

DEFENSE OF THE CAJUN BAYOU



THE JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER
OPERATIONS GROUP



CENTER FOR ARMY LESSONS LEARNED

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Defense of the Cajun Bayou

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Foreword

In 11 rotations a year, the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) challenges infantry brigade combat teams, aviation task forces, combat service support battalions, and other units from all components of the Army with a multi-domain, decisive action training environment. That challenge builds readiness. Units experience the friction associated with a deployment from reception, staging, onward movement, and integration through attacks, defenses, and brigade live-fire exercises here at Fort Polk, Louisiana so lessons and learning can be applied before they must answer the nation's call for a real mobilization to an unknown conflict. The JRTC continually strives to improve the quality and realism of the training experience. If you have not been to a JRTC rotation in the last year, you might not be ready for the relentless peer-threat Geronimo poses with integrated air defense systems, counter-fire radars, chemical munitions, electronic attack, aggressive reconnaissance, close air support, and a robust integrated fires command. Leaders, from the brigade commander to the battle captain, must adjust to the rapid pace and need for constant focus on the brigade fight. Every decision matters.

This decision-making book underscores the importance of decisions. Sometimes it is not just for the want of a nail that the battle was lost, but maybe that is not far off the mark. The smallest, most innocuous decisions can have disproportionate impacts on a brigade's success.

Who are the decision makers? Spoiler alert ... it is not just the brigade commander. This book provides insight into how every decision maker, from fighting company commanders to tired staff officers, can make decisions informed by the commander's intent that affect the brigade as a whole.

We hope you find both utility and professional enjoyment in reading this book. The decisions you will face throughout this work emanate from observations and trends our observer, coach/trainers derive from rotations throughout the year. We hope units across the force use the material within as fodder for leader professional development discussions so the entire team, the entire brigade staff, can get on board.

I would like to recognize the operations group team for their great work on this project. They are in the trenches, wrestling with these challenges. Thank you!

All the Way!



Patrick D. Frank
BG, USA
CG, JRTC and Fort Polk



Introduction

Brigades that come to the Joint Readiness Training Center will fight a brigade fight. Every unit, regardless of echelon or component, from the squad through the battalion, from infantry to military police to transportation to aviation, will leave better than it arrived after enduring the crucible training event here in Louisiana. However, small unit training can occur anywhere. The swamps and humid heat of Fort Polk offer a unique opportunity. Through rotational design and observer, coach/trainer coaching, brigades can focus on their role in shaping deep, synchronizing maneuver, allocating resources, and setting the conditions necessary for battalions to succeed in both the offense and defense. This book is an effort to reach units prior to their arrival in Louisiana by giving them realistic scenarios to think about while following the Cajun Brigade through the planning and execution of a defense.

As you read what we have provided, take note of the guidance the brigade commander provides his staff. Watch the staff focus on achieving the commander's guidance through its planning sessions. Study how the staff primaries take an active role in their struggle to understand and apply that guidance. Empathize with them as they do it all under the duress and tyranny of time. Throughout, we have attempted to give you an opportunity to take an active role. Enjoy! We will see you at leader professional training.

Special thanks to MAJ Benjamin Culver, MAJ Ian Fleischmann, MAJ Thomas Whitehead, CPT Brendan Forrester, and CPT Andrew Heath for the hard work, research, and patience on this project. They witness the struggles associated with the brigade fight every rotation. They weave their observations into the story you are about to read.

All the Way!



David W. Gardner
COL, IN
Commander, Operations Group

Preface

WARNING! Do not attempt to read this book straight through. You will not find a table of contents to guide your reading. After you turn this page, you join the Cajun Brigade at 0600 hours. The first section of reading immerses you in the Cajun Brigade and the operating environment it faces. Read along, gain an understanding of what has happened, and what the Cajuns are planning. You will face decisions from a variety of perspectives from battle captain to brigade commander. Make a decision and follow the corresponding instructions. Ignoring these instructions and reading from page 1 throughout will result in confusion. So follow the page numbers corresponding to your decision. If you have made a mistake, it will become abundantly clear and you will find instructions to get back to that fork in the road.

Enjoy!

The Brigade Command and Control Team

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The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the Department.

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Day 3, 0600 Hours, Brigade TOC

The sun rose steadily through the trees, burning morning fog and creating another Cajun steam bath to start the day. It started at 90 degrees with 90 percent humidity; that soon sounded like a fond memory. Other sounds echo. The staccato of occasional gunfire filters through the hum of generators drums only slightly louder than the mosquitoes surrounding the 3rd Brigade (BDE), 21st Infantry Division BDE headquarters. It is another great autumn day on the bayou!

The 3/21 Infantry “Ragin’ Cajuns” had deployed to this subtropical climate after coming off a year as the U.S. Northern Command Regionally Aligned Force (RAF). RAF missions are not the most exciting missions in the world; this one had tagged the Cajuns as a focused ready BDE, and they had plenty of time to train together as an infantry brigade combat team (IBCT) focused on large-scale combat operations. They had finished a series of command post (CP) exercises (CPXs) using simulations at their home station mission training complex to train the planning staff and current operations sections. All infantry companies completed their required live-fire exercises within the last four months. The field artillery battalion (BN) was Table XVIII complete and the intelligence warfighting function (WfF) certified Gate 1 of the military intelligence training strategy. They had tested their planning operating procedures (PSOP) and tactical standard operating procedures (TACSOP) in culminating training events. They made some minor improvements, but the documents proved good to go. In short, they were ready to fight when their nation called them to fight for Atropia’s freedom, or so they thought.

3/21 BCT was a typical light infantry BDE task organization. The BCT had of three rifle BNs (1-45 Infantry “Gators,” 1-46 Infantry “Razorbacks,” and 1-47 Infantry “Copperheads”); a cavalry squadron (3-21 Cavalry “Swamp Fox”); a field artillery (FA) BN (1-36 Field Artillery “Mud Bugs”); an engineer BN (117 BDE Engineer BN “Nutria”); and a support BN (112 BDE Support BN [BSB] “Boudin”). Joint Task Force (JTF) 21 provided them operational control (OPCON) of an armor company (A/1-71 armored “Turtles”)

and a multifunction aviation task force (Task Force Mosquito) with attack, lift, and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) capabilities. The JTF's combat sustainment support BN (989 CSSB "Sustainers") were in direct support to the BDE. Of course, enablers OPCON'ed to the BCT included an Avenger air defense artillery (ADA) battery, a military police (MP) platoon, a chemical decontamination platoon, a civil affairs (CA) detachment, a 3/21 IBCT task organization route clearance platoon, and a special operations forces (SOF) liaison the BDE received OPCON.

See Figure 1. On page 3 for the 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team task organization.

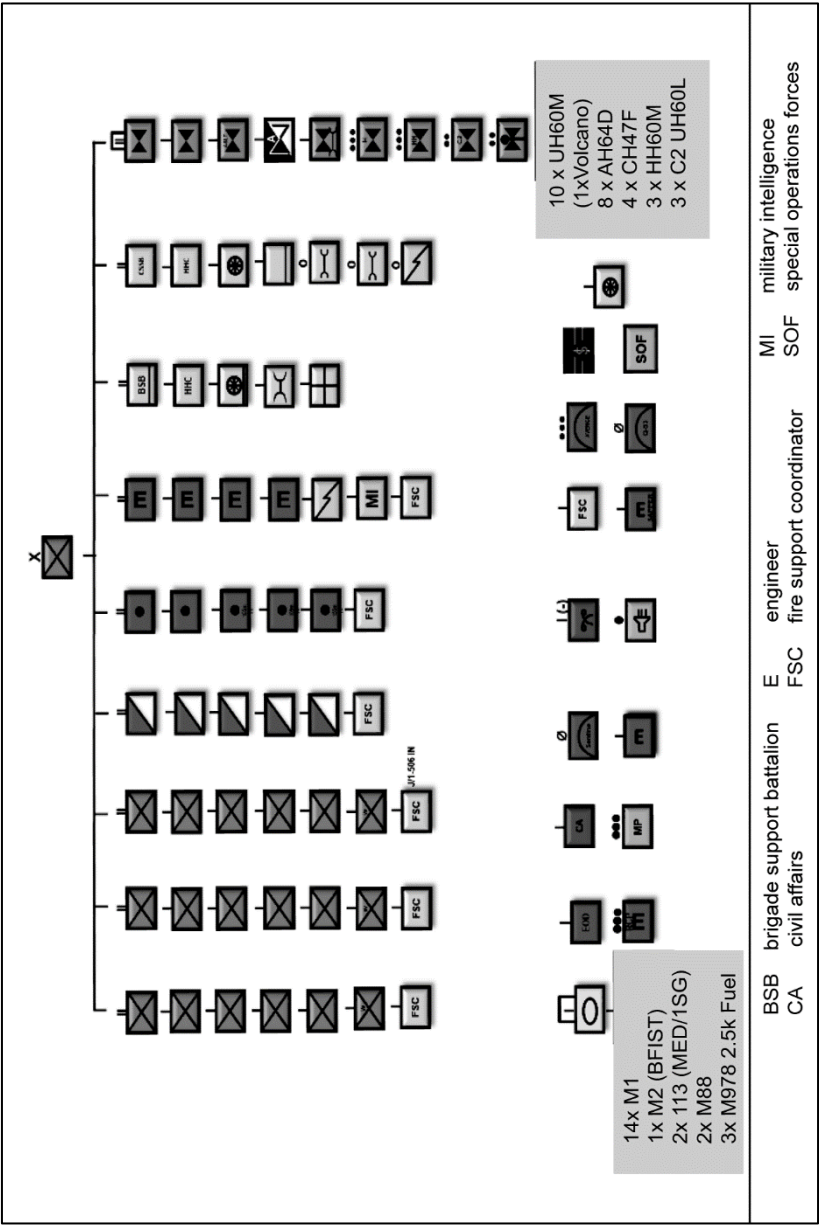


Figure 1. 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team task organization.

Using echelon above BDE (EAB) assets, Cajun 2's team had identified most of the enemy's 1711 Mechanized Infantry BN's positions for detailed planning. The 1711 was task organized into a BN-sized detachment (BDET). It had broken through the JTF 21 front line and seized Dara Lam and Sangari. 3/21 BCT's mission was to destroy the 1711 BDET and restore the forward line of troops (FLOT).

See Figure 2. on page 5 for the 1711 battalion-sized detachment attack.

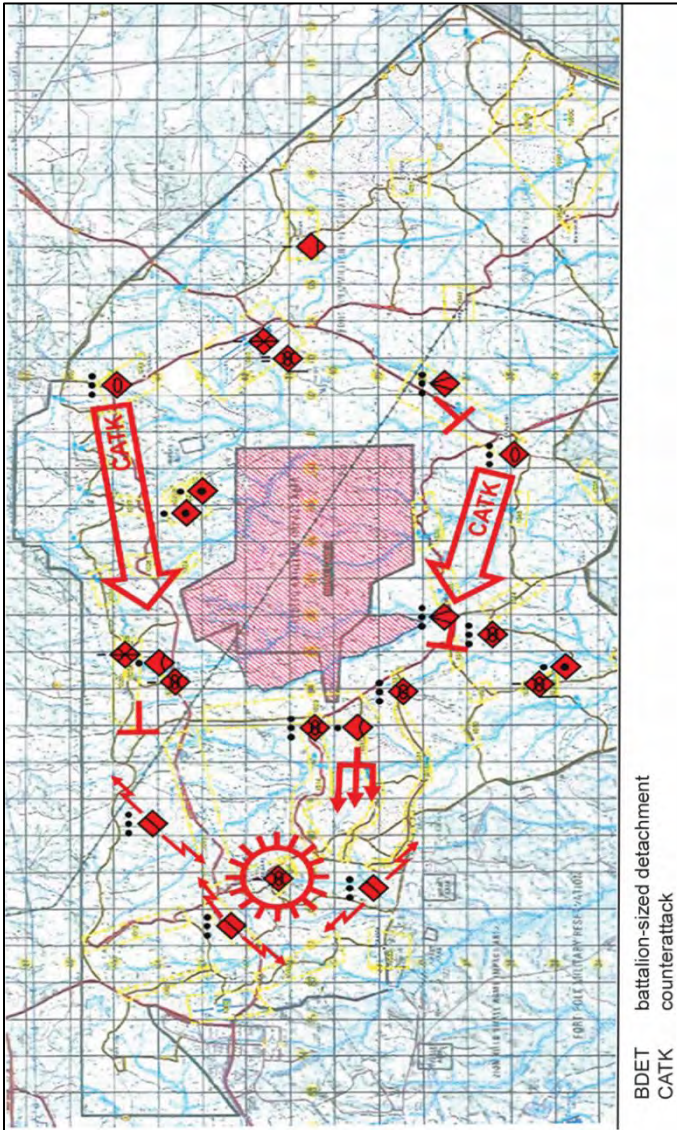


Figure 2. 1711 battalion-sized detachment attack.

The Cajun staff had a workable plan for the BDE's attack. The Swamp Foxes, 3-21 CAV, would conduct area reconnaissance of named areas of interest (NAIs) to identify enemy positions and air

defense platforms and then maneuver into two screen lines in the north and south. 1-45 IN would seize Self Airfield and Sangan and then move to seize Batoor and Marghoz. Finally, 1-46 IN, as the main effort, would seize Sangari. Expecting 1-46 IN to take significant combat losses, 1-47 IN would follow and assume before moving south through the open terrain southeast of Sangari to ultimately clear Marjani in the thickly wooded and restrictive terrain beyond. The BDE support BN (BSB) would then establish the BDE support area (BSA) in the vicinity of Sangan and TF Mosquito would move to Self Airfield.

The attack did not go as planned. Despite a thorough communications exercise, the BDE lost nearly all upper and lower tactical internet (TI) connection to their subordinate BNs (BNs) as they attacked to Sangan and Sangari. Outside the range for the one-system remote video terminal (OSRVT) to pick up a full-motion video (FMV) feed from the Shadow tactical unmanned aircraft system (UAS), the BDE was unable to detect or trigger fires on three high-priority targets (HPTs), an IL-220 and 2 x 2S6M1s. The Q53 counter-fire radar picked up enemy D-30 fires, but the BCT was unable to counter-fire and the enemy artillery inflicted significant casualties on the Gators and Razorbacks. By the end of the night, Cajun had established a lodgment around Sangan and seized Sangari. The BCT had failed to take Batoor and was blocked at the eastern edge of the open area southeast of Sangari. Marjani remained out of its control. All three infantry BNs were between 50 and 85 percent strength, and most of the 105 mm guns from B/1-36 FA were destroyed.

See Figure 3. on page 7 for the 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team initial attack course of action.

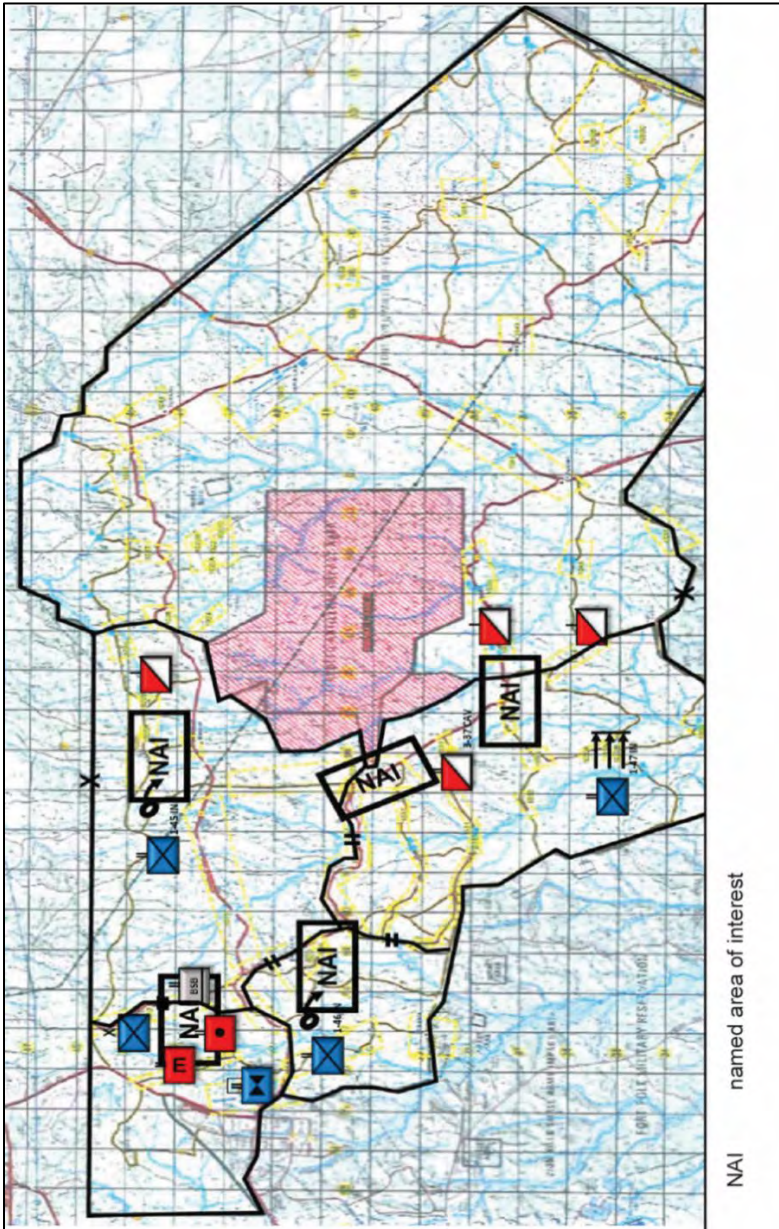


Figure 3. 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team initial attack course of action.

Cajun 6 was tired. He had stayed up most of the night ensuring the BDE would seize its objectives and had managed to squeeze in a couple hours of sleep before the heat of the day set in. He drank too-strong coffee out of a too-hot canteen cup and shook away the last of the sleep from his eyes. A long day awaited him. The BDE had not destroyed the 1711 BDET and now intelligence from JTF 21 said the 17th Division Tactical Group (DTG) was on the move.

This morning's intelligence summary said the 1713 BDET was moving to reinforce the 1711 BDET and that it should arrive in a few days. The BDE was not first in priority for anything. The BDE were still in a close fight, did not own any of the key terrain, and now another formation was breathing down its neck. It had yet to receive an order to defend; Cajun 6 knew it was coming. He was already prepared to drive the operations process. First, though, he needed to figure out exactly what was going on in his area of operations (AO) before the order hit.

Cajun 6 walked into his tactical operations center (TOC). The chief-of-operations (CHOPS) called the tactical operations center TOC to attention.

"Carry on," Cajun 6 called. "Just need a morning battle update brief (BUB) to get me started today."

A year before Cajun 6 had reorganized the BDE battle rhythm when he took command. The changes came quickly; his introduction to the BDE happened when the executive officer (XO) had handed him a printout of an Outlook calendar on a 5x8 index card. It showed wall-to-wall meetings from 0800 hours to 2100 hours, Cajun 6 had asked, "What's this?"

"It's the brigade battle rhythm sir," replied the XO.

Cajun 6 had looked at it again. The entire concept was unsustainable. The staff would only update their estimates once a day. They would use the night shift to prepare pretty slides for a 0800 hours BUB. Those slides would then sit unused the rest of the day and never be actively employed in the fight. More importantly, that train of meetings, working groups, and decision boards would have left him, the commander, scrambling to find time to get outside of the TOC's

confines to see his BDE and apply leadership where required.

“This is nuts,” he had said as he handed the card back to the XO.

“Delete everything except the commander’s update brief (CUB), operations sync(hronization) (OPSYNC), and targeting board.”

The XO had looked up at him as the commander had told him to “find a way to make it work.” The XO did and the staff started toward becoming a fighting staff.

Now a year later the staff responded when the CHOPs yelled “BUB! Get your estimates, we’ll start with the BDE assistant chief of staff for intelligence (S-2).”

The BCT S-2 current operations (CUOPS) officer started the BUB, as per the BCT TACSOP. He briefed the current known and templated enemy positions, changes in enemy composition and disposition since the last BUB, the focus of collection over the next 24, and the HPTs the BCT was trying to locate and destroy, and the effects and battle damage assessment (BDA) the BDE had inflicted since the last BUB.

“Do we know how many tanks and Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty Russian tracked infantry fighting vehicles (BMPs) remain in the 1711?” Cajun 6 asked.

“Sir, we don’t have an assessment at this time. We...”

Cajun 6 raised his hand and cutoff his S-2, “Get it. It’ll be important as we lean into our next planning cycle.”

The S-2 acknowledged the guidance before the fires noncommissioned officer (NCO) followed him and briefed the fires assets available by location, including the organic and JTF assets in general support, status of ammunition, and the disposition of the radars. CHOPS followed and talked through the current subordinate unit locations, the BCT FLOT, and ongoing missions. The assistant BDE engineer (ABE) covered the updated obstacle overlay and the location and status of dig assets. The BDE aviation officer (BAO) briefed the planned rotary- and fixed-wing support and the status of air mission requests (AMRs). The assistant chief of staff for

personnel (S-1) reviewed current combat power and estimates for replacements in the next 24 hours. The assistant chief of staff for logistics (S-4) addressed current classes of supply and planned resupply missions. The medical officer (MEDO) noted the locations of active ambulance exchange points (AXPs) and numbers of patients at each medical role. The assistant chief of staff for information operations (S-6) briefed the location and communications status of mission command nodes and RETRANs sites. He also reviewed the current BCT primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency (PACE) communication plan. The provost marshal officer (PMO) revealed the number of detainees in the BCT detainee holding area. Last, but not least, the XO briefed the status of current planning efforts and the planning timeline.

Following the BUB, Cajun 6 told Cajun 5 he expected the JTF order for the defense to be published in the afternoon but not to wait for it. “Tell the staff to start gathering the tools,” Cajun 6 said. “Be ready to give me an initial look when I get back from battle field circulation [BFC] with the Gators [near Batoor], Razorbacks [at Sangari], and Nutria [near Self Airfield]. In the meantime, we need to continue to press the attack until we hold defensible terrain.”

A running estimate for each WfF function must be updated on a regular practice from receipt of mission through mission analysis (MA) course of action development (COA development), COA approval and execution of the operation. A running estimate is the continuous assessment of the current situation used to determine if the current operation is proceeding according to the commander’s intent and if the planned future operations are supportable (ADP 5-0, *The Operations Process*, 31 JUL 2019). Doctrine does not offer an authoritative solution on what an intelligence running estimate should include or how it should be presented, maintained, or employed.

After the commander departed, Cajun 5 turned to the rest of the staff members and told them to put out the word that the staff would gather in the plans tent at 1400 hours to start the military decisionmaking process (MDMP). Meanwhile, they were to “gather the tools and come ready to plan”.

One of the assistant S-3s, a young captain who joined the section three weeks earlier, raised his hand and asked the XO, “What does gather the tools even mean?”

“Start asking higher for draft products and update your running estimate,” replied Cajun 5.

The S-3 added, “That also means updating the overlays, gathering map markers, dry erase markers, cleaning off the expired products, and reviewing the BCT PSOP.”

Day 3, 1000 Hours, 1-45 Infantry near Batoor

“Is BDE tracking our casualties?” Gator 6 asked his XO. “I’m not sure Alpha Company can hold on with what they’ve got.”

“We’re tracking the casualties, and we’re working the replacements,” Cajun 6 said grimly from the entrance to the Gator TOC. The BN operations sergeant major (OPS SGM) immediately called the TOC to attention. “Carry on.” Cajun 6 said as he nodded to the OPS SGM and then turned back to Gator 6. “Let’s talk over the map.”

They stepped over to the map board behind the battle captain’s station. An intelligence analyst stepped aside after adjusting an enemy icon. Cajun 6 looked at it and noticed it sat on Gator’s objective. He turned to the analyst.

“That’s no longer a templated location?” Cajun 6 asked. After noting the analyst nodded his head, he continued, “What’s the source?”

“That’s based on our Ravens and scouts, sir.” Gator 6 injected. He began pointing to the map. “We’re struggling to push beyond this terrain. Alpha makes some headway but then they’re pushed back again. They can’t make it alone, but neither can Charlie towards Marghoz. Now we’ve taken too many casualties. We’re basically just holding.”

Cajun 6 nodded, “This is too much objective for what you’ve got, isn’t it?”

“I’m afraid so. They’re dug in like wood ticks,” Gator 6 said. “We

need to take both objectives simultaneously or immediately one after the other. Any hesitation and the enemy counterattacks before we can consolidate on our gains.”

“How far do you have to go to secure that terrain?”

“I’m not sure right now sir but probably out to here.” Gator 6 indicated some eastings one or two kilometers from the town. He continued, “We need more punch if we’re going to make it there and I need to protect my flank. If I had another rifle company and some armor, I could sequence and synchronize the entire BN on Batoor. Add in some covering fire from Mud Bugs to keep their heads down and isolate the objective from Marghoz, and I think we’d have a shot.”

“What else do you need beside more troops?”

“Sir, let me get you a list.”

Cajun 6 appreciated the insight from his BN commander. As a result of his engagement with Gator 6, he needed to make some immediate task organization changes to support his main effort. Cajun 6 raised Razorback 6 via a frequency modulation (FM) radio on the BDE command net and informed him that, effective immediately, two rifle companies of Razorback were OPCON to Gator.

“Sir, we’re about six clicks from the Gators. Who is responsible for coordinating transportation?” Razorback 6 asked. “Should I just use my own trucks? They’re tied up right now.”

“Neither,” Cajun 6 replied. “Put your troopers on the road and start them walking. They’re infantry. Prove it, time to audit their physical fitness.”

“Roger that, sir.”

Cajun 6 then called Nutria and placed a platoon of sappers OPCON to Gator. He didn’t delve into the details but gave clear instructions to reinforce within the next two hours. These forces would tip the scale in favor of Gator. Now Cajun 6 needed to backbrief the staff on his decisions and drive it to continue synchronizing support to Gator until the objectives were secure.

Day 3, 2230 Hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 5 was losing his patience with the assistant S-3 who was trying to make the projector work. He had already pushed the start time for the MA brief 30 minutes to the right at the S-2's request and he knew this was eating into their planning timeline.

