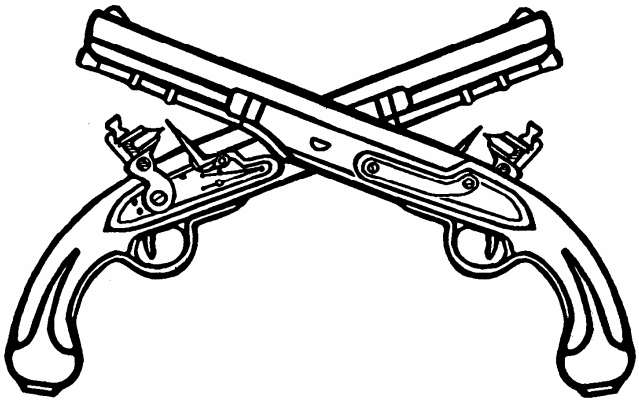
SUBCOURSE
MP1030

EDITION
B

RIVER CROSSING OPERATIONS

MP



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RIVER CROSSING OPERATIONS

SUBCOURSE MP1030

EDITION B

4 Credit Hours

Edition Date: September 1994

SUBCOURSE OVERVIEW

We designed this subcourse to teach you the role of the military police (MP) in a river crossing operation. River crossings are one of the more complex operations that must be accomplished. You will learn how to plan and conduct MP support for a river crossing.

There are no prerequisites for this subcourse.

This subcourse reflects the doctrine which was current at the time it was prepared. In your own work situation, always refer to the latest official publications.

Unless otherwise stated, the masculine gender of singular pronouns is used to refer to both men and women.

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

ACTION: Plan and conduct MP support to a river crossing.

CONDITIONS: You will have this subcourse.

STANDARD: To demonstrate competency of this task you must achieve a minimum score of 70 percent on the subcourse examination.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LESSON

PLAN, ORGANIZE, AND COORDINATE MILITARY POLICE SUPPORT FOR RIVER CROSSING OPERATIONS

Critical Task: 191-379-4401

OVERVIEW

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson you will learn to plan, organize, and coordinate military police support for river crossing operations.

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

ACTION: Plan, organize, and coordinate MP support for river crossing operations.

CONDITION: You will have this subcourse, paper and pencil.

STANDARD: To demonstrate competency of this task you must achieve a minimum score of 70 percent on the subcourse examination.

REFERENCES: The material contained in this lesson was derived from the following publications: FM 90-13, FM 19-1, FM 19-14, FM 19-40, FM 19-4, and ARTEP 19-77-30 MTP.

INTRODUCTION

The tasks that must be performed by the military police in a river crossing operation are highly complex. MP operations are characterized by centralized planning and control. At the same time, military police at every level must be prepared to act with initiative and dispatch. Several missions may have to be performed at the same time. It may become necessary for you, as an NCO, to have your personnel change missions quickly. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary that you have a complete understanding of how a river crossing is conducted, and why things occur the way they do. Otherwise, you cannot make the informed decisions that will be required of you.

River crossings are an integral part of land warfare. The lethality of modern weapons, and the capability of larger enemy formations, dictate that crossing forces reduce their vulnerability. They do this by maintaining inherent mobility. The objective of any river crossing is to project combat power across a water obstacle while ensuring the integrity and momentum of the force. Therefore, whether in the offense or retrograde, rivers must be crossed in stride. They are a continuation of the operation.

The type of water obstacle is not important--river, lake, or canal. All will be referred to as river crossings throughout this subcourse. The size and composition of the obstacle and the enemy situation will dictate how the crossing is to be made. Normally, it is a division operation, but it can be accomplished by a corps, or by brigades and battalions.

Corps do not normally conduct river crossings. They do so when two or more divisions are involved. The corps may also conduct the operation when it is too big for a division. When the division can control corps elements, the division will conduct the river crossing.

All efforts are directed to crossing the obstacle without loss of momentum. This is true regardless of the obstacle, enemy force, or the size of the crossing force. The force pauses at the river only as a last resort. This is done to build up combat power.

PART A - PLAN MP SUPPORT OF RIVER CROSSING OPERATIONS

1. General.

A river crossing is one of the most complex operations the Army conducts. It is a special operation. The crossing needs additional planning and support. There are many special considerations. Some of these challenges are discussed in the following paragraphs.

a. Special Equipment and Personnel Required.

Special equipment and specially trained personnel are required to successfully conduct river crossing operations. This is particularly true of the engineers. Their participation in overcoming water obstacles is so critical that they have special units who specialize in river crossings. This includes, for example, a mobile assault bridge company in the division engineer battalion. Other engineer units include float bridge companies and light bridge companies. In addition, all engineer personnel receive special training to support the combat forces in a river crossing.

Special training is not limited to the engineers, however. All combat arms units and most combat support units receive specialized training. Many combat service support units also receives such training. There are other specialized units that participate in river crossings. These would include special units trained in combat deception and chemical smoke generator units.

b. Command and Control is Difficult.

Few operations that are conducted by land forces are more complex than river crossings. There will be a high concentration of units of many different kinds, and from several different organizations, mixed together in a very small area. For periods of time, units will be divided by the water barrier itself. The command, control, and communications are made even more complex in that often such an operation may be conducted using radio silence

and in darkness. The role of the military police in assisting the commander in keeping the situation devolving into chaos is critical.

c. Courses of Action are Limited.

A water obstacle presents only a limited number of places at which it is feasible to cross. This allows the enemy to use substantial economy of force operations. In other words, if he has time to organize for combat, he can lightly screen areas along the water obstacle that are not suitable for crossing, and concentrate his major forces on those limited places where such operations are feasible. This is a major reason why a water obstacle must be crossed as rapidly as possible. It is critical not to give the enemy the opportunity to organize his defense along the river line.

d. Deviations From the Original Plan is Difficult.

Once forces are committed to a river crossing, deviation from the plan is all but impossible. The operation is too complex. It is also very limited in its location, as is noted above. Unlike the "normal" land battle, water obstacles are very difficult to bypass. Even a decision to stop the operation, to fall back and regroup, is usually disastrous. It could well cause the momentum to shift to the enemy. The friendly losses would probably be enormous.

2. Role of Military Police.

The role of the military police as a member of the combined arms team is critical. MP support to river crossings is a vital aspect in the overall success of a crossing operation. MP support reduces congestion, speeds the crossing, and helps maneuver forces to maintain momentum. This is accomplished by MP with a combination of battlefield circulation control (BCC), area security, and measures routinely used in enemy prisoner of war (EPW) operations.

MP provide BCC for river crossings by enforcing main supply route (MSR) regulations, directing crossing units to their proper locations, ensuring units move through the crossing area on schedule, and disseminating information that will assist in the control of the crossing unit. MP provide area security by conducting area reconnaissance to locate small scale enemy activity and to gather information. They may also control and evacuate EPW captured by the maneuver force. MP operate traffic control posts (TCP) and mobile patrols. They erect temporary signs. They set up and operate staging areas and holding areas. TCP are operated at staging areas and holding areas to control movement to and from those areas. Selected teams at TCP also report the movement of units and convoys to their company headquarters for the further transmission to the highway traffic division. MP operate a communications net that enables them to communicate with highway traffic division (HTD), or equivalent, the crossing area commander, and other military police in the area.

Although each type of river crossing requires a different degree of military police support, the measures used to provide that support are basically the same. Your role as an NCO will be vital. All the missions will be demanding and will require the best of your abilities. To be able to make the quick decisions required to assist the commander, you must fully understand the overall concept of river crossings.

3. Types of River Crossings.

Commanders should not surrender the initiative to the enemy by letting water obstacles needlessly affect their scheme of maneuver. Whenever possible, obstacles are crossed in stride, using local materials or organic equipment. This is referred to as a hasty crossing. There are times, however, when this is not possible and a build-up of forces and equipment is required in order to ensure a successful crossing of the obstacle. When this is necessary, momentum may be sacrificed. This operation is called a deliberate crossing. While in the defense it may become necessary to pull forces back across a water obstacle. This operation is referred to as a retrograde crossing.

a. Hasty Crossing.

A hasty river crossing is a decentralized operation using organic, existing, or expedient crossing means. It is conducted as a continuation of the attack with little or no loss of momentum by the attacking force. A hasty crossing is preferred over a deliberate crossing.

As in other crossings, a hasty crossing must be anticipated and planned in advance. Routine procedures, such as command and control, and the location of armored vehicle launched bridges (AVLB) in the column, are specified in standing operating procedures (SOP). Whenever possible, crossing sites are seized intact and in advance of leading elements.

Because enemy resistance on both banks is negligible or light, a hasty crossing does not require that all enemy forces be cleared from the river line. It capitalizes on the enemy's confusion and lack of sufficient combat power to oppose the crossing. Those enemy forces not cleared may pose a threat to military police. MP area security elements and mobile patrols may have to deal with them.

To maintain the momentum of the attack, and to get maximum combat power across quickly, the force crosses the water obstacle on a broad front. Therefore, whenever the force reaches an obstacle, day or night, the crossing is made. As the bulk of the assault units cross the obstacle, minimum forces are left to secure the crossing site. The initial assault in the hasty crossing should result in the rapid seizure of a sufficient area to ensure that the crossing sites are relatively secure from enemy ground action and direct fire.

Hasty river crossings are characterized by:

- o Speed, surprise, and minimum loss of momentum.
- o Decentralized operations with organic, existing, or expedient resources.
- o Weak enemy defenses on both banks.
- o Minimum concentration of forces.
- o A quick continuation of the attack.

A hasty river crossing does not require special military police support. The division MP platoon in direct support of the brigade provides the necessary support.

b. Deliberate River Crossing.

A deliberate river crossing is required when a hasty crossing is not feasible, has failed, or when offensive operations must be renewed at the river line. It may be forced by a significant river obstacle and/or by a strong defending enemy.

Deliberate river crossings will not normally be conducted from march formations, but will required a build-up of firepower and equipment on both the entry and exit banks. Enemy forces must, therefore, be cleared from the entry bank. Strong opposition on the exit bank dictates a deliberate crossing which provides for a phased build-up of combat power within the bridge head. Further, deliberate crossings will be conducted when the water obstacle is severe, prohibiting crossing with organic and expedient equipment.

Deliberate river crossings are characterized by:

- o The failure or infeasibility of a hasty river crossing.
- o Detailed planning and centralized control.
- o A deliberate pause to prepare, acquire additional bridging/rafting equipment, and concentrate combat power.
- o Clearance of enemy forces from the entry bank.

Military police support to a deliberate river crossing is planned and detailed. It may require the addition of corps MP assets. Almost all of the missions detailed in the introduction, and in the role of the military police, will be required to be performed.

c. Retrograde River Crossing.

A retrograde river crossing is required when enemy advances threaten to overwhelm the division, causing it to retrograde, and subjecting it to an enemy pursuit. A retrograde crossing is not an offensive crossing in reverse. In this situation, the retrograde crossing is conducted to:

- o Establish the defense on the exit bank.
- o Continue the retrograde to defensive positions beyond the water obstacle.

Retrograde river crossings are characterized by:

- o Detailed planning and centralized control.
- o Enemy control of maneuver initiative.
- o High risk to friendly forces.
- o Forces on the exit bank providing overwatching fires.
- o Forces delaying enemy's advances, to trade space for time at the crossing sites.

Military police support retrograde crossings by controlling battlefield circulation within the crossing area and on the entry and exit bank sides of the river. By providing area security, they defend critical locations along the MSR that could be cut off by enemy forces attempting to disrupt the retrograde movement.

4. General Planning.

Planning is critical to the success of a river crossing operation. There will seldom be adequate time to conduct the detailed planning desired. Therefore, it is imperative that adequate SOPs be developed to cover river crossing contingencies.

Future tactical missions, river characteristics, and probable enemy defenses govern the plans for crossing. Unless the river features or enemy disposition limit the courses of action, the crossing concentrates on securing a bridgehead which best facilitates future operations.

a. Offensive River Crossings.

The river crossing operation is not a tactical mission in itself. Its purpose is to permit the force to overcome an obstacle quickly and continue advancement. Tactical objectives assigned by higher headquarters may or may not include terrain objectives within the bridgehead. However, terrain objectives and/or space are required to ensure the security of the force and crossing sites. Thus, the river crossing, either hasty or deliberate, is a

special operation planned as a part of and in conjunction with future operations.

Assault forces are assigned crossing areas and objectives which together comprise the bridgehead. Intermediate objectives are assigned as required. Crossing sites and areas that minimize both the concentration of forces waiting to cross and separation of combat power are selected on each side of the river. The crossing force commander offsets the inherent disadvantage of the obstacle by crossing at numerous sites on a broad front. Air superiority, or parity, even if temporary, are required. The mission is accomplished through detailed planning and positive control of support and assault forces in each crossing area.

An offensive river crossing operation poses several problems to the commander. These must be evaluated and resolved in order to overcome the negative aspect of the obstacle. The successful outcome of the operation depends on many factors:

- o The severity of the obstacle.
- o The enemy's use or defense of the obstacle.
- o Command and coordination of the operation.
- o Ability to effectively project overwhelming combat power across the obstacle, to permit continuation of the mission.

The water obstacle, in many respects, is similar to any other extensive natural or manmade obstacle that restricts the planned movement of tactical forces. Locations must be chosen where elements can cross. This usually requires that forces become canalized at selected points. This, in turn, limits the full application of their combat power and increases their vulnerability to enemy fire. Military police support is essential in helping the commander control the congestion that occurs and gets the forces across as rapidly as possible.

b. Crossing Front.

The crossing front is that area between the lateral (flank) boundaries, along the obstacles, of the crossing force. In a deliberate crossing, conditions may dictate crossing on a narrow front. Use of a broad crossing front is desirable to reduce congestion and vulnerability. Whether a broad or narrow front is used will have a substantial impact on military police planning.

The broad front is preferred because it will provide for rapid crossing of the entire force. Further, it may cause the defender to delay launching a counterattack against the crossing force until he can determine which crossing most seriously threatens his defense. If the enemy delays his counterattack too long, it will allow the attacking force time to build up combat power on the exit bank. In addition to being canalized at the crossing

sites, the crossing force is temporarily divided when part of it is across the obstacle and the remainder is not. This subjects the force to possible defeat in detail, as commitment of combat power is piecemeal.

The commander may consider crossing the water obstacle during the hours of darkness to reduce the vulnerability of his force and to gain the advantage of surprise over the enemy. When the commander selects this option, the role of the military police as a means of control is enhanced, due to the reduced visibility and potential for increased confusion.

c. Crossing Site Selection.

The characteristics of the obstacle and the amount of crossing equipment available will dictate the number of crossing sites. If there are not fording sites across the obstacles, vehicles cross by "swimming," rafting, or bridging. The routes of access and egress, the slope and stability of the banks, and the depth and velocity of the water current all impact on the requirement for support equipment, site preparation time, and the selection of feasible crossing points.

The enemy's defense, or most probable course of action, is evaluated in conjunction with the obstacle's physical characteristics. The enemy can choose to defend forward of, on, or beyond the obstacle. The weather, terrain, and enemy capabilities provide indications of his probable action. In any case, the enemy should be expected to oppose the development of crossing sites, and to attempt to defeat the crossing force when it is most vulnerable.

d. Command and Control.

Command and control during the river crossing is perhaps the most difficult function of the operation. Centralized command of the operation ensures coordination of support and assault forces. Positive control of crossing elements while concentrating, moving across, and dispersing increases the probability of success. However, there must be sufficient flexibility to permit adjustment in the plan and changes during execution. The role of the military police in assisting the commander to accomplish these objectives is critical.

Some of the military police-command relationships will vary from those of other operations. For example, some military police elements will be placed under operational control of other units, rather than in direct support. Many of the operations will be more centralized than might be the case elsewhere. At the same time, execution must be aggressive. To accomplish this, you need to understand the overall concept, and the responsibilities of all elements engaged in the operation.

e. Plan.

