

SOLUTIONS — TACTICAL VIGNETTE 98-5

“Zone Recon To LOA Steelers” from the September-October 1998 issue of *ARMOR*

THE PROBLEM

Situation:

You are “Wolfpack 6,” the commander of Delta Team, TF 3-37, with two tank platoons and a mech platoon. Sunrise is at 0600, sunset at 1800.

Enemy:

The 52d MRB has seized Bensonville to our north. It is set up in a deliberate defense on the south side of the town in OBJ GREEN (encompassing OBJ YELLOW and OBJ BLUE, which is east of YELLOW) oriented south. In OBJ YELLOW, we expect an MRC(+). The TF S2 templates that the enemy is established in a well-prepared defense out of contact, with three MRPs in a horseshoe formation tied into the terrain and a dismantled infantry strongpoint on the west side of his defensive position. This strongpoint is templated to have an AT firing line composed of 2A45Ms and AT-5s. The enemy also has an extensive obstacle belt, three dismantled reconnaissance teams (DRT), and two CSOPs forward in the security zone (see map board with original enemy SITEMP and R&S graphics).

The most probable and most dangerous course of action is for the enemy to courageously hold his defensive positions and die in place. He will attempt to piecemeal friendly units with obstacles and indirect fire and destroy them in his kill sack as they move through the restrictive NTC-like terrain north toward Bensonville.

Friendly:

TF Mission: As the main effort of the brigade’s attack on OBJ GREEN, TF 3-37 attacks 310600AUG98 to seize OBJ YELLOW, vic 085595, to facilitate passage of follow-on forces that will gain control of Bensonville vic 130700.

Last night the TF scout platoon, which had only six operational HMMWVs, infiltrated through the zone to attempt to reconnoiter enemy positions and obstacles. As of first light this morning, the TF TOC has lost communications with the scouts. Before the TOC lost communications with the scouts (VIPERS), it had received the following information:

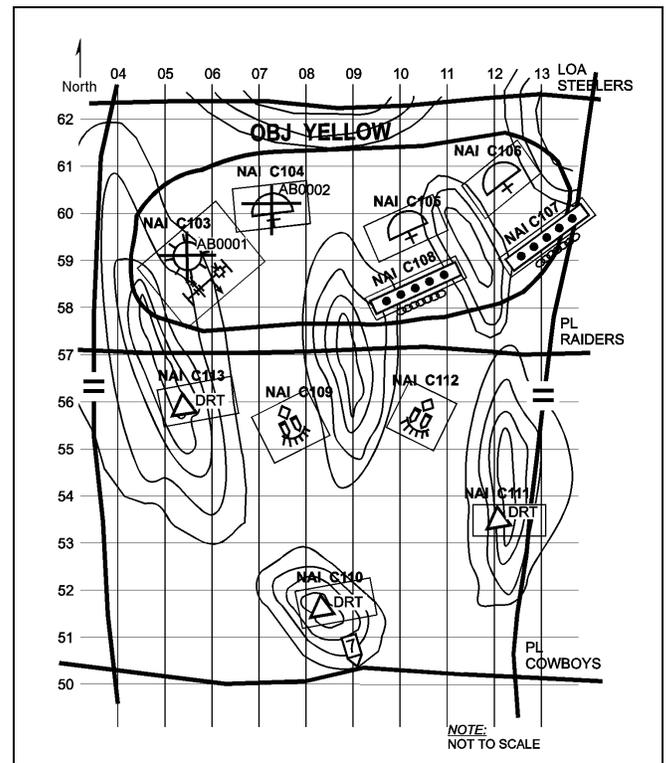
- **A section** (VIPER 2 and 3).
 - One vehicle requires recovery vic 044580; the other vehicle is FMC and a patrol is conducting dismantled reconnaissance vic 045594.

- Reported complex obstacle (triple-strand concertina with AT and AP mines) running NE-SW with difficult bypass at SW end vic 059568; dismantled enemy activity vic 055591.
- Last SITREP at 0445.
- **B section** (VIPER 4 and 6).
 - Reported point obstacle (wire and mines) with difficult bypass on north side grid 119580.
 - Last reported grid 112606. Last transmission at 0300: “CONTACT NORTH, OUT!” No further contact.
- **C section** (VIPER 1 and 5).
 - Reported two BMPs stationary vic 076556 oriented S-SE at 0030; wire/mine obstacle oriented NE-SW vic 074587 at 0200.
 - VIPER 1 destroyed vic 078588 at 0230; all KIAs.
 - VIPER 5 conducted dismantled reconnaissance and reported tracked vehicle activity vic 100600 at 0300; three T-80s (stationary in a hide position) vic 079609 at 0400.
 - Last reported grid 062608, relayed through VIPER 2 at 0445.

