

CHAPTER 4

EXECUTION

Purpose

This chapter focuses on execution. The intent is to portray for the FSO how a fire support plan could be executed. This chapter addresses the following key items:

- Ž Use of a fire support rehearsal.
- Ž Fire support coordinating measures.
- Ž Schedules of fire.
- Ž COLT employment.

Ž Use of planned TACAIR missions.

The chapter includes two examples – one for the offense and one for the defense. The plan for each scenario was developed in Chapter 3. The example solutions are not to be considered the best or only ways to execute the plans. Instead, they are examples that demonstrate how to effectively employ and manage various fire support assets. Only brigade, battalion, and Company B targets are plotted.

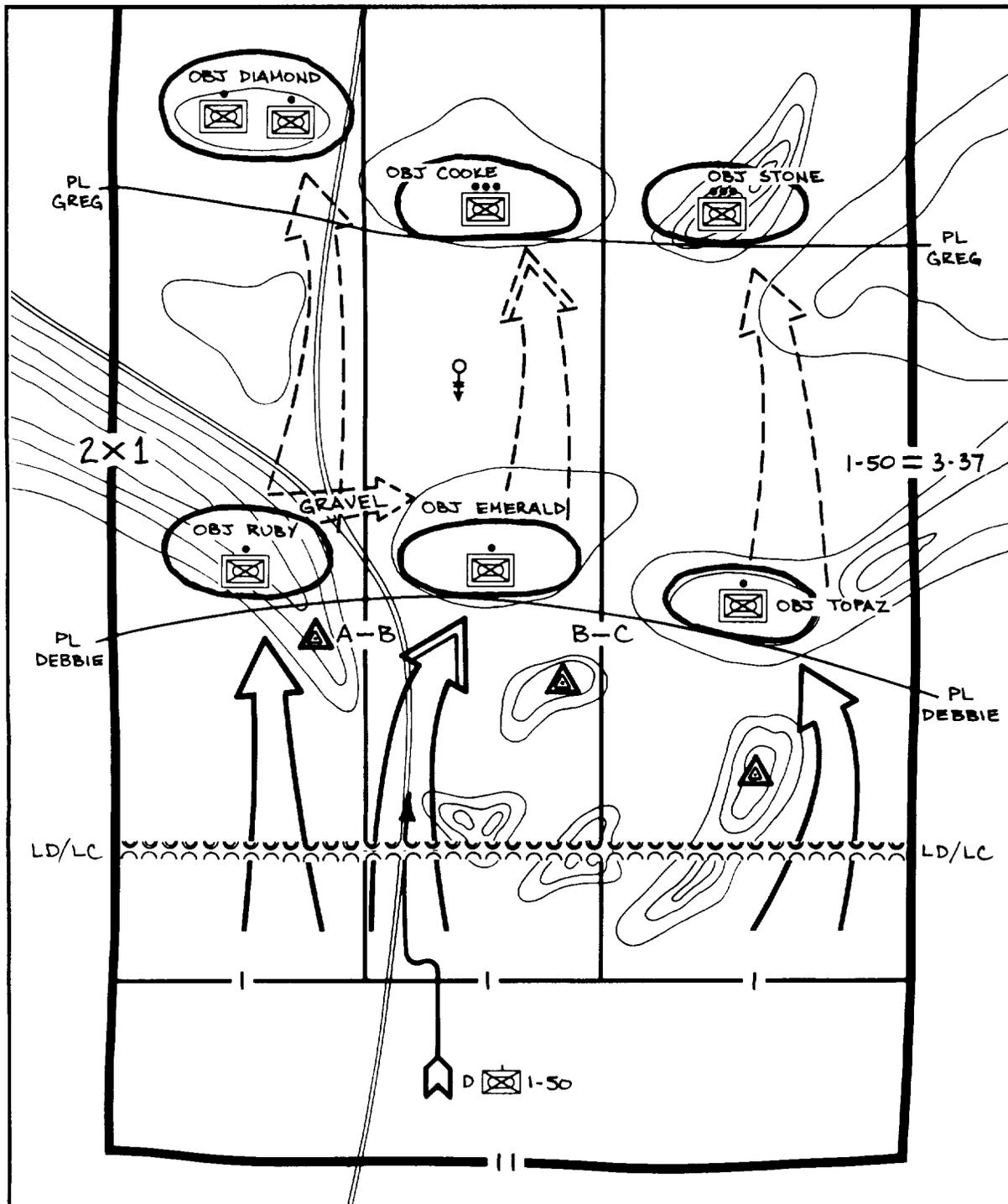
EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DELIBERATE ATTACK

