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# Hellenic Supreme Joint War College HSJWC

**A strategic evaluation of the concept of Mission Command with reference to the present information age.**



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# Presentation

**A strategic evaluation of the concept of Mission Command with reference to the present information age.**

- **Mission Command**
- **Command and Control**
- **Information Age**
- **Conclusions**
- **Questions**



# Aim of the Paper

- Examine the concept of **Mission Command** as a main Command and Control method
- Examine the problem of **Command and Control** of military operations
- Examine how **Information age** affected the above

in order to examine if Mission Command remains a valid C2 method in the present Information Age



# Mission Command



Decentralized Command and Control method

## Evolution

Historically : Armies used  
Centralized Command

Problem



Military Defeat





# Mission Command



## Analysis

### Causes of Defeat

- Ineffective leadership
- Risk avoidance
- Lack of initiative
- Limited or false information

### Nature of War

- Fog of War
- Friction

War is a **CHAOTIC** phenomenon

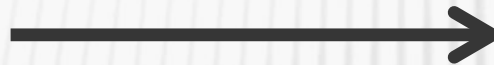


# Mission Command

**Solution**



Use Chaotic nature of War to gain the **Decision Advantage**



Initiative on lower Command Levels



Helmuth von Moltke

Pictures: wikipedia commons

“It is a mistake for an officer to **wait for orders in situations in which these cannot arrive**. His actions will be more effective if he can act freely within the intention of his commander”



# Mission Command



## Present Definition

Milan Vego has defined Mission Command as a **relaxed decentralized command and control method** based more on understanding the requirements of the mission than on detailed orders and instruction from the chain of command (Vego, 2009, pp. X-33). Mission command requires that the **superior commanders trust and empower their subordinates** to act on their own will when something unexpected occurs (Shamir, 2011, p. 3).

Easier said than done



# Mission Command



## Practical Employment

- Is not Complete Freedom of action
- Subordinates must act within their limits
- Restrictions = Communications
- Requires delegation of authority
- Depends on Size of Operations





# Mission Command



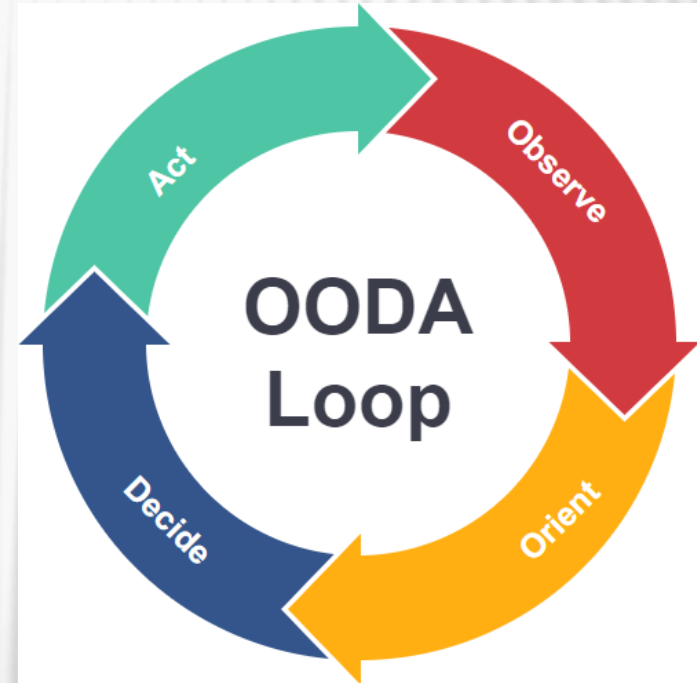
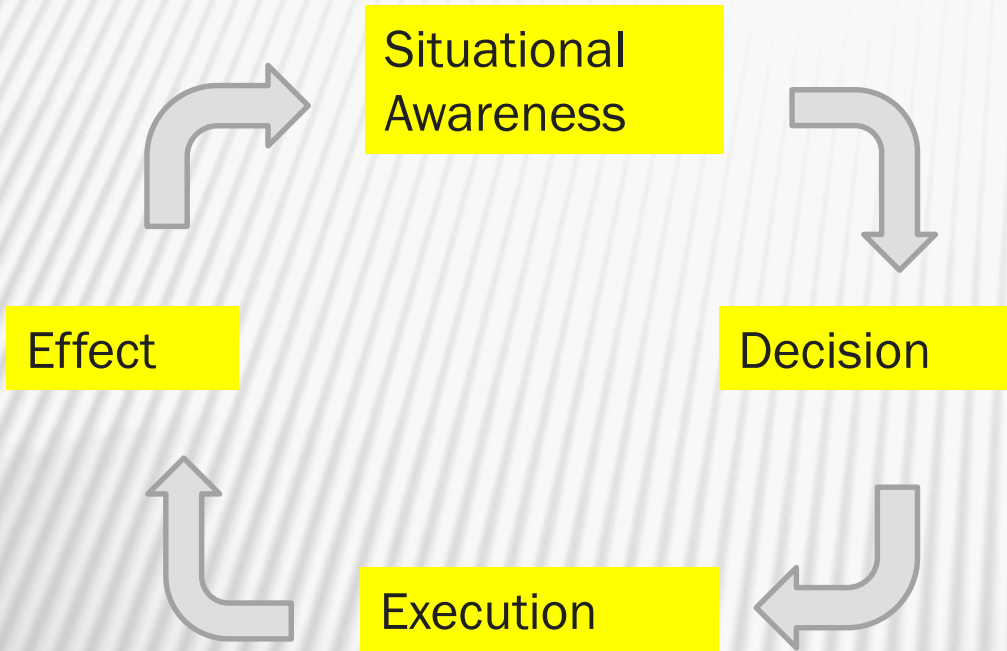
## Training/ Culture

