

## Chapter 3

# OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

This chapter provides some examples of how the AASLT division integrates and synchronizes organic and supporting combat, CS, and CSS assets to conduct offensive operations. The AASLT division supports the corps or JTF commander's intent and concept of operations as part of a corps or JTF operation.

Corps, divisions, and brigades use a variety of tactics and techniques to execute offensive operations. The tactics and techniques in this chapter suggest how the AASLT division might conduct operations.

## FUNDAMENTALS

### Offensive Maneuver

There are five forms of offensive maneuver: envelopment, turning movement, penetration, frontal attack, and infiltration. They orient on the enemy force, not the terrain. The AASLT division conducts all five forms of maneuver.

The commander selects the best form of maneuver for achieving his purpose. Forms of maneuver and forms of offensive operations complement one another.

An *envelopment* causes the enemy to simultaneously fight in two or more directions to meet converging attacks. It avoids the enemy's main defensive strength by attacking from his flanks or, preferably, his rear.

The AASLT division's cross-FLOT operations may be thought of as a "vertical" envelopment. Air assaults and raids over the hostile front help secure and attack objectives in the enemy's rear, cutting his LOC and escape routes.

Supporting attacks, by brigades not air assaulting or by other corps forces, fix the enemy in position as the envelopment proceeds. The division may assist in a corps double envelopment to pocket an enemy force. At least one axis must be a ground attack because an aerial double envelopment would not necessarily disrupt the coherence of an enemy's defensive scheme.

The AASLT division cannot conduct an aerial double envelopment without substantial assault and medium assault reinforcements from the corps or JTF. Against a weakened foe, one brigade might air assault while another infiltrates overland, but this would be an exception.

The *turning movement* goes deep to secure vital areas far in the opponent's rear to cause him to turn and fight or face destruction. The division participates in a turning movement as part of a larger force. If combined with a strong penetration attempt at the FLOT, a turning movement would compel the enemy to fight in two directions at once.

Turning movements generally involve entire corps. The AASLT division could execute such a maneuver by seizing an FOB and then rapidly sending in the division's remaining brigades in sequence over the next 48 hours to expand the threat to the enemy's rear.

In the *penetration*, the AASLT division attacks through the enemy's principal defensive position to divide the enemy force and allow it to be defeated in detail. Once a penetration occurs, the division exploits it out to its maximum range of operations.

The AASLT division can contribute to a corps penetration in two ways. It can mass organic aviation fires and provide flexible task forces to rapidly exploit the gap created during the penetration.

Commanders use penetration when enemy flanks are not assailable. To penetrate a dug-in enemy, the AASLT division could commit one brigade to a dismounted deliberate attack to rupture the enemy line at a weak spot.

As soon as the breach occurs, the second brigade, or preferably an OPCON armored brigade, would push through on the ground. Simultaneously, the other brigade might air assault deep to complete the collapse of enemy defenses—a process aided by deep attack aviation raids.

When employing an AASLT force, a penetration represents a less desirable form of maneuver than an envelopment. A penetration commits soldiers and units trained and outfitted for cross-FLOT

operations into potentially costly front-line engagements better conducted by mechanized forces. The same lightness that allows AASLT formations to go deep and destroy enemy rear echelon elements proves a liability in close combat against fortified positions.

Forcing a rupture to break the enemy at the front and to spring loose a ground convoy to open a main supply route (MSR) to the airhead certainly argues for OPCON of an armored or mechanized brigade. This especially applies if the corps wants the AASLT division to make a doctrinal ground penetration.

The *frontal attack* engages the enemy in more or less equal strength along the LC. The division frontal attack is the least desirable form of maneuver. It serves as a useful supporting effort if begun simultaneously with a deep air assault. Unlike an actual penetration, an AASLT brigade can mount a credible frontal attack to fix opposing forces along the FLOT.

*Infiltration* is the covert movement of all or part of the attacking force through enemy lines to an objective in their rear. Small groups or individuals move by stealth through enemy defensive belts over a period of time and normally under cover of darkness. They then assemble in predesignated spots behind the enemy's front lines. Infiltrations—

- Put surveillance teams and pathfinders in place.
- Secure possible LZs and FARPs.
- Raid enemy AD sites to open air corridors.
- Position aviation-delivered artillery batteries.
- Seize flight landing strips to create “instant” FOBs.
- Secure choke points along future MSRs.

The AASLT division as a whole does not infiltrate. Infiltrations in the AASLT division work best as supporting attacks timed to coincide with simultaneous cross-FLOT operations.

### Tactical Offense

The four general forms of the tactical offense are movement to contact, attack, exploitation, and pursuit. While it is convenient to talk of them as

different forms, in reality they may flow readily from one to the other.

Different forms of attack simultaneously occur throughout the depth of the battlefield. An attack may lead to exploitation, and exploitation can lead to pursuit. But there are often occasions when a deliberate attack can either follow a pursuit or lead directly to pursuit.

The ebb and flow of battle opens many avenues for attack. Victory normally goes to the bold and eludes commanders who can only see parts of the combat instead of the whole.

The primary focus of division offensive deep operations is to interdict by delaying, disrupting, or diverting enemy division reserves (battalion- or regimental-size counterattack forces). It then shifts to enemy units defending in depth.

The AASLT division effectively conducts cross-FLOT deep operations. When the AASLT division conducts deep operations it frequently receives corps or JTF augmentation of combat, CS, and/or CSS assets.

The following paragraphs portray the AASLT division conducting an air assault and deliberate attack. See Chapter 4 for an expanded discussion.

### Offensive Framework

In the offense, all types of Army divisions simultaneously perform three operations in depth—deep, close, and rear. Deep operations focus on attacking key enemy assets or centers of gravity. Close operations, featuring main and supporting attacks, close with and destroy the enemy and/or secure terrain. Rear operations sustain offensive momentum and ensure freedom of action.

Synchronizing these three types of operations creates high-tempo operations that present the enemy with one continuous operation. To best mesh these operations, the AASLT division should play key deep, close, or rear operations roles, based on its inherent capabilities and limitations, in the corps or JTF framework. It then organizes its own offensive battlefield to best support the higher units' maneuver.

### **The Division in a Corps Offensive**

As the corps or JTF commander marshals forces for battle, he considers how best to employ the AASLT division. In a corps or JTF offensive, an AASLT division can effectively conduct corps deep operations.

The division may attack targets well behind enemy lines. When the corps or JTF does not plan a ground linkup, the preferred method is a raid. An air assault to seize a choke point, create a blocking position, or engage and destroy enemy reserves offer chances for the corps or JTF commander to extend the battlefield to operational depth.

Placing an FOB in the opponent's rear echelon, and subsequently conducting offensive operations from this location, confronts the foe with a series of raids and air assaults throughout the expanse of his terrain. Doing so endangers the foe's MSRs and movement of reinforcements.

In corps close operations, the AASLT division conducts either main or supporting attacks at a given time. Because of lift constraints imposed by the numbers of organic aircraft, the division can only commit a three-battalion maneuver brigade and a three-battalion attack aviation effort during a 24-hour period.

This constraint usually suffices for a corps supporting attack and, if aimed at a decisive spot in space and time, could well serve as the corps' main attack. If employed as the main attack, the corps or JTF should augment the AASLT division with additional assault, medium assault, and attack aviation to increase the amount of force projected cross-FLOT.

In rear operations, the AASLT division dominates large areas with highly responsive AATFs and attack aviation forces. The division offers the corps or JTF commander an organization well suited for search and attack operations against enemy unconventional elements and local insurgents. When he elects to employ the division in rear operations, the corps or JTF commander needs to carefully weigh whether he can afford to commit such a powerful entity to the rear area.

Because of its large aviation complement, the AASLT division can reconnoiter and secure large areas. It might screen the corps flank, perform offensive covering force missions, or carry out

large-scale deceptions to conceal other corps operations and to keep the enemy at bay. The division conducts raids and air assaults to carry out these tasks, but it also employs its sizable infantry strength to secure critical sites in the corps or JTF rear.

If used as the corps reserve, the AASLT division offers the corps or JTF commander maximum flexibility. It can join the battle at great range and high speed, with no terrain limitations. However, adverse weather limits these advantages and severely restricts AASLT division activities.

The commander needs to avoid sending the AASLT division into action piecemeal. The temptation may arise to split out attack aviation, air cavalry, assault and medium assault aircraft, and AATFs on a variety of supporting missions throughout the deep, close, and rear battlefield. Doing so would dissipate a force that fights best as a concentrated force. The sum of the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The corps or JTF must consider the time required to reorganize, assemble, and recreate the division's AATFs to permit maximum effort cross-FLOT raids and air assaults.

### **The Air Assault Division Offensive**

While METT-T assessments determine the exact apportionment of forces for deep, close, and rear operations, the AASLT division displays some consistent patterns in organizing for combat. The ability to air assault one combined-arms brigade equivalent every 24 hours affects the allocation of combat power.

The aviation brigade plays a major role in deep operations, with DIVARTY working closely to provide responsive fire support, especially SEAD. Combined-arms forces up to brigade strength may raid and attack into the deep zone. Deep operations set the conditions for immediate and violent transition into close operations in the same geographical area.

Before the division's deep air assault, the division FSE conducts targeting-cell meetings to coordinate the destruction of enemy assets that could influence the division's operation. The division commander issues his guidance and establishes the amount of risk he is willing to accept.

The targeting cell then establishes the targets for attack. When the commander issues his guidance,

the division battle staff and appropriate supporting arms (the FSE, G2, aviation brigade, and ALO) select and nominate targets for attack by both Army and joint assets.

Commander's guidance, METT-T factors, and enemy capabilities determine the conditions that must be set before the deep air assault. There are certain enemy assets the targeting cells usually address, including—

- Enemy ADA systems (radar guided that can influence the division's ingress and egress air routes into the objective).
- Fire support assets (rocket and tube artillery that can range, mass, and deliver large observed volumes of fire on the objective).
- Enemy armored or mobile reserves that can reach the objective within an established time limit of troops landing on the objective.

The division determines whether targets are selected for destruction, neutralization, or suppression. The division uses all available fire support assets, especially organic attack helicopters and joint assets, to deliver precision strikes on targets. Organic and reinforcing artillery use multiple-launch rocket systems (MLRS) and Army tactical missile systems (ATACMS) in conjunction with electronic warfare to defeat targets.

METT-T factors determine the amount of time the division needs to conduct condition-setting, which begins from 48 to 72 hours before conducting the deep air assault. The division attacks targets and collects battle damage assessments (BDA) to determine how well the conditions are set.

If conditions are properly set by the established time limit, the force conducts the deep air assault. If a commander feels that conditions are not set according to his guidance, he must decide whether to extend the condition-setting process or to select an alternate COA.

Maneuver brigades normally conduct close operations for the AASLT division. One brigade delivers the main attack, which is almost always a division-controlled, brigade-scaled, cross-FLOT air assault. Another brigade conducts a supporting attack, using either limited aviation means or, perhaps, ground infiltration. Under certain circumstances in the offense, attack aviation might make

the main attack or raid in a supporting effort, but they prefer to fight deep.

Since rear operations must keep vulnerable aviation assembly areas, CPs, and logistic sites free from threats, the division may devote up to a brigade for this role. Usually, a battalion TF, often augmented from the command aviation battalion for lift and the cavalry squadron for aerial firepower, carries out divisional rear operations when resources are particularly constrained. An assault battalion could be given an on-order mission to assist in this operation.

The AASLT division designates up to one brigade as a reserve and places it in a PZ posture for commitment as required. If the rear threat is enough to require the division to commit a brigade, and the division has already committed the other two maneuver brigades to close operations, the division may accept the risk of having no reserve or only a small one (perhaps an understrength battalion TF).

Under an optimum situation, the AASLT division operates from a corps or JTF reserve assembly area until committed to an assigned zone. The division does not occupy ground at the LC, or if it does, it only holds a narrow frontage to facilitate a ground attack to link up with the eventual airhead the division will form. Division attack aviation and DIVARTY fight deep to prepare conditions for the main air assault.

One brigade may air assault cross-FLOT to a FOB while the aviation brigade expands outward from the FOB to erect an outer ring. Meanwhile, another brigade secures vulnerable rear areas. The air cavalry screens as far forward as possible to identify alerted hostile reserves. Finally, a third AASLT brigade waits in PZ posture ready to stage forward and launch follow-on deep operations within the next 24 hours (Figure 3-1).

The AASLT division may employ two brigades forward in separate FOBs. When they do this in order to provide an outer ring for both, they will need attack helicopter battalion augmentation. The division's aviation brigade may not always have the outer ring mission. If attack helicopter battalions are placed OPCON to each forward AASLT brigade, this attack helicopter battalion augmentation's importance increases.

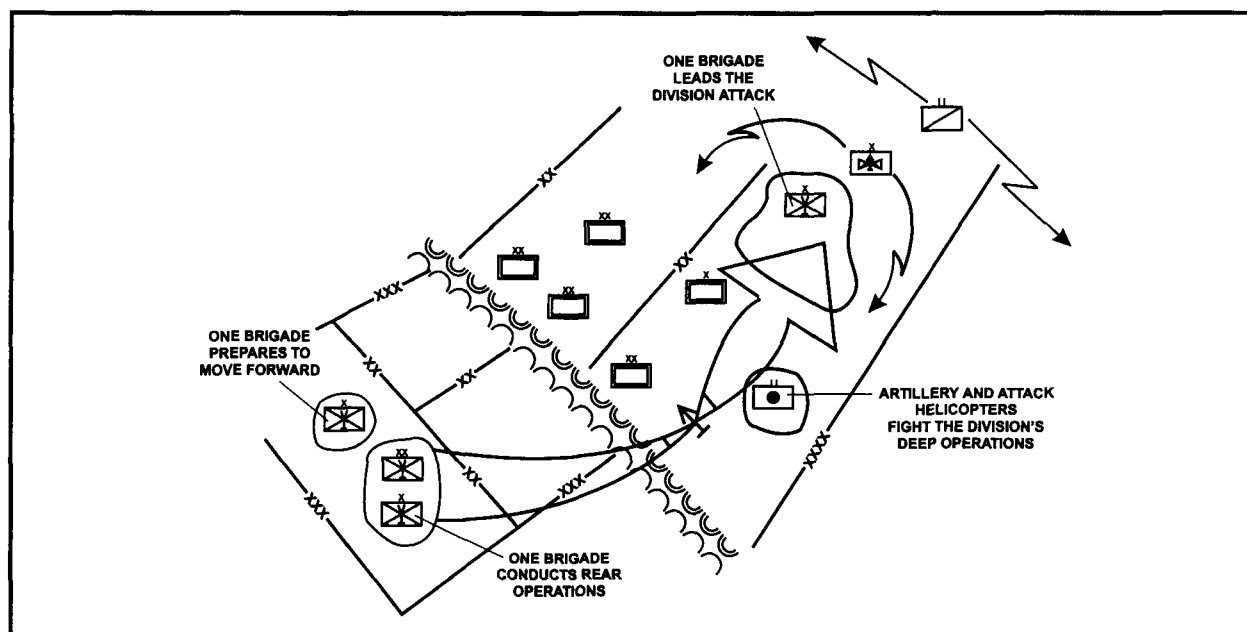


Figure 3-1. Air assault division employment

## THE DELIBERATE ATTACK

The AASLT division normally conducts ground offensive operations in restricted terrain. It conducts a deliberate attack as part of a corps operation to seize key terrain and/or destroy enemy forces. It attacks with surprise and violence to destroy the enemy's center of gravity.

