APPENDIX D

Planning and Employment Considerations for Tactical Operations

Contents

OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

Decisive victory rarely is the result of success gained in an initial attack; rather, it is the result of quickly and relentlessly exploiting that initial success. As specific opportunities for exploitation cannot be anticipated with certainty, the commander plans thoroughly and develops sequels based on potential outcomes of the battle. He prepares mentally for any contingency, identifying tentative concepts of operation and missions and objectives for each element of the MAGTF.

Aviation Combat Element

The aviation combat element (ACE) may conduct offensive operations to defeat, destroy or neutralize the enemy. The MAGTF must ensure that adequate battlespace is assigned to employ all the capabilities of available ACE assets. The MAGTF commander takes advantage of the ACE's capabilities—range, speed, mobility, and agility—to shape the battlespace and set conditions for decisive

action. MAGTF aviation assets will be integrated into MAGTF offensive operations either as the main effort or in a supporting role.

The "Policy for Command and Control of USMC Tactical Air in Sustained Operations Ashore," found in JP 0-2, directs the MAGTF commander to provide sorties to the joint force commander for air defense, long-range interdiction, and long range reconnaissance. He must also provide sorties in excess of MAGTF direct support requirements. The MAGTF commander may task-organize aviation, ground, and combat service support units under a single commander to execute the form of offensive maneuver selected. When considering the employment of MAGTF aviation assets in the offense, planners must consider weather conditions and employment duration.

Three closely related activities occur within the MAGTF's single battle: *deep, close,* and *rear* operations. As a result, the ACE will be integral in each operation in depth to support the MAGTF's single battle.

The ACE conducts deep operations by providing fires through offensive air support (deep and close air support); force protection through antiair warfare, air reconnaissance, and electronic warfare; and support of maneuver, insertion, movement, and resupply of forces in the deep area through assault support. Security missions, such as screening, may be conducted in the deep area by the ACE.

In close operations, the ACE can be the decisive action for lasting effects on the battlefield. MAGTF commanders shape the course of the battle and can pick from a combination of the types of offensive operations and forms of maneuver to use at the critical time and place to close with and destroy the enemy. For example, commanders may fix a part of the enemy forces with aviation forces through offensive air support and then envelop using the ground combat element (GCE) to defeat the enemy. The ACE can augment the combat power of the reserve when committed by the MAGTF commander at the decisive time and place.

In rear operations, MAGTF commanders should allocate adequate resources to maintain freedom of action and continuity of operations. Aviation assets can support the force in the rear because of the range, speed, mobility, and agility. Assault support assets increase the mobility of the tactical combat force that operates in the rear area. To decrease reaction time, ACE assets may be employed as direct support assets to the rear area commander by the MAGTF commander.

Types of Offensive Operations

The ACE can conduct or support all types of offensive operations.

Movement to Contact. The initial task of the ACE is to locate the enemy by reconnoitering forward or by screening the flanks of the force. Rotary-wing aircraft are well-suited to gain, regain or maintain continuous contact with the enemy during movement to contact. Once the ACE locates the enemy it may use offensive air support to fix him. The MAGTF commander can then use the ACE to attack, to support an attack by the GCE or bypass the enemy force. During a movement to contact, aviation assets may perform a number of tasks to include:

- Reconnoiter and determine the trafficability of all high-speed routes, bridges, culverts, overpasses, underpasses, bypasses, and fords within the zone.
- Find and report all enemy forces within the zone and help determine their size, composition, and activity. The ACE is capable of establishing visual and electromagnetic contact with the enemy at extended ranges.
- Provide aviation assets for advance force, flank or rear security missions associated with the MAGTF's movement to conduct.
- Conduct screening missions.
- Provide fires and assault support for the force.

Attack. MAGTF aviation assets will be integrated into MAGTF attack operations either as the main effort or in a supporting role. During attack operations, MAGTF aviation assets may be employed in the close fight or deep against second echelon forces, enemy artillery, enemy helicopter forces, and enemy reaction forces, which could disrupt the momentum of the MAGTF attack. Operations beyond the depth of the close fight, especially when conducted in synchronization with other combined arms and joint service contributions, can break the cohesion of enemy defenses and lead to exploitation and pursuit. During attack operations, the ACE may perform a number of tasks to include:

- Disrupt, degrade or destroy specific enemy units.
- Envelop (along a specific axis) enemy forces.
- Block enemy forces.
- Conduct raids against enemy units.
- Fix enemy units.
- Screen or guard.
- Conduct counterattacks.
- Conduct feints or demonstrations.

While MAGTF aviation forces are capable of performing the tasks and/or missions listed above, they will seldom execute them alone. The MAGTF will

employ forces with a variety of integrated, mutually supporting forces. An example might be the ACE attacking a second echelon enemy unit under the direction of a force reconnaissance team. To allow the aircraft to reach the target area, the GCE suppresses an enemy air defense site along the ingress route.

Exploitation. During exploitation operations, MAGTF aviation assets may be used to maintain pressure on the collapsing enemy forces. MAGTF aviation operations may be tasked to prevent the enemy from reconstituting a defense, prevent the withdrawal of enemy forces to other defensible terrain, and destroy the enemy command and control during exploitation operations. They may also be used to strike enemy, attempt to reform or provide reconnaissance in front of friendly advancing ground exploitation forces. MAGTF aerial reconnaissance gives the MAGTF commander the capability to exploit by using the greatest advantage that MAGTF aviation has to offer: range and speed.

