

CHAPTER 7

PATROLLING

Section I. INTRODUCTION

7-1. GENERAL

A patrol is a mission. The unit that has the mission organizes for the conduct of the patrol. When organizing for the patrol, unit integrity is maintained as much as possible; for example, when a squad is tasked to conduct a patrol, the squad leader becomes the leader of the patrol.

Mechanized infantry units are capable of conducting all types of mounted and dismounted combat patrols. While mounted combat patrols are common missions for mechanized infantry platoons, mounted reconnaissance patrols are normally scout platoon missions. However, infantry platoon leaders must be prepared to conduct mounted reconnaissance patrols if the scout platoon is not available.

There are two categories of patrols:

Reconnaissance (area or zone) patrols collect information or confirm or disprove the accuracy of information previously gained.

Combat (ambush, security, or raid) patrols provide security and harass, destroy or capture enemy troops, equipment, and installations. A combat patrol also collects and reports information as part of its mission.

7-2. ORGANIZING FOR A PATROL

A patrol generally consists of a headquarters and the elements needed for the mission.

The leader of the patrol must decide what elements and teams are needed, select men for those elements and teams, and decide what weapons and equipment to provide. He should use his unit's normal organization and chain of command (squad leaders and platoon sergeant) to man the patrol. A combat patrol may be organized like this: a headquarters; the 1st and 2d Squads as the assault element; the 3d Squad as the security element; and the machine gunners, Dragon gunners, and the platoon sergeant as the support element.

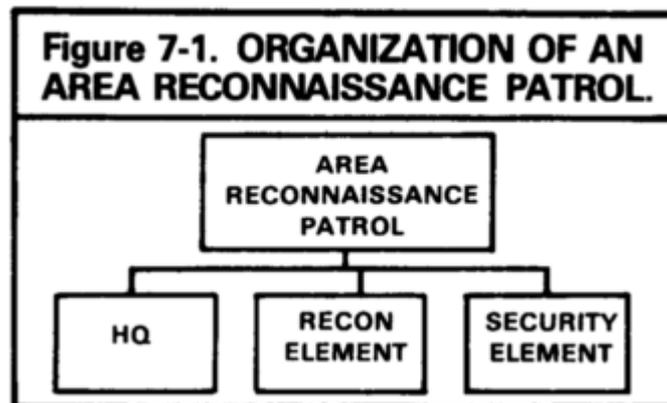
Headquarters. The headquarters of a patrol consists of the leader, assistant leader, radiotelephone operators (RATELO), forward observer, and any other troops such as engineers required to control and support the patrol. In a small patrol (three or four men), the leader may be the only man in the headquarters.

Elements. Elements are the subordinate organizations in the patrol tailored to the patrol's mission.

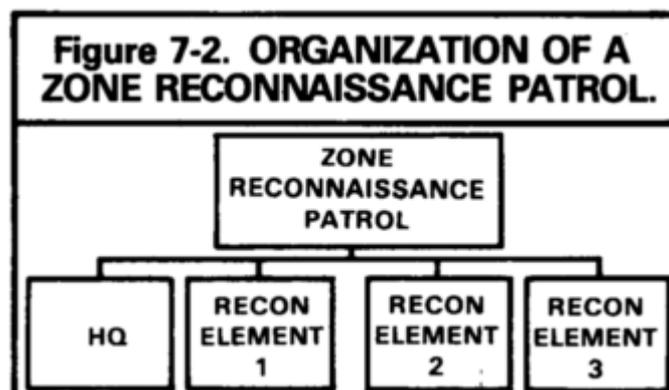
Reconnaissance patrol. A two-, three-, or four-man reconnaissance patrol is not organized into elements. Instead, it operates as a single unit providing its own security.

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In an area reconnaissance, the patrol is organized into a reconnaissance element and a security element.



In a zone reconnaissance, the patrol is organized into several reconnaissance elements.

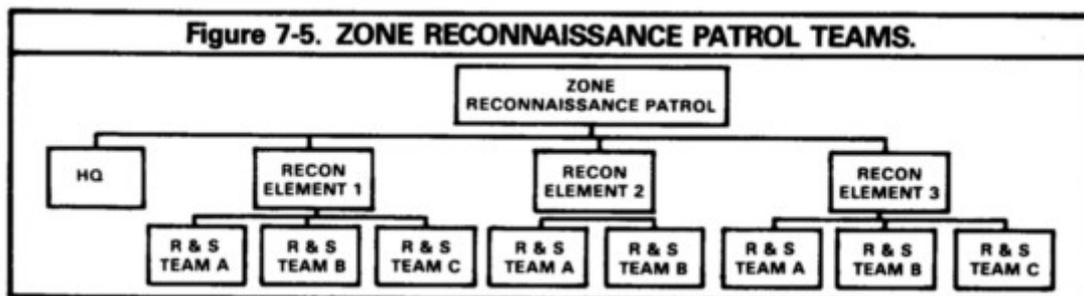
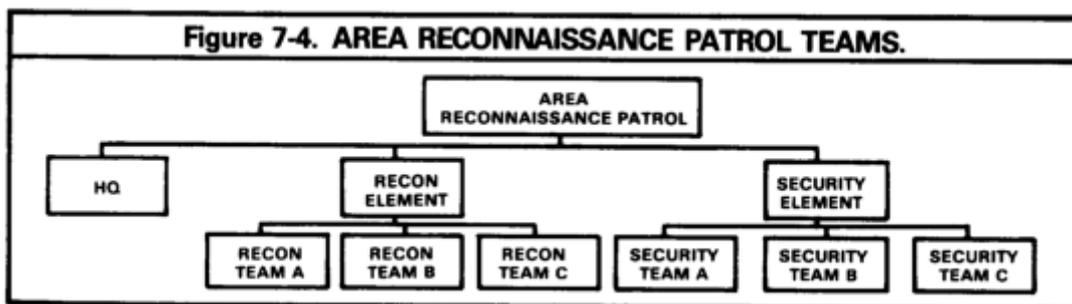


Combat patrol. A combat patrol is normally organized into an assault element, a security element, and a support element. At times, the support element may be omitted by keeping automatic weapons in the assault element.



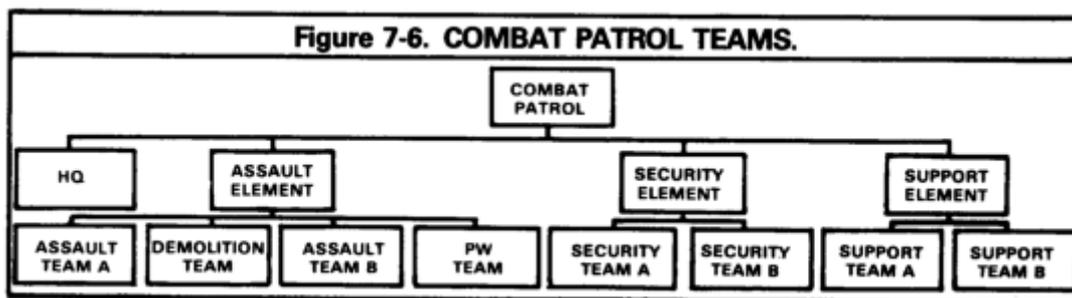
Each element of a patrol may be further organized into the teams needed to perform essential tasks.

Reconnaissance patrol elements are organized into teams as necessary to accomplish the elements' tasks. Reconnaissance elements may be organized into several reconnaissance teams for an area reconnaissance or organized into reconnaissance and security teams for a zone reconnaissance. Security teams are organized as required to secure the objective area.



Combat patrol elements are organized into teams as necessary to accomplish the elements' tasks. The internal teams facilitate the execution of the mission with minimum on-the-spot instructions. They may include litter, search, and prisoner teams. Special purpose teams may also be organized and attached to the patrol, such as scout dog and engineer demolition teams.

A team may be designated for either type of patrol. It consists of a compass man who continually checks direction, a point man who follows the directions of the compass man and provides security and a pace man who keeps a running count of his 100-meter pace to verify the distance traveled.



7-3. SELECTING MEN, WEAPONS, AND EQUIPMENT

Men. Members of the patrol usually come from the leader's platoon or squad, except when--

the headquarters dispatching a patrol provides special troops, such as demolition specialists, engineers, interpreters, guides, scout dog teams, and FOs; and

the leader's company provides aidmen and messengers.

Weapons. The weapons and ammunition selected are based on what is needed to do the job. Because of bulk or weight, the difficulty of carrying some weapons when dismounted must be considered. The value of the weapon to the accomplishment of the mission is measured against the difficulty in carrying it.

Equipment. In addition to the equipment commonly used by every patrol, the leader selects equipment to aid in control, for routine use in the objective area, and to use en route.

Aiding in control. This may include whistles, flares, radios, flashlights, and luminous tape.

Common use. This is equipment normally carried on all patrols, or that which is common to all members of the patrol. It may include the uniform to wear and individual equipment to carry. An SOP should prescribe routine uniform and equipment to save time in planning and preparing for a patrol.

Use in the objective area. This may include such items as explosives, binoculars, ropes to bind prisoners, and flashlights.

Use en route. Equipment to help reach and return from the objective may include maps, binoculars, flashlights, boats, stream-crossing equipment, compasses, and wire cutters.

The leader must determine how much water and food is required. Rations are carried only when needed.

Section II. PREPARATION FOR A PATROL

7-4. GENERAL

When given an order to lead a patrol, the leader starts his troop leading procedure as described in [chapter 3](#).

The warning order is issued to all members of the patrol.

7-5. COORDINATION

Coordination is continuous throughout patrol planning and preparation. Even though some coordination is done for the leader of the patrol, the leader should still check to be sure that nothing is overlooked.

Before leaving the place where he gets the OPORD, the leader coordinates what he can. The place will probably be a battalion or company command post (CP) where communications are better and key personnel are available to help in the coordination.

The leader should prepare a checklist and carry it during his coordination so as not to overlook anything that may be vital to his mission. Some items may need to be coordinated with more than one staff section. The following [examples](#) are things which the leader must coordinate.

S2.

Changes in the enemy situation.

Special equipment requirements.

S3.

Changes in the friendly situation.

Route selection, landing zone selection.

Linkup procedure.

Transportation.

Resupply (in conjunction with S4).

Signal plan--call signs, frequencies, code words, pyrotechnics, and challenges and passwords.

Departure and reentry of friendly lines (see [below](#)).

Other units in the area.

Attachment of specialized troops (engineer, demolition team, scout dog team, FOs, interpreters).

Rehearsal areas with terrain similar to objective site. Also, security of the rehearsal area; use of blanks, pyrotechnics, and live ammunition; fortifications available, time the area is available, and transportation.

PLATOON FO OR COMPANY FIST CHIEF.

Fire support on the objective.

Fire support along routes to and from the objective (include alternate routes).

FRIENDLY FORWARD UNIT.

The leader identifies himself and his unit, size of patrol, time(s) of departure and return, and area of the patrol's operation (if it is within the forward unit's area of operation).

The forward unit provides information on terrain, known or suspected enemy positions, likely enemy ambush sites, and latest enemy activity. It also furnishes detailed information on friendly positions; obstacle locations; fire plan; and support the unit can furnish, such as fire support, litter teams, guides, communications, and reaction units. The signal plan, to include the signals to be used upon reentry, and the procedure to be used by the patrol and the guide during departure and reentry are also provided by the forward unit. Also, location(s) of dismount point (if used), initial rally point, departure point, and reentry point is furnished.

ADJACENT PATROL(S).

Identification of the patrol.

Mission.

Route.

Fire plan.

Signal plan.

Planned times and points for departure and reentry.

Any information that either patrol may have about the enemy.

The leader must make either a map, ground, or aerial reconnaissance before completing his plan.

7-6. COMPLETE THE PLAN

After the warning order has been issued and reconnaissance has been made, and while members of the patrol are preparing themselves and their equipment, the leader completes his plan. He first assigns essential tasks to be performed by elements, teams, and men. He then plans other phases of the unit's mission.

Tasks in the Objective Area. Essential tasks in the objective area are assigned. The leader plans how elements, teams, and men are to perform their tasks.

Other Tasks. Tasks are assigned and planned which will help the patrol reach the objective and return. These tasks include navigation, security during movement and halts, actions at danger areas, actions on enemy contact, and water crossing.

Times of Departure and Return. Times of departure and return are based on the amount of time needed to:

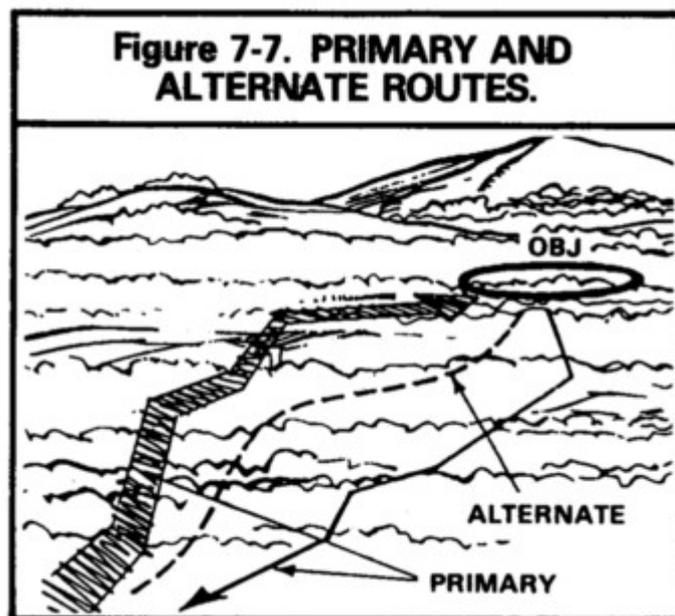
Reach the objective. This is determined by considering the distance, terrain, anticipated

speed of movement, friendly and enemy situation, and (if applicable) the time at or by which the mission must be accomplished.

Accomplish essential tasks in the objective area. This includes the leaders' reconnaissance and movement of elements and teams into position, as well as the accomplishment of the unit's mission.

Return to a friendly area. This may be difficult to determine because casualties prisoners, or captured equipment may slow the patrol. The use of a different return route may change the time needed.

Primary and Alternate Routes. The leader selects the primary route to and from the objective. The return route should be different from the route to the objective. He also selects an alternate route which may be used either to or from the objective. The alternate route is used when the unit has made contact with the enemy on the primary route. It may also be used when the leader knows or suspects that the patrol has been detected.



Rally Points. A rally point is a place where a patrol can reassemble and reorganize if dispersed during movement; or temporarily halt to reorganize and prepare for actions at an objective; or temporarily halt to prepare to depart from friendly lines; or temporarily halt to prepare to reenter friendly lines. The leader should pick rally points either during the patrol or by a map study before the patrol. Those picked from a map are **tentative** and will be so until confirmed on the ground.

The leader should look for places that:

- Are large enough for assembly of the patrol.**
- Are easily recognized.**
- Have cover and concealment.**
- Are defensible for a short time.**
- Are away from normal routes of troop movement.**

He must:

Select an initial rally point (RP) (on the friendly side of a forward unit's lines). An initial rally point is where a patrol rallies if dispersed before departing friendly lines or before reaching an en route rally point. It is located within friendly lines.

Select en route rally points on both the near and far side of danger areas. An en route rally point is where a patrol rallies if dispersed en route to or from its objective. There may be several en route rally points. They are between friendly lines and an objective along a patrol's route.

