

## CHAPTER 6

### OTHER TACTICAL OPERATIONS

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Several combat operations are routinely associated with the successful accomplishment of the reconnaissance and security missions described in Chapters 4 and 5. These operations require special planning and training considerations because of their complexity. Scout platoons must execute them based on standardized procedures and must support their parent units' execution of these operations.

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#### Section I. ASSEMBLY AREAS

An assembly area is a site where a unit regroups or prepares for future operations. Normally, a scout platoon occupies an assembly area as part of its parent unit, but it may occupy one independently. Once in the assembly area, the platoon prepares and issues orders, conducts resupply operations, repairs and maintains vehicles and equipment, and feeds and rests its soldiers.

#### CHARACTERISTICS

The scout platoon is often directed to find, clear, and occupy an assembly area. There are certain characteristics to look for when selecting an area:

- Concealment from overhead observation.
- Cover from direct fire.

- Good drainage and a ground surface that will support the platoon's or the parent unit's vehicles.
- Good exits, entrances, and roads.
- Enough space for adequate dispersion of vehicles, personnel, and equipment.
- Defensibility and fields of fire.

## **QUARTERING PARTY**

As part of its parent unit or on its own, the scout platoon may have to assume quartering party duties. Understanding these duties makes occupying the assembly area much easier. The quartering party's mission is to reconnoiter the area for enemy presence and booby traps, designate vehicle locations, prepare the area for occupation, and assist units with occupation. The platoon leader or PSG designates the vehicles and personnel from the platoon to be part of a battalion or troop quartering party. The entire platoon maybe given this task.

The quartering party moves to the new assembly area under the control of the battalion headquarters and headquarters company (HHC) commander, battalion S1, troop XO, or troop first sergeant (1SG). The following discussion outlines the primary responsibilities of the quartering party.

### **Reconnoiter and Clear the Area**

Even in a supposedly secure location, the assembly area must be cleared by security patrols. Initially, the scout element conducts an area reconnaissance of the assembly area to find enemy forces, obstacles, and NBC contamination. This is a time-consuming process that must be planned for by the parent unit. Once the area is cleared, it must be secured to prevent enemy infiltration. To do this, the quartering party establishes OPs or security patrols. If the enemy situation warrants it, the officer in charge (OIC) or NCO in charge (NCOIC) may need to enlarge the quartering party to provide adequate security personnel while others organize and mark the assembly area.

### **Determine if the Area is Suitable**

Once the area is secure, the OIC or NCOIC must conduct a reconnaissance to verify the area's suitability and to position guides and markings. This task can

be conducted in conjunction with the initial area reconnaissance. When checking the position for suitability, the quartering party analyzes cover and concealment, drainage, routes into and out of the area, internal routes, defensibility, and fields of fire. If the area is unsatisfactory, the scouts should immediately begin looking for an alternate site to recommend to the commander. The OIC or NCOIC should notify the commander immediately, reporting his actions and recommendations and requesting further instructions.

### **Organize the Area**

Designate positions on the ground for the various elements within the assembly area. The siting should be consistent with the commander's guidance, unit SOP, and follow-on missions. The frontages selected for the various elements must be consistent with terrain considerations and must provide adequate defensive coverage.

### **Improve and Mark Entrances, Exits, and Internal Routes**

Once the organization of the assembly area is complete, mark the positions. Reconnoiter and mark routes from the RP to the assembly area. The actual entrance and exit for the assembly area must be well marked to facilitate easy movement. Designate and mark internal routes to prevent excessive movement that could create a large unit signature. Unit SOP should dictate the marking system to be used. Examples of markings include them lights, engineer tape, unit tactical signs, flashlights, VS- 17 panels, and thermal tape.

### **Mark or Remove Obstacles and Mines**

Ideally, the commander should have some indication of current or past presence of an enemy in the proposed area. If there is a possibility of mines or CBU's in the assembly area, additional scouts or combat engineers with mine-detecting equipment should be requested before the quartering party departs. Obstacle and mine removal requires prior planning to ensure sufficient quantities of the proper equipment are available. This equipment may include pioneer tools, demolitions, or combat engineer vehicles (CEV). Sufficient time must also be allocated to allow the quartering party to accomplish this mission before the main body arrives, If the area contains numerous obstacles, an alternate area should be reconnoitered.

