

Chapter 3

Battalion Operations

This chapter, Chapter 2, Appendix E, and MCWP 3-16.3, *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Cannon Battery*, serve as guidelines for battalion operations.

3001. Mission

The mission of the battalion is to provide close and continuous artillery support to amphibious/land-based MAGTF operations to include: accurate and responsive fires in support of maneuver, long-range fire to establish operational depth, counterfire to defeat enemy fire support systems and assistance in integrating all fire support assets into combat operations. The battalion will be assigned a standard or nonstandard mission. The inherent responsibilities for each tactical mission are outlined in Figure 1-5.

3002. Duties and Responsibilities of Battalion Operations Personnel

a. Battalion Commander. The artillery battalion commander executes the fire support responsibilities inherent to his assigned tactical mission. He is responsible for the training, morale, and discipline of the personnel in the battalion. During operations, the commander reconnoiters routes, position areas, and observation sites. He guides his staff and subordinate commanders in artillery operations, including fire direction, fire planning, and CSS matters. The DS artillery battalion commander is normally assigned to duty as regimental Fire Support Coordinator (FSC). He maintains liaison with the supported or reinforced unit commander. He also provides expertise and advice on fire support coordination matters to the supported commander.

b. Battalion Liaison Officer. The battalion liaison officer (LNO) provides artillery representation in the regimental FSCC. He monitors artillery regimental fire direction (Arty Regt FD) nets in order to maintain situational awareness and keep abreast of artillery fire planning and significant artillery missions. In addition he ensures the S-2 and/or TIO are advised of all target information received through artillery channels. Specific duties are outlined in MCWP 3-16, *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Fire Support Coordination*.

c. Battalion Operations Officer. In addition to fighting the battalion, the Operations officer specifically:

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- 1 • Prepares artillery operation orders, letters of instruction, and operational
2 reports.
- 3 • Incorporates the principles of AWIFM-MAP, as outlined in chapter 1, in the
4 planning and execution of assigned missions.
- 5 • Supervises the operation of the main COC.
- 6 • Interprets commander's guidance and incorporates it into the artillery fire plan.
- 7 • Coordinates movement of the forward COC.
- 8 • Develops a scheme of positioning, displacing, and moving units under the
9 battalion's control.
- 10 • Coordinates use of attached assets.
- 11 • Coordinates the delivery of artillery support. He stays abreast of the supported
12 unit's tactical situation to ensure adequate and safe artillery support. He keeps
13 others informed of the artillery situation (i.e., fire capability, ammunition status,
14 etc.).
- 15 • Employs operational security and electronic warfare (EW) in artillery
16 operations.
- 17 • Works closely with commanders, other staff officers, and the staffs of higher,
18 lower, reinforcing, reinforced, and supported units on artillery matters. He
19 keeps the S-2 informed of all targets attacked or planned for attack and advises
20 on changes in observation and intelligence requirements.
- 21 • Coordinates the activities of liaison officers.
- 22 • Works with the S-4 and keeps him situationally aware of current ammunition
23 status.
- 24 • Coordinates survey activities.
- 25 • Works with the S-6 and keeps him situationally aware of current communication
26 requirements.

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28 **d. Battalion Assistant Operations Officer/FDO/Watch Officer.** The assistant
29 operations officer executes the fire plan and manages the assets under battalion's control. In
30 the absence of the S-3, he executes the responsibilities of the S-3. In addition, he will:

- 31 • Supervise the operation of the FDC.
- 32 • Ensure dissemination of information to subordinate units.
- 33 • Perform tactical fire direction.
- 34 • Brief COC watch officer in accordance with Figure 2-1.
- 35 • Perform tactical fire direction to coordinate the attack of targets generated by
36 the intelligence section, higher headquarters, and attached units.
- 37 • Review schedules of fire to alleviate unnecessary duplication and execute as
38 appropriate.
- 39 • The battalion fire direction officer (FDO), assisted by battalion fire direction
40 personnel, is responsible for training battery FDC personnel.
- 41 • Ensure battery FDCs are managing MVVs, weapons information, and
42 ammunition.
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1 **e. Battalion Operations (Ops) Chief.** The Battalion Ops Chief is the principal
2 assistant to the operations officer. His duties include but are not limited to:

