



# ARSOF 2022

**U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND**

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## /// FROM THE COMMANDER

The relevance of Army Special Operations Forces has never been greater than it is today. As a force, we are the cornerstone of the joint forces fighting our nation's wars — maintaining alliances, building partner-nation capacity, developing surrogate capabilities and conducting multilateral or unilateral special operations with absolute precision. As long as belligerent nations and non-state actors continue to employ nonconventional means against the United States and its allies, and terrorist networks continue their efforts to strike at our homeland and interests abroad, ARSOF will remain an indispensable partner to the joint and interagency team.

While our success over the past decade of conflict highlights our relevance, both in and out of declared theaters of war, we cannot afford to become complacent or maintain the status quo. As a force, we must continuously learn, anticipate and evolve in order to defeat an adaptive enemy and the uncertain threats of the 21st century. Without question, over the next decade, we will face complex challenges that will test the mettle of our force. To ensure that we can find, fix and finish tomorrow's enemy, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command is moving forward with a deliberate plan, *ARSOF 2022*, to recover and revitalize our force.

*ARSOF 2022* is a blueprint for change. It describes precepts and imperatives that will enable ARSOF to thrive in a future operating environment that is characterized by uncertainty. The first half of the document provides the intellectual framework for the ARSOF 2022 vision, including a synopsis of the envisioned future operating environment and strategic guidance. Building on these external drivers, the document describes a maturation of foundational precepts including SOF Operational Art, the Human Domain, the 7th Warfighting Function, Special Warfare and Surgical Strike, while also defining the six enabling concepts that provide the framework to achieve the ARSOF 2022 vision.

In the coming decade, ARSOF will be called upon to provide balanced and fully integrated special operations capabilities to the nation. Our force must maintain its high degree of professionalism complemented by cutting-edge training, world-class education and the balanced use of state-of-the-art and indigenous equipment. Our formations must be organized, postured and networked in a manner that enables them to anticipate and prevent or rapidly respond to regional contingencies or threats to the stability of our allies.

Ultimately, we must provide senior decision makers with innovative ideas and viable options to better defend our homeland and achieve our national-security objectives. It is my intention that this document will serve as the azimuth to move ARSOF forward.

CHARLES T. CLEVELAND  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, USA  
COMMANDING

**Over the next decade, Army special operations forces will remain actively engaged in protecting our homeland and our national-security interests abroad.**

**Our force will be called upon to face a number of threats occurring in multi-dimensional, hybrid-operating environments. It is imperative that our force understands not only the threats that may develop over the next decade, but also the changing environment in which we will be called to operate.**

**Future Operating Environment.** As we project beyond Iraq and Afghanistan, we will face a challenging security environment. We are not returning to a pre-9/11 era of operations nor the Cold War-era where competing superpowers created a fairly predictable, if tenuous, world order. Instead, this new world will be characterized by an irregular balance of power between both state and non-state actors. It will present a dynamic operating environment that is characterized by uncertainty. The shift in the nation's tolerance away from large-scale joint operations, coupled with the complexity of the future operating environment, create a growing gap between national action and inaction – this changing dynamic could give our adversaries broader freedom of action and encourage increased instability. The reality of this changing paradigm requires USASOC and the

U.S. Special Operations Command to build new strategic options for the nation.

Future threats will range from standing conventional and unconventional forces to irregular militias and paramilitaries to terrorist groups, criminal elements and any number of hybrids. The interaction of several variables within the environment, including human behavior, assures both fog and friction.

We will increasingly act in multi-dimensional, hybrid operating environments, which will require the force to operate within, and seamlessly shift between, ethnic enclaves in the center of sprawling megacities and austere rural villages. These diverse operating environments will also test support elements, including logistics, intelligence and communications. While the rise of non-state and

**FUTURE THREATS >**

Over the next decade, the ARSOF Soldier will be called on to put all of his training to the test in ungoverned and under-governed parts of the world, as well as in urban centers. As borders become more porous and threats evolve and build, the problem set confronting the force can be divided into three subsets:

**PERSISTENT CHALLENGES**

Throughout the international community, there are persistent strategic challenges: acquisition and allocation of natural resources, the balance of population between urban and rural communities and the establishment of communications. How our allies deal with these strategic challenges will ultimately shape the world in which ARSOF operates.

**EMERGING CHALLENGES**

In an era of constrained budgets and limited resources, ARSOF must take a realistic look at the emerging challenges of today to prepare for the world of 2022. Asymmetric threats and pre-emptive cyber attacks from both state and non-state actors will characterize regional challenges in the next decade.

**UNCONVENTIONAL CHALLENGES**

The combination of unconventional challenges ranging from transnational terrorism, dispersion and access to weapons of mass destruction, organized criminal networks and the privatization of force could expose the United States to serious threats within the undergoverned regions of the world.



## DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS >

### Leader Development

Leaders must be able to deal effectively with the complexity and uncertainty of potential operating environments, be culturally aware, understand the information environment, master consequence management and be prepared to conduct decisive actions.

### Training Development

Training venues must reflect an understanding of the influence of various cultures and actors present in potential operating environments including the use of cultural and language role players.

### Capabilities Development

Capabilities development must anticipate the operational needs of commanders and incorporate the adaptability inherent in commercial off-the-shelf technology to support the near future.

### Concepts Development

Accounting for adaptive adversaries requires scenario-based concepts that are informed by collaboration from ongoing operations but look well beyond the current fight.

transnational actors will serve to complicate U.S. government actions throughout under-governed nations, we cannot afford to discount the actions of state-sponsored actors who operate much like other violent extremists organizations, only with the state's direction and support. Countries where state-sponsored, non-state and transnational actors operate typically have weak and corrupt central governments, high unemployment, exorbitant poverty levels, limited internal infrastructure, deep ethnic and religious divisions and a history of humanitarian issues. It is in these regions of the world that ARSOF units will be the force of choice.

Several aggravating factors will influence the way we operate:

- » **Geopolitical Constraints:** Our battlespace will contain agile state actors and non-state actors operating across borders of sovereign nations and outside of declared combat zones.
- » **Policy Limitations:** Forward presence will be affected by a reduced budget and national reluctance to act overtly and unilaterally.
- » **Hostile nation states:** These states will be more capable and want more resources, but still will be unable to match U.S. forces.
- » **Threat networks:** These networks (comprised of both state-sponsored and non-state terrorist groups) will remain active; their

attacks will have greater impact; they will use more sophisticated techniques; and they will retain freedom of maneuver.

Conditions across the strategic environment indicate future conflict will not be confined to one category. It will range in scope from major conventional conflicts to humanitarian support and nation-building missions. Very capable adversaries will continue to challenge U.S. interests globally, while rising military powers will work to advance their regional and global interests. Enemies will seek to exploit their asymmetric advantages wherever possible; USASOC's training; education, capabilities and concept development must reflect this reality.

The momentum of human interaction is reaching unprecedented levels; enabled by generational leaps in personal communication technologies and an associated social-media explosion, with little to no state control of those technologies and applications.

We must be prepared to conduct special operations in more restrictive areas than those that we have experienced in Iraq and Afghanistan over the past decade. As the challenges for access and placement increase, infiltration and exfiltration options will be reduced and ARSOF will become the more subtle option for decision makers to affect desired change and meet future threats.



It is imperative that our plans are guided by and nested within those of our national leaders and our higher headquarters. The following guidance has defined our role as a force. Using this guidance, we have developed a strategic framework for our way forward.

**DEFENSE STRATEGIC GUIDANCE**



“Whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost and small-footprint approaches to achieve security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence and advisory capabilities.”

**2010 NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY**



“We will continue to rebalance our military capabilities to excel at counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, stability operations and meeting increasingly sophisticated security threats, while ensuring our force is ready to address the full range of military operations.”

## SOCOM 2020



- » “The Global SOF Enterprise will become a globally networked force of special operations forces, services, interagency, allies and partners able to rapidly or persistently address regional contingencies and threats to stability.”
- » “SOCOM must not only continue to pursue terrorists wherever we may find them, we must rebalance the force and tenaciously embrace indirect operations in the Human Domain — the totality of the physical, cultural and social environments that influence human behavior in a population-centric conflict.”
- » “We must think differently, seek greater understanding of local, regional and global contexts and strengthen trust through interagency and partner cooperation.”
- » “While SOF is designed to contribute to or support efforts in every domain of warfare, the vast majority of SOF expertise lies in the Human Domain of competition, conflict and war. The Human Domain is about developing understanding of, and nurturing influence among critical populaces. Operating in the Human Domain is a core competency for SOF and we are uniquely suited for successful operations or campaigns to win population-centric conflicts.”

## US ARMY 2012 STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDANCE



- » “Vision: The Army is globally engaged and regionally responsive; it is an indispensable partner and provider of a full range of capabilities to combatant commanders in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multi-national environment. As part of the joint force and as America’s Army, in all that we offer, we guarantee the agility, versatility and depth to prevent, shape and win.”
- » “Army units will be increasingly focused on preparing for missions within specific geographical combatant commands. This regional alignment ... will be further enhanced by increasing the integration of conventional and special operations forces.”

## THE U.S. ARMY CAPSTONE CONCEPT



“The Army must achieve SOF and conventional force interdependence to lock in the advances of the last decade of conflict, more effectively counter future threats and shape the operational environment. The Army must establish a range of personnel, training and command and support relationships between SOF and CF.”

“In order to prepare for the future threat environment of the next decade, ARSOF will need to be capable of facing a variety of political and military challenges within a complex operating environment.”



**Vision** Provide our nation the world's premier special operations units, capable of prosecuting the most sensitive special warfare campaigns and executing the most difficult surgical strike operations, while providing seamless and persistent special operations support to joint-force commanders worldwide.

