Chapter 5

Other Tactical Operations

Section 1 Security Operations

5101. General

Security operations are designed to provide reaction time, maneuver space, and protection *for* the force as a whole. Characteristics include: aggressive reconnaissance to reduce unknowns, the ability to gain and maintain contact with the enemy, and the ability to provide early and accurate warning to the main body. The primary orientation of the security force is the protection of the main body as opposed to a terrain or enemy objective. Security operations include the forms screen, guard, cover, and area security.

At the tactical level security forces protect the command against surprise attack and observation by hostile air and ground forces. They maintain freedom of maneuver for the command by providing reaction time and maneuver space. Forces conducting security missions orient their movements on the force or facility they are assigned to secure.

Security forces may operate at varying distances from the main body and to any flank based on conditions of METT-T. They employ the minimum combat power necessary to cover extended frontages in order to provide the commander early warning. This allows the commander to retain the bulk of his combat power to be committed at the decisive place and time.

Security forces and the main body force interact through the exchange of information. Security forces report enemy activities to the main body commander and to other affected security forces. The main body commander ensures that the security force commander has access to all pertinent intelligence and combat information obtained by the main body to supplement security force's capabilities. Through the continuous exchange of information both the security force and main body commander have the time to choose a course of action suitable to the situation.

As in reconnaissance operations, aviation assets working in concert with ground security forces create a synergism that facilitates rapid mission execution. RSTA assets are focused on NAIs and TAIs to permit, limited security forces to concentrate on likely avenues of approach. and restrictive terrain

Successful operations depend on the proper application of the following fundamentals.

- *Provide Early Warning and Reaction Time.* First and foremost, the security force provides early warning by detecting the enemy force quickly and alerting the main body. Then, the security force provides reaction time by taking actions within its capability and mission constraints to delay the enemy's advance.

- *Orient on the Force to Secure.* The security force orients all its actions to protect and provide early warning to the force that it is to secure. It aggressively seeks out the enemy and occupies terrain only to enhance its ability to protect the main body.

- *Perform Continuous Reconnaissance.* The security force conducts its operations by aggressively seeking out the enemy and reconnoitering key terrain. Security forces continuously employ a combination of observation posts (OPs), mounted/dismounted patrols, sensors, and defensive positions.

- *Maintain Enemy Contact.* The security force commander arrays his available assets to ensure continuous contact with the enemy. At the same time, the security force must not become decisively engaged and fixed in place. It must retain its flexibility to stay in front of the enemy and continue to report. Contact with the enemy is maintained both physically and with technical assets.

Security Missions.

The forms of security are screen, guard, and cover. Each provides an increased measure of security and reaction time to the force. A screen allocates minimal combat power to cover an extended flank, yet only provides early warning. A guard contains sufficient combat power to defeat or contain lead elements of an enemy force. A covering force allocates considerable combat power to engage an enemy force at a considerable distance from the main force, providing the maximum early warning and reaction time. However, the more combat power allocated to the security force the less that will be available for the main effort.

5102. Covering Force.

A covering force is: 1. A force operating apart from the main force for the purpose of intercepting, engaging, delaying, disorganizing, and deceiving the enemy before he can attack the force covered. 2. Any body or detachment of troops that provides security for a larger force by observation, reconnaissance, attack, or defense, or by any combination of these methods. (JP 1-02) Typically, a covering force operates forward of the main force; however, it may operate to the rear or either flank. Although a covering force aggressively develops the situation independent of the main force, its fundamental orientation remains on preventing the surprise and untimely engagement of the main force. A covering force differs from a screening or guarding force in that it is normally a self-sufficient combined arms force equipped with enough combat power to develop the situation at a considerable distance away from the main force. While the covering force provides the most security to the main force, it generally requires a considerable amount of dedicated logistical support. A commander will assign a covering force mission whenever the enemy possesses a strong mobile force, capable of rapid and decisive action. Additionally, the commander must have sufficient assets to resource both the covering force and the main force.

When the commander lacks the ability to resource both a covering force and the main force, he may opt to assign a less robust security mission. The frontage of the covering force areas will normally be the same size as the zone or sector of the main force it is protecting. Its depth will be METT-T dependent. When the commander perceives a

significant threat to the rear of his formation, and resources permit, he may assign a rear cover mission. A rear covering force normally protects a force moving away form the enemy. The covering force deploys behind the forward maneuver units of the main force, accepts battle hand over and passes the main force through it, and then defends or delays. Alternatively, the covering force may conduct a relief in place as part of a deception plan or to take advantage of the best defensive terrain. The covering force establishes passage points and assists the rearward passage of the main force, as necessary. From that point on, the mission is conducted the same as any other defensive covering force operation. As the main force moves, the covering force displaces to subsequent phase lines in depth.

Types of Cover:

Offensive Cover. During offensive operations, a covering force may operate to the front or flanks of the main body. An offensive covering force may accomplish the following:

- Perform reconnaissance along the main body's axis of advance.
- Deny the enemy information about the size, strength, composition and objective of the main body.
- Destroy or repel enemy reconnaissance and security zone forces.
- Penetrate enemy defense, develop the situation to determine enemy strengths, weaknesses and dispositions.
- Defeat, repel, or fix enemy forces as directed by the higher commander.
- Exploit opportunities initial main body force are committed.

The covering force should clear the zone of enemy security and small combat elements and penetrate the leading elements of the enemy's defensive positions. When it can advance no further, it prepares for the main body to conduct a forward passage of lines. It continues to perform close reconnaissance of enemy positions to locate gaps or vulnerable flanks. It reports enemy dispositions immediately to the commander of the main force so that he can exploit enemy weakness. The covering force may guide the entire main force or some of it's elements as they attack through or around the covering force. If the covering force has done its job well, the commander of the main force will be able to attack the enemy's weak point at the time of his choosing with previously uncommitted forces.

Defensive cover Operations. A defensive covering force operates to the front, flanks, or rear of a main force deploying to defend. The primary mission of a defensive covering force is to strip away enemy reconnaissance, force the enemy to reveal his main effort, disrupt his attack, and deny him of the initiative.

Defensive covering forces:

- Maintain continuous surveillance of high-speed avenues of approach.
- Destroy or repel enemy reconnaissance and security forces.
- Determine the size, strength, composition, and direction of the enemy's main effort.
- Defeat the lead enemy echelons within its capability.

- Force the enemy to repeatedly deploy to fight through the covering force and commit the reserve or follow-on forces to sustain momentum.
- Create ambiguity as to location and disposition of the main force.

The covering force screens, defends, delays, and counterattacks to execute a defensive cover. If the covering force area is not yet occupied, the covering force may have to reconnoiter and clear the area or route. As in offensive operations, aerial reconnaissance is critical to extend the battlespace. It can screen less threatened sectors and rapidly reinforce fires when other elements of the covering force are heavily engaged. During defensive operations the commander of the main force designates the forward and rear boundaries of the security force with phase lines. The lateral boundaries of the security area are normally extensions of he main body boundaries. The rear boundary of the covering force area is the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA).

5103. Guard Force.

A guard force is tasked to protect the main force by preventing the enemy from being able to engage main forces with direct fire weapons. The guard force accomplishes its task by reconnoitering, attacking, defending, and delaying enemy forces in order to provide time for the main force to counter enemy actions. A guard force is normally task-organized from the elements comprising the main force; therefore, it operates within supporting range of the main body.

A guard differs from a screening force in that it contains greater combat power and is employed to engage enemy forces within its capability as opposed to a screen that only provides early warning and destroys enemy reconnaissance.

The commander of the main force assigns a guard mission to subordinate units when there are little or no other security forces between the main force and probable enemy forces and he needs both protection and early warning. He may use a guard to the front of his main forces (advance guard), to the rear (rear guard) especially during retrograde operations or to the flank (flank guard) when there is a threat of significant enemy contact. Lastly, a screening mission may transition to a guard mission upon the approach of a sizable enemy force.

The commander may designate a tank unit as a guard force for protection from enemy ground observation, direct fire, and surprise attack for a given period of time. A guard force allows the commander to extend the defense in time and space to prevent interruption of the organization of the main battle area. Observation of the enemy and reporting of information by the guard force is an inherent task of the guard force, but secondary to its primary function of protecting the main force.

Types of Guard. There are three types of guard: the advance guard, flank guard, and rear guard.

- *Advance Guard.* The advance guard is the lead element of an advancing formation or column. The mission of the advance guard is to clear the axis or zone of enemy elements and allow the unimpeded movement of the main force. In some cases, an advance guard may operate behind the security force of a higher echelon. In these situations, the higher echelon security force will develop the situation initially. The advance guard may then reinforce the higher echelon security force or expand the area of contact with the enemy force.

- *Flank Guard.* As in the screen, the commander designates the general trace of the flank guard positions. The commander of the flank guard considers the axis taken by the main force, the enemy's capabilities, and avenues of approach in order to determine his initial dispositions. Sectors should be sufficiently deep to provide early warning and reaction time, yet remain within supporting range of the main force.

The flank guard has the responsibility to clear the area between the main force and the flank guard's positions. Typically, the flank guard will operate on a smaller frontage than a screen.

Should an enemy attack appear imminent from the flank, the flank guard will normally occupy preplanned or hasty defensive positions. Should the enemy prove too strong for the flank guard, it will normally delay in sector. Flank guard operations can be employed while the main force is stationary or moving.

Stationary Flank Guard. A flank guard for a stationary force reconnoiters out to its initial security positions. This allows the flank guard to clear the zone and become familiar with the terrain that may subsequently be defended. Upon reaching its initial positions, the flank guard establishes a defense. The commander plans the defense or delay in depth from the initial positions
The following critical tasks apply during this mission.

- Maintain continuous surveillance of enemy avenues of approach.
- Maintain contact with the main body.
- Provide early warning and defeat, repel, or fix enemy ground forces, within capabilities, before they can engage the main body with direct fire.

