



UK Defence Doctrine



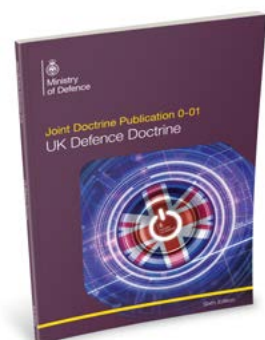
Joint Doctrine Publication (JDP) 0-01, *UK Defence Doctrine* (UKDD), 6th Edition is the UK's capstone doctrine publication and the foundation of all UK joint doctrine. Its purpose is to guide the employment of the military instrument and to explain its utility. UKDD has been updated for the first time since 2014.

As is often described, war's nature is constant, however the character of warfare changes as our surrounding circumstances alter. UKDD outlines this in relation to the current strategic context and highlights that there are those who seek to undermine the rules-based international order. It is aligned with how the North Atlantic Treaty Organization sees these threats and challenges, not least given the Russian Federation's actions in Ukraine. UKDD describes how governments, groups, factions and non-state actors act in competition, the intensity of which can fluctuate across a continuum from cooperation, rivalry, confrontation and ultimately armed conflict.

To meet the threats and challenges we face, UKDD describes how policy and national strategy are developed and the four instruments of national power (diplomatic, information, military and economic) integrated; this is referred to by the government as the integrated approach. The instruments are applied through both hard and soft power, and in blending these known as 'smart power'. The military instrument articulates its role through Defence and military strategies, the latter mainly implemented at the operational level through the execution of campaigns.

At its centre, UKDD describes the three tenets of UK doctrine which guide the successful employment of the military instrument.

- a. **Mission command** remains our empowering command philosophy and the employment of the military instrument is enabled by it. It is founded on the clear expression of intent by commanders and the freedom of subordinates to act to achieve that intent. Mission command is a form of decentralised decision-making, promoting initiative but responsive to superior direction.
- b. The **manoeuvrist approach** continues as an attitude of mind that seeks indirect approaches in applying strength against vulnerability and a relentless determination to succeed and to exploit success. The manoeuvrist approach seeks to seize and hold the initiative, shape understanding, undermine will and fracture cohesion of our adversaries.
- c. In today's complex and dynamic environment our third tenet has evolved – this is now called **integrated action**. Such activity has previously been termed 'joint action'; however, this is now considered too narrow



and too focused on the enemy. Integrated action can be described as the audience-centric orchestration of military activities, across all operational domains, synchronised with non-military activities to influence the attitude and behaviour of selected audiences necessary to achieve successful outcomes. Understanding the audiences is the major consideration of integrated action and so UKDD introduces an audience-centric approach recognising that people are at the heart of competition.

UKDD updates the principles of war within the changing character of warfare. Underpinned by understanding and the three tenets of doctrine, their expression, emphasis and application change in relation to context. Applying them requires judgement, common sense and intelligent interpretation. Two principles have evolved to give them contemporary relevance: concentration of effects replacing concentration of force; and integration replacing cooperation.

Fighting power determines the ability of our Armed Forces to operate and warfight. UKDD describes fighting power's hierarchy, consisting of a pre-eminent moral component (the will), a conceptual component (the thought process) and a physical component (the means). Changing circumstances require adaptation of our fighting power if we are to function successfully.

Whilst the *Integrated Operating Concept* remains a concept, UKDD describes the utility of the military instrument using its framework which considers activities across four functions: protect, engage, constrain and warfight. The functions must not be thought of as a linear progression. Their successful application requires a mindset that thinks in several dimensions so that escalation and de-escalation is dynamically managed up and down the levels of operations and across operational domains.

It is, however, impossible to deter all threats and so the UK must determine which adversary activities can and must be deterred, and which are better tackled through resilience or other forms of activity. UKDD describes a deterrence posture which must remain proactive and focused.

Defence and the military instrument of national power play a unique role in protecting and promoting the three fundamental national interests: sovereignty, security and prosperity. Defence's fundamental purpose is to protect the people of the UK, prevent conflict and be ready to fight our enemies. Our Armed Forces must be ready and able to fight; it is their core competence.

Want to read more?

The full edition of JDP 0-01 is designed to be a simple and concise explanation of the employment and utility of the military instrument of power. It is relevant to all personnel within Defence, across government and to our allies and partners. It forms an essential part of professional military education to reinforce understanding as people progress through their careers.



Find out more about joint operational-level doctrine and the other work of the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre at the links below.

