17 April 2014

SUBJECT: Is today's Cavalry Squadron manned, trained, & equipped to accomplish the R&S missions required of a Brigade Combat Team?

Purpose: Provide information on the DOTMLPF review of short and long term solutions to man, train and equip Cavalry Squadrons to accomplish their reconnaissance & security missions as part of Combined Arms Maneuver and Wide Area Security.

Why Cavalry Squadrons are critical:

Cavalry Squadrons, through the execution of Reconnaissance and Security missions provide critical support to the BCT because they:

- Identify opportunities and dangers.
- Enable discriminate use of force.
- Create and preserve options.
- Facilitate transition.
- Ensure freedom of maneuver & action.
- Develop the situation in contact.
- Determine enemy intent.
- Provide time and space.

How we got here: DATE rotations across the three CTCs and all three BCTs reveal mission challenges for the Cavalry Squadron, which can be organized into related problem sets. These problem sets reflect the cumulative impact of an over-reliance upon technology and subsequent adoption of flawed doctrine, organizations, and concepts following Operation Desert Storm, and continuing with the Army's transformation to modularity.

In the years following Operation Desert Storm, the fielding of new sensor technologies and the emergence of a digital network combined to provide scouts with significant capability enhancements. With an increased ability to gather and share information from afar, a new contact paradigm emerged that assumed Cavalry formations could gain contact and develop

the situation mounted from unarmored, lightly armed platforms – all while remaining safely outside the enemy's direct fire engagement range.

This contact paradigm shaped the organization and employment principles of the Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition (RSTA) squadrons of what was then our interim formation, the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), and subsequently, of the Brigade Reconnaissance Troops organic to the Armored Brigades of our Mechanized Divisions.[1] These formations possessed minimal combat capability relative to their parent organizations, designed to serve primarily in an information collection capacity, at a distance and out of contact with the enemy. The contact paradigm proved problematic under the demands of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In fact, the 2003 march to Baghdad initially raised concerns about this detrimental influence. Standoff information collection from light platforms proved unrealistic in high tempo operations characterized by a series of movements to contact and sudden, sharp encounters with Iraqi conventional and paramilitary forces. In the complex operational environment in which they operated, Brigade commanders required formations with the ability to the develop situation through close contact with enemy forces; and capable of providing early warning and security for the main body.[2]

Despite recent combat experiences to the contrary, the Army retained the contact paradigm and RSTA influence during transition to modular brigade combat teams and elimination of division cavalry squadrons and the Armored Cavalry Regiment. The deactivation of these formations left the force structure without an organization that possessed the organic assets, doctrinal underpinning, and specialized training to execute the broad range of traditional Cavalry missions (Zone, Route, Area Reconnaissance; Guard, Screen, Cover, etc). The compounding factors of flawed modular Cavalry Squadrons and the loss of the aforementioned traditional Cavalry capability were not readily apparent as the force entered focused and extended COIN and SFA campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Only when BCTs addressed the challenges of full spectrum of warfare would Cavalry formations fully expose their limitations. This realization occurred as a result of our ongoing shift to an Army of Preparation, and the ensuing Decisive Action Training Environment rotations in EAB Warfighter

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1. Effective or Efficient: The conundrum of the ARS, MAJ Daniel Mark, AY 08-09.

2. To Fight or Not to Fight, Dr. Robert Cameron, 2010, page 460.

simulations, and at our respective Combat Training Centers. The following discussion describes the most significant challenges to the Cavalry Squadron and recommends actions that will create formations consistent with the Organizing Principles of: appropriate leader to led ratio; capable of conducting simultaneous mounted & dismounted operations in close proximity to enemy & civilian populations; and organized with both the flexibility and the depth required for mission success.

Problem Set #1: Brigade Combat Teams do not effectively employ Cavalry Squadrons or apply mission command ISO Reconnaissance & Security operations.

Despite the importance that Reconnaissance & Security (R&S) operations play in setting the conditions necessary for tactical and operational success, Army's Brigade Combat Teams struggle to effectively employ their organic Cavalry Squadron. Inadequate leader development, flawed doctrine, and under-strength organizations combine to create a generation of Leaders who lack the knowledge, skills, and experience to effectively plan and execute R&S operations within the context of Combined Arms Maneuver and Wide Area Security operations.