The night before the attack, the battalion commander conducted a map rehearsal of the OPORD with all commanders and FSOs and the battalion staff. Since the OPORD had been briefed earlier in the day, commanders had had time to get back to their units with their FSOs and make initial plans for the upcoming operation. Before the rehearsal started, the maneuver battalion S2 updated the intelligence situation, which included a refined location for the mortar position (Target AA0072). This walk-through was a back-brief to the battalion commander, updated with new intelligence, on how prepared the units were for the attack and how well they understood his intent. As the rehearsal progressed through the phases of the operation, each commander discussed how he would execute his part of the attack. At the same time, each FSO using his fire support execution matrix explained how the fire support would be executed as the battle unfolds. The ALO interjected that the CAS will take 20 minutes to get on station once alerted. The battalion

commander directed the CAS to scramble as soon as the companies begin to move toward their final objectives. The commander estimated it will take 30 minutes to reach those objectives. As the rehearsal progressed, the battalion commander realized that from his position he could not observe any enemy movement beyond the intermediate objectives to trigger interdiction of enemy moving to reinforce the intermediate objectives. The FSO suggested requesting an AFSO for that observation. Also, the battalion commander determined that alternate attack means other than CAS had not been planned on CAS targets. Therefore, he told the FSO to request the AFSO and to ensure that alternate attack methods were planned. Satisfied that the battalion at all levels had developed a cohesive plan that fully incorporated and synchronized fire support assets into the scheme of maneuver, the commander ended the rehearsal. He was confident that, with minor last-minute preparations, the battalion was prepared for the upcoming battle.

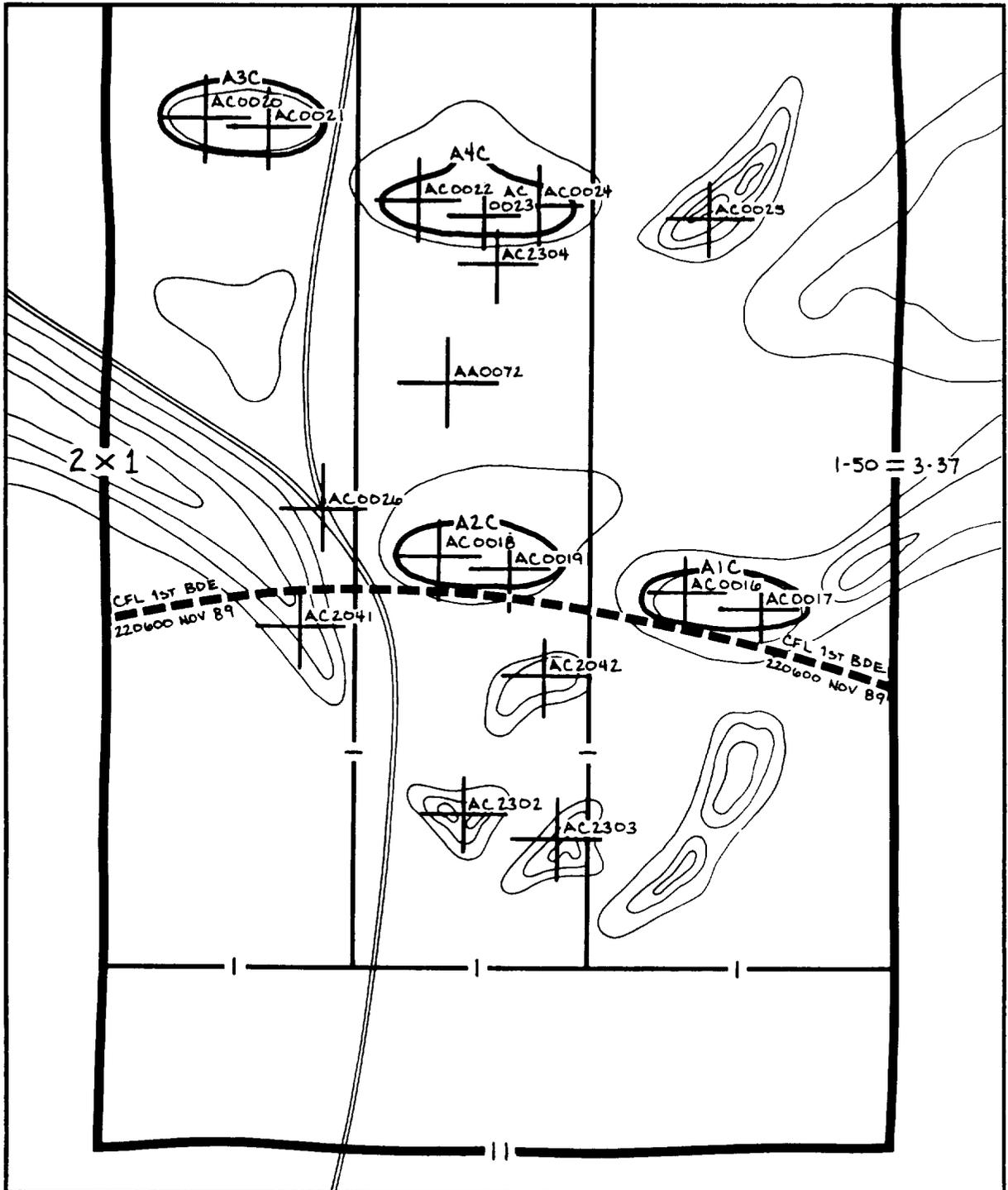
EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DELIBERATE ATTACK (CONTINUED)

