

Chapter 8

Military Operations Other Than War

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Section 1. Introduction.

Military operations other than war focus on deterring war, resolving conflict, promoting peace, and give support to civil authorities in response to domestic crises. MOOTW may involve elements of both combat and noncombat operations in peacetime, conflict, and war. Task organized as part of a MAGTF, Marine tank units may be called upon to support a wide range of operations in various political and geographical environments. Most recently Marine tank units have participated in Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) in Cuba, Somalia and Haiti. Because of the relatively large slice of resources necessary to deploy, operate, and sustain mechanized forces, tank units are usually used to execute MOOTW activities that take maximum advantage of their inherent capabilities: armor protected firepower, cross terrain mobility, and shock effect. Tanks are employed in offensive and defensive missions during MOOTW using procedures similar to those described in chapters 3 and 4.

In MOOTW tank units may be assigned missions traditionally handled by infantry or military police forces. For example, a tank unit could be tasked as reaction forces to support crowd and riot control. Problems such as potential casualties to non-combatants and collateral damage of local infrastructure can arise when tank units are used in this type of role. To perform effectively and efficiently, tank crewmen should receive special equipment and training before executing such operations

Disciplined, well-trained, combat-ready commanders and crewmen can adapt to the specialized demands of MOOTW. To achieve a high degree of readiness, tank unit must be thoroughly trained before deployment in such areas as: the operational environment, rules of engagement (ROE), force protection, and civil affairs. Flexibility and situational awareness are paramount requirements, especially for unit commanders.

Section 2. Operational Considerations

NOTE: The term "environment" in the following discussion of MOOTW, refers to the cultural, political, and military context in which these operations take place, as well as to the terrain and weather of the area of operations.

8201. Environment

MOOTW is often conducted in a politically sensitive environment. Tank crewmen must consider every individual action as having significant potential political or operational impact. This places increased importance on tank crew discipline, decentralized execution of lawful orders, cultural training, and exploitation of any existing foreign language capabilities within the force. One act of civil disturbance or intolerant treatment of civilians can turn a supportive populace against the force and be exploited by potential adversaries. This same act may also be a focal point in turning domestic public opinion against a continued effort. Each Marine must understand the political and economic situation, as well as the cultures, climate, and terrain of the region. He should

understand the military situation, especially the doctrine, tactics, and equipment that are employed by belligerent, guerrilla, terrorist or paramilitary forces. Orientation training should also clarify the following environmental conditions: the tempo of operations, local news media, and the American role in the operation.

The commander must consider his activities in relation to similar activities carried out by agencies of the US government, allies, and the host nation, as well as nongovernmental and private volunteer organizations. Additional MOOTW considerations include:

- Media scrutiny will be extensive.
- Rules of engagement will be more restrictive.
- Identification of hostile parties may be more difficult.
- Military assets may be routinely used to support noncombat functions.
- Interaction with civilian noncombatants will be routine at every level of command.

Tempo.

Although extreme tension may underlie MOOTW, the tempo of operations is generally slow. For the tank unit involved in MOOTW, the key to a secure environment is not only to diligence in maintaining OPSEC, but also to varying security techniques and procedures to avoid predictability.

Rules of Engagement.

ROE are directives issued by military authority that delineate the circumstances and limitations under which US forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered. Rules of engagement dictate when, where, against whom, and how force—especially lethal force—may be used. ROE are important for a wide variety of reasons—moral, political, legal, tactical, and technical. Key considerations in the design of ROE's include:

- US Policy
- International Law
- Host Nation Law
- The Threat
- Commander's intent
- Operational considerations
- Tactical capabilities

Specific aspects of ROE may be intended to address force protection issues like combat identification and fratricide, or the use of particular types of weapons in certain situations. Culture may be an important factor as well. In some cultures, the use of human shields or the participation of women and children in combat activities may be routine, and this may necessitate adjustments to ROE. ROE may also forbid engagements in the vicinity of cultural or artistic sites, because such sites are often irreplaceable. Their destruction may inflame the emotions of the local populace or turn domestic and/or

international opinion against the operation. For this reason, tank crews in particular, must understand the lethality of the tank's weapon systems and automotive capabilities with regard to potential collateral damage to noncombatants, property, and local infrastructure (e.g. buildings, roads, rails, and bridges).