Moving Flank Guard. The techniques for movement and establishing the flank guard force are similar to techniques used during flank screening operations. Whichever technique is used, the flank guard must remain in contact with the leading elements of the main body.

Methods of Flank Guard Movement. As in any guard mission, the greater the level of security, the slower the guard's movement. Based on the speed of the main body, the likelihood of the enemy attack, and the distance to the objective, the guard force adopts one or a combination of the following three movement techniques:

Successive bounds. This is used when the enemy action against the flank is light and the movement of the main force is expected to include frequent short halts.

Alternate bounds. Used when strong enemy action is anticipated against the flank, this technique requires slow movement by the main force. Alternate bounds are the most secure, yet the slowest technique.

Continuous movement. This is used when enemy activity on the flank is unlikely and the main force is moving with all possible speed. Traveling in column with an on-order defensive mission is the quickest but least secure technique.

- *Rear Guard.* The rear guard protects the exposed rear of the main force during offensive operations or retrograde operations. Rear guards are normally established during a withdrawal, retirement, or when conducting deep maneuver forward of the FLOT when there is significant enemy threat to the rear of the main force.

Establishing a rear guard during a retrograde operation may be done in two ways. The rear guard may relieve other units in place along the FLOT as they move to the rear. Alternatively, the rear guard may establish a position in depth behind the main force and pass those forces through.

The rear guard employs both sector and battle positions while executing its mission. The commander of the main force prescribes the distance that the rear guard must maintain between itself and the main force. The rear guard for a moving force displaces to successive battle positions in-depth as the main force moves. The nature of enemy contact determines the method of displacement.

5104. Screen Force.

A screening force primarily provides early warning. It observes, identifies, and reports information. It generally fights only in self-defense, but does engage enemy reconnaissance elements within its capabilities. Commanders generally establish screens on an extended flank, to the rear, or to the front of a stationary force. A screen is often executed as a series of OPs with patrolling between them.

The GCE commander may establish a screening force utilizing tank units to gain and maintain contact with the enemy, to observe enemy activity, to identify the enemy main effort, and to report information. In most situations, the minimum-security force normally organized by the GCE is a screening force. Normally, the screening force only fights in self-defense, but may be tasked to:

- Repel enemy reconnaissance units as part of the GCEs counter-reconnaissance effort.
- Prevent enemy artillery form acquiring terrain that enables front-line unit to be engaged.
- Provide early warning.
- Attack the enemy with supporting arms.

A screen is not conducted forward of a moving force. The security element forward of a moving force must conduct either a guard or cover. A screen is essentially an outpost line, consisting of OPs, which may reposition laterally along the outpost line (a designated phase line). However, these units conduct a form of reconnaissance when advancing a screen line.

The senior commander determines the general location at which he wants the screening force to operate. Screens for a moving force must remain physically tied into the main force. The senior commander may or may not delineate a rear boundary for the screening force. If it is designated, it should be coordinated as a phase line outside the main force's boundaries.

The screening force commander conducts a detailed analysis of the terrain along the general trace line and establishes his initial screen line. The initial screen line depicts where the screening force will initially be located. It should be on or very near the general trace line, but more importantly it is on terrain that allows good observation. The initial screen line must be within supporting range of the main force, yet far enough away to provide sufficient early warning. Normally, there is little or no depth along the screen, except along high-speed avenues of approach. This depth allows commanders to maintain continuous contact while OPs along the initial screen line are displacing.

The screening force commander controls movement in sector by designating subsequent screen lines. Subsequent screen lines are essentially phase lines. They require reporting when crossing or occupying. Displacement to a subsequent screen line is event driven. The approach of an enemy force, relief of a friendly unit, or movement of the protected force dictate screen movements. Typically, the commander of the main force does not place a time requirement on the duration of the screen. Doing so may force the screening force to accept decisive engagement for which the screening force is not organized.

Types of Screens. A screening force provides security for a main force that is either stationary or moving. The terms "stationary" and "moving" describe the actions of the protected force, not the screening force.

Stationary Screen. A security force conducts a screen to the front, flank and rear of a stationary force in a similar manner. The tasks associated with a stationary screen normally consist of movement to the initial screen line, establishment of the screen, and displacement to subsequent screen lines. Additionally, the screening force commander coordinates battle handover line (BHL) and passage of lines with the main force commander.

Movement to initial screen line. Typically, the screening force commander will reconnoiter forward to the initial screen line. While this technique provides information of tactical value on the enemy and terrain in the sector, it may also be very time consuming. Using air reconnaissance forward of the ground units will increase the speed and security of the movement. If time is critical, the screening force may conduct a

tactical road march or approach march to its initial screen line. While it is faster, this technique does not assess the enemy or terrain situation between the screening force and the main force.

Establishment of the screen. OPs are established with overlapping fields of observation; and if possible, a small force retained as reserve. Normally, OPs are established in depth on high-speed avenues of approach. Routes between the initial and subsequent screen lines should be planned to facilitate rapid occupation of the subsequent screen line. The element held in reserve is deployed in depth and positioned to react to contingencies that develop during the conduct of the screen.

Displacement to subsequent screen lines. As discussed above displacement to subsequent screen lines is normally event driven. The FEBA is the rear boundary for a forward screen. A phase line is designated as the BHL as the rearward boundary for a flank or rear screen. Battle handover and passage of lines are discussed later in Chapter 5, *Other Tactical Operations.*

Moving Screen. A screen is maintained along the flanks and/or the rear of the main force. Responsibilities for a moving flank screen begin at the front of the lead combat element in the main force and end at the rear of the protected force. The movement of the screen is keyed to the movement of the main force. There are three techniques of performing this type of screen:

Screening force crosses the line of departure (LD) separate from the main force. The screening force may cross the LD separate from the main force, conduct a tactical road march, approach march, or tactical movement parallel to the main force, and drop off elements along the screen line. This technique is appropriate when the main force is moving quickly or the LD is uncontested. This is the fastest but least secure technique.

Screening force's lead element reconnoiters the zone. The screening force may cross the LD separate from main force with lead elements conducting a form of reconnaissance. Follow-on elements occupy screen line positions. This technique is appropriate when the main force is moving slow or the LD is uncontested. This technique is slower than the previous technique, but provides better security.

Screening force crosses LD with the main force. The screen force may cross the LD with the main force and reconnoiter out to the screen line. This technique is appropriate when the main force is moving slowly, the LD is also the line of contact (LC), or the enemy situation is vague. This technique provides security for the screen force and the main force, but is the most time consuming.

A moving screen may be placed to the rear of the main force conducting an attack or a retrograde operation. In this situation the screen line displaces to subsequent screen line based on movements of the main body or enemy force.

Movement along the screen line is determined by the speed of the main force, the distance to the objective, and the enemy situation. There are four basic methods of controlling movement along the screen line.

- Alternate bound by individual OPs from rear to front.
- Alternate bound by subordinate units from rear to front.
- Successive bound by units along the screen line.
- Continuous march along the route of advance.

Screening Operations during Limited Visibility. Limited visibility caused by weather conditions often affects both the screening force's ground and air observation capabilities. While technical intelligence assets can be employed to offset limited visibility the screening force should adjust its techniques and procedures. For example, OPs should be adjusted; night and thermal observation devices employed; electronic surveillance devices, trip flares, and OPs placed along dismounted avenues of approach. Depth in the screen can facilitate acquisition of enemy forces that may elude forward elements. Patrols are closely coordinated to prevent misidentification and engagement by friendly elements. Rigorous sound and light discipline at night prevents compromise and potential bypass of OPs by enemy reconnaissance forces. Additional OPs can be established as listening posts (LP) to take advantage of the extended distance sound travels at night. Indirect illumination is planned and used as necessary.

Integration of Intelligence Systems. In addition to aviation, technical assets can greatly expand the area covered by screening forces. Remote sensors, UAVs, and downlinks from theater and national assets can all greatly expand the area covered by a screening force, thereby providing the main force and the screening force commander time to adjust to situations if necessary.

Section 2. Retrograde Operations

5201. General.

Retrograde operations are organized movements to the rear or away from the enemy. The enemy may force these operations or a commander may execute them voluntarily. Retrograde operations are transitional operations. They are not considered in isolation. They are conducted before or after either defensive or offensive operations. They are part of a larger scheme of maneuver to regain the initiative and defeat the enemy. Commanders execute retrogrades to:

- Wear down the enemy, trading space for time in situations that do not favor a defense.
- Disengage from combat.
- Avoid combat under undesirable conditions such as continuing an operation that no longer promises success.
- Draw the enemy into an unfavorable situation.
- Place forces in a more favorable position.

- Allow the use of a portion or all of the force elsewhere.
- To conform to the movement of other forces.
- Upon achieving the purpose of the ongoing operation.

The forms of retrograde include delay, withdrawal, and retirement operations.

5202. Delay.

An operation in which a force under pressure trades space for time by slowing down the enemy's momentum and inflicting maximum damage on the enemy without, in principle, becoming decisively engaged. In the delay, the destruction of the enemy force is secondary to slowing his advance to gain time. Mechanized units are ideally suited for delay operations because of their long-range weapons and mobility.

Delays are conducted:
- When the force's strength is insufficient to defend or attack
- To reduce the enemy's offensive capability by inflicting casualties
- To gain time by forcing the enemy to deploy
- To determine the strength and location of the enemy's main effort
- When the enemy intent is not clear and the commander desires intelligence
- To protect and provide early warning for the main battle area forces
- To allow time to reestablish the defense.

The delay succeeds by forcing the enemy to repeatedly concentrate its forces to fight through delay positions. Delaying forces will displace once the enemy concentrates sufficient resources to decisively engage and defeat friendly forces.
Commanders generally decentralize delay execution to battalion and lower levels. The commander establishes the accepted risk through his commander's intent statement and the establishment of disengagement criteria. He monitors subordinate unit status, and shifts resources to met the enemy's main attack. The commander seizes those fleeting opportunities to decisively counterattack the enemy with his reserve at every opportunity. Typically, the reserve will be committed to assist a unit's disengagement and regain the ability to maneuver or to prevent the enemy from exploiting advantages.

