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**AUSTRALIAN ARMY**

**MANUAL OF LAND WARFARE**

**PART TWO**  
**INFANTRY TRAINING**

**VOLUME 1 PAMPHLET No 2**  
**THE RIFLE PLATOON**

**1986**

**AUSTRALIAN ARMY**  
**MANUAL OF LAND WARFARE**

**PART TWO**  
**INFANTRY TRAINING**

**VOLUME 1**  
**INFANTRY IN OPERATIONS**

**PAMPHLET NO 2**  
**THE RIFLE PLATOON**  
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**1986**

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Headquarters Training Command  
4 July 1986

Authorised for issue.



(K. H. KIRKLAND)  
Major General  
General Officer Commanding

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The Rifle Platoon, 1986.**

Doctrine Production, Force Development Group, Combined Arms Training and Development Centre is responsible for the management and sponsorship of this pamphlet. The doctrine contained herein was approved on 4 July 1986.

**AMENDMENT CERTIFICATE**

1. Proposals for amendments or additions to the text of this pamphlet should be made through normal channels to the sponsor. To facilitate this, there are amendment proposal forms at the back of this publication.
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<i>Amendment List</i>		<i>Amended By (Printed Name and Initials)</i>	<i>Date of Amending</i>
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1.	30/11/99	Doctrine Production	18/07/00
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## PREFACE

### Aim

1. The aim of this pamphlet is to provide the doctrine for the employment and training of the rifle platoons of a standard infantry battalion.

### Level

2. This pamphlet is written for company, platoon and section commanders, staff officers, officers and non-commissioned officers of the other Arms and Services, and students at Army schools who require an understanding of basic infantry doctrine.

### Scope

3. The pamphlet reflects the operation of the platoons with a standard infantry battalion deployed to conduct conventional operations. It expands upon the doctrine contained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Battalion* but is specifically related to the employment of the infantry rifle platoon.

### Gender

4. Words importing gender refer to both male and female, unless specifically stated otherwise.

### Associated Publications

5. The pamphlet takes into account the doctrine contained in other *Australian Army Manual of Land Warfare* pamphlets and *Joint Service Publications*. Repetition has been avoided as far as possible. Where repetition occurs, the matter has been included in the interests of clarity and completeness. Much of the data and doctrine referred to in this pamphlet has been extracted from the publications and summarised where necessary and included in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

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**ABBREVIATIONS**

The following abbreviations are used in this publication. Their sources are as shown.

**JSP (AS) 101**

AFV	Armoured Fighting Vehicle
AO	Area of Operations
APC	Armoured Personnel Carrier
BC	Battery Commander
CAIRS	Close Air Support
CES	Complete Equipment Schedule
CP	Command Post
CZ	Combat Zone
DF	Defensive Fire
ECM	Electronic Counter-measures
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EW	Electronic Warfare
FAC	Forward Air Controller
FO	Forward Observer
FPF	Final Protective Fire
FUP	Forming Up Place
HE	High Explosive
HF	High Frequency
LD	Line of Departure
LO	Liaison Officer
MFC	Mortar Fire Controller
MG	Machine Gun
NBC	Nuclear, Biological and Chemical
OGp	Orders Group
OP	Observation Post
Orbat	Order of Battle
PD	Point Detonating (Fuse)
RAP	Regimental Aid Post

RCL	Recoilless Rifle
Rgp	Reconnaissance Group
RV	Rendezvous
SHELREP	Shelling Report
SOI	Signals Operating Instructions
SOP	Standing Operating Instructions
TCV	Troop Carrying Vehicle
UHF	Ultra High Frequency
VHF	Very High Frequency
WP	White Phosphorus

### Common Military Usage

APDS	Armour Piercing - Discarding Sabot
BE	Base Ejection
CAP	Company Aid Post
CASEVAC	Casualty Evacuation
CRP	Combat Ration Pack
CRW	Counter Revolutionary Warfare
CS	Riot Control/Training Agent
DUSTOFF	Forward Aeromedical Evacuation
ENGREP	Engineering Report
FAD	First Aid Dressing
GPMG	General Purpose Machine Gun
GSMG	General Support Machine Gun
HEAT	High Explosive Anti-tank
HEDP	High Explosive Dual Purpose
HEP-T	High Explosive Plastic with Tracer
HESH	High Explosive Squash Head
HMG	Heavy Machine Gun
IET	Initial Employment Training
lkd	Linked
LP	Listening Post
MA	Muzzle Action

MAINTDEM	Maintenance Demand
MORTREP	Mortaring Bombing Report
MRAAW	Medium Range Anti-armour Weapon
OPDEM	Operational Demand
OT	Line Observer to Target
PAL	Patrol Ambush Light
PEWS	Platoon Early Warning System
PLC	Projected Line Charge
PRIMAINTDEM	Priority Maintenance Demand
RHU	Reinforcement Holding Unit
RMO	Regimental Medical Officer
RSO	Regimental Signals Officer
SFMG	Sustained Fire Machine Gun
SLR	Self Loading Rifle
SRAAW	Short Range Anti-armour Weapons
TGP	Target Grid Procedure
TOET	Tests of Elementary Training
TOPP	Threat Oriented Protective Posture

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## **PART ONE. COMBAT POWER**

### **CHAPTER 1. ORGANISATION**

‘...the four best commands in the Service - a platoon, a battalion, a division and an army. A platoon because it is your first command, because you are young and because, if you are any good, you know the men in it better than their mothers do and love them as much.’

*- Field Marshal Sir William Slim*

#### **SECTION 1-1. GENERAL**

‘Combat Power - The total means of destructive and/or disruptive force which a military unit/formation can apply against the opponent at a given time.’

*JSP (AS) 101 (A)*

#### **Introduction**

101. Part One of this pamphlet deals with the main elements which make up combat power.

102. The other three parts of this pamphlet cover the doctrine, techniques and training which must be mastered by the platoon commander, NCOs and soldiers. The other parts are:

- a. [Part Two - Battlecraft](#),
- b. [Part Three - Tactics](#), and
- c. [Part Four - Training](#).

#### **The Operational Environment**

103. **Physical Environment.** The infantryman must be trained and prepared to fight in all environments found on the Australian mainland, in its territories and, if required, in an overseas theatre. Training in peacetime covers both open and close terrain. From these two broad categories, individual and collective skills are learned, which are adaptable to other areas.

104. **Organisations.** Units and formations will, to a large extent, determine the emphasis on the training which a platoon will be required to do. This pamphlet will provide guidance for training, but emphasis will change depending on the organisation and role of the unit or formation.



105. **The Enemy.** The Musorians are a hypothetical enemy designed to create a realistic training scenario. They provide a model for setting training requirements. The following, less familiar aspects of the enemy must always be considered in training:

- a. *Electronic Warfare (EW).* EW is the military use of the electromagnetic spectrum to influence operations. It must be assumed that enemy EW measures will be employed so our training must include EW.
- b. *Surveillance.* There has been an increased capability in ground surveillance equipment and techniques. Image intensification and thermal imagery equipment (both active and passive), radars, and seismic devices are becoming more commonplace. It must be assumed that the enemy will employ these equipments.
- c. *Air Superiority.* The Musorians have a full range of proven weapons, including aircraft. The air threat must be considered in any phase of training and/or operations.

106. **Night Operations.** Night operations give greater security from enemy air and surveillance threats. They give sonic tactical advantages and opportunities for surprise. Night operations are difficult and night training is necessary.

107. **Patrolling.** Patrolling is an essential element of all operations and will be a normal activity at the section, platoon and company levels. Much of the doctrine and techniques described in this pamphlet concern patrolling. Detailed information on patrolling is found in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.3, Patrolling and Tracking.*

## SECTION 1-2. ORGANISATION AND ROLE

### Role

108. The role of the infantry platoon is to seek out and close with the enemy, to kill or capture him, to seize and hold ground and repel attack, by day and night, in any weather or terrain.

### Tasks

109. The platoon will usually operate as part of a rifle company in a battalion setting, as it is dependent on its parent sub-unit and unit for combat and administrative support. The platoon may be employed on independent tasks for limited periods.

110. The platoon can undertake the following tasks:
- a. kill or capture the enemy;
  - b. seize and hold ground for limited periods;
  - c. impose delay on the enemy by firepower and movement;
  - d. deny information to the enemy by concealment and patrolling;
  - e. gain topographical and enemy information by observation and
  - f. patrolling;
  - g. protect elements of the battalion or supporting arms and services;
  - h. provide escorts, or carry out civilian/refugee control duties; and
  - i. provide aid to the civil power.

### **SECTION 1-3. THE STANDARD INFANTRY BATTALION**

#### **The Battalion**

111. The outline organisation of the standard infantry battalion is shown in [Annex A](#) to this chapter. The organisation of the standard infantry battalion and the way in which it operates are described in detail in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Battalion*.

#### **The Rifle Company**

112. The rifle company consists of a headquarters, three rifle platoons and a support section. The detailed organisation of the rifle company is shown in [Annex B](#) to this chapter.

113. The tasks that a rifle company is capable of undertaking and the responsibilities of key personnel in company headquarters, are detailed in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Battalion*. Depending on the task, the rifle company usually needs the assistance of the specialists from support and administrative companies such as:

- a. a mortar fire controller (MFC),
- b. a medical assistant,
- c. stretcher bearers,
- d. radio operators,
- e. cooks,
- f. drivers, and
- g. RAEME technicians.

114. The rifle company also relies on combat support from the battalion mortar, assault pioneer, anti-armour and machine gun (MG) platoons in addition to any other combat support which may be available, such as armour and artillery.

## SECTION 1-4. THE RIFLE PLATOON

### Organisation of the Rifle Platoon

115. The rifle platoon consists of a headquarters and three sections. The detailed organisation is shown in [Annex B](#) to this chapter.

116. Rifle platoons are numbered consecutively throughout the battalion, eg, the rifle platoons of A company are 1, 2, and 3; those of B Company are 4, 5 and 6; and so on.

### Organisation of the Rifle Section

117. The rifle section comprises one corporal, one lance corporal and seven private soldiers. For ease of control the section is divided into predetermined groups, making the section commander's task much easier during training and on operations. The section may be divided into:

- a. the scout group (two men),
- b. MG group (three men including the section ZIC), and
- c. the rifle group (three men).

The section commander usually moves with the rifle group. One man in any group which is not commanded by an NCO acts as the leader.

118. In war, the section has to function as a team in which each place is filled by the best available man. The aim of training is to produce a section team of experts, with adequate reserves for each group.

### Strength

119. The number of soldiers in a platoon may be less than the number of men authorised in the establishment. The strength will vary according to the casualty rate and the flow of reinforcements.

120. If there have been heavy casualties it may be necessary to amalgamate or reorganise some platoons and sections. Section integrity should be maintained and individuals not moved to other sections, especially if the low strength is a temporary circumstance. If amalgamation is necessary, it is better to keep the understrength section as a group of a larger organisation than split up the individuals. Experience has indicated that sections cannot operate effectively below a

strength of one NCO and four men. Below this strength, the section's ability to keep operating on sustained operations falls off. With reduced numbers sentry rosters, patrolling tasks, work party duties and other day to day requirements will have to be modified and carefully controlled.

121. A platoon of less than eighteen men may require reorganising into a fighting patrol configuration of two section groups and a command group, but retaining section integrity wherever possible.

122. The acceptable strength of platoons is a matter for the CO to decide. He may order amalgamation or reorganisation at any time.

### **Responsibilities and Duties - Platoon Headquarters**

123. **Platoon Commander.** The platoon commander is responsible to his OC for the training, operation, discipline, administration and welfare of his platoon. He must understand his company commander's aims and intentions, and be prepared to implement them even in the absence of given orders. It is his duty to ensure that:

- a. the security of his platoon is maintained;
- b. all tasks allotted to his platoon are properly carried out;
- c. he has a thorough knowledge of, and can implement, platoon training techniques, tactics and administration;
- d. he has a thorough knowledge of platoon battle procedure;
- e. his platoon is well trained, ensuring that all ranks are trained to perform the role of their next superior;
- f. a high standard of discipline and morale is maintained;
- g. he knows all of his men well, particularly their individual strengths and weaknesses, and has an understanding of their personal problems;
- h. he and his men keep physically fit;
- i. a high standard of both collective and personal hygiene is maintained;
- j. he inspects his men regularly to see that they are properly clothed and equipped, their weapons and equipment are kept clean and in good working order;
- k. he checks his men regularly to ensure that they are not suffering from injuries (eg blisters, chafing); and
- l. a proper balance is maintained between work and rest periods.

124. **Platoon Sergeant.** The platoon sergeant is the platoon 2IC and must be conversant with all the duties of the platoon commander. In the absence of the platoon commander he will command the platoon. He is also responsible to the platoon commander for the day to day administration of the platoon. His duties include:

- a. understudying the platoon commander;
- b. maintaining the platoon roll book and duty rosters;
- c. assisting the platoon commander in maintaining a high standard of discipline and morale within the platoon;
- d. supervising the training done by section commanders; and
- e. the collection and distribution to sections of ammunition, rations, water and other stores and supplies.

125. **Rifleman (Orderly/Runner).** The orderly/runner is to:

- a. look after the platoon commander's personal needs in the field, such as packing his gear, cleaning his clothes and equipment and preparing his meals;
- b. carry written or verbal messages;
- c. act as a relief radio operator; and
- d. carry out the duties of a rifleman.

126. The rifleman selected to perform the duties of the orderly/runner should ideally be the next soldier in line for promotion. The soldier will gain experience that he would not gain as a rifleman. He will gain an insight into platoon operations that will be invaluable to him when he is promoted. The soldier should be articulate and highly proficient in all infantry skills as he may be required to perform a variety of duties not listed above, including:

- a. preparation of improvised models for platoon orders,
- b. acting as a platoon guide, or
- c. providing protection for the platoon commander during reconnaissance.

127. **Radio Operator.** The radio operator is a signals trained rifleman, whose duties are to:

- a. maintain communications with other stations on the company net,
- b. transmit and receive messages,

- c. encode and decode messages,
- d. maintain the platoon radio set in operational order at all times, and
- e. carry out the duties of a rifleman.

### **Responsibilities and Duties - Rifle Section**

128. All members of the rifle section must be proficient in all the duties and responsibilities of the rifleman. These are:

- a. being proficient at:
  - (1) handling all platoon weapons,
  - (2) fieldcraft,
  - (3) basic navigation,
  - (4) marksmanship,
  - (5) tracking, and
  - (6) first aid;
- b. keeping his weapon and ammunition clean and in operational order;
- c. ensuring that his clothing and equipment are clean and in good repair; and
- d. keeping physically fit and healthy.

129. Additional duties for individual members of the section are detailed in paragraphs 130 to 135.

130. **Section Commander.** The section commander's responsibilities to his section are similar to those the platoon commander has to his platoon. He must understand his platoon commander's aims and intentions and be prepared to implement them even in the absence of given orders. It is his duty to ensure that:

- a. the security of his section is maintained;
- b. all tasks allotted to his section are carried out efficiently;
- c. he has a thorough knowledge of section battle procedure and infantry skills;
- d. his section is well trained;
- e. the highest standard of discipline is maintained within his section;
- f. he knows the strength and weaknesses of all of his men, and he has an understanding of their personal problems;

- g. his section maintains its weapons, ammunition, clothing and equipment in good order;
- h. his men observe all orders on health; and
- i. the section duty roster is properly kept and carried out.

131. **Section 2IC.** The section 2IC understudies the section commander and usually commands the MG group. In the absence of the section commander he will command the section. His duties include:

- a. the collection and distribution of ammunition, rations, water, stores and other supplies;
- b. assisting the section commander in maintaining a high standard of discipline within the section; and
- c. controlling the fire and movement of the MG team.

132. **No 1 on Section MG.** The No 1 on the MG is to:

- a. ensure that the section MG is maintained in operational order,
- b. carry the MG and ammunition, and
- c. fire the MG as ordered.

133. **No 2 on Section MG.** The No 2 on the MG is to:

- a. assist the No 1 by observing and correcting fire,
- b. assist the No 1 in target location,
- c. carry additional ammunition for the MG and feed the ammunition to the gun (if required),
- d. assist the No 1 to maintain the gun, and
- e. be prepared to take over the MG if the No 1 becomes a casualty.

134. **Grenadier/Rifleman.** The grenadier/rifleman has the additional responsibilities for:

- a. ensuring that the grenade launcher is kept in operational order,
- b. carrying the grenade launcher and ammunitions and
- c. firing the grenade launcher as ordered.

135. **Scouts.** The scouts lead the section during patrolling operations and during the advance. They are primarily responsible for providing early warning to the section. Scouts should be alternated regularly.

136. **Initiative.** Each member of the platoon must understand his superiors aims and intentions and be prepared to implement them even in the absence of given orders. Historical examples illustrating the use of initiative are contained in [Annex C](#).

## SECTION 1-5. WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

### General

137. Each section has an MG as well as rifles and a grenade launcher. In addition, depending on the type of operation and the task, members of the section may be armed with the following weapons:

- a. short range anti-armour weapons (SRAAW), or
- b. grenades and pyrotechnics

138. With these weapons the platoon can bring formidable fire to bear.

139. The characteristics of the current infantry weapons, doctrine covering training with the weapons and the tactical employment of the weapons are contained in pamphlets in the following MLW 2, Inf volumes:

- a. *Volume 4, Infantry Small Arms.*
- b. *Volume 6, Anti-armour Weapons.*
- c. *Volume 7, Grenades and Pyrotechnics.*
- d. *Volumes 4 and 7, Grenade Launcher.*

140. The platoon may also be equipped with a range of surveillance equipment and other infantry specialist equipment. The characteristics of the current surveillance devices, doctrine and the tactical employment of the equipment are described in MLW Two, Inf Trg Volume 9, Infantry Equipment range of pamphlets.

### Load Carrying Capabilities of Soldiers

141. Commanders must limit the load to be carried by soldiers to the minimum required for the operation or task. There is a tendency for commanders and individuals to add extra equipment and ammunition as a precautionary measure. The advantages of comfort and increased self-sufficiency must be weighed up against the disadvantage of reduced efficiency; as the load increases the efficiency of the soldier decreases.



142. **Annex D** to this chapter tabulates the weight of weapons, equipments and items available for use by the infantry soldier. A soldier should be able to carry about 1/3 of his body weight and still remain effective for extended operational periods.

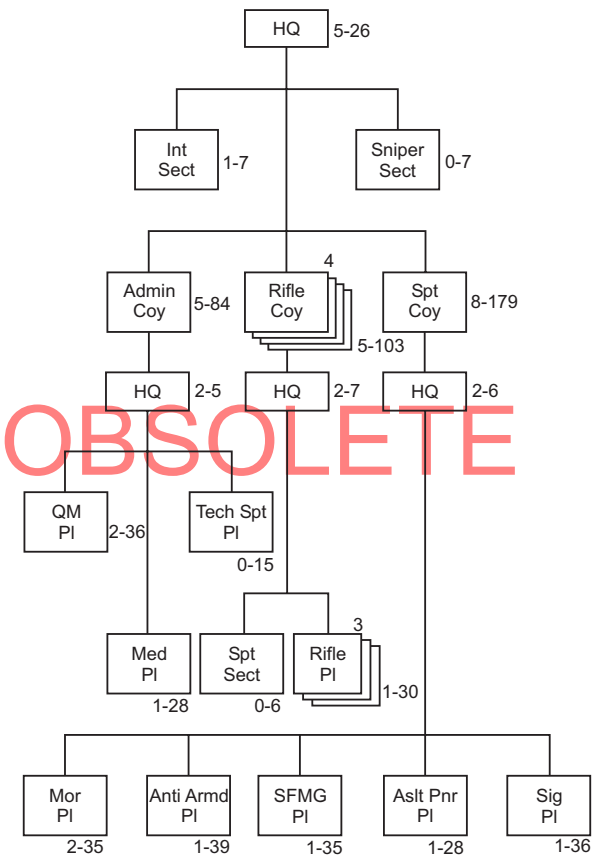
143. **Field Orders of Dress.** Orders of dress not only list the items carried by a soldier, but imply the duration of a task. Platoon commanders should be aware of this relationship and select appropriate orders of dress. Orders of dress are given in Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs), and can be modified to suit the requirement.

144. **Porterage.** Platoons may be required to carry out porterage tasks, such as moving ammunition, explosives, rations and defence stores. Porterage is normally an administrative requirement and much greater loads will be carried than for normal patrolling.

- Annexes:**
- A. Organisation of The Standard Infantry Battalion
  - B. Detailed Organisation of the Rifle Company
  - C. The Use of Initiative - Historical Examples -  
World War 1
  - D. Equipment Weight Table

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**ORGANISATION OF THE STANDARD INFANTRY BATTALION**



Summary

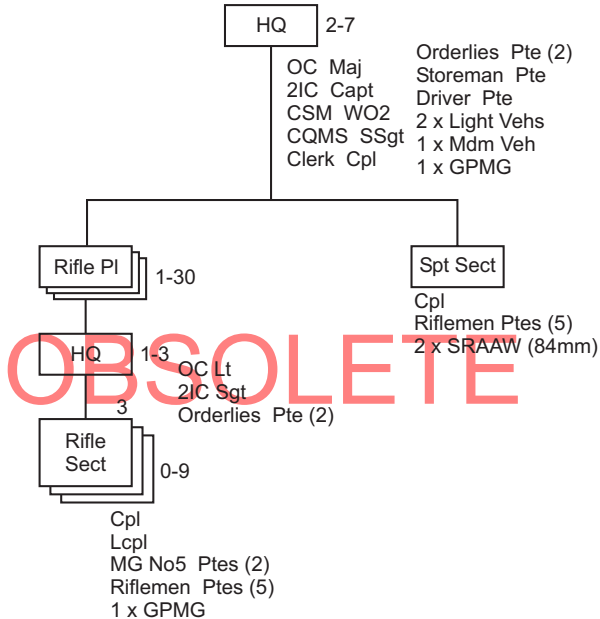
Offr	OR	Total	Lt Veh	Mdm Veh	Lt Tir	Mdm Tir	LMG	GPMG	SFMG	SRAAW 84mm	SRAAW 106mm	81mm Mor
39	717	756	51	18	67	3	16	71	6	8	8	6
							→	→	→	→	→	→

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**ANNEX B TO  
CHAPTER 1**

**DETAILED ORGANISATION OF THE RIFLE COMPANY**

DETAILED ORGANISATION OF THE RIFLE COMPANY



**Summary**

Offrs	ORs	Total	Light Veh	Mdm Veh	GP MG	SRAAW 84mm
5	103	108	2	1	10	2

**OBSOLETE**

**THE USE OF INITIATIVE****HISTORICAL EXAMPLES - WORLD WAR I****Background**

1. The Second Somme Offensive commenced on the morning of 8 August 1918. The British III Corps advanced north of the River Somme, while the Australian Corps, 2nd and 3rd Divisions leading, advanced south of the river.

2. The first stage was carried out entirely in dense fog. Vision was further impaired by the inclusion of white smoke-shell in the barrage. The German resistance was minimal. The Australian Corps had in the previous months gained "a mastery over the enemy" to such an extent that the Germans often surrendered at the first hint of attack.

3. The 2nd and 3rd Divisions secured their objective early in the morning and commenced digging in. The 4th and 5th Divisions took up the advance.

4. On the left flank, the British III Corps could not keep up with the Australian advance. The German gunners, firing from the dense woods and from Chipilly Peninsula, which jutted out from the northern side in a hairpin loop in the river, fired with impunity into the flank of the 4th Division streaming past on the exposed slopes south of the River Somme.

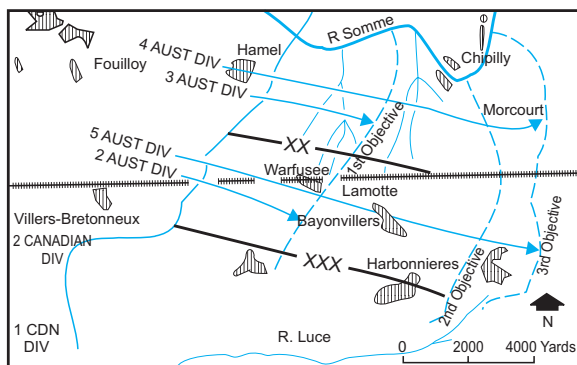


Figure 1-1. Concept of the Second Somme Offensive

## Narrative One

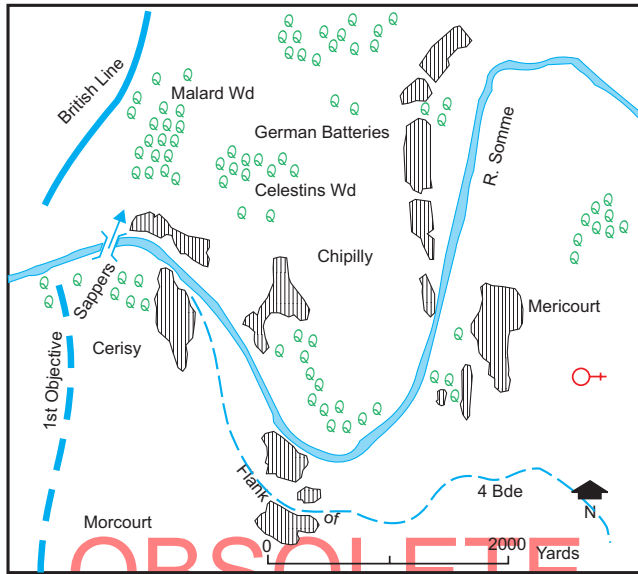


Figure 1-2. Actions of 12th Australian Field Coy Sappers

5. When the British 3rd Corps failed to make progress opposite Chipilly on the left flank, two sappers of the 12th Australian Field Coy working on repairing a bridge, observed from their point of vantage in rear of the 4th Australian Division, that the English flank company was held up by a nest of machine gunners on a forward ridge. They decided, on their own accord, to end the impasse themselves by rushing the enemy position from the flank. They ran across an open field several hundred yards wide and attacked the German machine gunners from the rear. The Germans, apparently thinking they were part of a large force, hoisted a white flag. The British then came forward and carried on to the next spur.

Narrative Two

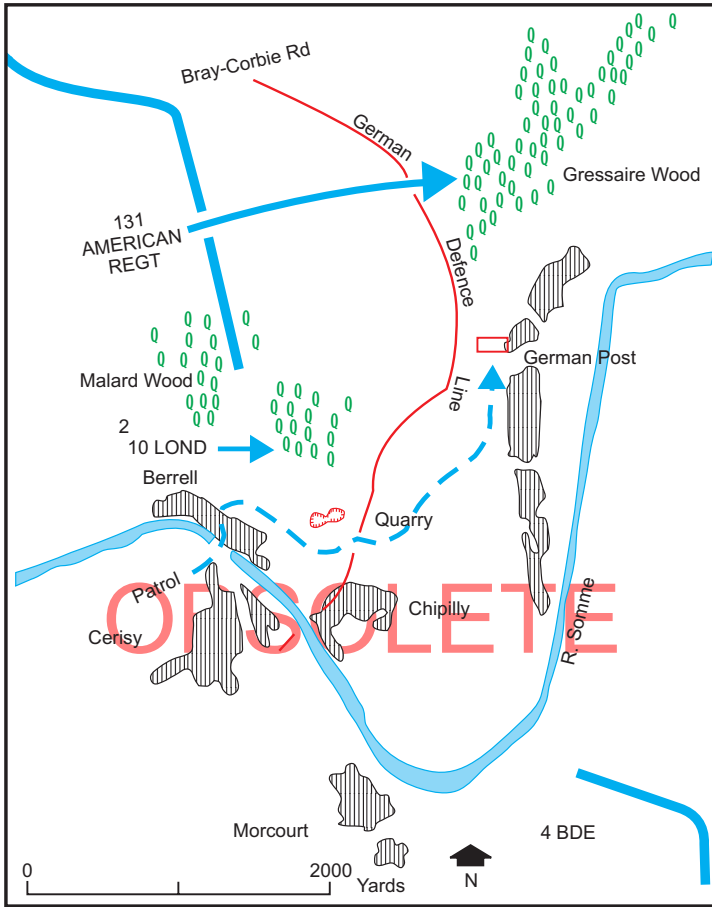


Figure 1-3. Route of the Australian Patrol

6. An Australian patrol of six men, led by two NCO's that had previously been through the village of Chipilly, was sent across the river by their commanding officer to assist the British forward brigade. There they spoke to the company commander of a British battalion whose men were sheltering under cover obviously reluctant to advance towards their objective, Chipilly, which was on the left of the 4th Australian Brigade. Heavy enfilading fire from a position south of the village was hampering the Australian advance on that sector. To the



suggestion of the two NCO's to follow the patrol who would lead the way, the British company commander turned a deaf ear. The Australians then said they 'would go it alone'. The British company commander unsuccessfully endeavoured to dissuade them. Spreading themselves out with intervals of twelve yards between each man, they charged forward - the enemy opened fire but the wide front (about sixty yards) enabled the patrol to reach the village unhurt. They surrounded and captured a German post and took thirty prisoners. The British then came up and these prisoners were handed over to them. Then, showing the British how to attack defended localities, the diggers led the British in a succession of rushes and captured post after post of Germans and finally captured the spur from which the Germans were hampering the 4th Brigade's advance. A total of over 200 prisoners were taken in this action, they then returned to their own lines.

### Commentary

7. Both narratives illustrate what can be achieved when soldiers use their initiative. In both cases the soldiers were aware of their superiors' intentions. Realising that the German positions were interfering with the advancing formations, thus delaying the offensive, they took action to rectify the situation.

8. **Narrative One.** Time was of the essence. The sappers, realising this, did not seek direction from their superiors. Instead they assessed the situation, formulated a course of action, and carried it out aggressively. These speedy actions confused the Germans into surrender.

9. **Narrative Two.** The Australian patrol was undaunted by the British company commander's lack of enthusiasm for their plan. They were aware from their initial orders that Chipilly Village had to be secured to allow their formation to continue unhindered. Again the situation did not allow time to seek direction or assistance from their superiors. The soldiers used their initiative and accepted responsibility for the task. The initiative and daring displayed in the attack proved to be decisive in securing the village. That an Australian battalion commander should send six men to assist a British brigade forward speaks volumes for the confidence that the Australians had in their soldiers and the willingness of officers to delegate responsibility.

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**ANNEX D TO  
CHAPTER 1**

**EQUIPMENT WEIGHT TABLE**

**Table 1-1. EQUIPMENT WEIGHT TABLE (1**

**WARNING:**

From the following tables, it is obvious that a soldier can be over-loaded. As a rule of thumb, a soldier should carry into battle no more than one-third of his body weight in equipment and ancillaries. Commanders at all levels must be constantly alert to this problem.

<i>Serial</i>	<i>Dress or Equipment Type (2)</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Weight (kg) (3)</i>	<i>Cumulative Total</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>	<i>(d)</i>	<i>(e)</i>	<i>(f)</i>
1.		Personal Clothing	3.517	3.517	Incls underclothing, field dress, boots, sweatrag, handkerchief.
2.	Weapons and CES	SLR	4.300		
		SLR sling	0.130		
		SLR bayonet	0.470		
		3 x SLR magazines	2.100		Filled
		SLR cleaning kit	0.145		
		M16	2.950		
		M16 sling	0.075		
		10 x M16 magazines	4.250		Filled
		M16 bayonet	0.438		
		M16 bipon	0.37		
		M16 cleaning kit	0.14		Incl bipod legs.
		M203/M16	4.800		
		M203 cleaning kit	0.200		
		GPMG M60	10.430		
		GPMG M60 sling	0.510		
		GPMG M60 accessory bag	1.190 )		Accessory bag and items complete weighs 5.172 kg.
		GPMG M60 spare barrel	3.020 )		
			0.232 )		
		GPMG M60 glove			
		GPMG M60 cleaning kit	0.470	0.730	
		GPMG M60 magazine	10.900		
		GPMG M60 cleaning kit	3.00	0.730	
		GSMG MAG 58 spare barrel	10.900		Incl. sling
			3.00		



Serial	Dress or Equipment Type (2)	Items	Weight (kg) (3)	Cumulative Total	Remarks
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
4.	Marching Order	Aust Pack (large)	1.730		
		2 x water bottles and carriers	2.650		
		Entrenching tool	1.730		
		Sleeping bag	1.920		
		Shelter indiv	0.680		
		Mosquito net	0.375		
		Helmet	1.740		
		Pullover	0.860		
		Coat Olive Green	1.380		
		Shaving and boot cleaning gear	0.600		
		2 x pkts hexamine	0.384		
		Dixies	0.407		
		KFS set	0.076		
		Housewife	0.046		
		2 x CRP (24 hr)	2.740		
		Trousers	0.710		
Shirt	0.395				
2 x handkerchiefs	0.032				
Water bladder	3.250				
Sub total	21.705	33.570			
5.	Ammunition	3 x SLR magazines	2.100		Full of water.
		10 x M16 magazines	4.250		
		6 x 40 mm HEDP rds	1.320		
		7.62 mm lkd ball 100 rds	2.250		
		M26 grenade	0.410		
		M26 grenade	0.670		
		No 83 Smk grenade	2.200		
		1 x 66 mm rocket	2.590		
		Anti-personnel weapon	0.640		
		M18A1 (Claymore) complete	0.600		
		Trip flare			
		Signal illum			

<i>Serial</i>	<i>Dress or Equipment Type (2)</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Weight (kg) (3)</i>	<i>Cumulative Total</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>	<i>(d)</i>	<i>(e)</i>	<i>(f)</i>
6.	Section Equipment	SLR magazine filler	0.070		
		Wire cutters	0.830		
		Compass	0.295		
		Map case, protractor			
		pens	0.300		
		Section medical kit	0.480		
		Torch	0.315		
		Machette	810		
		ANPRC 77 set	5.909 )		In cover
		Battery	1.153 )		ANPRCC 77
		3' antenna	0.440 )		set with
		10' antenna	0.600 )		battery and
		Accessory bag	0.305 )		CES weighs
		Harness	1.270 )		12.362 kg.
		Handset	0.505 )		
		Antenna lightweight	2.180 )		
		Patrol Ambush Light	2.76		In satchel
		ANPVS 4	3.8		(in case).
			(6.5)		
		Platoon Early Warning System	TBA		
		Marker Panel Set	0.450		In case.
		Binoculars	0.400		

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**Notes:**

- Weights are approximate only.
- Orders of dress are suggested only and will vary according to unit SOPs.
- Dry weight only.
- Estimated weights for individuals in a section dressed in Marching Order carrying 3 x CRPs, 800 rounds for the GPMG M60, two grenades and other items (but not those listed in serial 6), varies from 43.755 - 50.947 kg, or an average of 47.302 kg.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **COMBAT SUPPORT**

#### **SECTION 2-1. INTRODUCTION**

201. Rifle platoons will frequently be helped in their tasks by elements of the battalion and other arms. Success in battle depends largely upon cooperation between all supporting arms and services. This chapter describes the combat support likely to be provided to rifle platoons by support company, supporting arms, and air support. Those arms most likely to support the rifle platoon are:

- a. armour,
- b. artillery,
- c. engineers, and
- d. army aviation.

#### **SECTION 2-2. RIFLE COMPANY**

202. Combat support will normally be provided to the rifle platoon, in the first instance, by other elements of the rifle company, ie:

- a. other rifle platoons, and
- b. the support section.

203. Rifle platoons can engage the enemy using MGs, rifles, grenades and anti-armour weapons out to a maximum effective range of 800 m. The support section provides the company with immediate and intimate fire support. The support section is equipped with two SRAAWs (84mm Carl Gustav) capable of firing anti-tank, high explosive, smoke and illuminating ammunition, and one MG which is held at company headquarters. The SRAAWs are primarily anti-armour weapons but can be used against personnel in the open and in bunkers.

204. Support from within the rifle company can be requested by the platoons but will always be directed and coordinated by the company commander. The company commander is responsible for requesting support from support company, other arms and air support. He will be assisted by the attached MFC and forward observer (FO), who will usually control the fire support provided. The platoon commander may be delegated this responsibility during independent platoon operations.



## SECTION 2-3. SUPPORT COMPANY

### General

205. The organisation of support company is shown in [Annex A to Chapter 1](#). The role of support company is to provide intimate support to the battalion. The contribution made to the combat power of the battalion by the support company specialist platoons, is described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1. 1, The Infantry Battalion*, Chapter 2 and *MLW Two Inf Trg 1. 3, The Specialist Platoons*.

### Mortar Platoon

206. The role of the mortar platoon is to provide indirect fire support to the infantry battalion. The mortar platoon is equipped with six mortars and can operate as three independent sections of two mortars each; as a platoon of four mortars and one independent section of two mortars; or as a platoon of six mortars.

207. The types of mortar ammunition and fire are:

a. *High Explosive (HE)*.

(1) HE ammunition can be fused as follows:

- (a) *Point Detonating*. The round detonates on impact with the ground or objects such as trees.
- (b) *Delay*. The round penetrates to some extent before detonating, thus having a significant destructive effect on field defences and installations.
- (c) *Proximity*. The round detonates in the air. This is very effective against troops in field defences without overhead protection, armoured personnel carriers (APCs) which are not closed down and troops in the open.

- b. *Smoke*. Smoke rounds are primarily used for blinding enemy observation posts (OPs), reducing the effectiveness of their weapons and screening our own troops. Smoke can also be used to aid observation of fire in difficult terrain, as a signal, and will cause casualties due to the burning white phosphorus of the round.
- c. *Illumination*. The parachute illumination round produces an excellent white light. It is valuable for illuminating assaulting infantry and armour, and can be used in conjunction with other types of ammunition.

208. The fire of the battalion mortars may support the rifle platoon in the following ways:

- a. *Attack and Advance.* In the attack and the advance, battalion mortars may be used to:
  - (1) neutralise or destroy targets of opportunity;
  - (2) cover the movement of platoons and sections;
  - (3) illuminate the battlefield;
  - (4) support the reorganisation of the platoon and section on the objective, by helping to break up enemy counter attack. This is known as defensive fire (DF) and is dealt with in the next sub-paragraph.
  
- b. *Defence and Withdrawal.* In defence and withdrawal battalion mortars may be used to:
  - (1) assist in breaking up an enemy attack. The company commander will identify probable enemy forming up places (FUPs), routes to the FUP and lines of approach. These may be nominated as DF tasks and registered by all battalion mortars within range of them. Platoon commanders may call for DF by means of pre-arranged signals, radio or line. The DF tasks covering most likely enemy approaches may be nominated as DF final protective fire (FPF) tasks, depending on the number of fire units available. Mortars, when not otherwise engaged, are laid on the FPF task so that a call for fire on the most likely approach can be answered immediately;
  - (2) engage opportunity targets;
  - (3) neutralise targets;
  - (4) assist patrols by engaging targets of opportunity or by firing DF tasks. An MFC may accompany a patrol;
  - (5) illuminate the battlefield; and
  - (6) cover movement.

209. A detailed coverage of the tactical employment of mortars is contained in the *MLW Two, Inf Trg 5.2, Mortar Tactical Employment and Fire Control*. The characteristics of the battalion mortars are detailed in the *MLW Two, Inf Trg Vol 5* series of pamphlets, and *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

210. Unless allocated an MFC, the platoon commander will request mortar fire using the company net. The MFC is usually collocated with company headquarters but may be tasked to support a platoon on an independent task.

211. The MFC advises the commander and calls for, or adjusts fire in accordance with, the request of that commander. If the MFC is unavailable, any member of the battalion may call for fire using all arms target grid procedure, as described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 5.2, Mortar Tactical Employment and Fire Control*, and *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

### **Anti-armour Platoon**

212. The role of the anti-armour platoon is to provide the infantry battalion with the capability to defeat enemy armour and to destroy other targets in the battalion area of operations (AO). The anti-armour platoon is equipped with eight medium range anti-armour weapons (MRAAW) 106 mm Recoilless Rifle (RCL) and can operate as four independent sections consisting of two detachments each with one MRAAW, as a platoon of eight MRAAW, or any other combination.

213. The characteristics of the MRAAW and doctrine concerning its tactical employment are detailed in the *MLW Two, Inf Trg 6.3, The MRAAW System*, and *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.3, The Specialist Platoons*.

214. Anti-armour platoon weapons will normally be centrally controlled and will be deployed by the CO. He may place sections under command of rifle companies but it is unlikely that he will place a section under command of a rifle platoon. Anti-armour elements may be deployed in the platoon defensive locations. The anti-armour platoon commander will coordinate their siting with the company commander, and the platoon will be tasked with providing local protection.

### **Assault Pioneer Platoon**

215. The role of the assault pioneer platoon is to undertake a variety of field engineering tasks to assist the battalion to fight, maintain mobility and restrict the enemy's mobility. The platoon carries explosives, a variety of hand tools, powered assault boats, power drilling, sawing and shovelling equipment, and minefield breaching equipment.

216. The assault pioneer platoon will normally be centrally controlled and deployed by the CO. He may place the platoon or sections under command of a rifle company. When manpower is provided by rifle companies, the assault pioneer platoon will provide specialist advice and supervision. The platoon can give intimate support to the rifle company by:

- a. assisting with the construction and breaching of obstacles;
- b. operating engineer assault equipment;
- c. destroying enemy bunkers;
- d. constructing elementary tracks and roads;
- e. constructing and maintaining dropping zones and helicopter landing points or zones; and
- f. assisting riflemen to dig-in, using explosives and digging equipment.

217. The platoon is also trained to fight as a rifle platoon. Each section has an MG.

### **Sustained Fire Machine Gun Platoon**

218. The role of the sustained fire machine gun (SFMG) platoon is to provide machine gun fire support to the battalion. The platoon is equipped with six SFMGs which have an effective range of 2400 m. It can operate either as three independent sections, each of two detachments of one gun; as a platoon fire unit of six guns; or as a combination of these. Detachments should not operate independently.

219. The employment of the SFMG platoon is explained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.3, The Specialist Platoons*. The characteristics of the SFMG and GSMG are detailed in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 4.8, The General Support Machine Gun (GSMG)*.

220. SFMG fire is planned and coordinated at battalion level. The CO will detail the tasks for the platoon and the platoon commander will be responsible for the detailed siting of the guns. To do this he will liaise with the company commanders to coordinate the SFMG fire and locations with those of the company weapons. The platoon will usually be in support rather than under command. If elements of the machine gun platoon are deployed in a platoon defensive location, that platoon will be tasked with providing local protection and the company will be responsible for their administration.

221. Requests for machine gun fire can be sent:

- a. from platoon to company over the company net, then from the company to the battalion command post (CP) over the battalion command net;
- b. over the mortar or artillery net by an MFC or FO; or
- c. over the battalion patrol net, if established, by patrols or OPs.

222. The procedure for requesting MG fire is described in the *MLW Two, Inf Trg 4.8, The General Support Machine Gun (GSMG)*.

### **Signals Platoon**

223. The role of the signals platoon is to provide operational communications for the command and control of the infantry battalion. This can take the form of equipment only, or both operators and equipment. The signals platoon is equipped with radios, both very high frequency (VHF) and high frequency (HF). It holds sufficient switchboards, field telephones and wire to establish battalion line communications. A small reserve pool of signals equipment is held.

224. The characteristics of the equipment and doctrine concerning the tactical employment of the signals platoon are detailed in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.3, The Specialist Platoons*.

225. Platoon signallers are deployed by the regimental signals officer (RSO) in accordance with the CO's requirements. Detachments are allocated to battalion headquarters, all companies, administrative cells, the CO and to specific tasks as required. Signallers are not usually allocated below company level. Platoon signallers are rifleman trained in the use of signals equipment.

226. The signals platoon MG is deployed as part of the battalion headquarters local defence plan. A signaller's personal equipment is on the same scale as a rifleman's. Specialist equipment will be allocated by the RSO in accordance with the CO's plan.

## **SECTION 2-4. ARMOUR**

### **General**

227. The infantry platoon is most likely to work with the following RAAC sub-units:

- a. tank troop, and
- b. APC section.

### **Tanks**

228. The organisation of the tank squadron is detailed in *MLW One 5.2, Aide-Memoire*. This pamphlet will explain what platoon and section commanders must know to enable them to cooperate effectively with tanks. For further information on the operations of tanks in support of infantry read *MLW Two, Armd Trg 1.4, The Tank Regiment in Support of the Infantry Division*.

229. **Recognition.** A tank is identified by the callsign painted on its turret or hull. Within the tank squadron, troops are numbered from 1 to 4 and individual vehicles alphabetically, thus the vehicle callsigns on the armoured radio net for 2 Troop A Squadron would be 12, 12A, 12B and 12C.

230. **Fire and Movement.** Fire and movement is an important factor in tank tactics. A tank will not move unless it is supported by at least one other tank from a static fire position.

231. **Command and Control.** Individual arms commanders are responsible for the employment of their troops to provide the support required. In addition to good radio communication, control will be facilitated if the commanders move in close proximity to each other.

232. **Movement.** The major factors affecting tank movement are as follows:

- a. Tanks will always move from one position to another at their best speed and must not be governed by the speed of the infantry.
- b. When moving, tanks:
  - (1) make use of the best going and cover available;
  - (2) avoid crossing crests; and
  - (3) avoid moving in straight lines thereby avoiding presenting an easy target.
- c. The distance between tank positions, or bounds, is governed by:
  - (1) ground,
  - (2) visibility, and
  - (3) the maximum effective range of the supporting tanks.
- d. Tanks and infantry will often move on different axes.

233. **Inter-communications at Platoon/Troop Level.** The platoon and the tank troop may communicate with each other by the following means:

- a. *Radio.* Radio can be used to speak to individual tanks or to the troop on the company net. The monitoring facilities on the commander's headset should enable him to communicate with the infantry direct. The tank will use its normal callsign with the prefix 'Tango'.

