Chapter 5

Command, Control, and Troop-Leading Procedures

The purpose of Command and Control (C2) is to implement the commander's will in pursuit of the unit's objective. C2 is both a system and a process. The essential component for both is leadership. This chapter provides techniques and procedures used by infantry platoons, squads, and sections for C2 and communications. It describes troop-leading procedures (TLP), communications in combat, and operation orders.

SECTION I — COMMAND AND CONTROL

5-1.   C2 refers to the process of directing, coordinating, and controlling a unit to accomplish a mission. C2 implements the commander's will in pursuit of the unit's objective. The two components of C2 are the commander and the C2 system. At platoon level the C2 system consists of the personnel, information management, procedures, and equipment the platoon leader uses to carry out the operational process (plan, prepare, execute, and assess) within his platoon.

LEADERSHIP

5-2.   Leadership means influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish a mission (Table 5-1). Leadership is the most vital component of C2.

Table 5-1. Elements of leadership.

Leadership: Influencing people to accomplish a mission by providing—	PURPOSE	The *reason* to accomplish the mission.
	DIRECTION	The *means* to accomplish the mission.
	MOTIVATION	The *will* to accomplish the mission.

MISSION-ORIENTED COMMAND AND CONTROL

5-3.   Mission command is the conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based on mission orders for effective mission accomplishment. Successful mission command results from subordinate leaders at all echelons exercising disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to accomplish missions. It requires an environment of trust and mutual understanding. Successful mission command rests on the following four elements.

- *Commander's Intent.* The commander's intent is a clear, concise statement of what the force must do and the conditions the force must meet to succeed with respect to the enemy, terrain, and desired end state.
- *Subordinates' Initiative.* This is the assumption of responsibility for deciding and initiating independent actions when the concept of operations no longer applies or when an unanticipated opportunity leading to achieving the commander's intent presents itself.

- *Mission Orders.* Mission orders are a technique for completing combat orders. They allow subordinates maximum freedom of planning and action in accomplishing missions. They leave the "how" of mission accomplishment to subordinates.
- *Resource Allocation.* Commanders allocate enough resources for subordinates to accomplish their missions. Resources include Soldiers, material, and information.

MISSION COMMAND

5-4.   Mission command concentrates on the objective of an operation, not on how to achieve it. It emphasizes timely decision-making. The platoon leader must understand the company commander's intent and his clear responsibility to act within that intent to achieve the desired end state. With the company commander's intent to provide unity of effort, mission command relies on decentralized execution and the platoon leader's initiative.

5-5.   The company commander must create trust and mutual understanding between himself and his subordinates. This is more than just control. Commanders must encourage subordinates to exercise initiative. Mission command applies to all operations across the spectrum of conflict.

5-6.   Mission command counters the uncertainty of war by reducing the amount of certainty needed to act. Commanders guide unity of effort through the commander's intent, mission orders, and the CCIR. Company commanders hold a "loose rein," allowing platoon leaders freedom of action and requiring them to exercise subordinates' initiative. Commanders make fewer decisions, but this allows them to focus on the most important ones. The command operates more on self-discipline than imposed discipline. Because mission command decentralizes decision-making authority and grants subordinates significant freedom of action, it demands more of commanders at all levels and requires rigorous training and education. If the platoon leader is new and has not reached the level of confidence or maturity of the commander, the commander may need to be more directive until the platoon leader is ready.

5-7.   Mission command tends to be decentralized, informal, and flexible. Orders and plans are as brief and simple as possible, relying on implicit communication—subordinates' ability to coordinate and the human capacity to understand with minimal verbal information exchange. This can be a result of extended combat or training in which many actions and procedures have become standing operating procedure (SOP). By decentralizing decision-making authority, mission command increases tempo and improves the subordinates' ability to act in fluid and disorderly situations. Moreover, relying on implicit communication makes mission command less vulnerable to disruption of communications than detailed command.

5-8.   Mission command is appropriate for operations in the often politically-charged atmosphere and complex conditions of stability operations. Company commanders must explain not only the tasks assigned and their immediate purpose, but also prescribe an atmosphere to achieve and maintain throughout the AO. They must explain what to achieve and communicate the rationale for military action throughout their commands. Doing this allows platoon leaders, squad leaders and their Soldiers to gain insight into what is expected of them, what constraints apply, and most important, why the mission is being undertaken.

5-9.   Detailed command is ill-suited to the conditions of stability operations. Commanders using its techniques try to provide guidance or direction for all conceivable contingencies, which is impossible in dynamic and complex environments. Under detailed command, subordinates must refer to their headquarters when they encounter situations not covered by the commander's guidance. Doing this increases the time required for decisions and delays acting. In addition, success in interagency operations often requires unity of effort, even when there is not unity of command. In such an environment, detailed command is impossible. In contrast to the detailed instructions required by detailed command, mission command calls for a clear commander's intent. This commander's intent provides subordinates guidelines within which to obtain unity of effort with agencies not under military command. Subordinates then act within those guidelines to contribute to achieving the desired end state.

NOTE: The platoon leader must understand the situation and commander's intent one and two levels higher than his own. However, he must know the real-time battlefield situation in detail for his immediate higher level (company).

SECTION II — PLANS AND ORDERS

5-10. Plans are the basis for any mission. To develop his plan (concept of the operation), the platoon leader summarizes how best to accomplish his mission within the scope of the commander's intent one and two levels up. The platoon leader uses TLP to turn the concept into a fully developed plan and to prepare a concise, accurate operation order (OPORD). He assigns additional tasks (and outlines their purpose) for subordinate elements, allocates available resources, and establishes priorities to make the concept work. The following discussion covers important aspects of orders development and serves as an introduction to the discussion of the TLP. This section focuses on the mission statement and the commander's intent, which provide the doctrinal foundation for the OPORD. It also includes a basic discussion of the three types of orders (warning orders [WARNOs], OPORDs, and FRAGOs) used by the platoon leader. The platoon leader and his subordinates must have a thorough understanding of the building blocks for everything else that they do.

MISSION STATEMENT

5-11. The platoon leader uses the mission statement to summarize the upcoming operation. This brief paragraph (usually a single sentence) describes the type of operation, the unit's tactical task, and purpose. It is written based on the five Ws: who (unit), what (task[s]), when (date-time group), where (grid location or geographical reference for the AO or objective), and why (purpose). The platoon leader must ensure that the mission is thoroughly understood by all leaders and Soldiers one and two echelons down. The following considerations apply in development of the mission statement.

OPERATIONS

5-12. Full spectrum operations are groupings of related activities in four broad categories: offense, defense, stability, and civil support.

TASKS

5-13. Tactical tasks are specific activities performed by the unit while it is conducting a form of tactical operation or a choice of maneuver. The title of each task can also be used as an action verb in the unit's mission statement to describe actions during the operation. Tasks should be definable, attainable, and measurable. Tactical tasks that require specific tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) for the platoon are covered in detail throughout this manual. Figure 5-1 gives examples of tactical tasks the platoon and its subordinate elements may be called upon to conduct. Refer to FM 1-02 for definition of the tactical tasks listed in Figure 5-1.

Destroy Disrupt	Isolate Breach
Fix Suppress	Follow and Support
Block Support by Fire	Follow and Assume
Attack by Fire Interdict	Retain
Canalize Seize	Reduce
Secure Clear	

Figure 5-1. Examples of tactical tasks.

PURPOSE

5-14. A simple, clearly stated purpose tells subordinates the reason the platoon is conducting the mission.

PLACEMENT IN OPORD

5-15. The platoon leader has several options as to where in the OPORD he outlines his subordinates' tasks and purpose. His main concern is that placement of the mission statement should assist subordinate leaders in understanding the task and purpose and each of the five W elements exactly. Figure 5-2 shows an example of a mission statement the platoon leader might include in his order.

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EXAMPLE:

3rd Platoon (Who performs the task?) Attacks to seize. (What is the task?)
The bridge at (Nx330159). (Where do they perform the task?) At 040600Z
FEB 01. (When do they perform the task?) To pass the 1st Platoon
(company main effort) on to OBJ BOB. (Why must they perform the task?)


Or, broken out into the five W format:

Who?    3rd Platoon.
What?   Seize.
Where? The bridge at (Nx330159).
When?   At 040600Z FEB 01.
Why?    To pass the 1st Platoon (company main effort) on to OBJ BOB.
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Figure 5-2. Example mission statement.

COMBAT ORDERS

5-16. Combat orders are the means by which the platoon 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 platoon leader and subordinate leaders work with combat 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 platoon understands how to receive and respond to the various types of orders. The skills associated with orders are highly perishable. Therefore, the platoon leader must take every opportunity to train the platoon in the use of combat orders with realistic practice.

WARNING ORDER

5-17. Platoon leaders alert their platoons by using a WARNO during the planning for an operation. WARNOs also initiate the platoon leader's most valuable time management tool—the parallel planning process. The platoon leader may issue a series of warning orders to his subordinate leaders to help them prepare for new missions. The directions and guidelines in the WARNO allow subordinates to begin their own planning and preparation activities.

(1) The content of WARNOs is based on two major variables: information available about the upcoming operation and special instructions. The information usually comes from the company commander. The platoon leader wants his subordinates to take appropriate action, so he normally issues his WARNOs either as he receives additional orders from the company or as he completes his own analysis of the situation.

(2) In addition to alerting the unit to the upcoming operation, WARNOs allow the platoon leader to issue tactical information incrementally and, ultimately, to shorten the length of the actual OPORD. WARNOs do not have a specific format, but one technique to follow is the five-

paragraph OPORD format. Table 5-2 shows an example of how the platoon leader might use WARNOs to alert the platoon and provide initial planning guidance.

Table 5-2. Example of multiple warning orders.

PLATOON LEADER'S ACTION	POSSIBLE CONTENT OF WARNING ORDER	PLATOON LEADER'S PURPOSE
Receive the company warning order	Warning order #1 covers: Type of mission and tentative task organization. Movement plan. Tentative timeline. Standard drills to be rehearsed.	Prepare squads for movement to the tactical assembly area. Obtain map sheets.
Conduct METT-TC analysis	Warning order #2 covers: Friendly situation. Enemy situation. Security plan. Terrain analysis. Platoon mission.	Initiate squad-level mission analysis. Initiate generic rehearsals (drill- and task-related). Prepare for combat.
Develop a plan	Warning order #3 covers: Concept of the operation. Concept of fires. Subordinate unit tasks and purposes. Updated graphics.	Identify platoon-level reconnaissance requirements. Direct leader's reconnaissance. Prepare for combat.

OPERATIONS ORDER

5-18. The OPORD is the five-paragraph directive issued by a leader to subordinates for the purpose of implementing the coordinated execution of an operation. When time and information are available, the platoon leader will normally issue a complete OPORD as part of his TLP. However, after issuing a series of WARNOs, he does not need to repeat information previously covered. He can simply review previously issued information or brief the changes or earlier omissions. He then will have more time to concentrate on visualizing his concept of the fight for his subordinates. As noted in his WARNOs, the platoon leader also may issue an execution matrix either to supplement the OPORD or as a tool to aid in the execution of the mission. However, the matrix order technique does not replace a five-paragraph OPORD.

FRAGMENTARY ORDER

5-19. A FRAGO is an abbreviated form of an OPORD (verbal, written, or digital) that normally follows the five-paragraph format. It is usually issued on a day-to-day basis that eliminates the need for restating information contained in a basic OPORD. It may be issued in sections. It is issued after an OPORD to change or modify that order and is normally focused on the next mission. The platoon leader uses a FRAGO to—

- Communicate changes in the enemy or friendly situation.
- Task subordinate elements based on changes in the situation.
- Implement timely changes to existing orders.
- Provide pertinent extracts from more detailed orders.
- Provide interim instructions until he can develop a detailed order.
- Specify instructions for subordinates who do not need a complete order.

SECTION III — TROOP-LEADING PROCEDURES

5-20. The TLP begin when the platoon leader receives the first indication of an upcoming mission. They continue throughout the operational process (plan, prepare, execute, and assess). The TLP comprise a sequence of actions that help platoon leaders use available time effectively and efficiently to issue orders and execute tactical operations. TLP are not a hard and fast set of rules. Some actions may be performed simultaneously or in an order different than shown in Figure 5-3. They are a guide that must be applied consistent with the situation and the experience of the platoon leader and his subordinate leaders. The tasks involved in some actions (such as initiate movement, issue the WARNO, and conduct reconnaissance) may recur several times during the process. The last action (activities associated with supervising and refining the plan) occurs continuously throughout TLP and execution of the operation. The following information concerning the TLP assumes that the platoon leader will plan in a time-constrained environment. All steps should be done, even if done in abbreviated fashion. As such, the suggested techniques are oriented to help a platoon leader quickly develop and issue a combat order.

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RECEIVE THE MISSION
ISSUE A WARNING ORDER
MAKE A TENTATIVE PLAN
INITIATE MOVEMENT
CONDUCT RECONNAISSANCE
COMPLETE THE PLAN
ISSUE THE OPERATIONS ORDER
SUPERVISE AND REFINE
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Figure 5-3. Troop-leading procedures.

RECEIVE THE MISSION

5-21. This step begins with the receipt of an initial WARNO from the company. It also may begin when the platoon leader receives the commander's OPORD, or it may result from a change in the overall situation. Receipt of mission initiates the planning and preparation process so the platoon leader can prepare an initial WARNO as quickly as possible. At this stage of the TLP, mission analysis should focus on determining the unit's mission and the amount of available time. For the platoon leader, mission analysis is essentially the analysis of the factors of METT-TC, but he must not become involved in a detailed METT-TC analysis. This will occur after issuing the initial WARNO. The platoon leader should use METT-TC from the enemy's perspective to develop the details of possible enemy courses of action (COA). The following can assist in this process.

- Understand the enemy's mission. Will the enemy's likely mission be based on his doctrine, knowledge of the situation, and capabilities? This may be difficult to determine if the enemy has no established order of battle. Enemy analysis must consider situational reports of enemy patterns. When does the enemy strike, and where? Where does the enemy get logistical support and fire support? What cultural or religious factors are involved?
  - Why is the enemy conducting this operation?
  - What are the enemy's goals and are they tied to specific events or times?
  - What are the enemy's capabilities?
  - What are the enemy's objectives? Based on the situation template (SITEMP) and the projected enemy mission, what are the enemy's march objectives (offense) or the terrain or force he intends to protect (defense)? The commander normally provides this information.
- If the enemy is attacking, which avenues will he use to reach his objectives in executing his COAs and why?
- How will terrain affect his speed and formations?
- How will he use key terrain and locations with clear observation and fields of fire?

- How will terrain affect his speed and formations?
- How will he use key terrain and locations with clear observation and fields of fire?
- Does the weather aid or hinder the enemy in accomplishing his mission or does the weather degrade the enemy's weapons or equipment effectiveness?
- Enemy obstacles are locations provided by the company commander, platoon leader's assessment, or obtained from reconnaissance that give the platoon leader insight into how the enemy is trying to accomplish his mission.
- Perhaps the most critical aspect of mission analysis is determining the combat power potential of one's force. The platoon leader must realistically and unemotionally determine what tasks his Soldiers are capable of performing. This analysis includes the troops attached to or in direct support of the platoon. The platoon leader must know the status of his Soldiers' experience and training level, and the strengths and weaknesses of his subordinate leaders. His assessment includes knowing the status of his Soldiers and their equipment, and it includes understanding the full array of assets that are in support of the platoon such as additional AT weapons, snipers, and engineers. For example, how much indirect fire is available and when is it available?

5-22. As addressed in the "receive the mission" TLP, time analysis is a critical aspect to planning, preparation, and execution. Not only must the platoon leader appreciate how much time is available, he must be able to appreciate the time-space aspects of preparing, moving, fighting, and sustaining. He must be able to see his own tasks and enemy actions in relation to time. The platoon leader should conduct backward planning and observe the "1/3 – 2/3 rule" to allow subordinates their own planning time. Examples of time analysis are as follows.

    (1) He must be able to assess the impact of limited visibility conditions on the TLP.

    (2) He must know how long it takes to conduct certain tasks such as order preparation, rehearsals, back-briefs, and other time-sensitive preparations for subordinate elements.

    (3) He must understand how long it takes to deploy a support by fire (SBF) element, probably the weapons squad, and determine the amount of ammunition needed to sustain the support for a specific period of time.

    (4) He must know how long it takes to assemble a bangalore torpedo and to breach a wire obstacle.

    (5) Most importantly, as events occur, the platoon leader must adjust his analysis of time available to him and assess the impact on what he wants to accomplish.

    (6) Finally, he must update previous timelines for his subordinates, listing all events that affect the platoon.

5-23. The commander will provide the platoon leader with civil considerations that may affect the company and platoon missions. The platoon leader also must identify any civil considerations that may affect only his platoon's mission. Platoons are likely to conduct missions in areas where there are numerous non-combatants and civilians on the battlefield. Some considerations may include refugee movement, humanitarian assistance requirements, or specific requirements related to the rules of engagement (ROE) or rules of interaction (ROI).

ISSUE A WARNING ORDER

5-24. After the platoon leader determines the platoon's mission and gauges the time available for planning, preparation, and execution, he immediately issues an oral WARNO to his subordinates. In addition to telling his subordinates of the platoon's new mission, the WARNO also gives them the platoon leader's planning timeline. The platoon leader relays all other instructions or information that he thinks will assist the platoon in preparing for the new mission. Such information includes information about the enemy, the nature of the overall plan, and specific instructions for preparation. Most importantly, by issuing the initial WARNO as quickly as possible, the platoon leader enables his subordinates to begin their own planning and preparation while he begins to develop the platoon operation order. An example may include the squads rehearsing designated battle drills. This is called parallel planning.

MAKE A TENTATIVE PLAN

5-25. After receiving the company OPORD (or FRAGO), the platoon leader develops a tentative plan. The process of developing this plan in a time-constrained environment usually has six steps: receipt of the mission, mission analysis, COA development, COA analysis, COA selection, and issue the order. The platoon leader relies heavily on the company commander's METT-TC analysis. This allows the platoon leader to save time by focusing his analysis effort on areas that affect his plan. Typically, a platoon leader will develop one COA. If more time is available, he may develop more than one, in which case he will need to compare these COAs and select the best one.

MISSION ANALYSIS

5-26. This is a continuous process during the course of the operation. It requires the platoon leader to analyze all the factors of METT-TC in as much depth as time and quality of information will allow. The factors of METT-TC are not always analyzed sequentially. How and when the platoon leader analyzes each factor depends on when information is made available to him. One technique for the analysis is based on the sequence of products that the company commander receives and produces: mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops, time, civil considerations. The platoon leader must develop significant conclusions about how each element will affect mission accomplishment and then account for it in his plan.

MISSION

5-27. Leaders at every echelon must have a clear understanding of the mission, intent, and concept of the operation of the commanders one and two levels higher. Without this understanding, it would be difficult to exercise disciplined initiative. One technique to quickly understand the operation is to draw a simple sketch of the battalion and company's concepts of the operation (if not provided by the commander). The platoon leader now can understand how the platoon mission relates to the missions of other units and how his mission fits into the overall plan, and he can capture this understanding of the purpose (why) in his restated mission statement. The platoon leader will write a restated mission statement using his analysis of these areas: the battalion mission, intent, and concept; the company mission, intent, and concept; identification of specified, implied, and essential tasks; identification of risks; and any constraints.

- *Battalion Mission, Intent, and Concept.* The platoon leader must understand the battalion commander's concept of the operation. He identifies the battalion's task and purpose, and how his company is contributing to the battalion's fight. The platoon leader also must understand the battalion commander's intent found in the friendly forces paragraph (paragraph 1b) of the company order.
- *Company Mission, Intent, and Concept.* The platoon leader must understand the company's concept of the operation. He identifies the company's task and purpose, as well as his contribution to the company's fight. The platoon leader must clearly understand the commander's intent from the order (paragraph 3a). Additionally, the platoon leader identifies the task, purpose, and disposition for all adjacent maneuver elements under company control.
- *Platoon Mission.* The platoon leader finds his platoon's mission in the company's concept of the operation paragraph. The purpose of the main effort platoon usually matches the purpose of the company. Similarly, shaping operation platoons' purposes must relate to the purpose of the main effort platoon. The platoon leader must understand how his purpose relates to the other platoons in the company. He determines the platoon's essential tactical task to successfully accomplish his given purpose. Finally, he must understand why the commander gave his platoon a particular tactical task and how it fits into the company's concept of the operation.
- *Constraints.* Constraints are restrictions placed on the platoon leader by the commander to dictate action or inaction, thus restricting the freedom of action the platoon leader has for planning by stating the things that must or must not be done. The two types of constraints are: requirements for action (for example, maintain a squad in reserve); and prohibitions of action (for example, do not cross phaseline [PL] BULL until authorized).
- *Identification of Tasks.* The platoon leader must identify and understand the tasks required to accomplish the mission. There are three types of tasks: specified; implied; and essential.

- **Specified Tasks.** These are tasks specifically assigned to a platoon by the commander. Paragraphs 2 and 3 from the company OPORD state specified tasks. Specified tasks may also be found in annexes and overlays (see p. 5-21 for OPORD example).
- **Implied Tasks.** These are tasks that must be performed to accomplish a specified task, but which are not stated in the OPORD. Implied tasks are derived from a detailed analysis of the OPORD, the enemy situation, the COAs, and the terrain. Analysis of the platoon's current location in relation to future areas of operation as well as the doctrinal requirements for each specified task also might provide implied tasks. SOP tasks are not considered implied tasks.
- **Essential Tasks.** An essential task is one that must be executed to accomplish the mission derived from a review of the specified and implied tasks. This is normally the task found in the mission statement

- *Identification of Risks.* Risk is the chance of injury or death to individuals and damage to or loss of vehicles and equipment. Risk, or the potential for risk, is always present in every combat and training situation the platoon faces. Risk management must take place at all levels of the chain of command during every operation. It is an integral part of tactical planning. The platoon leader, his NCOs, and all other platoon Soldiers must know how to use risk management, coupled with fratricide avoidance measures, to ensure that the mission is executed in the safest possible environment within mission constraints. The platoon leader should review risk from a tactical perspective (how can they best accomplish the mission with the least damage to their unit?) and an individual perspective (how do I minimize the chances of my Soldiers getting hurt and keep my equipment from being damaged?). Refer to Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of risk management and fratricide avoidance.
- *Restated Platoon Mission Statement.* The platoon leader restates his mission statement using the five Ws: who, what, when, where, and why. The "who" is the platoon. The "what" is the type of operation and the platoon's essential tactical task. The "when" is the date-time group (DTG) given in the OPORD. The "where" is the objective or location taken from the OPORD. The "why" is the purpose for the platoon's essential tactical task taken from the commander's paragraph 3.

ANALYSIS OF TERRAIN AND WEATHER

5-28. The platoon leader must conduct a detailed analysis of the terrain to determine how it will uniquely affect his unit and the enemy he anticipates fighting. The platoon leader must gain an appreciation of the terrain before attempting to develop either enemy or friendly COA. He must exceed merely making observations (for example, this is high ground, this is an avenue of approach). He must arrive at significant conclusions concerning how the ground will affect the enemy and his unit. Because of limited planning time, the platoon leader normally prioritizes his terrain analysis. For example, in the conduct of an assault, his priority may be the area around the objective followed by the platoon's specific axis leading to the objective.

5-29. Terrain mobility is classified in one of three categories:
(1) Unrestricted. This is terrain free of any movement restrictions. No actions are required to enhance mobility. For mechanized forces, unrestricted terrain is typically flat or moderately sloped, with scattered or widely spaced obstacles such as trees or rocks. Unrestricted terrain generally allows wide maneuver and offers unlimited travel over well-developed road networks. Unrestricted terrain is an advantage in situations requiring rapid movement for mechanized forces.
(2) Restricted. This terrain hinders movement to some degree, and units may need to detour frequently. Restricted terrain may cause difficulty in maintaining optimal speed, moving in some types of combat formations, or transitioning from one formation to another. This terrain typically encompasses moderate to steep slopes or moderate to dense spacing of obstacles such as trees, rocks, or buildings. The terrain may not require additional assets or time to traverse, but it may

hinder movement to some degree due to increased security requirements. In instances when security is the paramount concern, both friendly and enemy elements may move in more restricted terrain that may provide more cover and concealment.

(3) Severely Restricted. This terrain severely hinders or slows movement in combat formations unless some effort is made to enhance mobility. It may require a commitment of engineer forces to improve mobility or a deviation from doctrinal tactics, such as using a column rather than a wedge formation or moving at speeds much slower than otherwise preferred. Severely restricted terrain includes any terrain that requires equipment not organic to the unit to cross (for example, a large body of water and slopes requiring mountaineering equipment).

5-30. The military aspects of terrain observation (Figure 5-4) are used to analyze the ground. The sequence used to analyze the military aspects of terrain can vary. The platoon leader may prefer to determine obstacles first, avenues of approach second, key terrain third, observation and fields of fire fourth, and cover and concealment last. For each aspect of terrain, the platoon leader determines its effect on both friendly and enemy forces. The following are OAKOC aspects of terrain.
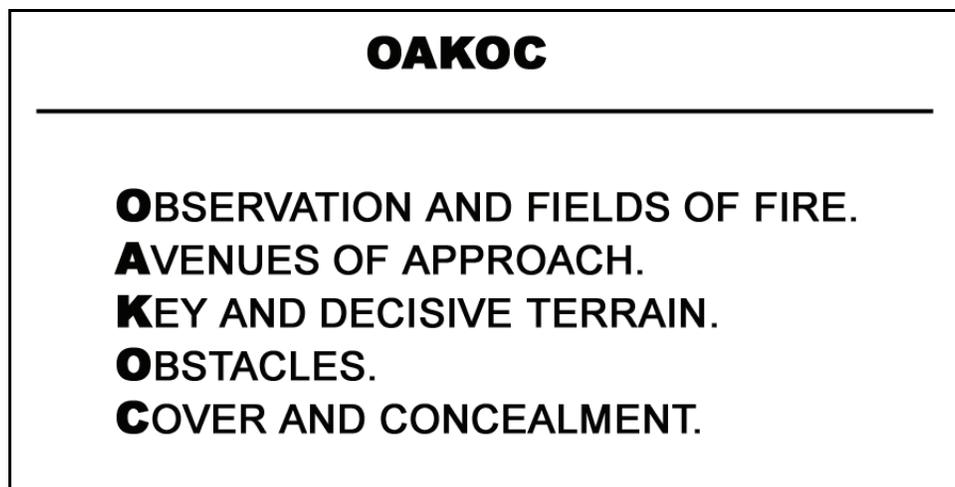

Figure 5-4. Military aspects of terrain.

OBSTACLES

5-31. The platoon leader first identifies existing and reinforcing obstacles in his AO that limit his mobility with regards to the mission. Existing obstacles are typically natural terrain features present on the battlefield. These may include ravines, gaps, or ditches over 3-meters wide; tree stumps and large rocks over 18-inches high; forests with trees 8 inches or greater in diameter and with less than 4 meters between trees; and manmade obstacles such as towns or cities. Reinforcing obstacles are typically manmade obstacles that augment existing obstacles. These may include minefields, AT ditches, road craters, abatis and log cribs, wire obstacles, and infantry strongpoints. Figure 5-5 lists several offensive and defensive considerations the platoon leader can include in his analysis of obstacles and restricted terrain.

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 │ OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS                                             │
 │                                                                       │
 │   • How is the enemy using obstacles and restricted terrain features?│
 │   • What is the composition of the enemy's reinforcing obstacles?    │
 │   • How will obstacles and terrain affect my movement and or maneuver?│
 │   • If necessary, how can the company avoid such features?           │
 │   • How do we detect and, if desired, bypass the obstacles?          │
 │   • Where has the enemy positioned weapons to cover the obstacles, and what │
 │     type of weapons is he using?                                     │
 │   • If I must support or execute a breach, where is the expected breach site? │
 ├─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
 │ DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS                                             │
 │                                                                       │
 │   • Where do I want to kill the enemy? Where do I want him to go?    │
 │   • How will existing obstacles and restricted terrain affect the enemy? │
 │   • Where does the enemy want to go?                                 │
 │   • How can I use these features to force the enemy into my engagement area, │
 │     deny him an avenue, or disrupt his movement?                     │
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Figure 5-5. Considerations in obstacle and terrain analysis.

AVENUES OF APPROACH

5-32. An avenue of approach is an air or ground route of an attacking force leading to its objective or key terrain. For each avenue of approach, the platoon leader determines the type (mounted, dismounted, air, or subterranean), size, and formation and speed of the largest unit that can travel along it. The commander may give him this information. Mounted forces may move on avenues along unrestricted or restricted terrain (or both). Dismounted avenues and avenues used by reconnaissance elements and infantry platoons normally include terrain that is restricted and at times severely restricted to mounted forces. The terrain analysis also must identify avenues of approach for both friendly and enemy units. Figure 5-6 lists several considerations for avenue of approach analysis.

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 │ OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS                                             │
 │                                                                       │
 │   • How can I use each avenue of approach to support my movement and │
 │     maneuver?                                                         │
 │   • How will each avenue support movement techniques, formations, and (once we │
 │     make enemy contact) maneuver?                                    │
 │   • Will variations in trafficability or lane width force changes in formations or │
 │     movement techniques or require defile drills?                    │
 │   • What are the advantages and disadvantages of each avenue?        │
 │   • What are the enemy's likely counterattack routes?                │
 │   • Do lateral routes exist that we can use to shift to other axes or that the enemy │
 │     can use to threaten our flanks?                                  │
 ├─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
 │ DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS                                             │
 │                                                                       │
 │   • What are all likely enemy avenues into my sector?               │
 │   • How can the enemy use each avenue of approach?                  │
 │   • Do lateral routes exist that the enemy can use to threaten our flanks? │
 │   • What avenues would support a friendly counterattack?            │
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Figure 5-6. Considerations for avenue of approach analysis.

KEY TERRAIN

5-33. Key terrain affords a marked advantage to the combatant who seizes, retains, or controls it. The platoon leader identifies key terrain starting at the objective or main battle area and working backwards to his current position. It is a conclusion rather than an observation. The platoon leader must assess what terrain is key to accomplishing his mission. Key terrain may allow the platoon leader to apply direct fire or achieve observation of the objective (or avenue of approach). Key terrain may also be enemy oriented, meaning that if the enemy controls the terrain it could prevent the platoon from accomplishing its mission.

- An example of key terrain for a platoon could be a tree line on a hillside that provides overwatch of a high-speed avenue of approach. Controlling this tree line may be critical in passing follow-on forces (main effort) to their objective. High ground is not necessarily key terrain. A prominent hilltop that overlooks an avenue of approach and offers clear observation and fields of fire, if it is easily bypassed, is not key terrain.
- Although unlikely, the platoon leader may identify decisive terrain—key terrain that holds such importance that the seizure, retention, and control of it will be necessary for mission accomplishment and may decide the outcome of the battle. Use the following two military aspects of terrain (observation and fields of fire, and cover and concealment) to analyze each piece of key terrain. Figure 5-7 depicts operational considerations to use when analyzing key terrain.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- What terrain is key to the company and to the battalion and why?
- Is the enemy controlling this key terrain?
- What terrain is key to the enemy and why?
- How do I gain or maintain control of key terrain?
- What terrain is key for friendly observation, both for command and control and for calling for fires?

