Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

IN FOCUS

Updated October 19, 2026

The Army's Multi-Domain Task Force

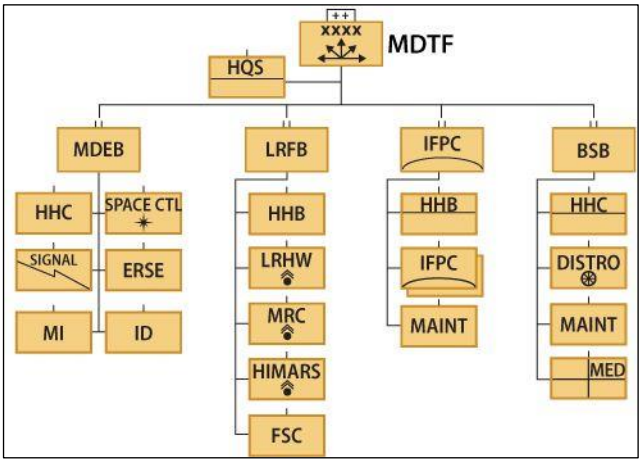
The Significance of the Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF)

Congress has expressed concern about the military threat posed by Russia and China. The Army believes to address this threat, it must be able to operate in a multi-domain (air, land, water, space, cyber, information) environment, requiring new operational concepts, technologies, weapons, and units. The MDTF is the Army's self-described organization centerpiece of this effort. The Army's Chief of Staff Paper #1: *Army Multi-Domain Transformation Ready to Win in Competition and Conflict* describes the MDTF as "theater-level maneuver elements designed to synchronize precision effects and precision fires in all domains against adversary anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) networks in all domains, enabling joint forces to execute their operational plan (OPLAN)-directed roles."

MDTF Organization

Figure 1 depicts a generic MDTF.

Figure 1. Generic MDTF



Source: Army Information Paper provided to CRS, April 10, 2025.

Notes: MDEB = Multi-Domain Effects Battalion; HHC = Headquarters and Headquarters Company; MI = Military Intelligence; ERSE = Extended Range Sensing Element; ID = Information Dominance; LRFB = Long-Range Fires Battalion; HHB = Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; LRHW = Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon; MRC =Mid-Range Capability (also referred to as Strategic Mid-Range Fires [SMRF]); HIMARS = High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems; FSC = Forward Sustainment Company; IFPC = Integrated Fire Protection Capability; BSB = Brigade Support Battalion.

MDTFs are to be tailored to Combatant Commander requirements, so it is possible the generic MDTF in **Figure 1** may contain more, fewer, or other types of units depending on the requirements of its assigned theater of operations.

Army Plans for MDTF Development

The Army originally planned to build five MDTFs: two aligned to the Indo-Pacific region; one aligned to Europe; one stationed in the Arctic region and oriented on multiple threats; and a fifth MDTF aligned for global response.

1st MDTF

The 1st MDTF was activated on September 16, 2020, and is headquartered at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA, and aligned to the U.S. Army Pacific.

2nd MDTF

On April 13, 2021, the Army announced it would station its 2nd MDTF in Germany. The Germany-based MDTF is to support U.S. Army Europe and Africa. On September 16, 2021, the Army activated the 2nd MDTF at Clay Kaserne in Wiesbaden.

Split Stationing of the 2nd MDTF at Fort Drum, NY

On December 13, 2023, Senator Charles Schumer and Representative Elise Stefanik announced in 2025 Fort Drum, NY, would become the home of 1,495 soldiers and personnel from the 2nd MDTF's Long-Range Fires Battalion (LRFB), Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), and Air Defense (IFPC) Battalion. The 2nd MDTF's Headquarters and Effects Battalions, activated in 2021, would remain in Germany.

3rd MDTF

The Army activated the 3rd MDTF at Schofield Barracks, HI, in September 2022. The 3rd MDTF is to support the U.S. Army Pacific as a component of U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM).

