

ATP 3-90.90

Army Tactical Standard Operating Procedures

November 2011

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Headquarters, Department of the Army

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Preface

PURPOSE

Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-90.90 facilitates development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) in order to enhance efficiency and adaptability across the force. ATP 3-90.90 achieves this purpose through linking to a milWiki portal under the milSuite uniform resource locator (URL) containing guidance for tactical SOPs and unclassified examples of SOPs for reference. The SOP portal provides a baseline for developing new SOPs quickly and a forum for improving existing SOPs. The portal presents best practices consistent with doctrinal principles.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE OF THIS MANUAL

The Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate established the SOP portal in 2009. The authors attempted to align the original information with pertinent doctrine and regulations. Where the portal's contents differ from current doctrine and regulations, the latter take precedence. The information in the SOP portal is not authoritative doctrine. The examples in the portal do not provide ready-to-use SOPs for Army units. Soldiers developing SOPs for their units are encouraged to apply critical thinking while referring to the models and other resources to aid their own content development. At a minimum, portal users must be familiar with this ATP, Field Manuals (FMs) 5-0 and 6-99.2; Army Regulations (ARs) 25-1, 34-4, and 380-5; and Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA Pam) 25-403. Soldiers are encouraged to use the portal to collaborate, to improve the portal's contents, and to upload new SOP examples. The SOP portal is secure and requires an Army Knowledge Online or Defense Knowledge Online login. The portal's contents are unclassified. Neither this manual nor the SOP portal is intended to regulate the appearance or content of unit SOPs.

This ATP uses joint terms where applicable. When formal military terms are identified in the text of this ATP, the terms are italicized and the number of the proponent manual follows the definition. The glossary lists acronyms used. See the references for a listing of publications cited.

A *standard operating procedure* is a set of instructions covering those features of operations which lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness. The procedure is applicable unless ordered otherwise (JP 3-31). A SOP is both standing and standard: it instructs how to perform a prescribed and accepted process established for completing a task. Features of operations that lend themselves to standardization are common and usually detailed processes performed often and requiring minimal variation each time. Well-written and properly used unit tactical SOPs enhance effective execution of tasks; the benefits of SOPs are numerous. They reduce training time, the loss of unwritten information, the commission of errors, the omission of essential steps or processes, and the time required for completion of tasks. This does not mean, however, that carrying out SOPs never requires thought or that SOPs should never change. Indeed, tactical units must change some operating procedures as rapidly as operational environments and missions change. The SOP portal helps units avoid an unnecessary loss of effectiveness that could occur by maintaining unthinking dependence on outdated written procedures. The portal also helps units avoid a loss of effectiveness that could occur when units delay writing down processes that need to become standardized.

Note. In June 2010, JP 3-31 changed *standing operating procedure* to *standard operating procedure*. The meaning is unchanged.

SCOPE

The doctrine in this manual provides techniques for developing unit tactical SOPs. Units throughout the Army can take advantage of technology to obtain guidance, collaborate in real time, and find information quickly. This manual and the SOP portal are intended to enhance operational adaptability Army-wide. In the short term, the information in the SOP portal will help units establish or improve SOPs more rapidly. In the long term, the intention is that more and more units will build SOPs using the portal and the doctrine in this manual. Ideally, SOPs throughout the Army should increase in similarity as the combination of doctrinal guidance and Army-wide milWiki collaboration facilitates consensus. This will help units communicate and coordinate with

one another more easily. Reassigned Soldiers and units will become familiar with SOPs in their new assignments more quickly.

Chapter 1 of this ATP discusses resources for integrating SOP development with collaborative technology, doctrine, and policy. Chapter 2 discusses a process to help authors develop effective SOPs. Chapter 3 provides the SOP portal's URL and detailed instructions on how to use the portal.

To enhance standardization of tactical SOPs, the SOP portal provides tactical SOP guidance organized according to the Army operation plan and order format. For the reader's convenience, chapter 3 of this manual shows a list of attachments and responsible staff officers as table 3-1 (pages 3-4 to 3-7). Table 3-1 serves as an approximate table of contents for the information under the portal's tactical SOP guidance tab. Because the volume and variability of material in the portal, providing a fixed listing of the portal's contents in this ATP is not practical. Unit SOP examples are organized under the portal's categories tab (described in chapter 3). The general categories used for SOP examples are nondoctrinal and variable; they will expand or change as Soldiers modify them.

APPLICABILITY

The principal audience for ATP 3-90.90 is Army leaders and staffs at tactical headquarters. This manual can also be used as a reference by joint and multinational commands and other Services. This manual does not apply to organizations developing official departmental publications.

ATP 3-90.90 applies to the Active Army, Army National Guard (ARNG)/Army National Guard of the United States (ARNGUS), and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) unless otherwise stated.

SECURITY MEASURES FOR MILWIKI COLLABORATION

The milSuite and milWiki information security procedures ensure that the SOP portal is secure. The SOP portal is consistent with Department of the Army information security policies and procedures. SOP portal users must adhere to AR 380-5. SOP portals users must not post classified information to the portal. To develop unit SOPs, users must download and develop information on unit hardware with the appropriate classification. The Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate milWiki program manager, SOP portal content managers, and the milSuite security network enterprise managers monitor input to the portal. Managers or doctrine proponents may modify or remove content. Posts are traceable to their originator.