Figure 5-7. Considerations in key terrain analysis.

OBSERVATION AND FIELDS OF FIRE

5-34. The platoon leader analyzes areas surrounding key terrain, objectives, avenues of approach, and obstacles to determine if they provide clear observation and fields of fire for both friendly and enemy forces. He locates intervisibility lines (terrain that inhibits observation from one point to another) that have not been identified by the commander and determines where visual contact between the two forces occurs. When analyzing fields of fire, the platoon leader focuses on both friendly and enemy direct fire capabilities. Additionally, he identifies positions that enable artillery observers to call for indirect fires and permit snipers to engage targets. Figure 5-8 provides considerations for analysis of observation and fields of fire. Whenever possible, the platoon leader conducts a ground reconnaissance from both the friendly and enemy perspective.

OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS

- Are clear observation and fields of fire available on or near the objective for enemy observers and weapon systems?
- Where can the enemy concentrate fires?
- Where is he vulnerable?
- Where are possible SBF or assault-by-fire positions for friendly forces?
- Where are the natural target reference points (TRPs)?
- Where do I position indirect fire observers?

DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS

- What locations afford clear observation and fields of fire along enemy avenues of approach?
- Where will the enemy set firing lines and or antitank weapons?
- Where will I be unable to mass fires?
- Where is the dead space in my sector? Where am I vulnerable?
- Where are the natural TRPs?
- Where do I position indirect fire observers?

Figure 5-8. Considerations for analysis of observation and fields of fire.

COVER AND CONCEALMENT

5-35. Cover is protection from the effects of fires. Concealment is protection from observation but not direct fire or indirect fires. Figure 5-9 provides considerations for analysis of cover and concealment. Consideration of these elements can lead the platoon leader to identify areas that can, at best, achieve both facets. The platoon leader looks at the terrain, foliage, structures, and other features on the key terrain, objective, and avenues of approach to identify sites that offer cover and concealment.

OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS

- What axes afford both clear fields of fire and effective cover and concealment?
- Which terrain provides bounding elements with cover and concealment while facilitating lethality?

Figure 5-9. Considerations in analysis of cover and concealment.

Five military aspects of weather
    (1) Visibility.
    (2) Winds.
    (3) Precipitation.
    (4) Cloud cover.
    (5) Temperature/humidity.

5-36. The platoon leader must go beyond merely making observations. He must arrive at significant conclusions about how the weather will affect his platoon and the enemy. He receives conclusions from the commander and identifies his own critical conclusions about the weather. Most importantly, the platoon leader must apply these conclusions when he develops friendly and enemy COAs. The five military aspects of weather are—

- Visibility. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about visibility factors (such as fog, smog, and humidity) and battlefield obscurants (such as smoke and dust). Some visibility considerations are—

- Will the current weather favor the use of smoke to obscure during breaching?
- Will fog affect friendly and enemy target acquisition?

● Light Data. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about beginning morning nautical twilight (BMNT), sunrise (SR), sunset (SS), end of evening nautical twilight (EENT), moonrise (MR), moonset (MS), and percentage of illumination. Some light data considerations are—
- Will the sun rise behind my attack?
- How can I take advantage of the limited illumination?
- How will limited illumination affect friendly and enemy target acquisition?

● Temperature. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about temperature factors (such as high and low temperatures and infrared crossover times) and battlefield factors (such as use of smoke or chemicals). Some temperature considerations are—
- How will temperature (hot or cold) affect rate of foot march for the platoon?
- How will temperature (hot or cold) affect the Soldiers and equipment?
- Will temperatures favor the use of nonpersistent chemicals?

● Precipitation. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about precipitation factors (such as type, amount, and duration). Some precipitation considerations are—
- How will precipitation affect mobility?
- How can precipitation add to the platoon achieving surprise?

● Winds. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about wind factors (such as direction and speed). Some wind considerations are—
- Will wind speed cause smoke to dissipate quickly?
- Will wind speed and direction favor enemy use of smoke?

5-37. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about cloud cover (such as target acquisition degradation, aircraft approach, and radar effectiveness). Some cloud cover considerations are—
- Will heavy cloud cover limit illumination and solar heating of targets?
- Will heavy cloud cover degrade the use of infrared-guided artillery?
- Will cloud cover cause glare, a condition that attacking aircraft might use to conceal their approach?
- Will the cloud cover affect ground surveillance radar (GSR) coverage of the AO?

ANALYSIS OF ENEMY

5-38. This step allows the platoon leader to identify the enemy's strength and potential weaknesses or vulnerabilities so he can exploit them to generate overwhelming combat power in achieving his mission. The platoon leader must understand the assumptions the commander used to portray the enemy's COAs covered in the company's plan. Furthermore, the platoon leader's assumptions about the enemy must be consistent with those of the company commander. To effectively analyze the enemy, the platoon leader must know how the enemy may fight. It is equally important for the platoon leader to understand what is actually known about the enemy as opposed to what is only assumed or templated.

5-39. During doctrinal analysis, it is not enough only to know the number and types of vehicles, soldiers, and weapons the enemy has. The platoon leader's analysis must extend down to the individual key weapon system. During stability operations or small-scale contingency (SSC) operations in an underdeveloped area where little is known about the combatants, it may be difficult to portray or template the enemy doctrinally. In this case, the platoon leader must rely on brigade and battalion analyses funneled through the company commander as well as his own knowledge of recent enemy activities. The platoon leader should consider the following areas as he analyzes the enemy.

● *Composition.* The platoon leader's analysis must determine the number and types of enemy vehicles, soldiers, and equipment that could be used against his platoon. He gets this information from paragraph 1a of the company OPORD. His analysis also must examine how the enemy organizes for combat to include the possible use of a reserve.

- *Disposition.* From the commander's information, the platoon leader identifies how the enemy that his platoon will fight is arrayed.
- *Strength.* The platoon leader identifies the strength of the enemy. It is imperative that the platoon leader determines the actual numbers of equipment and personnel that his platoon is expected to fight or that may affect his platoon. Again, much of this information is gained through the detailed OPORD.
- *Capabilities.* Based on the commander's assessment and the enemy's doctrine and current location, the platoon leader must determine what the enemy is capable of doing against his platoon during the mission. Such an analysis must include the planning ranges for each enemy weapons system that the platoon may encounter.
- *Anticipated Enemy Courses of Action.* To identify potential enemy COAs, the platoon leader weighs the result of his initial analysis of terrain and weather against the enemy's composition, capabilities, and doctrinal objectives. He then develops an enemy SITEMP for his portion of the company plan. The end product is a platoon SITEMP, a graphic overlay depiction of how he believes the enemy will fight under the specific conditions expected on the battlefield. The commander's analysis and understanding of the current enemy and friendly situation will provide the platoon leader with most of this information. Included in the SITEMP is the range fan of the enemy's weapons and any tactical and protective obstacles, either identified or merely templated. Once the SITEMP has been developed it should be transferred to a large-scale sketch to enable subordinates to see the details of the anticipated enemy COA. After the platoon leader briefs the enemy analysis to his subordinates, he must ensure they understand what is known, what is suspected, and what merely templated (educated guess) is. The platoon's SITEMP should depict individual Soldier and weapons positions and is a refinement of the commander's SITEMP.

SUMMARY OF MISSION ANALYSIS

5-40. The end result of mission analysis, as done during the formulation of a tentative plan, is a number of insights and conclusions regarding how the factors of METT-TC affect accomplishment of the platoon's mission. The platoon leader must determine how he can apply his strengths against enemy weakness, while protecting his weaknesses from enemy strength. From these the platoon leader will develop a COA.

COURSE OF ACTION DEVELOPMENT

5-41. The purpose of COA development is to determine one (or more) way(s) to achieve the mission by applying the overwhelming effects of combat power at the decisive place or time with the least cost in friendly casualties. If time permits, the platoon leader may develop several COAs. The platoon leader makes each COA as detailed as possible to describe clearly how he plans to use his forces to achieve the unit's purpose and mission-essential task(s) consistent with the commander's intent. He focuses on the actions the unit must take at the decisive point and works backward to his start point. A COA should satisfy the criteria listed in Table 5-3.

> **NOTE:** The platoon leader should consider (METT-TC dependent) incorporating his squad leaders and platoon sergeant in COA development. Incorporating the squad leaders and platoon sergeant in the process may add time to the initial COA development process, but it will save time by increasing their understanding of the platoon's plan.

Table 5-3. Course of action criteria.

Suitable	If the COA were successfully executed, would the unit accomplish the mission consistent with the battalion and company commander's concept and intent?
Feasible	The platoon must have the technical and tactical skill and resources to successfully accomplish the COA. In short, given the enemy situation and terrain, the unit must have the training, equipment, leadership, and rehearsal time necessary to successfully execute the mission.
Distinguishable	If more than one COA is developed, then each COA must be sufficiently different from the others to justify full development and consideration. At platoon level, this is very difficult to accomplish, particularly if the platoon has limited freedom of action or time to plan and prepare.
Complete	The COA must include the operational factors of who, what, when, where, and how. The COA must address the doctrinal aspects of the operation. For example, in the attack against a defending enemy, the COA must cover movement to, deployment against, assault of, and consolidation upon the objective.

(1) ***COA Development Step 1: Analyze Relative Combat Power.*** This step compares combat power strengths and weaknesses of both friendly and enemy forces. At the platoon level this should not be a complex process. However, if the platoon is attacking or defending against a force that has no order of battle but has exhibited guerrilla- or terrorist-type tactics, it could be difficult. For the platoon leader, it starts by returning to the conclusions the commander arrived at during mission analysis, specifically the conclusions about the enemy's strength, weakness, and vulnerabilities. In short, the platoon leader is trying to ascertain where, when, and how the platoon's combat power (Intelligence, Movement and Maneuver, Fire Support, Protection, Sustainment, and Command and Control) can be superior to the enemy's while achieving the mission. This analysis should lead to techniques, procedures, and a potential decisive point that will focus the COA development. See FM 1-02 for the definition of a decisive point.

- ***COA Development Step 2: Generate Options.*** The platoon leader must first identify the objectives or times at which the unit will mass overwhelming firepower to achieve a specific result (with respect to terrain, enemy, and or time) that will accomplish the platoon's mission. He should take the following action.

- *Determine the Doctrinal Requirements.* As the platoon leader begins to develop a COA he should consider, if he has not done so in mission analysis, what doctrine suggests in terms of accomplishing the mission. For example, in an attack of a strongpoint, doctrine outlines several steps: isolate the objective area and the selected breach site, attack to penetrate and seize a foothold in the strongpoint, exploit the penetration, and clear the objective. In this case, doctrine gives the platoon leader a framework to begin developing a way to accomplish the mission.

- *Determine the Decisive Point.* The next and most important action is to identify a decisive point in order to progress with COA development. The decisive point may be given to the platoon leader by the company commander or be determined by the platoon leader through his relative combat power analysis.

- *Determine the Purpose of Each Element.* Determine the purpose of the subordinate elements starting with the main effort. The main effort's purpose is nested to the platoon's purpose and is achieved at the platoon leader's decisive point. The platoon leader next identifies the purposes of shaping efforts. These purposes are nested to the main effort's purpose by setting the conditions for success of the main effort.

- *Determine Tasks of Subordinate Elements.* Starting with the main effort, the platoon leader specifies the essential tactical tasks that will enable the main and shaping efforts to achieve their purpose.

(2) ***COA Development Step 3: Array Initial Forces.*** The platoon leader next must determine the specific number of squads and weapons necessary to accomplish the mission and provide a basis for

development of a scheme of maneuver. He will consider the platoon's restated mission statement, the commander's intent, and the enemy's most probable COA. He should allocate resources to the main effort (at the decisive point) and continue with shaping efforts in descending order of importance to accomplish the tasks and purposes he assigned during Step 2. For example, the main effort in an attack of a strong point may require a rifle squad and an engineer squad to secure a foothold, whereas an SBF force may require the entire weapons squad.

(3) *COA Development Step 4: Develop Schemes of Maneuver.* The scheme of maneuver is a description of how the platoon leader envisions his subordinates will accomplish the mission from the start of the operation until its completion. He does this by determining how the achievement of one task will lead to the execution of the next. He clarifies in his mind the best ways to use the available terrain as well as how best to employ the platoon's strengths against the enemy's weaknesses (gained from his relative combat power analysis). This includes the requirements of indirect fire to support the maneuver. The platoon leader then develops the maneuver control measures necessary to enhance understanding of the scheme of maneuver, ensure fratricide avoidance, and to clarify the task and purpose of the main and shaping efforts. (Refer to Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of fratricide avoidance.) He also determines the supply and medical evacuation aspects of the COA.

(4) *COA Development Step 5: Assign Headquarters.* The platoon leader assigns specific elements (for example, squads) as the main and shaping efforts. The platoon leader ensures that he has employed every element of the unit and has C2 for each element.

(5) *COA Development Step 6: Prepare COA Statements and Sketches.* The platoon leader's ability to prepare COA sketches and statements will depend on the amount of time available and his skill and experience as a platoon leader. Whenever possible, the platoon leader should prepare a sketch showing the COA. The COA statement is based on the scheme of maneuver the commander has already developed and the platoon leader's situational analysis. It focuses on all significant actions from the start of the COA to its finish. The company commander should provide the platoon and squad leaders his COA analysis when time is a limiting factor. Particularly if the order is verbal, it is extremely useful to have one or more sketches of critical events within the plan that require coordinated movement of two or more subordinate units.

- **Wargaming of COA.** After developing a COA, the platoon leader wargames it to determine its advantages and disadvantages, to visualize the flow of the battle, and to identify requirements to synchronize actual execution. This is typically done during a discussion with the squad leaders, platoon sergeant, or other key personnel. This technique is not complicated, and it facilitates a total understanding of the plan. This is not a rehearsal. The wargame is designed to synchronize all platoon actions, whereas during COA development the leader is focused on simply integrating all platoon assets into the fight.

- **COA Comparison and Selection.** If the platoon leader develops more than one COA, he must compare them by weighing the specific advantages, disadvantages, strengths, and weaknesses of each. These attributes may pertain to the accomplishment of the platoon purpose, the use of terrain, the destruction of the enemy, or any other aspect of the operation that the platoon leader believes is important. The platoon leader uses these factors as his frame of reference in tentatively selecting the best COA. He makes the final selection of a COA based on his own analysis.

INITIATE MOVEMENT

5-42. The platoon leader initiates any movement that is necessary to continue preparations or to posture the unit for the operation. This may include movement to an assembly area (AA), battle position, perimeter defense, or attack position; movement of reconnaissance elements; or movement to compute time-distance factors for the unit's mission.

> **NOTE:** The following discussion on reconnaissance and the amount or type of reconnaissance conducted must be evaluated by the amount of information needed, the risk to leaders conducting the reconnaissance, and time available, and it must be a coordinated effort with higher command.

CONDUCT RECONNAISSANCE

5-43. Even if the platoon leader has made a leader's reconnaissance with the company commander at some point during TLP, he should still conduct a reconnaissance after he has developed his plan. The focus of the reconnaissance is to confirm the priority intelligence requirements (PIRs) that support the tentative plan.

- These PIRs are critical requirements needed to confirm or deny some aspect of the enemy (location, strength, movement). The PIRs also include assumptions about the terrain (to verify, for example, that a tentative SBF position actually will allow for suppression of the enemy, or to verify the utility of an avenue of approach).
- The platoon leader may include his subordinate leaders in this reconnaissance (or he may instruct a squad to conduct a reconnaissance patrol with specific objectives). This allows them to see as much of the terrain and enemy as possible. It also helps each leader visualize the plan more clearly.
- At the platoon level, the leader's reconnaissance may include movement to or beyond a line of departure (LD) or from the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA) back to and through the engagement area along likely enemy routes. If possible, the platoon leader should select a vantage point that provides the group with the best possible view of the decisive point.
- The platoon leader may also conduct a leader's reconnaissance through other means. Examples of this type of reconnaissance include surveillance of an area by subordinate elements, patrols by infantry squads to determine where the enemy is (and is not) located, and establishment of OPs to gain additional information. If available, the leaders may use video from unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or video footage provided from helicopter gun cameras and digital downloads of 2D terrain products. The nature of the reconnaissance, including what it covers and how long it lasts, depends on the tactical situation and the time available. The platoon leader should use the results from the COA development process to identify information and security requirements for the platoon's reconnaissance operations.

COMPLETE THE PLAN

5-44. Completion of the plan includes several actions that transform the commander's intent and concept and the platoon concept into a fully developed platoon OPORD. These actions include preparing overlays, refining the indirect fire list, completing sustainment and C2 requirements, and updating the tentative plan as a result of the reconnaissance. It also allows the platoon leader to prepare the briefing site, briefing medium and briefing material he will need to present the OPORD to his subordinates. Completing the plan allows the platoon leader to make final coordination with other units or the commander before issuing the OPORD to his subordinates.

ISSUE THE OPERATIONS ORDER

5-45. The OPORD precisely and concisely explains the mission, the commander's intent and concept of how he wants his squads to accomplish the mission. The OPORD must not contain unnecessary information that could obscure what is essential and important. The platoon leader must ensure his squads know exactly what must be done, when it must be done, and how the platoon must work together to accomplish the mission and stay consistent with the intentions of the commander.

- The platoon leader issues the order in person, looking into the eyes of all his Soldiers to ensure each leader and Soldier understands the mission and what his element must achieve. The platoon leader also uses visual aids, such as sand tables and concept sketches, to depict actions on the objective or movement.

- The format of the five-paragraph OPORD helps the platoon leader paint a complete picture of all aspects of the operation: terrain, enemy, higher and adjacent friendly units, platoon mission, execution, support, and command. The format also helps him address all relevant details of the operation. Finally, it provides subordinates with a predictable, smooth flow of information from beginning to end.

SUPERVISE AND REFINE

5-46. The platoon leader supervises the unit's preparation for combat by conducting confirmation briefs, rehearsals, and inspections. Table 5-4 lists the items the unit should have.

Table 5-4. Precombat checklist.

Precombat Checklist		
ID card	Pintels	Grappling hook
ID tags	T&E mechanisms	Sling sets
Ammunition	Spare barrels	PZ marking kit
Weapons	Spare barrel bags	ANCD
Protective mask	Extraction tools	Plugger/GPS
Knives	Asbestos gloves	Handheld microphones
Flashlights	Barrel changing handles	NVDs
Radios and backup communication	Headspace and timing gauges	Batteries and spare batteries
Communication cards	M249 tools	Picket pounder
9-line MEDEVAC procedures	BII	Engineer stakes
	Oil & transmission fluids	Pickets
OPORD	Anti-freeze coolant	Concertina wire
FRAGOs	5-gallon water jugs	TCP signs
Maps	MREs	IR lights
Graphics, routes, OBJs, LZs, and PZs	Load plans	Glint tape
Protractors	Fuel cans	Chemical lights
Alcohol pens	Fuel spout	Spare hand sets
Alcohol erasers	Tow bars	Pencil with eraser
Pen and paper	Slave cables	Weapon tie downs
Tripods	Concertina wire gloves	

5-47. Platoon 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.

5-48. The platoon conducts rehearsals. During the rehearsals, leaders practice sending tactical reports IAW the unit's SOPs. Reporting before, during, and after contact with the enemy is rehearsed in detail starting with actions on the objective. Rehearsals are not intended to analyze a COA.

(1) The platoon leader uses well-planned, efficiently run rehearsals to accomplish the following:

- Reinforce training and increase proficiency in critical tasks.
- Reveal weaknesses or problems in the plan.
- Integrate and synchronize the actions of attached elements.
- Confirm coordination requirements between the platoon and adjacent units.
- Confirm each Soldier's understanding of the mission, concept of the operation, the direct fire plan, anticipated contingencies, and possible actions and reactions for various situations that may arise during the operation.

(2) Rehearsal techniques include the following:

- *Map Rehearsal.* A map rehearsal is usually conducted as part of a confirmation brief involving subordinate leaders or portions of their elements. The leader uses the map and overlay to guide participants as they brief their role in the operation. If necessary, he can use a sketch map. A sketch map provides the same information as a terrain model and can be used at any time.

- *Sand Table or Terrain Model.* This reduced-force or full-force technique employs a small-scale sand table or model that depicts graphic control measures and important terrain features for reference and orientation. Participants walk around the sand table or model to practice the actions of their own elements or vehicles (if working with mechanized units) in relation to other members of the platoon.

- *Radio Rehearsal.* This is a reduced-force or full-force rehearsal conducted when the situation does not allow the platoon to gather at one location. Subordinate elements check their communications systems and rehearse key elements of the platoon plan.

- *Reduced-Force Rehearsal.* In this rehearsal, leaders discuss the mission while moving over key terrain or similar terrain.

- *Full-Force Rehearsal.* This technique is used during a full-force rehearsal. Rehearsals begin in good visibility over open terrain and become increasingly realistic until conditions approximate those expected in the AO.

NOTE: If time permits, the platoon should conduct a full-force rehearsal of the plan.

SQUAD ORDERS

5-49. The squad leader follows the same format as in Figure 5-10 and issues his five-paragraph format OPORD to his squad. Because the squad is the smallest maneuver element, he does not develop COAs. He must, however, assign specific tasks and purposes to his team leaders to ensure his squad mission is accomplished.

EXAMPLE

1. **Situation.**
   a. **Enemy Forces.** The enemy the squad is expected to encounter or who could affect the squad mission. Include the composition, disposition, and capabilities of the enemy.
   b. **Friendly Forces.** The squad leader states the company's mission and the commander's intent along with the platoon leader's mission. Also states the missions of sister squads or other units on his flanks and rear, and how they influence his squad.
   c. **Attachments and Detachments.** Squads normally fight as a unit without attachments.

2. **Mission.** The squad's mission statement includes the 5 W's: Who, What (task), Where, When, and Why (purpose).

3. **Execution.**
   a. **Concept of the Operation.** The squad leader describes in one or more paragraphs the employment of the other squads and platoon attachments for the platoon mission. The platoon main effort, shaping effort, and general plan for fire support. Any engineer, reconnaissance, or security operations are also included.
   b. **Maneuver.** The squad leader describes in detail the task and purpose for each of his fire teams. Movement formations, actions on the objective, and engagement/disengagement criteria from start to mission completion are included.
   C. **Fires.** The squad leader explains the concept of indirect and direct fires to include priority of fires for artillery and mortars, when fires will begin, cease or shift, and target integration.

4. **Service Support.** Here the squad leader explains logistical items needed for the mission that are not covered in the unit SOPs. Additional ammunition, location of casualty collection points (CCPs), caches, enemy prisoner of war (EPW) collection points, and any other items the squad members may need that are unique to the mission are included.

5. **Command and Signal.**
   a. **Command.** Location of the platoon and company command posts or key leaders during the mission.
   b. **Signal.** Unit SOPs normally cover most of the signal instructions. Unique areas for the mission may be methods of communication, pyrotechnics to be used to signal, code words, running password, challenge and passwords (used when behind friendly lines), and other special signal instructions.

Figure 5-10. Five-paragraph format OPORD example.

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Chapter 6

Sustainment

Sustainment facilitates uninterrupted operations by means of logistical support. It is accomplished through supply systems, maintenance, and other services that ensure continuous support throughout combat operations. The platoon leader is responsible for planning sustainment. The platoon sergeant is the platoon's main sustainment operator. The platoon sergeant works closely with the company executive officer (XO) and first sergeant (1SG) to ensure the platoon receives the required support for its assigned missions. Sustainment responsibilities and procedures in the platoon are the same as those that are habitually associated with Infantry units. The platoon and company rely heavily upon their higher headquarters for their sustainment needs. The company normally forecasts supplies with input from each platoon. in the process.

SECTION I — INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

6-1.   Sustainment is an ever present requirement in all operations. All Soldiers, leaders, and units have sustainment responsibilities. At the tactical level there are two main categories of personnel: sustainment providers; and sustainment users. Both the sustainment provider and the sustainment user have responsibilities for making the system work. The sustainment provider brings the sustainment user the supplies needed to fight. An Infantry platoon is normally a sustainment user only, having no organic sustainment assets. This section focuses on specific individual responsibilities within the platoon's sustainment chain.

PLATOON SERGEANT

6-2.   As the platoon's main sustainment operator, the platoon sergeant executes the platoon's logistical plan based on mission requirements, and platoon and company SOPs. The platoon sergeant's sustainment duties include—

- Participating in sustainment rehearsals at the company level and integrating sustainment into the platoon's maneuver rehearsals.
- Receiving, consolidating, and forwarding all administrative, personnel, and casualty reports to the 1SG as directed or IAW unit SOP.
- Obtaining supplies, equipment (except Class VIII), and mail from the supply sergeant and ensuring proper distribution.
- Supervising evacuation of casualties, KIAs, EPWs, and damaged equipment.
- Maintaining the platoon's manning roster.
- Cross-leveling supplies and equipment throughout the platoon.
- Coordinating logistics/personnel requirements with attached or OPCON units.

SQUAD LEADER

6-3.   Each squad leader's sustainment duties include:
- Ensuring Soldiers perform proper maintenance on all assigned equipment.
- Ensuring Soldiers maintain personal hygiene.
- Compiling personnel and logistics reports for the platoon and submitting them to the platoon sergeant as directed or IAW unit SOP.

- Obtaining supplies, equipment (except Class VIII), and mail from the platoon sergeant and ensuring proper distribution.
- Cross-leveling supplies and equipment throughout the squad.

TRAUMA SPECIALIST/PLATOON MEDIC

6-4. The trauma specialist/platoon medic is attached from the battalion medical platoon to provide emergency medical treatment for sick, injured, or wounded platoon personnel. Emergency medical treatment procedures performed by the trauma specialist may include opening an airway, starting intravenous fluids, controlling hemorrhage, preventing or treating for shock, splinting fractures or suspected fractures, and providing relief for pain. The trauma specialist is trained under the supervision of the battalion surgeon or physician's assistant (PA) and medical platoon leader. The trauma specialist is also responsible for—

- Triaging injured, wounded, or ill friendly and enemy personnel for priority of treatment.
- Conducting sick call screening for the platoon.
- Assisting in the evacuation of sick, injured, or wounded personnel under the direction of the platoon sergeant.
- Assisting in the training of the platoon's combat lifesavers in enhanced first-aid procedures.
- Requisitioning Class VIII supplies from the battalion aid station (BAS) for the platoon according to the tactical standing operating procedure (TSOP).
- Recommending locations for platoon casualty collection point(s) (CCP).
- Providing guidance to the platoon's combat lifesavers as required.

COMBAT LIFESAVER

6-5. The combat lifesaver (CLS) is a nonmedical Soldier trained to provide advanced first aid/lifesaving procedures beyond the level of self-aid or buddy aid. The CLS is not intended to take the place of medical personnel. His specialized training can slow deterioration of a wounded Soldier's condition until treatment by medical personnel is possible. Each certified combat lifesaver is issued a CLS aid bag. Whenever possible, the platoon leader ensures there is at least one CLS in each fire team.

TRAINING

6-6. Because combat lifesaving is an organic capability, the platoon should make it a training priority. An emerging "first responder" program is now expanding CLS trauma treatment with increased emphasis on combat and training injuries.

DUTIES

6-7. The combat lifesaver ensures that the squad CLS bag, litters, and IVs are properly packed. He also identifies any Class VIII shortages to the platoon medic, and participates in all casualty treatment and litter-carry drills. His advanced first-aid skills are called upon in the field until casualties can be evacuated. The combat lifesaver must know the location of the CCP and the SOP for establishing it. The CLS has a laminated quick reference nine-line MEDEVAC card.

SECTION II — PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6-8. Planning sustainment operations is primarily a company- and battalion-level operation. While the company commander and XO plan the operation, the platoon leader is responsible for execution at platoon level.

PLANNING

6-9. The platoon sergeant executes the plan at squad level. Sustainment at the Infantry platoon level is characterized by the following: responsiveness, economy, flexibility, integration, and survivability

RESPONSIVENESS

6-10. To be effective sustainment needs to be responsive. This requires users to provide timely requests for supplies and support while requiring providers to anticipate user needs in advance.

ECONOMY

6-11. To be efficient, sustainment providers and users exercise conservation. Because resources are always limited, it is in the best interest of everyone to use only what is needed. The principle of economy necessitates that Soldiers, leaders, and their units conserve resources whenever possible. This also ensures other Soldiers and units will have the supplies they need.

FLEXIBILITY

6-12. The principle of flexibility embodies the chaotic nature of combat. Providers and users alike remain aware that, despite the best efforts of all involved, things seldom go as planned; shipments are delayed, convoys are attacked, and supplies are destroyed. To support the needs of both the individual unit and the rest of the units on the battlefield requires both the user and provider to know what they need, when they need it and possible substitutes.

INTEGRATION

6-13. To function properly, sustainment considerations must be integrated into every aspect of an operation. Sustainment is not branch or rank specific – it is an essential part of all operations at all levels by all Soldiers. Again, without sustainment units can not accomplish their mission

SURVIVABILITY

6-14. On the whole, sustainment assets are necessary yet finite resources that are easily destroyed. Units without their classes of supply can not fight. Accordingly, survivability of sustainment assets is a high priority for everyone. This affects the platoon in two ways. First units may be required to conduct security missions for sustainment assets, such as convoy security, base security, and response force activities. Second, units must ensure the survivability of their own supplies and any asset that might be under their charge by properly safeguarding them

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUSTAINMENT PLAN

6-15. The platoon leader develops his sustainment plan by determining exactly what he has on hand to accurately predict his support requirements. This process is important not only in confirming the validity of the sustainment plan, but also in ensuring the platoon submits support requests as early as possible. The platoon leader formulates his sustainment execution plan and submits support requests to the company based on his maneuver plan. It is critical for the company to know what the platoon has on hand for designated critical supplies.

OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS

6-16. The sustainment plan should provide answers to the following types of operational questions:

TYPES OF SUPPORT

- Based on the nature of the operation and specific tactical factors, what types of support will the platoon need?

QUANTITIES

- In what quantities will this support be required?
- If occupying a SBF position, how long is the platoon likely to fire, and at what rate of fire? This drives the estimate for required Class V.
- Will emergency resupply be required during the battle? Potentially when and where?
- Does this operation require prestocked supplies (cache points)?

THREAT

- What are the composition, disposition, and capabilities of the expected enemy threat?
- How will these affect sustainment operations during the battle?
- Where and when will the expected contact occur?
- What are the platoon's expected casualties and equipment losses based on the nature and location of expected contact?
- What impact will the enemy's special weapons capabilities (such as CBRN) have on the battle and on expected sustainment requirements?
- How many EPWs are expected, and where?