- b. *Tank Telephone.* The tank telephone is located in a box at the rear of the tank hull. To talk to the tank commander, open the box, pull out the handset on its spring cable and press the buzzer button which is inside the box. Press the pressel switch on the handset firmly before speaking. The telephone is connected to the tank inter-communication circuit and the tank commander will hear the buzzer whatever net he is on at the time. The gunner can also reply to a call, and can tell the caller if the tank commander is otherwise engaged. The user should move clear of the rear of the tank to the extent of the cable as soon as he withdraws the telephone from its box. Replace the telephone and close the box after use.

**WARNING:**

If approaching the tank to use the tank telephone be prepared for sudden rearward movement of the vehicle.

- c. *Personal Contact.* Personal contact is the best method of communication as it reduces misunderstanding.
- d. *Visual Signals.* A simple system of previously arranged signals, such as handsignals, coloured smoke, flares, tracer etc, is sometimes an effective means of communication.

234. **Tank/Target Indication.** The methods used for infantry tank/target indication are described in [Annex A](#) to this chapter.

235. **Frontages.** A troop will disperse to the limit at which control and mutual fire support can be maintained. This is usually dictated by the type of country. In open country a troop may operate on a frontage of about 1000 m. In close country the distance may be as little as 100 m, or even less.

236. **Characteristics of Tanks.** The characteristics of tank weapons are detailed in the *MLW Two, Armd Trg 3. 1, The Medium Battle Tank (Leopard AS-1)*. The tactical characteristics of tanks are as follows:

- a. *Firepower.* The main armament and machine gun of the tank provide heavy, aimed, direct fire. The tank excels at:
- (1) destructive fire against hard and pinpoint targets,
  - (2) close support for infantry, and
  - (3) quick engagement of opportunity targets.

- b. *Mobility.* The cross country ability of the tank enables it to move to a variety of fire positions, to avoid enemy observation and fire, and to take quick evasive action.
- c. *Protection.* Armour does not provide absolute protection against attacks from all ranges and angles, but it affords a reasonable chance of survival on the battlefield and allows a tank to expose itself to mortars, light artillery and small-arms fire in order to fire direct. Armour affords some protection against radiation, biological and chemical agents.
- d. *Flexibility.* Flexibility derives from the commander's ability to exploit firepower, mobility and protection, to concentrate the destructive power of his tanks.

237. **Shock Action.** Used boldly, employing the characteristics of tanks to apply maximum firepower at unexpected times and places, tanks can produce a shock effect on the enemy. Shock action will disrupt the enemy's plans, destroy his cohesion, sap his morale and weaken his will to resist.

238. **Limitations.** Tanks are subject to the following limitations:

- a. *Dependence on Logistic Support and Servicing.* An indication of the requirement is given in *MLW One 5.2, Aide-Memoire*. Tanks should receive replenishment as frequently as possible, and the platoon commander must be prepared for this.
- b. *Vulnerability in Close Quarter Fighting.* In close country, including built-up areas, supporting infantry will usually be required to provide close protection, especially against SRAAWs. Close country increases the tank's vulnerability because its mobility and visibility are reduced.
- c. *Vulnerability to Air Attack.* Tanks, particularly en masse, are vulnerable to air attack.
- d. *Difficulty in Holding Ground.* During daylight, in open country, tanks can hold or deny ground for limited periods. In close or broken country, or if ground is to be held for extended periods, infantry support is required.
- e. *Ground and Obstacles.* Steep or very close country and difficult going, limit the movement of tanks. Natural and artificial obstacles, including minefields, may be a barrier to unassisted tanks. Engineer assistance may be required if an obstacle is to be breached.



- f. *Noise.* Noise can prejudice surprise, but skilful driving or a cover plan will reduce this limitation. Although the enemy can hear our tanks, he may have difficulty identifying their numbers and direction. When tanks are deployed within an infantry position, a higher level of noise must be expected as crews conduct essential maintenance, metals expand and contract and gunnery power systems operate.
- g. *Darkness and Limited Visibility.* In spite of aims to vision, night and fog restrict visibility and reduce engagement ranges.

239. The types of tank ammunition and fire are:

- a. *High Explosive - Anti-tank (HEAT).* The round is dual purpose. It is used primarily to destroy armour, but can be used to destroy or neutralise soft targets.
- b. *High Explosive - Squash Head (HESH).* As for the HEAT round, it is dual purpose, used primarily to defeat enemy armour, but is very effective on other types of soft targets.
- c. *Armour Piercing - Discarding Sabot (APDS).* This is a kinetic energy round used to defeat enemy armour. Having no high explosive, it is of limited use against other types of targets.
- d. *Anti Personnel - Spintex.* The round is fired from the tank's main armament and is particularly effective against massed troops in the open. It can be used to clear gaps through wire obstacles. It is effective from muzzle action (MA) to 4400 m, using a timed fuse.
- e. *Smoke.* The smoke round is used as a tactical weapon, to cover movement. The tank is not best suited to lay down large smoke screens. The round will also cause casualties due to the burning white phosphorus.
- f. *Machine Gun.* The Leopard AS-1 tank is equipped with two 7.62mm machine guns; one coaxially mounted and another used in the anti-aircraft role.

240. **Tank Support.** Tank support for infantry usually takes the following forms:

- a. *Advance.* During the advance, tanks can:
  - (1) protect the movement of advancing infantry and
  - (2) destroy minor opposition.

- b. *Attack.* During the attack, tanks can:
  - (1) provide intimate direct fire support, particularly after indirect fire has been lifted;
  - (2) destroy enemy AFVs;
  - (3) dominate the objective and the areas forward, and to the flanks to prevent the enemy from interfering with reorganisation; and
  - (4) provide illumination.
- c. *Defence.* In defence, tanks can:
  - (1) destroy enemy armour,
  - (2) provide intimate direct fire support from previously reconnoitred positions,
  - (3) provide night observation and illumination, and
  - (4) support a counter-attack and counter penetration.
- d. *Withdrawal.* During the withdrawal, tanks can:
  - (1) provide delaying action as a rear guard,
  - (2) counter-attack, and
  - (3) protect exposed flanks.

241. **Tasks of the Infantry.** When infantry are working with tanks their tasks include:

- a. seizing and holding ground;
- b. the destruction of enemy SRAAWs. The closer the country, the greater the importance of this protection;
- c. the destruction of any weapons missed by the assaulting tanks; and
- d. the clearing of defiles, close country or urban terrain which threatens the tank's security.

242. **Battlecraft.** The infantry/tank team must have standard procedures for planning and launching operations. These must be practised and known to all to obtain the smooth and swift cooperation required in battle.

243. **Marrying Up.** The regrouping of units requires careful planning. The following are the major planning considerations:

- a. The selection of an area:
  - (1) large enough to prevent congestion of vehicles and personnel,
  - (2) secure from enemy ground interference,
  - (3) preferably out of range of enemy artillery, and
  - (4) accessible by sufficient trafficable routes.
- b. Signposting of the area.
- c. Provision of guides by the static unit.
- d. Exchange of liaison officers (LOs).
- e. Agreement to a plan which includes:
  - (1) vehicle/troop allocation;
  - (2) locations;
  - (3) communications; and
  - (4) coordinating details, including timings, routes, identification and traffic control.

244. Once the marry up has been achieved, operating procedures and general familiarisation training need to be completed:

- a. *Before Battle:*
  - (1) Infantry and tank crews and commanders must get to know each other.
  - (2) Each arm must have a knowledge of the characteristics of the weapons, equipment and the limitations of the other.
  - (3) Planning for the battle is not done in isolation.
- b. *Essential Checks.* No matter how limited the time, the following must be completed:
  - (1) final check of communications;
  - (2) final check of reference points;
  - (3) check of responsibilities - tanks to infantry and infantry to tanks; and
  - (4) check of all special signals to be used.

245. **The Carriage of Infantry on Tanks.** Infantry should only be carried on tanks as a last resort. If carried, the following must apply:

- a. Infantry must never ride on the leading tanks because:
  - (1) they are extremely vulnerable to enemy fire, and
  - (2) they will impede the immediate action capability of the tank once contact has been made.
- b. Platoon and section commanders must ensure that their soldiers:
  - (1) have practised mounting and dismounting drills. Under no circumstances must individuals mount or dismount without being ordered to do so;
  - (2) have practised emergency action to be taken in the event of enemy air or ground attack;
  - (3) keep awake (exhaust fumes produce drowsiness);
  - (4) keep clear of exhaust pipes (they become hot);
  - (5) do not hang their legs over the side of tanks (they may be crushed by trees or walls); and
  - (6) hold on securely to whatever hand holds are available.

## APCs

246. The APC section is designed to carry an infantry platoon, providing a degree of protection against small arms and automatic weapon fire, anti-personnel obstacles and shell fragmentation. The organisation of the APC troop together with vehicle data and weapon characteristics are detailed in *MLW One 5.2, Aide- Memoire*.

247. **Command and Control.** When carrying infantry, APC units normally operate under operational control of the infantry. The vehicle commander controls the APC and its driver.

248. **Communications.** Each APC has one radio on the company net and one primarily for squadron use. Fixed callsigns are painted on the sides of the APC and the section numbering system is similar to the tank troop.

249. **Marrying Up.** The requirement for marrying up is the same as for tanks.

250. **Debussing.** An infantry section will debus to the right and/or left of its APC, no further forward than the APC turret, facing in the same

direction as the vehicle. (Debussing drills must be rehearsed as part of the preparation before battle.) The procedures vary depending on whether the section is in or out of contact but the section should always debus in the following order:

- a. MG No 1,
- b. 2IC,
- c. MG No 2,
- d. section commander, and
- e. riflemen/scouts.

251. **Embossing.** Troops are to board the APC in reverse order to that of debussing.

252. **Mounted Formations.** It must be expected that formations will change regularly and rapidly. The four basic platoon mounted formations (Figure 2.1) are:

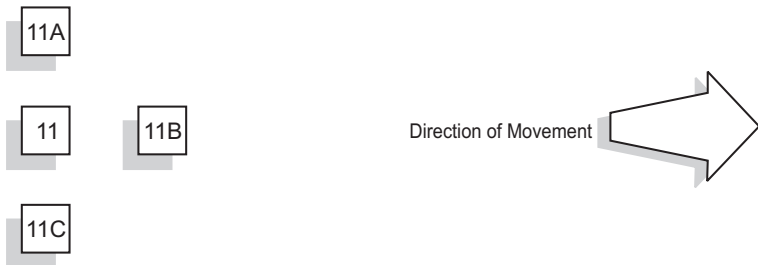
- a. *Box.* This formation is used when enemy contact is possible;
- b. *One Up.* The One Up formation is used when enemy contact is possible;
- c. *Line Ahead.* Line Ahead formation is used when enemy contact is unlikely; and
- d. *Line Abreast.* Line Abreast is when contact has been made with the enemy. Line abreast is ideal for assaulting an objective or clearing an area.

253. **Spacing.** Because of the need to achieve mutual support, the effective range of APC weapons regulates the spacing between vehicles. Normal spacings for the platoon are:

- a. *Frontages.* Frontages are not to exceed 300 m.
- b. *Depth.* Depth is not to exceed 800 m.



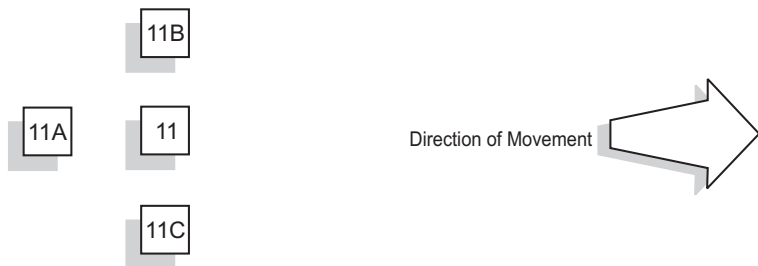
a. Box



b. One Up



c. Line Ahead



d. Line Abreast

Figure 2-1. Platoon Mounted Formations

## SECTION 2-5. ARTILLERY

### General

254. Artillery can engage the enemy at longer ranges and with heavier weapons than the infantry. For the infantry commander a knowledge of what support the artillery can give him, and how he can obtain it, may mean the difference between the success and failure of his mission, and the life or death of his men.

### Artillery Fire

255. The types of surface to surface artillery ammunition are as follows:

- a. *HE*. HE ammunition can be fused as:
  - (1) *Point Detonating (PD)*. Point detonating fusing produces detonation on impact with the ground or objects such as trees;
  - (2) *Delay*. Delay fusing allows ammunition to penetrate to some extent before detonating, which has a significant destructive effect on field defences and installations; or
  - (3) *Variable Time and Proximity*. Variable time and proximity fusing produces detonation in the air. This is very effective against troops in field defences without overhead protection, APCs not closed down and troops in the open.
- b. *Smoke*. Smoke projectiles are used primarily for reducing the effectiveness of enemy weapons or OPs by blinding the enemy and screening the activities of our troops. Smoke can also be used as an aid to observation, or as a signal. There are two types of smoke projectiles, they are:
  - (1) *Base Ejection (BE)*. BE is used for blinding or screening, as an aid to observation office, or for signals; and
  - (2) *White Phosphorus (WP)* WP is used for screening and also produces an incendiary effect which is capable of causing casualties.
- c. *Illumination*. The parachute illuminating round produces excellent white light to illuminate the battle field.
- d. *Anti-armour*. The anti-armour projectiles to be used in the direct fire role against armour and hard targets are:
  - (1) High Explosive Plastic With Tracer (HEP-T), and
  - (2) HESH.

- e. *Anti-Personnel*. The anti-personnel projectiles to be used in the direct fire role against personnel in the open are:
  - (1) fleshette, and
  - (2) cannister.
- f. *Carrier*. Carrier projectiles can carry chemicals or propaganda leaflets.

256. The characteristics of artillery weapons and ammunition are detailed in *MLW One 5.2, Aide-Memoire*.

### Artillery Tasks

257. **The Attack.** During the attack, artillery supports infantry operations with:

- a. *Preparation Fire*. Preparation fire is a brief but intense HE concentration; and
- b. *Covering Fire*. Covering fire is HE and smoke to protect assaulting troops by neutralising enemy direct fire weapons and OPs. This fire may be:
  - (1) on a timed programme, laid down in orders;
  - (2) at targets on call, which is fire at pre-arranged targets, fired when called for; or
  - (3) at targets of opportunity.

258. **Defence.** Artillery can support infantry in the defence by providing the following types of fire:

- a. *DF*. DF disorganises enemy preparations for an attack or counter-attack and breaks up his assault. It may be divided into:
  - (1) counter preparation fire, to hit at enemy preparations and reserves;
  - (2) close defensive fire, to hit the enemy in the FUP and during the assault. Tasks should be reserved for likely enemy approaches and those which the infantry and armour cannot adequately cover; and
  - (3) FPF, the most vital DF task. Fire units can accept only one FPF and will remain laid on it when not engaging the enemy.
- b. *Covering Fire*. Covering fire in defence is used to support a counter-attack and is the same as for the attack.



259. **General.** Other types of available fire which are not related to any particular point in the battle are:

- a. *Counter-Battery.* Counter-battery fire is HE fired to destroy or neutralise enemy artillery or mortar positions. These missions are usually controlled at brigade level.
- b. *Harassing.* Harassing fire is observed or predicted fire intended to disrupt enemy troop and vehicle movement, disturb their rest, and lower their morale.
- c. *Smoke.*
- d. *Illumination.*

### How to Get Artillery Support

260. Artillery fire is normally controlled by an FO, who has communications on both the artillery, and the infantry nets. The FO is normally allocated to a rifle company from the field battery which is 'in direct support'.

261. If an FO and party are allotted to assaulting companies in the attack, they will assist the infantry by adjusting any pre-arranged fire plans or engaging opportunity targets.

262. In defence FOs may be established in company or platoon locations, or they may be located in static OPs which a rifle platoon may be tasked to protect.

263. Artillery fire may also be controlled by an MFC or or by any officer or non-commissioned officer. The standard artillery fire control procedure is shown in [Annex B](#) to this chapter. The MFC will request artillery fire support over the mortar firing net, whereas officers and non-commissioned officers will request it through company headquarters on the company net.

### Troop Safety

264. To make the best use of covering fire, infantry must move as close to it as safety will permit. The safe distance depends on many factors like the calibre, range and position of the guns, the slope of the ground, whether the troops are in APCs or not, the presence of trees around the target and the type of ammunition in use. The FO should be consulted on the safe distance before each mission, but the responsibility rests with the infantry commander to decide how close he will go. Planning safety distances are detailed in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

## Fire Planning

265. A fire plan is the tactical plan for using all available weapons for offensive and defensive support. Fire planning requires a detailed knowledge of the characteristics of the weapons and of the physical and logistics capabilities of those providing the support. The infantry commander must prepare his fire plan in collaboration with his artillery and/or support company advisers. It is important that artillery and/or support company advisers take part in all planning from inception and have the earliest information on any change which may affect the fire plan.

## Shelling and Mortaring Reports (SHELREPS/MORTREPS)

266. SHELREPs and MORTREPs are reports of enemy shelling and mortaring, containing information on the calibre, direction, time, density and the area under bombardment.

267. The submission of SHELREPs and MORTREPS is the responsibility of all arms. They provide a valuable source of artillery intelligence. By themselves, they seldom provide the location of hostile batteries, but they indicate which batteries are active, the areas to search for new batteries, and the number and type of weapons.

268. SHELREPs and MORTREPs must be passed as quickly and as often as possible. The format for these reports is contained in *MLW One 5.1, Staff Duties in the Field, 1987*.

## SECTION 2-6. ENGINEERS

### General

269. The work of combat engineers can contribute enormously to the success of an operation. As there are seldom sufficient engineers to carry out all the tasks required of them, higher commanders have to allot priorities for engineer work. For many of their tasks the engineers require heavy and bulky equipment. Engineer commanders need to know as much as possible about probable future tasks to enable the right men, with the right equipment, to be sent to the right place, at the right time. Infantry commanders can help a great deal by promptly passing back accurate engineer information.

270. Information is required on:

- a. the state of roads, tracks and bridges (good as well as bad);
- b. the types and location of mines encountered;
- c. the width of streams, canals and other obstacles; and

- d. local availability of engineer plant, and material-such as timber, steel, stone, gravel and sand.

271. The information should be reported in accordance with unit SOPs. These SOPs should be based on Engineer Reports (ENGREPs) as detailed in *MLW Two, Engr Trg 1.2, Engineer Intelligence and Project Management*.

### **Engineer Tasks**

272. The main tasks which engineers have to carry out it in the combat zone (CZ) are those which maintain and improve our own mobility and those which impede the enemy.

273. Improving the mobility of our own troops may include:

- a. the opening of routes to enable men and vehicles to reach their objectives by:
  - (1) construction, repair and maintenance of roads and tracks;
  - (2) crossing water obstacles by rafts, bridges and the development of fording places;
  - (3) construction of entrance and exit points for amphibious vehicles on water obstacles; and
  - (4) detecting, breaching and clearing minefields and other artificial obstacles;
- b. the destruction of enemy defences and obstacles; and
- c. the construction, repair and maintenance of airfields and the preparation of landing sites for helicopters.

274. Impeding the enemy's mobility requires the production of an obstacle plan. The plan is made by engineers in collaboration with the tactical commander and his staff so that it complements the tactical plan. The obstacle plan must take full account of natural obstacles and will include the addition of artificial obstacles, using anti-tank minefields, demolitions, craters etc, either to link the natural obstacles together or to make them more difficult to cross. In addition to completing the obstacle plan, engineers help to impede the enemy in the following ways:

- a. *Preparation of Defensive Positions.* Although the infantry are responsible for their own defences, engineers assist in their preparation with the use of mechanical digging equipment and the provision of defence stores and advice as required.

- b. *Denial.* Denial measures may include the destruction of military stocks of food, fuel, equipment and facilities, and the removal or contamination of valuable resources.

275. Other tasks which the engineers may have to undertake in the CZ include:

- a. *Water Supply.* Engineers are responsible for the supply of drinkable water.
- b. *Lighting.* Engineer responsibilities include the provision of lighting and power to formation headquarters.
- c. *Camouflage.* Engineers have a responsibility to assist in any major camouflage projects.
- d. *Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD).* Engineers also have the responsibility for the detection, neutralisation and, where necessary, final disposal of unexploded missiles.

### **Cooperation**

276. There will frequently be parties of engineers working in the forward areas. Whenever there are engineers in the company area, contact should be made with them and information exchanged with their commander. The platoon or section may also be directed to give assistance to the engineer party.

### **Further Information**

277. The roles, organisations, characteristics and tasks of engineer units are described in *MLW Two, Engr Trg 1.1, Employment of Engineers.*

## **SECTION 2-7. AVIATION**

### **General**

278. The Army Aviation Corps provides infantry with the following support:

- a. reconnaissance and surveillance,
- b. observation of fire,
- c. assistance in command and liaison, and
- d. limited movement of men and materiel.

## Reconnaissance and Surveillance

279. Reconnaissance sorties are flown to obtain detailed and specific information. When ordering a reconnaissance mission the following must be considered:

- a. Time should be allowed for a detailed map reconnaissance, and for planning the conduct of the mission.
- b. The pilot must be provided with information on the location of both friendly forces and known or suspected enemy forces, particularly air defence locations.
- c. Vegetation will have a marked effect on the success of a reconnaissance mission. Dense vegetation is more difficult to see through and requires the aircraft to fly slowly at tree top level, reducing the effectiveness of observation and increasing the vulnerability of the aircraft.

280. Surveillance sorties are flown as part of an overall plan for systematic observation of a particular area or point, to detect change. Army Aviation can provide visual, electronic or photographic surveillance for these missions.

## Observation of Fire

281. Observation of fire tasks include:

- a. target acquisition;
- b. adjusting indirect fire of artillery, mortars, naval guns and armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs); and
- c. forward air control of ground attack aircraft.

## Assistance in Command and Liaison

282. The increased mobility provided by helicopters can greatly assist commanders and their staff. Helicopters can be used for transport, or as temporary airborne command posts.

283. LOs can be carried rapidly by air and the aircraft can provide an efficient air dispatch service.

284. Army aircraft, particularly helicopters, can assist in traffic control. In a low level conflict they may be employed as voice aircraft for crowd control or for dropping leaflets, CS grenades or for illumination.

285. Army aircraft are equipped to carry out automatic radio retransmission and can be equipped to undertake electronic warfare operations.

286. All Army aircraft are equipped with VHF and UHF homing facilities. These facilities home in on radio transmissions, and are particularly useful when the pilot is required to locate troops on the ground, or when troops on the ground are unsure of their position.

287. Army aircraft can be used to lift small parties of men or carry small quantities of stores. All Army helicopters can be equipped to evacuate casualties.

### **Further Information**

288. More detailed information on the employment of Army Aviation is provided in *MLW Two, Avn Trg 1.1, The Employment of Army Aviation* and *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*. The latter pamphlet also describes the requirements for landing points and airstrips, aircraft marshalling signals, the procedure for requesting Army Aviation support, advice on briefing and debriefing of pilots and notes for passengers.

## **SECTION 2-8. AIR SUPPORT**

### **General**

289. Air support is considered in detail in *MLW One 1.8, Air Support*.

290. In addition to the provision of offensive air support, aircraft may be the primary means of providing mobility on the battlefield, resupply, and evacuation of casualties. All ranks must be trained to operate with aircraft. This section describes the air support likely to be encountered at platoon level.

### **Close Air Support**

291. Close air support (CAIRS) is air action against hostile targets which are close to friendly forces. CAIRS missions will not normally be directed against targets which can be engaged effectively by surface-to-surface weapons. CAIRS can be used to kill the enemy in both attack and defence, and is particularly effective against troops in the open and against armour.

292. To ensure that friendly positions are not mistaken for the enemy, a clear indication of the friendly and/or enemy positions must be given. Any of the following methods may be used to identify targets:

- a. Give the degree bearing and distance from the observer, or use the clock ray method incorporating easily identifiable natural features or north bearing (to indicate 12 o'clock) and the distance.

- b. Mark the target directly by smoke, rockets, artillery or mortar fire. Smoke colours for identifying targets are prescribed by formation headquarters.

293. CAIRS requests initiated by a platoon are passed by company headquarters to battalion headquarters on the command net. Battalion headquarters will check the request and, if approved, send it to higher headquarters.

### **Aerial Reconnaissance and Surveillance**

294. Aerial reconnaissance and surveillance is used to provide information for the commander by use of visual, electronic or photographic means. This support for the platoon is provided primarily by Army Aviation but on some occasions RAAF aircraft may be used. Aerial reconnaissance and surveillance may be:

- a. *Visual.* Visual surveillance involves pilot or observer reports of details seen.
- b. *Photographic.* Photographic surveillance results in the provision of photographs of the area. Such photographs are normally made available to the platoon command; or
- c. *Electronic.* Electronic reconnaissance and surveillance involves the use of sensors which are used to obtain information about the enemy. The RAAF is responsible for processing, interpreting and disseminating all information produce from sensor reconnaissance.

295. Detail about the provision of aerial reconnaissance by Army Aviation is contained in *MLW Two, Avn Trg 1.3, Conduct of Missions.*

### **Resupply by Air**

296. Air resupply may be by:

- a. landing by fixed wing or rotary wing aircraft,
- b. dropping by parachute, or
- c. free dropping.

297. Commanders must know the requirements for the dimensions and marking of landing sites and the selection and marking of dropping zones. Aircraft characteristics and performances together with the requirements for landing sites and dropping zones are detailed in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire.*

## **Air Movement**

298. A platoon will frequently be moved by Service aircraft, especially rotary wing aircraft. Drills for emplaning and deplaning are detailed in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.1, The Infantry Soldiers Handbook*.

## **Aeromedical Evacuation**

299. Aeromedical evacuation by utility helicopter or transport aircraft permits much earlier treatment of casualties. Evacuation by fixed wing aircraft will normally be restricted to rear areas where landing strips have been constructed. Helicopters normally evacuate from the vicinity of Regimental Aid Posts (RAP) but may evacuate from forward companies and long patrols, if the tactical situation permits. The request for forward aeromedical evacuation (DUSTOFF) must be sent on the command net. The format of the DUSTOFF request is detailed in unit SOPs.

- Annexes:**
- A. Infantry/Tank Target Indication
  - B. Artillery and Mortar Target Grid Procedures

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**INFANTRY/TANK TARGET INDICATION****Sequence of Target Indication**

1. The term infantry/tank target indication covers any method by which infantry can indicate targets to tanks. The procedure for getting the task commander to see and engage the target quickly is to:
  - a. attract the tank commander's attention;
  - b. get him looking in the right direction;
  - c. give the range from the tank to the target;
  - d. describe the target;
  - e. give the tank commander an executive order; and
  - f. if the target is not immediately seen, correct the tank's fire until the tank commander sees the target.

**Attracting Attention**

2. Attracting the tank commander's attention can be done by:
  - a. offering the target on radio, eg 'TANGO 23 THIS IS INDIA 21, TARGET OVER';
  - b. telling the tank commander by radio that the infantry commander will come to his tank to direct him personally, or to use the tank telephone;
  - c. using the tank telephone; or
  - d. using field signals.

**WARNING:**

If approaching the tank to use the tank telephone, be prepared for sudden rearward movement of the vehicle.

**Indicating Direction**

3. The methods of indicating the right direction to the tank commander are as follows:
  - a. *Reference Points.* Reference points may be either pre-arranged or hasty. The reference point method is used in open country and, when time allows, pre-arranged reference points are agreed. Hasty reference points can be conspicuous features.

- b. *Gun Barrel of the Tank.* The gun barrel method (Figure 2-2 ) is mainly used in close country. Whichever direction the barrel is pointing is taken as 12 o'clock.

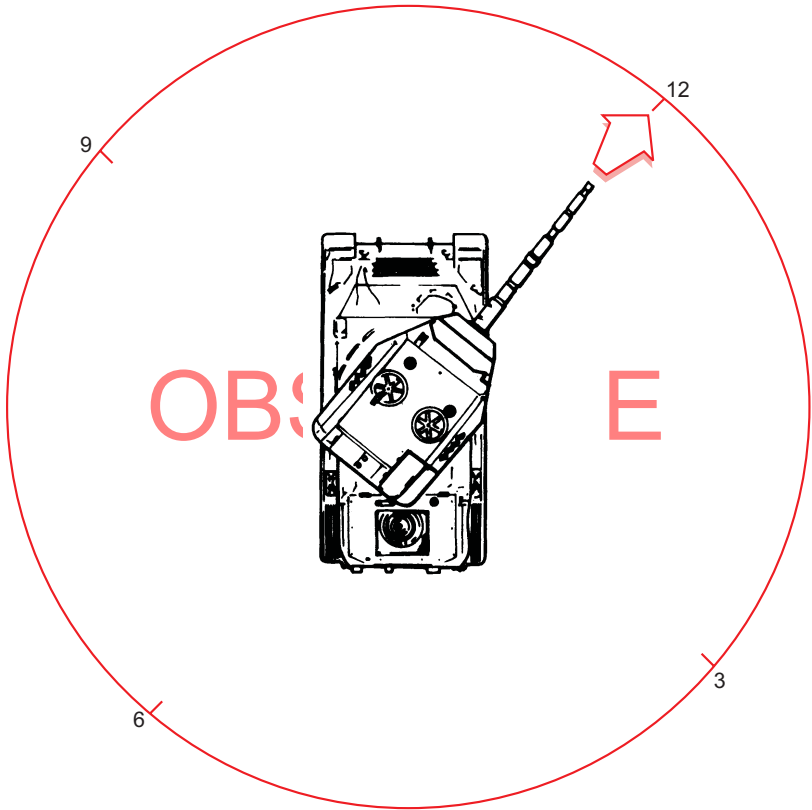


Figure 2-2. Target Indication - Gun Barrel Method

- c. *Axis of Hull or Axis of Advance.* The axis system (Figure 2-3 ) is similar to the gun barrel system except that in this case the hull or the axis of advance is taken as 12 o'clock. If the infantryman is using the tank telephone, the axis of the hull method will be the simplest.

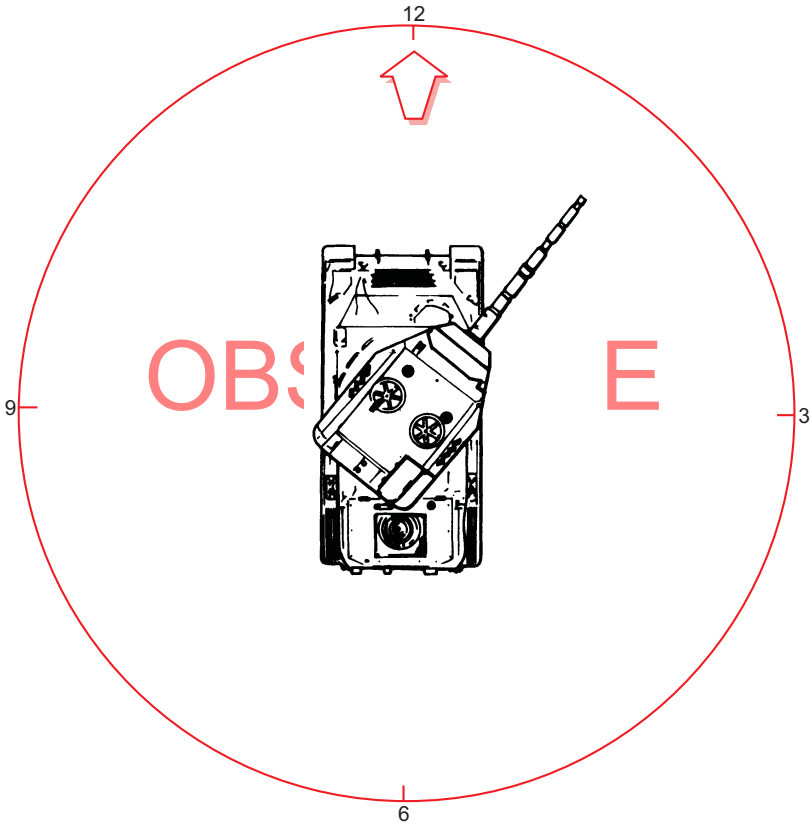


Figure 2-3. Axis of Hull or Axis of Advance

- d. *Fire Shot for Reference.* The shot for reference method has many variations. It is usually used in conjunction with the methods described in sub-paragraphs b and c. The infantry commander may request 'FIRE SHOT (main armament) (or BURST (MG) FOR REFERENCE' or he may indicate the target himself by firing a shot (7.62 tracer, a burst from the MG, or an HE grenade from the grenade launcher) and instructing the tank, 'FIRING SHOT/BURST /GRENADE FOR REFERENCE'. Once the fall of shot is identified, corrections are made onto the target.

### **Range**

4. Either the range from the tank to the target or the grid reference of the target must be given. The former is preferable for close country and the latter in open country at longer ranges.

### **Description of Target**

5. The tank commander must be told what the target is so that he can select the most appropriate ammunition with which to engage it.

### **Executive Order**

6. The infantryman tells the tank commander what he wants done to the target. Normally this will be:

- a. destroy, or
- b. neutralise.

7. If the target is to be neutralised, the infantryman should indicate the time for which the target is to be neutralised and what he intends doing next, eg, 'NEUTRALISE FOR 10 MINUTES AT MY COMMAND - I AM MOVING AROUND THE RIGHT FLANK.'

### **Correction of Tank Fire**

8. The crew commander may fail to identify the target or may engage the wrong target. If this occurs the infantryman will use the previous fall of shot to correct, or give another description of the target.

9. Corrections must always be made from the infantry point of view. In open country when correcting fire onto targets at longer ranges, the infantryman should use the normal artillery system of line corrections; eg, 'GO LEFT ... METRES' followed by corrections 'ADD' or 'DROP'. To assist the crew commander, the infantryman must report his position to the tank; eg, 'I AM POSITIONED ABOUT 300 METRES TO YOUR LEFT IN THE TREE LINE'.

10. Correction of fire in close country may be conducted by simple commands such as, 'LEFT/RIGHT/ADD/DROP... METRES'.

### **Continuous Calling Method - Poor Visibility**

11. The continuous calling method is used when the tank commander cannot see a pinpoint target because of thick vegetation.

12. The coaxial MG is used to range onto the target and then the tank engages with its main armament. The infantry commander may not be able to see the tank, but he must have an accurate idea of its position, either from the noise of its engine and armament, or from directions given by other infantrymen in the platoon.

13. The following order is given to the tank commander: 'AXIS OF ADVANCE - 10 O'CLOCK - 50 - FIRE BURST FOR REFERENCE AND I'LL START CALLING', or the tank commander may request the infantryman to, 'START CALLING'.

14. As soon as the infantryman identifies the burst on the ground, he starts to call corrections. If the fall of shot is LEFT he calls 'RIGHT' and continues to do so until a burst falls to the RIGHT of the target and then he calls 'LEFT' until he brackets the target. Similarly, if the fall of shot is high or low he calls 'ADD' or 'DROP' until he achieves a hit on the target.

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ANNEX B TO  
CHAPTER 2**ARTILLERY AND MORTAR TARGET GRID PROCEDURES****General**

1. The procedures outlined in this section are applicable to the control of both mortar and artillery fire. A section will not normally have an MFC or an artillery FO attached, but fire support can be obtained by contacting the MFC, FO or company commander. All officers and NCOs should be trained in target grid procedure (TGP).

**Information Required from Observer**

2. If a target is to be engaged by someone other than a trained observer with direct contact to the fire unit, the following information is required:

- a. observer's identification,
- b. warning order,
- c. location of target,
- d. description of target,
- e. method of engagement, and
- f. method of fire and control.

3. **Observer's Identification.** Normal radiotelephone procedure is used, using allocated callsigns. The only exception is that all transmissions are read back in full. (This applies to all TGP).

4. **Warning Order.** The order 'FIRE MISSION' is the warning order. The selection of the number of guns to engage the target should be left to trained observers or to the controlling authority.

5. **Location of Target.** To enable the correct calculations to be made at the gun or mortar line, the direction (grid bearing from the observer to the target) should always be included when giving the location of a target. The location of a target may be indicated in one of the following ways:

- a. *By a Grid Reference.* The observer gives the grid reference of the target and direction from him to the target, eg, 'GRID 123456, DIRECTION 1240'.
- b. *By a Target Number or Reference Object.* The target number is that of a previously recorded target. The reference object is one which is known to both the observer and the fire unit. Examples are:



- (1) 'TARGET ZT 1242, DIRECTION 1240'.
- (2) 'CONCRETE BRIDGE, DIRECTION 1240'.

c. *By a Target Grid Correction from a Recorded Target or from a Reference Object.* When a target is located near-a previously recorded target or a reference object, the information given in sub-paragraph b is given, together with the required target grid correction from the recorded target or reference object (the direction is to the new target). This method Should only be used when the new target is within 500 Metres of the recorded target or reference object. Examples are:

- (1) 'TARGET ZT 1242, DIRECTION 1300, RIGHT 400, DROP 200'.
- (2) 'CONCRETE BRIDGE, DIRECTION 1180, LEFT 200, ADD 400'.

6. **Description of Target.** The description of the target should be brief, but sufficiently informative to enable the determination of the importance of the target and the best method of engagement. The observer should state the approximate number of personnel, weapons, vehicle etc, the size of the area covered by the target and the degree of protection . Examples are as follows:

- a. '50 INFANTRY AND 3 TANKS IN OPEN, 200 BY 200'.
- b. '60 INFANTRY DIGGING IN ALONG RIDGE LINE'.
- c. '20 VEHICLES IN WOOD, 300 BY 300'.

7. **Method of Engagement.** The method of engagement of the target includes:

- a. *Type of Engagement.* This indicates to the forward observer any special procedures. If the type of engagement is not given, the convention is that an area neutralisation mission is required. Other types of engagements which may be ordered are:
  - (1) 'REGISTRATION' - a single gun target to record accurate firing data for possible future use; and
  - (2) 'DANGER CLOSE' - when the target is close to our own troops (within 550 metres).
- b. *Ammunition.* This element gives the type of ammunition required. If ammunition other than HE with PD fuse is required, either during adjustment and/or fire for effect, it must be specified separately. Orders for shell are given as 'HE', 'ILLUMINATING', 'WP', or 'SMOKE' (including colour, if other than white). The orders for fuse are given as 'VT' (artillery - variable time) or 'PROX' (mortars - proximity). Unless stated the fuse used will be PD.

8. **Method of Fire and Control.** The method of fire and control includes elements which indicate the control to be exercised by the observer over:

- a. whether adjustment is to be carried out, or fire delivered without adjustment;
- b. the method of fire; and
- c. the time of delivery of fire.

9. The orders to be used for fire and control are:

- a. *'ADJUST FIRE'*. 'ADJUST FIRE' is used when fire is to be adjusted by the observer. If more than one gun/mortar is required, the order '.....(number of guns/mortars) 'ADJUST FIRE', must be given. This order may be prefixed by 'AT MY COMMAND';
- b. *'FIRE FOR EFFECT'*. 'FIRE FOR EFFECT' is used by the observer when he wishes the target to be engaged without adjustment, or when he is satisfied that the adjustment process has been satisfactorily completed; eg, after his report of 'TARGET'. This order may be prefixed by 'AT MY COMMAND';
- c. *'AT MY COMMAND ... FIRE'*. 'AT MY COMMAND' is used when the observer wishes to control the moment of firing for any reason. The order 'FIRE' is given when the fire unit has reported 'READY' and the observer wishes it to fire. 'AT MY COMMAND' is cancelled by 'CANCEL AT MY COMMAND'; and
- d. *'CHECK FIRING'*. 'CHECK FIRING' means stop firing immediately. 'CHECK FIRING' is cancelled by 'CANCEL CHECK FIRING' from the originator.

### Target Grid Corrections

10. **Line Corrections.** Fire must always be corrected onto an imaginary line drawn from the observer through the target (line OT). Correction orders are detailed in [Table 2-1](#). They indicate whether the round is over (beyond the target) or short (the observer's side of the target) as seen by the observer looking along the line OT. Unless the guns are firing over the head of the observer it will usually be preferable to visualise the line OT as a lane having some width, because the length of the beaten zone of the gun is much greater than its width. The observer should not give a line correction, after the initial line cor-

rection, except on the evidence of two or more rounds. To assist in obtaining an accurate correction to bring the next round onto the line OT, the angle between the first round and the line OT should be measured with the graticules of the binoculars, or with the hand. Having measured this angle and knowing the approximate distance observer to target, the correction necessary can be calculated by using the sub-tension rule 'one mil at 1000 units subtends one unit'. For example, if the observer is 2000 m from the target and he observes a round failing 100 mils to the right of the line OT, his correction will be 'LEFT 200' ( $100 \times 2 = 200$ ). Line corrections may be ordered to the nearest 10 m.

**TABLE 2-1. TARGET GRID CORRECTIONS**

<i>Serial</i>	<i>Position of Burst in Relation to the Line OT on Target</i>	<i>Correction</i>
(a)	(b)	(c)
1.	Right of line OT	'LEFT .....
2.	Left of line OT	'RIGHT .....
3.	Beyond the target	'ADD .....
4.	Short of the target	'ADD .....
5.	On the target	'TARGET .....

11. **Bracketing.** As soon as a round bursts on or near the line OT, the observer should correct along this line. Because it is not possible to measure accurately how far over, or short of the target a round may be, a process of bracketing is used. This consists of getting an opening long bracket of 400 or 800 m (two rounds separated by this amount falling over and short of the target) and subsequently splitting this bracket progressively until a short bracket of 100 m is obtained. A correction of 'ADD 800', if it produces a bracket, should be followed by 'DROP 400'. If this round falls short, the next correction should be 'ADD 200' and so on. As soon as a 100 m bracket is obtained the observer orders 'ADD OR DROP 50. TARGET'. Should the target be hit before adjustment is completed the observer will immediately report 'TARGET' and no further correction will be necessary. An example of the process of adjustment is given in [Figure 2-4](#) and [Table 2-2](#).

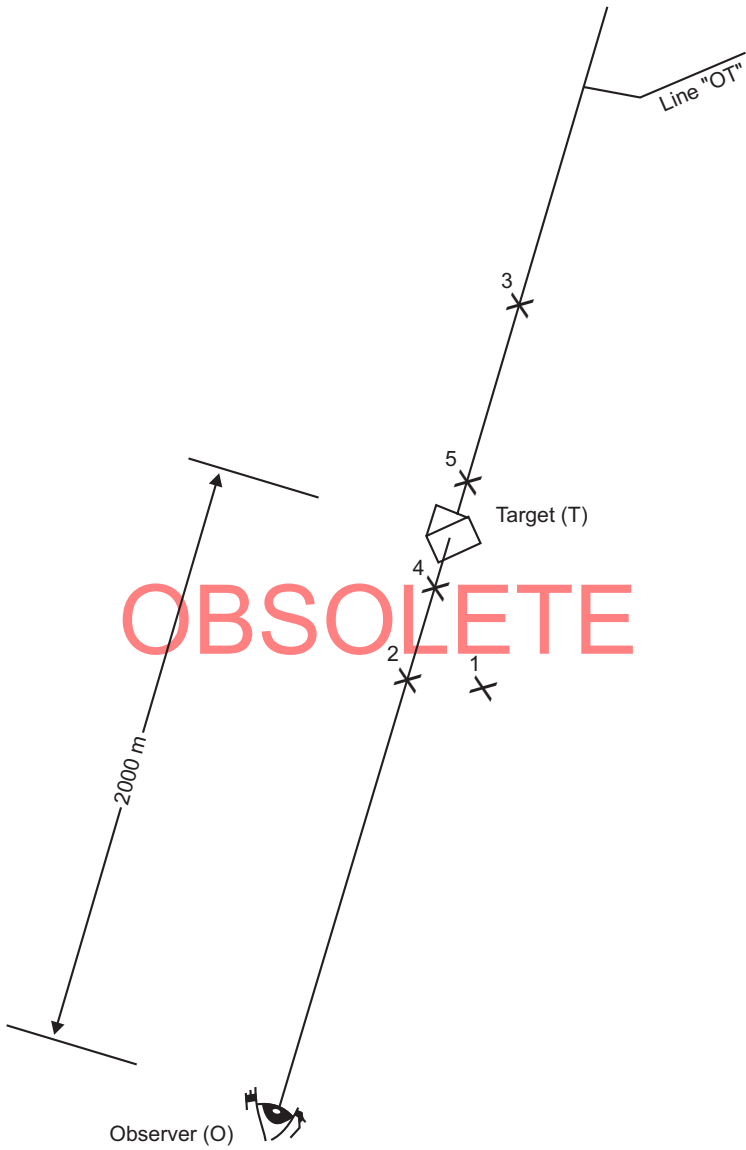


Figure 2-4. Adjustment of Fire

**TABLE 2-2. EXAMPLE OF THE PROCESS OF ADJUSTMENT**

<i>Round</i>	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Correction</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>
1.	Right 100 mils	'LEFT 200'
2.	Short	'ADD 400'
3.	Over	'DROP 200'
4.	Short	'ADD 100'
5.	Over	'DROP 50 TARGET'

12. At any time the FO may take over the fire mission and carry out the engagement using the report 'TARGET IDENTIFIED'.

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## CHAPTER 3

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

#### SECTION 3-1. TACTICAL INFORMATION

##### General

301. Any plan made by a commander in the field must be based on all the information at his disposal. The more accurate and complete the information the more likely the plan is to succeed.

302. In battle, forward platoons are a most important source of information to a company or battalion commander. They keep him constantly informed of enemy activities and the nature of the country in front of the forward defended localities, or over which the company or battalion is moving. Commanders at all levels may base their plans and operations, sometimes wholly, on the information provided by forward platoons.

