UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
THE BASIC SCHOOL
MARINE CORPS TRAINING COMMAND
CAMP BARRETT, VIRGINIA 22134-5019

SCOUTING AND PATROLLING OPERATIONS W2D0001XQ-DM STUDENT HANDOUT

Patrolling Operations

Introduction

Patrolling keeps the enemy off balance, adds an offensive punch to the defense, allows us to retain the initiative, and guards against surprise. It is, therefore, an integral part of our warfighting philosophy. When we are not actively fighting the enemy, we are seeking his location and continuing to impose our will on him. Depending on what we are trying to achieve, our patrolling effort may be directed toward several different objectives. As a result, several types of patrols are tailored to each objective. Patrols may be required to:

- Locate the enemy and determine his composition, disposition, and strength
- Reconnoiter the ground upon which we may be fighting
- Locate friendly troops
- Achieve limited objective offensive operations in the enemy rear areas
- Keep the enemy at a distance while we consolidate and reorganize for further operations

Importance

The success of entire units may depend on the proficiency of those few Marines on patrol. Patrolling is a skill that every unit must master. Regardless of MOS, all units will be faced with the need to execute one of the above missions at some point during combat operations. As a result, every Marine should understand the basics of patrolling. As we have recently seen in Kosovo, East Timor, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Iraq, CSS units have been repeatedly tasked with conducting patrolling operations. In addition, because even the simplest patrol requires an intensive amount of teamwork, planning, and advanced field skills, it is an excellent vehicle to:

- Increase small unit proficiency
- Build leadership
- Train your subordinates in decision-making and independent operations

It is often said, “If a unit can patrol well, it can do anything well.”

Patrolling Operations (continued)

In This Lesson

Some of the things we are going to be discussing today can give you, as a Marine, an edge in understanding the types and classifications of patrols, typical task organizations of patrols, and how to plan and conduct a patrolling operation.

This lesson covers the following topics:

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Learning Objectives

Terminal Learning Objectives:
TBS-PAT-2002 Given a unit with or without attachments, a mission with commander's intent, paper, and pen, write a combat order to support the achievement of higher headquarters intent.

TBS-PAT-1008 Given a patrol order, assigned weapon, and an assignment in a patrol, while wearing an assault load, perform individual actions in a patrol without compromising the integrity of the patrol.

Patrolling Operations (continued)

Learning Objectives (continued)

Enabling Learning Objectives:

TBS-C2-1002a Given an order from higher, develop an estimate of the situation to issue an operations order.

TBS –OFF-2102k Given a mission and commander's intent, develop a mental estimate of the situation using METT-TC to accomplish the mission.

TBS-PAT-1008b Given a simulated combat environment, a mission, while part of a unit, conduct patrolling rehearsals to increase proficiency.

TBS-PAT-1008e Given a tactical scenario, a simulated combat environment, while in a patrol, perform individual actions during departure/reentry of friendly lines to facilitate successful movement of the patrol.

TBS-PAT-1008f Given a scenario, a simulated combat environment, while in a patrol, perform individual actions at halts to maintain security of the patrol.

TBS-PAT-1008i Given a tactical scenario, a simulated combat environment, while in a patrol, tactically disseminate information during a patrol to accomplish the mission while avoiding detection from the enemy.

TBS-PAT-1013a Given an order from higher, plan a patrol to accomplish the mission and meet the commander's intent.

TBS-PAT-1013g Given an evaluation, define types of enemy contact without error.

TBS-PAT-1013m Given an evaluation, identify the three classifications of ambush patrols without error.

TBS-PAT-1013n Given an evaluation, identify the two types of ambush patrols without error.

TBS-PAT-1013t Given an evaluation, identify the purpose of an ambush without omission.

TBS-PAT-1013u Given order with enemy situation and known terrain, determine movement techniques to accomplish the mission and meet commanders intent.

Learning Objectives (continued)

Enabling Learning Objectives (Continued):

TBS-PAT-2002l Given an evaluation and without the aid of references, identify the classifications of patrols without omission.

TBS-PAT-2002m Given an evaluation define a patrol without omission.

Patrolling Basic Information

Patrolling Defined

MCWP 3-11.3 Scouting and Patrolling defines a patrol as “a detachment of ground, sea, or air forces sent out for the purpose of gathering information or carrying out a destructive, harassing, mopping-up, or security mission.”

As indicated by the word detachment, a patrol is by nature a small unit operating outside of friendly lines. This independent nature requires extensive planning. Additionally, the various purposes and missions that patrols may be tasked with, require us to classify patrols in order to aid in our planning.

Classifications of Patrols

Patrols are classified by:

- Means of movement
  - Foot mobile
  - Motorized
  - Helicopter-borne
  - Waterborne
- Mission
  - Reconnaissance patrols
  - Combat patrols

Patrols can be a combination of any of these two classifications. For example, a patrol may be a motorized combat patrol or a foot mobile reconnaissance patrol. The means of movement used will be based on METT-TC and the unit commander’s requirements. To choose the most effective means of movement for the mission, the commander must understand the capabilities and limitations of each.

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

Reconnaissance Patrols

Reconnaissance patrols are among the commander's most reliable means of obtaining timely and accurate information about the enemy and terrain. The patrol must move into potentially hostile areas and remain undetected to gather information on specific targets. Recon patrols are one of the two types of patrols. They provide timely and accurate information on the enemy and terrain. They confirm the leader's plan before it is executed. Units on reconnaissance operations collect specific information (priority intelligence requirements [PIR]) or general information (information requirements [IR]) based on the instructions from their higher commander.

In order to have a successful reconnaissance patrol, leaders must apply the fundamentals of the reconnaissance to his/her plan during the conduct of the operation.

- **Gain all required information** The parent unit tells the patrol leader (PL) what information is required. This is in the form of the IR and PIR. The mission is then tailored to what information is required. During the entire patrol, members must continuously gain and exchange all information gathered, but cannot consider the mission accomplished unless all PIR has been gathered.
- **Avoid detection by the enemy** A patrol must not let the enemy know that it is in the objective area. If the enemy knows he is being observed, he may move, change his plans, or increase his security measures. Methods of avoiding detection are:
    - Minimize movement in the objective area (area reconnaissance).
    - Move no closer to the enemy than necessary
    - If possible, use long-range surveillance or night vision devices
    - Camouflage, stealth, noise, and light discipline
    - Minimize radio traffic
- **Employ security measures** A patrol must be able to break contact and return to the friendly unit with what information is gathered. If necessary, break contact and continue the mission. Security elements are emplaced so that they can overwatch the reconnaissance elements and suppress the enemy so the reconnaissance element can break contact.
- **Task organization** When the patrol leader receives the order, they will analyze the mission to ensure understanding of what must be done. Then task organize the patrol to best accomplish the mission IAW METT-TC. Recons are typically squad-sized.

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

There are 3 types of Reconnaissance Patrols:

- Route Reconnaissance
- Area Reconnaissance
- Zone Reconnaissance

Route Reconnaissance: Route reconnaissance is a directed effort to obtain detailed information of a specified route and all terrain from which the enemy could influence movement along that route. Route reconnaissance is focused along a specific line of communication, such as a road, railway or waterway to provide new or updated information on route conditions and activities. Route reconnaissance normally precedes the movement of friendly forces. It provides detailed information about a specific route and the surrounding terrain that could be used to influence movement along that route.

Area Reconnaissance: Area reconnaissance is a directed effort to obtain detailed information on the terrain or enemy activity within a prescribed area, such as a town, ridge line, woods or other features critical to operations. Area reconnaissance can be made of a single point, such as a bridge or installation, and could include hostile headquarters, key terrain, objective areas or critical installations. Emphasis is placed on reaching the area without being detected. Hostile situations encountered en route are developed only enough to allow the reconnoitering units to report and bypass.

Zone Reconnaissance: Zone reconnaissance is a directed effort to obtain detailed information on all routes, obstacles (to include chemical or radiological contamination), terrain, and enemy forces within a zone defined by boundaries. A zone reconnaissance normally applies when the enemy situation is vague or when information on cross-country trafficability is desired. Zone reconnaissance supports the total integrated intelligence picture of a space defined by length and breadth. The size of the area depends on the potential for information on hostile forces, terrain, and weather in the zone; the requirements levied by the commander; and the reconnaissance forces available to exploit the intelligence value in the zone.

Combat Patrols

Combat patrols are assigned missions that usually require them to actively engage the enemy. As a secondary mission, they collect and report information about the enemy and terrain [MCWP 3-11.2 Marine Rifle Squad (FMFM 6-5)].

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

The distinct difference between reconnaissance patrols and combat patrols is that combat patrols plan to actively engage the enemy. Because of this, combat patrols will generally be larger than reconnaissance patrols. If a reconnaissance patrol engages the enemy, it has most likely failed in its mission. However, this does not mean that combat patrols do not seek to gain information about the enemy and terrain. **Every patrol should seek to fulfill information requirements (IR) as a secondary mission.**

There are 4 types of Combat Patrols (SCAR):

- Security Patrol
- Contact Patrol
- Ambush Patrol
- Raid

A **Security patrol** is a patrol that is used in proximity to defensive positions, on the flanks of advancing units, or in rear areas. Purposes of security patrols are to:

- Detect infiltration by the enemy
- Destroy infiltrators
- Protect against surprise and ambush

A security patrol is sent out from a unit location during a halt, when the unit is stationary, to search the local area, to detect any enemy forces near the main body, and to engage and destroy them within the capability of the patrol. This type of combat patrol is normally sent out by units operating in close terrain with limited fields of observation and fire. Although this type of combat patrol seeks to make direct enemy contact and to destroy enemy forces within its capability, the patrol should try to avoid decisive engagement. A security patrol detects and disrupts enemy forces that are conducting reconnaissance of the main body or that are massing to conduct an attack. Security patrols are normally away from the main body of the unit for limited periods, returning frequently to coordinate and rest. They do not operate beyond the range of communications and supporting fires from the main body, especially mortar fires.

Patrols will be task organized differently depending on the mission and the size of the patrol. The Patrol Leader determines all the essential tasks that are required to accomplish the mission and then assigns units to carry out each essential task. When assigning functions, missions, and chain of command, the PL should use the unit's normal organization. When determining size and task organization, the PL must provide for control, security, speed, flexibility, and the ability to assault or maneuver on an enemy unit or objective. At a squad level the fire teams are broken down into security unit, headquarters unit and assault unit each having a different task in order to accomplish the squad's overall mission.

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

A **Contact patrol** is employed to establish and/or maintain contact with an enemy force when the definite location is unknown. The patrol will maintain contact with enemy forces through direct and/or indirect fires, or observation. Furthermore, a contact patrol will avoid decisive engagement with the enemy. Contact patrols are generally deployed to the front, flanks, or rear of friendly units. Although security patrols may also engage the enemy, contact patrols are tasked and organized for that specific purpose. Contact patrols are typically employed in conjunction with larger offensive maneuvers, helping to build the ground commanders situational awareness of the enemy's current composition, disposition, and strength just prior to a more decisive engagement. An example of a contact patrol may come in the form of small probing patrols into an enemy defensive position.

An **Ambush** is a surprise attack from a concealed position on a moving or temporarily halted target. It can include an assault to close with and destroy the target, or it can include only an attack by fire. An ambush need not seize or hold ground.

The primary purpose of an ambush is to destroy enemy troops and equipment. The loss of personnel, equipment, and supplies reduces the overall combat effectiveness of the enemy.

The secondary purpose of an ambush is to harass enemy units. Frequent successful ambushes will cause the enemy to divert assets from other missions in order to guard convoys, troop movements, and logistics supply routes. Frequent successful ambushes also degrade the enemy's morale and make him more susceptible to human factors, creating apprehension to conduct missions and causing him to adopt a defensive mindset. The cumulative affects significantly reduce the enemy's combat effectiveness.

Classifications of Ambush Patrols

Deliberate Ambush

A deliberate ambush is planned in detail, well rehearsed, and established in a specified location to destroy or capture a specific enemy target. The patrol leader needs to have specific intelligence about the target such as the size, composition, organization, rate of movement, route, armament and equipment of the enemy force and the location of the ambush site. This level of detail is necessary so that the Patrol Leader can appropriately task organize and create detailed actions on the objective in order to kill or destroy the specified target.

An ambush patrol may be required to assault through the objective in order to confirm the specified target is in fact destroyed and to collect information on the enemy. Tasking a unit to "Attack By Fire" does not necessarily require an assault. Tasking a unit to "Destroy" may require an assault.

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

In the case of destroying, it is likely that “Mission Has Priority” and that the unit conducting a deliberate ambush will be platoon-sized or larger. To understand when the patrol will assault through the objective the Commander’s Intent must be clear.

Ambush of Opportunity

An ambush of opportunity is planned and rehearsed, however, detail of a specific target in not known. An ambush of opportunity is established on or near a specified location to destroy or capture the first suitable target encountered. This is the most common type of ambush and will generally be executed by a reinforced rifle squad.