TERRAIN AND WEATHER

- What ground will provide the best security for CCPs?
- What are the platoon's casualty evacuation routes?
- What are the company's dirty routes for evacuating contaminated personnel and equipment?

TIME AND LOCATION

- When and where will the platoon need sustainment?
- Based on the nature and location of expected contact, what are the best sites for the CCP?
- Where will the EPW collection points be located? Who secures them, when does the platoon turn them over, and to whom?

REQUIREMENTS

6-17. Determine support requirements by asking the following questions:

- What are the support requirements by element and type of support?
- Which squad has priority for emergency Class V resupply?

RISK FACTOR

- Will lulls in the battle permit support elements to conduct resupply operations in relative safety?
- If no lulls are expected, how can the platoon best minimize the danger to the sustainment vehicles providing the required support?

RESUPPLY TECHNIQUE

6-18. Resupply techniques the platoon use will be based on information developed during the sustainment planning process.

CLASSES OF SUPPLY CONSIDERATIONS

6-19. The platoon sergeant obtains supplies and delivers them to the platoon. The platoon leader establishes priorities for delivery, but combat demands that Class I, V, and IX supplies and equipment take priority because they are the most critical to successful operations.

CLASS I

6-20. This class includes rations, water, and ice. It also includes gratuitous issue of items related to health, morale, and welfare. The Daily Strength Report triggers an automatic request for Class I supplies. Personnel in the field trains prepare rations and deliver them with the LOGPAC. If the unit has special food requests, they must request them (for example, if a mission calls for MREs in lieu of planned hot rations).

CLASS II

6-21. This class includes clothing, individual equipment, mission-oriented protective posture (MOPP) suits, tentage, tool sets, and administrative and housekeeping supplies. The platoon sergeant normally distributes expendable items such as soap, toilet tissue, and insecticide based on battalion and company LOGPAC schedules.

CLASS III

6-22. This class includes bulk and packaged petroleum, oil, and lubricants (POL) products, which Infantry platoons do not normally require. Unusual Class III requests are coordinated by the company and then delivered to the battalion combat trains.

CLASS IV

6-23. This class includes construction materials, pickets, sandbags, and concertina wire.

CLASS V

6-24. This class covers all types of ammunition and mines including, C4, and other explosives.

CLASS VI

6-25. This class includes personal-demand items including, candy, soaps, cameras, film, and sundry packets that are normally sold through the exchange system.

CLASS VII

6-26. Infantry platoons do not normally have vehicles. However, this class includes major end items such as major equipment and vehicles. Battle loss reports trigger the issuance of Class VII items.

CLASS VIII

6-27. This class covers medical supplies. The BAS replaces combat lifesaver bags and first-aid kits on a one-for-one basis.

CLASS IX

6-28. This class includes repair parts and documents required for equipment maintenance operations. Repair parts are issued in response to a specific request or are obtained by direct exchange of repairable parts. The latter can include batteries for NVDs, and man-portable radios. In combat situations, exchange and cannibalization are normal ways to obtain Class IX items.

CLASS X

6-29. This class includes materials to support nonmilitary programs such as agricultural and economic development. Division level or higher will provide the platoon with instructions for requesting and issuing Class X supplies.

MISCELLANEOUS

6-30. This category covers anything that does not fall under one of the existing classes of supply.

MAINTENANCE

6-31. Proper maintenance is the key to keeping equipment and other materials in serviceable condition. It is a continuous process, starting with preventive measures taken by each Soldier responsible for a piece of equipment, and continuing on through repair and recovery efforts. Equipment services include inspecting, cleaning, testing, servicing, repairing, requisitioning, recovering, and evacuating damaged equipment for repair.

SOLDIER'S LOAD

6-32. The Soldier's load is a main concern of the leader. How much is carried, how far, and in what configuration are important mission considerations. Leaders must learn to prepare for the most likely contingencies based on available information, because they cannot be prepared for all possible operations. See FM 21-18, *Foot Marches*, and FM 3-21.10, *The Infantry Rifle Company,* for detailed discussions on load planning, calculating, and management techniques used to assist leaders and Soldiers in organizing tactical loads to ensure safety and combat effectiveness.

COMBAT LOAD AND BASIC LOAD

6-33. The platoon's combat load varies by mission and includes the supplies physically carried into the fight. The company commander may direct minimum requirements or be very specific for the composition of the combat load. Often, the unit SOP or the platoon leader specifies most items. The basic load includes supplies kept by the platoon for use in combat. The quantity of most basic load supply items depends on how many days in combat the platoon might have to sustain itself without resupply. For Class V ammunition, the higher commander or SOP specifies the platoon's basic load.

TRANSPORTATION

6-34. Because the Infantry platoon leader has no organic transportation, they request transportation support through the 1SG or company XO. They, in turn, request it from the battalion S4 for ground transportation or S3 air operations if the transportation is for helicopters. Whenever possible, unless there is a specific reason not to, rucksacks and excess equipment should be transported by vehicle.

SECTION III — RESUPPLY OPERATIONS

6-35. Resupply operations fall into one of three classifications: routine, emergency, or prestock. The platoon SOP specifies cues for each method. The platoon should rehearse or conduct resupply operations every time they conduct field training. The actual method selected for resupply in the field depends on METT-TC factors.

ROUTINE RESUPPLY

6-36. Routine resupply operations primarily include Classes I, V, and IX; mail; and other items requested by the platoon. When possible, the platoon should conduct routine resupply daily. Ideally, it does so during periods of limited visibility.

6-37. The LOGPAC technique offers a simple, efficient way to accomplish routine resupply operations. The key feature of LOGPAC, a centrally organized resupply convoy, originates at the battalion trains. The convoy carries all items needed to sustain the platoon for a specific period (usually 24 hours) or until the next scheduled LOGPAC. The battalion SOP will specify the LOGPAC's exact composition and march order.

6-38. As directed by the commander or XO, the 1SG establishes the company resupply point. He uses either the service station method (Figure 6-1), the tailgate method (Figure 6-2), or the in-position method (Figure 6-3). He briefs each LOGPAC driver on which method to use. When he has the resupply point ready, the 1SG informs the commander. The company commander then directs each platoon or element to conduct resupply based on the tactical situation.

6-39. The service station method allows the squads to move individually to a centrally located resupply point. This method requires the Soldiers to leave their fighting positions. Depending on the tactical situation, a squad moves out of its position, conducts resupply operations, and moves back into position. The squads rotate individually to eat; pick up mail, Class IX supplies, and other supplies and sundries; and refill or exchange water. This process continues until the entire platoon has received its supplies. The technique is used when contact is not likely and for the resupply of one or several classes of supplies.
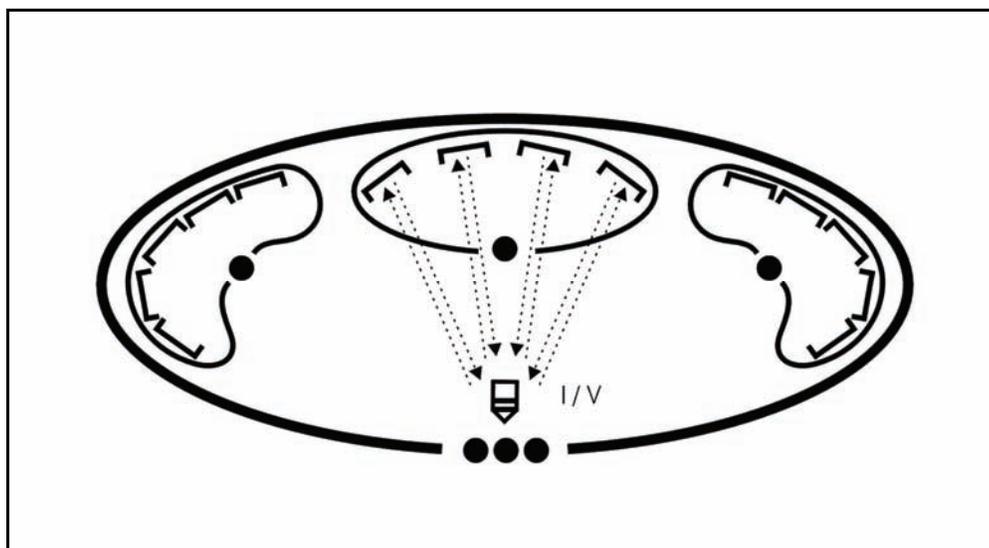
Figure 6-1. Service station resupply method.

NOTE: The platoon order should state the sequence for moving squads or portions of squads out of position. Companies may vary the technique by establishing a resupply point for each platoon and moving the supplies to that point.

6-40. In AAs, the 1SG normally uses the tailgate method (Figure 6-2). Individual Soldiers rotate through the feeding area. While there, they pick up mail and sundries and refill or exchange water cans. They centralize and guard any EPW. They take Soldiers killed in action and their personal effects to the holding area (normally a location downwind and out of sight of the platoon/company), where the 1SG assumes responsibility for them.
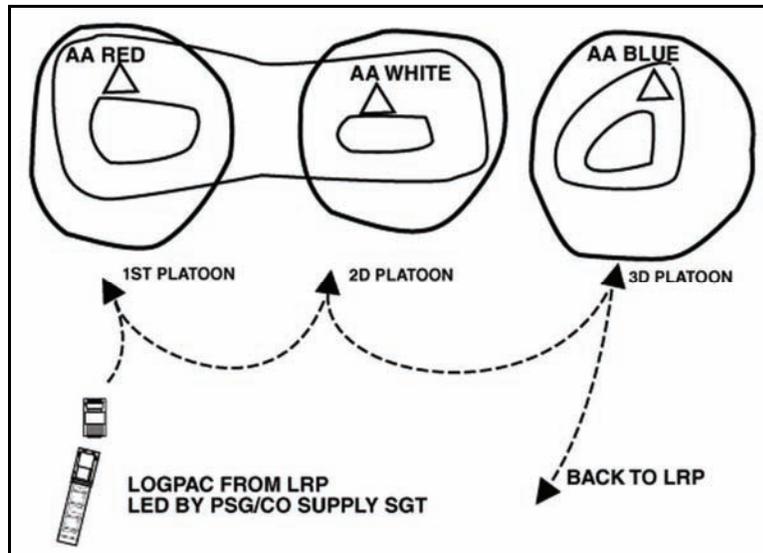
Figure 6-2. Tailgate resupply method.

6-41. During operations when contact with the enemy is imminent, the in-position resupply method (Figure 6-3) may be required to ensure adequate supplies are available to the squads. This method requires the company to bring forward supplies, equipment, or both to individual fighting positions. The platoon normally provides a guide to ensure the supplies are distributed to the most critical position first. This method—

- Is used when an immediate need exists.
- Is used to resupply single classes of supply.
- Enables leaders to keep squad members in their fighting positions.
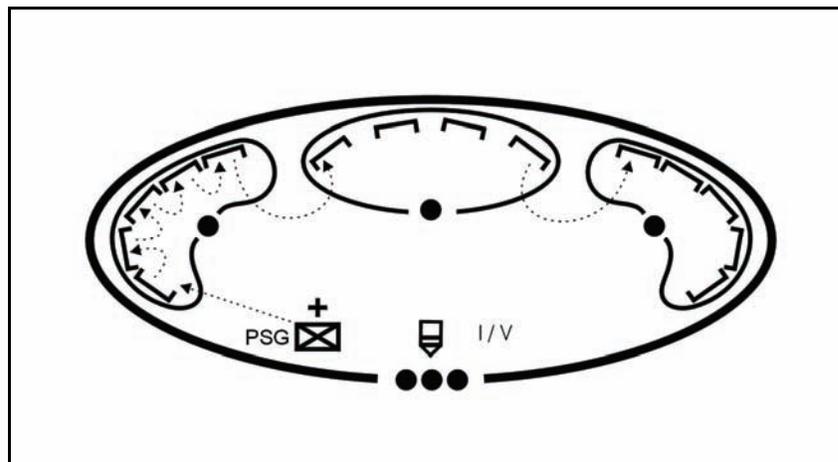
Figure 6-3. In-position resupply method.

NOTE: If resupply vehicles cannot move near platoon positions, platoon members may need to help the resupply personnel move supplies and equipment forward.

EMERGENCY RESUPPLY

6-42. Occasionally during combat operations, the platoon may have such an urgent need for resupply that it cannot wait for a routine LOGPAC. Emergency resupply may involve Classes I (usually water), V, VII,

VIII, and CBRN equipment. Emergency resupply can be conducted using either the service station or tailgate method, but more often uses the in-position method. The fastest appropriate means is normally used, although procedures may have to be adjusted when the company is in contact with the enemy. In the service station method, individual squads may pull back during a lull in combat to conduct resupply and then return to the fight. With tailgate resupply, the company brings limited supplies forward to the closest concealed position behind each element.

PRESTOCK RESUPPLY

6-43. In defensive or stay-behind operations and at some other times, the platoon may need prestocked supplies (also known as prepositioned or cached resupply). Normally, the platoon only prepositions items directed by the company.

6-44. All levels must carefully plan and execute prestock operations. All leaders, down to squad leader level, must know the exact locations of prestock sites. They verify these locations during reconnaissance or rehearsals. The platoon takes steps to ensure the survivability of the prestocked supplies. These measures include selecting covered and concealed positions and digging in the prestock positions. The platoon leader must have a removal and destruction plan to prevent the enemy from capturing prepositioned supplies.

6-45. During offensive operations, the company can preposition supplies on trucks well forward on the battlefield. This works well if the company expects to use a large volume of fire, with corresponding ammunition requirements. It allows the platoons to quickly resupply during consolidation or during lulls.

AERIAL SUSTAINMENT

6-46. Aerial sustainment is an aviation mission that consists of moving personnel, equipment, materiel, and supplies by utility, cargo, and fixed-wing assets for use in operations. Overland resupply might not work due to terrain, distance, or the existing enemy threat. The platoon must initiate a request for resupply and must push it through company to battalion. The platoon must prepare to receive the supplies at the specified time and location.

6-47. A aerial sustainment with speed balls is a technique with preconfigured loads to resupply Infantry platoons in urban areas (Figure 6-4). Sustainment personnel prepackage supplies in aviation kit bags, duffle bags, or other suitable containers. Helicopters fly as close to the drop point as possible, reduce speed, drop supplies, and leave the area quickly. Supplies should be packaged in bubble wrap or other shock-absorbing material to minimize damage.
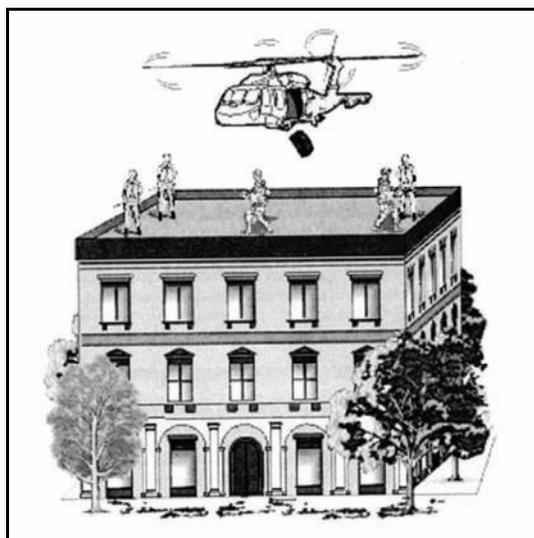
Figure 6-4. Speed ball delivery.

SECTION IV — CASUALTY PROCEDURES

6-48. Following are the procedures that should be followed in the treatment, evacuation, and reporting of combat casualties.

INITIAL CARE

6-49. When combat begins and casualties occur, the platoon first must provide initial care to those wounded in action (WIA).

6-50. Effective casualty evacuation provides a major increase in the morale of a unit. This is accomplished through the administration of first aid (self-aid/buddy aid), enhanced first aid (by the combat lifesaver), and emergency medical treatment (by the trauma specialist/platoon medic). Casualties are cared for at the point of injury or under nearby cover and concealment.

6-51. During the fight, casualties should remain under cover where they received initial treatment. As soon as the situation allows, squad leaders arrange for casualty evacuation to the platoon CCP. The platoon normally sets up the CCP in a covered and concealed location to the rear of the platoon position. At the CCP, the platoon medic conducts triage on all casualties, takes steps to stabilize their conditions, and starts the process of moving them to the rear for advanced treatment. Before the platoon evacuates casualties to the CCP or beyond, leaders should remove all key operational items and equipment from each person. Removal should include automated network control devices (ANCD), GPS maps, position-locating devices, and laser pointers. Every unit should establish an SOP for handling the weapons and ammunition of its WIA.

6-52. The tactical situation will determine how quickly fellow Soldiers can treat wounded Soldiers. Understandably, fewer casualties occur if Soldiers focus on destroying or neutralizing the enemy that caused the casualties. This is a critical situation that should be discussed and rehearsed by the squads and platoons prior to executing a mission.

MOVEMENT

6-53. Timely movement of casualties from the battlefield is important not only for safety and care for the wounded, but also for troop morale.

6-54. Squad leaders are responsible for casualty evacuation from the battlefield to the platoon CCP. At the CCP, the senior trauma specialist assists the platoon sergeant and 1SG in arranging evacuation by ground or air ambulance or by non-standard means. Leaders must minimize the number of Soldiers required to evacuate casualties. Casualties with minor wounds can walk or even assist with carrying the more seriously wounded. Soldiers can make field-expedient litters by cutting small trees and putting the poles through the sleeves of zippered Army combat uniform (ACU) blouses or ponchos. A travois, or skid, may be used for casualty evacuation. This is a type of litter on which wounded can be strapped; it can be pulled by one person. It can be locally fabricated from durable, rollable plastic on which tie-down straps are fastened. In rough terrain (or on patrols), casualties may be evacuated all the way to the BAS by litter teams. From there they can be carried with the unit until transportation can reach them, or left at a position and picked up later.

6-55. From the platoon area, casualties are normally evacuated to the company CCP and then back to the BAS. The company 1SG, with the assistance of the platoon sergeant, is normally responsible for movement of the casualties from the platoon to the company CCP. The unit SOP should address this activity, including the marking of casualties during limited visibility operations. Small, standard, or infrared chemical lights work well for this purpose. Once the casualties are collected, evaluated, and treated, they are sent to company CCP. Once they arrive, the above process is repeated while awaiting their evacuation back to the BAS.

6-56. When the company is widely dispersed, the casualties may be evacuated directly from the platoon CCP by vehicle or helicopter. Helicopter evacuation may be restricted due to the enemy air defense artillery (ADA) or small arms/RPG threat. In some cases, casualties must be moved to the company CCP or

battalion combat trains before helicopter evacuation. When there are not enough battalion organic ambulances to move the wounded, unit leaders may direct supply vehicles to "backhaul" casualties to the BAS after supplies are delivered. Normally, urgent casualties will move by ambulance. Less seriously hurt Soldiers are moved through other means. If no ambulance is available, the most critical casualties must get to the BAS as quickly as possible. In some cases, the platoon sergeant may direct platoon litter teams to carry casualties to the rear.

6-57. The senior military person present determines whether to request medical evacuation and assigns precedence. These decisions are based on the advice of the senior medical person at the scene, the patient's condition, and the tactical situation. Casualties will be picked up as soon as possible, consistent with available resources and pending missions. Following are priority categories of precedence and the criteria used in their assignment.

PRIORITY I-URGENT

6-58. Assigned to emergency cases that should be evacuated as soon as possible and within a maximum of two hours in order to save life, limb, or eyesight; to prevent complications of serious illness; or to avoid permanent disability.

PRIORITY IA-URGENT-SURG

6-59. Assigned to patients who must receive far forward surgical intervention to save their lives and stabilize them for further evacuation.

PRIORITY II-PRIORITY

6-60. Assigned to sick and wounded personnel requiring prompt medical care. The precedence is used when special treatment is not available locally and the individual will suffer unnecessary pain or disability (becoming URGENT precedence) if not evacuated within four hours.

PRIORITY III-ROUTINE

6-61. Assigned to sick and wounded personnel requiring evacuation but whose condition is not expected to deteriorate significantly. The sick and wounded in this category should be evacuated within 24 hours.

PRIORITY IV-CONVENIENCE

6-62. Assigned to patients for whom evacuation by medical vehicle is a matter of medical convenience rather than necessity.

CASEVAC

6-63. Casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) is the term used to refer to the movement of casualties by air or ground on nonmedical vehicles or aircraft. CASEVAC operations normally involve the initial movement of wounded or injured Soldiers to the nearest medical treatment facility. Casualty evacuation operations may also be employed in support of mass casualty operations. Medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) includes the provision of en route medical care, whereas CASEVAC does not provide any medical care during movement. For definitive information on CASEVAC, see FM 8-10-6, *Medical Evacuation in a Theater of Operations, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, FM 8-10-26, *Employment of the Medical Company (Air Ambulance)*, and Table 6-1.

6-64. When possible, medical platoon ambulances provide evacuation and en route care from the Soldier's point of injury or the platoon's or company's CCP to the BAS. The ambulance team supporting the company works in coordination with the senior trauma specialist supporting the platoons. In mass casualty situations, non-medical vehicles may be used to assist in casualty evacuation as directed by the Infantry company commander. However, plans for the use of non-medical vehicles to perform casualty evacuation should be included in the unit SOP.

Table 6-1. Procedures to Request Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC).

Line/ Item	Explanation	Where/How Obtained	Who Normally Provides	Reason
1/Location of pickup site by grid coordinates with grid zone letters	Encrypt the grid coordinates of the pickup site. When using the DRYAD Numeral Cipher, the same "SET" line will be used to encrypt the grid zone letters and the coordinates. To prevent misunderstanding, it is stated that grid zone letters are included in the message (unless SOP specifies its use at all times).	From map	Unit leader(s)	Required so evacuation vehicle knows where to pick up patient, and, unit coordinating the evacuation mission can plan the route for the evacuation vehicle (if evacuation vehicle must pick up from more than one location).
2/Requesting unit radio frequency, call signal, and suffix	Encrypt the frequency of the radio at the pickup site, not a relay frequency. The call sign (and suffix if used) of the person to be contacted at the pickup site may be transmitted in the clear.	From SOI	RATELO	Required so evacuation vehicle can contact requesting unit while en route (or obtain additional information and change in situation or directions).
3/Number of patients by precedence. Note the brevity codes used.	Report only applicable information and encrypt the brevity codes. A-Urgent B-Urgent-Surgical C-Priority D-Routine E-Convenience If two or more categories must be reported in the same request, insert the word *BREAK* between each category.	From evaluation of patient(s)	Medic or senior person present	Required by unit controlling the evacuation vehicles to assist in prioritizing missions.
4/Special equipment required	Encrypt the applicable brevity codes. A-None B-Hoist C-Extraction equipment D-Ventilator	From evaluation of patient/ situation	Medic or senior person present	Required so equipment can be placed on board the evacuation vehicle prior to the start of the mission.
5/Number of patients	Report only applicable information and encrypt the brevity code. If requesting MEDEVAC for both types, insert the word *BREAK* between the litter entry and ambulatory entry. For example: L + # of PNT-litter A + # of PNT-ambulatory	From evaluation of patient	Medic or senior person present	Required so appropriate number of evacuation vehicles may be dispatched to the pickup site. They should be configured to carry the patients requiring evacuation.

Table 6-1. Procedures to Request Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) (continued).

Line/ Item	Explanation	Where/How Obtained	Who Normally Provides	Reason
6/Security of pickup site (wartime)	N-No enemy troops in area P-Possibly enemy troops in area (approach with caution) E-Enemy troops in area (approach with caution) X-Enemy troops in area (armed escort required)	From evaluation of situation	Unit leader	Required to assist the evacuation crew in assessing the situation and determining if assistance is required. More definitive guidance (such as specific location of enemy to assist an aircraft in planning its approach) can be furnished by the evacuation aircraft while it is en route.
7/Number and type of wound, injury, or illness (peacetime)	Specific information regarding patient wounds by type (gunshot or shrapnel). Report serious bleeding and patient blood type (if known).	From evaluation of patient	Medic or senior person present	Required to assist evacuation personnel in determining treatment and special equipment needed.
8/Method of marking pickup site	Encrypt the brevity codes. A-Panels B-Pyrotechnic signal C-Smoke signal D-None E-Other	Based on situation and availability of materials	Medic or senior person present	Required to assist the evacuation crew in identifying the specific location of the pick up. Note that the color of the panels or smoke should not be transmitted until the evacuation vehicle contacts the unit just prior to its arrival. For security, the crew should identify the color. The unit should verify it.
9/Patient nationality and status	The number of patients in each category does not need to be transmitted. Encrypt only the applicable brevity codes. A-US military B-US civilian C-Non-US military D-Non-US civilian E-EPW	From evaluation of patient	Medic or senior person present	Required to assist in planning for destination facilities and need for guards. Unit requesting support should ensure that there is an English-speaking representative at the pickup site.
10/CBRN contamin-ation (wartime)	Include this line only when applicable. Encrypt the applicable brevity codes. N-Nuclear B-Biological C-Chemical	From situation	Medic or senior person present	Required to assist in planning for the mission. Determine which evacuation vehicle will accomplish the mission and when it will be accomplished.
11/Terrain description (peacetime)	Include details of terrain features in and around proposed landing site. If possible, describe relationship of site to prominent terrain feature (lake, mountain, and tower).	From area survey	Personnel at site	Required to allow evacuation personnel to assist route/avenue of approach into area. Of particular importance if hoist operation is required.

UNIT SOPS

6-65. Unit SOPs and OPORDs must address casualty treatment and evacuation in detail. They should cover the duties and responsibilities of key personnel, the evacuation of chemically contaminated casualties (on routes separate from noncontaminated casualties), and the priority for manning key weapons and positions. They should specify preferred and alternate methods of evacuation and make provisions for retrieving and safeguarding the weapons, ammunition, and equipment of casualties. Slightly wounded personnel are treated and returned to duty by the lowest echelon possible. Platoon medic evaluate sick Soldiers and either treat or evacuate them as necessary. Casualty evacuation should be rehearsed like any other critical part of an operation.

CASUALTY REPORT

6-66. A casualty report is filled out when a casualty occurs, or as soon as the tactical situation permits. This is usually done by the Soldier's squad leader and turned in to the platoon sergeant, who forwards it to the 1SG. A brief description of how the casualty occurred (including the place, time, and activity being performed) and who or what inflicted the wound is included. If the squad leader does not have personal knowledge of how the casualty occurred, he gets this information from any Soldier who does have the knowledge. Department of the Army (DA) Form 1156, *Casualty Feeder Card* (Figure 6-5A and B), is used to report those Soldiers who have been killed and recovered, and those who have been wounded. This form is also used to report KIA Soldiers who are missing, captured, or not recovered. The Soldier with the most knowledge of the incident should complete the witness statement. This information is used to inform the Soldier's next of kin and to provide a statistical base for analysis of friendly or enemy tactics. Once the casualty's medical condition has stabilized, the company commander may write a letter to the Soldier's next of kin. During lulls in the battle, the platoon forwards casualty information to the company headquarters.

Figure 6-5A. DA Form 1156, casualty feeder card (report front).

Figure 6-5B. DA Form 1156, casualty feeder card (report back).

KILLED IN ACTION

6-67. The platoon leader designates a location for the collection of KIAs. All personal effects remain with the body. However, squad leaders remove and safeguard any equipment and issue items. He keeps these until he can turn the equipment and issue items over to the platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant turns over the KIA to the 1SG. As a rule, the platoon should not transport KIA remains on the same vehicle as wounded Soldiers. KIAs are normally transported to the rear on empty resupply trucks, but this depends on unit SOP.

SECTION V — ENEMY PRISONERS OF WAR AND RETAINED/DETAINED PERSONS

6-68. Enemy prisoners of war (EPW) and captured enemy equipment or materiel often provide excellent combat information. This information is of tactical value only if the platoon processes and evacuates prisoners and materiel to the rear quickly. In any tactical situation, the platoon will have specific procedures and guidelines for handling prisoners and captured materiel.

6-69. All persons captured, personnel detained or retained by U.S. Armed Forces during the course of military operations, are considered "detained" persons until their status is determined by higher military and civilian authorities. The BCT has an organic military police platoon organic to the BSTB to take control of and evacuate detainees (Figure 6-6). However, as a practical matter, when Infantry squads, platoons, companies, and battalions capture enemy personnel, they must provide the initial processing and holding for detainees. Detainee handling is a resource intensive and politically sensitive operation that requires detailed training, guidance, and supervision.
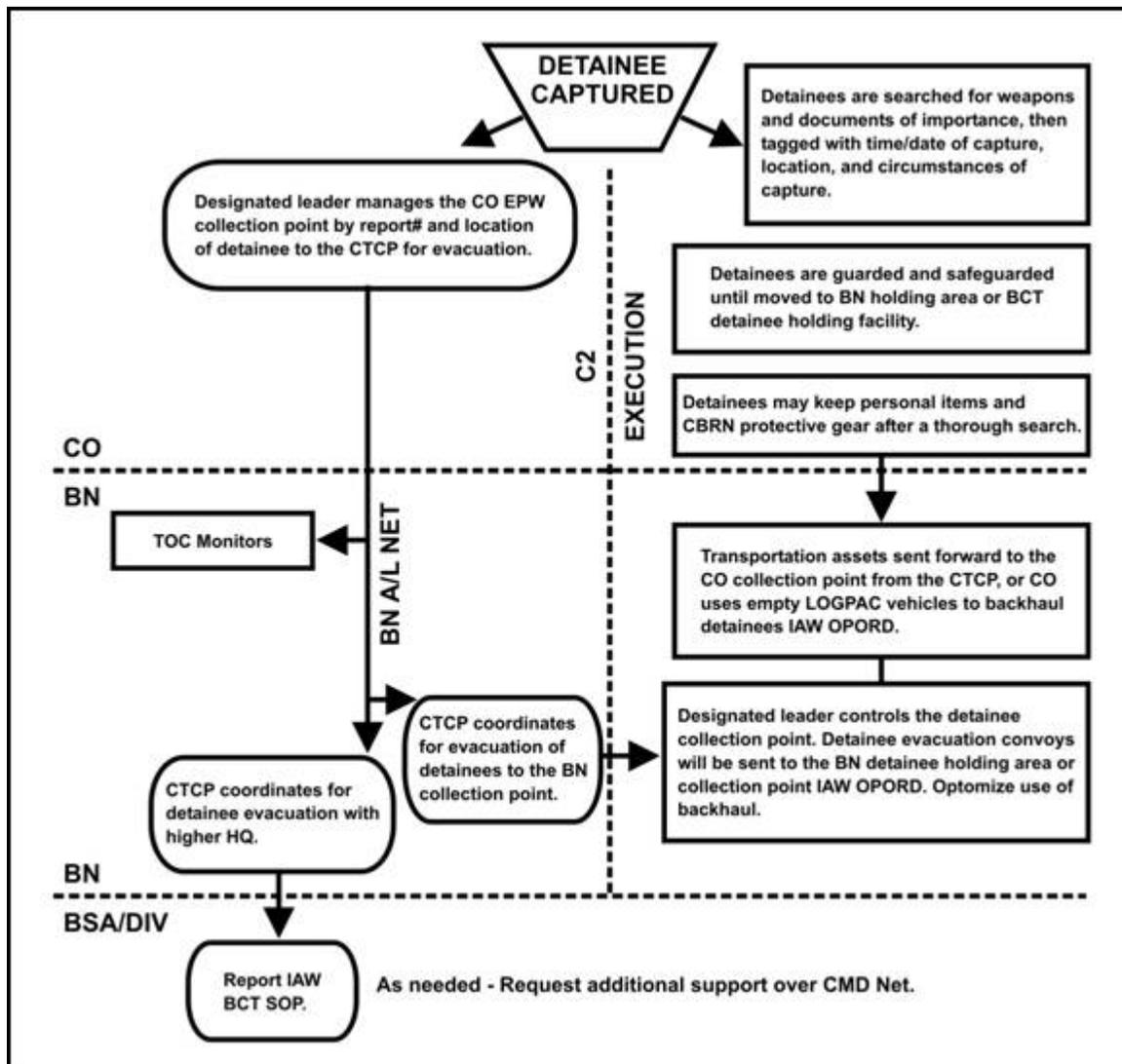
Figure 6-6. Detainee handling.