## **Perform Guide Duties**

The quartering party prepares the assembly area to make the occupation of the new positions swift and efficient. This can be a wasted effort if the guides do not perform their duties properly. Because the quartering party is familiar with the area and the vehicle positions, the vehicle commanders rely, at least initially, on the guides to position the platoon; therefore, guides must be thoroughly briefed prior to the mission. The guides are positioned between the RP and the assembly area entrance so that they can meet their unit as it crosses the RP. They must know the proper route from the RP to the new positions; they quickly move their units through the RP and into the assembly area. They do not stop until vehicle positions are occupied. Once in the new area, the guides direct the vehicles to their tentative positions. Immediately afterward, they walk the platoon leader through the positions, briefing him on the vehicle positions, adjacent units, fields of fire, location of the CP, and any other essential information.

## **Accomplish Additional Assigned Tasks**

If the commander assigns any additional tasks, the quartering party must accomplish them. The commander should prioritize these tasks; if he does not, the quartering party leader must arrange a priority of tasks that allows for the most important to be accomplished first. Examples of such additional tasks include establishing priorities of work, providing security for the command group, test-firing weapons, and assisting in traffic control.

## **OCCUPATION**

When a unit arrives at an assembly area, all elements move off the route of march and clear it without slowing or halting. The platoon leader should keep this in mind as he posts guides, selects routes, and allocates space in the assembly area. After a march serial has cleared the route, it can adjust vehicle positions without holding up traffic.

## **ACTIONS IN THE ASSEMBLY AREA**

As soon as the platoon occupies its area, it must automatically execute the priority of tasks outlined in FKSM 17-98-3. The initial tasks include the following:

- Position vehicles.
- Establish local security.

- Establish lateral contact with vehicles on the flanks.
- Develop range cards or sector sketches and submit them to the platoon leader for inclusion in the platoon fire plan. Scouts may have to adjust their positions accordingly.
- Camouflage positions.
- Perform preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS).

Security is a constant concern in assembly areas. Noise and light discipline are especially important. Limit the number of vehicles that enter and exit the assembly area. The local security that is initially established will be replaced by more permanent OPs once the platoon is established in position. Establish these OPs in accordance with procedures outlined in Section III, Appendix B, of this manual. The platoon leader or higher commander may also require patrols (mounted and dismounted) within the assembly area, especially during darkness. Wire and messengers are the primary means of communications. How many wire lines are laid depends on how long the platoon will be in the assembly area. Radio is used only in an emergency when no other means of communication is available.

## **DEPARTING THE ASSEMBLY AREA**

Departing an assembly area is a critical and often overlooked task. A well-organized departure sets up the platoon for its next mission. A poorly organized departure can cause delays and other problems that may adversely affect the platoon's mission before it begins.

The departure requires thorough planning and preparation, including a walk-through rehearsal. As part of the preparation, a thorough police call must be conducted. This ensures that all evidence of the unit's occupation is removed and denies the enemy any equipment, supplies, or other items that might be of military or intelligence value. Leaders must carefully supervise execution of the departure to ensure that no delays occur.

## **Section II. ROAD MARCHES**

Units not engaged in combat may have to travel long distances to position themselves for future operations. These movements are planned at battalion,

squadron, and company/troop level, but they are executed by the platoons. Success depends largely on unit discipline and the platoons' ability to execute the plan with strict adherence to SOP.

The road march differs from other forms of movement in that—

- The purpose is relocation, not making contact.
- The primary consideration is rapid movement of vehicles.
- It is conducted at a prescribed speed.
- A prescribed interval is maintained between vehicles.

As part of a battalion task force, a scout platoon may perform various duties during a road march: manning traffic control points (TCP), serving as road guides or as a quartering party, or conducting route reconnaissance.

TCP personnel should be employed in pairs, with one directing traffic while the other provides security. They need to know the exact number of vehicles in each march serial, the markings for each serial, and the passing times so that they can adequately control and report the movement of their unit. Considerations for manning the TCP include weather, the marking system for the TCP and route (to include critical turns), limited visibility procedures, and recovery of the TCPs. The platoon leader or PSG has several options in deciding how to man the TCP, to include manning with individual vehicles (up to 6 or 10 TCPs, depending on the configuration of the platoon), dropping off platoon personnel with FM communications at each TCP, or requesting augmentation if needed.

