

NATO Allied Command Transformation Operational Experimentation (OPEX)



Fact Sheet – OPEX

Background:	OPEX is a compact, yet versatile organisation within NATO’s Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, based in Norfolk, Virginia, USA. OPEX is responsible for experimenting, using controlled investigations to gain evidence in support of developing new concepts, ideas, and capabilities. As an operationally-focused Branch, OPEX works extensively with field operators and niche experts such as deployed NATO forces, civilians, academics, industry, other international organisations, and non-government organisations. Experimentation enables the Alliance to better understand what works, and what does not, and why.
Mission:	The OPEX mission is to plan, design, and conduct and analyze experiments in support of concepts and capabilities development.
Why Experiment?	To reduce uncertainty, to evaluate innovations objectively, identify solutions that may not be clear through study and analysis alone, and reduce the risk of selecting a poor solution.
Types of Experiment:	<p><i>Discovery.</i> Introducing novel systems, concepts, organisations, or technologies to a setting where their use can be observed and recorded.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis.</i> Testing of educated, testable predictions about what will happen; if we do x then, y will happen.</p> <p><i>Validation.</i> Provide the final demonstrated evidence of whether or not a prototype can operate within the operational theatre and improve effectiveness or efficiency. Validation activities include Operational and Acceptance Testing in support of formal Capability Acceptance, ensuring that all supporting elements of a new capability are present and viable.</p>
Venues for Experiments:	Operations, Exercises, Scenario Based Discussions or Wargaming, Table-Top Exercises, Workshops, Surveys, etc.
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