



U.S. Department of Defense

2024

Regional Sustainment Framework



Vision:

Establish a globally connected, resilient, defense ecosystem through collaborative regional sustainment strategies that leverage the strengths of our allies, partners, and the Defense Industrial Base, thus, ensuring the materiel readiness of the force in a contested logistics environment.



REGIONAL SUSTAINMENT: Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul Foreword

At the speed of warfare, and particularly in contested environments, rapid regeneration of materiel readiness is critical. Integrated deterrence, a core approach outlined in the 2022 National Defense Strategy, challenges our defense ecosystem to posture theaters of operations to be more distributed. Traditional methods that depend on retrograding materiel for repair and maintenance are no longer viable. To better meet the challenge and needs of our warfighters, we must establish distributed maintenance and repair capabilities closer to the point of need, thereby posturing our theaters of operation to capitalize on allies and partners capabilities.

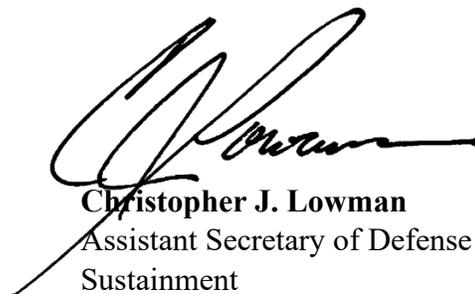
To address these challenges, the Regional Sustainment Framework (RSF) outlines the Department's strategic initiative designed to optimize regional Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) capabilities. These capabilities may be owned by partner nations, industrial partners, or through cooperative partnerships. Currently, we return assets to the Continental United States for major repairs, missing an opportunity to use existing ally or partner nation MRO capabilities for shared weapons systems. By integrating these resources, we foster an effective regional MRO strategy that supports both our regional partners and the U.S. Joint Force in competition and conflict.

Developing weapon system sustainment strategies that account for geographic distribution, regional sustainment capabilities, and the demands of U.S. and partner nation forces in both competition and conflict is a critical first step in implementing RSF. Collaborating with allies and partners to build sustainment strategies provides a more stable picture of demand, informing region-specific investment decisions for the commercial sector and governments. Such a cooperative approach creates a more agile and resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem.

The RSF ensures that the Joint Force is supported by sustainment strategies that are responsive, resilient, and ready to deliver in a contested logistics environment.



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Distribution Statement A. Approved for public release: distribution unlimited.

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1. Overview

The Regional Sustainment Framework (RSF) is the Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) answer to ensuring that the Joint Force is supported by sustainment strategies that are responsive, resilient, and ready to deliver in a contested logistics environment. The RSF aligns the U.S., its international partners, and industry in a more closely linked collaborative context. The goal is to change Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) strategies to better equip the warfighter with a network of globally dispersed capabilities that deliver MRO closer to the point of need. The RSF will better harness the strengths of our allies and global industry partners by driving enhanced coordination to ensure the warfighter has access to the maintenance capabilities they need, when and where they need them. The RSF enables a collective and resilient co-sustainment ecosystem for planning and execution.