The JTF had finally published an order on the SIPR SharePoint page at 1750 hours but luckily the BCT had not waited to start planning. The BCT had been actively coordinating with its higher headquarters and using their upper TI to check for the products. The daily CUB had been scheduled for 1800 hours but Cajun 6 had still been out on BFC and took the update via the BCT operations and intelligence (O&I) FM channel. In a cascading effect, the CUB delayed the receipt of mission brief but it was worth the delay. The CUB was critical to Cajun 6 both as a battle rhythm event that helped him visualize and direct, but also critical to the staff for the opportunity to brief and hear from commanders what was actually happening on the ground.

"How do you read me, Cajun 5?" Cajun 6's voice had come through the radio. The staff cringed reflexively.

"Loud and clear, sir."

"Okay, let's get this going." Cajun 6 said. "First on Gator since I visited them earlier, you should be tracking that Gator had not been able to take their objectives on their own. We are pushing some of the Razorbacks up there as well as more sappers from Nutria. Let me know what that means. We can't wait on this."

Cajun 5 scribbled notes down, squeezed the hand mike, "Roger, sir." He thought, "I hope the staff has relooked the planning assumptions again."

And so they had. Cajun 5 took the receipt-of-mission brief at 1900 hours. Cajun 3 briefed the new mission, key tasks, and the no later than defend time, which was based on the assistant chief of staff for intelligence (J-2's) best estimate on when the enemy would commit the main attack. Cajun 2 covered the updated JTF and BCT enemy

situations. Cajun 5 reviewed the planning timeline and set the mission analysis brief at 2200 hours with an emphasis to maximize the time for the BNs to conduct their own planning and engagement area (EA) development. The staff had published their initial estimates in warning order (WARNO) 1 both on their BDE internal SharePoint and using a mission data loader to transfer the WARNORD to subordinates on the joint capabilities release (JCR). Within 15 minutes, each BN acknowledged receiving the WARNO.

Immediately following the WARNO publication, the staff began working on mission analysis, following the sub steps outlined in FM 6-0. It had seemed cumbersome when they first used the checklists, but by now, the staff was used to the process and had worked a few shortcuts into their PSOP. Key to the process had been getting the staff to execute IPB as a staff integrating process. IPB was still heavy on the S-2, but when every staff officer actively engaged their expertise in focusing on the enemy, the XO found staff sections that normally forgot they were even in a war (“cough”). The admin and logistics operations center (“cough”) were now more engaged and proactively involved in winning. The S-4 now knew as much about Arianan logistics as its own and turned out to be surprisingly prescient in the CP exercise targeting working groups at templating enemy logistics nodes.

“Just press function and F4!” yelled Cajun 5 at the captain still fumbling with getting his screen projected. Unsurprisingly, the shortcut worked and the mission analysis brief flared to life on the screen. Cajun 6 looked around the room to make sure Mud Bug 6, the fire support coordinator (FSCoord), and Nutria 6 were present. BN commanders were always welcome at mission analysis briefs, but Cajun 6 demanded his fires and engineer commanders be present when the mission was a defense.

Cajun 2 began the brief with updated IPB, focusing heavily on the terrain. His geospatial analysts built a draft modified combined obstacles overlay (MCOO) based on several geospatial databases, but Cajun 2 had forced the geospatial team to confer with the assistant engineer and subordinate unit S-2s to check the reality of their work. The resulting work, incorporating actual reconnaissance, was far more detailed and highlighted several pieces of key terrain. Cajun 2 briefly covered their threat models, which did not differ

significantly from 1711 BDET, and moved on to the composition and task organization of 1713 BDET. He then discussed the expected enemy timeline for reconsolidation and attack and which BDE tactical group and what division tactical group assets they could expect to see brought to bear in the fight ahead.

“Sir, in answer to your question earlier about how many T-80s and armored vehicles we can expect to face from the 1713 and the 1711 remnants, assuming JTF attrition, we assess we’ll face a combined 15 tanks.”

Cajun 6 turned to Mud Bug 6, “Targeting has its work cut out for it. That’s the deep fight, our fight.”

“Roger sir,” the FSCOORD acknowledged.

“I’ll reiterate this in my guidance at the end, but I’ll also tell you now. In the COA brief you need to tell me how many tanks do we, the BDE, need to destroy, how many can we destroy, and how can we do it to enable the BNs as the enemy enters its EAs.”

All present acknowledged and Cajun 2 briefed three separate enemy COAs, but he focused Cajun 6 on the situation template to highlight the COA differences, enemy options, and the enemy commander’s decision points. Cajun 6 acknowledged and better understood the resulting event template, event matrix, and key NAIs. Cajun 2 then switched to briefing friendly collection capabilities, the JTF information collection synchronization matrix (ICSM), the current JTF and BCT intelligence handover lines, and the draft priority intelligence requirements he and the S-3 used when building the initial reconnaissance plan. Cajun 6 approved the PIR.

The fires support officer followed, “The Deuce told you where the enemy was; here are some ways we can kill him. Sir, I acknowledge your guidance on whittling the enemy down in the deep fight. King of Battle!” The staff collectively rolled their eyes. (See Figure 4. On page 16.)

Target List Worksheet v2

LINE NO	TARGET NO	DESCRIPTION	AS OF: 022500CT17		LOCATION	ALTITUDE	ATTITUDE	LENGTH	WIDTH	SOURCE / ACCURACY	REMARKS	EVENT OR TRIGGER
			AS OF: 022500CT17	AS OF: 022500CT17								
1	KU0000	Smoke for Marghar Breach	15R WQ 3491.4479	90	800	200	WGSS-84			WGSS-84	FA SMK SMK 20 minutes	Initiate Breach on Marghar
2	KU0005	Smoke for Balcor Breach	15R WQ 3401.4031	100	3200	200	WGSS-84			WGSS-84	FA SMK SMK 20 minutes	Initiate Breach on Balcor
3	KU0010	758 and Hot Shot	15R WQ 3139.4531	90			WGSS-84			WGSS-84	P. CAS A: 15mm, P.LT 4 HE	ID OF ZSE or Hot Shot
4	KU0015	ZSU 23.4	15R WQ 0008.4239	110			WGSS-84			WGSS-84	P. CAS A: 15mm, P.LT 4 HE	ID of ZSU
5	KU0020	Smokes for Dara Lam Breach	15R WQ 3180.3749	100	1000	250	WGSS-84			WGSS-84	FA SMK SMK 20 minutes	Initiate Breach on Dara Lam
6	KU0025	ID EN P.LT or greater reinforcing OBJ	15R WQ 3180.3749	68	800	200					FA FASCAM	Initiate on mill of Air Assault on DRESSITO
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												

FASCAM family of scatterable mines
 HE high explosive
 mm millimeter
 SMK smoke

Figure 4. Target list worksheet.

Staffs produce a draft target list worksheet during MA and update it daily. A daily battle rhythm update event mitigates version control issues. The BDE fires cell distributes it down to the company fire support teams and the firing elements in both the FA BN and the maneuver BNs. It should be rehearsed, refined and updated during and immediately following a daily fires sync, as well as the BCT combined

arms rehearsal (CAR) and FA technical rehearsals. Firing units should use it to forecast ammo requirements and predict firing locations for targets. Likewise, observers should use it to predict and plan observation post (OP) locations.

Of note, the fires running estimate recommended that the field artillery BN tactical CP (TAC) and Charlie Battery move forward with the CAV squadron. The fire support officer (FSO) was concerned with an overreliance on lower echelon tactical communications systems across the BCT. During the last fight, the fires BN was unable to reliably execute digital fires missions on both upper TI and high frequency (HF) nets. With the BN TAC forward, they could split the distance between the CAV and the BCT main CP and allow Charlie Battery to position forward to support the deep fight. That move would position the 155 mm howitzers where they could range the lead columns or reconnaissance of 1713 BDET when the CAV identified them. It would give the BCT the ability conduct counter-fire on the templated 2S19s that would otherwise outrange the M777s.

As part of the initial reconnaissance plan, the FSO recommended placing one 155 mm platoon in direct support to the CAV and the other platoon tasked as the primary counter-fire shooter. In truth, the Mud Bugs were already postured to execute, since they were parallel planning with the BCT staff. The BCT collection manager (CM) already had templated forward position areas for artillery (PAAs) locations from the Mud Bug staff and templated them as NAIs for 3-21 CAV in the initial reconnaissance plan. The FSO closed by emphasizing the proposed graphic for de-conflicting PAAs with maneuver forces and a draft target list worksheet nested with the high-payoff target list.

Following the FSO, all WfF leads briefed their running estimate per the BCT PSOP. Ending the brief, Cajun 3 suggested the commander's mission and intent.

Cajun 6 took a moment to think before he started asking questions. His staff physically braced themselves. This brief had been a quick turn, and Cajun 6 was not in a good mood given their lack of success during the first mission.

“S-2, I need you to do another turn on those enemy courses of action,” Cajun 6 began. “How many possible enemy courses of action are there?”

“Sir, there are unlimited courses of action,” the S-2 replied. They had this conversation before. Cajun 6, early in his command, dissuaded him of the schoolhouse idea that they should only think about most dangerous or most likely. “We are limited only by our imagination of what the enemy might do.”

“Exactly, so we need to look at this with the same level of detail. Ensure you’re templating every specialty unit. Think in terms, as we look at our targeting, of not only their formations, but their functions as well. As it comes to maneuver, I need you to think at the platoon level for the BNs to be able to figure it out so we can achieve a 3:1 ratio. If you can template platoons, then we have an idea about the enemy’s companies and the armor rolling within those companies.”

“Will do sir,” Cajun 2 nodded. “We’re almost there.”

“I know you are,” Cajun 6 conceded. “Let’s not forget our fight though, the BDE fight, which is not just beyond the CFL [coordinated fire line]. Sure, where are their long-range indirect fire assets? You showed me the battalion tactical group (BTG) and DTG fires 1713 BDET has available, now show me where they will be so we can either shoot them directly or coordinate with JTF to kill them before they kill us. There’s also the aspect of the BDE fight in how we synchronize BNs and our assets.”

Cajun 2 looked at the map as did the FSO. Cajun 6 watched before he continued, “Mud Bug 6 is going to be waist deep in a counter-fire fight, and we need to take out those guns. I need to know if those mechanized forces in Oberlin change their rate-of-march. Those indicators are critical because the FSO needs to know in case they start to bypass obstacles and we need to emplace a FASCAM [family of scatterable mines] minefield. What counter-mobility assets do enemy forces have that will enable their movement here? I’m not comfortable with the initial reconnaissance plan as you have it here. The CAV has fires, but what about logistics and medical support? The NAIs and draft reconnaissance guidance are good, but you’ve got work to do on the science before this goes out in my name.”

Cajun 6 continued with guidance for the rest of the WFF. “For protection and sustainment, we need a detailed protection asset SYNC plan and preparedness against a credible CBRN [chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear] threat. I’m concerned about our ability to support operational decontamination operations. That’s a lot of water.”

He approved the initial concept for employment of the CAV Squadron and movement of the artillery BN TAC and the BDE’s 155 mm battery (C/1-36 FA) into forward positions. He emphasized their PACE plan by report type and unit, specifically in retaining communications with the CAV once it moves forward.

“Important,” Cajun 6 said with a note of finality, “we are not in position to defend yet. Copperheads and Gators have to fight into position. We need to track their progress. Anything that delays them or if we get a whiff that they won’t make it at all, that’s a commander’s critical information requirement, because we’ll need to react. So, it is an assumption that we’ll get to the terrain we want until we’re on it.”

Following the briefing, the Cajun staff made the necessary changes to the initial reconnaissance plan and submitted their finalized products to the S-3 section. The S-3 approved the order and his assistant S-3 published warning order (WARNO) 2 on both upper and lower TI. Again, the BNs confirmed receipt within 15 minutes.

Day 4, 0100 Hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 3 poured a fresh cup of coffee before checking on the planners developing COAs, only to find a handful of captains still staring at a blank whiteboard. Resisting the urge to throw his hot canteen cup in their faces, Cajun 3 reminded himself that he had sent most of his experienced captains down to command in the last few months and these captains needed to see the primaries in action. Grabbing both the S-2 and the FSO, he cleared the whiteboard and started drawing the rough scheme of maneuver, operational boundaries, and phase lines. Next, the FSO drew the coordinated fire line and the known no-fire areas. The S-2 drew known enemy positions (using solid lines) and templated enemy positions (using dotted lines). The S-2

also drew the enemy avenues of approach and marked enemy time phased lines. On a separate part of the whiteboard, the S-2 drew out the disposition of 1713 BDET in the approach march. The S-3 went back to add unit locations and obstacle intent graphics. The assistant BDE engineer and others referred to their maps and began mentally allocating obstacles by type, keeping track of time and available Class IV supplies. The S-2 drew the known and templated 1711 BDET obstacles. Cajun 3 used that information to draw EAs for the BDE. The S-3, S-2, and FSO did some quick analysis of the correlation of forces and means and figured out how much of the enemy they would need to destroy in the BCT deep fight to make their EAs viable.

The assistant S-3 watched the primaries do this planning. His head spun, in part, from how easy they seemed to do it and, in part, from the fact that it was past midnight. He was exhausted. The task seemed impossible. How does a light infantry BCT stop an armored and mechanized enemy force?

“Sir, this seems impossible,” he blurted. “We’re going to get run over.”

“If we don’t do it right, we’ll get run over,” the S-3 responded.

“Nothing is more dangerous than an infantryman on the right terrain with the right weapon.”

The FSO paused and turned to the assistant S-3. “It’s not impossible. Our role, at the BDE, is to destroy key systems and capabilities and reduce the overall enemy force to a level that the BNs can manage. That is why the BDE deep fight is so important, so the BNs can hold their own.”

“Absolutely,” said the S-3. “A BN in defense can handle a BDET if it does its work with obstacles and proper sighting of its anti-tank systems...”

“With an indirect fires plan,” the FSO injected with a smile.

The S-3 nodded, “...with an indirect fires plan, a BN has how many CLUs [command launch units]? How many improved TOW [tube launched, optically tracked, wire guided missile] trucks?”

The pre-command captain looked up at the ceiling of the tent. Grime on the white interior looked back. The answer was not up there.

The S-3 saw him coming up with nothing. “An infantry company has to get 6 CLUs, a minimum of 150 meters from a target. Delta Company has eight TOW trucks they need to get with a shot. Don’t forget, we also have an armor company team with eight Bradleys and eight tanks...”

“Nine, sir!” the assistant S-3 blurted with a grin. “Turtle 6 is on a tank. Nine tanks.”

“Good. Don’t interrupt me again,” the S-3 replied. Seeing the smile vanish, the S-3 continued, “There are also eight Bradleys, and each can hold up to seven additional rounds plus the two already loaded. Each tank has a 120 mm smoothbore cannon. You’re so smart. Do the math. In perfect conditions, how many enemy armored vehicles can they kill?”

“Uhhhh,” the smile now firmly gone and replaced by a grimace, the assistant S-3 pulled out a pen and started scratching numbers.

“Without knowing how many additional Javelin rounds they have on-hand for the TOWs or CLUs, they have 60 shots, not including direct engagements from the tank 120 mm cannons.”

“We’ll assume you’re close enough. How many vehicles are there in a BDET?”

The assistant S-3 turned helplessly to the S-2, who looked up from chewing on the arm of his glasses when all eyes in the room looked at him. “What? Oh, the BDET? Yeah, approximately, 62 vehicles.”

“You’re too nice,” the S-3 said.

The S-2, FSO, and CM went back to the board with the 1713 BDET in approach march, the event template, and a map with templated battery positions and fire support coordination measures to work out the details of the deep fight. The S-3 shook his head. Turning back to the bewildered captain, “So what do our numbers look like?”

“Sir, it looks like with our current capabilities between the Bradleys, dismounted CLUs, and gun trucks we can, by the numbers, destroy

60 vehicles assuming no resupply. The CLUs can effectively be fired and displaced as long as the gunners are trained.”

“Absolutely. Where’s the weakest point on the tank?”

“Sir, it’s the top,” the assistant S-3 responded, wondering if he was wandering into an ambush.

“Right. So, the gunners need to make sure they’re toggling between top-attack mode and direct fire. We need to emphasize that at the rehearsal.”

“Yes, sir,” the assistant S-3 made a note. “Sir, we also assume the gun trucks and Bradleys get a clear line of sight, either a top or flank shot, and don’t miss. They have to make them count. If the enemy is too close and we don’t have a standoff, this is a lost capability. If we miss at all in the BDA reports, we need the flexibility to not only have the extra shots in the defense, but ultimately we need to transition back to the offense and counter-attack.”

“Alright. What can we expect aviation to do for us? BAO?”

“Yes sir.” A captain came over in a uniform far more comfortable and warmer than the uniforms worn by everyone else.

“How many AH-64s is Mosquito giving us?” the S-3 asked.

“Sir, they’re looking at a continuous attack, cycling two AH64s into the attack-by-fire positions as they move to and from the FARP [forward arming and refueling point]. Two birds will be at the attack-by-fire positions at all times.”

“What’s the reasonable number of tanks and BMPs we can expect them to be able to take out?”

“Assuming they get the shots, sir, we’re looking at maybe 21 kills. We might get more, but that’s not a certainty,” the BAO replied. The assistant S-3 was nodding his head as he scribbled down more numbers.

See Figure 5. On page 23 for an example of an attack helicopter continuous attack.

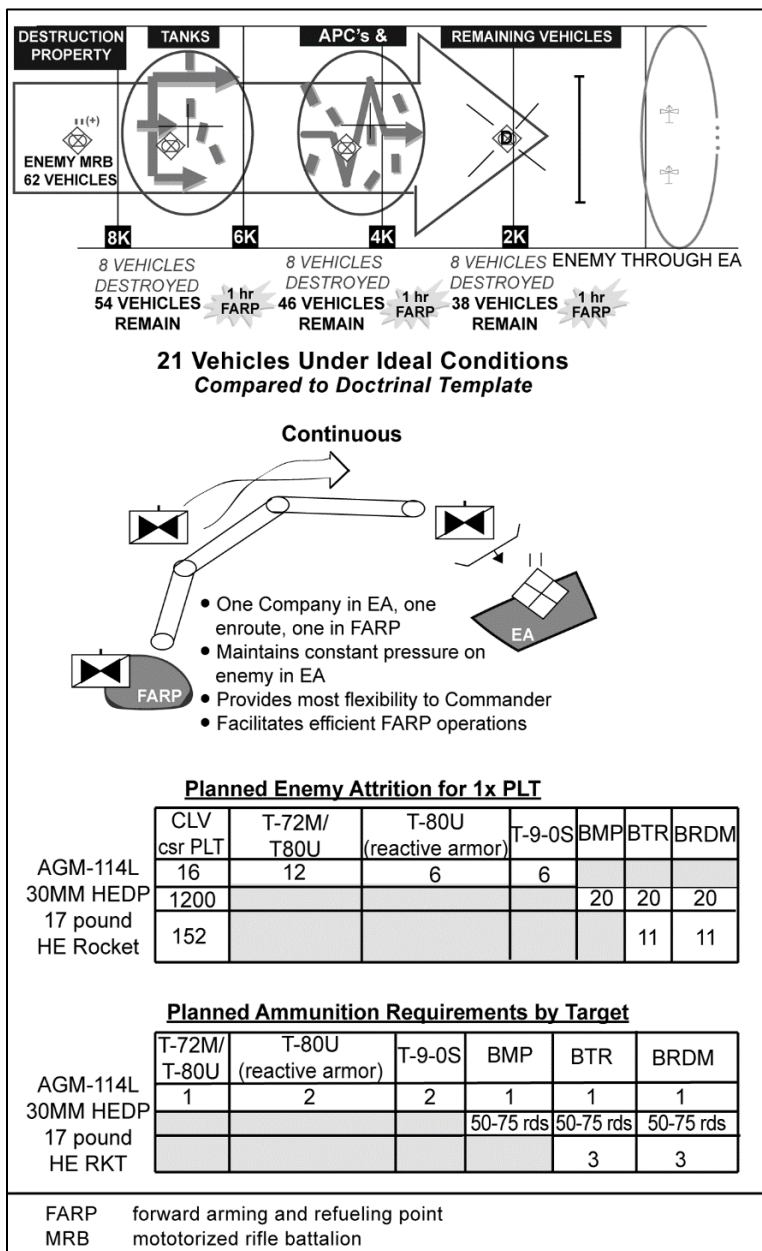


Figure 5. Example of an attack helicopter continuous attack.

Cajun 3 turned back to his assistant. “Get the point young padawan? We did the art, now you do the science. Get back to work.”

Meanwhile, the S-2 had started with the air defense systems since they were first on the high-priority target list (HPTL) and their elimination would increase the effectiveness of the AH-64s and close air support (CAS) as part of the deep fight. He started to pontificate on how 1713 BDET would leapfrog their organic Zenitnaya Samokhodnaya Ustanovka (Russian ADA piece, self-ropelled) (ZSU-23-4s and 2S6M1s) under the envelope of the task-organized BTG SA-6.

Cajun 3 interrupted him, “Get to the point S-2. We need to produce. Show me where they will be on the map.”

Cajun 2 conferred with his lead analyst and the enemy COAs before marking key locations where the enemy would position its air defense assets and templating the time those systems would radiate in accordance with the rate of march. The CM brought out the JTF ICSM and identified that the JTF could use its ELINT assets to identify most of the systems. One ZSU position was outside the window for available electronics Intelligence (ELINT). The CM said he would ask for division Gray Eagle support.

Cajun 3 cut him off. “If it’s just a ZSU then we’ll task the Apaches to take care of it. As long as you tell them when and where to look, they can handle a ZSU using MUM-T [manned/unmanned teaming]. If we get Gray Eagle or other higher echelon assets, I want to allocate them deeper to better shape the fight for our BNs.”

The S-3 turned to the ABE, "Do we have the Class IV on hand to achieve that stand off? Our indirect fires and direct fires are not going to be effective if we are not able to create opportunities with a good obstacle plan."

The ABE responds, "Sir, I will have to get back with you on that."

"There is a lot of green on this obstacle plan you're showing me. We can clearly see you haven't done the math on the Class IV. Have you thought about blade hours? Who are you recommending as CINC [commander in chief] Dozer? What is the current status of our blade

teams?"

The ABE starts trying to answer. CAJUN 3 cuts him off, addressing the OPS SGM, "SGM, can you get me some more coffee? Looks like you're going to be CINC Dozer."

The FSO then identified which enemy ADA systems that organic indirect fire systems could destroy once they were in range and which they would have to request support from JTF, either through CAS or high mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS) strikes. The targeting officer, realizing the discussion was basically building the shell for the targeting meeting, took copious notes and sketched out the discussion using the decide, detect, deliver, assess (D3A) methodology. The small group then progressed through the HPTL following the same methodology.

The S-2 identified where key enemy systems will be in time and space. For each target, the CM identified which BCT or EAB asset could detect the system and serve as the primary observer. The FSO allocated the appropriate killer, and the CM identified which asset would confirm the BDA.

Once the group started to address killing the enemy T-80 tanks and BMP-2 fighting vehicles, the S-3 took a more active role. The S-2 identified two main avenues of approach that 1713 BDET would use in the attack. Based on the speed of movement, the brigade would only get one real chance to shape those columns using CAS and attack aviation. Cajun 3 picked two locations where, based on the terrain, CAS and attack would have the advantage in temporarily stopping the formations. The FSO templated cratering or FASCAM minefield targets on each route and calculated the time it would take to emplace them. The S-2 backed up the enemy by that same amount of time and noted the time phase line at which he would have to identify which route the enemy main effort was using. The CM added NAIs at those locations and noted the latest time information of value for each in case the BCT collection plan had not already identified the enemy main effort per the event template. Cajun 3 and the BDE aviation officer templated the airspace required for the attack aviation at each location with the FSO and air liaison officer (LNO). Cajun 3 identified which route would be the BCT focus as a

decision point for the decision support matrix (DSM) and tasked one of his assistant S-3s to codify the whole plan in the SYNC matrix.

Cajun 3 brought a completed sketch to Cajun 6 at 0230 hours for refined guidance.

Cajun 6 wiped the sleep from his eyes and reviewed their work. “Not bad, but this deep fight location stuff isn’t a decision for me, it’s a trigger. The decision is made; kill it, just make sure it’s the right route. Timing is everything.” Cajun 6 then focused on the BN EAs. “This is okay, but I’m not seeing how you weighted our main effort. Adjust the task organization to ensure it has enough combat power. Remember, if Copperhead doesn’t make it into position, we’ll need to adjust.”

“Yes sir. We’re eyeing that in our estimates.”

“Ensure Mud Bug 6 gets a look as well. It’s important they’re identifying sustainment requirements at the targeting working group, otherwise we won’t realize the gap until we’re out of rounds,” Cajun 6 said.

“Roger, sir,” Cajun 3 acknowledged.

Cajun 6 continued, “At the COA development brief, I need to know when the FA technical rehearsal will be conducted. This fight can be over real fast. I cannot overstress the importance of rehearsed triggers for fires.”

“Roger, sir, I’ll let the FSCOORD know. We’ll synch those rehearsals.”

“Thanks S-3. Anything else?” He received a negative reply and Cajun 6 rolled over and went back to sleep while the S-3 disseminated the commander’s updated guidance to the FSO and the rest of the staff.

At 0400 hours, the staff reconvened a series of meetings to flesh out the details of the COA. The assistant engineer pulled in the ADA company commander, CBRN officer, electronic warfare officer (EWO), MEDO, an assistant S-3, the assistant S-2, an assistant FSO, and BN LNOs for the first meeting.

The assistant engineer began “We’re in a time crunch people. This is not a working group so get that counterinsurgency mentality out of your minds. We are building the details necessary for COA development to make this plan feasible and executable. The coffee pot is brewing; get the caffeine drip if you need it because the focus of the meeting is to produce an updated CAL [critical asset list], and DAL [defended asset list]. We want to recommend a reallocation of resources if necessary.”

Cajun 2 followed with the enemy commander’s HPTL and PIRs he needed to make the decisions in the briefed enemy COA, which served as a solid baseline for the CAL and the essential elements of friendly information (EEFI).

The FSO reminded the team that 155 mm howitzers were essential to the deep fight.

They were susceptible to counter-fire. Without those guns, they risked being unable to shape the fight before the BN EAs.

The assistant engineer prioritized C/1-36 FA guns on the DAL, the team re-tasked a blade team to dig survivability positions at their primary and alternate PAAs and gave them tactical control (TACON) of one avenger section. The EWO identified the increased jamming threat from the enemy.

