Chapter 12

Rear Operations

"The single, most significant rear operations threat to U.S. forces ... the 'Battle of the Bulge.' During the breakthrough, German combat and diversionary forces threatened U.S. command post and logistic areas causing US support units and personnel to become deeply involved in the fighting."

FM 90-14, Rear battle, June 1985

Rear operations ensure freedom of maneuver and continuity of operations. Rear operations are conducted using the basic tenets of Army operations discussed in Chapter 2.

REAR AREA THREAT

Enemy forces may threaten rear areas during operations. Their purpose is to seize and maintain the initiative while degrading or eliminating a unit's flexibility and capability to sustain close operations. Rear-area activities are the most lucrative targets for enemy NBC use. Disruption of logistical operations by the use of NBC weapons is an integral part of enemy tactics. Attacking our sustainment nodes weakens main battle area force effectiveness, places persistent chemicals out of an enemy's immediate maneuver, and permits subsequent rapid and deep penetrations to achieve their operational objectives. To achieve these aims, threat activities in rear areas will target key critical support and logistic facilities and units with NBC and conventional weapons. These areas will include—

- Special weapon storage sites and delivery systems.
- Command and control facilities.
- Air defense artillery sites.
- Airfields.
- Seaports.
- Main supply routes.

Levels of Threat

Three levels of threat activity define planning rear operations. These levels focus on the nature of the friendly response required to defeat the threat.

- Level I threats are those that can be defeated by base or base cluster self-defense measures. Examples of a level I threat are—
  - Enemy--controlled agent activities.
  - Sabotage by enemy sympathizers.
  - Terrorist activities.
- Level II threats are those that are beyond base or base cluster self-defense capabilities and can be defeated by response forces, normally MPs with supporting fires. Examples of a level II threat are—
  - Diversionary and sabotage operations conducted by unconventional/special forces.
  - Raid, ambush, and recon operations conducted by small combat units.
  - Special or Conventional warfare missions.

Both Threat level I and II forces are capable of using CB weapons against rear-area units.

- Level III threats are those that necessitate committing a tactical combat force. Examples of a level III threat are—
  - Heliborne operations helicopter-home operations.

Contents

- Airborne operations.
- Amphibious operations.
- Ground force operations (for example, mechanized unit linkup with smaller airborne and assault units).
- infiltration operations.

These threat activities will not occur in a specific order nor is there a necessary interrelationship between levels. Rear areas may face one or all threat level activities at one time. Additionally, some level I and level II threat activities will likely begin well ahead of general hostilities.

In addition to introducing ground forces into rear areas, enemy doctrine integrates tactical air force and attack helicopter strikes; the delivery of long-range artillery, missiles, and rockets; and radio electronic combat into their deep operations planning.

Meeting the Rear Area Threat

The rear operations commander commands and controls the planning and execution of rear operations. The rear operations commandera t division is the ADC-S; at corps, the deputy corps commander; and at EAC, the theater army commander. The theater army commander usually delegates coordinating responsibilities for rear operations to the ASCC who in turn delegates to his ASG commanders. The rear operations commander exercises his rear operations responsibilities through the rear command post (CP) at corps and division. At EAC, the TA, ASCC, and ASG commanders exercise their responsibilities **through their respective** operations centers.

INTEGRATION OF NBC DEFENSE INTO REAR OPERATIONS

The three fundamentals of NBC defense discussed in Chapter 4 must be integrated throughout all CS and CSS operations in the rear area.

Contamination avoidance and control are key to reducing the effects of the NBC battlefield. Since rear-area activities make the most lucrative targets, they use the passive measures of contamination avoidance before hostilities commence to minimize the effects of NBC attacks. Once NBC weapons have been used, units implement contamination control that encompasses decisions to limit the spread **of** contamination and reduce or eliminate its effect on sustained operations. Further, systems warning, reporting, locating, and identifying NBC hazards are emplaced to give indication of presence or absence of these hazards and what type hazard is present in order to determine duration and recognize symptoms.

