
VMFA-232

THEATER SPINS

OPERATION CERBERUS WEST

SYRIA & LEBANON

V1.0
MAY 2014

CSG-8
CARRIER OPERATIONS

CSG 8 - Overview

Carrier Strike Group 8, under the command of Rear Admiral John T. Phillips, consists of the following ships:

**USS Harry S. Truman (Nimitz CVN),
USS Gravelly (Arleigh Burke DDG),
USS Truxton (Arleigh Burke DDG),
USS Sampson (Arleigh Burke DDG),
USS Thomas Hudner (Arleigh Burke DDG),
USS Hue City (Ticonderoga CG),
USS Elrod (Perry FFG),
USS Kauffman (Perry FFG).**

Carrier Air Wing One is assigned to the USS Truman, consisting of the following squadrons:

**VFA-34 (F/A-18C),
VFA-83 (F/A-18C),
VFA-131 (F/A-18C),
VMFA-232 (F/A-18C),
VAW-125 (E-2D),
VS-37 (S-3B),
VAQ-144 (E/A-18G),
VRC-40 (C-2A),
HSC-11 (SH-60),
HSM-72 (SH-60).**

USS Harry S. Truman (CVN-75)

CALLSIGN Lone Warrior

TACAN 70X

ICLS Channel 18

LINK 4 330.5 MHz

ATC FREQUENCIES:

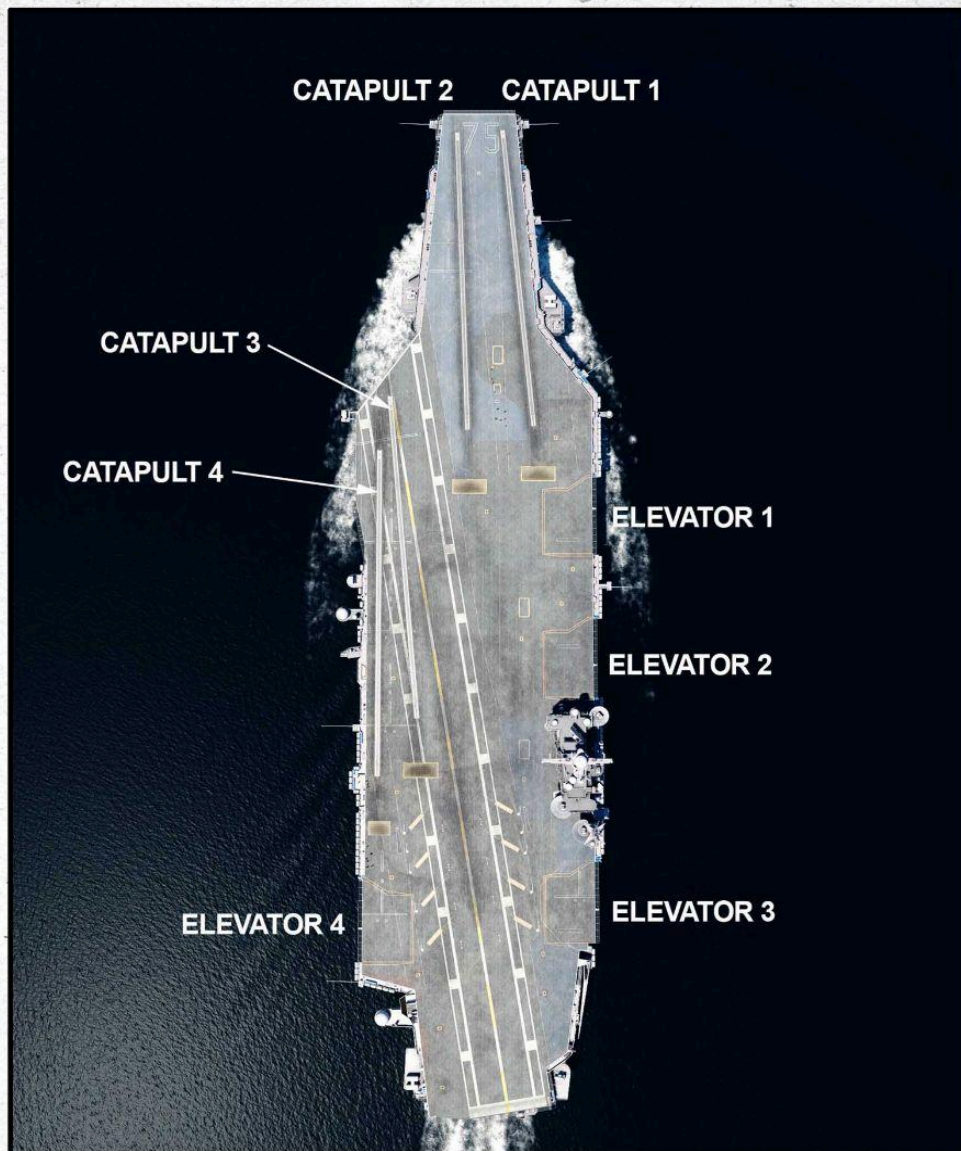
MARSHALL 131.5 MHz

APPROACH 132.0 MHz

TOWER 132.6 MHz

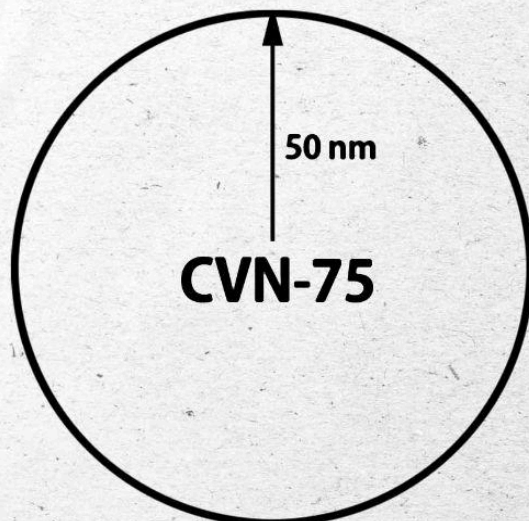
TOWER

EMERGENCY 134.0 MHz



Carrier Controlled Area (CCA):

The CCA is the airspace under the control of the Carrier Air Traffic Control. It is a 50 nm radius circle centered on the carrier. Within this 50 nm circle standardized Case I, Case II and Case III procedures must be adhered to.



Standardized Procedures

All departures and recoveries will follow standardized procedures to enable safe and efficient operations. The procedures will fall under either Case I, Case II or Case III, dependent on local conditions.

Case I Conditions:

Daytime, VFR conditions, Clouds minimum 3,000 foot base, visibility greater than 5 miles.

Case II Conditions:

VFR conditions within the vicinity of Mother. Clouds minimum 1,000 foot base, visibility greater than 5 miles.