The S-6 and EWO started to talk technical details, and the assistant engineer told them to have a sidebar outside. “Come up with a recommendation for PACE and countermeasures. Bring it back as tasks to subordinate units and update the scheme of protection.”

Last, the CBRN officer identified the most likely locations for chemical attacks based on the delivery means available, the enemy objectives, terrain, and weather. The team recommended mission oriented protective posture (MOPP) upgrades for the units at a higher threat. After finalizing the CAL and DAL, ensuring protection assets were assigned, the assistant engineer released the staff.

At 0700 hours, after catching only a few hours of sleep, the staff met for the target working group. The FSCOORD chaired the meeting with the BCT targeting officer in the lead. The S-3, S-2, CM, and representatives from each maneuver BN attended the meeting. The

FSCOORD laid out an analog map and fire support overlay in front of him.

“Cajun 6’s intent for fires is to integrate FASCAM into obstacles,” the FSCOORD began. “Maximize the positioning of radars to enable the counter-fire fight, and use EAB assets early to shape the deep fight.”

Cajun 2 briefed the current enemy situation and the enemy COA.

“We need to cage this discussion in accordance with the air tasking order days,” the FSO reminded him. “Otherwise we won’t be aligning assets the right way. We need to start with the ATO day for the planned defense and working backward.”

The FSCOORD nodded approvingly, and the S-2 briefed the enemy COA in detail. The CM briefed the key NAIs and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets available and the S-3 gave an operational overview with assumed subordinate unit positions and activities. The FSO gave an overview of the fire support (FS) plan and the HPTL for the day.

“Stop,” said the FSCOORD, “we need to make sure our sensor-to-shooter linkages are as solid as the deep fight planning you did earlier this morning. What are the exact targets we are focusing on and where is the observer?”

The FSO started to fumble through his papers, but the targeting officer saved him by reciting the primary and alternate observers and their approximate location for each target.

The FSCOORD looked pleased but asked, “What is the trigger to fire each target? Where are the delivery assets positioned?”

Neither the FSO nor the targeting officer had all the answers, but they made a note to adjust the target SYNC matrix to make sure the links are explicit for the next meeting.

The FSCOORD continued. He asked, “BN LNOs, what are your recommended targets or input?”

Silence.

Color flushed the FSCOORD’s face. He broke the silence. “We need

you to come to this meeting prepared. Is that clear?”

He got nods. Some tried not to make eye contact but failed.

The FSCOORD continued, “Bring your targets and don’t be afraid to speak up, especially if you are an observer for a BCT target. Where are gaps in our fires plan? We owe that risk to Cajun 6. If it’s possible that it’ll happen in execution, then we cannot be surprised.”

The BN LNOs remained silent with the exception of the CAV LNO, the BDE reconnaissance officer.

“Sir, we acknowledge we’re primary or alternate observers,” the BDE reconnaissance officer said, “the squadron will refine them in accordance with their scheme of maneuver.”

The FSCOORD closed the target working group (TWG) by emphatically stating the need to get into the details of planning targets, using the target, trigger, location, observer, delivery asset, attack guidance, and communication (TTLODAC) network method. “FSO, review the notes for me. What sustainment requirements have we identified that need to make it out of here?”

“Sustainment requirements sir?” the FSO looked bewildered.

“We cannot do our jobs without ammunition. When we talk about targets and missions that require our organic assets, we’re responsible for ensuring there are rounds to shoot. It makes no sense to wait for the batteries or our BN to generate the demand signal. Hand off the requirement to Cajun 4.”

“Oh, okay sir. I got it.”

Immediately after the meeting, the FSO pushed a draft target list to the BNs and the CM updated the ICSM with the adjustments made to the reconnaissance plan.

Day 4, 0800 hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 6 walked into the TOC and started to fill his canteen cup from a battle-hardened coffee urn on the back table before the XO noticed him. “BUB in five minutes!” he called out to the staff.

Just then the assistant S-2 received a phone call from the J-2. The JTF had identified a possible 9A52 SMERCH battery 70 kilometers east of the BCT AO, possible indicators of an SA-11 battery, and signals intelligence (SIGINT) reports that a unit of 2S19s and 9A51 PRIMAs was moving east from the 175 Fires BN to reinforce 171 BTG in its attack against the Cajuns. He hung up just as the XO called on the assistant S-2 to start the BUB.

The young captain confidently briefed the current enemy situation in the AO, the expected enemy actions for the day, and the reconnaissance missions they planned to execute based on the ICSM. At the last second, he also mentioned the report of the long-range artillery and ADA systems the J-2 had just called down.

The rest of the staff briefed their portions of the BUB. The XO asked the commander for any guidance.

Cajun 6 looked down at his notes for a few seconds and took a long sip from his cup. He did not like doing this to his staff, but with the new threat it was necessary. “Based on the enemy ADA and rocket assets identified by the JTF, reassess the COA development. Make adjustments for additional assets and targeting efforts in depth. Also, you finished the TWG recently?”

“Yes, sir,” the FSO responded. “We’ll factor that information into the next meeting.”

“Exactly wrong,” Cajun 6 said. “There is no time to wait. Do it now. Failure is waiting for a battle rhythm event to update execution products and running estimates. We have the information. Act on it. Make sure our collection plan and our EAB requests incorporate this information.”

The XO acknowledged the requirement, and Cajun 6 got up to depart for battlefield circulation. The staff fidgeted in their seats waiting for word from the XO on the new timeline. The OPS SGM broke the silence as he walked to the back of the tent, “Guess we better make you planners some more coffee while I wait for you to tell me when you need me as CINC Dozer.”

Cajun 3, Cajun 2, and the FSO met back in the plans tent at 0850 hours to review the COA sketch. Cajun 2 updated the enemy

SITEMP with the JTF reporting Primas and 2S19s and assessed that they are probably also moving with additional 2S6M1s or Crotales. Cajun 2 also assessed it as part of the 1715 FA BN (a BTG asset) and not a detachment from 175 FA BDE (a DTG asset).

See Figure 6. For an example information collection overlay.

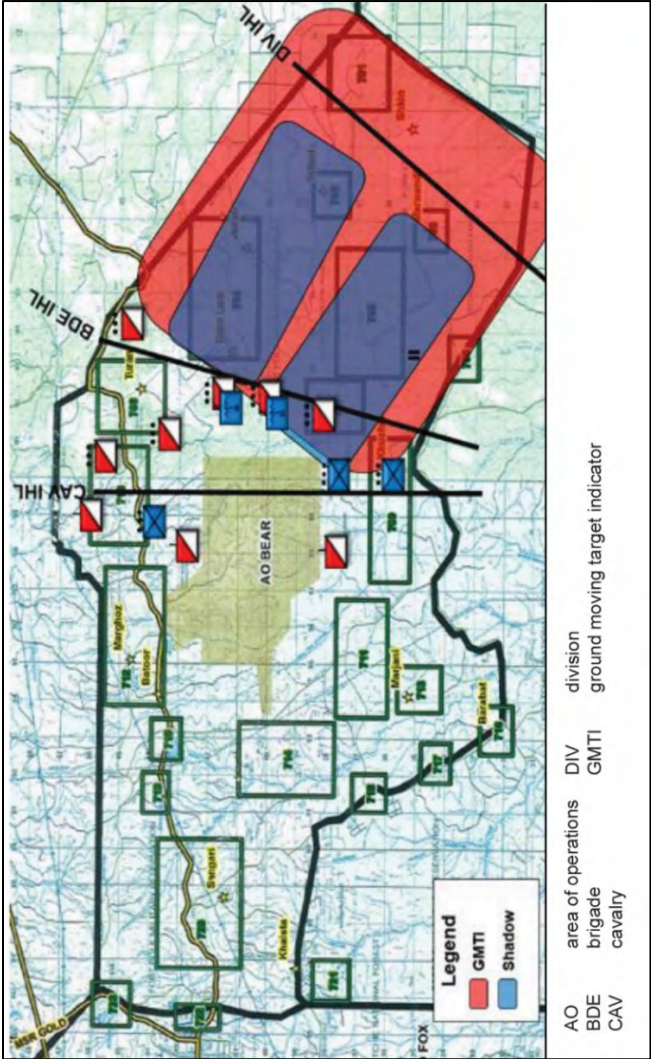


Figure 6. Example information collection overlay.

See Figure 7. For an example of a named area of interest matrix.

PIR	EEIs	Indicators	SIRs	NAIs Time	Organic												EAB												
					CAV	IN BN	IN BN	IN BN	FA BN	BEB	BEB	Shadow	SCT	HCT	IMINT	COMINT	ELINT	GMTI	FMV										
PIR 1: Where are the 1711 MIBM Reconnaissance and Indirect Fires assets	1A. Where are reconnaissance enemy forces?	Brigade reconnaissance teams of 5-7 personnel	Report composition, disposition, strength, and activity of recon team greater than 5+ personnel	710, 0600- 712, 2200 711	T																								
		Enemy movement consisting of 1+ BRDM	Report composition, disposition, strength, and activity of enemy movement consisting of 1+ BRDM or 1+ BRM-3k	719, 0600- 715, 2200 714	T									T															R
	1B. Where are enemy indirect fires assets?	Identification of BM- 21, Type-63, D30 or 2S9	Report composition, disposition, and activity of BM-21 (wheeled 122mm MLRS), Type 63 (towed 107mm MLRS), D30 (towed 152mm howitzer) and 2S9 (tracked 120mm mortar/direct fire gun)	714, 2100- 720, 0400 721																									R

CAV	cavalry	MM	ground moving target indicator	MM	millimeter
EEL	essential elements of information	GMTI	human intelligence collection team	PIR	priority of intelligence requirements
ELINT	electronic intelligence	HCT	image intelligence	SCT	signals intelligence collection team
FA	field artillery	IMINT	infantry	SIR	specific information requirement
FMV	full-motion video	IN	mechanized infantry battalion		
		MIBM			

Figure 7. Example named area of interest matrix.

See Figure 8. for an example information collection synchronization matrix.

DTG	ZULU	0600	0700	0800	0900	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500	1600	1700	1800	1900	2000	2100	2200	2300	0400	0500	0600	0700	0800	0900	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500	1600	1700	1800	1900	2000	2100	2200	2300														
Enemy																																																					
Friendly																																																					
Weather																																																					
Focus																																																					
Organic	A Troop																																																				
	B Troop																																																				
	C Troop																																																				
	IN BN																																																				
	IN BN																																																				
	Shadow 1																																																				
	Shadow 2																																																				
	Shadow 3																																																				
	Shadow 4																																																				
	SCT 1																																																				
	SCT 2																																																				
	HCT 1																																																				
	HCT 2																																																				
	COMINT																																																				
	ELINT																																																				
GMTI																																																					
FMV																																																					

Figure 8. Example information collection synchronization matrix.

“I don’t care who it belongs to, we need to kill it before it kills us,” replied the FSCOORD. “We need to do another TWG immediately to figure this out.”

The FSO lobbied the FSCOORD for no earlier than 1400 hours. “Sir, the BNs needed to digest the draft target list worksheet we just pushed out a few hours ago.”

“Sir, the CM also needs to relook the JTF collection plan and available EAB assets,” The S-2 argued. “He won’t be prepared immediately.”

“When can he get it? We’re not waiting until 1400 hours. The enemy is moving on us. If we wait, and I want people prepared to make sausage at the meeting, it cannot be for a minute longer than necessary,” the FSCOORD responded. “The BNs can digest what they have and then we’ll give them the update.”

“Sir, 90 minutes and we’ll be ready to go,” the S-2 offered. “1000 hours.”

“Good,” the FSCOORD agreed. “Its 1000 hours back in here. Let me know if there are any hiccups.” The staff officers broke to go tell their sections the good news.

The S-2 walked over to the BDE intelligence support element (BISE), comprised of elements of his section and the BCT’s military intelligence (MI) company, only to find the BISE chief (one of his 350F all-source technicians) fuming.

The CUOPS assistant S-2 had already told him about the updated ADA and fires assets. “That intel came from imagery that was almost five hours old when exploited. Based on the road network and tactical formations, those systems could be anywhere within 100 miles of that last location,” said the BISE chief.

The analysts had not accounted for reinforcing fires from 1715 FA BN into the enemy COAs and now they needed to determine how they would likely be employed. The BISE chief quickly circled potential PAAs for 2S19s and Primas approximately two-third’s maximum range from the 1711 BDET front line and point of attack for 1713 BDET. He tasked geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) to refine the locations and requested current imagery.

See Figure 9. on page 35 for a modified enemy course of action.

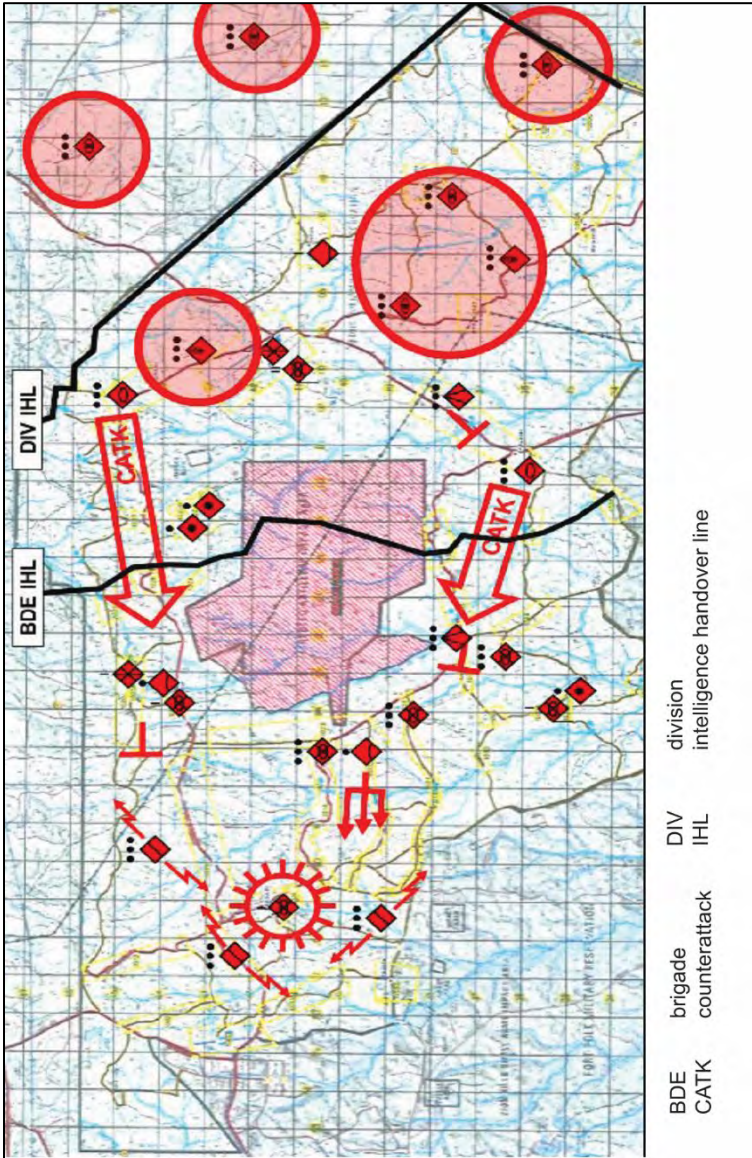


Figure 9. Modified enemy course of action.

“Why did you circle those, chief?” asked a young analyst.

“If the 2S19s are there it would indicate that 171 BTG was on the defense and intended to bring in 1713 BDET to either reinforce or counterattack,” he replied. He turned to the field artillery intelligence officer (FAIO), “What do you think?”

“A few closer PAAs may indicate that 171 BTG plans to press its attack further in either a decentralized or integrated attack,” the FAIO suggested.

The BISE chief turned back to the analyst, “Plot the new graphics on the enemy COAs while I update the event template. The CM will need this.”

The BISE chief returned to his work station and submitted a request for ground movement target indicator analysis to his GEOINT section. He also built a series of alerts into his DCGS-A multifunction workstation that would indicate any movement or reporting on the artillery and ADA assets. He needed to see if JTF 21 picked up any movement in its NAIs outside of the BCT AO in the last several hours that might indicate the current position of the artillery assets.

The CM received the updated event template around 0930 hours and started to adjust organic collection to cover the gaps. Several of the PAAs for the 1715 FA BN were outside the BCT AO and beyond the division intelligence handover line, so the CM submitted a request to the division CM to add them to the division collection deck. Even using wide-area and EAB collection to cue internal assets, the CM did not have enough organic intelligence collection assets to cover all the new NAIs.

The timing on one of the new NAIs was going to require them to shift a Shadow crew, which will result in lost coverage on a previously scheduled mission. Rather than just cancel the collection and desynchronizing the targeting plan for that day, the CM conferred with the BDE reconnaissance officer and they determined the CAV could cover one of the Shadow NAIs using scouts and Ravens, freeing up the Shadow to support the new NAIs. The CM realigned the collection on the ICSM and informed the targeting

officer, who updated the target SYNC matrix with the modified observer and assessment plan.

By 1000 hours, the targeting officer had completed the updated target SYNC matrix and the fire support noncommissioned officer (FS NCO) had consolidated inputs to the target list worksheet from the BNs. Just a few minutes past 1000 hours, they walked back into the plans tent where the FSCOORD was ready for the hasty TWG.

Day 5, 1000 hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 6 looked around the table, taking roll of his commanders. Copperhead 6 was still fighting to get his BN into position out near the low-water crossings. The others sat in their chairs, hard copies of the order in triplicate, rolls of acetate, and burned compact discs with the order, WARNOs, and graphics stacked in front of each of them. He turned to the S-3 and nodded, giving him the approval to start.

“Good morning gentlemen,” Cajun 3 began. “Copies of the order and all associated graphics and products are in front of each of you.” He continued with a brief review of the parallel planning efforts through each of the BN LNOs and turned it over to the S-2.

Cajun 2 extended his telescoping pointer and slapped it against the map board. “Gentlemen, as most of you know, the enemy was slightly more prepared than we originally anticipated.” Muffled guffaws rippled around the command table. “1711 BDET had more prepared defenses than we had anticipated and 1713 BDET is still enroute to reinforce or counterattack if necessary. By our calculations, we will begin to see reconnaissance elements from the BTG in the next 36 hours and the full 1713 BDET will be prepared to reinforce or counterattack in approximately 60 hours. That doesn’t leave us with much time to seize the key terrain, counter their reconnaissance, establish our defensive positions, and shape the enemy before the main attack. Key to this fight is the neutralization of enemy air defense systems...”

Day 5, 1115 hours, BDE TOC

“I appreciate the staff’s effort on this,” remarked Cajun 6. “Next time let’s try to keep this within an hour. Commanders, let’s roll directly

into confirmation briefs. If you need coffee, get it and come straight back.”

All rose and saluted, “Ragin’ sir!”

“Cajuns!” Cajun 6 replied. The group adjourned.

Cajun 2 might have been longwinded, but he had painted a clear picture of exactly what enemy force they would face. The 1713 BDET would come into the AO looking for a fight, with the ability to sequence BTG ground and aerial reconnaissance, long-range artillery and rocket fire, chemical munitions, cyberattacks, attack aviation, and CAS from MiG-29 fighter jets. Each commander had listened attentively, even Copperhead 6 after he arrived late and promptly spilled his coffee on the briefing table. Cajun 6 took a mental note to spend extra time walking his EA.

In sequence, the commanders repeated their assigned task and purpose, adding their concerns and initial risk assessments.

Swamp Fox 6 hesitated, “Sir, we’ll get our forces forward to screen to the CFL. I’m going to ask for priority in fires, MEDEVAC, and additional TOWs.”

“No doubt,” Cajun 6 replied. “Getting you out there is an operation. You need to be prepared to fight into position. We have to resource you accordingly. Make sure you’re feeding my TOC so the bubbles are leveled. If you’re not out there, then we won’t have the eyes we need.”

Swamp Fox 6 nodded and stepped to the rear. Gator 6 assumed his place. He focused his comments and questions on rapid delivery of additional Class IV, replacement Soldiers, and the amount of planned artillery support he could expect from Mud Bugs.

Mud Bug 6 did some math on the back of his OPORD. “Sir, I’m not sure we have the ammunition necessary.”

“Sir, he’s right,” Boudin 6 chimed in. “We’ll work with the CSSB.”
“Got it. Work with the S-4,” Cajun 6 cut them off. He turned to the S-3, “Make sure we’re tracking this and get to a resolution.”

See Figure 10. for the initial 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team defense course of action.

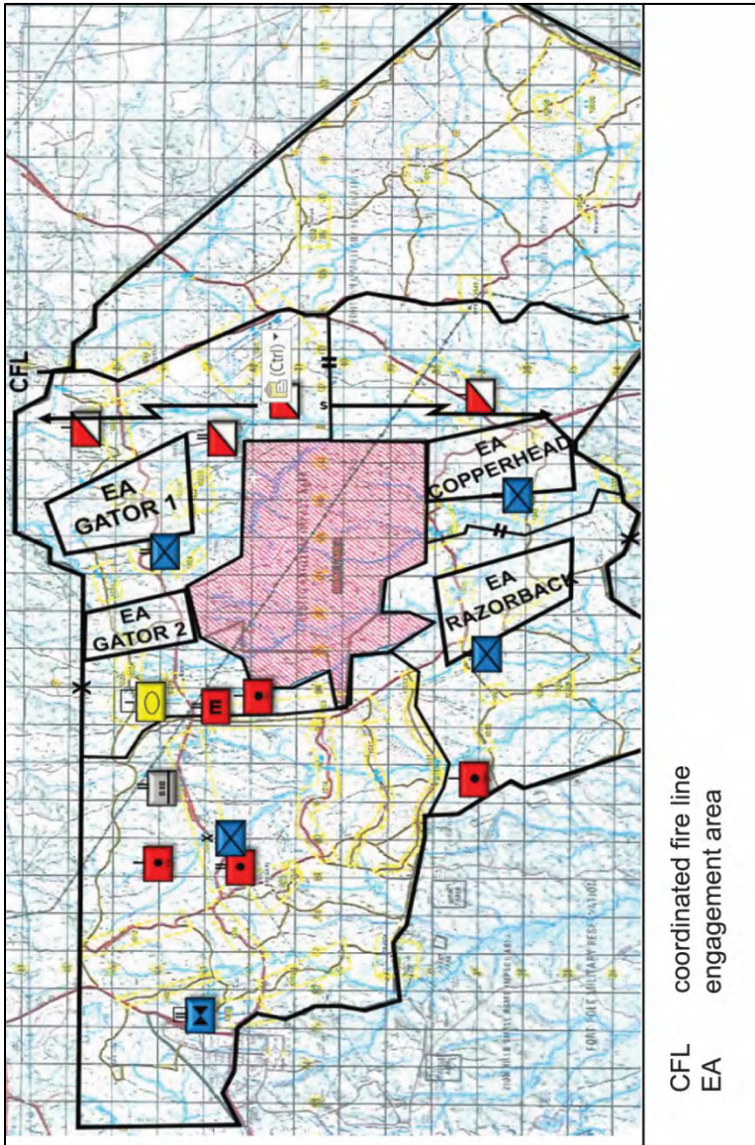


Figure 10. Initial 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team defense course of action.

“Roger, sir.” Cajun 3 scribbled some more notes.

Gator 6 continued, “We’ve seized Batoor and Marghoz with the extra companies from Razor. Thanks brother.”

“No worries,” Razorback 6 replied.

“We’re going to push forward and begin digging tomorrow.”

“Immediately,” Cajun 6 said.

“Sir?”

“You meant to say you’re going to start digging immediately,” Cajun 6 expanded. “There’s no time to waste. Hasty fighting positions should be dug before any other priorities of work. Wire should go in once you’ve sighted in your companies. They’re going to hit us as soon as they can. If you’re not survivable, you’re going to get pushed back.”

“Roger that, sir.”

Razorback 6 went next. “Sir, I’m not sure about my fight. I’ve only got two companies at the moment and one of those companies is Delta Company. I’m also not on the ground you want me to defend from, so I haven’t seen it to tell you better what I need.”

Cajun 6 acknowledged and turned to Copperhead, “When will Razorback get on the ground. Are you out past Kushal yet?”

Copperhead 6 shook his head, “Not yet sir. We’re working on it. We’ll get out there tomorrow. I understand our task.”

The backbrief culminated. Cajun 3 acknowledged the due-outs and said they would cut a fragmentary order (FRAGORD) with additional guidance.

Cajun 6 closed the meeting, “I’m getting out of here tomorrow to inspect your progress. I need to see where you are on the ground, hear your understanding of risk based on the terrain, and see how you’re going to leverage fires and anti-tank weapons.”

Start the adventure.

Day 6, 0930 hours, Outside of Sangari

Cajun 6 was dying to get out of the TOC. He had spent much of the last two days driving the operations process; now was his chance to break free of the cramped tents and see how his BNs were turning their plans into action. He was determined to walk every EA, ensure coordination and SYNC at the seams between units, inspect the progress of the blade teams as well as the amount of Class IV on hand and the status of what was still being pushed to the maneuver BNs. It was going to be a long day, and he could not wait.

Shortly after departing the BDE TOC he saw a convoy of vehicles with 1-47 Infantry bumper numbers parked on the side of the road just south of Sangari. “What are those doing here?” he thought to himself. He directed his driver to pull over so he could ask the platoon leader (PL).

“What are you guys doing here?” he asked the first NCO he found. “Where’s your platoon leader?”

“Sir, my PL died as we fought to seize our initial objectives a few days ago. We haven’t received a replacement,” the convoy NCO in charge (NCOIC) replied. “I know we’re supposed to be moving towards Low Water Crossing 5, but my company commander told me to wait here while they worked through the congestion ahead.”

“Does your JCR work?”

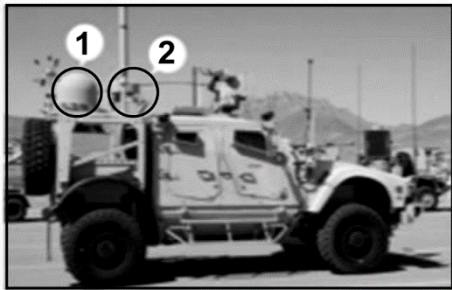
“No, sir,” the NCOIC replied.