Brigade Commanders and their associated staffs lack leader development and training to plan and execute R&S missions. Brigade staffs ideally comprise subject matter experts with a wide variety of skills to include fires, aviation, intelligence, engineering, and logistics. In the case of R&S operations, however, no designated staff officer possesses the unique training and experience required to assist the Brigade Commander to properly employ and utilize his R&S assets to answer his PIR.

The lack of updated R&S doctrine and related education and training for leaders above the company level compounds the lack of R&S expertise for commanders and staffs at the BCT and EAB. Currently the Cavalry Leader's Course (CLC) provides the most advanced functional course taught at MCoE, targeting company grade officers and senior NCO's serving at the Troop and Cavalry Squadron level.

Problem Set #2: Cavalry Squadrons lack the training, and the leader development & education to conduct Reconnaissance and Security Operations, and to integrate all arms and enablers (e.g. Fires, AV, ENG, CBRNE).

Related to challenges encountered at the BCT level, the Squadron Command team and supporting staff also suffer from a lack of knowledge, skills, and experience in conducting R&S operations. Compounding the lack of experienced senior leaders, Cavalry Squadrons contain a generation of Soldiers and junior Leaders more comfortable conducting counter-IED and presences patrols, or a four-man stack than they are conducting a zone reconnaissance or screen mission. The demands of 13 years of operational deployments to OIF and OEF focused time and resources very specifically to these theater and missions. The tempo of ARFORGEN also caused leaders to forgo sending subordinates to critical functional training such as the Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leaders Course, the Army Reconnaissance Course, and the Cavalry Leaders' Course. The cumulative effect of this deployment-focused training over 13 years has resulted in scouts unfamiliar with R&S operations.

In addition to a general decline in individual and collective task proficiency, modular Cavalry Squadrons face limitations in their structure and manning. As currently organized, the various Cavalry Squadrons of the BCTs are unable to conduct the Security missions of Guard and Cover normally associated with a Cavalry formation. As an unintended casualty of modularity, Cavalry Squadrons now also lack historically organic relationships with Aviation, Fires, and Intelligence Enablers. The resulting lack of habitual relationships in training and deployments creates training shortfalls in our Cavalry leaders, and results in Cavalry organizations not fully capable of conducting all their doctrinal tasks and missions.

Problem Set #3: Cavalry Squadrons cannot conduct appropriate combinations of simultaneous mounted and dismounted operations in close contact with the enemy and civilian populace.

As previously mentioned, rapid increases in technology contributed to an erroneous belief that future Cavalry formations could conduct reconnaissance operations either dismounted or mounted, and that technology would allow units to conduct security operations out of direct contact with the enemy. Overwhelming success in Operation Desert Storm proved to be a poor example of future war, contributing to the thought that future war would be easy, and that technologically superior US forces would dictate the nature of the conflict. Instead, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq confirmed that future enemies will fight asymmetrically – choosing to fight our weaknesses rather than our strengths. Recent history also validated that formations conducting R&S operations will require the capability to fight and develop the

situation through close contact with the enemy – a fight which is oftentimes complicated by proximity to indigenous populations. Accordingly, our scout formations must be able to conduct R&S operations both mounted <u>and</u> dismounted, <u>and</u> able to fight for information in close contact with the enemy and among the people.

Problems # 4 & 5: Cavalry Squadrons are equipped with inadequate vehicles, weapons, and communications.

Cavalry organizations lack equipment required to conduct R&S operations. Based on ongoing and future FDU's, Cavalry formations require increased BOIP of Nett Warrior and associated advanced voice and data long and short range systems for mounted and dismounted R&S missions. Additionally, scout platoons lack integrated OSRVT capability to download UAS feeds during operations.

IBCT: The Up-Armored HMMWVs (UAH) fielded to the IBCT Cavalry Squadron lack the passenger carrying capacity, protection, and mobility required for R&S operations. The UAH cannot survive direct fire engagements against enemy heavy machine guns, ATGMs, and lacks the firepower to fight for information. Ironically, the limitations of the UAH restrict the number of personnel available for dismounted operations across the IBCT Cavalry formations. The IBCT also lacks the organic MPF required for security operations, and to support successful transition operations.

SBCT: The Stryker-Recon Variant and the Stryker-Infantry Carrier Variant lack stabilized optics and stabilized weapons systems required for R&S operations.