Due to the political sensitivities involved, ROE are often more restrictive in MOOTW than in war. First, legal issues may have more impact on ROE design in MOOTW, which often raise a variety of controversial political-military issues. More fundamentally, however, "keeping the peace" and "fighting for peace" are distinctly different missions and require different rules of engagement. For example, MOOTW operations are typically constrained to use minimum force necessary to accomplish the mission. ROE in these circumstances are designed to prevent the start or escalation of a conflict. Hence, policies on the use of force are usually based on a defensive posture, requiring demonstrated hostile intent before deadly force is justified. Such ROE more closely resemble those for law enforcement agencies than military units. Nonetheless, missions encountered by forces in MOOTW often require the ability to use force proactively.

ROE issues are also greatly complicated by the urban environment. ROE designed for use in one area of a city may be irrelevant or counterproductive in another because of differences in the urban geometry, structural materials, and in the nature of the mission. For instance, the use of tank main gun rounds and coaxial machine rounds in a flimsy shantytown may pose more danger to adjacent friendly forces and to noncombatants than to the enemy. In other sections of the city, the use of HE rounds may threaten to disperse hazardous materials or contaminants into the air or water. Obviously, combat missions in one part of town will require different ROE than support to local police operations in another section might. The presence of adversary fighters dressed in civilian clothes, common in urban conflicts, will further complicate operations.

In all circumstances, ROE should be tactically sound, flexible, understandable, and enforceable. It must be disseminated and understood at all levels. Inappropriate or poorly enforced ROE may result in friendly casualties (including fratricide), collateral damage, and the deaths of noncombatants, seriously hampering an operation. ROE should be designed to fit the dynamics of the situation. Frequent changes or adjustments in ROE can generate confusion and create morale problems. **ROE CAN NEVER NEGATE THE RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY OF FRIENDLY FORCES TO SELF PROTECTION.** ROE must convince friendly personnel in harm's way that their well-being has been given adequate weight and that there are legitimate reasons for restrictions on the use of force. Otherwise, the ROE are likely to be misapplied or even disobeyed.

The M1A1 tank's armor protection is well suited to take the impact of small arms fire and rocks and bottles. Tank units provide the MAGTF with a highly effective graduated response should the situation require an escalation in the use of force. Graduated response options include use of tanks physical presence of tanks for crowd control to use of the tanks main gun and machine guns to destroy barricades or engage snipers. Likewise, tank units provide the MAGTF with the potential to provide a highly effective graduated response should the situation require an escalation in the use of force

Force Protection.

As with any operation, force protection is a primary goal for every commander involved in MOOTW. The armor protected firepower and automotive capabilities of the tank allow it to be employed in a number of MOOTW missions that provide the commander with options for minimal risk of personnel, equipment, and supplies. Risk assessment should focus on an evaluation of enemy elements, belligerent forces, civilians and terrain and weather considerations.

Antiterrorism protective measures training should include operational security, physical security and personal security measures. Examples include avoiding patterns and routines, strict noise and light discipline, use of cover and concealment, obstacles, OPs, and early warning devices. Commanders must also consider the protection afforded by armor vehicles, and secure locations for eating, resting, and conducting maintenance. For more information see MCRP 3-02D Combatting Terrorism and MCRP 3-02E, The Individuals Guide to Understanding and Surviving Terrorism.

Marine Responsibility.

As noted, the professionalism and discipline instilled in a well-trained, well-informed, and effectively led Marine are critical to the safe accomplishment of the MOOTW mission. Discipline is important in regards to security. Commanders should stress to their Marines that terrorists and thieves may attempt to infiltrate positions and or mount vehicles either to steal equipment and supplies or to inflict injury.

