
situation and planned responses to each squad. While a squad is going through, the other squads are often left out of the training and therefore miss an opportunity to learn. The negotiations should be videotaped for the benefit of later review. After each squad has moved through the STX, immediately move to a classroom where the squads can watch and critique their own performance and that of the other squads. It is critical at this time that the leader explain how certain responses either supported or violated the commander's intent and the ROEs. A violation of the ROEs should be taken extremely seriously. Another approach might be to stop the scenario as an ROE violation occurs and address it immediately.

There are several ways to "spice up" the scenario. First, change the initial response the civilians give—have them disband peacefully or open fire. Then add a nosy civilian crowd that keeps wanting to see what is going on, children running around the area, dogs, and other things that will tend to distract the soldiers. The

closer the situation is to real life, the better prepared the soldiers will be. Remember to make it easy at first and then gradually more difficult. Once the desired response from your subordinates has been achieved, it must be rehearsed as a battle drill.

Another way to reinforce this training is to publish short summaries of the situation and the response. Before a deployment, the squads and platoons can pull out these sheets and refresh their memories on the appropriate responses and how the ROEs were reflected. Here also the platoons can share information on their specific areas of expertise (cordon and search, convoys, checkpoints, and the like).

Training to successfully execute stability and support operations requires a certain mindset. As soon as a unit finds out it will be involved in such a mission, the leaders must begin developing that mental readiness. The more time a unit can spend going over ROEs and conducting STXs, the better.

Commanders and leaders will recog-

nize the training principles of this kind of training from traditional METL training. The ideas and characteristics are similar, but the situations are quite different. Trainers must always go back to the goal of STX training, which is empowering our individual soldiers with the ability to think under the stresses of stability and support operations, the tenacity to react to the difficult situations it presents, and the initiative to meet mission requirements while sustaining the force.

The missions of the future may well be more diverse and demanding than ever before, but—with the training that situational training exercises can provide—the U.S. Army will be ready to deploy, do the job right the first time, and return home.

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Field Trains and the BSA

What Each Should Expect from the Other

MAJOR SCOTT T. GLASS

Most battalion task forces operate their field trains out of the brigade support area (BSA). The BSA, which is the base of operations for the forward support battalion (FSB), is designed to afford the best mix of rear area defense and brigade maneuver task force sustainment. Although some field trains commanders see problems with this arrangement, I believe that view is based on a misunderstanding of what the field trains owe the BSA and

what they are entitled to expect in return.

Pushing critical support from the BSA forward to a maneuver task force is demanding, even under the best of circumstances; it is further complicated by terrain, weather, enemy attacks, or nuclear, biological, chemical (NBC) operations. In the middle of this tough situation is a maneuver battalion headquarters and headquarters company (HHC) commander who is often being pulled in sev-

eral different directions at once.

His task force commander and staff expect him to push combat service support (CSS) forward quickly. The FSB commander, being responsible for BSA security and staff, also expects the field trains commander to participate fully in rear area defense. The HHC's own task force commander may or may not fully support the field trains' participation in rear defense operations.

Although there is no set way to perform this critical juggling act, both missions can be carried out successfully with adequate planning, advance preparation, and communication. The keys to success are understanding requirements, maintaining effective communications with the FSB/BSA, and practice.

The requirements can be found in Field Manual (FM) 63-20, *Forward Support Battalion*, or FM 63-1, *Support Battalion and Squadrons, Separate Brigades and Armored Cavalry Regiment*. These references spell out BSA doctrine, and knowing the doctrine gives the HHC commander an excellent basis for knowing what he can expect and what is expected of him.

For complete understanding of the requirements and success in the BSA, an HHC commander absolutely must have an up-to-date edition of the FSB's tactical SOP. From this SOP, he can extract reports and coordinations for which he is responsible to the BSA. He can then build a timeline in his field trains SOP for each requirement.

A field trains SOP should outline a set of priority of work and essential coordinating actions; this SOP and the BSA tactical SOP must agree. If they don't, any conflicts must be worked out with the BSA staff.

For example, the field trains SOP may set a different minimum time period for connecting communication wire with the BSA command post than that outlined in the BSA tactical SOP. The field trains commander should work with the BSA staff to ensure that his SOP priority of work dovetails with his requirement timeline.

What do the FSB and BSA expect from the field trains? Exact requirements vary from unit to unit, but as a general rule, the FSB/BSA staff expects the following:

Attend a daily BSA update meeting. If the field trains commander cannot attend, a soldier with decision-making ability must be designated to go in his place. This meeting is simply too valuable to miss; this is where most of the information the BSA owes to the field trains is disseminated.

Occupy, secure, and defend designated terrain in the BSA defense

scheme. Part of this requirement will be tying in with units left and right, 24-hour security, maintaining NBC alarms, emplacing crew-served weapons, digging fighting positions, and keeping a reaction force. Patrols and observation posts (OPs) will probably be a part as well. Tactical SOPs contain specific details.

Observe pre-planned field artillery targets in the assigned area.

Maintain communications with the BSA at all times. No FSB/BSA will accept failed communications with a field trains command post.