6-70. All detained persons shall be immediately given humanitarian care and treatment. U.S. Armed Forces will never torture, maltreat, or purposely place detained persons in positions of danger. There is never a military necessity exception to violate these principles.

6-71. Field processing of detainees is always handled IAW the 5 Ss and T method:

- *Search:* Confiscate weapons and items of intelligence value or items that might assist the detainee to escape. Let the detainee keep protective clothing, equipment, identification and personal items. All confiscated items must be tagged.
- *Silence:* Direct the detainees not to talk, or make facial or hand gestures. They may be gagged.
- *Segregate:* Leaders are separated from the rest of the population. Separate hostile elements such as religious, political, or ethnic groups. Separate women and minors from adult male detainees.
- *Safeguard:* Ensure detainees are provided adequate food, potable water, clothing, shelter, medical attention, and that they not exposed to unnecessary danger. Do not use coercion to obtain information. Immediately report allegations of abuse through command channels.
- *Speed to a safe area/rear*: Evacuate detainees from the battlefield to a holding area or facility as soon as possible. Transfer captured documents and other property to the forces assuming responsibility for the detainees.

● *Tag*: Before evacuating an EPW detainee, he must be tagged with Department of the Defense (DD) Form 2745, *Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) Capture Tag* (Part A) (Figure 6-7), or by field expedient means. Field expedient means should include tagging with date and time of capture, location of capture, capturing unit, and circumstances of capture. DD Form 2745, *Unit Record Card* (Part B), is the unit record copy (Figure 6-8). DD Form 2745, *Document/Special Equipment Weapons Card* (Part C), is for the detainee's confiscated property (Figure 6-9). Tagging is critical. If it does not happen the ability of higher headquarters to quickly obtain pertinent tactical information is greatly reduced.

6-72. Detainees should be evacuated as soon as is practical to the BCT detainee collection point. Tactical questioning of detainees is allowed relative to collection of CCIR. However, detainees must always be treated IAW the U.S. Law of War Policy as set forth in the Department of Defense Directive 2311.01E, *DoD Law of War Program*.

6-73. Soldiers capturing equipment, documents, and detainees should tag them using DD Form 2745, *Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) Capture Tag*, take digital pictures, and report the capture immediately. Detainees are allowed to keep protective equipment such as protective masks. Other captured military equipment and detainee personal effects are inventoried on DA Form 4137, *Evidence/Property Custody Document*. Soldiers then coordinate with the platoon and company headquarters to link up and turn the documents and prisoners over to designated individuals.

6-74. In addition to initial processing, the capturing element provides guards and transportation to move prisoners to the designated EPW collection points. The capturing element normally carries prisoners on vehicles already heading toward the rear, such as tactical vehicles returning from LOGPAC operations. The capturing element must also feed, provide medical treatment, and safeguard EPWs until they reach the collection point.

6-75. Once EPWs arrive at the collection point, the platoon sergeant assumes responsibility for them. He provides for security and transports them to the company EPW collection point. He uses available personnel as guards, including walking wounded or Soldiers moving to the rear for reassignment.

Figure 6-7. DA Form 2745, enemy prisoner of war (EPW) capture tag (part A).

Figure 6-8. DD 2745, unit record card (part B).

Figure 6-9. DD 2745, document/special equipment weapons card (part C).

Chapter 7

OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

Platoon and squad leaders must understand the principles, tactics, techniques, and procedures associated with the offense. They must comprehend their role when operating within a larger organization's operations, and when operating independently. They must recognize the complementary and reinforcing effects of other maneuver elements and supporting elements with their own capabilities. They must also understand the impact of terrain, open or restrictive, on their operations. This chapter discusses offensive operations and the elements that affect tactical success.

SECTION I — INTRODUCTION TO OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

7-1.   Infantry platoon offensive actions can occur during all types of full spectrum operations. The enemy situation affects the type of operation conducted. METT-TC influences the actions of leaders and options available to them.

7-2.   The outcome of decisive combat derives from offensive operations. The platoon can best close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver to destroy or capture him, repel his assault by fire, engage in close combat, or counterattack through offensive operations. While tactical considerations call for the platoon to execute defensive operations for a period of time, defeating the enemy requires a shift to offensive operations. This is also true in stability operations in which transitions to the offense can occur suddenly and unexpectedly. To ensure the success of the attack, the platoon leader must understand the following fundamentals of offensive operations and apply the TLP during the operations process. (For a discussion on the TLP operations process, refer to Chapter 5.) A sound doctrinal foundation during offensive planning assists the platoon leader in capitalizing on the tactical employment of the Infantry platoon.

CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

7-3.   Surprise, concentration, tempo, and audacity characterize all offensive operations. To maximize the value of these characteristics, platoon leaders must apply the following considerations.

SURPRISE

7-4.   Platoons achieve surprise by attacking the enemy at a time or place he does not expect or in a manner for which he is unprepared. Unpredictability and boldness, within the scope of the commander's intent, help the platoon gain surprise. Total surprise is rarely essential; simply delaying or disrupting the enemy's reaction is usually effective. Surprise also stresses the enemy's command and control and induces psychological shock in his Soldiers and leaders. The platoon's ability to infiltrate during limited visibility and to attack are often key to achieving surprise.

CONCENTRATION

7-5.   Platoons achieve concentration by massing the effects of their weapons systems and rifle squads to achieve a single purpose. Massing effects does not require all elements of the platoon to be co-located; it simply requires the effects of the weapons systems to be applied at the right place and time. Because the attacker moves across terrain the enemy has prepared, he may expose himself to the enemy's fires. By

concentrating combat power, the attacker can reduce the effectiveness of enemy fires and the amount of time he is exposed to those fires. Modern navigation tools such as global positioning systems (GPSs) allow the platoon leader to disperse, while retaining the ability to quickly mass the effects of the platoon's weapons systems whenever necessary.

TEMPO

7-6.   Tempo is the rate of speed of military action. Controlling or altering that rate is essential for maintaining the initiative. While a fast tempo is preferred, the platoon leader must remember that synchronization sets the stage for successful accomplishment of the platoon's mission. To support the commander's intent, the platoon leader must ensure his platoon's movement is synchronized with the company's movement and with the other platoons. If the platoon is forced to slow down because of terrain or enemy resistance, the commander can alter the tempo of company movement to maintain synchronization. The tempo may change many times during an offensive operation. The platoon leader must remember that it is more important to move using covered and concealed routes (from which he can mass the effects of direct fires), than it is to maintain precise formations and predetermined speeds.

AUDACITY

7-7.   Audacity is a simple plan of action, boldly executed. It is the willingness to risk bold action to achieve positive results. Knowledge of the commander's intent one and two levels up allows the platoon leader to take advantage of battlefield opportunities whenever they present themselves. Audacity enhances the effectiveness of the platoon's support for the entire offensive operation. Marked by disciplined initiative, audacity also inspires Soldiers to overcome adversity and danger.

TYPES OF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

7-8.   The four types of offensive operations, described in FM 3-90, are movement to contact, attack, exploitation, and pursuit. Companies can execute movements to contact and attacks. Platoons generally conduct these forms of the offense as part of a company. Companies and platoons participate in an exploitation or pursuit as part of a larger force. The nature of these operations depends largely on the amount of time and enemy information available during the planning and preparation for the operation phases. All involve designating decisive points, maintaining mutual support, gaining fire superiority over the enemy, and seizing positions of advantage without prohibitive interference by the enemy.

MOVEMENT TO CONTACT

7-9.   Movement to contact is a type of offensive operation designed to develop the situation and establish or regain contact. The platoon will likely conduct a movement to contact as part of a company when the enemy situation is vague or not specific enough to conduct an attack. For a detailed discussion of movement to contact, refer to Section V.

ATTACK

7-10.   An attack is an offensive operation that destroys enemy forces, seizes, or secures terrain. An attack differs from a movement to contact because the enemy disposition is at least partially known. Movement supported by fires characterizes an attack. The platoon will likely participate in a synchronized company attack. However, the platoon may conduct a special purpose attack as part of or separate from a company offensive or defensive operation. Special purpose attacks consist of ambush, spoiling attack, counterattack, raid, feint, and demonstration. For a detailed discussion of attack and special purpose attacks, refer to Section VI.

EXPLOITATION

7-11.   All commanders are expected to exploit successful attacks. In the exploitation, the attacker extends the destruction of the defending force by maintaining constant offensive pressure. Exploitations are conducted at all command levels, but divisions and brigades are the echelons that conduct major

exploitation operations. The objective of exploitation is to disintegrate the enemy to the point where they have no alternative but surrender or fight following a successful attack. Indicators such as increased enemy prisoners of war (EPW), lack of organized defense, loss of enemy unit cohesion upon contact, and capture of enemy leaders indicate the opportunity to shift to an exploitation. Companies and platoons may conduct movements to contact or attacks as part of a higher unit's exploitation.

PURSUIT

7-12. Pursuits are conducted at the company level and higher. A pursuit typically follows a successful exploitation. The pursuit is designed to prevent a fleeing enemy from escaping and to destroy him. Companies and platoons may conduct pursuits as part of a higher unit's exploitation.

FORMS OF MANEUVER

7-13. In the typical offensive operations sequence (see Section II), the platoon maneuvers against the enemy in an area of operation. Maneuver places the enemy at a disadvantage through the application of friendly fires and movement. The five forms of maneuver are—

    (1) Envelopment.
    (2) Turning movement.
    (3) Infiltration.
    (4) Penetration.
    (5) Frontal attack.

ENVELOPMENT

7-14. Envelopment (Figure 7-1) is a form of maneuver in which an attacking element seeks to avoid the principal enemy defenses by seizing objectives to the enemy flank or rear in order to destroy him in his current positions. Flank attacks are a variant of envelopment in which access to the enemy's flank and rear results in enemy destruction or encirclement. A successful envelopment requires discovery or creation of an assailable flank. The envelopment is the preferred form of maneuver because the attacking element tends to suffer fewer casualties while having the most opportunities to destroy the enemy. A platoon may conduct the envelopment by itself or as part of the company's attack. Envelopments focus on—

- Seizing terrain.
- Destroying specific enemy forces.
- Interdicting enemy withdrawal routes.
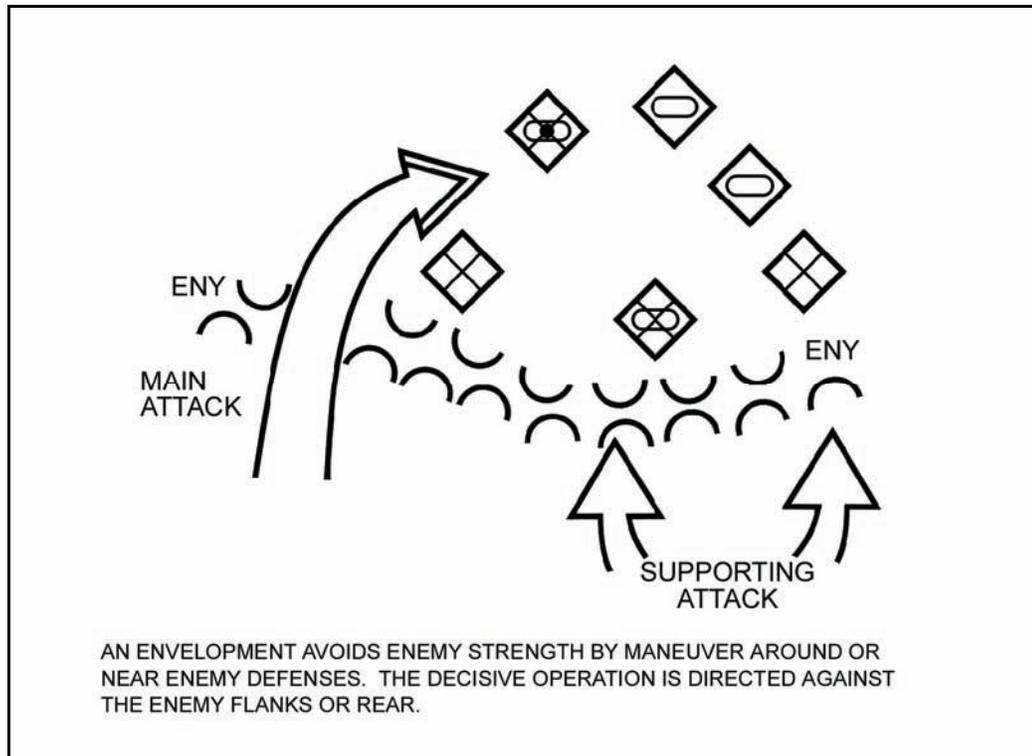
Figure 7-1. Envelopment.

TURNING MOVEMENT

7-15. The turning movement (Figure 7-2) is a form of maneuver in which the attacking element seeks to avoid the enemy's principal defensive positions by seizing objectives to the enemy's rear. This causes the enemy to move out of his current positions or to divert major forces to meet the threat. For a turning movement to be successful, the unit trying to turn the enemy must attack something the enemy will fight to save or that will cause him to move to avoid destruction. This may be a supply route, an artillery emplacement, or a headquarters. In addition to attacking a target that the enemy will fight to save, the attacking unit should be strong enough to pose a real threat. A platoon will likely conduct a turning movement as part of a company supporting a battalion attack.

> **NOTE:** The turning movement is different from envelopment because the element conducting the turning movement seeks to make the enemy displace from his current location. An enveloping element seeks to engage the enemy in his current location from an unexpected direction.

A TURNING MOVEMENT AVOIDS THE ENEMY'S PRINCIPLE DEFENSIVE
POSTIONS BY SEIZING OBJECTIVES TO THE ENEMY REAR AND CAUSING
THE ENEMY TO MOVE OUT OF HIS CURRENT POSITION.
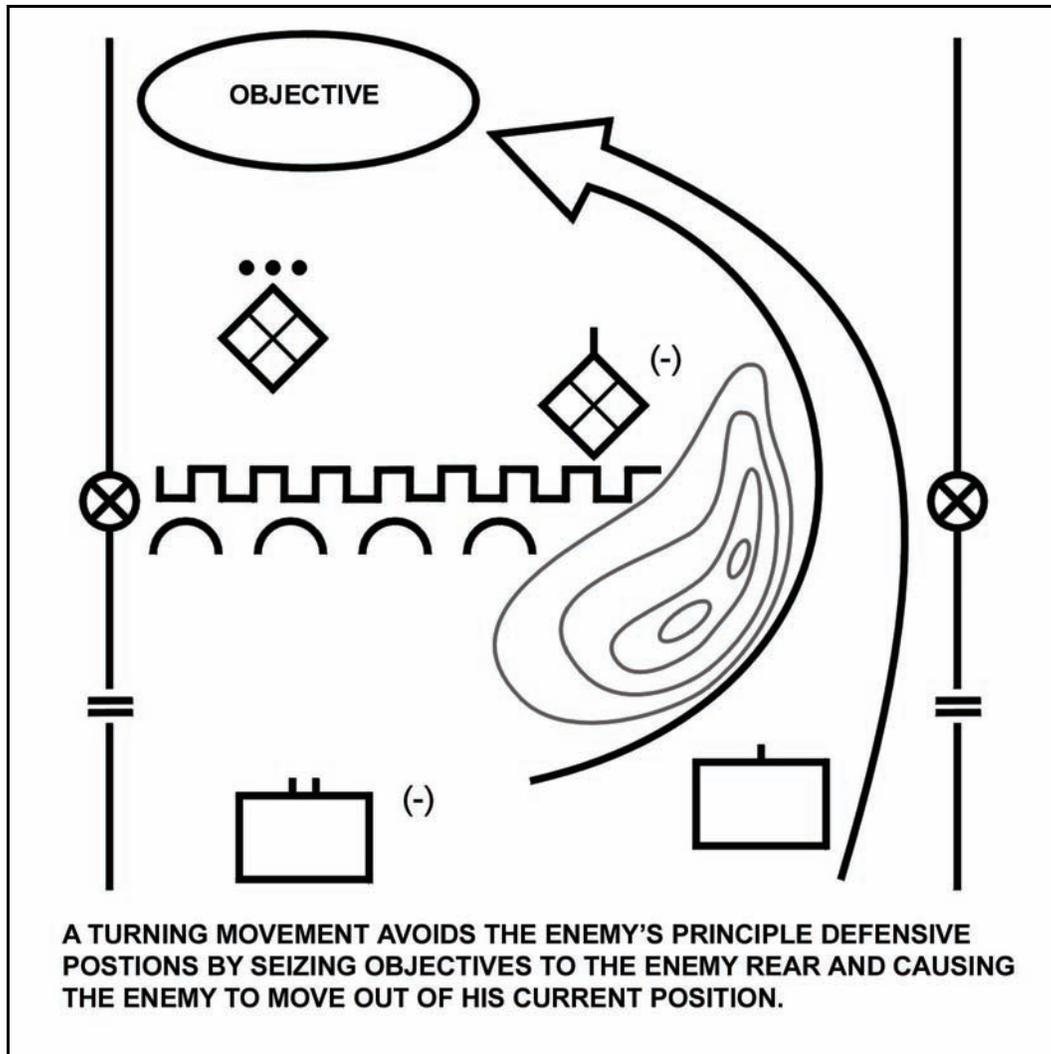
Figure 7-2. Turning movement.

INFILTRATION

7-16. Infiltration (Figure 7-3) is a form of maneuver in which an attacking element conducts undetected movement through or into an area occupied by enemy forces to gain a position of advantage in the enemy rear. When conducted efficiently only small elements will be exposed to enemy defensive fires. Moving and assembling forces covertly through enemy positions takes a considerable amount of time. A successful infiltration reaches the enemy's rear without fighting through prepared positions. An infiltration is normally used in conjunction with and in support of a unit conducting another form of maneuver. A platoon may conduct an infiltration as part of a larger unit's attack with the company employing another form of maneuver. A platoon may conduct an infiltration to—

- Attack enemy-held positions from an unexpected direction.
- Occupy a support-by-fire position to support an attack.
- Secure key terrain.
- Conduct ambushes and raids.
- Conduct a covert breach of an obstacle.
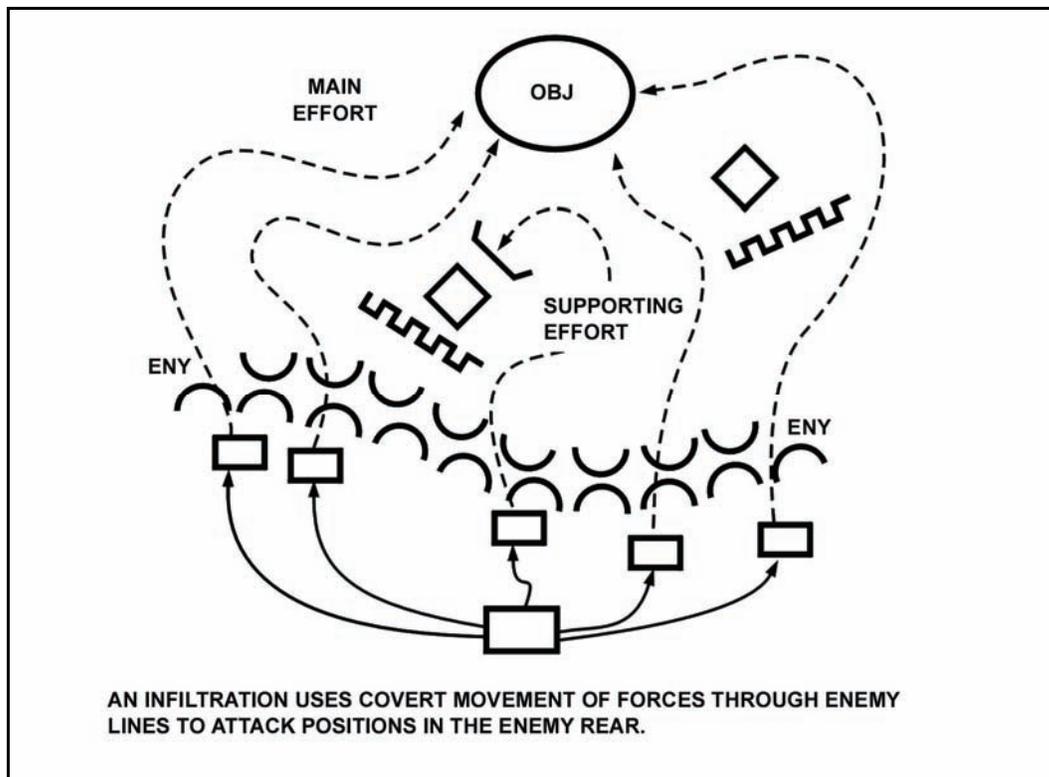
Figure 7-3. Infiltration.

PENETRATION

7-17. Penetration (Figure 7-4) is a form of maneuver in which an attacking element seeks to rupture enemy defenses on a narrow front to create both assailable flanks and access to the enemy's rear. Penetration is used when enemy flanks are not assailable; when enemy defenses are overextended; when weak spots in the enemy defense are identified; and when time does not permit some other form of maneuver. A penetration normally consists of three steps: breach the enemy's main defense positions, widen the gap created to secure flanks by enveloping one or both of the newly exposed flanks, and seize the objective. As part of a larger force penetration the platoon will normally isolate, suppress, fix, or destroy enemy forces; breach tactical or protective obstacles in the enemy's main defense; secure the shoulders of the penetration; or seize key terrain. Similar to breaching obstacles, the platoon will be designated as a breach, support, or assault element. A company may also use the penetration to secure a foothold within a built-up area.

A PENETRATION HAS THREE STAGES: THE INITIAL RUPTURE, ROLLING UP THE
FLANKS, AND CONTINUING THE ATTACK TO SECURE A DEEP OBJECTIVE.
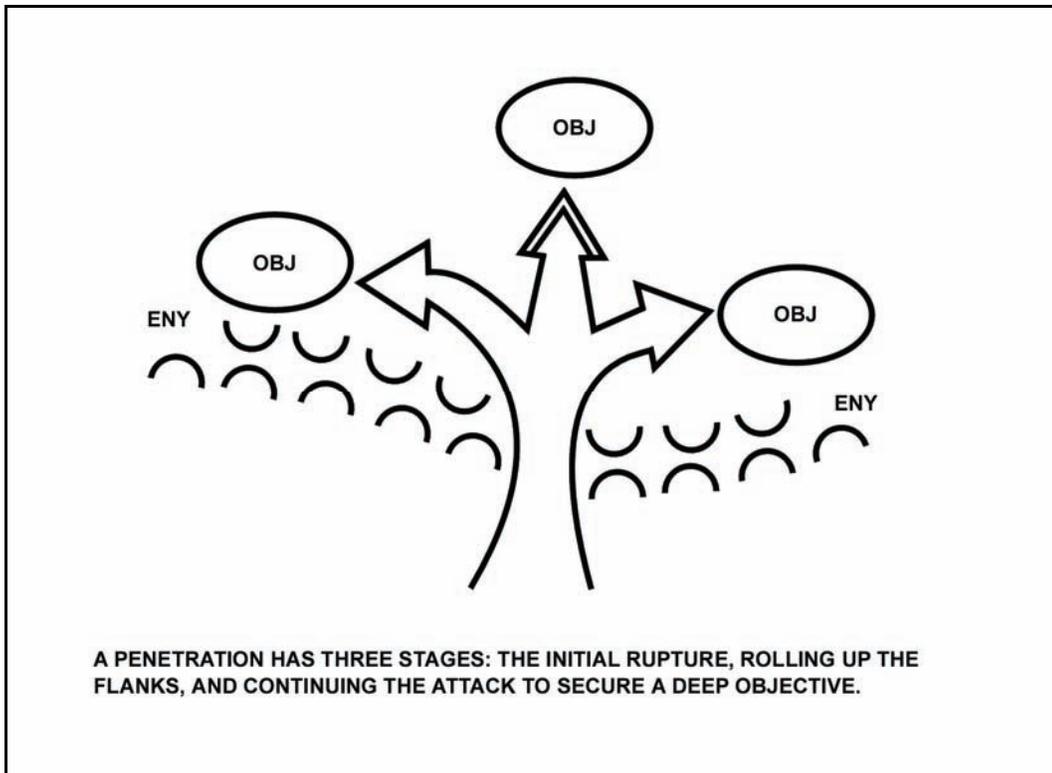
Figure 7-4. Penetration.

FRONTAL ATTACK

7-18. Frontal attack (Figure 7-5) is a form of maneuver in which an attacking element seeks to destroy a weaker enemy force or fix a larger enemy force along a broad front. It is the least desirable form of maneuver because it exposes the attacker to the concentrated fire of the defender and limits the effectiveness of the attacker's own fires. However, the frontal attack is often the best form of maneuver for an attack in which speed and simplicity are key. It is useful in overwhelming weak defenses, security outposts, or disorganized enemy forces, and is also often used when a unit conducts a reconnaissance in force.
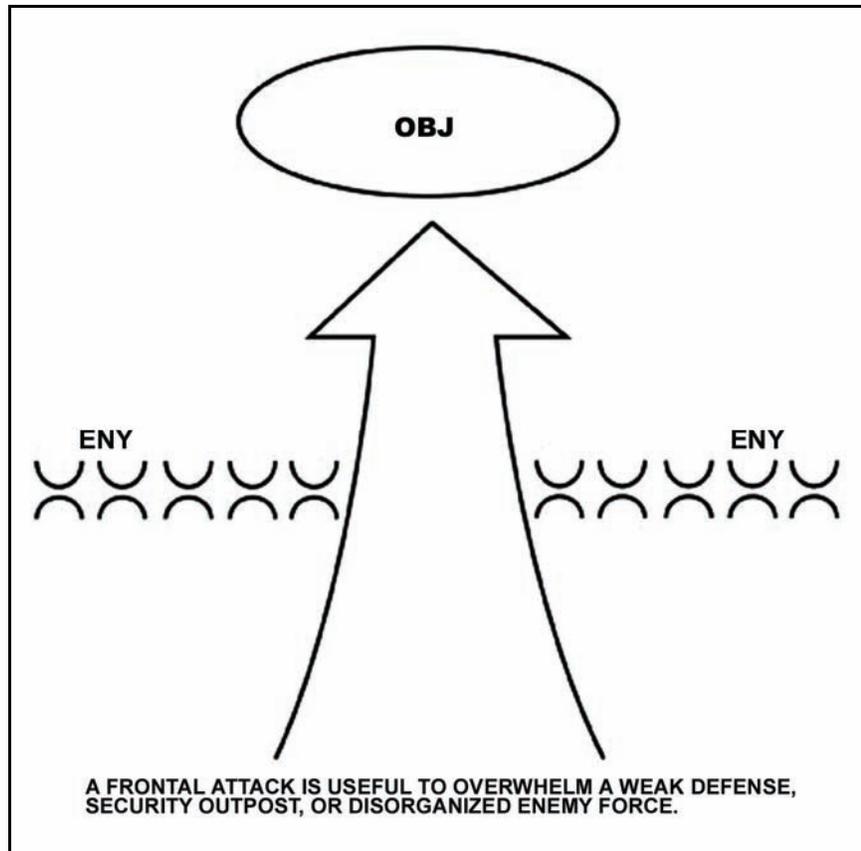
Figure 7-5. Frontal attack.

SECTION II — SEQUENCE OF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

7-19. As the platoon leader plans for an offensive mission, he generally considers the following, which apply to many, but not all, offensive operations:

- Assembly area.
- Reconnaissance.
- Movement to the line of departure.
- Maneuver.
- Deployment.
- Assault.
- Consolidation and reorganization.

PREPARATION IN THE OFFENSE

7-20. The friendly Infantry attacker has the advantage of choosing the time, place, and method of the engagement. Infantry units should maximize this advantage by engaging the enemy defender in a way that the he is unprepared for. Preparations for offensive operations include planning and rehearsals enabled by friendly reconnaissance operations that determine the enemy defender's disposition, composition, strength, capabilities, and possible courses of action. Friendly Infantry units then use this knowledge to develop their own courses of action.

ASSEMBLY AREA

7-21. The assembly area (AA) is the area a unit occupies to prepare for an operation. To prepare the platoon for the upcoming battle, the platoon leader plans, directs, and supervises mission preparations in the assembly area. This time allows the platoon to conduct precombat checks and inspections, rehearsals, and sustainment activities. The platoon will typically conduct these preparations within a company assembly area; it will rarely occupy its own assembly area.

RECONNAISSANCE

7-22. All leaders should aggressively seek information about the terrain and the enemy. Because the enemy situation and available planning time may limit a unit's reconnaissance, the platoon will likely conduct reconnaissance to answer the company commander's priority intelligence requirements (PIR). An example is reconnoitering and timing routes from the assembly area to the line of departure. The platoon may also augment the efforts of the battalion reconnaissance platoon to answer the commander's PIR. Other forms of reconnaissance include maps, and if available, terrain software/databases. Updates from reconnaissance can occur at any time while the platoon is planning for, preparing for, or executing the mission. As a result, the leader must always be prepared to adjust his plans.

MOVEMENT TO THE LINE OF DEPARTURE

7-23. The platoon will typically move from the AA to the line of departure as part of the company movement plan. This movement plan may direct the platoon to move to an attack position to await orders to cross the line of departure. If so, the platoon leader must reconnoiter, time, and rehearse the route to the attack position. Section and squad leaders must know where they are to locate within the assigned attack position, which is the last position an attacking element occupies or passes through before crossing the line of departure. The company commander may order all of the platoons to move within a company formation from the assembly area directly to the point of departure at the line of departure. The point of departure is the point where the unit crosses the line of departure and begins moving along a direction of attack or axis of advance. If one point of departure is used, it is important that both the lead platoon and trail platoons reconnoiter, time, and rehearse the route to it. This allows the company commander to maintain synchronization. To maintain flexibility and to further maintain synchronization, he may also designate a point of departure along the line of departure for each platoon.

