

CHAPTER 10

SUPPORTING COMBINED ARMS OPERATIONS

On the battlefield, you play a key role in helping combined-arms units conduct river crossings, passages of lines, and ADC operations. MP support for these combined arms operations enhances the tactical commander's options and conserves the use of his combat resources.

SUPPORT FOR RIVER CROSSINGS

MP support for river-crossing operations helps maneuver units move rapidly across river obstacles. Your support for a river crossing can be vital to help reduce congestion, speed the crossing, and enable the maneuver forces to maintain momentum.

River crossings, which most often take place in AOs where battle tempo and direction are subject to rapid change, are usual in division areas. But they also occur in corps areas.

Maneuver forces, generally division-size, conduct the river crossing. Engineers and MP support the maneuver force. See *Engineer support for river-crossing operations in FM 5-100 and 90-13*. Division MP companies most often support division assault forces on the entrance and exit banks of the river and at the crossing sites. Support must be available from MP outside the division. Usually, each division MP company must be augmented by an MP company from corps. The augmenting MP company is placed under the OPCON of the division PM. He task-organizes and employs its elements where they can best support the river crossing. Sometimes a platoon is placed with each division MP platoon supporting a brigade. A fourth platoon can augment MP elements supporting the division rear.

A hasty river crossing, conducted as a continuation of an attack to ensure little or no loss of momentum by the attacking force, is a decentralized operation using organic, existing, or expedient crossing means. When there is an MP platoon in direct support of a maneuver brigade, that platoon supports the crossing without the need for additional MP support.

Deliberate and retrograde river crossings, however, do require intensive MP support. Deliberate crossings require planned and augmented MP support. In a "deliberate" river crossing, undertaken when a hasty crossing cannot be made successfully, when offensive operations must be renewed at the river, or when forced by a significant river obstacle or a strong defending enemy, enemy forces must be cleared from the area. A

buildup of firepower and equipment is needed on both the entry and the exit banks.

Retrograde crossings also must be closely planned and controlled. Timing is critical. Massed crossing forces could slow momentum or exceed classification limits of the bridging. Forces moving to the rear may retrograde to defensive positions beyond the water obstacle. But they also may be slowed as they set up to defend the exit bank. You support retrograde crossings like you do deliberate crossings. You perform BCC within the crossing area and on the entry and exit sides of the river. But emphasis also is placed on area security to keep critical locations along MSRs from being cut off by small Threat forces trying to disrupt the retrograde movement.

CONTROL MEASURES

To ease control of large, fast-moving forces, the river crossing plan usually allots one crossing area for each maneuver brigade. Each area is set by control lines on the left and right flanks, and begins and ends at the traffic regulating lines (TRLs) on the entrance and exit banks of the river. The lines are located along easily identifiable terrain features.

Each crossing area has a crossing area commander. The crossing area commander has OPCON of all forces working within or passing through the crossing area. When you are operating inside the crossing area, you are OPCON to the crossing area commander for the duration of the operation. MP operating outside the crossing area are under the command of their appropriate echelon commander.

Emphasize BCC in the AO leading into the crossing area. You —

- Enforce MSR regulations.
- Emplace temporary signs to direct crossing units to their proper locations.
- Ensure units move through the crossing area on schedule.
- Disseminate information that assists in controlling the crossing unit.