During exploitation, the MAGTF commander assumes risk on the flanks and in the rear. He can employ aviation assets to minimize the risk by assigning the ACE to protect the flanks and can also assign direct support aviation assets to the rear area.

Pursuit. During a pursuit, the inherent speed and mobility of aviation forces are ideally suited to maintain enemy contact, develop the situation, and deliver aerial fires upon positions of enemy resistance. Since pursuit is a difficult phase of an operation to predict, ground forces may not be positioned to properly exploit the situation. Aviation forces may be moved quickly and may be tasked to find, fix, and attack fleeing enemy units; locate the enemy strike forces; and guide the GCE into attack positions or around enemy exposed flanks. The maneuverability and firepower of MAGTF aviation assets make it the optimum force to conduct pursuit operations.

Forms of Offensive Maneuver

The MAGTF commander chooses the form of maneuver that fully exploits all the dimensions of the battlespace, and that fully utilizes the capabilities of the MAGTF that best accomplishes the mission. The MAGTF commander organizes and employs the ACE to best support the chosen form of maneuver.

Envelopment. In an envelopment, the enemy's defensive positions may be bypassed using vertical envelopment from assault support assets. The commander may choose to conduct a double envelopment, and helicopterborne forces can be effectively used on a different route to attack than those of the GCE. This allows forces to converge with minimal risk of fratricide caused by two opposing friendly ground forces coming from different attack routes in a double

envelopment. The ACE can screen the flanks of an enveloping force reducing its vulnerability to enemy counteraction.

Turning Movement. A turning movement may use aviation forces to pass around the enemy's principal defensive positions to secure by helicopterborne forces or fires objectives deep in the enemy's rear using the ACE's advantages in speed, range, and mobility. The turning force usually operates at such distances from the fixing forces that mutual support is unlikely, except in the case of aviation units that can mutually support ground forces because of speed, range, mobility, agility, and line of sight communications. The ACE can screen the flanks of a turning force reducing its vulnerability to enemy counteraction.

Infiltration. During infiltration, the ACE can—

- Achieve surprise.
- Occupy a position from which to support the main attack by fire, especially rotary-wing close air support assets that can hover or land.
- Conduct ambushes and raids in the enemy's rear area to harass and disrupt his command and control and support activities.
- Cut off enemy forward units.

However, without augmentation by the GCE, the ACE would have difficulty securing key terrain.

Penetration. A penetration is a form of offensive maneuver that seeks to breach the enemy's main defenses creating an assailable flank where none existed before. Aviation forces can create and support the penetration or they can attack the flanks once the break has been made through the enemy's main defenses.

Flanking Attack. Aviation forces work well when conducting a flanking attack because the enemy's strength is normally oriented to the front and aviation forces can use all of the battlespace to attack from the flanks to minimize the enemy's strengths.

Frontal Attack. Aviation forces are often used to create gaps with fires in the enemy's front or to prevent or delay enemy reinforcements reaching the frontlines. Normally, the ACE will support the GCE in a MAGTF frontal attack.

Ground Combat Element

The GCE is a task-organized, combined arms force that closes with and defeats the enemy through the use of fires and maneuver. The MAGTF greatly enhances the combined arms capabilities resident in the GCE by extending the battlespace

through application of firepower, information operations, target acquisition, and mobility. The GCE is particularly effective in battlespace with restricted mobility, such as urban, wooded, mountainous or jungle. It is also highly effective in limited visibility and in missions to attack, defeat, and clear the enemy in prepared defenses.

To increase tactical tempo, flexibility, mobility, survivability, and to seize the initiative, as well as inflict shock effect on the enemy, the assault forces of the GCE can be transported by helicopter or organic assault amphibian vehicles. GCE mobility is often provided by a combination of these means.

Distribution of Forces

One of the primary ways the commander can influence the course of the attack is through the distribution of force into a main attack, one or more supporting attacks, and a reserve. By properly distributing his assets, the commander achieves superiority at the decisive time and place while maintaining the minimum necessary forces elsewhere to accomplish supporting tasks. The GCE's flexibility and capabilities are ideally suited for assignment to any of these missions.

Main Effort. The GCE commander provides the bulk of his combat power to the main effort to maintain momentum and ensure accomplishment of the mission. The commander personally allocates resources or shifts his main effort as needed. The GCE, together with other elements of the MAGTF, reconnoiters extensively to locate enemy strengths and weaknesses. Once a weakness is identified, the GCE commander rapidly maneuvers his main effort to exploit it.

The main effort is provided with the greatest mobility and the preponderance of combat support and combat service support. Consideration is made to the mobility, survivability, shock effect, sustainability, and lasting effect of the GCE when determining the force designated as the main effort. The commander normally gives the main effort priority of fire support.

Reserves are echeloned in depth to support exploitation of the main effort's success. The commander can further concentrate the main effort by assigning it a narrower zone of action. All other actions are designed to support the main effort.

Supporting Effort. The commander assigns the minimum combat power necessary to accomplish the purpose of each supporting effort. A supporting effort in the offense is carried out in conjunction with the main effort to achieve one or more of the following:

- Deceive the enemy as to the location of the main effort.
- Destroy or fix enemy forces that could shift to oppose the main effort.

