

Chapter 2

Battle Command

This chapter provides the techniques and procedures used by MP leaders at company and platoon level to C² their organizations.

OVERVIEW

2-1. Battle command is the art of battle decision making, leading, and motivating soldiers and organizations into action to achieve victory with the least cost to the organization. Commanders must visualize the current and future state of both friendly and enemy forces. The commander positions himself where he can guide and motivate the soldiers and influence the outcome of the missions.

2-2. The company commander is responsible for all that the unit does or fails to do. He cannot delegate this responsibility, and the final decision and responsibility rest with him. He discharges his responsibility through an established chain of command and holds each subordinate leader responsible for the actions of the platoon or the section.

2-3. The commander must be proficient in the tactical employment of the unit. He must know the capabilities and limitations of the soldiers and the equipment. A commander does this through a continuous cycle of planning, executing, and assessing training. Through this training, the commander gets to know the soldiers.

2-4. MP commanders prioritize, assign missions, and allocate resources where they can best support the higher echelon commander's intent. The company

commander makes most of the tactical decisions. Technological advances in today’s operational environments have reduced the time available for decision making while increasing the possibilities that must be considered.

2-5. Thorough and sound operational planning is the key to successful combat and CS operations. Commanders must identify the opportunities and anticipate and avoid problems. They must analyze their options before making the decisions on which subordinate leaders will base their actions. Commanders balance competing risks and then identify and develop the best course of action (COA).

MILITARY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS (MDMP)

2-6. The MDMP is a single, established, and proven analytical process used at all the echelons of the commands. This is a seven-step process used when adequate planning time and enough staff support are available (*Table 2-1*). This process is a detailed, deliberate, sequential, and time-consuming process that helps the commander and his staff examine a battlefield situation and reach logical decisions. The commander uses the entire staff during the process to explore the full range of probable and likely enemy and friendly COAs and to analyze and compare his own organization’s capabilities with the enemy’s.

Table 2-1. MDMP

Step	Action	Step	Action
1	Receipt of the mission	5	COA comparison
2	Mission analysis	6	COA approval
3	COA development	7	Orders production
4	COA analysis		

2-7. At company level, the commander normally uses the MDMP in a time-constrained environment without enough staff. A unit can shorten the process if it fully understands the role of each step of the process and the requirements to produce the necessary products. The application of the MDMP at company level and below is called the troop-leading procedures (TLP). *Figure 2-1, page 2-4* shows the relationship between MDMP and TLP.

2-8. MP commanders plan successful operations by anticipating possible future events and planning contingencies. MP leaders enhance both planning and execution of the operations when they—

- Use the military planning and decision-making process.
- Develop short- and long-range goals.
- Identify goals and objectives with a recognizable end-state.
- Coordinate goals and actions internally and externally.
- Base their plans on objective planning factors.
- Review their plans, continuously, in light of the METT-TC and updated information.
- Assign responsibilities and express expectations.
- Identify the options that may develop during an operation.
- Stand ready to accommodate the changes.

MILITARY PLANNING

2-9. Commanders select and carry out the developed COAs using military planning. Military planning guidelines include—

- Forecasting requirements by analyzing and evaluating facts and trends to predict what may occur.