BATTALION OFFENSIVE DIAGRAM



EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DELIBERATE ATTACK (CONTINUED)

BATTALION OFFENSIVE TARGET OVERLAY



EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DELIBERATE ATTACK (CONTINUED)

BATTALION FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION MATRIX

	AA	LD/LC	PL DEBBIE	PL GREG	FINAL OBJECTIVE
A	MORT 2 POF	MORT 2 POF O/O FA POF	MORT 2 POF O/O FA POF MORT 2 PRI TBT AC0026	MORT 2 POF	5
B	FA POF MORT 1 POF	FA POF MORT 1 POF 155 PRI TBT AC2042 GP A2C	FA POF 155 PRI TBT AA 0072	FA POF	4
C		GP A1C			3
D			O/O FA POF		2
BN				GP A3C, A4C F-No (GROUND ALERT) 0830-1230	1
	A	B	C	D	E

← 2 COLTS →

At 0600 the next day, the 1-50 Mech crossed the LD/LC to attack and seize battalion intermediate and final objectives as shown in the offensive diagram. With three companies abreast, the battalion was moving as fast as possible in the haze of early morning. As each platoon and company reported its progress and position, no indication was given that the enemy was aware of the attack. Suddenly, heavy mortar and artillery fires impacted across Company C forward elements, causing Company C to slow down and button up. The battalion FSO traveling with the battalion commander behind Company B immediately requested that the counterfire program be fired.

As the counterfire program was fired, the fires impacting on Company C became less intense; however, intense direct fires are now being received by all companies. Vehicles of each company began generating smoke from their smoke generators to better screen their movements. The FSOs request that Groups A1C and A2C be fired. Company A FSO requests smoke on Target AC2202, Company C wants smoke on Target AC2441, and Company B wants smoke short of the intermediate objective. The battalion FSO begins sorting out the calls for fire and approves the Company B request using the battalion mortars.

EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DELIBERATE ATTACK (CONTINUED)

Company B is now meeting very heavy resistance and has lost several vehicles and personnel. The FSO for Company B is constantly requesting FA fires to suppress the enemy and smoke to screen the company. The battalion FSO directs that Group A2C be fired again to suppress active enemy positions on Objective EMERALD.

Company A is making good progress. The FSO for Company A is keeping the battalion mortars busy suppressing the enemy antitank positions and firing targets. The Company A FSO then reports that the company lead elements are about to reach PL DEBBIE. At this time, all indirect fires are shifted beyond Objective RUBY as the company makes the final assault onto that objective. Also, the CFL on PL DEBBIE is cancelled and the CFL on PL GREG is put into effect.

The battalion commander is concerned that the battalion is taking too long to seize EMERALD and TOPAZ. He's worried that the enemy (possible motorized rifle company) at Objective COOKE will move forward to reinforce. The battalion FSO suggests firing Group A4C to try to hold the enemy in place at Objective COOKE or at least to slow his movement. The commander agrees and Group A4C is fired. Company A has seized Objective RUBY. The battalion FSO contacts the COLT with Company A, and he determines the COLT can observe Objective COOKE and cannot see any movement. Therefore, the FSO tails the commander there is no need to fire Group A4C yet.

Meanwhile, Company C is crossing PL DEBBIE in the final assault on Objective TOPAZ, and Company B is stalled in the vicinity of AC2042. The Company B fire support sergeant, who took over for the wounded FSO, continues to direct FA fires against the enemy bunkers and mortar smoke to screen friendly movement.

