
CHAPTER 7

Command and Control

The platoon leader uses the C² processes to ensure that his platoon accomplishes its missions. This chapter provides the TTP needed to command and control the platoon and make sound tactical decisions.

COMMAND AND SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

Command relationships can be operational control (OPCON) or attached. Support relationships can be DS or general support (GS). Both supporting and support parties must clearly understand what each of these mean (see *Table 6-2, page 6-8*). The following should be considered when using command and support relationships:

- When OPCON is used, the maneuver element—
 - Commands and controls the platoon.
 - Has the authority to place squads OPCON to companies/teams even though it is not considered advisable to do so with a mechanized platoon. Additionally, the TF cannot attach them to the company.
- When attached is used, the maneuver element—
 - Commands and controls the platoon except for limitations imposed by the attachment order.
 - Has responsibility for the platoon's logistics support except for personnel transfer and promotion.
- When DS is used—
 - The platoon receives its missions from the maneuver element.
 - The engineer company and the engineer battalion support and command the platoon.
 - The platoon works on the tasks that the maneuver element assigns.
 - The TF does not have the authority to split the platoon up and attach squads to companies/teams.
 - Logistics support for the platoon comes from engineer higher HQ.

- When GS is used, subordinate commanders must request support from the engineer commander on a task-by-task basis, and the senior commander sets priorities and assigns tasks to the GS unit. GS is seldom used at TF level. When an engineer commander wants to retain control over the engineers, they are retained in GS of maneuver forces.

The TF always provides the materials necessary to support engineer operations in its sector for offensive and defensive missions. This is a key logistics issue that must be understood at the start of any C² discussion. Even though the engineers determine requirements and use the material, supplying it remains a TF responsibility regardless of the command or support relationship (see *FM 5-100*).

COMMUNICATIONS

Engineers must operate on the following frequency modulated networks:

- TF.
- Platoon internal.
- Engineer company.
- Maneuver company/team.

Engineers have a two-net capability to support their communication requirements. In the DS or GS relationship, the engineer platoon should operate the first network on the engineer command network. The second network, the platoon's internal network, should be used to control the platoon's assets. In the attached or OPCON relationship, the engineer platoon should operate the first network on the engineer command network or supported maneuver company/team command network based on the task organization. The platoon leader uses his platoon's internal network to enter other networks for coordination and situation reporting. Before the platoon leader leaves his platoon's internal network, he must first hand over control of the network to the platoon sergeant to control the platoon's assets.

The platoon submits the following reports:

- Routine reports:
 - Commander's situation report (SITREP)—identifies changes to a unit's tactical situation.
 - Sensitive-items report—gives the results of a serial-number check on all sensitive items.
 - Supply-status report—informs the commander and staff of a subordinate unit's supply status.
 - Personnel-status report—is used to maintain the accountability and status of assigned and attached personnel and generate requests for replacements.

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- Maintenance-status report—provides information on the operational status of equipment and is used to generate requests for maintenance and parts.
 - Event-driven reports:
 - Spot report (SPOTREP)—identifies any known or suspected enemy activity.
 - Reconnaissance report—provides technical and tactical engineer data on a point/area target.
 - Countermobility report—gives the status of all obstacles.
 - Mobility report—gives the status and conditions of lanes, routes, bypasses, crossing sites, air lines of communication, as required, and ground lines of communication. It also includes status changes and the upgrade/downgrade of previously reported trafficability of locations/sites.
 - Survivability report—provides the detailed status of the unit's survivability level (for example, the number, type, and protective level (hull or turret) of positions).
 - Class IV/Class V special report—is used to keep track of critical engineer classes of supplies. For example, a platoon establishes a mine dump and keeps track of the types and quantities of mines available and the amounts issued.
 - Flash SITREP—is used to notify the next higher HQ when a subordinate unit becomes decisively engaged or has critical shortages that prevent mission accomplishment.
 - NBC report—is used to report NBC events.
 - Shelling report (SHELREP)—provides information on enemy indirect fire.
 - Enemy prisoner of war (EPW) report—is used to account for prisoners captured.
 - SCATMINE report—is used to notify affected units of the emplacement of SCATMINES.
 - Meaconing, intrusion, jamming, and interference (MIJI) report—is used to notify the Intelligence Officer (US Army) (S2) when the reception of radio signals is hindered, confused, or distorted by any external source or when instructions are received from a station that cannot authenticate.
 - Splash report—is used to report downed friendly aircraft.
 - Casualty report—identifies battle and nonbattle casualties to the parent unit and alerts medical-treatment facilities of incoming casualties.
 - Casualty-feeder report and witness-statement report—provide detailed eyewitness information on a casualty. They are used to account for casualties and provide administrative information for use in notifications and awards.

