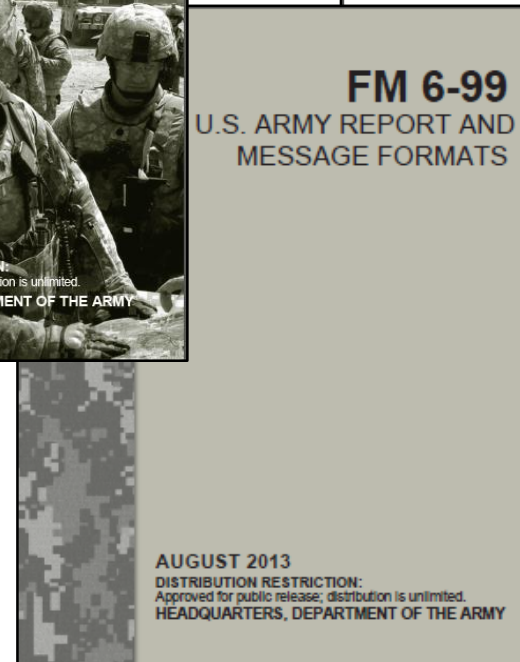
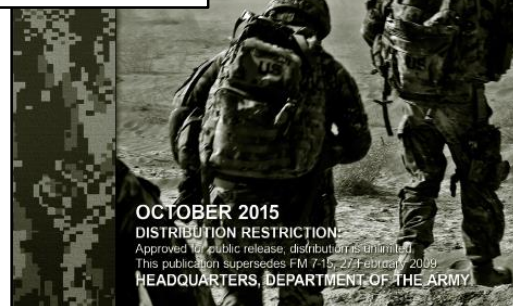
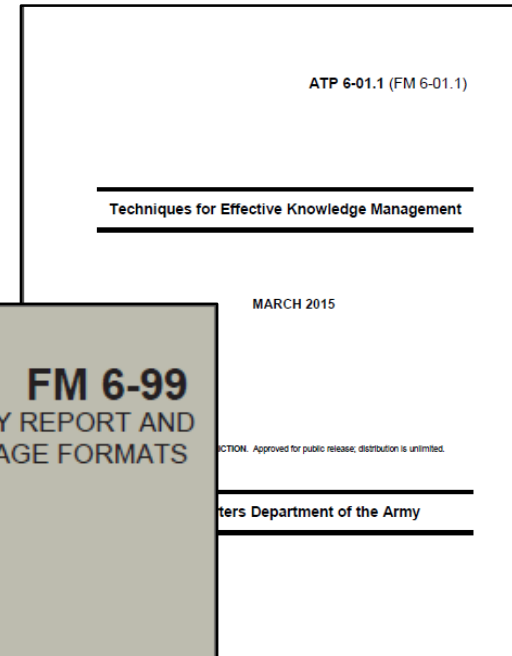
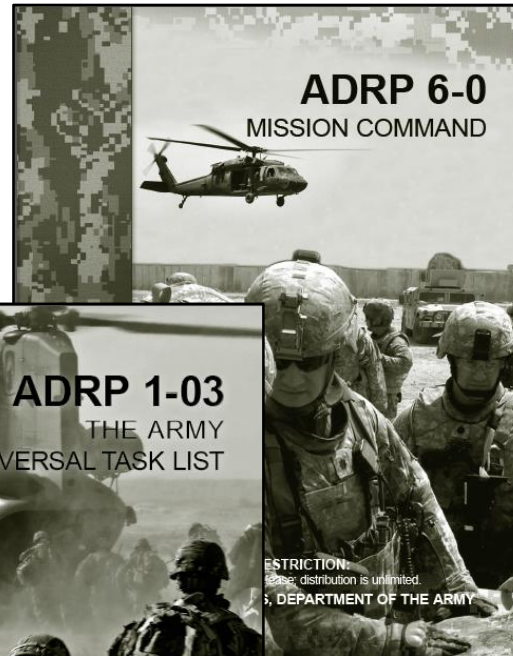
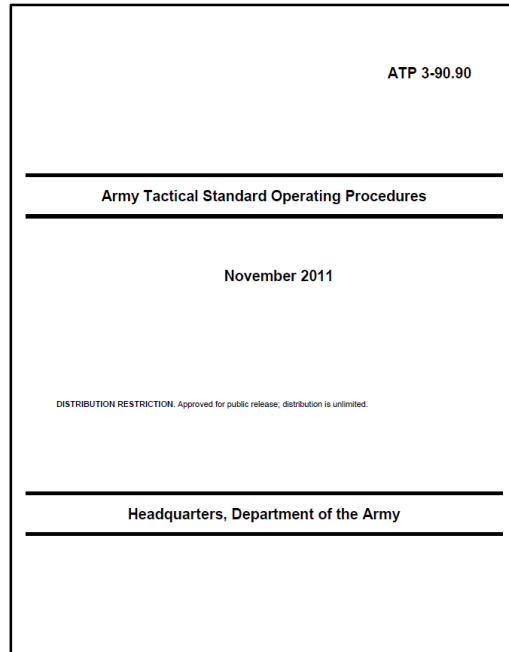