The battalion commander issues frag orders to Company A to attack Objective EMERALD from the flank along Axis GRAVEL to relieve pressure on Company B. An RFL is not established because of the lack of identifiable terrain and the fluid enemy situation. The battalion FSO contacts the FSOs of Companies A and B to tell them that all requests for fire must be cleared through him to preclude fratricide.

in the meantime, the battalion FSO has received a report from the mortar platoon leader that mortar smoke is critically low. The commander and FSO must decide whether to expend all the smoke to screen the Company B assault on Objective EMERALD or to save some smoke to screen the battalion assault on the final objectives. The commander decides to save the smoke. The battalion FSO contacts the company FSOs and the mortars to tail them to fire no more smoke until the battalion attacks the final objectives.

The Company B fire support sergeant reports to the battalion FSO that suppressive fires are ineffective because the enemy is well dug in and that his company is making little progress without the smoke. The battalion FSO directs that HE-delay be fired against the fortifications.

The Company A flank assault against Objective EMERALD is also meeting stiff resistance. Company C has consolidated on Objective TOPAZ. The battalion commander directs Company C to monitor the enemy situation in the vicinity of Objectives COOKE and STONE and be prepared to move out. Forty-five seconds later, one bunker is completely destroyed with HE-delay. Five minutes later, two more bunkers are destroyed and Company B is now able to continue the advance.

EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DELIBERATE ATTACK (CONTINUED)

Minutes later, Companies A and B have consolidated on Objective EMERALD. The battalion commander tells them to be prepared to assault their final objectives within 30 minutes.

Before the final assault, the battalion FSO contacts the brigade FSO, the DS battalion, the battalion mortars, and each company FSO –

- Ž To get an update on the status of fire support assets and ammunition availability.
- Ž To receive any new Intelligence and targets.
- Ž To update his target list.
- Ž To revise the fire support plan, if necessary.
- Ž TO request a replacement from the brigade FSO for the wounded FSO of Company B.

Before the assault begins on Objective STONE, the AFSO reports three BMPs moving south toward Objective TOPAZ. Behind these BMPs, he also sees another BMP with several antennas. The AFSO fires a Copperhead mission on the last BMP. At the same time, Company C FSO fires DPICM against the three lead BMPs. The AFSO reports the suspected command vehicle has been destroyed and one of the three BMPs is disabled. The other two are withdrawing back to the north.

The commander orders the battalion to move out to seize their final objectives. The battalion FSO tells the ALO to scramble the CAS.

The battalion is moving quickly now, meeting sporadic light resistance. The battalion FSO requests that Groups A3C and A4C be fired to keep the enemy down and in place. Before the

rounds impact, the enemy opens up with direct and indirect fires. Suddenly, the rounds impact on Groups A3C and A4C, and the enemy direct fires are temporarily suppressed. The companies quickly get into position to assault their objectives. The battalion FSO cancels the CFL on PL GREG and puts into effect another preplanned CFL beyond the final objectives. He also informs the company FSOs, the mortars, and the FA units that the smoke restriction is now lifted. Almost immediately, the battalion mortars and the FA begin shooting smoke rounds to screen friendly movement.

Before the CAS arrives, the battalion FSO and ALO agree on the IP to be used and the egress instructions. They confirm a 30-second time separation. The battalion FSO contacts the FDC to reinitiate Group A4C and Target AC0025. He directs that the last round fired on AC0025 be white phosphorus. He establishes and initiates a 3-minute series with the last valleys to impact 5 minutes from his time hack. The FSO coordinates the time sequence with the ALO. Thirty seconds after the impact of the WP, the F-16s and A-7s strike Objectives COOKE and STONE. Companies B and C cross PL GREG. Companies B and C are now able to very quickly consolidate on both objectives. Company A had more trouble with its objective but is eventually successful. The Company A FSO engages the enemy with indirect fire as the enemy forces withdraw north along the road.

The FSOs now analyze the terrain around them, discuss possible targets with their respective commanders, refine their target lists, and plan or adjust PPFs to support the battalion against counterattacks. Also, they continue planning for the next operation.

EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DEFENSE IN SECTOR

The night before the expected enemy attack, the battalion commander conducted a rehearsal on the actual terrain to be defended the next day. In attendance were all commanders and FSOs and the battalion staff. Since the OPORD had been briefed earlier in the day, commanders had had time to get back to their units and make initial plans for the upcoming defense. This rehearsal on the terrain showed the battalion commander how well prepared his units were for the next day's events and how well they understood his intent. It also allowed personnel to check communications by using alternate frequencies. The S2 gave an Intelligence update. As the walk-through progressed, each commander (using the maneuver execution matrix as a guide) demonstrated his execution of the plan and described how he would react if everything didn't go according to the plan. At the same time each FSO (using his fire support execution matrix) explained how the fire support would be executed as the battle unfolds. Trigger points, Copperhead and/or COLTs, and priority targets were discussed in detail. During this review, it was discovered that COLT 2 would need retransmission (retrans) capability to be effective. Also, to meet observer and firing unit positioning considerations, Battery C was designated as the Copperhead firing unit. The backup plan for executing priority targets was also reviewed. FASCAM emplacement on targets AR0001 and AR0003 was coordinated with the engineer representative. Satisfied that the battalion at all levels had developed a cohesive plan that fully incorporated and synchronized fire support assets into the scheme of maneuver, the commander ended the rehearsal. He was confident that, with minor last-minute preparations, the battalion was prepared for the next battle.

The battalion is now in the initial positions as shown in the battalion defensive diagram. The battalion scouts are deployed in a screen along PL BUICK. The division covering force has

already passed through the 2d Brigade. The two minefields and tank ditches have been completed and plotted on the obstacle overlay by the engineer representative in the battalion FS cell. The COLTs are deployed.

At 0420, the ground surveillance radar detects enemy movement to the front. At 0515, the scouts detect what they believe is an enemy patrol from a motorized rifle battalion approaching the forward obstacle at PL BUICK. The scouts, in well-concealed positions, allow this force to bypass the obstacle. The scouts can now see what is probably the enemy forward security element approaching the obstacle. This element consists of approximately a rifle company in BMPs and four medium tanks.

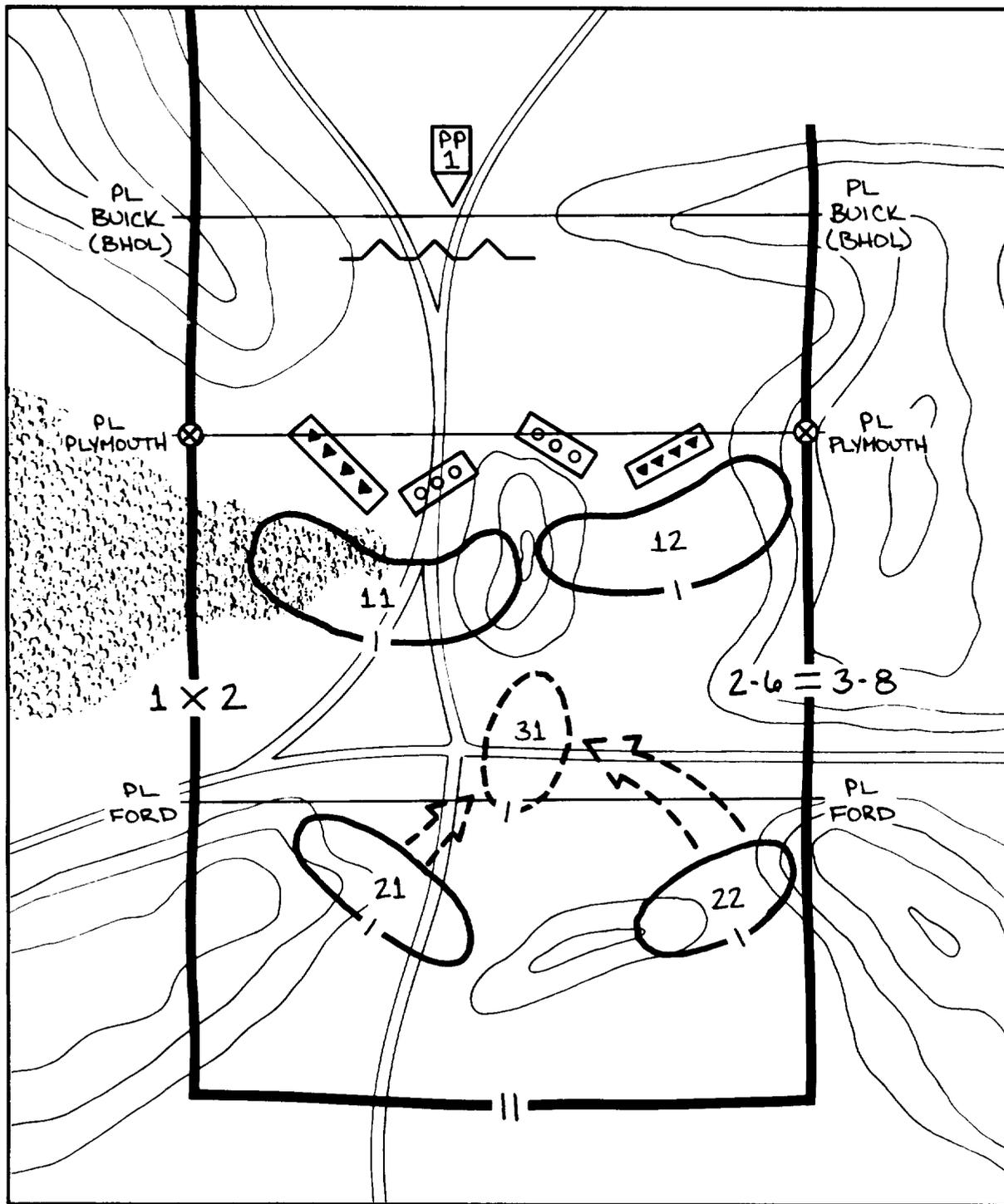
The position, strength, and rate of movement of the enemy forward security element are reported to the battalion command group forward. The battalion commander instructs the scouts to engage this enemy force when it comes into range. The scout platoon leader instructs the COLT to locate and engage the enemy company commander's vehicle.

