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Small Unit TACTICS

Planning & Conducting Tactical Operations

The Lightning Press
Larsen and Wade

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SUTS3
SMARTBOOK

Third Edition
(SUTS3)
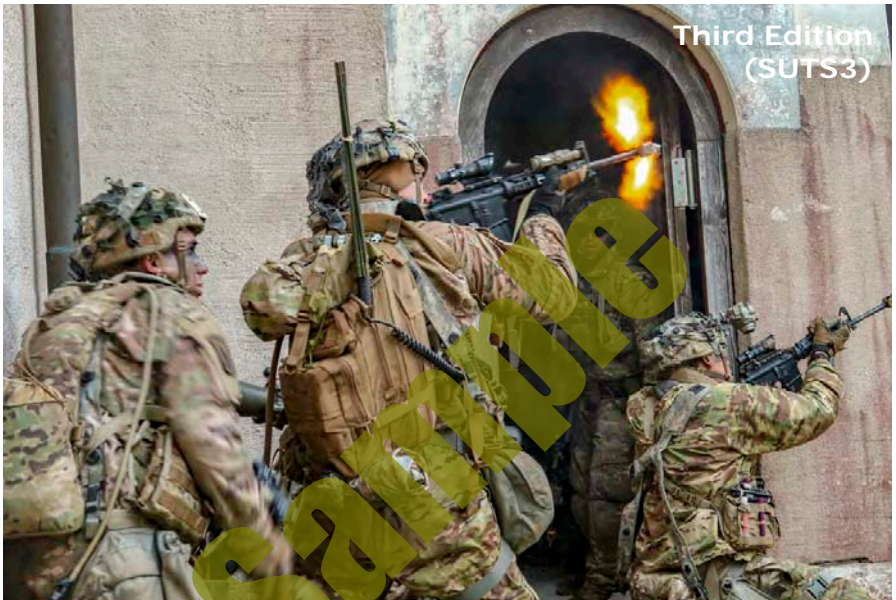
Small Unit
TACTICS

Planning & Conducting Tactical Operations

Third Edition (SUTS3)

The Lightning Press

Dr. Christopher Larsen
Norman M. Wade

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(SUTS3) The Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook, 3rd Ed.
Planning & Conducting Tactical Operations

SUTS3 is the third revised edition of The Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook, completely updated for 2019 to include ADP 3-90 Offense and Defense (Jul '19), ADP 3-0 (Jul '19) and FM 3-0 Operations w/Chg 1 (Dec '17), FMs 3-90-1 & -2 (May '13), ATP 3-21.8 Infantry Platoon and Squad (Apr '16), ATP 3-21.10 Infantry Rifle Company (May '18), TC 3-21-76 The Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), and the latest versions of more than 20 additional references.

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About our cover photo: U.S. Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) engage opposing forces in a simulated exercise during Saber Junction 18 at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, Sept. 26, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Gabrielle Weaver)

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(SUTS3)
Notes to Reader

Planning & Conducting Tactical Operations

Tactics is the employment and ordered arrangement of forces in relation to each other. Through tactics, commanders use **combat power** to accomplish missions. The tactical-level commander uses combat power in **battles, engagements, and small-unit actions**.
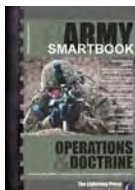
The nature of **close combat** in land operations is unique. Combatants routinely come **face-to-face** with one another in large numbers in a wide variety of operational environments comprising all types of terrain. When other means fail to drive enemy forces from their positions, forces close with and destroy or capture them.

An **offensive operation** is an operation to defeat or destroy enemy forces and gain control of terrain, resources, and population centers. Offensive operations impose the commander's will on an enemy. The offense is the most direct means of seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative to gain a physical and psychological advantage. The four types of offensive operations are movement to contact, attack, exploitation, and pursuit.

A **defensive operation** is an operation to defeat an enemy attack, gain time, economize forces, and develop conditions favorable for offensive or stability operations. Defensive operations are a counter to an enemy offensive action, and they seek to destroy as much of the attacking enemy forces as possible. Friendly forces use three types of defensive operations to deny enemy forces advantages: area defense, mobile defense, and retrograde.

The **Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook** translates and bridges operational-level doctrine into tactical application -- in the form of tactics, techniques and procedures -- and provides the "how to" at the small-unit level as a ready reference at the battalion, company, platoon, squad and fire team level.

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ADP 3-90   *FM 3-0 (Chg 1)*   *FM 3-90-1*   *FM 3-90-2*

ATP 3-21.10   *ATP 3-21.8*   *TC 3-21.76*   *plus 20+ more!*

SUTS3 chapters and topics include tactical fundamentals, the offense; the defense; train, advise, and assist (stability, peace, and counterinsurgency operations); enabling operations (reconnaissance, security operations, troop movement, relief in place, passage of lines, and encirclement); special purpose attacks (ambush, raid, counterattack, spoiling attack, demonstrations and feints); urban and regional environments (urban, fortified areas, desert, cold region, mountain, and jungle operations); patrols and patrolling.

Chap 1: Tactical Fundamentals

Tactics is the employment and ordered arrangement of forces in relation to each other. Through tactics, commanders use **combat power** to accomplish missions. The tactical-level commander uses combat power in **battles, engagements, and small-unit actions**. The nature of **close combat** in land operations is unique. Combatants routinely come **face-to-face** with one another in large numbers in a wide variety of operational environments comprising all types of terrain. When other means fail to drive enemy forces from their positions, forces close with and destroy or capture them.

Chap 2: The Offense

An **offensive operation** is an operation to defeat or destroy enemy forces and gain control of terrain, resources, and population centers. Offensive operations impose the commander's will on an enemy. The offense is the most direct means of seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative to gain a physical and psychological advantage. The offense compels an enemy to react, creating new or larger weaknesses the attacking force can exploit. The four types of offensive operations are movement to contact, attack, exploitation, and pursuit.

Chap 3: The Defense

A **defensive operation** is an operation to defeat an enemy attack, gain time, economize forces, and develop conditions favorable for offensive or stability operations. Defensive operations are a counter to an enemy offensive action, and they seek to destroy as much of the attacking enemy forces as possible. Friendly forces use three types of defensive operations to deny enemy forces advantages: area defense, mobile defense, and retrograde.

Chap 4: Train, Advise, Assist

Military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence missions, tasks, and actions encompass a wide range of actions where the military instrument of national power is tasked to support other instruments of national power as represented by interagency partners, as well as cooperate with international organizations and other countries to protect and enhance national security interests, deter conflict, and set conditions for future contingency operations. **Stability** is achieved through the process of stabilization through the balanced application of the instruments of national power in partnership with the host nation (HN) and local communities. **Peace operations** are crisis response and limited contingency operations, and normally include international efforts and military missions to contain conflict, redress the peace, and shape the environment to support reconciliation and rebuilding and to facilitate the transition to legitimate governance. **Counterinsurgency (COIN)** operations is the combination of measures undertaken by a government, sometimes with USG and multinational partner support, to defeat an insurgency.

Chap 5: Enabling Operations

Commanders direct **enabling operations** to support the conduct of the offensive, defensive, and stability operations and defense support of civil authorities tasks. Enabling operations are usually conducted by commanders as part of their shaping operations or supporting efforts. The tactical enabling tasks discussed in this chapter are reconnaissance, security, troop movement, relief in place, passage of lines, and encirclement operations.

Chap 6: Special Purpose Attacks

An attack is a type of offensive operation that destroys or defeats enemy forces, seizes and secures terrain, or both. Subordinate forms of the attack have special purposes. **Special purpose attacks** are the ambush, counterattack, demonstration, feint, raid, and spoiling attack. The commander's intent and the mission variables determine which of these forms of attack to employ. Commanders conduct each of these forms of attack, except for a raid, as either a hasty or a deliberate operation.

Chap 7: Urban & Regional Environments

Army doctrine addresses **five regional environments**: desert, cold, temperate, mountain, and jungle. Another area of special consideration involves urban area. The continued trend worldwide of urban growth and the shift of populations from rural to urban areas continues to affect Army operations. The **urban environment**, consisting of complex terrain, dense populations, and integrated infrastructures, is the predominant operational environment in which Army forces currently operate.

Chap 8: Patrols & Patrolling

The two categories of **patrols** are combat and reconnaissance. Patrols that depart the main body with the clear intent to make direct contact with the enemy are called **combat patrols**. The three types of combat patrols are raid patrols, ambush patrols (both of which are sent out to conduct special purpose attacks), and security patrols. Patrols that depart the main body with the intention of avoiding direct combat with the enemy while seeing out information or confirming the accuracy of previously-gathered information are called **reconnaissance patrols**. The most common types reconnaissance patrols are area, route, zone, and point. Leaders also dispatch reconnaissance patrols to track the enemy, and to establish contact with other friendly forces.

(SUTS3) References

The following references were used in part to compile The Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook. Additionally listed are related resources useful to the reader. All references are available to the general public and designated as "approved for public release; distribution is unlimited." The Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook does not contain classified or sensitive information restricted from public release.

Army Doctrinal Publications (ADPs)

ADP 1-02*	Aug 2018	Terms and Military Symbols
ADP 3-0*	Jul 2019	Operations
ADP 3-90*	Jul 2019	Offense and Defense
ADP 3-07*	Jul 2019	Stability
ADP 5-0*	Jul 2019	The Operations Process

Army Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (ATPs/ATTPs)

ATP 3-21.8 *	Apr 2016	Infantry Platoon and Squad
ATP 3-21.10*	May 2018	Infantry Rifle Company
ATTP 3-06.11	Jun 2011	Combined Arms Operations in Urban Terrain
ATTP 3-07.31*	May 2019	Peace Ops (Multiservice TTPs)
ATP 3-90.97*	Apr 2016	Mountain Warfare and Cold Weather Operations

Field Manuals (FMs) and Training Circulars (TCs)

FM 3-0*	Oct 2017	Operations (w/Change 1, Dec 2017)
FM 3-22*	May 2017	Army Support to Security Cooperation
FM 3-24*	May 2014	Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies
FM 3-90-1	Mar 2013	Offense and Defense, Volume 1
FM 3-90-2	Mar 2013	Reconnaissance, Security, and Tactical Enabling Tasks, Volume 2
FM 6-0	May 2014	Commander and Staff Organization and Operations (w/Change 2, Apr 2016)
FM 7-0	Oct 2016	Train to Win in a Complex World
FM 90-3	Aug 1993	Desert Operations
FM 90-5	Aug 1993	Jungle Operations
TC 3-21.76*	Apr 2017	The Ranger Handbook

Joint Publications (JPs)

JP 3-0*	Oct 2018	Joint Operations (w/Change 1)
JP 3-07.3	Aug 2012	Peace Operations
JP 3-07*	Aug 2016	Stability
JP 3-20*	May 2017	Security Cooperation
JP 3-24*	Apr 2018	Counterinsurgency

* Denotes new/updated reference since last publication (SUTS2).

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Chap 1

I. The Art & Science of Tactics

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense & Defense (Jul '19), chap. 1.

I. Tactics

Tactics is the employment, ordered arrangement, and directed actions of forces in relation to each other. ADP 3-90 is the primary publication for the offense and defense at the tactical level. It is authoritative and provides guidance in the form of combat-tested concepts and ideas modified to take advantage of Army and joint capabilities. It focuses on the tactics used to employ current capabilities to prevail in combat. Tactics are not prescriptive. Tacticians use creativity to develop solutions for which enemy forces are neither prepared nor able to cope.

Tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) provide commanders and staffs with the fundamentals to develop solutions to tactical problems. (Dept. of Army photo by CPL Gabrielle Weaver).

Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP)

Tactics always require judgment and adaptation to a situation's unique circumstances. On the other hand, techniques and procedures are established patterns or processes that can be applied repeatedly with little or no judgment to a variety of circumstances. Tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) provide commanders and staffs with the fundamentals to develop solutions to tactical problems. The solution to any specific problem is a unique combination of these fundamentals, current TTP, and the creation of new TTP based on an evaluation of the situation. Commanders determine acceptable solutions by mastering doctrine and current TTP. They gain this mastery through experiences in education, training, and operations.

II. The Tactical Level of Warfare

The tactical level of warfare is the level of warfare at which battles and engagements are planned and executed to achieve military objectives assigned to tactical units or task forces (JP 3-0). Activities at this level focus on the ordered arrange-

ment, movement, and maneuver of combat elements in relation to each other and to enemy forces to achieve assigned objectives. The strategic and operational levels of warfare provide the context for tactical operations, and they are discussed in JP 3-0 and ADRP 3-0. Without this context, tactical operations may be reduced to a series of disconnected actions.

Engagements

An engagement is a tactical conflict, usually between opposing, lower echelon maneuver forces (JP 3-0). Brigades and lower echelon units generally conduct engagements. Engagements result from deliberate closure with or chance encounters between two opponents.

Battles

A battle consists of a set of related engagements that lasts longer and involves larger forces than an engagement. Battles affect the course of a campaign or major operation, as they determine the outcome of a division or corps echelon achieving one or more significant objectives. Battles are usually operationally significant, if not operationally decisive.

The outcomes of battles determine strategic and operational success and contribute to the overall operation or campaign achieving a strategic purpose. The outcomes of engagements determine tactical success and contribute to friendly forces winning a battle.

Levels of Warfare

Echelons of command, sizes of units, types of equipment, or components do not define the strategic, operational, or tactical levels of warfare. Instead, the level of warfare is determined by what level objective is achieved by the action. National assets, including space-based and cyberspace capabilities previously considered principally strategic, provide important support to tactical operations.

The levels of warfare help commanders visualize a logical nesting of operations, allocate resources, and assign tasks to the appropriate echelon of command. Advances in technology and a complex information environment compress time and space relationships. This reality blurs the boundaries between the levels of warfare. In a world of constant and immediate communication, a single event may affect all three levels of warfare simultaneously.

III. The Art and Science of Tactics

Army leaders at all echelons master the art and science of tactics—two distinctly different yet inseparable concepts—to solve the problems that will face them on the battlefield. A tactical problem occurs when the mission variables; mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations (METT-TC) of the desired tactical situation differ from the current tactical situation. (See FM 6-0 for a discussion of the mission variables.)

A. The Art of Tactics

The art of tactics is three interrelated aspects: the creative and flexible array of means to accomplish missions, decision making under conditions of uncertainty when faced with a thinking and adaptive enemy, and the understanding of the effects of combat on Soldiers. An art, as opposed to a science, requires exercising intuition based on operational experiences and cannot be learned solely by study. Leaders exercise the art of tactics by balancing study with a variety of relevant and practical experiences. Repetitive practice under a variety of realistic conditions increases an individual's mastery of the art of tactics.

Close Combat

Ref: ADP 3-0, Operations (Jul '19), p. 1-11.

The nature of close combat in land operations is unique. Combatants routinely come face-to-face with one another in large numbers in a wide variety of operational environments comprising all types of terrain. When other means fail to drive enemy forces from their positions, Army forces close with and destroy or capture them. The outcome of battles and engagements depends on the ability of Army forces to close with enemy forces and prevail in close combat. Close combat is warfare carried out on land in a direct-fire fight, supported by direct and indirect fires and other assets. Units involved in close combat employ direct fire weapons supported by indirect fire, air-delivered fires, and nonlethal engagement means. Units in close combat defeat or destroy enemy forces and seize and retain ground. Close combat at lower echelons contains many more interactions between friendly and enemy forces than any other form of combat.

(Dept. of Army photo by Staff Sgt. Steven M. Colvin.)

Close combat is most often linked to difficult terrain where enemies seek to negate friendly advantages in technology and weapon capabilities. Urban terrain represents one of the most likely close combat challenges. The complexity of urban terrain and the density of noncombatants reduce the effectiveness of advanced sensors and long-range weapons. Operations in large, densely populated areas require special considerations. From a planning perspective, commanders view cities as both topographic features and a dynamic system of varying operational entities containing hostile forces, local populations, and infrastructure.

Effective close combat relies on lethality informed by a high degree of situational understanding across multiple domains. The capacity for physical destruction is the foundation of all other military capabilities, and it is building block of military operations. Army formations are organized, equipped, and trained to employ lethal capabilities in a wide range of conditions. The demonstrated lethality of Army forces provides the credibility essential to deterring adversaries and assuring allies and partners.

An inherent, complementary relationship exists between using lethal force and applying military capabilities for nonlethal purposes. In wartime, each situation requires a different mix of violence and constraint. Lethal and nonlethal actions used together complement each other and create multiple dilemmas for opponents. During operations short of armed conflict, the lethality implicit in Army forces enables their performance of other tasks effectively with minimal adversary interference.

Common Tactical Concepts
Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense & Defense (Jul '19), pp. 2-4 to 2-17.

Tacticians need to understand common tactical concepts, military definitions, and the tactical echelons and organizations they employ in the performance of offensive and defensive tasks. Many of these are discussed in greater detail within *The Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook* or other books within the *SMARTbook series*.

Joint Interdependence. Army forces perform tactical offensive and defensive tasks as members of an interdependent joint force, applying land power as part of **unified action**. *See pp. 1-22 to 1-23.*

Principles of Joint Operations. JP 3-0 defines the twelve principles of joint operations - Objective, Offensive, Mass, Maneuver, Economy of force, Unity of command, Security, Surprise, Simplicity, Restraint, Perseverance, and Legitimacy - and provides general guidance for conducting military operations. *Refer to JFODS5.*

Operational Variables and Mission Variables. Army planners use the operational variables to describe the conditions of an operational environment. Upon receipt of a mission, Army leaders filter relevant information categorized by the operational variables into the categories of the mission variables for use during mission analysis. *Refer to BSS5.*

The Army's Tactical Doctrinal Taxonomy. While an operation's primary element is offense, defense, stability, or defense support of civil authorities, different units involved in that operation may be conducting different types and subordinate forms of operations. *See p. 1-32.*

Warfighting Functions. A warfighting function is a group of tasks and systems united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives (ADP 3-0). *See pp. 1-38 to 1-39.*

Defeat Mechanisms. A defeat mechanism is the method through which friendly forces accomplish their mission against enemy opposition (ADP 3-0). Tactical forces at all echelons use combinations of the four defeat mechanisms: destroy, dislocate, disintegrate, and isolate. *Refer to AODS6.*

Basic Tactical Concepts

Area of Influence. An area of influence is a geographical area wherein a commander is directly capable of influencing operations by maneuver or fire support systems normally under the commander's command or control (JP 3-0). *See p. 1-26.*

Area of Interest. An area of interest is that area of concern to the commander, including the area of influence, areas adjacent thereto, and extending into enemy territory (JP 3-0). *See p. 1-26.*

Area of Operations. An area of operations is an operational area defined by a commander for land and maritime forces that should be large enough to accomplish their missions and protect their forces (JP 3-0). *See p. 1-26.*

Avenue of Approach. An avenue of approach is a path used by an attacking force leading to its objective or to key terrain. *See p. 1-48.*

Combined Arms. ADP 3-0 defines combined arms as the synchronized and simultaneous application of all elements of combat power that together achieve an effect greater than if each element was used separately or sequentially.

Committed Force. A committed force is a force in contact with an enemy or deployed on a specific mission or course of action which precludes its employment elsewhere. A force with an on-order mission is considered a committed force.

Concept of Operations. The concept of operations is a statement that directs the manner in which subordinate units cooperate to accomplish the mission and establishes the sequence of actions to achieve the end state (ADP 5-0). *Refer to BSS5.*

Decisive Engagement. A decisive engagement is an engagement in which a unit is considered fully committed and cannot maneuver or extricate itself. In the absence of outside assistance, the action must be fought to a conclusion with the forces at hand.

Defeat in Detail. Defeat in detail is achieved by concentrating overwhelming combat power against separate parts of a force rather than defeating the entire force at once. A smaller force can use this technique to achieve success against a larger enemy.

Economy of Force. Economy of force is the judicious employment and distribution of forces to expend the minimum essential combat power on secondary efforts in order to allocate the maximum possible combat power on primary efforts (JP 3-0). It is a principle of war.

Flanks. A flank is the right or left limit of a unit. For a stationary unit, flanks are designated in terms of an enemy's actual or expected location. For a moving unit, the direction of movement defines the flanks.

Mutual Support. Mutual support is that support which units render each other against an enemy, because of their assigned tasks, their position relative to each other and to the enemy, and their inherent capabilities (JP 3-31).

Operational Framework. An operational framework is a cognitive tool used to assist commanders and staffs in clearly visualizing and describing the application of combat power in time, space, purpose, and resources in the concept of operations (ADP 1-01).

Piecemeal Commitment. Piecemeal commitment is the immediate employment of units in combat as they become available instead of waiting for larger aggregations of units to ensure mass, or the unsynchronized employment of available forces so that their combat power is not employed effectively. Piecemeal commitment subjects the smaller committed forces to defeat in detail and prevents the massing and synchronizing of combat power with following maneuver and sustainment elements. However, piecemeal commitment may be advantageous to maintain momentum and to retain or exploit the initiative.

Reconstitution. Reconstitution involves actions that commanders plan and implement to restore units to a desired level of combat effectiveness commensurate with mission requirements and available resources (ATP 3-21.20).

Reserve. While joint doctrine has three definitions for reserve, this definition applies to Army tactical operations: A reserve is that portion of a body of troops that is withheld from action at the beginning of an engagement, in order to be available for a decisive movement.

Rules Of Engagement (ROE). Rules of engagement are directives issued by competent military authority that delineate the circumstances and limitations under which United States forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered (JP 1-04).

Supporting Distance. Supporting distance is the distance between two units that can be traveled in time for one to come to the aid of the other and prevent its defeat by an enemy or ensure it regains control of a civil situation (ADP 3-0).

Supporting Range. Supporting range is the distance one unit may be geographically separated from a second unit yet remain within the maximum range of the second unit's weapons systems (ADP 3-0).

Tactical Mobility. Tactical mobility is the ability of friendly forces to move and maneuver freely on the battlefield relative to the enemy. Tactical mobility is a function of the relationship between cross-country mobility, firepower, and protection. The terrain, soil conditions, and weather affect cross country mobility.

Uncommitted Forces. An uncommitted force is a force that is not in contact with an enemy and is not already deployed on a specific mission or course of action. Commanders use uncommitted forces to exploit success or avoid failure.

Weighting the Decisive Operation or Main Effort . The decisive operation is the operation that directly accomplishes the mission (ADP 3-0). Weighting the decisive operation or the main effort is a basic tactical concept closely associated with the mass and maneuver principles of war. The purpose for weighting the decisive operation or main effort is to concentrate the effects of combat power at the most advantageous place and time.

II. The Army's Operational Concept

Ref: ADRP 3-0, Operations (Oct '17), chap. 1 and 3.

ADP 3-0 describes how the Army conducts operations as a unified action partner using the Army's operational concept—a fundamental statement that frames how Army forces, operating as part of a joint force, conduct operations (ADP 1-01). The Army's operational concept is unified land operations. ADP 3-0 discusses the foundations, tenets, and doctrine of unified land operations, which serves as a common reference for solving military problems in multiple domains and the framework for the range of military operations across the competition continuum. It is the core of Army doctrine, and it guides how Army forces contribute to unified action.

I. Unified Land Operations

Unified land operations is the Army's warfighting doctrine, and it is the Army's operational concept and contribution to unified action. Unified land operations is an intellectual outgrowth of both previous operations doctrine and recent combat experience. It recognizes the nature of modern warfare in multiple domains and the need to conduct a fluid mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations or DSCA simultaneously. Unified land operations acknowledges that strategic success requires fully integrating U.S. military operations with the efforts of interagency and multinational partners. Army forces, as part of the joint force, contribute to joint operations through the conduct of unified land operations. Unified land operations is the simultaneous execution of offense, defense, stability, and defense support of civil authorities across multiple domains to shape operational environments, prevent conflict, prevail in large-scale ground combat, and consolidate gains as part of unified action.

The goal of unified land operations is to establish conditions that achieve the JFC's end state by applying landpower as part of a unified action to defeat the enemy. Unified land operations is how the Army applies combat power through 1) simultaneous offensive, defensive, and stability, or DSCA, to 2) seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, and 3) consolidate gains. Military forces seek to prevent or deter threats through unified action, and, when necessary, defeat aggression.

II. Decisive Action

Decisive action is the continuous, simultaneous execution of offensive, defensive, and stability operations or defense support of civil authority tasks. Army forces conduct decisive action. Commanders seize, retain, and exploit the initiative while synchronizing their actions to achieve the best effects possible. Operations conducted outside the United States and its territories simultaneously combine three elements of decisive action—offense, defense, and stability. Within the United States and its territories, decisive action combines elements of DSCA and, as required, offense and defense to support homeland defense.

Refer to AODS6 (w/Change 1): The Army Operations & Doctrine SMARTbook (Guide to FM/ADP 3-0 Operations & the Elements of Combat Power). Completely updated with the Jul 2019 ADPs, Chg 1 to the 400-pg AODS6 includes operations (ADP 3-0), large-scale combat operations (FM 3-0 w/Chg 1), and refocused chapters on the elements of combat power: command & control (ADP 6-0), movement and maneuver (ADPs 3-90, 3-07, 3-28, 3-05), intelligence (ADP 2-0), fires (ADP 3-19), sustainment (ADP 4-0), & protection (ADP 3-37).

Decisive action begins with the commander's intent and concept of operations. Decisive action provides direction for an entire operation. Commanders and staffs refine the concept of operations during planning and determine the proper allocation of resources and tasks. Throughout an operation, they may adjust the allocation of resources and tasks as conditions change.

Simultaneity

The simultaneity of decisive action varies by echelon and span of control. Higher echelons generally have a broader focus than lower echelons when assigning responsibilities to subordinates. The higher the echelon, the greater the possibility that all elements of decisive action occur simultaneously within its area of operations. At lower echelons, an assigned task may require all the echelons' combat power to execute a specific task. For example, in some form a higher echelon, such as a corps, always performs offensive, defensive, and stability or defense support of civil authority operations simultaneously. Subordinate brigades perform some combination of offensive, defensive, and stability operations, but they generally are more focused by their immediate priorities on a specific element, particularly during large-scale ground combat operations.

Unified land operations addresses combat with armed opponents amid populations. This requires Army forces to shape civil conditions. Winning battles and engagements is important, but it is not always the most significant task in a strategic context. Shaping civil conditions with unified action partners is generally important to the success of all campaigns, and thus it is a critical component of all operations.