Protection and decon measures must be taken when NBC contamination is unavoidable. Individual soldiers and units upgrade their MOPP level and seek collective protection for rest and relief. Collective protection must be provided to critical functions, such as operations cells and medical treatment facilities. Decon operations reduce the immediate NBC hazards and bring a unit back to some degree of mission effectiveness. Decon also may allow troops to reduce their MOPP level and operate in a contamination-free environment. Protection and decon need to be integrated into all work and rest and relief activities.

SYNCHRONIZATION OF SUSTAINMENT

The CSS cell of the rear CP plans and directs sustainment operations throughout the rear area. Synchronization of sustainment with the commander's concept of operation is critical to the success of close and deep operations. Rear operations ensure that sustainment is not degraded and do not limit the commander's freedom of maneuver while maintaining continuity of operations under NBC conditions. Task organization of chemical units supporting rear operations should be tailored to IPB and vulnerability analyses and keyed to each phase of the battle. The division chemical officer provides advice on coordinating US and host nation assets at critical times to maintain sustainment. NBC recon, decon, and smoke units, controlled by a chemical battalion working with the rear CP operations cell, and tactical combat forces (TCFs) support sustainment throughout the rear.

To the degree possible, CSS facilities are dispersed to minimize the effect of enemy NBC attacks. The CSS cell at corps and below and the ASCC/ASG at EAC must anticipate, plan, and coordinate the relocation of CSS units in the rear area as situation changes.

Coordination with many organizations is critical. Terrain management and response to NBC events influence a broad range of logistical activities. Key operators include transportation, supply, engineer, and military police. Coordination with S3/G3s (higher, lower, and adjacent) is imperative to assess the impact on present and future operations. Also, the rear CP coordinates through the G5 for HNS for sustainment operations in the rear area.

INTELLIGENCE

In the division and corps, the operations cell of the rear CP is responsible for the rear-ares IPB. The rear CP operations cell uses IPB products from the division, corps, or TA it supports. Combined with information gained from transiting units, it prepares intelligence updates and identifies likely enemy targets and intentions. This estimate, along with information on the current enemy situation, is disseminated to all units in the rear area; it forms the basis for planning and conducting the rear-area NBC defense operations.

One of the functions of the rear CP operations cell is to gather and disseminate early warning information regarding enemy air activities. It collects air threat early warning information from the division, corps, and EAC air defense early warning nets; Army airspace command and control element at each echelon; Air Force tactical air control party airlift element; and other Air Force control teams that may be operating in the rear. Once the warning is received, the rear CP operations cell immediately notifies the tactical combat force, response forces, and all bases and base clusters in the rear area.

BASE AND BASE CLUSTER OPERATIONS

Each base and base cluster commander integrates NBC defense considerations designed to detect, defeat, and minimize the effects of enemy NBC attacks. He bases this integration on the IPB provided by the rear CP, his own IPB, the current intelligence situation, and an analysis of his unit(s) mission requirements. To maximize unit mission accomplishment, defense plans must remain flexible. This flexibility will allow for differing degrees of preparation based on the probability of enemy activities. Base cluster commanders will basically rely upon the NBC assets from their cluster units.

Plans

Defense plans include analyses of critical functions and priorities for NBC survivability actions. NBC recon, decon, smoke, and flame operations are integrated for base cluster defense plans. Obscurants may be used to improve survivability during windows of increased vulnerability, such as imminent air attacks, command post displacements, or critical operations like fast refuel, ammunition transfers, or MSR repair. Reconstitution sites, staging areas, or loading activities by base clusters are more survivable and less detectable under obscurant screens. Obscurant hazes and self-defense smoke use are best for rear operations in order not to complicate mobility and coordination of logistic actions. Some trade-offs need to be made between the level of increased survivability with the logistical cost of sustaining the smoke screens. Large-area smoke screens restrict enemy air-landing zones and, along with deceptive screens, enhance rear-area missions. These plans should also include—

- Use of observation posts/listening posts and/or patrols.
- Assignment of defense sectors to subordinates.
- Integration of available weapons into the defense.
- Identification of unit response forces.
- Air, ground, and NBC attack alarm systems.
- Obstacle planning.
- Area damage control.
- Internal air defense measures.
- Fire support planning.