303. Despite all the other calls on their time and attention, platoon and section commanders must send back tactical information as a matter of urgency. They must also remember that information needs to flow both ways and must keep their men informed of the situation.

##### Information Required

304. During operations, information is required from the forward troops on:

- a. the enemy,
- b. friendly forces, and
- c. the ground.

305. **The Enemy.** The company or battalion commander will want to know the answers to the following questions about the enemy:

- a. Who is he?
- b. Where is he?
- c. What has he got and how many?
- d. What is he doing and how is he doing it?
- e. What is he likely to do and how is he likely to do it?

306. **Friendly Forces.** A commander must, at all times, have the following information concerning his troops:

- a. Where are they?
- b. How far have they been able to get?
- c. What are the troops on their flanks doing?
- d. What are their losses in men and equipment?
- e. What is their present fighting state?

307. **The Ground.** So that he may decide upon the best use of troops and equipment, a commander will want to know the following about the ground:

- a. What is the 'going' like? (Density and type of vegetation, type of surface, suitability for movement).
- b. What obstacles, natural or artificial are there? How can they be overcome?
- c. Is the existing map accurate? Are any corrections necessary?
- d. What is the condition of roads and tracks?
- e. How wide and deep are the streams? How fast do they flow?
- f. What open areas exist? How large are they?
- g. What are the areas of tactical importance?

### Obtaining Information

308. The information required by commanders will sometimes be readily available to the forward troops, but often they will have to take special steps to secure it. There will always be a requirement for the unit to organise a patrol programme which includes fighting and reconnaissance patrols, setting up OP and any other measure deemed necessary. Full use of all the senses and skills in patrolling and tracking will be necessary. More detail is contained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.3, Patrolling and Tracking*.

309. Prisoners of war and captured documents and equipment are valuable sources of information. The interrogation of prisoners, examination of equipment and translation of documents are the responsibility of trained personnel. Prisoners and captured articles must be sent to company headquarters immediately after capture for movement back to battalion headquarters. The quicker information is extracted, the quicker it can be used to advantage.

310. **Negative Information.** Negative information, such as the absence of the enemy from a given area, is also of great value. Forward troops should not fail to report even the most trivial item of information concerning the enemy. It is from these many small items from all over the battalion area that a picture of the enemy's strength and intentions can be drawn. Keen observation and an enquiring mind are required.

## SECTION 3-2. REPORTING

### General

311. It is important to pass information back accurately and promptly. A patrol diary will greatly assist accuracy of detail on long patrols.

312. Messages used to report information must have the following characteristics:

- a. *Accuracy.* Such details as grid references, figures, dates and times must be carefully checked before the message is sent. If the observer cannot be certain of numbers, use the word 'ESTIMATED'.
- b. *Brevity.* Provided it is clear, the shorter the message the better. Leave out unnecessary words. In written messages, use only common abbreviations and write legibly.
- c. *Clarity.* There must be no doubt about the meaning. 'ENEMY TANKS TO MY FRONT' may mean a squadron of enemy tanks advancing or two enemy tanks stationary. Be precise.

313. In verbal and written reports, the following points must be included:

- a. The time of the event or observation.
- b. The source of the information. Answers to one or more of the following questions are needed:
  - (1) Who saw it?
  - (2) Where was it when he saw it?
  - (3) Who heard it?
  - (4) Where did he hear it?
  - (5) From whom did he hear it?
- c. The place at which the event happened, eg, grid reference or estimated distance and direction from a known or easily recognisable point.

### Method of Reporting

314. **Verbal Reports.** In some circumstances information may be passed personally to the next higher commander. In this way any queries can be answered and misunderstandings cleared up on the spot. Details can be pointed out on the ground, on a map or on an improvised model, and the enemy cannot intercept the message.



315. **Reports by Radio and Telephone.** Reports will frequently be sent by radio or field telephone. When using either radio or telephone, strict attention must be paid to security. Details of the message format for most reports are included in *MLW One 5.1, Staff Duties in the Field* and should be included in unit SOPs.

316. **Written Messages.** When a verbal report cannot be made, or a message is too long to be remembered by an orderly, a written message is required. If possible, send written messages on the standard message forms. If these are not available any paper may be used. The requirements for message writing are detailed in *MLW One 5.1, Staff Duties in the Field*.

317. **Verbal Messages by Runner.** This is the least satisfactory way of passing information as misunderstandings can easily occur. Even a simple message may be distorted. Verbal messages should always be short, and the sender of the message should:

- a. pick a reliable man to take it;
- b. think it out carefully so that he can give it to the messenger without hesitation;
- c. give it slowly and clearly; and
- d. after a pause, make the messenger repeat it twice to ensure that he has memorised it, correctly.

### SECTION 3-3. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE RIFLE COMPANY

#### General

318. Communications between company headquarters, the rifle platoons and any attached troops of the battalion or supporting arms may be by:

- a. radio,
- b. line,
- c. personal contact,
- d. runner, or
- e. light signals and smoke.

#### Radio

319. Radio is the primary means of communicating between the company commander and his platoons. Company headquarters will man radios on battalion nets and the company internal net. A standard radio diagram for the rifle company command net is shown in [Annex A](#) to this chapter.

320. **Rifle Platoon.** The platoon radio will be carried and operated by a rifleman who is a trained and qualified signaller. All soldiers in the platoon should be trained to set up and use the platoon radio, and correctly send and receive simple messages. The procedure to be used for radio communication is detailed in *MLW Two, Sig Trg 2.3, Radio Telephone Procedure*. The basis for training in radio communications is provided in *MLW Two, Sig Trg 2.2, Radio Communications*.

321. **Antennas.** Radio operators and platoon and section commanders must know how to operate the radio equipment they are likely to use, and how to use the power of the set most effectively. All radio stations should erect the most efficient antenna possible and should be prepared to relay traffic if necessary. These aspects of radio communications are described in *MLW Two, Sig Trg 2.2, Radio Communications*.

322. **Siting.** In siting the platoon radio, which will normally be VHF, users and operators must remember that the position of the radio is critical for good communications. When siting VHF radios, the following general points should be borne in mind:

- a. a line-of-sight transmission path is ideal;
- b. the set should be as high as possible;
- c. a move of a few metres will often restore communications;
- d. avoid placing the set in front of a reflecting object such as a cliff, building, water tank, or metal bridge; and
- e. avoid sources of electrical interference and power lines.

323. The signals platoon maintains a reserve of VHF radios which can be issued to rifle companies for OP parties, standing patrols or other detachments from the platoons or company.

324. In addition to the VHF radio set normally used by platoons, a pool of HF radio sets is held by the signal platoon for use when long range communications are required. Company headquarters are issued an HF radio as an alternative means of communications on the battalion command net.

## **Line**

325. Sufficient line stores, including a switchboard, are carried within company headquarters to enable line communications to be established within the company area. On occasions, line communications may also be established between platoon headquarters and sentry positions, OPs and standing patrols. Line can be cut by shelling and tracked vehicles. Burying

or suspending line off the ground will reduce the chance of cutting. Line should be duplicated on a different route so that if one line is broken the alternative can still be used.

### **Personal Contact**

326. Personal contact is the best method by which commanders at all levels can pass orders or information to their subordinates. Detailed briefings can be given and the commander can ensure that his subordinates understand. He can also pass written material or equipment at the same time.

### **Runner**

327. A runner may sometimes be used to carry messages when radio or line communication is not possible, or when the message is long. A platoon commander relies a great deal on his runner for communications with his sections as he will not normally have radio communications with them.

### **Light and Smoke Signals**

328. The use of light and smoke signals is restricted by security considerations and the range of colours available. They can also be confused with enemy and other light signals or other flares. They are normally used:

- a. to indicate success, for example, in the assault or on successful arrival at a destination;
- b. to indicate the start of a part of an operation;
- c. for calling down artillery or mortar fire; or
- d. in conjunction with radio to indicate targets or the location of positions to supporting aircraft.

### **Communications Within the Platoon**

329. Additional methods of communication within the platoon are:

- a. field signals,
- b. whistle,
- c. communication cord, and
- d. expedient signals.

330. **Field Signals.** With practice, a remarkable amount of information can be passed by means of field signals. They are often the best means of control and have the advantage of being silent. The standard signals are shown in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.1, The Infantry Soldiers Handbook*.

331. **Whistle.** Blasts on a whistle are an effective and simple method of communication between the platoon commander and his section commanders but, like voice control, should only be used when noise is acceptable. They are best used to attract attention and then used in conjunction with another means such as field signals. Whistles may be particularly useful in the night attack.

332. **Communication Cord.** In defence, a good method of communication between the platoon commander and his section commanders is to connect their fire trenches with string or cord. Signals are given by a series of tugs indicating certain action. This method can also be used effectively between the section commander and the machine gun pit or sentry post and in ambushes, between groups. Sufficient strong cord should always be carried within the platoon to provide communication cords.

333. **Expedient Signals.** Expedient signals consist of all special methods and devices used to transmit commands or information. All signals must be understood and rehearsed before their use. During training and in operations, platoons may develop or utilise expedient signalling devices such as:

- a. *Flags.* Flags can be used very effectively, especially in mounted operations, to send pre-arranged signals over long distances; and
- b. *Mirrors.* Mirrors can be a very effective means of sending signals.

#### SECTION 3-4. SECURITY OF INFORMATION

##### General

334. It is the responsibility of every soldier to make sure that the enemy's task of collecting information about friendly troops is made as difficult as possible.

##### Enemy Sources of Information in the Field

335. Enemy sources of information in the field and the methods of preventing him from utilising these sources are shown in [Table 3-1](#).

**TABLE 3-1. COUNTERING ENEMY INFORMATION SOURCES**

<i>Serial</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Counter</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>
1.	Reconnaissance and surveillance, ground and air.	Aggressive patrolling, camouflage, concealment fieldcraft and deception.
2.	Interrogation of our troops taken prisoner.	Training of personnel in their duties if captured (Section 5-7).
3.	Interception of our radio or telephone communications.	Strict adherence to correct radio and telephone procedure /security measures (paragraph 336). Reduce use to a minimum.
4.	Captured documents.	Control over the distribution of maps and documents. Collection, before going into operations, of official documents, diaries, notes and similar identifying material, which are secured until return. All waste paper must be burnt (Section 5-7)
5.	Careless talk.	Instruction on the dangers of discussing projected moves and operations, in speculation on the same subjects, and passing on rumours.
6.	Letters.	Instruction to all ranks on what may or may not be mentioned in letters.
7.	Refuse.	Destruction and concealment of all refuse, particularly during mobile operations and on patrols (Section 5-8).

Serial	Source	Counter
(a)	(b)	(c)
8.	Civilian and refugees.	Alerting troops to the fact that the enemy will use local inhabitants and refugees as informers and agents. These people should be handled tactfully, yet firmly, in accordance with orders relating to them.
9.	Animals.	Alert the troops that animals can be used to disclose wire, booby traps, trip flares, anti-personnel minefields and to neutralise sensor devices.

### Radio and Telephone Security

336. **Radio.** Every transmission by radio is liable to interception by the enemy, even beyond the normal range of the radio. The information gained in this way will supplement that received from other sources and may enable enemy intelligence to discover our dispositions and to deduce our plans for battle. Correct use of codes, changing of frequencies and callsigns, and reporting of breaches in security are essential procedures for maintaining communications security. The rules of radio telephone (RATEL) procedure must always be adhered to by operators and users. RATEL procedure is prescribed in *MLW Two, Sig Trg 2.3, Radio Telephone Procedure*.

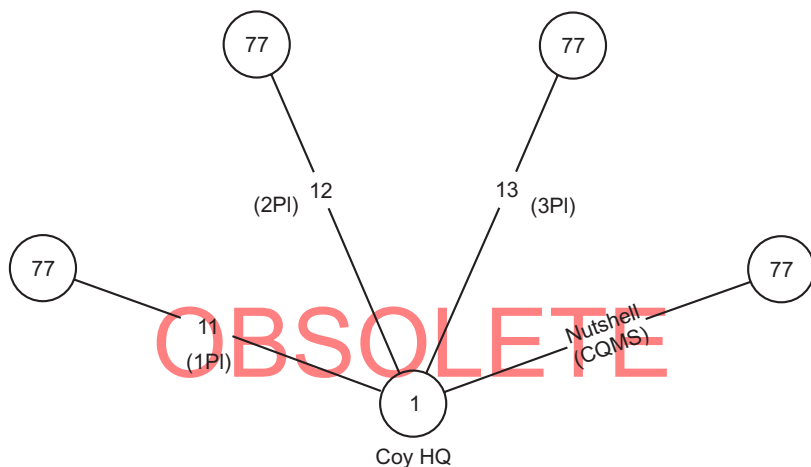
337. **Telephone.** The enemy can tap telephone lines without interfering with the line. The rules of RATEL procedure must therefore be adhered to by all users of telephone equipment.

**Annex:**     A. [Standard Radio Diagram for the Rifle Company](#)

**OBSOLETE**

**ANNEX A TO  
CHAPTER 3**

**STANDARD RADIO DIAGRAM FOR THE RIFLE COMPANY**



**Notes:**

1. This net's callsigns belong to A Coy (Callsign One). For B Coy platoons callsigns would be 21, 22, 23 and 20, similarly for C and D Coys.
2. Manned by company orderly/signaller.
3. Link to Bn HQ manned by signal platoon detachment complete with their radios.
4. Company radio stores allocation is:
  - a. 6 x ANPRC 77 sets complete (1 spare)
  - b. 1 x Antenna RC 292
5. Typical company line equipment is:
  - a. 5 x telephone sets K
  - b. 1 x Switchboard 993 GT
  - c. 1 x dispenser of telephone cable (805 m)



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## CHAPTER 4

### LEADERSHIP

#### SECTION 4-1. LEADERSHIP IN BATTLE

##### General

401. Leadership is described in detail in *MLW Three 2.1, Leadership*. This chapter will deal briefly with leadership in battle and command and control at platoon level.

402. Leadership is the art of influencing and directing men so as to obtain their willing obedience, confidence, respect and loyal cooperation. The outcome of most battles depends upon leadership — especially the leadership of platoon and section commanders.

403. In battle, the platoon and section commanders must be aware of the stress under which men will be, and how this may influence their soldiers' actions in both the short and long term. Under fire, they must realise that some soldiers may sit in the bottom of their pits and not use their weapons for instance. Commanders must identify the problems quickly and take resolute and effective action.

404. The qualities which distinguish a leader from other men are courage, willpower, initiative, knowledge and, probably above all, unselfishness. The foundations of leadership must be laid long before the battle begins.

##### Discipline

405. Military discipline is a combination of imposed discipline and self discipline. Imposed discipline is designed to introduce the standards of obedience and behaviour that are demanded in battle. As the soldiers develop through training and experience they learn to discipline themselves, and it is this self discipline that will determine the outcome of battle.

406. Discipline is a state of mind that produces a readiness for willing and intelligent obedience. In battle there must be the highest degree of discipline as it enables a soldier to carry out orders efficiently and quickly and rely on others to do the same. The aim of military discipline is to produce technically skilled, self-reliant, self-disciplined soldiers, working together as members of a team.

407. The standard of discipline in the platoon will reflect the standard of leadership. A good leader will ensure that a state of mutual respect exists

between himself and his men. He must ensure that each man has developed sufficient self control. He must have pride in his job, in himself and in his team, and faith in the leader. He must obey willingly any order he is given, or do whatever is necessary to achieve the platoon and section mission in the absence of further orders.

## **Morale**

408. The morale of the soldier is the greatest single factor in war. Morale is founded on discipline, leadership and self respect. It is the degree of confidence a soldier feels in himself, in his leaders, in his group, in his profession and in his ability to overcome all obstacles. When both individual and team morale are high, the sub-unit and the individuals are much more likely to survive the rigours of combat.

## **The Leader**

409. Leading in battle is not fundamentally different from leading in other circumstances - the team must be led to accomplish its task effectively and efficiently. In battle, the effectiveness of the team depends on its ability to meet the additional challenging stresses and demands of the combat environment. The impact of two major causes of stress on operations, fear and fatigue are described in *MLW Three 2,1, Leadership*. The platoon commander must set the example and ensure that his section commanders understand the effects of fear and fatigue in battle and how to minimise them.

410. **Platoon Commander.** A platoon commander's chief means of control are voice, whistle, radio and the use of field or special signals. He must position himself where he can use them most effectively. Although personal presence and voice predominate in an infantry battle, the platoon commander may have to rely on the radio. The platoon commander should position himself where he can see the whole battle area, where he can direct and influence the battle, and where people can get to him. The platoon commander is not another rifleman and should not, except in a crisis, get himself involved in the firefight.

411. **Section Commander.** In battle the section commander will position himself where he can lead his section and inspire his men by example. In an attack, he will probably control his section best by positioning himself in the centre and slightly ahead. There will be occasions when, in order to direct his section best and make full use of his fire power, he will position himself level with, or even to the rear of his section.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **SECTION 5-1. GENERAL**

501. Sound administration is an element of command and is essential for the maintenance of efficiency and high morale. The main administrative considerations at platoon level are:

- a. resupply of combat supplies;
- b. supply of essential stores for a particular operation;
- c. replacement or repair of weapons, equipment and clothing;
- d. medical care and evacuation of casualties;
- e. reception of reinforcements;
- f. welfare of soldiers;
- g. the handling of enemy prisoners;
- h. health and hygiene; and
- i. burial of the dead.

502. All of these matters are the direct concern of the platoon commander, platoon sergeant and section commanders.

503. The administrative organisations of the infantry battalion are described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Battalion*.

#### **SECTION 5-2. PLATOON COMMANDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **General**

504. The platoon commander is responsible for the administration of his platoon, both in barracks and in the field. Even though he may delegate certain routine administrative tasks to his platoon sergeant and section commanders, he alone is responsible for ensuring that these tasks have been correctly carried out, and that his platoon is fit for battle.

##### **Platoon Commander's Notebook**

505. It is essential that the platoon commander maintains a personal notebook containing detailed information to allow him to appreciate the capabilities and limitations of each man. Basic details should be entered as soon as the man joins the platoon and comments added regularly.

506. On active service there should be two books:

- a. The first, a small, waterproof book, contains the bare essentials for use during field training and in action, for instance:
  - (1) number, rank, name and initials;
  - (2) date of birth;
  - (3) religion;
  - (4) blood group;
  - (5) weapon number; and
  - (6) size of boots and basic clothing items.
- b. The second book should be stiff-backed and loose-leafed. It should contain at least three pages relating to each man, one recording his military history and qualifications, one recording his family and next of kin details, and the other recording regularly entered confidential facts and opinions on the soldier's performance. The platoon sergeant and the section commanders should be consulted to assist in maintaining these records.

## SECTION 5-3. RESUPPLY

### The Resupply System

507. The resupply system for platoons is based on daily maintenance for combat supplies (ammunition, rations and packaged water). The provision of other commodities is on demand, either on a routine or a priority basis.

508. **Routine Demands.** Non-operationally urgent demands are requested as a maintenance demand (MAINTDEM). MAINTDEMS for the following day are normally passed to the CQMS or his representative during the daily maintenance.

509. **Priority Demands.** Priority maintenance demands (PRIMAINTDEMS) may be requested by radio and will take precedence over routine demands. The items will be delivered as soon as they are available by the next available means.

510. **Operational Demands.** Urgently required items that are necessary for continued operations are requested by radio as operational demands (OPDEM). The items will be delivered as soon as they are available by the fastest possible means.

511. Details of the message forms for MAINTDEM, PRIMAINTDEM and OPDEM should be included in unit SOPs.

### **Ammunition**

512. Each member of the platoon carries a given amount of ammunition for his weapon. This amount should be detailed in unit SOPs.

513. When a platoon requires more ammunition, it should be brought forward from the battalion holdings during routine resupply. The battalion's holdings are referred to as first line ammunition.

514. The CSM holds an immediate reserve of all types of ammunition for the platoons and the amount held is normally detailed in unit SOPs. The CSM will issue his holdings only in an emergency when the battalion holdings cannot be sent forward.

515. The RSM will normally hold a company's worth of ammunition and this will similarly be issued in an emergency when the battalion's holdings cannot be sent forward.

### **Water**

516. Provision of water to platoons will be the subject of orders from battalion and company headquarters. One or more of the following may apply:

- a. Collection of water may be by platoons from an approved local source. Such water must be filtered and sterilised using the Millbank filter and tablets carried by each soldier.
- b. Soldiers may be required to collect rain water falling directly onto individual shelters or into suitable containers.
- c. Water may be delivered from a battalion or company water point. Such water must be purified by filtration and disinfection.
- d. Delivery of water may be from an engineer water point. Such water will already have been purified.

517. If water is scarce or likely to be scarce, careful control of its distribution and the holding of a reserve are necessary. Water is time consuming to collect and heavy to carry. Replenishment must be planned.

518. It will often be necessary to provide protection for section or platoon water parties as natural water sources are likely sites for enemy ambush.

## Rations

519. There are five types of rations:

- a. fresh rations or canned equivalent,
- b. 10 man combat rations,
- c. 24 hour ration packs,
- d. individual meal combat ration, and
- e. emergency combat ration.

520. Fresh rations or canned equivalent are issued whenever possible and may be cooked centrally by company cooks, or on a platoon or section basis. Centralised cooking reduces waste but because of restrictions, such as the tactical situation or deployment, will usually only be delivered at night.

521. The 10 man combat ration pack is designed to feed 10 men for one day and may be cooked in the same way as fresh rations.

522. The 24-hour individual ration pack is designed for issue over periods of up to six weeks, usually during mobile operation. 24-hour rations are nutritious and designed to be eaten hot or cold.

523. The individual meal combat ration is a self-contained meal for one man and is used when no other form of ration is practicable

524. Each man carries an emergency combat ration to be eaten only on the orders of his platoon or section commander. Emergency combat rations should not be eaten simply because one scheduled meal does not arrive. When deciding whether to eat the combat ration, the commander must consider the physical well-being of his soldiers, the likelihood of future resupply and the availability of food from local sources.

525. Whatever the type of rationing, the food is received in the battalion by the quartermaster platoon and either distributed in hot boxes or divided into company lots for collection by the CQMSs or their representatives. They distribute it to platoons as either prepared food or as rations. Distribution to sections is normally arranged by the platoon sergeant. The aim, whatever the circumstances or ration type available, should be to produce two hot meals each day, in the morning and at night and a midday cold snack.

## Other Stores

526. Platoon requirements include stores such as:

- a. oil and cleaning materials for weapons;

- b. replacement weapons and spare parts;
- c. defence stores such as wire, pickets, sandbags and revetting materials;
- d. replacement boots, equipment and clothing;
- e. fuel, when cooking is on a platoon basis, and additional hexamine tablets for individual cooking;
- f. spare radio batteries; and
- g. tools and other equipments as required.

527. The platoon sergeant, having collated section needs, obtains these items through the CQMS by the procedure described in paragraphs 507 to 511.

528. **The Echelon Bag System.** The echelon bag system is normally used when the unit is in the field. Each soldier is permitted to have an echelon bag containing items required on a periodic basis, during lulls in operations, and rest periods. Typical items are clean uniforms, toiletry articles, spare socks, underclothes, boots and other personal items. Echelon bags are held in sub-unit groups, usually at B echelon, and called forward as required. Unit SOPs often dictate items to be included.

### **Resupply by Air**

529. Resupply by air is discussed in [Section 2-8](#).

## **SECTION 5-4. BATTLE CASUALTIES**

### **First Aid**

530. An important factor in maintaining a soldier's morale is the knowledge that, should he be wounded, his comrades are sufficiently trained to care for him. Within the company every soldier must have a basic knowledge of first aid. This should include:

- a. use of shell dressing,
- b. how to treat burns,
- c. how to give artificial respiration,
- d. how to stop bleeding,
- e. how to deal with shock, and
- f. how to recognise and deal with illness caused by exposure to harsh weather conditions.



531. The essentials of first aid are as follows:
- a. *Save Life.* Stopbleedingandmaintain a free free airway.
  - b. *Prevent Condition Becoming Worse.* Treatforshock, immobilise fractures and cover wounds.
  - c. *Relieve Pain.* Use of splints and dressings.
  - d. *Prevent Further Wounding.* Get casualties to a safe place and mark the location so that stretcher bearers can locate them.
532. The emergency care and treatment of the injured and sick is detailed in *MLW Two, Med and Dent Trg 3.1, First Aid* and *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2. 1, The Infantry Soldiers Handbook*.

### Evacuation

533. **Evacuation From the Platoon Location.** If a casualty is able to walk he will move back to the company aid post (CAP). If he is a stretcher case, company headquarters should be asked to provide stretcher bearers. Where they are not available, the platoon sergeant should arrange for the casualties to be carried back on improvised stretchers. Casualties may be collected from the platoon or company location by helicopter or ambulance and taken directly to the RAP or to rear medical units for treatment. A casualty being evacuated from the platoon is to take his rifle, a few rounds of ammunition and his personal equipment. No other weapons, such as MGs, SRAAWs, mines, grenade launcher, or controlled stores, are to be taken.

534. **CAP.** A medical assistant from the medical platoon will usually establish the CAP. He will check the first aid given to the patient and prepare casualties for movement to the battalion RAP or, under some circumstances, further to the rear.

535. **Evacuation to the RAP.** Casualties will usually reach the RAP:

- a. by walking,
- b. carried by stretcher bearers attached to companies, or
- c. collected by stretcher bearers or an ambulance from the RAP.

536. **RAP.** At the RAP, the regimental medical officer (RMO) will ascertain the condition of the casualties and allocate a priority for evacuation. Casualties will then be given treatment to prepare them for further evacuation to medical units. The casualty's rifle and personal equipment will remain with him during his evacuation. Any ammunition will be removed before the casualty leaves the RAP.

## Enemy and Civilian Casualties

537. Enemy and civilian casualties are to be afforded the same medical treatment as friendly casualties and are to be evacuated from the CZ by the same means. There is to be no discrimination between friendly, enemy and civilian casualties.

538. Enemy casualties should be searched before first aid treatment and the following must be confiscated:

- a. arms, ammunition and personal web equipment;
- b. compasses;
- c. binoculars; and
- d. papers and equipment.

## Burials

539. It is equally important for the sake of morale that all burials are conducted with dignity and without delay. A chaplain should conduct them, but where this is not possible they should be conducted by an officer.

540. In operations, it will be rare for more than an emergency burial to take place either at the point of contact or after evacuation to the rear. Care must be taken to ensure that the grave is properly marked. It must also be recorded with an eight figure grid reference. All documentation must be completed in accordance with current administrative orders so that subsequent relocation and reinterment can occur. Detailed requirements should be included in unit SOPs.

541. If the burial is not to take place in the platoon locality, company headquarters is to arrange for the body to be removed as soon as possible.

## SECTION 5-5. REINFORCEMENTS

### General

542. On arrival in the theatre of operations, reinforcements are held at the reinforcement holding unit (RHU) where they are acclimatised and trained before being posted to the battalion. Some reinforcements will usually be held in an echelon. As casualties occur, reinforcements will be moved forward to join their new platoons and replaced by troops from the RHU.

543. When a new member joins the platoon he should be briefed by the platoon commander on the situation and the routine within the platoon. Once allotted to a section, the section commander must assist him to fit

into the team as quickly as possible. Ideally, reinforcements should be allotted to units between operations or during quiet periods, to give them time to adjust to their new environment. Platoon and section commanders must be aware that a reinforcement, especially one without combat experience, will be under more severe stress in a combat situation than the remainder of the platoon.

## SECTION 5-6. WELFARE

544. No commander must lose sight of the fact that good welfare is a major contributory factor to good morale.

545. **Chaplains.** A good chaplain, whatever his denomination, is invaluable. He should be assisted in every way possible to bring spiritual and material comfort to soldiers. His presence can assist the wounded and badly shocked by providing comfort and reassurance.

546. **Mail.** One of the most important single contributions to good morale is the regular arrival and departure of mail. Mail to and from troops on operations is passed through the daily maintenance system. The platoon sergeant must ensure that all outgoing mail is collected and dispatched daily and that all incoming mail is distributed promptly.

547. **News and Briefings.** In war, personal and local problems tend to assume undue importance. Regular briefings on the battle situation and the provision of newspapers, news bulletins and battalion news letters, keep everyone in touch with the general situation and keep local problems in perspective.

548. **Pay.** Poor pay administration will have an adverse effect on morale. On operations, the main considerations are that:

- a. soldiers receive sufficient money in the field to meet their needs,
- b. allowances and remittances to dependants be paid promptly, and
- c. platoon commanders have sufficient knowledge about pay administration to be able to give immediate advice on matters such as allotments and remittances.

549. **Amenities.** Platoon commanders must guard against boredom when soldiers are not actually fighting or working. Ready access to amenities such as libraries, motion pictures and sporting facilities will do much to alleviate this boredom.

## SECTION 5-7. PRISONERS OF WAR

### Conduct If Taken Prisoner

550. It is the responsibility of every commander to prepare his men for war. This preparation would be incomplete unless each man is fully conversant with his rights and duties if taken prisoner, and is aware of the psychological effects of being captured. This topic is covered in detail in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Soldiers Handbook*.

### Enemy Prisoners

551. Speed is essential in handling and passing back prisoners of war. Platoon and section commanders must ensure that prisoners are disarmed immediately and searched to prevent the destruction of equipment or documents. The following actions are then to be carried out:

- a. All personal equipment, documents and detachable insignia are to be removed and placed in a suitable receptacle. They are labelled to associate them with a particular prisoner, place and date/time of capture and capturing unit.
- b. Officers, political officers, NCOs and other ranks, males and females, are separated. Talking and smoking are forbidden.
- c. Time and place of capture are reported to company headquarters, if possible at the time of capture.
- d. Prisoners are sent back to company headquarters under guard, the strength of the escort depending on the number and condition of the prisoners. The escort will take any captured equipment and documents with them. Walking wounded may be used as prisoner escorts, however, they must be fully capable of carrying out the task.
- e. Prisoners can be used to carry stretcher cases.
- f. Enemy wounded will be treated in the same way as our own.

## SECTION 5-8. HEALTH AND HYGIENE

552. Casualties, caused by sickness and disease can out-number battle casualties in operations. Good hygiene is the greatest single contributor to a high standard of health. The RMO and his medical assistants are available to advise on hygiene matters, but the platoon commander is responsible for the health and hygiene of his platoon.

553. **Ablutions.** Regular washing is essential for good health. Twenty-five litres of water per day per person for all purposes is considered to be the minimum. Often it is not possible to issue this amount during operations, so very strict individual and collective water economy may be necessary.

554. **Latrines.** Latrines must be sited and dug as soon as possible. The hole should be no more than 30 cm wide, at least 1 m long and not less than 1 m deep. Earth from the hole is piled behind and a tin provided as a scoop so that each man may cover his motion with earth after using the latrine. A fire trench should be dug nearby to protect anyone caught in the open by enemy fire. Latrines should be:

- a. sited 20-30 m downwind;
- b. located in the shade, especially in the tropics;
- c. in cover, such as on reverse slopes, or in hollows, or scrub;
- d. within the platoon perimeter;
- e. at least 50 m from waterpoints and in such a position that they cannot drain towards the waterpoint; and
- f. filled in when no longer required.

555. **Urinals.** Urinals require equally careful siting to ensure that they will be used in preference to the ground around the position. The pit should be at least 30 cm deep and the bottom should be covered with leaves and twigs. Urinals should not be sited within 50 m of a water point and should be filled in when no longer required.

556. **Refuse.** Visible refuse advertises troops' presence from air and ground, and is bad for hygiene as it encourages flies and rats. All refuse must be burnt and the residue buried in a refuse pit which is filled in when it is no longer required. Tins must be flattened before being buried. Ideally, there should be a refuse pit per section of 0.6 x 0.6 x 1.3 m. Many animals, particularly pigs, root up refuse, so shallow pits are useless. In certain circumstances, eg in protracted defence, backloading may be preferable.

557. **Water.** Coupled with the conservation of water, water discipline includes the necessity for every man to drink water to keep himself fit. This is particularly important in the heat where dehydration can cause collapse. It has been estimated that as much as 20 litres per man per day could be needed in certain conditions of climate and activity. Infected and unclean water is a carrier of disease and Millbank filter bags and water sterilising tablets must be used if there is any doubt about the cleanliness of the water supply.

558. **Personal Hygiene.** Cleanliness helps to protect the body against diseases, but cleanliness alone is not enough. By failing to take precautions against disease, or by drinking unsterilised water, a person who is scrupulously clean bodily, may yet endanger his health and life. Strict compliance with all rules and instructions for the protection of health is the only way to avoid diseases. The following points must be kept in mind:

- a. Feet should be washed, dried and, if possible, powdered each day.
- b. The opportunity to have a bath should not be neglected.
- c. Socks should be changed regularly and kept well darned.
- d. Boots should be pliable and in good repair and, although well fitting, must allow room for some toe movement and expansion of the foot.
- e. Nails should be kept short and clean.
- f. Teeth should be cleaned at least once daily.
- g. Hands should be washed before eating and after every visit to the latrine.
- h. Shaving should occur at least daily.
- i. Sun bathing is beneficial but must be very carefully controlled as sunburn is debilitating.
- j. Clothing, sleeping bag liners etc must be washed regularly, aired and inspected for bugs and infestation.
- k. Mess tins and eating utensils must be carefully cleaned after use.
- l. Body inspections, especially foot inspections, should be carried out regularly by both regimental and medical officers. This is an essential part of a regimental officer's duty and should not be delegated entirely to medical officers and orderlies.

559. Health and hygiene is described in detail in *MLW Two, Med and Dent Trg 2.1, Preventive Medicine*.

560. **Fitness.** Fit men are able to fight better and remain healthy longer than unfit men. Keeping himself and his men fully fit is an essential task of the platoon commander. Battle fitness requires endurance and mental toughness. A programme of battle PT must be designed and followed.

561. **Fatigue.** Fatigue will be an ever-present factor affecting a soldier's performance, regardless of his degree of fitness, morale and training. Platoon and section commanders must continually be aware of this problem, particularly in themselves. Although the effects of fatigue are lessened by physical fitness, the ability to perform mental tasks (make an appreciation or a decision, or prepare navigation data) will be affected.

562. Work loads must be shared and the commander must take care not to over-use one soldier, section or platoon. The same scouts should not be used all the time or the strain will quickly wear down their performance. Load carrying must be spread amongst the section(s). If night activity is heavy, troops must, wherever possible, rest during the day. Rest should be taken whenever the situation permits.

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## PART TWO - BATTLECRAFT

### CHAPTER 6

## TACTICAL FORMATIONS AND CONTACT DRILLS

### SECTION 6-1. GENERAL

601. Section formations are used when the section is moving tactically. They save time in tactical movement and assist in achieving control and security. They serve as the basis of tactical teamwork upon which more advanced infantry section tactics depend. In selecting a section formation, the commander must consider the following factors:

- a. *The Ground, Terrain and Vegetation.* Some formations are best suited to close country or to night movement, while others are better for open country and allow a wider search pattern.
- b. *The Enemy.* The direction from which enemy contact is expected and the form of that contact will influence the formation adopted. Some formations are better able to produce maximum firepower to the front and should be used in an assault or advance to contact, if possible. Other formations provide better firepower to the flanks and may be used to counter enemy ambushes, or to provide protection to another party.
- c. *Control.* The section commander must maintain control. He must select the formation that best allows him to control the movement and firepower of the whole section.

### SECTION 6-2. SECTION FORMATIONS

#### General

602. Each individual must know his location in the formation relative to the other members of the section and the section commander. Each soldier covers a set arc of responsibility for observation as the section is moving. These arcs of observation must be pre-determined. To provide the section with all-round protection they must interlock.

603. The section formation will be altered as necessary by the section commander while the section is moving. The distance between men will be determined by the task, the nature of the threat, the closeness of the country, and by the visibility. As a general rule, the section should be dispersed up to the limit of control, thereby allowing a wide area to be covered and making the section less vulnerable to enemy ground and air attack, and its movement less easy to detect.



604. The basic section formations are:

- a. single file,
- b. staggered file,
- c. open file,
- d. arrowhead, and
- e. extended line.

605. **Single file.** The single file formation (Figure 6-1) is useful for following narrow features such as creeks, minefield lanes and narrow tracks in close country or by night:

- a. *Advantages:*
  - (1) good control and speed,
  - (2) least vulnerable to fire from a flank, and
  - (3) good for night movement.
- b. *Disadvantages:*
  - (1) poor firepower to the front, and
  - (2) vulnerable to frontal fire.

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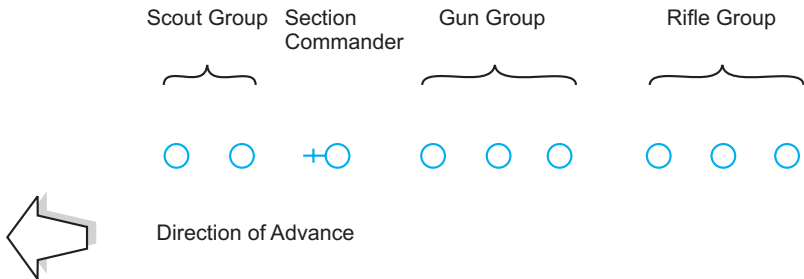


Figure 6-1. Single File

606. **Staggered File.** Staggered file (Figure 6-2 ) may be used when the path is wide enough to permit alternate men to move on opposite sides of it. It is good for ridge and track clearance and for administrative moves along a cleared road:

a. *Advantages:*

- (1) good firepower to the flanks,
- (2) good control in relatively close country, and
- (3) suitable for night movement.

b. *Disadvantages:*

- (1) covers a narrow front,
- (2) vulnerable to frontal fire,
- (3) presents a concentrated target, and
- (4) splits the section group.

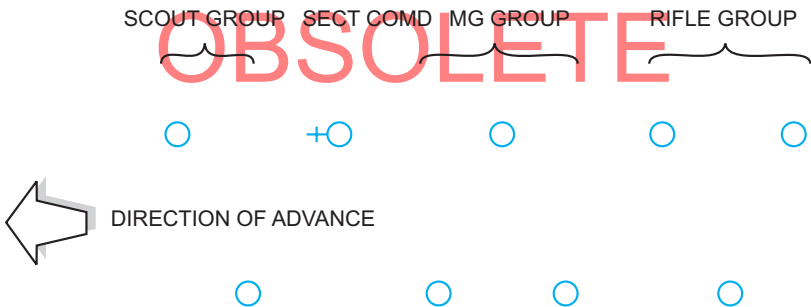


Figure 6-2. Staggered File

607. **Open File.** Open file (Figure 6-3 ) may be used when the path made by the scouts is wide enough to permit alternate men to move on both sides of it (as for staggered file).

a. *Advantages:*

- (1) good firepower to the flanks,

- (2) good control in relatively close country,
- (3) suitable for night movement, and
- (4) contact drill positions easily reached.

b. *Disadvantages:*

- (1) covers a narrow front,
- (2) vulnerable to frontal fire, and
- (3) presents a concentrated target.

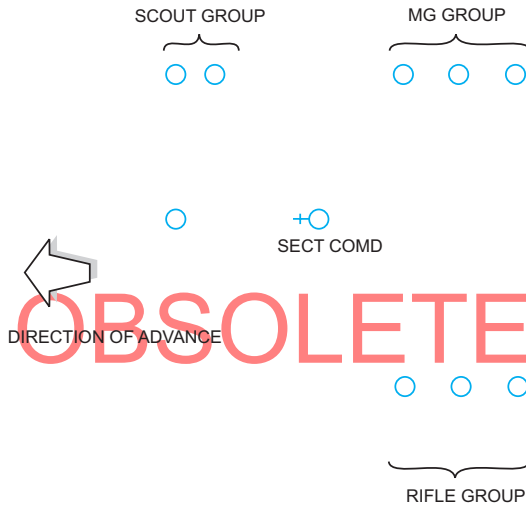


Figure 6-3. Open File

608. **Arrowhead.** The arrowhead formation (Figure 6-4) is best for moving on a broad front in open country by day:

a. *Advantages:*

- (1) less vulnerable to frontal fire,
- (2) good for firepower to the front,
- (3) good for crossing open country,
- (4) contact drill positions easily reached, and
- (5) it clears more ground.

b. *Disadvantages:*

- (1) control is more difficult than other formations,
- (2) vulnerable to flanking fire, and
- (3) very difficult for night movement.

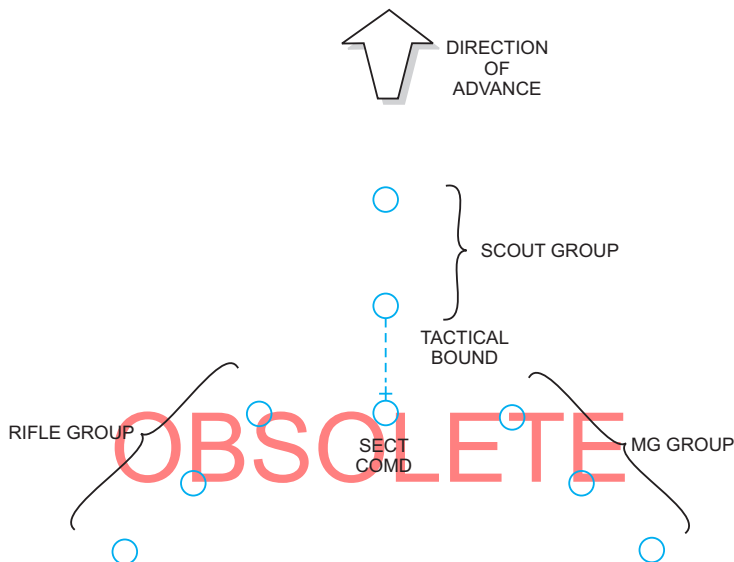


Figure 6-4. Arrowhead

609. **Extended Line.** Extended line (Figure 6-5 ) is an assault formation:

a. *Advantages:*

- (1) best formation for final assault, and
- (2) very good for firepower to the front and for bayonet fighting.

b. *Disadvantages:*

- (1) control is difficult, and
- (2) most vulnerable to flanking fire.


 ENEMY
DIRECTION OF  
ADVANCE

Figure 6-5. Extended Line.

# OBSOLETE

## SECTION 6-3. PLATOON FORMATIONS

### General

610. Platoon formations are used when the platoon is moving tactically. The selection of a platoon formation will depend mainly on the task and on the need for control.

611. **Task.** The platoon task will often dictate the formation to be used. When advancing against an unlocated enemy, the platoon commander will wish to keep the bulk of the platoon out of the immediate fire fight to enable him to manoeuvre and destroy the enemy when their position is located. In the assault, the platoon commander will try to bring the maximum strength onto the objective.

612. **Control.** The need for control will influence the selection of the formation and the spacing between sections. The platoon's commander must ensure that no part of his platoon is ever beyond the potential support of some other part.

## Basic Formations

613. There are three basic formations for a platoon. These formations employ the section formations in any combination to allow the platoon to achieve its mission in any type of terrain. The formations are depicted in Figure 6-6 and are as follows:

- a. *One-up.* In one-up formation, one section is forward of platoon headquarters and two sections move parallel to and on either side of platoon headquarters. It is normally used when moving in open country against an unlocated enemy.
- b. *Two-up.* In two-up formation, two sections advance parallel to and level with each other, forward of platoon headquarters, while the third section is to the rear. It is used when the platoon has to cover a wide front, or in the attack when the width of the objective calls for two sections to arrive simultaneously.
- c. *Column.* In column formation, the sections and platoon headquarters move one behind the other. It is used when the platoon is moving along linear features such as roads and tracks.

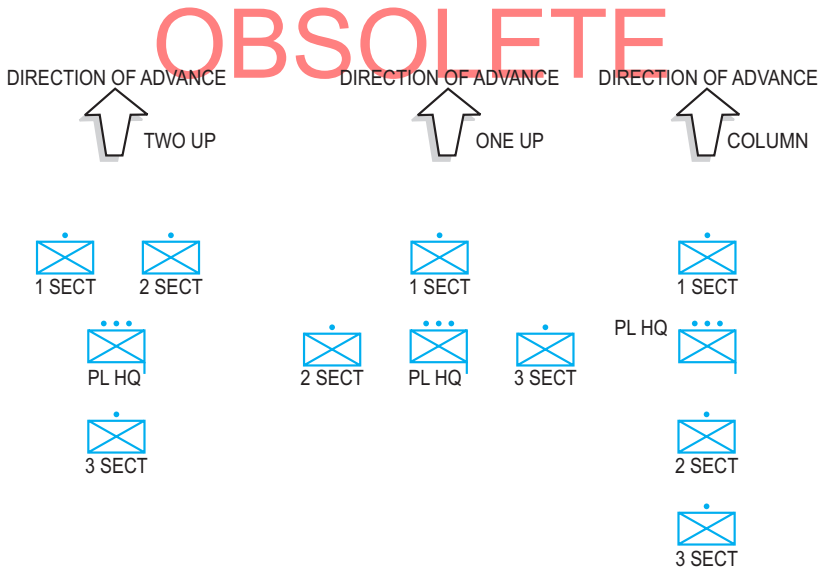


Figure 6-6. Platoon Formations

614. The formations shown in [Figure 6-6](#) are not rigid. A possible variation is that, in the two-up formation, the rear section could move across behind one of the leading sections. This gives a platoon in column with one section on the flank, providing flank protection.

615. **Spacing.** The spacing between sections can be varied and will be governed by the requirement for control and the closeness of the country. Control of platoon formations requires a lot of practice in the use of field signals, runners, link men and other control measures in order to maintain relative distances between sections. The platoon commander must balance the need for control against the necessity for dispersal to avoid:

- a. casualties from artillery and mortar fire; and
- b. all three sections being engaged simultaneously, thereby depriving the platoon commander of his ability to manoeuvre.

