Normandy Virtual Staff Ride (VSR) Instructor Notes - Introduction

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Intent/Function of this Module: This overview is intended to be the first part of each of the other Neptune/Overlord VSR Modules provided by Army University Press. In short, this module provides the strategic and operational setting for the D-Day invasion and sets the stage for the more detailed modules that follow.

List of Stands

Stand 1. Germany First Agreement (Initial Allied Planning).

Stand 2. New Allied Plan.

Stand 3. Naval and Air Preparation, and Logistics.

Stand 4. German Defenses.

Administrative note: Yellow highlighted text refers to terrain movements.

Blue highlights refer to visuals.

Red highlights are informational comments or place holders for future information.

Text enclosed in a black box is background material and details for the instructor. Instructors should not present this material to students because of the need to keep the field phase of the VSR within a reasonable time limit.

The intent is for this module to be only 20 minutes (or less) and set up the other Neptune/Overlord modules that follow.

Stand 1 - Germany First Agreement (Initial Allied Planning)

Directions:

There is no virtual terrain in this Normandy module (Neptune Overview).

Visuals:

Visual 1-1: Northwest France, Invasion Areas, 1944
Visual 1-2: COSSAC, Original Invasion Plan

Orientation: Northwest France (done on visual/map only):

Visual 1-1: Northwest France, Invasion Areas, 1944

1. The Allies looked at multiple locations for possible landings on the French coast for their Cross-Channel invasion. Two of these locations were clearly the best.

   a. Pas de Calais. This was closest to England, but also the most heavily defended by the Germans.

   b. Normandy. This also included the Cotentin Peninsula.

   c. The limited beaches in the area between the two (north of Le Havre) were not suitable for amphibious operations.

2. The terrain in these areas was crucial to considerations for the invasion plan.

   a. Ports. The Allies wanted to obtain functioning ports as soon as possible to enable reinforcement and resupply of their forces.

      (1) Cherbourg was the best port in the area.

      (2) Le Havre and Calais were not as extensive, but still good port facilities.

      (3) Caen, Dieppe, and Boulogne were other, smaller ports.

   b. Other cities.

      (1) In Normandy: Varreville, Carentan, St. Lo, Vire, Falaise.

      (2) East and north of Normandy: Rouen, Eureux, Mantes, Abbeville.

c. Rivers.

(1) The Seine and Somme Rivers were the largest near Le Havre and Pas de Calais.

(2) The Dives and Orne Rivers were on the eastern side of Normandy.

(3) The Vire and Douve Rivers flowed out of a sandy estuary called the Bancs du Grand Vey. The rivers separated Normandy itself from the Cotentin Peninsula.

d. The Germans had an extensive railroads and roads in France (not shown on the map) that normally would allow for rapid reinforcement against any landing site.

(1) However, the Allies mounted an extensive bombing campaign for weeks prior to D-Day that devastated the transportation network.

(2) Eisenhower had faced opposition from the Allied air leaders who wanted to continue to conduct strategic bombing against German industry. However, Eisenhower demanded the bombing of the French transportation network and eventually won approval of his plan.

Description: Overall D-Day Plan.

1. Allied Meetings (Strategic Planning).

a. At the Arcadia Conference (22 Dec 1941 to 14 Jan 1942, in Washington, DC), Allied leaders, specifically Roosevelt and Churchill, agreed to a strategic focus on defeating Germany first (prioritizing the war in Europe over the war in the Pacific).

b. Despite this initial agreement, the US and Great Britain disagreed over when to launch an invasion of northwest Europe. With the British more inclined to delay.

c. At the Tehran Conference (22–26 Nov 1943), Roosevelt (with Churchill's agreement) named General Dwight D. Eisenhower as commander of the Allied cross-channel invasion force, and they committed to an attack date in the spring of 1944.

2. Chief of Staff Supreme Allied Command (COSSAC) Plan.

a. After the agreement of a Germany first policy, the Allied leaders created the position of COSSAC, under Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Morgan.

b. Morgan and his staff did extensive research and planning, and they concluded that the best invasion site was Normandy. There studies looked at many factors to include:

(1) German defenses. Normandy was less well defended than the Pas de Calais.

(2) Normandy was within range of Allied airpower (particularly fighters) in England.

(3) Though not as close to England as Pas de Calais, Normandy was a short distance from the English coast, easing the need for naval support and lessening the risk of German interference while at sea.

