

Firepower distribution method of anti-ship missile based on coupled path planning

LIU Gang^{1,*}, AN Zhibiao¹, LAO Songyang², and LI Wu¹

1. School of Information Science and Engineering, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology, Yueyang 414006, China;
2. College of Systems Engineering, National University of Defense Technology, Changsha 410000, China

Abstract: Anti-ship missile coordinated attack mission planning is a complex multi-objective optimization problem with multiple combinations of platforms, strong decision-making constraints, and tightly coupled links. To avoid the coupling disorder between path planning and firepower distribution and improve the efficiency of coordinated attack mission planning, a firepower distribution model under the conditions of path planning is established from the perspective of decoupling optimization and the algorithm is implemented. First, we establish reference coordinate system of firepower distribution to clarify the reference direction of firepower distribution and divide the area of firepower distribution; then, we construct an index table of membership of firepower distribution to obtain alternative firepower distribution plans; finally, the fitness function of firepower distribution is established based on damage income, missile loss, ratio of efficiency and cost of firepower distribution, and the mean square deviation of the number of missiles used, and the alternatives are sorted to obtain the optimal firepower distribution plan. According to two simulation experiments, the method in this paper can effectively solve the many-to-many firepower distribution problem of coupled path planning. Under the premise of ensuring that no path crossing occurs, the optimal global solution can be obtained, and the operability and timeliness are good.

Keywords: anti-ship missile, path planning, firepower distribution, cooperation, weapon-target assignment (WTA), coupled.

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1. Introduction

Modern naval battles and coordinated anti-ship missile attacks have become the most important and only long-range means of attacking the sea. Due to the coupling relationship between path planning and firepower distribution,

in addition to the high-intensity, multi-directional, multi-wave saturation attack effect, it is necessary to avoid the problems of path crossing and range waste [1,2], which makes the anti-ship missiles coordinated attack mission planning a complex multi-objective optimization problem with multiple combinations of platforms, strong decision-making constraints, and tightly coupled links.

Theoretically, for offline pre-planning problems such as cooperative anti-ship missile path planning, the exact calculation method and the intelligent optimization method can generally be used to solve the problem. However, considering the complexity of cooperative planning and the rapidity of time requirements, the intelligent optimization method becomes the current first choice for solving the cooperative offline path pre-planning problem.

Based on the existing problem model of cooperative path planning, scholars mainly refer to the application of intelligent optimization algorithms in other unmanned aerial vehicles to study the cooperative path planning method of anti-ship missiles based on intelligent optimization algorithms. Zandavi et al. [3] proposed a heuristic optimized missile path planning model based on 3 degree of freedom (3DOF) simulation to compare the performance of the genetic algorithm and the particle swarm algorithm, and the results showed that the genetic algorithm is closer to reality, but the particle swarm algorithm is more effective in solving the path planning problem due to its acceptable results and shorter computation time. Yang et al. [4] improved the genetic algorithm for multi-bomb cooperative path planning by first generating optimized paths that satisfy both the maximum number of waypoints constraint and the minimum path segment length constraint through population initialization, then using subpopulation categorization to distinguish similar paths, and finally fine-tuning the child paths to generate

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*Corresponding author.

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optimal and multiple suboptimal paths. Lei et al. [5] improved the Voronoi diagram to establish a multi-missile path model with the optimization objectives of minimizing the total cost of the path and minimizing the maximum time difference to reach the target, abstracted the collaborative path planning as a distributed constrained optimization problem, and used the asynchronous distributed constrained optimal algorithm and the dynamic planning optimal protocol algorithm to find the collaborative path. Qin et al. [6] proposed a path planning method for automatic parking systems based on direction map search and geometric curves. Liu et al. [7] proposed a collaborative path planning method for multi-autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) under the influence of time-varying ocean currents based on the dynamic programming algorithm. Fan et al. [8] proposed a new manned/unmanned aerial vehicle (MAV/UAV) collaborative combat network model construction method based on a complex network. Hu et al. [9] proposed a distributed self-organizing method for UAV swarm search-attack mission planning. Yang et al. [10] solved the vehicle routing problem with rich cooperation. There is also the problem of ship scheduling [11]. Wang et al. [12] proposed a fast course planning method for anti-ship missiles based on geometric principle. Lin et al. [13] presented a collaborative complete coverage and path planning (CCPP) algorithms for single robot and multi-robot systems. Hu et al. [14] designed an improved Gaussian mixture model (GMM)/Gaussian mixture regression (GMR)-based path planning method for collaborative robots (cobots) to achieve adaptive obstacle avoidance in dynamic manufacturing.

In recent years, scholars have combined collaborative path planning and weapon-target assignments (WTA) into one problem, and then solved it by segments or decoupled optimization. Zeng et al. [15] decomposed the problem into two levels of multi-objective fire allocation and time-optimal collaborative path planning, and used three methods to solve the problem: non-dominated sorting genetic algorithm II (NSGA-II), multi-objective evolutionary algorithm based on decomposition (MOEA/D), and the ε -constrained MOEA/D algorithm (decomposition-based MOEA with the ε -constraint, DMOEA- ε C). Through comparison, it is found that DMOEA- ε C is the best choice for solving the multi-target firepower distribution problem, and combining it with the time-optimal cooperative path planning method can generate a missile flanking attack solution that is significantly better than the rule-based method. Jia et al. [16] proposed a method framework for multi-platform collaborative surprise path planning, decoupling the path planning process from the selection of optimization metrics and the establishment of

constraints, and finding the path control points through particle swarm optimization algorithms. Jia et al. [17] also decoupled mission assignment and path planning for optimization, using genetic algorithms to find the mission assignment scheme and the loop flow artificial potential field method to find the path planning scheme by using a genetic algorithm to find the firepower distribution scheme and a circular flow artificial potential field method to find the path planning scheme to achieve the simultaneous arrival of multiple platforms. Wang et al. [18] constructed the task auction architecture and auction revenue function with the distributed contract network auction algorithm, combined with the simulated annealing algorithm to coordinate the task execution order, used the A* algorithm to complete the range estimation between two task points, and completed the collaborative path preliminary planning simultaneously in the firepower distribution stage to determine the best task execution order, so as to realize the tight coupling between firepower distribution and collaborative path planning. Zhen et al. [19,20] proposed an intelligent self-organizing algorithm (ISOA) and a UAV swarm intelligent collaborative task planning schema based on artificial potential field and ant colony algorithm. Li et al. [21] proposed a practical cooperative occupation decision-making methodology for use with multiple unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs). Sprenger et al. [22] proposed a methodology to solve a cooperative transportation planning problem and to assess its performance. Fernandez et al. [23] proposed a new vehicle routing problem that arises in an urban area where several carriers operate and some of their customers have demand of service for more than one carrier. Li et al. [24] proposed an intelligent agent-based model for the decision-making process during fleet operations by combining real-time optimization with artificial intelligence.

