

24

THE SECTION LEADER OF THE BATTALION DAVY CROCKETT SECTION

Captain Paul F. Somerville

Roster Nr 159 Group Nr 18 CAR #1

The United States Army Infantry School
Fort Benning, Georgia
8 December 1963

SUBJECT: The Section Leader of the Battalion Davy Crockett
Section

1. **PROBLEM.** To determine whether there is a need for a commissioned officer in the Battalion Davy Crockett section as the section leader.
2. **ASSUMPTIONS.**
 - a. The Battalion Davy Crockett section will be organized as outlined in the Table of Organization and Equipment 7-36E, dated 15 August 1963.
 - b. The augmented Davy Crockett section will continue to operate under the control and supervision of the heavy mortar platoon leader.
3. **FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM.**
 - a. The present section leader is a Sergeant First Class, E7. (9 and Annex A)
 - b. The platoon leader is the only officer currently assigned to the Mortar/DC platoon. (5:104 and 9)
 - c. The Mortar/DC platoon leader will spend little time with the Davy Crockett section during tactical situations. (7:293)
 - d. Training and employment of the Mortar/DC sections are similar in operational aspects but vary differently in security and technical requirements. (2:74-157, 366-384; 3:13-15, 8:8, 15-26, 37 and 10:E1 + E2)
 - e. In training during peacetime, DC weapons systems security requirements must always be considered and met. (3:4 and 10:E1-EI)
 - f. Position disclosing features of the backblast and enemy counterfire location of the Davy Crockett weapon by the distinctive trajectories of its piston and major caliber round will necessitate frequent shifting of position. (7:310)
 - g. The platoon leader is responsible for resupply of the D.C. squads employed in direct support or general support. (7:310)
4. **DISCUSSION:**
 - a. At the present time, the battalion mortar and Davy Crockett platoon leader has more duties than he can successfully perform. This means that he will be unable to accomplish many of his duties to the Davy Crockett section. (Annex B)
 - b. Employment of the Davy Crockett involves a minimum delay between the decision to fire by the battalion commander and actual firing of the round. (8:12)
 - c. Experience with Davy Crockett training indicates that D.C. personnel must train full time if they are to be

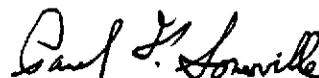
prepared adequately for frequent technical proficiency inspections. (1, 4 and Annex D)

- d. Many of the peacetime safety rules which require the signature, and/or the presence of an officer will also apply in a non-nuclear war and sometimes in a nuclear war. (10:E1, E2)
- e. D.C. training requires continuous officer supervision to insure that security and technical standards are met and maintained. (10)
- f. Since the platoon leader will be unable to personally control the Davy Crockett section much of the time, the advantages of having a commissioned officer as section leader are:
 - (1) The Davy Crockett section could be employed as a separate unit under the control of a commissioned officer. (Annex C)
 - (2) He could assume the complete duties of the Davy Crockett section and make recommendations to the S-3 or the battalion commander. (Annex C)
 - (3) He would be technically qualified and insure that the D.C. section could perform all of the necessary routine and emergency operations required by their weapons system in a safe, timely, and correct manner. (3:4)
 - (4) He could conduct reconnaissance as required by the tactical situation and effect timely displacements based on the range of the weapons and the situation. (Annex C)
 - (5) For details see Annex C (Discussion) and Annex D (Summary of Interviews).
- g. There are two disadvantages to augmenting an officer:
 - (1) An additional officer is required to replace a Sergeant First Class who can partially accomplish the duties.
 - (2) The officer would control only twelve men. (Annex A)

5. CONCLUSIONS.

- a. A section leader is required for the Davy Crockett section with rank, experience, and authority adequate to effectively command.
- b. A noncommissioned officer is not qualified to accomplish the duties required of the Davy Crockett section leader because of the complex nature of the weapons system.

6. ACTION RECOMMENDED. That the section leader for the Davy Crockett section in Table of Organization 7-36E be replaced by a commissioned officer.


PAUL F. SOMERVILLE
Captain, Infantry

ANNEX A--Table of Organization and Equipment No. 7-36E (Headquarters
Department of the Army, Washington 25, D.C., 15 August 1963).