(4) COSSAC also did extensive studies of the German positions and obstacles, the beaches (sand and tides), other terrain considerations, the weather, and many other factors.

(5) This information was extremely valuable as the Allied planning progressed.

Visual 1-2: COSSAC, Original Invasion Plan

c. COSSAC developed an initial proposal for the invasion.

(1) The plan called for three Allied divisions (1 US and 2 British) to land on three beaches (later named as OMAHA, GOLD, and JUNO).

(2) These forces were to be supplemented by a small airborne contingent of roughly 2/3rd's of a British airborne division.

(3) The plan also laid out details of air and naval support.

d. Although the COSSAC plan underwent considerable changes, criticism of their efforts is often overstated.

(1) Morgan and his planners were given limits on the troops, transport ships, and transport aircraft that would be available for the assault. Later, Allied leaders allowed more time for the preparations and build-up of forces and transport.

(2) COSSAC's extensive research gave Eisenhower's and Montgomery's planners a great base on which to craft the new plan.

Analysis:

None at this stand.

Stand 2 – New Allied Plan

Directions:

There is no virtual terrain in this Normandy module (Neptune Overview).

Visuals:

Visual 2-1: Senior Allied Commanders Allied Expeditionary Force, D-Day, 6 June 1944
Visual 2-2: Neptune Plan, Allied Landing Beaches and Airborne Landings, 6 June 1944

Orientation: There is no orientation in this stand.

Description:

Visual 2-1: Senior Allied Commanders Allied Expeditionary Force, D-Day, 6 June 1944

1. Eisenhower and Montgomery take command.

   a. After the Tehran Conference, General Dwight D. Eisenhower became the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force—the leader of the Allied Normandy invasion.

   b. Eisenhower brought in his own staff from his command in North Africa and Sicily. He graciously integrated the COSSAC staff into his own.

   c. Eisenhower's ground commander for Neptune was a British commander that Eisenhower had also worked with in North Africa and Sicily, General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery.

2. The Allied leaders, particularly Montgomery, felt that the COSSAC invasion plan needed to be expanded.

   a. Expanding the landing area.

      (1) The greater the initial landing area, the harder for the Germans to destroy it or contain the subsequent breakout. Montgomery knew how well the Germans responded to the small lodgment areas at Salerno and Anzio in Italy.

      (2) To the east, the Allies added a beach (later dubbed SWORD) that not only widened the lodgment, it allowed the Allies to use the Orne River as its left flank protection.

      (3) To the west, the Allies added a beach (later called UTAH), which also expanded the beachhead, and of particular importance, was close to Cherbourg—a port that the Allies felt was essential for bringing supplies and reinforcements.

(4) Adding UTAH had many benefits (expanding the landing area, closer to a port), but it added risk because UTAH was separated from the other landing areas by the Douve and Vire Rivers.

b. Expanding the forces.

(1) Montgomery demanded additional US and British (and/or Canadian) divisions for the expanded landing area.

(2) This included two more divisions to land on the beaches and two additional US airborne divisions.

3. New Neptune plan.

a. Allied Command Structure.

(1) Eisenhower was the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force.

(2) The commander of the land forces (21st Army Group) was Montgomery. He commanded two armies:

(a) US 1st Army under Lieutenant General Omar N. Bradley.

(b) British 2nd Army under Lieutenant General Miles Dempsey.

(3) The commander of the naval forces (Commander-in-Chief, Allied Naval Expeditionary Force) was British Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsey. He commanded two naval task forces:

(a) The Western Naval Task Force (mostly US) under US Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk.

(b) The Eastern Naval Task Force (mostly British) under British Rear Admiral Sir Philip L. Vian.

(4) The commander of the air forces (Commander Allied Expeditionary Air Force) was British Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory.

(a) Unlike the ground and naval forces, the Allied airpower was not neatly divided into geographic areas.

(b) RAF Bomber Command and US Strategic Air Forces Command, Europe, focused on strategic bombing and the transportation campaign to isolate Normandy in the weeks before the landings.

(c) 2nd Tactical Air Force was a combined organization of US and British air units that specifically bombed beach defenses prior to the invasion.

(d) On D-Day itself, the US landings were to be supported with air bombardments and transport by US Army 8th Air Force at OMAHA and US Army 9th Air Force at UTAH.

