tions or platoons, the HHC commander is responsible for leading the battalion's quartering party during these exercises, for selecting the exact location of the battalion's command post, and for supporting it after it has been established.

One of the most difficult tasks any HHC commander has to do is to find a way to instill in his soldiers a desire to provide the best possible professional support to the battalion. Because they often operate separately, he cannot supervise their actions closely. Unfortunately, his soldiers get little recognition or thanks for the support they provide; too often it seems that no one notices what they do until something goes wrong. He must let his soldiers know that their actions have a profound effect on the overall morale of the battalion and on its success or failure. His reward, if there is one, comes from watching his soldiers perform, develop, learn, and mature while providing the best possible support to the battalion.

The job of a HHC commander is demanding, both professionally and personally, and carries with it the requirements for a professional understanding of how all of the individual assets of the battalion fit together to produce a proficient unit. This understanding gives an officer a broad educational base upon which to build the rest of his career.

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The Headquarters Commandant

CAPTAIN KIM STENSON

One of the toughest problems confronting the commander of a mechanized infantry battalion headquarters company is the question of exactly what his responsibilities are when his battalion moves to the field and he becomes the headquarters commandant.

Once the battalion is committed tactically, the headquarters company's assets are split into three distinct sub-units: the battalion's tactical operations center (TOC), the combat trains, and the field trains. The combat trains are usually supervised by the battalion S-4, while the field trains operate under the control of the battalion motor officer and the support platoon leader. The headquarters commander is responsible for the TOC — he must select a site for it and provide for its movement, its security, and its logistical support and maintenance.

But Army doctrine on the subject of what all this means is sadly lacking, and what doctrine there is is misleading and seldom followed. What, then, really happens when the HHC commander moves out the gate on a combat exercise and becomes the headquarters commandant? And what does he have to work with?

His personnel assets include a first sergeant, a supply sergeant, a supply clerk/armorer, a driver, and a two-man maintenance team. This group is sometimes augmented by an executive officer, an NBC NCO, and a full-time armorer. (This augmentation depends upon the particular infantry battalion and the company's strength.) With these people, the HHC commandant must ensure that the TOC has the logistical and administrative support it needs to operate.

Transportation for the group consists of an M561 and an M35 with trailer. The first sergeant and the supply sergeant double up with the M35 and the HHC commandant uses the M561. Neither the commandant nor the first sergeant is authorized any communications equipment.

The actual components of a battalion TOC are, at least, the following:

- The battalion command group (one M113 and one M151).
- The S-2 (one M577).
- The S-3 (one M577, one M113, and one M151).

• The fire support officer (FSO) (one M577).

• The battalion communications officer (two M577s, one M561, and one M151).

• HHC (one M561 and one M35).

• HHC maintenance (one M561).

• An air liaison officer (ALO) (one M113).

• The Redeye section (one M151).

In addition, air defense and engineer units may be attached. The number of people involved ranges from 45 to 60.

Normally, the S-3 selects at least two general areas where he would like the TOC located. The headquarters commandant must then conduct a reconnaissance of those areas and select the one that is most suitable. The perfect TOC location, if he can find it, is at the center of the battalion's sector, on flat, high ground, and with good routes both in and out. Ideally, it should also be on a rear slope with just the right amount of vegetation — not enough to restrict movement or the placement of vehicles, but enough to provide concealment. Normally, the TOC is located two to five kilometers behind the battalion's front lines, but this is not as important as the other criteria.

Sometimes, many of these considerations have to be subordinated to the battalion's communications needs, for without good communications, the TOC simply cannot fill its tactical role.

Built-up areas should always be considered, too, in selecting a TOC location, although these are often overlooked. Villages and towns usually offer good roads, cover and concealment, and a signature-hiding capability.

