

Observations from Army Reconnaissance Course

by CPT Patrick M. Zang

Significant transformation came to the Army Reconnaissance Course (ARC) during the last 16 months. Part of this was command-directed to help emphasize reconnaissance and security (R&S) operations across the Army. A second part resulted from 3rd Squadron (Blackheart), 16th Cavalry Regiment, aligning itself more with the Army's University Model and the subsequent organizational structure change.

The Blackheart Squadron created the Department of Reconnaissance and Security (DoRS) that now manages the following courses:

- Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leader's Course (RSLC);
- ARC;
- Cavalry Leader's Course (CLC); and
- Small Unmanned Aerial Systems Master Trainer Course.

The DoRS concept continues R&S training throughout the development of leaders. RSLC is designed for team and squad leaders; ARC for platoon-level leaders; and CLC for troop and squadron leaders. In conjunction with this change, the ARC pendulum swung from training section and platoon leaders to focusing solely on platoon-level leaders (staff sergeants to first lieutenants).

The change to ARC was codified into the officer corps when ARC became a requirement for all Armor Branch lieutenants, according to Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet (PAM) 600-3, Paragraph 4a(1), dated June 2017. However, this directly contradicts the ARC prerequisites in the Army Training Requirements and Resource System (ATRRS), which state that to attend ARC, "one must be serving in or projected to serve in a reconnaissance billet." Currently there are commanders at the highest echelon emphasizing the requirement in DA PAM 600-3. However, no such champion exists for the noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps to emphasize the ARC requirement.

Despite the conflict between DA PAM 600-3 and ATRRS pertaining to ARC, a fundamental change will occur within the NCO ranks regarding the course in Fiscal Year 2020. Historically, the platoon-sergeant position has contained a positional additional skill identifier (ASI) for ARC. In accordance with the Chief of Armor's initiatives and directives, the positional ASI will shift to reflect two staff sergeants per scout platoon across the Army effective Oct. 1, 2019.

In the Active Component alone, there are 307 scout platoons (nine scout platoons per armored brigade combat team (ABCT) times 10 ABCTs; nine scout platoons per Stryker brigade combat team (SBCT) times seven SBCTs; and 11 scout platoons per infantry brigade combat team (IBCT) times 14 IBCTs). These numbers reflect the Army's organization as of Dec. 31, 2017, and include 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Regiments as SBCTs, and all airborne and air-assault brigades as IBCTs. Ultimately there are 614 staff sergeants in the Active Component who are to be ARC graduates and who are currently serving in a reconnaissance billet. The assumption is that all platoon sergeants are already ARC graduates.

The bottom line is that ARC presents a dichotomous scenario to the Army. All Armor Branch lieutenants must remain at Fort Benning, GA, until they at least attempt ARC. Simultaneously, there is a 2-to-1 ratio of NCOs to officers that according to ASIs are to be ARC graduates.

This situation presents a misconception that NCOs are unable to attend ARC due to officer needs. The reality lies in the fact that due to operations tempo and forecasting issues, the operational force has a difficult time securing a reserved seat for its NCOs. Given this, the schoolhouse at Fort Benning is able to more rapidly and easily forecast and reserve seats in ARC, thereby making the course dynamics skewed toward the officer. (Typical course dynamics are out of 60 students, 50 are officers.) The recommendation is that the same emphasis placed on officer education be placed on NCO education. The lieutenant is incapable of single-handedly changing a platoon. However, it is the NCO with years of operational experience – coupled with institutional knowledge and training – who is able to complement the young officer to greatly enhance the platoon's capability and lethality.

Familiar components remain

While possessing a revised focus, ARC maintains many components that are recognizable across generations of leaders. The first week of the course is still Operation Bushmaster. This strenuous dismounted field-training exercise (FTX) is centered on mastery of land-navigation techniques. The culmination of Operation Bushmaster is a land-navigation star course the students must pass individually.

Upon successful completion of this atrophied (minus-10-point level) task, students enter Teach Week. Topics of instruction include:

- Reconnaissance missions and organizations;
- Intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB);
- Evaluating routes and obstacles;
- Zone reconnaissance and screen operations;
- Air-ground operations;
- Indirect-fires planning (IDF); and
- Continuous reconnaissance (managing the transition between R&S/fighter management).

Students are then given a troop-level operations order (OPORD) they must subsequently prepare to deliver in a one-on-one setting. ARC premises its OPORD assessments on the CLC model; it is a tactical-decision exercise, where the student is presented with a “thinking and adaptive” enemy. The student’s plan must compensate for this enemy’s actions to succeed. Rather than merely “checking the block” and putting words on every sentence in their respective OPORD shell, the student is challenged to adhere to R&S fundamentals at all times.

The last week-plus of ARC is field time in the form of two FTXs: Operation Eagle Eye (the tactics and fieldcraft of being a scout, coupled with smaller, more manageable missions in accordance with the Army’s crawl, walk, run training methodology) and Operation Last Stand, a seven-mission FTX encompassing most Fort Benning training areas and built on a 12-hour timeline (five hours for troop-leading procedures (TLPs), six hours for execution and one hour for an after-action review and reset).

