CHAPTER 5
FIGHTING POWER

How does the Army generate fighting power?

*Human force is threefold: it is mental, moral and physical, but none of these forms of force can be expended without influencing the other two.*

Major General J. F. C. Fuller

INTRODUCTION

Australia is unlikely ever to possess a large standing army. However, as Marshal de Saxe has pointed out, ‘it is not big armies that win battles; it is the good ones’. To this end, the Army has embraced the concept of *fighting power*, which seeks to harness all its moral, physical and intellectual resources in the pursuit of success in battle. Fighting power extends the earlier notion of combat power by adding an intellectual component to the moral and physical dimensions. This chapter describes these three components and the role of professional mastery in integrating them to generate fighting power.

THE GENERATION OF FIGHTING POWER

Fighting power is the result of the integration of three interdependent components: the intellectual component provides the knowledge to fight; the moral component provides the will to fight; and the physical component provides the means to fight. The role of professional mastery in the integration of these components to generate fighting power is illustrated in figure 7.

The intellectual and moral components of fighting power represent the human dimension of warfighting. They are concerned with how people, individually and collectively, apply their non-materiel resources—intellect, emotions, motivation and leadership—to fight and win. The capacity to apply these resources is a critically important element in the human dimension of

warfighting. It is what enables individuals and teams to succeed in a complex and chaotic battlespace characterised by danger, uncertainty and friction.

The physical component of fighting power is represented by the BOS, which are the building blocks of Army capability. The division of responsibility under the respective BOS describes how equipment and trained personnel are supported and organised into forces that can be fielded in battle.

**THE INTELLECTUAL COMPONENT**

The knowledge and the communication and thinking skills of each member of the Army team comprise the intellectual component of fighting power. The intellectual component may be described as the way in which creativity and analytical ability are applied to meet military challenges. In its application, the intellectual component is expressed in three important ways: *analytical excellence, adaptability, and concept-led innovation.*
Analytical Excellence

Analytical excellence refers to the capacity of individuals to assess a situation quickly and accurately, and determine and communicate an appropriate response reliably. It is the product of minds that have been shaped by training, education and experience. Its epitome is the commander and team who can move through the decision cycle faster than an adversary to produce a successful outcome.

Adaptability

Adaptability refers to the capacity of individuals to accommodate changed circumstances without being overwhelmed or neutralised. It is expressed in a willingness to pursue new or changed objectives in the absence of a full explanation for change. Adaptability requires particular trust and confidence in higher leadership. Adaptable individuals also require confidence in themselves—in their training and preparation for battle—and in their capacity to comprehend a situation and respond appropriately with a minimum of supervision.

Concept-led Innovation

More abstract than adaptability, but no less important, concept-led innovation is an essential dimension of the intellectual component of fighting power. It is primarily exercised in campaign planning and, outside the battlespace, through the development of new capabilities, operational concepts and doctrine. Concept-led innovation is the product of an organisational climate that encourages inquiry, debate, experimentation, testing and informed change. More broadly, such innovation underpins the Army’s concept-led and capability-based modernisation on a continuous basis.

Summary

The intellectual component is that dimension of fighting power concerned with what the Army knows and how the Army operates. It is engendered by a continuum of individual training and education that begins with the selection of recruits. It is reflected in the high priority accorded to demanding and rigorous collective training. It facilitates timely, accurate and unambiguous communication between competent professionals in the pursuit of shared goals, within and outside the battlespace. The intellectual component of fighting power rewards professional self-development and encourages innovation.
THE MORAL COMPONENT

In the midst of chaos, danger and uncertainty, individual soldiers need to overcome fear and rise above their personal circumstances in the pursuit of organisational goals. Where the intellectual component of fighting power provides the knowledge to fight, the moral component supplies and sustains the will to fight. The moral component is the other half of the human dimension of fighting power and is reflected most especially in the willingness to endure hardship, danger and mortal peril. The moral component of fighting power is expressed in, and depends on, three essential and interdependent elements: purpose, integrity and morale.

Purpose

Purpose refers to individual and collective belief in the worth of the cause underlying the task at hand. This belief is influenced by a range of intangible factors such as legitimacy, shared values and group ethos, and is sustained by good leadership. These intangible factors operate to sustain individuals and teams in the pursuit of their objectives when the environment and the situation conspire to distract them. In some circumstances, particularly in small teams, the upholding of values and the embodiment of ethos can assume the place of purpose. A sense of purpose greatly contributes to the Army’s core values of courage, initiative and teamwork.