The ambush of opportunity will usually be part of an effort to harass and interdict, or gain intelligence on enemy forces in the Tactical Area Of Responsibility (TAOR). When establishing an ambush of opportunity the commander will likely direct that “Time Has Priority” and instruct the Patrol Leader to establish the ambush in a specific location and return even if the ambush is not tripped. As a result, an assault of the kill zone may not be required. The patrol will still seek to kill the enemy and destroy their equipment but again the overall effect will be harassment of the enemy and the collection of information.

Hasty Ambush

A hasty ambush is an Immediate Action where the patrol makes visual contact with an enemy force and has time to establish an ambush without being detected. A hasty ambush is not planned but is well rehearsed and is accomplished through the use of hand and arm signals given from the Patrol Leader.

Types of Ambushes

Point Ambush

A point ambush is an ambush where forces are deployed to attack a single kill zone.

Area Ambush

An area ambush is an ambush where forces are deployed to attack multiple, mutually supported kill zones.

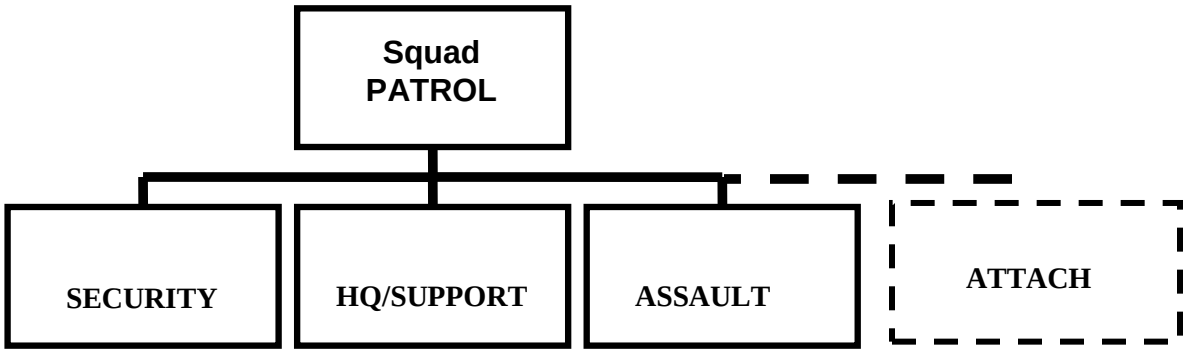
Raid is a surprise attack on an enemy force or installation with the attacking force withdrawing after accomplishing its mission. Raids destroy or capture enemy personnel or equipment, destroy installations, or free friendly personnel

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

In the case of destroying, it is likely that “Mission Has Priority” and that the unit conducting a deliberate ambush will be platoon-sized or larger. To understand when the patrol will assault through the objective the Commander’s Intent must be clear.

COMBAT PATROL

- **PATROL ORGANIZATION**



Because the headquarters element of any patrol will include, at a minimum, the PL, assistant patrol leader, and radio operator, one fire team will act as the headquarters element. In this case, the remaining fire teams will act as the security and assault units. Each unit’s composition and duties are described in the table below.

Unit	Composition	Duties/Tasks	Sqd Size Ptrl Example
Security unit	• Security Unit Leader • Flankers • Point Man	• Provide security to front & flanks during mvmt • Isolates objective , ambush sites	2d Fire Team
Support Unit	• Support Unit Leader • Attachments to assist in support by fire • Navigator/Paceman	• Base Unit for Patrol • Provides base of fire in contact	1st Fire Team
Assault unit	• Assault Unit Leader • Assault/Search teams • Attachments to assist in assault of an objective	• Provide rear security during mvmt • Patrol’s maneuver element • In ambush site: *Searches the engagement area	3d Fire Team

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

Unit	Composition	Duties/Tasks	Sqd Size Ptrl Example
Attachments	On a squad size patrol, • Consists of non-organic units provided to execute tasks that the organic units cannot. • Organization will depend on the patrol's mission.	Execute tasks that the organic units cannot Will generally travel with another element, and not independently	Any inorganic elements
Headquarters	• Patrol Leader • Assistant Patrol Leader • Radio Operator • Corpsman	• Command and Control of the patrol during preparation and execution of the mission	PLT Only

Because at the platoon level, the headquarters element already exists in the form of the platoon commander (PL), platoon sergeant (APL), and platoon radio operator, the headquarters element of the patrol will not be pulled from an existing squad. This allows the patrol headquarters to travel with the support element during movement. The three remaining squads can then fulfill the roles of assault, support, and security. In this case, the support unit is a full element and does not travel within the headquarters unit in the form of attachments. If the patrol is given machine guns, EOD, rockets, or other external support, these elements will travel with the element that supports its function, and that squad leader will be responsible for their accountability. The duties/ responsibilities of each unit are:

Security Unit:

- Provides security to the front and flanks during movement
- Upon enemy contact :
  - Isolates the enemy
  - Secures the objective rally point (ORP)
  - Covers the withdrawal of the support unit

Assault Unit:

- Provides rear security during movement
- Is the maneuver unit of the patrol
- Upon enemy contact:
  - Engages the enemy
  - Assaults through and searches the objective area
  - Emplaces any demolition

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

Support Unit:

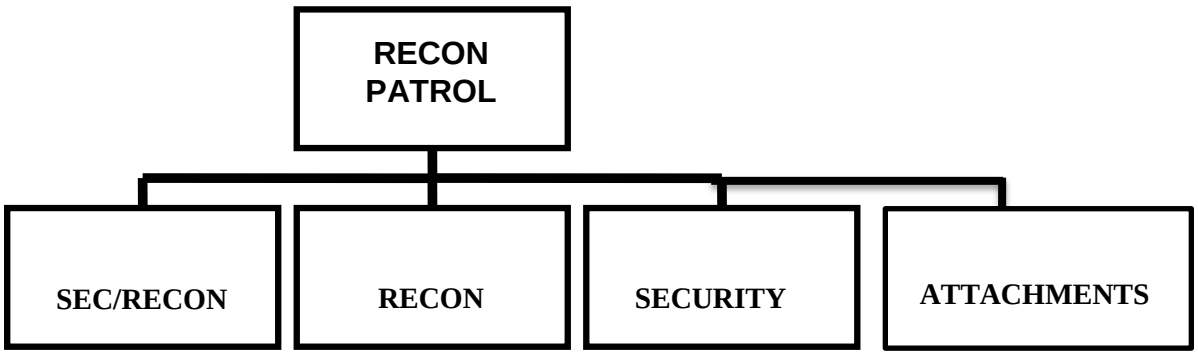
- Controls speed and direction of movement of patrol (base unit).
- May provide Marines to the Security Unit to provide flank security during patrol.
- Responsible for communications with higher.
- Ultimately responsible for any and all aspects required to control and support the patrol.
- Upon enemy contact:
  - Directs movement to the objective.
  - Establishes the objective rally point (ORP).

Attachments:

- Execute tasks that the squad cannot with the equipment that they have organic to them.

During the execution of a patrol, it is unknown what size enemy the patrol will encounter and where they will encounter the enemy because of this upon enemy contact each unit has to be able to fill any one of the other unit's roles. The squad has to be flexible in taking on other roles and responsibilities depending on the situation.

- **<u>RECON PATROL</u>**



The patrol should be organized with one or two fire teams to actually conduct the reconnaissance mission and the remaining fire team to provide security. Each fire team should be prepared to assume either mission. A small area reconnaissance patrol needs only one fire team for the assigned mission. A patrol with a wider area reconnaissance mission should use two fire teams to physically conduct the mission and one fire team for cover and/or security.

Patrolling Basic Information (Continued)

SECURITY ELEMENT

- Cover likely avenue of approach in to OBJ. area
- Protect unites conducting recon
- Secure ORP

RECON ELEMENT

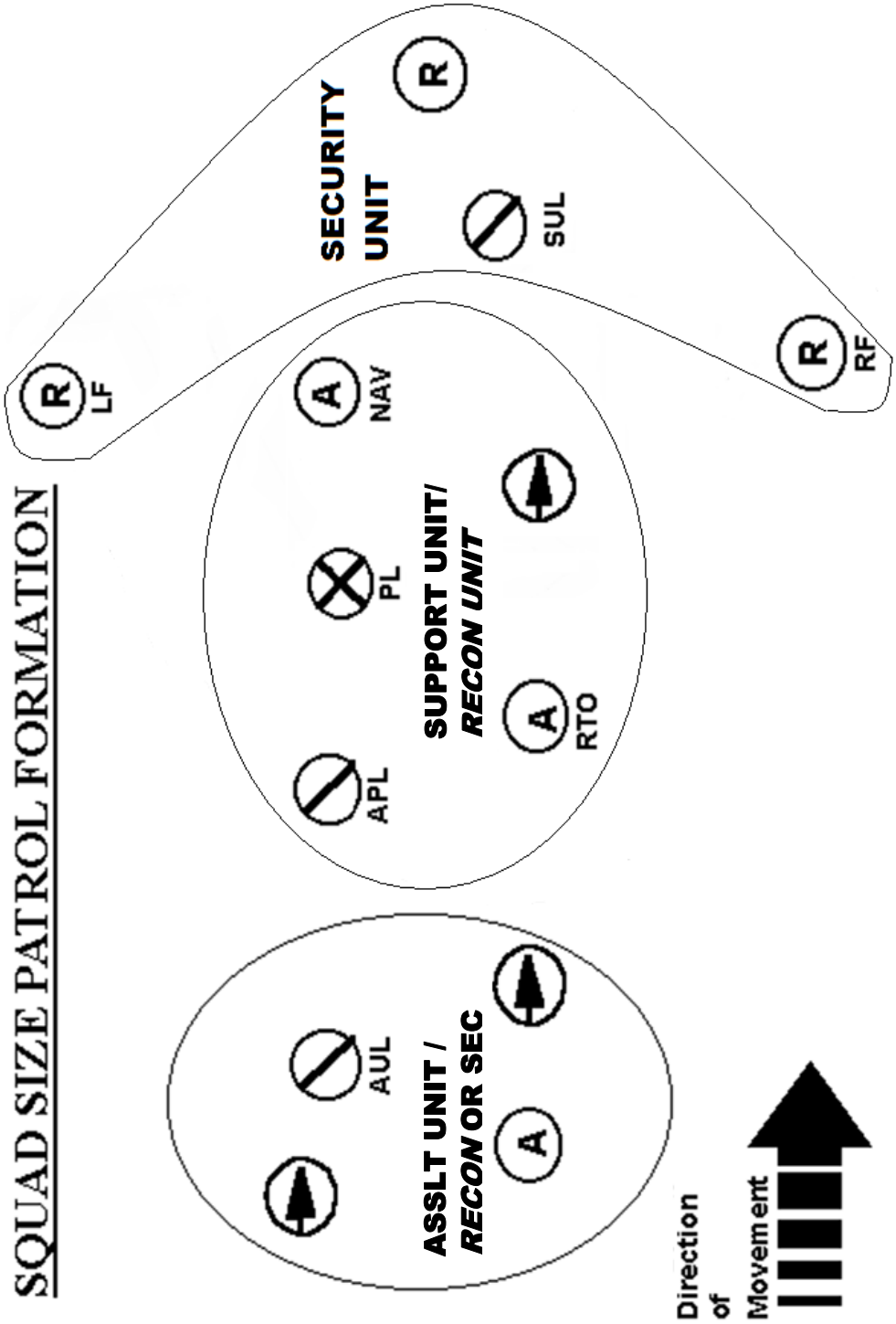
- Collect/answer PIR/IR info.
- Observe enemy activity in objective area
- Package and relay recon findings

Other Key Personnel

It essential that everyone knows what element they will be traveling with during movement. However, there are other important roles that are essential to the overall success of the patrol. Since this is the case there are a number of other key billets that are important to be aware of. The Patrol Leader should specifically provide tasking statements for these billets depending on what type of service they will be providing. Some examples are listed below:

Combat Patrol	Recon Patrol
Assistant Patrol leader	APL
Security unit leader	Sec Unit Leader(s)
Assault Unit leader	Recon Element Leader(s)
Navigator	Navigator
Radio Operator	Radio Operator
Support Unit Leader	

Any Marine who is tasked with filling one of these responsibilities must be aware of what these roles consist of. To make sure that every Marine understands what their job is the patrol leader specifically provides a tasking statement to each of these billet holders. When tasking individuals on the patrol it is good to follow the saying “If they are tasked by me they report to me.” This simply means when the patrol leader tasks a certain individual with a duty they now must report to the patrol leader in reference to the tasking statement. Some of these tasking statements will be located in Coordinating Instructions of the order these should include aid/litter teams, EPW teams, flanks, navigators, pacers and RTOs.


SQUAD SIZE PATROL FORMATION
R
LF
SECURITY
UNIT
R
SUL
R
RF
A
NAV
PL
SUPPORT UNIT/
RECON UNIT
A
RTO
APL
AUL
ASSLT UNIT /
RECON OR SEC
A
Direction
of
Movement

Patrol Planning and Preparation

In preparation for leading a patrol, the Patrol Leader will utilize the six troop leading steps BAMCIS and the tactical planning process in order to aid in the planning process.

