AAR - Death Valley: Task Force Defence

Scenario from ARMORED TASK FORCE
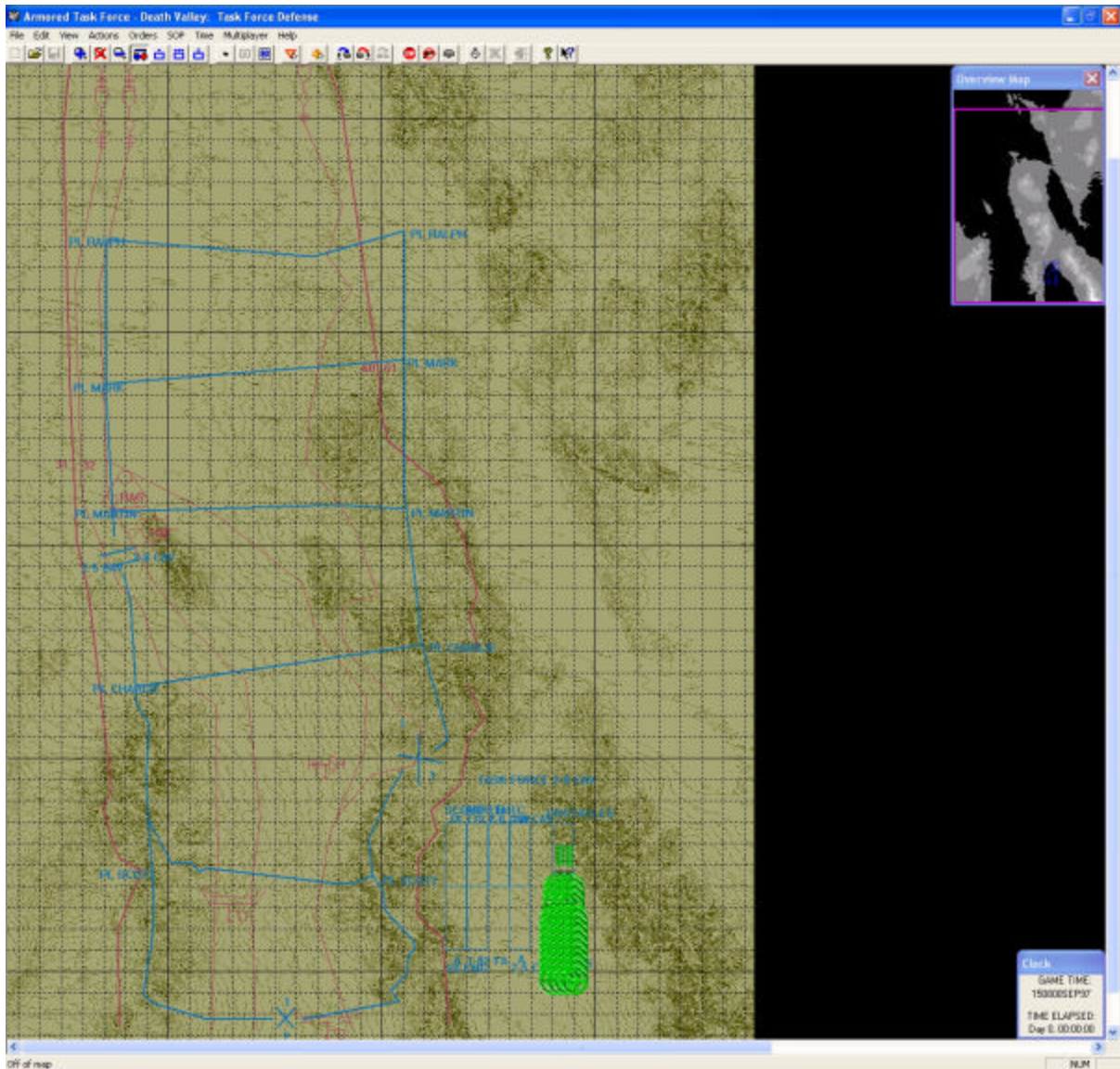
written by Maj P Proctor

OPORD 97-56? 1

BCT (IRONHORSE), 1 CAV DIVISION

1. SITUATION:

    A. ENEMY FORCES:

        1.   The 60 MRD, has completed its reconstitution and is preparing to begin offensive operations. He is currently at approximately 80 percent with three MRR's at a combat power of 40 / 100 / 24 and RAG's of 2 BN's of 2S19 and 1 BN of 2S1 artillery. His DAG consists of 2 BN's of BM21's and 2 BN's of 2S5's.

      ? 2.   The most likely course of action is that the enemy will attack in zone NLT 150800SEP97 to destroy the 1 BCT, 1 CD and facilitate the continued attack to sieze Barstow. He will attack with two MRR's abreast, the 31st in the west and the 32nd in the east. These MRR's will attack with two MRB's up and two back. One MRR, the 33rd, will form the second echelon of the MRD and be committed to support the MRR which encounters the least resistance. The 31st MRR will be the main effort and will receive a Forward Detatchement which may attack NET 141800SEP97 to seize key passes to facilitate the attack. His SOKOL and fixed wing assets have not been reconstituted and will not be a threat, however he does have sufficient aircraft to deliver dismounted company size elements deep within our sector.

    B. FRIENDLY FORCES:

        1.   Higher Mission. 1st Cavalry Division defends in sector, NLT 150800SEP97, to destroy the first echelon MRD's of the 9th CAA and prevent penetrration of PL SCOTT. o/o counterattack to complete the destruction of the first echelon divisions.?

        2.   To our east, 3 BCT has the mission of defending in sector to destroy the 61 MRD. To our west, the 4ID defends in sector as the III corps main effort to destroy the 10th CAA. To our rear, 2 BCT is the 1 CD reserve.

    C. WEATHER:

        1.   Winds are expected to be out of the north-northeast at approximately 6.8 miles per hour.?

        2.   The hours of daylight are as follows. Before morning nautical twilight (BMNT) will begin at 0705. Early evening nautical twilight (EENT) will end at 2008.

2. MISSION.

1 BCT defends in sector NLT 150800SEP97 to destroy the 1st echelon of the 60 MRD and prevent a penetration of PL SCOTT. o/o 1BCT passes 2BCT through to allow them to complete the destruction of the 60 MRD. o/o 1BCT conducts a counterattack to complete the destruction of 60 MRD.

3. EXECUTION:

A. COMMANDER'S INTENT.

It is my intent to totally destroy the 1st echelon of the 60 MRD and then to withdraw and pass through 2 BCT's lines to allow them to complete the destruction of the follow on echelons. However, we must also be postured with enough combat power to counterattack and complete the destruction of the enemy. We will do this by forming a security zone between PL MARTIN and PL CHARLIE. This security zone will consist of one company team from each task force. This will be set the morning before the defense to destroy the enemies regimental recon, TF ANGEL, and the lead MRR CRP's. No obstacles are authorized north of PL CHARLIE as we have limited engineer assets. As we withdraw this screen, we will use FA delivered FASCAM to slow the advance of the 31 MRR in the west so we can destroy the MRR's sequentially. Our main battle area will be between PL CHARLIE and PL SCOTT and will consist of 2 TF's abreast, 2-8 in the east and 2-5 in the west. My desired endstate is that no enemy elements platoon size or larger penetrate PL SCOTT and we complete the defense with 1 CO/TM of combat power per TF. ?

B. CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION.

1. Maneuver.

    This operation will be conducted in 5 phases. First will be the establishment of the counter recon screen. The second phase will be the withdrawl of the security zone and the delaying of the 31 MRR. Next will be the destruction of the first echelon of the 32 MRR, then the destruction of the first echelon of the 31 MRR. Finally, will be the destruction of the 2nd echechelon MRB's of the 60 MRD. o/o missions to counterattack or pass 2BCT through will be discussed in a later FRAGO TBP.

    a. Phase One.

    This phase begins at 140800SEP97. TF 2-8 and TF 2-5 both deploy one CO/TM between PL MARTIN and PL CHARLIE to destroy enemy reconaisance, TF ANGEL, the forward detachment if it is deployed, and the CRP's of the 31 and 32 MRR. This phase ends when the CRP's are destroyed at about 150830SEP97

    ? b. Phase Two.