During Operation Last Stand, the students are not provided with dedicated “sleep” time and must execute area-reconnaissance, zone-reconnaissance, route-reconnaissance, screen and area-security missions. The threat is ever-evolving given emerging tactics, techniques and procedures learned from the Army’s combat-training centers (CTCs), open-source intelligence and media sources. Areas of threat emphasis consist of (but are not limited to):

- Red unmanned aerial systems (UAS) serving as observers for massed indirect-fires attacks;
- Contested electronic-warfare environment; and
- In accordance with the U.S. Army’s understanding of Russian new-generation warfare, the use of hybrid maneuver (conventional uniformed forces conjoined with non-state, non-uniformed “proxies”).

Some of the noticeable changes implemented in the course include:

- No requirement for an airborne physical;
- No Army Physical Fitness Test administered;
- Entrance examination conducted on Day 1 focused on operational terms and graphics, land navigation, R&S doctrine and vehicle identification; and
- OPORD assessments.

Given the fact that ALC is a course prerequisite for NCOs, units that send their NCOs to the course should make a concerted and dedicated effort to prepare their Soldiers accordingly. All study materials and an OPORD shell is offered on the course Website: <http://www.benning.army.mil/Armor/316thCav/ARC/>.

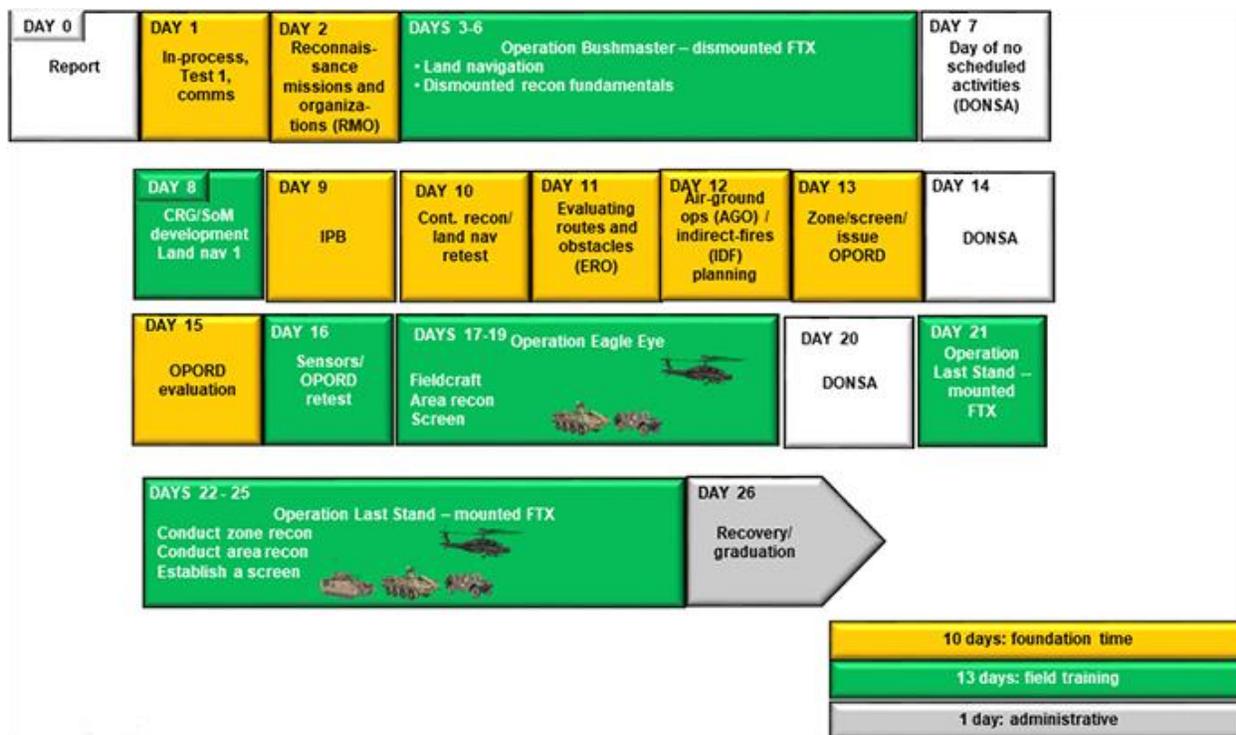


Figure 1. ARC course map.

The following sections will serve as compilation of observations of areas of difficulty for junior leaders, coupled with recommendations and resources to rectify the situation. Also, most identified issues coincide with areas identified during the 2017 Gainey Cup competition.

Communications/reporting

There is, and always will be, the requirement for scouts to communicate effectively using beyond-line-of-sight (BLOS) communications systems. Unfortunately, this is another skill that has atrophied due to the proliferation of new technologies (such as Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below and Joint Capabilities Release, the Army's next-generation friendly-force tracking system currently fielded to Afghanistan), and a superiority in communications and technology compared to our adversaries for the past two decades. With this challenge in mind, the use of standardized reporting formats (see Army Technical Publication (ATP) 3-20.98, **Reconnaissance Platoon**, Appendix A), communications windows and radio systems beyond mere frequency modulation (FM) are simple fixes that platoon-level leaders can implement during Sergeant's Time training to increase platoon capacity and lethality.