Unified land operations span the entire competition continuum. They are conducted to support all four Army strategic roles. The relative emphasis on the various elements of decisive action vary with the purpose and context of the operations being conducted.
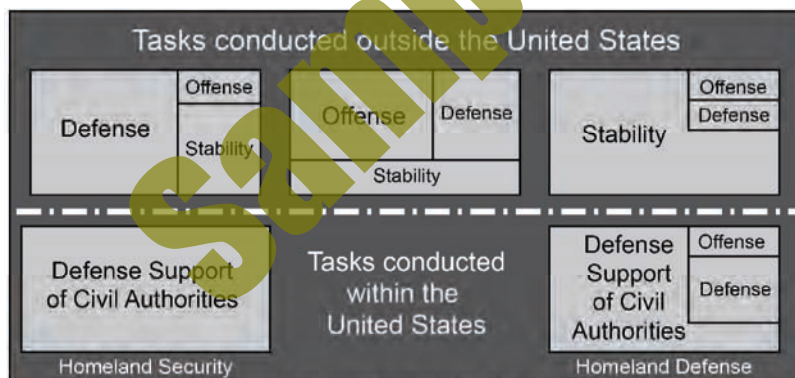
The mission determines the relative weight of effort among the elements.

Ref: ADP 3-0, Operations (Jul '19), fig. 3-1. Decisive action.

Elements of Decisive Action

Decisive action is the continuous, simultaneous execution of offensive, defensive, and stability operations or defense support of civil authority tasks. Army forces conduct decisive action. Commanders seize, retain, and exploit the initiative while synchronizing their actions to achieve the best effects possible. Operations conducted outside the United States and its territories simultaneously combine three elements of decisive action—offense, defense, and stability. Within the United States and its territories, decisive action combines elements of DSCA and, as required, offense and defense to support homeland defense.

See following pages (pp. 1-16 to 1-17) for discussion of the elements of decisive action.

Operations (Unified Logic Chart)

Ref: ADP 3-0, Operations (Jul '19), Introductory figure. ADP 3-0 unified logic chart.

The conduct of joint operations is

Unified Action

The synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort (JP 1).

Operational Environment
human context
land operations
PMESII-PT
METT-TC

U.S. Army strategic roles in support of the joint force

Win

| Shape operational environments | Prevent conflict | Prevail in large-scale ground combat | Consolidate gains |

The Army's contribution to joint operations is

Unified Land Operations
(The Army's Operational Concept)

The simultaneous execution of offense, defense, stability, and defense support of civil authorities across multiple domains to shape operational environments, prevent conflict, prevail in large-scale ground combat, and consolidate gains as part of unfied action.

To cope with an operational environment, Army forces conduct—

Executed through...

Decisive Action
Offensive   Defensive   Stability   DSCA

Guided by...

Mission Command (Approach)

To execute unified land operations, commanders

Organize effort within commonly understood constructs

Operations Structure

| Develop operations characterized by— | Cognitively link tactical actions to strategic objectives | Provide a broad process for conducting operations | Provide basic options for visualizing and describing operations | Provide an intellectual organization for common critical tasks |

Tenets	**Principles**	**Operational Art**	**Operations Process**	**Operational Framework**	**Combat Power**
Simultaneity	Mission command	End state and conditions	Plan	Area of operations	Warfighting functions
Depth	Develop the situation through action	Centers of gravity	• Army design methodology	Deep, close, consolidation, and support areas	• Command and control
Synchronization	Combined arms	Decisive points	• MDMP		• Movement and maneuver
Flexibility	Adherence to law of war	Lines of operations and lines of effort	• Troop leading procedures	Decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations	• Intelligence
	Establish and maintain security	Tempo	Prepare	Main and supporting efforts	• Fires
	Create multiple dilemmas for the enemy	Phasing and transitions	Execute		• Sustainment
		Culmination	Assess		• Protection
		Operational reach			Information
		Basing			Leadership
		Risk			

DSCA	defense support of civil authorities
MDMP	military decision-making process
METT-TC	mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, and civilian considerations
PMESII-PT	political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time
U.S.	United States

Elements of Decisive Action

Ref: ADP 3-0, Operations (Jul '19), pp. 3-3 to 3-4 and table 3-1, p. 3-2.

Decisive action requires simultaneous combinations of offense, defense, and stability or defense support of civil authorities tasks.

1. Offensive Operations

An offensive operation is an operation to defeat or destroy enemy forces and gain control of terrain, resources, and population centers. Offensive operations impose the commander's will on an enemy. The offense is the most direct means of seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative to gain a physical and psychological advantage. In the offense, the decisive operation is a sudden action directed toward enemy weaknesses and capitalizing on speed, surprise, and shock. If that operation fails to destroy an enemy, operations continue until enemy forces are defeated. The offense compels an enemy to react, creating new or larger weaknesses the attacking force can exploit.

See pp. 4-2 to 4-3 and SUTS2: The Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook, 2nd Ed (ADP 3-90)

Offense

Types of Offensive Operations
- Movement to contact
- Attack
- Exploitation
- Pursuit

Purposes
- Dislocate, isolate, disrupt and destroy enemy forces
- Seize key terrain
- Deprive the enemy of resources
- Refine intelligence
- Deceive and divert the enemy
- Provide a secure environment for stability operations

2. Defensive Operations

A defensive operation is an operation to defeat an enemy attack, gain time, economize forces, and develop conditions favorable for offensive or stability operations. Normally the defense cannot achieve a decisive victory. However, it sets conditions for a counteroffensive or a counterattack that enables forces to regain the initiative. Defensive operations are a counter to an enemy offensive action, and they seek to destroy as much of the attacking enemy

Defense

Types of Defensive Operations
- Mobile defense
- Area defense
- Retrograde

Purposes
- Deter or defeat enemy offensive operations
- Gain time
- Achieve economy of force
- Retain key terrain
- Protect the populace, critical assets and infrastructure
- Refine intelligence

forces as possible. They preserve control over land, resources, and populations, and retain key terrain, protect lines of communications, and protect critical capabilities against attack. Commanders can conduct defensive operations in one area to free forces for offensive operations elsewhere.

See pp. 4-2 to 4-3 and SUTS2: The Small Unit Tactics SMARTbook, 2nd Ed. (ADP 3-90)

3. Stability Operations

A stability operation is an operation conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to establish or maintain a secure environment and provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. These operations support governance by a host nation, an interim government, or a military government. Stability involves coercive and constructive action. Stability helps in building relationships among unified action partners and promoting U.S. security interests. It can help establish political, legal, social, and economic institutions in an area while supporting transition of responsibility to a legitimate authority. Commanders are legally required to perform minimum-essential stability operations tasks when controlling populated areas of operations. These include security, food, water, shelter, and medical treatment.

Stability

Stability Operations Tasks
- Establish civil security
- Establish civil control
- Restore essential services
- Support to governance
- Support to economic and infrastructure development
- Conduct security cooperation

Purposes
- Provide a secure environment
- Secure land areas
- Meet the critical needs of the populace
- Gain support for host-nation government
- Shape the environment for interagency and host-nation success
- Promote security, build partner capacity, and provide access
- Refine intelligence

See pp. 4-4 to 4-5 and TAA2: The Military Engagement, Security Cooperation & Stability SMARTbook, 2nd Ed. (ADP 3-07)

4. Defense Support of Civil Authority

Defense support of civil authorities is support provided by U.S. Federal military forces, DOD civilians, DOD contract personnel, DOD Component assets, and National Guard forces (when the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Governors of the affected States, elects and requests to use those forces in Title 32, United States Code status) in response to requests for assistance from civil authorities for domestic emergencies, law enforcement support, and other domestic activities, or from qualifying entities for special events. (DODD 3025.18). DSCA is a task executed in the homeland and U.S. territories. It is

Defense Support of Civil Authorities

Defense Support of Civil Authorities Tasks
- Provide support for domestic disasters
- Provide support for domestic CBRN incidents
- Provide support for domestic civilian law enforcement agencies
- Provide other designated support

Purposes
- Save lives
- Restore essential services
- Maintain or restore law and order
- Protect infrastructure and property
- Support maintenance or restoration of local government
- Shape the environment for interagency success

performed to support another primary agency, lead federal agency, or local authority. When DSCA is authorized, it consists of four types of operations. National Guard forces—Title 32 or state active forces under the command and control of the governor and the adjutant general—are usually the first forces to respond on behalf of state authorities. When Federal military forces are employed for DSCA activities, they remain under Federal military command and control at all times.

See pp. 4-6 to 4-7 and HDS1: Homeland Defense & DSCA SMARTbook. (JP 3-28)

III. Large-Scale Combat Operations

Large-scale combat operations are at the far right of the conflict continuum and associated with war. Historically, battlefields in large-scale combat operations have been more chaotic, intense, and highly destructive than those the Army has experienced in the past several decades. During the 1943 battles of Sidi Bou Zid and Kasserine Pass in World War II, 5,000 American Soldiers were killed over the course of just 10 days; during the first three days of fighting the Army lost Soldiers at the rate of 1,333 per day. Even later in the war, when units were better seasoned, trained, and equipped, casualty rates remained high due to the inherent lethality of large-scale combat operations. In the Hürtgen Forest the Army sustained 33,000 total casualties over 144 days, a loss of 229 Soldiers per day. Similarly, the Battle of the Bulge cost the Army 470 Soldiers per day, for a total loss of 19,270 killed and 62,489 wounded over 41 days of sustained combat.

Large-scale combat operations are intense, lethal, and brutal. Their conditions include complexity, chaos, fear, violence, fatigue, and uncertainty. Future battlefields will include noncombatants, and they will be crowded in and around large cities. Enemies will employ conventional tactics, terror, criminal activity, and information warfare to further complicate operations. To an ever-increasing degree, activities in the information environment are inseparable from ground operations. Large-scale combat operations present the greatest challenge for Army forces.

IV. The Multi-Domain Battle

The Army conducts operations across multiple domains and the information environment. All Army operations are multi-domain operations, and all battles are multi-domain battles. Examples of Army multi-domain operations include airborne and air assault operations, air and missile defense, fires, aviation, cyberspace electromagnetic activities, information operations, space operations, military deception (MILDEC), and information collection. Large-scale combat operations such as these entail significant operational risk, synchronization, capabilities convergence, and high operational tempo. Key considerations for operating in multiple domains include—

- Mission command.
- Reconnaissance in depth.
- Mobility.
- Cross-domain fires.
- Tempo and convergence of effects.
- Protection.
- Sustainment.
- Information operations.

Army forces may be required to conduct operations across multiple domains to gain freedom of action for other members of the joint force. Examples of these operations include neutralizing enemy integrated air defenses or long-range surface-to-surface fires systems, denying enemy access to an AO, disrupting enemy C2, protecting friendly networks, conducting tactical deception, or disrupting an enemy's ability to conduct information warfare.

Positions of Relative Advantage

Enemies are likely to initiate hostilities against a friendly force from initial positions of relative advantage. These include physical, temporal, and cognitive positions and cultural, informational, and other human factors peculiar to the land domain.

V. Operational Framework

An operational framework is a cognitive tool used to assist commanders and staffs in clearly visualizing and describing the application of combat power in time, space, purpose, and resources in the concept of operations (ADP 1-01). The operational framework provides an organizing construct for visualizing and describing operations by echelon in time and space within the context of an AO, area of influence, and area of interest. It provides a logical architecture for determining the responsibilities, permissions, and restrictions for subordinate echelons, and by doing so enables freedom of action and unity of effort. When used in conjunction with effective operational graphics, it provides commanders the ability to provide intent, develop shared visualization, and ultimately create the shared understanding necessary for the exercise of initiative at every echelon.

The operational framework has four components. First, commanders are assigned an AO for the conduct of operations, from which, in turn, they assign AOs to subordinate units based on their visualization of the operation. Units should be assigned AOs commensurate with their ability to influence what happens within them. Second, within their assigned AO, commanders designate deep, close, support, and consolidation areas to describe the physical arrangement of forces in time, space, and purpose. Third, commanders establish decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations to further articulate an operation in terms of purpose. Finally, commanders designate the main and supporting efforts to designate the shifting and prioritization of resources.

Within an AO, commanders use control measures to assign responsibilities, coordinate fires and maneuver, and organize operations. To facilitate this integration and synchronization, commanders designate targeting priority, effects, and timing within their AOs. Commanders assign subordinates responsibility for particular areas in order to create freedom of action, generate rapid tempo, and best use available combat power. Some capabilities, like cyberspace and information operations, can potentially generate effects far outside assigned AOs for tactical units. When assigning AOs, each headquarters ensures its subordinate headquarters' capabilities align with their span of control and missions. The way in which headquarters graphically portray the operational framework and allocate resources to accomplish missions in time and space drives the pace of operations. Higher echelon headquarters create the conditions for subordinate echelons to succeed.

See following pages (pp. 1-26 to 1-27) for an overview and further discussion.

Close, Deep, Support, and Consolidation Areas

Commanders designate close, deep, support, and consolidation areas to describe the physical arrangement of forces in time, space, and focus. Commanders will always designate a close area and a support area. They designate a deep area and consolidation area as required. The echelon above corps (normally the land component commander) designates the corps' AO. In addition to flank and rear boundaries, a corps forward boundary (a phase line) could be used to depict the geographic extent of the corps' responsibilities. This phase line is adjusted as required.

The corps headquarters geographically divides its AO into subareas in which deep, close, support, and consolidate gains operations are conducted. The use of unit boundaries delineates responsibilities of subordinate units (the corps, divisions, and separate brigades) facilitates control, and enables freedom of action. The corps headquarters plans for and adjusts subordinate unit boundaries (including forward, rear, and lateral boundaries) and fire support coordination measures based on changes in the situation.

See following pages (pp. 1-26 to 1-27) for an overview and further discussion.

The Army Operational Framework

Ref: ADP 3-0, Operations (Jul '19), pp. 4-2 to 4-5. See also AODS6 pp. 2-14 to 2-21.

Army leaders are responsible for clearly articulating their concept of operations in time, space, purpose, and resources. They do this through an operational framework & associated vocabulary. An operational framework is a cognitive tool used to assist commanders and staffs in clearly visualizing and describing the application of combat power in time, space, purpose, and resources in the concept of operations (ADP 1-01). An operational framework establishes an area of geographic and operational responsibility for the commander and provides a way to visualize how the commander will employ forces against the enemy.

The operational framework has four components. First, commanders are assigned an area of operations for the conduct of operations. Second, a commander can designate a deep, close, and support areas to describe the physical arrangement of forces in time and space. Third, within this area, commanders conduct decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations to articulate the operation in terms of purpose. Finally, commanders designate the main and supporting efforts to designate the shifting prioritization of resources.

Area of Operations

An area of operations is an operational area defined by a commander for land and maritime forces that should be large enough to accomplish their missions and protect their forces (JP 3-0). For land operations, an area of operations includes subordinate areas of operations assigned by Army commanders to their subordinate echelons. In operations, commanders use control measures to assign responsibilities, coordinate fire and maneuver, and control combat operations. A control measure is a means of regulating forces or warfighting functions (ADP 6-0). One of the most important control measures is the assigned area of operations. The Army commander or joint force land component commander is the supported commander within an area of operations designated by the JFC for land operations. Within their areas of operations, commanders integrate and synchronize combat power. To facilitate this integration and synchronization, commanders designate targeting priorities, effects, and timing within their areas of operations.

Area of Influence

Commanders consider a unit's area of influence when assigning it an area of operations. An area of influence is a geographical area wherein a commander is directly capable of influencing operations by maneuver or fire support systems normally under the commander's command or control (JP 3-0).
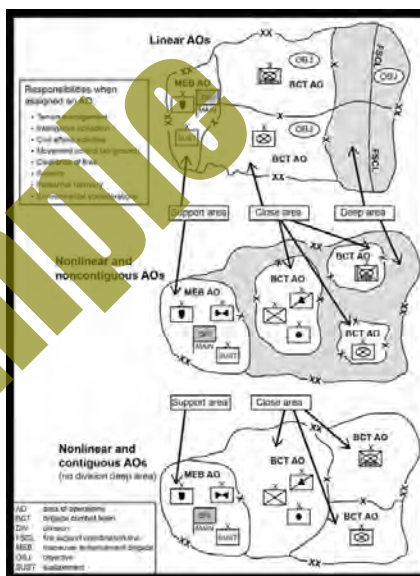
Understanding the area of influence helps the commander and staff plan branches to the current operation in which the force uses capabilities outside the area of operations.

Area of Interest

An area of interest is that area of concern to the commander, including the area of influence, areas adjacent thereto, and extending into enemy territory. This area also includes areas occupied by enemy forces who could jeopardize the accomplishment of the mission (JP 3-0). An area of interest for stability or DSCA tasks may be much larger than that area associated with the offense and defense.
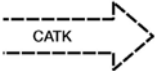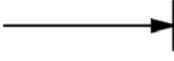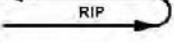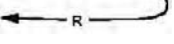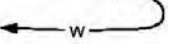
IV. Tactical Mission Tasks/ Taxonomy of Army Tactics

Ref: ADP 1-02, Terms and Military Symbols (Aug '18), chap. 1 and 9.

A tactical mission task is a specific activity performed by a unit while executing a form of tactical operation or form of maneuver. A tactical mission task may be expressed as either an **action by a friendly force** or **effect on an enemy force**. The tactical mission tasks describe the results or effects the commander wants to achieve. *See following pages (pp. 1-30 to 1-31) for tactical mission tasks.*

Not all tactical mission tasks have symbols. Some tactical mission task symbols will include unit symbols, and the tactical mission task "delay until a specified time" will use an amplifier. However, no modifiers are used with tactical mission task symbols. Tactical mission task symbols are used in course of action sketches, synchronization matrixes, and maneuver sketches. They do not replace any part of the operation order.

A. Mission Symbols

Counterattack (dashed axis)		A form of attack by part or all of a defending force against an enemy attacking force, with the general objective of denying the enemy his goal in attacking (FM 3-0).
Cover		A form of security operation whose primary task is to protect the main body by fighting to gain time while also observing and reporting information and preventing enemy ground observation of and direct fire against the main body.
Delay		A form of retrograde in which a force under pressure trades space for time by slowing down the enemy's momentum and inflicting maximum damage on the enemy without, in principle, becoming decisively engaged (JP 1-02, see delaying operation).
Guard		A form of security operations whose primary task is to protect the main body by fighting to gain time while also observing and reporting information and preventing enemy ground observation of and direct fire against the main body. Units conducting a guard mission cannot operate independently because they rely upon fires and combat support assets of the main body.
Penetrate		A form of maneuver in which an attacking force seeks to rupture enemy defenses on a narrow front to disrupt the defensive system (FM 3-0).
Relief in Place		A tactical enabling operation in which, by the direction of higher authority, all or part of a unit is replaced in an area by the incoming unit.
Retirement		A form of retrograde [JP 1-02 uses *operation*] in which a force out of contact with the enemy moves away from the enemy (JP 1-02).
Screen		A form of security operations that primarily provides early warning to the protected force.
Withdraw		A planned operation in which a force in contact disengages from an enemy force (JP 1-02) [The Army considers it a form of retrograde.]

Tactical Doctrinal Taxonomy

Ref: Adapted from Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), fig. 2-1, p. 2-3.

The following shows the Army's tactical doctrinal taxonomy for the four elements of decisive action (in accordance with ADP 3-0) and their subordinate tasks. The commander conducts tactical enabling tasks to assist the planning, preparation, and execution of any of the four elements of decisive action. Tactical enabling tasks are never decisive operations in the context of the conduct of offensive and defensive tasks. (They are also never decisive during the conduct of stability tasks.) The commander uses tactical shaping tasks to assist in conducting combat operations with reduced risk.

Elements of Decisive Action (and subordinate tasks)

Offensive Operations
  Movement to Contact
    Search and attack
    Cordon and search
  Attack
    Ambush*
    Counterattack*
    Demonstration*
    Spoiling attack*
    Feint*
    Raid*
    *Also known as special
    purpose attacks*
  Exploitation
  Pursuit
    Frontal
    Combination

Forms of Maneuver
  Envelopment
  Frontal attack
  Infiltration
  Penetration
  Turning Movement
Defensive Operations
  Area Defense
  Mobile Defense
  Retrograde
    Delay
    Withdraw
    Retirement
  Forms of the Defense
    Defense of linear obstacle
    Perimeter defense
    Reverse slope defense

Stability Operations
    Civil security
    Civil control
    Restore essential services
    Support to governance
    Support to economic and
    infrastructure development
    Conduct security cooperation

**Defense Support to
Civil Authorities**
    Provide support for domestic
    disasters
    Provide support for domestic
    CBRN incidents
    Provide support for domestic
    law enforcement agencies
    Provide other designated
    support

Enabling Operations

**Reconnaissance
Operations**
    Area
    Reconnaissance in force
    Route
    Special
    Zone
Security
    Screen
    Guard
    Cover
    Area

Passage of Lines
    Forward
    Rearward
Troop Movement
    Administrative movement
    Approach march
    Road march
**Encirclement
Operations**

Relief in Place
    Sequential
    Simultaneous
    Staggered
Other Enabling Operations (Examples)
    Information Operations
    (FM 3-13)
    Mobility Operations
    (ATP 3-90.4)
    Countermobility Operations
    (ATP 3-90.8)

Tactical Mission Tasks

**Actions by Friendly
Forces**
    Attack-by-Fire   Occupy
    Breach   Reduce
    Bypass   Retain
    Clear   Secure
    Control   Seize
    Counterreconnaissance Support-by-Fire
    Disengage
    Exfiltrate
    Follow and Assume
    Follow and Support

Effects on Enemy Force
    Block
    Canalize
    Contain
    Defeat
    Destroy
    Disrupt
    Fix
    Interdict
    Isolate
    Neutralize
    Suppress
    Turn

Describe

Ref: ADP 5-0, The Operations Process (Jul '19), pp. 1-9 to 1-10.

Commanders describe their visualization to their staffs and subordinate commanders to facilitate shared understanding and purpose throughout the force. During planning, commanders ensure subordinates understand their visualization well enough to begin course of action (COA) development. During execution, commanders describe modifications to their visualization in updated planning guidance and directives resulting in fragmentary orders (FRAGORDs) that adjust the original operation order (OPORD). Commanders describe their visualization in doctrinal terms, refining and clarifying it, as circumstances require. Commanders describe their visualization in terms of—

- Commander's intent
- Planning guidance
- Commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs)
- Essential elements of friendly information

A. Commander's Intent

The commander's intent is a clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander's desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned (JP 3-0). During planning, the initial commander's intent guides COA development. In execution, the commander's intent guides initiative as subordinates make decisions and take action when unforeseen opportunities arise or when countering threats. Commanders develop their intent statement personally. It must be easy to remember and clearly understood by commanders and staffs two echelons lower in the chain of command. The more concise the commander's intent, the easier it is to understand and recall.

B. Commander's Planning Guidance

Commanders provide planning guidance to the staff based upon their visualization of the operation. Planning guidance conveys the essence of the commander's visualization, including a description of the operational approach. Effective planning guidance reflects how the commander sees the operation unfolding. The commander's planning guidance broadly describes when, where, and how the commander intends to employ combat power to accomplish the mission within the higher commander's intent. Broad and general guidance gives the staff and subordinate leaders maximum latitude; it lets proficient staffs develop flexible and effective options. Commanders modify planning guidance based on staff and subordinate input and changing conditions during different stages of planning and throughout the operations process.

Refer to FM 6-0 for sample planning guidance by warfighting function.

C. Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIR)

A commander's critical information requirement is an information requirement identified by the commander as being critical to facilitating timely decision making (JP 3-0). Commanders decide to designate an information requirement as a CCIR based on likely decisions during the conduct of an operation. A CCIR may support one or more decision points. During planning, staffs recommend information requirements for commanders to designate as CCIRs. During preparation and execution, they recommend changes to CCIRs based on their assessments of the operation.

Always promulgated by a plan or order, commanders limit the number of CCIRs to focus their staff and subordinate unit information collection and assessment efforts. The fewer the CCIRs, the easier it is for staffs to remember, recognize, and act on each one. As such, the rapid reporting of CCIRs to the commander is essential to adjusting operations. CCIR falls into one of two categories: priority intelligence requirements (known as PIRs) and friendly force information requirements (known as FFIRs).

Priority Intelligence Requirement (PIR)

A priority intelligence requirement is an intelligence requirement that the commander and staff need to understand the threat and other aspects of the operational environment (JP 2-01). Priority intelligence requirements identify the information about the enemy and other aspects of an OE that the commander considers most important. Intelligence about civil considerations may be as critical as intelligence about the enemy. In coordination with the staff, the intelligence officer manages priority intelligence requirements for the commander as part of the intelligence process.

Friendly Force Information Requirement (FFIR)

A friendly force information requirement is information the commander and staff need to understand the status of friendly force and supporting capabilities (JP 3-0). Friendly force information requirements identify the information about the mission, troops and support available, and time available for friendly forces that the commander considers most important. In coordination with the staff, the operations officer manages friendly force information requirements for the commander.

D. Essential Elements of Friendly Information (EEFI)

Commanders also describe information they want protected as essential elements of friendly information. An essential element of friendly information is a critical aspect of a friendly operation that, if known by a threat would subsequently compromise, lead to failure, or limit success of the operation and therefore should be protected from enemy detection (ADP 6-0). Although essential elements of friendly information (known as EEFIs) are not CCIRs, they have the same priority. Essential elements of friendly information establish elements of information to protect rather than elements to collect. Their identification is the first step in the operations security process and central to the protection of information.

VI. Troop Leading Procedures (TLP)

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Apr '16), app. A; ATP 3-21.10, Infantry Rifle Company (May '18), app. B; and FM 6-0 (C2), Commander and Staff Organization and Operations (Apr '16), chap. 10;

Troop leading procedures extend the MDMP to the small-unit level. The MDMP and TLP are similar but not identical. They are both linked by the basic Army problem solving methodology explained. Commanders with a coordinating staff use the MDMP as their primary planning process. Company-level and smaller units lack formal staffs and use TLP to plan and prepare for operations. This places the responsibility for planning primarily on the commander or small-unit leader.

Leaders project their presence and guidance through troop leading procedures. TLP is the process a leader goes through to prepare the unit to accomplish a tactical mission. It begins when the mission is received. (Dept. of Army photo by 1LT Ryan DeBooy).

Troop leading procedures are a dynamic process used by small-unit leaders to analyze a mission, develop a plan, and prepare for an operation (ADP 5-0). These procedures enable leaders to maximize available planning time while developing effective plans and preparing their units for an operation. TLP consist of eight steps. The sequence of the steps of TLP is not rigid. Leaders modify the sequence to meet the mission, situation, and available time. Leaders perform some steps concurrently, while other steps may be performed continuously throughout the operation.

Leaders use TLP when working alone or with a small group to solve tactical problems. For example, a company commander may use the executive officer, first sergeant, fire support officer, supply sergeant, and communications sergeant to assist during TLP.