MANEUVER

7-24. The company commander will plan the approach of all platoons to the objective to ensure synchronization, security, speed, and flexibility. He will select the platoons' routes, movement techniques, formations, and methods of movement to best support his intent for actions on the objective. The platoon leader must recognize this portion of the battle as a fight, not as a movement. He must be prepared to make contact with the enemy. (For a detailed discussion of actions on contact, refer to Chapter 1, paragraph 1-160, and Chapter 3, Section V.) He must plan accordingly to reinforce the commander's needs for synchronization, security, speed, and flexibility. During execution, he may display disciplined initiative and alter his platoon's formation, technique, or speed to maintain synchronization with the other platoons and flexibility for the company commander.

DEPLOYMENT

7-25. As the platoon deploys and moves toward the assault position, it minimizes delay and confusion by beginning the final positioning of the squads as directed by the company commander. An assault position is the last covered and concealed position short of the objective from which final preparations are made to assault the objective. This tactical positioning allows the platoon to move in the best tactical posture through the assault position into the attack. Movement should be as rapid as the terrain, unit mobility, and enemy situation permit. A common control measure used in or just beyond the assault position is the probable line of deployment (PLD), which is used most often under conditions of limited visibility. The

probable line of deployment is a phase line the company commander designates as a location where he intends to completely deploy his unit into the assault formation before beginning the assault.

ASSAULT

7-26. During an offensive operation, the platoon's objective may be terrain-oriented or force-oriented. Terrain-oriented objectives may require the platoon to seize a designated area and often require fighting through enemy forces. If the objective is force-oriented, an objective may be assigned for orientation, while the platoon's efforts are focused on the enemy's actual location. Actions on the objective begin when the company or platoon begins placing direct and indirect fires on the objective. This may occur while the platoon is still moving toward the objective from the assault position or probable line of deployment.

CONSOLIDATION AND REORGANIZATION

7-27. The platoon consolidates and reorganizes as required by the situation and mission. Consolidation is the process of organizing and strengthening a newly captured position so it can be defended. Reorganization is the actions taken to shift internal resources within a degraded unit to increase its level of combat effectiveness. Reorganization actions can include, cross-leveling ammunition, ensuring key weapons systems are manned, and ensuring key leadership positions are filled if the operators/crew become casualties. The platoon executes follow-on missions as directed by the company commander. A likely mission may be to continue the attack against the enemy within the area of operations. Regardless of the situation, the platoon must posture itself and prepare for continued offensive operations. Table 7-1 contains common consolidation and reorganization activities.

Table 7-1. Consolidation and reorganization activities.

Consolidation Activities	Reorganization Activities

• **S**ecurity measures include—
   ▪ Establishing 360-degree local security.
   ▪ Using security patrols.
   ▪ Using observation posts/outposts.
   ▪ Emplacing early warning devices.
   ▪ Establishing and registering final protective fires.
   ▪ Seeking out and eliminating enemy resistance (on and off the objective).
 • **A**utomatic weapons (man, position, and assign principal directions of fire [PDFs] to Soldiers manning automatic weapons).
 • **F**ields of fire (establish sectors of fire and other direct fire control measures for each subunit/Soldier).
 • **E**ntrenchment (provide guidance on protection requirements such as digging/building fighting positions).
	• Reestablishing the chain of command.
	 • Manning key weapon systems.
	 • Maintaining communications and reports, to include—
	   ▪ Restoring communication with any unit temporarily out of communication.
	   ▪ Sending unit situation report.
	   ▪ Sending SITREPs (at a minimum, subordinates report status of mission accomplishment).
	   ▪ Identifying and requesting resupply of critical shortages.
	 • Resupplying and redistributing ammunition and other critical supplies.
	 • Performing special team actions such as—
	   ▪ Consolidating and evacuating casualties, EPWs, enemy weapons, noncombatants/ refugees, and damaged equipment (not necessarily in the same location).
	   ▪ Treating and evacuating wounded personnel.
	   ▪ Evacuating friendly KIA.
	   ▪ Treating and processing EPWs.
	   ▪ Segregating and safeguarding noncombatants/ refugees.
	   ▪ Searching and marking positions to indicate to other friendly forces that they have been cleared.

SECTION III — PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7-28. The warfighting functions are a group of tasks and systems united by a common purpose that Infantry leaders use to accomplish missions and training objectives. Planning, synchronization and coordination among the warfighting functions are critical for success. The warfighting functions are addressed in this section.

INTELLIGENCE

The Intelligence warfighting function consists of the related tasks and systems that facilitate understanding of the enemy, terrain, weather, and civil considerations. In offensive operations the Infantry platoon leader uses his intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR) assets to study the terrain and confirm or deny the enemy's strengths, dispositions, and likely intentions, especially where and in what strength the enemy will defend. These assets also gather information concerning the civilian population within the AO to confirm or deny their numbers, locations, and likely intentions.

MOVEMENT AND MANEUVER

7-29. The movement and maneuver warfighting function consists of the related tasks and systems that move forces to achieve a position of advantage in relation to the enemy. The purpose of maneuver is to close with and destroy the defending enemy. Maneuver requires a base-of-fire element to suppress or destroy enemy forces with accurate direct fires and bounding elements to gain positional advantage over the enemy. When effectively executed, maneuver leaves enemy elements vulnerable by forcing them to fight in at least two directions, robbing them of initiative, and ultimately limiting their tactical options. Movement and maneuver are the means by which Infantry leaders mass the effects of combat power to achieve surprise, shock, momentum, and dominance.

7-30. The platoon will likely focus on mobility during the movement phase of offensive operations and may be required to breach obstacles as part of an offensive operation. These obstacles may be protective (employed to assist units in their close-in protection), which the platoon is expected to breach without additional assets. Tactical obstacles, however, which block, disrupt, turn, or fix unit formations, normally require engineer assets to breach. Refer to FM 3-34.2, *Combined-Arms Breaching Operations,* for a more detailed discussion of breaching.

FIRE SUPPORT

7-31. The fire support warfighting function consists of the related tasks and systems that provide collective and coordinated use of Army indirect fires, joint fires, and offensive information operations. The platoon may be able to employ indirect fires from field artillery or company and or battalion mortars to isolate a small part of the enemy defense or to suppress the enemy on the objective. The platoon leader must always keep in mind the potential danger to friendly elements created by indirect fires used in support of the assault. He must ensure that the indirect fire assets always know the position and direction of movement of his platoon.

PROTECTION

7-32. The protection warfighting function consists of the related tasks and systems that preserve the force, so the Infantry leader can apply maximum combat power. Preserving the force includes protecting personnel, physical assets, and information of the Infantry platoon. Areas included in protection at the Infantry platoon level are:

- Safety
- Fratricide avoidance
- Survivability
- Air and missile defense
- Force health protection

SUSTAINMENT

7-33. The sustainment warfighting function includes related tasks and systems that provide support and services to ensure freedom of action, extend operational reach, and prolong endurance. The primary purpose of sustainment in the offense is to assist the platoon and company in maintaining momentum during the attack. Key sustainment planning considerations for the platoon leader during the offense include:

- High expenditure of ammunition for selected tactical tasks.
- Friendly casualty rate and how to evacuate the casualties to what locations.
- Availability of water and other mission-essential supplies before, during, and after actions on the objective.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

7-34. The command and control warfighting function consists of the related tasks and systems that support Infantry leaders in exercising authority and direction. At the Infantry platoon and squad level, command and control refers to the process of directing, coordinating, and controlling a unit to accomplish a mission. During offensive operations Infantry leaders must establish control measures to provide a way to direct and coordinate the platoon or squad's movement.

7-35. Control measures are directives given graphically or orally by a commander to subordinate commands to assign responsibilities, coordinate fires and maneuver, and control combat operations. Each control measure can be portrayed graphically. In general, all control measures should be easily identifiable on the ground. Leaders organize the battlefield by establishing control measures that dictate responsibility, control movement, and manage fires.

AREA OF OPERATION

7-36. The area of operation (AO) is the basic control measure for assigning responsibility and conducting operations. An AO is a clearly defined geographical area with associated airspace where leaders conduct operations within the limits of their authority. Within an AO leaders are responsible for accomplishing their mission and are accountable for their unit's actions. Units acting as part of a larger unit operate within the AO of the next higher commander. When assigned their own AO, leaders of Infantry platoons or squads usually have expanded planning, preparation, and execution responsibilities. At lower levels, the term AO is often synonymous with a unit's current location and any associated operational environment, usually without formal boundaries.

7-37. Boundaries control the maneuver and fire of adjacent units. They are normally drawn along recognizable terrain features and are situated so key terrain features and avenues of approach are inclusive to one unit.

7-38. Leaders use boundaries as their basic control measure to divide up the battlefield and assign responsibilities. When given a boundary, the owning unit may employ any direct or indirect fire in accordance with previously-issued orders and ROE without receiving further clearance from the controlling headquarters. The following exceptions apply:

- Munitions that produce effects outside of the boundary must be authorized by higher.
- Munitions that are restricted must authorized.

Direct Fire and Boundaries

7-39. Direct fire may be used across a unit boundary without prior coordination if the enemy target is clearly identified. When possible, direct fire boundries should be coordinated with adjacent units. Unless the target poses an imminent threat, the leader authorizing the fire should attempt prior coordination before engaging targets across his boundary. Indirect fire will not be used across a unit's boundary unless prior coordination is made.

Basic Control Measures

7-40. Leaders use the boundary to divide up their AOs for subordinates. An AO normally contains one or more engagement areas (defense operations) and or objectives (offensive operations). Leaders use additional control measures to specify responsibilities, control movement and fires (direct and indirect), sequence subordinate activities, and synchronize other resources.

Types of AOs

7-41. The type of AO is defined by whether a unit shares a boundary with an adjacent unit. If it does, it is a contiguous AO. If a boundary is not shared with another unit, it is a noncontiguous AO (Figure 7-6). The higher headquarters is responsible for the area between noncontiguous AOs.
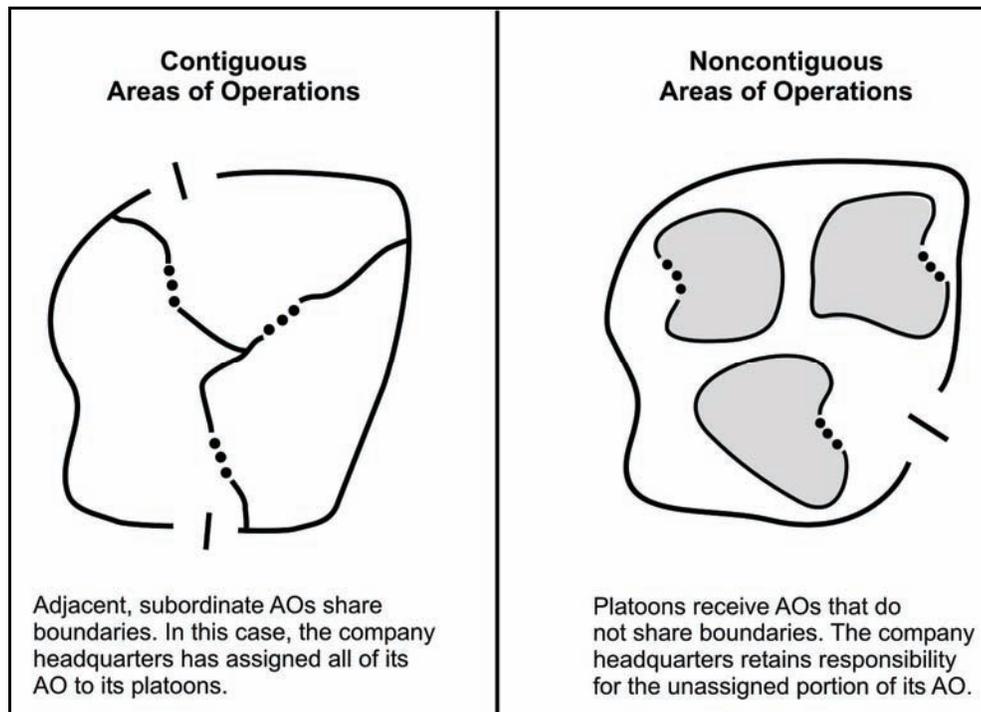
Figure 7-6. Types of AOs.

Mutually Supporting Units

7-42. Regardless of whether a unit shares a common boundary, leaders must determine if they have mutually-supporting adjacent units. The presence of a mutually-supporting unit indicates an increased requirement for coordination. A position without mutually-supporting adjacent units indicates an increased requirement for security—360-degree security.

INTEGRATING CONTROL MEASURES WITH TERRAIN

7-43. When looking for terrain features to use as control measures, leaders consider three types: linear; point; and area. Linear features follow major natural and man-made features such as ridgelines, valleys, trails, streams, power lines, and streets. Point features can be identified by a specific feature or a grid coordinate including, hilltops, and prominent buildings. Area features are significantly larger than point features and require a combination of grid coordinates and terrain orientation. Table 7-2 lists common uses of terrain features for control measures.

Table 7-2. Terrain feature control measures.

Use of Linear Terrain Features in the Offense	Use of Point Terrain Features in the Offense	Use of Area Terrain Features in the Offense
Axis of advance Direction of attack Infiltration lane Limit of advance Line of contact Line of departure Phase line Probable line of deployment Route	Check point Coordination point Linkup point Point of departure Rally point Target reference point	Assembly area Assault position Battle position Objective Named area of interest Targeted area of interest
Use of Linear Terrain Features in the Defense	**Use of Point Terrain Features in the Defense**	**Use of Area Terrain Features in the Defense**
Battle handover line Final protective line Forward edge of battle area (FEBA) Forward line of own troops (FLOT) Screen line Guard line	Observation post Target reference point	Battle position Main battle area Security zone

SECTION IV — PLATOON ATTACKS

7-44. Platoons and squads normally conduct an attack as part of the Infantry company. An attack requires detailed planning, synchronization, and rehearsals to be successful. The company commander designates platoon objectives with a specific mission for his assault, support, and breach elements. To ensure synchronization, all leaders must clearly understand the mission, with emphasis on the purpose, of peer and subordinate elements. Leaders must also know the location of their subordinates and adjacent units during the attack. In addition to having different forms based on their purposes (refer to Section VII), 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. Attacks may take the form of one of the following:

- Enemy-oriented attacks against a stationary force.
- Enemy-oriented attacks against a moving force.
- Terrain-oriented attacks.

7-45. Additionally, some attacks may be significantly focused on executing a select task by a certain date/time group. Attacks will either be daylight attacks or limited visibility attacks. Limited visibility attacks are further divided into illuminated and nonilluminated attacks. Leaders must always plan on nonilluminated attacks becoming illuminated at some point, whether due to friendly or enemy efforts.

DELIBERATE ATTACK

7-46. A deliberate attack is a type of offensive action characterized by preplanned coordinated employment of firepower and maneuver to close with and destroy the enemy. The deliberate attack is a fully coordinated operation that is usually reserved for those situations in which the enemy defense cannot be overcome by a hasty attack. Commanders may order a deliberate attack when the deployment of the enemy shows no identifiable exposed flank or physical weakness, or when a delay will not significantly improve the enemy's defenses. The deliberate attack is characterized by detailed intelligence concerning a situation that allows the leader to develop and coordinate detailed plans. The leader task-organizes his forces specifically

for the operation to provide a fully synchronized combined arms team. Time taken to prepare a deliberate attack is also time in which the enemy can continue defensive improvements, disengage, or launch a spoiling attack. The phases of the deliberate attack are reconnaissance, move to the objective, isolate the objective, seize a foothold and exploit the penetration (actions on the objective), and consolidate and reorganize (Figure 7-7).
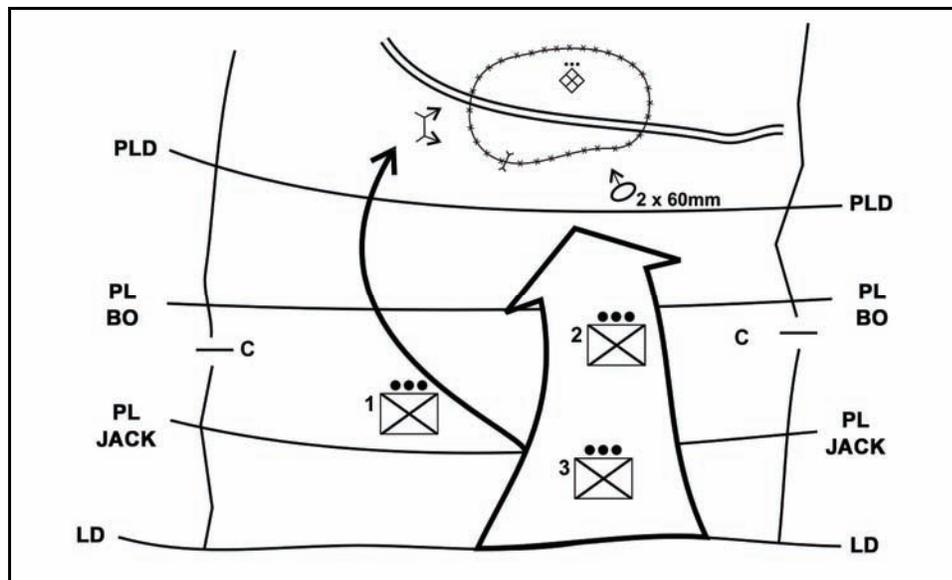
Figure 7-7. Company deliberate attack.

RECONNAISSANCE

7-47. Before a deliberate attack, the platoon and company should gain enemy, terrain, and friendly information from the reconnaissance conducted by the battalion reconnaissance platoon. However, this may not always occur. The platoon and company should be prepared to conduct their own reconnaissance of the objective to confirm, modify, or deny their tentative plan.

7-48. Platoons should not conduct reconnaissance unless specifically tasked to do so in a consolidated reconnaissance plan. If possible, the company should determine the enemy's size, location, disposition, most vulnerable point, and most probable course of action. At this point, and with permission from battalion, the company should direct the platoon to conduct a reconnaissance patrol. This element conducts a reconnaissance of the terrain along the axis of advance and on the objective. It determines where the enemy is most vulnerable to attack and where the support element can best place fires on the objective.

7-49. The tentative plan may change as a result of the reconnaissance if the platoon or squad discovers that terrain or enemy dispositions are different than determined earlier in the TLP. The platoon or squad leader may modify control measures based on the results of the reconnaissance, and must send these adjustments to their leader as soon as possible. For example, the platoon may discover the weapons squad cannot suppress the enemy from the north side of the objective as originally planned because of terrain limitations. Therefore, the platoon leader moves the support-by-fire positions to the south side of the objective, adjusts the tentative plan's control measures, and radios the control measures to his commander for approval. The graphics are subsequently disseminated throughout the company and to adjacent units as needed.

ADVANCE TO THE OBJECTIVE

7-50. The attacking element advances to within assault distance of the enemy position under supporting fires using a combination of traveling, traveling overwatch, or bounding overwatch. Platoons advance to successive positions using available cover and concealment. The company commander may designate support-by-fire positions to protect friendly elements with suppressive direct fires. As the company maneuvers in zone, it employs fires to suppress, neutralize, and obscure the enemy positions. The support-

by-fire elements may need to occasionally change locations to maintain the ability to support the advancing assault element.

Assembly Area to the Line of Departure

7-51. The line of departure is normally a phase line where elements of the attacking element transition to secure movement techniques in preparation for contact with the enemy. Platoons may maneuver from the line of departure to designated support-by-fire positions, assault positions, and breach or bypass sites. Before leaving the assembly area, the platoon leader should receive an update of the location of forward and adjacent friendly elements. He should also receive updated enemy locations. The platoon leader then disseminates these reports to each squad leader.

7-52. The platoon moves forward from the assembly area to the line of departure, usually as part of a company formation along a planned route. The platoon leader should have reconnoitered the route to the line of departure and specifically to the crossing point. During the planning stage, he plots a waypoint on the line of departure at the point he intends to cross. The platoon navigates to the waypoint during movement. The move from the assembly area is timed during the reconnaissance so the lead section crosses the line of departure at the time of attack without halting in the attack position. If the platoon must halt in the attack position, the squads establish security and take care of last minute coordination.

Line of Departure to Assault Position

7-53. The platoon moves from the line of departure to the assault position. The platoon leader plots waypoints to coincide with checkpoints along the route. During movement, he ensures the platoon navigates from checkpoint to checkpoint or phase line by using basic land navigation skills supplemented by precision navigation.

Assault Position to the Objective

7-54. The assault position is the last covered and concealed position before reaching the objective. Ideally, the platoon occupies the assault position without the enemy detecting any of the platoon's elements. Preparations in the assault position may include preparing bangalores, other breaching equipment or demolitions, fixing bayonets, ceasing or shifting fires, or preparing smoke pots. The platoon may halt in the assault position if necessary to ensure it is synchronized with friendly forces. Once the assault element moves forward of the assault position, the assault must continue. If stopped or turned back, the assault element could sustain unnecessary casualties.

7-55. Supporting fire from the weapons squad must continue to suppress the enemy and must be closely controlled to prevent fratricide. At times, the assault element may mark each Soldier or just the team on the flank nearest the support element. The key is to ensure the support-by-fire element knows the location of the assault element at all times. The assaulting Soldiers and the support element sustain a high rate of fire to suppress the enemy.

7-56. When the assault element moves to the breach point, the base-of-fire leader verifies the assault element is at the right location. The base-of-fire leader is responsible for tracking the assault element as it assaults the objective. The company commander shifts or ceases indirect fire when it endangers the advancing Soldiers and coordinates this with the platoon's assault. As the fire of the platoon's support is masked, the platoon leader shifts or ceases it or displaces the weapons squad to a position where continuous fire can be maintained.

ISOLATE THE OBJECTIVE

7-57. The goals of isolation are to prevent the enemy from reinforcing the objective and to prevent enemy forces on the objective from leaving. Infantry platoons will probably be an isolating element within a company.

SEIZE A FOOTHOLD AND EXPLOIT THE PENETRATION (ACTIONS ON THE OBJECTIVE)

7-58. The platoon leader often designates assault, support, and breach elements within his platoon to conduct a deliberate attack. One technique is to designate the weapons squad as the support element, an Infantry squad as the breach element, and the remainder of the platoon as the assault element.

7-59. The supporting elements assist the breach element's initial breach of the objective by placing suppressive fires on the most dangerous enemy positions. As the breach is being established, the weapons squad shifts fires (or local self-defense weapons) to allow the breach element to penetrate the objective and avoid fratricide. Visual observation and information provided through the radio are vital to maintain suppressive fires just forward of the breach and assault elements.

7-60. The supporting elements monitor the forward progress of the assault element and keep shifting suppressive fire at a safe distance in front of them. The weapons squad positions itself to provide continual close-in suppressive fire to aid the actions of the assault squad(s) as it moves across the objective.

7-61. Once the breach element has seized the initial foothold on the objective, the assault element may then move through the breach lane to assault the objective. As this occurs, the platoon leader closely observes the progress of the breach and assault elements to ensure there is no loss in momentum, and that assault and breach elements do not cross in front of the supporting elements.

7-62. All communication from the support element to the breach, assault, and weapons support is by frequency modulated (FM) radio or signals. If the platoon sergeant or squad leader observes problems, they radio the platoon leader. The platoon leader uses this information and what he personally sees on the objective to control the assault.

CONSOLIDATE AND REORGANIZE

7-63. Once enemy resistance on the objective has ceased, the platoon quickly consolidates to defend against a possible counterattack and prepares for follow-on missions.

7-64. Consolidation consists of actions taken to secure the objective and defend against an enemy counterattack.

7-65. Reorganization, normally conducted concurrently with consolidation, consists of preparing for follow-on operations. As with consolidation, the platoon leader must plan and prepare for reorganization as he conducts his TLP.

SITE EXPLOITATION

7-66. Once the sensitive site is secure, enemy resistance eliminated, and safe access established, exploitation of the site begins. Subject matter experts and teams carefully enter and exploit every structure, facility, and vehicle on the site and determine its value and its hazard to the platoon. The security force continues to secure the site. Leaders may elect to rotate the assault, support, and security forces if the site exploitation lasts for a prolonged period of time. .

HASTY ATTACK

7-67. The platoon normally participates in a hasty attack as part of a larger unit, during movement to contact, as part of a defense, or whenever the commander determines that the enemy is vulnerable. A hasty attack is used to—

- Exploit a tactical opportunity.
- Maintain the momentum.
- Regain the initiative.
- Prevent the enemy from regaining organization or balance.
- Gain a favorable position that may be lost with time.

7-68. Because its primary purpose is to maintain momentum or take advantage of the enemy situation, the hasty attack is normally conducted with only the resources that are immediately available. Maintaining

constant pressure through hasty attacks keeps the enemy off balance and makes it difficult for him to react effectively. Rapidly attacking before the enemy can act often results in success even when the combat power ratio is not as favorable as desired. With its emphasis on agility and surprise, however, this type of attack may cause the attacking element to lose a degree of synchronization. To minimize this risk, the commander should maximize use of standard formations, well-rehearsed, thoroughly-understood battle and crew drills, and SOPs. The hasty attack is often the preferred option during continuous operations. It allows the commander to maintain the momentum of friendly operations while denying the enemy the time needed to prepare his defenses and to recover from losses suffered during previous action. Hasty attacks normally result from a movement to contact, successful defense, or continuation of a previous attack.

TASK ORGANIZATION

7-69. The hasty attack is conducted using the principles of fire and movement. The controlling headquarters normally designates a base-of-fire element and a maneuver element.

CONDUCT OF THE HASTY ATTACK

7-70. By necessity, hasty attacks are simple and require a minimum of coordination with higher and adjacent leaders. Leaders, however, still take the necessary measures to assess the situation, decide on an appropriate course of action, and direct their subordinates in setting conditions and execution.

7-71. Execution begins with establishment of a base of fire, which then suppresses the enemy force. The maneuver element uses a combination of techniques to maintain its security as it advances in contact to a position of advantage. These techniques include:

- Use of internal base-of-fire and bounding elements.
- Use of covered and concealed routes.
- Use of indirect fires and smoke grenades or pots to suppress or obscure the enemy or to screen friendly movement.
- Execution of bold maneuver that initially takes the maneuver element out of enemy direct fire range.

SECTION V — OTHER OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

7-72. This section focuses on offensive operations of movement to contact, exploitation, and pursuit the platoon normally conducts as part of an Infantry company or larger element:

MOVEMENT TO CONTACT

7-73. Platoons and squads participate in a movement to contact as part of a company using movement formations and techniques explained in Chapter 4. A company generally conducts a movement to contact when it must gain or maintain contact with the enemy, or when it lacks sufficient time to gain intelligence or make extensive plans to defeat the enemy (Figure 7-8). Higher intelligence assets should attempt to find the enemy through reconnaissance and surveillance. Battalions may task or allow companies to gather intelligence through reconnaissance and surveillance if the company commander needs to further develop the intelligence picture. In this case, the company tasks a platoon or squad to conduct reconnaissance, surveillance, or both.

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│        ┌──────────────────┐                                           │
│        │  FORCES ARE OUT   │                                          │
│        │   OF CONTACT      │                                          │
│        └──────────────────┘                                           │
│                 │                                                     │
│                 │     LEADER CONDUCTS A MTC TO GAIN CONTACT           │
│                 │        ●  APPROACH MARCH                            │
│                 ▼        ●  SEARCH AND ATTACK                         │
│        ┌──────────────────┐                                           │
│        │    MEETING        │                                          │
│        │  ENGAGEMENT       │                                          │
│        └──────────────────┘                                           │
│                 │                                                     │
│                 │     LEADER CONDUCTS ACTIONS ON CONTACT TO MAKE      │
│                 │     A DECISION                                      │
│                 │        ●  HASTY ATTACK                              │
│                 │        ●  SUPPORT BY FIRE FOR ANOTHER MANEUVER      │
│                 │           ELEMENT                                  │
│                 │        ●  BYPASS                                    │
│                 │        ●  BREAK CONTACT                             │
│                 ▼        ●  HASTY DEFENSE                             │
│        ┌──────────────────┐                                           │
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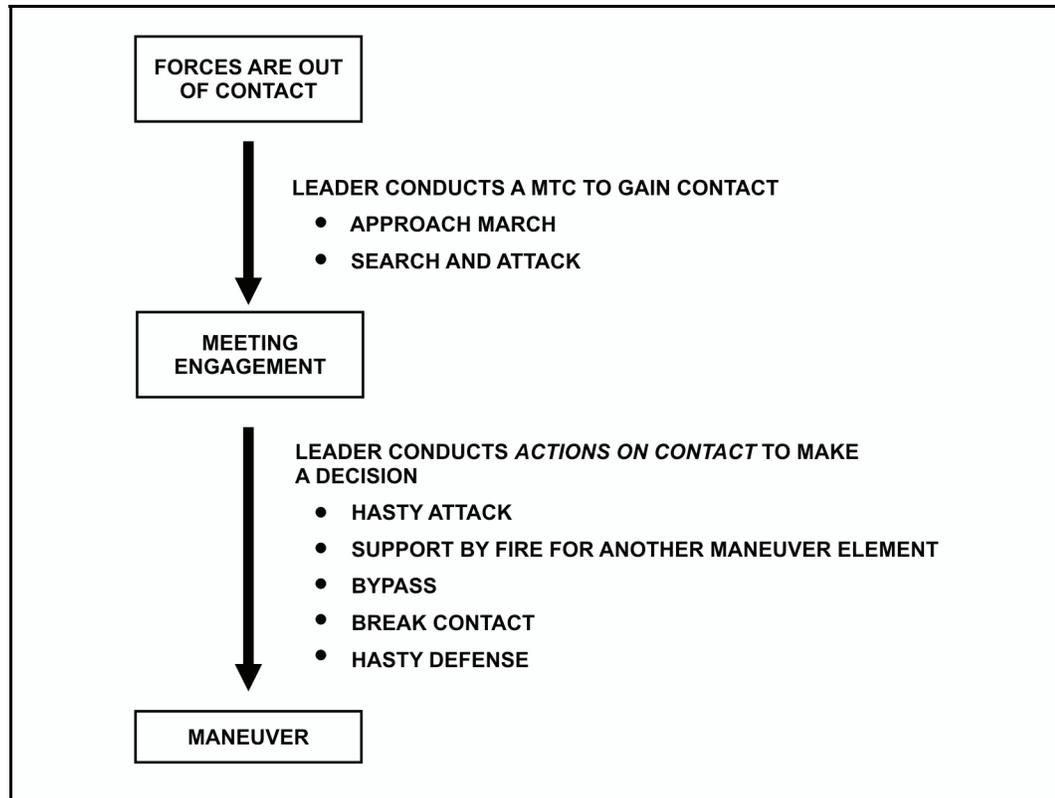
Figure 7-8. Movement to contact framework.