Select an objective rally point (ORP). An objective rally point is where a patrol halts to prepare for actions at its objective. It is also a point to which a patrol returns after its actions at its objective. It must be near a patrol's objective, but there is no set distance to it from the objective. It should be far enough from the objective so that the patrol's activities will not be detected by the enemy.

Select a reentry rally point on the enemy side of a forward unit's lines. A reentry rally point is where a patrol halts to prepare to reenter friendly lines. It is short of friendly lines and out of sight and sound of friendly observation posts.

Rehearsals and Inspections. These are vital to proper preparation for a patrol. They must be well planned and conducted even though the men are experienced in patrolling. Coordination is made with the commander or S3 for use of a rehearsal area resembling the objective area. Plans must provide for inspections by element and team leaders as well as by the leader of the patrol.

Signals. The signals to be used on the patrol must be planned and rehearsed. Signals may be needed to lift or shift supporting fire, to start an assault, to order withdrawal from the objective, to signal "all clear," and to stop and start movement of the patrol. Visual and audible signals such as arm-and-hand signals, flares, voice, whistles, radios and infrared equipment may be used. All signals must be known by all patrol members.

Communications With Higher Headquarters. The plan must include radio call signs, primary and alternate frequencies, times to report, and codes.

Challenge and Password. The challenge and password from the communications electronics operation instructions (CEOI) should not be used beyond the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA). The leader may devise his own challenge and password system to be used beyond the FEBA. An example of this is the odd-number system. Any odd number can be used. If the leader specified 11 as the odd number, the challenge could be any number between 1 and 10. The password would be the number which, when added to the challenge, equals 11 (challenge, 8; password, 3).

Chain of Command. Changes to the chain of command given in the warning order are included in the order.

Location of Leaders. The location of the leaders of the patrol is planned for all phases of the patrol--during movement, at danger area, and at the objective.

The leader plans to be where he can best control the patrol during each phase.

The assistant leader may be given a special job for each phase of the patrol. He may help the

leader control the patrol by being where he can best take command, if required.

Some places the assistant leader may be during actions in the objective area are:

On a raid or ambush, with the support element.

On an area reconnaissance, in the objective rally point.

On a zone reconnaissance, with a reconnaissance element which has been directed to move to and establish the point at which all elements are to link up after reconnoitering.

7-7. ISSUE OPERATION ORDER

The operation order is issued in a standard sequence. Terrain models, sketches, or blackboards are used to illustrate the plan. Sketches to show planned actions can be drawn in the sand, dirt, or snow.

Personnel may make notes but should hold questions until the order is completed. This prevents interruption of the leader's train of thought.

Figure 7-8. OPERATION ORDER FORMAT WITH PATROL CONSIDERATIONS.

1. SITUATION.

a. Enemy forces.

Identification.

Location.

Activity.

b. Friendly forces.

Mission of next higher unit.

Location and planned actions of units on right and left.

Mission and routes of other (adjacent) patrols.

Fire support available.

c. Attachments and detachments.

2. MISSION.

3. EXECUTION.

a. Concept of operation (scheme of maneuver and fire support plan).

b. Subunit tasks (elements/teams/men).

c. Coordinating instructions.

(1) Time of departure and return.

(2) Movement techniques and order of movement.

(3) Route (primary and alternate).

(4) Departure and reentry of lines.

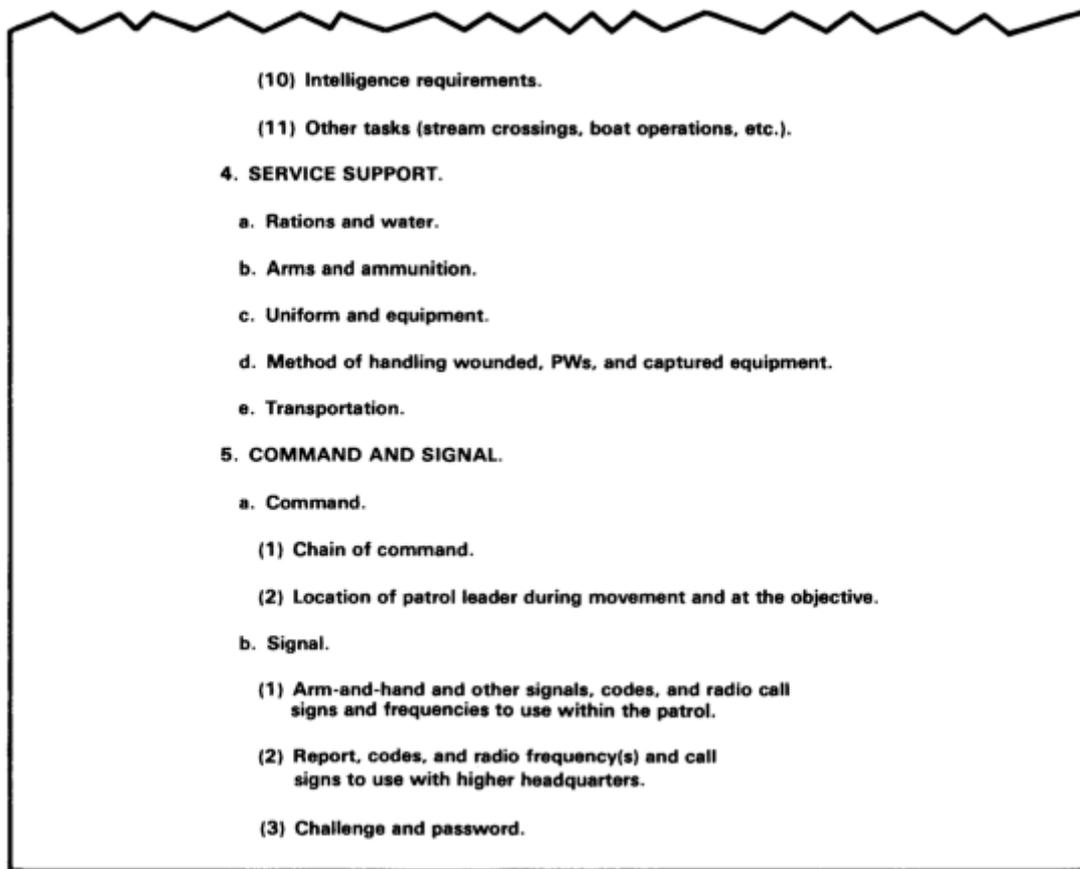
(5) Rally points and action at rally points.

(6) Action at danger areas.

(7) Action on enemy contact.

(8) Action at the objective.

(9) Fire support (if not already covered).



7-8. INSPECT AND REHEARSE

Inspections determine the patrol's physical and mental state of readiness. Inspections before rehearsals insure completeness and correctness of uniform and equipment. Men are questioned to see if each one knows--

the plan;

what he is to do and when he is to do it;

what others are to do;

and challenges and passwords, signals, codes, radio call signs, frequencies, and reporting times.

Rehearsals help insure the proficiency of the patrol. They let the leader check plans and make any changes needed. The suitability of equipment is verified. It is through well-directed rehearsals that men become familiar with what they must do when on patrol.

If the patrol is to be at night, it is advisable to hold both day and night rehearsals. Terrain similar to that over which the patrol will operate should be used. When time permits, all actions are rehearsed. When time is short, only the most critical actions are rehearsed. Actions to take place in the objective area are critical and should always be rehearsed.

A good way to rehearse is to have the leader walk and talk the whole patrol through each action. He describes the actions of elements, teams, and men, and he has them perform these actions. In this dry run, men take their positions in formations at reduced distances to get the

"feel" of the patrol. When the different actions are clear to all concerned, a complete (normal speed) rehearsal is held with the whole patrol. This is a wet run. As many dry runs and wet runs are conducted as deemed necessary to gain proficiency. When possible, element and team leaders rehearse their units separately before the final rehearsal of the entire patrol.

Section III. COMMON PATROLLING TASKS

7-9. GENERAL

Soldiers who patrol must know a variety of tasks. Although not every patrol requires the same tasks, those discussed here are common to most patrols.

7-10. DEPARTURE FROM FRIENDLY LINES

The departure of a patrol through another unit's lines can be confusing and dangerous if not well coordinated. The leader must coordinate the departure with the forward unit commander.

When the patrol is ready to conduct the passage, it moves up and halts at the initial rally point.

Before passing through the forward unit, the leader again checks with that unit's commander to learn of recent enemy activity or situation changes that may require adjustment in the patrol plan.

A guide from the forward unit then leads the patrol through his unit and through wire and other obstacles forward of the unit.

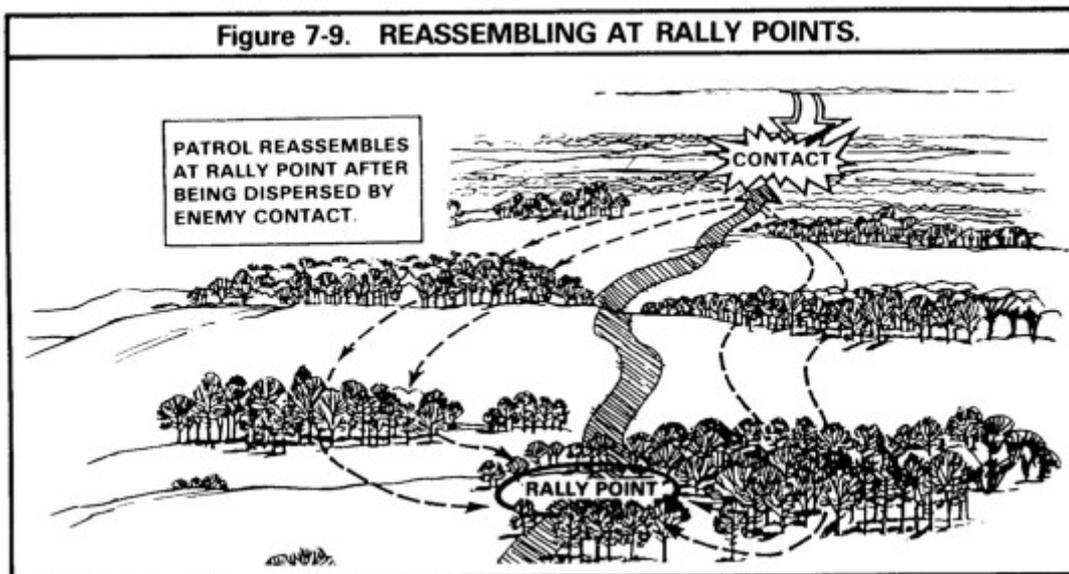
The forward unit may have OPs to its front that can help secure the patrol as it moves out. The patrol moves beyond the range of the friendly unit's small area and final protective fire, and halts briefly to adjust to sights and sounds of the battlefield.

7-11. USE OF RALLY POINTS

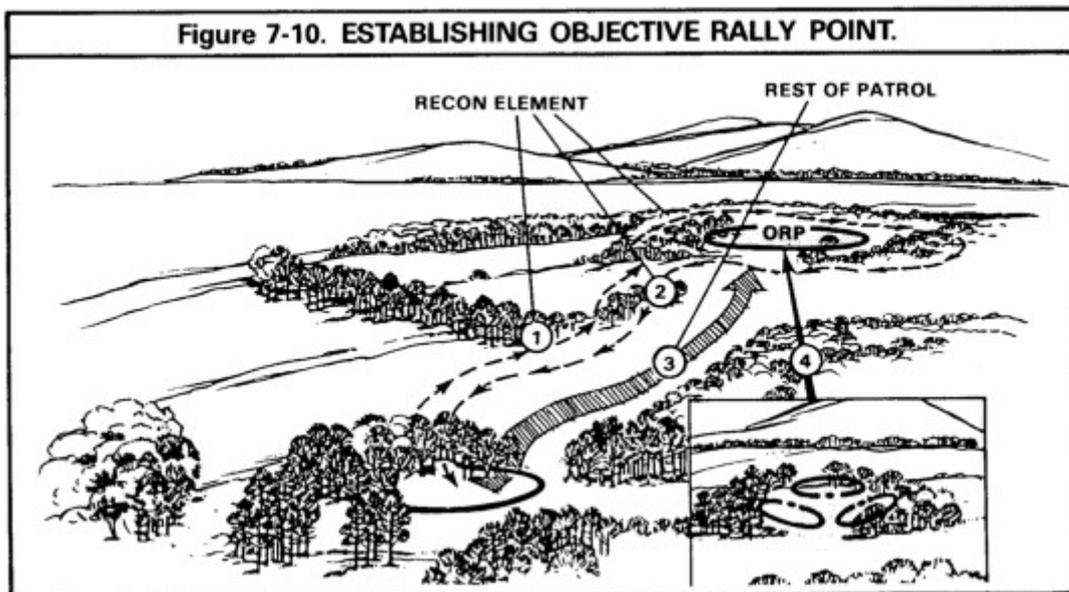
Rally Points Along the Route. As the patrol moves along its route, the leader will select and announce rally points, or confirm points that were earlier selected from a map. If dispersed between rally points en route, the patrol rallies at the last rally point it passed. Actions to be taken at rally points must be planned in detail and briefed during the patrol order. The plan must provide for the continuation of the patrol as long as there is a good chance to accomplish the mission. Two examples of plans for actions at rally points are:

Assembled personnel will wait until a set number of men arrive and then go on with the mission under control of the senior man present. This plan is good for a reconnaissance patrol when two or three men may be able to accomplish the mission.

Assembled personnel will wait for a set period, after which the senior man present will decide whether to continue the patrol or not, based on troops and equipment present. This may be the plan when a minimum number of men, or certain items of equipment, or both, are needed to accomplish the mission.



Objective Rally Point. The patrol halts as it nears the tentative ORP, and a reconnaissance element moves forward to see if the point is suitable as an ORP and to see that no enemy troops are near. When the leader is satisfied, two men are sent back to bring the rest of the patrol into the ORP. The patrol then sets up a perimeter for all-round security.



When the ORP is occupied and secure, the leader of the patrol, compass man, and element leaders go on a leaders' reconnaissance. Before the leader of the patrol goes, he tells the assistant leader:

Who he is taking with him.

How long he will be gone.

What to do if he fails to return.

What to do if he makes enemy contact.

What to do if the assistant leader (in the ORP) makes enemy contact.

This leader's reconnaissance is done to pinpoint the objective, to pick positions for the patrol's elements, and to get information to confirm or alter the plan. After the leaders' reconnaissance, the leaders return to the ORP to complete plans and disseminate information. While they are doing this, one or more men may stay behind to observe the objective. On a reconnaissance patrol, if the leader gets enough information about the objective during the leaders' reconnaissance, his mission is accomplished and the patrol returns to friendly lines. If he does not get enough information, the patrol reconnoiters as planned until enough information is gained to satisfy the requirement of the mission.

If the patrol is to move out of the ORP as one group, for its action at the objective, its leader may pick a release point where the patrol will separate. Each element then goes on its own route from the release point to its position.

When the mission is accomplished, the patrol assembles in the ORP and disseminates information to all personnel.

7-12. DANGER AREAS

Specific plans are made in advance for crossing each known danger area (an area where there is an increased chance of detection or a fight). General plans which can be quickly modified to fit the situation are made for crossing unexpected danger areas.

When moving, the patrol tries to avoid danger areas. Typical danger areas are:

Known enemy positions.

Roads and trails.

Streams.

Open areas.

To cross a danger area, a patrol must:

Designate near and far side rally points.

Secure the near side.

