

Field Artillery

A Professional Bulletin for Redlegs

May-August 2002

**RESPECT
LOYALTY
HONOR
DUTY**

**In this
combined
edition:**

- The FA NCO**
- The FA in History**

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May-August 2002

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FA *Essential* to Current and Future Force Success

The Field Artillery is absolutely essential today to the success of our joint forces and the Army's combined arms team—and will continue to be in the future. Some have confused discussions about the viability of any particular weapons system with established requirements for indirect fires or the future relevancy of Field Artillery. The requirement for indirect fires is growing, and the relevancy of the Field Artillery is on the rise.

In the future, the Field Artillery, fully integrated with joint fires and all other effects-producing systems, will be *more* critical to the success of land forces in high-intensity conflict than ever before. This message is clear and being articulated repeatedly by our most senior civilian and military leadership in an unprecedented way.

Army studies, analyses and war games have informed us of the continuing need for land-based indirect fires and reinforced that a mix of mortar, cannon, rocket and missile fires will be required to meet the fire support needs of the force.

Window into the Future. How the Army wants its transformed force to operate is clear. The Army's White Paper "Concepts for the Objective Force" states, "Operations will be characterized by developing situations out of contact; maneuvering to positions of advantage; engaging enemy forces beyond the range of their weapons; destroying them with precision fires; and, as required, by tactical assault at times and places of our choosing."

This concept was the basis of the recently concluded Army Transformation War Game (ATWG) at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. It provided valuable insights that reinforce the importance of the Field Artillery and the employment of land-based indirect fires. In the War Game, the transformed force faced the full spectrum of operational

requirements: high-intensity conflict, peace support operations and stability operations/deterrence. The force conducted these operations in the full range of environmental and terrain conditions, including mountainous, complex, urban, open-rolling and triple-canopy jungle.

The following are War Game observations applicable to the Field Artillery.

- In any environment, we must have a wide range of joint and Army indirect fire capabilities to engage targets successfully and be responsive to any echelon.

- Shaping operations will be continuous, will be conducted throughout the nonlinear battlespace, will require the sustained commitment of air- and land-based fires and will not end until the conflict is terminated.

- Removing the adversary's counter-strike capabilities early—his missiles/rockets, air power and air defenses—is absolutely imperative to ensure our successful access to the areas in which we must operate.

- Joint operations require interdependence among the services. The capability to fully integrate joint and land-based indirect fires is essential to engage the right targets with the right capabilities at the right time.

- We need a broader spectrum of non-lethal effects to influence outcomes across the full spectrum of operations.

- Our command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C⁴ISR) systems, including sensors, must function in all environments and be networked. To that end, the Networked Fires architecture must be an inherent part of the Army's battle command system.

- Integrated versus deconflicted airspace must be the norm. We must enable all airspace users—not restrict them in time or space. This requirement facilitates the deconfliction of the trajectories of our munitions and the loiter attack capabilities we will field.



- Finally, the future force needs an organizational element at every echelon that enables execution-centric, horizontally integrated fires and effects.

These insights harken back to immutable principles of land warfare. Land forces are an essential component of our armed services and will remain the primary means by which enemy armies are defeated and terrain is controlled. Land forces employ two primary military means to conduct warfare: fires and maneuver. Each complements the other.

Fires include joint air/sea- and land-based fires. Joint air/sea- and land-based fires, again, are complementary and fill mutually supporting roles essential to the successful prosecution of warfare. Land-based fires include the capabilities of systems that engage targets by direct and indirect means.

Our doctrine is based on these principles. *FM 3.0, Operations* states that "Firepower provides the destructive force essential to overcoming the enemy's ability and will to fight." (Paragraph 4-11)

Our leaders understand the critical role of firepower in land warfare—including artillery firepower. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul D. Wolfowitz said, "Land warfare will continue to be a critical part of our defense strategy. And there's a vital role for accurate artillery in establishing battlefield dominance.... The need for artillery has definitely not gone away. We need precise fires." (Department of Defense News Briefing, 8 May)



Land-based operational fires will come from NetFires, FCS-NLOS and HIMARS, the latter shown here firing.

Future Indirect Fires. Indirect fires, especially those provided by the Field Artillery, will be increasingly important to warfare in the future. We will provide highly lethal and responsive operational and tactical fires.

Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White said, "... the requirement for indirect fire systems to support the United States Army ... across the full spectrum of conflict, 24/7, all weather, tactical, operational ranges, precise and mass targets, continues. And that requirement is valid and has to be met." (News Briefing, 8 May)

Our future operational fires will be long-range and precise to enable the initial engagement of systems—such as long-range ballistic missiles employed to deny us access to the enemy—and to support subsequent operational maneuver by offensive counterstrike and shaping operations.

We also will use land-based indirect fires to attack sophisticated enemy air defenses to open up protected air corridors for a precision air campaign in depth. These operational fires will be delivered from deployable artillery systems and complement the effects provided by joint systems, such as manned aircraft, naval cruise missiles and long-range naval gunfire.

Land-based operational fires will come from NetFires, the future combat system-non-line-of-sight (FCS-NLOS) and the high-mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS) firing precision Army tactical missiles and rockets.

By doctrine, our tactical fires are to "destroy or neutralize enemy forces, suppress enemy fires, and disrupt en-

emy movement." (FM 3.0, Paragraph 4-15) We will continue to use the effects of indirect fires before forces are joined in order to destroy, dislocate, demoralize and disorganize our adversaries. We will seek to create an advantage for our maneuver forces and reduce or eliminate any advantages our adversaries might have. Indirect fires will isolate the battlefield, enable maneuver forces to retain freedom of action and posture those forces to enter close combat at a significant advantage.

The Field Artillery's enduring mission of close support for maneuver will create the conditions for decisive close combat. In making it possible for maneuver to close with the enemy, land-based indirect fire tasks will include preparatory fires, area fires (including suppression and obscuration), counterbattery, danger close and final protective fires. With future technologies, we potentially will be able to contribute a wide range of nonlethal effects to blind or disable the enemy, emplace unattended ground sensors or launch tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (TUAVs).

Our experience and analyses inform us that a combination of mortar, cannon, rocket and missile fires will be required to accomplish these tactical fires tasks.

Land-based indirect fires combined with joint fires are the critical elements of additional combat power the joint force commander can apply. They must be available to ensure success in the most critical stages of engagements when forces are joined with the enemy.

The FA and Networked Fires. Today, the Field Artillery clearly under-

stands and accepts its role as the integrating agent to synchronize indirect fires with maneuver. Fires and effects integration will become even more critical to the transformed force.

The Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) recently designated the Field Artillery Center at Fort Sill the lead for developing our Army's procedures for fires and effects integration and designing the architecture for Networked Fires for our Objective Force. Fort Sill is in the process of organizing an Enhanced Battle Lab to support fires and effects integration.

The concept of Networked Fires is to provide near-real-time integration of lethal and nonlethal effects, including complementary access to and support of joint sensors and fires capabilities. The intent is to fully access and integrate relevant Army, joint, multinational and interagency sensors, delivery systems and information. This will enable commanders at every echelon to have responsive, dynamic control over the application of effects and reach-back access to additional support systems. Networked Fires will provide optimal attack solutions by integrating Army, joint and multinational lethal and nonlethal systems with relevant sensors for attack and post-attack assessment.

Conclusion. The current and future forces of the Army will remain dependent on indirect fires as a critical component of combat power. Army doctrine, conceptual work and extensive analyses all reinforce that land-based indirect fires are essential today and for as far as we can project into the future.

In fact, as we move into the future, the transforming force will conduct tactical assaults only when required—as stated in the Objective Force White Paper.

I conclude with the words of our Chief of Staff of the Army General Eric K. Shinseki who could not have articulated the requirement for indirect fires more clearly. He said, "The Army's need for organic fires requires responsive, immediate, 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week, accurate support in all weather and terrain, capable of reengaging fleeting targets, and sustainable for as long as they are required. These indirect fire capabilities are what we must provide to our Soldiers as they fight to win the close battle." (Opening Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 16 May)

The Field Artillery has a future, one that's vital to our Army's future.

Sergeant Major of the Army Jack L. Tilley
Army Staff at the Pentagon

NCOs, Stay in Your Lane— the Army Needs You There

By Patricia Slayden Hollis

Q *NCOs play what role and have what responsibilities in the Transformation of the Army?*

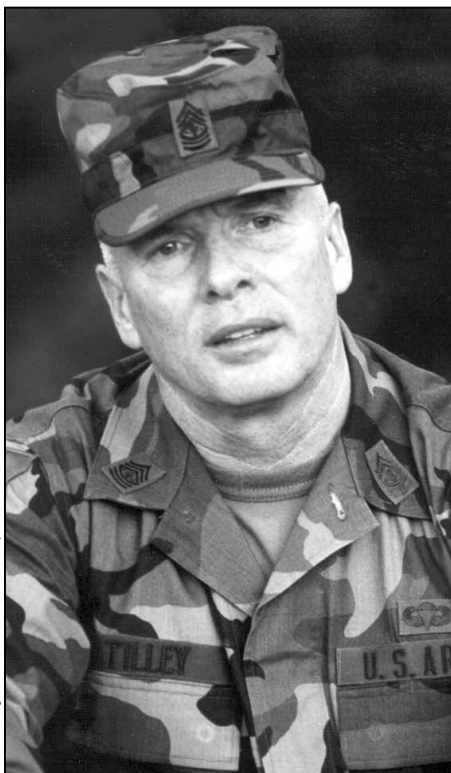
A The Army's Transformation encompasses far more than just the formation of the IBCT [initial brigade combat team] at Fort Lewis, Washington. The Army's Transformation involves the entire officer, NCO and warrant officer education systems, the integration of the Army and Secretary of the Army staffs—just about every aspect of the Army.

But as far as the NCOs down in the units are concerned, they will have the same role and responsibilities in the transformed Army. The equipment and unit organization might change and technology will be more advanced, but they still must focus on the basics and stay focused on their jobs.

As a sergeant in the Army, I've worked with seven different tanks. That didn't change my leadership style, techniques of developing people or how I fulfilled my responsibilities to soldiers and the unit—just my equipment changed. Now education-wise, some things may change, but that is based on technology.

The NCO needs to “stay in his lane.” He must understand the basics of soldiering, *know* his MOS [military occupational specialty]; lead, counsel and train his soldiers; enforce all standards; and live the Army values—be the best at what he does. In war, there is no “Second Place” for the NCO and his soldiers. That's the NCO's focus during transformation.

Q *The Army education system for officers, NCOs and warrant officers is transforming with the Chief of Staff's new Leader Development Campaign Plan. Although the redesign of the NCOES is not final, why are we redesigning NCOES and what can you tell us about the redesign?*



SMA Tilley listens to a soldier's question.

A We surveyed some 34,000 NCOs about the NCOES and what we needed to improve to better develop NCOs. Late this spring, we will finalize the plan and release the details of the redesign.

The NCOES that I went through was developed in the mid-1970s, so it's time to transform our education system. We are taking a look at all NCOES courses and revamping them to ensure that what the NCO needs to know is in the right course at the right time in his career.

Basically, we are looking at distance learning for the common core information, which would allow soldiers to stay in their units longer. So for courses like BNCOC [basic NCO course] and ANCOC [advanced NCO course], students would learn the common core subjects via distance learning before they came to the resident courses.

We are *not* adding any distance learning to PLDC [primary leadership development course]. Young soldiers need to come on site and interact with each other and their instructors to learn leadership skills.

But we are adding some financial planning to PLDC, so our future leaders can manage their finances and invest for the future. In BNCOC and ANCOC, we are going to educate NCOs about their retirement benefits—let them know what they can expect before they retire.

We are slipping the Sergeants Major Academy to earlier in an NCO's career. Right now, the average for attendance is more than 20 years of service. We want to bring that down to about 17 years. NCOs need to know some things earlier in their careers. That's the same reason we are taking some information in the Battle Staff and First Sergeant Courses and moving it down into BNCOC and ANCOC.

One of the things people don't realize is the civilian education level of the NCO Corps has gone up considerably. About 20 years ago, the average education level was a high school diploma. Today, the average education level of the NCO is probably at least an associate's degree...many have more education. A degree is not a requirement, but because of the national emphasis on education, NCOs today are more highly educated.

So, we are developing the Army University Access Online. This is a \$500,000,000 program that gives soldiers laptops and printers for their Army distance learning requirements and to go to college. In a few years, the Army will start issuing laptops and printers to soldiers.

Right now, we have about 125,000 soldiers forward deployed in Korea, Germany and other places. We have another 75,000 soldiers deployed in operations in places such as Kosovo,

Bosnia, Macedonia, even Afghanistan. This Army University Access Online program will ensure soldiers “on the ground” have the equipment they need to complete the distance learning requirements for their NCOES courses in a timely manner and continue their college education from wherever they are.

Overall, we are increasing distance learning requirements. But we need to be careful not to overload the soldier—not to overload the unit that has to give him duty time to complete distance learning requirements. The Chief of Staff of the Army agrees we have to strike a balance of distance learning and resident instruction.

Q *Do you see the Army combining or partially combining OES and NCOES course POIs [programs of instruction] wherever possible?*

A There’s been a lot of discussion about that, and I’m not sure that’s a good idea. Our NCO and officer corps are intertwined. Our officers complement NCOs and our NCOs complement officers. The relationship between the two is probably the best I’ve seen in my 33 years in the Army.

But officers and NCOs do different things. So, we don’t want officers and NCOs thinking alike. NCOs must continue to think at the individual task level and officers at the collective task level. Officers plan; sergeants execute. It’s good to come together in some integrated training, but our OES and NCOES need to be different so we both know where our lanes are.

The difference between our Army and the armies of other countries is our NCO Corps—the specific focus of our NCO Corps. You know, right now in Afghanistan and elsewhere, we have great political and military leaders doing a wonderful job, but the sergeant on the ground is making the difference. He is deciding whether or not to kill somebody. Active, Reserve or National Guard, our NCOs are dedicated professionals who prove that daily by making a difference in deployments around the world.

Q *What is your vision of the future soldier—do you see him highly skilled in a specific area with more narrow assignment utilization or more*

a generalist who receives assignment-oriented training—training only as he needs it for his next assignment?

A I favor the multipurpose soldier—he must have general knowledge of his MOS coming out of basic training and AIT [advanced individual training] but be fully trained on the specific equipment he’ll find in his first unit. Each soldier is going to have to do more.

At the same time, I think we have to be very careful not to overload soldiers while making them multipurpose. We need to ensure soldiers can be proficient in their MOS.

We have gone back to the proponents of the various MOS and asked them if their MOS are combined correctly. For example, we took the 11B (Infantryman), 11M (Fighting Vehicle Infantryman) and 11H (Heavy Antiarmor Weapons Infantryman) MOS and consolidated them into one MOS to make the infantryman multipurpose. 11Bs need to know how to fight in light units, operate Bradleys or fire TOWs [tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided missiles].

Now, it’ll take five or so years to work through all the “gigs” of combining these MOS. But the consolidated MOS will give the Army more options for employing 11Bs in different places.

Q *When you consolidate MOS, how does the soldier get the training he needs when he is reassigned to a unit with different equipment?*

A The soldier will be trained on that equipment before he goes to his next unit—called “just-in-time” training. As time goes on, for example, 11Bs will have served in light infantry and then Bradley units, so they will be trained in all aspects of their MOS.

Of course, the consolidated MOS’ ANCOC and BNCOC will incorporate training from the three MOS. The development of the multipurpose 11B will take quite a while.

One issue we were concerned about was the promotion system. Soldiers in the three MOS that now make up the 11B MOS advanced a little quicker in the separate MOS. We had to make sure the advancement for soldiers in the consolidated MOS was Ok before we consolidated those MOS.

We are looking at consolidating some CSS [combat service support] MOS ...medical MOS; some of the supply MOS; the mechanical MOS, maybe those for light-wheeled and heavy-wheeled vehicles; even some of the administrative MOS. But no decisions have been made yet.

Q *When you consolidate MOS and make the soldier multipurpose with just-in-time training, when he gets to the top ranks of his MOS, will he be prepared to train and supervise subordinates? Will he be technically and tactically competent in his MOS that encompasses a broader type and number of skill sets?*

A He’s going to have challenges, but the answer is, “Yes.” The senior NCO’s leadership skills are basic to meeting that challenge.

I’m not trained in every MOS in the Army; I have one MOS—I’m a tanker. And I’ve been a tanker for a long, long time. But that doesn’t mean that I can’t deal with other MOS.

So it’s a leadership challenge—it’s technical too, but it really boils down to the leadership skills the NCO has developed as he has been selected for higher and more demanding positions.

Q *The “Stop Loss” program (not allowing soldiers in selected shortage MOSs to retire or leave the Army) was implemented in conjunction with the War on Terrorism and affects only a few MOS. Do you see the Stop Loss Program expanding?*

A That really depends on the needs of the Army in the War on Terrorism. The Chief of Staff of the Army, Secretary of the Army and Secretary of Defense along with the CINCs [commanders-in-chief] determine exactly what we need to fight terrorism. You notice they did not lock everybody in the Army—just critical MOS that have shortages.

Our Reserve and National Guard soldiers also are working hard on duty for long periods. Eleven thousand National Guardsmen are working airport, installation and other homeland security projects. So, the requirements depend on how the War on Terrorism progresses.

Morale in the Army is good—I mean *really* good. We're fighting for the United States of America.

We just had the best pay raise in 20 years, the Army is getting 29,000 sets of privatized housing by 2007, we are improving billeting for single soldiers and spending billions of dollars on Tricare—it is a good time to be a soldier. The American people watch soldiers in Afghanistan and other places in the world on the television news and are proud of them.

Q Army warrant officer MOS assess new WOs from the NCO Corps vice accessing them directly out of, say, civilian schooling and experience. Some think that takes the most technically qualified people out of the NCO Corps. What's best for the Army?

A I've heard discussions about that—I think the way we're doing it now is best for the Army. I don't have a problem with taking warrant officers out of the NCO Corps.

Some MOS have more limited advancement possibilities, and becoming a warrant officer gives soldiers options, provides another way for NCOs to develop and grow.

Q As the most senior NCO in the Army, what advice would you give ambitious young NCOs who aspire to the most senior NCO positions?

A One—don't *aspire*. You know, I never wanted to be the SMA [Sergeant Major of the Army]. When I was a private, I wanted to be the best private I could be so I could make specialist. Then as a specialist, I worked hard so, maybe, I could become a sergeant. I was never selected in the secondary zone for any promotion—I always was promoted in the primary zone. That's just the way it fell because of promotion slots, allocations and, maybe, because of my performance. But I was always a good soldier.

So my advice is, do your job to the best of your ability and stay in your lane of responsibility. If you are a squad leader, give 200 percent to your squad or team. Your lane of responsibility is where you are at the time...from tank commander to division sergeant major. That's all about training, discipline, motivation,



SMA Jack Tillery shares a few thoughts with members of the 75th Ranger Regiment at Fort Benning, Georgia.

attitude and taking care of soldiers and families.

In Vietnam in 1968, half the unit I was in was killed during the Tet Offensive—A Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry—the 1/4 Cav—in the 1st Infantry Division. Many good officers, NCOs and soldiers died in that surprise attack, fighting outnumbered.

My point is, NCOs must do their jobs to the best of their abilities *everyday*. Because when the surprise offensive comes, it's too late to teach soldiers what to do. Even at a "desk job" at the Pentagon, when a terrorist plane hits the building, it's too late to teach first aid. Don't assume the worst won't happen because it can and does, especially in our business.

If I could change one thing in my career, I'd have spent more time with my family. I've been married for 32 years, and I love my wife—she is absolutely my best friend. But I have been so focused on the Army that I didn't watch my two children grow up.

Would I have been selected for SMA if I had spent more time with my family? To tell you the truth, I don't know, and I'm not sure it matters. If I had spent more time—time that goes by so fast—with my wife and kids, I still would have been a good soldier, a good NCO. So, my final piece of advice to young NCOs is to maintain balance in your

lives—be a dedicated professional, but make time for your families.

Q What message would you like to send Field Artillery NCOs stationed around the world?

A Stay focused and in your lane. Understand this War on Terrorism is not over. We need you and your soldiers to stay prepared to do your jobs in the next fight.



Sergeant Major Jack L. Tilley became the 12th Sergeant Major of the Army on 23 June 2000. In his previous assignment, he was the Command Sergeant Major (CSM) of Central Command, MacDill AFB, Florida. Other CSM assignments include serving at the Army Space and Missile Defense Command, Arlington, Virginia; 194th Armor Brigade, 1st Armored Division in Germany; and 1st Battalion, 10th Cavalry, Fort Knox, Kentucky. In his 33 years in the Army, he has held every key NCO leadership position: tank commander, section leader, drill sergeant, platoon sergeant, senior instructor, operations sergeant, first sergeant and CSM. He is a graduate of Airborne School, Fort Benning, Georgia, and the Master Gunner Course, Fort Knox, Kentucky, among others. He is a combat veteran of Vietnam with the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division.

The Platoon Sergeant and His Lieutenant



Who Does What?

Command Sergeant Major Rodney L. Beck

A sergeant in the Army, if he's a squad leader or tank commander, is a commander just like an officer, no difference whatever. It's just the smallest tactical element.

General William E. DePuy

As Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command
"The Officer/NCO Relationship," *The NCO Journal*, Fall 2001

NCOs, the backbone of the Army, train, lead and take care of soldiers—all soldiers. Rank is irrelevant. NCOs receive their authority from their oath of office, Federal law, rank and Army traditions and regulations.

Battery leaders, literally, are all "officers" as part of the organization called the Army—some are commissioned and some are noncommissioned. Intertwined, the officer and NCO corps share responsibilities for the discipline, morale, wel-

fare, performance and combat readiness of the unit—although at different levels. Because battery NCOs are responsible for soldiers, they have a duty to share their expertise with and help develop their young officers. Likewise, these young officers have obligations to their NCOs and soldiers.

This article outlines expectations for platoon sergeants' training second lieutenants and lieutenants' obligations to their NCOs and soldiers.

What Officers and NCOs Do. The officer commands, establishes policy and manages the Army. He focuses on collective training that leads to accomplishing the mission. Primarily, he is involved with unit-level leadership, management and operations, concentrating on unit effectiveness and readiness. The officer also mentors and coaches his subordinate officers and NCOs.

The officer ensures his subordinate NCOs and soldiers are prepared to function as effective unit members and fight in combat.

The officer focuses on day-to-day operations at a higher level—developing training schedules, acquiring resources for upcoming events, troubleshooting unit challenges, planning and coordinating with the next higher unit and much more.

In contrast, the NCO conducts the daily business of the Army within established policy. He focuses on individual training that leads to mission capability. Primarily, the NCO is involved with individual soldiers and leading the team, concentrating on meeting the standards of performance, training soldiers and providing professional development for his officers and subordinate NCOs. At all times, the NCO coaches and mentors his soldiers, preparing them for combat and developing them for the future responsibilities.



The NCO ensures his soldiers are prepared to function as effective team members and fight in combat.

At the platoon level, the following are some of the daily tasks of the platoon sergeant. He conducts an accountability formation (an in-ranks inspection to ensure soldiers are cleanly shaven and have the proper uniform) at the physical fitness (PT) formation and then another one at the “first work call” formation. He inspects his platoon and marches his soldiers off to conduct police call. He then brings them back into a formation and marches them off to the training site.

During the day, the platoon sergeant may conduct other inspections (i.e., vehicle and equipment); may attend meetings with his lieutenant, other NCOs and (or) the battery commander; and will spend some time counseling soldiers and trying to solve their problems. With the officer’s focus on higher level planning and resourcing, who is best qualified to train the second lieutenant in the day-to-day operations and technical aspects of the platoon? The lieutenant’s platoon sergeant, of course.

Platoon Sergeant’s Training and Developing His Second Lieutenant.

I’ve been wearing the rank of NCO for 24-plus years, and I’ve trained so many soldiers that I can’t count them. And to be honest, some of my easiest times training soldiers were when I trained lieutenants. They are eager to learn, just like a recruit coming into basic combat training (BCT).

The new Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) being developed to replace Officer Basic Courses (will have a Phase II of BOLC at Fort Sill) places more emphasis on young officers’ abilities to lead small units in combat as new graduates. More than ever, they will need the expertise and support of their NCOs.

It is in the unit that the lieutenant learns how to lead the Army’s most valuable and complex resource—the soldier. But the Army does a poor job of training lieutenants in units. At least part of the reason is the confusion about whose “responsibility” it is to train them.

Too often the platoon sergeant hears the battery commander’s infamous statement, “Platoon Sergeant, it is your responsibility to train your platoon leader.” *Not true.* It is the battery commander’s responsibility to train the second lieutenant, to develop his skills and knowledge from the officer’s perspective.

That does not mean the platoon sergeant does not share in the development

of the second lieutenant—in fact he does. It is the platoon sergeant’s duty, as a team player in the battery, to train and develop all of his new soldiers (the second lieutenant included) as much as he can.

The words of Command Sergeant Major John D. Woodward, as the Command Sergeant Major of the 84th Ordnance Battalion in Germany, express the duty clearly: “As a platoon sergeant, you must be constantly aware of your role as a teacher to your platoon leader.... Your task is to convey your knowledge and experience to your *lieutenant* without being condescending or disrespectful.” (Quote taken from the article “My Lieutenant and Me,” *The NCO Journal*, Fall, 2001, Page 10-11.)

The Army does a great job of teaching NCOs how to train soldiers, but a poor job of teaching NCOs how to train and develop their young officers. Here are some things platoon sergeants can do to develop their lieutenants.

Have the right attitude. As the platoon sergeant begins working with the lieutenant, his first concern should be to provide the best possible leadership for the platoon. But at the same time, he is training a future commander and influencing the young officer’s relationship with, reliance on and support of NCOs for years to come. The platoon sergeant should have the attitude that it is his duty to train and develop his lieutenant into the best in the battalion.

Apply tact and show loyalty. The platoon sergeant must share his knowledge and experience with the lieutenant. How does he do that and still let the lieutenant learn through experience? It isn’t as hard as it seems. It requires a skill called “tact” and a trait called “loyalty.”

Here’s an example of what the platoon sergeant can say: “Sir, I recommend we attack the hill from the right because...” Now, suppose the lieutenant says, “I think the left side is better”? The platoon sergeant then has an opportunity to demonstrate his loyalty—an important trait. Without the unquestionable loyalty of his platoon sergeant, the junior officer will never trust him completely. And without complete trust in the platoon sergeant, the lieutenant probably won’t learn much from him—the Army’s loss.

So, what if the lieutenant’s choice doesn’t work? He will be wrong, but he will learn through the experience, enabling him to make a wiser choice in the future. He may realize that his platoon sergeant’s ideas and recommendations

were good ones. Regardless, the professional NCO must be loyal enough to do his utmost to see that the lieutenant’s solution works.

I always told each of my young officers that no matter what happened, he would make all final decisions after listening to the advice of his NCOs and fellow officers. I also encouraged him to seek advice from and confide in two great soldiers: the battery first sergeant and battalion command sergeant major. Both of these “old” soldiers have a wealth of experience, not only in executing the mission, but also in taking care of soldiers in the field and garrison.

Be the technical expert. When it comes to common tasks, military occupational specialty (MOS) competencies and knowledge of weapons, the platoon sergeant *must* be the most proficient soldier in the platoon. This will go a long way toward developing the lieutenant’s confidence in and willingness to learn from the platoon sergeant.

Teach him how the platoon operates. Another way for the platoon sergeant to develop the lieutenant and earn his respect is to show him continually how to accomplish platoon tasks. The platoon sergeant can teach him how to conduct inspections and, then, have him conduct inspections, such as in-ranks, TA-50 layouts, and vehicle and equipment inspections.

Many times I’ve asked officers when they last inspected their section or platoon, and most answered, “Never.” So my question was, “Why not—because someone said inspections were ‘NCO’s Business’?” Inspections ensure soldiers are equipped and prepared to go out and do what leaders are asking them to do—inspections enforce standards and take care of soldiers—inspections are “leaders’ business.”

If the platoon sergeant respects and supports his second lieutenant, the lieutenant will support and respect him.

Lieutenant Obligations to the Platoon Sergeant. Now, what does the NCO expect of the lieutenant (of officers of any rank)?

Have character and be dedicated. The platoon sergeant expects the highest standards of personal integrity and morals. He expects the lieutenant to maintain the highest state of personal appearance. He expects him to be fair and consistent, have dignity, have compassion and understanding, and treat each soldier as an individual with individual talents and problems.

The young officer must work to be good at his job, have a sense of duty and be selfless and honest. He must have courage, the courage to stand up and defend soldiers and assume the blame when things go wrong.

The NCO also expects his lieutenant to stick out his chin and say, "This man is worthy of promotion, and I want him promoted." On the other hand, he must have the greater courage to say, "This man is not qualified, and he must not be promoted."

Understand NCO business and development. Lieutenants should be involved in the NCO professional development program (NCOPD). NCOPD is and has to be the business of all leaders, NCOs and officers.

Although the command sergeant major plans NCOPDs and the first sergeant manages and conducts them, the platoon sergeant should invite his lieutenant to the training. If not, the lieutenant should express interest in attending. The NCOPD shows the competencies and professionalism of the NCO Corps and educates the young officer about the NCO's business and challenges.

Young officers must learn about the NCO education system (NCOES); the platoon sergeant should teach him. The young officer must understand the importance of the NCO's career development and his professional and personal growth.

Many times leaders, NCOs and officers, keep a soldier from attending a professional school because they can't spare him with a major equipment fielding or training exercise coming up. When leaders do that, they take away or delay the soldier's opportunity for further development, take away the opportunity to create a great NCO who has the right behavioral model to follow and may rob the Army of a reenlistment.

