

ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

VISION

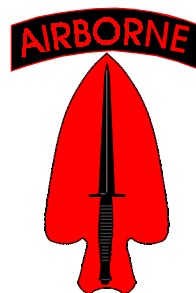


2010



**United States Army
Special Operations Command
Fort Bragg, North Carolina**

7 April 1997



ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

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THE VISION

By 2002, prepare the concept for Army Special Operations Forces 2010 “Team of Teams”:

A value-based organization composed of quality people who are —

- ***Experienced, self-reliant warrior-diplomats,***
- ***An integral part of the joint team,***
- ***A decisive factor in crisis resolution, and***
- ***Persuasive in peace.***

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter J. Schoomaker".

Peter J. Schoomaker
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) Vision 2010 describes the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) template for developing future operational capabilities. The conceptual template derives from Joint Vision 2010, Army Vision 2010, and SOF Vision 2020. ARSOF Vision 2010 describes the ARSOF dual role as a member of the Army team and the joint special operations forces team.

This document establishes the precept that modernizing ARSOF requires the determination of future operational capabilities. Modernizing ARSOF will generate the new requirements for doctrine, training, leader development, organizations, matériel, and soldiers (DTLOMS).

ARSOF Vision 2010 describes three interdependent components for building ready and mission-capable ARSOF beyond 2010:

- Building on the instruments of success.
- Identifying future capabilities.
- Implementing change.

BUILDING ON THE INSTRUMENTS OF SUCCESS

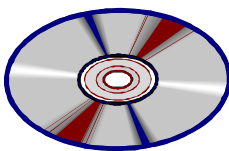
The foundation of today's forces will continue to be the foundation of ARSOF forces in 2010: quality people and quality training and education.

Quality People



People remain the key to our future success. The lifelong military learning experience must train for certainty but educate for uncertainty. We must maintain our traditional emphasis on selecting and retaining high-quality personnel. We will continue to seek personnel with suitable cognitive characteristics such as above average intelligence, ability to deal with complex issues and situations, ability to tolerate ambiguity, ability to maintain a clear mental picture of situational awareness, and the ability to make quality decisions based on known data. We will also continue to seek personality traits such as integrity, emotional stability, high tolerance for stress (physical and mental), flexibility, self-discipline, and self-confidence. The future ARSOF leader and team member must be adaptive and able to accomplish missions for which there is little prior experience, which do not fit perceived ideas of military operations, and for which there is no precedent.

Quality Training and Education



Training will continue to be physically and mentally demanding. Both individual and unit training will exploit advancements in computer-aided instruction, realistic interactive and distributed simulations, and virtual reality environments to prepare the future force for any mission assigned. The institutional training base will focus on regional studies and language proficiency training. It will

integrate training in all SOF disciplines, i.e., Civil-Military Operations, Psychological Operations, and Special Forces.

We will emphasize education that encourages leadership and creative, thoughtful solutions to sensitive and high-risk situations. Future ARSOF missions and activities will require even greater specialized training.

IDENTIFYING FUTURE CAPABILITIES

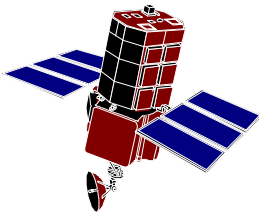
Identifying future capabilities includes an overview of the global security environment, the unique roles of ARSOF, and ARSOF support of Army and joint operations.

Global Security Environment



A burgeoning global economy will alter the way in which states interact. The global balance of power will evolve into one determined by economic power rather than the cold war's military power paradigm. The rapid pace of innovation and change in the information and technology domains will create tremendous opportunity and uncertainty within the global economic world. Adversaries arising from and allied along economic interests will increasingly resort to operations other than war (OOTW) as a policy means. While OOTW most likely will predominate, the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) remains the most dangerous capability an adversary could possess.

The rapid acceleration of the information revolution and corresponding technologies have produced unforeseen effects. Instantaneous transmission of events and messages around the world have raised domestic consciousness of foreign crises and created momentum for and against U.S. involvement. The capability for rapid interaction between nations involved in a crisis likewise has shortened decision cycles and action timelines. This trend, while not in itself a threat, heightens U.S. national interests in regional events while shortening the time available for a military response to crises.



