



HIP-POCKET GUIDE

JOINT OPERATIONS PLANNING PROCESS



U.S. ARMY
LOGISTICS, G-4
PRODUCT

STEP 1 - Initiation

STEP 2 - Mission Analysis

KEY INPUTS

- Higher headquarters' planning directive
- Other strategic guidance
- Commander's planning guidance
 - Description of the operational environment
 - Definition of the problem
 - Commander's operational approach
 - Commander's initial intent

KEY OUTPUTS

- Staff estimates
- Mission statement
- Commander's refined operational approach including:
 - Joint force commander's (JFC's) intent statement
 - JFC's updated planning guidance
 - Commander's critical information requirements

STEP 3 - Course of Action (COA) Development

KEY INPUTS

- Staff estimates
- Mission statement
- Commander's refined operational approach including:
 - Joint force commander's (JFC's) intent statement
 - JFC's updated planning guidance
 - Commander's critical information requirements

KEY OUTPUTS

- Revised staff estimates
- COA alternatives with concept narrative and sketch including:
 - Objectives
 - Key tasks
 - Major capabilities required
 - Task organization
 - Main and supporting efforts
 - Deployment concept
 - Sustainment concept
 - Information operations support themes
 - Identification of reserve
 - Identification of required supporting interagency tasks

STEP 7 - Plan or Order Development

STEP 4 - Course of Action (COA) Analysis

KEY INPUTS

- Revised staff estimates
- COA alternatives with concept narrative and sketch including:
 - Objectives
 - Key tasks
 - Major capabilities required
 - Task organization
 - Main and supporting efforts
 - Deployment concept
 - Sustainment concept
 - Information operations support themes
 - Identification of reserve
 - Identification of required supporting interagency tasks

KEY OUTPUTS

- Potential decision point
- Evaluation criteria
- Potential branches and sequels
- Refined COAs
- Revised staff estimates

STEP 5 - Course of Action (COA) Comparison

KEY INPUTS

- Advantages and disadvantages
- Wargaming results
- Evaluation criteria
- Revised staff estimates

KEY OUTPUTS

- Evaluated COAs
- Recommended COA
- COA selection rationale
- Revised staff estimates
- Refined commander's critical information requirements

STEP 6 - Course of Action (COA) Approval

KEY INPUTS

- Refined COAs
- Staff recommendation
- JFC's personal analysis (experience & judgment)

KEY OUTPUTS

- COA modifications
- JFC's COA selection
- Commander's estimate (if required)
- Refined commander's intent