Case III Conditions:

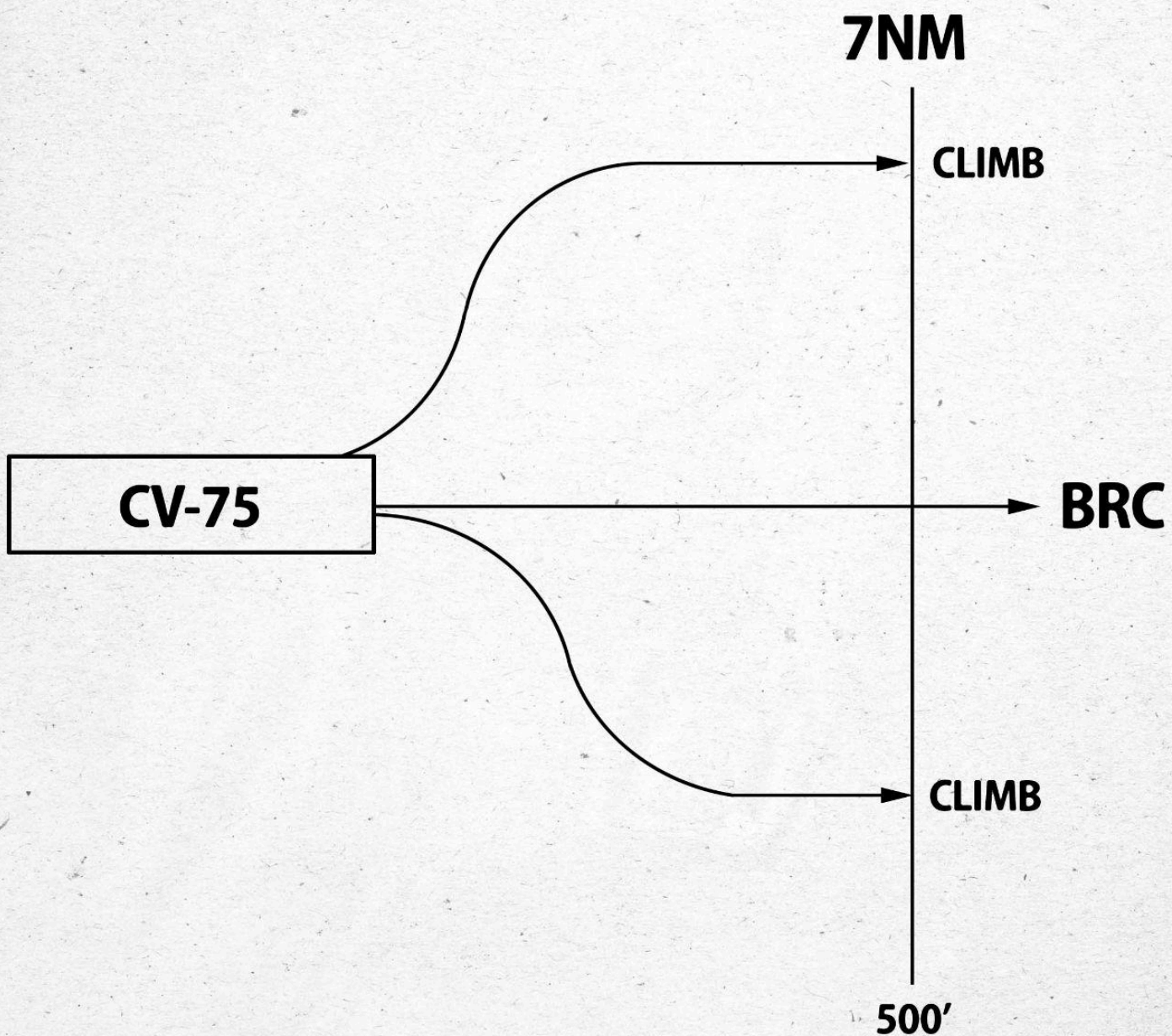
Night or IFR conditions. Clouds base lower than 1,000 feet, visibility less than 5 miles.

Case I Departure

On launch perform a clearing turn (right from catapults 1 or 2, left from catapults 3 or 4), then turn back to parallel the carriers Base Recovery Course (BRC).

Climb and maintain 500 feet at 300 KIAS, continuing to parallel the BRC until 7nm from the carrier.

Departure control terminates at 7nm from the carrier, at this point climb on planned route.



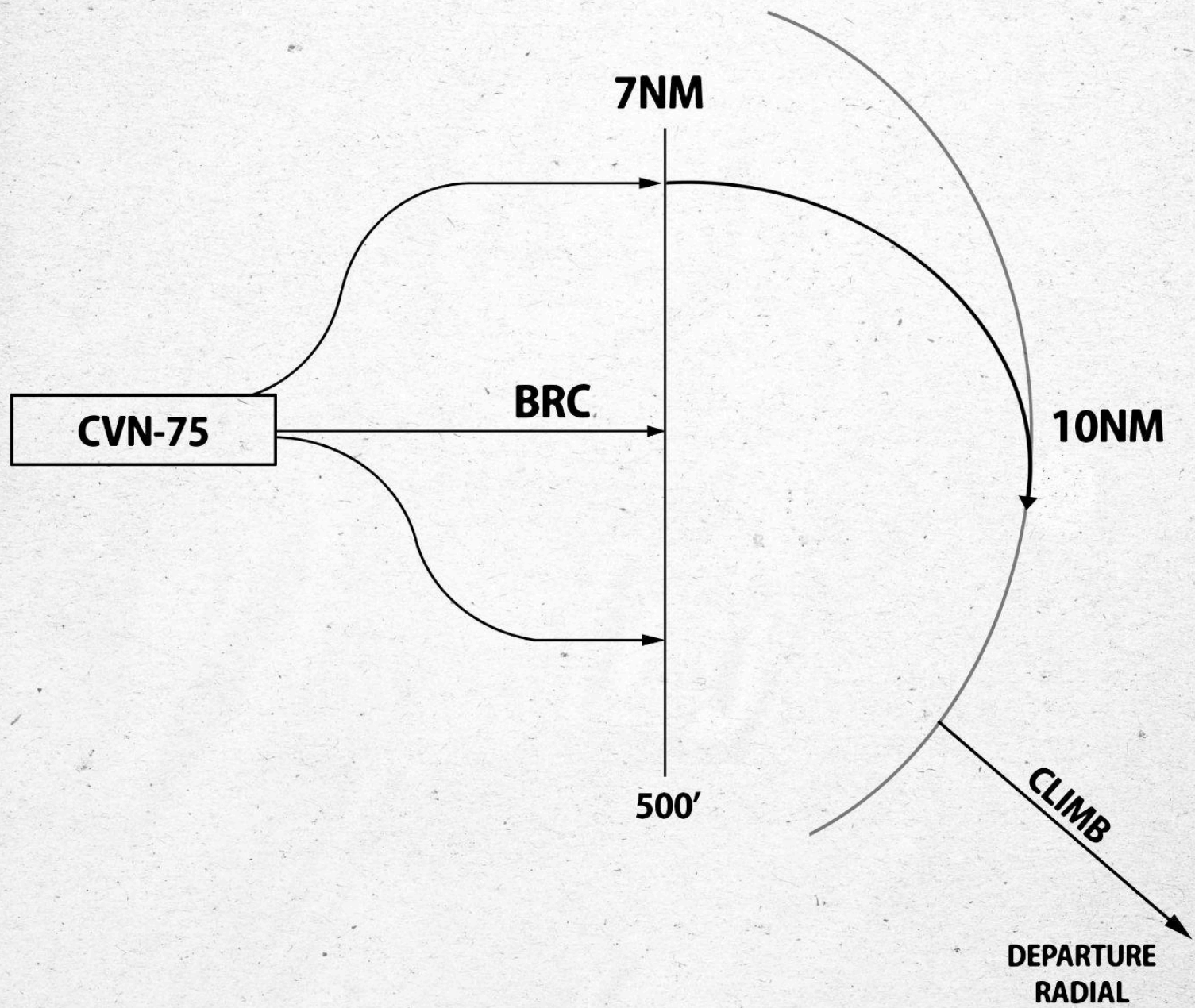
Case II Departure

On launch perform a clearing turn (right from catapults 1 or 2, left from catapults 3 or 4), then turn back to parallel the carriers Base Recovery Course (BRC).