## **PREPARING FOR ROAD MARCHES**

The basic considerations in planning any road march are the enemy situation, the mission, the march order, and the type, number, and characteristics of vehicles available for the movement. When preparing for a tactical road march, the platoon should use the following planning sequence if time permits:

- Prepare and issue the warning order as early as possible to allow maximum time for preparation,
- Prepare an estimate of the situation and organization of the march column.

- Organize and dispatch reconnaissance and quartering parties.
- Prepare the detailed movement plans based on the organization of the march column and a review of available reconnaissance information.
- Prepare and issue the march order.
- Prepare and issue overlays to all track commanders. The road march overlay should include, as a minimum, the location of the SP, RP, scheduled halts, and checkpoints at critical points along the route.

## **MARCH COLUMNS**

A tactical march may be conducted in close column or open column or by infiltration. In dusty conditions, vehicles must be spaced so that the dust from one does not blind the driver of the next.

### **Close Column**

Close column is normally used for marches during limited visibility conditions. Under these conditions, vehicles are spaced so the driver can see the two lights in the blackout marker of the vehicle ahead, about 25 to 50 meters apart. Close column marching takes advantage of the traffic capacity of the routes, but it provides little dispersion. Traffic density is approximately 20 to 30 vehicles per kilometer along the route of march.

### **Open Column**

Open column is generally used during daylight. The distance between vehicles is increased to provide greater dispersion; it varies from 50 meters to 100 meters, or more if the situation requires. Open column may also be used at night with infrared lights, blackout lights, or passive night-vision equipment. Normal vehicle density is 15 vehicles per kilometer when vehicles are 50 meters apart, 12 vehicles per kilometer when the distance is 75 meters, and 10 vehicles per kilometer when the distance is increased to 100 meters. The increased dispersion of the vehicles in open column movement enhances security.

## **Infiltration**

Infiltration provides the best possible passive defense against enemy observation and attack, but it may be difficult to control. It is suited to tactical marches when sufficient time and road space are available and maximum security, deception, and dispersion are desired. The advance party usually infiltrates. Vehicles are dispatched individually, in small groups, or at irregular intervals at a rate that reduces traffic density and prevents undue massing of vehicles.

## **MARCH COLUMN CONTROL**

Column control is maintained through the chain of command. Each scout vehicle has a prescribed place in the platoon march column as described in Section III of FKSM 17-98-3.

### **Start Point**

An SP provides all vehicles of a march column a common point for starting their movement. When vehicles use more than one route, each route has an SP. The SP is a recognizable place along the route of march, such as a road intersection. It should not be in a defile, on a hill, or at a sharp curve in the road that could cause movement to slow. It should be far enough from assembly areas to allow vehicles to be organized and moving at the prescribed speed when they reach it. Before starting a march, elements of the platoon should reconnoiter the route to the SP to determine times for major units of the serial to arrive at and clear the serial SP.

### **Release Point**

An RP gives all vehicles of the march column a common point for reverting to control of the platoon leader. It is a point on the route of march that is easy to recognize on the map and on the ground. Guides should meet vehicles as they arrive at the RP and lead them to the new areas. Multiple routes and cross-country movement from the RP to assembly areas allow vehicles to disperse rapidly. In selecting an RP, avoid hills, defiles, and sharp curves that may cause elements to slow or stop on the route. No vehicle should be required to countermarch or pass through another element to reach its new position.

### **Checkpoints**

Checkpoints on a route are used for reference in providing instructions and identifying places where interference with movement might occur or where timing might be critical.

## **Restrictions**

Restrictions are points along the route of march, such as bridges, intersections, ferries, or bypasses, where movement maybe limited or obstructed during certain time periods. The march planner should start the move early enough to pass such a point before a restriction begins, delay the start of the move to pass a restriction after it has ended, or plan to halt the column along the route until the restriction is lifted.

## **Traffic Control**

Traffic control is normally provided by the parent unit controlling the march. TCPs manned by military police maybe located at critical points along the route. Among the factors that can increase traffic control problems are movement on multiple routes during periods of poor visibility and the existence of major intersections, defiles, and detours along routes. In a battalion task force, the scout platoon may act as road guides to assist the military police. Road guides may lead serials or march units on a particular route or portion of a route or through a critical area. These guides must follow the same procedures and guidance as other TCP personnel.