Public Affairs and the Media.

By their very nature all MOOTW missions receive intense public interest and scrutiny. In many cases it is public interest or media interest which ultimately resulted in the MOOTW mission. Also, much of the public's knowledge of military activity is provided by the news media. All Marines should understand and following:

- Identifying, understanding, and fulfilling command information needs is critical to success. Marines must receive information specific to the operation through command channels and world, national, and local news. This enhances moral and unit esprit. It eases distractions and reduces the boredom, fear, isolation, uncertainty, rumor, and misinformation inherent in MOOTW.
- Every Marine is a spokesperson. PA guidance should be widely disseminated. Although the commander is normally the unit's official spokesperson, informed junior Marines can also be honest, accurate, forthright, and insightful spokespersons.
- The media is an important information channel to the American public. In the high visibility, politically sensitive MOOTW environment, public opinion is a critical element. By proactively assisting news media representatives, commanders help them

understand the US role in these operations and produce stories that foster the confidence of the American public. Nevertheless commanders must balance OPSEC and other operational requirements with these needs.

In many MOOTW environments, the local populace may view the presence of tank units as both a highly visible and potentially intimidating event. As a result, tank units frequently draw the attention of the media. Journalists may use film footage of tanks for “symbolic effect” in their broadcasts. Whether intentional or not, the message commonly interpreted by domestic, international, and local audiences is that employment of tanks equates to firm commitment and demonstration of American resolve in the respective crisis. Consequently, the tank crew’s actions may be highly scrutinized and questioned by the media. This is another reason why crewmen need to be disciplined, well trained, and understand their mission and ROE.

See MCWP 3-33.3 Public Affairs for more information.

Joint Publication 3-07, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, lists the following sixteen types of MOOTW. Although tank units may be employed all types of MOOTW, they may be employed in the majority of types:

- Arms Control
- Combating Terrorism
- Department of Defense Support to Counterdrug Operations
- Enforcement of Sanctions/Maritime Intercept Operations
- Enforcing Exclusion Zones
- Ensuring Freedom on Navigation and Overflight
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Military Support to Civil Authorities
- Nation Assistance/Support to Counterinsurgency
- Noncombatant Evacuation Operations
- Peace Operations
- Protection of Shipping
- Recovery Operations
- Show of Force Operations
- Strikes and Raids.
- Support to Insurgency

The following sections focus on common roles tanks can play in MOOTW:

8202. Noncombatant Evacuation Operations.

The tank unit can be used in the NEO scenario as an element of a security force or reaction force (See Section 8 for details on reaction force.)

Security. The tank unit can establish a BP or conduct a relief in place of a BP as part of a MAGTF perimeter or strongpoint defense. (See Chapter 4 for detailed information on

defensive operations.) Dismounted infantry may or may not be integrated with the tank unit. Coordination with dismounted patrols and OPs outside the perimeter is critical for situational awareness. See Appendix B for detailed information on employment of tanks with Infantry. Signs, in the local language, should be posted as necessary within the engagement area to identify movement restrictions on the local populace.

Mine Clearing of Evacuation Route. When called upon the tank unit can proof the evacuation route to detect and neutralize mines. Based on METT-T factors, the unit may use tactical movement techniques to provide overwatch for the proofing vehicle, which can be a tank (equipped with a mine roller, if available) or an engineer vehicle. If mines are detected, the unit conducts breach force operations within its capability; whenever possible, the platoon should be equipped with a mine plow and a breaching kit containing wire and bolt cutters, grappling hooks, and demolitions. If the obstacle is not within the platoon's breaching capability, engineers are called forward. At all times, the proofing and overwatch vehicles should take notice of anything that is out of the ordinary, such as new construction, repairs to damaged buildings, plants or trees that seem new or out of place, and freshly dug earth. These conditions may indicate the presence of newly emplaced or command-detonated mines. The tank unit conducts tactical movement breaching operations as discussed in and Appendix C.