Planning includes providing enough space for support forces to work, and for assault forces to concentrate, before crossing. Otherwise, the

support and assault forces become lucrative targets for conventional and nuclear fire. Traffic control during the operation is regulated by a timetable that gets maneuver forces and combat support forces across in the right sequence, while making efficient use of the crossing sites. The role of the military police in assisting the commander in accomplishing this is critical. Support force assets, including military police, beyond the organic capability of the crossing force are often required.

The crossing force commander and his staff plan the river crossing operation. They prepare an operations order and specify what support they need. The provost marshal (PM), based on operations order, plans MP support. The plan includes how MP assets will be used and what additional resources are required. The MP company commander plans the use of his personnel based on the operations order and taskings received from the PM. The operations order gives operational control to the crossing area commander of all units moving through the crossing area; tactical elements providing area security; support forces such as medical or recovery elements; and control elements, primarily military police, that control crossing units in the crossing area.

f. Communications.

Communications capacity may become saturated, requiring additional signal units and equipment. Imposing radio listening silence, prior to the assault crossing, places a greater dependence on wire communications. Additional communications security measures help to deceive the enemy as to when and where crossings are to be made.

g. Deception.

The difficulty of the entire operation makes it desirable to incorporate a deception plan. Since the enemy will be expecting a crossing, a deception plan which employs reconnaissance, site preparations, and a build up of forces at a time and/or location other than the actual crossing area may be effective in diluting his defensive capability. Military police will fully participate in such a deception operation. It will require planning on the part of the PM as complex as that required for the actual operation.

h. Retrograde River Crossing.

A retrograde river crossing is conducted with the same detailed planning as a deliberate defensive crossing. A significant consideration is that failure of the retrograde on the entry bank may well resolve in the loss of the entire force. The commander must get all nonessential combat support and combat service support across the river, and disperse them in locations that can support the operation. The delaying force deceives and delays the enemy while a defensive force is established on the exit bank. The defending force on the exit bank accepts responsibility, on order, for the battle from the delaying force. The defending force then overwatches the crossing of the delaying force.

The retrograde force should expect that the enemy will detect the operation and attempt to counter it. Having the temporary advantage of combat power, the enemy pursuit may include envelopment tactics to secure crossings and cut off the retrograde force before it can cross.

(1) Crossing Sites. Contrary to the offensive operations, retrograde crossing sites are initially controlled by friendly forces. These sites may be insufficient in number. It is reasonable to expect that these forces will be known to the enemy and will be attacked early in the operation. Development of additional sites provides insurance against this probability.

Tactical bridging and rafts should be salvaged for future requirements. It may, however, be necessary to destroy them to prevent capture. Fixed bridging must be destroyed. This requires close coordination with the delaying force to preclude either cutting off friendly forces or allowing enemy seizure of intact sites.

(2) Command and Control. Command, control, and coordination are difficult in a retrograde crossing. Delaying, defending, and support forces, including military police, must have explicit missions and tasks. Initially, all forces continue to delay until designated forces are instructed to break contact and move, over strictly controlled withdrawal routes, to crossing sites. A major military police role will be to assist in the control of these routes.

(3) Deception. Ideally, deception is planned and executed to deceive the enemy regarding the retrograde. As a minimum, these plans seek to conceal the extent of the operation and the actual crossing sites to be used. Smoke, electronic deception, and dummy sites reduce the enemy's capability to disrupt the crossing.

i. Operations Security.

Operations security (OPSEC) measures must be applied to achieve successful river crossings, both offensive and retrograde. Enemy intelligence collectors will concentrate on identifying the time and place of such crossings.

OPSEC measures include concealing special river crossing equipment, confining the movement of this equipment to hours of darkness or reduced visibility, and concealing movement by smoke. Stereotyped patterns of preparation must be avoided. All planning must consider the current OPSEC posture of the unit and identify friendly vulnerabilities which might signal the enemy the time and place of the crossing. Some of these vulnerabilities can be overcome with proper camouflage, noise, thermal, electromagnetic and light discipline, and avoidance of patterns.

5. Commander's Considerations.

Primary factors that affect planning for a river crossing are the river, the terrain, and the enemy. The initial step in planning is getting data

about these three factors. All sources of intelligence are used. Intelligence is gathered as early as possible, well before the operation begins. The special considerations of a river crossing require current and detailed information to plan and execute it successfully.

Much information is available through the use of air and ground cavalry and engineers. They conduct reconnaissance well in advance of arriving units. The division obtains information from all available sources. That information is collected, evaluated, and disseminated to assault and support forces, including military police.

a. Obstacle and Terrain Data.

The general characteristics of most rivers in the world have been studied and recorded. Modern intelligence technology permits frequent revisions of existing data. More precise information about specific rivers and possible crossing sites must be gathered at the time.

Support forces will require large amounts of information to provide the mobility network for the assault. This includes movement to the sites, across the river, and beyond. Circumstances will often prevent getting all the desired information. Minimum information sought includes:

- Existing crossing sites - location and condition.
- Width, depth, and velocity of the river.
- River bottom conditions.
- Bank height, slope, and stability.

Available crossing means may not be adequate because of the number of sites required or other reasons. They must be added to by local resources. Intelligence must be gathered on these local resources. They include:

- Local boats, barges, and ferries.
- Sand, gravel, steel, and lumber stockpiles.
- Indigenous construction equipment and labor.

In addition, information must be gathered on the enemy.

b. The Enemy.

All units of the crossing force require knowledge of enemy capabilities. One of the most important considerations to determine is the capability of the enemy to interdict the crossing force during its crossing. This is when the crossing force is most vulnerable.

Offensive crossings require a thorough understanding of the enemy tactics for defense of a river line. Retrograde operations must stop or delay enemy pursuit operations. All crossings require knowledge of the possibility of guerrilla actions. They must also know the attitude of the local population. These latter items are of particular importance to the military police and the security force.

6. Military Police Concepts.

Military police have a key role to play in these river crossing operations. One of the reasons river crossings are so complex is the difficulty of command and control. MP are ideally suited to assist the commander in this, as well as other areas.

The division MP company's direct support (DS) platoons support each assault brigade. The general support (GS) platoons support rear elements of the division on an area basis. It is likely that the tasks of the direct support platoons will exceed their capabilities. For this reason, support should be available from MP assets outside the division. Usually, each direct support platoon will be augmented by an MP platoon from corps assets. An augmented MP company is attached to the division under operational control (OPCON) of the PM. The division PM has OPCON of the augmenting MP company. He tasks organizes it, placing a platoon with each of the division's direct support platoons in the brigades. The fourth platoon augments division rear MP elements.

Area support is provided the division rear area by the GS platoons. The GS platoons will cross shortly after the DS platoons. They provide support to the division's rear elements as they cross. The GS platoon providing security for the division command post crosses with the CP. It provides security for the CP as it crosses. Corps MP platoons move into the crossing site as the division DS platoons move forward. The corps platoons then assume responsibility for the crossing site.

Military police set up holding areas on the entry and exit banks. Exit bank holding areas allow units to reassemble and continue the movement. These holding areas are within the crossing area, but beyond the traffic regulating line. They are operated by division MP. Entry bank holding areas may be operated by corps MP. The corps MP are OPCON to the division provost marshal. They also operate TCPs from the staging areas to the traffic regulating line.

MP collocate TCPs with engineer regulating points (ERPs). Engineers use ERPs to make technical checks of vehicles. Military police make sure all vehicles clear the ERPs. To provide circulation control and disseminate information to assist crossing units, mobile patrols operate along primary routes. The mobile patrols provide control, spot problems, and reroute traffic in case of emergencies. MP also operate TCPs at the traffic regulating line. Traffic regulating lines are set up on both sides of the crossing areas to identify the beginning and end of the crossing area commander's operational control.

MP emplace temporary signs along the routes from the staging areas to the crossing areas to guide convoys. Mobile patrols check the signs to make sure they have not been tampered with.

MP accept EPWs from capturing units. An MP element from the division MP company sets up and operates temporary forward EPW collecting points on the entry and exit banks. The collecting points must be far enough back from the obstacle to ensure EPWs do not inhibit or observe the operations. As the corps MP assets become available, they take control of the temporary collecting points. They use transportation returning from the far side to begin the evacuation of EPWs. Now that you have a general understanding of the overall concept of river crossing operations, we need to examine these actions more closely. There have probably been terms used with which you are not completely familiar. As has already been noted, command and control are among the most difficult aspects of a river crossing.

7. Command and Control.

River crossings are normally conducted by division size forces. Hasty river crossings may be carried out by brigades or battalions. However, when a deliberate or retrograde crossing is conducted, it will normally be under the command and control of the division. The corps will provide support units to the division to accomplish its mission. If the crossing is such a large operation that the division cannot effectively conduct it, or if more than one division is involved in crossing, then the corps will assume control. In either case, the procedures are essentially the same and vary only in magnitude. Figure 1-1 is a diagram of a river crossing area.

a. Crossing Force Commander.

A crossing force commander is designated to plan and control the river crossing operation. In a division crossing, the commander may assume that position. More likely, he may designate his assistant division commander (ADC) for maneuver as crossing force commander. This latter will allow the division commander to command all aspects of the division's operations. The crossing force commander then has overall control of the river crossing operation.

b. Crossing Force Headquarters.

The crossing force commander is assisted by a crossing force headquarters. The headquarters has representation from the following staff elements:

- o Operations/area security.
- o Engineers.
- o Movement and traffic control.
- o Communications and electronics.

o Logistics.

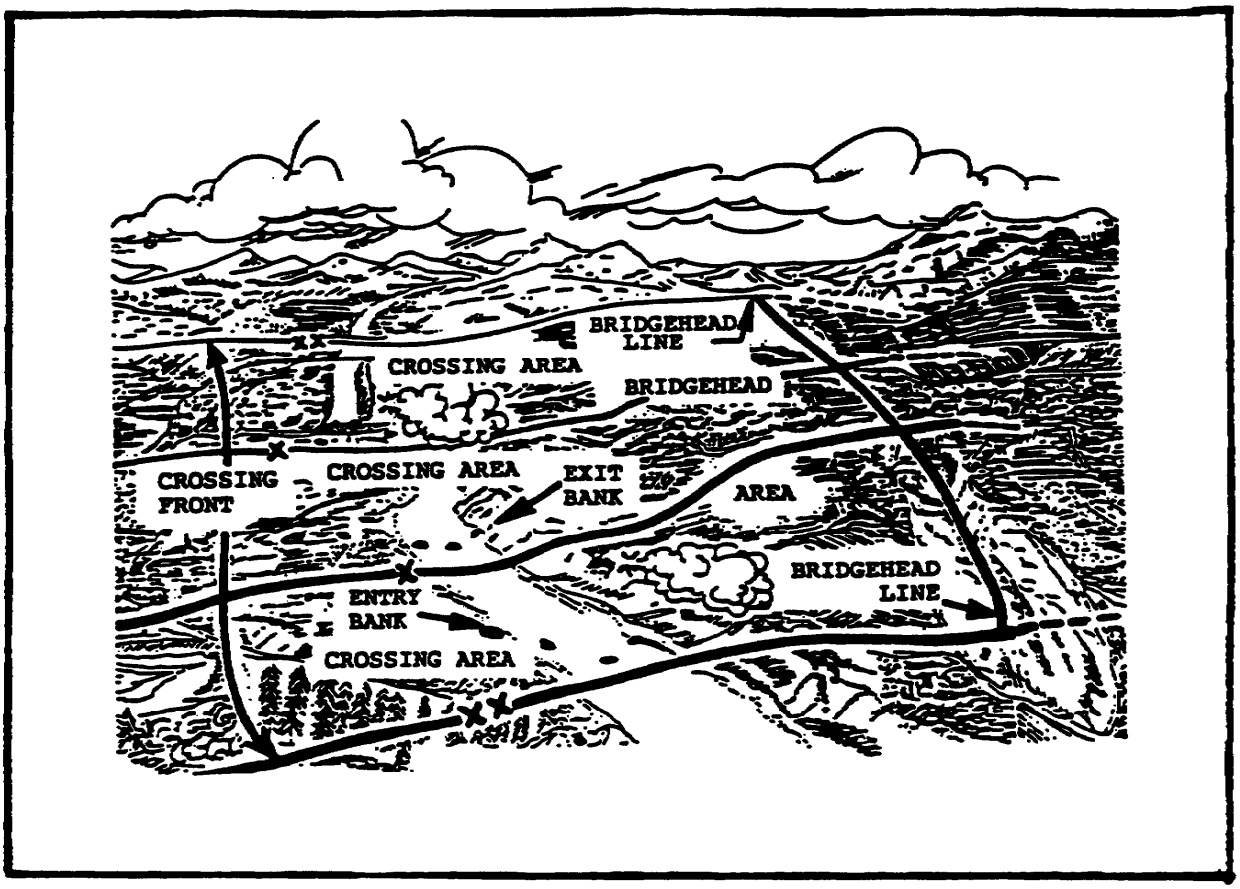

Figure 1-1. River Crossing Area.

The crossing force headquarters may be formed within the division main CP, or as ad hoc staff formed and located adjacent to the main CP. It is important that the crossing force headquarters work closely with the division's day-to-day planners. Although manning of the headquarters is primarily from the division staff, manning may be augmented by corps. For example, the commander of the supporting engineer element should probably be designated as the crossing force engineer.

c. Assault Forces.

In division operations, brigades are the assault forces. When the assault is conducted with two brigades forward, then two brigade zones are designated within the crossing front. These zones are the crossing areas, one for each brigade. The assault force commanders, usually the brigade commanders, command the assault forces. When these units enter the crossing area, control is passed to the crossing area commander (CAC). Control returns to the assault force commander as the assault forces leave the crossing area.

d. Crossing Area Command.

Since the assault force is normally a brigade, the brigade executive officer is usually designated as a crossing area commander. This serves to bind together the assault crossing and the tactical concept.

However, the designated crossing area commander may be a division or brigade staff officer. Staff officers are used when a more centralized control is required. Situations that favor the appointment of division staff officers as CAC include:

- o Crossings on a very restrictive and narrow front.
- o Limited availability of bridging and site development equipment.
- o A large or swift-moving water obstacle, and/or well developed enemy defenses that require centralized control.
- o Two or more brigades using the same crossing sites or means.

The designation of a CAC, other than the assault force commander, allows the assault force commander to focus his attention on the battle.

Each crossing area commander controls:

- o Crossing units of the assault force while in the crossing area.
- o Tactical elements that secure the crossing sites.
- o Support forces-engineers that develop and maintain crossing sites.
- o Control elements, primarily military police, that direct and control crossing units in the crossing area.

Figure 1-2 schematically portrays the command and control of a river crossing.

e. Reverse Planning.

The crossing force commander facilitates planning by dividing the operation into distinct and manageable phases:

o Advance to the river.

o Assault crossing of the river.

o Advance from the exit bank.

o Securing the bridgehead.

These segments are distinct only while planning. During the execution there is no planned pause between them, since the overall operation proceeds as a continuation of the attack.

The planning sequence is considered in reverse order of occurrence. In other words, the last task (securing the bridgehead) is planned first. However, the river is examined first.

The crossing force and crossing area headquarters begin their planning using the commander's guidance. At the same time, the crossing force and crossing area engineers also begin their planning, as do the movement and traffic control (MP) planners.