Climb and maintain 500 feet at 300 KIAS, continuing to parallel the BRC until 7nm from the carrier.

At 7nm begin a turn to intercept the 10nm arc, ensure you stay beneath the cloud base on the 10nm arc.

Maintain the 10nm arc until reaching the briefed departure radial. Climb at 300 knots along the departure radial until clear of the clouds.

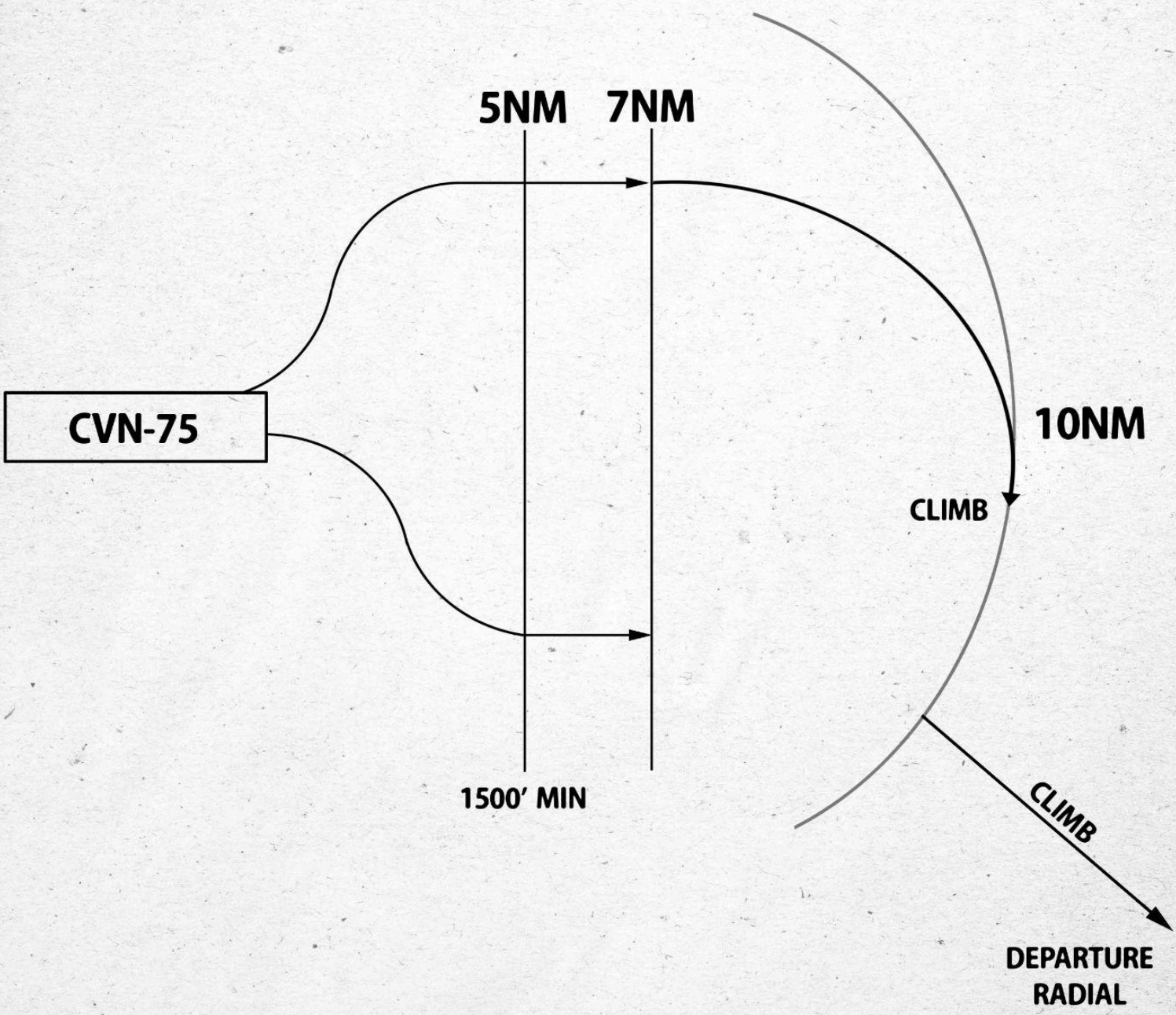


Case III Departure

Following launch, climb straight ahead at 300 KIAS, ensuring a minimum of 1500 feet altitude at 5 miles from the carrier.

At 7nm begin a turn to intercept the 10nm arc, climb along the 10nm arc to the briefed departure radial.

Continue to climb along the radial until clear of the weather.



Case I Recovery

Upon entering the CCA at 50nm from the carrier contact Marshall and declare 'Inbound'.

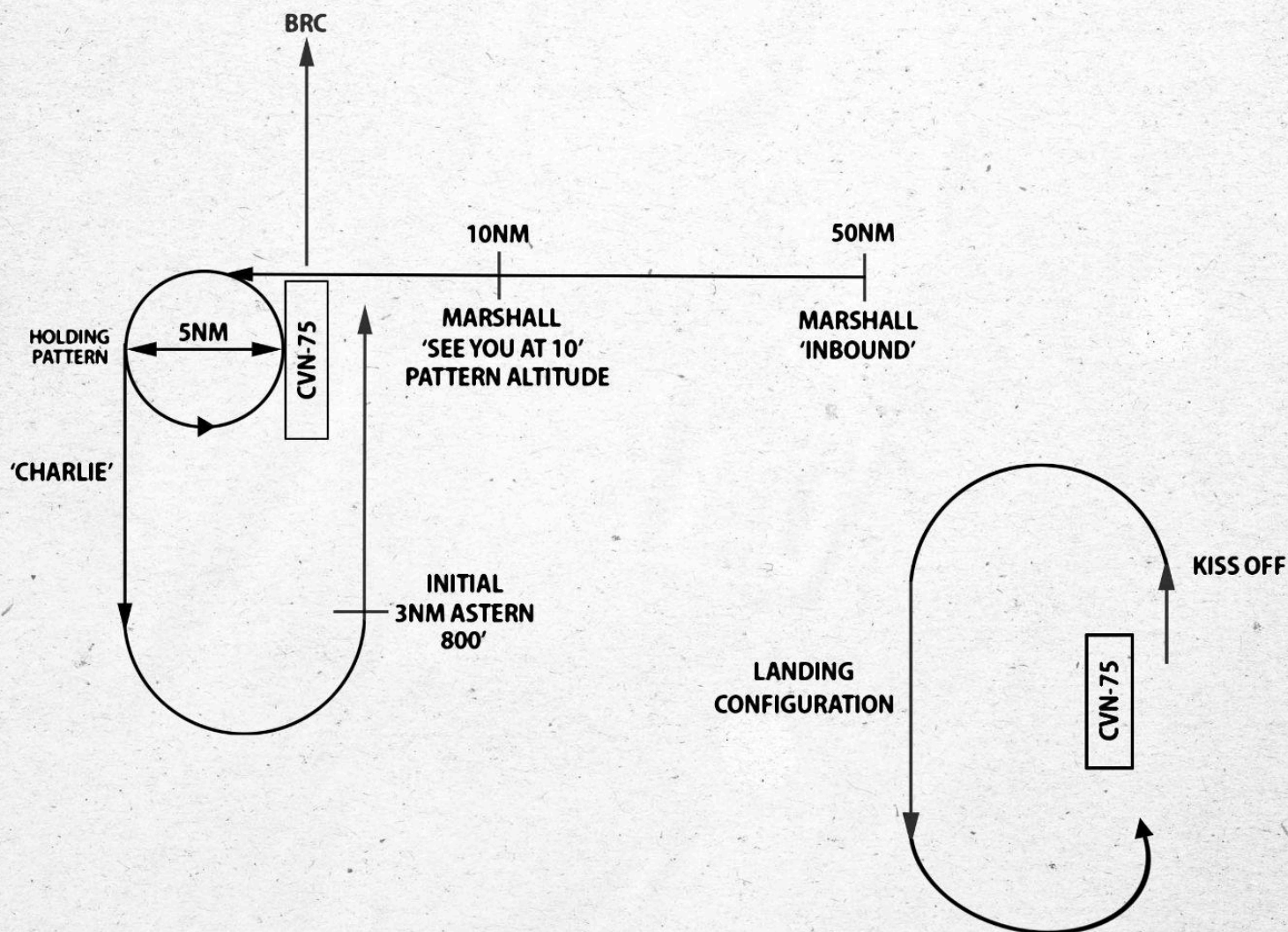
Once cleared by Marshall proceed direct to the carrier, arriving at the briefed squadron pattern altitude 10nm from the carrier.