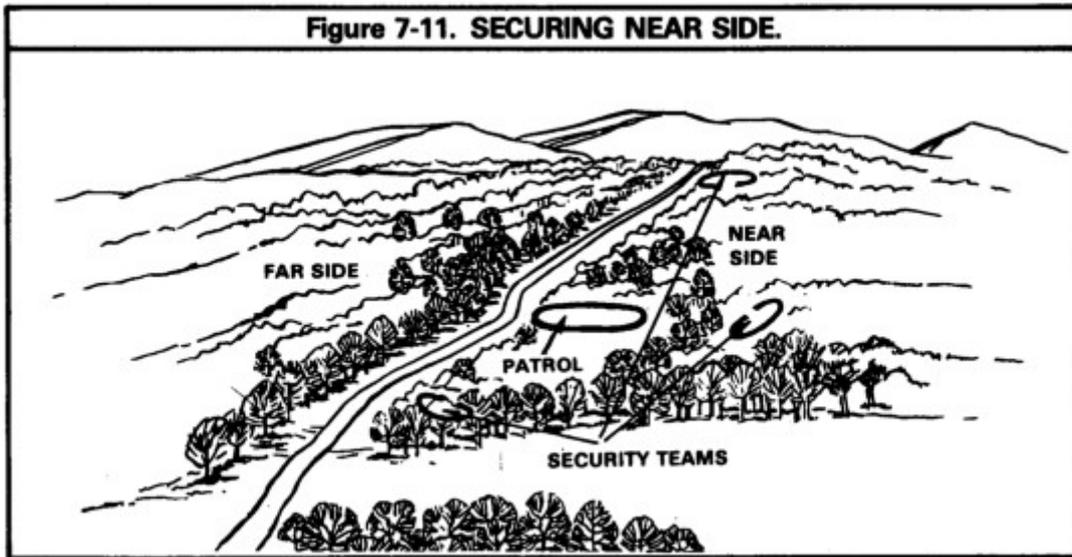
Secure the far side.

Cross the danger area.

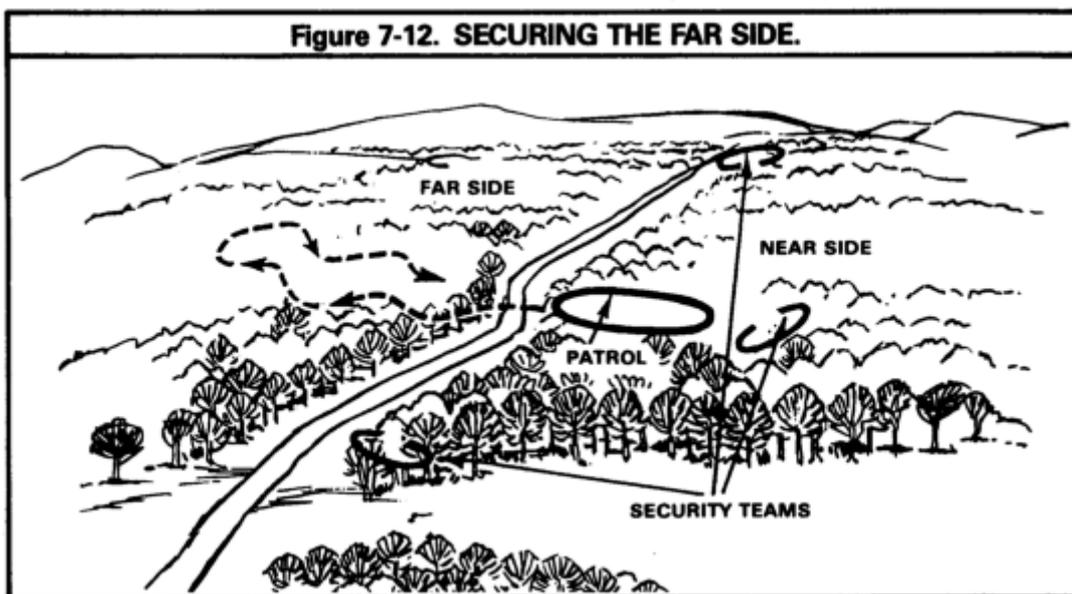
The patrol uses bounding overwatch or variations of it to cross a danger area. The leader decides how the patrol will cross based on the time he has, the size of the patrol, the size of the danger area, the fields of fire into the area, and the amount of security he can post. A small patrol may cross all at once, in pairs, or one man at a time.

A large patrol normally crosses its elements one at a time. As each element crosses, it moves to an overwatch position or to the far side rally point until told to continue movement.

Securing the near side may involve nothing more than observing. In other places, it may involve posting security teams far enough out on both flanks and to the rear of the crossing point to give warning of approaching enemy and to overwatch the crossing of the rest of the patrol.



Once flank and rear security is positioned, the danger area is crossed by a team. The team crosses quickly and reconnoiters and secures the far side of the danger area. The area secured on the far side must be large enough for full patrol deployment. When the team leader is sure the far side is safe, he sends two men back to signal the rest of the patrol to cross. When the patrol has crossed the danger area, the security teams cross and rejoin the patrol.



7-13. ACTIONS ON ENEMY CONTACT

Unless required by the mission, a patrol must strive to avoid enemy contact. If it does make unexpected contact with the enemy, it must quickly break the contact and continue its mission.

Battle Drills. Battle drills are well rehearsed plans intended to provide fast reaction to unexpected enemy contacts. Leaders should prepare battle drills for the most common situations. These drills

must stress **simplicity** (every man must be able to understand the plan and be able to carry out his part of it) and **speed of execution** (as soon as any member of the patrol recognizes a situation requiring an immediate action, he initiates the appropriate drill).

Air attack. The first man to see an aircraft shouts, AIRCRAFT, FRONT (RIGHT, LEFT, OR REAR): If the leader sees that the aircraft is making a firing run on the patrol, he hits the ground at once and shoots at the aircraft. All men follow his example.

Chance contact.

"FREEZE." This battle drill is used when a patrol, not yet seen by the enemy, sees the enemy and does not have time to take any other action. All men hold still until signaled to continue or to do something else.

"HASTY AMBUSH." This battle drill is used when a patrol, not yet seen by the enemy, sees the enemy approaching and has time to take some action other than to "FREEZE." When the signal is given to initiate the drill, all men move on line and take concealed firing positions. The leader lets the enemy pass if his patrol is not detected. If the patrol is detected the ambush is initiated.

"IMMEDIATE ASSAULT." This battle drill is used when a patrol and an enemy element of the same size or smaller see each other at the same time and at such close range that fire and movement is not feasible. The men nearest the enemy open fire and shout, CONTACT, FRONT (RIGHT, LEFT, OR REAR). The patrol moves swiftly into the assault. It stops the assault if the enemy withdraws and breaks contact. If the enemy stands and fights, the assault is carried through the enemy and movement is continued until the enemy is destroyed or contact is broken.

"CLOCK SYSTEM." This battle drill is used when a patrol and a larger enemy element see each other at the same time. The patrol must break contact or be destroyed. The direction in which the patrol is moving is always 12 o'clock. When contact is made, the leader shouts a direction and a distance to move--for example, EIGHT O'CLOCK, TWO HUNDRED. This tells the patrol to move in the direction of 8 o'clock for 200 meters. Each man must be sure to move in relation to the patrol's direction of march, not in relation to the direction of the enemy or the direction he is facing at that moment. If contact is broken, the patrol rallies at the designated distance away and continues its mission. If contact is not broken, another direction and distance is given. The process continues until contact is broken.

Ambush. If a patrol finds itself in an enemy ambush, it must get out of the kill zone or face destruction. It must take the following battle drill actions:

The men in the kill zone, without order or signal, immediately return fire and quickly move out of the kill zone by the safest way. (There is no set way to do this; it must be each man's decision for his situation.) Smoke can help conceal the men in the kill zone.

The men not in the kill zone fire to support the withdrawal of the men in the kill zone.

The patrol breaks contact and reorganizes in the last designated rally point it passed.

Indirect fire. If a patrol comes under indirect fire, the leader immediately has the patrol move out of the impact area. The men do not seek cover. By continuing to move, the patrol is more difficult to hit, and the chance of being pinned down is less.

Sniper fire. If a patrol comes under sniper fire, it immediately returns fire in the direction of the sniper. The patrol then conducts fire and movement to break contact with the sniper.

Handling Casualties and Prisoners. A patrol should have an SOP for handling casualties and prisoners. The method used must not jeopardize the mission.

Wounded are moved from the immediate area of a firefight before receiving first aid. Giving first aid during a firefight risks even more casualties.

Dead may be handled the same way as seriously wounded, except that no one is left with the body which is concealed for later pickup.

Prisoners are bound and gagged; they may be blindfolded. They may then be taken under guard to a friendly area. They may be evacuated by air, taken with the patrol, or concealed for later pickup. (See [chapter 8](#) for discussion on handling prisoners.)

7-14. REENTRY OF FRIENDLY LINES

The reentry of a patrol through another unit's lines can be confusing and dangerous if not well coordinated. The leader **must** coordinate the reentry with the friendly unit commander before the patrol leaves on its mission.

When a patrol returns to friendly lines, it stops at the reentry rally point just short of the friendly unit, out of sight and sound of OPs. The leader transmits a radio message (a prearranged code word) to tell the friendly unit that the patrol is ready to reenter. The message must be acknowledged before the patrol moves in. This is done to make sure that men of the friendly unit do not shoot at the returning patrol. If radio communication is not possible, one patrol member should contact an OP using the challenge and password. Once contact is made, the OP can then relay a message to the unit's commander. The friendly unit then sends a guide to lead the patrol through its position. The leader should pass on to the friendly unit commander anything of tactical value.

If communications are established, and the friendly unit is prepared to guide the patrol through the lines, the patrol moves forward to the reentry point. The guide and leader exchange signals to identify the patrol. Once identified, the patrol moves forward and is led through the lines by the guide. The assistant leader should stay at the reentry point and count the men going through the lines. This will insure that only the members of the patrol reenter friendly lines.

If no communications can be established, or if no OPs can be found, and if a reentry point was coordinated before the patrol's departure, the patrol can still conduct reentry. The leader takes a small security team with him to reconnoiter for the reentry point. He leaves the rest of the patrol outside of small arms range of friendly lines. He avoids probing around wire obstacles. One way to find the reentry point when visibility is poor is to have the guide from the friendly lines turn on an infrared light or a flashlight shielded with a red lens. (This must be coordinated before the patrol departs friendly lines; for example, at a predetermined time and place, the guide from the friendly unit turns on the light source [for 30 seconds] every half hour during a 3-hour period. Note that this method must be used judiciously because of the enemy's capability to detect infrared sources.) Either type light is easy to see with a starlight scope. The leader then makes contact with the guide. He then sends two men to bring the patrol forward. The guide then leads the patrol through the

lines. The assistant leader should stay at the reentry point and count the men as they go through the lines.

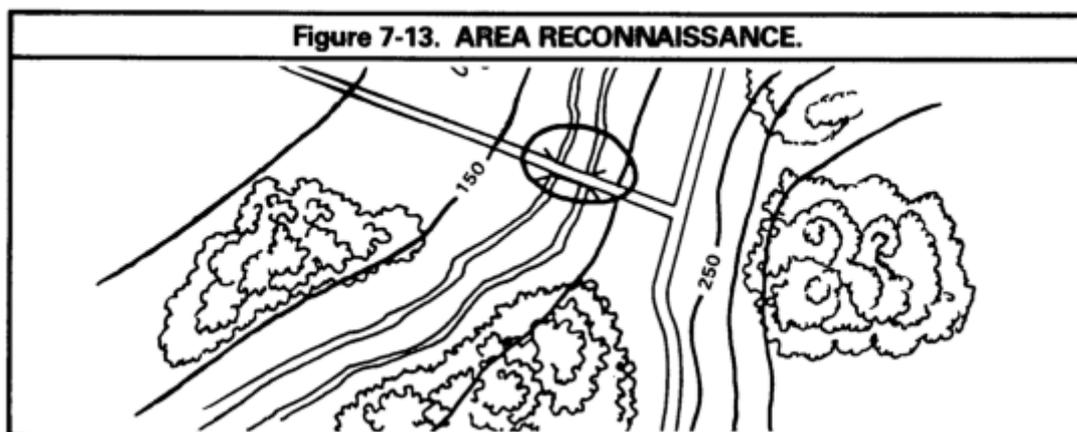
Section IV. RECONNAISSANCE PATROL

7-15. GENERAL

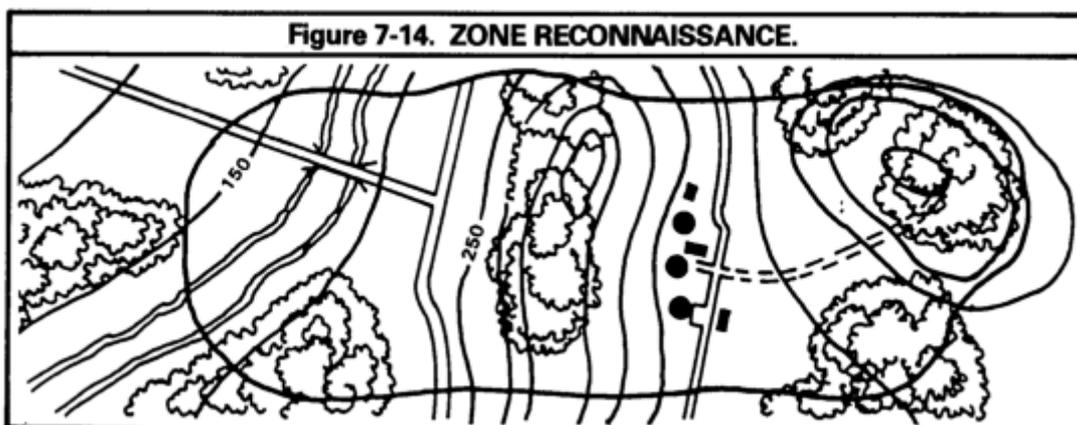
The focus of this section is on dismounted reconnaissance. Scout platoon reconnaissance missions are discussed in [FM 71-2](#) and [FM 17-95](#).

7-16. TYPES OF RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS

Area Reconnaissance. This is a reconnaissance conducted to obtain information concerning a specific location and the area immediately around it (for example, road junction, hill, bridge, enemy position). The location of the objective is designated by either grid coordinates or a map overlay with a boundary line encircling the area.

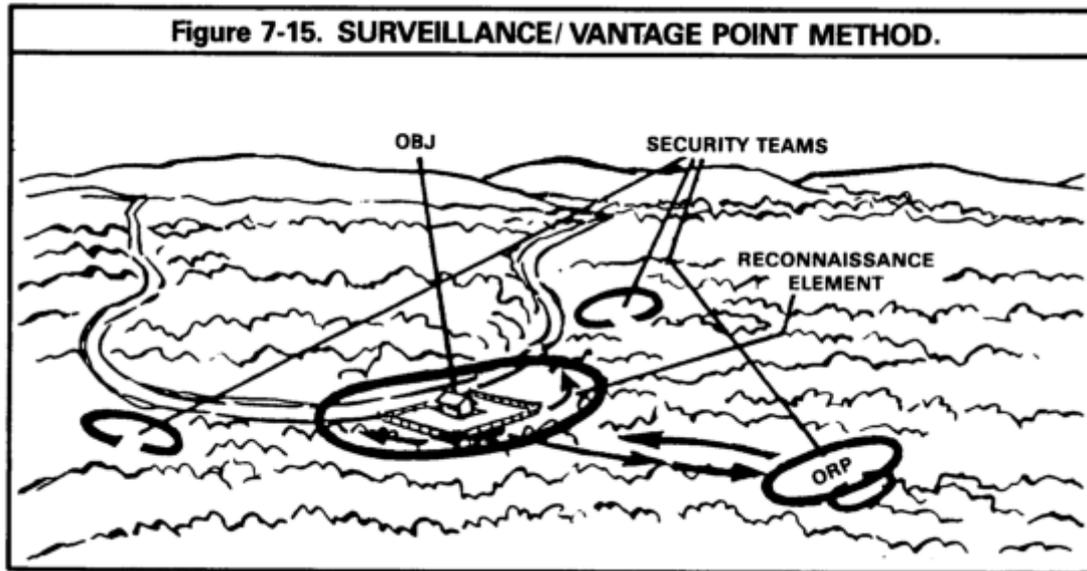


Zone Reconnaissance. This is a reconnaissance conducted to obtain information all enemy, terrain, and routes within a specific on zone. The zone is defined by boundaries.