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- 4 • Perform tactical/technical fire direction.
- 5 • Supervise operation of the COC.
- 6 • Ensure a COC journal is maintained at all times.
- 7 • Ensure all situation maps and overlays are current and applicable.
- 8 • Supervise the establishment and displacement of the COC.
- 9 • Establish a watch schedule.
- 10 • Maintain accountability of all personnel in the COC.
- 11 • Assist the S-3 and watch officer in their duties.
- 12

13 **f. Battalion Assistant Operations (Ops) Chief.** The Battalion Assistant Ops Chief is
14 the principal assistant to the Assistant Operations Officer/FDO/Watch Officer. His duties
15 include but are not limited to:

- 16
- 17 • Supervise inventories and loading of equipment.
- 18 • Supervise vehicle maintenance.
- 19 • Establish supply requisitions for the COC.
- 20 • Assists in fire planning.
- 21 • Assists the OpsChf in his duties and responsibilities.
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24 **3003. Tactical Policies**

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26 See Chapter 2, paragraph 2003.
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29 **3004. Battalion Combat Operations Center**

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31 Throughout this manual Combat Operations Center (COC) will be used as the generic
32 command cell. It is important to understand that the only difference between a COC and
33 Command Post (CP) is the presence of the commander.
34

35 **a. Main Combat Operations Center (Main COC).** This COC is composed of the
36 battalion commander (as desired), his principal staff, and required members and equipment
37 from Headquarters Battery necessary to control the battalion, conduct liaison with adjacent
38 units and receive direction from higher headquarters. The Main COC handles the bulk of
39 command and control for the battalion. The Main COC has the ability to reconstitute the
40 Forward COC that can perform the mission of the Main COC (figure 3-1 illustrates one
41 configuration). Recommended personnel to establish the Main COC command group are as
42 follows:
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- 1 • S-1 representative.
- 2 • S-2.
- 3 • S-3 or S-3A.
- 4 • S-4 representative.
- 5 • Battalion communications officer or assistant communications officer.
- 6 • Battalion survey chief.
- 7 • Counterbattery radar officer (if attached).
- 8 • Liaison officers as assigned.
- 9 • Battalion NBCD officer.
- 10 • HQ Battery support elements.

11
12 **b. Forward Combat Operations Center (Fwd COC).** This COC is composed of the
13 battalion commander (as desired), designated principal staff, and required members and
14 equipment from Headquarters Battery necessary to assume the mission of the Main COC. The
15 Fwd COC possesses high mobility, yet can be task-organized for self-sustainment and specific
16 missions. The Fwd COC is activated in order to allow displacement of the Main COC, or
17 weight a particular zone within the battle area to provide fluid command and control during
18 rapid maneuver scenarios. Recommended personnel to establish the Main COC command
19 group are as follows:

- 20
- 21 • Battalion Commander.
- 22 • S-2 representative.
- 23 • S-3 or S-3A.
- 24 • S-4 representative (if necessary).
- 25 • Battalion communications officer or assistant communications officer.
- 26 • Battalion survey officer (if necessary).
- 27 • Liaison officers as assigned.
- 28 • NBCD representative.
- 29 • HQ Battery commander (occupies Main COC once established).

30
31 **c. Administrative and Logistic Operations Center (ALOC).** The ALOC is
32 composed of elements within Headquarters Battery, and representatives of subordinate units
33 required to provide administrative, medical, messing, and maintenance facilities. The ALOC
34 possesses communications to command and control the logistics mission of the battalion.
35 Location of the ALOC will be in the rear of the battalion operating area, near an MSR, and in
36 position to provide rapid logistical support and effectively coordinate operations with combat
37 service support elements.