The COLT locates the command vehicle, computes its rate of advance, and establishes a trigger point. The COLT completes the preformatted message, transmits it, and waits for the target to come into the Copperhead footprint before lasing it.

The COLT has also requested DPICM to button up the other vehicles. As the Copperhead round and DPICM impact, the scouts open fire with tube-launched, optically tracked, wire guided missiles (TOWs) against the enemy tanks and with their 25-mm guns against the BMPs. The surviving enemy vehicles immediately begin to generate smoke to conceal their positions and move toward defilade positions.

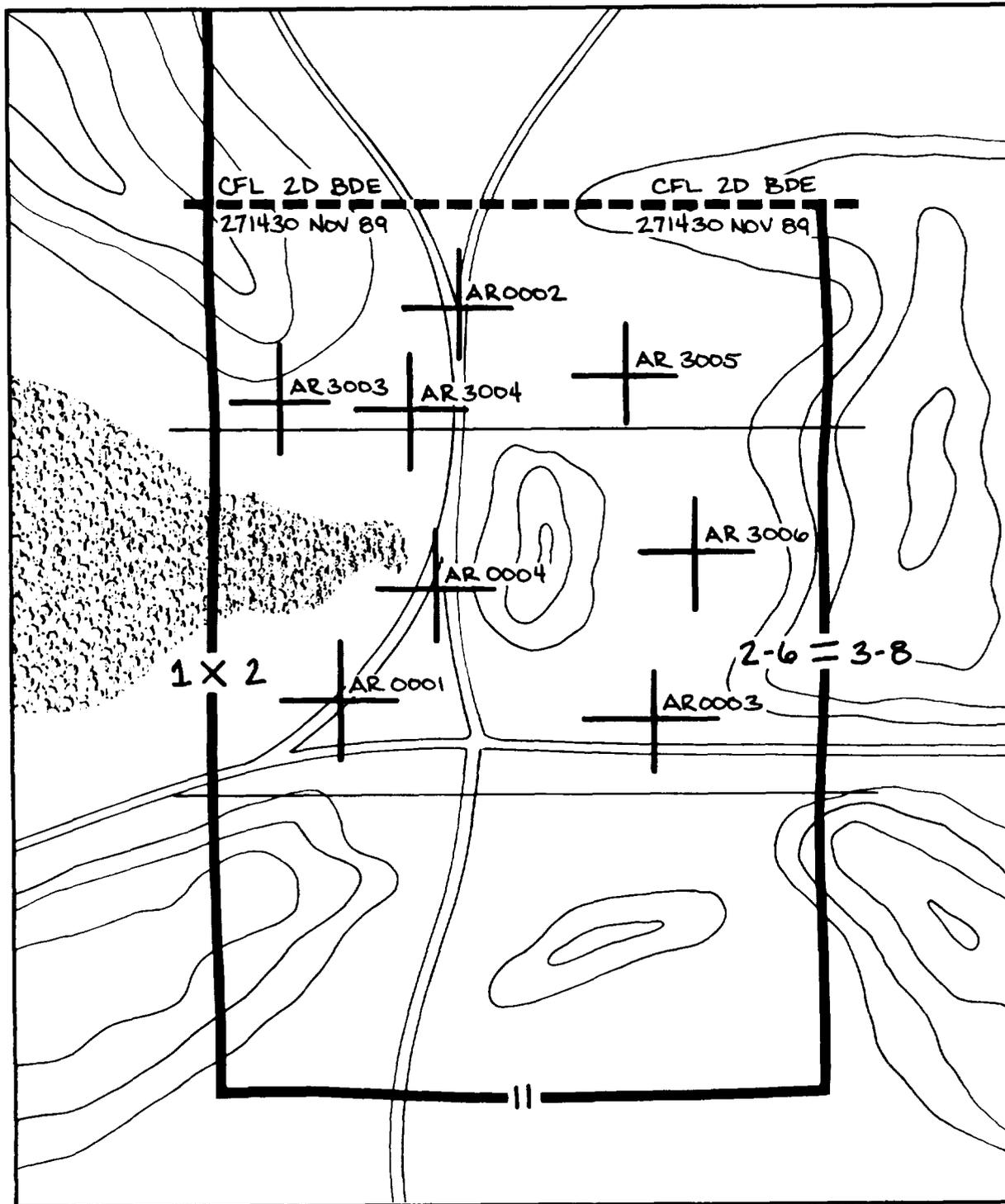
EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DEFENSE IN SECTOR (CONTINUED)