At 10nm from the carrier contact Marshall and call 'See you at 10'.

Fly the Case 1 holding pattern at the briefed altitude, maintain this altitude in the pattern until contacted by Marshall with 'your signal is Charlie'.

When instructed by Marshall, switch to Tower frequency and 'break the deck' by extending downwind of the carrier to 'initial', 3nm astern of the carrier at 800 feet.

As you pass the starboard side of the carrier 'kiss off' your flight and perform an overhead break to enter the landing pattern.



Case II Recovery

Upon entering the CCA at 50nm from the carrier contact Marshall and declare 'Inbound'. Marshall will provide a marshall radial, distance, altitude and time to push.

Once cleared by Marshall proceed to the marshall area, located on the specified radial/distance. Arrive at the assigned altitude.

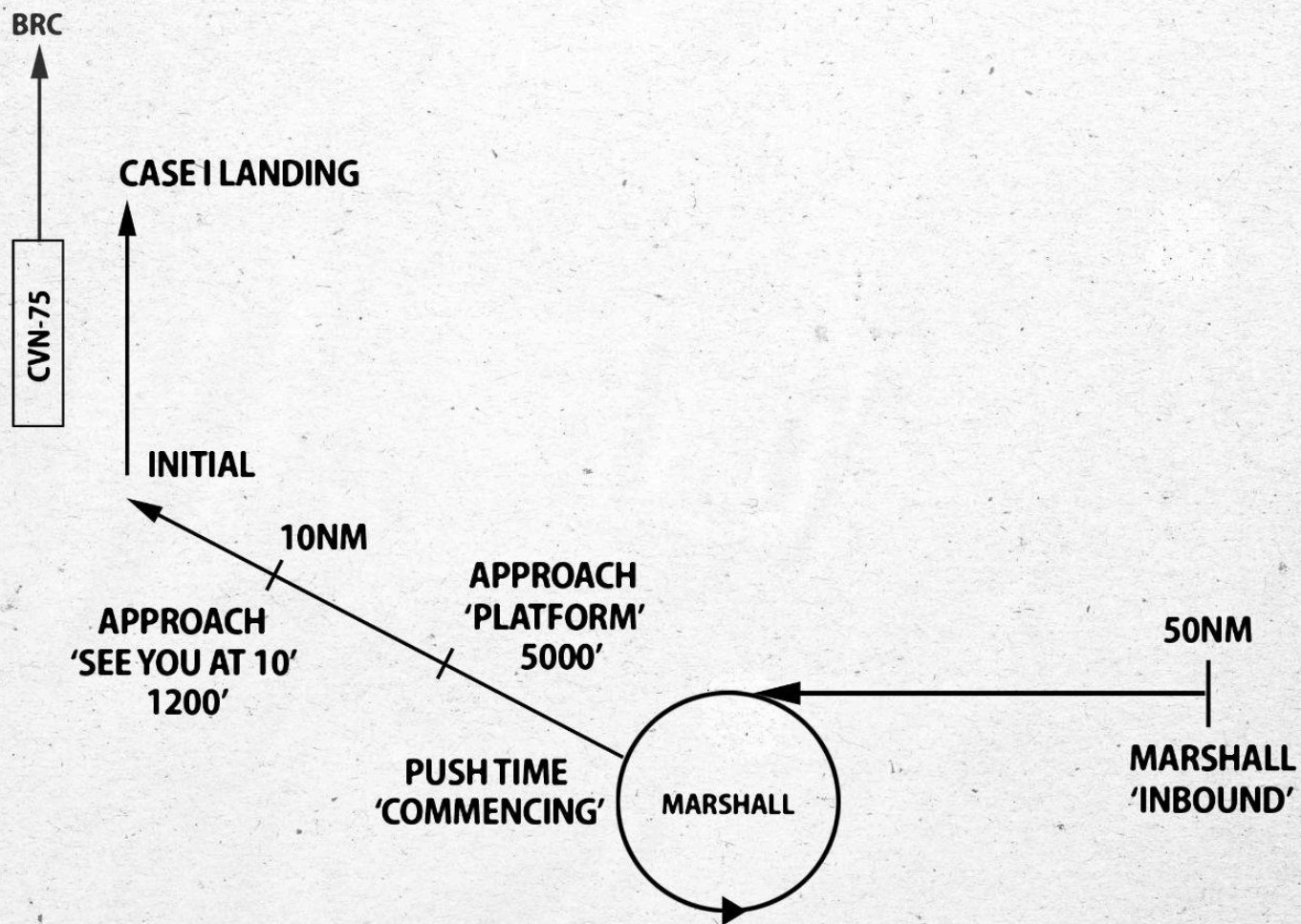
Once at marshall and at the assigned altitude, contact Marshall and declare 'Established'. Hold at the marshall area, maintaining the assigned altitude until the designated push time.

At the designated push time, call 'Commencing' to Marshall and push towards the carrier, switching to the Approach frequency.

As you pass through 5000 feet altitude contact Approach and call 'Platform'.

Contact Approach at 10nm and call 'See you at 10'. Arrive at 1200 feet altitude.

Switch to the Tower frequency and proceed to Initial, following Case I procedures for a VFR landing.



Case III Recovery

Upon entering the CCA at 50nm from the carrier contact Marshall and declare 'Inbound'. Marshall will provide a marshall radial, distance, altitude and time to push.

Once cleared by Marshall proceed to the marshall area, located on the specified radial/distance. Arrive at the assigned altitude.