Visual 2-2: Neptune Plan, Allied Landing Beaches and Airborne Landings, 6 June 1944

b. British forces and landings.

(1) 3rd British Infantry Division was to land at SWORD.

(2) 3rd Canadian Infantry Division was to land at JUNO.

(3) 50th British Infantry Division was to land at GOLD.

(4) Elements of British 6th Airborne Division were to land in areas behind SWORD beach.

(a) These forces were not landing as a division, but instead in smaller groups with specialized missions.

(b) They were to seize key bridges and neutralize a major German artillery position.

c. US forces and landings.

(1) Elements of 1st and 29th US Infantry Divisions were to land at OMAHA.

(2) A US Army Ranger force was to land at Pointe du Hoc to neutralize the German heavy guns there.

(3) 4th US Infantry Division was to land at UTAH.

(4) 101st US Airborne Division was to land west of UTAH beach to hold the exits to the beach causeways—enabling 4th Division and further reinforcements to advance inland.

(5) 82nd US Airborne Division was to land west of the 101st, gaining positions to ease the crossing of the Cotentin Peninsula and isolation of Cherbourg.

4. Allied Codenames and deception.

a. Operation Overlord was the name for the establishment of a large-scale lodgment on the Continent in northwest France and eventual advance into Germany.

b. Operation Neptune was the first phase of Overlord, the amphibious invasion and establishment of a secure foothold.

c. Under the Transport Plan, communications infrastructure and road and rail links were bombed to cut off the north of France and to make it more difficult for the Germans to deploy reinforcements. These attacks were widespread so as to avoid revealing the exact location of the invasion.

d. Operation Bodyguard and its sub-component, Fortitude, were the names of the deception plan that supported Overlord and Neptune.

(1) Operation Fortitude included Fortitude North, a misinformation campaign focusing the Germans into expecting an attack on Norway.

(2) Fortitude South was a major deception operation designed to fool the Germans into believing that the landings would take place at Pas de Calais.

(3) The Allies created a fictitious 1st US Army Group, supposedly located in Kent and Sussex under the command of Lieutenant General George S. Patton. To enhance the plan, the Allies constructed dummy tanks, trucks, and landing craft, and positioned them near the coast.

Visual 2-3: Allied Objectives: Overlord, June 1944

5. Allied Objectives.

a. The initial goal was to capture Carentan, Bayeux, and Caen. The landings at OMAHA would link the forces at UTAH with the British landings and enable a large and secure lodgment.

b. The American landings at UTAH, in conjunction with the airborne drops west of the beaches were to cut off the Cotentin Peninsula and capture the port facilities at Cherbourg.

c. The British at SWORD and GOLD, and the Canadians at JUNO, were to capture Caen and form a front line to the south-east of the city in order to protect the American flank. Possession of Caen and its surroundings was to give the Anglo-Canadian forces a staging area for an attack south to capture Falaise.

d. This secure lodgment would eventually allow the Allies to advance towards the Seine River and the heart of France.

6. A total of 156,115 men landed on D-Day.

a. This included 57,500 Americans and 75,215 British and Canadians from the sea.

b. 15,500 Americans and 7,900 British landed from the air.

Analysis:

None at this stand.

Stand 3 – Naval and Air Preparation, and Logistics

Directions:

There is no virtual terrain in this Normandy module (Neptune Overview).

Visuals:

Visual 3-1: Neptune Plan, Naval Operations, June 1944
Visual 3-2: Neptune Plan, Air Operations, June 1944

Orientation: There is no orientation in this stand.

Description:

Visual 3-1: Neptune Plan, Naval Operations, June 1944

1. Naval plans—roles and missions.

   a. First and foremost, the Allied naval forces had to deliver the ground troops to the beaches. This involved multiple craft designed to off-load both men and equipment.

   b. The troop and equipment movement needed to be guarded from the German Navy and Air Force (in reality, a small threat, but still a consideration)

   c. The Allied naval forces needed to breech the German anti-ship minefield in the English Channel.

   d. The Allied ships were to also provide a preliminary bombardment, and other fire support as needed on D-Day and after.

   e. The invasion fleet consisted of 6,939 vessels:

1,213 warships, 4,126 landing craft of various types, 736 ancillary craft, and 864 merchant vessels.