A deliberate attack endeavors to overcome strong enemy forces in established positions. Characteristically, deliberate attacks rely on thorough planning and reconnaissance, massive fire support, and large concentrations of maneuver combat power. All of these are designed to break the enemy at the FLOT and setup a penetration or envelopment.

Casualties may be high when friendly units fight through. Therefore, Army armored divisions attempt to maintain momentum by movements to contact and hasty attacks that transition directly to pursuit.

The AASLT division prefers the deliberate attack to the hasty attack. The division's daily cross-FLOT operations reflect all of the traits of a deliberate attack, except one. The AASLT division does not concentrate especially large maneuver forces to punch through at the FLOT. Instead it overflies it to gain positional leverage in the enemy rear. This maneuver avoids the many losses normally

associated with trying to break through a dug-in, opposing army.

The AASLT division normally moves by deliberate aerial cross-FLOT bounds. Its deliberate-attack cycle (battle rhythm) permits H-hour about 48 hours after mission receipt.

The following example shows just one way the AASLT division maybe employed. METT-T factors always guide the final decision.

The example shows the corps conducting a successful defense and preparing to transition to the offense. The corps commander estimates a widely dispersed enemy at from 40 to 60 percent strength.

Rugged terrain is immediately to the corps' front, causing difficulty for maneuvering heavy units. The outer ring is a deep operation for the division and is controlled by the main CP.

An extensive corps intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) determines the feasibility of using the AASLT division. During the IPB process, the staff locates enemy forces, analyzes terrain, and conducts a risk assessment.

The corps provides IPB products to the AASLT division during the plans development process. The corps directs the AASLT division to conduct AASLT operations over the rugged terrain.

The corps commander's concept for attack is to use AASLT infantry in a turning movement (Figure 3-2). This would force the enemy to fight in two directions. The AASLT division would seize key choke points (objectives FOX and WOLF) and the river crossing site (objective DOG).

The corps would penetrate enemy defenses with in-place defending mechanized divisions, then attack with the corps reserve (an armored division) to seize objective SNAKE. The AASLT division would continue to hold and expand the objective over a 48-hour period.

Following the armored division attack, the AASLT division conducts consolidation and reorganization operations. It then prepares to conduct follow-on AASLT operations to assist the corps' offensive operation. Or, if directed, it conducts operations to secure corps MSRs from the line of departure (LD) or LC to objective DOG.

This operation is a five-phase corps operation. In phase one, in-place divisions continue to defend, conduct aggressive patrolling, and perform counter-reconnaissance operations. The AASLT division moves to PZs in preparation for the attack. One brigade's mission initially is the division reserve.

In phase two, the two brigades air assault cross-FLOT to secure objectives FOX and WOLF (Figure

3-3). The third brigade is the division reserve and continues to prepare for commitment to secure objective DOG as the division continues to support the operation and expand the objective area.

In phase three, in-place divisions attack to penetrate the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA) and create a gap to pass the lead armored division for the attack on the corps objective (Figure 3-4). Simultaneously, the first two AASLT brigades (now dismounted infantry) attack to secure dominant terrain and choke points at objectives FOX and WOLF while the division's attack helicopters conduct a supporting attack deeper into the enemy's rear area.

In phase four, the armored division attacks through the gap created in the FEBA by the in-place divisions, conducts link-up, and passes through choke points secured by the infantry (Figure 3-5). As the armored division reaches phase line (PL) BLUE, the AASLT division continues to support the operation at objectives FOX and WOLF, seizes the river crossing site at objective DOG, and prepares to pass the armored division through the river crossing passage point.

In phase five, the armored division conducts a link-up operation with the AASLT division, conducts the river crossing, then attacks to seize the corps objective (Figure 3-6). The corps may tell the