The second lieutenant also must learn the NCO promotion system. The officer promotion system and the NCO promotion system are very different. A second lieutenant will be promoted to first lieutenant and then captain automatically (almost) within a time schedule.

In contrast, NCO promotions are not "automatic." (However, one could make a case that promotions from private to private first class are automatic.) For example, a specialist has to prove himself, not only in his performance on the job and off duty, but also in the eyes of the first sergeant and battalion command sergeant major before they recommend the battalion commander approve

his promotion. He knows when he becomes eligible, but he does not know when he will be asked to appear before the local board.

The platoon sergeant, battery first sergeant and battalion command sergeant major begin the process of educating young officers on the promotion system so they understand the impact of their actions—especially when they become battery commanders. The platoon sergeant has the opportunity to "grow" the lieutenant to become concerned with his NCOs' qualifications for selection for promotions and knowledgeable about their DA MOS selection rates.

Take pride in his NCOs. The young officer must take pride in his NCOs. Their performance reflects his efficiency. The more he encourages them and facilitates their military education and the development of leadership skills, the more qualified his NCOs are to perform. He can turn to the battery's expert, the first sergeant, for advice about his soldiers' developmental requirements.

Make training a priority. Leaders—both officers and NCOs—are responsible for effective, realistic training. The lieutenant allocates resources and time and provides clear guidance for training, while the NCO conducts the training. The lieutenant must help ensure that every minute of training fills a platoon training need.

The lieutenant should involve his platoon sergeant in planning training and in all training meetings. The platoon sergeant is an expert on what individual and platoon tasks need to be trained.

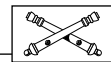
The lieutenant must exhibit tolerance for mistakes during training—they *will* happen. After all, soldiers are not in train-

ing to make their bosses look good—they are being *trained* and, like their lieutenant, will learn from their mistakes.

At the same time, the lieutenant should hold his platoon sergeant responsible for quality training. He shares responsibility for the development of the platoon sergeant's training skills with the battery first sergeant and the battalion command sergeant major.

If the second lieutenant respects and supports his platoon sergeant, then the sergeant will respect and support him.

Together, the lieutenant and platoon sergeant will lead their soldiers into combat, if need be. So they must work together in peacetime, one depending on the other, to ensure their soldiers are trained and ready to fight. If not, when the first round is fired in combat, it will be too late.



Command Sergeant Major Rodney L. Beck became the CSM of the Field Artillery and Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in May 2001. He served two years as a Platoon Sergeant, six years as a Battery First Sergeant and two and one-half years as a Battalion CSM. His last assignment was as the CSM of the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) Artillery (M198 and M119 howitzers) at Fort Drum, New York. He was a Battery Nuclear, Biological and Chemical NCO; Drill Sergeant; Gunnery Instructor; FA Battalion Operations NCO; and Operations Sergeant for the Commander-in-Chief of Europe's Airborne Command Post. Among other units, he has served in a Paladin unit in III Corps Artillery, Fort Sill; a multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) unit in the 2d Infantry Division in Korea; and an M102 105-mm unit in the 9th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. CSM Beck is a certified Computer Repair Technician.

NCO Leadership Booklets Online

- "The Sergeants Major of the Army: On Leadership and The Profession of Arms"
- "The Officer/NCO Relationship: Words of Wisdom and Tips for Success"
- "The Noncommissioned Officer Corps: On Leadership, the Army, and America"
- "The Noncommissioned Officer Corps: On Training, Cohesion, and Combat"
- "Command, Leadership, and Effective Staff Support: A Handbook Including Practical Ways for the Staff to Increase Support to Battalion and Company Commanders"
- "The US Army Noncommissioned Officer Corps: A Selected Bibliography" (1998)

Soldiers can get an electronic copy of these and other Information Management Support Center booklets from the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) website at <http://call.army.mil>; click on "CALL Products" and then "Special Products." The booklets are in PDF format. Soldiers also can call (703) 697-1365 or DSN 227-1365 if they have questions or problems downloading the booklets.



So, You Want to be a Master Gunner?



In 1995, the Master Gunner positions first were authorized at the Field Artillery Division Artillery, Brigade and Battalion levels. In early 1999, the Chief of Field Artillery tasked the Gunnery Department and the then Warfighting Integration Development Directorate (WIDD) of the Field Artillery School, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to develop a Master Gunner program. After a year of research and several analyses of task lists, the departments established a Field Artillery Master Gunner position at the FA School.

In general, the Master Gunner is the commander's and command sergeant major's (CSM's) weapons system expert on training, safety, ammunition resupply and maintenance operations. He is assigned to the S3 section to help train and certify crews, maintain the operational status of primary weapons systems and conduct certifications of unit commanders and leaders on weapons and digital fire direction systems. He also may train newly arrived soldiers on the unit's particular weapon system.

The soldier who wants to be a Master Gunner must meet the basic requirements and have the assignments to best prepare him for the position.

Battalion Master Gunner. The FA School recommends the Master Gunner, active duty or Army National Guard (ARNG), be a sergeant first class and have at least one year's experience as a firing or ammunition platoon sergeant (PSG).

It also is recommended he be a Battle Staff graduate. This gives him the knowledge to help provide logistical support for the close fight on today's battlefield. Combined with his experience as a PSG, the course enhances his abilities to provide the battalion commander and CSM the accurate, detailed information they need to ensure the unit is trained and ready. During field operations, the Master Gunner is an additional planner in the battalion tactical operations center (TOC).

The following assignments are recommended to ensure the soldier has the skills and technical proficiency required for the Battalion Master Gunner job.

Towed Artillery (M102/M119/M198). One should be extremely proficient with the aiming circle, gun laying and positioning system (GLPS), fire control alignment test (FCAT), calibrations, ammunition section operations and fire direction operations; understand basic gunnery; and be a U-6 FA Weapons Maintenance Course graduate.

Self-Propelled Howitzer (M109A5). One should be extremely proficient with the aiming circle, GLPS, FCAT, calibrations, ammunition section operations and fire direction operations and understand basic gunnery.

Paladin Artillery (M109A6). One should be extremely proficient with the aiming circle, GLPS, FCAT, calibrations, ammunition section operations and fire direction operations; understand basic gunnery; and be a Paladin Commander's Course graduate.

MLRS Artillery (M270/M270A1). One should be extremely proficient with the fire control system (FCS), calibrations,

calculating mask-ing data, ammu-nition section op-erations and fire direction operations.

Division Artillery/Brigade Master Gunner. It is recommended he have at least two years' experience as a Battalion Master Gunner.

If the Master Gunner will serve in a division artillery, his Master Gunner experience will have been in a howitzer battalion, heavy or light, as appropriate for the division artillery. This position is not authorized on the modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE); all divisions with master gunners are taking them "out of hide."

If the Master Gunner will serve in an FA brigade with primarily rocket/missile units, then his Master Gunner experience will have been in a rocket/missile battalion.

However, at the division artillery/brigade level, the Master Gunner is expected to be an expert on all the systems his unit has. To qualify for Division Artillery/Brigade Master Gunner, a former Battalion Master Gunner must become an expert on other weapons systems by self-study.

The Division Artillery/Brigade Master Gunner establishes and maintains standards and ensures the entire division artillery/brigade understands and adheres to standardization.

The Division Artillery/Brigade Master Gunner works for the commander and CSM and is responsible for the Battalion Master Gunner program, including certifying and validating the Battalion Master Gunners. The Division Artillery/Brigade Master Gunner works with his respective battalions as the total trainer and resident expert on all matters pertaining to the division artillery/brigade. He mentors the Battalion Master Gunners and maintains a top-notch gunnery certification program throughout the division artillery/brigade.

FA Master Gunner. It is recommended that all future FA Master Gunners be a master sergeant and have a minimum of one year as a Division Artillery/Brigade Master Gunner or first sergeant. His duties include helping to manage individual and crew training and certification programs for all delivery systems; maintain the maximum readiness and operational status of all delivery systems; troubleshoot problems on the primary weapon systems, ammunition vehicles and fire direction centers (FDCs); and maintain the most current information and training packages on all primary weapons systems and their supporting ammunition vehicles and FDC. In addition, the FA Master Gunner maintains a dialogue with all Master Gunners.

The Master Gunner website is at <http://sill-www.army.mil/mg>. It includes support packages, standards for unit certification programs and a way to contact the FA Master Gunner.

MSG Arthur D. Hawkins, FA Master Gunner
Gunnery Department, FA School, Fort Sill, OK

The First Sergeant

By Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Thomas D. Morgan



First commands never can be duplicated nor can the First Sergeants and other NCOs who went with them. In the late 1950s, First Sergeant Lawrence “Bud” McCarren was the “Topkick” of B Battery, 5th Battalion, 16th Field Artillery, part of the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. B Battery was my first Field Artillery command. I was a First Lieutenant at the time.

“Top” was a wonderful “Old Soldier,” old enough to be my father, and I thought of him as being *Supreme*. A World War II veteran who had started out in the Army as a Cannoneer “Gun Bunny,” he knew everything about the Artillery and the Army. He had little formal education but a great deal of talent and intelligence.

He was a solidly built Irishman from Minnesota with an Irish brogue who was ruggedly good-looking, very much like the sergeants played by veteran actor Victor McLaglen in the John Ford/John Wayne westerns. He was the type of career NCO that veteran USO performer Martha Raye doted on when she entertained the troops in Vietnam.

I was in awe of him and rarely did anything without consulting him. He had a group of career senior NCOs who he relied on to help him run the battery—the Motor Sergeant, Mess Sergeant and Chief of Firing Battery (“Smoke”). These senior NCOs were the types who extended a helping hand and provided the irreplaceable inner strength of the unit. They were hardcore professionals who always could be counted on in a pinch.

They were blocky, knurled NCOs who knew how to handle draftee soldiers and young NCOs during the Cold War era. The Army had just made the transition from brown to black footwear, and many soldiers dyed their relatively new brown boots black. Some ways to do that were better than others, and the career NCOs showed the troops the best way to do it. That was just one of the many things the Old Army soldiers could teach the new draftees. And teach they did.

They served soldiers and the Army selflessly—a model for generations to come. I was lucky enough to know

them. This article is their portrait and a tribute to them.

Careful Attention to Detail/Enforce the Standards. My first observation of the First Sergeant at work was during my first Saturday morning inspection (SAMI). He formed the battery and then had the men face off and check each other over. He had a checklist that he talked them through. He started at the top—the hat (everyone had to wear his overseas cap at the same angle), the placement of the lapel and shoulder insignia (and a little last-minute polishing), the alignment of the buttons on the jacket, the length of the trousers (they were either pulled up if too long or pulled down a little under the blouse if too short) and so forth.

When he was satisfied the men were ready, he then called on me to inspect the formation. As one would expect, I was pleased with the results. Therefore, we could finish early. The men were released before Saturday afternoon had started, and the NCOs could repair to the NCO Club for a beer or two before going home.

Everything went like a well-run ship. The First Sergeant made sure it was so.

Expert Field Artilleryman. In the field during firing practices, First Sergeant McCarren could do all the jobs required of the soldiers. He could get a slow gun section firing faster, and he knew how to troubleshoot the battery switchboard if a “green” draftee had trouble making it work. He was a master at setting up the battery area, making it efficient and visually attractive for inspecting officers from higher headquarters.

Dedicated Professionals. He and the Motor Sergeant had a close relationship. McCarren always screened new men for their mechanical aptitude and made sure the Motor Sergeant had the right type of men who would make good mechanics to maintain the trucks and tractors that towed our battery’s M114 155-mm howitzers.

The mechanics in the motor pool were not always pretty, but they were amazingly effective. We always left the motor pool with all our vehicles and came back with them all.

The Motor Sergeant was a little overweight and did not like to be seen around the headquarters. He was known for raiding the mess truck at night in the field. I always “turned a blind eye” to this. I had learned early on that he *knew* what he was doing with our vehicles.

The Mess Sergeant was another feudal baron in his own right. His domain was the mess hall. The troops always ate well, and therefore, so did the officers. Coffee and freshly made donuts or cake were available for mid-morning snacks in garrison and in the field.

Our supported infantry unit always came over to the battery area when we were in the field because of the good fresh-cooked food—no C-Rations for us. Sometimes B-Rations were issued in the field, but the Mess Sergeant always made them into meals that disguised the fact that they came out of GI-issued cans.

Cakes were baked for birthdays, and there were always extra things to eat that the Mess Sergeant had scrounged from his circle of NCO friends on the post.

Smoke kept the Cannoneers in line with rawhide toughness but human understanding. The 95-pound 155-mm shells were heavy, and the fuzes and primers required special care. We never had the accidents with ammunition or firing errors that other units had.

While it may seem from my description that life in B battery was idyllic, we had our share of problems and trouble. Some of the draftee soldiers were recalcitrant and some were criminals (those who local judges had given the option of going to jail or into the Army). But, the NCO chain-of-command could handle them.

Those NCOs planned and organized projects with little or no supervision, and then they could execute them as planned. They were loyal, sincere and all-business on duty. I rarely was asked to exercise my command authority with Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) punishments.

Role Model and Teacher. First Sergeant McCarren was a father figure and strict disciplinarian to the young soldiers and a role model for the young NCOs. He treated me with great respect, but he was a bit of a “Dutch Uncle.” If I got carried away with something, he could bring me back to earth quickly. Sometimes he would tell me “Lieutenant, it’s time for you to give a little.” I soon learned to value his judgment.

He played me like a violin, and I loved the tune. It always was better to let him do most of the talking when the Battalion Commander came around.

The First Sergeant was helpful to the troops, but his Irish temper came through when provoked. No one wanted to cross him, and woe be it to those who tried.



Photo courtesy of Fort Lewis Museum

First Sergeants had their work cut out for them in the Draftee Army.

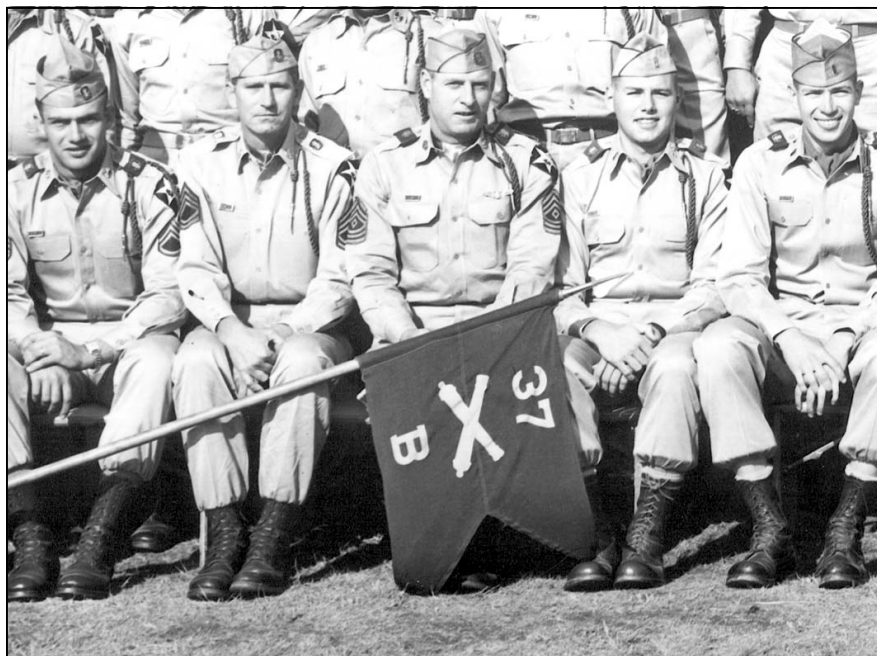


Photo courtesy of Fort Lewis Museum

The two young Lieutenants on the First Sergeant’s left owed their status in the battery to the First Sergeant’s mentoring.

When it came time for me to leave the battery, the First Sergeant gave me a swagger stick. Swagger sticks were going out of style by then, but I carried it proudly for a while. I still have it.

Postlude. Not long ago, I saw the old First Sergeant at the Post Exchange at Fort Lewis for the first time in more than 30 years. He was standing in the pharmacy line with his back to me. Now in his 80s, he was leaning lightly on a cane. He had had a heart by-pass operation in his 70s and needed some of the types of medications that most of us old soldiers depend upon as we age.

However, I recognized him instantly. I remembered how he looked when his back was to me in formation when he was forming up the battery for inspection. He looked the same to me now as then.

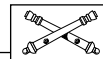
Time and pressure make diamonds, and he was still a splendid soldier. The years had been kind to his countenance, and his voice was still firm with a hint of that Irish brogue. We chatted about old times and the soldiers we had known.

I will never forget First Sergeant McCarren—and all the other quality NCOs in B Battery—or my chance meeting with him that day. I think I stayed in the Army until mandatory retirement because of him and his cadre of NCOs.

Character is essential in First Sergeants just as it is for successful officers. I hope the day has not passed when slightly undereducated but thoroughly dedicated professional soldiers can rise to the top.

Soldiers like First Sergeant McCarren (and the others) stayed close to the troops and were the backbone of the Army when First Sergeants were the real power block. They did not hold meetings and conferences, have reserved parking spaces or serve as “ornaments” on parade. They worked hard without fanfare and were not afraid to do the tough jobs. They were not in it for personal gain and were happy to serve as First Sergeants for years.

I kept looking for men like First Sergeant McCarren during my years of service. I found some who were almost as good but none who could top him. He epitomized the value of selfless service.



Lieutenant Colonel Thomas D. Morgan retired from the Army in 1986. He then worked 12 years as a Fire Support Analyst under contract with the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, since the BCTP’s inception, retiring from the program in 1999. He commanded two firing batteries in the 5th Battalion, 16th Field Artillery, part of the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. Among other assignments, he was a Gunnery Instructor in the Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and the Executive Officer of 1st Battalion, 321st Field Artillery, 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam. He holds an MA in History from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Missouri at Kansas City.



“Welcome Aboard, Sergeant Major”

By Colonel Lawrence H. Saul

Undoubtedly, the most important interpersonal relationship in any battalion is that of the commander and the command sergeant major (CSM). As the two most senior leaders in the battalion, they will have nearly a half century of experience between them.

The battalion commander and the CSM are both well-intentioned and wish to lead the unit successfully. Together, they set the day-to-day climate of the unit. This relationship will be crucial in establishing and enforcing standards of combat readiness, training, morale and discipline for the unit.

Perhaps the most challenging task of a battalion commander is establishing terms of reference for the newly assigned battalion CSM. There are a number of areas in which the battalion commander and CSM must focus their attention. Clearly, training, maintenance and other readiness-related issues are critical; however, there are fundamentals that require routine review and emphasis. Some of these are leadership and discipline, expectations of sergeants, the development of junior leaders, safety and other topics.

The following is an open letter from a battalion commander to his newly appointed battalion CSM, proposing terms of reference for day-to-day operations of the battalion.

Dear Sergeant Major:

I fully understand the duties and responsibilities of the Command Sergeant Major are numerous. With your vast experience, I expect your greatest contribution to this unit will be upholding and enforcing standards and providing all our soldiers outstanding leadership by your living example.

The CSM seeks out problem areas and takes corrective action, instills discipline and obedience by setting the example and is a doer as well as an advisor to the commander. This is the obligation of the senior NCO Corps; furthermore, it is mandated in *Army Regulation 600-20 Army Command Policy*.

I firmly believe that, next to me, you will have more impact on this battalion than any other NCO or officer.

Expectations for Sergeants. It is important you know what I expect of ser-

geants. I have seven key expectations of sergeants [see the figure]. Perhaps the most critical of these expectations is for a sergeant to really know his soldiers—to have a detailed knowledge of their talents, abilities, strengths and weaknesses.

Each sergeant must maintain a data bank of key information on his soldiers. This information includes weapons serial number, qualification date and score, PT [physical fitness] test date and score, uniform and boot sizes and the date of the soldier's last NCOER [NCO evaluation report]. Additional but also important information is the soldier's marital and family status, where his family lives, the condition of his quarters, the quality of the local schools for his children and so on.

Of course, you recognize this data bank as the “Leader's Book.” Sadly, many units no longer maintain such leadership tools.

Promoting and Developing Soldiers. You and the other senior NCOs are fully responsible for identifying and selecting our future leaders. This is an awesome task; the perpetuation of the NCO Corps rests upon your shoulders. You know the process. You will “be training your replacement.”

I am confident you will establish a system that identifies, produces and develops junior leaders to meet the needs of the battalion. I think you will agree the most important requirements for promotion are MOS [military occupational specialty] knowledge and the demonstrated potential to do the job the young leader would be promoted into.

In addition, you are responsible for the conduct of all promotion boards, ensuring they are fair, yet selective. I know you will maintain high standards and that only the best qualified soldiers will be selected for promotion. We cannot afford to have unqualified personnel promoted.

Leadership and Discipline. You are key to maintaining esprit de corps and discipline, focusing on the areas of dress, military bearing and conduct of the enlisted members of the battalion.

You shape the emerging sergeant by allowing him, early on, to lead and train soldiers. Develop a program that helps troops prepare for PLDC [primary leadership development course] and other leader developing schools. Inform soldiers about the many positive professional benefits of attending Ranger School and competing for the Sergeant

Audie Murphy Club or the Sergeant Morales Club and other programs.

You know the critical task of teaching the art of leadership. Our newly promoted NCOs, who were just recently specialists, have much to learn. With your years of experience, you are best positioned to ensure they learn the right things.

To ensure the proper development of budding sergeants, they must have the opportunity to learn and grow in a positive, non-threatening environment. As the CSM, you help establish that environment.

Ensure all NCOs employ proper leadership and supervisory techniques. This will require routine oversight on your part.

Discipline has been defined as “doing the right thing, when no one is watching.” Discipline also is behaving in a proper, professional manner at all times. When it comes to UCMJ [Uniform Code of Military Justice] punishments and other adverse personnel actions, I will seek your advice and recommendations on these matters. You will play a key role in this process.

You maintain discipline by conducting formal and informal NCOPD [NCO professional development] classes, inspecting personnel and unit areas, and making on-the-spot corrections.

Professional Competence of Battalion NCOs. NCOPD is the most essential tool you have to shape the NCO Corps for the future. I want you to be involved with the battery 1SGs [first sergeants], ensuring their teaching, leading, counseling, advising and supervising of their NCOs is top notch. You will have a ripple

effect when you train the 1SGs how to do their job and they, in turn, train the PSGs [platoon sergeants] who, subsequently, train the section chiefs and team leaders.

Education is what separates our Army from all others. You should emphasize continuing education. Keep the command informed on the many facets of the Army education program.

Personal development must be fostered and encouraged. You advise and guide our junior leaders on their career development. You should visit the post education center, MOS library, NCO Academy and other educational facilities to determine what services offered meet the needs of the battalion.

You and the NCO support channel are responsible for CTT [common task training] and testing.

NCO Assignments. You are responsible for the procedures of assigning NCOs and soldiers to the batteries and sections where they are most needed. You manage all NCO assignments.

I want to know of any changes involving SFCs [sergeants first class] and above, just to be kept informed.

All enlisted affairs are your responsibility—99.9 percent of the time I will support your personnel recommendations; however, there may be some unique circumstances where I need to intervene.

NCO Initiative. We must ensure our NCOs understand they have the freedom to use their own initiative in decision-making, training and other aspects of their duties.

Tempered with their own experiences, they will become credible leaders when they know and understand the commander’s intent and have the necessary tools and resources. You help ensure they understand the commander’s intent and have the resources to do their jobs.

We cannot allow a “Zero Defects” attitude to exist in this unit, except in the area of safety.

Training. The most important action a unit undertakes is training. You must be fully involved in advising battery 1SGs on all aspects of training: planning, coordinating, executing and inspecting. The essential ingredient to our success in training depends on the effectiveness of battalion and battery training meetings and the enforcement of very high standards.

Secondly, and also of great importance to me, is your personal involvement in

the Sergeant’s Time program. This is a critical event for us. You will put real meaning into this endeavor if you enforce high standards in planning and executing this crucial training.

I will enforce Sergeant’s Time training with the passion of a zealot. Once the program meets your standards, invite me to inspect and observe.

Safety. This area is vital to me. Based on our past experiences, I know you will make strict enforcement of safety procedures a personal interest as well. I expect you to have zero tolerance in this one critical area. Everyone must be a “Safety Officer.” No training event is worth the loss of a soldier’s life or limb.

In addition, an artillery unit’s reputation precedes it. A unit that can’t shoot straight is dangerous and held up for ridicule. Our battalion must be safe and competent, technically and tactically.

Off-duty vehicle accidents kill too many soldiers. Often, if leaders had been involved, these tragedies could have been prevented. Let’s keep our soldiers alive.

Administration. You advise the battalion staff and battery commanders and NCOs on how to establish sound and practical administrative procedures. You need to closely monitor the activities of the PAC [personnel administration center]. You advise me on all matters pertaining to the enlisted members of the battalion, to include monitoring the reenlistment program and bar to reenlistment procedures.

Additionally, I expect you to look into any complaints and report your findings and recommendations to me. Whatever the issue, you look into it and offer solutions or institute your own fix. Feel free to use me whenever you feel command emphasis is needed to solve problems.

You also will monitor NCOERs, ensuring the proper rating scheme is followed and all reports are correct, appropriate and submitted on time. I want your advice on senior rating NCOs and the proper comments to write.

You assist me in training the officers of the battalion in all aspects of NCOER management. I will ask you to give OPD [officer professional development] classes to our officers on emerging selection board trends and other aspects of NCO promotions and selections, NCOER writing, etc. Please be assured that I will put as much effort into writing an officer’s OER [officer efficiency report] as he does his sergeants’ NCOERs.

Sergeants—

1. Know their soldiers and their character.
2. Know their soldiers’ whereabouts 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
3. Are responsible for their soldiers’ training and education.
4. Are responsible for their soldiers’ appearance and demeanor.
5. Are responsible for the maintenance, accountability and security of their section equipment.
6. Enforce standards by their own appearance, attitude and ability.
7. Live and instill Army values daily and set and enforce high standards of personal conduct.

Expectations of Sergeants. The most important expectation is the first.

Furthermore, the awards program will need your oversight.

Lastly, yet of great significance, is the battalion command inspection program; we must ensure it remains a viable, effective endeavor.

Welfare and Morale. You need to be involved in maintaining the health, welfare and morale of members of the units and their families. All battalion leaders must promote a lifestyle that produces motivated and responsive soldiers who are fit to fight. We need to encourage healthy and wholesome lifestyles for our soldiers to strive for.

We also need to de-emphasize habits and activities that are unhealthy or hazardous. It's a shame when a young soldier takes up cigarette smoking or some other foolhardy habit. What is worse is when he takes up the bad habit by observing his senior leaders who have set poor examples.

You counsel all the enlisted personnel on all phases of Army life. You can enlist the aid of the chaplain, where appropriate. He has a wealth of resources that can benefit our families. You and the chaplain play a significant role in the lives of our families, establishing programs and offering varied opportunities that enable soldiers and their families to thrive.

Equal Opportunity/Human Relations. You ensure that all enlisted members of the command are treated fairly without regard to race, religious beliefs or national origin. Remain alert for signs of discrimination in any form, and report them to me immediately.

Our soldiers must be treated with dignity and respect; furthermore, they must acknowledge they owe the same treatment to others. I will not tolerate any form of discrimination.

Our young soldiers come from a variety of backgrounds and their cultural differences sometimes are unfamiliar to their fellow soldiers. However, they all must understand and adopt Army Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage. Our soldiers must live them every day—and see them modeled by all their leaders, especially the NCO Corps.

Control of Drug and Alcohol Abuse. Endeavor to instill in the NCO Corps knowledge and awareness of drug and alcohol abuse that enables NCOs to instruct and counsel subordinates concerning the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Together, we must continually play down the traditional “machismo” atti-

tude regarding alcohol and strive to eradicate drug use. These attitudes remain a plague on our Army and have a negative impact on morale and esprit.

The new drug “Ecstasy” is a growing menace. Be knowledgeable about it and on the look out for evidence of its abuse by our soldiers.

Physical Conditioning and Competitive Athletics. You help the batteries and the battalion staff plan, coordinate and execute the full range of organized sports, athletics and recreational activities.

Sports are an essential ingredient of team building. Too often these days, leaders do not appreciate the positive impact team sports have on their unit's morale. A winning sports team can make a good unit even better.

You must strive to develop the soldier as a whole person, one who is fit and willing to fight and wants to expend maximum effort to accomplish the unit's mission and his individual goals.

Visits to the Batteries and Offices. Independent of me, make frequent visits to the batteries as well as sections and offices throughout the battalion. Let leaders know what you saw and provide me a recommendation if something needs my attention.

You and the battalion NCO Corps are responsible for the appearance of all unit facilities. Visiting leaders form a “snapshot” opinion of our unit based on its appearance. One of your jobs is to ensure our headquarters reflects our unit's proud history and traditions as the home of professionals. You also ensure our barracks are maintained in such a condition that our soldiers are proud to call them “home.”

Reception of Incoming Personnel. Make sure we have a solid sponsorship program. The reception and welcoming of new personnel is crucial. You must ensure NCOs are instructed in the proper techniques of making soldiers feel they are wanted and needed as members of the team.

Drill and Ceremonies. Although the Napoleonic Period ended nearly 200 years ago, soldiers still have requirements to march. Parades, changes of command and other ceremonies require soldiers to move in formations. Good units do all things well, including drill and ceremonies. I expect our formations to be a model of discipline.

You must develop and maintain a high degree of awareness of Army traditions, customs and military courtesy in the

NCO Corps and ensure the battalion adheres to these traditions. The young officers, as well, will benefit from your training them in these matters.

I expect you to help me greet visitors and fulfill social obligations of the command.