    This phase begins at about 150830SEP97 when the CRP's have been destroyed. TF 2-8 and TF 2-5 will withdraw their security zone CO/TM's behind PL CHARLIE and prepare for the attack of the 1st echelon MRR's. 3-18 FA will fire a FASCAM minefield in the west to delay the advance of the 31 MRR. This phase ends when the 32 MRR reaches PL CHARLIE, at about 150900SEP97. ?

c. Phase Three.

This phase begins at about 150900SEP97, when the 1st echelon of 32 MRR reaches PL CHARLIE. TF 2-8 will destroy the first echelon with direct and indirect fire. This phase ends when the first echelon of the 31 MRR reaches PL CHARLIE.?

d. Phase Four.

<paragraph omitted>?

e. Phase Five.

This phase begins when the second echelon MRB's of the 60 MRD reach PL CHARLIE at about 150930SEP97. TF 2-8 and TF 2-5 will destroy the second echelon units with direct and indirect fire. This phase ends when the second echelon of the 60 MRD is destroyed, about 151000SEP97.

2. Fires.

This operation is sequenced to delay the 31 MRR in the west and allow 1BCT to mass its fire support assets on the MRR's sequentially.

a. Phase One.

During this phase, priority of fires for 1-82 FA goes to TF 2-8 CAV. Priority of fires for 3-18 FA will go to TF 2-5. CAS will not be available during this phase. The CFL for this phase will be PL MARTIN.?

b. Phase Two.

Priority of fires for 1-82 FA goes to TF 2-8 CAV. 3-18 FA will fire a FASCAM minefield to delay the 31 MRR in 2-5 CAV sector. No change to the CFL?

c. Phase Three.

Priority of fires for 1-82 FA goes to TF 2-8 CAV. 3-18 FA will be the dedicated counterfire shooter. CFL will be PL CHARLIE.?

d. Phase Four.

<paragraph omitted>?

e. Phase Five.

Priority of fires for 1-82 FA goes to TF 2-8 CAV. Priority of fires for 3-18 FA will go to TF 2-5 CAV. No change to the CFL

3. Tasks to Subordinate Units.

See Appendix C for Task Organization.

    a. TF 2-8 CAV.

        1. Deploy a CO/TM between PL MARTIN and PL CHARLIE NLT 140800SEP97 to destroy enemy reconaisance, TF ANGEL if it is deployed, and enemy CRP's. Withdraw the security zone when enemy CRP's are destroyed.?

        2. Destroy the 32 MRR.? 3. Allow no penetration of platoon or larger elements of PL SCOTT.

    b. TF 2-5 CAV.

<paragraph omitted>

4. Coordinating instructions.

    a. The limit of advance for scouts, COLT's, and any other recon asset is PL MARK.

    ? b. No engineer deployed obstacles will be placed north of PL CHARLIE.

    ? c. PIR.

<paragraph omitted>

4. SERVICE SUPPORT.

There will be no resupply of any class of supply until mission completion (Buy the release version of Armored Task Force today to add ammunition resupply and many other great features!)

5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL.

    A. Succession of command is per SOP? B. Current SOI is in effect.

APPENDIX C (TASK ORGANIZATION) TO OPORD 97-56

TASK FORCE 2-8 CAV

    HHC/2-8 CAV

        Scout Platoon

        Mortar Platoon

    B/2-8 CAV

        2 X Tank Platoon

        1 X Mech Inf Platoon

    C/2-8 CAV

        2 X Tank Platoon

        1 X Mech Inf Platoon

B/2-5 CAV

    2 X Mech Inf Platoon

    1 X Tank Platoon

A/20 ENG

    1 X ACE Platoon

    1 X MCLiC Platoon

TASK FORCE 2-5 CAV:

<paragraph omitted>

1-82 FA

    A/1-82 FA

        6 X M109A6 Paladin

    B/1-82 FA

        6 X M109A6 Paladin

    C/1-82 FA

        6 X M109A6 Paladin

Synchronizing Fire and Maneuver
Death Valley: Task Force Defense

The key to winning any battle, offensive or defensive, is having the most combat power at the decisive point. Combat power is not just tanks and Bradleys, though. Combat power is also fire support (artillery and mortars), mobility (engineers), and all of the other components of the battlefield operating system (BOS).

Fire support is perhaps the most complicated component to synchronize into the combined arms fight, for a number of reasons. First, the flexibility of the weapon systems (numerous ammunition types, great range, engagement options) can make it hard to figure out how and where to place your fires. Also, movement, positioning, and ammunition management require careful planning and prioritization.

How it's done in the force.

When a real armored task force first receives its mission, the staff quickly analyzes it and briefs the task force commander on his mission and assets available. It is here that the commander issues his guidance to his staff, on how he wishes to accomplish the mission. A key element of this guidance is the Commander's Guidance for Fires. It describes how he wants to use fire support (artillery, mortars, close air support, and any other available assets) to help accomplish his mission.

The battalion fire support officer, a field artillery captain who is a member of the armor or infantry battalion staff, translates this guidance in to a fire support plan. The two most important components of this plan are *Essential Fire Support Tasks* and the *High Payoff Target List*. These components allow the unit to make decisions on who, what, where, when, and why to fire during the fight.

It works like this. Essential Fire Support Tasks (EFSTs) are the tasks that *must be accomplished*, or the task force course of action will have to be altered during the fight (almost always disastrous). When one or more of these tasks is triggered, they supersede all other fires. No matter what targets are being shoot, they are canceled when it is time to fire an EFST.

The high payoff target list (HPTL) is next in priority. If it is not time to fire an EFST, the next target in priority is an HPT. These are targets that you have identified which, if destroyed, will make it easier for your task force to accomplish its objective. They may or may not be HVTs (high value targets) to the enemy, things that, if destroyed, will cause him to alter *his* course of action.

Finally, if there are no EFSTs to be fired, and no HPTs have been spotted, fires go to the unit with priority of fire. That is, the unit with priority of fire can call targets of opportunity that he has identified and wants to engage. These fires will immediately

stop, however, if an HPT is identified or an EFST is triggered. (Priority of fires is not simulated in **Armored Task Force**, so we ignore it in this example.)

The task force staff begins planning the fight and the battalion fire support officer is there. He continues to refine and synchronize his fire support plan with the maneuver plan, until he has a plan which is both synchronized with maneuver and meets the task force commander's guidance.

A document that is produced as part of the *brigade* fire support plan is the AGM (attack guidance matrix). This helps executors, battalion and company fire support officers, decide what targets to attack with what assets. It also provides TSS (target selection standards) that tell executors what targets *not* to shoot at. This will be important later in this discussion.

How it looks.

Our mission is to defend between PL CHARLIE and PL SCOTT against an MRR (Motorized Rifle Regiment). We are also instructed to set an initial security zone of a single company's worth of combat power between PL CHARLIE and PL MARTIN, to be collapse after the enemy CRPs (combat recon patrols) are destroyed.