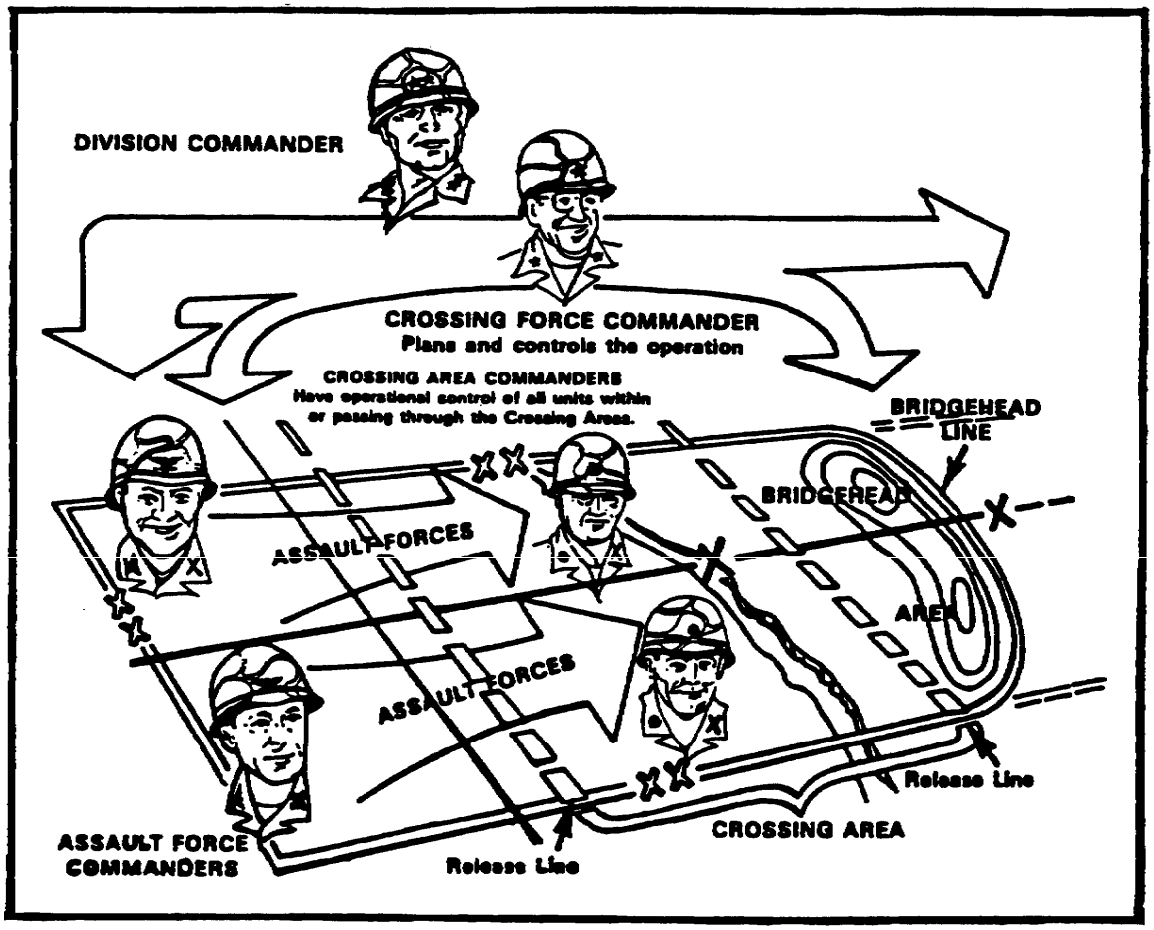

Figure 1-2. Command and Control.

Assault crossing plans may be completed at crossing force headquarters level or delegated to the assault force and crossing area commanders, once attack zones and crossing areas have been specified. To maintain the speed of the advance without loss of momentum, plans for hasty crossings are often accomplished at the brigade or assault force level. On the other hand, plans for deliberate crossings require more time and build-up of combat power are normally division or corps responsibilities. Complete plans prepared at division or corps require detailed coordination with brigades to ensure that the sequencing of units at the crossing site complements the brigade's assault concept.

When the crossing force headquarters delegates planning for the assault crossing, guidance and support are provided to the assault force and CAC. Guidance may include:

- o Time of the attack and/or assault crossing of the river.
- o Specific crossing sites.
- o Times that bridges are scheduled for use by forces other than the assaulting brigade.
- o Available crossing support forces; for example, military police and engineers.

f. Forces.

The division's crossing force commander and his staff plan the river crossing operation with the following tactical concepts in mind:

Assault forces lead, making the initial assault of the river and continuing the advance from the exit bank to the final objectives.

Follow-up forces provide overwatching direct and indirect fire support, crossing site security, and follow and support assistance to the assault force.

Support forces develop crossing sites, emplace crossing means, control units moving into and away from the crossing sties, and assist the assault force to the objectives.

Combat service support elements sustain the assault and subsequent advance.

Leading brigade and battalion commanders envision their subordinate units in a similar functional grouping. Elements designated as follow-up, support, and service support analyze respective taskings to determine their task organization.

Assault forces close on the water obstacle and cross rapidly by any means available. Infantry elements establish local security on the exit bank

to permit development of the crossing sites. Initial crossings may be limited to pneumatic assault boats and amphibious vehicles while tanks provide support from overwatch positions. Army aviation assets may lift assault forces over the obstacle in conjunction with the assault across the water. Tactical air and air defense artillery protect the crossing sites and units. Artillery fires and air strikes are effective in softening enemy resistance, and may precede the assault with preparatory fires and/or a rolling barrage. Divisional engineers advance with the lead element to breach obstacles and open or improve trails to keep units moving. Tanks, using bridges or rafts installed by support forces, cross later in the assault.

Support forces accompany the assault forces and provide the necessary support to the crossing area commander. Engineers improve crossing sites, and access and egress routes at crossing sites as rapidly as time and security permits. Rafts and bridges are installed to transport heavy loads. Military police and other designated crossing unit personnel control the flow of traffic to and away from crossing locations.

Follow-up forces move close behind assault forces to add their combat power where needed. Using rafts and bridges they cross quickly behind assault elements. They may overwatch assault elements, conduct follow and support tasks, or assume the mission of lead assault unit. Artillery provide counterfires to protect the site, smoke to conceal the crossing, and fires in support of the lead assault element. Air defense artillery protects the sites and provides an umbrella for Army aviation operating in the area. Engineers develop overwatching and firing positions, then advance with the follow-up forces to reduce obstacles, improve bypasses, and install flank obstacles as required. Necessary maneuvers, fire support, and air defense elements secure crossing sites from guerrillas or local enemy counterattackers.

Combat service support sustains the attack. Decentralized and "prepackaged" support accompanies the lead elements when possible. Rearming, refueling, and maintenance points are established along advance routes to speed up servicing. The service support center or headquarters keeps clear of enemy artillery, if possible, and crosses after the follow-up forces.

8. Advance from the Exit Bank.

The advance from the exit bank is also primarily a tactical operation conducted by the combat forces. The assault forces advance rapidly from crossing areas to their objectives. They do this without stopping to reorganize.

Strong enemy resistance may be met and must be overcome. Detailed planning and rapid execution are critical to success.

The advance from the exit bank extends from the release point (see Figure 1-3) to the objectives. At the release point, or line, the crossing area commander passes control of units to the assault force commander. The assault forces continue the attack without pause. The location of the release

point/line is a function of terrain and expected battle. It is determined by the two commanders (assault force and crossing area).

Release points/line may be located 2-3 kilometers from the exit bank. This distance allows the assault force commanders to assemble their forces for a continuation of the attack. Further, the clearance of this distance by follow-up and support forces prevents direct fire on assault forces while they are in the water. The release points (line when connected) are, therefore, located to facilitate the operation. They also aid control and the security of forces moving through the crossing area.

The major concerns of the crossing and assault forces commanders during the attack are the vulnerability of the force when on the exit bank, and a rapid advance to secure objectives. The latter is the overriding consideration. During the early stages of the attack, the assault force is divided by the river and very vulnerable; it is difficult to concentrate their combat power.

9. Assault Crossing of the River.

Plans must provide for projecting combat power across the water obstacle at a rate greater than the enemy's ability to concentrate against the crossing force.

This task distinguishes river crossings from other offensive operations. It requires careful planing, timing, and execution. It must be in a sequence that causes minimal interference in the advance to the river. Forces must cross as rapidly as possible with sufficient combat power to overwhelm the enemy.

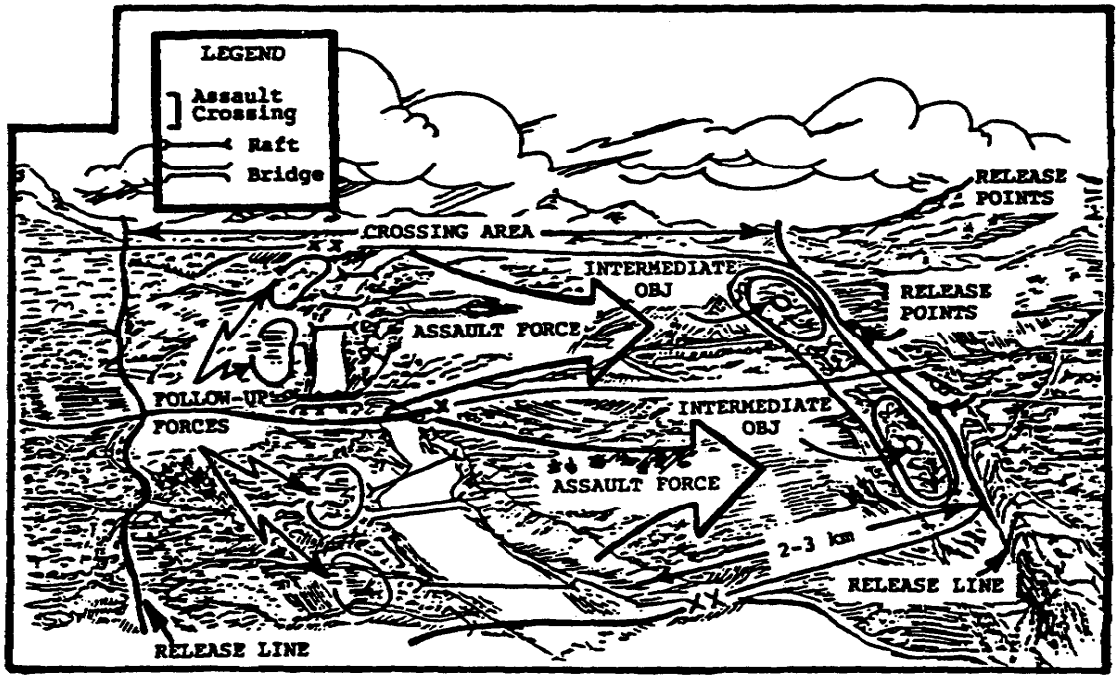

Figure 1-3. Crossing Area Boundaries.

a. Crossing Front and Areas.

The crossing force commander begins planning the assault crossing by designating attack zones with the crossing front. Boundaries between assault forces are selected to facilitate subsequent operations. In other words, they are selected based on the advance from the exit bank, rather than on the approach to the river.

In division operations, brigades are the assault forces, and attack zones coincide with crossing areas. In corps crossing, divisions are the assault forces, but retain the authority to select the crossing areas within attack zones assigned by corps. In both areas, division assigns each assault brigade a crossing area and designates crossing area commanders (CAC). The size of the crossing area must be large enough to accommodate sufficient crossing sites, the assault force, and essential follow-up and support forces. The depth of the crossing area is usually 2-3 kilometers on either side of the river. Therefore, the width of the crossing area along the river must be adjusted to fit the situation.

b. Crossing Area Staff and Force.

The crossing area commander operates from a headquarters from which he can control the crossing. This may be located with the assaulting brigade headquarters. The CAC usually coordinates supporting engineer, military police, and security forces by face-to-face contact. This means that if you are the platoon sergeant of the brigade MP platoon, you will be dealing directly with him. When located with the brigade tactical operations center, he can directly coordinate maneuver and logistic requirements with the brigade S3 and S4.

Assault forces and crossing area commanders and their staffs must plan together. Preferably, they develop the portion of the river crossing plan that pertains to the assault crossing of the river. They determine crossing sites, a unit crossing schedule, and traffic movement plans for both banks to ensure a continuous and ever-increasing flow of advancing assault forces. They collect and examine data for incorporation into the assault crossing plan. Jointly they determine a point in time or space when the CAC assumes control of units in the area. The crossing area commander needs to secure crossing sites to cross as many vehicles as possible during the least amount of time. He is concerned with the battle, but more interested in crossing units. A primary mission of his MP element, therefore, is to assist him in getting the maximum number of vehicles across in the shortest period of time with a minimum amount of confusion.

Conversely, the assault force commander focuses on securing objectives and is more concerned with fighting the enemy than in maximizing crossings. He wants units task-organized with sufficient service support elements positioned in the rear. His concept envisions units fighting to the river's edge and from the exit bank without being slowed in assembly areas.

While the CAC exercises temporary control over tactical units moving through the area, he usually has OPCON of divisional and corps support forces, including military police and security elements. The support forces develops sites, route traffic, and protect the crossing site.

Whereas initial assault sites are oriented on close-in exit bank objectives and surprise, subsequent sites are selected to provide good access and egress to enhance mobility and the build-up of combat power on the exit bank. Sites served by good road nets on either bank speed up the operation. To achieve a faster crossing rate, more control of vehicles/units moving into the crossing area and awaiting crossing is necessary. Units or "vehicle packages" are identified for crossing at specified sites and specific times. Military police will assist in ensuring that these schedules are maintained.

10. Control Measures.

Because a river crossing is such a complex operation it requires close command and control, there have been developed a series of control measures. These control measures are used to facilitate the operation and provide the necessary coordination required in a river crossing.

a. Bridgehead.

A river crossing operation is considered completed when the bridgehead is secured. Securing the bridgehead requires control of an area on the exit bank which is large enough to accommodate the assault and essential support elements of the crossing force. In some circumstances, the size of the bridgehead may increase beyond that required for the crossing force. For example, future operations may envision passing an equal size unit through the crossing force. More terrain is needed on the exit bank to ensure a rapid passage of lines. In addition to accommodating the crossing force and facilitating future operations, the size of the bridgehead may be determined by the defensive characteristics of the terrain. Not only must the enemy be defeated in the bridgehead, but he must also be prevented from effectively counterattacking the crossing force and/or destroying the crossing sites once the bridgehead has been secured. Therefore, defensible terrain and space within the bridgehead are required to conduct an active defense.

The bridgehead is graphically depicted by a bridgehead line that defines the outer limit of the area. Normally, this line is located along identifiable terrain features. It includes crossing force objectives and is connected to the river bank on the right and left flank of the crossing front. This arc orients the crossing force to the flanks as well as the front. Usually the objectives assigned by higher head-quarters are within the bridgehead. If not, the attack proceeds from the bridgehead to secure these objectives. In either case, once the bridgehead is secured, the river crossing operation is completed.

b. Objectives.

To secure the bridgehead, objectives within the bridgehead line area are assigned to assault forces. Considerations for selection of objectives, and the relative size forces to secure them, do not vary from usual offensive operations. Ideally, objectives are attainable by the assault forces in one continuous attack from the river. The crossing force commander specifies only those objectives which must be controlled to secure the bridgehead. When terrain or enemy conditions warrant, intermediate objectives are assigned. Care must be taken that intermediate objectives do not unnecessarily slow assault forces.

Whenever possible, assault forces advance directly from the exit bank to bridgehead objectives. When intermediate objectives have been assigned, they are secured with a minimum delay en route to final or bridgehead objectives. When intermediate objectives has not been assigned by division or higher headquarters, the assault force commanders select objectives required to facilitate operations. At lower command levels (brigade), intermediate objectives are appropriate. For example, it is difficult for the lead battalion or company of an assault force to attack continuously without securing intermediate objectives, except when advancing against weak enemy forces. Figure 1-4 is an illustration of objectives.