The above methods have real bottlenecks such as difficult coupling and decoupling processing in the vertical decision-making process and difficulty in ensuring global optimality in the design of the solution algorithm. The existing coupling processing and decoupling optimization are either through “partition-coordination” or “predict-adjustment.” In essence, they are both decomposition modeling and algebraic optimization, and only locally optimal solutions can be obtained.

We proposed the region division model in [1], which has better performance for single platform single target. However, since path crossing may occur for multiple platforms and multiple targets, the present firepower distribution concept is introduced to ensure that path crossing does not occur during path planning. To address the

above problems, this paper proposes a four-stage model of “reference of firepower distribution-division of area of firepower distribution-index table of membership-scheme preference” to optimize the firepower distribution method of coupled path planning. The coupled baseline system is established, and the decoupled affiliation degree guides the evolutionary direction to ensure that the global optimal solution is not lost due to the coupling from the source.

2. Origin and evolution of the concept of firepower distribution

In traditional concepts, the concept of firepower distribution is generally used in air defense operations, which refers to the matching decision-making process between ship-to-air missiles and artillery units and air attack targets. These are the problem of WTA in air defense operations [25–27]. However, with the rapid development of

anti-ship missiles as a typical representative of anti-sea warfare equipment and technology, its operational use mode also changes accordingly. In anti-ship warfare, the timeliness of information, the time-sensitivity of targets, and the quick decision of the combat process are further enhanced and highlighted, which makes the status of these three in anti-ship warfare gradually improved and developed to the same height as their status in air defense warfare. This has created new combat requirements in anti-ship warfare. In response to combat requirements, corresponding decision-making process are required to support. Driven by new combat requirements, the concept of firepower distribution was gradually introduced into anti-ship operations [28], and it was enriched and developed, becoming a key decision-making link in anti-ship operations. The conceptual evolution of firepower distribution is shown in Fig. 1.

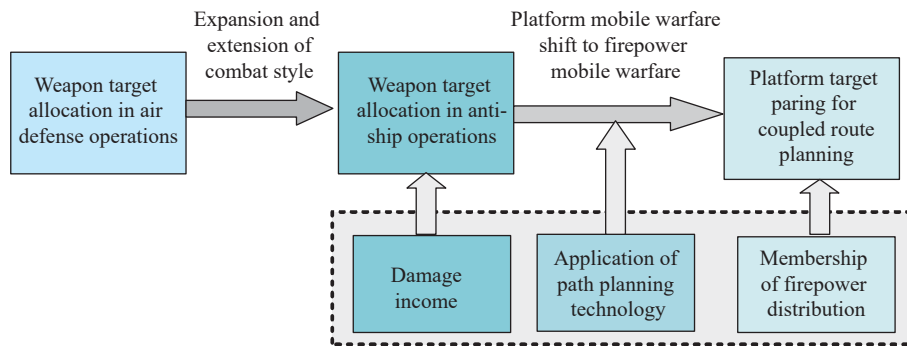


Fig. 1 Conceptual evolution of firepower distribution

The “anti-ship missile firepower distribution” according to the mission of the missile attack refers to the reasonable matching decision between the missile and the target. The corresponding decision-making instruction is set to the missile, and the target selection ability of the missile itself is used to select the intended attack target (firepower distribution target) to realize the commander’s operational intentions and ensure operational coordination [29–33]. The essence is to reasonably distribute missile firepower to strike a predetermined target in accordance with the commander’s combat intentions. The evaluation index is the probability of damage to the target by the missile. The technical basis and key lie in the ability of anti-ship missiles to select targets by firepower distribution. The realization form is to rely on missiles to autonomously complete the search, identification, selection, and attack of targets. This is not only the conceptual expansion and extension of its combat style (or aspects) from air defense to anti-ship for firepower distribution but also a leap-forward change in concepts and technology, which puts forward very high requirements for the

intelligent combat level of anti-ship missiles. The whole process of anti-ship missile firepower distribution can be divided into three stages: (i) the commander makes the attack target decision; (ii) the missile user sets the attack decision instruction to the missile. (iii) the missile selects the predetermined attack target according to the decision instruction.

The theory of maritime firepower mobile warfare has led to the rapid development of naval weaponry and equipment technology as one of the important needs, and the anti-ship missile path planning technology has emerged. The application of path planning technology has greatly improved the combat effectiveness of anti-ship missiles. It has also made the traditional anti-ship decision-making links unable to meet the development requirements of maritime firepower mobile warfare. The firepower distribution is the most profoundly affected.

Before the path planning, the first key problem to be solved is to clarify the starting point and the target point of the anti-ship missile attack, and in the coordinated path

planning is to clarify which launch platform attacks which target. This is the problem to be solved by firepower distribution. Therefore, the firepower distribution should be carried out before path planning, and reasonable firepower distribution is a prerequisite to ensure the smooth progress of path planning. If the firepower distribution is unreasonable, it will cause difficulty in path planning and even unsolvable situations. This puts forward new requirements for firepower distribution. The firepower distribution not only satisfies its own constraints but also be able to satisfy subsequent path planning requirements. The existing firepower distribution methods of anti-ship missiles are based on platform maneuvering warfare and direct anti-ship missiles, and do not consider firepower maneuvering factors such as path planning. This is far from the new requirements for firepower distribution. As a result, it is no longer possible to ensure that anti-ship missiles can fully exert their due combat effectiveness under the conditions of maritime firepower mobile warfare. Therefore, the concept and method of anti-ship missile firepower distribution must be improved and developed.

In view of the basic needs of coordinated path planning to study the issue of anti-ship missile firepower distribution, the first and foremost thing is to realize the conceptual transformation from platform maneuver warfare to firepower maneuver warfare. This paper proposes the method of regional division for collaborative path planning as a new anti-ship decision-making link under the conditions of maritime firepower maneuver warfare [34]. Regional division can not only avoid the occurrence of path crossing phenomenon but also be used as a bridge and tie for firepower distribution and path planning. Therefore, on the basis of satisfying its own constraints, firepower distribution should serve regional division and path planning. It can be defined as follows:

Definition 1 Anti-ship missile firepower distribution is the process of coordinated path planning, according to the number of firepower units, the location of firepower units, the number of targets and the location of targets, each target is assigned to different firepower units according to certain rules and constraints, and each firepower unit carries out the attack separately so that the subsequent area division and path planning can be carried out smoothly, thereby ensuring the effective completion of the mission.

For Definition 1, there are two important points to explain:

(i) Definition 1 is to conceptually realize the transformation of firepower distribution from platform maneuver warfare to firepower maneuver warfare. The key is to

create decision-making conditions for subsequent regional division and path planning. The regional division is based on a firepower unit (or launch platform). It focuses on the matching decision-making between the firepower unit and the target. However, it does not ignore the intelligent combat level of anti-ship missiles. The target selection capability of anti-ship missiles is still an important part of it.