8203. Humanitarian Operations

The tank unit can establish a battle position as part of a MAGTF humanitarian supply site. See Chapter 4 for detailed information on defensive operations. Dismounted infantry may or may not be task organized with the tank unit. Coordination with dismounted patrols and OPs outside the perimeter is critical for security. See Appendix B for detailed information on employment of tanks with infantry. Signs, in the local language, should be posted as necessary within the engagement area to identify movement restrictions on the local populace. The tank's "intimidation factor" should be considered. Normally, the tank unit is positioned as far away as possible from those who are benefiting from the humanitarian effort.

8204. Convoy Security Operations.

This mission requires the tank unit to provide convoy security and close-in protection from direct fire while on the move. Tank units are well suited for this role because of their mobility, firepower, and armor protection. Depending on a variety of factors (size of the convoy, escort assets available, and METT-T), convoy escort missions are normally conducted by Marine tank units at the platoon level, either independently or as part of a larger unit's convoy security mission. Therefore, this section will be discussed at the platoon level for the aforementioned reason and for sake of simplicity.

Command & Control. The relationship between the tank platoon and the convoy commander must provide for unity of command. In most cases, the tank unit commander may serve as the security element or support the security force commander.

Tactical disposition. During escort missions, the tank unit leader supports the convoy commander by positioning his tanks to provide security in all directions and throughout the length of the convoy. They can adjust the disposition of the tank unit, either as a unit or dispersed, to fit the security requirements of each particular situation. As noted, several factors, including convoy size and METT-T, affect this disposition. Perhaps the key consideration is whether the platoon is operating as part of larger escort force or is executing the escort mission independently.

Escort Missions. When the unit is deployed during an escort operation, it can provide forward, flank, rear or close-in security. In such situations, it executes tactical movement based on the factors of METT-T. Figures 8-1 and 8-2 show the platoon using various formations while performing escort duties as a unit. These formations can also be used by the platoon while part of a Large Scale Escort Mission.

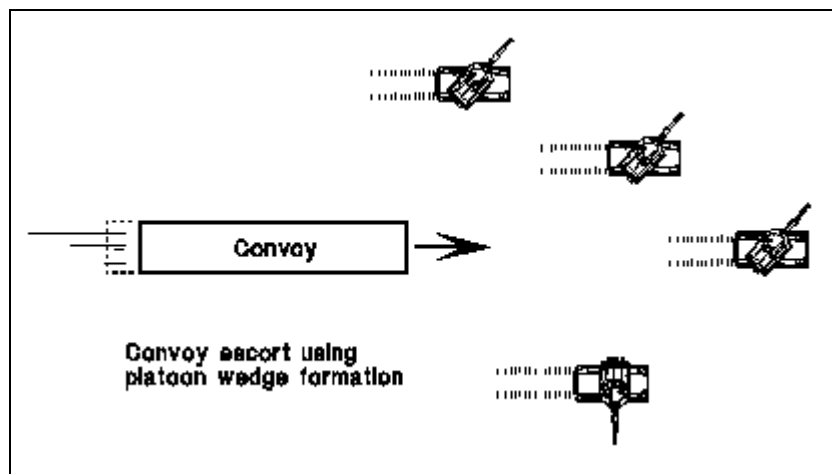


Figure 8-1. Platoon performing forward security for a convoy.

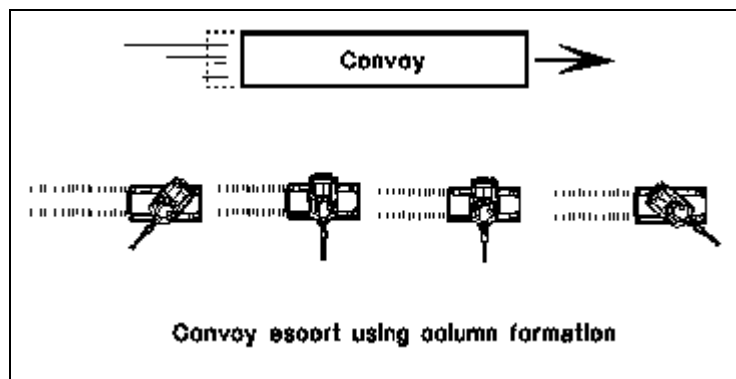


Figure 8-2. Platoon performing flank security for a convoy.