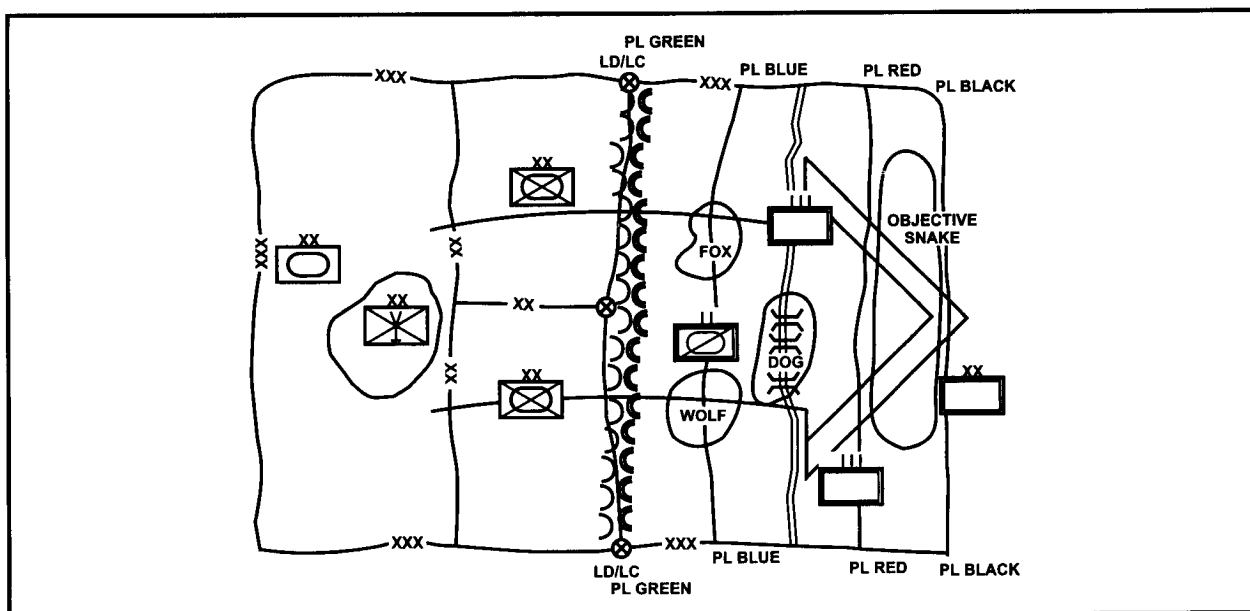


Figure 3-2. The corps concept of operations: the deliberate attack, phase one

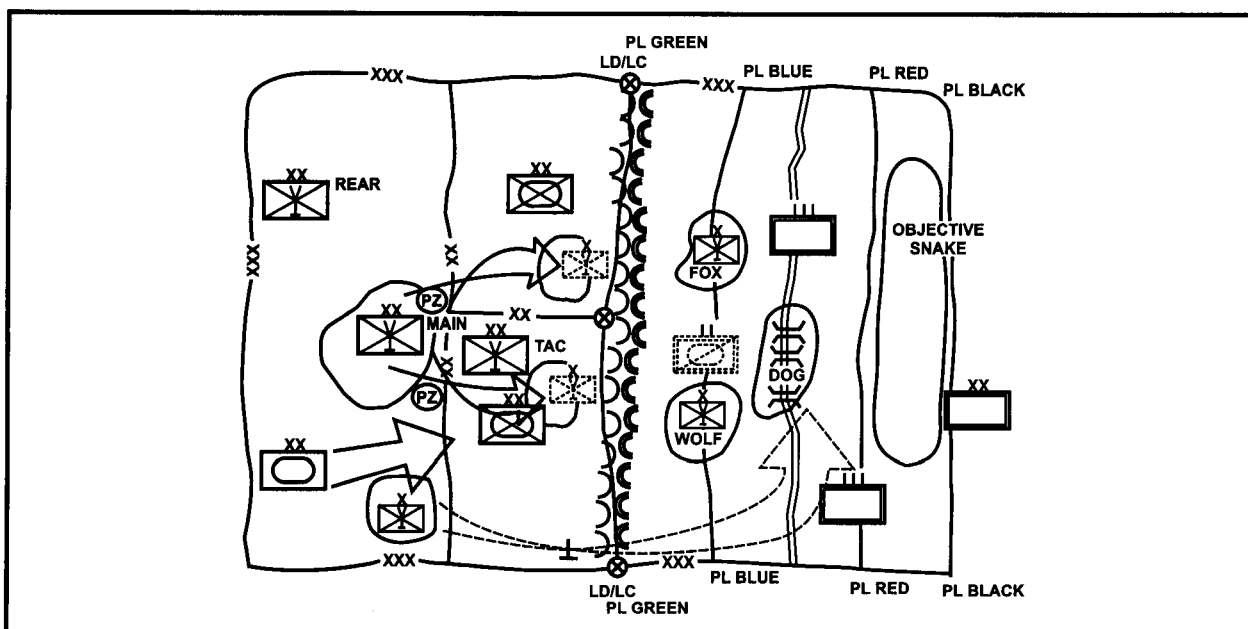


Figure 3-3. The corps concept of operations: the deliberate attack, phase two

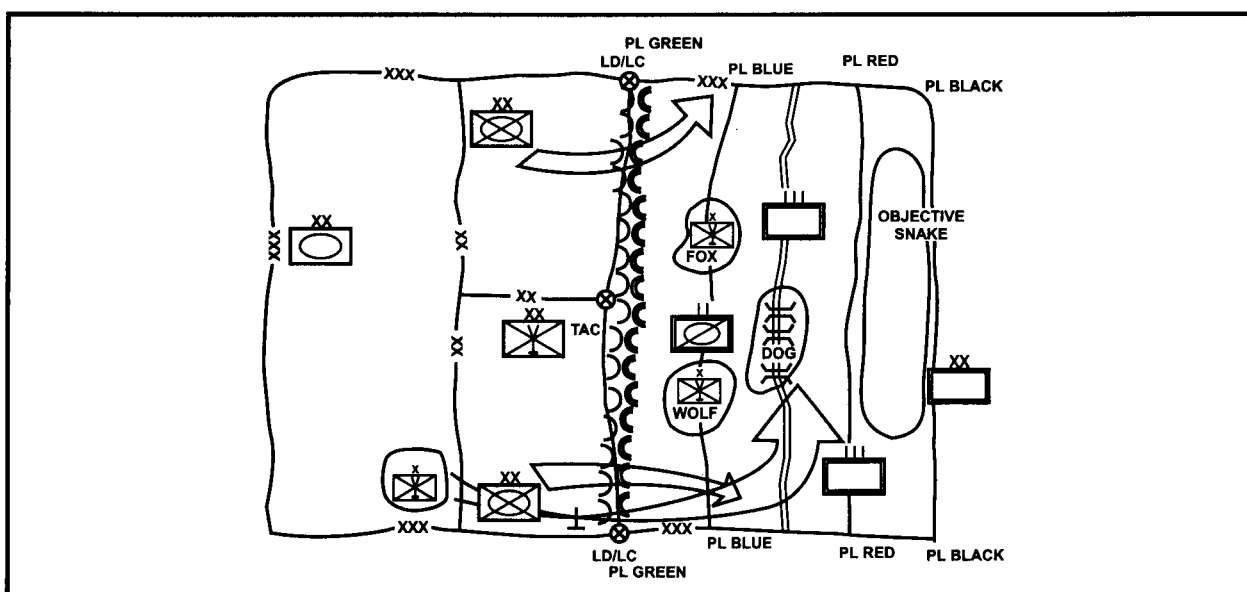


Figure 3-4. The corps concept of operations: the deliberate attack, phase three

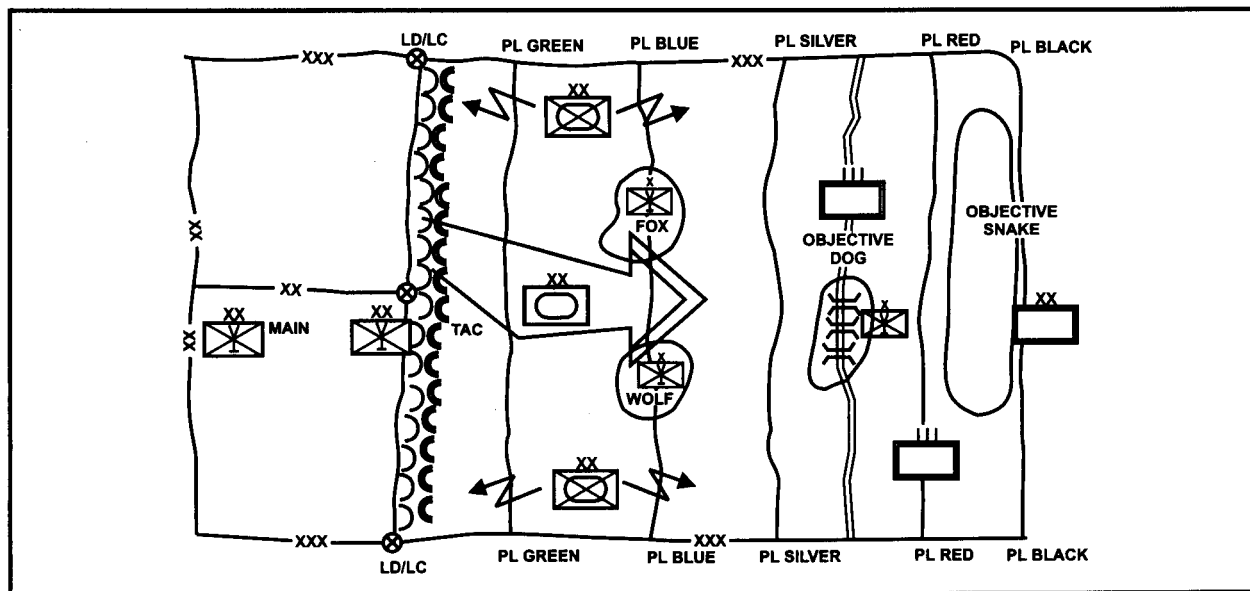


Figure 3-5. The corps concept of operations: the deliberate attack, phase four

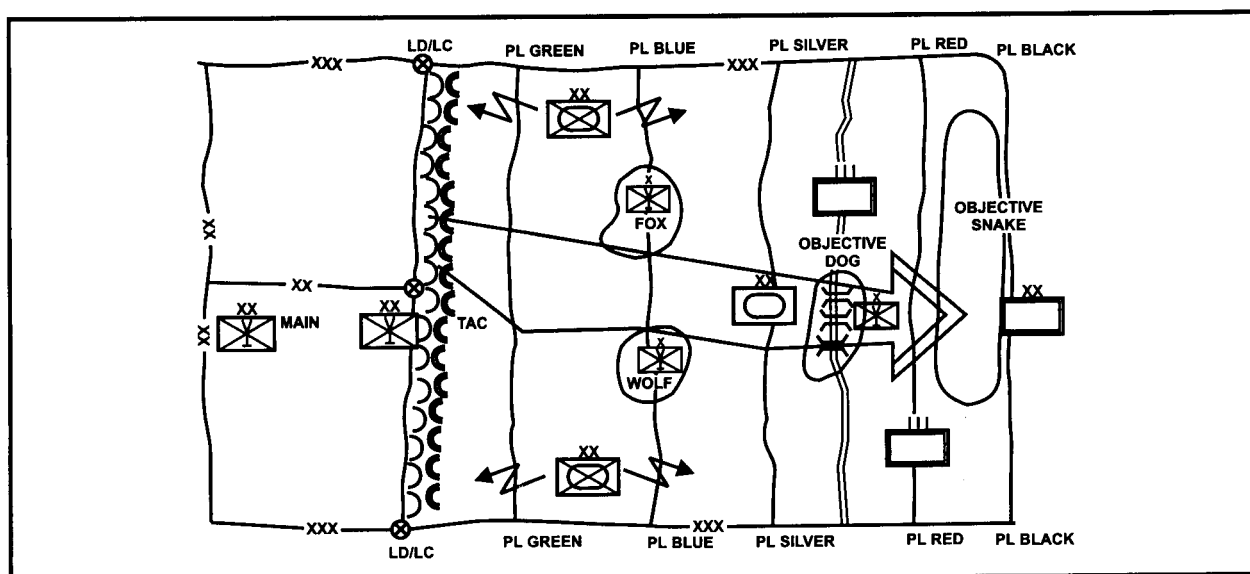


Figure 3-6. The corps concept of operations: the deliberate attack, phase five



AASLT division to conduct follow-and-support operations, to secure LOC from the FEBA to the corps objective, or to assist in an exploitation operation.

## MANEUVER

The AASLT division commander and staff receive the corps commander's concept. During the decision-making process, they determine that one brigade each is needed to seize objectives WOLF, FOX, and DOG.

The commander's concept is to simultaneously air assault two brigades to seize choke points (objectives FOX and WOLF) and to air assault the third brigade to seize crossing sites at objective DOG within 24 hours.

To conduct this operation according to the division commander's concept, the division must request and receive substantial aviation augmentation from the corps. The commander task-organizes his assets based on his concept and mission requirements (Figure 3-7). Initially, seizing objective WOLF is the division's main effort.

## Deep Operations

The AASLT division is part of the overall corps attack. The corps coordinates its deep operations with the AASLT division to synchronize the AASLT operation into the overall corps plan. It synchronizes the operation through detailed planning and centralized execution of corps attack assets beyond PL GREEN.

The corps directs its efforts toward shaping the battlefield to ensure the AASLT unit does not lose the element of surprise. It also wants to ensure that superior forces do not attack the AASLT brigades after their insertion. Therefore, the corps uses other assets, such as SOFs, to disrupt, delay, deceive, and confuse the enemy. When the AASLT division begins its air assault, the corps may portray activity or possible threats at other portions of the battlefield to divert the enemy's attention.

## Close Operations

The AASLT division commander's concept of operations supports the corps commander's concept. Success depends on the division's ability to

1st Bde	2d Bde	3d Bde
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn
—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)	—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)	—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)
—Engr Co (-) (L)	—Engr Co (-) (L)	—Engr Co (-) (L)
—ADA Btry (-)	—ADA Btry (-)	—ADA Btry (-)
		—IEW Tm
Division Troops	DIVARTY	Avn Bde
—Recon Sqdn (-)	—Btry (155-mm (T)) (Atchd)	—Atk Bn x 3 (AH-64)
—MI Bn (-)	—FA Bde (R) DIVARTY	—Cav Sqdn
—ADA Bn (-)	—FA Bn (155-mm (SP)) (R)	—Aslt Bn x 3
—Engr Bn (-)	—FA Bn (155-mm (SP)) (R)	—Med Aslt Bn
—Engr Co (L) (DS)/XXX	—FA Bn (MLRS) (GS)	—Aslt Bn x 3/XXX
—MP Co		—Atk Bn (AH-64)/XXX
		—Med Aslt Co/XXX
—Cml Co/XXX (GS)		
DISCOM		
—MSB		
—FSB		
—FSB		
—FSB		
—AVIM		
—Trk Co/XXX		
—Air Amb Co		

**Figure 3-7. Division task organization:  
the deliberate attack**

seize and hold its objectives until the armored force conducts the link-up operation and continues across the river to the corps objective.

The AASLT division commander knows the operation depends on his brigades and the defending heavy divisions achieving surprise and a coordinated attack. The commander's concept calls for a five-phase operation linked to the phases the corps concept presents.

In phase one, the AASLT division, with its reinforcing and augmenting elements, moves to the PZs, conducts reconnaissance, and begins preparation for combat activities (Figure 3-8). It coordinates with corps and defending divisions to position artillery and support units and to identify airspace

control measures and passage points (PPs) through in-place divisions on land and in the air. Support units move to base clusters near the PZs. While the division moves into the PZs, the staff continues to coordinate air corridors to support the air assault.

The AASLT division coordinates with the defending divisions for passage and SEAD support. They also exchange other essential information (fire support measures, ADA coverage, and engineer support) with the corps and the defending divisions to support the air assault and subsequent attacks.

In phase two, the first and second brigades conduct air assault through in-place defending divisions and through enemy areas to the LZs (Figure 3-9). As the brigades assemble for the air assault and attack, they do final coordination to adjust boundaries.

Brigade rear boundaries move closer to the objective, thus establishing brigade boundaries around each objective. This meets the corps commander's guidance and provides the defending divisions room to maneuver as they transition to the attack. This maneuver room is necessary to create the penetration.

In phase three, the assault on objectives FOX and WOLF begins and the heavy divisions attack simultaneously to penetrate and create the gap in the FEBA (Figure 3-10).

During phase four, the brigades consolidate on their objectives, linking up with and passing the corps armored division. The AASLT division has coordinated link-up procedures with the armored division before the attack. The brigade gives battalions the tasks of establishing link-up points at predetermined locations.

In phase five, the third brigade conducts the air assault to seize objective DOG while the lead unit of the attacking armored force simultaneously crosses PL BLUE. Once the brigade secures objective DOG and the crossing sites, it establishes link-up points to pass the armored division. After passing the division, it prepares for the next mission. The AASLT division and the armored division coordinated link-up points and procedures before the attack.

### Rear Operations

The primary role of division rear and CSS elements is to coordinate logistic operations and support for maneuver brigades. The rear CP and the defending mechanized divisions coordinate terrain management in addition to controlling traffic and the movement of displaced persons. The division's rear CP is responsible for coordinating rear area security.

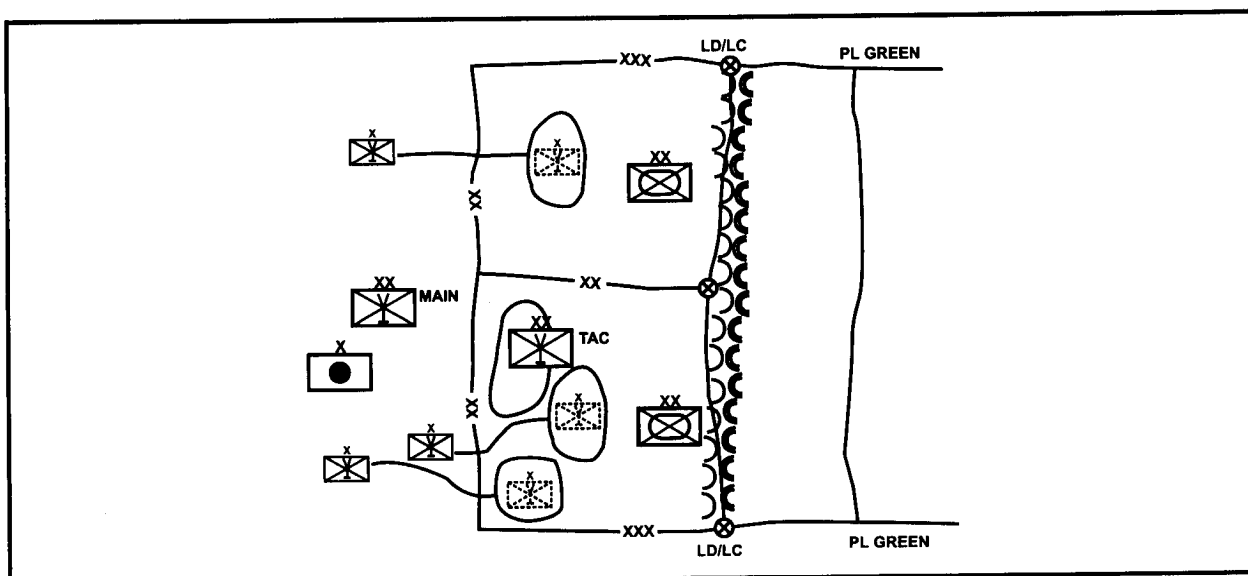


Figure 3-8. The division concept of operations: close operations, phase one

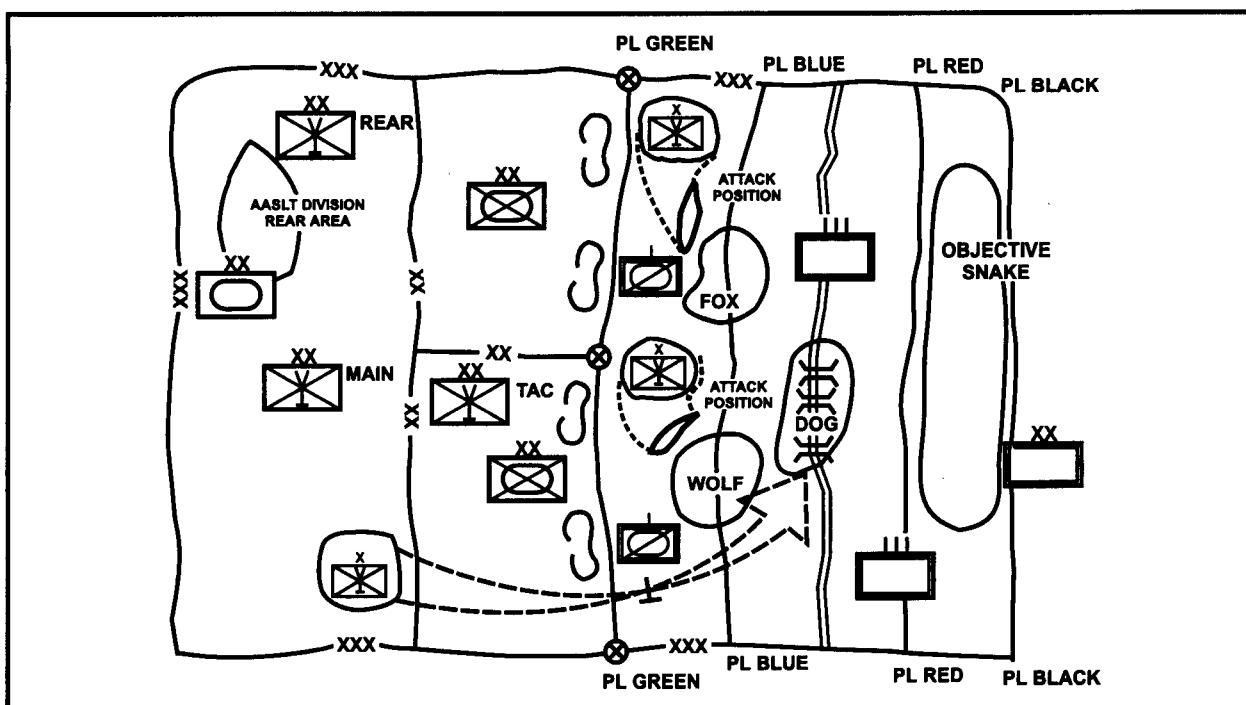


Figure 3-9. The division concept of operations: close operations, phase two

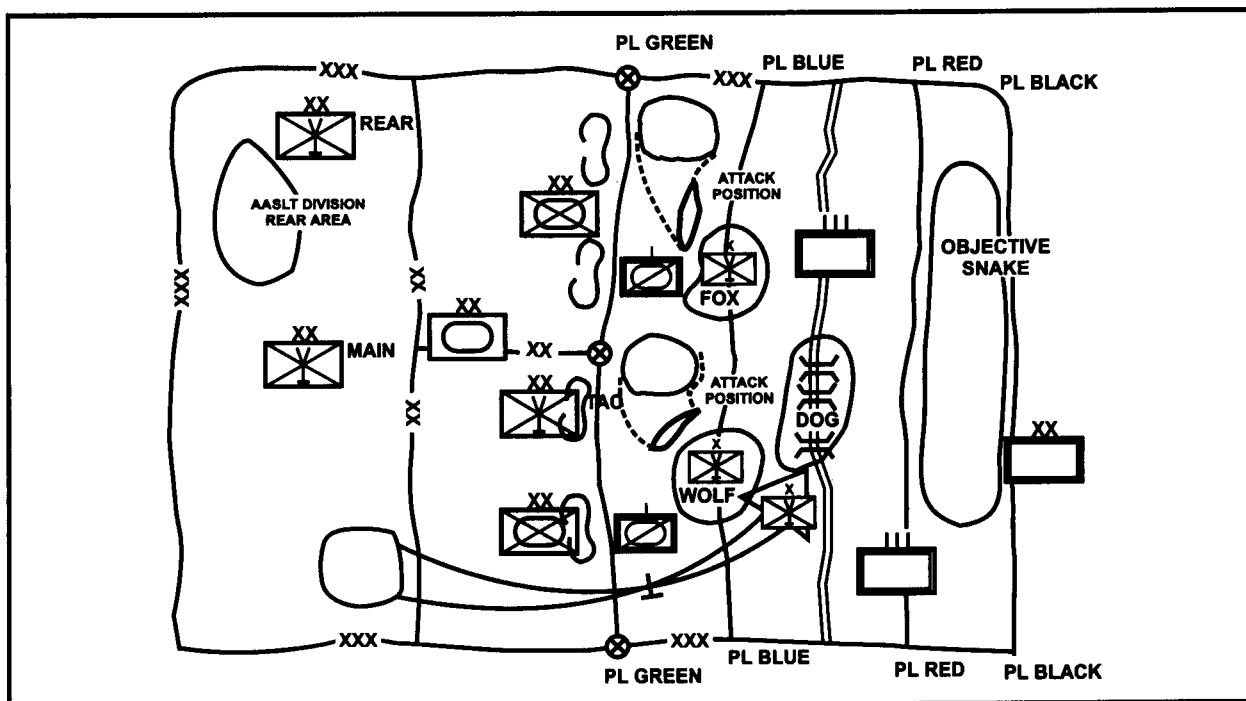


Figure 3-10. The division concept of operations: close operations, phases three, four, and five

## Security Operations

The corps protects the AASLT force by deception as well as by active security. Before the air assault begins, the corps attempts to deceive the enemy about the division's movements and intent. It may conduct feints and spoiling attack operations that divert enemy attention away from the AASLT area (PZs and LZs) or conduct a corps deception plan. Once the air assault begins, the infantry division coordinates security with the defending divisions and corps.

