HANDBOOK

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SMALL-UNIT OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures

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Foreword

This handbook will assist Soldiers and small-unit leaders in preparing for the difficulties and challenges they will face when deployed to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The handbook specifically addresses the unique geographic and cultural aspects small units can expect to encounter in the Afghan theater of operations. While current U.S. formations have been successfully conducting counterinsurgency operations in Iraq, the infrastructure, terrain, culture, and enemy are very different in OEF. Operations in many parts of the Afghan theater are still heavily weighted in favor of direct lethal engagements against a hardened and determined enemy force.

The average enemy fighter in Afghanistan has been fighting continuously for the last 30 years. As a nation, the people of Afghanistan have been fighting for thousands of years. It should come as no surprise that the enemy has developed very effective tactics, techniques, and procedures to combat a technologically superior enemy that relies heavily on vehicles for transport and supply. This enemy has repeatedly demonstrated an advanced understanding of U.S. tactics and will exploit any mistake with catastrophic results.

Key concepts covered in this publication include:

- Command and control
- Soldier stamina and fitness
- Marksmanship
- Medical and casualty evacuation
- Mounted and dismounted battle drills
- Protection
- Interpreters

Michael D. Barbero
Major General, USA
Commanding

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David Liwanag, "Small Unit Leader DM Notes," *Infantry Magazine*, Jan-Feb 2007.

Joseph Paschall, "IO for JOE: Applying Strategic IO at the Tactical Level," *Field Artillery*, Jul-Aug 2005.

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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to assist small-unit leaders and Soldiers as they prepare to deploy to and conduct actual operations in Afghanistan. These operations are different from operations in Iraq in several ways. Soldiers and small-unit leaders will face unique difficulties and challenges when operating in the very distinct and disparate provinces of Afghanistan. The average enemy fighter in Afghanistan has been fighting continuously for the last 30 years. As a nation, the people of Afghanistan have been fighting for thousands of years. It should come as no surprise that the enemy has developed very effective tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) to combat a technologically superior enemy that relies on armored vehicles and helicopters for transport and logistical support. The situation is further exacerbated by separate and distinct ethnic groups, high rates of illiteracy, micro-societies with unique languages and cultures, and tribal/warlord allegiances that have no direct links to national policies or international agreements. Each small unit and its leaders must be prepared to conduct operations unique to its assigned mission and area of operations (AO).

An analysis of comments and insights from small-unit leaders who have served in Operation Enduring Freedom consistently highlights several areas of emphasis and two central and recurring themes. The areas of emphasis include command and control (C2), Soldier physical fitness, marksmanship, front-line medical procedures, integration and employment of fires and joint fires, mounted and dismounted battle drills, protection, and engagement. The central and recurring themes in small-unit operations in Afghanistan are simple. Units and leaders must get back to the basics; basic doctrinal fundamentals must be applied to all operations, and standards must be rigidly enforced.

Soldiers and small-unit leaders must be prepared to provide effective C2. At the small-unit level, leaders must thoroughly, deliberately, and precisely plan and rehearse C2 procedures and systems they will employ. Due to great distances, rugged and variable terrain, and extreme altitudes and weather, C2 must be proactive, reliable, and redundant. Small-unit leaders must establish, conduct, and enforce detailed troop-leading procedures and precombat checks and inspections of personnel and equipment prior to every mission.

Every Soldier and leader must be physically fit and mentally tough. The extremes of operating in Afghanistan (the climate, terrain, combat tasks, and stress) demand even greater emphasis on being in the best physical shape possible. Soldiers in good shape are better able to handle the fatigue and stress brought on by the rigors of daily tasks. Fatigue is also a major reason Soldiers become complacent in a combat zone; complacency significantly increases a Soldier's risk of becoming a casualty. Leaders cannot function effectively if they are not physically ready to "keep up" with their Soldiers.

Small units operating in the Afghan theater continue to stress the importance of individual marksmanship skills. Every Soldier, regardless of rank or duty position, must be able to place well-aimed, sustained, effective, and lethal fires using his individual weapon or any individual or crew-served weapon assigned to the unit. Many small units are identifying and training Soldiers as long-range or squad-designated marksmen. Finally, because of the possibility of engaging the enemy in villages or other developed areas, units must be prepared to conduct close-quarters marksmanship and reflexive fire.

Small-unit leaders in Afghanistan will be required to employ several medical treatment assets and options. Leaders must know what assets are available, what training and equipment is required, and how to plan for and integrate these assets into all missions and operations. As many Soldiers as possible must be qualified as combat lifesavers or, if possible, emergency medical technicians. Immediate medical attention saves lives and preserves combat power. The terrain and distances involved in small-unit operations in Afghanistan can complicate and protract medical evacuation (MEDEVAC). Small units must be skilled in casualty care to compensate for the possible longer time periods between the request for and the arrival of MEDEVAC assets. Additionally, all Soldiers must understand and be prepared to conduct both casualty evacuations and MEDEVACs to include calling for aircraft.

Small units conducting combat operations in Afghanistan face unique challenges in the area of fires. The varied and rugged geography combined with the very limited and circuitous ground transportation network and extremely experienced and adaptive enemy necessitate the dispersion of small units over large areas. The same conditions that necessitate this dispersion make protection of the dispersed units difficult. Weather and terrain can negatively influence quick reaction forces fires, aerial fires, and air resupply. The decentralized and dispersed nature of ongoing operations makes the employment of fires a critical component that small units must carefully plan, integrate, rehearse, and execute in all operations.

In Afghanistan, small units are subject to almost constant contact and engagement with hostile forces. Whether conducting operations from a forward operations base, a combat outpost, a joint security station, a village or urban area, or while moving, the small unit must be prepared and ready to encounter, engage, defeat, or destroy hostile forces. Therefore, small units must develop standing operating procedures or battle drills for both mounted and dismounted engagements with the enemy. Units must be able to react to hostile fire, ambushes, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) from both mounted and dismounted formations. Additionally, due to possible engagements in villages and developed areas, small units must be able to conduct close-quarters combat and room-clearing drills as necessary.

Enhanced tactical protection is an absolute necessity to conserve and protect Soldiers, operations bases, and equipment. The enormous strain that emerging security requirements are placing on available forces makes it imperative that small-unit leaders understand protection as it applies at the tactical level and leverage available technologies to enhance protection. Leaders must understand and incorporate the fundamentals of protection into all static and moving operations. All units must be proficient in the fundamentals of patrolling. A terrain and historical analysis of each AO will increase protection, as the enemy often uses the same locations and tactics for repetitive ambush and IED attacks.

Small-unit leaders must weigh and understand key principles in planning and conducting engagements. Key concepts include understanding the relationship between the patrol and the commander's priority intelligence requirements, talking points, interpreter use, and staying in the unit's and leader's lane. Small-unit commanders and leaders in an engagement are often the ones most in need of interpreters, but they often do not know how to use them effectively.

The central, recurring themes of getting back to basics and enforcing standards are critical to small-unit mission successes in Afghanistan. This handbook is

interspersed with current TTP as well as observations, insights, and lessons from theater. However, its base content is drawn largely from existing, time-proven, and doctrinal concepts which transcend theaters and conflicts. While not new, these principles have been arranged in a single, pocket-sized document tailored for use by small-unit leaders and Soldiers in the Afghanistan theater of operations.

Chapter 1

Command and Control

> "Maintaining communications is vital as it is the only life line to get assistance and assets quickly. Without communications units must fight on their own!"
>
> –Former Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) commander

Command and control (C2) is the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander/leader over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. C2 functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission. Large formations such as brigade combat teams and battalions are staffed and equipped with state of the art automated C2 systems and personnel to man and monitor these systems. Although at the small-unit level—company and below—C2 systems and personnel are limited, C2 is still critical to successful mission accomplishment and the protection of Soldiers and equipment.

At the small-unit level, leaders must thoroughly, deliberately, and precisely plan and rehearse C2 procedures and systems they will employ. C2 must be proactive, reliable, and redundant because of the great distances, rugged and variable terrain, and extreme altitudes and weather. Small-unit leaders must establish, conduct, and enforce detailed troop-leading procedures and precombat checks (PCCs) and precombat inspections (PCIs) of personnel and equipment prior to every mission. Additionally, small-unit leaders must establish redundant communications to pass on reports and information that are critical to mission success. Maintaining communications is vital; it is the only life line to get assistance and assets quickly.

Leaders must ensure that what Soldiers report to them and what they report to the next higher headquarters (HQ) is accurate and timely. This process requires a detailed, well-thought-out, and adequately resourced plan. Small-unit leaders must understand the importance and criticality of developing their communications plan along the lines of primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency (PACE) means of communications.

Troop-Leading Procedures

Precombat checks and precombat inspections

A key element of C2 at the small-unit level in the Afghanistan theater of operations is troop-leading procedures. Checks and inspections are critical to successful operations. Noncommissioned officers (NCOs)/leaders at the small-unit level establish checks and inspections that support the unit's mission. They ensure Soldiers perform checks and inspections before and after every operation. Checks and inspections fall into the following categories:

- PCCs

- PCIs

- Postcombat checks and inspections

PCCs help prepare the company/platoon for combat or other types of military operations. These checks include individuals, vehicles, weapons, and equipment. While these checklists are generic, a unit can tailor them to its specific needs. NCOs at all levels use these checklists in planning and preparing instructions for their subordinate leaders.

Table 1-1 is an example of a comprehensive small-unit PCI checklist that a unit may modify and adopt. Leaders should use this checklist as a starting point and add or remove items based on the unit's needs. For example, if bottled water is used almost exclusively, canteens might be removed from the checklist, but extra bottles (for dismounted) or extra cases (for mounted) of water should be added.

Leaders should also consider creating different versions of the checklists. Many units conduct patrols at least daily; therefore, a comprehensive checklist would be burdensome, and junior leaders would likely not use the list or only partially complete it. The unit could use a comprehensive list weekly (or at some other interval) and use an abbreviated checklist prior to every patrol. The key is for the unit leader to determine what items Soldiers need to check every time for security, protection, and mission success.

Precombat checks and inspections

Precombat Checklist			
	Check		**Check**
Individual		**Platoon Sergeant**	
Equipment packed according to tactical standing operating procedures (SOPs)		Operation equipment:	
Load-bearing vest complete and serviceable:		Maps (updated)	
Ear plugs		Compasses	
First aid pouch		Pens, etc.	
Ammunition pouches		Sleep plan established	
Canteen with water and cup		Class V supplies issued	
Kevlar with camouflage cover and band		Weapons control	
Weapons, zero data in pistol grip		Platoon status to first sergeant	
Body armor as required		Situation briefed	
Flashlight with batteries and lens filters		Meals ready to eat (MREs) issued	
Casualty feeder reports			
Weapon at appropriate arming level		**First Sergeant**	
Identification (ID) card		Personnel accounted for	
ID tags (two sets, with two tags; one set worn)		Uploaded by load plan	
MREs		Expendable supplies on hand	
Drivers license(s)		Operation equipment:	
Challenge and password		Maps (updated)	
Shot records		Compasses	
Hot/Cold weather brief		Listening post/Observation post (OP) verified and positioned	

Precombat Checklist (cont.)			
	Check		**Check**
Individual (cont.)		**First Sergeant (cont.)**	
Mission brief		Defense plan established and rehearsed	
		Defensive sector diagram complete	
Squad Leader		Range cards verified and complete	
Personnel accounted for		Camouflaged	
Individual PCI completed		Vehicles:	
Reference publications reviewed		Equipment	
Uploaded by load plan		Positions	
Expendable supplies on hand		Glass and mirrors	
Sleep plan established		Re-pack all equipment not in use	
Weapons control		Field sanitation enforced	
Section status to platoon sergeant		Hand washing enforced	
Situation briefed		Trash kept policed	
MREs issued		Medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) helicopter pad marked	
Ammunition basic load issued		Casualty collection identified	
		Reference publications reviewed	
Platoon sergeant		Early warning devices employed	
Personnel accounted for		Noise and light discipline enforced	
Individual PCI completed and verified		Sleep plan established	

Precombat Checklist (cont.)			
	Check		**Check**
Platoon Sergeant (cont.)		**First Sergeant (cont.)**	
Reference publications reviewed		Class V supplies issued	
Uploaded by load plan		Feeding plan established	
Expendable supplies on hand		Accountability of personnel to adjutant	
Operational equipment:		Accountability of sensitive items to operations and training officer	
Maps (updated)		Reportable equipment status to battalion maintenance officer	
Compasses		Situation briefed	

Table 1-1

Precombat Checklist—Equipment			
	Check		**Check**
Communications Equipment		**Generator Operator**	
Equipment accounted for:		All basic issue items (BII) on hand:	
Radios		Grounding rods	
Microphones		Fire extinguishers	
Antennas		-10 manuals	
Encrypting equipment		PMCS performed	
Signal operating instructions (SOI)		Generator fully fueled	

Precombat Checklist—Equipmnt (cont.)			
	Check		**Check**
Communications Equipment (cont.)		**Generator Operator (cont.)**	
Preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) completed:		Extra fuel and petroleum, oil, and lubricants (POL)	
Radios			
Antennas		**Vehicle Commander**	
Encrypting equipment		All BII on hand:	
Call sign board		Pioneer tools	
Frequencies:		Fire extinguishers	
Unit		-10 manuals	
Next higher HQ		PMCS performed:	
MEDEVAC		Vehicle	
Fire support		Radios	
TA-312s:		Vehicle fully fueled	
Batteries		Extra fuel and POL	
Wire		Grease pencils	
Reel handles		Notebook	
Single-Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System (SINCGARS):		Pens/Pencils	
Batteries		Maps and overlays	
Wire		Sun/Wind/Dust goggles	
Blank report formats		Compass/Global Positioning System (GPS) present and serviceable	

Precombat Checklist—Equipment (cont.)			
	Check		**Check**
Communications Equipment (cont.)		**Vehicle Commander (cont.)**	
Spare equipment:		Binoculars	
Microphones		Crew-served weapons	
Headsets		Headpiece and timing checked	
Antennas		Ammunition basic load	
Batteries		Qualified gunner	
Coordinate pick up of equipment		Vehicle load plan verified	
Coordinate pick up of SOI		Convoy number on vehicle	
SINCGARS spare battery			
Crew-Served Weapons		**Driver/Vehicle Preparation**	
Clean and functional		-10 manual and lubricating oil	
Spare barrels and cleaning kits		BII/Automated item identification present and serviceable:	
Glove; bolt rupture extraction		First aid kit	
Tripod with transversing and elevating mechanism and bipod binoculars		Fire extinguisher	
Head space and timing set (M2 .50 caliber machine gun)		Warning triangles	
Machine guns mounted		PMCS performed	
Function check		Vehicle topped off	
Test fire with permission		Loaded according to load plan	
Night vision device, serviceable		POL products including weapons oil	
		Five gallon can of water	

Precombat Checklist—Equipment (cont.)			
	Check		**Check**
Combat Lifesavers (CLSs)		**Driver/Vehicle Preparation (cont.)**	
CLS bags issued		Five gallon can of fuel	
100 percent inventory and all supplies replenished		Rags	
		MREs rations stowed	
		Tools	
		Goggles	
		Dispatch	
		Vehicle hardened as required	
		Strip map	
		Convoy route and plan briefed	
		Camouflage nets/poles configured/stowed	
		Lights and markings covered	
		Convoy number on vehicle	
		Trailer properly connected (including safety chains)	

Table 1-2

PCIs validate that the PCCs were performed. NCOs ensure that Soldiers perform inspections. NCOs must also allocate time for corrective actions should an individual or item fail the inspection. NCOs cannot delegate this responsibility. The NCO must be the inspector. This process demands that the NCO be competent in the maintenance and care of all of his unit's equipment. The standards he sets will determine the unit's ability to perform in combat.

Postcombat checks are identical in form to PCCs, but differ in substance. The NCOs perform checks on individuals, vehicles, weapons, and equipment. However, the focus changes to repairing and refitting these items to a reusable condition. The unit must replenish and replace expendable and lost items. Units replace their basic-load items and ensure that equipment has its full complement of POL. Unit personnel evacuate damaged and nonoperational equipment for repair.

The company and platoon leadership plan and conduct postcombat inspections. Inspections must focus on serviceability. Soldiers must operate vehicles and equipment to standard. A check of all radios requires that the unit position a net

station at a distance consistent with combat conditions. It does a unit no good to be able to talk only in an assembly area. NCOs should allocate sufficient time to perform these inspections. An inspection which checks only one of every three weapons ensures that the unit is only one-third operational. While time may not permit a 100 percent inspection of everything, small-unit leaders must determine which systems/equipment are critical for an operation and thoroughly check those items.

Postcombat inspection

The following provides an example of a way to conduct a postcombat inspection:

Vehicle preparations:

- Load vehicles according to the load plan.

- Refuel vehicles.

- Fill water cans full and stow Class I supplies (rations).

- Clean and stow equipment.

- Refill and stow first aid kit/CLS bag.

- Dispatch vehicle with technical manual and tool kit.

- Stow basic load of ammunition.

Communications equipment:

- Ensure radios are operational, mounted, and secured.

- Ensure connections and receptacles are clean and frequencies are set.

- Ensure antenna matching unit(s) are operational.

- Test communication security equipment.

- Stow operational telephones.

- Ensure that GPS, OE-254 antenna, and satellite communications are complete, operational, and stowed.

- Enter and monitor all required nets.

Optics: Ensure that night-vision devices and binoculars are cleaned, operational, and stowed.

Maintenance:

- Conduct PMCS on all equipment.

- Complete Department of the Army Form 2404(s) (Organization-level Maintenance Inspection Sheet) on all equipment.

Armaments: Clean and test-fire all weapons.

Commanders must ensure that subordinate leaders and noncommissioned officers in charge (NCOICs) have checklists readily available to determine if Soldiers are properly prepared. It is critical that NCOs conduct PCCs for all Soldiers before any operation or movement, and that the commander or platoon leader conducts PCIs before all missions. These checks are critical to the survival of Soldiers for both mounted and dismounted patrols.

Communication

Continuous, uninterrupted communication is critical to small-unit mission accomplishment. Battle tracking and information exchange cannot function without effective communication between subordinate units and their higher HQ as well as between units operating within the same operational environment (OE). Nonetheless, anecdotal information suggests that there are still instances when units are allowed to go "outside the wire" with minimal communications. Communications are the only link to pass on reports and information that are critical to mission success. Calls for fire, close air support, close combat air, MEDEVAC, and resupply may all be critical. Small-unit leaders must establish redundant means of communication for every mission.

Leaders must provide timely and accurate reporting to the next higher HQ. Many initial reports are sketchy, may be missing key elements of information, or may be outright wrong. Small-unit leaders must follow up contact reports with detailed second reports. This practice mitigates the possibility of reporting confusing, conflicting, or incorrect information.

Basic means of communication include radio, wire, messenger, visual signals, audible signals, and networks. A brief description of each follows.

Radio

Platoon leaders operate on the platoon net and monitor the company net. Units should minimize radio communications until contact or the enemy situation necessitates its use. In most situations, units may use other means, such as special radios and satellite phones, for unit-to-unit and long-distance communication. Because of the great distances and mountainous terrain in Afghanistan, the tactical satellite (TACSAT) radio has great utility. If available, units should train with and incorporate the AN/PRC-148 Multiband Inter/Intra Team Radio. Units also regularly use cell phones for short- and long-distance communications, though these do not allow secure communications. Cell phones can be both an asset and a liability, so units must closely control their use.

Wire

Hot wire loops were very common before encrypted radios became more readily available to small units. Units may still use them at times, and the unit typically establishes the loops within the platoon and to other platoons and the company when small units are stationary and the situation permits. OPs should be included in the wire loop.

Messenger

Units may use messengers to reduce electronic signals and signatures. Employing encrypted radios down to the small-unit level has made messenger use less frequent, but it is still a viable and secure means of communications. The unit SOP will dictate which unit sends and receives messengers (higher to lower or lower to higher echelon).

Visual signals

Visual signals typically include hand and arm signals, flag signals, pyrotechnics, flashlights, and chemical lights. Units should plan visual signals together with or as a backup for voice communications. Units can also use visual signals when voice communications are lost or when jamming or interference disrupts voice communications.

Audible signals

Units usually use audible signals to transmit prearranged messages, to attract attention, and to spread warning alarms. These signals must have prearranged meanings and the unit should address these signals in its SOP.

Network

Network-centric communications include Blue Force Tracker (BFT), Force XXI battle command—brigade-and-below (FBCB2), Non-Secure Internet Protocol Router (NIPR) and Secure Internet Protocol Router (SIPR), and other commercial off-the-shelf systems. The availability of these systems will vary from unit to unit, and terrain and weather may influence their use. Small-unit leaders must understand the importance and criticality of developing their communications plan along the lines of PACE means of communications. Leaders must consider many factors to effectively manage the information within their unit and ultimately achieve information superiority. The PACE plan must facilitate the information flow within the unit. For example, a platoon on patrol could use a frequency modulation (FM) radio as its primary means of communication with BFT/FBCB2 as its alternate. The platoon's contingency means of communications could be a TACSAT communications radio, and its emergency communications system could be satellite cell phone.

Communication Checklist	
	Check
Communications Equipment	
Equipment accounted for: radios, microphones, antennas, encrypting equipment, and SOIs	
PMCS completed: radios, antennas, encrypting equipment, and call sign board	
Frequencies: unit, next higher HQ, MEDEVAC, and fire support	
TA-312s: batteries, wire, and reel handles	
SINCGARS: batteries and wire	
Blank report formats	
Spare equipment: microphones, headsets, antennas, and batteries	
Coordinate equipment pick up	
Coordinate SOI pick up	
SINCGARS spare battery	

Table 1-3

Command and Control in Operation Enduring Freedom/Afghanistan

Within the Afghanistan theater of operation, unit leaders should be aware of certain caveats. While units must meet the principles of C2 spelled out above, some of the unique aspects of operations in Afghanistan will likely affect how these principles play out in practice. The following caveats and related guidelines should help the small-unit leader in Afghanistan more effectively apply the principles of C2.

The means of communication and the systems available vary greatly throughout the OEF theater. Cell phones and NIPR/SIPR e-mail are the primary communications links at virtually all levels. Cell phones are not secure, but they are fairly reliable throughout most of the theater (there are some dead spots but only in the more rugged and less-developed areas of the country). E-mail is secure only when using encryption on the NIPR or a SIPR system, and SIPR is often not available at small-unit bases. Consequently, small-unit leaders should coordinate with higher HQ and others they need to communicate with to determine what information they can send using cell phones and unsecured e-mail without limiting the unit's operational abilities.