Large-scale Escort Missions. When sufficient escort assets are available, the convoy commander will usually organize the convoy into three distinct elements: advance guard, close-in protective group, and rear guard.

The tank unit is normally best employed as an element of the close-in protective group. This group provides immediate, close-in protection for the main body of the vehicle column with escort vehicles positioned either within the column or on the flanks. The convoy commander's vehicle is located within this group.

The advance guard reconnoiters and proofs the convoy route. It searches for signs of enemy activity, such as ambushes and obstacles. Within its capabilities, it attempts to clear the route and provides the convoy commander with early warning before the arrival of the vehicle column. In some cases, a tank section or the entire platoon may be designated as part of the advance guard. The platoon commander may also be required to attach a mine plow or mine roller to this element. The rear guard follows the convoy. It provides security in the area behind the main body of the vehicle column, often moving with medical and recovery assets. Again, a tank section, or the entire tank platoon may be part of this element.

NOTE: The convoy commander may also designate the tank as part of a reserve (quick reaction) force for additional firepower in the event of enemy contact. The reserve will either move with the convoy or be located at a staging area close enough to provide immediate interdiction against the enemy.

8205. Mounted Patrols.

A tank unit can be given a patrol mission to proof a route to detect and neutralize mines. Based on METT-T factors, the unit may use tactical movement techniques to provide overwatch for the proofing vehicle, which can be a tank (equipped with a mine roller, if available) or an engineer vehicle. If mines are detected, the unit conducts breach force operations within its capability; whenever possible, the lead tank should be equipped with a mine plow and a breaching kit containing wire and bolt cutters, grappling hooks, and demolitions.

The tank unit when patrolling an urban areas or close terrain, normally overwatches and/or follows in support of dismounted infantry (see Figures 7-4A and 7-4B). Procedures for operating with infantry are discussed in Appendix B.

8206. Checkpoints.

A tank unit can overwatch an infantry or military police traffic control point. Additionally, the overwatch element must ensure it coordinates for it's own local security; it usually does this by coordinating with dismounted infantry for OPs and dismounted patrols. For more information on overwatch and occupation of a defensive position see Chapter 4.

The tank unit (supported by infantry) can be employed to occupy a perimeter defense to protect traffic and facilitate movement through a choke point along the MSR. Infantry is

normally integrated into the perimeter defense to augment the tank unit's firepower and to provide security by means of dismounted patrols and OPs

The tank unit can be employed to overwatch a blockade or roadblock. The blockade or roadblock can either be a manned position or a reinforcing obstacle covered by fires only. It coordinates with dismounted infantry for local security (OPs and dismounted patrols). Positions are improved using procedures for deliberate occupation of a battle position (see Chapter 4).

8207. Reaction Force.

a. Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel. Tank units can be employed as an element of the MAGTF reserve (sometimes referred to as the quick reaction force) during TRAP missions. Typical missions include: reinforcement and relief of encircled friendly forces that are conducting the TRAP mission or securing an objective in an operation to rescue a downed aircraft or stranded vehicle. In all these scenarios, the tank unit conducts a movement to contact and if required actions on contact. For more information on these operations, refer to Chapter 3, Offensive Operations.

Tank units can be employed with infantry to conduct a cordon and search mission. During the cordon and search, the tank unit normally occupies overwatch and/or hasty defensive positions to isolate a search area. Close coordination and communication with the dismounted elements conducting the search is critical. Dismounted forces are also employed in OPs and patrols to maintain surveillance of dead space and gaps in the cordoned area. The tank unit must be prepared to take immediate action if the search team or OPs identify enemy elements. Enemy contact may require the unit to execute tactical maneuver and deliver fires directed by the dismounted elements. See Appendix B.