The rate of change and progress in the information revolution raises the possibility of uncertain change in military organizations and capabilities. Military services lead in exploring the implications of these technologies, but it may be 20 or more years before those implications are fully understood. Meanwhile, the information technologies at the root of these changes are largely available in the global marketplace, as are a surprising number of sophisticated weapons platforms and munitions. Potential adversaries need not try to match U.S. capabilities but merely come up with creative "niche" or "asymmetric" capabilities that could confound U.S. military strategy. The result is that the United States must maintain sufficient conventional military strength to continue deterrence and, at the same time, develop and expand military capabilities that can prevent and defeat niche and asymmetrical threats.



Demographic trends will equal or surpass the effects of the information revolution with possible effects on global politics. Large-scale population shifts from rural to urban terrain will continue. High population rates in less-developed countries portend a rapidly growing, youthful cohort that may levy demands for improved living standards on states ill-equipped to meet them. This need could instigate internal state breakdown or nurture antagonism between the developed and less-developed states along “have” and “have not” lines. Meanwhile, among developed nations, low birth rates foreshadow aging populations with a different but perhaps equally daunting set of demands on governments to maintain an acceptable standard of living. This trend will also reduce the military-age cohort sufficiently to impede the recruitment of military personnel—especially for the personnel-intensive ground forces.

The significance and effect of these global trends vary by region, even though the situation in one region is almost always linked to events elsewhere. Any or all of these global factors lead to a wide spectrum of military response ranging from large-scale combat operations to disaster relief.

Unique Roles of ARSOF

America requires forces who are at home in all parts of the peace, deterrence, conflict, and war continuum (Figure 1). ARSOF can succeed in both conventional and unconventional roles through unique skills not available in the military at large. This success will occur throughout the continuum either directly in relatively compressed moments of time and space or indirectly over expanded or open-ended stretches of time and space.

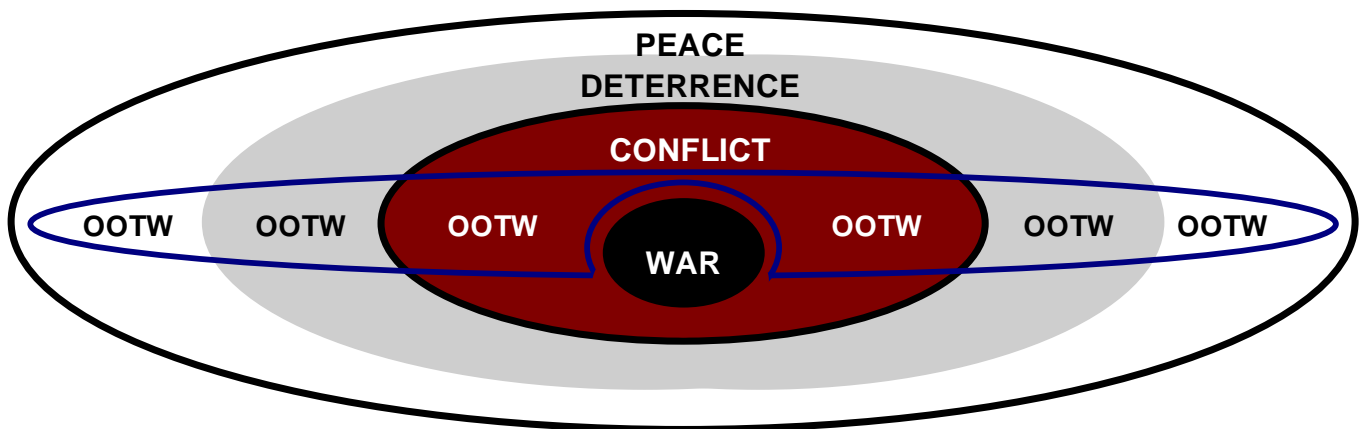


Figure 1. Peace, deterrence, conflict, and war continuum.

Peace Military used in nonviolent or internal security operations under civilian control.

Deterrence Military used to deter use of violence by rival or adversary.

Conflict Limited military application of violence that supports crisis resolution.

War Military violence used as primary method to coerce or force a rival or adversary to submit to your will.

ARSOF will continue to play a strong persuasive role in peacetime through—

- Civil-Military Operations
- Psychological Operations
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Combat Search and Rescue
- Security Assistance
- Counterdrug Activities
- Countermine Activities

PEACETIME

Acquire and sustain situational awareness by face-to-face contact with local populations and militaries.