PCCs and PCIs are definitely critical. The terrain and distances in Afghanistan can limit normal FM reception, and there are areas in which cell phones do not operate. In these situations, TACSAT systems are often the only option available (to include the BFT satellite system). Therefore, it is necessary that small units and teams are

proficient in the set up and use of TACSAT systems and regularly set up and check the systems to ensure they are fully mission-capable.

Small-unit leaders cannot assume subordinates are proficient or even familiar with all basic Soldier skills. The organizational structure of OEF is such that teams regularly are composed of service members from different branches (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine) with training and experience unrelated to their assigned positions. Therefore, leaders may have to conduct initial training and should regularly conduct refresher training on subjects such as crew-served weapons, individual weapons, communications equipment, driving (including night driving with night-vision goggles and driving in difficult terrain), vehicle maintenance, basic first aid, and similar tasks.

In many cases, several sending units form units and teams once they arrive in theater. In addition, members of a team may be on different deployment cycles; they arrive and depart from theater at different times. Consequently, small-unit leaders should develop plans for building trust and relationships within the teams both initially and as personnel changes take place. As a part of team building and preparing units for missions, leaders should regularly practice battle drills. These drills should include standard patrol drills such as security halts, recovering a vehicle, and responding to enemy contact; forward operating base/patrol base (PB) drills such as responding to indirect or direct fire attacks; and drills related to the unit's assigned missions. Of course, units must rehearse battle drills related to safety (such as rollover drills).

It is not unusual in the OEF theater for units and teams to be working regularly with one or more units that are not part of their same higher HQ or chain of command; therefore, unit leaders should identify others—besides their own HQ—with whom they need to establish and maintain effective communications. One of the truly critical keys to success is building strong, effective relationships with all the other elements in the area of operations (AO). Good communications and regular coordination will contribute to and follow from these relationships.

Company Command Post Operations

Although not currently recognized by or included in Army doctrine, most companies operating in Afghanistan establish company-level command posts (CPs). This development is attributable to the terrain, long distances, and the decentralized nature of operations in Afghanistan. Companies that have established platoon-size joint security stations, combat outposts, and PBs need to replicate many functions traditionally performed by the battalion-level CP. These functions can include tracking personnel and vehicles in and out on patrols, coordinating and prioritizing fires, establishing and positioning quick reaction forces (QRF), and tracking combat power and casualties. These company-level CPs are also sometimes referred to as company fusion cells.

The mission of the CP is to focus collection assets and efforts; glean intelligence from information gathered; recommend lethal and nonlethal courses of action to the commander; and disseminate intelligence throughout the company, laterally to other units, and up the chain of command to the battalion-level intelligence officer (S2). In addition to serving as the company hub for filtering and analyzing raw data, the CP provides the commander with information on combat power and available enablers as well as on the activities and attitudes of the local population.

Several sources feed information into the company CP. All of these pieces of information taken together form the overall picture for the commander, enabling him to establish his intent and make his decisions. It is critical that the commander and the CP personnel constantly share updated information to maintain a current and relevant common operating picture (COP) of the battlefield. If information is not communicated accurately and in a timely manner, it will adversely impact the commander's ability to provide critical information and intent to his superior commander and subordinate leaders. Figure 1-1 illustrates how the company CP operates.
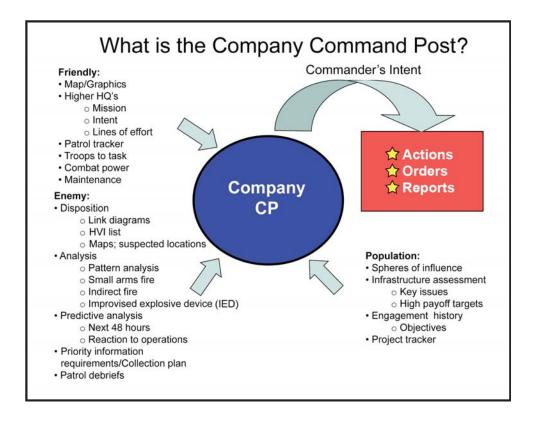

Figure 1-1

Company Command Post Staffing

Companies, regardless of function, are neither authorized nor staffed for CP operations. Therefore, tough decisions regarding manpower and personnel are necessary. Every Soldier or leader involved in CP operations is one less Soldier or leader available to send on patrol, provide security, or staff a QRF. Most commanders with combat experience in theater feel that the contributions of the CP are well worth the costs associated with resourcing it. There are multiple ways to staff the CP; however, a good rule to follow is "if it doesn't hurt, it's probably not the right personnel." The payoff for staffing the CP appropriately is large dividends in the volume, timeliness, and value of information passed to the commander and leadership to drive operations.

Leaders can greatly increase the effectiveness of the CP by selecting the correct individuals for this duty. The personnel selected should:

- Possess strong analytical aptitude.

- Possess strong computer skills.

- Understand battle tracking.

- Be sufficient for 24-hour operations (at least two analysts, two current operations personnel, and one leader/NCO).

- Understand how to work with intelligence systems.

Leaders in the company CP must be vigilant in the following areas so the greatest benefit is derived from its organization:

- Enforcing the debrief standards (the battalion commander should be copied on any debriefs that are forwarded to the S2)

- Enforcing priority intelligence requirements (PIR), specific information requirements (SIR), and specific orders and requests (SOR) (information requirements cannot be allowed to stagnate)

- Following SOPs with clearly defined methods of communication (must include both voice and data)

- Maintaining regularly scheduled communication with battalion staff (weekly meeting on the battle rhythm)

- Maintaining and retaining the CP personnel once they have been trained

- Minimizing distracter tasks for the CP

Figure 1-2 is an example of a recommended CP organizational and staffing chart.
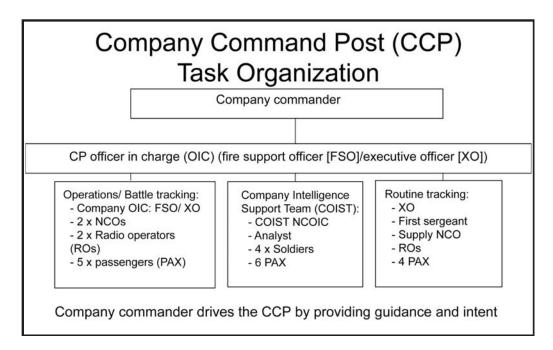
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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│            Company Command Post (CCP)                        │
│               Task Organization                              │
│      ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐               │
│      │         Company commander            │               │
│      └──────────────────┬───────────────────┘               │
│  ┌──────────────────────┴──────────────────────────────┐    │
│  │ CP officer in charge (OIC) (fire support officer     │    │
│  │ [FSO]/executive officer [XO])                        │    │
│  └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘   │
│  ┌────────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐   │
│  │ Operations/    │ │ Company        │ │ Routine        │   │
│  │ Battle         │ │ Intelligence   │ │ tracking:      │   │
│  │ tracking:      │ │ Support Team   │ │  - XO          │   │
│  │  - Company     │ │ (COIST):       │ │  - First       │   │
│  │    OIC: FSO/XO │ │  - COIST NCOIC │ │    sergeant    │   │
│  │  - 2 x NCOs    │ │  - Analyst     │ │  - Supply NCO  │   │
│  │  - 2 x Radio   │ │  - 4 x Soldiers│ │  - ROs         │   │
│  │    operators   │ │  - 6 PAX       │ │  - 4 PAX       │   │
│  │    (ROs)       │ │                │ │                │   │
│  │  - 5 x         │ │                │ │                │   │
│  │    passengers  │ │                │ │                │   │
│  │    (PAX)       │ │                │ │                │   │
│  └────────────────┘ └────────────────┘ └────────────────┘   │
│  Company commander drives the CCP by providing guidance     │
│  and intent                                                 │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 1-2

Command Post Purpose, Duties, and Responsibilities

Developing valid and relevant situational understanding (SU) of the OE requires the personal attention and effort of each individual commander. Pattern analysis and information-gathering operations enhance and contribute to the commander's force-protection program, SU, and battlefield vision. These operations portray relevant environmental and threat information that may affect the commander's operational and tactical visualization of the battlefield. For the commander to develop a relevant and timely understanding of the OE, he must logically and diligently collect, organize, and study all the information he can from all sources about all facets of the OE. This analysis includes information about friendly, enemy, and noncombatant forces; cultural and ethnic considerations; the company's short- and long-term goals; and how company actions can best contribute to the overall information operations (IO) campaign. The commander can best impact CP operations by:

- Providing guidance to the CP on priorities of work and collection efforts.

- Adjusting and updating PIR, SIR, and SOR on a continuous basis.

- Providing the link between company current operations and CP personnel.

- Ensuring the CP is synchronized on all operations and intelligence (IO, nonlethal operations, daily patrols, Biometric Automated Toolset [BAT] and Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment [HIIDE], host-nation support forces operations, intelligence collection plan, all combat operations, debriefs, be on the lookout, and high-value individuals).

- Working with the CP analyzing CP products and debriefs to focus efforts on target recommendations.

- Ensuring the commander or CP representative attends battalion targeting meetings, provides feedback, and refines guidance to the CP to meet the battalion commander's intent.

- Conducting link-up (face-to-face or verbal) with the battalion S2 to ensure the CP is providing timely and accurate products and analysis. This link-up will provide feedback on how well the CP is working and conducting operations.

- Providing guidance on his expectations.

Duties and responsibilities of the CP current operations cell include the following:

- Current operations NCOIC:

    ° Tracks current updates of all friendly units in the AO.

    ° Ensures the patrol tracker is updated with accurate information.

    ° Ensures any updated intelligence is immediately passed to units on patrol.

    ° Updates the SIGACT tracker.

    ° Ensures all COP graphics are updated with current information.

- Current operations RO:

    ° Keeps a daily log of all communications and activities with units on patrol.

    ° Maintains constant communications with units on patrol and updates higher HQ with unit locations.

    ° Monitors FBCB2/BFT for any communications and friendly unit locations.

    ° Updates the commander on any combat enablers the battalion may push to company level.

- COIST NCOIC:

    ° Initiates all COIST actions and operations.

    ° Provides updated enemy threat briefs to patrols prior to start-point time.

    ° Ensures CP members are tasked appropriately and priorities of work are identified.

  º Ensures priorities are completed and analysts have the time and the appropriate area to conduct work.

  º Requests battalion intelligence and collection assets for company and platoon operations; synchronizes collection efforts and priorities with the battalion S2.

  º Manages all current and emerging targets and ensures target packets are created to facilitate action on a target.

  º Recommends to the commander when a target is actionable and specifies what assets are available.

  º Monitors nonlethal aspects of the CP and recommends options for the commander on the nonlethal fight.

- COIST analyst:

  º Reads, interprets, researches and analyzes intelligence (the most knowledgeable and informed member of the COIST).

  º Debriefs, pre-briefs, and talks with the battalion S2 analyst.

  º Makes recommendations and gives the commander his "best guess" based on information he obtains.

  º Updates PIR, SIR, and SOR from the commander.

CP routine/logistical duties and responsibilities:

- Executive officer (XO) duties:

  º Updates maintenance status tracker for all vehicles, weapons, and equipment.

  º Updates the commander when combat power is needed to conduct resupply operations.

  º Tracks all supplies as they relate to combat operations.

  º Develops recovery plans for all patrols and operations.

  º Tracks host-nation security force training and integration plans.

- First sergeant duties:

    º Updates personnel status tracker for each platoon and the company.

    º Updates and manages environmental morale leave of all personnel assigned.

    º Updates troops-to-task tracker; ensures all tasks are tracked from the battalion and are completed.

Company Command Post Training and Systems

Required training is critical for personnel manning critical systems within the CP. It is equally important to cross-train on these systems. As new equipment is fielded, the company must ensure Soldiers are properly trained to operate the new equipment. It is often difficult or impossible to service or repair new devices and equipment in theater. Each company will have different Army battle command systems (ABCS) in the tactical operations center. These systems are only effective if the user has the proper training and implements the system. Each system functions independently, but working as a network offers better situational awareness (SA) and understanding to unit commanders. Some of the systems listed are collection assets that can greatly enhance the company commander's targeting decision cycle and assist the CP in SU of the AO and spheres of influence. Collection asset products also assist in developing and driving SIRs and SOR at the company level.

Systems and training may include:

- Raven Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) operations.

- BAT and HIIDE employment.

- Tactical ground reporting network.

- My Internet Relay Chat.

- One System Remote Video Terminal (provides real-time UAS/close combat attack feed).

- Unattended ground sensors.

- Tagging, tracking, and locating.

- Cell phone exploitation.

- ABCS.

- Additional rapid equipment-fielding systems.

Command Post Products

A properly functioning CP should have the following products available for the commander:

- Enemy situation template for the AO

- Pattern analysis data for AO (friendly and enemy)

- Debrief database available for searching

- BATS/HIIDE database available for searching

- Status of intelligence-gathering systems in AO

- Personality tracking matrix/link analysis

- Area cataloging status tracker

- Targeting recommendations

- Political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, and information status by location

- Current COP

- Updated combat power tracker

- Current patrol tracker

The commander and leaders must have the most current and accurate information available to make a decision when the fight starts and troops are in contact. A commander does not have time to receive a verbal brief during this process. He must have the ability to visually reference all of his combat power and the locations of enemy and friendly forces on the battlefield to assist in his decision. The CP must maintain all tracking charts and ensure updates are continually conducted, and leaders must spot check to confirm accurate information. Figures 1-3 through 1-14 are examples of a CP brief, a patrol brief, battle-tracking charts, and a patrol debrief.
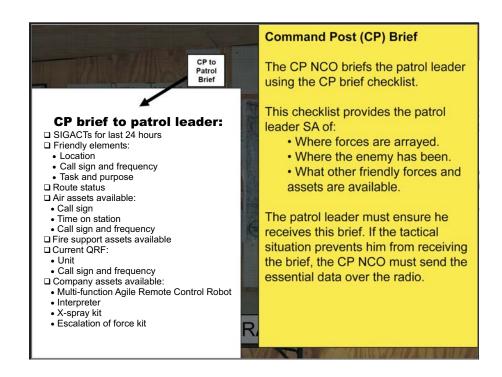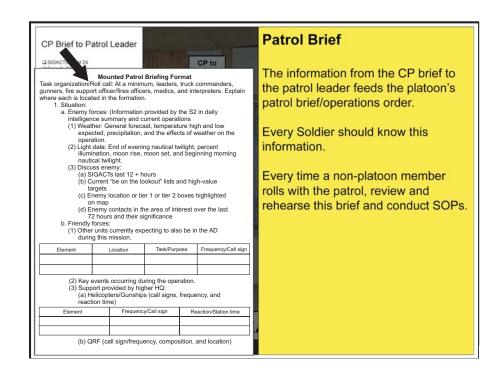
CP brief to patrol leader:
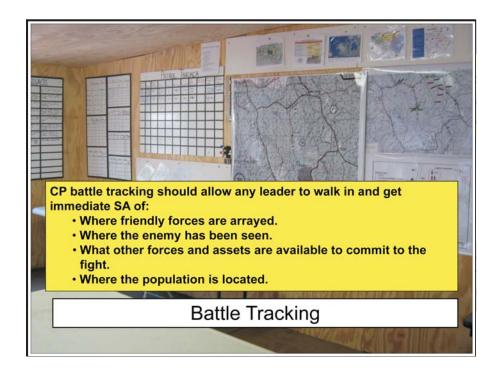- SIGACTs for last 24 hours
- Friendly elements:
  - Location
  - Call sign and frequency
  - Task and purpose
- Route status
- Air assets available:
  - Call sign
  - Time on station
  - Call sign and frequency
- Fire support assets available
- Current QRF:
  - Unit
  - Call sign and frequency
- Company assets available:
  - Multi-function Agile Remote Control Robot
  - Interpreter
  - X-spray kit
  - Escalation of force kit

Command Post (CP) Brief

The CP NCO briefs the patrol leader using the CP brief checklist.

This checklist provides the patrol leader SA of:
- Where forces are arrayed.
- Where the enemy has been.
- What other friendly forces and assets are available.

The patrol leader must ensure he receives this brief. If the tactical situation prevents him from receiving the brief, the CP NCO must send the essential data over the radio.

Figure 1-3

Patrol Brief

The information from the CP brief to the patrol leader feeds the platoon's patrol brief/operations order.

Every Soldier should know this information.

Every time a non-platoon member rolls with the patrol, review and rehearse this brief and conduct SOPs.

Figure 1-4

Figure 1-5

Figure 1-6
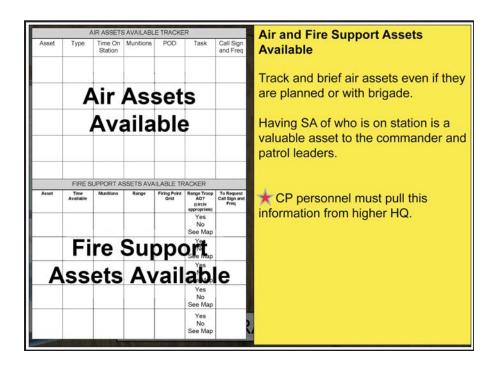
Figure 1-7
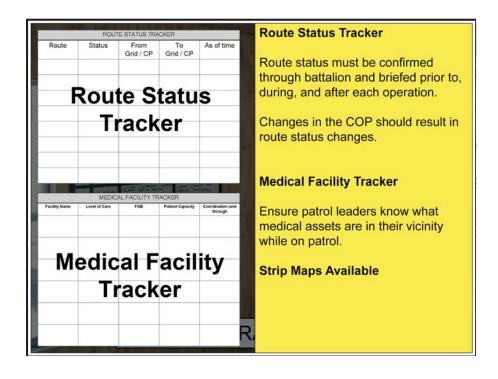

Figure 1-8

Figure 1-9
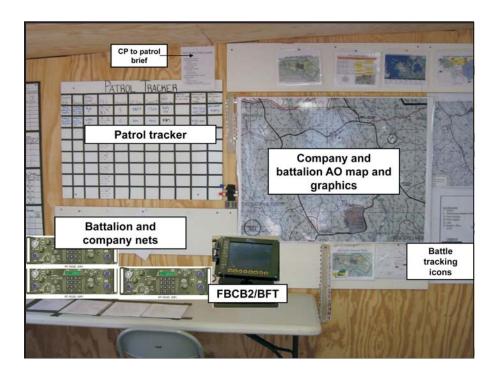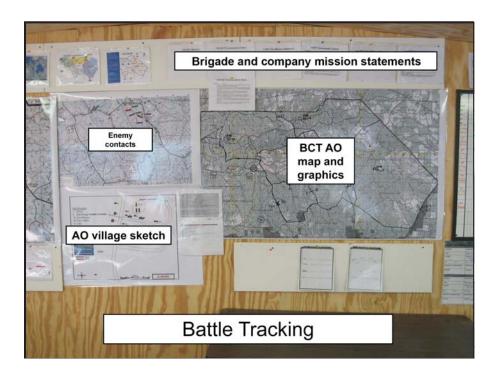

Figure 1-10

Figure 1-11

Figure 1-12

Patrol Debriefing

The patrol leader is responsible for leading the debrief with his element. The COIST representative should be a back stop to record any information or ask additional leading questions. The COIST representative may use a voice recorder to record and review statements.

The mission pre-brief should contain a requirement for a debriefing following each mission. Leaders should not consider the mission complete until the debriefing and reporting are done. Everyone on the patrol participates in the debriefing. The patrol debrief should:

- Maintain focus and draw out information as it actually occurred.

- Avoid trying to confirm pre-patrol assumptions or suspicions.

- Develop and adhere to the SOP.

- Discuss the most important topics first and then review events chronologically.

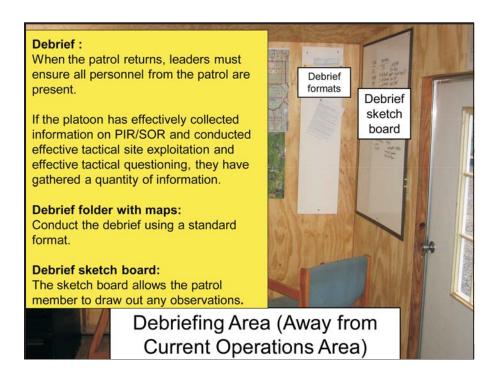- Use a step-by-step, routine process to reduce debriefing time.

Debrief :
When the patrol returns, leaders must ensure all personnel from the patrol are present.

If the platoon has effectively collected information on PIR/SOR and conducted effective tactical site exploitation and effective tactical questioning, they have gathered a quantity of information.

Debrief folder with maps:
Conduct the debrief using a standard format.

Debrief sketch board:
The sketch board allows the patrol member to draw out any observations.

Debrief formats

Debrief sketch board

Debriefing Area (Away from Current Operations Area)
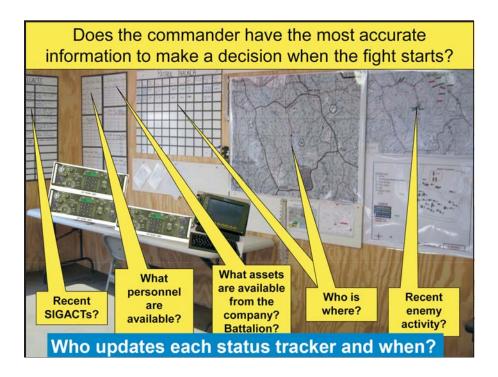
Figure 1-13

Figure 1-14

Conclusion

At the small-unit level, leaders must thoroughly, deliberately, and precisely plan and rehearse the C2 procedures and systems they will employ. Due to great distances, rugged and variable terrain, and extreme altitudes and weather, C2 must be proactive, reliable, and redundant. Small-unit leaders must establish, conduct, and enforce detailed troop-leading procedures and PCC and PCI of personnel and equipment prior to every mission. Additionally, communications are the only link to pass on reports and information that are critical to mission success. Small-unit leaders must establish redundant means of communication for every mission. Finally, leaders at all levels must weigh the mission and determine if a company-level CP is required, and if so, how will it be organized, staffed, and resourced.