## **Speed Control**

Vehicles in a column of any length may simultaneously encounter many different types of routes and obstacles. This causes different parts of the column to move at different speeds at the same time, producing an undesirable accordion or whip effect. The movement order gives march speed, rate of march, and maximum safe catch-up speed to reduce "column whipping." The lead vehicle must not exceed the authorized maximum speed of the slowest vehicle in the column. To minimize vehicle congestion on the nearside of an obstacle, vehicle commanders and drivers must be alert and maintain the prescribed minimum following distance. Vehicles should make only gradual speed changes. All vehicles must maintain their prescribed interval. Vehicle commanders must constantly be aware of the vehicle interval to their front and rear and adjust their speed accordingly.

## **Halts**

Halts are made to allow following traffic to pass and to provide time for rest, personal comfort and relief, mess activities, refueling, maintenance and inspection of equipment, and adjustments in schedule. The time and duration of

halts are usually specified in the movement order or prescribed in unit SOP. The SOP should also prescribe actions to be taken during halts. Vehicle crews perform maintenance at scheduled halts.

A short rest halt of 15 minutes is usually taken after the first hour of marching. A 10-minute short halt is taken every two hours thereafter. The prescribed rate of march includes the time required for short halts. When possible, march elements using the same route stop at the same time. Route characteristics, however, may make it necessary to halt at a particular point on the route rather than simultaneously at a fixed time.

Long halts are planned in advance. The length of the halt is added to the total travel time. Locations for long halts are normally selected to allow all vehicles to clear the road and to permit proper dispersion. Halts for refueling should be scheduled in advance by the unit commander.

The herringbone formation is used to provide security for the march column during unscheduled halts (see Figure 3-14, page 3-14). All vehicles should move completely off the road to permit passage of vehicles down the center of the column. Movement commanders give permission to execute unscheduled halts.

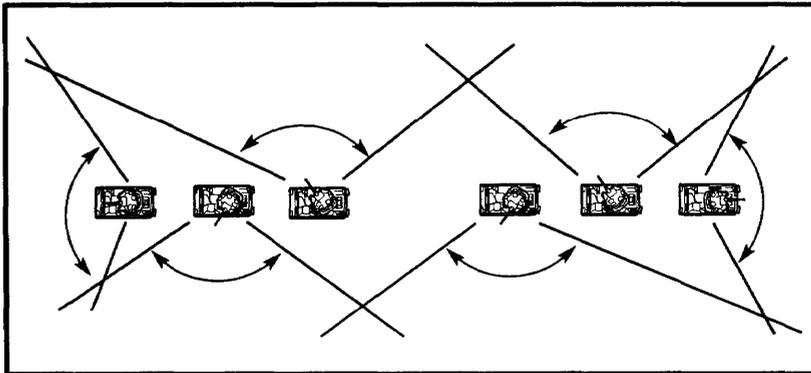
The first priority at a halt is local security. OPs are established and sectors of fire assigned to each vehicle. These actions should be automatic and part of the unit SOP (see Section III of Chapter 5 covering area security operations).

### **Miscellaneous Factors**

Disabled vehicles must not obstruct traffic. Their crews must move them off the road and report their status immediately to the PSG. Crews must immediately signal the follow-on vehicles to bypass and continue movement. They then establish security and post guides to direct traffic. If possible, the crews repair their vehicles and rejoin the rear of the column just ahead of the trail element. Vehicles that have dropped from the column should return to their positions only when the column has halted. Vehicles that cannot be repaired by their crews are recovered by the trail party.

Vehicle commanders must remain alert and exercise caution whenever they start to move. Vehicles that move too soon or too late can cause confusion in the formation. Lead vehicles must keep speeds low until all vehicles have moved onto the route of march.

Vehicle commanders assign sectors of observation to their personnel to provide 360-degree observation. Each vehicle commander designates an observer as air guard to provide air security. Each vehicle has a sector of observation as shown in Figure 6-1.



**Figure 6-1. Sectors of observation in a road march.**

## ROAD MARCH TRAINING

The overall success or failure of a mission could depend on the ability of units to march rapidly and efficiently over long distances. The unit's level of training in road marching is thus a major factor in determining mission success. Important factors in training for tactical road marches include the following:

- Driver training. The vehicle driver can make or break a road march. He must know the proper march interval and following distances; he must understand the effect the speed of his vehicle can have on the rest of the serial. Drivers can use man-made features (such as utility poles) or time/distance factors to gauge distance between vehicles. For example, at 15 miles per hour (mph) with a 100-meter interval, there are 15 seconds between vehicles; 20 mph and a 100-meter interval equals 11 seconds between vehicles.
- NBC. All members of the organization must be trained in NBC countermeasures and driving in NBC gear.
- Air guards. Each vehicle commander designates an air guard responsible for detecting enemy aircraft. A further discussion of active and passive air defense measures can be found in Section IV, Chapter 7, of this manual.