## Reserve Operations

The division initially has the third brigade in reserve until it begins movement to the PZ. Upon commitment of the reserve, the commander should reconstitute the reserve as soon as METT-T factors permit.

## Intelligence

The division commander, working with the G2, G3, and fire support coordinator (FSCOORD), develops the PIR. The G2 integrates intelligence assets required to collect PIR into the division collection plan. The division submits requests for intelligence information or for additional assets to corps for support to the collection plan when the plan exceeds the division's organic capabilities.

The commander's PIR focuses on enemy units or actions which may adversely affect the AASLT or attack helicopter raid. The division coordinates with both the corps and defending mechanized divisions for previously collected information (enemy, sensor, or observation post (OP) locations). The corps' Quick Fix and division LRSD provide real-time information and intelligence.

Division MI assets support the division collection plan for all phases of the operation. In phases one through five, the AASLT division uses maneuver brigades and those assets which do not have to accompany AASLT units to collect information.

Military intelligence assets along the FEBA support both division and corps collection plans. To enhance collection of intelligence in phase five, an IEW team moves with the AASLT brigades. The IEW team accompanies the forward ground element and looks beyond objective DOG.

## Fire Support

The AASLT division supports its attack with CAS, attack helicopter, artillery, and EW assets. These assets must provide responsive fires during all phases of the operation. Task-organized division artillery and a corps-reinforcing FA brigade provide responsive fire support.

Corps artillery assigns a priority of fire for each phase of the operation. During phase one, priority of fire is to the defending divisions; phase two, the AASLT division; phase three, penetrating divisions; phases four and five, the attacking armored division.

The division FSE selects areas and coordinates with the G3 (or S3 at brigade level) before positioning artillery in a unit's sector. Brigade FSCOORDs, with their maneuver commanders, position DS artillery (Figure 3-11). Artillery assets air assault forward with the maneuver brigades to precoordinated positions to support all phases of the operation—reconnaissance, air assault, attack, and linkup. They also provide responsive counterbattery fire for the brigades.

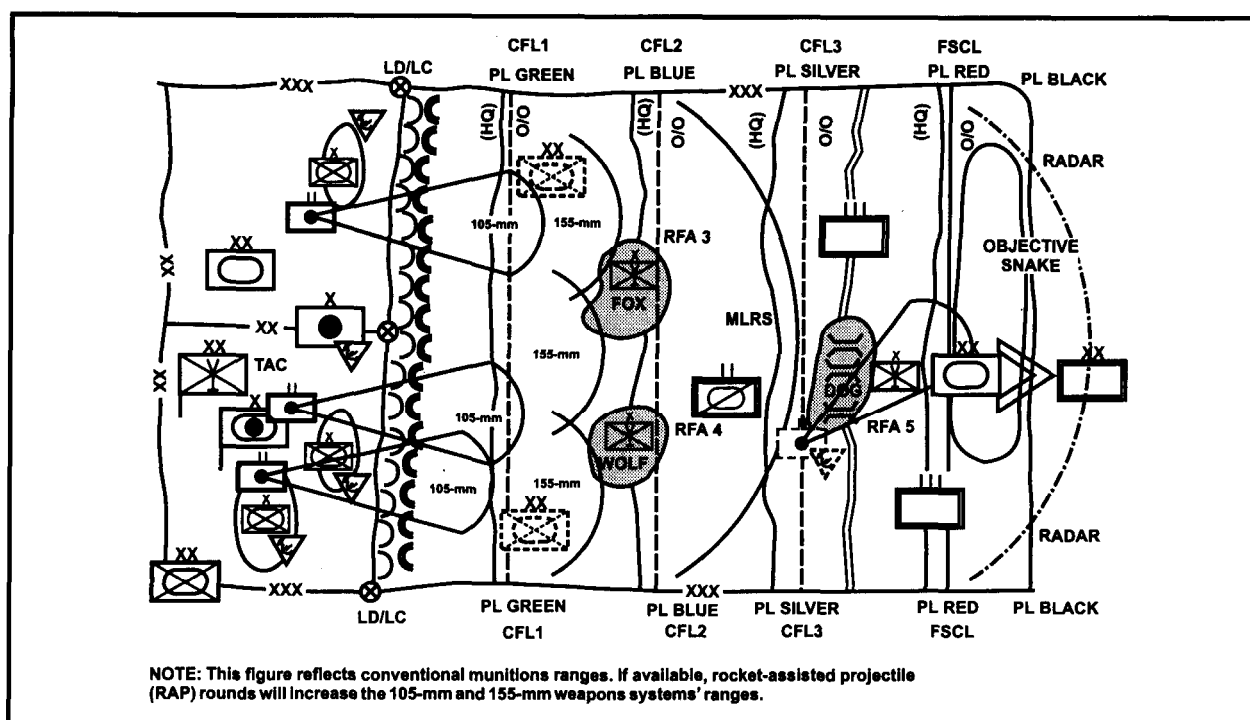
The defending armored or mechanized divisions and corps artillery battalions receive nonstandard missions to allow them to fire in support of changing priorities. The nonstandard mission sets limits on ammunition expenditure and positioning.

Units stockpile ammunition to support air assault and penetration on the ground at battery locations. Corps and division artillery units use this ammunition to fire preparations, SEAD, programs, target groups, and other types of fires. The corps artillery commander and his staff integrate fires to ensure efficient use of in-place and supporting corps artillery.

Coordination between the AASLT division and the corps FSE is critical to preventing fratricide. The AASLT division establishes and coordinates fire support coordination measures (FSCM) for AASLT corridors, LZs, objectives, LRSD locations, and link-up points.

The AASLT division FSE controls fire support between PL GREEN and PL BLUE during the air assault. In-place divisions assume responsibility for fire coordination (within their boundaries to PL BLUE) once the air assault is complete.

The armored division assumes responsibility for controlling fires (beyond PL BLUE) when its lead



**Figure 3-11. Division concept of operations:  
fire support**

element conducts the passage with the infantry. The corps establishes on-order restrictive fire areas (RFAs) around objectives and link-up points.

The division coordinates engagement areas (EAs) and family of scatterable mines (FASCAM) minefield with the corps. Together they seal the objectives from possible enemy reinforcement and to neutralize enemy actions to the flanks.

The corps artillery headquarters coordinates countermortar and counterbattery radar positioning and control. The AASLT division FSE coordinates radar coverages with the defending division's FSEs.

DIVARTY places radars to provide continuous support throughout the AASLT division's sector. The corps establishes Quick Fire channels between radars and firing units to rapidly silence enemy indirect-fire systems which might affect the corps' plan. A Q-36 radar with the third brigade's DS artillery provides counterbattery coverage at river-crossing sites.

### Mobility and Survivability (M/S)

Priority of engineer support within the AASLT division is M/S in deep and rear areas. The division attaches AASLT engineer companies to each brigade.

During the air assault and attack, AASLT engineer companies support the breaching of obstacles, reporting information on obstacles, bridge conditions, and soil composition in the areas they occupy. The AASLT division, defending divisions, and the corps use this information to prepare for penetration, attack, and follow-on movement of CSS assets.

Division AASLT engineer companies deployed with brigades breach obstacles during the assault on objectives and, where possible, in and around link-up points. The AASLT division engineer, with input from the brigade engineers and the deputy fire support coordinator (DFSCoord), and the ALO plan scatterable mines to block enemy counterattacks and reinforcements. The AASLT division's engineer battalion retains the personnel and equipment not task-organized to maneuver brigades to support on-order (o/o) follow-and-support missions.

### Air Defense

The division ADA's primary role is to provide AD coverage during all phases of the operation. For the air assault, brigades move with only man-portable air defense (MANPAD) systems. Vulcans and Avengers remain in the rear near the PZs. They provide coverage for division CS and CSS assets. Stingers provide coverage during the AASLT operation, movement to the objectives, the attack, and at link-up points.

During the air assault, the corps' ADA priority is to air-assaulting brigades. The corps pushes its high-altitude ADA coverage as far forward as possible to support the operation. Division ADA weapons are under "weapons hold" status during the air assault. Passive defensive measures are the division's primary air defense.

Air defense elements with air-assaulting brigades form a protective umbrella around and over objective areas. They maintain this coverage and extend it to cover link-up points once they secure the objectives.

After the third brigade's air assault, the corps' AD priority shifts to the attacking divisions. Air defense systems in the third brigade establish coverage for the assault and for river-crossing sites.

As soon as possible, the AASLT division's G3 directs division towed systems forward with the attacking heavy division. This strengthens coverage over choke points and river crossing sites and provides additional ground firepower if required.

### Combat Service Support

Division G4 planners, in close coordination with DISCOM personnel, develop a concept for support. The concept is a detailed plan that mirrors the concept of operations and outlines the support package for the operation. Field Manual 101-5 (D) gives an example of a concept of a support plan. (See also Figure 3-12.)

Brigades can sustain field operations for from 48 to 72 hours without resupply. Throughout operations, the division commander influences the main effort by designating priority of support.

The commander weights the main effort with CSS assets, particularly CHS. (The majority of the

wounded are evacuated after objectives have been consolidated.)

The G4 coordinates for maximum use of the container delivery system (CDS) to conduct resupply. The G4 coordinates with DISCOM for preconfigured push-packages of Class VIII supplies tailored to meet specific CHS mission requirements. The loading plan and staging are critical to successful air assault of CSS.

Aerial assets accomplish resupply during the consolidation on the objective. The DTO coordinates the integration of DISCOM support assets into the attacking division's follow-on logistic movement with the DISCOM commander.

The division's DTO coordinates MSRs to locations that forward brigades select. The FSBs move forward on order from their supported brigade. The DISCOM provides information on requirements and displacements.

The infantry division DISCOM headquarters may not move during this operation. Main support battalion units and elements of the MMC move near the FSBs to support reorganization of the brigades in preparation for the next mission.

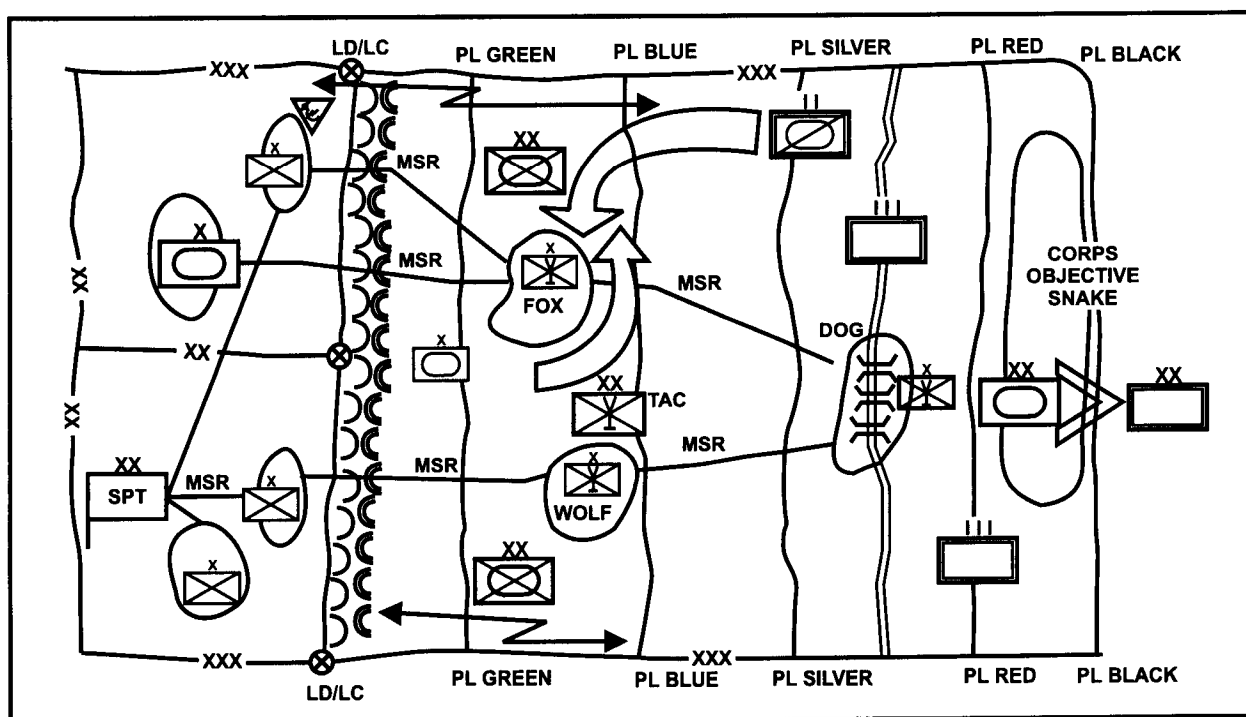
### Battle Command

After receiving the warning order, the AASLT division's TAC CP moves forward to coordinate the infiltration with defending divisions. The TAC CP determines brigade assembly areas, initial passage points, corridors, and link-up points as brigades prepare to move to assembly areas.