Standard Operating Procedures: A Primer



Key Points of ATP 3-90.90

Army Tactical Standard Operating Procedures

A *standard operating procedure* is a set of instructions covering those features of operations which lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness. The procedure is applicable unless ordered otherwise (JP 3-31).

- ATP facilitates development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) in order to enhance efficiency and adaptability across the force
 - SOP portal (on milWiki) is not authoritative doctrine. The examples in the portal do not provide ready-to-use SOPs for Army units
 - Applicable to Active Army, ARNG, ARNGUS), and USAR
 - Principal audience for ATP is Army leaders and staffs at tactical headquarters (but can be used as a reference by JIM audiences.
 - Does not apply to organizations developing official departmental publications
- Well-written and properly used unit tactical SOPs enhance effective execution of tasks; the benefits of SOPs are numerous
 - Reduce training time
 - Reduce loss of unwritten information
 - Reduce commission of errors
 - Reduce omission of essential steps or processes
 - Reduce time required to complete tasks
 - Other Doctrinal Publications
 - ADRP 1-03, ART 5.2.1.3 *Establish or revise standard operating procedures*
 - FM 6-99.2, prescribes Army report and message formats
 - DA Pam 25-40, Table 12-1, SOPs are a type of operational record

ART 5.2.1.3 ESTABLISH OR REVISE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

5-69. Units create or modify a set of instructions covering those tasks and functions that lend themselves to a definite or standard procedure without a loss of effectiveness. The standard operating procedures are effective unless ordered otherwise to meet altered conditions. (FM 6-0) (USACAC)

No.	Scale	Measure
01	Yes/No	Unit's standard operating procedures or its revisions facilitated mission accomplishment and warfighting functions integration.
02	Yes/No	Commands had policies and procedures for operation and maintenance of information systems.
03	Yes/No	Commands had restoration plans for critical failures.
04	Percent	Of normal operations covered by procedures.
05	Percent	Of procedures revised during operations.
06	Percent	Of total down time for operational mission command systems attributed to failure to follow established policies and procedures.