First, I take a look at how the S-2 (intelligence officer) expect the enemy to attack.
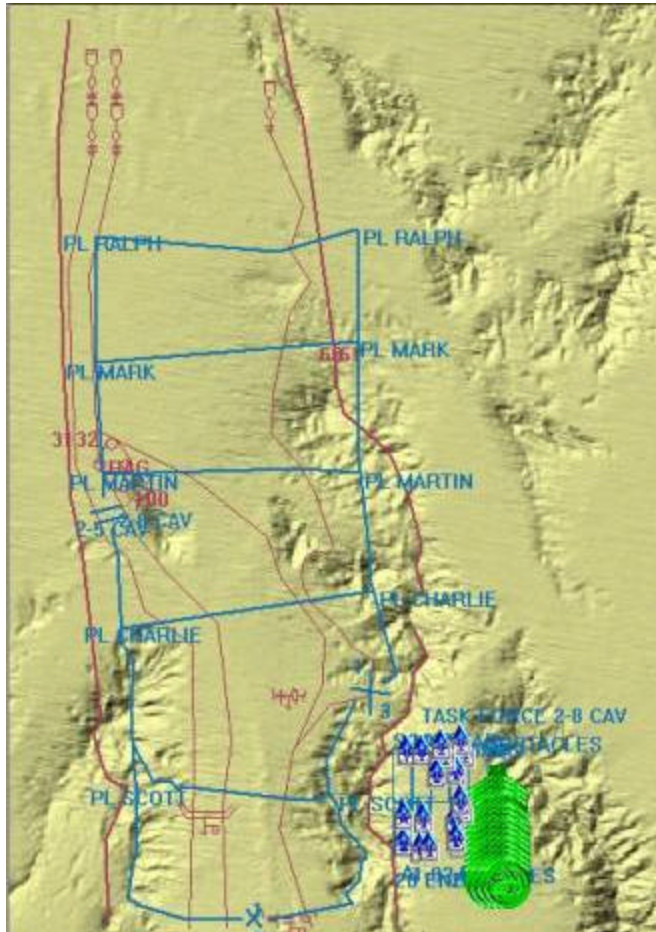
The division of my battle space seems pretty clear cut. The recon limit of advance (set forth in the Coordinating Instructions in the OPORD) is PL MARK, so I can realistically detect and impact units with fires as far forward as PL RALPH. So, my "deep fight" (I put this in quotes because, doctrinally, a maneuver battalion does not have a deep fight), the area where I can "shape" the battle by placing fires on the enemy, extends from PL RALPH to PL MARTIN. The area between PL MARTIN and PL CHARLIE, my security zone, is a transition area between the "deep" and "close" fight. The main battle area, between PL CHARLIE and PL SCOTT, is where the "close", direct fire fight will occur. And our "rear" area is between PL SCOTT and our rear boundary.

The challenge of this mission is that I am not permitted to place any obstacles forward of PL CHARLIE. So the enemy will be at a full sprint as I attempt to affect him with indirect fires during his movement in sector toward my main battle area.

In the defense, the enemy drives the phasing of the operation. These are the phases in which I will conduct the operation.

Phase	Activity	Begin	End	Approximate Elapsed Time
I	CRPs enter sector	Game start	CRPs cross PL MARTIN	H + 0
II	CRPs destroyed in the security zone	CRPs cross PL MARTIN	First Echelon MRBs cross PL MARTIN	H + 26
III	First echelon MRBs pass through the security zone	First Echelon MRBs cross PL MARTIN	First Echelon MRBs cross PL CHARLIE	H + 41
IV	Destruction of first echelon MRBs	First Echelon MRBs cross PL CHARLIE	Second Echelon MRBs cross PL CHARLIE	H + 57
V	Destruction of second echelon MRBs	Second Echelon MRBs cross PL CHARLIE	MRR destroyed	H + 72

Since I am my own commander (at least here) I will establish my own guidance for fires. I must consider the full range of assets at my disposal (artillery and mortars, both with no ammunition resupply). I must also consider the enemy's capabilities (I am outgunned at least 3 to 1 in artillery and 9 to 1 in mortar tubes; additional artillery or rocket fire may be placed on me from the DAG, division artillery group, as well). An additional consideration is that only the enemy's observers and BRDM-2 ATGMs can see through smoke or at night. This will become an important element of my plan.

My restriction in number of tubes and ammunition is a severely limiting factor. Here is the break down. Remember that OPFOR units, since not dug in, will move as soon as attacked with artillery. Thus, this table, for killing munitions only describes the effects for single volleys.

Munition	Number of Volleys	Effects
HE	10	30 dismount teams or 10 BRDM-2 ATGMs or 10 2B11 mortars
HERAP	4	12 dismount teams or 4 BRDM-2 ATGMs or 4 2B11 mortars
DPICM	13	39 BRDM-2 ATGMs or 13 BMP-2s or 13 howitzers or 13 launchers or 13 FDCs or 13 engineer vehicles
BBDPICM	4	12 BRDM-2 ATGMs or 4 BMP-2s or 4 howitzers or 4 launchers or 4 FDCs or 4 engineer vehicles
Smoke	4	24 minutes (1000m length)
Illumination	36 (total)	54 minutes (500m radius)
FASCAM	2	1 low density (36%) 200X800 minefield
CPHD	18 (total)	None (no laser observers)

Mortars can really only be used in suppression, as we have only 2 tubes, and the munitions are only half as effective as 155mm artillery. If we *did* use mortars to kill targets, we could kill 4 dismount teams (with 12 volleys of HE each). Each killing mission would take 3 minutes to fire.

But, returning to the ammunition restriction, it is clear that we cannot do *everything* with our fire support assets. With that in mind, I am going to use killing missions on high payoff targets to reduce the enemy's ability to mass indirect fires at *his* decisive point. I will use obscuration and suppressive fires to reduce the enemy's ability to mass *direct* fires at his decisive point.

Here is my guidance for fires.

- ? I want to use aggressive counter-reconnaissance and artillery fires to destroy all dismounted recon teams, so that I do not take effective indirect fire prior to direct fire contact with the enemy.
- ? I want to use artillery to neutralize enemy artillery, to prevent the enemy from massing indirect fires at the decisive point.
- ? I want to use artillery smoke to obscure the enemy, to prevent him from massing direct fire at the decisive point.
- ? I want to use my mortars and artillery to suppress the enemy's direct fire systems in the engagement area.

Since I am also the Battalion FSO (Fire Support Officer), I am going to write my own EFSTs (Essential Fire Support Tasks). Note that real EFST's would have planned target numbers. I am not going to go to this level of detail, but everything else is doctrinally correct.

EFST 1:	
Task.	Destroy enemy dismount recon teams between PL MARTIN and the brigade rear boundary.
Purpose.	Prevent enemy from placing indirect fires on my high value targets or main battle area defense.
Method.	1-82 FA fires a battery 1 round (6 total rounds) of HE on enemy dismount recon teams when identified, prior to first echelon MRBs crossing PL MARTIN.
Effects.	TF 2-8 CAV looses no high value targets due to enemy indirect fire. 3 DRTs (division recon teams) and 2 IRTs (independent recon teams, armed with SA-19s) destroyed.

EFST 2:	
Task.	Destroy enemy artillery fire direction centers in sector.
Purpose.	Prevent enemy from placing indirect fires on my high value targets or main battle area defense.
Method.	1-82 FA fires a battalion 1 round (18 total rounds) of DPICM or BBDPICM or a battalion 3 rounds (54 total rounds) HE on stationary fire direction centers when they emplace, vicinity PL MARTIN.
Effects.	TF 2-8 CAV looses no high value targets due to enemy indirect fire. 18 artillery FDCs destroyed

EFST 3:

Task.
Disrupt the ability of first echelon MRBs to place direct fire on main battle area defense.

Purpose.
Allow TF 2-8 CAV to complete the destruction of first echelon MRBs with direct fire.

Method.
When the first echelon MRB forms a firing line within direct fire range of the main battle area defense, 1-82 FA fires a 12 minute duration, 1000m smoke screen MRB in firing line in engagement areas. Mortar platoon fires 25 rounds HE (50 total rounds) on enemy T-80s, BMP-2s and BRDM-2 ATGMs in the main battle area. 1-82 FA fires 2 batteries, 6 rounds HE, on enemy BRDM-2 ATGMs in the main battle area.

Effects.
TF 2-8 CAV completes the destruction of first echelon MRBs with direct fire. 4 BRDM-2 ATGMs destroyed

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EFST 4:

Task.
Disrupt the ability of second echelon MRBs to place direct fire on main battle area defense.

Purpose.
Allow TF 2-8 CAV to complete the destruction of second echelon MRBs with direct fire.

Method.
When the second echelon MRB forms a firing line within direct fire range of the main battle area defense, 1-82 FA fires a 12 minute duration, 1000m smoke screen MRB in firing line in engagement areas. Mortar platoon fires 25 rounds HE (50 total rounds) on enemy T-80s, BMP-2s and BRDM-2 ATGMs in the main battle area. 1-82 FA fires 2 batteries, 6 rounds HE, on enemy BRDM-2 ATGMs in the main battle area.

