

# TRAINING NOTES



## CSC Commander

CAPTAIN JOHN NIXON  
CAPTAIN CRAIG BENEDICT

Today's mechanized infantry battalion is undergoing a tremendous upheaval as all its resources and new equipment are being gathered for the great leap into Division 86. But Division 86 is several years away and, meanwhile, there are some unsolved problems in the present structure of the mechanized infantry battalion. The most controversial of these problems may be the delineation of the duties and responsibilities of the combat support company (CSC) commander.

The CSC commander has a unique and challenging position. He controls more firepower than any other company commander in the battalion, but instead of simplifying his job this firepower only complicates it because of the wide variety of vehicles, weapon systems, and military occupational specialties in the company. This organizational challenge, coupled with unclear guidance from the training and doctrinal literature, can leave the CSC commander confused as to his roles and duties on the battlefield.

Essentially, he is a kind of utility man for the battalion; he can be assigned to act either as a tactical commander or as a staff officer, or as

both at the same time. As utility man, he must know all the possible ways his company's assets can be employed, he must receive precise instructions, and, above all, he must be flexible.

Among his most difficult tasks are training and maintenance, because the CSC company includes soldiers with many different kinds of specialties. Besides being responsible for the sustained training of scouts, tank killers, and mortar men, he may also be responsible for training air defenders, tankers, and ground surveillance radarmen. This means that he must be knowledgeable in each of these specialty areas.

A continual assessment of unit training, coupled with long range planning, can ease his training pressures and it will also help if the commander can see to it that only strong platoon leaders are assigned to the special platoons to act as his primary assistants. He simply cannot control all the training and its evaluation single-handed; the training must be decentralized if the soldiers are to be prepared to perform their duties.

When it comes to maintenance, the CSC has the smallest man-to-vehicle ratio in the battalion. A CSC com-

mander, therefore, may often feel that he spends most of his time in the motor pool or talking to the support maintenance battalion about the status of his downed weapon systems.

Although such training and maintenance concerns are a part of the responsibilities of any company commander, with the CSC commander they are unique in their variety and must be treated uniquely.

### TACTICAL ENVIRONMENT

But the real problems arise when the CSC commander moves from a garrison to a tactical environment. TOEs, SOPs, and Army regulations guide the CSC commander's garrison duties, but neither doctrine nor policy covers him when he goes to the field. There he can be used either as a maneuver commander or as a special staff officer.

In a tactical environment, there are some missions that his company can do better than a mechanized infantry company, and in these situations, he can be used better as a maneuver company commander. In the defense, for example, a CSC can provide the security force for a battalion, using



who had scored much lower. The soldier's explanation was that on the range the targets didn't shoot back.

This concept of practicing individual skills in training situations where the targets shoot back, as they did at Fort Campbell, can be applied to training with other infantry small arms as well.

Some more systematic research and data analysis are needed before the specific improvement in skills from this training can be scientifically confirmed. But this type of individual training could overcome some of the difficulties associated with collective or unit training and also prepare individual soldiers better for such training.

In addition, the information regarding each soldier's individual ability to detect enemy forces at varying distances can help squad leaders and other trainers identify individual deficiencies, determine future training requirements, and assign individual responsibilities during unit missions. Another benefit is the insight the squad

leaders often obtain during their participation in one-on-one training.

Such training is practical because it does not require special terrain or a large amount of MILES equipment or of time; each run requires about five minutes per soldier. Two fire teams can practice attacking and defending in an hour on a single exercise lane.

ARI will supply provisional scoring forms and draft rules of play to any unit that is interested in adapting the method to its own training needs. With further tryouts and an accumulation of lessons learned in the field, ARI could develop a standardized method with a set of progressive training standards.

