



Soldiers with 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th MI Brigade conduct air load operations at Fort Hood, Texas, March 10, 2019. The 163rd prepares to convoy as a part of their certification. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard, 504th Military Intelligence Brigade)

FM 3-0: Operations

A Selected Overview

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Field Manual (FM) 3-0: Operations, published October 2017, details how the Army will fight near-peer threats using current capabilities. Large-Scale Combat Operations (LSCO), after almost 20 years of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, is now re-invigorated and FM 3-0 prepares our Army culture to the possibility of near-peer large-scale combat. According to the Department of Defense, "Today, we are emerging from a period of strategic atrophy, aware that our competitive military advantage has been eroding" (Mattis, 2018, p. 1).

Twenty-first century LSCO will be joint and multinational. The threat of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) attacks are heightened. Near-peer adver-

saries have high-level cyber and electromagnetic spectrum (EMS) capabilities. The next major war is predicted to be multi-dimensional.

According to FM 3-0, "Large-scale combat operations are intense, lethal, and brutal. Their conditions include complexity, chaos, fear, violence, fatigue, and uncertainty" (Department of the Army, 2017b, p.1-1). This article examines six sections of FM 3.0 so that noncommissioned officers (NCOs) get an overview in preparation for the future.

Mission Command Philosophy

Arguably the most important concept for NCOs to understand is: *Mission Command*.

"Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity."

—Gen. George S. Patton, Jr.

(Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 1-19)

“Mission command requires an environment of mutual trust and shared understanding among commanders, staffs, and subordinates... Using mission orders, commanders focus their orders on the purpose of an operation rather than on the details of how to perform assigned tasks. Doing this minimizes detailed control and allows subordinates the greatest possible freedom of action.”
(Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 1-19)

Decisions need to be made and executed quickly. Mission command should cascade down the ranks through the NCOs to the formations at large. Trusting and empowering subordinates to act, within the commander's intent, is a force multiplier. In the dynamic environment of LSCO, self-reliance and aggressive action are key. Trusting a subordinate to plan and execute a mission

objective enhances efficiency and places the U.S. at an advantage against its near-peer rivals.

Cyberspace and the Electromagnetic Spectrum

Our cyberspace systems (Department of Defense information network (DODIN), internet, telecom networks, computers, and social media platforms) are at risk and may be reduced or eliminated in the future fight. *Electromagnetic spectrum* (EMS) attacks can affect defense systems, financial systems, and power grids. According to *Forbes*, a serious attack could wipe out entire infrastructures that the U.S. has come to rely on (Pandya, 2019).

In *FM 3-0*, "Cyberspace is highly vulnerable for several reasons, including ease of access, network and software complexity, lack of security considerations in network design and software development, and inappropriate user activity" (Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 1-7).

LSCO requires Soldiers to turn off equipment to limit the electronic signature and obstruct the target acquisition capabilities of enemies. NCOs will be enforcing strict security protocols to counter EMS attacks. An accidental phone call or social media post could alert enemies to your location.

"In order to combat a degraded EMS environment, troops should possess competent land navigation skills."

—Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Kiely



A group of 173rd Airborne Brigade paratroopers fire an M240 Bravo machine gun at enemy forces on the objective during Exercise Immediate Response at Vojarna Josip Jovic Airbase, Udbina, Croatia, May 16, 2019. Exercise Immediate Response is a multinational exercise co-led by Croatian Armed Forces, Slovenian Armed Forces, and U.S. Army Europe. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Austin Berner)

In order to combat a degraded EMS environment, especially one without global positioning systems, troops should possess competent land navigation skills. According to *FM 3-0*, "Enemies able to contest the cyberspace domain can disrupt the mission command and targeting process for friendly artillery units. To prevent this, units require training in analog methods of employment" (Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 2-61).

CBRN

Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) warfare is enticing to adversaries because it is inexpensive, does not destroy buildings and infrastructure, and entails less risk than sending in troops. Eliminating chemical depots and delivery systems are deep operational goals of U.S. and joint forces (Department of the Army, 2017a).