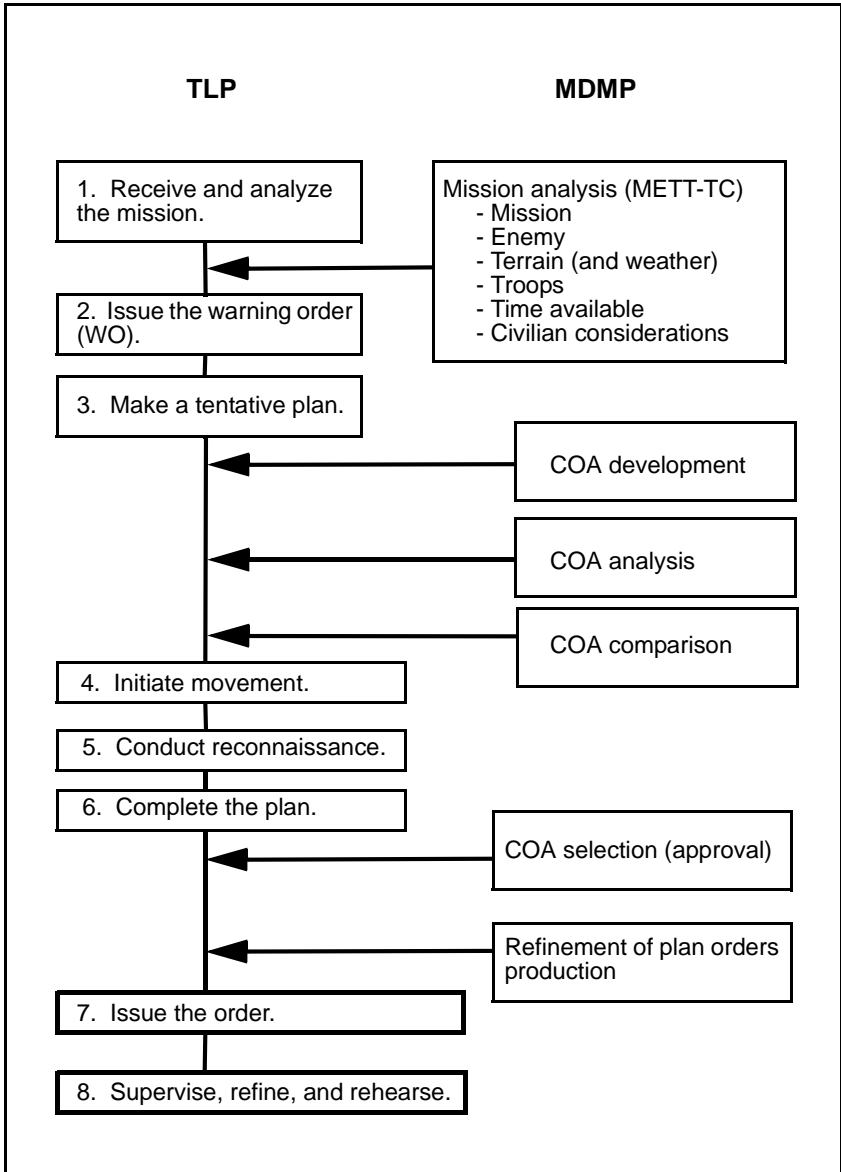


Figure 2-1. Relationship Between TLP and the MDMP

- Examining probable requirements and establishing priorities for further preparation.
- Studying implications and interrelationships of probable requirements.
- Analyzing the mission to determine tasks, their complexity, and their relative importance.
- Establishing guidance for further planning that will help keep all the elements focused on the commander's intent.
- Preparing studies and estimates to help formulate the COA and assess its feasibility.
- Selecting the COA, identifying the best course, and retaining other feasible courses for use in contingencies as alternate plans.
- Preparing the plan in detail and conducting rehearsals when time, resources, and security permit.

2-10. Use the following military planning guidelines to answer the three key questions of operational planning:

- What military condition must be produced to achieve the goal?
- What sequence of actions is most likely to produce that condition?
- How should resources be applied to accomplish that sequence of actions?

2-11. If the plan is not implemented immediately, retain it for later use. As events occur or new information becomes available, review and revise the plan accordingly.

ANALYSIS, FORECASTING, AND RISKS

2-12. Conducting a mission analysis is crucial to planning. The process begins by gathering facts and ascertaining current conditions, such as the—

- Higher-level mission and the commander's intent (one and two levels up).

- Current task organization (two levels down).
- Current unit status (locations, operation capabilities, and activities).
- Logistics situation (refer to *FM 101-5* for the logistic estimate format).

2-13. When facts are not available, the commander will need to develop assumptions. Assumptions must substitute for fact where information is not known. Keep in mind that as time passes between the receipt of a mission and the execution of a plan, facts are increasingly likely to have changed. Develop sound assumptions that can be used in place of facts.

2-14. Analyzing the higher-level mission and the commander's intent will help identify what tasks are required to accomplish the mission. As the mission is analyzed, identify both the *specified* and the *implied* tasks to be performed. *Specified tasks* are those stated in higher HQ orders and plans. *Implied tasks* (like crossing a river or passing through the lines of a unit lying between you and the objective) are not so stated, but must be accomplished to satisfy the overall operation. From among the specified and implied tasks, essential tasks that are crucial to the mission's success must be identified.

2-15. Integral to mission planning is the analysis of mission requirements in terms of time, space, and personnel. If MP are to balance the benefits of detailed planning against the need for immediate action, they must—

- Determine how much time there will be between receiving the mission and the deadline for having completed it.
- Know how long it will take to obtain and process information, make decisions, and issue orders.

- Know how long it will take subordinates to execute the orders, complete the mission, or carry out the operation.

2-16. Because each unit involved in an operation performs its planning based on the plans of the next higher level, allocation of adequate time for subordinate units to plan is a consideration at each level. Publishing SOPs reduces the number of details to be explained. It also promotes understanding and teamwork among commanders, staff, and troops.