“Command” in CSM. To help you discharge your duties and responsibilities effectively, you will play an active, authoritative part in the battalion. I consider you my right arm; you will be the only man in the battalion able to influence me to change my mind. I expect you to offer your advice, guidance and counsel.

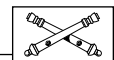
My ideal CSM is the absolute epitome of dedication and professionalism in his appearance, knowledge, upholding the standards and concern for soldiers.

You are the finder and fixer of problems. You will know more about what is going on in the battalion than anyone else. Keep me informed of what is going on, both good and bad. Be totally honest with me about what I am doing, both good and bad.

You must enforce standardization across the board. This is central to all artillerymen.

Finally, feel free to discuss this document with me, including deletions, revisions or additions. This is *not* a contract—merely my views on what a CSM does in regards to making a battalion operate efficiently.

R. L Cannon
LTC, FA
Commanding



Colonel Lawrence (Larry) H. Saul commands the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) Artillery, Fort Drum, New York. He began his military career as an enlisted soldier in 1968 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery via Officer Candidate School, Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1978. He commanded two battalions: 4th Battalion, 11th Field Artillery, and the Arctic Warrior Battalion, both in the 172d Infantry Brigade (Separate) in Alaska. He also commanded three batteries: two firing batteries in the 41st Field Artillery Brigade, V Corps, in Germany, and a headquarters, headquarters and services battery, in the 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery, also in the 172d Infantry Brigade. He has had seven tours overseas, including two with the British Army. He is a Vietnam veteran, serving as mortar Platoon Leader with the 18th Engineer Brigade.

Reversing a Negative Trend:

The M981 FIST-V on DEADLINE

Whether in the motor pool or on the battlefield, there is a common negative trend among a number of FA units: deadlined M981 fire support team vehicles (FIST-Vs). The FIST-V is an M113 chassis with a laser designator rangefinder (LDR) and night-sight mounted on it.

It seems these vehicles breakdown continuously.

Information gathered at the National Training Center (NTC), Fort Irwin, California, from rotational units over a three-month period showed that, at the task force (TF) level, anywhere from 25 to 100 percent of the FIST-Vs were reported non-mission capable (NMC) at any one time. This same trend is evident in FA units with FIST-Vs Army-wide.

This article discusses ways to help reverse this trend, including changing the FIST-V's maintenance reporting system.

The Operator. Making the M981 a more dependable vehicle begins with the operator. First, the operator must conduct proper preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) with the correct technical manual (TM); he will find minor deficiencies that, if left unattended, could lead to major problems and a NMC vehicle. Also, the operator must use the proper lubrication order (LO) when filling fluids to prevent unnecessary wear and tear. Finally, he must operate the vehicle properly to avoid damaging it.

Supervisors must ensure all deficiencies are annotated properly on the DA Form 5988-E Equipment Inspection and Maintenance Checklist (the automated version of DA Form 2404). This form is sent to unit-level maintenance to order parts. Supervisors must follow-up on the status of the deficiencies and ensure all parts are on order.

Unit Maintenance. The next step in the process is the battery maintenance personnel verify that the deficiencies are legitimate and annotated correctly. After ordering the parts, the supervisor should ensure these parts remain on requisition and posted on the 5988-E until the parts are received and placed on the vehicle or the deficiencies repaired.

The battery motor sergeant ensures the M981 FIST-V deadlines are included in their NMC reports, which may or may not be consolidated at the battalion level.

Reporting Problem. Although other M113s are ground-reportable pieces of equipment on the monthly Army materiel status system (AMSS) report (the automated version of DA Form 2406 Materiel Conditions Status Report), the logistics community classifies the M981 FIST-V as non-reportable on AMSS. Batteries only can document their deadlined FIST-Vs on the automated daily NMC report via the unit-level logistics system-ground (ULLS-G).

For any NMC piece of equipment to make the AMSS report, its materiel condition status report (MCSR) code in ULLS-G must be a "Y"; the FIST-V is coded "M." Only the equipment coded with a "Y" on AMSS can appear on the 026 report—the report routinely briefed to commanders. Therefore, the FIST-V cannot be reported on the 026.

When the NMC FIST-V becomes automated, it loses visibility for higher level maintenance

managers plus others briefed on the 026. Also, the NMC FIST-V is not factored into the unit's operations readiness rate.

The bottom line is that, based on automated reports and routine procedures, NMC FIST-Vs have no visibility above the battery level.

Trend Fixes. There are several things units can do to help reverse the negative trend of FIST-Vs' being NMC.

The battalion maintenance tech (BMT) or the battalion motor officer (BMO) must take the battery's NMC reports to the next higher maintenance manager and get help in expediting the delivery of repair parts for FIST-Vs. This brings the problem to the attention of the higher level maintenance managers who otherwise would not have visibility of the NMC FIST-Vs.

NMC FIST-Vs should be briefed to higher commanders. Routinely, vehicles on the 026 that are NMC for a number of days (15, 30—it varies by command) are briefed to higher commanders. Although not listed on the 026, NMC FIST-Vs also should be briefed. Commanders need to be aware of the lack of visibility NMC FIST-Vs have due to the MCSR code. Then they can emphasize the importance of supporting FIST-V maintenance throughout the command.

In addition, the Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, needs to work with the logistics community to change the FIST-V coding so NMC FIST-Vs can appear on the AMSS—and, ultimately, the 026.

When fully mission capable, the M981 FIST-V is an effective platform to accurately locate and adjust indirect fires onto targets. A properly working targeting station and 13-power LDR give the commander more in-depth information about his battlefield than he can get with other visibility means.

If properly maintained with deficiencies reported and fixed in a timely manner, the M981 FIST-V deficiency trend can be reversed, enabling FISTs to focus on training and providing the right fires at the right place and right time.

SSG Leslie W. Ketchum, Co/Tm Fire Support Trainer
Scorpion Team, NTC,





SSGs Restituto Carrillo and Neville Abram, L-R, Gunnery Department instructors, verify the fuze type and setting before loading a projectile into the new Paladin Fire Support Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (FSCATT). Photo by Fred W. Baker II, Fort Sill Cannoneer.

Enlisted Redlegs: Take Charge of Your Career

By Sergeant First Class Robert A. Smedley and Lieutenant Colonel William A. Rigby

Transformation is occurring across the full spectrum of Army systems. Our active duty enlisted personnel management system (EPMS) is undergoing changes to move forward with advances in technology and information management. These changes will increase the soldier's control over his career, make the personnel system more responsive to personal preferences and increase overall family stability.

Enlisted personnel management's first priority is to meet Army readiness requirements—man warfighting units to 100 percent of authorizations. The Army relies on enlisted soldiers, particularly combat arms, to offset shortages in of-

ficer manning and shortfalls in other military occupational specialties (MOS).

Our second priority is to fulfill the soldier's personal assignment preferences. This is a significant change from the past when personal preference was the third or fourth consideration. However, this change in priority places more responsibility on the soldier to manage his professional development. More so than ever, the soldier must understand the requirements for development and success in his MOS. Inherent, also, is the greater responsibility of his senior leaders and mentors to understand his professional development needs and advise him on career options.

This article provides information for soldiers and leaders on the Field Artillery's enlisted force professional development requirements and guidelines.

How to Succeed. The skills and experiences that enable a young sergeant (SGT) to become a competent platoon sergeant (PSG) are the result of that NCO's commitment to becoming a subject matter expert (SME) in his field, both inside and outside his MOS, and being proactive in his career assignments. Developing and sustaining individual competence is a result of Army schools, unit training and exercises, and personal learning by the soldier.

Personal learning or lifetime learning is a central tenet of the Army's personnel transformation. New information technologies provide greater opportunities for self-education through distance learning programs. Some examples are video teleconference classes, individual CD ROM interactive training, web-based individual learning and correspondence programs. Soldiers use computers to access most of these distance learning programs.

While these programs won't replace resident training in the Army schools or unit exercises, they will help the soldier in sustainment training or special skills qualification. Leaders must understand this shift and provide soldiers the opportunities to maximize their use of these developmental programs.

The Total Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM) in Alexandria, Virginia, and branch proponents have websites that provide substantial career development information for enlisted soldiers. See Figure 1 for the websites for Field Artillerymen and a brief explanation of what's available on each.

To use many of the Army systems listed in Figure 1, the soldier must have

an Army Knowledge Online (AKO) account. For example, soldiers may check their individual military records online through the AKO web portal before promotion boards.

Soldiers also must understand the sequence and types of professional development options in their MOS and how these fit into the progression of all the Field Artillery MOS. The Field Artillery is structured with 87 percent of its authorizations in tables of organization and equipment (TOEs) in warfighting units with the remaining 13 percent in tables of distribution and allowances (TDAs) in support units and organizations. Thus, most of a soldier's Field Artillery career will be spent in tactical units.

The majority of the TDA positions available for Field Artillery soldiers are at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and include jobs such as instructor, drill sergeant and other positions in the Field Artillery School and Center. The other primary TDA assignments for FA soldiers are recruiting positions, Active Component/ Reserve Component (AC/RC) positions, Combat Training Center (CTC) observers/controllers (O/Cs) and ROTC positions.

The next consideration in career planning is overseas service. Ten years ago, nearly 50 percent of the Field Artillery was positioned overseas. Today, that percentage is about 18 percent. Soldiers today have a slightly greater probability of serving in an unaccompanied short tour (Korea) than of serving in an overseas long tour.

The following sections provide a description of the key agencies and the chain of command—plus the individual soldier—who are involved in determining Field Artillery enlisted professional development and assignments.

Field Artillery Proponency Office (FAPO). The Chief of Field Artillery sets the professional development standards for all Field Artillery soldiers. The action office is FAPO, which "coordinates the formulation and implementation of personnel management issues" and advises and assists in enlisted career management.

FAPO provides a wealth of information at its website (Figure 1). This includes detailed descriptions of each FA MOS and career maps with required institutional training duty positions to be held and for what lengths of time,

Useful Information or Links Found on Websites	Website Proponent/ Title	Web Addresses
FA Branch Update, Field Artillery Proponency Office (FAPO) Professional Development Model and Duty Descriptions by MOS, PERSCOM Directory of FA Branch Representatives, FA Links	FA Branch PERSCOM	http://www.perscom.army.mil/Epfa/fa_itr.htm
Numerous Useful Links, Including Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (EREC), Army Doctrine and Training Digital Library (ADATDL-Field Manuals), Army Electronic Library (Army Regulations and DA Pamphlets), NCO Education System (NCOES), etc.	Army Knowledge Online (AKO)	http://www.us.army.mil/portal/portal_home.jhtml
Online Update of Location Preference, Volunteering for Locations or Special Duty Assignments and Personal Contact Information	Army Satisfaction Key (ASK)	https://isdrad06.hoffman.army.mil/erec/ask_ako.htm
Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) Online	EREC	http://www.erec/army.mil/
Officer and Enlisted Management Directorate, Enlisted Selections and Promotions, EREC, Officer Efficiency Reports (OERs) and NCOERs	PERSCOM	http://www.perscom.army.mil/default.htm
Links for FA Officers and Warrant Officers, NCO Professional Development, NCO and Enlisted MOS Descriptions, FA Related Training and Doctrine Publications and the FA Professional Development Model	FAPO—The Artilleryman	http://sill-www.army.mil/FA/index.htm
FA Training and Doctrine Publications, Individual and Shared Task Lists, Soldier Training Publications (STPs), Individual Training Materials	Requirements Determination Development and Integration (RDDI) of the Futures Development Integration Center, Fort Sill	http://faresources.sill.army.mil/rddi/rddi_page.htm

Figure 1: Useful FA Websites

Rank	PVT/SPC	SGT	SSG	SFC	MSG/1SG	SGM/CSM
Institutional Pillar	OSUT/AIT/PLDC	PLDC	BNCOC	ANCOC	Sergeants Major Academy	
Operational Pillar	Driver Cannoneer Ammo SP Asst Gunner	Gunner Ammo SGT	Section Chief	PSG Gunnery SGT Master Gunner Asst Ops NCO	PSG Gunnery SGT Master Gunner Asst Ops NCO	Ops SGM/CSM FA Battalion- Brigade-Division Artillery-Corps Artillery
Special Assignments	Corporal Recruiter	Recruiter	Drill SGT Recruiter Instructor	Drill SGT Recruiter/ROTC Instructor AC/RC or CTC O/C EOA	Instructor/ROTC AC/RC Trainer CTC O/C IG NCO	Instructor/ROTC AC/RC Trainer CTC O/C FA School
Institutional & Special Skills	Airborne Air Assault ASI U6	Airborne Air Assault ASI U6	Airborne Air Assault ASI U6	Airborne Air Assault Battle Staff	1SG Course Battle Staff	Tactical Air Operations
Recommended Time in Assignments	Needs of the Army	Needs of the Army	24 Mos as Section Chief	24 Mos as PSG Gunnery SGT Master Gunner Asst Ops NCO	24 Mos as 1SG	Needs of the Army
Promotions	6 Mos—PV2 12 Mos—PFC 26 Mos—SPC	PZ—36 Mos SZ—18 Mos	PZ—84 Mos SZ—48 Mos	PZ—SZ Announced by HQDA Before Each Board	PZ—SZ Announced by HQDA Before Each Board	PZ—SZ Announced by HQDA Before Each Board
Retention Control Point	3 Yrs TIS SPC—10 Yrs TIS SPC(P)—13 Yrs TIS	15 Yrs TIS SGT(P)—20 Yrs TIS	20 Yrs TIS SSG(P)—24 Yrs TIS	24 Yrs TIS SFC(P)—26 Yrs TIS	26 Yrs TIS MSG(P)—30 Yrs TIS	30 Yrs TIS CSM (Nominative Only by 3- or 4-Star Generals) 35 Yrs TIS
<p>Legend:</p> <p>AC/RC = Active Component/Reserve Component AIT = Advanced Individual Training ANCOC = Advanced NCO Course ASI = Additional Skill Identifier</p> <p>BNCOC = Basic NCO Course CTC = Combat Training Center EOA = Equal Opportunity Advisor HQDA = Headquarters Department of the Army IG = Inspector General O/C = Observer/Controller</p> <p>OSUT = One-Station Unit Training PLDC = Primary Leadership Development Course PZ = Primary Zone SP = Self Propelled SZ = Secondary Zone TIS = Time in Service</p>						

Figure 2: MOS 13B Cannon Crewmember Proponent Career Map

and special skill training and assignments recommended by rank. See the sample career map for 13B Cannon Crewmember in Figure 2.

While there is no one career pathway, the principal development objective is for every soldier to serve at least 24 months in defined leadership positions as a staff sergeant (SSG), sergeant first class (SFC) and master sergeant (MSG). At the Field Artillery Command Sergeants Major (CSM) Conference in September 2000, the CSMs recommended that career maps be used as the standard for promotion boards. These career maps, such as the one in Figure 2, will be published in *DA Pam 600-25, US Army Noncommissioned Officer's Guide*, which is expected to be released in 2003.

Field Artillery Branch, PERSCOM. This agency plays a major role in the

progression of a soldier. In the course of managing Army readiness requirements and soldier development, the FA Branch manages soldiers from their entrance on active duty through their retirement.

FA Branch recommends accession requirements and monetary incentives for enlisting soldiers as well as distributes advanced individual training (AIT) graduates throughout the world. In order to retain quality soldiers and maintain proper strength levels, the FA Branch advises PERSCOM on retention issues, such as reclassification requests and reenlistment monetary incentives.

The branch objective is to place all soldiers in assignments that will allow them to meet branch professional development requirements and advance through the NCO ranks in their MOS.

PERSCOM implemented an online interactive information system in March.

The Assignment Satisfaction Key (ASK) allows soldiers to input preferences and get information from the Total Army Personnel Database (TAPDB). Soldiers also may view current assignment instructions through ASK. In April, PERSCOM mailed a brochure explaining ASK to all units.

ASK supports enlisted personnel volunteering for assignments, by grade and MOS, based on the needs of the Army or the soldier's preference. It allows soldiers to view and update information from home or the office via the Internet.

Using ASK, the soldier can select three continental United States (CONUS) and three outside CONUS (OCONUS) assignment preferences (assignment volunteer requests) that FA Branch will consider when making assignments.

PERSCOM views a service member's preferences as "If I must be reassigned,

these are the locations I prefer.” While a service member who *volunteers* for reassignment is viewed as “I would like to be reassigned now to one of these locations.” These statements apply when the soldier updates his special duty preferences and volunteer information online.

An advantage to ASK is it allows the service member to update his personal contact information online, such as home address, home and duty phone numbers and home or military email addresses.

ASK is linked to an automated Soldier Assignment Module (SAM) that PERSCOM also implemented in March. SAM automatically links ASK information to assignment processing. FA Branch no longer must track “DA Form 4187, Personnel Action” preference requests manually. SAM provides a list of eligible soldiers for a given assignment. Volunteers, if qualified, are considered for the assignment before non-volunteers.

SAM applies current assignment policies, such as time-on-station guidance (36 to 48 months), remaining time-in-service (TIS) requirements and MOS and grade matches. This maintains discipline in the assignment system, which means a soldier who volunteers for an assignment will not move early unless Army readiness requires him to. A second quality control measure is that the FA Branch sergeant major (SGM) reviews every soldier’s assignment to ensure he’s not reassigned too soon.

Chain of Command. Commanders, CSMs and first sergeants (ISGs) provide the critical link between professional development objectives and actual assignment of soldiers. They also are the recommending authority for promotions from private to SSG. These key leaders must understand the branch career development maps and provide soldiers opportunities for advancement while balancing unit readiness and mission requirements with the individual’s development.

Some FA soldiers and NCOs may have to work outside their assigned MOS to fill critical, low-density MOS unit shortages—for example, battery training NCO; nuclear biological chemical (NBC) NCO; or supply or fuel specialists. But leaders must understand that it is imperative to the soldiers’ career progression that they spend the minimal time in these types of positions.

The NCO evaluation report (NCOER) is the primary consideration for deter-

mining assignment qualifications and nominative assignments. Troop-leading experience is critical to the development of all soldiers and their advancement as senior NCOs.

Multiple duty positions and NCOER ratings for positions outside the career map’s recommended paths are not considered career enhancing. Such a pattern may make it appear the NCO is avoiding challenging troop-leading assignments.

The Individual Soldier. FAPO, PERSCOM and the chain of command provide the basic framework of skills and guidance and give the soldier an opportunity to succeed with attendance at the appropriate NCO education system (NCOES) schools and assignments to the duty position for his rank. But it is the NCO’s responsibility to learn, grow and develop. He must become a student of the profession of arms. He routinely must read professional journals and updated doctrinal manuals to keep abreast of the newest methods and technologies being developed.

As the Army transforms, soldiers adapt to new systems and training methods. Transformation will place a premium on a soldier’s ability to learn and adapt quickly.

Soldiers must first be proficient in their MOS. But they also should work to understand the skills of other Field Artillery MOS and those MOS they habitually work with.

The biggest discriminator for assignments is usually a soldier’s general technical (GT) score from the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). If a soldier’s GT score on the ASVAB is below 100, he will be ineligible for most nominative assignments or to transfer to a different MOS.

If a soldier’s GT score is below 100, then he should strive to raise it to make himself competitive for possible reenlistment options, promotions and nominative or special duty assignments. Battery and battalion leaders should support promising junior soldiers and NCOs with the opportunity to attend Functional Aptitude Skills Test (FAST) classes to raise their GT scores.

How to Get an Assignment. Soldiers can take specific actions to improve their assignment options.

Reenlistment. By carefully planning and exercising reenlistment options, an NCO can program a significant portion of his career from his first reenlistment through his following reenlistments until

he reaches a career NCO status at 10 years or more of service. A soldier could provide his family a significant amount of time in one location or select reenlistment bonus options that provide a significant amount of money.

For example, a soldier could reenlist for a number of years and select a permanent change of station (PCS) to a location he and his family want. Once settled, he would be stabilized for a minimum of 24 months before being selected for an overseas assignment.

If the soldier or NCO wanted to provide his family with even more stability, he could volunteer to serve an unaccompanied tour to Korea and request a Homebase Assignment Program (HAP) location back to the post he reenlisted for. The 24 or more months CONUS service plus the 12 months in Korea plus another 24 or more months gives his family up to five years or more at the same location.

Under current PERSCOM assignment policies, personnel normally will serve 36 months time-on-station before being eligible for reassignment overseas and 48 months time-on-station before being reassigned in CONUS.

That same NCO may elect to take advantage of the Army’s reenlistment bonus programs when choosing the location and MOS to give his family or himself a financial gain. A Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) is one offered for reenlisting within a certain MOS for a specified amount of time. A Targeted Selective Reenlistment Bonus (TSRB) is offered for reenlistment to specific locations. In both cases, the list of MOS offering SRBs and the locations offering TSRBs change periodically in an attempt to maintain the strength of the overall force. Information regarding bonuses and when they are offered is available from the unit reenlistment NCO.

PERSCOM recently implemented a policy in an effort to give mid-career NCOs more options on continued service as they approach reenlistment. In the past, assignment timing often had a mid-career NCO entering his window for reenlistment—10 to 13 months from expiration term of service (ETS)—already on orders by FA Branch. Unless he submitted a DA Form 4187 requesting a deletion, he had to proceed to the new assignment. This caused many soldiers to choose to leave service rather than accept an assignment they did not want.

The new policy does not allow PERSCOM assignment branches to place a mid-career NCO on orders from 13 to 10 months before ETS. This four-month block is intended to allow an NCO time to review and exercise reenlistment options. Most assignments are coded as only available for reenlisting soldiers between the 13 to 10 months before the required report date. Unit reenlistment counselors can provide soldiers with available locations from the reenlistment Retain system.

NCOES Schooling. NCOES schools are designed to prepare NCOs to perform duties at the next higher duty position; attendance is mandatory for promotion to SGT, SSG and SFC. Thus, maintaining eligibility to attend and complete an NCOES school should be of primary concern to an NCO desiring to advance.

FA Branch is responsible for scheduling promotable SSGs for the advanced NCO course (ANCOC). Once selected by the SFC promotion board, the promotable NCOs' records are passed to the FA Branch schools coordinator who screens and schedules those eligible for attendance at ANCOC on the Army training requirements and resources system (ATRRS).

It takes from three to five weeks to schedule promotable SSGs for ANCOC after the promotion list is released. In that process, the schools coordinator considers the sequence numbers, physical profiles, flags and bars, approved retirements, location and, if the NCO is overseas, whether or not it is more cost-

effective to send the NCO temporary duty (TDY) and return or TDY enroute to his new next duty station.

Scheduling for the basic NCO course (BNCOC) is conducted by the NCOES Branch at PERSCOM using the BNCOC automated report system (BARS) or by units submitting a request through the chain of command to the installation training office through the Army training application system (ATAS).

The BARS report is an order-of-merit list that ranks staff sergeants by date-of-rank and promotable sergeants by promotion points. The battalion schools NCO usually maintains the BARS report with input from the unit leadership and NCO support channel.

BARS is only as accurate as the input from the field; it is the unit's and NCO's responsibility to keep the report up-to-date. Failure to do so could result in delays or the inability to schedule an otherwise eligible NCO for BNCOC.

FA Branch can request BNCOC for an NCO TDY enroute to a new duty station; however, attendance depends on available class dates and training spaces. Once scheduled, soldiers must pay strict attention to personnel telegrams (PERSGRAMS) because, since 1 October 2001, many NCOs attend BNCOC in two separate locations for Phase I (Common Core) and Phase II (Technical Track). Dates and locations should be verified with the battalion schools manager.

A frequent concern is the status of conditionally promoted NCOs (those who have met the cut-off scores but

have not completed the appropriate NCOES school) being administratively reduced because they haven't completed BNCOC. Soldiers are required to complete NCOES within one year of being conditionally promoted. Soldiers who are not scheduled for the appropriate school within one year will not have their rank removed if nonattendance is due to no fault of their own. If nonattendance is their fault, (academic or disciplinary reasons, failure to meet Army height and weight standards or to pass the Army physical fitness test, or APFT), they will have their rank removed.

The primary leadership development course (PLDC) is conducted locally at major installations. Local units schedule soldiers to attend PLDC through the installation schools manager. The battalion CSM maintains an order-of-merit list.

Special Duty and Nominative Assignments. These assignments play an important role in the careers of most soldiers. Solid duty performance in one of these jobs often will increase a soldier's potential for promotion because he has demonstrated the ability to perform outside the normal duties of his MOS in a very challenging assignment. Soldiers can enjoy a successful career without serving in one of these type positions; however, the majority of senior NCOs promoted to MSG and SGM have completed a tour successfully in a special duty or nominative position.

The career maps for each MOS list the positions by grade for which NCOs will be considered for special duty or nominative assignments. (For an example, see the row marked "Special Assignments" in Figure 2.)

"Special duty" assignments are for SSGs and below—from four to 10 years of service. These include duty as drill sergeants, recruiters, instructors and a small number of other unique positions. PERSCOM selects soldiers for special duty positions.

A SGT may be selected for duty as a recruiter based on the need for recruiters and the available population of SSGs in an MOS. An SSG may serve as a recruiter, drill sergeant, instructor and, in a few cases, as an O/C at a CTC.

Each of the special duty assignments has specific requirements regarding rank, GT score, minimum physical profile, NCOES courses completed, age and leadership experience. Drill sergeant, instructor and O/C requirements are listed in AR 614-200, *Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management*.



Drill Sergeant Brad Handy supervises as Fort Sill FA Training Center recruits negotiate the "Skyscraper" during training at the Confidence Obstacle Course. (Photo by Fred W. Baker III, Fort Sill Cannoneer.)

Generally, the minimum requirements are a GT score of 100 or better, be serving in the grade SSG and a BNCOC graduate, have quality NCOERs and DA Form 1059 Service School Academic Evaluation Report and display military bearing, leadership ability and the capability to perform in positions of greater responsibility.

To be a drill sergeant, an NCO must be 36 years old or younger, unless volunteering (submit a copy of a recent physical).

Army-wide, there is a greater need for qualified SGTs and SSGs for recruiting duty. Recruiting is difficult to qualify for because recruiters often must live away from military posts in high-cost areas. Because of this, there are additional restrictions on the number of dependents permitted.

As a SGT or SSG, drill sergeant, recruiter or instructor duty should be the goal after completing two years in a leadership position. Soldiers should be willing to accept more than one type of these challenging assignments because they are limited by the school dates available and the number of personnel returning from these assignments. If a soldier receives orders for one, he should put as much effort into being successful at that duty as he did in the positions that allowed him to be selected for the special duty.

All soldiers considered for special duty assignments must pass a commander's evaluation for service in the duty position and an extensive background review of police records, financial records and Army community support records. PERSCOM assignment branches usually consider five NCOs for every three special duty job positions.

"Nominative" assignments are for career soldiers—senior SSGs and SFCs and above. PERSCOM nominates soldiers for these positions. An SFC may serve as a recruiter, drill sergeant, CTC or AC/RC O/C, instructor, equal opportunity NCO and in a few positions in ROTC or West Point. Most SFCs serving as recruiters or drill sergeants were assigned initially as SSGs and, subsequently were selected for promotion.

An MSG may serve as a CTC or AC/RC O/C, equal opportunity NCO, inspector general (IG) NCO or ROTC instructor.

FA nominative assignments are competitive and based primarily on demonstrated leadership ability, technical proficiency and other selection criteria, such as time-in-grade, time-on-station and the effect on unit readiness.


- 
- Have an active Army Knowledge Online (AKO) account.
 - Know when you are eligible for a board.
 - Ensure your Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (EREC) "board" packet is accurate.
 - Check your OMPF online through the AKO portal.
 - Have a current photo (every three years); send a digital photo to EREC via AKO (fast) or mail a copy of the digital photo (slow).
 - Verify your DA Form 2-1 and ERB; make sure the data does not conflict between these two reports and sign them when you verify them.
 - If there are errors, *correct* them.

Figure 3: DA Promotion Board Preparation Checklist. The board only sees three documents: official military personnel file (OMPF), photo and DA Form 2-1 Personnel Qualification Record/Enlisted Records Brief (ERB).

A soldier can improve his chances for selection to a special duty or nominative position by ensuring his GT score is over 100, a prerequisite for both these types of assignments. If he has retaken the ASVAB after joining the Army, he must ensure current scores are reflected on his DA Form 2-1/2A, Personnel Qualification Record and (or) Enlisted Records Brief (ERB).

Being selected for a special duty or nominative assignment is significant. However, these assignments are not substitutes for successful troop-leading time. Each NCO should serve at least 24 months in each leadership position at the appropriate grade; the time served "on the line" is an essential part of the professional development of the NCO.

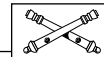
Records Accuracy. With the ability to review most of his military records online, every FA soldier should review them for completeness and accuracy before every centralized selection board meets. By the end of 2002, the Army will discontinue making microfiche military records; all soldiers will have to review their records online. Figure 3 provides a checklist to use in preparing for a board.

The NCOER is the most important tool used by promotion boards and by FA Branch for consideration for nominative assignments. Because the NCOER is a permanent part of an NCO's record, the overall quality of the NCOER is of the utmost importance, both in substance (content) and format. AR 623-

605, *NCOER System* should be the start point for any questions on the NCOER.

The current NCOER system works. It clearly identifies the vast majority of successful NCOs who should be promoted and provides the opportunity for senior leaders to recognize those NCOs who are exceptional. Thus, performance reflected on the NCOER is the most important aspect of a soldier's career progression and the one aspect over which he has the most control.

There is no magical formula for success. Success is a combination of competence, hard work and solid performance in the duty position and in sustaining this performance in each duty position. The soldier must become familiar with the recommended career pathways and general sequence of assignments, develop his leadership and technical skills, complete the required schools, meet the minimum aptitude standards, use reenlistment windows to his advantage and continually perform to standard. The soldier who does all these things will be the modern, technically proficient, professional NCO who is taking *charge* of his career.