Without a clearer picture of the enemy, the TF commander believes that tomorrow’s attack will be unsuccessful. He wants you to assume the mission of the scout platoon. At 1630, just as your ISG arrives at your assembly area with the LOG-PAC, the TF commander issues a FRAGO directing you to conduct a force-oriented zone reconnaissance to LOA STEELERS to confirm or deny the S2’s template. He wants you to reconnoiter all NAIs; to identify the composition, disposition, and array of enemy forces in OBJ YELLOW and the obstacles in the security zone; and to destroy CSOPs and any other reconnaissance assets in zone. He at-

taches an engineer squad and an extra FIST to your company team to assist you in your mission, and he orders you to position both FIST-Vs in OPs where they will be able to observe preparatory fires on the objective. He reminds you that all friendly elements, including scouts, must be at least 2 kilometers from any pre-planned targets because the brigade commander has given him MLRS support for the attack. You have priority of artillery fires until 0600, and you are primary shooter for AB0001 and AB0002 prior to the attack. After completing your reconnaissance mission and positioning your FIST-Vs in OPs, you will consolidate your remaining forces at CP 7 and fall in as the trail company team of the TF diamond during the attack. You may leave FIST-Vs and dismantled OPs north of PL COWBOYS, but you must have the rest of your company team positioned at CP 7 prepared to attack when the TF comes through.

The time is now 1700, and the sun will set in an hour. Your assembly area is 3km south of the LD, and the LD is 10km south of PL COWBOYS. The attack is planned to begin with preparatory fires at 0600. You must act now! What do you do?



THE SOLUTIONS

Author's Solution

(NOTE: This solution is in the form of a FRAGO from WOLFPACK 6, the commander of Delta Team, TF 3-37. The team comprises two tank platoons and a mech platoon.)

SITUATION

General:

Last night, the TF scout platoon (VIPERS), with six operational HMMWVs, infiltrated through the zone to conduct reconnaissance of enemy positions and obstacles. As of first light, the TF TOC has lost communications with the scouts. The attack is planned for tomorrow morning at 0600. Without confirmation of his IPB, the TF commander has serious reservations about the enemy situation and scheme of maneuver for tomorrow's attack. To ensure the operation's success, he has directed us to complete the mission of the scout platoon.

Enemy:

Intel update follows. Before contact was lost, the TF scouts reported the following enemy situation:

- Complex obstacle (triple-strand concertina with AT and AP mines) running NE-SW with difficult bypass at SW end vic 059568.
- Dismounted enemy activity vic 055591 at 0445.
- Point obstacle (wire and mines) with difficult bypass on north side vic 119580.
- Two stationary BMPs oriented S-SE vic 076556 at 0030.
- Wire/mine obstacle oriented NE-SW vic 074587 at 0200.
- Tracked vehicle activity vic 100600 at 0300.
- Three T-80s stationary in hide position vic 079609 at 0400.

An obstacle in the west, although not templated, has been confirmed by the scouts. The enemy's countermobility capabilities are not unlimited. If, as the scouts report, there is a large complex obstacle in the west, the enemy must be weak somewhere else. Additionally, VIPER's B section was able to maneuver to

112606 without reporting any contact; this tends to deny the presence of the templated CSOP in NAI C112 and an obstacle and MRP in NAIs C107 and C106 respectively. Based on this information, I think he is probably weaker in the east than in the west.

Friendly:

Before contact was lost, scout locations were reported as follows:

- **A section** (VIPER 2 and 3): one vehicle needs recovery vic 044580; the other vehicle is FMC and is collocated with the bent vehicle; patrol is conducting dismounted reconnaissance vic NAI C103 (grid 045594).
- **B section** (VIPER 4 and 6): last reported at grid 112606; assumed to be zapped.
- **C section** (VIPER 1 and 5): VIPER 1 zapped vic 078588 at 0230 (all KIAs); VIPER 5 is conducting dismounted reconnaissance, last reported grid 062608 at 0445 (relayed by VIPER 2).