### Mission Command Requires:

- Trained Officers
- Common Understanding
- Acceptance of Errors

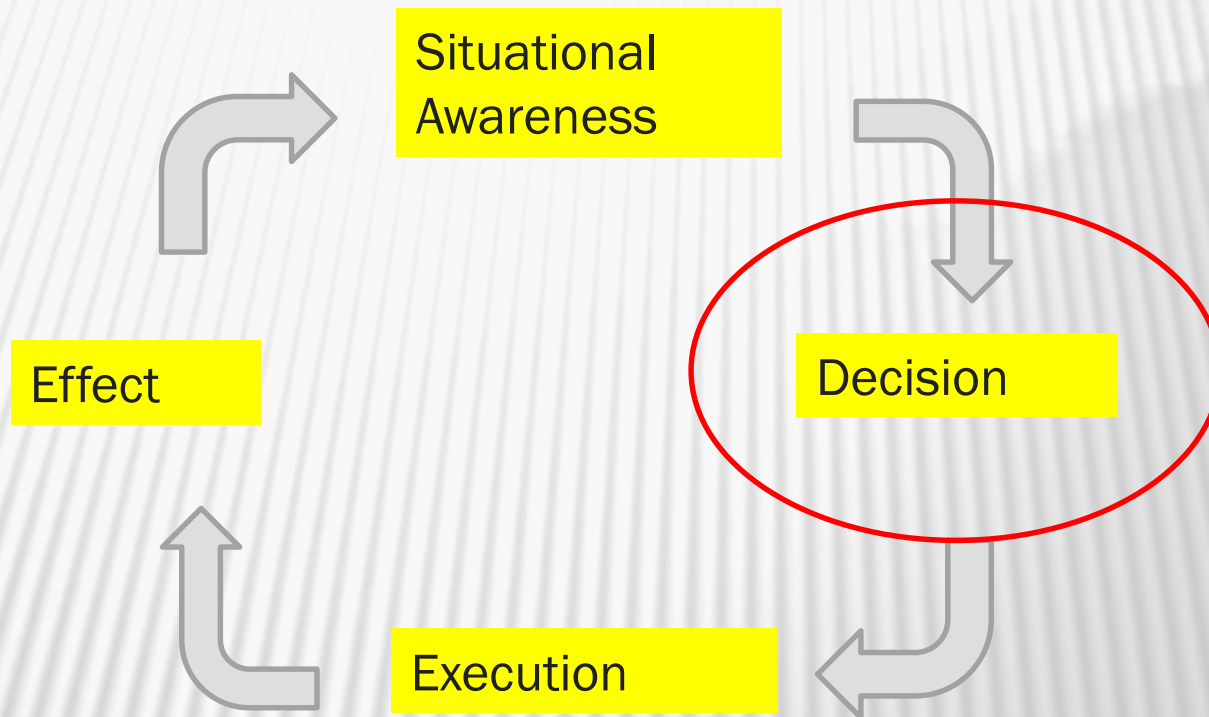


# Command and Control



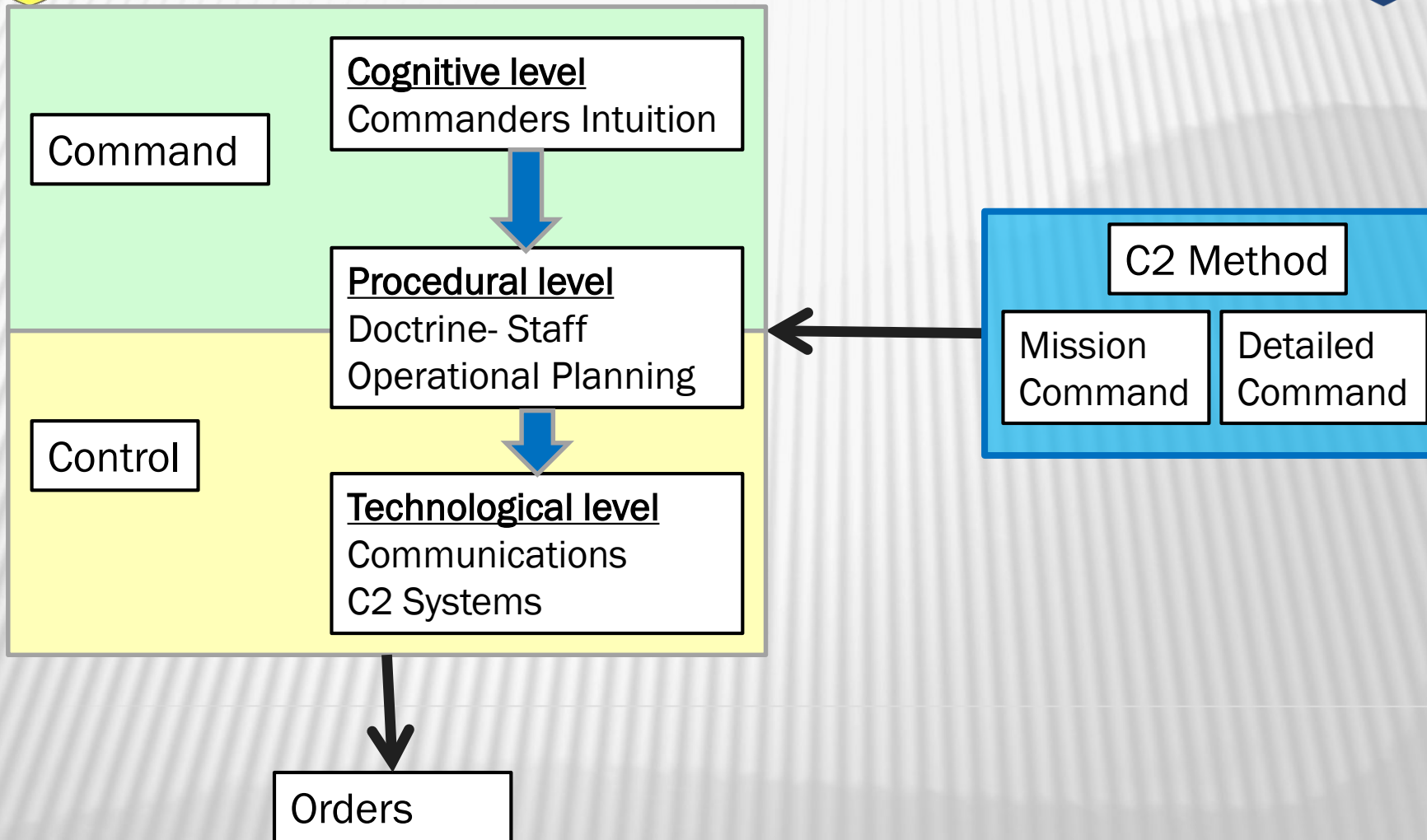


# Command and Control



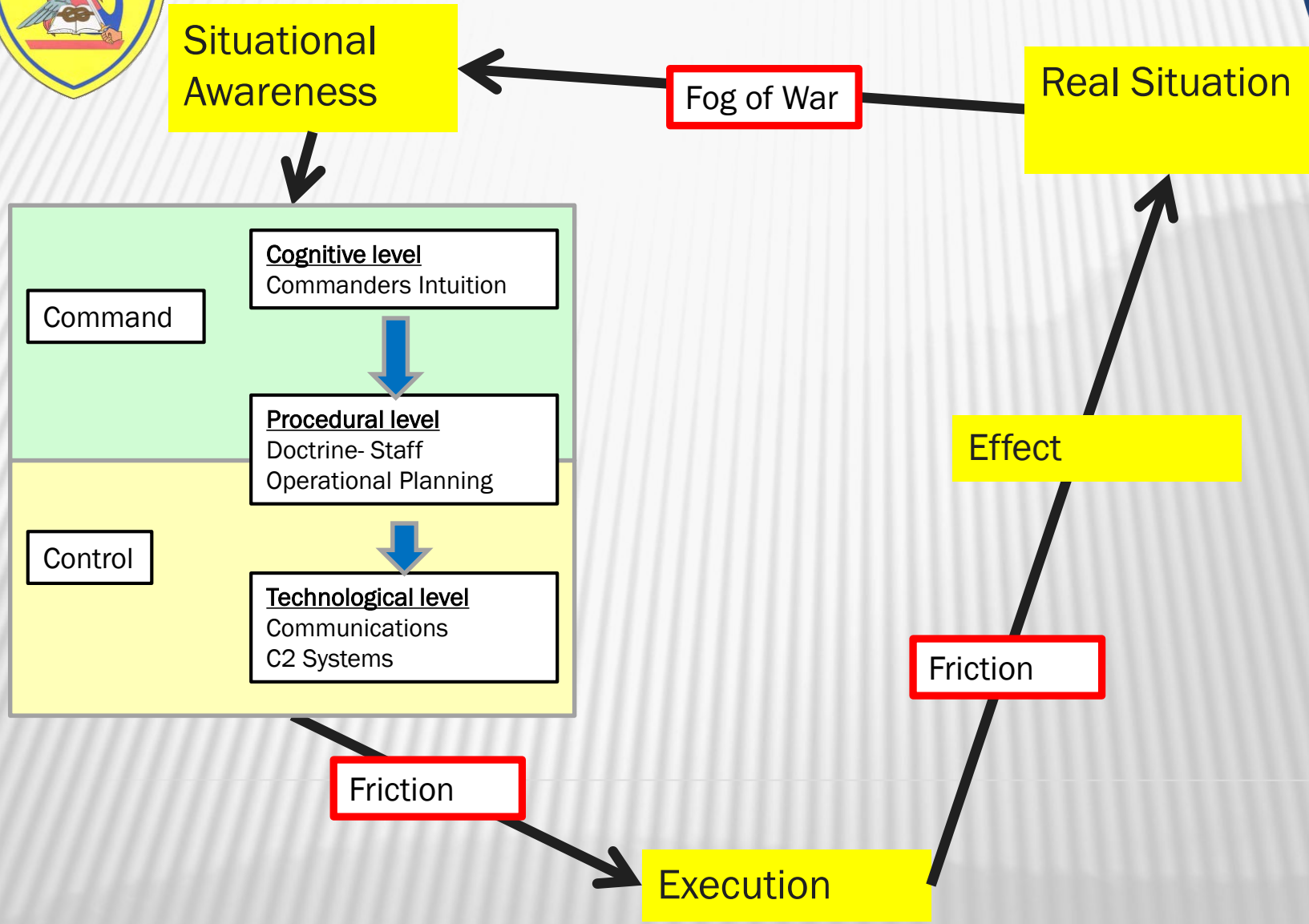


# Command and Control



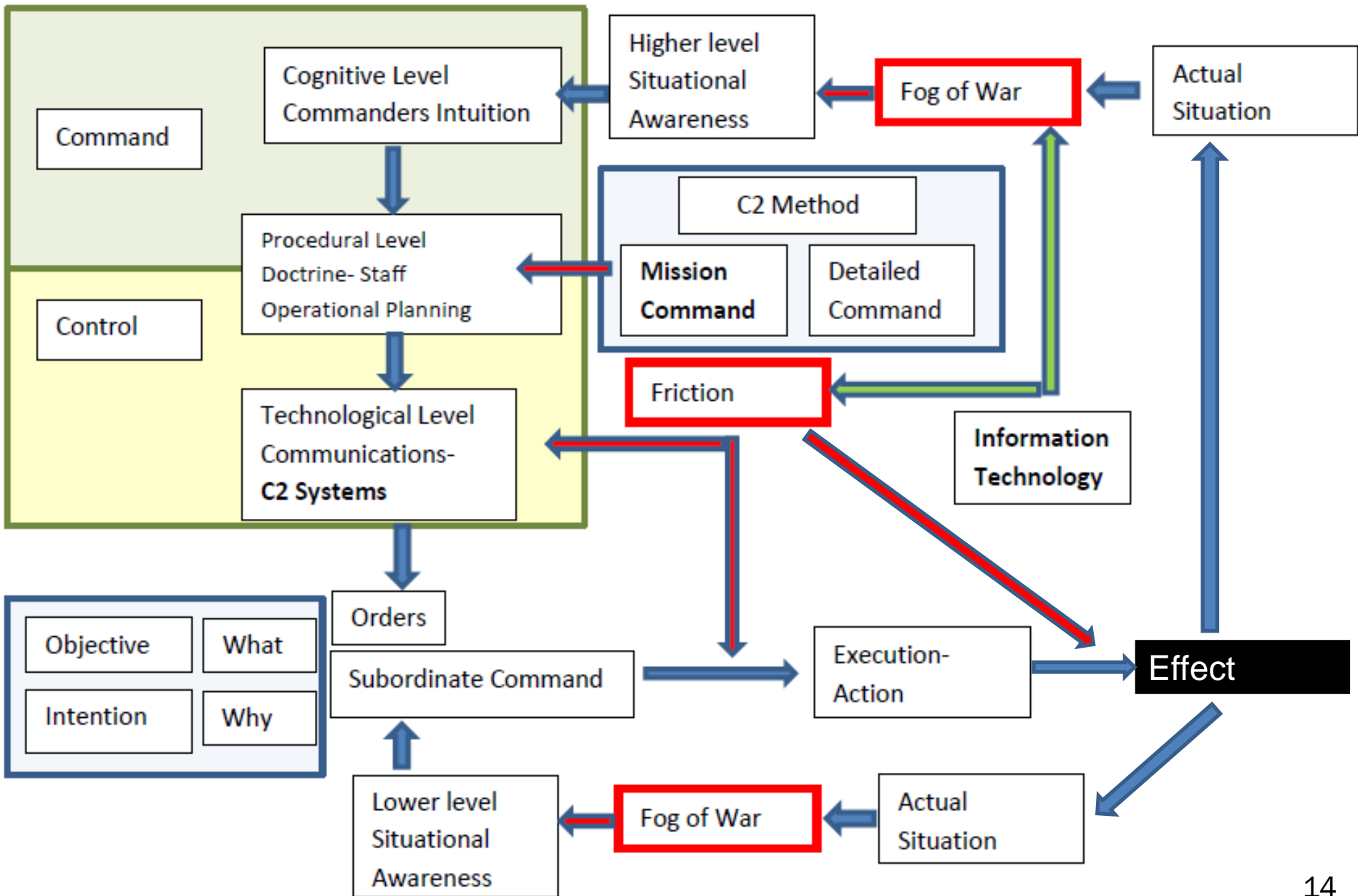


# Command and Control



# Command and Control

Decision Superiority = Speed + Quality





# Command and Control



- Modern C2 Systems bring unprecedented capabilities to commanders
- Digital Divide



Picture: [www.rheinmetall.ca](http://www.rheinmetall.ca)



