

French Army approaches to networked warfare

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Résumé ou extrait : The French Army has been developing and fielding networked warfare technology since the 1990s and now boasts both considerable experience using the technology in the field and a successful modernization program. As part of an effort to glean lessons learned from the French network-centric warfare (NCW) program for the U.S. Army, RAND researchers combed through a variety of primary and secondary French sources and interviewed several dozen French Army officers, think tank

analysts, and government experts. The concept of NCW argues that, because of networks that share information, the power and lethality of a deployed force can be greater than the sum of its parts; information, moreover, would enable modern forces to forgo armor and mass. Interviews with French Army officers suggest that NCW is a French solution to a French problem stemming from French budgetary constraints-specifically, the need to build one middle-weight force that is deployable to Africa but that is still robust enough for higher-end threats. By contrast, the U.S. Army's modernization challenge starts with a different strategic premise-deterring China and Russia, as well as different assumptions about available logistical capabilities. The two militaries' requirements therefore do not necessarily overlap sufficiently for a solution appropriate for one to be appropriate for the other.

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