- Actions on contact. The platoon must be ready to execute immediate action drills in accordance with unit SOP at any time during the road march. A detailed discussion of actions on contact can be found in Section VII, Chapter 3.
- Constant practice. Road march training must be conducted at every opportunity; road march techniques can be practiced even in routine situations, such as two vehicles moving together outside a motor pool.
- Systematic training. The unit should first master road march techniques under good conditions (in the daytime, over short distances, and with good communications). It then must work toward mastering these skills under difficult conditions, including operations involving limited visibility, blackout, long distances, and radio listening silence.

### **Section III. BATTLE HANDOVER AND PASSAGE OF LINES**

Battle handover is an operation conducted by stationary and passing units in a close-in battle to transfer responsibility for fighting an enemy force from one unit to another. It is designed to sustain continuity of the combined arms fight and to prevent the enemy from moving unopposed on the battlefield as one force picks up the fight from another. It is also designed to preserve the fighting capabilities of both friendly units.

Passage of lines is a tactical event associated with battle handover. It is the controlled movement of one unit through the positions of a stationary unit, conducted so that neither unit interferes with the other's scheme of maneuver. A passage of lines will often be needed because the combat situation does not permit one unit to bypass another unit's position.

A unit may conduct either a rearward or forward passage of lines. When a unit moves toward the enemy through a stationary unit, it is considered a forward passage. In a rearward passage, the unit moves away from the enemy through friendly units.

A passage of lines may be conducted to—

- Continue an attack or counterattack.
- Envelop an enemy force.
- Pursue a fleeing enemy.
- Withdraw security forces or MBA forces.
- Facilitate route, zone, or area reconnaissance.
- Execute a defense or a delay.
- Execute a screen or guard operation.

A scout platoon may perform some of these operations independently (screen and reconnaissance); otherwise, it usually will take part in a passage of lines as part of a larger force.

## **CRITICAL TASKS**

There are three key elements in battle handover and passage of lines: the stationary unit, the passing unit, and the common commander.

The commander exercising command authority over both the stationary unit and the passing unit must designate the BHL, a PL forward of the stationary unit that is recognizable on the ground. He normally does this in coordination with the stationary unit commander, who will recommend the BHL. The line is forward of the FEBA in the defense or the FLOT in the offense. It is drawn where elements of the passing unit can be effectively protected by direct fires of the forward combat elements of the stationary unit until passage of lines is complete. The area between the BHL and the stationary force belongs to the stationary force commander. The common commander will also provide the graphic control measures that depict the BHL and contact points on an overlay issued to subordinate units with the OPORD or FRAGO (see Figure 6-2, page 6-14).

Battle handover begins on order of the common commander. Defensive handover is complete when the passing unit is clear and the stationary unit is ready to engage the enemy. Offensive handover is complete when the passing unit has deployed and crossed the BHL. The common commander prescribes

the specific criteria that mark completion of handover; he ensures both subordinate commanders understand these criteria.

The scout platoon, acting independently or as part of a troop or battalion passage, may be either the stationary or the passing unit. The platoon will normally assist in some portion of the passage of lines and maybe required to coordinate the passage. In many cases, the scout platoon will be required to conduct a passage separate from its higher headquarters.