The reconnaissance community encourages scouts to use someone else's bullets to bring an effect against the enemy. Therefore, a scout who cannot communicate with the fires direction center, the fires battalion main or the squadron main is useless to the commander. To improve communication abilities, ARC introduces students to high frequency (HF) radios. By no means is an ARC graduate a master of the HF radio. However, the concepts and capabilities introduced during the course resound across monthly observations from the CTCs and the Center for Army Lessons-Learned (CALL).

It is a matter of tribal lore that the scout's best weapon is the radio. Therefore, a scout must possess the capability to communicate BLOS to bring effects against the enemy and provide options – and thereby an advantage to the commander. It is opined that many shy away from the HF radio due to its complexity. CALL Handbook 17-20 is readily accessible and presents a step-by-step how-to guide for all the Army's common radio systems. Many commanders keep a copy of this handbook in their vehicle at all times, and all ARC students are provided a hard copy of this invaluable resource.

Land navigation

Platoon-level leaders struggle to understand the ever-changing dynamics of the modern battlefield, more specifically the threat's capability to institute a contested electromagnetic spectrum. It is open-source knowledge that during the conflict in Ukraine, Russia and/or its proxies spoofed Ukrainian Global Positioning Systems, causing a violation of international territory and a massive retaliatory Multiple Launch Rocket System attack on an entire battalion.

A simple remedy for this type of threat is to move beyond the 21st-Century reliance on technology and return to the basics of a map, compass and protractor. That's why the preceding course overview makes it clear that ARC emphasizes land navigation, terrain association and route planning. For example, students are challenged physically and mentally to plan and execute a route focused on their understanding of terrain association, time-distance analysis, backstops, attack points, catching features and the ability to self-locate during Operation Bushmaster.

The Army recognizes that land navigation is a perishable and vital skill, yet training geared toward keeping this skillset fresh in the minds of Soldiers is lacking. A perceived problem is over-reliance on technology during the Iraq/Afghanistan fights. Leaders have become complacent due to informational and technological overmatch. This complacency allowed an erosion of the basics.

One of those basics, unaided land navigation across uneven terrain, is the hallmark of military operations. Scouts who are unable to successfully navigate put themselves at risk and detract from their unit's combat power. Furthermore, the mission of the scout is to be in the right place at the right time, able to collect information to answer a priority intelligence requirement (PIR), allowing the commander to make a timely and accurate decision. To facilitate proficiency among scouts, basic skills like determining road distance, elevation based on contour lines, intersection, resection and understanding the G-M angle, are concepts that must be strongly revisited – if not taught from scratch – among students.

Actions on contact

Given the dichotomous nature of the Armor Branch (tank and scout), many students struggle to grasp the concept of making contact on "your" terms and with the smallest element. There is a prevailing infantry-centric mindset in which a "knife fight" is the preferred method of contact. However, it is important to understand that as scouts, one of the fundamentals of reconnaissance is to *gain* and *maintain* contact with the enemy. There are eight forms of contact. Given this, it is acceptable and within the bounds of doctrine to make contact with the enemy from a purely observational perspective. This enables the scout element to retain freedom of maneuver and maintain contact with the enemy while continuing to orient on the reconnaissance objective and answer PIR for the commander.

When it comes to contact with the enemy, we stress to our students that the primary-alternate-contingency-emergency (PACE) plan is not solely limited to Paragraph 5 of the OPORD. It is critical to develop, brief and understand a PACE plan in everything we do. More specifically, during the scheme-of-maneuver (SoM)-development portion of the OPORD process, the scout leader must account for all enemy templated on the situational template.

Also, scouts need to possess more than one way to account for said enemy. This doesn't mean there must be four proposed means to handle the enemy presented, but there needs to be more than one course of action (CoA) with a plan. For example, if the enemy is templated to possess an observation post, the scout's primary means may be through an indirect-fires target from the artillery battery. The alternate CoA could be an indirect-fires target from the troop mortar section; the contingency CoA could be direct-fire weapons systems from the mounted element; and the emergency CoA could be from a dismounted M240L light machinegun from a scout squad.

Another challenge among scouts today is a distinct lack of emphasis on dismounted operations. Platoon-level leaders must plan and account for their dismounted element. They must understand that dismounts are not mere "crunchies" in the back of the vehicle. They are combat multipliers capable of extending the width of the screen, capable of stealthily infiltrating to a named area of interest in support of an area reconnaissance or capable of

clearing an intervisibility line (a relative, localized, pattern of limitations on observation, caused by (often subtle) variations in terrain elevation) to provide better local security for the mounted element.