In this example, the TAC CP is forward near the LD/LC to support brigade operations. To aid in control, the AASLT division provides liaison teams to each defending division.

The AASLT division uses control measures the corps establishes for coordination. It also establishes brigade boundaries and responsibilities for each phase of the AASLT division operation. Brigade CPs move forward and collocate with brigade CPs through which they will pass, as do their battalions.

The AASLT division TAC CP moves forward behind the last maneuver brigade of the attacking armored division with the cavalry squadron ground



**Figure 3-12. Division concept of support:  
combat service support**

troop. This provides security to the TAC CP while it moves.

The TAC CP repositions forward near objective DOG. The jump CP air assaults with the third brigade as it secures river-crossing sites. Main and rear CPs move on order.

## PENETRATION

A commander uses penetrations when enemy flanks are not assailable and other forms of maneuver are not feasible. The penetration often pits the attacker's strength against the defender's. As a result, there are higher casualty rates than with other forms of maneuver except frontal attack, which has the highest casualty rate.

The penetrating unit masses sufficient combat power at points of penetration to overwhelm the enemy. The AASLT division masses effects from fires of all available means to breach enemy defensive positions along a narrow front, to hold open the shoulder, and to degrade the effects of a counter-attack.

Follow-on friendly forces rapidly exploit success of the penetrating force. Multiple penetration points may be desirable if they will cause the enemy to disperse his fires and consider multiple threats before committing.

If the AASLT division receives the mission to conduct a ground (dismounted) penetration, they conduct it as an infantry division (light) (ID (L)) would conduct a penetration. (See discussion in FM 71-100-2.) However, if the AASLT division's mission is to conduct AASLT operations deep behind enemy positions to support the corps or JTF concept, the division conducts operations in a manner similar to the deliberate attack.

## MOVEMENT TO CONTACT

The AASLT division conducts a movement to contact to gain or regain contact with the enemy. The goal is to use the smallest possible force with which to find the enemy, then maneuver with the remainder of the division's forces as the situation develops. A movement to contact ends in an attack (hasty or deliberate), a defense, or a retrograde.

The best use of the AASLT division leading a corps movement to contact is as a covering force (in restrictive terrain) against a relatively static opponent or when the corps expects contact within hours of the time of attack.

In wide-open terrain against a mechanized enemy or on long movements against a largely unknown foe, the AASLT division's liabilities begin to outweigh its capabilities. Only attack aviation can hold its own in a meeting engagement with massed mechanized opposing forces.

The AASLT division cannot fight and prevail in its usual combined-arms style against massed mechanized forces. Therefore, the corps or JTF must not allow this to occur.

In open terrain, a mounted enemy on the ground might move unpredictably and quickly. He could reposition faster than could landed AASLT forces, negating their speed advantage. Although these conditions favor detection and destruction by attack helicopters, a large, organized, constantly moving, aggressive foe with mobile AD systems could penetrate the AASLT division's rear areas by outflanking blocking forces and hasty FASCAM.

On restrictive ground, dynamics change. Even strong tank formations can find themselves diverted into canalized avenues of approach, creating slower, more predictable patterns of motion.

These dynamics play nicely into the AASLT division's normal process of decision, condition setting, and execution. The resulting sequence of raids and air assaults would certainly favor the force least affected by terrain.

Even if the AASLT division's attack aviation matches up well against hostile armored formations, the division as a whole might find it difficult to maintain its OPTEMPO in the teeth of an attacking enemy armored force. This is particularly true if the tanks catch aircraft on the ground or while landing.

The AASLT division requires only a short time to establish defenses in order to hold its own. But in a movement to contact against a large armored formation, that time might not be available.

If the enemy lacks mechanized technology, or proves unable or unwilling to conduct armored combined-arms warfare, the AASLT division can regain its edge. It can find a static foe, suppress

and/or destroy his ADA and fire support units, locate his maneuver forces and envelop them deep, and defeat him.

Air assault cross-FLOT operations into unknown areas without a solid IPB are high-risk operations. Movements which take more than 24 hours without contact quickly outrun the AASLT division's ability to set any sort of conditions for raids or air assaults. This consideration particularly applies when the force is opposed by a competent conventional enemy capable of his own offensive operations. If the corps or JTF develops the situation into an outright pursuit, it might run the risk of going deep with minimal information. The AASLT division should not lead the corps movement to contact in this instance.

If enemy positions are within 150 kilometers of the FLOT, especially if the enemy lacks armor or is occupying close terrain, the AASLT division becomes a much better choice to lead a movement to contact. The corps or JTF must provide an environment for the division to conduct a condition-setting cycle, particularly for intelligence and fire support, before executing major raids or air assaults.

When moving to contact under favorable conditions, an AASLT division can move within an approximate 300-kilometer radius. It relies on aviation to concentrate forces and develop the situation once significant engagement occurs (Figure 3-13).

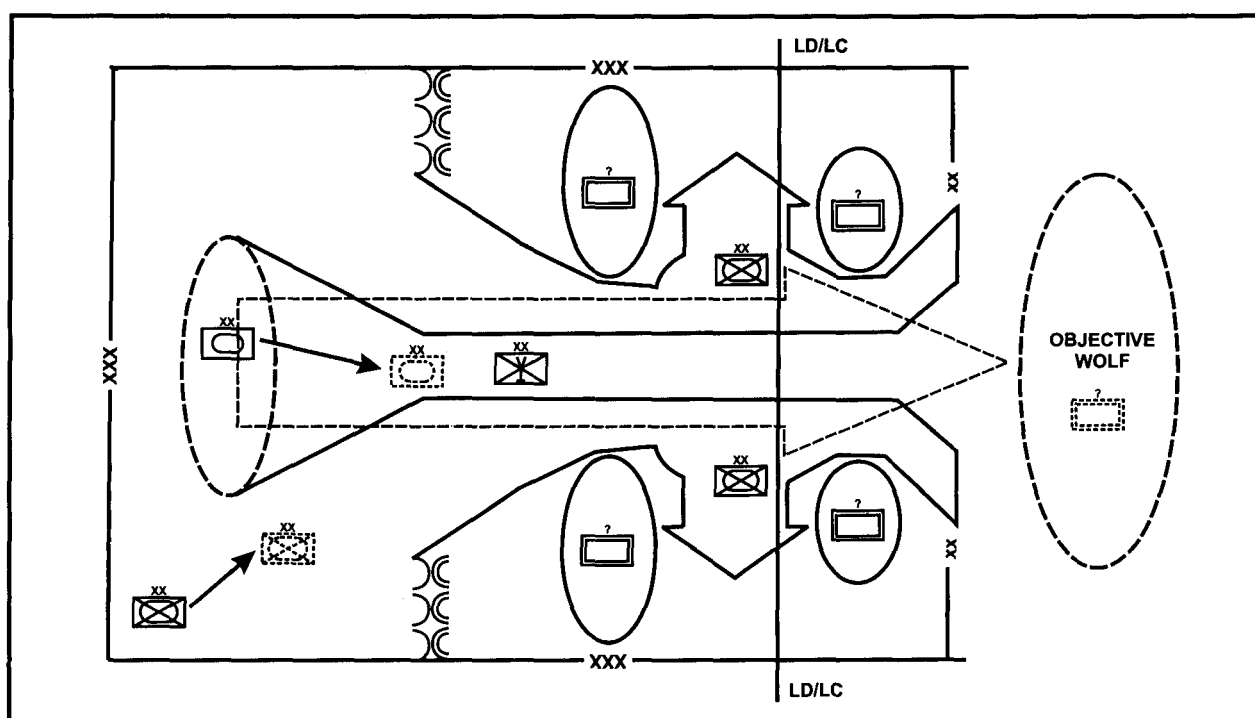
The division usually leads with the aviation brigade and is reinforced with an infantry TF with priority on fire support, including at least one AASLT artillery battalion. Initially, the aviation brigade is the main effort.

Two brigades, each including sufficient lift aviation to insert a battalion TF, follow and support the aviation brigade in zone. They wait in a PZ posture as operations proceed, then advance via helicopter to subsequent PZs until the lead unit makes contact with the enemy.

The third brigade (minus an infantry TF and the DS artillery supporting the aviation brigade), with a battalion-size slice of lift aviation, forms the reserve. The division commander maintains a battalion of attack helicopters in reserve.

Ideally, the air cavalry squadron finds the enemy. Once the division establishes contact, it begins its usual cross-FLOT process, setting conditions to





**Figure 3-13. A corps movement to contact**

pass behind the enemy's main combat forces. The division continues to observe the enemy and begins fire support programs for aerial envelopment by raid or air assault.

Follow-and-support brigades identify, engage, and destroy small, hostile units in zone. They fix enemy battalions for destruction by fires, hasty attack, or to prevent enemy interference in other division deep operations. The AASLT division continues this pattern of moving to contact and hasty attacks until the situation changes and a branch or sequel to the current operation begins or until the corps or JTF changes the division's mission.

The approach march, reconnaissance in force, and search and attack operations are some of the techniques for conducting a movement to contact. METT-T factors determine how a unit will conduct a movement to contact.

### The Approach March

In this example, the corps successfully drives back enemy forces from their initial lines of defense. As enemy units withdraw, they break contact with friendly forces. The nature of the terrain causes the

corps commander to use his AASLT division in a movement to contact to reestablish contact.

If the AASLT division's movement to contact is successful, the corps commander commits his armored force, intending to regain ground contact with the enemy and to exploit success. The current tactical situation and intelligence reports indicate—

- The enemy's exact location is unknown.
- The corps has no covering force.
- The enemy has the capability to disrupt or delay the corps.
- Friendly forces have air superiority.
- The corps heavy division is in a hasty defense and has an on-order mission to continue the attack.
- Terrain is restrictive with limited movement routes for armored forces.

### Maneuver

The corps commander's concept of operations requires rapid movement over restrictive terrain. The division will lead with the aviation brigade and move with the cavalry squadron leading the aviation

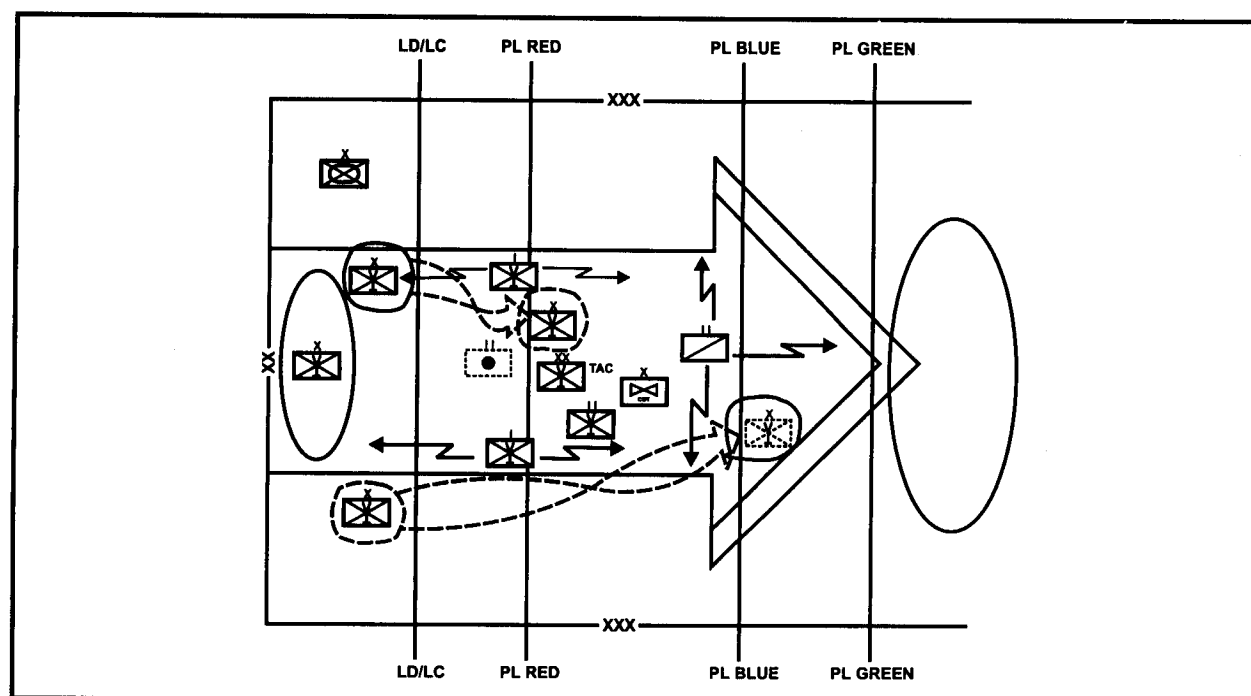


Figure 3-14. The approach march: maneuver

brigade. It will be reinforced with an AASLT battalion, an artillery battalion, then the AASLT brigades (Figure 3-14).

Figure 3-15 depicts the division's task organization. Once the division makes contact, it develops the situation.

The cavalry squadron quickly assesses the situation to determine exact enemy unit locations, strengths, depth of formation, and intentions. The aviation brigade can use AASLT infantry, attack helicopters, and/or field artillery against the enemy. If necessary, these assets take responsibility from the cavalry to fully develop the situation and destroy enemy forces.

The division has the option to destroy or contain the enemy, depending on the size of the enemy force and the situation at the time of contact. If the division does not make significant contact, it continues to move until it traverses the restrictive terrain at PL GREEN and the armored forces pass forward. Corps MLRS may be general support-reinforcing (GS-R) to DIVARTY.

**Deep Operations.** Using organic assets and possibly SOF, the corps conducts deep operations

against uncommitted enemy forces, LOCs, and supply of those forces. It provides the division with intelligence on these uncommitted forces.