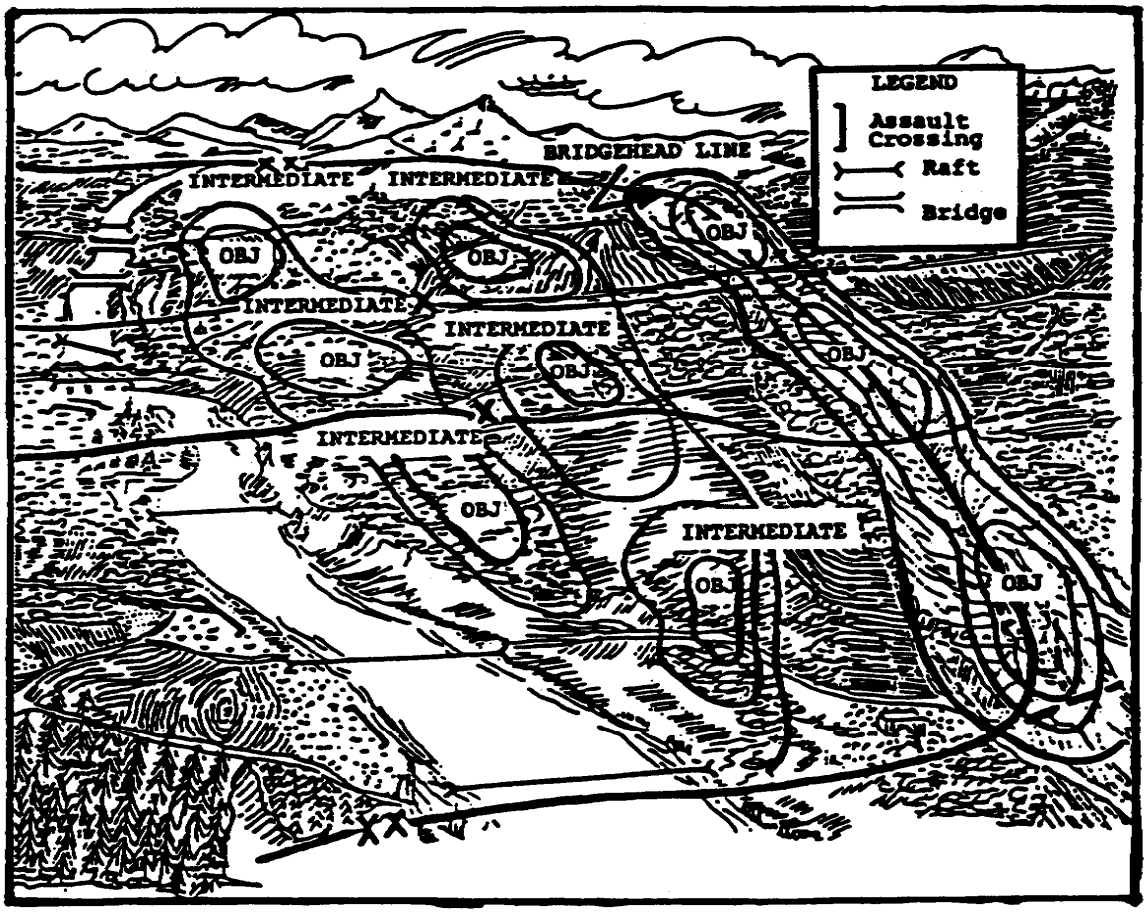

Figure 1-4. River Crossing Objectives.

Intermediate objectives serve several purposes:

- o Orient the direction of attack toward final objectives.
- o Provide centralized control of the advance.
- o Facilitate changes in lead companies/battalions of the assault.
- o Gain an initial foothold on the exit bank when stubborn enemy resistance is expected.

Determining where and what intermediate objectives to select is dependent upon terrain and defensive dispositions. In areas of relatively open or unrestrictive terrain, or against a weak enemy, few intermediate objectives are needed. Where terrain is rugged, or when enemy defensive positions have been prepared in depth, more objectives are appropriate. Possible objectives include hills, enemy positions, or control measures such as report lines and phase lines.

11. Crossing Methods and Means.

Before completing command and control arrangements, crossing methods and means are reviewed. The basic methods are fording, swimming, assault boats, rafts, and bridges. These methods are important. Each requires a little different action on the part of MP to control them. You must understand their capabilities. Then you can make informed decisions without the constant guidance of the CAC commander. It makes your job easier when you understand the "whys" of what is happening.

Bridges and rafts are the only method not normally used in the initial assault. They require special site preparation by the engineers. Bridges and rafts are emplaced as quickly as possible. The sites used for the initial assault crossing may be different from those used later. Better crossing sites may be developed after early enemy resistance is overcome.

As soon as possible tanks and heavy engineer equipment cross. Rafting is the most common means. They may also be able to cross by fording up to four feet of water at carefully selected sites. The engineers begin to prepare and improve exit sites as soon as they can. Bridging is the final method and usually requires substantial site preparation, particularly the bridge approaches.

a. Fording.

All military combat vehicles are capable of fording shallow rivers with limited stream velocity and stable beds. Most vehicles are equipped with kits to increase fording depth capabilities. Stream velocities of less than 1.5 meters per second are preferred. Specific depth capabilities and required adaptation are contained in appropriate operator technical manuals. Additionally, foot troops can wade across some shallow streams.

b. Army Aircraft.

Army aircraft are both a means and a methods. They provide a unique capability to cross and support crossing operations. They may be used to transport reconnaissance teams, exit bank security, and exit bank work elements. In some cases, they may comprise the primary means for transporting assault element and equipment to secure objectives. Helicopters can lift components of some bridges that have been preassembled in rear areas, and deliver them at the entry bank. Aircraft may also be used for aerial fire-support, command and control, or the aerial shuttle of troops to augment water crossing means.

c. Reconnaissance and Pneumatic Assault Boat.

Reconnaissance and assault boats have a major role in the early stages of the assault. Site selection and exit bank patrolling may be accomplished by personnel operating from 3-man reconnaissance boats, or 15-man pneumatic assault boats.

d. Assault boats:

- o Are primary crossing means for infantry or other dismounted forces.
- o Carry 12 assault troops and a 3-man engineer crew.
- o Augment crossing capability of amphibious vehicles, or provide a substitute capability when the condition of entry/exit banks preclude vehicular use.
- o Have a slower rate of crossing and are more vulnerable to enemy fires, when compared to armored personnel carriers.
- o May be used for silent crossings, feints, and patrols.

e. Amphibious Vehicles.

Amphibious vehicles are the primary means for initial crossings by a heavy division. Armored personnel carriers are preferred for assault elements, while unarmored amphibious vehicles transport supplies and equipment. Entry and exit points must be cleared of obstructions and have slopes consistent with the vehicle's capability. Each amphibious vehicle must be prepared and inspected before entering the water.

f. Rafts.

On wide unfordable rivers, rafts are normally the initial means for crossing tanks and heavy vehicles. Because of their size and mobility, rafts are less vulnerable to enemy fires than bridges. However, crossing subject to direct and observed enemy fires require plans for dispersed rafting operations. Rafts alone cannot cross the required traffic volume. They are replaced or supplemented by bridging when enemy observed fires have been neutralized.

Light rafting augments other means during crossing operations. The six light tactical raft (LTR) sets, organic to the corps float bridge company, can carry loads up to class 16. When all six sets are connected, they form an 80 meter, class 16 bridge. The 24 raft pontoons with outboard motors can also be used as assault boats.

Heavy rafting transports the division's class 60 loads. The three type rafts, mobile assault bridge (MAB), ribbon, and M4T6, are components of bridge sets and are assembled in various configurations to support given loads.

g. Bridging.

The decision to install bridging requires careful consideration. The crossing force commander and CAC must weigh the advantages of increased crossing rates versus the probability of losing a bridge to enemy activity. Available resources may be limited, permitting either rafting or bridging, but not both. Military police must be prepared to support either option. Traffic control to multiple raft sites is more difficult and requires more manpower than to a small number of bridge sites with more clearly defined entry points. The volume of traffic to a bridge will be high, but more easily controlled than that to a series of raft sites.

Generally, rafts will be used to cross the critical assault vehicles required to secure the initial objective. Bridging will start as soon as possible, depending on the tactical situation. Added security is required to protect bridges. The enemy will attempt to destroy them. He may permit them to be installed and then attack them, with the objective of destroying the bridging equipment. It is important to note, for military police planning that alternate bridge sites are developed so that bridges can be relocated if the tactical situation requires. Military police must be prepared to support such a relocation. This will involve the relocation of TCPs and rerouting of traffic.

Because not all bridge types are in the current inventory, not all will be discussed. Research and development continues to improve the emplacement time and crossing capability.

The use of captured permanent bridges requires knowledge of the current conditions and/or original construction. Forces seizing permanent bridging require accompany engineers to neutralize explosives devices and reinforce weak or damaged portions. Planners rarely base the success of a crossing operation on the seizure of a permanent bridge.

(1) Fixed bridging is seldom used during the initial assault because of required assembly time and magnitude of effort. Fixed bridging is supported by the banks, or by abutments, and is installed over ravines as well as rivers. This type of bridging is basically panel construction and is assembled in an "erector set" manner. During river crossing operations, fixed bridging normally supplements or replaces AVLBs or float bridges. The most common types of fixed bridges are the Bailey bridge and medium girder bridge.

Bailey bridges may be built in various configurations to accommodate the desired load. In a two-hour period, the longest class 60 bridge that can be built with the normal bridge set spans 18 meters (60 feet), and requires two engineer platoons to assemble. Other versions can be constructed that are longer, but require additional time and equipment. This is a highly versatile bridge set that can be made into a large number of configurations.

Medium girder bridges are a newer development than the Bailey bridge. They provide a greater assault capability. The normal configuration provides a class 60 capacity for 30 meter gaps, and requires an engineer platoon one hour to assemble. Other variations are possible with additional kits.

(2) Floating bridges are the primary means of rapidly crossing assault vehicles and supplies during river crossing operations.

The M4T6 is an older version of float bridge that requires substantial engineer labor to assemble and launch. It requires special assembly and launch sites which may have to be prepared. It also requires secure assembly sites. It is used primarily by corps engineers to augment other types of bridging after the initial assault, since corps crossing requirements are extensive.

Mobile assault bridges (MAB) are self-contained, self-propelled units that enter the water from the march, lower a propulsion unit, rotate a roadway deck, and connect to other units to form rafts or bridges. Certain of the MAP are end units that provide entry/exit ramps; the balance of the units provide the center span of the bridge. A 150-meter bridge can be placed in operation in one hour by organic crews.

The ribbon bridge consists of bays, which are transported on 5-ton trucks. The bridge unit slides from the truck and unfolds into a floating roadway section; power boards are used to connect these sections into bridges or rafts.

12. Crossing and Movement Plans.

Once the tactical plan to secure the bridgehead has been prepared and the crossing means and methods have been examined, crossing and movement plans must be developed. The crossing plan provides for the movement of all elements of the crossing force during the crossing of the obstacle. It is developed in conjunction with other plans, especially those concerned with

surface movement to and from the river, air movement, construction and maintenance of roads to and from crossing sites, and the construction and operation of rafts and bridges. It is critically important for MP to be familiar with the crossing plan; it provides the information needed to accomplish most of the BCC mission.

Specifically, the crossing plan provides for:

- Delineating the crossing areas.
- Designating and allocating crossing sites and means to crossing units. This also includes fording and amphibious vehicle crossing sites.
- Designating the number, type, capacity, location, and time of opening of the rafts and bridges to be constructed.
- Allocating unit priorities for use of the crossing sites and means.
- Within the established priorities, units establish a detailed crossing schedule specifying the number and type of vehicles.
- Designation of the CAC and passage of control times/locations.
- Designation of staging areas and engineer equipment parks, as required.
- Designation of alternating one-way traffic bridges. This is established only after movement to the far bank is adequate to meet the needs of the assault forces.
- Designation of one-way routes and the limiting of traffic to the area during the various phases of the operation.
- Actions and responsibilities if traffic gets ambushed or interdicted. This prescribes how the area commanders and convoy commanders are to react, delineates responsibilities. It includes control of the reaction force and fire support, etc.

Understanding the information contained in the crossing plan is critical for the military police if they are to successfully accomplish their mission.

a. Crossing Schedule.

The crossing schedule provides a timetable for units at designated sites. The assault force identifies the battalion crossing sequence. Battalions specify the sequence for the companies. Requirements are matched with capabilities, crossing means, and sites. Times for units are determined in relation to the initial assault (H-Hour).

The crossing schedule must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in the battle. Unit crossing priorities may have to be adjusted. Designated areas and alternate routes are used, where necessary, to hold up units or

bypass congested routes. The brigade or CAC staff may develop the crossing schedule

b. Movement Plan.

A movement plan facilitates traffic control in the crossing area. Routes leading to crossings are specified and TCPs are designated at critical points and intersections. Staging and holding areas are selected to enable units to assemble, prepare vehicles for crossing, and await movement to the crossing. Multiple areas, located in depth and adjacent to selected routes, provide for dispersion of crossing units. Covered and concealed areas are desired.

The movement plan is published as an annex to the division operation order or as a separate movement order. The plans include a movement overlay with traffic circulation details. Figure 1-5 is a simplified example. Also included with the movement overlay is an engineer route classification overlay. A major control document, developed from movement planning graphics, is the road movement table. A simplified example of a road movement table is shown in figure 1-6.

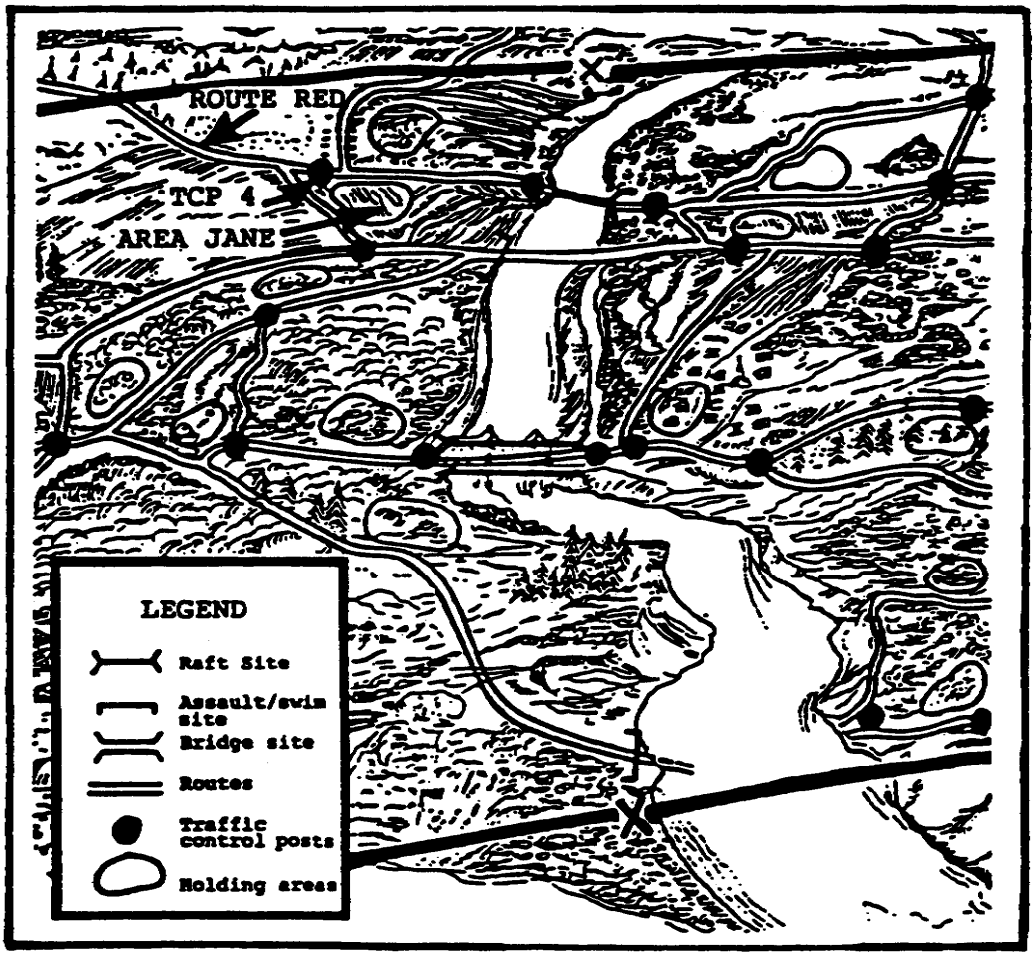

Figure 1-5. Traffic Movement Overlay.