Global Scouts

ARSOF enable the United States during peacetime to maintain an overseas presence with self-reliant warrior-diplomats attuned to local conditions. ARSOF will engage allies and potential allies, rivals, and adversaries with their language skills and cultural expertise to provide credible and favorable first *and continuing* impressions of America's armed forces. Concurrently, ARSOF engaged in other nations during peacetime will acquire and sustain situational awareness in regions where U.S. interests exist or emerge expediently. Close contact in military-to-military settings or contact with the local populace will enhance respect, establish or improve relations, reduce tension, and when required, facilitate coalition operations. Continued emphasis on joint and interagency interoperability will be paramount for ARSOF peacetime engagement activities. ARSOF peacetime engagement in 2010 will provide a low-key presence that is politically acceptable and readily convertible to military applications.

DETERRENCE

Influence, advise, train, and interact with foreign forces and populations.

Coalition Enablers

In 2010, the ARSOF warrior-diplomat will be a valuable tool in deterring conflict and war by influencing, advising, training, and interacting with foreign forces and populations. ARSOF's unconventional warfare expertise will serve as a flexible, suitable, and adaptable method in the overall national military strategy for deterrence and conflict termination. This ARSOF capability will contribute an effective, economical, deterrent measure for the United States toward potential adversaries by establishing a legitimate presence for U.S. forces with host governments. Should conflict become imminent, the United States will be ready to transition to "fighting and winning" by building on ARSOF coalition enablers already there. ARSOF will play a major role as the integrator of U.S. conventional and interagency forces into a coalition with a host nation.

CRISIS RESOLUTION

Lethal, surgical, and discreet operations; postconflict specialists.

Small, Mature, Lethal Forces

The ARSOF contribution to crisis resolution and crisis response will enable the United States to act on warning to employ low-key, politico-military, or unconventional forces applications to defuse a conflict before it escalates. Potential crises will run the gamut from human tragedies to armed conflict. ARSOF must be able to deploy immediately and, if necessary, discreetly to flash points in adequate time to organize or support coalition efforts for relief. If deterrent measures weaken and conflict becomes imminent, U.S. success in "crisis resolution 2010" will largely hinge on small, mature, and when necessary, lethal forces to conduct the following:

- Strikes and Raids
 - Terminal guidance operations
 - Pre-strike SEAD (suppression of enemy air defenses)
 - Recovery

- Combat search and rescue
- Counterterrorism
- Counterproliferation
- Special Reconnaissance
 - Advanced force operations
 - Operational reconnaissance
 - HUMINT/SIGINT/ELINT/COMINT
- Unconventional Warfare
 - Guerrilla warfare
 - Subversion
 - Sabotage
 - Intelligence activities
 - Evasion and escape
 - Counterinsurgency
- CMO
- PSYOP

The ARSOF role does not compete with conventional forces but offers the National Command Authorities (NCA) and combatant commanders relevant capabilities that are not resident in the conventional force structure. ARSOF will give the geographic CINC global scouts with established military and inter-agency connections in any potential crisis area. These global scouts provide unique capabilities that can quickly and decisively neutralize selected threats. Future ARSOF crisis response capabilities will give life to innovative, unconventional, high pay-off alternatives where no other viable option exists.

ARSOF in 2010 will play a vital role in postconflict resolution. ARSOF will lead the U.S. Army's supporting effort in accomplishing national objectives to either restore preconflict or prewar conditions or implement end state terms and circumstances.

When our nation must resort to war as the instrument of policy, ARSOF will be a full partner in the joint and Army operations required to fight and win.

Support of Army and Joint Operations

The goal of future Army and joint operations is the establishment of full spectrum dominance. This goal is achieved through the synergy realized from the application of five joint operational concepts: information dominance, dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full-dimensional protection, and focused logistics. ARSOF will provide unique capabilities and expertise in each of the operational concepts that will enable the Joint Force Commander to dominate the full range of military operations in peace, conflict, and war.

NOTE: The following italicized paragraphs in the left margin are extracts from Joint Vision 2010 and Army Vision 2010.

We must have information superiority: the capability to collect, process, and disseminate an uninterrupted flow of information while exploiting or denying an adversary's ability to do the same.

Dominant maneuver will be the multidimensional application of information, engagement, and mobility capabilities to position and employ widely dispersed joint air, land, sea, and space forces to accomplish assigned operational tasks.