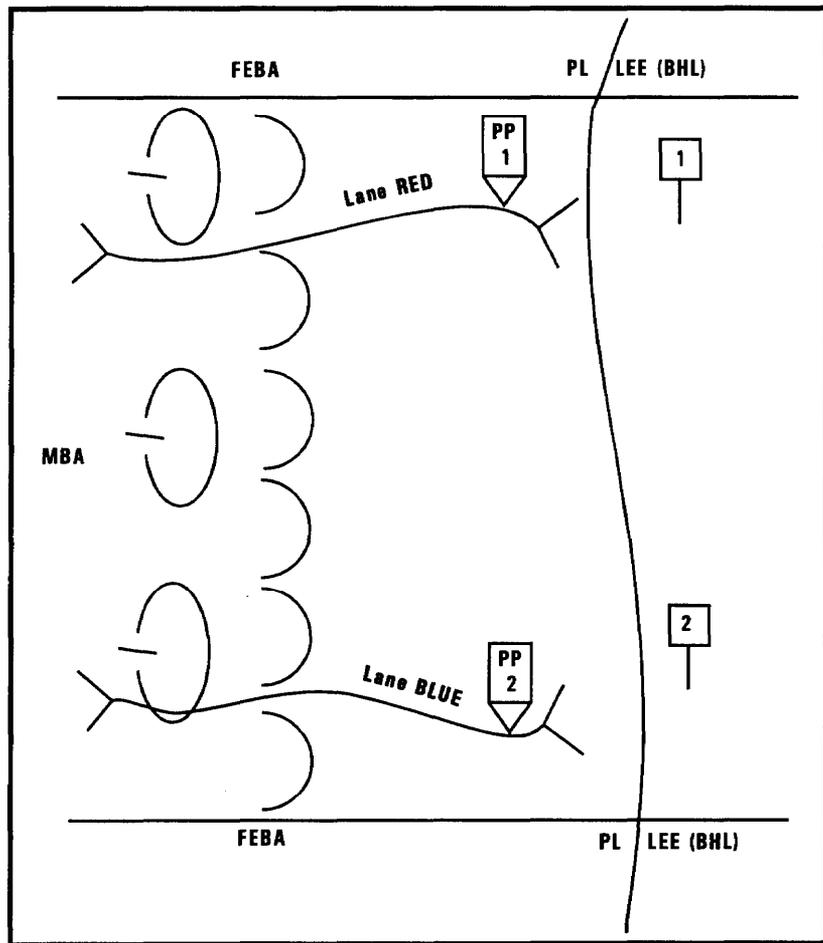


Figure 6-2. Battle handover and passage of lines graphics.

## Passing Unit Critical Tasks

The passing unit must accomplish several critical tasks during battle handover and passage of lines. It must—

- Immediately establish communications with the stationary unit. It enters the command, O1, and fire support nets of the stationary unit.
- Collocate a team or vehicle (platoon leader or PSG) with the tactical command post (TAC CP) or TOC of the stationary unit as soon as possible to enhance communications and unity of effort.
- Continuously report to the stationary unit the location, size, and composition of all enemy forces, as well as the enemy's current activity. If the enemy is attacking, the passing unit reports his direction of movement, movement formation, and estimated rate of advance. If the enemy is defending, passing unit reports include his locations, orientation, composition, fire sacks, reserves (if known), obstacle systems, and flanks.
- Continuously report to the stationary unit the location, size, and activity of all parent unit elements, to include CS, CSS, and command and control facilities.
- Given the current disposition of the parent unit and scout teams, coordinate with the stationary unit and determine contact points at which each designated section will physically coordinate handover and passage of lines with representatives of the stationary unit. Once contact points are determined, the passing unit sends a FRAGO to all teams specifying where they will physically coordinate passage with the stationary unit. The passing unit also confirms recognition signals that must be displayed during passage.
- Ensure that each team acknowledges where it must physically coordinate the passage and dispatches representatives to assigned contact points to coordinate passage for the team. At the contact points, the representatives confirm recognition signals and exchange required information with counterparts from the stationary unit.
- Maintain visual contact with all enemy units and delay back to the BHL, avoiding decisive engagement.

- During the passage, display correct recognition signals and use correct challenge and password as specified in the SOI.
- Maintain proper weapons orientation.

### **Stationary Unit Critical Tasks**

The stationary unit must accomplish a variety of critical tasks when ordered to conduct battle handover and passage of lines. It must—

- Establish communications with the passing unit, coordinate necessary contact points, and direct the passing unit to the contact points based on current dispositions of the designated units.
- Ensure that contact points are manned and that passing elements have established personal communications with their representatives.
- Ensure that representatives at the contact points assign each passing element a passage point into the area of operations and a route that extends from the passage points to the rear boundary or to an assembly area.
- Ensure that representatives at the contact points exchange required information with the passing unit as outlined in FKSM 17-98-3.
- If security forces are working with the platoon, position them along the BHL where they have the best possible observation of enemy avenues of approach, adjusting as necessary for limited visibility conditions.
- If obstacles are emplaced between the FEBA and the BHL, ensure that routes through the obstacle system are clearly marked and physically controlled by guides or that escorts are provided to the passing unit.
- Ensure that all routes of withdrawal obligated to the passing unit are unobstructed and facilitate rapid movement to the RP.
- Ensure that obligated routes of advance, attack positions, and routes to the BHL are unobstructed and facilitate rapid movement.

