



OPERA: Operational Planning Environment and Reference Application

- Planning and calculation tools to facilitate the collaborative planning carried out by a group of functional staff experts
- Easy access to information on doctrines, organizations, equipment and resources

The Planning Process

The planning process of the Canadian Forces, either deliberate or crisis action, is an intensive information management activity, which implies distinct groups of functional staff experts, each one working on a specific portion of the plan. Military staffs start the planning process using generic or existent plans as a framework, which must be shared to build a new plan. Lots of coordination among the staff is spent to ensure that each person developing his portion of the plan is well aligned with the commander's intents. Throughout the planning process, long and intensive calculations such as to get a rough estimate of the resources required for a typical task or to develop a detailed dumping of supplies are performed by different experts. In the future, the range of military operations will be increasing in complexity and intensity. Then, it is obvious that any command and control information system should provide several tools to support the decision-making and planning process.



OPERA logo

Multi-User Environment

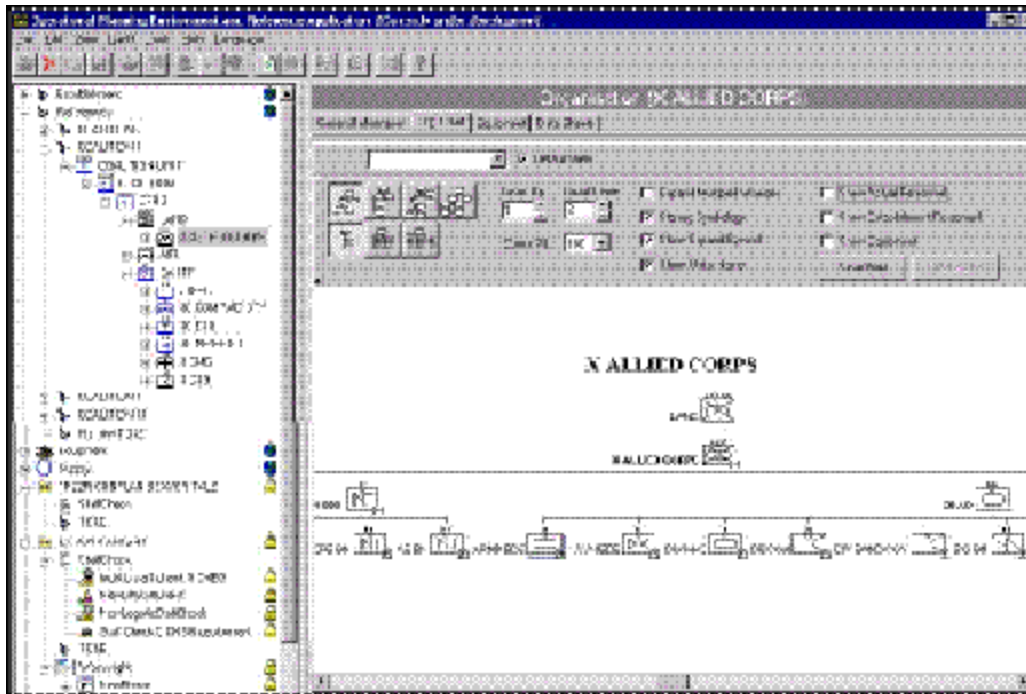
OPERA provides an operational planning environment where the plan being developed can be accessed, modified and shared by the staff from any available workstation within a Headquarters. Different functional staff experts can develop a plan in parallel by adding and modifying elements to the plan. A publish function controlled by a specific role helps to minimize coordination efforts and to validate information before it becomes public to the other planners. For ensuring that mission objectives are met, the commander can monitor the development of the plan.



In a multi-user environment, the plan can be viewed and modified by many users at the same time.

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User Interface



OPERA provides a graphical user interface similar to windows explorer that it is simple to use; A hierarchical view of all the elements available for planning is shown on the left side, users can select any element from that view and the system displays the associated details on the right portion of the window.

Shorter Planning Cycle

With OPERA, planners have direct access to a set of databases that are continuously updated by automated replication mechanisms. Replication of information will occur at different levels of command and will reduce considerably transmission errors. It may also eliminate the need of briefings to higher and subordinate levels. Using these databases, quick staff checks can be carried out immediately at the beginning of the planning cycle with minimal user input giving the commander a good idea of the possible courses of actions. The fast exchange of information directly through the plan (the database) instead of sending and receiving messages also reduces the planning cycle, operators have no need to filter the information received by messages before incorporation to the plan.

LC2IEDM Model

The data model used by OPERA for the operational planning process is based on the Land Command and Control Information Exchange Data Model (LC2IEDM), which complies to the NATO exchange data model. Based on that model, OPERA will be able to interoperate directly with other Canadian and Allied Systems.

For more information

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