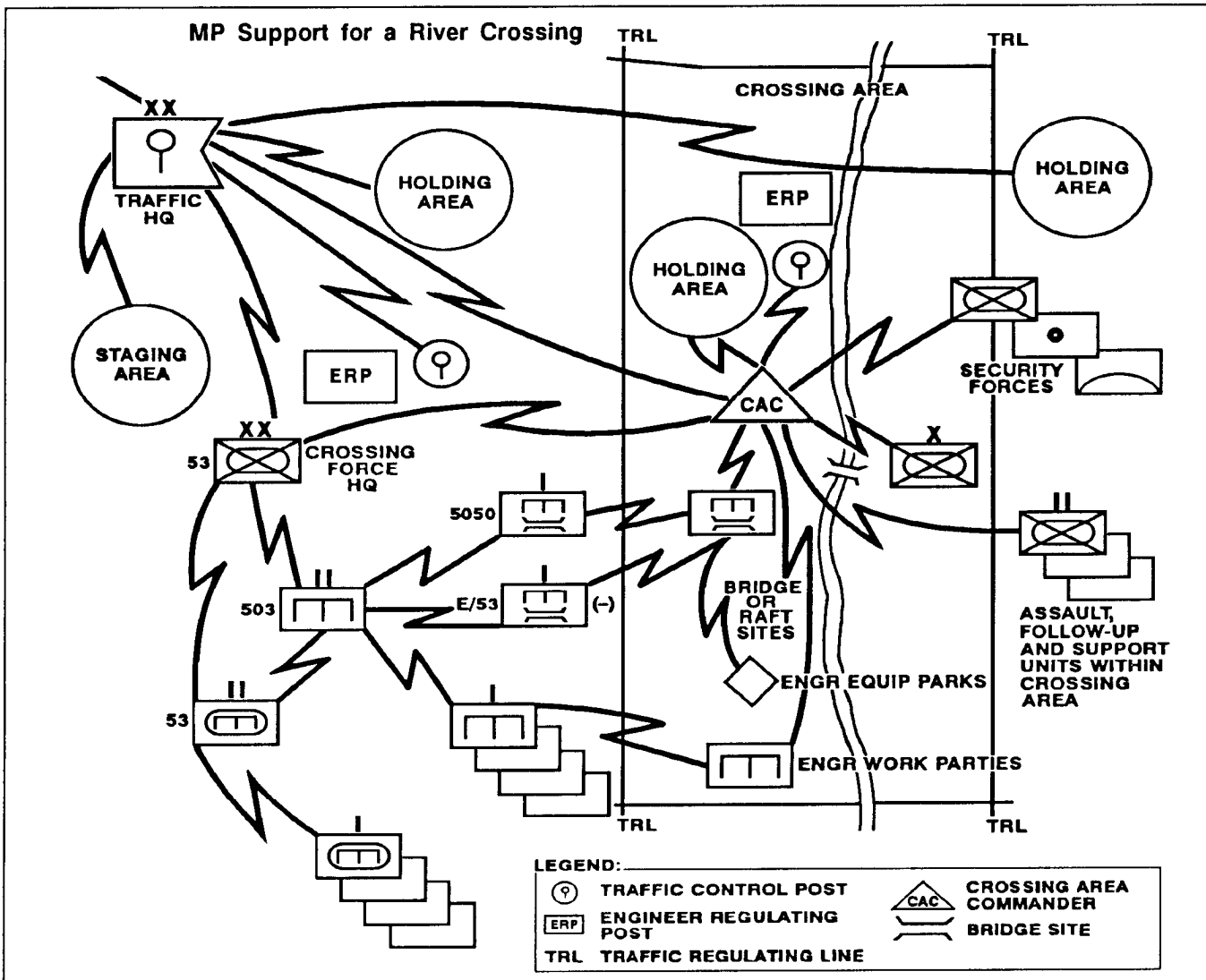
You set up holding areas on the entry and exit banks of the river. Exit bank holding areas temporarily hold sections of a convoy until the convoy can reassemble and continue its movement. MP elements operate exit bank holding areas within the crossing area beyond the TRL. TRLs identify the beginning and the end of the crossing area commander's OPCON.

You operate TCPs at holding areas and staging areas to control movement to and from those areas. (A staging area is a larger version of a holding area. It is located outside the crossing area on the entrance bank of the river. It is used to hold convoys until their designated departure times.) Elements of the augmenting MP company normally operate entry bank holding areas and TCPs from the staging areas to the TRL or release line. Selected teams at TCPs report the movement of units and convoys to the echelon transportation office. They also relay messages between this office and

moving units. MP communications enable them to communicate with the transportation office, the crossing area commander, and other MP in the area.

You collocate TCPs with engineer regulating points (ERPs). Engineers use ERPs to make technical checks on vehicles. You make sure all vehicles clear the ERPs. MP mounted patrols control circulation and disseminate information to assist crossing units. They operate along primary routes, spotting problems and rerouting traffic in case of emergencies. You may also operate TCPs at the TRL.

After placing temporary signs along the routes to guide convoys from the staging areas to the crossing area, mounted patrols check the signs from time to time to make sure no one has tampered with them. You recon the area to locate small-scale enemy activity and to gather information. You also recon the crossing unit's flanks and rear.