“Let’s go check mine,” Cajun 6 said. They walked to his truck together. The JCR was a mess of blue icons spread from Sangari to the impact area. Clicking through, Cajun 6 saw the icons were a mix of 1-46 IN, 1-47 IN, and 3-21 CAV.

“So much for the movement control plan,” he murmured before turning to the NCOIC. “Okay. Hold tight. We’ll cut this Gordian knot, sergeant.”

See Figure 11. on page 42 for the Vehicle mounted point of presence.

The point of presence (PoP) is installed on select combat platforms at corps, division, brigade and battalion echelons, enabling mobile mission command by providing on-the-move network connectivity, both line-of-sight and beyond-line-of-sight.



Point of presence

- 1 - Net-Centric Waveform Antenna
- 2 - High-Band Networking Waveform Antenna

Figure 11. Vehicle mounted point of presence.

Containing his frustration, he tried to call Cajun 3 on the secure voice over internet protocol (SVOIP) in his mine-resistant ambush protected all-terrain vehicle (MATV), but he couldn't connect via the high-speed, beyond-line-of-sight network centric waveform (NCW). The PoP was useful for keeping him connected to the BDE while on the move, but only when it was configured properly. He turned to the driver, "Do we have a commo specialist with us today?"

"No, sir."

Making a note to address this with the S-6, Cajun 6 raised Cajun 3 via BDE command on FM, "Cajun 6, this is Cajun 3, sir."

"Roger, Cajun 6 here. Who's responsible for the movement control plan? It's a disaster out here. Ensure each BN understands their boundaries. Get Nutria 6 off his cot! He needs to be into the movement control plan to get these subordinate units moving to where they need to go."

Without waiting for a response, he dropped his hand mike. He searched for the 1-47 IN commander vehicle and located him near the intersection of Mill Creek and Dugout Roads.

“Let’s go find Copperhead 6,” he told his driver. “Find your way through this congestion. Don’t hit anyone. Wait. I’ll ground guide this one.”

Day 6, 1030 hours, Low Water Crossing 19

Cajun 6’s truck splashed through the low water crossing before Cajun 6 noticed a destroyed dozer on the side of the road. He didn’t recall hearing that briefed in the BUB that morning. He tried to call the BCT battle captain to get details on the significant activity via his MATV’s SVOIP. The NCW hadn’t fixed itself and maybe this was due to the vegetation. “I prefer a hand mike anyway,” he muttered. He picked up the radio and after several frustrating attempts to clarify the SIGACT with the radio telephone operator (RTO), he called for the XO to get on the radio. “Is anyone there tracking a dozer was destroyed?”

Sensing the frustration, Cajun 5 replied, “No, sir. We’ll modify the plan to account for the lost hours. When you get back, we’ll brief you on our analysis.”

“Roger. That’s great. The immediate problem is two-fold. First, we don’t have a grown-up on the radio. When BNs call BDE they need someone who can help them solve their problems and speaks with authority. BDE RTO is not a task for whatever specialist the S-3 section is trying to chapter,” Cajun 6 said. “Also, figure out why we didn’t know about this loss prior to me finding it. I’m going to get Nutria 6 on this.”

He could not raise Nutria 6 on the BDE command net, so he dropped to the BDE engineer BN’s command frequency. Once Nutria 6 came on the net, he pressed the question to find out why he had to discover the loss of a dozer by literally driving up on the wreckage.

“Sir,” Nutria 6 replied, “We lost that dozer to enemy indirect fire around 1700 hours last night. I thought we sent the report to your CP.”

“That’s an FFIR [friendly force information requirement] to me on multiple levels. Those types of losses represent not only an equipment loss but also lost capacity to enhance our protection,” Cajun 6 reminded Nutria 6. “You’re telling me we lost that dozer

team by indirect, which means we also lost an opportunity for a radar acquisition. Was it artillery or mortar fire?"

"Sir, I don't know."

"We should have known this at the 1800 hours CUB last night. We've just lost 12 hours of blade time."

"Roger, sir. Understood."

"Okay. Get after it. Tighten up your reporting on your end. I'll work on my CP as well." Cajun 6 said, realizing at least part of this problem fell on the BDE for not tracking the location of all their critical assets. Cajun 6 again contacted the main CP and had the RTO inform the BCT OPS SGM that he needed to be the CINC Dozer and to personally ensure the dig sync matrix was followed.

Day 6, 1100 hours, Low Water Crossing 19

Cajun 6 found Copperhead at his CP. He walked in alone, unstopped by any kind of guard or mildly attentive staff officer, surprising those inside as he asked a Soldier if they had hot coffee.

"BN, attention!" Copperhead 6 barked, standing suddenly.

"Carry on. Let's talk about your progress on EA development."

Copperhead 6 pulled a series of printed PowerPoint slides out of his map board and began briefing almost exactly the same plan he briefed in the commander backbriefs.

Cajun 6 held his hand up. "You've already told me this. Now I want you to show me. Take me out and show me how you're tying into the terrain with the Razorbacks."

Copperhead 6 sighed. His finger traced along Holly Springs Road, only a few kilometers to the southeast. "Sir, that's going to be difficult. We haven't made it into our positions yet. We've encountered more resistance at Low Water Crossing 17 than expected."

"I thought you were almost there last night. At least, that's what you said at the CUB. When can you get there?" Cajun 6 asked.

“Sir, I think the enemy has prepared defensive positions roughly along the Six Mile Creek East Fork,” Copperhead 6 replied. “We just have to fight a little bit more before we get to Low Water Crossing 5.”

“Can you do it today?” Cajun 6 asked. “You realize we can’t wait for this to happen. I need you in position, but more importantly, I need you ready to defend. It would be better for you to defend back here or anywhere with an EA in front of you.”

Ever the optimist, Copperhead 6 replied, “Sir, we can do it. I might need some additional resources, but ...”

“You’re not hearing me,” Cajun 6 disagreed. “There’s a mess on the road behind you. It’s a disaster. We’re losing time. Remember, what Cajun 2 briefed about the low water crossings?”

Copperhead 6 shrugged.

“Those low water crossings are key terrain. They can restrict east-west vehicular traffic. Taking those crossings will be difficult, but if you can take those, the enemy won’t hold all the key terrain in the south.” Cajun 6 turned, examining the map pensively.

By this point, Copperhead 3 and a handful of staff officers had stopped work to listen to the commander’s decision.

Copperhead 6 broke the silence. “We will get there sir. Low Water Crossing 5 is more defensible terrain, it’s the better EA. If we can seize that key terrain we won’t have to do as much with obstacle development. Boa Company will be able to clear through these enemy positions in a matter of hours, if I can just get some more artillery support and a platoon of Bradleys.”

Make a Decision:

What should Cajun 6 do?

If you think he should stick to the plan and reinforce
Copperheads, turn to [page 54](#).

If you think he should change the plan and stop Copperheads
short, turn to [page 65](#).

“Alert the reserve! Move it down to Checkpoint 7 and tell them to come up on Copperhead’s net,” Cajun 3 said. “Call Mosquito 3 over at the aviation task force. They were supposed to have a team of AH-64s coming up in 10 minutes.”

As the BAO picked up the phone and dialed, he heard Cajun 3 say, “Give them priority to support Copperhead in the south and then Gator in the north. He then turned to the S-2. “What is going on?”

“I don’t know,” Cajun 2 replied, “The attack wasn’t supposed to happen until tomorrow night. I figured we would see some recon but nothing like this.”

Cajun 3 gave him a dead look. “S-2, what about all the assets you briefed this afternoon at the CAR. Can’t they tell us what’s going on?”

“Well yes,” replied Cajun 2. “If they were laid on for tonight instead of tomorrow night, and if I had my BISE set up to handle the PED [processing, exploitation, and dissemination] of the incoming intelligence. Not a lot of capability in the TAC, but I’ll see what I can do.”

“We need to get BDA and these reports right,” Cajun 3 said. He looked at the battle captain as well as all of those assembled. “We need to hash this out on the CUOPs floor, otherwise we’ll be double counting vehicles and not have any idea what’s going on.”

Meanwhile, the two platoons of Bradleys raced down Dugout Road from their position as the BDE reserve. Luckily, reinforcing Copperhead was their number one priority so they had already arranged linkup procedures at Checkpoint 7 earlier that day. Boa 6 met them and directed the reserve on to Anaconda’s position. Turtle 6 pressed his vehicles as fast as prudent, but as he rounded the bend and looked up the hill, he saw the columns of smoke rising from destroyed friendly vehicles. He pressed on to investigate, his last vehicle’s track just barely passing the low water crossing when the improvised explosive device (IED) went off, rendering his last track a mobility kill and blocking his retreat. A T-80 hidden in the

vegetation to the south opened up on the side of the Bradleys moments later. This was going to be a long night he thought as he ordered his tank into the shelter of the embankment.

An hour later, reports of the contact began to crystalize in the Copperhead TOC. Anaconda 6 had lost a few vehicles but most of his defensive positions around the low water crossing were still intact. The reserve had not fared as well. Turtle 6 survived, but six of his Bradleys had not. He had a pair of M88s enroute to recover his vehicles and haul them back to the BSA for repairs. He might be able to get one or two of them back in the fight by tomorrow night.

Day 8, 0730 hours, BDE TAC

Cajun 6 wished he could refill his to-go cup with coffee from the OPS SGM's urn.

Unfortunately, it met its untimely demise when the plans tent was destroyed by a BM-21. He was tired after supervising the casualties and then the strike on Copperhead and, just having taken the fight back from Mud Bug, the enemy struck 1-47 IN. He checked the Joint Battle Command Platform to see if there were any changes. A few icons had moved, and he referenced those changes with the map he kept on his lap. It was not fancy, but he was not going to rely on JCR for his common operational picture (COP). Radio traffic, FM, transverse chats, and SVIOP were all necessary to track and understand what was happening. The ever-reliable map, however analog it might be, still provided the best medium for combining all those information streams.

He sent a message to Cajun 5 over JCR. "I'm heading out to see our EAs and judge last night's damage for myself. I'll start with Copperhead. I'll take the BUB on the road on O&I [operations and intelligence]. The S-2, S-3, and FSCOORD are coming with the CSM [command sergeant major] and me today to help us level the bubbles with the BN staffs and ensure everyone is tracking their parts in the IC, fires, and ops channels."

See Figure 12. on page 49 for the finalized 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team defense course of action.

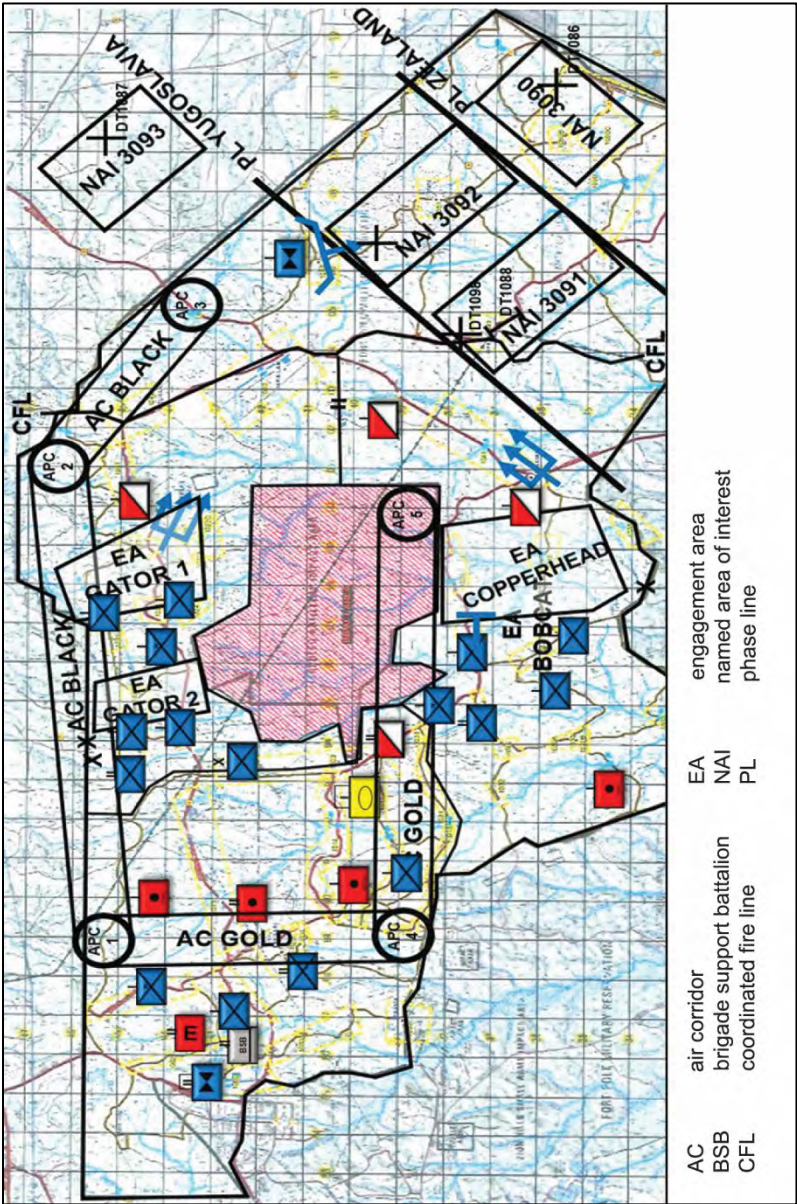


Figure 12. Finalized 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team defense course of action.

At the new TOC location, Cajun 5 acknowledged and went to find the senior ops NCO. After last night's attack on the TOC, he had a litany of items on his to-do list. Most pressing was achieving full operational capacity with the equipment and tents he had. Casualties had been evacuated. They lost equipment, but their capabilities were not degraded beyond the loss of a few chairs and tables. It would be a few hours though before they were ready to take the fight from the TAC.

His second item was a mission command communications exercise to test their PACE followed by supervising the senior ops NCO running battle drills on the TOC floor. From there, they would rehearse identifying and alerting the newly found and emplaced Stinger teams across the BCT defense to incoming red air. Last, but not least, he intended to supervise the intelligence and fires teams in a technical rehearsal on the triggers for everything on the execution checklist. He wanted to see the Soldier who would be on shift pass test message traffic over their PACE from the analyst who conducted the processing, exploitation, and dissemination for the IC asset to the fires supporter who sent the mission to the guns.

Day 8, 1100 hours, Outside the BDE TOC

Cajun 6 was sitting on the back of a high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV), watching Soldiers dig fighting positions around the TOC and waiting for his chili mac to heat up, when Cajun 5 approached him.

“Sir, after last night's IDF, I think it's a good idea to send out the TAC as a redundant C2 [command and control] node,” Cajun 5 offered.

“With our losses, do we have the personnel to support that?” Cajun 6 asked.

“Sir, we might be thin in that area,” Cajun 5 conceded. “I think we need to consider survivability though.”

“Survivability is important, but so is functionality,” Cajun 6 countered. “We also don't have the same functionality in the TAC that we do here. We need to be able to control air. Our fires section

is really just the FSO and FS NCO, and the S-2 won't have any of his intel systems up. Besides, we didn't rehearse C2 from the TAC at any point. I like getting away from this stinky flagpole as much as the rest of you, but it's my flagpole."

"Sir, it won't move far, maybe a click or two down the road. Just enough that if the main gets destroyed, you have a place to go and continue the fight. They can set up and shadow track the fight, ready to take over if need be."

"Alright XO. Go ahead. Figure it out," Cajun 6 allowed. "But, let's ensure we have our Stingers in the right spot to take care of red air the next time it acts as a spotter."

Day 8, 1800 hours, BDE TOC

"Guidons. Guidons. Guidons. This is Cajun main. Stand by for Cajun 3 to start the CUB," called the battle captain, holding down F3 to key the mike for his Ventrillo.

Cajun 3 keyed the mike on his headset and started the CUB with a short operations update to ensure everyone was on the same FRAGORD, with the same execution check (EXCHECK), and the right copy of the DSM. All products had been hung on the portal and pushed out over JCR. All overlays were built in the Command Post of the Future (CPOF) and posted on the portal using the naming conventions and file structure laid out in the PSOP.

Cajun 2 followed with an intelligence update, highlighting the slight shift in the enemy timeline based on JTF attrition that had caused the adjustment to the EXCHECK.

Cajun 2 turned the net over to Cajun 6, who, after a short intro, turned it over to Swamp Fox 6, the CAV squadron commander, for an update. As Swamp Fox 6 finished his update, Cajun 6 jumped in to verify the PACE his reconnaissance teams would use.

Silence.

Cajun 6 keyed his mike and repeated the question. Again, silence. Then everyone dropped out of the Ventrillo room.

“S-6!” yelled Cajun 6. “Fix this now! And don’t tell me it’s my microphone again. You should know by now that I don’t change microphones. I change signal officers.”

Message received. The S-6 called for his best technicians to start looking over the commander’s system, but the network technician slowly realized that the enemy was interfering with the Warfighter Information Network-Tactical (WIN-T) satellite communications. The S-6 cyberspace defense technician had been observing and preventing the increasing cyberattacks throughout the day.

“Sir, this might be a cyber attack,” the S-6 told Cajun 5. “The standard procedure is for the network technicians to block the attacks. We can’t estimate how long the network might be down.”

“Alright do it,” replied Cajun 5. “But until you figure it out, we are switching to FM per our PACE.”

The RTO directed all subordinate units via JCR and FM to move from CPOF and Ventrillo to FM. Within five minutes, the Cajun 6 was reiterating his guidance across the BCT. Luckily, the mission command communications exercise the XO ran earlier that day helped smooth out the changeover process.

Day 8, 2130 hours, BDE TOC

“Sir,” the S-2 analyst called out tentatively. “Shadow is reporting two BMPs and dismounts in NAI [named area of interest] 2040 south of Copperhead. We weren’t tracking, but it looks like a road down there.”

Cajun 3 looked to Cajun 2 expectantly. “Sorry,” replied Cajun 2, “we didn’t expect them until 0100 hours. All my assets come up in the next 30 minutes. Division hasn’t called though...”

Cajun 6 checked his map and saw a thin black line and the mark of a low water crossing west of Kushal. “Damn. Looks like they may have found a way around Copperhead. S-2, I’m assuming that’s not the BDET because I only see two. Assuming that’s the recon, how long do we have before the first echelon gets through there?”

Cajun 2 scribbled on the back of some used sticky notes. “Maybe 30

minutes sir.”

“FSO, how long would it take to block that low water crossing with FASCAM and work a new linear DPICM [dual purpose improved conventional munitions] target?” asked Cajun 6.

We can do it,” the FSO replied, “but judging by the size, it will take us about 25 minutes.”

Make a Decision:

What should Cajun 6 do?

If you close the gap with FASCAM, turn to [page 114](#).

If you decide instead for Copperhead to deal with the contact further without the FASCAM, turn to [page 85](#).

Every fiber of Cajun 6's being screamed out to him that there was no way Copperhead 6 had a clue what he was talking about. His gut told him this was a bad idea, but Copperhead 6 was apparently willing to fall on his sword. Cajun 6 did not want to undermine his subordinate commander in front of his staff like this. Cajun 3 had surely built some flex in the plan and they could reprioritize dig assets to stay on track. Besides, Copperhead 6 was right, the other terrain looked to be more defensible, and they probably could get by with fewer obstacles with the right terrain.

"You have until 2200 hours tonight. We can't wait longer than that. 1713 BDET will probably attack in the next 36 to 48 hours, and you can be sure they won't give us rest to build our defenses in peace. That will leave you with approximately 24 hours to hand off this terrain to Razorbacks and build your EA. It's going to be tight, but I'll support you."

"Roger, sir!" Copperhead 6 replied. "We will get there."

Cajun 6 left the Copperhead TOC and committed his reserve, the armor company team "Turtles" to Copperhead, in the hopes that the additional forces would speed the Copperhead advance. Reinforcing Copperhead at this stage was not one of the reserve's planning priorities, so it took them longer to mobilize and move than Cajun 6 would have liked. In the meantime, Copperhead 6 continued to feed Boa Company into the meat grinder. Copperhead scouts found a route bypassing the heavily defended low water crossings, but the Turtles found that 1711 BDET remnants had established a well-constructed ambush along the bypass route and had destroyed all but three Bradleys and three tanks.

By 1800 hours, Copperhead had seized Low Water Crossings 16, 17, and 54 and was on his way to get to Low Water Crossing 5, fighting off localized counterattacks with the last of the armor and his remaining rifle company (+) with maybe six platoons of combat power. It was not much, but Low Water Crossing 5 would be his, as he assured the BDE commander during the CUB.

Unfortunately, the tactic had cost them valuable time and resources. By the time they called the blade teams forward at 0200 hours the

next morning, they had lost at least six hours of blade time. Factoring in the time it then took the Razorbacks to assume the terrain the Copperheads were leaving behind, they lost another three hours in movement and planning. The CINC Dozer tried to keep the remaining teams busy, but all that really did was incorrectly prioritize at least another three hours of digging in the rear area when all that effort should have gone into the EAs. In the end, the 12 hours of delay cost them over 500 meters of anti-tank ditch or a platoon of vehicle and individual fighting positions. Anaconda 6 was able to set in an 11-row wire obstacle and a few random single-strand serpentine, but little else.

The delay had also prevented Swamp Fox from getting his mounted troop forward of Copperhead. So instead, Swamp Fox reallocated his troops to the northern corridor in front of Gator. When the 171 BTG recon rolled through at 2200 hours, Copperhead had no warning and was not prepared. The lone T-80 tank and heavy 2S19 artillery supporting the Boyevaya Razvedyvatelnaya Dozornaya Mashina Russian wheeled vehicle (BRDMs) easily destroyed the Soldiers still pounding pickets and dragging concertina wire without individual fighting positions. When the reports of tanks reached Copperhead 6, he instinctively reached for the hand mike to call for the BCT reserve but remembered at the last second that he had sheepishly just returned the remaining platoon (+) of combat power to the BCT TOC only a few hours prior.

He called for emergency AH-64 support but there was none, so instead he dialed Razorback 6 on SVOIP. “Hey brother. I hate to tell you this but I’m pretty sure you’re about to have company.”

Razorback 6 heard the sound of tank treads in the background of the SVOIP and knew he was in trouble. They had barely oriented themselves to the terrain and just started digging when the reconnaissance showed up. No one had fighting positions established, none of their obstacles were constructed, and Razorback 6 had allocated all of his weapons platoons to various tasks requiring their vehicles leaving him with a single rifle platoon, with almost no anti-tank (AT) weapons, as his BN reserve. The recon sliced through their unimproved positions like a hot knife and into the deep area. Valiant souls tried to call for fire but the recon was never stationary

long enough for the 12 minutes of fire mission processing time needed to accurately target them, and besides, the TOC kept cancelling the missions due to the inability to clear ground with multiple converging BNs in contact with no rehearsed reverse passage of lines procedures.

Neither BN was fully reconstituted when the 1713 BDET attacked a day later, again slicing through measly obstacles patched together by the remnants of both BNs before finding their way to the BDE TOC to sever the head of the Ragin Cajuns.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-Cajun 6 committed his reserve against an emerging contingency. How do you balance your planned reserve commitment criteria against a deliberate decision to assume risk by executing an unanticipated request?

-Cajun 6 chose to continue fighting for the most advantageous terrain sacrificing time and combat power in the process. How do you balance the risks between a more prepared defense with more combat power in a less advantageous position versus less time and combat power on more advantageous terrain?

-Cajun 6 was not prepared to make the decision on where the brigade should defend. Could the staff have anticipated a decision point for the brigade to begin transition to the defense based on time and terrain available?

Go back to [page 41](#) and reconsider your decision.

“Negative FSO. We have a plan and we are sticking to it. They may have found our soft underbelly, but I’m not taking that bait. Cajun 3, alert the reserve, confirm planning priorities with the primary task to reinforce Copperhead.”

Day 9, 0130 hours, BDE TOC

The SVOIP rang at the S-2 CUOPS desk. The J-2 was calling to notify Cajun 2 the 1713 BDET columns were crossing the division intelligence handover line (IHL) and were now a Cajun problem.

“We’re tracking, sir,” replied Cajun 2. “My 35G here on the TOC floor has been watching their GMTI [ground moving target indicator] tracks on his movement intelligence client. By our count, they are down to 14 tracks and seven wheeled vehicles on the western route and 16 tracks and 14 wheeled vehicles on the eastern route. They must have reinforced the initial echelon with the hope of using 1712 BDET in trail as an exploitation force.”

The S-2 section plotted the operations graphics onto its movement intelligence (MOVINT) client and projected it up on a screen next to the one-station remote viewer terminal (OSRVT) feed. One analyst continually updated the position of the columns in CPOF while another updated the analog map.

Cajun 3 called Mosquito main on BDE command and told them to launch the AH-64s to the ABF [attack by fire] position. He announced, “Attention in the TOC, EXCHECK line Caledonia.”

The TOC paused momentarily before the calls came fast, but calm, thanks to the repeated rehearsals run by the OPS SGM.

Analysts exploiting motion imagery and moving target indicators should provide call outs in near real time to keep the CP aware of key enemy movements and disposition. Often this involves tracking multiple enemy formations at one time.

A way to keep track of multiple enemy units is use the Track ID or to label each formation alphabetically (A, B, C, etc.) upon identification. As each formation splits, append a number (B splits into B1 and B2). Further subdivisions alternate between letter and number (for example, B1 splits into B1a and B1b). This method allows current operations analysts to track the number and type of moving forces, make assumptions on positions based on rate of march, and maintain accountability of identified enemy targets.

“Attention in the TOC,” yelled the S-2 analyst. “CST [cryptologic support team] reports 2S6M1 active in NAI 3093. Grid VQ...”

“Fires, execute target DT 1087, adjust grid to VQ...”

“Attention in the TOC, Shadow 2 is down over NAI 3093!”

“It’s ok, it probably triggered the 2S6M1 before the AH-64s could get to the ABF position.”

“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1 departing NAI 3090 northwest on Route NICKEL, 13 tracks, 5 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour!”

“Is that crossing phase line ZEALAND?”

“Confirmed. Tracking via GMTI.” “Roger sir, that’s the trigger for FASCAM.”

“Fires, you heard the that, fire DT 1098!”

“Firing DT 1098.”

“JTACs, you have those F-15s lined up?”

“Negative sir, they just checked off station. I held them as long as I could.” “Seriously? S-2, has Shadow located the reserve forces in 3090?”

