Based on lessons learned from previous fire support coordination exercises, the Marine Corps now uses a methodology called essential fire support tasks (EFSTs). The purpose of EFST is to translate the maneuver commander’s intent into usable information for the fire support coordinator (FSC). The FSC uses EFSTs to focus supporting arms agencies on critical or essential tasks that must be accomplished to meet the maneuver commander’s intent.

CONCEPT OF FIRES PARAGRAPH

As a subparagraph to the concept of operations, the concept of fires paragraph contains EFSTs and describes the commander’s guidance for fires and the concept of fires to support the scheme of maneuver. The concept of fires must clearly describe the logical sequence of EFSTs and how they contribute to the concept of operations. The FSC uses the specified and implied tasks identified during mission analysis and from the commander’s guidance for fire support to identify specific fire support tasks. The FSC must then determine the methodology to accomplish each task.

The methods frame the role of supporting arms agencies in the overall plan and serve to focus their efforts in supporting the scheme of maneuver. The concept of fires along with the concept of maneuver communicates how the force as a whole will achieve the commander’s intent. For the FSC to meet the commander’s intent, EFSTs must be closely integrated with maneuver.

EFSTs can also help focus the targeting effort by concentrating on enemy critical vulnerabilities and necessary targets that will facilitate maneuver. The primary audience for the concept of fires is the subordinate maneuver commanders and their fire support personnel. At each level of command (division, regiment, battalion) there are different levels of experience working with various fire support products and tools. This technique applies to all levels of FSCCs and staffs.

FORMAT

Overall paragraph organization should mirror that of the scheme of maneuver paragraph. If the maneuver paragraph is phased or otherwise organized, the concept of fires paragraph will take on the same organization. Just as maneuver tasks use task and purpose, fire support tasks are defined by the task, purpose, method, and effects (TPME) thought process. TPME may be used by the FSC to develop the concept of fires that is concise but specific enough to clearly state what fires are to accomplish in the operation. Within each phase of an operation, each EFST will be described in sequence of planned execution. This can be done using TPME in step action form or as subparagraphs. The information required in each subcategory is outlined below.

Task

Describes the targeting objective fires must achieve against a specific enemy formation’s function or capability. Formations are HPTs or contain one or more HPTs.

\[ \text{Task} = \text{Objective}, \text{Formation}, \text{and Function}. \]

Objective

MCRP 3-16A/FM 6-20-10, Targeting, outlines several terms to describe targeting objectives that can be used, however disrupt, delay or limit are most commonly used. Targeting objectives should not be mistaken for effects of fire such as: harass, suppress, neutralize, or destroy used to determine the degree of damage or duration of effects on a specific target. Targeting objectives entail the analysis of enemy situations relative to the objectives, mission, and the capabilities at the commander’s disposal, in order to identify and nominate specific vulnerabilities that, if exploited, will accomplish the commander’s intent through disrupting, delaying, limiting, or diverting enemy forces or critical resources. See chapter 3 for information on targeting objectives and effects of fire.
**Disrupt.** Means to preclude efficient interaction of enemy combat or combat support systems. Simplified, it means to not let an enemy formation perform a specific function: not to do what it is supposed to do.

Example: Disrupt the AT battery long range fires against the TF flank companies.

**Delay.** Means to alter the time of arrival of a specific enemy formation or capability. It focuses on not letting the enemy do some function when it wants/needs to.

Example: Delay the ability of the advance unit to support the security element with direct fires.

**Limit.** Applies to reducing the options or courses of action available to the enemy commander. For example, the commander may direct the use of air interdiction and fire support to limit the use of one or more avenues of approach available to the enemy. Also, he may direct the use of interdiction to limit enemy use of fire support. To limit capabilities implies we also disrupt enemy plans by precluding effective interaction or the cohesion of enemy combat and combat support systems.

Example: Limit the ability of the enemy air assault company to establish an LZ in the high ground west of the firebase.

**Divert.** Addresses the commander’s desire to tie up critical enemy resources. Attack of certain interdiction targets may result in the enemy commander’s diverting capabilities or assets from one area or activity to another. Divert indirectly reduces the enemy commander’s capability to continue his plans.

**Formation**

A specific element or subelement of the enemy. Can specify a specific vehicle type or target category as long as the element or subelement is clear.

Example: The enemy platoon at the point of penetration.

**Function**

An ability of the formation to achieve its primary task and purpose. What is the formation doing that is unacceptable? What do we want the formation to do/not do? Helping words: “the ability to . . . .”

Example: The ability to effectively direct fire against the breach force.

**Purpose**

Describes maneuver or operational purpose for the task. Identify as specifically as possible the maneuver formation that will leverage the targeting objective; describe in space and time what the objective accomplishes.

**Purpose = Maneuver Purpose.**

Example: To allow Bravo Mech to occupy the support by fire position without becoming decisively engaged by the center enemy platoon.