## SECTION 6-4. CONTACT DRILLS

### General

616. Every soldier in the section must be aware of what is required of him when contact is made with the enemy. Instinctive reaction is essential and it is the individual soldier's responsibility to search the ground continuously for possible fire positions.

617. There are two procedures which are used at section level only:

- a. basic drill, and
- b. contact drills.

### Basic Drill

618. The basic drill is used when a section comes under effective small arms fire while advancing or patrolling in open country. The section will be moving on a broad front and contact may be made at ranges of several hundred metres. The basic drill is an individual drill and will not require the section to redeploy as if it were in close, restricting country. Usually the section commander will be able to see almost as much of the opening situations as the scouts.

619. On contact, every man will run to the nearest cover or as directed by the section commander.

620. On taking cover, each man moves a short distance, so that he reappears, in a different position. As soon as possible each man rises to a position of observation, if necessary, moving a short distance to do so.

Everybody must remain within voice control distance of his section commander. As soon as a man sights the enemy, he opens fire without further orders. The actions can be summed up as follows:

- a. run,
- b. down,
- c. crawl or roll,
- d. observe,
- e. aim, and
- f. fire.

621. The section commander must assume control of fire as soon as possible.

### **Contact Drills**

622. Contact drills are automatic actions designed to regain or exploit initiative without the need for orders. They are used in close country where the section is frequently forced to move in single file and where contact frequently occurs at ranges of 20 metres or less. There will be a lot of close fighting, noise and confusion, and the commander will not be in a position to issue an order immediately because he will know little of the enemy strength or dispositions. It is vital that the section should counter quickly with a prearranged plan.

623. Contact drills are used to cover this initial period of surprise and to give the section commander time to appreciate the situation and make a plan. There will be occasions where the nature of the ground, vegetation, or the enemy disposition will not permit a drill to be used. In such cases, the section commander will quickly issue orders for the placement of his section on the ground.

624. Contact drills allow the section to deploy quickly, provide a degree of all round protection and enable the section commander to know the location of his troops. Once a section commander gives an order, the drill has finished.

625. Contact drills will be used by:

- a. the leading section of a large force;
- b. a section moving on its own; and
- c. a fighting patrol. (When the patrol consists of two or more sections, only the leading section may need to carry out the drill.)



626. The success of contact drills depends on:

- a. practice,
- b. aggression,
- c. speed,
- d. discipline, and
- e. common sense.

627. the types of contact drills are:

- a. contact front,
- b. contact rear,
- c. immediate ambush, and
- d. counter ambush.

### **Contact Front**

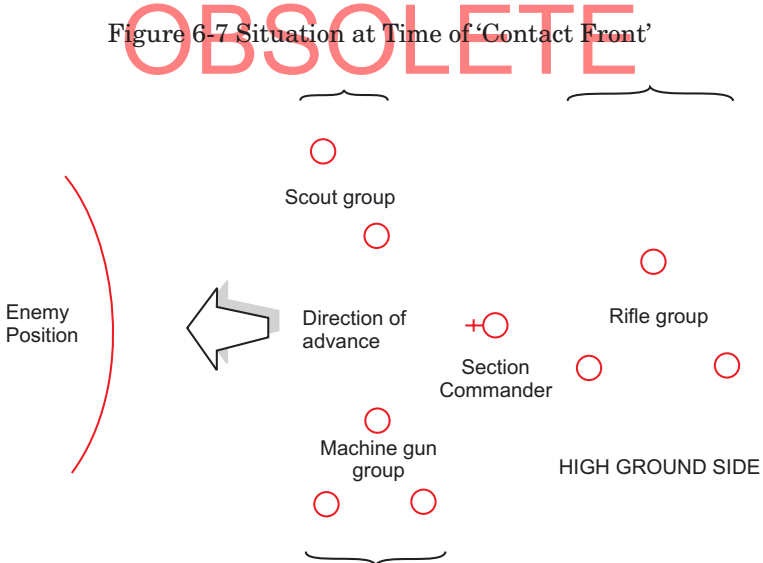
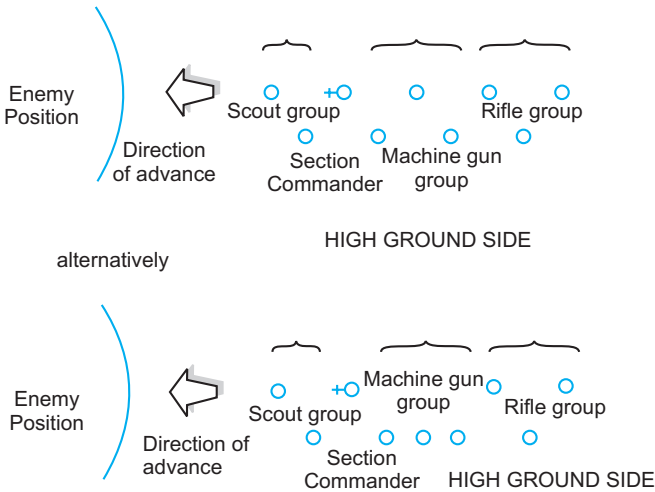
628. When a section makes contact to the front, two actions must take place as rapidly as possible:

- a. the maximum amount of firepower must be directed at the enemy, and
- b. the section must be deployed to positions from which the section commander can exert control.

629. **Sequence of Action.** The following drill is to be conducted when contact is made to the front:

- a. The scouts immediately return fire and deploy to a fire position. Both scouts attempt to assess the enemy dispositions.
- b. As the scouts engage the enemy, all members of the section shout, 'CONTACT FRONT'.
- c. The section commander goes to ground to the rear of the scouts fire position, but remains in voice contact with them.
- d. The gun group doubles forward to a fire position approximately level with the section commander, but on the right of the line of advance, or if applicable, to the higher ground side. The gun group can then open fire in the direction of the enemy position.
- e. The remainder of the section doubles forward and takes up positions to the rear of the section commander.

630. Figure 6-7 shows the section at the time of contact and Figure 6-8 shows the relative positions of the section after the drill has been completed.



631. It may not be possible for either the gun or rifle group to double forward as suggested, because of intense enemy fire or dense vegetation. When this occurs, movement may have to be by individual fire and movement within each group. Individuals may have to crawl forward. If enemy fire is so intense as to restrict movement, the section commander may terminate the drill in order to prevent his entire section from moving forward and subsequently being pinned down.

632. A common fault is for the gun group to move too far to a flank and become isolated from the remainder of the section. The gun group is to remain in contact with the section commander. If there is a requirement for the gun group to move further to a flank, the movement should be covered by fire. This is not part of the contact drill.

633. Subsequent action depends on the information that the section commander can obtain from the scouts or other members of the section, or from his own appreciation.

### **Contact Rear**

634. When contact is made from the rear, the immediate requirement is the same as for the contact front:

- a. the maximum amount of firepower must be directed at the enemy, and
- b. the section must be deployed to positions from which the section commander can exert control.

635. **Sequence of Action.** The drill for contact rear is as follows:

- a. The rear two men immediately return fire and seek cover. Both then attempt to assess the enemy dispositions. The rear two men may be either riflemen or a rifleman and the number 2 on the MG depending on the section formation.
- b. As this occurs, all members of the section shout, 'CONTACT REAR'.
- c. The remaining rifleman (or riflemen) goes to ground and guides the section commander and scout group as they move to join him.
- d. The gun group turns around and doubles back to a fire position approximately level with the last two men. They remain on the same side of the axis of advance as they were on before the contact. The gun group commences to fire in the direction of the enemy position.

- e. The section commander doubles back to a position in behind where the two rear men are engaging the enemy, so that he is in voice contact with them.
- f. The scouts double back and take up a position alongside the rifleman (or riflemen) who has gone to ground, so that they are slightly to the rear of the section commander, facing in the direction of the enemy.

636. Figure 6-9 shows the situation at the time of contact and [Figure 6-10](#) shows the relative positions of the section after the order 'Contact Rear'.

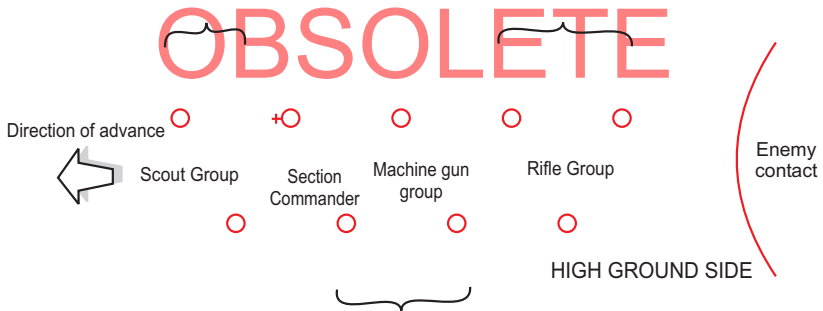


Figure 6-9. Situation at Time of 'Contact Rear'

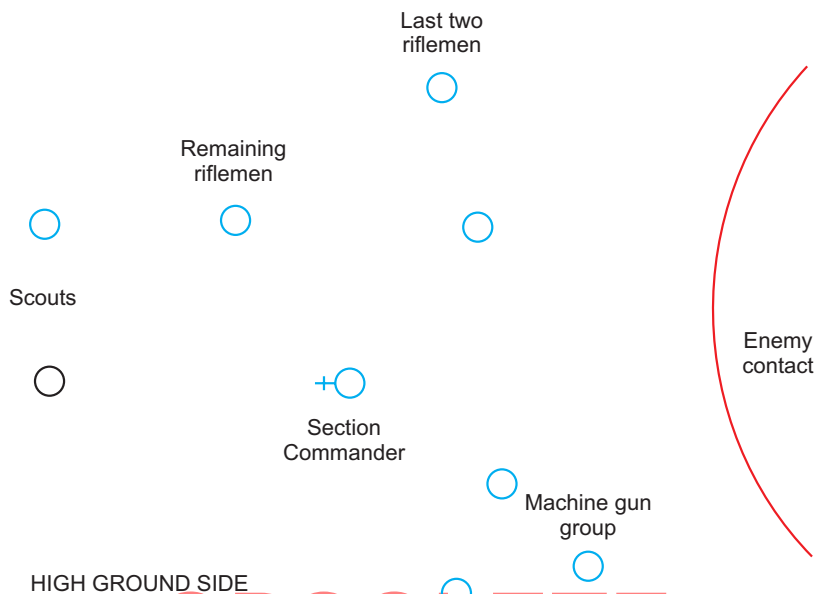


Figure 6-10. Situation After Order ‘Contact Rear’

637. Subsequent action depends on the information that the section commander can obtain from the remainder of the section, or from his own appreciation.

### Immediate Ambush and Counter Ambush

638. The immediate ambush and counter ambush drills are described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.4, Ambush and Counter Ambush*.

### Platoon Contact Drills

639. **Contact, Front and Rear.** Platoon contact drills follow the same general pattern as section drills. The section(s) in contact will carry out the section contact drill (be it contact front/rear). Platoon headquarters and the rear section(s) close up to the section in front, but remain out of contact and wait for the platoon commander’s orders. The platoon contact drill ends when the sections are all on the ground in an all round defensive posture. See [Figures 6-11](#) and [6-12](#).

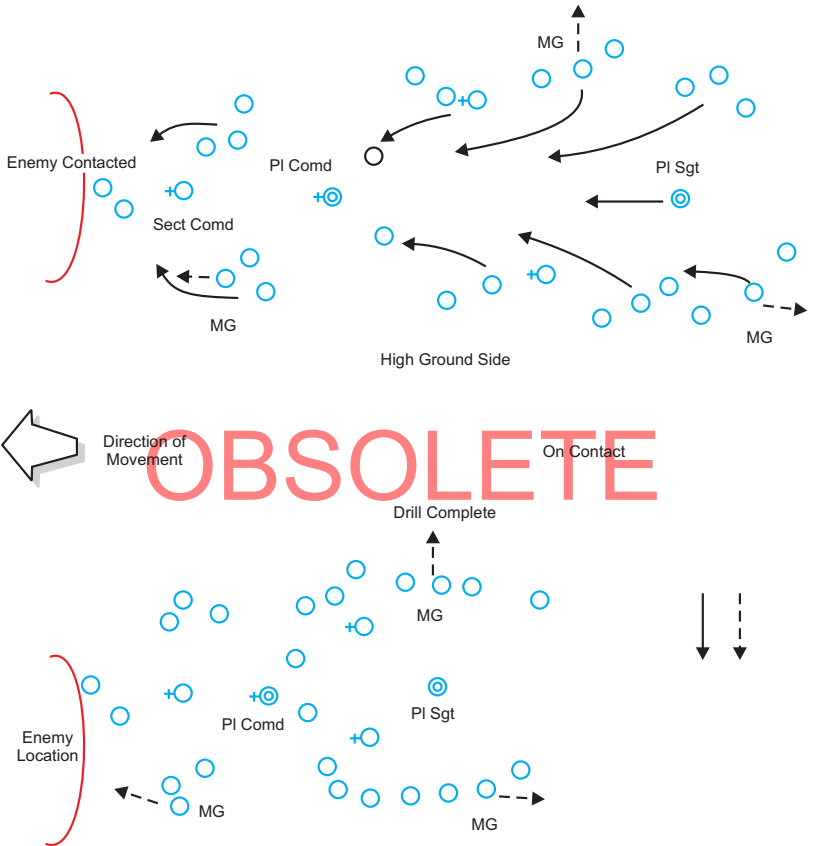


Figure 6-11. Situation Before and After 'Contact Front'

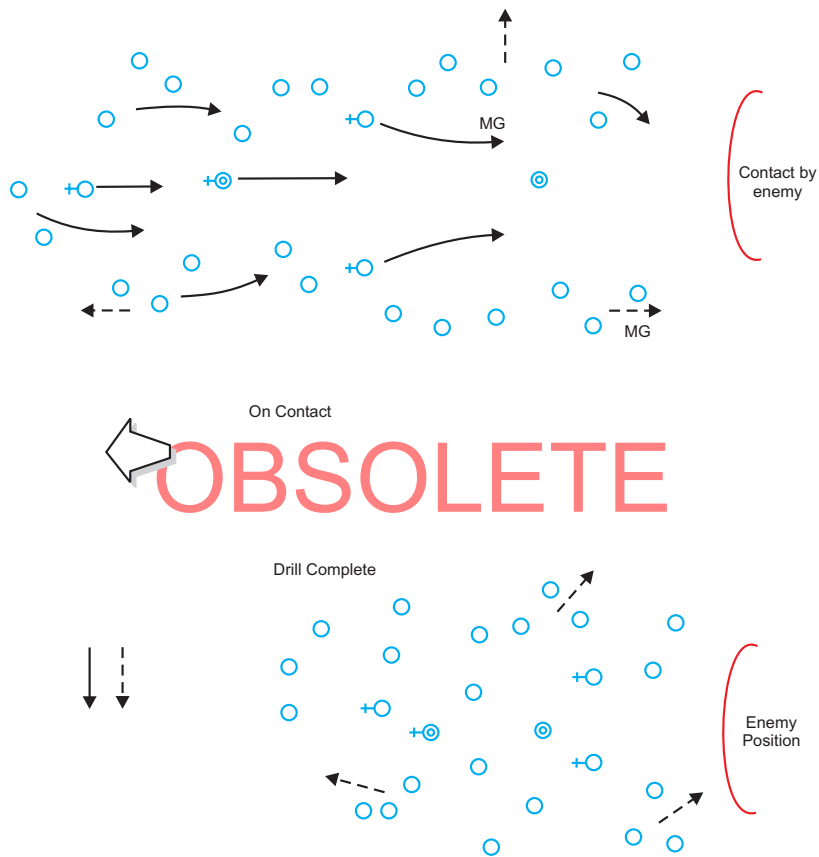


Figure 6-12. Situation Before and After 'Contact Rear'

## CHAPTER 7

### CLOSING WITH THE ENEMY

#### SECTION 7-1. GENERAL

701. The primary task of the platoon is to kill the enemy. To achieve this the members of the platoon must be close enough to either shoot, grenade or bayonet their opponents. When the platoon is in defence, it is the enemy who must move and expose himself. In the advance, the attack and the withdrawal, some or all of the platoon must move if they are to engage the enemy. This will often involve exposure to enemy observation and fire. This exposure must be minimised if the platoon is to succeed. This can be achieved by:

- a. the use of covered or concealed approaches,
- b. the use of smoke or darkness to conceal movement, and
- c. the use of covering fire to neutralise enemy weapons and allow movement over exposed ground.

702. These techniques can only be used effectively if the members of the platoon have achieved a high standard of fitness, fieldcraft, weapons handling and marksmanship. Detailed information on these subjects will be found in the other pamphlets in the MLW Infantry Training series.

#### SECTION 7-2. USE OF COVERED/CONCEALED APPROACHES

##### General

703. **Surveillance Devices.** The enemy is likely to be equipped with surveillance devices in addition to the usual warning devices such as trip flares, mines and improvised devices. When moving in the area of operations, commanders must assume such devices are being used against them. Night does not offer guaranteed protection against detection and routes must be planned as for day, using covered and concealed routes, particularly in areas in which the enemy is known to be active. A thorough understanding of equipment characteristics and tactical use is necessary to enable the effects of these surveillance devices to be minimised.

##### Selection of Lines of Advance

704. The selection of lines of advance for a platoon is largely a matter of map reading. After deciding on the area to be studied, which must be larger than the area to be occupied or crossed, apply the catchword 'GROUND':



- G General.* Get a rough idea of the character of the area - the topography and vegetation.
- R Ridges.* Mark on the tale with a single line, the highest part of all ranges and spurs. Mark in a different colour the streams or lowest lines of valleys and re-entrants.
- O Observation.* Circle with a pencil any particularly good observation points or detached features.
- U Undergrowth or Cover.* Study the location of villages, primary and secondary jungle, woods, belts of trees or rough ground.
- N Non-passable.* Mark non-passable areas with a capital N.
- D Defilade.* The covered line of approach to any point, and the areas that afford cover, can now easily be picked out.

705. A clear picture of the ground as a whole, its possibilities and its disadvantages is formed, and a plan can then be made indicating:

- a. where to move, and
- b. where covering fire is most necessary.

### SECTION 7-3. USE OF SMOKE OR DARKNESS

#### Use of Smoke

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706. The principal use of smoke is to screen movement from enemy observation and therefore from observed fire. Smoke can be produced by indirect fire, direct fire weapons and smoke grenades.

707. Smoke is a valuable weapon but it has limitations:

- a. Weather conditions must be suitable. It is impossible to lay an effective smoke screen in a high wind. A moderate wind blowing at right angles to the screen, will also reduce its linear coverage. When there is no wind at all, smoke tends to billow and a great deal of ammunition may be needed to establish and maintain a screen.
- b. Smoke affects other supporting fire; it usually makes aimed fire support impossible.
- c. Only a limited supply of smoke grenades is carried within the platoon.

#### Movement by Night

708. Darkness helps provide concealment and assists surprise. Darkness is not a guarantee against detection and measures must be taken against surveillance devices. Experience in handling our

equipments and knowledge of enemy equipments will determine how best to minimise their effectiveness. Movement by night requires constant practice, particularly in the crossing of obstacles.

709. The main differences between night and day operations are as follows:

- a. Small arms fire is difficult to aim and is generally too high. MGs can fire on fixed lines, and small arms night sighting equipment may be used. Small arms night aiming techniques should be practised regularly.
- b. Sight is largely replaced by other senses. Avoidance of noise and creating distinctive smells are of the greatest importance.
- c. Objects generally are visible only on skylines. This increases the importance of using low ground, both for movement and observation.
- d. Maintaining direction is difficult. This makes previous daylight reconnaissance necessary whenever possible.
- e. Control is difficult. Close formations are necessary.

710. Particular attention should be paid to the following points at night:

- a. Equipment must not shine in the moonlight and not rattle. Sandbags wrapped round equipment and tools will prevent shine and deaden sound.
- b. Orders and messages must be passed in a whisper, just loud enough for them to be heard by the recipient. A simple system of signals should be arranged.
- c. Particular care must be taken in crossing gaps where movement may show against the skyline.
- d. The stars, the moon, the wind and landmarks silhouetted against the sky can be used to keep direction.
- e. Commanders must be well forward for control of pace and direction.
- f. After every halt, allow time for everyone to prepare to move and to check that the man behind is ready.

## SECTION 7-4. FIRE AND MOVEMENT

### General

711. The closer the platoon gets to the enemy, the more difficult it becomes to find routes which avoid his observation and fire. Movement over exposed ground will be very risky unless accurate covering fire can prevent the enemy from using his weapons effectively. This fire may be provided by artillery or armour, or from other elements of the battalion or company. The platoon will often have to rely on its own resources for covering fire.

712. Regardless of how the covering fire is provided, the technique of using fire to cover exposed movement is known as 'fire and movement'. Within the platoon, one or more sections may cover the movement of another. A section may conduct its own fire and movement by using the MG group to cover the movement of the remainder. The same technique can be used between individuals within groups. In this way there is always 'one foot on the ground' with one element moving, and at least one other in a position to provide covering fire. On occasions it may even be necessary to carry out fire and movement within a section or group which is itself already receiving covering fire from another section or platoon.

### Basic Considerations

713. There are six basic considerations for section and platoon fire and movement. They are:

- a. control by the commander,
- b. speed,
- c. winning the fire fight using all available fire support,
- d. wide angle of covering fire,
- e. maximum use of cover and concealment, and
- f. minimum exposed movement without covering fire.

### Control

714. Fire and movement is time consuming, very tiring and usually costly in ammunition. It must not start any earlier than necessary. As the enemy must be neutralised by fire throughout any exposed movement, careful coordination is always necessary. The commander must exercise strict control over who fires, at what, and when.

715. Fire discipline will be difficult to achieve during fire and movement. The ground will be unfamiliar, accurate ranges may not be known, reference points may not have been given, enemy positions may be difficult

to detect, and the passage of information and orders by voice will be difficult. Every soldier must search his arc for targets and report them to his commander. Control by field signals and whistle must also be practised, and commanders in particular must be skilled in the issue of fire control orders and in all the associated skills. Further details on fire discipline will be found in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.2, Fieldcraft and Target Detection*, Chapters 7 to 12 inclusive.

716. Commanders must exercise strict control over the movement of individuals and groups. Control will be made easier if leaders are appointed for each group within the section to control fire and movement within that group. This will reduce the load on the section commander, particularly in confused situations such as fighting through an objective.

### **Speed**

717. The longer it takes to close with the enemy using fire and movement, the greater the opportunity for the enemy to inflict casualties or to withdraw. Speed in the execution of fire and movement will retain the initiative and keep up the momentum of the assault. Speed in individual movement over exposed ground will minimise casualties. The conflict between the requirement for control, the need for speed, and the need to minimise exposed movement can be reduced by training.

### **Winning the Fire Fight**

718. While the assaulting platoon is under fire from the defenders, the commander must develop sufficient firepower to win the fire fight, neutralising the enemy's fire and enabling the assaulting troops to break into the objective. To achieve this superiority the platoon commander may:

- a. use one or even two sections to neutralise enemy defensive fire,
- b. group his MGs and/or grenadiers into a fire support team,
- c. use the support company weapons available,
- d. use part or all of another platoon or company,
- e. use tank or APC fire,
- f. use artillery, or
- g. combine some of the methods listed above.

719. The firefight may last several hours and resupply will be a critical consideration. The commander must always consider the quantities of ammunition used, maintaining sufficient to continue the fight through. Weapon characteristics, control of fire and movement and supporting

weapon safety distances must be taken into account. There will be a time when the enemy's fire and reaction to the assault weakens. The platoon commander must be aware of this and quickly take the initiative to achieve the break-in.

### Wide Angle of Covering Fire

720. A wide angle between the covering fire and those moving allows the fire to continue until the last possible moment; a right angle, as depicted in Figure 7-1, is ideal. This must not, however, cause a loss of control or reduce speed.

Enemy

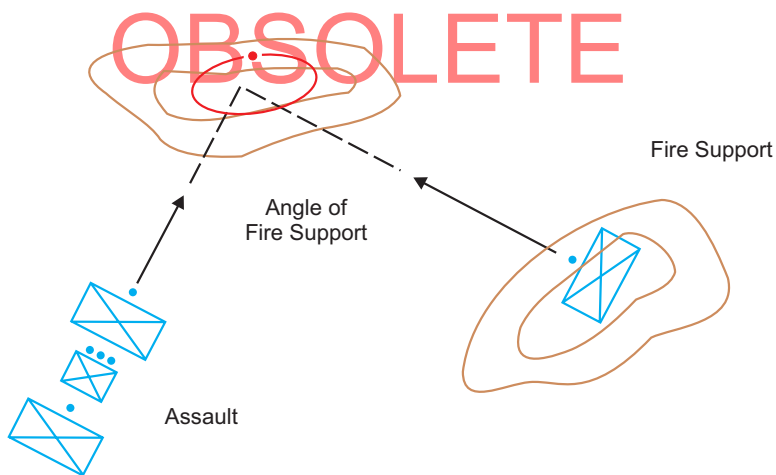


Figure 7-1. Wide Angle of Covering Fire

## Maximum Use of Cover and Concealment

721. Every member of the platoon must be able to:
- a. recognise a good fire position,
  - b. choose the most protected route to a fire position,
  - c. employ the most appropriate method of movement to reach fire position, and
  - d. remain concealed when in it.
722. The characteristics of a good fire position and the various techniques of movement and concealment are explained in detail in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.2, Fieldcraft and Target Detection*, Chapters 1 to 4 inclusive.

## Minimum Exposed Movement Without Covering Fire

723. Any movement which may be exposed to enemy fire should be supported by covering fire. To be fully effective, fire should begin before movement and stop only after movement is complete. The fire must be accurate and continuous.

## Techniques and Training

724. **Training.** Well executed fire and movement is not easily achieved. It demands a high standard of individual skills and good teamwork. These will only be achieved by practice which is closely supervised, followed by careful correction of faults. Some common faults are as follows:

- a. *Soldiers Exposed for Too Long When Moving.* Movement must be short and fast.
- b. *Predictable Patterns of Movement.* Commanders must vary the selection of the groups to move.
- c. *Bunching Behind Obvious Fire Positions.* Obvious positions will draw more enemy fire and bunching increases vulnerability to fragmentation weapons.
- d. *Failure to Select the Next Fire Position Before Moving.* This increases the period of exposure and usually results in the occupation of poor fire positions.
- e. *Poor Selection of Fire Positions.* Fire positions should at least offer concealment (desirably cover) from fire, and must allow effective use of the weapon.
- f. *Commencing Fire and Movement Too Soon.* Fire and movement should only commence in response to effective enemy direct fire. Fire and movement provides no protection from indirect fire, it merely keeps soldiers in the target area for longer.

725. **Scouts.** Scouts move in pairs from bound to bound; one moving quickly to the next objective covered by the second who observes the area of concern. In this manner a scout can be supported if he is surprised. The considerations listed in [paragraph 7.24](#) apply to scouts' movements. Scouts move in one of three ways:

- a. *Caterpillar.* The leading scout goes forward to a bound, and when he is in position the second scout closes up. The leading scout then moves on to the next bound and so on.
- b. *Leap Frog.* The second scout closes up, but instead of stopping near the leading scout, continues on to the next bound.
- c. *Trail.* Both scouts continue moving with a suitable gap between them.

726. The platoon commander must be able to halt his scouts at any time. Control is exercised through field signals.

727. **Techniques.** There are a number of techniques which the platoon and section commanders on foot can use to close with the enemy. They can best be explained in relation to the assault.

728. **Advance in Extended Line.** During the earliest stage of the assault, the platoon may move in extended line when it is protected by covering fire and not receiving effective small arms fire. Control is relatively easy to maintain and a steady rate of assault, coordinated with the fire support is possible. This method also conserves the platoon's physical strength and ammunition. At all times the platoon must be prepared to adopt fire and movement.

729. **By Dry Fire and Movement.** As the enemy position is being neared, the platoon commander may decide to move his platoon by fire and movement in groups, but not firing. Dry fire and movement is used when the platoon still has not been effectively engaged with aimed small-arms fire. Circumstances which warrant the adoption of the technique includes the lifting (or imminent lifting) of covering fire, enemy troops seen taking up firing positions, or simply the closeness of the enemy's position. The technique enhances the platoon's ability to deal with the expected enemy fire and conserves ammunition, but it does require greater physical effort and should not be adopted until there is a need to do so.

730. **Fire and Movement by Groups.** Once effective small-arms fire is being received, the platoon and its sections will start to use fire and movement. Sections and possibly sub-section groups will move by fire and movement.

731. **Pepperpotting.** Another technique of fire and movement is known as pepperpotting and can be used at group and section level. It can be used when the attackers are close to the enemy, but is more suitable when they are fighting through an enemy position. It is a good method of ensuring elements do not advance too far in front of their own troops, and therefore minimises the risk of being shot by their covering fire, but it is limited by the noise of battle which can lead to confusion. It can be achieved by numbering off each member as either odd or even and using the following commands in battle:

‘ODDS GO! (or one whistle blast)’

or

‘EVENS GO! (or two whistle blasts)’

732. This method has the advantages of good control, an even distribution of covering fire and is simple. It has the disadvantages of a narrow angle of covering fire, a predictable pattern of movement, and it breaks up section groups.

### **Aggression**

733. Fire and movement must be conducted aggressively to be successful. The aggressive attitude required of all members of the platoon must be demanded and developed in training.

## **SECTION 7-5. MOUNTED PLATOONS**

734. **APCs** APC characteristics and formations are described in Section 2-4. Although APCs provide protection, speed and flexibility, considerations of approaches, use of smoke and/or darkness, and fire and movement within the unit are still applicable.

735. **Dismounting.** Once the mounted platoon has covered the distance from the line of departure (LD) to the vicinity of the enemy defensive position, the decision on where to dismount becomes a major consideration. There are four options. Platoons can dismount:

- a. well short of the enemy forward pits;
- b. just short of the enemy forward pits;
- c. on the enemy position; or



- d. after the enemy position has been driven through and the APCs have reached the rear of the enemy position. The dismounted platoon will then fight through the position from rear to front.

736. The decision as to where to dismount will usually be made by the company or battalion commander. Considerations include:

- a. the enemy anti-armour threat;
- b. the ground;
- c. enemy field defences and the extent of his position;
- d. the fire support available, both indirect and direct;
- e. enemy tactics and likely reaction;
- f. the mission; and
- g. control.

737. **Dismount Well Short of the Enemy Forward Pits.** Infantry may dismount well short of the enemy forward pits if there is a significant anti-armour threat, insufficient fire support to cover closer movement, or the terrain is unsuitable for APCs. Advantages are that this technique reduces the anti-armour threat and could enhance surprise if used at night in conjunction with a deception plan, ie, using the noise of the APCs to deceive the enemy, as they move away from the dismount point. Disadvantages are that there will be a long assault without the considerable advantages of speed, protection, communications and fire support. The flexibility provided by the APCs is lost as well as the shock effect if used in conjunction with tanks and other fire support. As a general rule commanders should aim to remain mounted as long as possible.

738. **Dismount Just Short of the Enemy Forward Pits.** Precisely when to dismount depends on the enemy defences. The commander should aim to pass through most, if not all of the known enemy wire and anti-personnel minefields and the anticipated enemy killing areas. An additional guideline is to move the APCs as close as possible to the indirect covering fire. If this fire was falling on the forward pits the dismount point would be about 100 m away, or less if the ground permits. Direct covering fire may allow an even closer approach. The advantages of this are that the final assault is very short and may well be the start of the break-in stage, and most or all of the enemy defences are breached and killing areas passed over. Control is easier if troops dismount just short of the enemy forward pits. They will know the direction to the enemy and the APCs can ensure the assault formation is as required, usually extended line. During

the dismount the APCs' MGs can give intense fire support to cover the dismount. Disadvantages are that not all of the field defences may be breached, and at the closer range the APCs become more vulnerable to SRAAWs and heavy machine gun (HMGs).

739. **Dismount on the Enemy Position.** Dismounting on the enemy position has a number of advantages, but should only be considered if the extent and depth of the enemy position is known. The shock effect, especially on demoralised defenders, is considerable. Disadvantages are also considerable, especially if the extent of the enemy position is not fully realised, or insufficient troops and firepower are committed to the assault. Control may easily be lost, and APCs will be highly vulnerable to SRAAWs and HMGs. Well-disciplined enemy troops in well-prepared defences could suffer few casualties and cause heavy casualties to assaulting troops.

740. **Dismount Through and at the Rear of the Enemy Position.** Compared with dismounting on the enemy position, dismounting at the rear of the position has advantages, chiefly that it overruns prepared field defences and killing areas, assaults from the least expected direction and creates confusion. Disadvantages are significant. APCs will be vulnerable and if the enemy are well trained and in well-prepared positions, few, if any of them may be killed during the assault and a long fight-through is still a probability. Control is also more difficult as troops in APCs will become disoriented and confused just before dismount.

741. **Other Considerations.** The commander, when making the critical decision on where to dismount, has other considerations. He may well decide that he will go as far as possible in APCs and dismount on command. The time for the dismount may be dictated by the effectiveness of the enemy anti-armour fire, the terrain, and the risks the commander may be willing to accept in moving close to his fire support. The standard of training of his troops with APCs and armour is important. If his troops are mechanised and always train to fight and operate with tanks, the commander will be able to use his troops on options requiring greater skill and expertise than if the troops were mounted only for that particular operation.

**OBSOLETE**

## CHAPTER 8

### PROTECTION

#### SECTION 8-1. GENERAL

801. A platoon or section cannot be regarded as secure unless it is protected in all directions from which an attack is possible. It must be guarded to the front, the flanks, the rear and from the air. A section or platoon can still be subjected to attack even when it is not in direct contact with the enemy, and when other troops appear to provide security. It must always be ready to fight and should protect itself from any threat, including assault, guerilla forces, enemy agents, saboteurs, and nuclear or chemical attack.

802. The forms of protection considered here are:

- a. protection at rest;
- b. use of sentries;
- c. protection against air attack; and
- d. nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) protection;

803. Information on protection on the move is detailed in [Chapter 11](#) of this pamphlet.

804. Every commander is responsible for the protection of his men. This entails taking steps to safeguard against surprise, concealing his dispositions from the enemy, and in the case of nuclear threat, ensuring adequate dispersion and passive defence.

805. Platoon and section commanders must always be alert to the threat of surprise attack. Anticipation and preparedness will reduce casualties to a minimum. In particular, they must ensure that their men:

- a. are alert to the threat,
- b. know what to do in various circumstances, and
- c. know why they are doing it.

806. Precautions against surprise attack must be continuous. Protection is very largely a matter of self discipline, the example being set always by the commanders.

807. Where enemy ground action is possible, troops should always be armed and should move in pairs where possible. When troops are engaged

in tasks not permitting the carriage of arms, such as digging, weapons are to be placed within reach. Equipment, if not worn, must be placed nearby, assembled for immediate use. If there is a chemical warfare threat the NBC ensemble must be worn and the respirator carried.

## **SECTION 8-2. PROTECTION AT REST**

### **General**

808. Whenever troops are halted for any length of time they must be allotted tactical positions which are to be occupied in the event of a threat. These positions are termed fire positions and are to be sited to meet ground attack from any direction and give concealment from air observation. The characteristics of a good fire position are described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.2, Fieldcraft and Target Detection*.

809. The requirement for protection at rest will depend on the duration of the halt and the topography. There are different requirements for:

- a. brief halts in open and close country,
- b. extended halts in close country, and
- c. extended halts in open country.

### **Brief Halts in Open and Close Country**

810. During any tactical movement there will be a requirement for frequent brief halts of less than 10 minutes. It would be impracticable to require the platoon to deploy into a defensive position at each of these halts. During brief halts the platoon members will remain in formation and adopt fire positions covering their arcs of responsibility. This drill should be performed automatically in open or close country whenever the field signal for 'halt' is given.

811. Procedures for halts for longer periods, and whether or not to adopt a harbour drill, will be decided by the platoon commander. Regardless of the procedure used, the guidelines for security, all round defence and the operational situation must be considered.

### **Extended Halts in Close Country - Harbour Drill**

812. During lengthy halts in close country (including overnight halts) the harbour drill should be used. Depending on visibility and patrolling formation, the procedure may be modified at the discretion of the commander. Any modification should, however, be well thought out and should be practised as a platoon drill.

813. The harbour drill is designed to enable the platoon to deploy quickly into a defensive position in close country with the minimum of orders or delay.

814. **Selection of Site.** It is rarely advisable for a platoon or section to bivouac or halt on a track, even the track it has made by its own passage. Advantage must be taken of the security provided by freedom from observation in close country. A site should be chosen well away from tracks, townships, and other features which may be frequented by the local population or by hostile patrols. An overnight position should not be occupied until about two hours before dark.

815. **Breaking Track.** The procedure for leaving an existing track without making a fresh one is as follows:

- a. The place of departure from the track is selected.
- b. The column is halted at normal intervals. Section commanders must ensure that there is no closing up.
- c. A warning order is passed back - 'BREAK TRACK LEFT' (or RIGHT). On an order or signal, each man turns to the left (or right) and moves directly into the undergrowth on a given bearing or angle, being careful not to disrupt the foliage.
- d. Section commanders must see that direction and contact with flank sections are maintained.
- e. Movement is continued for the period specified or for a given number of paces, or until the platoon commander is confident that the distance travelled has achieved the aim of security.
- f. The original direction is then resumed until the bivouac site is reached.

816. Although this technique helps to conceal the place the track was left, it does not deceive a well-trained enemy. The normal measures for protection must still be taken.

817. A method of occupying a platoon harbour in close country is termed the 12 o'clock method and is illustrated in [Figure 8-1](#). It is assumed that the platoon will remain in a position for a reasonable period, eg, over 30 minutes.

818. Having conducted a limited reconnaissance and selected the site for the base, the platoon commander places himself in the centre of the intended perimeter and indicates the direction of 12 o'clock. On receipt of this signal, section commanders take their men to their respective positions in relation to 12 o'clock.

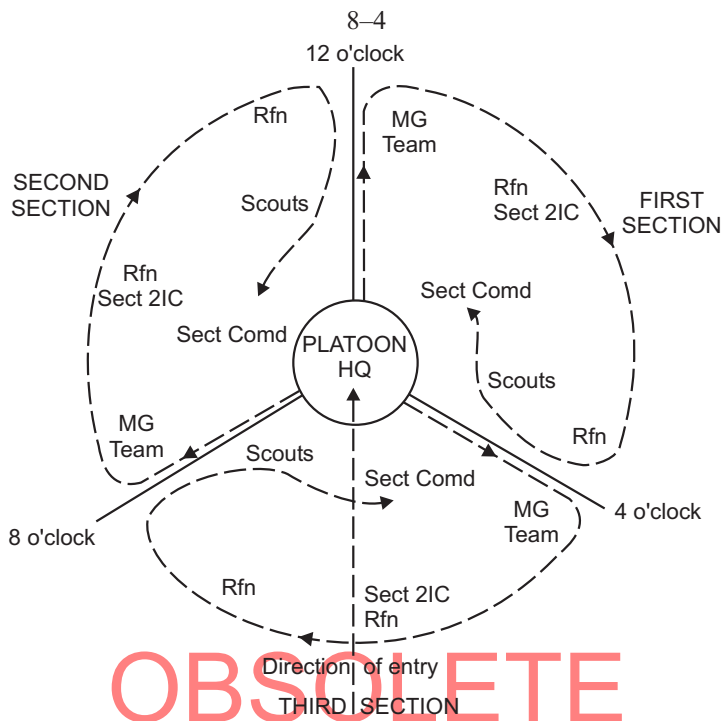


Figure 8-1. General Layout and Occupation of a Platoon Harbour in Close Country

819. **Clearing Patrols.** Once the harbour site has been occupied the section commander will move to the platoon commander and report that his section is in position and is standing to. The sequence of events then will be as follows:

- a. In most cases the platoon commander will be able to see his perimeter and check that the sections have tied in with one another and that they are in the area he indicated. In close country this may be impossible and before a clearing patrol (Figure 8-2) is sent out he should move around the perimeter to ensure it is tied in and correctly positioned. Once he is satisfied the platoon commander will order 'CLEARING PATROLS OUT'.
- b. Section commanders will then dispatch their scouts. The scouts will move out of the harbour from the right of their respective section positions, near the MG of the neighbouring section.
- c. Section commanders then return to their section MG positions.

- d. The scouts from each section move in an anti-clockwise direction at a distance from the perimeter which will depend on the density of vegetation. One scout will move at a visual distance from the perimeter, the other will move at a visual distance from him. Both scouts will sweep the area in front of their sections and return through their section MG location on the left of their section position (Figure 8-2).
- e. When the clearing patrols have returned, the section commanders will relay their reports to the platoon commander at the platoon headquarters position.
- f. After the clearing patrols have cleared the area, the platoon commander will move clockwise around the harbour position, commencing at the MG position of the first section. He will take each section commander through the section position, checking the position of the section members and coordinating between sections where necessary. Noise and movement must be reduced to a minimum.
- g. Once the platoon commander has completed any necessary adjustments within the section, the section commander collects the member of the section who is first on the sentry roster and returns to the MG location. The sentry's pack will be left in his position.

820. **Sentries.** After the platoon commander has adjusted the position he will then order 'SENTRIES OUT', usually only one in front of each MG position. Additional information on sentries is contained in Section 8-3 of this chapter. The following actions should then occur:

- a. The remainder of the platoon remove their packs.
- b. The section commander posts the sentry with the 2IC noting the sentry post. A possible location for sentries is shown in Figure 8-2.
- c. Having briefed the sentry, the section commander returns to the platoon commander at platoon headquarters and reports 'SENTRY POSTED'. As the section 2IC returns from the sentry post he will lay a communication cord from the sentry post to the MG location, from the MG location to the section commander's location, and from the section commander's location to the platoon commander. The 2IC will also inform the No 1 on the MG of the sentry's location and his withdrawal route.



821. When all section commanders have reported 'SENTRIES POSTED', the platoon commander orders 'STAND DOWN'. On this order the next rostered sentry for each section will man his section's MG. The other members of the section will commence the sequence of development.

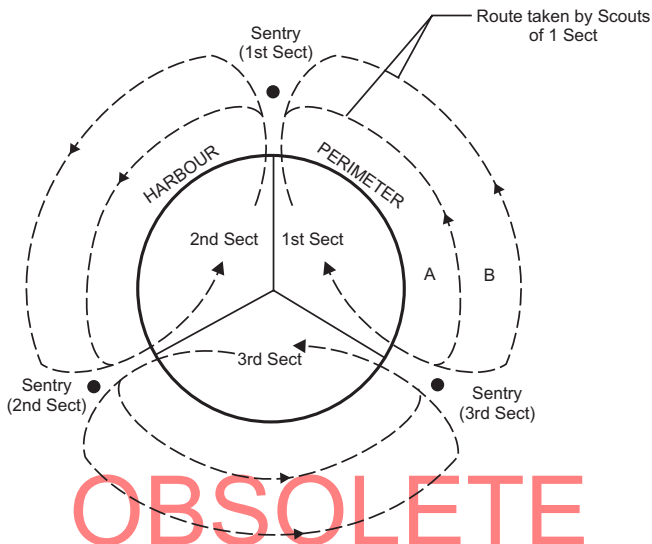


Figure 8-2. Clearing Patrols and Sentries Sequence of Development.

**Notes:**

1. Distance A to B represents one visual distance.

822. **Sequence of Development.** The sequence of development of the harbour is as follows:

- a. *Track Plan.* The track plan must be instituted first to avoid trampling of the area before security is compromised. Ideally it is done, in part, during the occupation.
- b. Fighting trenches and latrines are commenced.
- c. Perimeter vines (chest height perimeter cord) and communications cord are laid out before dark. On 'STAND DOWN' in the evening, the perimeter vine will be raised and fastened at chest height. On 'STAND TO' in the morning the perimeter vine will be lowered to the ground.

- d. Shelters will be placed on the ground, laid out ready for erection. They will not be erected until after dark, that is, 'STAND DOWN' at night. They will be dropped at 'STAND TO' in the morning.
- e. Normal daily routine tasks are completed.
- f. Pits are developed further as time and the situation permit.

### **Extended Halts in Open Country**

823. The harbour drill is not suitable in open country as the section MGs must be sited to cover likely approaches and to provide mutual support. The other weapon pits in the sections must also be sited to protect the gun and to cover the section's sector of responsibility. In open country, the platoon must deploy into a hasty defence position during lengthy halts, especially during overnight stays. In hasty defence the basic considerations and actions are the same as for the deliberate defence, which is described in [Chapter 12](#).

824. To save time, the hasty defence position for open country can be developed from the platoon harbour drill used in close country. The platoon should deploy in a similar manner but the sections must be adjusted to form defended posts which are mutually supporting within the platoon locality. The platoon commander must take particular care to select a site which provides good fields of fire and observation and minimises the likelihood of surprise attack. After the clearing patrols have cleared the area, the platoon commander will site the section MGs and allocate tasks for the MG and the sections. The section commanders must then select the sites for the remaining section weapons and allocate arcs of responsibility.

## **SECTION 8-3. SENTRIES**

### **General**

825. Sentries must always be posted for the local protection of any body of troops. They are responsible for checking the identity of visitors or suspicious persons in the vicinity. The security of the position depends on the alertness and efficiency of the sentries. They must be able to alert the section silently by day and night and must avoid unnecessary movement. They should be concealed and in a position from which they can observe and fire effectively.

826. The number of sentry positions occupied must be sufficient to ensure security of the locality. Sentries will be posted to give all-round protection. Particular attention must be paid to likely approaches. This requirement will vary according to the sections' proximity to enemy positions, enemy activity, and visibility.

