
APPENDIX F
DOCTRINE, TACTICS TECHNIQUES, AND
PROCEDURES FOR CLEARANCE OF
INDIRECT FIRES IN THE CLOSE BATTLE

This appendix provides a discussion of clearance of fires in the close battle.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Firing units do a good job of focusing fires and preventing fratricide on targets planned and rehearsed before the battle begins. These fires meet the prerequisites for positive clearance of fires. They are developed through careful planning, thorough rehearsal, and intensive management of the FSCMs. These procedures maintain an acceptable level of responsiveness and force protection and are based on the scheme of fires supporting the scheme of maneuver.

DEFINING CLEARANCE OF FIRES IN THE CLOSE FIGHT

Experience gained from the combat training centers has identified problems in the clearance and prioritization of fires on targets of opportunity. Fires on these targets must provide the same level of force protection as on planned targets, without undue delay in responsiveness. Field artillerymen cannot allow the definition of positive clearance of fires to mean only fires that are safe and do not violate FSCMs. Clearance of fires must also mean that we attack the right targets (focus) with the appropriate FS assets (synchronize) to support the maneuver forces.

OBSERVERS AND INITIAL CLEARANCE PROCEDURES

All observers, maneuver or fire support, must meet several requirements to accomplish positive clearance of fires on unplanned targets. The forward observer must—

- Use the best available method of target location.
- Positively identify the target as the enemy.
- Be the initiator of the mission.
- Maintain eyes on the target.
- Coordinate the clearance of any targets outside his boundary.

By applying these rules, observers begin the positive clearance of the fires process.

SYNCHRONIZED CLEARANCE

To provide safe focused fires on unplanned targets, FSOs must use both the maneuver and FS nets that they monitor. For example, Team A FSO is on an avenue of approach that the enemy is unexpectedly attacking. The TF does not have POFs. On the heavy mortar net, the team FSO requests clearance from the TF FSO to use artillery on targets of opportunity that meet the commander's established attack guidance. The team FSO inputs the target data into his FIST DMD or FED and awaits TF approval before transmitting the mission. When the mission has been approved, the team FSO sends the mission to the firing unit. This clears the target to be engaged with the appropriate asset and meets the requirement for friendly troop safety. The TF FSO has the brigade FSO clear the mission on the brigade fire support coordination (FSC) net. In conjunction with the FSCOORD, prioritize the firing of the mission on the basis of the attack guidance and tactical information. The brigade FSO or FSCOORD relays the clearance and priority of the mission to the firing unit S3 and fire direction officer on the brigade FSC net to achieve massed fires on the target.

CONCLUSION

In summary, fire supporters must provide focused and safe fires on unplanned targets. Observers apply basic rules to begin the clearance process, and FSOs determine target priority on the basis of their maneuver commander's guidance. This synchronization of timely and accurate fires is a complex problem. There is no recipe for success. The factors of METT-T and the habitual relationship between the maneuver unit and its supporting artillery will determine success in the next battle.