Techniques of Delay Operations. There are two main techniques of delay operations. These are delay from alternate positions and delay from successive positions. In the execution of both techniques, it is crucial that the delay force maintains contact with the enemy between delay positions.

Alternate Positions. Delay from alternate positions involves two or more units in a single sector, occupying delaying positions in depth. As the first unit engages the enemy, the second occupies the next position in depth and prepares to assume responsibility for the operation. The first force disengages and passes around the second. It then prepares to reengage the enemy from a position in greater depth, while the second force takes up the fight.

Delay from alternate positions is useful on particularly dangerous avenues of approach. This method offers greater security than delay from successive positions. However, it requires more forces and continuous maneuver coordination. Additionally, there is the risk of losing contact with the enemy between delay positions.

Successive Positions. Delaying from successive positions occurs when the sector is so wide that available forces cannot occupy more than a single tier of positions. Delaying units are positioned forward in a single echelon. Maneuver units delay continuously on and between positions throughout their sectors. As a result this technique is simpler to coordinate than the delay from alternate positions.

Delaying from successive positions is easier to penetrate than a delay from alternate positions because the force has less depth and less time to occupy subsequent positions. To facilitate the rapid occupation of positions, units will normally recon subsequent positions before occupation and post guides on one or two subsequent positions.

In restrictive terrain, where infantry conducts the primary action, successive positions may be close together). In more open terrain, delay positions are often further apart. In the selection of positions, commanders consider the location of natural and artificial obstacles, particularly when the enemy possesses sufficient armored combat systems.

Organization of Forces. As in defensive operations, commanders assign their delaying force a sector with flank and rear boundaries; the commander selects delay positions on key terrain astride likely enemy avenues of approach. Delay positions are normally battle positions that commanders plan throughout the depth of the delay sector. Phase lines are designated along identifiable terrain features to control the displacement of friendly forces. Selected phase lines may be designated as delay lines. Delay lines require the delaying force prevent the enemy from crossing the line until a specified time or the occurrence of an event. Time and resources will normally constrain units to preparing only the initial and a few subsequent positions.

Coordination is critical during a delay. To ensure coordination, commanders designate contact points at the boundaries along delay lines to ensure units coordinate each series of delay positions.

In the delay, R&S assets are focused on named and target areas of interest. It is essential that the delaying commander identify the enemy's advance early enough to adjust his scheme of maneuver and concentrate sufficient combat power to effectively delay the enemy.

Commanders normally retain a reserve to contain enemy penetrations between delay positions, reinforce fires into an engagement area, or help a unit disengaging from the enemy. The size of the reserve depends on the situation and forces available.

Execution of the Delay. A mechanized force will normally be assigned sectors in which to delay and the initial delay positions. Phase lines may be employed to control

the timing of the delay. The tank should be employed as the primary weapon to engage enemy tanks. Their high rate of fire, armor protection against enemy artillery, and mobility make tanks best suited for this mission. Tanks may also be retained in a reserve to extricate forces, which have been decisively engaged, or to conduct counterattacks.

Rear Operations. Rear operations in a delay are similar to rear operations in the defense. However, the echeloning of combat service support organizations required to maintain continuous support during the delay, coupled with the additional dispersion inherent to the delay, complicates the conduct of these operations. Critical to the success of the delay is the ability of the rear to provide Class III and V to the force.

Concluding the Delay. A delay operation terminates when one of the following three conditions exist:

The advancing enemy force reaches a culmination point. In this case the delaying force has three choices. They may maintain contact in current positions, they may withdraw, or the delaying force may transition to the offense.

The delaying force passes through another force. Typically, the delaying force will conduct a rearward passage of lines at the battle handover line (BHL) and move into assembly areas. That passage of lines may be under enemy pressure. Smooth transfer of control requires the commander involved coordinate passage points, establish recognition signals, work out supporting fires, and agree on routes through the defended position. As in the defense, commanders locate the battle handover line in front of the forward edge of the battle area. It is preferable to pass delaying units to the rear in sectors not under direct attack.
The delaying force reaches defensible terrain and transitions to the defense.

5203. Withdrawal.

A planned operation in which a force in contact disengages from an enemy force. A withdrawal is a type of retrograde where a force in contact plans to disengage from the enemy and move in a direction away from the enemy. The relative mobility of the tank battalion make it ideally suited to perform the rear guard duties for a withdrawing MAGTF. Withdraws may be executed at any time and during any type of operation. Units undertake a withdrawal for the following reasons:

- If the unit achieves its objective and there is no further requirement to maintain contact.
- To avoid baffle under unfavorable tactical conditions, for example, if a force cannot achieve the object of its operations and defeat threatens the force.
- To draw the enemy into an unfavorable position.
- To extend the enemy's lines of communication.
- To conform to the movements of adjacent friendly forces.
- As an economy of force measure to allow the use of the force or parts of the force elsewhere.

- As a prelude to a retirement operation.
- For logistical reasons.

Withdrawals are inherently dangerous, since they involve moving units to the rear away from what is usually a stronger enemy force. An aggressive enemy will attempt to prevent or delay a unit's withdrawal. In all withdrawals, the commander should attempt to conceal from the enemy his intention to withdraw. Whatever the case, a withdrawal always begins under the threat of enemy interference. Since the force is the most vulnerable if the enemy attacks, commander's plan for a withdrawal under pressure. Commanders then develop contingencies for a withdrawal without pressure. In both cases, the commander's primary concerns will be to:

- Break contact with the enemy.
- Displace the main body rapidly, free of enemy interference.
- Safeguard the withdrawal routes.
- Retain sufficient combat, combat support, and combat service support capabilities throughout the operation.

Factors Impacting the Conduct of a Withdrawal. A unit will conduct one of four types of withdrawal operations. Each type requires a slightly different blending of withdrawal fundamentals. There are four factors that establish the type of withdrawal taking place and impact on how a unit conducts a withdrawal.

Withdrawal Under Enemy Pressure. A withdrawal under enemy pressure depends on maneuver and firepower to break contact as the enemy attacks the withdrawing unit. The goal is to preserve the unit and prevent the enemy from forcing the withdrawal into a disorganized retreat. The planning and techniques for a withdrawal under enemy pressure are very similar to the techniques for a delay. The difference is that, in a delay, to maintain contact with the enemy and, in a withdrawal under pressure, you conduct fire and movement to disengage from the enemy. The withdrawal begins with the withdrawing unit (not the security force) engaging the enemy along all avenues of approach. The withdrawing unit disengages, conducts a rearward passage thorough the security force, assembles, and moves to the next position. The security force assumes the fight from the forward elements. This includes delaying the enemy advance while bulk of the withdrawing unit conducts a movement to the rear. On order or when predetermined criteria are met, the security force disengages itself and moves to the rear as a rearguard. The rearguard may be required to maintain contact with the enemy throughout the operation.

Withdrawal Not Under Enemy Pressure. If the unit is not under actual attack, the withdrawal is not under pressure. A withdrawal not under pressure depends on deception and speed of execution. The enemy must not be aware that the withdrawal is taking place. Deception and OPSEC are essential to the success of the operation. Several things can be done to deceive the enemy; leave a detachment left in contact (DLIC) to make the enemy believe you are still in position, or use limited visibility to cover the withdrawal. In an assisted withdrawal, a regiment would provide the security force for the battalion.

If the battalion must form its own DLIC, it is normally organized from elements of each company in contact with the enemy. The DLIC would normally be commanded by the battalion executive officer or operations officer. The company DLICs would normally be commanded by the company executive officers. Another option is for the battalion commander to leave a single company as the DLIC. If enemy contact is just in one company's sector, this approach is preferred. The DLIC should be able to engage the enemy on all avenues of approach with both direct and indirect fire. The main body and combat support elements displace using stealth along designated routes to a new assembly area. Reserve forces may be positioned along the withdrawal routes and be given on-order missions to defend, delay, or counterattack during the withdrawal.

Assisted Withdrawal. In an assisted withdrawal, the assisting force may provide:

- The security force through which the withdrawing force will pass.
- Reconnaissance of withdrawal routes.
- Forces to secure choke points or key terrain along withdrawal routes.
- Elements to assist in movement control such as the establishment of traffic control points.
- Required combat, combat support and combat service support. This can involve conducting a counterattack to assist the withdrawing unit disengage from the enemy.

Unassisted Withdrawal. In an unassisted withdrawal, the withdrawing unit must do everything by itself. It must establish its own security force, recon and secure routes to the rear, and disengage from the enemy.

A withdrawal normally occurs in three overlapping phases. The preparatory phase occurs when all nonessential personnel including combat trains are relocated to the rear. Next the disengagement phase has units begin sequenced movement to the rear. When contact is broken, a tactical march is conducted to an assembly area. During the security phase a detachment left in contact assists disengagement of other element, it assumes responsibility for the battalion sector, deceives the enemy, and protects the movement of disengaging elements with maneuver and fires. This phase is completed when the detachment left in contact breaks contact with the enemy and completes its movement to the rear.

Organization of Forces. Units avoid changing their task organization, unless they have sufficient planning time. However, circumstances may dictate rapid task organization changes immediately before the withdrawal. A commander typically organizes his force into security forces, main body, and a reserve.

Security Forces. The typical threat to a withdrawing force is a pursuing enemy. The rear guard normally contains the preponderance of force devoted to the security mission. When the enemy can infiltrate or insert forces ahead of the withdrawing force, the commander may also establish an advance guard to clear the route or sector. He designates flank guard responsibilities. If warranted, the commander may elect to directly control any part of the security force.

If the security force cannot prevent the enemy from closing on the main body, it must either be reinforced by the reserve, or the overall commander must commit some or all of the main body to restore the situation. In this event, the withdrawal resumes at the earliest possible time.

The greater the stand-off advantage that the security force has, the easier it will be for the security force to successfully cover the main body's withdrawal. The security force maintains contact with the enemy until ordered to disengage or until another force takes over this task.