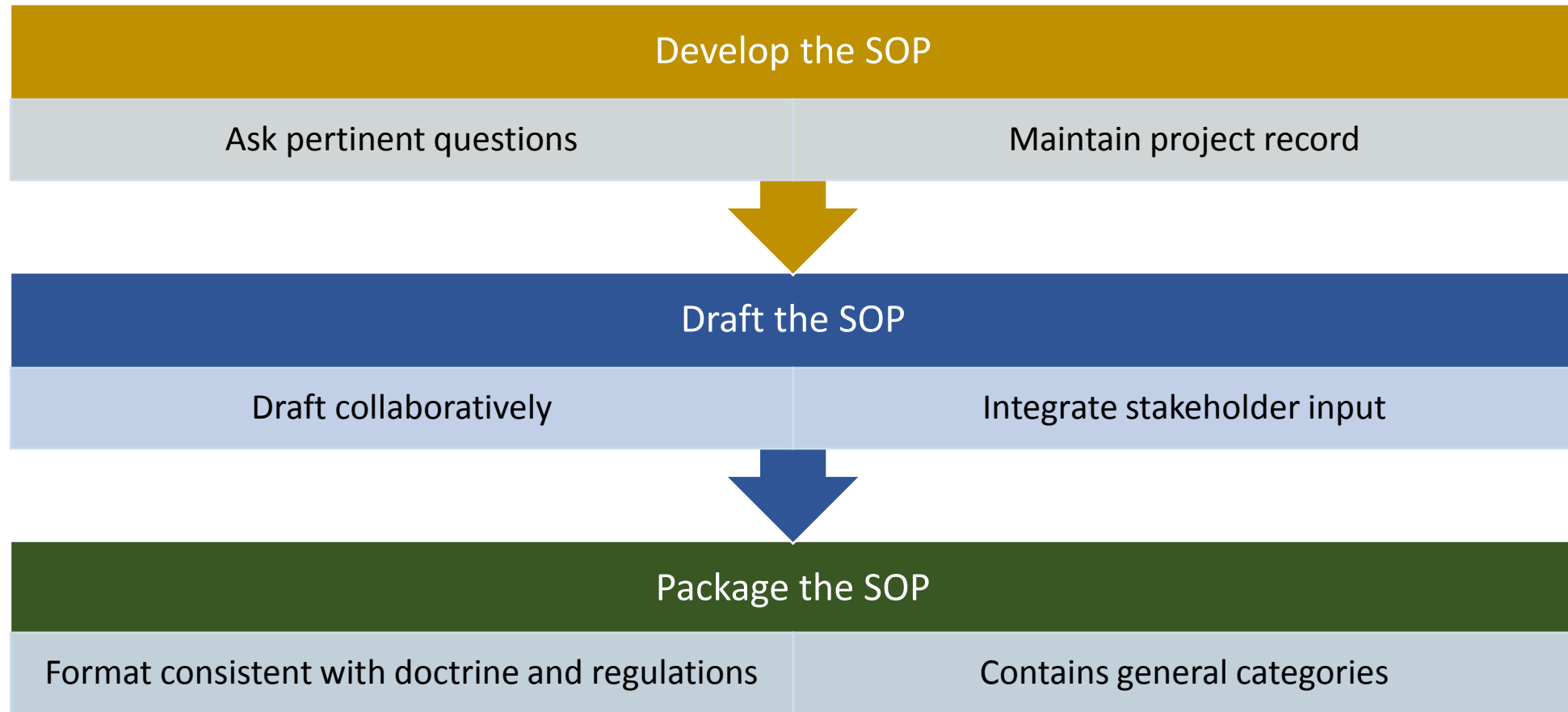
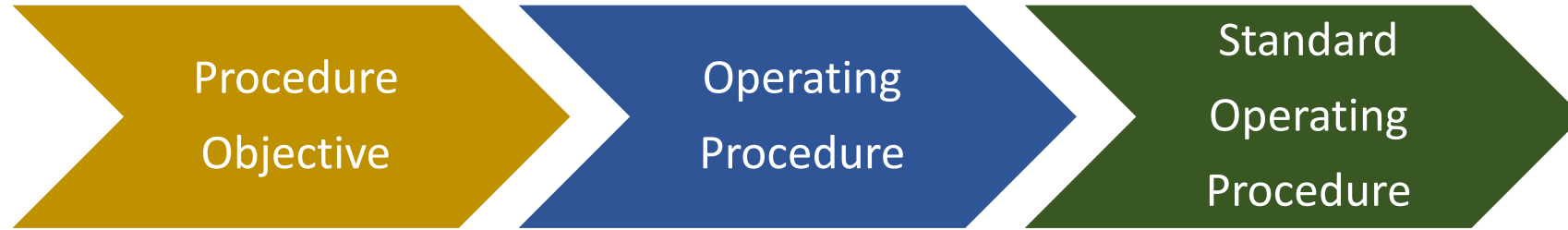
Source: ADRP 1-03, Oct 2015
Army Universal Task List

