

Chapter 4

MOVEMENT TECHNIQUES AND FORMATIONS

The tempo of operations demands that NBC recon units spend a lot of time moving. NBC reconnaissance units will normally spend more time moving than performing reconnaissance. Moving carelessly may cause a unit to make contact with the enemy and suffer needless casualties.

NBC recon units use standard formations and movement techniques to get to their assigned area. Once at the mission area, the NBC recon unit selects the appropriate NBC reconnaissance technique to perform its mission.

FUNDAMENTALS OF TACTICAL MOVEMENT

To survive on the battlefield and provide NBC recon, you must exercise command and control, maximize the use of terrain, and apply the following fundamentals of movement:

- Move on covered and concealed routes.
- Do not move directly forward from covered and concealed positions.
- Avoid likely ambush sites and other danger areas.
- Enforce camouflage, noise, and light discipline.
- Maintain all-around security, including guards against air attack.

Your NBC recon element must adhere to the following guidelines:

Use terrain for protection - terrain offers natural cover and concealment from enemy observation and cover against enemy fire. Using terrain to protect vehicles is difficult so, terrain driving must become a habit. Use terrain for protection and cover and concealment when in contact with the enemy and when contact is possible or expected.

Avoid possible kill zones - avoid wide open spaces, especially where high ground dominates, or where cover and concealment are available to the enemy.

Maximize the vehicle's capabilities - use any available depressions and trees to avoid enemy anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) fire. When moving to a new position, move as rapidly as possible.

COMMAND AND CONTROL CONCEPTS

Place yourself where you can best command and control. Your location is governed by the situation, movement formation, movement technique, and whether or not your unit is performing recon. Selection of the movement formation is based on the factors of METT-T. The distance between vehicles varies according to the terrain and enemy. Your vehicle crew is responsible for providing all-around security while on the move. Direct movement by using approved arm-and-hand signals. Radios should be used only as a backup means of communicating.

FORMATIONS

There are five formations for squad platoon mounted movement: column, line, wedge, vee, and echelon.

Column Formation

The column formation is used for road marches, for movement during limited visibility, and when passing through defiles or other restrictive terrain. The platoon can deploy rapidly from the column formation into other formations. The column simplifies control and provides good security.

Use the staggered column (Figure 4-1) for rapid movement across open terrain. It affords all around observation and fields of fire. The platoon leader is positioned to best control the platoon. The staggered column formation is used by squad- or platoon-size units. Vehicles should maintain 25 to 100 meter internals and lateral dispersion. Each vehicle commander maintains observation of his designated sector. The exact distance between vehicles depends on METT-T, weather conditions, and visibility.

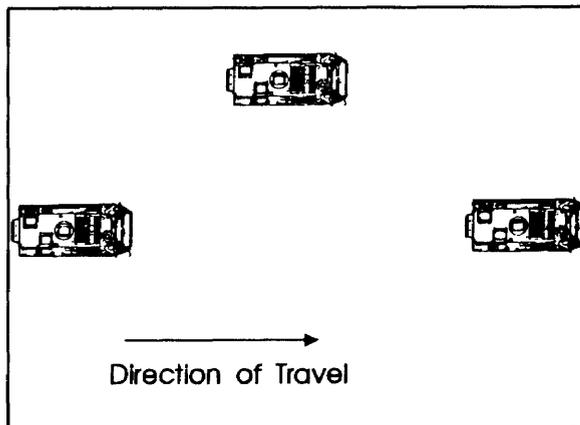


Figure 4-1. Staggered column formation.

Line Formation

Use the line formation (Figure 4-2) for rapid movement when time is limited. However, it provides little flank security. This information is primarily used when no enemy contact is expected and time is critical.

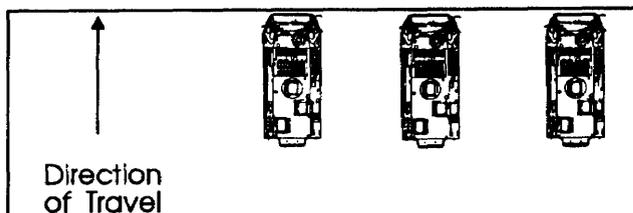


Figure 4-2. Line Formation

Wedge Formation

The wedge formation (Figure 4-3) is used by platoon-sized elements. It allows for security and facilitates positive command and control. Vehicle dispersion and intervals again depend on METT-T, weather conditions, and visibility. When spreading out in open, flat terrain, each vehicle must maintain visibility of the vehicle to its front. When moving in platoon wedge, the platoon leader is positioned for best control of movement of the entire platoon. Each vehicle commander maintains observation of a designated sector. This formation is used when enemy contact is possible.