(ii) The “rules” in Definition 1 belong to the category of firepower distribution methods, the basis for formulating rules is the evaluation index. It is obviously inappropriate to simply use the damage probability of anti-ship missiles as the evaluation index of firepower distribution for coordinated path planning. What evaluation index should be selected and how to formulate corresponding rules are all open-ended questions. For this reason, we put forward the concept of an index table of firepower distribution membership and use it as an evaluation index to study the firepower distribution method of anti-ship missiles under the condition of path planning.

3. Firepower distribution model of coupled path planning

In order to adapt anti-ship operations to the development requirements of maritime firepower maneuver warfare, the concept of firepower distribution and its evolution is studied, the concept of anti-ship missile firepower distribution under the condition of path planning is proposed, and its definition is given in Section 2. This section solves the problem of how to distribute firepower for anti-ship missiles under the condition of path planning. That is the problem of firepower distribution method and modeling for cooperative path planning. This section divides the modeling of the firepower distribution of coordinated path planning into the following four steps to achieve: First, establish firepower distribution reference coordinate system and define the reference direction of firepower distribution. Second, carry out the area of firepower distribution in the reference coordinate system of firepower distribution, and obtain the area of firepower distribution under the jurisdiction of each platform. Third, calculate the membership degree of each target to the firepower distribution area of each platform, establish the firepower index table of membership of firepower distribution, and obtain all possible alternative firepower distribution plans. Finally, according to the fitness function of firepower distribution, sort the alternative firepower distribution schema, and obtain the optimal global solution of firepower distribution schema. Fig. 2. shows the modeling process of firepower distribution in cooperative path planning.

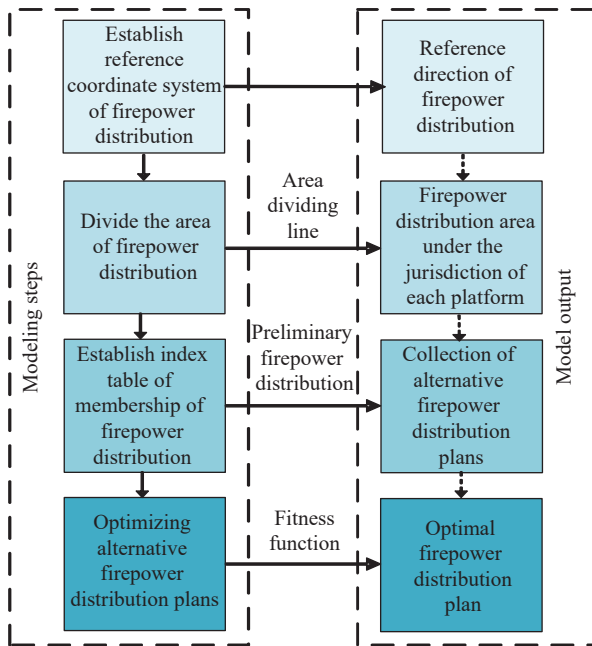


Fig. 2 Conceptual evolution of firepower distribution

3.1 Establishing a reference coordinate system of firepower distribution

When conducting a single-platform anti-ship missile attack, the reference direction of firepower distribution is specifically determined according to the attack situation of the platform on the target. Because of the compatibility of target firepower, the reference direction of firepower distribution of each platform is different from each other. However, the above-mentioned situation is obviously inappropriate when conducting firepower distribution modeling for cooperative path planning. When conducting coordinated path planning firepower distribution, not only the constraints of the single-platform anti-ship missile reference direction of firepower distribution must be considered, but more importantly, the mutual coordination constraints between multiple platforms must be considered. It is necessary to uniformly describe and determine the base direction of firepower distribution of anti-ship missiles on each platform. Make the following definition:

Definition 2 The reference direction of firepower distribution is the reference direction used to uniformly measure the direction of anti-ship missile firepower distribution for each platform when conducting firepower distribution for cooperative path planning.

Establishing the reference direction of firepower distribution is the premise and basis for establishing the firepower distribution model. Different reference directions of firepower distribution will construct different firepower distribution situations (input of the model), and the

reference direction of firepower distribution needs to be in a suitable coordinate system. Therefore, to establish a firepower distribution model, it is first necessary to establish its reference coordinate system. The following definitions are given:

Definition 3 The baseline of firepower distribution is a ray pointing to the reference direction of the firepower with a certain point as the endpoint, and it is a specific expression of the reference direction of firepower distribution.

Definition 4 The baseline angle of firepower distribution is the angle rotated from the due east (horizontal direction) on the chart to the baseline of the firepower distribution, with counter-clockwise as the positive, and used to measure the direction of the baseline of firepower distribution, denoted as $\alpha_s \in [0, 2\pi)$

Definition 5 The normal line of firepower distribution is a ray that takes the endpoint of the baseline of firepower distribution as the endpoint and points to the direction of the baseline of firepower distribution rotated 90° counter-clockwise.

Definition 6 The reference coordinate system of firepower distribution is a Cartesian coordinate system with the end of the baseline of firepower distribution as the origin and the baseline of firepower distribution and the normal line of firepower distribution as the two coordinate axes. The directions of baseline of firepower distribution and the directions of the firepower normal are the positive directions of the respective coordinate axes. The coordinate axes where the baseline of firepower distribution is called the baseline axis, denoted as x_s , and the coordinate distance on it called the baseline coordinate; the coordinate axis where the normal line of firepower distribution is called the normal axis, denoted as y_s , and the coordinate distance on it called the normal coordinates.

The reference coordinate system of firepower distribution is used to provide a unified description of the location of each platform, each target, and related area in the firepower distribution. From the above definition, it can be seen that the reference coordinate system of firepower distribution is determined by the baseline of firepower distribution, which is in turn determined by the baseline angle of firepower distribution. The reference coordinate system of firepower distribution is actually used to determine the baseline of firepower distribution and its baseline angle of firepower distribution. The baseline of firepower distribution is different, the location description provided is different, and the relevant area constructed is also different. In the firepower distribution modeling, the most important thing is that the baseline of firepower distribution needs to be selected and determined.

The following is a specific determination of the baseline of firepower distribution based on Definition 3 and Definition 4. As shown in Fig. 3, the dispersion center of the launch platform O_w^c is taken as the endpoint of the baseline of firepower distribution, the angle is formed by the line between the endpoint and the dispersion center of target O_d^c , and the due east direction (horizontal direction) on the chart is taken as the baseline angle of firepower distribution α_s .

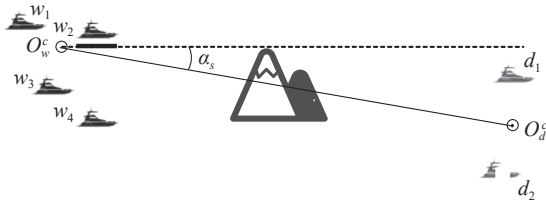


Fig. 3 Determine the firepower baseline

The positions of the dispersion center of the launch platform and the dispersion center of the target are the determining factors of the baseline of firepower distribution. Calculate them separately as follows:

Suppose the geographic coordinates of the dispersion center of launch platform O_w^c are (x_w^c, y_w^c) .

$$O_w^c : \begin{cases} x_w^c = \frac{1}{N_w} \sum_{i=1}^{N_w} x_w^i \\ y_w^c = \frac{1}{N_w} \sum_{i=1}^{N_w} y_w^i \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

where N_w is the number of launch platforms, and (x_w^i, y_w^i) is the i th ($i = 1, 2, \dots, N_w$) geographic coordinates of the launch platform w_i .