Effects.
TF 2-8 CAV completes the destruction of second echelon MRBs with direct fire. 4 BRDM-2 ATGMs destroyed.

If you count the number of battalion volleys used to satisfy these EFSTs, you come up with the following:

Munition	Number of Volleys	Effects
HE	10	5 dismount teams, 1 FDC, 4 BRDM-2s destroyed
HERAP	4	4 BRDM-2s destroyed
DPICM	13	13 FDCs destroyed
BBDPICM	4	4 FDCs destroyed
Smoke	4	24 minutes (1000m length)
Illumination	0	
FASCAM	0	
CPHD	0	

Mortars will fire all of the HE while the enemy MRBs are in the engagement area.

I am not going to build an AGM (attack guidance matrix) here, as that is beyond the scope of the battalion fire support plan. But I would like to spend a minute talking about target selection standards.

In the attack, we are fighting a dug-in enemy, who sits in one spot, and usually does not displace when taking incoming. In the attack, the enemy will try to keep moving to avoid artillery fire. If he does take fire, he will conduct a survivability move to try to avoid additional volleys. This requires that we adjust our artillery tactics in the defense.

Firing DPICM, a tank in the open takes around 54 rounds to destroy. That's three volleys from an artillery battalion. The tank will never sit around for that long. For that reason, artillery is ineffective against attacking tanks, even if they are stationary. Similarly, we will not fire more than 1 volley at a target, as they will move before the next one lands. The only possible exception is enemy vehicles in an obstacle. But hopefully the enemy will not get that close.

Similarly, it is almost impossible to hit a moving target (in **ATF** or reality), unless we are using PGMs. We predict that the second echelon MIB will enter the engagement area in 45 minutes. Firing 1-volley missions (which take about 2.5 minutes to process), we are only going to get to fire about 18 targets prior to the second echelon entering the engagement area. We don't want to waste them on targets we probably won't hit.

So, our target selection standards will prohibit firing on tanks and prohibit firing at moving targets, except with PGMs or in the breach. Similarly, our attack guidance matrix would dictate that only 1 volley per target be fired (again, except in obstacles).

Since we have no spare ammunition, once we develop our EFSTs, we will not develop HPTLs (high payoff target lists) for each phase. But we can translate our EFSTs into "preferred target lists" for each phase.

Phase	I	II	III	IV	V
Activity	CRPs enter sector	CRPs destroyed in the security zone	First echelon MRBs pass through the security zone	Destruction of first echelon MRBs	Destruction of second echelon MRBs
Phase Time	26 minutes	15 minutes	16 minutes	15 minutes	?
Active EFSTs	EFST 1	EFST 1	EFST 2	EFST 3	EFST 4
Time to complete EFSTs	5 to 10 minutes		**36 to 40 minutes**	12 minutes	12 minutes
Preferred targets	DRTs IRTs	DRTs IRTs	?155mm Battalion FDCs ?122 mm Battalion FDCs	? Smoke ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (D) ? T80s & BMP-2s in the engagement area (S, mortar) ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (S)	? Smoke ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (D) ? T80s & BMP-2s in the engagement area (S, mortar) ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (S)

In this breakdown, you can immediately see the problem. Artillery FDCs will not emplace until Phase III (actually, about the middle of phase III) which lasts about 16 minutes. However, it will take 36 to 40 minutes to destroy 18 artillery FDCs (17 Battalion 1 round DPICM missions and 1-3 Battalion 1 round HE missions). We need a way to destroy 18 FDCs in 16 minutes.

At this point, were I the Battalion FSO, I would go to the Maneuver Battalion Commander and explain to him that I cannot, with my current assets, meet his intent. He would then be forced to revise his guidance.

Since *I am* the commander, I am going to do just that. I still want to use artillery to neutralize enemy artillery battalions, but I am also going to direct the Maneuver Battalion S-3 (*hey, that's me too*) to use dismounted ambushes to assist in neutralizing enemy artillery.

The S-3 does some calculus with the Battalion Fire Support Officer and decides that the artillery can feasibly destroy *8* Fire Direction Centers in 16 minutes (8 Battalion 1 round DPICM missions). That means that our dismounted ambush needs to destroy 10 ACRVs (FDC vehicles). A Javelin AT missile has a 100% pK against an ACRV, and can be counted on to hit the target at least 50% of the time. A single team carriers 3 missiles, and there are 4 teams in a single platoon (12 total missiles). We need about 20 total missiles to do the job, so, to ensure success, even with casualties to our dismounted teams, we will commit 2 dismounted platoons to this effort.

This also frees up 8 Battalion 1 round DPICM fire missions and 3 Battalion 1 round HE missions, so we will go ahead and develop HPTLs (high payoff target lists) for each phase to direct the use of these rounds.

Here is our corrected EFST 2.

EFST 2 (revised):	
<u>Task</u>.	Destroy enemy artillery fire direction centers in sector.
<u>Purpose</u>.	Prevent enemy from placing indirect fires on my high value targets or main battle area defense.
<u>Method</u>.	1-82 FA fires a battalion 1 round (18 total rounds) of DPICM or BBDPICM on stationary fire direction centers when they emplace, vicinity PL MARTIN.
<u>Effects</u>.	TF 2-8 CAV looses no high value targets due to enemy indirect fire. 8 artillery FDCs destroyed

The high payoff target lists:

HPTL

Phase I:
      Stationary Artillery FDCs
      BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
      Stationary Engineer vehicles
      2B11 120mm mortar trucks
      BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the security zone.
      BMP-2s or BRDM-2s of the MRBs moving in zone.

Phase II:
      Stationary Artillery FDCs
      BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
      2B11 120mm mortar trucks
      BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of CRPs in the security zone.
      BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the security zone.

Phase III:
      DRTs or IRTs in the main battle area
      BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
      2B11 120mm mortar trucks

Phase IV:
      DRTs or IRTs in the main battle area
      BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
      2B11 120mm mortar trucks

Phase V:
      Stationary Engineer vehicles
      2B11 120mm mortar trucks
      Stationary BMP-2s in the engagement area (D)

I can also update our table

Phase	I	II	III	IV	V
Activity	CRPs enter sector	CRPs destroyed in the security zone	First echelon MRBs pass through the security zone	Destruction of first echelon MRBs	Destruction of second echelon MRBs
Phase Time	26 minutes	15 minutes	16 minutes	15 minutes	?
Active EFSTs	EFST 1	EFST 1	EFST 2	EFST 3	EFST 4
Time to complete EFSTs	5 to 10 minutes		16 minutes	12 minutes	12 minutes
Preferred targets	? DRTs ? IRT ? Stationary Artillery FDCs ? BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area. ? Stationary Engineer vehicles ? 2B11 120mm mortar trucks ? BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the security zone.	? DRTs ? IRTs ? Stationary Artillery FDCs ? BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area. ? 2B11 120mm mortar trucks ? BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of CRPs in the security zone. BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the security zone.	?152mm Battalion FDCs ?122 mm Battalion FDCs ? DRTs or IRTs in the main battle area ? BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area. ? 2B11 120mm mortar trucks	? Smoke ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (D) ? T80s & BMP-2s in the engagement area (S, mortar) ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (S)	? Smoke ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (D) ? T80s & BMP-2s in the engagement area (S, mortar) ? BRDM-2s in the engagement area (S) ? Stationary Engineer vehicles ? 2B11 120mm mortar trucks ? Stationary BMP-2s in the engagement area (D)

And our AGM (attack guidance matrix):

DRT or IRT	BTY 1 HE/HERAP
BRDM-2 (D)	BTY 1 DPICM/BBDPICM, BN 1 HE/HERAP
2B11 mortars (D)	BTY 1 DPICM/BBDPICM, BN 1 HE/HERAP
BMP-2 (D)	BN 1 DPICM/BBDPICM
BRDM-2, BMP-2, or T-80 (S)	1 mortar tube, 1 round HE
Artillery FDC	BN 1 DPICM/BBDPICM
Engineering Vehicle	BN 1 DPICM

Except for the HPTL of BMP-2s or BRDM-2s in the MRBs in Phase I, the Target
Selection Standard for all targets is *stationary*.