2. Naval support was divided into two commands.

   a. Eastern Naval Task Force was under British Rear Admiral Sir Philip L. Vian.

      (1) This force was to transport the British and Canadian troops to their beaches, clear the minefield and provide fire support.

      (2) Because the Normandy Virtual Staff Ride (VSR) focuses on the American efforts, there is no need to cover any details of this Task Force.

   b. Western Naval Task Force was under US Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk.

(1) Kirk's Task Force (TF) had the same missions as Vian's force: transport the American troops to their beaches, clear the minefield, and provide fire support on the beaches and inland as much as possible.

(2) Western Naval TF was composed of 3 separate forces.

(a) Force O under Rear Admiral John L. Hall, Jr. This force supported the American landings at OMAHA.

(b) Force U under Rear Admiral Don P. Moon, which supported the UTAH landings.

(c) Force B was the naval support for follow-on forces on D+1.

Visual 3-2: Neptune Plan, Air Operations, June 1944

3. As discussed before, Allied air support was divided into numerous commands and tasks in support of Overlord.

a. Long term air support began with Allied strategic bombing, mostly conducted by RAF Bomber Command and US Strategic Air Forces Command, Europe. While not directly related to Normandy, Allied strategic bombing gradually wore down German fighter defenses, giving the Allies control of the air over France.

b. As per Eisenhower's request, several weeks before D-Day, the strategic bombers shifted to the Transportation Plan—isolating Normandy by destroying the railway system that supported the Normandy area.

c. Closer to D-Day, 2nd Tactical Air Force, an ad hoc creation of US and British tactical fighters and bombers, attacked specific targets in the Normandy area.

d. On D-Day itself, each American beach was supported by different air commands with distinctly different air support capabilities.

(1) Air support at OMAHA Beach was provided US Army 8th Air Force. Their principal bombers were the B-24 Liberator—a strategic bomber used for high-level area bombing.

(a) 8th US Air Force was commanded by Lieutenant General Jimmy Doolittle.

(b) It consisted of VIII Air Force Composite Command (the bombers), VIII Air Force Fighter command, and VIII Air Force Service Command.

(2) Air support at UTAH was provided US Army 9th Air Force. They relied heavily on B-26 Marauder bombers for their operation—a smaller plane better suited to lower-level close air support.

(a) 9th Air Force was commanded by Lieutenant General Lewis H. Brereton.

(b) It consisted of IX Bomber Command, IX Fighter Command and IX Troop Carrier Command.

(c) IX Troop Carrier Command had the mission of delivering the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions to their drop zones.

4. Logistics.

a. Allied leaders understood the importance of logistics—not just to the initial landings but to the subsequent campaign.

b. In what some historians called “the battle of the build-up,” the Allies had to bring more combat reinforcements and supplies to Normandy at a faster rate than the Germans. The Allied Air Forces’ Transportation Plan was effective on limiting German movement of men and material.

c. For the Allies, port facilities were essential to off-load their own reinforcements and support.

d. After examining alternatives, the Allied planners made seizing Cherbourg as the major port to support their operations.

(1) Thus, a major mission of VII Corps was to take the port as soon as possible. Even so, the planners knew this might take time.

(2) In order to bring in the maximum of supplies and reinforcements—even without a major port—the Allies developed two artificial harbors (called Mulberries) for off-loading men and material.

(3) Both Mulberries were to be towed from England to France. One was to be deployed at OMAHA Beach for the US forces. The other at Arromanche for the British and Canadians.

Analysis:

None at this stand.

Stand 4 – German Defenses

Directions:

There is no virtual terrain in this Normandy module (Neptune Overview).

Visuals:

Visual 4-1: Senior German Commanders, D-Day, 6 June 1944
Visual 4-2: Northwest France, German Defenses, June 1944

Orientation: There is no orientation in this stand.

Description:

Visual 4-1: Senior German Commanders, D-Day, 6 June 1944

1. Overall German command structure.

   a. German Army Group B was commanded by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel.

      (1) Rommel's Army Group covered all of Northern France and Belgium.

      (2) It consisted of two armies: 7th and 15th.

   b. 15th Army was commanded by Colonel General Hans von Salmuth.

      (1) His army covered the Pas de Calais area all the way to Le Havre.

