

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1-1. Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide commanders and their staffs with information and data which can guide them in their conduct of tactical clearing operations. It provides a consolidation of the latest information and guidance to personnel responsible for planning land clearing operations and for utilizing and supervising engineer units engaged in such operations. Additionally, the manual provides information about equipment and methods used by civilian land clearing agencies that are also applicable to military clearing operations.

1-2. Scope

This manual contains information on how to evaluate clearing requirements, determine the amount of effort required, select the most efficient means to clear the vegetation, and support and secure land clearing units. The necessity for sound prior planning is emphasized throughout this manual because it is a major lesson to be learned from the clearing operations conducted up to now. Good planning will insure that the specifications are consistent with the purpose for clearing, which is essential to avoid wasted effort resulting from clearing too thoroughly in one area and not thoroughly enough in another. Clearing for agricultural or forestry purposes specifically is not included. However, the potential civic action benefits to be derived from a clearing project, such as making more agricultural areas available and providing felled vegetation for lumber, should always be considered, due to the favorable social and economic impact on the local populace.

1-3. Application

In addition to information specifically pertinent to

tactical land clearing, this manual contains a variety of data and information having application to land clearing in general. These are included because tactical land clearing operations can utilize most of the engineering considerations and techniques discussed therein. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that tactical land clearing operations are a distinctive, separate, and highly specialized type of combat operation normally conducted by combined arms groupings supported by TOE engineer land clearing companies (or composite or provisional engineer land clearing battalions) and other engineer units as may be appropriate. Land clearing on a relatively small scale may be conducted in mid-intensity or higher level warfare by any engineer unit equipped with land clearing plows and related equipment. However, large-scale land clearing operations in a counterinsurgency environment or in low-intensity warfare where enemy forces make extensive use of heavily forested areas for their bases and operations will normally be accomplished with the support of specialized engineer land clearing units as indicated above.

1-4. Changes

Users of this publication are encouraged to submit recommended changes and comments to improve the publication. Comments should be keyed to the specific page, paragraph, and line of the text in which the change is recommended. Reasons will be provided for each comment to insure understanding and complete evaluation. Comments should be prepared using DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) and forwarded direct to the Commandant, US Army Engineer School, Fort Belvoir, Virginia 22060.