Performing Troop Leading Procedures

TLP provide small unit leaders a framework for planning and preparing for operations. This section discusses each step of TLP.
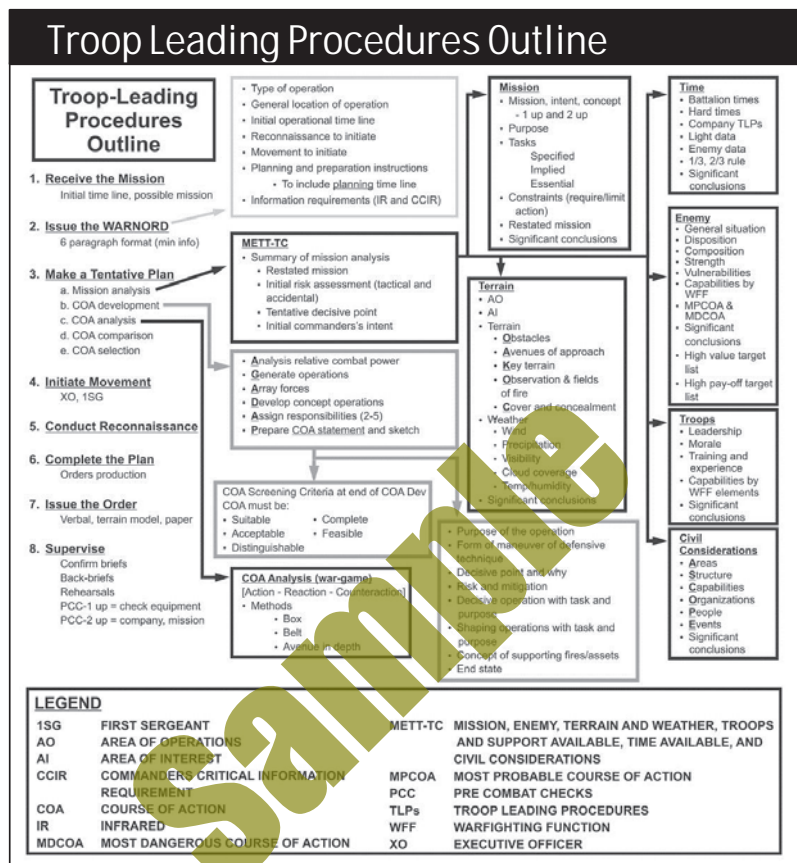
Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Apr '16), fig. A-2.

Army leaders begin TLP when they receive the initial WARNO or perceive a new mission. As each subsequent order arrives, leaders modify their assessments, update tentative plans, and continue to supervise and assess preparations. In some situations, the higher headquarters may not issue the full sequence of WARNOs; security considerations or tempo may make it impractical. In other cases, Army leaders may initiate TLP before receiving a WARNO based on existing plans and orders (contingency plans or be-prepared missions), and an understanding of the situation.

Refer to BSS5: The Battle Staff SMARTbook, 5th Ed. for further discussion. BSS5 covers the operations process (ADRP 5-0); commander's activities (Understand, Visualize, Describe, Direct, Lead, Assess); the military decisionmaking process and troop leading procedures (FM 6-0: MDMP/TLP); integrating processes and continuing activities (IPB, targeting, risk management); plans and orders (WARNOs/FRAGOs/OPORDs); mission command, command posts, liaison; rehearsals & after action reviews; and operational terms & symbols.

1. Receive the Mission

In Step 1 of TLP, leaders determine their units' missions and assess the time available to accomplish them. They can conduct an initial (light) analysis of the order using METT-TC. They conduct detailed METT-TC analyses only after they issue the first WARNORD (Step 2). Rarely will they receive their missions until after higher command issues the third WARNORDs or the OPORDs themselves. However, in the course of parallel planning, small-unit leaders already will have deduced their tentative missions.

Leaders can receive their missions in several ways. They can get them in the form of WARNORDs or, if higher chooses to wait for more information, an actual OPORD. Sometimes higher chooses not to send WARNORDs, opting instead to wait and send a full OPORD. Worst case, leaders receive new missions due to situational changes occurring during the execution of a prior mission. In addition to receiving (or deducing) their missions during this step, the leaders must also—

- Assess the time available to prepare for and execute the mission.
- Prepare an initial timeline for planning and executing the mission.
- Conduct an initial planning-time analysis.
- Determine the total amount of time to plan and prepare.
- As planning continues, use the initial planning-time analysis to conduct a detailed time analysis.
- Analyze the time his unit has available.
- Prepare an initial timeline.

The most important element of the leader's WARNORD is the initial timeline for planning. They also may convey other instructions or information they think will help their subordinates prepare for the upcoming mission.

2. Issue a Warning Order (WARNORD)

A WARNORD is a preliminary notice of an order or action to follow. Though less detailed than a complete OPORD, a WARNORD aids in parallel planning. After the leaders receive new missions and assess the time available for planning, preparing, and executing the mission, they immediately issue WARNORDs to their subordinates. By issuing the initial WARNORDs as quickly as possible, they enable subordinates to begin their own planning and preparation (parallel planning) while they begin to develop the OPORDs. When they obtain more information, they issue updated WARNORDs, giving subordinates as much as they know.

Leaders can issue WARNORDs to their subordinates right after they receive higher command's initial WARNORDs. In their own initial WARNORDs, they include the same elements given in their higher headquarters' initial WARNORDs. If practical, leaders brief their subordinate leaders face-to-face, on the ground. Otherwise, they use a terrain model, sketch, or map.

The WARNORD follows the five-paragraph OPORD format and includes the following items, at a minimum:

- Type of operation.
- General location of operation.
- Initial operational timeline.
- Reconnaissance to initiate.
- Movement to initiate.
- Planning and preparation instructions (to include planning timeline).
- Information requirements.
- Commander's critical information

3. Make a Tentative Plan

In a time-constrained environment, a platoon leader typically develops only one COA. However, as time permits, he can develop as many COA, for comparison purposes, as time allows. He begins TLP Step 3 after he issues his own WARNORD, and after he has received company's third WARNORD, or until he has enough information to proceed. He need not wait for a complete OPORD before starting to develop his own tentative plan.

A. Mission Analysis

The platoon leader begins mission analysis when receiving the mission. During mission analysis, the platoon leader—

- Restates the mission.
- Conducts an initial risk assessment.
- Identifies a tentative decisive point.
- Defines his own intent.

He conducts mission analysis to help him start developing his vision, and to confirm what he must do to accomplish his mission. At the lower levels, leaders conduct their mission analyses by evaluating METT-TC. He makes significant deductions about the terrain, enemy, and own forces affecting operations. These significant deductions drive the planning process and execution of operations. A leader must convey to his subordinates the importance of these deductions, and effect they will have on the units operations. In the end, the usefulness of mission analysis lies in recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities. The answers to the following questions become inputs into developing a COA. Mission analysis has no time standard. A leader may take as much time as needed, while still adhering to the one-third/two-thirds rule. Mission analysis answers the four questions of the leader's visualization:

- What is my mission?
- What is the current situation?
- How do we accomplish the mission?
- What are the risks?

> ### METT-TC
>
> Analyzing METT-TC is a continuous process. Leaders constantly receive information, from the time they begin planning through execution. During execution, their continuous analyses enable them to issue well-developed FRAGORDs. They must assess if the new information affects their missions and plans. If so, then they must decide how to adjust their plans to meet these new situations. They need not analyze METT-TC in a particular order. How and when they do so depends on when they receive information as well as on their experience and preferences. One technique is to parallel the TLP based on the products received from higher. Using this technique, they would, but need not, analyze mission first; followed by terrain and weather; enemy; troops and support available; time available; and finally civil considerations.
>
> *See facing page for an overview and discussion of METT-TC.*

Analysis of Mission

A mission is task and purpose clearly indicating the action to be taken and reason for the action. In common usage, especially when applied to lower military units, a mission is a duty or task assigned to an individual or unit. The mission is always the first factor leaders consider and most basic question: What have I been told to do, and why?

Chap 1

Tactical Fundamentals

VII. Plans & Orders

Ref: FM 6-0 (C2), Commander and Staff Organization and Operations (Apr '16), app. C; ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Apr '16), app. A; and ATP 3-21.10, Infantry Rifle Company (May '18), app. B.

Mission orders are the means by which the small unit leader receives and transmits information from the earliest notification that an operation will occur through the final steps of execution. WARNOs, OPORDs, and FRAGOs are absolutely critical to mission success. In a tactical situation, the small unit leaders work with mission orders on a daily basis, and they must have precise knowledge of the correct format for each type of order. At the same time, they must ensure that every Soldier in the unit understands how to receive and respond to the various types of orders.

(Dept of Army photo by SGT Elizabeth White.)

Plans and orders are the means by which commanders express their visualization, commander's intent, and decisions. They focus on results the commander expects to achieve. Plans and orders form the basis commanders use to synchronize military operations. They encourage initiative by providing the "what" and "why" of a mission, and leave the how to accomplish the mission to subordinates. They give subordinates the operational and tactical freedom to accomplish the mission by providing the minimum restrictions and details necessary for synchronization and coordination.

Refer to BSS5: The Battle Staff SMARTbook, 5th Ed. for further discussion. BSS5 covers the operations process (ADRP 5-0); commander's activities (Understand, Visualize, Describe, Direct, Lead, Assess); the military decisionmaking process and troop leading procedures (FM 6-0: MDMP/TLP); integrating processes and continuing activities (IPB, targeting, risk management); plans and orders (WARNOs/FRAGOs/OPORDs); mission command, command posts, liaison; rehearsals & after action reviews; and operational terms & symbols.

WARNORD/OPORD - A Small Unit Perspective

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Apr '16), app. A.

I. Warning Order (WARNORD)

Leaders can issue WARNORDs to their subordinates right after they receive higher command's initial WARNORDs. In their own initial WARNORDs, they include the same elements given in their higher headquarters' initial WARNORDs. If practical, leaders brief their subordinate leaders face-to-face, on the ground. Otherwise, they use a terrain model, sketch, or map.

Warning Order #   to Operations Order #
Initial Task Organization:
Effective Date/Time:

1. Situation:
General Enemy Overview:
- Area of Operation (AO)
- Area of Interest (AOI)
- Who the Company/Team is fighting
- Brigade Combat Team Mission
- Brigade Combat Team Commander Intent
- Battalion/Task Force Mission
- Battalion/Task Force Commander Intent

2. Mission:
Upcoming Task and Purpose or Type of Operational/
General Location:

3. Execution:
Movement Instructions/Movement to Initiate:
- Our Current Location
- Our Next Location:
- Objective Location:
Reconnaissance Tasks/Reconnaissance to Initiate:
- Reconnaissance Team:
Information Requirements:
Coordinated Instructions:
- Mission-Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP)
- Collection Operations Management (COM)
- Route
- Zero/Boresight
- Precombat Checks (PCC)
- Commander's Critical Information Requirement (CCIR)
- Priority Intelligence Requirement (PIR)
- Friendly Force Information Requirement (FFIR)
- Priorities of Work
- Priorities of Rehearsals
Initial Operational/Planning Timeline:
- Battalion
- Company/Platoon Planning/Operational
- Enemy
- Weather (WX)/Light Data

4. Sustainment:
Planning/Preparation Instructions:
Combat Trains Command Post (CTCP)
Unit Maintenance Collection Point (UMCP)
Logistics Release Point (LRP) Grid
Ambulance Exchange Point (AXP) Grid
Casualty Collection Point (CCP) Grid
Company Trains Grid
Class of Supply:
- Class I
- Class III
- Class IV
- Class V
- Others

5. Command and Signal:
Company Command Post (CP):
- Primary CP
- Alternate CP
Succession of Command
Battalion Grid
Tactical Command Post Grid
Main Command Post Grid

Ref: ATP 3-21.10, Infantry Rifle Company (May '18), fig. B-4. Company example provided as it is more comprehensive than example provided in ATP 3-21.8.

The WARNORD follows the five-paragraph OPORD format and includes the following items, at a minimum:

- Type of operation
- General location of operation
- Initial operational timeline
- Reconnaissance to initiate

Conducting the PCI
Ref: FM 3-19 Military Police Leader's Handbook, appendix E.

The pre-combat inspection (PCI), or preoperation checks and inspections as FM 6-0 refers to them, is one of these critical preparation activities. Unit preparation includes completing precombat checks and inspections. These ensure that soldiers, units, and systems are as fully capable and ready to execute as time and resources permit. This preparation includes pre-combat training that readies soldiers and systems to execute the mission.

PCI is essential in that it checks:

1. Each troop's equipment necessary for mission accomplishment

2. Each troop's understanding of the mission purpose (commander's intent)

3. Each troop's understanding of how their task contributes to the mission

That means the PCI looks at equipment, asks questions regarding the commander's intent, and asks questions regarding the rehearsal. In this manner, the PCI protects the unit from missing any of critical steps of TLP.

The PCI is typically conducted in two stages. First, subordinate leaders conduct a PCI prior to movement to the AA to check equipment. Second, the PL conducts a PCI after the rehearsal to check equipment and mission knowledge.

The PCI is best achieved with a checklist. This keeps us from missing important key equipment and situational awareness.

Soldiers are inspected for what to bring and what *not* to bring. This will differ greatly depending on their role in the patrol. Every military unit must be able to shoot, move, and communicate. Those are the three basic Soldier skills. The PCI makes sure that each Soldier can do this.

A. Uniform and Gear

• Check that the troop is wearing the proper uniform and camouflage

• Check that boots are serviceable, comfortable, and appropriate

• Check that rain and cold weather gear is carried if needed

• Check water canteens and bladders are full and the troop is hydrated

• Check that first aid kits are present and complete

• Check that ID tags are worn, as well as special medical tags (allergies)

• Check that all specialty equipment is carried in either the LBE or rucksack

• Check all leaders for appropriate maps and compass/GPS

• Check all leaders for communication devices

• Check for secured gear by having the troop jump up and down

B. Communication Devices

• Check that extra batteries, antenna, mic, and basic radio kit are present

• Check that the radio is set to the proper channel and/or frequency

• Check the SOI/CEOI and ensure that each troop knows the call signs and code

• Check that all field phones are serviceable, clean, and in watertight containers

• Check for whistles, flares, color panels, and other communication devices

C. Weapon Systems

- Check that each weapon system is assigned to the appropriate troop
- Check that each weapon is serviceable, clean, and zeroed.
- Check that ammunition is serviceable and plentiful for each weapon
- Check that lubrication is present, as well as field cleaning kits
- Check optical devices (day and night) are serviceable
- Check that extra batteries are carried for optical devices

D. Specialty Equipment

- Check for first aid kits
- Check for protective gear—body armor, eye wear, kneepads, etc
- Check for screening smoke canisters
- Check for wire breaching/marking equipment if appropriate
- Check for mines/explosives if appropriate
- Check for anti-armor weapons if appropriate
- Check for rappelling/climbing/crossing gear if appropriate
- Check for pioneering tools if appropriate

E. Mission Knowledge

Small unit leaders should conduct a confirmation brief after issuing the oral OPORD to ensure subordinates know the mission, the commander's intent, the concept of the operation, and their assigned tasks. Confirmation briefs can be conducted face-to-face or by radio, depending on the situation. Face-to face-is the desired method, because all section and squad leaders are together to resolve questions, and it ensures that each leader knows what the adjacent squad is doing.

1. Commander's Intent

- Check that each troop understands the mission purpose
- Check that each troop understands the key tasks we must achieve
- Check that each troop understands the end state of success

2. Mission Tasks

- Check that each troop understands the mission statement
- Check that each troop understands their assigned task(s)
- Check that each troop knows how to identify the enemy
- Check that each troop knows the expected light, weather, and terrain conditions
- Check that each troop knows where other friendly troops are located
- Check that each troop knows his leader, and SOI/CEOI information

II. Rehearsal Types

Ref: FM 6-0 (C2), Commander and Staff Organization and Operations (Apr '16), pp. 12-1 to 12-2.

Each rehearsal type achieves a different result and has a specific place in the preparation timeline.

A. Backbrief

A back brief is a briefing by subordinates to the commander to review how subordinates intend to accomplish their mission. Normally, subordinates perform back briefs throughout preparation. These briefs allow commanders to clarify the commander's intent early in subordinate planning. Commanders use the back brief to identify any problems in the concept of operations.

The back brief differs from the confirmation brief (a briefing subordinates give their higher commander immediately following receipt of an order) in that subordinate leaders are given time to complete their plan. Back briefs require the fewest resources and are often the only option under time-constrained conditions. Subordinate leaders explain their actions from start to finish of the mission. Back briefs are performed sequentially, with all leaders reviewing their tasks. When time is available, back briefs can be combined with other types of rehearsals. Doing this lets all subordinate leaders coordinate their plans before performing more elaborate drills.

B. Combined Arms Rehearsal

A combined arms rehearsal is a rehearsal in which subordinate units synchronize their plans with each other. A maneuver unit headquarters normally executes a combined arms rehearsal after subordinate units issue their operation order. This rehearsal type helps ensure that subordinate commanders' plans achieve the higher commander's intent.

C. Support Rehearsal

The support rehearsal helps synchronize each war fighting function with the overall operation. This rehearsal supports the operation so units can accomplish their missions. Throughout preparation, units conduct support rehearsals within the framework of a single or limited number of war fighting functions. These rehearsals typically involve coordination and procedure drills for aviation, fires, engineer support, or casualty evacuation. Support rehearsals and combined arms rehearsals complement preparations for the operation. Units may conduct rehearsals separately and then combine them into full-dress rehearsals. Although these rehearsals differ slightly by warfighting function, they achieve the same result.

D. Battle Drill or SOP Rehearsal

A battle drill is a collective action rapidly executed without applying a deliberate decision making process. A battle drill or SOP rehearsal ensures that all participants understand a technique or a specific set of procedures. Throughout preparation, units and staffs rehearse battle drills and SOPs. These rehearsals do not need a completed order from higher headquarters. Leaders place priority on those drills or actions they anticipate occurring during the operation. For example, a transportation platoon may rehearse a battle drill on reacting to an ambush while waiting to begin movement.

All echelons use these rehearsal types; however, they are most common for platoons, squads, and sections. They are conducted throughout preparation and are not limited to published battle drills. All echelons can rehearse such actions as a command post shift change, an obstacle breach lane-marking SOP, or a refuel-on-the-move site operation.

Chap 1

X. The After Action Review (AAR)

Ref: FM 6-0 (C2), Commander and Staff Organization and Operations (Apr '16), chap. 16 and A Leader's Guide to After Action Reviews (Aug '12).

An after action review (AAR) is a guided analysis of an organization's performance, conducted at appropriate times during and at the conclusion of a training event or operation with the objective of improving future performance. It includes a facilitator, event participants, and other observers (ADRP 7-0, Training Units and Developing Leaders, Aug '12).

AARs are a key part of the training process, but they are not cure-alls for unit-training problems. Leaders must still make on-the-spot corrections and take responsibility for training soldiers and units. (Dept. of Army photo by Paolo Bovo).

AARs are a professional discussion of an event that enables Soldiers/units to discover for themselves what happened and develop a strategy (e.g., retraining) for improving performance. They provide candid insights into strengths and weaknesses from various perspectives and feedback, and focus directly on the commander's intent, training objectives and standards. Leaders know and enforce standards for collective and individual tasks.

Refer to BSS5: The Battle Staff SMARTbook, 5th Ed. for further discussion. BSS5 covers the operations process (ADRP 5-0); commander's activities (Understand, Visualize, Describe, Direct, Lead, Assess); the military decisionmaking process and troop leading procedures (FM 6-0: MDMP/TLP); integrating processes and continuing activities (IPB, targeting, risk management); plans and orders (WARNOs/FRAGOs/OPORDs); mission command, command posts, liaison; rehearsals & after action reviews; and operational terms & symbols.

Leaders must avoid creating the environment of a critique during AARs. Because Soldiers and leaders participating in an AAR actively self-discover what happened and why, they learn and remember more than they would from a critique alone. A critique only gives one viewpoint and frequently provides little opportunity for discussion of events by participants. Leaders make on-the-spot corrections and take responsibility for training Soldiers and units.

Types Of After Action Reviews

Two types of after action reviews exist: formal and informal. Commanders generally conduct formal action reviews after completing a mission. Normally, only informal after action reviews are possible during the conduct of operations.

Types of After-Action Reviews

Formal Reviews	Informal Reviews
■ Conducted by either internal or external leaders and external observer and controllers (OC)	■ Conducted by internal chain of command
■ Takes more time to prepare	■ Takes less time to prepare
■ Uses complex training aids	■ Uses simple training aids
■ Scheduled - events and / or tasks are identified beforehand	■ Conducted as needed. Primarily based on leaders assessment
■ Conducted where best supported	■ Held at the training site

Ref: A Leader's Guide to After Action Reviews, p. 5.

A. Formal

Leaders plan formal after action reviews when they complete an operation or otherwise realize they have the need, time, and resources available. Formal after action reviews require more planning and preparation than informal after action reviews. Formal after action reviews require site reconnaissance and selection; coordination for aids (such as terrain models and large-scale maps); and selection, setup, maintenance, and security of the after action review site. During formal after action reviews, the after action review facilitator (unit leader or other facilitator) provides an overview of the operation and focuses the discussion on topics the after action review plan identifies. At the conclusion, the facilitator reviews identified and discussed key points and issues, and summarizes strengths and weaknesses.

B. Informal

Leaders use informal after action reviews as on-the-spot coaching tools while reviewing Soldier and unit performance during or immediately after execution. Informal after action reviews involve all Soldiers. These after action reviews provide immediate feedback to Soldiers, leaders, and units after execution. Ideas and solutions leaders gathered during informal after action reviews can be applied immediately as the unit continues operations. Successful solutions can be identified and transferred as lessons learned.

The Offense

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), chap. 3 and FM 3-90-1, Offense and Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), part one.

An offensive operation is an operation to defeat or destroy enemy forces and gain control of terrain, resources, and population centers. Offensive operations impose the commander's will on an enemy. The offense is the most direct means of seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative to gain a physical and psychological advantage. In the offense, the decisive operation is a sudden action directed toward enemy weaknesses and capitalizing on speed, surprise, and shock. If that operation fails to destroy an enemy, operations continue until enemy forces are defeated. The offense compels an enemy to react, creating new or larger weaknesses the attacking force can exploit. (ADP 3-0)

The offense is the ultimate means commanders have of imposing their will on enemy forces. Commanders may also perform offensive tasks to deceive or divert an enemy force, develop intelligence, or hold an enemy force in position. (USMC photo by Pfc Rachel Porter).

An attacking force's principal advantage is the initiative. Having the initiative allows commanders to select the time, place, and methods used by attacking forces. An attacking commander has the opportunity to develop a plan and concentrate the capabilities of subordinate forces in a specific manner, location, and time that is most disadvantageous to an enemy force. Commanders focus on attacking the right combination of targets to accomplish the mission at the least cost. They create exploitable opportunities through rapid, violently executed, and unpredictable attacks that minimize an enemy force's ability to respond.

I. Types of Offensive Operations

The four types of offensive operations are movement to contact, attack, exploitation, and pursuit.

A. Movement to Contact

Movement to contact is a type of offensive operation designed to develop the situation and to establish or regain contact. The goal of a movement to contact is to make initial contact with a small element while retaining enough combat power to develop the situation and mitigate the associated risk. A movement to contact creates favorable conditions for subsequent tactical actions. Commanders conduct a movement to contact when an enemy situation is vague or not specific enough to conduct an attack. A movement to contact may result in a meeting engagement. Meeting engagements are combat actions that occur when an incompletely deployed force engages an enemy at an unexpected time and place. Once an enemy force makes contact, the commander has five options: attack, defend, bypass, delay, or withdraw. Subordinate variations of a movement to contact include search and attack and cordon and search operations.

See pp. 2-11 to 2-16.

B. Attack

An attack is a type of offensive operation that destroys or defeats enemy forces, seizes and secures terrain, or both. Attacks incorporate coordinated movement supported by fires. They may be part of either decisive or shaping operations. A commander may describe an attack as hasty or deliberate, depending on the time available for assessing the situation, planning, and preparing. A commander may decide to conduct an attack using only fires, based on an analysis of the mission variables. An attack differs from a movement to contact because in an attack commanders know at least part of an enemy's dispositions. This knowledge enables commanders to better synchronize and employ combat power.

See pp. 2-17 to 2-22.

Special Purpose Attacks

Variations of the attack are ambush, counterattack, demonstration, feint, raid, and spoiling attack. The commander's intent and the mission variables guide which of these variations of attack to employ. Commanders conduct each of these variations, except for a raid, as either a hasty or a deliberate operation.

See pp. 6-1 to 6-30.

C. Exploitation

An exploitation is a type of offensive operation that usually follows a successful attack and is designed to disorganize the enemy in depth. Exploitations seek to disintegrate enemy forces to the point where they have no alternative but to surrender or retreat. Exploitations take advantage of tactical opportunities. Division and higher echelon headquarters normally plan exploitations as branches or sequels.

See pp. 2-23 to 2-26.

D. Pursuit

A pursuit is a type of offensive operation designed to catch or cut off a hostile force attempting to escape, with the aim of destroying it. There are two variations of the pursuit: frontal and combination. A pursuit normally follows a successful exploitation. However, if enemy resistance breaks down and enemy forces begin fleeing the battlefield, any type of offensive operation can transition into a pursuit. Pursuits entail rapid movement and decentralized control. Bold action and calculated initiative are required in the conduct of a pursuit.

See pp. 2-27 to 2-32.

II. Purposes of the Offense

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), pp. 3-1 and 3-7.

The offense is the decisive form of war. The offense is the ultimate means commanders have of imposing their will on enemy forces. Commanders may also perform offensive tasks to deceive or divert an enemy force, develop intelligence, or hold an enemy force in position. Commanders seize, retain, and exploit the initiative when performing offensive tasks. Specific operations may orient on an enemy force or terrain objective to achieve a position of relative advantage. Taking the initiative from an enemy force requires the performance of offensive tasks, even in the defense.

The **main purpose of the offense is to defeat, destroy, or neutralize an enemy force**. Additionally, commanders perform offensive tasks to—

- Secure decisive terrain.
- Deprive the enemy of resources.
- Gain information.
- Deceive and divert an enemy force.
- Fix an enemy force in position.
- Disrupt an enemy force's attack.
- Set the conditions for successful future operations.

The offense supports friendly operations in the air, maritime, space, and cyberspace domains, and in the information environment. These operations destroy, dislocate, disintegrate, or isolate an enemy force.

Each battle or engagement has unique characteristics, such as the types of weapons, degree of tactical mobility, and the influence of various capabilities across multiple domains. The commanders most likely to enjoy tactical success are those able to visualize the battlefield, understand the implications of existing friendly and enemy dispositions, and take effective action first. Commanders maintain this momentum by following up attacks quickly to deny enemy forces any opportunity to adjust or adapt to the new situation. The tempo of friendly operations must be fast enough to prevent effective enemy counteraction. Commanders maintain pressure by adjusting combinations of friendly capabilities to exploit initial gains and create further dilemmas for an enemy commander.