Suppose the geographic coordinates of the dispersion center of target O_d^c is (x_d^c, y_d^c) .

$$O_d^c : \begin{cases} x_d^c = \frac{1}{N_d} \sum_{j=1}^{N_d} x_d^j \\ y_d^c = \frac{1}{N_d} \sum_{j=1}^{N_d} y_d^j \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

where N_d is the number of targets and (x_d^j, y_d^j) is the j th ($j = 1, 2, \dots, N_d$) geographic coordinate of target d_j .

The above calculation method of the dispersion center is suitable for the situation where the distribution of each platform (target) is relatively uniform. If some platforms (targets) are far away from most other platforms (targets), the situation is shown in Fig. 4.

As shown in Fig. 4., by calculating according to (2), the dispersion center of the launch platform is O_w^c , and the corresponding baseline angle of firepower distribution is α_s' . If the firepower distribution is according to this

reference direction, most of the launch platforms (as in Fig. 4, w_1, w_2, w_3, w_4) obviously cannot allocate a reasonable area when the subsequent area division is carried out. In order to solve this problem, when calculating the dispersion center, the situation is similar to the platform in Fig. 4. w_5 needs to be eliminated. For this reason, this paper first pre-processes the location data and then calculates it according to the calculation formula of the dispersion center.

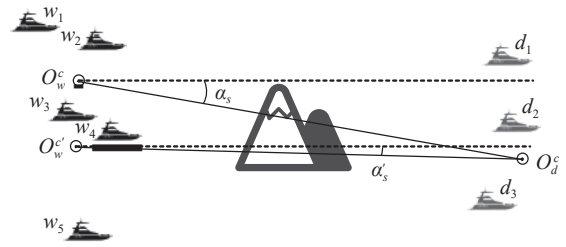


Fig. 4 Scattering center position under extremely uneven distribution

The steps of data pre-process are as follows:

Step 1 According to the calculation formulas (1) and (2) of the dispersion center, calculate the position of the initial dispersion center O_w^c to obtain the coordinates (x_w^c, y_w^c) and calculate the position of the initial dispersion center O_d^c to obtain the coordinates (x_d^c, y_d^c) .

Step 2 Calculate the distance D_w^i/D_d^j between each launch platform w_i (target d_j) and the initial dispersion center O_w^c/O_d^c :

$$\begin{cases} D_w^i = \sqrt{(x_w^i - x_w^c)^2 + (y_w^i - y_w^c)^2} \\ D_d^j = \sqrt{(x_d^j - x_d^c)^2 + (y_d^j - y_d^c)^2} \end{cases} \quad (3)$$

Step 3 Determine whether D_w^i/D_d^j is greater than a certain critical value $\varepsilon_w(\varepsilon_d)$. If it is, then the corresponding platform (target) is considered to be an interference platform (target), and remove it; otherwise, this platform (target) participates in the calculation of the dispersion center. Go to Step 4.

Step 4 According to the calculation formulas (1) and (2) of the dispersion center, calculate the position of the dispersion center after removing the interference platform (target), and obtain the new coordinate of the dispersion center position (x_w^c, y_w^c) and (x_d^c, y_d^c) .

After pre-processing the data, the final dispersion center of the launch platform O_w^c and the target O_d^c can be obtained. The baseline of firepower distribution can be determined. The baseline of firepower distribution is the ray that points to the target dispersion center O_d^c with the dispersion center of the launch platform O_w^c as the endpoint. According to Definition 4, the calculation formula

of the baseline angle of firepower distribution α_s can be obtained:

$$\alpha_s = \begin{cases} \arctan \frac{y_d^c}{y_w^c}, & x_w^c < x_d^c; y_w^c \leq y_d^c \\ \frac{\pi}{2}, & x_w^c = x_d^c; y_w^c < y_d^c \\ \pi + \arctan \frac{y_d^c}{y_w^c}, & x_w^c > x_d^c \\ \frac{3\pi}{2}, & x_w^c = x_d^c; y_w^c > y_d^c \\ 2\pi + \arctan \frac{y_d^c}{y_w^c}, & x_w^c < x_d^c; y_w^c > y_d^c \end{cases} \quad (4)$$

The reference coordinate system of firepower distribution is established. The geographic coordinates of the launch platform and the target are converted into the corresponding baseline coordinates and normal coordinates.

$$\begin{pmatrix} x_s \\ y_s \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \cos \alpha_s & \sin \alpha_s \\ -\sin \alpha_s & \sin \alpha_s \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x - x_w^c \\ y - y_w^c \end{pmatrix} \quad (5)$$

where (x, y) is the geographic coordinates of the launch platform (target), α_s is the baseline angle of firepower distribution, (x_s, y_s) is the reference coordinate of firepower distribution of the launch platform (target), x_s is the distance of baseline coordinate, and y_s is the distance of normal coordinate.

3.2 Division of area of firepower distribution

After the reference coordinate system of firepower distribution is established, the area of firepower distribution is divided into the reference coordinate system of firepower distribution to obtain the area of firepower distribution under the jurisdiction of each platform. Since the research goal of firepower distribution in this article is to achieve task coordination between launch platforms, the focus of the research is to solve the problem of path crossing. The following three assumptions may be made for the division of areas of firepower distribution:

- (i) The target platform has entered the maximum effective range of the launching platform when the firepower distribution is started.
- (ii) The performances of the anti-ship missiles of all launch platforms are roughly the same.
- (iii) Each target platform poses the same threat to each launch platform.

As shown in Fig. 5, $w_i (i \leq N_w)$ is a launching platform, the size of i is increased in the negative direction of the normal axis. Firepower distribution reference system coordinates are (x_{sw}^i, y_{sw}^i) , where x_{sw}^i is the distance of baseline coordinate, and y_{sw}^i is the distance of normal coordinate. $d_j (j \leq N_d)$ is the target platform, where the size of j is increased sequentially along the negative direction of the normal axis. The reference coordinate of firepower distribution are (x_{sd}^j, y_{sd}^j) , where x_{sd}^j is the dis-

tance of the baseline coordinate, and y_{sw}^i is the distance of the normal coordinate.