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Over the past decade, USASOC built a robust capability to target terrorist networks and an unmatched capacity for counterinsurgency operations. At its peak, the level of support to joint-force headquarters in the U.S. Central Command area of operations was the largest sustained effort in our history. As a force, our Soldiers have performed magnificently during two of the nation's longest wars while executing a wide range of demanding and high-risk operations in hostile environments. As the nature and extent of our engagements in the Middle East change, it is critical to review the lessons learned over the past decade, assess our current situation and explore requirements for the future force.

Perhaps the most significant change of the past decade is the evolution of the Human Domain. During World War I, aerial platforms were used as a means of fire and observation in land combat. By the end of World War II, airspace had evolved into a distinct domain because its control became recognized as a key to success in the war. National leadership directed the establishment of a separate department of the Air Force in order to develop the required and unique doctrine,

organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel and facilities solutions needed to dominate this newly, contested space. A similar appreciation for influencing populations now suggests the need for establishment of a Human Domain.

Wars among the people that emphasize influencing population groups rather than an exclusive emphasis on battle is an ancient concept. Since the early 1950s, ARSOF have been specifically designed to work in this Human Domain. The emergence of the Human Domain demands the armed forces and other U.S. government security agencies analyze what it takes to win wars among the people, including defeating terrorist and other VEOs. Evidence of this new domain can be found in the number and type of ad hoc structures and significant repurposing of traditional Land Domain tools.

Based on lessons learned, the Army is updating its concept framework to reflect the work done to advise, assist and influence foreign security forces, governments and people. Adding the 7th Warfighting Function to the other six Warfighting functions will leverage the Army's recent war-time experiences and help ensure the hard-



learned lessons are not forgotten. The establishment of a 7th Warfighting Function addresses the related tasks and systems that influence the behaviors of a people (friendly, neutral, adversary), security forces and governments and enables the prioritization and synchronization of efforts to achieve strategic effects.

The importance of SOF interdependence with Army conventional forces also became evident. Across the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan, we forged relationships with the conventional force that resulted in operational effectiveness unparalleled in our history. By improving interdependence, we enabled seamless and consistent application of combat power across the full range of military operations.

The need for special operations campaigns that tie SOF tactical capabilities to U.S. regional or national objectives became apparent. Efforts over the past decade focused on building partner-nation capacity, advising partner forces and conducting some unilateral activities to safeguard U.S. interests outside of declared theaters of armed conflict. To support the development of these operational-level efforts, theater special operations commands required individuals with competency to design plans. These campaigns, many of them SOF-centric, consisted of multiple lines of effort developed and synchronized by the TSOCs to achieve discrete outcomes in support of the geographic combatant commanders' overall strategy. We will increasingly need special operations campaign designers and planners who understand the full range of special operations capabilities and can weave their operations together over time to achieve U.S. objectives.

Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom required USASOC to primarily focus on developing the manpower, equipment and command structures necessary to ensure operational success in mature combat theaters. As the war in Afghanistan transitions to an Afghan-led effort, a large segment of our force will be remissioned to other strategic and theater problem sets. Future operations and SOF campaigns will require persistence, distributed command and control, low-visibility operations and small-scale, non-standard logistics support. The current force structure, manpower and equipment are not optimized for this dispersed operational footprint. Therefore, we must develop and validate flexible, scalable and responsive distributed command and control structures. Our regionally expert forces will be called upon to provide continuous, proactive and responsive support to their respective joint-force commands — whether in country or deployed.

### WHERE WE WANT TO GO

ARSOF 2022 Objective: In 2022, ARSOF provide joint-force commanders scalable nodes, with unmatched levels of tactical skill and language and cultural expertise, which establish persistent and distributed networks that provide the nation precise and nuanced asymmetric capability. Skilled SOF operational planners and leaders routinely mesh special warfare and surgical strike capabilities to conduct SOF campaigns in support of joint and interagency efforts. As a force, we are uniquely prepared to succeed in the most uncertain conditions and offer solutions to the nation's most difficult and sensitive problems.

**“The ability to assess and understand a situation from multiple points of view and to intuitively adapt operations as necessary requires mature Soldiers who have the ability to combine their education and experience to solve a problem.”**

## PRIORITIES >

### USASOC PRIORITIES

- » Win the Current Fight
- » Strengthen the Global SOF Network
- » Further Army SOF/CF Interdependence
- » Preserve the Force

### SOF TRUTHS

- » Humans are more important than hardware.
- » Quality is better than quantity.
- » Special operations forces cannot be mass produced.
- » Competent special operations forces cannot be created after emergencies occur.
- » Most special operations require non-SOF support.

## ARSOF CRITICAL CAPABILITIES >

### SPECIAL WARFARE:

The execution of activities that involve a combination of lethal and non-lethal actions taken by specially trained and educated forces that have a deep understanding of cultures and foreign language, proficiency in small-unit tactics, subversion, sabotage and the ability to build and fight alongside indigenous combat formations in a permissive, uncertain or hostile environment.

### SURGICAL STRIKE:

The execution of activities in a precise manner that employ SOF in hostile, denied or politically sensitive environments to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover or damage designated targets, or influence threats.

## ARSOF CRITICAL CAPABILITIES: SPECIAL WARFARE AND SURGICAL STRIKE

USASOC provides the nation with forces capable of executing two different, but mutually supporting forms of special operations: special warfare and surgical strike. Joint-force commanders leverage ARSOF's ability to execute these capabilities in the development and execution of their special operations campaigns. Understanding the differences will illuminate how special warfare and surgical strike can best be utilized to achieve strategic effects in support of regional or national objectives.

Previous attempts to describe our force included descriptions such as "black/white," "national/theater" and "direct/indirect." These terms, which describe the force by the nature of the funding, command and control structures, authorities or operational approach have limited utility. The terms special warfare and surgical strike more accurately describe our force based on its capabilities.

Special warfare and surgical strike are distinguished by how they address uncertainty. Our

## SOF CORE ACTIVITIES >

### 10 Title X Core Activities as enumerated by the U.S. Congress:

**1] Direct Action:** Short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied or diplomatically sensitive environments and which employ specialized military capabilities to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover or damage designated targets.

**2] Strategic Reconnaissance:** Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied or politically sensitive environments to collect or verify information of strategic or operational significance, employing military capabilities not normally found in conventional forces.

**3] Unconventional Warfare:** Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary and guerrilla force in a denied area.

**4] Foreign Internal Defense:** Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism and other threats to its security.

**5] Civil Affairs Operations:** Those military operations conducted by civil affairs forces that (1) enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities in localities where military forces are present; (2) require coordination other interagency, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, indigenous populations and institutions and the private sector,

(3) involve application of functional specialty skills that normally the responsibility of civil government to enhance the conduct of civil-military operations.

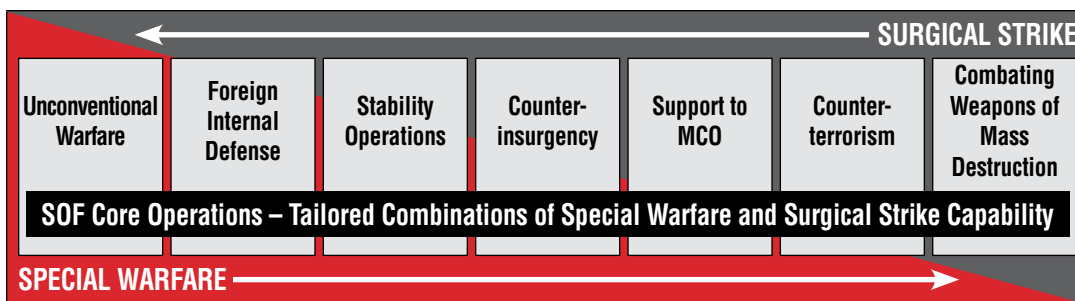
**6] Counterterrorism:** Actions taken directly against terrorist networks and indirectly to influence and render global and regional environments inhospitable to terrorist networks.

**7] Military Information Support Operations:** Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals.

**8] Humanitarian Assistance:** Programs conducted to relieve or reduce the results of natural or man made disasters or other endemic conditions such as human pain, disease, hunger, or privation that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property. Humanitarian assistance provided by US forces is limited in scope and duration. The assistance provided is designed to supplement or complement the efforts of the host nation civil authorities or agencies that may have the primary responsibility for providing humanitarian assistance.

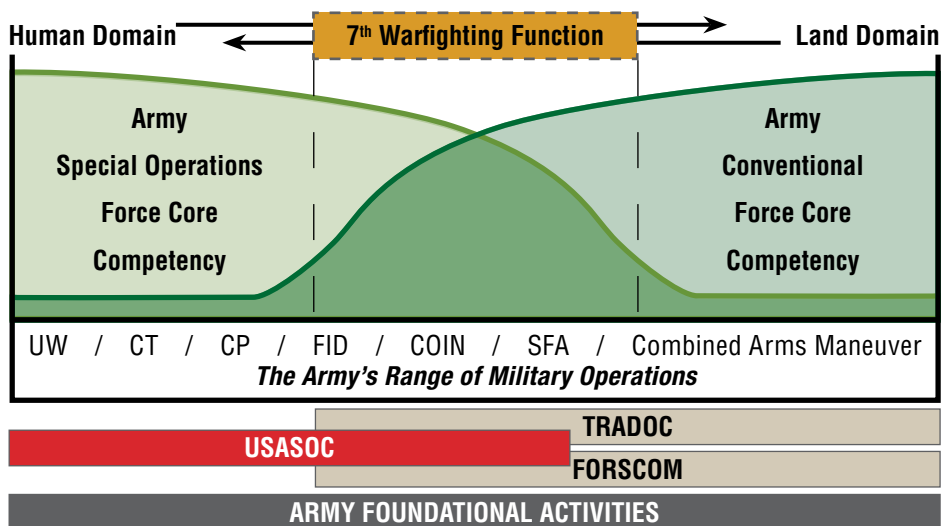
**9] Theater Search and Rescue:** Employment of specialized SOF aircraft and uniquely qualified SOF air crews for the rescue of personnel from enemy territory or denied areas whenever conventional combat search and rescue techniques and capabilities are inadequate.

