

Introduction

Successfully supporting the commander with reliable and redundant communications is a direct result of **detailed planning**. Planning signal support operations should not occur in a vacuum or just among signalers. For communications to successfully support the commander, several steps must occur with absolute conviction. The most critical step in understanding what is expected from a signal leader and planner is understanding the commander's intent. From the commander's intent, all planning can begin among sections, staffs, units and individuals. The staff planning process per the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Student Text (ST) 101-5 and the wargaming process begin immediately. Warning orders and fragmentary orders (FRAGOs) can be issued to subordinates so they can make maximum use of the time available and execute the appropriate troop-leading procedures.

Soldiers' lives hinge on our ability to plan tactical operations. Planners must successfully synchronize and integrate the plan to support the commander. Communications must support the scheme of maneuver as every other battlefield functional area (BFA) must in a synchronized and integrated effort put maximum focus on a specific objective at a specific time. This will ensure the commander accomplishes the mission. Today's battlefield is three dimensional and signal planning must be done with

FM 11-43

the same application of thought. Planning and coordinating joint operations or operations other than war (OOTW) also must be done with great detail and forethought. Soldiers and signal teams deserve the opportunity to survive based on solid plans and viable contingencies to support unstable situations.

Soldiers must understand several issues for success in a tactical environment. Leaders must keep soldiers informed and updated on all key information. The first issue is an understanding that **a communications problem is everyone's concern until it is solved**. The second issue involves signal soldiers who are highly qualified representatives of the Signal Corps and as such we are all trainers. This means when a user has a communications problem we try our best to educate them so they become **self-reliant**. If we fail to educate, then we must not only do our own work, but we must also do someone else's work. Next, we must train as if we are going to war/conflict. This means we cannot accept the training standard that communications assets go unescorted into the maneuver boxes/threat areas days in advance just to ensure communications are ready. Once in a tactical situation, specific channels for accurate and timely intelligence, battle tracking, and environmental and situational awareness must be developed. This information must be disseminated to the lowest levels possible. All node centers (NCs), radio access units (RAUs), retransmission (RETRANS), and relay teams must get this information promptly. The information

ensures the teams understand and can support the maneuver schemes and are synchronized with other BFAs across the battlefield. Awareness of the enemy or threat enables the soldier to feel secure in their surroundings.

As a signal leader, you are tasked with great responsibility. Plan for success and win the information war.