



**THE ROLE OF MILITARY TERMS IN GENERAL MILITARY  
REGULATIONS**

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A B S T R A C T	K E Y W O R D S
<p>Military terminology refers to the terms and language of military organizations and personnel as belonging to a discrete category. As distinguishable by their usage in military doctrine, they serve to depoliticise, dehumanise, or otherwise abstract discussion about its operations from an actual description thereof</p>	<p>Operations, the same country, additional complexity, actual description.</p>

**Introduction**

The operational pressure for uniform understanding has developed since the early 20th century with the importance of joint operations between different services (army, navy, air force) of the same country. International alliances and operations, including peacekeeping,<sup>[1]</sup> have added additional complexity. For example, the NATO alliance now maintains a large dictionary<sup>[2]</sup> of common terms for use by member countries. Development work is also taking place<sup>[3]</sup> between NATO and Russia on common terminology for extended air defence, in English, French and Russian.

Some claim military terms serve to depoliticise, dehumanize, or otherwise abstract discussion about operations from an actual description thereof. Similar to "legal terminology" and related to "political terminology", military terms are known for an oblique tendency to incorporate technical language. In many cases, it reflects a need to be precise. It can also reflect a perceived need for operational security, giving away no more information than needed. It can also serve to disguise or distort meaning as with doublespeak. "Kinetic activity" as a buzzword for combat, in use since the inception of the War on Terror, has been criticized as a don't-ask-don't-tell policy for murder.<sup>[4]</sup>

This is a list of **established military terms** which have been in use for at least 50 years. Since technology and doctrine have changed over time, not all of them are in current use, or they may have been superseded by more modern terms. However, they are still in current use in articles about previous military periods. Some of them like *camouflet* have been adapted to describe modern versions of old techniques.

**Operational**

- Adrift: Loose and out of control. Typically applied to a ship or vessel that has lost power and is unable to control its movement.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Aft: Any part of the ship closer to the stern than you currently are.<sup>[10]</sup>
- All Hands: The entire ship's crew to include all officers and enlisted.<sup>[10]</sup>

- Aye, Aye: Response acknowledging and understanding a command.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Bow: Front of the ship.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Below: Any deck beneath the one you are currently on.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Carry on: An order given to continue work or duties.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Cast off: To throw off, to let go, to unfurl.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Colours: Raising and lowering of the National Ensign, the National flag, and organization flags.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Fathom: Unit of measurement generally used for depth from sea level to sea floor.<sup>[10]</sup>
- General Quarters: Battle stations.<sup>[10]</sup> Generally set when the ship is about to engage in battle or hostile activities.
- Jettison: To throw or dispose of something over the side of the ship.
- Ladder: Also known as a ladder well. Much like civilian stairs, however much steeper.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Leave: Vacation time nearly completely free unless an emergency recall occurs.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Shore leave or Liberty (US): Permission to leave the ship/base to enjoy non-work activities.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Mid-watch: Tends to be the midnight to 0400 watch. Also known as "balls to four" due to military time equivalent 0000-0400.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Needle alive: Airspeed indicator showing increasing speed.
- Port Side: Left hand side of the ship.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Quarters: Generally the morning assembly of all hands for muster and accountability.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Starboard: Right hand side of the ship.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Ready room: Room on an aircraft carrier where aircrew conduct much of their pre-flight and post-flight briefs.
- Smoke in the air: Used by Naval Aviators/Aircrew for locked-on incoming missiles at visual range.
- Stern: Rear of the ship.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Taps: Lights out, time to sleep.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Turn to: Start working.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Working Aloft: Working above the highest deck, generally performing maintenance on the ship's mast or antennas.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Engineering

*See also List of fortifications*

- Abatis: a defensive obstacle consisting of an obstacle formed (in the modern era) of the branches of trees laid in a row.
- Banquette, or fire step
- Barbed wire
- Bartizan: a cylindrical turret or sentry post projecting beyond the parapet of a fort or castle
- Bastion
- Bastion fortress: a star-shaped fortress surrounding a town or city (also known as *star fort* or *Trace italienne*).
- Battery: an artillery position, which may be fortified.
- Berm
- Blast wall: a barrier for protection from high explosive blast.
- Blockhouse: a) Medieval and Renaissance - a small artillery tower, b) 18th and 19th centuries - a small colonial wooden fort, c) 20th century - a large concrete defensive structure.

- Breastwork
- Bulwark
- Bunker: a heavily fortified, mainly underground, facility used as a defensive position; also commonly used as command centres for high-level officers.
- Caponier: a defensive firing position either projecting into, or traversing the ditch of a fort.
- Carnot wall: a wall pierced with loopholes, sited above the scarp of a ditch but below the rampart.
- Casemate: a vaulted chamber for protected storage, accommodation or if provided with an embrasure, for artillery

## References

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