- Control terrain that, if occupied by the enemy, will hinder the main effort.
- Force the enemy to commit reserves prematurely.

In support of the MAGTF single battle, the GCE can be an ideal supporting effort for the ACE when the ACE is assigned as the main effort. In logistic-oriented missions, such as humanitarian assistance operations, the GCE can be an ideal supporting effort for the combat service support detachment if that element is assigned as the main effort.

Reserves. The primary purpose of the reserve is to attack at the critical time and place to ensure the victory or exploit success. Its strength and location will vary with its contemplated mission, form of maneuver, terrain, possible enemy reaction, and clarity of the situation. The reserve should be:

- Positioned to readily reinforce the main effort.
- Employed to exploit success, not reinforce failure.
- Committed in strength, not piecemeal.
- Reconstituted immediately.

Types of Offensive Operations

An attack by the GCE rarely develops exactly as planned. The commander must be prepared to take advantage of fleeting opportunities that present themselves during offensive operations. To exploit these opportunities and generate tempo, command and control must be decentralized. Subordinate commanders must make decisions using their initiative and understanding of their senior's intent. In the attack, the GCE must minimize its exposure to enemy fire by using rapid maneuver and counterfire, exploiting cover offered by the terrain, avoiding obstacles, and maintaining security.

The GCE commander employs his organic fires and supporting arms in coordination with maneuver to enable him to close with the enemy. The commander prepares for the attack by successively delivering fires on enemy fire support assets, command and control assets, support facilities, and frontline units. These fires protect the force and restrict the enemy's ability to counter the attack. Artillery and other supporting arms ensure continuity of support and the ability to mass fires by timely displacement. During the final stages of the attack, the attacker must rely primarily on organic fires to overcome remaining enemy resistance.

The attack culminates in a powerful and violent assault. The assaulting units overrun the enemy using fire and movement. The attacker exploits success immediately by continuing to attack into the depth of the enemy to further disrupt

his defense. Deep operations, augmented with ACE or other MAGTF fires and information operations, attack enemy command and control and critical logistic nodes or second echelon maneuver forces, helping to break down the enemy's cohesion. As the defense begins to disintegrate, the attacker pursues the enemy to defeat him completely.

Movement to Contact. Using its internal reconnaissance and security assets, in coordination with MAGTF and ACE capabilities, the GCE finds and maintains contact while developing the situation with ground combat enemy forces in order to achieve the commander's decisive action. The GCE commander will initiate contact with as minimal a force as necessary so as to maintain freedom of maneuver with the bulk of his force. Once contact is gained, it is not normally broken without authority from the MAGTF commander. The GCE commander must exercise careful judgment to ensure that by maintaining contact, his force is not bending to the will of the enemy or being drawn into an ambush or other consequential action.

Attack. In the MAGTF single battle, the ACE and GCE, when supported in depth by the combat service support element (CSSE), have complementary capabilities. When integrated for the purpose of the attack, these capabilities can significantly increase their combined effects on the enemy for greater tactical decisiveness. In an attack, the GCE commander prevents effective enemy maneuver or counteraction by seizing the initiative through the use of his organic intelligence and security elements while masking his true intentions. The GCE commander makes every effort to achieve surprise by such methods as attacking under cover of darkness or using terrain and/or weather to conceal his force as it closes with the enemy. Once the GCE has gained the advantage, the commander will focus his combat power against the enemy's center of gravity through its critical vulnerabilities in order to destroy it and exploit all advantages gained.

Exploitation. The GCE normally conducts an exploitation by continuing the attack with committed units or by launching an uncommitted unit into the attack through a passage of lines. The commander may commit his reserve as the exploitation force depending on the factors of METT-T. He will constitute a new reserve as soon as possible to defeat enemy counterattacks and to restore momentum to a stalled attack.

Pursuit. Success in the pursuit is particularly enhanced through extensive use of the ACE to support the GCE's rapid movement and to provide flank security. Combat service support planning by the GCE in advance of the initial attack must take into account success and ensure that the combat trains have the mobility to support an aggressive pursuit.

Forms of Maneuver

The GCE commander selects the best form of maneuver to support the MAGTF commander's concept of operation.

Envelopment. The most successful envelopments by the GCE require MAGTF resources and support from the ACE and CSSE. By nature, envelopments require surprise, superior mobility (ground and/or air) on the part of the enveloping force, the main effort, and success by the supporting efforts to fix the enemy in place.

Turning Movement. During a turning movement, the main effort usually operates at such a distance from supporting efforts that its units are beyond mutual supporting distance. Therefore, the GCE's main effort must be self-sufficient or integrated with highly mobile CSSEs in order to reach the objective before becoming decisively engaged. A turning movement is rarely executed by a GCE of less than division strength. Consideration should be made to use the ACE as a supporting effort to capitalize on its inherent mobility, speed, and range.

Flanking Attack. The GCE commander will use fires and terrain, and exploit weaknesses in enemy dispositions to create a flank. To the GCE, a flanking attack is similar to envelopment but is conducted on a shallower axis and is usually less decisive and less risky than a deeper attack. A flanking attack is usually conducted by battalions or below. This attack usually requires a supporting attack to occupy the enemy to the GCE's front.