BATTALION DEFENSIVE DIAGRAM



EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DEFENSE IN SECTOR (CONTINUED)

BATTALION DEFENSIVE TARGET OVERLAY



EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DEFENSE IN SECTOR (CONTINUED)

BATTALION FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION MATRIX

	PL BUICK	PL PLYMOUTH	BPs 11 AND 12	BP 31	PL FORD
SCOUTS	FA POF 155 PRI TGT AR0002				6
A (BP 11)	O/O FA POF	FA POF 155 PRI TGT AR0004			5
B (BP 12)		MORT POF	MORT POF		4
C (BP 21)	FO TO SCOUTS		O/O FA POF	O/O FA POF 155 FPF	3
D (BP 22)			O/O FA POF	O/O FA POF MORT FPF	2
BN		SF-16 0400-1100 ? (A-10 0900-1100)	FASCAM AR0001/ AR0003		1
	← 2 COLTs →				
	A	B	C	D	E

The COLT uses a series of predetermined locations (trigger points) on likely avenues of approach to engage the fast-moving enemy. The COLT calls for fire as the enemy crosses the trigger points to ensure massed fires strike the enemy as he enters the engagement area.

The COLT sees a type 1 artillery command and reconnaissance vehicle (ACRV) moving toward the remaining BMPs in the engagement area. The COLT locates the ACRV, processes the mission, and directs a Copperhead round onto the enemy vehicle.

Enemy artillery is now impacting around the scout positions. The COLT reports this information to

the battalion FSO, who relays it to the brigade FSO. The brigade FSO requests counterfire. Three minutes later, **BATTALION 4 ROUNDS** is fired at the enemy artillery, temporarily silencing it.

The advance guard (battalion [-]) of the enemy force can now be seen approaching from the north in preassault formation. The enemy patrol that was allowed to bypass the scouts has now run into the obstacles in front of BPs 11 and 12, and one vehicle is disabled. The enemy engineer squad marks the obstacles while the other elements try to find gaps in the barriers. Companies A and B open fire and destroy the entire patrol.

EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DEFENSE IN SECTOR (CONTINUED)

Suddenly, extremely heavy artillery concentrations impact on Companies A and B and the forward elements. The battalion FSO, believing this is the start of the main attack, contacts the brigade FSO and requests that the counterpreparation be fired. The brigade commander approves the request, and the brigade FSO forwards the mission to the division FS cell. The request is approved, and soon the 10-minute division counterpreparation begins. Under the cover of the heavy artillery concentrations, the advance guard breaches and bypasses the forward obstacle, making the forward positions untenable. The battalion commander directs that the scouts withdraw to their position along the west flank of Company A. COLT 2 withdraws with the scouts. The CFL on PL BUICK is cancelled, and the CFL on PL PLYMOUTH is put into effect. COLT 2 positions itself on the hill mass in the vicinity of BP 21 observing to the northeast.

As soon as the lead company of the advance guard is within sight, the FOs of Companies A and B begin requesting fires to slow down and button up the enemy with DPICM. The lead enemy company now moves from prebattle formation to a wedge attack formation. The lead company also has two T-72s with the KMT-4 mine-clearing plows attached. The enemy attack seems to be heavier in front of Company A.