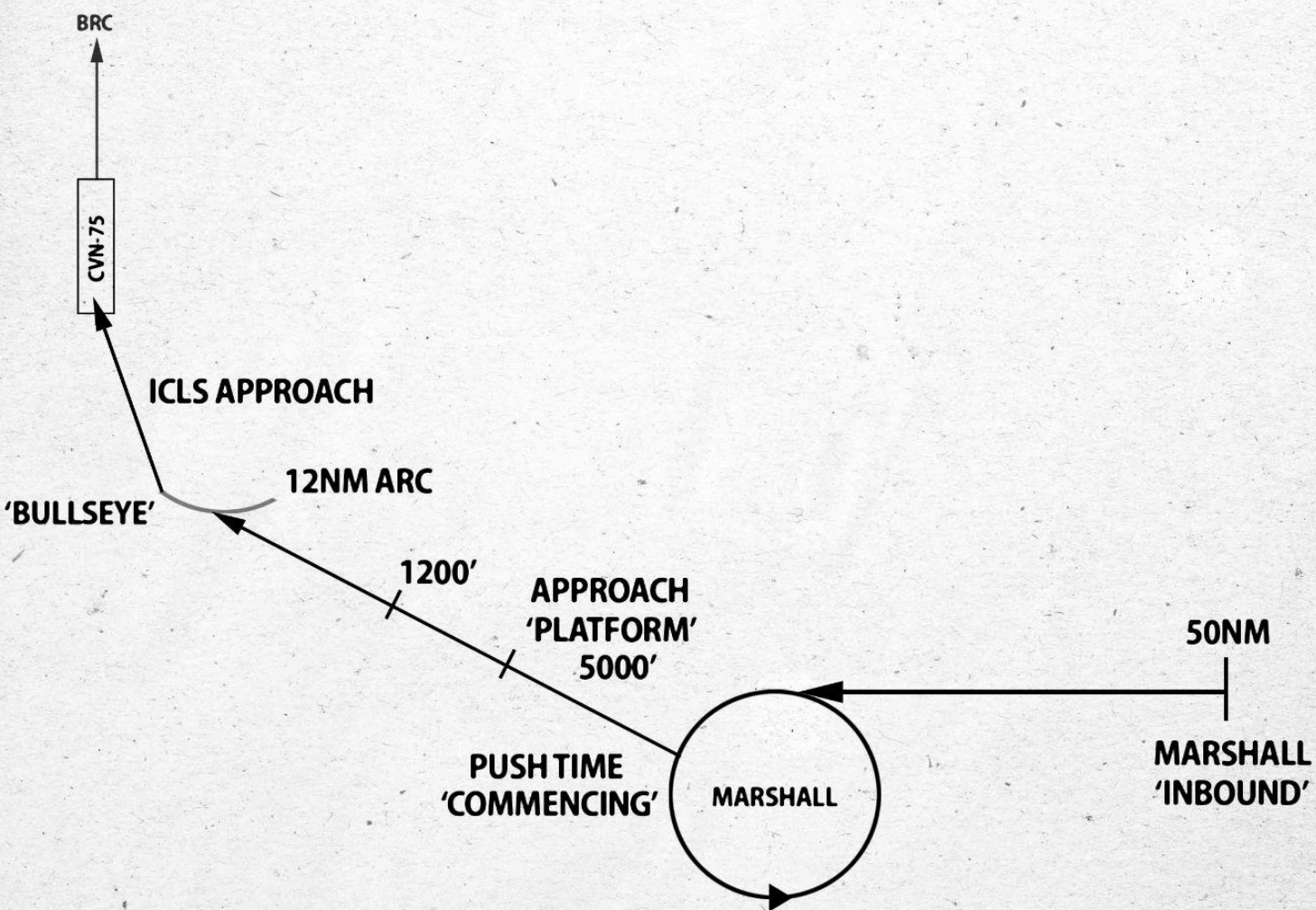
Once at marshall and at the assigned altitude, contact Marshall and declare 'Established'. Hold at the marshall area, maintaining the assigned altitude until the designated push time.

At the designated push time, call 'Commencing' to Marshall and push towards the carrier, switching to the Approach frequency.

As you pass through 5000 feet altitude contact Approach and call 'Platform'. Continue to descend to 1200 feet.

At 15nm from the carrier, make a 90 degree turn to fly the 12nm arc to the final bearing for landing.

Once on the final bearing Approach will call 'Bullseye'. Configure for landing and follow ICLS for an IFR landing.

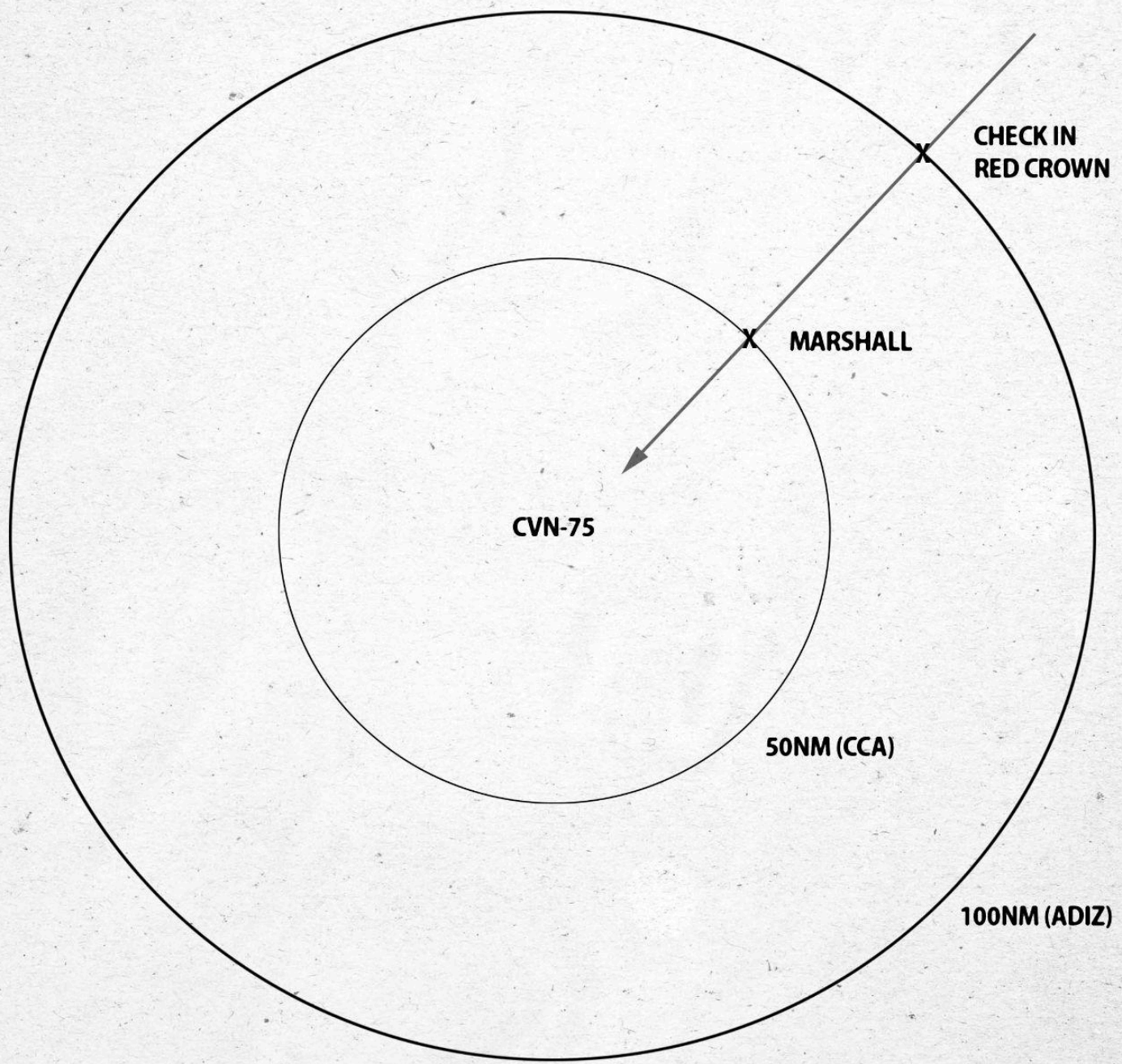


CSG Approach - Air Defense Procedures

CSG-8 air defense is under the control of USS Hue City, callsign Red Crown.