Frontal Attack. The GCE goal in the frontal attack is to fix or defeat the enemy. The GCE commander may conduct feints or demonstrations in other areas to weaken the enemy effort at the breach by causing him to shift his reserves to the GCE's advantage.

Infiltration. The GCE commander must ensure that operational security is a top priority during planning and preparation for an infiltration as the forces conducting the infiltration are particularly vulnerable to surprise and ambush. Prearranged helicopter-delivered combat service support resupply is critical to support forces beyond the FEBA.

Penetration. The GCE must closely coordinate its operations with the ACE to take advantage of the ACE's ability to create gaps in the enemy's defense.

Combat Service Support Element

Combat service support planners should keep continuously informed of operation plans. They anticipate offensive operations even while supporting other types of operations. The objective of combat service support conducted in support of

offensive operations is to extend operational reach and increase the endurance of the force by supporting as far forward as possible with a logistics system that is optimized for throughput.

To prepare for an attack, CSSEs ensure that all support equipment is ready and that supplies are best located for support. They ensure that enough transportation is available to support the tactical and support plans. Commanders ensure that all support elements understand their responsibilities.

The forward deployment of CSSEs must take into account the vulnerability of the unit to enemy counterattack and maneuver element requirements for space and roads. CSSEs, especially mobile combat service support detachments, require security assistance. They need to be written into the fire support plan, have their own list of on-call targets, and have assets to call for fire from artillery and aviation platforms, as well as have established procedures for actions upon enemy contact.

The fundamental principle of supply support in the offense is responsiveness-to the supported unit. Supply support is typically more difficult in the offense than in the defense because of the ever-changing locations of units and their support areas. The concept of support becomes even more important and increasingly difficult to execute. Combat service support planners must coordinate preparations and unit positioning with deception plans to avoid giving away the element of surprise. Consequently, most combat service support operations will be conducted under the cover of darkness.

Ammunition

Responsive ammunition support for offensive operations is critical. This support is more difficult in offensive operations due to the lengthening of supply lines and the need for user resupply vehicles to stay close to firing elements. In preparing for the attack, logistics planners consider the following:

- Placing ammunition close to the user.
- Preparing ammunition supply points and ammunition transfer points to rapidly move forward as the attack advances.
- Stockpiling artillery ammunition at designated firing positions (possibly forward of current positions).
- Moving ammunition forward with advancing elements to ensure that basic loads can be replenished quickly.

Fuel

Offensive operations use large quantities of fuel. As a result, logisticians prepare for the attack by building up stocks in forward sites while avoiding signaling intentions to the enemy. They also ensure that fuel supply elements can move forward as the attack develops. Control of bulk transporter assets must be closely maintained throughout the AO. This is particularly true if the attack is highly successful and results in exploitation or pursuit.

Maintenance

Planners ensure maintenance operations support momentum and massing at critical points. Maintenance personnel maximize momentum by repairing at the point of malfunction or damage. They enhance momentum by keeping the maximum number of weapon systems operable and mobile. Emphasis is on battle damage assessment and rapid return of equipment to the supported unit. Repair and recovery personnel perform their mission in forward areas.

Supply

While Classes III (petroleum, oils, and lubricants) and V (ammunition) are the most important supplies in the offense, planners consider all classes of supply. While the need for barrier and fortification material decreases, for example, the requirement for obstacle, breaching, and bridging material may increase. Weapons system requirements may also be higher since weapon systems exposure to enemy fire during offensive operations is usually greater.

Transportation and Distribution

Movement requirements heavily tax transportation resources. There may be a wide dispersion of units and lengthening lines of communications. There may also be an increased requirement for personnel replacements and some classes of supply, such as fuel and weapon systems. These factors demand close coordination and planning for the use of transportation assets. Techniques such as supply push (unit distribution) or mobile forward tactical resupply and refueling points may be incorporated into the concept of support. Resources such as transportation and supply infrastructure that may be secure in the more stable environment of defense may not be as reliable in the offense. The opening and securing of main supply routes and available logistics facilities to sustain the MAGTF's offensive operations must be included in the operational and combat service support planning.

The mobility of offensive operations requires reliance on motor and air transport. When considering the air transport mode, the planner also considers aerial delivery. Movement control personnel set priorities in accordance with the

combatant commander's or joint force commander's priorities to ensure that transportation assets meet the most critical needs. Aerial delivery or external helicopter delivery may be in greater demand.

Medical

Offensive operations increase the burden on medical resources. Planners can expect high casualty rates. High casualties and long evacuation lines will stress medical treatment and evacuation resources to their limits and may dictate augmentation for medical detachments. Fleet hospitals move forward in preparation for offensive operations to provide maximum treatment and holding facilities. When organic medical resources are insufficient, evacuation may require use of nonmedical transportation assets, adding additional stress to an already overtaxed transportation system.

Services

The main combat service support effort in the offense is to provide only the most critically needed support to the attacking force. Most service functions play a minor role. Commanders suspend some services until the situation stabilizes. Laundry, clothing exchange, and field showers may be temporarily suspended. Mortuary affairs/graves registration is a major exception. It continues and may intensify. Adequate mortuary affairs/graves registration supplies must be on hand. Mortuary affairs detachments maintain close communications with personnel elements to verify and report casualty information and aid in the identification of remains.

DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

An effective defense is never passive. The defender cannot prepare his positions and simply wait for the enemy to attack. Commanders at every level must seek every opportunity to wrest the initiative from the attacker and shift to the offense. Subordinate commanders take the necessary steps to maintain their positions and cover gaps in their dispositions by the use of observation, obstacles, fires or reserves. The defense demands resolute will on the part of all commanders.

Aviation Combat Element

The MAGTF commander uses speed, range, mobility, and agility of aviation assets to maximize concentration and flexibility in the defense. MAGTF aviation assets are integrated into MAGTF defensive operations either as the main effort or in a supporting role. During preparation for defensive operations, the ACE may support the covering force with aerial reconnaissance and fires. The

MAGTF commander may task-organize aviation, ground, and combat service support units under a single aviation combat commander to execute the form of defensive maneuver selected.

During defensive operations, the MAGTF commander organizes his battlespace into three areas: security area, main battle area, and rear area. The ACE will operate throughout all of these areas and is integral to the MAGTF's single battle in the defense.

Security Area

Typically, operations in the security area include interdiction by air maneuver and fires. During the defense, aviation can be used to attack deep against high-payoff targets, enemy concentrations, and moving columns, and also to disrupt enemy centers of gravity.

The MAGTF commander seeks to engage the enemy as far out as possible. Because of the mobility and range of aviation assets, the ACE has excellent capabilities to conduct these operations. ACE assets can be employed in depth to attack follow-on echelons before they can move forward to the main battle area. Aviation forces can be employed to conduct screening operations; in conjunction with ground forces, they conduct guard operations on an open flank. Normally, ACE forces are not given guard missions.

Main Battle Area

The greater the depth of the main battle area, the greater the maneuver space for maximizing the capabilities of the ACE. A counterattack is an attack by part or all of a defending force against an attacking enemy force, for such specific purposes as regaining ground lost or cutting off and destroying enemy advance units. ACE assets used as the counterattack force can be employed to conduct decisive action to regain the initiative.

Rear Area

MAGTF commanders should allocate adequate resources to protect the rear area to maintain freedom of action and continuity of operations. Aviation assets can support the force in the rear because of their range, speed, and mobility. Because ACE airfields often operate in rear areas, aviation assets must depend on those functions of security and sustainment required to maintain continuity of operations. Assault support assets increase the mobility of the tactical combat force that operates in the rear area. To increase reaction time, ACE assets may be employed as direct support assets to the rear area commander by the MAGTF commander.

Mobile Defense

Since minimum force is placed forward to canalize, delay, disrupt, and deceive the enemy as to the actual location of the defense, MAGTF aviation assets can supplement mobile forces to fill in gaps where the MAGTF is most vulnerable. A mobile defense requires mobility greater than that of the attacker. The MAGTF generates the mobility advantage with helicopterborne forces and MAGTF aviation assets. The ACE can support through fires the displacement of GCE units to alternate and supplementary positions used in the mobile defense. Terrain and space are traded to draw the enemy deeper into the defensive area, causing him to overextend his force and expose his flanks to ACE assets. Together, MAGTF aviation assets and ground combat forces provide a much more effective strike force that can bring simultaneous fires to bear upon the enemy from unexpected directions.

Position Defense

In a position defense, the MAGTF commander can employ his aviation assets (primarily assault support aircraft) to help contain tactical emergencies, by disengaging them from an area and quickly concentrating them in another. Because of the ACE's mobility and agility, the MAGTF commander can risk reducing the size of the ground maneuver force placed in reserve. In a position defense, aviation assets can be used to blunt and contain enemy penetrations, to counterattack, and to exploit opportunities presented by the enemy.

Ground Combat Element

The GCE conducts the defense through the assignment of sectors, battle or blocking positions, and strong points. These assignments are made in a manner that enhances depth and mutual support; provides opportunities to trap or ambush the attacker; and affords observation, surprise, and deception. The GCE commander maintains an awareness of concurrent delaying actions to take advantage of opportunities created by adjacent units. The GCE receives substantial heavy engineering and logistical support from the combat service support detachment to enhance the survivability, sustainability, and countermobility of its defensive positions. The ACE provides support to the GCE through assault support, close air support, and reconnaissance.

Security Forces

GCE security forces are employed in the security area to delay, disrupt, and provide early warning of the enemy's advance and to deceive him as to the true location of the main battle area. These forces are assigned cover, guard or screen missions.

Screening Force

The GCE may establish a screening force to gain and maintain contact with the enemy, observe enemy activity, identify the enemy main effort, and report information. In most situations, the minimum security force organized by the GCE is a screening force. Normally, the screening force only fights in self-defense, but may be tasked to—

- Repel enemy reconnaissance units as part of the GCE's counterreconnaissance effort.
- Prevent enemy artillery from acquiring terrain that enables frontline units to be engaged.
- Provide early warning.
- Attack the enemy with supporting arms.

Guard Force

The GCE may designate a guard force for protection from enemy ground observation, direct fire, and surprise attack for a given period of time. A guard force allows the commander to extend the defense in time and space to prevent interruption of the organization of the main battle area. Observation of the enemy and reporting of information by the guard force is an inherent task of the guard force, but secondary to its primary function of protection.

The GCE commander determines the orientation of the guard force and the duration the guard must be provided. Normally, guard forces are oriented to the flanks for the minimum amount of time necessary to develop an integrated defense.