**10] Activities Specified by the President or SECDEF**



**< USASOC generates the ARSOF critical capabilities of special warfare and surgical strike to conduct these special operations missions.**

**USASOC is the proponent for a segment of the U.S. Army's Range of Military Operations**



special warfare capability mitigates uncertainty by providing the nation a self-contained force that is designed to accomplish its mission through and with indigenous surrogates and partners. Special warfare Soldiers possess expertise in tactics, combat-adviser skills, military deception, sabotage and subversion, expertise in foreign language, relationship-building skills, cultural understanding, adaptive decision making and cognitive problem solving. This unique skill set is necessary to enhance survivability for our force over extended periods of time in hostile, austere and denied environments. Surgical strike reduces uncertainty through detailed analysis and pinpoint accuracy. Key knowledge, skills and attributes for employment of surgical strike include the execution of robust

intelligence fusion, leveraging high-tech collection systems, management of deliberate targeting cycles and the ability to discriminate and engage threat targets with minimal collateral damage.

In August 2012, the U.S. Army published Army Doctrinal Publication ADP 3-05, *Special Operations*. Although doctrine will evolve over time, the introduction of these terms in ADP 3-05 represents a maturation of special operations concepts. By describing special operations in these two different forms, USASOC's ability to generate, sustain and articulate ARSOF capabilities is enhanced. Further, this approach highlights the synergy possible through the combination of special warfare and surgical strike capabilities at the operational level.

# SPECIAL WARFARE

Since 1952, the term special warfare has been key to the conduct of special operations. At that time, the term described the conduct of unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency and Psychological Operations. In 1956, to reflect the evolution and focus of special operations, the PSYWAR Center, now the JFK Special Warfare Center and School, changed its name to the Special Warfare Center. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy made special operations the center of his strategic policy, naming the first Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for COIN, Special Activities and Special Warfare. Between 1952 and 1962, special warfare became the commonly accepted term to discuss UW, COIN and PSYWAR, although it was not codified into doctrine until the publication of ADP-3-05, *Special Operations* in 2012.



From the Office of Strategic Service's operational groups and the exploits of Filipino guerillas led by Russell Volckmann in World War II to the Montagnard Civilian Irregular Defense Groups of Vietnam to support to counterinsurgency operations in El Salvador, the United States has a rich history of special warfare.

More recently, our force led the U.S. overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in the days following 9/11 and have provided essential contributions to the successful efforts against violent extremists organizations in Colombia and the Philippines.

Special Warfare is that form of special operations in which the United States government defends its interests through training, material or even direct combat support to indigenous people and friendly governments whose interests coincide with those of the United States. Special Warfare includes foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare. Unconventional warfare became a mission for the U.S. Army in 1952 with the activation of the 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, N.C. A couple of years later, in response to the French defeat at Dien

Bien Phu, counterinsurgency and foreign internal defense were added to the Special Warfare mission set.

As with conventional warfare, the Army has developed special warfare maneuver units, whose mission includes closing with and destroying the enemy. These are the five active duty and two National Guard Special Forces Groups. Selected, trained and organized to work with indigenous forces, possessing area expertise and language proficiency, exceptional small-unit fighting skills and the ability to operate in uncertain or denied areas for extended periods, Special Forces units are designed to operate in complex and uncertain environments. Also essential to the conduct of Special Warfare are Civil Affairs and Military Information Support Operations units, particularly enabled by their capability to analyze, segment, and



ultimately influence populations in ways desired by the supported commanders. Each of these Special Warfare units (CA, MISO, SF) has an assigned area of responsibility that corresponds to their supported geographic combatant command.

Typically long in duration, special warfare campaigns are conducted in a temporal context that differs from many military activities and is most effectively conducted through a persistent forward presence. Once viewed as separate and isolated operations, the operating environment may change rapidly, resulting in what may begin as a foreign internal defense operation transitioning to a UW operation, or vice versa, as conditions change in the country due to time or disruptive events such as coups d'états. Therefore, it is important, and more accurate, to view FID, COIN and UW as a range of special warfare capabilities that are similar in that they cultivate relationships with partner forces and seek shared security interests.

The most critical gap in ARSOF special warfare capability exists in the UW mission set; our ability

to conduct UW in denied areas for extended periods of time. As the Department of Defense and U.S. Special Operations Command lead for UW, USASOC must focus on building such a capacity over the next decade. Over the next 10 years, USASOC will make a concerted effort to address this critical gap and others by rebalancing the force and developing an enhanced ARSOF capability to conduct special warfare in concert with joint and interagency partners. For many in our force and our Army, this will require a paradigm shift and an assessment of the historic role of SOF versus the more publicized role our force assumed over the past decade. The Soldiers in our special warfare units must recognize that their value lies not only in their lethality, but in the fact that they are trained, educated, led, equipped and organized in unique ways to meet the demands of an uncertain future. Our force will possess unparalleled special warfare capabilities that will enable them to support long-duration special operations campaigns in the most sensitive, austere and denied environments to achieve strategic U.S. objectives.

# SURGICAL STRIKE

World War II, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were military conflicts that resulted in major collateral damage to the areas in which the battles were waged as well as significant loss of life. As the Vietnam War wound down, international and American public opinion was outraged by widespread bombing campaigns that resulted in the loss of innocent lives. The “slash and burn” bombing campaigns of the first half of the century were outdated, and in its place, the Department of Defense introduced the term surgical strike in the first Gulf War to describe a new way of waging war that included “one bomb, one target,” which greatly limited collateral damage and loss of innocent lives. Today, ARSOF has honed that capability in order to act with precision against threats to our national security.



Throughout our nation’s history, Army special operations forces have conducted sensitive military-strike operations to achieve some of our most critical strategic objectives.

Our surgical strike capability has been forged from the daring exploits of the 1st Special Service Force and Ranger Battalions of World War II to the Son Tay Raid deep inside enemy territory in Vietnam. This legacy continues today with the relentless pursuit of our nation’s enemies across the globe.

The modern ARSOF surgical strike requirement was born from our experiences in Operation Eagle Claw in 1979. From this failed rescue attempt of U.S. hostages in Iran, the U.S. was determined to improve its capability to rapidly and surgically conduct sensitive, scalable and unilateral direct-action missions against adversaries anywhere in the world. The conduct of hostage rescue or other unilateral sensitive operations requires special airlift, intelligence and support assets that utilize cutting-edge technologies to ensure success. ARSOF surgical strike maneuver units include a

special mission unit, Special Forces Commander’s In-extremis Forces and the 75th Ranger Regiment.

Executed unilaterally or collaboratively, surgical strike extends operational reach and influence by engaging global targets discriminately and precisely. Strike operations are not always intended to be an isolated activity; they are executed to shape the operational environment or influence selected target audiences in support of larger strategic interests. Although the actual strike is short in duration, the comprehensive planning process and affiliated influence efforts frequently require interagency and host-nation partnerships to develop an understanding of the threat network and facilitate post-operation activities.

ARSOF possess a highly scalable and versatile suite of surgical strike capabilities, ranging from clandestine small-unit raids to overt, regimental-



sized forcible-entry operations. Our elements support enduring, decisive, counterterrorism requirements outside designated theaters of armed, active conflict and maintain a forward presence in order to support and/or conduct precise counterterrorism operations in politically sensitive environments. These operations are conducted with pinpoint precision and minimal collateral damage. Our force is uniquely designed to infiltrate austere, remote locations and rapidly mass combat power to seize, destroy, capture or recover designated targets and exfiltrate in a single period of darkness. The 75th Ranger Regiment has the ability to seize heavily defended airfields for a wide variety of purposes, including non-combatant evacuation operations, precious cargo transfers and establishing a lodgment for conventional or special operations forces.