Sequence of the Offense

Offensive tasks are typically executed in a five-step sequence. This sequence is for discussion purposes only and is not the only way of conducting offensive tasks. These sequences overlap during the conduct of the offense. Normally the first three steps are shaping operations, while the maneuver step is the decisive operation. Follow through is usually a sequel or branch to the plan based upon the situation. The five-step sequence of the offense during execution is—

- Gain and maintain enemy contact
- Disrupt the enemy
- Fix the enemy
- Maneuver
- Follow through

*Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), p. 2-11.*

III. Forms of Maneuver

Ref: FM 3-90-1, Offense and Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), pp. 1-2 to 1-22.

Forms of maneuver are distinct tactical combinations of fire and movement with a unique set of doctrinal characteristics that differ primarily in the relationship between the maneuvering force and the enemy. The commander generally chooses one form on which he builds a course of action (COA). The higher commander rarely specifies the specific form of offensive maneuver. However, his guidance and intent, along with the mission that includes implied tasks, may impose constraints such as time, security, and direction of attack.

A. Envelopment

The envelopment is a form of maneuver in which an attacking force seeks to avoid the principal enemy defenses by seizing objectives to the enemy rear to destroy the enemy in his current positions. At the tactical level, envelopments focus on seizing terrain, destroying specific enemy forces, and interdicting enemy withdrawal routes. Envelopments avoid the enemy front, where he is protected and can easily concentrate fires. Single envelopments maneuver against one enemy flank; double envelopments maneuver against both. Either variant can develop into an encirclement.
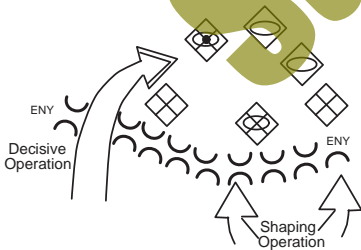
An envelopment avoids enemy strength by maneuver around or overenemy defenses. The decisive operation is directed against the enemy flanks or rear.

To envelop the enemy, commanders find or create an assailable flank. Sometimes the enemy exposes a flank by advancing, unaware of friendly locations. In other conditions, such as a fluid battle involving forces in noncontiguous AOs, a combination of air and indirect fires may create an assailable flank by isolating the enemy on unfavorable terrain.

An envelopment may result in an encirclement. Encirclements are operations where one force loses its freedom of maneuver because an opposing force is able to isolate it by controlling all ground lines of communications. An offensive encirclement is typically an extension of either a pursuit or envelopment. A direct pressure force maintains contact with the enemy, preventing his disengagement and reconstitution. Meanwhile, an encircling force maneuvers to envelop the enemy, cutting his escape routes and setting inner and outer rings. The outer ring defeats enemy attempts to break through to his encircled force. The inner ring contains the encircled force. All available means, including obstacles, should be used to contain the enemy. Then friendly forces use all available fires to destroy him. Encirclements often occur in nonlinear offensive operations.

B. Turning Movement

A turning movement is a form of maneuver in which the attacking force seeks to avoid the enemy's principal defensive positions by seizing objectives to the rear and causing the enemy to move out of current positions or divert major forces to meet the threat. A major threat to his rear forces the enemy to attack or withdraw rearward, thus "turning" him out of his defensive positions. Turning movements typically require greater depth than other maneuver forms. Deep fires take on added importance. They protect the enveloping force and attack the enemy.
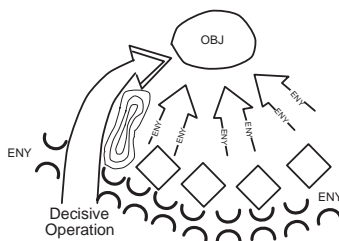
A turning movement attacks the enemy rear to "turn" him out of position and force him to fight to the rear of his flanks.

The Offense

II. Attack

Ref: FM 3-90-1, Offense & Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), chap 3; ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 2-83 to 2-96; and ATP 3-21.10, Infantry Rifle Company (May '18), pp. 2-114 to 2-186.

An attack is a type of offensive operation that destroys or defeats enemy forces, seizes and secures terrain, or both. Attacks incorporate coordinated movement supported by fires. They may be part of either decisive or shaping operations. A commander may describe an attack as hasty or deliberate, depending on the time available for assessing the situation, planning, and preparing. A commander may decide to conduct an attack using only fires, based on an analysis of the mission variables. An attack differs from a movement to contact because in an attack commanders know at least part of an enemy's dispositions. This knowledge enables commanders to better synchronize and employ combat power. (ADP 3-90)

The support team masses combat power to suppress enemy defenses while the assault team moves forward. (Dept. of Army photo by SGT Allyson Manners).

Variations of the attack are ambush, counterattack, demonstration, feint, raid, and spoiling attack. The commander's intent and the mission variables guide which of these variations of attack to employ. Commanders conduct each of these variations, except for a raid, as either a hasty or a deliberate operation.

See chap. 6 for special purpose attacks (with emphasis on ambushes and raids).

Hasty vs. Deliberate Attacks

In addition to having different forms based on their purposes, attacks are characterized as hasty, or deliberate. The primary difference between the hasty and deliberate attack is the planning and coordination time available to allow the full integration and synchronization of all available combined arms assets.

I. Attack - Organization

The attack force breaks into two teams, the support team and the assault team. If the enemy is specifically known to have prior warning to our attack and is known to have the available resources to conduct spoiling attacks, the combat leader may also form a security team for protecting the flanks from an enemy spoiling attack. Otherwise, the attack uses just the support and assault teams.

The assault team includes a breach team. The breach team has the job of moving forward to neutralize the enemy's obstacles. They use defilades and smoke to obscure their activity. (Dept. of Army photo by SPC Kyle Edwards.)

Platoons and squads normally conduct an attack as part of the Infantry company.

A. Assault Team

The assault team includes an internal breach team that is tasked with the responsibility of cutting a path through the enemy's forward obstacles. This team typically consists of a 2-man security team and a 2-man engineer team. The breach team carries specialized equipment for cutting through wire, neutralizing land mines, and marking the path once they have created the breach in the enemy's obstacles. In most cases, the breach team will require ample amounts of smoke canisters to mask their activity.

B. Support Team

The support team employs mass casualty producing weapons and may also have an internal sub-team to conduct a feign attack. The feign attack is coordinated to advance at the same time as the breach team advances. The feign attack serves to pull attention away from the breach team to confuse the enemy as to the true location of the main assault force.

Like the breach team, the feign attack team employs smoke canisters and high rates of fire to make their attack look convincing—though the feign attack team does not attempt to pass through enemy obstacles. Instead, the feign attack remains just outside the enemy's obstacles and conducts an attack by fire to augment the support team fires.

III. Conducting the Attack - A Small Unit Perspective

In the event a patrol is tasked to conduct an attack, the patrol may go through a 9-step process for the planning and execution of actions on the objective.

In the attack, the a small unit maneuvers along lines of least resistance using the terrain for cover and concealment. This indirect approach affords the best chance to achieve surprise on the enemy force. In the attack, the unit maneuvers along lines of least resistance using the terrain for cover and concealment. This indirect approach affords the best chance to achieve surprise on the enemy force.

1. Move to the Assault Position

An assault position is the last covered and concealed position before the OBJ. It differs from an ORP in that our patrol will *not* return to the assault position. We are not required to stop in the assault position; however, it is common to wait here so that friendly units and supporting fires can be synchronized against the enemy target. A leader's recon of the objective is optional, but with good intelligence, this is not required.

2. Form the Attack

At the designated time, the PL forms the patrol into its attack formation and order of march. This is the start of the attack. The attack will bypass any obstacles that have not been specifically assigned—unless they present a threat. The attack force passes through danger areas maintaining attack formation. Only as large a force as necessary is exposed to achieve each task. This conceals the size and intent of attack force.

3. Identify the Objective

The pointman determines the direction and distance of the OPFOR position (the OBJ). The PL leads the support team to its assigned position. This position allows the support team to observe the OPFOR defensive line and employ suppressive fires if the enemy detects the attack force.

4. Engage the Objective

The support team *does not* indiscriminately fire upon the OPFOR position if the attack still has the element of surprise! The assault's breach team moves up to the objective to neutralize the enemy's obstacles. If at any time the attack force is detected, the support team employs suppressive fire against enemy positions and may dispatch a feign attack.

5. Breach Obstacles

Using a defilade or similar cover, the assault's breach team moves forward. If the support team is not firing, the breach team uses stealth in approaching its objective. If suppressive fires are already underway, the breach team employs smoke to mask their movement. Simultaneously, the support team's feign attack employs a smoke screen at another point along the enemy's defensive line and attacks by fire. This will confuse the enemy as to the location of the breach team. The breach team uses visual tape during the day, or lights at night, to mark the breach of the enemy's obstacles.

6. Exploit the Breach

The breach team signals the assault leader once they have opened a path through the obstacles. Using the breach team as near side security, and moving under the cover fire of the support team, the entire assault team moves quickly through the breach.

Once the breach team opens a path through the enemy obstacles, the rest of the assault team moves forward to destroy key enemy positions. The support team coordinates suppressive fires during this time. (Dept. of Army photo.)

7. Clear the Objective

The assault team uses a high volume of fire and a small maneuver force to clear the first couple of fighting positions. Fireteams are assigned specific tasks, such as taking out bunkers or providing for left and right security. The support team continues to shift fires as the assault team clears more enemy fighting positions. The support team must keep the OPFOR suppressed and unable to form a counterattack. When the assault team clears enough of the enemy positions, the assault leader signals for the support team to move through the breach and join the assault team. Now the attack force assaults assigned targets, such as the OPFOR CP and communications nodes, or the attack may continue against the enemy's exposed flanks.

8. Reconsolidate and Reorganize

To regain the patrol's mass and strength, the PL forms the patrol into a 180° security position on the far side of the OBJ and prepares for a counterattack. Element leaders use liquid, ammo, casualties, equipment (LACE) considerations to account for personnel, ensure key weapon systems are manned, and redistribute ammunition, water, medical supplies, and batteries. The PL reports to higher command the progress of the attack and coordinates for supporting resources. Friendly casualties are evacuated, as are EPWs, according to the OPORD. In truth, reconsolidation and reorganization may occur even before all the objectives have been accomplished. It is an ongoing task and may be conducted multiple times.

9. Continue the Mission

After seizing the OBJ, the attack force prepares to transform into a new mission. The patrol might be required to defend, withdraw, or begin an exploitation or pursuit.

The Offense

IV. Pursuit

Ref: FM 3-90-1, Offense & Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), chap 5 and ATP 3-21.10, Infantry Rifle Company (May '18), p. 2-188.

A pursuit is a type of offensive operation designed to catch or cut off a hostile force attempting to escape, with the aim of destroying it. There are two variations of the pursuit: frontal and combination. A pursuit normally follows a successful exploitation. However, if enemy resistance breaks down and enemy forces begin fleeing the battlefield, any type of offensive operation can transition into a pursuit. Pursuits entail rapid movement and decentralized control. Bold action and calculated initiative are required in the conduct of a pursuit. (ADP 3-90)

The pursuit seeks to find, fix, and finish a fleeing enemy force. To do this, an enveloping force moves quickly forward along a parallel route of the escaping enemy and suppresses the enemy in their escape routes. (Dept. of Army photo by SGT William Begley).

A pursuit differs from the exploitation in that its primary function is to complete the destruction of the targeted enemy force. Army doctrine regards a pursuit as an offensive task. Pursuit operations begin when an enemy force attempts to conduct retrograde operations. At that point, it becomes most vulnerable to the loss of internal cohesion and complete destruction. An aggressively executed pursuit leaves the enemy trapped, unprepared, and unable to defend, faced with the options of surrendering or complete destruction. Pursuits include the rapid shifting of units, continuous day and night movements, hasty attacks, containment of bypassed enemy forces, large numbers of prisoners, and a willingness to forego some synchronization to maintain contact with and pressure on a fleeing enemy. Pursuits require swift maneuver and attacks by forces to strike the enemy's most vulnerable areas. A successful pursuit requires flexible forces, initiative by commanders at all echelons, and a high tempo during execution.

Unlike an exploitation, which may focus on seizing key or decisive terrain instead of the enemy force, the pursuit always focuses on completing the destruction of fleeing enemy forces by destroying their ability and will to resist. This is seldom accomplished by directly pushing back the hostile forces on their lines of communication (LOCs). The commander in a pursuit tries to combine direct pressure against the retreating forces with an enveloping or encircling maneuver to place friendly troops across the enemy's lines of retreat. This fixes the enemy in positions where the enemy force can be defeated in detail. If it becomes apparent that enemy resistance has broken down entirely and the enemy is fleeing the battlefield, any other offensive task can transition to a pursuit.

Conducting a pursuit is a prudent risk. Once the pursuit begins, the commander maintains contact with the enemy and pursues retreating enemy forces without further orders. The commander maintains the pursuit as long as the enemy appears disorganized and friendly forces continue to advance. Like exploitation, pursuit tests the audacity and endurance of Soldiers and leaders. In both operations, the attacker risks becoming disorganized. Extraordinary physical and mental effort is necessary to sustain the pursuit, transition to other operations, and translate tactical success into operational or strategic victory.

I. Organization

Normally, the commander does not organize specifically for pursuit operations ahead of time, although the unit staff may plan for a pursuit mission as a branch or sequel to the current order. Therefore, the commander must be flexible to react when the situation presents itself. Subordinate elements are made as self-sufficient as resources will permit. The commander's maneuver and sustainment forces continue their ongoing activities, while the commander readjusts priorities to better support the pursuit. The commander requests and acquires additional support from higher headquarters in accordance with the mission variables of METT-TC. For most pursuits, the commander assigns subordinate forces security, direct-pressure, encircling, follow and support, and reserve missions. The commander can assign available airborne or air assault units the encircling mission because of their ability to conduct vertical envelopments. Given sufficient resources, there can be more than one force assigned the encirclement mission. The subordinate unit assigned the follow and support mission polices the battlefield to prevent the dissipation of the combat power of the unit assigned the direct-pressure mission. Appendix B addresses the duties of a follow and support force. The reserve allows the commander to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities or respond to enemy counterattacks.

There are two options in conducting a pursuit; each involves assigning a subordinate the mission of maintaining direct-pressure on the rearward moving enemy force. The first is a frontal pursuit that employs only direct-pressure. The second is a combination that uses one subordinate element to maintain direct-pressure and one or more other subordinate forces to encircling the retrograding enemy. The combination pursuit is generally more effective. Either the subordinate applying direct-pressure or the subordinate conducting the encirclement can be conducting the decisive operation in a combination pursuit.

A. Frontal Pursuit

In a frontal pursuit, the commander employs only a single force to maintain direct-pressure on the retrograding enemy by conducting operations along the same retrograde routes used by that enemy. The commander chooses this option in two situations. The first is when a subordinate force with a sufficient mobility advantage to get behind a retrograding enemy force cannot be created. The second is when the commander cannot provide enough resources to the force conducting the encirclement to allow that force to survive and sustain itself until linkup with the direct-pres-
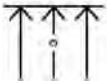
V. Small Unit Offensive Tactical Mission Tasks

Ref: Adapted from ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 2-12 to 2-14 and FM 3-90-1, Offense and Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), app. B.

Tactical mission tasks describe the results or effects the commander wants to achieve—the what and why of a mission statement. The "what" is an effect that is normally measurable. The "why" of a mission statement provides the mission's purpose.This section provides discussion and examples of some common actions and tasks the platoon may perform during a movement to contact, a hasty attack, or a deliberate attack.

The following paragraphs are select tactical mission tasks that a platoon may receive that are typically associated with offensive tasks. The situations used in this section are examples only. For the complete list, refer to FM 3-90-1. They are not applicable in every tactical operation, nor intended to prescribe specific method for achieving the purpose of the operation.

Breach		*Breach* is a tactical mission task in which the unit employs all available means to break through or secure a passage through an enemy defense, obstacle, minefield, or fortification.
Defeat	*No graphic*	*Defeat* occurs when an enemy has temporarily or permanently lost the physical means or the will to fight. The defeated force is unwilling or unable to pursue his COA, and can no longer interfere to a significant degree.
Destroy		*Destroy* is a tactical mission task that physically renders an enemy force combat-ineffective until it is reconstituted. Alternatively, to destroy a combat system is to damage it so badly that it cannot perform any function or be restored to a usable condition without being entirely rebuilt.
Seize		*Seize* is a tactical mission task that involves taking possession of a designated area by using overwhelming force. An enemy force can no longer place direct fire on an objective that has been seized.
Suppress		*Suppress* is a tactical mission task that results in the temporary degradation of the performance of a force or weapon system below the level needed to accomplish its mission.
Support by Fire		*Support-by-fire* is a tactical mission task in which a maneuver force moves to a position where it can engage the enemy by direct fire in support of another maneuvering force. The primary objective of the support force is normally to fix and suppress the enemy so he cannot effectively fire on the maneuvering force.
Clear		*Clear* is a tactical mission task that requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area.
Attack by Fire		*Attack-by-fire* is a tactical mission task in which a commander uses direct fires, supported by indirect fires, to engage an enemy without closing with him to destroy, suppress, fix, or deceive him.

Tactical mission tasks describe the results or effects the commander wants to achieve - the what and why of a mission statement. For a more complete listing of tactical mission tasks, see pp. 1-29 to 1-32.

I. Breach

A platoon may conduct a breach during an attack to break through or secure a passage through an enemy defense, obstacle, minefield, or fortification. A platoon can participate in a hasty breach or participate as part of a larger unit during the conduct of a deliberate breach. A deliberate breach requires a synchronized combined arms operation.

II. Defeat

A platoon defeats an enemy force when the enemy force has temporarily or permanently lost the physical means or the will to fight. During a defeat, the defeated force's leader is unwilling or unable to pursue his adopted course of action, thereby yielding to the friendly commander's will. Also, he can no longer interfere with the actions of friendly forces to a significant degree.

III. Destroy

A platoon destroys an enemy force when it physically renders an enemy force combat-ineffective until it is reconstituted. A platoon can destroy an enemy force by—

- Executing an ambush where the entire enemy element is in the kill zone.
- Using surprise direct and indirect fire into an engagement area.
- Coordinating direct and indirect fires onto an objective.
- Massing indirect fires onto an unprepared enemy.

IV. Seize

A platoon has seized an objective when it physically occupies it and the enemy can no longer place direct fire on it. A platoon may seize during either offensive or defensive tasks. Examples include:

- A platoon seizes the far side of an obstacle as part of a company breach or seizes a building to establish a foothold in an urban environment
- A platoon seizes a portion of an enemy defense as part of a company deliberate attack
- A platoon seizes key terrain to prevent its use by the enemy

There are many inherent dangers in seizing an objective. They include the requirement to execute an assault, prepared enemy fires, a rapidly changing tactical environment, and the possibility of fratricide when friendly elements converge. These factors require the platoon leader and subordinate leaders to understand the following planning considerations.

Developing a clear and current picture of the enemy situation is very important. The platoon may seize an objective in a variety of situations, and the platoon leader will often face unique challenges in collecting and disseminating information on the situation. For example, if the platoon is the seizing element during a company deliberate attack, the platoon leader should be able to develop an accurate picture of the enemy situation during the planning and preparation for the operation. He must be prepared to issue modifications to the platoon as new intelligence comes in or as problems are identified in rehearsals.

In another scenario, the platoon leader may have to develop his picture of the enemy situation during execution. He must rely more heavily on reports from units in contact with the enemy and on his own development of the situation. In this type of situation, such as when the platoon is seizing an enemy combat security outpost during a movement to contact, the platoon leader must plan on relaying information as it develops. He uses clear, concise FRAGOs to explain the enemy situation, and gives clear directives to subordinates.

V. Suppress

A platoon or squad has suppressed an enemy when the enemy cannot prevent our forces from accomplishing their mission. It is a temporary measure. The platoon can use direct fire or call in indirect and obscuring fires. Units in support and attack by fire positions often use suppressive fires to accomplish their mission. It is often used by the platoon during an attack to—

- Allow further movement of friendly forces.
- Isolate an objective by suppressing enemy units in mutually supporting positions.
- Cover the dismounted assault element from the line of departure (LD) to the objective.

During planning and preparation, the platoon leader should consider—

- Conducting a line-of-sight analysis during his terrain analysis to identify the most advantageous positions from which to suppress the enemy
- Planning and integrating direct and indirect fires
- Determining control measures (triggers) for lifting, shifting, or ceasing direct fires
- Determining control measures for shifting or ceasing indirect fires
- Planning and rehearsing actions on contact
- Planning for large Class V expenditures. (The company commander and the platoon leader must consider a number of factors in assessing Class V requirements including the desired effects of the platoon direct fires; the composition, disposition, and strength of the enemy force; and the time required to suppress the enemy.)
- Determining when and how the platoon will reload ammunition during the fight while still maintaining suppression for the assaulting element

VI. Support by Fire

The platoon maneuvers to a position on the battlefield from where it can observe the enemy and engage him with direct and indirect fires. The purpose of support by fire is to prevent the enemy from engaging friendly elements.

To accomplish this task, the platoon must maintain orientation both on the enemy force and on the friendly maneuver element it is supporting. The platoon leader should plan and prepare by—

- Conducting line-of-sight analysis to identify the most advantageous support-by-fire positions
- Conducting planning and integration for direct and indirect fires
- Determining triggers for lifting, shifting, or ceasing direct and indirect fires
- Planning and rehearsing actions on contact
- Planning for large Class V expenditures, especially for the weapons squad and support elements, because they must calculate rounds per minute. (The platoon leader and weapons squad leader must consider a number of factors in assessing Class V requirements, including the desired effects of platoon fires; the time required for suppressing the enemy; and the composition, disposition, and strength of the enemy force.)

A comprehensive understanding of the battlefield and enemy and friendly disposition is a crucial factor in all support-by-fire operations. The platoon leader uses all available intelligence and information resources to stay abreast of events on the battlefield. Additional considerations may apply. The platoon may have to execute an attack to secure the terrain from where it will conduct the support by fire. The initial support-by-fire position may not afford adequate security or may not allow the platoon to achieve its intended purpose. This could force the platoon to reposition to

VI. Actions on Contact

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 2-59 to 2-62.

Actions on contact are a series of combat actions, often conducted simultaneously, taken upon contact with the enemy to develop the situation. Leaders analyze the enemy throughout TLP to identify all likely contact situations that may occur during an operation. This process should not be confused with battle drills such as Battle Drill "React to Contact." Battle drills are the actions of individual Soldiers and small units when they meet the enemy. Through planning and rehearsals conducted during TLP, leaders and Soldiers develop and refine COA to deal with the probable enemy actions. The COA becomes the foundation schemes of maneuver.

Five Steps of Actions on Contact

The Infantry unit should execute actions on contact using a logical, well-organized process of decisionmaking and action entailing these five steps:

Actions on Contact

A   **Deploy and Report**

B   **Evaluate and Develop the Situation**

C   **Choose a Course of Action**

D   **Execute the Selected Course of Action**

E   **Recommend a Course of Action to the Higher Commander**

This five-step process is not intended to generate a rigid, lockstep response to the enemy. Rather, the goal is to provide an orderly framework enabling the company and its platoons and squads to survive the initial contact, and apply sound decisionmaking and timely actions to complete the operation. Ideally, the unit sees the enemy (visual contact) before being seen by the enemy; it then can initiate direct contact on its own terms by executing the designated COA.

Once the lead elements of a force conducting movement to contact encounter the enemy, they conduct actions on contact. The unit treats obstacles like enemy contact, assuming the obstacles are covered by fire. The unit's security force gains tactical advantage over an enemy by using tempo and initiative to conduct these actions, allowing it to gain and maintain contact without becoming decisively engaged. How quickly the unit develops the situation is directly related to its security, and the tempo is directly related to the unit's use of well-rehearsed SOP and drills.

Leaders understand properly executed actions on contact require time at the squad and platoon levels. To develop the situation, a platoon or company may have to

The Defense

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), chap. 4 and FM 3-90-1, Offense and Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), part two.

A defensive operation is an operation to defeat an enemy attack, gain time, economize forces, and develop conditions favorable for offensive or stability operations. Normally the defense cannot achieve a decisive victory. However, it sets conditions for a counteroffensive or a counterattack that enables forces to regain the initiative. Defensive operations are a counter to an enemy offensive action, and they seek to destroy as much of the attacking enemy forces as possible. They preserve control over land, resources, and populations, and retain key terrain, protect lines of communications, and protect critical capabilities against attack. Commanders can conduct defensive operations in one area to free forces for offensive operations elsewhere. (ADP 3-0)

While the offensive element of combat operations is more decisive, the defense is usually the stronger element. However, the performance of defensive tasks alone normally cannot achieve a decision. (Dept. of Army photo by SSG Todd Christopherson.)

A defending force does not wait passively to be attacked. A defending force aggressively seeks ways of attriting and weakening enemy forces before close combat begins. A defending force maneuvers to place enemy forces in a position of disadvantage and attacks those enemy forces at every opportunity. The static and mobile elements of a defense combine to deprive enemy forces of the initiative. A defending force contains enemy forces while seeking every opportunity to transition to the offense.

I. Purposes of the Defense

While the offense is more decisive, the defense is usually stronger. However, the conduct of the defense alone normally cannot determine the outcome of battles. Army forces generally conduct the defense to create conditions favorable for the offense.

The purpose of the defense is to create conditions for a counteroffensive that allows Army forces to regain the initiative. Other reasons for performing defensive tasks include—

• Retaining decisive terrain or denying a vital area to an enemy.

• Attriting or fixing an enemy as a prelude to offensive tasks.

• Countering enemy action.

• Increasing an enemy's vulnerability by forcing an enemy commander to concentrate subordinate forces.

A defending force does not wait passively to be attacked. A defending force aggressively seeks ways of attriting and weakening enemy forces before close combat begins. A defending force maneuvers to place enemy forces in a position of disadvantage and attacks those enemy forces at every opportunity. The static and mobile elements of a defense combine to deprive enemy forces of the initiative. A defending force contains enemy forces while seeking every opportunity to transition to the offense.

See facing page for discussion of characteristics of the defense.

II. Types of Defensive Operations

Friendly forces use three types of defensive operations to deny enemy forces advantages:

• Area defense focuses on terrain.

• Mobile defense focuses on the movement of enemy forces.

• Retrograde focuses on the movement of friendly forces.

A. Area Defense

The area defense is a type of defensive operation that concentrates on denying enemy forces access to designated terrain for a specific time rather than destroying the enemy outright. The focus of an area defense is on retaining terrain where the bulk of a defending force positions itself in mutually supporting, prepared positions. Units maintain their positions and control the terrain between the position of enemy forces and the terrain they desire.

See pp. 3-7 to 3-14.

B. Mobile Defense

The mobile defense is a type of defensive operation that concentrates on the destruction or defeat of the enemy through a decisive attack by a striking force. The mobile defense focuses on defeating or destroying enemy forces by allowing them to advance to a point where they are exposed to a decisive counterattack by a striking force.