## Sentry Orders

827. Orders for sentries must be carefully thought out so that nothing is omitted, left to chance or liable to be misunderstood. The orders must be given clearly. Orders to sentries should be given in the sentry's location and must include the detail contained in [Annex A](#) to this chapter.

## Sentry's Task

828. A sentry's task is to provide early warning. He will alert the position with a pre-arranged signal using such means as communication cord or wire if:

- a. a warning device indicates personnel movement near the post,  
or
- b. anyone approaches the post.

829. When a person or party closes with the section area, the whole section must be alert and ready to fire when the sentry challenges.

## Challenging

830. The standard challenging procedure must always be followed. Failure to do so may result in casualties being inflicted on friendly troops, particularly returning patrols. The section commander will always be alerted if any unexpected person or group approaches the position and, if the situation warrants it, he will 'stand to' the section. The sentry will do the challenging. The challenge will be given quietly at a range that will enable the section to kill any enemy who tries to run away, but not so close that the enemy could rush the post. If the order to halt is not obeyed, it is repeated and if still not obeyed, the orders for opening fire must be followed. The section commander must ensure that his whole sector remains covered and that all his men do not all concentrate on one direction.

831. The standard procedure for challenging and reply is detailed in [Table 8-1](#).

**TABLE 8-1. STANDARD SENTRY CHALLENGING PROCEDURE**

<i>Serial</i>	<i>Action by sentry</i>	<i>Action by person or group challenged</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>
1.	'HALT! WHO IS (or goes) THERE?'	Halts and gives any reply which indicates the person or group is authorised to pass, e.g. 'B COMPANY PATROL', 'CORPORAL JONES OF 1 SECTION', etc.
2.	'ADVANCE (ONE) AND BE RECOGNISED'	One person (eg group leader) advances without replying.
3.	'HALT!' (When the unknown person has approached sufficiently for sentry to recognise him or to give challenge).	Person halts until recognised by sentry.
4.	Challenge (if any) is given in a low tone.	Reply or countersign is given in a low tone.
5.	'ADVANCE ANOTHER ONE (or remainder) AND BE RECOGNISED'. (Sentry calls forward remainder one by one or as a group, as the situation or his orders demand).	Second person or the remainder of group advances at the order of the sentry to be recognised. Group leader, or person designated by leader must remain with the sentry to assist in identifying remainder

**Passwords**

832. If a password is used it will always be in two parts; for example:

- a. Challenge.. ...Derby
- b. Countersign.. ..Winner

833. If the two parts have some connection, as in the example given, they will be easier to remember but the connection must not be so obvious that an enemy may guess the countersign.

### Number of Sentries

834. **By Day.** The minimum requirement in the best conditions by day, is to have one sentry manning each section's MG. A second sentry may be deployed forward of the MG to give early warning. This will be normal in close country, where the second sentry should be far enough forward of the perimeter to observe ground which the gunner cannot see. He must be out of hearing range of any noise from the occupied position, such as digging. In open country the field of view of the sentry on the MG may be sufficient not to require a second sentry.

835. **By Night.** At night it is normal to deploy two sentries on the section MG. One sentry will physically man the MG and the second sentry will be beside the gun.

### Night Sentry Roster

836. The night sentry's tour of duty should not exceed two hours. This may require each man in the section to do two tours of duty during the night. Relief of the night sentries should be staggered so that one sentry is always fresh and the other is aware of the prevailing tactical situation. The sentry roster is to be prepared under the supervision of the section commander and notified to every man. An example of a sentry duty roster is detailed in Table 8-2. The roster should change every night to ensure all soldiers, over a period of time, receive equal numbers of early, late and middle of shift tours of duty. Individual characteristics should also be taken into consideration as some individuals find it nearly impossible to remain awake and alert during the early hours of the morning while others find it relatively easy.

**TABLE 8-2. EXAMPLE NIGHT SENTRY ROSTER**

#### 1 Section Sentry Roster

25 Dec 86

2000-2100	CPL Morgan <sup>1</sup>	2000-2200	PTE Fairleigh
2100-2300	PTE Morton	2200-2400	PTE McIntosh
2300-0100	PTE MacMillan	2400-0200	PTE Westcott
0100-0300	PTE Harris	0200-0400	PTE Ingle
0300-0500	LCPL Bramah	0400-0500	CPL Morgan (L MORGAN) CPL

1. One of the first two sentries does half a shift at the start of the roster and half of the shift at the end to obtain a staggered system of relief.

## The Section MG at Night

837. If the MG is covering the front of another section then its sentry must watch that area while the second sentry watches the section's own front. Strict orders must be issued about opening fire with the MG so that the position is not prematurely disclosed.

838. It is important that each man retains his own weapon throughout the night. Weapons should not be rotated throughout the section. The No 1 on the gun will sleep in close proximity to the gun. If the No 1 on the gun moves away from the MG he will borrow the weapon of the gun sentry.

## SECTION 8-4. PROTECTION AGAINST AIR ATTACK

### General

839. The measures for obtaining protection against an air attack are detailed in *JSP(AS) 13A Air Defence/Airspace Control* and *MLW Two Arty Trg, 1.4, Unit Air Defence* and are grouped as follows:

- a. *Passive Air Defence Measures.* All measures other than active defence, taken to minimise the effect of hostile air action are regarded as passive. At platoon level the following passive air defence measures can be undertaken:
  - (1) concealment,
  - (2) dispersion,
  - (3) digging-in, and
  - (4) early warning.
- b. *Active Air Defence Measures.* Active measures include all direct defensive action taken to destroy or reduce the effectiveness of an enemy air attack. There are very few active measures that a platoon can take to resist air attack, except to use its own weapons to try to repel the attack.

### Concealment

840. The best protection against air attack is concealment. High priority must be given at all times to concealment using natural and artificial camouflage. Even the sighting of a few troops could lead to the disclosure of a whole unit otherwise well concealed.

841. When troops are moving on foot in open spaces, the following rules should be observed:

- a. On a road or track when tactical deployment is not essential, sections should move dispersed in single file on one side.

- b. Where practicable, open fields should be skirted. Sections should move in single file along treelines rather than in the open. In wet or frosty conditions a few men moving across a field leave a plainly visible track.
- c. If movement has to take place across open ground, sections should move in an irregular, well dispersed formation.
- d. In areas of soft sand, such as in deserts or on beaches, movement should be on outcrops of rock, on harder sand, on the water's edge, or in an irregular formation where the beach joins the land.

842. When the section is at rest, or establishing a defensive position out of contact with the enemy, the following points should be observed:

- a. During temporary halts, men should disperse under cover to rest, and vehicles should be camouflaged. If there is no cover, the men should be well dispersed and lying face down, keeping still and not looking up when aircraft are overhead.
- b. Track discipline must be maintained when a post is occupied in the open. The track plan laid down by the platoon commander must be understood and enforced. Rules for track discipline in the open are:
  - (1) make full use of existing tracks;
  - (2) do not cut corners;
  - (3) keep new tracks to an absolute minimum;
  - (4) new tracks must blend into the background pattern, following tree lines (or under the trees), areas of stone or rock, gullies and stream beds or the edge of grassland and scrub; and
  - (5) new tracks which cannot be fitted into the ground pattern must not stop at the position to which they lead. Such tracks must be extended further to deceive the enemy.
- c. Any spoil from trenches and latrines must be camouflaged or hidden under overhead cover. If necessary, it should be taken from the trenches as they are dug and carried to the nearest cover. Any spoil used for parapets or overhead cover on the trenches must be camouflaged, as must the bottom of the trench.
- d. Fire trenches should be sited under cover or along some break in the pattern of the ground, ie, at the edge of a cultivated area or an area of low scrub or long grass. It may be difficult at times

to find positions which also fulfil the primary requirements of a fire trench, but some compromise is usually possible. It is difficult to conceal a trench which is out in the open, away from any break in the ground pattern.

- e. Fire trenches and shelters must be progressively camouflaged as they are constructed. The concealment of spoil is a continuous process. Work should not cease until all camouflage is complete.
- f. Work on a defensive position during the hours of daylight will depend on the air situation and the degree of enemy observation. Under adverse air conditions, work may only be possible at night.
- g. Shiny or light coloured objects which will attract attention from the air must not be left lying about. Mess tins, mirrors, food containers, white underwear or towels must all be hidden. Men should not be allowed to remove their shirts if there is an air or NBC threat.
- h. Fires must not be lit where there is any possibility of the smoke or flame being observed.
- i. Vehicle engines that are warm should be shielded from above, preferably with a solid object such as an old door, to defeat infra-red detectors. Ideally they should be hidden in or amongst buildings where there is a more favourable infra-red background.

## Dispersion

843. Dispersion is most important and is probably one of the most difficult measures to enforce, even with well-trained troops. In open country, or where it does not prejudice control on the move or at rest, troops within the platoon must keep dispersed to:

- a. assist concealment,
- b. avoid presenting a worthwhile target, and
- c. reduce casualties if the platoon is attacked.

844. Platoon and section commanders are responsible for ensuring dispersion of those under their command when they are within enemy artillery or mortar range, or under an air threat. Control must be maintained throughout and radio, field telephones, field signals and runners can all assist. The threat should be considered carefully before concentrating the platoon or section to collect meals, rations or water.



845. The commanders of troop carrying vehicles (TCVs) moving by day, must ensure that their drivers maintain the ordered interval. This will be about a minimum of 100 metres if air attack is likely. An air sentry must be posted in each vehicle. In open areas, B vehicles moving on roads and APCs moving across country may be dispersed even wider. Counter ambush techniques when troops are moving by TCV are described in detail in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.4, Ambush and Counter Ambush*.

### **Digging In**

846. During all halts of longer than the regular rest periods, when patrolling or when enemy air attack is imminent, troops will dig at least shellscrapes or to Stage 1, depending on the time halted and operational situation. This should be the first task undertaken upon arriving in any area. When enemy air activity is intense and men have to sleep in their trenches, the pits should be developed to Stage 3 as quickly as possible. A minimum of 50 cm of overhead cover will be necessary.

### **Early Warning**

847. Because air attacks will be swift and often unexpected, early warning of probable attack is necessary to give troops an opportunity to take cover. This warning may be passed through normal command channels, or given by local sentries. All sentries should have air watch included in their duties, and alertness for enemy aircraft is required as part of normal observation. If tactical sentries do not have a good view of the air space around them, a special air sentry must be detailed.

848. The speed of low flying aircraft makes them difficult to identify, but troops must be trained and become proficient in quick aircraft recognition. Hostile, low-flying aircraft may appear suddenly from behind low hills, treelines and haze. They will normally try to attack with the sun behind them.

### **Action When Attacked**

849. The alarm must be given immediately if troops working in the open are to have any chance of taking cover. This warning is the responsibility of all sentries in the area and will be passed by whistle, voice, radio or by any other method which may have been ordered.

850. On the alarm being given, all troops except those in close contact with the enemy must immediately take cover, below ground level if possible, and remain there until the 'all clear' signal is given. When in close contact with the enemy, troops subjected to air attack must continue to engage attacking enemy ground forces.

851. Rules for opening fire on enemy aircraft will be issued in each theatre of operations in the form of unit SOPs.

## SECTION 8-5. NBC PROTECTION

### Protection Against Blast Effects

852. The best individual defence against blast is to dig in. Defensive positions designed for protection against a nuclear attack should be prepared whenever the tactical situation permits. These positions may vary from individual weapon pits to improved collective shelters. Certain materials and types of construction provide good protection against blast:

- a. *Weapon Pits.* Because earth is a good shielding material, a properly constructed weapon pit provides excellent protection against blast. Personnel should dig a weapon pit whenever occupying a position and improve it by providing overhead protection as soon as time and the situation permit. When correctly constructed, the weapon pit and overhead protection should be sufficiently strong to resist being collapsed by blast.
- b. *Shelters.* Tunnels, caves and storm drains will provide effective shelters unless there is a nearby underground burst. Culverts, drains and ditches can be used in an emergency although they offer only partial protection. Because they are airtight, AFVs provide excellent protection in most situations. Any vehicle made of steel will provide some protection.
- c. *Protection of Equipment and Supplies.* Individual equipment should be placed in protected positions such as weapon pits or separate holes. Objects such as ration cans, tools and petrol cans should be secured to minimise the danger from flying materials.

### Immediate Actions

853. An individual's reaction to nuclear bursts must be spontaneous, if there is to be any opportunity for self protection. All personnel must be trained if caught in the open:

- a. to move no more than a few steps to cover or drop flat on the ground, preferably with feet towards the blast centre, and eyes closed;
- b. to protect any exposed skin surfaces; and
- c. to remain prone until after the blast wave has passed and debris has stopped falling.

## Personal Decontamination

854. After fallout has settled, personnel should carry out personal decontamination procedures. Care should be taken during decontamination to ensure that containers do not contact exposed parts of the body. Head, face and neck should be wiped clean, or washed if possible; these actions will reduce the burn hazard associated with prolonged contact with radioactive material. Final decontamination should be carried out as soon as possible.

## Threat-oriented Protective Posture (TOPP) Levels

855. When operating in an NBC environment, troops must adopt a level of protection consistent with both the threat and the task being performed. Procedures adopted for each TOPP level are designed to afford maximum protection while allowing the task at hand to be completed with the minimum interruption. The three levels of TOPP are detailed in Table 8-3.

**TABLE 8-3. THREAT-ORIENTED PROTECTION POSTURE LEVELS**

<i>Serial</i>	<i>Level of TOPP</i>	<i>Items Worn</i>	<i>Items Carried</i>
<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>	<i>(d)</i>
1.	Minimum (TOPP 1)	Combat clothing.	Mask.
2.	Medium (TOPP 2)	Protective clothing, and overboots.	Mask and gloves.
3.	Maximum (TOPP 3)	Protective clothing, mask, gloves and overboots.	

## Operational Limitations

856. The prolonged wearing of full protective dress will not always be practicable because of operational considerations or climate. In high temperatures, the incidence of heat exhaustion will be high. In addition, breathing resistance and physiological stress will rapidly cause fatigue. Both of these factors will, unless great care is taken, cause the condition of troops to deteriorate quickly to the extent that they are unable to perform their tasks adequately.

**Further Information**

857. Further information on the effects of nuclear weapons and biological and chemical agents, tactical considerations and measures that can be used against an attack, are described in *MLW One 4.1, Nuclear Operations* and *MLW One 4.2, Biological and Chemical Operations* respectively.

**Annex:**    A. [Sentry Orders](#)

OBSOLETE

**OBSOLETE**

**SENTRY ORDERS**

1. Likely direction of enemy's approach.
2. Arcs of responsibility.
3. Extent of fire lanes.
4. Name of landmarks and reference points.
5. Position of:
  - a. friendly forces/patrols and when they are due in;
  - b. other sentries;
  - c. own 'gun' position;
  - d. flank weapons;
    - (1) type, and
    - (2) distance;
  - e. early warning devices; and
  - f. flares.
6. Concealment and camouflage requirements.
7. Rules of engagement.
8. State of weapon readiness.
9. Challenging procedure.
10. Password.
11. Route to and from sentry position.
12. Location of immediate superior.
13. Timing for tour of duty.
14. System of relief.
15. Action on enemy approach:
  - a. open fire, or
  - b. warn commander by a means to be specified.

16. Action on:
  - a. contact with the enemy by the sentry;
  - b. contact elsewhere on platoon/company perimeter; and
  - c. shelling of position.
17. Details of special duties, such as:
  - a. air sentry, or
  - b. gas sentry.

OBSOLETE

## CHAPTER 9

### BATTLE PROCEDURE

#### SECTION 9-1. GENERAL

##### Introduction

901. Before any operation, all ranks must know their tasks and what support they can expect in the execution of these tasks. If practical, time must be allowed for reconnaissance, planning and the issue of orders to all troops involved.

902. Those actions taken by the platoon from the time the situation or problem appears until an operation is commenced, are collectively termed 'battle procedure'. Battle procedure allows the commander to launch his force into battle quickly with the maximum preparation. It ensures that as many as possible of the actions required before battle are carried out concurrently, thus saving time. Battle procedure is discussed in detail in *MLW One 5.1, Staff Duties in the Field, 1987*.

##### Aim of Battle Procedure

903. Battle procedure is designed to enable the platoon to launch into combat in the minimum amount of time, thoroughly prepared for the operation and with the greatest amount of coordinated support available.

904. Rarely will there be enough time to prepare for battle. Good battle procedure saves time without sacrificing thoroughness and is based on the following considerations:

- a. *Knowledge.* Platoon members must know their roles and be practised in the procedures for all types of operations.
- b. *Anticipation.* All members, particularly platoon commanders, platoon sergeants and section commanders, must continually appraise and re-appraise the battle-field situation with a view to anticipating an involvement and thereby be prepared to meet it.
- c. *Communication.* Information must be passed through the chain of command by the timely issue of warning orders, orders and briefings.
- d. *Economy.* Resources, in particular time and effort, must be economically used.
- e. *Thoroughness.* The platoon must commence the battle with nothing left to chance. All important detail must be covered during the preparation and as much minor detail as time will allow. Rehearsed drills and SOPs can be employed to see that nothing important is forgotten.



## Sequence of Battle Procedure

905. An example of the sequence of battle procedure is shown in [Annex A](#) to this chapter. Each operation will have its own variations. What is important is that the sequence is logical and timely, and that as many actions as possible occur concurrently.

### SECTION 9-2. ROLES AND GROUPING

#### General

906. During battle procedure each platoon member will function in one or more of the following groups; reconnaissance group (Rgp); orders group (Ogp) and platoon body.

907. During the battle procedure every platoon member must at some stage attend an OGp, whether at platoon or section level.

908. **Rgp.** The task of the Rgp is to obtain information, particularly on the enemy and the ground. It must see without being seen, and therefore must be as small as possible for the task. It will usually consist of the platoon commander, his orderly/runner and perhaps another soldier for protection. The orderly/runner and the soldier may act as guides for later moves. An MFC or support company platoon representative may also be included if it is necessary for them to view the ground or enemy first hand.

909. **OGp.** The platoon OGp usually consists of:

- a. the platoon Rgp, minus any personnel included only for protection;
- b. the section commanders;
- c. the platoon sergeant (if available);
- d. orderly/runner; and
- e. signaller.

910. Where there are attached support company platoons or supporting arms, the commanders or representatives of these sub-units may attend the OGp, eg, MFC, APC section commander, section commander of an engineer reconnaissance party.

911. When in a firm base or a secure area, and there is sufficient time or the complexity of the operation warrants, the entire patrol or platoon may attend the OGp in addition to the section commanders.

912. **Platoon Body.** The body consists of all those who are not involved in either the R or O groups. The platoon body will act on previous warning orders and orders to carry out designated tasks or, without further instruction, prepare for battle.

### SECTION 9-3. WARNING ORDER

913. If battle procedure is to achieve the goal of thorough and timely preparation, the passage of information must be speedy and efficient. Information and instructions must be quickly passed to all levels in the chain of command. This allows for subordinates to get on with the preparations which are their responsibility without waiting for detailed orders.

914. Included in these preparations are reconnaissance, administration and deployment. Whenever possible these activities should be conducted concurrently in order to save time. This can be achieved through the issue of warning orders.

915. To be effective a warning order should include:

- a. a general outline of the task (secrecy, however, may preclude the early announcement of the precise mission);
- b. the time and rendezvous (RV) for the OGp;
- c. timings or notice of move: and
- d. administrative arrangements, including preliminary moves.

916. The warning order may also include additional reconnaissance details such as any personnel required, other than those normally included in the Rgp, and the limits of reconnaissance. Preliminary tasks, such as the repositioning of fire support, may also be included.

917. Immediately the platoon commander receives a warning order he prepares and issues his own warning order to his OGp. In order to avoid unnecessary tension or fatigue, the platoon commander should quickly complete a time and space appreciation, before he issues his warning order, to calculate the earliest time that the platoon will be required to undertake some major activity or move. Having calculated this he can issue timings in the following manner: 'NO MOVE BEFORE .... HOURS' or 'BE AT .... HOURS (or minutes) NOTICE TO MOVE FROM NOW (or from a given time)'. This also allows for maximum time to be spent on concurrent activity, eg, 'weapon preparation, eating and resting'.

918. After issuing his warning order and before leaving for the company OGp, the platoon commander will entrust the continued preparation, preliminary moves, and perhaps relocation of fire support and target adjustment to the platoon sergeant. If necessary, further instructions as to the preparation and assembly of the platoon OGp may be issued, eg, the construction of models and the issue of maps.

919. Section commanders will extract from the platoon warning order, the relevant information and issue section warning orders. If there is time available before the platoon OGp, they will supervise battle procedure. Before they attend the platoon OGp, they will hand over control to their section 2ICs.

#### **SECTION 9-4. RECONNAISSANCE**

920. The reconnaissance will provide much of the information on the enemy and ground upon which the platoon commander will base his plan. All operations call for the commander to look for the information pertinent to that operation, eg, in the attack, routes, FUP and viable approaches must be found; whereas in defence, fields of fire and weapon pit sites will be pertinent. Whatever the operation, the platoon commander must plan the reconnaissance to obtain the information required in the time available.

921. Before conducting a reconnaissance the commander should:
- a. obtain all the available information about the situation;
  - b. decide what he wants his reconnaissance to achieve;
  - c. conduct a map reconnaissance to get as much information as possible about the ground, likely vantage points, routes and obstacles; and
  - d. conduct a preliminary time and space appreciation to determine how much time he can afford to spend on the reconnaissance and still have time to formulate a plan, write orders, and issue them. Time must be allowed for the orders to be passed and acted upon by all subordinates.

922. Rarely will there be enough time for the commander to see all that he would like to see. He must therefore give priorities to reconnoitering those areas which he considers most promising from his map reconnaissance.

923. The reconnaissance must be planned and executed to avoid detection. In particular, the Rgp must not take casualties from its own

troops and supporting arms. The commander must ensure that the platoon sergeant knows the reconnaissance plan and that the platoon is careful not to fire nor adjust fire onto the Rgp.

## SECTION 9-5. THE APPRECIATION

### General

924. The commander must employ a logical process of reasoning to arrive at a plan which will solve the problem and achieve the desired goal. This process is the appreciation.

925. On the battlefield the junior leader will have little time to conduct more than a mental appreciation and so he must discipline his mind to think logically and not to allow his reasoning to be clouded by fear, fatigue, hardship or other distractions. To assist in this process, the following sequence should be followed:

- a. *Determine the Aim.* There must be a clear understanding of what goal or objective the solution must achieve.
- b. *Analyse the Factors.* The known facts of the situation are analysed to produce the logical deductions which can be made in consideration of the aim.
- c. *Consider the Courses Open.* The options derived from an analysis of the factors are further weighed to arrive at the best course of action.
- d. *Formulate the Plan.* The best course of action is translated into the commander's plan. The plan in turn forms the basis of the commander's orders.

### The Aim

926. The most important decision of the appreciation process is the determination of the aim. If the aim selected is not what the commander or his superiors really want to achieve, then the appreciation will be based on a false foundation. Although it is the platoon commander's responsibility to define the platoon aim, it will often be dictated by the company commander.

927. Should the platoon be given a number of tasks to perform then the most important task becomes the aim. Any other tasks or conditions imposed upon how this goal is to be achieved become 'limitations' to the aim, but never become dual or multiple aims. Should one of these limitations be a task requiring the solution of a later tactical problem then a further appreciation will be required, once the immediate task has been completed.

928. The aim must be clear, concise and positive. A platoon aim is generally expressed in terms of:

- a. to kill,
- b. to capture,
- c. to destroy,
- d. to defend,
- e. to advance, or
- f. to withdraw.

929. The verb expressing the aim must clearly indicate the goal. Any confusion must be clarified by the platoon commander at his superior's OGP.

### Factors - General

930. The aim having been determined, all available facts are examined to see how they influence the achievement of the aim. The facts of an immediate tactical problem facing the platoon will generally fall into four main groups known as factors. They are:

- a. the enemy involved,
- b. own troops available,
- c. the ground over which the engagement will occur, and
- d. the time and space available or required for the battle.

931. Other factors which may influence the problem and which it may be necessary to consider separately are:

- a. meteorology,
- b. administration,
- c. civilians,
- d. morale, and
- e. communications.

932. **Examining the Facts.** From the known facts of the situation, a commander is able to deduce further details and information from which he can work out a viable course of action. An example of this process is shown in [Annex A](#) to this chapter. Each fact is considered in relation to the aim. Facts and information are fully considered and those that are irrelevant are discarded. One fact may lead to a number of deductions, or a

number of facts provide one deduction. A simple test to be applied to a deduction is to follow it with the question 'So what?' If a further conclusion can be drawn then the question may be answered: 'Therefore .....'. The better the intelligence available on the situation, the more appropriate the resultant plan is likely to be.

### **Factors - Enemy**

933. One aim of the enemy will be to deny the opposition intelligence. The commander must utilise his knowledge of the enemy order of battle (orbat) and tactics to make logical deductions from those facts available. Typical questions about the enemy which the commander must answer are:

- a. Where is he?
- b. What strength is he?
- c. What is he doing?
- d. What is he likely to do?
- e. What weapons does he have?
- f. What support does he have?
- g. How does this affect me?
- h. How can I counter this?

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### **Factors - Own Forces**

934. The commander must know himself and his troops. He must know the capabilities and employment of his platoon and its weapons, and those of supporting platoons and arms. Using this knowledge and his knowledge of the situation, the commander can deduce the best use of his resources and predict the need for additional support. Generally he must work within the resources allocated at the outset. In particular, the commander balances his weapons against those of his enemy to maximise his firepower against the opposing forces when and where it will be most advantageous.

### **Factors - Ground**

935. Platoon and section commanders must develop an eye for the ground. They must be capable of visualising the ground from their map, the effects friendly and enemy weapons will have on it and how the battle will be fought across it. The ground should be appreciated in the following sequence:

- a. ground general,
- b. vital ground, and
- c. approaches to the vital ground.

936. **Ground General.** The commander notes slope, vegetation, obstacles and dominating features. Deductions such as the going for infantry and armour, the fields of fire available to both sides, and thus which areas to avoid or use can be made. During this examination, attention is given to features which dominate the area and afford an advantage to the side that occupies them, eg, the vital ground and the ground covering approaches.

937. **Vital Ground.** The vital ground is: 'Ground, the possession of which by the enemy will seriously interfere with the successful defence of the position' (*JSP(AS)101-Glossary*). The vital ground for a platoon attack is generally the area occupied by the enemy force. It will normally be the job of the platoon to clear this area pit by pit with grenade and bayonet. Should some area within the enemy position offer a marked advantage the attackers should aim to possess it as soon as possible. The platoon in defence must look to protect that area which, if taken by the enemy, would prejudice the aim of the defence.

938. **Key Terrain.** Key terrain is: 'Ground, the seizure or retention of which affords a marked advantage to either combatant' (*JSP(AS)101*). Key terrain is usually a knoll, high ground or a feature which it would be advantageous to hold for purposes of deployment of weapons and troops, or security or for cover. It could be an objective to be captured before the vital ground can be attacked.

939. **Vital Element.** A platoon not only attacks and defends, but is capable of executing many different types of operations in which a piece of ground will not necessarily be the vital element, eg, the defence of a bridge or installation, or a raid to capture an object or prisoner. Whatever the operation, the commander must decide what element or object is vital to achieving the aim and make his appreciation in consideration of possessing or controlling this element or object.

940. When considering ground, the commander will be looking for various requirements depending on the task at hand. Many aspects are common to most tasks, and often must be looked at from the enemy's point of view. Such aspects include:

- a. fields of fire and distances,
- b. going for both infantry and AFVs, and
- c. obstacles and defiles.

941. Many of these common aspects will be considered mentally as the commander looks for more specific task-related information. Examples are:

a. *The Advance:*

- (1) main and alternate route(s);
- (2) axis and centreline of advance;
- (3) control features and bounds;
- (4) holding areas for rear troops and troops in TCVs; and
- (5) likely enemy held terrain and therefore target planning, approaches to the enemy and fields of fire.

b. *The Attack:*

- (1) vital ground, key terrain and objectives;
- (2) approaches, ground covering approaches, going, fields of fire;
- (3) observation points;
- (4) FUPs, routes to the FUPs, axes of assault;
- (5) assembly areas;
- (6) distances for assault and depth troops;
- (7) frontages; and
- (8) location of fire support.

c. *Defence.* As for the attack but from the defender's point of view with emphasis on:

- (1) deployment of troops to ground,
- (2) deployment of weapons to ground,
- (3) observation, and
- (4) field defences.

d. *Withdrawal.*

- (1) withdrawal routes;
- (2) control measures, including location of check-points and RVs and holding areas; and
- (3) going, day and night.

942. The above lists are not exhaustive and other operations, eg, relief in place, night operations and assault river crossings will have their own requirements for conduct of a ground appreciation.



943. By the completion of the reconnaissance, the commander must have weighed the advantages and disadvantages of the ground and considered certain options as to how he can use or combat them. At this stage of the appreciation the commander will be conceiving some viable courses of action. Before these options are fixed he must decide whether they can be achieved in the time available.

### **Factors - Time and Space**

944. Time and space available for the operation is analysed to determine if considered options are feasible in the time given. The analysis requires starting from a given time, such as 'time now', or the time by which the aim is to be achieved, and adding or subtracting in sequence the timings for each activity that must occur before and after that activity.

945. These considerations can be applied to general, day-to-day assessments, such as:

- a. priorities of work;
- b. coordination of support, eg transport timings;
- c. movement planning;
- d. training schedules; and
- e. tactical problems.

946. In the offensive and defensive operations, each specific type of operation has important timings, apart from the general times listed above. Examples are:

- a. *The Advance.* The commander will consider times by which he is to advance to given objectives, when to secure or clear them and methods of movement. He will need to know basic planning times, such as rates of advance, by foot, APC or TCV, by day and night.
- b. *The Attack.* The commander will be given objectives to secure or clear by a certain time, and will have to plan movement from assembly areas to FUPs, and onto the objective. He will need to know basic times such as the rates of advance, how long is required to fight through an objective and how long to reorganise. Timings for registration of indirect fire support, movement of fire units and coordination with infantry and armoured units is of critical importance.
- c. *Defence.* In occupying a defensive position, a primary consideration is to devise a priority of effort between patrolling, digging in and developing the defence to various stages. He will need to know time requirements such as how long it will take to dig in,

the demand for patrols made on his troops, and when to have the position defended by.

- d. *Withdrawal.* The withdrawal is an operation which is heavily dependent on coordinated times for success. It will frequently involve coordination of fire support, with a planned order of movement of troops and marrying up with transport at specific times and places. Timings the commander will need to know are, for example, the time until he must deny the position to the enemy, when to start thinning out, and when to be clear of the position, or pass through given check points or RVs.

947. The timings as laid down in the plan, especially with regard to fire support, are vital and must be met, however the plan must be flexible to permit changes to meet unexpected events. Practice of battle procedures will ensure concurrent action, minimal delays and maximum preparation.

948. The appreciation of time and space will often lead to the exclusion of certain courses of action or approaches.

### **Courses Open**

949. The courses of action open to both the enemy and the friendly commander must be evaluated to determine:

- a. the most likely enemy action and hence the best course to adopt to achieve the aim, or
- b. enemy reaction (and if necessary any subsequent friendly reactions required).

950. The commander must first consider the courses open to the side that has the initiative, eg, in the attack and ambush, his course of action and the likely enemy reaction; and in the defence, the enemy action and the best reaction with which he can counter it.

951. The advantages and disadvantages of each option open to the commander must be weighed to produce the best course of action.

### **Plan**

952. The best course of action is translated into the commander's plan, which in turn forms the basis of orders and thus follows a similar format:

- a. *Mission.* The aim of the appreciation defines the mission.
- b. *Execution.* The tasks to be allocated to sub-units are derived from the deductions made during the consideration of the factors. The essential elements of coordination, eg timings, H hour,

FUP, LD, routes, and priorities of work; can be extracted from the analysis made of the various factors.

- c. *Command and Signals or Administration and Logistics.* At platoon level it will not be normal for elements which fall into the 'command and signals' or 'administration and logistics' categories to form a keystone of the plan or be so peculiar as to warrant special listing.

953. The plan must achieve the aim of the appreciation and it must comply with whatever orders, if any, initiated the appreciation. It is essential that the aim is correct and that it be used to test the factors during the appreciation.

## SECTION 9-6. ORDERS

### General

954. Orders are the means by which the platoon commander communicates his plan and intentions to his subordinates. At the completion of orders, the participants must know exactly what is to be achieved, how it is to be achieved and what role they must play. If the mission is to succeed, then the orders must be issued in a timely and efficient manner. At platoon level this is usually done verbally. Orders must be understood and be capable of being effected.

955. Platoon orders may be initiated solely by the platoon commander or as a result of company orders. No matter at what level in the chain of command the initiation occurs, it is the duty of each successive commander to extract the relevant detail, appreciate the situation and issue a set of orders relevant to his command.

### Sequence

956. Orders must be given in a logical sequence and must include all the necessary detail. They must be passed quickly, making the maximum use of warning orders, and include only the relevant detail. The following sequence is adopted:

- a. *Explanation of Model and/or Topography.*
- (1) *Situation.* The facts of the situation are given under the headings 'Enemy', 'Own Forces' and 'Ground'.
  - (2) *Mission.* There must be a clear and concise statement of the mission, which is derived directly from the 'Aim' of the appreciation.

- (3) *Execution.* The description of how the mission is to be carried out must include the allocation of specific tasks and the coordinating detail peculiar to the plan.
- (4) *Administration and Logistics.* The administrative and logistical requirements of the mission must include anything additional to those covered by SOPs.
- (5) *Command and Signals.* That detail peculiar to the plan and not covered by SOPs eg, location of platoon headquarters, reorganisation, signals, and the synchronisation of watches must be included.

### Detailed Content

957. Each type of operation will require a slight variation to the information detailed under each heading. An example of that detail and a comparative table is contained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*. No list can cover every single contingency. It is up to the commander to see that his orders contain the necessary detail. The information that is given to the subordinate commander must be sufficient for him to continue the designated plan and achieve the mission should the commander become a casualty.

### Presentation

958. When presenting orders, the commander must take into consideration:

- a. the time available for:
  - (1) presentation;
  - (2) dissemination; and
  - (3) implementation of orders
- b. the level of comprehension of his OGp; and
- c. the level of training of his command. The more experienced and well trained the platoon, the less the detail likely to be necessary in orders as more aspects will fall within SOPs.

959. No matter what the level or standard of the command, there are some basic rules which ensure effective presentation:

- a. Orders must be given clearly, calmly and confidently.
- b. Nothing relevant must be omitted, nothing irrelevant included.
- c. Interruptions are not allowed.

- d. Allow time for orders to be considered and questions asked.
- e. Question members of the OGP on important elements of their orders to ensure that they understand them.
- f. If time allows, take notes during long orders and conversely make notes for the presentation of long orders. Refer to notes to ensure accuracy, where necessary.
- g. If possible arrange for the OGP to look over the ground first hand. If this is not possible, utilise maps, air photographs, dirt and mud models.

960. Security of the OGP is vital. It should be conducted in an area where it can be afforded protection by the platoon or sentries and which is accessible and central to those attending. The routes in and out should be covered from fire and from view and, where possible, the location should be defilade to any immediate fire fight. It may be necessary for a commander, particularly a section commander, to issue his orders to separate groups or individuals and to relay brief orders to others.

### **Patrol and Ambush Orders**

961. If there is sufficient time, patrol and ambush orders are best delivered to an OGP consisting of the entire platoon or patrol. The check lists for patrol and ambush orders are contained in the *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.3, Patrolling and Tracking* and *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.4, Ambush and Counter Ambush* respectively.

### **Snap Orders and Radio Orders**

962. Snap orders are an abbreviated form of orders given when the situation demands immediate action. The exact content of snap orders cannot be listed, as it depends on the situation. For example a section commander may be ordered to, 'CLEAR THAT SHED'. How he does it is left to him, but speed is essential. Another example is when the platoon commander has more, but still limited time for reconnaissance and issue of orders. In this case he gives only the essential guidance to his section commanders. He would still follow the same sequence as full orders but may well delete most of the paragraphs, such as Situation, Administration and Logistics and Command and Signals. These orders will be verbal. In many situations a section commander may achieve the best results by snap orders such as, 'GUN GROUP COVER US FROM THAT EMBANKMENT'. When this group is in position he orders, 'RIFLE GROUP FOLLOW ME'.

963. Radio orders are given when distance, time or the situation prevents the assembly of an OGp. They may be either a complete sequence of orders, or more in the nature of snap orders. In many situations, eg during mechanised operations, or during operations over a wide area, radio may well be the normal means of issuing orders. They may be additional to a formal OGp and could be confirmatory in nature, ie confirm or make final adjustments to previous orders, once a particular situation has been clarified.

964. Regardless of the reason for using radio orders, they must be concise, clear and used only when necessary, as enemy EW will be a distinct threat.

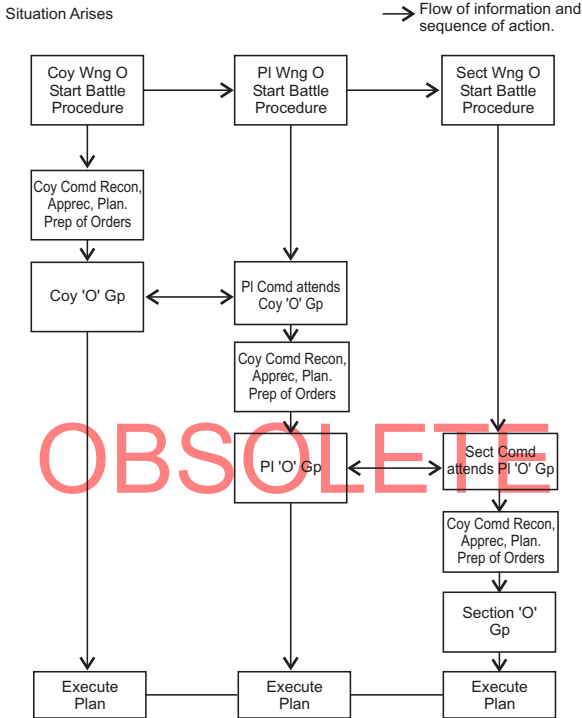
**Annex:**     A. Sequence of Battle Procedure

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## ANNEX A TO CHAPTER 9

### SEQUENCE OF BATTLE PROCEDURE



Flow of information and sequence of action.

- Notes:
1. Battle procedure may include administration ammunition, weapons check, feeding, resting, medical checks, stores issue, supervision of progress, reconnaissance, appreciations, preparation of orders, issue of orders and preliminary moves.
  2. PI Sgt and Sect 2ICs comd pl and sects respectively when comds at OGp, recon etc, and prepare maps.



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## CHAPTER 10

### NEGOTIATING OBSTACLES

#### SECTION 10-1 GENERAL

1001. The crossing of major obstacles will normally be planned at battalion level or higher. As platoons and sections will be involved, their commanders and soldiers must know the various methods of crossing or breaching these obstacles. Major obstacles include:

- a. rivers, streams and canals;
- b. wire;
- c. minefields; and
- d. contaminated areas

1002. When the obstacles covering an enemy position are ineffective, and inadequately covered by fire, a quick attack may be the most decisive action. Should the obstacles be extensive and covered by effective fire, it will be necessary to either:

- a. outflank or bypass them, or
- b. carry out a deliberate breaching or crossing operation using special equipment.

1003. This chapter covers the assault, crossing and deliberate breaching of obstacles at platoon level. The deliberate breaching or crossing of obstacles at company and battalion level is described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1 The Infantry Battalion*. General considerations concerning the crossing of natural and artificial obstacles are described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.2 Fieldcraft and Target Detection*.

#### SECTION 10-2. GAPPING WIRE OBSTACLES

##### Methods of Making Gaps

1004. Wire obstacles will usually be covered by fire and encountered in the last stages of an attack. Methods of making gaps in wire include:

- a. *Artillery and Mortar Fire*. The effectiveness of artillery and mortar fire is limited, especially against low wire entanglements. It will make gaps in the wire but will not clear lanes sufficiently large for an infantry assault. This method may be useful in a quick attack where wire is not extensive.
- b. *Tanks Firing Cannister Ammunition at Short Range*. Cannister ammunition can clear wire obstacles effectively, especially in open country.

- c. *Wire Cutters.* Wire cutters are effective for cutting gaps in wire before a major breach is made, or for clearing the last strands of wire. The leading sections may have to go to ground to give covering fire to a gapping party.
- d. *Bangalore Torpedo.* Assault pioneer gapping parties may accompany assaulting platoons or sections and blow gaps using Bangalore Torpedoes. Gapping parties should be covered by indirect and direct fire support. A Bangalore Torpedo can blow a gap in a wire obstacle 3m wide and 6-8 m deep.
- e. *Use of Bridging Expedients.* Leading sections may carry material which can be thrown over wire obstacles to form bridges.

1005. **Mines and Booby Traps.** Both anti-personnel and anti-tank mines are likely to be laid in wire obstacles or immediately in front of or behind them. The type and density of the mines should be determined during the ground reconnaissance. The platoon commander may need to combine his gapping operation with a minefield breaching operation. The breaching of minefields is described in [Section 10-3](#). If mines are laid in wire obstacles it is likely that booby traps are also in use. A taut wire must not be cut nor a loose wire pulled until it has been investigated for booby traps.

1006. **Gaps.** The method of passing through gaps will vary according to the number of gaps. The ideal is one gap for each of the leading assault sections. There should be at least one gap for each platoon. If the covering fire is coming from outside the platoon, sections should quickly break formation, double through the gap, and reform. When covering fire is limited, enemy opposition may force sections to pass through gaps employing fire and movement.

1007. **Types of Obstacles.** The designs of wire obstacles used by the Australian Army are described in *MLW Two, Eng Trg 2.2 Obstacles and Field Defences*. The basic design of those used by the enemy will be similar.

### SECTION 10-3. BREACHING MINEFIELDS

#### General

1008. Minefields may be encountered anywhere on the battlefield, but are usually employed in defence, to deny approaches to enemy positions or to channel assaulting troops into killing areas. To use them as an effective obstacle the enemy will normally cover them with fire. For crossing large minefields a minefield breaching operation will be necessary. Enemy minefields may not be marked and the enemy may cause delay by using dummy marking, forcing troops to clear an area that has not been mined.

1009. Small groups of nuisance mines may be encountered anywhere. A low density minefield, ie, one with only a few mines per metre of front, or an anti-tank minefield, may be crossed on foot without a special breaching operation. Casualties caused by walking through such a minefield will often be less than those caused by enemy fire during a breaching operation.

1010. **Mine Incident Drill.** During dismounted operations, when the platoon is out of contact with the enemy, the following drill should be adopted when a mine is detonated causing casualties:

- a. On detonation everyone remains motionless.
- b. The commander confirms the number, location and condition of the casualties. Information is passed verbally or by field signal.
- c. The radio operator requests casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) and sends initial report of incident.
- d. Use bayonets to prod to and around casualties. Mark all proven lanes.
- e. Where possible apply initial first aid to casualties.
- f. The commander nominates troops to maintain observation, all other troops not immediately involved will prod and make a safe area for CASEVAC.
- g. Extraction of casualties will be along marked lanes.

### **Methods of Breaching a Minefield**

1011. Minefields may be breached by the use of mine detectors and prodders, or by the use of explosives.

1012. **Use of Mine Detectors and Prodders.** Breaching parties made up of infantry or engineers using mine detectors and/or prodders work in darkness or under covering fire to make safe lanes through the field. A safe lane for infantry is from 1 to 2 m wide and is marked by string or tape.

1013. **Use of Explosives.** Minefield safe lanes may be cleared by using prepared explosive charges such as the Projected Line Charge (PLC) or Bangalore Torpedoes. The PLC, which provides a rapid means of clearing narrow lanes through minefields, consists of an explosive-filled hose which is projected over the mined area and then exploded. Small PLCs will clear a path about 1.3 m wide through most minefields. With large PLCs, a path up to 1m wide may be achieved. PLCs are not suitable for use in areas where the line will be held clear of the ground by obstructions such as vegetation and fences and may also prove ineffective against deeply-buried or blast-proof mines. The current in-service PLC equipment is described in *MLW Two, Eng Trg 2.5 Mine Warfare and Booby Traps*. The Bangalore Torpedo is discussed in *MLW Two, Eng Trg 2.4 Demolitions*.

## Lanes

1014. Ideally, one lane is required for each of the leading assault sections. If this is not possible, there should be at least one lane for each platoon.

1015. The methods for passing through the cleared lanes are the same as for passing through gaps in wire. Further detail on mine clearing is detailed in *MLW Two, Eng Trg 2.5 Mine Warfare and Booby Traps*.

## SECTION 10-4. NEGOTIATING WATER OBSTACLES

### General

1016. When a water obstacle is encountered, the commander of the leading troops must initiate a reconnaissance to obtain information which will enable him to:

- a. provide a report on the obstacle to his commander, and
- b. determine a means of getting his own men and their equipment to the far bank with the minimum delay.