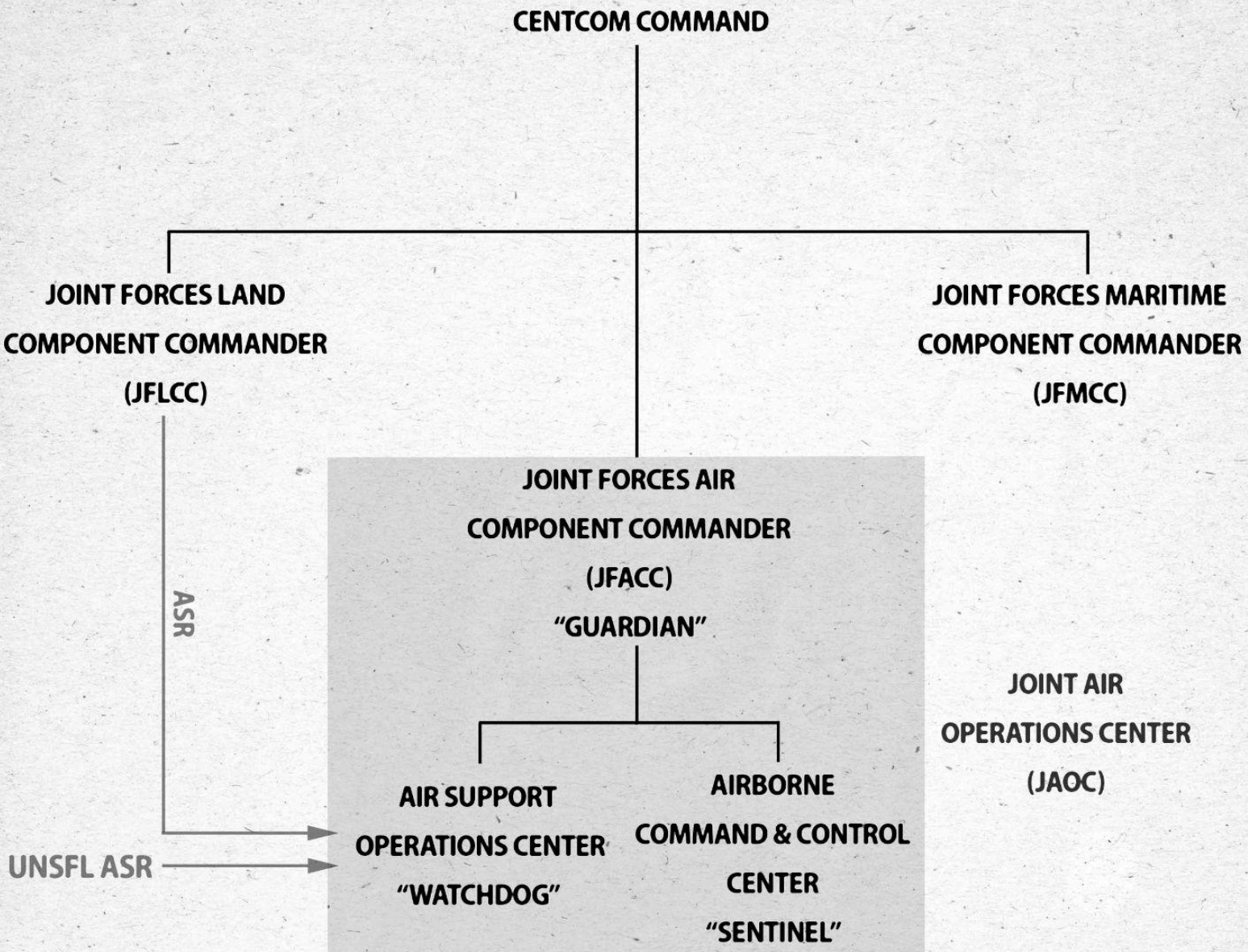
A 100nm radius Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) is in effect, centered on USS Harry S. Truman. Any aircraft entering the CSG-8 ADIZ must to check in with the controller on Red Crown as they approach the ADIZ boundary. Instructions from Red Crown must be adhered to.

RED CROWN: 145.5 MHz



THEATER OPERATIONS

Command Structure - Operation Cerberus West



Units assigned to Operation Cerberus West fall under the relevant CENTCOM component commander, with naval aviation units reporting into the JFACC and tasked under the JAOC produced Air Tasking Order (ATO).

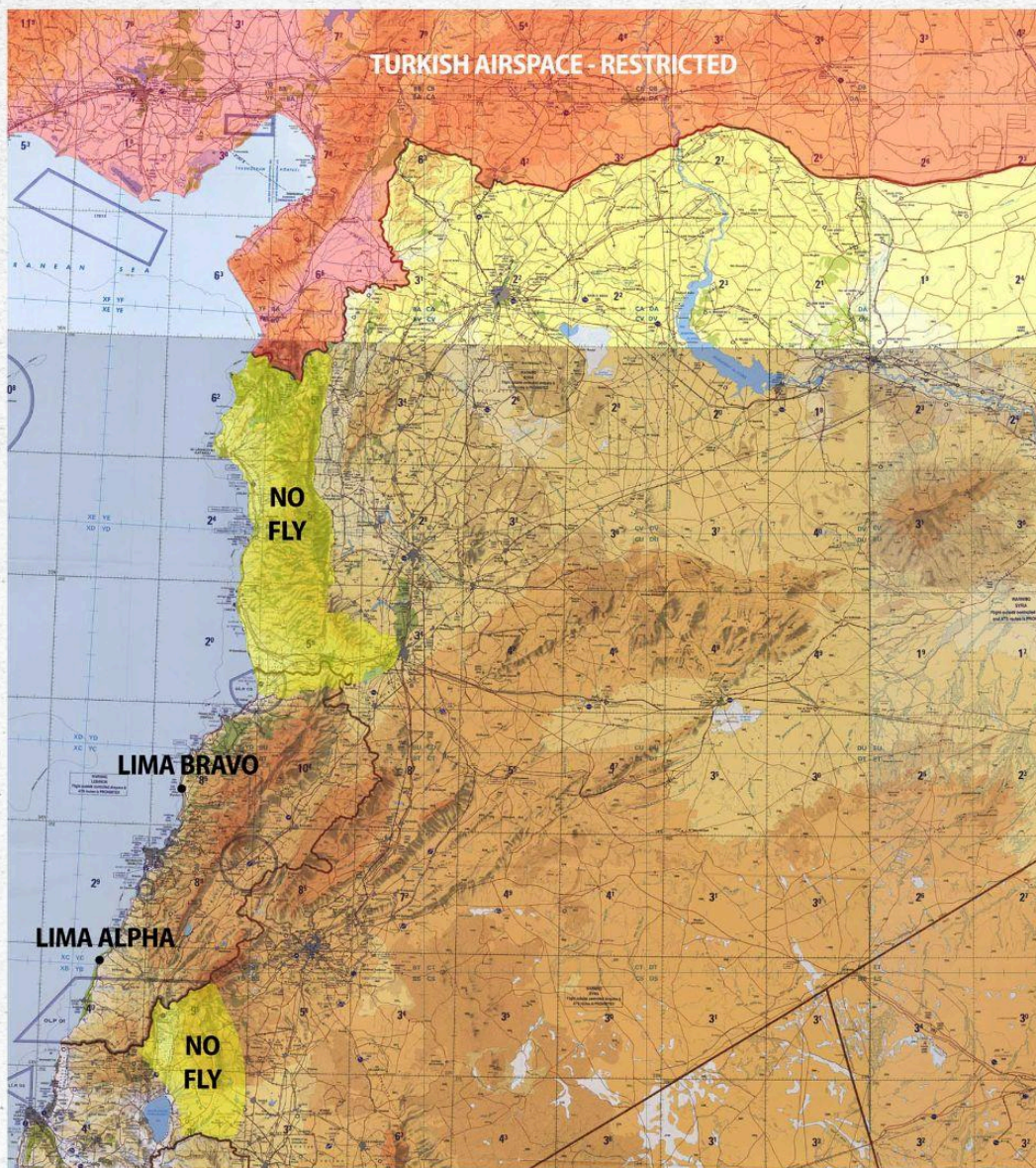
The Airborne Command and Control Center 'Sentinel' will provide a continuous airborne link between theater aircraft and the JAOC.