Chapter 2

Individual Physical Fitness

> "Physical fitness, stamina, and mental fitness are critical. Soldiers 'hit the wall' and leaders must recognize this fact and continue to lead."
>
> —Former Operation Enduring Freedom commander

Physical Fitness Training

Every Soldier must stay in good physical condition. The extremes of operating in Afghanistan (climate, terrain, combat tasks, and stress) demand even greater emphasis on being in the best physical shape possible. Physically fit Soldiers are better able to handle the fatigue and stress brought on by the rigors of daily tasks. Fatigue is also a major cause of complacency, and complacency is a major factor in a Soldier's risk of becoming a casualty. Leaders cannot function if they are not physically ready to "keep up" with their Soldiers.

Individual physical fitness is one key to successful operations in any combat environment but especially in mountainous terrain or when faced with temperature extremes—both of which are found in Afghanistan. Fatigue can result in carelessness and cause Soldiers to sustain injuries in steep or uneven terrain or when operating in and around combat vehicles. Soldiers require strong knees, well-developed core musculature, and ankle stability along with properly fitted boots and equipment to effectively avoid combat-related injuries.

Mission requirements and units' living situations will largely determine when Soldiers can conduct physical training and what types of conditioning are necessary. A deployed unit's operational tempo (OPTEMPO) may result in a diminished Soldier-fitness level; Soldiers may lose the fitness they obtained prior to deployment. Consequently, small-unit leaders must develop fitness plans that are adaptable and sufficiently flexible to work in a wide variety of situations.

Aerobic performance can quickly decline after only two to three weeks of inactivity. Aerobic performance is the foundation for all other performance enhancements. With a well-maintained cardiovascular system, individuals will recover faster from all operationally-imposed demands. Therefore, building and maintaining a strong aerobic capacity while in theater is critical. Aerobic fitness is potentially the difference between safely reaching cover or rescuing a fallen comrade.

Fitness is an individual's responsibility. However, because the safety and success of each unit is at stake, it is also a team issue that requires unit leaders to make physical training a priority. Soldier fitness consists of both an aerobic and an anaerobic component. Even small volume workouts (two to three exercises, three to six sets each, and two to ten repetitions [reps]) are valuable in the operational theater, as long as they are of a sufficient intensity and specific movements are included.

In operational environments with challenging conditions, Soldiers should emphasize intensity rather than duration. For aerobic training to be most effective, Soldiers should strive for a wide range of intensity and durations. With limited space and time, high-intensity, short-duration activities may be all that are possible. At a minimum, the goals of all deployed Soldiers should be to maintain fitness and to adapt to the mission's needs.

Anaerobic (strength and power) training should also focus on intensity rather than duration in high OPTEMPO environments. However, focusing on intensity does not mean ignoring form. Soldiers must use the proper techniques to provide the most benefit and avoid injuries. Leaders should ensure that form is never sacrificed during dedicated anaerobic training sessions and that a full range of motion is enforced for each repetition. Training muscular strength and muscular power is equally as important to Soldiers as they perform their daily combat duties. Muscular strength is how much a Soldier can lift, and muscular power is how fast a Soldier can move an object. It is not enough for leaders to know their Soldiers can support full combat loads (muscular strength); they must also know that the Soldiers can move combat loads rapidly in all situations (muscular power).

Intensity is one of the most important factors for results-oriented deployment fitness. Additionally, the rest and recovery intervals (periods of rest during the workout and recovery between workouts) provide Soldiers the ability to adapt and become stronger. The speed of movement—such as fast versus slow or explosive versus stable and controlled—can transform a basic exercise movement into an advanced movement. In order to gauge intensity, the rating of perceived exertion (RPE) scale can be used. The RPE is a subjective scale from 0 to 10 that provides a common terminology of intensity. The RPE scale is as follows:

Rating	Description
0	Nothing at all
0.5	Very, Very Light
1	Very Light
2	Fairly Light
3	Moderate
4	Somewhat Hard
5	Hard
6	
7	Very Hard
8	
9	
10	Very, Very Hard (Maximal)

Table 2-1

This scale works well to describe both cardiovascular and strength training intensity. Although there are additional and more effective ways to determine intensity, the RPE scale works very well for the deployed environment and a broad Soldier population. The scale can be used to alternate between difficult, high intensity (RPE 7), and lower intensity (RPE 3) sessions. Since the cornerstones of fitness improvement are consistency, overload, and recovery, the RPE scale can ensure Soldiers obtain the maximum benefit from their training regimens. Leaders should ensure all Soldiers (and themselves) are conducting fitness training at least three to four times per week, and those who are more diligent and train more often are including recovery training in their programs.

Example aerobic exercises

Units can implement the following examples of aerobic exercises during a deployment with little or no fitness equipment.

Example 1:

1. Space two objects approximately 25 meters apart. At a low intensity, begin running back and forth between the objects for five to ten minutes (similar to a shuttle run), making sure to physically touch each object on the ground (RPE 2–4).

2. Immediately following the 5–10-minute shuttle run, perform 6–8 reps of 20-second sprints with 10-second recovery. For both the sprint and recovery, do not stop or start abruptly following each interval, but ease out of each interval. Strictly adhere to the work/recovery intervals (RPE 8–10).

3. Perform an additional five to ten minute shuttle run at a low intensity to cool down (RPE 2–4).

Example 2:

1. Perform a continuous run of low intensity for five to ten minutes (RPE 2–4).

2. Immediately perform 6–8 hill sprints 30 seconds in duration, with 15 seconds of recovery between. Strictly adhere to the work/recovery intervals (RPE 8–10).

3. Perform a continuous run of low intensity for five to ten minutes (RPE 2–4).

Example 3:

1. Jump rope for five to ten minutes at a low to moderate intensity (RPE 2–4).

2. Perform 6–8 body weight squat intervals (as many as possible with good form and full range of motion) for 20 seconds, with 10-second recovery. Strictly adhere to the work/recovery intervals (RPE 8–10).

3. Walk or jump rope for five to ten additional minutes at a low to moderate intensity (RPE 2–4).

Example strength and power exercises

Examples of possible strength and power exercises during a deployment include:

Example 1:

1. Warm up for five minutes.

2. Perform one minute of each exercise with no recovery:

- Walking lunge with twist

Figure 2-1

- Single leg crossover

Figure 2-2

- Scorpion

Figure 2-3

3. Perform each exercise successively for one set, recover for one minute, and then repeat:

- Conduct 15 reps of 3–5 sets of box jumps (12–18 inches in height)

Figure 2-4

- Conduct ten reps of three to five sets Burpee pull-ups

Figure 2-5

- Conduct ten reps (five reps on each side) of three to five sets of single-leg lateral step-ups

Figure 2-6

4. Cool down for five minutes.

Total estimated time for workout (including warm up, cool down, and recovery): 19–23 minutes.

Example 2:

1. Warm up for five minutes.

2. Perform one minute of each exercise with no recovery.

- Walking quadriceps

Figure 2-7

- Walking hamstrings

Figure 2-8

- Figure 8s

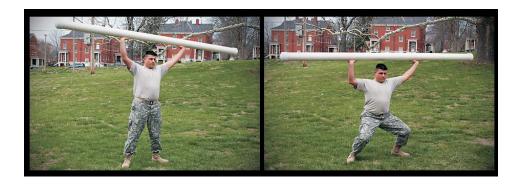**Figure 2-9**

3. Perform each exercise successively for one set, recover for one minute, and then repeat:

- Conduct five reps of three to five sets of duffle bag cleans

Figure 2-10

- Conduct ten reps of three to five sets of sandbag one-arm get-ups

Figure 2-11

- Conduct ten reps of three to five sets of duffle bag lateral arcs

4. Cool down for five minutes.

Total estimate time for workout (including warm up, cool down, and recovery): 22–28 minutes.

Example 3:

1. Warm up for five to ten minutes.

2. Perform one minute of each of the following exercises with no rest between:

- Single-leg V-up (switch legs at 30 seconds)

Figure 2-12

- Walking lunge with forearm drop

Figure 2-13

3. Perform each exercise successively for one set, recover for one minute, and then repeat:

- Three to five sets of tire flip hops

Figure 2-14

- Three to five sets of overhead squats (large pipe or other object of similar size)

Figure 2-15

- Three to five sets of bag swings

Figure 2-16

4. Cool down for five to ten minutes.

Injury Prevention

Another critical aspect of fitness maintenance during a combat deployment is injury prevention. Soldiers who fail to maintain a sufficient level of fitness or engage in activities that provide too much intensity with inadequate rest take longer to recover from daily combat activities than physically fit Soldiers. Tired or recovering Soldiers are also more susceptible to injury.

The impact the body must absorb during combat operations is incredible. For example, a Soldier who weighs 172 pounds and wears his personal protective gear weighs approximately 220 pounds. If this Soldier jumps from the back of a standard, up-armored high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle, he could impact the ground with a force greater than six times his body weight. This impact will increase further with full battle gear such as weapons, ammunition, water, and other equipment. While no specific training will adequately prepare a Soldier for all of the rigors of combat, a physically fit Soldier will recover more quickly and experience fewer injuries.

Acquiring Fitness Equipment

Most bases of any size in Afghanistan—even the smallest with less than two dozen service members—have at least some exercise equipment available. This equipment may be limited to a multi-function machine such as a Bowflex or a treadmill, or it might include free weights, dumbbells, and several different cardiovascular machines. If the unit's location does not have these items, but the unit has a place to set up and use these items, work through the chain of command to acquire this equipment. Units can often find unused equipment and/or funds to purchase new equipment. It is up to unit leaders to make the necessary requests and then follow up as needed.

Facilities must be built to house this equipment. Also, look for places for the unit to construct a volleyball court or something similar. Volleyball and soccer are very popular in Afghanistan. The Afghan National Army also has fitness programs. It is possible an Afghan army or police facility near the base has some facilities and equipment the unit could share. Title 10 field ordering officer funds may be used to build or request construction of a gym, workout area, and/or volleyball court.

Conclusion

Even small volume workouts (two to three exercises, three to six sets each, and two to ten reps) can have tremendous value in the operational theater as long as sufficient intensity and specific movements are included. Leaders must determine how much time and how often physical training will occur during a deployment. Physical conditioning time will vary based on the mission and operational requirements of the unit. Additionally, fitness in theater will hinge on the availability of equipment, imagination, and practical application. As a goal, the small-unit leader should attempt to ensure his personnel complete the following at a minimum:

- Aerobic: three times per week, ten minutes per session, and at a variable intensity.

- Strength: two times per week; one specific exercise for the lower body, one specific exercise for the upper body, and one specific exercise for the entire body; two to three sets of each specific exercise; and with progressive training of two to ten reps.

- Power: two times per week with various exercises entailing high-speed movements, jumps, bounds, short sprints, and field-expedient variations of weightlifting movements.

Injury is often the result of movement deceleration or sudden changes in direction under force or torque. The likelihood of injury sustained during physical training increases substantially with improper form and technique. When determining personal or unit physical fitness objectives, think critically about the following factors:

- Does Army physical fitness testing/physical readiness training-specific fitness transfer directly to tactical fitness?

- What typical daily movements do the Soldiers perform?

- Where are injuries likely to occur and how can they be prevented?

- Can exercises be utilized frequently in various conditions and by individuals of various fitness levels?

As the military continues to adapt to asymmetrical warfare and various operational theaters, so must the application of fitness and the specific means by which it approaches health and fitness. The Army must be able to provide a variety of concepts to a broad spectrum of situations when typical equipment is not available. Special attention must be paid to boots, ankles, knees, and backs to prevent injuries and ensure Soldiers are fully capable of accomplishing assigned missions and tasks when operating in extreme conditions.

Chapter 3

Marksmanship and Weapons Training

"Soldiers should be cross-trained on all weapon systems in their unit. The possibility for every Soldier to become a MK19 gunner in the mountains of Afghanistan is real."

—Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) command sergeant major

The terrain, unit configuration, missions, and operational nature of units in Afghanistan vary tremendously. It is nearly impossible to specify the exact marksmanship and weapons skills that will be most critical because these skills vary based on the factors above. Consequently, once Soldiers know the type of unit in which they will serve, the nature of the operations, and the terrain, they should have a good foundation of basic weapons and marksmanship skills. All Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan should be familiar with and comfortable firing their personal weapons.

Basic Rifle Marksmanship

A Soldier must be confident with his individual weapon and with his ability to hit a target under varied conditions and at a range of distances. This confidence begins with basic weapons marksmanship skills taught in initial entry training and reinforced at home station.

The fundamentals required for accuracy and consistency when firing a weapon can be executed with an unloaded weapon nearly anywhere. Leaders should teach Soldiers the following fundamentals of marksmanship and have them practice the fundamentals until they are proficient:

- Stance/position

- Grip

- Sight alignment

- Sight picture

- Breathing

- Recovery

- Follow-through

Concentrate on these firing position factors:

- Cheek-to-stock position (stock weld) is the always the same.

- Eye relief (distance from the eye to the rear sight) is consistent.

- Trigger-finger placement is the same every time and in every position.

- Elbows are properly positioned for correct support of the weapon.

- Legs are properly positioned for support and steady firing posture.

- Non-firing hand is positioned to support and steady the weapon.

Leaders should have Soldiers work in pairs and observe each other. Soldiers should check each other for consistency as they go through each of the factors above.

Leaders should teach Soldiers some of the following range-estimation methods and have them practice these methods:

- 100-meter unit of measure. Visualize the number of 100-meter increments between the shooter and the target (up to 500 meters [m]).

- Range card. Construct and use a range card to quickly determine ranges.

- Front sight post. Estimate range by using the front-sight post as a scale.

- Appearance of objects. Determine range based on the size and visible characteristics of an object.

- Combination. Use a combination of two or more methods to determine an unknown range.

Train Soldiers until they have mastered the fundamentals of marksmanship, then move on to more advanced principles and techniques. For example, teach Soldiers the following:

- Apply marksmanship fundamentals to every shot.

- Make every shot count. Ammunition resupply may be problematic.

- Understand how the weapon functions and how that affects the ability to hit a target at long range.

- Comprehend the basics of range estimation and target identification at long range.

- Work in pairs, record every shot (hit or miss), and adjust accordingly.

- Practice engaging moving targets until able to hit targets at 500m or beyond.

Many Soldiers in Afghanistan are issued optics and infrared targeting devices for their rifles. Training and practice with them should also become a part of the unit's deployment preparation and/or its ongoing training plan in theater. Some of these optics and targeting devices will aid in range determination and target acquisition. Leaders must become familiar with the positive attributes and liabilities of each system as it is fielded and must ensure Soldiers are properly trained on employment and maintenance.

Squad-Designated Marksman

Many combat arms units—infantry units in particular—make use of a squad-designated marksman (SDM). The SDM is a member of the squad who is given additional training and practice to be more proficient at engaging targets in the 300–500m range. While it is not typical for other types of units to have an SDM, there is no reason they should not, and it is possible a unit could find itself in a situation where an SDM is very valuable.

Close-Quarters Marksmanship/Reflexive Fire

A basic tenet of the Army is that each Soldier is trained and ready to use his individual weapon. Marksmanship training is the leader's responsibility. All Soldiers will need some advanced marksmanship training in preparation for the types of engagements they may encounter in Afghanistan. No military specialty or duty position will exempt a Soldier from the possibility of engaging the enemy in close combat. Every unit in the OEF theater is susceptible to enemy ambush or small-arms attack. Consequently, once Soldiers are competent with the basics, they should be trained on and practice close-quarters marksmanship (CQM) and reflexive fire.

Leaders should train Soldiers to:

- Use reflexive fire techniques (proper weapon-ready stance, aiming, shot placement, and trigger manipulation) to quickly and effectively engage targets at ranges under 25m. Reflexive fire helps Soldiers identify and discriminate between targets in a close-quarters fight, make shoot/no-shoot decisions, and react.

- Practice reflexive fire techniques until Soldiers can quickly hit a target without taking careful aim.

- Pay attention to the following fundamentals of advanced marksmanship training and practice these fundamentals until they are proficient in CQM and reflexive fire:

  º Stance

  º Grip

  º Sight alignment

  º Sight picture

  º Breathing

  º Recovery

  º Follow-through

Crew-Served Weapons

Just as every Soldier in the Afghanistan theater must be prepared for close-quarters combat, they must also be prepared to use and effectively engage targets with crew-served weapons. The Afghanistan theater is large with operations spread out over great distances. Consequently, mounted combat patrols (MCPs) are extremely common for Soldiers in almost any duty position. These MCPs often occur with the minimum number of Soldiers per vehicle, which means almost any Soldier may find himself serving as a driver or gunner. In addition, base security operations may require Soldiers to serve as primary, assistant, or alternate gunners. All Soldiers should be prepared to take over operation of a crew-served weapon if the primary gunner becomes unable to perform his duties.

Small-unit leaders need to provide training and practice on crew-served weapons systems. This training must include mounting and setting up the weapon system, including making adjustments such as head space and timing on the M2 .50 caliber machine gun. The training must also include loading, charging, firing, and clearing a malfunction on the weapons. Soldiers must be trained to properly clear the weapons.

Weapon Clearing and Safety

Just about the only thing worse than being unable to fire an available weapon when under attack is having a negligent discharge that injures or kills someone. Consequently, Soldiers must understand the importance of weapons safety at all times, and leaders must reinforce safety awareness regularly.

Most U.S. and allied bases in Afghanistan require or at least allow personnel to carry loaded weapons. Weapons should never be charged (round in the chamber) when on a base unless the Soldier is part of base security. Soldiers who carry loaded weapons should be very conscious of their actions. Leaders should train Soldiers on how to accomplish their day-to-day tasks while carrying a loaded weapon. Leaders must teach muzzle awareness and other factors that can compromise safety. Soldiers must also know how to properly clear weapons when entering military bases. It is critical that all weapons (including crew-served weapons) are properly cleared so there is no possibility of a negligent discharge on a military facility.

Developing and Implementing Weapons Training

Many junior enlisted Soldiers have had little weapons training or experience, and many officers and noncommissioned officers have limited training or training that is not current. These personnel are not well prepared to develop and conduct such training for their subordinates. In these cases, small-unit leaders can request assistance from higher headquarters (HQ). The higher HQ may have someone to assist with the training or may be able to coordinate for someone to assist. Many areas of the Afghanistan theater have units in fairly close proximity, and small-unit leaders can often find an individual or unit nearby with experience in weapons and marksmanship who would be willing to assist with planning or conducting any or all of these types of training.

The small-unit leader should determine what other elements are in his area of operations (AO) and build relationships with them in order to facilitate sharing

expertise. Of course, the leader must also be willing to admit his limitations when seeking assistance. It is in the other unit's best interest to help with this kind of training because weapons safety training will ensure more people in the AO can effectively and safely employ their weapons.

The small-unit leader must also determine what locations are available to conduct live-fire training. Live-fire training is central and critical to instilling Soldiers' confidence in their weapons. Many bases have designated/established live-fire ranges. In other cases, ranges can be set up temporarily in unoccupied draws or similar locations. It is best to work with other units in the area who may have done this in the past and can assist you.

Scheduling live-fire training may be a leader's biggest challenge. Generally, units have limited amounts of ammunition and must request training ammunition to conduct range training. The lead time for this can be as long as 90 days. Leaders should work with higher HQ to figure out how to make this work. Again, relationships with nearby units may help. With permission of the higher HQ, a small unit may be able to piggy-back on another unit's live-fire training.

Of course, sometimes other individuals and units are not readily available for assistance. In these cases, the leader should find his own resources.

Conclusion

Small units operating in the Afghanistan theater continue to stress the critical importance of a variety of weapons skills, beginning with individual marksmanship skills. Small-unit leaders must ensure that each Soldier is trained, proficient, and confident in both his weapon and his ability to use it effectively. Soldiers should be familiar with and able to use crew-served weapons. Where possible and because of the possibility of engaging the enemy in villages or other developed areas, units must be prepared to conduct CQM/reflexive fire. Small units may also want to identify and train Soldiers as SDMs. In deployment preparation, consider training under the most realistic conditions possible to include ranges with moving targets and shooting on ranges immediately after road marches or runs to replicate the accelerated heart rates Soldiers will experience when firing in actual engagements.

Chapter 4

First Responder Medical Training and Casualty Evacuation

"The platoon up through the brigade must ensure they have set the conditions for a MEDEVAC [medical evacuation] before the aircraft comes in. The HLZ [helicopter landing zone] must be secure and not taking small-arms fire. The patients need to be stable and ready to load. Supporting assets like CAS [close air support] and CCA [combat close attack] need to be on station. Also, units should train with the hoist, as many places do not have suitable HLZs."

—Former Operation Enduring Freedom commander

Small-unit leaders in combat operations will be required to employ several medical treatment assets and options. Leaders must know what assets are available, what training and equipment is required, and how to plan for and integrate these assets into all missions and operations. Each unit will likely have combat lifesavers (CLSs) organic to the unit, combat medics attached or organic to the unit, and MEDEVAC/casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) assets that can be called for on an as-needed basis. Soldiers with recent theater experience believe that every Soldier should be CLS qualified. Because of distances and terrain, units should plan that it will take 40 minutes for a MEDEVAC to arrive after it is requested.

Combat Lifesaver

There is no doubt that CLS-trained Soldiers in small units are saving lives. It is the responsibility of every leader to ensure his unit obtains CLS training for Soldiers, including the routine refresher training for those who are already CLS-qualified.

The vast majority of small-unit combat veterans agree that CLS training is making a substantial difference in the survival of wounded Soldiers. Train a sufficient number of Soldiers to ensure there is at least one CLS-qualified Soldier per team/crew. Many units have sent all Soldiers to CLS training with the intent of greatly enhancing Soldiers' survivability.

Emergency medical technician (EMT) (or first responder) training is the next level of training after CLS training. When possible, train selected Soldiers as EMTs. They can augment your organic medics in severe situations. On a combat mission, one medic and one EMT per platoon is a good planning factor.

Equip every vehicle and squad with a CLS medical supply bag. If not covered by your higher command, include inspecting the contents of the CLS bag in your unit standing operating procedures (SOPs). Include regular CLS bag inspections as part of the unit's precombat checks and inspections. Contents of the CLS bag should be unit-specific and tailored to the usage history in the area of operations.

Every CLS is responsible to ensure that:

- His aid bag (medical equipment set) is stocked according to the prescribed packing list.

- All stocked items are serviceable.