Additional graphic control measures:

Add the following graphic control measures:

- Platoon boundary along N-S grid line 09.
- PL OILERS along E-W grid line 53.
- CP 8 at 121572.

MISSION

Wolfpack conducts a zone reconnaissance NLT 301730AUG98 to LOA STEELERS to destroy enemy reconnaissance forces, confirm or deny the presence of other enemy forces and obstacles in zone, and establish OPs to observe enemy defensive positions. Consolidate at CP 7 NLT 0600.

Intent:

Our main reconnaissance effort will be in the east, because I believe that is where the enemy is weakest. I want to destroy DRTs and confirmed CSOP, observe NAIs C103, C104, C105, C108 to confirm or deny templated enemy MRPs and obstacles. I want to clear NAIs C106 and C107 to confirm or deny a templated

MRP and obstacle in those NAIs. Do not become decisively engaged with the enemy's main defense and consolidate at CP 7 NLT 0600.

Concept of the operation:

We will move quickly in a company wedge, assuming risk to PL COWBOYS. We must make contact with VIPER ASAP and use him to assist us throughout the mission. We will set vic PL COWBOYS, BLUE will move quickly and begin to locate and destroy the DRT teams in zone. RED will move forward and destroy the CSOP in NAI C109. WHITE will move up and clear NAI C112. With the CSOP and DRTs destroyed, the enemy will not have eyes on our reconnaissance efforts tonight or our attack tomorrow. Then we will continue our reconnaissance and set FIST-Vs in OPs to observe AB0001 and AB0002. On order the engineers will breach the obstacle vic CP 8. NLT 0600, we will consolidate at CP 7 and conduct rearm and refuel operations. Then we will fall in as the trail element of the TF diamond when the TF passes our location at 0700 on the attack to seize OBJ YELLOW tomorrow morning.

Maneuver:

BLUE: You are initially the main effort. Lead company wedge to PL COWBOYS. Move quickly to CP 7, dismount, and conduct a hasty DRT sweep to clear NAI C110. Once this is complete, remount, and send one section and a FIST-V to NAI C113 and send one section to NAI C111. You must move quickly to take out the enemy's eyes. RED and WHITE will overwatch your mounted movement. Dismount your squads 1km south of each NAI and clear NAI C113 and C111. Use your dismounts to guide the FIST-V into a position vic 054555 oriented on NAI 109 to call fires on the CSOP. Once DRT sweeps are complete, establish a dismounted OP (OP1) vic 053563 to observe NAIs C103 and C104 and a dismounted OP (OP2) vic 122552 to observe NAIs C107 and C108. Use your vehicles to overwatch your dismounts as much as possible. Your vehicles are the company reserve. Keep them at REDCON 1 and be prepared to react quickly to FRAGOs from me. Leaving your OPs in place, start your move back to CP 7 NLT 0500. Consolidate at CP 7 NLT 0600.

THUNDER 14: Move with BLUE. Set vic 054555 oriented on NAI C109. On

order, adjust fires on the CSOP in C109. After destroying the CSOP, move to a position vic 046567 to serve as primary shooter for AB0001 and AB0002.

RED: Move on the left of the company wedge. Set COWBOYS. Follow and overwatch BLUE's move to NAI C113. Set vic PL OILERS. Once the FIST is set in a position to observe fires on NAI C109, move forward and destroy reported CSOP at NAI C109. Make contact with VIPER 2 on his net, and send a section to recover his vehicle. Have him guide you in, if necessary. If recovery is not possible, ensure that all friendly elements, including VIPER 5 (last reported to be near AB0002), are at least 2 km from targets. Send your other section with the XO to set PL RAIDERS and observe the obstacle reported by VIPER vic 074587. Determine if there is a bypass on the NE end. If there is no bypass, determine the point of penetration. Move as stealthily as possible, and do not become decisively engaged. Start your move back to CP 7 NLT 0500. Consolidate your platoon at CP 7 NLT 0600.