- **Begin the Planning**:
    - METT-TC Analysis
    - Study the mission
    - Plan the use of available time
    - Study terrain and situation
    - Equipment Considerations
    - **Issue the warning order**
- **Arrange Reconnaissance/Make Coordination:**
    - Combat Operations Center (COC) Coordination
    - Forward Unit Coordination (FUC)
- **Make Reconnaissance:**
    - Physical, Aerial or map reconnaissance
- **Complete the Plan:**
    - Complete the plan with the information driven by METT-TC analysis, coordination, and Reconnaissance.
- **Issue the Order:**
    - On a patrol, the thorough coordination and detailed planning requires that all patrol members are present at the order and a detailed well built terrain model that reflects the terrain is constructed and present.
    - PL will only “walk the dog” after SOM and again doring coordinating instructions.
- **Supervise:**
    - Rehearsals
    - Pre-Combat Checks
    - Pre-Combat Inspections
- **Execute**

Patrol Planning and Preparation (Continued)

METT-TC (Mission Analysis)

Once the Patrol Leader receives the order from higher there are certain things that the patrol leader will use in order to guide his planning process. The Patrol Leader must ensure that he understands the mission statement. He must also ensure that he understands higher's tasking statement which will ultimately become his squad's mission statement. The PL must understand his higher commander's intent and the implied tasks that may be required in the completion of the mission. Depending on the tactical task that is included in higher's tasking statement may translate into different actions during execution. It is essential that the PL understands fully what specifically will accomplish the mission.

METT-TC (Enemy Analysis)

Despite an enemy situation that may possibly be unknown, it is still the obligation of the patrol leader to provide the most clarity possible through a detailed analysis. Enemy locations, movement/patrol routes, and positions should be broken down into known, suspected, and likely enemy positions. The definition of each can be found in the fire support planning publication. The expected composition, disposition, and strength, as well as their capabilities and limitations must be analyzed. The patrol leader must calculate what he believes the enemy's overall task and purpose is. From that, he can deduce the likely actions the enemy will take in order to accomplish his intended mission. From this, the patrol leader can more effectively plan how to overcome the enemy's action and accomplish his own patrolling mission.

METT-TC (Terrain and Situation Analysis)

Because the enemy composition, disposition, and strength will often be vague on a patrol, the PL studies the terrain, roads, and streams to identify likely, suspected, or possible enemy positions. The terrain and vegetation will also affect speed, means of movement, size, and special equipment that may be required. The gear that would be required on a patrol through a mountainous environment will differ from that required on a patrol in the jungle. Environment and weather will also impact the effects of indirect and direct fire weapons. The PL must be aware of how the environment will adversely affect his Marines and weapons.

Patrol Planning and Preparation (Continued)

METT-TC (Organize the Patrol)

To reduce the patrol's signature, a patrol should be task organized with only those Marines required to accomplish the mission. Thus each Marine on the patrol will have a specific duty to execute; therefore, the Patrol Leader should carefully select who he takes on the mission. Ideally, the patrol will be task organized around an existing unit that has experience working together.

When deciding what equipment the patrol should take, the PL should consider the following planning areas:

- Routine equipment: Gear that is common to all members of the patrol (e.g., utility uniform, flak, I.D. tags, weapons cleaning gear, RCO, NVDs, comm. assets, water/chow, etc.).
- En route equipment: Organic and non-organic equipment that assists the patrol in reaching the objective area (e.g., fording or rappelling gear, map, lensatic compass, GPS, ropes, carabineers, etc.).
- Objective area equipment: Special equipment that enables the unit to accomplish the mission once they have reached their objective area (e.g., thermal optics, claymore mines, EPW handling gear, sensors, demo, etc.).
- Observation equipment: Devices that enable the patrol to observe enemy activity in order to report, locate or destroy an enemy unit. Observation equipment allows the patrol to use combat hunter techniques in order to accomplish the mission. (e.g. M22 binoculars, Leupold Binoculars, Rifle Optics, Night vision devices, Thermal optics)

The gear requirements for a patrol must be published in a warning order. This will allow the APL to conduct concurrent actions while the patrol leader prepares his order.

METT-TC (Time Analysis)

Time considerations are essential for a successful patrol. There are several questions a patrol leader must ask when analyzing time considerations:

- How long to move through the treeline during the day/night?
- What time of day am I departing?
- Does the time of day coincide with any specific enemy activity?
- When do I need to return to base?

Analyzing the time appropriately will help the patrol leader select a better route. Considering the time space through the terrain will alleviate the unintended friction of moving too far, or too short.

Patrol Planning and Preparation (Continued)

Plan the Use of Available Time.

Time will always be at a premium in a combat environment. To ensure that subordinates are allotted sufficient time to accomplish assigned tasks, the Patrol Leader should use the one third – two thirds rule: The PL uses one third of the available time for his planning and order issue and allows his subordinates two thirds of the available time for their preparation.

To determine exactly how much time is available for patrol preparation, the PL uses reverse planning, which involves:

- Working backward from the time that the patrol must depart friendly lines
- Prioritizing essential tasks
- Analyzing required actions prior to departure, actions on the patrol, actions on return
- Developing a timeline to ensure that all tasks are accomplished

For example, if it is 1100 and you have been tasked with exiting friendly lines at 1800, your timeline may look like this:

1730–1800 Forward Unit Coordination/Passage of Lines
1700–1730 Pre-Combat Inspections -PL
1400–1700 Rehearsals
1300–1400 Order Issue
1230–1300 Pre-Combat Checks -APL
1115–1230 Ammunition/Logistics Issue/Gear Prep
1100–1115 Warning Order

Issue the Warning Order.

Once the PL has received the mission, established his timeline, and selected who is going on the patrol and what gear they are taking, the PL is able to publish a warning order. The warning order allows subordinate leaders to begin physically preparing their Marines while the PL completes his planning. The PL issues the warning order far enough in advance for subordinate leaders to ensure that all logistical requirements are met and the gear is given an operational check and to begin some initial rehearsals based on the mission.

The timeline is included, so subordinates know how much time they have for preparation and where and when the order is going to be issued**. It is the responsibility of the APL to supervise and enforce the timeline and requirements within the warning order.**

Patrol Planning and Preparation (Continued)

Arrange Recon/ Patrol Coordination.

To ensure that the patrol receives all required support and to minimize the risk of friendly fire, the PL coordinates with all units supporting and affected by the patrol. Coordination takes place in the form of:

- Combat Operations Center (COC) coordination
- Forward Unit Coordination (FUC) with any unit whose lines the patrol may be passing through

Battalion Coordination

In the COC, the PL will need to coordinate as described in the table below with the section or a designated representative for that Section; The PL should prepare a checklist and consult it during coordination so as to not overlook anything that may be vital to his or her mission. Some items may need to be coordinated with more than one staff section. Refer to MCRP 3-11.1A Commander's Tactical Notebook, Appendix I for an example checklist.

COC Coordination With…	Description
Battalion Adjutant (S-1)	• The adjutant is responsible for personnel accountability within the battalion. • The Patrol Leader will provide the S-1 with a roster of Marines he is taking outside friendly lines.
Intelligence officer (S-2)	• The intelligence officer can o Update the enemy situation, enemy gear and uniform, and weather o Provide sketches, photographs, or imagery • The S-2 will generally also have information requirements (IR) for the Patrol Leader to fulfill.
Operations officer (S-3)	• The operations officer will generally not be available to coordinate with the Patrol Leader. However, a watch officer in the operations section within the COC will be available to make liaison and can update the PL on the friendly situation. • The PL will submit an overlay of the patrol route to the watch officer to help the COC deconflict friendly units and track the progress of the patrol.
Fire support coordinator (FSC)	• Coordination with the FSC is essential if the PL is to receive fire support for his patrol. • The FSC can update the PL on o Locations of all fire support agencies o Directions of fire o Fire support control measures o Types and amounts of munitions available
Logistics officer (S-4)	• The logistics officer provides all logistical support for the unit. • Realistically, the APL or platoon sergeant will coordinate all logistics issues for the patrol.

Patrol Planning and Preparation (Continued)

Communications officer (S-6)	• The communications officer can inform the PL of o Reporting requirements o Frequencies and Call Signs o When these items change • The PL will be issued communications electronic operating instructions (CEOI) or smart pack that will include all of this information. • Generally the PL will not be required to coordinate with the S-6.

It is important to note that when it is possible COC Coordination should be done prior to the Patrol Leader issuing his order to his squad. From the time that the Patrol Leader has received his order to this point in his planning process a certain amount of time has elapsed. The enemy situation or friendly situation may have been altered depending how much time has elapsed. It is not unusual for the S-3 or operations to alter the squads tasking mission (specifically checkpoints) because of the change of either the enemy situation or friendly situation. In order to minimize this potential friction if possible COC Coordination should be done prior to completing the plan and issuing the order.

Forward Unit Coordination

After the PL coordinates with the COC, which will be well behind friendly lines, coordination is then required with any units affected by the patrol, including adjacent patrols or any forward units (such as a company or platoon in a defensive position) through which the patrol must pass. During this forward unit coordination (FUC), the following must be coordinated:

- Movement within friendly areas
- Departure/reentry of friendly lines

For further details on COC and FUC coordination, refer to MCRP 3-11.1A, Commander's Tactical Notebook, Appendix I.

Company Coordination

When conducting patrols on the company level as part of the company patrolling effort, the platoon commander or company executive officer will conduct COC coordination. The PL will then be responsible for coordinating with the:

Company Executive Officer to:

- Update enemy and friendly situation
- Coordinate passage of lines
- Submit patrol overlay

Mortar Section Leader/Weapons Platoon Commander to:

- Coordinate fire support for the patrol
- Submit fire support overlay

Company Gunnery Sergeant:

- The APL will coordinate all logistics issues.

Patrol Planning and Preparation (Continued)

Patrol Overlay

An integral part of coordination with higher headquarters, whether on the company or battalion level, is the patrol overlay.

Refer to MCRP 3-11.1A Commander's Tactical Notebook, Appendix J for an example Patrol Overlay. (Patrol overlays are covered in more dealt in Patrol Overlay workshop B2H0375.)

The overlay is constructed on a clear sheet of plastic overlay paper. Crosshairs indicating the appropriate grids should be drawn in the corners, so the overlay can be aligned on the map. If existing pre-planned targets do not adequately cover the patrol route, the PL should plan additional targets. These additional targets must have their target designator left blank until the FSC approves the target and issues a target number. Targets to be requested are submitted as a list of targets. If the FSC approves those targets, they are returned as a target list. Target lists are covered in more detail in B2C0329 Fire Support Planning.

The overlay should include the following:

- Target list to include pre-planned targets
- Patrol information
- Marginal information
- Checkpoints
- Primary and alternate routes

Higher headquarters will maintain two copies of the overlay:

- If coordinating on the battalion level, one for the:
  - S-3
  - FSC
- If coordinating on the company level, one for the:
  - Company executive officer
  - Weapons platoon commander

Higher headquarters will use these overlay copies in order to:

- Track the patrol's progress
- Deconflict friendly movements
- Assist in reinforcing or extracting the patrol
- Facilitating indirect fire support
- Aid in the evident of a casevac

Patrol Planning and Preparation (Continued)

Make Reconnaissance.

The PL can reconnoiter his route and objective area through physical or aerial reconnaissance and studying aerial photos or imagery. However, a PL will often not have access to photos or have the time or means to execute a physical or aerial reconnaissance. In this case, the PL's most effective means of reconnaissance is to make a detailed map study and debrief other units who have experience operating in the area.

Complete the Plan.

Before issuing the order, the PL should receive a final update of the enemy situation with the S-2 or company executive officer and ensure that all required coordination has been completed.

Issue the Order.

Due to the level of detail inherent in a patrol order and because all Marines on the patrol will have a specific task, all members of the patrol must be present to receive the patrol order. The patrol order will be discussed in detail during B2H0375 Patrol Order and Overlay Workshop.

Supervise.

The PL's most effective tools of supervision are:

- Productive and Realistic Rehearsals. Each action the patrol may have to execute en route and in the objective area will be rehearsed within friendly lines to ensure the operational readiness of the patrol members. Rehearsals are one of the most critical steps in patrol preparation. Rehearsals may include:
    - ROC walk (walking through immediate action drills using cards). This will be done during the Patrol order and will be discussed in detail during B2H3397 Patrol Order and Overlay Demonstration.
    - Dry runs (walk through)
    - Wet runs (at full speed)
- Inspections. Inspections are conducted to ensure the physical and mental readiness of the patrol members. The two types of inspections are:
    - Pre-Combat Checklist. The APL conducts initial inspections before the patrol order is issued to ensure that the patrol is in compliance with the warning order and Marines are physically prepared for the mission.
    - Pre-Combat Inspections. The PL conducts a final inspection just prior to departing friendly lines to ensure the mental readiness of the patrol with regard to the five-paragraph order. Patrol members are questioned about:
        - The mission and the intent

- Routes
- Fire support
- The communications plan
- Signals
- Challenge and passwords
- Patrol Planning and Preparation (continued)
- All actions the patrol will execute during the mission.