“Negative, still looking. Mover B2 departing NAI 3090 north on RTE [route] TUNGSTEN, 13 tracks, 11 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour.”

“Charon Troop reports three BRDM passing their position enroute to Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Fire mission, DT 1121 in support of Charon Troop, target BRDM IVO Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Are those Apaches on station yet?” “DT1 098 shot. FASCAM emplaced.”

“Gnat 61 and 62 are in position at ABF positions; Gnat 63 and 64 on ramp ready to launch!”

“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1 splits into two groups. B1A continues north on RTE NICKEL, seven tracks, two wheels, 15 kilometers per hour. Mover B1B milling at the intersection of RTEs NICKEL and CARBON, six tracks, three wheels.

“S-2, we can’t wait on that other 2S6, move Shadow to NAI 3091. Verify that GMTI on the way.”

“Gnat 61 and 62 reporting engaging armor column vicinity Tofani!”

“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1A halts vicinity phase line YUGO!”

“Shadow verifies 9 vehicles halted on Route NICKEL near the FASCAM!” “Fire DT 1088!”

The BDE coordinated attack went almost as well as could be expected, largely thanks to the detailed planning and repeated rehearsals. It was not perfect, however. Gnat 63 was shot down by a suspected SA-18 as it flew southeast over Turani enroute to the ABF position. The second half of the western column was apparently the majority of the T-80s, including at least two with KMT-7 mine rollers that easily cleared the FASCAM. Swamp Fox confirmed the enemy composition as it passed the forward observation posts, but largely failed to disrupt the tanks of the first echelon.

Cajun 3 continued to work Mosquito onto the second echelon of

BMPs and tanks, but without confirming the destruction of that second 2S6 he didn't want to push them any further south than the ABF position. Shadow 1 eventually found the 2S6 bursts by taking bursts of 200 x 30 mm rounds to the engine but, the CST wasn't able to confirm the launch point.

Without Shadow or CAS on station it was difficult to slow the second echelon. As they passed phase line YUGOSLAVIA, Cajun 3 made the call to pass the AH-64s to Copperhead for the remaining 30 minutes of time on station.

The RTO at the JCR announced, "Attention in the TOC. Mud Bugs report 2nd Platoon, Charlie Battery receiving indirect fire! Reporting one M777 destroyed, two KIA and four WIA. Currently conducting CASEVAC and displacing with the other howitzers."

"Where's the acquisition?" asked the FSO.

The radar tech responded with the point of origin for what he believed was a battery of D-30s. The fires section executed its counter-fire battle drill, and 1st Platoon, Charlie Battery initiated counter-fire six minutes after the acquisition.

The FSO picked up the SVOIP to call the Mud Bug TOC, "Is 1st Platoon conducting a survivability move?" He listened for a second. "Make sure the platoons are displacing. That last mission was a 'thank you' for the FASCAM. We can't lose that other platoon."

The AH64s continued to hammer away at the second echelon as it tried to punch through Copperhead, but amazingly the BN held. Cajun 3 was about to celebrate when the RTO called out, "Attention in the TOC, Gator main reports heavy contact in EA LION. The second echelon must have bypassed Swamp Fox somehow. Caiman Company has been turned out of its battle positions. Gator 6 is requesting BCT reserve to reinforce at Marghoz."

Cajun 6 looked grimly at the S-3. "Make it so."

Cajun 3 called Gator Main on SVOIP to inform them of the task organization change and commitment of the reserve. He hung up just as the sound of an artillery detonated outside the TOC.

Cajun 5's careworn face turned to Cajun 6. "Sir, might be time for another survivability move of our own."

Cajun 6 was already out the door of the tent. He left Cajun 5 in charge of the fight at the TOC, grabbed his FSO, S-3, S-2, and a handful of other staff officers as he walked out to his truck to drive to the TAC that Cajun 5 had dispatched earlier.

In the Gator EA, Turtle arrived with hare-like speed. Tanks led in the foray, while the Bradleys established battle positions for TOW shots in accordance with the plan rehearsed earlier. The tanks were deadly accurate and stalled the enemy advance though most of the Abrams were destroyed. Gator continued to pour indirect fires into the EA and the enemy receded.

Day 9, 0300 hours, Outside the BDE TOC

It took a little longer than he would have liked to have gathered the right personnel, but they hadn't planned this jump, so he could only blame himself. Cajun 6 impatiently called over the radio, "We have to move now."

His radio barked back. "Cajun 6, this is Cajun 5. You may want to come back in here."

The TAC just reported that it took 20 rounds of 122 mm rockets. The TAC personnel were choking a lot, so I think its gas."

"What?" Cajun 6 asked, incredulous. His mind felt slowed by too little sleep and so many things to think about. "What?"

"Gas, sir," Cajun 5 repeated.

"What—" Cajun 6's head turned toward a loud boom detonating somewhere nearby. "Gas, sir," Cajun 5 said again. "The TAC got hit with gas. We need you..."

Cajun 6 didn't hear the rest of his statement. Another boom happened nearby. His head turned again instinctively toward the sound. He suddenly felt underwater. *What?*

"Sir!"

Another explosion. His head turned even slower. "Sir!"

His eyes snapped open as hands jostled him roughly. He was looking at his driver. “Sir! We’re getting hit with IDF!”

“Is it gas?” Cajun 6 looked at him as if he did not know why he was there. “No, Sir.”

“Do we need to get down?”

“No, sir. The OCs are on the other side of the perimeter.”

“OCs?” Cajun 6 processed the term. OCs. Observer coaches. “What day is it?”

“It’s training day 4.” His driver replied, handing Cajun 6 his harness. “You’ll need to put this back on. There’s supposed to be a CUB in 30 minutes, at least until the IDF came in. I think Cajun 5 is going to jump the TOC.”

“Training day 4.” Cajun 6 repeated. “We haven’t defended yet. Lots of work to do. Time to get to it!”

The end for now.

“Sergeant, we cannot deviate from the ICSM. There are a lot things we’re looking for. That’s valuable time we’d lose.”

“Alright, sir.” The NCO shook his head. Officers never listened to him.

The analyst’s eyes were wide. This was awkward. He looked from his NCO to the battle captain unsure what to do. Finally, the battle captain nodded at him, “Good job, point that out. Keep the birds on track.”

He returned to his desk with a smile on his face. This job was not his favorite, but he felt he was growing into it.

Day 7, 0900 hours, Terrain Model outside the BDE TOC

The OPS SGM walked over to a few lieutenants finishing up on the terrain model. Their first attempt had looked like a postage stamp.

“What is this?” He asked them before he launched into teaching mode. “This isn’t a Ranger School terrain model. We need this to be huge. Cajun 6 likes to see his BN commanders and company commanders moving around on the ground. We need phase lines, key terrain, enemy locations, built-up areas, roads, boundaries, targets, and obstacles.”

They looked crestfallen, but he did not care. He would be crestfallen if Cajun 6 did not like the terrain model. These lieutenants would learn. Now the terrain model looked like something to be proud of and capable of even getting a kudos from the boss.

“Good job,” he gave them a thumbs up. He turned and saw the FSCOORD approaching with Cajun 2. Other staff officers from BDE and the BNs were also approaching. It was just about time for the IC and fires rehearsal.

A few minutes later, after the FSCOORD and Cajun 2 had familiarized themselves with the terrain model and the location of everything, the rehearsal began.

“Sir!” No one heard the voice at first over the din of generators humming near the TOC and the voices at the terrain model speaking

loudly. “Sir!”

A few heads turned, and then a few more. The FSCOORD stopped midsentence as a runner approached the terrain model. “What is it?” the FSCOORD asked.

“Battle captain wanted you to know right away that we lost the Shadow. It was shot down after it crossed the CFL.”

“I thought we fired SEAD [suppression of enemy air defenses] for it.”

“We did, but we didn’t confirm BDA.”

“Well, now we’ve lost a capability, time in our coverage, and the enemy is repositioning a functioning air defense capability,” the FSCOORD said.

“What do we do?”

“We’ll start by pausing this rehearsal until we can make our adjustments.” The FSCOORD advised all staff to adjust their products based on the new situation.

“We need to let Cajun 6 know as well,” Cajun 2 nodded.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-The CHOPS chose to execute the ICSM regardless of current developments. Who should have the authority to authorize deviations and what is the acceptable level of risk to do so?

-The SEAD mission was hastily planned in support of the initial reconnaissance effort and did not include an immediate method to assess the successfulness of the strikes. How could the IC manager have synchronized the requirements to validate battle damage assessments and reconnaissance of high payoff targets?

To reconsider your decision, return to [page 80](#).

Every fiber of Cajun 6's being screamed out to him that there was no way Copperhead 6 had a clue what he was talking about. The Copperheads would never reach Low Water Crossing 5, and certainly not with enough combat power to do anything once they got there. He hated to admit it, but they were about to maximize their operational reach in the south and after witnessing the cluster of trucks on the roads, he knew Razorbacks were not in position nor had the combat power either to execute a rapid forward passage of lines under contact or to assume the Copperhead objectives.

"I agree you need help, but I'm not giving you my reserve, yet," Cajun 6 stated. "Complete the seizure of Low Water Crossings 16 and 17 and start work on laying in your EAs just east of there. You're not making it to Low Water Crossing 5 in time. 1713 BDET will probably attack in the next 36 to 48 hours, and you can be sure they won't give us rest to build our defenses in peace. We are down one blade team, and this way we avoid having to dig positions both here and forward at Low Water Crossing 5. If we prioritize survivability positions and counter-mobility in the rear, we can probably buy enough time to hold the dig assets off until 2000 hours. After that you are where you are, and you'll just have to defend from there.

"Roger sir. We'll make adjustments and seize the low water crossings," Copperhead 6 nodded. He looked around for his S-3 and XO and smiled, pleased they were furiously scribbling notes. "We'll plan to establish our EAs east of those positions."

"Good. Don't wait. Move immediately. We'll get a FRAGORD out to coordinate details in supporting assets and coordinating products," Cajun 6 said.

Copperhead 6 nodded, "I'll tell you how successful we are tonight at the CUB sir."

Cajun 6 left, returning to his truck where he raised Cajun 3 on the SVOIP phone, which was now inexplicably working.

"I should have brought you out here with me," Cajun 6 said. "It would've been easier to coordinate the staff with you out here seeing

this dumpster fire yourself.”

“Roger sir,” Cajun 3 responded. He liked the idea of seeing what the commander was seeing at the same time. It would help him keep the staff on task.

“We need a branch plan... new EAs west of Low Water Crossing 5. We’ve lost a blade team we haven’t accounted for, and 1-47 Infantry hasn’t made sufficient progress. Our plan is worthless.”

“Yes sir, we’ve got the staff spinning,” Cajun 3 replied.

“I don’t want them spinning,” Cajun 6 barked. “I need them making a simple plan. Ensure the battle captain knows what’s going on. In the next hour the Copperheads will begin their attack. They are our main effort.”

“Sir, any guidance on the Razorbacks?”

“Dazzle me with your collective brilliance and creativity,” Cajun 6 said, head reclined back. He had no immediate ideas on Razorbacks. He pulled two companies from them to reinforce Gator the other day because it was easier than synchronizing two BNs, but now they were somewhat neutered. It was time to rely on the staff a bit and see what they could dream up for him. They were talented and needed a chance off the leash to show what they could do.

Day 6, 1130 hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 3 returned from his conversation with Cajun 6 to the plans tent where the staff sections were already working. He informed them they would be executing another iteration of COA development. He called for the battle captain, who briefed the planning team on the updated SIGACTs and situation as they now knew it to be.

“We’ll begin by reviewing staff estimates. Ensure you’ve captured the changes the battle captain just reviewed. What does it mean for your WfF? You have 30 minutes to make the changes.”

Immediately following the meeting, the S-2, S-3, and FSO huddled to review boundary changes and asset allocation adjustments. They quickly sketched out a modified course of action, new boundaries,

EAs, obstacle plan, and adjusted the IC plan to support. Once done, Cajun 3 reassembled the staff, briefed the updates to the plan, and gave them an hour to build out the necessary details for the FRAGORD.

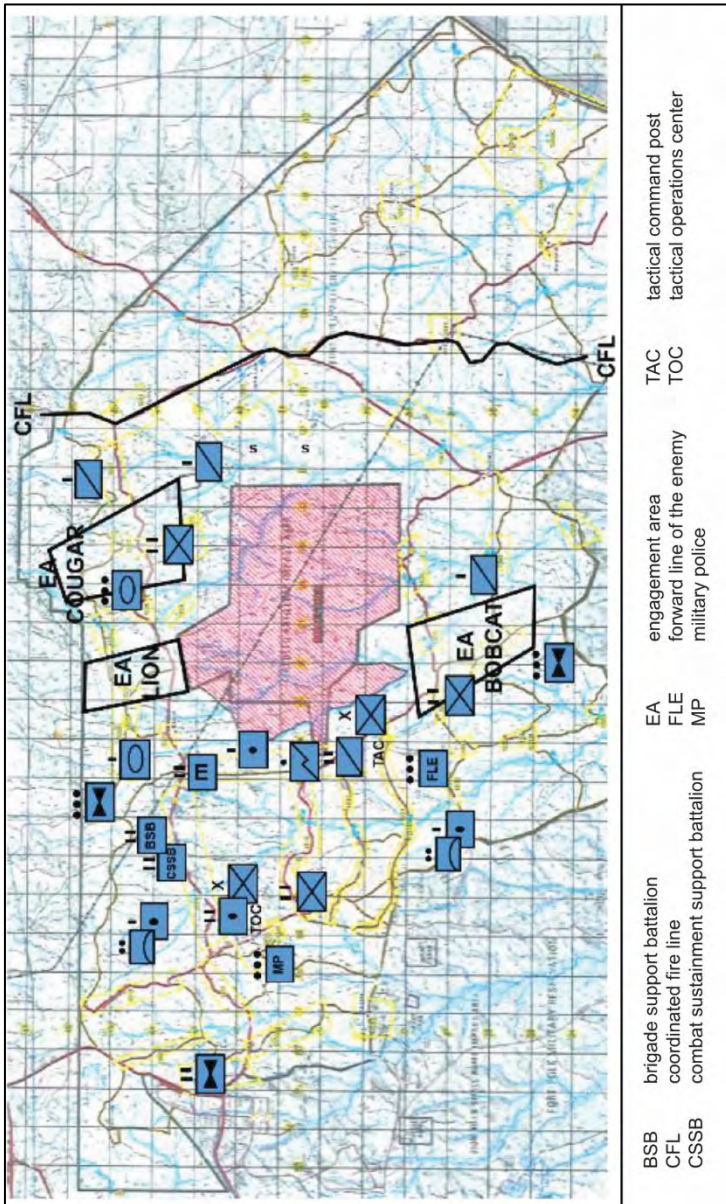


Figure 1 -Modified defense course of action.

The assistant engineer led a hasty COA development planning session to discuss changes to the obstacle plan and blade team allocations.

Cajun 3 opened the planning session, “We need a dig sync matrix. I literally cannot emphasize that enough. We have a responsibility to understand progress or lack of progress on the timeline and how closely we are adhering to the BCT plan.”

“The enemy high value target list is focused on destruction of BCT enabling capabilities with the artillery batteries, UAS launch and recovery site, and the FARP highest on the enemy high value target list,” Cajun 2 said. “We may be able to assume risk reallocating some of the blade hours from the BSB.”

“That won’t be enough hours,” the assistant engineer pointed out. “We need to cut the hours in the northern EA short if we must lock down the south.”

“The Copperheads aren’t in position though,” Cajun 3 said. “Continue in the north. They get done what they can get done. Once 1-47 Infantry has actually secured the terrain, we’ll rush them the assets.”

In the end, they determined that for this new plan to be viable and to be prepared to defend against 1713 BDET, 1-47 IN would have to be ready to start obstacle construction no later than 2330 hours tonight.

Day 6, 1800 hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 6 walked into the TOC and recoiled slightly from the smell. Everyone inside was used to it already, but the smell was one of his favorite reasons for battlefield circulation. A combined putrid stank of body odor, coffee, and tobacco products hung in the humid air in the tent. A broken environmental control unit merely supplied power instead of helping push the smell and humidity outside.

Cajun 3 gave him a deskside brief on the changes to the plan. Copperhead had managed to seize the low water crossings they needed to establish at least one EA. It was not an ideal position, but it was as good as it was going to get before blades had to start pushing dirt in the south. The staff worked all afternoon under the

assumption Copperhead would seize the necessary terrain, and luckily it worked out. They did not have time to build the branch had Copperhead failed.

Cajun 6 approved the changes and told the S-3 that the FRAGORD needed to be published NLT 0600 hours. “We need to ensure we push out the operational graphics, a sync matrix, target list worksheet, FS overlay, IC plan, target SYNC matrix, dig sync matrix, and a review of the DSM.”

“Sir, we haven’t updated the DSM yet.”

“That’s okay. Push it out with another FRAGORD.” Cajun 6 shook his head. “Make sure each BN receives two hard copies of the FRAGORD and products at the BCT CAR in the morning.”

Cajun 3 nodded, frustration and fatigue reflected on his face. His voice tried not to betray any concerns with the timeline. Cajun 6 nodded back, and the S-3 left to articulate the commander’s guidance to the staff.

As the BCT staff updated its products throughout the night, the assistant S-2 reviewed the updated BDA assessment from the BISE. He realized that an analyst had done the math incorrectly, and the BCT had not identified or destroyed the 2S6M1 they had originally templated with 1711 BDET. There was still a significant ADA threat in the forward area.

He interrupted the CM, who was updating the ICSM to discuss the threat of enemy air assets for the BCT Shadow. The two officers agreed something needed to be done. They resolved to discuss it with the S-2 when he returned.

Meanwhile, the FSO chaired a hasty TWG to ensure assets remained aligned with the updated plan. Participants included the CM, S-2, S-3, air liaison officer, targeting officer (TO), BN LNOs, and the staff weather officer. The S-2 highlighted changes to the enemy scheme of maneuver and the assessed adjustments to the timeline for the enemy approach. The FSO and TO reviewed and adjusted the asset allocations for both artillery and fixed wing assets to give more fires to the southern BNs for the next four days. The CM went through

each ATO day and re-sequenced the collection efforts to the appropriate NAIs, working with the BDE reconnaissance to ensure proper CAV utilization.

Following the meeting, the FSO called the FSCoord on SVIOP, who gave him approval for the changes, and the FSO pushed the updated products to the S-3 for publication.

Day 6, 1900 hours, Near Turani

Ares 6, Alpha Troop, 3-21 CAV commander, keyed his hand mike, “Swamp Fox main, this is Ares 6. Over.”

“Ares 6, this is Swamp Fox main. Over.”

“Swamp Fox main, this is Ares 6. We have eyes on 12-14 enemy dismounts in the village of Turani. Looks like a soft target. Request permission to execute hasty spoiling attack on their position and exploit any information they have. Worst case, we throw the attack off guard, best case they have more actionable intelligence we can exploit. Over.”

“Hold one while we get the commander’s guidance. Over,” the Squadron RTO replied.

Swamp Fox 6 was unsure of what to do. His task was to screen, but Ares 6 was one of his best troop commanders, very aggressive. The troop commander knew an opportunity when he saw one. This might be time to listen to what the troop commander was offering. He would be risking combat power, but potentially throwing off the enemy reconnaissance plan, buying decision space for both his BDE commander and fellow BN commanders.

**Decision Point:
What should Swamp Fox 6 do?**

If you order the spoiling attack, turn to [page 98](#).

If you deny the spoiling attack, go to [page 78](#).

Cajun 3 turned to the BAO. “Call Mosquito 3 over at the aviation task force. They were supposed to have a team of AH-64s coming up in 10 minutes. Give them priority to support Copperhead in the south and then Gator in the north.”

Cajun 3 turned to the S-2. “What is going on?”

“I don’t know,” Cajun 2 replied, “The attack wasn’t supposed to happen until tomorrow night. I figured we would see some recon but nothing like this.”

Cajun 3 gave him a dead look. “S-2, what about all the assets you briefed this afternoon at the CAR. Can’t they tell us what’s going on?”

“Well yes,” replied Cajun 2. “If they were laid on for tonight instead of tomorrow night, and if I had my BISE set up to handle the PED of the incoming intelligence. Not a lot of capability in the TAC, but I’ll see what I can do.”

“They could just be attempting to shape conditions and exploit the strike on our main,” Cajun 3 offered. “We need to provide Cajun 6 some analysis. Regardless, this doesn’t meet reserve criteria on the DSM, and I’m going to wait to make a decision. Copperhead 6 has been a little light on the trigger lately.”

“We need to get BDA and these reports right,” Cajun 3 said. He looked at the battle captain as well as all of those assembled. “We need to hash this out on the CUOPs floor, otherwise we’ll be double counting vehicles and not have any idea what’s going on.”

The S-2 considered for a moment and typed away on transverse for a few minutes before answering. “I’m not seeing any indicators of the main attack from our EAB assets, GMTI, or SIGINT. JTF hasn’t confirmed crossing of the IHL. These might be remnant forces looking to take our eye off the ball or looking for a seam. They probably don’t know the extent of damage done by the earlier strike, but are looking to exploit something based on the BM-21 strike earlier.” He went back to typing in the JTF intel chat window on

Transverse.

“What’s he trying to do?” asked Cajun 3.

“The JTF is still showing 1713 BDET at least a day off. I think this is probably the BTG recon in support of tomorrow night’s attack. We took some of it off the field, but that would mean it’s a little heavy, especially in the south. It’s not on the COA, but I bet the BTG recon was augmented with a company (-) attack from 1711 BDET in the south where we haven’t made as much progress.”

Over the next hour reports cleaned up. Gator had minimal small arms contact. Mosquito engaged the force attacking Copperhead and degraded it enough that Copperhead could hold its positions without the reserve. The attacking force did include a single T-80 and a handful of BMPs. Cajun 2 stuck to his guns that it was just a heavy recon. Copperhead 6 wasn’t sure, but Cajun 3 was just glad the line had solidified without him having to wake the boss.

Day 8, 0730 hours, BDE TAC

Cajun 6 wished he could refill his to-go cup with coffee from the OPS SGM’s urn.

Unfortunately, it met its untimely demise when the plans tent was destroyed by a BM-21. He was tired after supervising the casualties and then the strike on Copperhead, and, just having taken the fight back from Mud Bug, the enemy struck 1-47 IN. He checked the JCR to see if there were any changes. A few icons had moved, and he referenced those changes with the map he kept in his lap. It wasn’t fancy, but he wasn’t going to rely on JCR for his COP. Radio traffic, FM, Transverse chats, and SVIOP were all necessary to track and understand what was happening. The ever reliable map, however analog it might be, still provided the best medium for combining all of those information streams.

For the finalized 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team Defense course of action, see Figure 12 on page 49.)

He sent a message to Cajun 5 over JCR. “I’m heading out to see our EAs and judge the damage of last night for myself. I’ll start with Copperhead. I’ll take the BUB on the road on O&I. The S-2, S-3,

and FSCOORD are coming with the CSM and me today to help us level the bubbles with the BN staffs and ensure everyone is tracking their parts in the IC, fires, and ops channels.”

At the new TOC location, Cajun 5 acknowledged Cajun 6’s flash, immediate, priority, routine (FIPR) message before he went to find the senior ops NCO. After last night’s attack on the TOC, he had a litany of items on his to-do list. Most pressing was achieving full operational capacity with the equipment and tents he had. Casualties had been evacuated. They had lost equipment, but their capabilities weren’t degraded beyond the loss of a few chairs and tables. It would be a few hours though before they were ready to take the fight from the TAC.

His second item was a mission command communications exercise to test their PACE, followed by supervising the senior ops NCO conducting battle drills on the TOC floor. From there they would rehearse identifying and alerting the newly found and emplaced Stinger teams across the BCT defense to incoming red air.

Last, but not least, Cajun 5 intended to supervise the intel and fires teams in a technical rehearsal on the triggers for everything on the EXCHECK. He wanted to see the Soldier who would be on shift pass test message traffic over their PACE from the analyst who conducted PED for the IC asset to the fires supporter who sent the mission to the guns. His stomach rumbled. He hadn’t eaten. There wasn’t time.

Day 8, 1100 hours, Outside the BDE TOC

Cajun 6 was sitting on the back of a HMMWV, watching Soldiers dig fighting positions around the TOC, waiting for his chili mac to heat up when Cajun 5 approached him.

“Sir, after last night’s IDF, I think it’s a good idea to send out the TAC as a redundant C2 node,” Cajun 5 offered.

“With our losses do we have the personnel to support that?” Cajun 6 asked.

“Sir, we might be thin in that area,” Cajun 5 conceded. “I think we need to consider survivability though.”

“Survivability is important, but so is functionality,” Cajun 6 countered. “We also don’t have the same functionality in the TAC that we do here. We need to be able to control air. Our fires section is really just the FSO and FS NCO, and the S-2 won’t have any of his intel systems up. Besides we didn’t rehearse C2 from the TAC at any point. I like getting away from this stinky flagpole as much as the rest of you, but it’s my flagpole.”

“Sir, it won’t move far, maybe a click or two down the road. Just enough that if the main gets destroyed you have a place to go and continue the fight. They can set up and shadow track the fight, ready to take over if need be.”

“Alright XO. Go ahead. Figure it out,” Cajun 6 allowed. “But, let’s ensure we have our Stingers in the right spot to take care of red air the next time it acts as a spotter.”

Day 8, 1800 hours, BDE TOC

“Guidons. Guidons. Guidons. This is Cajun main. Stand by for Cajun 3 to start the CUB” called the battle captain, holding down F3 to key the mike for his Ventrillo.

Cajun 3 keyed the mike on his headset and started the CUB with a short operations update to ensure everyone was on the same FRAGORD, with the same EXCHECK, and the right copy of the DSM. All products had been hung on the portal and pushed out over JCR. All overlays were built in CPOF and posted on the portal using the naming conventions and file structure laid out in the PSOP.

Cajun 2 followed with an intel update, highlighting the slight shift in the enemy timeline based on JTF attrition that had caused the adjustment to the EXCHECK.

Cajun 2 turned the net over to Cajun 6, who after a short intro turned it over to Swamp Fox 6, the CAV Squadron commander, for an update. As Swamp Fox 6 finished his update, Cajun 6 jumped in to verify the PACE his reconnaissance teams would use.