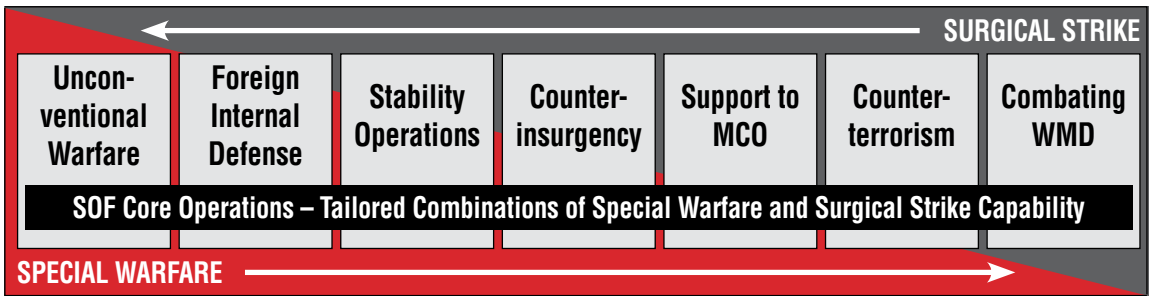
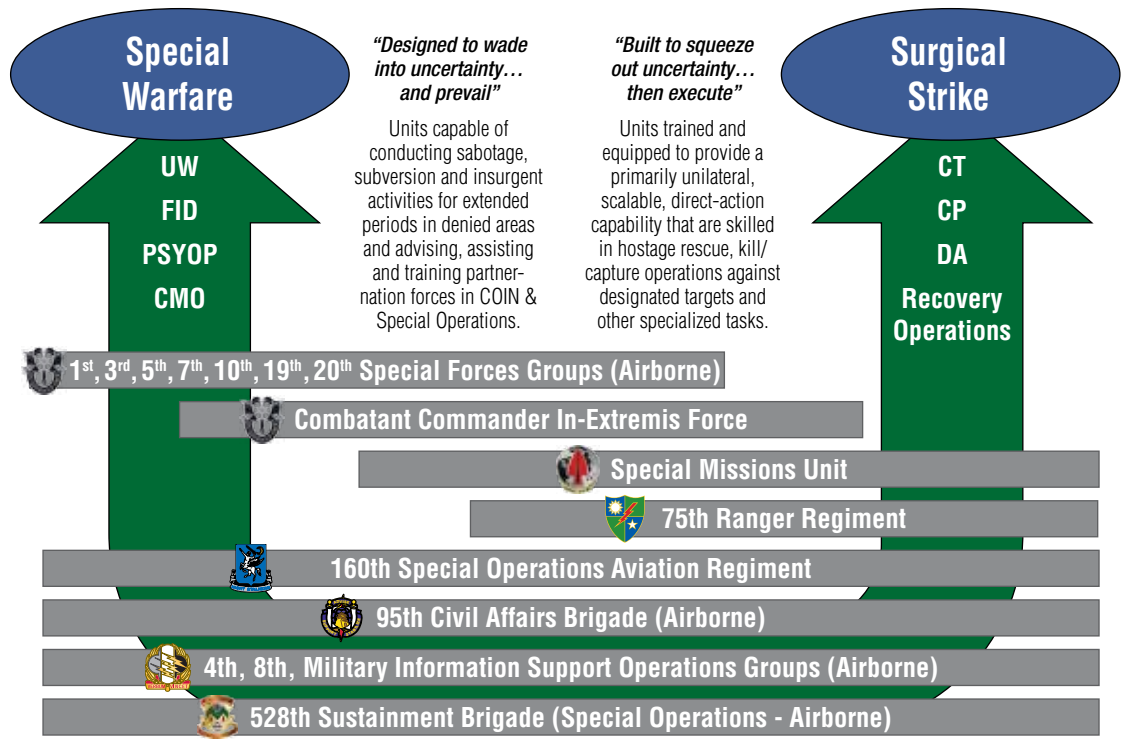
To enhance our surgical strike capability we must develop innovative means to increase organic ARSOF capability to conduct the find, fix, finish,

exploit, analyze and disseminate (F3EAD) targeting cycle regardless of the austerity or complexity of the environment. ARSOF must possess surgical strike capability across a wide spectrum of threats, ranging from sophisticated nation states with advanced anti-access, cyber and defensive capabilities to VEOs operating inside failed nation states. To meet this challenge, USASOC must maintain a robust research and development capability and aggressive experimentation process that continues to identify opportunities to enhance our partnerships and methodologies and leverage cutting-edge technology.

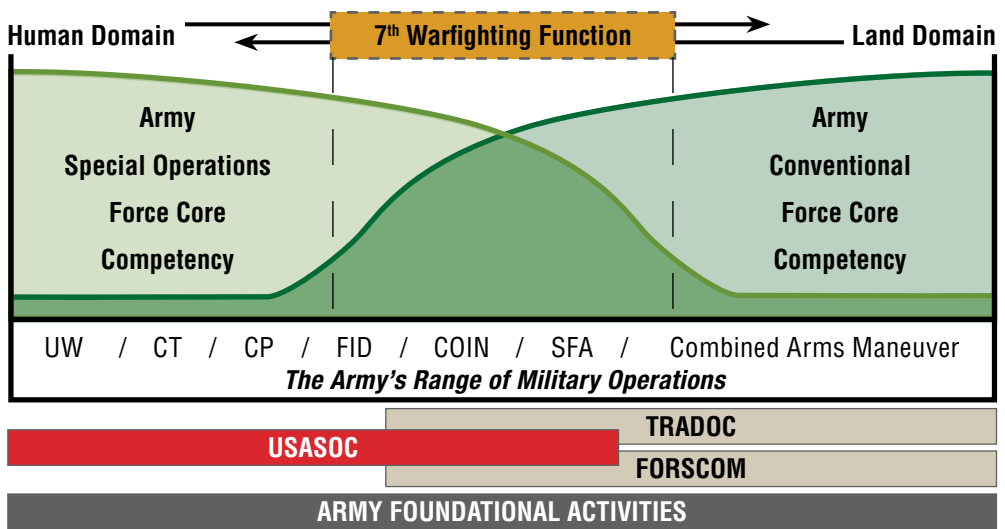
Over the next 10 years, ARSOF will continuously evolve to provide decision makers an ever-increasing range of sophisticated SOF strike options. ARSOF will remain a lethal and agile strike force, capable of projecting discreet, precise and scalable force, without notice, anywhere in the world.

**FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS FOR ARSOF >**

**USASOC generates two different but mutually supporting forms of special operations**



**USASOC is the proponent for a segment of the U.S. Army’s Range of Military Operations**





## ARSOF 2022 PRIORITIES >

### INVEST IN HUMAN CAPITAL

USASOC fields a diverse, regionally expert force with the world's best trained and educated special operations Soldiers capable of addressing uncertainty.

### OPTIMIZE SOF/CF/JIIM INTERDEPENDENCE

USASOC optimizes the force multiplying potential of partnership with the Army and interagency to provide the nation with seamless combat power.

### OPERATIONALIZE THE CONUS BASE

Regionally expert forces provide continuous, proactive and responsive support to forward deployed forces.

### DEVELOP SOF CAPABILITIES AT OPERATIONAL LEVEL

USASOC forces provide expertise to enable operational-level headquarters in their effort to tie tactical capabilities to regional or national strategies.

### FACILITATE SOF MISSION COMMAND

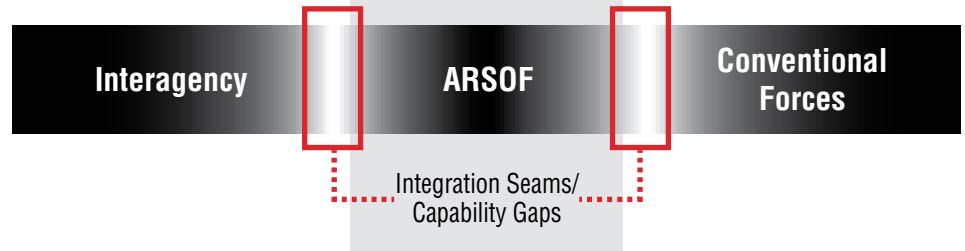
ARSOF have developed and validated flexible, scalable and responsive distributed command and control structures.

### OPTIMIZE RESOURCING AND COMMODITY AREAS

USASOC will rebalance its portfolio while getting better, not bigger.

## ARSOF 2022 USASOC Commander's Vision

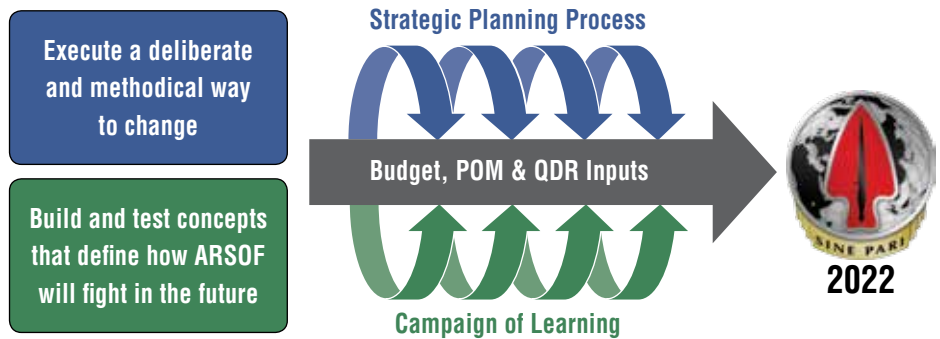
Provide our nation the world's premier special operations units, capable of prosecuting the most sensitive special warfare campaigns and executing the most difficult surgical strike operations, while providing seamless and persistent special operations support to joint-force commanders worldwide.



### Commander's Intent

USASOC matures the Army SOF profession, addresses capability gaps and improves integration at the 'seams' to better enable seamless application of combat power across the spectrum of responsibility.

## FUTURE FORCE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



USASOC develops the future force through mutually supporting processes that are fully integrated into broader Army and USSOCOM processes.



### SOF CAMPAIGN OF LEARNING

- >> Develop ARSOF concepts, validate through robust experimentation
- >> Inform CBA and POM processes
- >> Integrate with Army and USSOCOM
- >> Execute workshops, seminars and other learning events
- >> Link science & technology efforts
- >> Partner with industry & academia

### STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

- >> Provide operational focus and prioritize required capabilities
- >> Identify gaps and mitigation strategies, balance portfolios and S&T investment opportunities
- >> Integrate and allocate resourcing guidance to put capabilities in the hands of the operator

## ARSOF 2022 PRIORITIES

In order to focus our efforts over the next decade, we have prioritized our requirements into six categories, which are the enabling concepts that will allow us to direct and shape the future development of the force:

1. Invest in Human Capital
2. Optimize SOF/Conventional Force/JIIM Interdependence
3. Operationalize the CONUS base
4. Develop SOF Capabilities at the operational level
5. Facilitate SOF Mission Command
6. Optimize Resourcing and Commodity Areas

In the following pages, each of these enabling concepts is described in greater detail, including a brief description of their challenges, vision and possible solutions in the near, mid and far-term.

### 1. INVEST IN HUMAN CAPITAL

**Our force is the best educated, trained and equipped special operations formation in the world. Our Soldiers are capable of succeeding in the increasing uncertainty of the 21st century battlefield.**

The ARSOF Soldier is our center of gravity. To ensure that our operators will succeed in the future operating environment, we will recruit, assess, select, train, educate and retain only those Soldiers with the knowledge, skills and attributes to thrive in the most demanding conditions. To retain a decisive advantage over our adversaries, we will seek a variety of solutions to optimize our human capital, including: enhanced education and training and increased diversity of human capital. To ensure the health of our force, our focus will continue to be on the preservation of our force and their families.