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Lieutenant Colonel (Promotable) William A. Rigby is the Field Artillery Branch Chief, EPMD at PERSCOM. He has served in a variety of Field Artillery assignments, to include in cannon, multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) and Pershing units. He most recently headed the Office of the Chief of Field Artillery as Chief of the Field Artillery Propensity Office (FAPO) in Training Command, Fort Sill. He will attend the War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, in August.



The Battalion Fire Control NCO

By Sergeant First Class Robert M. Castillo

My first experience with the Field Artillery battalion fire control NCO (FCNCO) was as a young soldier in a battery fire direction center (FDC) during the battalion “Best FDC Competition.” I was the FDC advance party man in a 105-mm battery and had just pulled into position with the rest of the battery advance party.

As I began to enter the initial gun data into the back-up computer system (BUCS), I heard this gruff voice asking, “What are your priorities of work as the advance party man?” Before I could answer, he took the data and BUCS and entered the data in a few seconds. His final words were, “It’s getting ready to shoot!”

During the rest of my first tour, I experienced the wrath of that old, crabby, knowledgeable, chain-smoking, coffee-drinking manual fire direction guru many times. He dictated what we trained on and when and where we trained it.

The battalion FCNCO has remained essentially the same for the past 12 years—although with the introduction

of digital systems to the Field Artillery, the scope of his duties has increased and will increase even more in the next three to four years.

This article addresses the duties and responsibilities of the FCNCO and outlines some tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) for his increasing the effectiveness of the battalion.

Duties and Responsibilities. The primary duty of the FCNCO is to be the premier trainer of all the Military Occupation Specialties (MOS) 13E Cannon Fire Direction Specialists and 13C Automated Fire Support Systems Specialists in the direct support (DS) FA battalion. He determines the “gate” training strategy for all 13E/C tasks in the battalion; manages the 13E/Cs; mentors battery and platoon FDC soldiers, section chiefs and fire direction officers (FDOs); guards FDC Sergeant’s Time training; and develops the roadmap for digital training in his battalion.

In addition, the FCNCO brings much to the DS orders process in the military decision-making process (MDMP). With his shooter’s and executor’s perspective, he can serve the battalion well.

Training. While I was the FCNCO for the 2d Battalion, 320th Field Artillery (2-320 FA), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, the battalion instituted an aggressive training program to introduce ex-Paladin FDC chiefs to the world of manual FDC secondary checks and computations. We did this via FDC consolidated training in Sergeant’s Time and the commitment of the command group to a liberal training program.

However, the FCNCO responsibilities and input are just as important in the mechanized artillery battalion. The FCNCO’s ability to understand both the light and heavy fire direction worlds is an asset to either battalion.

Our gate strategy began with prioritizing the basic fire direction tasks based on our mission essential task list (METL) and then training them in standardized crew drills supplemented with informally written standing operating procedures (SOPs). These SOPs had step-by-step procedures to enhance understanding. The training culminated in gunnery field exercises with advance party procedures, occupation crew drills and fire mission processing.

Later, as the FCNCO in 4-27 FA, 1st Armored Division, Germany, we established a training strategy to build the gunnery knowledge of all FDC soldiers based on feedback from a rotation to the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) in Hohenfels. The soldiers attended basic manual gunnery classes once a month during consolidated Sergeant’s Time. Determining soldiers’ training needs on an implied task—manual gunnery—is the FCNCO’s responsibility.

The FCNCO’s time should be spent with the battery and platoon FDCs concentrating on simple step-by-step drills at the lowest levels. This enhances and standardizes soldier knowledge at every level.

The time spent with the battery and platoon FDCs is beneficial in two ways. First, it ensures the training conducted at the battalion and section levels is useful and realistic and standardizes the battalion. The endstate is soldiers can be “plugged into” any battery because they all were trained in the same manner.

Second, the FCNCO learns the strengths and weaknesses of each of his battery and platoon FDCs, which makes him a better advisor to the commander in all matters concerning the FDCs.

Managing. The FCNCO gives the command sergeant major (CSM) a monthly “snapshot” of the FDC sol-

diers and where the battalion stands in team building. With the help of the personnel actions NCO and the battery first sergeants, each FDC soldier is tracked using a simple spreadsheet software program containing his name, rank, duty position, arrival date, previous duty position, departure date and battery.

This form allows the FCNCO to make recommendations to the chain of command and the NCO support channel on moving soldiers and replacing soldiers leaving the battalion. It also enhances the battalion's ability to promote soldiers from within, align new leaders with sections based on their abilities and that of their prospective sections, and create an environment for soldiers to strive to become leaders.

In FY04, MOS 13E and 13C are scheduled to be consolidated into MOS 13D FA Tactical Data Systems Specialist. With the introduction of the 13D program to the fire direction community, tracking FDC soldiers increases in importance because of the effects of consolidating two MOS on a DS battalion. For example, unless the FCNCO has a tracking system in place, if the battalion receives an abundance of ex-13Cs to run the battery and platoon FDC, this could lead to problems throughout the battalion. In addition, to qualify as a 13D, the 13C or 13E, at a minimum, must undergo a battalion-directed training program and be certified as a 13D by the first lieutenant colonel in the soldier's chain-of-command.

Mentoring. A battalion mentoring program is, perhaps, the hardest to start but the easiest to maintain. By the nature of his job, the FCNCO is the senior "observer/controller" in all matters related to the battalion's FDCs. During field problems, the FCNCO learns about the individual abilities of each leader and soldier by visiting the firing batteries and observing the crew drills, fire direction procedures and other training.

The FCNCO's visits to the battery FDCs with the Battalion Master Gunner provide invaluable information for the command team to use in future training events, field exercises and deployments to the various training centers. During these visits, soldiers begin to understand the role of the FCNCO, his training plans and his ability to make them better at their jobs. The visits also can evaluate the effectiveness of training and refine TTPs that aren't working. The visits promote the FCNCO's interaction with the FDC soldiers and build

teams around the programs instead of vice-versa.

The FCNCO mentorship of battery and platoon FDC personnel must include the battalion FDO and the soldiers in the battalion FDC. The relationship between the FCNCO and the battalion FDO is easy to define if one understands what each "brings to the table." At the battalion level, the FDO is either a senior lieutenant or captain who, in most cases, has served as a battery or platoon FDO. His understanding of the tactical and technical aspects of the battalion FDC is limited to his experience as a battery FDO.

The battalion FCNCO is a senior enlisted leader (E-7/sergeant first class) who has served as a battery fire direction NCO (FDNCO); in most cases, as a 13C, he will have spent much of his time at the battalion FA tactical operations center (TOC). Together, the two must build on each other's strengths and knowledge and dedicate themselves to training the battalion fire direction capabilities.

They share duties in the orders process and developing battalion FDC leaders and, most important, perform each other's duties in the other's absence. Together they are key to the FDC program and, therefore, share in the mentorship program.

In many cases, the FCNCO must develop the skills of the battalion FDO to help him understand the difference between his role as a planner and executor. For example during the MDMP, the FCNCO can help the battalion FDO develop a plan that is tactically and technically effective.

Too often, the technical aspects of a plan are overlooked until it is already in the hands of the battalion FDC and the battery and platoon FDCs. The FCNCO's mentoring of the battalion FDO improves the plan and, at the same

time, allows the FCNCO to gain experience in planning, learning skills most FDOs learned from their first days in the service.

The battalion FDO and FCNCO can develop FDC leaders in programs such as the "FDC University" held one night a week, Fire Direction Conferences to validate new SOPs or TTPs held quarterly and the occasional brown-bag lunches with various combinations of FDC chiefs, FDOs, the battalion's officers and the command group. The battalion FDC personnel can be developed with classes in the MDMP, essential fire support tasks (EFSTs) versus essential FA tasks (EFATs) and ammunition management.

Guarding Sergeant's Time. The CSM establishes the battalion's Sergeant's Time standards. His format is a tool for all NCOs to ensure precious training time is not wasted—or worse, is not "just another event" annotated in the monthly training calendar.

As the guardian of Sergeant's Time, the FCNCO ensures FDC soldiers maintain the high standards established by the CSM. In Sergeant's Time, FDC soldiers meet one day a week for consolidated FDC training taught by section chiefs and leaders in the various FDCs. This consolidated program allows NCO trainers to train as they were trained, standardizing the battalion's training.

The training plan is the "digital road map," a plan that allows the FCNCO to share his training vision for 13Es/Cs with the command group, showing how the training meshes with the battalion's METL. This allows the command group to prioritize training, consolidate assets and resources, and map the training objectives in the six-week training calendar. Figure 1 is an example of a digital road map for a task, in this case, developing a digital fire mission processing SOP.

- **Week One**—Determine the format for the SOP; participants include all current fire direction NCOs (FDNCOs) and fire direction officers (FDOs).
- **Week Two**—Determine the database requirements for sensor-to-shooter links.
- **Week Three**—Link the sensor-to-shooter, for example: handheld terminal unit (HTU) to task force advanced FA tactical data system (AFATDS) to battalion fire direction center (FDC) AFATDS to battery lightweight computer unit (LCU) AFATDS.
- **Week Four**—Determine fire mission step-by-step procedures using a sensor-to-shooter link (classroom environment).
- **Week Five**—Conduct a sensor-to-shooter communications exercise (COMEX) using a "TACFIRE [tactical fire direction system] Park" or motor pool.
- **Week Six**—Introduce the digital field environment in a field training exercise (FTX).

Figure 1: The FCNCO's Training Road Map for Developing Digital Fire Mission Processing Standing Operating Procedures (SOP)

The FCNCO and the MDMP. With all the duties and responsibilities discussed, introducing the FCNCO to the orders process is the most beneficial to the battalion because of his experience at both the battery and battalion levels. For example, the FCNCO can have input into no less than eight sets of orders involved in the battalion's rotation to the CMTC, not including the deployment and redeployment orders.

The following information walks through the MDMP for developing orders and presents TTP for the FCNCO's involvement in the process.

As we begin the orders process, the first step is mission analysis. The FCNCO should bring the information listed in Figure 2 to the mission analysis. Using their experience, the FCNCO and battalion FDO can provide insight into the digital technical and tactical aspects of the mission.

As the mission is analyzed, the FCNCO can provide insight for the S3 to develop the warning order (WARNO) for the batteries, to include battalion-directed rehearsals for the battery and platoon FDCs.

The next phase of the MDMP is developing courses of action (COAs) and wargaming them. The FCNCO and battalion FDO can help the S2 develop the plan that portrays the enemy actions in the various COAs. Figure 3 lists the information the FCNCO must have for wargaming.

The FCNCO's and battalion FDO's contributions up to this stage of the



The FCNCO leads an after-action review (AAR) at one of his FDCs. He oversees the training of and mentors all the battalion's 13Es and 13Cs.

MDMP have been technical in nature. But during wargaming, they must shift from planner to executor. The FCNCO's knowledge of what the gun line can and cannot do is critical information for planners. Much like the battalion operations officer/S3, he is the honest broker of the plan.

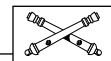
After the commander chooses the COA, the FCNCO attends the Field Artillery support plan (FASP) briefing and the battalion Rock Drill. He provides technical expertise and explains how the targets will be attacked and what the triggers are for ammunition resupply. In fact, he may have to brief the plan in the absence of the battalion FDO.

- Gunnery Solution for All Targets
- Ammunition Requirements
- Shift Times
- Met Schedule Confirmed
- EFATs Plotted with Range Arcs
- Key Decision Points Identified
- Ammunition Resupply Synchronized with EFAT Execution

Figure 3: The FCNCO's Information for Wargaming

TTP that has evolved out of Combat Training Center (CTC) rotations has the FCNCO present at the brigade fire support rehearsal and brigade combined arms rehearsal to increase his understanding of the plan. His ability to envision the brigade commander's intent for fires helps him synchronize the shooter with the sensor. The FCNCO's presence at these two major events also allows for invaluable cross talk with the aviators (fixed-wing and helicopters) and helps him understand critical decision points for the brigade during the fight. With this knowledge he can ensure the battalion FDC is more flexible—can change the plan during the fight, as needed.

As a major player in training and directing fire direction personnel, the FCNCO can enhance the effectiveness of the battalion. His knowledge of his fire direction leaders and soldiers at the battalion and battery/platoon levels allows him to focus the battalion's fire direction efforts to accomplish the mission. He can live up to his title as the battalion's "Fire Control NCO" if his priority is "Getting ready to shoot!"



Sergeant First Class Robert M. Castillo is the Fire Control NCO (FCNCO) for the 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery (4-27 FA), part of the 1st Armored Division in Germany. He previously served as an Operations Sergeant and FCNCO for 2-320 FA, part of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; Fire Direction Center Observer/Controller and Fire Support Analyst at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California; FCNCO for 3-29 FA and Battery Fire Direction Chief for 5-29 FA, both in the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized) at Fort Carson, Colorado; and Battery Fire Direction Chief for 1-7 FA, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) at Fort Drum, New York. He entered the Army in 1989 and holds a BA in English from St. Edwards University in Austin, Texas.

- Digital Status: Do we have digital communications with observers, fire support elements (FSEs) and battery/platoons?
- Communication Issues: Do we have communications with observers, FSEs and battery/platoons?
- Essential Fire Support Task (EFST) to Essential Field Artillery Task (EFAT): What are our EFAT requirements?
- Range: What ranges must we be prepared to shoot?
- Munitions: What munitions are required?
- Meteorological: What is our Met schedule?
- Required Supply Rate (RSR): What is our RSR?
- Controlled Supply Rate (CSR): What is our CSR?

Figure 2: The FCNCO's Information for Mission Analysis

"So, FSO, did we integrate our mortars effectively?"

By Sergeant First Class Russell W. Scott

All maneuver units require indirect fires to win battles. Mortar sections and platoons provide the maneuver commander responsive indirect fires in the close fight.

Military history has repeatedly demonstrated the effectiveness of mortars. Their rapid, high-angle fires are invaluable against dug-in enemy troops and targets in defilade that are not vulnerable to attack by direct fires. *FM 7-90, Tactical Employment of Mortars* states that, by virtue of their organization at both the company and battalion levels, mortars provide valuable and responsive fires that ease the combat tasks of company/troop, battalion/squadron and brigade/regimental commanders. The bottom line—the primary role of the mortars is to provide responsive, indirect fires to the maneuver commander.

Sound good? Well, it *isn't* happening!

What I see at the National Training Center (NTC), Fort Irwin, California, is rotational units' inability to achieve the mortar effects desired during combined arms operations. I continually see the task force struggle to integrate its mortars properly into the scheme of maneuver even though the mortar platoon leader is encouraged to spend time at the tactical operations center (TOC) during the planning phases of all operations.

Am I implying that the task force commanders, fire support officers (FSOs) and mortar platoon leaders do not know their jobs? Not at all. Through many rotations, I have met some of the most technically and tactically proficient officers and NCOs in the US Army.

So what's the problem? It's not that mortars lack target list worksheets, overlays or fire support execution matrices (FSEMs). For the most part, they each have a specific task and purpose during

the various phases of the operation.

You might ask, "Well, isn't that integration of mortars into the fire plan?" And I would answer, "Yes and No." I said only "specific task and purpose"—the mortar platoon's mission also must be realistic.

Many times I have read a task force operations order (OPORD) where the mortar platoon's mission is to fix the advance guard main body (AGMB) or the main body (MB). That is asking too much of a mortar platoon.

First, commanders and FSOs must give mortars a realistic mission, one within the weapon's capabilities. This problem can be resolved by the FSO's focusing on high-payoff targets (HPTs) that mortars can affect. Additionally, the FSO must provide the essential mortar tasks, their purposes and desired effects for the realistic missions. Both the mortar platoon and the observers who will be calling for fire require realistic, clearly understood missions.

Mortars destroy, neutralize or suppress the enemy, allowing the maneuver element to close with and kill him. For example during a recent rotation, I observed a mortar platoon during a force-on-force movement-to-contact mission. The mortars moved about one kilometer behind the lead maneuver element.

The mortars occupied Mortar Point Three when the lead element (M1A2 tanks and M2 Bradleys) started to receive fire from enemy anti-tank (AT) systems to the front. The observer responsible for this area called the FSO



with a fire mission, which was relayed to the mortars. The enemy, consisting of two BRDMs (Soviet-type wheeled vehicle) with AT5s, was using a hill mass and a wadi-system for cover and to gain firing angle advantages.

The mortars adjusted fire onto the target to try to suppress the BRDMs. Unfortunately, the target survived due to a lack of volume of fires. The first BRDM pulled back for cover, forcing the second to reposition.

Mortars received a second fire mission from the FSO. Using three and then four guns, the mortars quickly adjusted onto the target with suppressive effects.

Meanwhile the task force commander halted the movement of the lead element approximately three kilometers from the target (maximum range of the AT5 is 3,750 meters). His task for the mortars, which had limited ammunition, was to destroy the AT5s. The mortars fired 14 suppressive missions, but due to terrain and the ability of the BRDMs to quickly reposition, the BRDMs survived.

About the time the mortars went "black" on ammunition, the task force commander ordered the lead element to close with and destroy the enemy. Five tanks and three Bradleys later, it was all over.

This engagement could have been a classic example of synchronization had the lead element taken advantage of the

mortars to suppress the enemy's direct fire weapons as the friendly force advanced. The outcome of the battle could have been different.

No one can foresee the future, and it's easy to pick apart someone's course of action after the fact, but this engagement illustrates that the commander made the conscious decision *not* to integrate his battlefield assets to accomplish the mission. The commander chose to use his weapons one at a time instead of in concert with each other (mass), losing the advantages the integrated operation would have given him. As a result, the task force did not accomplish the mission.

How do units use mortars more effectively? In addition to the commander's giving the mortar platoon realistic missions, the task force fire supporters and decision makers need to establish command relationships to routinely work with mortars, ensure mortar leaders participate in the task force military decision-making process (MDMP) and train with mortars at home station.

Command Relationships. Relationships between the mortar platoon leader and his task force commander, battalion operations officer and FSO must be special, as stated in FM 7-90. The FM also states that the FSO and the mortar platoon leader must have a unique rela-

tionship. They both must understand the battalion commander's intent for fires and work closely together to see that it is carried out.

Well, that's what doctrine says. But it's an area units really have to work on.

During my time as an observer/controller (O/C), about 80 percent of the mortar platoon leaders do not know their FSOs. They talk once or twice one week before coming to the NTC—one can only imagine how that impacts on the planning process. Mortars usually are pushed to the side and haphazardly worked into the fire plan as an afterthought.

Military Decision-Making Process.

The mortar platoon leader or platoon sergeant needs to be involved in the task force's MDMP at home station as well as during Combat Training Center (CTC) rotations. This facilitates the FSO's, operations officer's (S3's) and commander's better understanding of the capabilities and limitations of mortars.

After the mission analysis briefing to the task force commander, the commander provides specific guidance for mortars, including the essential fire support tasks (EFSTs) with task, purpose, method and desired effects. This focuses the mortar platoon throughout the planning and preparation phases.

The mortar platoon leader and (or) platoon sergeant must actively participate in the course of action (COA) development and wargaming stages of the MDMP. This ensures mortars will be integrated into and synchronized with the task force scheme of maneuver and defensive plan. The process will define specific mortar fire missions, movement triggers, positioning and resupply requirements.

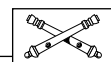
Without the participation of mortar leaders in the MDMP, decision makers can make erroneous assumptions about what the mortar platoon can and cannot do.

Home-Station Training. Mortar training should start with all related fire support elements in the task force to establish rapport and a good working relationship among these elements and promote a better understanding of the requirements involved in integrating mortars.

Mortars must be an integral part of unit training events, such as command post exercises (CPXs) in the motor pool, task force and company-level gunnery training, and field training exercises (FTXs).

This article does not tell everything units need to do to integrate mortars with maneuver—it just gives a few suggestions based on observations of rotations at the NTC.

If units implement these suggestions, they can go a long way toward reversing the negative trend of failing to integrate mortars into combined arms operations.



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Senior Fire Support Conference

30 September—4 October

The 2002 Senior Fire Support Conference will be held from Monday 30 September until Friday 4 October at the Field Artillery School, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The conference will cover subjects related to current, future, joint and allied fires.

In addition to brigade-level and above Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) Army and Marine Field Artillery commanders with their command sergeants major (CSMs), the conference attendees will include Army and Marine senior commanders; selected senior leaders from all services and our allies; some retired general officers; and US Field Artillery Association corporate members.

The main conference for all attendees will start on Wednesday 1 October. Monday and Tuesday will have special sessions for Army AC and Army National Guard (ARNG) Field Artillery commanders and their CSMs.

Monday will be conference registration for special session attendees followed by an evening icebreaker. Tuesday's sessions will discuss FA issues, including a status report on the Senior Field Artillery Leaders' Conference held at the Field Artillery School in May. On Tuesday afternoon, ARNG commanders will have a special session as will the CSMs, both AC and ARNG.

Other conference attendees will register for the conference Tuesday afternoon.

As the conference theme and details of the conference agenda are finalized, they will be posted on the Senior Fire Support Conference website on the Fort Sill Homepage: sill-www.army.mil/sfsc. If readers have questions before the website is online, they can contact Colonel Gary Swartz, Director of the Fire Support and Combined Arms Operations Department, FA School, at swartzl@sill.army.mil.

FA School Library Named After Master Sergeant Morris Swett

In October 1968, the US Army Artillery and Missile Center, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, renamed its “Technical Library” in Room 16 of Snow Hall “Morris J. Swett” after a retired Master Sergeant who devoted more than 40 years to the library.

Morris Swett was born in Brooklyn, New York, on 18 December 1888. He entered military service on 22 December 1908 at Fort Slocum, New York, and on 3 January 1909, was assigned as a Photographer at the US Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, where he served for six years. During that time, he worked in the USMA library and discovered his lifelong interest as a librarian.

On 15 May 1915, he was transferred to the School of Fire at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to help run the newly established library. The artillery library had been started by First Lieutenant (later Major General) Ralph Pennell, Secretary of the School of Fire, by order of Captain Dan T. Moore, the first Commandant of the School of Fire, in 1911.

When Master Sergeant Swett retired 1 July 1939 after 30 years of active service, he had devoted more than 24 years to the development of Fort Sill’s 60,000-volume library. He then joined the staff of the *Field Artillery Journal* in Washington, DC, under the editorship of Captain Wilbur S. Nye.

On 15 October 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an unprecedented executive order placing Sergeant Swett in civil service, waiving the requirement for him to speak a foreign language, enabling him to serve as the librarian at Fort Sill. Sergeant Swett, once again, became the librarian at the Field Artillery School.

Before his retirement from civil service in December 1954, his job position was as a GS 11, one of the highest grades in civil service. He had served the Fort Sill library for more than 40 years.

On 14 January 1955, Morris Swett received the Meritorious Civilian Ser-

vice Award, the second highest citation given to a civilian employee, for his service from 15 October 1939 until 15 October 1954.

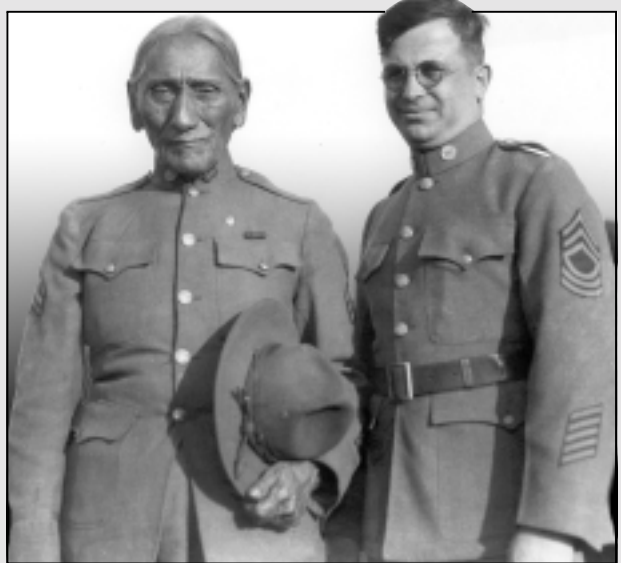
Morris Swett had developed the library’s technical and historical holdings from a nucleus of a few volumes to one of the largest, most complete catalogued military libraries in existence. He also gathered original source material on the history of Fort Sill and the surrounding area.

On his off-duty time, he was active in recording the personalities and events of historical interest in the area by conducting interviews, collecting materials and artifacts, and taking photographs. His range of interests included not only the military, but also civilian pioneers of the region, particularly the Indians. He was a friend of Indian Scout I-See-O after whom the Field Artillery School’s I-See-O Hall was named. In addition in 1942, he was adopted into the Kiowa Tribe as the son of Hunting Horse and named “Too-qoodle-ti-ke,” meaning “Helping Young Man.”

In addition to collecting earlier photographs, he took some 2,000 photographs covering the period 1916 through the 1930s. He preserved and catalogued these photographs, often donating them to the appropriate museum of the area, such as the Carnegie Library and the Museum of the Great Plains—including giving thousands of documents, artifacts and photographs to the Fort Sill Museum.

Swett’s knowledge, contacts, records and photographs were critical in the development and writing of the official history of old Fort Sill—*Carbine and Lance* by Wilbur S. Nye.

He was also instrumental in locating and marking many historical sites on Fort Sill and elsewhere. For example, he conducted research and located the



Master Sergeant Morris Swett stands with the famous Indian Scout I-See-O.

unmarked grave of frontier Marshal Heck Thomas in Highland Cemetery, Lawton, Oklahoma, and helped to locate the unmarked grave of Geronimo on Fort Sill.

In 1964, he was awarded the prestigious Achievement Award of the American Association of State and Local History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Under his guidance, the Field Artillery Library had grown from approximately 200 volumes to more than 108,000 volumes, comprising one of the finest Artillery libraries in the world. It was still growing by 4,000 volumes per year when he retired.

In 1962 at the age of 74, Morris Swett joined the staff of the Museum of the Great Plains, Lawton, as the curator of its library and archives. He guided the development of the museum’s library until July 1965.

In August 1966, Morris Swett died at the age of 77 after a lengthy illness. He was buried with full military honors in the Fort Sill Cemetery.

Master Sergeant Morris Swett often was referred to as “Mr. Fort Sill” because of his vast historical knowledge of the post and area. As one of the pillars of the Field Artillery School, he helped and advised generations of young artillerymen and was widely known throughout the artillery community.

Information taken from collected newspaper clippings and documents of Morris Swett Library.

Ed.

NCOs and Values-Based Decision Making

By First Sergeant Edwin V. Blount



In the “Army of One,” senior leaders look to the NCO Corps to embrace a value system that develops character and to lead soldiers. The Army depends on its NCOs to create the environment and set the tempo for success in full-spectrum operations.

Successful NCOs anticipate change, exploit every opportunity to meet the unit’s objectives and motivate their subordinates to higher levels of productivity to achieve the unit’s goals. Successful sergeants promote Army Values and take care of soldiers in the process. In short, they are leaders with values-based decision-making skills.

Full-spectrum operations is a concept based on the realization that modern wars most likely will be fought with more high-technology forces in complex terrain. These include offensive and defensive operations in major theater wars (MTWs) down to stability and support operations (SASO). These operations often will be conducted on an expanded, nonlinear battlefield.

Full-spectrum operations demand that NCOs master the art of leading soldiers in any situation. This makes developing quality leaders with mature decision-making skills a priority for the NCO Corps.

Developing Quality Leaders. While many civilian organizations seek individuals they hope already have honed essential leadership abilities, the NCO Corps “grows” leaders, instilling the leadership qualities and skills in its young soldiers. The NCO Corps accomplishes this by having young soldiers participate in different courses and training and perform in different jobs. This exposes them repeatedly to the applicable environments, developing their insight to anticipate change and skills to exploit the opportunities change presents and teaching them how to inspire subordinates to higher levels of productivity to meet unit objectives. Successful NCOs are uninhibited by constraints that would be considered daunting, and they place no boundaries or limitations on accomplishing their goals.

Successful NCOs accomplish full-spectrum missions by being task-oriented and persuasive and tactful in influencing others. Their influence, however, would be short-lived without keen conceptual skills, task competence, good human relation skills, and a sense of self-confidence.

Conceptual Skills. These are “general analytical ability, logical thinking, pro-

iciency in concept formation and conceptualization of complex and ambiguous relationships, creativity in idea generation and problem solving, ability to analyze events and perceive trends, anticipate changes, and recognize opportunities and potential problems.¹¹ These skills are essential for NCOs' effective planning, organizing, coordinating policy formation, problem solving and program development.

For instance, in order to coordinate separate, specialized parts of a unit, an NCO needs a certain level of technical knowledge of how the various parts relate to each other. He must be able to visualize and anticipate how changes in one part of the unit's operations will affect the other parts. Otherwise, he won't be able to synchronize the overall operation.

Task Competence and Self Confidence. NCOs provide and create the capabilities for significant victories on the battlefield. This is why NCOs must know procedures, methods and techniques involved in pursuing the unit's objectives. They must be highly proficient in using the tools of their trade.

Technical and tactical competence in their jobs gives sergeants confidence when directing subordinates and helps them make effective decisions. Competent, confident NCOs are more likely to make good decisions and influence others to help them implement the decisions to accomplish the mission.

At the same time, they must recognize their own weaknesses—knowing when to seek help or advice is a positive attribute. Such flexibility allows good leaders to avoid wasted effort on counterproductive courses of actions.

Human Relations Skills. In addition, because sergeants are first-line leaders and interact with soldiers on an hourly basis, human relations skills and making good humanistic decisions are critical to relate effectively to seniors and peers alike. The first-line leader must be a good communicator who demonstrates insight when dealing with social situations. He must be considerate of others and able to instill a spirit of cooperation among all the members of his team.