INFORMATION SECURITY CAUTION

SOP portal users must comply with AR 380-5. Do not enter any classified information about friendly or enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures in use for current operations. Develop classified unit SOPs on classified unit hardware.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Headquarters, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, is the proponent for this publication. The preparing agency is the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center. Send written comments and recommendations on a DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, ATTN: ATZL-MCK-D (ATP 3-90.90), 300 McPherson Avenue (Building 463), Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2337; or by e-mail to: usarmy.leavenworth.mccoe.mbx.cadd-org-mailbox@mail.mil; or submit an electronic DA Form 2028.

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Chapter 1

Standard Operating Procedure Development Resources

This chapter introduces using collaborative technology to enhance standard operating procedure content development. Then it discusses Army doctrine and policy in support of standard operating procedure content development. Finally, it briefly discusses resources related to coordinating operating procedures with partners.

COLLABORATIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR SOP DEVELOPMENT

1-1. Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-90.90 is distinct from traditional doctrinal literature in that it links to an online portal containing guidance for developing tactical standard operating procedures (SOPs), along with examples of unit SOPs. The portal serves as a forum for discussion, updates, and improvements. Soldiers may use the portal as a resource when developing unit SOPs in support of command post operations. Soldiers can refer to ATP 3-90.90 and the SOP portal to improve processes for establishing and revising SOPs and for discussing best practices in general.

1-2. The SOP portal harnesses collaborative technology to accelerate the creation and sharing of knowledge related to unit SOPs. The portal makes it easy for Soldiers to preserve, share, and adopt lessons learned among units throughout the Army. The portal's guidance and examples are not doctrinal or authoritative and, therefore, are not subject to the time-consuming staffing requirements of doctrine development. Additionally, the models do not present classified tactics, techniques, and procedures used in current operations. Chapter 3 discusses practical aspects of how to use the SOP portal.

DOCTRINE AND POLICY TO SUPPORT STANDARDIZATION AND RECORDKEEPING

1-3. While Army units may draw on material in the SOP portal to accelerate SOP development, they also must consider pertinent Army doctrine and regulations. Additionally, commanders and staffs analyze their operational environment and their mission to determine what SOPs are needed and how to employ them. Commanders and staffs employ SOPs to further mission command (see Field Manual (FM) 6-0 for more information about mission command). Paragraphs 1-4 to 1-7 introduce Army doctrine and policy publications to support SOP standardization and recordkeeping.

Note. Appendix A of FM 5-0 describes the types of SOPs needed for conducting command post operations.

THE ARMY UNIVERSAL TASK LIST

1-4. FM 7-15 outlines Army tactical task 5.2.1.3, Establish or revise standard [or standing] operating procedures:

Create or modify a set of instructions covering those tasks and functions that lend themselves to a definite or standing procedure without a loss of effectiveness; the standing operating procedures is effective unless ordered otherwise to meet altered conditions.

FM 7-15

Per FM 7-15, the overall goal for SOPs is to facilitate mission accomplishment and warfighting functions integration.

U.S. ARMY REPORT AND MESSAGE FORMATS

1-5. FM 6-99.2 prescribes Army report and message formats. Unit SOPs must use voice and digital report and message formats from FM 6-99.2. Only unit commanders may authorize modifications. For occasions that FM 6-99.2 does not provide necessary branch-specific technical reports and messages, units still must use doctrinally established formats. Refer to Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA Pam) 25-30 online to find doctrinal publications containing branch-specific formats; go to <http://armypubs.army.mil>.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY RECORDKEEPING GUIDANCE

1-6. Leaders ensure units adhere to Department of the Army (DA) recordkeeping guidance when preparing and using SOPs. The SOP portal does not alter or substitute for these requirements. SOPs are a type of operational record (see table 12-1, DA Pam 25-40). DA Pam 25-40 provides guidance and procedures for collecting, preparing, transferring, and preserving operational records. Army Regulation (AR) 25-1 establishes policies and assigns responsibilities for managing information resources and information technology, including recordkeeping. AR 25-400-2 governs maintenance and disposition of Army information and implements policy on recordkeeping requirements (see www.arims.army.mil). DA Pam 25-403 provides operational procedures and guidelines for Army recordkeeping. AR 380-5 discusses Army information security policy. DA Pam 600-67 discusses how to apply the Army writing standard. Units use the Army writing standard to ensure SOPs and other operational records are concise and easy to read. (Chapter 2 of this ATP discusses the Army writing standard in more detail.) Table 1-1 summarizes these recordkeeping authorities.

Table 1-1. Department of the Army recordkeeping guidance

<p>AR 25-1, <i>Army Knowledge Management and Information Technology</i>. AR 25-400-2, <i>The Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS)</i>. AR 380-5, <i>Department of the Army Information Security Program</i>. DA Pam 25-40, <i>Army Publishing: Action Officers Guide</i>. DA Pam 25-403, <i>Guide to Recordkeeping in the Army</i>. DA Pam 600-67, <i>Effective Writing for Army Leaders</i>.</p>

ARMY STANDARDIZATION POLICY

1-7. Authors of unit SOPs ensure alignment with higher-level SOPs and standardization documents as appropriate to support the goals of Army standardization policy. AR 34-4 defines *standardization* as the management principle which fosters the development and sustainment of a high state of proficiency and readiness among Soldiers and units throughout an organization. This definition emphasizes procedures that—

- Sustain proficiency and readiness among Soldiers and Army units.
- Reduce adverse effects of personnel turbulence following reassignment of Soldiers.
- Eliminate local modification to approved standardized practices and procedures.