See pp. 3-15 to 3-20.

C. Retrograde

The retrograde is a type of defensive operation that involves organized movement away from the enemy. An enemy force may compel these operations, or a commander may perform them voluntarily. The higher echelon commander of a force executing a retrograde must approve the retrograde before its initiation. A retrograde is not conducted in isolation. It is always part of a larger scheme of maneuver designed to regain the initiative and defeat the enemy.

See pp. 3-21 to 3-24.

III. Characteristics of the Defense

A feature of the defense is a striving to regain the initiative from the attacking enemy. The defending commander uses the characteristics of the defense to help accomplish that task. (Dept. of Army photo by 1LT Ryan DeBooy.)

A. Disruption

Defending forces seek to disrupt attacks by employing actions that desynchronize an enemy force's preparations. Disruption actions include deceiving or destroying enemy reconnaissance forces, breaking up combat formations, separating echelons, and impeding an enemy force's ability to synchronize its combined arms. Defending forces conduct spoiling attacks to deny an enemy force's ability to focus combat power. They counterattack to deny an enemy force the ability to exploit. Defending forces employ electronic warfare and cyberspace assets in addition to lethal systems to target enemy command and control systems and disrupt enemy forces in depth by isolating forward echelons from their higher echelon headquarters.

B. Flexibility

Defensive operations require flexible plans that anticipate enemy actions and allocates resources accordingly. Commanders shift the main effort as required. They plan battle positions in depth and the use of reserves in spoiling attacks and counterattacks.

C. Maneuver

Maneuver allows a defending force to achieve and exploit a position of advantage over an enemy force. Even in the defense there are elements of the offense. The defending force seeks opportunities to maneuver against the attacking force.

D. Mass and Concentration

Defending forces seek to mass and concentrate effects against enemy forces. This action produces overwhelming combat power at specific locations to support their decisive operations. Defending forces can surrender ground to gain time for maneuver that allows them to mass and concentrate effects.

E. Operations in Depth

Operations in depth is the simultaneous application of combat power throughout an area of operations. Commanders plan their operations in depth. They create conditions by disrupting enemy long-range fires, sustainment, and command and control. These disruptions weaken enemy forces and prevent any early enemy successes. Operations in depth prevent enemy forces from maintaining their tempo. In the defense, commanders establish a security area and the main battle area (MBA) with its associated FEBA.

F. Preparation

Defending units prepare their AOs before attacking enemy forces arrive, or they establish the defense behind a force performing a security operation. Commanders employ forward and flank security forces to protect their defending forces from surprise and reduce the unknowns in any situation. Defending forces study the terrain, study enemy forces, and prepare engagement areas.

G. Security

Commanders secure their forces through the performance of security, protection, information operations, and cyberspace and electronic warfare tasks. Security may include the provision of area security for civilians, infrastructure, lines of communications (LOCs), and other aspects of the echelon support and consolidation areas. Security tasks prevent enemy intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets from determining friendly locations, strengths, and weaknesses.

The Defense

The Defense

I. Area Defense

Ref: FM 3-90-1, Offense & Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), chap 7; ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 3-26 to 3-71; and ATP 3-21.10, Infantry Rifle Company (May '18), chap. 3.

The area defense is a type of defensive operation that concentrates on denying enemy forces access to designated terrain for a specific time rather than destroying the enemy outright. The focus of an area defense is on retaining terrain where the bulk of a defending force positions itself in mutually supporting, prepared positions. Units maintain their positions and control the terrain between the position of enemy forces and the terrain they desire. The decisive operation focuses fires into engagement areas, possibly supplemented by a counterattack. (ADP 3-90)

An area defense capitalizes on the strength inherent in a closely integrated defensive organization on the ground. (Dept of Army photo by Markus Rauchenberger.)

A commander conducts an area defense when the following conditions occur:

- When directed to defend or retain specified terrain.
- When the commander cannot resource a striking force.
- The forces available have less mobility than the enemy.
- The terrain affords natural lines of resistance and limits the enemy to a few well-defined avenues of approach, thereby restricting the enemy's maneuver.
- There is enough time to organize the position.
- Terrain constraints and lack of friendly air superiority limit the striking force's options in a mobile defense to a few probable employment options.
- Conditions require the preservation of forces when transitioning from a focus on the conduct of offensive tasks to stability tasks and when offensive actions are superfluous to the mission.

I. Area Defense - Organization

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 3-3 to 3-4

The leader organizes the defending force to accomplish information collection, reconnaissance operations; security; main battle area; reserve; and sustainment missions. The leader has the option of defending forward or defending in-depth. When the leader defends forward within an area of operation, the force is organized so most of available combat power is committed early in the defensive effort. To accomplish this, the leader may deploy forces forward or plan counterattacks well forward in the main battle area or even beyond the main battle area. If the leader has the option of conducting a defense indepth, security forces and forward main battle area elements are used to identify, define, and control the depth of the enemy's main effort while holding off secondary thrusts. This allows the leader to conserve combat power, strengthen the reserve, and better resource the counterattack.

The defense makes use of obstacles to expose and/or slow the enemy advance in our prepared engagement areas. Troops use of wire obstacles and mines in defilades that cannot be covered by fire. (Dept. of Army photo by SGT Michael MacLeod.)

Security

The leader balances the need to create a strong security force to shape the battle with the resulting diversion of combat power from the main body's decisive operation The leader usually allocates security forces to provide early warning and protect those forces, systems, and locations necessary to conduct the decisive operation from unexpected enemy contact.

Main Battle Area

The leader builds the decisive operation around identified decisive points, such as key terrain or high-payoff targets. The leader positions the echelon main body within the main battle area where the leader wants to conduct the decisive operation. The leader organizes the main body to halt, defeat, and ultimately destroy attacking enemy forces. The majority of the main body deploys into prepared defensive positions within the main battle area.

Reserve

The reserve is not a committed force. The leader can assign it a wide variety of tasks on its commitment, and it must be prepared to perform other missions. In certain situations, it may become necessary to commit the reserve to restore the integrity of the defense by blocking an enemy penetration or reinforcing fires into an engagement area.

II. Forms of Defensive Maneuver
Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 3-4 to 3-6.

Two forms of defensive maneuver within an area defense are defense in-depth and forward defense. The Infantry platoon is expected to be able to do both. While the Infantry company commander usually selects the type of area defense to use, the higher commander often defines the general defensive scheme for the Infantry company. The specific mission may impose constraints such as time, security, and retention of certain areas that are significant factors in determining how the Infantry company will defend.

Defense In-Depth
Defense in-depth reduces the risk of the attacking enemy quickly penetrating the defense. The enemy is unable to exploit a penetration because of additional defensive positions employed in-depth. The in-depth defense provides more space and time to defeat the enemy attack.

The Infantry platoon uses a defense in-depth when—

- The mission allows the Infantry platoon to fight throughout the depth of the areas of operations.
- The terrain does not favor a defense well forward, and better defensible terrain is available deeper in the areas of operations.
- Sufficient depth is available in the areas operations.
- Cover and concealment forward in the areas of operations is limited.
- Weapons of mass destruction may be used.

Forward Defense
The intent of a forward defense is to prevent enemy penetration of the defense. Due to lack of depth, a forward defense is least preferred. The Infantry platoon deploys the majority of its combat power into forward defensive positions near the forward edge of the battle area. While the Infantry company may lack depth, the platoon and squads must build depth into the defense at their levels. The leader fights to retain the forward position, and may conduct counterattacks against enemy penetrations, or to destroy enemy forces in forward engagement area. Often, counterattacks are planned forward of the forward edge of the battle area to defeat the enemy.

The Infantry platoon uses a forward defense when—

- Terrain forward in the areas of operations favors the defense.
- Strong existing natural or man-made obstacles, such as river or a rail lines, are located forward in areas of operations.
- The assigned area of operations lacks depth due to location of the area or facility to be protected.
- Cover and concealment in rear portions of the areas of operations is limited.
- Directed by higher headquarters to retain or initially control forward terrain.

Forms of the Defense
The infantry platoon will normally defends using one (or a combination) of three forms of the defense:

- Defense of a linear obstacle
- Defense of a perimeter
- Defense of a reverse slope

See pp. 3-25 to 3-32 for further discussion of these three forms of defense.

The Defense
II. Mobile Defense

Ref: FM 3-90-1, Offense & Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), chap 8; ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 3-87 to 3-88.

The mobile defense is a type of defensive operation that concentrates on the destruction or defeat of the enemy through a decisive attack by a striking force. The mobile defense focuses on defeating or destroying enemy forces by allowing them to advance to a point where they are exposed to a decisive counterattack by a striking force. The striking force is a dedicated counterattack force in a mobile defense constituted with the bulk of available combat power. A fixing force is a force designated to supplement the striking force by preventing the enemy from moving from a specific area for a specific time. A fixing force supplements a striking force by holding attacking enemy forces in position, by canalizing attacking enemy forces into ambush areas, and by retaining areas from which to launch the striking force. (ADP 3-90)

A mobile defense focuses on destroying the attacking force by permitting the enemy to advance into a position that exposes the enemy to counterattack and envelopment. The commander retains the majority of available combat power in a striking force for the decisive operation, a major counterattack. (Dept. of Army photo by Paolo Bovo.)

A division is the smallest unit that can conduct, versus participate in, a mobile defense. Small units do not normally conduct a mobile defense because of their inability to fight multiple engagements throughout the AO, while simultaneously resourcing striking, fixing, and reserve forces. Typically, the striking force in a mobile defense may consist of one-half to two-thirds of the defender's combat power. Smaller units generally conduct an area defense or a delay as part of the fixing force as the commander shapes the enemy's penetration or they attack as part of the striking force. Alternatively, they can constitute a portion of the reserve.

IV. Small Unit Forms of the Defense

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 3-41 to 3-51 and FM 3-90-1, Offense and Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), pp. 6-21 to 6-29.

Though the outcome of decisive combat derives from offensive actions, leaders often find it is necessary, even advisable, to defend. The general task and purpose of all defensive operations is to defeat an enemy attack and gain the initiative for offensive operations. It is important to set conditions of the defense so friendly forces can destroy or fix the enemy while preparing to seize the initiative and return to the offense. The platoon may conduct the defense to gain time, retain key terrain, facilitate other operations, preoccupy the enemy in one area while friendly forces attack him in another, or erode enemy forces. A well coordinated defense can also set the conditions for follow-on forces and follow-on operations.

Forms of the Defense

A platoon will normally defend IAW using one of these forms of the defense:

I **Defense of a Linear Obstacle**

II **Perimeter Defense**

III **Reverse-Slope Defense**

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16).

The Infantry platoon usually defends using one of three forms of defense: defense of a linear obstacle, perimeter defense, and reverse slope. The platoon also can defend using a combination of these forms. (*Refer to FM 3-90-1 for more information.*)

I. Defense of a Linear Obstacle

A platoon leader may conduct either an area or mobile defense along or behind a linear obstacle. The Infantry leader normally prefers an area defense because it accepts less risk by not allowing the enemy to cross the obstacle. Linear obstacles such as mountain ranges or river lines generally favor a forward defense. It is extremely difficult to deploy in strength along the entire length of a linear obstacle. The defending leader must conduct economy of force measures in some areas.

Within an area defense, the leader's use of a defense in-depth accepts the possibility the enemy may force a crossing at a given point. The depth of the defense

Order of Events

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 3-14 to 3-17.

Usually, as part of a larger element, the Infantry platoon conducts the defense performing several integrated and overlapping activities. The following paragraphs focus on the tactical considerations and procedures involved in each activity. This discussion shows an attacking enemy that uses depth in its operations, but there will be situations where a platoon must defend against an enemy that does not have a doctrinal operational foundation. The platoon must be prepared to defend against such threats. This unconventional (insurgent or terrorist force) enemy situation requires a more flexible plan that allows for more responsive and decentralized control of combat power rather than spreading it evenly throughout the platoon's area of operation. The platoon also may conduct 'base-camp' or perimeter defense along with offense and patrolling against terrorist and insurgent forces.

As the platoon leader plans his defense, he generally follows this order of events:

- • Reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) operations and enemy preparatory fires.
- • Occupation and preparation.
- • Approach of the enemy main attack.
- • Enemy assault.
- • Counterattack.
- • Consolidation and reorganization.

Reconnaissance and Security Operations and Enemy Preparatory Fires

Security forces must protect friendly main battle area forces in order to allow them to prepare their defense. These security forces work in conjunction with and complement company and battalion security operations. The enemy will try to discover the defensive scheme of maneuver using reconnaissance elements and attacks by forward detachments and disruption elements. It also tries to breach the platoon's tactical obstacles.

The security force's goals normally include providing early warning, destroying enemy reconnaissance units, and impeding and harassing enemy assault elements. The security force continues its mission until directed to displace. The commander also may use security forces in his deception effort to give the illusion of strength in one area while establishing the main defense in another. While conducting this type of security operation, the Infantry platoon may simultaneously have to prepare battle positions, creating a challenging time-management problem for the commander and his subordinate leaders.

During this activity, the Infantry platoon might be required to provide guides to pass the security force and might be tasked to close the passage lanes. The platoon also may play a role in shaping the battlefield. The platoon leader may position the platoon to deny likely enemy attack corridors to enhance flexibility and force enemy elements into friendly engagement area. When it is not conducting security or preparation tasks, the platoon normally occupies hide positions to avoid possible CBRN strikes or enemy artillery preparation.

Occupation and Preparation

A leader's reconnaissance is critical during this time in order for the platoon to conduct occupation without hesitation and begin the priorities of work. The participants in the reconnaissance are the platoon leader, platoon sergeant, and selected squad leaders, forward observer, RTO, and a security element. The goals are, but not limited to, identification of enemy avenues of approach, engagement area, sectors of fire, the tentative obstacle plan, indirect fire plan, observation post, rally point and command post locations. Operational security is critical during the occupation to ensure the platoon avoids

detection and maintains combat power for the actual defense. Soldiers, at all levels of the platoon, must thoroughly understand their duties and responsibilities related to the occupation; they must be able to execute the occupation quickly and efficiently to maximize the time available for planning and preparation of the defense.

Approach of the Enemy Main Attack

The platoon engages the enemy at a time and place where direct and indirect fire systems are maximized to achieve success within his designated area of operation. If available, as the enemy's assault force approaches the engagement area, the platoon may initiate CAS to weaken the enemy. Friendly forces occupy their actual defensive positions before the enemy reaches direct fire range and may shift positions in response to enemy actions or other tactical factors. *Note. Long-range fires might be withheld in accordance with a higher commander's intent.*

Enemy Assault

During an assault, the enemy deploys to achieve mass at a designated point, normally employing assault and support forces. This may leave him vulnerable to the combined effects of indirect and direct fires and integrated obstacles. The enemy may employ additional forces to fix friendly elements and prevent their repositioning. Friendly counter-attack forces might be committed against the enemy flank or rear, while other friendly forces may displace to alternate, supplementary, or subsequent positions in support of the commander's scheme of maneuver. All friendly forces should be prepared for the enemy to maximize employment of combat multipliers to create vulnerabilities. The enemy also is likely to use artillery, CAS, and CBRN weapons to set the conditions for the assault.

The platoon engages the enemy. Squad leaders and team leaders control their Soldiers' direct fires. Destroyed vital positions are reoccupied. Soldiers move to alternate positions if the primary positions become untenable. Casualties are evacuated. Mines, indirect fires to include mortars are fired. Javelins and other direct fire weapons target the enemy's support positions.

Under limited visibility, selected mortars and field artillery units initially may fire infrared illumination if the enemy has not identified the defenders' positions. Once the platoon engages the enemy from its primary positions, regular illumination is used. If the platoon has overhead cover and the enemy penetrates the tactical wire, fires may include variable timed fuzed HE.

When required, final protective fires are initiated. Indirect fire systems to include field artillery and heavy mortars; join in firing their final protective fires concentrations until ordered to cease-fire or have exhausted their ammunition. Medium machine guns fire along their final protective lines (FPL). Soldiers fire to the flank to provide mutual support. Soldiers are resupplied with ammunition, and casualties evacuated.

Counterattack

As the enemy's momentum slows or stops, friendly forces may conduct a counterattack. The counterattack might be for offensive purposes to seize the initiative from the enemy. In some cases, the purpose of the counterattack is mainly defensive such as reestablishing a position or restoring control of the sector. The Infantry platoon may participate in the counterattack as a base-of-fire element‿providing support by fire for the counterattack force‿or as the actual counterattack force.

Consolidation and Reorganization

The platoon secures its defensive area by repositioning forces, destroying remaining enemy elements, processing EPW, and reestablishing obstacles. The platoon conducts all necessary sustainment functions as it prepares to continue the defense. Even when enemy forces are not actively engaging it, the platoon maintains awareness of the tactical situation and local security at all times. The platoon prepares itself for possible follow-on missions.

Train, Advise & Assist

Ref: ADP 3-07, Stability (Jul '19), chap. 3 and JP 3-20, Security Cooperation (May '17).

In the complex, dynamic operational environments of the 21st century, significant challenges to sustainable peace and security exist. Sources of instability that push parties toward violence include religious fanaticism, global competition for resources, climate change, residual territorial claims, ideology, ethnic tension, elitism, greed, and the desire for power. These factors create belts of state fragility and instability that threaten U.S. national security.

Throughout U.S. history, U.S. forces have learned that military force alone cannot secure sustainable peace. U.S. forces can only achieve sustainable peace through a comprehensive approach in which military objectives nest in a larger cooperative effort of the departments and agencies of the U.S. Government, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, multinational partners, the private sector, and the host nation.

The recent announcement of "Advisory Brigades" by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley focuses on the need for specialized units to train and advise foreign forces. Called train, advise and assist brigades, the units would deploy to different combatant command areas to help train allies and partners, similar to what units have been doing in Iraq and Afghanistan. "I look at it as if you get a two-for," Milley said. "You get a day-to-day engagement that the combatant commanders want in order to train, advise and assist. And then in time of national emergency, you have at least four or five brigades with standing chains of command that can marry Soldiers up like the old COHORT units.

Military Engagement, Security Cooperation, and Stability

Military engagement, security cooperation, and stability missions, tasks, and actions encompass a wide range of actions where the military instrument of national power is tasked to support OGAs and cooperate with IGOs (e.g., UN, NATO) and other countries to protect and enhance national security interests, deter conflict, and set conditions for future contingency operations. Use of joint capabilities in these and related activities such as Security Force Assistance and Foreign Internal Defense helps shape the operational environment and keep the day-to-day tensions between nations or groups below the threshold of armed conflict while maintaining US global influence.

Refer to TAA2: Military Engagement, Security Cooperation & Stability SMARTbook (Foreign Train, Advise, & Assist) chap 2 for further discussion. Topics include the Range of Military Operations (JP 3-0), Security Cooperation & Security Assistance (Train, Advise, & Assist), Stability Operations (ADRP 3-07), Peace Operations (JP 3-07.3), Counterinsurgency Operations (JP & FM 3-24), Civil-Military Operations (JP 3-57), Multinational Operations (JP 3-16), Interorganizational Coordination (JP 3-08), and more.

Security Force Assistance (SFA)

Ref: JP 3-20, Security Cooperation (May '17), app. B and FM 3-22, Army Support to Security Cooperation (Jan '13), p. 1-10.

Security force assistance is defined as—the Department of Defense activities that contribute to unified action by the United States Government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions (JP 3-22). Consistent with DOD policy for security force assistance (known as SFA), the Army develops, maintains, and institutionalizes the capabilities of its personnel to support DOD efforts to organize, train, equip, and advise foreign security forces (FSF) and relevant supporting institutions. Security forces are duly constituted military, paramilitary, police, and constabulary forces of a state (JP 3-22). When directed to do so in accordance with appropriate legal authorities, Army forces conduct security force assistance activities in support of combatant commanders' campaign plans and national objectives.

Security Force Assistance Tasks

A Organize

B Train

C Equip

D Rebuild and Build

E Advise and Assist

Foreign security forces are forces, including but not limited to, military, paramilitary, police, and intelligence forces; border police, coast guard, and customs officials; and prison guards and correctional personnel, that provide security for a host nation and its relevant population or support a regional security organization's mission. Security force assistance activities are conducted primarily to assist host nations build the capacity to defend against internal, external, and transnational threats to stability. However, DOD may also conduct security force assistance to assist host nations to defend against external threats; contribute to multinational operations; or organize, train, equip, and advise a nation's security forces or supporting institutions.

It is DOD policy that security force assistance is a subset of DOD overall security cooperation initiatives and that security force assistance activities directly increase the capacity or capability of FSF or their supporting institutions. Other forms of security force assistance—specifically, advising in a hostile environment and other activities geared toward assisting a partner nation engaged in conflict—are performed by U.S. forces using resources and authorities specially provided to DOD for employment in support of combat operations.

Security Force Assistance Activities

Ref: JP 3-20, Security Cooperation (May '17), fig. B-3.

SFA activities that are part of unified action by the GCC require interagency coordination. Even small tactical operations usually require interagency coordination, most often through the SCO with the country team as a part of the CCMD's routine activities (as part of a campaign plan) and in initial phases of an operation (such as deploying flexible deterrent or flexible response options) campaign and through a joint/multinational force or Service component headquarters organization during combat operations and again through the SCO as operations transition back to civilian control.

Resources/ Funding/ Programs	Security Force Assistance (SFA)	Foreign Security Force Missions/Operations	Purpose
Security Cooperation		Major Combat Operations	• Deter/defeat external threat
Title 22, USC – Foreign Relations		Foreign Internal Defense	• Deter/defeat internal threat
FMS IMET FMF	**SFA Activities**	Counterinsurgency	• Defeat insurgency
Title 10, USC – Armed Forces	Organize	Counterterrorism	• Disrupt/defeat terrorists
PEP JCET PfP	Train	Unconventional Warfare	• Defeat enemy/ illegitimate authority
Other	Equip	Stability Operations	• Provide security and essential services
Section 1206 Section 1208 Section 1033	Rebuild/ Build	Humanitarian Assistance	• Save lives
USG	Advise	Peace Operations	• Separate the opponents
Federal Law Enforcement		Maritime Security Operations	• Provide security in the maritime domain
Title 28, USC (DOJ, FBI) Title 14, USC (USCG)			
Means		**Ways**	**Ends**

Sample

Legend

DOJ	Department of Justice	PEP	personnel exchange program
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation	PfP	Partnership for Peace
FMF	foreign military financing	USC	United States Code
FMS	foreign military sales	USCG	United States Coast Guard
IMET	international military education and training	USG	United States Government
JCET	joint combined exchange training		

Refer to TAA2: Military Engagement, Security Cooperation & Stability SMARTbook (Foreign Train, Advise, & Assist) for further discussion. Topics include the Range of Military Operations (JP 3-0), Security Cooperation & Security Assistance (Train, Advise, & Assist), Stability Operations (ADRP 3-07), Peace Operations (JP 3-07.3), Counterinsurgency Operations (JP & FM 3-24), Civil-Military Operations (JP 3-57), Multinational Operations (JP 3-16), Interorganizational Cooperation (JP 3-08), and more.

Train, Advise & Assist

C. Establishing Observation Posts and Checkpoints

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. D-7 to D-23.

Observation Posts

The observation post, the primary means of maintaining surveillance of an assigned avenue or named areas of interest, is a position from where units observe the enemy and direct and adjust indirect fires against him. From the observation post, platoons or squads send SALUTE reports to their controlling headquarters when observing enemy activity.

Observation posts can be executed either mounted or dismounted. As they are complementary, if possible they should be used in combination.

The main advantage of a dismounted observation post is it provides maximum stealth hopefully preventing the enemy from detecting it. The two main disadvantages are it has limited flexibility, taking time to displace and limited firepower to protect itself if detected.

Checkpoints

As defined by ADRP 1-02 it is a predetermined point on the ground used to control movement, tactical maneuver, and orientation. Checkpoints are primarily a military police task; however, while conducting area security, platoons or squads are frequently employed to establish and operate checkpoints.

Although similar, the checkpoint should not to be confused with a roadblock or blocking position. Roadblocks are designed to prevent all access to a certain area by both wheeled and pedestrian traffic for a variety of purposes. The checkpoint also should not be confused with an observation post which is established to collect information.

When conducting checkpoint operations, Soldiers need the following support:

- Linguists familiar with the local language and understand English.
- Host-nation police or a civil affairs officer.
- Wire/sandbags.
- Signs to reduce misunderstandings and confusion on the part of the local populace
- Lighting.
- Communications equipment.
- Handheld translation devices.

A checkpoint should consist of four areas:

- **Canalization Zone**. The canalization zone uses natural obstacles or artificial obstacles to canalize the vehicles into the checkpoint.
- **Turning Or Deceleration Zone**. The search element establishes obstacles and an overwatch force to control each road or traffic lane being blocked. The turning or deceleration zone forces vehicles into making a rapid decision. The vehicle can decelerate, make slow hard turns, or maintain speed and crash into a series of obstacles. The road or traffic lanes should be blocked at either end of the checkpoint.
- **Search Zone**. The search zone is a relatively secure area where personnel and vehicles are positively identified and searched. A decision is made to confiscate weapons and contraband, detain a vehicle, or allow it to pass. The area is set up with a blocking obstacle denying entry/exit without loss of life or equipment.
- **Safe Zone**. The safe zone is the assembly area for the checkpoint, which allows personnel to eat, sleep, and recover in relative security.

Task Organization

The basic organization of a checkpoint includes a security element, a search element, an assault element, and a mission command element. The actual strength and composition of the force is determined by the nature of the threat, road layout, type of checkpoint required, and anticipated number of vehicles to be processed.

There are two types of checkpoints: deliberate and hasty.

Deliberate Checkpoint

A deliberate checkpoint is permanent or semi-permanent. It is established to control the movement of vehicles and pedestrians, and to help maintain law and order. They typically are constructed and employed to protect an operating base or well-established roads. Like defensive positions, deliberate checkpoint should be improved continuously.

Deliberate checkpoints—

- Control all vehicle and pedestrian traffic so crowds cannot assemble.
- Allow known offenders or suspected enemy personnel to be arrested.
- Enforce curfews.
- Deter illegal movement.
- Prevent the movement of supplies to the enemy.
- Deny the enemy contact with the local inhabitants.
- Dominate the area around the checkpoint. (This includes maintaining law and order by local patrolling to prevent damage to property or injury to persons.)
- Collect information.

Hasty Checkpoint

A hasty checkpoint differs from a deliberate checkpoint in it is not, in most cases, pre-planned. A hasty checkpoint usually will be activated as part of a larger tactical plan or in reaction to hostile activities such as a bomb, mine incident, or sniper attack, and can be lifted on the command of the controlling headquarters. A hasty checkpoint always will have a specific task and purpose. Most often used to avoid predictability and targeting by the enemy. It should be set up to last from five minutes to up to two hours using an ambush mentality. The short duration reduces the risk of the enemy organizing an attack against the checkpoint. The maximum time suggested of the checkpoint to remain in place would be about eight hours, as this may be considered to be the limit of endurance of the units conducting the checkpoint and may invite the checkpoint to enemy attacks.