Covering Force

The GCE may provide the bulk of the MAGTF's covering force. The covering force operates apart from the main force to engage, delay, disrupt, and deceive the enemy before he can attack the main force. A GCE covering force can be augmented or supported by rotary-wing attack assets in order to strengthen its capabilities and further disrupt enemy attack formations.

Security Measures

Security measures are employed by the GCE and coordinated at all levels. These security measures include combat patrolling, sensors, target acquisition radars, surveillance, and employment of false visual and electronic signatures. In addition, skills of certain units within the GCE enhance the security posture of the organization. For example, engineers within the GCE contribute to survivability, mobility, and countermobility, all of which contribute to security.

Any active measure that may impact on other elements of the MAGTF is coordinated throughout the MAGTF. All units of the GCE provide local security. The degree of local security is dictated by terrain, communications, target acquisition capabilities, and the enemy threat.

Combat Service Support Element

The role of the CSSE in the defense is to support defensive battles while maintaining the capability to shift to the offense with little notice. Facilities and combat service support areas should be far enough in the rear to be out of the flow of battle and relatively secure. They should not be so far back that they make the support effort less effective. Where possible, combat service support units locate out of the reach of potential penetrations in protected and concealed locations without sacrificing support and out of the movement routes for retrograding units. Dispersion should be consistent with support requirements, control, and local security. Air defense coverage should be planned and emplaced.

Ammunition

Logisticians position ammunition supply and transfer points to facilitate rapid and responsive support. Using units may stockpile ammunition in excess of their basic loads. Ammunition may also be placed at successive defensive positions. This provides easy access and lessens transportation problems during the withdrawal to those positions. The defense usually requires a greater volume of ammunition than the offense. Construction and barrier material and ammunition requirements, especially for mines and barrier materials, are heaviest during the preparation for defense.

Fuel

The form of defensive operation influences fuel requirements. A position defense typically requires less fuel than an offensive operation. Mobile defenses, on the other hand, generally involve greater fuel consumption that the more static-oriented area defense. In either case, forward stockpiles of fuel may be appropriate.

Maintenance

The primary thrust of the maintenance effort in the defense is to maximize the number of weapon systems available at the start of the operation. Once the defensive battle begins, the thrust is to fix the maximum number of inoperable systems and return them to battle in the least amount of time. This requires forward support at, or as near as possible to, the intended AO of the systems.

Supply

Supply activity will be the most intensive during the preparation stage. Stockpiles should be far forward and at successive defensive positions, especially critical supplies (fuel, ammunition, barrier materiel). While many supplies—especially munitions and barrier material—must be far forward, they must also be as mobile as possible. This allows continuous support as combat power shifts in response to enemy attacks. The CSSE must position the ammunition supply points or transfer points to maximize responsiveness.

Transportation and Distribution

Transportation resources are most critical in the preparation stage of the defense. Stockpiling supplies and shifting personnel, weapon systems, and supplies require extensive transportation, laterally or in depth, to meet the probable points of enemy attack. Transportation assets move barrier supplies and ammunition (e.g., mines, demolitions) as close to the barrier sites as possible. Logisticians take action to increase the flow of these materials as soon as the intention to conduct a deliberate defense is known.

Medical

Medical support of defensive operations is more difficult than in the offense. Casualty rates are lower, but forward acquisition is complicated by enemy action and the initial direction of maneuver to the rear. The task of frontline medical units is to stabilize, prioritize, and evacuate the wounded. Priorities for evacuation will be complicated by the probable enemy main effort. Enemy activities may inhibit evacuation, increase casualties among medical personnel, and damage medical and evacuation equipment. Heaviest casualties, including those caused by enemy artillery and weapons of mass destruction, may be expected during the initial enemy attack and in the counterattack.

The enemy attack may disrupt ground and air communications routes and delay evacuation of patients to and from aid stations. Clearing facilities should be located away from points of possible penetration and must not interfere with reserve force positioning. The depth and dispersion of the mobile defense create significant time and distance problems in evacuation support to security and fixing forces. Security forces may be forced to withdraw while simultaneously carrying their patients to the rear. Peak loads may require additional helicopter evacuation capability. Nonmedical transportation assets may not be available to assist in casualty evacuation.

Services

In the defense, services operate routinely where the tactical situation permits. Service facilities should locate out of the way and not interfere with tactical operations. Mortuary affairs detachments evacuate the dead as rapidly as possible especially in deliberate defensive position to maintain morale. The use of hot rations tends to increase in the defense. Aerial delivery of rations and other services may be employed for cut-off, screening or guarding units.

OTHER TACTICAL OPERATIONS

A MAGTF may be required to conduct other tactical operations in combination, sequentially or as part of the offense or defense. Such operations are difficult, complex, often involve risk, and require detailed planning. Methods for conducting other tactical operations vary according to METT-T factors as they apply to each situation.

Aviation Combat Element

The MAGTF commander uses the ACE's inherent capabilities of range, speed, mobility, and agility when conducting these tactical operations He should ensure that adequate battlespace is assigned to employ all the capabilities of available aviation assets. Marine aviation is capable of operating in any environment; however, weather can adversely affect its effectiveness in performing some functions such as assault support and reconnaissance. Longer periods of employment will require increased maintenance efforts and the MAGTF may be required to support the joint force commander by providing excess sorties.