7-74. The movement to contact results in a meeting engagement. A meeting engagement is the combat action that occurs when a moving element engages a stationary or moving enemy at an unexpected time and place. Meeting engagements are characterized by—

- Limited knowledge of the enemy.
- Minimum time available for the leader to conduct actions on contact.
- Rapidly changing situation.
- Rapid execution of battle and crew drills.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7-75. The company commander will not have a complete visualization of the situation. The leader's role is to gain as much firsthand information as possible. Combined with information on the enemy and the terrain, firsthand information provides knowledge and understanding necessary to respond to the enemy. However, if the enemy situation remains vague, the platoon must be prepared to act in any situation. This is accomplished through proper planning, appropriate movement formations and techniques, fire control measures, platoon SOPs, engagement criteria, and studying the terrain before and during movement to anticipate likely enemy locations. While moving, all leaders study the terrain and anticipate enemy contact. Based on these terrain studies, leaders should avoid likely areas of enemy ambush or areas that expose their platoons to long-range observation and fires. If the enemy is a conventional force, his units may use a doctrinal approach to their disposition, making it easier to find them. If faced with an asymmetric threat, there may be no doctrinal template for the enemy. In this instance, the leader must look for historical patterns in the enemy's operations. In both cases, the leader has to analyze how the enemy fights, how he uses terrain, and what he hopes to accomplish against friendly elements.

TECHNIQUES

7-76. A movement to contact is conducted using one of two techniques: approach march, or search and attack (Table 7-3). The approach march technique is used when the enemy is expected to deploy using relatively fixed offensive or defensive formations, and the situation remains vague. The search and attack technique is used when the enemy is dispersed, when he is expected to avoid contact or quickly disengage and withdraw, or when the higher unit needs to deny him movement in an area of operation.

Table 7-3. The two types of movement to contact.

Approach march is best used when the—	Search and attack is best used when the—
• Enemy force is more conventional in nature. • Enemy force follows a more structured order of battle and is more predictable. • Enemy force is more centrally located. • Enemy conducts more centralized operations.	• Enemy conducts operations over a very large area in a dispersed manner, forcing friendly units to disperse to locate him. • Enemy forces and operations are unconventional or guerilla in nature. • Enemy typically operates in small teams and only makes contact when he feels he has the advantage.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

7-77. The company commander will dictate a number of command and control techniques for the unit to employ. The platoon leader, within the scope of the commander's intent and guidance and the factors of METT-TC, may modify these techniques to better control his sections and squads. The platoon leader will tell the company commander of any additional graphic control measures he builds into his plan. Some examples of command and control techniques are discussed below.

Graphic Control Measures

7-78. The company commander will normally assign lines of departure, phase lines, checkpoints, and GPS waypoints to control the forward movement of the platoon. The platoon does not stop at a phase line unless told to do so. If necessary, the platoon leader designates additional phase lines, checkpoints, or waypoints for use within the platoon to reduce the number and length of radio transmissions used to control movement.

Fire Control Measures

7-79. The platoon uses boundaries, direct fire plans, pyrotechnics, signals, and FRAGOs for direct fire control and distribution. (For a detailed discussion of direct fire control and distribution, refer to Chapter 2.) The variety of weapons in the Infantry platoon makes it critical for all squads to understand the observation plan and the designated sectors of fire during a movement to contact. This takes on importance because of the scarcity of information about the enemy.

Indirect Fire Plan

7-80. The platoon leader must have a good indirect fire plan for his route to cover anticipated places of contact. These targets are a product of the platoon leader's analysis of the factors of METT-TC and must be incorporated into the company indirect fire plan.

DEVELOPING THE SITUATION

7-81. Once the platoon makes contact with the enemy, it maintains contact until the commander orders otherwise. The platoon leader develops the situation based on the effectiveness of enemy fire, friendly casualties, size of enemy force, and freedom to maneuver. He gathers and reports critical information about the enemy and recommends a course of action. The platoon can bypass the enemy with permission from the commander, conduct an attack, fix the enemy so another platoon can conduct the assault, conduct a

defense, establish an ambush, or break contact. The following guidelines apply for the platoon to develop the situation after making contact.

DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS

7-82. In some situations, a platoon conducting a movement to contact makes contact with a much larger and more powerful enemy force. If the platoon encounters a larger enemy force where the terrain gives the platoon an advantage, it should attempt to fix the enemy force. This allows the rest of the company to maneuver against the force. If the platoon cannot fix the enemy, it may have to assume a defensive posture (see Chapter 8) or break contact, but it should do so only if it is in danger of being overwhelmed. Surrendering the initiative to the enemy means the enemy has fixed the platoon in place. Exposed rifle squads are vulnerable to enemy indirect fires. If the platoon receives indirect fire during movement, it should attempt to move out of the area or find a covered position for the rifle squads. Once the indirect fires cease, the platoon prepares for an enemy assault. In the defense, the platoon leader—

- Keeps the company commander informed and continues to report on enemy strength, dispositions, and activities.
- Positions squads to cover dismounted avenues of approach in preparation for the enemy's attack.
- Orients the weapons squad and their Javelins along mounted avenues of approach and establishes positions for the M240B machine guns.
- Establishes direct fire control and distribution measures.
- Calls for and adjusts indirect fires.

APPROACH MARCH TECHNIQUE

7-83. The approach march advances a combat unit when direct contact with the enemy is intended. It can be performed dismounted, mounted, or a combination of the two. The concept behind the approach march as a technique for movement to contact is to make contact with the smallest enemy element. When executed effectively it allows the commander the flexibility of maneuvering or bypassing the enemy force. During an approach march, the company commander will organize his unit into two elements (advance guard, and main body). As part of a company using the approach march technique, platoons may act as the advance guard, the flank or rear guard, or may receive on-order missions as part of the main body.

Advance Guard

7-84. The advance guard operates forward of the main body to ensure its uninterrupted advance. It protects the main body from surprise attack and fixes the enemy to protect the deployment of the main body. As the advance guard, the platoon finds the enemy and locates gaps, flanks, and weaknesses in his defense. The advance guard attempts to make contact on ground of its own choosing, to gain the advantage of surprise, and to develop the situation (either fight through or support the assault of all or part of the main body). The advance guard operates within the range of indirect fire support weapons. The platoon uses appropriate formations and movement techniques based on the factors of METT-TC.

7-85. The advance guard is normally the most robust of the security elements. In addition to the general security measures described above, the advance guard and its sub elements—

- Preserve the main body's freedom of maneuver.
- Prevent unnecessary delay in movement of the main body.
- Learn the whereabouts of the enemy.
- Develop intelligence about the terrain and the environment.
- Detect and overcome enemy security measures.
- Identify and disrupt enemy attempts to ambush the main body.
- Must be ready to gain fire superiority and fight any enemy forces encountered.
- Watch the enemy (if direct fire contact is not pending).
- Delay any enemy attacks to gain time for the main body to deploy.

Main Body

7-86. When moving as part of the main body platoons may be tasked to assault, bypass, or fix an enemy force; or to seize, secure, or clear an assigned area. The platoon also may be detailed to provide squads as flank or rear guards, stay-behind ambushes, or additional security to the front. Platoons and squads use appropriate formations and movement, assault, and ambush techniques.

7-87. The main body moves to reinforce any success achieved by the advance guard, flank the enemy position, or apply overwhelming combat power to seize the contested area. During the attack, the leader on the field takes care to isolate the objective by positioning the flank guard to prevent interdiction of enemy reinforcements into the engagement. The positioning of flank guard blocking positions must be far enough away from the area that no enemy weapons can bring fires to effect the attack by the main body.

Flank or Rear Guard

7-88. The platoon will have the responsibilities of flank or rear guard when moving within the company main body. However, the platoon may act as the flank or rear guard for a battalion conducting a movement to contact using approach march technique. In either situation, the platoon—

- Moves using the appropriate formation and movement technique. (It must maintain the same momentum as the main body.)
- Provides early warning.
- Destroys enemy reconnaissance units.
- Prevents direct fires or observation of the main body.

Actions on Contact

7-89. Once the advance guard makes contact, the main body's leader conducts actions on contact to determine how the main body will fight the enemy. To facilitate this, the advance guard reports enemy contact or disruption. It also deploys and attempts to overcome enemy based on information from point patrol. If the advance guard is not able to overcome the enemy, it assumes a support-by-fire position to support maneuver of the remainder of the advance guard. The remainder of the advance guard attempts a close envelopment to defeat the enemy unless the enemy force is overwhelmingly superior. If successful, the advance guard reforms and resumes march or initiates pursuit. If unsuccessful, the advance guard holds its positions, blocks the enemy, and continues supporting the subsequent maneuver and attack of the main body.

Additional Approach March COAs

7-90. There are several courses of action available to the leader when the advance guard comes into contact with a force that it cannot overcome with its organic forces. These courses of action include—

- Frontal attack.
- Fix and bypass.
- Fix, isolate, and attack.
- Oblique attack.
- Withdrawal.

SEARCH AND ATTACK TECHNIQUE

7-91. The search and attack is a technique conducted when the enemy is operating as small, dispersed elements, or when the task is to deny the enemy the ability to move within a given area of operations. The platoon will participate as part of company or battalion search and attack. A unit conducts a search and attack for one or more of the following reasons:

- Render the enemy in the area of operations combat-ineffective.
- Prevent the enemy from operating unhindered in a given area of operations.

- Prevent the enemy from massing to disrupt or destroy friendly military or civilian operations, equipment, or facilities.
- Gain information about the enemy and the terrain.

Organization of Elements

7-92. The higher commander will task-organize the subordinate units into reconnaissance (finding, fixing, and finishing) elements. He will assign specific tasks and purposes to his search and attack elements. It is important to note that within the concept of find, fix, and finish, all platoons could be the reconnaissance element. Depending on the size of the enemy they find, they could end up executing a reconnaissance mission, become the fixing element, or find that they are able to finish the enemy. Planning considerations for organizing include—

- The factors of METT-TC.
- The requirement for decentralized execution.
- The requirement for mutual support. (The platoon leader must be able to respond to contact with his rifle squads or to mutually support another platoon within the company.)
- The Soldier's load. (The leader should ask, "Does the Soldier carry his rucksack, cache it, or leave it at a central point? How will the rucksacks be linked up with the Soldier?")
- Resupply and CASEVAC.
- The employment of key weapons.
- The requirement for patrol bases.

Find (Reconnaissance Element)

7-93. The size and composition of the reconnaissance element is based on the available information on the size and activity of the enemy operating in the designated area of operations. The reconnaissance element typically consists of the battalion reconnaissance platoon plus other battalion and higher level assets. Reconnaissance operations are used to answer information requirements used for leader decisionmaking and are not normally followed immediately by a hasty attack. The find action of a search and attack is used to locate the enemy with the expressed intent of making a hasty attack as soon as possible with the main body. The platoon will reconnoiter named area(s) of interest (NAI) and other areas as designated. The platoon may find the enemy through zone reconnaissance, patrolling, and establishing observation posts.

7-94. The task of the search element is to locate the enemy or information leading to the enemy. The techniques used to search are unique to the area of operations and should be developed and adapted to the specifics of the particular environment. What works in one location may not work in another.

7-95. The security element has two tasks: early warning of approaching enemy and providing support forces to the search elements if in contact with the enemy. The purpose of the security element is to protect the search element allowing them to search. Security elements tasked to provide early warning must be able to observe avenues of approach into and out of the objective area. If the search element is compromised, the security element must be able to quickly support them. These positions must also be able to facilitate communication to higher as well as any supporting assets.

Fixing Element

7-96. The fixing element must have sufficient combat power to isolate the enemy and develop the situation once the reconnaissance element finds him. When developing the situation, the fixing element either continues to maintain visual contact with the enemy until the finishing element arrives, or conducts an attack to physically fix the enemy until the finishing element arrives. The goal is to keep the enemy in a position in which he can be destroyed by the finishing element. Sometimes the fixing element may have sufficient combat power to destroy the enemy themselves. The platoon maintains visual contact to allow the reconnaissance element to continue to other NAIs and isolates the immediate area. The fixing element makes physical contact only if the enemy attempts to leave the area or other enemy elements enter the area. At all times after contact is made, the platoon integrates as many combat multipliers into the fight as

possible. Examples include indirect fire support, attack aviation, close air support (CAS), and antiarmor sections or platoons, if they are available.

7-97. The fix element can consist of maneuver elements, fire support assets, and aviation elements. To isolate the enemy, fixing elements normally establish a cordon of blocking positions on possible avenues of approach out of the engagement area. The fix element is also responsible for ensuring its own internal security, conducting link ups with the find/finish elements as required and coordinating fire support assets.

Finishing Element

7-98. The finishing element must have sufficient combat power to destroy enemy forces located within the area of operations. The finishing element must be responsive enough to engage the enemy before he can break contact, yet patient enough not to rush to failure. A platoon, as the finishing element, may be tasked to—

- Destroy the enemy with an attack.
- Block enemy escape routes while another unit conducts the attack.
- Destroy the enemy with an ambush while the reconnaissance or fixing elements drive the enemy toward the ambush location.
- Not allow the enemy to break contact.

Control Measures

7-99. The higher commander will define commander's intent and establish control measures that allow for decentralized execution and platoon leader initiative to the greatest extent possible. The minimum control measures for a search and attack include—

- Areas of operation.
- Named areas of interest.
- Phase lines.
- TRPs.
- Objectives.
- Checkpoints.
- Contact points.
- GPS waypoints.

7-100. An area of operation defines the location in which the subordinate units will conduct their searches. A technique called the "horse blanket" breaks the battalion and company area of operation into many named smaller areas of operation. Units remain in designated areas of operation as they conduct their missions. Battalion and higher reconnaissance assets might be used to observe areas of operation with no platoons in them, while platoons or companies provide their own reconnaissance in the AO. This command and control technique, along with TRPs, assists in avoiding fratricide in a noncontiguous environment. A TRP facilitates the responsiveness of the fixing and finishing elements once the reconnaissance element detects the enemy. Objectives and checkpoints guide the movement of subordinates and help leaders control their organizations. Contact points aid coordination among the units operating in adjacent areas.

EXPLOITATION

7-101. A platoon normally takes part in exploitations as part of a larger force. However, the platoon should exploit tactical success at the local level within the higher commanders' concept of the operation and intent.

PURSUIT

7-102. The objective of the pursuit is the total destruction of the enemy force. Forces equally as or more mobile than the enemy normally conduct the pursuit. The platoon may take part in a pursuit after a

successful hasty attack, as part of a company mission, or as part of a task-organized company acting as a designated pursuit element.

ATTACKS DURING LIMITED VISIBILITY

7-103.   Effective use of night vision device(s) (NVD) and thermal weapons site(s) (TWS) during limited visibility attacks enhance squad and platoon abilities to achieve surprise and cause panic in a lesser-equipped enemy. NVD enhancements allow the Infantry Soldier to see farther and with greater clarity and provide a marked advantage over the enemy.

7-104.   Leaders have an increased ability to control fires during limited visibility. The platoon has three types of enhancements for use in fire control: target designators (GCP-1 and AIM-1); aiming lights (AIM-1 and AN/PAQ-4B/C); and target illuminators designed for use with NVDs. These include infrared parachute flares, infrared trip flares, infrared 40-mm rounds, infrared mortar rounds, infrared bike lights, and remote black lights. These assets greatly aid in target acquisition and fire control. If the engagement becomes illuminated, there are a variety of target illuminators for the unaided eye.

7-105.   Soldiers carrying weapons with NVD enhancements have greater accuracy of fires during limited visibility. Each Soldier in the platoon is equipped with an AN/PAQ-4B/C aiming light for his individual weapon. The AN/PAQ-4B/C enables the rifleman to put infrared light on the target at the point of aim.

7-106.   Leaders can designate targets with greater precision using the PEQ-2. The PEQ-2 is an infrared laser pointer that uses an infrared light to designate targets and sectors of fire and to concentrate fire. The leader lazes a target and directs his Soldiers to place their fires on the target. Soldiers then use the aiming lights on their AN/PAQ-4B/Cs to engage the target.

7-107.   Leaders also can designate larger targets using target illuminators. Target illuminators are essentially infrared light sources that light the target, making it easier to acquire effectively. Target illuminators consist of infrared illumination rounds, infrared M203 40-mm rounds, infrared trip flares, and infrared parachute flares. Leaders and Soldiers use the infrared devices to identify enemy or friendly personnel and then engage targets using their aiming lights.

7-108.   The platoon leader and squad leaders follow tactical standing operating procedures (TSOP) and sound courses of action to synchronize the employment of infrared illumination devices, target designators, and aiming lights. This is done during their assault on the objective, while remaining prepared for a noninfrared illuminated attack.

7-109.   Leaders use luminous tape or chemical lights to mark assault personnel to prevent fratricide. The enemy must not be able to see the marking. Two techniques are to place tape on the back of the helmet or to use small infrared chemical lights (if the enemy has no NVDs). Supporting elements must know the location of the lead assault element.

7-110.   To reduce the risk to the assault element, the platoon leader may assign weapons control restrictions. For example, the squad on the right in the assault might be assigned weapons free to the right flank because no friendly Soldiers are there. The squad on the left may be assigned weapons tight or weapons hold, which means that another friendly unit is located there.

7-111.   The platoon leader may do the following to increase control during the assault:
- Avoid use of flares, grenades, or smoke on the objective.
- Allow only certain personnel with NVDs to engage targets on the objective.
- Use a magnetic azimuth for maintaining direction.
- Use mortar or artillery rounds to orient attacking units.
- Assign a base squad or fire team to pace and guide others.
- Reduce intervals between Soldiers and squads.

7-112.   As in daylight, mortar, artillery, and antiarmor fires are planned, but are not fired unless the platoon is detected or is ready to assault. Some weapons may fire before the attack and maintain a pattern to deceive the enemy or to help cover noise made by the platoon's movement. This is not done if it will disclose the attack.

7-113.   Indirect fire is hard to adjust when visibility is poor. If the exact location of friendly units is not clearly known, indirect fire is directed first at enemy positions beyond the objective, then moved onto the objective.

7-114.   Illuminating rounds that are fired to burn on the ground can be used to mark objectives. This helps the platoon orient on the objective but may adversely affect NVDs.

7-115.   Smoke is planned to further reduce the enemy's visibility, particularly if he has NVDs. The smoke is laid close to or on enemy positions so it does not restrict friendly movement or hinder the breaching of obstacles. Employing smoke on the objective during the assault may make it hard for assaulting Soldiers to find enemy fighting positions. If enough thermal sights are available, smoke on the objective may provide a decisive advantage for a well-trained platoon.

7-116.   Illumination is always planned for limited visibility attacks, giving the leader the option of calling for it. Battalion commanders normally control the use of conventional illumination, but may authorize the company commander to do so. If the commander decides to use conventional illumination, he should not call for it until the assault is initiated or the attack is detected. It should be placed on several locations over a wide area to confuse the enemy as to the exact place of the attack. Also, it should be placed beyond the objective to help assaulting Soldiers see and fire at withdrawing or counterattacking enemy Soldiers.

> **NOTE:** If the enemy is equipped with NVDs, leaders must evaluate the risk of using each technique and ensure the mission is not compromised because the enemy can detect infrared light sources.

SECTION VI — SPECIAL PURPOSE ATTACKS

7-117.   When the company commander directs it, the platoon conducts a special attack. The commander bases his decision on the factors of METT-TC. Special purpose attacks are subordinate forms of an attack and they include—

- Ambush.
- Raid.
- Counterattack.
- Spoiling attack.
- Feint.
- Demonstration.

7-118.   As forms of the attack, they share many of the same planning, preparation, and execution considerations of the offense. Feints and demonstrations are also associated with military deception operations.

AMBUSH

7-119.   An ambush is a form of attack by fire or other destructive means from concealed positions on a moving or temporarily halted enemy. It may take the form of an assault to close with and destroy the enemy, or be an attack by fire only. An ambush does not require ground to be seized or held. Ambushes are generally executed to reduce the enemy force's overall combat effectiveness. Destruction is the primary reason for conducting an ambush. Other reasons to conduct ambushes are to harass the enemy, capture the enemy, destroy or capture enemy equipment, and gain information about the enemy. Ambushes are classified by category (deliberate or hasty), formation (linear or L-shaped), and type (point, area, or antiarmor). The platoon leader uses a combination of category, type, and formation for developing his ambush plan. See Chapter 9 for greater detail on ambushes.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

7-120.   The execution of an ambush is offensive in nature. However, the platoon may be directed to conduct an ambush during offensive or defensive operations. The platoon must take all necessary

precautions to ensure that it is not detected during movement to or preparation of the ambush site. The platoon also must have a secure route of withdrawal following the ambush. An ambush normally consists of the following actions:

- Tactical movement to the objective rally point (ORP).
- Reconnaissance of the ambush site.
- Establishment of the ambush security site.
- Preparation of the ambush site.
- Execution of the ambush.
- Withdrawal.

TASK ORGANIZATION

7-121.   The Infantry platoon is normally task-organized into assault, support, and security elements for execution of the ambush.

Assault Element

7-122.   The assault element executes the ambush. It may employ an attack by fire, an assault, or a combination of those techniques to destroy the ambushed enemy force. The assault element generally consists of a rifle squad. The platoon leader is normally located with the assault element.

Support Element

7-123.   The support element fixes the enemy force to prevent it from moving out of the kill zone, which allows the assault element to conduct the ambush. The support element generally uses direct fires in this role, but it may be responsible for calling indirect fires to further fix the ambushed enemy force. The support element generally consists of the weapons squad. The platoon sergeant is normally located with the support element.

Security Element

7-124.   The security element provides protection and early warning to the assault and support elements, and secures the objective rally point. It isolates the ambush site both to prevent the ambushed enemy force from moving out of the ambush site and to prevent enemy rescue elements from reaching the ambush site. The security element may also be responsible for securing the platoon's withdrawal route. The security element generally consists of a rifle squad.

PLANNING

7-125.   The platoon leader's key planning considerations for any ambush include the following:

- Cover the entire kill zone (engagement area) by fire.
- Use existing terrain features (rocks or fallen trees, for example) or reinforcing obstacles (Claymores or other mines) orienting into the kill zone to keep the enemy in the kill zone.
- Determine how to emplace reinforcing obstacles on the far side of the kill zone.
- Protect the assault and support elements with mines, Claymores, or explosives.
- Use the security element to isolate the kill zone.
- Establish rear security behind the assault element.
- Assault into the kill zone to search dead and wounded, to assemble prisoners, and to collect equipment. The assault element must be able to move quickly on its own through the ambush site protective obstacles.
- Time the actions of all elements of the platoon to prevent the loss of surprise.

> **NOTE:** When manning an ambush for long periods of time, the platoon leader may use only one squad to conduct the entire ambush, rotating squads over time. The platoon leader must consider the factors of METT-TC and must especially consider the company commander's intent and guidance.

CATEGORY

7-126.   The leader determines the category of ambush through an analysis of the factors of METT-TC. Typically, the two most important factors are time and enemy.

Deliberate

7-127.   A deliberate ambush is a planned offensive action conducted against a specific target for a specific purpose at a predetermined location. When planning a deliberate ambush, the leader requires detailed information on the—

- Size and composition of the targeted enemy unit.
- Weapons and equipment available to the enemy.
- Enemy's route and direction of movement.
- Times that the targeted enemy unit will reach or pass specified points along the route.

Hasty

7-128.   The platoon (or squad) conducts a hasty ambush when it makes visual contact with an enemy force and has time to establish an ambush without being detected. The conduct of the hasty ambush should represent the execution of disciplined initiative within the parameters of the commander's intent. The actions for a hasty ambush should be established in a unit SOP and rehearsed so Soldiers know what to do on the leader's signal.

FORMATIONS

7-129.   The platoon leader considers the factors of METT-TC to determine the required formation.

Linear

7-130.   In an ambush using a linear formation, the assault and support elements deploy parallel to the enemy's route. This position forces the enemy on the long axis of the kill zone, and subjects the enemy to flanking fire. The linear formation can be used in close terrain that restricts the enemy's ability to maneuver against the platoon, or in open terrain (provided a means of keeping the enemy in the kill zone can be effected).

L-Shaped

7-131.   In an L-shaped ambush the assault element forms the long leg parallel to the enemy's direction of movement along the kill zone. The support element forms the short leg at one end of and at a right angle to the assault element. This provides both flanking (long leg) and enfilading (short leg) fires against the enemy. The L-shaped ambush can be used at a sharp bend in a road, trail, or stream. It should not be used where the short leg would have to cross a straight road or trail. The platoon leader must consider the other factors of METT-TC before opting for the L-shaped formation. Special attention must be placed on sectors of fire and SDZ of weapons because of the risk of fratricide when conducting an L-shaped ambush.

V-Shaped Ambush

7-132.   The V-shaped ambush assault elements are placed along both sides of the enemy route so they form a V. Take extreme care to ensure neither group fires into the other. This formation subjects the enemy to both enfilading and interlocking fire.

TYPE

7-133.   The company commander, following an analysis of the factors of METT-TC, determines the type of ambush that the platoon will employ.

CONDUCTING AN AREA AMBUSH

7-134.   An area ambush (more than one point ambush) is not conducted by a unit smaller than a platoon. This ambush works best where enemy movement is restricted. Once the platoon is prepared, the area ambush is conducted the same as a point ambush. The dominating feature of an area ambush is the amount of synchronization between the separate point ambushes.

7-135.   Area ambushes require more planning and control to execute successfully. Surprise is more difficult to achieve simply because of the unit's dispersion in the AO. Having more than one ambush site increases the likelihood of being detected by the enemy or civilians. This major disadvantage is offset by the increased flexibility and sophistication available to the leader.

CONDUCTING A POINT AMBUSH

7-136.   Point ambushes are set at the most ideal location to inflict damage on the enemy. Such ambushes must be able to handle being hit by the enemy force from more than one direction. The ambush site should enable the unit to execute an ambush in two or three main directions. The other directions must be covered by security that gives early warning of enemy attack.

RAID

7-137.   A raid is a limited-objective form of an attack, usually small-scale, involving swift penetration of hostile territory to secure information, confuse the enemy, or destroy installations. A raid always ends with a planned withdrawal to a friendly location upon completion of the mission. The platoon can conduct an independent raid in support of the battalion or higher headquarters operation, or it can participate as part of the company in a series of raids. Rifle squads do not execute raids; they participate in a platoon raids.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

7-138.   The platoon may conduct a raid to accomplish a number of missions, including the following:
- Capture prisoners.
- Destroy specific command, control, and or communications locations.
- Destroy logistical areas.
- Obtain information concerning enemy locations, dispositions, strengths, intentions, or methods of operation.
- Confuse the enemy or disrupt his plans.
- Seize contraband.

TASK ORGANIZATION

7-139.   The task organization of the raiding element is determined by the purpose of the operation. However, the raiding force normally consists of the following elements:
- Support element (support by fire).
- Assault element (with the essential task of the mission).
- Breach element (if required to reduce enemy obstacles).
- Isolation/security element.

CONDUCT OF THE RAID

7-140.   The main differences between a raid and other special purpose attacks are the limited objectives of the raid and the associated withdrawal following completion. However, the sequence of platoon actions for

a raid is very similar to those for an ambush. Additionally, the assault element of the platoon may have to conduct a breach of a protective obstacle (if a breach element has not been designated). Raids may be conducted in daylight or darkness, within or beyond the supporting distances of the parent unit. When the enemy location to be raided is beyond supporting distances of friendly lines, the raiding party operates as a separate element. An objective, usually very specific in nature, is assigned to orient the raiding unit (Figure 7-9). During the withdrawal, the attacking element should use a route different from that used to conduct the raid itself.
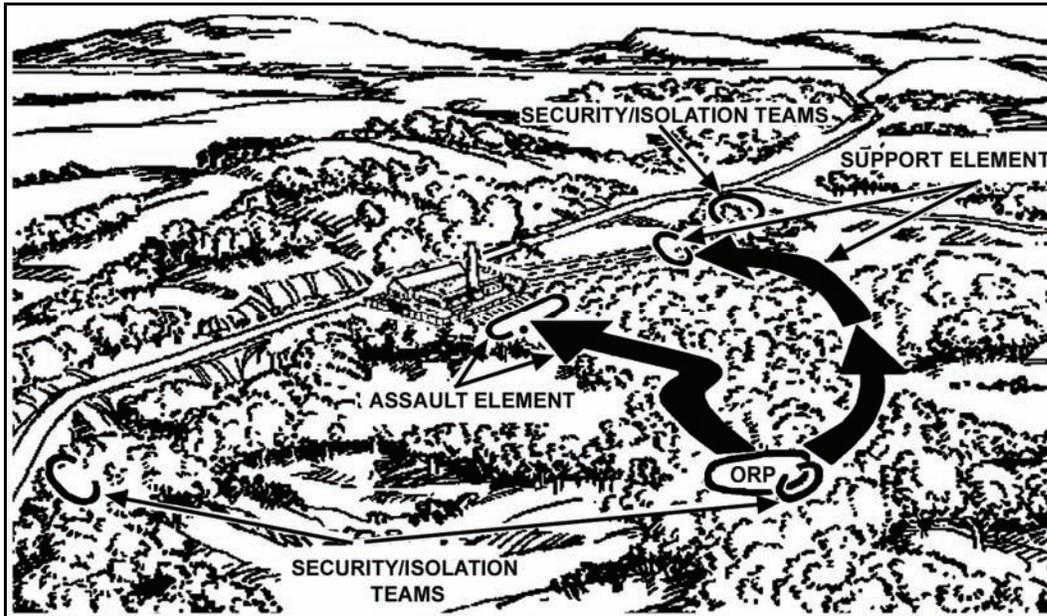

Figure 7-9. Platoon raid.

COUNTERATTACK

7-141.   The counterattack is a form of attack by part or all of a friendly defending element against an enemy attacking force. The general objective of a counterattack is to deny the enemy his goal of attacking. This attack by defensive elements regains the initiative or denies the enemy success with his attack. The platoon may conduct a counterattack as a lightly committed element within a company or as the battalion reserve. Counterattacks afford the friendly defender the opportunity to create favorable conditions for the commitment of combat power. The platoon counterattacks after the enemy begins his attack, reveals his main effort, or creates an assailable flank. As part of a higher headquarters, the platoon conducts the counterattack much like other attacks. However, the platoon leader must synchronize the execution of his counterattack within the overall defensive effort. The platoon should rehearse the counterattack and prepare the ground to be traversed, paying close attention to friendly unit locations, obstacles, and engagement areas.

SPOILING ATTACK

7-142.   A spoiling attack is a form of attack that preempts or seriously impairs an enemy attack while the enemy is in the process of planning or preparing to attack. The purpose of a spoiling attack is to disrupt the enemy's offensive capabilities and timelines, destroy his personnel and equipment, and gain additional time for the defending element to prepare positions. The purpose is not to secure terrain or other physical objectives. A commander (company or battalion) may direct a platoon to conduct a spoiling attack during friendly defensive preparations to strike the enemy while he is in assembly areas or attack positions where he is preparing offensive operations. The platoon leader plans for a spoiling attack as he does for other attacks.