1017. **Selection of Crossing Places.** The following points should be considered when selecting a crossing place for an improvised crossing, when boats are not available:

- a. As wider portions of the waterway are likely to be shallower and have weaker current, poor swimmers can often make easier crossings in these areas.
- b. It is easier to cross from a point jutting out into the stream; if possible, where the flow of the current is towards the far bank.
- c. High banks on the far shore are an indication of deep water and may make it difficult for the men to leave the water. Deep water on the near bank is not such a problem as it is negotiated before the men get too tired.
- d. Shallow water or sandbars in the centre of the stream provide an opportunity for reorganisation and rest. They will also enable men to regain their feet if they have been swept away, or to recuperate if they are exhausted.
- e. Crossing should be made at an angle of about 800 mils downstream as shown in [Figure 10-1](#)

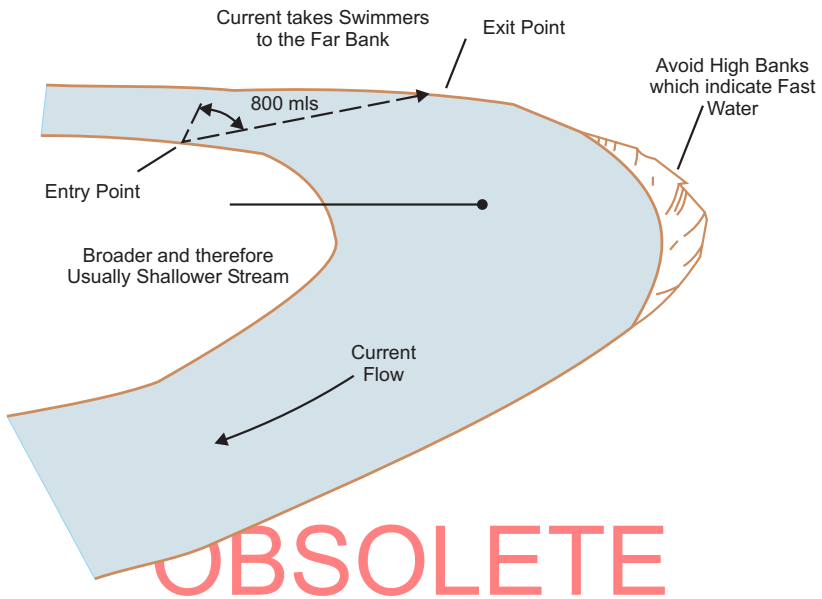


Figure 10-1. Crossing at 800 mls Downstream

### Methods of Crossing.

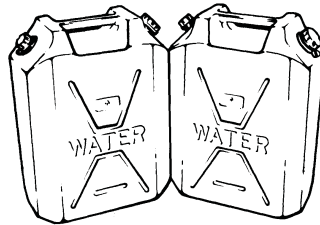
1018. **Wading.** To wade across a stream, face upstream and lean against the current whilst moving crabwise across the stream. A stick about 2 m long will often help. Do not attempt to wade directly across a swiftly flowing stream at right angles to the current. The current will eventually sweep one foot in front of the other, resulting in loss of balance and the danger of being swept away.

1019. **Hand Lines.** When wading is dangerous, toggle ropes or rifle slings may be linked together to provide a hand line. A hand line will help prevent soldiers who lose their footing from being swept away, and gives confidence to weak swimmers.

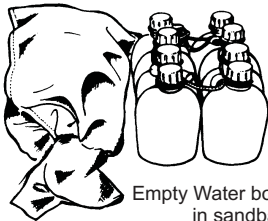
1020. **Floats.** Floats can be used to assist soldiers to cross a water obstacle. They can enable a comparatively long water crossing to be made with the minimum of fatigue by the swimmers, who, on arriving at the far bank, will have dry clothing and equipment to put on. They can also be used to support a weak swimmer and as a means of getting equipment across or keeping it dry. There are many ways of improvising floatation aids. Figure 10-2 shows some methods others may be improvised.



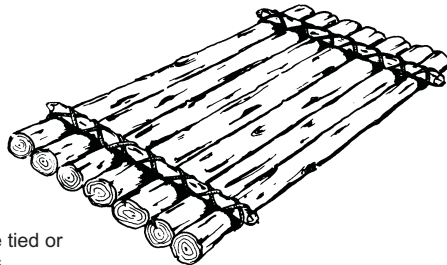
Pack/Equipment wrapped in Shelter.  
Weapon on top, ready for  
instant use.



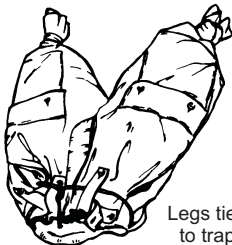
Empty Jerri cans



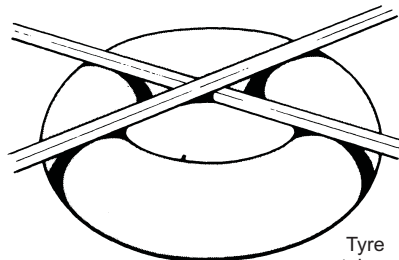
Empty Water bottle tied or  
in sandbags



Lashed logs, bamboo or other  
buoyant materials



Legs tied off  
to trap air



Tyre  
tubes

Figure 10-2. Improvised Floatation Aids

1021. **Swimming.** Swimming is only suitable for very short distances. In the event of an individual getting into difficulties in the water he should swim with the current, easing himself out of it to either bank as appropriate. On no account should he try to swim against the current. It is important that every soldier in the platoon be taught to swim. When there are non-swimmers in the platoon, they should be paired with swimmers and assisted by a float.

1022. **Crossing Over an Obstacle.** After an assault crossing or when there is little or no risk of enemy interference, rope bridges above the water may be used. The construction of rope bridges is described in *MLW Two, Engr Trg 2.1 Obstacle Crossing and Mobility*.

1023. **Tactical Considerations.** The following tactical considerations should be observed when water obstacles are being negotiated:

- a. *Bank Protection Party.* A bank protection party must be established to cover the commander's initial reconnaissance.
- b. *Covering Group.* A covering group must be provided for the initial crossing. This may well be provided by the bank protection party.
- c. *MG.* An MG should be established on the far bank as soon as possible.
- d. *Lifeline.* Depending on the width and depth of the waterway and the strength of the current it may be necessary to establish a lifeline.
- e. *Assembly Area.* An assembly area in which to prepare floatation equipment is essential.
- f. *Far Bank Protection Section.* The section commander of the far bank protection section and the platoon commander should be established on the far bank before floatation of equipment starts.
- g. *The Home Bank.* The platoon sergeant is responsible for security of the assembly area and the preparation of floatation equipment. He is responsible for the coordination of the home bank until he crosses. The platoon sergeant should cross last and report completion of the crossing to the platoon commander.

1024. **Watermanship.** Platoon and section commanders should study and practise watermanship. Deciding where to cross and land, and launching a boat into a stream call for knowledge of the effect of a current on a boat and of the characteristics of such features as banks, bends and



pools. Handling a boat in a difficult current and landing on a steep bank need careful training and practice. Further details are contained in *MLW 2, Engr Trg 2.1, Obstacle Crossing and Mobility*

## **SECTION 10-5 CONTAMINATED AREAS**

### **General**

1025. Contaminated areas include those which have been subject to NBC attack. When a platoon has to cross a contaminated area, protective measures as discussed in [Section 8-5](#) should be employed.

**OBSOLETE**

## PART THREE-TACTICS

### CHAPTER 11. ADVANCE AND PURSUIT

#### SECTION 11-1. GENERAL

##### The Advance

1101. The advance is a mobile operation in which the platoon moves as part of a larger force to close with the enemy. The aim of the advance is to:

- a. destroy the enemy,
- b. force an enemy withdrawal,
- c. seize tactically important ground,
- d. seize or maintain the initiative, or
- e. deceive the enemy.

1102. There are two types of advance:

- a. *The advance to Contact.* In the advance to contact the emphasis is on wide reconnaissance to find the enemy positions and determine their strength. The main part of the advancing force is uncommitted and ready for action. Speed and bold action will be necessary to forestall enemy reaction.
- b. *The advance in Contact.* During an advance in contact the aim is to maintain pressure on the enemy, to harass him continuously and to prevent him from breaking contact and settling into a defensive position. These will often involve night operations. The enemy must be denied the opportunity to regain the initiative. This can be best achieved by speed, surprise and aggressive planning and action.

##### The Pursuit

1103. The pursuit is a form of advance. A platoon in the pursuit will move as fast as is tactically sound and will act as in any other advance. Company orders will include instructions on the action to be taken on making contact with the enemy, eg leading platoons may be ordered to report on and then bypass enemy parties of nominated sizes. The speed of the pursuit at platoon level can also be increased by mounting infantry in vehicles, particularly A vehicles or aircraft. Typical platoon tasks could be to continue advancing in contact and maintain pressure on the enemy; dealing with bypassed pockets of enemy; acting in a cut off role, especially while mounted in APCs or in helicopters, and administrative tasks such as handling prisoners of war or guarding secured areas.

1104. When the enemy has been forced to withdraw he should be routed by bold and aggressive action in a pursuit. For a platoon there is little difference between an advance and a pursuit, therefore they will be considered jointly.

1105. In order to execute the platoon's role in the advance the commander must understand the operation as it applies to the battalion, as this is the smallest force that will undertake an advance. This information is detailed in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Battalion*.

### Advancing Force Grouping

1106. The general groupings of an advancing force are illustrated in Figure 11-1.

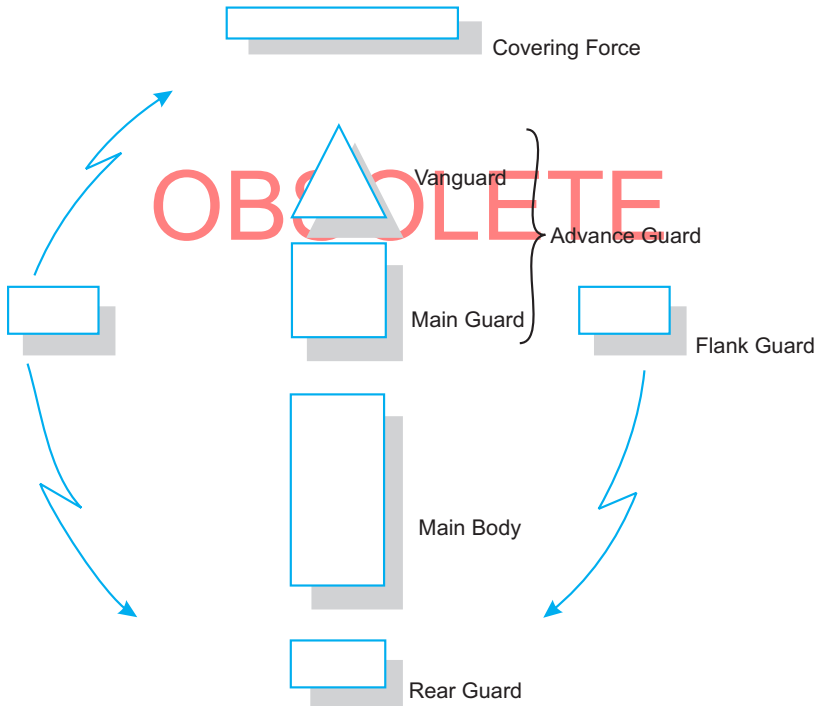


Figure 11-1. Grouping of the Advanced Forces

## Groups and Tasks

1107. An advancing force is divided into five major groups, each with a defined task:

- a. *Covering Force.* A covering force provides reconnaissance across the front of the advancing force. It seeks out the main enemy force and obtains information so that the main force can be applied against those objectives most likely to lead to the destruction of the enemy. The covering force is normally provided and controlled by the senior headquarters. To maintain momentum it usually bypasses minor opposition.
- b. *Advance Guard.* The advance guard clears away minor opposition in front of the main body and exploits any enemy weakness discovered by the covering force. The leading element of the advance guard is called the vanguard while the remainder is the main guard. The advance guard maintains momentum and the initiative through its aggressive action, keeping the enemy off guard and allowing the main body to prepare for the delivery of major blows.
- c. *Main Body.* The main body provides the main fighting strength of the advancing force and supplies periodic changes of advance, flank and rear guards.
- d. *Flank Guard.* A flank guard gives early warning of an enemy threat from a flank. It then acts to block or to slow down such a threat, and to prevent small-arms fire being directed against the main body.
- e. *Rear Guard.* The rear guard protects the main body from surprise attack from the rear and forms the link with any other force following.

## Battalion Deployment

1108. While each advance will result in a particular grouping and balance of forces, a typical battalion deployment in the advance is detailed in [Figure 11-2](#).

11-4

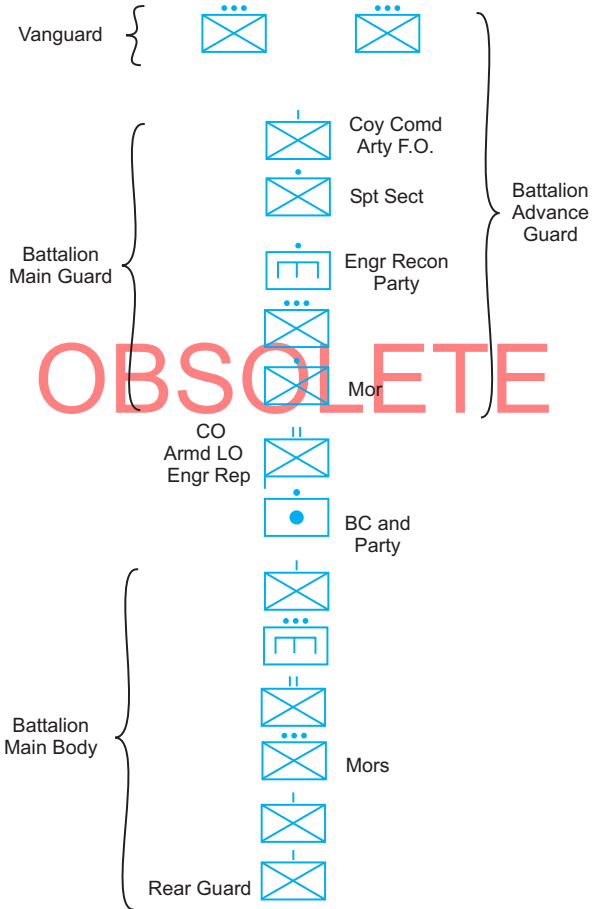
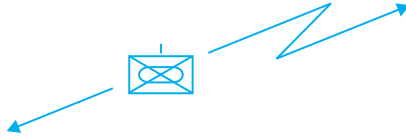


Figure 11-2. Typical Battalion Deployment in the Advance

## Platoon and Section Roles

1109. During an advance, platoons and sections may be called on to act as:

- a. the point section, the leading section of the leading platoon;
- b. the leading platoon, the battalion vanguard (there may be two leading platoons);
- c. part of the company in the mainguard;
- d. part of the company in the main body;
- e. the flank platoon (or section), the battalion flank guard or part of it; or
- f. the rear platoon (or section), the battalion rear guard or part of it

## Stages

1110. The advance is considered in two stages:

- a. the preparatory stage which is essentially battle procedure, and
- b. the conduct stage.

## SECTION 11-2. THE PREPARATORY STAGE

### General

1111. The major appreciation and planning for the conduct of the advance is made at battalion headquarters and higher, but the platoon commander must also appreciate and plan. He must ensure that the platoon can not only meet the battalion or company commander's plan, but quickly react to unforeseen contingencies. The platoon must be well briefed, rehearsed and equipped so that the coordinated response necessary to seize the initiative during the advance can be made quickly. The orders given during this stage will have a great bearing during the conduct stage.

### Basic Considerations

1112. During both stages of the advance the basic considerations for the platoon are:

- a. control,
- b. rate of advance,
- c. firepower, and
- d. protection.

## Control

1113. Control during the advance is essential and depends on:

- a. a simple clear cut plan and orders based on timely and accurate information,
- b. good battle procedure and communications, and
- c. the platoon commander moving well forward.

1114. **Control Measures.** During the advance, various measures are used to assist in control:

- a. *LD.* The LD is the point from which the leading platoon commences the advance. A force will normally adopt their advance formation before crossing this line.
- b. *Axis.* The axis is the general line astride which the platoon will move. The platoon headquarters will follow this line. The platoon axis will normally be ordered by the company commander. It may be in the same direction but not on the same axis as the main force and could be a bearing, feature or road.
- c. *Bounds.* Bounds are tactical features which can be defended if necessary. The platoon will not normally halt on a bound unless ordered to do so, but will approach and pass over it with caution. The leading, flank or rear sections report each platoon bound clear of enemy and then continue the advance. The platoon commander relays the information on company bounds to the company commander. The platoon commander may select intermediate platoon bounds between those laid down by the company commander. If a platoon is ordered to halt to conform to a situation elsewhere, or to rest, it should do so on a bound.
- d. *Report Lines.* Report lines are used for controlling and monitoring the location and rate of advance of advancing elements. They have no tactical significance except that they are chosen to conform with easily recognisable features, such as road junctions and streams. In close country and in bad going, bounds may be close together and thus reduce the need for report lines. The passing of report lines is reported in the same manner as bounds. Both are given nick-names for ease of reporting and secrecy. The report lines are selected by the company commander

but the platoon commander may order his own as well, although this would be unusual.

1115. **Position of Commanders.** The platoon commander must be in a position to assume control of the battle if the leading or flank sections are unable to overcome opposition quickly. By moving centrally and close behind the leading section(s) he can bring quick, coordinated fire onto any enemy. The platoon commander must be careful not to overcommit his platoon. The commander of the leading platoon must resist the temptation to lead the advance or rush forward and take over the section commander's role at the first shot. The location of section commanders in relation to their platoon commander and platoon sergeant is important. It is usual for section commanders of the leading and flank sections to move behind their scouts. Ground and/or vegetation will determine the best positions for control and observation, however, as little time and exposure as possible should be spent on contact moving to the platoon commander. The platoon sergeant normally travels centrally in the rear of the platoon formations. When a platoon is moving as part of a company formation, the company commander may require his depth platoon commanders to move closer to him, or be in the headquarters itself.

1116. **Formations.** Formations are chosen with regard to task, terrain and rate of advance. The leading platoon(s) must be able to develop maximum firepower in the direction of the enemy and to clear a path for the rest of the advance. The platoon commander must retain control of his sections at all times, changing formation smoothly and speedily to accommodate terrain and obstacles. Pre-arranged field signals for platoon formations, obstacle crossings, and battle formation will enhance control. Platoon and section formations are described in [Chapter 6](#) of this pamphlet and field signals are described in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.1, The Infantry Soldiers Handbook*.

1117. **Contact Man.** The leading platoon must maintain visual contact with other elements of the company to the rear and flanks. Nominated soldiers in the flank and rear sections must be tasked to maintain contact. In this way, leading platoons can be kept aligned, and if necessary, cover each other's movement with the minimum of radio traffic. The advance must be smooth, avoiding concertinaing, particularly in close country.

1118. **Scouts.** The role of the scout is to provide early warning to an advancing section or platoon and pass back information without being seen. The correct use of scouts is vital in the considerations of control, rate of advance and protection. They may be placed well forward in open terrain or to the flanks when those areas are not completely open and



known, or may harbour enemy. Scouts must not mask the fire of the platoon.

### **Rate of Advance**

1119. In many ways, at platoon level, the conduct of the advance will resemble that of a patrol. One important difference is the rate of advance. This will rarely be left to the platoon commander to decide but will be ordered by his company commander. The platoon commander must supervise this rate.

1120. Quite often this rate will be faster than that which would be adopted during an independent platoon patrol. While security is not to be prejudiced nor casualties taken unnecessarily, the momentum of the advance must be maintained and the time and space considerations of the force's mission given priority.

1121. If the advance is to be rapid, the scouts and the platoon may be forced to use tracks and less dense going unless the area is particularly open. In this case vehicles, particularly A vehicles, may be allocated to the advancing force or groups, especially the advance guard. Notwithstanding, increased speed will decrease the thoroughness of reconnaissance. If movement off tracks in close country is unacceptably slow, only likely enemy positions may be reconnoitred. Particular attention must be paid to the area immediately covering the road or track being used as the axis.

1122. In open country, a rapid rate of advance will not create such a difficult balance between security and speed because the platoon can be deployed on a wide frontage with one or two sections forward. During a rapid advance in open country, a change in vegetation, a river, or other obstacle can channel or slow the platoon. Changes in formation and movement will ensure security and speed are maintained.

1123. Whatever the conditions the platoon and section commanders must continually study the map and ground to appreciate the going, avoid unnecessary pauses and dangerous ground, and anticipate enemy action and their subsequent counter actions. They must not permit the risk of casualties among leading scouts to influence the rate of advance unduly. There are usually fewer casualties during an advance than in other operations.

### **Firepower**

1124. The platoon must always be prepared to bring the maximum volume of fire against enemy positions. This includes not only the platoon firepower, but that of supporting platoons and arms. Artillery and mortar DF tasks should be determined during the preparatory stage and made

known to all commanders. A quick, heavy weight of fire onto the enemy will allow the platoon to neutralise the enemy position and to seize the initiative with bold, aggressive action and minimum casualties.

1125. Likely enemy positions must be approached in a battle deployment. The deployment must include the standby of supporting mortar and artillery fire and the positioning of support platoons such as the anti armour or MG platoon. Other flanking platoons and the company support section may be in a position to assist. This coordination of firepower will either be pre-arranged or will be arranged by the company commander on request from the platoon commander.

1126. The company commander will often move the attached FO, MFC and other elements with the leading platoon, and in the case of a battle group advance, tank and armoured vehicle firepower will be available. The platoon commander may also have access to naval and air firepower.

### **Protection**

1127. A platoon is often tasked with the protection of the main body. Protection provided must be as thorough in the reconnaissance and searching of its axis and sector as other considerations, such as the rate of advance and ground will allow. It must not be ambushed and must ensure the remainder of the force is not ambushed. Security is a particular problem in close country, and in open country when the enemy has increased mobility.

1128. The leading section(s) is responsible for security to the front and the immediate flanks of the main body. In close country this includes searching trees for snipers. Flank and rear sections must guard the flanks and rear of the platoon respectively. The vanguard platoon will be responsible for security to the front and flanks, normally to a nominated distance, of the main guard. As in patrolling, each individual must search his arc of responsibility.

1129. When an air threat exists, air defence sentries must be nominated from rear sections. When a tank threat exists, tanks and anti-armour weapons should be moved well forward during the advance and sited for protection at halts.

1130. Whenever a platoon halts during the advance it adopts a defensive posture ([Section 8-2](#)).

### **Advancing with Armoured Support**

1131. An advance with armoured support requires a high degree of infantry/armour cooperation. The information required at platoon level to

enable infantry to cooperate with tanks and APC's is provided in Chapters 2 and 7 of this pamphlet, and *MLW One 2.2, The Battle Group*.

### SECTION 11-3. CONDUCT OF THE ADVANCE

#### General

1132. Many of the platoon's actions during the advance, such as moving between bounds, obstacle crossings and action on contact, will be decided upon and rehearsed during the preparatory stage. Platoon and section commanders must continually appreciate the situation and the ground. In this manner the platoon will not be slowed or drawn into an unfavourable battle situation, and will maintain momentum and inflict casualties on the enemy.

#### Aspects of Specific Tasks

1133. Leading Platoon. The enemy will attempt to impose delay by using positions sited in depth in front of the advance. These positions can impose a delay quite disproportionate to their size. The leading platoon must prevent the enemy from withdrawing to fight again by cutting them off and destroying them. The leading platoon must maintain the momentum of the advance, destroy the delaying enemy and retain the initiative. To achieve this the following points should be noted:

- a. Lead sections and scouts should be changed periodically to help maintain the speed of the advance. Rear sections must be in visual or voice contact of platoon headquarters to ensure quick deployment.
- b. Leading sections neutralise isolated enemy posts using contact drills or by firing pre-arranged DF tasks. This immediate action is followed by a quick attack. Larger forces are destroyed through the use of firepower and manoeuvre as appreciated by the platoon commander and as laid down in orders during the preparatory phase.
- c. The section in contact should try to define the strength and limits of a position which is too strong for it to attack. This is done from a hasty defensive position.
- d. As soon as contact occurs the platoon commander must move forward to observe the action and gain information from the section commanders. He must also keep the company commander informed.
- e. At the onset of combat, those sections not immediately involved deploy into all round defence and await further orders.
- f. If the point section cannot overcome the opposition, the platoon commander appreciates the situation and decides if the task is

within the platoon's capabilities. By this time the company commander should have arrived to assist if necessary.

- g. If the task is within the capabilities of the platoon, a quick attack must be launched in coordination with all available fire support. It is important that the platoon keeps the company fully informed about actions and intentions. Plans must be cleared with the company commander.
- h. If the task is beyond the platoon's capabilities, the platoon adopts a defensive position to contain the enemy and to cover the deployment of the company. Pressure continues to be applied to the enemy through probing and patrols to gain further information on the enemy strength, disposition and likely intentions.

1134. **Flank Platoon.** The speed of the flank platoon must not hinder the speed of the advance. Although the platoon may be advancing parallel to the main body it must be vigilant all round and be prepared to fight in any direction. It is normal for the flank platoon to remain under company control and not be detached under battalion control.

1135. **Rear Platoon.** The rear platoon must be prepared to fight to either flank as well as to the rear.

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## CHAPTER 12

### ATTACK

#### SECTION 12-1. GENERAL

##### Introduction

1201. The aim of an attack is to close with and destroy the enemy or to capture terrain. This is done by a combination of fire and movement.

1202. The attack may be launched by day or night. It may be noisy (with full fire support) or be silent (to achieve surprise). Silent attacks can only take place when visibility is poor, eg, in fog, at night, or in close country.

##### Types of Attack

1203. Attacks are termed 'quick' or 'deliberate' depending on the degree of preparation of the enemy position which in turn dictates the degree of preparation necessary to destroy it. This chapter describes in detail the requirements of the attack. In the quick attack the platoon commander's mental appreciation and verbal orders will follow essentially the same process, modified because of the urgency of the situation.

1204. Most deliberate attacks are planned at battalion level or above, and battalion attacks are usually deliberate. A company or platoon attack is usually a quick attack but may be deliberate, eg, a raid on an enemy locality or post. The platoon will normally only take part in a deliberate attack as part of a large force.

##### Quick Attack

1205. A platoon or section quick attack may be launched:

- a. against hastily prepared enemy defences;
- b. when one or both sides are moving;
- c. when contact is first made during an advance or during a pursuit;
- d. on an unexpected encounter during a patrol operation;
- e. to overcome unexpected opposition during a deliberate attack, including fighting through the objective; and
- f. to seize an opportunity presented by a rapid change in the enemy's ability or will to fight.

1206. In the quick attack there is little time for reconnaissance or organisation of an elaborate fire plan but there is usually considerable scope for manoeuvre, and fire and movement. The plan must be simple and flexible and carried out with determination and speed. While hesitation in seizing the initiative may be fatal, a quick attack, particularly at platoon level, is not merely a contact drill. It should not be launched without adequate reconnaissance and planning.

### **Deliberate Attack**

1207. A deliberate attack is staged against well-organised, strong enemy defences. Assaulting troops will often have little room in which to manoeuvre but this is offset by additional time for reconnaissance and for the preparation and coordination of the fire of tanks, artillery, air and battalion weapons.

### **Key Considerations for the Attack**

1208. When an attack is planned, the following factors must be considered:

- a. *Surprise.* An attack from an unexpected direction will usually have a greater chance of success. The following aspects must be considered to enhance the chance of achieving surprise:
  - (1) concealment of movement from the assembly area to the LD;
  - (2) good security achieved by patrolling, radio silence and march discipline;
  - (3) choice of time;
  - (4) speed; and
  - (5) deception.
- b. *Firepower.* Fire superiority must be gained and maintained throughout the assault to permit movement without prohibitive losses. The fire plan must involve all indirect and direct fire weapons available to the platoon.
- c. *Secure FUP and LD.* There must be a secure FUP and LD otherwise the assault may not start in accordance with the plan and the coordination of the attack will be upset.
- d. *Maintenance and Momentum.* The momentum of the attack must be maintained so that the initiative is always retained. This can be done by maintaining and utilising a reserve and by speed and initiative at all levels. At company and platoon levels a reserve is not usually possible, but the assault formation should always be in depth.

- e. *Retention of the Initiative.* Every opportunity consistent with the aim must be taken to exploit tactical advantages. At platoon level this is best achieved by speed and aggression.
- f. *Rapid Reorganisation.* When captured, the objective must be organised immediately for defence against counter-attack. An attack is not complete until reorganisation is complete.

### **Stages of the Attack**

1209. There are four stages in a platoon attack:

- a. Stage 1 - Preparatory
- b. Stage 2 - Assault
- c. Stage 3 - Exploitation
- d. Stage 4 - Reorganisation

## **SECTION 12-2. THE PREPARATORY STAGE**

### **General**

1210. The preparatory stage includes:

- a. issue/receipt of company commander's orders,
- b. issue of a warning order,
- c. reconnaissance,
- d. appreciation and planning,
- e. orders,
- f. rehearsal,
- g. move to FUP, and
- h. action in FUP.

### **Company Commander's Orders**

1211. When a platoon is participating in an attack as part of a larger force, the company commander will issue detailed orders to his platoon commanders, and these are the basis for platoon orders.

### **Warning Order**

1212. Having received his orders, or in the case of the encounter battle, having reported the situation to his company commander as being within his capability, the platoon commander warns the platoon so that preparations for the attack can start.



1213. The warning order will contain:
- the probable task,
  - earliest time to move or amount of notice, RV and time for OGP,
  - location of assembly area and FUP if known, and
  - any necessary administrative arrangements.

1214. Whenever possible the platoon commander will issue his warning order verbally to section commanders. If time does not permit he may use his runner, or his platoon sergeant. On receipt of the warning order, section commanders warn their men to check weapons, ammunition, equipment, water and rations, and prepare their sections to move.

### **Reconnaissance**

1215. To arrive at a plan, the platoon commander must first determine:
- the location, strength, probable task and likely reaction of the enemy;
  - the platoon's objective;
  - the best way to attack; and
  - when he can attack.

1216. To do this, he must carry out a reconnaissance and make an appreciation. The time available for reconnaissance will depend on the urgency of the operation. To ensure best results a reconnaissance should always be planned. The platoon commander should refer to his map for likely areas and routes for reconnaissance. Areas suitable for observing approaches to the objective should be identified, with routes that are defilade, or at least concealed from view.

1217. The platoon commander should conduct the reconnaissance himself, although a section commander may be used if time is short or there is more than one obvious approach. This is not ideal as the platoon loses the ability to respond rapidly to the unexpected as soon as more than one reconnaissance element is away. Reconnaissance parties must be provided with adequate protection.

1218. In the case of a platoon attack against enemy in contact with the leading section, the platoon commander moves forward to gain information. Once the platoon commander has all the information he can obtain, he makes a quick mental appreciation and formulates his plan.

1219. When participating in an attack by a larger force, the platoon commander is normally told:

- a. where the enemy is, in what strength and what he is doing;
- b. what friendly troops are doing;
- c. his objective;
- d. the route he will take in the attack; and
- e. H-hour.

1220. The objective and the route to it will always be examined to get a more detailed estimate of the enemy, so that tasks can be allotted to sections and so that the formations to be used on route to the objective can be decided. Circumstances may prevent a detailed close reconnaissance and may be restricted to a map (and air photograph) reconnaissance and observation of the objectives from a distance.

1221. Before the attack, if time and the enemy permit, section commanders should also view the objective and the route to it. In the worst case it may only be possible to point out the objective during the early stage of the attack.

### Appreciation and Planning

1222. In making his plan, the platoon commander must consider the following:

- a. *Enemy.* He must determine the location of the enemy, his intentions, his strength, dispositions, weapons and arcs of fire. This can be determined by:
  - (1) sightings made by forward troops.
  - (2) further reconnaissance by the commander, and
  - (3) knowledge of enemy organisation and tactics.
- b. *Approaches.* The platoon commander must now decide on the best approach to the enemy position by comparing the good and bad points of each approach. Factors to be considered are:
  - (1) Does the FUP require protection, and if so how can this be provided? Can a distinctive LD be found adjacent to it, probably the forward edge of the FUP? This should be at right angles to the axis of attack.
  - (2) Are the route to the FUP and ground between the FUP and the objectives covered from enemy fire? If they are not, he must plan to cover the move forward with supporting fire from his own MGs or from mortars, artillery,

tanks, or battalion support weapons. Fire superiority must be maintained throughout the attack.

- (3) Is the approach concealed from enemy view? Thick timber will provide concealment and will often allow assault troops to get up to the enemy position without being detected, but movement through thick timber makes control difficult.
  - (4) Does the approach offer positions from which supporting fire can be directed against the enemy while the assault troops move towards the objective? For MGs and rifles the best angle for supporting fire is at right angles to the line of approach. Can the troops providing supporting fire observe the assaulting elements from the support position? Is the approach suitable for employment of fire and movement?
  - (5) Are there any obstacles on the approach? Deep creeks, wire and broken ground will slow down movement and leave assaulting troops vulnerable to enemy fire.
  - (6) Is the approach secure? Can the enemy interfere with the assault before it reaches the objective? Wide flanking movements in close country may cause intrusion into other enemy localities.
- c. *Timings.* The platoon commander must decide on the earliest possible H-hour. Considerations affecting H-hour are provided in [Chapter 9](#).

1223. **Courses Open.** From the above considerations, the platoon commander may have two or more courses of action open to him. For a quick attack it is unlikely that he will have more than two; for a deliberate attack there may be more options for consideration. When he has identified the options, the platoon commander must evaluate his options to determine:

- a. which course best achieves his aim, and
- b. what the enemy can do to prevent him achieving his aim.

1224. **Plan.** As a result of the combat appreciation the platoon commander now decides on his plan, which will include:

- a. mission;
- b. section tasks, including action on the objective;
- c. employment of any support allotted;

- d. the assembly are, which should be secure, concealed and free from direct fire. In the quick attack, the assembly area will normally be the present location of the platoon;
- e. the FUP, which should be secure from direct enemy action and defilade from enemy direct fire and observation. It should be sufficiently large for the deployment of the assault group and the depth group, accessible by a covered approach and as close to the objective as enemy observation and fire will allow;
- f. order of march to the FUP, which will be determined by section tasks such as securing of the FUP, assault and depth sections;
- g. LD;
- h. H-hour;
- i. rate of advance, essential when supporting fire is used, but in an attack with a larger force is specified in the company commander's orders;
- j. axis of assault;
- k. coordination of fire support including when and how to start and stop, and where it is to be directed;
- l. limits of exploitation;
- m. reorganisation locations;
- n. location of platoon headquarters; and
- o. administrative arrangements.

## Orders

1225. In a deliberate attack, orders are given in detail, using models to explain topography and the plan. Platoon and section commanders usually view the ground from OP's or during a patrol.

1226. In the quick attack, time is limited. The platoon commander gives orders to his section commanders and, preferably, gives them a quick look at the ground. If a point section is in contact with the enemy, the section commander should not be taken away from his section and brought to the rear to receive his orders. The orders should be given or sent to the section commander after the O group. Section commanders then pass these orders to their sections, either in the assembly are or in the FUP.

1227. Examples of platoon and section orders for the attack are given in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

## Preparing for the Attack

1228. In the deliberate attack, preparation takes place in the assembly area and involves:

- a. a final check of weapons, equipment and ammunition;
- b. application of suitable camouflage;
- c. feeding or issue of rations; and
- d. rehearsals.

1229. In the quick attack the preparation will normally be restricted to a final check of weapons, equipment and ammunition.

## Movement to the FUP

1230. As late as possible, the assaulting troops move forward from the assembly area to the FUP and form up in assault formation.

1231. Formations for the move from the assembly area to the FUP will depend on:

- a. the speed of movement required,
- b. control,
- c. the likelihood of enemy interference, and
- d. the going.

1232. **Order of March.** In a company attack, a platoon may be required to move ahead of the remainder of the assault troops to secure the FUP. This is normally the depth platoon in the assault. The depth platoon would therefore move ahead of the assault platoons in the order of march. In a platoon attack it may be necessary to move sections in the same way.

1233. Securing the FUP is usually difficult because of its size and the commander of the security force should be given specific orders in this regard. It may be possible to provide security by occupying dominating ground which covers the FUP and approaches to it.

## Action in the FUP

1234. The FUP is secured by the first section in the order of march. It may be cleared by sweeping the area, or by placing groups in positions which give observation of the FUP and protection against possible enemy interference, or a combination of both. All-round defence is important and positioning of the gun(s) is vital. Once the FUP is secured the assault element will move in and adopt the assault formation. Depth elements will then follow and take up position, in assault formation.

1235. Final briefings will occur, if necessary, as will checks on direction of the assault, positioning of guns, and any other control measure as required. As the FUP is close to the enemy, smoking, lights and noise are prohibited. Time spent in the FUP must be kept to the absolute minimum.

### **Movement to the LD**

1236. The LD is normally the forward edge of the FUP. If a separate LD has been chosen, the assault troops move forward from the FUP deployed in their attack formations. They do not halt on the LD.

## **SECTION 12-3 THE ASSAULT STAGE**

### **Fire Support**

1237. In order for the assaulting platoon to close with the enemy and achieve a break-in sufficient firepower has to be concentrated to neutralise the enemy's fire. The amount of firepower used will depend on the effectiveness and extent of enemy fire, and the resources available, in particular from outside the platoon. Increasingly effective enemy fire may force the platoon commander to increase his covering fire by:

- a. having a second section give covering fire to cover the initial moves. Once a break-in is achieved the second section may join the assaulting section;
- b. grouping together section MGs and/or grenade launchers which may be in a static fire support position or in the actual assault, depending on the ground;
- c. fire and movement between sections and within sections;
- d. request tank, artillery or mortar fire to screen or neutralise the enemy weapon or weapons and continue to attack; or
- e. a coordinated use of any of the above.

1238. When a company attacks as part of a larger force, the covering fire will either be provided from outside the company, or a platoon, or elements thereof may be tasked with providing fire support for the assaulting elements.

1239. The considerations for providing fire support are described in [Section 12-6](#).

## Assault Formations

1240. The size of the assaulting element will depend on the volume of fire required to neutralise the enemy fire. If one section is sufficient to neutralise the enemy fire, the other two will form the assault group. Ground will also be a determining factor.

1241. The platoon will begin its attack in a predetermined formation. The basic formations are:

- a. one section up, or
- b. two sections up.

1242. **One Section Up.** One section up, with one section in depth and one section providing covering fire from a flank, as illustrated in [Figure 12-1](#), is the most common formation. This formation provides the flexibility and the depth necessary to deal with unexpected opposition and to consolidate the objective.

# OBSOLETE

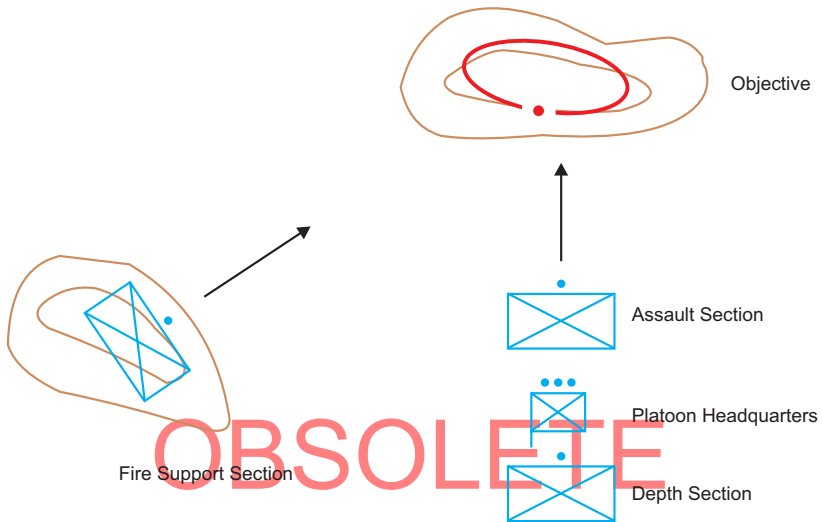


Figure 12-1. Platoon Attack - One Section Up

1243. **Two Sections Up.** Two sections up with one section providing covering fire from a flank, (Figure 12-2) is also a common formation. It is used when the objective is either too wide for one section, or in close country or at night, when the spacing between troops must be reduced to a few metres, preventing the coverage of the objective with one section. When two sections are up, the section providing fire support should be close enough to the objective to be able to provide depth to the assault once the fire support task has been completed.



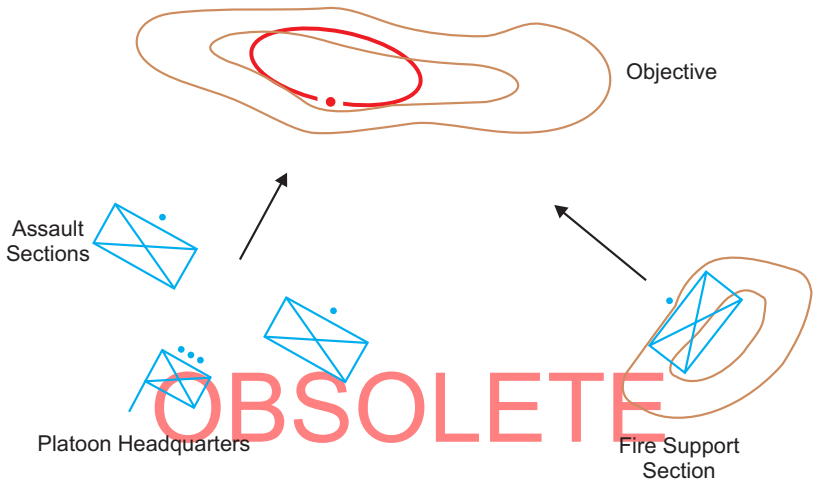


Figure 12-2. Platoon Attack - Two Sections U

1244. Within the basic formations, sections will adopt formations suited to the ground and cover available. The extended line formation ([paragraph 609](#)) is the most common as it provides maximum firepower to the front. In close country, or at night, sections may have to move up in file and deploy into extended line when close to the objective. In this case the rapid change from single file(s) to an assault formation should be rehearsed as a platoon drill.

1245. The distance between men will vary according to the terrain and the visibility. Normally sections will be in extended line with 5 to 10 m between men. In close country and at night control is more difficult and tighter formations are necessary. Men who must be visible to their neighbours may be as close as 2 m.

1246. The platoon commander, with his radio operator and runner, should move a short distance behind the centre of the assaulting section or sections. Considerations for the movement of the platoon commander are described in [Section 4-1](#).

1247. The platoon sergeant may move either with platoon headquarters, or behind one of the assaulting sections if there is a dangerous flank, or he may remain with the fire support section, whichever the platoon commander decides. The platoon sergeant must, however, be in a position to take over command if the platoon commander becomes a casualty. The possibility of the platoon commander and platoon sergeant becoming casualties together should be considered when deciding whether the platoon sergeant should move with platoon headquarters.

### **Movement to the Objective**

1248. At H-hour, the assault troops cross the LD.

1249. When the rate of advance is predetermined, covering artillery and mortar fire are planned on this rate. As troops must move as close as possible to any covering fire provided, platoon and section commanders must ensure their troops advance at the planned rate.

1250. During this stage control is essential. Troops must maintain their formation and not bunch. When visibility permits, section commanders must constantly watch all members of the section, and they in turn must watch their commanders. The noise of battle often drowns out voices, field signals and whistle blasts may need to be used.

1251. In the assault the wounded are left for attention by others in depth to the assault. In a company attack stretcher bearers usually follow assaulting platoons. In a platoon quick attack the wounded will be cared for after the attack succeeds.

1252. Troops must not stop during the assault because of enemy artillery, mortar fire or minefields. To do so will cause more casualties.

1253. The crossing of obstacles in a deliberate attack will have been planned. Objectives chosen for a quick attack will not have elaborate obstacles. Section and platoon commanders must retain control whilst crossing obstacles. The methods of negotiating obstacles are considered in [Chapter 10](#).

1254. Keeping direction during an attack in close country or at night is difficult. It is usually maintained by the section and platoon commanders using compasses, or by observing covering fire falling on the objective.

### **The Break-in**

1255. The fire plan will have artillery and mortars in support of an attack continuing to neutralise the objective until the last possible moment. When this indirect fire lifts, the enemy should be stunned and ineffective for a few moments. Full advantage must be taken of this period by any or all of the following:

- a. *Tanks and APCs.* Tanks used in the attack, or as fire support, continue to give close support.
- b. *Fire Support.* Small-arms fire from supporting sections or platoons is continued for as long as possible.
- c. *Assaulting Troops.* Assaulting troops must try to fire from the shoulder as they advance. Troops must observe fire discipline, as in many cases fire control orders will not be possible. They must not arrive at the objective without ammunition.
- d. *Leading Sections.* Where the ground and vegetation offer no obstacle to movement, leading sections should move very quickly over the last 30 or 40 m to the enemy positions to minimise the effect of grenades.

### **Fighting Through the Objective**

1256. The assault must not stop until the objective has been cleared. Leading assault sections may have to bypass small enemy posts leaving them to be cleared by rear sections. If the rear sections also have to bypass this opposition, the platoon commander must inform his company commander. The latter circumstances will be unusual.

1257. Fighting through the objective to the limit of exploitation calls for a high standard of leadership, initiative and determination. Teamwork and training will be tested to the utmost. Example, leadership and individual initiative will be essential to success in the fight through.

1258. Opposition must be quickly and accurately located and fire and movement within the section and the platoon used to keep the attack moving and retain the initiative. The scope for manoeuvre is very limited and any fire and movement usually consists of alternate groups going to ground and supporting the forward movement of the others for a few metres at a time, or small groups working forward to deal with each individual post or trench. Care must be taken that groups do not get too far

in front and risk receiving fire from own troops. The more groups there are operating, the more difficult it is for the platoon commander and the section commanders to retain control, so every opportunity must be made to take advantage of ground, cover and slackening of enemy fire to get forward. Inflexible adherence to small or large fire and movement groups, irrespective of conditions, may result in the attack coming to a halt or even failing.

1259. If leading sections run short of ammunition, or are held up by enemy fire, the platoon commander must be quick and bold in using rear sections to maintain the momentum.