TLPs

Armor and cavalry doctrine is distinctly lacking when it comes to a how-to guide and an adequate explanation of TLPs. Field Manual (FM) 3-21.10, *Infantry Rifle Company*, Chapter 2, is a 56-page breakdown of the TLPs. Armor and cavalry manuals currently consist of little more than a listing of the TLPs' eight steps. This void in armor and cavalry doctrine stunts the growth of our junior leaders.

Upon graduation from Armor Basic Officer Leader's Course (ABOLC) and ARC, operational-force commanders should expect these young officers to be, at a minimum, a "P" at platoon-level TLPs. The truth is far from this, however. Young leaders struggle with time management and focus, providing a clear task and purpose to subordinates and conducting events simultaneously (as opposed to sequentially). As a result, leaders struggle to issue clear and concise guidance to their subordinates; instead, the entire leadership isolates itself from the entire organization in an attempt to plan by committee. To correct this, junior leaders must become proficient at decentralized planning and the issuance of FM fragmentary orders.

Mission command

There is a fundamental misunderstanding of mission command among junior leaders. It is as if they are conditioned and trained to believe that conducting leader checks or backbriefs, asking questions, etc., are tantamount to micromanagement. However, Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 6-0 defines mission command as "the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower leaders in the conduct of unified land operations." I opine that mission command is the new "mission, enemy, terrain, troops available, time and civilian considerations" (otherwise known as METT-TC) of the Army, a cop-out that leaders use to shirk their responsibilities. Yes, as leaders it is understood that the goal is to provide subordinates the "what," not the "how." However, there are times when a commander is forced to exercise detailed command, or command and control.

Mission command is best achieved through trust. Trust is achieved through training. Junior leaders need not be afraid to question their subordinates. At the end of the day, the platoon leader is responsible for everything the platoon does or fails to do. Leaders in the military are charged with one of the most awesome responsibilities that exists in the world: the care of America's sons and daughters. Given this, providing oversight, asking questions, requiring backbriefs and "micromanaging" with subordinates who have not earned "trust" should not be perceived as negative but rather as the standard.

Commander's recon guidance

Commander's R&S guidance is the bread and butter of cavalry operations. Granted, there is no codified position in doctrine where the commander's reconnaissance guidance (CRG) is to be placed within the OPORD; however, it is the opinion of the ARC team that the CRG is an extension of the commander's Intent. It should be briefed immediately following the endstate in Paragraph 3. A second option is to brief CRG after the concept of the operations and then brief changes to the overarching CRG by phase during the scheme of maneuver.

No matter where it is briefed, it is critically important and often misunderstood. A disproportionate amount of the problem stems from counterintuitive terms (rapid, disengage and displacement). Another problem is that the "go to" manual for a clear understanding of CRG is FM 3-98, which is viewed by junior leaders as a brigade-level manual. Cavalry doctrine provides a disservice to leaders at the squadron and below level.

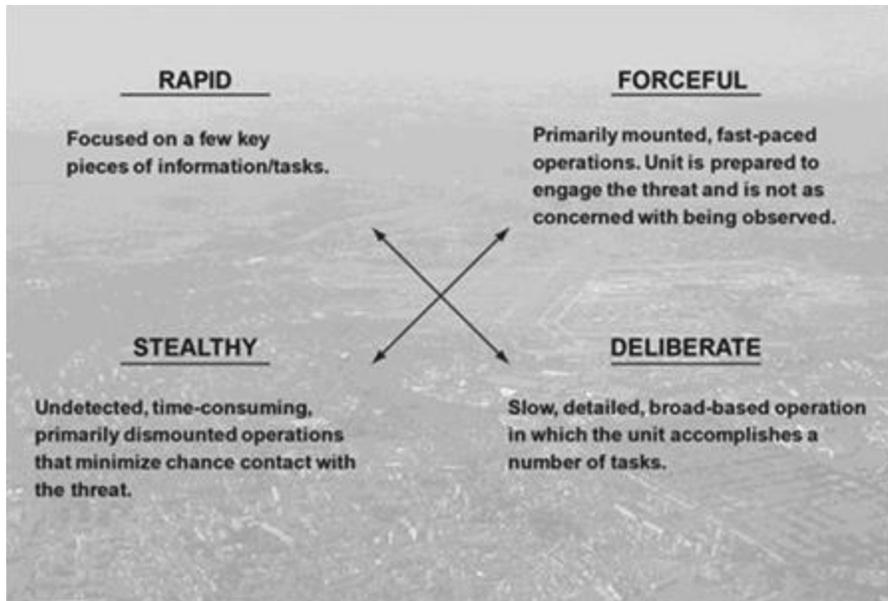


Figure 2. This graphic has been used for years in armor and cavalry doctrine to illustrate the tempo portion of the CRG. (Adapted from Figure 4-2, FM 3-98)

Figure 2 has led scouts over the years to believe that there are solely two combinations (rapid and forceful, or stealthy and deliberate). However, this is one of the great misnomers of cavalry operations.