2-17. When doing reverse planning, consider the classic allotment of one-third time for planning and two-thirds time for execution (*Table 2-2*). Move backward from the time of execution to—

- Allocate time to accomplish each phase of an operation.
- Determine how much time is needed to rehearse.
- Determine how much time is needed for developing the plan.

Table 2-2. Reverse Planning Timetable

Time	Action
2230	Execute the mission.
2130-2215	Conduct inspection(s).
1845-2130	Conduct rehearsal(s).
1815-1845	Issue an operation order (OPORD).
1745-1815	Complete the plan.
1715-1745	Conduct the leaders' reconnaissance.
1630-1715	Issue a tentative plan.
1630	Issue a WO.
1600	Receive the mission.

2-18. When using terrain analysis, consider the layout of the battlefield. Appreciate the opportunities and

limitations of the major terrain features, transportation networks, and built-up areas. Fit the operational concept and planning to that environment. Use the IPB to evaluate the area in terms of the military aspects of the terrain. Consider how to exploit the opportunities afforded by weather while minimizing its adverse effects.

2-19. Use current information on the threat to identify known enemy activities and threat capabilities that could affect this and future operations. Attempt to anticipate the enemy's objectives and intentions.

2-20. Consider available assets and determine acceptable levels of risk. At every echelon, MP disperse their assets and prioritize operations to meet the echelon commander's needs within the limits of the resources at hand. MP leaders must concentrate their efforts on key locations and accept risks elsewhere. When possible, recognize and moderate such risks in the choice of operations and in the contingency planning. The five steps to identify, analyze, and reduce risks are listed in *FM 100-14*.

COURSE OF ACTION IDENTIFICATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND SELECTION

2-21. The commander's selected COA will become the actual plan for accomplishing the mission. To ensure the best plan possible, identify several possible COAs, each significantly different from the others. In identifying COAs, do not overlook a check of the "basics" that include the—

- Commander's intent.
- Essential tasks.
- Effective use of C^2 .
- Principles of war.
- Ethical considerations.
- Relative force ratio.

2-22. Consider preparing a COA statement (and sketch, if appropriate) for each option. The COA statement is the "how" of the operation. Ensure that it includes the following five elements:

- What – the type of action.
- When – the time the action will begin.
- Where – the assigned area.
- How – the use of available assets.
- Why – the purpose of the operation.

2-23. When developing the COA, analyze the relative combat power. Consider the initial array of the forces and develop the schemes of maneuver. Determine C² means and maneuver control measures.

2-24. Base doctrinal capabilities and planning on historical planning factors, and then relook the estimates in light of the available assets, the factors of METT-TC, the echelon commander's intent, and the mission's priorities. For example, when planning distribution of mobile assets for route coverage, begin with an estimate of one mobile MP team per 10 kilometers. For area coverage, begin with an estimate of one mobile MP team per 55 square kilometers.

2-25. When dispersing the assets into small combat elements, consider the classic ratios of friendly to enemy forces (3 to 1) to help ensure that the elements can concentrate enough combat power to accomplish the mission. Consider the speed and ease of reassembling the elements if dispersing them to distant sites.

2-26. Attempt to anticipate the enemy's likely moves. Consider ways to obstruct dangerous approaches to the area and avenues leading away from potential landing zones. Plan ways to combine the efforts of different resources, like enhancing the combat power for the base response and counterreconnaissance operations with fire

support from field artillery or aviation. Attempt to determine the outcome of the operations by—

- Conserving unit strength through economy of force.
- Using terrain, weather, deception, and operations security (OPSEC) to your advantage.
- Focusing your efforts on enemy vulnerabilities.
- Ensuring unity of effort among subordinates and with your peers.

2-27. When planning for combat operations, whenever possible, develop a COA that avoids an enemy's strength and strikes at his weaknesses. Avoid head-on encounters with an enemy's forces. Seek to gain the element of surprise. When moving, plan to use indirect approaches and flank positions that do not attract immediate attention. Plan for fire support to increase MP combat power. Plan to operate on the enemy's flanks and rear, where direct fire is most effective, psychological shock is the greatest, and the enemy is least prepared to fight. Respond to and implement changes quickly and plan supplementary or alternative control measures to modify the plan as the situation dictates.

2-28. For a combat operation, the COA statement and sketches include the following:

- Allocated forces.
- Unit boundaries.
- Axes of advance.
- Routes for a forward or rearward passage of lines.
- Air axes for the maneuver of attack helicopters.
- Other control measures which may include—
 - Phase lines.
 - Assembly and holding areas.
 - Zones or sectors.
 - Battle positions.
 - Objectives.
 - Obstacles.
 - Routes.

