Military Police Battlefield Organization

The military police support commanders at every echelon throughout a theater of operations. The geographical net of MP units extends across both the combat and communications zones. Wherever they are, MP units at each level of command respond to the operational needs of commanders.

The size of the MP force and the distribution of MP assets supporting a theater of operations depend largely on a number of issues affecting the conflict. If the conflict is fought as part of a wartime coalition of forces, the shared cost of supporting the forward deployed forces is far less than the total cost imposed by a unilateral action. Manpower obligations are also reduced. Protecting LOC and facilities can be a shared responsibility. No one MP force would be called on to protect them unassisted. But in a unilateral operation, like the conflict over the Falkland Islands in 1982, a single military force can expect to obligate a large portion of MP assets to operate and protect critical LOC and facilities.

If a conflict erupts in a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) country, the friendly HN can, to some extent, relieve US commanders of the need to provide forces for security and logistical support in the COMMZ. In hostile territory the problems encountered by commanders can be extremely manpower-intensive. If a commander does not have support from the local government, he must obligate much of his MP force to counter interference to his military operations from a hostile population. And he will need a larger MP force, or he will need to divert other military resources to protect his LOC.

If a conflict occurs in a developed country, the road networks and other transportation

means of an industrialized nation are a distinct advantage to commanders moving much-needed material and supplies. But in a developing country movement over large areas may depend on the presence of one good road. Enemy forces interdicting that MSR can wreak havoc with military operations. Adequate MP support on such an MSR becomes imperative.

If a conflict is fought in a theater of operations where policy permits EPWs to be evacuated out of the theater, MP forces required for in-theater prisoner of war internment would be limited to those units needed to intern EPWs until evacuation to CONUS commences. Out-of-theater manning would eliminate the need to move large numbers of MP units into a theater to handle an EPW flow that surges during offensive operations only to wane during defensive periods. Out-of-theater manning not only saves valuable space on aircraft bringing in

MP EPW personnel and equipment, but also significantly reduces the drain on the supply system. In-theater EPWs and MP EPW personnel must all be fed, clothed, and otherwise sustained.

Within any theater there may be a unified or a combined command. A theater army (TA) is the US Army component of a unified command. The TA organizes, equips, trains, and provides Army forces to support the needs of its theater of operations. It provides communicative, logistical, and administrative support for US forces in the theater. It coordinates HN support and rear operations in the COMMZ. It provides security and maintains discipline in the COMMZ. It also may be tasked to provide logistical support, such as supply, engineer, and health services, to allied forces in the TA sector.

In an established theater, the territory is divided into a COMMZ and a combat zone. The TA headquarters and functional commands operate in the COMMZ. The territorial responsibility for the combat zone is assigned to a number of corps. For ease of tactical control the combat zone is divided into AOs, one for each corps. Each corps area is subdivided to provide an AO for each division. MP units are assigned to the TA and its subordinate commands to provide MP support throughout the theater of operations.

MILITARY POLICE STRUCTURE IN THE THEATER OF OPERATIONS

CHAIN OF COMMAND
PERSCOM – PERSONNEL COMMAND
PW – PRISONER OF WAR
PWIC – UNITED STATES PRISONER OF WAR/CIVILIAN INTERNEE INFORMATION CENTER
TAACOM – THEATER ARMY AREA COMMAND
TRANSCOM – TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