- Items have not exceeded their expiration dates.

Correspondence Course

The U.S. Army Institute for Professional Development (AIPD) offers the Combat Lifesaver Course as a self-study correspondence course (ISO871). The correspondence materials cover information needed to successfully complete the written, written performance, and performance examinations for CLS certification and recertification. Leaders must enroll Soldiers in accordance with Army Regulation 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development*, to receive credit for the course.

> Further information is available by contacting AIPD:
> Army Institute for Professional Development
> ATTN: ATIC-ISD (dl Student Support Team)
> U.S. Army Training Support Center
> Newport News, VA 23628-0001
> Telephone: DSN 826-3335/3322; COM (757) 878-3335/3322

Casualty Evacuation

Leaders are responsible for casualty collection in their units. During combat operations, platoons will most likely sustain casualties. While it is always the first priority to accomplish the mission, once the fight is over, a casualty collection point (CCP) must immediately be established during reorganization operations to prevent Soldiers from dying due to their wounds. Rapidly establishing the CCP enables casualties to be treated by priority and then quickly evacuated to the company CCP where they can receive lifesaving care. Being able to treat and evacuate Soldiers efficiently will save lives and increase combat readiness. This chapter illustrates how to plan, prepare, and execute CASEVAC, but also covers the responsibilities of those involved in the process. Incorporating these steps will minimize Soldier deaths from wounds sustained on the battlefield.

Planning phase

MEDEVAC is the movement of casualties using medical assets while providing en route medical care. CASEVAC is the movement of casualties by non-medical assets without en route medical care. For purposes of this chapter, CASEVAC will encompass tasks completed when moving casualties from the point of injury to the platoon or company CCP where ideally the casualty is then transferred to a MEDEVAC asset. CASEVAC takes the combined efforts of the entire chain of command.

Specific duties and responsibilities of key personnel in planning CASEVAC

Platoon sergeant. The efficient treatment, collection, and preparation of casualties for evacuation is directly related to the platoon sergeant's ability to successfully anticipate, plan, and rehearse casualty collection before and during an operation. First, the platoon sergeant studies his map and conducts terrain analysis to identify suitable locations for CCPs. These locations should facilitate air and ground evacuation, and the CCP should be accessible by standard medical vehicles such as field ambulances. The platoon sergeant does this for all phases of the operation, including insertion/extraction, infiltration/exfiltration, and actions on the objective. He ensures that the platoon has sufficient Class VIII (medical) supplies to include the right number of litters, intravenous drip bags (IVs), and CLS bags. The platoon sergeant must carry a laminated, quick reference 9-line MEDEVAC card to expedite the process. Prior to execution, the platoon sergeant must coordinate the proposed CCP locations with the company first sergeant (1SG).

Platoon medic. The platoon medic is the senior medical Soldier in the platoon. During the planning phase, he inspects the platoon CLS bags, verifies IVs are placed in litters, and acquires any Class VIII supplies needed for the mission. The medic must know the proposed locations of the platoon CCPs and the SOPs for establishing them. He rehearses casualty treatment and litter carries with all platoon members (not just the aid and litter teams). Time permitting, he trains the platoon in basic and advanced lifesaving and follows up with CLS refresher sessions. He also must carry a laminated, quick reference 9-line MEDEVAC card.

CLS. CLSs are squad members trained in emergency medical techniques. These individuals are often the first-available medical assets for the squad until a medic or another more qualified medical person becomes available. Platoon and company leadership should ensure CLS training is a training priority. The designated CLS ensures that squad CLS bags are packed, all IVs are present, and litters are properly packed and identifies Class VIII shortages to the platoon medic. CLSs participate in all casualty treatment and litter-carry drills. CLSs must know the location of the CCP and the SOP for establishing it. They also have laminated, quick reference 9-line MEDEVAC cards.

Platoon radio operator (RO). The platoon RO is the unit's medical switchboard. He carries a laminated, quick reference 9-line MEDEVAC card to expedite the MEDEVAC. Before operations commence, he must load the primary MEDEVAC frequency into his radio and have the alternate frequency recorded in his notebook or on his communication card.

Platoon members. Platoon members are not bystanders in CASEVAC operations. They assist the platoon medic and combat lifesavers in preparing all medical equipment. All Soldiers must know the location of the CCP and the SOP for establishing it. They participate in all casualty treatment, tasks required at the CCP, and litter-carry rehearsals.

Initial Treatment Phase

It is necessary to review the Army standing evacuation priorities to thoroughly understand actions during the initial treatment phase of CCP operations.

Priorities of evacuation

Priorities of evacuation determine how casualties are handled throughout the MEDEVAC process. Field Manual (FM) 7-8, *Infantry Rifle Company*, states the standard casualty categories are immediate, delayed, minimal, and expectant:

- Immediate—to save life or limb:

    º Airway obstruction.

    º Respiratory and cardio-respiratory failure (cardio-respiratory failure on the battlefield is not considered an immediate condition; it is classified as expectant [see below]).

    º Massive external bleeding.

    º Shock.

    º Sucking chest wound, if respiratory distress is evident.

    º Second- or third-degree burns of the face and neck or perineum (musing shock or respiratory distress).

    º After a casualty with life- or limb-threatening conditions has been initially treated, no further treatment will be given until other immediate casualties are treated.

- Delayed—less risk by treatment being delayed:

    º Open chest wound.

    º Penetrating abdomen wound.

    º Severe eye injury.

    º A vascular limb without apparent blood supply.

    º Other open wounds.

    º Fractures.

    º Second- and third-degree burns not involving the face and neck or perineum.

- Minimal—can be treated with self or buddy aid. Patients in this category are not evacuated to a medical treatment facility:

    º Minor lacerations.

    º Contusions.

    º Sprains.

º Minor combat stress problems.

º Partial-thickness burns (under 20 percent).

Note: Casualties with minor injuries can assist with recording treatment, emergency care, and defense of the area.

- Expectant—little hope of recovery. This category should be used only if resources are limited:

  º Massive head injury with signs of impending death.

  º Burns on more than 85 percent of the body surface area.

Dead: Expired personnel should be kept separate from the other casualties and are last in the order of evacuation. They are the last to be extracted and only when the situation permits; otherwise, they should be conveyed by the supply vehicles.

Responsibilities

Platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant establishes the initial CCP and moves it as necessary with the flow of the battle. He continuously reports the number and type of casualties to the 1SG and, if needed, requests additional medical support to treat casualties. He collects toe tags, Casualty Feeder Cards (Department of the Army [DA] Form 1156), and ensures all mission-essential items are removed, cross-loaded, and accounted for according to the unit's SOP. He ensures casualties are placed in consolidated groups according to evacuation priority. Finally, the platoon sergeant maintains the medical supplies at required levels, thereby avoiding medical equipment shortages at critical times.

Platoon medic. The platoon medic must be able to establish, organize, and operate the CCP until the fight is over and the platoon sergeant arrives. The platoon medic must remember what doctrine says about MEDEVAC. FM 7-8 states, "The object is to provide the greatest good (medical treatment) for the greatest number." This means the platoon medic must complete the most difficult task, namely, triage casualties as they arrive in the CCP. The platoon medic begins initial lifesaving care, focusing on immediate and expectant casualties. He then separates casualties by type category to facilitate MEDEVAC or overland movement to the company CCP. Once immediate and expectant casualties are stabilized, the medic assists the CLS personnel in treating delayed casualties. In the absence of orders, the platoon medic must establish the CCP. He ensures that casualties are properly secured on the litters and monitors initial treatment of Soldiers prior to the platoon moving. He continuously assesses the condition of each casualty and directs and supervises the CLS personnel providing additional treatment. He updates the platoon sergeant on medical supply shortages so they can be requisitioned.

CLS. CLSs must complete their assigned duties and accomplish the mission. CLSs perform first aid and initial lifesaving steps. They also form the aid and litter teams. They provide treatment to delayed casualties and assist the platoon medic in treating immediate and expectant casualties. Finally, CLSs prepare the casualties in accordance with the platoon SOP. CLSs constantly monitor casualties and provide additional treatment as warranted.

Platoon members. Soldiers must also complete their duties and accomplish the mission. All Soldiers form litter teams as needed and assist the CLS/platoon medic in casualty treatment. Non-CLS trained Soldiers provide buddy aid to minimal casualties. Finally, Soldiers provide local security for the CCP.

Overland Movement Phase

If a platoon moves its casualties without vehicle assistance to the company CCP, personnel must account for the following special considerations:

Platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant is responsible for maintaining accountability of all personnel and equipment. He supervises the Soldiers' workloads and establishes a plan for litter-bearer replacements and CCP security. The platoon sergeant and the platoon leader ensure the platoon is following the proper route to the company CCP. The platoon sergeant maintains 100 percent security during movement and at halts while supervising the platoon medic and CLS personnel perform casualty treatment. The platoon sergeant regularly updates the 1SG on the casualties' conditions. He rotates the RO all-purpose lightweight individual carrying equipment (ALICE) pack between the RO, the platoon leader, and himself. Either the platoon leader or the platoon sergeant must always be available to monitor the platoon situation and react to enemy contact. Only one leader should serve as a litter-bearer at a time. Finally, the platoon sergeant ensures casualties are moved by category and supervises the casualty interval during movement.

Platoon medic. The platoon medic continuously monitors casualties during movement and at halts, and he updates the platoon sergeant on their conditions. He supervises the movement of casualties from the platoon CCP to the company CCP to ensure they remain in the proper categories. Finally, he administers additional treatment as required during movement.

CLS. CLSs monitor an assigned casualty during movement and at halts. Each CLS should be assigned only one casualty. The CLS monitors the casualty's condition with assistance from the platoon medic.

Platoon members. Platoon members provide security during movement and at halts. They also assist with evacuating casualties by staffing litters. They assist the CLS and platoon medic with casualty treatment. Typically, this phase ends here if the company accepts responsibility for the casualties moved by the platoon to the company CCP.

Extraction Phase

This phase can be conducted by the platoon or as a part of the company's CCP plan.

Platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant establishes local security, which might include roads or other danger areas. He moves casualties to a covered and concealed position near the link-up point and keeps them in category order. After the RO establishes communications, the platoon sergeant makes a 9-line MEDEVAC request regardless of the extraction means. The platoon sergeant continuously upgrades security and monitors the conditions of the casualties.

Platoon medic. The platoon medic conducts the 9-line MEDEVAC request in the absence of the platoon sergeant. He monitors and updates the casualties' statuses and relays any status changes to the platoon sergeant. He ensures casualties are in order of category to expedite MEDEVAC.

CLS. The CLS monitors and updates his patient's condition. CLSs help provide local security and assist in moving casualties to the MEDEVAC platform.

Platoon members. Platoon members assist the CLS and platoon medic in casualty treatment. They provide local security for the MEDEVAC site and assist with moving the casualties to the MEDEVAC platform.

Guidance for Retrieving and Safeguarding Weapons, Ammunition, and Equipment

The platoon sergeant must remember that every casualty possesses critical combat equipment that must be accounted for and redistributed to enable the platoon to complete its mission. The following is a list of equipment that may be taken from a casualty:

- Individual weapons. At a minimum, the M203, M249, and M240 should be taken from the casualty and redistributed within the platoon. These are all primarily area-suppression weapons. The M203 should be retained in the platoon because of its casualty-producing effects.

- Accessories for crew-served weapons. These accessories include tripods; traversing and elevating mechanisms; spare barrels (M240 and M249); cleaning kits; and any other special, crew-served weapon equipment.

- Night-vision goggles (NVGs) and lasers. Change out with defective platoon or company equipment.

- Ammunition and pyrotechnics. These items should always be taken to replenish basic load requirements.

- Maps and sensitive documents. Accountability of these items is critical.

- Mission-essential equipment/special equipment. These items include breach kits, demolition, markings, Claymores, CLS bags, litters, batteries, and other mission-critical items.

- Antitank weapons/mortar rounds. Account for mortar rounds and redistribute throughout the platoon.

The following equipment must remain with the casualty:

- Protective mask and associated chemical defense equipment

- Minimum of one canteen of water (wound dependent)

- One casualty feeder card

- Ballistic helmet

The following equipment should be evacuated with the casualty:

- ALICE pack

- Load-bearing equipment

- Any non-mission-essential equipment

Techniques for Distribution of Casualties' Equipment

The platoon chain of command is responsible for formally establishing a chain of custody for all equipment recovered from casualties. It is critical that this equipment is tactically cross-loaded and redistributed to enable the platoon to complete its mission.

Platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant must establish accountability for equipment remaining behind and equipment being evacuated with the casualty. A proven technique requires that each Soldier carry a CASEVAC card (see sample below) or a sensitive items card that is attached to his DA Form 1156. All area-fire weapons such as M203s, M249s, M240s, AT-4s, and container launch units (CLUs) as well as any required optics such as NVGs and aiming devices, should remain with the platoon. Excess M4s and defective optics, NVGs, and aiming devices should be evacuated with the casualties. Duffle bags and/or aviation kit bags can be stored inside the Skedco litter bag to facilitate the evacuation of equipment. When needed, the platoon sergeant places the casualty's sensitive items in the duffle bag and/or aviation kit bag, and they are backhauled together with the casualty to the company CCP. The platoon sergeant must ensure he conducts a face-to-face exchange of the sensitive items with the 1SG or executive officer to ensure positive control of the sensitive items. If the MEDEVAC platform cannot backhaul the equipment because of a lack of space, the equipment may be cached or destroyed in place (mission dependent).

CASEVAC card

1. SNL: Doe, John, 123-45-6789, PVT, O+
2. Air Assault: Infiltration Lift_____ Serial_____ Chalk_____ Exfiltration Lift_____ Serial_____ Chalk_____
3. Airborne Operations: Aircraft_____Passengers_____
4. Track Assault: Infiltration Chalk_____ Truck _____ Exfiltration Chalk_____ Truck_____

Front side

1. Weapon: M240, Stock Number (SN): 1234567
2. NVGs: PVS-14, SN: 12345
3. Aiming device: PEQ-2, SN: 12345
4. Optic: M145, SN: 12345

5. Additional equipment:
 	
  AT-4:
  Pyrotechnics:
  Binoculars:_____, SN:
  Precision Lightweight Global Positioning System Receiver_____, SN:
  Radio:_____, SN:
  CLS bag:
  Litter:
  Breach kit:

Back Side

Squad leader. The squad leader accepts responsibility for mission-essential equipment taken from casualties and redistributes the equipment in accordance with the platoon sergeant's guidance. The squad leader then records any changes to the sensitive items his squad carries on his master list and the individual squad member's card.

Platoon members. If a Soldier becomes a casualty, he retains all his personal equipment minus any mission-essential equipment taken by the platoon sergeant. Also, the individual Soldier must be prepared to accept responsibility for additional pieces of mission-essential equipment removed from other platoon casualties. Ultimately, the individual Soldier is responsible for securing mission-essential or sensitive items, and he must update his sensitive items card accordingly.

Planning Truths

An effective MEDEVAC plan will:

- Minimize mortality by rapidly and efficiently moving the sick, injured, and wounded to a medical treatment facility.

- Be a force multiplier as it clears the battlefield, which enables the tactical commander to continue his mission with all available combat assets.

- Build the morale of Soldiers by demonstrating that care is quickly available if they are wounded.

- Provide en route medical care that is essential in improving the prognosis and reducing disability of wounded, injured, or ill Soldiers.

- Provide medical economy of force by maximizing potential use of limited assets.

- Provide connectivity to the force health protection system as appropriate within the joint health service support system.

Small-unit leaders must plan and disseminate effective MEDEVAC plans that can be rehearsed at all levels. Such a properly assembled, disseminated, rehearsed, and executed MEDEVAC plan is a tangible combat multiplier that builds the confidence of the Soldiers; allows the maneuver commander to continue his mission by relieving him of his casualties; and, most importantly, conserves the Army's most precious resource—the Soldier.

MEDEVAC 9-line request:

Line 1. Location of the pick-up (PU) site.

Line 2. Radio frequency, call sign, and suffix.

Line 3. Number of casualties by precedence:

    A. Urgent

    B. Urgent surgical

    C. Priority

    D. Routine

    E. Convenience

Line 4. Special equipment:

    A. None

    B. Hoist

    C. Extraction equipment

    D. Ventilator

Line 5. Number of casualties by type:

    A. Litter

    B. Ambulatory

Line 6. Security of the PU site:

    N—No enemy troops in area

    P—Possible enemy troops in area (approach with caution)

E—Enemy troops in area (approach with caution)

X—Enemy troops in area (armed escort required)

Line 7. Method of marking pick-up site:

A. Panels

B. Pyrotechnic signal

C. Smoke signal

D. None

E. Other

Line 8. Patient nationality and status:

A. U.S. military

B. U.S. civilian

C. Non–U.S. military

D. Non–U.S. civilian

E. Enemy prisoner of war

Line 9. Nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) contamination:

N—Nuclear

B—Biological

C—Chemical

**Line 10. (Used in theater) Vital signs of casualty (temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and respiratory rate).

Conclusion

It is clear that CASEVAC is not something left to chance. At the platoon level, the platoon sergeant bears the principal responsibility for planning, preparing, rehearsing, and executing CASEVAC. Observations and experience dictate that platoon sergeants fully understand the fundamentals of CASEVAC and are prepared to effectively evacuate wounded Soldiers. Small units must understand and conduct the detailed planning required for CASEVAC and develop fully functional SOPs. History has shown that the platoon sergeant must anticipate and plan for treating, collecting, securing, and moving the platoon's casualties. In the chaos of battle, an SOP facilitates routine operations such as CASEVAC. History has demonstrated that the platoon sergeant must ensure leaders and Soldiers are trained and rehearsed on medical treatment, litter carries, and CCP operations to be successful at CASEVAC operations—lives of Soldiers depend on it. Conditions

must be set for MEDEVAC before the aircraft arrives. Landing zones must be secure and free from enemy fire, and patients must stable and ready for movement. Employ CAS and CCA if available, and be prepared to conduct hoist operations if conditions do not allow for landing.

Chapter 5

Employment of Joint Fires, Organic Fires, and Close Combat Attack

> "The need for lots of air/ground integration training can't be overstated! Also understand how to fight with fires and when a unit is moving beyond its fire support range. Mortars are king in the higher elevations and more accurate as they have the high angle required to hit the tops of ridges. Tube artillery can miss the top and send the shell down the backside of the ridge."
>
> —Former Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) commander

Small units conducting combat operations in Afghanistan face unique challenges in the area of fires. The varied and rugged geography, the limited and circuitous ground transportation network, and an extremely experienced and adaptive enemy necessitate the dispersion of small units over large areas. The same conditions that necessitate this dispersion make protection of the dispersed units difficult, as quick reaction forces (QRF), fires, aerial fires, and air resupply are all negatively impacted by weather and terrain. The decentralized and dispersed nature of ongoing operations makes the employment of fires a critical component of all operations that must be carefully planned, integrated, rehearsed, and executed at the small-unit level. Air-ground integration in training is critically important and cannot be over emphasized.

In addition to the physical constraints facing small units operating in Afghanistan, there are also engagement constraints that make the employment of fires somewhat restrictive in nature. In some instances, because of the close proximity to friendly forces and local nationals, precision fires may be desired and/or required. If those assets are not available, the small unit will have to fall back on organic fire assets—mortars and field artillery—that can only be employed if they are properly preplanned and registered. This chapter will examine joint fires, close combat attack (CCA), and the employment of organic fires in support of small-unit operations.

Joint Fires

Joint fires are fires delivered during the employment of forces from two or more components in coordinated action to produce desired effects in support of a common objective. For small Army units operating in the Afghanistan theater, these fires will most likely consist of Marine fixed- or rotary-wing aviation and indirect fires assets or Air Force airborne platforms providing fires in close air support (CAS). The same concept applies to small Marine Corps maneuver units that receive support from Army and Air Force assets. Although communications systems and procedures may differ slightly, the principles of joint fires employment are the same.

Close Air Support

CAS is an element of joint fire support and is defined as air action by fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft against hostile ground targets that are in close proximity to friendly surfaces forces and which require detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces. For the purposes of CAS, close proximity means that friendly forces and/or noncombatants are close enough to the target that care must be taken to avoid casualties from air-delivered weapons effects.

All unit leaders must understand how to integrate CAS into operations as well as how to request and control CAS missions. Small-unit leaders with recent theater experience strongly recommend planning restricted operations zones (ROZs), which are volumes of airspace of defined dimensions designated for a specific operational mission based on analysis of where contact is likely. These pre-planned ROZs can then be activated to quickly clear airspace for CAS or close combat air. Each maneuver element should have a trained and qualified team to call for and adjust CAS. This team will likely consist of an attached joint terminal attack controller (JTAC) supporting at the battalion level and trained joint fires observers (JFOs) at the company and platoon levels. Units with OEF experience recommend qualifying all fire support officers, forward observers, and as many other small-unit leaders as possible as JFOs.

The JTAC is a qualified (certified) airman who directs the action of combat aircraft engaged in CAS and other offensive air operations from a forward position. A qualified and current JTAC will be capable and authorized to perform terminal attack control.

The JTAC should work closely with the supported commander/leader and must:

- Know the enemy situation, selected targets, and location of friendly units.

- Know the supported unit's plans, position, and needs.

- Validate targets of opportunity.

- Advise the commander on proper employment of air assets.

- Submit immediate requests for CAS.

- Control CAS with the supported commander's approval.

- Perform battle damage assessment (BDA).

A JFO is a trained and certified service member who can request, adjust, and control surface-to-surface fires, provide targeting information in support of CAS, and perform terminal guidance operations. The JFO adds joint warfighting capability but cannot provide terminal attack control. JFOs do not circumvent the need for qualified JTACs/forward air controllers (airborne) (FAC [A]s) during CAS operations. JFOs provide the capability to exploit opportunities that exist in the operational environment (OE) where a trained observer could be used to efficiently support air-delivered fires, surface-to-surface fires, and facilitate targeting. The JFO is not an additional person provided to a team but rather an existing team member

who has received the proper supplemental training and certification. The following joint mission tasks have been identified for certification and qualification as a JFO:

- Engage targets with ground surface-to-surface fires.

- Engage targets with naval surface fires.

- Provide targeting information for air-to-ground fires.

- Perform terminal guidance operations.