When a security zone exists between the two main opposing forces, the existing security forces can transition on order to a rear guard. It then conducts delay operations until ordered to disengage and break contact with the enemy.

Sometimes the withdrawing force is in close contact with an enemy and a security zone does not exist. Withdrawals under these conditions require different techniques by security forces.

A technique often used in these situations is the detachment left in contact. This provides the means to sequentially break contact with the enemy. Frontline units leave detachments in contact to secure their movement to the rear. There are two ways of providing the detachment left in contact. These are:

- Each major subordinate element of the withdrawing force leaves a sub element in place, for example, for a regimental- sized task force withdrawal; each battalion-sized task force might leave a company team in contact.
- One major subordinate command of the withdrawing force stays behind, for example, for a brigade withdrawal, one battalion task force may assume the mission of a detachment left in contact. It expands to cover the sector.

These detachments left in contact attempt to deceive the enemy by giving the impression that the original defending unit continues to hold the position in strength. The detachments left in contact simulate, as nearly as possible, continued presence of the main body until it is too late for the enemy to react. They may do this by sustaining operations and other activities such as electronic transmissions, or by attacking. This force must have specific instructions about what to do when the enemy attacks, and when and under what circumstances to withdraw. If required, these detachments receive additional recovery, evacuation, and transportation assets for use after disengagement to speed up their rearward movement.

Typically, subordinate elements left in contact will fall under a senior DLIC commander. The number of intermediate headquarters established depends on METT-T.

Often when a detachment is left in contact, additional security forces set up behind the existing main defensive positions to assist the withdrawal process. These additional

forces can be part of the withdrawing unit or an assisting unit may provide them. The detachment left in contact can then delay back on these additional security forces and join them. Alternatively the detachment delays back to the additional security force, conducts battle hand-over, and conducts a rearward passage of lines. In either case, the security force then becomes the rear guard.

Main Body Forces. On order, the main body moves rapidly on multiple routes to reconnoitered positions (having previously dispatched quartering parties). It may occupy a series of intermediate positions before completing the withdrawal. Usually combat service support and combat support units (with their convoy escorts) precede combat units in the withdrawal movement formation. If the rear guard and/or covering force experiences too much difficulty in delaying the enemy, the commander may need to commit additional forces from the main body to assist their delay effort. The main body itself delays or defends if the security force fails to slow the enemy.

If the enemy blocks movement to the rear, the commander shifts to alternate routes to bypass the interdicted area. Alternatively, he attacks through the enemy.

Reserve. Commanders will generally find a reserve difficult to resource because of the need to commit forces to security tasks. When the complete formation withdraws under pressure, the task of the reserve may be to take limited offensive action, such as spoiling attacks, to disorganize, disrupt, and delay the enemy. It can counter penetrations between delay positions, reinforce threatened areas, and protect withdrawal routes. Reserves may also extricate encircled or heavily engaged forces.

5204. Retirement.

A retirement is a retrograde operation in which a force, out of contact with the enemy, moves away from the enemy (usually to the rear). Retiring units organize for combat, but do not anticipate interference by enemy ground forces. Typically, another unit's security forces cover the movement of one formation as it conducts a retirement. Mobile enemy forces, unconventional forces, air strikes, air assaults, or long-range fires may attempt to interdict the retiring unit. Commanders plan for such enemy actions.

A unit conducts a retirement to:

- Extend the distance from the enemy.
- Reduce the support distance from other friendly forces.
- Secure more favorable terrain.
- Conform to the dispositions of the larger command
- Allow its employment in another area.

When a withdrawal from action precedes a retirement, the actual retirement begins upon completion of the
organization of march formations. (While a force withdrawing without enemy pressure can also use march columns, the difference is the probability of enemy interference.)

Any retirement terrain objective should support the unit's new mission and the purpose of the retirement. A subordinate factor in the selection of a retirement terrain objective, and the routes the force takes to that objective, is its capability to support defensive actions should combat occur during the retirement.

The initial action is to move logistical and administrative units and supplies to the rear. At the designated time, troops execute a withdrawal from action, move into assembly areas (if necessary), and form into march formation. Then the force is prepared to initiate the retirement. During the initial phase the force retires in multiple small columns. As the distance from the enemy increases, smaller columns consolidate into larger ones. Road nets and the potential for hostile interference influence the time and manner in which this occurs.

Organization of Forces. In a retirement, leaders will normally designate security elements and the main body. The formation and number of columns employed during a retirement depend upon the number of available routes and potential enemy interference. Commanders typically will want to simultaneously move major forces to the rear. However, a limited road net or flank threat may require echelonment of the movement in terms of time and ground locations.

The threat of enemy forces, the prevention of surprise, and march route clearance usually requires the column to have an advance guard, augmented with engineers.

The commander designates flank security responsibilities to guard against potential enemy interference against the retiring force and a surprise flanking attack against the retirement's extended columns. Flank guard responsibilities may be designated to subordinate march units. Flank guards must be mobile. Light armor reconnaissance, mechanized infantry, armor, artillery, and engineer forces usually form part of the flank and rear guards.

Terrain and the enemy threat will dictate if the retiring force establishes a single rear guard or if each column forms a separate rear guard. The rear guard is normally the principal security element of each retiring column. It protects the column from surprise, harassment and attack by any pursuing enemy force. Its size and composition depend upon the strength and imminence of the enemy threat. The rear guard generally remains in march columns unless there is a potential for enemy interference. Should the enemy establish contact, the rear guard conducts a delay.

The main body organizes in a manner inverse to that for an approach march. The movement of combat service support and combat support units should precede the movement of combat forces. When necessary, elements of the main body can reinforce the rear guard or any other security element. Fire support and attack helicopter elements of the main body are usually the first elements tasked for this mission; this is because they can most rapidly respond. If the retiring formation can resource a reserve, it performs the same functions as discussed in the withdrawal.

Section 3. Reconnaissance Operations

Reconnaissance is continuous and intrinsic to all Marine operations. Reconnaissance is a directed effort to collect information about the enemy and the friendly commander's area of operations. Reconnaissance information includes information relating to the activities and resources of an enemy, or about the meteorological, hydrographic, or geographic characteristics of the particular area of operation. Reconnaissance is a focused collection effort, accomplished by observation or mechanical detection method. The tank battalion can utilize its Scout and TOW platoons to conduct reconnaissance operations. For a more detailed discussion on the capabilities of the Scout and TOW platoons refer to Annex F.

Commanders draw conclusions concerning the enemy and enemy actions from accurate and timely information. It is from these conclusions that commander's make their plans and commit their marines into battle. And it is through reconnaissance that they obtain this information.

Reconnaissance prior to unit actions, such as movements and occupation of assembly areas, is critical to protecting a commander's forces. Doing so preserves their combat power for decisive battle and engagements. Reconnaissance identifies terrain, enemy and friendly obstacles to movement and the commander's plan. This allows commanders to maneuver the bulk of his forces freely and rapidly. It also allows commanders to keep forces free from contact as long as possible and to concentrate them for the decisive engagement.

Finally, commanders modify their plan by shifting resources and priorities or continue with the plan based upon their overall view of the battlefield. Reconnaissance information contributes significantly to a commander's view of the battlefield and an understanding of his situation.

Types of Reconnaissance Assets. Reconnaissance can be passive or active and is done with a combination of ground, air, and technical assets. Active methods include mounted and dismounted ground reconnaissance, aerial platforms, or reconnaissance by fire. Passive methods include actions such as map and photographic reconnaissance and surveillance (the systematic observation of a particular location, place, or thing by human or technical means

Ground reconnaissance elements provide vital information to commanders. Ground reconnaissance forces gain and maintain contact with the enemy. They work through gaps and around the flanks and rear of the enemy, ascertaining the strength, movement, composition, and disposition of the enemy's main force, as well as the location of enemy reinforcements. Ground reconnaissance units can assist commanders fit forces into the fight and guide them if required. Ground reconnaissance elements are generally limited in the depth to which they can conduct reconnaissance. However, they can operate under weather conditions that preclude air reconnaissance.

Air reconnaissance complements and extends the zone covered by ground reconnaissance. Successful aerial reconnaissance can obtain information that is useful in giving effective direction to ground reconnaissance units. Under favorable conditions, aviation can furnish early information concerning the enemy's general disposition and movements to a considerable depth. Ground reconnaissance may conduct the detailed recon of critical areas, in all weather. Acting in concert, air and ground reconnaissance creates a synergism that facilitates rapid mission execution.

Technical reconnaissance is accomplished largely by systems. It includes electronic-gathering methods available at various echelons. Theater and national technical reconnaissance systems can downlink to the higher level tactical commanders (Division, Wing or above), thus providing them near-real-time battlefield information. Technical means also include unmanned aerial vehicles and remotely emplaced sensors.

Key to optimizing reconnaissance is cueing. Cueing involves the use of one or more means of reconnaissance (air, ground, or technical) providing information that directs collection by another means. For example, Guardrail common sensor may intercept transmissions of a suspected enemy air defense site. This, in turn, may cue an unmanned aerial vehicle launch to confirm or deny this location. In this example, if detailed or firsthand reconnaissance is required, the commander may choose to dispatch a ground reconnaissance element.

Forms of Reconnaissance. There are five forms of reconnaissance operations: route, zone, area, force-oriented, and reconnaissance in force.

- *Route Reconnaissance.* A route reconnaissance is a reconnaissance effort along a specific line of communications, such as a road, railway, or waterway. It provides new or updated information on route conditions and activities along a specific route.

- *Zone Reconnaissance.* A zone reconnaissance is a directed effort to obtain detailed information within a zone defined by boundaries. A zone reconnaissance provides data concerning all routes, obstacles (to include chemical or radiological contamination), terrain, and enemy forces within the zone of action.

- *Area Reconnaissance.* An area reconnaissance provides detailed information concerning the terrain or enemy activity within a prescribed area, such as a town, ridgeline, woods, or other feature critical to operations. Areas are smaller than zones. (A zone reconnaissance may include several area reconnaissances). At its most basic level, an area reconnaissance could be made of a single point, such as a bridge or an installation.