      (2) Due to Allied deceptive measures (as well the German leaders' own pre-dispositions), the Germans expected the Allied invasion to come in 15th Army's area.

   c. 7th Army was commanded by Colonel General Friedrich Dollmann.

      (1) Dollmann's Army defended Normandy to include the Cotentin Peninsula, as well as the Brittany Peninsula.

      (2) 7th Army had three corps:

         (a) LXXIV Corps in northern Brittany under General of the Infantry Erich Straube.

         (b) XXV Corps in southern Brittany under General of the Artillery Wilhelm Fahrmrbacher.

(c) LXXXIV Corps in Normandy and the Cotentin Peninsula under General of the Artillery Erich Marcks.

(3) Marcks' corps was responsible for the area of the Allied landings on 6 June.

d. The Commander of the German Navy's English Channel District was Admiral Friederich Rieve.

(1) He controlled a small group of vessels: mostly U-Boats (submarines) and S-Boats (somewhat similar to US PT Boats).

(2) Rieve's force had virtually no effect on the D-Day operations. However, several of his S-Boats inflicted heavy casualties on US forces during an exercise (Tiger) prior to D-Day in the waters off Slapton Sands, England.

e. The commander of the German Air Force's 3rd *Luftflotte* (responsible for air operations in France and the Low Countries) was Field Marshal Hugo Sperrle.

(1) Sperrle had virtually no bomber assets and extremely limited fighter planes. His forces had either been destroyed in the Allied bombing campaign or transferred to the Mediterranean Theater to oppose Allied operations there.

(2) Not surprisingly, the German Air Force played a negligible role in opposing the D-Day landings.

f. Adding to the German difficulties facing the Allied landings, their command relationships were often confused.

(1) The three service commanders (Rommel, Rieve, and Sperrle) were independent of each other—there was no joint German commander in charge of all services in France.

(2) Rommel's ground troops included German Air Force elements (paratroopers fighting as infantry and anti-aircraft soldiers) and German Navy elements (manning many of the largest coastal defense guns). While the Army commanders had operational control of these units, they were often logistically supported by their Air or Navy higher headquarters.

(3) Within the Army, control of panzer (tank) units was also convoluted.

(a) Rommel feared that Allied control of the air would negate German tank forces' effectiveness unless the panzer units were close to the beaches, to help defeat the Allies before they could secure a lodgment.

(b) Rommel's superior commander, Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, believed that the tank units should stay concentrated more to the rear. Then they could be committed to a counterattack after the Allies had

landed and push the Allies back into the sea.

(c) In the end, Hitler intervened with a compromise. Rommel got three panzer divisions, which he positioned near the beaches. Four more divisions were placed into reserve.

(d) To add to the complications, the four reserve panzer divisions could not be released without Hitler's personal permission.

Visual 4-2: Northwest France, German Defenses, June 1944

2. The Atlantic Wall.

a. The Atlantic Wall was a system of coastal defenses and fortifications built by Germany between 1942 and 1944, along the coast of continental Europe and Scandinavia as a defense against an anticipated Allied invasion.

b. The fortifications included coastal guns, batteries, mortars, and artillery, and tens of thousands of German troops (not including mobile German forces behind the "wall").

c. The concept of these fortifications was based on assumptions and facts that made a static defensive posture necessary.

(1) Germany was primarily committed to the fighting on the Eastern Front, which limited German strength—especially with mobile units—on the Western Front.

(2) With less capability for a mobile defense (most of Germany's mobile units were fighting in Russia), a static defense on the western coast was thought to be the best option.

(3) The Allies had command of the air and sea. Thus the Atlantic Wall had to be able to survive air and sea bombardment.

(4) This in turn led to the use of massive quantities of concrete and steel to build hardened defensive positions up and down the Atlantic coast. Ultimately, the Germans used 17 million cubic meters of concrete, as well as 1.2 million tons of steel in constructing the wall's positions.

d. The "wall" was actually a series of different defensive measures.

(1) The first priority was placed on port facilities. These were designated as "fortresses."

(a) The fortresses received the most extensive positions and the largest guns. Their garrisons had orders not to retreat and to defend to the last man.

(b) Cherbourg and Le Havre were the nearest fortresses in the Allied landing area.

(2) Between the fortresses, the Germans constructed less extensive, but in most cases, still substantial defenses.

(a) Many of these positions were known as *Widerstandsnest* (in English, resistance nests or strongpoints). In this staff ride, we will call these positions WN by the German abbreviation.