38
39 **d. Alternate Regimental Combat Operations Center.** The Battalion Main COC may
40 be designated the alternate regimental COC when severe degradation or catastrophic loss of
41 command, control, and communications (C3) occurs within the regimental COC. This
42 alternate COC provides short term C3 to the regiment. Ideally, the alternate regimental COC
43 will dissolve within 36 hours and the regimental Main COC will reconstitute. The capability
44 exists with normal succession of command to function for longer periods if necessary.

3005. Battalion Fire Direction Center

The battalion FDC is composed of personnel from the operations platoon. Watch sections are operated similar to the regimental FDC. The battalion communications platoon provides equipment and personnel support to the FDC. Functions of the battalion FDC during operations include fire direction, movement and positioning of batteries, and other functions.

NOTE: The tactics, techniques, and procedures outlined throughout this chapter are applicable in a digitized environment. See MCRP 3-16.2A, *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for AFATDS* for corresponding digital message formats.

a. Fire Direction. The battalion FDC has primary responsibility for tactical fire direction in the battalion. The extent that tactical fire direction is exercised is situational dependent. In some situations, the battalion FDO may make all tactical fire direction decisions. In other situations, tactical fire direction may be decentralized; e.g., when a battery is operating independently; when the battalion is unable to maintain communications with a battery; or when batteries are widely dispersed. Every effort is made to exercise control over the batteries before decentralizing tactical fire direction. Regardless of the degree of centralization, the battalion FDC works closely with battery FDCs. The battalion FDC can provide valuable guidance on techniques for engaging targets. The battalion FDC provides technical fire direction support, as required.

(1) Centralized Tactical Fire Direction. Centralized fire direction equates to authority to make decisions regarding fire missions, how fire control is executed, and how calls for fire are answered. The degree of control may be to the degree that the battalion controls all fire missions directly, or the battalion intercedes as necessary. The degree of centralization is dictated by the tactical situation, communications, and the FDC's personnel strength, training, and expertise.

(a) Normally the battalion FDC answers all calls for fire, makes all tactical fire direction decisions, and assumes control of fire missions on the net(s). Fire orders are then transmitted to firing batteries, as appropriate.

(b) Fire missions can be transmitted on Arty COF Nets established by the battalion. For responsiveness, calls for fire are sent to a firing battery assigned to a specific Arty COF Net, each controlled by the battalion. The battery and battalion FDOs concurrently analyze the fire mission. The battery FDO determines how to attack the target. The battalion FDO provides guidance and intercedes, as necessary. Considerations include the nature of the target, recommendation of the requester, attack guidance, commander's guidance, firing restrictions, ammunition status, accuracy, gun-target line, survivability and FSCMs. The below lists call for fire procedures:

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- The battery FDO transmits a request for additional support to the battalion FDC, if required (see figure 2-5). If the battery FDO determines his battery can adequately meet the mission requirements, he issues a fire order and monitors the transmission of the message-to-observer (MTO).
- The battalion FDO intercedes as necessary after monitoring the call for fire or battery FDO's MTO. The battalion FDO may decide to mass the battalion, request reinforcing fires, give the mission to reinforcing artillery, give the mission to another firing battery, use a different shell fuze combination or volume of fire, assign aimpoints for engagement of large targets, and/or pass the request to the FSCC to assign the target to another supporting arm. The battalion FDO announces his decision using a fire order. If the battalion FDO decides to mass the battalion, the battalion FDC may assume control of the fire mission.

(c) When required by the situation, the battery FDO may make his own tactical fire direction decisions. Each battery will establish a separate Arty COF Net and will act as net control. The net is monitored by the battalion FDC as communications allow. The battalion FDC responds to requests from the batteries and assists where applicable.

NOTE: See Appendix I and MCRP 3-16.2A, *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for AFATDS*, for fire direction procedures when operating with AFATDS

(2) Provision for Continuous Support. An artillery battalion in DS must provide continuous support, even during displacement. To accomplish this, the battalion may identify an Arty COF Net for use by a maneuver battalion and assign a firing battery to guard the net. When a battery cannot fire, the battalion FDC may assign another battery to guard the Arty COF Net or the battalion FDC may guard the Arty COF Net, assume control of fire missions on the net, and issue appropriate fire orders.

