
PART ONE

THE MP LAW AND ORDER MISSION

The MP Corps provides the Army a wide range of diverse support. On the battlefield MP provide commanders combat, combat support, and combat service support. Both “an Arm and a Service,” the MP Corps plays an important role in battle. But MP also play an important role in supporting commanders beyond the successful resolution of battle. Through their law and order mission MP continue their active support of Army commanders by ensuring the existence of the lawful and orderly environment units need to maintain combat readiness. MP performing law and order operations extend the commander’s command and control. They aid commanders in obtaining and maintaining combat proficiency. They prevent diversion of military resources. They suppress the chance for criminal behavior; they protect and assist the military community. And they help commanders ensure US forces are disciplined troops of high morale.

In a theater of operations MP conduct law and order operations only when the combat commander requires it and when battle intensity permits. During intense continuous combat, like that expected near a main battle area or in a developing theater of operations, MP are most needed to expedite and conserve vital resources for combat forces. In intense combat the commander’s priority of need is most often for MP combat and combat support operations. MP are employed more often for battlefield circulation control (BCC), area security, and enemy prisoner of war (EPW) operations and less often for law and order operations. But a commander’s need for law and order operations depends on the tactical situation. And it depends on the level of command involved and the location of the command on the battlefield.

In a peacetime environment MP conduct extensive law and order operations. These operations support commanders’ order and discipline in the field and on installations around the world. The performance of these operations impacts even beyond the maintenance of law and order. Many peacetime law and order operations and subelements embody basic methods, measures, and techniques MP use to carry out their BCC and area security missions. For example, operating a traffic control post (TCP) is a measure basic to the MP missions of BCC and area security. Operating TCPs is also basic to the MP law and order mission. MP conducting law and order operations in a peacetime environment are consistently exercising battlefield skills.

In peacetime as well as in combat MP provide commanders with a well-armed, communications-intensive, and highly mobile asset. While combat ready, the MPs’ professional orientation ensures their ability to operate with restraint and authority, within probable cause, and with a minimum use of force. This makes MP ideally suited as a response force in civil confrontations or disorders, in terrorist counteractions, and in low-intensity conflicts in a noncombat area.

Away from conflict, wherever US forces are located, the MP Corps is the protector and assistant of the military community. MP efforts are directed to ensuring a lawful and orderly environment. MP help ensure commanders have troops, equipment, and supplies when and where they need them to maintain readiness. By their efforts to preserve the law, MP help the commander ensure a high standard of order and discipline within the commander’s units. By their efforts to assist and protect the military community, MP help ensure a high level of well-being among the commander’s troops.

MP provide commanders with the support they need wherever and whenever it is needed. In peace and war MP help commanders ensure a lawful and orderly military environment. MP enforce laws. MP investigate disorders and suspected crimes.

MP confine US military prisoners. MP take counteractions against terrorism. And always, MP are prepared to quickly expand their law and order operations into their full-scale battlefield range of combat, combat support, and combat service support operations.



Military police help the commander get his people, supplies, and equipment where he needs them when he needs them. MP help relieve the commander's burden of providing security and protection for critical persons, facilities, and equipment. MP are the initial response force to criminal and enemy attempts to demoralize, terrorize, or sabotage the military community or its operation. MP relieve commanders of the responsibility for detaining and safeguarding prisoners and MP reduce opportunities for crime. Only the magnitude and purpose inherent in each operation changes from peace to war.