Execution of the Patrol

Introduction

This topic outlines many of the basic techniques and procedures used to conduct a patrol. Though an array of patrolling techniques and procedures exists, those discussed within this handout are the doctrinal baseline for the conduct of a patrol.

Command and Control

Command and control is essential to the overall success of the patrol. All Marines in the patrol must understand the route and the overall plan; however when it comes to command and control the patrol leader and the assistant patrol leader must understand their roles when it comes to execution of a patrol.

- Patrol Leader:
  - Ultimately responsible for everything that happens and fails to happen during the execution of the patrol.
  - Report any change in situation to higher. Report current positions of patrol using check points or grids
  - Upon enemy contact decides proper immediate action drill.
- Assistant Patrol Leader
  - Responsible for accountability of Marines on the patrol
  - Responsible for dispersion
  - At times can be in charge of the placement of flank security
  - Responsible for CASEVACs
  - Responsible for handing of EPWs

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Halts

There are two different types of halts: short, and long security halts.

A short security halt is three to five minutes or less. When executed, the patrol will maintain its patrol formation, and establish security within the formation. This allows for a quick transition between a halt and continued movement.

The first halt will initially occur when a patrol departs friendly lines. The patrol will halt approximately one terrain feature away from friendly lines and conduct SLLS (stop, look, listen, smell). It will be easy for Marines within the patrol to observe anomalies or suspicious activity if they have a general baseline of what the environment should be like. Although a listening halt should be conducted shortly after departing friendly lines, they can also be conducted at anytime throughout the patrol.

Long security halts are all halts lasting in excess of three to five minutes. When executing a long security halt, the patrol moves into a 360-degree perimeter and lays in the prone position to provide for a more effective perimeter in the event of contact.

Movement Techniques

A movement technique is the method a unit uses to traverse terrain. There are three movement techniques: traveling, traveling overwatch, and bounding overwatch. The selection of a movement technique is based on the likelihood of enemy contact and the need for speed. Factors to consider for each technique are control, dispersion, speed, and security. Movement techniques are not fixed formations. They refer to the distances between Marines, teams, and squads that vary based on METT-TC. Marines must be able to see their fire team leaders. The patrol leader should be able to see his lead squad leader. Leaders control movement with hand-and-arm signals and use radios only when needed.

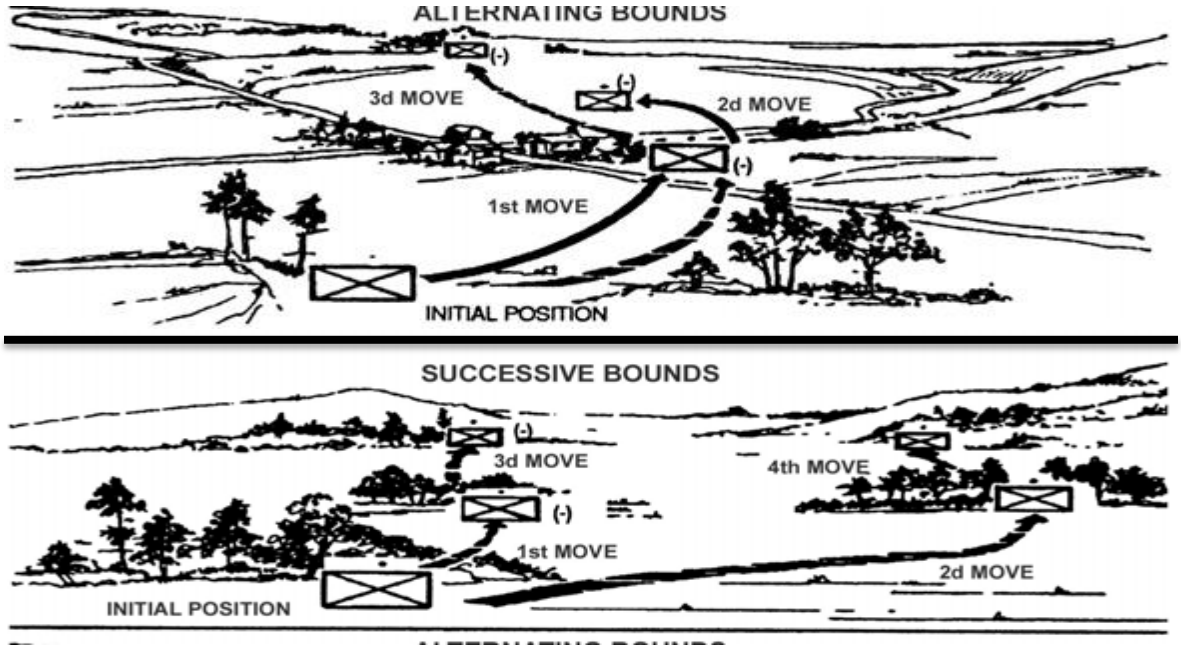
- The traveling technique is used when enemy contact is not likely but speed is necessary.
- The traveling overwatch technique is used when enemy contact is possible.
- The bounding overwatch technique is used when enemy contact is likely, or when crossing a danger area.

- **Traveling**. In the traveling technique, the distance between individuals and elements is about 10 meters. It has the following characteristics:
  - More control than traveling overwatch but less than bounding overwatch.
  - Minimum dispersion.
  - Maximum speed.
  - Minimum security.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

- **Traveling Overwatch**. The distance between individuals remains equal but increases to 20-30m between elements
  - In traveling overwatch, the lead element must be far enough ahead of the rest of the partol to detect or engage any enemy before the enemy observes or fires on the main body. However, it must be close enough to be supported by the patrol small arm's fires. This is normally between 50 to 100 meters, depending on terrain, vegetation, and light and weather conditions.
  - Traveling overwatch has the following characteristics:
    - Good control.
    - Good dispersion.
    - Good speed.
    - Good security forward.

- **Bounding Overwatch**. In the bounding overwatch technique, the distance between Marines remains about 10 meters. The distance between elements varies.
  - The squad or platoon has a bounding element and an overwatch element. The bounding element moves while the overwatch element occupies an overwatch position that can cover the route of the bounding element by fire. Each bound is within supporting range of the overwatch element.
  - There are two types of bounding, successive and alternating. Successive is nothing more than one squad moving to a position, then the overwatching squad moving to a position generally online with the first squad. Alternating bounding is when one squad moves into position, then the overwatching squad moves to a position in front of the first squad.



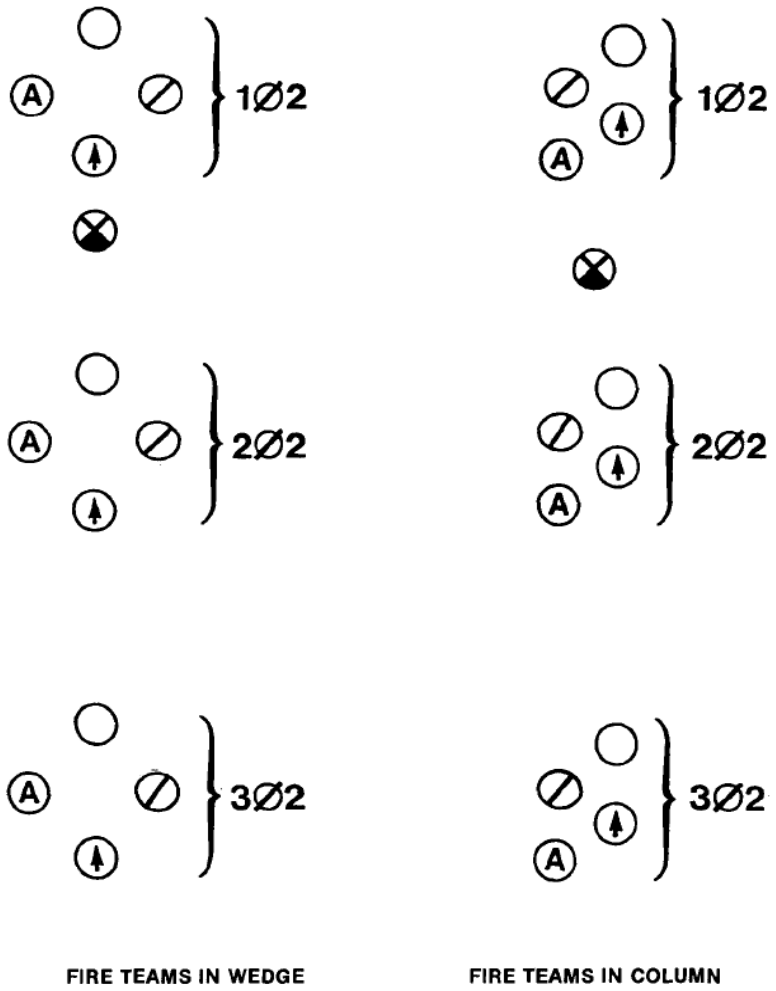
Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

- The length of a bound depends on the terrain, visibility, and control.
- Before a bound, the leader gives the following instructions to his subordinates:
  - Direction of the enemy if known
  - Position of overwatch elements
  - Next overwatch position
  - Route of the bounding element
  - What to do after the bounding element reaches the next position
  - How the elements receive follow-on orders
- The characteristics of bounding overwatch are:
  - Maximum control
  - Maximum dispersion
  - Minimum speed
  - Maximum security

Movement Formations The patrol leader prescribes the formation for his patrol. The patrol leader may prescribe the initial formation for their respective subordinate units when the situation dictates or the commander so desires. Subsequent changes may be made by the subordinate unit leaders. The characteristics of squad formations are similar to those of the fire team. The fire team is the maneuver element in squad formations.

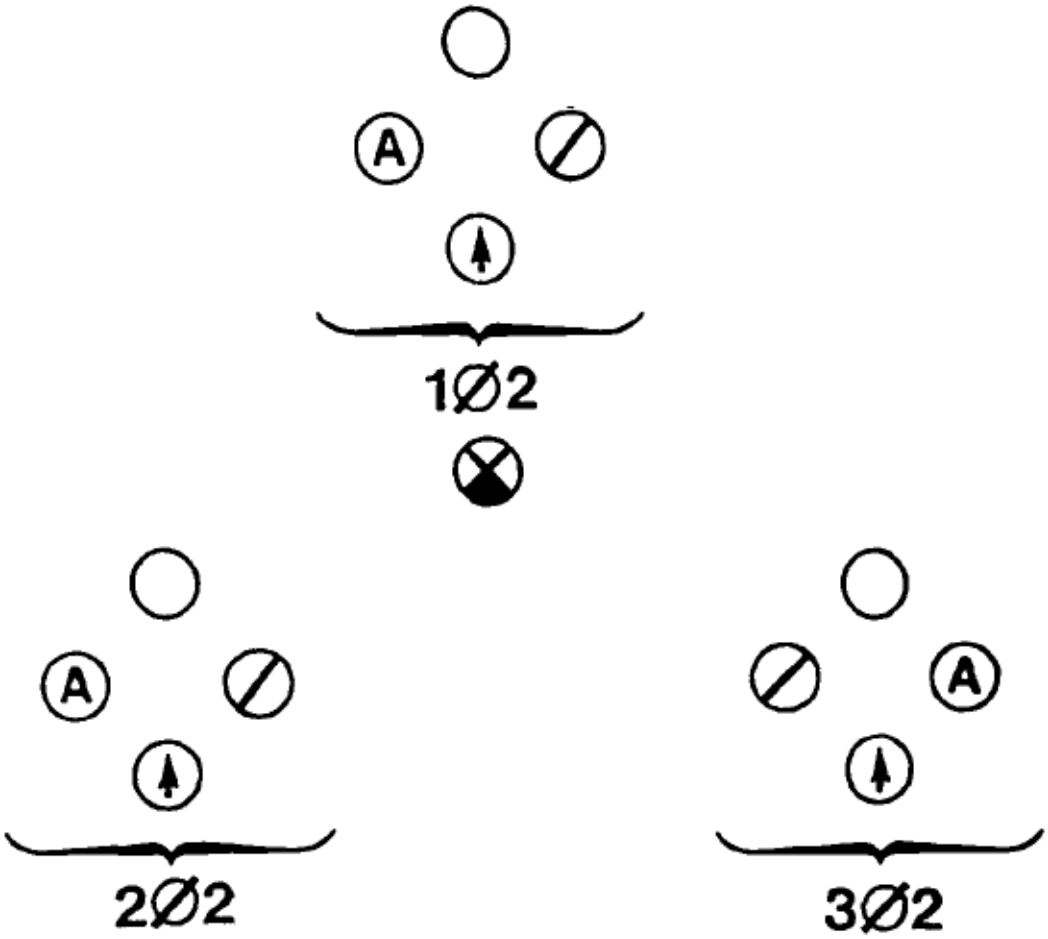
Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

- Squad Column. Fire teams are arranged in succession one behind the other.
  - Easy to control and maneuver.
  - Excellent for speed of movement or when strict control is desired.
  - Especially suitable for narrow covered routes of advance, maneuvering through gaps between areas receiving hostile artillery fire, moving through areas of limited observation, and moving under conditions of reduced visibility.
  - Vulnerable to fire from the front.
  - Used for night operations.



Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

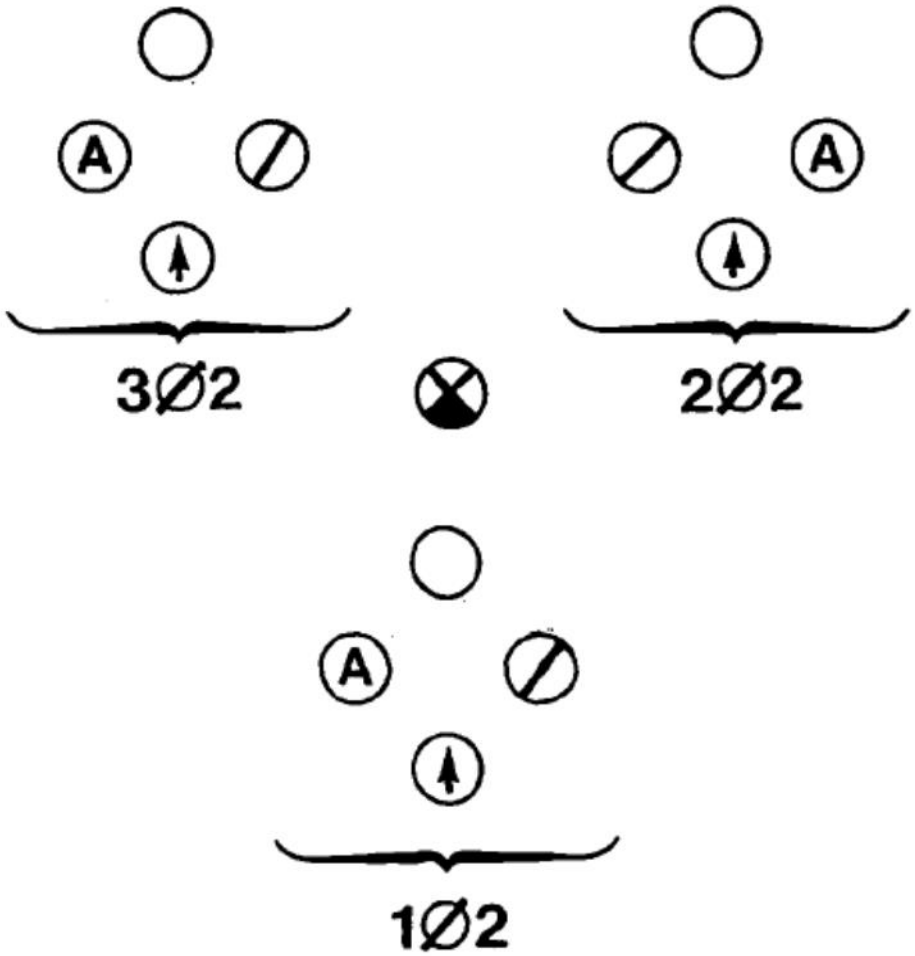
- Squad Wedge
  - Permits good control
  - Provides all-round security
  - Formation is flexible
  - Fire is adequate in all directions



(FIRE TEAMS IN WEDGE. TEAM LEADERS POSITIONED FOR EASE IN COMMUNICATING WITH SQUAD LEADER.)

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

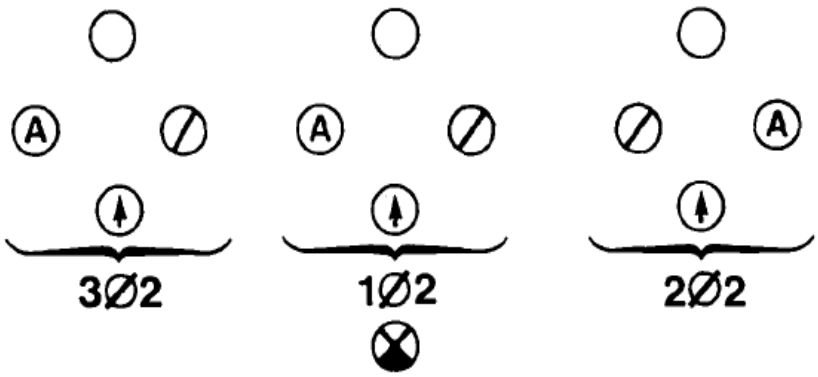
- Squad Vee
  - Facilitates movement into squad line.
  - Provides excellent firepower to front and flanks.
  - Provides all-round security.
  - Used when the enemy is to the front and his strength and location are known. May be used when crossing large open areas.



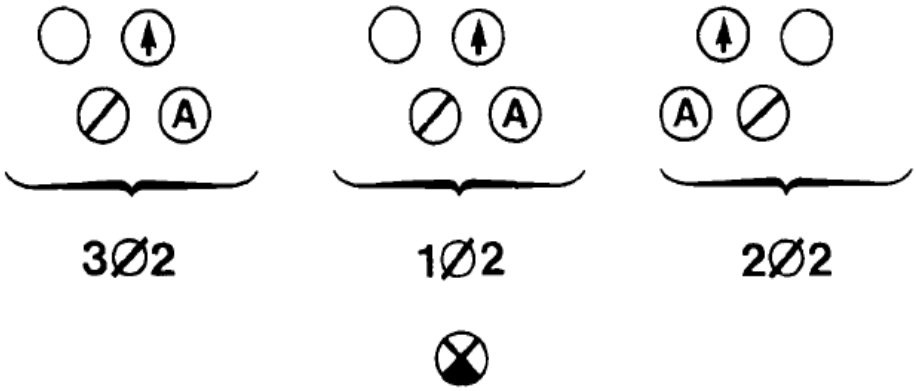
(FIRE TEAMS IN WEDGE. TEAM LEADERS POSITIONED FOR EASE IN COMMUNICATING WITH SQUAD LEADER.)

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

- Squad Online
  - Maximum firepower to the front
  - Used when the location and strength of the enemy are known, during the assault, mopping up, and crossing short open areas



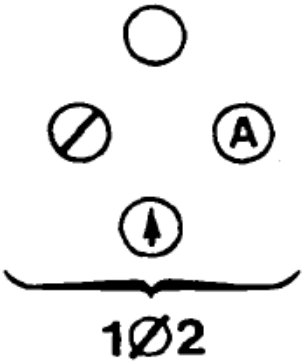
(FIRE TEAMS IN WEDGE)

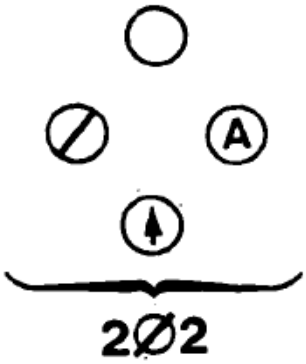


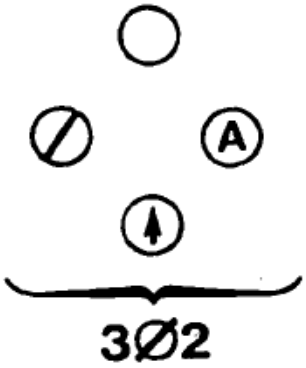
(FIRST AND THIRD FIRE TEAMS IN SKIRMISHERS RIGHT:
SECOND FIRE TEAM IN SKIRMISHERS LEFT)

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

- Squad Echelon Right.
  - Provides heavy firepower to front and echeloned flank
  - Used to protect an open or exposed flank

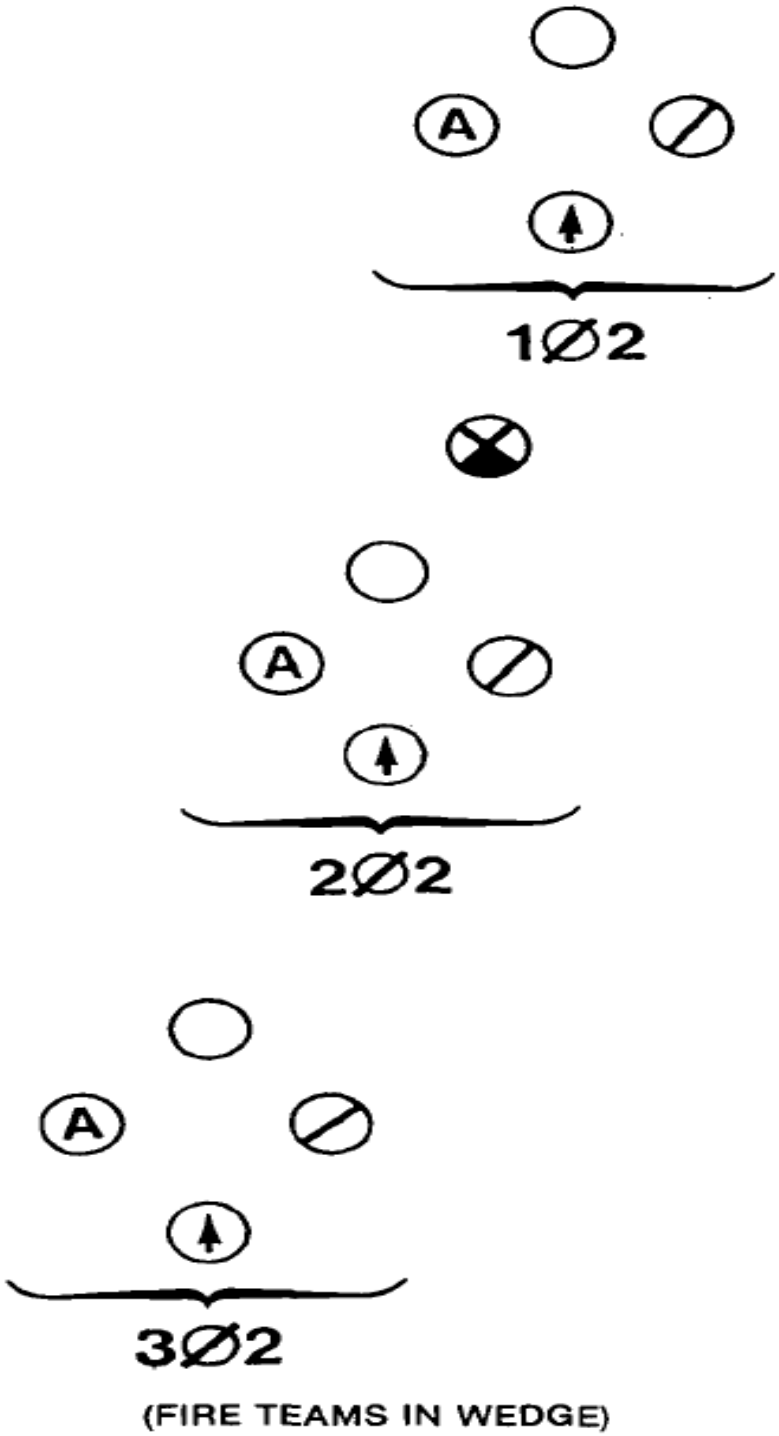






Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

- Squad Echelon Left
  - Provides heavy firepower to front and echeloned flank
- Used to protect an open or exposed flank



Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Rally Points

A rally point (RP) is a point on the ground where a patrol assembles and reorganizes if dispersed or separated, normally used after breaking contact with an enemy force. A rally point should be easily recognizable, have good cover and concealment, and be defendable for a short time. During the planning phase, the PL makes a thorough map study to pick likely rally points; however, these are confirmed during movement with the PL passing the appropriate hand and arm signal to identify the RP to all members of the patrol. Rally points can also be used in conjunction with the lost Marine plan (the lost Marine plan is discussed in detail in B2B2457, Combat Orders Discussion Group).

Types of Rally Points:

- Initial Rally Point
- En route Rally Points
- Objective Rally Point
- Re-Entry Rally Point

The **initial rally point** is within friendly lines, where the patrol can rally if it becomes separated before departing the friendly area or before reaching the first en route rally point.

En route rally points are between the initial rally point and the objective rally point; and from the objective rally point back to the point where the patrol reenters friendly lines. They are determined as the patrol passes through a likely area that is suitable for a rally point.

The **objective rally point** is located nearest the objective where the patrol makes final preparations prior to approaching the objective. It also serves as a location where the patrol reassembles after completing actions on the objective. The objective rally point must be suitable to accommodate those activities accomplished prior to actions on the objective. This position must provide the patrol concealment from enemy observation and, if possible, cover from enemy fires. It may be located short of, to a flank or beyond the objective. It should be out of sight, sound, and small-arms range of the objective area.

The **reentry rally point** is located out of sight, sound, and small-arms weapons range of the friendly unit through which the platoon will return. This also means that the RRP should be outside the final protective fires of the friendly unit. The platoon occupies the RRP as a security perimeter.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Rally points are also established when crossing danger areas. The PL designates a near side rally point and a far side rally point.

Actions at rally points must be covered in detail in the patrol order. If the patrol is dispersed, Marines will move to the designated rally point. If not all members return to the rally point, those Marines at the rally point must determine whether they can continue the mission or execute the escape and evasion plan. This decision is based on the go/no go criteria (go/no go criteria is discussed in detail B2B0287, Combat Orders Discussion Group).