ENGINEER INTEGRATION

The company commander of a mechanized engineer company normally associated with a battalion/TF is also the staff engineer and advisor to the TF commander. Likewise, in a light TF, the staff engineer advisor to the TF commander is the light engineer platoon leader. The staff engineer integrates engineers into the TF's planning process. He coordinates with other BOS to ensure engineer synchronization. During the preparation of the battle, the staff engineer ensures that soldiers and equipment are in the correct location and on time for linkups and rehearsals. He then executes the engineer mission to support the operation. The platoon is the lowest level engineer unit that can still effectively accomplish independent tasks. The platoon usually operates under the control of an engineer company; however, it can be attached to a maneuver company/team.

The platoon leader must keep both the engineer company and maneuver company/team commanders informed on critical tasks. He must continuously forward and update tactical and technical information upward and laterally by all available means.

In heavy forces, the TF normally receives an engineer company in support, and the company commander is the TF engineer. In light forces and in some special situations in heavy forces, the TF only receives an engineer platoon, and the platoon leader is the TF engineer. When the platoon leader is acting as the TF engineer, he should consider the following information:

- Orders should include when and where the TOC is to be established. If the TOC is to be moved before the platoon arrives, this should also be included.
- Orders should identify an assembly area where the platoon can be consolidated.
- The entire platoon must **not** go to the TOC.

PLATOON LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Once the platoon leader arrives at the TOC, he should—

- Check in with the S3 or company commander and report the platoon's status and location and any problems.
- Provide the status of equipment and the number of soldiers to the operations noncommissioned officer (NCO).
- Obtain the TF's and the team's signal operation instructions (SOI) and enter the maneuver force's network.

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- Ensure that the communications equipment is set for the correct variable for secure operations and is compatible with the supported unit's communications equipment.
 - Check with the operations sergeant for any changes to routine or required reports and SOP items.
 - Be familiar with the TF SOP. **This is not the time to start studying the SOP.**
 - Provide the status of obstacles being constructed.
 - Check on format requirements for the periodic report. He should also check to see that TOC personnel are familiar with the reports being sent and know how to post them to their charts or overlays.
 - Determine if a specific individual at the TOC has been designated as an expeditor or overwatcher for engineers in the sector requiring assistance.
 - Provide any terrain, route, or other information acquired from the reconnaissance unit or personnel enroute to the S2 or company/team commander.
 - Obtain such information as the current enemy situation, weather and light data, and terrain details, to include topographic products, from the S2 or company/team commander.
 - Provide any priority intelligence requirements (PIR) or information requirements (IR) needed for upcoming operations to the S2 or company/team commander.
 - Stop at the combat trains and coordinate for classes of supplies and services when joining the maneuver force.
 - Obtain frequencies and call signs for the administrative and logistics net control stations (NCSs).
 - Provide a platoon roster and identify any critical shortages to the Adjutant (US Army) (S1) or operations sergeant.
 - Review the TF SOP for reporting and evacuating casualties.
 - Coordinate with the S4 or company/team 1SG and review the platoon's logistics status. The channel used for operational logistics for the platoon varies based on the command and support relationships.

NOTE: The platoon leader should remember that if a problem arises which will prevent the accomplishment of the mission or if normal channels are not working fast enough and logistics become an operational issue, the S3 or commander should be apprised of the problem.

As a minimum, the platoon leader must be present when the—

- Maneuver force receives the WO.
- Commander conducts reconnaissance.
- Commander makes and announces a decision and explains the intent.
- OPORD is received.

MANEUVER FORCE'S CONTROL

Normally, the platoon is kept under the engineer company's control and works for the battalion/TF commander. A major consideration in planning for the use of engineers is to maintain platoon integrity, keeping the entire platoon under the platoon leader's control. When maneuver forces are moving on two axes during mechanized offensive operations, the platoon will not place a part of the platoon on each axis. During the planning process, the engineer planner must weigh the main effort and determine which axis is critical to the mission and requires engineer assets. Placing an engineer NCO with the scout platoon when it is performing reconnaissance can help provide more specific information on the obstacles that the scouts find. Obstacle breaching can thus be preplanned. See *Appendix A* for basic formations, movement techniques, and hand-and-arm signals and *Appendix B* for checklists.

ENGINEER ATTACHMENTS

If the platoon has been augmented with AVLBs, they normally come in pairs. This is for both maintenance and tactical reasons. The AVLBs should be placed with the element that needs a gap-crossing capability. In the deliberate attack, AVLBs can be integrated individually into attack formations. Employment as a pair allows the squad leader to control them. If the AVLBs are not immediately required, they should be returned to the company's control. Curbs on the AVLB must be removed if M1 tanks with rollers are to cross the AVLB, and the roller's dog bone must be raised. If a CEV is attached to the platoon, it normally moves with the platoon.

Heavy equipment and wheeled vehicles should move with the platoon only on tactical road marches over good roads. During a movement to contact or over rougher terrain, METT-T determines where and what heavy equipment moves in the formation.