Legitimacy refers to perceptions of justice, legality and morality as they apply to military operations and related actions. At the highest level, legitimacy finds expression in Australia using force under defined circumstances only and in a strictly controlled manner, such as the United Nations Security Council resolution sanctioning Australian leadership of the INTERFET mission.
More broadly, such legitimacy is expressed in the terms of international conventions covering the resort to, and the use of, military force including a substantial body of law embodying just war doctrine.\textsuperscript{2} Legitimacy also flows directly through to the lowest levels when expressed in ROE and orders for opening fire.

\textbf{Integrity}

A noble purpose cannot provide moral legitimacy unaided. The personal character and ethics of those tasked with achieving such a purpose are equally important. Even the most just cause can be undermined by deficiencies in the way it is pursued. Only a just purpose implemented with integrity will suffice in the Australian context.

Successful military operations demand integrity and moral courage at every level. The importance of a soldier’s moral character in general, and his leadership in particular, cannot be overstated with regard to developing and sustaining fighting power. Both in and out of battle, leadership—whether exercised directly through command or indirectly through peer example—is much more than the practical art of influencing and directing people to achieve purposeful objectives.

War is chaotic and full of moral dilemmas; it often involves the need for restraint in situations where normal constraints are absent or sublimated. Practical methods of leadership and peer example can be taught, modelled and practised, but the Army’s warfighting ethos, and Australia’s national ethos, dictate that such methods can only be fully implemented and sustained by soldiers of robust integrity. Leadership and the collective trust required within the Army depend on robust personal integrity anchored in the character and qualities capable of absorbing the shocks and dilemmas of battle.

\textsuperscript{2} The just war concept is the internationally accepted doctrine that maintains that resort to war (known in legal terms as \textit{jus ad bellum}) can only be justified if six key principles are satisfied. The principles are generally agreed as:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{Last Resort.} Every effort must be made to resolve differences by peaceful means before resorting to the use of force.
  \item \textbf{Competent Authority.} Only legitimate (national) authorities can decide on war.
  \item \textbf{Just Cause.} War may be resorted to only after a specific fault, and if the purpose is to make reparation for injury or restore what has been wrongfully seized.
  \item \textbf{Right Intention.} The intention must be the advancement of good or the avoidance of evil.
  \item \textbf{Probability of Success.} In a war, other than one strictly in self-defence, there must be a reasonable prospect of victory.
  \item \textbf{Proportionality.} The innocent shall be immune from direct attack, and the amount and effect of force used shall not be disproportionate to the end achieved.
\end{itemize}

Further references on the just war concept include:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Michael Walzer, \textit{Just and Unjust Wars}, Basic Books, NY, 1977,
  \item Barrie Paskins and Michael Dockrill, \textit{The Ethics of War}, Duckworth, London, 1979,
\end{itemize}
Integrity, demonstrated through moral courage, is therefore essential for a holistic approach to soldiering and for sustaining the will to fight, even in cases of mortal danger. Leaders and peers who set a good example earn respect for their professional abilities and personal qualities. Integrity also involves dedication to the mission or task at hand without any loss of moral perspective concerning the proper enforcement of military discipline, the appropriate employment of force in combat and the protection of non-combatants.

Morale

Morale is a quality of individuals and teams that is closely related to their sense of purpose, the way that they are led and the character of the soldiers concerned. High morale sustains individual and collective will in the face of adversity. Morale reflects and expresses the degree of confidence with which individuals and teams approach the task at hand and is a critical factor in the generation of fighting power. Building and sustaining individual and collective morale, traditionally referred to as esprit de corps, is a major responsibility of commanders at all levels. The key to success with this responsibility is understanding that morale has spiritual, rational and material foundations.

Morale cannot be permanently sustained by rational and material motivations alone. In particular, these motivations cannot nourish the spiritual aspect of human interaction and satisfy the common need to contextualise human effort with wider purposes, individual mortality and religious faith. The spiritual foundations of morale within the Army are primarily but not exclusively grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition, and the associated and derivative ethical and moral values that underlie Australian society. They particularly find acknowledgement and expression in the prominent place accorded to the role of chaplains in the provision of spiritual guidance and direction to the Army, especially when engaged on operations.

