

who knows how to make radios work, who understands recovery techniques; this is the information to use in task organizing for missions.

A big lesson we learned is that if you plan for the worst course of action, you will rarely be surprised or unprepared. Ensure that every element has the equipment, expertise, and training to deal with

accidents. Also remember that vehicle recovery is dangerous, and send the best team you can and prevent disaster.

Our company deployment to Macedonia was a challenge and a rewarding experience as well. The entire chain of command worked hard before and during the mission on these areas to ensure mission success and to meet every infan-

try commander's major responsibility to his leaders and his soldiers in peacekeeping operations—suffer no casualties.

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Urban Patrolling Experiences in Haiti

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When our battalion of the 10th Mountain Division deployed to Haiti to participate in Operation *Uphold Democracy*, we all knew what our mission was: to provide a stable and secure environment in which ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide could safely return to the country and reestablish a democratic government. But the nature of the tasks we would encounter on the island was vague and undefined. As platoon leaders in that operation, we would like to share some of the unique characteristics of patrolling in an urban environment.

When we first arrived in Haiti, our role as a country-wide reserve was fairly simple. If something went wrong, anywhere, we were ready to respond. Instead of waiting for things to happen, we conducted operations that would support the overall mission of establishing a safe and secure environment. One of these activities was to conduct patrols in and around the city of Port-au-Prince.

Patrolling the streets served several purposes. The most apparent of these were providing security for the populace, conducting reconnaissance, gathering intelligence, confirming named areas of interest (NAIs), and demonstrating a U.S.

presence in selected areas of the city.

During the first few weeks, we were sent out to the villages and slums to show the people that we were there to assist in the establishment of a new government. Their response to us ranged from neutral to positive. (On rare occasions, we ran into a person or group that was against the United States, and was quite vocal about it.) The overall positive interaction with the Haitian civilians, however, laid the foundation for a spirit of cooperation that would be the cornerstone of our intelligence gathering efforts.

The patrols created an atmosphere of trust just because we were Americans and were there to help. Many of the locals would openly approach the patrols and begin to divulge information about the *Attaches* (hired thugs who would commit random or planned acts of violence against the people), locations of headquarters of FRAPH (the political and paramilitary group of the party in power), and the locations of possible weapon caches.

A typical scenario would go like this: The patrol would stop, security would be established, and the interpreter would walk up to a group of Haitians and begin

to ask questions about the area. Invariably, someone would come forward and provide a lead. At this point, the interpreter and the platoon leader would further question the group, using a sort of questionnaire that was developed by the intelligence people. The answers given enabled the platoon leader to make an on-site decision whether or not the lead was worth pursuing. Right there, we would set up a meeting between the Haitian source of information and the counterintelligence team and inform higher headquarters.

The Haitians were motivated to do this for several reasons: There were significant monetary rewards for recovered weapons (up to \$800 for machineguns); and they would be helping rid their country of the perpetrators and their weapons that had created the current situations. Occasionally, some dubious types would give misleading information in an attempt to get back at someone for personal reasons. All of these "informants" would be processed through the counterintelligence teams, which would evaluate the validity of the information. Ultimately, this information would either prove non-critical or prove accurate, in which case

a cordon and search mission would take place. The patrols would also collect information on the disposition of the population and classify the roads and terrain for vehicular travel. The S-2 would template all this data for use in current and future operations. The result of our patrolling efforts was a noticeable decline in the level of crime and violence throughout the city.

Our linguists were our greatest asset and primary link to the people. Those attached to our company were all untrained as infantrymen but were nevertheless expected to act as such. The importance of having someone fluent in the native language cannot be overstated. If we could communicate on the streets, we became credible to the people. Because there were never enough linguists, we had to ensure that they were on the patrols, which had the highest probability of getting information. This was during the day and early evening when the markets and streets were full of people. Without them, our ability to exploit the assigned sector would have been significantly degraded.