(Classification)

ANNEX B (ROAD MOVEMENT TABLE) to OPORD

Reference: Map, series M504, AFGAN, sheet 4842 (BHAD—WURST), edition 1-DMG, 1:100,000.

Time Zone Used Throughout the Order: ZULU.

General Data:

1. Average Speed: 20 kmph.
2. Traffic Density: 20 veh per km.
3. Halts: SOP.
4. Routes:
   a. Route RED. Serials: 1, 3, 4, and 5.
   b. Route BLUE. Serials: 2 and 6.
5. Critical Points:
   a. Route RED.
      (1) Start point: RJ 413 at MB201699.
      (2) Release point: RJ 211 at QA990628.
      (3) Other critical points.
         (a) RJ (VILLERS) at MB330718.
         (b) RJ 242 at MB455701.
         (c) RJ (LAWST) at DA585692.
         (d) BLUE River bridge at PA683686.
      (4) Route classification: 6 · 50.
      (5) Route restrictions: BLUE River bridge—6 50.
   b. Route BLUE.
      (1) Start point: RJ 526 at MS229509.
      (2) Release point: RJ 105 at RS981511.
      (3) Other critical points.
         (a) RJ 592 at MS334481.
         (b) RJ (CHANCE) at MS401490.
         (c) RJ (VEGAS) at QT790501.
         (d) BLUE River bridge at RS850495.
      (4) Route classification: 10 50.
      (5) Route restrictions: BLUE River bridge—6 50
6. Main Routes to Start Point: • • •
7. Main Routes from Release Points: • • •

Mov number	Date	Unit	No of vehicles	Load class of heaviest vehicle	From	To	Route	Route to start point	Critical points			Route from release point	Remarks
									Ref	Due	Clear		
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)	(m)	(n)
1	• • •	1st Bde	• • •	• • •	BHAD area	WURST area	RED	• • •	SP	0530	0635	• • •	• • •
									RJP(VILLERS)	0610	0715		
									RJ 242	0630	0735		
									RJ (LAWST)	0715	0820		
									BLUE River bridge	0735	0900		
									RJ (HAINS)	0815	0920		PST 65 min
									RP	0855	1000		
2	• • •	2d Bde	• • •	• • •	BHAD area	WURST area	BLUE	• • •	SP	0530	0635	• • •	• • •
									RJ 592	0548	0653		
									RJ (CHANCE)	0630	0735		
									RJ (VEGAS)	0800	0905		
									BLUE River bridge	0840	0945		PST 65 min
									RP	0920	1025		
3	• • •	3d Bde	• • •	• • •	BHAD	WURST	RED	• • •	SP	0650	0755	• • •	• • •

Figure 1-6. Road Movement Table.

c. Movement Control.

The CAC implements the crossing and movement plans through supporting and assaulting elements.

The crossing area engineer maintains contact with Sites, for information on site development, crossing means installation, and traffic flow. He establishes regulating points, usually located with TCPs, to ensure proper weight classification, preparation of vehicles before arrival at the crossing site, and rerouting where required.

Military police operate TCPs, route traffic, and provide reports of the movement of units. TCPs may also effect changes in the movement plan. They maintain communication with the crossing area headquarters in a common radio net. Military police reroute traffic or direct units into assembly areas, based on the flow of traffic along routes and into crossing sites.

Movement control officers are designated for each crossing battalion and separate unit. They are responsible for movement of their units in accordance with the crossing plan, and maintain communications with the crossing area headquarters to receive information on changes. Such changes may also be directly effected through the TCPs.

13. Advance to the River.

The first task to be accomplished in the river crossing is the last detailed planning task. It is executed as part of a river crossing in either a hasty or deliberate crossing. Although a deliberate crossing will include a pause short of the entry bank to build up combat power, maneuver forces will still execute this task as a part of the attack.

It is during planning for the advance to the river that planners resolve the feasibility of the preferred form--a hasty crossing. The key considerations center on the terrain, water obstacle, and the enemy.

Whether the current operation begins 20 to 50 kilometers from the river or has objectives near or on the entry bank, the anticipated crossing should be perceived as a hasty crossing. However, changes in the enemy situation, additional intelligence, or the lack of engineer/bridging resources may require plans for a deliberate crossing. The significant factors for such a decision are:

- The previously planned river assault hour is delayed.
- The entry bank must be cleared of enemy forces.
- More time is required to prepare detailed plans and build up combat power.

a. Alignment of Forces.

The advance to the river may be either a hasty or deliberate attack. The alignment of forces is considered while planning the attack. The alignment required is determined. Additional traffic control will be required if a great deal of realignment is needed. Plans are made to reposition the forces. Crossing support is obtained prior to reaching the river. Control measures are designated prior to the advance to the river. This includes crossing areas and headquarters.

Alignment of forces should be done prior to the advance to the river. As little realignment should be done as possible. The advance to the river is timed so that the crossing unit does not pause at the river in a hasty crossing. It does not stop to concentrate troops and equipment. The unit moves directly into the water.

b. Transfer of Control.

Control is passed from the assault force commander to the crossing area commander. This is done as the assault force advances to the river. The exact timing is agreed on by the two commanders. This decision is based on the tactical situation within the crossing area.

Once crossing areas are established and transfer of control is made, the crossing area commander controls movement within the crossing area. The rear limit of the crossing area is approximately 2-3 kilometers from the river. From this time on, regardless of scheduling, vehicles move into the crossing area only on call from the crossing area commander. Military police will play a key role in enforcing this.

14. Control Measures.

Up to this point, planning, tactical and crossing operations, crossing and movement plans, and command and control organizations have been discussed. How many commanders maintain control and carry out plans to complete the river crossing?

The following are some of the techniques and control measures which should be used to carry out a river crossing operation:

- o Effective command relationship.
- o Detailed and efficient planning.
- o Clear and manageable plans and orders.
- o Up to date unit SOP.
- o Adequate security forces.
- o Responsive fire support and air defense.

- o Proficient units, crews, and operators.
- o Serviceable and effective communications.
- o Identifiable and functional control areas and lines.
  - Crossing areas and sites.
  - Staging areas.
  - Holding areas.
  - Traffic control posts.
  - Engineer regulating posts.
  - Traffic regulating lines.
  - Positive traffic control.

15. Highway Traffic Division.

The highway traffic division is an operating and planning agency which is delegated the authority to plan, schedule, route, and monitor the movement of traffic. The highway traffic division should be located with the crossing force headquarters. It must work closely with the elements of the unit's staff.

The division transportation officer's office provides the nucleus for the divisional equivalent of the corps highway traffic division. In large operations, the corps highway traffic division may assume responsibilities farther forward in the division area than might normally be the case. The section requires augmentation by additional movement, administration, and support personnel to operate the traffic division. Augmentation will normally be provided by the transportation elements of the corps support command. The division signal battalion provides the traffic division with communications support. The division military police company provides assistance in controlling the flow of traffic. This often involves the detailing of NCOs to the traffic division or equivalent.

Movement to the rear of the crossing area is controlled through unit commanders and the traffic division. As the assault forces move forward, the traffic division controls movement beyond the crossing areas and up to the area controlled by the assault force.

In a river crossing operation, the traffic division, or equivalent, performs the following:

- o Assists the crossing force staff in developing priorities for movement and in the use of routes by elements of the crossing force.

- o Establishes and disseminates a provisional allotment of times and routes of movement of units.
- o Consolidates road movement tables.
- o Schedules highway movements.
- o Prepares crossing force road movement tables and graphs based on the crossing plan.
- o Prepares the traffic circulation plan.
- o Monitors traffic movement.
- o Provides procedures for changing routes, schedules, or priorities, as directed by the crossing force headquarters.

Figure 1-7 illustrates, in overlay form, the control measures used.

16. Traffic and Movement Control.

a. Crossing Control Officers.

Each unit designates a crossing control officer whom maintains contact with the crossing area commander. They are designated to assist in the control of units during a crossing. They assist the crossing area commander in maintaining an uninterrupted, orderly movement across the water.

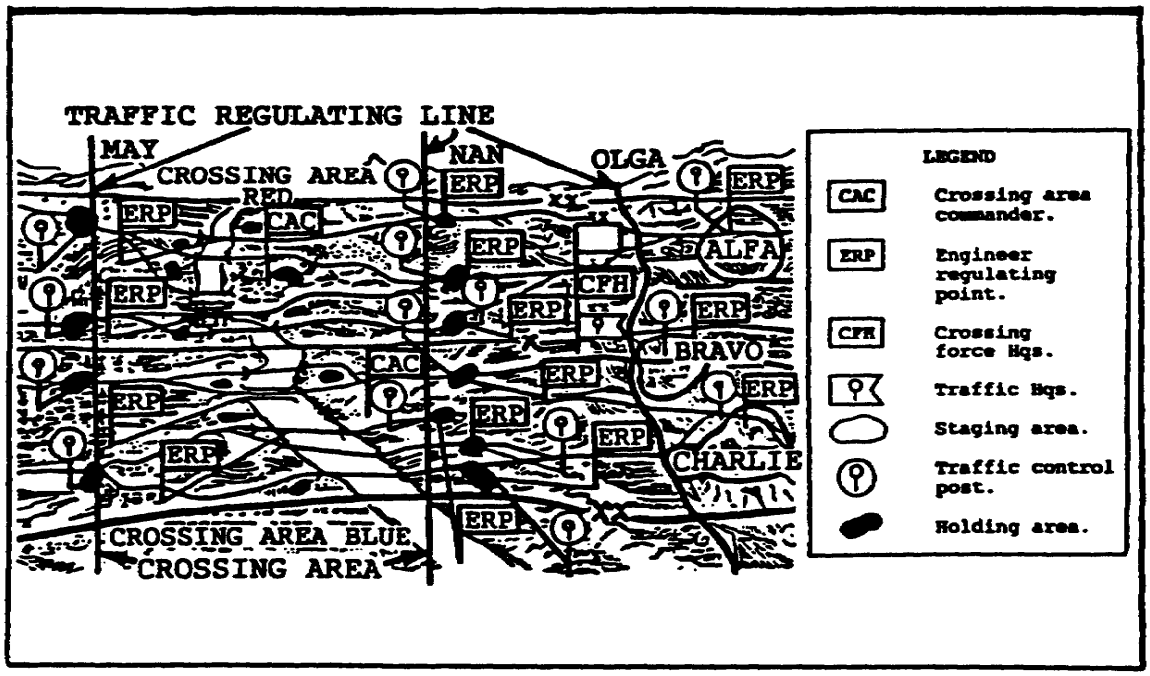

Figure 1-7. Control Measures.

Some of the control techniques that the crossing control officers use are as follows:

- o Designating and marking certain vehicles and equipment, such as command, communication, ammunition, and ambulance vehicles to ensure high priority of movement on the road net and on the crossing means.

- o Plainly marking convoys with their priority and serial number so that markings can be read from the air and the ground.

- o Assigning an overall priority to each element scheduled to cross the river, to assist in maintaining a proper order of movement if some of the crossing means are destroyed.

- o Restricting the flow of traffic returning from the far bank, particularly in the early stages of the operation.

- o Limiting essential returning vehicles or personnel to crossing on rafts or to being moved by helicopter.

b. Traffic Regulating Line.

This line is a control measure used to delineate areas of responsibility for traffic regulation and control, as exercised by different elements of command.

A traffic regulating line to supplement normal control delineated by unit boundaries may be established immediately to the rear of the reserve and trains area of the assault brigade. This limits the brigade commanders responsibility for traffic control to his rear. A traffic regulating line may be established on either side of the river to mark the area of traffic regulation and control responsibility of the crossing area commander. Other traffic regulating lines may be established to facilitate the control of traffic throughout the division. They are also used to indicate the forward limit of the corps' area of responsibility for traffic regulations.

Traffic regulating line should be established along easily recognized terrain or manmade features.

c. Traffic Control Posts.

Military police at traffic control posts (TCPs) within the area of an assaulting division perform their normal function of traffic control by enforcing traffic rules and providing information and directions. They may also become involved in straggler and refugee control, particularly if these begin to affect the traffic flow.

In a river crossing, these TCPs also assist in traffic regulation by reporting to traffic division on the movements of units and convoys. TCPs may also relay messages between traffic division and moving units. TCPs are

located on both banks of the river to control traffic moving toward or away from the river, and are normally located at the following points:

- o Major crossroads and junctions along the MSRs, and near division rear and lateral boundaries where uncontrolled entry of traffic from adjacent unit areas could interfere with division surface movement.

- o At critical crossroads and junctions across the river and within or beyond crossing areas.

- o At principal entrances to and exits from staging areas.

- o At entrances and exits to holding areas.

- o At engineer regulating points.

d. Staging Areas.

Waiting areas for units about to cross the river are called staging areas. They must be located far enough from the river to allow the units to be rerouted. Units may need to use alternate roads to the raft and bridge sites.

Staging areas are also used by corps and Army units. These are units supporting the division that will cross the river. The HTD, or equivalent, designates staging areas. They are found in the traffic circulation plan. Each staging area is controlled by TCP. Movement is according to planned times. This is a primary function of the TCP. Normally troops and their vehicles assembly in the staging area. Units that will support the assault from forward areas and reconnaissance elements do not use staging areas. Once assembled, units move forward on order. They move under unit control. The crossing plans list when units move into staging areas. This is based on their mission in the crossing plan. The mission of the unit during the advance to the river does not affect this schedule.

e. Holding Areas.

Holding areas are waiting spaces, both near and within the crossing areas, to handle vehicles if a sudden interruption occurs in the movement of traffic across the river. Vehicles move into these areas and disperse rather than standing on the roads and restricting the flow of traffic into the crossing areas.

Holding areas located within the crossing area were at one time called dispersal areas. They are located along the access roads to the bridge and raft sites. They provide an area where vehicles can disperse to avoid congestion on the crossing site access roads when the flow of traffic when the flow of traffic has been interrupted. TCPs and MP teams controlling these areas must maintain constant contact with the CAC.

Holding areas just outside the crossing areas are located with access to all principal roads leading to the crossing sites. Holding areas must be established on the near and the far banks. Those on the far bank may be used to temporarily hold and reassemble unit convoys that are utilizing various crossing means before continuing movement. For example, a unit may have crossed using two bridges and some rafts. It would then reassemble in a far bank holding area before moving forward.

Depending on the availability of space, these holding areas are located to facilitate traffic into and from the areas, consistent with the principal of maximum flow and minimum control. These areas are normally established and operated by military police, as provided for in the traffic circulation plan and as directed by the crossing area commander.

f. Engineer Regulating Points (ERPs).

ERPs are located near or within staging areas, holding areas, or crossing sites. Engineer personnel make technical checks to ensure that vehicles crossing the river match the capability of the crossing means. They also determine the load carrying capacity of the crossing means. A TCP is located with each ERP to control the traffic flow. The TCP is in constant contact with the traffic division, or equivalent, or CAC, depending on the location. Engineer personnel operate the ERP. MP operate the TCP. The crossing area commander controls the ERP within the crossing area. ERPs located outside the crossing area are under the operational control of the traffic division, or equivalent. The ERP must be located far enough from the river to allow flexibility in routing of vehicles to appropriate sites.

On occasion it may be necessary for vehicles to cross which exceed the load classification of the bridge. This is done only in unusual circumstances. The decision as to when to allow vehicles to cross a bridge is normally made by the crossing area or crossing force commander. They do so based on the tactical situation. The engineer officer provides them technical advice on the capacity of the bridge under these unusual circumstances. The commander must weigh the tactical need for the vehicle as opposed to the risk of damage or loss of the bridge. There are three types of crossings: normal, caution, and risk.