Standardization throughout an organization reduces operational turbulence and confusion between units when force tailoring occurs.

DOCTRINE AND POLICY FOR COORDINATING OPERATING PROCEDURES WITH PARTNERS

1-8. Leaders consider whether unit SOPs can enhance coordination with military and nonmilitary partners. Army leaders incorporate interoperability requirements when establishing and revising SOPs, particularly regarding mission command systems. Paragraphs 1-9 to 1-14 briefly discuss doctrine and policy related to coordinating Army tactical unit operating procedures with partners.

COORDINATION WITH JOINT PARTNERS

1-9. Army standardization efforts related to operating procedures sometimes include joint partners. Joint doctrine expands standardization principles to include the Department of Defense as a whole. According to Joint Publication (JP) 4-02, standardization is—

The process by which the Department of Defense achieves the closest practicable cooperation among the Services and Department of Defense agencies for the most efficient use of research, development, and production resources, and agrees to adopt on the broadest possible basis the use of: a. common or compatible operational, administrative, and logistic procedures; b. common or compatible technical procedures and criteria; c. common, compatible, or interchangeable supplies, components, weapons, or equipment; and d. common or compatible tactical doctrine with corresponding organizational compatibility.

JP 4-02

To facilitate coordination during joint operations, other Services and other partners may refer to the SOP portal.

1-10. JP 3-0 discusses considerations related to interoperability of operating procedures during joint operations. JP 6-0 discusses interoperability considerations for communications during joint operations. Unit leaders consider whether unit SOPs should incorporate coordination with joint partners, consistent with joint and Army doctrine.

MULTINATIONAL FORCE COMPATIBILITY

1-11. Standardization efforts related to operating procedures sometimes include multinational partners. AR 34-1 establishes DA policy for enhancing multinational force compatibility through international military standardization and other Army security cooperation activities. AR 34-1 requires United States Army Training and Doctrine Command to integrate multinational force compatibility where appropriate in all assigned doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) development activities. AR 34-1 also lists additional publications related to standardization for multinational operations. For information security policy related to sharing information with multinational partners, see AR 380-5 and AR 380-10. See JP 3-16 for joint doctrine related to interoperability with multinational partners. Unit leaders consider whether unit SOPs should incorporate coordination with multinational partners.

FOREIGN DISCLOSURE CAUTION

SOPs that support standardization for multinational operations must comply with foreign disclosure policies and procedures described in AR 380-10.

SUPPORT FOR UNIFIED ACTION

1-12. Unit SOPs can support unified action, which is vital to the success of stability and defense support of civil authorities operations. *Unified action* is the synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort (JP 1).

1-13. Military forces conduct stability operations in coordination with diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power. Army forces synchronize, coordinate, and integrate their activities with other entities to achieve common goals. FM 3-07 provides the doctrinal foundation for developing tactics, techniques, and procedures for stability operations. Appendix B of FM 3-07 discusses civil–military cooperation, including governmental and international partners.

1-14. Military forces conduct defense support of civil authorities operations in coordination with other Services; local, state, and federal government agencies; private sector organizations; and both state National Guard and federal military forces. FM 3-28 discusses Army coordination with unified action partners for defense support of civil authorities operations. See chapter 2 of FM 3-28 for a detailed description of the comprehensive national approach for this coordination. See JP 3-08 for joint doctrine related to coordinating military operations with nonmilitary partners. Unit leaders consider how unit SOPs can support unified action for stability and defense support of civil authorities operations.

Chapter 2

Effective Operating Procedure Instructions

This chapter presents a general process for developing standard operating procedures as instructional materials. It briefly discusses how to prepare effective written instructions by applying the Army writing standard.

DEVELOPING SOPS AS INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

2-1. An operating procedure is the approved process to complete a complex, recurring task. A procedure consists of a series of detailed steps—or subordinate tasks—and carrying out those steps ensures a desired result. A standard operating procedure (SOP) provides the instructions for performing an operating procedure. (See the glossary for the full definitions of the terms *procedures* and *standard operating procedure*.) Writing down instructions for operating procedures is essential for units to achieve the desired result easily and repeatedly.

2-2. Paragraphs 2-3 to 2-12 introduce a flexible developmental process for creating SOPs. This process is general enough to apply across a broad range of activities. As developers of instructional materials, SOP authors must follow a process that ensures effective instructions as well as effective procedures.

STAGES OF SOP DEVELOPMENT

2-3. SOP authoring involves three general stages of development. In the first stage, the SOP author determines the optimal product expected from establishing or revising a procedure. This becomes the objective—it could be anything from a rapidly assembled piece of equipment, to synchronization of schedules, to a complex intelligence product. Sometimes the commander supplies this information, or an author conducts assessments to establish or refine the objective. Then, after concisely stating the procedure's objective, the author articulates the purpose of the SOP. The purpose expresses what its users should be able to do by reading and following the SOP.