WHITE: Move on the right of the company wedge. Set PL COWBOYS. Follow and overwatch BLUE's move to NAI C111. Set vic PL OILERS. Once BLUE reports NAI C111 clear, you become the main effort. Move forward and clear NAI C112. Send one section and SAPPER 2 (engineer squad) to reconnoiter the point obstacle vic CP 8. Do not risk being compromised. Assess the trafficability of that avenue of approach for the attack. Bypass the obstacle and clear NAIs C107 and C106. Attempt to make contact with VIPER's B section and find out what happened to that element. Evacuate WIAs if necessary. Return to CP 8. On order breach the obstacle. Be prepared to leave that tank section and engineer vehicle on site to secure the area and keep that lane open. Have your other section set RAIDERS and observe NAIs C108 and C105 to confirm or deny presence of obstacles and vehicles. Position THUNDER 24 (FIST) in an OP vic 090573 to be the alternate shooter for AB0001 and AB0002. Start your move back to CP 7 NLT 0500. Consolidate your platoon at CP 7 NLT 0600.

SAPPER 2: Move with WHITE. On order, breach the obstacle vic CP 8. Be prepared to remain on site, secure the area, and direct traffic through the lane.

THUNDER 24: Move with WHITE. Set vic 090573 and orient on NAI C103 and C104. You will be the alternate shooter for AB0001 and AB0002.

WOLFPACK 5: Move with RED and supervise the effort in the west. Call the TF main and get retrans for our net.

WOLFPACK 9: Request that the TF immediately attach to us an additional engineer squad, two additional medic PCs, a fueler, and an ammo truck for this mission. They must move with us when we leave this location. Follow the company team's move and set the trains at CP 7. Conduct CSS operations from there. Conduct rearm and refuel operations at CP 7 NLT 0600.

WOLFPACK MG: You are the company team relay and battle captain. Move in my HMMWV with the trains. Ensure that you maintain communications with me and with the TF main. Keep accurate track of the battle and move to high ground as necessary.

I will move with WHITE. I need clarification on the enemy situation in the east. Keep me informed. What are your questions?

RATIONALE

The three keys to the success of this mission are:

1. Recognize that you can't do everything. You must clarify the TF commander's PIR. Time is of the essence, and your resources are limited. Seek guidance from higher and focus your reconnaissance efforts.
2. Fight the enemy, not the plan. You must quickly conduct a thorough IPB. Use reports from the scouts to update your sitemp. Plan off of your updated sitemp, not the original from the S2. Continue to update your running estimate of the enemy situation throughout the night and think from the enemy's perspective. Recommend a COA to the commander based on the information you gather.
3. Use all assets available. Continue to use available scouts to conduct reconnaissance and provide you with information on the enemy in OBJ YELLOW. Evacuate wounded scouts as necessary. Share information with reconnaissance assets from your adjacent units, brigade reconnaissance assets, etc.

After LOGPAC activities are completed, start your movement ASAP. Request clearer focus from the TF commander. You must request additional assets (engineer, medics, fueler, and ammo truck) in order to accomplish your mission and sustain your team. Once you

complete your IPB, inform the TF commander that you believe that the enemy is weakest in the east and recommend that he begins developing a COA to attack in the east, to be executed pending the results of your reconnaissance. The reconnaissance information you gather and your recommended COA should provide him with sufficient information to make his final decision.

Sacrifice security for speed and assume risk in your movement to PL COWBOYS. Make contact with VIPER ASAP and use them to help you. If any scouts are still alive, you should be in communications range with them by the time you reach PL COWBOYS. If any scouts are alive, they have presumably been conducting continuous reconnaissance and surveillance since they lost communications with the TF main. They should have at least some new information that will help you. It is implied in your mission that you assume operational control of the scouts. Issue them a FRAGO to conduct detailed area reconnaissance of any unconfirmed NAIs in OBJ YELLOW and help you confirm your IPB. Ensure all scouts are at least 2km from preplanned targets and abandon disabled vehicles if necessary. Extract wounded scouts as necessary.

