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## CHAPTER 5

# Air Defense

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The platoon leader and sergeant should understand how AD weapons can support the platoon and how the platoon can support AD units. The platoon leader should know where the AD umbrella is in relationship to his area of operations and what kind of support he can expect. The platoon can provide its own AD measures, either passive or active. Passive AD measures are used to keep soldiers and equipment undetected by enemy air assets. Active AD measures are used to engage enemy aircraft. The following are active AD measures:

- Using the football-field method for high-performance aircraft (aim 200 meters in front of the aircraft).
- Using the football-field method for helicopters (aim 50 meters in front of the helicopter).
- Aiming weapons slightly above the nose of aircraft that is approaching head on.
- Firing all weapons at the reference point
- Ensuring that the AD-weapons control status is given. Status could be—
  - Hold—weapons are fired only in self-defense or in response to a formal order.
  - Tight—weapons are fired only at aircraft positively identified as hostile.
  - Free—weapons are fired at any aircraft not positively identified as friendly.
- Ensuring that AD warning conditions are given. Conditions could be—
  - White—an air attack is not probable.
  - Yellow—an air attack is probable.
  - Red—an air attack is imminent or in progress.
- Determining if the maneuver commander plans to provide survivability positions for AD assets and what the priority is for those positions.
- Ensuring that the platoon is able to receive AD early warning. When the AD warning condition changes to red, the warning of incoming enemy aircraft and their direction is transmitted over command or operations and intelligence networks. The platoon leader should ensure that the platoon is monitoring the appropriate networks.