(3) Fire Missions From Other Sources. An artillery battalion with a DS mission may receive fire missions from sources other than its FOs (e.g., from the artillery regiment) or the battalion FDC may initiate fire missions itself. An artillery battalion with a reinforcing or GS mission may receive fire missions originated by the reinforced battalion (as appropriate) and/or the artillery regiment. For these fire missions, the battalion FDO/watch officer makes the appropriate tactical fire direction decisions and issues fire orders to the batteries. After the mission is terminated, the battalion FDO sends a FIREP to the unit which originated the mission.

(4) Reinforcing Artillery

(a) Fire Mission. The FDO will assign a unit(s) to reinforce another for a particular fire mission. The reinforced unit will provide replot data of the target to its reinforcing unit(s). Communications between the units will be on the Arty Bn FD Net. If positive communications cannot be established between them, the battalion FDC will act as relay. After the fire mission, the reinforcing unit(s) will resume its normal operational status.

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2 **(b) Reinforcing artillery** will establish communications with reinforced artillery
3 over the higher Arty Regt FD Net or the reinforced unit's FD net. Fire missions will be
4 directed by battalion fire order or as described in the preceding paragraph.
5

6 **b. Movement and Positioning.** The artillery battalion S-3 directs the positioning and
7 movement of the firing batteries and other artillery units operating under the battalion's
8 control. The DS battalion S-3 makes the necessary coordination for the movement/positioning
9 of the DS battalion and any reinforcing artillery. The regimental S-3 makes the necessary
10 coordination for GS and GS-R battalions. The battalion S-3 coordinates the movement with the
11 battalion S-2 and S-4 and issues movement orders to the batteries. The batteries submit
12 DISREPs and FIRECAPs to the battalion. The battalion commander directs the movement and
13 positioning of the headquarters battery. For more on movement and positioning, see
14 Appendices D and G.
15

16 **c. Other Functions of the Battalion FDC.** Other functions of the battalion FDC are
17 similar to those performed by the artillery regimental FDC. See paragraph 2007d. For
18 ammunition, the S-3 identifies the type, quantity, location/unit, and required time/date for
19 ammunition resupply. The battalion FDC maintains an accurate ammunition status of the
20 battalion. The battalion S-3 assigns firing batteries to priority targets and assigns priority of
21 fires. He also establishes battalion fire order standards and coordinates the assignment of FOs
22 and LNOs. Targeting is conducted in concert with the regiment.
23

24 **d. Special Missions.** When firing special missions it is vital that all procedures for the
25 battalion are clearly understood by all subordinate units. Special missions include priority
26 targets, final protective fires (FPF), immediate suppression, continuous suppression,
27 immediate smoke, quick smoke, danger close, scheduled fires, FASCAM, and suppression of
28 enemy air defenses (SEAD). The establishment of unit SOPs should address these special
29 missions as well as provide standard engagement information.
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32 **3006. Continuity of Operations**

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34 The Battalion Main COC is responsible for command and control (C2) of the battalion and
35 must be prepared to serve as the alternate regimental COC when severe degradation or
36 catastrophic loss of command, control, and communications (C3) occurs within the Regimental
37 COC. In addition, each Battery FDC must be prepared to tactically control the fires of the
38 battalion and able to serve as the alternate Battalion COC simultaneous to tactically controlling
39 fires of the battery when the battalion COC sustains significant degradation in C3 capability or
40 serves as the alternate regimental COC. The alternate COC for the battalion will be designated
41 in the applicable operation order or fragmentary order. Assumption of control and passage of
42 command and control will follow the procedures outlined in chapter 2.
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3007. Displacement/Advance Party Operations

Although paragraphs 2011 and 2012 establish the precepts for displacement and advance party operations, it is important to realize the significant differences between regimental and battalion operations. Battalions operate at a higher tempo and must synchronize their movement with the supported maneuver unit, reinforced artillery unit, or higher regimental headquarters depending on their assigned tactical mission. These movements must also support the artillery regiment's concept of operations.

