

set up where it is; amber indicates that the section can be set up and firing within ten minutes; and red indicates that the section will not be able to fire within ten minutes. The mortar section sergeant keeps the FSO abreast of his section's status, and the FSO keeps the company commander and the battalion FSO informed.

The battalion mortars monitor and keep track of the status of each company's mortar section. This allows the battalion mortars to set their guns to respond quickly to the unit that is in the least favorable situation. The battalion commander, through his FSO, determines priority when the battalion mortars are in general support and more than one unit is in a red or amber status.

Even when a company is beyond the range of nonorganic fire support, the green, amber, red system should still be used. If a company's mortars are in red status and out of range of nonorganic fire support, they may still be within the range of another company's mortars. By keeping track of the status and location of each company, and of the range of each company's mortars, the battalion FSO can

significantly increase the battalion's ability to meet a company's need for indirect fire.

When a company is nearing an objective, is in red status, and out of range of another company's mortars, the battalion commander may elect to have the company stop, which allows him to position another company so that additional indirect fire support is attainable. This could prevent a unit from making enemy contact when it has no indirect support available.

FIRE SUPPORT

The FSO keeps track of the availability of all organic and nonorganic fire support assets. He can direct the fires of the company and battalion mortars on single or multiple targets as they are needed. He can integrate any supporting artillery to further ensure timely, adequate support.

When the battalion has close air support available, the company mortars have the capacity to spot targets for the close support aircraft. In terrain where landmarks

are not distinct, a company commander can guide the aircraft by firing HE rounds at the target. This technique has proved effective and easy to do. It allows a company to be well beyond range of all nonorganic indirect fire support and still deliver a devastating blow to the enemy.

At first glance, a light infantry company commander may conclude that his two 60mm mortars are not sufficient to give him effective indirect fire support and that resupply constraints will further reduce their effectiveness. By concentrating on what his equipment will allow, however, and by conducting in-depth mission analysis and planning, the commander's capacity to use his own indirect fire support to defeat an enemy, and to save his soldiers' lives, will be dramatically increased.



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Live Fire Drills

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Historically, the unit that fires first in an engagement has an advantage, and the unit that fires first and most accurately probably has assured victory. Although this has been known for over 40 years, the Army has done little to train units to gain this initial accurate firepower.

One of the critical reasons that this training is not done is that units tend to draw distinct boundaries between types of weapon training—range firing, MILES/tactical training and live fire exercises.

There are several reasons for this, but the primary ones are a perception (as opposed to knowledge) that Army Regulation 385-63 prohibits certain exercises; a "we've never done it that way" attitude; and a belief, usually well-founded, that training inspectors and others who happen by will not understand anything different.

As one watches a unit go through its training, several observations become readily apparent. During range firing,

soldiers move in orderly lines, are supervised by NCOs who often are required to wear color-coded helmets, and take orders from someone in a range tower by way of a public address system. (In this article "range firing" refers exclusively to 10-meter, 25-meter, field fire, known distance, and record fire ranges.)

During tactical training, units move in tactical formations, there is little direct control over the soldiers, and commands are shouted above the noise. During live

FIRING DRILLS

DRILL 1. Drop and Engage.

Ammunition: Five rounds of 5.56mm ball.

Starting Position: Soldier faces down range with weapon on SAFE and held at port arms.

Drill: The target is raised. The soldier drops to the ground, places the selector switch on SEMI, and engages with five rounds of rapid fire.

Time Limit: Five seconds from the time the target first appears.

Accuracy: All five rounds on the paper holding the silhouette or the silhouette itself. (This standard is essentially that of placing suppressive fire on a target.)

Drill 2. Drop, Roll, and Engage.

Ammunition: Five rounds of 5.56mm ball.

Starting Position: Same as Drill 1.

Drill: The target is raised. The soldier drops to the ground, rolls left or right, places the selector switch on SEMI, and engages with five rounds of rapid fire.

Time Limit: Same as Drill 1.

Accuracy: Same as for Drill 1. (The same time is allowed because Drill 2 should not be trained until Drill 1 has been mastered.)

DRILL 3. Roll, Rush, and Engage.

Ammunition: Two magazines each of five rounds of 5.56mm ball.

Starting Position: Prone unsupported firing position, weapon on SEMI.

Drill: The target is raised. The soldier fires five rounds of rapid fire, places the weapon on SAFE, changes magazines, rolls left or right, then rushes a short distance, drops to the ground, places the weapon on SEMI, and engages with five rounds of rapid fire.

Time Limit: Ten seconds from the time the target is raised.

Accuracy: Same as for Drills 1 and 2.

DRILL 4. Buddy Team Roll, Rush, and Engage.

Ammunition: Two five-round magazines each.

Starting Position: Same as for Drill 3.

Drill: Buddy team starts as in Drill 3. Two targets are raised. When the targets appear, Soldier 1 engages his target, and Soldier 2 rolls, rushes, and engages his target. When Soldier 2 begins firing, Soldier 1 executes the drill.

Time Limit: None.

Accuracy: Same as previous drills.

fire exercises, depending on the unit, the soldiers may again move in tightly controlled formations, under close supervision, and take orders from an administrative NCO who sometimes is equipped with a bullhorn. On more realistic live fire exercises, soldiers move hesitantly, usually use improper movement techniques, and often simply expend rounds without aiming. In many cases, if their weapons malfunction, they are at a total loss as to what to do.

By divorcing range firing from tactical training, therefore, we have produced a situation in which a satisfactory performance in live fire exercises is difficult to attain and success in a firefight would be

problematic at best.

There is a method of bridging the gap between range firing and tactical training. This proposed method consists of four drills as shown in the box. The drills are designed to be conducted on a known distance (KD) range. The distance used is optional, but 300 meters is the most effective. The KD range was chosen because the silhouette is mounted on a large sheet of target paper, which provides feedback to the trainer on a soldier's misses and on the dispersion of his rounds. (A field fire and record fire range can be used instead, but these ranges have only limited means of determining whether a soldier is missing a target because of a

poor zero or because of a poor shooting technique.)

These drills should be expanded as the soldiers become more proficient. For example, dummy rounds can be added to each magazine to ensure stoppages; the number of magazine changes can be increased (using a three-round and a two-round magazine instead of a five-round); and the MOPP level can be increased until the drills are conducted in MOPP 4.

There are several immediate payoffs to this program. First and foremost, this is safety training. It teaches soldiers to move with loaded weapons under tactical conditions and to change magazines and reduce stoppages without supervision.

TECHNIQUE

Second, the program teaches the correct technique to be used in combat, and it does so in a sterile environment where errors can be readily identified. It reinforces the need for accuracy and the use of the steady-hold factors. Suppressing targets at 300 meters after rolling or rushing is infinitely more difficult than a similar feat on a qualification range.

The third, and by no means least, payoff is in soldier confidence. A soldier learns that he no longer has to depend upon instructions from a tower, or from an NCO in a white helmet, to be able to change a magazine, move with a loaded weapon, or reduce a stoppage. He also learns that his fellow soldiers have the same abilities. During live fire this translates into swift, confident movements instead of hesitancy and inertia.

While this program is not a cure-all, it is an indispensable phase in a unit's transition from tactical training with blanks to tactical training with live ammunition.

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