

all routine tasks in MOPP IV.

- Plan for decontamination and MOPP-gear exchange. Decontamination is a challenge for a light battalion. Since you will often need help from the heavy brigade, make sure the brigade is aware of your requirements before the battle.

- Make sure all soldiers in the battalion are trained to detect and determine types of potential agents using the M-256 chemical detector kit.

- SOPs for the defense must specifically address when and by whom M-8 chemical alarms will be emplaced.

You will increase your effectiveness at the NTC if you focus your training on avoiding contaminated areas, detecting the presence of chemical agents and

determining the type of agent, and being prepared to operate in an NBC environment when necessary.

The NTC is the only training environment in which a light battalion and a heavy brigade work closely together in a realistic scenario against a world-class opposing force and under difficult terrain and weather conditions. You will be guaranteed an opportunity to train yourself, your leaders, and your soldiers under the most stressful conditions available in training. And you'll return home more proficient in your job and with a better trained battalion. What's more, with proper preparation and training, your battalion can significantly affect the NTC battlefield.

One last piece of advice: Remember

that you bring unique light battalion capabilities to the NTC battlefield that the heavy brigade may not fully appreciate without your help. Work hard before the rotation to become part of the brigade team. Sell your battalion and its capabilities to the brigade commander and his staff. Then arrive ready to fight and win as part of the brigade team.

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Coordinating Conventional And Special Operations Forces

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As the Army becomes more involved in regional conflicts and operations other than war (OOTW), deployed units and Special Operations Forces (SOFs) will be required to work together more closely than they may have done in the past.

During Operations GOLDEN PHEASANT, DESERT SHIELD, and DESERT STORM, along with various rotations to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), infantry brigades were augmented by Special Operations Command and Control Elements (SOCCEs). It may be helpful to infantrymen to know the roles, organization, and functions of the SOCCE, and how it can help conventional units and, in turn, be helped by them.

A SOCCE is attached to a conventional headquarters when the conventional unit's area of operations overlaps that of an SOF. The SOCCE commander

advises the supported commander on the capabilities and limitations of the Special Forces (SF) teams and provides command and control links between the SOCCE and the unit.

The SOCCE's primary role is to ensure unity of effort by synchronizing SF and conventional force operations and intelligence requirements. The SOCCE accomplishes this by coordinating operational planning and intelligence with the supported commander's staff. It forwards target acquisition, intelligence, and weather reports from deployed SF teams. In particular, when SF is in the vicinity of a unit's objective, or when link-up becomes imminent, the SOCCE helps the conventional unit staff plan the link-up.

A SOCCE is usually based on a Special Forces Operational Detachment-B (SFOD-B) or B Team. The B Team is headquarters for an SF com-

pany composed of six A Teams. At full strength, each A Team is composed of 12 soldiers. A SOCCE may control from one to six teams. (B Team and A Team personnel are shown in Figures 7-9 and 7-10 of Field Manual 100-25, *Doctrine for Army Special Operations Forces*.)

A SOCCE is usually task organized into a command cell, an operations cell, a communications cell, and a support cell.

The command cell is made up of the detachment commander (a major) and the sergeant major. It provides command and control for the deployed A Teams and advises the conventional force commander concerning the capabilities and limitations of deployed elements.

The operations cell is composed of the executive officer and S-2 (captains), two detachment technicians (chief war-

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rant officer-2), two operations sergeants (master sergeants), two intelligence sergeants, an air operations sergeant, and an NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical) sergeant.

This cell plans or helps plan all joint or unilateral missions involving SF assets as follows:

- Provides liaison inside the tactical operations center.
- Coordinates all ongoing or future joint operations.
- Monitors all calls for fire and close air support to protect A Teams from fratricide.
- Provides detailed link-up plans between A Teams and conventional forces.
- Provides situation reports every 12 hours and periodic intelligence reports every 8 hours or as needed.
- Develops and adjusts priority information requirements (PIRs) and collection plans to support the conventional force commander.
- Provides a direct line to G-2 or S-2 with all intelligence and combat information from deployed A Teams.

Because of its small size, the SOCCE operations cell fuses the S-3 and S-2 operations. A series of situation maps displays both friendly and enemy units. Maps of 1:100,000 scale and image maps depict the operational context of the corps, division, SF, and enemy general-purpose units, SOF, and insurgent or terrorist elements. Maps of 1:50,000 scale depict the specific tactical situation of the A Teams and the unit the SOCCE is supporting. There is constant interaction between operations (which records the friendly situation and operational graphics), intelligence (which provides enemy situation and intelligence preparation of the battlefield products), and the liaison personnel (who focus on recording pertinent information concerning the A Teams).

The communications cell, made up of a communications supervisor and two radio operators, provides 24-hour communication between the deployed SF elements, the conventional force, and higher SF headquarters. It must perform limited maintenance for organic and assigned communications

equipment and must ensure that the SOCCE is integrated into the conventional force's communications plan.

The cell uses UHF tactical satellite, HF burst, HF voice and data, local FM, local telephone, theater communications system (voice, data, FAX), and nontechnical communications.