Silence.

Cajun 6 keyed his mike and repeated the question. Again, silence.

Then everyone dropped out of the Ventrillo room.

“S-6!” yelled Cajun 6. “Fix this now! And don’t tell me it’s my microphone again. You should know by now that I don’t change microphones. I change signal officers.”

Message received. The S-6 called for his best technicians to start looking over the commander’s system but the network technician slowly realized that the enemy was interfering with the WIN-T satellite communications. The S-6 cyberspace defense technician had been observing and preventing the increasing cyberattacks throughout the day.

“Sir, this might be a cyberattack,” the S-6 told Cajun 5. “The standard procedure is for the network technicians to block the attacks. We can’t estimate how long the network might be down.”

“Alright do it,” replied Cajun 5. “But until you figure it out, we are switching to FM per our PACE.”

The RTO directed all subordinate units via JCR and FM to move from CPOF and Ventrillo to FM. Within five minutes Cajun 6 was reiterating his guidance across the BCT. Luckily, the mission command communications exercise the XO ran earlier that day helped smooth out the changeover process.

Day 8, 2130 hours, BDE TOC

“Sir,” the S-2 analyst called out tentatively, “Shadow is reporting two BMPs and dismounts in NAI 2040 south of Copperhead. We weren’t tracking, but it looks like a road down there.”

Cajun 3 looked to Cajun 2 expectantly. “Sorry,” replied Cajun 2, “we didn’t expect them until 0100 hours. All my assets come up in the next 30 minutes. Division hasn’t called though...”

Cajun 6 checked his map and saw a thin black line and the mark of a Low Water Crossing west of Kushal. “Damn. Looks like they may have found a way around Copperhead. S-2, I’m assuming that’s not the BDET because I only see two. Assuming that’s the recon, how long do we have before the first echelon gets through there?”

Cajun 2 scribbled on the back of some used sticky notes. “Maybe 30 minutes, sir.”

“FSO, how long would it take to block that low water crossing with FASCAM and work a new linear DPICM target?” asked Cajun 6.

“We can do it,” the FSO replied, “but judging by the size it will take us about 25 minutes.”

Make a Decision:

What should Cajun 6 do?

If you close the gap with FASCAM, turn to [page 122](#).

If you decide instead for Copperhead to deal with the contact further without the FASCAM, turn to [page 57](#).

Day 6, 1930 hours, Near Turani

“Ares 6, this is Swamp Fox 6. Guidance to follow, break. You have permission to continue reconnaissance but do not get decisively engaged. The task is for us to screen. Let’s integrate the king of battle before we consider allowing you to ride into town on your horse.”

“Swamp Fox 6, this is Ares 6. Sir, acknowledge.”

Ares 6 quickly developed a plan to establish a blocking position to the north of the village and to send a platoon from the southwest to attack through the village to the northeast. The commander ordered his FSO to build a hasty fires plan, utilizing only organic mortars. He drafted an order and published it to his platoons along with basic graphics through the JCR.

As they approached the northern blocking position, the troop first sergeant established a casualty collection point. The northern blocking position was set, and the PL from the assaulting force called Ares 6.

“Ares 6, this is Red 1.”

“Red 1, this is Ares 6.”

“Ares 6, this is Red 1. I see over 25 personnel, at least 12 belt feed weapon systems, likely mortar tubes, and 3 technical vehicles with crew-served weapons mounted just left the village to the east at a high rate of speed.”

Ares 6 wanted to attack. His troops were motivated for a fight. As he rewound the report in his head, his gut told him something was off.

“Top, what do you think?” He asked for his first sergeant’s opinion.

“Sir, I don’t think 12 knuckleheads will have the info that justifies the possible loss of the BCT’s eyes in the north. They have the tactical advantage of being in hardened positions, and if the lieutenant can see 25 personnel, there’s likely twice that. This does not make any sense to me.”

Ares 6 concurred and picked up his hand mike. He called off the attack. “Fall back to your former positions. Break. Red 1, maintain observation of the target. We’re going to bring fires on those guys.”

“Ares 6, Red 1, roger.”

Once re-established Ares 6 called Swamp Fox 6. “Swamp Fox 6, this is Ares 6.”

“Ares 6, this is Swamp Fox 6.”

“Swamp Fox 6, this is Ares 6. Sir, we’re not going to attack. Red 1 has observed 25 personnel, over 12 crew-served weapons and several technicals. I’d like to put some indirect fire on them.”

“Ares 6, this is Swamp Fox 6. Roger, sounds like you made the right choice. The BCT needs to continue to observe NAIs and develop targets to assist in shaping the deep fight. If we die that’s one less layer of indicators and warning and one less option for the BDE to shape the enemy before they hit the EAs. We’ll use our mortars. As delightful as that target is, they aren’t on the BDE’s HPTL. Return to your previous mission once we deliver some 120 mm mortars.”

“Roger sir,” Ares 6 replied. “We’ll charlie-mike out here. Over.”

“Swamp 6, out.”

Turn to [page 80](#).

Day 7, 0400 hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 2 walked into the plans tent, unshaven and in need of coffee. Almost immediately the CM and assistant S-2 approached him. The two captains rehashed their conversation about the significant ADA threat towards the BCT Shadow in the deep fight.

“Our tasked ELINT support should be sufficient to cue fires in support of the aircraft,” the CM insisted.

“We don’t want to risk the asset in case we’re were wrong, or the JTF doesn’t push the ELINT hits in time to move the UAS to safety,” Cajun 2 countered. They could always get another Shadow, but that would take time, time Cajun 2 didn’t know they would have.

Hearing the commotion, the FSO stood up and walked over to the S-2 and his captains. “What’s the issue here?” the FSO asked.

“We need to get the Shadow out to look for enemy fires assets per the HPTL, but I’m still concerned about ADA. We can’t confirm it’s there yet, but we also probably can’t risk losing a Shadow,” replied Cajun 2.”

“It’s not standard operating procedure, but we could fire some SEAD when the Shadow crosses the FLOT. Point out some possible target locations, so I can template SEAD targets.”

The S-2 pointed out a few possible locations on the map.

The FSO nodded. “I’m concerned about the distance from the 105 mm batteries to these possible templated locations. We have limited allocations of 155 mm rounds. We can’t screw this up. The Shadow is the BCT’s primary FMV asset.”

The FSO stressed to the team its role in the targeting missions scheduled for the next few days. The team discussed four possible targets, but ultimately agreed to execute two of them as the Shadow takes off later that day.

Day 7, 0845 hours, BDE TOC

The FSO walked into the CUOPS floor and sat down with the fires team as the familiar sound of the flying lawnmower droned overhead. The fires section was preparing to execute two 155 mm SEAD targets as the Shadow crossed the CFL. It had already completed communication checks via FM with the CAV squadron fires elements that were in a forward observation post. Since no other aircraft were scheduled to fly, the BAO and FSO knew they did not need to clear air.

The CAV fires support element called into BCT fires, “Fire DT 1000.”

BCT fires relayed the call for fire to the FA BN fire direction center (FDC), “Fire DT 1000.”

A few minutes later, the FA BN gave “shot, DT 1000” to BCT, who relayed the same to the CAV. After receiving “rounds complete, DT1000” from the FA BN, the BCT prepared to fire the next target, DT 1005. As the rounds went out, the S-2 CUOPs NCO turned to the analyst executing intelligence tactical control with the UAS.

“Direct the UAS to conduct BDA for the SEAD mission.” “Sergeant, that’s not on the ICSM.”

“What are you telling him to do?” the battle captain approached the conversation. “Sir, we need to confirm BDA,” the S-2 NCO said.

“Sir, I was saying it’s not the ICSM.”

Decision Point:
What should the Battle Captain do?

If you deviate from the ICSM, turn to [page 101](#).

If you hold fast to the planned ICSM, turn to [page 63](#).

“I appreciate your idea sergeant, but we’ve got this,” The battle captain said. “Move the UAS to the IED site, and let’s get the BSB tracking a possible recovery mission. Where is the MEDO?”

“Roger sir,” the sergeant acknowledged and passed along directions to the Shadow platoon.

A few minutes later the BSB called back and confirmed the convoy actually belonged to Fuse Company and had been carrying 155 mm rounds to resupply the mostly-depleted stocks at C/1-36 FA. This was bad. Charlie Battery did not have enough ammo to execute the defense as planned, and this would require the FSO to trim targets.

The 9 line was received and processed higher as the Shadow arrived over the damage.

The operator began to scan nearby tree lines, and eventually made its way back to over the damaged vehicle. The air MEDEVAC arrived and departed without an issue. The headquarters and headquarters company (HHC) first sergeant walked into the CP. He was out checking on perimeter security and ensuring the drone buster was ready to be utilized during the CAR.

Once the first sergeant saw the Shadow feed, he asked CHOPS, “Sir, have you notified Cajun 6?”

“Sergeant Baker, run to the CAR and notify the Cajun 6 and 9,” he replied.

Four minutes later, Cajun 3 walked into the CP in time to see the Shadow feed watching the convoy attempt to do self-recovery, then it went blank.

“What happened?” Cajun 3 asked.

It took a few minutes of reaching out to the military intelligence company commander and Nutria before they concluded a 2S6 had shot down the Shadow.

“What?” Cajun 3 looked incredulous. “Where did this happen?” The

battle captain wordlessly indicated the location on the map.

“The Shadow was over the recovery site?” Cajun 3 asked, still putting the pieces together.

“We thought it was best to look for any groups that might try to execute a complex attack,” said the battle captain.

“That isn’t in accordance with the ICSM. We need Shadows in the deep fight. Why would we be watching people recover a vehicle? That’s not your decision, CHOPS,” he yelled. “S-2, get another in the air!”

An hour later, the majority of the staff returned to the TOC. The OPS SGM gave instructions for the breakdown and sterilization of the terrain model. In the plans tent the S-3 gave guidance for the refinement of the execution matrix and preparation for FRAGORD 1 to be published.

“Execution matrix sir?” the assistant S-3 asked. “I thought it was a sync matrix.”

“It’s a sync matrix after war-gaming, but after the CAR, and we’ve validated it, the sync matrix becomes an execution matrix.”

In the TOC, Cajun 5 walked to the battle captain for an update, but remembered he needed to close a loop with Mud Bug 5 before he returned to his TOC.

Day 7, 2130 hours, BDE TOC

It started faint, but grew louder until the sound was unmistakable. The sound of a Mi-35 “HIND” helicopter, flying at about 100 feet, buzzed over the TOC. At first no one reacted, clearly assuming the aircraft was their own.

“That’s red air!” yelled the specialist sitting at the Tactical Airspace Integration System (TAIS).

The battle captain directed everyone to turn out their lights and to alert the Stinger teams. No one moved, partly because the TOC was now almost completely dark except for the eerie blue light of computer monitors, but also because no one knew who was on a

Stinger team.

Cajun 3 asked, “ADAM [air defense and airspace management] cell, where are the BCT’s Stingers?” No one responded.

Cajun 3 directed the BDE aviation element and battle captain to alert all the BNs, find all of the Stinger teams, and get them set up on a quick-fire net. Then, Cajun 3 grabbed the 140A command and control systems technician, who had been a man-portable air defense operator before warrant officer candidate school, and went outside to find a Stinger.

The first thing Cajun 3 saw were the two Soldiers on guard outside the TOC entry control point (ECP) smoking and wearing red lens flashlights on their foreheads. He scanned the footprint. Generator panels flipped open, lit up like a Christmas tree. Soldiers straggled through sleeping areas with the lights out. The civil affairs tent had its doors rolled up on the sides for ventilation. There was no way that helicopter did not see them. Cajun 3 plucked the cigarettes from the ECP guards’ mouths. “Do you have any Stingers?” “No, sir, but I think HHC does.”

Cajun 3 worked his way over to the HHC CP. “Commander, do you have any Stingers?” “Roger, sir.” The HHC commander stood up and started rummaging behind her field desk. “Here it is sir!” she said as she pulled the Stinger in question out of a box behind a stack of meals ready to eat (MREs) in her well-lit, open-walled Standardized Integrated Command Post System tent. The sound of enemy rotary wing had passed, and Cajun 3 realized they needed to seriously readdress their passive air defense measures, react to enemy air battle drills, and track the Stinger team locations and readiness.

Cajun 3 returned to the TOC and found Cajun 5. “We need to jump. Can we wait until morning? The staff is exhausted. They’re beginning to fray.”

Decision Point: Should the XO initiate a TOC jump?

If you believe the TOC should jump, stay on [page 85](#).

If, however, you agree with the XO and the TOC jump can wait until morning, turn to [page 92](#).

“Let’s figure out where we’ll jump to and brief everyone on the plan,” Cajun 5 argued. “We’ll ensure the staff personnel complete their products for planning and execution. They’ll get some much needed sleep. We’ll start the sequence in the morning.”

“Ok. You’re the XO.” Cajun 3 couldn’t sound more reluctant. “I’ll be in the plans tent supervising the product refinement.”

“You’ll see. We’ll be alright,” Cajun 5 maintained.

Cajun 3 did not acknowledge, but trudged back into the night. Suddenly though he stopped, turned, and returned to Cajun 5. “No. We’ve got to send the TAC out. It’s our jump TOC. They’re in warm status. We can begin breakdown of all non-essentials and move the TOC to a red status.”

Cajun 5 slowly nodded his head. “You’re right, of course. Priorities of work, just like in Ranger School... damn.”

“I’ll let Cajun 6 know and have him move out immediately. He can rejoin the TAC once it’s established and IOC [initial operating capable],” the S-3 said. At the XO’s nod, he marched off to find the boss.

Fifteen minutes later, Cajun 6 rolled out. Before he left he told Cajun 3, “Call Mud Bug 6. Have the fires TOC take the fight. Break the TOC down immediately. Don’t stop at red status.”

“Roger, sir,” Cajun 3 acknowledged and walked to the TOC. On the CUOPs floor, Cajun 5 was giving instructions to the OPS SGM. Cajun 3 briefed him on Cajun 6’s guidance.

“Okay, sergeant major. You’ve heard him,” Cajun 5 said. “Everyone up and begin the breakdown.” The operations sergeant nodded and left.

A few minutes later, rockets impacted the ground, twelve 120 mm rockets in fact, from a BM-21 strike. Because the entire perimeter was alert and working there were only five Soldiers and NCOs occupying the same ground the rockets desired. They died instantly. Shrapnel mercifully missed others, but shredded the plans tent and

disabled its generator. The TOC had transferred the fight to Mud Bugs and, with the TAC launched, the Cajuns has not lost control or any situational awareness. The Mud Bugs began immediately working a counter-fire mission to destroy the offending BM-21.

Unfortunately, the enemy 1L220 counter-fire radar picked up the outgoing 155 mm rounds from Charlie Battery. Before the last Charlie Battery round left the tube, a 2S19 battery 12 mission rained down around the Charlie Battery guns. Shrapnel ripped through gun crews as the 152 mm rounds detonated throughout the gun line, destroying three guns and crews in place. The rest of the battery scrambled to jump the guns as well as manage casualty care.

Losing the BDE's long range 155 mm guns would hamper the brigade's ability to shape the enemy and degrade its key systems before it rolled into BN EAs. With less than 24 hours before the main enemy attack, getting replacements would be almost impossible, and as fourth in the JTF priority of fires, it would be unlikely to make up the difference with general support.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-The brigade CP lacked the air defense posture to prevent compromise. How could the brigade have postured its air defense to prevent compromise of its CPs?

-Cajun 5 wanted to delay making the decision to relocate the brigade CP. What conditions warrant decisions to displace mission command nodes?

-The CHOPS deviated from the ICSM and allocated the UAS to observing friendly units instead of looking for high payoff targets (like the 1L220U radar). Who should have the authority to authorize deviations and what is the acceptable level of risk to do so?

Turn to [page 108](#) to reconsider your decisions.

“Negative FSO. We have a plan and we are sticking to it. They may have found our soft underbelly, but I’m not taking that bait. Tell Copperhead to deal with it.”

Day 9, 0130 hours, BDE TOC

The SVOIP rang at the S-2 CUOPS desk. The J-2 was calling to notify Cajun 2 the 1713 BDET columns were crossing the division IHL and were now a Cajun problem.

“We’re tracking sir,” replied Cajun 2. “My 35G here on the TOC floor has been watching their GMTI tracks on his MOVINT client. By our count they are down to 14 tracks and 7 wheeled vehicles on the western route and 16 tracks and 14 wheeled vehicles on the eastern route. They must have reinforced the initial echelon with the hope of using 1712 BDET in trail as an exploitation force.”

The S-2 section plotted the operations graphics onto its MOVINT client and projected it up on a screen next to the OSRVT feed. One analyst continually updated the position of the columns in CPOF, while another updated the analog map.

Cajun 3 called Mosquito main on BDE command and told them to launch the Apaches to the ABF position. “Attention in the TOC, EXCHECK line Caledonia,” he announced. The TOC paused momentarily before the calls came fast, but calm, thanks to the repeated rehearsals run by the OPS SGM.

“Attention in the TOC,” yelled the S-2 analyst. “CST reports 2S6M1 active in NAI 3093. Grid VQ...”

“Fires, execute target DT 1087, adjust grid to VQ...”

“Attention in the TOC, Shadow 2 is down over NAI 3093!”

“It’s okay; it probably triggered the 2S6M1 before the AH-64s could get to the ABF position.”

“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1 departing NAI 3090 northwest on Route NICKEL, 13 tracks, 5 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour!”

Analysts exploiting motion imagery and moving target indicators (MTI) should provide call outs in near real time to keep the CP aware of key enemy movements and disposition. Often this involves tracking multiple enemy formations at one time.

A way to keep track of multiple enemy units is use the Track ID or to label each formation alphabetically (A, B, C, etc.) upon identification. As each formation splits, append a number (B splits into B1 and B2). Further subdivisions alternate between letter and number (for example, B1 splits into B1a and B1b).

This method allows current operations analysts to track the number and type of moving forces, make assumptions on positions based on rate of march, and maintain accountability of identified enemy targets.

“Is that crossing phase line ZEALAND?”

“Confirmed. Tracking via GMTI.” “Roger sir, that’s the trigger for FASCAM”

“Fires, you heard the order, fire DT 1098!”

“Firing DT 1098.”

“JTACs, you have those F-15s lined up?”

“Negative sir, they just checked off station. I held them as long as I could.” “Seriously? S-2, has Shadow located the reserve forces in 3090?”

“Negative, still looking. Mover B2 departing NAI 3090 north on Route TUNGSTEN, 13 tracks, 11 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour!”

“Charon Troop reports three BRDM passing their position enroute to Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Fire Mission, DT 1121 in support of Charon Troop, target BRDM in vicinity of Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Are those Apaches on station yet?” “DT 1098 shot. FASCAM emplaced.”

“Gnat 61 and 62 are in position at ABF positions; Gnat 63 and 64 on ramp ready to launch.”

“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1 splits into two groups. B1A continues north on Route NICKEL, 7 tracks, 2 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour. Mover B1B milling at the intersection of Routes NICKEL and CARBON, 6 tracks, 3 wheels.

“S-2, we can’t wait on that other 2S6, move Shadow to NAI 3091. Verify that GMTI on the way.”

“Gnat 61 and 62 reporting engaging armor column vicinity Tofani!”
“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1A halts vicinity phase line YUGO.”

“Shadow verifies 9 vehicles halted on Route NICKEL near the FASCAM.” “Fire DT 1088!”

The BDE coordinated attack went; however, almost as well as could be expected, largely thanks to the detailed planning and repeated rehearsals. It was not perfect however. Gnat 63 was shot down by a suspected SA-18 as it flew southeast over Turani enroute to the ABF position. The second half of the western column was apparently the majority of the T-80s, including at least two with KMT-7 mine rollers that easily cleared the FASCAM minefield. Swamp Fox confirmed the enemy composition as it passed the forward observation posts, but largely failed to disrupt the tanks of the first echelon.

Cajun 3 continued to work the AH-64s on the second echelon of BMPs and tanks, but without confirming the destruction of that second 2S6 he didn’t want to push them any further south than the ABF position. Shadow 1 eventually found the 2S6 bursts, taking bursts of 200 x 30 mm rounds to the engine but the CST wasn’t able to confirm the launch point. Without Shadow or CAS on station it was difficult to slow the second echelon. As it passed phase line YUGOSLAVIA, Cajun 3 made the call to pass the AH-64s to Copperhead for the remaining 30 minutes of time on station.

The RTO at the JCR announced, “Attention in the TOC. Mud Bugs report 2nd Platoon, Charlie Battery receiving indirect fire! Reporting one M777 destroyed, two KIA, and four WIA. Currently conducting

CASEVAC and displacing with the other howitzers.”

“Where’s the acquisition?” asked the FSO.

The radar tech responded with the point of origin for what he believed was a battery of D-30s. The fires section executed its counter-fire battle drill, and 1st Platoon, Charlie Battery initiated counter-fire 6 minutes after the acquisition.

The FSO picked up the SVOIP to call Mud Bug TOC, “Is 1st platoon conducting a survivability move?” He listened for a second. “Make sure the platoons are displacing. That last mission was a ‘thank you’ for the FASCAM. We can’t lose that other platoon.”

The AH64s continue to hammer away at the second echelon as they tried to punch through Copperhead, but eventually called ‘*Winchester*’ and returned to base. The FARP had been destroyed by a 2S19 strike, likely called in by special purpose force (SPF), which took the last eyes in the sky out of the fight for the remainder of the night. It was down to the infantrymen now.

Copperhead 6 committed the platoon of tanks he was keeping as his BN reserve to Low Water Crossing 54. Amazingly, it seemed to be holding the second echelon in place.

Then Cajun 6’s SVOIP rang.

“Sir, its Gator 6. We’re taking heavy contact in EA LION. The second echelon must have bypassed Swamp Fox somehow. Caiman Company has been turned out of their battle positions. I’ve already committed my Dragon Company, and they are down to their last gun truck. I need the reserve.”

Cajun 6 looked at Cajun 3. “Where is what is left of the reserve?”

“Turtle 6 has one tank and three Bradleys,” replied Cajun 5, “but he’s in the BSA, and his priority for the last day has been reconstitution of personnel and equipment. We can get them there, but it’s going to take a minute.”

In fact, it took too many minutes. A column of BMPs eventually broke through the friendly lines. With no remaining UAS or rotary-

wing aviation to locate the enemy, Cajun 3 tried to vector elements of Razorbacks to locate the enemy. Unfortunately, the Arianans knew the terrain better than the Razorbacks and seemed to evade every attempt at interdiction until they broke through the BSA perimeter and destroyed everything they could before going black on ammunition and transitioning to close kills with their treads.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-Cajun 6 chose not to employ FASCAM to block a potential enemy avenue of approach. How did the staff generate options for the commander and anticipate gaps in capability or combat power?

-Cajun 6 committed the reserve early to reinforce Copperhead. How do you balance reserve commitment criteria for emerging versus planned operations?

Turn to [page 96](#) and reconsider your decision.

“Let’s figure out where we’ll jump to and brief everyone on the plan,” Cajun 5 argued. “We’ll ensure they all complete their products for planning and execution. They’ll get some much needed sleep. We’ll start the sequence in the morning.”

“Ok. You’re the XO.” Cajun 3 couldn’t sound more reluctant. “I’ll be in the plans tent, in my body armor, supervising the product refinement.”

“You’ll see. We’ll be alright,” Cajun 5 maintained.

Cajun 3 did not acknowledge, but trudged back into the night.

It wasn’t more than 30 minutes later when the first rockets impacted into ground. The BISE occupied the same ground and gave way under the explosive effective of ten rockets.

None of the 20 Soldiers, NCOs, or officers knew what hit them. One minute they were merely drowsing at their workstations, the next minute they were dead. Equipment and vehicles at the point of impact were in flames.

One or two Soldiers on the perimeter yelled, “Incoming!” They dove to the ground. Some of the Soldiers closest to the impacts actually moved fast enough for shrapnel from the rockets to miss them as it soared over their bodies. The resulting concussions, however, did their damage, knocking them unconscious.

Shrapnel pierced the CUOPs tent adjacent to the BISE, wounding several Soldiers and NCOs before the concussion wave knocked everyone else to the ground. Cajun 3, in the plans tent, opposite of the BISE from the CUOPs, dove to the floor. Screams and shouts filled the air and competed with the ringing in his ear as he struggled to his feet. He never considered how he should have pressed Cajun 5 to jump the TOC. He did not have time to consider it. The second volley of ten rockets impacted behind him. He and the others in the plans tent died instantly.

The enemy had generated a fire mission from the red air overflight and used a BM-21 strike to sever the head of the BDE. The FA BN tried to counter-fire, but before Charlie Battery could finish the fire

mission, 152 mm rounds from the enemy 2S19s rained down on the Mud Bug firing points, destroying all BDE long-range fires. The BNs were now left without any ability to synchronize them in the fight to come, and no ability to shape the enemy deep area with indirect fires.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-The brigade CP lacked the air defense posture to prevent compromise. How could the brigade have postured their air defense to prevent compromise of their CPs?

-Cajun 5 wanted to delay making the decision to relocate the brigade CP. What conditions warrant decisions to displace mission command nodes?

Turn to [page 108](#) and reconsider your decision.

“Let’s figure out where we’ll jump to and brief everyone on the plan,” Cajun 5 argued. “We’ll ensure they all complete their products for planning and execution. They’ll get some much needed sleep. We’ll start the sequence in the morning.”

“Ok. You’re the XO.” Cajun 3 couldn’t sound more reluctant. “I’ll be in the plans tent supervising the product refinement.”

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Cajun 3 did not acknowledge, but trudged back into the night. Suddenly though he stopped, turned, and returned to Cajun 5. “No. We’ve got to send the TAC out. It’s our jump TOC. They’re in warm status. We can begin breakdown of all non-essentials and move the TOC to a red status.”

Cajun 5 slowly nodded his head. “You’re right, of course. Priorities of work, just like in Ranger School... damn.”

“I’ll let Cajun 6 know and have him move out immediately. He can rejoin the TAC once it’s established and IOC,” the S-3 said. At the XO’s nod, he marched off to find the boss.

Fifteen minutes later, Cajun 6 rolled out. Before he left he told Cajun 3, “Call Mud Bug 6. Have the fires TOC take the fight. Break the TOC down immediately. Don’t stop at red status.”