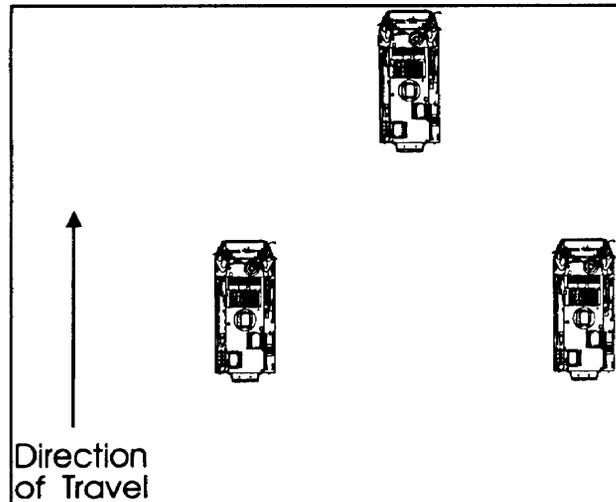


Figure 4-3. Wedge formation.

The column of wedges formation is one of the most frequently used platoon movement formations. It allows for optimum flexibility, security, and good command and control. It is best employed when traveling or traveling overwatch conditions are warranted. Vehicle dispersion and intervals between squads are METT-T dependent, but the lead vehicle of the trail squad generally needs visual contact with the lead squad. This formation allows squads to deploy into other formations more rapidly should the tactical situation warrant.

Vee Formation

The vee formation (Figure 4-4) affords good security, speed, command, and control. Split vee can be used when the two sections are operating on different routes. These formations are used when contact is possible but speed is desirable. The lead vee element moves along covered and concealed routes for protection. The trail element moves at variable speed, continually overmatching and providing security. The trail element must always maintain visual contact with the lead element and may stop periodically to observe.

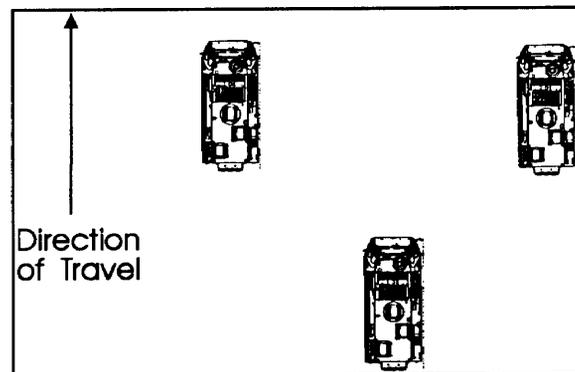


Figure 4-4. Vee formation

Echelon Right (Left) Formation

An echelon formation (Figure 4-5) provides good coverage of an area. It provides flexibility and speed. This formation does not provide sufficient security if enemy contact is possible or expected.

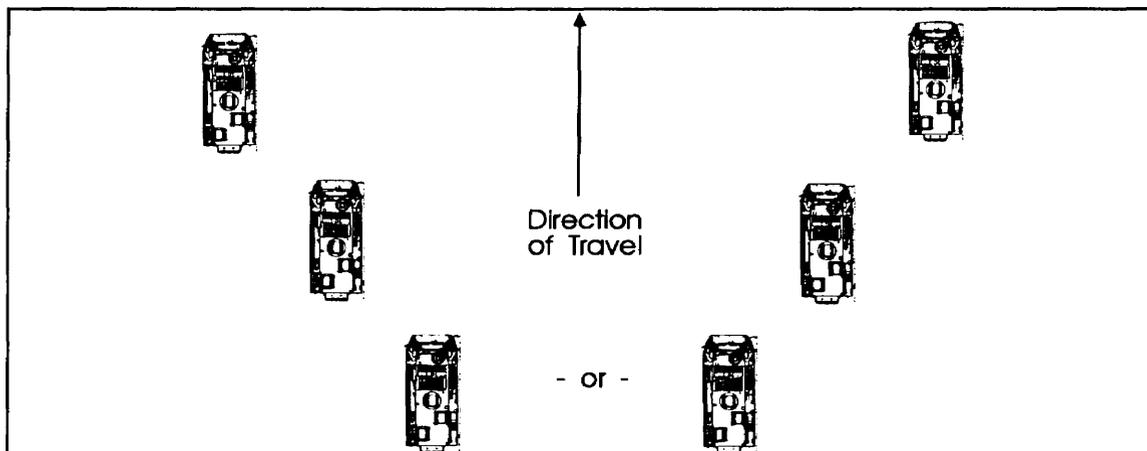


Figure 4-5. Echelon right and left formations.

Stationary Formations

There are two security formations used when vehicles are not moving: herringbone and coil.

Herringbone Formation

Use the herringbone (Figure 4-6) when the platoon is moving in column formation and needs to disperse. You may need to rapidly disperse during air attacks or when the platoon must stop during movement. The herringbone formation lets the platoon move to covered and conceded positions off a road or from an open area and establish all-around security without detailed instructions being issued. The vehicles are repositioned as necessary to take advantage of the best cover, concealment, and fields of fire. Crew members dismount and establish security.