2-29. Assess all of the feasible COAs after developing them. Consider constraints and restrictions on each COA. Weigh the available COA for the AO, for the level of responsibility, the commander's intent, and the mission's priorities. Decide on the best COA. For more information about the MDMP process, refer to *FM 101-5*.

2-30. Once the commander decides on a COA, he announces it in the form of orders that include his intent and concept of the operation. Based on these orders, the platoon leader uses TLP to organize his time during planning and preparation for the mission. Time management is the key. The platoon leader normally uses one-third of the available time to plan, prepare, and issue the order. The squad leaders have the remaining two-thirds of the time to prepare the squads for the mission. Whenever possible, TLP are integrated and accomplished concurrently rather than sequentially. Relationships between TLP and the MDMP are shown in *Figure 2-1, page 2-4*.

TROOP-LEADING PROCEDURES

2-31. TLP begin when the platoon leader is alerted for a mission and starts again when he receives a change or a new mission. Conducting TLP is an eight-step process (*Table 2-3, page 2-12*). Steps 3 through 8 may not follow a rigid sequence. Several of the steps may be accomplished concurrently. In CS operations, platoon leaders rarely have enough time to go through each step in detail. However, the procedure must be followed, if only in abbreviated form. This ensures that nothing is left out of the planning and the preparation.

2-32. Risk management is an integral part of TLP and must be integrated into every aspect of mission

Table 2-3. The Eight Steps of TLP

Step	Action
1	Receive and analyze the mission.
2	Issue a WO.
3	Make a tentative plan.
4	Initiate movement.
5	Conduct a reconnaissance.
6	Complete the plan.
7	Issue the order.
8	Supervise, refine, and rehearse.

planning and execution. Identifying hazards and implementing control measures to mitigate those hazards will minimize operational accidents, thereby preserving combat power. Risk management is not a separate process, but rather infused into the entire TLP. For more information about risk management, refer to *FM 100-14*.

RECEIVE AND ANALYZE THE MISSION

2-33. TLP begin when the platoon leader is alerted for a mission and start again when he receives a change or a new mission. When the platoon leader receives the mission, he—

- Analyzes the mission.
- Considers the operations underway.
- Identifies the hazards associated with the mission, and considers the aspects of the current and future situations, environment, and known historical problems.
- Considers the time needed to plan and carry out the new mission. For example, will sleep plans be needed to ensure that all the teams are on a similar rest posture?

- Plans the use of available time. The most critical resource may be time, especially during daylight hours.
- Uses reverse planning to make a timetable. The timetable—
 - Identifies what must be done.
 - Works backwards from the time the soldiers have to be ready, allowing them time to do each task.
- Uses no more than one-third of the time for planning. The subordinate leaders need the remaining time to make preparations.

2-34. If time is too short to do the rest of the troop-leading steps in detail, at least do a fast mental review and—

- Make a quick map reconnaissance while sending for the subordinate leaders, depending on the level of the mission.
- Have the minimum control measures needed posted on their maps.
- Give an abbreviated order.
- Cite enemy and friendly situations.
- State the mission of the team, squad, or platoon and the concept of the operation.

2-35. If there is not enough time to do these actions, have the unit move out, then issue a fragmentary order (FRAGO) by radio or at the next scheduled halt. Continue the plan while moving.

ISSUE A WARNING ORDER

2-36. Issue an oral or written WO to the subordinate leaders as soon as possible. Give enough information for the unit to begin preparing for the mission. If needed, issue several WOs to keep subordinates informed. Refer to *Appendix D* for more information about WOs.

2-37. The unit SOP should detail what actions to take when a WO is received. Such actions may include drawing ammunition, rations, water, and communications gear and checking vehicles and equipment. Keep all the personnel informed of what they are to do and why they are to do it.

MAKE A TENTATIVE PLAN

2-38. Develop the plan based on the factors of METT-TC (using the OPORD format and the higher HQ order). The order may be specific about the tasks the unit is to do. The time available may be limited and the scheme of maneuver may be dictated. Nevertheless, the leader still must evaluate the mission in terms of METT-TC to see how MP elements can best carry out the commander's order. The leader must—

- Consider each factor and compare the COA to form a base for the plan.
- Include concepts for reconnaissance, coordination with adjacent and/or supporting units, and troop movement.
- Assess the identified hazards. Consider the impact of each hazard in terms of potential loss based on probability and severity.
- Identify control measures that will eliminate the hazards or mitigate them to an acceptable level. Make decisions on acceptable levels of risk based on potential benefits versus cost.
- Issue the plan, when firm, as an order. *Appendix D* contains the OPORD format.

