

**NETWORK CENTRIC OPERATIONS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
CASE STUDY: AIR-GROUND OPERATIONS**

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This case study applies the Network Centric Operations Conceptual Framework (NCO CF) to force application within the context of major combat operations, drawing from air-ground engagements occurring during the Division Capstone Exercise Phase I (DCXI), Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The air-ground mission area is a particularly fertile field from which to draw real-world data and insight that will be of use in further refining the NCO CF. It also is a particularly useful channel for drawing the attention of the enterprise to the NCO CF. This is because, on the one hand, the ground-air interface has been one of the most contentious operational seams between the military services, particularly between the Air Force and the Army. The debates over responsibilities and the efforts to facilitate an effective operational integration of ground and air power have been long and often heated. On the other hand, recent experience in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom suggests that the validity of many assumptions underlying the NCO CF were supported strongly in the operations with regard to sensing and synchronization. In other words, the air-to-ground mission area has some recent examples that have salience not only in terms of topicality, but also because there appears to be real-world, well documented, and recent evidence supporting at least some of the major components of NCO CF.