1260. Tanks accompanying the infantry are of great value in dealing with enemy MGs and bunkers.

1261. HE grenades may be used to advantage, but their use must be strictly controlled, particularly against targets above ground, as casualties may be caused to own troops. Smoke grenades will often be useful in covering the movement of troops.

1262. Depth sections or platoons move around behind the assault troops and usually consolidate, their tasks being:

- a. clearing of bunkers, tunnels and trenches bypassed by the assault sections and platoons;
- b. holding and searching prisoners;
- c. protecting the leading sections and platoons from enemy in the rear who are pretending to be dead; and
- d. tending to the wounded.

1263. Fighting through the objective continues until the limit of exploitation ([paragraph 1265](#)) is reached. Whilst every opportunity should be taken to pursue fleeing enemy, the limit of exploitation is a control measure and movement beyond must be coordinated with other units or sub-units involved in the operation.

## SECTION 12-4. THE EXPLOITATION STAGE

### General

1264. Exploitation is conducted to take advantage of success in battle, to follow up initial gains, and to improve the immediate security of a newly taken objective. It enables the attacker to retain the initiative by preventing the enemy from reorganising his defences, mounting a counter-attack or conducting an orderly withdrawal.

1265. At platoon level, exploitation is usually limited because of the size of the force. The platoon commander will usually indicate a limit of exploitation beyond the objective. It is a control measure so that section commanders do not push too far beyond the objective. This does not preclude the platoon from conducting a quick follow-up of the enemy, but the platoon commander should quickly reorganise first to regain control, check casualties and brief his troops.

1266. When acting as part of a larger force the platoon may be designated as the exploitation force, in which case it is likely to conduct an advance in contact or a pursuit.

## SECTION 12-5. REORGANISATION

### General

1267. When the objective is cleared of the enemy, the assaulting platoons and sections must reorganise quickly, to prevent a successful counter attack by the enemy. Reorganisation is the process by which control of the platoon is regained and the platoon is firmly established in its new locality.

1268. When fighting through the objective is finished, and the limit of exploitation has been reached, platoons and sections move to their reorganisation areas as laid down in orders. Section commanders account for their section members, post sentries, site their MG and fire trenches and troops begin digging in. Section commanders or their 2ICs collect and report to their platoon sergeant the following information:

- a. ammunition held;
- b. casualties; and
- c. enemy prisoners of war, stating whether wounded, and the number of dead on the position.

1269. In a platoon attack, a section which has been providing covering fire from a flank will usually move forward to the reorganisation position with the remainder of the platoon.

1270. The selection of the reorganisation position must be considered in terms of the likely enemy action and the ground. The platoon commander must decide whether he will reorganise on or off the objective. If enemy mortar and artillery bombardment prevents digging, the platoon commander may consider using the enemy trenches, or he may try to get clear of the bombardment by moving off the objective. Captured enemy trenches should only be used by our troops when there is no other suitable cover available. Captured trenches are unlikely to be well sited for our purposes (they will probably be facing the wrong way) and their exact positions will be known to the enemy's artillery, mortars and counter-attack force. By moving off the objective, the platoon will be able to disperse and site trenches to cover likely enemy counter-attack approaches, but it will take the platoon longer to carry out its post-attack administration as casualties, prisoners and equipment will need to be moved from the objective to the reorganisation position.

1271. The sequence of action by the platoon commander will be to:

- a. make certain that he has correctly identified his objective and its limits;
- b. coordinate a hasty defence with his section commanders. This includes indirect fire support DF tasks if available. His immediate aim is to hold his objective firmly;
- c. report capture of the objective to his company commander, normally by success signal or radio;
- d. clear any ground which may conceal enemy who would threaten the position;
- e. make a thorough reconnaissance of the position to ensure that his reorganisation deployment is the best possible for defence; and
- f. send out patrols.

1272. The platoon sergeant will:

- a. arrange guards for prisoners;
- b. arrange for the evacuation of casualties to company headquarters;
- c. supervise the digging of platoon headquarters;
- d. consolidate ammunition expenditure and arrange redistribution of remaining ammunition between sections;
- e. report ammunition expenditure, casualties and prisoners to company headquarters;

- f. find out exactly how the platoon commander has sited the platoon, what patrols are out and what orders have been given, in case he should have to take over;
- g. organise the distribution of ammunition and reorganisation of stores delivered to the platoon area;
- h. arrange for evacuation of prisoners and disposal of captured equipment; and
- i. arrange for burial of the enemy dead.

### **Examples**

1273. Illustrations of various platoon attacks are shown in [Figure 12-3](#).

## **SECTION 12-6. THE RIFLE PLATOON IN THE COMPANY ATTACK**

### **General**

1274. At company or higher level, a platoon will usually be tasked as either:

- a. assault group,
- b. depth platoon, or
- c. fire support.

### **Assault Group**

1275. The actions of the assault group in a company attack are the same as those of a platoon conducting an attack alone. In a company attack the company commander will give coordinating details such as:

- a. the platoon objective,
- b. the platoon formation,
- c. the rate of assault,
- d. the axis of assault,
- e. action on objective,
- f. the reorganisation position, and
- g. the limit of exploitation.

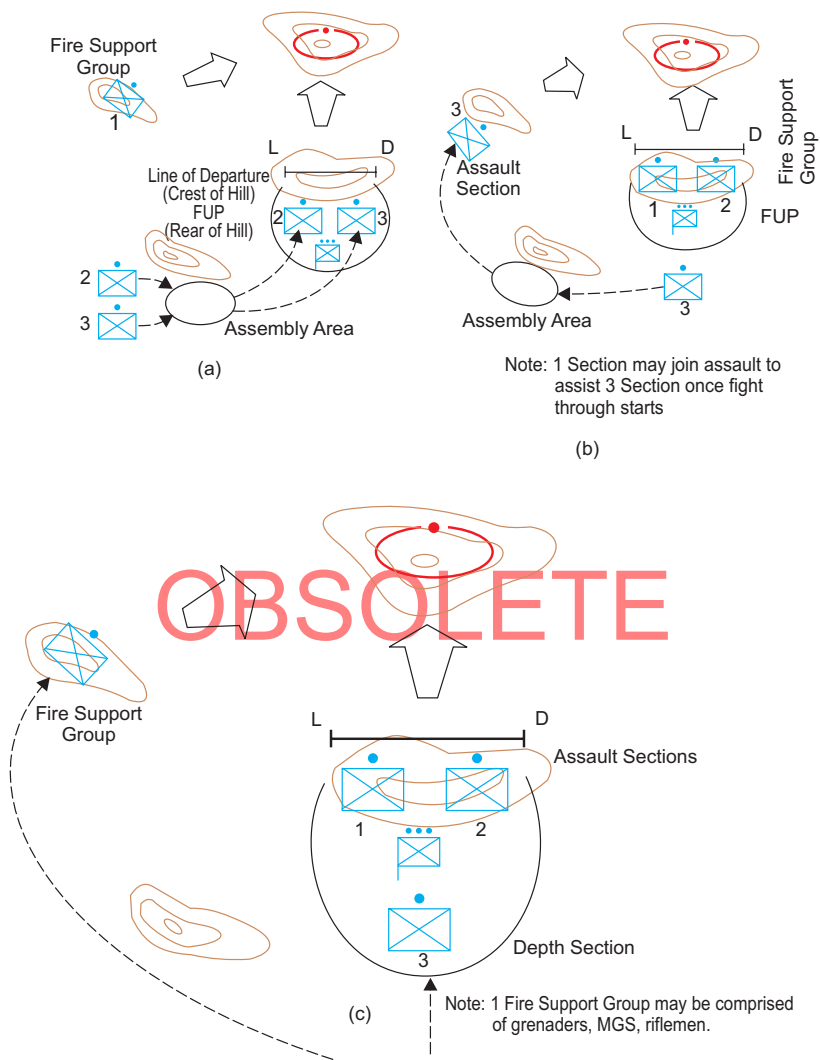


Figure 12-3. Examples of a Platoon Attack



## Depth Platoon

1276. Normally one platoon is held to provide depth during each phase of an attack. The company commander commits the depth platoon when it is needed to influence the action and to maintain the momentum of the attack. Because of the various tasks which may be given to the depth platoon, the platoon commander must know the missions and tactical plans of the assault platoons. He must also know as much as possible about the ground and the enemy situation in the entire company area of operation, and keep abreast of the tactical situation as it develops. Finally he must be capable of rapid and effective response when committed.

1277. **Tasks of the Depth Platoon.** The depth platoon may be required to:

- a. secure the company FUP and LD,
- b. protect the flanks or rear of the company,
- c. maintain contact with adjacent units,
- d. clear a position which has been overrun or bypassed by the assault platoons,
- e. take over the mission of an assault platoon which requires relief or rest,
- f. attack from a new direction, or
- g. protect or assist the reorganization on the objective.

## Fire Support

1278. The assaulting platoons in a company attack must be covered by direct supporting fire from the moment indirect fire support lifts until the platoon reaches the objective. This supporting fire may be provided by tanks, APCs, battalion direct fire weapons, or by another rifle platoon or element thereof.

1279. When a platoon is tasked with providing fire support, the location of the fire support position will be specified by the company commander as will the details of the fire support requirement. The platoon must move to the fire support location, which may not be secure, and position itself to provide the support required.

1280. The precautions taken by the platoon commander during the move to, and the occupation of, the fire support position will depend on the location of the position and the time available to get into position. The platoon commander must assume, unless it is known otherwise, that the

fire support position is not secure and he must approach with caution. He must also expect that the position will be registered as an enemy DF and therefore he must dig fire trenches, if time allows, and ensure that the men are as dispersed as possible. While there is a need for maximum firepower to be directed at the objective, the need for all-round protection will still exist.

1281. The fire support platoon or element must ensure that they can provide maximum fire onto the whole objective. Individual fire discipline must be maintained so that ammunition is not wasted. The fire of the platoon can be controlled by the company commander or the assault platoons by radio, or by the fire support commander who must be in a position to observe the effects of fire on the objective. Once the pre-H-hour and H-hour tasks are completed, part or all of the fire support element may be moved to conform with the reorganisation plan or to assist in the fight through the enemy position.

## **SECTION 12-7. SUPPORT FOR THE ATTACK**

### **General**

1282. During the attack, every effort must be made to use all available forms of support. It is likely that at platoon level the following support only will be available:

- a. battalion and company direct fire support,
- b. artillery and mortars, and
- c. AFV fire.

1283. This should not preclude the platoon commander from considering and using other forms of support if available, such as:

- a. CAIRS to provide neutralising fire onto the enemy,
- b. engineers to assist with obstacle breaching and assault demolitions,
- c. armed helicopters to provide intimate support, and
- d. support from other platoons to provide fire support or act as cut-offs.

1284. A knowledge of weapon characteristics and safety aspects is essential to the platoon commander when employing any of these resources. Additional information required by the platoon commander is contained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

1285. Combat support is considered in detail in [Chapter 2](#) of this pamphlet. Support company in the attack and supporting arms in the attack are described in detail in *MLW 2, Inf Trg, 1.1, The Infantry Battalion*.

## SECTION 12-8. NIGHT ATTACK

### General

1286. A deliberate night attack will rarely be conducted by the platoon alone. The platoon will usually participate as part of a company or battalion deliberate attack.

1287. A night attack is made in preference to a daylight attack to:

- a. take advantage of a tactical situation,
- b. maintain the momentum of an advance,
- c. achieve a greater degree of surprise,
- d. minimise the effect of enemy direct and indirect fire, and
- e. reduce the possibility of an armoured counter-attack before re-organisation is complete.

1288. The stages and conduct of a night attack by a platoon are the same as those for a daylight operation, however, three aspects require particular attention, namely:

- a. simplicity of plan to facilitate control which is difficult at night;
- b. thorough reconnaissance, both by day and night if possible; and
- c. detailed preparations.

1289. As in daylight operations, a night attack can be noisy or silent, however at company and platoon level a silent attack may be relatively easier to mount.

### Movement to the FUP and Forming Up

1290. In a silent attack particular attention must be paid to equipment to reduce noise and to reduce weight for ease of movement. It is likely that enemy surveillance equipment will be used to detect the move and routes. Countermeasures must be carefully selected to prevent detection.

1291. In a company attack the LD, the FUP and routes to it are marked by tapes or lights. Guides are provided to guide platoons to their exact forming up positions. In a platoon attack, section guides (who have been rehearsed, if possible, both by day and night) will lead sections from the

assembly area to their exact positions in the FUP. These should be simply marked for night identification. The night vision of the platoon should not be impaired by the use of lights before the attack.

### **Movements to the Objective**

1292. Aids to keeping direction are compass bearings, pace checkers, use of tracer ammunition, falling covering fire, use of prominent landmarks, skyline features and the moon. Men may wear white or luminous objects on their backs or helmets.

1293. Changes in direction after crossing the LD should be avoided. Sections must maintain contact with their flanking sections.

1294. Rates of advance will depend on the degree of darkness, the need for silence, the fire plan, obstacles, vegetation and the state of the ground. It will probably be about half the daylight rate. Men must move at a steady pace and must be briefed on the action to be taken if the enemy uses flares or other means of illumination.

1295. Even when surprise has been lost, it is still best to exercise control with a minimum of shouting, as by listening the assault troops can gain valuable information on the enemy's whereabouts, and a silent approach can be unnerving to the enemy. One advantage of the night attack is the psychological effect upon the enemy whose doubts and fears are magnified by the unknown.

1296. The move to the objective requires the attacking troops to reach the final assault position without being discovered. If the attack is discovered before this stage, the following will normally occur:

- a. The commander will call for prearranged supporting fire on the objective to neutralise enemy fire. Planned illumination may be called for to permit better control and more rapid movement.
- b. Platoons should attempt to continue in their previous formations. If this is impossible, they must move forward using fire and movement. If they are close to the objective, the final assault stages, including break-in, can begin as soon as the attack is discovered.

1297. Scattered fire by small elements of enemy must not be taken as loss of surprise and should not be taken as the signal to begin the assault.

### **Fighting Through the Objective**

1298. This is the most difficult stage of a night attack. It requires detailed training and rehearsal and must be done systematically to avoid confusion and to retain control. The plan should avoid the necessity of passing one section through another. Particular points to be avoided are:

- a. converging on enemy weapon flashes;
- b. use of grenades above ground level; and
- c. loss of control, permitting groups of assaulting troops to move ahead, thereby greatly increasing the risks of causing casualties to own troops.

### **Reorganisation**

1299. The plan for reorganisation on the objective is included in the orders for the attack and will be similar to the procedure used in daylight. Coordinated defence may initially be difficult. In the darkness there is a tendency for sections to lay out their positions too close together. This is avoided by very clear instructions for reorganisation, careful liaison by section commanders, and thorough and early coordination by the platoon commander.

12100. A system similar to the '12 o'clock' method used in harbouring may be employed. In this case '12 o'clock' should be the axis of the attack, using either a compass bearing, track, or other definable feature.

12101. Commanders must know pre-arranged DF tasks and who can call for them. All members of the platoon must know the pre-arranged success signal.

12102. Any support weapons and their detachments which join the platoon during darkness must be protected.

## **SECTION 12-9. ATTACKING TRENCH SYSTEMS AND STRONG POINTS**

### **General**

12103. Pillboxes, fortified dug-outs and bunkers, will often be met in an attack on a prepared position. They will usually be sited to be mutually supporting. They will normally be protected by wire and mines. The rifle platoon will have to deal with such places, though usually with support from battalion support weapons and possibly tanks. On occasions less formidable types of bunkers will have to be captured by the platoon with its own weapons, using smoke and HE grenades, platoon SRAAWs and the SRAAWS of the company support section.

12104. Against a mutually supporting series of fortifications, a simultaneous attack on all the fortifications will give the best chance of success. The fire from these fortifications will become confused and the enemy will not be able to move reinforcements easily to stop a gap. The rifle platoon cannot attack more than one emplacement at a time.

## Open Trenches

12105. Each trench may be assaulted by a complete rifle group covered by the complete gun group. Airburst artillery or mortar fire should first be used to destroy or neutralise the enemy in the trenches prior to the assault.

## Trench Systems

12106. Once the assault section has broken into a continuous zigzag trench system occupied by the enemy, it will divide into previously detailed groups to clear the trenches. A grenade group and a clearing group will be required. The grenade group throws grenades into the section of the trench to be cleared. As soon as the grenades explode the clearing group charges in to complete clearing that section. This process is continued until the whole system has been cleared. Strict control by the section commander is essential.

## Small Bunkers

12107. There are various methods for dealing with bunkers that are not heavily fortified. In general, grenades, anti-armoured weapons or prepared explosive charges will provide the most effective means of attack; men armed only with rifles will be of little use. Some methods for dealing with bunkers are as follows:

- a. A party of two to four men with HE and smoke grenades manoeuvre forward under cover of the fire of the section gun group or their own smoke. When they reach a blind spot of the bunker, they push grenades or prepared explosive charges through the apertures.
- b. The platoon SRAAW closes within range of the bunker under cover of smoke. One hit should destroy the bunker.
- c. When an SRAAW is used to clear a bunker the hit must be quickly followed by the assault party using grenades to kill any survivors.

12108. All bunkers must be treated as if they contain live enemy, even if no activity has been detected from them. The clearing of bunkers must be systematic or the enemy will come up behind assault groups.

## Deliberate Attack

12109. A deliberate attack can be undertaken by one platoon against one pillbox/bunker. A possible organisation of the attacking team is:

- a. No 1 Section and platoon headquarters, fire support section;
- b. No 2 Section, with SRAAW from the company support section, cut off section;
- c. No 3 Section, pillbox clearing section; and
- d. assault pioneers added to No 2 Section to operate Bangalore Torpedoes and any charges used.

12110. A possible method of attack is as follows:

- a. The fire support section opens heavy fire on the enemy. Smoke is laid by firing smoke grenades from the rifle.
- b. No 2 Section and the assault pioneers move to a position close to the wire. The SRAAW team should move further to a flank ready to open fire on the pillbox. The assault pioneers place the Bangalore Torpedoes in the wire, light the fuses and withdraw.
- c. When the wire is blown No 2 Section rushes through the gap and takes up a position beyond the pillbox, killing any enemy in trenches outside it. The assault pioneers follow, place charges against the pillbox and join No 2 Section. Any anti-personnel mines in the gap should have been destroyed by the bangalores.
- d. When the charges go off, No 3 Section clears the pillbox with grenades.

12111. The use of flame against strong points can also be very effective. It has a great morale effect and the threat of its use may even induce the enemy to leave a pillbox or emplacement before any attack is launched.

12112. A platoon attack against a pillbox is illustrated in [Figure 12-4](#).

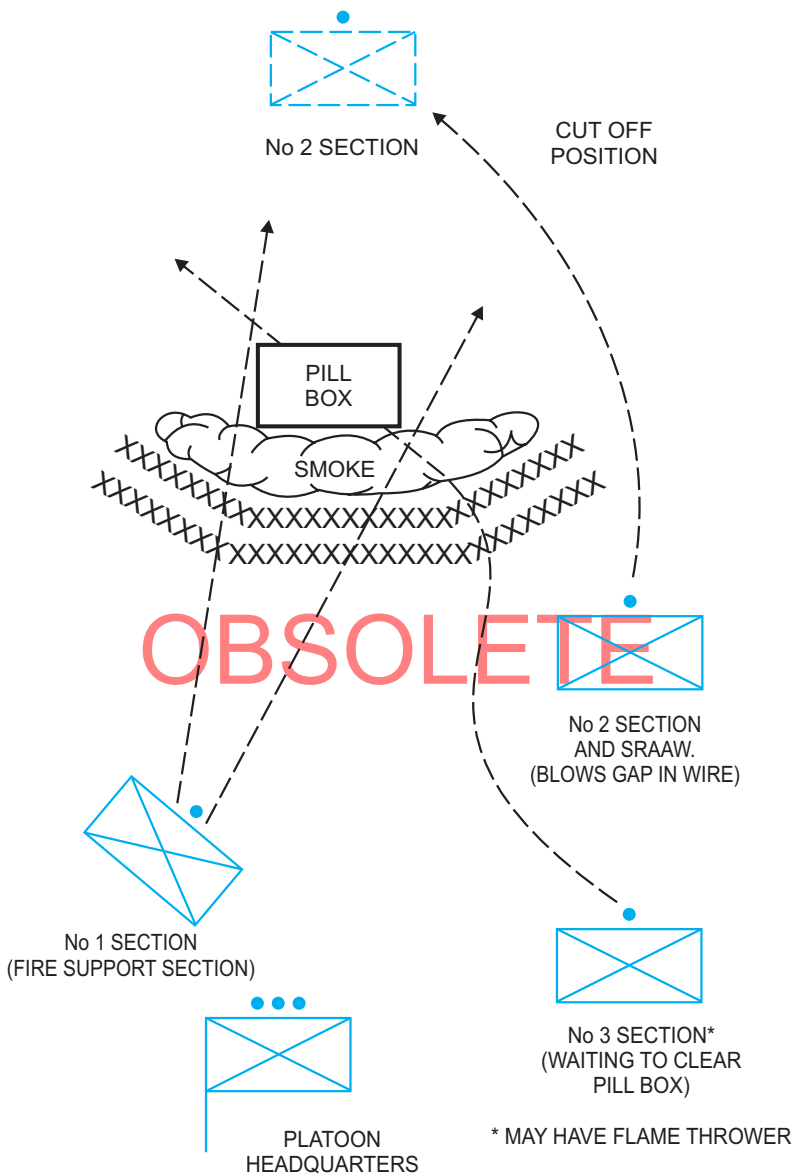


Figure 12-4. Platoon attacking a Pillbox



**OBSOLETE**

## CHAPTER 13

### DEFENCE

#### SECTION 13-1 GENERAL

##### Introduction

1301. The platoon will usually occupy a defensive position as part of a company or a larger force. The platoon will be required to hold its locality firmly and to destroy an enemy assault by fire, even if other defended localities are overrun, or the platoon is surrounded.

1302. When a force is in contact with the enemy, defence must be conducted aggressively. The platoon will be called upon to play a full part in a patrol programme designed to seek out, harass and kill the enemy.

1303. The circumstances in which the platoon will undertake defence are:

- a. in an advance to contact, so that any enemy assault can be destroyed;
- b. to destroy an advancing enemy on ground of our own choice;
- c. to form a firm base for patrolling activities or for a company attack;
- d. to secure ground that has been seized against the counter-attack;
- e. to secure the company withdrawal route.

1304. Typical platoon tasks in defence are;

- a. defence of the position;
- b. patrolling, both fighting and reconnaissance;
- c. standing patrols and listening posts (LPs)
- d. screen and OP tasks;
- e. development of the defensive position, including obstacles, wire, pits, crawl trenches, digging in communications wire and latrines;
- f. administrative tasks such as water parties, resupply, stores, dumping and local daily routines; and
- g. rehearsals for counter-attack, ambushing and patrols.

1305. The type of defensive position that can be constructed depends on the time and materials available. The platoon defence may be undertaken deliberately when there is no contact with the enemy or it may be adopted hastily when there is close contact.

1306. In deliberate defence there will be time for detailed reconnaissance, planning and coordination on ground of our own choice. In hasty defence the locality will have to be developed on ground provided by the circumstances of the battle, strengthened by such local readjustment as is possible. This may be limited to improvement of natural cover. In both deliberate and hasty defence the basic considerations and actions are the same.

### **Basic Considerations**

1307. In preparing his plan for the defence the platoon commander, in addition to orders and information received from his company commander, must keep the following considerations in mind:

- a. use of ground,
- b. mutual support,
- c. all-round defence,
- d. control,
- e. depth,
- f. centralisation of firepower, and
- g. security.

1308. These basic considerations will often be in conflict to some degree and must be applied with common sense to each particular piece of ground to obtain the best solution.

### **Use of Ground**

1309. **Fields of Fire.** Fire trenches should be sited on ground which affords good fields of fire. Depending on the country, the length of the fields of fire will vary from a few metres in very close country to 300 m or more in open country. Care must be taken in thinning undergrowth to achieve clear fields of fire. The need to clear fire lanes must be balanced against the requirement for concealment.

1310. **Observation.** Platoon and section commanders should be able to observe the enemy at longer ranges than the field of fire. This gives them more time to prepare to meet any attack which develops and to call for mortar and artillery support. A good field of observation also improves

security and makes it possible to reduce the number of sentries by day. A good field of observation or fire can also be used by the enemy and the desire to see and fire over long distances must be balanced against the need for concealment. Within the locality occupants of a pit should be able to observe all around their pit to a distance of 30-40 m, ie, grenade throwing range.

1311. **Concealment.** The position must remain concealed from enemy ground and air observation and surveillance. Positions not concealed risk destruction or neutralisation. The closer the country, the easier it is to achieve concealment. In open country, when the platoon is part of a battalion area defence, it may be possible to occupy positions on reverse or counter slopes and thus make enemy ground observation difficult. Reverse slopes are described in detail in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Battalion*. Concealment from air observation is described in [Section 8-4](#) of this pamphlet.

1312. **Dispersion.** The platoon must not be too concentrated otherwise it will present a vulnerable target to bombardment, either by artillery or from the air. On the other hand, it must not be so dispersed as to allow infiltration by night or present problems of control. As a guideline, the centre of one section should rarely be less than 50 metres from the centre of the next section or from platoon headquarters, except in very close country.

1313. **Maximum Use of Obstacles.** The platoon defensive position must be planned so that maximum use is made of natural obstacles. Natural obstacles can be made more effective by the addition of artificial obstacles. In the absence of suitable natural obstacles, artificial obstacles must be developed. Obstacles must be covered by observed fire and the enemy must be prevented from reconnoitering or interfering with them.

### **Mutual Support**

1314. There must be mutual support between sections so that a section position cannot be attacked without at least one other section being able to bring effective fire onto the attackers.

### **All Round Defence**

1315. The platoon must be capable of all-round defence. The extent of all round defence necessary will depend on the terrain and the proximity of other platoons. For instance:

- a. A platoon whose rear and part of its flanks are protected by others is able to concentrate its fire on the most likely approaches. It must still be able to deal with infiltrating enemy parties and hold its position against enemy who have broken through the

nearby localities and are attacking it from the flanks or rear. The selection of alternative arcs of fire, and possibly alternative positions covering the same platoon sector, especially for fire trenches in depth or on the flanks, must be considered. Secondary positions may be necessary to cover other approaches.

- b. An isolated platoon locality will need the maximum all-round defence possible, especially in close country. This reduces the concentration of fire on the most likely approaches, but implies that weapons, including MGs, have interlocking arcs, ie, the fire of any weapon is designed to interlock with and overlap the fire of another weapon. Weapons with longer ranges should interlock further out so that as the attacker presses further forward he encounters more interlocking arcs of fire.

### Control

1316. The platoon commander must be able to control his sections from platoon headquarters. It is desirable for section posts to be in view and it is essential that at least one fire trench of each section (preferably the section commander's) is within voice range. The shape and nature of the ground will sometimes make it impossible to see all section posts and battle noise will often prevent voice control. These circumstances are overcome by:

- a. relaying orders, from the platoon commander through one section to another;
- b. by personal visit or runner (difficult but not impossible, even when under attack) using crawl trenches where possible;
- c. pre-arranged signals, such as whistle blasts; and
- d. by use of field telephone if available, or modified systems using line, dug in when time permits.

### Depth

1317. There must be depth within the platoon, so that regardless of the direction of attack, the enemy, having passed through one section is confronted with another. Depth sections can be sited to fire between or over the heads of forward sections. Depth implies depth of fire as well as physical depth on the ground. The platoon commander achieves depth by:

- a. patrols;
- b. use of obstacles which will slow the enemy down so that he may be destroyed further out;

- c. depth pits within a section and depth sections within the platoon; and
- d. use of all available weapon systems including small arms, SRAAWs MRAAWs grenades (both hand and weapon projected) Anti-personnel weapon M18A1 (Claymore), artillery and mortars.

### **Centralisation of Firepower**

1318. The platoon commander must ensure that maximum fire is brought to bear on the most likely enemy approaches. This will require coordination between sections, flanking companies, support company detachments and supporting arms elements. The company commander is responsible for coordination between his platoons, flanking companies, and support company and supporting arms sub-unit commanders. The platoon commander must coordinate the sections of his platoon. The platoon commander must also be aware of the firepower that will be provided from flanking companies, support company and supporting arms elements. This includes the location of DF tasks for artillery, mortars, anti-armoured weapons and the primary tasks of MGs of the SFMG Platoon and other companies.

### **Security**

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1319. The platoon commander must ensure that he is not surprised. He will do this by participating in the battalion patrolling programme and by the use of sentries and surveillance devices. The use of sentries is described in detail in [Section 8-3](#).

## **SECTION 13-2. THE DEFENSIVE LAYOUT**

### **General**

1320. The layout of a platoon's pits may consist of the three sections' pits and platoon headquarters' pits being evenly spaced throughout the locality, or by having three section posts and a platoon headquarters. The section posts consist of a close grouping of the section pits, but they must still cover the section area by observation and fire. The closeness of the pits in a section post makes verbal control by the section commander easier, and he can move from pit to pit in a minimum of time and with minimum exposure. A combination of the two types of layout may be desirable, depending on the ground. A typical platoon defensive layout is illustrated in [Figure 13-1](#).

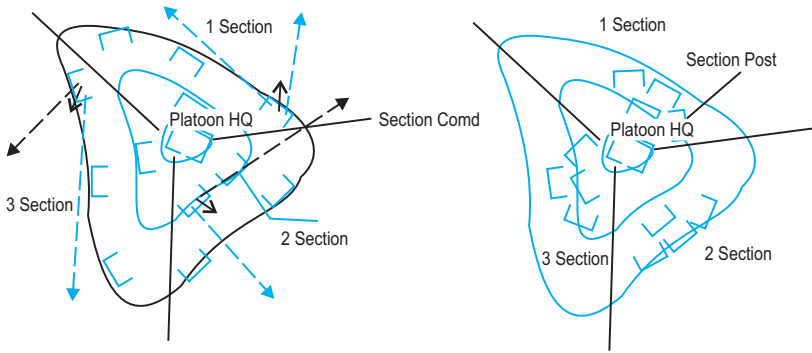


Figure 13-1. Typical Independent Platoon Defensive Layout

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## Types of Positions

1321. The platoon commander must use every ruse he can think of to deceive the enemy. His defence must be sited to cover all enemy approaches by day and night. He may move all or part of his platoon, or only individual MG pits. In order to do this, it may be necessary to prepare several defence positions as follows:

- a. *Primary Position.* The position from which a platoon or weapon carries out its primary task.
- b. *Alternative Position.* The position from which the primary task can be carried out if the primary position becomes untenable. Alternative positions are prepared to:
  - (1) deny the enemy knowledge of MG positions, by moving them to alternative positions by day and night,
  - (2) enable depth guns to move to prepared positions to assist in countering penetration, and
  - (3) cover the same approach from a different location.

- c. *Secondary Position.* A previously reconnoitred (and if possible, prepared) position to which a platoon or MG may move to in order to cover another approach.

### **Platoon Headquarters**

1322. Platoon headquarters should be sited where the platoon commander can see and control his sections and is accessible, preferably by day as well as night, to essential visitors such as the company commander, medical officer and runners. It must be positioned to ensure good communications both to company HQ and to supporting arms and units. Alternatives must be available.

1323. The layout and construction of platoon headquarters is the responsibility of the platoon sergeant once its position on the ground has been decided. Two fire trenches with overhead protection will be constructed from which, if possible, all section posts and the platoon front can be seen. The radio set on the company net should not be screened from company headquarters.

### **Fire Trenches**

1324. Work must commence immediately on fire trenches. *MLW Two, Engr Trg 2.2, Obstacles and Field Defences* describes the requirements of fire trenches. Selected information is also contained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.4, The Infantry Soldiers Handbook* and *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

1325. Before digging starts, the platoon should 'stand to'. This gives the platoon commander an opportunity to check the distances between sections. Minutes spent at this stage could avoid hours needed to resite trenches once digging has begun.

### **Camouflage**

1326. The top layer of the soil should be carefully removed and preserved for later use. Soil which is not required for the parapet or for overhead protection should be placed in containers as it is dug. Sandbags, shelters, blanket outers and bulk ration tins are suitable for this purpose. The soil should be progressively hidden in depressions or behind logs or the buttresses of trees, within or just outside the post. Care must be taken to ensure this spoil is covered from aerial observation. A blanket of vines, leaves or transplanted bushes may be used to screen bare scars. Track plans are to be rigidly adhered to.



## Latrines

1327. Latrines should be sited and dug as soon as possible after work begins. The requirement for siting and digging latrines is detailed in [Sections 5-8](#).

## Fire Lanes

1328. Fire lanes must be prepared with minimum interference to the existing growth. Where vegetation has to be disturbed it should be done in an irregular manner, but only to sufficient height to allow a firer to sight his weapon at ground level. Often sufficient vision can be obtained by thinning out leaves and undergrowth.

1329. Troops only need to view the enemy's legs when using fire lanes; they can judge where the rest of the enemy's body is and engage it through growth sufficient to stop view but not bullets.

1330. Fire trenches can be further camouflaged by transplanting shrubs from elsewhere into sandbags, ration containers and ammunition boxes and siting them in the lane, close in front of the fire trenches. These shrubs can be knocked down when the enemy assaults.

## Arcs and Tasks of the Section MG

1331. Arcs and tasks within arcs are defined as follows:

- a. *Arcs*. The arc of the gun is the limit restricted by physical obstructions or the presence of own troops, within which it can fire. The limit is defined by the left and right of arc.
- b. *Tasks*. Within each MG's arc a number of tasks may be given and a priority allocated to each. About four tasks will be the maximum.

1332. **Priority of Tasks**. The primary task of the MG is determined by the platoon or company commander to ensure that in the worst possible case, eg, a simultaneous attack on the entire battalion/company frontage in reduced visibility, the fire of all MGs is coordinated.

1333. Unless there are reasons for not firing an MG, eg concealment its position or conservation of ammunition, the gunner should be free to engage opportunity targets anywhere within his arc of fire as long as he is not engaged on higher priority tasks.

## Staking the Arc

1334. The limits of the arc of fire should be marked at the fire trench with four stout pegs. The primary and secondary tasks within the arc are not staked, but a method similar to that shown at Plate 13-1 should be used. The staking of the arc ensures that other members of the section are not endangered during night firing.

1335. In rear fire trenches it will be necessary to ensure that weapons sited to give overhead fire over forward trenches are not depressed too low. This can be achieved by a combination of stakes and wire.

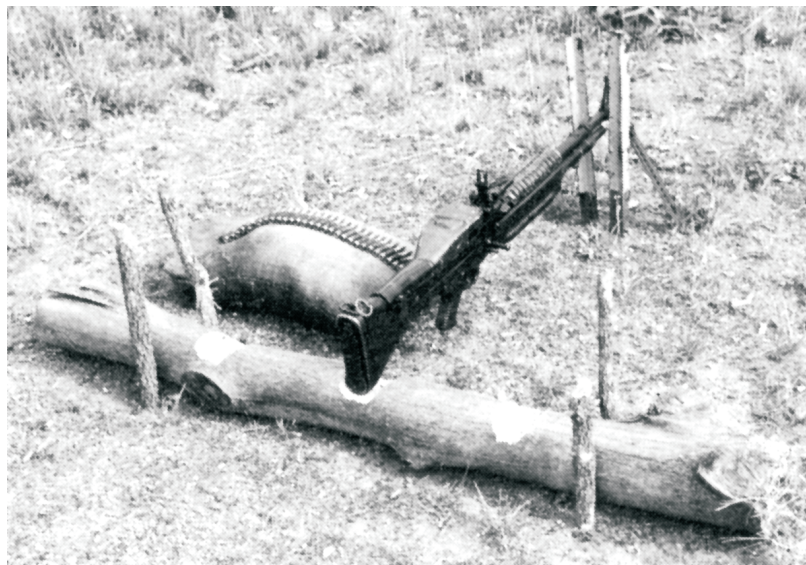


Plate 13-1. Staking the Primary Arc

### Use of Fixed Lines

1336. During periods of limited visibility MGs should be laid on fixed lines. Sighting pegs are used to enable the MG to fire on its task during darkness, fog or smoke (Plate 13-2). If the arc covered by the MG includes dead ground the section commander must ensure that this can be covered by fire from some other weapon in the section. If this is not possible, the matter must be reported to the platoon commander so that it can be covered by another section or by mortars.



Plate 13-2. Fixed Lines

### Obstacles

1337. The use of wire and other obstacles is always important. The allocation of these items and the priority given to them will be decided by the company commander. Guidance in the siting, construction and maintenance of field defences and the employment, design and construction of obstacles is provided in *MLW Two, Engr Trg 2.2, Obstacles and Field Defences*.

## SECTION 13-3. PLANNING AND OCCUPYING THE POSITION

### Battle Procedure

1338. **Warning Orders.** The platoon commander will issue a warning order to his platoon sergeant and section commanders either after receiving his orders, or after receiving a warning order from the company commander. The requirement for warning orders is described in [Section 9-3](#). After issuing the warning order and before leaving for the company OGp or reconnaissance, the platoon commander will entrust the continued preparation and preliminary moves to the platoon sergeant. Section commanders will extract the information relevant to their sections and issue warning orders.

1339. **Company Orders.** Before commencing his detailed reconnaissance the platoon commander will receive orders from the company commander which will include the following information:

- a. *The Enemy.* When and from which direction and in which form the attack is most likely to come.
- b. *Own Troops.* The locations of neighbouring platoons, whether troops are out in front to cover the occupation of the position.
- c. *Task.* Including the ground which the platoon must hold, observe and/or cover with fire, and its forward limits.
- d. *Support Weapons.* Position and task of support weapons in the platoon locality.
- e. *DF Tasks Near the Locality.* Details of plans for DF tasks which may be tentative at this stage.
- f. *Anti-armour Plan.* Siting of anti-armour weapons, development of construction of any tank obstacles and killing grounds.
- g. *Digging and Wiring.* What digging and wiring is to be done and the priority of work.
- h. *Times.* By what time must the position be occupied and defended; timings for defensive routine such as stand to and stand down.
- i. *Patrols.* Those patrols for which the platoon is responsible or which are being sent out in the vicinity of the platoon, and their routes and times out and in.

- j. *Tools and Stores.* Details of the allocation of tools and defence store, where and when they can be drawn.
- k. *Overhead Protection Material.* Source of overhead protection material.
- l. *Company Headquarters and CAP.* Details of the location of company headquarters and CAP.
- m. *Routes.* Details of routes to company and battalion headquarters, and to adjoining platoons and companies.

1340. **Reconnaissance.** After receiving his orders for the impending operation, the platoon commander starts his detailed reconnaissance. The reconnaissance must be planned (Section 9-4) so that the information required can be obtained in the time available. During the reconnaissance the platoon commander will conduct a combat appreciation (Section 9-5) from which he will arrive at a plan for the defence of the ground which his platoon has been tasked to defend.

1341. During the reconnaissance, the platoon commander will study his area from his own and, if possible, from the enemy's point of view, noting likely approaches and the fire positions which best cover them. The platoon commander must check proposed weapon sites at ground level to ensure that they can adequately cover these approaches. He must decide how he can conceal his position from ground and air observation.

1342. He should visit neighbouring platoons and any supporting weapon detachments or tanks in the area so that he knows exactly where they are. During this period he will probably be visited by the company commander who will discuss on the ground the section tasks, inter-platoon boundaries, the line of forward fire trenches, and adjustments of DF tasks.

1343. In his appreciation, the company commander will determine the locations of sections by identifying detailed tasks for the section MGs. In his orders the company commander will detail specific tasks for each platoon and allow the platoon commander to site section MGs to achieve these tasks. The company commander should personally check MGs.

1344. **Platoon Orders.** Once the orders have been prepared the platoon commander calls his OGp and gives his orders for the occupation of the position. At this stage he may not have sufficient information to give detailed orders, so in order to get work started on the platoon locality as soon as possible, he may give preliminary orders. These include:

- a. brief information on enemy and friendly forces,

- b. the mission,
- c. section positions and fire tasks (to include MG sites),
- d. priority of work (this is given to him by the company commander),
- e. the track plan,
- f. security provisions, and
- g. location of platoon and company headquarters.

1345. Detailed orders will be given as soon as possible and should follow the standard headings given in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 2.2, Infantry Commanders Aide-Memoire*.

### Occupation

1346. **What the Section Commander Must Do.** After receiving his preliminary orders, the section commander carries out a detailed reconnaissance of his own area. Having been given the site and tasks for his MG, he select the sites for the remaining section weapons, and decides on their arcs of fire, with primary and secondary tasks to carry out the section tasks. He should make contact with neighbouring section posts so that they know each other's positions, and can ensure that all the enemy approaches are covered by fire. Finally, he marks out his fire trenches on the ground as shown in [Figure 13-1](#). The basic considerations are:

- a. The MG is sited to cover the main tasks allotted and may be in any one of the section's trenches.
- b. The distance between trenches depends on visibility and voice range.
- c. Where there is an odd number of men in the section, one trench must be adapted to accommodate three men.
- d. Trenches in depth may be sited to fire between or over the heads of forward trenches.

1347. The sections must be given their dispositions and fire tasks before digging starts so that they can deal with any immediate enemy attack.

1348. When preparing a position while in contact with the enemy, each man must, as soon as his weapon has been sited, provide himself with some form of cover from which he can fire.

1349. The section commander is responsible for ensuring that:

- a. the section weapons are so placed that each man can fire over the arc allotted to him. The fire trenches must be selected with the eye close to the ground. Each man's fire position must be checked during construction and on completion;
- b. each soldier understands his arcs, tasks and limits of fire. This includes areas to his rear;
- c. the section is not surprised by the enemy;
- d. the section is dug in properly;
- e. the section is concealed from ground and air observations, and camouflage instructions are observed;
- f. a proper routine is observed;
- g. a range card is made for each pit and the men are briefed on all reference points. The platoon commander should coordinate the reference points;
- h. strict attention is paid to track discipline;
- i. dead ground is covered by fire from another section or by mortars;
- j. alternative arcs and possible alternative positions are selected, if these have not been given by the platoon commander;
- k. sentries are always posted on the MG and double sentries at night;
- l. troops who are not on duty sleep clothed and ready for instant action;
- m. no lights are shown;
- n. personal weapons are kept alongside the soldier while he is sleeping and within reach when he is working, and personal equipment is kept packed and handy; and
- o. there is minimum noise in the position.

1350. While the section commanders are conducting their reconnaissance and the troops move onto the position, the platoon commander visits the section commanders, coordinates tasks and coordinates the fire plan of the platoon.

## SECTION 13-4. CONDUCT OF THE DEFENCE

### Routine

1351. It is difficult to specify times for routines except for 'stand to' and 'stand down'. Any routine details such as meal timings, erection of shelters, water replenishment, etc will be governed by such factors as the tactical situation, closeness of the country, degree of darkness and enemy proximity and habits. It is important that a daily routine be established to ensure a high standard of efficiency. Enemy air superiority or the operational situation in general may dictate that units rest during the day and operate at night. The following routine may be used as a guide;

a. *Morning:*

- (1) strike shelters
- (2) 'stand to'. The duration of stand to will vary according to the season and the country but will be for a specific time before and after first and last light respectively. Each member puts on his fighting equipment, occupies his fire position and mans his weapon. Clearing patrols may be sent out during this period and 'stand down' should not be ordered until their tasks are completed. LPs are repositioned and manned for day observation, and sentries are posted. Troops 'stand down' on a specific order, not on a time basis.
- (3) check communications;
- (4) reposition LPs and man them for day observation;
- (5) check sensor devices, Anti-personnel weapon M18A1 (Claymore) and obstacles;
- (6) change to day routine. Single sentries are posted, track discipline is maintained;
- (7) clean weapons and ammunition. Weapons should not all be cleaned simultaneously. The cleaning of MGs must be coordinate by the platoon commander or platoon sergeant. Defects and deficiencies should be reported. Subject to security restrictions, MGs should be test fired on a regular basis but not from the MG pit;
- (8) inspect all weapons and ammunition;
- (9) troops shave, wash, clean boots, and periodic skin and foot inspections are carried out;
- (10) water bottles are filled and sterilised;



- (11) breakfast may be cooked centrally and delivered to the position under section arrangements, or by pairs. Utensils are cleaned and stored;
  - (12) take malaria suppressant;
  - (13) the section area is cleaned and equipment laid out for instant use and camouflaged;
  - (14) clothing and equipment are checked and mended, and boots are inspected.
  - (15) the section is briefed on the day's activities, patrol requirements, rehearsals, reconnaissance and rosters. Rest and fatigues are organised and promulgated.
  - (16) further section activities such as reconnaissance patrols, rehearsals and briefings are carried out. Improvement to fire trenches, camouflage and wiring will be carried out as necessary. Maximum possible uninterrupted rest should be given to patrol members and all others except sentries; and
  - (17) midday meal consumed.
- b. *Afternoon:*
- (1) re-clean weapons, check patrol equipment, radio webbing carriers, batteries and ammunition.
  - (2) periodically check personal hygiene, re-applying powder, repellent and anti-mite as required, conduct foot and skin inspections.
  - (3) complete night preparations. Shelters are prepared but normally not erected until after stand down, water is replenished etc:
  - (4) evening meal eaten:
  - (5) orders for the night are issued. Ensure everyone knows fields of fire, details of DF tasks, LPs and returning patrols;
  - (6) LPs are repositioned and increased to at least two men. Dusk will govern the time the platoon and company orders require LPs to be in position. In close country LPS are normally deployed and relieved in daylight and in open country in darkness;
  - (7) check sensor devices and Anti-personnel weapon M18A1 (Claymore);

- (8) all members 'stand to', wearing fighting equipment and man their fire positions until ordered to 'stand down'. Day sentries are withdrawn. Clearing patrols may be sent out during the evening 'stand to'. 'Stand down' should not be ordered until their tasks are completed:
  - (9) change over from day to night routine; and
  - (10) equipment should be placed so that it is readily available for use after dark.
- c. Night:
- (1) 'stand down' on the company commander's orders;
  - (2) double sentries remain posted in the MG pit; and
  - (3) no movement after dark within the perimeter except by patrols and for routine post changes. Track discipline must be maintained.