7-17. CONDUCT OF AN AREA RECONNAISSANCE

A patrol uses the **surveillance/vantage point method** to conduct an area reconnaissance. The leader uses a series of surveillance/vantage points around the objective from which to observe it and the surrounding area.



The patrol halts in the ORP and establishes security. The leader confirms the patrol's location. The leaders conduct a leaders' reconnaissance of the objective area to confirm the plan and then return to the ORP. The security element departs the ORP before the reconnaissance element. The security element leader positions security teams at the ORP, and on likely enemy avenues of approach going into the objective area.

Once the security teams are in position, the reconnaissance element departs the ORP. The reconnaissance element moves to several surveillance/vantage points around the objective. The reconnaissance element leader may decide to have a small reconnaissance team move to each surveillance/vantage point instead of having the entire element move as a unit from point to point. Once the objective has been reconnoitered, the elements return to the ORP and disseminate information. This insures that the information reaches the unit if the patrol is engaged and broken up en route to friendly lines. The patrol then returns to friendly lines.

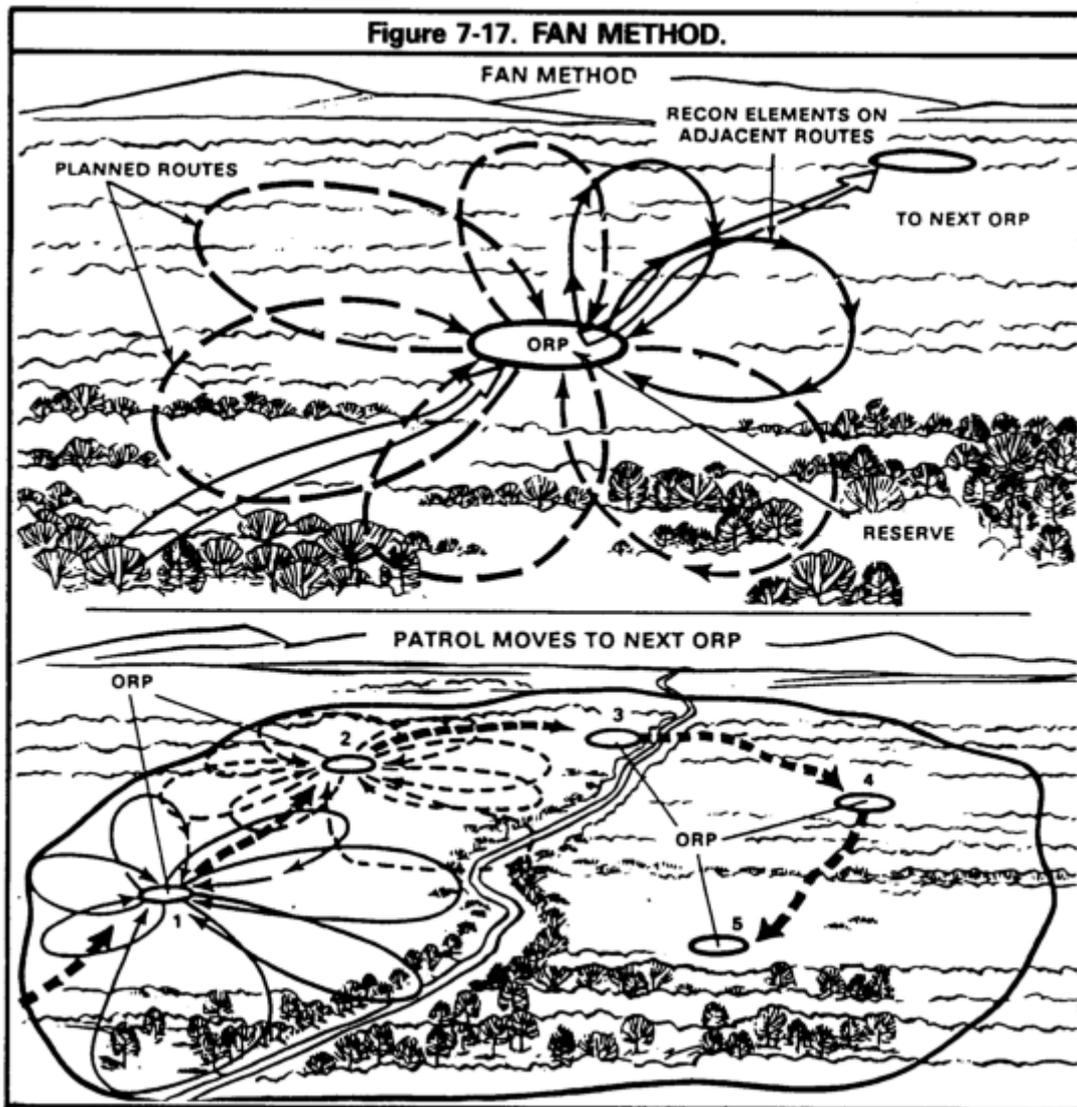
The terrain may not allow a patrol to secure an objective area. In this case, the leader leaves a security team in the ORP and uses reconnaissance and security teams to reconnoiter the objective. These teams move to different surveillance/vantage points from which they reconnoiter the objective. Once the objective has been reconnoitered, the reconnaissance and security teams return to the ORP and disseminate the information. The patrol then returns to friendly lines.



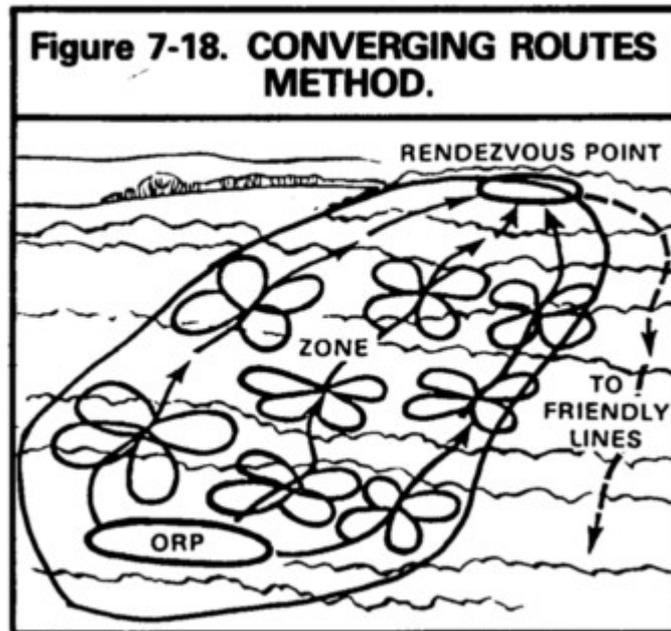
7-18. CONDUCT OF A ZONE RECONNAISSANCE

There are three basic methods of conducting a zone reconnaissance--**fan method**, **converging routes method**, and **successive sector method**.

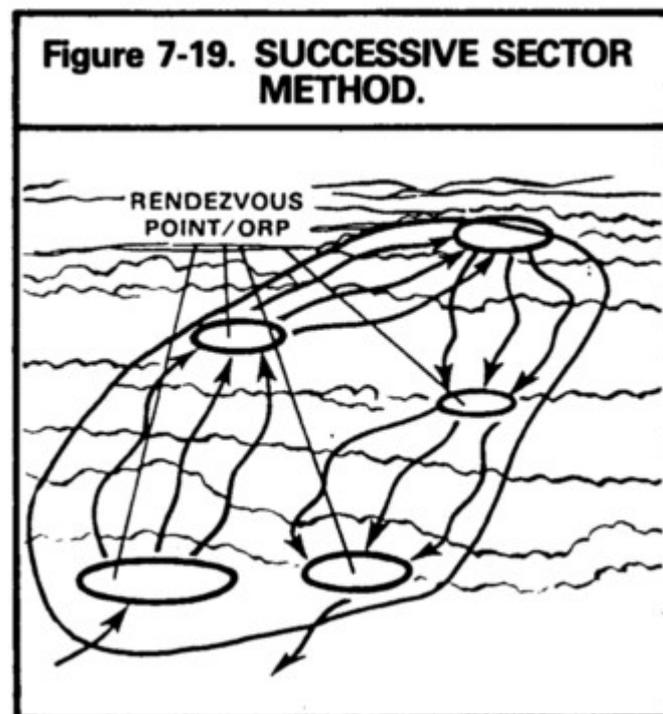
Fan Method. The leader of the patrol first selects a series of ORPs throughout the zone from which to operate. When the patrol arrives at the first ORP, it halts and establishes security. The leader confirms the patrol's location. He then selects reconnaissance routes out from and back to the ORP. (These routes form a fan-shaped pattern around the ORP. The routes must overlap to insure that the entire area has been reconnoitered.) Once the routes have been selected, the leader sends out reconnaissance elements along the routes. He does not send out all of his elements at once. He keeps a security element in the ORP. (For example, if the patrol has three reconnaissance elements, only two are sent out. The other one is kept as a reserve.) Additionally the leader sends the elements out on adjacent routes. This avoids having the patrol make contact in two different directions. After the entire area (fan) has been reconnoitered, the information obtained is disseminated. The patrol then moves to the next ORP. This action is repeated at each successive ORP.



Converging Routes Method. The leader of the patrol first selects an ORP, then selects reconnaissance routes through the zone, and then selects a rendezvous point. A reconnaissance element is sent out on each route where patrol members are to link up after the reconnaissance. The leader normally moves with the center element. The elements normally reconnoiter their routes using the fan method. The entire patrol links up at the rendezvous point at the designated time.



Successive Sector Method. This method is basically a continuation of the converging routes method. The leader selects an ORP and a series of reconnaissance routes and rendezvous points. The actions of the patrol from each ORP to each rendezvous point are the same as in the converging routes method. (Each rendezvous point becomes the ORP for the next phase.) When the patrol links up at a rendezvous point, the leader again designates reconnaissance routes, a linkup time, and the next rendezvous point. This action continues until the entire zone has been reconnoitered. Once the reconnaissance is completed, the patrol returns to friendly lines.



Section V. COMBAT PATROL

7-19. GENERAL

Combat patrols provide security, and harass, few weapons and little equipment to harass or destroy, or capture enemy troops, equipment, and installations. There are three types of combat patrols-- **ambush, security, and raid.**

7-20. AMBUSH PATROL

An ambush is a surprise attack from a concealed position on a moving or temporarily halted target. It may include an assault to close with and destroy the target, or the attack may be by fire only. It does not require that ground be seized and held. It enables a small unit with destroy a larger, better armed unit.

There are two types of ambush: point and area. In a **point ambush**, troops deploy to attack a single kill zone. In an **area ambush**, troops deploy as multiple **related** point ambushes.

Ambushes are categorized as either hasty or deliberate.

A **hasty ambush** is a battle drill, as discussed in [section III](#).

A **deliberate ambush** is planned as a specific action against a specific target. Detailed information of the target is required, such as size, organization, weapons and equipment carried, route and direction of movement, and times the target will reach or pass certain points on its route. Deliberate ambushes are planned when--

reliable information is received on the expected movement of a specific target; and
patrols, convoys, carrying parties, or similar targets establish patterns of size, time, and movement sufficient to permit detailed planning for their ambush.

Ambushes are described in the following terms:

AMBUSH SITE--the terrain on which a point ambush is established.

KILL ZONE--the part of an ambush site where fire is concentrated to isolate, trap, and destroy the target.

ASSAULT ELEMENT--the part of the ambush patrol that fires into and assaults the kill zone.

SUPPORT ELEMENT--the part of the ambush patrol that supports the assault element by firing into and around the kill zone.

SECURITY ELEMENT--the early warning and security part of an ambush patrol. It secures the ORP, and blocks enemy avenues of approach into and out of the ambush site. It does this to prevent any enemy from getting into or out of the ambush site.

7-21. FUNDAMENTALS OF A SUCCESSFUL AMBUSH

Surprise. Surprise is a major feature that distinguishes an ambush from other forms of attack. It is surprise that allows the patrol to seize control of the situation. If **complete** surprise cannot be achieved, it must be so nearly complete that the target does not know of the ambush until too late for **effective** reaction. Surprise is achieved by good planning, preparation, and execution.

Coordinated Fire. All weapons, including mines and demolitions, must be positioned, and all fire, including that of supporting artillery and mortars, must be coordinated to achieve--

the isolation of the kill zone to prevent escape or reinforcement; and

the surprise delivery of a large volume of highly concentrated fire into the kill zone. This fire must inflict maximum damage so that the target can be quickly assaulted, when required, and destroyed.

Control. Close control must be maintained during movement to, occupation of, and withdrawal from the ambush site. Control is most critical at the time of the target's approach. Control measures must provide for--

early warning of target approach,

withholding fire until the target has moved into the kill zone,

opening fire at the proper time,

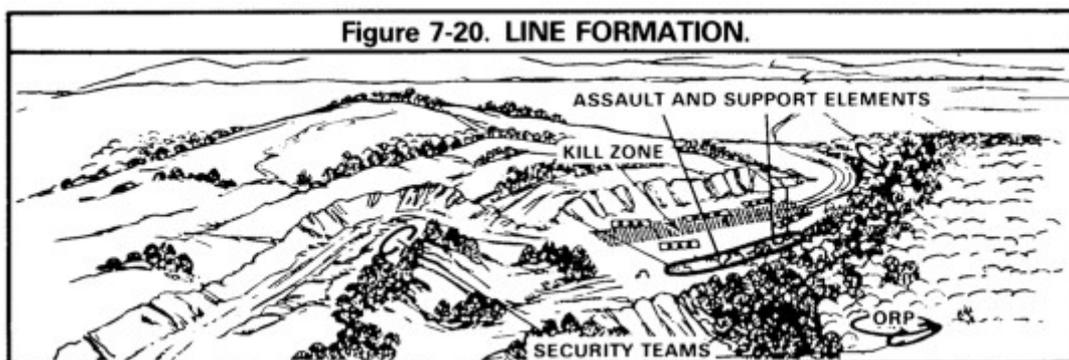
initiation of proper action if the ambush is prematurely detected,

lifting or shifting of supporting fire when the attack includes assault of the target and

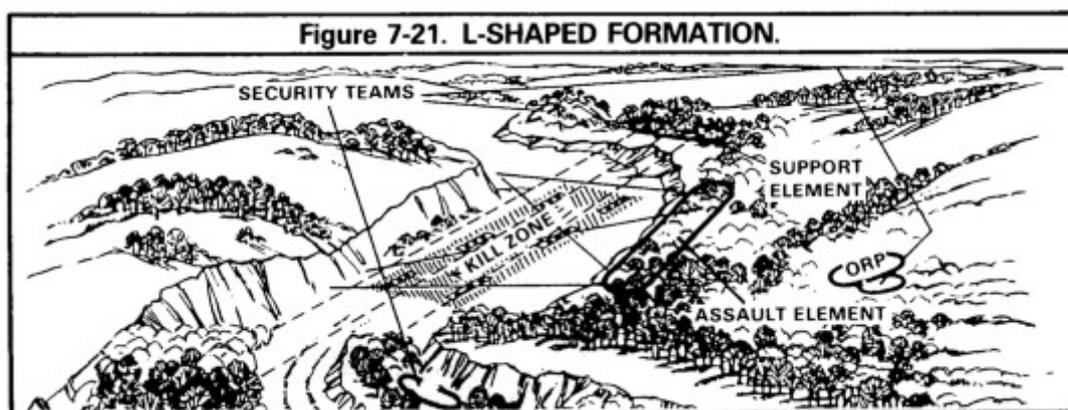
timely and orderly withdrawal of the patrol to the ORP.