- *Force Oriented Reconnaissance.* Force-oriented reconnaissance differs significantly from the previous forms of reconnaissance. The objective of force-oriented reconnaissance is to quickly find a specific enemy force and stay with it wherever it moves on the battlefield. Units performing this mission provide timely, accurate, first hand information on the enemy force's disposition and its depth. Units conducting force-oriented reconnaissance may sift through the enemy to reconnoiter in depth. They may also guide attacking friendly forces to the preferred point of attack. In this mission very little time is spent on detailed terrain reconnaissance and terrain-related reports. Additionally, terrain oriented control measures are minimal.

- *Reconnaissance in Force.* Reconnaissance in force (RIF) is a limited purpose form of reconnaissance conducted by a considerable force to obtain information and test enemy dispositions, strengths, and reactions. It is conducted by reconnaissance and general-purpose forces to aggressively develop the situation. The size and strength of the force must be sufficient to cause the enemy to respond in some manner and be able to protect itself. A RIF is conducted when the enemy is known to be operating in-strength within a given area and sufficient intelligence cannot be developed by another means.

Section 4. River Crossing Operations

The purpose of a river crossing, whether in the offensive or in a retrograde operation is to project combat power across a water obstacle to accomplish a mission. River crossings require specific procedures for success because the water obstacle prevents normal ground maneuver.

Inherent within the tank battalion table of organization is four armor vehicle bridge launchers (AVLBs) and their compliment of eight bridges. Typically organized as a bridging platoon within the tank battalion the AVLB enables the tank battalion to traverse 40-foot water obstacles without the assistance of MEF bridging assets. Refer to Appendix A for vehicle characteristics of the AVLB.

There are three basic river crossing types: hasty, deliberate, and retrograde.

- *Hasty River Crossing.* A hasty river crossing is a task conducted as part of a larger operation, typically an attack, with no intentional pause at the water line to prepare. It capitalizes on speed while suppressing the enemy. A hasty crossing is possible with appropriately equipped forces when the threat of enemy is not defending the river line in strength at the crossing and the characteristics of the river do not exceed the capabilities of the engineer systems accompanying the force. A hasty crossing is the preferred option. Characteristics of a hasty river crossing include: speed and surprise, minimum loss of momentum at the river, minimal concentration of forces, and well-understood unit standard operating procedures and detailed prior planning.

The hasty crossing uses all possible organic, existing, or expedient means to get across the obstacle in stride. Clearance of enemy forces from the near bank is not a prerequisite to a hasty river crossing. Air assault and airborne forces can simplify the crossing of a river line by use of vertical envelopment. Most combat systems organic to armor and mechanized infantry units cannot swim. As a result, these units must rely on accompanying engineers for the means to conduct the hasty river crossing. Although success of a hasty crossing is not predicated on the seizure of intact bridges, a rapid advance to the river may allow seizure of bridges before the enemy can destroy them. A force crossing a river should prepare to take maximum advantage of any bridges seized.

- *Deliberate River Crossing.* When a hasty river crossing is not feasible for example, when the enemy and/or terrain situations prevent, a hasty crossing attempt fails, or friendly offensive operations resume at a river line after a pause, the force conducts a deliberate river crossing operation. The deliberate river crossing is an operation in

itself, it requires unique planning, control, and specialized support measures. Detailed planning, deliberate buildup and preparation, deception, and clearance of enemy forces from the near bank characterize this type of crossing. Commanders conduct extensive reconnaissance, full-scale rehearsals, and ensure all necessary logistics preparations.

- *Retrograde River Crossing.* A retrograde crossing is a movement to the rear across a water obstacle while in contact with the enemy. The retrograding force may reestablish its defense

For a more in depth discussion on River Crossing Operations refer to MCWP 3-17.1.

Section 5. Linkup Operations

5501. General.

Linkup is a task conducted to join two forces. Both forces may be moving toward one another, or one may be stationary. Linkup operations may occur in a variety of circumstances. They are most often conducted:

- To join two forces regardless of where they are on the battlefield.
- To join an attacking force with a force inserted into the enemy's rear, for example, a helicopterborne force or an infiltration force.
- To complete the encirclement of an enemy force.
- To assist the breakout or come to the relief of an encircled friendly force.

The headquarters ordering the linkup establishes the command relationship between forces and the responsibilities of each. It should also establish control measures, such as contact points and boundaries between converging forces, restrictive fire lines, and other measures to control maneuver and fires. Such control measures may be adjusted during the operation to provide for freedom of action as well as positive control.

5502. Conduct of a Linkup

A linkup is an operation wherein two friendly forces join together in a hostile area. A linkup may occur between a helicopterborne force and a force on the ground such as a mechanized force, between two converging forces, or in the relief of an encircled force.

A linkup involves a stationary force and a moving force. If both units are moving, one is designated the stationary force and should occupy the linkup point at least temporarily to effect linkup. The commanders involved must coordinate their schemes of maneuver. They agree on primary and alternate linkup points where physical contact between the advance elements of the two units will occur. Linkup points must be easily recognizable to both units and are located where the routes of the moving force intersect the security elements of the stationary force. Whenever possible, joining forces exchange as much information as possible prior to the operation. Linkup commanders review:

- Command relationships before, during, and after linkup.

- Coordination of fire support before, during, and after linkup.
- Fire support control measures.
- Method of linkup.
- Both near and far recognition signals and communications procedures to be employed. These recognition signals include pyrotechnics, arm bands, vehicle markings, gun tube orientation, panels, colored smoke, lights, and challenge and passwords.
- Operations to be conducted following linkup.

There are two methods of linkup. The preferred method is when the moving force(s) has an assigned limit of advance (LOA) near the other force and affects linkup at predetermined contact points. Units then coordinate further operations. The other method is used during highly fluid, mobile operations when an enemy force is escaping from a potential encirclement or when one of the forces affecting the linkup is at risk and requires reinforcement immediately. In this method, the moving force or forces continue to move and conduct long-range recognition via radios or other communication means, stopping only when they make physical contact.

- *Linkup When One Unit is Stationary:* When one of the units involved is stationary, linkup points are usually located near the limit of advance. It is also near the stationary force's security elements. Alternate linkup points are also designated since enemy action may interfere with linkup at primary points. Stationary forces assist in the linkup by opening lanes in minefields, breaching or removing selected obstacles, furnishing guides, and designating assembly areas. A restricted fire line (RFL) is established between the two forces and a restricted fire area (RFA) may be established around one or both forces linking up. A fire support coordination line (FSCL) is established beyond the area where the two forces are linking up. When a moving force is coming to relieve an encircled force, it brings those additional logistical assets required to restore the encircled unit's combat effectiveness to the desired level.

- *Linkup between Two Moving Units:* Linkup between two moving units is one of the most difficult operations. Limits of advance are established to prevent fratricide. Primary and alternate linkup points for two moving forces are established in the vicinity of the limit of advance. Fire support considerations are similar to when a stationary and moving force link up. Leading elements of each force should exchange liaison teams and be on a common radio net.

Section 6. Passages of Lines

5601. General.

A passage of lines is an operation in which a force moves forward or rearward through another force's combat position with the intention of moving into or out of contact with the enemy. It is always conducted in conjunction with another mission, such as to begin an attack, conduct an exploitation or a security force mission. The reasons for conducting a passage of lines are to:

- Sustain the tempo of an offensive operation with fresh forces.
- Maintain the viability of the defense by introducing fresh forces.
- Free a unit for another mission, reconstitution, routine rest, resupply, refresher/specialized training, or maintenance.

The conduct of a passage of lines involves two forces; the stationary force and the moving force. In the offense, the moving force is normally the attacking force and is organized to assume its assigned mission after the passage. The stationary force facilitates the passage and provides maximum support to the moving force. Normally, the plans and requirements of the moving force have priority. The time or circumstances at which responsibility for the zone of action transfers from the stationary force to the moving force must be agreed upon by the two commanders or specified by higher authority. Normally, the attacking commander assumes responsibility at or before the time of attack. Responsibility may be transferred before the time of attack to allow the attacking commander to control any preparation fires. In this latter case, elements of the stationary force that are in contact at the time of the transfer must be placed under the operational control of the attacking commander. Liaison between the forces involved should be established as early as possible.

Due to the risks associated with a passage of lines, they are, if possible, conducted at night or during periods of reduced visibility. The risks include fratricide, exposure to enemy counter-actions, and loss of control as responsibility for the sector is handed over from one force to another, and the potential of unintegrated movement of forces. The stationary and moving force commanders normally collocate their command posts in order to facilitate command and control of this demanding tactical operation.

Passage of lines occurs under two basic conditions:

- *Forward Passage of Lines.* A forward passage of lines is accomplished when a moving force passes through the sector of a stationary force occupying forward positions. The purpose of this passage may be to conduct operations such as an offensive operation, reconnaissance and security. The stationary force generally supports the moving force until the moving force masks the stationary forces direct fires and is out of range of the stationary force's indirect fires systems.

- *Rearward Passage of Lines.* A rearward passage of lines is where a moving force conducting a retrograde movement passes through the sector of a stationary force occupying a defensive position. In the defense, a withdrawing security force normally executes the rearward passage of lines. This operation may or may not be conducted under enemy pressure.

Fundamentals: Commanders reduce risk and ensure synchronization by detailed planning and decentralized execution. Typically the combat operation centers of both units involved will collocate while their subordinate elements conduct the passage of lines. When the rearward passage is complete when the last element passes rearward and it is

then that the battle handover is affected. Leaders consider three fundamentals in the conduct of a passage of lines:

- *Speed* - During the execution of a passage of lines, the intermingling of units with the resulting concentration of forces renders both forces vulnerable to enemy attack. Therefore, commanders avoid delay during the execution of a passage of line.
- *Secrecy* - The passage of lines must be concealed from the enemy as long as possible. Units must initiate a plan for deception and operational security.
- *Control* - Forces intermingling during the passage increase the need for control. Passage of lines requires close coordination and liaison between all headquarters and echelons involved in the activity and identification of the movement when one force assumes responsibility from another.