Defense plans include MP units providing area security and/or battlefield circulation control in the vicinity of the base or base cluster. The rear operations cell integrates those into the overall rear defense and the support plans. Defense plans will be coordinated with adjacent bases and base clusters to maximize mutual support and to prevent killing each other. Flame is used to complement defense plans and restrict use of the LZ/DZ.

Operations

Units operating in the base or base cluster submit requests for NBC recon, decon, and smoke support to the base or base cluster commander. Some bases and base clusters may have chemical units located with them.

Base or base cluster commanders will establish an operations center capable of maintaining 24-hour communications with the rear operations cell for intelligence, tactical information, and/or direction and with their parent organization for unit mission guidance. Additionally, base or base cluster commanders will establish communications with and have operational control to direct defensive operations of other units occupying terrain within their base or base cluster.

Large fixed sites, such as ports, airfields, and railheads, require thorough base or base cluster defense planning. These sites are likely to be

pretargeted before hostilities begin. See FM 341 or FM 90-12 for fixed site planning considerations.

Mission-essential civilians should to be identified so that they can be given NBC equipment, such as MOPP gear, and trained to use it. Individual, such as forklift operation, vehicle mechanics, and dispatchers, who are critical to mission accomplishment are mission essential. Bases will normally deny entry to non-mission-essential civilians during wartime. However, the commander is responsible for ensuring NBC protection of official civilian visitors to the base.

WARNING AND REPORTING

Units in the base or base cluster submit their NBC reports to the base or base cluster operations cell and to their parent unit simultaneously. They also warn adjacent units within the base or base cluster. The base or base cluster operation cell submits its NBC reports to its next higher headquarters rear CP operations cell at corps or the rear CP at division. The base or base cluster operation cell warns adjacent bases or base clusters, host nation counterparts, cluster units, and sister services. See Chapter 3 for discussion of the NBCWRS.

AREA DAMAGE CONTROL OPERATIONS

Area damage control (ADC) operations facilitate the return of base or base clusters to mission capability with effective planning, establishment of specific responsibilities, and use of all available assets. ADC forces (organic or support) focus on a rapid response to aid in a base or base cluster's recovery following an attack. ADC measures are those taken before, during, and after hostile action or natural disasters to reduce the probability of damage, to minimize its effects, and to aid in the continuation or reestablishment of normal operations (see FM 90-23 for the list of these measures). The rear CP operations cell, along with their associated NBCC, will designate the response to bases or base clusters who require additional chemical support. Response may include HNS. Once designated, ADC forces must coordinate with supported bases or base clusters to assist in recovery. ADC resources should not be expended for removing rubble and debris that have no bearing on mission accomplishment.

The commander's concept and intent, the rear-area IPB, and the rear CP operations cell operations officer's priorities drive ADC force planning. ADC forces meld this information into their own IPB and position themselves in the area where they can beat provide timely support to threatened high-priority **facilities.**

The TA commander is responsible for ADC in the COMMZ and establishes overall priorities. The TA deputy chief of staff for operations sets and prioritizes overall ADC requirements relative to the TA's mission and capabilities. He establishes these priorities in coordination with the senior theater component commands, supported area commands, and supporting TA functional commands. The ASCC commanders and ASG commanders are responsible for planning ADC operations that use assets within their areas. They plan ADC operations through their respective rear CP operations cell. Senior commanders of bases and installations within the COMMZ coordinate requirements for ADC with the TA commander. At EAC, overall NBC fictions (comprising NBC defense, decon, and smoke) are normally the responsibility of the host nation. However, chemical units are available to all AASCS and ASGs to provide NBC defense, decon, and smoke support to all units in the ASCC area of responsibility. See FM 90-23 for further discussion of ADC operations.