These abilities are essential for NCOs to establish rapport with subordinates, peers, superiors and outsiders. When a sergeant is not sensitive to the attitudes, feelings and needs of his soldiers, he won't be able to anticipate reactions to his orders accurately, making decision making difficult.

1. **Analyze the Mission**—Brigade receives the division operations order (OPORD), conducts an analysis and issues a warning order (WARNO).
2. **Determine the Situation**—Brigade commander determines his intent and guidance.
3. **Develop Courses of Action (COAs)**—Brigade develops COAs and determines the high-payoff target list (HPTL).
4. **Analyze COAs**—Brigade analyzes and wargames the various COAs, determining the best COAs for the commander's consideration.
5. **Compare COAs**—This is a continuation of the brigade's wargaming of the COAs with the brigade staff briefing the commander on his COA options.
6. **Decide on COA**—Commander determines the COA; brigade then prepares for/rehearses and executes the COA.

The Rational Decision-Making Model (Graham T. Allison) Parallel to the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP). The six steps in the rational decision-making model are similar to the steps in the MDMP; however, the latter carries the COA on into execution.

Values-Based Decision Making.

Quality NCO leadership goes beyond the traits and skills already discussed. NCOs must master the process of decision-making to enhance their effectiveness for their units and the Army, including using resources efficiently.

Decision making is the process of evaluating two or more options to reach the best possible outcome. Decision makers incorporate perception, interpretation, option generation and evaluation into the process.

Because NCOs face problems and issues calling for decision making daily, they must consider the requirements and directives when making choices. They also must be able to anticipate the effect the current situation will have on future requirements.

NCOs must continually evaluate each situation and adapt to unpredicted changes in the status quo. From the mountains of Afghanistan to SASO operations in Bosnia—even in administrative offices throughout the Army—sergeants must understand and be able to adjust to the conditions in which they must operate.

Two authors, Graham T. Allison and Thomas L. Saaty, have proposed processes for decision making. Allison developed a six-step process that uses an analysis approach to decision making.² Saaty developed the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), a concept for making values-focused decisions as compared to alternatives-focused decisions.³

Allison describes his rational decision-making model in six steps: mission analysis, situation analysis, course of action (COA) development, COA analysis, COA comparison and the decision. This model and others similar to it describe the process the Army uses daily in multiple ways. For instance, the military decision-making process

(MDMP) for combat operations is a decision making model. See the figure for a comparison of Allison's model and the brigade MDMP.

Using Allison's model, the NCO, for instance in a military contingency, begins by collecting information to determine the requirements to accomplish the mission. He then helps formulate goals and objectives based on the information obtained from the mission analysis. Next, he analyzes the situation and advises seniors of the details of the relevant factors, such as framework, operational area, restrictions, assumptions and deductions.

Based on this analysis, he helps identify COAs. He analyzes each COA for adequacy and feasibility and then evaluates them by weighing its advantages against its disadvantages. NCOs must participate in the final selection of the best COA in light of military operational successes and organizational capabilities.

Saaty says decision making is either values-focused or alternatives-focused and argues that decision making should be based on values, not alternatives. Alternatives-focused thinking is when the decision maker determines what alternatives are available and then chooses the best one—the one that solves the problem and is efficient, cost-effective and feasible to implement.

Values-focused thinking is when the decision maker decides what he wants as the outcome, based on his values, and figures out how to make it happen. He chooses his best values-based alternative and works to make it a reality.

While decision making usually focuses on a choice among alternatives, Saaty proposes that the underlying rationale in any decision problem should be the desire to avoid undesirable consequences while achieving desirable



NCOs who guard the War on Terrorism prisoners of war in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, struggle with integrity issues daily. (US Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 1st Class Shane T. McCoy)

ones. Although Saaty's process recognizes that fundamental values can result in the decision maker's identifying decision opportunities and developing better alternatives, the intent is to be proactive and select more attractive alternatives before reaching a conclusion.⁴

AHP is a highly flexible decision-making process; it allows for change in the selected COA. For example, it allows an NCO to gather input for a decision, make a values-based decision affecting his soldiers, test the sensitivity of his solution on his soldiers and make changes as necessary. The advantage is the AHP process recognizes the potential for the NCO to fine-tune a COA as the situation changes around him.

Finally, AHP provides a framework for NCOs' participation in decision making or problem solving. Ideas and judgments, when questioned, can be strengthened or weakened by input.

The way to shape the future is through team participation, bargaining and compromise. Although team participation takes time and may initially complicate the process of implementing a decision, the benefit of incorporating diverse input in the decision-making process outweighs the potential negative effect.

Understandably, in many situations there will not be enough time to get a volume of input for or fine tune a solution. However, if NCOs exercise these skills in situations when time is not a factor, the process will become second nature and useful, even in a clock-critical crisis in military operations.

Army Values and Decision Making. Army Values are extremely important

to NCO decision making: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honesty, Integrity, and Personal Courage (LDRSHIP). The following are two examples of how NCOs apply Army Values to their decision making.

NCOs face decisions affecting their integrity on many occasions. Integrity is steadfast obedience to a strict moral or ethical code and the ability to make firm and complete decisions without compromising mission objectives.

For instance, the NCOs who guard the War on Terrorism prisoners of war in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, struggle with integrity issues daily. Each must adhere consistently to strict procedures and abide by stringent rules, regulations and national/international laws pertaining to the treatment of prisoners of war while under the watchful eyes of the media and international authorities. Each must follow all the rules and laws with complete objectivity, regardless of his negative feelings about the group that attacked his nation or his personal bias for or against one or more of the individual prisoners. At the same time, he must conduct reasonable assessments of situations and demonstrate sound initiative under special situations while upholding the rules of engagement—behavior key to the success of any NCO.

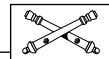
Integrity in an NCO is crucial for identifying shortcomings and enforcing standards. For instance, when a soldier is identified as overweight, the Weight Control NCO must enforce the standards of the Army weight control program. He should not ignore standards because the soldier is a hard worker

or a peer. The NCO must consider the good of the Army and ultimately the good of the overweight soldier and make the values-based decision. Often, the NCO will have to choose "the hard right over the easy wrong."

In this situation, the NCO would identify the individual for the overweight program and use his human relation skills to work with the soldier to develop goals for losing weight without breaking down the soldier's self-respect. This action implements a values-based decision, one that solves the problem and works with the individual affected by the decision.

To ignore the overweight problem because of a reenlistment goal, a promotion or because the soldier is a senior leader impairs the NCO's credibility and integrity. When he fails to enforce standards, he compromises the unit's combat readiness.

The reality is that sergeants will face problem-solving issues requiring decisions on a daily basis. Today's NCO must approach his job armed with essential leadership traits and an understanding of not only the decision-making process, but also the importance of values in that process.



First Sergeant Edwin V. Blount is the First Sergeant of A Battery, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, part of the 75th Field Artillery Brigade in III Corps Artillery, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. In his previous assignment, he was the First Sergeant in B Battery, 6th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery, also in the 75th FA Brigade. He was as an Observer/Controller for the 1st Battalion, 290th Training Support (FA) in the 4th Brigade, 75th Division (Training Support), Fort Sill. His other assignments include serving as a Battalion Intelligence Sergeant, Assistant Instructor for Distance Learning in the Battle Staff Course, Ammunition Section Chief, Launcher Section Chief and Gunner. Among other awards and honors, he is a member of the Sergeant Morales and Audie Murphy Clubs, was the V Corps Distinguished Leader and received the Leadership Award in his Basic NCO Course (BNCOC). He holds a Master of Arts in Management from Webster University, St. Louis.

Endnotes:

1. Gary R. Yukl, Ph.D., *Leadership in Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981), 85-87.
2. Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971) 255-256.
3. Thomas L. Saaty, *Decision Making for Leaders* (Belmont, CA: Lifetime Learning Publications, 1982), 22-26.
4. Ibid.

Desert Fire: The Diary of a Gulf War Gunner

Andrew Gillespie, South Yorkshire, England: Leo Cooper, 2001. 248 Pages. ISBN 0-85052-7953. \$25.86

This is a rare find—a book tailor-made for the professional development of young commissioned and noncommissioned officers.

Desert Fire is the personal story of Major Andrew Gillespie who commanded a battery of 155-mm self-propelled howitzers, part of the British 1st Armored Division during Operations Desert Shield and Storm. Although the work is titled a “Diary,” the entries have obviously been polished and edited. Perhaps some of the immediacy of first impressions may have been lost or softened, but the trade-off has produced a competently written, highly readable text.

The great strength of this book is that it offers innumerable examples of the often mundane, but crucial challenges that consume junior commanders on operational deployments. Most striking is the importance of post-deployment training. Gillespie’s account leaves little doubt that a battery trained to fight on the Rhine was ill-prepared for desert warfare.

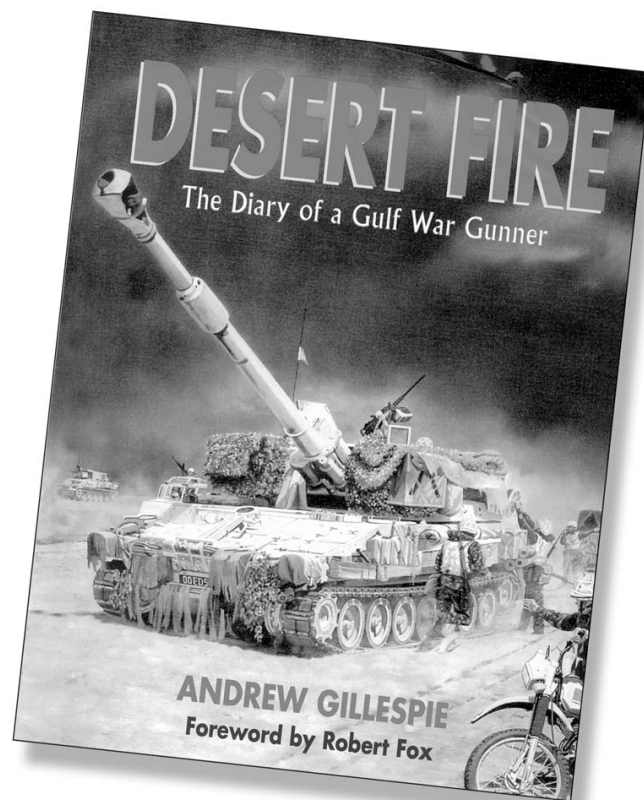
If the ground battle had started on 27 December, the day his men arrived in theater, rather than almost two months later, the results would have been quite different. Some of the tasks—figuring out the ins and outs of desert navigation—were predictable. Others came as surprises. Forward observers had always assumed that directing artillery fire would be their primary task; however, in the desert, they found that directing close air support (CAS) and employing laser-guided munitions were just as, if not more important.

Gillespie’s prewar days were filled with building and then training on makeshift ranges and conducting field training exercises. Preparations and training continued up to the final days before crossing the line of departure.

The diary is also excellent at illustrating the challenges of on-the-spot tactical innovation. Battery resupply depended on wheeled ammunition carriers that were totally unsuited to desert terrain. By trial and error, drivers discovered that by deflating their tires and maneuvering independently, rather than following in column as they had been taught and trained, they could compensate for their carriers’ limited off-road capabilities. Such stories are gems of what good soldiers and leaders do when faced with new operational challenges.

About two-thirds of the book covers the deployment, preparations and post-conflict operations; the remaining one-third is a fine narrative of the lightning war. Maps and photographs are scattered throughout. There is a useful appendix and index as well. All of these add to the utility of *Desert Fire* as a professional development tool.

The best way to approach this work is not as a prescriptive roadmap for how to adapt to desert battle, but as a case study in how junior leaders respond to operational challenges at the



tactical level. One technique would be to treat Gillespie’s narrative like an after-action review, looking at what he saw as the problem, how he addressed it and what one might learn from his experience. In virtually every category—leadership, tactics, equipment, doctrine and organization—there are vignettes in his account worthy of debate and discussion.

Another point of departure might be a comparison between British and American operational methods. The differences between the two are well known. British battery commanders are far more senior than their US counterparts. During the battle, they go forward to act as observers, leaving their second in command to maneuver the guns. This text not only offers an opportunity to debate the merits of both systems, but also should prompt consideration of which system might serve best in the 21st century.

Despite all the innovations stemming from digital systems and other transformation initiatives, the structure and function of the basic fighting unit—the artillery battery—seems little effected.

Rethinking the role of the battery leadership and reconsidering what the critical command functions are and how they will be exercised in a range of military operations should consume young minds for a long time and prompt innovation and experimentation in every unit.

Dr. James Jay Carafano, LTC(R), FA
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Washington, DC

The Maneuver Shooter Program:

Multiplying the Efficiency of Indirect Fires



By Master Sergeant Sean T. Yeterian and
Sergeant First Class Richard B. Dauz

The lieutenant was used to being this close to his adversaries, but never this vulnerable. The desert's topography offered no security. He and his soldiers were as easily visible to the three BMPs as they were to him. One glance from the BMPs in the wrong direction, and there was sure to be trouble.

The lieutenant knew it was time to draw upon his call-for-fire (CFF) training. As a new Bradley Commander, he had not yet been exposed to the repetitive CFF training that his other comrades had.

Being on the line looking directly at the foe while your crew hurriedly tried to remount a thrown track was not "part of the plan," at least not his plan. Now, with nowhere to run and the lives of his soldiers depending on the actions of the next several moments, the lieutenant felt the sting of responsibility and overwhelming pressure.

To his relief, the fire support officer (FSO) answered him on the first call. To his horror, the enemy seemed to note

their presence and began closing the 2000-meter gap between them. Now more desperate than ever, the lieutenant hurried his data, trying to estimate an accurate grid coordinate for the moving BMPs. He reported his information and continued the drill.

Throughout this desperate and sometimes frantic event, he never considered reporting the Bradley's location. It seemed unimportant at the time. The only thing that mattered was getting rid of the immediate threat.

The fire mission was executed, and the round landed short. The radio went silent, and no effects were reported.

History's battlefields are littered with incidents of fratricide. Too often these incidents can be attributed to a lack of understanding of the battlefield systems being used. The delivery of fires, be it from artillery, naval gunfire or close air support (CAS), is among the leading culprits of our darkest moments in combat.

The Maneuver Shooter Program is a tool meant to weaken the grip of igno-

rance. Its purpose is to ensure fires are not only safer for the troops on the line, but also a more lethal and effective force multiplier.

This article discusses the Maneuver Shooter Program, including its training strategy for teaching maneuver soldiers CFF procedures and giving them an appreciation of the requirements for and time it takes to clear fires.

The Training Strategy. Simply put, the Maneuver Shooter Program is a training plan to educate key leaders in frontline positions. The foundation of the program is based on CFF skills.

Forward observers (FOs) are positioned on the battlefield to gain as much insight into the enemy situation as possible; however, it is unrealistic to expect a "total" realization of battlefield activity with the limited numbers of FA FOs. The Maneuver Shooter Program is based on the premise that the more trained CFF eyes we have on the battlefield, the more effective our combat power will be.

The CFF fundamentals are taught in three phases: classroom instruction, training on the ground unit armory device full-crew interactive simulation

trainer (GUARDFIST) and live-fire exercises. The target audience for each of these phases, at a minimum, is the maneuver battalion and company commanders, scouts, platoon leaders, platoon sergeants and track commanders. Phases I and II should be conducted at least semiannually.

The content of the Maneuver Shooter Program is aimed at the most basic CFF procedures. As units gain proficiency in those tasks, the program should introduce them to more complicated scenarios requiring greater understanding of the fire support system. The additional training includes moving target drills, fire support doctrine, integrating essential fire support tasks (EFSTs) into troop leading procedures (TLPs), etc.

The frequency of the Maneuver Shooter Program phases and the lengths of training in each phase are recommendations for sustainment training after the program has been established and maneuver units trained. The phases for units in the infantile stages of training may need to be increased in frequency and length.

Phase I—Classroom Instruction. This phase is an eight-hour block of instruction covering the basic principles and techniques of effective CFF procedures. The best environment to perform this class would be in a GUARDFIST. However, the absence of this system should not prevent commanders from executing this essential training. The primary trainers should be the company fire support NCO (FSNCO) and FSO.

Phase II—GUARDFIST. In this phase, the student applies the knowledge gained in Phase I. Each leader is involved in a one-day period of hands-on CFF training using GUARDFIST. The focus is on accurate target location, correct CFF procedures and correct adjustment procedures. The FSNCO should be the primary trainer for this phase. Continual feedback from trainer to student is key to the success of this training.

Phase III—Live Fire. This phase is executed during scheduled Field Artillery and mortar live-fire events. It is “Phase II” live training in a real environment. During this drill, potential maneuver shooters execute their CFF drills and can see the effects of indirect fire. Battalions should take advantage of observation points (OPs) located close to the impact area to observe close-in fires (up to 200 meters) and their effects.

When there are not enough live-fire training events available for maneuver

shooter training, a good substitute would be the close combat tactical trainer (CCTT).

The results of the program are that maneuver has a greater understanding of fire support along frontline traces. The maneuver commander has increased confidence in his unit’s abilities to fight and survive. But do maneuver shooters have enough training and knowledge to execute each CFF mission in every situation safely and efficiently?

CFF procedures are only a subcomponent of a multi-functional system. A better understanding of what happens once the CFF has been passed to the FSO will increase the efficiency of its requestors.

“Where the hell is my fire mission?”—more of an angry statement than a question, the staff sergeant nervously watched the lead T-80 tanks creep toward him in the valley below his Abrams’ hide position on the ridge.

During their movement-to-contact, Tiger Six’s orders had been to go to the crest of the ridge and look for the enemy. When he reported the enemy tank company moving toward them, Tiger Six’s last orders were “Get the FSO to drop DPICM [dual-purpose improved conventional munitions] on their butt to slow them down long enough for us to get in position on the ridge for a hasty ambush—but don’t compromise your location.”

Having been an Abrams Tank Commander for more than a year, he knew

that even the realism of the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California, had not made him feel this anxious. The pressure in combat was an entirely new level of anxiety.

“We can take ‘em, Chief,” the driver whispered.

“Well if we don’t get some artillery soon, we just might do that! I don’t want those bastards to get away.”

Only 90 seconds had passed since the Tank Commander had transmitted his CFF, but as the T-80s neared, the time seemed to slow to a standstill.

“Mustang One Eight, this is Bulldog Five... where is my fire? Over.”

“Stand by... Out.” was the response.

Irritated and impatient, the Tank Commander felt compelled to resolve the situation himself.

“Alright boys, let’s roll. Gunner, heat, one tank.”

“Identified,” the gunner responded.

“Up,” the loader informed.

“Fire!”

“On the waaay!”

The first T-80 tank blew up. As the Abrams crew took a bead on the second T-80, the radio exploded: “Bulldog Five, this is Tiger Six. What the hell is going on up there—we aren’t in position yet?”

As Tiger Six yelled into the radio, the enemy tanks reacted by establishing a firing line and began a hasty attack.

Maneuver shooters must understand the time it takes to clear fires—especially, as in this scenario—on targets of opportunity during a movement-to-con-



Maneuver soldiers down to the lowest possible level need to understand how and why fires are cleared.



The Maneuver Shooter Program

tact where friendly forces are moving within close proximity to the targets. Without carefully clearing fires, the results could be the same as in the first scenario: fratricide.

Indirect fires were essential for the tank company's hasty ambush to work. But the maneuver shooter did not exercise the tactical patience for indirect fires to make the maneuver plan work.

Maneuver soldiers down to the lowest possible level need to understand how and why fires are cleared. Knowledge of this process and the role fires play in the overall plan give maneuver shooters a reason to exercise patience in difficult situations.

Based on the knowledge and experience of the maneuver soldiers to be trained and the types of missions they must execute, each Maneuver Shooter Program's contents must be tailored for the maneuver units.

Fire Support Battle Drills. The CFF training in the Maneuver Shooter Program gives the maneuver commander a basic foundation to begin refining his fire support battle drills. Essentially this process neutralizes the enemy with minimal risk to friendly units. An important part of the unit's successful fires is a quick, efficient method for clearing fires.

There are several issues with clearing fires, but for purposes of this article, I discuss only three: target location, understanding procedures and knowledge of the fire support system.

Target Location. The Maneuver Shooter Program addresses this weakness in the system by forcing the students to practice locating and directing fire on notional targets. However, faulty target data is still a major nemesis of effective fire support.

Fire support units that routinely receive errant data through CFF requests, naturally, painstakingly ensure they catch inaccuracies before they become fatal. Because the FSO does not trust the data, his hyper-analysis of each request bogs down the process.

Units that are well-trained in target location techniques will have a quicker response time from their fire support cells. Knowing that target location data is dependable allows the FSO to be

more involved in verifying data and executing the mission rather than being slow to commit.

The Bradley Commander in the first scenario could have been the victim of poor target location training. With the urgency of the situation, he may have hurriedly delivered an inaccurate grid that was fatal to his crew.

But his was not the only mistake. The company FSO, not taking into consideration the requester's location, had apparently decided to execute the fire without clearing it.

When the lieutenant's voice exploded over the speaker remote, it was obvious he was in dire straits. Three BMPs were moving in his direction; his Bradley had thrown a track and he needed immediate help. The FSO was his only hope.

During the transmission of the CFF request, the FSO noticed info was missing from the request and it was improperly formatted. But the FSO thought it was no time to conduct training—the lieutenant needed help and needed it right away. The FSO failed to clear the fires.

Understanding Procedures at the Lowest Level. The Abrams Tank Commander in the second scenario was probably the victim of ignorance. He did not understand the need for clearing fires or the amount of time needed to execute safe, accurate fires. As products of simulation exercises, soldiers expect that once they make the call, immediate results will follow.

The time needed to properly clear a target varies with each situation. It is largely dependent on what sector-of-fire the target is in and who is responsible for that sector-of-fire.

Units well-trained on well-conceived battle drills for clearing fires will have the best chance of success during grave situations, but the dismissal of this process is *not* an option.

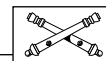
Helping maneuver shooters understand this process will give them tactical patience under pressure.

Knowledge is Power. Through fire support conferences, the 1st Infantry Division educates division senior leaders on methods and applications of indirect fires. Through simulations, these

principles can be applied and analyzed. Through training exercises, we can see the effects these applications have on the battlefield.

The Maneuver Shooter Program can give first-line soldiers up to commanders an appreciation for what happens when a fire supporter doesn't adjust fire off a preplanned target. They can begin to get a feel for the amount of time it takes to "lift and shift" fires using antiquated systems. Leaders can gain insights into the necessity for clearing fires and the time needed to make that happen. Then they can begin thinking about how to minimize the times and fight with fires more effectively.

But all must understand that the enemy in the training and simulation events is not real, and nothing but actual combat can cause the urgency and vicious effects these events can have on soldiers calling for fires to save their lives. The decisions that have the most critical impact on victory or defeat are made at the lowest levels. It is an absolute necessity to ensure frontline leaders have enough training and information to execute those decisions with confidence.



Master Sergeant Sean T. Yeterian is the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized) Fire Support Element Sergeant Major in Germany. He served as First Sergeant for three batteries: D Battery, 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery; A Battery, 1st Battalion, 33d Field Artillery; and Headquarters and Headquarters Battery of the Division Artillery, all in the 1st Infantry Division. Also in the 1st Infantry Division, he was the Division Artillery Intelligence NCO, Ammunition Platoon Sergeant and Firing Platoon Sergeant. In addition, he was a Launcher Section Chief for the 1st Battalion, 27th Field Artillery, 41st Field Artillery Brigade in Germany. He holds an Associate's Degree from Cameron University, Lawton, Oklahoma.

Sergeant First Class Richard B. Daux is the Deep Operations Coordination Cell (DOCC) Fire Support NCO-in-Charge (FSNCOIC) in Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Infantry Division Artillery. As a Fire Support Specialist, he has served with the 1st Armored Division, Germany; 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), Fort Drum, New York; and 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) when it was in Germany. Sergeant First Class Daux participated in Operations Desert Shield and Storm as a Company Fire Support Sergeant with the 4th Battalion, 70th Armor, 1st Armored Division, and in deployments to Hungary and Kosovo.

2002 History Writing Contest Winners

First Place— “Bombarding the Marianas: Joint Fires at the Strategic, Operational and Tactical Levels” by Major Prisco R. Hernandez, ARNG

Second Place— “A Contest of Contrasts: The Principle of Dislocation and the Artillery Fight at the Battle of Chancellorsville” by Captain G. James Schreckengost, PAARNG

Third Place— “How Artillery Beat Rommel After Kasserine” by Robert C. Baldrige

Judges of the 2002 History Writing Contest

Colonel (Retired) Thomas G. Waller, Jr. holds three Masters of Art, including in Military Art and Science from the School for Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; Asian Studies from the University of Michigan; and National Security Studies from the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. He has been published several times in *Field Artillery*, including as the winner of the 1989 History Writing Contest. His article “The Field Artillery Battery: Its Past, Present and Future” that appeared in the January-February 2001 edition is a finalist for the Army Historical Foundation’s 2001 Distinguished Article Award. He taught Military History at the US Military Academy at West Point. Among other assignments, he commanded two FA battalions and coordinated fire support for VII Corps during Operations Desert Shield and Storm in Southwest Asia.

Dr. James Jay Carafano (LTC, Retired) is a Senior Fellow in the nonprofit Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment in Washington, DC. He has a Ph.D. in History from Georgetown University, also in Washington. Dr. Carafano taught history at the US Military Academy at West Point; Marymount College in Tarrytown, New York; and the Field Artillery School, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. His book *After D-Day: Operation Cobra and the Normandy Breakout* was selected for the Military Book of the Month Club for June 2001. He edited *Soldiers are Our Credentials: The Collected Works and Selected Papers of Dennis J. Reimer*, Center of Military History, 2000. Dr. Carafano’s latest book, *Waltzing into the Cold War: The Struggle for Occupied Austria* being published by Texas A&M University, is due out this fall.

Dr. Boyd L. Dastrup received a Ph.D. in History from Kansas State University. He has authored several books, including *The US Army Command and General Staff College: A Centennial History* (1982); *Crusade in Nuremberg: Military Occupation, 1945-1949* (1985); *King of Battle: A Branch History of the US Army’s Field Artillery* (1992, 1993); *Modernizing the King of Battle: 1973-1991* (1994); and *The Field Artillery: History and Sourcebook* (1994). He also has written articles for *A Guide to the Sources of United States Military History* (1998) and *The Oxford Companion to American Military History* (1999). Dr. Dastrup has been the Command Historian for the US Army Field Artillery Center and Fort Sill since 1984.

Field Artillery Themes for 2003

Edition	Theme	Deadline
Sep-Oct	Close Support	1 Jun 2002
Nov-Dec	Red Book	1 Aug
Jan-Feb	Fires TTP for the COE	1 Oct
Mar-Apr	Lethal and Nonlethal Fires and Effects	1 Dec
May-Jun	Joint Fires	1 Feb 2003
Jul-Aug	History	1 Feb: Contest* 1 Apr: Other
Sep-Oct	Fighting the FA Battalion	1 Jun
Nov-Dec	Fires for the Objective Force	1 Aug

*Due date for Contest submissions; all other articles due 1 April.

2003 History Writing Contest Rules

The US Field Artillery Association is sponsoring its 18th annual History Writing Contest with the winners’ articles to be published in *Field Artillery* and the Association’s version of the magazine, *FA Journal*. To compete, submit an original, unpublished manuscript on any historical perspective of Field Artillery or fire support by 1 February 2003. The Association will award \$300 for the First Place article, \$150 for Second and \$50 for Third. Selected Honorable Mention articles also may appear in *Field Artillery*. Civilians or military of all branches and services, including allies, are eligible to compete. You don’t have to be a member of the Association.

Your submission should include (1) a double-spaced, typed manuscript of no more than 4,000 words with footnotes, (2) bibliography, (3) your comprehensive biography and (4) graphics (black and white or color photographs, maps, charts, etc.) to support your article. The article should include an analysis of lessons or concepts that apply to today’s Redlegs—it should not just record history or document the details of an operation. Authors may draw from any historical period they choose.

A panel of three historians will judge the manuscripts without the authors’ names. The panel will determine the winners based on the following criteria:

- Writing clarity (40%)
- Usefulness to Today’s Redlegs (30%)
- Historical Accuracy (20%)
- Originality (10%)

By 1 February 2003, send the manuscript to the US Field Artillery Association, ATTN: History Contest, P.O. Box 33027, Fort Sill, Oklahoma 73503-0027 (FedEx to Building 758, McNair Road). For more information, call DSN 639-5121/6806 or commercial (580) 442-5121/6806 or email: famag@sill.army.mil.





A B-29 takes off from Saipan for a bombing mission over Japan.

Bombard the Marianas: Joint Fires at the Strategic, Operational and Tactical Levels

By Major Prisco R. Hernandez, ARNG

The war was lost when the Marianas were taken away from Japan and when we heard the B-29s were coming out..we had nothing in Japan that we could use against such a weapon.

Prince Naruhiko Higashikuni
Commander-in-Chief of Japanese Home Defense
"Campaign in the Marianas"

United States Army in World War II: The War in the Pacific, Phillip A. Crowl

The campaign to capture the Mariana Islands from the Japanese is especially worthy of close study by the joint fire support planner because it was a campaign dominated by the employment of fires at all levels of war: strategic, operational and tactical. It was fought to capture airstrips from which to carry on a campaign of strategic bombing against the Japanese homeland.

Operational success was ensured by the neutralization of the Japanese anchorage and naval airbase at Truk and the defeat of a strong counterattack by a Japanese carrier task force. At the tactical level, the amphibious assaults were made possible by extensive preparatory bombardments and the constant application of joint firepower to support land

First Place



operations. Thus, the application of strategic firepower against the enemy was the ultimate goal of a campaign that was won by the use of joint fires at the operational and tactical levels.