Characteristics of a hasty checkpoint include:

- Located along likely enemy avenues of approach.
- Achieve surprise.
- Temporary.
- Unit is able to carry and erect construction materiels without additional assistance.
- Uses vehicles as an obstacle between the vehicles and personnel, and reinforces them with concertina wire.
- Soldiers are positioned at each end of the checkpoint.
- Soldiers are covered by mounted or dismounted automatic weapons.
- Assault force/response force is concealed nearby to attack or assault in case the site is attacked.

The hasty checkpoint's success is brought about by swift and decisive operations. In many cases, there may be no clear orders before the checkpoint is set up. Leaders must rely on common sense and instinct to determine which vehicles or pedestrians to stop for questioning or searching. They are moved quickly into position, thoroughly conducted, and just as swiftly withdrawn when lifted or once the threat has passed.

Train, Advise & Assist

Types of Peace Operations

Ref: JP 3-07.3, Peace Operations (Aug '12), chap. I.

PO includes the five types of operations. *Note: The US adopted the term peace operations while others such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) adopted the term peace-support operations.*

1. Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)

PKO consist of military support to diplomatic, informational, and economic efforts to establish or maintain peace in areas of potential or actual conflict. PKO take place following diplomatic negotiation and agreement among the parties to a dispute, the sponsoring organization, and potential force-contributing nations. Before PKO begin, a credible truce or cease fire is in effect, and the parties to the dispute must consent to the operation. A main function of the PKO force is to establish a presence that inhibits hostile actions by the disputing parties and bolsters confidence in the peace process. Agreements often specify which nations' forces are acceptable, as well as the size and type of forces each will contribute.

2. Peace Enforcement Operations (PEO)

Peace enforcement operations (PEO) enforce the provisions of a mandate designed to maintain or restore peace and order. PEO may include the enforcement of sanctions and exclusion zones, protection of personnel providing FHA, restoration of order, and forcible separation of belligerent parties. PEO may be conducted pursuant to a lawful mandate or in accordance with international law and do not require the consent of the HN or the parties to the conflict, although broad based consent is preferred. Forces conducting PEO use force or the threat of force to coerce or compel compliance with resolutions or sanctions. Forces conducting PEO generally have full combat capabilities, although there may be some restrictions on weapons and targeting.

3. Peace Building (PB)

PB consists of actions that support political, economic, social, and security aspects of society. Although the major responsibility for PB is with the civil sector, early in PO, when critical and immediate tasks normally carried out by civilian organizations temporarily exceed their capabilities, PO forces should assist and cooperate with the HN civil sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and IGOs, to ensure that those tasks are accomplished.

4. Peacemaking (PM)

Peacemaking is the process of diplomacy, mediation, negotiation, or other forms of peaceful settlement that arranges an end to a dispute and resolves the issues that led to the conflict. Military support to the peacemaking process includes military-to-military relations, security assistance, or other activities, which influence disputing parties to seek a diplomatic settlement. An example of military support to peacemaking was the involvement of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe and the Joint Staff plans directorate during the development of the Dayton Accords by the presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia outlining a General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5. Conflict Prevention

Conflict prevention employs complementary diplomatic, civil, and military means to monitor and identify the causes of a conflict, and takes timely action to prevent the occurrence, escalation, or resumption of hostilities. Chapter VI of the United Nations (UN) Charter covers activities aimed at conflict prevention. Conflict prevention includes fact-finding missions, consultations, warnings, inspections, and monitoring.

Refer to TAA2: Military Engagement, Security Cooperation & Stability SMARTbook (Foreign Train, Advise, & Assist) chap. 4 for further discussion.

IV. Countering Insurgencies (COIN)

Ref: JP 3-24, Counterinsurgency (Apr '18), chap. 1 and FM 3-24, Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies (May '14), chap. 1.

I. Insurgency

Insurgency is the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region. An insurgency is a form of intrastate conflict, and counterinsurgency (COIN) is used to counter it. The term insurgency can also refer to the group itself. Insurgents can combine the use of terrorism; subversion; sabotage; other political, economic, and psychological activities; and armed conflict to achieve its aims. It is an organization political-military struggle by a predominantly indigenous group or movement designed to weaken, subvert, or displace the control of an established government for a particular region. Each insurgency has its own unique characteristics, but they typically include the following common elements: a strategy, an ideology, an organization, a support structure, the ability to manage information, and a supportive environment.

Insurgencies will continue to challenge security and stability around the globe in the 21st century. While the possibility of large scale warfare remains, few nations are likely to engage the US, allies, and partner nations. (Dept. of Army photo.)

Refer to TAA2: Military Engagement, Security Cooperation & Stability SMARTbook (Foreign Train, Advise, & Assist) for further discussion. Topics include the Range of Military Operations (JP 3-0), Security Cooperation & Security Assistance (Train, Advise, & Assist), Stability Operations (ADRP 3-07), Peace Operations (JP 3-07.3), Counterinsurgency Operations (JP & FM 3-24), Civil-Military Operations (JP 3-57), Multinational Operations (JP 3-16), Interorganizational Cooperation (JP 3-08), and more.

Enabling Operations

I. Reconnaissance

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), pp. 5-1 to 5-2, and FM 3-90-2S, Reconnaissance, Security, and Tactical Enabling Tasks, Vol. 2 (Mar '13), chap. 2.

Reconnaissance is a mission undertaken to obtain, by visual observation or other detection methods, information about the activities and resources of an enemy or adversary, or to secure data concerning the meteorological, hydrographical, or geographical characteristics of a particular area (JP 2-0). Reconnaissance accomplished by small units primarily relies on the human dynamic rather than technical means. Reconnaissance is a focused collection effort. It is performed before, during, and after operations to provide commanders and staffs information used in the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process so they can formulate, confirm, or modify courses of action (COAs).

Reconnaissance is a process of gathering information to help the commander shape his understanding of the battlespace. Reconnaissance uses many techniques and technologies to collect this information, but it is still largely a human endeavor. (Dept. of Army photo.)

Reconnaissance Objective

Commanders orient their reconnaissance assets by identifying a reconnaissance objective within an area of operations (AO). The reconnaissance objective is a terrain feature, geographic area, enemy force, adversary, or other mission or operational variable about which the commander wants to obtain additional information. Every reconnaissance mission specifies a reconnaissance objective that clarifies the intent of the effort, and prioritizes those efforts, by specifying the most important information to obtain. Commanders assign reconnaissance objectives based on priority information requirements resulting from the IPB process and the reconnaissance asset's capabilities and limitations. A reconnaissance objective can be information about a specific geographical location, such as the cross country trafficability of a specific area, to confirm or deny a specific activity of a threat, or to specify a specific location of a threat.

I. Reconnaissance Fundamentals

At this point the PL should know the specific recon mission and have received and developed the maneuver control measures. Before delving into the execution of each type of reconnaissance, it's important to delineate the fundamentals of recon patrols. There are seven rules to remember.

1. Ensure continuous reconnaissance

Reconnaissance happens before, during, and after an engagement. Before the engagement, the recon team develops the commander's picture of the battlefield. During the engagement, the recon team lets the commander know if the plan is having its intended effect upon the enemy force. After the engagement, the recon team helps the commander to determine the enemy's next move.

2. Do not keep reconnaissance assets in reserve

Of course, the recon team should not be run until it is exhausted. However, the recon team acts as the commander's eyes and ears forward. There is no reason to keep one ear or one eye in reserve! Recon assets must be managed to allow continuous reconnaissance. That includes a rest plan.

3. Orient on reconnaissance objectives

Don't just throw the recon team forward without a specified objective! Name the type of recon mission and name the objective within the AO. This helps the commander prioritize the recon assets and objectives, plus gives focus to the recon team for the most economical use of time.

4. Report information rapidly and accurately

Over time, information loses value because more often than not, the battlefield is rapidly changing. Recon teams give timely reports on exactly what they see (without exaggeration) and exactly what they do not see. A common mistake in reconnaissance is the failure to report when no enemy force or presence is detected. Failing to report does nothing for the commander. A report of negative activity gives the commander a better understanding of where the enemy *isn't* located, at least.

5. Retain freedom of maneuver

As stated earlier, a recon team that becomes engaged in a firefight with the enemy is fixed to a given location. Without the ability to maneuver, that recon team can only report what is to its immediate front. In short, it has become no more useful in developing the battlefield picture than any other line unit.

6. Gain and maintain enemy contact

Recon teams seek to gain contact with the enemy. More often than not, the recon team uses a combination of stealth and surveillance to maintain contact with the enemy. The recon team maintains contact with the enemy until the commander orders them to withdraw. The recon patrol leader may also break contact if the recon team is decisively engaged, but then seeks to regain contact immediately.

7. Develop the situation rapidly

Once contact is gained, the recon team must quickly discern the threat. For an enemy force, that means identifying the approximate size of the enemy force, the activity and direction of movement, and possibly the enemy's disposition and capabilities. When evaluating an enemy obstacle, the recon team must discern the type of obstacle, the extent of the obstacle, and whether or not it is covered by enemy fire. Often, enemy obstacles tell the commander a fair amount of information regarding the capabilities and even the location of the enemy force.

Enabling
Operations

B. The Route Reconnaissance

Route reconnaissance is a form of reconnaissance that focuses along a specific line of communication, such as a road, railway, or cross-country mobility corridor. It provides new or updated information on route conditions, such as obstacles and bridge classifications, and enemy and civilian activity along the route. A route reconnaissance includes not only the route itself, but also all terrain along the route from which the enemy could influence the friendly force's movement.

The commander may assign a route reconnaissance as a separate mission or as a specified task for a unit conducting a zone or area reconnaissance. A scout platoon can conduct a route reconnaissance over only one route at a time. For larger organizations, the number of scout platoons available directly influences the number of routes that can be covered at one time. Integrating ground, air, and technical assets assures a faster and more complete route reconnaissance.

Depending on the length of route to be reconnoitered, the route recon may be conducted with great stealth, or it may be conducted with great mobility. The effort is to gather intelligence on the route and its conditions. (Dept. of Army photo by SGT Austan Owen).

Route Reconnaissance Tasks

- Find, report, and clear within capabilities all enemy forces that can influence movement along the route
- Determine the trafficability of the route; can it support the friendly force?
- Reconnoiter all terrain that the enemy can use to dominate movement along the route, such as choke points, ambush sites, and pickup zones, landing zones, and drop zones
- Reconnoiter all built-up areas, contaminated areas, and lateral routes along the route
- Evaluate and classify all bridges, defiles, overpasses and underpasses, and culverts along the route

II. Security Operations

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), chap 5, pp. 5-3 to 5-4 and FM 3-90-2, Reconnaissance, Security, and Tactical Enabling Tasks, Vol. 2 (Mar '13), chap. 2.

The main difference between conducting security operations and reconnaissance is that security operations orient on the force or facility being protected while reconnaissance orients on the enemy and terrain. Security operations aim to protect a force from surprise and reduce the unknowns in any situation. Commanders conduct security operations to the front, flanks, or rear of a friendly force. Security operations are shaping operations. As a shaping operation, economy of force is often a consideration when planning. (ADP 3-90)

Security operations must provide information regarding enemy movement and capacity while giving the commander enough time and space with which to form an effective response. (Dept. of Navy photo by LTJG Matthew Stroup.)

I. Security Operations Tasks

The four types of security operations are—screen, guard, cover, and area security.

A. Screen

Screen is a type of security operation that primarily provides early warning to the protected force. (ADP 3-90) A unit performing a screen observes, identifies, and reports enemy actions. Generally, a screening force engages and destroys enemy reconnaissance elements in its capabilities— augmented by indirect fires—but otherwise fights only in self-defense. The screen has the minimum combat power necessary to provide the desired early warning, which allows the commander to retain the bulk of the main body's combat power for commitment at the decisive place and time. A screen provides the least amount of protection of any security mission; it does not have the combat power to develop the situation.

II. Fundamentals of Security Ops

Ref: FM 3-90-2, Recon, Security, & Tactical Enabling Tasks, Vol. 2 (Mar '13), pp. 2-2 to 2-3.

1. Provide Early and Accurate Warning

The security force provides early warning by detecting the enemy force quickly and reporting information accurately to the main body commander. The security force operates at varying distances from the main body based on the factors of METT-TC. As a minimum, it should operate far enough from the main body to prevent enemy ground forces from observing or engaging the main body with direct fires. The earlier the security force detects the enemy, the more time the main body has to assess the changing situation and react. The commander positions ground security and aeroscouts to provide long-range observation of expected enemy avenues of approach, and he re-inforces and integrates them with available intelligence collection systems to maximize warning time.

2. Provide Reaction Time and Maneuver Space

The security force provides the main body with enough reaction time and maneuver space to effectively respond to likely enemy actions by operating at a distance from the main body and by offering resistance to enemy forces. The commander determines the amount of time and space required to effectively respond from information provided by the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process and the main body commander's guidance regarding time to react to enemy courses of action (COA) based on the factors of METT-TC. The security force that operates farthest from the main body and offers more resistance provides more time and space to the main body. It attempts to hinder the enemy's advance by acting within its capabilities and mission constraints.

3. Orient on the Force or Facility to Be Secured

The security force focuses all its actions on protecting and providing early warning to the secured force or facility. It operates between the main body and known or sus-pected enemy units. The security force must move as the main body moves and orient on its movement. The security force commander must know the main body's scheme of maneuver to maneuver his force to remain between the main body and the enemy. The value of terrain occupied by the security force hinges on the protection it provides to the main body commander.

4. Perform Continuous Reconnaissance

The security force aggressively and continuously seeks the enemy and reconnoiters key terrain. It conducts active area or zone reconnaissance to detect enemy movement or enemy preparations for action and to learn as much as possible about the terrain. The ultimate goal is to determine the enemy's COA and assist the main body in counter-ing it. Terrain information focuses on its possible use by the enemy or the friendly force, either for offensive or defensive operations. Stationary security forces use combinations of OPs, aviation, patrols, intelligence collection assets, and battle positions (BPs) to perform reconnaissance. Moving security forces perform zone, area, or route recon-naissance along with using OPs and BPs, to accomplish this fundamental.

5. Maintain Enemy Contact

Once the security force makes enemy contact, it does not break contact unless specifi-cally directed by the main force commander. The security asset that first makes contact does not have to maintain that contact if the entire security force maintains contact with the enemy. The security force commander ensures that his subordinate security assets hand off contact with the enemy from one security asset to another in this case. The se-curity force must continuously collect information on the enemy's activities to assist the main body in determining potential and actual enemy COAs and to prevent the enemy from surprising the main body. This requires continuous visual contact, the ability to use direct and indirect fires, freedom to maneuver, and depth in space and time.

Enabling Operations

Screen Movement Methods

Method	Characteristics	Advantages	Disadvantages
Alternate Bounds by OPs	■ Main body moves faster ■ Conducted by platoon or company/troop ■ Contact is possible ■ Conducted rear to front	■ Very secure method ■ Maintains maximum surveillance over the security area	■ Execution takes time ■ Disrupts unit integrity
Alternate Bounds by Units	■ Main body moves faster ■ Conducted by platoon or company/troop ■ Contact is possible ■ Conducted rear to front	■ Execution does not take a great deal of time ■ Maintains good surveillance over the security area ■ Maintains unit integrity	■ May leave temporary gaps in coverage
Successive Bounds	■ Main body moving slowly ■ Conducted by platoon or company/troop ■ Contact is possible ■ Conducted simultaneously or in succession ■ Units should maintain an air screen during ground movement	■ Most secure method ■ Maintains maximum surveillance ■ Maintains unit integrity	■ Execution takes the most time ■ Unit is less secure when all elements are moving simultaneously ■ Simultaneous movement may leave temporary gaps
Continuous Marching	■ Main body is moving relatively quickly ■ Performed as a route reconnaissance ■ Enemy contact not likely ■ Unit should maintain an air screen on the flank	■ OPs displace quickly ■ Maintains unit integrity	■ Least secure method

Ref: FM 3-90-2, table 2-2, p. 2-13.

B. Guard

Guard is a type of security operation done to protect the main body by fighting to gain time while preventing enemy ground observation of and direct fire against the main body. Units performing a guard cannot operate independently. They rely upon fires, functional support, and multifunctional support assets of the main body. (ADP 3-90)

A guard differs from a screen in that a guard force contains sufficient combat power to defeat, cause the withdrawal of, or fix the lead elements of an enemy ground force before it can engage the main body with direct fire. A guard force routinely engages enemy forces with direct and indirect fires. A screening force, however, primarily uses indirect fires or close air support to destroy enemy reconnaissance elements and slow the movement of other enemy forces. A guard force uses all means at its disposal, including decisive engagement, to prevent the enemy from penetrating to a position were it could observe and engage the main body. It operates within the range of the main body's fire support weapons, deploying over a narrower front than a comparable-size screening force to permit concentrating combat power.

Types of Guard Operations

1. Advance guard
2. Flank guard
3. Rear guard

Ref: FM 3-90-2, pp. 2-15 to 2-19.

Enabling Operations

IV. Relief in Place

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), pp. 5-4 to 5-5. and FM 3-90-2, Reconnaissance, Security, and Tactical Enabling Tasks, Vol. 2 (Mar '13), chap. 4.

A relief in place is an operation in which, by direction of higher authority, all or part of a unit is replaced in an area by the incoming unit and the responsibilities of the replaced elements for the mission and the assigned zone of operations are transferred to the incoming unit. (JP 3-07.3) (*Note. The Army uses an AO instead of a zone of operations.*) There are three techniques for conducting a relief: sequentially, simultaneously, or staggered. A **sequential relief** occurs when each element in the relieved unit is relieved in succession, from right to left or left to right, depending on how it is deployed. A **simultaneous relief** occurs when all elements are relieved at the same time. A **staggered relief** occurs when the commander relieves each element in a sequence determined by the tactical situation, not its geographical orientation. Simultaneous relief takes the least time to execute, but is more easily detected by the enemy. Sequential or staggered reliefs can occur over a significant amount of time. These three relief techniques can occur regardless of the operational theme in which the unit is participating.

A commander conducts a relief in place as part of a larger operation, primarily to maintain the combat effectiveness of committed units. The higher headquarters directs when and where to conduct the relief and establishes the appropriate control measures. (Dept. of Army photo by SSG Jason Epperson.)

A relief can be characterized as either deliberate or hasty, depending on the amount of planning and preparations associated with the relief. The major differences are the depth and detail of planning and, potentially, the execution time. Detailed planning generally facilitates shorter execution time by determining exactly what the commander believes needs to be done and the resources needed to accomplish the mission. Deliberate planning allows the commander and staff to identify, develop, and coordinate solutions to most potential problems before they occur and to ensure the availability of resources when and where they are needed.

Chap 6

Special Purpose Attacks

Ref: ADP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Jul '19), p. 3-3 and FM 3-90-1, Offense and Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), pp. 3-23 to 3-31.

An attack is a type of offensive operation that destroys or defeats enemy forces, seizes and secures terrain, or both. Attacks incorporate coordinated movement supported by fires. They may be part of either decisive or shaping operations. A commander may describe an attack as hasty or deliberate, depending on the time available for assessing the situation, planning, and preparing. A commander may decide to conduct an attack using only fires, based on an analysis of the mission variables. An attack differs from a movement to contact because in an attack commanders know at least part of an enemy's dispositions. This knowledge enables commanders to better synchronize and employ combat power. (ADP 3-90)

Variations of the attack are ambush, counterattack, demonstration, feint, raid, and spoiling attack. The commander's intent and the mission variables guide which of these variations of attack to employ. Commanders conduct each of these variations, except for a raid, as either a hasty or a deliberate operation.

Editor's Note: This chapter specifically discusses "special purpose attacks." Chap. 2 discusses the attack (pp. 2-13 to 2-18) and other forms of the offense.

Special Purpose Attacks

A	**Ambush**
B	**Raid**
C	**Spoiling Attack**
D	**Counterattack**
E	**Demonstration**
VI	**Feint**

Special Purpose Atks

I. Ambush

An ambush is an attack by fire or other destructive means from concealed positions on a moving or temporarily halted enemy. An ambush stops, denies, or destroys enemy forces by maximizing the element of surprise. Ambushes can employ direct fire systems as well as other destructive means, such as command-detonated mines, indirect fires, and supporting nonlethal effects.

See pp. 6-3 to 6-16 for further discussion of the ambush.

II. Raid

A raid is an operation to temporarily seize an area in order to secure information, confuse an adversary, capture personnel or equipment, or to destroy a capability culminating in a planned withdrawal (JP 3-0). Raids are usually small, involving battalion-sized or smaller forces.

See pp. 6-17 to 6-22 for further discussion of the raid.

III. Counterattack

A counterattack is an attack by part or all of a defending force against an enemy attacking force, for such specific purposes as regaining ground lost or cutting off or destroying enemy advance units, and with the general objective of denying to the enemy the attainment of the enemy's purpose in attacking. In sustained defensive actions, it is undertaken to restore the battle position and is directed at limited objectives. The commander directs a counterattack—normally conducted from a defensive posture—to defeat or destroy enemy forces, exploit an enemy weakness, such as an exposed flank, or to regain control of terrain and facilities after an enemy success. A unit conducts a counterattack to seize the initiative from the enemy through offensive action.

See pp. 6-23 to 6-26 for further discussion of the counterattack.

IV. Spoiling Attack

A spoiling attack is a tactical maneuver employed to seriously impair a hostile attack while the enemy is in the process of forming or assembling for an attack. The objective of a spoiling attack is to disrupt the enemy's offensive capabilities and timelines while destroying targeted enemy personnel and equipment, not to seize terrain and other physical objectives. A commander conducts a spoiling attack whenever possible during the conduct of friendly defensive tasks to strike an enemy force while it is in assembly areas or attack positions preparing for its own offensive operation or is temporarily stopped. A spoiling attack usually employs armored, attack helicopter, or fire support elements to attack enemy assembly positions in front of the friendly commander's main line of resistance or battle positions.

See pp. 6-27 to 6-28 for further discussion of the spoiling attack.

V. Demonstration

In military deception, a demonstration is a show of force in an area where a decision is not sought that is made to deceive an adversary. It is similar to a feint but no actual contact with the adversary is intended (JP 3-13.4).

See pp. 6-29 to 6-30 for further discussion of demonstrations and feints.

VI. Feint

A feint in military deception is an offensive action involving contact with the adversary conducted for the purpose of deceiving the adversary as to the location and/or time of the actual main offensive action (JP 3-13.4). A commander uses demonstrations and feints in conjunction with other military deception activities. They generally attempt to deceive the enemy and induce the enemy commander to move reserves and shift fire support assets to locations where they cannot immediately impact the friendly decisive operation or take other actions not conducive to the enemy's best interests during the defense. Both forms are always shaping operations. The commander must synchronize the conduct of these forms of attack with higher and lower echelon plans and operations to prevent inadvertently placing another unit at risk.

The principal difference between these forms of attack is that in a feint the commander assigns the force an objective limited in size, scope, or some other measure. Forces conducting a feint make direct fire contact with the enemy but avoid decisive engagement. Forces conducting a demonstration do not seek contact with the enemy.

See pp. 6-29 to 6-30 for further discussion of demonstrations and feints.

Special Purpose Attacks

I. Ambush

Ref: FM 3-90-1, Offense & Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), pp. 5-23 to 5-27; TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), pp. 7-9 to 7-15; and ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), p. 2-95.

An ambush is an attack by fire or other destructive means from concealed positions on a moving or temporarily halted enemy (FM 3-90-1). An ambush stops, denies, or destroys enemy forces by maximizing the element of surprise. Ambushes can employ direct fire systems as well as other destructive means, such as command-detonated mines, indirect fires, and supporting nonlethal effects. They may include an assault to close with and destroy enemy forces. In an ambush, ground objectives do not have to be seized and held.

Area ambushes trap the enemy in a network of attacks from multiple concealed positions. These ambushes are carefully oriented to avoid "friendly fire" and yet maximize combat power against the enemy. (Ref: FM 7-8, chap 3, fig. 3-15).

Ambushes are classified by category (deliberate or hasty), formation (linear or L-shaped), and type (point, area, or antiarmor). In a point ambush, a unit deploys to attack a single kill zone. In an area ambush, a unit deploys into two or more related point ambushes. A unit smaller than a platoon does not normally conduct an area ambush. Anti-armor ambushes focus on moving or temporarily halted enemy armored vehicles.

The normal goal of an ambush is the death or capture of all enemy personnel located within the kill zone. Ideally, the ambush force can destroy the ambushed enemy so quickly that enemy personnel within the kill zone cannot to report the engagement while the ambush force accomplishes its mission.

From a small unit perspective, how that is achieved and to what extent determines the difference in employing either a near ambush or a far ambush.

Near Ambush

The near ambush has the expressed purpose of destroying the target. This often requires an assaulting force to literally overrun the target after the initial volley of fire has inflicted tremendous damage. Again, the intent is to destroy everything.

Since the patrol will overwhelm the target, the patrol will get as close as possible to the enemy. This close proximity also means that friendly forces MUST outnumber the enemy target.

The near ambush has the express intent of overwhelming and destroying the enemy force. The near ambush masses close to the kill zone and requires careful fire coordination. The linear method offers the greatest simplicity. (Ref: FM 7-85, chap 6, fig. 6-1).

Far Ambush

The far ambush has only the purpose of injuring and/or delaying the target. This rarely ever calls for an assaulting force—since the patrol doesn't seek the complete destruction of the enemy force there is no need to risk the loss of friendly troops. The far ambush simply intends to *harass*.

A far ambush team can engage an enemy patrol of any size or type. It does not matter if the enemy force is larger than the patrol because significant distances are used, as well as natural obstacles of the terrain, and established routes of withdraw that allows the ambush patrol to escape before the enemy has time to organize an effective counterattack.

I. Organization

A typical ambush is organized into three elements: assault, support, and security.

An ambush patrol will be broken into multiple teams, each with a very specific set of responsibilities. The Infantry platoon is normally task-organized into assault, support, and security elements for execution of the ambush.

Each team must be assigned a leader. The ambush will require special equipment for each assigned team. This equipment should be made available for the rehearsal as well, to ensure everything functions according to the execution plan. Each team has a specific set of duties.

A. Conducting the Near Ambush

The near ambush is used to destroy the enemy target. Necessarily, it is preferred that the ambush patrol outnumber the enemy by a 2:1 ratio. If they are more evenly matched, that is acceptable. To achieve numerical superiority, the PL needs to know the approximate size of the enemy patrols.

1. The patrol occupies an ORP either one terrain feature or approximately 300 meters away from the intended ambush site. The PL assembles the leader's recon team and issues a five-point contingency plan to the assistant patrol leader (APL) prior to leaving on the recon. At a minimum, the leader's recon will include the PL, a two-man security team, and either the leader of the assault team or the support team—typically the team the PL will *not* accompany.