Information Dominance. Information operations (IO) conducted to gain information dominance are essential to all the patterns of operations. They consist of both offensive and defensive efforts to create a disparity between what we know about our operational environment and operations within it and what the enemy knows about his operational environment. ARSOF IO are conducted within the context of joint IO and Army IO.

ARSOF will provide capabilities to conduct offensive IO. They will identify, locate, target, and attack enemy command, control, communications, computer, and intelligence (C⁴I) nodes. ARSOF elements will conduct psychological operations to support strategic, operational, and tactical goals and objectives.

In the aggregate, IO technologies will assist in understanding the operational environment. High-speed processors will fuse information from multiple sources while rapid generation of high-fidelity databases will enable the commander to visualize current and future operations. Bandwidth on demand will facilitate common understanding at all echelons, and new antenna configurations will allow dissemination of “real time” information on the move. At the same time, low probability of intercept or low probability of detection signature management will protect friendly information while directed, and RF energy will disrupt and deny information to the enemy.

Dominant Maneuver. For ARSOF, dominant maneuver consists of two elements: strategic and operational. Strategic maneuver equates to the requirement for ARSOF to be the “First to Deploy” into an area of operation. ARSOF will be equipped with lighter, more durable, multipurpose war fighting systems, thus reducing the amount of time required as well as the size and complexity of the logistics tail needed to sustain the force.

Operational maneuver exploits enemy vulnerabilities to infiltrate and exfiltrate hostile and denied areas. This maneuver allows ARSOF to conduct operations at unexpected times and places and to strike enemy vulnerabilities in unanticipated ways. ARSOF will exploit situational understanding technology to synchronize ARSOF with land force operational maneuver.

ARSOF support dominant maneuver through special reconnaissance targeted on operational objectives for conventional land forces to maneuver against. They also support dominant maneuver through direct action missions that attack critical enemy operational C⁴I nodes. These actions decrease the enemy's ability to react to friendly maneuver. During coalition operations, ARSOF provide language-qualified and culturally attuned soldiers who provide the land component commander interface and connectivity with allied forces.

ARSOF can facilitate dominant maneuver by supporting deception plans, by decreasing enemy morale and effectiveness, and by using strategic, tactical, and operational psychological operations to induce the enemy to surrender without fighting. ARSOF support dominant maneuver by integrating consideration of movement and caring for the civil population resident

in the battle area. After the battle, ARSOF help the conventional commander with consolidating gains, enabling early withdrawal of friendly forces, and laying the foundation for the resumption of lawful affairs.

Precision engagement will consist of a system of systems that enables joint forces to locate the objective or target, provide responsive command and control, generate the desired effect, assess the level of success, and retain the flexibility to reengage with precision when required.

Full Dimensional Protection will be control of the battlespace to ensure our forces can maintain freedom of action during deployment, maneuver, and engagement while providing multilayered defenses for our forces and facilities at all levels. This concept has global implications for the joint force. To achieve a multilayered, seamless architecture of protection from the full array of enemy weaponry and electronic systems in both strategic and operational environments, all components of the joint force must evolve concepts and technologies that can be easily coordinated and synchronized.

Precision Engagement. ARSOF support precision engagement operations by the joint force command through special reconnaissance with ARSOF elements acting as sensors reporting locations of high priority targets to the targeting system. They can also attack targets directly or by using target marking systems that allow other weapons systems to accurately engage the target. The same elements provide the battle damage assessment to facilitate reengagement if required. ARSOF elements will use information programs to target specific audiences with the intent to influence them to support U.S. and allied goals and objectives.

The Land Component Commander (LCC) sets the conditions for success by shaping the battlespace. Shaping the battlespace begins with early intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). Early deployed ARSOF provide the LCC with a sensor through which he acquires real-time information about enemy forces. IPB supports identification of the enemy's main effort and enables the LCC to *decide* which high-value targets to engage to facilitate his scheme of maneuver; prioritize and sequence collection assets to *detect* and track those targets; and select appropriate weapon systems to *deliver* the correct munitions to destroy those targets where and when he chooses.

Information technologies will facilitate sharing "real-time" information among all Services, allies, and coalition partners. Technologies to be exploited will permit isolating, tagging, and tracking moving enemy forces and targets with precision. Immediate and accurate battle damage assessment provided by ARSOF will facilitate reengagement. As future joint forces combine processes to make virtually any enemy force or target accessible, other technologies will enhance the intelligence and precision of the weapons used to engage them.