Planning Close Air Support

Regardless of what mission the unit is conducting, commanders and subordinate leaders must plan for CAS at key points throughout the area of operations (AO) and within specific missions. Some units have used the technique of placing frequency and call signs on the top side of vehicles. Additionally, small-unit leaders should consider units of measure when talking with air systems. A unit might say: "Enemy located one convoy length left and two convoy lengths forward in direction of travel" to help the CAS platform acquire the enemy target. For example, if a unit is conducting a combat logistics patrol, combat patrol, or presence patrol, small-unit leaders could analyze the terrain to determine likely/historical choke points and ambush sites where CAS may be needed. This analysis will enable pre-coordination and the establishment of control measures for use in the event CAS or joint fires are requested. The conditions for effective CAS are:

- Well-trained personnel with well-developed skills.

- Effective planning and integration.

- Effective command, control, communications, and computer systems.

- Accurate target marking and/or acquisition.

- Streamlined and flexible procedures.

- Appropriate ordnance.

Although not a requirement for CAS employment, favorable weather improves CAS effectiveness. CAS has the following planning considerations:

- CAS can support offensive, defensive, and other military operations.

- CAS planners must account for the enemy's disposition, composition, order of battle, capabilities, and likely courses of action.

- CAS planners must consider command and control; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and CAS aircraft assets available.

- Terrain can affect communication and visual line of sight for identifying the target and/or aircraft. Threat (air and ground) and weather (ceiling and visibility) may affect the decision to employ low-, medium-, or high-altitude tactics.

- Time considerations include the time available for planning and the air tasking order (ATO) planning cycle.

- Probability of fratricide and collateral damage risk to civilians, civilian structures, and properties associated with CAS attacks must be considered.

CAS Requests

There are two types of CAS requests: preplanned and immediate. Preplanned requests may be filled with either scheduled or on-call air missions, while most immediate requests are filled with on-call missions. Preplanned scheduled missions may be diverted to fill immediate requests.

Preplanned requests are those CAS requirements foreseen early enough to be included in the joint ATO and submitted as preplanned requests. Immediate requests arise from situations that develop outside the ATO planning cycle.

CAS Briefing

JTACs/FAC(A)s/JFOs will use a standardized briefing to pass information rapidly. The CAS briefing form, also referred to as the 9-line briefing (see Figure 5-1), is the standard for use with fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. The CAS briefing form helps aircrews determine if they have the information required to perform the mission. The briefing form is used for all threat conditions and does not dictate the CAS aircraft's tactics. The mission brief follows the numbered sequence (1-9) of the CAS briefing form.

Format 11. CAS Briefing (9-Line)

(Omit data not required. Do not transmit line numbers. Units of measure are standard unless otherwise specified. *Denotes minimum essential in limited communications environment. **BOLD** denotes readback items when requested.)

Terminal controller: "_____, this is _____"
(Aircraft Call Sign)   (Terminal Controller)

1. ***IP/BP: "_____"**

2. *Heading: "_____" (Deg Magnetic)
   (IP/BP to Target)

   Offset: "_____" (Left/Right)

3. *Distance: "_____"
   (IP-to-Target in nautical miles/BP-to-Target in meters)

4. *Target Elevation: "_____" (in feet/MSL)

5. *Target Description: "_____"

6. ***Target Location: "_____"**
   (Lat/Long, grid coords to include map datum [i.e., WGS-84], offsets of visual description)

7. *Type Mark: "_____" Code: "_____"
   (WP, Laser, IR, Beacon)   (Actual Code)
   Laser to Target Line: "_____ Degrees"

8. *** Location of Friendlies: "_____"**
   (from target, cardinal directions and distance in meters)
   Position marked by: "_____"

9. Egress: "_____"

Remarks (as appropriate): "_____"
(Ordnance Delivery, Threats, FAH Hazards, ACAs, Weather, Restrictions, Additional Target Information, SEAD, Laser, Illumination, Night Vision Capability, Danger Close [with commander's initials])

Time on Target (TOT): "_____"
                          OR
Time to Target (TTT): "
"Stand by _____ plus _____ Hack."
         (minutes)   (seconds)

NOTE: When identifying position coordinates for joint operations, include the map data. Grid coordinates must include the 100,000-meter grid identification.

IP: Identifiable geographical point	IR: Infrared
BP: Battle position	WP: White phosphorous
Deg: Degree	FAH: Final attack heading
MSL: Mean sea level	ACA: Airspace coordination area
Lat: Latitude	SEAD: Suppression of enemy air defenses
Long: Longitude	Tgt: Target

Figure 5-1. CAS 9-line briefing form

Close Combat Attack

Upon arrival in their assigned AO, all small-unit leaders should get a copy of the standing operating procedures (SOPs) of the aviation unit that is supporting the small unit with CCA. Prior to all missions, the small unit should coordinate with the supporting CCA unit to exchange frequencies, call signs, and recognition signals. CCA is the employment of attack helicopters consisting of attack weapons teams (AWTs) comprised of AH-64 Apaches or scout weapons teams (SWTs) comprised of OH-58D Kiowa Warriors in maneuver/fires to directly support a ground force that is in anticipated or direct contact with the enemy. For the purposes of this document, AWT/SWT refers to any Army, Army special operations force, or Marine rotary-wing aviation element capable of CCA operations.

The keys to successful aerial and ground maneuvers are detailed planning, SOPs, and training. SOPs are critical in synchronizing aerial and ground maneuvers. Three key reports form the foundation of most unit SOPs for conducting air CCA. The reports are the CCA fragmentary order (FRAGO), the attack inbound summary, and the target handover. The CCA FRAGO is even more critical if the planning process is hasty. The CCA FRAGO is issued to the attack company commander when he is inbound to the landing zone. The FRAGO should contain all of the information needed to complete the mission and should paint a clear picture of the current friendly and enemy situation; assign a clear task and purpose; and communicate the identification, friend or foe signals, and unit frequencies to be used. It can be issued as "no change" or contain any changes that have occurred since the final conditions check. The CCA FRAGO includes:

1. Situation:

    a. Enemy

    b. Friendly

2. Mission:

    a. Task

    b. Purpose

3. Coordinating instructions:

    a. Friendly location

    b. Friendly marking

    c. Enemy location

    d. Enemy marking (manner in which friendly units will mark the enemy)

    e. CCA hopset for confirmation/commands

The CCA FRAGO provides the first AWT/SWT on station great situational awareness as well as last-minute changes to the mission.

The next report is the attack inbound summary. It is transmitted by the aircraft team leader and includes:

- (Small-unit leader), this is (AWT/SWT call sign).

- Number of aircraft in the team.

- Ammunition on the aircraft (such as Hellfire Air-to-Ground Missile System, tube-launched optically-tracked wire-guided missile, 2.75 inch rockets, .50 caliber machine gun, minigun, and 20- and 30-mm guns/cannons).

- Optical capability (such as thermals, night-vision devices, and Target Acquisition and Designation Sight/Pilot Night-Vision Sensor).

- Station time (time aircraft can remain in support of the ground unit).

The attack inbound summary is used any time a new team of AH-64s arrives on station. It gives the ground commander information on the new team's restrictions or limitations. It is especially useful when conducting CCA if the new team arrives with a different task organization, ordnance, configuration, station time, or optical capability than was previously briefed. These two reports set the stage for successful air and ground coordination. Both the air and ground maneuver units must have a clear understanding of the situation, capabilities, and scheme of maneuver.

The final report is the target handover request. It was developed after executing several CCA missions and has proven to be very effective if communicated clearly and concisely. It includes the following:

Small-unit leader:

- (AWT/SWT) this is (small-unit leader).

- My location is _____. Visual recognition signal is _____.

- Target description.

- Target location:

  ° From my location, target is _____ degrees, _____meters.

  ° Grid of target.

  ° Reference a known point (major terrain feature) to give location of target.

- Marking target with (indicate type of signal depending on conditions).

- Ready to mark target at your command, over.

AWT/SWT leader:

- (Small-unit leader), this is (AWT/SWT call sign).

- Observer location is _____. Visual recognition is _____.

- Verify target is _____ located at _____.

- Maneuvering to engage.

- (Small-unit leader), this is AWT/SWT call sign; give friendly recognition signal.

- AWT/SWT confirms friendly recognition signal or continues to maneuver to confirm friendly location.

- Observer, this is AWT/SWT, target located grid _____.

- Mark target with _____.

- Target will be engaged with _____ (such as 30-mm rockets/Hellfire missile).

- BDA follows_____ (pilot gives BDA to ground unit).

The target handover request is crucial in the prevention of fratricide and destruction of the enemy. The target handover request allows the ground maneuver force to communicate to the AWT/SWT the exact location of friendly and enemy forces. Marking techniques are like any other technique—use what works. Meals ready to eat, heaters, IR chemical lights, body posture, and IR strobes will work well depending on terrain, foliage, and relative locations of the AWT/SWT teams in relation to the ground maneuver force.

The final key to success is training between aerial and ground maneuver units. Conducted regularly, training gives ground units a better understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the AWT/SWT battalion. Although helicopters operate in the third dimension, they are restricted by terrain. Unlike fixed-wing jet aircraft, attack helicopters have neither the speed nor the altitude to reduce their exposure to enemy air defense weapons. Units must use the terrain to conceal their movements. Just as it takes time for a tank operator, Bradley fighting vehicle operator, or infantryman to plan his next move, it takes time for an AWT/SWT platoon to plan its maneuver to engage a target. Attack helicopters are also constrained by lines of intervisibility and proper concealment to ensure survivability. All units on the ground must understand and recognize these important aspects of the AWT's/SWT's employment. Additionally, success depends on a clear task and purpose from the ground task force commander. Task and purpose define how the tactical commander wants to use a maneuver force to accomplish his intent. All subordinate units need a clear task and purpose to be successful.

A task is defined as the result or effect the commander wishes to achieve. Tasks should be clearly understood and feasible. Too often, tasks that cannot be completed are given to Army aviation units because of aircraft limitations or lack of

definition. It is the job of the aviation commander to educate ground tactical commanders on the capabilities and limitations of his crews and the airframe. This information ensures that appropriate tasks are given to the AWTs/SWTs on the battlefield. The commander must look at the unit's ability to perform numerous tasks during CCA missions as well. Too many tasks can lead to forces being spread too thinly across the battlefield and an inability to mass fires in accordance with attack helicopter doctrine. Purpose is also important and gives the attack commander the flexibility to use initiative to meet the commander's intent if things are not going as planned on the battlefield. Overall, a clear task and purpose result in well-defined objectives and increased probability of mission accomplishment.

CCA is a difficult mission to perform without prior coordination, detailed planning, and training. In OEF where the immediate threat exists, it is extremely important that the ground and air maneuver units conduct frequent coordination to guarantee success. If detailed planning is not possible, units should revert to lessons learned during past CCA employments and the resulting SOPs. The development of new ways to mark targets such as air commander pointers and day visual lasers will further reduce the difficulties of integrating air and ground assets. Establishing a habitual relationship between air and ground units and frequent training are critical. It is this synergy that has made CCA an effective and lethal method of delivering destructive fires against any enemy in OEF.

Organic Fires

Each unit should have an identified, supporting field artillery unit in either direct or general support for every mission. Every Soldier conducting small-unit operations should know this unit's contact information, call signs, frequencies, and other links. Additionally, the small maneuver unit must establish and maintain communications with its supporting artillery and be familiar with that unit's call for fire (CFF) procedures and SOPs. In mountainous terrain, like that found in much of Afghanistan, angles of fire are critical when engaging mountain tops and ridges. Leaders must consider capabilities and effects when planning for and conducting indirect fire missions.

Call for fire

A CFF is a concise message prepared by the observer. It contains all information needed by the fire direction center (FDC) to determine the method of target attack. It is a request for fire, not an order. It must be sent quickly but clearly enough that it can be understood, recorded, and read back without error by the FDC recorder. The observer should tell the radio operator (RO) that he has seen a target so the RO can start the CFF while the target location is being determined. Information is sent as it is determined rather than waiting until a complete CFF has been prepared.

Regardless of the method of target location used, the normal CFF is sent in three parts consisting of six elements. The six elements in the sequence in which they are transmitted are as follows:

- Observer identification

- Warning order

- Target location

- Target description

- Method of engagement

- Method of fire and control

The three transmissions in a CFF are as follows:

- Observer identification and warning order

- Target location

- Description of target, method of engagement, and method of fire and control

There is a break after each transmission, and the FDC reads back the data.

Department of the Army Form 5429-R (Conduct of Fire) is used by the observer in conducting fire missions and recording mission data. Section I helps him record the CFF and subsequent adjustment data. Section II records registration data.

Because of terrain and distances in OEF, the most reliable and responsive fires available to a small unit are organic battalion/company mortars, which in some cases will be collocated with the small unit on a combat outpost (COP), joint security station (JSS), or patrol base (PB).

There are two primary options for using the battalion/company mortar section/platoon. The first option is to maintain the entire section/platoon in one location under centralized control. The second option is to break out sections or even individual tubes to subordinate maneuver elements to ensure they have indirect fire support when conducting decentralized operations. In the first option, attaching the battalion/company mortar section/platoon to one of the maneuver companies/platoons can be highly beneficial. Every OE will inevitably have one or two key areas that are more tactically vital to the success of the battalion/company than other areas. It is within these areas that the battalion/company commander often commits the most combat power, as success or failure at this decisive point often influences the entire OE. By attaching the mortar section/platoon to the company/platoon controlling this key terrain within the battalion/company OE, the company commander/platoon leader gains a much greater capability to influence events within that terrain. In the current OE where company-/platoon-level COPs, JSSs, and PBs are becoming increasingly more common and, in most cases, directed by higher headquarters (HQ), having an extra section/platoon can alleviate personnel strain and increase protection.

The other option is to retain the mortar section/platoon under direct battalion/company control. The OEF environment, depending on a small unit's location and mission, has made protection and responsive fires critical to decentralized units operating independently and geographically separated from their higher HQ. Insurgents rely almost exclusively on "hit and run" engagements. Although the enemy is very flexible and extremely adaptive, common engagements include ambushes initiated with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) frequently followed by small arms and antitank rocket fire. These engagements vary in length from a few minutes to several hours, after which the enemy is either eliminated or

fades back into the complex terrain. Success in this type of fight largely depends on a unit's capability to maintain maneuver flexibility and its ability to provide effective direct and indirect lethal fires.

Once contact is initiated, there is frequently a need to push additional combat power to the location of the contact, whether it is to help in the fight, recover potentially damaged vehicles and injured personnel, or prevent enemy withdrawal or reinforcement. By retaining the mortar section/platoon at the battalion/company level, the battalion/company has retained an asset that can accomplish any of the above tasks without affecting other missions.

The major threats to allied forces in the current OE are IEDs and complex ambushes. These attacks on combat patrols require the battalion/company to maintain a QRF at all times. The mortar section/platoon, as the battalion/company reserve, can bear the majority of this burden and allow companies to focus on operations within their respective OEs. If a mortar section/platoon is attached away from the HQ, it is not available to serve as a QRF or to backfill security requirements created by other assets called away from the COP, JSS, or command post to perform QRF duties.

Mortar Support

The mortar platoon provides immediate, indirect fire support. Using mortars, the section/platoon can quickly place a heavy volume of accurate, sustained fire on the threat. Mortar rounds can strike targets that low-angle fires cannot reach. These include targets on reverse slopes, in narrow ravines or trenches, and in forests or towns. Mortars are suppressive indirect fire weapons. They can be employed to neutralize or destroy area or point targets, screen large areas with smoke, and provide illumination or coordinated high-explosive/illumination. The mortar platoon's mission is to provide close and immediate indirect fire support for maneuver battalions and companies.

Effective mortar fire

For mortar fire to be effective, it must be dense and hit the target at the right time with the right projectile and fuse. Good observation is necessary for effective mortar fire. Limited observation results in a greater expenditure of ammunition and less effective fire. Some type of observation is desirable for every target to ensure that fire is placed on the target. Observation of close battle areas is usually visual. When targets are hidden by terrain features or when great distance or limited visibility is involved, observation can be achieved by radar or sound. When visual observation is possible, corrections can be made to place mortar fire on the target by adjustment procedures; however, lack of observation must not preclude firing on targets that can be located by other means.

The immediate objective is to deliver a large volume of accurate and timely fire to inflict as many enemy casualties as possible. The number of casualties inflicted in a target area can usually be increased by surprise fire. If surprise, massed fires cannot be achieved, the time required to bring effective fires on the target should be kept to a minimum. The greatest demoralizing effect on the enemy can be achieved by delivering the maximum number of effective rounds from all the mortars in the shortest possible time. Mortar units must be prepared to accomplish multiple fire

missions. They can provide an immediate, heavy volume of accurate fire for sustained periods.

Mortar positions

Mortars should be employed in defilade to protect them from enemy direct fire and observation and to take the greatest advantage of their indirect fires role. Defilade precludes sighting the weapons directly at the target (direct lay) and it is necessary for survivability. Because mortars are indirect fire weapons, special procedures ensure that the weapon and ammunition settings used will cause the projectile to burst on or above the target. A coordinated effort by the indirect fire team ensures the timely and accurate engagement of targets.

Conclusion

Small units conducting combat operations in Afghanistan face unique challenges in the area of fires. The varied and rugged geography, a limited and circuitous ground transportation network, and an extremely experienced and adaptive enemy necessitate the dispersion of small units over large areas. The same conditions that necessitate this dispersion make protection of the dispersed units difficult as QRF, fires, aerial fires, and air resupply are all negatively impacted by weather and terrain. The decentralized and dispersed nature of ongoing operations makes the employment of fires a critical component that must be carefully planned, integrated, rehearsed, and executed in small-unit operations. Small-unit leaders must know what systems are available, how to communicate with the systems, and how to best integrate the capabilities and limitations inherent in the employment of joint fires, CCA, and organic indirect systems.

Chapter 6

Small-Unit Mounted and Dismounted Drills

> "The drill of moving from mounted to dismounted needs to be rehearsed and needs to be understood. It is not an easy drill to get down and if it is not treated like a battle drill, you will fail at it."
>
> —Operation Enduring Freedom command sergeant major

Small units operating in the Afghan theater of operation are subject to almost constant contact and engagement with hostile forces. Whether conducting operations from a forward operations base (FOB), a combat outpost (COP), a joint security station (JSS), a village or urban area, or while moving, the small unit must be prepared and ready to encounter, engage, defeat, or destroy hostile forces. Therefore, small units must develop standing operating procedures (SOPs) or battle drills for both mounted and dismounted engagements with the enemy. Units must be able to react to fire, ambushes, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) from both mounted and dismounted formations. Additionally, due to possible engagements in villages and developed areas, small units must be able to conduct close-quarters combat and room-clearing drills as necessary.

A battle drill describes how platoons and squads apply fire and maneuver to commonly encountered situations. They require leaders to make decisions rapidly and to quickly issue brief, oral orders. A battle drill is a collective action rapidly executed without applying a deliberate decision-making process.

Characteristics of a battle drill include the following:

- They require minimal orders from leaders to accomplish and are standard throughout the Army.

- They are sequential actions vital to success in combat or critical to preserving life.

- They apply to platoons or smaller units.

- They are trained responses to enemy actions or orders issued by leaders.

- They represent mental steps followed for offensive and defensive actions in training and combat.

A platoon's ability to accomplish its mission often depends on Soldiers and leaders quickly executing key actions. All Soldiers and leaders must know their immediate reaction to enemy contact and anticipate follow-up actions. Drills are limited to situations requiring instantaneous response; therefore, Soldiers must execute drills instinctively. This instinctive response results from continual practice. Drills provide small units with standard procedures essential for building strength and aggressiveness. Battle drills:

- Identify key actions that leaders and Soldiers must perform quickly.

- Provide for a smooth transition from one activity to another; for example, a movement from an offensive action to a defensive action.

- Provide standardized actions that link Soldier and collective tasks at platoon level and below.

- Require the full understanding of each individual and leader and continual practice.

This chapter outlines the most common battle drills small units can reasonably expect to encounter during their deployment. Unit leaders must examine the area in which they expect to operate and then prioritize and train on the appropriate battle drills to ensure small units are prepared and rehearsed. Although these tasks are infantry-related, all small units in theater should be ready and prepared to conduct these actions.

Dismounted Drills

Reacting to a small arms attack

If the unit is stationary or moving dismounted, makes visual contact with the enemy, and the enemy initiates contact with direct fire weapons, execute the following drill:

1. Immediately occupy the nearest covered positions and return fire.

2. Squad/team leaders locate and engage known or suspected enemy positions with well-aimed fire and pass information to the platoon leader.

3. Team leaders control their Soldiers' fire by marking targets with lasers or by marking intended targets with tracers or M203 rounds.

4. Soldiers maintain visual or verbal contact with the Soldiers on their left and/or right.

5. Soldiers maintain contact with their team leader and relay the location of enemy positions.

6. Squad/team leaders visually or verbally check the status of their Soldiers.

7. Squad leaders maintain contact with the platoon leader.

8. Unit leader reports the contact to higher headquarters (HQ).

React to ambush (near)

If the unit is moving dismounted, execute the following drill:

1. Soldiers in the kill zone execute one of the following two actions:

> a. Return fire immediately. If cover is not available immediately, without order or signal, assault through the kill zone.

> b. Return fire immediately. If cover is available, without order or signal, occupy the nearest covered position and throw smoke grenades.

2. Soldiers in the kill zone assault through the ambush using fire and movement.

3. Soldiers not in the kill zone identify the enemy location, place well-aimed suppressive fire on the enemy's position, and shift fire as Soldiers assault the objective.

4. Soldiers assault through and destroy the enemy position.

5. Leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

React to ambush (far)

If the unit is dismounted, execute the following drill:

1. Soldiers receiving fire immediately return fire, seek cover, and suppress the enemy positions.

2. Soldiers not receiving fire move along a covered and concealed route to the enemy's flank to assault the enemy position.

3. Soldiers in the kill zone shift suppressive fires as the assaulting Soldiers fight through and destroy the enemy.

4. The unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

After executing any of these battle drills, render immediate medical assistance and evacuate casualties that result from these contacts.