Strategic Environment and Operational Planning. By spring of 1944, the course of the Pacific War had turned against Japan. Powerful Japanese fleets had been fought to a standstill at Midway and the Coral Sea, and Japanese island garrisons in the South and Central Pacific had been overcome and annihilated by American and Australian forces. Furthermore, American land-based and carrier-based aircraft were routinely bombing Japanese forward anchorages, such as Rabaul and Truk. American submarines also were roaming freely, interdicting Japanese sea lines of communications by attacking military and commercial cargo shipping.

The two-pronged advance by General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, which started as a compromise born out of interservice rivalry, had actually become a source of strategic strength. It already was eroding Japan's limited capabilities and keeping its leadership off balance.¹

By 1944, General MacArthur had won presidential approval for his "return" to the Philippines.² However, the Commander-in-Chief in the Pacific Theater, Admiral Nimitz, persisted in the belief that a thrust through the small atolls and islands of the Central Pacific would shorten the war at less cost to the United States. Such a thrust would cut Japanese lines of communications to the strategic resources of Southeast Asia and defeat the Japanese Navy, thus isolating Japanese army units in the Philippines and on the Asian mainland.

This approach also was favored by General "Hap" Arnold and the Army Air Forces (AAF). The capture of airstrips in the Marianas would place the AAF in a position to launch long-range strategic bombing attacks on the Japanese homeland and interdict the north-

south sea lanes that linked Japan to its sources of oil, foodstuffs and raw materials in the Philippines and Southeast Asia.³

By this stage of the war, United States forces had acquired a wealth of practical experience in the conduct of amphibious operations. Beginning with the campaigns for Guadalcanal, New Guinea and the Solomons in the South Pacific and the Gilberts and Marshalls in the Central Pacific, all the armed services had been working together under difficult circumstances to plan and execute these complex operations.

In preparation for Operation Forager, the assault on the Marianas, Admiral Nimitz assembled a powerful joint force consisting of aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, amphibious vessels, landing craft and numerous escorts.⁴ Operational command was entrusted to Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, Commander of the 5th Fleet.

Task Force 58, a fast carrier group under Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, would provide escort and cover for the amphibious forces. These forces would be commanded by Vice Admiral Richmond K. Turner and consisted of the Northern and the Southern Amphibious Assault Groups. Turner assumed personal command of the Northern Group, which would invade Saipan and Tinian.

It included the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions with the Army National Guard's 27th Infantry Division in reserve and the XXIV Corps Artillery in general support (GS).

Once ashore, Marine General Holland Smith would assume command of land operations, grouping all forces under the V Amphibious Corps. The Southern Assault Group, under Rear Admiral Conolly, would invade Guam. Its land component, III Amphibious Corps under Marine Major General Roy S. Geiger, included the 3d Marine Division, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, a corps artillery headquarters and the 77th Infantry Division in reserve.⁵

The coming operations clearly demanded joint planning and execution of fires. Initially, naval aviation and gunfire would serve as the primary means of fire support. In addition, units from the Seventh Army Air Forces would strike at long range from the recently captured airstrips in the Marshalls and, later, would be transferred to captured airfields in the Marianas to provide close air support (CAS). Finally, organic and supporting Field Artillery units would provide close and GS fires for the land battles.

The tactical plans incorporated the experience gained from previous battles in the Central Pacific. The US Marines

had suffered enormous casualties in the assault on Betio Island in the Tarawa atoll, and the desire to prevent future bloodbaths animated all operational and tactical planning.⁶ In the campaign for the Marshall Islands, fire support planning had been far more thorough and comprehensive, and as a result, the assaults on Kwajalein and the other atolls in the Marshalls were much less costly than Tarawa.⁷ However, campaign planners of all services were aware that the Marianas offered a far tougher "nut to crack."

In contrast with the small atolls of the Central Pacific that offer few places to hide and no opportunities for defense in depth, the Marianas are substantial islands. Their varied topography includes rough hills, thick jungle, nearly impassable coastal swamps and mangrove thickets. The islands are of volcanic origin and have many caves that could afford an enemy formidable natural defenses. They also have man-made terrain features, such as rice paddies, sugarcane fields and substantial towns.⁸

Thus, the Marianas Campaign would be carried out in a very complex topographical and maritime environment. It would consist of four distinct phases and one supporting operation to be executed in the event of a Japanese naval counterattack. (See Figure 1.)

	Mission	Purpose	Tasks	Sources of Fires	Effects
Phase I Preparation	Achieve air superiority. Shape the battlespace.	Protect amphibious forces in their approach to the objective.	Neutralize enemy airfields. Destroy enemy aircraft. Destroy/neutralize selected installations.	Long-Range AAF Bombers Navy Carrier Aircraft	Attacks on the Marianas and Truk effectively neutralized enemy airfields.
Phase II Amphibious Assaults	Maintain air superiority. Neutralize shore defenses. Shock/demoralize defenders.	Enable successful amphibious assaults. Minimize friendly casualties.	Destroy/neutralize enemy shore batteries. Destroy anti-aircraft guns. Destroy enemy vessels. Provide close support to ground forces.	Naval Gunfire Naval/Marine Aviation Artillery Based on Saipan (for Assault on Tinian)	Firepower assured the success of the amphibious assaults and kept friendly casualties relatively low.
Phase III Land Operations	Achieve air supremacy. Achieve firepower dominance. Support the close fight.	Defeat Japanese ground forces.	Counter battery fire. Support the close fight. Interdict enemy LOC. Achieve/maintain air supremacy. Provide protective fires.	Army/Marine FA Navy/Marine CAS/BAI Naval Gunfire AAF CAS/BAI	Firepower made a critical contribution to the combat power of ground maneuver forces, especially when assaulting prepared positions.
Phase IV Consolidation	Support the close fight. Maintain air supremacy.	Secure the islands.	Support the close fight. Maintain air supremacy.	Army FA/Mortars Marine Artillery/Mortars	Firepower helped crush enemy resistance while minimizing friendly casualties.
Supporting Naval Contingency Operations	Defeat the enemy fleet.	Eliminate the threat to American naval and amphibious task forces.	Destroy/sink enemy ships.	Naval Aviation Naval AAA	The Japanese fleet was crippled and forced to withdraw with catastrophic personnel and equipment losses.
Legend: AAA = Anti-Aircraft Artillery AAF = Army Air Force BAI = Battlefield Air Interdiction CAS = Close Air Support LOC = Lines of Communications					

Figure 1: Employment of Operational Firepower in the Marianas Campaign

The campaign would start with a preparatory phase with the objective of bringing the amphibious assault forces safely to their attack positions off the islands. This would be followed by amphibious assaults on the three target islands—Saipan, Tinian and Guam. The islands then would be captured and all enemy resistance eliminated. Finally, American forces would consolidate and reorganize.

If the Japanese Navy were to challenge the invaders in a major fleet action, the US Navy would have to execute a major contingency operation to safeguard the landings and defeat the Japanese at sea. Capturing the Marianas would be followed by the building of forward naval bases for the fleet and landing strips capable of handling the AAF's new B-29 long-range bombers.

From an operational perspective, firepower would be the decisive element of combat power. Firepower would enable US forces to isolate the target islands, facilitate the opposed landings and ensure victory on the ground.

In any encounter with the Japanese fleet, firepower would decide the issue.

Preliminary and Supporting Operations. In April 1944, the AAF started their "softening up" operations with airstrikes on Guam, Saipan and Tinian from airfields in Eniwetok in the Marshalls.⁹ In addition, a separate air campaign against Truk, the principal Japanese naval base in the Central Pacific, was conducted to neutralize this base and isolate the target islands in the Marianas. The United States wanted to ensure air superiority before the assault landings.¹⁰

The decision to "bypass" Truk was based on the understanding that air power would suffice to neutralize this and other Japanese airfields in the Caroline Islands.¹¹ The Japanese at Truk were repeatedly pounded in savage bombing raids. Although they managed to repair their airfields and fly-in some reinforcements, The Japanese forces at Truk were rendered ineffective.

This aerial campaign continued right through the invasion of the Marianas and denied the Japanese defenders any significant air support. Indeed, on the day of the invasion of Saipan, Truk was the object of an especially punishing bombing raid to ensure that its airplanes would not sortie against the American invaders.¹²

Despite the neutralization of Truk, the Japanese Navy managed to assemble a



Scarcely a week after coming ashore at Saipan, 155-mm "Long Tom" guns were bombarding Tinian, as shown here in a night bombardment.

sizable fleet to challenge the American amphibious task forces.¹³ This Japanese fleet clashed with the US Navy in a series of engagements from 3 May to 24 June 1944. The fighting culminated in the climactic Battle of the Philippine Sea (19-20 June 1944) and resulted in a decisive American victory.¹⁴ The battle was nicknamed "The Marianas Turkey Shoot" by US sailors because it was, in essence, an attritional contest decided by the superior equipment and training of the American naval aviators and anti-aircraft gunners.¹⁵

The neutralization of Truk and the defeat of the Japanese Navy in the Central Pacific were critical enabling operations that ensured the safety of American amphibious forces in the Marianas and proved vital to their success. Both victories were won through the use of superior aerial and naval firepower.

The Application of Fires at the Tactical Level—One Play, Three Acts. Although all three main islands in the Marianas group shared common characteristics, each had its own peculiarities that planners had to consider. In addition, with the capture and habilitation of land airfields and the changing conditions at sea, the sources of fire support changed as the campaign progressed. For example, once Saipan was captured, it served as a platform for artillery attacks into Tinian and air attacks into the other islands.¹⁶ (See the map in Figure 2.)

The first island to be taken was Saipan. The amphibious assault was set for 15

June 1944 with the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions spearheading the landings and the Army's 27th Division in reserve. It was preceded by four days of intensive naval and air bombardment, two days of minesweeping operations and preliminary reconnaissance landings to prepare the beaches.¹⁷

American commanders had learned from bitter experience that the only way to avoid terrible casualties in an amphibious assault against prepared positions was to execute a massive and thorough schedule of preparatory fires using all means available.¹⁸ The heavy bombardment continued throughout the assault with armed landing craft infantry (LCI) firing machineguns, rockets and 40-mm cannons into the beach defenses. This pattern of heavy preparatory bombardment was repeatedly employed in all other amphibious assaults with slight variations.

The assault on the next objective, Tinian, was one of the most heavily supported in the Pacific war. It was noteworthy in that Field Artillery based on Saipan provided effective preparatory fires and continuous fire support for the assault and subsequent land operations.

Tinian, a smaller island, lay only three to four miles south of Saipan, well within range of land-based artillery. Indeed, scarcely a week after coming ashore at Saipan, 155-mm "Long Tom" guns were bombarding Tinian.

Soon, the XXIV Corps Artillery served as the controlling headquarters for a massive grouping of artillery tubes reg-

istered on Tinian. By the middle of July, an impressive 13 battalions of Army and Marine artillery of various types were firing on Tinian.¹⁹ The landings on 24 July were prepared by an especially heavy air, land and sea bombardment.²⁰

The final objective in the Marianas was Guam. This is the largest of the islands and includes sizable mountains to the south. Despite the challenging terrain and the desperate fanaticism of the doomed Japanese defenders, the assault and capture of Guam benefited from lessons learned in the previous operations.

Admiral Turner, the commander of the amphibious force fully understood the importance of firepower as a “battering ram” to crack tough defenses and save the life of friendly troops. “My aim,” he said, “is to get the troops ashore standing up.”²¹

No resources were spared in the preparation for the landings. The initial bombardment was savage. But it was not merely the volume of fire that was significant, but also its increased precision and sophistication.

Close support was assured by organic mortars plus the Marines’ Pack 75 howitzers. In addition, 105-mm howitzers of direct support (DS) battalions were transported in DUKWs (amphibious vehicles) close on the heels of the infantry assault.²² These amphibious vehicles also proved invaluable for ammunition resupply during the initial stages of the assault.²³

Despite relatively lightly opposed landings made possible by thorough fire support plans, savage close fighting on all three islands continued for some time. Desperate defenders launched suicidal *banzai* attacks. Well-concealed snipers and machineguns also took a heavy toll. Casualties mounted, especially in the mountains and thickly vegetated areas of Saipan and Guam.

This only proves that despite overwhelming firepower and air supremacy, the infantry always must root out determined enemy soldiers. However, it is clear that in the absence of this firepower, friendly casualties would have been intolerable.

Fire Support Assets and Coordination. The level of joint cooperation in fire support achieved in the Marianas Campaign was remarkable, given the degree of service independence during World War II. Because fire support assets and weapons did not operate under a single chain of command, the tactics,

techniques and procedures (TTPs) used were the result of practical experimentation in joint warfare under combat conditions.

Both Army and Navy organizational structures were subdivided. The Army included both the ground forces and the AAF. The Navy’s fire support assets included naval gunfire, naval aviation and the Marine Corps—a service with its own artillery and aircraft. All these elements had their organic means of fire support. All would be needed.

Beside direct fire systems, such as tanks and armed amphibious tracked vehicles, called amtracs, the ground forces had organic indirect fire support weapons in the form of mortars of various sizes. Each Marine division was

supported by an artillery battalion, and each Army division had four artillery battalions in its division artillery. In addition, V Amphibious Corps was supported by the XXIV Corps Artillery Headquarters under Brigadier General Arthur M. Harper, which included two battalions of 155-mm howitzers and two of 155-mm guns plus other units assigned as the situation demanded.

Similarly, the III Amphibious Corps formed a corps artillery headquarters under Marine Brigadier General Pedro A. del Valle.²⁴ The most important function of these corps artillery headquarters was to serve as the principal fire support centers for the coordination and integration of all operational fires in the land battle.

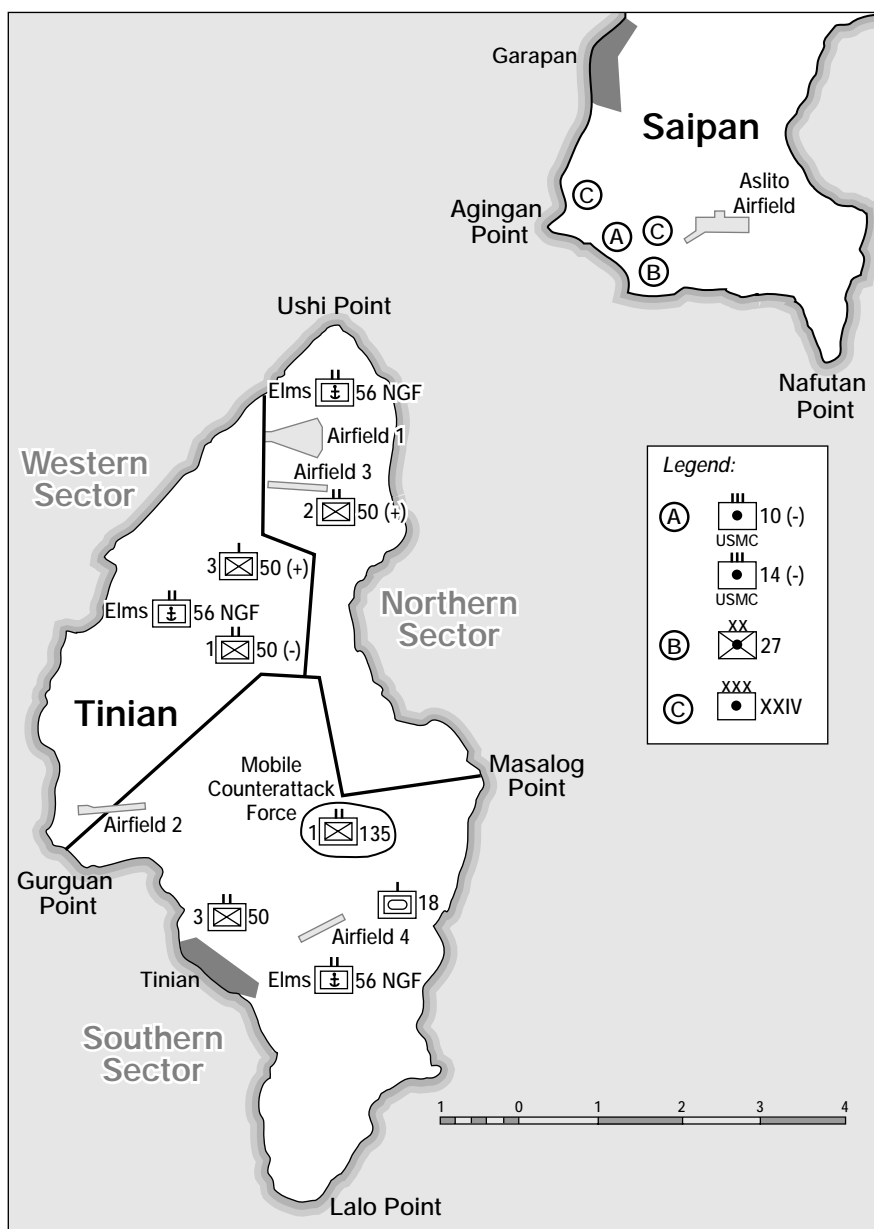


Figure 2: Japanese Defensive Positions on Tinian and US Artillery on Saipan



Of all the firepower, the Japanese most feared naval gunfire. These 16-inch guns were so powerful that the standoff distance from friendlies was 2,500 yards for most missions.

The corps artillery also served as a clearinghouse for targeting information. It worked closely with the force G2 and used its assigned light spotter aircraft to gather targeting information, conduct damage assessments and control fires.²⁵ In addition, senior fire support coordinators from the Navy and the AAF worked closely with their Army and Marine colleagues to coordinate, deconflict and schedule fires.

Given its complexity and joint nature, the ad hoc fire coordination arrangements proved remarkably efficient and flexible. As an example, Navy vessels, ranging from battleships to destroyers, were assigned DS missions to specific infantry units.²⁶ Two or three vessels provided fires to an infantry regiment or battalion, and their fires were controlled by naval liaison officers in radio contact with the ships. All caliber of weapons were used for this mission, but the most effective type was the 5-inch naval gun, a medium gun that proved to be particularly accurate.²⁷

Fire Support Platforms and the Effects of Fires. Aircraft were, and still are, the farthest ranging firepower platforms. B-24 medium bombers and P-47 fighter-bombers of the AAF initiated the preparatory phase of the Marianas Campaign from airfields in Kwajalein more than 1,000 miles away. The airraids continued right up to the assault landings and throughout the land operations.

Once Saipan was captured, its airfields provided Army planes a base within the theater from which they provided protection to the airfields and CAS to ground troops. In addition, Navy and Marine planes attacked the islands from aircraft carriers and also provided CAS. Throughout the campaign, air

power proved its great flexibility. The weather too, was generally good, and was not a major impediment to flyers.

The AAF B-24 medium bomber could carry a formidable payload, including bombs weighing 500, 1,000 and even 1,500 pounds. Other planes, such as the P-47, served as fighter-bombers. They could deliver bombs and make strafing runs with their machineguns and 4.5 inch rockets. These rockets were relative newcomers to the battlefield but proved very effective.

Another relatively new weapon was the incendiary bomb. These bombs were used to clear dense sugarcane fields to facilitate the ground attack.²⁸ In addition, light observation aircraft were extremely useful as aerial forward observers and scouts.

Of all the types of firepower the Japanese experienced, naval gunfire was by far the most feared.²⁹ When asked how he could tell naval gunfire apart from regular artillery fire, a Japanese prisoner laughed bitterly and assured his captor that this was not difficult to determine when one was at the receiving end.³⁰

Naval gunfire proved to be devastating and remarkably accurate in DS to the infantry, but its most valuable contribution was as a deep attack weapon. Large caliber long-ranging guns of up to 16 inches proved to be excellent for attacking bunkers, caves and troop concentrations out of contact with friendly forces. These guns were so powerful that the safe stand-off distance from friendly troops was 1,500 yards for preparatory fires and 2,500 yards for other missions.³¹

However, as in other campaigns, most commanders agreed with Brigadier General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Com-

mander of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade in operations in Guam, about his assessment of Field Artillery. He said, that for close support of the Infantry, "...artillery was the most effective weapon employed during the operation."³² This assessment was echoed by Admiral Turner, who commented: "Field artillery is much better qualified for this type of fire by reason of its greater accuracy and smaller burst patterns."³³

Artillery fire was abundantly available in the form of 75-mm Pack howitzers organic to Marine regiments, Army 105-mm DS artillery battalions, and 155-mm howitzers and 155-mm Long Tom guns with the Army's XXIV Corps Artillery. Artillery fire was immediately responsive in the DS role and was effective in all weather conditions. In addition, the high-angle capabilities of howitzers and mortars were particularly effective in engaging enemy entrenchments in defilade or reverse-slope positions.

Field Artillery weapons also were used in unorthodox ways, often in a direct fire mode against enemy entrenchments and pillboxes or to stop *banzai* charges. In one instance, "Pack howitzers were dragged to within thirty-five yards of the infantry front lines to fire point-blank at the onrushing enemy. 'Arms and legs,' reported one observer, 'flew like snow.'"³⁴

The human effects of firepower proved to be at least as significant as the physical destruction they wrought. Even against so determined and fanatical an enemy as the Japanese, the physical and emotional effects of bombardment were devastating.

They suffered greatly in their *seishin*—a word that means not so much "morale" as "psychological well-being." After several days of successive attacks, "scattered outbreaks of serious loss of spirit" occurred. After another week, the spirit of some of the men deteriorated so badly that they "could not perform their duties in a positive manner."³⁵

Interestingly, the Japanese sense of *shiki*, or soldierly duty, remained high.³⁶ Thus, while firepower degraded their hopes of victory or survival, it could not break their devotion to duty.

Nonetheless, the powerful stunning effect of bombardment by heavy weapons often can be decisive. The human factor, impossible to quantify, can be critical to the success of an attack. From the comments of stunned prisoners, it appears that heavy firepower did achieve

Type of Platform	Principal Missions	Main Weapons	Capabilities	Limitations
Naval Vessels	Preparatory Fires Deep Fires Direct Support (DS)	16" Gun 14" Gun 8" Gun 5" Gun	Large Volume of Heavy Caliber Fire Greatest "Shock Effects"	Flat trajectory produces relatively high probable error. Flat trajectory makes it difficult to hit targets in defilade. Heavy seas affect accuracy.
Aircraft	CAS BAI	Bombs Napalm "Fire Bomb" Machinegun 4.5" Rocket Cannon	Capable of Achieving Tactical Surprise Shock Effect Good for Attacking Deep Targets	Limited time on target Difficult to direct to targets. Slow response times.
Tube Artillery	DS General Support (GS)	155-mm Howitzer 155-mm Gun 105-mm Howitzer 75-mm Pack Howitzer	Responsive Fires, Especially DS Good Accuracy Capable of Predictable Fire Patterns Well-Organized Command/Control	Required dedicated prime movers. Effectiveness depends on good and timely observer-to-shooter communications.
Mortars	DS	4.2" Mortar 80-mm Mortar 60-mm Mortar	Very Responsive High-Angle Fire Effective Against Targets in Defilade Excellent for Illumination	Effectiveness depends on good and timely observer-to-shooter communications.
Rocket Launchers	DS	Explosive Warhead	High Volume of Fire	Not as accurate as tube artillery.

Figure 3: Fire Support Platforms and Weapons Used in the Marianas. The characteristics, capabilities and limitations of these weapons as well as the missions assigned to them reflect those of World War II and not their modern descendants.

decisive effects in the Marianas. (See Figure 3.)

Back to the Future. It is clear the success of major forcible-entry operations like those carried out in the Marianas Campaign depend on the availability and application of a wide variety of fire support assets. The study of such operations provides many lessons for today's capabilities-based force. As we move from strategically forward-deployed forces to expeditionary forces, the likelihood of conducting forcible-entry operations in an immature theater increases.³⁷

The lessons of the Marianas Campaign are as pertinent today as they were almost 50 years ago. Fire support assets must support the campaign plan at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. At the strategic level, planners must ensure they allocate sufficient fire-power assets to support the theater commander's objectives. Operational commanders must, in turn, reallocate fire-power assets and establish a workable joint command and control structure that allows these assets to be used to maximum advantage. In certain circumstances, the commander's objectives are best attained by the application of fires; in others, firepower enables maneuver. In all cases, however, firepower employed against well-chosen targets saves lives.

At the tactical level, the complex issues of command and control of fire support assets from all services must be addressed to ensure they may be brought to bear at the correct time and

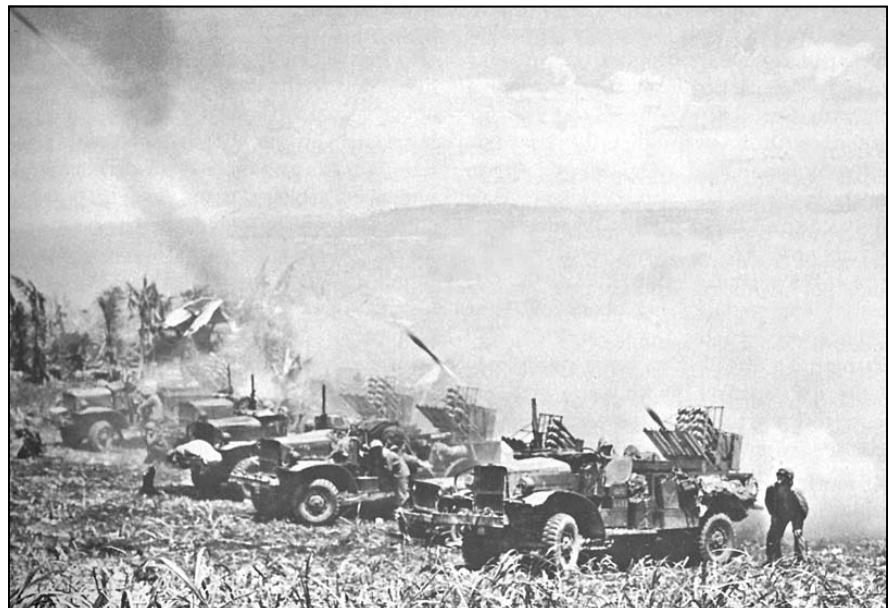
place. Even a rich, technologically advanced and well-supplied force, such as the American amphibious task force that attacked the Marianas, never has "enough" fire support to satisfy commanders and soldiers who must face the enemy. Therefore commanders and planners must continuously assess battlefield conditions and shift assets as needed.

In addition, soldiers must demonstrate versatility and improvisation. For example, in the Marianas Campaign, Marines used captured 25-mm dual-mounted cannons to provide direct fire support to pinned-down troops.³⁸ In addition, because the Americans had achieved total air supremacy, the fire-

power of the anti-aircraft artillery was used in a direct fire mode to support ground forces.³⁹

One of the most important effects of fires is suppression. Suppression, however, is a temporary effect. Thus, to be effective, fire must be coordinated with maneuver in assaults that follow closely on the heels of preparatory fires.

In all situations where direct frontal assaults are inevitable, fire support often spells the difference between success and failure, between survival and death. This was clearly evident in the Marianas, a campaign that was waged for the strategic objective of securing a strategic firepower advantage over the



On Saipan, the 8th Marines fire truck-mounted rocket launchers at the Japanese.

enemy's homeland. The forceful and massive application of firepower at the operational and tactical levels made this objective possible. The testimony of stunned Japanese survivors validated the effectiveness of suppression as an effect of fires.

The Marianas Campaign was a joint operation. In the 21st century, joint operations will be the norm, not the exception—a fact recognized in the Army's most recent doctrinal field manual, *FM 3-0, Operations*. The FM states, "The strengths of each service component combine to overcome the limitations or reinforce the effects of the other components. The combination of multiple and diverse joint force capabilities creates military power more potent than the sum of its parts."⁴⁰

The use of joint forces means that battlefield operating systems (BOS), such as firepower, cut across branch and service boundaries. Firepower and fire support are no longer the exclusive purview of artillerymen. Firepower has become a "system of systems" and military professionals must employ all available assets in the most effective way to achieve the desired effects on target at the appropriate time.

As we transition to an effects-based firepower community, it is imperative we develop integrated doctrine for employing fires at all levels. Fifty years

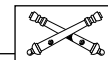
ago, the pace of events permitted the ad hoc evolution of practical solutions to the challenges of joint warfare; tomorrow, the battlefields of the future will not allow us such luxury.

Finally, firepower weapons and artillery, specifically, were developed to create breaches, "crack down" fortifications and pierce otherwise impregnable enemy defenses. Today, artillery and firepower in general continue to serve as the battering ram that enables maneuver, sometimes serving as the catalyst for victory through attrition.

In our day, attritional warfare has been given a bad name, evoking nightmarish visions of murderous trench warfare. But we must not forget that whenever maneuver is not feasible and it becomes necessary to literally punch a hole or charge into the mouths of cannons, overwhelming firepower and attrition warfare is often the best, sometimes the only, solution.

We also must remember that, when we adopt attritional warfare, we are seeking to visit the effects of overwhelming and sustained firepower upon the enemy while protecting our own troops from enemy fires. When the effects of attritional warfare are brought to bear on the enemy, it can demolish his will to resist and minimize friendly casualties. Thus, the old maxim, "Artillery conquers, infantry occupies" is realized.

Combat is never simple. But, in some situations, such as on the Marianas Campaign, firepower can well be the decisive element of combat power, while in others, it might be an enabling or auxiliary element. In all cases, however, the proper application of fires remains an essential element for victory.