2. At the designated ambush site, the PL ensures that it is an appropriate terrain using the considerations of Observation, Cover & concealment, Obstacles, Key terrain, and Avenues of approach (OCOKA). The PL does this without contaminating the kill zone—meaning he shouldn't actually walk through or onto the kill zone, but should move around to view it from the far right, far left, and from the middle of the ambush formation. If the terrain is not suitable for a near ambush, the PL chooses an appropriate site nearby.

3. The PL will then post the two-man security team far back, where they are easily concealed but can still view the kill zone. This post will later become the release point. The security team sits back-to-back, with one man facing the kill zone and the other facing back in the direction of the ORP. The PL will leave these men with a five-point contingency plan and return to the ORP. The security team must monitor all enemy activity and report this to the PL upon his return. It will be critical to know if the enemy has stopped on or near the ambush site.

4. After returning to the ORP, the PL coordinates any changes to the original plan with every member of the ambush patrol. Final preparations are conducted in the ORP and the PL pulls together the patrol. The order of march will be the PL, security team, support team, and lastly the assault team. This is the exact order because the ambush must be placed into position using this sequence.

5. The PL leads the patrol to the security team at the release point. He links up the two-man security team with their security team leader. If the intended location of the left and right side security areas can be seen from the release point, the PL will have the security team leader place his teams into position. If the locations cannot be seen, the PL positions the left and right security teams, taking the Security team leader with him.

6. Once the left and right security teams are in position, the PL returns to the release point and picks up the support team. He positions them into the formation, typically in front of the release point. The PL returns back to the release point and picks up the assault team. They, too, are placed in formation and assume the opposite (left or right) side of the support team.

7. With everyone in place, the PL will take his place as the leader of either the support or the assault team, as determined in the operation order (OPORD). The PL will conduct a communication system check, and then the team awaits the enemy. Security is kept at 100 percent.

8. The ambush patrol continues to wait in position until:

   • The PL gives the "end time" signal that indicates the patrol must return
   • The PL gives the "no fire" signal and allows a larger enemy force to pass
   • OR…the ambush is initiated

9. The ambush patrol fires upon the kill zone only when:

   • The PL initiates fire against the enemy in the kill zone
   • OR—the enemy discovers the ambush patrol

After the initial volley of fire, the commander may give the signal for the assault team to attack across the kill zone. The support team and security teams must first lift or shift their fires to prevent fratricide. (USMC photo by Pfc Austin Anyzeski.)

Actions on the Objective

1. The actions on the objective will not take long. All members of the ambush patrol fire into the kill zone—regardless of whether or not they see a specific target. The only exceptions may be the security teams who may not have a clear view of the kill zone.

2. The PL gives the signal to cease fire, to shift fires, or to lift fires. At this moment, the PL decides if it is reasonably safe for the assault team to move across the kill zone.

3. If the assault team is sent across the kill zone, it conducts the following actions in this order:

  • Sweep the kill zone on line, being certain to double-tap all enemy
  • Secure the far side of the kill zone
  • Send the necessary specialty teams back into the kill zone to search for PIR, aid friendly casualties, or to destroy enemy equipment

4. The assault team leader then gives the thumbs-up signal to the PL indicating that the far side of the kill zone is secure and that the specialty teams have finished their tasks. The assault team secures the far side of the kill zone until the PL signals to fall back.

5. The PL gives the signal for the assault team to fall back through the release point to the ORP. The assault team does this without hesitation and doesn't wait for other teams.

6. The PL gives the signal for the support team to fall back through the release point to the ORP. The support team does this immediately.

7. The PL will give the signal for the security team to fall back through the release point and move to the ORP. The PL will wait for the security team at the release point and move back to the ORP with this element. In this manner, the ambush has displaced in the exact reverse order that it was emplaced.

Specialty teams, such as the PIR search team, come from within the assault team. This is partly because the assault team tends to be the largest team on the ambush, but also because it is the only team that enters the kill zone. (Dept. of Army photo by Gertrud Zach.)

Reconsolidate & Reorganize

1. The first element to get back to the ORP is the assault team. The assault team leader forms the ORP into a 360° security area and continues to shape the ORP until a senior leader replaces him. Redistribute ammunition and water; be sure key weapons are manned.

2. All troops must be accounted for and casualties must receive medical aid. Following accountability, the PL will ask for a sensitive equipment check.

3. The PL will facilitate the dissemination of PIR to all members of the patrol. This is necessary because—should the patrol later become engaged and take casualties—the PIR must be relayed to higher command.

4. The designated route of return and plans to evacuate casualties and/or EPW will be followed in accordance with the OPORD. Continue the mission.

Special Purpose Atks

Special Purpose Attacks

II. Raid

Ref: FM 3-90-1, Offense & Defense, Vol. 1 (Mar '13), pp. 5-29 to 5-30; TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), pp. 7-16s to 7-17; and ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), p. 2-96.

A raid is an operation to temporarily seize an area in order to secure information, confuse an adversary, capture personnel or equipment, or to destroy a capability culminating in a planned withdrawal (JP 3-0). Raids are usually small, involving battalion-sized or smaller forces.

There are many reasons to conduct raids. A patrol might be tasked to destroy key enemy equipment or facilities, temporarily seize key terrain, gather intelligence items, or liberate personnel. While each of these missions differs from the next, they each entail a set of basic considerations. Additioanlly, operations designed to rescue and recover individuals and equipment in danger of capture are normally conducted as raids.
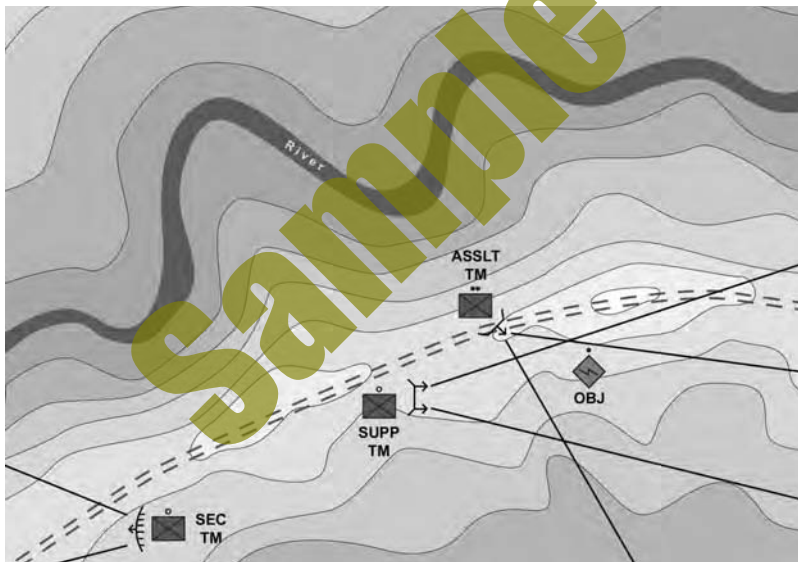
The raid has the same basic teams as the ambush—security, support, and assault. The principle difference is that the raid is conducted on established, stationary targets, whereas the ambush is used on moving or temporarily halted targets.

Raids are normally conducted in five phases. In the first phase the raiding force inserts or infiltrates into the objective area. In the second phase the objective area is then sealed off from outside support or reinforcement, to include enemy air assets. In phase three any enemy forces at or near the objective are overcome in a violently executed surprise attack using all available firepower for shock effect. In phase four the force seizes the objective and accomplishes its assigned task quickly before any surviving enemy in the objective area can recover or be reinforced. Lastly in phase five the raiding force withdraws from the objective area and is extracted usually using a different route than what was used for movement to the objective.

I. Organization

In a very similar manner as the ambush force, the raiding force breaks down into three main elements: the security team, the support team, and the assault team.

1. Security Team

The security team is most commonly deployed to the left, right and sometimes rear of the raiding formation as it is deployed around the objective. They carry rifles, light machineguns, anti-personnel mines and possibly some anti-armor capabilities. Their main purpose is to isolate the target, prevent any enemy reinforcements, and to seal the escape of any enemy running from the objective.

2. Support Team

The **support team** is commonly deployed center of the raiding formation in such a manner that they have a clear view of the objective. They carry heavier mass-casualty producing weapons, such as machineguns, grenade launchers, or missiles. This team is primarily responsible for the shock effect, as well as inflicting as many casualties upon the enemy as possible to ensure the success of the assaulting team.

3. Assault Team

The assault team is deployed as closely to the objective as stealth and coordinated fire support allow. They are lightly armed with rifles and carbines but may have special equipment. This team is responsible for the destruction, capture, or liberation of the target. Upon assaulting across the objective, they are also the most exposed—and least armed element of the raid.
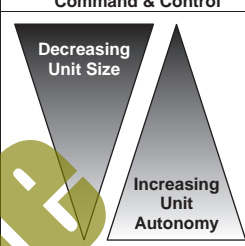
After the leader's recon, the patrol leader leaves a 2-man security team overlooking the objective from a concealed position. This position later becomes the release point for the raid. The PL returns to the ORP to finalize plans. (Photo by Jeong, Hae-jung).

Special Purpose Atks

Chap 7

Urban & Regional Environments

Army doctrine addresses five regional environments: desert, cold, temperate, mountain, and jungle. Another area of special consideration involves urban areas*.

Relative Units of Control, Action & Maneuver

	Unit of Control	Unit of Action	Unit of Maneuver	Relative Command & Control
Desert Region	JTF	BDE	BN/CO	Decreasing Unit Size
Cold Region	BDE	BN	CO/PLT	
Temperate Region	BDE	BN	CO/PLT	
Urban Area	BN	CO	PLT/SQD	
Mountain Region	BN	CO	PLT/SQD	Increasing Unit Autonomy
Jungle Region	CO	PLT	SQD/TM	

*Urban Operations

The continued trend worldwide of urban growth and the shift of populations from rural to urban areas continues to affect Army operations. The urban environment, consisting of complex terrain, dense populations, and integrated infrastructures, is the predominant operational environment in which Army forces currently operate. *ATTP 3-06.11, Combined Arms Operations in Urban Terrain (Jun '11),* establishes doctrine for combined arms operations in urban terrain for the brigade combat team (BCT) and battalion/squadron commanders and staffs, company/troop commanders, small-unit leaders, and individual Soldiers.

See pp. 7-3 to 7-16. See also pp. 7-17 to 7-22 for related discussion of fortified areas.

Desert Operations

Arid regions make up about one-third of the earth's land surface, a higher percentage than that of any other climate. Desert operations demand adaptation to the environment and to the limitations imposed by terrain and climate. Success depends on the an appreciation of the effects of the arid conditions on Soldiers, on equipment and facilities, and on combat and support operations. *FM 90-3/FMFM 7-27, Desert Operations (Aug '93),* is the Army and Marine Corps' manual for desert operations. It is the key reference for commanders and staff regarding how desert affects personnel, equipment, and operations. It will assist them in planning and conducting combat operations in desert environments.

See pp. 7-23 to 7-30.

Cold Region Operations

When conducting military operations in cold regions, leaders, Soldiers, and Marines must plan to fight two enemies: the cold and the opposing force. Despite the difficulties that cold regions pose, there are armies that have prepared for and can conduct large-scale, sustained operations in cold environments. In contrast, few U.S. Army units or personnel have trained extensively in cold region operations. *ATP 3-90.97,*

Urban & Regional

Mountain Warfare and Cold Weather Operations (Apr '16), is the Army's doctrinal publication for operations in the cold region environment. This manual will enable leaders, Soldiers, and Marines to accurately describe cold region environments, their effects on military equipment, impacts these environments have on personnel, and most importantly, how to employ the elements of combat power in cold region environments. It provides the conceptual framework for conventional forces to conduct cold region operations at operational and tactical levels.

See pp. 7-31 to 7-38.

Mountain Operations

With approximately 38 percent of the world's landmass classified as mountains, the Army must be prepared to deter conflict, resist coercion, and defeat aggression in mountains as in other areas. Throughout the course of history, armies have been significantly affected by the requirement to fight in mountains. *ATP 3-90.97, Mountain Warfare and Cold Weather Operations (Apr '16)*, describes the tactics, techniques, and procedures that the U.S. Army uses to fight in mountainous regions. It provides key information and considerations for commanders and staffs regarding how mountains affect personnel, equipment, and operations. It also assists them in planning, preparing, and executing operations, battles, and engagements in a mountainous environment. Army units do not routinely train for operations in a mountainous environment. The jungle environment includes densely forested areas, grasslands, cultivated areas, and swamps. Jungles are classified as primary or secondary jungles based on the terrain and vegetation.

See pp. 7-39 to 7-46.

Jungle Operations

Jungles, in their various forms, are common in tropical areas of the world—mainly Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The climate in jungles varies with location. Close to the equator, all seasons are nearly alike, with rains throughout the year; farther from the equator, especially in India and Southeast Asia, jungles have distinct wet (monsoon) and dry seasons. Both zones have high temperatures (averaging 78 to 95+ degrees Fahrenheit), heavy rainfall (as much as 1,000 centimeters [400+ inches] annually), and high humidity (90 percent) throughout the year. Severe weather also has an impact on tactical operations in the jungle. *FM 90-5, Jungle Operations (Aug '93)*, is the Army's field manual on jungle operations.

See pp. 7-47 to 7-54.

Mission Command Considerations

Commanders of tactical forces will recognize a general tendency of command and control to vary from centralized to decentralized operations that is specific to any given regional or area environment. Such trends represent an historic norm, however the trends are not etched in stone as formalized doctrine. Still, it may help to consider battle command as it fluctuates from unit reliance on highly centralized control of desert operations, to unit autonomy in highly decentralized control of jungle operations.

In the associated graph (previous page), the "unit of control" is the higher command element tasked to an operational objective. The "unit of action" refers to the unit tasked to decisive engagement to achieve the operational objective. And the "unit of maneuver" includes the units responsible for shaping operational success.

Urban & Regional

Chap 7

I. Urban Operations

Ref: ATTP 3-06.11, Combined Arms Operations in Urban Terrain (Jun '11) and TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), chap. 11.

Infantry platoons conduct operations in urban areas using the same principles applicable to other offensive operations. This section explains the general tactics, techniques, and procedures used for a limited attack in an urban area.

Depending on the scale of the operation, Infantry platoons or squads may be required to conduct any or all of the find, fix, fight, and follow-through functions. Leaders should expect trouble in the process of determining the exact location of the enemy and should anticipate enemy knowledge of their movements prior to arriving in the objective area. (Dept. of Army photo by SPC Andy Barrera.)

I. Find

The compartmentalized nature of urban terrain, limited observation and fields of fire, and the vast amounts of potential cover and concealment mean that defenders can disperse and remain undetected. The origin of enemy gunfire can be difficult to detect, because distance and direction become distorted by structures. The nature of urban conflicts makes it more difficult for leaders to exercise command and control verbally, and for Soldiers to pass and receive information. Situational understanding is normally limited to the platoon's immediate area.

II. Isolate the Building

The fix function has two aspects: isolating the objective to prevent interference from the outside (while preventing enemy from exiting), and separating forces on the objective from each other (denying mutual support and repositioning). This is accomplished by achieving fire superiority and seizing positions of advantage.

Urban Operations (UO)

Ref: ATTP 3-06.11, Combined Arms Operations in Urban Terrain (Jun '11), introduction and adaptations from ADRP 3-90, Offense and Defense (Aug '12), pp. 5-8 to 5-9.

Commanders conducting major urban operations use their ability to visualize how doctrine and military capabilities are applied within the context of the urban environment. An operational framework is the basic foundation for this visualization. In turn, this visualization forms the basis of operational design and decisionmaking. To accurately visualize, describe, and direct the conduct of operations in an urban environment, commanders and their staffs must understand the basic fundamentals applicable to most urban operations.

Fundamentals of Urban Operations

The impact of the urban operations environment often differs from one operation to the next. However, some fundamentals apply to urban operations regardless of the mission, geographical location, or level of command. Some of these fundamentals are not exclusive to urban environments. Yet, they are particularly relevant to an environment dominated by man-made structures and a dense noncombatant population. Vitally, these fundamentals help to ensure that every action taken by a commander operating in an urban environment contributes to the desired end-state of the major operation.

- Maintain close combat capability
- Avoid the attrition approach
- Control the essential
- Minimize collateral damage
- Preserve critical infrastructure
- Separate noncombatants from combatants
- Restore essential services
- Understand the human dimension
- Create a collaborative information environment
- Transition control

Urban Operational Construct

The five essential components of the urban operational construct are described below.

Understand

Understanding requires the continuous assessment of the current situation and operational progress. Commanders use visualization, staffs use running estimates, and both use the IPB process to assess and understand the urban environment. Commanders and staffs observe and continually learn about the urban environment (terrain, society, and infrastructure) and other mission variables. They use reconnaissance and security forces; information systems; and reports from other headquarters, services, organizations, and agencies. They orient themselves and achieve situational understanding based on a common operational picture and continuously updated CCIR. The commander's ability to rapidly and accurately achieve an understanding of the urban environment contributes to seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative during UO.

Shape

Reconnaissance, security, and inform and influence activities are essential to successful UO. These shaping operations set the conditions for decisive operations at the tactical level in the urban area. Isolation, decisive action, minimum friendly casualties, and acceptable collateral damage distinguish success when the AO is properly shaped. Failure to adequately shape the urban AO creates unacceptable risk. Urban shaping operations may include actions taken to achieve or prevent isolation, understand the environment, maintain freedom of action, protect the force, and develop cooperative relationships with

the urban population. Some shaping operations may take months to successfully shape the AO.

Engage

In UO, the BCT engages by appropriately applying the full range of capabilities against decisive points leading to centers of gravity. Successful engagements take advantage of the BCT's training; leadership; and, within the constraints of the environment, equipment and technology. Engagement can be active or passive and has many components, but it is characterized by maintaining contact with the threat and population to develop the situation. Successful engagements also require the establishment of necessary levels of control and influence over all or portions of the AO until responsibilities can be transferred to other legitimate military or civilian control. Engagements may range from the overwhelming and precise application of combat power in order to defeat an enemy to large-scale humanitarian operations to HN security force assistance characterized by information and influencing activities.

Consolidate

Forces consolidate to protect and strengthen initial gains and ensure retention of the initiative. Consolidation includes actions taken to eliminate or neutralize isolated or bypassed enemy forces (including the processing of prisoners and civilian detainees) to increase security and protect lines of communications. It includes the sustainment operations, rapid repositioning, and reorganization of maneuver forces and reconnaissance and security forces. Consolidation may also include activities in support of the civilian population, such as the relocation of displaced civilians, reestablishment of law and order, humanitarian assistance and relief operations, and restoration of key urban infrastructure.

Transition

When planning UO, commanders ensure that they plan, prepare for, and manage transitions. Transitions are movements from one phase of an operation to another and may involve changes in the type of operation, concept of the operation, mission, situation, task organization, forces, resource allocation, support arrangements, or mission command. Transitions occur in all operations. However, in UO, they occur with greater frequency and intensity, are more complex, and often involve agencies other than U.S. military organizations. All operations often include a transition of responsibility for some aspect of the urban environment to (or back to) a legitimate civilian authority. Unless planned and executed effectively, transitions can reduce the tempo of UO, slow its momentum, and cede the initiative to the enemy.

Key Tactical Considerations

Commanders and planners of major operations must thoroughly understand the tactical urban battle as well as the effects of that environment on men, equipment, and systems. The complexity of urban environment changes and often compresses many tactical factors typically considered in the planning process. These compressed tactical factors include—

- Time
- Distances
- Density
- Combat power
- Levels of war
- Decision making

Commanders and their staffs should carefully review ATTP 3-06.11 for techniques that support tactical urban operations.

Urban & Regional

B. Clearing Rooms

Ref: TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), pp. 8-18 to 8-21.

Although rooms come in all shapes and sizes, there are some general principles that apply to most room clearing tasks. For clearing large open buildings such as hangars or warehouses, it may be necessary to use subordinate units using a line formation while employing traveling or bounding overwatch. These methods can effectively clear the entire structure while ensuring security.

Room clearing techniques differ based on METT-TC, ROE, and probability of non-combatants inside the building. If there are known or suspected enemy forces, but no noncombatants inside the building, the platoon may conduct high intensity room clearings. If there are known or suspected noncombatants within the building, the platoon may conduct precision room clearings. High intensity room clearing may consist of fragmentation grenade employment and an immediate and high volume of small arms fire placed into the room, precision room clearing will not.
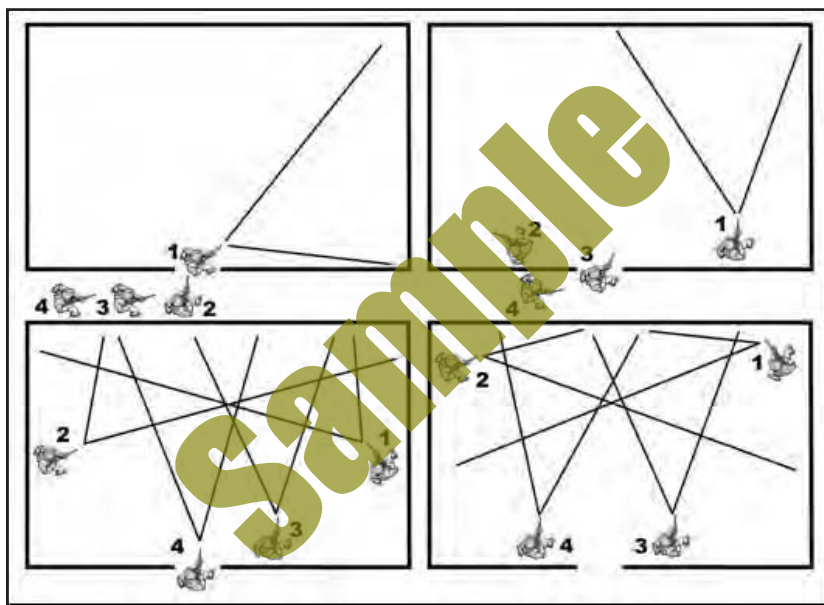
• **#1 Man**. The #1 man enters the room and eliminates any immediate threat. He can move left or right, moving along the path of least resistance to a point of domination—one of the two corners and continues down the room to gain depth.

• **#2 Man**. The #2 man enters almost simultaneously with the first and moves in the opposite direction, following the wall. The #2 man must clear the entry point, clear the immediate threat area, and move to his point of domination.

• **#3 Man**. The #3 man simply moves in the opposite direction of the #2 man inside the room, moves at least 1 meter

from the entry point, and takes a position that dominates his sector.

• **#4 Man**. The #4 man moves in the opposite direction of the #3 man, clears the doorway by at least 1 meter, and moves to a position that dominates his sector.

Once the room is cleared, the team leader may order some team members to move deeper into the room overwatched by the other team members. The team leader must control this action. In addition to dominating the room, all team members are responsible for identifying possible loopholes and mouseholes. Cleared rooms should be marked IAW unit SOP.

Urban & Regional

III. Desert Operations

Ref: FM 90-3 (FMFM 7-27), Desert Operations (Aug '93).

I. Desert Environments

By definition, a desert region receives less than 10 inches (25cm) of rainfall annually. There are 22 deserts covering 30 percent of the earths' landmass. The largest non-polar desert is the Sahara that covers the northern half of the African continent, an area larger than the entire contiguous 48 states of America. The word desert comes from Latin desertum meaning "an abandoned place." Though admittedly sparse, both large and small cities are distributed across the deserts of the world. Human population in the desert centers on fresh water sources, oil reserves, and seaports.

Successful desert operations require adaptation to the environment and to the limitations its terrain and climate impose. Equipment and tactics must be modified and adapted to a dusty and rugged landscape where temperatures vary from extreme highs down to freezing and where visibility may change from 30 miles to 30 feet in a matter of minutes. Deserts are arid, barren regions of the earth incapable of supporting normal life due to lack of water. (Dept. of Defense photo by Chance Haworth).

A. Weather in the Desert

Storms in the desert are commonly refer to dust storms. Dust storms are a meteorological formation that may produce hurricane force wind delivering walls of thick dust several hundred feet (100m) high. Dust storms may last as long as several days and can produce dangerous levels of static electricity. Visibility closes to just 30 feet (10m) and travel by land-borne or airborne vehicle is extremely dangerous.

Typically, deserts also have a rainy season in which nearly all of the little precipitation falls. Rains commonly follow heavy dust storms. Flash flooding is a threat during rains because the desert floor has modest absorption properties.

During the rainy season it is not uncommon to see temperature lows at or near freezing, 32°F (0°C) during the night. Daily highs during the rainy season may not get much above 50°F (10°C).

However, rainy seasons are the exception in the desert. Most of the year the desert is blistering hot with daily high temperatures soaring up to and even beyond 130°F (54°C). Nightly lows can plummet 40°F (22°C) from the daily high in just a matter of a couple hours, causing high winds. This is due to the lack of substantial vegetation and the arid soil's inability to retain heat.

B. Terrain & Vegetation Characteristics

Consideration of OCOKA presents unique challenge in the desert – not because of significant impairment to mobility, but instead due to a lack of obstacles. In most desert environments key terrain is often unavailable and the avenue of approach may offer unlimited options.

The flipside of the open nature of the desert is that concealment and even adequate cover are elusive. Particularly when moving during daylight hours, the enemy is almost always privy to friendly maneuver.

Terrain Formations

Deserts may be broken into four generic classifications. That includes sand dune desserts, rocky deserts, mountain deserts, and arctic deserts. The last two desert types, mountain and arctic, are discussed in their associated sections of this manual. This section will focus on sand dune deserts and rocky deserts exclusively.

Sand dune desserts are denoted by wind drifting soils that form small to large dunes and valleys, called "slacks." A single dune can actually form a series of ridges that extend beyond 60 miles (100km) and crest as high as 1,600 feet (500m). Slacks, too, can be very small or very large measuring as much as 2 miles (3km) from dune peak to peak.

Rocky deserts are perhaps the most common and include very flat regions of sun-baked silt and even dry "salt lakes." More typically rocky deserts exhibit exhaustive networks of rock outcroppings and wind/water formed ravines called "waddis."

Vegetation

Vegetation in desert regions has little impact on considerations of OCOKA. What vegetation is available offers little concealment, no cover, and only rarely offers any practical advantage such as shade or relief from the heat. On the other hand, for purposes of primitive survival needs, the presence of vegetation indicates the potential of a water source.

There is little to no vegetation present in sand dune deserts. Vegetation is present in most rocky deserts. Sagebrush, grasses, and various cactus plants are common, particularly in the lowlands areas where seasonal rains pool.

C. Impact on Mobility

Roadways are more easily established in rocky deserts. Off-road travel by both vehicle and foot is easily achieved, the heat and lack of water not withstanding. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of sand dune deserts.