Retrograde

Aviation plays a major role in setting the conditions for a successful retrograde. The ACE can provide security for friendly ground forces and interdict enemy forces to disrupt and delay his advance. Air delivered mines can be used to supplement obstacles emplaced by engineers to impede or canalize enemy movements throughout the battlespace. Assault support may be used to move ground forces rapidly between delaying positions and move troops, equipment, and supplies away from the enemy. When a retirement occurs over extended distances, the security mission may be given to the aviation commander and appropriate ground units may be placed under his command authority. Retrograde operations are conducted primarily during limited visibility; therefore, aviation’s all-weather abilities should be exploited. Should the retrograde operation require the displacement of aviation assets, the MAGTF

should plan for the movement by echelon of airfield equipment and personnel while maintaining continuous aviation support for the duration of the operation.

Passage of Lines

MAGTF aviation assets can support a forward passage of lines by providing or supporting the security force to fix enemy forces in place and permit the MAGTF to complete the passage of lines. Aviation could then be used to exploit success of the moving force. In a rearward passage, in addition to a security force role, aviation can serve as the MAGTF counterattack force.

Linkup

Tactical aviation assets can be used to establish initial electronic connectivity between two units conducting a linkup while physical contact between ground forces occurs later. A helicopterborne force acting as the moving force can usually accomplish physical linkup rapidly.

Relief in Place

Assault support assets are ideal to transport infantry units to conduct a rapid relief in place especially where there is no enemy pressure or where a replacement of like type units is required. In certain instances, a relief in place of a ground unit with an aviation force such as attack helicopters can keep the enemy off balance and rest a ground unit.

Obstacle Crossing

Aviation assets give the MAGTF the ability to cross obstacles with minimal delay, loss of momentum, and casualties. Helicopterborne forces can bypass most obstacles completely; if necessary, these forces can reduce or eliminate the obstacle from the far side of the impediment. Aviation assets can suppress and disrupt the enemy when the force is most vulnerable while astride the obstacle.

Breakout from Encirclement

Normally, when encircled by the enemy, a MAGTF commander will attempt to breakout as soon as possible. Aviation forces provide an immediately responsive and effective asset to aid in the breakout. The encircled force may receive fire support from aviation assets outside the encirclement. Attack helicopters can conduct a breakout by rupturing and penetrating the enemy's encircling position, widening the gap until all the other encircled forces have moved through. In addition, aviation forces can be used as a diversion or may augment the reserve when committed. Any of the encircled forces (rupture force, main body, or rear guard) may consist of aviation and ground task-organized combined arms teams.

Ground Combat Element

The GCE conducts other tactical operations to support the MAGTF's offensive and defensive operations. These operations may require augmentation of specialized equipment and personnel with special skills. The type of augmentation will depend on the characteristics of the AO, conditions under which they are conducted, the nature of the operations, or any combination of these factors. The GCE is dependent upon the rest of the MAGTF for the additional fires, logistics, and other support necessary to execute these operations with speed and security.

Retrograde

In a retrograde, the GCE will normally conduct disengagement by echelon. Security forces (such as the guard and covering force) and the reserve usually are highly mobile units comprised of tanks, light armored reconnaissance, and infantry mounted on assault amphibious vehicles and augmented by attack helicopter assets. The GCE's organic combat engineering assets or those from the CSSE are employed to prepare initial and subsequent delaying positions and support other countermobility requirements. Indirect fires are used to attack enemy formations, force their early deployment, slow their advance, and limit their contact with friendly forces. Tactical deception is used to confuse the enemy as to the true location and intent of ground forces; the retrograde itself may be a deception measure to make the enemy susceptible to a counterattack. The MAGTF commander should consider the use of a mobile reserve to support the counterattack during a retrograde. The GCE will employ appropriate force protection measures and normal movement-to-contact methods, including security measures, in a retrograde.

Passage of Lines

The GCE can control linkup operations between its subordinate commands or conduct them with the ACE, CSSE, and with other joint or multinational forces. When the GCE conducts a linkup, the force designated as the stationary unit should at least temporarily occupy the designated linkup point. The moving ground force commander will normally locate his forward command post in the vicinity of the stationary ground force combat operations center to facilitate integration and coordination of tactical plans, fire support, security, command and control, combat service support, communications, and maneuver control and fire support coordinating measures. The GCE commander should ensure that appropriate command relationships are established and understood by both elements. Fire support coordinating measures, such as restricted fire lines, are established or modified as required to balance freedom of action and positive control.

Linkup

When the linkup is between two subordinate ground units, the GCE establishes maneuver control measures such as linkup points and boundaries between converging forces, and fire support coordinating measures such as restricted fire lines and coordinated fire lines. Control measures are adjusted during the operation to provide for freedom of action and maximum control. The GCE commander may designate linkup points, usually located where the moving force's routes arrive at the location of the stationary force's security elements. Alternate linkup points are also designated since enemy action may interfere with linkup at primary points. To assist in the linkup, stationary forces help open lanes in minefields, breach or remove selected obstacles, furnish guides, and designate assembly areas. Leading elements of each force should be on a common radio net.