Full Dimensional Protection. For ARSOF, full-dimensional protection consists of maintaining low unit signatures through modularity and task organization. Operating at night or during periods of limited visibility will remain key means for protecting forces committed on operational missions.

ARSOF support the LCC's full-dimensional protection program by locating, targeting, and/or attacking threat theater missile defense systems. ARSOF will identify and neutralize terrorist agencies that threaten the safety of U.S. and allied forces. ARSOF will also provide information and training to joint forces to immunize them against potential threat propaganda themes and symbols. ARSOF will provide a means for the reestablishment of civilian control over territory seized or occupied by the LCC.

Advanced technologies will provide vastly improved personal armor, chemical and biological protection ensembles, reduced signature enhancements, and improved night vision devices. Concepts and technologies that support dominant maneuver will also contribute to protecting the force.

Focused logistics will be the fusion of information, logistics, and transportation technologies to provide rapid crises response, to track and shift assets even while en route, and deliver tailored logistics packages and sustainment directly at the strategic, operational, and tactical level of operations.

Focused Logistics. For ARSOF, focused logistics will entail small, tailored, austere logistics packages capable of providing limited support to ARSOF units deployed to the area of operations before the Army logistics system is established or when no Army logistics system is planned.

Technology will greatly enable the concept of focused logistics. Smaller fighting elements with easily maintainable equipment, made of more durable materials that share repair-part commonality among component-specific equipment and equipment in other components, will significantly reduce the volume and complexity of the resupply system. Precision weapons with increased lethality and durability and fuel-efficient systems will generate reductions in demands on the sustainment infrastructure. Semiautomatic, built-in, diagnostic sensors will anticipate failure and initiate resupply or replacement activities before failures occur. A vast array of advances in human support and medical care technologies, including “internet triage” and “telemedicine,” will greatly enhance the survivability of all members of the joint force.

Focused logistics, clearly, is the most applicable operational concept across the patterns of operation. No other concept is executable without focused logistics.

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

ARSOF Vision 2010 will channel innovative experimentation, training, and technology to produce the most effective force for 2010. Changing ARSOF doctrine, training, leader development policy, organizations, and matériel for the challenges of 2010 will follow a disciplined process.

Between now and 2002, we will continue to follow the USSOCOM Strategic Planning Process for developing program objective memorandum (POM) input. That process improves force readiness by improving its capacity to perform current capabilities. However, by 2002, we need to know what DTLOMS changes will be necessary for ARSOF to attain an optimum capability by 2010.

With 2010 as our goal, we have four years to identify which elements of DTLOMS need changing and what resources are needed to implement those changes. In 2002, we will prepare the POM for the years 2006-2011. This POM will specify the necessary dollars and manpower to modernize the force by 2010 (Figure 2).

The choice of the year 2010 as the target date for implementing changes is not arbitrary. By the year 2010, the Army will buy out legacy systems and other systems will wear out. Between 2000 and 2010, new systems will begin migrating into the force, e.g., Force XXI digitization programs, avionics for SOA, the Joint Base System.

The process ARSOF will follow to determine mission needs and operational requirements for 2010 must be simultaneously disciplined to reach our

goal and flexible enough to respond to uncertainty. ARSOF Vision 2010 takes the first step in the process. ARSOF 2010 describes the global security environment and implications for ARSOF in 2010. Within these parameters and the anticipated future resource constraints, we must determine the best way to employ ARSOF built on good people who are well trained and well educated.

Next, we must develop and validate by 2002 an operational concept for ARSOF (CA, PSYOP, SF, Rangers, SO Aviation, and SO support functions) that describes—

- Principles, missions, and employment of ARSOF.
- Integration with the joint and Army operational concepts for 2010.
 - Information dominance.
 - Dominant maneuver.
 - Precision engagement.
 - Full-dimensional protection.
 - Focused logistics.
- Contribution to crisis response and crisis resolution.
- Support of national defense against WMD.