FEINT

7-143.   A feint is a form of attack used to deceive the enemy as to the location and time of the actual operation. Feints attempt to induce the enemy to move reserves and shift his fire support to locations where they cannot immediately impact the actual operation. When directed to conduct a feint, the platoon seeks direct fire or contact with the enemy, but avoids decisive engagement. The commander (company or battalion) will assign the platoon an objective limited in size or scope. The planning, preparation, and execution considerations are the same as for other forms of attack. The enemy must be convinced that the feint is the actual attack.

DEMONSTRATION

7-144.   A demonstration is a form of attack designed to deceive the enemy as to the location or time of the actual operation by a display of force. Demonstrations attempt to deceive the enemy and induce him to move reserves and shift his fire support to locations where they cannot immediately impact the actual operation. When directed to conduct a demonstration, the platoon does not seek to make contact with the enemy. The planning, preparation, and execution considerations are the same as for other forms of attack. It must appear to be an actual impending attack.

SECTION VII — OFFENSIVE TACTICAL TASKS

7-145.   Tactical tasks are specific activities performed by units as they conduct tactical operations or maneuver. At the platoon level, these tasks are the warfighting actions the platoon may be called on to perform in battle. 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. It is extremely important to fully understand the purpose behind a task (what) because the purpose (why) defines what the platoon must achieve as a result of executing its mission. A task can be fully accomplished, but if battlefield conditions change and the platoon is unable to achieve the purpose, the mission is a failure.

> **NOTE:** The situations used in this section to describe the platoon leader's role in the conduct of tactical tasks are examples only. They are not applicable in every tactical operation, nor are they intended to prescribe any specific method or technique the platoon must use in achieving the purpose of the operation. Ultimately, it is up to the commander or leader on the ground to apply both the principles discussed here, and his knowledge of the situation. An understanding of his unit's capabilities, the enemy he is fighting, and the ground on which the battle is taking place are critical when developing a successful tactical solution.

SEIZE

7-146.   Seizing involves gaining possession of a designated objective by overwhelming force. Seizing an objective is complex. It involves closure with the enemy, under fire of the enemy's weapons to the point that the friendly assaulting element gains positional advantage over, destroys, or forces the withdrawal of the enemy.

7-147.   A platoon may seize prepared or unprepared enemy positions from either an offensive or defensive posture. Examples include the following:

- 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.

7-148.   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.

7-149.   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.

7-150.   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 give clear directives to subordinates.

CLEAR

7-151.   Clearing requires the platoon to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area. The platoon may be tasked with clearing an objective area during an attack to facilitate the movement of the remainder of the company, or may be assigned clearance of a specific part of a larger objective area. Infantry platoons are normally best suited to conduct clearance operations, which in many cases will involve working in restrictive terrain. Situations in which the platoon may conduct the clearance tactical task include clearing a—

- Defile, including choke points in the defile and high ground surrounding it.
- Heavily wooded area.
- Built-up or strip area. Refer to FM 3-06, *Urban Operations*, and FM 3-06.11, *Combined Operations in Urban Terrain,* for a detailed discussion of urban combat.
- Road, trail, or other narrow corridor, which may include obstacles or other obstructions on the actual roadway and in surrounding wooded and built-up areas.

GENERAL TERRAIN CONSIDERATIONS

7-152.   The platoon leader must consider several important terrain factors when planning and executing the clearance task. Observation and fields of fire may favor the enemy. To be successful, the friendly attacking element must neutralize this advantage by identifying dead spaces where the enemy cannot see or engage friendly elements. It should also identify multiple friendly support-by-fire positions that are necessary to support a complex scheme of maneuver which cover the platoon's approach, the actual clearance task, and friendly maneuver beyond the restrictive terrain.

7-153.   When clearing in support of tactical vehicles, cover and concealment are normally abundant for Infantry elements, but scarce for trail-bound vehicles. Lack of cover leaves vehicles vulnerable to enemy antiarmor fires. While clearing in support of mechanized vehicles, obstacles influence the maneuver of vehicles entering the objective area. The narrow corridors, trails, or roads associated with restrictive terrain can be easily obstructed with wire, mines, and log cribs.

7-154.   Key terrain may include areas dominating the objective area, approaches, or exits, and any terrain dominating the area inside the defile, wooded area, or built-up area. Avenues of approach will be limited. The platoon must consider the impact of canalization and estimate how much time will be required to clear the objective area.

RESTRICTIVE TERRAIN CONSIDERATIONS

7-155.   Conducting clearance in restrictive terrain is both time consuming and resource intensive. During the planning process, the platoon leader evaluates the tactical requirements, resources, and other considerations for each operation.

7-156.   During the approach, the platoon leader focuses on moving combat power into the restrictive terrain and posturing it to start clearing the terrain. The approach ends when the rifle squads complete their preparations to conduct an attack. The platoon leader—

- Establishes support-by-fire positions.
- Destroys or suppresses any known enemy positions to allow elements to approach the restrictive terrain.
- Provides more security by incorporating suppressive indirect fires and obscuring or screening smoke.

7-157.   The platoon leader provides support by fire for the rifle squads. He prepares to support the rifle squads where they enter the restrictive terrain by using—

- High ground on either side of a defile.
- Wooded areas on either side of a trail or road.
- Buildings on either side of a road in a built-up area.
- Movement of rifle squads along axes to provide cover and concealment.

7-158.   Clearance begins as the rifle squads begin their attack in and around the restrictive terrain. Examples of where this maneuver may take place include—

- Both sides of a defile, either along the ridgelines or high along the walls of the defile.
- Along the wood lines parallel to a road or trail.
- Around and between buildings on either side of the roadway in a built-up area.

7-159.   The following apply during clearance:

- The squads provide a base of fire to allow the weapons squad or support-by-fire element to bound to a new support-by-fire position. This cycle continues until the entire area is cleared.
- Direct-fire plans should cover responsibility for horizontal and vertical observation, and direct fire.
- Squads should clear a defile from the top down and should be oriented on objectives on the far side of the defile.
- Engineers with manual breaching capability should move with the rifle squads. Engineers may also be needed in the overwatching element to reduce obstacles.

7-160.   At times, the unit may encounter terrain that restricts or severely restricts movement. Movement through these areas is vulnerable to ambush and road blocks. Clearance techniques can also be loosely applied to other terrain features. Bridges, city streets, road bends, corridors, thickly wooded areas, and any other area where a narrow passage wall has severely restrictive terrain on both sides may need clearing when advancing in the fight.

7-161.   The platoon must secure the far side of the defile, built-up area, or wooded area until the company moves forward to pick up the fight beyond the restrictive terrain. If the restrictive area is large, the platoon may be directed to assist the passage of another element forward to continue the clearance operation. The platoon must be prepared to—

- Destroy enemy forces.
- Secure the far side of the restrictive terrain.
- Maneuver squads to establish support-by-fire positions on the far side of the restrictive terrain.
- Support by fire to protect the deployment of the follow-on force assuming the fight.
- Suppress any enemy elements that threaten the company while it exits the restrictive terrain.
- Disrupt enemy counterattacks.
- Protect the obstacle reduction effort.
- Maintain observation beyond the restrictive terrain.
- Integrate indirect fires as necessary.

ENEMY ANALYSIS

7-162.   Careful analysis of the enemy situation is necessary to ensure the success of clearing. The enemy evaluation should include the following:

- Enemy vehicle location, key weapons, and Infantry elements in the area of operations.
- Type and locations of enemy reserve forces.
- Type and locations of enemy OPs.
- The impact of the enemy's CBRN and or artillery capabilities.

BELOWGROUND OPERATIONS

7-163.   Belowground operations involve clearing enemy trenches, tunnels, caves, basements, and bunker complexes. The platoon's base-of-fire element and maneuvering squads must maintain close coordination. The weapons squad or support-by-fire element focuses on protecting the squads as they clear the trench line, or maneuver to destroy individual or vehicle positions. The base-of-fire element normally concentrates on destroying key surface structures (especially command posts and crew-served weapons bunkers) and the suppression and destruction of enemy vehicles.

7-164.   The platoon must establish a base of fire to allow the rifle squads to then maneuver or enter the trench line, tunnel, basement, or bunker. The direct-fire plan must be thoroughly developed and rehearsed to ensure it will facilitate effective protection for the Infantry while preventing fratricide.

7-165.   The platoon leader must also consider specific hazards associated with the platoon or supporting weapons systems. An example is the downrange hazard for the rifle squads created by the CCMS.

7-166.   The platoon should consider using restrictive fire measures to protect converging friendly elements. It must also use other direct-fire control measures such as visual signals to trigger the requirement to lift, shift, or cease direct fires. Techniques for controlling direct fires during trench, tunnel, basement, and bunker clearance may include the following: attaching a flag to a pole carried by the Soldier who follows immediately behind the lead clearing team; using panels to mark cleared bunkers, tunnels, and basements; using visual signals to indicate when to lift, shift, or cease fires.

7-167.   Once the rifle squads enter the belowground area, the combined effects of the platoon's assets place the enemy in a dilemma. Every action the enemy takes to avoid direct fire from the support-by-fire element, such as maintaining defilade positions or abandoning bunker complexes, leaves him vulnerable to attack from the rifle squads maneuvering down the trench. Every time the enemy moves his vehicles to avoid attacking squads, or when his Infantry elements stay in bunkers or command posts, he exposes himself to support fires.

7-168.   Consolidation consists of securing the objective and defending against an enemy counterattack.

7-169.   Reorganization, normally conducted concurrently with consolidation, consists of preparing for follow-on operations. As with consolidation, the platoon leader must plan and prepare for reorganization as he conducts his TLP. He ensures the platoon is prepared to—

- Provide essential medical treatment and evacuate casualties as necessary.
- Cross-level personnel and adjust task organization as required.
- Conduct resupply operations, including rearming and refueling.
- Redistribute ammunition.
- Conduct required maintenance.

SUPPRESS

7-170.   The platoon maneuvers to a position on the battlefield where it can observe the enemy and engage him with direct and indirect fires. The purpose of suppressing is to prevent the enemy from effectively engaging friendly elements with direct or indirect fires. To accomplish this, the platoon must maintain orientation both on the enemy force and on the friendly maneuver element it is supporting. 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 (see Chapter 2).
- 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.

SUPPORT BY FIRE

7-171.   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.

7-172.   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.)

7-173.   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 maintain the desired weapons effects on the enemy. The platoon leader must ensure the platoon adheres to these guidelines:

- Maintain communication with the moving element.
- Be prepared to support the moving element with both direct and indirect fires.
- Be ready to lift, shift, or cease fires when masked by the moving element.
- Scan the area of operations and prepare to acquire and destroy any enemy element that threatens the moving element.
- Maintain 360-degree security.
- Use Javelins to destroy any exposed enemy vehicles.
- Employ squads to lay a base of sustained fire to keep the enemy fixed or suppressed in his fighting positions.
- Prevent the enemy from employing accurate direct fires against the protected force.

ATTACK BY FIRE

7-174.   The platoon maneuvers to a position on the battlefield from where it can observe the enemy and engage him with direct and indirect fires at a distance to destroy or weaken his maneuvers. The platoon destroys the enemy or prevents him from repositioning. The platoon employs long-range fires from dominating terrain. It also uses flanking fires or takes advantage of the standoff range of the unit's weapons systems. The company commander may designate an attack-by-fire position from where the platoon will fix the enemy. An attack-by-fire position is most commonly employed when the mission or tactical situation focuses on destruction or prevention of enemy movement. In the offense, it is usually executed by supporting elements. During defensive operations, it is often a counterattack option for the reserve element.

7-175.   When the platoon is assigned an attack-by-fire position, the platoon leader obtains the most current intelligence update on the enemy and applies his analysis to the information. During planning and preparation, the platoon leader should consider—

- Conducting a line-of-sight analysis during terrain analysis to identify the most favorable locations to destroy or fix the enemy.
- Conducting direct and indirect fire planning and integration.
- 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.

7-176.   Several other considerations may affect the successful execution of an attack by fire. The platoon may be required to conduct an attack against enemy security forces to seize the ground from where it will establish the attack-by-fire position. The initial attack-by-fire position may afford inadequate security or may not allow the platoon to achieve its task or purpose. This could force the platoon to reposition to maintain the desired weapons effects on the enemy force. Because an attack by fire may be conducted well beyond the direct fire range of other platoons, it may not allow the platoon to destroy the targeted enemy force from its initial positions. The platoon may begin to fix the enemy at extended ranges. Additional maneuver would then be required to close with the enemy force and complete its destruction. Throughout an attack by fire, the platoon should reposition or maneuver to maintain flexibility, increase survivability, and maintain desired weapons effects on the enemy. Rifle squad support functions may include:

- Seizing the attack-by-fire position before occupation by mounted sections.
- Providing local security for the attack-by-fire position.
- Executing timely, decisive actions on contact.
- Using maneuver to move to and occupy attack-by-fire positions.
- Destroying enemy security elements protecting the targeted force.
- Employing effective direct and indirect fires to disrupt, fix, or destroy the enemy force.

SECTION VIII — URBAN AREAS

7-177.   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. For a more detailed discussion on urban operations see FM 3-06.11.

CRITICAL TASKS

7-178.   There are a number of critical tasks that need emphasis for Infantry platoons assaulting a building:

- Isolate the building.
- Gain and maintain fire superiority inside and outside the building.
- Gain access to the inside of the building.

- Move inside the building.
- Seize positions of advantage.
- Control the tempo.

FIND

7-179.   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.

ISOLATE THE BUILDING

7-180.   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. If the platoon is conducting a semi-independent assault, it should be organized to accomplish both the fix and finish function.

7-181.   A cordon is a line of troops or military posts that enclose an area to prevent passage. The Infantry platoon normally conducts a cordon as part of a larger unit. It is established by positioning one or more security elements on key terrain that dominates avenues of approach in and out of the objective area. The overall goal is the protection of the maneuver element, and to completely dominate what exits or enters the objective area. This requires a detailed understanding of avenues of approach in the area. There are many techniques used to facilitate isolation including, blocking positions, direct fire (precision and area), indirect fire, roadblocks, checkpoints, and observation posts. The same techniques can be used to cordon and search a small urban area (such as a village) surrounded by other terrain (Figure 7-10).

7-182.   Ideally these positions are occupied simultaneously, but a sequential approach can also be useful. Limited visibility aids can be used in the establishment and security of the cordon. The security element can either surround the area while the maneuver element simultaneously moves in, or it can use a sequential technique in which they use stealth to get into position before the actual assault.

7-183.   Plans should be developed to handle detained personnel. Infantrymen will normally provide security and accompany police and intelligence forces who will identify, question, and detain suspects. Infantry may also conduct searches and assist in detaining suspects, but their principal role is to reduce any resistance that may develop and to provide security for the operation. Use of force is kept to a minimum unless otherwise directed.
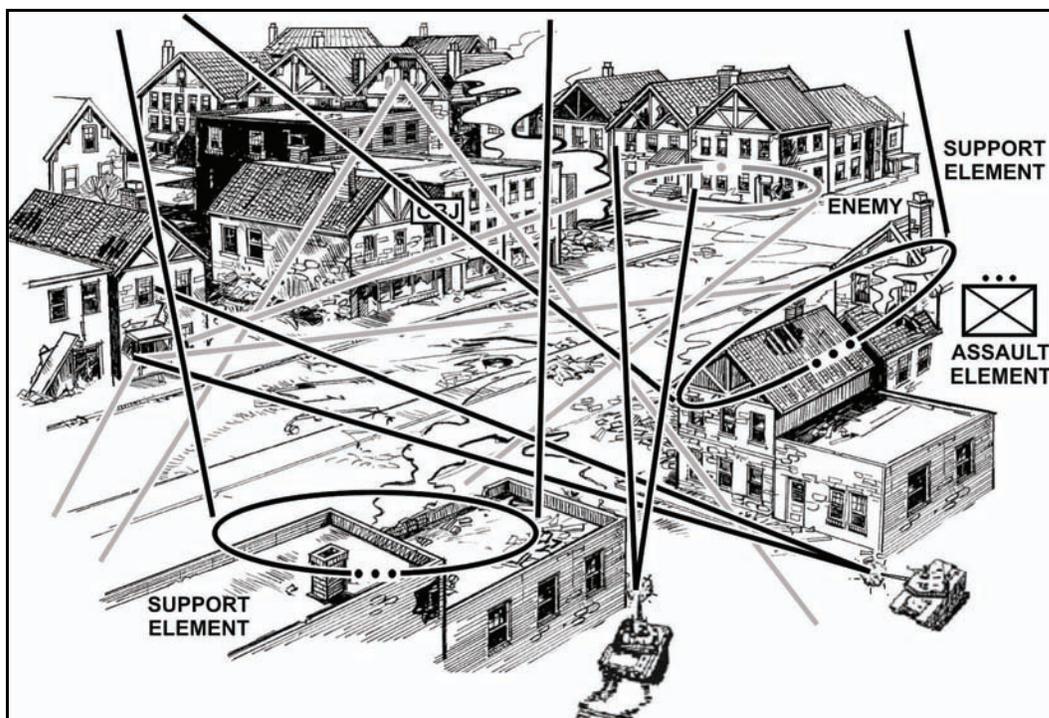
Figure 7-10. Isolate the building.

ASSAULT A BUILDING

7-184.   Squads and platoons, particularly when augmented with engineers, are the best organized and equipped units in the Army for breaching protective obstacles; gaining access to buildings; and assaulting rooms, hallways, and stairways. Although there are specific drills associated with fighting in buildings, the overall assault is an operation, not a drill. During planning, the leader's level of detail should identify each window (aperture, opening, or firing port) in his sector fortifications. He should then consider assigning these as a specific TRP when planning fires.

On 21 July 2003, the 3rd battalion 327 Infantry Regiment and an assault team of elite Special Operations Soldiers from Task Force 20 conducted an assault on a building as part of a raid to kill or capture high value targets.

Surprise, created by leveraging the aspect of time, enabled the leader to control the tempo by creating an initial advantage for the attackers. Instead of sequential actions, the leaders began actions on the objective with the near simultaneous arrival of the assault, support element, and security elements. The assault element arrived at an assault position right outside of the building. The support element occupied three separate support-by-fire positions. Two security elements were organized to establish inner and outer cordons. The first security element isolated the objective by establishing six blocking positions that denied enemy escape and blocked local counterattacks. The second security element formed the outer cordon to prevent a general counterattack and protect the population. With the enemy force found and fixed, an interpreter using a bullhorn requested their quiet surrender. This request was met by gunfire from the objective.

The fight began with the enemy concentrated on the building's second floor. The support element easily achieved enough fire superiority to enable movement outside the building. With those conditions created, the assault element moved from the assault position to objective and without difficulty seized the building's first floor. However, once the assault element attempted to go to the second floor, the support

element was not able to maintain the fire superiority necessary to facilitate the move. The assault element was also unable to achieve fire superiority. Undeterred, the assault element chanced a move up the stairway only to be beaten back by effective enemy fires resulting in casualties. They attempted several times to gain fire superiority but the defender's position of advantage gave them the firepower advantage and the assault was halted.

When the leader realized the team would not be able to gain fire superiority from their current locations, he slowed the operation's tempo down by ordering another element to seize a position of advantage on top of the objective building. Several members of the follow-on force gained access to the roof tops of neighboring houses. From there, they were able to use a supersurface avenue of approach to seize the objective building's rooftop. From this position of advantage, the Soldiers were able to communicate target locations and monitor munition effects, increasing the support element's ability to destroy or suppress the enemy.

With fire superiority completely gained outside and inside the building, the assault team successfully renewed its attempt to move to the second floor. Once up the stairs, they quickly eliminated remaining resistance and cleared the remainder of the objective, finishing the fight and accomplishing the mission.

ENTERING THE BUILDING

7-185. After establishing suppression and obscuration, leaders deploy their subordinates to secure the near side and then, after gaining access, secure the far side. Gaining access to the inside of the building normally requires reducing protective obstacles. Reducing obstacles is discussed at length in Appendix F.

7-186. Units gain access by using either a top or bottom entry. The entry point is the same thing as a point of penetration for an obstacle breach and as such is a danger area. The entry point will become the focus of fires for any enemy in a position to fire at it. It is commonly referred to as the "fatal funnel." Leaders ensure they have established measures to ensure the assault team has fire superiority when moving through the fatal funnel. Grenades (ROE determines fragmentation or concussion) are used to gain enough of a window of opportunity until the assault element can employ its small arms fire.

Top Entry

7-187. The top of a building is ordinarily considered a position of advantage. Entering at the top and fighting downward is the preferred method of gaining access to a building for a number of reasons. First, just as in operations on other types of terrain, it is easier to own the high ground and work your way down than it is to fight your way up when the enemy owns the high ground. Second, an enemy forced down to ground level may be tempted to withdraw from the building and expose himself to the fire of covering units or weapons. Third, the ground floor and basements are normally more heavily defended. Finally, the roof of a building is ordinarily weaker than the walls (and therefore easier to penetrate).

7-188. Top entry is only feasible when the unit can gain access to an upper floor or rooftop. Rooftops are danger areas when surrounding buildings are higher and forces can be exposed to fire from those buildings. Soldiers should consider the use of devices and other techniques that allow them upper level access without using interior stairways. Those devices and techniques include, but are not limited to, adjacent rooftops, fire escapes, portable ladders, and various Soldier-assisted lifts. For more information on top entry breaching, see FM 3-06.11.

Bottom Entry

7-189. Entry at the bottom is common and may be the only option available. When entering from the bottom, breaching a wall to create a "mousehole" is the preferred method because doors and windows may be booby-trapped and covered by fire from inside the structure. There are many ways to accomplish this, including employing CCMS, SLM, demolitions, hand tools, machine guns, artillery fire, and tank fire. The actual technique used depends on the ROE, assets available, building structure, and the enemy situation. If

the assault element must enter through a door or window, it should enter from a rear or flank position after ensuring the entry point is clear of obstacles.

Secure the Near and Far Side of the Point of Penetration

7-190.   Infantry platoons use the following drill for gaining access to the building. The steps of this drill are very similar to those drills described in Section IX to secure the near and far side of the point of penetration—

- The squad leader and the assault fire team move to the last covered and concealed position near the entry point.
- The squad leader confirms the entry point.
- The platoon leader or squad leader shifts the support fire away from the entry point.
- The support-by-fire element continues to suppress building and adjacent enemy positions as required.
- Buddy team #1 (team leader and automatic rifleman) remain in a position short of the entry point to add suppressive fires for the initial entry.
- Buddy team #2 (grenadier and rifleman) and the squad leader move to the entry point. They move in rushes or by crawling.
- The squad leader positions himself where he can best control his teams.
- Buddy team #2 position themselves against the wall to the right or left of the entry point.
- On the squad leader command of COOK OFF GRENADES (2 seconds maximum), the Soldiers employing the grenades shout, FRAG OUT, and throw the grenades into the building. (If the squad leader decides not to use grenades, he commands, PREPARE TO ENTER—GO!)
- Upon detonation of both grenades (or command GO), the buddy team flows into the room/hallway and moves to points of domination engaging all identified or likely enemy positions.
- Both Soldiers halt and take up positions to block any enemy movement toward the entry point.
- Simultaneously, buddy team #1 moves to and enters the building, joins buddy team #2, and announces, CLEAR.
- The squad leader remains at the entry point and marks it IAW unit SOP. He calls forward the next fire team with, NEXT TEAM IN.
- Once the squad has secured a foothold, the squad leader reports to the platoon leader, FOOTHOLD SECURE. The platoon follows the success of the seizure of the foothold with the remainder of the platoon.

7-191.   When using a doorway as the point of entry, the path of least resistance is initially determined on the way the door opens. If the door opens inward, the Soldier plans to move away from the hinged side. If the door opens outward, he plans to move toward the hinged side. Upon entering, the size of the room, enemy situation, and obstacles in the room (furniture and other items) that hinder or channel movement become factors that influence the number one man's direction of movement.

CLEAR A ROOM

7-192.   The term *room* in this FM means any enclosed space or partition within a building. 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.

7-193.   Room clearing techniques differ based on METT-TC, ROE, and probability of noncombatants 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.

7-194.   Room clearing techniques are described using the standard four-man fire team. This does not mean that all four members must enter a room, nor does it mean that more than four men cannot enter. The fire team organization is the baseline from where units adapt to the specific situation. This is because the compartmentalized nature typical of buildings and rooms makes units larger than squads awkward and unmanageable.

7-195.   For this battle drill to be effectively employed, each member of the team must know his sector of fire and how his sector overlaps and links with the sectors of the other team members. No movement should mask the fire of any of the other team members.

7-196.   On the signal, the team enters through the entry point (or breach). As the team members move to their points of domination, they engage all threats or hostile targets in sequence in their sector. The direction each man moves should not be preplanned unless the exact room layout is known. Each man should, however, go in a direction opposite the man in front of him (Figure 7-11). For example:

- **#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.

7-197.   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 in the ceiling, walls, and floor. Cleared rooms should be marked IAW unit SOP.
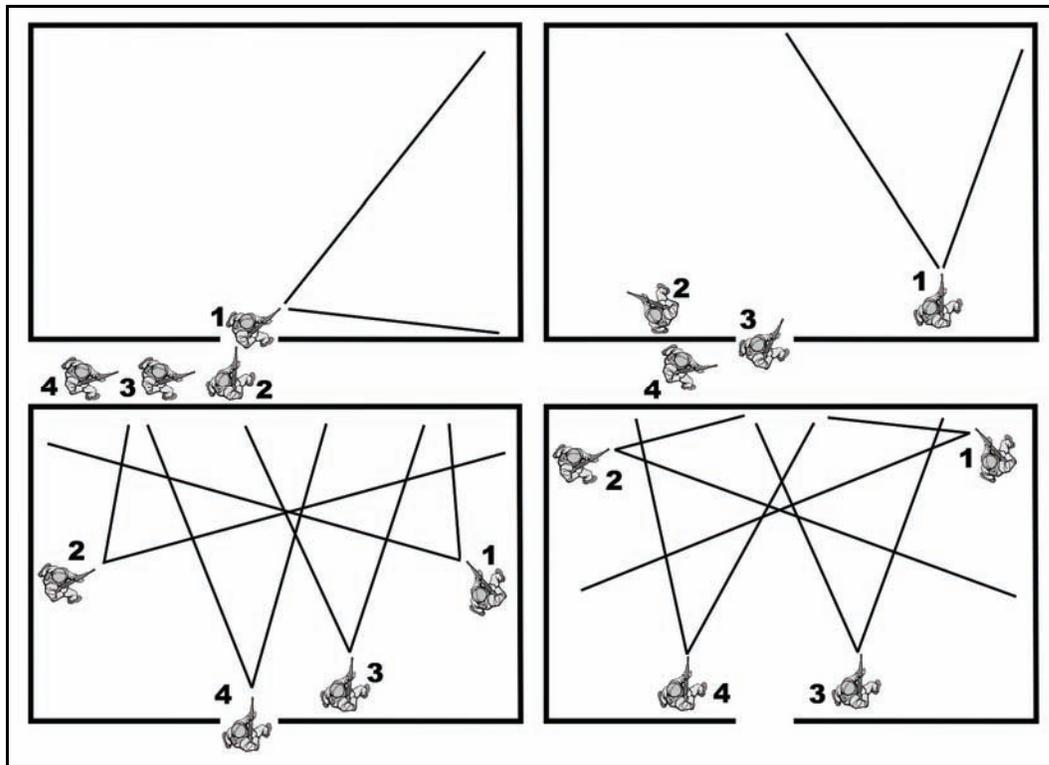
Figure 7-11. Clearing a room.

MOVING IN THE BUILDING

7-198.   Movement techniques used inside a building are employed by teams to negotiate hallways and other avenues of approach. They are similar to movement techniques employed when clearing enemy trenches, which is discussed in Section IX.

Diamond Formation (Serpentine Technique)

7-199.   The serpentine technique is a variation of a diamond formation that is used in a narrow hallway. The #1 man provides security to the front. His sector of fire includes any enemy Soldiers who appear at the far end or along the hallway. The #2 and #3 men cover the left and right sides of the #1 man. Their sectors of fire include any enemy combatants who appear suddenly from either side of the hall. The #4 man (normally carrying the M249 machine gun) provides rear protection against any enemy Soldiers suddenly appearing behind the team.

Vee Formation (Rolling-T Technique)

7-200.   The rolling-T technique is a variation of the Vee formation and is used in wide hallways (Figure 7-12). The #1 and #2 men move abreast, covering the opposite side of the hallway from the one they are walking on. The #3 man covers the far end of the hallway from a position behind the #1 and #2 men, firing between them. The #4 man provides rear security.
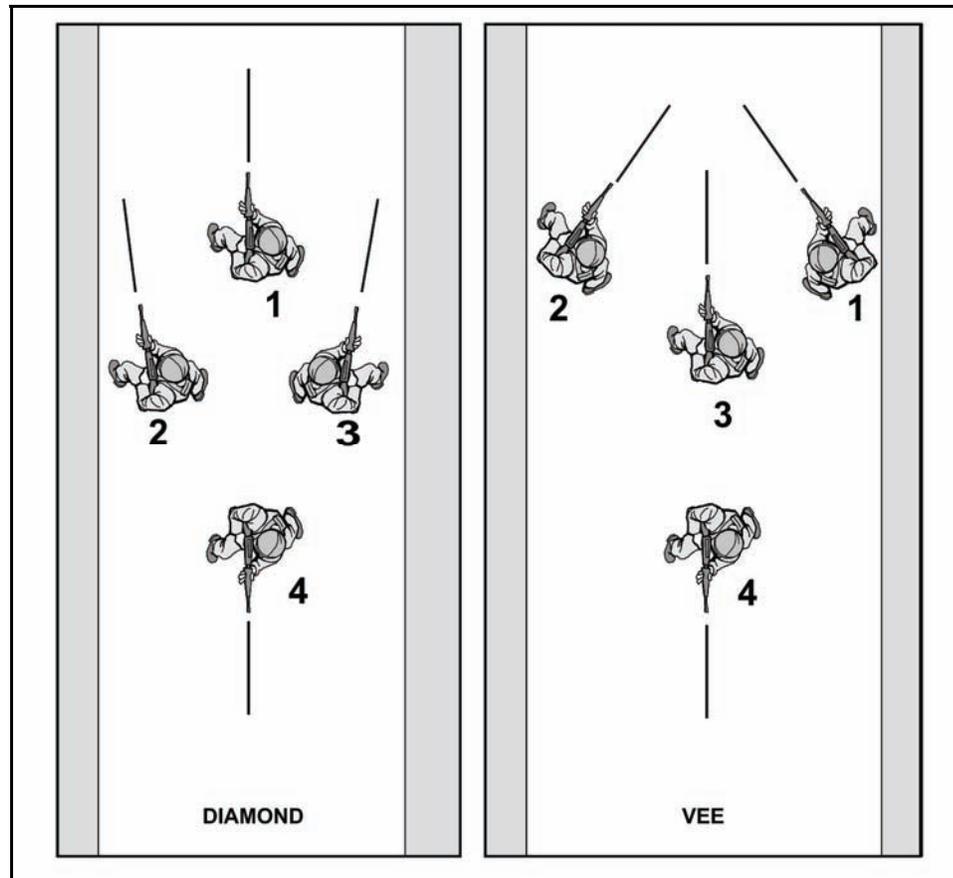
Figure 7-12. Diamond and vee formation techniques.