Setup for the fight.

We build our defense much as is described in "Building an Engagement Area" in chapter
6 of the *Armored Task Force* *User's Guide.*
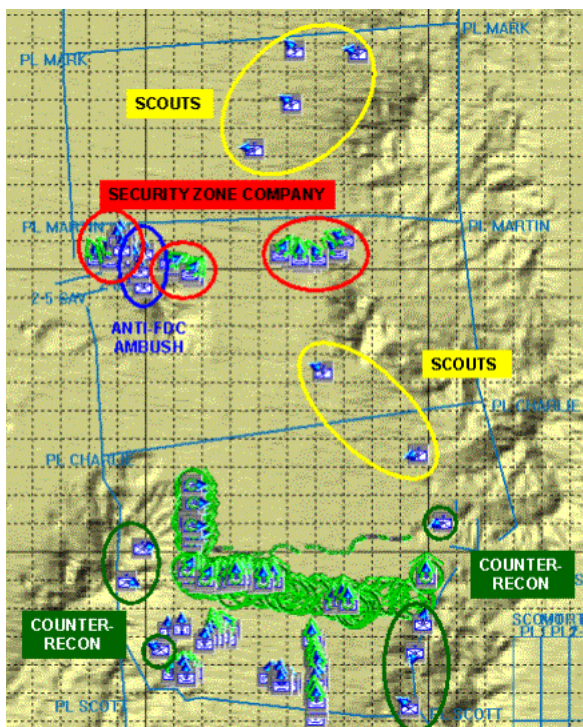
This situation differs from that in the
User's Guide in that the OPORD instructs
that we must place a company-sized
element forward, in the security zone, to
destroy the CRPs (Combat Recon Patrols)
and then withdraw them prior to the
arrival of the enemy main body. I choose
to use a company of all Bradleys, so that I
can use the long-range capability of the
TOW (3,750 m) to destroy the CRPs.
This gives me the maximum time to
withdraw my Security Zone company
prior to the arrival of the main body (15
minutes behind the CRPs.

I also have two dismounted infantry
platoons forward, at the templated enemy
artillery position, to destroy any FDCs
that stop there.

I have two scout teams back, in the main battle area, to give me good observation of the
enemy prior to the obstacle belt. I also have four scout teams forward of the security
zone, to observe the enemy as it moves into sector.
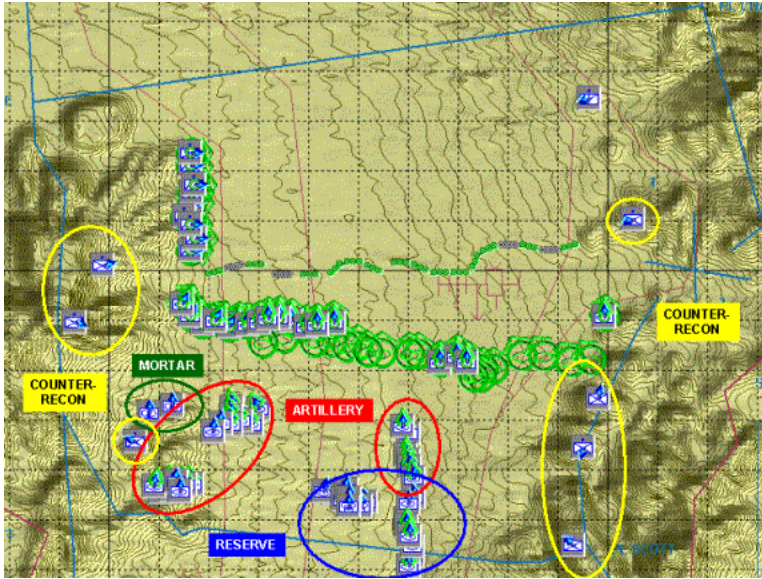
Significant here is that I have 7 dismounted teams, almost a full platoon of infantry, positioned to identify enemy observers to be destroyed with artillery and/or direct fire.
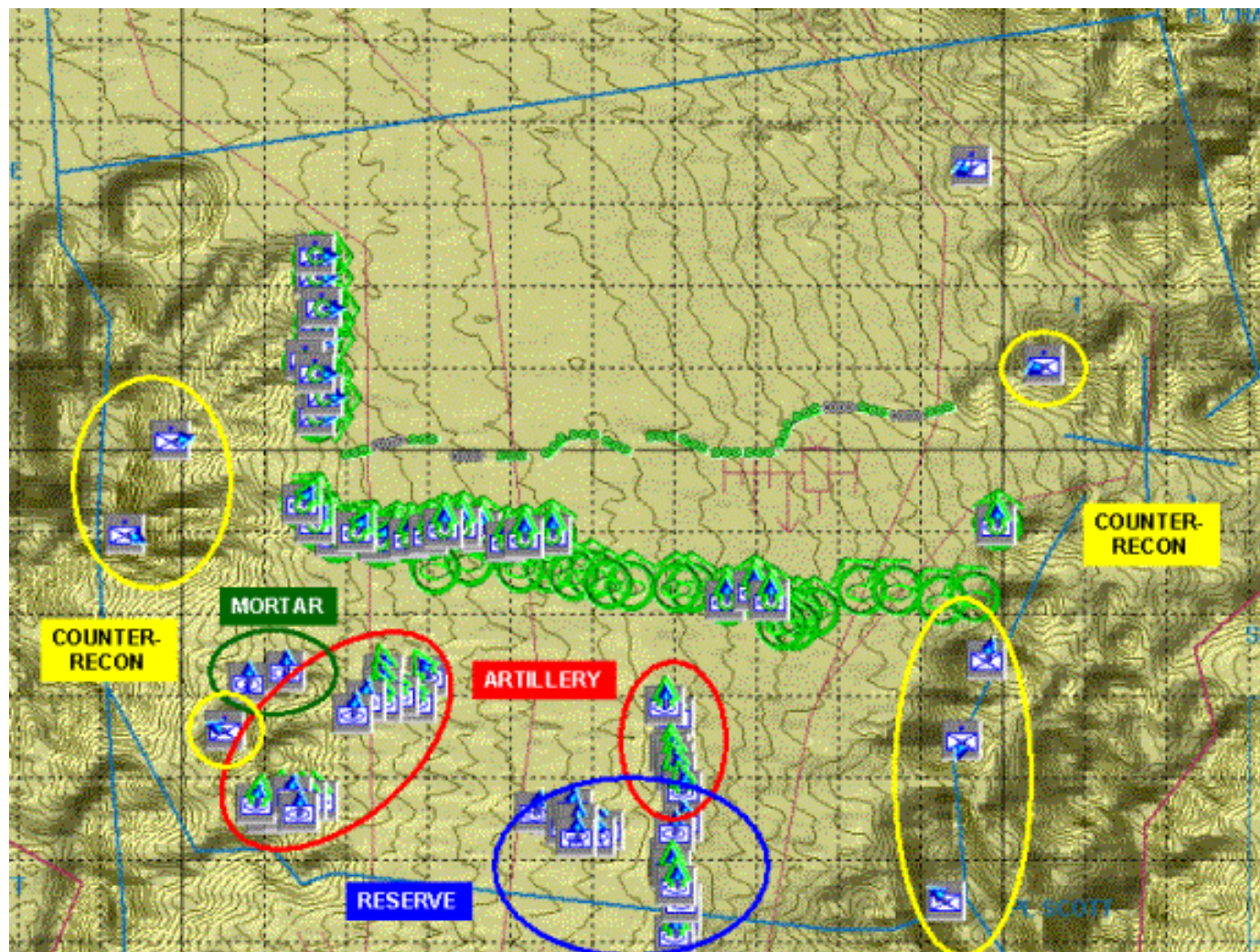
The empty holes in the main battle area will be filled by the Security Zone company, once they withdraw, when the CRPs are destroyed.

The above 2 picture have been reproduced in larger format in the next 2 pages.