React to indirect fire

The unit is moving dismounted and conducting operations. A Soldier gives the alert, "incoming," or a round impacts nearby. Soldiers immediately seek the best available cover. The unit moves out of the area to the designated rally point after the impacts. The unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ. The unit executes the following drill:

1. Any Soldier announces, "Incoming!"

2. Soldiers immediately assume the prone position or move to immediately available cover during the initial impacts.

3. The unit leader orders the unit to move to a rally point by giving a direction and distance.

4. After the impacts, Soldiers move rapidly in the direction and distance to the designated rally point.

5. The unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

Establish security at the halt

The unit is moving tactically and conducting operations. An unforeseen event causes the unit to halt. Enemy contact is possible. This drill begins when the unit must halt and enemy contact is possible, or the unit leader initiates drill by giving the order to "halt." Soldiers stop movement and clear the area according to the unit's SOP. (An example technique is the 5–25 meter [m] check; each Soldier immediately scans 5m around his position and then searches out to 25m based on the duration of the halt). Soldiers occupy covered and concealed positions and maintain dispersion and all-round security. The unit executes the following drill:

1. The unit leader gives the arm-and-hand signal to halt.

2. Soldiers establish local security:

    a. Assume hasty fighting positions using available cover and concealment.

    b. Inspect and clear their immediate area (for example, using the 5–25m technique).

    c. Establish a sector of fire for assigned weapons (for example, using 12 o'clock as the direction the Soldier is facing, the Soldier's sector of fire will be his 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock).

3. Element leader adjusts positions as necessary:

    a. Inspects and clears his element area.

    b. Ensures Soldiers' sectors of fire overlap.

    c. Coordinates sectors with the elements on his left and right.

4. The unit leader reports the situation to higher HQ.

Mounted Drills

Mounted operations in Afghanistan are inherently dangerous due to rugged terrain with extreme relief and very limited road networks. Soldiers who have deployed to Afghanistan acknowledge that use of seat belts and gunner restraint systems is critical for safety and protection. A properly restrained Soldier can and will survive a rollover accident. Small-unit leaders must incorporate safety and protection into all aspects of mounted operations.

Recovery operations are critical and must be incorporated in planning and conducting mounted patrols and mounted operations. Every element that leaves a secure area must be prepared to conduct hasty self-recovery operations and must also know what additional recovery assets are available, where they are located, and how to contact them. In addition to recovery of organic vehicle assets, units must be prepared to conduct recovery operations for military and host nation support vehicles such as busses, cargo trucks, and "jingle trucks," which they may escort or encounter while on patrol. Units with recent Afghan theater experience recommend tow straps or chains over tow bars as they provide greater flexibility and are more durable when conducting off-road/rough terrain recovery operations. Units, regardless of type, should develop and rehearse a battle drill for the recovery of vehicles.

React to small arms attack

If the unit is stationary or moving mounted, makes visual contact with the enemy, and the enemy initiates contact with direct fire weapons, execute the following drill:

1. If moving as part of a combat logistics patrol, vehicle gunners immediately suppress enemy positions and continue to move.

2. Vehicle commanders direct their drivers to accelerate safely through the engagement area.

3. If moving as part of a combat patrol, vehicle gunners suppress and fix the enemy, allowing others to maneuver against and destroy the enemy.

4. Leaders visually or verbally check the status of their Soldiers and vehicles.

5. Unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

React to ambush (near)

If the unit is moving mounted, execute the following drill:

1. Vehicle gunners in the kill zone immediately return fire while moving out of the kill zone.

2. Soldiers in disabled vehicles in the kill zone immediately obscure themselves from the enemy with smoke, dismount if possible, seek covered positions, and return fire.

3. Vehicle gunners and Soldiers outside of the kill zone identify the enemy positions, place well-aimed suppressive fire on the enemy, and shift fire as Soldiers assault the objective.

4. Soldiers in the kill zone assault through the ambush and destroy the enemy.

5. Unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

React to ambush (far)

If the unit is mounted, execute the following drill:

1. Gunners and personnel on vehicles immediately return fire.

2. If the roadway is clear, all vehicles proceed through the kill zone.

3. Soldier in the lead vehicle throws smoke to obscure the enemy's view of the kill zone.

4. Soldiers in disabled vehicles dismount and set up security while awaiting recovery.

5. Remainder of platoon/section follow the lead vehicle out of the kill zone while continuing to suppress the enemy.

6. Unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

React to indirect fire

The platoon/section is stationary or moving, conducting operations. The alert, "incoming," comes over the radio or intercom or rounds impact nearby. This drill begins when any member alerts "incoming" or a round impacts. When moving, drivers immediately move their vehicles out of the impact area in the direction and distance ordered. If stationary, drivers start their vehicles and move in the direction and distance ordered. The unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ. If the unit is mounted, execute the following drill:

1. Any Soldier announces, "Incoming!"

2. Vehicle commanders repeat the alert over the radio.

3. The leader gives the direction and link-up location over the radio.

4. Soldiers close all hatches (if applicable to the vehicle type); gunners stay below turret shields or get down into the vehicle.

5. Drivers move rapidly out of the impact area in the direction ordered by the leader.

6. The unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

Break contact

The platoon/squad/section is stationary or moving, conducting operations. All or part of the unit is receiving enemy direct fire. The unit leader initiates this drill by giving the order to "break contact." The unit returns fire. A leader identifies the enemy as a superior force and makes the decision to break contact. The unit breaks contact using fire and movement. The unit continues to move until the enemy cannot observe or place effective fire on it. The unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ. If the unit is mounted, execute the following drill:

1. The unit leader directs the vehicles in contact to place well-aimed suppressive fire on the enemy's positions.

2. The unit leader orders distance, direction, a terrain feature, or last objective rally point over the radio for the movement of the first section.

3. The unit leader calls for and adjusts indirect fire to suppress the enemy's positions.

4. Gunners in the base-of-fire vehicles continue to engage the enemy. They attempt to gain fire superiority to support the bound of the moving section.

5. The moving section bounds to assume the overwatch position.

      a. The section uses the terrain and/or smoke to mask its movement.

      b. Vehicle gunners and mounted Soldiers continue to suppress the enemy.

6. The platoon/squad/section continues to suppress the enemy and bounds until it is no longer receiving enemy fire.

7. The unit leader reports the contact to higher HQ.

Dismount a vehicle

The unit is moving mounted and conducting operations as part of a larger element. The unit is ordered to dismount and provide security. The unit leader initiates this drill by giving the order, "dismount." The unit moves to the best covered and concealed position available, which provides protection for the dismounting personnel. When the command "dismount" is given, all Soldiers dismount in the order specified and clear the area per unit SOP. (An example technique is the 5–25m; each Soldier immediately scans 5m around his position and then searches out to 25m based on the duration of the halt.) Soldiers occupy positions, and vehicle gunners scan for enemy activity:

1. The unit leader selects a covered or concealed position as the dismount point.

2. The unit leader gives the order to dismount over the radio.

3. Vehicle commanders monitor radios and alert the Soldiers in the vehicle.

4. The drivers move their vehicles to the designated dismount point seeking the best cover and concealment available.

5. The driver stops the vehicle, and the vehicle commander dismounts and occupies a security position.

6. Soldiers dismount in the specified order, clear the area, and move to covered and concealed positions.

7. The vehicles occupy overwatch positions, and designated Soldiers man crew-served weapons and scan for enemy activity.

8. Element leaders reposition their Soldiers as needed in the overwatch positions.

9. The unit leader reports to higher HQ.

Establish security at the halt

The unit is moving tactically, conducting operations. An unforeseen event causes the unit to halt. Enemy contact is possible. This drill begins when the unit must halt and enemy contact is possible, or the unit leader initiates the drill by giving the order to "halt." Vehicle commanders direct their vehicles into designated positions using available cover and concealment. Soldiers dismount in the order specified and clear the area according to the unit's SOP. (For example, if the selected technique is the 5–25m, each Soldier immediately scans 5m around his position and then searches out to 25m based on the duration of the halt). The platoon/section members maintain dispersion and all-round security:

1. The unit leader gives the order over the radio to stop movement.

2. The unit halts in the herringbone or coil formation according to the unit SOP.

3. Using cover and concealment, each vehicle commander ensures his vehicle is correctly positioned and the crew-served weapon is manned and scanning.

4. Vehicle commanders order Soldiers to dismount, clear the area, and provide local security.

5. Soldiers dismount and occupy hasty fighting positions as designated by the leader:

> a. They move to a covered and concealed position as designated by the leader.
>
> b. They inspect and clear the immediate area (for example, using the 5–25m technique).
>
> c. They establish a sector of fire for the assigned weapon.

6. Dismounted element leaders adjust positions as necessary.

7. The unit leader reports the situation to higher HQ.

React to an improvised explosive device

The unit is moving either dismounted or mounted; execute the following drill:

1. The unit reacts to a suspected or known IED prior to detonation by using the confirm, clear, call, cordon, control technique (5 Cs).

2. While maintaining as safe a distance as possible and 360-degree security, the platoon/squad/section confirms the presence of an IED by using all available optics to identify any parts of an exposed ordnance such as wires, antennas, and detonation cord:

a. Conducts surveillance from a safe distance.

b. Observes the immediate surroundings for suspicious activities.

3. The unit clears all personnel from the area by moving them to a safe distance to protect them from a potential secondary IED.

4. The unit calls higher HQ to report the IED in accordance with the unit's SOP.

5. The unit cordons off the area, directs personnel out of the danger area, prevents all military or civilian traffic from passing, and only allows authorized personnel to enter:

a. Soldiers direct people out of the 300m minimum danger area.

b. Soldiers identify and clear an area for an incident control point.

c. Soldiers occupy positions and continuously secure the area.

6. The unit controls the area inside the cordon to ensure only authorized access.

7. The unit continuously scans the area for suspicious activity:

a. Identifies potential enemy observation, vantage, or ambush points.

b. Maintains visual observation on the IED to ensure there is no tampering with the device.

After executing any of these battle drills, render immediate medical assistance and evacuate casualties that result from these contacts.

Convoy and Convoy Live-Fire Training

One of the most dangerous activities in Afghanistan is moving in a convoy. Convoy training teaches the responsibilities for each crew position (driver, commander, or gunner).

Convoy fundamentals:

- Movement drills:

  ° Scanning responsibilities and 360-degree security.

  ° Techniques for keeping standoff with a potential threat.

  ° Actions on halts: 5–25m crew halt drill and the 5 Cs.

- Battle drills:

  ° React to attack from the driver's side (left side).

  ° React to attack from the vehicle commander's side (right side).

      º How to exit/enter a vehicle while in contact.

      º How to break contact.

      º What to do at the rally point.

- Casualty extrication, first aid, and evacuation (including calling for medical evacuation [MEDEVAC]):

- Vehicle rollover and evacuation drill.

- Vehicle self recovery (like vehicles and while in contact).

- Reporting (size, activity, location, uniform, troops, and equipment report; MEDEVAC request; and IED/unexploded explosive ordnance report).

Convoy training continues with live-fire training in both moving and stationary situations. Train Soldiers to fire on targets in all directions (to the sides, front, and rear) simultaneously. Emphasize muzzle awareness and individual fire discipline techniques. Crew positions will dictate the firing technique. Train each crew member on the appropriate techniques.

Close-Quarters Battle

Some fighting in Afghanistan occurs in urban areas (confined spaces; streets; small, open areas; and buildings), which requires small units to fight a close-quarters battle (CQB). In order to be successful, train Soldiers on the principles of CQB: surprise, speed, and controlled violence of action.

Rehearsals are the single most important thing a leader can do for Soldiers. Rehearse how to move through a room, building, street, or open area. Rehearsals train the Soldiers how to become accustomed to the feel of CQB and experience the problems associated with it. Just as repetition is the key to learning immediate action drills, Soldiers should practice CQB repeatedly until they are able to react correctly without much thought. During training, focus on flexibility and reacting to the unknown (no two streets, buildings, or rooms are the same). Also, whenever possible, train with the team members you will fight with. Make every effort to keep that team together in combat.

Enter and clear a room

The element is conducting operations as part of a larger unit, and the unit's four-Soldier team has been given the mission to clear a room. Enemy personnel are believed to be in the building. Noncombatants may be present in the building and are possibly intermixed with enemy personnel. Support and security elements are positioned at the initial foothold and outside the building. Some iterations of this drill should be performed in mission-oriented protective posture 4. This drill begins on the order of the unit leader or the command of the clearing team leader. The team secures and clears the room by killing or capturing the enemy while minimizing friendly casualties, non-combatant casualties, and collateral damage. The team complies with the rules of engagement (ROE). The team maintains a sufficient fighting force to repel an enemy counterattack and continue operations.

The unit executes the following drill:

1. The element leader occupies a position to best control the security and clearing teams:

> a. The element leader directs a team to secure corridors or hallways outside the room with appropriate firepower.

> b. The team leader (normally the number two Soldier) takes a position to best control the clearing team outside the room.

> c. The element leader gives the signal to clear the room.

Note: If the element is conducting high-intensity combat operations and grenades are being used, the element must comply with the ROE and consider the building structure because Soldiers can be injured from fragments if walls and floors are thin or damaged. A Soldier of the clearing team cooks off at least one grenade (fragmentation, concussion, or stun), throws the grenade into the room, and announces, "FRAG out."

2. The clearing team enters and clears the room:

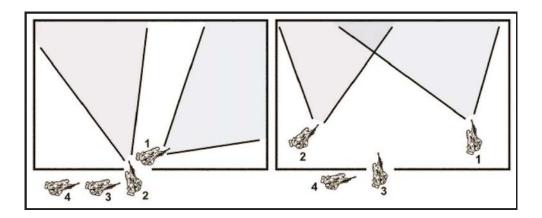> a. The first two Soldiers enter the room almost simultaneously.

Figure 6-1. Clear a room; first two Soldiers

> (1) The first Soldier enters the room and moves left or right along the path of least resistance to one of two corners. He assumes a position of domination facing into the room. During movement, he eliminates all immediate threats.

(2) The second Soldier (normally the team leader) enters the room immediately after the first Soldier. He moves in the opposite direction of the first Soldier to his point of domination. During movement, he eliminates all immediate threats in his sector. **Note**: During high-intensity combat, the Soldiers enter immediately after the grenade detonates. Both Soldiers enter firing aimed bursts into their sectors, engaging all threats or hostile targets to cover their entry. **Note**: If the first or second Soldier discovers that the room is small or a short room (such as a closet or bathroom), he announces, "short room" or "short." The clearing team leader informs the third and fourth Soldiers whether to stay outside the room or to enter.

b. The third Soldier moves in the opposite direction of the second Soldier while scanning and clearing his sector as he assumes his point of domination.
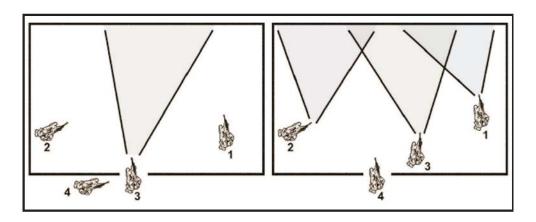

Figure 6-2. The third Soldier moves into position.

c. The fourth Soldier moves in the opposite direction of the third Soldier to a position that dominates his sector.
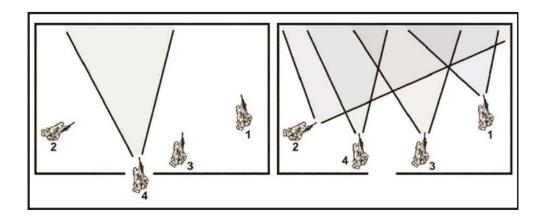

Figure 6-3. Clear a room; fourth Soldier

d. All Soldiers engage enemy combatants with precision-aimed fire and identify noncombatants to avoid collateral damage. **Note**: If necessary or on order, Soldiers number one and two of the clearing team may move deeper into the room while overwatched by the other team members.

e. The team leader announces to the element leader when the room is clear.

3. The element leader enters the room:

a. Makes a quick assessment of the room and the threat.

b. Determines if the squad has sufficient fire power to continue clearing its assigned sector.

c. Reports to the unit leader that the first room is clear.

d. Requests needed sustainment to continue clearing the sector.

e. Marks entry point in accordance with the unit SOP.

4. The element consolidates and reorganizes as necessary.

Conclusion

Small units operating in the Afghanistan theater of operation are subject to almost constant contact and engagement with hostile forces. Whether conducting operations from an FOB, a COP, a JSS, a village or urban area, or while moving, the small unit must be prepared and ready to encounter, engage, defeat, or destroy hostile forces. Therefore, small units must develop SOPs or battle drills for both mounted and dismounted engagements with the enemy. While all battle drills are important, each small-unit leader must assess the environment in which his unit will operate and determine which battle drills should receive emphasis and rehearsal time.

Chapter 7

Protection

> "We must teach the principles of the defense. The old saying 'the defense is never done' is very much true. There is no Hesco defense manual that explains how to build a defensible perimeter. The BLUF [bottom line up front] is the principles still apply but must be taught and understood by a new generation of leaders not steeped in the defense."
>
> —Former Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) brigade combat team commander

Wherever American forces are deployed, they become lucrative targets for those who intend to do them harm or undermine their will to continue to carry the fight to the enemy. Enhanced tactical protection is an absolute necessity to conserve and protect Soldiers, operation bases, and equipment. The enormous strains that emerging security requirements are placing on available forces make it imperative that small-unit leaders understand protection as it applies at the tactical level and that they leverage available technologies to enhance protection.

Perimeter Defense

U.S. forces participating in OEF understand that small-unit, independent actions are the keys to winning in this challenging environment. While the offense is the most decisive type of combat operation, defensive operations in this environment are vital to protection. When leaders are required to establish static defenses, they must limit the vulnerability of their forces. Proper preparation of the position reduces the threat to U.S. forces. A perimeter defense is the preferred method for a company or platoon to secure itself at a patrol base (PB), combat outpost (COP), or joint security station (JSS). It provides the best security because it is oriented in all directions. The characteristics of the defense (preparation, security, disruption, massing effects, and flexibility) should be considered when planning or conducting a perimeter defense.

Static defensive positions must be defended, regardless of the type of terrain where they are established or how long they will be occupied. Aggressive, dismounted patrolling must be combined with the use of all available observation systems. Companies and platoons assigned to defend positions should be augmented with mortars, heavy weapons, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs), and other enablers. Perimeter defenses are used to retain decisive terrain and deny vital avenues of approach to the anti-Afghan forces.

Leaders establish priorities of work to control the preparation and execution of a perimeter defense. A full-blown defense with an extensive obstacle plan may not be feasible, but the priorities of work must still be followed in accordance with Field Manual (FM) 3-21.8, *Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad*, or FM 3-21.10, *The Infantry Rifle Company*. For reasons beyond their control, small-unit leaders may not have the opportunity to select the best position to defend. In this case, it is even more important to follow the priorities of work to make the best of the situation. Leaders can modify the priorities of work in accordance with mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil

considerations (METT-TC). The following priorities of work are extremely important to small-unit defensive operations:

- Establish all-around security, including patrols and observation posts (OPs), with consideration for periods of limited visibility.

- Post local security.

- Position key weapon systems. Dispersion is critical, and positions must permit mutually supporting fires.

- Position other assets (command post [CP], mortars, and vehicles).

- Designate final protective lines and final protective fires.

- Clear fields of fire if necessary.

- Prepare range cards and sector sketches.

- Prepare hasty fighting positions.

- Emplace obstacles and mines.

- Emplace early warning devices (whistlers, trip flares, platoon early warning devices).

- Mark/improve markings for target reference points and direct fire control measures.

- Establish rest plans.

- Rehearse engagements/disengagements.

- Adjust positions/control measures as required.

- Stockpile ammunition, food, water, and medical supplies.

- Manage time to provide subordinate leaders with two-thirds of all available time.

- Plan for contingencies; select an alternate site.

> "Units must keep the enemy away from FOBs [forward operating bases] and COPs and extend their security bubble to ensure they don't get hit where they sleep. The enemy has 100 percent situational awareness on our positions and is always watching."
>
> —Former OEF commander

Other important planning factors:

- Conduct aggressive patrolling; one patrol every three days will not suffice.

- Rehearse all contingencies to ensure all subordinates have a clear understanding of the plan.

- Rehearse the alert plan and consolidation/reorganization.

- Rehearse in all light conditions.

- Check early warning devices and Claymores frequently and not at regular intervals!

- Disperse vehicles to reduce their vulnerability to mortar and rocket fire.

- Locate medics at defensive positions and stockpile medical supplies. Because of the large distances and the availability of air evacuation assets, casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) could prove to be a challenge. Soldiers must have increased proficiency in medical tasks. Wounded Soldiers want to know they will be taken care of quickly.

- Enforce noise and light discipline and use night-vision devices and thermal sights.

- Have a deception plan. If possible, vary daily activity times and locations. Time permitting, dig false positions or use E-type silhouettes to make the occupying force appear larger.

- Coordinate direct and indirect fire plans to prevent accidentally engaging neighboring noncombatants or allied forces.

Additional considerations

Before preparing and occupying the COP or JSS, the small-unit leader should evaluate the following factors:

- Location of the position.

- Effects of weather.

- Traffic patterns.

- OP sites and/or patrol routes.

- Entry and exit procedures.

- Vehicle emplacement and orientation.

- Size and composition of the reserve.

- Quick reaction force (QRF)/reserve (organic and supporting).

- Location of possible landing zones (LZs) and pickup zones (PZs).

- Combat sustainment considerations, including locations of the following:

  ° Mess areas and latrines (including drainage).

  ° Storage areas/bunkers for Class III, IV, and V supplies.

  ° Maintenance and refueling areas.

  ° Aid station.

- Proximity to structures and/or roadways (including security factors).

The U.S. Army focuses on offensive operations because they are the most decisive type of combat operation, but more units are finding themselves conducting defensive operations behind enemy lines. Small-unit combat operations are the key to successful mission accomplishment, so junior leaders must be armed with the proper tools and knowledge to establish these types of defenses. Whether defending a mountaintop or in an occupied village in Afghanistan, leaders must take the proper steps to accomplish the mission and provide protection.

Patrol Base Planning

Units are particularly vulnerable when initially occupying any position. Leaders must have a complete and well-coordinated occupation plan and ensure that sufficient barrier materials, early warning systems, and an appropriately-sized security element are available. When conducting PB operations, small-unit leaders must consider and address the following five areas:

- CP/Command and control (C2)

- Communications

- Force protection

- Detainee holding

- Life support

Command post

The CP does not have a set organization. It consists of the commander, other personnel, and equipment required to support the C2 process (radio operators [ROs]; fires support team; communications sergeant; and the nuclear, biological, and chemical noncommissioned officer). The executive officer, first sergeant, armorer, reserve element leader, and the leaders of attached or supporting units may also locate with the CP.