BY 2002, PREPARE A CONCEPT FOR THE ARSOF 2010 “TEAM OF TEAMS”

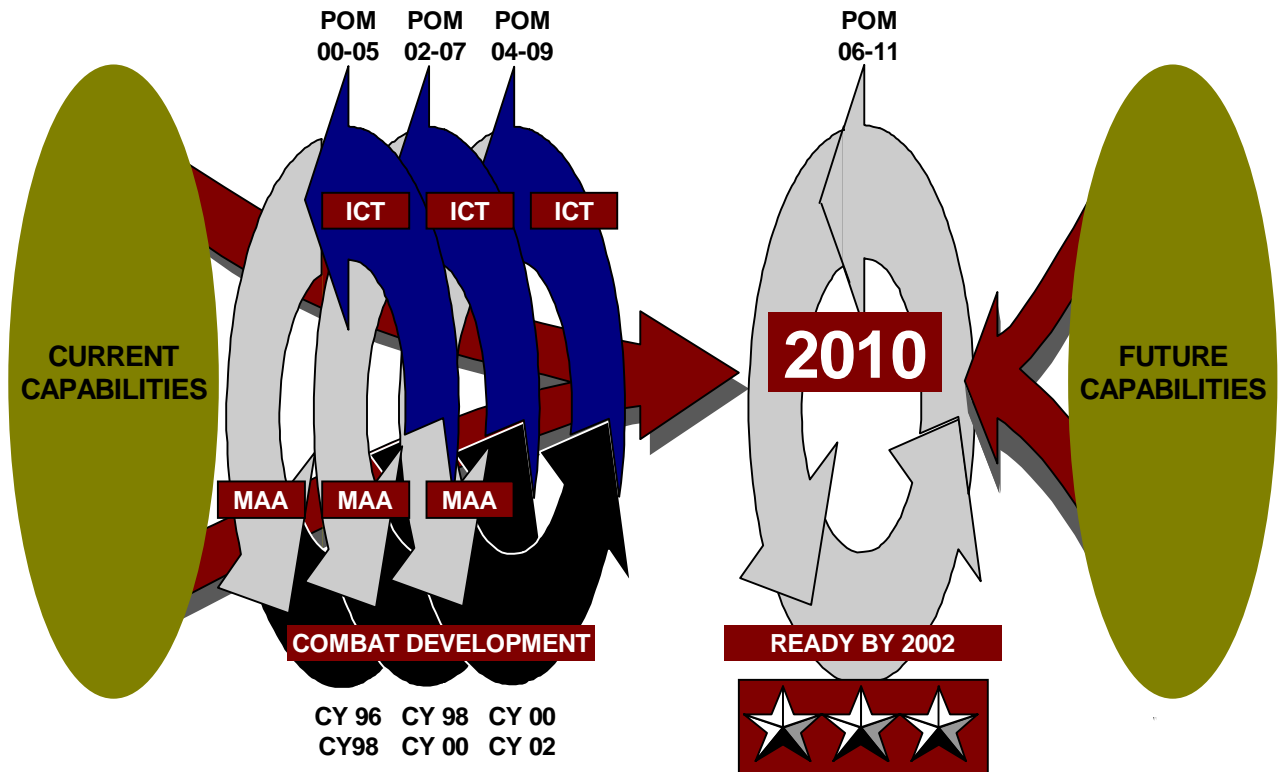


Figure 2. Current and future capabilities.

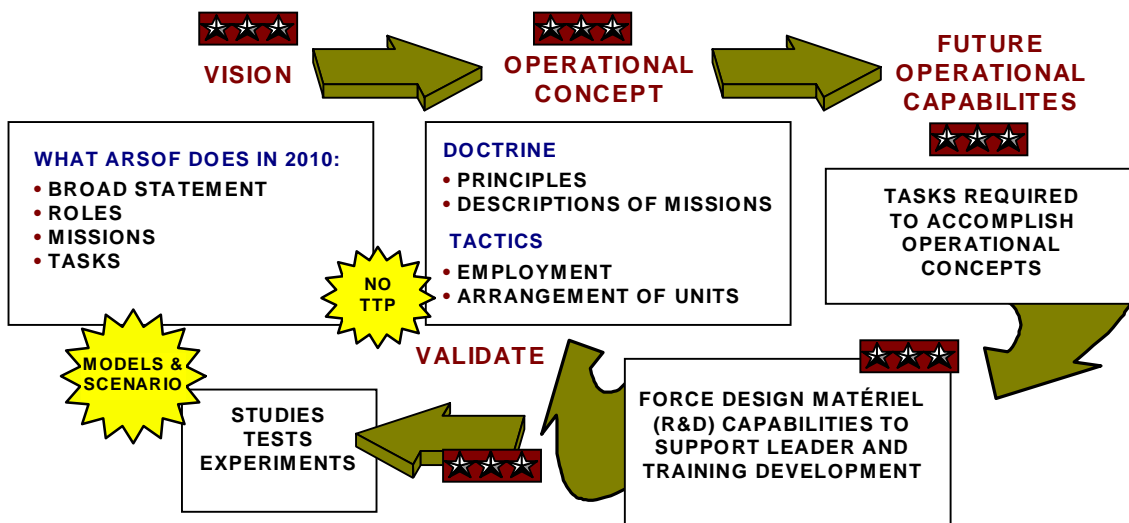
Inherent to the operational concept will be the development of the ARSOF future operational capabilities list that describes the tasks required to implement the operational concept. From this list, a priority of effort (Figure 3) will be determined to focus the ARSOF studies, tests, and experiments to validate force design, matériel (R&D), and capabilities to support leader and training development.