According to the *U.S. National Library of Medicine*, "Chemical weapons are inexpensive and are relatively easy to produce, even by



A group of Army Reserve Soldiers from the 327th Chemical Company, 92nd Chemical Battalion, 415th Chemical Brigade, 76th Operational Response Command enter a tunnel to conduct reconnaissance of a suspected chemical weapons cache during a training exercise at Dugway Proving Ground, Utah, June 20, 2019. The exercise is designed to be the premiere CBRN validation event for Army Reserve units, and serve as the culminating training event for premobilization and top tier priority units. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brent C. Powell)

small terrorist groups, to create mass casualties with small quantities" (Ganesan, Raza, & Vjayaraghavan, 2010, para. 1).

In *FM 3-0*, "All units have an inherent responsibility to improve the survivability of their own fighting positions, bases, or base camps. This includes preparation for operations in a CBRN environment, which requires planning for immediate or operational decontamination" (Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 6-26).

Beyond basic survivability operations, *FM 3-0* recommends the following strategies to increase unit survivability:

1. Force Dispersion
2. Redundancy
3. Leadership
4. Discipline
5. Mobility
6. Situational Understanding
7. Terrain Management
8. CBRN Planning

(Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 2-51)

Familiarity with these specific unit capabilities streamlines formations and increases survivability should a CBRN attack occur.

Multinational Force Interoperability

Multinational force interoperability (MFI), the ability of military equipment or groups to operate in conjunction with each other, is a mainstay of U.S. forces. This entails working and fighting alongside unified action

partners. Allies and friends, even short-term partnerships, bring deterrence and credibility to the U.S.'s increasingly multinational force. According to *FM 3-0*, "Shape activities are executed continuously with the intent of enhancing international legitimacy and gaining multinational cooperation by shaping perceptions and influencing adversaries' and allies' behavior" (Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 1-13).

However, MFI is not just confined to shaping operations. Besides bringing influence and access, they provide battlefield capabilities that complement the military's force structure. An example of MFI in action is Tobruq Legacy 2019, a joint exercise recently completed in Poland. According to *Army.mil*, "The goal for the exercise is to work side-by-side with partner nations and find a way to utilize all of the technology and fire power available..." (Minor, 2019, para. 7).

Movement to Contact Operations

Movement to contact operations is frequent in LSCO operations. In recent history, the U.S. has enjoyed full implementation of considerable aerial and digital intelligence gathering systems. Near-peer threats will severely restrict this capability via denied, degraded, and disrupted space operational environments. According to *FM 3-0*:

“Peer threats have capabilities that can contest the space domain and attack the on-orbit, link, and terrestrial segments of U.S. satellite communications; positioning, navigation, and timing; missile warning; environmental weather; and space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance efforts. These attacks may have significant impacts across all warfighting functions, and they may significantly disrupt timelines and resources expended to accomplish the mission. (Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 4-24).”

This reduced battlefield intelligence will necessitate movement to contact operations to find the enemy and develop the situation. With this in mind, NCOs must be familiar with all unit tactics.

For example, they must know the difference between a tactical road march and an approach march. Or that if artillery units fall behind the ground elements it's better to supplement the ground elements with close air support rather than slow the advance. Or that "a corps or division commander should never commit the main body to canalizing terrain before forward security elements have advanced far enough to ensure that the main body will not become fixed within that terrain" (Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 7-39).



Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, the chief of the U.S. Army Reserve and the commanding general of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, speaks with Soldiers from several nations during exercise Maple Resolve in Camp Wainwright, Alberta, Canada, May 19, 2019. Maple Resolve is an annual exercise hosted by the Canadian Army bringing NATO allies together from across the world to share and learn tactics while strengthening foreign military ties. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. Stephanie Ramirez)

NCOs must know the procedures for the security force, the main body, control measures, task-organization, etc. in order to utilize mission command to complete objectives.

Stability Tasks

Consolidating gains is a new chapter in the field manual. The concept of rebuilding the foreign government and key infrastructures is a key to enduring success. How the Army executes missions and interacts with local populations and host-nation forces will influence how indigenous people view Soldiers.

In *Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0*, "Commanders are legally required to provide minimum-es-

sential stability tasks when controlling populated areas of operations. These essential services provide minimal levels of security, food, water, shelter, and medical treatment" (Department of the Army, 2017a, p. 3-4).

Without the acceptance of the population, the military's success will be void of any lasting resolution as new threats will simply take the place of the old ones once the military leaves the area of operations.

Conclusion

As the focus on COIN operations shifts to a LSCO-oriented mindset to prepare for near-peer threats, *FM 3-0* is the current doctrine that instructs Soldiers to develop training and tactics with the future battlefield in mind. ■

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