#### 1A. ENHANCED EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**CHALLENGE:** Success in the future operating environment places a premium on the mastery of problem solving and highly specialized technical skills; for the special warfare units this includes foreign language and cultural expertise.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will be the most well-educated and well-trained force within the Department of Defense.

#### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

##### SHORT-TERM

- » Activate the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School's Special Warfare Education Group (Airborne) as a centrally selected O6 command (FY13).
- » Identify SOF assignments that require Defense Language Institute or other advanced language training.
- » Send selected Soldiers to the Defense Language Institute for training en route to assignments and TDY.
- » Formalize and resource the SOF lifelong-learning model, including expansion of SWCS's education initiatives to enable Soldiers to obtain an associate's degree through its qualification courses and to provide opportunities for Soldiers to earn bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees. (Prioritize ARSOF Education Program in FY 15-19 POM.)
- » Broaden the range of special operations aviation-related individual training and education including unmanned-aerial systems.
- » Develop a SWCS SOF Sustainment curriculum and doctrine for sustainment professionals assigned to USASOC.
- » Develop required training and education programs to improve asymmetric and unconventional-warfare capabilities.
- » Improve cross-command recruitment and assignments.

##### MID-TERM

- » Implement innovative approaches to language and cultural-immersion education.
- » Codify and resource SOF doctorate requirements in key/influential positions across the Department of Defense and throughout the U.S. Government.
- » Develop a UW Capabilities Manager who supports SWCS's role as the U.S. Army Special Operations Center of Excellence and USASOC's role as the DoD lead for UW, including a comprehensive program of UW education, doctrine and leader development.

- » Establish a SWCS-enhanced UW operator training program and expand the content of UW curriculum in the ARSOF qualification courses and Army Professional Military Education.
- » Develop a Special Actions Program Manager at SWCS to support SWCS's role as the U.S. Army Special Operations Center of Excellence and USASOC's role as the DoD lead for ASO, including a comprehensive program of ASO, PE and Special Activities education, doctrine and leader development.
- » Develop advanced Military Information Support Operations education and training.
- » Implement regional and in-country resident language programs.
- » Implement overseas internships with industry for selected SOF operators and special operations intelligence personnel.
- » Implement a Joint/Interagency SOF Sustainment Course in conjunction with the Joint Special Operations University, which prepares mid-career ARSOF sustainment professionals to provide support to SOF operations.
- » Develop and promulgate U.S. Army and SOCOM personnel policies that promote the development of SOF operators with the expertise required to execute clandestine UW operations.
- » Develop SOF capabilities at the operational level and educate a cadre of SOF campaign planners.
- » Create and implement a Military Government (38G) Area of Concern within the Army.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Consolidate selection and assessment courses across the force.

## 1B. INCREASED ADVANTAGE THROUGH HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

**CHALLENGE:** The wide array of knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for success in the future operating environment requires USASOC to expand the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the force.

**2022 VISION:** USASOC units will represent and capitalize on the nation's broad range of ethnic and cultural composition in order to enhance ARSOF capability to succeed in the Human Domain.

#### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

##### SHORT-TERM

- » Actively recruit the widest ethnic and cultural range of U.S. citizens, including first-generation Americans with innate foreign-language capability and cultural knowledge.
- » Expand the Military Accessions Vital to National Interest program with a focused effort to improve recruitment of foreign-born U.S. residents into ARSOF special warfare units.
- » Continue to execute Cultural Support Team training to meet joint-operational requirements.
- » Develop a collaborative system that encourages and facilitates cross-command identification assessment, selection, training and retention of ethnically and culturally diverse personnel within USASOC formations.
- » Develop innovative ways to expand the pool of ARSOF candidates.
- » Support U.S. Army and SOCOM initiatives to expand service opportunities for women.
- » Explore concepts to enhance female support to SOF operations.

##### MID-TERM

- » Explore recruitment and assessment strategies to increase the number of personnel who enter the ARSOF qualification courses with foreign-language proficiency above the 1/1 level.
- » Build a core of 3/3 and native foreign-language speakers in all critical languages and dialects.
- » Recruit 25 percent of special warfare operators from target populations.
- » Implement policies and authorities for recruitment of civil-sector experts to conduct civil-military operations and enhance stability operations.

##### LONG-TERM

- » ARSOF possess a diverse range of low-visibility, culturally astute means to access populations and operate in denied areas regardless of the nature of the human population.
- » ARSOF and U.S. allies have capabilities required to conduct nuanced and effective inform and influence activities and cyber-electromagnetic activities in targeted regions.
- » Maximize career opportunities for special operators between USASOC maneuver units.

**“If you know your enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”**

— Sun Tzu

**“We cannot win the current fight without preserving the force and its families.”**

—Adm. William H. McRaven,  
Commander, USSOCOM

## 1G. PRESERVATION OF THE FORCE AND FAMILIES

**CHALLENGE:** The challenging nature of special operations, including repeated overseas deployments in austere conditions, places an extraordinary demand on the physical, emotional and spiritual well being of ARSOF Soldiers and their families. ARSOF operational tempo is expected to remain at high-levels for the next decade.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF Soldiers and families will understand that they are the number one priority to sustaining a vital and capable force. It is imperative that our force knows that they have access to any and all programs that contribute to the health of their families. Behavioral health is a necessary and integral aspect of overall Soldier fitness. The ARSOF community will be aware of and encouraged to utilize behavioral health services for operators and families in the same way that Tactical Human Optimization Rapid Rehabilitation Reconditioning, or THOR3, enables physical health and recovery. The high demands that SOF operations place on Soldiers and families are effectively mitigated with a healthy incorporation of preventative maintenance in the same way that prevention is the preferred method to counter physical injury.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Continue to invest in programs including the THOR3 Program, Strong Bonds, Gold Star Family Program, Operator Resiliency Program and Unit Ministry Programs.

#### MID-TERM

- » Develop DOTMLPF solutions to institutionalize ARSOF Human Performance Optimization, including improvement and management of: USASOC THOR3 Program, Special Operations Center for Enhanced Performance, Human Dynamics and Operator Resiliency Programs.
- » Ensure relationships/programs are in place to react immediately to negative stressors on SOF families.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Lead the Army in innovative, proactive programs that offset the demanding and sometimes harmful effects of sustained SOF operations.

## 2. OPTIMIZE SOF/CF/JIIM INTERDEPENDENCE

**USASOC optimizes the force multiplying potential of partnerships with the Army and interagency to provide the nation with seamless combat power.**

**CHALLENGE:** ARSOF must bridge the critical seams of SOF-Conventional Force and SOF-Interagency relationships to effectively contribute to unified action in the 21st century by partnering with the Army to meet its Title 10 collective training responsibilities. We must facilitate the interdependence of SOF, the interagency and conventional forces in support of unified action and unified land operations through the Mission Command Training Program.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will create an integrated training environment to improve USASOC's ability to provide trained and ready operational-level SOF to ground combatant commanders worldwide, while promoting increased SOF/CF interdependence.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Nest the efforts of SOF and Army regionally-aligned forces and SOF and the interagency.
- » Embed SOF doctrine in all Army Professional Military Education.
- » Reestablish the Military Assistance Training Advisor Course and reconsider the reestablishment of the Institute of Military Assistance at SWCS.
- » Develop/implement concepts to increase 75th Ranger Regiment inclusion in TSOC plans, exercises and operations.
- » Partner with U.S. Army, Marine Corps and SOCOM in the establishment of a Strategic Landpower Task Force that explores and develops means to increase U.S. strategic landpower.
- » Develop a concept, in partnership with Combined Arms Center-Training, for a new Mission Command Training Program Operations Group to design and execute integrated operational level collective training for Joint SOF Operational elements

#### MID-TERM

- » Partner with the Army to explore the consolidation of the Army's Active and Reserve Military Information Support Operations and Civil Affairs forces under a single multicomponent command.

- » Expand institutional support to JIIM relationships.
- » Mature SWCS's role as the U.S. Army Special Operations Center of Excellence as the advocate for all aspects of ARSOF capabilities (special warfare and surgical strike)
- » Leverage Army and joint theater-logistics capabilities.
- » Establish the Institute for Military Support to Governance to strengthen partnerships with interagency and further leverage the other '5th Forces Providers' such as academia, non-governmental organizations and civil enterprises.
- » As a part of MCTP establish an operations group that facilitates the collective training requirements of ARSOF.
- » Explore assignment of the Army's Information Operations capability to MISOC.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Facilitate the blending of capabilities between the Department of Defense and the interagency into one uninterrupted spectrum of options for U.S. policy makers, while acting as the Army lead for SOF/CF interdependence.

### 3. OPERATIONALIZE THE CONUS BASE

**Regionally expert forces provide continuous, proactive support to forward deployed forces.**

**CHALLENGE:** There is an under utilized operational capacity in CONUS-based regionally expert forces. This capacity is vital to mission success and cannot remain untapped. By establishing mechanisms and leveraging technology, we can harness CONUS-based capacity to better support OCONUS deployed forces. Like Artillery in major combat operations, regionally expert forces should not be "left in reserve" in the conduct of special operations.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will be capable of providing regional expertise to the TSOCs from CONUS-based regionally expert forces. By physically and virtually synchronizing the capacity of regional experts from across the U.S. government, academia and industry, ARSOF will leverage the nation's CONUS-based regional expertise for continuous support to global special operations mission requirements.

#### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

##### SHORT-TERM

- » Develop the capability of the Military Information Support Operations Command to synchronize the U.S. government's global MISO efforts, providing an influence. This capability is realized through the establishment of the MISOC Effects Group and the UW Social Theory Academy.
- » Develop the capability of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade CONUS-based headquarters to leverage the U.S. government's civil-sector expertise through the establishment of the Civil Military Advisory Group with global CMOC capability.
- » Conduct experimentation to determine the optimal balance of forward- and CONUS-based forces.
- » Develop CONUS-based capability to provide enhanced UW capability to TSOCs including tailored packages to habitually and routinely support GCCs and interagency special activities requirements.

##### MID-TERM

- » Develop CONUS-based capability to enhance partner-nation rotary-wing capability (ARSOAC).
- » Develop CONUS-based capability to develop partner-nation SOF doctrine, training and education institutions (SWCS).
- » Man and resource the MEG and UWSTA appropriately as stand-alone organizations under the MISOC. Enable the MEG to integrate and synchronize the expected long-duration, whole-of-government influence efforts in support of GCCs objectives. UWSTA continues research, theory development and testing and policy formulation for the use of the Internet, social media and emergent means of singular and mass communication technologies and capabilities.

##### LONG-TERM

- » Explore the development of CONUS-based force packages that can be deployed as tailorable Special Warfare Task Forces and capability to execute support to national-level influence strategy operations.

**“Like Artillery in Combined Arms maneuver, regionally expert forces should never be in reserve — even in CONUS, they need to continue to support the fight.”**

—Lt. Gen. Charles T. Cleveland,  
Commander, USASOC

**“People sleep  
peaceable  
in their beds  
at night only  
because rough  
men stand  
ready to do  
violence on  
their behalf.”**

—George Orwell

## 4. DEVELOP SOF CAPABILITIES AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

**CHALLENGE:** SOF must improve its capability to design and plan long-duration, low-visibility, SOF-centric contributions to campaigns that bridge tactical SOF capability to strategic objectives.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF capability will be seamlessly integrated into campaign plans and routinely leveraged to achieve campaign goals.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Implement a Special Operations Campaign Planners curriculum at SWCS to educate selected officers to effectively integrate SOF capability into campaign plans.
- » Establish a Special Operations Campaign, Design and Theory Office at SWCS, which will partner with School of Advanced Military Studies and other advanced schools for military operational art.

#### MID-TERM

- » Assign ARSOF Operational Artists to Joint, Army and SOF operational headquarters, including TSOCs, in order to enhance the campaign-planning capability.
- » Enhance ARSOF Liaison Elements in direct support of each TSOC by the realignment of sustainment planners who ensure Army Service Component Commands fulfillment of ARSOF requirements in low-signature campaigns and named operations.
- » Develop and Assign operational-level CMO/stability operations planners at TSOCs.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Foster the development of ARSOF operational and strategic planners with the requisite experience and education to contribute in positions of increasing influence in Joint, Army, Interagency and SOF operational headquarters.

## 5. FACILITATE SOF MISSION COMMAND

**CHALLENGE:** The greatest single challenge facing SOF today is outdated command and control structures. Over the last decade, there have been numerous and diverse efforts to address this critical gap. This includes the establishment of hybrid C2 nodes, such as TSOCs-Forward in Yemen, Lebanon and Pakistan and Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines, JSOTF-Trans-Sahel and JSOTF-Caribbean Central America. Ad hoc in nature and insufficiently resourced, these efforts have yielded disparate effects, resulting in missed opportunities to effectively integrate SOF capabilities. In addition, some national security challenges increasingly require SOF-centric solutions that require unique combinations of SOF/CF capability and SOF operational level mission command.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will possess a wide array of scalable and deployable C2 nodes, capable of projecting SOF mission command in the most austere and politically sensitive environments, with the requisite level of expertise, experience and architecture to plan, integrate and synchronize SOF operations and SOF campaigns at any echelon of joint command, in an interagency country-team environment or with partnered indigenous forces of any size, including SOF operational headquarters above the TSOC level that are designed to conduct SOF-centric campaigns.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Conduct a thorough review of our existing organizations, formations and mission-command paradigms, all the way down to the detachment level.
- » Conduct experimentation with alternative forms of SOF C2 nodes.
- » Develop tailored packages to provide a mission command plug to TSOCs for the conduct of special activities including advanced special operations, military source operations and unconventional warfare.

## MID-TERM

- » Explore hybrid SOF-conventional force command structures that build on legacy efforts, such as the 1960s-era Special Action Forces, which will leverage the inherent strengths of SOF and CF formations.
- » Experiment with operational- and divisional-level headquarters for the conduct of special warfare to include a Joint Special Warfare Command capable of conducting global SW missions in support of TSOC and national objectives.
- » Develop an agile mechanism to routinely reassign units and personnel within USASOC to build hybrid teams comprised of special warfare and surgical strike capabilities to meet global mission requirements.
- » Enable Army Special Operations Aviation forces to execute mission command of joint capabilities in support of ground forces.

## LONG-TERM

- » Experiment with hybrid (SOF/CF) corps-level headquarters with organic interagency and intergovernmental plug-ins designed to conduct COIN, humanitarian assistance, FID and limited combined arms maneuver.
- » Develop an integrated ARSOF architecture that incorporates, analyzes and displays a common operating picture from SF, CA, PSYOP, etc.



## 6. OPTIMIZE RESOURCING AND COMMODITY AREAS

**OVERVIEW:** The current resource allocation reflects a significant commitment to the U.S. Central Command combat theaters. While national policy and SOF requirements regarding Afghanistan will solidify in the coming months, we anticipate that we must begin to realign resources in FY15 in order to better meet our global-mission requirements. Our forces must be equipped to operate in any environment in the world for extended periods in a low-visibility and clandestine fashion. Instead of taking a one-size-fits-all approach, we must equip our formations to meet the specific needs of their assigned missions and area of operations, especially our regionally aligned special warfare units. We should embrace an approach to resourcing that is highly agile and encourages our regionally aligned forces to be as varied and unique as their areas of operations and missions require, including leveraging COTS solutions and improved mechanisms to locally procure equipment that is indigenous to the area of operations.

### 6A. MOBILITY SYSTEMS

**CHALLENGE:** The ARSOF mobility fleet is not properly balanced to meet SOF global-mission requirements, including over investment in expensive to maintain and unwieldy platforms such as MRAPs and GMVs.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will possess a wide range of mobility platforms that are able to penetrate denied areas clandestinely by air, sea or land, including the use of stealth technologies. These platforms are designed to allow the force to operate for extended periods of time in denied areas.

#### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

##### SHORT-TERM

- » Field the commercially available four-seat variant of the Lightweight Tactical All-Terrain Vehicle.
- » Improve management of individual vehicles such as ATVs, snowmobiles and motorcycles to provide more agility to meet specific mission requirements.
- » Consolidate aerial-delivery capability within sustainment mission command in order to provide robust delivery options in limited-access environments.
- » Invest in non-standard commercial vehicles that provide a low-visibility and survivable platform that is sustainable in austere environments around the world through locally available parts and service.

##### MID-TERM

- » Replace the legacy GMV fleet one for one with the GMV 1.1, which will offer greater mobility and internal air transportability via CH-47. The GMV 1.1 is scheduled for incorporation into the operational fleet FY15.
- » Utilize a pooling strategy to maintain a wartime contingency fleet of MATVs utilizing Army sustainment and storage.

##### LONG-TERM

- » Leverage new science and technology initiatives including but not limited to lightweight armor, stealth technology, unmanned capabilities and decreased fuel consumption with added range.
- » Field Regional MISO Task Forces capable of leading and executing high-end UW and other politically sensitive missions.



## 6B. AVIATION

**CHALLENGE:** Maintain pace in modernization of platforms and force structure to provide comparative advantage to execute precision aviation missions in the future operating environment.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will possess a fully functional SOF Aviation Enterprise that synchronizes efforts to generate the world's premier special operations aviation capability.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