2-4. In the second stage, the SOP author establishes an optimal process for achieving the objective. This becomes the operating procedure. This hands-on stage normally involves research, collaboration, and synthesis. The author finds out the steps—including subordinate tasks—that should be performed, along with their sequence, resources and conditions needed, and considerations for safety, security, and coordination. In some cases, an author need only develop instructions for a predetermined operating procedure. In other cases, the steps of the procedure itself must be revised or established before developing the instructions. For developing detailed steps of operating procedures, SOP authors use methods appropriate to their activity.

2-5. In the third stage, the SOP author explains in writing how to carry out the operating procedure, usually in a computer-generated document. The commander's approval makes this document a SOP. This stage involves formulating and writing down instructions consistent with appropriate writing processes and style requirements. This stage usually includes creating additional instructional materials not limited to paper documents. Authors determine subordinate SOP development tasks—such as research, testing, and staffing requirements—depending on the activity, the nature of the procedure, and operational requirements.

2-6. SOP authors gather as much relevant information as possible from all appropriate sources they can find. The SOP portal aids their research. However, authors need not limit their research to the Internet. Authors focus on establishing and writing down a process that will consistently produce the desired result. Authors use critical thinking skills when assessing potential resource material, such as old or borrowed SOPs.

2-7. Table 2-1 summarizes the stages SOP development and their results. The process is flexible, and authors may revisit earlier stages. For example, developing instructions during stage 3 sometimes leads to additional refinement of the operating procedure.

Table 2-1. Stages of standard operating procedure development

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Result</i>
1. Determine optimal product a procedure should deliver	The objective
2. Establish an optimal process for achieving the objective	The operating procedure
3. Explain in writing how to carry out the operating procedure	The standard operating procedure (the instructions)

HOW TO GET STARTED DEVELOPING THE SOP

2-8. To help SOP authors get started, table 2-2 (pages 2-2 to 2-3) lists sample initial questions for authors to ask themselves. Authors answer questions such as these *in writing* to help plan their projects and complete them efficiently. This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Additionally, for complex projects, authors must keep a journal or project record showing their time line, milestones, progress made, contacts made, sources used, lessons learned, and issues that arise.

Table 2-2. Sample initial authoring questions

What is the objective of the procedure to be established or revised (what will be the product of the procedure)?
What is the commander’s guidance about the procedure and its product?
What is the instructional purpose of the SOP document (what will its users be able to do)?
Who will read the document, and who will use the procedure?
What background knowledge do SOP users have?
To develop the procedure thoroughly and accurately, what information must be gathered and from what sources?
What sources are considered authoritative or informative for this procedure?
How can the SOP portal be used to facilitate developing the SOP?
If a procedure already existed for achieving the objective, what were its strengths and weaknesses?
If there is already a consensus for the optimal way to achieve the objective, what is the general statement of that method?
Whose assistance and what additional resources will be needed to complete the SOP?
Who must agree on the procedure?
Who will sign to approve the SOP?
By what methodology should the procedure be developed or improved?
How should the new or revised SOP be vetted (both the procedure and the instructions)?
With what existing documents, resources, organizations, or partners must the SOP align (regulations, policies, equipment, doctrinal or training literature, other)?

Table 2-2. Sample initial authoring questions (continued)

What will be the recordkeeping requirements related to the SOP?
What safety considerations are pertinent to the procedure that will be established or revised?
What security requirements must be observed in relation to the SOP?
What conditions, equipment, materials, or technology are pertinent to the procedure that will be established or revised?
How many drafts should it take to arrive at a final version of the SOP?
What is the subject of the SOP document?
What major subtopics should the SOP include?
What topics should the SOP avoid?
How should the SOP be organized—what is the preliminary topic outline?
What are the best media (paper, digital, visual, 3D, audio, video, combination, other) for the SOP and for supporting instructional materials?
How should the SOP be made available to intended users?
Who should teach others to use the procedure?
How should the procedure be tested, and how often?
Who will update the SOP, and when?
Who will ensure compliance with the SOP?
Considering the work to be done and the commander's guidance, what is a reasonable time line for completing the SOP?
Legend: SOP: standard operating procedure

HOW TO DRAFT THE SOP

2-9. Authors prepare a series of drafts and integrate input from stakeholders into each revision of the document. This helps ensure the final instructions accurately explain the procedure. Early in SOP development, authors identify stakeholders who will review the drafts and provide input. Stakeholders include any person or group with a direct interest or involvement related to the SOP, especially Soldiers. Authors must solicit input from Soldiers. Additionally, authors must keep in mind that stakeholders sometimes include other military or nonmilitary partners.

2-10. In the context of authoring, drafting refers to writing preliminary and developmental versions of a document. Initially, authors approach drafting using whatever techniques best suit their personal learning style. Some begin by brainstorming, making lists, or drawing maps or flow charts on a white board. Drafting is usually collaborative. The number of drafts needed depends on the complexity of the procedure, the number of stakeholders, and the time available for completing the SOP. Authors normally begin drafting the instructions for a procedure while establishing the procedure itself. Authors use rational methods appropriate to their discipline and activity for devising and testing tactical operating procedures.

HOW TO PACKAGE THE SOP

2-11. SOP authors use the format required by their command, which must be consistent with appropriate military doctrine and regulations (see chapter 1). Unit SOPs normally contain the following categories of information:

- Name of the SOP, activity, unit, and classification.
- Subject of the SOP (this is the overall topic).
- References pertinent to the procedure. Citations must be accurate and thorough—title, type, number, and date of publication (for formal publications); online links if appropriate; and identifying information for correspondence or meetings.
- Purpose of the SOP (to ensure result X by giving instructions for performing task Y).
- Short summary of the SOP (a few sentences, placed near the beginning but composed last).