Section 3 - Organization

<u>Para</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Personnel Full</u>	<u>Reduced Full</u>
25	01	Davy Crockett Section Leader	11277	1	1
	02	Squad Leader	11267	2	2
	03	Fire Dir. Cmpt.	11227	2	2
	04	Gunner	11217	2	2
	05	Asst Gunner	11207	2	2
	06	Lt Truck Driver	11207	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
		TOTAL		12	12

Equipment (Davy Crockett Section)

<u>Para Nr</u>	<u>Item Nr</u>	<u>Item-Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	
			<u>Full Strength</u>	<u>Reduced Strength</u>
25	108050	Decontaminating Apparatus, Portable, 1½ Qt	3	3
	400115	Aiming Circle	2	2
	401088	Bayonet Knife with Scabbard for 7.62 rifle	12	12
	401248	Binocular 6x30 Mil. Reticle	3	3
	401519	Board Plotting azimuth ranging Infantry	2	2
	410625	Compass Mil Graduations	2	2
	429280	Pistol Automatic Cal .45	3	3
	435965	Rifle 7.63MM Semiautomatic Light Barrel	9	9
	460050	Trk Cargo, 3/4-Ton, 4x4	2	2
	461790	Trk Utility, 1/4-Ton, 4x4	1	1
	515202	Cook Set, Fld	3	3
	529100	Goggles, Sun	3	3
	575060	Stove, Gas Burner, 1 burner	3	3
	634670	Radiacmeter IM-93/UD	2	2
	644300	Radio Set AN/PRC 25	2	2
	655701	Radio Set AN/VRC-47 Mtd in Trk 1/4-Ton	1	1

<u>Para</u> <u>Nr</u>	<u>Item</u> <u>Nr</u>	<u>Item-Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	
			<u>Full</u> <u>Strength</u>	<u>Reduced</u> <u>Strength</u>
25	660060	Reel Equipment CE-11	3	3
	678260	Telephone Set TA-312/PT	6	6
	698350	Wire WD-1/TT on DR 8 1/4 Mile	2	2
	942250	Gun, recoilless 120 MM XM63 w/Mount Tripod XM 120 w/Davy Crockett	2	2
	942255	Gun, recoilless 155MM XM64 w/Mount Tripod XM 121 w/Davy Crockett	2	2
	947118	Trk, Utility 1/4-Ton 4x4 M38A10 carrier for Davy Crockett	2	2

ANNEX B--Duties of the Mortar Platoon Leader (7:293)

The platoon leader commands the platoon and supervises the training of all elements. He makes full use of the chain of command to assist him in carrying out these responsibilities. Specifically, he -

1. Makes recommendations for the employment of his platoon.
2. Is responsible for the employment of the platoon in accordance with orders received from the battalion commander or commander of the unit to which attached.
3. Assigns missions and issues orders to his leaders and supervises their execution.
4. Within guidance provided, selects position areas and controls the movement of all elements of the platoon not attached to other units.
5. Keeps informed of the enemy and friendly situation.
6. Establishes and maintains communication with the supported units through the forward observer team.
7. Establishes a fire control system with the platoon.
8. In coordination with FSCOORD prepares a plan for heavy mortar and DC fire support.
9. Within guidance provided, plans, initiates and supervises the timely displacement of all elements of the platoon not attached to other units.
10. Maintains adequate security.
11. Supervises the supply of ammunition to each of the firing sections not attached to other units.
12. Supervises the platoon communication system.
13. Insures that liaison and communication are established and maintained with the fire support coordinator. (FSCOORD)
14. Performs other duties as a battalion special staff officer.

ANNEX C--Discussion.

1. The Davy Crockett section and mortar platoon should be treated as separate units because of the security clearance of secret required of members of the D.C. section and the technical difference of the two systems. The tactical employment of the two sections will find them widely separated on the battle field. (3:11-15 and 8:12)
2. In order to take maximum advantage of its range, Davy Crockett weapons must be employed well forward. (8:12) This means the section leader must conduct reconnaissance for new firing positions on a continuous basis. The difference in range capability of the Davy Crockett and 4.2 inch mortar makes it almost impossible for the platoon leader to recon positions for both sections.
3. Coordination, control, safety criteria and warning necessary for nuclear fires places additional limitations on the employment of the Davy Crockett. (8:12) A full time officer in the section would expedite the firing of the system.
4. Carelessness or negligence in the atomic weapons field is of such far reaching consequence that close command supervision is required. Command and staff officers at all levels of command should acquire a working knowledge of atomic weapons and related activities. (3:6)
5. The objective of a Technical Proficiency Inspection is to insure a high standard in the performance of technical operations utilizing nuclear weapons by those organizations required to have a nuclear weapons storage, support, or delivery capability. Some of the additional requirements placed on a unit by a TPI that could be handled by the section leader are: (Annex D)
 - a. Lesson plans.
 - b. Individual training record cards.
 - c. Security clearances.
 - d. Quarterly master training schedule.
 - e. Weekly training schedule.
 - f. Vast amount of classified material and paper work required.
 - g. Exactness required.
6. (U) Classified test conducted by USCONARC showed that the platoon leader could not exercise tactical control over both the Davy Crockett squads and 4.2 inch mortar squads. The dissimilarity of fire direction procedures and method of tactical employment of the mortar and Davy Crockett weapons produces a control and communication problem. One of the recommendations of the test included the augmentation of an officer as D.C. section leader. (6:13,14)
7. Interviews with officers experienced in Davy Crockett