**Method**

Describes how the task and purpose will be achieved. It ties the detect function or “lookers” (executor/observer/TA sensor) with the deliver function or “shooters” (lethal and nonlethal assets) in time and space and describes how to achieve the task. The following should be considered under method:

**Method = Priority, Allocation, Restriction.**

- Priority of fires (POF).
- Final protective fires (FPFs).
- Observers (pri/alt).
- Restrictions.
- Triggers.
- Special munitions.
- Target allocation.
- Target.
- Priority targets.
- EW.
- CAS/attack aviation.
- Any other instructions.
Fire Support Coordination in the Ground Combat Element

Priority

Describes the “how” of the EFST. For the looker, it can assign POF to execute the task outlined. It assigns observers in maneuver units or other acquisition means. Assignment of the looker requires the consideration of Target Selection Standards. When a specific asset; e.g., CAS, is to focus exclusively on a task, that information can be communicated here.

Example: Priority of CAS is to destroy the enemy’s Combined Arms Reserve tanks. This part of the method can also provide focus by using NAI, TAI, targets, or EA to describe where attacks will occur.

Allocation

For the shooter, it describes allocating fire support assets to accomplish the EFSTs. Assets may include projected or mechanical smoke, indirect fires (suppress, neutralize, destroy, obscure, screen), FASCAM, CPHD, F/W and R/W CAS, and EW. In method, fire support assets identify their part of accomplishing the EFST. It is from the method of an EFST that the artillery and other FS/TA assets get their essential tasks.

Restriction

The method can also outline any limitations or restrictions on accomplishing the tasks; e.g., ammunition (no ICM on the OBJ), FSCM (ACA Blue) or other restrictions that may effect accomplishing the EFST. See bullet format and paragraph format examples below.

Effects

Attempts to quantify successful accomplishment of the task. It provides the looker with a measure of effectiveness (MOE) for the task. If multiple shooters are involved it helps delineate what each must accomplish. Effects provide a measure of when we are done with the task. It also provides the basis for the assess function in D3A and the decision to reattack or not. See appendix I, table I-7.

Concept of fires and EFST information is placed in the Concept of Fires paragraph as shown below. An example of the information required for the concept of fires and EFSTs is shown on pages D-4 through D-5.

3b. ( ) Concept of Operations

(1) ( ) Concept of Maneuver

(2) ( ) Concept of Fires. Task and purpose for each EFST from the base order.

Example: Method (Bullet Format)

- Priority: Arty POF to Alpha Co, Mortar POF to Charlie Co. Team Mech. Arty and Mortar POF when committed.
- Allocation: Alpha fires Arty Pri Tgt AB1000, Bn 3 DPICM when security element goes to ground. Charlie fires mortar Pri Tgt AB 2001 Plt 10 HE at AT-5 platoon when they set their firing line. Back up observer for both targets is Recon Tm 2 vic. OP1. Send suppression missions to Bn FSCC, expect mortar Plt 3 HE. CAS maintained at Bn level.
- Restrictions: RFA 200 meters radius over Recon Tm 2. No DPICM within 500 meters NP123456. ACA Joe in effect when CAS at IP, no fires south of 58 North/South gridline.

Example: AGMB delayed for 20 minutes. 1 T80/4 BMPs destroyed by FASCAM. CAS destroys 4 T80s and 2 BMPs behind FASCAM. Enemy ADA jammed by EW during CAS attack.

Example: Method (Paragraph Format)

Arty POF to Alpha Co, Mortar POF to Team Charlie. Team Mech gets Arty and Mortar POF when committed. Recon Tm 2 occupies OP 1 prior to LD. Upon contact, Alpha (P), Recon Tm 2 (A) fires Arty Pri Tgt AB 1000 Bn 3 DPICM at security element when it goes to ground. Charlie (P), Recon Tm 2 (A) fires mortar Pri Tgt AB2001 Plt 10 HE at AT-5 firing line when they set. Adjust and repeat as necessary. Send all suppression missions to Bn FSCC, expect mortar Plt 3 HE. CAS, if available, maintained by Bn. All RFAs 200 meters radius, Recon Tm 2. No DPICM within 500 meters NP 123456. ACA Joe i/e when CAS at IP, no fires south of 58 N/S gridline.
PHASE ONE, RECCE MOVEMENT FORWARD

TASK
Destroy the 2 x Forward Security Combat Outposts of the 127th battalion’s main defensive positions to prevent identification of FO and scout forward movement and initial movement of 1/6 from AA HOTBED.

PURPOSE
To allow FOs and scouts to occupy forward OP locations and safeguard initial movement of 1/6 from AA HOTBED to LD (PL JIMMY).

METHOD
Priority: Artillery POF to FO TM 1, mortar POF to scouts.
Allocation: AB 1001 CPHD PRI TGT identified observation post (1 x BMP + Inf section) FO tm 1 (P), scouts(A) at H-180 backup Bn 3 DPICM. AB1002 CPHD PRI TGT identified observation post (1x T80 + Inf section) FO tm 2 (P), FO tm 1 (A) at H-120 backup Bn 3 DPICM. AB1005 templated OP scouts (P), FO tm 2 (A) when TM B Crosses PL BILL. AB1003 mortar SMK Deception 10 minutes 300 x 60 scouts (P) FO tm 2 (A) at H-10.
Restrictions: Clear Illum through regiment, no DPICM on MSR MARS, regiment release Authority for SD FASCAM. CFL PL TOM o/o PL DICK. RFAs 300 meters radius on all FO tm and scout locations. FFA 67599977-67009710-65009675.