**Close Operations.** While the division conducts a movement to contact to gain or regain contact with the enemy, the goal is to make first enemy contact with the smallest possible friendly force. If the division commander is reasonably sure of the enemy's location and is a considerable distance from the enemy, he may elect to use a less secure but faster rate of movement until he nears the enemy's location. He can then adjust the tempo as he anticipates enemy contact.

For example, the cavalry squadron conducts a zone reconnaissance in front of the aviation brigade to locate enemy forces. On order the division may change this to a screen mission upon contact with enemy forces. The aviation brigade (+) follows the cavalry squadron while two brigades remain in their PZs.

The two brigades prepare to move forward, conducting AASLT operations if they make contact with the enemy; or air movement if they move to a subsequent PZ. The remaining brigade (-) is the division reserve.

1st Bde	2d Bde	3d Bde
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—FSB
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	
—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)	—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)	
—Aslt Avn Bn	—Aslt Avn Bn	
—MI Plt	—MI Plt	
—Engr Co (L)	—Engr Co (L)	
—ADA Btry (-)	—ADA Btry (-)	
—FSB	—FSB	
Avn Bde	DIVARTY	DISCOM
—Inf Bn	—Btry (155-mm (T)) (Atchd)	—MSB
—Cav Sqdn	—FA Bde (R) DIVARTY	—Air Amb Co
—AH Bn	—FA Bn (155-mm (SP)) (R)	
—AH Bn	—FA Bn (155-mm (SP)) (R)	
—Aslt Avn Bn		
—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)		
—Med Aslt Avn Bn		
—AVIM Bn		
—MI Plt (+)		
—Engr Co (+) (L)		
—ADA Btry (-)		
Division Troops		
—Inf Bn		
—AH Bn		
—MI Bn (-)		
—ADA Bn (-)		
—Engr Bn (-)		
—Lt Engr Equip Co (DS)/XXX		
—MP Co		

**Figure 3–15. The approach march: task organization**

One brigade designates flank and rear security forces and gives these units a screen mission. Each brigade integrates CS and limited CSS assets into their movement. The division cavalry squadron locates the enemy and develops the situation.

If the division commander decides to conduct a hasty attack, the aviation brigade is in position to do so. This brigade receives priority of effort within the division.

If the enemy force is of sufficient size to preclude an attack by one brigade, the aviation brigade fixes the enemy force while the lead AASLT brigade air

assaults into position and moves to attack the enemy. The next AASLT brigade prepares for commitment into this fight. If the lead AASLT brigade defeats the enemy, the next AASLT brigade assumes the position behind the aviation brigade and prepares for the next enemy contact.

**Rear Operations.** Rear units, DISCOM, and division troops remain in the DSA. The in-place unit provides security until committed. The rear CP coordinates and synchronizes both air and ground movements forward.

Sustainment units move on order once the division secures the restrictive terrain. (Ground resupply is the preferred method.)

**Security Operations.** The division conducts an advance screen with the reconnaissance squadron during zone reconnaissance. Each brigade has advanced, flank, and rear guards.

The division maintains security by positioning its assets within mutually supporting distances as it moves. Early warning is critical to its security. Long-range surveillance patrols and electronic intelligence-gathering assets help locate the enemy and indicate his possible locations and intent.

**Reserve Operations.** The division commander retains one AASLT infantry brigade (-) and one AHB in reserve.

## Intelligence

The primary mission of intelligence assets is to find the enemy and report to the commander in a timely manner. The commander establishes the CCIR early to focus the efforts of all collection assets. He approves a collection plan and specific PIR, the acquisition assets to use, and actions to take once units report PIR information. (See Chapter 5 for more information on this process.)

The division requires intelligence information continuously as it moves forward. The cavalry squadron reports directly to the TAC CP where the intelligence staff officer continuously analyzes the information along with other sources, such as those from division and corps long-range surveillance (LRS) units. Information from designated named areas of interest (NAIs) and target areas of interest (TAIs) also aids the development of intelligence to locate the enemy.

Intelligence acquisition gaps may occur. The G2 employs MI assets in layers to see the battlefield to fill these gaps. Maneuver units accomplish forward and flank information-gathering. The MI battalion moves its assets as necessary to accomplish its mission.

## Fire Support

Primary fire support considerations in a movement to contact include anticipating enemy actions during the movement and when organizing for combat and moving artillery battalions and ammunition forward. Also important is the ability to provide rapid and accurate fires on targets which affect the force's survivability and mission.

In this example, the division commander integrates fire support into the total mission (Figure 3-16). Establishing a Quick Fire channel improves fire support to the aviation brigade and

cavalry squadron. The task organization provides flexibility, responsiveness, and agility when and where the division makes contact with the enemy.

As the division moves across the LD/LC, DS and GS artillery will be in position to provide support. Once the brigades determine air corridors and routes out of the LZs, FA units determine where to position their assets to best support the operation. Since artillery follows its brigade, the brigade maintains movement control. The division commander uses the battery with the aviation brigade to rapidly provide additional fire support as needed on the battlefield.

During the movement, maneuver elements are extremely vulnerable to enemy indirect fires. If possible, the corps augments the division with the capability to plan, execute, and coordinate effective counterbattery and counterfire programs. Artillery units carry maximum amounts of ammunition but still require resupply.

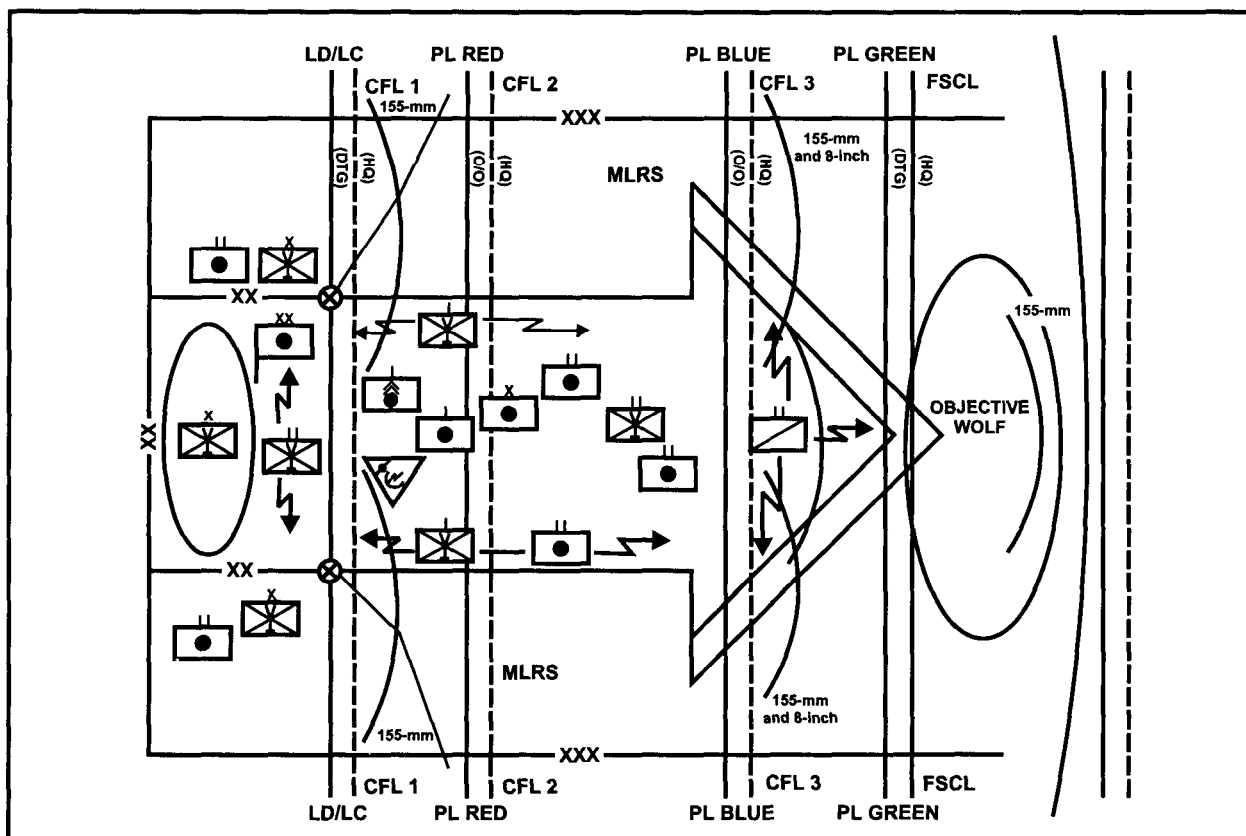


Figure 3-16. The approach march: fire support

As maneuver units move forward, FSCM ensure rapid fire support. DIVARTY headquarters locates near the LD/LC where it maintains command and control and sustainment requirements for division artillery.

### **Mobility and Survivability**

The primary engineer mission is to locate and breach enemy obstacles to facilitate mobility of CSS elements and the corps follow-on force. The division task-organizes its light engineer companies to each brigade and the cavalry squadron.

Engineers with the cavalry squadron identify obstacles, report route conditions, and provide a limited capability for breaching obstacles. Engineers with brigades identify obstacles and report route conditions along routes of march and to the flanks.

If required, engineers on the flanks construct situational obstacles to stop possible enemy penetrations from the flank. Engineers coordinate with the division FSE to emplace FASCAM. The engineer battalion headquarters coordinates support to forward engineer companies to expedite division movement.

### **Air Defense**

The AASLT division has limited ADA assets. Critical division resources have priority for ADA coverage. Stinger teams are in DS to brigades. For the movement, Avengers are kept under the ADA battalion's control.

The division requests additional ADA support from corps. Corps assets provide ADA protection for the rear area.

### **Combat Service Support**

The division task-organizes for speed and stealth. Units carry a 48-hour, unit basic load (UBL) (Classes I, III, V, and VIII) to ensure brigades have limited logistic support. The FSBs move forward by wheeled vehicle when they can. Maintenance timelines are short and units replace rather than repair most unserviceable items to rapidly return equipment to use.

The DISCOM and the rear CP coordinate limited wheeled vehicle routes in the division area between

the corps force and division supply points (SUPPT). The DISCOM and the rear CP displace on order when the corps force passes through the division and when MSRs are secure.

### **Battle Command**

The commanding general positions himself well forward to see the battlefield. The rear CP maintains a position in the rear behind the main CP. Brigades task-organize into self-contained TFs to enhance flexibility and the ability to attack enemy forces.

The division TAC CP moves behind the aviation brigade and maintains communications with the cavalry squadron. The division main CP stays at the LD/LC until the division secures the restrictive terrain and the corps heavy division passes through.

### **Search and Attack Operations**

A search and attack operation is a likely mission for the AASLT division. Although brigades and battalions conduct it as a decentralized mission, it requires division support.

The division allocates resources; moves troops, supplies, and materiel; and assimilates and distributes intelligence. Search and attack operations are time-consuming. The division commander and staff must allow subordinate commanders enough time to develop intelligence before expecting results.

Smaller, lighter maneuver forces generally conduct search and attack operations in large areas to destroy enemy forces, to deny area to the enemy, and to collect information. They may also conduct search and attack operations—

- Against a dispersed enemy on close terrain unsuitable for armored forces.
- In rear areas against enemy SOF or infiltrators.
- As area security missions to clear assigned zones.

Search and attack operations can prevent the enemy from planning, assembling, and executing operations on his own initiative. Ideally, the AASLT division's three AH-64 battalions are the first element to execute this operation.

Most search and attack operations begin without detailed prior information about the enemy. The commander must produce much of his own intelligence as

the operation unfolds. Historically, units conduct search and attack operations—

- In an environment of friendly air and fire superiority.
- Against squad- to company-size forces equipped with small arms and mortars, but normally without artillery support.
- Against both regular and guerrilla forces whose locations are unknown.
- In an environment where the enemy has the advantage of knowing both the terrain and the local populace.
- At company, battalion, and brigade levels with division support.

The corps or JTF may direct the division to conduct combat operations to clear the enemy in zone. The intent may be to eliminate an enemy's ability to interfere with current or future combat operations or with an HN government's ability to protect its population. Search and attack operations orient on the enemy, not on taking or holding terrain.

To counter the threat's potentially close ties to the population, US units must gain local civilian support. PSYOPs are key to gaining this support. Therefore, search and attack operations accept some risk to friendly forces to prevent collateral damage.

The corps or JTF and/or the division must clearly disseminate ROE, strictly controlling reconnaissance by fire, unobserved supporting fires, and air strikes. The goal is to destroy the enemy, not the host nation.

A division order directing search and attack operations assigns brigade AOs and task-organizes them as self-contained forces with combat and CS forces. Brigades normally establish fire support bases for DS artillery and organic mortars. Brigades assign battalions AOs, then further subdivides those areas into company zones of action.

NOTE: Figure 3-17 shows how the division assigns search and attack brigade AOs. Figures 3-18 and 3-19 show the task organization. See FM 7-30 for the tactics and techniques for brigade search and attack operations.

### The Find-Fix-Fight or Finish Cycle

A search and attack operation goes through a definite cycle. Finding the enemy focuses friendly combat power to destroy him. Fixing the opposition prevents

his escape as friendly combat power concentrates against him. Finally, fighting or finishing the enemy destroys him and provides combat information to locate other hostile forces. This restarts the find-fix-fight or finish cycle.

**Finding.** Intelligence drives search and attack and its success depends on a careful search for the enemy and, after finding him, massing superior forces to destroy him. To find the enemy, units must conduct aggressive, continuous reconnaissance. Commanders must resist the temptation to rely on saturation infantry patrols at the outset. Instead, they must develop a detailed picture of the enemy and the region so soldiers can enter it in force.

Searching is a time-consuming process. It only becomes effective when done methodically over time. This gives the TF an area awareness equivalent to the enemy's initial local knowledge. The IPB involves the entire staff and keys on enemy CSS, the least mobile part of his array.

Finders maneuver to see the enemy, not kill him. Observation post (OP) and/or listening post (LP) units conduct surveillance, LLVI listen, and GSR scans while most of the infantry secures finder items. The division uses patrols (which must be slow and stealthy).

Finding may require days or even weeks to discern enemy patterns, depending on METT-T. The ideal result is an in-depth picture of the hostile CSS system and locations.

**Fixing.** Once friendly forces determine the location of a vulnerable CSS node or other lucrative target, the AATF maneuvers a small force (a company or team at the battalion level) to fix the enemy at the site. This force intends to become decisively engaged.

Fixing sets conditions for employing fighters or finishers. Fixers must maintain contact. Fixers may finish off small, isolated, or lightly held hostile outposts without additional forces, but that is the exception, not the rule.