As enemy forces encounter the obstacles, they put the T-72s with mine-clearing plows in the front to try to force their way through. Both companies fire on the enemy while the company FSOs request fire on Targets AR3003, AR3004, and AR3005 to halt the enemy breaching attempt. TOWs fired at the mine-clearing vehicles disable one of the T-72s.

As the enemy force begins probing along the obstacles to find gaps, the Company A commander and FSO can see the enemy main

force moving up very quickly in prebattle formation. The FSO immediately requests all available fires to slow and canalize the main body. Four minutes later, fires from two battalions and two MLRS launchers impact along the length of the enemy main body. The battalion S3 air also requests the battalion CAS mission to attack the enemy main force. The battalion FSO will coordinate the FA WP marking rounds.

The enemy lead company at the obstacles has now dismounted its infantry, and forces have begun to move into the hills on the right flank of Company B. The enemy tanks and BMPs try to suppress Companies A and B to allow enemy Infantry to advance more quickly. However, the company FSOs request and receive battalion mortar fires against the dismounted infantry, causing the enemy forces to halt and take cover.

Enemy engineer vehicles are identified trying to clear the minefield to the front of Company A while a T-54 carrying an MT-55 bridge is seen moving toward the antitank ditch. The enemy begins building a heavy smoke screen to obscure the obstacle-breaching efforts. The Company A FSO requests a shift from Target AR3004 with DPICM to better engage the enemy while Company A tries to halt the breach with direct fires. Meanwhile, Company B is receiving sporadically intense fires from the dismounted enemy in the hills to the right of the Company B position.

The main body of the motorized rifle regiment (MRR), now 1 kilometer behind the lead battalion, moves behind the forest to the left flank of Company A and dismounts its infantry. The flank platoon FO requests VT on those dismounted enemy troops in the open. The rounds impact, causing approximately 30 casualties, but the enemy infantry troops are still able to get into the forest.

EXAMPLE OF FIRE SUPPORT EXECUTION FOR DEFENSE IN SECTOR (CONTINUED)

As the enemy armor forces move toward the Company A position, they are acquired by COLT 3. The COLT initiates a Copperhead mission. At the same time, the FSO receives word from the ALO that the aircraft is at the IP. The FSO cancels the Copperhead mission and directs the COLT to lase for the TACAIR. The FSO verifies the PRF codes and frequencies with the ALO and passes them to the COLT. The CAS mission then attacks the enemy formations, using a combination of Maverick and 30-mm cannon. The mission destroys three vehicles and disables five others.

As the smoke clears around the obstacles, the enemy can be seen driving across the emplaced bridge and through a lane in the mine-field to the front of Company A. Battalion mortars are employed against the enemy dismounted troops in the forest, who are beginning to put heavy pressure on the flank of Company A.

The battalion commander directs Company D to move to BP 31. The company FSO requests suppressive fires to slow the enemy advance until Company D reaches its next position. Target AR3004 is fired with DPICM and the FA-delivered FASCAM (Target AR0001) is also fired.

The enemy, in approximately battalion (-) strength, is now driving toward BP 21. COLT 2 to the rear of Company C detects, engages, and destroys another suspected command vehicle.

The battalion FSO requests all available fires (shell DPICM) from the brigade FSO. The brigade FSO contacts the division FS cell, requesting as much support as possible for the mission. The request is approved and the fires of four FA battalions impact on the lead enemy formation, destroying

or disabling seven vehicles and temporarily bringing the enemy advance to a halt.

The main enemy force is now within range of Company C in BP 21 and Company D in BP 31 and is within antitank weapon range. The battalion commander directs the FSO to reseed the breached minefield in front of BP 11. The FSO adjusts the FASCAM in from Target AR3004. As the enemy attack on BP 21 withers from heavy direct and indirect fires, Company A reestablishes BP 11.

All companies consolidate and begin to improve their positions in preparation for the enemy second echelon to attack. Company D reoccupies BP 22. The battalion is now at about 60 percent strength. Company A destroys the bridge emplaced over the antitank ditch. Engineer FASCAM is emplaced to close the gaps created by the enemy.

Before the next attack, the battalion FSO continues planning and coordinating fire support. He talks to the S2 and the targeting officer to find out what the enemy is likely to do next and how that impacts on the fire support plan and target list. He contacts the brigade FSO to get information on the status of fire support assets, their positions, and ammunition status. He also asks about changes to the priority of fires, if any, and changes to target lists. He must also determine the status of the battalion mortars. As he gathers all this information, he constantly updates the company FSOs.

Most importantly, he maintains constant contact with the battalion commander and S3 to provide input and make changes to the fire support plan on the basis of the commander's modifications to the scheme of maneuver.