2024 Army Force Structure Transformation Initiative and MDTFs

On February 27, 2024, the Army released a white paper, *Army Force Structure Transformation*, outlining plans to transform the force. The white paper noted the Army intended to "complete the build out of the Army's five MDTFSs" and that

> Three task forces will be assigned to U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC); one will be assigned to U.S. Army Europe-Africa (USAREUR-AF); and another will be service-retained with a likely focus on the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

April 2024 Update on MDTF Alignment and Stationing

According to an April 2024 *Defense News* article, the Army updated MDTF pre-decisional plans. The Army reportedly plans to consolidate Mid-Range Capability and Long-Range Hypersonic batteries under an LRFB and complete programming of the remaining Indirect Fire Protection

Capability (IFPC) battalions over the next five years. The Army also plans to convert all brigade support companies to battalions. In terms of specific MDTFs

- The 1st MDTF is to be fully established in FY2024 with a Multi-Domain Effects Battalion (MDEB), an IFPC battalion, a BSB, and an LRFB.
- The 2nd MDTF is to be headquartered in Germany with an MDEB and other elements stationed at Fort Drum, NY, with an IFPC battalion, a BSB, and an LRFB. The 2nd MDTF is to be fully operational in FY2025 with the addition of the LRFB in FY2026. The 2nd MDTF is to focus on supporting the European theater.
- The 3rd MDTF, headquartered in Hawaii with an MDEB, is to consist of an IFPC battalion, a BSB, and an LRFB stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA, and is to be fully operational by FY2026.
- The 4th MDTF is planned to be stationed at Fort Carson, CO, but is to focus on the Indo-Pacific theater and is to be fully operational by FY2027.
- The 5th MDTF is planned to be stationed at Fort Bragg, NC, and is to concentrate on regions as determined. The 5th MDTF is to be fully operational by FY2028.

Potential Change to 2nd MDTF LRFB Deployment Plans

Reportedly, based on a May 1, 2026, Administration decision to remove 5,000 U.S. troops from Germany:

> one full brigade will leave Germany and a long-range fires battalion that was due to be deployed later this year will be cancelled.

While specific units were not identified, the 2nd MDTF's LRFB had previously been designated by the Army as European-aligned.

Possible 2nd MDTF Troop Deployment to Korea

Reportedly, the Army plans to move "hundreds of multidomain troops from Germany to South Korea within the year," although this was not confirmed by the Pentagon. The report suggests that the 2nd MDTF's MDEB "would join U.S. Forces Korea to strengthen capabilities against North Korea while bolstering deterrence against China."

Multi Domain Command Europe

In January 2026, the Army created Multi Domain Command Europe (MDC-E) by merging the 56th Artillery Command with the 2nd MDTF. According to the Army, MDC-E "plans, integrates, executes, and assesses long-range precision fires and multi-domain effects for U.S. Army Europe and Africa to destroy enemy A2/AD capabilities and disrupt ground forces."

Multi Domain Command Pacific

According to U.S. Army Pacific, the 1st MDTF is to merge with the 7th Infantry Division (ID) to form Multi Domain Command Pacific (MDC-PAC). U.S. Army Pacific further noted the following: "The new command merges the 7th Infantry Division's two Stryker infantry brigades with the multidomain fires, cyber, space, electronic warfare and intelligence capabilities developed by the 1st MDTF."

4th MDTF Activated

On October 8, 2026, the Army activated the 4th MDTF at Fort Carson, CO. The 4th MDTF, consisting of almost 2,100 soldiers, along with the 1st MDTF "reports to the 7th Infantry Division, designated as the multi-domain operational headquarters."

MDTFs and How the Army Fights

On October 7, 2026, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army published *How the Army Fights*. This new operational warfighting guidance

> builds on the Army's multidomain operations doctrine by explaining how the force employs land power at the operational level of war. The guidance aligns how the Army organizes, trains, equips and sustains its formations for contested, high-intensity conflict.

Neither the MDTF's nor MDC's operational or doctrinal roles are specifically discussed in *How the Army Fights*, except in a hypothetical vignette on pages 32 and 33.

Possible Oversight Issues for Congress

Possible oversight issues for Congress could include

- Did MDCs, MDTFs, or subordinate units play an operational role in Operation Epic Fury and ongoing operations in the Middle East? If so, what are some of the emerging lessons and how might they influence future MDC and MDTF development and alignment?
- If the 2nd MDTF's LRFB is not to be forward stationed in Germany as originally planned, how might this impact the 2nd MDTF's concept of operational support of U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and NATO? Also, if elements on the 2nd MDTF are deployed to Korea as reported, how might this impact operations in Europe and Africa?
- In view of the release of *How the Army Fights*, has the Army's thinking about MDTFs and newly established MDCs changed or evolved since the Army's 2024 white paper *Army Force Structure Transformation*? If so, what are the associated changes and how might they affect MDC and MDTF force structure, basing, regional alignment, and operational role?

Andrew Feickert, Specialist in Military Ground Forces
Robert Holcombe, U.S. Army Fellow

IF11797

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.