“Roger sir,” Cajun 3 acknowledged and walked to the TOC. On the CUOPs floor, Cajun 5 was giving instructions to the OPS SGM. Cajun 3 briefed him on Cajun 6’s guidance.

“Okay, sergeant major. You’ve heard him,” Cajun 5 said. “Everyone up and begin the breakdown.” The operations sergeant nodded and left.

A few minutes later, rockets impacted the ground, twelve 120 mm rockets in fact, from a BM-21 strike. Because the entire perimeter was alert and working there were only five Soldiers and NCOs occupying the same ground the rockets desired. They died instantly. Shrapnel mercifully missed others, but shredded the plans tent and disabled its generator. The TOC had transferred the fight to Mud

Bugs and with the TAC launched, the Cajuns had not lost control or any situational awareness. The Mud Bugs began immediately working a counter-fire mission to destroy the offending BM-21. Minutes later, 155 mm rounds from Charlie Battery detonated around the enemy BM-21, vindicating the loss of the plans tent, its generator, and the OPS SGM's favorite coffee urn.

Turn to [page 96](#).

Day 8, 0200 hours, Low Water Crossing 16

Anaconda 6 dozed in his seat while the soft glow of his JCR illuminated his face. His driver was supposed to be keeping him awake but had fallen fast asleep on the steering column. His gunner shivered in the cool night air, wondering how is it so hot during the day, and yet so cold at night? When the soft sound of rumbling to the south caught his ears. He gently kicked his commander in the shoulder.

“Sir, you better wake up. I think I hear something.”

Anaconda 6 woke up just in time to see the southern tree line flare to life with muzzle flashes as the enemy attacked his position from the south. Anaconda 6 grabbed his radio, keying the hand mike as he watched one of the trucks explode while the others returned fire.

Artillery began pounding his position and soon the screams and yells were inaudible over the din of battle. One artillery round impacted not far from Anaconda 6’s truck, and suddenly being sleepy was no longer a problem.

“Copperhead main this is Anaconda 6,” blared the radio in the 1-47 IN TOC. “We have enemy contact! We’re receiving IDF; believe we hear enemy vehicles to our front.”

Copperhead 6 sat upright in his chair. He looked at Copperhead 3. “You handle things here, I’ll go get help! I’m on my way to my truck!” He was aware of the strike on Cajun main earlier. It was best if he was in his vehicle with his POP to support him.

After climbing into his MATV and closing the heavy door, he got on the BDE command net. “Cajun TAC, this is Copperhead 6, we’re taking heavy contact down here. I’m going to need the BDE reserve, CAS, and any attack aviation assets you can give me, pronto!”

In the BDE TAC, Cajun 3 looked over at Cajun 2 and the FSO.

“They received IDF?”

Any acquisitions?”

“Roger, we’re processing,” the fires desk NCO barked.

“Cajun TAC, this is Copperhead 6, did you copy my last transmission? I need those assets.

Make a Decision:

Should Cajun 6 commit the reserve?

If you commit the reserve to reinforce Copperhead, turn to [page 47.](#)

If you hold the reserve from Copperhead, turn to [page 72.](#)

Day 6, 1630 hours, Near Turani

“Ares 6, this is Swamp Fox 6. Guidance to follow, break. You have permission to attack.

Take a few minutes to continue reconnaissance, plan, and then attack as you see fit. We will prioritize you with BN mortars.”

“Swamp Fox 6, this is Ares 6. Sir, acknowledge.”

Ares 6 quickly developed a plan to establish a blocking position to the north of the village and to send a platoon from the southwest to attack through the village to the northeast. The commander quickly ordered his FSO to build a hasty fires plan, utilizing only organic 60 mm mortars. He drafted an order and published it to his platoons along with basic graphics through the JCR. As they approached the northern blocking position, the troop first sergeant established a casualty collection point. The northern blocking position was set, and the PL from the assaulting force called Ares 6.

“Ares 6, this is Red 1.”

“Red 1, this is Ares 6.”

“Ares 6, this is Red 1. I see over 25 personnel, at least 12 belt-fed weapon systems, likely mortar tubes, and 3 technical vehicles with crew-served weapons mounted just left the village to the east at a high rate of speed.” The report gave Ares 6 pause, but he knew his troops were motivated for a fight, and the element of surprise should weigh in his favor.

“Good report Red 1. I think we will still get the drop on them, and with those technicals gone we should be able to get in and out without their ability to support the enemy. Go ahead and attack.”

It didn't occur to Ares 6 that maybe they were not as stealthy as they thought, until the mortar rounds started dropping with startling precision on his blocking positions from the newly-established enemy mortar firing positions east of Turani. It was too late to turn back now since they were almost to the village, but then multiple machine gun positions on rooftops and windows opened up on his position. Bullets ripped through the HMMWVs, which then took

erratic turns as bullets perforated the driving compartments. His assault force came to an abrupt halt when the technical from earlier crested the hill. It must have circled around and was now counterattacking from the north. Ares 6 knew this was not going to end well. He thought about Swamp Fox 6 as he tried to organize his forces to withdraw, but the kill sack was complete.

With one troop of the cavalry squadron destroyed, the paratroopers of the 9611 went on the offensive. The Gators had been depending on the cavalry squadron to lead the counter-reconnaissance fight, or at least to provide some limited indicators and warning of potential attack, while they focused on establishing their EAs. Instead three enemy technicals surprised a blade team digging fighting positions and destroyed a third of the BDE's dig capacity in seconds. Over the next 36 hours, that blade team should have been able to dig in a full company of individual and vehicle fighting positions or over 1.6 kilometers of anti-tank ditches. By the time the Gators interdicted the 9611 Airborne counterattack they had lost almost a company of combat power that could not be replaced in the mere 36 hours before the main attack of 1711 BDET.

Without the cavalry to trigger deep fires in support of the BDE shaping operation and disrupt enemy formations in support of BN EAs, 1711 BDET entered what should have been EA COUGAR with more combat power than the Gators could handle. It penetrated easily through the supplemental-turned-primary battle positions at EA LION. Before long, Arianan T-80s and BMPs roamed the BDE rear area, destroying the Cajun's ability to sustain before moving to find an aviation FARP.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-Ares 6 identified enemy forces in Turani as a target of opportunity. How do you balance enabling disciplined initiative on the part of a commander versus adherence to a synchronized brigade plan?

-Swamp Fox 6 approved Ares 6's plan to seize Turani. How could the brigade have achieved the same effect in destruction of enemy forces without risking the loss of a brigade reconnaissance asset?

-Swamp Fox 6 authorized the seizure of Turani. Where is the decision authority to retask a brigade reconnaissance mission?

Go back to [page 65](#) and reconsider your decisions.

“Sir, ADA systems are at the top of the HPTL. We just shot at them. Failure or success could drive modifications to the collection plan.”

A warm feeling came over the battle captain. He hated this job. He was not sure what the right answer was. Both the analyst and the sergeant had good points. He had been told since the basic course to trust your NCOs. He had do so now as well.

“Listen to your sergeant,” The battle captain told the analyst.

The Soldier shrugged and sent the necessary directions to the pilots.

They found nothing at the first target. The warm feeling plaguing the battle captain turned into a sweat. The UAS flew to the second target location though, and they found destroyed support trucks and a damaged 2S6M1.

The S-2 NCO, “Take a look sir.”

Relief swept over him. “Move the Shadow out of range. We need to repeat on the damaged 2S6M1,” he directed. The BDE fires section executed the re-attack of the target, and the S-2 section moved the Shadow back to confirm destruction of the system.

“Okay. This is a deviation from the planned fires and collection for the day,” the battle captain said. Turning to the fires section again, “Shoot the SEAD fires on the remaining two suspected 2S6M1 locations.”

It took longer than the first two missions to generate the right target information. Cajun 5 walked into the TOC as the fires cell busily tried to arrange the shot.

“Battle captain, what’s going on?” asked Cajun 3.

“Sir,” the battle captain responded, “we shot SEAD in support of the Shadow crossing the CFL. The S-2 NCO thought we should confirm BDA. Seemed like a prudent risk so I diverted the Shadow and we found that we had damaged but not destroyed the 2S6M1. Fires is working the reattack now. It’s time deviated from the ICSM, but it confirms that we took the number one HPT off the list.”

“Good work battle captain. Disciplined initiative in action. Check the other two SEAD targets for BDA as well. We may lose an hour of coverage but Cajun 2 has to agree that the gain is worth it.”

Day 7, 0900 hours, Terrain Model outside the BDE TOC

The OPS SGM walked over to a few lieutenants finishing up on the terrain model. Their first attempt had looked like a postage stamp.

“What is this?” he had asked them before he launched into teaching mode. “This isn’t a Ranger School terrain model. We need this to be huge. Cajun 6 likes to see his BN commanders and company commanders moving around on the ground. We need phase lines, key terrain, enemy locations, built-up areas, roads, boundaries, targets, and obstacles.”

They looked crestfallen, but he did not care. He would be crestfallen if Cajun 6 didn’t like the terrain model. These lieutenants would learn. Now the terrain model looked like something to be proud of and capable of even getting a kudos from the boss.

“Good job,” he gave them a thumbs up. He turned and saw the FSCoord approaching with Cajun 2. Other staff officers from BDE and the BNs were also approaching. It was just about time for the IC and fires rehearsal.

Mud Bug 6 looked around and figured they had a critical mass of personnel to start the IC and fires rehearsal. “FSO!” he called. “Go ahead and start roll call.”

The FSO called out names and call signs, with each participant responding in a monotonous “here.” The rehearsal included the normal participants: the FSCoord, BDE and BN FSOs, Cajun 2, BN S-2s, the cavalry squadron commander, the BAO, air defense officer, aviation task force S-3, battery and company commanders, and others. After the FSO finished roll call, Cajun 6 stood for his opening remarks.

“Team,” started Cajun 6, “this is perhaps our most important rehearsal. The purpose of this BDE is to find and kill the enemy forces, and we can’t do that if we do not properly shape their formations before they make contact with our BNs. Our ability to

detect, deliver, and assess the impacts on the enemy is critical to mission success. Cajun 2, what are we up against?”

Cajun 2 gave a brief overview of the enemy set and then assumed his position next to the FSCOORD and Cajun 6. Taking the briefing stick, the assistant S-3 oriented everyone to the new, improved, and larger terrain model. He laid out the broad outline of the first phase of the operation before the assistant S-2 followed, placing enemy icons and moving them discrete distances, showing enemy action across all war-fighting functions in the given phase. Next in sequence, the CM briefed the division and BDE IHL, NAIs, and the PIR for the phase before launching into the allocation of EAB collection allocations. When she got to BDE organic IC assets, she handed the briefing stick to the MI company commander, who positioned his low-level voice intercept (LLVI) team leaders, Shadow PL, and human intelligence collection team leaders on the map to show collection capability. The squadron commanding officer took the briefing stick next and briefed the concept of reconnaissance, positioning troop commanders on the terrain model in addition to the intelligence collectors.

Finally, the FSO covered the HPTL, essential fire support tasks, fire support coordination measures, positioning of batteries, and the location of radars, placing battery commanders and radar techs in their appropriate positions as he spoke.

The FSO was about to move into the second phase of the operation when Cajun 2 interrupted, “FSO, before we move on, let’s work the sensor-to-shooter chain. Let’s say the BTG recon moves up towards Turani and gets an order to initiate recon. Those BRDMs are third on our HPTL in this phase. How do we find and kill them?”

“Sir!” piped up one of the LLVI team leaders, a specialist who had never been in a BDE rehearsal before. “I can find it. We can locate the enemy through their nets and tell Swamp Fox 2 to call for fire.”

The FSO looked at the S-2 and FSCOORD hopefully. He did not want to drag this rehearsal out all day.

“Close,” replied Cajun 2. “What I think you meant to say was that you are collecting on the Arianan O&I net and get a hit on the enemy

recon. Now what?"

"We work out the cut and call up the grid coordinate for the transmitter," the team leader replied.

"Close," Cajun 2 replied again. "What you meant to say was you radio LLVI team leader 2 via ASIPS [Advanced System Improvement Program] net 274 to inform him of the frequency and direction and then call your lob up to the cryptologic support team using your PSC-5 Satellite Communications as primary and JCR as alternate. The CST...where are you chief?"

The SIGINT tech raised his hand from the back row.

"Get out here. Chief, you receive both lobs, calculate the cut, and then pass the target to the BDE S-2 CUOPS section via Transverse primary, TA-312 alternate. CUOPS, where are you?"

A young lieutenant raised his hand. "You get out here as well. Lieutenant, you receive the cut, announce it to the TOC, and the battle captain calls for fire on the target as it matches the number 3 on the HPTL. Now let's work through this for the other targets in this phase."

"Hold up 2," interjected the FSCoord. "Let's say your cut puts the recon C2 node in the backyard of the Mosque there in Turani. FSO, now what do we do?"

"Lawyer!" called the FSO. "You're up."

The BDE judge advocate nudged his way through the crowd to the edge of the terrain model. "Well sir, depending on how sure you are of the signal..."

"We're sure."

"Then you would have to make a collateral damage estimate call, but the mosque is also probably on the no-strike list. I'd say you need to get at least another set of eyes on the target, monitor it until it moves, and then maybe strike it later."

"Negative Ghost Rider, that pattern is full. S-2, is that recon an imminent threat? Don't answer, of course it is. First, FSO, make sure

you whittle down every ‘no strike’ entity in AFATDS [Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System] to the smallest possible size. Second, if it’s still a concern, we’ll switch to precision guided munitions. Bottom line, we are shooting that target. This isn’t a counterinsurgency operation, there are thousands of trained Soldiers ready to kill us at a moment’s notice. It’s a valid military target. Alright FSO, let’s move on to the next phase and focus on the BDE deep fight. Cajun 2A, walk us through the indicators.”

Cajun 2A walked to the map with an armful of red icons on sticks and started dropping them along two routes in the southeast side of the AO.

He began, “After the BTG and BDET recon pass through, we expect 1713 BDET to enter the AO along these two routes. Exact time unclear but probably around 0100 hours tomorrow, give or take a few hours. Two column will consist of at least 11 BMPs and three T-80s. They will have SA-18s for localized air defense, but will primarily rely on a 2S6M1 likely positioned in the south to provide eight kilometers of coverage. They will have support from an additional D30 battery (six guns) and general support from a battery of 2S19s and a section of 9A51 Primas, likely also with a 2S6M1. One of those two columns, probably the main effort, will have an IMR2 and a BAT2 [bulldozers]. It will take these forces approximately 15 minutes after crossing the division IHL to clear PAAs near NAI 3090 and establish two platoons of D-30s and the 2S6M1. It will take the columns approximately 15 minutes to move from phase line ZEALAND to phase line YUGOSLAVIA, at which point we expect them to execute a 10 minute short halt to move the 2S6M1 from phase line ZEALAND to vicinity NAI 3091.”

For the finalized 3/21 Infantry Brigade Combat Team defense course of action, see Figure 12 on page 49.

Cajun 2 stopped him, “Alright 2A, lets pause here. CM, how are we following this?”

The CM briefed, “Sir, JTF intelligence CUOPS will notify S-2 CUOPS of the 1711 BDET crossing the division IHL via SVOIP primary, Transverse alternate. We have GMTI laid on from 2200-

0400 hours and our GEOINT section will be following all developments and calling out moving columns via Transverse primary, TA-312 alternate. We also have ELINT from 2200- 0200; the CST will analyze and call out identifications of emitters via Transverse primary, SVOIP alternate. We will have two Shadow UAS up from 2000-0400 hours, primary NAI 3090 and 3093, and secondary NAI 3091 and 3092.”

“Great,” stated the FSCOORD. “Now I counted a total of at least 32 HPTs in that first echelon. FSO, walk us through the fires.”

“Roger, sir. ADA continues to top the HPTL to give our AH-64s freedom of movement. ELINT, GMTI, and Shadows, in that order, are the key to locating the 2S6M1s. The one in NAI 3093 is DT 1087 and is technically in the JTF’s AO, so we plan to hit that one with HIMARS; DT 1086 is in NAI 3090, so that’s a Charlie Battery target. Once those are clear, we need to destroy both columns between phase line YUGOSLAVIA and phase line ZEALAND, and the armor reserve the S-2 failed to mention, to get the COFMS [correlation of forces matrices] right for the BNs in EAs LION and BOBCAT. We’ll stop the western column with FASCAM target DT 1098 and then DPICM linear target DT 1088. Apaches and CAS will focus on the eastern column.

“Hold on FSO,” interjected Cajun 6. “You just ran through a whole lot of moving parts. When are we firing the FASCAM?”

“On order, sir.”

“Negative. FSCOORD, how long is it going to take to emplace that FASCAM?”

“It’s small and in constrained terrain. With one platoon, sir, 10 minutes. I see where you’re going though, sir. It’s got a 4 hour duration and I’d rather emplace it before those D-30s are emplaced. Trigger to fire should be notification of 1712 BDET crossing division IHL.”

Cajun 6 nodded. “Good call. Now, BAO, when do we launch the Apaches?” The BAO looked to the FSCOORD and the aviation task force S-3.

Mosquito 3 spoke up first. “Sir, the crew can fly for 6 hours under

goggles. We'll have the crews cycled for a 2000-0800 hours duty day, just be warned this means we are accepting risk in the days previous as we cycle those crews. If we are at the FARP, blades turning, we can be at the attack-by-fire position in 12 minutes. I don't recommend that though because the S-2 doesn't know if this attack is kicking off at 2000 hours or 0200 hours. I can go from flight line to ABF position with 30 minutes notice."

Cajun 2 took the hint. "Sir, I'll talk with JTF and get them to shift the IHL by 10 minutes to give us a 5 minute buffer on getting the Apaches in."

"Speaking of getting the Apaches in," asked Cajun 6, "how are we keeping them out of the gun target lines?"

The BAO chimed in this time. "Sir, we've established two air corridors that will keep the AH-64s outside the gun target lines but maximize their ability to maneuver freely across the AO and support the BCT."

"Good work BAO. FSCOORD, let's work through the rest of this BDE fight in detail before we get to the BNs..."

Turn to [page 108](#).

Day 7, 1330 hours, BDE Main

The FSCOORD looked at his watch. The CAR was supposed to start in 90 minutes and he needed to review some things beforehand. He did not want to hold another TWG, but the FSO had pretty much twisted his arm to stick to the battle rhythm, and this was the only time today that worked.

The ABE was fired up about the HPTL on the expected day of the attack. He thought engineering assets should be number one on the HPTL, but the FSO disagreed.

“Dude, we’re still emplacing our own obstacles and, at best, we are on track to complete 60 percent of the plan due to loss of blade teams due to maintenance, enemy actions, etc.

The BNs do not know what to do with them and haven’t used them efficiently. That makes it even more important to take out the enemy breaching assets,” the ABE argued to the FSO.

“Ok, we will add breaching assets to our recommendations to the boss. I think the HPTL recommendation is ADA, fire support, engineer, maneuver,” said the FSCOORD watching the argument. “Any other nominations before we adjourn?”

Cajun 2A stood up. “Sir, we had a SAR [synthetic aperture radar] image taken early this morning. It’s not great, but our analysts think it might be the 1L-220 counter-fire radar. Can we add this for tomorrow?”

The FSCOORDs ears perked up. “Tomorrow? No, you’ll add that on today. CM change the ICSM and get it to CUOPS pronto.”

The meeting concluded and many members of the huddle left to prepare for the BCT CAR, scheduled to begin in less than an hour.

Day 7, 1445 hours, BDE TOC

Cajun 6 walked back into the TOC to refill his canteen cup with the OPS SGM's magical coffee sludge and stopped to ask the battle captain to walk him through the obstacle overlay.

The battle captain started to point at the COP and talk general obstacle intent, but Cajun 6 cut him off.

"I know the plan. I need to know the exact status of every obstacle, and so do you if you're going to be in that chair." The battle captain apologized and ran off in a sweat to find the assistant engineer who had an updated overlay handy.

He showed Cajun 6 his personal map board with the obstacle construction progress plotted. Construction was generally following the plan, but the effort in the south was behind schedule.

"ABE, this is good information, but it needs to be on the COP, not on your map board. Defenses have failed for less," stated Cajun 6. "And furthermore, at what point were you going to tell me that we are behind on obstacle construction in the south? We have less than 24 hours until our not later than defend time and the loss of every obstacle means the enemy has a greater chance to breach."

Cajun 6 left to find Copperhead 6 before the CAR at 1500 hours and to let him know exactly what Cajun 6 thought about his obstacle effort and reporting skills. He made a note as well to address this organizational complacency with the XO. If they could not complete the obstacle plan, Cajun 6 would have to either accept the risk or mitigate by committing additional combat power. He did not like either option.

Day 7, 1500 hours, Terrain Model outside the BDE TOC

Cajun 3 pulled out his map board and checked over the terrain model to ensure it was accurate. After the mission command, IC, fires, and sustainment rehearsals earlier, he was sure there were going to be things that were messed up or trampled. He quickly tasked his NCOs to clean up a few errant phase lines and coordination points.

Meanwhile the OPS SGM was trying to herd people into the right

locations. “If you’re on my terrain model and you don’t work for me get off to the side, now!” he yelled.

BN S-3s herded their company commanders to one side of the terrain model, urgently trying to pre-brief them, so they did not completely embarrass themselves in front of Cajun 6. BN commanders clustered on the other side, joking around, and waiting for Cajun 6 to appear so each could ambush him with just one quick thing before the CAR. The BCT staff waited quietly under the watchful eye of Cajun 5 while the plans team circled through the BNs, handing out the latest copies of the EXCHECK, DSM, operations graphics, and ICSM.

Cajun 6 slipped through the crowd, deftly avoiding being trapped by one of his commanders, and convened the CAR. “S-3, if everyone is here, let’s begin.”

Cajun 3 nodded. “Team, for those of you who don’t know where you are, this is the BCT combined arms rehearsal. We call it that because it’s first and foremost a rehearsal, and because we all need to understand how we are applying combined arms, not just infantry, to defeat the enemy in this operation. Cajun 3’s assistant is the official note taker. You all have the latest copies of our products. These will certainly change with what we discuss here today, and as one last act of kindness to the CHOPS, we will publish a FRAGORD within one hour covering all the changes we make today. After the CAR today, we will execute the fires technical and IC technical rehearsals in the TOC, starting at 1800 hours. Chaplain, can you start us off with a prayer?”

The chaplain smiled. “Pray with me Cajuns as I address God in my manner, may you do so as well in yours. Almighty, thank you for this glorious day as we prepare for battle; grant these fearsome warriors insights so they may crush our enemies and drive them before us, and, as always, may Your will be done. Amen.”

“Thank you chaplain,” added Cajun 6. “I couldn’t have said it better myself. Cajuns, this is what we’ve trained for – this is where we prove ourselves. All the staff work in the world can’t save us if we don’t understand the plan and how to execute it rapidly and violently. My intent is to leverage the BDE’s firepower to destroy as

much of the enemy as possible east of the CFL. From there, the rest will be up to you and your company commanders to close with and destroy the enemy. This is where we resolve friction. It's not a backbrief to me, so if you see an issue, speak up so we can fix it."

Cajun 6 sat down and the CHOPS walked to the center of the terrain model with his briefing stick. "Cajuns, I'm the CHOPS and this point marks the transition of the plan from plans to current operations. I'll lead the rehearsal, and my team is responsible for all changes to the plan from here on out. Verify you are on execution checklist version 3.1. S-3, please cover any changes to the task organization."

The S-3 took the briefing stick, provided a terrain orientation, briefed changes to the task organization, reiterated the mission and intent, and defined the phases of the operation, decision points, and key events to be covered in the rehearsal. He turned the stick over to Cajun 2 who covered the weather and impacts, a general update on the current enemy situation, and expected enemy COA. The CM followed and briefed the scheme of collection, task, and purpose for EAB collection assets, and the key NAIs and PIRs for that phase. The CHOPS then called up the CAV S-3 to brief.

Swamp Fox 3 briefed his squadron task organization, key tasks, boundaries, coordination points, and unit positions with commanders raising their hands and moving to their assigned positions when the S-3 called their call sign. In turn, troop commanders quickly briefed their task organization, task and purpose, combat power, and key system status. Swamp Fox 3 then covered the squadron's scheme of maneuver, including key radio calls, fire missions, and information requirements, with company commanders moving their markers on the terrain model to correspond with the S-3's narrative.

Over the next hour, Gator 3 followed Swamp Fox, using the same format, followed by Razorback, Copperhead, Mud Bug, Mosquito, Nutria, and finally Boudin. Mud Bug 3, of course, highlighted the positions of his batteries, the HPTL, PAAs, gun target lines, and displacement criteria. Mosquito 3 had all his commanders carry little helicopters on sticks and sound out 'choppa choppa' as they moved, highlighting air corridors, restricted operating zones, and launch

criteria for the deep fight. Nutria 3 covered the critical assets on the battlefield, positions for air defense assets, and progress in the execution of the dig plan.

Then Cajun 3 and Cajun 6 posed challenging vignettes, requiring company commanders to answer questions about reporting procedures, chemical decontamination routes, response to jamming, and casualty evacuation execution. Cajun 3 ended each phase by repeating where the BCT and the BNs should be focused and the conditions required to move to the next phase. The whole process took about 90 minutes, and most of the BDE was mentally exhausted by the end and glad to head back to their AOs.

Cajun 6 ended the CAR, “I’m still not sure we have the RPOL for Swamp Fox correct, especially in the south, but Cajun 3 assures me the CHOPS will cover it in the FRAGORD. Copperhead...Swamp Fox...I need the two of you to talk that transition – rehearse it again on the ground before tomorrow night.

Day 7, 1530 hours, BDE TOC while the CAR is Ongoing

“Attention in the TOC,” yelled the RTO observing the JCR. “Boudin main reports a convoy enroute to 3-21 hit an IED at VQ 8912 4139. One vehicle disabled, one litter urgent casualty, 9 line to follow...”

The rest of the TOC repeated the 8-digit grid and went back to whatever they were working on before. The battle captain looked around the room, realizing his crew were not in the game, and slammed his fist on the table.

“Does anyone in here understand what that means?” asked the battle captain. “Anyone?”