INITIATE MOVEMENT

2-39. Instruct subordinate leaders to start moving to the assembly area (AA). Allow subordinate leaders enough time for their actions if the element has to move and reorganize for the mission.

CONDUCT A RECONNAISSANCE

2-40. Ensure that the terrain where the operation is to be conducted is reconnoitered. At a minimum, conduct a map reconnaissance. (A map reconnaissance is the easiest, but least reliable form of reconnaissance. It is a supplement to other types of reconnaissance.) Study the map for terrain features, natural barriers, and other characteristics. Have subordinate leaders help identify key terrain features. Refer to *FM 21-26* for map-reading skills. Follow up with a visual reconnaissance of the area to be used and the terrain over which you will operate. A visual reconnaissance can be done—

- On the ground. A ground reconnaissance is time consuming, but the most reliable type of reconnaissance. MP see terrain features up close and can note problems not easily seen using other reconnaissance methods.
- In the air. If available, air reconnaissance can cover terrain quickly. To do an air reconnaissance, show the pilot a map of the terrain to be reconnoitered. Specify the type of information to be gathered. Have one person in the plane track the patrol's route on a map. At critical points, if the aircraft can land, have part of the patrol dismount to make a ground reconnaissance while the rest of the patrol goes back into the air to provide overwatch security. If the aircraft cannot land, make a visual search for enemy activity or for the required information.

2-41. Use the information from the reconnaissance to verify or to change the plan and to modify the risk-assessment process. Adapt your tactics to the terrain and the abilities of the force. If the reconnaissance cannot be finished due to distance or enemy pressure, make the plan from what has been seen. Give instructions for later actions in general terms and confirm or change while moving over the terrain.

Provide a sketch that will aid with a sand table to help in the OPORD issue, if time permits.

COMPLETE THE PLAN

2-42. Add details or makes changes to the tentative plan (as a result of the reconnaissance and coordination with nearby and/or supporting agencies) and identify specific tasks for all the subordinate elements.

ISSUE THE ORDER

2-43. Issue an OPORD or FRAGO ensuring that—

- The soldiers know the plan.
- The instructions are stated clearly and concisely (use the OPORD format). Platoon and squad orders are usually issued orally. However, if time permits, they can be written. When the order is written, delete the service support and command and signal paragraphs if covered by the SOP.
- The soldiers are thoroughly briefed on the hazards associated with the mission and the control measures identified to mitigate the hazards.
- The subordinate leaders back brief the order and spot-check the soldiers.
- When possible, the order is given from the advantage point where soldiers can see the area in which they will operate. This lets the leader point out terrain features on the ground as well as on a map. If this cannot be done, use a terrain model (sand table) or a sketch to help explain the order.

SUPERVISE, REFINE, AND REHEARSE

2-44. Supervise, refine, and rehearse the preparation to ensure that the soldiers are ready for the mission. This includes—

- Using the feedback received from subordinates.

- Ensuring that every soldier knows the mission and understands the commander's intent for the operation. The unit must be able to carry out the mission in the absence of the leader that developed the plan.
- Continuing to prepare when the troop-leading steps have been completed.
- Having the soldiers rehearse their actions if there is enough time before an operation.

Rehearsals

2-45. Rehearsals build confidence and improve performance. They allow faults in a plan to surface. If possible, soldiers should rehearse on terrain and under conditions like those at the operation site. Give priority to actions to be taken in the objective area. A rehearsal is especially helpful when operating in reduced visibility.

2-46. Each type of rehearsal reflects an increase in mission realism and a corresponding increase in rehearsal benefit. Each technique increases the realism of the enemy, terrain, team and squad actions, and actual time and distance relationships. Rehearsal techniques fall into the following four categories:

- Back brief.
- Rock drill.
- Walk-through.
- Full-scale.

2-47. Regardless of the rehearsal technique, leaders must demand that soldiers demonstrate the known hazards associated with the mission and understand the control measures identified to counter them. Insist that rehearsals include prescribed control measures (either actions or equipment).

2-48. **Back Brief.** The back brief rehearsal is an event that occurs after an OPORD has been issued. The back

brief is the quickest rehearsal technique. Subordinate leaders repeat back to the commander what he expects them to do and why, using a map or a sand table to explain their mission. The subordinate leader identifies all specified and implied tasks, determines their mission-essential tasks, and restates the mission. Items essential to the back brief are the—

- Commander's intent.
- Concept of the operation.
- Scheme of maneuver.
- Time to complete the tasks.