EFFECTS
2 x observation posts destroyed (1 x Bmp, 1x T80, 2 x sections) 1 x OP destroyed FO tms and scouts in forward OP positions able to observe BPs and TF1-69 crosses LD unhindered from direct or indirect fires.

PHASE TWO, SUPPORT BY FIRE AND BREACH OPERATION

TASK
Disrupt the ability of the 127th regiments 2 X Plt BP from effectively engaging Breach Force with Direct and Indirect Fires.

PURPOSE
To allow TM B to occupy support by fire position and TM C to establish 2 x Breach lanes prior to assault on to OBJ GOLD South.

METHOD
Priority: Artillery POF TM A, mortar POF TM C.
Allocation: A1B (AB1003 and AB1004 2 x MIP BPs)1x Bty per TGT Continuos Fire 20 minutes TM B (P), FO tm 1 (A) as TM B crosses 34 Northing. AB1009 20 minutes FA SMK 300 x 60 TM B (P) TM C (A) as TM B crosses 34 Northing.
Restrictions: Clear illum through regiment, no DPICM on MSR MARS, regiment release authority for SD FASCAM. CFL PL DICK o/o PL HARRY. RFAs 300 meters radius on all FO tm and scout locations. FFA 67599977-67009710-65009675.

EFFECTS
TM B occupies SBF position, TM C establishes 2 breach lanes and retains 85% combat power. 2 x Plt BPs unable to effectively engage 1/6.

PHASE THREE, SEIZE OBJECTIVE GOLD

TASK
Disrupt the ability of the 127th regiments 2xPlt BPs and enemy regiment from effectively engaging TM C and TM Mech with direct and indirect fires.
PURPOSE
To allow 1/6 to seize objective GOLD.

METHOD
Allocation: AB1100 FA PRI TGT continuous fire 15 minutes East Plt Pos TM C (P) scouts (A) as TM C exits breach lane. AB1200 mortar Smk 60 x 300 15 minutes TM C (P), FO tm1 (P) as TM C clears breach lane. If the enemy is observed moving vicinity ELGIN FO tm 1(P), scout (A) initiates 2xCAS when CAS is 5 minutes off IP AB1010 1 x bty 6rds templated SA13 SEAD FO tm 1 (P)TM C (A) when CAS 3 minutes off IP AB1201 (1 Tube) mortar red phosphorus (RP) CAS marker. Once TMC seizes Objective GOLD East, artillery and mortar POF to TM Mech. AB1101artillery PRI TGT Continuous fire 10 minutes West TM Mech (P) scouts (A) when TM Mech moves through TM C. If the enemy is observed moving vicinity ELGINFO tm 1(P), scout (A) initiates 2xCAS when CAS is 5 minutes off IP AB1010 1 x bty 6rds templated SA13 SEAD FO tm 1 (P)TM C (A) when CAS 3 minutes off IP AB1201 (1 Tube) mortar RP CAS marker.

Restrictions: Clear illum through regiment, no DPICM on MSR, regiment release authority for SD FASCAM. CFL PL DICK o/o PL HARRY. O/O ACA ORANGE. RFAs 300 meters radius on all FO tm and scout locations. FFA Grids 6759977-67009710-65009675.

EFFECTS
1/6 seizes OBJ GOLD, SA13 unable to engage CAS. CAS destroys enemy formation (3 x AT5s 12 x T80s).

PHASE 4, CONSOLIDATION
TASK
Limit the ability of the 127th regiment’s remaining forces from penetrating PL KEN.

PURPOSE
To allow 1/6 to establish a hasty defensive position along PL HARRY before the FPOL with 2/6.

METHOD
Priority: Artillery POF TM Mech, mortar POF TM A.
Allocation: AB8000 FASCAM SD, MD, 400 X 200 TM C (P) TM B (A) when Plt or greater size of BMPs or T80s seen passing South PL KING along Peters Pass. TMB (P) TM Mech (A). TM Mech to plan 1 x FA FPF. AB1020 mortar FPF TM C (P) as required.

Restrictions: Clear illum through regiment, No DPICM on MSR, regiment release authority for SD FASCAM. CFL PL HARRY. RFAs 300 meters radius on all FO tm and Scout locations. FFA Grids 6759977-67009710-65009675.

EFFECTS
No remaining 127 MIRB forces able to penetrate PL KEN.

1/1 will initially use artillery and NSFS to disrupt the reconnaissance element’s, from 132nd MRR, ability to identify and report our battle positions and obstacle locations to allow 2/1 to remain undetected within its BPs, prepared to maximize fires within EA Mack. Then R/W CAS and artillery will be used by 2/1 to delay the advanced guard, main body, of 132nd MRR west of PL Iowa to enable 1/1 to conduct rearward passage of lines with 2/1.