ABCT: For the reasons previously stated, the UAH fielded to the scout platoons of the ABCT's Combined Arms Battalions lack the passenger carrying capacity, protection, lethality, and mobility required for R&S operations.

Actions Underway:

Many of the initiatives necessary to address the shortfalls in R&S related training, leader development & education are underway.

An initiative has commenced to review and revise, the Live, Virtual, Constructive, and Gaming materials designed to train BCTs and Echelons above Brigade formations. This effort seeks to ensure units, and elements designed to externally assess units (CTCs, MCTP, etc)

employ scenarios that address R&S operations critical to success in the Decisive Action Training Environment.

Complementary to unit efforts to train leaders and formations, MCoE has reinvigorated R&S related leader development & education to enable Cavalry Squadron leaders and staff. MCoE has aligned functional courses to allow attendance following Professional Military Education. Additionally, MCoE has initiated revision of MTOEs, coding positions in support of the R&S functional training, reinforced by an R&S career path as reflected in updates to 600-3 and 600-25. While current R&S functional training covers operations at the squadron echelon and below, ILE will pilot an elective this fall to teach Field Grade Officers how to plan and execute R&S operations at the BCT and EAB level. Similarly, MCoE proposes designing R&S electives to afford the training opportunities at the US Sergeants Major Academy, PCC, and eventually for Distant Learning. Collectively, these efforts will provide future leaders and staffs with the training, education, and experience to man to conduct R&S missions at echelon.

Finally, revisions and improvements to doctrine underpin future Cavalry Squadron and R&S Operations. All maneuver doctrine now includes a Reconnaissance and Security chapter, and a rewrite of FM 3-98, *Reconnaissance & Security Operations*, awaits final draft review. Future initiatives include similar R&S chapters for all related doctrinal publications – both of our sister Branches and centers, but also at Echelons above Brigade.

Recommended Actions:

Army 2020:

- FDU 13-01: a set of three related documents that standardize the scout squads and platoons of the three Cavalry Squadrons with no personnel growth – recommend immediate approval.

- The decision to assign the R&S mission to one ABCT, and two SBCTs was made on 24 September 2013 – while further drawdown announcements are likely, the Corps level R&S capability gap endures – recommend immediate implementation.

- An acknowledged vehicle shortfall exists in the IBCT Cavalry Squadron – recommend expedite GOTS/COTS solution for the Lightweight Reconnaissance Vehicle.

- Improved manned/unmanned teaming – Both Air and Ground (e.g. OSRVT, UAS, etc)

- Improved capabilities at the squads level to achieve tactical overmatch (e.g. LMAMS, MaFIA, etc)

Army 2025 and beyond:

- A pending FDU further standardizes scout platoons of the IBCT Infantry Battalion to consist of 36 Soldiers – recommend approval for fielding as the opportunity presents itself.

- Consistent challenges experienced by Cavalry Squadrons conducting R&S operations support a standardized Squadron design – recommend validation and resourcing of the requirement for Cavalry Squadrons to reflect a standardized 6 x 36 x 3^2 – Squadrons consisting of three Cavalry Troops, with each Cavalry Troop consisting of three Scout Platoons.

- Develop future Cavalry Squadron with enhanced capabilities (UAS, UGV, MPF, etc.).

Conclusion:

Cavalry squadrons require agile and adaptive leaders and the appropriate formation composition to enable Army Brigades to operate as part of joint and multinational task forces, to seize and retain the initiative in diverse operational environments across the range of military operations. Cavalry organizations and their Brigade Headquarters require appropriate training, manning, and equipping to achieve their R&S objectives. To achieve their objectives, Cavalry Squadrons fight for information and simultaneously conduct mounted and dismounted operations, employing critical enablers such as aviation, fires, and Mobile Protected Firepower.

Cavalry Squadrons organized in a 6 x 36 x 3^2 configuration and supported by task organized and habitually related enablers, complemented with comprehensive institutional and organizational training, leader development & education are best prepared to accomplish the mission. Preparation includes adherence to an R&S career path that develops leaders through repetitive Cavalry assignments, alignment of PME and function training, and an emphasized Maneuver Leader Development Strategy. Finally, continued refinement of R&S doctrine, practiced through the implementation of the DATE scenario at home station training and CTCs, sustain readiness in an evolving and dynamic environment.