- Scope (to whom the SOP applies, and possibly under what conditions or circumstances).
- Definitions (sometimes needed to explain terms new to readers or to interpret acronyms).
- Responsibilities (brief, descriptive sentences telling exactly who is responsible to ensure what outcomes or provide what resources).
- Detailed instructions for the procedure, explaining—
 - Who performs exactly what tasks.
 - When to perform the tasks: such as under what conditions, in what sequence, how often or how many times, at what time of day, and before or after what other event or procedure.
 - How to perform the tasks: such as using what equipment or supplies, alone or together with whom, to whom or upon what, according to what security and safety requirements, and in what manner or at what pace.
 - A reason to perform the tasks (if this information aids comprehension, execution, or compliance).
 - What the result will be as each subordinate task is completed (if this information is concrete and factual, and it aids comprehension, execution, or compliance).
 - Alternating actions to take in likely changes of circumstances.
 - How or to whom Soldiers report completion of the procedure.
- Recordkeeping requirements.
- Enclosures.

2-12. SOPs usually become electronic and paper documents prepared in word processing programs. As instructional media, they may include digital, audio, or visual components. The authors normally prepare a memorandum containing the SOP, for the commander's signature. They prepare supporting instructional materials and applications to facilitate use of the SOP.

WRITING INSTRUCTIONS EFFECTIVELY

2-13. SOP authors staff a series of drafts (see paragraphs 2-9 to 2-10) to ensure the final SOP is accurate. SOP authors also ensure their instructions are easy to read and follow. To write effective instructions, SOP authors—

- Focus on the objective.
- Carefully observe and analyze the tasks to be explained.
- Consider the characteristics of the intended audience.
- Incorporate appropriate media (such as illustrations or videos).
- Use appropriate design (such as white space, color, diagrams, and sequencing).
- Limit the use of acronyms and abbreviations and interpret those used.
- Apply the Army writing standard: comprehensible in a single, rapid reading and generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.

The test of good writing is that a junior enlisted Soldier should have no trouble understanding exactly what to do after reading the instructions one time. AR 25-50 and DA PAM 600-67 describe good Army writing as concise, organized, and right to the point.

CONCISE WRITING FOR SOPs

2-14. Concise writing expresses the writer's point with the fewest words possible. Concise writing for SOPs avoids—

- Passive sentences.
- Fancy (bureaucratic) words and long sentences.
- Unnecessary repetition.

Effective writers avoid passive sentences when possible because they tend to slow or impair reading comprehension (see examples in paragraph 2-17). Passives make a document longer than necessary because they tend to be wordy. They make readers search for the main point of a sentence by moving it

toward the middle. Additionally, they make readers decipher who performs an action by moving the subject toward the end or by omitting the subject. Precision and conciseness go hand in hand. Short, commonly used words—based on their dictionary definitions—and short sentences usually communicate most effectively. Conciseness does not mean that repetition is never appropriate. SOP authors consider whether instructions should repeat critical information. Authors avoid *unnecessary* repetition by carefully organizing SOP content.

ORGANIZED WRITING FOR SOPs

2-15. Organized writing always starts with a purpose. Organized writing for SOPs presents—

- More important ideas before less important ideas.
- Closely related ideas together.
- Subordinate ideas under main ideas.
- The steps of a process in chronological order.

Authors achieve organization through planning and outlining. (See paragraphs 2-3 to 2-10 and table 2-2 for planning guidance.) Outlining consists of making a list of topics and arranging the topics in relation to one another. Authors prepare topic outlines before drafting any other text. Collaboration and hands-on techniques, such as drawing topic maps on whiteboards, facilitate topic outlining.

TO-THE-POINT WRITING FOR SOPs

2-16. To-the-point writing is direct. It states the main point at the beginning. A reader should not have to surmise the main point or wait until the end to discover it. In addition, to-the-point writing for SOPs avoids—

- Indirect or vague language.
- Jargon (specialized and unofficial words, usually understood by only a few).
- Unnecessary components (such as cartoons or humorous anecdotes, quotations, lengthy historical backgrounds, or irrelevant references to other publications).

These sample sentences illustrate indirect, ineffective writing for SOPs:

- Due to the fact that smoking is a fire hazard, it is essential that you turn off the engine prior to commencing to smoke.
- In accordance with aforementioned authorities, you must perform the task which is required.
- Avoid snafus by getting up-to-speed with required info on recordkeeping asap.

These sample sentences illustrate straightforward, to-the-point writing:

- Turn off the engine before lighting a cigarette.
- This task is mandatory.
- Read Army Regulation 25-400-2 before disposing of any operational records.

Authors use plain English wherever possible. They use formal military terminology accurately and precisely. When composing instructions, they assume most readers are pressed for time.

2-17. Finally, SOPs give to-the-point instructions using a mix of strong, imperative sentences and active, descriptive sentences. Imperative sentences do not require a subject—they tell a person to perform an action. Strong imperative sentences start with strong verbs. The document still must state explicitly who performs each action, especially when the instructions address more than one person. Instructions do not need to use words such as “must” or “should.” The following sentences provide more examples of passive, imperative, and descriptive sentences.