Navigating in and around the city was a task that ranged from being extremely simple to comically difficult. Because of the potential hostility in certain areas, we had to know our precise location at all times. The combination of poorly updated maps and an eroding street system amplified the challenge of knowing where we were all the time.

The conditions of the patrol (day or night, mounted or dismounted) were significant factors, but were made easier by some technological wizardry and the 65 or so maps that were issued before we deployed.

The maps varied in size, and we had maps of the city that ranged from 1:50,000-scale all the way down to 1:12,500. Although a map as detailed as 1:12,500 should provide tremendous coverage and definition, in many cases they proved inadequate. The new precise lightweight GPS (global positioning system) receivers we were issued enabled us to confirm grid locations and navigate by putting in way points before moving out of the base camp. While this device could provide a 10-digit grid coordinate, it has a margin of error of up to 150

meters. This is where we had to rely on training and skill to navigate accurately.

The selected route the patrol was on also affected navigation. When moving in the slums and outlying areas, what appeared to be a well-traveled two-lane road on the map often turned out to be a dirt path wide enough for a bicycle and a goat to pass comfortably, or it was not there at all.

One technique was to have the interpreter talk with the civilians to confirm unmarked streets. Although we could do this just about anywhere (there were always onlookers), the locals often recognized streets by a name that neither corresponded with the map nor made any directional sense whatsoever. If we were going into unfamiliar territory for a night patrol, we would try to send out a reconnaissance to pinpoint some of the prominent terrain features in the area. We also used the combination of mounted and

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dismounted patrols to cover the serviceable roads with the trucks while the foot patrol worked in the less developed areas. After a while, we adapted our navigational techniques to this MOUT environment by accepting the handicap and using all our assets to negotiate the mazes in which we often found ourselves.

The keys to a successful patrol in this urban environment were solid planning, platoon standing operating procedures, and accurate navigation. The time of the patrol, whether it was mounted or dismounted, the route, the size of the patrol, and contingency plans were all critical elements to consider before moving out. Nothing was more frustrating than missing a start point time because our vehicles were suddenly committed to another mission. Last-minute follow-up became a normal part of the pre-combat inspection checklist.

Time became a driving factor in the

conduct of our patrols, and we made a tremendous effort to avoid creating any patterns. Line companies usually performed two per day, one during daylight hours and one during hours of limited visibility. If the situation dictated, the number of patrols was increased. For example, a few days before the arrival of President Aristide, our company team located itself at the ministries complex adjacent to the National Palace. We tried to saturate the area with patrols at all hours of the day to thwart any possible violence from the growing crowds that began gravitating toward the palace.

After patrolling in the city, we could predict the type of activity we would observe at different hours of the day. Contrary to popular belief, many of the heinous acts of violence did not occur at night. The *Attaches* seemed to carry out their crimes during the daytime when large groups of Haitians gathered at the markets or for political rallies. As people became more comfortable with a U.S. armed presence, they began to venture out later in the evenings. From 0500 to 1300, the city was extremely busy, and during the hottest part of the day (around 1400), it slowed down a bit. This was a particularly unpleasant time to patrol in full combat gear. From 1800 to 2400, many people were still conducting business in the more concentrated areas of the city.

The neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince were a diverse mixture of shanties on dirt roads and middle-class homes with paved streets that were nice by any standard. Along with the citizens, the Haitian streets were filled with homeless dogs, pigs, cows, chickens, goats, and an occasional donkey. Moving undetected at night was nearly impossible in the villages as every dog within a quarter mile would start to howl as soon as we set foot in the area. Along with the animal life, people sleeping in the streets and all-night parties were all sights, sounds, and smells that we became accustomed to when patrolling at night.

We effectively used either mounted or dismounted patrols or a combination. Our patrols began almost exclusively on foot, using several different techniques. Generally, each patrol consisted of two squads with the headquarters section and

the platoon leader with his radiotelephone operator. Once the company commander gave us the patrol overlay, we would decide how to employ the two squads to cover our assigned area most effectively.