Communication

Radio Communication:

Communication with higher and adjacent units during the conduct of the patrol is critical. This requires that the radio operator and PL are proficient with the basic operations of the radio and how to trouble-shoot any problems. The Patrol Leader is ultimately responsible for reporting to higher the changes in the enemy or friendly situation. Transmissions should be concise and brevity codes should be coordinated and used whenever possible. The Patrol Leader should utilize the correct report formats to facilitate the communication between higher and the patrol.

Hand and Arm/Implicit Communication:

Communication within the patrol will primarily be with hand and arm signals. All members of the patrol must be familiar with all hand and arm signals listed in MCWP 3-11.2 Marine Rifle Squad (formerly FMFM 6-5). To be effective all Marines must ensure that they are constantly looking around and repeating any hand and arm signals passed by other members of the patrol, ensuring that all other Marines receive, understand, and continue to repeat the signal. The best form of communication is implicit communication. The designation and employment of a base unit is the proper way to employ your patrol both through the tactical control measures, as well as actions on enemy contact.

Voice Communication:

If it becomes necessary to communicate detailed information during the patrol, Marines should speak quietly. Whispering can cause a loud hissing noise and can often be misunderstood. When in contact with the enemy, voice commands must be load enough to be heard over battlefield noise.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Navigation

Although the PL is ultimately responsible for navigation, he may assign two pace counters and a navigator to aid him in this task. On the PL's order, the pace count is passed forward. The pace count is always given in meters. Because the two counts will seldom be the same, the average of the two counts can be used as a good approximation of the distance traveled. Checking pace counts at known points allows the PL to gauge the accuracy of his pacers.

The patrol is usually assigned checkpoints from higher headquarters to ensure coverage of a specific area. However, the PL will generally have some latitude to decide how exactly to move to each checkpoint and in what order to cover them. It is not necessary for the patrol to physically occupy the checkpoint, as long as it can attain visual contact.

Security and Movement

Because of the physically demanding nature of patrolling, the PL must maintain an even, deliberate pace during movement. As a general rule, a foot patrol will move at a rate of:

- One kilometer per hour during the day
- 500 meters per hour at night in a wooded environment

To minimize losses if the patrol is caught in an ambush or hit by indirect fire, patrols must maintain the maximum amount of dispersion possible without completely sacrificing control. In a wooded environment, the point man should move as far ahead of the patrol as visibility and control will allow in order to provide security to the front. The automatic rifleman is normally the cover man and follows in trace of the point man. The cover man provides fire to the front in the event of enemy contact. The flanks move as far out as control allows, usually one terrain feature away in woodland terrain in order to prevent the patrol from moving into an enemy ambush and give early warning of units moving toward the patrol. The assault unit provides rear security by:

- Moving continuously with the patrol, stopping periodically to observe the area behind the patrol
- Halting for several minutes, observing to the rear as the patrol continues to move, and then moving to regain position in the patrol
- Moving alternately, having one man halt observing to the rear as the other moves ahead with the patrol. The second man then halts, observing to the rear while the first man moves to regain his position within the formation.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Each Marine on the patrol should have a sector of responsibility that they scan continuously while on the patrol.

During movement, head counts should be conducted

- After crossing danger areas, security halts, enemy contact
- Any other time the PL requires

Head counts are conducted by team and unit leaders and are then passed to the PL through the APL.

Observation Techniques

Everyone in a patrol is responsible for employing a variety of observation techniques in order to aid in the overall accomplishment of the mission. Every member of a patrol should be patrolling in a combat hunter mindset. There are variety of considerations that not only the patrol leader needs to consider however every member of the patrol play a part in consistently scanning the immediate area around them or in their sector whether it be for signs of the enemy or evidence that the enemy may be in the area. Whether it be something tasked to the patrol specifically to look out for or something that the patrol determines as out of place, it is up to the patrol to take note of the location and activity and pass the information along to higher during the debrief of the patrol.

Commander's Critical Information Requests (CCIRs)

In higher's order or during COC Coordination the patrol will be tasked with reporting on Commander's Critical Information Requests (CCIRs). These are information requests by the commander that he feels is at the utmost importance that if the patrol comes across any of these requests he wants to know about them immediately. It is very important that every member of the patrol know the CCIRs so that everyone will be on the lookout for evidence that fulfill these information requests.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Mental and Physical Toughness

It is essential that every member of the patrol remain mentally and physically tough throughout the duration of the patrol. This may be difficult depending on the length and current operation tempo.

Physical Toughness

The patrol leader during his planning phase must take into consideration who he selects to go on the patrol. It will hurt the whole patrol and place them in danger if a Marine is hurt or not physically fit prior to going on the patrol. During execution every Marine must be able to move at the patrol leader's chosen rate of march. As discussed earlier there are different references concerning the average rate of march during the day and night however depending on the situation and mission this may be slower or faster. Not only must the Marines be able to patrol effectively however in some cases depending on the mission, essential equipment must be carried in order to facilitate a specific mission. It is essential that every Marine on the squad be able to display physical toughness throughout the patrol duration.

Mental toughness

Mental toughness is just as if not as important as physical toughness. If a Marine is able to patrol at the specific rate of march as the rest of the patrol however is not displaying good observation and patrolling techniques (e.g. scanning designated sector, communicating effectively with Marines in his team) he is not doing his part in accomplishing the squad's mission. It is not the patrol leader's responsibility for observing any signs of enemy activity however it is every Marine's responsibility in the squad. Everyone must consistently employ correct observation techniques throughout the duration of the patrol.

Individual Actions

Individual actions are the responsibility of every Marine in the patrol. Individual actions (e.g. proper weapons handling, silencing gear, and gear accountability) will only be accomplish by individual Marine's if they are consistently mentally and physically tough throughout the execution phase. If individual actions are not successfully accomplished by each Marine it will be more likely that the squad will not be able to successfully accomplish their mission.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Departure and Reentering Friendly Lines and Actions on Enemy Contact

Departure of Friendly Lines

The patrol's preparation phase is normally conducted in an assembly area located in a protected area behind friendly lines. Before passing through friendly lines, the PL must make forward unit coordination with the forward unit commander. The forward unit commander (FUC) is responsible for the defense in the area designated for the departure and reentry of the patrol. Refer to MCRP 3-11.1A Commander’s Tactical Notebook for further information on forward unit coordination.

When making final coordination, the PL leaves the patrol at the assembly area and takes the point man and navigator to meet with the forward unit commander. After all coordination has been made, the PL, point man, and navigator move to the passage point. The navigator stays with a guide from the forward unit at the passage point, and the point man and PL move back to link up with the patrol.

The PL briefs the patrol on any changes to the plan and the location of the initial rally point (IRP, a pre-designated point behind friendly lines at which the patrol can reorganize if enemy contact is made while departing friendly lines) and passage point. The PL moves the patrol in a tactical patrol column from the assembly area to the passage point.

Before entering the passage lane, the patrol assumes a dispersed file with the forward unit's guide leading the patrol. The APL is positioned behind the guide(s) and is followed by the rest of the patrol. Once through the barrier plan, the APL conducts a head count on the enemy side of the barrier plan to ensure that all Marines passed through friendly lines. Upon passing through the friendly barrier plan, the patrol immediately transitions into a tactical patrol column and moves out.

The patrol should conduct a short security halt one terrain feature away (out of friendly direct fire weapons range) in order to orient to the environment.

PASSAGE OF LINES CONTROL MEASURES

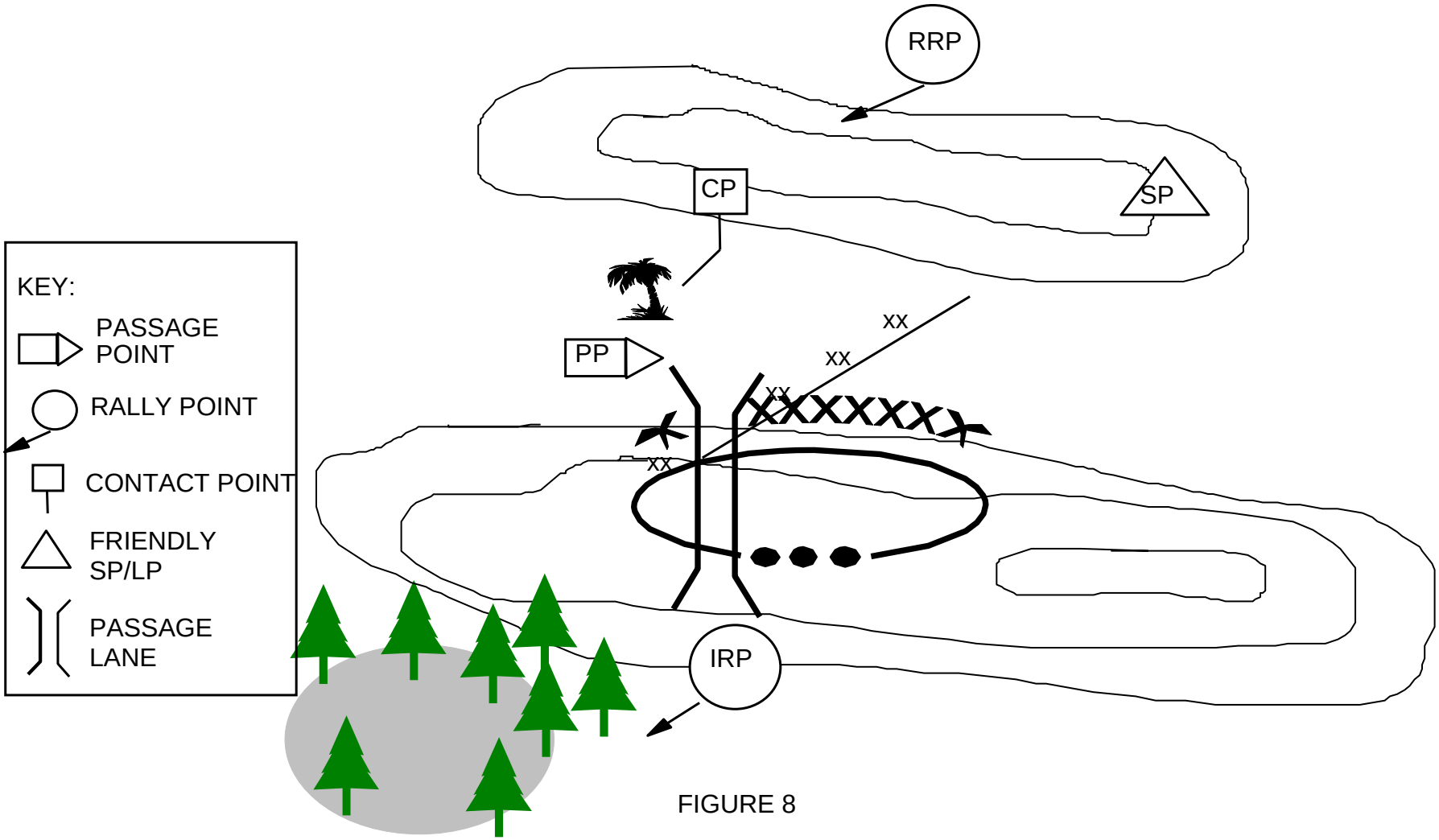


FIGURE 8

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Danger Areas

A danger area is any location where the patrol is exposed to the possibility of enemy observation or fire. Danger areas can include trails, fire breaks, streams, open fields, and even large wooded areas that have sparse ground vegetation. The two general classifications of danger areas are:

- Linear danger area: Any location where a patrol is vulnerable to enemy observation or fire predominantly from the flanks, such as a trail, road, or stream
- Cross-compartment danger area: Any location where a patrol is vulnerable to enemy observation or fire from the front and flanks, such as a draw or large open area.

Patrols should avoid crossing or paralleling danger areas if possible. If a patrol comes across a danger area, such as a large open field or a wooded area with little or no ground vegetation, it should try to execute a ninety degree off-set.

When crossing a danger area, the patrol should execute the danger area crossing as quickly as possible. The method a PL chooses for crossing a danger area depends heavily on the:

- Patrol's mission
- Known and suspected enemy locations
- Terrain within and around the danger area
- Patrol's size and firepower available to the patrol
- Amount of time the patrol has available to conduct the crossing (METT-T)

The danger area crossing techniques discussed below are for those circumstances where time is not a significant factor and contact with the enemy is likely.

Linear Danger Area Crossing

The patrol should cross a linear danger area where observation is restricted, such as at a curve in the road or where vegetation comes right up to both sides of the road (see Crossing a Linear Danger Area 1 and Crossing a Linear Danger Area 2 diagrams on next page).

CROSSING A LINEAR DANGER AREA

1. Security Unit identifies a possible linear danger area.
2. PL confirms danger area and passes hand and arm signal to the rest of the patrol.
3. Flanks (R) move up to the edge of the danger area.
4. PL designates near/far RPs.
5. Security Unit crosses Danger area and reconnoiters the far side.