A normal crossing is when the vehicle class number is equal to or less than the load classification of the bridge. Vehicles maintain a 30-meter interval and speed is restricted to 25 mph. Sudden stopping or acceleration is forbidden.

A caution crossing is when the vehicle classification number exceeds that of the bridge by nor more than 25%. Vehicles cross under strict traffic control. The vehicles remain on the center line of the bridge and do not exceed 8 mph. They maintain a minimum interval of 50 meters. Sudden stopping and acceleration or shifting gears is forbidden.

A risk crossing is made only on standard prefabricated fixed or floating bridges. Risk crossings are only made in the greatest emergencies.

The vehicle moves on the centerline. It is the only vehicle on the bridge. The speed limit is 5 mph and there can be no sudden stopping, acceleration, or any shifting of gears. After the crossing, and before other traffic is permitted on the bridge, the engineer officer must inspect the entire bridge for any damage.

g. Engineer Equipment Parks.

As can be imagined, river crossing requires a substantial amount of engineer equipment. Engineer equipment parks are established at least one kilometer behind bridge and raft sites. At these parks, engineer vehicles, equipment, and materiel are assembled to be used during the crossing operation. Empty engineer vehicles will be moved away from the river and crossing areas as soon as practicable. The equipment parks are so located as to prevent congestion of traffic leading to the crossing areas.

17. Retrograde Crossings.

A RETROGRADE CROSSING IS NOT AN OFFENSIVE CROSSING CONDUCTED IN REVERSE.

Retrograde operations are undertaken to trade space for time by delay, to disengage from enemy contact by withdrawal, or to move away from an area without enemy pressure. When such an operation is required, it may become necessary to cross a water obstacle. This section will address only those portions of river crossings that are unique to the retrograde. Retrograde operations are characterized by centralized control and detailed planning with the time available.

A river crossing conducted in conjunction with a retrograde operation will differ from an offensive crossing in several aspects:

- Existing bridges or other crossing sites will be intact and available to the retrograde force to speed the crossing. When only a few crossing sites are available and the enemy is applying heavy pressure, the crossing assumes a more deliberate character. It is the more deliberate retrograde that will be discussed.

- Relative combat power advantage will favor the enemy.

- The enemy commander will enjoy a maneuver advantage.

- Command and control will be more difficult for the crossing force.

a. Special military police considerations:

- Much of the traffic may well be confused and will be of high density.

- Although the number of EPW will probably be less, the volume of straggler and refugees will probably greatly increase.

Enemy pursuit action will constitute the greatest threat to a retrograde crossing. The pursuing force seeks a rapid, deep penetration to cut off and annihilate the retreating force. The pursuit force will maintain unrelenting pressure until the delaying force is destroyed. In all cases, whether there is pressure on the retreating force or not, a defensive force on the exit bank is required. Figure 1-8 is a graphic portrayal of a retrograde river crossing.

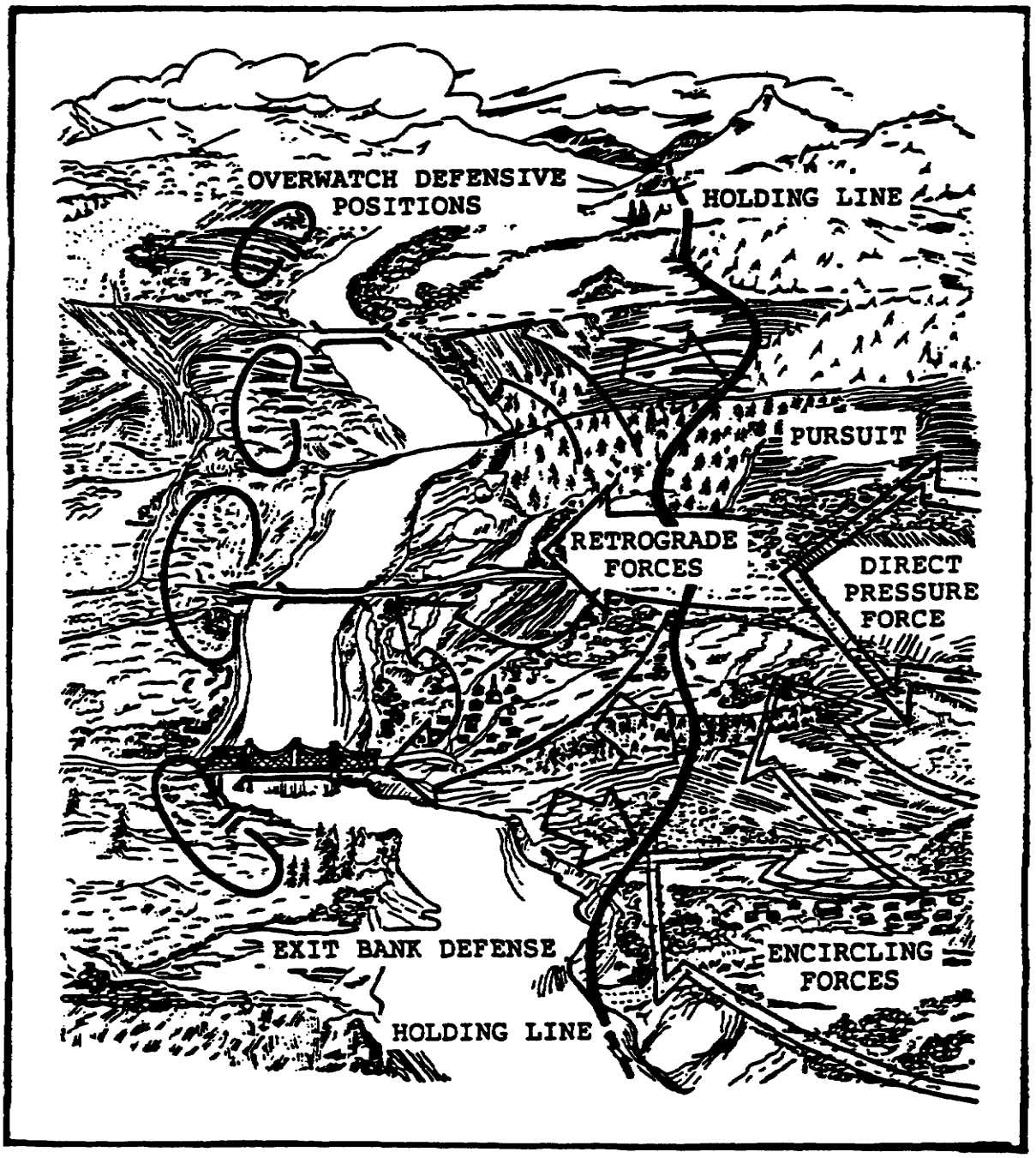

Figure 1-8. Retrograde River Crossing.

The retrograde crossing is divided into three segments for purposes of planning and discussion. These segments are the delay, defense, and the crossing. In actual execution, all three segments are conducted concurrently. Military police are involved in all three, but the heaviest commitment is to the crossing. However, since all three go on at the same time, it is important that you understand all three.

b. DELAY.

The delay is conducted to trade space for time and/or risk. In this instance, the delay is conducted in order to allow the main body of the force (division) to retire rapidly across a major water obstacle.

The delay is a major battle of attrition against a numerically superior enemy. The battle is fought from successive positions, in depth, to maximize destruction of the enemy without the delaying force, as a whole, losing its ability to maneuver.

Divisional elements in contact usually conduct the delay. They may consist of elements of one or more brigades. The size of the delay force is determined by many factors. These factors include the length of time required to establish defensive positions along the exit bank and the time necessary to develop the crossing areas.

Elements not assigned missions in the delay will execute a planned retirement and cross the water obstacle as rapidly as possible. These units, such as the military police, may have missions within the crossing area. Others may have missions in the defense being established on the exit bank. Movement of all elements must be consistent with a believable deception plan in order to preclude early enemy detection of specific crossing sites.

The delay will be continued until the battle is within communications and fire support range of the exit bank defense. At this point, which will be forward of the holding line, the defense assumes responsibility for the battle. The holding line is established on defensible terrain between the river and the enemy. It is sufficiently forward to preclude direct and observed indirect fires into the crossing area. Those elements of the delay force still on the entry bank complete the crossing.

18. Defense.

The defense force initially is small. It consists of elements not involved in the delay, as well as augmentation from corps resources. Since forces are not available to defend all points, the defense must be planned to provide for rapid lateral movement to concentrate fire power. These tactical moves may be made while other units are still crossing and exiting, requiring close traffic control. This lateral movement provides favorable force ratios at the required time and place.

After the defense force has assumed responsibility for the battle from the delay force, the requirement for close and continuous coordination becomes acute. The defense force must be able to concentrate its firepower to allow elements in contact to withdraw and complete the crossing. If the defense cannot sustain the requisite combat power to concentrate, unacceptably high losses can be anticipated among those elements on the entry bank.

Military police support for the units in defense becomes the same as at any other time the division goes into a defensive posture.

19. Crossing.

Activities within the crossing area do not differ significantly, whether the crossing is in the offense or the retrograde. As in the offense, planning and execution requirements in the crossing area must be closely tied to activities of the maneuver forces. Figure 1-9 is a graphic portrayal of the crossing area in a retrograde river crossing.

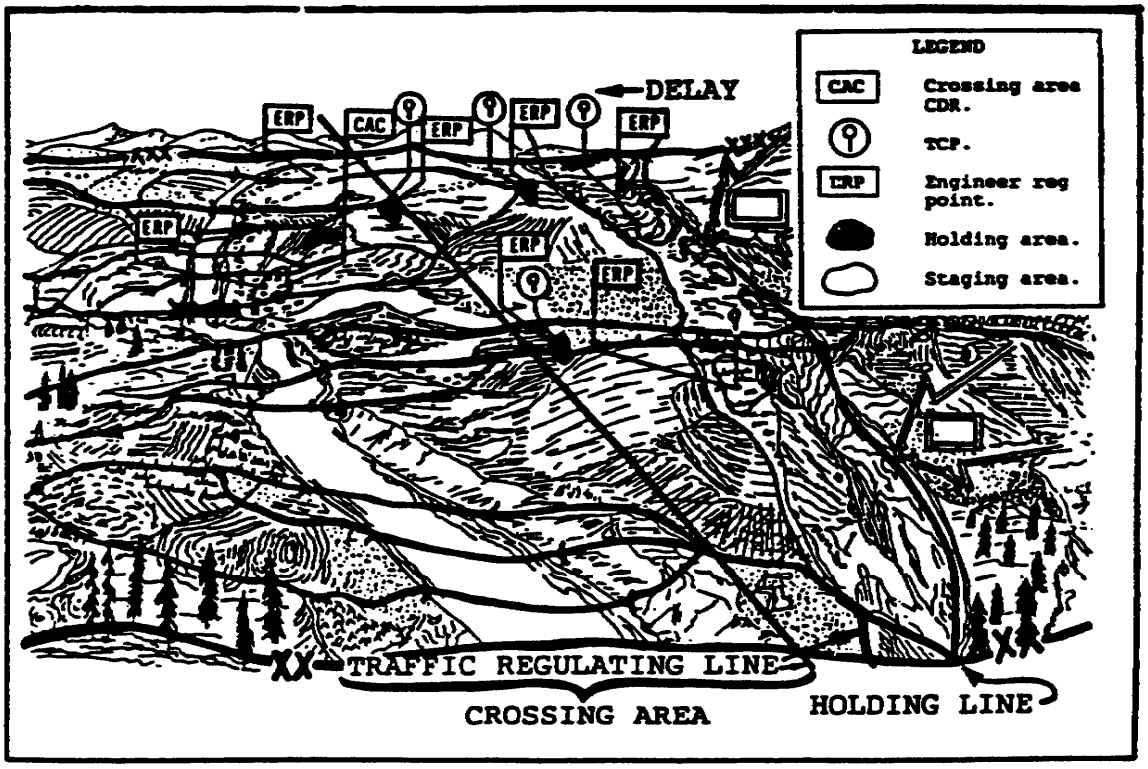

Figure 1-9. Retrograde Crossing Area.

Since friendly forces will have been in control of both banks of the water obstacle for some period prior to the retrograde, existing bridges should have been improved and repaired. All permanent crossing means provide crossing facilities. Available tactical bridging can be installed to the rear of the retrograding forces to supplement existing means, thus increasing the crossing potential. This may also increase the requirement for MP traffic control.

The crossing area commander is designated early to begin extensive planning. The CAC is the designated representative of the tactical commander to control the maneuver of the forces through the crossing area. At the division level, this may be the assistant division commander while, at brigade, the executive officer may perform this function. Engineers, military police, and a traffic division normally will be attached to his staff.

Traffic control up to and through the crossing area is a critical problem in crossing operations. For this reason, plans for movement must be detailed and control must be positive. This control is exercised by the delay force commander, the crossing area commander, and the highway traffic division.

It is the responsibility of the crossing area commander to ensure the continuous and orderly flow of the retreating elements across the river. His control extends to engineer regulating points (ERP), which ensure that vehicles are of a proper class and size, and that holding areas feed vehicles through the crossing area in an orderly fashion. The CAC also controls military police TCPs which manage traffic flow. Crossing site commanders are also under the control of the CAC. Activity within the crossing area will begin with small two-way crossings by combat service support units evacuating nonessential supplies, or prestocking the delay force. During the early stages of the retrograde, existing crossing means will be supplemented by the addition of tactical bridging and the development of rafting and fording sites. The crossing area must be operational early in order to allow all elements not involved in the delay to cross the obstacle.

Operation of the crossing area must provide for the rapid flow of traffic across the river. Planning must be extensive and execution flexible in order to allow the uninterrupted flow of troops and equipment across the obstacle. Emphasis is placed on siting crossing equipment to accommodate fluctuating quantities of friendly forces. Units are moved across at a time and place which will accommodate the tactical situation. This requires a great deal of flexibility and coordination on the part of military police.

The use of holding areas on the entry bank is discouraged if troops must mass under enemy observed fire. An area near the crossing site may be necessary to provide concealment. However, to avoid congestion, arrival of units at the crossing site should not exceed the crossing capability. There must be assurance that only essential personnel and equipment are operating in the crossing area.

The CAC must ensure coordinating crossing site selection to facilitate overwatch forces withdrawing under enemy pressure. Delay forces will be used to thicken the main battle area after they break contact and complete their withdrawal. Crossing site selection must conform to this plan of withdrawal. It is limited only by physical river features and the availability of crossing equipment. The CAC must provide for coordinating crossing equipment and supplies before defenses are completed. The CAC must have early decision about defense plans in order to place crossing means in the appropriate locations.

Coordination between the CAC and the delay commander must be provided for to optimize the use of crossing sites by delaying forces. As delay forces are disengaged, final plans for their crossing are rapidly coordinated with the defense commander. The crossing plan supports both the defense and delay plans.

Positive control of all movement to, across, and exiting from the river line must be provided. This is accomplished in close coordination with the defense commanders as they assume responsibility for the battle. The use of holding areas on the entry bank may not be practical as the battle nears the river line. Units that can be withdrawn from the delaying battle will be directed to cross without pause.

Operation of the crossing area must provide for the coordinated closing of crossing sites with defense commanders. When the tactical situation is such that crossing sites are no longer needed, or the danger of capture outweighs the advantage of crossing forces, the site must be closed or destroyed. The decision as to when this occurs at each site is made by the defense commander in whose area the site is located. The decision what will be done with crossing means will be made by the CAC.

Turnover of responsibility for sites from the crossing area commander to the defending force commander is by mutual agreement, or when directed by the crossing force commander. It is not essential that this hand-off be simultaneous between or within defensive sectors. When a crossing site is no longer required, it may be inactivated and removed, or turned over to the defense commander of the sector. Depending on the tactical situation, the crossing force commander might not allow crossing equipment to remain in place, even though the defending force commander desires its retention.