Air Support Requests (ASR) are fed into the ASOC 'Watchdog' and relayed to theater aviation assets through the ABCCC 'Sentinel'.

Note US Army assets deployed to the UNSFL fall under direct command of the UNSFL. UNSFL air support requests will be made to the ASOC.

Airspace Control

A number of airspace control measures are in operation in Syria and Lebanon. All theater airspace will be under the control of the ABCCC Sentinel.



All Turkish airspace is currently closed to US combat aircraft for Operation Cerberus West.

For deconfliction purposes, Russian controlled territory is restricted to US and UNSFL aircraft. This territory includes the northern tip of Lebanon - from Rene Mouawad airport north.

For deconfliction, the Israeli/Syrian frontline southwest of Damascus is restricted to US aircraft.

All ingressing US air traffic into Lebanon and Syria will be through point LIMA ALPHA (N33 29 43, E35 20 04).

All US air traffic egressing from Lebanon and Syria will be through point LIMA BRAVO (N34 08 42, E35 37 47).

Theater Bullseye

The theater bullseye is located at Rayak airport in the Bekaa valley (N33 51 00, E35 59 10) and will be referenced as 'Roadhouse' unless a mission specific bullseye is allocated.

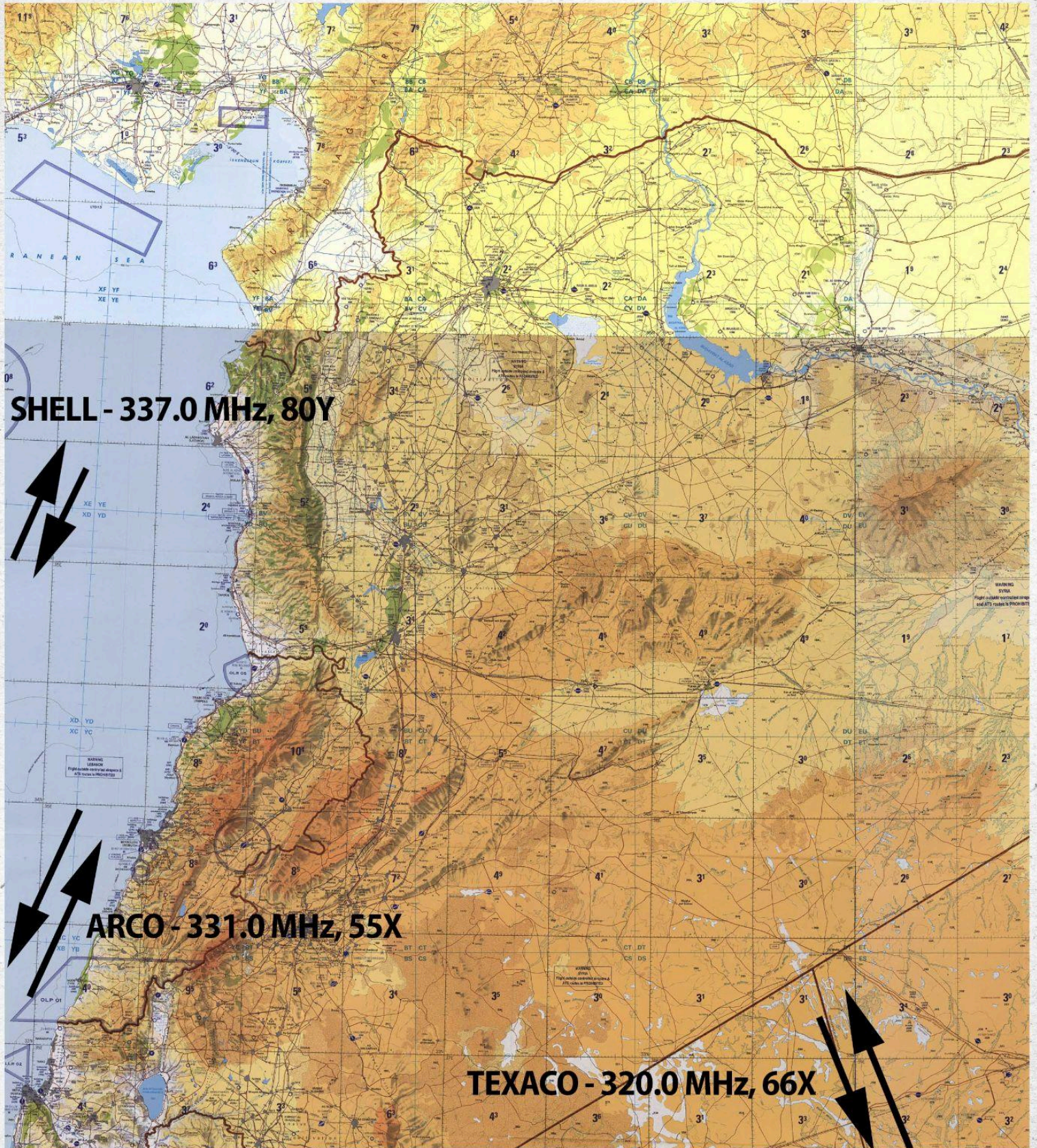


Speed Restrictions

Supersonic flight is restricted overland within the Lebanese border unless cleared by the ABCCC.

Air-Air Refuelling Tracks

Three permanent AAR tracks will be maintained to support Operation Cerberus West. The Arco track will be available off the coast of southwest Lebanon, the Texaco track will operate along the Jordan/Iraq border and the Shell track along the southeast coast of Cyprus.



Theater Rules of Engagement

The standing ROE for Operation Cerberus West are divided into two categories; air to air and air to surface.

Air to Air:

Given the prevalence of the Russian Air Force in theater enhanced ROEs have been established to prevent an unintended engagement of Russian aircraft.

- The standing ROE for A-A weapons is return fire or fire upon authorisation.
- Return fire can only be utilized following the deployment of a weapon by an aircraft that also meets the condition for a hostile act as laid out on the following pages. Return fire action can be taken without clearance from a higher agency providing the ROEs have been met.
- Fire upon authorisation requires specific clearance from the senior mission commander to engage.
- Visual identification of an aircraft is mandatory before clearance to engage can be given.