The headquarters commandant should conduct a thorough map reconnaissance before he does the actual reconnaissance on the ground. He can save valuable time by carefully selecting the most likely positions in advance. If he has the time, though, he should examine as many possible positions in the sector as he can, keeping in mind the TOC's need for lateral as well as forward and rearward movement.

Once a command post has been selected, a security team should be placed on location until the main body arrives. A wire team is good for this role — while it is securing the area, its members can also be wiring the location. The security team can also act as the quartering party for the vehicles when they arrive.

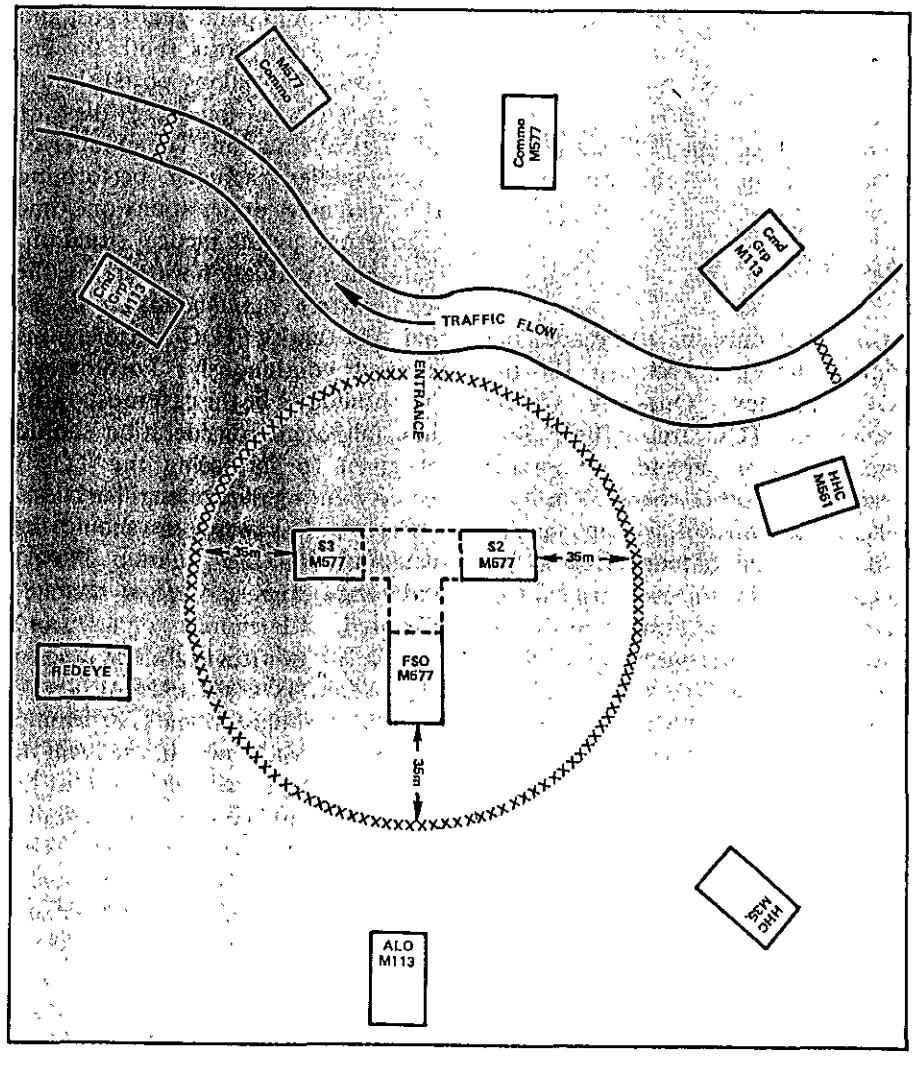
MOVING

Movement to the new location should be by echelon whenever possible. One echelon should be moving enroute while the other functions as the TOC until both are in place. During movement each vehicle should have a map with the destination plotted on it in the event of a break in column. Routes should be carefully selected for both ease of movement and cover from enemy fire. The TOC is most vulnerable while on the move, so a careful reconnaissance of the route is always essential. Air guards should be posted.

TOC personnel should be trained to react to enemy contact during movement. All the normal rules for mechanized infantry movement apply.

Once moved, the actual operations group, consisting of the S-2, the S-3, and the FSO, should be at the center of the area with the various other vehicles placed around it in a type of "wagon train" formation (see illustration). The security team must know the exact location for every vehicle and must guide them to the appropriate positions quickly.

Both an inner and an outer perimeter must be established. The inner perimeter should encompass the S-2/S-3/FSO complex, and a barrier



consisting of double strength concertina wire should be erected. The barrier should be at least 35 meters from the operations center. (To have enough concertina on hand, each combat vehicle must carry at least two rolls.) A guard must be posted at the entrance to this complex, and a TOC pass or access roster system must be implemented. Additionally, a walking guard is required on the inside of the perimeter, and correct challenge and password procedures are essential.

The outer perimeter should be formed using the remainder of the TOC elements. Each TOC section should be allocated a sector so that a 360° defense can be provided. Combat vehicles such as armored personnel carriers should be located along the armor avenues of approach leading into the TOC complex. The jump TOC elements, which consist of at least the battalion commander's and the S-3's armored personnel carriers, must be integrated into the overall defense plan, but care must be exercised in their placement because those vehicles will move frequently.

BARRIERS

One road must be designated the primary entrance and exit for the TOC complex. One-way traffic through the TOC area is best. Barriers should be erected or guards posted on all other roads to prevent intrusion. A movable barrier such as a log or a roll of concertina is required at the primary entrance. At that position a dismount point should be established and rigidly adhered to. The only vehicles moving in and out of the TOC should be those belonging to the actual TOC elements. An exception to this would be the support vehicles required for distributing Class I and Class III supplies.

Security forces are drawn from either internal sources — TOC personnel — or external sources — a rifle squad, for example, from one of the rifle companies.

If only internal sources are used, usually soldiers from the S-2/S-3/FSO complex are detailed to man the TOC entrance and to furnish the walking guard around the inside perimeter. Enough drivers and clerks are assigned to these three sections to allow this detail, which the S-2 NCOIC normally handles.

The communications section takes care of the guard post at the dismount point and any other guard positions that must be manned around the clock. Its NCOIC is made responsible for seeing that these various posts are manned.

If a rifle squad is made available, its leader sees that the various guard posts are taken care of in accordance with the headquarters commandant's plans.

In either case, the headquarters commandant must make checking the TOC guard posts an important part of his duties.

The dismount point guard post and the TOC guard posts (both the entrance and the walking posts) should be manned at all times regardless of the tactical situation. The number of other soldiers actually performing TOC defensive duties at any one time is governed by the tactical situation. If the enemy situation warrants it, the headquarters commandant should see that the entire TOC perimeter is manned continuously. Fortunately, this should not be the case most of the time, although consideration should be given to increasing the TOC's security during the hours of darkness.

Crew-served weapons should be dismounted if the situation allows, and range cards and sector sketches prepared. Claymores, mines, and especially trip wires can all be used to improve the TOC's chances of surviving. Every soldier in the TOC should have a position to man in the event of an attack. Fighting positions must be constructed and consideration should be given to digging-in the TOC vehicles whenever possible. An alert system must be implemented and should be tested frequently. (An airhorn is ideal for this.)

In order to avoid detection, both manmade and natural camouflage is essential. Camouflage nets must be erected immediately after arrival at each new location, and antennas must be remoted from the actual site to avoid pinpointing the TOC's location. Noise and light discipline is especially important.

MAINTENANCE

Equipment maintenance is usually handled by a two-man contact team from the HHC maintenance section. Although most of the HHC maintenance personnel and equipment are located with the combat trains, a two-man contact team should travel with the TOC at all times to handle its maintenance problems. (This two-man team — ideally a vehicle mechanic and a generator mechanic — normally moves in an M561.)

Class I and Class III supply is managed by the HHC's first sergeant. Class I distribution is handled as usual using the M35 as transport. The normal procedures, including five-meter intervals, weapons at the ready, and full equipment, all apply.

Class III distribution requires some special considerations. If at all possible, the TOC should be refueled just before it moves to a new location. This type of "service station" operation works the best, but it is not always feasible. If the TOC is already positioned, it is best to bring the POL truck to the TOC. Still, it is sometimes impossible to get the POL truck close enough to refuel the TOC's vehicles. At this point, a choice must be made either to break the TOC down and send the vehicles to a refueling point or to refuel using five-gallon cans.

Of great concern to the HHC commandant is the shortage of personnel. During fluid maneuver situations, the HHC's first sergeant is often away from the TOC solving maintenance and logistical problems. This means the HHC commandant has to conduct the reconnaissance on the possible new positions, prepare the TOC for movement, and move the TOC himself.

Another problem involves communications and transportation. Both the HHC commandant and his first sergeant need communications equipment that works efficiently. The need for this in reconnaissance and movement is obvious, and it is also obvious that the HHC commandant needs a vehicle other than an M561. The M561 was designed to fulfill a cargo role — not a reconnaissance or control role. A faster, more maneuverable vehicle that is capable of mounting a radio — an M151, for example — would be more appropriate.

But even if all of these other problems could be solved for him, the headquarters company commandant would still have one major difficulty with his role as commandant — he rarely has an opportunity to train the TOC as a unit. The staff sections have their various duties to perform within the battalion, and some elements, such as the fire support officer and the air liaison officer, are located in different units. When the TOC does train during a battalion exercise, it is sometimes difficult for its elements to practice such techniques as remoting antenna systems, improving fighting positions, or preparing range cards.

A plausible solution to this would be for the battalion to allocate one day a quarter for TOC training. For 24 hours the TOC elements would belong entirely to the HHC commander for training purposes. One day a quarter would not be overly ambitious, and having the battalion staff "down" for one full day would be no more than an inconvenience at most — and it could make a real difference in the long run.

But because of the necessary coordination both inside and outside the battalion, this solution can be achieved only if there is close cooperation between the battalion commander and the HHC commander. If the battalion commander can be sold on the idea, though, he will soon realize that this exercise will further improve his entire unit's combat readiness. And that is a worthwhile goal.

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Maintenance Flow Chart

CAPTAIN ROBERT R. LEONHARD

Company motor officers have their problems.

Their drivers complain about the volume of DA Forms 2404 they have to prepare every week, usually in triplicate — each describing the same old faults over and over again. The vehicles may have enough new seat cushions to supply the entire battalion but never get the new track shoes they need. The old 2404s can be found piled up in "in" boxes, stuffed under seats, crammed in logbooks, and scattered over desk-tops.

Many motor officers confront these problems daily but can find no "textbook" solutions to them. While many different sources and schools explain the uses and purposes of the various maintenance forms and records, few, if any, explain how to tie them all together in a daily set of procedures.

The first thing a motor officer needs to do to solve this problem is to get a detail of men together and send them through the motor pool to collect and burn all those old 2404s. Then he should sit down and establish a definite system for handling the 2404s and then a flow chart to make the system work. (Once he announces his system, it becomes his primary duty to enforce it, even if it tends to slow down operations at first, as it surely will. But as his system catches on, the drivers will spend less time writing and will soon have vehicles that operate better.)

The flow chart that I recommend is one I have used in my company shop operations. The crucial part of this system is the series of initials that are written by various individuals across the top of a 2404 as it flows from the driver, through the chain of command, through the shop office, and back to the driver. Each person in the chain should look for the proper initials as the form is passed to him, and he should not accept it if those initials are not there. This serves to see that each man does his job, and it quickly identifies problems.