Normally, the crossing area commander remains in command of the crossing means until delay elements have crossed the river. Control is then passed to the commander of the defense force. However, situations may arise in which the defending commander would take over crossing sites in his area before the delay force has completed crossing the river.

As stated earlier, retrograde river crossings are <u>not</u> offensive crossings conducted in reverse. A retrograde river crossing combines two of the most difficult forms of combat--a retrograde and a river crossing. This requires detailed planning and skillful execution to preserve the force and punish the enemy.

20. <u>Communications</u>.

In a river crossing, reliable communications are necessary for continuous coordination, and for efficient employment of the large number and variety of supporting units peculiar to this type of operation. All available means of signal communication may be required to ensure reliable contact. Figure 1-10 is an illustration of the special communications requirements in a river crossing.

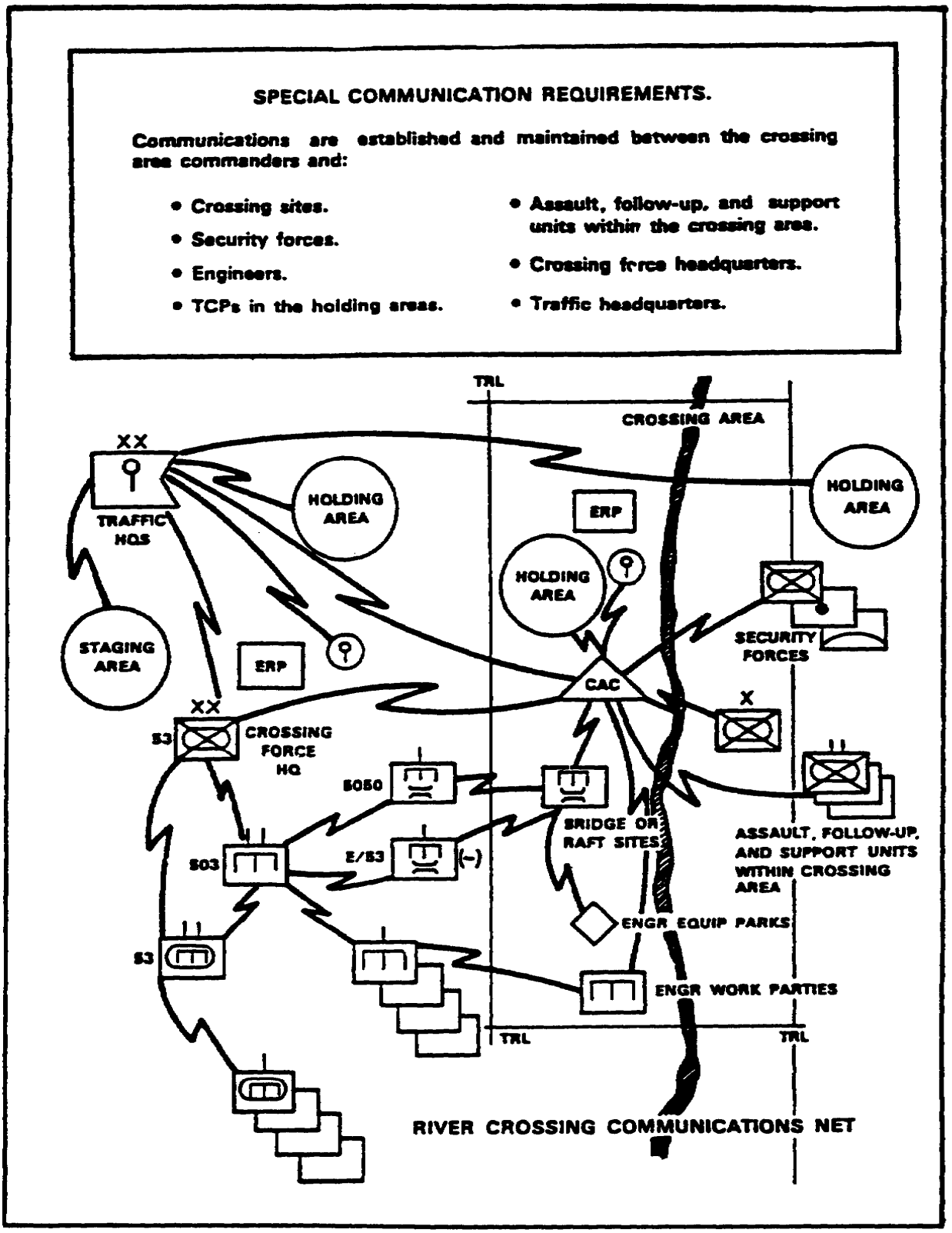

Figure 1-10. River Crossing Communications Net.

a. Communications Security.

The geographical distribution of radio nets associated with river crossing operations, and their peculiar communication patterns, can provide significant indicators of plans and preparations for these operations. Therefore, special emphasis should be placed on signal security and electronic countermeasures throughout operations. The enemy must be denied the information he needs to react effectively. Enemy attempts at disrupting command and control by interfering with communications must be defeated by using sound communications security practices.

b. Planning.

Communications planning is continuous and concurrent with tactical planning. The communications plan is developed to support the scheme of maneuver. It should provide for the use of multiple means. Communications orders are published in the communications-electronics directives. Plans must include provision for the use of, and defense against, electronic countermeasures. Specific instructions are normally set forth in appropriate directives.

c. Operations.

Prior to a deliberate (offensive or retrograde) crossing, the use of radio may be restricted to permit security and surprise. Initially, maximum reliance will be on wire communication, supplemented by messenger. After the operation begins, or during a hasty crossing, greater reliance will be placed on radio, visual, and sound communications within the crossing area.

Communications requirements in the retrograde will be compounded when the deception plan requires a notional mission portrayal. Units, such as engineers and military police that will have increased communications during this type of operation, must establish and maintain false radio and wire nets. At the same time, they must continue to be in communications with the crossing force net. Planners must note that these units will not have the equipment to operate both sets of nets. They must be supplemented by outside sources.

d. Division Signal Battalion.

The division signal battalion provides communications equipment support for the crossing area commanders. However, supplementary support may be required.

e. Engineer Requirements.

Division engineer units will probably be able to operate using organic communications equipment. Corps engineer units must receive additional signal support in order to maintain radio communications with the CAC and ERP.

f. Military Police Requirements.

Military police elements operating TCPs can, with organic equipment, perform their normal function. They may require equipment support to maintain contact with highway traffic division in monitoring the movement of traffic.

g. Communication Means.

(1) Wire communications. Wire should be used as extensively as conditions permit. Normally, sufficient telephone circuits exist between the forward area signal centers and the division main by means of radio relay. Wire circuits are extended from the forward signal centers to provide direct access from division crossing force and traffic division to the defend force and crossing area commanders. It is also extended to key TCPs at holding areas and crossing sites. If time permits, lateral lines are established between fixed TCPs and crossing area commanders.

Wire is extended across the river at the earliest practicable time in the offense. Wire teams from higher headquarters augment the division wire capability.

In the retrograde, wire will be a primary means of communication during the initial build-up in the crossing and defense areas to preclude compromise of the deception plan.

(2) Radio communications. Special movement control radio nets serve as a primary means to control and coordinate the crossing of units during the assault and retrograde. Some of the special nets that may be established are as follows:

- o Crossing area commander's net (FM) --this net should include the crossing sites within the crossing area, TCPs, engineer units, defending brigade units, and major crossing units. The latter enter the net while in the crossing area and leave the net when they leave the crossing area.

- o Division movement control nets (FM) --traffic division, or equivalent, acts as the net control station. Operating within the net are the division TOC, the crossing area commanders, and the TCP in the assembly areas.

(3) Messenger Service.

The crossing area commander's OPCON engineer, military police, and local security elements are included in scheduled messenger service. Special motor and air messengers should be available for direct priority communications which cannot be transmitted electronically.

PART B - ORGANIZE AND COORDINATE MILITARY SUPPORT FOR RIVER CROSSING OPERATIONS

1. General.

Military units throughout history have been required to cross various water obstacles. Particular emphasis on the crossing of water obstacles must be given in Europe. Due to the development of the canal system in conjunction with the river system, there are a large number of water obstacles.

Most of these water obstacles run perpendicular to the anticipated axis of advance. This means that they must be crossed by these type operations.

It is important that these obstacles be taken in stride. There should be as little pause as possible in crossing them. The preferred method is always a hasty crossing. Regardless of the type of crossing, firm and continuous control is essential to the crossings success.

A river crossing is a combined arms operation. Every element of the division and the supporting corps units has a mission to perform. The military police are a critical and essential part of that team effort.

2. Military Police Missions.

Once the plans have been prepared at the crossing force and other headquarters, they must be executed. The division provost marshal and his staff will have been intimately involved in preparing those plans. The military police are habitually tasked with certain missions. The support that MP provide, as you learned, varies from one type to another. In certain circumstances, depending on the situation, the military police may be tasked to provide other support, or the emphasis on their role may be changed. These are exceptions, however, and they must be dealt with as such.

The major missions of the military police in river crossings is to aid the combat forces in maintaining their momentum across the obstacle. Military police do this by reducing congestion to speed the crossing. Additionally, military police continue to provide security to selected elements as well as to their own positions, ensure refugees and stragglers do not interfere with operations, and conduct enemy prisoner of war (EPW) operations. As a platoon sergeant, you may be involved in any or all of these missions. Some of them are performed by the same personnel simultaneously. In other cases, as the operation progresses, personnel must be reassigned to meet new requirements.

The military police role can be listed as:

- Ensuring that only authorized movement takes place.
- Ensuring that priorities are honored.
- Aiding in preventing congestion.

- o Ensuring vehicles properly clear engineer regulating points (ERP).
- o Controlling traffic into and out of holding areas and staging areas.
- o Rerouting traffic onto alternate routes when required.
- o Providing information to assist moving units.
- o Conducting EPW operations.
- o Ensuring that stragglers and refugees do not interfere with the operation and are properly handled.

a. Battlefield Circulation Control.

BCC is a primary mission for military police in a river crossing. Even the missions of security, straggler/refugee control, and EPW indirectly contribute to the accomplishment of BCC. The most important thing in a river crossing is to get the maximum forces on the far side of the obstacle as rapidly as possible. Equally important, these forces must arrive on the far side in the correct order. As you are already aware, this takes a great deal of planning and coordination. The BCC mission is accomplished through the use of mobile patrols, TCPs, and temporary route signing.

b. Security.

Military police will provide security for their own locations, such as the TCPs. In so doing, they will also provide security for the forces moving through the area. They will continue to provide security for the division tactical operations center (DTOC) and other similar missions. In some cases, military police may be tasked to provide security for selected convoys as they move through the area. Mobile patrols must remain vigilant against enemy actions by small forces. Additionally, military police may be tasked to conduct reconnaissance missions of various kinds in the area.

c. Straggler and Refugee Control.

In operations as fast moving and complex as river crossings, the likelihood of soldiers becoming separated from their units increases. TCPs and mobile patrols must be prepared to integrate their control with the primary mission. Combat power is essential in a river crossing. Soldiers that are separated from their units must be returned to them as quickly as possible.

Refugees are the responsibility of the G5. Military police may be tasked to provide some assistance if the refugee problem is great. Refugees are normally more of a potential problem in retrograde operations than in offensive operations. In either case, refugees must not be permitted to interfere with the smooth movement of forces across the obstacle.

d. Enemy Prisoners of War.

Division prisoner of war collecting points normally are established on the entry and exit banks of the river. They are set up far enough to the rear to prevent interference with combat operations and river line activity. Division military police may establish forward brigade and task force temporary collecting points on the far bank immediately after the assault. Available empty transportation returning from the exit bank is used to evacuate EPW from the bridgehead or temporary collecting points.

On the spot interrogation of EPW and refugees by military intelligence personnel can provide information of immediate tactical value. Normal evacuation procedures are interrupted only while main division EPW collecting points are crossing to the far side of the river.

3. MP Support to a Crossing.

a. Organization.

Under normal circumstances, a corps military police company will be placed under the operational control of the division provost marshal. This company will be used to augment the resources of the division military police company. How the corps MP company is employed is a decision made by the division provost marshal. He will base his decision on the situation. He has the authority to task organize both the division and corps MP company to most effectively support the river crossing. How the resources are to be employed will be determined prior to the operation. The following discussion is based on the usual deployment. Circumstances may require this to be modified in any given operation.

(1) Division MP company will normally be employed in its usual configuration. Each of the direct support platoons will provide support for their respective brigades. One of the general support platoons will provide security for the main command post and the all source production section (ASPS). The other general support platoon will support the division rear on an area basis.

(2) Corps MP company will normally be placed under the operational control of the division. There are not enough assets, as you have learned for the division MP company to support a deliberate river crossing. The division provost marshal will task organize the corps MP company to make maximum use of its assets. This may be accomplished by providing a corps platoon to each of the direct support platoons. The fourth corps platoon is used to augment the division general support platoon providing area support to the division rear.

b. Command and Control.

Command relationships in a river crossing do not normally change. Control relationships, however, do very from normal. As noted previously, the

corps MP company is under the operational control of the division provost marshal.

In a river crossing, all units within the crossing area are under the operational control of the crossing area commander. This includes the military police elements, both corps and divisional. Most often, these elements will initially be the direct support platoon and a platoon from the corps MP company. In essence, these two platoons will work for the CAC. When the assault brigade moves forward, the division MP platoon will go forward with it. When the brigade and MP platoon move out of the crossing area, the MP platoon resumes its direct support relationship. The corps MP platoon will normally remain in the crossing area until relieved.

Elements of the division general support platoon will cross shortly behind the division direct support platoon to support the crossing of the division rear element. When they enter the crossing area, they come under the control of the CAC. Whenever military police units are employed outside of the crossing area, they will normally be under the operational control of the division provost marshal.

4. Communications.

In a river crossing, reliable communications are necessary for the coordination that is required. All available means of signal communications must be used. Great reliance must be placed on wire as well as radio. Usually, the organic communications assets of the military police are not sufficient to meet their increased requirements. They will normally be supplemented by equipment from the division signal battalion or elsewhere. In addition to wire and radio, the division signal battalion will provide messenger service that will include the military police. The special communications requirements are illustrated in Figure 1-10.

The MP platoons operating TCPs and staging areas outside the crossing area must establish a radio net and/or wire communication with the traffic division. This is in addition to the normal nets. The manner in which these nets are set up will depend on the number of stations. Distance and terrain may also affect their structure.

The MP platoons operating within the crossing areas will enter radio and/or wire communications with the crossing area commander. Included in the crossing area commander's net will be those elements crossing while they are in the crossing area. Also included will be the crossing site and elements of the support force in the crossing area. Since military police will provide a TCP at each ERP, they are normally required to provide the ERP communications as well.

In both cases, it may be necessary for the platoon headquarters to act as a net control station (NCS). The platoon NCS would then relay information between the traffic net or the CAC net, as appropriate.

5. Conduct of the Operations.

Each military police platoon may be assigned a variety of missions. The platoon leader/sergeant will, in turn, assign the missions to the squad. Orders to the various elements must include priorities. Figure 1-11 is a schematic of a river crossing operation showing some of the MP control measures.