Relief in Place

Control of all ground units normally remains with the outgoing commander. This requires close coordination with the supported units. Units may need to exchange certain weapons, supplies, equipment, and, occasionally, vehicles to facilitate a rapid relief. To ensure coordination and maintain security, the outgoing unit's radio nets, command frequencies, and operators should be used. The outgoing unit remains in charge of communications throughout the entire relief. Artillery is normally relieved last to ensure continuous fire support; if possible, the outgoing unit artillery remains in position until all units are relieved.

Obstacle Crossing

The GCE normally bypasses obstacles whenever possible, often using helicopterborne forces conducting an envelopment. It has the capability to conduct hasty and deliberate breaches. When conditions permit, assault amphibious vehicles are ideal to move assault elements across a river. For large-scale river crossing operations, the GCE may require additional bridging assets provided by the MAGTF or the joint force. The GCE maximizes the use of combined arms during crossing operations. Use of supporting arms, combat engineers, reconnaissance, rotary wing ACE assets, and armor reduces vulnerability, increases tempo, and supports initiative in breaching operations. Deception is maximized to deceive the enemy and draw enemy attention away from the crossing site.

Breakout from Encirclement

The GCE will attempt to deceive the enemy on the time and place of the breakout. It will make best use of limited visibility but not necessarily at the expense of time. The GCE will use its organic reconnaissance as well as other

reconnaissance assets to locate gaps and weaknesses in the enemy force. Initially, the rupture force will be the GCE's main effort and may be provided additional combat power, such as engineer support, necessary to achieve the rupture. During the breakout, massed continuous fires are used to open the rupture point, suppress enemy direct fire systems, and isolate the breakout from the enemy. Once the rupture is achieved, priority of fires may shift to the rear guard action if sufficient fires are available to support the momentum of the breakout. Artillery will provide continuous fire support during the breakout and subsequent movement to linkup with friendly forces.

Combat Service Support Element

The principles of logistics—responsiveness, simplicity, flexibility, economy, attainability, sustainability, and survivability—are universal constants that apply equally to the functional areas of logistics during other tactical operations. These considerations will not dictate a specific course of action, but will help maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of logistics operations.

Retrograde

Priority of support during retrograde operations is determined by the commander but is usually given to units that have completed the move and are preparing new positions. CSSEs must continue to support the delaying force with critical supplies at the old defensive positions while establishing support to withdrawing elements moving rearward. Combat service support personnel and equipment not essential to supporting forward combat forces should be moved as soon as feasible. Retrograde operations will strain the transportation system as all essential supplies, materiel, and personnel are moved rearward. Movement control personnel and agencies should maximize the use of all available transportation assets—watercraft, railroads, air, and line haul. All movements throughout the entire retrograde will be regulated, controlled, and prioritized to eliminate unnecessary surge periods and to avoid congestion. Helicopter and aerial delivery should be used whenever possible, as well as mobile loading of fuel and ammunition. If sufficient rolling stock is not available for mobile supply points, supplies can be placed along the retrograde route so forces can fall back on a continuous supply. Heavy equipment transportation should be coordinated by the senior movement control organization. Supplies that cannot be moved should be destroyed. Maintenance efforts should concentrate on use of controlled exchange and cannibalization to facilitate rapid turnaround of weapon systems. Repair to transportation assets is critical to retrograde operations.

Passage of Lines

The CSSE should establish liaison and coordinate movement control during the passage with the other force involved. Every action should be taken to avoid any interruption in logistics operations that would diminish the combat power of either force. All units should completely understand which unit will provide supply, maintenance; nuclear, biological, and chemical decontamination; medical; and movement priorities and control for the stationary and passing forces.

Linkup

Before the linkup has been initiated, combat service support is the responsibility of each unit involved in the linkup operation (whether it be converging forces, a force closing on a previous secured objective, forces encircling an enemy force, or during a counterattack). Converging forces should coordinate combat service support that can be mutually provided to facilitate the linkup operation and any subsequent mission.

Relief in Place

A CSSE involved in a relief in place should develop and coordinate a common concept of support, and exchange standing operating procedures, and combat support and combat service support status. The concept of support should clearly identify the specific elements of combat service support to be provided by each force involved in the relief. When possible, existing supplies, end items, and maintenance facilities should be left in place for the relieving force or prepositioned to support the movement of the forces involved in the relief.

Obstacle Crossing

Combat service support for obstacle crossing operations differs slightly from sustainment operations during the offense or defense. Transportation support for engineer units and bridging materiel is the primary concern, with maintenance of bridging equipment and fuel requirements a secondary consideration. All essential combat support and combat service support units should be moved across the obstacle early and dispersed in locations that can support the operation. Whenever possible, bridging equipment should be recovered early and replaced with assault float bridging and unit assets that can be recovered quickly. CSSEs may also have unique intelligence collection requirements, such as obstacle surveys or soil and trafficability studies, that must be satisfied in order to provide the desired support.

Breakout from Encirclement

The commander of an encircled force may have to reorganize his logistic support, centralize all supplies, and establish strict rationing and supply procedures to conserve his sustainment ability. If possible, resupply and casualty evacuation should be done by air. Centralized medical and graves registration operations should be established. The CSSEs should be integrated into the main body. In the event that some forces must be left behind, sufficient medical personnel and supplies will be left to attend the wounded, and personnel will also be detailed to destroy abandoned equipment.