COUNTER-RECON

COUNTER-RECON

MORTAR

ARTILLERY

RESERVE
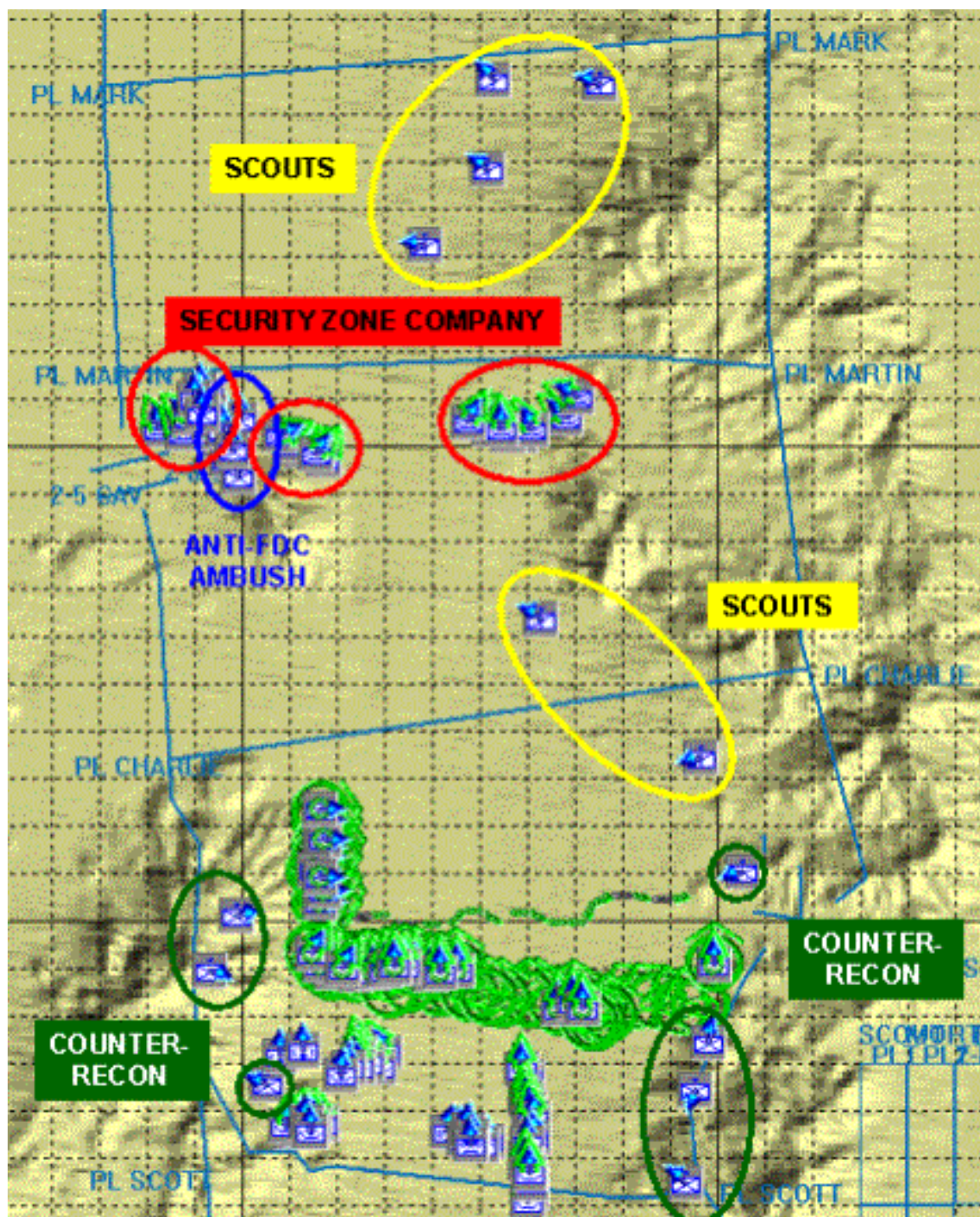
Phase I: Enemy reconnaissance and CRP's (combat recon patrols)

The scenario begins with the enemy LD (crossing of the line of departure) of the enemy CRP's. The results of the counter-reconnaissance fight from the previous 24 hours are simulated by the positioning of enemy dismount recon teams and IRTs in our rear area.

During this phase, the only enemies that are likely to be spotted are enemy dismount recon teams, IRTs, and enemy CRPs (combat recon patrols, a mix of BMPs and T-80s, three vehicles total, that recon routes into our sector). The CRPs will be moving, so they are not good targets to try to engage with fire support.

DRTs (division recon teams) and IRTs, on the other hand, are prime targets for engagement, if we can find them. In fact, this is the point of the EFST in effect, EFST 1 (Destroy enemy dismount recon teams).

If no EFST targets are available, we will move to our HPTL. We probably will not see The first HPT, but, 15 minutes after the LD of the CRP, the enemy first echelon will LD. If it stops in zone, we will begin to attack its HVTs. The enemy regimental recon might also have some BMP's and/or BRDMs in our rear area. These are even more important targets.

Here is the HPTL.

Phase I:
    Stationary Artillery FDCs
    BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
    Stationary Engineer vehicles
    2B11 120mm mortar trucks
    BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the security zone.
   BMP-2s or BRDM-2s of the MRBs moving in zone.

Next comes the all-important first clock start to "see what we can see". I am going to start the clock and then immediately stop it.

Here's what I see.

Along PL RALPH we see a BM-21 Battalion, but we cannot see the enemy FDCs. We do not have enough ammo to destroy every launcher. We are going to have to set these targets aside for now.

We also see three dismounted recon teams in our sector. These *are* good targets. In fact, they are an EFST right now. We are going to fire a battery 1 HE here, as per our AGM.
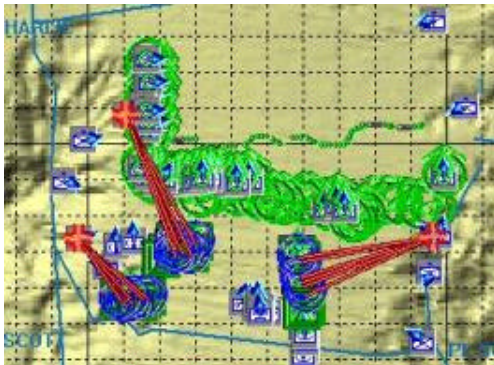

We fire these targets and they are quickly destroyed. I know there are more recon teams out there, but I have not spotted them, so I start repositioning the fire teams in my rear area in order to find and engage them.
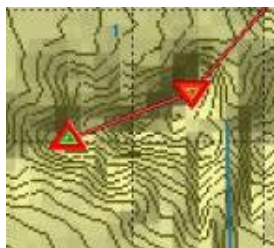
I am also going to move a scout team forward and try to spot the enemy FDCs for the BM-21 battalion. In the meantime, there are no good targets (EFSTs or HPTs) to shoot, so I am going to wait for one to emerge.

An enemy artillery mission destroys my enemy mortar. I hope that this was a fire mission called at time start, before I destroyed the enemy recon team. But we will have to wait and see. I will keep looking for enemy recon teams, though.
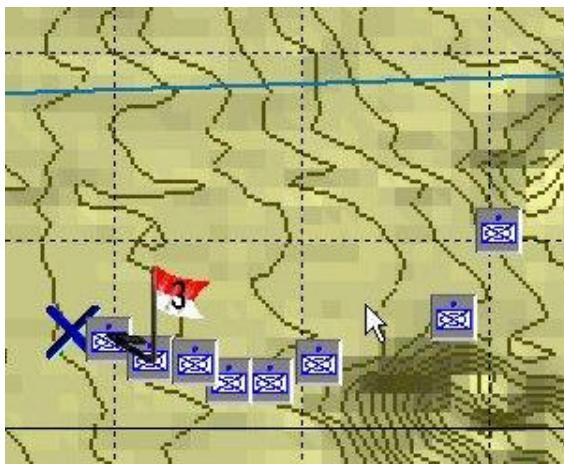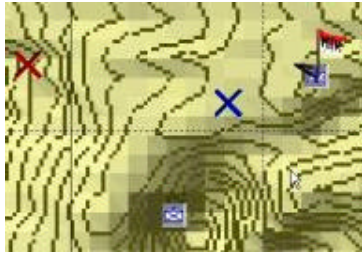
It appears we have made an incorrect read on the BM-21 battalion. The artillery battalion (unidentified) must be a gun battalion (probably 2S5 or 2S7 since it is not in formation with the rest of the regiment). The BM-21s are moving south to a position area where they can attack my main battle area defense. This means we are facing at least five battalions of artillery.