7-22. AMBUSH FORMATIONS

Line. In an ambush employing a line formation, the assault and support elements are deployed generally parallel to the target's route of movement (road, trail, stream). This positions the assault and support elements parallel to the long axis of the kill zone and subjects the target to **flanking** fire. The size of a target that can be trapped in the kill zone is limited by the size of the area that the assault and security elements can cover with a great volume of fire. The target is trapped in the kill zone by natural obstacles, mines (Claymore, antitank, antipersonnel), explosives, and direct and indirect fire. A **disadvantage** of the line formation is that its target may be so dispersed that it is larger than the kill zone. The line formation is good in close terrain which restricts the targets movement, and in open terrain where one flank is blocked by natural obstacles or can be blocked by mines or explosives. Similar obstacles may be put between the assault and support elements and the kill zone to protect the patrol from the target's counterambush actions. When a patrol is deployed this way, access lanes are left through the obstacles so the target can be assaulted. An advantage of the line formation is the relative ease by which it can be controlled under all conditions of visibility.



The L. The L-shaped formation in an ambush is a variation of the line formation. The long leg of the "L" (assault element) is parallel to the kill zone. This provides **flanking** fire. The short leg (support element) is at the end of, and at a right angle to, the kill zone. This provides **enfilade** fire which interlocks with fire from the other leg. This formation can be deployed on a straight stretch of a trail, road, or stream, or at a sharp bend in a trail, road, or stream.



7-23. SIGNALS

Audible and visual signals such as whistles and flares must be changed often to avoid setting patterns. Frequent use of the same signals may cause them to become known to the enemy. A target might recognize a signal and react in time to avoid the full effects of an ambush. For example, if a white star cluster is used all the time to signal withdrawal in a night ambush, an alert enemy might fire one and cause premature withdrawal of the ambush patrol.

Normally four signals are needed for the ambush.

- (1) A signal by a security team to alert the leader of the target's approach.
- (2) A signal to start the ambush, given by the leader or a man he designates. This must be a casualty-producing signal, such as machine gunfire or the detonation of mines or explosives.
- (3) A signal to shift fire when the target is to be assaulted. Voice, whistles, or flares may be used. All fire must stop or be shifted at once so that the assault can be made before the target can react.
- (4) A signal to withdraw. This can be by voice, whistle, or flare.

7-24. FIRE DISCIPLINE

Fire discipline is a key part of the ambush. **Fire must be withheld until the signal is given, then delivered at once in the heaviest, most accurate volume possible.** Well-timed and well-aimed fire helps achieve surprise as well as the destruction of the enemy. When the enemy is to be assaulted, the lifting or shifting of fire must also be precise. If it is not, the assault is delayed, and the enemy has a chance to react.

7-25. WITHDRAWAL TO THE ORP

Routes of withdrawal to the ORP are reconnoitered. Situation permitting, each man reconnoiters the route he is to use.

On signal, the patrol withdraws to the ORP, reorganizes, and starts its return march. At a set terrain feature or about 1,000 meters from the objective, the patrol will halt and disseminate information.

If the ambush fails and the patrol is pursued, withdrawal may be by bounds. Smoke and indirect fire may be used to assist the patrol in disengagement. Mines set along the withdrawal routes can help stop the pursuit.

7-26. CONDUCT OF A POINT AMBUSH

A point ambush, by itself or as part of an area ambush, is positioned on its target's expected route of approach. The ambush formation is important because it determines to a great extent whether a point ambush can deliver the heavy volume of fire necessary to isolate, trap, and destroy the enemy.

The formation to be used is based on the advantages and disadvantages of each possible formation in relation to the--

terrain, visibility, troops available, weapons, and equipment;

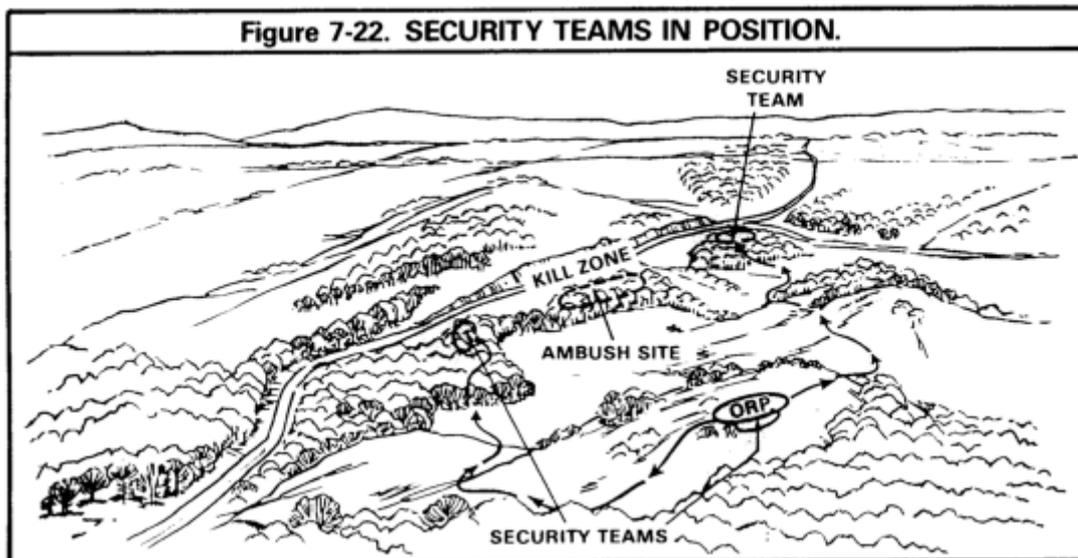
ease of control;

enemy force to be attacked, and

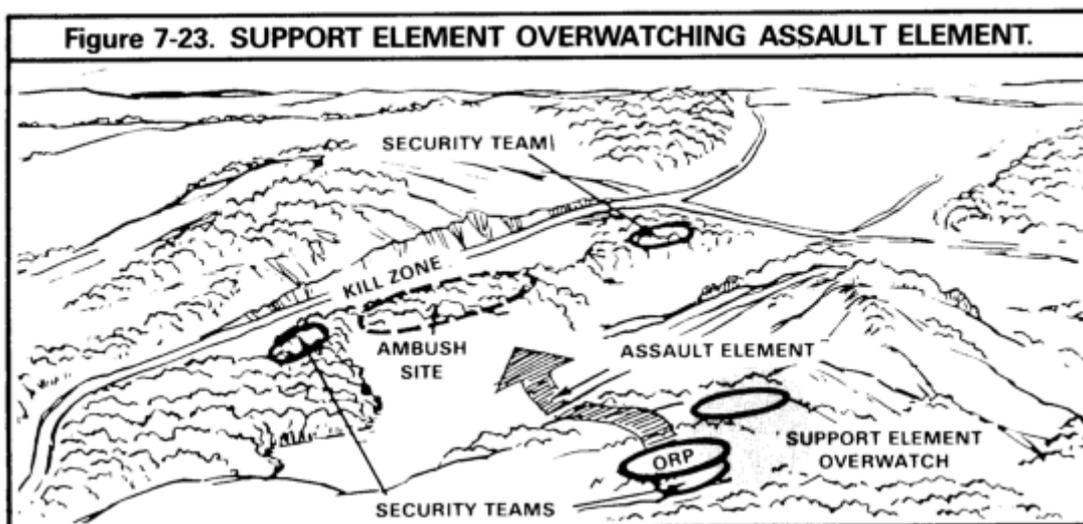
overall combat situation.

The patrol halts at the ORP and establishes security. The leader confirms the patrol's location. The leader then conducts a reconnaissance of the objective area to confirm the plan.

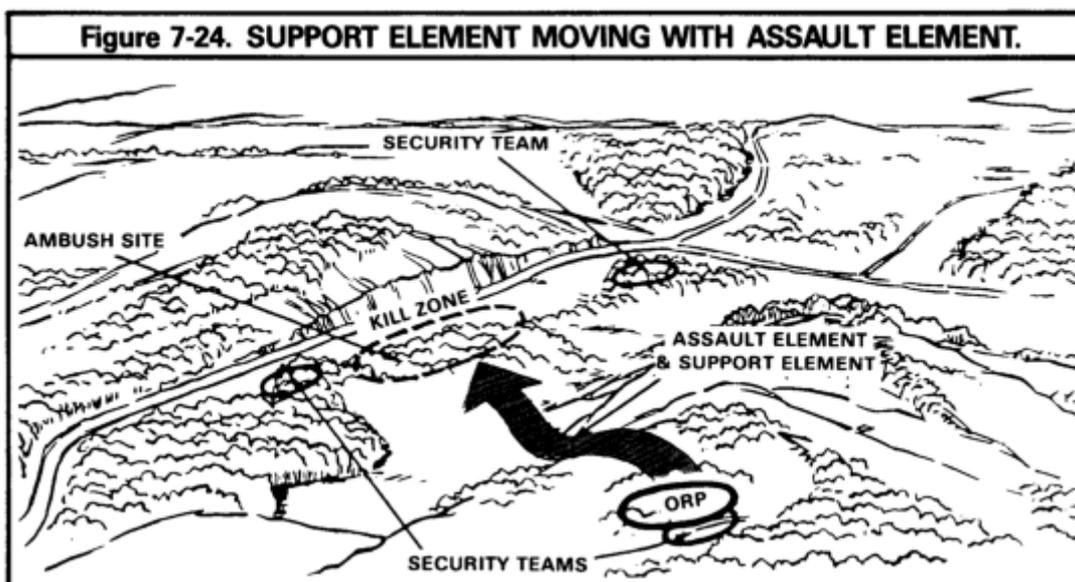
The security element leaves the ORP first. The teams of the security element move to positions from which they can secure the ORP and the flanks of the ambush site.



When the security teams are in position, the support and assault elements leave the ORP and occupy their positions. If there is a suitable position, the leader may have the support element overwatch the assault element's move to the ambush site. If not, both elements leave the ORP at the same time.



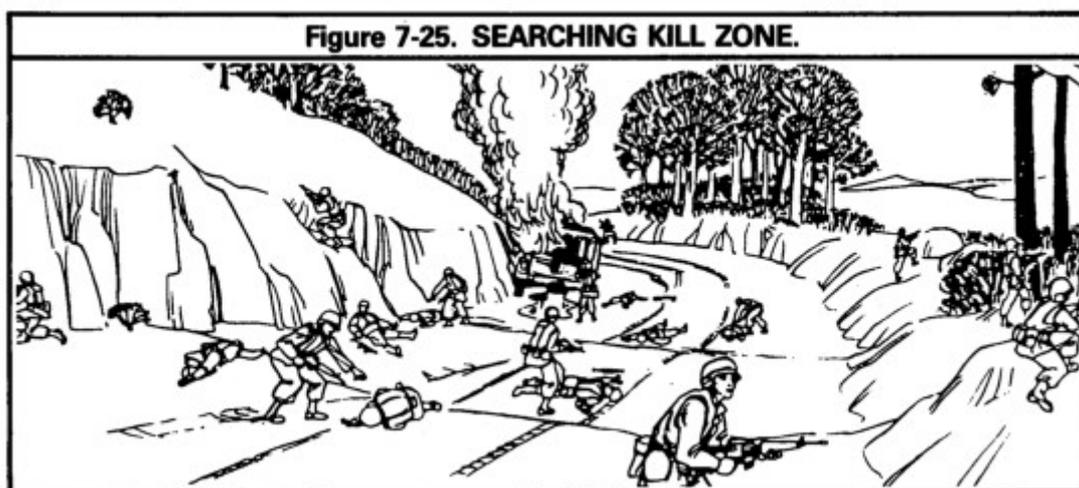
Once all elements are in position, the patrol awaits the target. When the target approaches, the security team spotting it alerts the leader of the patrol. The security team should report the target's direction of movement, size, and any special weapons or equipment.



Upon receipt of the report, the leader alerts the other elements. When the major part of the target is in the kill zone, the leader gives the signal to start the ambush.

When the assault element is required to assault the kill zone, the leader of the patrol gives the signal to lift or shift fire. This is also the signal for the assault to start. When the assault element has finished its mission in the kill zone, the leader gives the signal to withdraw to the ORP.

When the assault element is not required to assault the kill zone, and when the desired results have been achieved, the leader gives the signal to withdraw to the ORP.



On the signal to withdraw, all elements move back to the ORP. Equipment and personnel are accounted for, and the patrol moves out to a suitable location to disseminate information. The patrol then returns to friendly lines.

7-27. CONDUCT OF AN AREA AMBUSH

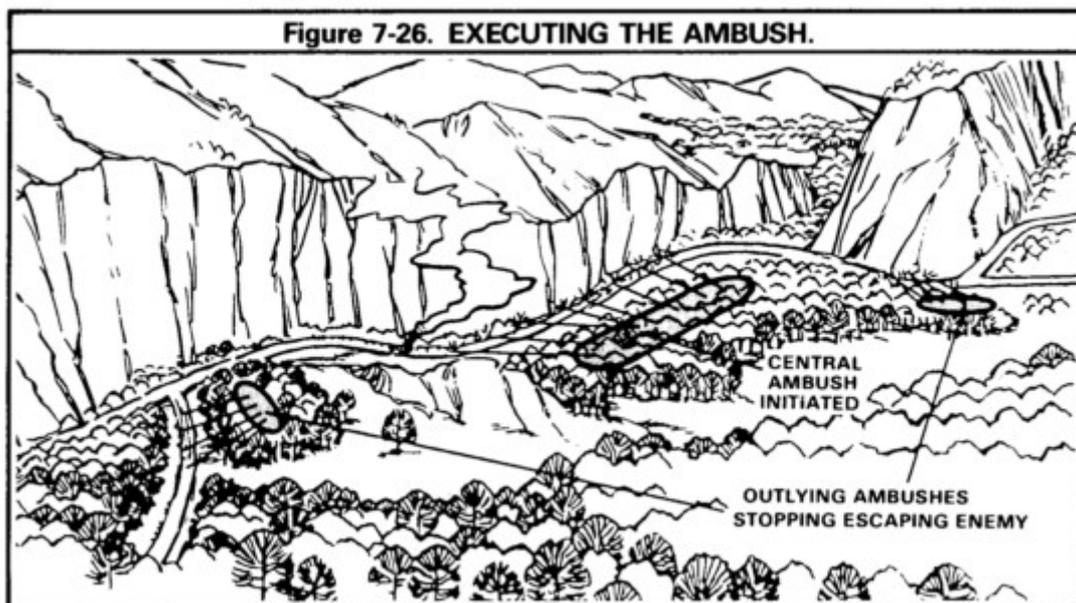
An area ambush is not normally conducted by a unit smaller than a platoon. The area ambush works best where enemy movement is largely restricted to trails or streams. The area selected should offer several suitable point ambush sites. The platoon leader must select one central ambush site around which he can organize the outlying ambushes. Squad-size patrols occupy the ambush sites.