MP SUPPORT IN THE COMMZ

In the COMMZ, MP support is provided to the TA by a TA PM and by MP units assigned to TA subordinate commands. MP units are assigned to the TAACOMs, the personnel command (PERSCOM), the transportation command (TRANSCOM), and to the TA's petroleum group, ordnance group, and special ammunition ordnance brigade.
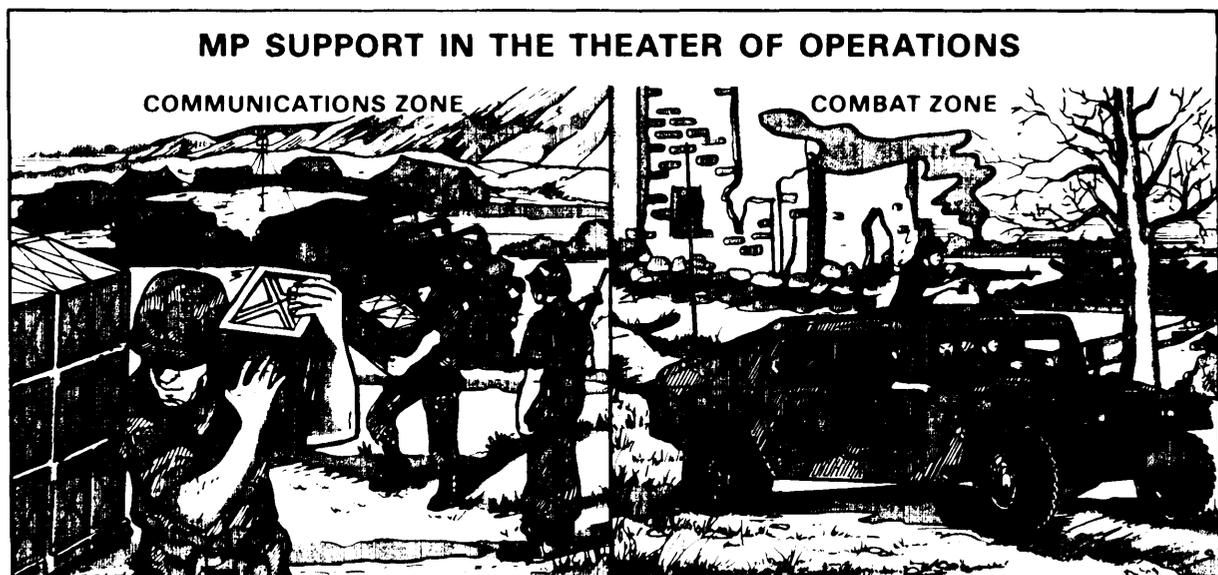
Most MP units in the COMMZ are assigned to TAACOMs. An MP brigade is assigned to each TAACOM to support the forces operating within that TAACOM's AO. The MP brigade commander is the TAACOM's PM. MP assigned to a TAACOM perform all four MP battlefield missions. They provide combat, CS, and CSS operations within their TAACOM's AO.

MP units assigned to other TA subordinate commands in the COMMZ perform only the one MP mission those commands need. MP are assigned to the PERSCOM to support that command's internment and confinement missions. They process, evacuate, and intern EPWs and CIs and confine US military prisoners. MP are assigned to the TRANSCOM and the TA's petroleum group, ordnance group, and special ammunition brigade to provide security of designated critical facilities and supplies. *See Chapter 7 for further discussion of MP support to TAACOMs. See Chapter 8 for MP support to the PERSCOM and Chapter 9 for MP support to the TRANSCOM, the petroleum group, the ordnance group, and the special ammunition ordnance brigade.*

MP SUPPORT IN THE COMBAT ZONE

In the combat zone, MP support is provided to each corps. division. and separate brigade. An MP brigade is assigned to each corps. The MP brigade commander is the corps' PM. A separate MP company and PM are assigned to each division. A separate MP platoon and PM are assigned to each separate bridgade. The MP units assigned to

corps, divisions, and separate brigades, like MP units assigned to TAACOMs, perform all four MP battlefield missions. They provide combat, CS, and CSS operations within their commands' AOs. See *Chapters 5 and 6 for further discussion of MP support to corps, divisions, and separate brigades.*

MP SUPPORT IN THE THEATER OF OPERATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS ZONE   COMBAT ZONE

TYPES OF MP UNITS

Most MP units supporting a theater of operations perform all four MP missions. These units are assigned to TAACOMS, corps, divisions, and separate brigades. They provide all forms of MP support to the forces operating within their AOs.

Other MP units are special-purpose, or "functional," units and perform one MP mission. Most of these units are assigned to the PERSCOM, the TRANSCOM, and the TA's petroleum group, ordnance group, and special ammunition ordnance brigade. These functional MP units are introduced into a theater of operations when their "parent" TA unit is required. Nearly all functional MP units, like the TA units to which they are assigned, are located in the COMMZ. But some functional MP units, like those providing security for special ammunition, move to other locations to accompany the units handling the commodity the MP secure.

TYPES OF MP COMMAND AND CONTROL RELATIONSHIPS

MP units are assigned to, attached to, or placed under the OPCON of units they support. Their command and control relationship may be changed briefly to provide better support for a specific operation.

From TA level down to division, MP units are assigned to their supported command on a long-term basis. This is true for MP units assigned to TAACOMs, corps, divisions, and separate brigades. It also applies to those functional MP units supporting the PERSCOM, the TRANSCOM, and the TA's petroleum group, ordnance group, and special ammunition ordnance brigade.

This command and control relationship may be changed briefly to provide better support for a specific operation. MP units are sometimes placed under the OPCON of another unit's commander for short-term operations. The MP unit remains in this relationship only as long as it is needed for that operation. Usually this is for a very short time. For example, a TAACOM MP battalion may be placed under the OPCON of an area support group (ASG) commander for brief operations like response force operations against Level II enemy forces. The ASG RAOC, acting as the ASG commander's agent, assigns the task and directs the battalion's response operations within the ASG's area. Likewise, when heavy security companies are placed under the OPCON of a Lance field artillery battalion commander to provide security for special ammunition, the relationship remains only as long as the MP units are needed to fulfill that function. But when corps MP companies are placed under the OPCON of the division PM to augment division MP assets, the relationship continues for as long as that augmentation is needed, rather than for the length of a particular operation.