Clearing Hallway Junctions

7-201.   Hallway intersections are danger areas and should be approached cautiously. Figure 7-13 depicts the fire team's actions upon reaching a "T" intersection when approaching along the "cross" of the "T". The unit is using the diamond (serpentine) formation for movement (Figure 7-13 A). To clear a hallway—

- The team configures into a modified 2-by-2 (box) formation with the #1 and #3 men abreast and toward the right side of the hall. The #2 man moves to the left side of the hall and orients to the front, and the #4 man shifts to the right side (his left) and maintains rear security. (When clearing a right-hand corner, use the left-handed firing method to minimize exposure [Figure 7-13 B]).
- The #1 and #3 men move to the edge of the corner. The #3 man assumes a low crouch or kneeling position. On signal, the #3 man, keeping low, turns right around the corner and the #1 man, staying high, steps forward while turning to the right. (Sectors of fire interlock and the low/high positions prevent Soldiers from firing at one another [Figure 7-13 C]).
- The #2 and #4 men continue to move in the direction of travel. As the #2 man passes behind the #1 man, the #1 man shifts laterally to his left until he reaches the far corner (Figure 7-13 D).
- The #2 and #4 men continue to move in the direction of travel. As the #4 man passes behind the #3 man, the #3 man shifts laterally to his left until he reaches the far corner. As the #3 man begins to shift across the hall, the #1 man turns into the direction of travel and moves to his original position in the diamond (serpentine) formation (Figure 7-13 E).
- As the #3 and #4 men reach the far side of the hallway, they, too, assume their original positions in the serpentine formation, and the fire team continues to move (Figure 7-13 F).
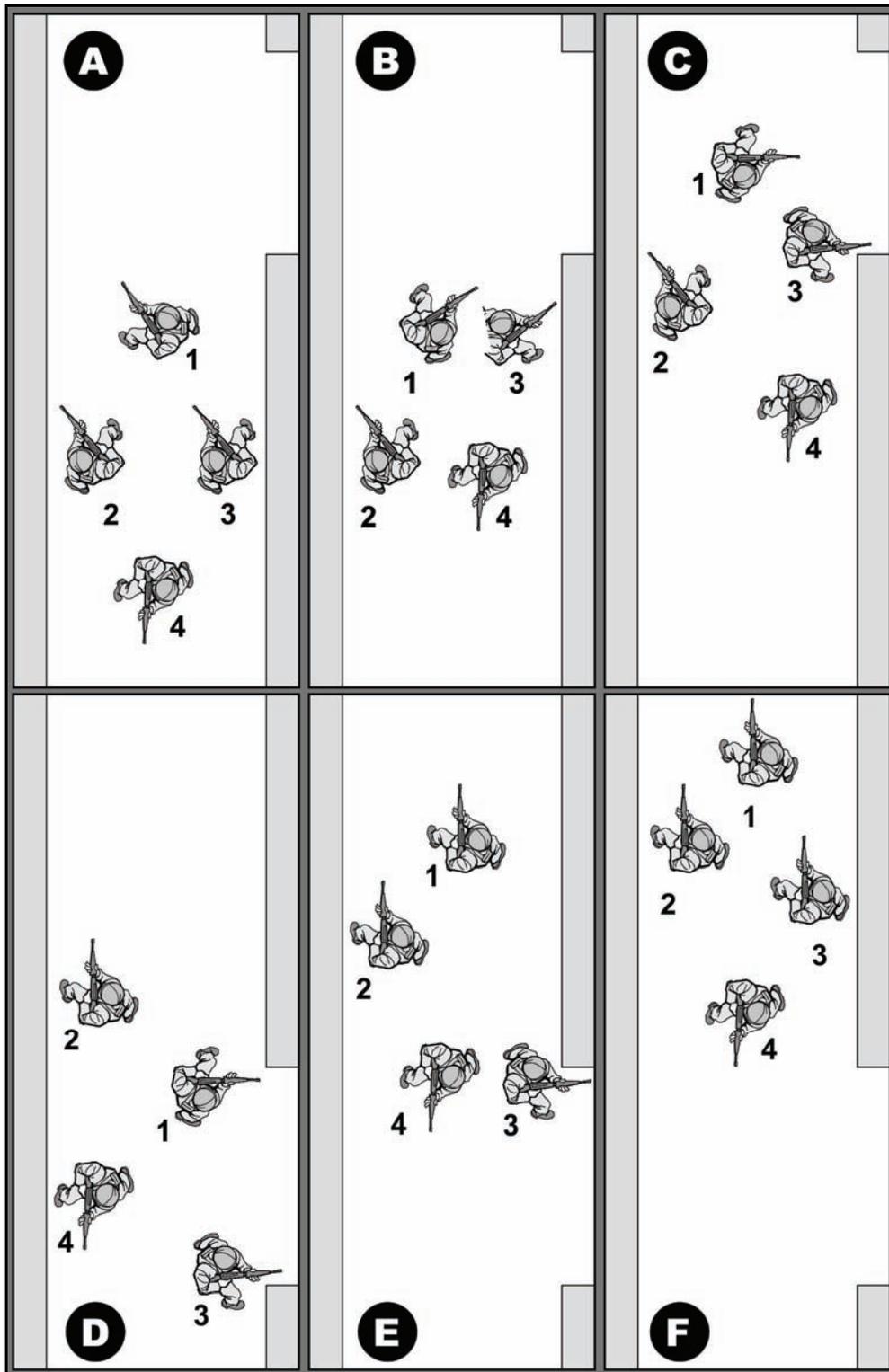
Figure 7-13. Clearing hallway junctions.

Clearing a "T" Intersection

7-202.   Figure 7-14 depicts the fire team's actions upon reaching a "T" intersection when approaching from the base of the "T". The fire team is using the diamond (serpentine) formation for movement (Figure 7-14 A). To clear a "T" intersection—

- The team configures into a 2-by-2 (box) formation with the #1 and #2 men left and the #3 and #4 men right. (When clearing a right-hand corner, use the left-handed firing method to minimize exposure [Figure 7-14 B]).
- The #1 and #3 men move to the edge of the corner and assume a low crouch or kneeling position. On signal, the #1 and #3 men simultaneously turn left and right respectively (Figure 7-14 C).
- At the same time, the #2 and #4 men step forward and turn left and right respectively while maintaining their (high) position. (Sectors of fire interlock and the low/high positions prevent Soldiers from firing at another [Figure 7-14 D]).
- Once the left and right portions of the hallway are clear, the fire team resumes the movement formation (Figure 7-14 E). Unless security is left behind, the hallway will no longer remain clear once the fire team leaves the immediate area.
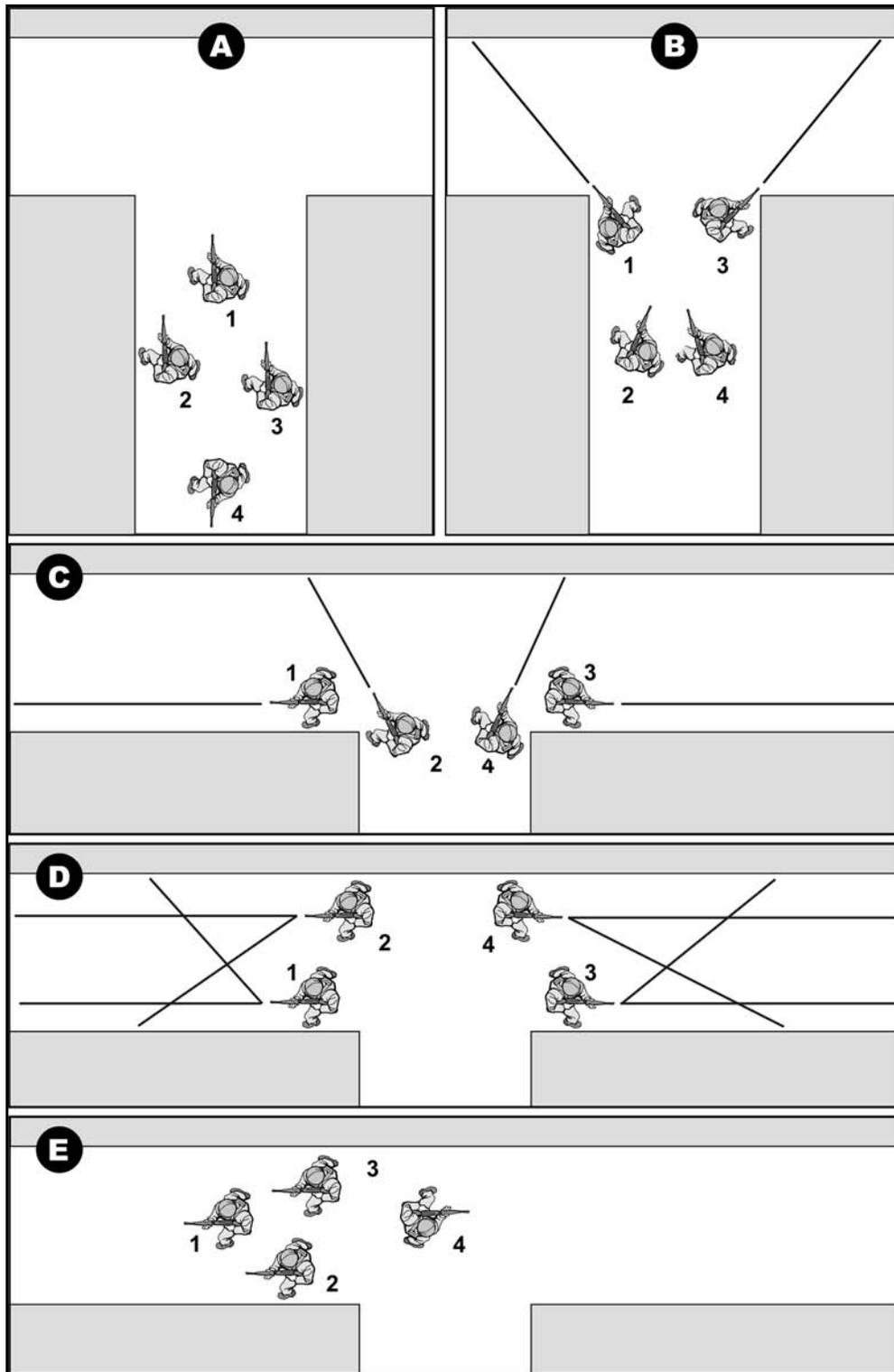
Figure 7-14. Clearing a "T" intersection.

Clearing Stairwells and Staircases

7-203.   Stairwells and staircases are comparable to doorways because they create a fatal funnel. The danger is intensified by the three-dimensional aspect of additional landings. The ability of units to conduct the movement depends upon which direction they are traveling and the layout of the stairs. Regardless, the clearing technique follows a basic format:

- The leader designates an assault element to clear the stairs.
- The unit maintains 360-degree, three-dimensional security in the vicinity of the stairs.
- The leader then directs the assault element to locate, mark, bypass, and or clear any obstacles or booby traps that may be blocking access to the stairs.
- The assault element moves up (or down) the stairway by using either the two-, three-, or four-man flow technique, providing overwatch up and down the stairs while moving. The three-man variation is preferred (Figure 7-15).
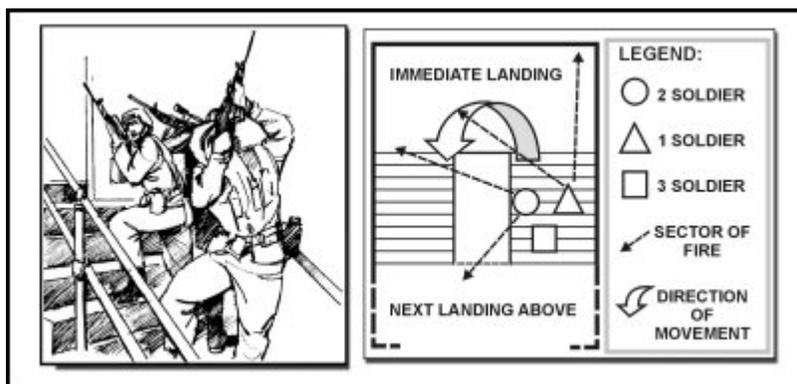
Figure 7-15. Three-man-flow clearing technique.

FOLLOW THROUGH

7-204.   After securing a floor (bottom, middle, or top), selected members of the unit are assigned to cover potential enemy counterattack routes to the building. Priority must be given initially to securing the direction of attack. Security elements alert the unit and place a heavy volume of fire on enemy forces approaching the unit.

7-205.   Units must guard all avenues of approach leading into their area. These may include—

- Enemy mouseholes between adjacent buildings.
- Covered routes to the building.
- Underground routes into the basement.
- Approaches over adjoining roofs or from window to window.

7-206.   Units that performed missions as assault elements should be prepared to assume an overwatch mission and to support another assault element.

7-207.   To continue the mission—

- Momentum must be maintained. This is a critical factor in clearing operations. The enemy cannot be allowed to move to its next set of prepared positions or to prepare new positions.
- The support element pushes replacements, ammunition, and supplies forward to the assault element.
- Casualties must be evacuated and replaced.
- Security for cleared areas must be established IAW the OPORD or TSOP.
- All cleared areas and rooms must be marked IAW unit SOP.
- The support element must displace forward to ensure that it is in place to provide support (such as isolation of the new objective) to the assault element.

SECTION IX — ATTACKING FORTIFIED POSITIONS

7-208.   Fortifications are works emplaced to defend and reinforce a position. Time permitting, enemy defenders build bunkers and trenches, emplace protective obstacles, and position mutually supporting fortifications when fortifying their positions. Soldiers who attack prepared positions should expect to encounter a range of planned enemy fires to include small arms fire, mortars, artillery, antitank missiles, antitank guns, tanks, attack aviation, and close air support. Attacking forces should also expect a range of offensive type maneuver options to include spoiling attacks, internal repositioning, counterattacks, and withdrawing to subsequent defensive positions. Spoiling attacks will attempt to disrupt the attacker's momentum and possibly seize key terrain. If driven out of their prepared positions, enemy troops may try to win them back by hasty local counterattacks or through deliberate, planned combined arms counterattacks. If forced to withdraw, the enemy forces may use obstacles, ambushes, and other delaying tactics to slow down pursuing attackers.

7-209.   The attack of a fortified position follows the basic principles of tactical maneuver. However, greater emphasis is placed upon detailed planning, special training and rehearsals, increased fire support, and the use of special equipment. The degree of special preparation depends upon the character, and extent of the defense.

7-210.   The deliberate nature of defenses requires a deliberate approach to the attack. These types of operations are time consuming. Leaders must develop schemes of maneuver that systematically reduce the area. Initially, these attacks should be limited in scope, focusing on individual positions and intermediate terrain objectives. Leaders must establish clear bypass criteria and position destruction criteria as well as allocate forces to secure cleared enemy positions. Failure in this will likely result in enemy reoccupying the positions, isolating lead elements, and ambushing follow-on units.

7-211.   The intense, close combat prevalent in trench clearing is remarkably similar to fighting in built up areas. Comparable characteristics include:

- **Restricted Observation and Fields of Fire.** Once the trench is entered, visibilities may be limited to a few meters in either direction. This compartmentalization necessarily decentralizes the engagement to the lowest level.
- **Cover and Concealment.** The nature of a trench system allows covered movement of both friendly and enemy forces. To prevent being flanked or counterattacked, junctions, possible entry points, and corners should be secured.
- **Difficulty in Locating the Enemy.** The assault element may come under fire from multiple mutually supporting positions in the trench or a nearby position. The exact location of the fire may be difficult to determine. Supporting elements outside the trench should be capable of locating, suppressing, or destroying such threats.
- **Close Quarters Fighting.** Because of the close nature of the trench system, Soldiers should be prepared to use close quarters marksmanship, bayonet, and hand-to-hand fight techniques.
- **Restricted Movement.** Trench width and height will severely restrict movement inside the system. This will ordinarily require the assault element to move at a low crouch or even a crawl. Sustainment functions such as ammunition resupply, EPW evacuation, casualty evacuation, and reinforcement will also be hampered.
- **Sustainment.** The intensity of close combat in the trench undoubtedly results in increased resource requirements.

FIND

7-212.   Finding the enemy's fortified positions relates back to the position's purpose. There are two general reasons to create fortified positions. The first includes defending key terrain and using the position as a base camp, shelter, or sanctuary for critical personnel or activities. This type of position is typically camouflaged and difficult to locate. When U.S. forces have air superiority and robust reconnaissance abilities, enemy forces will go to great lengths to conceal these positions. Sometimes the only way to find these enemy positions is by movement to contact. When Infantry platoons or squads encounter a previously

unidentified prepared enemy position, they should not, as a general rule, conduct a hasty attack until they have set conditions for success.

7-213.   The second general purpose for fortified positions is to create a situation in which the attacker is required to mass and present a profitable target. This type of position normally occurs in more conventional battles. These positions can be relatively easy to find because they occupy key terrain, establish identifiable patterns, and generally lack mobility.

7-214.   Attacking fortified positions requires thorough planning and preparation based on extensive reconnaissance.

FIX

7-215.   An enemy in fortified defenses has already partially fixed himself. This does not mean he will not be able to maneuver or that the fight will be easy. It does mean that the objective is probably more defined than with an enemy with complete freedom of movement. Fixing the enemy will still require measures to prevent repositioning to alternate, supplementary, and subsequent positions on the objective and measures to block enemy counterattack elements.

FINISH — FIGHTING ENEMIES IN FORTIFICATIONS

7-216.   Finishing an enemy in prepared positions requires the attacker to follow the fundamentals of the offense-surprise, concentration, tempo, and audacity to be successful.

7-217.   The actual fighting of enemy fortifications is clearly an Infantry platoon unit function because squads and platoons, particularly when augmented with engineers, are the best organized and equipped units in the Army for breaching protective obstacles. They are also best prepared to assault prepared positions such as bunkers and trench lines. Infantry platoons are capable of conducting these skills with organic, supplementary, and supporting weapons in any environment.

7-218.   Leaders develop detailed plans for each fortification, using the SOSRA technique to integrate and synchronize fire support and maneuver assets. Although there are specific drills associated with the types of fortifications, the assault of a fortified area is an operation, not a drill. During planning, the leader's level of detail should identify each aperture (opening or firing port) of his assigned fortification(s) and consider assigning these as a specific target when planning fires. Contingency plans are made for the possibility of encountering previously undetected fortifications along the route to the objective, and for neutralizing underground defenses when encountered.

SECURING THE NEAR AND FAR SIDE—BREACHING PROTECTIVE OBSTACLES

7-219.   To fight the enemy almost always requires penetrating extensive protective obstacles, both antipersonnel and antivehicle. Of particular concern to the Infantrymen are antipersonnel obstacles. Antipersonnel obstacles (both explosive and nonexplosive) include, wire entanglements; trip flares; antipersonnel mines; field expedient devices (booby traps, nonexplosive traps, punji sticks); flame devices; rubble; warning devices; CBRN; and any other type of obstacle created to prevent troops from entering a position. Antipersonnel obstacles are usually integrated with enemy fires close enough to the fortification for adequate enemy surveillance by day or night, but beyond effective hand grenade range. Obstacles are also used within the enemy position to compartmentalize the area in the event outer protective barriers are breached. See Appendix F for more information on obstacles.

7-220.   The following steps are an example platoon breach:
- The squad leader and the breaching fire team move to the last covered and concealed position near the breach point (point of penetration).
- The squad leader confirms the breach point.
- The platoon leader or squad leader shifts the suppressing element away from the entry point.
- The fire element continues to suppress enemy positions as required.

- Buddy team #1 (team leader and the automatic rifleman) remains in a position short of the obstacle to provide local security for buddy team #2.
- The squad leader and breaching fire team leader employ smoke grenades to obscure the breach point.
- Buddy team #2 (grenadier and rifleman) moves to the breach point. They move in rushes or by crawling.
- The squad leader positions himself where he can best control his teams.
- Buddy team #2 positions themselves to the right and left of the breach point near the protective obstacle.
- Buddy team #2 probes for mines and creates a breach, marking their path as they proceed.
- Once breached, buddy team #1 and buddy team #2 move to the far side of the obstacle and take up covered and concealed positions to block any enemy movement toward the breach point. They engage all identified or likely enemy positions.
- The squad leader remains at the entry point and marks it. He calls forward the next fire team with, "Next team in."
- Once the squad has secured a foothold, the squad leader reports to the platoon leader, "Foothold secure." The platoon follows the success of the seizure of the foothold with the remainder of the platoon.

KNOCKING OUT BUNKERS

7-221. The term *bunker* in this FM covers all emplacements having overhead cover and containing apertures (embrasures) through which weapons are fired. The two primary types are reinforced concrete pillboxes, and log bunkers. There are two notable exploitable weaknesses of bunkers.

7-222. First, bunkers are permanent, their location and orientation fixed. Bunkers cannot be relocated or adjusted to meet a changing situation. They are optimized for a particular direction and function. The worst thing an Infantry platoon or squad can do is to approach the position in the manner it was designed to fight. Instead, the unit should approach the position from the direction it is least able to defend against—the flank or rear.

7-223. Second, bunkers must have openings (doors, windows, apertures, or air vents). There are two disadvantages to be exploited here. First, structurally, the opening is the weakest part of the position and will be the first part of the structure to collapse if engaged. Second, a single opening can only cover a finite sector, creating blind spots. To cover these blind spots, the defender has to either rely on mutually supporting positions or build an additional opening. Mutual support may be disrupted, thereby enabling the attacker to exploit the blind spot. Adding additional openings correspondingly weakens the position's structural soundness, in which case the attacker targets the opening to collapse the position.

7-224. Ideally the team is able to destroy the bunker with standoff weapons and HE munitions. However, when required, the fire team can assault the bunker with small arms and grenades. A fire team (two to four men) with HE and smoke grenades move forward under cover of the suppression and obscuration fires from the squad and other elements of the base of fire. When they reach a vulnerable point of the bunker, they destroy it or personnel inside with grenades or other hand-held demolitions. All unsecured bunkers must be treated as if they contain live enemy, even if no activity has been detected from them. The clearing of bunkers must be systematic or the enemy will come up behind assault groups. To clear a bunker—

- The squad leader and the assault fire team move to the last covered and concealed position near the position's vulnerable point.
- The squad leader confirms the vulnerable point
- The platoon leader/squad leader shifts the base of fire away from the vulnerable point.
- The base of fire continues to suppress the position and adjacent enemy positions as required.
- Buddy team #1 (team leader and the automatic rifleman) remain in a position short of the position to add suppressive fires for buddy team #2 (grenadier and rifleman).
- Buddy team #2 moves to the vulnerable point. They move in rushes or by crawling.

- One Soldier takes up a covered position near the exit.
- The other Soldier cooks off a grenade (2 seconds maximum), shouts, FRAG OUT, and throws it through an aperture.
- After the grenade detonates, the Soldier covering the exit enters and clears the bunker.
- Simultaneously, the second Soldier moves into the bunker to assist Soldier #1.
- Both Soldiers halt at a point of domination and take up positions to block any enemy movement toward their position.
- Buddy team #1 moves to join buddy team #2.
- The team leader inspects the bunker, marks the bunker, and signals the squad leader.
- The assault squad leader consolidates, reorganizes, and prepares to continue the mission.

ASSAULTING TRENCH SYSTEMS

7-225.   Trenches are dug to connect fighting positions. They are typically dug in a zigzagged fashion to prevent the attacker from firing down a long section if he gets into the trench, and to reduce the effectiveness of high explosive munitions. Trenches may also have shallow turns, intersections with other trenches, firing ports, overhead cover, and bunkers. Bunkers will usually be oriented outside the trench, but may also have the ability to provide protective fire into the trench.

7-226.   The trench provides defenders with a route that has frontal cover, enabling them to reposition without the threat of low trajectory fires. However, unless overhead cover is built, trenches are subject to the effects of high trajectory munitions like the grenade, grenade launcher, plunging machine gun fire, mortars, and artillery. These types of weapon systems should be used to gain and maintain fire superiority on defenders in the trench.

7-227.   The trench is the enemy's home, so there is no easy way to clear it. Their confined nature, extensive enemy preparations, and the limited ability to integrate combined arms fires makes trench clearing hazardous for even the best trained Infantry. If possible, a bulldozer or plow tank can be used to fill in the trench and bury the defenders. However, since this is not always feasible, Infantry units must move in and clear trenches. Although obscuration is necessarily outside the trench, it can be more of hindrance to the attacker inside the trench. Use of night vision equipment also requires special considerations.

Entering the Trenchline

7-228.   To enter the enemy trench the platoon takes the following steps:
- The squad leader and the assault fire team move to the last covered and concealed position near the entry point.
- The squad leader confirms the entry point.
- The platoon leader or squad leader shifts the base of fire away from the entry point.
- The base of fire continues to suppress trench and adjacent enemy positions as required.
- Buddy team #1 (team leader and automatic rifleman) remains in a position short of the trench to add suppressive fires for the initial entry.
- Buddy team #2 (grenadier and rifleman) and squad leader move to the entry point. They move in rushes or by crawling (squad leader positions himself where he can best control his teams).
- Buddy team #2 positions itself parallel to the edge of the trench. Team members get on their backs.
- On the squad leader command of COOK OFF GRENADES (2 seconds maximum), they shout, FRAG OUT, and throw the grenades into the trench.
- Upon detonation of both grenades, the Soldiers roll into the trench, landing on their feet and back-to-back. They engage all known, likely or suspected enemy positions.
- Both Soldiers immediately move in opposite directions down the trench, continuing until they reach the first corner or intersection.

● Both Soldiers halt and take up positions to block any enemy movement toward the entry point.
● Simultaneously, buddy team #1 moves to and enters the trench, joining buddy team #2. The squad leader directs them to one of the secured corners or intersections to relieve the Soldier who then rejoins his buddy at the opposite end of the foothold.
● At the same time, the squad leader rolls into the trench and secures the entry point.
● The squad leader remains at the entry point and marks it. He calls forward the next fire team with, NEXT TEAM IN.
● Once the squad has secured a foothold, the squad leader reports to the platoon leader, FOOTHOLD SECURE. The platoon follows the success of the seizure of the foothold with the remainder of the platoon.

7-229.   The leader or a designated subordinate must move into the trench as soon as possible to control the tempo, specifically the movement of the lead assault element and the movement of follow-on forces. He must resist the temptation to move the entire unit into the trench as this will unduly concentrate the unit in a small area. Instead,, he should ensure the outside of the trench remains isolated as he maintains fire superiority inside the trench. This may require a more deliberate approach. When subordinates have reached their objectives or have exhausted their resources, the leader commits follow-on forces or requests support from higher. Once stopped, the leader consolidates and reorganizes.

7-230.   The assault element is organized into a series of three-man teams. The team members are simply referred to as number 1 man, number 2 man, and number 3 man. Each team is armed with at least one M249 and one grenade launcher. All men are armed with multiple hand grenades.

7-231.   The positioning within the three-man team is rotational, so the men in the team must be rehearsed in each position. The number 1 man is responsible for assaulting down the trench using well aimed effective fire and throwing grenades around pivot points in the trenchline or into weapons emplacements. The number 2 man follows the number 1 man closely enough to support him but not so closely that both would be suppressed if the enemy gained local fire superiority. The number 3 man follows the number 2 man and prepares to move forward when positions rotate.

7-232.   While the initial three-man assault team rotates by event, the squad leader directs the rotation of the three-man teams within the squad as ammunition becomes low in the leading team, casualties occur, or as the situation dictates. Since this three-man drill is standardized, three-man teams may be reconstituted as needed from the remaining members of the squad. The platoon leader controls the rotation between squads using the same considerations as the squad leaders.

Clearing the Trenchline

7-233.   Once the squad has secured the entry point and expanded it to accommodate the squad, the rest of the platoon enters and begins to clear the designated section of the enemy position. The platoon may be tasked to clear in two directions if the objective is small. Otherwise, it will only clear in one direction as another platoon enters alongside and clears in the opposite direction.

7-234.   The lead three-man team of the initial assault squad moves out past the security of the support element and executes the trench clearing drill. The number 1 man, followed by number 2 man and number 3 man, maintains his advance until arriving at a pivot, junction point, or weapons emplacement in the trench. He alerts the rest of the team by yelling out, POSITION or, JUNCTION, and begins to prepare a grenade. The number 2 man immediately moves forward near the lead man and takes up the fire to cover until the grenade can be thrown around the corner of the pivot point. The number 3 man moves forward to the point previously occupied by number 2 and prepares for commitment.

7-235.   If the lead man encounters a junction in the trench, the platoon leader should move forward, make a quick estimate, and indicate the direction the team should continue to clear. This will normally be toward the bulk of the fortification or toward command post emplacements. He should place a marker (normally specified in the unit TSOP) pointing toward the direction of the cleared path. After employing a grenade, the number 2 man moves out in the direction indicated by the platoon leader and assumes the duties of the number 1 man. Anytime the number 1 man runs out of ammunition, he shouts, MAGAZINE, and

immediately moves against the wall of the trench to allow the number 2 man to take up the fire. Squad leaders continue to push uncommitted three-man teams forward, securing bypassed trenches and rotating fresh teams to the front. It is important to note that trenches are cleared in sequence not simultaneously.

Moving in a Trench

7-236. Once inside, the trench teams use variations of the combat formations described in Chapter 3 to move. These formations are used as appropriate inside buildings as well. The terms *hallway* and *trench* are used interchangeably. The column (file) and box formations are self explanatory. The line and echelon formations are generally infeasible.

FOLLOW-THROUGH

7-237. The factors for consolidation and reorganization of fortified positions are the same as consolidation and reorganization of other attacks. If a fortification is not destroyed sufficiently to prevent its reuse by the enemy, it must be guarded until means can be brought forward to complete the job. The number of positions the unit can assault is impacted by the—

- Length of time the bunkers must be guarded to prevent reoccupation by the enemy.
- Ability of the higher headquarters to resupply the unit.
- Availability of special equipment in sufficient quantities.
- Ability of the unit to sustain casualties and remain effective.

7-238. As part of consolidation, the leader orders a systematic search of the secured positions for booby traps and spider holes. He may also make a detailed sketch of his area and the surrounding dispositions if time allows. This information will be helpful for the higher headquarters intelligence officer or if the unit occupies the position for an extended length of time.

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