5602. Forward Passage of Lines.

On receipt of the warning order that directs an operation requiring a passage of lines, the moving force's commander and staff establish liaison, exchange standard operating procedures, and begin coordination with the stationary force. The moving force conducts reconnaissance from its current location to its designated assembly areas located generally to the rear of the stationary force. After completion of this reconnaissance, the moving force occupies these assembly areas. While this occurs, commanders and staffs of the two units involved coordinate:

- The exchange of intelligence and combat information.
- Current friendly dispositions and tactical plans, especially deception and obstacle plans. These include the subsequent mission guidance for both forces involved. Control measures for a passage of lines are generally restrictive in nature to prevent fratricide. If the enemy attacks during the passage he will probably require modification to prevent hampering friendly maneuver.
- Both long and short-range recognition symbols to reduce the probability of fratricide.
- When and under what conditions control of the area of operations will transfer from one headquarters to the other. The common commander must specify any special command relationships and retains control of the passage. The executing commanders normally agree upon the actual transfer of responsibility for the sector. In this case both commands should determine a time or identifiable event when command of the area of operations will pass to the commander of the moving force Provisions for movement control to include route selection, priorities for the use of routes and facilities, and the provision of guides. The moving force normally has priority for use of routes to and within the stationary force's tactical area of operation. Traffic control within this area is the responsibility of the stationary force until the moving force assumes control. During the passage, the moving force augments the traffic control capability of the unit in contact as required.
- Reconnaissance by elements of the moving force from up in their assembly areas and move forward to their attack positions and passage lanes.
- Security measures during the passage.
- Fires and any other combat support provided by the stationary force.
- Any combat service support provided by the stationary force.

- Measures to reduce both units' vulnerability to attack by enemy weapons of mass destruction.
- Operational security measures required before or during the passage. The stationary force continues to conduct aggressive counter-reconnaissance operations throughout the passage of lines.

The moving force normally prefers to conduct the passage through a gap in the stationary force's position versus either a lane or a route. Gaps are areas free of live mines or obstacles, whose width and direction will allow a friendly force to pass through in tactical formation. A lane is a route through an enemy or friendly obstacle which provides a passing force safe passage. The route may be reduced and proofed as part of a breach operation, or constructed as part of a friendly obstacle. A route is a prescribed course to be traveled from a specific point of origin to a specific destination.

Successful execution of a passage of lines requires effective communications between the two forces. The two forces exchange radio frequencies, call signs, and recognition signals. The commanders build redundancy of communication signals and means into their passage plans. The commanders designate contact points on easily identifiable terrain locations where passing and stationary forces must physically meet as a means of ensuring that communication at the low tactical level.

When executing the passage, the moving force's reconnaissance elements reconnoiter forward of the release points and establish a screen in front of the moving force. Main-body movement begins from their assembly areas to attack positions, where the moving force conducts its final preparations for the passage and attack.moving force. The stationary force clears any obstacles from designated passage gaps, lanes, and/or routes and guides elements of the moving force from the contact point(s) through the passage point(s). Any preparatory fires should coincide with the moving force's advance from the attack position to the passage lanes. The stationary forcenormally gives priority of fires to the moving force's elements moving in the passage lanes. Following the main effort, the moving force command post passes through the lanes as soon as possible after the lead elements complete their passage.

The stationary force furnishes any previously coordinated or emergency assistance, within its capabilities, to the moving force. The stationary forcet supports the moving force with fires for as long as possible, maintaining security of the passage lanes. Support by the stationary force generally terminates when the moving force's maneuver elements move out of direct-fire range. However, artillery, air defense, and other long-range systems may remain in support of the moving force until a previously designated event occurs (e.g. passing a phase line) or as directed by a higher headquarters.moving force. After responsibility for the area of operation transfers to the moving force, the commander of the moving unit coordinates all fires.

5603. Rearward Passage of Lines

Similar in concept to the forward passage of lines, the moving force may conduct a rearward passage either under enemy pressure or not under enemy pressure. The planning procedures for a rearward passage of lines closely resemble those for a forward passage of lines. Crucial to the successful execution of the rearward is close coordination between the two concerned commanders. This requirement for close coordination is even more critical when the tactical situation results in a staggered or incremental rearward passage

across a sector or area of operation. This may require the moving force commander to relinquish control of those elements that remain in contact at the time of the transfer of responsibility to the stationary commander.

The commanders and staffs of the two forces involved coordinate the same details as outlined for a forward passage of lines. The commanders of the moving force and the stationary force collocate their command posts at some time during the passage of lines. The two staffs coordinate those control measures necessary to support the retrograde operations and its associated rearward passage of lines. They agree upon the recognition plan and establish a probable time for the passage to begin. They confirm the battle handover line (BHL), primary and alternate routes, contact points, start points, passage points, release points, tactical assembly areas, emergency CSS points, and positions for artillery, air defense, and other units.

The stationary force identifies multiple routes through their sector and across their rear boundary to assembly areas and begins reconnaissance of these routes. The stationary force provides guides for the moving force, especially through obstacles, and mans both the contact and passage points. The moving force begins to reconnoiter its routes to the established contact points with the stationary force's troops. The stationary force establishes a security zone in front of the battle handover line and the stationary force commander may place direct fire assets anywhere in this zone to provide maximum support to the moving force to ease its disengagement.

The moving force maintains command of its subordinate elements throughout the retrograde and rearward passage. If the enemy continues to press his attack during the passage, the stationary force controls the battle from collocated command posts while the moving force monitors and controls the passage of lines. The moving force's command post passes through the lines as soon as possible after the lead elements complete their passage. Battle handover occurs when the stationary force assumes the defense of the sector. Generally, the stationary force assumes control of the sector after two-thirds of the passing force moves through the passage points.

The stationary force furnishes the moving force all possible assistance. Pivotal to the success of the rearward passage of lines is the provision of indirect and direct fire support by the stationary force to the moving force. This is especially important in covering the withdrawal of elements left in contact during a delay. The stationary force's fire support assets provide fire support until the moving force completes its passage. The moving force's fire support assets echelon rearward to provide continuous fire support for the moving force until it successfully disengages. Once the moving force hands over control of the battle to the stationary force, the stationary force initiates and clears calls for all fires forward of its location. The stationary force's engineer assets provide support to prepare the defense and execute the passage. Priority of effort initially ensures the ability of the moving force to move through passage lanes around the stationary force's defensive positions. It shifts to closure of these passage lanes once the moving force and any security elements disengage and withdraw through the security zone and obstacles.

The stationary force provides the moving force with the previously coordinated combat service support as far forward as possible. The stationary force concentrates on providing the moving force with emergency medical, recovery, and fuel to enable the moving force to rapidly move through the stationary force's positions.

Section 7. Relief in Place

A relief in place is an operation where one unit with a tactical mission is replaced by another. It is conducted as part of a larger operation primarily to maintain the combat effectiveness of committed units. The higher headquarters directs when and where to conduct the relief and establishes the appropriate control measures. The directing authority transfers responsibility for the mission and the assigned sector or zone of operations of the replaced unit to the incoming unit. Normally, the unit relieved is defending. However, a relief may set the stage for a resumption of offensive operations. A relief during an offensive will most likely occur during an operational pause. Otherwise, during an offense, the two forces concerned in the relief conduct a forward passage of lines. A relief may also serve to free the relieved unit for decontamination, reconstitution, routine rest, resupply, maintenance, specialized training, or another mission.

The relieving unit usually assumes the same responsibilities and generally deploys in the same configuration as the relieved unit. Command and control of a relief in place is by the close coordination of all the commanders involved. The co-location of unit command posts helps to achieve this level of coordination. If the relieved unit's forward elements can defend the area of operation; the relieving unit executes the relief in place from the rear to the front. This facilitates movement and terrain management.

There are two types of reliefs: a deliberate and a hasty relief in place. The major differences between them are the depth and detail of the planning and potentially, the execution time. Detailed planning generally facilitates a shorter execution time by determining what needs to be done, preventing most potential problems from occurring in the first place, and ensuring the availability of resources when needed.

In a deliberate relief, units exchange plans and liaison personnel, conduct briefings, perform detailed reconnaissance, and publish orders with detailed instructions. In a hasty relief, commanders use an abbreviated planning process and direct the execution using oral or fragmentary orders. In both cases, the relieved unit designates liaison personnel from its combat, combat support, and combat service support elements that remain with the relieving unit until completion of the necessary plans.

Fundamentals: Fundamental considerations common to both a hasty and a deliberate relief include:

- *Stealth* - The commander conceals the relief from the enemy for as long as possible. Accordingly, at first warning of the requirement for a relief, both the relieved and relieving unit review their operations security plans and procedures. Commanders may use deception measures in the conduct of a relief in place to maintain secrecy.
- *Speed* - Units conduct all relief operations, once initiated, as quickly as possible. Once initiated, a relief makes both units involved vulnerable to enemy attack because of their concentration, their movement, and the intermingling of forces. Any unnecessary delay during execution provides the enemy additional time to acquire and engage the forces involved in the relief.
- *Control* - The intermingling of forces inherent in a relief places increased burdens on C^2 systems. Traffic control, fire support coordination, obstacles plans, communications nets and facilities all require close coordination between all headquarters involved. Early liaison between the stationary and the relieving forces should occur.

Execution of a Relief in Place: The relief is a tactically vulnerable operation. The units involved must give special attention to security in the preparation and conduct of the operation. The intent is to conduct the relief in place without discovery by the enemy. Through the execution of this task the enemy should perceive only one unit's command structure in operation. Until completion of the relief, for security reasons, this should be the command structure of the defending unit.

