

Second, there is a useful debate unfolding about the potential demise of the Core Air and Space Power Roles, particularly Air Operations for Strategic Effect (AOSE). The proposed doctrine never foresaw any removal of that capability, only a change of its expression. JDN 2/08 attempts to bring air roles and capability back to its most fundamental level, because principles, tenets or fundamentals tend to stick and we currently have air doctrine and concepts using different expressions. JDN 2/08 makes very clear that Attack can be applied at any level of warfare. Therefore, what is currently cast in the Future Air and Space Operational Concept as AOSE is perfectly feasible. However, using a discrete label causes confusion in the other Services, because AOSE does not have universal application. Its title implies that there will always be something in the deep battle space to attack. But how, for example, could the role possibly apply in an insurgency? If the centre of gravity is the consent or tolerance of the host nation population, then which air operations create strategic effect? The answer might not be AOSE (which most people associate with long range bombers), but Intelligence and Situational Awareness and Mobility and Lift. Imagine a porous regional border in a big country, where interdiction of insurgents is triggered by Intelligence, but executed using Mobility and Lift to position a ground force. Strategic effect could thus be achieved by air power without a fast jet getting airborne or a bomb being dropped. Similarly, what is currently cast as close air support (a tactical level function of Attack) can create effects, for better or worse, at the strategic level. It is the context in which air power is applied that is most relevant.

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## **Soldiers are from Mars**

Following an enthusiastic response to the Air Power Review article 'Soldiers are from Mars . . .', I wonder if the editor would be good enough to support a public response to some common themes of high interest? First, I articulated the fourth air power role as Coercion and aligned it to precision attack. However, subsequent staffing of the associated doctrine (which was at the time in development) led to a view that the role could more clearly be expressed as Attack, with a link to coercion. That step was taken and Joint Doctrine Note 2/08 Integrated Air-Land Operations in Contemporary Warfare (JDN 2/08) was published in August 2008 casting the four fundamental air power roles as Control of the Air, Mobility and Lift, Intelligence and Situational Awareness, and Attack. Some adjustments were also made to the theory of coercion. The doctrine can be accessed from DCDC's web site now and hard copies are being distributed.

The doctrine argues that as the levels of warfare have blurred, so too have the air power roles. It thus makes sense to strip the roles back to their fundamentals, which can then be applied across the spectrum of warfare, limited only by the law of armed conflict and a commander's imagination. Will the RAF still make deep attacks behind future battle lines where no other capability can reach? Almost certainly. Can we conceive a strategic role for air power from the fundamental tenet of Attack. Of course. But is the language of Attack more accessible to brother officers of the other Services and therefore more likely to encourage integrated operational planning from the outset? From comment received thus far, yes.

Finally, if the current debate started by DCDC comes to a successful conclusion, we will recommend to the RAF that its concepts and doctrine are aligned to a consistent simpler lexicon based on JDN 2/08. This could provide a vocabulary for air power that is easy to learn and more likely to resonate with our sister Services, the public and our political masters, all of whom currently struggle to understand what air power delivers in complex environments. The technology and application will keep changing, but the roles should remain constant if we get the fundamental expression right. DCDC will argue to keep it simple and stick to the fundamental 'big four': Control of the Air, Mobility and Lift, Intelligence and Situational Awareness, and Attack. If anybody can think of an air power capability, current or future that would not fit into this framework, I would love to hear from you!

*Air Cdre Paul Colley*

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