The following (italicized text) is from a section from Chapter 3 of the ATP 3-20.98 rewrite now pending:

Focus defines the scout platoon's area of emphasis and can consist of one of four categories (threat, infrastructure, terrain and weather effects, and society). Providing focus enables the scout platoon to develop their scheme of maneuver and operate within the higher commander's information needs. An example of focus would be in an ABCT cavalry squadron conducting a zone reconnaissance, the lead platoon is threat-focused to provide freedom of maneuver for the trail platoon that is terrain-focused.

The reconnaissance focus must be further refined by the commander into reconnaissance objectives. A reconnaissance objective is a terrain feature, geographic area or an enemy force about which the commander wants to obtain additional information. The reconnaissance objective must directly support the endstate defined in the commander's Intent.

*Tempo of reconnaissance refers to the level of detail and the level of covertness required by the scout platoon to best accomplish its mission. Tempo is described by four terms: rapid, deliberate, stealthy and forceful. Rapid and deliberate are levels of detail and are mutually exclusive, meaning a scout platoon cannot be rapid and deliberate at the same time. Stealthy and forceful are mutually exclusive levels of covertness, meaning a scout platoon cannot be stealthy and forceful at the same time. **Note:** The tempo of a reconnaissance operation can change by phase. Therefore, the tempo issued in the OPORD covers the breadth of the mission and not necessarily every part of the operation. When the scout-platoon leader issues his or her reconnaissance guidance, the tempo is always issued as two words. There the four distinct terms associated with reconnaissance tempo comprise four possible combinations.*

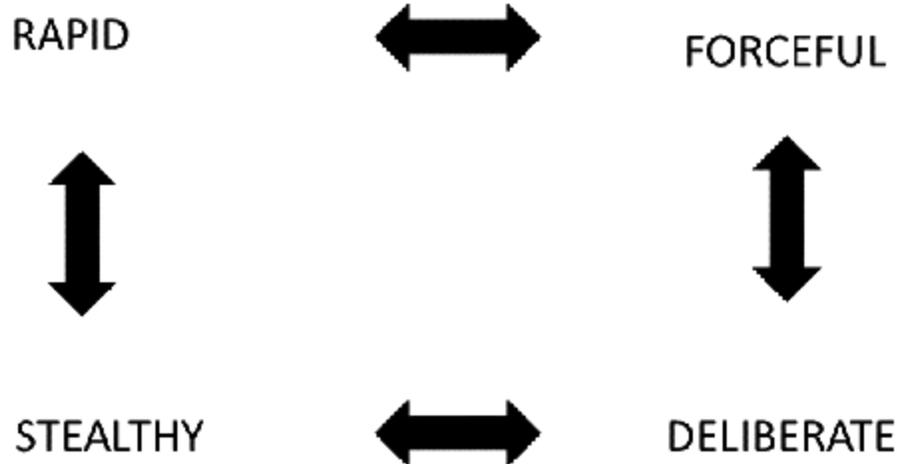


Figure 3. CRG tempo. Note that there are four tempos that can be given to a scout platoon: rapid and stealthy, rapid and forceful, deliberate and stealthy, and deliberate and forceful.

Rapid tempo indicates that the level of detail for the reconnaissance operation is limited to a certain number of prescribed tasks or PIR. Rapid tempo has nothing to do with the speed with which the operation is conducted. An example of this would be a rapid route reconnaissance in which the commander is only concerned with the ability of a bridge to support follow-on forces.

Deliberate tempo implies that all tasks of the mission must be accomplished to ensure overall mission success. An example of this would be when an organization is new to its area of operations and possesses limited information about a main route that it wishes to use as a main supply route for future operations. Given this scenario, the scout platoon would be ordered to conduct a deliberate route reconnaissance of the main supply route, following all the critical tasks associated with a route reconnaissance and creating a route reconnaissance overlay for the commander.

Stealthy tempo emphasizes avoiding detection and generally consists of restrictive engagement criteria. Stealthy reconnaissance takes more time and uses dismounted reconnaissance methods to maximize the use of cover and concealment to reduce friendly signatures. Stealthy reconnaissance is used when time is available, detailed reconnaissance is required, enemy threat contact is likely, or when terrain restricts the use of mounted reconnaissance elements.

Forceful tempo develops the situation rapidly by employing ground and air assets to develop the situation rapidly and “fight for information.” Forceful reconnaissance relies on the use of standoff weapons and optics to rapidly seize the initiative and answer the commander’s information needs. Forceful reconnaissance is used when time is limited, detailed information is not required, terrain is open or when dismounted reconnaissance elements cannot answer the information requirements in the time allotted.

Engagement criteria are protocols that specify those circumstances for initiating engagement with an enemy force. They can be either restrictive or permissive. The scout-platoon leader must define the size and type of force he or she expects subordinate units to engage and avoid. This enables the planning of the use of direct and indirect fires. Engagement criteria must be extremely precise so as to avoid confusion. Example, if the engagement criteria for 1st Platoon issued by the commander (a scout platoon in an SBCT cavalry squadron) is nine or fewer dismounts, two or fewer boyevaya razvedyvatelnaya dozornaya mashinas (BRDMs) (Russian scout vehicle) or one boyeva mashina pekhoty (BMP) (Russian fighting vehicle), the scout-platoon leader, operating in a two-section concept, can break down the engagement criteria to the section level as follows: five or fewer dismounts, one BRDM, only engage the BMP with dismounted anti-tank weapons systems at less than 1,000 meters.