Clear DRTs to prevent them from observing your every move. Only dismounts will be able to clear the DRTs. Your mechanized infantry platoon is your primary means of dismounted reconnaissance. Use it to conduct DRT sweeps to quickly take out the enemy's eyes. If DRTs are not cleared, they will call fires to impede and harass your reconnaissance efforts throughout the night. Once it completes its DRT sweeps, BLUE sets in two short-term OPs (VISITS) to observe NAIs, provide redundancy for preplanned targets, and provide "reconnaissance pull" for the TF during tomorrow's attack. Use BLUE's vehicles to act as the company team reserve or quick reaction force. FRAGO them as necessary. Use BLUE's dismounts to guide in and set one of the FIST-Vs in a position to overwatch NAI C109 and adjust fires on the CSOP and other targets of opportunity to facilitate your reconnaissance. BLUE must move quickly because you must clear DRTs before moving any other elements north of PL OILERS. Otherwise you risk compromising your entire unit.

Destroy the CSOP confirmed by the scouts in NAI C109 with a tank platoon and indirect fire called by the FIST-V emplaced by BLUE. Clear C112 to ensure that there is not a CSOP there. This will leave the enemy completely blind

and allow you to continue your zone reconnaissance toward OBJ Yellow.

You must get eyes on the obstacle in the western corridor. This is where the TF commander currently plans to attack. If you cannot convince him to attack in the east, he will attack in the west as planned and expect you to provide him with the grid to the point of penetration where the obstacle is weakest.

Physically clear NAIs C106 and C107. If you can deny the presence of an MRP and obstacle there, you may convince the TF commander to attack there. With some further reduction by the engineers, the bypass on the north side of the point obstacle may be a viable avenue of approach for the attack tomorrow. Use of this avenue, if successful, would also serve to isolate OBJ YELLOW and prevent the enemy from repositioning forces from OBJ BLUE (east of OBJ YELLOW) into OBJ YELLOW.

Reconnoiter the obstacle at CP 8. Beware of enemy overwatching the obstacle. The enemy should have eyes on the obstacle. Be careful and do not risk compromising your forces and your plan. If possible, bypass the obstacle initially and clear C106 and C107. If the NAIs are clear, prepare to breach the obstacle at CP 8. Do not breach too early, because you may compromise your intentions and allow him time to replace the obstacle.

The scouts confirmed tracked vehicle noises at NAI C105, but they neither confirmed nor denied the presence of the templated obstacle in NAI C108. Use a tank section from WHITE and your vehicle to conduct mounted reconnaissance along the eastern mobility corridor. Use the standoff distance of your thermal sights to observe NAIs C108 and C105 to confirm or deny presence of the templated obstacle and MRP. Then set the second FIST-V in a position where it can observe the preplanned targets and provide redundancy as the alternate shooter. If you visually clear NAI C108 and deny the presence of an obstacle there, you will have further support for recommending that the TF attack in the east rather than the west.

Do not allow mounted movement north of PL RAIDERS in the central mobility corridors without your authorization, because, based on your IPB, PL RAIDERS is most likely the southern edge of the enemy's kill sack. Using this control measure will prevent friendly vehicles from driving into the enemy's kill sack and becoming decisively engaged by his main defense.

Reader's Solution

(Submitted by CPT Ray M. Ceralde, Korea)

TASK ORGANIZATION:

RED – 1st Platoon (Tank)

WHITE – 2d Platoon (Tank)

BLUE – 3d Platoon (Mech)

FRAGO: Delivered face to face with 1s, 4s, and attachments while CO/TM conducts LOGPAC activities, and briefing off a 1:50,000 map and a dry erase board.

Situation. Scouts conducted zone reconnaissance up to PL STEELERS last night. The task force has lost commo with them. However, these are the reports they sent back before we lost contact.

The scouts reported the following enemy activities:

- Two BMPs, stationary, oriented SSE at 076556, NAI C109.
- Three T-80s, stationary, in a hide position vicinity 079609, NAI C104.
- Tracked vehicle activity vicinity 100600, NAI C105.
- Enemy dismount activity vicinity 055591, templated strongpoint, NAI C103.

The scouts reported the following obstacles:

- Wire and mine obstacle consisting of triple-strand concertina, AT and AP mines. Oriented SW to NE starting from a difficult bypass at 059568 going NE for an unknown length.
- Wire and mine obstacle 074587 oriented NE to SW. This obstacle most likely ties in with the previous obstacle and both of them combined are probably an extensive turning obstacle.
- Point obstacle consisting of wire and mines with difficult bypass on north side at 119580. This obstacle is most probably blocking the gap at 120573.