3008. Battalion Survey

This paragraph, utilized in conjunction with MCWP 3-16.7, *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Marine Survey*, sets forth procedures for conducting survey operations.

a. Mission. The mission of battalion survey is to provide a common grid over the battalion area of operations. The battalion survey section will normally perform fifth order level survey's in order to provide control to all units organic or attached to the battalion. In some cases, the battalion survey section may be tasked to provide control to units requiring survey who are not attached to the battalion, but are operating with the battalion's area.

b. Duties of Battalion Survey Personnel

(1) Battalion Survey Officer. The battalion survey officer is a member of the battalion special staff. His duties include, but are not limited to:

- Accompany the battalion commander or his representative on reconnaissance of the new position.
- Advises the commander of the capabilities and limitations of survey, radar, and met.
- Formulate and implement the battalion survey plan.
- Maintain close liaison with the battery commanders and coordinate survey operations within the battalion.

(2) Survey Chief. The survey chief is the principal assistant to the survey officer. His duties include, but are not limited to:

- Perform, when directed, any or all of the duties of the Battalion Survey Officer.
- Ensure all survey data is correctly derived, transmitted, and filed.
- Supervise and train surveyors in the conduct of operations and maintenance of survey equipment.

(3) Chief of Party (Conventional and PADS)

- Trains his survey party.
- Supervises and coordinates field operations of his survey team.
- Responsible for the maintenance and accountability of his equipment.

(4) Survey Recorder/Computer

- Maintains the required forms for computations of survey.
- Performs independent computations with a survey computer system
- Maintains the survey sections computer systems
- Performs the duties of chief of party in his absence

(5) Instrument Operator

- Operates and performs preventive maintenance checks and services on the teams survey equipment.

c. Battalion Survey Methods. All battalion survey sections will accomplish field work procedures and computations involved in GPS surveying, traverse, intersection, resection, hasty survey, and astronomic observation techniques in accordance with MCWP 3-16.7.

(1) Starting Control. See MCWP 3-16.7, *Marine Survey*.

(2) Distance Determination. See MCWP 3-16.7, *Marine Survey*.

(3) Angle Measurement. See MCWP 3-16.7, *Marine Survey*.

(4) Recorder's Notes/Closure of Survey. See MCWP 3-16.7, *Marine Survey*.

(5) Computations. See MCWP 3-16.7, *Marine Survey*.

- Two sets of independent computations are required for all surveys. One set of computations is performed by the computer and the second set by the verifier.

(6) Station Marking

- All stations surveyed by battalion teams will consist of a standard surveyor's hub driven almost flush with the ground, with a surveyors tack in the center indicating the plumbing point.

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- Each battalion will be allotted a block of numbers by regiment to designate their firing points. Adjustments will be made if necessary to accommodate attached survey section.

- The OS hub will have a tag affixed with the following information:

- Date established
- Station name
- Direction to EOL
- Instructions

99 05 15
OS – FP 3122
DIR OS-EOL: 0802 mils
DO NOT REMOVE UNTIL 99 05 31

- The EOL hub will be tagged with the following:

- Date established
- Station name
- Instructions

99 05 15
EOL – FP 3122
DO NOT REMOVE UNTIL 99 05 31

- The OS will be witnessed by a yellow stake. The EOL will be witnessed by a yellow and red stake. Witness stakes are not required to be tagged.

d. Firing Position Data Card. Battalion survey officers will give a firing position data card to the battery commander or his representative with the following information:

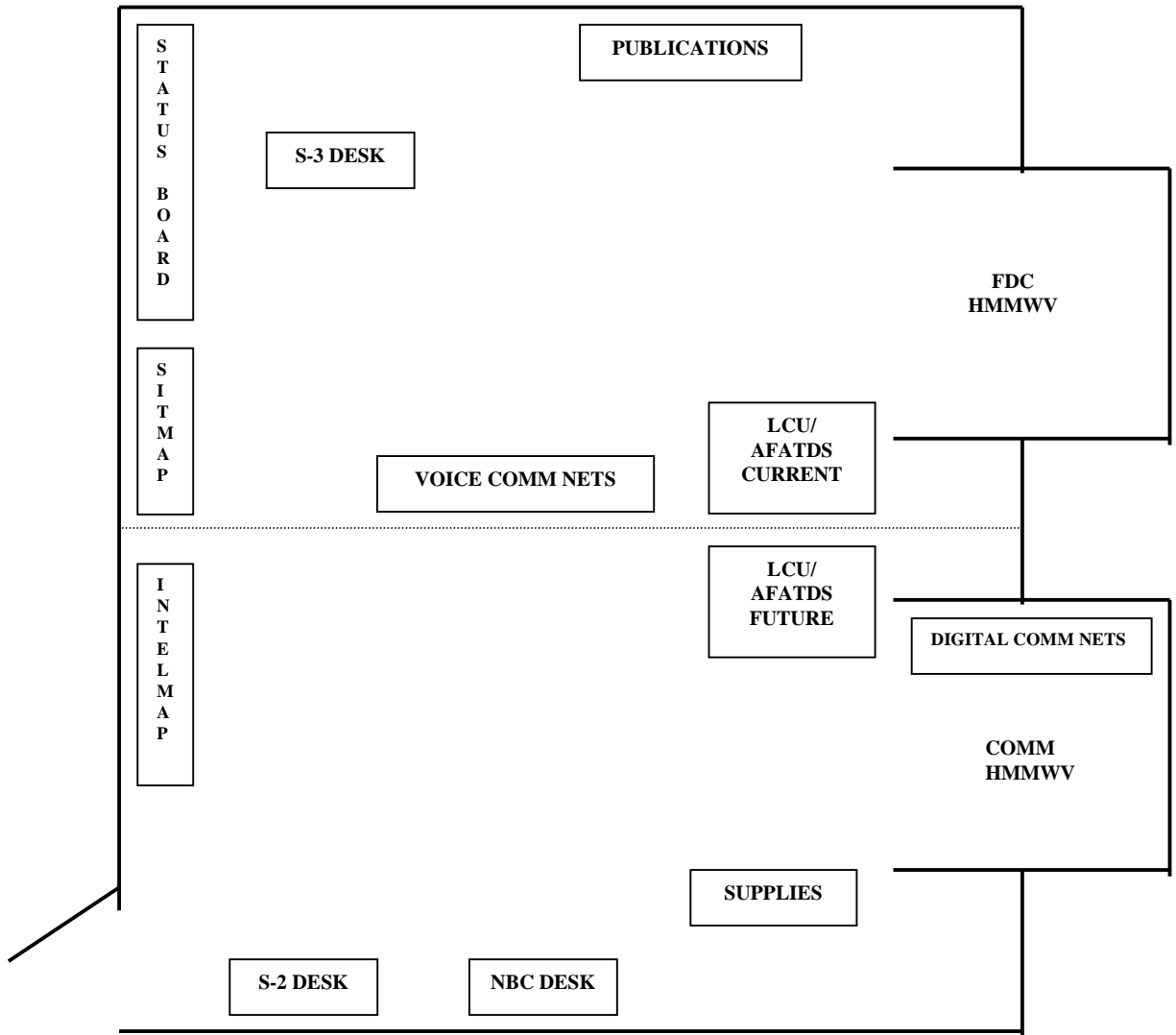
- Grid to OS (grid to EOL is optional for use when 6400 mil capability is required).
- Azimuth and distance from OS to EOL.

e. Priority of Survey

- Establish OS/EOL for the battery's.
- Establish declination stations.
- Extend control to Counterbattery Radar Sites.
- Extend control to meteorological stations.
- Perform target area survey's.
- Assist other units (mortars, PLRS, EW, etc) as required.

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NOTE: All COCs should contain only one entry point in order to facilitate the control of personnel on the access roster.

Figure 3-1. Example Battalion COC Configuration.

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