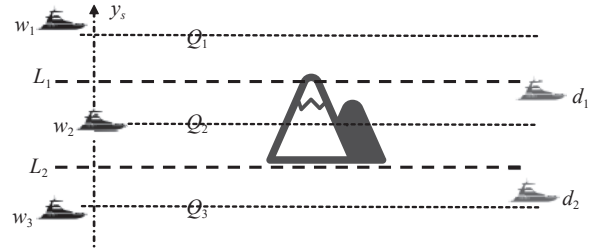


Fig. 5 Scattering center position under extremely uneven distribution

The following definitions are given:

Definition 7 A regional dividing line is a set of parallel lines parallel to the baseline axis. They divide the entire combat sea area into several areas, denoted as $L_m (m \leq N_w - 1)$, and the size of m is increased in order along the negative direction of the normal axis. The position is the weighted average of the normal coordinates of two adjacent launch platforms.

$$L_m = \lambda \cdot y_{sw}^m + (1 - \lambda) \cdot y_{sw}^{m+1}, \quad m \leq N_w - 1 \quad (6)$$

where $\lambda \in [0, 1]$ is the division weight coefficient, and the value is related to the performance of the anti-ship missiles of two adjacent launch platforms and the threat of each target to each launch platform.

When the performance of the anti-ship missiles of each platform is the same, and the threat level of each target to each launch platform is the same, the value of λ is 0.5, and then (6) can be transformed into

$$L_m = \frac{y_{sw}^m + y_{sw}^{m+1}}{2}, \quad m \leq N_w - 1. \quad (7)$$

Definition 8 The area of firepower distribution is a number of areas divided into the entire combat sea area by the area dividing line, denoted as $Q_k (k \leq N_w)$. The size of k is increased along the negative direction of the normal axis, Q_k corresponds to w_k , where w_k is called area of firepower distribution. On both sides of the regional dividing line are two different areas of firepower distribution, and the boundary of the area of firepower distribution Q_k is two adjacent regional dividing lines, the boundaries of the area of firepower distribution are respectively L_{k-1} and L_k . The upper boundary Q_1 is set as $L_1 + \varepsilon_1$, and the lower boundary Q_{N_k} is set as $L_{N_k-1} - \varepsilon_{N_k}$. The w_k firepower distribution area Q_k can be expressed as

$$Q_k \in \begin{cases} (L_k, L_1 + \varepsilon_1), & k = 1 \\ (L_k, L_{k-1}), & 1 < k < N_w \\ (L_{N_k-1} - \varepsilon_{N_k}, L_{k-1}), & k = N_w \end{cases} \quad (8)$$

where ε_1 and ε_{N_w} are fixed values, and the values are

determined according to the boundary of the combat sea area. In principle, the width of the upper and lower firepower distribution areas should be basically consistent with the width of the existing firepower distribution areas.

$$\begin{cases} L_0 = L_1 + \varepsilon_1 \\ L_{N_w-1} = L_{N_w} - \varepsilon_{N_w} \end{cases} \quad (9)$$

Formula (8) can be simplified as

$$Q_k \in (L_k, L_{k-1}), \quad 1 \leq k \leq N_w. \quad (10)$$

The regional dividing line $L_m (m \leq N_w - 1)$ can belong to either the area of firepower distribution Q_m or the area of firepower distribution Q_{m+1} . Considering the simplicity and uniformity of the expression, (8) and (10) are both open intervals.

In a single area of firepower distribution, there are generally no more than two target platforms. If the number of target platforms exceeds two, the target platform in this area of firepower distribution can be regarded as a dense target group and treated as a target platform, and the center of the dispersion is the target position; if several adjacent platforms in the launch platform are relatively close, they are regarded as a dense platform group, and the dispersion center is taken as the platform position.

In order to meet the anti-ship missile's flight constraints and firepower distribution constraints and to avoid the anti-ship missile's path crossing, the following criterion can be made:

Criterion 1 In the firepower distribution of coupled path planning, it is stipulated that each target is only related to its area of firepower distribution and adjacent areas of firepower distribution and has nothing to do with other areas of firepower distribution far away. If the target d_j is in the area of firepower distribution Q_k , it can only be assigned to platform w_k and its adjacent w_{k-1} and platform w_{k+1} (if it exists).

As shown in Fig. 5, target d_1 is in the area of firepower distribution Q_2 ; it can only be assigned to w_2 , w_1 or w_3 the platform because if assigned to platform w_4 , its path w_2 and w_3 will inevitably cross the path of the platform, attacking the target d_2 .

3.3 Establishing the index table of membership of firepower distribution

After the area of firepower distribution is divided, the area of firepower distribution under the jurisdiction of each platform is clarified, and the basic basis for firepower distribution is constructed. However, not all targets are assigned to the platform corresponding to the area of firepower distribution. Then, the next step is to provide a more direct basis for firepower distribution.

Definition 9 The index table of membership of firepower distribution is the probability of assigning a target d_j to the platform w_i , denoted as κ_j^i .

The concept of the index table of membership of firepower distribution provides a direct basis for firepower distribution. For example, if the target's d_j index table of membership of firepower distribution to the platform w_1 is 0.8, and the firepower distribution w_2 index table of membership of firepower distribution to the platform is 0.2. The platform w_1 will attack d_j with a greater probability. Under the premise of meeting other constraints, the target d_j should be distributed to the platform w_1 .

According to Criterion 1, if the target d_j is in the area of firepower distribution Q_k , its index table of membership of firepower distribution is only for the platform w_k and its adjacent w_{k-1} and the platform w_{k+1} (if it exists). As shown in Fig. 5, if the target d_1 is in the area of firepower distribution Q_2 , the index table of membership of firepower distribution d_1 is only for the w_2 , w_1 , and w_3 platforms. If the target d_j is in the area of firepower distribution Q_k , its index table of membership of firepower distribution κ_j^i can be determined by the following formula:

$$\kappa_j^i = \begin{cases} 1 - \exp\left(-\frac{|y_{sd}^j - L_k|}{|L_k - y_{sw}^{k-1}|}\right), & i = k - 1 \\ 1 - \frac{|y_{sd}^j - \frac{L_k + L_{k-1}}{2}|}{|L_k - L_{k-1}|}, & i = k \\ 1 - \exp\left(-\frac{|y_{sd}^j - L_{k-1}|}{|L_k - y_{sw}^{k+1}|}\right), & i = k + 1 \end{cases} \quad (11)$$

It can be seen from (11) that:

(i) The target d_j index table of membership of firepower distribution κ_j^k of the platform w_k ranges from 0.5 to 1. When the target d_j is in the center of the area of firepower distribution Q_k , the target d_j index table of membership of firepower distribution κ_j^k to the platform w_k is the largest, with a value of 1; when the target d_j is at the lower boundary L_k or upper boundary L_{k-1} of the area of firepower distribution Q_k , the target d_j index table of membership of firepower distribution κ_j^k to the platform w_k is set to 0.

(ii) When the target moves from the lower boundary to the upper boundary, the target's d_j index table of membership of firepower distribution κ_j^{k-1} to the platform w_{k-1} gets larger and larger, while the index table of membership of firepower distribution κ_j^{k+1} to the platform w_{k+1} gets smaller and smaller.

(iii) Equation (11) satisfies a certain principle of non-intersection of missile paths and also satisfies Criterion 1.