- Example of passive sentences (ineffective):
 - The engine is to be turned off.
 - The aforementioned task is always completed at the beginning.
 - Smoking is prohibited.
- Examples of imperative sentences (effective if the document makes clear who performs the action):

- Turn off the engine.
- First, turn off the engine.
- Do not smoke in or near the equipment room.
- Examples of descriptive sentences (effective when they clarify imperative sentences):
 - Turning off the engine helps conserve fuel and reduce the risk of fire.
 - The shift supervisor records the time the engine is shut down in the log book.

Finally, refer to the SOP portal for many examples of effectively written unit SOPs.

Chapter 3

The Standard Operating Procedure Portal

This chapter begins by emphasizing information security policy in relation to using the standard operating procedure portal. Then it explains how to log in to the milSuite to access the portal. It briefly introduces how to become familiar with the milWiki. Finally, it discusses practical aspects of navigating and using the standard operating procedure portal for collaboration.

ADHERING TO INFORMATION SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

3-1. Standard operation procedure (SOP) portal users must comply with information security policies and procedures. They must not enter classified tactics, techniques, and procedures currently in use for military operations. It is the responsibility of the command to classify SOPs—when in development and when approved—consistent with Army Regulation (AR) 380-5.

INFORMATION SECURITY CAUTION

SOP portal users must comply with AR 380-5 regarding information security policies and procedures.

Do not enter any classified information about friendly or enemy unit tactics, techniques, and procedures in use for current operations. Develop classified unit SOPs on classified unit hardware.

3-2. When beginning development of SOPs, units must download information from the portal. They must develop unit SOPs on unit hardware with the appropriate classification. The models on the SOP portal are unclassified examples only, intended to illustrate best practices. In addition, it is the command's responsibility to ensure compliance with AR 380-10 for foreign disclosure.

FOREIGN DISCLOSURE CAUTION

For SOPs that support multinational operations, SOP portal users must comply with AR 380-10 regarding foreign disclosure policies and procedures.

LOGGING IN TO THE PORTAL

3-3. The milSuite Web site provides social media capabilities for enhancing collaboration and efficiency within the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) and Defense Knowledge Online (DKO) communities. Access to milSuite requires AKO or DKO credentials or a registered common access card (CAC).

3-4. Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, United States Army Combined Arms Center, hosts the SOP portal. Users may click on the following hyperlink or paste it into a Web browser: https://www.milsuite.mil/wiki/Portal:Standard_Operating_Procedures. This takes users directly to the SOP portal, by way of a milSuite login page.

3-5. The milSuite login page that users see initially provides user consent and terms of use information for the milSuite. Before logging in the first time, SOP portal users must read the information displayed under the “Standard Mandatory Notice and Consent Banner” and the “Terms of Use/Terms of Service” link. Upon logging in, users see the SOP portal home page. SOP portal users—

- Consent to the “Terms Of Use/Terms Of Service” for milSuite.
- Ensure all posts to the SOP portal are unclassified.
- Align SOP development with the doctrinal guidance in Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-90.90.
- Understand that posts are monitored and are not anonymous.
- Read and adhere to the milWiki rules of conduct (found by clicking on the “Rules of Conduct” link at the bottom of the SOP portal home page).
- Read and follow the milWiki guidelines (found by clicking on the “Guidelines” link under the “Support” heading along the left side of the SOP portal home page).

BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH THE MILWIKI

3-6. The milWiki provides numerous articles to familiarize users with using site. In the SOP portal home page, users will see links to articles, videos, frequently asked questions, and wiki templates pertinent to preparing SOPs. Additionally, users are encouraged to become familiar with the information at the milWiki links appearing on the left side of the SOP home page (visible after logging in). The milWiki information categories displayed on the left side of the page are—

- Navigation.
- Support.
- MilSuite.
- Tools.
- Toolbox.

3-7. The milWiki home page, at https://www.milsuite.mil/wiki/Main_Page, (also reached by clicking on the milWiki logo at the upper left-hand side of the SOP home page) links to tutorials, examples, article blueprints, and community links, under the heading “Getting Started.” Users may also navigate to an informative milWiki help page at <https://www.milsuite.mil/wiki/Help:Contents>.

USING THE SOP PORTAL HOME PAGE FOR COLLABORATION

3-8. Users should become familiar with how to use the milWiki before attempting to enter or modify content in the SOP portal (see paragraphs 3-6 to 3-7). This ATP provides a very limited description because the portal’s structure and content are developmental and subject to frequent change.

3-9. Users see the words “Portal: Standard Operating Procedures” near the top of the SOP portal home page. The SOP portal home page displays three tabs:

- Main page tab (of the SOP portal home page).
- SOP resources tab.
- Categories tab.

Users may navigate the site by clicking on the tabs, described in paragraphs 3-10 to 3-17.

SOP PORTAL HOME PAGE, MAIN PAGE TAB

3-10. The main page tab on the SOP portal home page displays a welcome message. This page offers a variety of resources. Users should not modify the content appearing in the welcome message.

SOP PORTAL HOME PAGE, SOP REOURCES TAB

3-11. Clicking on the SOP resources tab (the second of the three tabs displayed on the SOP portal's home page) takes users to the SOP resources page. Users see the words "Portal: Standard Operating Procedures/SOP Resources" near the top of the SOP resources page. Four tabs on the SOP resources page are—

- Main page tab (of the SOP resources page).
- Army regulations tab.
- Tactical SOP guidance tab.
- SOP categories tab (for uploading unit SOP examples).