# Command and Control



- Net-Centric Warfare will provide a common situational awareness to all levels of command
- Redundancy and Resilience



Picture: [www.microwavejournal.com](http://www.microwavejournal.com)





# Information Age



## Information Age has marked a new RMA (Revolution in Military Affairs)



Picture: [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)



Picture: [www.stackrack.com](http://www.stackrack.com)



# Information Age



## Is there a Fog of War and Friction?

- Commanders can have a better situational awareness than their subordinates
- Modern technology has greatly reduced the effects of Friction



# Information Age



## Effects of Modern Information environment

- Strategic significance of minor Tactical actions
- Public opinion
- Pressure from the Political Strategic Level



# Information Age



## Consequences of Strategic Control of Tactical Situations

- On the past officers had to live with the decisions of their subordinates
- Today they can monitor them and call them
- Subordinates avoid taking responsibility
- Micromanagement
- MOOTW (Military Operations Other Than War )



# Conclusions



**Mission Command gives a decision advantage under specific conditions**

**The Strategic Implications of Tactical actions necessitated under condition the use of Centralized command**



# Conclusions



**Modern Information Age technologies can reduce the effects of Fog of War and Friction to an extent that centralized command is more effective**

**Human Cognitive capabilities is a restrictive factor**



# Conclusions



**Mission Command remains relevant in cases C2 systems fail**

**Mission Command importance in building a leadership culture in officer remains unchanged**



# Questions