You accept EPWs from capturing units. An MP element from the division MP company sets up and operates temporary EPW collecting points on the entry and exit bank sides. Corps MP often take control of the EPW collecting points and temporary collecting points and, using transportation returning from the exit bank, begin evacuating the EPWs. But the division PM task-organizes all augmenting corps MP elements. He may place a platoon with each division MP platoon supporting a maneuver brigade. He then may use the remaining corps elements along with the remaining division MP elements for general support as the need arises.

PLANNING

The crossing force commander and his staff plan the river-crossing operation. They prepare an OPORD and specify what support they need. The PM, based on the OPORD, plans MP support. The plan includes how MP assets will be used and what additional resources are needed to do the job. The MP unit commander supporting the river crossing plans the use of his troops based on the OPORD and taskings from the PM. The OPORD routinely gives OPCON of all units, including MP entering the crossing area to the crossing area commander.

The MP leader supporting the crossing site develops a traffic control plan to support the circulation control plan. He must plan for –

- TCPs, temporary route signs, and mobile patrols at –
 - Major crossroads on MSRs and near crossing sites and lateral boundaries to control traffic from adjacent unit areas that could interfere with division surface movements.
 - Staging areas/ERPs to–
 - Provide directions and information.
 - Control movement to and from staging areas according to planned times.
 - Relay messages between traffic HQ and the moving unit.
 - Holding areas on–
 - The entrance bank to direct traffic to crossing sites.
 - The exit bank (inside the TRL) to control movement.
 - The exit bank (outside the TRL) to temporarily hold sections of a convoy or a unit until it can reassemble and continue its movement.
- Mobile patrols to operate along primary routes to control traffic, spot problems, and reroute traffic when necessary.
- Temporary EPW collecting points. The collecting points should be set up outside the TRLs. EPWs being evacuated must be moved through the crossing areas as quickly as possible so their transit does not impede the movement of friendly forces.

SUPPORT FOR PASSAGES OF LINES

Moving a maneuver unit through the positions of an emplaced unit that is in contact with the enemy is a critical action. It requires detailed coordination, detailed planning, and close, continuous supervision of the movement.

Both passing and stationary units are vulnerable, because –

- The units may become concentrated.
- The passing unit, due to the location of the stationary unit, may not be able to correctly react to enemy contact.
- Either unit could become subject to friendly fire while the other unit is in contact.

MP support for a passage of lines operation helps combat units in contact with the enemy maintain movement. When a force moves on the enemy by passing through a forward unit holding its position, MP can ease the moving units' passage through the holding units' lines. If a covering force withdrawing from the enemy must pass through friendly positions, MP can speed the force's rearward passage from the MBA.

CONTROL MEASURES

When planning control measures for a passage of lines, you must consider the placement of the –

- Assembly areas where units prepare for further action.
- BHOL where the stationary force assumes responsibility for the sector from the covering force.
- Forward edge of the battle area.
- Passage lanes along which the passing units move to avoid stationary units and obstacles.
- Passage points where units will pass through one another. They are located where the commanders want the units to execute the passage of lines. To help eliminate congestion, multiple passage points should be designated.
- Contact points (designate an easily identifiable piece of terrain) where the units will physically meet.
- Start points where unit elements come under the control of the commander responsible for the movement.
- Phase lines, used in controlling the timing of the operation; usually selected for recognizable terrain features extending across the zone of action.

- Release points where unit elements revert to their respective commanders and continue moving to their destinations.
- Routes of travel from point of origin to destination.
- Checkpoints used to coordinate friendly movement. (Checkpoints are not used as reference points for reporting enemy locations.)
- Battle positions, oriented on the most likely enemy avenue of approach, from which each unit will defend or attack. The unit locates within the general outline of the battle position.