I think that the enemy is defending the western avenue of approach (AA) as his main effort. His AT weapons are covering an extensive turning obstacle that will try to force us to go north and straight into the kill sack of an MRP or tank platoon vicinity 104. The AT fires will have flank shots on us as we go north to avoid the obstacle. The strongpoint is there to protect the AT firing line and force us to stay off the western ridge and keep us in

the east to go into the MRP kill sack. The CSOP in 109 is intended to give early warning and to attrit us.

In the eastern AA, the scouts haven't seen anything in 112 so we can assume that the two BMPs in 109 are the CSOP for the MRC defense. The scouts probably haven't cleared 108, where there is a templated obstacle, but their report of tracked vehicle activity vicinity of 105 indicates that there is an MRP defending this AA. I'm pretty sure that 108 is the location of this MRP's kill sack. Since the MRC has put a great deal of effort into the turning obstacle in the west, I do not think that there is an extensive obstacle here.

The gap in the far east is blocked by a point obstacle. The scouts found a difficult bypass around it but I'm sure that somebody is overwatching this obstacle. It may be an MRP (-) or a single vehicle and they may have let the scouts through to prevent their detection and/or deceive us that this obstacle is not covered. This MRP(-) may be defending this obstacle vicinity the 1257 grid square oriented west or defending in 106.

The scouts haven't found any DRT teams, especially in NAIs 110, 111, and 113. I still think that there is one DRT team out there, however.

As far as the friendly situation goes, Viper 1 has been zapped and Vipers 4 and 6 made direct fire contact, and we haven't heard from them since. As of the last report, four scout vehicles are still alive with one requiring recovery at 044580. All of the scout vehicles are north of PL RAIDERS.

Our attachments are an extra FIST-V and an engineer squad. BLACK 1, take one of your FIST-Vs to go with RED and the other one to go with WHITE. BLUE 1, take SAPPER 12 (engineer squad) with you.

Our mission is to conduct a force-oriented zone reconnaissance to destroy enemy security forces and to recon point obstacles from PL COWBOYS to PL RAIDERS starting at 1800 in order to support the task force's reconnaissance effort.

My intent is that we are completing the scout's zone recon, not redoing it. There are plenty of tasks that we have to do, but I have prioritized the most important ones. If we can re-establish commo with the remaining scouts, our mission becomes much easier because the scouts can continue their recon up to PL STEELERS and provide us updated reports. The end state is that we have destroyed the CSOP, reconned the point

obstacle in the gap, identified the DRTs, cleared designated NAIs, and positioned the FIST-Vs ready to observe AB0001 and AB0002. Also, we are ready to fall in as the trail CO/TM for the TF.

At 1800, be at REDCON 1 ready to move out of here. We'll cross the LD in a wedge formation using the traveling overwatch method, with BLUE leading and RED trailing in the west and WHITE trailing in the east. CO trains will trail in the center behind RED and WHITE. I'll assume risk and sacrifice security for speed while moving up to PL COWBOYS. After crossing PL COWBOYS, be deliberate and cautious in your movement.

BLUE 1, set vicinity CP7 and send your dismounts to clear NAI 110 in order to deny DRTs the use of this key terrain. Also, I want you to try to re-establish commo with the scouts on their net. They may be simply out of range, and we should be close enough to contact them from here.

When 110 is clear, BLUE 1, split one section to go west with RED and one to go east with WHITE.

BLUE section and RED 1, you will conduct a raid on the CSOP at 109 to destroy it in order to deny the enemy from using his security elements. Here's my guidance. BLUE, have your section move toward CP D4. I want you to fix the CSOP from the support by fire position vicinity CP D4 to allow RED to destroy it. RED 1, talk to BLUE's section so they can guide you in to assault the CSOP. I will be with RED to control the action here.

RED 1, after you destroy all enemy in 109, move back to CP D1 to overwatch BLUE's section. BLUE 1, at CP D4, send your dismounts to clear 113 to deny DRTs use of this terrain. Once 113 is clear, keep your dismounts there. Their mission is to observe 103 and 104 to provide early warning if the enemy situation changes. BLACK 1, send one of your FIST-Vs to position vicinity 113 to observe AB0002. BLUE, keep your section in the vicinity of CP D4 and continue to overwatch 109 to ensure that it remains clear.