2-49. **Rock Drill.** A rock drill rehearsal is done by acting out the friendly and enemy actions based on the scheme of maneuver and the situation. Subordinate leaders rehearse their actions by moving objects, such as rocks, that represent them or the platoon. In acting out the plan, leaders can talk through their missions, critical tasks, actions, and decisions. All subordinate leaders act out their parts simultaneously so problems and disconnects in synchronization can be more clearly identified.

2-50. **Walk-Through.** A walk-through rehearsal is the acting out of actions that will occur during a mission using the actual vehicles and equipment that will be used to conduct the operation. Participants communicate with the same type of equipment they will use during the operation. During a walk-through, subordinate leaders rehearse—

- Movement techniques, both mounted and dismounted.
- Critical actions.
- Decision making.

2-51. Since the leaders are in a more realistic environment, they rehearse the finer aspects of synchronization, C², and squad and team actions. Aggressive portrayal of OPFOR is critical in walk-

through rehearsals because it increases the rehearsal realism. This type of rehearsal is more difficult to orchestrate. It is the optimum balance between resource constraints and realism. Ensure that a walk-through rehearsal is the minimum goal for all the units.

2-52. **Full-Scale.** During a full-scale rehearsal, participants use real-time mounted and dismounted movements over the actual or similar terrain. It is normally conducted with all teams and squads to be used for the actual mission. At a minimum, one subunit must participate for a full-scale rehearsal. This type of rehearsal is the most resource intensive, but provides the most realistic training environment for the unit. It is often used to rehearse the operation plan (OPLAN) or OPORD when time is not an immediate constraint.

Inspection

2-53. The last action before an operation is inspecting. Allow ample time for subordinate leaders to correct problems. Inspect soldiers by checking their mental and physical readiness. Inspect their equipment and check for the following:

- Accountability.
- Serviceability.
- Weapons.
- Ammunition.
- Individual uniforms and equipment.
- Mission-essential equipment.
- Water and rations.
- Communications equipment.
- Vehicles.
- Camouflage.

2-54. The equipment used during a mission is based on the unit's SOP, a risk assessment, and special considerations. Ensure that the SOP specifies a combat

load and a list of ammunition and equipment usually carried on missions. Base changes from the SOP combat load on the METT-TC.

2-55. *Appendix E* contains a sample precombat-inspection (PCI) checklist. Ensure that the soldiers have everything they need for the mission. Ensure that they—

- Know their duties.
- Have only the equipment needed.
- Are wearing their equipment correctly and securely.

ORDERS AND REPORTS

2-56. MP leaders translate their thoughts, evaluations, and decisions into understandable reports and orders. Battlefield communication requires standardized, streamlined procedures. Despite personal exhaustion or battle confusion, you must be able to rapidly report information or issue instructions that are simple, clear, and brief.

ORDERS

2-57. Combat orders are written or oral communications giving details of tactical operations and administration. The three most common types of combat orders at company level and below are—

- WO
- OPORD
- FRAGO

2-58. WOs and OPORDs generally have set formats. This helps ensure that the receiver understands the intent of the message and that all needed information is provided. Standardization helps save time in writing as well as interpreting orders. FRAGOs enhance what has been previously sent out in the OPORD, such as a

change in the situation or mission. Refer to *Appendix D* for examples of orders.

Reports

2-59. MP report to higher HQ and provide information on which plans, decisions, and orders can be based. The information included in MP reports must be accurate and timely, and complete *negative* information ("There is no enemy at . . . ") is often as important as positive information. Reports are the main record of operational events. The three broad categories of reports are—

- Administrative.
- Operational.
- Intelligence.

2-60. Commanders may specify report formats in their local tactical SOP. Treat friendly information, including administrative reports, as classified or sensitive in nature to keep information from falling into the enemy's hands. *FM 101-5-2* and *Appendix D* of this manual CONTAIN STANDARD REPORTING FORMATS.

SOPs

2-61. SOPs detail how forces will execute unit-specific techniques and procedures that commanders standardize to enhance effectiveness and flexibility. Commanders use the SOP to standardize routine or recurring actions not needing their personal involvement.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AND RULES OF INTERACTION (ROI)

2-62. MP usually are among the first CS forces deployed to troubled areas around the world. As a direct result of a peacetime L&O mission, MP continually train in the prudent use of force, crisis management, and operations requiring restrictive ROE and ROI.