employment and organization lend considerable weight to the following: (Annex D)

- a. The present mortar and Davy Crockett platoon leader has more duties than he can accomplish.
- b. The responsibility of the Davy Crockett section is not commensurate with the grade of Sergeant First Class (E7).
- c. The majority of units in Seventh Army, Eighth Army, and the Second Infantry Division have officers specifically assigned as the Davy Crockett section leader although it is an unauthorized position.
- d. Requirements for simultaneous reconnaissance, liaison, fire planning and re-supply preclude one section sergeant from satisfactorily accomplishing all these items and still adequately supervise timely displacements of all elements of the section.
- e. There is a definite need for an officer in the Davy Crockett section. The section sergeant should remain in the TOE to assist the section leader with his many duties.

ANNEX D--Summary of Interviews.

1. Personal interviews were conducted with officers in the Davy Crockett Committee, Weapons Department, United States Army Infantry School, former Davy Crockett section leaders in USAREUR and 2d Infantry Division units and Battalion Commanders in the 2d Infantry Division. The comments gained from these interviews are considered expert opinions due to their school position and/or experience.
 - a. Lt Colonel John H. Cochran, Jr., former commander of the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry and presently G-3 of the 2d Infantry Division:

"1. I am convinced that a definite need exists for a commissioned officer in the Davy Crockett section. Some of my thoughts on this follows:

- a. It is common practice for the Battalion Commander to augment an officer to the Davy Crockett Section because of the 'exactness' of the weapon and the emphasis placed on it by the AEC.
- b. During peacetime operations, Davy Crockett units are required to undergo Technical Proficiency Inspections from a certified TPI team at least once annually. The conduct of TPI's are such as to require command emphasis and a concentrated training program, in order to successfully complete this inspection. An officer is needed to insure that proper training is conducted.
- c. The officer should be school trained, if possible, due to stringent technical requirements of a TPI, however, an outstanding Lieutenant can do the job if properly motivated and interested.
- d. Many of the subjects that must be taught to a D/C section are, of necessity, technical in nature, ie., firing tables. An officer, if assigned to the section is able to teach many of the subjects, and insure a high caliber of instruction.
- e. The presence of an officer in the D/C section gives it added prestige and in itself tends to aid morale and esprit within the unit, which can become a problem in preparing for a TPI, or particularly, if a unit is preparing for a reinspection.
- f. The presence of an officer in the D/C section insures that the Battalion Commander can be kept informed of the status of the section and aids in proper staff coordination, thus making the D/C section more responsive to the Battalion Commander's desire.
- g. I believe that the 4.2 mortar platoon leader cannot exercise tactical control over both the 4.2 mortar squads and the Davy Crockett

sections. The dissimilarity of fire direction procedures and method of tactical employment of the mortar and Davy Crockett weapons requires an officer in charge of each section under both peacetime and wartime conditions.

- h. Based on experience, this officer, as a minimum would be responsible for the following, in addition to training:
- (1) Constant review of Battalion Special Weapons SOP
 - (2) Formulation of exact check lists
 - (3) Everyday handling of classified material
 - (4) Review of lesson plans
 - (5) Required liaison with Battalion Headquarters and Battalion Commander
 - (6) Utilized on other TPI teams
 - (7) Requirements for continuous and simultaneous reconnaissance, liaison, fire planning, re-supply preclude one Section Sergeant from satisfactorily accomplishing all of these missions.

"2. I do not believe a non-commissioned officer should have the above responsibilities. The mere nature of Special Weapons requires close and positive supervision and leadership. An officer must accept this responsibility. The officer deals daily with the Commander and staff and must influence their actions and thoughts."