The CP is located where the leader determines it can best support his C2 process. The CP provides for its own security The purposes of the CP are to:

- Establish/Provide communications with higher, lower, adjacent, and supporting units.

- Assist the commander in planning, coordinating, and issuing orders.

Detainee holding

The PB must have the capability to hold detainees and must therefore designate a detainee holding area (DHA). Remember search, silence, segregate, safeguard, and speed to the rear (the 5 Ss) when planning for the DHA. The DHA is normally located in a safe and secure area that is accessible for the receipt and evacuation of detainees. It is a temporary location to field-process and house detainees and provides resources for intelligence exploitation. It is generally comprised of a semi-permanent structure designed and resourced to house detainees. Basic elements include:

- Protection against enemy direct and indirect fire.

- Shelter or cover from weather.

- Latrines.

- Basic hygiene facilities.

- Medical treatment facilities.

Life support

Life support considerations for a PB include:

- Power.

- Plans/Provisions for medical evacuation (MEDEVAC).

- Minimum medical provisions and designated casualty collection point.

- Latrines.

- Water.

- Dining facilities and rest areas.

Patrols and Patrolling

A patrol is a detachment sent out by a larger unit to conduct a specific combat, reconnaissance, or security mission. Patrols operate semi-independently and return to the main body upon completion of their missions. Patrolling fulfills the small unit's primary function of finding the enemy to either engage it or report its disposition, location, and actions to higher headquarters (HQ). Patrols act as the

eyes and ears of the larger unit and as a means to engage and disrupt the enemy before it can conduct a coordinated action against a CP/COP/JSS.

No patrol should ever depart a secure area without checking the eight points of failure contingency planning minimums recommended by the Joint Readiness Training Center.

8 Points of Failure **Contingency Planning Minimums**
Do not go out the gate without the following:
1. Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (who is watching the enemy watch us?)
2. Infiltration plan (route clearance, primary and alternate LZ, and deception)
3. Exfiltration plan (unpredictable, route clearance, and primary and alternate PZs)
4. C2 (primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency communication plan; company versus battalion fight; and span of control)
5. Fires (mortars, artillery, fixed-wing, rotary-wing, and electronic warfare)
6. CASEVAC (air, ground, and all points in the mission)
7. QRF (air, ground, and all points in the mission)
8. Logistics (resupply, vehicle recovery, and detainee extraction)
*Other (exploitation and consequence management)

Patrolling can accomplish several specific purposes:

- Gathering information on the enemy, the terrain, or the populace.

- Regaining contact with the enemy or with adjacent friendly forces.

- Engaging the enemy in combat to destroy it or inflict losses.

- Reassuring or gaining the trust of a local population.

- Preventing public disorder.

- Deterring and disrupting insurgent or criminal activity.

- Providing unit security.

- Protecting key infrastructure or bases.

Combat patrols

Combat patrols depart the main body with the clear intent to make direct contact with the enemy. The three types of combat patrols are raid, ambush, and security patrols. Combat and raid patrols are sent out to conduct special-purpose attacks. Reconnaissance patrols depart the main body with the intention of avoiding direct combat with the enemy while seeking out information or confirming the accuracy of previously gathered information. The most common types of reconnaissance patrols are area, route, zone, and point patrols. Leaders also dispatch reconnaissance patrols to track the enemy and establish contact with other friendly forces. Contact patrols make physical contact with adjacent units and report their locations, status, and intentions. Tracking patrols follow the trail and movements of a specific enemy unit. Presence patrols conduct a special form of reconnaissance, normally during stability or civil support operations.

A combat patrol provides security and harasses, destroys, or captures enemy troops, equipment, or installations. When the commander sends out a combat patrol, he intends for the patrol to make contact with the enemy and engage it in close combat.

A raid is a surprise attack against a position or installation for a specific purpose other than seizing and holding the terrain. It is conducted to destroy a position or installation, to destroy or capture enemy soldiers or equipment, or to free prisoners. A raid patrol retains terrain just long enough to accomplish the intent of the raid. A raid always ends with a planned withdrawal from the objective and a return to the main body.

An ambush is a surprise attack from a concealed position on a moving or temporarily halted target. An ambush patrol does not need to seize or hold any terrain. It can include an assault to close with and destroy the target or an attack by fire only.

The ambush site is the terrain on which a point ambush is established. The ambush site consists of a support-by-fire position for the support element and an assault position for the assault element. An ideal ambush site:

- Has good fields of fire into the kill zone.

- Has good cover and concealment.

- Has a protective obstacle.

- Has a covered and concealed withdrawal route.

- Makes it difficult for the enemy to conduct a flank attack.

The kill zone is the part of an ambush site where fire is concentrated to isolate or destroy the enemy. An ideal kill zone has these characteristics:

- Enemy forces are likely to enter it.

- It has natural tactical obstacles.

- It is large enough to observe and engage the anticipated enemy force.

A near ambush is a point ambush with the assault element within reasonable assaulting distance of the kill zone (less than 50 meters [m]). Close terrain, such as an urban area or heavy woods, may require this type of positioning. It may also be appropriate in open terrain in a "rise from the ground" ambush.

A far ambush is a point ambush with the assault element beyond reasonable assaulting distance of the kill zone (beyond 50m). This location may be appropriate in open terrain offering good fields of fire or when attack is by fire for a harassing ambush.

An ideal security position:

- Does not mask fires of the main body.

- Provides timely information for the main body (gives the leader time to act on the information provided).

- Can provide a support-by-fire position.

Security patrols prevent surprise of the main body by screening to the front, flank, and rear of the main body and detecting and destroying enemy forces in the local area. This type of combat patrol is normally sent out by units operating in close terrain with limited fields of observation and fire. Although this type of combat patrol seeks to make direct enemy contact and to destroy enemy forces within its capability, it should try to avoid a decisive engagement. Security patrols are employed both when the main body is stationary and when it is moving. When the main body is moving, the security patrol prevents the unit from being ambushed or coming into surprise chance contact.

When the unit is stationary or during a halt, a security patrol is sent out from a unit location to search the local area, detect any enemy forces near the main body, and engage and destroy the enemy within the capability of the patrol. A security patrol detects and disrupts enemy forces that are conducting reconnaissance of the main body or that are massing to conduct an attack. Additionally, security patrols prevent enemy infiltration, reconnaissance, or attacks. Security patrols are normally away from the main body of the unit for limited periods, returning frequently to coordinate and rest. They do not operate beyond the main body's range of communications and supporting fires, especially mortar fires, because these patrols normally operate for limited periods of time and are combat oriented.

Reconnaissance patrols

A reconnaissance patrol collects information to confirm or disprove the accuracy of previously obtained information. The intent for this type of patrol is to move stealthily, avoid enemy contact, and accomplish its tactical task without engaging in close combat. With one exception (presence patrols), reconnaissance patrols always try to accomplish their missions without being detected or observed. The following are types of reconnaissance patrols:

- An area reconnaissance patrol focuses on obtaining detailed information about the terrain or enemy activity within a prescribed area.

- A route reconnaissance patrol obtains detailed information about a specified route and any terrain where the enemy could influence movement along that route.

- A zone reconnaissance patrol involves a directed effort to obtain detailed information on all routes, obstacles, terrain, and enemy forces within a zone defined by boundaries.

- A point reconnaissance patrol goes straight to a specific location and assesses the situation. These patrols are often used in stability or civil support operations.

- The leader's reconnaissance patrol reconnoiters the objective just before an attack or prior to sending elements forward to locations to provide fire support. This patrol confirms the condition of the objective, provides each subordinate leader a clear picture of the terrain, and identifies any part of the objective that must be seized or suppressed. The commander can use the aid below to remember a five point contingency:

    - G: Going (Where is the leader going?)

    - O: Others (What others are going with the leader?)

    - T: Time (How long will the leader be gone?)

    - W: What (What actions will be taken if the leader fails to return?)

    - A: Actions (What actions do the departing reconnaissance element and main body plan to take on contact?)

- A contact patrol is a special reconnaissance patrol sent from one unit to physically contact and coordinate with another. Modern technology has reduced but not eliminated the need for contact patrols.

- A presence patrol is used in stability or civil support operations. It has many purposes, but it should always see and be seen in a specific manner determined by the commander:

    ° Its primary goal is to gather specific and general information about the conditions in the unit's area of operations. The patrol seeks out this information and then observes and reports.

    ° Its secondary role is to be seen as a tangible representation of U.S. military force, projecting an image that furthers the accomplishment of the commander's intent. Presence patrols are intended to clearly demonstrate the determination, competency, confidence, concern, and when appropriate, the overwhelming power of the force to all who observe it, including local and national media. To accomplish the "to be seen" part of its purpose, a presence patrol reconnoiters overtly. It takes deliberate steps to visibly reinforce the impression the commander wants to convey to the populace.

- A tracking patrol is normally a squad size (or possibly smaller) element. It is tasked to follow the trail of a specific enemy unit to determine its composition, final destination, and actions en route.

Combat patrol planning

There are three essential elements for a combat patrol: assault, support, and security. Assault elements accomplish the mission during actions on the objective. Support elements suppress or destroy the enemy on the objective in support of the assault element. Security elements assist in isolating the objective by preventing the enemy from entering and leaving the objective area as well as by ensuring the patrol's withdrawal route remains open. The size of each element is based on the situation and the leader's analysis of METT-TC.

The assault element is the combat patrol's decisive effort. Its task is to conduct actions on the objective. This element must be capable (through inherent capabilities or positioning relative to the enemy) of destroying or seizing the target of the combat patrol. Tasks typically associated with the assault element include:

- Conducting an assault across the objective to destroy enemy equipment, capture or kill enemy personnel, and clear key terrain and enemy positions.

- Deploying close enough to the objective to conduct an immediate assault if detected.

- Being prepared to support itself if the support element cannot suppress the enemy.

- Providing support to a breach element in reduction of obstacles.

- Planning detailed fire control and distribution.

- Conducting controlled withdrawal from the objective.

The support element suppresses the enemy on the objective using direct and indirect fires. The support element is a shaping effort that sets conditions for the mission's decisive effort. If required, the support force can be divided into two or more elements. The support force:

- Initiates fires and gains fire superiority with crew-served weapons and indirect fires.

- Controls rates and distribution of fires.

- Shifts/ceases fire on signal.

- Supports the withdrawal of the assault element.

The security element is a shaping force that has three roles. The first role is to isolate the objective from enemy personnel and vehicles attempting to enter the objective area. The second role is to prevent the enemy from escaping the objective area. The third role is to secure the patrol's withdrawal route. There is a subtle yet important distinction setting apart the security element. All elements of the patrol are responsible for their own local security. What distinguishes the security element is that they are protecting the entire patrol.

Additional special purpose teams assigned tasks may include:

- Search teams to find and collect documents, equipment, and information that can be used as intelligence.

- Prisoner teams to capture, secure, and account for prisoners and detainees.

- Demolition teams to plan and execute the destruction of obstacles and enemy equipment.

- Breach teams to create small-scale breaches in protective obstacles to facilitate the completion of the patrol's primary task.

- Aid and litter teams to identify, collect, render immediate aid, and coordinate MEDEVAC for casualties.

- Surveillance teams to establish and maintain covert observation of an objective.

Organization of patrols

A patrol is organized to perform specific tasks. It must be prepared to secure itself, navigate accurately, identify and cross danger areas, and reconnoiter the patrol objective. If it is a combat patrol, it must be prepared to breach obstacles, assault the objective, and support those assaults by fire. Additionally, a patrol must be able to conduct detailed searches as well as deal with casualties and prisoners or detainees. Elements and teams for platoons conducting patrols include common and specific elements for each type of patrol. The following elements are common to all patrols:

- HQ. The HQ normally consists of the patrol leader and his RO and may include a forward observer and his RO. Any attachments can also be part of the HQ element.

- Aid and litter team. The aid and litter team is responsible for locating, treating, and evacuating casualties.

- Enemy prisoner of war (EPW)/detainee teams. The EPW/detainee team is responsible for controlling EPWs in accordance with the five Ss and the leader's guidance. This team may also be used to account for and control detainees or recovered personnel.

- En route recorder. The recorder records all information collected during the patrol.

- Compass and pace man. When a patrol does not have access to Global Positioning Systems or if it is operating in a location where there is no satellite reception, it may be necessary to navigate by dead reckoning.

Preparing the Patrol

Units send out patrols under many and varied conditions on the battlefield. Patrols are often used during high-intensity combat. They are also sent out during stability operations and when the unit is providing support to civil authorities. The specific actions taken in preparing for a patrol, while conducting the mission, and after returning to the main body will vary depending on the tactical situation. However, the principles will remain the same. Successful patrol operations require considerable preparation before a patrol departs. The commander or platoon leader should brief the patrol leader and give him clear orders before dispatching the patrol.

Patrol orders, pre-patrol briefings, and rehearsals should cover the following subjects:

- Environment, local situation, and possible threats. The patrol leader should coordinate an intelligence briefing that covers the operating environment, local civil situation, terrain and weather that might affect the patrol's mission, general and specific threats to the patrol, suspect persons, and vehicles and locations known to be in the patrol's area.

- Mine and IED threat. The patrol leader should make a mine and improvised explosive device (IED) risk assessment based on the latest information available. Patrol members must be informed of the latest mine and IED threats and the restrictions to the unit's tactical standing operating procedures (SOPs) that result.

- Operations update. The patrol leader should coordinate for an up-to-date briefing on the location and intentions of other friendly patrols and units in the patrol's area. This briefing should include the existing fire and maneuver control measures in effect, any no-go or restricted areas, any special instructions in effect for the patrol's area, and all other operational issues that may affect the patrol and its mission.

- Mission and tasks. Every patrol leader should be given a specific task and purpose to accomplish with his patrol. Accordingly, each patrol member must know the mission and be aware of his responsibilities.

- Locations and route. The patrol leader must brief his patrol on all pertinent locations and routes. Locations and routes may include drop-off and pickup points, planned routes, rally points, exit and re-entry points, and alternates for each should be covered in detail.

- Posture. Posture is a key consideration during a presence patrol. The patrol leader should not depart until he is sure that he completely understands what posture or attitude the commander wishes the patrol to present to the populace it encounters. The patrol's posture may be soft or hard depending on the situation and the environment. The posture may change several times during a patrol.

- Actions on contact and actions at the scene of an incident. These are likely to be part of the unit's tactical SOPs but should be covered, especially if there are local variations or new members in the patrol.

- Rules of engagement, interaction, and escalation of force. Each member of the patrol must know and understand these rules.

- Communications and loss of communications plan. Every patrol member should know the means by which the patrol plans to communicate, and to whom, how, and when it should report. The patrol leader must ensure that he has considered what actions the patrol will take in the event it loses communications.

- Electronic countermeasures (ECM) plan. The ECM plan is especially important if the IED threat level is high. The patrol leader should clearly explain to all members of the patrol which ECM devices are being employed and their significant characteristics.

- Standard and special uniforms and equipment. Equipment should be distributed evenly among the patrol members. The location of key or unique equipment should be known by all members of the patrol. All patrols must have day and night capabilities regardless of the expected duration of the patrol.

- Medical. Every Soldier should carry his own first aid dressing according to the unit tactical SOP (TACSOP). If possible, every patrol should have at least one combat lifesaver (CLS) with a CLS bag. All patrol members must know who is responsible for carrying the CLS bag and know how to use its contents.

- Attachments. The patrol leader must ensure that all personnel attached to the patrol are introduced to the other patrol members and briefed thoroughly on the TACSOP, all patrol special orders, and the existing chain of command. The following personnel may be attached to a unit going out to patrol:

    º Interpreters

    º Police (either military police or local security forces)

    º Specialists in search or explosive demolitions

    º Female Soldiers specifically designated and trained to search local women

    º Military working dogs and dog handlers

Equipment carried by the patrol will be environment and task specific:

- Radios and ECM equipment. Radios and ECM equipment should be checked prior to every patrol to ensure the equipment is serviceable and operates correctly. Ensure there are sufficient batteries for the expected duration of the patrol plus additional backup batteries. Patrol members must be trained in the operation of all ECM and radio equipment. It is the patrol leader's responsibility to ensure that radios and ECM equipment are switched on and working and communication checks are conducted prior to leaving the base.

- Weapons. All weapons must be prepared for firing prior to departure from the larger unit. Slings should be used to ensure weapons do not become separated from a Soldier who becomes incapacitated. This also ensures that a weapon cannot be snatched away from a distracted Soldier while he is speaking with locals and used against him.

- Ammunition. Sufficient ammunition, signal pyrotechnics, smoke, and nonlethal munitions must be carried to enable the patrol to conduct its mission. The amount of each type of ammunition a patrol carries may be established by the unit's TACSOP or by the patrol leader based on his evaluation of the situation the patrol will likely face.

- Load-carrying equipment. Patrol members should carry sufficient team and personal equipment to enable them to accomplish other missions (such as reassignment to a cordon position before returning to the larger unit for resupply). The unit's TACSOP should establish the standard amount of equipment and supplies to be carried. The commander must carefully consider the burden he places on his Soldiers conducting a foot patrol, especially in extreme weather conditions or rugged terrain.

- Documentation. Team leaders are responsible to the patrol leader for ensuring that appropriate documentation is carried by individuals for the conduct of the mission. Under normal circumstances, Soldiers should carry just their identification card and tags. The unit TACSOP may prohibit or require the carrying of other appropriate, theater-specific documentation such as cards with rules on escalation of force, rules of engagement, or rules of interaction.

A number of equipment checks should be conducted prior to the patrol departing:

- Individual equipment check. It is the responsibility of every patrol member to check his individual equipment. Soldiers should secure any loose items of individual equipment.

- Team leader's equipment check. Leaders must ensure that team members only carry items required for the patrol. Team equipment must be checked for serviceability.

- Patrol leader's equipment check. Patrol leaders should check individual and team equipment from each team prior to deploying, paying particular attention to the serviceability of mission-specific equipment.

Patrols should rehearse any specific tactical actions or drills for situations the patrol leader anticipates it might encounter.

Patrol members should conduct communications checks with the unit HQ or the tactical operations center (TOC) before every patrol. Patrols should not leave the vicinity of the main body until all communication systems are operating correctly.

When the situation allows, the patrol leader should submit a written patrol manifest to the commander or TOC personnel prior to departing the main body. Whenever the unit sends out a patrol, it should compile a specific list of the patrol members before it departs. The unit TACSOP may establish a specific format for this manifest, but generally it should contain the following information:

- Patrol number or call sign designation.

- Unit designation of unit sending out the patrol.

- Patrol task and purpose (mission).

- Names and ranks of patrol leader and all subordinate leaders.

- Estimated date-time group (DTG) out.

- Estimated DTG in.

- Brief description of the patrol's intended route.

- Complete names, ranks, and units of all members of the patrol, including personnel attachments.

- Number, nomenclature, and serial number of all weapons with the patrol.

- Number, nomenclature, and serial number of all ECM devices, radios, and any other special or sensitive equipment with the patrol.

- Vehicle type and registration number (if appropriate).

The manifest allows the higher HQ to keep track of all the patrols. If the patrol engages the enemy or fails to return on time without reporting, the HQ has information on the size, capabilities, and intentions of the patrol. If the patrol suffers casualties or has a vehicle disabled, HQ can use this manifest to check that all personnel, weapons, and sensitive items were recovered.

Debriefing the Patrol and the Patrol Report

The patrol leader should conduct a hot debrief with the entire patrol as soon as possible after entering the base or rejoining the main body. This debrief allows him to capture low-level information while the Soldiers' memories are fresh and the information relevant. Every member of the patrol should participate. If there was an interpreter or other personnel attachment with the patrol, they should also be debriefed as sources of human intelligence. The patrol leader includes any significant information obtained during the hot debrief in his patrol report to the commander.

Immediately after the hot debrief, the patrol leader should render his patrol report to the commander. Depending on the situation and the commander's requirements, this report may be verbal, written, simple, or elaborate. The patrol commander is responsible for the patrol report. He may be assisted by his assistant patrol leaders and any special personnel attached to the patrol.

The patrol report should include a description of the route taken by the patrol (as opposed to the planned route), including any halt locations. If the unit uses digital command and control systems that automatically track and display the patrol's route, the information is already known. If not, the patrol leader must report it. When global positioning devices are used by the patrol, gathering route information is easier and faster. The actual route used by the patrol is important for planning future patrol routes and actions. Enemy intelligence operations will attempt to identify any patterns set by U.S. and allied patrols, including halt locations, which may result in attacks against locations regularly used by security forces.

Patrol Report (Example)

To: (Commander of unit ordering the patrol)

From: (Rank and name of patrol leader)

Title: Patrol situation report for Patrol # (patrol designation or number per unit TACSOP)

DTG patrol departed and DTG patrol returned: (all dates and times per the unit TACSOP)

Mission: (Restatement of the original mission noting any modification or fragmentary orders received during the patrol's duration.)

Friendly forces: (Only specify any changed details on the patrol's composition.)

Situation: (The patrol leader's evaluation of mission accomplishment with a general description of any significant patrol sightings.)

Specific incidents:

Time of incident:

Location of incident:
- Type/description of incident
- Number and types of casualties
- Location of casualties
- Actions taken by friendly forces
- Details of hostile persons/terrorists/insurgents
- General comments/additional information

Chapter 8

Cultural Engagements

> "In this environment, it is difficult to pass down a coherent IO [information operations] plan from the strategic to the tactical level. Each geographic location is unique and small-unit leaders must assess their AORs [areas of responsibility] and then leverage IO to further the small unit's mission."
>
> —Former Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) commander

Small-unit leaders must weigh and understand key principles in planning and conducting engagements. During an engagement, small-unit commanders and leaders are often the ones most in need of an interpreter, but often they do not know how to use them properly. This chapter examines issues involving interpreters and addresses questions pertinent to the small-unit leader.