### Security

1352. **Sentry Posts.** Sentry posts are established forward or to a flank of a platoon locality for the purpose of listening for enemy movement by day. Their function is to provide early warning and passive security and they should not open fire on the enemy. Their location and strength is ordered by the platoon commander. At night forward sentries will be withdrawn and tow sentries will be placed on the section MG. Troops positioned as sentries must be fully briefed on their task and have communications with their platoon, eg by vine, cord or, in protracted defence, perhaps by telephone. Further details on sentries and sentry orders are contained in [Section 8-3](#).

1353. **LPs.** LPs are ordered by company commanders. They will normally be sited within company weapon range to provide warning of enemy infiltration or reconnaissance. Like sentry posts, they are established to give early warning and would not normally open fire on an enemy.

1354. **Standing Patrols.** Standing patrols are sited by the battalion commander. Standing patrols are usually at least a section in strength and dug in, and apart from providing early warning are prepared to remain in position and fight. Information concerning their employment is contained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.3, Patrolling and Tracking*.

### Clearing Patrols

1355. In close country it is necessary to use clearing patrols to ensure that small parties of enemy are not lying up undetected, close to the defended locality or to areas selected for temporary occupation eg platoon overnight

harbours. These patrols normally are used before last light and again after first light. Their timing and route must not be allowed to become a matter of routine. They may either be mounted on a company basis, using a depth platoon or mounted by each platoon using a depth section or soldiers from depth pits.

1356. If mounted by the company, the strength of a clearing patrol will usually be about a section. If mounted by a platoon it will rarely be this large but should never be less than two or three men. Depending on enemy activity and the surrounding terrain a larger patrol may be necessary. A single clearing patrol normally goes out from one point of the forward edge of the locality, completes a circuit of the locality and returns at approximately the same place. The distance it moves outside the defence will depend on the visibility and the enemy habits.

1357. Alternatively a number of patrols may leave the position and clear a part of the platoon/company front. In this case the patrols leave at the same time, departing through a neighbouring section/platoon, move in the same direction, that is anti-clockwise as for harbour drill clearing patrols, then return through their own section/platoon. The platoon/company remains at 'stand to' until all patrols are in.

### Carriage of Weapon

1358. Whenever soldiers move around the position they must carry their personal weapon with them. If the No 1 on the MG has to leave the area of the MG he must carry the weapon of the sentry doing duty on the gun. When soldiers are working in the position then personal weapons and equipment must be within immediate reach. If weapons are placed on the ground or against personal equipment they should be positioned so that the safety catch is uppermost. In this manner the possibility of unauthorised discharge is minimised.

### Conduct Under Attack

1359. **Types of Attack.** The defence may be subjected to quick or deliberate attack by day or night:

- a. *The Quick Attack.* A quick attack is mounted with little warning and possibly while sentries and LPs are still in position.
- b. *The Deliberate Attack.* A deliberate attack will probably be launched after the approaches have been cleared of patrols, LPs and sentries.

1360. Where noise is the only indication that the enemy may be in the vicinity, the information is passed quickly to the higher commander. On no account should indiscriminate firing be directed at such noises. Many noises such as the rooting of the wild pigs and other animal noises may lead inexperienced troops to raise an alarm unnecessarily and provide the enemy with useful information. MGs may only be fired on the orders of section or platoon commanders. Troops must realise that they are in a much stronger position than any enemy moving above ground, and must hold their fire.

1361. The difference between the two types of attack lies in the amount of firepower the enemy has time to concentrate and use. In the quick attack the enemy exploits surprise, and some of the platoon may be away from their posts, carrying water and ammunition, patrolling or on other tasks. At all times the MGs will be manned. When the alarm is given, all members 'stand' to in their fire trenches and await orders. In the deliberate attack, although the defenders may not anticipate its exact direction or strength, warning will have been given by the enemy's actions and on the company commander's orders the platoon 'stands to' and prepares to meet the attack.

1362. Where our defences have been located, the enemy normally supports his attack with all available firepower. As long as this fire continues it will be very difficult to get soldiers to continue to expose themselves. Commanders must set the example. The problem for the platoon and section commander is to judge the time when the enemy supporting fire will lift so that they can get ready to meet the assaulting enemy troops. The enemy realises this and may resort to such deceptions as switching fire to a flank to clear the frontage for his own troops. Commanders must be on the alert to judge any breaks in the pattern of fire.

1363. The platoon or section must fight as a team. How the battle is fought will depend on such factors as whether or not tanks or APCs are in the position, location of support company weapons, or whether or not the platoon is by itself or in a company or battalion position. The speed with which the enemy's assault waves are engaged, depends largely on reflex action by the members of the platoon and the good habits acquired in training. The enemy is usually within range of accurate aimed fire for such a short period of time that each man must instinctively engage when the section commander calls for fire. Each shot must be aimed to kill. A sudden volley of fire is more likely to disrupt the enemy assault than scattered firing.

1364. The first rush will either fail or the enemy will be in amongst the front fire trenches. If the rush fails, the enemy may resort to fire and movement from a short range or organise more waves. In these cases the section commander must counter the enemy fire and movement by skilfully controlling the fire of his groups. These groups, if unable to fire flat trajectory weapons, use grenades. The section commander must be prepared to move men in the communication trenches to throw grenades into lost fire trenches and to retake them by encouraging initiative and immediate aggressive action. The section commander must impress on his men that once the enemy's first rush is beaten, or held, the initiative goes to the defenders as they are in prepared fire trenches and know the front in detail.

1365. The platoon commander must keep his company commander informed of the situation in his locality and ask for DF tasks to be fired as required.

### **Attack by Night**

1366. The enemy will often launch deliberate attacks by night, as darkness gives protection against aimed fire and assists surprise. The inability to see the enemy will lead to increased fear which may influence the effectiveness of the platoon. This fear can be overcome by night training. Platoon and section commanders must maintain tight control over fire and the use of illumination, and they must maximise the use of every passive method available for observing the enemy.

1367. **Surveillance Devices.** Surveillance devices can be used to monitor and observe movement without the inherent disadvantages of illumination, but it must be remembered that they do not replace patrols, and they are subject to technical failure and enemy efforts to neutralise their value. The use of surveillance devices will allow the platoon and section commanders to bring effective fire to bear on the enemy when they are most vulnerable. The sensible use of surveillance devices will also ensure that the initiative remains with the defenders.

1368. **Illumination.** The use of illumination must not be used until the enemy is within the effective range of our small arms. Once initiated, illumination should be continuous until the attack has been repulsed, as the use of illumination will impair the night vision of the defenders. If isolated illumination is used in exceptional circumstances, the soldiers must be warned so that they can close one eye to reduce the loss of night vision.

## **Local Counter-attack**

1369. When under attack the task of the platoon is to hold its locality intact. The task of the section is to hold its section post and to kill the attacking enemy. The platoon may also be required to take part in a more deliberate company counter-attack on another locality.

1370. If the attack has been contained the platoon commander may take the initiative and order a section attack to retake lost fire trenches.

## **SECTION 13-5. RELIEF IN PLACE**

### **General**

1371. The relief of one platoon or company by another is a common operation in defence. It usually takes place at night except in close country when daylight relief has advantages. To avoid confusion it is essential that there is a simple and deliberate procedure in which all ranks have been thoroughly trained. The relief must be preceded by a reconnaissance which will usually be the responsibility of an advance party from the relieving body. To describe more fully the procedures which a platoon may follow, relief in place is discussed in a battalion setting.

### **Advance Party**

1372. The composition of the advance party depends on whether the sub-units are in contact with the enemy, the time available, the amount of preparation required and the vulnerability of the route forward. Either the company commander and platoon commanders, or the company 2IC and the platoon sergeants, go forward in the advance party to meet their opposite numbers in the outgoing sub-unit and collect information. In either case one guide per platoon accompanies them. The outgoing unit usually provides patrols during the relief.

### **Information Required**

1373. The incoming platoon requires information on:

- a. the tasks of the platoon;
- b. topography, including details of dead ground;
- c. the enemy (habits, snipers, patrols, locations, minefields, wire, shelling);
- d. the disposition of platoons on flanks;
- e. the complete layout of the platoon including the number of men in each post, obstacles, warning devices, sniper posts, support weapons locations, supporting arms OPs, and communications;

- f. DF tasks and methods for calling for them;
- g. alternative positions;
- h. patrol routes and minefield lanes;
- i. any stores to be taken over, such as ammunition or defence stores;
- j. feeding and sanitary arrangements;
- k. evacuation of casualties;
- l. the location of headquarters and aid posts;
- m. routes for runners and track discipline; and
- n. action during relief if there is an attack or shelling.

### **Preparation**

1374. If the platoon sergeant goes with the advance party the relieving platoon commander must:

- a. brief the platoon sergeant and ensure that he has a written list of all the information required;
- b. inspect weapons, clothing and equipment for serviceability;
- c. brief the platoon on:
  - (1) exactly what is going to happen;
  - (2) expected light and weather conditions;
  - (3) the need for silent movement;
  - (4) the actions to be taken if they are attacked whilst the operation is in progress;
  - (5) the acceptance of night battle noises as normal; and
  - (6) control measures coordinating the move forward.

### **Platoon Representative in the Advance Party**

1375. The platoon representative will:

- a. decide whether the digging of any extra fire trenches is necessary before the relief takes place and, if so, arrange for a digging party;
- b. ensure that he knows where the company headquarters is and, if necessary, takes the compass bearings and paces the distance from platoon headquarters so that it can be found at night;

- c. check range cards and sketches and make any extra copies required; and
- d. site all weapons and allocate individuals to fire trenches.

### **Sequence of Relief**

1376. The relief in place progresses as follows:

- a. At the battalion checkpoint:
  - (1) companies are checked as they arrive, and
  - (2) guides lead companies direct to their company checkpoints.
- b. At the company checkpoint:
  - (1) platoon representatives meet their platoons and lead them to their new localities; and
  - (2) the routes from the battalion checkpoint to the company checkpoints are generally lit or marked by the outgoing unit. In difficult places tape should be used. It is often necessary to mark the way from the new company headquarters to the new platoon headquarters.
- c. When a platoon arrives in the area allotted to it, guides from the outgoing sections meet and guide the incoming sections to their positions. The incoming platoon representative briefs the guides on:
  - (1) the name of the incoming section commander, and
  - (2) the strength of the section.
- d. The incoming sections take up positions under cover as close as possible to the fire trenches which they are to occupy. The outgoing sections will be 'standing to'.
- e. The actual handover is supervised by the incoming platoon representative and conducted section by section.
- f. Men are given their tasks and all relevant information possible, including information about patrols. As they take over a fire trench the men 'stand to' until ordered to 'stand down'.
- g. When sections are in position and all stores have been checked, the platoon commander reports that the relief is complete to company headquarters and when ordered to do so by the company commander stands the platoon down.



**Passage of Command**

1377. The outgoing officer or NCO is responsible for the defence of his area until command passes. The moment when command is to pass is determined by agreement between the two officers or NCOs unless decided by higher headquarters. The decision as to when the command actually passes over is a result of completed events, not time, and must be clearly stated in orders. Before command passes, the outgoing commander exercises full operational command over all subordinate elements of the relieving force which have completed their portion of the relief. When command passes, the relieving commander assumes full operational command of all elements of the outgoing force which have not yet been relieved.

1378. As soon as possible after the relief, the platoon and section commanders must check their locality and posts to ensure that they are the most suitable. The outgoing platoon positions must be studied thoroughly in daylight, and improvements made accordingly.

**OBSOLETE**

## CHAPTER 14

### WITHDRAWAL

#### SECTION 14-1. GENERAL

##### Introduction

1401. The aim of the withdrawal is to achieve a clean break from the enemy, thereby providing an opportunity to regroup before resuming the offensive. It may be conducted deliberately as part of a prearranged, plan or more astily as a result of a change in the local tactical situation, such as withdrawal under fire from a superior force encountered during patrols, or after an ambush. The considerations and methods remain the same, but the time available for planning and battle procedure varies.

1402. The withdrawal may become necessary:

- a. as a result of local defeat,
- b. to avoid battle under unfavourable operational or logistic conditions,
- c. to conform with the movements of friendly forces,
- d. to draw the enemy into an unfavourable situation, or
- e. to gain time.

1403. The platoon will usually withdraw as part of a larger force, generally of battalion size. Much of the appreciation and planning will be undertaken at battalion level or higher and the platoon will generally be required to conform to a simple but well controlled plan. The withdrawal is a difficult operation, often conducted at night and sometimes with unexpected contact, so the platoon must be well disciplined and rehearsed.

1404. Platoon and section commanders should be familiar with the withdrawal operation up to battalion level as described in [Chapter 12 of MLW Two, Inf Trg 1.1, The Infantry Battalion.](#)

##### Considerations

1405. Platoon and section commanders must understand the basic considerations of the withdrawal so that they can contribute to the successful execution of the withdrawal plan and react correctly to contingent circumstances. A successful withdrawal depends on the following:

- a. *Simplicity and Flexibility.* The withdrawal is a difficult operation, especially if there is contact with the enemy during the operation. Good control is essential and can be achieved by a

simple flexible plan, clear orders, good communications and a system of checkpoints and RV. Enemy interference must be anticipated and the plan made to ensure the withdrawal continues in an orderly, secure manner.

- b. *Surprise.* It is difficult to withdraw without sustaining heavy casualties when the enemy knows exactly when it will occur. Platoon activity must give no indication that a withdrawal is imminent. The activity from the platoon should remain constant until the last moment. Much of the planning and preliminary activity must be done under the cover of darkness. Without surprise the withdrawing force will be hard-pressed to achieve a clean break. The aim is to disengage from the enemy and move back to the new position with the minimum of interference and casualties.
- c. *Security.* If the enemy learns of or suspects a withdrawal he will attempt to interfere with the operation and try to turn it into a rout. Infiltration, penetration, ambush, and flank and rear attacks are great dangers to the withdrawing platoon. The platoon must maintain its front intact until the time of the withdrawal, then withdraw quickly and without indicating where it went. The platoon should RV as soon as possible and move in a platoon formation that will provide as much security as the time limitations will allow. When halted, the platoon must adopt a defensive posture and should spend as little time as possible at places such as RVs or bounds. If all else fails the platoon and sections must be prepared to fight their way out. The last sub-unit to withdraw may be given vehicles for increased mobility.
- d. *Offensive Action.* While the withdrawal is essentially movement away from the enemy, there will be opportunities for the platoon to undertake offensive action. Aggressive patrolling and ambushing will help achieve surprise, security and a clean break. Activities by rear parties such as anti-tankmining, will assist the withdrawal and inflict casualties on the enemy. Ambushes may also be set to slow down the following enemy.
- e. *Maintenance of Morale.* The withdrawal imposes a greater strain on the morale of troops than most other operations. Platoon and section commanders must act to ensure that the standard of morale within the platoon does not deteriorate. Once the withdrawal has begun, as much reliable information as becomes available must be passed quickly through the chain of command to counteract rumours.

**Stages**

1406. At platoon level, the withdrawal can be considered in three stages:

- a. planning and preparation,
- b. conduct, and
- c. occupation of the new defensive position.

**SECTION 14-2. PLANNING AND PREPARATION****What the Platoon Commander Must Know**

1407. Before the withdrawal the platoon commander of a forward platoon must have the following information:

- a. Enemy strengths, locations and possible intentions.
- b. Withdrawal plans of any covering troops, ie those forward and to the flank of his position.
- c. Who is to order his withdrawal and by what means.
- d. What the company's commitment is to rear parties.
- e. Timings, including:
  - (1) the time before which there is to be no rearward movement. This time primarily involves movement of unnecessary stores, equipment and personnel which will move before the main body of troops. No movement is to be taken before this time, except for rear reconnaissance parties.
  - (2) The time until which the position is to be denied to the enemy. Until this time, sufficient troops must remain on the position to maintain the integrity of the defence to ensure the enemy can be repelled.
  - (3) The time by which the position must be abandoned, or the time that all troops must be clear of a line to the rear of the position. This will allow the commander freedom of action to use his supporting artillery and/or air support forward of the line.
- f. The location of the platoon RV.
- g. The location and route to the company RV, and check point. The route must not mask the fire of troops holding a position in the rear.
- h. The position of troops through whom he has to or may have to withdraw.

- i. The location of the position to which he has to withdraw and any intermediate positions.
- j. The location of the battalion RV and mounting point.
- k. Which platoon will be last out and its tasks, eg:
  - (1) to delay enemy by fire and movement, or
  - (2) to lay ambushes on the withdrawal route.
- l. The requirement to lay mines in the platoon area and the instructions for closing of mine lanes.
- m. Details of available supporting fire.
- n. Administrative arrangements including:
  - (1) the ammunition to be carried,
  - (2) the disposal of excess stores and equipment
  - (3) arrangements for casualty evacuation, and
  - (4) feeding arrangements.

### Effects of Topography and Meteorology

1408. When deciding on the order of withdrawal of his sections, the platoon commander must consider the effects of ground and darkness. The following procedures are recommended:

- a. *In Open Country by Night.* The rear platoons of companies and the rear sections of forward platoons are usually withdrawn first so that an intact front can be maintained until the last moment. The forward troops will then quickly move back unrestricted by those previously behind. This should effect a clean break. It is vital, however, that the enemy does not penetrate this remaining line or discover that the position lacks depth.
- b. *In Open Country by Day.* It is very difficult to achieve a clean break without good mobility and the ability to conceal your intentions. A large amount of firepower, particularly air and artillery, would be required. Since the withdrawal is likely to be observed and attract an enemy response, the forward sections usually withdraw first using the rear sections to cover them. If necessary, sections will leapfrog using fire and movement. Without compensating mobility and firepower a withdrawal in open country is best conducted at night.
- c. *In Close Country by Day.* In close country withdrawals are easier by day as the enemy air and ground observation will be restricted. It should be possible to withdraw rear sections first

without compromising secrecy and the intact front. However, the enemy is able to attack from a closer distance and is more likely to penetrate the defensive position or the withdrawal route. If in contact or a contact is imminent, the forward sections may have to be leapfrogged through the rear sections.

- d. *In Close Country by Night.* There is a great risk of losing control of sections and individuals when withdrawals in close country are attempted at night. There is also a risk of infiltration and ambush. If such a withdrawal is unavoidable, success will be greatly dependent on the individual and collective training of the platoon in night operations; and on the simplicity of the plan, the clarity of orders, a detailed preparatory reconnaissance and identification of routes.

## Control

1409. To ensure that the withdrawal of one sub-unit does not mask that of another, and to avoid clashes with own troops, commanders must know the location of their sub-unit RVs and the routes from these RVs to the unit RV. The company commander will select the platoon RV and the platoon commander will select the section RV. At section level these will generally be immediately behind the section position. At platoon level, the RV should be an easily recognisable place with cover from aimed enemy small-arms fire and observation. The platoon RV should allow the earliest possible concentration of the platoon.

1410. For control purposes the section and platoon commanders will choose a checkpoint on the routes to their respective RVs. To assist in control, platoon and section commanders should reconnoitre and memorise the route back to the company RV. The section 2IC should also reconnoitre and memorise the route to the platoon RV. The platoon sergeant will not usually be present during the withdrawal but will be at the new defensive position with the rear reconnaissance party. Control measures are shown in [Figure 14- 1](#).

## Orders

1411. Platoon orders should include most of the information required by the platoon commander in ([paragraph 1407](#) ) and the soldiers must be fully briefed in case the platoon or section commander becomes a casualty.

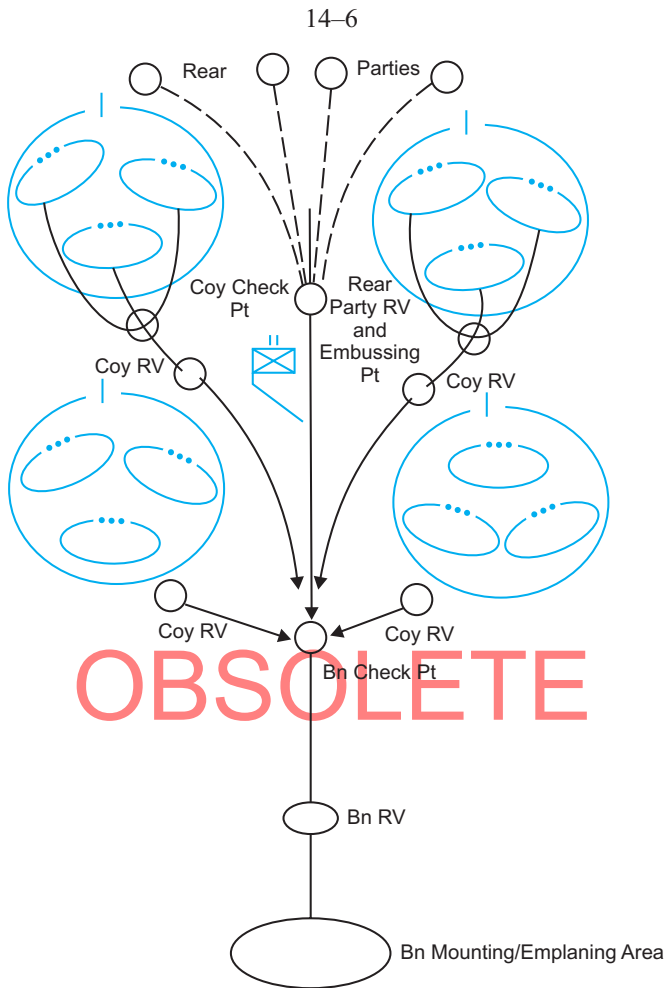


Figure 14-1. Control Measures in the Withdrawal

### Administration

1412. Before the withdrawal commences, platoon and section commanders must ensure that:

- a. surplus stores, equipment and ammunition have been disposed of as ordered;

- b. the remaining equipment and weapons are complete and ready for immediate use;
- c. casualties or those with injuries likely to slow the withdrawal have been sent back;
- d. each section has a stretcher or means of transporting casualties; and
- e. nothing of use to the enemy is left behind. This includes:
  - (1) intelligence, such as old orders, notes and letters;
  - (2) stores, equipment, ammunition; and
  - (3) weapons.

### SECTION 14-3. CONDUCT

1413. Just before the designated time of movement, troops should be wearing only the equipment needed for the withdrawal. This will ensure that their fighting ability is not impeded and that they will be able to move quickly and silently.

1414. The section will withdraw as a whole and move to its position in the platoon RV. The first section to arrive at the platoon RV is responsible for its security. If a section has to withdraw in contact it does so by fire and movement. The following points apply:

- a. The section commander withdraws with the last group after checking that all the other members of the section are clear of the position.
- b. The section commander maintains control of his section by voice or by other means which have been rehearsed by the section and can be employed in the worst case of close country by night.
- c. Fire control must be maintained.
- d. Casualties are carried on the section stretchers and will be dealt with in accordance with the casualty evacuation plan.
- e. On arrival at the platoon RV, section commanders check their sections and report to the platoon commander.

1415. The platoon commander withdraws with the last section after ensuring that all sections have withdrawn from the position. To assist him in this matter he may establish a checkpoint at the rear of the platoon position or just before the platoon RV. A prepositioned guide can then inform him of the sections withdrawn as he moves through with the last section. At the platoon RV the platoon commander receives reports from the section commanders, arranges casualty evacuation and moves the platoon to the company RV through the company check point.



1416. If the withdrawal is a fighting withdrawal, the platoon commander may have to fire and move his sections not only back to the platoon RV, but back to the company RV. He must make the maximum use of supporting fire, especially mortar and artillery, to achieve a clean break.

1417. On arrival at the company RV, the platoon occupies a prearranged locality in all-round defence and the platoon commander reports to the company commander. The company will then move rearwards as ordered.

1418. The pace for the withdrawal is a fast walk except when there is a need for fire and movement. Anything above a fast walk is fatiguing, induces panic and makes control difficult, especially at night. Fast and deliberate movement avoids confusion, inspires confidence and assists in achieving a clean break.

1419. Where vehicles are used to assist in the withdrawal the platoon will withdraw to an embussing point or marrying-up area. This area may be at the platoon RV when A vehicles are used, providing that their positioning does not prejudice surprise and security, and that the anti-armour threat is acceptable. The embussing point or marrying-up area could be at or near the battalion RV.

#### **SECTION 14-4. OCCUPATION OF THE NEW DEFENSIVE POSITION**

1420. The new defensive position should be reconnoitred before the old one is evacuated. The group that carries out this task is the rear reconnaissance party. Usually the platoon sergeant will go back under the command of the company 2IC. The platoon sergeant will take one or more members of the platoon to assist and act as guides.

1421. The new position is reconnoitred and orders are given as for the defence. The company 2IC will issue defence orders and designate platoon areas. Within this area the platoon sergeant will site all the fire trenches and if time permits, and with the assistance of the guides, will:

- a. define the fire trenches by spitlocking;
- b. mark them with tape or paper, to assist in positioning troops in the dark;
- c. dig the machine gun pits to stage one; and
- d. dig latrines.

1422. The platoon sergeant and guides receive the incoming platoon at a point decided by the company 2IC and guide the sections into position. The routine then continues as for the occupation and conduct of defence.

## **PART FOUR – TRAINING**

### **CHAPTER 15. TRAINING THE PLATOON**

#### **SECTION 15-1. CONDUCT OF TRAINING**

##### **General**

1501. Soldiers in a rifle platoon will have varying levels of ability and experience. The new platoon commander can identify these levels early if he reads the existing platoon commander's notebook and consults his platoon NCOs, the company commander and the CSM. These levels must be taken into account when tasks are allocated in the platoon and the training programme is prepared.

1502. Soldiers who have been in the platoon for some time will be aware of battalion and company SOPs and will probably have set tasks within the section and platoon. These more experienced soldiers can also be used to assist in training less experienced soldiers and making them feel welcome in the team. Care has to be taken to ensure that lessons contrary to the training requirement are not taught.

1503. Soldiers who have completed their Initial Employment Training (IET) or have arrived from an RHU may not possess all the skills required. Commanders at all levels must be aware of the exit standards of IET establishments and RHUs and ensure that their training programmes are geared to provide for a smooth continuation in learning.

1504. The platoon commander must be aware of the requirements for promotion and must examine the terminal performance standards for promotion courses. The resultant identification of gaps in the new soldiers' knowledge or skills should provide the platoon commander with part of the basis of a training programme for all of his soldiers. Teaching soldiers to the point where they can run a section and are potential NCOs should be one of the platoon commander's primary goals.

##### **The Programme**

1505. The CO will detail the battalion training programme. It may take the form of a training directive or training instructions to cover successive phases. The directive, or training instructions, will normally be issued in time to enable company commanders to plan and prepare their own programmes. The company commander will either prepare a detailed programme which dictates what will be taught and when, or he will provide comprehensive guidelines for the platoon commanders to prepare their own detailed programmes. In the latter case, he will indicate the

broad own detailed programmes. In the latter case, he will indicate the broad subjects to be covered, the standards required and when the troops will be assessed.

1506. The first step in preparing a detailed training programme is to analyse the battalion or company training directive to determine the tasks or activities that must be completed, and the dates by which these tasks or activities must be completed by each platoon. Each of these tasks or activities must then be further analysed to determine the individual and group skills necessary to achieve them. The individual and group skills for each task or activity should be listed and recorded for use in subsequent years.

1507. The next step in preparing a training programme is to assess the level of training of the soldiers. The platoon commander must learn which of the individual and group skills identified in the analysis can be performed by the soldiers and to what standard. This can be done, by a series of tests, exercises or competitions.

1508. Once the level of training has been assessed, the platoon commander can gauge where his platoon falls short of the training requirement and he can plan his programme to cover those areas. The structuring of the training will be influenced by the need to teach individual skills before group skills (where the training is new) and by the dates laid down for the platoon tasks or activities. (Reference to the appropriate training management plan, collective and/or individual training, would greatly assist in this task.)

1509. Even if a detailed programme is prepared by the company commander, the platoon commander should assess the level of training of his soldiers for his own information. If it becomes obvious that the platoon is weak in some areas not previously recognised by the company commander, the platoon commander should inform the company commander so that time is allowed to rectify the problem. He may also find that the platoon has to spend considerable time retraining on areas that have been incorrectly taught or to eliminate bad habits. This may mean that a planned programme has to be changed to accommodate extra training on areas of weakness. The new platoon commander should consult his platoon sergeant and the company commander when he prepares the training programme.

### **Running the Programme**

1510. The platoon commander should set goals, allocate the training resources and then supervise the training. He should give most of the instruction on platoon level knowledge and skills whereas the platoon NCOs should carry most of the instructional burden on individual skills. The platoon commander is responsible for the collective training of his sections and section commanders. It is the section commander's

responsibility to ensure that each member of his section has the individual skills required to enable him to successfully complete his job.

1511. There must be constant checking of faults by the platoon commander, the platoon sergeant and the section NCOs. Every time a soldier does something wrong or half-heartedly without correction it becomes harder to fix the fault.

1512. The main difficulty is to keep training interesting. Realism adds interest, builds team spirit and helps prepare troops for the realities of battle. This does not mean that all the training is to be tactical. Short tactical sessions may achieve more by allowing the soldier time to relax and think over or discuss the lessons he has learnt.

1513. The platoon commander will find that repetition in training is necessary. This does not mean that the same lesson is taught over and over again until the soldiers know it by heart, or that able soldiers are forced to endure repetitious training because less able soldiers fail to comprehend. Only constant practice will ensure that the soldier can gain and maintain a high proficiency in basic skills. The platoon commanders and those assisting should make use of the training ideas and exercises contained in the Infantry Training series of the Manual of Land Warfare.

## SECTION 15-2. NIGHT TRAINING

### General

1514. Night operations will always be a feature of warfare; to achieve surprise, to maintain the momentum of an operation, to keep pressure on the enemy, to minimise the effect of enemy air power and to minimise casualties. Modern night fighting equipment does not lessen the requirement to train for night operations - it increases it. There is a need to become familiar with the equipment and to understand how the enemy uses it, enabling development of techniques to defeat or minimise the effect of enemy equipments. The training of soldiers revolves around fieldcraft, navigation, weapons handling and battlecraft. New equipments enhance these capabilities, but do not replace them.

1515. **Frequency.** To acquire and maintain night operational skills requires regular and extended night training periods. Once a week is the recommended frequency. A few lessons of an introductory or procedural nature, eg, theory of night vision, unit SOPs, may be conducted during the to be conducted and once decided, this should not vary. The night should be early in the week so that if a period has to be postponed, the next night will be available to complete the training. Company and platoon commanders should avoid interfering with the normal end of week social and commercial commitments and take into account unit sports days. Regular

training conducted on set nights will fit into an accepted pattern for all concerned, including soldiers' families.

1516. **Duration.** Initially night training should last for at least 2-3 hours, in order to overcome the strangeness of the training and accustom soldiers to working in the dark. This period should be extended as individual and crew skills are mastered and collective skills are practised. As the soldiers are already trained in most aspects of night operations, commanders can expect to move onto collective skills very quickly. As new equipment and procedures are learnt, individual, crew and collective training can be done concurrently.

1517. As section, platoon and company night training becomes more the norm, training times will lengthen. It is recommended that 'reverse cycle' training be used. This is a term used to describe training where most traditional day and night activities are reversed, with troops operating at night and resting by day. A reverse cycle exercise of a week's duration (including four nights) would be a suitable way to end a particular block of night training, eg advance, attack and pursuit. To make such training exercise more timely and relevant, it should be programmed to be completed just before a major battalion or brigade exercise which will test the night training just completed.

### Training Content

1518. Night training lessons and exercises should cover:

- a. introductory training, such as unit SOPs, description of the programme and overall aims;
- b. individual skills, such as carriage of equipment, first aid and physical training;
- c. fieldcraft skills, such as night vision, identifying sounds, movement at night and camouflage;
- d. navigation skills (orienteeing is an excellent training method);
- e. weapon handling and shooting skills, including stripping and assembling, cleaning, immediate action drills and range practices;

- f. battlecraft skills, including all tactical techniques described in this pamphlet with particular emphasis on those requiring demanding control measures such as advance to contact, the attack, the withdrawal, challenging procedures, marrying-up procedures with A and B vehicles, crossing obstacles and breaching minefields;
- g. equipment training, on section and platoon equipments, such as the patrol ambush light (PAL), platoon early warning system (PEWS), the trilux rifle sight, the individual weapon sight, and other common equipments, such as radios (and their antennae) and pyrotechnics;
- h. two-sided exercises, which will train soldiers, acting as the enemy, to identify weaknesses in equipment. This aspect of training can be readily included in any exercise; and
- i. specialist platoon skills, which are described in Section 15-3. Many such skills and equipments are invaluable to the rifle platoon. Night training in skills of particular significance include target/grid procedure and illumination missions, operating pioneer equipments such as jackhammers, assault boats, mine detectors, SFMG with C2 sights, and radio and line equipment setting up, operation and repair.

1519. Once proficiency is achieved in company level night training, other arms and services should be integrated into night training, with particular attention to infantry/armour training, artillery training, military police training (traffic control) and administrative training (resupply, vehicle recovery and repair). All units which normally attach representatives to infantry units and sub-units should train with the infantry during the training periods and exercises mentioned above. These include artillery FOs (and their parties), engineers, armoured LOs and others as required such as drivers and cooks. This training is coordinated at company level.

### **Fatigue, Stress and Safety**

1520. **Fatigue.** Soldiers cannot train or continue to function in battle by both day and night for extended periods of time. Experience has shown that, although many physical activities such as route marching, can continue for 2 or 3 days or more, the decision making process of leaders and others deteriorates markedly and soldiers' overall performance drops. Physical training can build up stamina to minimise the effects of sleep loss. If troops train by night, consideration must be given to daytime 'stand down', or ensuring that the type of training conducted during the following day is suitable.

1521. **Stress.** In peacetime, training commanders at all levels should be keenly aware of how individuals react under stress. Stress in training is not a bad thing, providing it is applied in a sensible, safe manner. Trained, confident soldiers seek ways of proving themselves and extended night training periods are a way of placing stress on them. Commanders in particular are subject to stress and should be aware of the resultant degradation in their decision making ability. Battle inoculation is a proven and effective method of creating stress in a training situation. The combined effects of the 'crack-thump' of the rounds and the knowledge that the rounds are live, add to the realism of the training and should be used wherever practicable.

1522. **Safety.** Safety requirements must always be met. When soldiers become fatigued, care must be taken to ensure normal safety measures are followed. This is especially important during night shoots or night field firing exercises, or when troops are working with armour or helicopters, or travelling in vehicles.

### **SECTION 15-3. ASSISTANCE FROM SPECIALIST PLATOONS**

1523. All of the specialist platoons can assist with the training of the rifle platoon. The platoon commander must be familiar with the roles and tasks of the specialist platoons and call on their specialist knowledge to add variety to the platoon training and to ensure that instruction is being provided by those best qualified. Examples of the type of twining assistance which can be provided by the specialist platoons are as follows:

- a. *Mortar Platoon:*
  - (1) Target/grid procedure
  - (2) Adjust fire using the mini mortar range.
- b. *Assault Pioneer Platoon:*
  - (1) Booby traps recognition
  - (2) Mine warfare
  - (3) Field defences
  - (4) Watermanship
  - (5) Employment of flamethrowers.
- c. *Anti-armour Platoon:*
  - (1) SRAAW handling
  - (2) AFV recognition
  - (3) Introduction to MRAAW.

- d. *SFMG Platoon:*
  - (1) Use of the tripod
  - (2) Theory of MG fire.
- e. *Signal Platoon:*
  - (1) Platoon operators' course
  - (2) Laying wire
  - (3) Basic radio operator training for all members of the platoon.
- f. *Medical Platoon:*
  - (1) First aid training
  - (2) Health and hygiene instruction.

#### **SECTION 15-4. UNSCHEDULED TRAINING**

##### **General**

1524. Junior commanders should compile a list of short training exercises and activities which can be used to reinforce formal training and make use of spare time. Ideally the exercises/activities should be written on cards and carried by the junior commander so that they can be used when the opportunity arises. Some examples of these activities are as follows:

- a. Tests of elementary training (TOETs) (particularly before or during live firing activities).
- b. Weapon deployment and sighting, eg Anti-personnel weapon M18A1 (Claymore).
- c. Fieldcraft and target detection:
  - (1) why things are seen,
  - (2) personal camouflage,
  - (3) judging distance,
  - (4) indicating targets,
  - (5) fire control orders,
  - (6) use of range cards,
  - (7) movement with arms,
  - (8) crossing obstacles,
  - (9) selection of lines of advance, and
  - (10) fire positions.



- d. Patrolling and tracking:
  - (1) use of sign,
  - (2) deception,
  - (3) close reconnaissance,
  - (4) casualty evacuation,
  - (5) entering a patrol RV, and
  - (6) duties of a sentry.
- e. Use of fire support:
  - (1) how to call for fire, and
  - (2) effects of fire.
- f. Navigation:
  - (1) grid references,
  - (2) identifying locations on a map,
  - (3) finding grid references for features on the ground,
  - (4) taking bearings,
  - (5) direction from the stars,
  - (6) direction from the sun and a watch,
  - (7) pacing,
  - (8) bypassing,
  - (9) traversing, and
  - (10) resection.
- g. First aid:
  - (1) taking a pulse;
  - (2) clearing the airway;
  - (3) expired air resuscitation;
  - (4) carrying a casualty;
  - (5) treatment of wounds;
  - (6) treatment of burns;
  - (7) dressings, bandages, slings and splints; and
  - (8) treatment of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- h. Section fire and movement procedures,
- i. Procedures for contact drills,

- j. Searching an area or a prisoner of war and
- k. *Twenty Questions.* The junior leader prepares 20 cards with questions each week. The questions can range from any of the above topics to weapon ranges and characteristics.

1525. This list is by no means exhaustive. It is meant to be a guide to the type of training that can be conducted in short 15-20 minute gaps in organised training. Junior commanders should use a 'vui tui' with a list of headings and relevant facts on each subject to enable them to make the most effective use of their time.

1526. An example of the type of notes required and the suggested headings for a variety of subjects is at [Annex A](#).

## SECTION 15-5. COMPETITION IN TRAINING

### General

1527. Competition in training ([Annex B](#)) can be used to highlight weaknesses in individual and group skills as well as to provide an interesting change in instructional procedures for the soldiers involved. Competition between individuals can be used to test and assess the soldiers' basic skills Decision making processes and physical fitness. Competition between groups can be used to test the teamwork and battlecraft skills of the group in a number of physically and mentally demanding activities.

1528. The competitions should be well organised and place high demands on the soldiers involved and, where possible, make use of existing facilities. These facilities can include ranges, obstacle and confidence courses, road systems, training areas, etc. The organisation for the activity should include:

- a. booking any training facility required;
- b. providing rules and a scoring system for the activity;
- c. producing an outline of events and detailing safety officers, where required;
- d. providing activities for troops waiting to compete or who have finished the exercise; and
- e. arranging for administrative support.

**Annexes:** [A. Examples of Training Notes](#)  
[B. Competition Activities](#)

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**EXAMPLES OF TRAINING NOTES**

- a. Selection of Lines of Advance:
- (1) observation,
  - (2) fire positions,
  - (3) cover from view and fire,
  - (4) obstacles, and
  - (5) basic drill for taking cover.
  - (6) Have half the troops camouflage themselves and move about 100 m away from the remainder of the group who should be facing away from the area. On a prearranged signal have the group turn around and the camouflage soldiers begin moving forward using fire and movement. Have the observing group indicate targets as the group moves. When the group gets close stop the exercise and discuss the final positions of the group. Highlight any points which came out of the exercise. (Further exercises are contained in *MLW Two, Inf Trg, Fieldcraft and Target Detection*).
- b. Casualty evacuation:
- (1) Discuss methods of casualty evacuation and how it is provided.
  - (2) Discuss battle wounds.
  - (3) Discuss improvised stretchers and methods of carrying a casualty.
  - (4) Make an improvised stretcher.
  - (5) Discuss the need for the following when carrying a casualty:
    - (a) early warning group, eg scouts;
    - (b) command group;
    - (c) carrying group; and
    - (d) protection group.
- c. Fire support.
- (1) Discuss the types of fire support available.
  - (2) Discuss the methods of calling for indirect fire support.
  - (3) Practise the group in calling for indirect fire.

- d. Identifying locations on a map.
  - (1) Revise how to give a grid reference.
  - (2) Revise how to read map to ground and identify features, creeks etc on map.
  - (3) Indicate a feature on the ground and have soldiers indicate it on the map and give a grid reference for it.
  - (4) Combine with practice in calling for indirect fire support on the feature and normal target indication methods.

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**COMPETITION ACTIVITIES****Exercises for Trained Soldiers**

1. Select a number of stands, each the base for a separate exercise. The exercises can include a selection from the following examples:

- a. *Run.* The distance can be varied according to the circumstances and the run can be included anywhere in the programme.
- b. *Obstacle Course or Confidence Course.* Bayonets can be fitted during this activity and bayonet dummies placed through the course.
- c. *Carrying a Casualty.* Involves the requirement to carry a casualty and apply a shell dressing to a wound.
- d. *Crossing a river or similar obstacle.*
- e. *Range practice.* If conducted as a group activity then the practice should include all the weapons carried by the group; eg a section.
- f. *Communications.* Communications activities would include requirements to:
  - (1) set up and transmit a message on the current in-service radio, and
  - (2) carrying a verbal message through all activities and deliver at the end of the competition.
- g. *Strip and Assemble.* Involving the stripping and assembling of the in-service weapons used by the unit.
- h. *Enemy Encounters.* Involving:
  - (1) meeting a lone enemy,
  - (2) encountering an enemy MG pit,
  - (3) contacting an enemy sniper, or
  - (4) encountering a wounded enemy soldier.
- i. *Observation and Deduction Lane.* Information contained in the lane can be either used during the rest of the competition or delivered to a debriefing officer at the end of the activity.
- j. *Breaching a Minefield.*

- k. *Friendly Troops and Civilians*. Involving:
    - (1) encountering a lone friendly soldier,
    - (2) encountering a lone wounded friendly soldier,
    - (3) encountering a lone civilian, and
    - (4) searching a civilian.
  - l. *Navigation Stand*. Where any of the navigational activities listed in paragraphs 15.24.f or Annex A to this chapter can be used.
  - m. Medical stand, where any of the medical activities listed in paragraphs 15.24.g or Annex A to this chapter can be used.
2. Points can be awarded for each successfully completed activity. At the end of the competition the points are totalled and the winning team announced.
  3. If the competitors have to carry a message or provide information at the end of the activity then the debriefing officer must have a separate stand. The messages and information should be recorded so that the whole group can be debriefed at the end of the activity.
  4. A time factor can be added to any of the activities to make it more competitive. Points should be deducted for going over time.
  5. Training should also be arranged for those soldiers waiting to compete or having completed the competition. This training could include any of the short lessons included in this chapter or a more formal presentation, for example, using the mini-mortar range to instruct on fire control.

### **Raids**

6. Raiding parties can be made up and given missions to complete. The missions could be:
  - a. to rescue a POW,
  - b. to destroy:
    - (1) an administrative area,
    - (2) a bridge,
    - (3) an enemy barracks,
    - (4) vehicles,
    - (5) a CP
    - (6) an ammunition dump,
    - (7) fuel dump,
    - (8) stores area, or
    - (9) an airfield.

7. The success of the exercise depends largely on the need for secrecy, ensuring that the raiders do not discover the layout of the target area, before their deployment in the field. The guards should be briefed in the target area and the raiders should be briefed at drop points some distance from the target.

8. Time should be allowed for movement to the target, close reconnaissance, destruction of the target and extraction from the area. The exercise can be conducted at night.

### **Infiltration, Escape and Close Reconnaissance Exercises**

9. Infiltration, escape and close reconnaissance exercises can be conducted competitively and still provide excellent reinforcement training. These exercises should be run along the same lines as raids and points awarded for a successful result. A lantern stalk, while appearing low key, is a good vehicle for this type of training.

### **Orienteering**

10. Orienteering is an excellent way to reinforce physical fitness and navigation training. Once the basic methods of orienteering are mastered, orienteering can be combined with other activities, eg a treasure hunt to add interest and competition to an already competitive form of training. Details are contained in numerous books on the subject and in *MLW Two, Inf Trg 3.1, Navigation*.

### **Range Practices**

11. Basic fire and movement exercises can be conducted on classification ranges provided that the restrictions imposed by *MLW Two, Inf Trg 8. 1, Range Instructions and Safety Precautions* are observed. Different targets can be engaged and points can be awarded for the following:

- a. hits on target,
- b. control,
- c. fire control, and
- d. movement.



12. These basic exercises can then be expanded into more complex fire and movement training on field firing ranges. Basic training in fire control in the section defence can be conducted in a similar manner. A platoon field firing exercise in a tactical setting can combine and test many battle skills and is an excellent way to culminate a stage of training. Supporting weapons and equipments may be written into the exercise. Examples of such platoon field firing exercises are:

- a. an attack on a strong point,
- b. an assault river crossing in assault boats,
- c. a dismounted attack from APCs, and
- d. ambushes, by day and night, both mobile and dug in.

13. Imaginative use of field firing ranges and mechanical target equipment currently in service will greatly enhance the training of the platoon.

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