The rational foundations of morale reflect the importance of reason. Soldiers must be confident that they have been prepared well for operations by challenging, relevant and realistic training. Commanders and staffs must be prepared to explain in readily understood language the rationale for operations, and must acknowledge that their effectiveness as commanders is ultimately based on the confidence and respect that soldiers have in and for them. All these aspects must be nurtured in training.

The material foundations of morale reflect the critical part played by tangible measures. These measures may be direct, for example, the best available weapons and equipment; rapid evacuation of casualties; good food; reliable mail services; and regular, diverse and healthy rest and recreation. They may also be indirect or background measures, such as reasonable conditions of service, fair remuneration and comprehensive support to soldiers' families.
Morale can be maintained under adverse material circumstances where it is obvious that commanders are doing their very best to improve conditions.

**Summary**

The moral component is that dimension of fighting power concerned with the individual and collective will to fight. It is engendered by confidence in the cause concerned, nurtured by moral leadership and sustained by high morale. The moral component is reflected in the high priority given to character issues, character training and moral education in the Army’s recruitment and promotion processes, and in the Army’s warfighting culture. It is also reflected in the emphasis on spiritual guidance provided by Army chaplains. The moral component of fighting power reflects the Army’s role as a last-resort warfighting instrument of a Western liberal democracy, within an international system still striving for the resolution of disputes through reason and the rule of law.

**THE PHYSICAL COMPONENT**

The physical component of fighting power, represented by the BOS, provides the Army with the means to fight. These operating systems are interdependent and equally important. Within the battlespace and in combination, they allow a commander to orchestrate effects in time and space to achieve assigned objectives.

**Battlespace Operating Systems**

Each BOS represents the combination of personnel, collective training, major systems, supplies, facilities, and command and management—organised, supported and employed to perform a designated function as part of the whole. This relationship is discussed in [chapter 6](#). The BOS are:

- **Command, Control and Communications.** The Command, Control and Communications BOS includes all systems and personnel involved in exercising authority and direction over assigned or attached forces. This BOS includes a range of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities and procedural systems that are employed by a commander to plan, direct and control forces and operations in the accomplishment of a mission.

- **Manoeuvre.** The Manoeuvre BOS generates a range of battlespace effects including suppression, neutralisation and destruction of the enemy, and the seizure and retention of ground in all seasons, weather and
terrain. The Manoeuvre BOS includes all infantry, armour and Army Aviation force elements. This BOS is the dynamic element of combat, providing the means of prosecuting close combat and concentrating sufficient force at the decisive point to achieve surprise, psychological shock and physical momentum. Manoeuvre BOS effects are enhanced through the synchronisation of manoeuvre with the other BOS. There are three characteristics of all Manoeuvre BOS forces: firepower, mobility and protection.

- **Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance.** The Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance BOS produces intelligence for the planning and conduct of operations. This BOS includes all systems and personnel involved in planning, managing and collecting information on enemy capabilities and intentions, and the physical environment. This is achieved through intelligence gathering, reconnaissance and surveillance using visual, aural, electronic, photographic or other means.

- **Information Operations.** The Information Operations BOS is that capability specifically designed to affect adversary decision-making and information flows, while enhancing or protecting friendly information and decision systems. This capability usually fulfils shape and shield functions in both offensive and defensive terms. It normally includes operations security, deception, computer network operations, electronic attack measures, electronic protection measures, counterintelligence, and psychological operations. Information operations planning, civil affairs and public information are included in the BOS as the information operations support capability.

- **Offensive Support.** Offensive support is the collective and coordinated use of indirect fire weapons, armed aircraft, and other lethal and non lethal means in support of a ground or air manoeuvre plan. Offensive support includes indirect fire capabilities and the offensive support architecture and systems required to plan and coordinate fire, including joint assets. The effectiveness of offensive support is dependent on the integration of intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance assets that detect and track targets before an attack and provide combat assessment after its conclusion.

- **Mobility and Survivability.** The Mobility and Survivability BOS provides a diverse range of effects that contribute in the broadest sense to knowing and shaping the physical dimension. These effects are generated by five types of support that are integrated through the command, control, communications, computers and intelligence of the
Mobility and Survivability effort. These systems include: geospatial support to enhance knowledge of the physical dimension; mobility support to enhance friendly freedom to physically manoeuvre; counter-mobility support to deny the enemy freedom to physically manoeuvre; survivability support to reduce the effects of hazards; and sustainability support to enable a force to maintain the necessary level of fighting power.