## COORDINATION

Units are particularly vulnerable during a passage of lines. Personnel and subordinate elements may be concentrated, fires of the stationary unit may be masked temporarily, and the passing unit may not be disposed properly to react to enemy action. Detailed reconnaissance and coordination are critical in overcoming such situations and ensuring the passage is conducted quickly and smoothly.

Coordination occurs at a preplanned contact point where critical information is exchanged and coordinated. Coordination for battle handover normally flows from the commander out of contact to the commander in contact. Coordination for the handover and for the passage of lines should be conducted simultaneously.

The scout platoon leader plays a major role in coordination for handover and passage of lines. He is responsible for conducting reconnaissance to obtain information for use by both his parent unit and the platoon. He then uses this information in the coordination process.

During his reconnaissance, the platoon leader must confirm—

- The disposition of the stationary force through which his platoon, troop, or battalion must pass.
- The location of contact points where both units are required to make physical contact at a predetermined time.
- The location of passage lanes that provide a clear route through the stationary unit's position and that also facilitate a smooth and continuous passage. Areas selected for the passage should be unoccupied or on the flanks of units in position. If possible, the platoon leader should reconnoiter multiple routes that can reduce vulnerability during the operation.
- The location of an assembly area or attack position (for forward passage). This position should provide cover and concealment and be located where the passing unit will not interfere with the stationary unit.
- The initial location for CS and CSS elements of the platoon's parent unit.

Based on his reconnaissance, the platoon leader coordinates the following information:

- Contact points (primary and alternate).
- Passage points.
- Passage lanes, including the SP, RP, and critical points.
- The LD.
- Location and number of guides and guide vehicles.
- Routes through obstacles.
- Alternate routes.
- CSS plans, including Class III, Class V, maintenance, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), and disposition of enemy prisoners of war (EPW).
- Traffic control and number of vehicles by type.
- Time of the passage.
- Rally points, assembly area, and attack position (forward passage).
- Actions on contact if required during the passage.
- Time of transfer of responsibility for control of the sector and of handover of the enemy and BHL.
- Exchange of enemy and friendly information.
- Fire support during the passage.

The parent unit commander provides some of this information as part of his order to the platoon.

Given the capabilities of the scout platoon, many commanders require the platoon to assist other units in the passage of lines. Primarily, the scout platoon enhances the command and control function for the commander. The platoon

may be required to conduct one or all of the critical tasks of a stationary or passing unit or may assist its parent unit in the following ways:

- Elements of the scout platoon may assist in securing contact and passage points where passing units will meet and pass.
- The scout platoon may reconnoiter possible passage lanes (primary and alternate), clearing them of obstacles and marking their locations.
- The scout platoon may guide units from contact points to or through passage lanes. The platoon may also control traffic at the passage point and in the lane.
- Elements of the scout platoon maybe positioned in the passage area to act as a communication link when passing units have trouble with communications.
- The scout platoon may conduct area reconnaissance of attack positions (forward passage) and assembly area locations (rearward passage). Included in this reconnaissance effort is the need to check for NBC contamination.
- The scout platoon may assist the commander by occupying OPs or conducting patrols to provide a continuous flow of information about the enemy situation.

## **CONDUCT OF THE PASSAGE**

In a forward passage of lines, the platoon leader or unit commander normally performs the coordination. For a rearward passage of lines, the PSG or the commander's liaison officer normally performs the coordination. The stationary unit is responsible for designating passage points and passage lanes and for providing guides. If contact points have not been designated by higher headquarters, the stationary unit should coordinate their locations with the passing unit. For ease of control, the passing unit's command group (TAC CP or TOC) temporarily collocates with the stationary unit's command group (TAC CP or TOC).

After coordination is made and the passage begins, guides pick up the passing unit at the contact point or passage point. Guides exchange recognition

signals with the passing unit and move it along the route(s) without pausing, with the stationary unit overmatching the movement. Guides leave the unit either at the RP or after the movement has passed the last stationary unit position.

Disabled vehicles are recovered by self-recovery methods or by organic recovery vehicles. The stationary unit provides the required medical assistance, POL, and maintenance as far forward as possible. As a minimum, the stationary unit should provide emergency medical support.