Between now and 2002 we will execute our process in a yearly cyclical manner. We will review the operational concepts and update them as directed by the Commanding General. We also will review operational capabilities, status of models and scenarios, and results of ongoing studies and experiments in accordance with the concept development cycle (Figure 4). Every two years, the operational concepts will be validated as a part of the USSOCOM and Army POM development processes.

Any new capabilities that emerge before 2010 will be integrated into ARSOF as resources become available.

ARSOF Vision 2010 is the first step in maintaining our forward-thinking leadership as part of the joint and Army team. We cannot afford to wait for the future to become more clear or to creep forward maintaining our current capabilities with incremental product improvements. The future portends dynamic change in how military power relates to national policy and the way in which military forces will be employed. Learning to manage the potential of advanced technologies will be critical to our journey into the future. We must start now to develop new ways of doing business, phasing out the old ideas and molding a 21st century ARSOF “Team of Teams” built around the best soldiers our nation has ever known.

HOW TO DEVELOP FUTURE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES



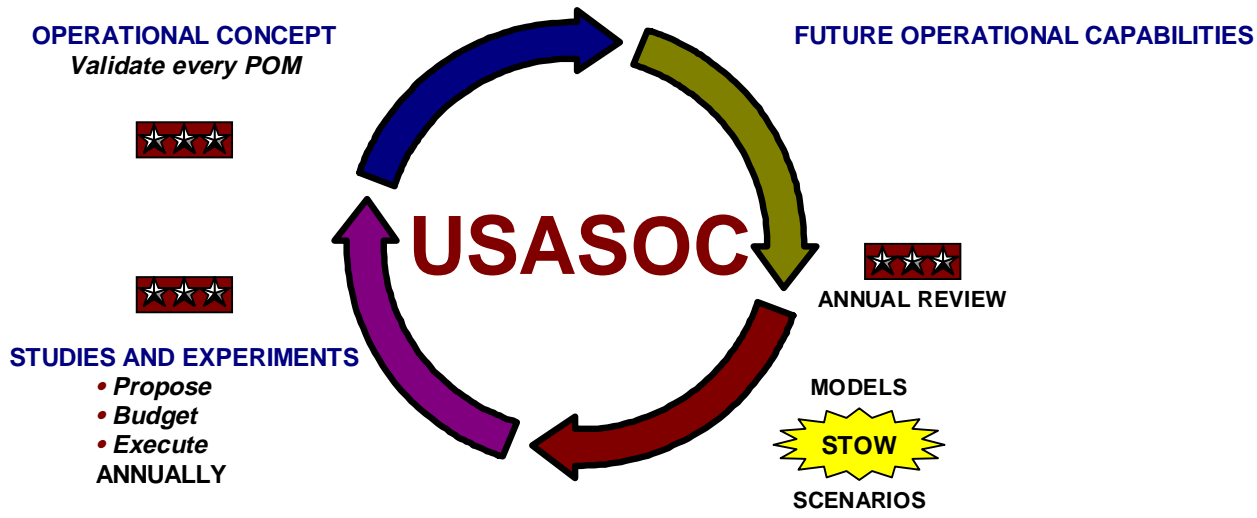


Figure 4. The concept development cycle.

**The real challenge
is not to put new ideas
in the military mind but
to put the *old one out*."**

B. H. Liddel-Hart.