It is even *more* important to destroy all of the enemy observers in our main battle area and rear area.

The enemy has attacked my security zone company with artillery. The good news is that this means the enemy probably *cannot* see my high value targets in the main battle area. The bad news is that I am going to have to sit and take this for about 15 more minutes before CRPs arrive. I am going to start moving dismounted teams into my security zone to look for observers, but they probably will not get there in time.

Our scouts are taking fire from the approaching BM-21 battalion. My scouts are an HVT and no match for a whole battalion, so I am going to displace him.

Now that the enemy BM-21 battalion is stopped, we will begin attacking FDCs with BN 1 BBDPICM per target. The battalion has destroyed a scout team, making observation more difficult, so we are also moving a new team in to help with spotting. They are quickly destroyed
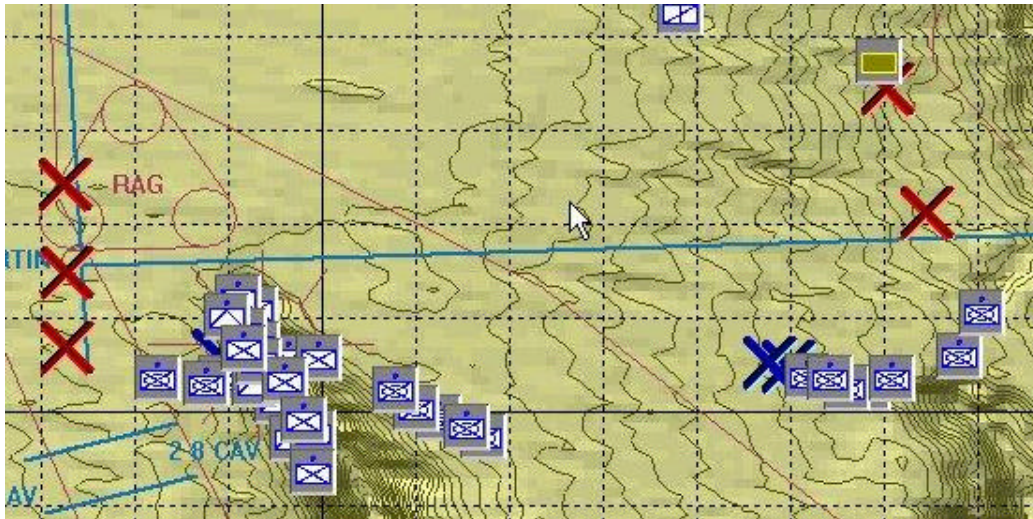
Phase II: CRPs destroyed in security zone

Phase II:
   Stationary Artillery FDCs
   BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
   2B11 120mm mortar trucks
   BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of CRPs in the security zone.
   BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the security zone.

We seem to be making short work of the CRPs. Here, the western-most CRPs have been destroyed and the eastern-most CRPs are in dire straits. We are going to withdraw the western-most portion of the security zone and stand by in the center to see if anything materializes in that part of our sector. As soon as the eastern-most CRP is destroyed, we withdraw that platoon as well. We will withdraw the center. when the main body is about 6 kilometers from PL MARTIN (to give us a good head start).

As we begin withdrawing, we start taking AT-5 fire from the base of the hill in the west of the security zone. There is an infantry strong point here. We are going to swing hard east to try to avoid it, but our entire security zone company is now in jeopardy.

We are going to need a little extra time to withdraw our center platoon, to steer clear of the infantry strong point, so we are going to start moving now.

The first echelon MIBs at NAI 1 begin Phase II. This also is the trigger for EFST 3.

> "…1, 1-ship sortie of A-10 Thunderbolt leaves for the IP (initial point) when first echelon MIBs arrive at NAI 1."

So we detach one aircraft from its platoon and start it moving toward the engagement area (it will take 15 minutes for it to start moving, simulating the trip to the IP).

Ultimately, I will loose almost two platoons, 7 Bradleys, while trying to withdraw from the security zone. The enemy infantry strong point was *very* effective.

The good news is that, besides the one mortar tube, we have lost no HVTs, or *any* combat power in the main battle area. We have been successful in destroying the enemy's *eyes* in the MBA.

Phase III: First echelon MRBs pass through the security zone
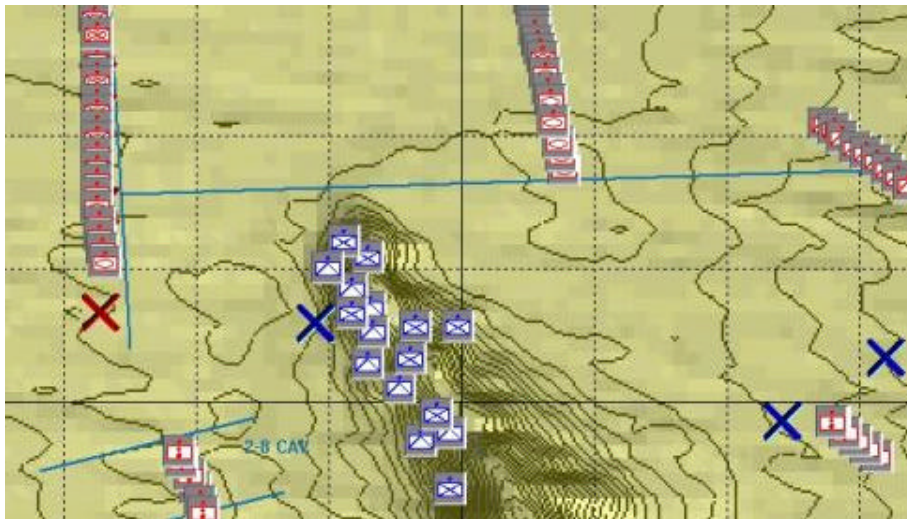

We have only used two battalion volleys of BBDPICM thus far (two lucky shots got all of the BM-21 FDCs. The enemy main body has entered the security zone, and we have spotted the enemy artillery battalions, but nothing has stopped yet. Here are the HPTs.

Phase III:
DRTs or IRTs in the main battle area
BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
2B11 120mm mortar trucks
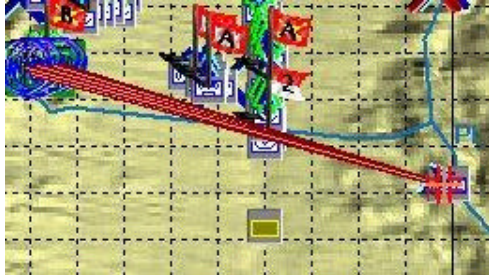
We have just spotted both in our rear area! We will fire a BTY 1 round HE at an enemy DRT, but the enemy regimental recon team will be destroyed with direct fire by our battalion reserve.

We reposition the southern portion of our reserve, since it was spotted by the enemy recon team before it was destroyed.


The enemy's artillery battalions are beginning to emplace, so we will start attacking FDCs with artillery. Each FDC gets a BN 1 DPICM. Of note is the fact that our first targets are outside of our western boundary, in 2-5 CAVs sector. In reality, we would have to coordinate with this battalion in order to fire in their sector. But this is not replicated in **ATF**.