At times, we would stagger the start time by 15 or 30 minutes, and sometimes we would move two squads together. Another technique was to run one squad in one direction and the other on a counter-route. We did this for several reasons: First, it would be more difficult for someone to detect a pattern, simply because there was none. Second, each SP and movement technique had its own advantages. The common denominator for these techniques was backup. There was always at least one squad nearby for immediate response in case a squad made contact. Additionally, there was an initial ready platoon at the airport. It was convenient having our own battalion as the joint task force quick-reaction force. We always knew that if a patrol ran into trouble and needed support, the battalion was already on alert and ready to roll.

Movement formations on foot patrols were strictly dictated by the size and condition of roadways, which ranged from major two-lane roads to the labyrinth of goat paths that weaved through the slums of the city. Another problem that affected patrols during the day were the crowds, which were a problem for the first month or so of our deployment. Curiosity seekers would mass in numbers up to a few hundred. Their presence would channel the element into the middle of the street and drive it into a file. Command and control became a factor when the squad could not remain dispersed, since the greatest threats we faced were snipers and possible grenade attacks.

Initially, mounted patrols were introduced for the rifle companies to drop us off deeper into the city to increase our range. When we first began using vehicles, they would pick up the patrol and either drop it off at the SP and return to base camp or pick up the patrol at the end of its route. The use of HMMWVs (high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles) instead of 5-ton trucks was a marked advantage simply because of maneuverability.

As our area of operation (AO) ex-

panded to the north and south of the airport, we began using vehicles strictly for mounted patrols. The advantages and disadvantages of mounted patrolling are obvious: Vehicles can move quickly for extended distances, but they make quite a bit of noise and quickly alert would-be aggressors to our presence; and a group of soldiers in the back of a vehicle makes an inviting target. But the vehicles did enable us to put a lot of soldiers quickly into the outer fringes of the city.

Adapting our SOPs to the vehicles took little time, and certain actions were so reflexive that they almost seemed like battle drills. An example of this was that whenever the vehicles stopped for at least one minute, we would dismount and establish a perimeter. Such simple things as this paid dividends over time: It con-

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ditioned the Haitians to stay away from the HMMWVs, thus reducing the opportunity of an attack, and it kept the panhandlers away as well.

Finally, we experimented with a combination of both mounted and dismounted patrols. This usually consisted of one squad plus M60 machinegun teams for security on the vehicles and one or two squads moving on foot. At the completion of a patrol, the dismounts would be picked up by the vehicles and returned to base camp. This proved quite successful so long as communications were maintained.

We were given quite a bit of freedom in selecting routes for our patrols. The S-2 told us the area in which we would be operating and for the most part allowed the company commander and platoon leaders to develop the route. We would be given specific NAIs and potential targets on a map, and we would develop the overlay in an attempt to cover as many NAIs as possible. If we were out on a patrol and found a location that was identified as a possible weapons cache, we could plan another patrol later to continue

our presence in the AO.

One example of this was a police company (one of the primary instigators of the coup that had ousted President Aristide) located about four kilometers southeast of the airport. Another was a large warehouse about one and one-half kilometers south of the airport. We intentionally included these areas in the patrol plan, as much to send a message as to observe activity.

The length of routes increased as we became more familiar with our AO and acclimated to temperatures in the high 90s. A six-kilometer movement through the hills of Port-au-Prince at three o'clock in the afternoon with full combat gear was still uncomfortable.

The size of patrols and the contingency plans were closely related. A general rule was that any patrol that went out the gate was composed of at least two squads, and whether they moved together or separately was left to the platoon leader's discretion. As a contingency plan, one squad remained at the camp with the squad leader, who had been completely briefed and monitored the radio and tracked the patrol. His squad was dedicated to providing support for the front line ambulance if it needed to roll out to pick up a wounded soldier.

Although the intricacies of this type of patrolling are not addressed in any of our field manuals, we were able to adapt quickly because of the foundation that had been laid during pre-deployment training. Assimilating conventional methods with an unconventional approach enabled us to accomplish our daily missions and successfully contribute to the massive U.S. military effort in Haiti.

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