Once the central ambush site has been selected, the platoon leader must determine the enemy's possible avenues of approach to and escape from this site. He then selects and assigns ambush sites to cover these avenues. The ambush sites are then established as explained for a point ambush.

Once the sites have been established, all enemy traffic going toward or away from the central ambush site is reported to the platoon leader--who is at the central ambush site. The outlying ambushes should allow the enemy to pass through their kill zones until the central ambush has been initiated.

Once the central ambush is initiated, the out-lying ambushes prevent any enemy from escaping or entering the area.

The actual conduct of the ambushes is the same as that discussed for the [point ambush](#).



7-28. SQUAD ANTIARMOR AMBUSH

The purpose of an antiarmor ambush is to destroy armored vehicles.

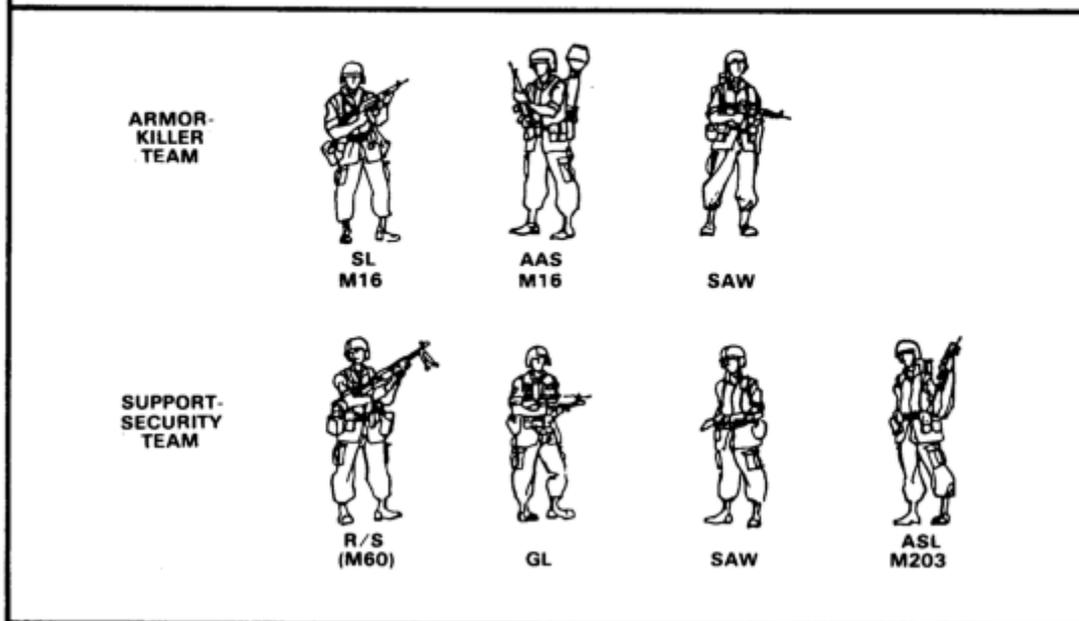
A squad can conduct a dismounted antiarmor ambush.

The leader organizes an **armor-killer team** and a **support/security team**.

The **armor-killer team** fires into the kill zone, augmented by obstacles and mines to prevent enemy maneuver. Normally, the Dragon is the main weapon of this team. LAWs and machine guns/SAWs may be used to supplement its fire. Where fields of fire are less than 100 meters, LAWs may be the main antiarmor weapon. In that case, the armor-killer team must mass LAW fire into the kill zone to make sure the target vehicle is killed.

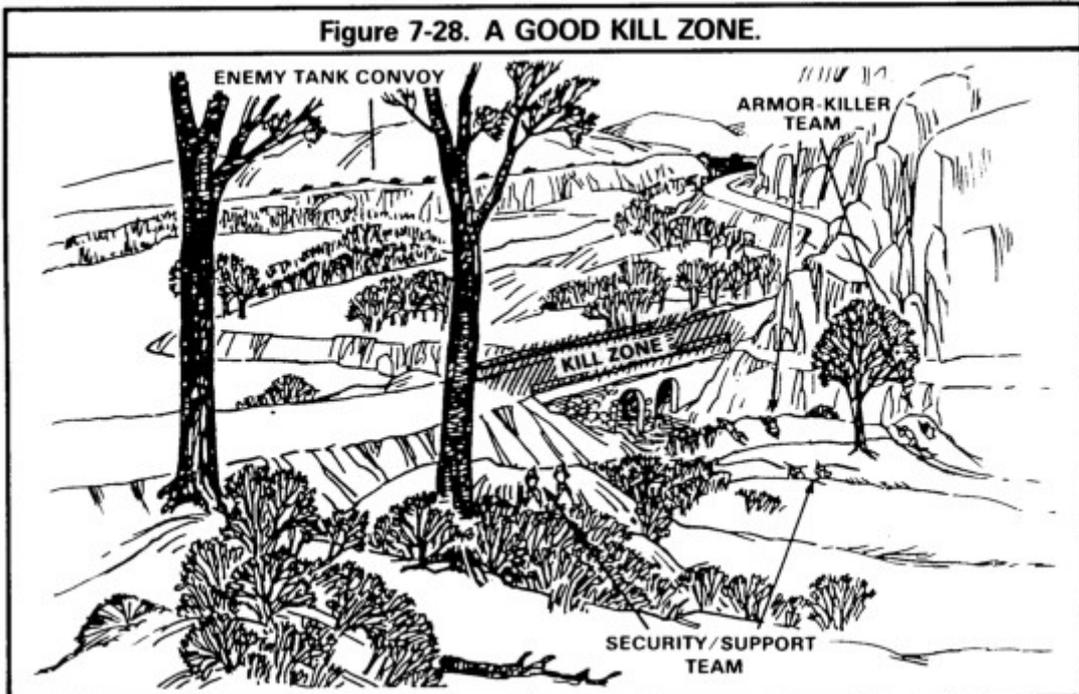
The **support/security team** provides support and security for the squad and should be positioned where it can cover the withdrawal of the armor-killer team.

**Figure 7-27. ARMOR-KILLER TEAM AND SUPPORT/SECURITY TEAM.
(THE RIFLEMAN/SNIPEER [R/S] MANS THE M60 MACHINE GUN FOR ADDED FIREPOWER.)**



The platoon leader will give the general location of the ambush site. The squad leader must pick the best place to put his squad. The squad position is based primarily on the location of the kill zone. When the squad arrives at the ambush site, the leader reconnoiters and picks the kill zone.

Figure 7-28. A GOOD KILL ZONE.



Having selected a kill zone and ambush site, the squad leader picks positions for the teams. Good positions have--

good fields of fire into the kill zone,

cover and concealment,

an obstacle between the teams and the kill zone, and

covered and concealed withdrawal routes.

After choosing the kill zone and the team's positions, the squad leader positions his men and equipment.

The support/security team is positioned first. It is important to have security on both flanks. These men may have to be repositioned after the armor-killer team sets up, but when setting up an ambush, the leader must post security first.

As soon as the ambush site is secure, the armor-killer team sets up so that it can cover the kill zone. The squad leader and the Dragon gunner pick the exact firing position. Once the Dragon is in position, the machine gun is positioned where it can cover the kill zone.

The squad leader positions himself where he can best control his men and weapons--normally near the Dragon. When the enemy enters the kill zone, the leader initiates the ambush. A command-detonated antiarmor mine is an excellent means to start the ambush. It must be command-detonated, not "tripped." This precludes initiating an ambush against too large a force or against undesirable targets. The Dragon can be used to initiate the ambush--but remember, it has a slow rate of fire, gives off a signature, and may not hit the target. When possible, the first and last enemy vehicles should be destroyed to keep the other vehicles from escaping.

The rest of the squad opens fire when the Dragon round impacts. Indirect fire should fall in the kill zone as soon as possible after the Dragon impacts. If the kill zone is in range, each man in the squad (except the Dragon gunner and machine gunner) fires a LAW. The machine gunner fires into the kill zone.

If enemy troops on foot precede the armored vehicles into the kill zone, the squad leader must decide if they pose a threat to the ambush. If they can outflank his squad before the enemy armor can be hit, he may decide to withdraw without making contact and to try to set up another ambush somewhere else. If the enemy infantry is an immediate threat to the squad or appears to be ready to find or trip any mechanical devices, the ambush is initiated with machine guns and small arms fire. All action against enemy infantry is just as was planned and rehearsed for action against armor, except that the antiarmor weapons do not fire.

If mounted enemy infantry approach the kill zone, their carriers are treated as light tanks. They should be allowed to get close before being destroyed, one at a time. If mounted infantry is mixed with tanks, the tanks should be the target for the Dragon. After the Dragon is fired, the enemy's carriers are hit with LAWs, grenade launchers (using the HEDP round), and machine guns.

Because of the speed with which other enemy armored vehicles may react, and the responsiveness of enemy artillery the squad must be prepared to move quickly when given the order to withdraw to the ORP.

7-29. PLATOON ANTIARMOR AMBUSH

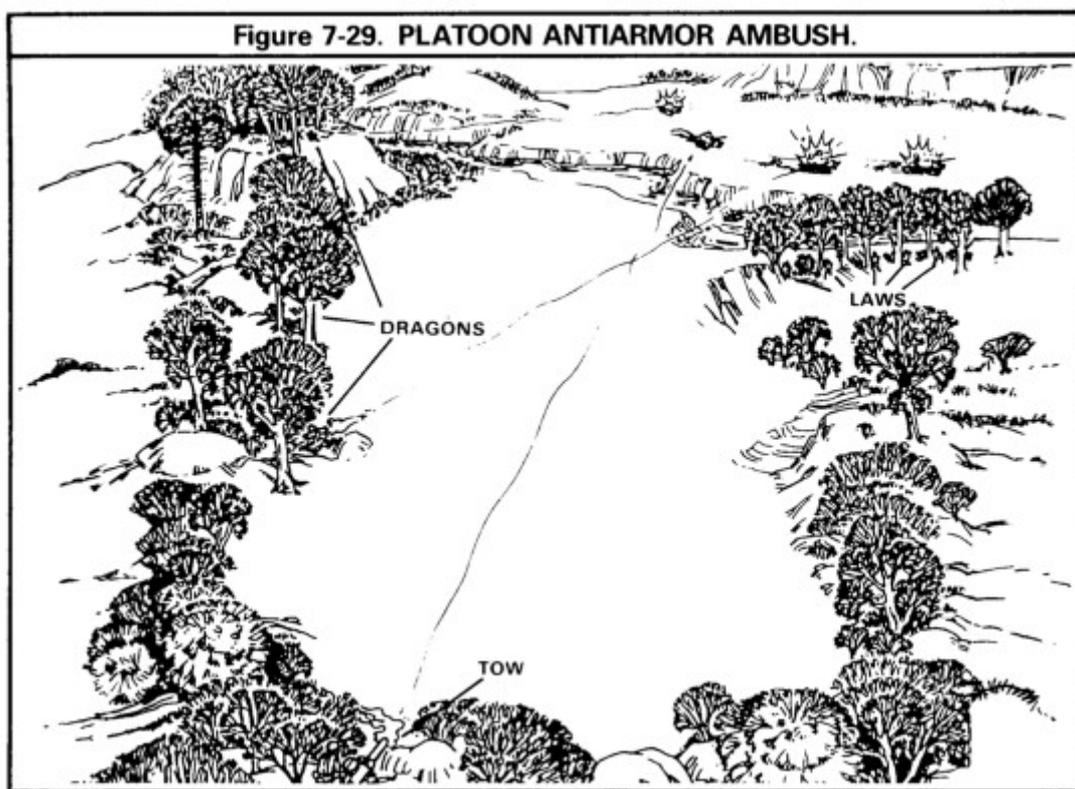
The platoon is a good size to conduct a dismounted antiarmor ambush.

The platoon leader must consider the same criteria for site selection, firing positions, and conduct of the ambush as previously described for the squad leader.

Additionally the platoon leader must organize the ambush into assault, security and support elements.

When the ambush has been completed, the platoon leader gives the order to withdraw to the ORP.

At the ORP, a quick headcount is taken, necessary adjustments in personnel and equipment are made, and the platoon moves out.



7-30. MOUNTED ANTIARMOR AMBUSH

The APC's mobility and firepower allow infantry squads and platoons to conduct mounted antiarmor ambushes.

The squad or platoon leader has several options for conducting the mounted antiarmor ambush.

Carrier teams conduct the ambush with Dragons mounted while the dismount team/element provides security.

Carrier teams conduct the ambush with Dragons dismounted and carrier teams firing caliber .50 machine guns while the dismount team/element provides security.

Both carrier and dismount teams conduct the ambush with one squad providing security.

Dismount teams with Dragon and LAW conduct the ambush while carrier teams provide security and prepare for rapid withdrawal.

The same considerations discussed in the dismounted antiarmor ambush apply for site selection and firing positions.

If the platoon is conducting the ambush, the dismount element can be organized into both an assault and a security element while the carrier element constitutes the support element.

The APCs can be used as a support element and/or overwatch force to assist the dismount element in disengaging.

The ORP must be selected to allow the dismount teams to link up with their vehicles. This may require both elements moving to an ORP. In this case, the ORP should be close to the dismount element.

The ambush is conducted with surprise and violence. Violence is generated by heavy volume fire.

7-31. SECURITY PATROL

Some combat patrols provide security. The most common security patrol that the infantry squad or platoon can expect to perform is a screen.

A screen requires a unit to maintain surveillance and provide early warning by maintaining at least visual contact with the enemy. A screening force must impede and harass the enemy by organic and supporting fires and, within its capability must destroy or repel enemy patrols.

Screening patrols prevent surprise attacks on the flank of moving units. They also reconnoiter areas through which units will pass and the routes they will use. They prevent infiltration and surprise attacks on stationary units by screening their front and/or flanks, and by reconnoitering gaps between the units and around their positions.

The leader of the patrol picks a series of OPs overmatching enemy avenues of approach into an area. Mounted or dismounted patrols are used to cover dead space and maintain contact between OPs. If the patrol makes contact, it reports to the commander and attacks or withdraws according to the commander's instructions.

7-32. RAID PATROL

A raid patrol is a combat patrol whose mission is to attack a position or installation for any or all of these purposes:

- (1) Destroy the position or installation.**
- (2) Destroy or capture troops or equipment.**
- (3) Liberate personnel.**

Surprise, firepower, and violent action are the keys to a raid.

Surprise is best achieved by attacking--

when the enemy may least expect an attack,

when visibility is poor, and

from an unexpected direction, such as from the rear or through a swamp or other seemingly impassable terrain.

Fire is concentrated at critical points to suppress the enemy.

Violence is best achieved by gaining surprise, by using massed fire, and by attacking aggressively.

The patrol moves to the ORP as described for a reconnaissance patrol. The ORP is secured, the leaders' reconnaissance is conducted, and plans are confirmed. Elements and teams move to their positions. If possible, their movements are coordinated so that all reach their positions about the same time. This improves the patrol's capability for decisive action if it is detected by the enemy too soon.

Security element. The teams of the security element move to positions from which they can secure the ORP, give warning of enemy approach, block avenues of approach into the objective area, prevent enemy escape from the objective area, or perform any combination of these tasks within their capability.