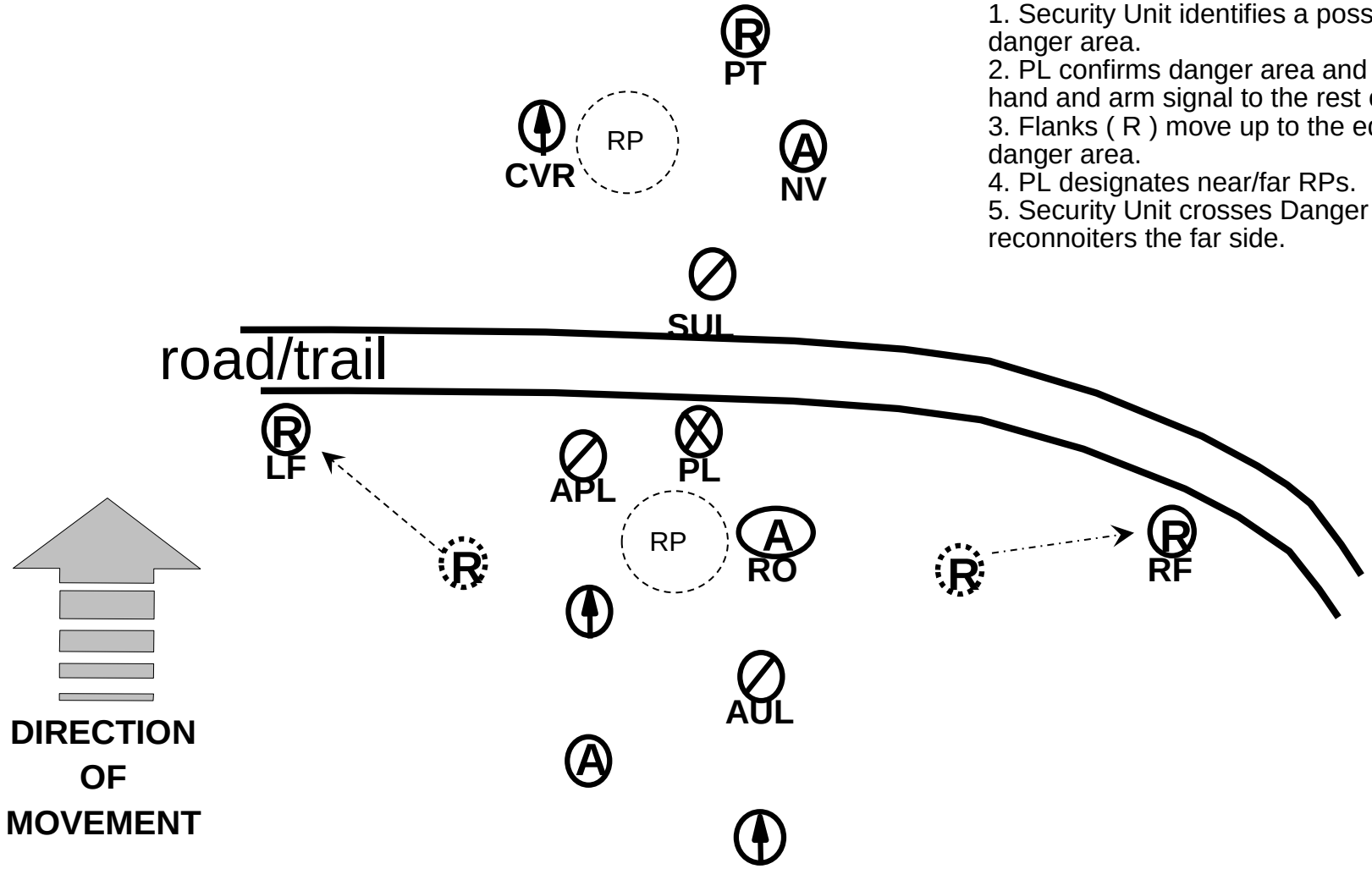
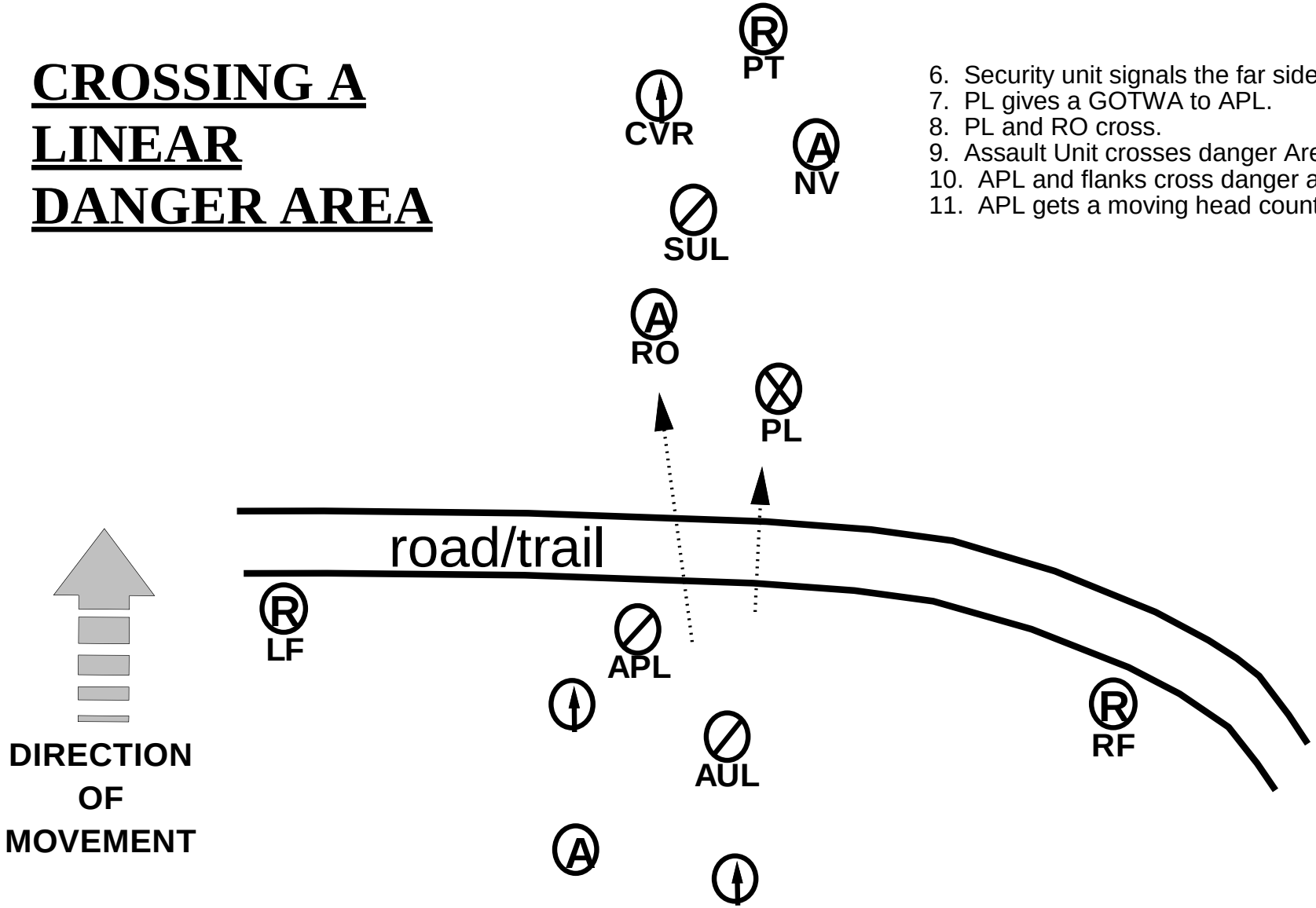


FIGURE 4a

CROSSING A LINEAR DANGER AREA

6. Security unit signals the far side is safe.
7. PL gives a GOTWA to APL.
8. PL and RO cross.
9. Assault Unit crosses danger Area.
10. APL and flanks cross danger area.
11. APL gets a moving head count.



Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

When the point man comes upon what he believes to be a danger area, he halts the patrol and signals for the PL to come forward. The PL puts the patrol in a short security halt and moves forward to join the point man. After confirming it as a danger area, the PL passes the hand and arm signal for linear danger area to the patrol.

Flanks move up to the edge of the danger area to provide security.

The PL designates near and far side rally points and directs security unit to cross the danger area and reconnoiter the far side, ensuring that they push far enough past the danger area to allow the remainder of the patrol to fall in behind. (See pages 41-43 for far side reconnaissance techniques and advantages and disadvantages of each.)

The point and cover man remain at twelve o'clock while the navigator and security unit leader push back toward the edge of the danger area to signal to the PL that the far side is clear.

Depending on the situation, the patrol will cross individually, in pairs, or by units. The PL and RO cross first, issuing a GOTWA to the APL and leaving him to direct the remaining units across. As patrol members reach the far side, they move forward toward the point and reorganize into the formation for movement.

The last patrol member to cross is normally the APL. The APL crosses along with the flanks and receives moving head count from the unit leaders as the patrol moves away from the danger area.

Cross-Compartment Danger Area Crossing

When crossing a draw or open area, the patrol is vulnerable to fire from the front and the flanks. To combat this threat, the PL orients the majority of the patrol's firepower across the danger area.

When the point man comes upon what he believes to be a danger area, he halts the patrol and signals for the PL to come forward. The PL puts the patrol in a short security halt and moves forward to join the point man. After confirming it as a danger area, the PL passes the hand and arm signal for cross-compartment danger area to the patrol.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

The PL:

- Brings the entire patrol on-line oriented across the danger area (the assault unit leaves at least one member oriented to the rear to provide 360-degree security)
- Designates near and far side rally points
- Directs security unit to cross the danger area and reconnoiter the far side, ensuring that they push far enough past the danger area to allow the remainder of the patrol to fall in behind. (See Appendix A for far side reconnaissance techniques and advantages and disadvantages of each.)

The point and cover man remain at twelve o'clock while the navigator and security unit leader push back toward the edge of the danger area to signal to the PL that the far side is clear.

CROSSING A CROSS COMPARTMENT DANGER AREA

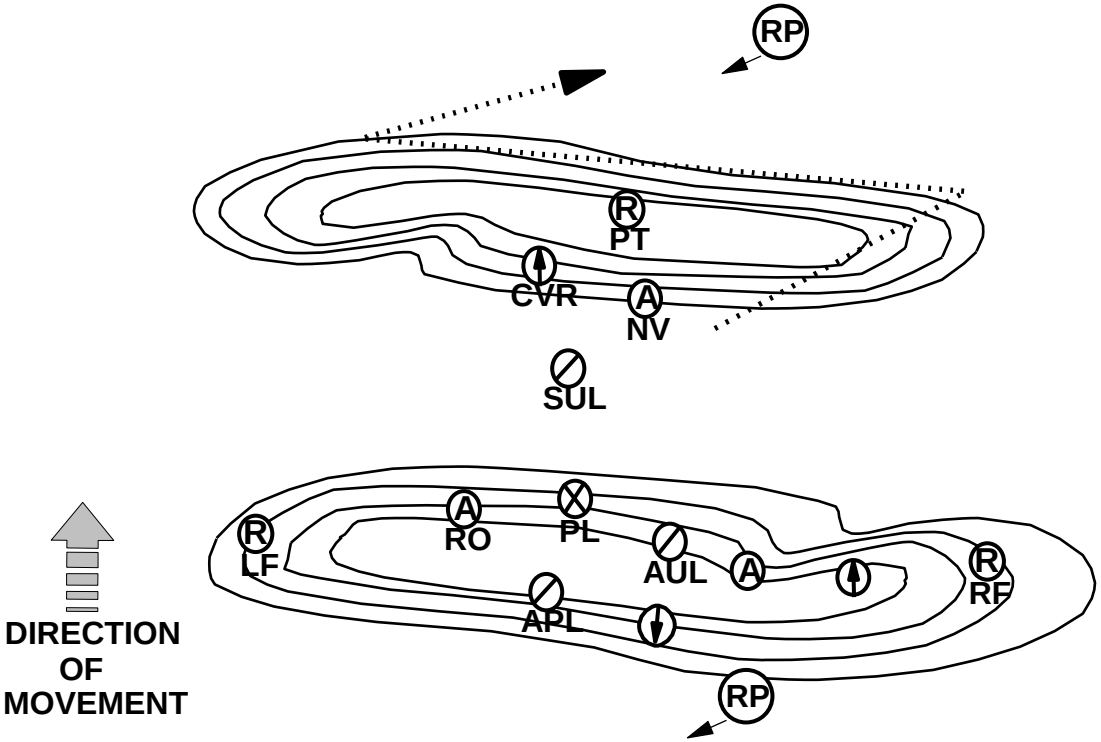


FIGURE 1

1. Security Unit identifies a possible cross-compartment danger area.
2. PL confirms danger area and passes hand and arm signal to the rest of the patrol.
3. Patrol moves online on the edge of the danger area.
4. PL designates near/far RPs.
5. Security Unit crosses Danger area and reconnoiters the far side.