Air to Surface:

The air to surface component of Cerberus West will likely cover a variety of target types and environments. It is likely that aircraft will be operating in a very complex and dynamic environment with hostile and friendly forces both operating in close proximity to civilians.

The following standing ROEs apply to all air to surface operations within Operation Cerberus West.

- **Predefined targets.** Targets specifically defined within a briefing are pre-cleared for engagement providing the risk of fratricide and collateral damage is eliminated and the briefed details are followed precisely. Predefined targets will not require visual identification by the attacking aircraft to engage. For targets to meet the predefined condition precise coordinates must be available and the target must not be within an area requiring fire control or within a no fire area.
- **Dynamic Targets.** Targets that do not meet the conditions for a predefined target will be considered a dynamic target. Dynamic targets may be assigned in the field via the JAOC or through a JTAC/FAC. Dynamic targets that are assigned and are not under the control of a JTAC/FAC require visual identification from the attacking aircraft or JTAC/FAC prior to engagement and clearance to engage from the mission commander. When an aircraft is under the control of a JTAC or FAC then weapons release authority will be under the control of the JTAC/FAC at all times.

Air to Surface - Restrictions:

The following restrictions and conditions apply at all times to reduce the likelihood of fratricide and collateral damage. The JFLCC and JAOC will collaborate on a daily basis to produce the air support chart (ASC).

The ASC will identify the following:

BCL - Battlefield Coordination Line.

FSCL - Fire Support Coordination Line.

RFA - Restricted Fire Area.

NFA - No Fire Area.

FFA - Free Fire Area.

BCL:

The BCL displays the current forward line of troops (FLOT).

It is marked on the air support chart by a solid blue line and letters BCL, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

FSCL:

The FSCL marks the expected furthest forward operating area of friendly ground forces.

Ground forces should not advance beyond the FSCL without coordinating with agencies controlling aircraft attacks. Any targets that lie between the BCL and FSCL can only be attacked by aircraft when under the control of a JTAC/FAC.

Targets beyond the FSCL fall under the control of the CAOC or senior mission commander.

The FSCL should follow well defined terrain features easily identifiable from the air. The FSCL is marked on the air support chart by a solid black line and letters FSCL, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

RFA:

The RFA is a blanket condition that applies to all areas not covered by another restriction.

It can also be designated to a particular location and is marked on the air support chart as an enclosed area in a black outline with the letters RFA, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

FFA:

Targets within a FFA require no authorisation or control to engage targets providing the theater ROEs are met.

It is marked on the air support chart as an enclosed area in a green outline and letters FFA, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

NFA:

The employment of weapons in a NFA is strictly forbidden in order to protect civilian or culturally significant locations.

It is marked on the air support chart as a closed area outlined in red with a cross through it and letters NFA, noting the coordinating agency and date it was updated.

FSCL "JFLCC" 01/01/14

BCL "JFLCC" 01/01/14

FFA "JFLCC" 01/01/14



RFA "JFLCC" 01/01/14



NFA "JFLCC" 01/01/14



Control of Air Support:

Air support requests (ASR) will commonly be made through the ground commander CAS to the air support operations center (ASOC).

The ASOC will process the ASR and match to available CAS platforms. ASOC will direct the CAS platform to the AO and connect them to the JTAC/FAC.

The JTAC or FAC will provide the targets details, locations of friendly forces or civilians and specify the attack details such as IP, attack direction, weapons to be employed and egress routes. The JTAC will also specify the type of control authority they will have over the attack, these are detailed as below.

Type 1:

JTAC requires control of individual attacks and must visually acquire the attacking aircraft and the target for each attack. Targets and friendly positions should be marked whenever possible.

Visual acquisition must be obtained through eyes-on or via optics such as binoculars, without the use of third party devices such as laptops or other digital imagery.

Control will be made over the attack direction of the aircraft to reduce the risk of collateral damage or the attack affecting friendly forces.

Type 2:

JTAC requires control of individual attacks but JTAC is unable to visually acquire the attacking aircraft at weapons release, unable to visually acquire the target, or the attacking aircraft is unable to acquire the mark/target prior to weapons release.

JTAC can acquire the target visually or use targeting data from a scout, fire support team, joint fires observer, unmanned aircraft (UA), special operations forces, CAS aircrew, or other asset with accurate real-time targeting information.

Type 3:

JTAC provides clearance for multiple attacks within a single engagement subject to specific attack restrictions.

JTAC does not need to visually acquire the aircraft or the target.

JTAC will provide attacking aircraft with targeting restrictions and then grant blanket weapons release clearance to meet the stated restrictions.

JTAC maintains abort authority.

9 Lines:

The JTAC will commonly provide the CAS platform with a 9 line specifying the instructions for the attack. The 9 line format is as follows.

1. Initial point (IP)
2. Heading from the IP to the target.
3. Distance from the IP to the target in nautical miles.
4. Target elevation in feet above mean sea level.
5. Target description.
6. Target location coordinates.
7. Type of mark.
8. Location of friendlies from the target, direction, and distance in meters.
9. Egress direction.

The pilot will respond by reading back lines 4,6 and 8. If readback is successful the JTAC/FAC will pass remarks and restrictions, these will cover the process for the attacking aircraft to 'call in' on their attack run, weapons release heading/final attack heading and any relevant threats.

Terminology:

The JTAC/FAC and air support platform will communicate using set terminology. This terminology is detailed here.

Bomb on Target (BOT) - target location will be described, usually through a 'talk-on'.

Bomb on Coordinates (BOC) - target location will be passed as precise coordinates.

Cleared hot - air support is cleared to engage the target under type 1 or 2 control.

Cleared to engage - air support is cleared to engage the target under type 3 control.

Abort - If the JTAC/FAC calls abort then the attacking aircraft must safety weapons systems and maneuver off target immediately.

Contact - refers to spotting visual references used to talk onto a target.

Tally - Visual confirmation by the pilot of the target.

Visual - Visual confirmation of friendly forces.

Air to Surface - Exceptions:

If control of an attack has been placed under that of a JTAC/FAC and contact with the JTAC/FAC is subsequently lost, then the attack may proceed in the defense of friendly forces if the conditions for hostile intent can be met and friendly forces are in clear and imminent danger.

Hostile Intent:**Hostile Act considered if a unit:**

Engages friendly forces with a weapons system, resulting in weapons release.

OR

Supports the weapons systems of other units, resulting in weapons release. Including but not limited to lasing, marking and radar illumination of targets.

Alternatively a Hostile Act is considered if a unit meets ALL of the conditions below:

Spikes/spots/marks a friendly target within their weapons range or the range of a supporting unit.

Persistently maneuvers to maintain a weapons firing solution or to maintain solution for fire support.

PosID as a bandit or belonging to a defined hostile force.

OR

Moves in a persistently aggressive manner towards friendly forces.

Actively deploys countermeasures and/or seeks to avoid detection.

PosID as a bandit or belonging to a hostile force.

A Hostile Act is considered if a unit meets any of the conditions below:

(note these conditions may apply to individuals that are civilian in appearance)

Observed preparation of an ambush position, including but not limited to the positioning of weapons systems, explosives or significant obstructions in tactically advantageous positions.

Confirmed as engaging in the command and control of hostile forces.

Observed in the use, transportation or maintenance of weapons systems that pose a threat to US or UNSFL forces.