As the assault and support elements move into position, the security element keeps the leader of the patrol informed of all enemy action. It shoots only if detected or on the leader's order.

Once the assault starts, the security element prevents enemy entry into, or escape from, the objective area.

When the assault is completed, the security element covers the withdrawal of the assault and support elements to the ORP. It withdraws itself on order or on a prearranged signal.

Support element. The support element moves into position so that it can suppress the objective and shift fire when the assault starts. It normally covers the withdrawal of the assault element from the immediate area of the objective. It withdraws itself on oral order or on signal.

Assault element. The assault element deploys close enough to the objective to permit immediate assault if detected by the enemy. As supporting fire is lifted or shifted, the assault element assaults, seizes, and secures the objective. It protects demolition teams, search teams, and other teams while they work. On order or signal, the assault element withdraws to the ORP.

At the ORP, the patrol reorganizes and moves about 1,000 meters away to disseminate information. During reorganization, ammunition is distributed, casualties are treated, and status reports are given.

Section VI. PATROL BASES

7-33. GENERAL

A **patrol base** is a position set up when a patrol halts for an extended period in a place not protected by friendly troops.

Having a patrol base is usually part of the patrol plan but it may be an on-the-spot decision.

The time a patrol base may be occupied depends on the need for secrecy. It should not, however, be occupied for more than 24 hours except in an emergency. A patrol base is occupied only as long as necessary for its purpose. A patrol should not use the same patrol base more than once.

Patrol bases are used when there is a need to--

stop all movement to avoid detection;

hide a patrol during a long, detailed reconnaissance of an objective area;

eat, clean weapons and equipment, and rest;

plan and issue orders;

reorganize after a patrol has infiltrated an enemy area; and

have a base from which to conduct several consecutive or concurrent operations such as ambush, raid, reconnaissance, or security patrols.

7-34. SELECTION

The site of a patrol base is usually picked from a map or aerial reconnaissance during planning. A patrol base site picked by map or aerial reconnaissance is tentative. Its suitability must be confirmed, and it must be secured before it is occupied.

Plans to establish a patrol base must include selection of an **alternate patrol base site**. The alternate site is used if the initial site is unsuitable or if the patrol is required unexpectedly to evacuate the initial patrol base. It is usually desirable to reconnoiter the alternate site and keep it under watch until occupied or until no longer needed.

7-35. CONSIDERATIONS

Planning for a patrol base must include consideration of the mission and security measures, both passive and active.

Mission. A patrol base must be located so that it allows the patrol to accomplish its mission.

Security Measures.

The leader selects--

terrain which would probably be considered of little tactical value by the enemy;

difficult terrain which would impede foot movement;

an area of dense vegetation, preferably bushes and trees that spread close to the ground; and

an area near a source of water.

He plans for--

OPs;

communications with OPs;

defense of the patrol base;

withdrawal from the patrol base, to include withdrawal routes and a rally point, or rendezvous point, or alternate patrol base;

a security system to make sure that necessary troops are awake at all times;

enforcement of camouflage, noise, and light discipline; and

the conduct of necessary activities with minimum movement and noise.

He avoids--

known or suspected enemy positions;

built-up areas;

ridges and hilltops, except as necessary for maintaining communications;

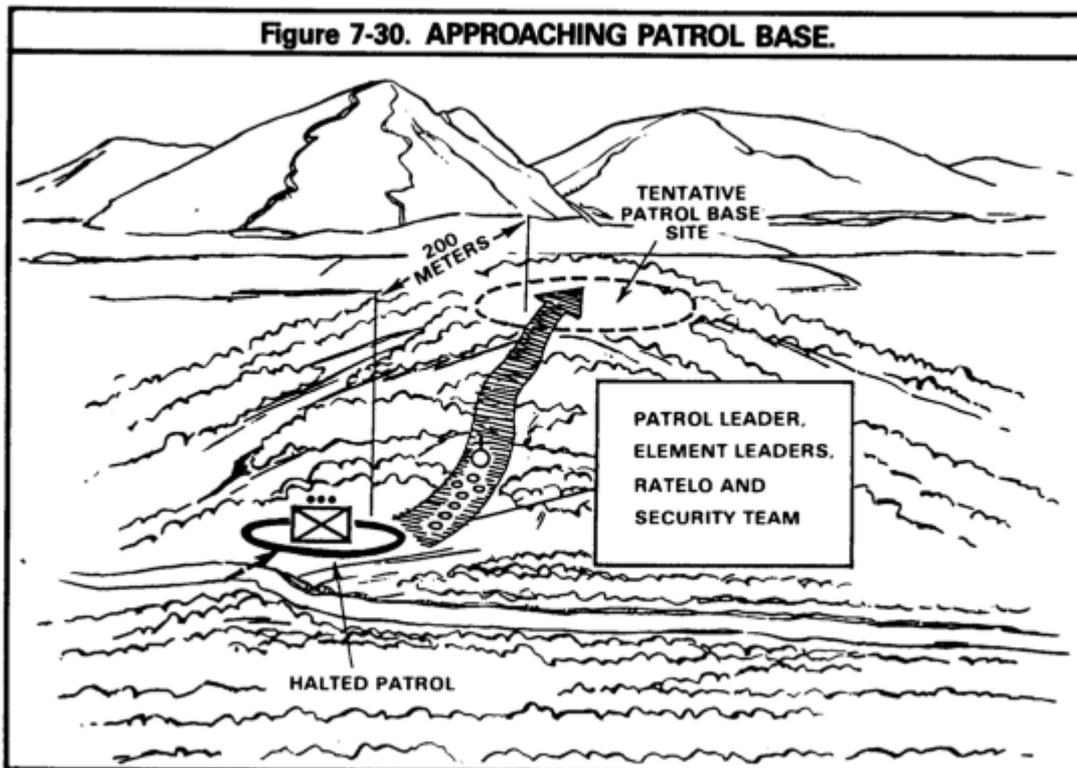
roads, trails, wet areas, steep slopes; and

small valleys.

7-36. OCCUPATION OF A PATROL BASE

Before moving into a patrol base, the area is reconnoitered and secured. Once secured, a patrol base is occupied by moving to the selected site, deploying into it, and establishing a perimeter defense. The following is an [example](#) of a patrol occupying a patrol base.

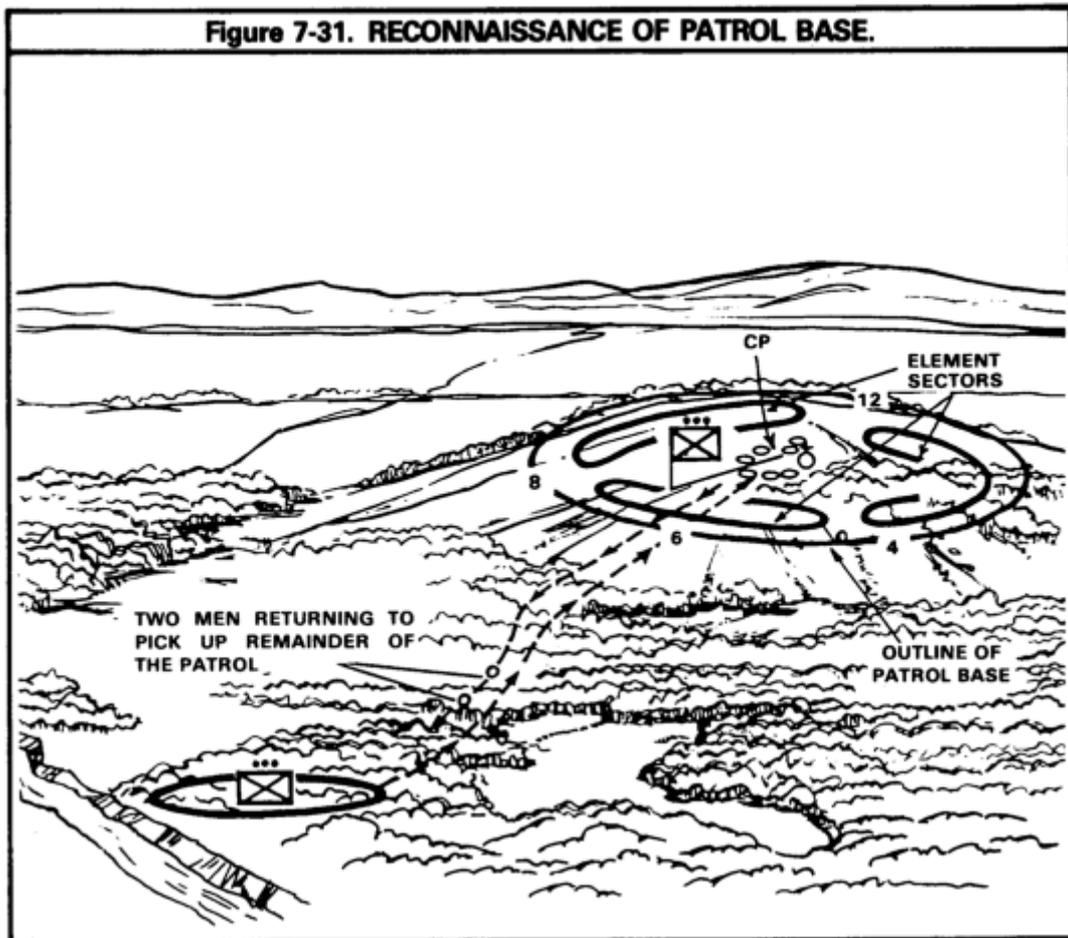
Approach. The patrol halts within 200 meters of the tentative patrol base site. Security is posted. The element leaders, radiotelephone operator, and a security team join the leader of the patrol and move forward to reconnoiter the site.



Reconnaissance.

The leader designates the point of entry into the patrol base site as 6 o'clock. He moves to and designates the center of the base as the patrol CP.

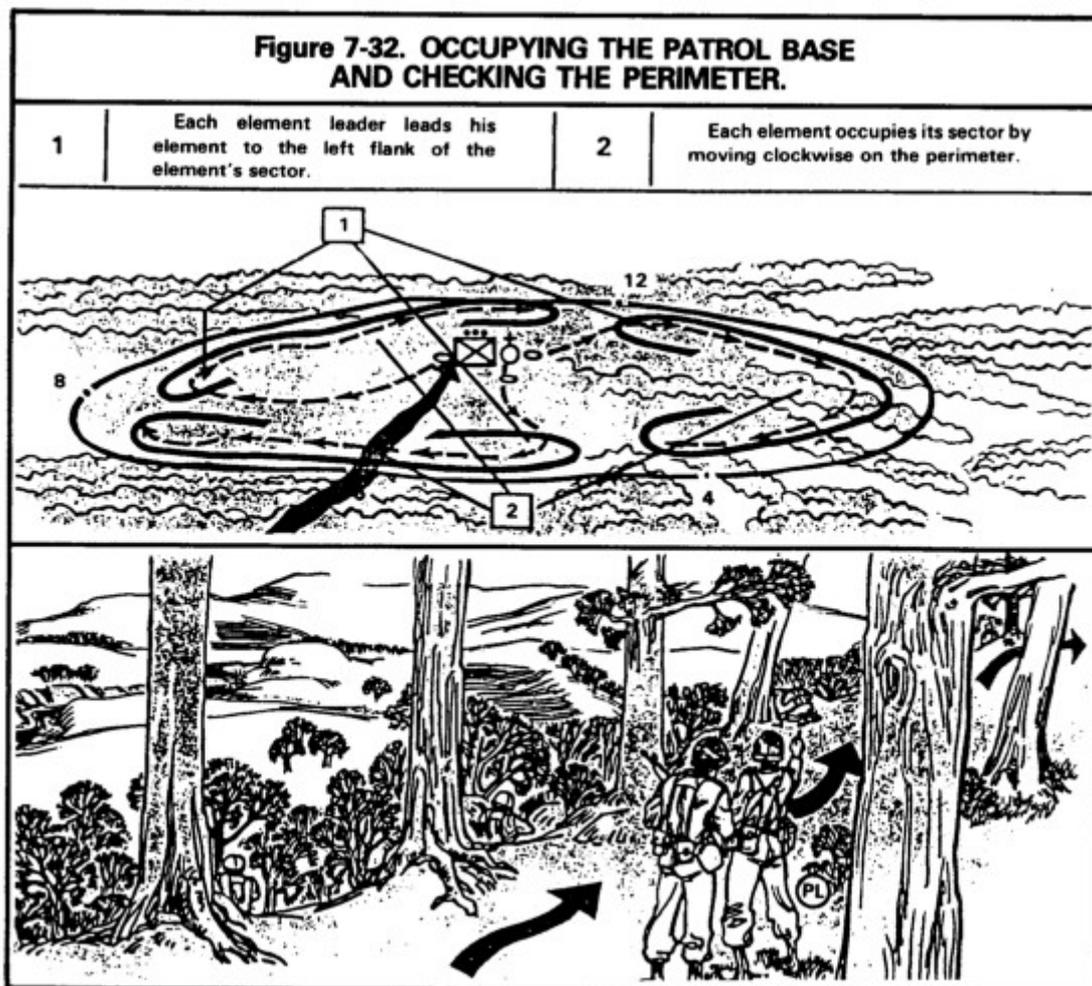
The element leaders reconnoiter the sectors assigned to them for suitability and then return to the CP. The elements would have been given their sectors in the operation order. After the reconnaissance, the leader of the patrol sends two men back to bring the rest of the patrol forward.



Occupation.

The patrol enters the base in single file. It moves to the center of the base. Designated men remove signs of the patrol's entry into the area.

The leader checks the perimeter by meeting each element leader at the left flank of his respective sector. Together, they move clockwise to the end of that sector, making changes as needed. At the end of the sector, the leader meets the element leader of the next sector and repeats the inspection until he has checked his entire perimeter.



Each element leader sends out a reconnaissance team to reconnoiter forward of the element's sector. The team moves a set distance out from the left flank of the sector, moves clockwise to the right limit of the sector, and reenters at the right flank of the sector. It reports signs of enemy activity suitable OP locations, possible rally points, and withdrawal routes.

The leader of the patrol designates withdrawal routes and a rally point outside the base for use in case the patrol is dispersed unexpectedly.

Each element puts out an OP and establishes communications with the patrol command post.

7-37. ACTIONS IN A PATROL BASE

Security.

Security must be a patrol's first priority. Only one point of entry and exit is used. This point is camouflaged and guarded at all times.

Only necessary movement should be permitted, both inside and outside the patrol base.

Noisy work, such as cutting branches, is done only at set times. Such work is done as soon as possible after occupation but never at night or in the quiet periods of early morning and late evening. Noisy work should be done when other noise (sounds of aircraft, artillery or distant battle) will cover it.

A **stand-to** is held both morning and evening to insure that every man adjusts to the changing light and noise conditions, and is dressed, equipped, and ready for action. The stand-to should start before first light in the morning and continue until after light. It should start before dark in the evening and last until dark. The starting and ending times should vary to prevent establishing a pattern, but the stand-to must last long enough to accomplish its purpose.

Defense.

Defensive measures must be planned, but a patrol base is usually defended only when evacuation is not possible. Complete fighting positions are not built. Camouflage and concealment are stressed.

A fire plan is made. Early warning devices may be put on avenues of approach. The leader must decide whether the probability of the patrol base being detected is high. If it is, and the base definitely must be defended, mines and tripflares should be put on avenues of approach and in places which cannot be covered by fire. If the probability of detection is low, the value of these devices must be weighed against the fact that their discovery could compromise the patrol base.