The unit receiving the mission to conduct a relief in place may occupy the exact same positions as the unit it relieves. Alternatively, it may establish more favorable positions within the general vicinity of the relieved unit's location. The occupation of different positions makes early discovery of the relief by the enemy more likely. While the units involved in the relief plan, coordinate, and execute the relief in place, their common higher headquarters will continue to attack and disrupt the enemy's uncommitted and reserve forces.

As soon as the common higher headquarters issues the warning order, the relieving unit establishes communications and liaison with the unit to be relieved. The warning order includes the time of relief, units to be relieved and the sequence, and designates the relieving units. It contains some discussion of future missions, route priorities, any restrictions on advance parties, any extraordinary required security measures, and the time and place for the issuance of the complete order.

The CP monitors the current situation and coordinates withdrawal procedures with the unit being relieved. When time is short in a hasty relief, a small advance party from the relieving unit moves quickly to the main CP of the relieved unit. This advance party consists primarily of tactical command post personnel. It conducts the liaison functions for other staff agencies, coordinates the relief, and issues required fragmentary orders while subordinate units move to designated locations.

The relieving unit receives current intelligence, operations, and logistical information from the unit being relieved, common higher headquarters, adjacent units, and subordinate elements. The exchange of information on the enemy situation, friendly dispositions, terrain analysis, and fire and obstacle plans, coupled with reconnaissance, paints a picture for the commander of the relieving force to use in his planning and execution.

The fire support coordinators exchange target lists. They coordinate fire control measures and identify those artillery and other fire support units available to support the relief. The fire support assets of both units support the relief. This is critical in the event the enemy detects the relief and tries to exploit the situation. Units plan their fires to deceive the enemy and expedite the relief. Fire coordination measures in front of the positions of the unit being relieved remain in effect until the withdrawal of the relieved unit. The relieving unit then establishes, coordinates, and controls new fire control measures as required.

The relieving unit verifies the obstacle records of the unit to be relieved. The engineer priority is initially to mobility to get the relieving unit(s) into sector, focusing on those routes and lanes leading into the sector. Once the relief occurs, priority of effort transitions to support of the relieving unit's continuing mission.

Priority of the air defense effort is to protect passage points, battle positions, primary relief routes, and assemble areas. At a minimum, the air defense assets of both units

support the relief. Higher echelon and joint air defense organizations may also support the relief.

Any increase in activity in forward positions can reveal the relief to the enemy. Increased activity results from the movement of Marines and equipment out of position by the relieved unit and into position by the relieving unit. After any period of combat, there will be differences in the types and amount of equipment between the relieving unit and the relieved unit, even if they have the same table of organization and equipment (TOE). These differences can also reveal the relief to the enemy. To limit the extent of these indicators, the units concerned establish guidelines for the exchange of compatible equipment and supplies between the forces involved. It may be necessary to exchange certain weapons, supplies, equipment, and occasionally, vehicles between units. When there are major differences in the numbers of combat systems between the two units, for example, a tank heavy task force relieves a mechanized infantry heavy task force inoperable equipment or visual simulators may assist in hiding the change of units.

To maintain security during the relief in place, the relieving unit makes maximum use of the relieved unit's radio nets and operators. Both units conduct the relief on the command frequency of the relieved unit at all levels. The relieved unit's signal officer remains in charge of communications throughout the relief operation.

The relieving unit begins moving from its current location to assembly area(s) in the sector of the unit being relieved. Reconnaissance elements of the relieving unit will precede this movement with a route reconnaissance to the assembly area. They will conduct reconnaissance of the routes leading from the assembly area(s) to the positions of the unit being relieved later. The commander of the relieving unit normally conducts a leader's reconnaissance of these proposed positions before their occupation. The outgoing commander is responsible for the defense of his sector until command is passedat the time previously mutually agreed on by the two commanders. This should occur early in the process to ease both the relief and the subsequent operation. Normally, this occurs when the relieving unit occupies its assembly area(s).

As the first relieving element arrives from the assembly area to the position being assumed, it establishes a screen of the positions of the unit being relieved as the tactical situation permits. The remainder of the relieving unit then moves forward to positions behind the unit being relieved. The relieving unit may use the relieved unit's alternative and supplementary defensive positions to take advantage of any previous defensive preparations.

Normally the relieving unit's main command post co-locates with the relieved unit's main command post. Both commanders (or their designated representatives) remain together for the duration of the relief operation., All of the relieved unit's fire support assets reinforce those of the relieving unit. Remarks: TACON and OPCON only in joint opeations. During USMC operations command relationships organic or attached and support relationships DS or GS.When possible, the commander of the relieving unit sends a clear, short, and simple message to all units involved in the relief acknowledging the passage of command.

The relieved unit continues to defend and acts as a covering force. The relieving unit's advance parties coordinate procedures for the rearward passage of the relieved unit on order; the relieved unit begins withdrawing through the relieving unit and moves to assembly area(s). The relieved unit's crew-served weapons are usually the last elements relieved after giving the relieving unit its range cards. The relieving unit replaces them on

a one-for-one basis to the maximum extent possible to maintain the illusion of routine activity. The relieved unit's combat support and logistics assets assist both the relieved and the relieving units during this period. As the support elements of the unit being relieved displace, they leave the relieving unit critical supplies according to previously coordinated arrangements. The relieving unit then defends the sector.

In a relief in place, the preferred technique is to relieve rearward elements of the relieved force first and then relieve the forward positions. However, normally the relieved unit's fire support systems are the last systems relieved. If possible the relieved unit's artillery remains in place until all other relieved elements displace. If the relief is for the purpose of continuing the attack, generally both forces' artillery remains in place to support the subsequent operation. Artillery units are not normally required to relieve weapon system for weapon system unless the terrain limits the number of firing positions available. Until the change of command for the sector between the two units, all fire support means remain under the control of the relieved commander.

The relieving unit is responsible for all rear area functions. The two units' rear command posts also co-locate and a single traffic headquarters coordinates the movement in and out of the area or sector. One-way main supply routes can simplify the forward and rearward movement of both units. The relieving unit's rear command post controls both units' military police assets, if any, to control movement throughout the tactical area of responsibility.

It is highly probable that any future conflict requiring a relief will involve the replacement, at some point, of an allied force or sister service. The following additional points should be considered when such reliefs occur:

- Dissimilar unit organizations may require special adjustments in assigned sectors.
- Control of fire support may require special liaison.
- Language difficulties may require the increased use of guides.
- Use of relieved unit communications will require special signal arrangements and use of added operators.
- Ammunition and equipment incompatibility may make exchange more difficult.

Section 8. Breakout from Encirclement

Units will normally attempt to conduct breakout operations when

- Directed by the senior commander or falls within his intent.
- Units do not have sufficient relative combat power to defend encircled.
- There is not adequate defensible terrain available.
- The encircled unit will not be able to sustain itself for a sufficient period of time.

The encircled force normally conducts a breakout by task organizing with *a rupture force* , a *main body*, and a *rear guard*. If the commander has enough forces, he may organize separate reserve, diversionary, and supporting elements. Any of the forces may consist of aviation or ground combat units (one or both as individual elements or as task-organized combined arms teams) and appropriate combat service support organizations, based on METT-T.

Fundamentals:

- *Act Rapidly* - Generally, the best opportunity for a breakout attempt comes in the early stages of enemy encirclement. The enemy has not yet brought in sufficient combat power to encircle the friendly force in strength and weak points exist in the enemy force. An encircled force may be operating under adverse conditions and not have all of its technical intelligence systems operating. The commander may be forced to operate with low levels of intelligence concerning enemy strengths, weaknesses, and intentions. Within this environment, he should conduct aggressive reconnaissance to ascertain information on the enemy. The commander should also obtain information from available R&S assets. If the enemy is in close contact, the commander may be forced to conduct reconnaissance in force to ascertain information on enemy strengths. In either case, the commander must quickly select a course of action and develop a plan accordingly.

- *Reorganize the Command* - The unit must reorganize to conduct the breakout based on available resources. Without resupply, tank and mechanized infantry units may not be able to move all their vehicles in the breakout attack. Priority of support may be limited to the rupture force and rear guard, with the remainder of the force keeping only sufficient transportation assets to move them. The breakout plan should outline destruction criteria and all vehicles and equipment that cannot be moved, should be destroyed as soon as possible. To conduct a breakout attack, units typically task-organize a rupture force, reserve, main body, and rear guard.

Organization of Forces:

- *Rupture Force* - The encircled forces attack as soon as possible by employing one or more rupture forces to penetrate the enemy defensive positions. The commander must produce overwhelming combat power at the breakout point. The rupture force, which may vary in size from one-third to two-thirds of the total encircled force, is assigned the mission of penetrating the enemy-encircling position, widening the gap, and holding the shoulder of the gap until all other encircled forces can move through. The rupture force must be of sufficient strength to penetrate the enemy line. A favorable combat power ratio must be achieved at the point of attack by means of surprise, troop strength, mobility, and firepower.

Initially, the rupture force will be the main effort. The rupture force commander will probably have additional assets attached to his unit. These assets might include air defense or additional engineer personnel from any encircled engineer unit. The commander should integrate these assets properly for maximum combat power to achieve the rupture.

- *Reserve Force* - The reserve follows the rupture attack to maintain the attack's momentum and secure objectives past the rupture. After the rupture force secures the gap, the reserve normally becomes the lead element. When a unit receives the reserve

force mission, the commander must coordinate closely with the rupture force commander on the gap's location, the enemy situation at the rupture, and the enemy situation (if known) along the direction of attack past the rupture point.

Initially, the reserve will pass through the gap created by the rupture force. It is essential that the reserve continue a rapid movement from the encircled area toward the final objective (probably a linkup). If the reserve makes secondary attacks, it is important that it does not become bogged down. Artillery preparation may assist the reserve force in maintaining momentum out of the encircled area.

- *Main Body* - The main body consists of the main command post, the bulk of the combat service support (CSS), and some combat support (CS) assets. It contains those combat forces not required for other missions and should contain sufficient combat power to protect itself. It moves rapidly as a single group on multiple routes immediately behind the reserve. Security elements protect the flanks of the main body during movement. One commander should have sole command of this element to ensure orderly movement.