2-63. ROE are the directives established by higher HQ that delineate the circumstances and limitations under which soldiers will initiate and/or continue engagement with belligerent forces. ROE may reflect the law of armed conflict and operational considerations, but are primarily concerned with the restraints on the use of force. ROE are the primary means by which commanders convey legal, political, diplomatic, and military guidance to soldiers. Leaders at every level must train their soldiers carefully and thoroughly concerning ROE and laws that govern armed conflict before deployment. During the conduct of the operation, leaders continue to train soldiers and stress firm, determined, and impartial execution of ROE to preclude inviting challenges from any of the belligerent parties.

2-64. ROI embody those human dimension skills needed to successfully interface with various categories of people. They spell out with whom, under what circumstances, and to what extent soldiers may interact with other forces and the civilian populace. ROI, when applied with good interpersonal communication (IPC) skills, improve the soldier's ability to accomplish the mission while reducing possible hostile confrontations. ROI and IPC, by enhancing the soldier's persuasion, negotiation, and communication skills, also improve his survivability. ROI founded on firm ROE provide the soldier with the tools to address nontraditional threats such as political friction, ideologies, cultural idiosyncrasies, and religious beliefs and rituals. ROI must be regionally and culturally specific. MP leaders must train soldiers on ROE and ROI using tactical vignettes or simulated events.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

2-65. Situational awareness is the ability to maintain a constant, clear mental picture of the tactical situation. This picture includes an understanding of both the

friendly and enemy situations and of relevant terrain. It also includes relating events in time to form logical conclusions and make decisions that anticipate events. Since MP platoons normally operate dispersed, it is essential that all MP leaders maintain situational awareness so that they can make quick, sound tactical decisions. Situational awareness also permits MP leaders to anticipate events and relate separate pieces of information to form logical conclusions. One of the critical outcomes of situational awareness on the part of all MP is a reduction in fratricide incidents. Refer to *Appendix F* for fratricide avoidance.

BATTLEFIELD FRAMEWORK

2-66. The commander will structure the battlefield based on the conditions of METT-TC and his commander's intent. How he does this affects the MP platoon leader's mission planning and his ability to maintain situational awareness. Geographically, available assets, mission, and the AO influence the dispersion of MP assets. The framework of this AO can vary from an area that is dominated by several towns or large cities to an area that includes several bases and base clusters. MP can expect to operate in sustainment areas where there may be clear boundaries and closely tied adjacent units or in a decentralized structure with few secure areas and unit boundaries. Between these extremes are an unlimited number of possible variations. Maintaining situational awareness becomes more difficult as the battlefield becomes less structured. Modern, highly mobile operations with small forces lend themselves to a less rigid framework that challenges the MP ability to maintain an accurate *picture* of the battlefield. MP are the echelon commander's critical link to the battlefield, constantly gathering police, operational, and combat information.

BATTLEFIELD PICTURE

2-67. To have a clear picture of the battlefield, the MP leader must have virtually perfect knowledge of the friendly situation one level higher. This means the MP platoon leader must know the company situation and the location and mission of the adjacent company and platoons. It is also important that the platoon leader update his subordinate leaders periodically regarding the higher situation. The platoon leader must have a relatively complete knowledge of the terrain, and he must know as much as possible about the enemy. The requirement to maintain a real-time picture of the battlefield one level higher does not relieve the platoon leader of the requirement to understand the situation and the commander's intent two levels higher. The difference is that this understanding of the situation two levels higher does not have to be as specific or in real time.

2-68. Most of the information the platoon leader needs comes in the form of reports over communication channels. Subordinate leaders are required to periodically report their status. If an MP team is operating in an area that does not allow uninterrupted communications, the team leader coordinates with adjacent teams to relay his report. If an MP team does not report in a timely manner, the platoon leader must quickly determine the status of the overdue team.

2-69. If possible, the platoon leader monitors his platoon and company net. How effectively he can accomplish this is, to some degree, experience-dependent; however, there are techniques he can apply to relate the information he is receiving to the map and thereby track the tactical situation.

2-70. The platoon leader's map is the key to maintaining situational awareness. He plots all friendly position reports up to one level higher than his own and plots information from spot reports (SPOTREPs). He uses

different colors for friendly and enemy elements to allow quick distinction. To avoid cluttering the map, he places a dot or symbol on the map where the element is located and labels the point with a number. The same number is then written in the map's margin (or beyond the AOs) with the complete SPOTREP or unit identification (ID) next to it. Include the time on this notation. As positions or reports are updated, the old symbol is crossed off and a new one with a corresponding notation is added; it is critical that updates to previous reports be clearly identified as such during transmission. This simple system can greatly increase the ability to track both friendly forces and enemy activity in a particular AO.