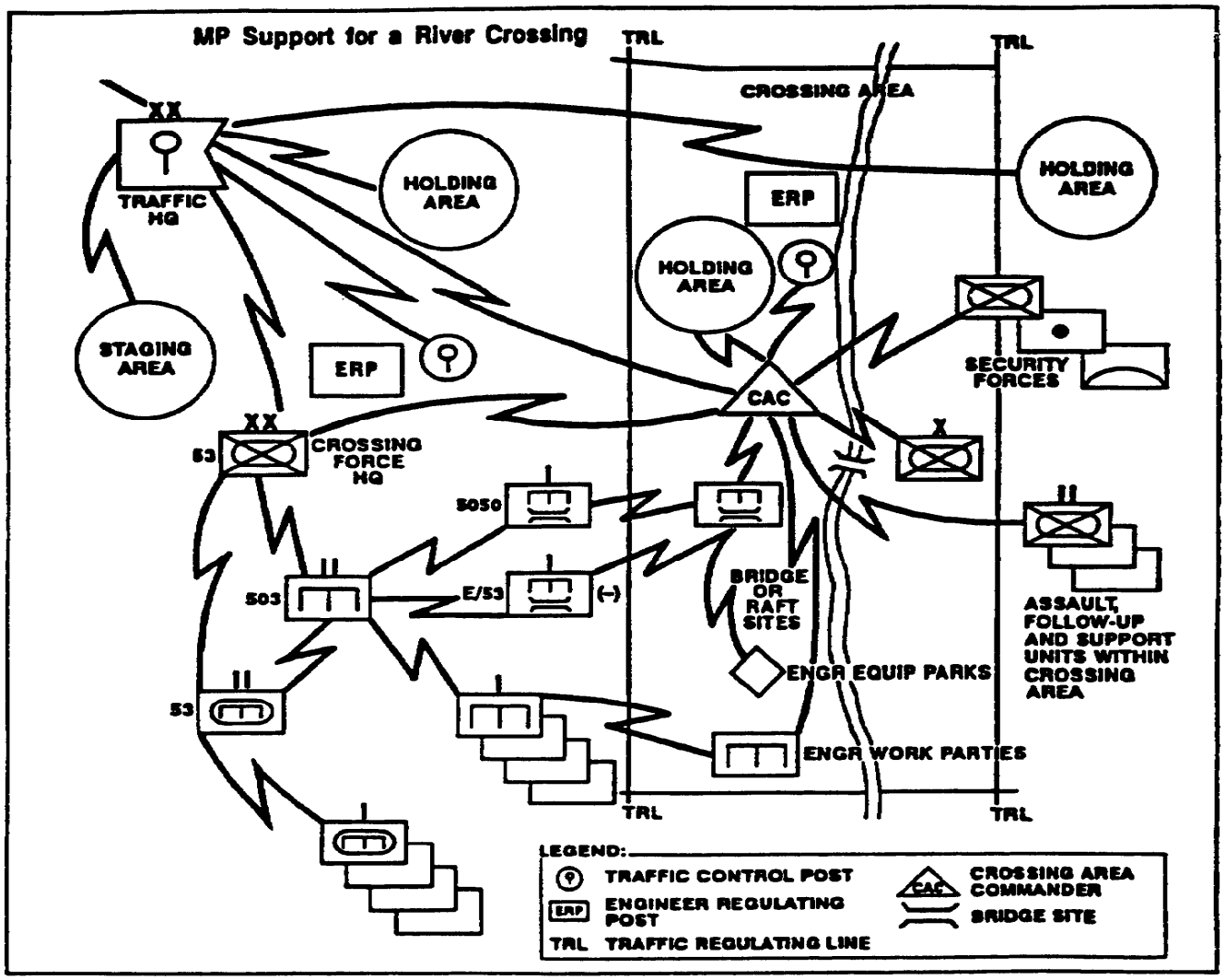

Figure 1-11. River Crossing Schematic.

a. Traffic Control Posts.

A very large number of TCPs will be required in a river crossing area. TCPs are normally located at the following points:

- o Major crossroads and junctions. In routine operations, TCPs will be located at the most critical intersections. In a river crossing, TCPs will be established at almost all substantial intersections. They will also be established along the division rear and lateral boundaries to preclude traffic from adjacent units/areas from interfering with the operation.

- o Critical crossroads and Junctions across the river and within or beyond crossing areas.

- o At the entrances and exits to staging areas and holding areas.

- o At engineer regulating points.

- o Along the traffic regulating line.

TCPs perform their normal functions at all locations. These include:

- o Provide circulation control.

- o Enforce MSR/other regulations.

- o Conduct straggler and refugee control measures.

- o Gather and report intelligence information.

- o Disseminate information.

Certain of the TCPs will have special requirements in addition to those normally performed. Which of these are to be done depends primarily on the location of the TCP. These special requirements include:

- o Reporting the movement of convoys to the traffic headquarters when they clear their location.

- o Rerouting convoys or directing them into holding and/or staging areas.

- o Relaying messages between moving units and the traffic headquarters.

- o Ensuring all traffic properly clears ERP.

b. Staging Areas.

The platoon may be required to operate staging areas. These are waiting areas for convoys designated to cross the obstacle. Staging areas are

also used by the unit to make final preparations prior to crossing the river. They are located far enough from the river to facilitate rerouting, should that become necessary. They will also be used by corps and Army units that are crossing in the division's sector.

Staging area locations are designated by the traffic division. Movement to and from a staging area is based on a preplanned schedule. Figure 1-6 is an example of road movement table. TCPs at staging areas will be provided a similar listing of when units are to arrive/depart. They must be prepared, however, to make adjustments upon direction of the traffic division. MP at the staging area control movement into and out of them. This is accomplished by the use of TCPs. The number of TCPs required will depend upon the size of the staging area.

c. Holding Areas.

These are waiting spaces near and within the crossing areas. They are used when there is a sudden interruption in the movement of traffic across the river. Vehicles move into these areas and disperse rather than standing on the roads.

Within the crossing area, holding areas are located on the route leading to the crossing site. Holding areas located outside the crossing areas are located with access to all the principal roads leading to the crossing sites. They may also be established on the far shore. Those on the far shore may be used for units to reassemble after crossing.

These areas are designated in the traffic circulation plan. When placed in operation they will be controlled by MP TCPs. It is important that the TCP maintain constant contact with the CAC or traffic division, which is determined by the location of the area within, or outside, the crossing area respectively.

d. Engineer Regulating Points.

ERP will be established by the engineers. The purpose of the ERP is to check each vehicle prior to crossing. Each vehicle is checked for its military load classification and size. This is to ensure that the vehicles and the crossing means are matched, and that the crossing means is not overloaded. These tasks will be accomplished by the engineer personnel.

An MP TCP will be collocated with each ERP. The primary function of the TCP is to make sure that each vehicle is checked by the engineers. Engineers are responsible for determining if a vehicle has been satisfactorily checked; at the same time, MP are responsible for the smooth flow of vehicles through the ERP. Additionally, the MP must remain in contact with CAC headquarters. They also provide communications for the engineers manning the ERP.

e. Mobile Patrols.

The platoon may be assigned a section of a route on which to provide mobile patrols. A function of the mobile patrol is to look for problem areas. The patrol should take action, if possible, to correct problems before they become serious. The patrol also provides information and directions to users or the route. Its members must be prepared at all times to dismount and establish a temporary TCP if the situation requires. MP mobile patrols also perform an intelligence-gathering function. Security of the route is enhanced by their presence and their ability to react quickly to small scale enemy attacks. They also need to be alert for stragglers and refugees and be prepared to properly handle them.

f. Temporary Signs.

Temporary signs are erected to aid the flow of traffic. This may include such things as route markers in a river crossing. They are also placed where hazards exist. Signs show road users the location of detours, key units, and facilities. They also give direction, distances, and general information. The traffic circulation plan will normally designate were signs are to be placed. In addition to the planned use of signs, MP must be prepared to erect them in emergency situations. Signs are placed where they give a driver adequate time to comply with them, or to take other appropriate action. They should not block existing permanent signs. Signs are also erected at junctions of roads to prevent confusion. MP patrols must check the signs regularly to ensure they have not been tampered with.

g. Enemy Prisoner of War Operations.

The MP EPW mission is humane as well as of tactical importance. In any conflict involving U.S. forces, safe and humane treatment of EPW is provided. MP conduct collection and evacuation operations as a part of river crossing operations. The mission is essentially the same as that conducted in any other kind of tactical operation. Strict adherence to the laws of war and treaties to which the U.S. is signatory is required.

The size of commitment to EPW operations will initially be based on the EPW estimate of the G2. Intelligence personnel will estimate the number of EPW that are likely to be captured. Based on this estimate, the provost marshal will estimate how much of his resources to devote to the EPW mission.

Direct support platoons must always be prepared to accept EPW from the combat forces. They may be required to establish temporary forward collecting points. In all cases, they relieve the combat forces of EPW as quickly as practicable. Direct support MP search, segregate, silence, and speed EPW to the rear. EPW will be evacuated to the division collecting point on available empty transportation returning to the rear. Secondary crossing sites should be used if available.

Normally, one squad is designated to establish a division EPW collecting point. The squad leader assigns specific tasks to each team

leader. At the collecting point, MP will search, tag, report, segregate, and safeguard the EPW. They will be evacuated to the rear as rapidly as possible. The collecting point should be established far enough to the rear to avoid interference with the operation. It should also preclude EPW from observing the operation.

h. Straggler and Refugee Control.

Under normal circumstances, stragglers and refugee control will be accomplished as a concurrent mission by TCP and mobile patrols. Only in very exceptional circumstances should MP resources be devoted to this mission. Estimate of stragglers are provided by the G1. Estimates of refugees are provided by the G5.

The primary task of MP involved in straggler control will be to return the individual to their unit as rapidly as possible. Stragglers represent a significant drain on combat manpower. Additionally, they must not be permitted to interfere with combat operations. There are three categories of stragglers. These categories are injured, uninjured, and those deliberately attempting to avoid returning to their unit. The most common in a river crossing operation will probably uninjured. These are individuals who, in the confusion, have become separated from their units and are seeking to return. MP should direct them to their unit, if possible. If not they should be directed to a headquarters within their chain of command, or another nearby headquarters unit. Injured stragglers should be given first aid and placed in medical channels. Deliberate stragglers must be apprehended, detained, and disposed of in accordance with the unit SOP.

Refugees are the responsibility of civil affairs personnel. MP encountering refugees should direct them to the nearest G5 refugee collecting point. In all cases, they must not be permitted to interfere with the traffic flow or other aspects of the operation. When necessary they must be redirected on secondary routes, handled in accordance to the SOP, or as
directed.

6. MP Platoon Tasking and Coordination.

As a military police NCO, you may find yourself as the acting platoon leader in support of a river crossing operation. You already know that the platoon may be tasked to accomplish several missions simultaneously. In addition, you may find yourself in charge of part or all of the assets of a supporting MP platoon from corps. If you are located within a crossing area, your command relationship will be somewhat different from that under which you normally operate. You must be prepared to handle all of these situations and be prepared to coordinate directly with a large number of senior officers.

As in all other operations, you will receive your instructions in the form of a five-paragraph field order. Your first step is to study the operations order (OPORD) for both assigned and implied tasks. You will use that information to form your own plan of action. This will include the personnel, equipment, and supplies required to accomplish these tasks. In many respects

the OPORD will be the same as any other OPORD that you receive. There will be differences, however, as you have already learned. You must study those differences very carefully. A major difference will have to do with whether your platoon or squad will be operating within or outside the crossing area. You must be particularly concerned with command and control, reporting procedures, communications, and traffic priorities.

The troop leading steps that you will follow are the same as those you use for any other mission. As with any mission, but especially in a river crossing, it is important that the personnel you select for the various tasks be well trained and preferably experienced in those tasks. Few operations are more demanding than a river crossing. It takes very little to cause confusion. The better prepared your personnel are, the smoother the operation will flow.

LESSON

PRACTICE EXERCISE

INSTRUCTIONS

This practice exercise will show you how much you have learned in this lesson. Answer each question. When you are done, turn the page and check your answer.

GENERAL SITUATION I

You are the platoon sergeant of a divisional direct support platoon. You are at the brigade CP. The brigade CO states the brigade will conduct a river crossing as a part of the division.

1. The river crossing will take place with no pause in the advance. The brigade will cross the river at designated points, using whatever means are available, and will not pause on either bank. What type of river crossing is he discussing?

A. Hasty.
B. Deliberate.
C. Retrograde.
D. Defensive.

2. In the type of river crossing described in the general situation and question 1, what type of military police support from the brigade will you normally expect to find for your platoon?

A. 1 corps MP platoon in direct support
B. 1 corps MP platoon attached
C. No additional MP support
D. 1 corps MP platoon under operational control

GENERAL SITUATION II

You are the platoon sergeant of the division platoon in direct support of the 1st Brigade. The brigade is about to participate, as part of the division, in a river crossing.

3. The brigade commander states that the river crossing will be an offensive operation. It will be characterized by centralized control. There will be a pause to build up combat power and secure additional equipment. What type river crossing can you anticipate participating in?

A. Hasty
B. Deliberate
C. Retrograde
D. Defensive

4. In the initial phase of the crossing, your platoon has been tasked to establish several TCPs within the crossing area. You already are aware that your platoon would normally be under the operational control of the

A. provost marshal.
B. crossing force commander.
C. crossing force engineer.
D. crossing area commander.

5. The brigade commander states that he has learned that a corps MP company is being attached to the division for the operation. As his military police advisor, he asks you what support the brigade can expect from this company. You advise him that normally

A. the division PM will retain all of the corps MP assets.
B. the corps MP company will be used to perform area security and EPW missions.
C. one platoon of the corps MP company will probably be used to augment your platoon.
D. his information is incorrect. Corps MP units are never, or rarely, attached to the division.

6. During the discussion in the brigade TOC, you hear that there will be locations established to check the size and classification of vehicles before they cross the river. You know these are called

A. engineer regulating points.
B. traffic control posts.
C. highway regulating points.
D. weight classification stations.

7. You are seeking a document to assist you in planning your support to the brigade. You are looking for a document that contains a traffic circulation overlay and road movement table to allow for movement of all elements into and out of staging areas. You are looking for the

A. crossing plan annex.
B. road movement annex.
C. traffic circulation plan.
D. crossing schedule.

8. Waiting spaces near and within the crossing area to handle vehicles, should their be a sudden interruption to traffic, are called

A. staging areas.
B. vehicle parks.
C. regulating points.
D. holding areas.

9. The river crossing is normally considered as completed when

A. all divisional forces have completed crossing.
B. ordered by the division commander.
C. the bridgehead is secured.
D. the assault force has completed its crossing.

10. In a river crossing operation, your platoon is usually considered a part of which force?

A. Assault
B. Follow-up
C. Support
D. Combat service support

11. If you wanted to know the actions and responsibilities required if traffic gets ambushed or interdicted, you would asked to see the

A. traffic control annex.
B. crossing plan.
C. movement plan.
D. combat support annex.

12. An ERP is collocated in the crossing area with one of your TCPs. They have a vehicle that has a classification of 60. The bridge that is being used is class 50. They ask you to use your radio net to seek approval for the vehicle to cross. Who do you contact?

A. Crossing area commander
B. Provost marshal
C. Crossing force engineer
D. Highway traffic division

13. In the situation described in question 12, what type crossing would be required if it were to be approved?

A. Normal
B. Caution
C. Risk
D. Expedient

LESSON

PRACTICE EXERCISE

ANSWER KEY AND FEEDBACK

Item		Correct Answer and Feedback
1.	A.	Hasty. A hasty river... (page 1-5, para 3a).
2.	C.	No additional MP support. A hasty river... (page 1-5, para 3a).
3.	B.	Deliberate. Deliberate river... (page 1-5, para 3b).
4.	D.	Crossing area commander. The operations order... (page 1-9, para 4e).
5.	C.	One platoon of the corps MP company Usually, each... (page 1-12, para 6).
6.	A.	Engineer regulation points. Engineer personnel... (page 1-36, para 16f).
7.	B.	Road movement annex. The movement plan... (page 1-28, para 12b).
8.	D.	Holding areas. Holding areas... (page 1-35, para 16e).
9.	C.	The bridgehead is secured. In either case... (page 1-21, para 10a).
10.	C.	Support. Support forces... (page 1-7, para 7f).
11.	B.	Crossing plan. Actions and... (page 1-27, para 12).
12.	A.	Crossing area commander. The decision... (page 1-36, para 16f).
13.	B.	Caution. A caution... (page 1-36, para 16f).