- *Rear Guard* - The rear guard consists of the personnel and equipment left on the perimeter to provide protection for the rupture and diversionary attacks (if a diversionary attack force exists). Forces left in contact must fight a vigorous delaying action on the perimeter so that no portion of the force is cut off. Under a single commander, the rear guard acts as a covering force to protect the main body from attack while it is moving from the area. In addition to providing security, it deceives the enemy as to the encircled force's intentions. It simulates the activities of the encircled force until they clear the gap. Once the breakout commences the rear guard and any diversionary forces disengage or delay toward the rupture. Perimeter forces integrate smoothly into the rear of the breakout column. Upon achieving the breakout, priority of fires may be shifted to the rear guard action. Above all else, the force must maintain the momentum of the attack or the force will be more vulnerable to destruction than it was prior to the breakout.

As other units support or follow the breakout, the rear guard commander must spread his forces over an extended area. This will require flexibility and mobility on the part of the rear guard. The perimeter must withstand enemy pressure.

- *Diversionary or Supporting Force* - The encircled force should divert enemy attention from the location of the rupture. A supporting or diversionary attack can assist the breakout attack by diverting enemy attention and resources away from the rupture effort. The forces conducting a supporting or diversionary effort may be from either inside or outside of the encirclement area. The commander should direct their efforts to a point where the enemy might expect a breakout or where a relief effort might occur. The forces participating in these efforts are as mobile as available vehicles and trafficability will allow. Mobile, self-propelled weapons systems ideally suit the needs of a diversionary or supporting force.

Success of the diversionary force is important to the success of any breakout operation. If the force fails to deceive the enemy of the encircled force's intentions, the full combat power of the enemy could be directed at the rupture point. On the other hand, the diversionary force may rupture the enemy's lines. If a rupture occurs, the diversionary force commander must know the commander's intent. He may exploit this success, or he may have to disengage and follow and support the reserve force.

Conduct of the Breakout

Detailed planning for a breakout attack may not be possible because the attack must be initiated so quickly after a friendly force is encircled. Units will conduct aggressive reconnaissance to confirm the enemy disposition. If the enemy-encircling force occupies strong positions in close proximity, the encircled unit may be required to conduct a reconnaissance in force at selected locations to ascertain enemy strengths and reactions. The unit initiates its breakout attack as soon as it develops sufficient intelligence concerning enemy dispositions. Its attack exploits conditions of limited visibility and gaps or weaknesses in the enemy's positions. If friendly forces enjoy air superiority, the breakout attack may be initiated during daylight hours to fully exploit the capabilities of close air support. Additionally, the probability of a successful breakout increases measurably if another friendly force attacks toward the encircled force as it attempts to breakout.

The unit takes all possible precautions to deceive the enemy as to the location of the main attack. The rupture force minimizes occupation of attack positions prior to the main attack. A supporting attack may be required to assist the rupture force in penetrating enemy positions and expanding the shoulders. Feints and demonstrations may also be employed to deceive the enemy as to the main attack. However, diversionary attacks need not always occur first.

The commander will organize and control his rupture force as he would a deliberate attack or movement to contact. The rupture force generates overwhelming combat power at the point of the main attack and attempts to rapidly penetrate enemy positions and expand the penetration. If the commander is hard-pressed to generate sufficient combat power with the rupture force and still maintain the perimeter defense, he may have to initiate a withdrawal in certain sectors, prior to the main attack, to generate combat power. If enemy forces are in strength at the point of penetration, the rupture force will likely hold the shoulders. If the enemy is not in strength, the commander may have the rupture force continue its attack as the main effort. If there are no identified enemy formations beyond the penetration, the rupture force may transition to a movement to contact. The follow and assume force is prepared to assume the main effort if the rupture force becomes decisively engaged short of its objectives.

The reserve moves in the approach march formation and is prepared to react to enemy counterattacks or exploit the success of the rupture force. The main body follows the reserve. It moves on multiple routes in either the approach or road march formation. It contains sufficient combat power to protect itself and reinforce the flank or rear security forces should they come under attack. Typically, the flank security forces will conduct a screen or guard mission.

The rear guard will initially conduct a withdrawal to break contact with the enemy forces around the perimeter and then diminish the perimeter as it delays back behind the main body. If the enemy closely pursues the breakout force, the rear guard may become the main effort. The reserve should then be positioned where it can also support the rear guard.

The priority for fire support is initially with the rupture force. Fire support assets must also move with the main body and rear guard so that security forces have adequate fires.

Engineers with the rupture force focus on mobility operations. Engineers with a follow and assume force or reserve improve routes and replace AVLBs with other bridging assets. Engineers are also task-organized with the flank security elements whose focus is countermobility operations. The rear guard must also have adequate engineers to conduct countermobility operations.

Air defense assets will be prioritized to protect the rupture force, rear guard, and then the main body. Sufficient medium-and short-range air defense systems must be dedicated to cover all critical points through which the encircled force will pass.

All units and vehicles will carry the maximum supplies possible on board with emphasis on Class III and V. The encircled force will only take those vehicles it can support. It may be possible for the encircled force's higher headquarters to establish an intermediate support base as the breakout attack moves toward a linkup.

Exfiltration

If success of a breakout attack appears questionable and a relief operation is not planned, one way to preserve a portion of the force might be through organized exfiltration. Exfiltration is the act of passing stealthily out of enemy-held territory. An exfiltration effort is preferable to capture and can distract the enemy from his main effort. It may produce intelligence for the main force. Exfiltration by the encircled force is employed only as a last resort by the encircled force once after destroying or incapacitating all equipment (less medical) not accompanying the breakout force. Casualties may have to be left in place by exfiltrating forces with supplies and medical attendants.

Exfiltration is most feasible over rough or difficult terrain, through areas unoccupied by the enemy, or through areas not covered by enemy observation and fire. These conditions often allow undetected movement of small elements when movement of the entire force would present more risk. It requires resourcefulness, a high degree of discipline, expert land navigation skills, and motivation. It is unlikely that the entire force will be able to exfiltrate since there may be a requirement to create a diversion. Good small-unit leadership is essential in this type of operation.

Based on reconnaissance, the exfiltrating unit subdivides into small groups and exfiltrates during periods of limited visibility by passing through and around enemy defensive positions. If detected, they seek to bypass. Units use preparatory fires to cover their movement as well as to get rid of stockpiled ammunition. Rally points, routes, and linkup plans all must be coordinated.

Exfiltration may be more difficult to accomplish mounted using combat and tactical vehicles. This is due to the limitations they impose upon exfiltration routes and the increased noise involved in their operation which makes their detection by the enemy more likely.

Attacking Deeper

A course of action that the enemy is not likely to expect for an encircled force is to attack deeper. It involves great risk, but may offer the only feasible course of action under some circumstances. It is only feasible if a unit can sustain itself while isolated. When the enemy is attacking, attacking deeper into the enemy rear may disrupt the enemy's offense and provide an opportunity for linkup from another direction. If the enemy is defending and the attacking force finds itself isolated through its own offensive action, it may continue the attack toward its assigned objective.

Logistical shortfalls can be relieved somewhat by aerial resupply, external forces establishing intermediate support bases, and possibly by using captured supplies. Close air support will also have greater difficulty in providing support due to the enemy situation around the encircled force.

Section 9. Road March and Assembly Areas.

A tactical road march is a tactical movement used to relocate units within the combat zone in order to prepare for combat operations. Mechanized units must often travel long distances in order to position themselves to perform their next assigned mission. The primary consideration of the march is rapid movement, but security is required even though contact with enemy ground forces in not expected. During tactical road marches, the commander is always prepared to execute maneuver. A mechanized unit, when executing its tactical missions, moves across the terrain using the formations and techniques of movement appropriate to the situation. The movements are conducted as road marches and differ from a movement to contact in that the purpose is relocation, not to gain enemy contact, with the primary consideration being rapid movement of units.

Prior to the execution of the road march the battalion plans and issues a march order that includes:

- Routes to the release point (RP) and start point (SP).
- Route strip map.
- Order of march.
- SP and RP locations and times.
- Maximum catch-up speed.
- Designation of quartering parties.
- Intervals between vehicles and march units.
- How routes will be marked and by whom.
- Road restrictions.
- Actions on enemy contact.
- Actions at halt or for disabled vehicles.

- Actions in assembly area.
- Resupply, maintenance, and feeding procedures.
- Scheduled halts.
- Fire support plan.

The battalion scout platoon will conduct a route reconnaissance that identifies the following:

- Availability and conditions of routes.
- Start point/release point confirmation.
- Location of critical points.
- Location and suitability of holding/assembly area and areas for maintenance /refueling.
- Distances between critical points, and total distance between start point and release point.
- Location of obstacles.
- NBC monitoring of assemble area.
- Information on all enemy on routes.
- Alternate routes, if required.

The battalion will then conduct the road march ensuring that it maintains security during the march. Designated security elements eliminate enemy elements to allow uninterrupted movement of the main body.

Assembly Area - An area in which a command is assembled preparatory to further action. The tank battalion will typically require a minimum of a four square kilometer area when directed to occupy an assemble area. In the assembly area the unit reviews and issues orders, services and repairs vehicles, receives and issues supplies, and feeds personnel. The assembly area, when used to prepare for an attack, is usually well forward. If possible, it should be out of range of enemy artillery.

The tank battalion will select an assembly area with the following characteristics: cover from direct fire, good exits and entrances, and adequate internal roads, and space for dispersion of vehicles and equipment. Overhead concealment is important if the unit is to remain in the area for any length of time. Vehicles, equipment, entrances, and exits should be camouflaged to keep the enemy from detecting the location of the unit.

As the battalion occupies the assembly area the main body moves into position without halting or blocking routes. Security is established immediately and radio listening silence or minimum radio transmissions maintained. All units are resupplied and operations orders are issued.