CHAPTER 5

METHODS OF TASKING RECONNAISSANCE AND SURVEILLANCE ASSETS

The S3 is responsible for and has tasking authority over maneuver elements. The S2 makes tasking recommendations to the commander or S3. The S2 is the primary user of the scouts and, many times, the S2 actually tasks them. In some units the S2 has tasking authority over R&S assets after the commander and the S3 approve the R&S plan. Every unit has its own SOP regarding R&S responsibilities.

Normally, you can consider the commanders approval of the R&S plan as granting tasking authority. Many times the S3 does not have time to prepare and publish separate R&S missions, so the S2 does it. Once the S2, after coordinating closely with the S3, has completed writing the formal plan, it is sent to the commander for approval. Once the commander signs the fragmentary order (FRAGO) or warning order, the taskings within it become missions ordered by the commander, regardless of who actually wrote it.

Another way to publish the missions and taskings of the R&S plan is to print it in the subordinate unit instructions within the unit OPORD. While not as timely as FRAGOs or warning orders, unit instructions still let everyone know what you expect of them during the R&S operations.

Figure 5-1 shows a sample R&S tasking with subordinate unit instructions. Maneuver battalions can also use this method when it is tailored to their level.

Probably the quickest way to issue R&S orders is to have the S3 issue them when issuing the warning order to the unit. This method ensures the tasked assets know it is a formal tasking coming from the commander. Both the S2 and S3 plan the R&S operation; however, the S3 continues to have the responsibility of actually tasking assets.

A formal method of tasking assets for R&S operations is an intelligence annex to the OPORD. The intelligence annex is a formal intelligence tasking document accompanying an OPORD or an operations plan (OPLAN). Paragraph 2, Priority Intelligence Requirements, and paragraph 3, Intelligence Acquisition Tasks, inform all assets what the focus of the R&S plan is and what mission each asset is to conduct. The

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3. Subordinate Unit Instructions

b. TF 1-6:

(1) Establish contact point 1 and assist passage of covering force elements through the FEBA.

(2) Defend in sector from NT888777 to NT666555 NLT 181500U JAN94.

(3) Establish surveillance sites along Route TOM and HARRY to provide early warning of enemy flank attack NLT 181500U JAN94.

(4) Send CR patrols along the FIBEL river and the DICKEL ridge line NLT 181600U JAN94 to confirm or deny the presence of enemy reconnaissance patrols.

c. TF 1-68:

(1) Establish contact point 2 and assist passage of covering force elements through the FEBA.

(2) Defend in sector from NS666444 to NS333222 NLT 181500U JAN94.

(3) Establish screen along the east side of the NEILSON AQUADUCT NLT 181500U JAN94. Establish surveillance positions near the intersection of AUBOBAHN 67 and 4 to provide early warning of enemy reinforcements.

(4) Send a CR patrol in the forests southeast of KIBBLESNBITS capable of destroying a reinforced BMP Company NLT 181700U JAN94 to destroy enemy reconnaissance units.

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Figure 5-1. Sample R&S tasking with subordinate unit instructions.

S2 is responsible for the intelligence annex. Again, before distribution, the S2 coordinates the intelligence annex with the commander and S3 for their approval.

Figure 5-2 is a sample R&S tasking. Maneuver battalions can also use this method, but would tailor it to their level.

The R&S tasking matrix is another method of tasking R&S assets. (See Appendix A.) Distribution can be--

o Directly to the tasked asset.

o Attached to the subordinate unit instructions of the OPORD.

o Attached to the intelligence annex.

Once tasked, the assets must understand their mission. During the mission briefing for the assets, use as many of the IPB products as possible. Each product serves a particular purpose:

o The modified combined obstacles overlay (MCOO) reveals terrain constraints.

o Photographs show terrain features.

o Enemy situation templates provide a picture of the enemy's location and probable COA.

o Event templates indicate where and when the enemy can maneuver.

o NAI on the event template show target locations.

o The DST provides a picture of the overall friendly scheme of maneuver and warns the R&S assets of any friendly fires in their vicinity.

Once the assets have an understanding of the enemy and terrain, they can receive detailed mission instructions. It does not matter if you or the S3 give this briefing, just as long as the assets understand their mission. If possible, the S2, S3, and FSO should be involved in this briefing.

Each asset should understand what the commander wants it to accomplish. Give the assets the big picture, then direct them to their specific roles and how they are to support the overall mission.

You can see the extensive time required to plan R&S operations. In most units there is not enough time to go into a lot of mission-specific detailed planning before the assets are deployed. R&S operations must begin as soon as possible after the unit receives the warning order or OPORD. If this is the case, assets can be sent out after you and the S3 have developed the rough draft R&S plan. Later, as you and the other staff officers refine the R&S plan, you can adjust the assets and their instructions.

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ANNEX B (Intelligence) to OPORD 19...

REFERENCES: Map sheets

TIME ZONE: U

3. Intelligence acquisition tasks.

a. TF 1-6:

(1) Establish surveillance sites along routes TOM and HARRY to provide early warning of enemy flank attack NLT 181500U JAN94.

(2) Send CR patrols along the FIBEL river and the DICKEL ridge line NLT 181600U JAN94 to confirm or deny the presence of enemy recon elements.

b. TF 1-68:

(1) Establish screen along the east side of the NEILSON AQUADUCT NLT 181500U JAN94. Establish surveillance positions near the intersection of AUTOBAHN 67 and 4 to provide early warning of enemy reinforcements.

(2) Send a CR patrol in the forests southeast of KIBBLESNBITS capable of destroying a reinforced BMP Company NLT 181700U JAN94.

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Figure 5-2. Sample R&S tasking in the intelligence annex to the OPORD.