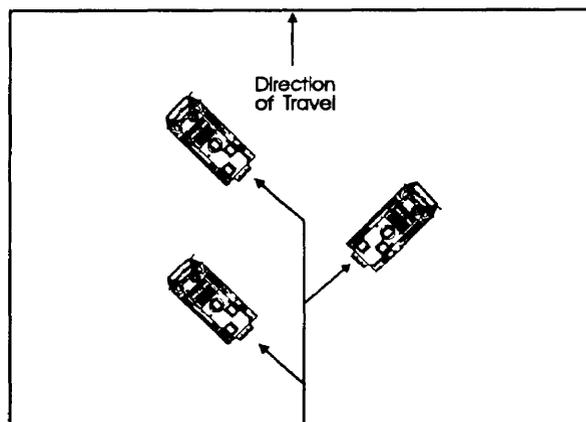


Figure 4-6. Herringbone formation.

Coil Formation

The coil is used to provide all-around (360 degree) security and observation when the unit is stationary (Figure 4-7). It is useful for tactical refueling, resupply, and issuing platoon orders. Since this formation makes the platoon a target of opportunity, do not use the coil for long periods during daylight. Security is posted to include air guards and dismounted listening post (LP) and observation post (OP). There are two methods to form a coil.

- The first method, when visibility is limited, requires the platoon leader to form the coil by leading his platoon in a circle. When the circle is complete, all vehicles stop, adjust for cover and concealment, turn 90 degrees outward, and post security.

- In the second method, the platoon leader, signals for the platoon to assume a coil, quickly moves his vehicle into position, then stops. The other vehicles move directly to their assigned positions, as stated in the platoon SOP, seek cover and concealment, and post security. This technique is used during daylight or whenever speed is essential.

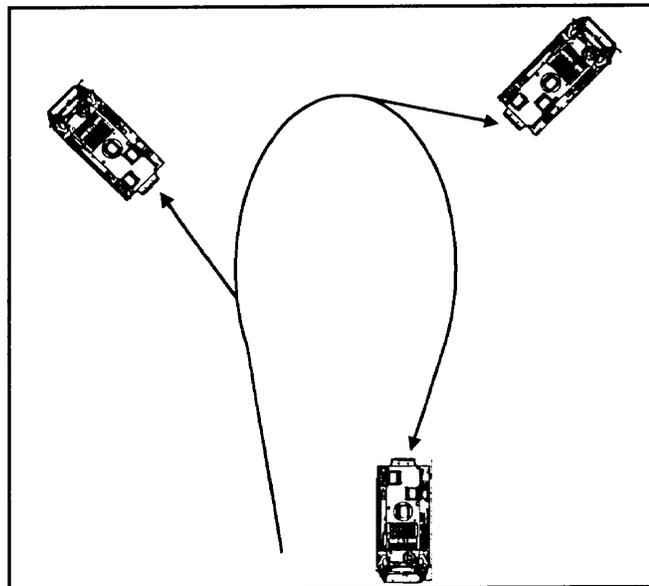


Figure 4-7. Coil formation.

MOVEMENT TECHNIQUES

Movement techniques are methods of traversing terrain. They are **traveling, traveling overwatch, and bounding overwatch**. The likelihood of enemy contact determines which technique to use, as shown in the following table:

Movement Techniques	
Enemy Contact	Recommended Movement
Not Likely	Traveling
Possible	Traveling Overwatch
Expected	Bounding Overwatch

Traveling

The traveling movement technique is employed when enemy contact is not likely and speed is necessary. The unit moves in column with 50 meter intervals. Vehicles move continuously at a maximum safe speed. When the column stops, all vehicles herringbone. The unit moves along covered and concealed routes automatically contracting and expanding, based on terrain and visibility. Local security is maintained according to SOP. Each vehicle posts an airguard. The unit leader is located where he can best control.

Traveling Overwatch

The traveling overwatch movement technique is employed when enemy contact is likely (possible). Unit moves in column with a 50-meter interval with designated lead and trail elements. The trail element moves continuously following covered and concealed routes. The lead element is approximately 50 to 100 meters ahead of the trail element, depending on terrain and vegetation. The trail element moves at varying speeds, stopping as required to overwatch the lead vehicle. Visual contact is maintained with the lead element at all times. The trail element overmatches at such a distance that should the enemy engage the lead element, it will not prevent the trailing element from firing or moving to support the lead element. In wooded areas or restricted terrain, the units reduce speed and interval. In adverse weather conditions, the crew of the lead vehicle dismounts to verify the trafficability of the route. The following vehicle(s) provide overwatch. Your unit maintains local security according to its SOP.

Bounding Overwatch

The bounding overwatch movement technique is employed when enemy contact is expected. The basic movement formation is the staggered column with 50 to 100 meter intervals between vehicles. Lead element bounds forward following a covered and concealed route. The bounding element may be a single vehicle for a squad movement or an entire squad for a platoon movement. The overwatching element covers the progress of the bounding element from covered and concealed positions offering observation and fields of fire against suspected enemy positions. Visual contact is maintained at all times. The length of the bound is based on terrain analysis and the ranges and fields of fire from the overmatching vehicles. When cresting a hill, entering an open area, exiting a defile, or moving through any other restrictive terrain, it may be necessary to dismount a crewman from the vehicle (this should not be done when operating with the overpressure system on). The unit maintains local security according to its SOP.