Note: The scout platoon must develop a PACE plan for initiating contact with the enemy. For example, if the scout platoon is to destroy an enemy BMP as part of its scheme of maneuver, the primary means to destroy the BMP may be a priority fires target from the artillery battalion. An alternate means to destroy the BMP may be using troop

mortars. A contingency may be direct fire from an anti-tank weapons system, and an emergency means may be a dismounted anti-tank weapons system.

Engagement criteria needs to be thought of as the size of the enemy element that can be rapidly destroyed by the organic firepower on hand in the scout platoon. This enables the scout platoon to avoid becoming decisively engaged and retain freedom of maneuver.

Disengagement criteria are protocols that specify those circumstance of avoiding contact or when to disengage from a fight so as to avoid becoming decisively engaged and retain the freedom of maneuver. If a scout platoon does not understand or violates its disengagement criteria, it will likely become decisively engaged and have to fight the battle to its conclusion. Using the example from engagement criteria listed above, if an individual section encounters three BMPs, they are to disengage. While the section may possess enough anti-tank weapon systems to gain a small tactical victory, the chances of becoming decisively engaged and failing to orient on the reconnaissance objective are too great. In this scenario, the scout section would seek to avoid a direct-fire engagement and move, if necessary, to an alternate location to maintain threat contact while avoiding engagement.

Displacement criteria are triggers for a planned withdrawal, passage of lines or a reconnaissance handover between units. Displacement criteria are conditions that are either event-driven (example: associated PIR being met), time-driven (example: latest-time-information-of-value trigger is met) or threat-driven (example: identification of enemy reserve).

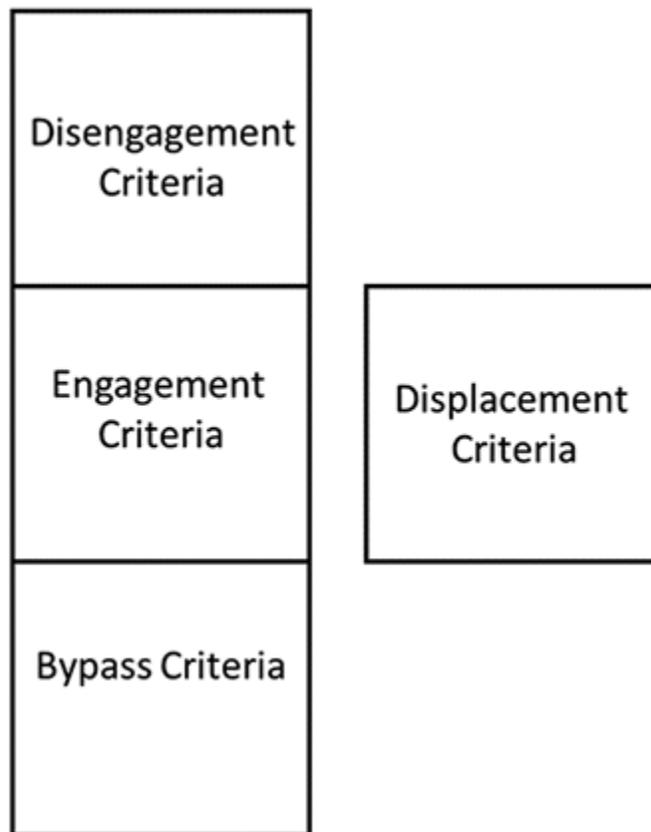


Figure 4. Disengagement criteria, engagement criteria, displacement criteria and bypass criteria.

Allow Figure 4 to enhance the way we understand CRG. The figure is to be viewed as the strike zone in baseball. Bypass criteria is the pitch below the batter's knees. While the hitter is capable of turning this pitch into something positive, it is, generally speaking, something not worth the hitter's time and therefore should be bypassed and reported. Engagement criteria, or the middle of the strike zone, are threat elements that the commander is 100-percent comfortable with the subordinate element engaging and destroying without outside assistance.

Disengagement criteria can be thought of as the pitch coming straight for the batter's head. While one could stand in there and allow oneself to get "hit" in the interest of getting on base and advancing the team's ability, one could also end up in the hospital or worse. Therefore, disengagement criteria is a threat element the commander is uncomfortable with the subordinate element engaging for fear of becoming decisively engaged and requiring assistance for extrication. Lastly, displacement criteria can be easily construed as Ball 4. In essence, this is a change of mission for the hitter; he is no longer a batter in the box attempting to win his one-on-one engagement with the pitcher but instead is now a baserunner.

This nuanced athletic example is how the concept was explained to me by my CLC instructor and has demonstrated noticeable dividends when instructing ARC students.