Send the required reports at designated times. These can range from logistical updates to such defense-oriented data as sector sketches.

Pass applicable intelligence and defense data immediately to the BSA tactical operations center (TOC). This information may come from a variety of sources—OPs, patrols, and debriefs of returning logistics drivers.

Relocate to a new BSA as part of the BSA movement plan. This includes moving in accordance with a published timeline.

On the surface, these steps may sound like distractions that keep field trains from building logistical packages (LOGPACs)

BSA payback comes in the form of survivability and defense assistance that no field trains operating outside the BSA could provide for itself or expect from its parent battalion.

to send forward. But they are all necessary to the security of the supplies.

In exchange for these necessary actions, the BSA owes the field trains a considerable amount in return. This payback comes as survivability and defense assistance that no field trains operating outside the BSA could either provide for itself or expect from its parent battalion.

The tactical SOP outlines specific assistance with movement, survivability, and defense plans that the FSB/BSA TOC must provide to each field trains com-

mander. If this assistance is not provided routinely, a field trains commander should ask for it and be firm about it. After all, the tactical SOP probably says he is entitled to it.

Again, information on the amount and the quality of assistance varies from one unit to another. Generally, however, the BSA owes the field trains the following information and actions:

Area of operations. The BSA staff assigns each tenant unit terrain with left and right limits to secure and from which to conduct CSS operations. Normally, the brigade and FSB staffs select a BSA site that can support the battalion task forces equally. Field trains commanders must be told their area in advance of BSA displacements so they can reconnoiter the new site. Field trains commanders, ideally, should have a significant amount of input on site selection, particularly when the new location is a great distance from the task forces.

Operations orders (OPORDs). Field trains should receive timely copies of each OPORD the BSA produces, especially when the BSA is due to displace. These should include graphic overlays.

Field artillery targeting plan. The BSA gets a limited number of pre-planned targets. The BSA S-3 assigns the targets to units fronting key terrain for observation and calls for fire.

NBC operations. Field trains receive NBC strike and contamination intelligence from the BSA, and being included in any decontamination operations is of paramount importance. Each field trains should be assigned a decontamination priority in accordance with its parent battalion's mission.

Daily intelligence updates. The BSA S-2 keeps the trains commanders aware of the threat in the rear area to help prevent enemy interdiction of task force LOGPACs.

Obstacle and engineer support plan. If a tenant unit is assigned a high-speed avenue of approach in its area of operations, the BSA must plan obstacles on it. The BSA coordinates and assigns priority to engineer support for digging countermobility obstacles and survivability positions.

Reaction force assistance. If a ten-

ant unit is attacked, the BSA reaction force will assist if needed.

Enemy air threat early warning and air defense artillery. The BSA is tied into the early warning net for enemy aircraft and must send this information quickly to tenant units. The BSA also coordinates and prioritizes air coverage from Stinger missile teams.

Use of communications systems. If a field trains does not have access to mobile subscriber equipment (MSE), it can make some use of the terminal at the BSA TOC. This also applies to tactical fax machines.

Attack helicopter assets. If the BSA is threatened, it can request attack helicopters from supporting aviation units or the brigade reserve. A field trains operating alone would have little chance of being granted this request.

Few of these services or advantages are readily available to a field trains from its parent task force in similar quality or quantity.

BSA CSS Advantages

Being in the BSA gives tenant units several advantages that improve the field trains' ability to sustain their parent task forces:

Heavy lift assets. If the supported brigade has dedicated heavy helicopter assets, the BSA is most likely the focal point for their pick-ups. Field trains commanders in the BSA are well placed to assist in lifting critical Class III and V supplies forward.

Direct access to bulk Class III and V supplies. Locating near the Class III and V stocks required for task force sustainment enables field trains to draw them and meet emergency needs more responsively. Proximity to these stocks cuts down on the support platoon's travel time. A field trains operating alone would have to go back to the stocks, draw them, and then move forward again.

Limited CSS blackouts. If a task force field trains operates outside the BSA, it may have to move frequently to preserve concealment and security. During these moves, sustaining the task force is a difficult task that may be interrupted altogether. The BSA provides some stability for field trains and helps prevent or

limit CSS blackouts.

Proximity to vehicle and personnel casualties. A field trains commander operating as a part of the BSA can quickly respond to casualties and vehicles evacuated to the BSA for treatment or repair. Quick feedback can then be sent back to the parent task force.

Convoy security. The BSA is responsible for coordinating security for the CSS moving forward over the main supply routes. BSA field trains receive intelligence and military police assets to help keep LOGPACs secure during movement.

Base security. When LOGPACs move forward, only a few soldiers remain in

Field trains commanders, ideally, should have a significant amount of input on site selection, particularly when the new location is a great distance from their task forces.

the field trains site. If this site is in the BSA, it can count on any defensive assistance needed.

The daily BSA meeting is the mechanism by which all this information is disseminated and essential coordination is executed, and the field trains commander must be there to receive it.

What happens if the information and actions from the BSA are not satisfactory to the field trains commander? What if he needs some help with his defensive tasks? What if the timeline conflicts with his mission requirements? Such things can happen. This is where the open communications channels and mutual respect developed during prior training events with the FSB staff will pay big dividends.