CROSSING A CROSS COMPARTMENT DANGER AREA

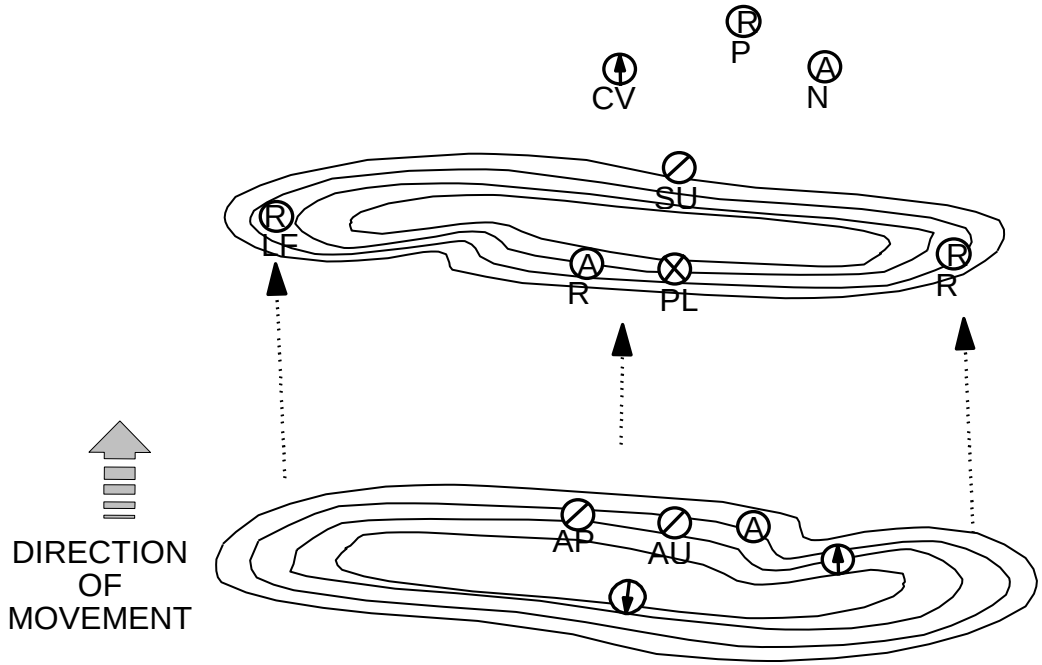


Figure 2

6. Security unit signals the far side is safe.
7. PL gives a GOTWA to APL.
8. The HQ unit and flanks cross.
9. Flanks re-establish security on the far side of the danger area.
9. APL and Assault Unit cross danger Area.
10. APL gets a moving head count.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

The headquarters unit crosses first with the flanks, issuing a GOTWA with the APL and leaving him to direct the remaining units across. The patrol may cross in pairs or in units. Once across, the flanks orient to the sides and rear to cover the remainder of the patrol's crossing. When the flanks are set on the far side, the APL moves across with the assault unit.

Once on the far side, the APL receives a moving head count from the unit leaders as the patrol assumes patrol formation and moves away from the danger area.

Contact with the Enemy-Forms of Contact

Contact with the enemy can be categorized into six forms of contact. Identifying the type of contact will aid the patrol leader's decision making with regards to which action to take and reporting requirements to higher headquarters. The six forms of contact are as follows:

- Visual. This is when the patrol makes visual contact with the Enemy. This should translate into a SPOTREP to higher headquarters and engaging the enemy with a continued observation, hasty ambush, or indirect fire.
- Direct fire. This is when the patrol is receiving and returning fire with the Enemy. This translates into a SPOTREP to higher headquarters. The patrol leader can initiate his chance contact or counter-ambush immediate action drill.
- Indirect Fire. When a patrol receives indirect fire, the follow-on report is a Shelling Report (SHELLREP). The patrol uses its immediate action drill for indirect fire.
- Obstacle. When the patrol encounters an obstacle, the follow-on report is an Obstacle Report. The patrol then negotiates the obstacle and continues mission or reduces the obstacle within capabilities.
- CBRN. On contact with Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear threats, the patrol submits a CBRN report. The patrol takes appropriate protective measures and continues mission or as directed by higher headquarters.
- Signal/EW. Upon contact with the Enemy via signals or electronic means, the patrol reports the contact to higher headquarters. The patrol continues mission or as directed by higher headquarters.

Actions on Enemy Contact—Immediate Action Drills

Patrol Leaders must anticipate, plan, and rehearse actions to be taken on enemy contact. These planned and rehearsed actions are called immediate action drills and are designed to provide swift, positive action or reaction to visual or physical contact. All patrol members place emphasis on aggressive, rapid execution and alertness.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

One important hand and arm signal to understand when discussing immediate action drills is freeze. The signal to freeze is used when the patrol is in imminent danger of being spotted. All patrol members cease all movement completely.

Hasty Ambush

A hasty ambush is used when the patrol has spotted the enemy, but the enemy has not spotted them. All patrol members quietly move into a position where they can fire upon the enemy when the PL signals to open fire. Unit leaders must ensure front and flank security is maintained during this IA drill (see Hasty Ambush diagram on following page).

The Marine who sees or hears the enemy signals freeze. Once the enemy is identified, the PL signals "hasty ambush" in the direction the ambush will be oriented. Patrol members quickly and quietly move into a line formation. The PL initiates the ambush with a casualty producing signal.

If the enemy prematurely detects any patrol member, the ambush will be initiated immediately, while the remainder of the patrol moves rapidly on line. The PL will then conduct an immediate assault or break contact.

Chance Contact—Immediate Assault

An immediate assault is used when the patrol and the enemy sight spot each other concurrently. The PL must first determine if he can overwhelm the enemy force. If he feels that he can, then the patrol executes an immediate assault (see Immediate Assault diagram on following page).

The patrol member in contact returns fire and orients the patrol by shouting the direction and distance to the enemy (ADDRAC: Alert, Direction, Description, Range, Assignment, and Control). The patrol rapidly deploys on line. The PL directs the patrol to assault the enemy unit, utilizing fire and movement.

Chance Contact—Break Contact

Break contact is used when the patrol and the enemy sight spot each other concurrently, but the PL feels that he cannot overwhelm the enemy force. The patrol member in contact returns fire and orients the patrol by shouting the direction and distance to the enemy (ADDRAC: Alert, Direction, Description, Range, Assignment, and Control).

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

The PL uses the clock system (twelve o'clock is the direction of movement) to give a direction and follows with a distance (in meters) for the patrol to move in order to break contact. However, contact cannot be broken as a patrol. The units in the patrol will have to break contact successively, while covering each other's movement. Smoke and CS can be used to screen the withdrawal.

Counter-Ambush

When caught in an ambush, the unit leader in the kill zone must determine if the unit is caught in a:

- Near ambush: any ambush within 50 meters of enemy direct fire weapons (considered hand grenade range)
- Far ambush: anything farther than 50 meters

Near Ambush

The senior unit leader in the kill zone determines if the unit is caught in a near or far ambush. If the unit is in a near ambush, individuals caught in the kill zone immediately return fire and exit the kill zone as rapidly as possible. Generally, the most expedient exit may be an aggressive assault directly towards the enemy position.

Those units not caught in the kill zone attempt to maneuver to relieve pressure off those in the kill zone. The unit continues the attack until the ambush is eliminated or the PL signals to break contact.

Far Ambush

The senior unit leader in the kill zone determines if the unit is caught in a near or far ambush. If the unit is caught in a far ambush, Marines caught in the kill zone take cover and try to achieve fire superiority. The PL maneuvers units not caught in the kill zone to relieve pressure on the units in the kill zone. As soon as pressure is relieved off units in the kill zone, the patrol breaks contact.

Indirect Fire

Any patrol member may initiate this drill upon realizing indirect fire is inbound. The patrol assumes the prone position when "Incoming" is sounded. The PL then has the patrol break contact out of the impact area after the initial salvo has impacted. Direction is given via the clock method, with 12 o'clock being the original direction of movement, followed by distance in meters. The PL can also have the patrol break contact to the last rally point.

Execution of the Patrol (Continued)

Re-Entry of Friendly Lines

Re-entry of friendly lines is a complicated evolution that can present a serious risk of fratricide if not coordinated previously and executed correctly. When re-entering friendly lines, the patrol conducts a long security halt at the designated reentry rally point (RRP).

The PL requests permission, via the radio, to reenter friendly lines. The PL must ensure that permission is granted before moving forward to the contact point. Part of the previous coordination required (usually done during forward unit coordination before the patrol exits friendly lines) is to establish a no communications plan in case the patrol is unable to raise the forward unit on the radio. This plan can be to establish designated pre-planned time windows when the guide will move to the contact point.

After leaving a 5-point contingency plan with the APL, the PL (moving unit) takes two Marines (point man and navigator) for security and advances to conduct a link-up with a guide (stationary unit) at a pre-designated contact point.

The moving unit initiates the far recognition signal (such as flashes from NVGs or removing a cover), and the stationary unit responds—e.g. the moving unit initiates with three flashes, the stationary responds with two, and the moving unit acknowledges with one. As the patrol moves closer to the contact point, the stationary unit (guide) initiates the near recognition signal (challenge and password), and the patrol responds.

Once the PL has linked-up with the guide, the PL returns to the RRP with the point man to retrieve the remainder of the patrol. The navigator remains with the guide at the contact point. Once the PL links-up with the patrol (using near/far recognition signals), he leads the patrol back to the contact point. As the patrol moves out from the RRP, the formation remains tight to facilitate transition into a dispersed file once reaching the passage point.

When the PL returns to the contact point with the remainder of the patrol, he links-up with the guide and the navigator (using near/far recognition signals). The guide then leads the patrol from the contact point to the passage point and through the barrier plan. The patrol transitions into a dispersed file when moving through the passage lane. At the passage point, on the enemy side of the barrier plan, the PL and one Marine for security count all members into the passage lane to ensure that all are accounted for and that no enemy infiltrators attempt to slip in with the patrol. Once inside friendly lines, the PL provides the forward unit commander with a SALUTE/SPOT report regarding the terrain in the immediate vicinity and any enemy encountered during the patrol.

The PL takes the patrol to the S-2 for the patrol debrief.

Patrol Debrief

Introduction

This topic outlines the purpose, importance and what consists of a patrol debrief. Though an array of patrolling techniques and procedures exists, those discussed within this handout are the doctrinal baseline for the conduct of a patrol.

Debriefing

When the patrol returns, the Patrol Leader as well as the entire unit upon the discretion of the commander will conduct a debrief with the commander. Necessary information is recovered with the commander's needs and patrol's mission in mind. Information that should be passed includes primary information requirements which depend on the needs and desires of the commander. The debriefing should be conducted as soon as possible following the patrol's return, while information is still fresh in the patrol members' minds.

In addition to debriefing with the commander, the patrol should also conduct a debrief at all battalion or company levels. At a minimum a debrief should be conducted with an Intel representative whether it be at the company or battalion level. This does not preclude the Patrol Leader to pass a relevant information to any of the S shops if need be. All relevant information must be passed on so that information can be analyzed and disseminated to other friendly units in the area. This is the only way to gain a better understanding of not only the enemy but of the area of operation that the friendly unit is operating in. The patrol should pass on a complete account of everything of military importance that the patrol observed or encountered while on the assigned mission. These reports should not be restricted to information about the enemy, but also should include information about the terrain, newly discovered roads, trails, swamps, streams and communication problems. (Reference MCWP 3-11.3, Chapter 14.) To wage combat successfully, a commander must have accurate, detailed, and timely information about the enemy, the terrain, and adjacent friendly units. Well-trained scouts and well-led patrols are among the most effective tools the commander has to acquire the necessary information.

Patrol Critique

The Patrol Leader should hold a critique for constructive criticism. The critique is an excellent time to prepare for future patrols by reviewing lessons learned as a result of the patrol. The patrol should be able to recognize what they need to ultimately improve on for future operations. If these things are brought out following a patrol the squad should not make the same mistake twice and ultimately become a better trained and cohesive unit.

Summary

We have discussed patrolling as a skill that every unit must master. Regardless of Military Occupational Specialty, all units will be faced with the need to execute a patrolling mission at some point during combat operations. As a result, every Marine should understand the basics of patrolling.

References

Reference Number or Author	Reference Title
MCWP 3-11.2	Marine Rifle Squad
MCWP 3-11.3	Scouting and Patrolling
MCIP 3-11.01A	Infantry Company Operations
FM 7-8	Infantry Squad and Platoon
SH 21-76B	US Army Ranger Handbook

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term or Acronym	Definition or Identification
ADDRAC	**A**lert, **D**irection, **D**escription, **R**ange, **A**ssignment, **C**ontrol
APL	Patrol Sergeant
BAMCIS	**B**egin the planning, **A**rrange reconnaissance/make coordination, **M**ake reconnaissance, **C**omplete the plan, **I**ssue the order, **S**upervise
CEOI	Communications electronic operating instructions
COC	Combat Operations Center
CSS	Combat Service Support
EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal
EPW	Enemy Prisoner of War
FSC	Fire support coordinator
FUC	Forward Unit Coordination
GOTWA	Five-point contingency plan: G: Where he is **g**oing; O: **O**thers he is taking; T: **T**ime he will be gone; W: **W**hat to do if he doesn't come back; A: **A**ctions on enemy contact
GPS	Global positioning system
IR	Information requirements

Notes