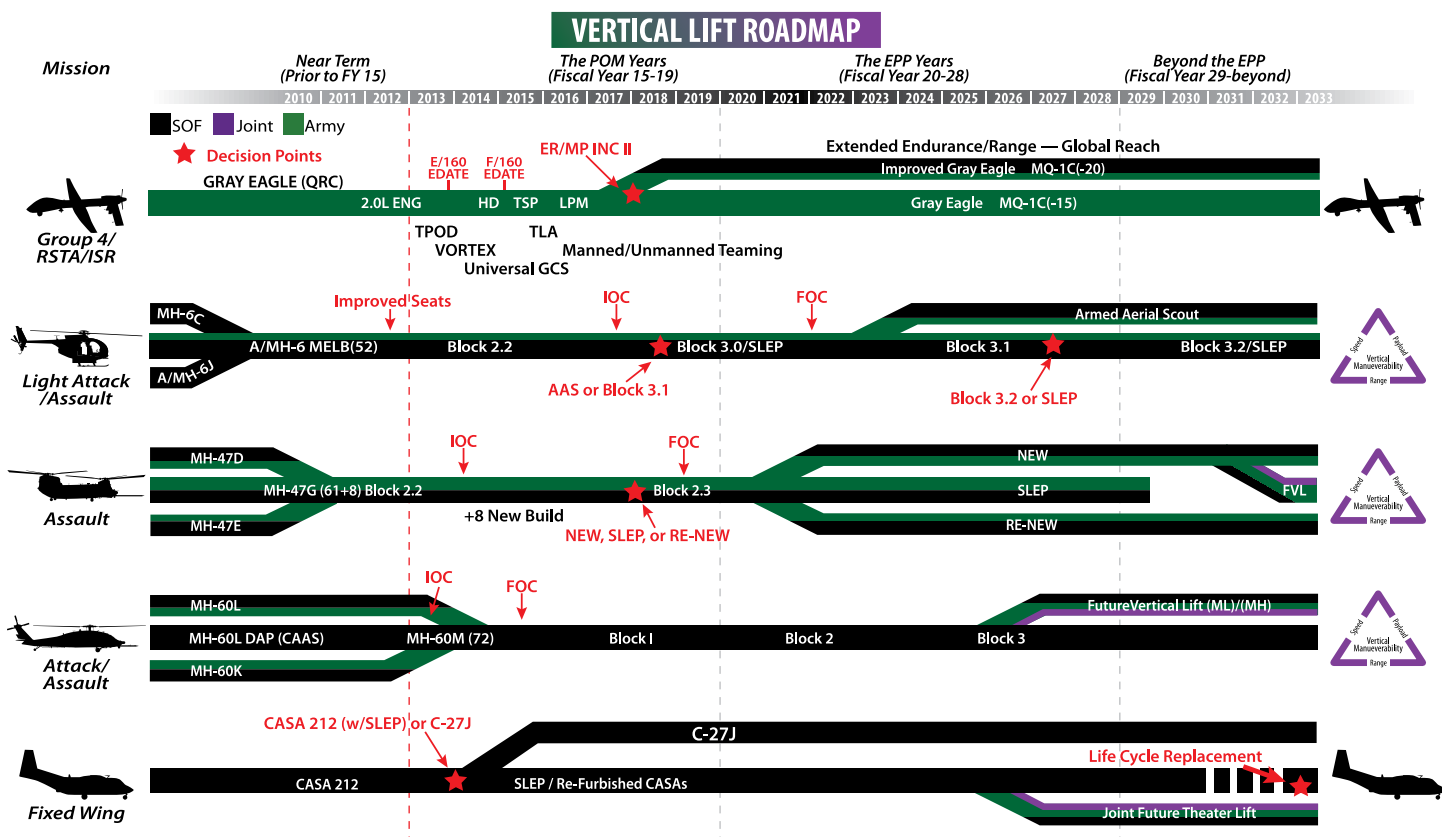
- » Field approved modernization for the mission-enhanced Little Birds.
- » Field approved modernization of MH-60M Blackhawks.
- » Improve Army unmanned aerial-system programs of record (Raven, Shadow and Gray Eagle) to meet joint expeditionary tactics, techniques, procedures, forward-based networking and sensor requirements.
- » Retain flexibility within the acquisition process to explore potential non-program of record solutions to support ground-force reconnaissance and fires requirements.

#### MID-TERM

- » Evaluate operational and maintenance costs in the Heavy Assault (MH-47G) fleet, which has been the preferred platform of SOF operators. Ensure these high-demand, low-density aircraft meet SOF requirements through the 2030s.
- » Research replacement options for MELB that will extend the capabilities required by Joint SOF customers.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Develop SOF Mission Equipment Packages to ensure ARSOF aviation maintains an advantage in command and control, survivability, navigation and targeting.





## 6C. TARGET ENGAGEMENT

**CHALLENGE:** Many problems in the future will require a different set of lethal and non-lethal options with varying levels of discrimination, feasibility and acceptance.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will leverage emerging technology to continue to develop innovative, low-visibility means and when required, non-attributable materiel solutions, that enable new means for ARSOF to discriminately engage the most sensitive targets around the globe.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Field visual augmentation systems (PVS-31), weapons systems and munitions that are critical to the success of ARSOF in ongoing combat operations.
- » Focus USASOC research, development, test and evaluation on innovative solutions and maximize the utility of other advancements made throughout the Department of Defense and the interagency.
- » Collaborate with SOCOM, Naval Post Graduate School and the Defense Intelligence Agency on development of social-media mapping capabilities.

#### MID-TERM

- » Continue investments in RDT&E in advanced digital multi-spectral night-vision goggles with color, thermal and wide-field-of view capability and precision sniper rifle.
- » Employ initial social-media mapping capabilities that enable predictive behavioral analyses and both precision and mass-target engagement in support of special warfare and surgical strike via non-attributable or delayed attribution mean.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Rebalance the target-engagement portfolio including a wide array of scalable, precision lethal- and nonlethal-weapons systems and munitions that better enable the SOF operator to conduct all aspects of unconventional warfare.

## 6D. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTERS

**CHALLENGE:** Technological advances and operational paradigms continue to drive increased requirements for secure and non-secure, real-time communications leveraging multimodal, cloud-based mesh-network technology.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will be equipped with innovative systems that provide low-visibility, reliable, secure and seamless video, data, imagery and voice services that provide integrated, on the move, timely and relevant information to enable SOF C2 in any environment with any echelon of joint command or partner force.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Build agility into existing systems to better facilitate distributed SOF C2, including real-time secure and non-secure communications that enables SOF tactical formations to communicate with GCCs and TSOC headquarters.

#### MID-TERM

- » Increase forward presence of 528th Sustainment Brigade (SO) (A) signal detachments in each TSOC in order to provide satellite on the move, individual high-definition video and enhanced executive communications support.
- » Utilize a versatile combination of COTS and joint systems.
- » Develop a wide variety of technologies characterized by their simplicity, durability and disposability.
- » Develop an enhanced capability for multiple secure communications via satellite, wireless and WiFi systems for irregular forces, including long range communications to support widely distributed operations.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Develop interoperable, scalable and tailorable net-centric information infrastructures that support flexible information sharing across organizations and cultures, including instantaneous reach back to government and non-government sources of cultural and other expertise.

“One need not destroy one’s enemy. One need only destroy his willingness to fight.”

—Sun Tzu

**“The leaner Army, seasoned by a decade of war, will bring added emphasis to cyber security and special operations.”**

—Gen. Ray Odierno, Chief of Staff, United States Army

## 6E. SOLDIER SYSTEMS

**CHALLENGE:** Over the last 10 years, ARSOF have focused Soldier system program investments in combat survivability, including body armor and other personal protective equipment. The future operating environment requires non-overt, clandestine, scalable Soldier systems.

**2022 VISION:** The ARSOF operator will be equipped to infiltrate, operate and survive in denied areas for extended duration in a low-visibility fashion, with a minimal burden of equipment bulk, weight and mass.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Rebalance the Soldier-systems portfolio toward operations outside major combat theaters, including increasing anti-access/area-denial capability with the introduction of the high-glide canopy.
- » Develop a wide variety of technologies characterized by their simplicity, durability and disposability.

#### MID-TERM

- » Increase aerial-delivery capability, including low-visibility equipment.
- » Develop means to defeat advanced biometric identification/verification technologies.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Leverage existing technology such as freeze-dried plasma and emerging technology such as signature management/reduction technology to better enable the SOF operator in any environment.
- » Increase organic medical capability including the establishment of deployable, scalable surgical teams modeled after the Joint Medical Augmentation Unit.

## 6F. CYBER OPERATIONS

**CHALLENGE:** Mastery of the Cyber Domain will require Army Special Operations to have training in cyber operations, knowledge of supporting systems and organizations and the ability to utilize cyberspace to enable operations while mitigating the inherent security risks.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF personnel will be prepared to utilize the Cyber Domain to enhance operations both with internal means and external support.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Formalize cyber synchronization, manning, training and capability development across USASOC echelons and units.
- » Coordinate with SOCOM and Army Cyber Command to ensure ARSOF-unique cyber requirements are included in emerging doctrine, manning and capabilities development.
- » Establish support relationships to enable ARSOF formations with expertise and means.

#### MID-TERM

- » Identify and certify ARSOF personnel through cyber training and education from previously established external organizations.
- » Introduce cyber experts into ARSOF organizations to enable operations.
- » Establish support structures that facilitate operations between the lowest level through combatant command and national organizations.
- » Nest ARSOF requirements and Title 10 responsibilities for cyber within all service and joint governing documents and regulations.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Normalize cyber operations as part of operational planning, experimentation and operations.
- » Train and certify ARSOF personnel in appropriate cyber skills as part of their MOS initial training.

## 6G. MISO SYSTEMS

**CHALLENGE:** Proliferation of smart phones, mobile devices and social media present unprecedented opportunities for both adversary and U.S. MISO efforts.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF will be the strategic nexus for all Department of Defense influence activities and recognized as the partner of choice for influence campaigns.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Develop and implement training and education in military deception, SLE and other advanced MISO skills to develop master MISO practitioners.
- » Develop innovative tactics, techniques and procedures for use of social media and other tools to influence foreign target audiences in support of special warfare and surgical strike efforts.

#### MID-TERM

- » Develop innovative methods of subversion to support enhanced ARSOF UW capability.
- » Invest in high-end communication and influence practices and technologies, including establishment of the Social Theory Academy at SWCS.
- » Reinvigorate the Cultural Intelligence Element including subject-matter experts in marketing, persuasive and traditional communication, use of social media and other cyber-based tools.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Explore next generation ground-based and flyaway broadcast systems, social media and leaflet delivery system.
- » Increase advanced technology and tools and substantially increase intelligence support, executing mass and precision influence missions in all environments.

## 6H. INTELLIGENCE SENSORS AND SYSTEMS

**CHALLENGE:** Intelligence systems are currently weighted to support current combat operations, enemy-focused collection and kinetic targeting.

**2022 VISION:** ARSOF tactical elements will have an unprecedented level of organic and tactical exploitation of national capability, regardless of the austerity or sensitivity of their environments.

### POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

#### SHORT-TERM

- » Invest in technical-collection systems, identity-operations systems and intelligence support systems.

#### MID-TERM

- » Explore emerging technologies to enhance ARSOF organic F3EAD capability.
- » Develop capabilities focused on providing enhanced cultural intelligence to globally deployed SOF, both in real time and leveraging reach back to CONUS expertise, including Department of Defense, U.S. government agencies and academia.

#### LONG-TERM

- » Enable SOF to tactically exploit national intelligence capacities including space-related technologies, better clandestine tagging, tracking and locating, cyber and social-media capabilities.



“MILCON is a long-duration, sustained effort over time, to provide the finest, modernized facilities to support our forces...”