Stages of SOP Development

Table 2-1. Stages of standard operating procedure development

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Result</i>
1. Determine optimal product a procedure should deliver	The objective
2. Establish an optimal process for achieving the objective	The operating procedure
3. Explain in writing how to carry out the operating procedure	The standard operating procedure (the instructions)

Concept Mapping the 'SOP Development Process'



Developing the SOP: Getting Started

Table 2-2. Sample initial authoring questions

What is the objective of the procedure to be established or revised (what will be the product of the procedure)?
What is the commander's guidance about the procedure and its product?
What is the instructional purpose of the SOP document (what will its users be able to do)?
Who will read the document, and who will use the procedure?
What background knowledge do SOP users have?
To develop the procedure thoroughly and accurately, what information must be gathered and from what sources?
What sources are considered authoritative or informative for this procedure?
How can the SOP portal be used to facilitate developing the SOP?
If a procedure already existed for achieving the objective, what were its strengths and weaknesses?
If there is already a consensus for the optimal way to achieve the objective, what is the general statement of that method?
Whose assistance and what additional resources will be needed to complete the SOP?
Who must agree on the procedure?
Who will sign to approve the SOP?
By what methodology should the procedure be developed or improved?
How should the new or revised SOP be vetted (both the procedure and the instructions)?
With what existing documents, resources, organizations, or partners must the SOP align (regulations, policies, equipment, doctrinal or training literature, other)?

Table 2-2. Sample initial authoring questions (continued)

What will be the recordkeeping requirements related to the SOP?
What safety considerations are pertinent to the procedure that will be established or revised?
What security requirements must be observed in relation to the SOP?
What conditions, equipment, materials, or technology are pertinent to the procedure that will be established or revised?
How many drafts should it take to arrive at a final version of the SOP?
What is the subject of the SOP document?
What major subtopics should the SOP include?
What topics should the SOP avoid?
How should the SOP be organized—what is the preliminary topic outline?
What are the best media (paper, digital, visual, 3D, audio, video, combination, other) for the SOP and for supporting instructional materials?
How should the SOP be made available to intended users?
Who should teach others to use the procedure?
How should the procedure be tested, and how often?
Who will update the SOP, and when?
Who will ensure compliance with the SOP?
Considering the work to be done and the commander's guidance, what is a reasonable time line for completing the SOP?
Legend: SOP: standard operating procedure

Writing SOPs: Tips and Tricks

Effective Writing

- Focus on objective
- Carefully observe and analyze tasks
- Consider intended audience characteristics
- Incorporate appropriate media
- Use appropriate design
- Limit acronym use
- Apply the Army writing standard

Organized Writing

- More important ideas before less important ideas
- Closely related ideas together
- Subordinate ideas under main ideas
- Step of a process in chronological order

Concise Writing

- Express point with fewest words possible
- Avoid passive sentences (They slow/impair reading comprehension and make document longer than needed)
- Avoid fancy (bureaucratic) words and long sentences
- Avoid unnecessary repetition

To-The-Point Writing

- Avoids indirect or vague language
- Avoids jargon (specialized and unofficial words)
- Avoids unnecessary components (e.g.; cartoons, humorous anecdotes, irrelevant references, long historical backgrounds, quotations)

Example:

Ineffective: In accordance with aforementioned authorities, you must perform the task which is required

Effective: This task is mandatory