BATTLE SPACE

2-71. As mentioned earlier, an accurate picture of the battlefield provides the platoon leader with important tactical information, including friendly and enemy positions and relevant terrain. In turn, complete understanding of the military significance of this picture requires knowledge of the concept of battle space, the key element in the intellectual process of visualizing the battlefield.

2-72. At the most fundamental level, battle space is the three-dimensional *bubble* or area in which the platoon can acquire enemy forces and influence them with effective fires. This space is defined by the following numerous battlefield factors:

- The locations of the friendly forces, including the platoon's individual teams, OPs, and patrols.
- The effects of the terrain, weather, and movement.
- The ranges of all the available platoon weapons and sensing systems.

2-73. Each squad has its own battle space; the platoon battle space is the sum of the individual squads battle spaces. Platoon battle space is not restricted by boundaries; it can overlap with the battle space of

adjacent units. For example, an enemy element that is spotted outside of the platoon's AO can still adversely affect the platoon's mission. Coordination is made with adjacent units to detect and destroy the threat.

2-74. Battle space has applications in all phases of mission planning and execution. During the planning process, it is a critical factor in selection of the routes and tentative positions. Once mission execution begins, the platoon leader's knowledge of the battle space is critical to issuing timely and effective orders as the situation changes.

2-75. The importance of battle space demands that the platoon leader direct most of his battle command effort toward managing and enhancing his space. He must be aware at every moment how battle space is changing as friendly and enemy forces move and terrain and visibility conditions change. He must evaluate how these changes affect his squads.

2-76. As the operation progresses, the platoon leader must take active measures to shape the battle space to his best advantage. One vital step in this process is to eliminate any gaps, or dead space, that exist within the *bubble*. The platoon leader can accomplish this in several ways, including maneuvering teams, repositioning OPs, and deploying patrols or remote sensors.

COMMAND POST OPERATIONS

2-77. Company- and larger-size elements have a tactical operations center (TOC) and platoons have CPs. The CP is wherever the platoon leader goes. It can be mobile or stationary. No matter the location, there must be communication with and command of the unit and a method for battle tracking. CP activities are a 24-hour

operation. The leadership must ensure that there is a plan for continuous operations.

2-78. A mobile CP may be a HMMWV and an ASV. The platoon leader can make decisions on the move while having communication capabilities nearby. A leader's book can hold information on battle rosters, report formats, and a map of the battlefield.

2-79. A stationary CP may be the platoon leader's tent or office. Communications may be telephonic, by messenger, or by radio. Track the status of equipment and personnel by using charts. Use large maps to track the battle. Keep in mind that moving to another location requires taking charts and maps, so everything needs to be mobile.

2-80. Key personnel for CP operations are the platoon leader, the PSG, and the radio/telephone operator (RTO).

PLATOON LEADER

2-81. The platoon leader is responsible for C² of his organization and—

- Planning the missions according to the commander's guidance.
- Planning security to include the placement of crew-served weapons.
- Issuing orders and providing work priorities to subordinate leaders.
- Conducting PCI.
- Planning and conducting platoon rehearsals.
- Battle tracking (knowing) on a map the exact location of all the MP teams, to include the position of friendly platoons and known enemy, and a platoon-sector sketch.
- Adapting to new situations, making necessary adjustments, and issuing FRAGOs.

- Controlling the movement of the subordinate units.
- Ensuring that the communication net is established.
- Conducting risk assessment and continuously updating it.
- Reporting to higher HQ using the correct report format.

PLATOON SERGEANT

2-82. The PSG is responsible for the logistics of the operation and—

- Coordinating and providing all the needed class items.
- Ensuring equipment serviceability and accountability.
- Supervising the maintenance.
- Establishing and supervising a sleep plan.
- Supervising the security plan's execution.
- Supervising the maintenance of work priorities.
- Supervising PCIs.
- Supervising sanitation and hygiene.
- Adjusting, manning, and cross leveling the soldiers, weapons, and equipment.
- Coordinating and supervising morale services.
- Assisting the platoon leader in rehearsals.
- Supervising test firing.
- Assisting with battle tracking.
- Consolidating subordinate units' status reports for the platoon leader.
- Assisting with the reports.
- Providing technical and tactical advice to the platoon leader.
- Maintaining situational awareness.

RADIO/TELEPHONE OPERATOR

2-83. The RTO should be an experienced MP who is also the platoon leader's driver. The RTO—

- Communicates with higher HQ and separate units.
- Submits the required reports according to orders and SOPs.
- Maintains a record of communications.
- Maintains the radio and communication equipment.
- Assists with battle tracking.