After calculating the index table of membership of firepower distribution of all targets to their respective launch platforms, an index table of an anti-ship missile of

membership of firepower distribution can be established. Table 1 shows the index table of membership of firepower distribution.

Table 1 Index table of membership of firepower distribution

Platform	Target				
	d_1	d_2	d_3	...	d_{N_d}
w_1	0.4	0.8	0	...	0
w_2	0.6	0.3	0	...	0
w_3	0.4	0.7	0.2	...	0
\vdots	\vdots	\vdots	\vdots	\ddots	\vdots
w_{N_d}	0.4	0.8	0	...	0.5

After the index table of membership of firepower distribution is obtained, the preliminary firepower distribution can be performed according to the value of the index table of membership of firepower distribution. Two of the higher values of the index table of membership of firepower distribution of each target are selected as alternative firepower distribution schema, and then the alternative firepower distribution schema of each target are combined to obtain a complete set of alternative firepower distribution schema.

3.4 Optimizing alternative firepower distribution schema

After obtaining the set of alternative firepower distribution schema, the optimal firepower distribution schema is selected from the set of alternative firepower distribution schema. Then, we must first clarify the evaluation criteria and establish a suitable fitness function of firepower distribution.

Definition 10 Damage income is the damage income of the anti-ship missile carried on the launching platform to the target, denoted as

$$b_d = \left(\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j - 2n_c \right) \cdot \alpha_b \quad (12)$$

where n_j is the number of anti-ship missiles that target j is attacked. n_c is the number of path crossing. Obviously, for anyone path crossing, the corresponding two anti-ship missiles fail at the same time. α_b is the benefit factor.

Definition 11 Missile loss is the number of anti-ship missiles consumed in an attack, denoted as

$$c_m = \beta_c \cdot \sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j \quad (13)$$

where β_c is the loss factor.

Definition 12 The ratio of efficiency and cost of fire-

power distribution is the ratio between the damage income of the anti-ship missile carried on the launching platform to the target b_d and the loss of the anti-ship missile in an attack c_m , denoted as

$$R_{bc} = \frac{b_d}{c_m} = \frac{\left(\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j - 2n_c \right) \cdot \alpha_b}{\beta_c \cdot \sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j} \quad (14)$$

Equation (14) is a typical calculation form of the ratio of efficiency-cost. However, for the military, the main consideration is to damage the target, while the consideration of loss is secondary. Therefore, in order to highlight the requirements for damage, the damage income is expressed in the form of an exponential function, and the ratio of efficiency and cost of firepower distribution can be calculated by the following formula:

$$R_{bc} = \frac{\exp \left[\left(\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j - 2n_c \right) \cdot \alpha_b \right]}{\beta_c \cdot \sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j} \quad (15)$$

When performing alternative firepower distribution optimization, in addition to considering the ratio of efficiency and cost of firepower distribution, it should also consider making the target as fully damaged as possible (assuming that the more missiles the target is attacked, the greater the probability of damage). Each target platform poses the same threat to each launch platform. When the number of launched anti-ship missiles is the same, the launched anti-ship missiles should be equally distributed to each target platform as much as possible. This is also to satisfy the requirement that each target platform is damaged as much as possible:

Definition 13 The mean square deviation of the number of missiles used is the mean square deviation of the number of anti-ship missiles distribution by each target during an attack, denoted as

$$\sigma_n = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} (n_j - \bar{n})^2}{N_d}}. \quad (16)$$

The average value of the number of anti-ship missiles distribution to each target, that is \bar{n} , mean of n_j to N_d :

$$\bar{n} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j}{N_d}. \quad (17)$$

Considering that the path does not crossing and all targets are damaged as much as possible, the fitness function of firepower distribution can be established.

$$f(n_j, n_c) = \gamma \cdot \frac{\exp\left[\left(\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j - 2n_c\right) \cdot \alpha_b\right]}{\beta_c \cdot \sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j} \cdot (1 - \gamma) \cdot \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} (n_j - \bar{n})^2}{N_d}}, \quad 1 \leq j \leq N_d \quad (18)$$

where γ is the weight coefficient.

After the fitness function of firepower distribution is established, the fitness function value of firepower distribution of each alternative firepower distribution plan can be calculated based on it, and the firepower distribution plan is optimized according to the size of the fitness function value of firepower distribution. The greater the value of the fitness function of firepower distribution, the greater the probability that the corresponding firepower distribution plan will be selected.

After the firepower distribution is completed, the optimal firepower distribution plan can be verified. The specific method is: first carry out path planning, and check again whether there is path crossing; if there is, reselect the suboptimal firepower distribution in the set of alternative firepower distribution plans, and then carry out path planning until the path planning of all anti-ship missiles is completed and there is no path crossing.

3.5 Algorithm steps

Design its firepower distribution algorithm according to the firepower distribution model of coupled path planning:

Step 1 Set the size of the critical value ε_w and ε_d .

Step 2 Calculate the position coordinates of the dispersion center O_w^c of the launch platform (x_w^c, y_w^c) , and the position coordinates (x_d^c, y_d^c) of the target's dispersion center O_d^c according to (1) and (2).

Step 3 Calculate the distance $D_w^i(D_d^j)$ between each launch platform w_i (target d_j) and the dispersion center $O_w^c(O_d^c)$ according to (3), and judge whether $D_w^i(D_d^j)$ is greater than the critical value $\varepsilon_w(\varepsilon_d)$. If it is, remove this platform (target) and turn Step 2; otherwise, go to Step 4.

Step 4 Calculate the baseline angle α_s according to (4), and convert the geographic coordinates of the launch platform and the target platform into the corresponding baseline coordinates and normal coordinates according to (5);

Step 5 Order $i = 1, j = 1, k = 1, m = 1$.

Step 6 Determine whether $m \leq N_w - 1$. If it is true, go to Step 7; otherwise, go to Step 8.

Step 7 Calculate the position of the area dividing line L_m according to (7), and go to Step 6.

Step 8 Determine whether $k \leq N_w$ is true. If yes, go to Step 9; otherwise, go to Step 10.

Step 9 Determine the scope of the area of firepower distribution Q_k according to (10), and then go to Step 8.

Step 10 Determine whether $j \leq N_d$. If it is true, go to Step 11; otherwise $j = 1$, go to Step 12.

Step 11 Calculate which area of firepower distribution it belongs to according to the target's d_j firepower reference system coordinates (x_{sd}^j, y_{sd}^j) , go to Step 10.

Step 12 Determine whether $j \leq N_d$. If it is true, go to Step 13; otherwise, go to Step 14.

Step 13 Calculate the index table of firepower distribution membership κ_j^i of the target d_j according to (11), $j++$ and go to Step 12.

Step 14 Establish the index table of membership of firepower distribution, and carry out preliminary firepower distribution based on the principle of first taking the larger one and obtain an alternative N_p firepower distribution plan.

Step 15 Set the value size of $\alpha_b, \beta_c, \gamma$ and order $p = 1$.

Step 16 Determine whether $p \leq N_p$. If it is true, go to Step 17; otherwise, go to Step 18.