SOP Resources Page, Main Page Tab

3-12. At the SOP resources page, users first see a main page tab. This tab displays a welcome message and a variety of helpful resources. Users may upload additional resources. Resources shown at this tab are for the convenience of users—resources may not be authoritative.

SOP Resources Page, Army Regulations Tab

3-13. At the Army regulations tab, users see copies of several ARs pertinent to the SOP portal. These are provided for the convenience of portal users. The official repository for Army administrative publications is http://www.apd.army.mil/AdminPubs/Pubs_home.asp.

SOP Resources Page, Tactical SOP Guidance Tab

3-14. To view or modify the portal's tactical SOP guidance, users click on the tactical SOP guidance tab in the SOP resources page, and then on the appropriate chapter. The chapters listed under the tactical SOP "contents" are variable. They are named and organized based on the Army operation plan and order format (ATTP 5-0.1 is the doctrinal proponent). For the reader's convenience, table 3-1 (pages 3-4 to 3-7) lists the attachments and responsible staff officers. This serves as an approximate table of contents. Differences between table 3-1 and the portal's contents are due to the site's remaining under development. Users submitting content should keep the mode of organization as consistent as possible with table 3-1. Users should keep in mind that the contents within the tactical SOP guidance are not authoritative doctrine. Additionally, SOP portal users may find some chapters with the message "contents pending." Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate encourages Soldiers to submit text for missing chapters and to submit comments and recommendations for improving others. Users must observe information security policies and procedures described in this chapter.

SOP Resources Page, SOP Categories Tab

3-15. The SOP categories tab displayed on the SOP resources page and the "categories" tab displayed on the SOP portal home page provide two ways to navigate to one location containing unit SOP examples. To view or upload unit SOPs, users click on either tab. Paragraphs 3-16 and 3-17 further describe using the categories.

SOP PORTAL HOME PAGE, CATEGORIES TAB

3-16. The portal's examples of unit SOPs are organized by general, nondoctrinal categories. Tactical units are encouraged to upload unclassified SOPs to the portal—as examples of best practices to share with other units—according to information security policies and procedures described in this chapter. To upload unit SOPs, users follow the instructions for the milWiki (see paragraphs 3-6 and 3-7). Users may create new categories or reorganize existing categories for their unit SOPs.

3-17. To adopt text from the portal into unit SOPs, users select the desired text, copy it, and paste it into their own document, using unit hardware with the appropriate classification and following unit procedures. They modify or omit portions as needed. They must comply with AR 380-5. Chapter 2 provides additional guidance on developing effective SOPs.

Table 3-1. List of attachments and responsible staff officers

ANNEX A – TASK ORGANIZATION (G-5 or G-3 [S-3])
ANNEX B – INTELLIGENCE (G-2 [S-2])
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 – Intelligence Estimate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Terrain (Engineer Officer) Tab B – Weather (Staff Weather Officer) Tab C – Civil Considerations Tab D – Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield Products Appendix 2 – Counterintelligence Appendix 3 – Signals Intelligence Appendix 4 – Human Intelligence Appendix 5 – Geospatial Intelligence Appendix 6 – Measurement and Signature Intelligence Appendix 7 – Open Source Intelligence
ANNEX C – OPERATIONS (G-5 or G-3 [S-3])
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 – Design Concept Appendix 2 – Operation Overlay Appendix 3 – Decision Support Products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Execution Matrix Tab B – Decision Support Template and Matrix Appendix 4 – Gap Crossing Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Traffic Control Overlay Appendix 5 – Air Assault Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Pickup Zone Diagram Tab B – Air Movement Table Tab C – Landing Zone Diagram Appendix 6 – Airborne Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Marshalling Plan Tab B – Air Movement Plan Tab C – Drop Zone/Extraction Zone Diagram Appendix 7 – Amphibious Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Advance Force Operations Tab B – Embarkation Plan Tab C – Landing Plan Tab D – Rehearsal Plan Appendix 8 – Special Operations (G-3 [S-3]) Appendix 9 – Battlefield Obscuration (CBRN Officer) Appendix 10 – Airspace Command and Control (G-3 [S-3] or Airspace Command and Control Officer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Air Traffic Services Appendix 11 – Rules of Engagement (Staff Judge Advocate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – No Strike List Tab B – Restricted Target List (G-3 [S-3] with Staff Judge Advocate) Appendix 12 – Law and Order Operations (Provost Marshal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Police Engagement Tab B – Law Enforcement Appendix 13 – Internment and Resettlement Operations (Provost Marshal)

Table 3-1. List of attachments and responsible staff officers (continued)