Prior to leaving the relative security of the joint security station (JSS), the leader must examine the commander's priority intelligence requirements (PIRs) and determine how he can break them into specific information requirements (SIRs) and specific orders and requests (SORs). Small units conduct patrols for a variety of purposes, which can include providing local security in and around the JSS, gathering census data, gauging the attitudes of the local nationals (LNs) toward U.S. forces, and assessing economic conditions or radical changes in the local environment. SIRs/SORs might include the number of military-aged males, the number of people per household, or the number of locals that are or appear to be employed/working. By engaging the right LNs—usually heads of households or village elders—and asking the right questions, the small-unit leader will be able to provide answers to SIRs/SORs that when combined with other information will answer the commander's PIR. The leader must understand what his unit is looking for and ensure all assigned personnel are actively seeking to answer requirements.

Talking Points

Leaders must also have well-thought-out and well-disseminated talking points. Talking points are usually a short list with summaries of a speaker's agenda for public or private engagements. In the case of small-unit leaders engaging LNs in OEF, these points would provide the message the unit wants to communicate to all people that come in contact with U.S. forces operating in the local area. These talking points may be included in the battalion or company operation order or fragmentary order and will provide Soldiers and leaders with a short list of key points. Examples of talking points could include the following:

- We are here at the request of the Government of Afghanistan/the village elder.

- We will stay here as long as it takes.

- We want to help you build a strong economy.

- We have a medical civic action program scheduled to help the children and women of this area.

- We are committed to partnering with Afghan security forces to provide a safe and secure environment.

Leaders must critically assess the area of operations (AO) and carefully consider how best to influence the local population. Talking points (IO themes and messages) can be too complex for the locals in certain situations. The average Afghan village (outside of the major cities) has about a 95 percent illiteracy rate. The average Afghan thinks in terms of his hierarchy—the family, compound, clan, and village. Their comprehension of geo-political concepts, regional government, and national government is nonexistent.

Leaders must keep IO themes and messages extremely simple. Afghans understand money. Conveying the message that money will come to help their villages when the violence stops will typically gain cooperation from Afghans. Communicate to them that they can help by providing information about insurgents so the insurgents can be stopped, and once it is safe, nongovernmental organizations and provincial reconstruction teams will come to the village to provide assistance. Do not promise amounts of money or specific projects.

Memorizing and using these points at every opportunity is probably not a viable strategy. The introduction and implementation of these points must be done carefully, based on the dynamics of the situation and the leader's assessment of the person or group he is engaging. As an example, an angry mob of villagers might react positively to some of the above talking points and very negatively to others. The Soldier/leader engaging the locals cannot have a discussion based on rote memorization. The unit representative who engages the LNs must be able to speak spontaneously. It cannot sound scripted; Afghans will pick up on it right away and not believe anything said to them.

Most small-unit leaders in Afghanistan will find that a critical part of nearly all operations is working with LNs (police officers, soldiers, government officials, villagers, elders, or others). To be successful in this aspect of their work, leaders must learn how to effectively build relationships and communicate with any Afghans they encounter during operations or day-to-day activities.

Talking and working with Afghans as well as working with and through an interpreter should not make leaders or Soldiers nervous. The language, culture, and working-with-an-interpreter training some leaders will receive in preparation for deployment may seem overwhelming, but putting these concepts into practice will probably prove to be much easier than expected.

Most Afghans who are likely to interact with friendly forces have adapted to working with these soldiers and their interpreters. They are accepting of Americans and other non-Afghans with whom they meet and have conversations. Leaders should not become unnatural in their speaking and mannerisms as they try too hard to avoid making a mistake and/or try to apply all the detailed lessons learned, nor should they be careless and thoughtless in their discussions and meetings with Afghans. The following guidelines related to Afghan culture and working with Afghans will hopefully ease the mind of small-unit leaders preparing to deploy.

Building Relationships

With time, patience, and a willingness to drink steaming-hot chai (tea), leaders can build effective working relationships in Afghanistan with relative ease. Afghans typically do not like to jump immediately into business—especially with someone new to them. Rather, they want to spend time getting to know each other through small talk. Usually they do this while drinking chai and possibly having *naan* (Afghan flat bread), cheese, snacks (dried yellow peas, raisins, pistachios, almonds, candied nuts, and small candies are typical), or something similar. Consequently, Afghans need time to go through this routine—especially in the early stages of developing a relationship. Small-unit leaders should not expect to conduct business quickly after sharing food and drink with the LNs unless this will be a relatively short-term or very clearly a business-only relationship. Because many Afghans have been working with U.S. and other forces for several years, they have become at least somewhat accustomed to skipping the small talk and getting down to business, but only under certain circumstances.

For example, a small-unit leader may be coordinating for a local contractor to build a small structure on a base. This would be a purely business relationship with a very limited scope. In this case, it would be acceptable to get straight to business without small talk or drinking chai together. On the other hand, the contractor could be a somewhat influential local person, in which case it might be valuable for the sake of a good reputation for the U.S. forces in the area to take a little more time, make a bit of small talk, and offer some refreshments. This approach might also compel the contractor to take more care in the work that gets done.

In the case of some Afghans with whom U.S. Soldiers will work, a higher level of trust and mutual respect, as opposed to just an effective, working relationship, may be desired. As with American relationships, time, small talk, and refreshments are not enough to build such a bond. This type of relationship-building requires sharing in-depth stories and demonstrating commitment and character. The fact that U.S. forces are serving with the Afghan military helps to build this type of relationship. Many Afghans, especially those serving in the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police (ANP), Afghan Border Patrol (ABP), government, and similar organizations, understand and truly appreciate the sacrifices that U.S. and allied forces are making by being away from their families and the comforts of home.

Beyond that, however, the small-unit leader and other Soldiers should demonstrate their commitment and character by being present regularly and engaging the Afghans in a respectful manner, listening to what they have to say, and acknowledging (and where possible implementing) their ideas.

Leaders and their teams should show respect and be as courteous as possible while driving through villages. If they are conducting foot patrols in an area, they should greet the locals in Dari or Pashto, smile at them, and not assume an aggressive posture unless there is a specific reason for it. If stopping to engage the locals and/or elders, do not wear dark glasses. This is a sign of disrespect. Ask them about their village. If invited for chai and the situation permits, accept the offer.

Leaders who are building a relationship with an Afghan counterpart, such as an ANA or ANP commander or elected official, can build a stronger, more trusting relationship by lending assistance. Leaders can help them learn their own systems

and how to use them correctly. U.S. Soldiers who come in and just do all that is asked of them by the Afghans will be popular, but they will not earn respect. Leaders should get to know their counterparts and find out how effective they are, what they have already done, and what improvements they are trying to make. If the Afghans have been working hard and making good use of the systems they have but have needs beyond the available resources, helping them complete projects may be appropriate.

Leaders in certain positions, such as on mentor teams, may have access to field ordering officer (FOO) funds that can be used for smaller projects (up to $2,500) on a very short timeline. These funds are typically directed to either the ANP or ANA for projects for items that will improve Afghan living conditions, force protection, and/or operational capabilities. There are many restrictions on how FOO funds can be used, but once leaders become familiar with the process, it can be an excellent tool for earning the trust of and building a relationship with the Afghans.

Regardless of a leader's position, he should learn how to use the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) and humanitarian assistance (HA) to help local villages and their residents. CERP funds can be used to build schools, mosques, clinics, bridges, wells, roads, and numerous infrastructure projects, but they can also be used for smaller projects. HA can consist of food supplies such as flour, cornmeal, beans, rice, chai, and cooking oil as well as clothing and other items. Leaders working with the ANA, the ANP, and the ABP can involve their counterparts in these programs to help them earn trust and respect from local people.

Ethnicity in Afghanistan

There are a variety of ethnic heritages among the people of Afghanistan; these ethnic differences were the basis for many conflicts throughout its history. This situation has improved drastically since the start of OEF, but some bias still exists and can affect the ways in which Afghans work together and how much they trust each other.

The part of the country in which one operates will largely determine which ethnicity is in the majority. The eastern provinces, those that border Pakistan and some that border Iran, are primarily Pashtuns. Some of the provinces to the north have larger numbers of Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Turkmen. There are other areas with larger Hazara populations and still others with Baluchis. These ethnic groups tend to be further divided into tribes among which conflicts can arise. The larger cities tend to be much more diverse and, in general, conflicts based on ethnic backgrounds and tribes are much less common. Once leaders arrive at their assigned location, they will want to determine the ethnic makeup of the region and try to find out how ethnicity affects relationships and activities.

The ethnic divisions do more than cause conflicts; they also tend to dictate the primary language spoken in a given area. Pashtuns tend to all speak Pashto—one of Afghanistan's official languages. Most of the rest of the population speaks Dari—the other official language. Many of the more educated Pashtuns speak both Pashto and Dari. In addition, there are groups in some of the more remote villages who speak neither of the official languages. Dari tends to be the language in which most official government business is conducted. While Dari and Pashto do share

some words, they are very different languages. Pashto is generally considered the more difficult to learn, and learning some of the language is important.

While leaders will not hold long dialogues with Afghans in Dari or Pashto—and they should not try to conduct any formal or important business without an interpreter unless they are extremely proficient in the given language––they do need to demonstrate to the Afghans that they respect them enough to make an effort at learning their language. Leaders should learn a few key and common phrases in whatever is the dominant language in the AO. If that language is not Dari, they should also learn some Dari phrases as they will likely encounter at least some Dari speakers, and these may be people important to their operations.

Islam

Afghanistan is an Islamic country. The official religion is Islam, and the Islamic faith influences many aspects of the government. U.S. Soldiers must demonstrate respect for Islam and must make necessary adjustments to operations to accommodate Muslims—those who are of the Islamic faith. U.S. Soldiers must avoid making any derogatory comments about Islam or Muslims and taking any actions that would threaten or harm religious buildings (mosques) or items such as the Koran or prayer rugs.

Customs

One of the best ways to show respect for Afghans and to build a good relationship with them is to be aware of and adhere to some of their most common customs, including the following:

- Learn and use as much of their language as possible; they do not expect U.S. Soldiers to become fluent, but they will appreciate the effort to speak their language.

- Greet them in their language with a handshake and once the leader gets to know them better with a hug.

- Ask the LNs about themselves and their families, but do not ask about their wives or daughters. Afghans—and many Muslims—are very protective of women; so unless you have gotten to know them fairly well, do not ask directly about wives or daughters.

- During Ramazan—the Afghan name for Ramadan—do not eat or drink in front of the Afghans. During Ramadan, all Muslims must abstain from eating or drinking from sun up to sun down, and Ramadan lasts for a month.

- Drink chai, except during Ramadan. Afghans like to have chai—or tea—anytime they gather. When it is served, drink it graciously.

- Eat the food they offer. Afghans will try to provide snacks—these can be expensive and are often paid for out of their own pocket, so eat graciously.

- If they offer a meal, eat graciously what is served. Typically goat meat is served (though they will also serve beef, lamb, and fish) along with rice, *nann*, fruits, and vegetables. Some Afghans will serve soft drinks.

- Do not interfere with their times of prayer; Muslims are required to go to the mosque (or at least find a quiet place) and pray five times each day. Avoid scheduling meetings that interfere with these times. If you must schedule during these times, allow the Afghans to take a break to pray as needed.

- When they offer prayers at an event such as a meal, honor them by doing as they do.

- Treat them as real people. Afghans have a great sense of humor and enjoy joking around just like Americans. Be careful that anything said—even in a joking manner—will not be culturally, religiously, or otherwise offensive.

- Hold their hand. When Afghan men develop true respect and trust in someone, they will hold hands when they walk and talk. If an Afghan does this to an American Soldier, he is essentially saying, "You are my brother." It is the ultimate show of friendship and must be reciprocated.

- Ensure that your subordinates follow these customs and do not do anything that would be insulting or inappropriate to the Afghans.

Remember that most Afghans with whom small-unit leaders will engage will be somewhat tolerant based on previous experiences with U.S. Soldiers. Leaders should pay extra attention when entering and working in an area that has had limited prior U.S./allied presence.

The leader's exact duty position and the nature of his unit's mission will largely dictate the frequency with which he will work directly with Afghans. Anyone serving as a mentor can expect to work, meet, and talk with Afghans on an almost daily basis. Leaders who are part of a combat-focused unit may work, meet, and talk with Afghans as little as once or twice a week and as often as daily. A small number of Soldiers and leaders may not work with Afghans on any sort of regular basis, but even these individuals will have encounters with LNs who work on allied bases in a variety of roles.

Interpreters

Virtually all leaders in Afghanistan, and small unit leaders probably more so than others, will regularly interact with Afghans and, therefore, use an interpreter. There are, of course, Afghans besides those who serve as interpreters who speak English, but U.S. Soldiers will not encounter them very often in their day-to-day operations.

U.S. Soldiers and leaders will encounter two common types of interpreters: those employed directly by the U.S. military through a contractor and those employed by someone else. Those employed by someone else can be extremely helpful in many respects, but they have not received training or instruction that prepares them to work for the military. They also have not had an official background check or been

cleared to wear a military uniform, ride in military vehicles, or be around classified materials.

Those employed by the U.S. military should have had a fairly good background and security check. Even so, leaders should not assume these interpreters are 100 percent loyal and trustworthy. U.S. military interpreters are authorized to wear a U.S. uniform, ride in U.S. patrols, and have access to U.S. bases, though the level of access varies based on several factors. Typically these interpreters will not have a security clearance, but they are allowed to access most locations and/or materials that a U.S. Soldier without a security clearance can access.

While interpreters are employed for their language skills, they bring much more to the table than their ability to translate dialogues and text. They bring a cultural understanding that can significantly help a small-unit leader be more effective in dealing with other Afghans. They can provide advice on how to approach a key leader engagement; they can explain how the leader should greet the Afghans, where to sit, how to sit (sometimes important), and things to avoid that might be considered offensive or inappropriate. They sometimes are able to adjust their guidance for different people based on their experience and prior knowledge of different Afghans.

Leaders may be especially fortunate if they have an interpreter who grew up in the leader's AO and, therefore, is familiar with the geography, people, businesses, and politics of that area. Such an interpreter brings invaluable knowledge and insights that can benefit the small-unit leader both in his engagements with Afghans as well as with any number of different operations.

Leaders may be similarly fortunate to have an interpreter who has been in his current position for an extended period of time and served as an interpreter for the leader's predecessors. In these cases, the interpreter almost certainly is familiar with the personalities of the Afghans with whom the leader is likely to engage on a regular basis. He will also know the AO and many of the standing operating procedures in effect. He will also know about prior operations and engagements that could affect current and future operations and have a network of local people who can assist with a variety of projects and activities. Interpreters also bring a personality and other unofficial skills to their positions.

Using interpreters is not overly difficult most of the time, though there are a number of factors that will affect the difficulty. The first and probably biggest factor is how well an interpreter speaks the necessary languages of English and Dari or Pashto. It can be helpful if an interpreter also speaks Urdu as this is a common language for Pakistanis, and in some parts of Afghanistan, there are many Pakistani contractors, workers, and businessmen.

Some leaders may receive training that treats an interpreter as a tool rather than as a member of the team. This type of training provides guidelines for diminishing the presence of the interpreter so that the leader's presence is stronger. In many respects this makes sense because the leader needs his Afghan counterpart to know he is in charge. However, in many cases, the interpreter is better known by and has more respect from the Afghan than does the U.S. leader, and the interpreter is an educated Afghan. Even the young interpreters are respected because of their level of education and the risk inherent in being an interpreter for the U.S. To not

acknowledge the status of these interpreters would be insulting to them and to other Afghans.

So, while some training suggests placing the interpreter slightly behind and to one side of the leader, in many if not most cases, it is best to have the interpreter by the leader's side. Similarly, some training recommends that the interpreter should translate as literally as possible and even mimic the tone and inflections of the leader; it suggests that the interpreter not be actively engaged in the purpose of the dialogue but only translate the words. However, if the interpreter is experienced and has been working with these particular Afghans over a longer period of time, there is a good chance he can resolve many things more easily than the U.S. leader using exact translations. The key is for the leader to find out the capabilities of his interpreter and the level of respect he enjoys from the Afghans.

Determining these capabilities and the level of trust that can be given to the interpreter is one of the biggest challenges for the leader, The majority of military interpreters have been vetted, but the process is not nearly as in-depth as U.S. security clearance checks. There is no evidence to suggest that there are many interpreters who are anti-government sympathizers or are working with anti-government forces, but it is possible that interpreters can be threatened into compromising security or operations either directly or through threats to their families. Leaders using interpreters should consider this and periodically check on how well messages are being conveyed.

Many interpreters will demonstrate through their actions, commitment, and loyalty to a team that they are very trustworthy. There are no hard and fast rules for determining an interpreter's trustworthiness, just as there are no hard and fast rules for determining the level of commitment of other members of one's team. As with many military situations, leaders may have to take calculated risks as to how much trust to put in their interpreters. The one place this is likely to come into play is when planning missions. If an interpreter is trusted completely, he will likely assist with planning because of his familiarity with the area and people. Interpreters who have not earned as much trust may not be given as much information or as soon and probably will not be included in mission planning.

There are, of course, other concerns that can arise with interpreters. These will have to be addressed by the leader through the process outlined by his higher headquarters and/or the contractor. Some interpreters may have or develop bad habits or tendencies that detract from their effectiveness or even endanger the team including poor hygiene, gambling, a drug problem, or fraternizing with locals. It is also possible an interpreter will become emotionally involved in some issue related to the team, the mission, an operation, and/or Afghans with whom the team is working. The leader will need to determine how detrimental the situation is to the team and how best to deal with it.

Small-unit leaders do not typically have the luxury of choosing an interpreter who will be best for the team and mission; however, if they have the opportunity to select an interpreter, his experience and the trust of previous leaders might be the highest priorities in making a selection.

All the information on interpreters up to this point has been on those who are Afghan citizens. There are also interpreters who are U.S. citizens. These interpreters are often given security clearances because the military can conduct

complete background checks. Consequently, they can generally be trusted to a much greater degree, at least from the standpoint of sharing classified materials. The team leader should still determine how much to trust them on an operational level. While these interpreters typically speak excellent English and have a security clearance, they often lack local knowledge and/or the networks that Afghan interpreters typically have. They are also not very common at the small-unit level.

Some small-unit leaders will be in situations that require them to communicate with Afghans by phone on a regular basis, which can be accomplished fairly easily using most interpreters. Typically, in these cases, the Afghans and interpreters have each other's phone numbers. If the Afghan initiates the dialogue, he or she will call the interpreter with his need or situation. The interpreter will then relay the information to the U.S. leader, either while still on the phone if in close proximity or after taking the call. The interpreter may need to call the U.S. leader to relay the message. The interpreter will then call the Afghan back repeating the process as necessary. The situation is reversed when the U.S. leader needs to initiate contact for some reason.

Keep in mind the following when using an interpreter and dealing with interpreters on your team:

- Dialogue should be of reasonable length and complexity to allow the interpreter to accurately translate; leaders should avoid terminology, acronyms, and phrases that the interpreter is unlikely to know.

- Leaders should pay attention to nonverbal cues about the Afghans with whom they are engaged, but they also should account for cultural differences and not assume that gestures, tone, and inflections mean the same in Afghanistan as in America.

- Interpreters should sit with the leader at meals as a guest; in most cases, this will happen automatically.

- The Afghan counterpart might speak English, so leaders should not say anything in English that they would not want their counterpart to hear.

- Interpreters should carry notebooks and pens to take notes during longer dialogues and/or at meetings with various speakers.

- Interpreters should ask questions of the U.S. leader and the Afghan counterparts when clarification is needed on some part of a discussion.

- Interpreters live on the U.S. military base with or near their teams. If there are multiple interpreters working with teams on that base, they will usually live together.

- Interpreters may prefer that local people not know they work for the U.S. military; they may try to hide their appearance when with the team and then wear civilian clothes when going outside the base for any reason.

- Females rarely serve as interpreters because of the cultural issues regarding women in Afghanistan. If a small unit receives a female interpreter, discuss with her and other experienced leaders some of the things that must be considered during operations.

- The leaders should know and understand the interpreter contract and the expectations of all parties involved, especially the leader's responsibility regarding submitting hours so the interpreter is paid.

- Interpreters should understand the expectations and adheres to these whether they are related to appearance, grooming, conduct, or performance.

- Conversations may take about twice as long as normal due to translating.

- Leaders may have to educate an interpreter on basic organizational or tactical terminology or military rank structure.

- Leaders should speak directly to the Afghan, not to the interpreter. However, it is common for the Afghans to speak directly to the interpreter.

- As leaders become comfortable using an interpreter, they may occasionally say "ask him…" or "tell him…"; in training this is often considered to be very wrong. Leaders should not worry about these things. If the conversation is smooth and progressing, no one is likely noticing these phrases, and starting to worry about them will disrupt the flow of dialogue.

- Leaders should be aware of their interpreters' needs. Interpreters should be given time to rest periodically. They may be poorly adjusted to continuous military operations and could become physically exhausted from wearing body armor and carrying equipment. More importantly, continuous interpreting is mentally exhausting.

- Military contracts allow for time off each month, and often interpreters will want to take time off during Afghan holidays. They should be given time off to visit their families or take some other trip when the operational situation allows.

Staying on Track

All information should be put into the context of each leader's mission and goal. Keep in mind that missions and goals can be easily sidetracked while working with Afghans. This is compounded by the use of interpreters. A leader may go into a meeting with a specific purpose in mind only to have the Afghan head in a different direction. Because of his unfamiliarity with using an interpreter and his inability to use his own words directly, the leader may never return to the original purpose. Because of this, the meeting may end without ever completing the original business.

If the business is not critically time sensitive and the leader and Afghan will be meeting regularly, the leader can let this happen on occasion without too much worry. In other circumstances (time sensitive, short notice, one-time meeting), the leader may need to carefully prepare with his interpreter so the interpreter knows to strive toward keeping the meeting on track and working toward the leader's stated purpose.

Similarly to keeping an Afghan counterpart on track, the U.S. leader needs to stay in his lane. Some Afghans will try to get their U.S. counterpart to make promises or deal with issues that are outside their purview. The U.S. leader needs to exercise caution in these situations.

Conclusion

Operations in Afghanistan almost always involve working with LNs. This reality is further complicated by the very diverse ethnic enclaves that characterize this theater. Each unit, Soldier, and leader must carefully weigh a myriad of tasks and considerations when preparing to conduct small-unit operations in theater. Small-unit leaders must carefully weigh, understand, and plan how to conduct successful engagements. Key principles in planning and conducting engagements include the relationship between the patrol and the commander's PIR, talking points, interpreters, and units and leaders staying in the appropriate lane. The small-unit's engagements and actions must provide uniform and consistnt messages.

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