Step 17 Calculate the fitness function value of firepower distribution of the first alternative firepower distribution plan according to (18), $p++$ and go to Step 16.

Step 18 Check whether there is a path crossing. If yes, go to Step 15; otherwise, the optimal firepower distribution plan is the one with the largest fitness function value of firepower distribution, and the firepower distribution ends.

Fig. 6 shows the algorithm flow designed according to the above steps.

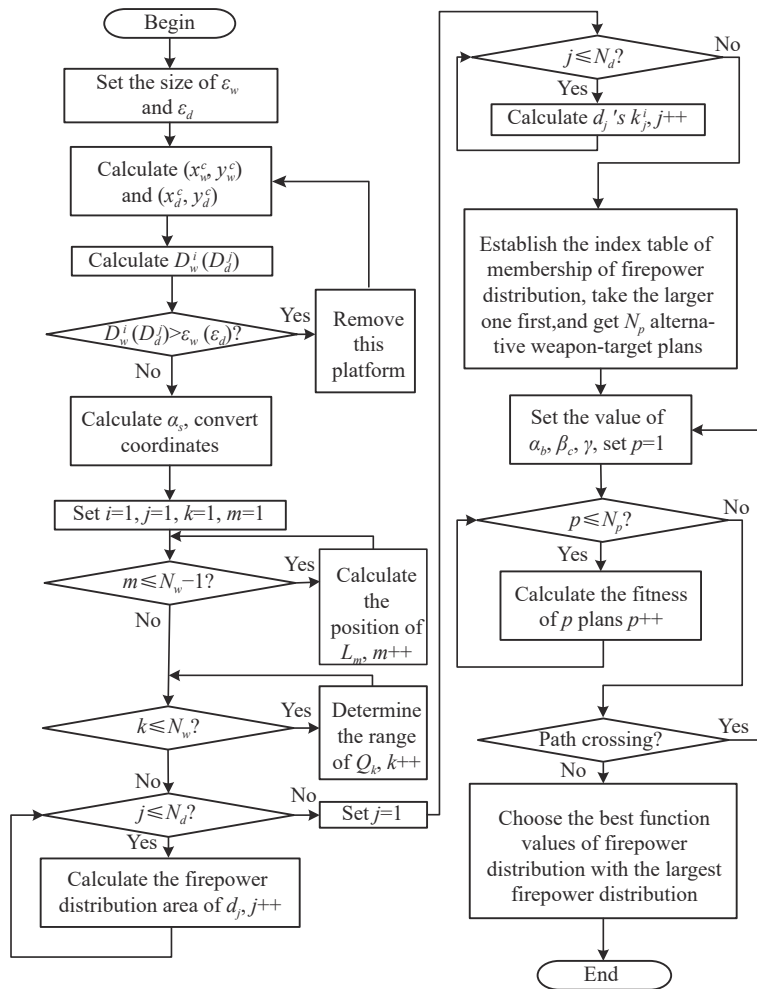


Fig. 6 Conceptual evolution of firepower distribution

4. Simulation experiment

Simulation 1 Take the combat situation in Fig. 5 as an example, the red platforms $w_1, w_2,$ and w_3 implement a multi-directional simultaneous attack on blue ships d_1 and d_2 anti-ship missiles in a certain sea area.

According to Subsection 3.1, the distance of baseline coordinate and distance of normal coordinate of the three platforms on the red side and the two ships on the blue side are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Coordinate data of the firepower reference system of the red and blue platforms (Simulation 1)

Firepower sub-base system	Red party			Blue party	
	w_1	w_2	w_3	d_1	d_2
Baseline coordinates	5.91	-13.02	7.11	0.47	-0.47
Normal coordinate	4.19	-0.32	-3.87	1.86	-1.86

According to Subsection 3.2, the location of the area dividing line can be determined from Table 2.

$$L_1 = \frac{4.19 + (-0.32)}{2} = 1.935$$

$$L_2 = \frac{(-0.32) + (-3.87)}{2} = -2.095$$

It may be assumed $\epsilon_1 = \epsilon_{N_w} = 3$ that the specific scope of the area of firepower distribution Q_1, Q_2 and Q_3 can be determined:

$$\begin{aligned} Q_1 &: (1.935, 4.935), \\ Q_2 &: (-2.095, 1.935), \\ Q_3 &: (-5.095, -2.095). \end{aligned}$$

According to the distance of normal coordinate of each target and the interval of each area of firepower distribution, it can be determined that the target d_1 is located in Q_2 the middle and the target d_2 is located in Q_2 the middle. The table of area of firepower distribution shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Table of area of firepower distribution (Simulation 1)

Blue party	d_1	d_2
Area of firepower distribution	Q_2	Q_2

According to Subsection 3.3, calculate the membership of firepower distribution of each target to each platform respectively, and establish the index table of membership of firepower distribution, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Index table of membership of firepower distribution (Simulation 1)

Red party	Blue party	
	d_1	d_2
w_1	0.4670	0.0367
w_2	0.5186	0.5583
w_3	0.0144	0.5197

A set of alternative firepower distribution schema can be obtained from Table 4, as shown in Table 5.

According to Subsection 3.4 and (8), for the above nine alternative firepower distribution plans, let $\alpha_b = \beta_c = 1$, $\gamma = 0.8$, calculate their fitness function values of firepower distribution fitness function values according to the fitness function of firepower distribution and summarize them in Table 6.

Table 6 Fitness function value of firepower distribution (Simulation 1)

Program number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Adaptability	10.7862	5.2147	5.2147	5.2147	2.8890	2.8890	5.2147	2.8890	2.8890

It can be concluded from Table 6 that Program 1 is the preferred firepower distribution plan. The result has the same fitness function value of firepower distribution because that the fitness function of firepower distribution is only related to path crossing and the number of attacks on the target.

Simulation 2 Take the combat situation in Fig. 4 as

Table 7 Coordinate data of the firepower reference system of the red and blue platforms (Simulation 2)

Firepower sub-base system	Red party					Blue party		
	w_1	w_2	w_3	w_4	w_5	d_1	d_2	d_3
Baseline coordinate	-12.18	-12.29	7.01	5.29	27.23	291.03	-390.34	99.31
Normal coordinate	499.87	109.65	40.25	-149.91	-299.26	276.43	3.78	-280.21

According to Subsection 3.2, the location of the area dividing line can be determined from Table 7.

$$L_1 = \frac{499.87 + 109.65}{2} = 304.76$$

$$L_2 = \frac{109.65 + 40.25}{2} = 74.95$$

Table 5 Collection of alternative firepower distribution plans (Simulation 1)

Serial number	Specific plan	$\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j$	n_c
1	w_1, w_2 attack d_1 w_2, w_3 attack d_2	4	0
2	w_1, w_2 attack d_1 w_2 attack d_2	3	0
3	w_1, w_2 attack d_1 w_3 attack d_2	3	0
4	w_1 attack d_1 w_2, w_3 attack d_2	3	0
5	w_1 attack d_1 w_2 attack d_2	2	0
6	w_1 attack d_1 w_3 attack d_2	2	0
7	w_2 attack d_1 w_2, w_3 attack d_2	3	0
8	w_2 attack d_1 w_2 attack d_2	2	0
9	w_2 attack d_1 w_3 attack d_2	2	0

an example, the red platforms w_1, w_2, w_3, w_4 , and w_5 implement a multi-directional simultaneous attack on blue ships d_1, d_2 , and d_3 anti-ship missiles in a certain sea area.