Platoon operating distances

Fort Benning, due to its distinctive lack of mounted-maneuver training area, presents young leaders with a false understanding of the capabilities of weapons systems and optics, and how to array their formation across the depth and breadth of the battlefield. It is virtually unfathomable to be presented a situation on Fort Benning in which a Long-Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System mounted on a humvee can observe a target beyond one to two kilometers. Further, the restrictive and vegetated terrain severely limits the student's ability to approach anything resembling the doctrinal operating distances outlined in ATP 3-20.97, Appendix B. The notion of a cavalry troop executing a screen across an 18-kilometer front is completely foreign and unimaginable to the students.

With this in mind, operational-force leaders must account for and adjust for this deficiency. Table 1, with Figure 5, describe how.

Screen width = $(1/2 \text{ the maximum effective range of the weapons system}) \times (.75 \text{ the number of vehicles}) \times \text{terrain} + \text{flank security}$.

Regarding the terrain portion of the formula:

- Use 1 for unrestricted;
- Use .5 for restricted; or
- Use .25 for severely restricted.
- Flank security is calculated using the maximum effective range of the weapons system.

Given the following conditions:

- An ABCT cavalry troop platoon with six Bradleys in unrestrictive terrain could screen a width of 9,750 meters and a depth of 4,875 meters.
- Width = $(.5 \times 3,000) \times (.75 \times 6) \times 1 + 3,000 = 9,750$ meters.

Note: 3,000 is used for the maximum effective range of the M242 Bushmaster. Screen depth = width/2.

Table 1.

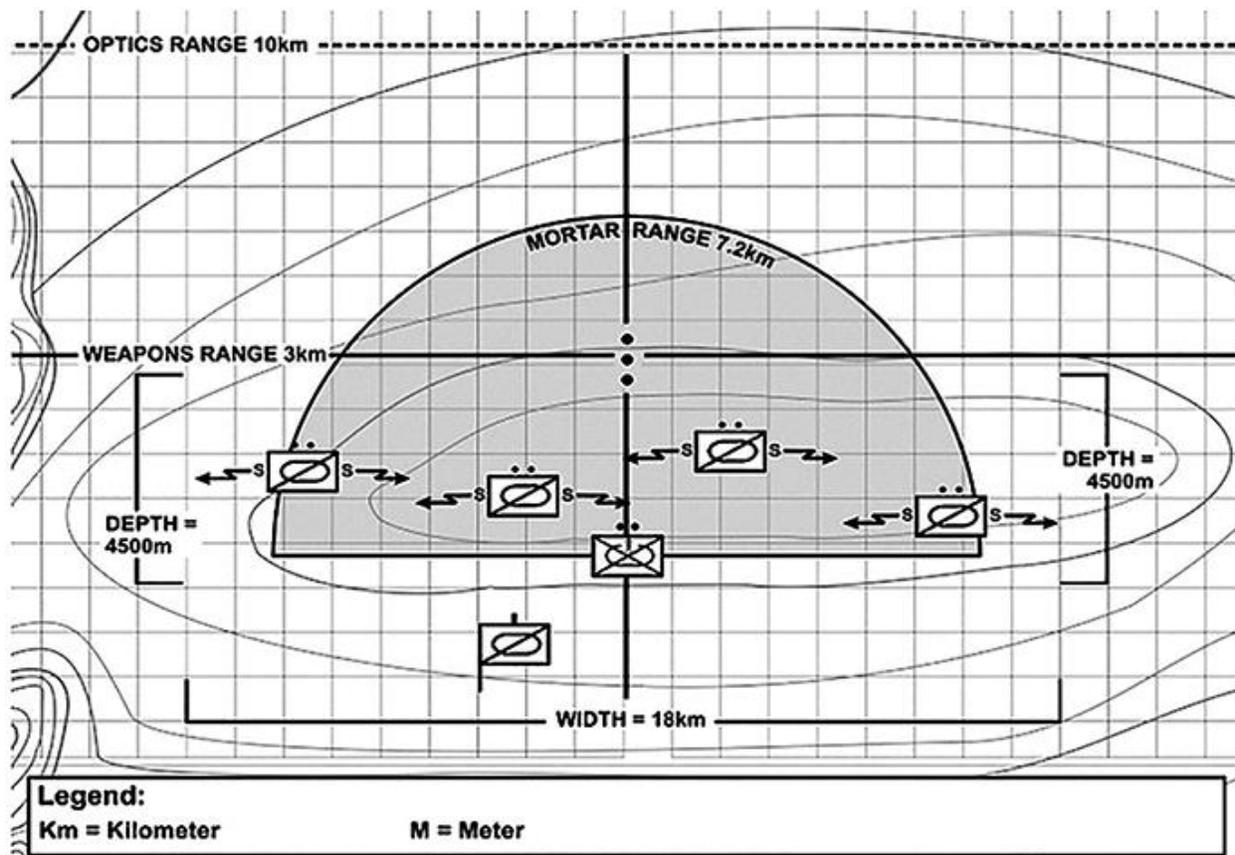


Figure 5. (Adapted from Figure B-2, ATP 3-20.97)

Understand that a screen is not synonymous with a “line.” The term “screen line” is yet another misnomer in cavalry doctrine and needs to be stricken from our lexicon. It is critically important to understand the necessity of depth in conducting a screen. Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 1-02 defines a screen as “a security task that primarily provides early warning to the protected force.” As such, the platoon’s ability to create depth is created by using and combining dismounted observation posts and UAS, and applying supporting range and distance to the platoon’s organic-vehicle platforms. This process enables the platoon to adhere to the reconnaissance-management techniques (cueing, mixing and redundancy) while executing target and reconnaissance handovers and maximizing the fundamentals of security. This provides early and accurate warning, and it also provides reaction time and maneuver space.