If the fixing unit can hold the opposing force, the TF masses combat power to overwhelm the enemy. The AATF may conduct a hasty or deliberate attack to destroy the hostile force.

If the TF cannot concentrate sufficient combat power, it may keep the enemy force under

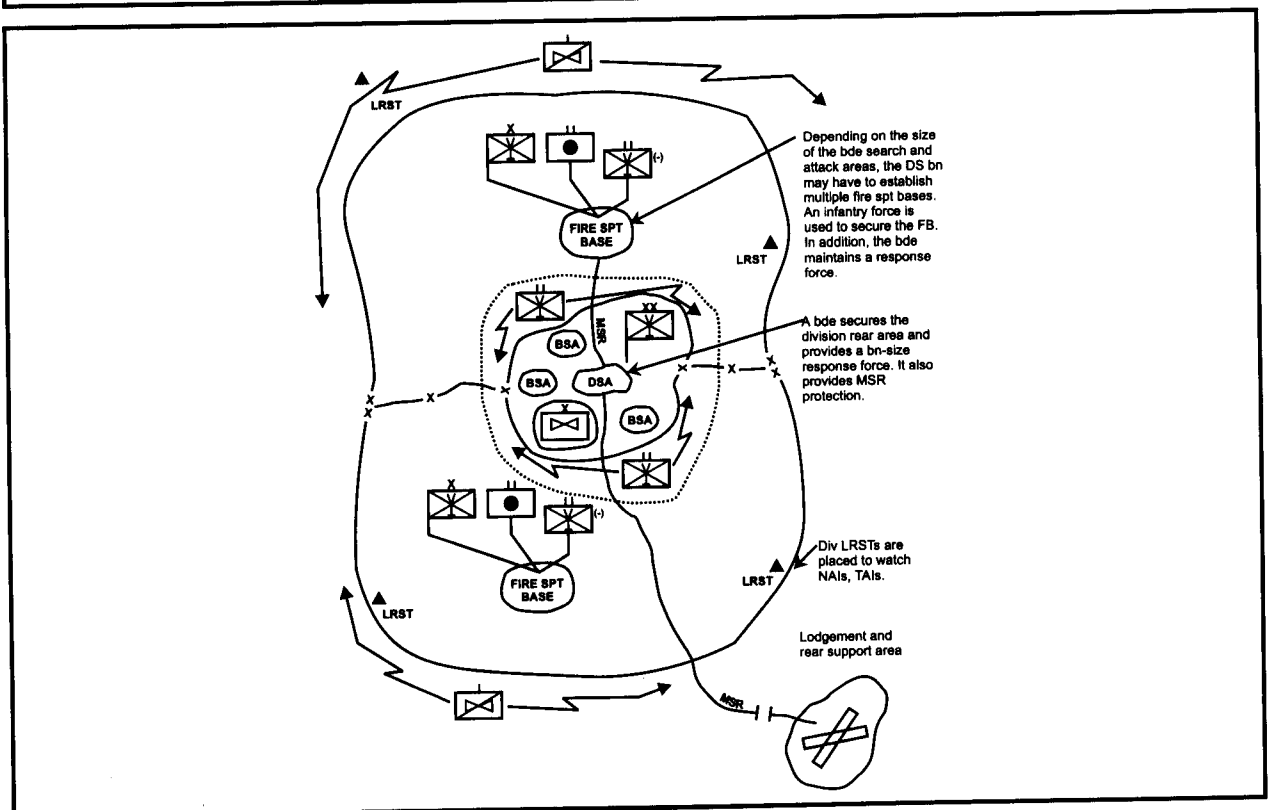
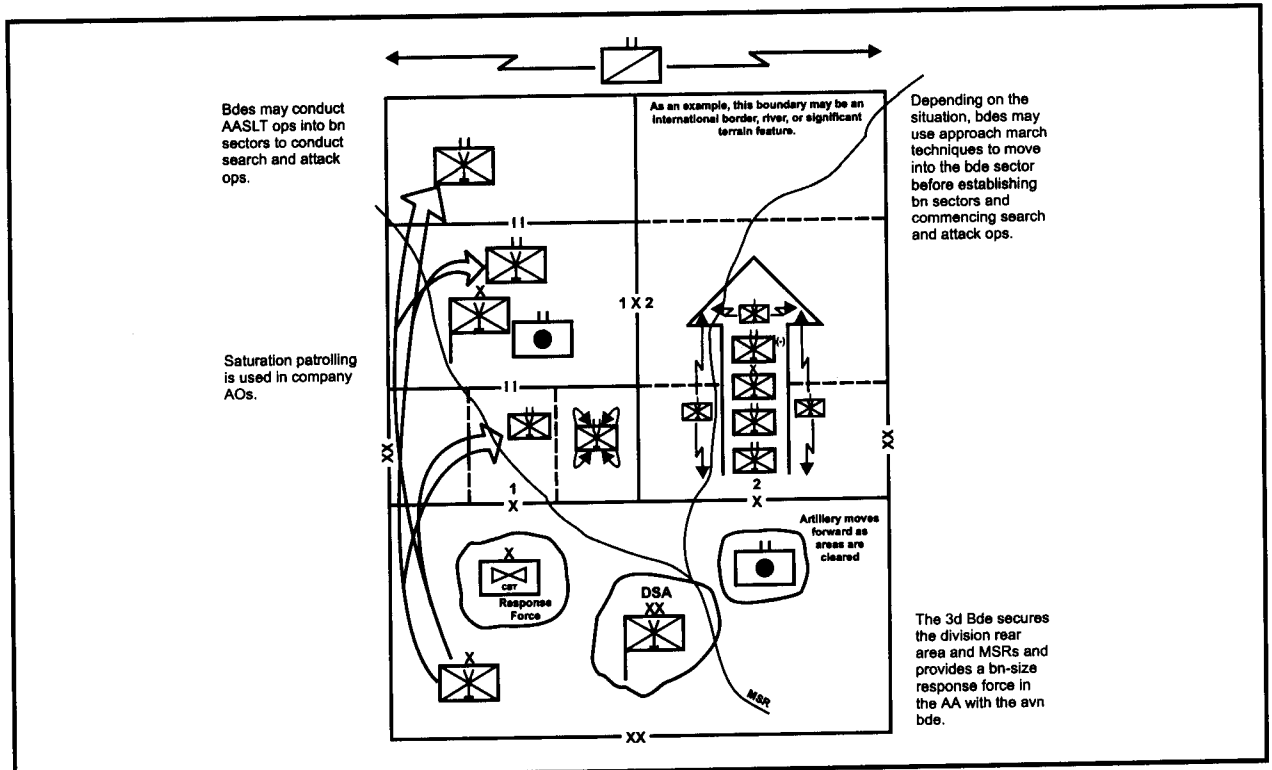


Figure 3-17. Division assignments of brigade AOs

1st Bde	2d Bde	3d Bde
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn
—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn	—Inf Bn
—Aslt Avn Bn (OPCON)	—Aslt Avn Bn (OPCON)	—Aslt Avn Bn (OPCON)
—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)	—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)	—FA Bn (105-mm (T)) (DS)
—Engr Co (L)	—Engr Co (L)	—Engr Co (L)
—ADA Btry (-) (DS)	—ADA Btry (-) (DS)	—ADA Btry (-) (DS)
<b>Division Troops</b>	<b>DIVARTY</b>	<b>Aviation Brigade</b>
—Cav Sqdn	—FA Btry (155-mm (T))	—Atk Bn
—Engr Bn (-)	—FA Bde (-) (R)	—Atk Bn
—Lt Engr Equip Co (DS)/xxx	—FA Bn (155-mm (SP))	—Atk Bn
—ADA Bn (-)	—FA Bn (155-mm (SP))	—Med Aslt Avn Bn
—MI Bn		—Cbt Spt Avn Bn
—MP Co		
—MP Co/xxx (OPCON)		
—CA Co (-)/xxx		
—PSYOP Co (-)/xxx		
<b>DISCOM</b>		
—MSB		
—FSB		
—FSB		
—FSB		
—AVIM Bn		
—Trk Co/xxx		
—Air Amb Co		

**Figure 3-18. Task organization:  
search and attack**

surveillance until the brigade can shift reinforcements or blocking forces as required. If the fixing force meets a more powerful opponent, it might have to withdraw or assume a hasty defense, pending reinforcement.

**Fighting or Finishing.** When a contact arises, or intelligence indicates the presence of a vulnerable enemy element, friendly forces must entrap or encircle the hostile force. The AATF attacks those contacts most likely to pay off in destruction of enemy capability and production of new intelligence. They continue to fight until a decisive finish occurs and they have destroyed or captured enemy forces. This necessitates rapid, precise placement of strong maneuver forces.

In search and attack missions, the AATF's reserve stands by with its aircraft in PZ posture, ready to attack once conditions are set. It air assaults on,

TF 4-502		
Tm A	Tm B	Tm C
1 Plt/A	1 Plt/B	1 Plt/C
2 Plt/A	2 Plt/B	2 Plt/c
3 Plt/A	3 Plt/B	3 Plt/C
SEC Plt	4 Plt/D	Mort Sec
Mort Sec	5 Plt/D	3/4/B/2-44 ADA
1/4/B/2-44 ADA	Mort Sec	3/4/B/326 Engr
LLVI 1/B/311 MI	2/3/B/2-44 ADA	2/3/288 PSYOP
LLVI 2/B/311 MI	4/B/326 Engr (-)	
GSR 1/B/311 MI	1/3/288 PSYOP	
GSR 2/B/311 MI		
TF Control		
<b>Tm D</b>		
1 Plt/D		
2 Plt/D		
3 Plt/D		
4/4/B/2-44 ADA		
TF Main CP		
Mort Plt		
Tm B/TF 9-101 (OPCON)		
4/B/2-44 ADA (-)		
1/415 CA		
3/288 PSYOP (-)		
Cbt Tns		

**Figure 3-19. Air assault battalion  
TF task organization: search and attack**

or as close as possible to, the fixed enemy or CSS site and destroys him.

The fighting or finishing unit gathers prisoners, documents, and artifacts to feed the "find" part of the continuing cycle. A typical search and attack tempo might take up to a week to find, a day to fix, and another day to fight or finish the mission. Exact times depend on METT-T, but in any case, fixing, and especially finishing, proceed rapidly.

### Maneuver

The success of search and attack operations depends on carefully searching for the enemy and, on finding him, massing superior forces to destroy him. On finding an enemy force, friendly units take one of several actions.

If the searching force is able to mass sufficient combat power to overwhelm the enemy, it may conduct a hasty or deliberate attack to destroy the enemy force. If it is not able to mass sufficient combat power, it may keep the enemy force under



surveillance until reinforcement and fixing forces arrive. If a larger enemy force discovers the search and attack force, the smaller force may have to withdraw or assume a hasty defense pending reinforcement.

When contact occurs, or intelligence indicates the presence of an enemy force, friendly units entrap or encircle the enemy force. In most cases it is not sufficient to use only an attacking force and a blocking force.

Ground combat units cover the most likely routes of withdrawal; light reconnaissance elements cover the less likely routes. Units use air or other mobile means to emplace and/or extract forces to exploit time and space advantages.

Commanders rapidly adjust plans to enemy movements and alter schemes of maneuver to fix and destroy the enemy. Speed and deception characterize tactical maneuver. While speed is essential, commanders must pay meticulous attention to continuous provision of air, artillery, and if available, NGF support.

## Intelligence

There are three intelligence methods in search and attack operations: reconnaissance, human intelligence (HUMINT), and aerial surveillance and acquisition.

**Reconnaissance.** Aggressive, continuous reconnaissance is essential in all search and attack operations. Saturation patrolling by platoon- or squad-size units, either on foot or delivered by helicopter, is a prime source of information. The AASLT division should immediately exploit these enemy contacts. Commanders understand and accept that searching is time-consuming and can only be effective if done methodically.

The division LRSD observes likely enemy avenues of approach. It also observes and reports on areas the G2 identifies as potential enemy base camps or cache sites.

Because some of these operations may occur within brigade areas of responsibility (AORs), the G2 closely coordinates the collection plan with brigades and exchanges information to prevent fratricide or duplication of effort. (Using LRSDs is in

addition to the acquisition efforts of brigades and battalions.)

The division cavalry squadron is also an integral part of intelligence acquisition. The squadron is normally retained in GS of the division. The G2, through the G3, tasks both air and ground elements with intelligence-collection tasks.

Like the LRSD, the squadron operates within brigade AORs and must be part of the overall acquisition plan. The division does not give these assets to brigades for their use.

Special operations forces within the division AOR are another important intelligence-acquisition source. The division can request special reconnaissance missions through the corps or JTF or joint special operations TF headquarters. Division forces must know the locations and missions of SOFs to prevent fratricide and duplication of effort.

**Human Intelligence.** The division can obtain information on enemy forces by establishing close liaison with province, district, and village leaders. Frequent visits to local villages by searching forces (such as MP, HN, or security forces) often yield accurate and timely information on local enemy forces. This technique is especially effective if enemy forces have oppressed the local population.

**Aerial Surveillance and Acquisition.** Aerial platforms yield valuable information on enemy forces. The division should maximize infrared detection, visual observation, and communications intercept.

## Fire Support

Divisional units receive fire support during search and attack operations by artillery, mortars, attack helicopters, CAS aircraft, and when available, NGF. Brigades establish fire support bases for supporting artillery and organic mortars within brigade AOs.

Bases provide complete coverage of the AO and are mutually supporting. Establishing bases often requires insertion and resupply by helicopters.

Sufficient security forces must be on hand for protection. Units must fully fortify fire support bases and ensure they have all-around security including countermobility obstacles and survivability positions.

Attack helicopters normally operate from the division rear area and do not locate within the search AO. The aviation brigade ensures the positioning of these assets to provide rapid and responsive fire support when divisional units locate enemy units.

### Air Defense

Normally, enemy forces will not have air assets in this environment. In most cases, the division only requires ADA if it conducts operations close to a hostile nation which possesses an offensive air capability. The division G3 normally positions AD assets in the division rear area.

### Mobility and Survivability

The division engineer allocates engineers to the brigades primarily to support mobility, countermobility, and survivability requirements in the close fight and for rear area operations. The division engineer normally task-organizes engineers in a command relationship based on the nature of decentralized, small-scale, search and attack techniques. Typical missions requiring engineer effort include engineer reconnaissance, breach operations, ammunition cache destruction, route or MSR clearance, and protective obstacle support.