## 6I. MILITARY CONSTRUCTION

**CHALLENGE:** Currently our nation's premier special operations units are housed in a variety of facilities ranging from dilapidated World War II-era structures and temporary modular facilities to 30-year-old legacy facilities. Some units are just now starting to see the benefits of the robust SOCOM MILCON investment program, which began in 2008. At the current rate of MILCON investment, existing USASOC facilities requirements will not be built until 2028.

**2022 VISION:** USASOC will continue to modernize our infrastructure, including sustained investment in the institutional force to realize the SWCS Campus vision and provide world-class facilities for our operational units that fully support the mission requirements and capabilities of ARSOF 2022, with a vision to build to the same standards as the new 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) facilities in Florida.

**POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:** MILCON is a long-duration, sustained effort over time, to provide the finest, modernized facilities to support our forces including unique ISR, mobility, training and operational requirements. We will synchronize our facility modernization efforts with ARSOF 2022 rebalancing and restructuring efforts within existing resourcing levels without deferring the replacement of sub-standard existing facilities

### SHORT-TERM

- » Conduct holistic review of current MILCON program to ensure as we move forward we are meeting ARSOF 2022 priorities and capitalizing on opportunities to share common support and maintenance facilities.
- » Assess current facilities, with an emphasis on barracks, to ensure sustainment, restoration and modernization requirements are included in all ARSOF Installation Annual Work Plans.
- » Complete hangar facilities for Grey Eagle Fielding.

### MID-TERM

- » Conduct facility compatibility studies to ensure existing and programmed facilities are adequate and optimized to meet mission requirements.
- » Improve our ability to compete for Army P2 funding and develop a facilities recapitalization strategy to anticipate future resourcing requirements and compete in the MILCON POM process.
- » Develop engineering master plan to facilitate generating and operational force requirements across the USASOC Aviation Enterprise.

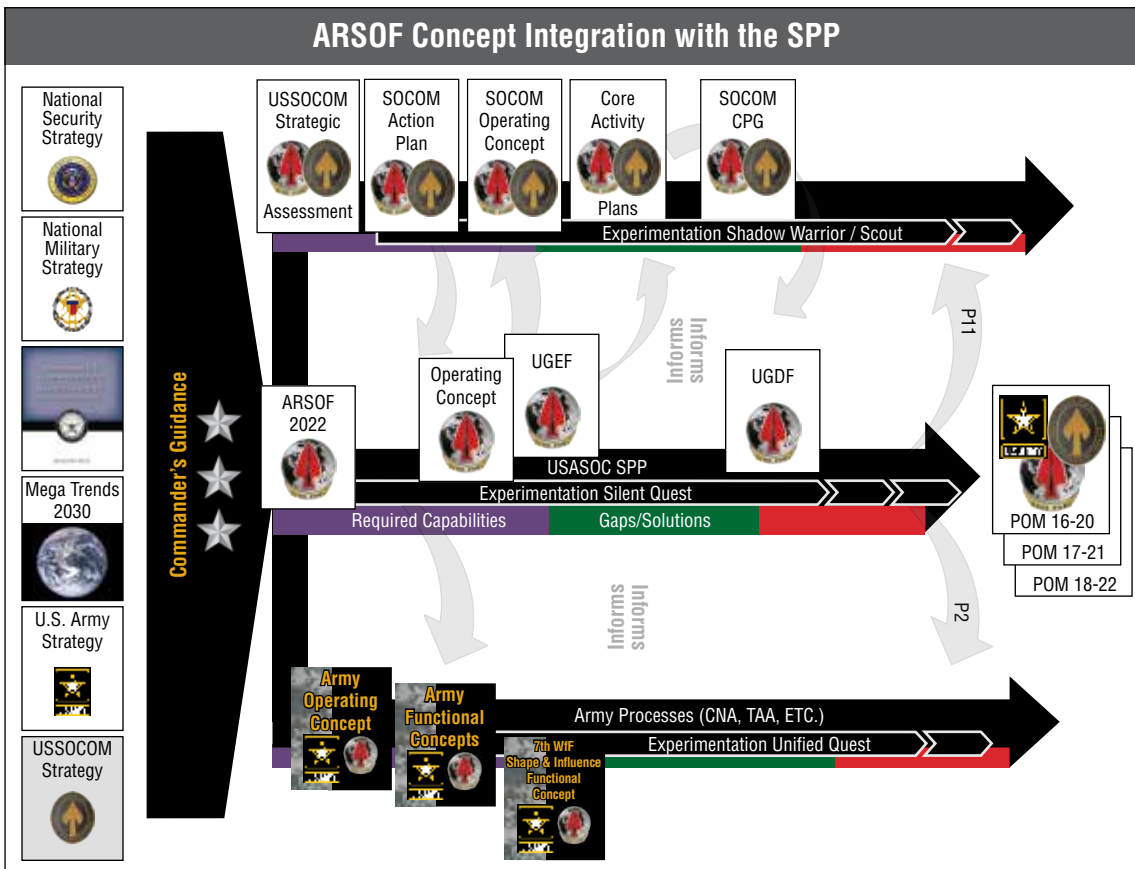
### LONG-TERM

- » Modernize existing facilities to meet evolving equipment, power and C2 requirements.
- » Develop, in partnership with SOCOM, a long-range, steady-state funding profile for MILCON.



**ARSOF 2022** articulates the USASOC commander's vision to provide the nation an unprecedented range of SOF capability and strategic options. It is an ambitious articulation of the commander's transformational roadmap over the next 10 years.

The USASOC Strategic Planning Process will implement this guidance and translate it into action. It will inform ARSOF Operating Concepts that influence and are further developed in conjunction with the USASOC and U.S. Army Resourcing and Planning Documents. The SPP develops a capabilities-based, mission-focused plan to inform effective resource allocation and an investment strategy across the enterprise.



“This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins — war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of combat; by infiltration instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It requires — in those situations where we must encounter it — a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore, a new and wholly different kind of military training.”

— President John F. Kennedy, 1962



## EXPERIMENTATION/ CAMPAIGN OF LEARNING

### THE ROLE OF EXPERIMENTATION IN THE CAMPAIGN OF LEARNING

Experimentation supports the USASOC Campaign of Learning through the conduct of live, virtual and constructive experiments to determine current and future capability vulnerabilities, test/validate functional concepts and shape the development of DOTMLPF solutions.

USASOC Experimentation priorities are found in the ARSOF Concepts Research Experimentation Guidance, which is a part of the USASOC concepts and capabilities development plan used to identify concept and capability vulnerabilities for both the current and future force.

Experiments culminate in the transition of their results through event reports, observations, findings and recommendations that can be readily used to facilitate decision-making. The results will be standardized and made available through a supporting IT system and will directly lead to a DOTMLPF solution to eliminate the current vulnerabilities or best prepare the future force to meet the challenges of the operating environment.

**ENDSTATE:** Given a future operational environment, determine what capabilities and capacities are required to meet strategic, operational and tactical challenges that ARSOF can expect to encounter in 2022 and for which existing doctrine and concepts are inadequate.

USASOC will host its own exercise series called SILENT QUEST and participate in TRADOC and SOCOM experiments.

#### THE SILENT QUEST SERIES VISION:

SILENT QUEST is a biannual, commandwide exercise that builds on future operating environment concepts. While normally projected against environments beyond the POM years, selected DOTMLPF findings may be brought forward earlier. The exercises will:

- » Be the culmination of our SOF Campaign of Learning to support and inform concept development and future SOF design initiatives.
- » Identify and validate SOF concept development for SOF campaigns and operations and the Army's full range of military operations.
- » Produce outcomes that generate input for DOTMLPF and the POM to support ARSOF 2022 initiatives.
- » Identify gaps and overlaps in USASOC's current and future capabilities.



## CONCLUSION

For more than 60 years, Army Special Operations Forces have been at the tip of the spear in the defense of our nation. While the way we fight may change, our core tenets have not. We remain in contact with the enemy, making significant contributions to the nation through extraordinary sacrifice from our regiments and our families. Yet, even while in the fight, we must become students of not only our adversaries but also of our past to build on lessons learned from previous engagements; and of the future, in order to develop the techniques and strategies necessary to remain the force of choice for decision makers. It is imperative that we are prepared to meet these challenges head on, and the way we do that will be through preparation. As your commander, I can prepare you for these threats in no better way than by planning for your success. That's why this map of our way forward is so important.

The future of Army Special Operations Forces is built upon the foundation of past experience, customs, traditions and proven employment concepts among the diverse organizations that make up USASOC. ARSOF have always functioned as a strategic bridging force, serving as connective tissue among indigenous forces and populations and within our military and the interagency community. While that cannot change, we are not content to maintain the status quo, because failure is not an option.

We must posture ourselves to meet and sustain the growing demands for increased cultural access and enhanced mobility required in support of national and theater strategies.

By embracing the changes outlined within ARSOF 2022, we will be prepared to thrive in the complex operating environment of the 21st century. By honing our special warfare and surgical strike capabilities and matching them with state-of-the-art technology used by educated and culturally savvy Soldiers we can ensure the defense of our nation and help to shore up that of our partners.

Without action, the words here are just that, words. It is imperative that our entire force inculcates these changes into the way they do business. If we move forward in a connected, reasoned manner, we will be able to face the uncertainty of the next decade and emerge a stronger force. It is in your hands.

**“History teaches us that the nations that grow comfortable with the old ways and complacent in the face of new threats, those nations do not long endure. And in the 21st century, we do not have the luxury of deciding which challenges to prepare for and which to ignore. We must overcome the full spectrum of threats – the conventional and the unconventional; the nation state and the terrorist network; the spread of deadly technologies and the spread of hateful ideologies; 18th century-style piracy and 21st century cyber threats.”**

—President Barack H. Obama,  
2009



# ARSOF 2022

**U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND**