rent maintenance status. These additional mechanics can be organized into contact teams to reinforce the CMTs as the BMO deems necessary.

The heavy wheel vehicle mechanics (63S10) must be cross-attached because of the increased number of heavy expanded-mobility tactical trucks (HEMTT) the infantry task force will receive in the cross-attachment of Class III and V squads. The armor task force has only four M1 tank hull mechanics and two turret mechanics in the maintenance and service section, one of whom is an NCO. This allows for only one hull mechanic and one turret mechanic to be cross-attached to the infantry task force. The commander should consider pulling mechanics from the tank CMTs to allow the infantry task force BMO to echelon his maintenance assets among the CMTs, the UMCP, and the field trains.

After the maintenance assets have been cross-attached, assets can be arrayed on the battlefield in the general configuration shown in Table 6. This configuration is based on a balanced task force with two infantry-heavy teams and two armor-heavy teams. These assets can be shifted on the basis of the current tactical situation and maintenance status.

Sustaining the force is the logistician's job, but it is the commander's responsibility. The cross-attachment of CSS assets must be accomplished with the same degree of detail that we now devote to combat and combat support assets. A precise cross-attachment of CSS assets based on task organization will give the logisticians the means to plan properly and adequately, and to prepare and execute combat service support operations during combat operations. It will allow for the total support a task force needs to accomplish any tactical mission it may be assigned.

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NEOs
The New Mission

LIEUTENANT ROBERT L. BATEMAN

The image of a helicopter hovering above a large group of people on top of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon in 1975 is a familiar one, but few people think of it as a military operation. Yet that is exactly what it was—a noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO).

NEOs have been around as long as the infantry, and the mission is still to get civilians out of harm's way. But in the past 30 years, our nation's ability and need to conduct these operations have increased dramatically. Traditionally, this has been the province of the U.S. Marine Corps and the Fleet Marine Force. More recently, however, it has become one of the major contingency missions for the Army's light infantry divisions.

The concept behind a NEO mission is deceptively simple—to move U.S. civilians and allied personnel out of the area of actual or potential hostilities. The reality can be staggeringly complex, involving Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps personnel aside from the civilians themselves. Further, since the entire operation comes under State Department control, the requirement for clear communication, thorough understanding of operational terms, and agreement on a course of action is particularly critical.

On the battlefield, the light infantry is prized for its flexibility, its ability to maneuver on and dominate restrictive terrain, and its orientation toward night operations. All of these characteristics are essential to NEOs.

The NEO is now the primary contingency mission in many light infantry divisions, but it was only recently that the Army began to train seriously for these complex missions. The Army has no published doctrine on how to conduct NEO missions. In fact, very little has been produced on the subject at any level. The 82d Airborne Division has a NEO handbook, as does the 7th Infantry Division, but the 25th Infantry Division may have come the farthest with a complete NEO mission training plan (MTP) created by its 3d Brigade. The material presented here will provide a basic background and understanding of the NEO mission, as well as a few suggestions on executing it for those junior leaders who will be involved in it on the ground some day.

A NEO mission can be defined loosely as any military operation that has as its primary focus collecting and processing civilians and moving them out of an actual or potential combat zone or area of civil unrest. The civilians may be U.S. citizens, allied civilians, indigenous friendly personnel, or anyone the State Department may designate, and the threat level may vary dramatically.

NEO missions are executed any time the U.S. Government decides that the lives of U.S. civilians living or working in a foreign country are threatened by activities in or around that country. Additionally, political considerations often dictate that the decision to evacuate not be made until the last possible moment. Obviously, this means that a NEO mission is almost always considered an emergency. This built-in dichotomy can make a NEO mission especially frustrating to a unit commander, and this frustration may show its effect down to platoon and squad level operations.

Since the definition of NEO covers a wide range of possible scenarios, NEOs are categorized into three basic types—permissive, semi-permissive, and non-permissive.

A permissive NEO is the easiest to execute because of highly favorable conditions. No resistance to the evacuation is expected. The host nation's military and civil law enforcement agencies have control in the area of operations (AO) and are able and willing to help in the evacuation process. In these conditions, the NEO can be conducted at a slower pace, and the search for and processing of the evacuating civilians can be more thorough. But this type of NEO is also the least likely because of the political considerations; when the situation is this good, it is unlikely that the State Department will recommend evacuation in the first place.

A semi-permissive NEO, as the title suggests, is slightly more complicated. It is characterized by an increased threat to the force and the civilians from civil disorders and potential terrorist activity. Additionally, the host nation may be indifferent to the situation or may not be able to help even if it wants to do so. The evacuations of Saigon and Monrovia, Liberia, are prime examples of this type of NEO. Planning considerations in this case require a secure lodgement area and probably an airfield (ideally located together) since the host nation cannot or will not provide them.

The non-permissive NEO is the most difficult and also the most likely form. In this type of operation, hostilities are under way or imminent in the AO. This type may also be used when the host nation is actively opposed to the evacuation of the civilians, or when the population in the AO is under the control of armed forces that have both the ability and the intent to interfere with the evacuation. (Intelligence agencies will warn of terrorists or criminals who may try to disrupt the evacuation.)

Obviously, this is the most complex form of NEO. In addition to conducting a civilian-oriented mission, the unit involved must also be prepared to engage in combat operations at any point. These dual requirements can lead to some very involved rules of engagement (ROEs).

Generally, noncombatant evacuation operations are executed in five phases:

- Alert.
- Deployment to an initial staging base.
- Evacuation site operations—consisting of marshalling, evacuation control center operations, and deployment of the evacuees to a safe haven.
- Safe haven operations.
- Redeployment.

Ideally, the staging base can be eliminated when marshalling and evacuation take place at the same location. Such a site must have an airfield capable of accepting C-141 aircraft. It should be close to the civilians' homes and work places, and it should be relatively defendable (outside major urban centers or known bases of hostile forces). In that situation, the unit executing the NEO has to be prepared to do so immediately upon arrival, because the staging base activities (crossloading, mission planning, and the like) have to be done before deployment. In either case, the unit's real work begins as soon as it arrives at the marshalling site.

MARSHALLING

The marshalling process is the heart of the entire NEO. This is the phase in which the civilian evacuees are first contacted, collected, screened, and prepared for their movement out of the AO to the safe haven. This is also the point where the command is most dispersed and therefore vulnerable to hostile forces. Finally, this can be one of the most frustrating phases for the junior leaders as they contact and deal with civilians whose attitude can range from profusely thankful to belligerent and resentful. and as they also deal with the constant threat of encountering hostile forces and getting into combat. All of this must be done while the unit is trying to coordinate the activities of any attached civil affairs, emergency ordnance disposal, translator, military police, military intelligence, and psychological operations units.

The NEO marshalling team can be any size from platoon through battalion, depending on the mission. The deciding factors are the threat capabilities, the number of civilians to be evacuated, and the dispersion of those civilians from a central location. In any case, the marshalling team is generally split into three elements—the search teams, the security and control team, and the process team.

In the best situation, the search team may not be needed at all. Every U.S. Embassy is required to have an evacuation plan on file to aid in the evacuation of all civilians in the country. The plan is supposed to provide centralized locations where U.S. civilians will gather before evacuation, and these sites are to be accessible by aircraft and easy to find. Soccer stadiums and playing fields are often selected for this reason. Too often in the past, though, these plans have been hopelessly out of date by the time they were needed. The planned landing zones might be occupied by urban buildings, for example, or power lines may have gone up around the site. Today, many of these plans have been updated, and most embassy staffs work to ensure that they remain current. But it is still possible that an Army unit will be confronted with an out-of-date plan.

The method adopted by the State Department to implement the evacuation plan is the warden system. In this system, a prominent man or woman in the U.S. community is selected to be the "warden" for several other U.S. civilians (anywhere from two to 20). The warden must know the home addresses, the work locations, and the home and business phone numbers for all the people on his list. Additionally, if he does not know them personally, he should at least be able to recognize them on sight. When the State Department notifies the Embassy to prepare for evacuation, the Embassy notifies the wardens. The wardens then notify the people on their lists, telling them the date, time, and location for the evacuation, along with any restrictions (on baggage, items that will be considered contraband, pets, and the like).

This is where the search teams come into play. If little notice has been given before the evacuation, many of the civilians may not have been contacted. When the marshalling team lands at the marshalling site, they must be prepared to go out and look for those civilians. Wardens can make this job a lot easier if they are available, but when the unit arrives it may find only an empty field and a list of names and addresses. Then the entire focus must shift to finding the civilians and moving them to the marshalling site.

Fully half of the unit may be used for this task, and the task organization depends on how small each search team can safely be. That, of course, depends upon METT-T (mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time), and the commander on the ground must decide.

Each team should be well briefed on the rules of engagement and should also know the rules regarding personal possessions (one carry-on bag with toiletries, clothes, and valuables), animals (none), and what constitutes contraband (drugs, weapons). Then the team members go out and do their best to contact everyone they are assigned, telling them where to go and what to take with them. If they arrive at a home and nobody is there, the general rule is to leave a message on the door and carry on with the search. If they find a U.S. citizen who knows of the evacuation but just doesn't want to go, they also need to know what to do in that situation. (U.S. citizens always have the right to refuse help.) They may believe the situation does not warrant their leaving and may decide to stay. A search team leader who faces such a situation should extend the offer again and if that fails, note the date and time, the civilian's name, and the circumstances.

In addition, the embassy will have provided a list of U.S. citizens it expects to be evacuated from a specific site and may also have provided a list of third-country nationals who are to be evacuated for humanitarian or political reasons.

At the marshalling site itself, the rest of the unit should be organized into three elements—process, control, and security. These elements may later be augmented by the return of the search teams, but only the control element should be varied by the circumstances. The security element should not be changed, for obvious reasons, and the process element is a specialized group that has had additional training just for that purpose.

The mission of the process team is to prepare the evacuees for eventual overseas movement to the safe haven (a friendly major power or, most likely, the United States itself). Doing this quickly and efficiently in a potential combat zone can be a challenge, and many of the functions may be eliminated to save time and move the civilians back to a safer location in-country. In any case, since processing must be done before overseas movement, it is best to get it done as soon as possible.

Generally, this mission will need at least one platoon to operate well. A light infantry rifle platoon (with attachments) can perform a process team mission.

The process team is broken down into five elements: reception, recording, search, medical screen, and debrief.

At the reception station three soldiers from the rifle platoon meet the evacuee and record his identification (preferably a passport), screen the embassy-provided list for his name, and have him sign a waiver or consent form.

Attachments at this site may include civil affairs personnel and a translator for non-U.S. nationals the government may want evacuated. At least one NCO should also be at the site to greet each civilian. He reminds the evacuee of the definition of *contraband* and explains what will take place at the five stations of the processing line. He ensures that the evacuee does not enter the line with more than one bag or with any visible items of contraband (animals and plants are the most common).

At the recording station, the civilian is again asked for his name and social security number and is entered on a passenger manifest according to status (determined by the embassy-provided list). If the civilian's status is changed—by the discovery of drugs or weapons at the search station, for example—these manifests are also changed. Generally, this station has four soldiers so that more than one person can be processed at the same time.

Next is the search station, where it is again helpful to set up two teams to speed the process. If any Military Police are attached to the unit, this is probably the most critical place to use their experience. Everything must be searched, every carry-on bag and every person who is to be evacuated. (The only exceptions to this are diplomatic bags and persons, but that is an entirely different problem of its own.)

Generally, a search team should consist of three men—one to search bags, one to do body pat-down searches, and one to provide security. If there are two teams, at least six men are needed, plus one NCO to oversee the operation.

Additionally, a "hot box" is needed where any contraband within the perimeter can be placed. Anything the soldiers of the process team find that may be contraband, that has any intelligence value, or that may be dangerous is brought here, evaluated, or disposed of as appropriate. If the NCO believes it is important enough, he may bring it to the attention of the process team platoon leader. Meanwhile, it saves time for every soldier to know that if he finds something questionable or that he thinks may be dangerous, he takes it straight to the hot box and then gets back to his station. The hot box should be at least 35 meters from the process line, perpendicular to the search station, or, if possible, around the corner of a building or below ground. This site should be manned by one of the EOD personnel (if there are any) or at least by an NCO.

The last two sites are the medical screening and debriefing stations. At the medical screening site, the attached medic or doctor checks each person quickly on the way through, concentrating mainly on symptoms of some form of communicable illness that could be a hazard. He may also give first aid at the site if time and circumstances permit.

Finally, the evacuee arrives at the debriefing site where the officer in charge (OIC) or an attached intelligence NCO may check for any potentially helpful intelligence he may have. It is highly recommended, however, that this station *not* be run by the OIC but rather by the attached intelligence NCO or officer. The OIC of the process team will have more than enough on his hands and should not be tied to this one station.

That, in a nutshell, is how a processing station can be run during a NEO. Of course, any necessary shortcuts can be taken when there is not enough time for the entire process.

The evacuation of noncombatants from a potential or actual combat zone is a mission which must often be executed on short notice. A commander who recognizes this as a contingency mission and trains and organizes for it will most likely be able to complete this critical mission quickly and without inordinate casualties to either the noncombatants or his force. The keys to a successful noncombatant evacuation operation are detailed training and coordination to ensure that every member of the team knows his job and does it right the first time.

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Operation DESERT STORM
Crossing the LD

CAPTAIN THOMAS E. BERON

Leaders preparing for combat must try to anticipate all the things that can possibly go wrong. Then they should make plans for dealing with these contingencies when they occur. Such plans can prevent disaster, as my company learned during Operation DESERT STORM.

For six months, our battalion training had focused on engaging and defeating the Iraqi Army. Our mission for the upcoming operation was relatively simple. We would conduct a flanking movement to strike deep into the enemy's rear area, cutting lines of communication and then establishing blocking positions to prevent his retreat. My job, as antiarmor company (Company E) commander, would be to provide long-range TOW fires wherever the battalion commander needed them.

Leaving the task force tactical operations center after the final line-of-departure briefing, I felt relieved. I would return to my company and pass on the order to begin the attack, and in two hours we would be in enemy territory. Soon the apprehension and doubt would give way to action and challenge.

My soldiers, sections, and platoons were well trained and ready for combat. The six months in country before the war had allowed us to prepare tactically, physically, and emotionally. The command and control glitches had been worked out. Equipment shortcomings had been identified and corrected. The nervousness and fear of the unknown had been addressed, discussed, explained, and finally accepted. Our confessions had been heard, our sleeves were rolled up, and we were ready to fight.

Mission analysis indicated that the first phase of the operation, the drive to the Euphrates River valley, would hold little opportunity for my company. A mechanized infantry antiarmor company is basically a defensive unit, one that