The support cell consists of supply sergeant, medic, and general mechanic, and may be augmented as required. It provides logistical support for the SOCCE: Class II, V, VII, VIII, and limited IX. It develops plans for sustaining all the SOCCE's organic needs, provides maintenance support on organic equipment, establishes agreements with the supported units' HHCs and G-4/S-4 to provide support beyond organic capabilities. The support cell conducts sick call and limited medical support activities as well as assistance in preparing, packing, and rigging all SOCCE equipment for insertion with the supported conventional unit.

Usually, the SOCCE has a liaison officer (LNO) assigned for each A Team to provide a critical human link between the A Team, the SOCCE, and the conventional force. The LNO has a 1:50,000 map and supporting imagery products and is familiar with all aspects of the A Team's mission. He must be able to plot the team's actual and probable courses of action on the situation map and in his situation report daily, even if the team is not communicating.

The LNO usually has a sequence of overlays for coordination and information purposes that include the following:

- Operational boundaries.
- A Team Situation.
 - Infiltration location and status.
 - Planned strategic reconnaissance location, changed to actual once established.
 - Mission support base location.
- Infiltration, exfiltration, and emergency resupply.
 - Drop zones, landing zones, pickup zones (primary and alternate).
 - Escape and evasion routes, planned.
- Fire support.

- Target reference points and no-fire areas for friendly artillery (Army, Joint, Coalition).

- Close air support (Army, Joint, Coalition).

• A Team intelligence reports (using numeral/notation list beside map).

- Numeral on map designates location of event and sequence.

- Notation list explains date-time group and SALUTE (size, activity, location, unit, time, and equipment) details of event.

- BDA results should be noted next to original notation.

• Friendly forces.

- Unit locations and boundaries.

- Headquarters.

- Tactical units.

- Artillery.

- Aviation.

- Logistics.

- Medical.

- SOCCE.

A SOCCE offers the conventional unit commander several advantages—more observers in his areas of interest and influence who can report on PIRs, named and targeted areas of interest, battle damage assessment for long-range fires and air interdiction, weather, and terrain. Because of their area orientation, Special Forces can advise on cultural issues as well as on how U.S. equipment holds up in a particular region. The SF can provide assessments on friendly coalition units and insight into host-nation support and liaison. In addition, the SF medic usually has information on how the climate will affect soldiers and the area's endemic medical problems.

The actual situation will dictate the command relationship. When a joint special operations area (JSOA) is encompassed by a conventional force area of interest, their operations must be coordinated. The commander of the conventional force can request that the SF perform tasks to support his mission if those tasks do not adversely affect the SF element's primary mission. Operational control remains within SOF channels. In situations where special and conventional operations directly affect each other, the commander in

chief may direct that operational control be passed to the conventional unit commander who will exercise it through the established SOF chain of command. Some sample situations would be when a conventional force commander requests SOF support for a specific mission, when the commander in chief commits a conventional force to JSOA, or when the area of operations of a conventional force encompasses a JSOA and link-up is imminent. The SOCCE facilitates the command relationships by making sure they are understood by all units involved during various phases of an operation.

SF may request and receive operational control of conventional units to support a specific combined counterinsurgency operation, as a reaction or reinforcing element for a special operation, or for logistical support during combat operations after link-up, or during contingency operations when the senior Army headquarters in an operational area is an Army Special Operations Task Force.

Since all of this sounds very formal, and perhaps awkward, a practical example may be in order:

During one JRTC rotation, an A

Team reporting on enemy movements along an avenue of approach (AA) to a drop zone could not be exfiltrated due to extended bad weather. Eventually, the A Team ran out of batteries to operate its radios and lost communications. The SOCCE coordinated a contingency exfiltration plan with the brigade S-3 Air.

During the early evening, the exfiltration was done and the A Team was debriefed by the brigade commander, S-3, and S-2. The detachment was able to lay out exactly where prepared enemy fighting positions were at choke points along the AA leading from the drop zone to the conventional force's objectives. They provided a summary of enemy activities during their time in the operational area and what they thought the enemy might do. This helped the commander assess probable enemy courses of action during his attack.

The SOCCE is the key to coordinating conventional and special operations. To do their jobs, the members of the element must know the conventional force's tactical SOP and have detailed primary, alternate, and contingency communications plans. They must ensure that the conventional

force commander understands how SF capabilities strengthen his own operations and how he can help overcome SF weaknesses.

The SOCCE must be proactive in coordinating operations and sharing intelligence. It must function as an integrated part of the conventional commander's staff; only then can it ensure that operations involving conventional and special operations forces are executed successfully the first time, every time.

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Training For Battle Staff Competency

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Battle staff competency is a critical element of unit readiness, but one that is difficult to achieve without a carefully planned training program. A battle staff training program should teach subordinate leaders and staff officers the skills and teamwork they need to plan and execute combat operations. This is a challenge for a battalion commander, considering the many mission requirements that units have today, along with the effects of those re-

quirements on the available time, personnel, and material resources.

I want to share an approach to battle staff training that gives a battalion commander a way to coach his officers and staff members while also improving his tactical decision making skills.

There are several things a commander must do at the outset to ensure that his battle staff training is effective:

- Spell out his commitment to professional development and battle staff

competency in two critical documents—his command philosophy and his training guidance. Battle staff training can easily be overcome by events if it is not programmed on short-range and long-range training calendars and training schedules.

- Conduct battle staff training during the training cycle. The cycle is designed to build the individual or small-unit skills necessary to overall success. In a good unit where noncom-