### Combat Service Support

DISCOM normally provides CSS for units conducting search and attack operations on an area support basis. Resupply is normally by both ground and air, depending on terrain. Medical evacuation normally is by aerial evacuation to brigade rear support areas.

Increases in Class V small arms, hand grenades, Claymores, and mortar and artillery ammunition normally occur. Forward-deployed units are normally resupplied with small arms by air. Convoy escorts are critical to protect resupply efforts. Units must ensure they maintain security for LOCs and supply locations.

### Battle Command

During search and attack operations, the division TAC CP normally deploys forward in the AO, generally near a major reserve force. The TAC CP's

primary mission is to provide division-level intelligence and attack assets to maneuver brigades. The TAC CP commands and controls all division assets in support of search and attack operations, including the cavalry squadron in GS to the division and the three AHBs initially under aviation brigade control.

Although C<sup>2</sup> of search operations in search and attack operations is usually decentralized, for maximum effectiveness the division and brigades must centralize C<sup>2</sup> of the attack portion. Once a friendly unit establishes contact with an enemy force, the division or brigade immediately masses combat power to prevent the enemy's escape.

The division controls helicopter assets that brigades and battalions need to mass combat power. The main CP makes these assets available as quickly as possible.

### Rear Operations

The division normally maintains a rear area with division support elements and the aviation brigade. Depending on the tactical situation, at least one brigade probably secures this area, which may be adjacent to the search and attack AOs or some distance away.

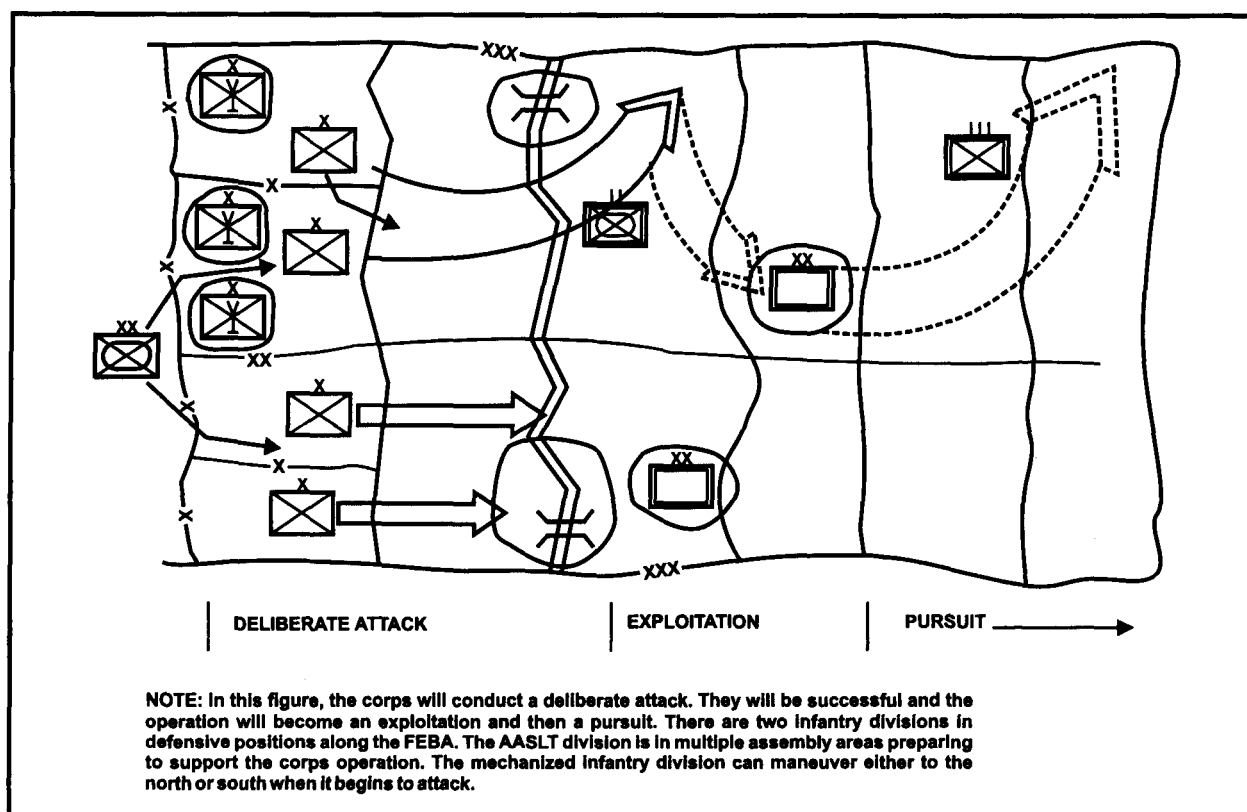
Both the main and rear CPs locate in the secured area. The rear CP is responsible for rear operations.

## EXPLOITATION AND PURSUIT

A division conducts exploitation and pursuit operations to take advantage of a weakened or collapsed enemy defense. The exploitation's purpose is to prevent the enemy from reconstituting a defense and withdrawing to other defensible terrain and to destroy his C<sup>2</sup>. Figure 3-20 depicts a corps exploitation and pursuit operation.

The AASLT division transitions to exploitation when the enemy cannot maintain or reestablish a coherent defense. For example, he may have lost major portions of his C<sup>2</sup> structure; his AD, artillery, logistic assets; and the mobile reserves he could have used to restore the situation.

Because AASLT forces rapidly jump intervening terrain, they perform well in shaping the battlefield to prevent enemy reconstitution of a defense. The



**Figure 3–20. Corps-level exploitation and pursuit**

division reserve often enters action to exploit a successful main attack.

The division exploits in a combination of movements to contact, hasty attacks, and deliberate attacks. Air assault operations easily traverse rivers, swamps, forests, and mountains to secure key ground to cut off enemy movements. The division seizes FOBs and builds airheads into FOBs to create launching pads for a relentless series of aerial operations.

Raids go deep to continue the destruction of enemy AD, artillery, command facilities, CSS, and mobile reserves. Intelligence and CSS deserve special attention during exploitations. As the enemy dissolves and the battlefield deepens, both systems strain to meet the AASLT division's needs.

The division uses USAF reconnaissance; joint surveillance, target attack radar system (JSTARS) tracks; and Army aviation as principal means of seeing deep. Air cavalry troops and AHBs conduct reconnaissance and screen flanks to maintain

contact and to guide and support follow-on and AASLT forces.

The division pushes MI electronic collectors out with combined-arms raids and air assaults. Analysts focus on enemy unit movement (speed, size, type of formation, direction, and so on) and emitters (type, location, movement, numbers, and soon) as they try to update a dynamic IPB template.

Logisticians use FOBs, logistic assault bases (LABs), and a network of MSRs and FARPs to sustain air and ground movements. With bypassed enemy platoons and fragments all across the zone, the division will most likely commit up to a brigade to secure these vulnerable, valuable CSS nodes.

During an exploitation, the division assumes risks on flanks, in the rear, and in planning deep operations. When pressed, an exploitation sets conditions for a pursuit. The exploitation may follow a deliberate or hasty attack when—

- The enemy is unable to maintain or establish a defense.

- Friendly forces overrun enemy artillery and C<sup>2</sup> positions.
- There is an increase in captured enemy equipment and EPWs.
- Friendly forces capture enemy supply dumps.

Pursuit normally follows a successful exploitation. A pursuit is designed to catch or cut off a hostile enemy force attempting to escape with the aim of destroying it.

Friendly units transition to pursuit when the enemy ceases to try to defend or counterattack and attempts to break contact and getaway (normally in a highly disorganized manner). Once forces begin the pursuit, they do not stop until they have destroyed the enemy.

A pursuit operation involves a direct pressure force to prevent enemy disengagement and an encircling force to get into the enemy's rear area to block or prevent escape. The direct-pressure force attacks day and night to drive the fleeing foe into the trap set by the encircling force. Once the direct-pressure force gets the enemy into the designated EA, USAF strikes, fires, and maneuver finish him off.

The commander normally uses a direct-pressure force, usually the lead force from the exploitation,

and an enveloping force to block the enemy's escape. The intent is to catch the enemy between these two forces and destroy him.

The AASLT division pursues on its own or, preferably, as part of a coordinated corps or JTF operation. Its attack aviation can provide direct pressure, although the preferred method is for an OPCON armored brigade or a coordinated armored division to perform this role. An AASLT brigade sent to secure a choke point and block enemy withdrawal offers an ideal means of completing the encircling task. (See Figure 3-21.)

In pursuit, the AASLT division's aerial envelopments are usually continuous. Brigades may air assault, destroy an enemy force, consolidate, build up a LAB or FOB, then prepare to conduct and execute another AASLT operation. Operations will likely continue in daylight (a deviation from the usual practice on air assaults and raids) because of the acceptable risks friendly forces encounter when the enemy is in a completely disorganized retreat.

The division maintains the momentum until the enemy has been destroyed or surrenders. The transition from exploitation to pursuit normally begins when—

- The division advances without a strong enemy reaction.

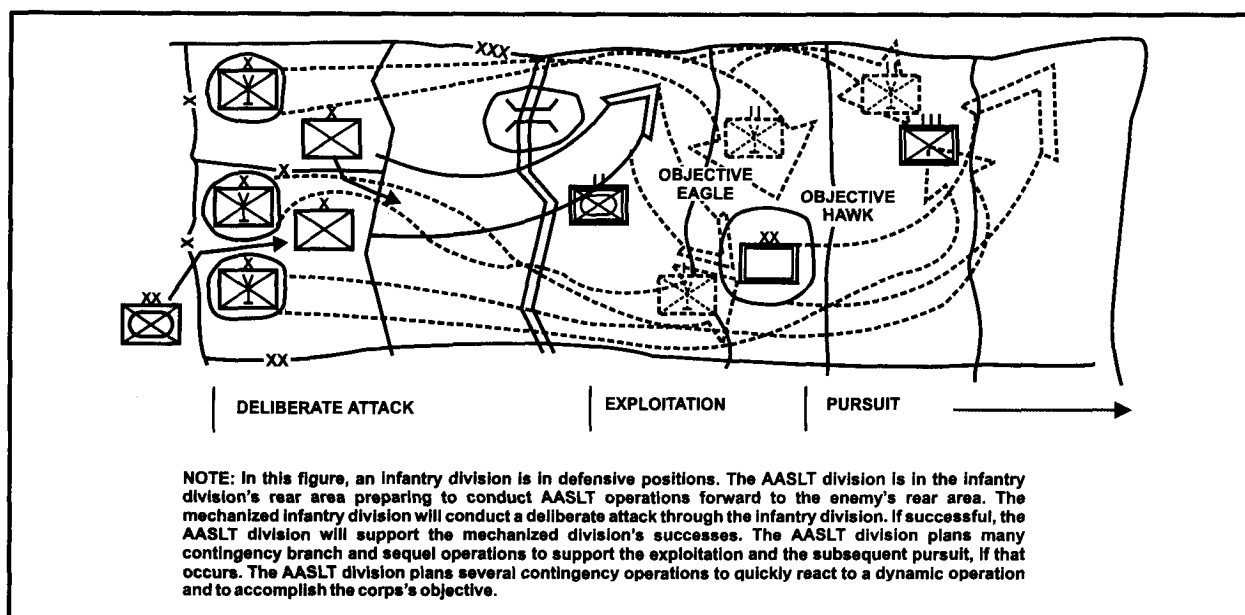


Figure 3-21. An AASLT division supporting a corps pursuit operation

- Friendly forces encounter an increased number of EPWs, abandoned weapons, and unburied enemy dead.
- There is a lessening of enemy artillery fire.
- Enemy obstacles are lacking.

Decentralized execution characterizes exploitation and pursuit operations. However, the corps commander and his staff continuously monitor exploitation and pursuit operations. They ensure the division does not overextend the corps to keep it from being put at risk by an enemy counterattack.

Although transitioning from the attack to exploitation and pursuit may present a major opportunity to destroy enemy forces, commanders must exercise extreme care. Too rapid an advance risks overextending lines of supply (LOS) and LOC. This may give the enemy an opportunity to isolate the pursuing force or to counterattack into an exposed flank.

The transition from deliberate attack to exploitation and pursuit may be abrupt or so gradual it is hardly distinguishable from current operations. Once the transition occurs, commanders ensure units make every effort to maintain pressure on the enemy.

Small enemy units are bypassed by the direct-pressure force unless they are a threat to the division or cannot be bypassed. Maneuver elements of the division main body or follow and support operations of other units destroy bypassed forces. The exploiting force directs follow and support units to enemy positions.

The AASLT division executes exploitation and pursuit operations in much the same way as the ID(L) executes these operations. The most significant difference is the amount of organic aviation the AASLT division has.

The commander uses his AHBs as a direct-pressure force if he does not have an armored force. The mobility and firepower of attack helicopters make them an ideal asset for the direct-pressure force.

If an armored force is available for the direct-pressure force mission, the commander can use attack helicopters to attack enemy forces from the flanks. Assault helicopters also have a significant

capability to place infantry forces into blocking positions using organic assets. The AASLT division performs exploitation and pursuit operations similar to those of an ID (L), but they have the capability to move much faster.

NOTE: See also FM 71-100-2, Chapter 3.

## FOLLOW AND SUPPORT

The corps or JTF may assign the follow and support mission to the AASLT division. As a follow and support force, the division is a committed force. It follows a force conducting an offensive operation (normally a pursuit or exploitation).

As a follow and support force, the division must retain the agility and flexibility to respond rapidly to the needs of the supported force. The follow and support force may require MP, MI, and PSYOP assets to meet these capabilities:

- Destroy bypassed units.
- Relieve in place any direct pressure or encircling force which has halted to contain the enemy.
- Block movement of reinforcements.
- Secure LOCs.
- Secure EPWs, key areas, and installations.
- Secure key terrain.
- Control refugees.

The follow and support mission requires centralized planning and decentralized execution. The division can expect to commit elements piecemeal, from company to battalion size, when reacting to bypass situations the lead division creates.

Because of transportation mobility differences, the AASLT division might need ground transportation augmentation to achieve mobility comparable to that of the division they are following and supporting. When committed, the AASLT division moves its units via helicopters. With this exception, the AASLT division conducts follow and support missions similar to those of the ID (L).

NOTE: See also FM 71-100-2, Chapter 3.