The lack of plant roots in the soil allows dunes to move. It is not uncommon for large dunes to move as much as 100 meters in five years time. This makes roadway construction through a sand dune desert all but impossible. Off road travel by vehicle is not feasible for tracked or wheeled vehicles, and there is considerable danger of a vehicle flipping as the sand dune gives way to the weight of the vehicle. Light 4x4 quad motorcycles are one of the few options.

Even foot travel quickly becomes exhausting as the sand slips with each step taken. For the most part, the only reasonable mobility option in regards to sand dune deserts is either to go around it, or to insert and extract vertically by air.

Visibility in the desert extends for miles. Given the tendency to employ armored vehicles for their relative speed and overwhelming firepower, the trade off is that stealth is difficult to achieve. Armored formations result in plumes of dust that can be seen over very long distances. (Dept. of Defense photo by Cecillio Ricardo).

II. Desert Effects on Personnel

The weather and terrain of the desert have a very tangible impact on operations, with the most significant factor being extreme heat. The human body's demand for water is enormous under these conditions.

Consider that working troops may need to as much as 4 gallons (15 liters) of drinking water per day. Combat units calculate another 2.5 gallons (9.5 liters) per individual for cooking and cleaning. At 6.5 gallons (24.5 liters) per individual, a company of 140 troops would consume a total of 910 gallons (3,444 liters) each day, at a weight of 7,600 lbs. Commanders must also consider the load weight imposed by the requirement for water during desert operations.

A. Injuries & Disease in the Desert

See the following page for discussion of injuries and disease in the desert.

B. Uniforms & Special Equipment

The extreme heat of desert operations demands specialized uniforms and items that extend the durability of the uniform, and therefore the comfort of the troops during extended missions. Since the troops must wear the uniform over the entire body to avoid severe sunburn, the uniforms are made of a very light, tough material such as Ripstop in either 65/35 nylon-cotton or 100 percent poplin. Uniforms are worn loosely. Specialty items are necessary for troop comfort in the desert. Without such items, routine injury can exacerbate to more severe injury. These items include:

- Sun and wind goggles to keep dust out of the eyes
- Suede-out leather mechanic type gloves to protect from hot surfaces
- Knee pads protect against injuries in rocky deserts
- Full brim "Boonie" hats keep the sun off the face and neck
- Scarves to cover the nose and mouth from inhaling dust
- Sweat rags or cooling bandanas kept wet around the neck

Urban & Regional

V. Mountain Operations

Ref: ATP 3-90.97, Mountain Warfare and Cold Weather Operations (Apr '16) and adaptations from FM 3-97.6 (90-6), Mountain Operations (Nov '00).

I. Mountain Environments

Mountain weather can vary sharply and has enormous implications for tactical missions. Erratic weather conditions from extreme cold to hot temperatures, extremely arid to periods of considerable precipitation, and from calm to violent winds dictate a wider variety of combat troop equipment and uniforms, placing greater demand on unit logistical requirements.

Talus boulders present challenges and opportunities in mountain warfare. Ascent is relatively easy but descent requires greater care. (Dept. of Army photo).

A. Temperatures

Generally, mountain temperatures decrease approximately 5 degrees for every one thousand feet (300 meters) increased in altitude. This varies of course depending on air humidity. Furthermore, during periods of cloud overcast the temperatures may counter-intuitively become warmer than during periods of clear sky. This phenomenon is referred to as inversion.

Normal daytime to nighttime temperatures will vary 40 degrees in the mountains. Where there are no forest canopies, the temperature variation in the mountains can vary at even greater extremes.

Extreme temperatures have marginal effect on weapon ballistics, but create a greater demand on weapon maintenance as the moving parts can become frozen with ice and snow. In rare but specific weather and humidity conditions, small arms fire will leave frozen vapor trails behind the bullet, disclosing the firing position of both friendly and enemy troops.

VI. Jungle Operations

Ref: FM 90-5, Jungle Operations (Aug '82).

I. Jungle Environments

The word jungle comes from Sanskrit jangala, meaning "wasteland." Today the word jungle encompasses any climate with year-round warm temperatures, moderate to extreme rainfall, and dense vegetation. This includes three distinct climate zones – the equatorial tropics, tropical regions, and subtropical regions.

In general small arm weapons perform very well in jungle environments. Weapons require regular maintenance and a constant coat of protective oil. Combat troops should be trained in close quarter marksmanship in anticipation of enemy engagement at very short distances. (Dept. of Defense photo by Brian J. Slaght).

Jungle environments present unique challenges for military operations and yet because such a large percentage of the world's population lives in and around the jungle, an ability to conduct military operations in the jungle is essential. Fortunately, the US military has a long history of jungle operations all over the globe from which to pull lessons learned.

A. Weather in the Jungle

Generally speaking jungle environments enjoy consistently warm temperatures throughout the year. Indeed, of all the operational environments jungle climates experience the least fluctuation in daily and yearly temperatures.

Nonetheless there are noticeable differences between equatorial tropic, tropical, and subtropical climates.

B. Terrain & Vegetation Characteristics

Ref: FM 90-5, Jungle Operations (Aug '93), chap. 1.

Tactical considerations of OCOKA present unique challenges in the dense jungle canopy and tropical grasslands. Visibility in the jungle is greatly diminished making concealment all but guaranteed for both friend and foe alike.

Dismounted patrolling remains the only viable option for imposing force in jungle operations. US Marines patrol the jungles of Columbia. (Dept. of Defense photo by Brian J. Slaght).

Terrain Formations

Farmable plains in jungle regions are regarded at a premium, especially when low altitude mountains are present. As such flat land is commonly cultivated into expansive open fields of rice paddies, cane fields, and fruit tree plantations or other similar produce. And because jungle regions are highly populated, villages, townships and cities also vie for lowland plains.

Swamps are the exception to habitual use of lowland terrain for farms and cities. Swamps restrict movement for vehicles and often even for dismounted patrols. In such cases travel through swamps may require small, flat-bottom boats.

Swamps fall into two general categories:

- **Mangrove swamps** – costal region swamps often with brackish water and dense shrub trees that grow only 3-15 feet (1-5m) high, as are common in the Everglades of Florida.
- **Palm swamps** – freshwater inland swamps set in mature forests trees that grow 65 feet (20m) or taller with dense upper canopies, as is common in the Bayous of Louisiana.

Hilly and mountainous terrain is commonly void of human development in jungle regions, leaving pristine jungle forests covering the high ground.

Vegetation

The jungle climate is covered with dense vegetation. This includes rainforests and deciduous forest, but also includes grasslands called savannahs.

- **Rainforests** – mature forests with trees growing as tall 200 feet (60m) and multiple canopy layers that leave a dark rotten floor with no undergrowth. The canopy ceiling can be 25 feet (8m) above the ground.
- **Deciduous Forests** – new growth or mature forests with trees commonly reaching 65 feet (20m) high. These forests typically have just one upper canopy that allows sunlight to the forest floor that may in spots produce a thick underbrush canopy.
- **Savannahs** – treeless grassland with broadleaf grasses that grow 3-15 feet (1-5m) high. These grasslands can appear as small meadows in the jungle, or grow as vast open prairies across flats and mountain foothills.

The more canopies present in the jungle, the less sunlight can break through to the forest floor. Yet the lack of undergrowth in dark jungle forests makes for easier movement when conducting dismounted patrols.

Urban & Regional

Patrols & Patrolling

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), chap. 6 and TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), chap. 7.

The two categories of patrols are combat and reconnaissance. Regardless of the type of patrol being sent out, the commander must provide a clear task and purpose to the patrol leader. Any time a patrol leaves the main body of the unit there is a possibility that it may become engaged in close combat.

Patrol missions can range from security patrols in the close vicinity of the main body, to raids deep into enemy territory. Successful patrolling requires detailed contingency planning and well-rehearsed small unit tactics. The planned action determines the type of patrol. (USMC photo by Sgt Kirstin Merrimarahajara.)

Combat Patrols

Patrols that depart the main body with the clear intent to make direct contact with the enemy are called combat patrols. The three types of combat patrols are raid patrols, ambush patrols (both of which are sent out to conduct special purpose attacks), and security patrols.

Reconnaissance Patrols

Patrols that depart the main body with the intention of avoiding direct combat with the enemy while seeing out information or confirming the accuracy of previously-gathered information are called reconnaissance patrols. The most common types reconnaissance patrols are area, route, zone, and point. Leaders also dispatch reconnaissance patrols to track the enemy, and to establish contact with other friendly forces. **Contact patrols** make physical contact with adjacent units and report their location, status, and intentions. **Tracking patrols** follow the trail and movements of a specific enemy unit. **Presence patrols** conduct a special form of reconnaissance, normally during stability or civil support operations.

See also p. 4-14 for discussion of patrols in support of stability operations.

I. Organization of Patrols

A patrol is organized to perform specific tasks. It must be prepared to secure itself, navigate accurately, identify and cross danger areas, and reconnoiter the patrol objective. If it is a combat patrol, it must be prepared to breach obstacles, assault the objective, and support those assaults by fire. Additionally, a patrol must be able to conduct detailed searches as well as deal with casualties and prisoners or detainees.

The leader identifies those tasks the patrol must perform and decides which elements will implement them. Where possible, he should maintain squad and fire team integrity.

Squads and fire teams may perform more than one task during the time a patrol is away from the main body or it may be responsible for only one task. The leader must plan carefully to ensure that he has identified and assigned all required tasks in the most efficient way. (Dept. of Army photo by SGT Michael MacLeod.)

A patrol is sent out by a larger unit to conduct a specific combat, reconnaissance, or security mission. A patrol's organization is temporary and specifically matched to the immediate task. Because a patrol is an organization, not a mission, it is not correct to speak of giving a unit a mission to "Patrol."

The terms "patrolling" or "conducting a patrol" are used to refer to the semi-independent operation conducted to accomplish the patrol's mission. Patrols require a specific task and purpose.

A commander sends a patrol out from the main body to conduct a specific tactical task with an associated purpose. Upon completion of that task, the patrol leader returns to the main body, reports to the commander and describes the events that took place, the status of the patrol's members and equipment, and any observations.

If a patrol is made up of an organic unit, such as a rifle squad, the squad leader is responsible. If a patrol is made up of mixed elements from several units, an officer or NCO is designated as the patrol leader. This temporary title defines his role and responsibilities for that mission. The patrol leader may designate an assistant, normally the next senior man in the patrol, and any subordinate element leaders he requires.

A patrol can consist of a unit as small as a fire team. Squad- and platoon-size patrols are normal. Sometimes, for combat tasks such as a raid, the patrol can consist of most of the combat elements of a rifle company. Unlike operations in which the Infantry platoon or squad is integrated into a larger organization, the patrol is semi-independent and relies on itself for security.

Every patrol is assigned specific tasks. Some tasks are assigned to the entire patrol, others are assigned to subordinate teams, and finally some are assigned to each individual. An individual will have multiple tasks and subtasks to consider and carry out.

1. Pointman, Dragman, and Security Team

Security is everyone's responsibility. Having noted that, every patrol has a troop walking in front. This troop is called the pointman. He is responsible for making sure the patrol does not walk into enemy ambushes, minefields, or similar. The pointman has forward security. Sometimes a patrol will send the pointman with another patrol member to walk a short distance forward of the patrol.

Also, every patrol has someone who is last in the formation. This troop is called the dragman. He is responsible for making sure that no patrol members are left behind. He also makes sure that the enemy doesn't surprise the patrol from the rear unnoticed.

The security team is responsible for specifically pulling security to the left and right of the patrol. This is a critical task when crossing danger areas, so a specific team is identified to conduct this task.

2. Clearing Team

The clearing team crosses the danger area once the security team is in place. The clearing team has the specified responsibility of visually clearing and physically securing the far side of a danger area. It's important so another team is designated to conduct this task.

3. Compass & Pace Team

Obviously someone needs to make sure the patrol is headed in the right direction and that we don't travel too far. This is the job of the compassman and paceman. Typically the compass and pace team is positioned immediately behind the pointman. Additionally, a secondary compass and pace team is usually located in the back half of the patrol.

4. Command Team

The PL and a radio operator (RTO) make up the command team for most patrols. Doctrinally speaking, the APL is also part of this team but the APL is normally positioned near the very rear of the formation to help the dragman and ensure no patrol member is left behind.

5. Aid & Litter Team

Someone has to help pull wounded buddies out of harms way. There are usually two members of each fire team designated as aid and litter teams. These teams are spread throughout the patrol and have the responsibility of carrying and employing extra medical aid gear.

6. Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) Search Team

EPW teams are responsible for controlling enemy prisoners IAW the five S's and the leader's guidance. These teams may also be responsible for accounting for and controlling detainees or recovered personnel.

7. Tracking Team

There are many different specialty teams that might be assigned to a patrol. Trackers are just one such resource. Explosive ordinance details (EOD) are another. Trackers are unique, however, because they are generally positioned just ahead of the pointman on the patrol.

8. Support Team

The support team is outfitted with heavy, crew-served weapons on the patrol. Of course, reconnaissance patrols usually do not make use of a support team. But when a support team is required, it will be positioned to the center of the patrol.

9. Assault & Breach Team

Reconnaissance rarely ever needs an assault team. The assault team may be dispersed throughout the patrol, but ideally is situated toward the rear. This is because the assault team is typically placed on the objective last.

Patrols & Patrolling

I. Movement Techniques

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 2-43 to 2-52 and TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), pp. 6-2 to 6-4.

Movement techniques are not fixed formations. They refer to the distances between Soldiers, teams, and squads vary based on mission, enemy, terrain, visibility, and other factors affecting control. There are three movement techniques: traveling; traveling overwatch; and bounding overwatch. The selection of a movement technique is based on the likelihood of enemy contact and need for speed. Factors to consider for each technique are control, dispersion, speed, and security. Individual movement techniques include high and low crawl, and three to five second rushes from one covered position to another.

MOVEMENT TECHNIQUES	WHEN NORMALLY USED	CHARACTERISTICS			
		CONTROL	DISPERSION	SPEED	SECURITY
Traveling	Contact not likely	More	Less	Fastest	Least
Traveling overwatch	Contact possible	Less	More	Slower	More
Bounding overwatch	Contact expected	Most	Most	Slowest	Most

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), table 2-6, page 2-44.

The squad is the essential fire and maneuver element. US Army squads include two fire teams, while Marine squads include three fire teams made up of a rifleman, automatic rifleman, grenadier, and team leader. A squad with as few as seven troops can be split into two fire teams and a squad leader. (Photo by Lithuania Land Forces.)

The traveling-overwatch technique is used when enemy contact is likely. The traveling overwatch separates each element by about 25 meters so that it is difficult for the enemy to attack an entire patrol at once. (Ref: FM 7-92, chap 3, section II, fig. 3-7).
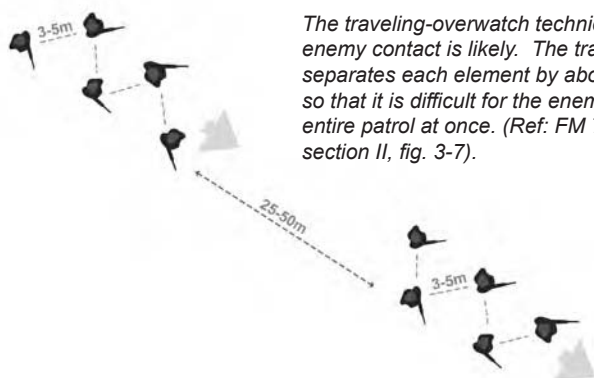
III. Bounding Overwatch

1. The patrol is separated into two elements. This technique compromises speed for greater security and control.

2. The forward element halts in a position that offers the best observation of the terrain in front of the patrol. This element becomes the "overwatch" position. The position must offer some cover or concealment.

3. The trail element (behind the forward element) then bounds forward, either slightly left or right of the overwatch position.

4. Once the bounding element has successfully passed through the terrain, they take up a position that offers the best observation of the terrain in front of them. The bounding element now becomes the overwatch position and the old overwatch bounds forward.

5. This process is repeated until the patrol reaches its objective, or the PL selects another movement technique due to an improved security situation.

6. If the patrol comes under fire, the bounding overwatch becomes quick and violent. The overwatch position conducts suppressive fires while the PL directs the bounding element to either conduct a hasty attack against the enemy or break contact.

The bounding-overwatch technique is used explicitly when enemy contact is expected. The effort is to allow maximum use of combat power in the direction of movement, while exposing our smallest force to any potential enemy. (Photo by Jeong, Hae-jung).

Patrols & Patrolling

Patrols & Patrolling
II. Combat Formations

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 2-19 to 2-43 and TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), p. 6-1.

Squad formations include the squad column, the squad line, and the squad file. These formations are building blocks for the entire element. What that means is that the smallest element, the fire team, may be in a wedge while the larger element, such as the squad or platoon may be in another formation. It is quite possible to have fireteams in wedges, squads in columns, and the platoon in line—all at the same time. Additionally, this section will discuss a couple variations including the diamond and the staggered column.

Leaders attempt to maintain flexibility in their formations. Doing so enables them to react when unexpected enemy actions occur. (USMC photo by Sgt Jordan Gilbert.)

Fire Team Formations

The term fire team formation refers to the Soldiers' relative positions within the fire team. Fire team formations include the fire team wedge and the fire team file. Both formations have advantages and disadvantages. Regardless of which formation the team employs, each Soldier must know his location in the formation relative to the other members of the fire team and the team leader. Each Soldier covers a set sector of responsibility for observation and direct fire as the team is moving. To provide the unit with all-round protection, these sectors must interlock.

The team leader adjusts the team's formation as necessary while the team is moving. The distance between men will be determined by the mission, the nature of the threat, the closeness of the terrain, and by the visibility. As a general rule, the unit should be dispersed up to the limit of control. This allows for a wide area to be

Primary Formations

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 2-19 to 2-43.

Combat formations are composed of two variables: lateral frontage, represented by the line formation; and depth, represented by the column formation. The advantages attributed to one of these variables are disadvantages to the other. Leaders combine the elements of lateral frontage and depth to determine the best formation for their situation. In addition to the line and column/file, the other five types of formations—box, vee, wedge, diamond, and echelon—combine these elements into varying degrees. Each does so with different degrees of emphasis resulting in unique advantages and disadvantages.

NAME / FORMATION / SIGNAL (IF APPLICABLE)	CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Line Formation	- All elements arranged in a row - Majority of observation and direct fires oriented forward; minimal to the flanks - Each subordinate unit on the line must clear its own path forward - One subordinate designated as base on which the other subordinates cue their movement	Ability to: - Generate fire superiority to the front - Clear a large area - Disperse - Transition to bounding overwatch, base of fire, or assault	- Control difficulty increases during limited visibility and in restrictive or close terrain - Difficult to designate a maneuver element - Vulnerable assailable flanks - Potentially slow - Large signature
Column/File Formation	- One lead element - Majority of observation and direct fires oriented to the flanks; minimal to the front - One route means unit only influenced by obstacles on that one route	- Easiest formation to control (as long as leader can communicate with lead element) - Ability to generate a maneuver element - Secure flanks - Speed	- Reduced ability to achieve fire superiority to the front - Clears a limited area and concentrates the unit - Transitions poorly to bounding overwatch, base of fire, and assault - Column's depth makes it a good target for close air attacks and machine gun beaten zone
Vee Formation	- Two lead elements - Trail elements move between the two lead elements - Used when contact to the front is expected - "Reverse wedge" - Unit required to two lanes/routes forward	The ability to: - Generate fire superiority to the front - Generate a maneuver element - Secure flanks - Disperse - Transition to bounding overwatch, base of fire, or assault	- Control difficulty increases during limited visibility and in restrictive or close terrain - Potentially slow
Box Formation	- Two lead elements - Trail elements follow lead elements - All-around security	Same as vee formation advantages	Same as vee formation disadvantages
Wedge Formation	- One lead element - Trail elements paired off abreast of each other on the flanks - Used when the situation is uncertain	The ability to: - Control, even during limited visibility, in restrictive terrain, or in close terrain - Transition trail elements to base of fire or assault - Secure the front and flanks - Easy transition to line and column	- Trail elements are required to clear their path forward - Frequent need to transition to column in restrictive, close terrain
Diamond Formation	- Similar to the wedge formation - Fourth element follows the lead element	Same as wedge formation advantages	Same as wedge formation disadvantages
Echelon Formation	- Elements deployed diagonally left and right - Observation and fire to both the front and one flank - Each subordinate unit on the line clears its own path forward	- Ability to assign sectors that encompass both the front and flank	- Difficult to maintain proper relationship between subordinates - Vulnerable to the opposite flanks

III. Crossing a Danger Area

Ref: ATP 3-21.8, Infantry Platoon and Squad (Aug '16), pp. 5-16 to 5-23 and TC 3.21-76, Ranger Handbook (Apr '17), pp. 6-8 to 6-12.

Crossing danger areas can be achieved through one of a series of battle drills designed to get the patrol to the far side of the danger area with the very least amount of exposure, and the maximum amount of necessary firepower positioned to deflect an enemy attack. In essence, the patrol will be moving from one concealed position to another, getting through the danger area as safely and as quickly as possible.

Types of Danger Areas

Danger areas fall into two categories, linear and open. Each category has two subcategories, big and small. The numerous types of danger areas require that patrols have multiple methods in their bag of tricks to get safely across the danger area.

Roads, paths, creeks, and open fields present opportunities for ambush and sniping missions. Natural and man-made obstacles allow for fairly long sectors of fire because they are relatively clear.

A patrol leader (PL) must assess is which type of danger area the patrol is presented with. Ideally, the patrol circumvents a danger area—that is, the patrol goes around. However, linear danger areas rarely leave that option. Instead, the patrol must traverse these danger areas by crossing them.

So, the PL has to assess the type and relative size of the danger area. Also, the PL has to assess the likelihood of enemy contact. It's a pretty quick mental checklist:

- Linear vs. Open
- Big vs. Small
- Time Constraints

If the patrol is moving through territory with significant enemy presence, hopefully the PL allotted a realistic amount of time to conduct the mission. The patrol employs a more deliberate method of crossing the danger area, one that offers maximum protection to the front and flanks. For a linear danger area, this might mean the heart-shaped method. For an open danger area, this might mean the box method.

If, on the other hand, the patrol is moving quickly through territory with sparse enemy presence and time is of a high priority, then the patrol employs a method of crossing the danger area that makes maximum use of speed as a form of security, with minimal protection to the front and flanks. For a linear danger area, this might mean the patch-to-the-road method. For an open danger area, this might mean the bypass method.

The size of the danger area must also be considered. Even in the case of patrolling through territory with sparse enemy presence, if the danger area is too large to use speed as a form of security…it may be best to use a method that offers a greater form of security.

The platoon leader or squad leader decides how the unit will cross based on the time he has, size of the unit, size of the danger area, fields of fire into the area, and the amount of security he can post. An Infantry platoon or squad may cross all at once, in buddy teams, or one Soldier at a time. A large unit normally crosses its elements one at a time. As each element crosses, it moves to an overwatch position or to the far-side rally point until told to continue movement.

I. Patch-to-the-Road Method

Using this method, a nine-man squad should be able to cross the danger area in ten seconds or less. *Speed is a form of security.* This method also allows the column formation to be maintained, which means greater control and communication for the PL.

1. The point man brings the patrol to a halt and signals that he has come upon a danger area. The PL comes forward to view the danger area, assesses the situation, and selects a method of negotiating the danger area.

2. If the patch-to-the-road method is selected, the PL communicates this to the team with the appropriate hand and arm signal. The entire patrol closes the intervals between members shoulder-to-shoulder. The patrol members must actually touch each other. This is done even during daylight hours. This will allow a very fast pace when crossing and prevent a break in contact.

3. The two-man security team moves from the rear of the formation up to the front. At the PL's signal, the first security troop steps up to the danger area only as far as he needs to look left and right. If the road is clear of enemy presence, the troop takes a position so he can view down the road to his right. In this position, his unit patch (on the upper part of his left arm sleeve) will be facing toward the middle of the road. Thus, the method is called "patch-to-the-road."

This method uses speed as the primary form of security. A left and right security overwatch is provided locally. At the patrol leader's signal, the rest of the patrol move in file across the danger area. (Photo by Jeong, Hae-jung).

Patrols & Patrolling

II. Wagon Wheel Method

This drill is used almost exclusively for occupying the ORP security halt. Developed in the jungles of Southeast Asia, this drill works well in areas of dense vegetation because it allows the PL to see where each troop is located. The effort is to get the entire patrol in a circular formation and this takes a bit more work than the cigar-shaped method. Care must be taken in selecting the ORP site, as well as occupying it with the least amount of noise and commotion.

This method of forming the ORP is one of the most simple. After a security team is placed as the anchor, the entire patrol plays "follow the leader" in a big circle. Once the circle is complete, the PL adjusts the circle evenly.

The wagon wheel method is conducted by having the patrol leader simply walk in a circle around the area of the intended ORP. Troops are adjusted once the circle is complete. Typically a machinegunner sits at 12 and 6 o'clock. (Photo by Jeong, Hae-jung).

1. The patrol assumes an ERP security halt approximately 100 meters out from the planned ORP site. A leader's recon is then conducted forward at the ORP site to make certain the terrain is appropriate for use.

2. The leader's recon typically involves four members of the patrol—the PL, a compass man, and a two-man security team. Before leaving the ERP, the PL issues the assistant patrol leader (APL) a contingency plan and coordinates for their return.

3. Once the leader's recon has reached the designated ORP site, the PL determines if the site is appropriate or selects another site nearby.

4. The PL places the two-man security back to back at the 6 o'clock position of the ORP. The security team will be left at the ORP to watch the objective and to guide the remainder of the patrol into position. The PL will leave a contingency plan with the security team before the PL and the compass man return to pick up the rest of the patrol.

5. The PL and the point man return to the rest of the patrol back in the security halt. The patrol resumes its marching order, and since the compass man has already been to the ORP and back, he can lead the patrol right to the security team at the 6 o'clock position. The patrol halts once the compass man links up with the security team and the PL moves forward.

6. From the 6 o'clock position the PL leads the patrol in a large circular path around the perimeter of the ORP. This forms the patrol into a large circle through an exercise of "follow the leader."

7. Once the circle has been completed, the subordinate leaders adjust the exact positions of the members to offer the best cover and to provide 360° sectors of fire.

8. The PL pulls subordinate leaders to the center in order to confirm or adjust plans. The PL sets work priorities in motion for the ORP.

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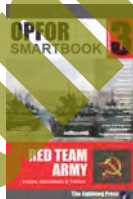
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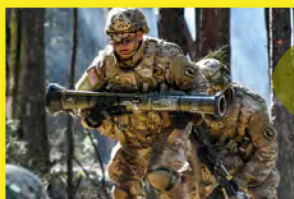
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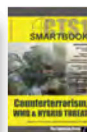
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