



# Rethinking Command & Control

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“...the future of command and control is not  
*command and control.*”

Dr. David S. Alberts

“Agility, Focus, and Convergence:  
The Future of Command & Control”  
*The International C2 Journal, 2007*

# C2 Defined

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- Department of Defense: The “exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated **commander** over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission”
- Navy Perspective: The central figure of C2 is the **commander** who “commands by deciding what must be done and exercising leadership to inspire subordinates toward a common goal”

# The Dual Nature of C2

- (1) – Centralized system of command and control to provide a clear hierarchy of authority
- (2) – Accept some elements of uncertainty of warfare and decentralize command and control



- **Core idea**: harness technologies to increase warfighter efficacy by networking sensors, decision makers, and shooters towards a shared awareness and self-synchronization
- While Network Centric Warfare promised to link all aspects of military activity for greater awareness and unity, C2 remains held by the need to centralize

- **Joint Forces Command**: Current operating environment requires more than unilateral, military-centric approaches
    - Future challenges characterized by joint, interagency, and coalition focus
  - **National Defense Strategy**: “The best way to achieve security is to prevent war when possible...”
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- **Lesson**: C2 must be interoperable, particularly for non-traditional partners, and must support a broader range of missions

# Challenge: Developing Agile C2

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- C2-related research and design efforts must seamlessly integrate with existing platforms, but must *also* act as the glue for emerging systems and requirements
- A Glimmer of Hope: Shift to a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)
  - Exposing of data, development and implementation of standards, and interoperability requirements

# When Suboptimal *is* Optimal

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- Ensuring that a system is able to meet the *general* requirements for a broad set of mission threads can, at times, be preferable to one solely optimized for a small set of specific requirements
- Often, building the sub-optimal system in terms of operational requirements may be *the* optimal system overall

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- **Lesson:** Build a system that is as flexible as possible



# An Operational Perspective

- Partnership for the Americas Collaboration Center (PFACC) at U.S. Southern Command
  - Reflects Admiral James Stavridis' intent to evolve C2 into a more collaborative endeavor at the joint, federal, and international levels





*In speaking to how the military's focus on centralized control of all decisions slows down the warfighter*

“I’m not talking about getting rid of the chain of command, but I am talking about enabling the warfighter in ways that are significantly different than what we do today, and the technology is there to do it.”

General James Cartwright

Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs

March 4, 2009

Naval Information Technology Day

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