## **NBC CONSIDERATIONS**

Because of potential congestion of units at passage points and along routes, it is essential that stationary and passing units take protective measures against NBC attack. Some techniques to reduce vulnerability include the following:

- To minimize exposure time, passing units move as rapidly as possible through passage points and along passage routes to RPs.
- Passing and stationary units conduct radiological and chemical monitoring.
- Stationary units disperse by using hide positions and posting one or two vehicles in primary firing positions. Units in hide positions prepare for nuclear attack.
- Passing and stationary units put on chemical-protective clothing as prescribed by the commander.
- Stationary units request assistance through channels for decontamination of the passing unit, if required. Units normally conduct a hasty decontamination and then move to a rear assembly area for deliberate decontamination. A scout platoon does not have the internal assets for a deliberate personnel or equipment decontamination; it requires assistance from a chemical defense company.

## **FRATRICIDE AVOIDANCE**

Since battle handover and passage of lines are usually conducted in contact with the enemy, extreme care must be taken to avoid fratricide. Thorough coordination is critical; all units involved must know the correct recognition signals as well as the exact number of vehicles and time of passage. There will

be times when not all elements have received the necessary information or when stragglers are unaware of the current operation. Planning and coordination must take into account the following considerations:

- Fratricide assessment.
- Vehicle marking systems.
- Navigational aids.
- Enemy situation and composition.
- Obscuration (limited visibility).
- IFF expedients for ground forces.
- Effective SOPs.
- Communications procedures and potential problems.

Chapter 2 (Section V) and Appendix G discuss fratricide avoidance and risk reduction measures in more detail.

## **Section IV. RELIEF IN PLACE**

A relief in place is an operation in which one unit replaces another unit in combat. It may be accomplished during offensive or defensive operations. The primary purpose of the relief is to sustain the combat effectiveness of committed units. It may also be conducted to allow a relieved unit to rest, reconstitute, or decontaminate or to change missions. For the scout platoon, the relief operation may entail serving as road guides for the battalion task force, performing liaison with the relieved unit, or participating in the relief with its parent unit.

Relief in place is difficult to plan and conduct because of the nature of the operation and the command, control, communication, and coordination required. It is important that the operation not be disclosed to the enemy; security, secrecy, and speed are critical. Though the scout platoon cannot always wait for optimum conditions, relief in place is best conducted during periods of limited visibility and during lulls in battle. Limited visibility may be achieved by using smoke to obscure the enemy's vision. Using smoke over a large area can confuse the enemy as to the platoon's actual location.

The relief must be conducted as quickly and as secretly as possible. The relieving scouts must avoid sustaining casualties, hampering the operation of the scouts being relieved, or allowing the enemy to detect the operation. To reduce confusion and maintain security, the incoming platoon leader must attempt to obtain the following information:

- The time that responsibility for the sector or zone is to pass.
- Operations security (OPSEC) considerations.
- Deception plans.
- The time, method, and sequence of relief.
- Routes and critical control measures.
- Graphics depicting alternate and subsequent fighting positions.
- Contingency plans for changes of mission.
- Actions on enemy contact, if required before completion of the relief.
- Handoff procedures for artillery and ADA.
- Obstacle locations and procedures for transfer of responsibility.
- Procedures for transfer of ammunition, wire lines, POL, and other materiel between the outgoing and incoming units, if necessary.

Radio traffic must be kept to a minimum; light and noise discipline must be strictly enforced. If possible, the relieving scout platoon leader conducts a reconnaissance of the new positions. This is usually accomplished with the relieved platoon leader.

Once the reconnaissance is complete and orders are finalized, the platoon executes its mission. If it is participating in the relief, one of several methods of relief in place may be used:

- One vehicle at a time. This is the slowest, but most secure, method.
- All vehicles simultaneously. This is the quickest, but least secure, method.

- Occupying adjacent or in-depth positions that cover the same area of responsibility.
- Exchange of vehicles and equipment. This is done when secrecy is the overriding factor. This is the most difficult and time-consuming method.

The actual relief in place can be conducted from a hide position behind the relieved platoon, with individual relieving vehicles moving forward. The platoon can also occupy alternate positions within the relieved platoon's sector or zone. In some cases, the platoon may move into the primary positions as soon as the relieved vehicles back out.

The most important transmission during the relief process is the completion call to the incoming platoon's commander. This is made when the incoming platoon is fully set into position and prepared to conduct operations.