According to Subsection 3.1, the distance of baseline coordinate and distance of normal coordinate of the five platforms on the red side and the three ships on the blue side are shown in Table 7.

$$L_3 = \frac{40.25 + (-149.91)}{2} = -54.83$$

$$L_4 = \frac{(-149.91) + (-299.26)}{2} = -224.59$$

It may be assumed $\varepsilon_1 = \varepsilon_{N_c} = 100$ that the specific scope of the area of firepower distribution Q_1, Q_2, Q_3, Q_4 , and Q_5 can be determined:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q_1 &: (304.76, 404.76), \\
 Q_2 &: (74.95, 304.76), \\
 Q_3 &: (-54.83, 74.95), \\
 Q_4 &: (-224.59, -54.83), \\
 Q_5 &: (-324.59, -224.59).
 \end{aligned}$$

According to the distance of normal coordinate of each target and the interval of each area of firepower distribution, it can be determined that the target d_1 is located in Q_2 the middle, the target d_2 is located in Q_3 the middle and the target d_3 is located in Q_5 the middle. The table of area of firepower distribution shown in Table 8.

Table 8 Table of area of firepower distribution (Simulation 2)

Blue party	d_1	d_2	d_3
Area of firepower distribution	Q_2	Q_3	Q_5

According to Subsection 3.3, calculate the membership of firepower distribution of each target to each platform respectively, and establish the index table of membership of firepower distribution, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9 Index table of membership of firepower distribution (Simulation 2)

Red party	Blue party		
	d_1	d_2	d_3
w_1	0.4157	0	0
w_2	0.6234	0.2997	0
w_3	0.1016	0.9516	0
w_4	0	0.2713	0.2244
w_5	0	0	0.9438

A set of alternative firepower distribution schema can be obtained from Table 9, as shown in Table 10.

Table 11 Fitness function value of firepower distribution (Simulation 2)

Program number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Adaptability	16.8672	53.6272	23.5575	23.6518	10.8253	23.6518	10.8253	10.8253	5.3561

It can be concluded from Table 11 that Program 2 is the preferred firepower distribution plan. From Table 10, it can be seen that the fitness function of firepower distribution penalizing the path crossing situation is relatively strict. If there is path crossing, the fitness function value of firepower distribution fitness function value is very small, which also verifies the rationality of the allocation fitness function, and judging from the set of alternative firepower distribution schema, there are not many cases of actual path crossing.

Table 10 Collection of alternative firepower distribution plans (Simulation 2)

Serial number	Specific plan	$\sum_{j=1}^{N_d} n_j$	n_c
1	w_1, w_2, w_3 attack d_1	7	1
	w_2, w_3, w_4 attack d_2		
	w_5 attacks d_3		
2	w_1, w_2 attack d_1	6	0
	w_2, w_3, w_4 attack d_2		
	w_5 attacks d_3		
3	w_2 attack d_1	5	0
	w_2, w_3, w_4 attack d_2		
	w_5 attack d_3		
4	w_1, w_2 attack d_1	5	0
	w_2, w_3 attack d_2		
	w_5 attack d_3		
5	w_2 attack d_1	4	0
	w_2, w_3 attack d_2		
	w_5 attack d_3		
6	w_1, w_2 attack d_1	5	0
	w_3, w_4 attack d_2		
	w_5 attack d_3		
7	w_2 attack d_1	4	0
	w_3, w_4 attack d_2		
	w_5 attack d_3		
8	w_1, w_2 attack d_1	4	0
	w_3 attack d_2		
	w_5 attack d_3		
9	w_2 attack d_1	3	0
	w_3 attack d_2		
	w_5 attack d_3		

According to Subsection 3.4 and (8), for the above nine alternative firepower distribution plans, let $\alpha_b = \beta_c = 1$, $\gamma = 0.8$, calculate their fitness function values of firepower distribution fitness function values according to the fitness function of firepower distribution and summarize them in Table 11.

Comparing the two simulations, it can be concluded that the present firepower distribution method can reduce the number of selectable firepower distribution schemes and reduce the calculation time. From Table 6 and Table 11 the optimal firepower distribution scheme is not affected by the platform outlier points and the path crossing.

5. Conclusions

This paper establishes a firepower distribution model

under the condition of path planning from the perspective of decoupling optimization and implements the algorithm.

(i) The concept of anti-ship missile firepower distribution under the condition of path planning is proposed, and its formal definition is given.

(ii) The coupling disorder of path planning and firepower distribution is avoided by establishing a reference coordinate system of firepower distribution and dividing the area of firepower distribution.

(iii) According to the performance of the anti-ship missile and the coordination constraints, the membership criterion of firepower distribution is constructed, and the index table of membership of fire distribution is established to obtain all possible alternative firepower distribution schema.

(iv) The fitness function of firepower distribution is established based on the damage income, missile loss, the ratio of efficiency and cost of firepower distribution, and the mean square deviation of the number of missiles is used, and the optimal global solution of the firepower distribution scheme is obtained.

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Biographies



LIU Gang was born in 1983. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from Naval Arms Command Institute, Guangzhou, China, in 2005 and 2008, respectively, and Ph.D. degree from National University of Defense Technology, Changsha, China, 2013. He has been working in School of Information Science and Engineering, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology, since 2018.

His research interests include intelligent information processing and collaborative mission planning.

E-mail: liugang@hnist.edu.cn



AN Zhibiao was born in 1998. He received his B.S. degree in Tangshan University, Tangshan, China, in 2019. Currently he is a graduate student in School of Information Science and Engineering, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology. His research interests include path planning.

E-mail: anzhibiao@vip.hnist.edu.cn



LAO Songyang was born in 1968. He received his B.S. degree in information system engineering and Ph.D. degree in system engineering from National University of Defense Technology, Changsha, China, in 1990 and 1996, respectively. He was a visiting scholar with Dublin City University, Ireland, from 2004 to 2005. He is currently a professor with the College of Systems

Engineering. His current research interests include deep learning, image processing, video analysis, and human-computer interaction.

E-mail: laosongyang@sina.vip.com



LI Wu was born in 1977. He received his B.S. degree from Shenyang Ligong University, Shenyang, China, M.S. degree in power system and its automation from Xi'an Jiaotong University, Chengdu, China, and Ph.D. degree in control science and engineering from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China, in 2009. His current research interests include intel-

ligent decision analysis and optimization.

E-mail: 12009012@hnist.edu.cn