A withdrawal plan is also made. If the patrol is forced to leave the patrol base, it rallies at either a rally point, a rendezvous point, or an alternate patrol base. Each person must know where to withdraw to.

Communications.

Communications are established with higher headquarters and OPs, and within the patrol.

Radios are a good means of communication, but they must be closely controlled because of the enemy's ability to monitor the patrol's transmissions and possibly use radio direction finders to find the patrol base.

Wire should be used within the patrol base if its bulk and weight and the time needed to lay and pick it up do not hinder the patrol's ability to accomplish its mission.

Tug or pull wires may be used for signaling. They are quiet and reduce radio or telephone traffic.

Maintenance. Weapons and equipment are maintained.

Sanitation and Personal Hygiene. In daylight, catholes outside the perimeter are used. The user must be guarded. At night, catholes must be inside the perimeter. Men wash, shave, and brush their teeth on a regular basis. Trash is buried in a concealed site or is carried with the patrol.

Eating. Men take turns eating. No more than half of the men should eat at a time, in order to have the other half alert and ready to fight.

Water. If details are sent to get water, guards must also be sent to protect them. No more than two trips to the source should be made in a 24-hour period.

Rest. Rest and sleep are permitted in special periods only after all work has been done. As in eating, men take turns resting. Security must be maintained.

Planning. Leaders should use the time spent in a patrol base to continue to plan and prepare for the mission.

Departure. All signs of the patrol's presence are removed or concealed. This may help keep the patrol's presence secret and prevent pursuit.

Section VII. MOUNTED PATROL

7-38. GENERAL

In the METT-T analysis, the factors of troops available, time, and the distance to be traveled have a major impact on the need for mounted patrols. Mounted patrols are especially useful in economy-of-force missions where the unit has a large sector to cover but few troops with which to operate. Mounted patrols can be used to:

Cover gaps between units in the defense and to provide flank security and coordination;

Provide early warning forward of units when operating without a covering force;

Provide connecting files and guides for the handover of the battle with a covering force;

Prevent or react to the insertion of enemy troops behind friendly lines as part of a rear area protection plan; and

Assist in reconnaissance where a large sector must be covered in a relatively short time.

Since time and distance are critical to the mission of a mounted patrol, security for the patrol is increasingly important and yet more difficult to accomplish. For this reason, a squad is not normally sent out as a mounted patrol since a single APC cannot effectively secure its own movement. Two squads--or if available, the entire platoon--are better suited for mounted patrolling.

7-39. ORGANIZATION AND PREPARATION

Depending upon the mission (combat or reconnaissance) of a mounted patrol, the elements, planning considerations, control measures, and techniques for the patrol are the same as previously discussed. The leader of the patrol must analyze the mission, determine what elements are needed, and decide the appropriate technique to use to accomplish the mission.

The patrol leader must use his coordination checklist and keep in mind that mounted operations will have an impact on route selection, linkup procedures, resupply signal plan, departure and reentry of friendly lines, and other units in the area. Since the speed of execution will significantly be increased, recognition signals must be firmly established to provide early and immediate identification by friendly forces.

Frequently, the area of operation for a mounted patrol will be relatively extensive. The map, ground, or aerial reconnaissance conducted by the leader must take into account the size of the area and the time constraints of the mission measured by the security requirements for the mounted patrol. It is sometimes helpful for the leader to section off the area to be traversed into the separate major cross-compartments offered by the terrain. Once these cross-compartments have been identified, the leader can determine the security measures that must be taken prior to entering each compartment and select the route to address the terrain in the most advantageous manner. In short, know the terrain!

7-40. FUNDAMENTALS OF MOVEMENT

Inherent in all mounted patrol operations is the command and control of movement. Good shooting and reconnaissance counts only after units have moved to critical points on the battlefield where they can see and kill. Communications and maintenance are vital because they support movement.

Cross-country movement must be supported by combined arms, competent navigation, and aggressive leadership. Movement techniques ([chapter 4](#)) must be understood at all levels of command. An important requirement in mounted patrolling is for the patrol to see the enemy first and see him farther away than the friendly unit can be seen. To do this, the mounted patrol must--

Avoid being seen,

if seen, avoid being hit, and

if hit, avoid being killed.

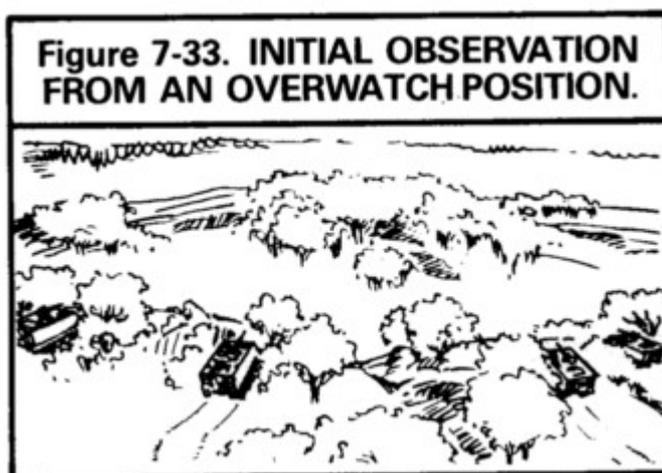
Once the enemy is sighted or contacted, the patrol must move to accomplish whatever the task may be--reconnaissance, security, or attack.

While moving, the patrol must use the terrain for protection. The leader should review the fundamentals of terrain driving (discussed in [chapter 4](#)) and maximize the use of cover and concealment. Despite its obvious advantage, terrain will reduce speed and increase control problems. Additionally the possibility of being ambushed by enemy infantry is increased. In most situations, these limitations must be accepted because the accuracy and lethality of long-range weapons have made exposed movement unacceptable. However, the leader must weigh the degree of security allowable against the required speed of execution and accept, but attempt to minimize, risk.

Mounted patrols should never enter a major cross-compartment without first establishing security and visually inspecting the area. Mounted patrols should make maximum use of dominating overwatch positions--in other words, positions that offer good observation and fields of fire into the cross-compartment. Elements occupying overwatch positions must:

Visually check the security of the position and be prepared to dismount to secure the area.

Occupy hull-down positions. This may be accomplished in phases. As the vehicle approaches the position, the observer in the TL hatch should be standing and prepared to observe over the crest of the hill since his vantage point is the highest on the vehicle. If he does not immediately see a threat, the vehicle can move forward until the main weapon system can cover the area. If enemy is seen, however, and if the mounted patrol is a combat mission, the vehicle should back down and move immediately to a hull-down firing position at another location on the overwatch position from which to engage the enemy. This is done to prevent the enemy from engaging first since the observer may have been seen during the initial occupation.



Be assigned areas for observation and fire by the element leader.

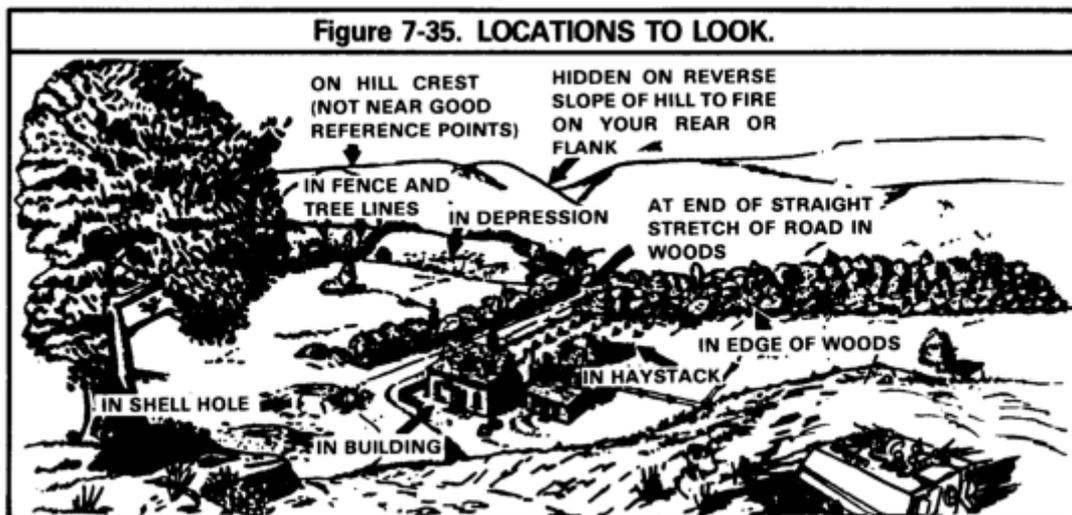
Orient all weapons on likely or suspected enemy positions. Depending on the leader's initial assessment of the threat, this may be mounted .50 caliber machine guns, Dragons, or a mixture of both. If TOWs are attached, they should always be in the overwatch mode.

Search for targets.

Be alert for enemy activity; do not concentrate on movement of bounding element.

Figure 7-34. SEARCHING HINTS.

WHAT TO LOOK AND LISTEN FOR	WHERE TO LOOK
TANKS	
Engine noise, truck clatter.	0-2,000 meters.
Exhaust smoke.	Near crest, next to buildings, in tree lines.
Dust and shine.	
Firing signature (flash, blast, etc.).	
ATGMs	
Smoke trail of missile in flight.	400-4,000 meters.
Missile controller may be up to 100 meters from launch site.	May be launched from behind crest.
OTHER AT WEAPONS	
Firing signature.	Usually well camouflaged. 360-degree observation to protect against tank ambush teams using hand-held weapons.
Hand-held and crew-served weapons systems.	May be employed on reverse slopes in pairs or more, and protected by mines. 0-1,000 meters. Usually on flank.



Before bounding to the next position, the element leader must consider:

- Where is the next position?

Where is the position to be taken on the next bound?

Where is the alternate position?

If the position is unsuitable on arrival, where to go next?

- What is the best route?

What is the exact route from here to the next position?

Use low ground; take advantage of hedges, trees, and scrubs.

Plan an alternate route.

- **Where is the enemy?**

Where would the enemy hide in order to observe, fire, and escape?

Likely enemy positions should be given special attention during the move.

What is the enemy's most likely withdrawal route?

- **What to do if fired upon?**

What cover is available on the route chosen?

Is the crew fully prepared to return fire immediately?

Is the crew fully briefed on the actions expected of them?

Who is covering the move; how can they help?

Will smoke help; who will deliver it?

7-41. ACTIONS ON CONTACT

If the enemy does not detect the initial contact, the mounted patrol, depending on the mission, normally continues observation by stealth until:

Detected.

The mission is accomplished.

Further development of the situation requires combat action.

The need for speed dictates sacrificing stealth.

Once contact is made during a reconnaissance or security patrol, the mounted patrol executes the following actions:

Deploy and report.

If first contact results in an exchange of fire, overwatch elements lay down a heavy volume of direct suppressive fire and request indirect fires and smoke, as necessary. The bounding elements (normally the first to be engaged) employ smoke devices and return fire while seeking cover. This deployment must be rapidly executed and is based on battle drills.

The patrol leader immediately reports the enemy contact to the commander.

Develop the situation. The patrol takes aggressive measures to determine the location, strength, composition, and disposition of the enemy forces encountered. This may be executed mounted or dismounted, depending on time and the terrain available. The platoon immediately establishes a heavy volume of fire with the leader establishing and designating sectors of fire for the other vehicles. While employing indirect fires, the leader directs the platoon, mounted or dismounted, to continue firing and moving to advantageous positions toward the objective until the enemy has disclosed his composition, size, and intentions.

Choose a course of action. The leader then chooses a course of action that will take care of the immediate situation as well as assist him in the assigned mission. The course of action must be chosen as quickly as the contact will permit.

Recommend a course of action. The leader makes a complete report to his superior. This report includes the enemy situation as it has been developed and the course of action the leader intends to adopt. This may include conducting a:

Hasty attack.

Bypass.

Hasty defense.

Again, the course of action must be favorable to the assigned mission for the patrol.

7-42. THE MOUNTED PATROL IN REAR AREA PROTECTION OPERATIONS

The mounted patrol may be used in any one of several possible missions as part of the rear area protection plan. The mission may be to:

Protect lines of communication. The mounted patrol may perform this mission by placing mutually supporting OPs along a route, by conducting mounted patrols over the route, and by escorting noncombat elements using the route.

Deny the enemy the use of a drop or landing zone (LZ). The mounted patrol may be sent out to mine or booby-trap potential drop or landing zones or to observe them for a specified period.

Protect a specific site or installation by positioning static elements and aggressive mounted patrols.

Provide a reaction force. The area in which the patrol is operating should be carefully delineated and subdivided into sectors which are identified by a letter, number, or name to enhance rapid identification and communication of the area of enemy intrusion. The leader must reconnoiter the routes in the area, know the terrain, and develop a plan for reaction to enemy intrusion. The infantry platoon may be operating with scout platoons in accomplishing this or any of the above [missions](#).

7-43. DEPARTURE AND REENTRY OF FRIENDLY LINES

Given the speed of execution for mounted patrols, timings for departure and reentry of friendly lines, the use of the initial rally point, recognition signals, and the reentry rally point are especially critical. The use of vehicles will increase the size requirement of the rally points significantly. Once the passage has begun, it must continue smoothly to prevent the massing of vehicles at the passage point. Recognition signals, whether panels or smoke during daylight or colored filtered lights at night, must be well disseminated among both the stationary unit and the patrol since the speed of the mission increases the chance for confusion and mistakes during passage. To avoid failure at the passage point, leaders must review the discussion on dismounted patrols with the added consideration of being mounted.

7-44. RECONNAISSANCE BY FIRE

Reconnaissance by fire is performed by firing on a suspected enemy position in an attempt to cause the enemy to react and thereby disclose his position. Reconnaissance by fire is a technique used when time is critical or the terrain does not favor the employment of dismounted troops. Normally, the platoon given a mounted patrol mission will be told whether the conditions of the mission allow reconnaissance by fire to be used. It is performed at the risk of losing surprise, but it may lessen the probability of moving into a well-concealed enemy position or fire pocket without being aware of its presence. During reconnaissance by fire, the platoon employs a fire element and an overwatch element. The overwatch element must continuously observe with binoculars the positions being reconnoitered, positions being fired upon, and adjacent areas so that any enemy movement or return fire is definitely located.



Reconnaissance by fire can be accomplished by either direct or indirect fire weapons. Some advantages and disadvantages of each technique are:

DIRECT FIRE.

Advantages.

Rapid response.

Accuracy.

Minimum communications required.

Fires can be delivered from different directions.

Disadvantages.

Sacrifices stealth and discloses friendly position.

Low volume of fire may telegraph intention.

Observation capability reduced.

Limited by the availability of ammunition and the maximum effective range of direct fire weapons.

INDIRECT FIRE.

Advantages.

Security for the mounted patrol that is directing the fire and observing the enemy action.

Permits all members of the patrol to observe the effects of the fire.

Not restricted by masking.

Wider variety of ammunition available for the mission.

Disadvantages.

Slower to deliver initial round.

Requires adjustment for accuracy.

Increased communications required.

Impacts on mortar/artillery supply rate.

Will seldom cause the enemy to fire, but may result in movement.

If the enemy returns fire, the patrol deploys and returns fire in an attempt to make the enemy commit himself to action that will show his composition, size, and intent. The patrol leader must immediately report the contact and actions taken to higher headquarters to obtain guidance to further develop the situation. If the fire is not returned, the unit reconnoiters the position, exercising caution since reconnaissance by fire may fail to cause seasoned troops to react.