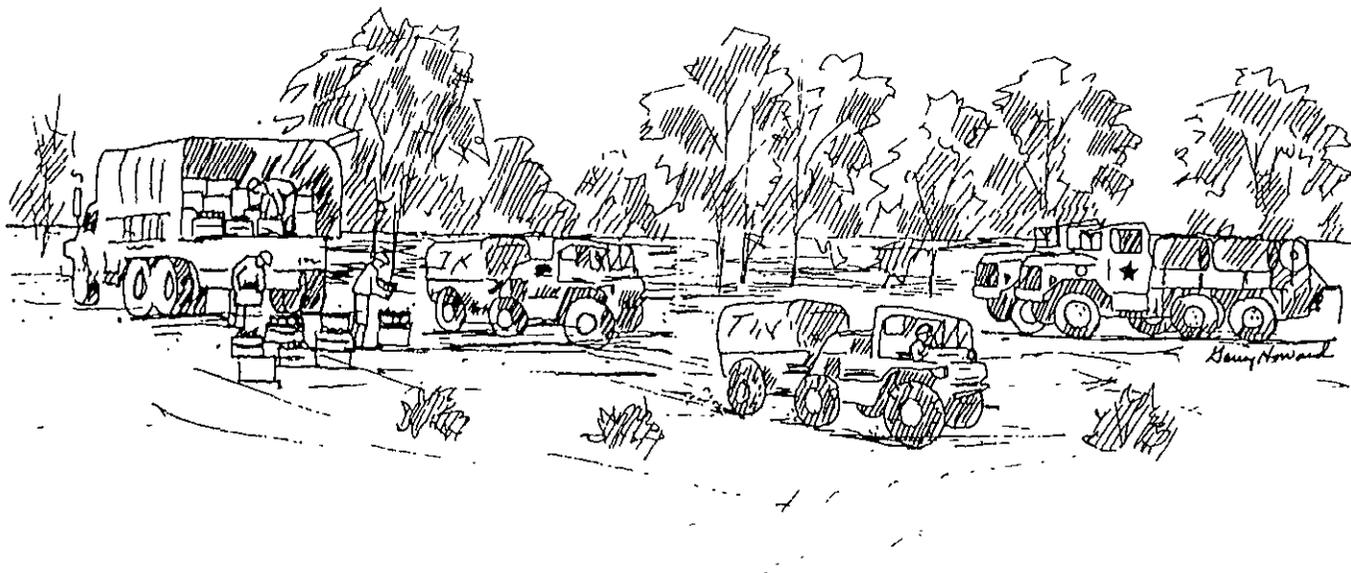
Any recommendations, questions, or requests for additional information or documentation regarding this training technique should be addressed to Dr. Stanley Bolin, Project Director for Performance Standards Research, ARI, 5001 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia 22333. Dr. Bolin can be reached by telephone at AUTOVON 284-8694.

**JERRY D. FREEBLE**, a Research Assistant with HumRRO, assisted in the development of the training techniques and with their field tryout at Fort Campbell.

**ROBERT H. SULZEN**, a Research Psychologist with ARI, has an extensive background in engagement simulation research. He was ARI's technical monitor of the contract under which these training techniques were developed.

**DAVID L. HANNAMAN**, a Senior Scientist with HumRRO, originally conceived and developed the one-on-one training techniques discussed here. He served for three years on active duty as an Army infantryman, including a one-year tour in Vietnam with the 25th Infantry Division.





its strong antiarmor assets (with additional security) and its reconnaissance assets to find and destroy the enemy forward of the FLOT (forward line of own troops). And if a battalion task force has an extended front, the CSC can be used to defend part of that front, providing particularly effective coverage of an armor avenue of approach. The CSC might also be assigned to act as a reserve unit, as a counterattack force, or as a counterinsurgency team.

In the offense, with augmentation, the company can act as an advance guard in a movement to contact, among other roles. The scouts' mobility, coupled with the TOW's long-range overwatch capability (again, with additional security), makes the CSC an ideal choice for such missions.

As a staff officer, a CSC commander is often not used properly. Because of his special qualifications, he should be considered a valued member of the battalion staff. He certainly should be treasured as an

advisor in the employment of any or all the special platoons in his company, and he could be used to establish and operate an alternate battalion tactical operations center (TOC). He might also be required to act as a re-transmission station between the battalion's forward elements and the main TOC, and he is an excellent choice to become a liaison officer to adjacent or higher units. (Although all of these are possible jobs for the CSC commander, he should not be given more than one of them at a time.) The selection of the right mission for him must be made on the basis of the mission of the battalion and the abilities of the CSC and its commander.

Whether the battalion commander chooses to use him as a staff officer or as a maneuver commander depends entirely on the situation and cannot be defined in field manuals or ARTEPs. But he should not be neglected, and his duties and responsibilities should be precisely spelled out for each operation. Above all, the

special knowledge and experience that he has should be used to the fullest extent to help the battalion accomplish its mission, whatever that mission might be.

**CAPTAIN JOHN NIXON**, a 1977 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, is a training management instructor at the Infantry School. He, too, has completed Airborne and Ranger training and the Dragon trainer course. He has served as a rifle platoon leader and an antitank platoon leader with the 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii.

**CAPTAIN CRAIG BENEDICT** is commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 58th Infantry, at Fort Benning, Georgia. A graduate of Southern Methodist University, he was commissioned in 1975 through the Officer Candidate School and has completed Airborne and Ranger training. He has served as a mechanized infantry rifle platoon leader, a scout platoon leader, and an operations instructor at the Infantry School.