- **Ground Based Air Defence.** Ground based air defence comprises all Army weapons systems, processes, procedures and personnel designed to nullify or reduce the effectiveness of attack by hostile aerial platforms and munitions after they are airborne. In so doing, they prevent the enemy interfering with the conduct of land operations from the air, thereby enhancing a commander’s freedom of combat manoeuvre. It includes systems designed to acquire, intercept, engage, destroy or neutralise weapons delivery platforms and/or the weapons themselves. This BOS encompasses dedicated air defence/anti-air systems, defensive counter-air systems, and also the use of fire by non-specialist weapons (all arms air defence) at aerial targets.

- **Combat Service Support.** The Combat Service Support BOS includes all systems, platforms and personnel required to sustain forces in the combat zone, including systems to provide combat service support, command, control, communications, computers and intelligence, distribution, materiel support, support engineering, health services support, personnel services and civil affairs.

**Summary**

The physical component is that dimension of fighting power concerned with the means to fight. These means are generated through a concept-led, integrated and mutually dependent process whereby the elements of FIC are focused towards structuring, equipping, supporting and training the Army for successful warfighting.
Professional mastery integrates the components of fighting power. At its most abstract, professional mastery is the demonstrated level of skill applied to the art and science of war. On a more practical level, professional mastery is an expression of how an individual applies the skills, knowledge and attitudes developed through education, training and experience to meet the requirements of the task at hand. Individual professional mastery forms the basis of the Army’s collective professional mastery, in which excellence in all aspects of the profession of arms represents a unified field of applied knowledge.

Developing Professional Mastery

An individual’s innate attributes include physical capacity, intellectual ability and moral values. These attributes can be enhanced over time by education, training and experience. Education is a whole-of-life process that develops higher-order cognitive skills through both structured and unstructured learning. Training, on the other hand, is the process of developing the specific vocational skills required to perform set tasks.

Experience, or experiential learning, is fundamental to individual development. It involves the exercise of skills, knowledge and attitudes ‘on the job’ at all levels and, more broadly, in personal and public life. Experience helps to develop the deductive and inductive decision-making skills that are essential for exercising professional mastery.

The exercise of leadership, whether by an individual in a formal command position or as a member of a team, is the core activity that integrates the components of fighting power. For example, leaders demonstrate professional mastery through the translation of operational concepts into orders or suggestions that employ the physical element of fighting power to best effect. Securing the willing cooperation of others in the execution of orders depends on those orders making sense morally as well as militarily. This process of making sense of situations is a key responsibility of leaders, and essential to creating cohesive units and harnessing the manoeuvrist approach.

All ranks can and should aspire to professional mastery. For most warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, the pursuit of professional mastery will predominantly involve work at the tactical level. They will fill the roles of operator, supervisor, manager or advisor, and provide an example to their colleagues.
To support these responsibilities, the focus of their training and education will be vocational, in order to concentrate their learning experiences on the development of deductive reasoning skills.

Commissioned officers will be required to possess appropriate combinations of education, training and experience at various stages of their professional development. At any given stage, they must display the necessary leadership to do their job. For example, senior officers working at the strategic level are expected to understand the impact of a broader range of external forces on events, and the implications of those changes for lower levels that are not totally visible to them.

The Army’s personnel management and training systems aim to develop professional mastery at all ranks. The Army seeks to measure each individual’s skills, knowledge and attitudes, where practical, to determine the educational, training and experience requirements of people so that professional mastery—in relation to both current and future job requirements—can be achieved.

CONCLUSION

Individuals and organisations contribute to winning the land battle by exerting their intellectual, moral and physical strengths to defeat the enemy’s will. Fighting power encompasses how the Army combines individuals and their supporting equipment into combat organisations. Professional mastery is the glue that binds the components together to optimise the Army’s fighting power.

The components of fighting power need to be constantly debated, tested and modernised. Professional armies shun complacency; they value forthright and robust intellectual and professional debate, especially in the discussion of doctrine and the development of future capability. This debate can only occur when professional mastery is achieved throughout the Army. The Army’s process for generating future land warfare capability is discussed in the final chapter.