Recommendations

Operational-force commanders must rely on their ARC graduates to augment the respective formation with doctrinal knowledge to bridge the gap, concurrent with a reliance on “outdated doctrine.” The ARC cadre provided a significant portion of the manpower to rewrite ATP 3-20.98. That manual is now in draft form and its publication date has not yet been determined. In the interim, some useful references are the following:

- FM 17-98, September 1994;
- Soldier’s Manual (SM) 3-20.96, February 2017;
- FM 5-20a and 5-20b, 1944; and
- FM 21-75, 1944.

Furthermore, it is imperative for NCOs to attend ARC. Their presence enhances the course through their operational experience. Also, the NCO Education System (NCOES) has deteriorated to such a point that graduates of the Advanced Leader’s Course (ALC) and Senior Leader’s Course (SLC) routinely report that they learned absolutely nothing related to their military-occupation specialty (MOS). This is a travesty of the highest degree.

Given the fact that NCOs' only permanent-change-of-station move to the "schoolhouse" is for the Sergeants Major Academy, it is incumbent on leaders to ensure the most-quality training is being delivered at each step. If NCOs are not provided the opportunity to enhance subject-matter expertise in their MOS at Fort Benning during mandated professional-development courses, where is this to occur? ARC cannot single-handedly pick up the slack for the lack of reconnaissance training in ABOLC and the abject failure of ALC and SLC to teach anything beyond the route-reconnaissance overlay.

The institutional domain is to supplement the operational domain. The Army cannot continue in its belief that the officer corps, through an over-reliance on institutional knowledge, can single-handedly change the culture of the Army as a whole and provide the requisite emphasis and skills to bring R&S operations back to a pre-9/11 state. The NCO, the backbone of the Army, is still expected to serve as the subject-matter expert and primary developer of the young lieutenant. Therefore, a refocused and restructured approach must be undertaken.

At the end of the day, this article is merely a blend of information. Do not view this article as a shameless ploy to emphasize the importance of the course; that is not the intent. From a holistic perspective, this article is meant to inform the force and dispel rumors about what the course is and what it is not.

ARC has changed significantly, and it will continue to undertake a wholesale approach to its methodology to retain relevancy for the operational force. I ask the operational force to emphasize NCO education beyond basic NCOES when it comes to efforts to continue the proliferation of cavalry knowledge and fieldcraft. Due to the fact that cavalry is a mindset and not a branch, it is imperative to move our doctrinal understanding forward through education, not merely the use of a "bard" style of passing tribal lore across generations.

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Acronym Quick-Scan

ABCT – armored brigade combat team

ABOLC – Armor Basic Officer Leader's Course

ADP – Army doctrinal publication

ADRP – Army doctrinal reference publication

ALC – Advanced Leader's Course

ARC – Army Reconnaissance Course

ASI – additional skill identifier

ATP – Army technical publication

ATRRS – Army Training Requirements and Resource System

BLOS – beyond-line-of-sight

BMP – *boyeva mashina pekhoty* (Russian fighting vehicle)

BRDM – *boyevaya razvedyvatelnaya dozornaya mashina* (Russian scout vehicle)

CALL – Center for Army Lessons Learned

CoA – course of action

CRG – commander's reconnaissance guidance

CLC – Cavalry Leader's Course

CTC – combat training center

DA – Department of the Army

DONSA – day of no scheduled activities

DoRS – Department of Reconnaissance and Security

EW – electronic warfare

FM – field manual

FM – frequency modulation

FTX – field-training exercise

HF – high frequency

IBCT – infantry brigade combat team

IDF – indirect fires
IPB – intelligence preparation of the battlefield
METT-TC – mission, enemy, terrain, troops available, time and civilian considerations
MOS – military-occupation specialty
NCO – noncommissioned officer
NCOES – Noncommissioned Officer Education System
OPORD – operations order
PACE – primary, alternate, contingency and emergency
PAM -- pamphlet
PIR – priority intelligence requirement
R&S – reconnaissance and security
RSLC – Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leader’s Course
SBCT – Stryker brigade combat team
SLC – Senior Leader’s Course
SM – Soldier’s manual
SoM – scheme of maneuver
TLP – troop-leading procedure
UAS – unmanned aerial system

Other references

- ADP 6-0, **Mission Command**, May 2012.
- ADRP 1-02, **Terms and Military Symbols**, December 2015.
- ATP 3-20.97, **Cavalry Troop**, September 2016.
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