

APPENDIX A

UNIT STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR FOOT MARCHES

A unit SOP prescribes routine methods to be followed in operations. To provide for quick and efficient movement, individual and unit training in preparation for and conduct of all forms of movement is desirable. The unit SOP should include those standard methods and techniques for each mode of transportation that the unit could be expected to employ. An extract of a battalion SOP that prescribes foot marching procedures is provided herein.

APPENDIX – (FOOT MARCHES) TO ANNEX – (OPERATIONS) TO – BATTALION – INFANTRY TACSOP

1. GENERAL

This appendix is published to standardize foot march procedures and techniques. All information applies to tactical foot marches along improved roads when the enemy situation does not indicate enemy attack. This appendix will be modified only by order or directives from this headquarters. All foot marches conducted by units of this battalion have the implied purpose of arriving at the prescribed destination at the appointed time with soldiers who can immediately accomplish their assigned tactical mission.

2. FACTORS AFFECTING THE MARCH

a. Plans and Orders: The commander involved in a march prepares complete, accurate, and realistic march plans in accordance with guidance contained in paragraph 3 of this appendix. These plans will be translated into timely orders and provide for security, control, minimizing of march losses, and the uninterrupted march of the unit.

b. March Discipline: Specific areas of concern are maintaining formations, distances between men and elements, and speed; and the effective use of cover and concealment, and security. Additionally, commanders will ensure that water, light, noise, and communications disciplines are rigidly enforced to include:

(1) *Water discipline:*

- (a) Drink only treated water from approved sources.
- (b) Drink water often. Great quantities of water should be drunk before, during, and after the march.

- (c) Drink water slowly to prevent cramps or nausea.
- (2) *Light discipline*: Unshielded light sources are not permitted during the hours of darkness. No smoking at night.
- (3) *Noise discipline*: The chain of command inspects every soldier participating in a foot march to eliminate noise by the proper wearing of equipment.
- (4) *Communications discipline*: Radio traffic must be reduced to a minimum through the use of arm-and-hand signals and messengers.
- (5) *Code words*: Code words are given to indicate five minutes until break, begin break, and three minutes to march.

3. FOOT MARCH PROCEDURES

a. Organization:

- (1) *Reconnaissance*. Battalion conducts the following, supplemented as required by personnel from units:
 - (a) Route reconnaissance.
 - (b) Reconnaissance of assembly, bivouac, and staging areas.
 - (c) Traffic control.
- (2) *Reconnaissance party*.
 - (a) Commander-reconnaissance or scout platoon leader.
 - (b) Composition of reconnaissance party designated separately for each march to include:
 - 1. Reconnaissance element from reconnaissance or scout/platoon.
 - 2. Traffic control element as designated.
 - 3. Engineer element, if available, from attached or supporting engineer unit.
 - 4. NBC reconnaissance and survey team.

(3) *Quarterming party.*

- (a) Commander-HHC commander.
- (b) Composition-communication officer and communication platoon elements; necessary security personnel; and representatives from each company (to include NBC personnel), the S4 section, and the medical platoon.

(4) *Foot marches* (walking elements).

- (a) Units are organized into march units and, if necessary for control, into march serials and march columns.
- (b) Organization: The battalion is organized with companies as follows —

Rifle company – 4 platoons (includes composite Co HQ Pit).

Headquarters and headquarters company –
1 composite platoon (when directed) march as second march unit; co (-) with motorized elements.

- (c) Attachments: Frontline ambulance to each company.
- (d) Motorized elements: Integrated with or follow main body by bounds unless shuttle marching is employed.

b. Control Measures: The following control measures will be used by company or larger units and be included in the march order:

- (1) Start point (SP) and release point (RP).
- (2) Critical points.
- (3) Time at which the head of the column is to pass the SP, RP, and critical point.
- (4) Date of march.

- (5) Order of march.
- (6) Route of march.
- (7) Distance between men and units.
- (8) Column gap.
- (9) Pace setter.
- (10) Road movement graph (if used)
- (11) Road movement table (battalion and brigade only).
- (12) Assembly and bivouac areas to include reconnaissance and quartering parties.
- (13) Command post (CP location).
- (14) Communication to be used during the march.
- (15) Lead and trail persons to mark locations with chemical lights during movement.

c. Security: Units provide for continuous all-round security during the march and at halts. Passive and active measures are planned against attack by enemy aircraft or long-range weapons during movement. Reconnaissance elements are employed to determine critical points along the route of march where security should be increased.

d. March Formation: The foot march formation is a staggered column of twos with one file on each side of the road unless otherwise specified.

e. Length of March: The normal length of march for a 24-hour period will be from 20 to 32 kph marching from 5 to 8 hours at a rate of 4 kph.

f. Rates of March:

	ROADS	CROSS COUNTRY
DAY	4.0 kph	2.4 kph
NIGHT	3.2 kph	1.6 kph

g. Distance between men and units:

TACTICAL SPEED

MEN:

Day:	5 meters	2 meters
Night:	3 meters	1 meter

UNITS: PLATOONS

Day:	50 meters	25 meters
Night:	25 meters	15 meters

UNITS: COMPANIES

Day:	100 meters	50 meters
Night:	50 meters	25 meters

h. Night Marches: During night marches control is increased by decreasing the distance between men and units, using connecting files to maintain contact between platoons and companies. Flashlights, lanterns, and pyrotechnics consistent with light discipline can be used for visual communications, depending on the tactical situation. Due to reduced visibility, night marches require the implementation of the following safety measures:

- (1) Use off-road trails or routes as much as possible to keep foot troops off roads used by vehicles.
- (2) Place marked and equipped guards with reflective or luminous materials at the front and rear of the march units.
- (3) Equip moving and static traffic guards with reflective fabric or tape, vests, caps, mittens, or hat

bands. Equip static traffic guards with illuminated or reflective signs, red lights, flashlights, traffic control batons, reflective flags, or lanterns.

(4) Disseminate warning to vehicle operators of the presence of troops on or near the roadway and restrict speeds as appropriate. Instruct vehicle operators on the meaning of luminous warning devices.

i. **Forced Marches:** For planning purposes, the maximum distances for forced marches are 56 km in 24 hours; 96 km in 48 hours; and 128 km in 72 hours. Full advantage will be taken of the periods when the troops are rested to increase the rate of march, if necessary. Rest periods are taken to ensure the arrival of the unit in effective fighting condition.

j. **Halts:** A 15-minute halt is made after the first 45 minutes of marching. Thereafter, a 10-minute halt is made every 50 minutes. Observation posts and local security are established during halts. Halfway through the march, a 15-minute rest stop is taken in which all men change their socks. Soldiers move to the sides of the road, seek cover and concealment, face outward, loosen their equipment during halts, and aidmen administer medical treatment as needed. Squad leaders check the feet of men and ensure feet are powdered and socks changed. Meal halts for A-rations last one hour and MREs 30 minutes.

k. **Straggler Control:** Stragglers who cannot meet or maintain the pace set for the foot march are the responsibility of his immediate chain of command. Fire team leaders, squad leaders, and ultimately the platoon leader must ensure the soldier is linked up with the straggler control party at the rear of the marching column. Information concerning the number of soldiers who fall out, their standard name lines, and medical disposition must be relayed through the chain of command to maintain

accountability of personnel and equipment. If individuals who fall out are carrying mission-essential equipment, this equipment must be transferred to other unit members.