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Endnotes:

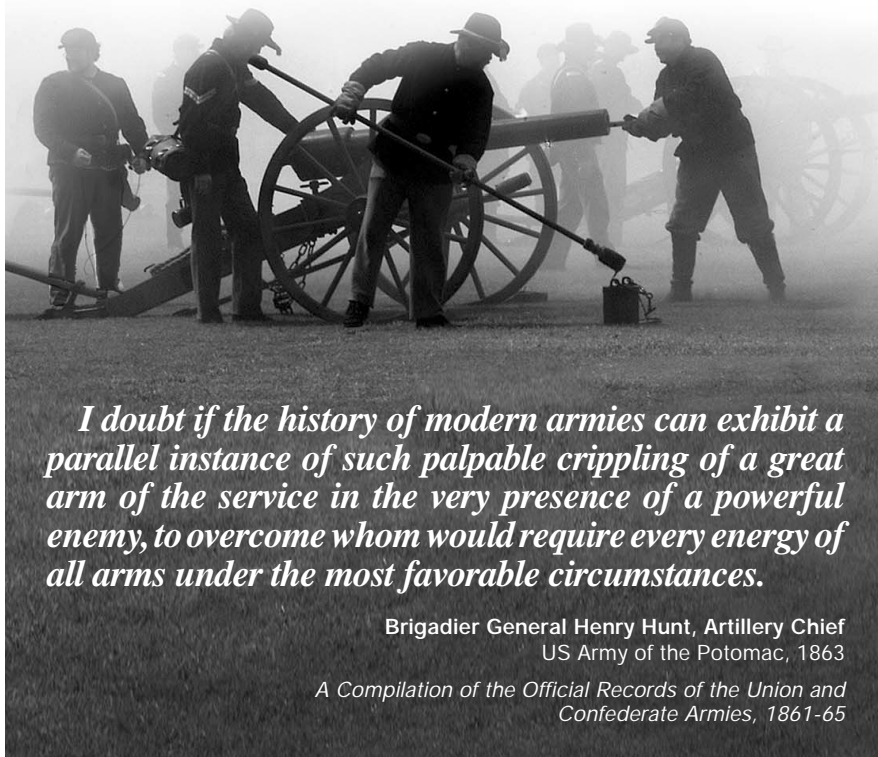
1. Ronald Spector, in common with other students of the Pacific War, describes the American two-pronged strategy in these words: "Against all common sense, against the dictates of military doctrine, against the essence of Roosevelt's message to Churchill, the Pacific was divided into two theaters...The traditional elements of careerism and doctrinal differences within the armed forces had combined to produce a monstrosity." Ronald H. Spector, *Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 144-145.
2. Murray Williamson, *A War to be Won: Fighting the Second World War* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2000), 340.
3. *Ibid.*, 339.
4. During WWII, the Joint Chiefs of Staff was an ad hoc organization that served the President and coordinated joint national military strategy at the highest level. In 1944, it was comprised of Admiral William D. Leahy, the President's Chief of Staff; Admiral Ernest J. King, Chief of Naval Operations and CINC of the US Fleet; General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the US Army; and General Henry H. Arnold, Commander of US Army Air Forces. Philip A. Crowl, "Campaign in the Marianas," *United States Army in World War II: The War in the Pacific*, (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1960), 1-2.
5. Spector, 301-302.
6. Wesley Frank Craven and James Lea Cate. "The Pacific: Guadalcanal to Saipan, August 1942 to July 1944," *The Army Air Forces in World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), 690.
7. Edwin P. Hoyt, *To the Marianas: War in the Central Pacific 1944* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1980), 4.
8. For an extended discussion of the military aspects of the geography of the Marianas, see Crowl, 21-30.
9. Vern Haugland, *The Army Air Forces Against Japan* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 187.
10. "B-24 raids and, later still, B-29 attacks kept Truk neutralized," Haugland, 188.
11. Craven, 676.
12. *Ibid.*, 690.
13. A Japanese fleet commanded by Vice Admiral Ozawa sailed with the intent of defeating the American fleet in a general fleet action and then destroying the amphibious task force off the Marianas. Operation A-Go ended in dismal failure for the Japanese. For details of the Japanese plans, see Samuel Eliot Morison "New Guinea and the Marianas: March 1944-August 1944," *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, vol. 7 (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1953), 213-216.
14. For a detailed narrative of the Battle of the Philippine Sea, see Morison, 213-321.

15. "This was the greatest carrier battle of the war. The forces engaged were three to four times those in preceding actions like Midway, and victory was so complete that the Japanese could never again engage on such a scale." Morison, 278.
16. Crowl, 287.
17. Craven, 690.
18. Crowl, 42.
19. Henry I. Shaw, Bernard C. Nalty and Edwin T. Turnbladh, "Central Pacific Drive," *History of US Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, vol. 7 (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Marine Corps, 1965), 351.
20. The guns and howitzers controlled by the XXIV Corps Artillery expended 24,536 rounds of all types prior to the Tinian landings. The day before the invasion, three battleships, five cruisers and 16 destroyers joined the bombardment. Shaw, 361-362.
21. *Ibid.*, 457.
22. *Ibid.*, 452.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, 435.
25. *Ibid.*, 361.
26. Crowl, 130.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Shaw, 364.
29. Crowl, 131.
30. *Ibid.*, 130.
31. *Ibid.*, 131.
32. Shaw, 576.
33. Crowl, 130.
34. Spector, 320.
35. Crowl, 336.
36. *Ibid.*, 337.
37. "Initial entry forces need to be interoperable and flexible enough to handle unforeseen circumstances. Initial entry forces require enough combat power to establish and protect lodgments and begin simultaneous shaping operations immediately upon arrival." *Field Manual 3-0, Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2001), 3-6.
38. Crowl, 78.
39. Shaw, 577.
40. *FM 3-0*, 2-6.

A Contest of Contrasts:

The Principle of Dislocation and the Artillery Fight at the Battle of Chancellorsville

By Captain G. James Schreckengost, PAARNG



I doubt if the history of modern armies can exhibit a parallel instance of such palpable crippling of a great arm of the service in the very presence of a powerful enemy, to overcome whom would require every energy of all arms under the most favorable circumstances.

Brigadier General Henry Hunt, Artillery Chief
US Army of the Potomac, 1863

A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1861-65

It has been said that war is the interaction of opposites. For every action, there is a reaction. For every move, there's a counter move. In 1998, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Leonhard, Infantry, wrote the polemic *The Principles of War for the Information Age*. In it, he argues that the nine principles of war the Army has inculcated since the 1920s should be altered to better address the technological realities of the 21st century. His most striking principle, "Advantage" (which expands the concept of Maneuver), is coupled with the sub-principle of "dislocation."¹

According to Leonhard, "dislocation is the art of rendering the enemy's strength irrelevant." Through dislocation, the friendly force temporarily sets aside the enemy's advantages (in numbers, positioning, technology, etc.) and causes those strengths to be unrelated to the outcome of the conflict.

Throughout the history of war, armies have used various means—technology, organization and, very often, maneuver—

Second Place



to dislocate the enemy's strength. Once the enemy's strength was set aside, the friendly force was free to attack through the enemy's weakness to bring about defeat. Dislocation is the theoretical foundation for obtaining advantage in combat. In other words, it sets the stage to ensure the conditions for victory.²

One of the best examples of dislocation occurred on May 3, 1863, the day after "Stonewall" Jackson infamously smashed the Federal right at Chancel-

lorsville. It was on this day, the day that I argue was the decisive day of the battle, when Confederate Colonel E. Porter Alexander, commander of the Southern artillery on the Confederate left, totally collapsed the Federal line in a rare textbook action—enfilade fire (a form of dislocation). As such, it was perhaps the best tactical use of artillery in the entire war. It was also a day in which the potentially overwhelming Federal artillery failed due to inadequate organizational tables and an inefficient support system.

Organization for Combat. When Major General "Fighting Joe" Hooker took command of the US Army of the Potomac in January 1863, he stripped Brigadier General Henry Hunt, the army's nominal chief of artillery since mid-1862, of what little authority he had. For example, Hooker "transferred the military command of the artillery to his own headquarters, to be resumed by the chief of artillery only under specific orders and for special occasions."³ This wasn't bad, as the maneuver commander should have a measure of control, but some room should have been left to allow for the experience and advice of the artillery chief.

For task organization, Hooker chose to sprinkle his precious artillery assets throughout the various infantry corps. Each corps commander, usually an infantryman from the old army, determined how to use his artillery.

Under Hooker's model, Hunt was relegated to simply being the commanding general's artillery advisor. He was still in charge of the respectable artillery reserve of 12 batteries, but the reserve could only be dispatched under the direct orders of the commanding general—not the artillery chief.

To compound the problem, each infantry corps commander organized his artillery differently. Therefore when the artillery was brought into battle at Chancellorsville, sustained massing of fires was nearly impossible. Of the six corps in the army, only half designated an artillery chief: the III, XI and XII

Corps. The other three, I, II and VI Corps, simply had divisional artillery chiefs. The highest-ranking artillery officers who had any real command authority were mere captains, and they were strictly beholden to their maneuver commanders.

In striking contrast, the artillery of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, although not nearly as well equipped as its Federal counterpart, made up for its shortcomings by having superior, but not perfect, organizational tables. Robert E. Lee, an offensive-minded general, believed that the artillery should be massed forward. Therefore, he kept only two battalions of artillery in reserve. The bulk of his artillery, all organized into battalions, was assigned to each corps.

Each corps also had an artillery chief—men who held real command authority—and five battalions of artillery each: three were direct support (DS) for the divisions and two were corps general support (GS) on-order DS. Colonel Alexander was Longstreet's I Corps artillery chief, and Colonel Samuel Crutchfield was Jackson's II Corps artillery chief.

In contrast to the Federals, the Confederates fought their artillery at the battalion level, not the battery level, when the technology of the age called for mass. They held but a small army reserve and pushed most of their guns down to the lowest level possible.

Battle of Chancellorsville. On 2 May 1863, Lee, outnumbered 2.5 to 1, made the bold decision to send Stonewall Jackson with half of the army around Hooker's right and roll up his flank just west of Chancellorsville (See the map.) An hour before dusk, Jackson's men advanced with two divisions on line and two in reserve and proceeded to eviscerate the outnumbered and outmaneuvered XI Corps. As the Federal infantry brigades reeled under the weight of Jackson's assault, the six batteries of the XI Corps under Lieutenant Colonel Louis Schirmer—the only corps in the Federal army to have a unified reserve at the corps level—massed their fires along the pike to impede the Confederate sweep.

Twelve artillery batteries were emplaced in the clearings of Hazel Grove and Fairview Heights, a mile behind the Federal forces, to stop the enemy onslaught. Atop the heights, now the "key-point of the battlefield" and astride the Plank Road, the Confederate main axis



Major General "Fighting Joe" Hooker chose to sprinkle his precious artillery assets throughout the various infantry corps.

of advance, Captain Charles Best, XII Corps Artillery Chief, wheeled 18 rifles and 16 smoothbores—a total of 34 guns—into position.⁴ About 500 yards in front of Best's grand battery was Brigadier General "Pappy" Williams' XII Corps division of infantry, the "Red Stars." Because of the proximity of Williams' infantry, the cannons were "stationed so as to reach the enemy by firing over the heads of our own troops...as no better position could be obtained, and the use of the guns was imperative."⁵ Best's well-chosen position was, according to Confederate artillerist Alexander, "essentially like the Confederate position at Marye's Heights before Fredericksburg, but on a larger scale."⁶

Some 600 yards farther south in the clearing of Hazel Grove, Captain James Huntington, a divisional artillery chief with the III Corps, formed a "large battery" of 36 guns (24 smoothbores and 12 rifles) with the aid of Major General Alfred Pleasonton, commander of the Cavalry Corps.⁷ He placed the 10th New York Battery on the right near the woods and four batteries in the center: his own Battery H, 1st Ohio; the XI New York Battery; 6th New York Horse Artillery from Pleasonton's command; and Battery F/K, 3d US. Battery B, 1st New Jersey held the left of the Federal line. Unlike Fairview Heights that was supported by a division of infantry, Hazel Grove had only artillery units.⁸

As Captains Best and Huntington completed their deployment at dusk, re-

treating troops from the crushed XI Corps, with the time bought by their "well-handled artillery," swept through and around Best's guns, "carrying off horses and caissons and even overturning one of the guns; but, as a whole, [Best and Huntington] held firm."⁹ On the heels of these refugees advanced the brigades of A.P. Hill's Confederate division, Jackson's corps, that erupted from the woods and charged the Federal infantry. About 500 yards back on higher ground, Best's gunners answered with "a storm of canister, first checking and then driving [the Confederates] back into the woods."¹⁰

Best remembered, "the enemy was in force in the woods between 600 yards and a mile in our front. I was obliged to fire over the heads of our infantry force, ranged in parallel lines about five hundred yards in front. It was an operation of great delicacy, this cannonade of thirty-four guns over the heads of our men, but it was a matter of necessity, and was promptly and fully executed."¹¹

Off to the left in Hazel Grove with Huntington's guns, Lewis' New York battery got the worst of it. Seeing that it was about to be flanked by Hill's attacking infantry, Huntington ordered Lewis to pull back about 200 yards while his own battery turned its tubes to the right and raked the wood line with canister to cover the New Yorkers' retreat. The ploy worked, and the Confederates were momentarily thrown back.¹² General Hunt later declared that Huntington's fight "was a desperate combat between artillery and infantry at three hundred yards distance, in which the artillery repulsed the infantry, flushed, as they were, with a great success."¹³

As the battle for Hazel Grove progressed, regiments of infantry from Sickles's III Corps arrived to support Huntington's lonely gunners and finally drove the Confederates back for the night, clearing the wood line.¹⁴ The fight for Fairview Heights and Hazel Grove on May 2 lasted "up to near 10 o'clock at night" after which Huntington ordered the guns be entrenched. Lieutenant John Woodbury of Battery M, 1st New York Artillery, XII Corps, remembered "throwing up earthworks by digging down 1½ feet, and placing the earth in front of the pieces. For want of proper tools, [it] consumed nearly the whole night."¹⁵

As the III and XII Corps improved their positions around Fairview Heights and Hazel Grove, Confederate corps

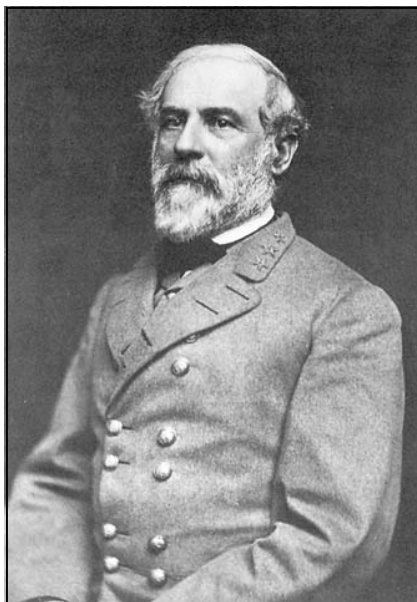
artillery chief Colonel Sam Crutchfield, “partaking of the impatience of Jackson,” pushed some guns forward along the Plank Road and opened up with a “random fire” toward Chancellorsville, more than a mile away. This lone battery was savaged by Best’s well-placed artillery, however, not only forcing it to withdraw, but also wounding the studious Crutchfield.

The rebel cause soon was dealt another a blow when Jackson, returning from a reconnaissance north of Best’s position, was mistakenly shot by nervous pickets from the 33d North Carolina of Lane’s brigade, A.P. Hill’s division. The Confederate attack, although successful, was costly. Not only had the old master been wounded, but his artillery chief, Crutchfield, and his strongest division commander, A.P. Hill, also were taken out of the fight. This left Major General James Ewell Brown Stuart, Lee’s cavalry chief, as the ranking officer on that side of the field.¹⁶

One of the first things Stuart did upon assuming command of the left wing of Lee’s army was to designate Colonel Alexander of Longstreet’s corps (-) as its “senior officer of artillery” and send him on a reconnaissance to “select and occupy with artillery positions along the line bearing upon the enemy’s position” in order to press the attack the next morning.¹⁷ This would not be an easy task as good artillery positions were almost non-existent in the tangled wilderness of Orange County, Virginia.¹⁸

After an “all-nighter,” Alexander was able to place only two batteries astride the Plank Road, Stuart’s planned axis of advance, and another four along the road that ran perpendicular to Hazel Grove under Major John Pegram, the artillery chief of A.P. Hill’s division.

“There were but two outlets through which our artillery could be moved,” Alexander remembered, “one the Plank Road, debouching within four hundred yards of [thirty-four] of the enemy’s guns, protected by breastworks and enfiladed for a long distance by a part of them, as well as by two guns behind a breastwork thrown up across the road abreast of their line of *abatis* and infantry cover; the second outlet was a cleared vista or lane through the pines [a half mile



Robert E. Lee, an offensive-minded general, believed that the artillery should be massed forward

to the south of the Plank Road], some 200 yards long by 25 yards wide. This opened upon a cleared ridge, held by the enemy’s artillery, about 400 yards distant.”¹⁹

Alexander kept the other hundred or so guns in reserve along Plank Road near Dowdall’s Tavern due to the lack of availability of artillery positions. From this point, he planned to dispatch them to the decisive time and place of the up-and-coming battle.²⁰

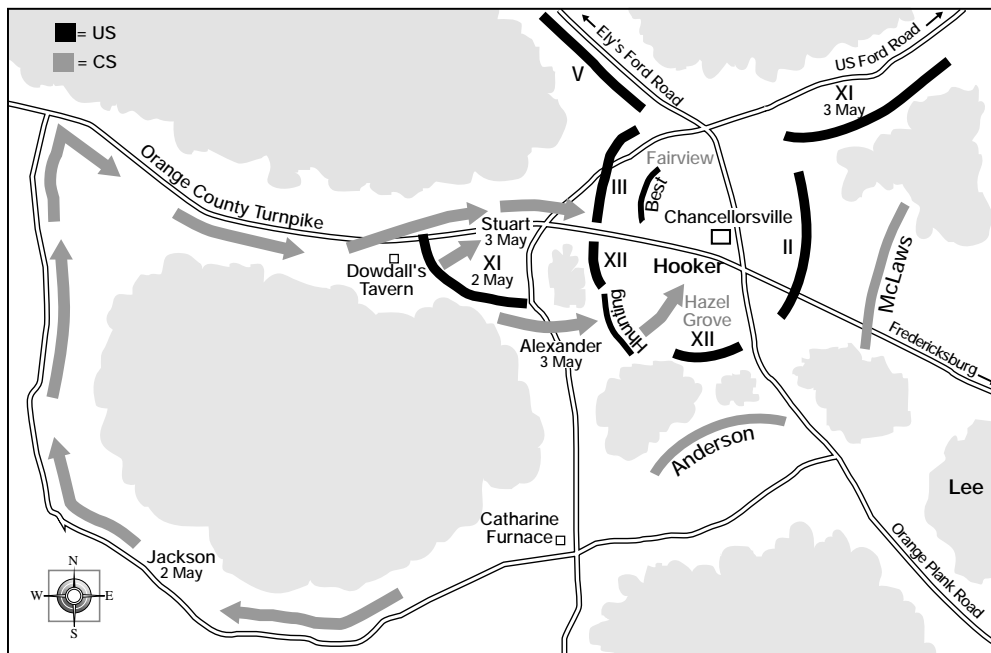
May 3 opened with 76,000 Federals facing 43,000 Confederates along the south bank of the Rapidan River north

of Chancellorsville. While the Federals held interior lines with superior artillery positions (Hazel Grove and Fairview Heights) and fresh troops (the II, V, and XII Corps), the Confederates held exterior lines with inferior artillery positions and, generally, were scattered.

Even so, Hooker yielded the opportunity to the Confederates when he ordered Sickles to vacate Hazel Grove because he thought it was indefensible. In total disbelief, the combative Sickles, the only non-West Pointer in the Federal high command (he was a Democratic Congressman and a member of the New York National Guard), argued with Hooker to hold the position as it protected Fairview Heights, the key to the battlefield. Hooker insisted, however, and the New Yorker was ordered to abandon the clearing.²¹

On the heels of the Federal withdrawal from Hazel Grove, Confederate artillery Major William Pegram pounced. Only James Huntington’s Ohio battery and two regiments of infantry from Brigadier General Charles Graham’s brigade remained in the grove when Pegram let them have it with shell. After a sharp exchange, Brigadier General James Archer of A.P. Hill’s division ordered his brigade to charge over the now under-defended breastworks and headed for the Ohio Battery.²² Faced with overwhelming odds, Huntington ordered his battery out.

“Our infantry support soon gave way,” remembered Sergeant Orin Dority, a Buckeye Redleg. “We were ordered to



Battle of Chancellorsville

limber to the rear and get to the rear as best we could." All the while, he added, the Rebels were shooting down the artillery horses and calling out, "Surrender you Yankee so-and-so!"²³

As the battery made its way northeastward across the clearing, Pelham's able gunners knocked out three limbers—splattering the drivers and their horses—and half of the battery was captured by Archer's advancing men. Once the clearing was secured, Pelham rushed up four batteries of artillery, marking the decisive turning point of the great battle.²⁴

Just as Archer and Pelham secured Hazel Grove, the main Confederate attack kicked off down the Plank Road with a frontal assault against Fairview Heights. Major General Alpheus Williams' and Brigadier General John Geary's XII Corps divisions on the south side of the road, Brigadier General Hiram Berry's III Corps division on the north side and Best's grand battery astride the road beat them back, however, with serious losses.

As Sickles had warned, the key to Fairview was now Hazel Grove, and Alexander capitalized on the Federal mistake. Making full use of the superior organizational tables he helped implement, the Confederate artillery chief quickly reinforced Pegram with three batteries from his own battalion and massed 28 guns on Hazel Grove. In one of the rarest instances of the war, Alexander and Pegram were not only able to shoot "near enfilade fire" into a division of enemy infantry, but also Best's grand battery which was posted atop the heights. During the deafening cannonade, Pegram turned to Alexander and exclaimed, "A glorious day, Colonel, a glorious day!"²⁵

Even worse, as the Confederate attack heightened, Best's guns ran out of ammunition. Because the army lacked any unified artillery chain of command let alone support system, the separate corps were responsible for resupply. And because the corps were principally infantry organizations, the artillery took a back seat.

To exacerbate the situation even more, the artillery on Fairview Heights came from different commands and nobody had the authority, especially a mere captain of artillery, to pool ammunition from the different corps trains. It must be remembered that the highest ranking artillery officer on the heights, Captain Best, in charge of the very existence of the army at this point in the battle, was

outranked by the hundreds of majors in the infantry battalions, let alone the brigade, division, and corps commanders in the area who knew little or nothing about the "long arm."

General Hunt, the artillery chief, was ordered by Hooker to remain miles away from the key point of the battle. When Best sent his request straight to Hooker, pleading for ammunition from any source, the army commander's reply was, "I can't make ammunition!"²⁶

As soon as they ran out of shell and shot, Best's guns ceased firing, for they dared not fire canister over the heads of their own troops. With central management of the guns, the sort of command formerly exercised by artillery chief Henry Hunt, batteries lacking ammunition would have been pulled back and replaced by fresh batteries held in reserve. But because Hooker stripped Hunt of this command authority and had ordered him to establish his headquarters along the Rapidan, this didn't happen.²⁷

In striking contrast to the steadily collapsing artillery position at Fairview, the Confederate position at Hazel Grove grew steadily stronger. Colonel Alexander rolled in additional batteries from his reserve at Dowdall's Tavern until he had filled every available gun position. The moment a battery ran low on ammunition, it was replaced by another with full chests. Alexander had some 50 guns employed against Best's dwindling 20 or so, with perhaps three dozen firing at any time.²⁸

Historian Steven Sears comments in his book *Chancellorsville*, "the volume of fire delivered from Hazel Grove that morning was never exceeded by the Confederate artillery. The best crews were getting off three rounds a minute, a firing pace equaled of the best-trained infantry. The gunners' single disappointment was (as always) the quality of their ammunition."²⁹ Alexander complained that there was an "extraordinary large percentage" of shell and case shot that either burst prematurely or failed to burst at all.³⁰

Nevertheless, it was the weight of this artillery—and the corresponding weakening of the Federal artillery—that began to steadily shift the tide of battle in the South's favor.

With the lack of adequate artillery support, Alpheus Williams' Federal division deployed astride the Plank Road was thrown back by two attacking brigades from A.P. Hill's division. "The getting away was worse than staying,"

Williams remembered. "Our line of retreat was over the ravine, up an exposed slope, and then for three-quarters of a mile over an open plain swept by artillery and infantry... Many a poor fellow lost his life or limb in this fearful transit."³¹

Caught up in this maelstrom was Lieutenant Justin Dimick's section of army regulars, Battery H, 1st US Army, on the Plank Road. At first his gunners tried to plug the hole with canister. When it became apparent that all was lost, however, Captain Thomas Osborn, Dimick's chief, ordered the guns out.

Like Huntington's battery in Hazel Grove, the Confederates opened fire on the horses to prevent the battery's escape. Seeing that one of his guns was immobilized and with Confederate infantry close behind, Dimick dismounted and pulled the gun along by prolonge. As he unhitched the piece from the limber, however, he fell mortally wounded when a bullet sliced his spine, disemboweling him.³²

An infantry officer from Williams' division said of the incident: "Not a braver act is recorded in the history of the war."³³ With the withdrawal of Best's guns at Fairview, the entire Federal line collapsed, and the army was once again forced to retreat north across the Rappahannock, allowing Lee to embark on his ambitious Gettysburg Campaign.

Lessons Learned. Great armies learn from their failures. Like the Phoenix rising from the fires of destruction, so too did the artillery of the Army of the Potomac under the guiding hand of Henry Jackson Hunt, father of the modern American artillery. Hunt regained his artillery command authority. He believed that artillery was the decisive arm, that he who used it correctly would win the battle and that he who did not, would not; it was that simple. He also believed that on the offense, if used properly, artillery would clear the way for the infantry. And in a defensive role, its most effective role, it could smash any enemy attack with frightening results.³⁴

Countering one infantry officer's attitude about artillery, Winfield Scott Hancock's, who said that artillery was simply there to give "moral support for the infantry with its loud noises and smoke," Hunt said, "What is called the 'moral support' of artillery is proportional not to the noise that it makes, but to its actual destructive effect."³⁵

To facilitate the "destructive effect," Hunt once again lobbied Hooker to

change how the artillery, the decisive arm, was organized. This time Hooker acquiesced to Hunt's wishes and implemented the system that has continued to be the foundation of today's artillery organization.

Hunt created a seamless web of artillery control, whether centralized or decentralized, that offered the flexibility to apply the right firepower and the right place at the right time. Under the new system, every battery was assigned to a battalion (which Hunt called brigades to elevate their relevance). In all, there were 13 artillery battalions of five to six batteries each. The six infantry corps had one DS battalion and the cavalry corps had two, for a total of eight DS battalions.

These formations fought as battalions. Each commanding officer, usually a field grade, also acted as his corps commander's fire support coordinator (FSCOORD). He was empowered to act as the corps commander's artillery advisor (develop essential fire support tasks, or EFSTs) and deploy and command the artillery troops in the corps (develop essential Field Artillery tasks, or EFATs, to facilitate the maneuver commander's intent). Although a corps commander could override his FSCOORD on fire support matters, he could not override Hunt's fire support decisions. Only the commanding general could do that.

The remaining five battalions were kept in the army's artillery reserve commanded by Brigadier General Robert O. Tyler. They would be the army's GS on-order DS assets.³⁶

Aside from the fact that Hunt was given the authority to move any gun on

the field to achieve mass like Alexander did at Hazel Grove, the most important change was the creation of an independent artillery support system. As was already stated, Federal artillery was handicapped by its quixotic organization at the Battle of Chancellorsville. Because its artillery fought as separate battalions or even batteries, when the guns ran out of ammunition, they were forced to vacate the field. Their divisional or corps trains were not configured to support artillery outfits.

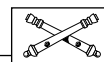
In the new artillery reserve, General Tyler not only commanded the 21 firing batteries of the reserve, but also the army's new centralized artillery support system. No longer would the battery commanders have to beg, borrow or steal from the infantry trains. They could go through their battalion commanders who had a direct line to Tyler who controlled hundreds of ammunition wagons (each holding 250 rounds per gun for the 366 guns) and portable forges.

From this point forward, the corps FSCOORDs requested "x" number of replacements from the artillery reserve and, once they arrived, sent their batteries back to Tyler for reconstitution. It became one giant rotating system that was elaborate in its workings but simple in concept.

If the Battle of Chancellorsville had been fought under this system, no doubt the Confederates would have been stopped the day after Jackson made his fateful sweep. On the converse, Alexander, although outnumbered in artillery assets, used his superior organizational tables to the utmost and drove the Federals from the field by using the principle of dislocation.

Through dislocation, one force temporarily sets aside the other's advantage. The Confederates, outnumbered 2.5 to 1, dislocated the stronger Federals at Chancellorsville with Jackson's unexpected attack on 2 May and, more decisively, by maneuvering their artillery assets onto Hazel Grove with Alexander, driving the Federals from the field.

As we move into an era of "lighter but more lethal forces," employing those forces—the art of war, so to speak—must not be overtaken by the science of war.



Captain G. James Schreckengost, Pennsylvania Army National Guard (PAARNG), won Second Place in the US Field Artillery Association's 2002 History Writing Contest with this article. He is the Commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 28th Infantry Division (Mechanized) Artillery, Pennsylvania ARNG. Also in the 28th Division, he has served as the Division Targeting Officer; Executive Officer for B Company, 2d Battalion, 111th Infantry; Rifle Platoon Leader in the 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry; and Armor Crewman in the 1st Squadron, 104th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Captain Schreckengost is a graduate of the Field Artillery Officer Advanced Course, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and holds a Master of Arts in American Studies from Penn State University. He is a high school American History teacher in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and is affiliated with the 108th Field Artillery Regiment. His article "The Fatal Blunder of the Day—The Artillery Fight at the First Battle of Bull Run" placed Third in the 2001 History Writing Contest.

Endnotes:

1. LTC Robert Leonhard, *The Principles of War for the Information Age* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1998), 64.
2. Ibid.
3. Henry Hunt, "The First Day at Gettysburg," *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York: The Century Company, 1887), Vol. 3, 260-61.
4. Charles Best, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1861-65* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 1880-1901), vol. 25, Part 2, 675.
5. Hunt, *Official Records*, 249.
6. E. P. Alexander, *Military Memoirs of a Confederate* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1983), 337.
7. Hunt, *Official Records*, 249.
8. L. Van Loan Naisawald, *Grape and Canisyster: The Story of the Field Artillery of the Army of the Potomac, 1861-65* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1999), 232-33; Hunt, *Official Records*, 162-64 and 249; Alfred Pleasonton, *Battles and Leaders*, 179.
9. Hunt, *Official Records*, 249.
10. Ibid.
11. Best, *Official Records*, 675.
12. Naisawald, 232.
13. Hunt, *Official Records*, 249.
14. Ibid.
15. John Woodbury, *Official Records*, 675.
16. Alexander, *Military Memoirs*, 339-40.

17. James Ewell Brown Stuart, *Official Records*, 887.
18. Alexander, *Official Records*, 823.
19. John Pegram, *Official Records*, 823.
20. Alexander, *Official Records*, 823.
21. Leonhard believes "Opportunity" should replace the more narrow principles of "Offensive and Initiative."
22. Steven Sears, *Chancellorsville* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), 316-17.
23. Ibid., 317.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., 320; John Geary, *Official Records*, 731.
26. Naisawald, 241.
27. Hunt, *Official Records*, 252.
28. Sears, 333.
29. Ibid.
30. Alexander, *Military Memoirs*, 347-48.
31. Sears, 335.
32. Naisawald, 240.
33. Sears, 321.
34. Naisawald, 206.
35. Ibid.
36. Hunt, *Official Records*, 471-72; Hunt, *Battles and Leaders*, 256-59; Naisawald, 259-62.

Two great feats of the US Army Artillery in World War II were the February 1943 emergency forced march of the 9th Infantry Division Artillery (Div Arty) into Tunisia, North Africa, and the division's resulting victory in the battle against a German panzer division of Field Marshall Irwin Rommel at Thala Pass. Furthermore, the 9th Div Arty fought without the division's three infantry regiments present. The 9th Artillery had been too far away to help stop the crushing German breakthrough of the Allied lines near the village of Kasserine and the mountain pass there.¹ But it arrived in time to beat Rommel's forces near Thala Pass.

The Thala Battle. Rommel's panzers had decimated the slim line of mostly American defenders in the Kasserine area—mainly the US 1st Armored, 3d Armored and 34th Infantry Divisions. The experienced Germans kept on, quickly forging ahead toward another important pass at Thala, 30 miles northwest of Kasserine. (See the map.)

The raw, untested troops of the then soundly beaten US II Corps retreated westward in an undisciplined and unorganized disarray. Officers, even colonels, made little or no effort to recover. Vehicles and ambulances were filled with the wounded and infantrymen without their equipment. All were heading west.

When questioned by the 9th Div Arty column arriving from the west, these officers and soldiers replied that they

had been overrun at Kasserine by superior numbers of German tanks and infantry and that they had been ordered to retreat to try to reconstitute somewhere in the rear.²

By the time the Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ-Eisenhower) knew of Rommel's ferocious attack, there were no reserves nearby to throw into the defense at Kasserine. There was no uncommitted infantry or armor to call upon.

However, most of the 9th Div Arty was some 800 mountainous miles to the west at Tlemcen, Algeria. AFHQ began sending whatever combat units they could to stop Rommel from penetrating further.³ If he got to the important supply junction at Tebessa, just across the border in Algeria, he could seriously threaten the Allies in the north and delay plans to conquer North Africa and Sicily by weeks or even months.

So, should the 9th Div Arty have been sent to fight Rommel's panzer forces without their 9th Division infantrymen? Without question, the emergency demanded it.

By the time the 9th Div Arty could get into the area, Rommel's General Baron Friedrich von Broich's 10th Panzer Division was driving hard up the road from Kasserine to Thala.⁴ Only a few British infantry platoons were in position to slow the panzer tanks and infantry. Mid-February had witnessed a major disaster for the US Army at Kasserine, and another worse disaster appeared to be looming at the western passes beyond Kasserine.

Third Place



HOW ARTILLERY BEAT ROMMEL AFTER KASSERINE

By Robert C. Baldrige



The Forced March. On the morning of 17 February, the 9th Div Arty Commander, Brigadier General S. LeRoy Irwin, hurriedly received orders to move out immediately with all his available artillery (one of his 105-mm battalions was too far away at the time) plus two regimental cannon companies that were nearby. He was to “force march” to Tebessa, meaning, “Go!—and don’t let anything stand in your way.” By late afternoon, a long column of artillery started on its now famous trek with General Irwin commanding.⁵

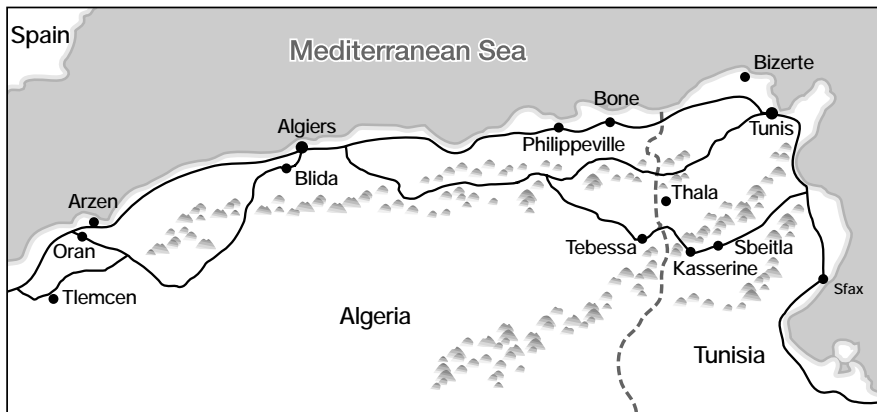
Because its 155-mm howitzers were the heaviest and the slowest, the 34th Field Artillery Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel William C. Westmoreland and his Executive Officer, Major Otto Kerner, Jr., led the Div Arty column. Closely following was Lieutenant Colonel Clinton Adams’ 60th Field Artillery Battalion and the Division Artillery’s Headquarters Battery. On the way near the village of L’Arba, the column picked up Lieutenant Colonel Justin W. Stoll’s 84th Field Artillery Battalion.

The column consisted of 12 155-mm, 24 105-mm and 12 75-mm howitzers mounted on half tracks and two platoons of anti-tank 37-mm guns from the two regimental cannon companies plus 36 various caliber weapons manned by British stragglers picked up along the way. The tortuous motorized column was 11 miles long and carried 2,170 officers and men in 411 jeeps and trucks pulling guns and maintenance equipment and supplies. This was a strong combat artillery force, one to be reckoned with—if it got there in time.

Moving slowly, but almost constantly, the column would take several hours to pass by a single point. Making only short stops for brief rests, gas and rations at depots, they made the 800 miles to Tebessa and then Thala in less than 100 hours.

The winter weather was the worst—cold and rainy in the lowland plateaus and frigid, icy and snowy in the 3,000-foot high Atlas Mountains. The ancient trade roads were narrow, clay-like and slightly tilted from the middle down to the gullied sides for drainage, which caused the howitzers to slide.

At night the tight, snaky curves in the mountains made it almost impossible to see more than 20 yards ahead. Headlights were blacked out with only “cat-eye” slitted hoods. Mud in the plains and ice in the mountains covered the



Map of the Kasserine Area in North Africa

roads.⁶ Miraculously, only two of the 9,000-pound 155-mm howitzers, pulled by big Diamond-T movers, slid off the road into the ditches or the gullies as the howitzers swung behind the trucks on curves.

Near their destination of Tebessa, the retreating II Corps troops and vehicles coming at them from the opposite direction slowed the column. With the help of a few MPs, the column sped up, forcing the retreats to stand aside. The retreating troops would often call out honestly, “But you are going in the wrong direction!”⁷

Did this affect the morale of the green 9th Artillerymen who knew little of what lay ahead as they moved toward their first battle? The results of the battle of Thala answer a definite, “No.”

Among the iron men of the march were the vehicle drivers, especially those who drove the big GMC and Diamond-T trucks that pulled the 105-mm and 155-mm howitzers. They hardly got any sleep during the entire march. At the few short rest periods, their sergeants had to briskly jolt them awake in order to get them started again. Certain drivers later received Bronze Star medals for their determination along with maintenance mechanics who repaired breakdowns and road repair problems day and night.⁸

By the morning of 21 February, the column reached its crossroads destination town of Tebessa. It had nearby airfields and a huge supply depot for American and British ground and air corps personnel. At that point, the town was frantic with a hodgepodge of rumors flying, uncoordinated evacuation activities and roads crowded with ambulances, military equipment and vehicles.

When the column stopped at Tebessa, General Irwin found new orders awaiting him. He was to turn north immedi-

ately into Tunisia and head for the mountain pass behind Thala.⁹ There, he was to take command of a mixed group of American and British Artillerymen who were desperately trying to stop, or at least slow, the fast-approaching panzers and infantry of the 10th Panzer Division. Elements of Brigadier Charles Dunphie’s greatly outnumbered 26th British Brigade were doing what they could to slow the Germans. Some even were running along ridgelines firing their rifles to make the enemy think the Thala defenses were stronger than they actually were.¹⁰

The Battle. By dusk of 21 February, Irwin’s column arrived behind Thala Pass, exhausted, cold and hungry. That night was spent preparing for action—digging in the guns, unloading and stacking the ammo, making night survey data, tying plots together, aligning gun barrels by use of aiming circles and stakes, and setting up radio and wire communications—doing all the things necessary for artillery to perform effectively.

Communications that night and early the next day were mostly out as many radios were damaged by the bumpy jolts of the march. Hand-laid wires kept getting knocked out by enemy shelling.

Gun-laying instruments were not properly declinated for this location. However, Brigadier H.J. Parham, the British First Army Artillery officer, was on the scene, supplying surveys, maps and suggested gun positions, all of which sped up accurate firing operations.¹¹

The news of the arrival of the 9th Div Arty at Thala was a great boost to the morale of the Allied defenders there. They had just been consolidated under the command of Brigadier General Cameron Nicholson, Assistant Commander of the British 6th Armored Division. His small task force of infantry



and armor could not be expected to stop the German panzer division just over the next ridgeline. But a small group of his “Nickforce” tanks heroically

slowed the division down in time for Irwin’s artillery to start blasting away at it at dawn on that cloudy morning of 22 February.

Irwin had positioned himself up on the front ridge of the British forward observation post (OP) overlooking the advancing Germans. Irwin made this forward Allied OP his forward command post for all the artillery in the area.¹² A unit of British artillery already there was preparing to direct fire on the Germans on the downward slope of the ridge.

Irwin knew that Captain William F. McGonagal’s C Battery, 84th Artillery, had practiced direct fire by bore sighting.¹³ (Bore sighting is not just looking through or along the tube, it consists of making the optical axis of the gunner’s panoramic telescope parallel to the line-of-sight through the center of the tube using various instruments and methods.)

So Irwin called the four 105-mm guns of C Battery up to the ridge to go into action. Two of its guns were hit and put out of action that day, but not before the battery had destroyed two enemy Mark IV tanks plus lighter vehicles and accompanying infantry.

In addition to being shelled, the defenders were subjected to bombing by German Stuka dive-bombers throughout the day, although cloudy skies had limited both German air operations and those of the US XII Fighter Command.¹⁴

The artillery kept up a steady and relentless “drumfire” on the Germans—so much so that by later that afternoon, the howitzer ammunition was 15 minutes away from being exhausted. By the end of the next day, the 9th Div Arty suffered 45 casualties, including eight killed. It had fired 1,904 rounds.

When the 9th Artillery started firing on the morning of 22 February, German General von Broich quickly was informed that the larger blasts were obviously 155-mm howitzers. He also knew from Arab spies that troop movements had come into the pass area the previous night. Knowing that 155-mm were an integral part of an infantry division’s artillery, he became mistakenly convinced that an entire new infantry division had arrived.

His men were tired and under strength from their Kasserine fighting, and he

thought they could not withstand a fresh enemy division on the scene. He and his 10th Panzer Division stopped. With Rommel’s approval, von Broich ordered his troops to withdraw back east from where they came.

Rommel, a sick man at that time, also was disillusioned by his arguments with General von Armin in the northern sector. Von Armin was not cooperating with the new command arrangements where he came under Rommel’s command. Von Armin pulled back his troops that were threatening Tebessa.

As Allied reinforcements arrived daily in the Tebessa and Thala area, it was downhill from then on for the Germans in North Africa until their surrender on 13 May 1943.

The 9th Div Arty was awarded a distinguished unit citation for conspicuous gallantry and heroism in battle on 21, 22 and 23 February 1943.¹⁵

The Thala Battle, which one could say was won by the artillery, was America’s first land victory over the Germans in World War II. It led to their surrender and withdrawal from North Africa and, thus, to a much safer opening of the Mediterranean and on to Sicily.

Lessons Learned. The 9th Div Arty’s forced march and success at the Thala Battle provided many lessons for artillerymen that still hold true today.

Quality Leadership. An early 9th Division Commander was Major General Jacob Devers, later commanding general of the 6th Army Group in wartime Germany. The 9th’s Commander in North

Africa was Major General Manton Eddy, later 3d Army’s XII Corps Commander in Germany and then commander of the reactivated US 7th Army in post-war Germany.

General Irwin and Lieutenant Colonel Westmoreland both had excellent training at the US Military Academy at West Point. Many others of the 9th Artillery, such as Colonel Alexander Patch of the 47th Infantry Regiment, later Commanding General of the 7th Army in wartime Germany, knew the value of leadership and training in making the 9th one of the war’s premium divisions.

Practical Training. This proved to be of paramount importance.¹⁶ Fortunately at Thala, the 9th Artillery had had more than its share of practical training. It was a regular army division and was manned by the early 1941 draftees who were the best America had to offer.

Training at night was obvious for fighters, but not so much for truck drivers. The 34th FA had many such night exercises in the states, including for its truck drivers.¹⁷

The night training helped in other ways. The Artillery needs the skills to recon and set up new firing positions quickly, especially at night. The Artillery can’t just stop and fire effectively like a rifleman or tank can.¹⁸

In the states, C Battery, 84th Field Artillery conducted bore sighting training, even though it was considered unlikely the battalion would need this skill in combat. The instruments and methods were designed for 1,000 yards, but



The Thala Battle, which one could say was won by the artillery, was America’s first land victory over the Germans in World War II.

at Thala, the battalion needed its bore sighting skills for short-range direct fire.¹⁹

Also while in the states, all ranks, officers and enlisted, were trained to be able to perform the jobs of their immediate supervisors in the 34th Field Artillery. Officers were required to know what went on at least two levels down.²⁰

The 34th had practiced widening or closing the spread of a battery's four guns from the normal 200 yards to 800 yards, or even positioning guns next to each other, as conditions required. This practice is desirable in deserts, plains and mountains and useful at Thala.²¹

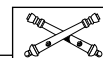
Massing Fires. It was only after Thala that the importance of massed firing was realized and understood and that a centralized (fire direction center) FDC was the way to control it.²²

Forward Command Post—Irwin's locating at a good forward OP and making it his forward command post was a pivotal strategy at Thala. His tactics were in contrast to those of the Commander of the US II Corps, Major General Lloyd Fredendall, who located his command post 70 miles back in an underground mining bunker.²³ It sounds basic today, but the concept of having a command post so far forward was new then.

Allied Cooperation. The Allies cooperated at Thala Pass, consolidating their efforts to stop the German panzers. Today, our armed forces operate similarly under many types of command arrangements all around the world.²⁴

Much has been written about the North African campaigns of the US Army,

from the November 1942 Operation Torch landings in French Morocco and Algeria on through to the May 1943 conclusion in Tunisia where the Germans were thrust out of North Africa by the Allied forces of America, Great Britain and the Free French. The Thala Battle, immediately after our disaster at Kasserine, was neither a long nor large one, but it was the turning point in North Africa, avenging Kasserine. At Thala, without the 9th Div Arty, the outnumbered and outgunned defenders certainly would have been overrun. The Germans retreated from Thala Pass and, just under three months later, from North Africa.



The author interviewed the following people for this article:

Leon Birum, Union City, Indiana—First Lieutenant Executive Officer of B Battery, 34th FA Battalion, later a Major

George Connolly, Marblehead, Maine—Second Lieutenant Reconnaissance Officer in B Battery, 34th FA Battalion, later a Colonel (USA, Retired)

Donald Harrison, Colorado Springs, Colorado—First Lieutenant Forward Observer (FO) in B Battery, 34th FA Battalion, later a Colonel (USA, Retired)

John Lannon, Pawtucket, Rhode Island—First Lieutenant Anti-Tank Platoon Leader and FO in B Battery, 34th FA Battalion, later a Captain

Aaron Lubin, Fresh Meadows, New York—Private First Class in the Anti-Tank Platoon, then a Sergeant in the Fire Direction Center of Headquarters Battery, 84th FA Battalion

Sheldon Stoddard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire—First Sergeant of B Battery, 34th FA Battalion, received Battlefield Commission to Second Lieutenant

Bert Waller, Poway, California—First Lieutenant Communications Officer in Headquarters Battery, 9th Infantry Division Artillery, later a Lieutenant Colonel (USA, Retired) (Now Deceased)

Edward Winsch, Garden City, New York—Scout Corporal and FO in C Battery, 84th FA Battalion, later a First Sergeant

Robert C. Baldrige is a World War II veteran with service in the 34th Field Artillery, 9th Infantry Division in England, France and Germany. He received a battlefield promotion to Second Lieutenant and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his actions as a Forward Observer with the 9th Infantry. Mr. Baldrige graduated from Yale in 1948 and is now retired from the textile industry. He is the author of *Victory Road*, his World War II memoirs. He also authored the article "Atomic Annie: First Nuclear Cannon" that was featured in the December 1996 *Military History* magazine. Mr. Baldrige, who is 77, is a member of the US Field Artillery Association, The 9th Infantry Division Association, The Association of the US Army, The Army Historical Foundation, Inc., The Council On America's Military Past and is a member of The National Order of Battlefield Commissions. He resides in Lawrence, New York.

Endnotes:

1. Interview with George I. Connolly, Marblehead, MA, Second Lieutenant/ Reconnaissance Officer, B Battery, 34th Field Artillery, 9th IN Div. The 9th Division was strung out over a wide area and not a unified, cohesive division until the end of the North African Campaign.
2. Interview with Leon "Buck" Birum, Union City, IN, First Lieutenant/Executive Officer, B/34 FA/9th IN Div.
3. George F. Howe, *Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative* (Fort McNair, Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1957), Pub. 6-1, 466.
4. *Ibid.*, 407.
5. Captain Joseph B. Mittleman, *Eight Stars to Victory: History of the Veteran 9th Infantry Division* (Washington, DC: Ninth Infantry Division Association, 1948), 89-91.
6. General Omar Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Holt, 1985), 27.
7. Interview with Donald L. Harrison, Colorado Springs, CO, Second Lieutenant/Forward Observer, B/34 FA/9th IN Div.
8. Interview with Sheldon Stoddard, Portsmouth, NH, First Sergeant, B/34 FA/9th IN Div.
9. Martin Blumenson, *Kasserine Pass* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 273.
10. Interview with John Lannon, Pawtucket, RI, First Lieutenant/ Forward Observer, B/34 FA/9th IN Div.
11. Interview with (now deceased) Bert C. Waller, Poway, CA, First Lieutenant/Communications Officer, HQ Battery, Div Arty, 9th IN Div.
12. Bert C. Waller, *Commanders We Knew, 9th Infantry Division in World War II* (Privately Published, October 1990), 5.
13. *Ibid.*, 99; interview with Edward Winsch, Garden City, NY, and Aaron Lubin, Fresh Meadows, NY, C Battery/84th FA/9th IN Div.; Lubin, "The Battle of Thala," *Octofail*, 9th Infantry Division Association Newspaper, August-September, 1997.
14. "The AAF in Northwest Africa," *Army Air Force Wings at War Series*, (Washington, DC: Center for Air Force History, 1992), No. 6, 29-36; Blumenson, 7-81.

15. Mittleman, 91. The citation reads, in part, "Although enemy forces were entrenched only 2,500 yards distant and there were only three platoons of friendly infantry in front of the artillery, the unit maintained constant and steady fire with such deadly effect that enemy tanks units were dispersed and driven back. The cool and determined manner in which... 9th Division Artillery entered into battle after an almost incredible forced march contributed in great measure to the defeat of the enemy's attempt to break through the Thala defile."
16. "Thorough technical, psychological and physical training is one protection and one weapon that every nation can give its soldiers before committing them to battle..." Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 175. "Eisenhower had learned much. He was going to make it a fixed rule, he promised, that until the war was won, no unit in his theater will every stop training, including units on the front line." Stephen Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 175.
17. Interview with Connolly and Birum, both of whom are mentioned in Samuel Zaffiris' *Westmoreland* (New York: Morrow, 1994), 51-3.
18. Interview with Connolly.
19. Waller, 99; interview with Winsch and Lubin.
20. Interview with Connolly.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Dr. Boyd L. Dastrup, *King of Battle: A Branch History of the US Army's Field Artillery* (Fort Monroe, VA: US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1992), 210.
23. Blumenson, 273-4.
24. Eisenhower became famous for understanding the problems allies had in their relationships with each other and his success in solving them

Report Out:

Senior Field Artillery Leaders Conference

By Brigadier General David C. Ralston and Colonel Stephen D. Mitchell

The goal of future Army operations will be to simultaneously attack critical targets throughout the area of operations by rapid maneuver and precision fires to break the adversary's will and compel him to surrender.

FM 1, The Army

There are many challenges facing the Field Artillery today as we meet current mission requirements and proceed with transformation. To tackle these challenges, Major General Michael D. Maples, Chief of Field Artillery, gathered together the senior FA commanders and command sergeants major (CSMs), active and Army National Guard (ARNG), and other representatives for a four-day conference at the FA School, Fort Sill, in April.

During the conference, attendees divided into panels and discussed the capabilities required for our Interim and Objective Forces and readiness issues. Then each panel briefed the conference at large about its findings. The following are selected topics briefed during the conference.

Objective Force Issues. A major point of discussion was how we transition from our current fire support elements (FSEs) and deep operations coordination cells (DOCCs) to effects coordination cells (ECCs) and prepare soldiers and leaders for this environment. While we have a pilot effort underway with the Initial Brigade Combat Teams (IBCTs) at Fort Lewis, Washington, the contemporary operating environment (COE) is showing the need to move to organizations that have a broader scope than just traditional fire support coordination. The XVII Airborne Corps Artillery, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and the 25th Infantry Division (Light) Artillery, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, are already moving in this direction.

The COE is driving us to integrate nonlethal effects along with the broad range of lethal effects. This new emphasis likely will require some changes in force structure and tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) for the Legacy Force. Requirements Determination Developments and Integration (RDDI), part of the Futures Development Inte-

gration Center (FDIC) at Fort Sill will look at what actions should be taken in the near term.

Furthermore, the tasks associated with effects coordination are broader and require curriculum changes to prepare our leaders for these expanded duties. Training Command will take the lead on developing new courses and instruction to address the training and leader development required.

A parallel issue resulting from a changing environment where adaptive enemies use different types of sanctuary, such as urban areas, is the need to minimize collateral damage and non-combatant casualties. As the conflicts in Kosovo and Afghanistan illustrate, our enemies are likely to hug the local population and sensitive locations, such as schools, hospitals or religious sites, in order to avoid attack.

To counter that tactic, we must acquire nonlethal munitions or other non-kinetic capabilities to increase our relevance in all environments. The devel-

opment of munitions leveraging nonlethal technologies is required—including malodorants, sound, physical incapacitants, the disabling of vehicle electronics, vision blocks or night vision. The Concepts and Analysis Division of FDIC will take the lead on these munitions/capabilities.

Going hand-in-glove with effects is the Networked Fires concept for future automation requirements. This is part of the larger Objective Force battle command system of systems that will provide near real-time integration of lethal and nonlethal effects in the land domain to include “reach” to Army, joint and multinational sensors and effects generating systems. The FDIC’s Task Force XXI has the lead on refining this concept.

The fire support officer’s (FSO’s) role in information operations (IO) also was addressed. Frequently when deployed to stability and support operations (SASO), such as those in Bosnia and Kosovo, FSOs at the task force and brigade levels find themselves responsible for IO. Maneuver commanders recognize their FSOs as their best integrators, so the mission naturally falls to the FSOs.

We have learned that the targeting methodology of *decide, detect, deliver, assess* (D-A) works well with nonlethal operation. We see ourselves as the inte-



2LTs in Lightfighter Lanes at the FA School

Photo by CPT Dennis Turner, FA School, Fort Sill, OK

grator of parts of IO that are generally characterized as “offensive” IO, although this concept needs refinement. Furthermore, we need to capture lessons learned and integrate them into our TTP “kit bag” for the FSO. We should look at adding these TTPs captured from Bosnia and Kosovo into our training and leader development.

Readiness Issues. Many issues discussed as readiness priorities for our Legacy and Interim Forces were brought up in multiple panels. One of the top issues was that of gun display unit (GDU) readiness. The GDU was fielded in non-Paladin cannon units as a component of the battery computer system (BCS) in the 1980s. Although the BCS lightweight computer units (LCUs) have been upgraded since that time, the GDUs have not and are no longer supportable.

Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Systems Manager for the Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (TSM AFATDS) has taken this issue on and is working to segue a GDU replacement onto the pocket forward entry device (PFED) and lightweight technical fire direction system (LWTFDS). The TSM expects to start fielding this GDU replacement on the PFED in FY04.

Two other readiness concerns are being addressed with a similar solution. The FED is aging, and we no longer have a LCU backup, such as the old backup computer system (BUCS). The Project Manager for Intelligence and Effects (PMI&E), Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, is leveraging advances in computer equipment to put the FED, BUCS and GDU on a palm-sized computer device—the PFED. The PFED and LWTFDS are funded and will start fielding in FY03.

The Field Artillery Center is accelerating a number of other programs to enhance the readiness of the Interim Force. Currently, many of our forward observers (FOs) are still working with outdated technology in the form of the ground/vehicular laser locator designator (G/VLLD). At 103 pounds, this device is simply too heavy and cumbersome for dismounted operations.

A suite of programs will give our observers more modern target acquisition tools to meet the first requirement for accurate predicted fires: target location and size. Among these are a lightweight laser designator rangefinder (LLDR) and a light dismounted optic. The LLDR starts fielding in FY03.

Unit/Institutional Training Balance.

This panel tackled some tough issues dealing with assignment-oriented training and the impact of distance learning on future officer and NCO institutional instruction.

For example, we currently train lieutenants for 19.4 weeks in the officer basic course (OBC). The new TRADOC model is the Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) that consists of two phases and will be implemented in FY04. The first is for six weeks of small-unit combat skills and leadership training. Phase II is 13.4 weeks of branch-specific training.

To make up for this six-week loss from our OBC program of instruction (POI), we have conducted a detailed task analysis of the critical skills required of a new lieutenant in a variety of initial assignments in multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) and heavy and light cannon units. We also reviewed the percentages of lieutenants serving in those positions and whether the critical tasks are best trained in the institution or the unit. To produce a more competent lieutenant for his first unit, the new BOLC course will be tracked based on the lieutenant’s initial unit with possible follow-on courses for selected officers in Bradley fire support team vehicle (BFIST) operations and MLRS platoon leader skills.

TRADOC also is leading a review of captains’ instruction to increase their proficiency as staff officers and commanders. TRADOC’s intent is to put unit commanders in charge of when an officer returns to the institution, based on the officer’s next staff or battery command assignment. The goal is for the officer to receive “just-in-time” instruction tailored to his next job. The just-in-time instruction may include distance learning for the common core tasks, institutional training or home-station training—or various combinations of the three.

The institution’s challenge is to retain the flexibility to teach those branch critical tasks identified as shortfalls for the individual officer as he moves to a new type of assignment.

Enhanced Battle Lab for Networked Fires. A few days after the conference, TRADOC named Fort Sill as the lead for developing the Army’s TTP for Networked Fires. Networked Fires is the near real-time integration of lethal and nonlethal effects, including access to and support from joint sensors and

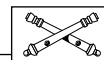
fires capabilities. Fort Sill is organizing an enhanced battle lab to support this fires and effects integration.

Reorganization of Fort Sill. This Networked Fires announcement and conference output provided the synergy for a long overdue reorganization of the Field Artillery Center and School. The reorganization will be post-wide—not just limited to the reorganization of the Training Command as reported in the article “Field Artillery Institutional Transformation” by Colonel Michael A. Madden in the March-April edition.

The leadership at Fort Sill has discussed reorganization for many years; reductions in human resources and TRADOC initiatives have combined to serve as the catalyst for action on the reorganization.

Conclusion. Other topics were raised during the conference, but citing all of them is outside the scope of this article. However, tangible solutions to many are already being worked and will be reported on in upcoming editions of *Field Artillery* and presented as an update during the Senior Fire Support Conference at Fort Sill on 30 September to 4 October (see the information on the conference on Page 26).

A major benefit of the conference was timely feedback on equipment and readiness concerns from field commanders. With this dialogue, the Field Artillery Center is better able to respond with a focused, integrated strategy to enhance the Legacy Force and transform it into the Objective Force, based on the continuing need for land-based indirect fires.



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