Training Events

Since so much information and coordination are required, practice is necessary to make a winning BSA team out of several task force field trains. Command post exercises (CPXs), field training exercises (FTXs), and officer professional development sessions all provide opportunities for practice.

Whenever the FSB/BSA is included in a brigade or division level CPX, the field trains commanders can participate with a leadership cell. As a minimum, the cell should be made up of the field trains commander, the XO, the first sergeant, and two communications specialists. The cell should use the wire, FM radio, and MSE equipment it would be expected to use during wartime.

Unfortunately, field trains rarely participate with the FSB during CPXs, and this is a lost opportunity. These exercises are prime events in which to learn the tactical SOP, familiarize all personnel with reports and information, and give the FSB staff some combat arms insight. If a field trains commander is new and has yet to deploy with the BSA, participating in a CPX is an excellent way to get acclimated.

Entire field trains cannot always deploy to the field when the BSA does. Although the goal should be to exercise the FSB-field trains link every time, on rare occasions, training calendar conflicts prevent it.

If the supporting BSA is deploying, however, and your maneuver battalion is not, a field trains commander should consider sending a group similar to the CPX cell. Members of this group can improve their grasp of the tactical SOP, replicate tactical movements, and walk through the occupation of a BSA. Even though only part of the field trains is present, the BSA becomes used to dealing with each as an entity.

Most FTXs eventually get around to having the field trains operate out of the BSA, but some of the training value is lost. The following are two ways to increase the amount of training time:

Move under FSB/BSA control to the initial BSA instead of meeting them later. This method entitles the field trains to a developed BSA defense and occupation plan from the FSB staff before movement.

Keep the field trains with the BSA until task force elements go back pure and the field trains revert to battalion control. The longer the training with the FSB/BSA staff, the more systems can be practiced.

Even when the deployment is over, the

job is not done. Field trains commanders can benefit from attending the FSB/BSA after-action reviews (AARs), although many fail to attend. Granted, HHC commanders are always busy, but AARs produce lessons learned, and the BSA/FSB always benefits from a field trains commander's input during an AAR.

It is extremely rare for field trains commanders to be included in FSB/BSA leader professional development programs. A field trains commander who hasn't been invited should ask the FSB S-3 for invitations to events concerning

BSA operations. Although not all of the scheduled topics will apply, most of them will benefit from his attendance and input. The HHC XO and other field trains leaders will also benefit from attending.

The goal of the FSB commander is to provide responsive CSS to sustain fighting task forces. This includes defending CSS assets when necessary, which can be done only with the participation of the field trains. If field trains leaders can build productive training relationships with the BSA and FSB staff, these relationships will only increase the BSA's

inherent CSS and security advantages. As a result, the task forces receive the combat service support they must have to fight and win.

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The Platoon Drill Attack

Is It a Drill or Not?

CAPTAIN DAVID M. TOCZEK

Looking forward to the 21st Century, the U.S. Army has begun to consider how to modify its organization, doctrine, and tactics to better face future threats. At least one task force has laid the groundwork for restructuring infantry units from the fire team to battalion level. When organizations change, the tactics that they will employ usually change as well.

One such document under scrutiny is the April 1992 edition of Field Manual (FM) 7-8, *Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad*. Specifically, many question the validity of Chapter 4, Battle Drills, and one drill in particular: Battle Drill 1, Platoon Attack. By examining the battle drill's definition, we will see that the platoon attack is, in fact, a battle drill. More important, even if it were not a battle drill, it should be kept in FM 7-8 as a guide for platoon leaders training their platoons to maneuver in contact.

As defined in FM 25-101, *Battle Focused Training*, a battle drill is "a collective action rapidly executed without applying a deliberate decision-making pro-

cess." A battle drill has the following characteristics:

- Requires minimal leader orders to accomplish and is standard throughout the Army.
- Requires sequential actions that are vital to success in combat or critical to preserving life.
- Applies to platoon-sized units or smaller.
- Involves trained responses to enemy actions or leaders' orders.
- Represents mental steps followed for offensive and defensive actions in training and combat.

In short, a battle drill allows a platoon or smaller unit to execute collective and individual actions with a minimum of leader decisions and directives.

Although this definition is accepted by all doctrinal manuals, it is not without fault. A troublesome qualifier in this definition is the term "deliberate decision-making process." What exactly characterizes a "deliberate" decision-making process? During any battle drill, the

leader must conduct an estimate of the situation, even if it is abbreviated. For example, when conducting Battle Drill 5, Knock Out Bunkers, a squad leader must answer several questions, including the following:

- How many bunkers are there? What is the enemy's strength?
- Can I properly suppress with my lead fire team? Do I need to move it to a better position?
- Which route should I take with the assault element? Will the terrain cover my movement? Will I mask my support element's fire?
- When I'm done, will I have enough personnel to continue the mission?

These basic questions cover the enemy, terrain, and troops portions of METT-T (mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time). To conduct the drill, the squad leader must develop courses of action, wargame them, compare them, and decide how he will mass his combat power. If we define a "deliberate decision-making process as involving even an abbre-