BLUE, send your eastern section to CP D3 and send your dismounts to clear 111 in order to deny DRTs use of this terrain. WHITE 1, overwatch BLUE's section in order to protect them. Once clear, take your dismounts back and move your section to CP D5 and clear 112. Next go to CP D8. SAPPER 12, recon the point obstacle to determine if mechanized forces can move through a breach if the TF

commander decides to attack through here for tomorrow's attack. BLUE, your section will provide overwatch for SAPPER to protect them during their recon. Additionally, observe for any enemy forces guarding this obstacle.

WHITE 1, work and talk with BLUE's section and use bounding overwatch to cover their moves as they clear 111, 112 and the obstacle at CP D8. When 112 is clear, go to CP D6 and send the FIST-V to position on the ridge about 1 km west of CP D6 to observe fires on AB0001. Additionally, observe NAI 108 from CP D6 to see if there are any enemy or obstacles there.

BLUE and SAPPER, once you've reconned the obstacle, move back to CP D3 using a series of bounds to overwatch each other. WHITE, work with BLUE to cover their moves back. When BLUE is set at CP D3, move back to CP D2. BLUE and WHITE, from your positions, continue to overwatch NAI 112 to report any new enemy activity.

Here's the coordinating instruction for everybody. The TF commander wants us to consolidate at CP 7 once we've completed our recon. I think it's because he wants all available combat power in the AA the TF attacks. On order, move to CP 7 where we will consolidate. From there, we will fall in as the trail CO/TM in the TF attack.

BLACK 7, move the CO trains to CP 7 once 110 is clear. Request the FAS to move closer to CP 7 and request for an additional M113 attached to us for casevac. Request an additional fueler and ammo HEMMT to be attached to us for tomorrow's attack, and be prepared to conduct a hot refuel and rearm during tomorrow's attack.

BLACK 5, go in the east with WHITE to control the maneuver there. Keep attempting to make contact with the scouts. I assume that they already know, but remind them to be at least 2 km away from the pre-planned MLRS targets by 0600. For the scout vehicle requiring recovery, order them to destroy it if it can't move out before 0600.

I'll be in the west with RED. What are your questions?

RATIONALE:

Since the TF commander has issued vague guidance, and assuming that I cannot contact him for clarification, I would have to prioritize tasks and execute the most important ones. This is not disobeying orders but maintaining a purpose orientation. It is probably unrealistic to

perform all the tasks, but some are important enough to support the TF commander's purpose, which is to enable the S2 to determine the enemy template.

My plan is based on the assumption that there are scouts still remaining and who can continue to perform reconnaissance. If I can re-establish contact with the remaining scouts, and they can continue their zone recon to PL STEELERS, they can execute the other half of the mission that the TF commander wants me to accomplish. Additionally, they can provide additional reports since the past day about what they have discovered that we do not know yet. If I can't contact the scouts or if they are all destroyed, I will continue the mission only to recon the areas that I don't have a good read on, such as NAIs 106 and 108.

Based on the scout's reports and making some deductions, such as about the turning obstacle in the west, the intel picture is over halfway complete. With that, I prioritized which NAIs we need to clear, what enemy to destroy, and what obstacles to recon to enable the S2 to confirm or deny the enemy template.

In order to gain a foothold, I need to clear NAI 110 first. From there, I have RED and BLUE conduct a raid to destroy the CSOP in the west. I have the BFV's guide the tanks in because they can locate and fix the CSOP, making it easier for the tanks to locate and destroy it. I use a raid for this operation because I do not intend to hold that ground; the enemy probably has a pre-planned artillery target there. Destroying the CSOP here will allow the TF to attack unimpeded.

In the east, I sent BLUE's other section to clear NAI 111 to ensure that there are no DRTs. I then have them recon the point obstacle because we need to determine if a breach through here will support the TF's attack. I did not send them past PL RAIDERS to clear NAIs 105 and 108 because I believe that this would put them in a suspected MRP kill sack.

When RED, WHITE, and BLUE had completed their missions, I positioned them just north of PL COWBOYS conducting a screen mission to allow them to continue observation but close enough to CP 7 to consolidate for tomorrow's attack.

The instructions I gave to the platoons were not extremely specific but I gave them enough guidance so they can execute using their own initiative. In situations where time is critical and there is minimal preparation time, initiative and clearly defined tasks and purposes are important to success.