- b. Lt Colonel William H. Cox, former commander of the 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry:

"The organization of the Mortar Davy Crockett Platoon includes only one officer (Lt) as the platoon leader. This is not sufficient to properly train the platoon, inasmuch as the Davy Crockett Section requires continuous and close supervision during all training. The nuclear inspection system of all nuclear weapons units requires that the unit spend long and arduous hours of training to be ready for the inspection. This requires the full time attention of an officer, which in fact leaves the Mortar Section under the complete control of an NCO. This is alright in training but in the field I found that the battalion commander needs an officer to advise on the use of the Mortars and to assist the Artillery Liaison Officer in fire planning for the battalion. The DC Section usually is in Battalion trains until a fire mission, allocation of nuclear round is received and the DC officer is required to be made available at all times."

- c. Captain Edwin W. Bunis, Team Chief and 1/Lt Albert E. Hiser, Instructor, Davy Crockett Team, Mortar

Committee, Weapons Department, United States Army
Infantry School:

1. Complex resupply procedures requires an officer's signature and his presence. (AR 190-60, AR 700-65, AR 735-35)
 2. The purpose of the Davy Crockett is to provide immediate response to requests for nuclear fire within the battalion. NCO's will not normally have the background training required to make timely and accurate decisions on nuclear weapons employment. (FM 7-20, FM 23-20, TC 7-4)
 3. AR 55-203 requires the presence of a commissioned officer when nuclear weapons are being transported.
 4. Upon receipt of SAL there is a need for direct supervision by a commissioned officer during movement of the nuclear projectiles within the battle area. At the present time there is no officer appointed by TOE. (AR 190-60, AR 55-203)
 5. The modification of war reserve projectiles with the XM 74 locking device requires an officer at the battalion exclusion area or firing site for the following reasons:
 - a. Training with the locking device requires a secret clearance with a background investigation.
 - b. Removal of the locking device is a complex process which requires an officer to coordinate verification of the order to remove the device and actual removal. (TB 9-1100-209)
 6. Coordination with supported units would be facilitated if there was an officer present. Based on our experience and the above facts we feel that a commissioned officer is necessary as the section leader of the Davy Crockett Section."
- d. 1/Lt William W. Francis, Special Weapons Officer, G3 Section, 2d Infantry Division:
- "TOE 7-16E gives inadequate support to the assigned Davy Crockett mission in omitting an officer as section leader. Based on liaison with personnel returning from Eighth US Army and USAREUR as well as courtesy visits to Third United States Army units I find that all DC Sections have a minimum of one officer permanently augmented by the Battalion Commander. Why are so many officers utilized in this unauthorized position? I maintain this as proof of the need for an officer."
- e. Consolidated opinions of Davy Crockett Section Leaders and mortar platoon leaders in the 2d Infantry Division shows:

1. An officer is needed in the Davy Crockett Section.
2. The mortar platoon leader has more duties than he can accomplish under the ROAD Organization.

ANNEX X--Bibliography.

1. Army Subject Schedule No. 7-47, Davy Crockett Weapons System XM 28 and XM 29, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 11 December 1961).
2. FM 23-92, 4.2-inch Mortar, M30 with Change 1, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, February 1961).
3. Guide for Davy Crockett Technical Proficiency Inspection Preparation (Fort Benning, Ga.: United States Army Infantry School, October 1963).
4. Infantry, July-August 1963, Davy Crockett TPI's.
5. Infantry Reference Data, ROAD (Fort Benning, Ga.: United States Army Infantry School, June 1963).
6. Ivy Flats Final Report, (Secret Restricted Data Atomic Energy Act 1954, Presidio of San Francisco: Headquarters Sixth United States Army, 22 August 1962).
7. Special Text 7-20-2, Infantry, Airborne Infantry, and Mechanized Infantry Battalions (Fort Benning, Ga.: United States Army Infantry School, August 1963).
8. Special Text 23-20-1, Davy Crockett Weapons System in Infantry and Armor Units (Fort Benning, Ga.: United States Army Infantry School, October 1963).
9. Table of Organization and Equipment No. 7-36E, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 15 August 1963).
10. T.M. 9-1000-209-12, Operator and Organizational Maintenance Manual (Prefire Procedures) with Changes 1, 2-1 and 2-2, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, March 1961) (Confidential)