LIAISON

Commanders of the passing and stationary units often collocate to ensure exact timing for the transfer of responsibility. Other key people in these units also collocate to be sure they know exactly when they must begin or end support for their unit. Stationary and passing units exchange information on —

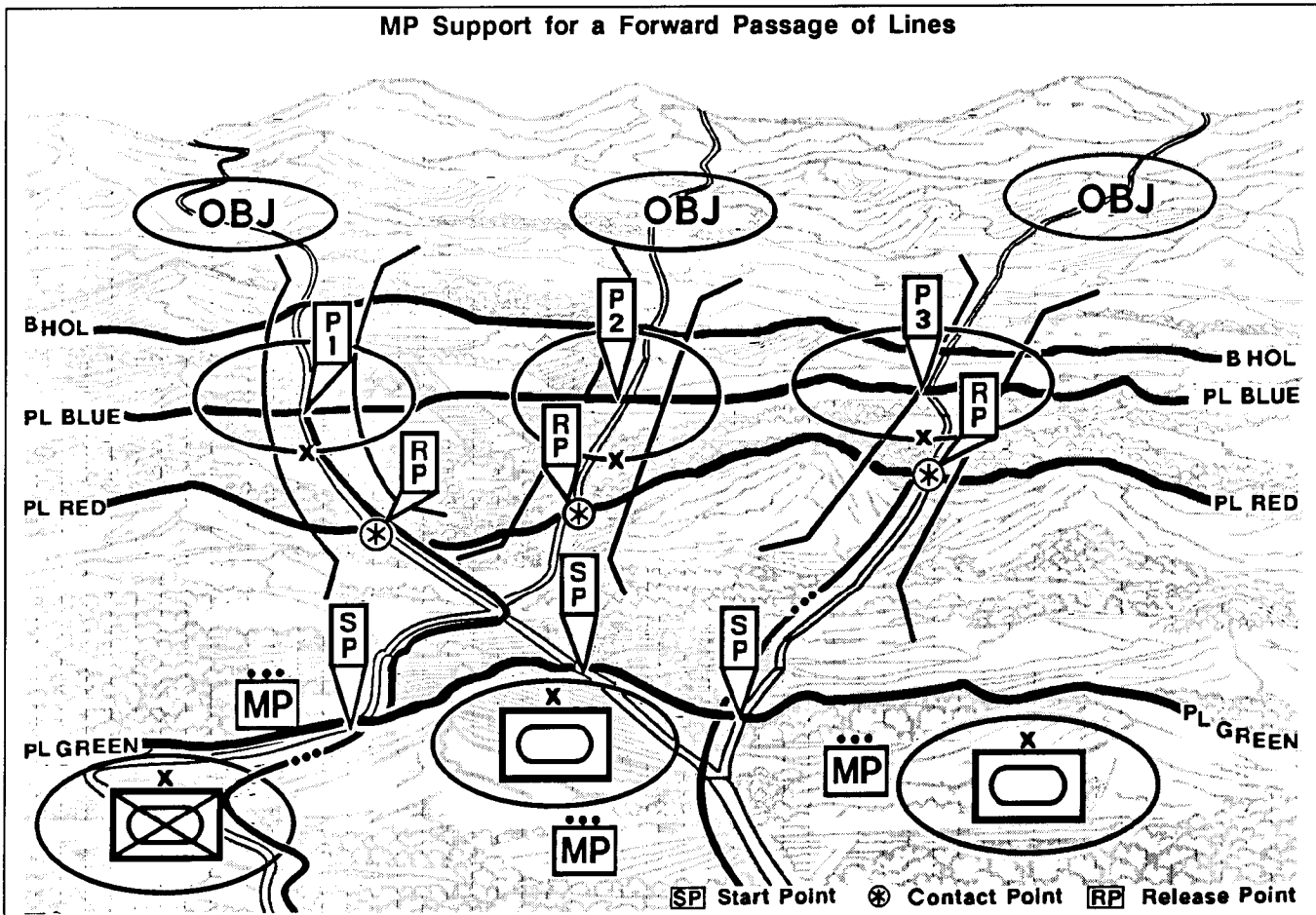
- Designations and types of units to pass.
- Missions of units and schemes of maneuver.
- Presence of NBC contamination and actions to minimize NBC munitions.
- Fire support.
- Intelligence (enemy and friendly situations).

- Contact and coordination points.
- Combat service support provided by stationary units, with locations for emergency support.
- Security measures during the passage, including OPs and patrol routes.
- Locations of passage points and lanes.
- Obstacle locations and types.
- Locations of assembly areas and attack positions.
- Routes, including start points and release points.
- Recognition signals to be used.
- SOI.
- Time or circumstances when responsibility for the control of the AO is transferred.