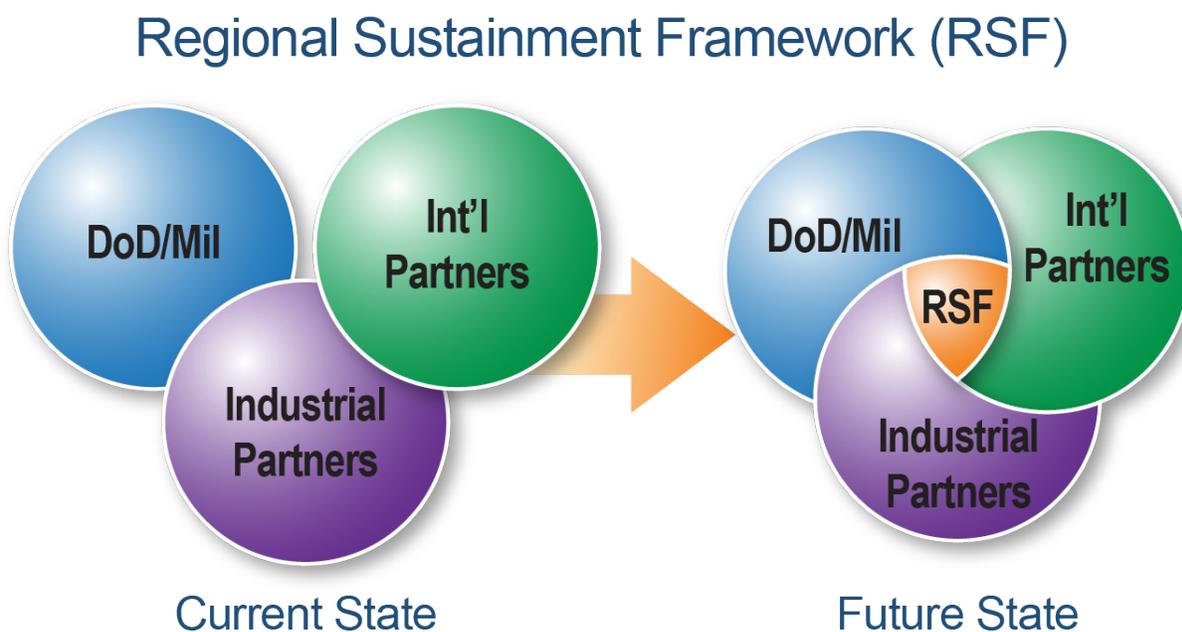


Figure 1. Evolution of the Regional Sustainment Framework, Toward Multilateral, Multi-National Government-Industry Cooperation

2. Goals

The RSF operationalizes the National Defense Strategy’s (NDS)¹ call for a more integrated and resilient defense posture and supports the National Defense Industrial Strategy’s (NDIS)² emphasis on leveraging global partnerships. It establishes a distributed MRO network that will support the Joint and Combined Force. The RSF has three primary goals:



2.1. Prevail in a Contested Logistics Environment

The DoD will optimize and align weapon system product support strategies and sustainment capabilities to establish a distributed MRO ecosystem that remains viable in peacetime and meets surge requirements during crises and conflicts. The Military Services will evaluate current, expand existing, and/or establish new MRO partnerships with allies and partners across multiple operational domains—sea, air, land, space, cyber—and the electromagnetic spectrum.



2.2. Enhance Military Readiness

The DoD will collaborate with allies and partners to understand their national defense and security priorities and incorporate those perspectives to build regionally focused product support/sustainment strategies. Collaboratively developed competencies and capabilities will increase the Joint and allied force’s ability to rapidly regenerate readiness, respond to persistent threats, and deter regional aggression.

2.3. Strengthen Regional Partnerships

The DoD will build a collective and resilient co-sustainment ecosystem by developing sustainment strategies that promote joint/allied regional MRO and foster collaborative relationships to expand repair network capacity across warfighting domains.

¹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, “National Defense Strategy,” October 27, 2022
<https://media.defense.gov/2022/Oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-NATIONAL-DEFENSE-STRATEGY-NPR-MDR.PDF>

² Office of the Secretary of Defense, “National Defense Industrial Strategy,” November 16, 2023
<https://www.businessdefense.gov/docs/ndis/2023-NDIS.pdf>

3. The Framework

3.1. Regionalization and Prioritization

Prioritize and align MRO partnership lines of effort based on strategic importance and operational requirements. Key considerations for prioritization and alignment include:

- **Strategic Relevance:** Align regional MRO efforts with the NDS priorities and support critical strategic objectives such as Operational Plans.
- **Threat Recognition:** Recognize and respond to emerging threats to ensure MRO responsiveness to deliver capabilities in an evolving security landscape.
- **Geopolitical Sensitivity:** Recognize and adapt to geopolitical shifts and the inherent challenges they pose to logistics and supply chain stability. This geopolitical component may drive the need for redundancy and a more distributed MRO network to ensure supply chain stability in a contested logistics environment.
- **Regional Focus:** Leverage regional allies and partners with established industrial capabilities and infrastructure capacity to enhance sustainment operations.



3.2. Strategic Partnership Alignment

MRO initiatives require collaboration with allies and partner nations to leverage strengths, exploit mutually beneficial opportunities, and foster a unified approach to regional co-sustainment initiatives for MRO which will include:

- **Deliberate Integration:** Prioritize engagement with allies and partners having shared defense systems and the potential for collaborative development, production, and sustainment endeavors.
- **Enhance Shared Capability:** Leverage existing capabilities and/or develop new partner capabilities to bolster the overall defense posture of U.S. Joint Forces and our regional allies and partners.

3.3. Platforms and Systems Approach

RSF implementation requires stakeholders to prioritize tailoring sustainment efforts for critical platforms, identify gaps in regional support solutions, and bridge shortfalls up-front to support contingency planning and execution.