TYPES OF MP SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

MP units on the battlefield provide either general support (GS) or direct support (DS). Most MP units on the battlefield provide GS. They support their assigned command as a whole. Below division level some MP provide DS. They give their priority of support to particular subelements of their assigned commands. MP units providing DS are not attached or assigned to the units they support. They remain under the command and operational control of their normal commander. However, they receive and execute operational taskings directly from, and give priority of effort to, the supported subelement.

MP STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

Throughout the theater of operations, the senior MP officer at each echelon is that commander's advisor and planner for MP operations. He is a member of the command's special staff. The TA PM is the theater's senior PM. He is responsible for staff supervision of MP matters at TA level. In TAACOMs and corps, the MP brigade commanders are also their commands' PMs. At division level and in separate brigades the senior MP officer is the PM.

The PM for each command in a theater of operations is that command's advisor on MP combat, CS, and CSS operations. The PM—

- Ž Advises the commander and staff about MP abilities.

- Ž Prepares plans and policies.

- Ž Coordinates MP operations.

- Ž Assists and supervises interaction of supporting and supported units.

- Ž Reviews current MP operations.

- Ž Coordinates with allied forces and HN military and civil police.

The PM implements the commander's policies and plans. He ensures MP plans and operations supporting the commander's tactical plan are carried out. He recommends when and where to concentrate the command's MP assets. He supervises MP support in the command's AO. He coordinates matters of MP concern on a daily basis.

The PM's day-to-day work is with the staff officers who supervise MP resources and functions or those whose areas of responsibility influence MP support. The PM coordinates with members of the commander's coordinating and special staffs. He works closely with the G3 section to provide MP support for tactical route movements. He coordinates BCC for logistical and administrative ground movements with the G4. He coordinates EPW and CI matters with the G1 and the G2. When needed, he coordinates with the G4 and the G5. On matters pertaining to security of CPs, he coordinates with the headquarters commandant.

PMs ensure MP planning is practical and flexible. They see that plans are coordinated with staff sections and subordinate commands. They make sure plans reflect manpower and resources needed by MP. (This includes needs for command and control, fire support, equipment, and supplies. It also includes construction, communication, transportation, and aviation support.) As new information is received, PMs review, update, and modify plans. The PMs see that the echelon commanders get the MP support they need.

In the absence of specific directions or orders, the PM plans the use of MP assets. He evaluates current operations and projects future courses of action. He bases his plans on assumptions consistent with sound judgment and a thorough knowledge of the situation and mission. The PM considers the—

- Ž Factors of METT-T.

- Ž Current IPB.

- Ž Environment within the area. This includes climate, terrain, and obstacles. It includes width, depth, size, and location of built-up areas. It includes attitudes and abilities of the local populace.

- Ž Kinds of units operating in the area.

- Ž Number of units in the area.

- Ž Missions and capabilities of these units. (This knowledge is imperative for base planning in the rear area.)

- Ž Specific missions of MP units in the area and the impact that rear area security operations will have on the ability of these units to support command headquarters.

- Ž Personnel, vehicles, and equipment in the MP units.

Coordination and communication among PMs and combat commanders are essential. Such actions ensure timely and efficient MP support to the division, corps, and TA during a conflict. The informal technical chain of coordination is an open line of communication between MP in different echelons. Through it the division PM maintains a link with the next higher echelon of MP support, the corps PM. The corps PM, in turn, maintains a link with the TAACOM PM. There is a technical link from the corps PM to each of the TA's other subordinate commands and elements. But the corps PM usually deals directly only with the TAACOM PM. For support from other elements of the TA, both the corps PM and the TAACOM PM go to the TA PM. However, if an MP unit of one of the other TA elements is near a corps area or a TAACOM AO requiring support, direct coordination can be conducted.

To speed coordination the PM uses the informal technical chain of coordination. This informal coordination enhances the MP support provided at each echelon. It also fosters cooperation and help among the MP elements at each echelon. For instance, if the division PM needs more assets to accomplish added missions, he uses his technical link with the corps PM. He requests X amount of MP assets to do the added missions. He explains that his division MP assets are totally committed. The corps PM assesses his own assets to see if he can provide the requested support. If the corps PM can provide support, the problem of how to do the added missions is solved. If, however, the corps PM needs all corps MP assets to accomplish corps MP missions, the division PM notifies the G3 that corps MP assets are not available without commander to-commander evaluation of MP mission priorities. The division commander talks to the corps commander. If they decide support should be provided, the corps commander then directs the change in priorities and the corps PM provides the assets. But the echelon commander may decide corps assets cannot be used to support the division's mission. In that case, support for those missions is delayed until division or corps MP assets are free to do them.