SUPPORTING THE PASSAGE

The degree of MP support for a passage of lines depends on the needs of the commander and the number of MP available. But when a corps or division commander orders a passage of lines, MP must immediately become involved in the planning and coordination. The PM section must quickly coordinate with the division transportation officer or the HTD at corps and the G3. The PM must know what units are involved and the location of their assembly areas.

MP Support for a Forward Passage of Lines



If your MP element is tasked to support a passage of lines, you coordinate with your operations section for the routes. Traffic on MSRs, refugee control routes, or elsewhere should not degrade your traffic circulation plan supporting the passage of lines. You continuously coordinate with your operations section to confirm –

- The size of the passing units.
- Locations of assembly areas.
- Recognition signals.
- Actual time that the passage of lines will take place.

You begin supporting a passage of lines at the route start point, which serves as a contact point. Recognition signals are displayed at the start point. You monitor the passing unit's command net during the entire passage.

MP SUPPORT FOR AREA DAMAGE CONTROL

Area damage control is basic to successful rear operations. ADC measures, taken before, during, and/or after hostile actions or natural or man-made disasters, minimize effects and reduce damage. All rear area units try to limit the impact of enemy actions and reestablish unit operations as quickly as possible. Commanders and operations sections at each level of command plan ADC operations.

ADC operations integrate the functions of many specialized units. Engineers plan and coordinate ADC operations at the site. Medical teams help sort and treat mass casualties and assist in initial evacuations. Army aviators help evacuate casualties and provide emergency resupply, communications relay operations, area damage assessment, and command and control actions. MP expedite and/or control battlefield movement into, around, or through damaged or contaminated areas. Signal elements reestablish the signal system. And many host-nation civil efforts on behalf of their population, like clearing rubble, aid military operations.

The amount of MP support needed for ADC operations depends on the extent of the damage, the importance of the affected area, and the effect of the damage on the movement of troops and logistical supplies. Enemy attacks on key military facilities can leave them unprotected. Heavy damage in urban civilian areas can disrupt or interdict local government services. (Protecting civilian facilities is a host nation's responsibility. But MP preserve law and order in such an area if so doing protects military needs and facilities.) Route and area recons are key to determining the trafficability of the routes into, out of, and around affected areas, to obtaining a damage assessment, and to having early warning of the continued presence of the enemy.

Your element and the passing unit may maintain radio silence.

Depending on the situation, you can support the passing unit with –

- TCPs.
- Escort/guide vehicles.
- Temporary route signs.
- A mix of these measures.

Where you can, use route signing. It will decrease the number of TCPs you need to operate. But if routes are not well defined, or if they cross congested areas, you should expect to provide TCPs. If need be, you could provide escort vehicles.

The enemy's damage to the terrain determines the degree and kind of MP support needed and where you place your priority of effort. Downed trees, urban rubble, damaged or destroyed bridges, cratered roads, and contaminated road networks impact on BCC. If the roads can be traveled, you can provide circulation control operations locally in the affected area. But damage to an area may be so great that roads must be closed and MSR traffic rerouted.

Security patrols may be needed around key facilities. Or you may need to set up OPs/LPs to observe sectors of the affected area. The OP/LP teams can watch for enemy agents trying to exploit the effects of a conventional attack through arson, sniper fire on firefighters, or other disruptive acts. OPs/LPs also watch for theft, pilferage, or arson against military property.

Your ADC operations may be either part of an ongoing operation or a separate requirement. During ADC operations you –

- Perform route and area recons in affected areas.
- Evaluate the serviceability of the road network.
- Note and report the development of critical points caused by damage to bridges, tunnels, and the like.
- Monitor the flow of refugees from the damaged area.
- Report and block off affected areas.
- Provide area security for involved critical facilities.
- Reroute battlefield movement to alternate road networks.
- Check for and report NBC hazards and contamination.
- Prevent sabotage, looting, and pilferage in the damaged area.
- Protect property, contain panic, and enforce emergency restrictions.

- Direct persons to first aid stations, emergency shelters, and the locations of other emergency operations.
 - Post temporary signs to prevent entry into unsafe buildings or to redirect activity to temporary locations.
 - Help establish populace control in affected areas.
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- Operate mounted and dismounted mobile patrols, checkpoints, and roadblocks to –
 - Enforce emergency restrictions on movement into, within, and out of the affected area.
 - Direct refugees.
 - Collect stragglers.
 - Enforce curfews, stand-fast orders, and movement authorizations and prioritizations.