Targeted weapons systems will be selected based on relevance to operational plans, a comprehensive review of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cases and other cooperative programs, and the potential for MRO collaboration, along with other criteria outlined below.

- **Strategic Importance:** Identify the systems that need to be sustained in a contested logistics environment.
- **International Relevance:** Assess the impact and opportunity for MRO capability development with highly capable allies and partners who are engaged or who are willing to engage in co-development, co-production, or co-sustainment programs.
- **Maintenance Needs:** Determine platform, system, subsystem, and component organizational, intermediate, and depot-level maintenance requirements.
- **Security:** Detect cybersecurity, intellectual property, and supply chain vulnerabilities.
- **Retrograde Considerations:** Capture all relevant data for the organized movement of unserviceable assets back to the nearest repair facility (e.g., time, distance, size, weight, complexity, and criticality).
- **International Industry Capacity:** Review the scope of accessible domestic and partner nation industrial support (e.g., workforce, and facilities).

3.4. Industrial Base Integration:

A regionally focused framework will promote partnerships with the global defense industry and align commercial capabilities with DoD sustainment needs, as directed in the National Defense Industrial Strategy.

DoD and other Federal Departments will explore ways to encourage industry investments (e.g., policy, contractual, and political) by promoting the benefits of co-sustainment. Potential government efforts include:

- **Establish Predictable Demand:** Consistent demand signal forecasting is crucial for planning, investment, and development of sustainment capabilities. Offer a predictable and consistent demand for MRO services to provide a stable market and opportunities for allies, partner nations, and the global defense industry.
- **Accelerate Partnerships:** Facilitate the swift establishment of partnerships between the defense sector and industry.
- **Integrate Product Support Strategies:** Ensure that product support solutions incorporate U.S., allies, and partners desired capabilities and objectives. Focus on optimizing the allocation of available resources—including the capabilities of allies and

partners—to effectively meet the generated demand. Regional sustainment should be designed into product support strategies.

- **Capital Investments:** Encourage industry investment through MRO demand generation, multi-party agreements, non-financial incentives, and supportive legislation.
- **Inter-Agency Alignment:** Align stakeholders by establishing inter-agency collaboration early in sustainment strategy development to better align policy and defense priorities with allies and partner nations; streamline the process for obtaining necessary licenses (e.g., export, technical data, and computer software licenses) while coordinating industry efforts with defense sustainment needs.
- **Compliance and Monitoring:** The DoD recognizes that compliance with the “50/50 Statute” (10 U.S.C. § 2466) is measured across all depot-level maintenance and repair activities within a fiscal year for each Military Department.³ This allows for strategic flexibility in how work is allocated between organic and commercial resources for individual platforms or systems. Additionally, MRO initiatives should consider the following strategies:
 - **Adaptive Sustainment Planning:** Strategically allocate maintenance and repair workloads to balance the use of commercial entities within the confines of the statute. This may involve prioritizing internal resources for platforms with higher security or technological sensitivity and using external capabilities for less sensitive needs.
 - **Continuous Monitoring** Closely monitor the distribution of maintenance workloads.



³ In accordance with Section 2466 of Title 10, United States Code, “Limitations on the performance of depot-level maintenance of materiel,” in effect as of March 9, 2024 <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title10-section2466&num=0&edition=prelim>

4. Summary

DoD sustainment strategies must evolve to prioritize the development of a network of regional MRO and sustainment capabilities. The RSF positively effects deterrence as a solution to rapidly changing global threats. The framework advances a defense posture that is increasingly coordinated with U.S., allies, and partner nations. It recognizes the inherent advantages and resiliency from using resources provided by allies, partner nations, and the defense industrial base. This approach will reduce operational risk, enhance readiness, and increase capabilities for the U.S. Joint Force and its partners.

Furthermore, the RSF employs an integrated approach to sustainment, tying regional partnerships and capabilities to readiness and the overall effectiveness of U.S., allied, and partner nation forces. It outlines a strategic pathway where Military Services, allies, partners, and industry are recognized as cooperating drivers to success.

Constant review and evolution will ensure that the RSF remains viable, driving MRO capabilities forward and enabling an integrated network to track and adapt strategies to meet real-time emerging challenges.

Actions required by Military Services, U.S., allied and partner nation government agencies, and industrial partners will be included in a multi-phased implementation plan released separately from this framework document.

The RSF is the United States' commitment to adapt and evolve in the face of global challenges—driving the DoD and its allies and partners closer to the desired end-state of a more peaceful, prosperous, and resilient future.

