



THE ARMY'S ROLE IN ACCESS ASSURANCE

The United States is the world's preeminent power because of our nation's ability to rapidly project and *sustain* significant conventional military power *anywhere in the world*. America regularly deploys forces abroad to defend our interests and allies, deter aggression, and conduct peacemaking and humanitarian operations. The deployment of U.S. and multinational forces **requires maintaining and assuring access** to sufficient fleets of aircraft, ships, vehicles and trains, as well as to bases, ports, prepositioned equipment and infrastructure. **Access Assurance** is critical to our national strategy.

Anti-Access (A²) is a complex array of asymmetric strategies and capabilities employed over time by less robust adversaries to thwart U.S. power-projection operations in an attempt to deny the United States political, economic, cultural and military access to a geographical area. Among these techniques are denial of overflight rights, strikes and work stoppages involving contracted personnel, and terrorist activities around population centers, airfields and ports (e.g., missiles and weapons of mass destruction) not only overseas but also in the continental United States.

The potential **Anti-Access risk cannot be allowed to limit the National Command Authorities' options or dictate U.S. interests.**

To achieve Access Assurance, the United States must:

- work within **coalitions** and **joint operations** and maintain strong ties with our **allies**;
- maintain **strong army-to-army contacts** to foster enduring relationships;
- establish strong U.S. **interagency coordination** for effective and unified action;
- move **quickly and early** at signals of potential conflict to deny an enemy the option of blocking the entry of U.S. forces;
- use **multiple deployment points and intermediate staging bases** to mitigate predictable behavior;
- **preposition** equipment (both on land and at sea);
- procure aircraft such as **C-17s** that have the capability to fly into remote areas should access be denied;
- maintain robust **air defense** capabilities and force protection capabilities;
- employ the concepts of **focused logistics and en route planning** to provide rapid crisis response and track and shift assets en route when necessary;
- leverage capabilities of Special Operations Forces to conduct **strategic reconnaissance and direct attack operations** to blind adversaries' C⁴ISR (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) and targeting systems.



The strategic response to an adversary's Anti-Access campaign is Access Assurance.

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This is the third of a series of discussion papers on key strategic issues relevant to the U.S. Army's transformation to the Objective Force.

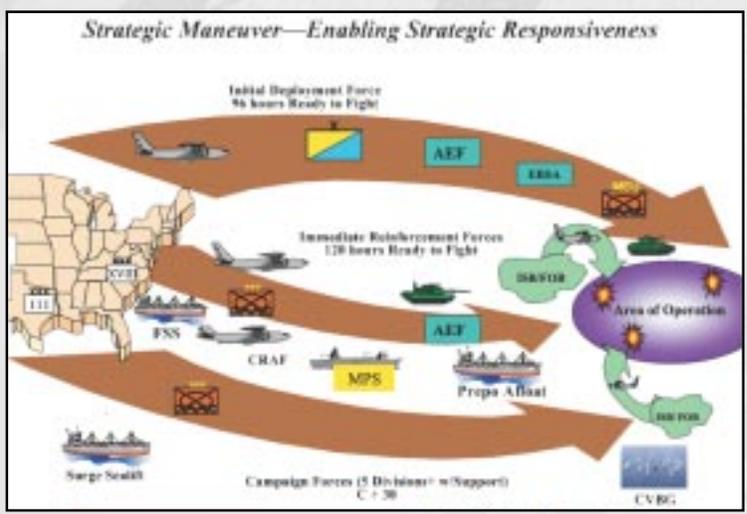


The Army's Role in Access Assurance (continued)

Current and emerging Army capabilities to successfully overcome Anti-Access strategies include:

- **Missile Defense** (e.g., **Mobile Tactical High Energy Laser [MTHEL]**, **Patriot PAC-3**). The U.S. Army has a revolutionary capability for missile defense and is leading the way on land-based theater missile defense.
- **Joint Transport Rotorcraft (JTR)**, **Advanced Tactical Transport (ATT)** and **High-Speed Shallow-Draft ships**. These may bypass or expand the number of usable airfields and seaports and dramatically expand the number of places troops and supplies may land. The landings may be done in *multiple places simultaneously*, avoiding U.S. deploying troops' becoming easy targets.
- **Tactically Organized Army Forces**. These can be *loaded and deployed in a distributed manner* by having units disaggregate for deployment into multiple small clandestine airfields and ports or over-the-shore landing points, and then reaggregate into combat formations as required for operations.
- **Deep-Strike Systems** such as **Comanche** and the **Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS)**. These can operate as part of a joint "access enabling task force" against enemy missile forces.
- **Organized, Small Strike Packages of C-17 deployable assets** such as **Crusader**, **Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)**, **radar**, etc. These can provide vital precision tactical fires and will assist in destroying the enemy's anti-access architecture, allowing the deployment of Army maneuver packages.
- **Infantry forces equipped with Land Warrior**, a modular integrated fighting system capable of separating an enemy from a civilian population. There is no known foreign counterpart.

A Joint Access Assurance Strategy Includes:



AEF = Air Expeditionary Force
 CRAF = Civil Reserve Air Fleet
 CVBG = Carrier Battle Group
 ERSA = Extended Range Strike Aircraft
 FOB = Forward Operating Base
 FSS = Fast Sealift Ship
 ISB = Intermediate Staging Base
 MEU = Marine Expeditionary Unit
 MPS = Maritime Prepositioning Ships

- preparing the battlefield and neutralizing or suppressing enemy Anti-Access forces;
- dispersing U.S. forces and bypassing airfields and seaports to deny the enemy targets for his Anti-Access weapons;
- employing ballistic and cruise missile defenses that deploy as theater enablers at the tactical level; and
- using lethality and survivability enhancements to the advantage of the United States and its allies.

The U.S. Army is playing a vital role in Access Assurance.

A Strategy of Access Assurance Begins and Ends with Engagement.

ISSUE 3: Contribution of Land Forces to Access Assurance