The battle captain directed the RTO to call the BSB and figure out what was in the convoy, and if it was going to have impacts. He sent a note in Transverse to Cajun 4 representatives in the administrative logistics center to tell them of the attack and then turned to the S-2 representatives. “Dynamically re-task the Shadow to provide over-watch of the resupply convoy. We need to keep an eye on it so we can protect the survivors.”

The analyst hesitated. “Sir, I’m not sure. Pulling the Shadow off the

collection plan is not a good idea. Cajun 2's assistant was pretty torqued about this last version he brought in right before the CAR. I think there is an important target we should be looking for."

"I have the delegated authority to re-task any ISR in support of the BCT," the battle captain said. "We did this last time and it worked out, remember?"

The battle captain sensed uneasiness with the analyst and the NCO. He followed up, "There could be a secondary threat. We need a detailed reconnaissance of the woods surrounding the attack to look for the IED triggermen or a potential ambush team."

"Roger, sir," the S-2 CUOPS NCO acknowledged, but still, it didn't sit right with him. "Sir, maybe we should ask the FSCOORD or Cajun 5?"

Make a Decision:

What should the Battle Captain do?

If you think they should re-task the UAS to cover their casualties,
turn to [page 80](#).

If, however, you believe they should keep the UAS on the ICSM,
turn to [page 119](#).

“Close the gap with FASCAM” Cajun 6 replied. “S-3, call Copperhead and tell them what we are doing. FSO, make it so.”

The BCT fires cell initiated the fire mission and pushed it down to the FA BN via AFATDS digital. The FA BN AFATDS initially declined the fire mission due to a no-longer valid no-fire area (NFA) that Copperhead had failed to clear out of their box. Twelve minutes later, the BCT fires and BN FDC clear the NFA and send the mission to the FDC.

2nd Platoon, Charlie Battery received the mission and shot the FASCAM, completing the mission 30 minutes after Cajun 6 gave the order.

Day 9, 0130 hours, BDE TOC

The FASCAM on Low Water Crossing 54 went inert just about the same time as the SVOIP rang at the S-2 CUOPS desk. The J-2 was calling to notify Cajun 2 the 1713 BDET columns were crossing the IHL and were now a Cajun problem.

“We’re tracking sir,” replied Cajun 2. “My 35G here on the TOC floor has been watching their GMTI tracks on his MOVINT client. By our count, they are down to 14 tracks and 7 wheeled vehicles on the western route and 16 tracks and 14 wheeled vehicles on the eastern route. They must have reinforced the initial echelon with the hope of using 1712 BDET in trail as an exploitation force.”

The S-2 section plotted the operations graphics onto its MOVINT client and projected it up on a screen next to the OSRVT feed. One analyst continually updated the position of the columns in CPOF while another updated the analog map.

Cajun 3 called Mosquito main on BDE command and told them to launch the Apaches to the ABF position.

“Attention in the TOC, EXCHECK line Caledonia,” he announced. The TOC paused momentarily before the calls came fast, but calm, thanks to the repeated rehearsals run by the OPS SGM.

Analysts exploiting motion imagery and moving target indicators should provide call outs in near real time to keep the CP aware of key enemy movements and dispositions. Often this involves tracking multiple enemy formations at one time.

A way to keep track of multiple enemy units is use the Track ID or to label each formation alphabetically (A, B, C, etc.) upon identification. As each formation splits, append a number (B splits into B1 and B2).

Further subdivisions alternate between letter and number (for example, B1 splits into B1a and B1b).

This method allows current operations analysts to track the number and type of moving forces, make assumptions on positions based on rate-of- march, and maintain accountability of identified enemy targets.

“Attention in the TOC,” yelled the S-2 analyst, “CST reports 2S6M1 active in NAI 3093. Grid VQ...”

“Fires, execute target DT 1087, adjust grid to VQ...”

“Attention in the TOC, Shadow 2 is down over NAI 3093!”

“It’s okay, it probably triggered the 2S6M1 before the AH-64s could get to the ABF position.”

“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1 departing NAI 3090 northwest on RTE NICKEL, 13 tracks, 5 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour!”

“Is that crossing phase line ZEALAND?” “Confirmed. Tracking via GMTI.”

“Roger, sir, that’s the trigger for FASCAM.” “Fires, you heard the order, fire DT 1098!”

“Sir, they can’t. 2nd platoon used their FASCAM rounds at Low Water Crossing 54 earlier, and 1st platoon is executing a survivability move.”

“JTACs, you have those F-15s lined up?”

“Negative sir, they just checked off station. I held them as long as I could.” “Seriously? S-2, has Shadow located the reserve forces in 3090?”

“Negative, still looking. Mover B2 departing NAI 3090 north on Route TUNGSTEN, 13 tracks, 11 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour.”

“Charon Troop reports three BRDMs passing their position enroute to Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Fire Mission, DT 1121 in support of Charon Troop, target BRDMs near Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Are those Apaches on station yet?”

“Yes, sir, Gnat 61 and 62 are in position at ABF positions; Gnat 63 and 64 on ramp ready to launch.” “S-2, we can’t wait on that other 2S6, move Shadow to NAI 3091.”

“Gnat 61 and 62 reporting engaging armor column vicinity Tofani!”
“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1A approaching phase line YUGO!”
“Fire DT 1088!”

“Firing DT 1088.”

Shadow arrived on NAI 3091 to see the fire markers on fire mission DT 1088 detonate their artillery simulators behind the enemy convoy as it continued to press north. With no FASCAM to slow them down, they continued to move at maximum speed towards the EAs. The first team of AH-64s destroyed the eastern column, but Gnat 63 was shot down by a suspected SA-18 as it flew southeast over Turani enroute to the ABF position. Shadow confirmed that the western column was apparently the majority of the T-80s, including the IMR2.

Swamp Fox was supposed to disrupt the enemy with wire obstacles and indirect fire, but by the time the reports got from the scouts to the BDE, the lead columns were already approaching Gator’s and Copperhead’s EAs. They failed to disrupt them at all. No fire missions were fired in support of their reporting.

Cajun 6 reminded himself to talk to Swamp Fox 6 about obstacle construction and timely reporting. Next time he would make sure he

walked the line with the CAV as well. He had not made it out there to walk the line with them. It did not help that his deep fight had let the critical enemy engineering assets through, but he was sure the wire obstacles Swamp Fox established were not up to snuff. Next time—if there was a next time.

Cajun 3 wanted to continue working the Apaches in the deep fight, but without confirming the destruction of that second 2S6 he couldn't push them any further south than the ABF position. Besides, the bulk of the first echelon had made it past phase line YUGOSLAVIA already, which was the trigger to pass control of the AH-64s to Copperhead. Shadow 1 eventually found the 2S6 bursts, taking bursts of 200 x 30 mm rounds to the engine, but the CST wasn't able to confirm the launch point.

The AH64s continued to hammer away at the first echelon as they tried to punch through Copperhead, but eventually called '*Winchester*' and returned to base. The FARP had been destroyed by a 2S19 strike, likely called in by SPF, which took the last eyes in the sky out of the fight for the remainder of the night. It was down to the infantrymen now.

Cajun 6's SVOIP rang, "Sir, its Gator 6. We're taking heavy contact in EA LION. The second echelon must have bypassed Swamp Fox somehow. Caiman Company has been turned out of their battle positions. I've already committed my Dragon Company, and they are down to their last gun truck. I need the reserve."

Copperhead 6 committed the platoon of tanks he was keeping as his BN reserve to Low Water Crossing 54. Stacked single file they quickly found themselves bottlenecked in unfamiliar terrain. An Mi-35 attack helicopter swooped low overhead and engaged the column of Abrams tanks, unleashing a stream of AT-6C Spiral Antitank Guided Missiles while its twin 30mm cannons strafed the nearby infantry. Tank after tank exploded, engulfing the narrow road in a column of flames.

Copperhead 6 almost could not understand the report of the tanks' destruction over the sound of secondary explosions. After taking a deep breath to settle his stomach, he called Cajun main to request the BDE reserve.

Cajun 6 looked at Cajun 3. “Where is what is left of the reserve?”

“Turtle 6 has one tank and three Bradleys,” replied Cajun 5. “But he’s in the BSA, and his priority for the last day has been reconstitution of personnel and equipment. We can get them there, but it’s going to take a minute.”

In fact, it took too many minutes. A column of BMPs eventually broke through the friendly lines. With no remaining UAS or rotary-wing aviation to locate the enemy, Cajun 3 tried to vector elements of Razorbacks to locate the enemy. Simultaneously, Cajun 6 tried to push all remaining combat power from Razorback south to reinforce Copperhead, but each platoon met its speedy death at the hands of the capable Arianan BMPs. Cajun 3 received the radio call from Boudin main that the BMPs had breached the BSA at just about the same time as a T-80 rolled up outside the BDE TOC.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-Mudbug had no guns available to shoot the planned FASCAM mission after Cajun 6 ordered the unplanned FASCAM. How did the staff generate options for the commander and anticipate gaps in capability or combat power?

Go back to [page 96](#) and reconsider your decisions.

“I appreciate your idea sergeant, but we’ve got this,” the battle captain said. “Move the UAS.”

“Roger, sir,” the sergeant acknowledged and passed along directions to the Shadow platoon.

The BSB called back and confirmed that the convoy actually belonged to Fuse Company and was carrying 155 mm rounds to resupply the mostly-depleted stocks at C/1-36 FA. This was bad. Charlie Battery did not have enough ammo to execute the defense as planned, and this would require the FSO to trim targets. The battle NCO, remembering that all the BCT leadership was at CAR, sent a runner to the CAR to notify the FSO and S-4. A few minutes later, Cajun 5, followed by Cajun 4 and the FSO, entered the TOC.

Cajun 5 looked at the OSRVVT and asked the battle captain, “What are you looking at?”

Cajun 5 checked his copy of the ICSM and realized this convoy was not on any of their charts. “Get the damn Shadow back where it belongs.” The battle captain quickly told the S-2 NCO to resume the planned reconnaissance flight and stick to the ICSM.

Damn, thought the battle captain, *I hate this job*.

The S-2 NCO smiled to himself as he redirected the Shadow back to the collection plan. “What does this mean for Charlie Battery?” asked Cajun 5 to the S-4 and FSO.

The S-4 checked the round count on his running estimate, and the FSO did some quick math on available ammunition.

“It means we don’t have the rounds we need to execute both the deep and close fights,” the FSO replied. “I’ll let the S-4 figure out the magic on getting me more bullets, but with what we have here we are going to have to shift all EA fires to the 105 mm batteries and even then it might not be enough.”

Cajun 5 directed the S-4 to look into it, ask the CSSB for assistance, and find a way to resupply Charlie Battery.

The S-2 NCO’s smile beamed large. “Sir!” he yelled. “I told you we

shouldn't have deviated. Check this out!" The grainy OSRVT feed was projected on the screen at the front of the TOC, but even the battle captain could see the large boxy trailer trying to hide under a camo net.

"Fires!" yelled the FSO, but the fires support NCO answered, "Sir, already on it. That counter-fire radar has an imminent date with a HIMARS strike."

The Shadow remained on station, and the staff primaries waited until they confirmed destruction of the 1L220 radar, to avoid having to fight their way back into the CAR.

An hour later, the majority of the staff returned to the TOC. The operations sergeant major gave instructions for the breakdown and sterilization of the terrain model. In the plans tent the S-3 gave guidance for the refinement of the execution matrix and preparation for FRAGORD 1 to be published.

"Execution matrix sir?" the assistant S-3 asked. "I thought it was a sync matrix."

"It's a synch matrix after war-gaming, but after the CAR, and we've validated it, the sync matrix becomes an execution matrix."

Day 7, 2130 hours, BDE TOC

It started faintly, but grew louder until the sound was unmistakable. The sound of a Mi-35 "HIND" helicopter, flying at about 100 feet, buzzed over the TOC. At first no one reacted, clearly assuming the aircraft was their own.

"That's red air!" yelled the specialist sitting at the TAIS.

The battle captain directed the staff members to turn out their lights and to alert the Stinger teams. No one moved, partly because the TOC was now almost completely dark except for the eerie blue light of computer monitors, but also because no one knew who was on a Stinger team.

Cajun 3 asked, "ADAM cell, where are the BCT's Stingers?" "Sir, we're not sure!"

Cajun 3 directed the BAE and battle captain to alert all the BNs, find all of the Stinger teams, and get them set up on a quick-fire net. Then, Cajun 3 grabbed the 140A command and control systems technician, who had been a man-portable air defense operator before warrant officer candidate school, and went outside to find a Stinger.

The first thing Cajun 3 saw were the two Soldiers on guard outside the TOC ECP smoking and wearing red lens flashlights on their foreheads. He scanned the footprint. Generator panels flipped open, lit up like a Christmas tree. Soldiers straggled through sleeping areas with the lights out. The civil affairs tent had its doors rolled up on the sides for ventilation. There was no way that helicopter did not see them. Cajun 3 plucked the cigarettes from the ECP guards' mouths. "Do you have any Stingers?"

"No sir, but I think HHC does."

Cajun 3 worked his way over to the HHC CP. "Commander, do you have any Stingers?" "Roger sir." The HHC commander stood up and started rummaging behind her field desk. Here it is sir!" she said as she pulled the Stinger in question out of a box behind a stack of MREs in her well-lit, open-walled Standardized Integrated Command Post System tent. The sound of enemy rotary wing had passed and Cajun 3 realized they needed to seriously readdress their passive air defense measures, react to enemy air battle drills, and track the Stinger team locations and readiness.

Cajun 3 returned to the TOC and found Cajun 5. "We need to jump. Can we wait until morning? The staff is exhausted. They're beginning to fray."

Make a Decision:

Should the XO initiate a TOC jump?

If you believe the TOC should jump, turn to [page 94](#).

If, however, you agree with the XO and the TOC jump can wait until morning, turn to [page 92](#).

“Close the gap with FASCAM,” Cajun 6 replied. “S-3, call Copperhead and tell them what we are doing. FSO, make it so.”

The BCT fires cell initiated the fire mission and pushed it down to the FA BN via AFATDS digital. The FA BN AFATDS initially declined the fire mission due to a no-longer valid NFA that Copperhead had failed to clear out of their box. Twelve minutes later, the BCT fires and BN FDC cleared the NFA and sent the mission to the FDC.

2nd Platoon, Charlie Battery received the mission and shot the FASCAM, completing the mission 30 minutes after Cajun 6 gave the order.

Day 9, 0130 hours, BDE TOC

The FASCAM on Low Water Crossing 54 went inert at the 4-hour mark, just about the same time as the SVOIP rang at the S-2 CUOPS desk. The J-2 was calling to notify Cajun 2 the 1713 BDET columns were crossing the division IHL and were now a Cajun problem.

“We’re tracking sir,” replied Cajun 2. “My 35G here on the TOC floor has been watching their GMTI tracks on his MOVINT client. By our count, they are down to 14 tracks and seven wheeled vehicles on the western route and 16 tracks and 14 wheeled vehicles on the eastern route. They must have reinforced the initial echelon with the hope of using 1712 BDET in trail as an exploitation force.”

The S-2 section plotted the operations graphics onto its MOVINT client and projected it up on a screen next to the OSRVT feed. One analyst continually updated the position of the columns in CPOF, while another updated the analog map.

Cajun 3 called Mosquito main on BDE command and told them to launch the Apaches to the ABF position. He announced, “Attention in the TOC, EXCHECK line Caledonia.”

Analysts exploiting motion imagery and moving target indicators (MTI) should provide call outs in near real time to keep the CP aware of key enemy movements and disposition. Often this involves tracking multiple enemy formations at one time.

A way to keep track of multiple enemy units is use the Track ID or to label each formation alphabetically (A, B, C, etc.) upon identification. As each formation splits, append a number (B splits into B1 and B2).

Further subdivisions alternate between letter and number (for example, B1 splits into B1a and B1b).

This method allows current operations analysts to track the number and type of moving forces, make assumptions on positions based on rate of march, and maintain accountability of identified enemy targets.

The TOC paused momentarily before the calls came fast, but calm, thanks to the repeated rehearsals run by the OPS SGM.

“Attention in the TOC,” yelled the S-2 analyst, “CST reports 2S6M1 active in NAI 3093. Grid VQ...”

“Fires, execute target DT 1087, adjust grid to VQ...”

“Attention in the TOC, Shadow 2 is shot down over NAI 3093!”

“It’s okay, the 2S6M1 probably identified it and shot it down before the AH-64s could get to the ABF position. When can we launch the next Shadow?”

“We don’t have to. We already have another in the air; check the ICSM.” “Attention in the TOC, Mover B1 departing NAI 3090 northwest on RTE NICKEL, 13 tracks, 5 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour!”

“Is that crossing phase line ZEALAND?” “Confirmed. Tracking via GMTI.”

“Roger sir, that’s the trigger for FASCAM.” “Fires, you heard the order, fire DT 1098!”

“Sir, they can’t. 2nd platoon used their FASCAM rounds at Low Water Crossing 54 earlier, and 1st platoon is executing a survivability move.”

“JTACs, you have those F-15s lined up?”

“Negative sir, they just checked off station. I held them as long as I could.” “Seriously? S-2, do we have anything looking in 3090? Any reserve forces?”

“Negative, still looking. Mover B2 departing NAI 3090 north on Route TUNGSTEN, 13 tracks, 11 wheels, 15 kilometers per hour.”

“Charon Troop reports three BRDM passing their position enroute to Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Fire Mission, DT 1121 in support of Charon Troop, target BRDM near Low Water Crossing 5!”

“Are those Apaches on station yet?”

“Yes sir, Gnat 61 and 62 are in position at ABF positions; Gnat 63 and 64 on ramp ready to launch.” “S-2, we can’t wait on that other 2S6, move Shadow to NAI 3091.”

“Gnat 61 and 62 report engaging armor column vicinity Tofani!”
“Attention in the TOC, Mover B1A approaching phase line YUGO!”
“Fire DT 1088!”

“Firing DT 1088.”

Shadow arrived on NAI 3091 to the rounds from fire mission DT 1088 detonating behind the enemy convoy as it continued to press north. With no FASCAM to slow it down, it continued to move at maximum speed towards the EAs. The first team of AH-64s destroyed the eastern column, but Gnat 63 was shot down by a suspected SA-18 as it flew southeast over Turani enroute to the ABF position. Shadow confirmed that the western column was apparently the majority of the T-80s.

Swamp Fox was supposed to disrupt the enemy with wire obstacles and indirect fire, but by the time the reports got from the scouts to the BDE, the lead columns were already approaching Gator’s and

Copperhead's EAs. They failed to disrupt them at all.

No fire missions were fired in support of their reporting.

Cajun 6 reminded himself to talk to Swamp Fox 6 about obstacle construction and timely reporting. It was not really possible to walk the line with the CAV, but he needed to press the importance on obstacles and how to delay the enemy, if they survived this. It didn't help that his deep fight had let the critical enemy engineering assets through, but he was sure the wire obstacles Swamp Fox established weren't up to snuff. Next time – if there was a next time.

Cajun 3 wanted to continue working Mosquito into the deep fight, but without confirming the destruction of that second 2S6 he couldn't push them any further south than the ABF position. Besides, the bulk of the first echelon had made it past phase line YUGOSLAVIA already, which was the trigger to pass control of the AH-64s to Copperhead. Shadow 1 eventually found the 2S6 by taking bursts of 200 x 30 mm rounds to the engine, but the CST wasn't able to confirm the radar emission.

The AH64s continued to hammer away at the first echelon as it tried to punch through Copperhead. They eventually called '*Winchester*' and returned to base. The FARP had been destroyed by a 2S19 strike, likely called in by SPF, which took the last eyes in the sky out of the fight for the remainder of the night. It was down to the infantrymen now.

Cajun 6's SVOIP rang. "Sir, its Gator 6. We're taking heavy contact in EA GATOR. The second echelon must have bypassed Swamp Fox somehow. Caiman Company has been turned out of their battle positions. I've already committed my Dragon Company, and they are down to their last gun truck. I need the reserve."

Cajun 6 looked grimly at the S-3. "Make it so."

Cajun 3 notified the reserve of the commitment and priorities via BDE command FM.

Meanwhile, Copperhead 6 committed the platoon of tanks he was keeping as his BN reserve to Low Water Crossing 54. Stacked single file, they quickly found themselves bottlenecked in unfamiliar

terrain. An MI-35 swooped low overhead and engaged the column of Abrams tanks with catastrophic results. After destroying the first and last tanks in the column, the hulking aircraft came around slowly and finished its business. Copperhead 6 received the report and called Cajun main.

“Cajun 6, its Copperhead 6. I need the reserve!”

Cajun 6 looked at Cajun 3. “It’s already committed. We’re about out of combat power. Give us a few minutes and we might be able to get Razorback to reinforce.”

In fact, it took too many minutes. Cajun 6 tried to push all remaining combat power from Razorback south to reinforce Copperhead, but each platoon met death at the hands of the capable Arianan BMPs. Cajun 3 received the radio call from Boudin main that the BMPs had breached the BSA at just about the same time as a T-80 rolled up outside the BDE TOC.

Failure:

How could this have developed differently?

-Mudbug had no guns available to shoot the planned FASCAM mission after Cajun 6 ordered the unplanned FASCAM. How did the staff generate options for the commander and anticipate gaps in capability or combat power?

-Cajun 6 committed the reserve to reinforce Gator moments before Copperhead asked for the reserve. How do you balance reserve commitment criteria for emerging versus planned operations?

Go back to [page 96](#) and reconsider your decisions.

Glossary of Acronyms

ABE	assistant BDE engineer
ABF	attack by fire
ADA	air defense artillery
ADAM	air defense and airspace management
AFATDS	advanced field artillery tactical data system
AMR	air mission request
AO	area of operations
ASIPS	Advanced System Improvement Program
AXP	ambulance exchange point
BAO	BDE aviation officer
BCT	BDE combat team
BDA	battle damage assessment
BDET	BN-sized detachment
BFC	battlefield circulation
BISE	BDE intelligence support element
BMP	Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty (Russian tracked infantry fighting vehicle)
BN	BN
BRDM	Boyevaya Razvedyvatelnaya Dozornaya Mashina (Russian wheeled vehicle)
BSA	BDE support area
BSB	brigade support battalion
BTG	BN tactical group
BUB	battle update brief
C2	command and control
CA	civil affairs
CAL	critical asset list

CAR	combined arms rehearsal
CAS	close air support
CAV	cavalry
CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear
CFL	coordinated fire line
CHOPs	chief of operations
CINC	commander-in-chief
CLU	command launch units
CM	collection manager
COA	course of action
COFMS	correlation of forces matrices
COP	common operational picture
CP	command post
CPOF	Command Post of the Future
CPX	command post exercises
CSSB	combat sustainment support battalion
CSM	command sergeant major
CST	cryptologic support team
CUB	commander update brief
DAL	defended asset list
D3A	decide detect deliver assess
DPICM	dual-purpose improved conventional munition
DSM	decision support matrix
DTG	division tactical group
EA	engagement area
EAB	echelon above BDE
ECP	entry control point

EEFI	essential elements of friendly information
EI	electronic intelligence
ELINT	electronics intelligence
EVENTEMP	event template
EWO	electronic warfare officer
EXCHECK	execution check
FAIO	field artillery intelligence officer
FARP	forward arming and refueling point
FASCAM	family of scatterable mines
FDC	fire direction control
FIPR	flash, immediate, priority, routine
FFIR	friendly force information requirements
FLOT	forward line of troops
FM	frequency modulation
FMV	full motion video
FRAGORD	fragmentary order
FSCoord	fire support coordinator
FS NCO	fire support noncommissioned officer
FSO	fire support officer
GEOINT	geospatial intelligence
GMTI	ground moving target indicator
HF	high frequency
HHC	headquarters and headquarters company
HIMARS	high mobility artillery rocket system
HMMWV	high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle
HPT	high-priority target
HPTL	high-priority target list

IC	information collection
ICSM	information collection synchronization matrix
IED	improvised explosive device
IDF	indirect fire
IHL	intelligence handover line
IOC	initial operating capable
IPB	intelligence preparation of the battlefield
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
J-2	assistant chief of staff for intelligence
JCR	joint capabilities release
JTAC	joint terminal attack controller
JTF	joint task force
KIA	killed in action
LLVI	low-level voice intercept
LNO	liaison officer
MA	mission analysis
MATV	mine-resistant ambush protected all-terrain vehicle
MCOO	modified combined obstacles overlay
MEDEVAC	medical evacuation
MEDO	medical officer
MDMP	military decision-making process
MI	military intelligence
MOPP	mission oriented protective posture
MOVINT	movement intelligence
MP	military police
MRAP	mine resistant ambush protected
MRE	meal ready to eat

MTI	moving target indicators
MUM-T	manned-unmanned teaming
NAI	named areas of interest
NFA	No-fire area
NCO	noncommissioned officer
NCOIC	noncommissioned officer in-charge
NCW	network centric waveform
O&I	operations and intelligence
OPCON	operational control
OPORD	operations order
OPS SGM	operations sergeant major
OPSYNC	operations synchronization
OSVRT	one system remote video terminal
PAA	position area for artillery
PACE	primary, alternate, contingency, emergency
PED	processing, exploitation, and dissemination
PIR	priority information requirement
PL	platoon leader
PMO	provost marshal officer
POP	point of presence
PSOP	planning standard operating procedures
RAF	regionally aligned force
RETRANS	retransmission
RTE	route
RTO	ratio telephone operator
S-1	assistant chief of staff for personnel
S-2	assistant chief of staff for intelligence

S-3	assistant chief of staff for operations
S-6	communications officer
SAR	synthetic aperture radar
SATCOM	satellite communication
SEAD	suppression of enemy air defenses
SIPR	secret internet protocol router
SIGACT	significant activity
SIGINT	signals intelligence
SITEMP	situation template
SOF	special operations forces
SPF	special purpose force
SVOIP	secure voice over internet protocol
TAC	tactical command post
TACON	tactical control
TACSOP	tactical standard operation procedures
TAIS	Tactical Airspace Integration System
TO	targeting officer
TOC	tactical operations center
TOW	tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided
TI	tactical internet
TTLODAC	target, trigger, location, observer, delivery asset, attack guidance, and communication
TWG	target working group
UAS	unmanned aircraft system
WARNO	warning order
WIA	wounded in action
WIN-T	Warfighter Information Network – Tactical

XO	executive officer
ZSU	Zenitnaya Samokhodnaya Ustanovka (Russian air defense artillery piece, self-propelled)

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