

US Joint Chiefs of Staff Official Nuclear Operations Doctrine Published, Taken Offline

By [Steven Aftergood](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Militarization and WMD](#)

The Joint Chiefs of Staff briefly published and then removed from public access a new edition of their official doctrine on the use of nuclear weapons. But a public copy was preserved. See Joint Publication 3-72, [Nuclear Operations](#), June 11, 2019.

The document presents an unclassified, mostly familiar overview of nuclear strategy, force structure, planning, targeting, command and control, and operations.

“Using nuclear weapons could create conditions for decisive results and the restoration of strategic stability,” according to one Strangelovian passage [in the publication](#). “Specifically, the use of a nuclear weapon will fundamentally change the scope of a battle and create conditions that affect how commanders will prevail in conflict.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY COMMANDER’S OVERVIEW

- **Discusses the four principal roles for US nuclear forces that guide the development of US force capabilities and prescribes the use of these capabilities.**
- **Outlines the sources of *Policy Guidance on Nuclear Weapons*.**
- **Describes nuclear forces and support structures.**
- **Discusses nuclear planning, targeting, intelligence support, and theater planning and targeting considerations.**
- **Describes nuclear command, control, and communications systems.**
- **Discusses the Department of Defense’s and Department of Energy’s shared responsibility to ensure US nuclear weapons are safe, secure, reliable, and under positive control, a concept commonly referred to as “surety.”**

[Screenshot](#)

The document might have gone unremarked, but after publishing it last week the Joint

Chiefs deleted it from their public website. A notice [there](#) states that it (JP 3-72) is now only “available through JEL+” (the Joint Electronic Library), which is a restricted access site.

A [local copy](#) remains publicly available on the FAS website.

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