(b) These WN were a variety of positions, sometimes with substantial guns and concrete casemates, but sometimes small positions with only machine guns and minimal protection.

(c) All German positions on the beaches and at the ports were protected by extensive obstacles such as Belgium gates, hedgehogs, log traps, and other obstacle types.

(d) There were also many batteries and positions inland that supported the WN.

(e) The Germans placed some obstacles inland, mostly wooden poles and mines, to hinder Allied airborne landings.

(3) The Atlantic Wall was substantial, but certainly not complete. Rommel accelerated construction of the fortifications when he took command, but he could not make them impregnable.

3. German dispositions in the west (overall).

a. The German forces facing the Allies included a variety of unit types.

(1) German static divisions. These were infantry units with no transport. They manned many of the coastal WN, but were ill-equipped to move and respond to other threats.

(a) The static divisions were usually designated as grenadier units.

(b) They often included older German reservists and non-German troops recruited from the Eastern Front (called “Ost” troops).

(c) The Allies believed that the static divisions would be weaker than the usual German formations.

(2) German infantry divisions. These divisions had their own transport assets for support (they were not mechanized or motorized). This might mean cars, trucks, or horses.

(3) German parachute and paralanding (glider) units. At this point in the war, these units were fighting as infantry with no air transport available.

(4) German panzer (tank) units.

(5) To add to the mix, there were naval sailors manning some of the coastal guns.

b. As discussed earlier, Rommel commanded two armies: 7th and 15th.

c. 15th Army, under Salmuth, guarded the Pas de Calais area south to Le Havre.

(1) The Germans expected the Allied landings to take place in Pas de Calais.

(2) The major ports in this area were well fortified, and most panzer units were in the 15th Army's region (if not under their control due to Hitler's directive).

d. 7th Army, under Dollmann, defended Normandy, the Cotentin Peninsula, and the Brittany Peninsula.

(1) Two of his three corps were committed to the defense of Brittany.

(a) LXXIV Corps in northern Brittany under Straube and XXV Corps in southern Brittany under Fahrmrbacher.

(b) These corps had to cover a large area, however the German leaders correctly believed that it was unlikely that the Allies would chose Brittany for their initial invasion due to the long distance from English bases.

(2) Thus it was Marcks' LXXXIV Corps, in the Normandy-Cotentin area, that received most of Dollmann's and Rommel's attention.

Visual 4-3: German Dispositions, Marcks' LXXXIV Corps, June 1944

4. German dispositions, Marcks' LXXXIV Corps.

a. Marcks had one fortress in his area—Cherbourg. Another fortress (Le Havre) was relatively close but in the 15th Army region.

b. 243rd Infantry Division guarded the west side of the Cotentin Peninsula.

c. 709th Infantry (Grenadier) Division manned the eastern side of the Cotentin Peninsula.

(1) It was a static division that included some "Ost" units.

(2) This division manned most of the WN defenses in the UTAH area.

d. A relatively recent arrival to the region was 91st Paralanding Division.

    (1) Marcks placed this division in positions in the interior of the peninsula.

    (2) The Allies were concerned about the arrival of the 91st. It was considered an experienced and well-trained unit, and it was located close to many of the US airborne drop zones.

e. The only tank unit near UTAH Beach and the airborne drop zones was the 100th Training Battalion.

f. 6th Parachute Regiment was positioned southeast of Caretan.

g. The German 352 Infantry Division, another well-trained and veteran unit manned the area opposing the OMAHA Beach landings and most of the area at GOLD Beach.

h. 716th Grenadier Division, a static decision, held the defenses opposite JUNO and SWORD.

i. Probably the most powerful unit in the Normandy region, 21st Panzer Division, was located just south of Caen.

    (1) Rommel had control of this division (through XLVII Panzer Corps' headquarters).

    (2) This was the only division close enough to the beach area to have a potential effect on D-Day—but only in the British area.

5. Marcks had probably slightly more than 50,000 men to oppose the Allied D-Day landings.

Analysis:

If you are doing this module as an introduction to another Normandy module(s), and you want to save time, you can skip an analysis. However, if time permits you can ask:

Evaluate the Allied, particularly the American, planning for D-Day. What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the plan? What aspects of planning for an amphibious operation are still applicable today?