ANNEX D – FIRES (Chief of Fires/Fire Support Officer)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 – Fire Support Overlay Appendix 2 – Fire Support Execution Matrix Appendix 3 – Targeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Target Selection Standards Tab B – Target Synchronization Matrix Tab C – Attack Guidance Matrix Tab D – Target List Worksheets Tab E – Battle Damage Assessment (G-2 [S-2]) Appendix 4 – Field Artillery Support Appendix 5 – Air Support Appendix 6 – Naval Fire Support Appendix 7 – Cyber/Electromagnetic Activities (Electronic Warfare Officer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Electronic Warfare Tab B – Computer Network Operations Tab C – Computer Network Attack Tab D – Computer Network Exploitation
ANNEX E – PROTECTION (Chief of Protection/Protection Officer as designated by the commander)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 – Air and Missile Defense (Air and Missile Defense Officer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tab A – Enemy Air Avenues of Approach Tab B – Enemy Air Order of Battle Tab C – Enemy Theater Ballistic Missile Overlay Tab D – Air and Missile Defense Protection Overlay Tab E – Critical Asset List/Defended Asset List Appendix 2 – Personnel Recovery (Personnel Recovery Officer) Appendix 3 – Fratricide Avoidance (Safety Officer) Appendix 4 – Operational Area Security (Provost Marshal) Appendix 5 – Antiterrorism (Antiterrorism Officer) Appendix 6 – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense (CBRN Officer) Appendix 7 – Safety (Safety Officer) Appendix 8 – Operations Security (Operations Security Officer) Appendix 9 – Explosive Ordnance Disposal (Explosive Ordnance Disposal Officer) Appendix 10 – Force Health Protection (Surgeon)

Table 3-1. List of attachments and responsible staff officers (continued)

ANNEX F – SUSTAINMENT (Chief of Sustainment [S-4])
Appendix 1 – Logistics (G-4 [S-4]) Appendix 2 – Personnel Services Support (G-1 [S-1]) Appendix 3 – Army Health System Support (Surgeon)
ANNEX G – ENGINEER (Engineer Officer)
Appendix 1 – Mobility/Counter-mobility Appendix 2 – Survivability (Engineer Officer) Appendix 3 – General Engineering Appendix 4 – Geospatial Engineering Appendix 5 – Engineer Task Organization and Execution Matrix Appendix 6 – Environmental Considerations
ANNEX H – SIGNAL (G-6 [S-6])
Appendix 1 – Information Assurance Appendix 2 – Voice and Data Network Diagrams Appendix 3 – Satellite Communications Appendix 4 – Foreign Data Exchanges Appendix 5 – Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations
ANNEX I – Not Used
ANNEX J – INFORM AND INFLUENCE ACTIVITIES (G-7 [S-7])
Appendix 1 – Public Affairs (Public Affairs Officer) Appendix 2 – Military Deception (Military Deception Officer) Appendix 3 – Military Information Support Operations (Military Information Support Officer) Appendix 4 – Soldier and Leader Engagement
ANNEX K – CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS (G-9 [S-9])
Appendix 1 – Execution Matrix Appendix 2 – Populace and Resources Control Plan Appendix 3 – Civil Information Management Plan
ANNEX L – INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE (G-3 [S-3])
Appendix 1 – ISR Overlay Appendix 2 – ISR Tasking Matrix
ANNEX M – ASSESSMENT (G-5 [S-5] or G-3 [S-3])
Appendix 1 – Nesting of Assessment Efforts Appendix 2 – Assessment Framework Appendix 3 – Assessment Working Group
ANNEX N – SPACE OPERATIONS (Space Operations Officer)
ANNEX O – Not Used
ANNEX P – HOST-NATION SUPPORT (G-4 [S-4])
ANNEX Q – Spare
ANNEX R – REPORTS (G-3 [S-3], G-5 [S-5], G-7 and Knowledge Management Officer)
ANNEX S – SPECIAL TECHNICAL OPERATIONS (Special Technical Operations Officer)
Appendix 1 – Special Technical Operations Capabilities Integration Matrix Appendix 2 – Functional Area I Program and Objectives Appendix 3 – Functional Area II Program and Objectives
ANNEX T – Spare
ANNEX U – INSPECTOR GENERAL (Inspector General)

Table 3-1. List of attachments and responsible staff officers (continued)

ANNEX V – INTERAGENCY COORDINATION (G-3 [S-3] and G-9 [S-9])
ANNEX W – Spare
ANNEX X – Spare
ANNEX Y – Spare
ANNEX Z – DISTRIBUTION (G-3 [S-3] and Knowledge Management Officer)
<p>Legend:</p> <p>G-1, assistant chief of staff, personnel G-2, assistant chief of staff, intelligence G-3, assistant chief of staff, operations G-4, assistant chief of staff, logistics G-5, assistant chief of staff, plans G-6, assistant chief of staff, signal G-7, assistant chief of staff, inform and influence activities G-9, assistant chief of staff, civil affairs operations</p> <p>S-1, personnel staff officer S-2, intelligence staff officer S-3, operations staff officer S-4, logistics staff officer S-5, plans staff officer S-6, signal staff officer S-7, inform and influence activities staff officer S-9, civil affairs operations staff officer</p>

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Glossary

SECTION I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AR	Army regulation
ATP	Army techniques publication
ATTP	Army tactics, techniques, and procedures
CJCSI	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff instruction
DA Pam	Department of the Army pamphlet
FM	field manual
JP	joint publication
SOP	standard operating procedure

SECTION II – TERMS

procedures

Standard, detailed steps that prescribe how to perform specific tasks. (CJCSI 5120.02B)

standard operating procedure

A set of instructions covering those features of operations which lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness. The procedure is applicable unless ordered otherwise. (JP 3-31)

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REQUIRED PUBLICATIONS

These documents must be available to intended users of this publication.

JP 1-02. *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 8 November 2010.

FM 1-02. *Operational Terms and Graphics*, 21 September 2004.

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