

## **Appendix F**

### **Scout and TOW Platoons**

<p>Section 1. Scout Platoon Section 2. TOW Platoon</p>
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## Section 1. Scout Platoon.

**Mission.** The battalion scout platoon performs reconnaissance, provides limited security, and assists in controlling movement of the battalion. The platoon is not organized or equipped to conduct independent offensive, defensive, or retrograde operations. It operates as part of the battalion and should be assigned missions that capitalize on its reconnaissance capabilities. The scout platoon is one of the battalion commander's primary sources of combat intelligence before the battle and is his eyes and ears during the battle. Although the platoon has antitank (AT) capability, it cannot perform its scouting roles when employed as an AT force.

**Organization** The Scout Platoon is organized into a HQ Element and two sections. The HQ element consists of the platoon commander and platoon sergeant and their vehicles. Each section contains a section leader and two other vehicles.

Insert Organizational Diagram

**Employment Fundamentals.** There are six fundamentals requisite to the successful employment of the tank battalion scout platoon. The scout platoon should be employed with these fundamentals in mind:

- *Use maximum reconnaissance force forward.* Do not keep scouts in reserve. This does not mean scouts must be on-line and oriented forward; rather, all available scouts must be employed executing reconnaissance tasks.
- *Orient on the reconnaissance objective.* The platoon's scheme of maneuver is focused toward a specific objective or set of objectives based on the operations order and the battalion commander's intent.
- *Report all information rapidly and accurately.* Commanders base their decisions and plans on the battlefield information that scouts provide during reconnaissance. Information loses value over time. Scouts must report all information exactly as they

see it and as fast as possible. They must never assume, distort, or exaggerate; inaccurate information is dangerous.

- *Retain freedom to maneuver.* Scouts must be able to maneuver on the battlefield. If the enemy fixes them, scouts must free themselves; otherwise, they can no longer accomplish their mission. Scouts must continually maintain an awareness of tactical developments. They must employ the proper tactical movement and react appropriately to unexpected situations. When contact is made, the platoon commander must seek to develop the situation at the lowest possible level, retaining the initiative, the ability to continue the mission, and the ability to maneuver his other elements.
- *Gain and maintain enemy contact.* Scouts seek visual contact with the enemy on favorable terms. They employ sound tactical movement, target acquisition methods, and appropriate actions on contact to see the enemy first and thereby retain the initiative and control of the situation. Once scouts find the enemy, they maintain contact using all available means until their commander orders them to do otherwise or as required by their specific instructions.
- *Develop the situation rapidly.* Whether scouts run into an obstacle or the enemy, they must quickly determine what they are up against. If it is the enemy, the scouts determine the enemy's size, composition, and activity. They find the enemy flanks. They find any barriers or obstacles surrounding the enemy position and find out if any other enemy forces can support the position. If the scouts encounter an obstacle, they find and mark a bypass or, if appropriate, execute or assist in a breach. This all must be done quickly, with a minimum of guidance from higher. Time is the scout's most precious resource; he cannot waste it if he is to achieve mission success.

### **Capabilities and Limitations.**

a. *Capabilities.* In addition to its primary missions, the scout platoon can:

- Conduct liaison.
- Perform quartermaster duties.
- Provide traffic control.
- Conduct chemical detection and radiological survey and monitoring operations as part of a nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) defense.
- Conduct limited pioneer and demolition work.
- Participate in area security.

b. *Limitations.* Some limitations on the scout platoon are:

- The scout platoon is dependent on its parent unit for combat support (CS) and CSS augmentation.
- The HMMWV scout platoon can reconnoiter only two routes simultaneously (reconnoitering for trafficability only).

- The scout platoon reconnoiters a zone 3 to 5 kilometers wide. METT-T conditions may increase or decrease the size of the zone for either type of platoon.
- During screening operations, all scout platoons are limited in their ability to destroy or repel enemy reconnaissance units.
- The HMMWV scout platoon can man up to six OP's for short durations or up to three OP's for long durations.
- When properly organized, scouts can conduct effective reconnaissance and security patrols. The HMMWV scout platoon has a very limited dismounted capability. It must be properly task organized to conduct dismounted operations.
- The distance the scouts can operate away from the main body is restricted to the range of communications and the range of supporting indirect fire.
- The scout platoon has limited obstacle creation ability and carries a basic load of demolitions.
- The scout platoon has very limited obstacle breaching capability (limited to hasty point obstacles).

## **Section 2. TOW Platoon.**

**Mission.** The primary mission of the antitank TOW platoon is to provide counter-mechanized support, utilizing the TOW to engage and destroy enemy armored vehicles, particularly tanks. When not performing its primary mission, the antitank platoon may assume a secondary mission of engaging other point targets or providing limited security to the commander in the form of a screen or OP's.

**Organization Update** to reflect the “newest” TO/TE (with pictures)

Insert Organizational Diagram here.

**Methods of Employment.** The TOW platoon may be employed as an organic unit for a specific mission such as setting a screen or a blocking position but will typically be broken down into sections, which are then attached in direct or general support to individual tank or infantry companies. The long standoff of the TOW weapon system lends itself to covering likely avenues of approach for armored vehicles, freeing up tanks to conduct offensive missions.

## **Capabilities and Limitations.**

a. Some advantages of the TOW weapon systems are:

- The TOW weapons system can be manpacked to obtain an advantageous firing position not accessible while mounted, but only for short distances due to the heavy weight of the system.
- Engaging at its maximum effective range does not significantly decrease the TOW's accuracy.
- The TOW 2B has a fire down munition that can penetrate a vehicle's armor where it is thinnest, on the top.
- The TOW weapon system contains a thermal sight that provides enhanced capability at night and during limited visibility.
- Unlike kinetic energy antitank weapons (sabot), the TOW missile does not lose power in direct proportion to the engagement range.

**b. Some limitations of the TOW weapon systems are:**

- TOW weapons should be employed in squads (two launchers) as a minimum, so that the crews can provide mutual support.
- Cover and concealment are extremely important since the TOW is vulnerable to both direct and indirect fire.
- The TOW produces a large amount of backblast, which must be taken into consideration when planning firing positions. Clearing the backblast area of loose debris or watering the area down can help reduce the signature.
- The TOW has reduced range when firing over water obstacles.
- The TOW cannot fire on the move and the gunner must keep his sights on the target throughout the time of flight, 14-16 seconds to reach maximum range.