Once the traffic clears, and the FDCs are in the open, we use the suppress order with our dismount platoon to begin destroying these targets, as well.
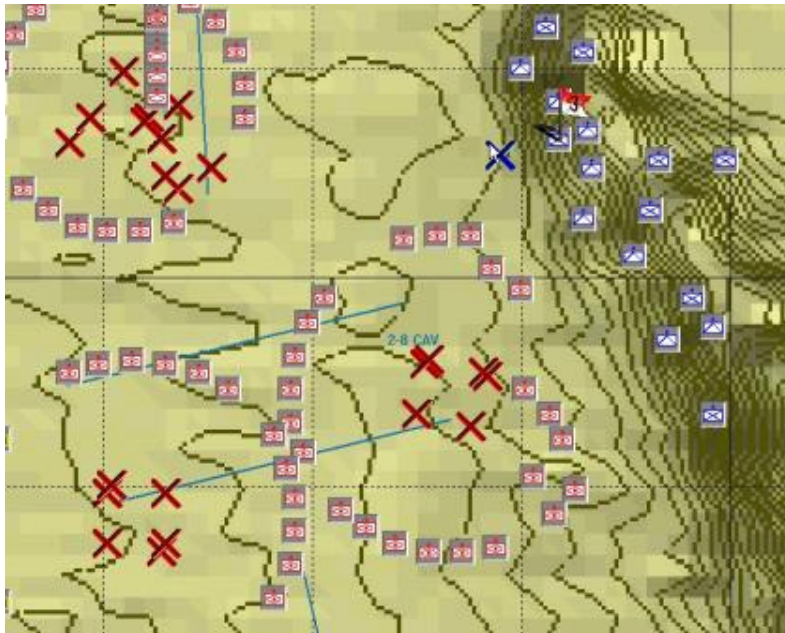
Ultimately, the combination of dismounted direct fire and artillery fire destroys the eighteen enemy FDCs for the three artillery battalions from the RAG. We have totally neutralized the enemy's artillery except for the DAG gun battalion that has displaced to a place where we can't see him . EFST 1 and 2 are accomplishe

Phase IV: Destruction of first echelon MRBs
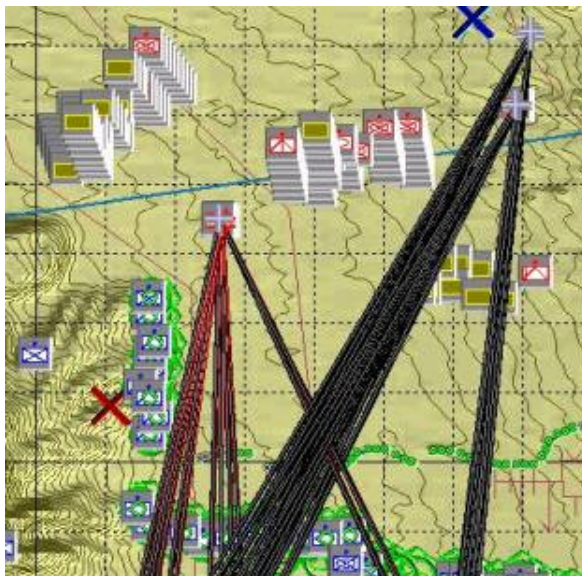
The fire support plan is "on track". The enemy first echelon is crossing PL CHARLIE and he has no artillery. While I wait for a trigger to execute EFST 3 (Disrupt the ability of first echelon MRBs to place direct fire on main battle area defense), we are going to attack an enemy HVT, in this case 2B11 120mm mortar trucks. These mortars can be used to suppress our main battle area.
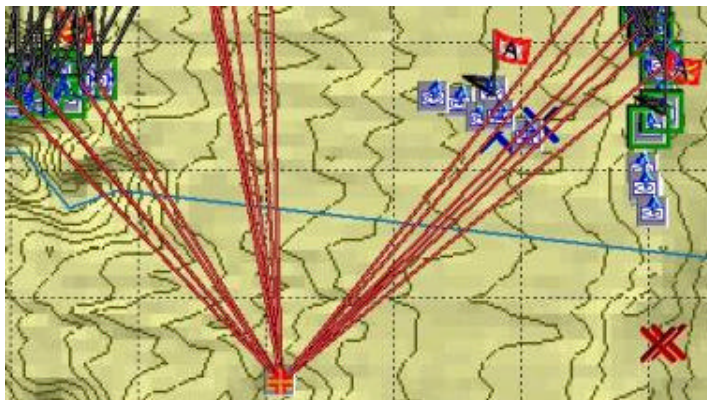
Our HPTL:

Phase IV:
    DRTs or IRTs in the main battle area
    BRDM-2s or BMP-2s of the regimental recon in the main battle area.
    2B11 120mm mortar trucks

Either the enemy enveloping detachment or a regimental recon team has appeared behind my obstacles in the main battle area. I will engage them with direct fire.

Artillery fire lands on our engineer company, which alerts us to the presence of an enemy regimental recon team in our rear area. We will immediately begin targeting them.
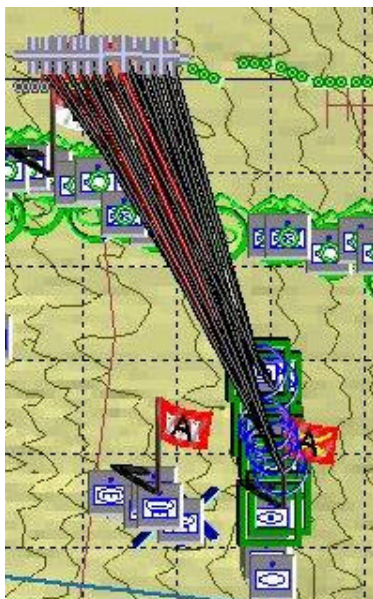
As the enemy approaches, we also begin our smoke target. We are going to initially fire on smoke, while we complete the destruction of the enemy regimental recon, since the enemy is not stationary yet. We will begin suppression as soon as they stop. Unfortunately, they just aren't stopping! They keep repositioning in the engagement area as I destroy them with direct fire.

No matter. With direct fire and smoke obscuration, I am making short work of the enemy in the engagement area.

The enemy can now clearly see that the first echelon will not be able to penetrate the main obstacle belt. I continue to target mortars with artillery and he now has only two tubes remaining, that I can see. I have not taken effective indirect fire of any kind in the main battle area.

But, now, I see the enemy has another trick up his sleeve. In the far east of my sector, in the main battle area, I see at least a tank platoon (probably a company), moving toward my defense. I am going to deploy my reserve to the east to reinforce my defense there.
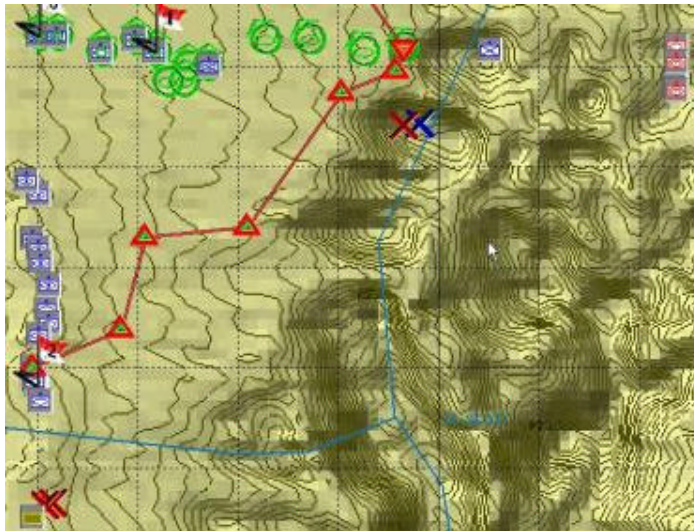
There is an enemy regimental recon team to the south of my reserve, threatening my artillery battery, so I will leave the southern-most tank in place. But the rest of my platoon is moving to reinforce my right flank.

Our reserve gets there in time and is able to blunt the attack of the enveloping detachment.

With the threat in the east defeated, I am going to move my reserve platoon west to reinforce that portion of the defense. An enemy regimental recon vehicle has turned up dangerously close to my artillery batteries, so I am going to send the remaining reserve vehicle from A Battery to defeat the threat.

We manage to destroy the enemy BMP *just* before he spots my artillery battery.

**Phase V: Destruction of second echelon MRBs**

The enemy second echelon has crossed PL CHARLIE and we are waiting for the trigger for EFST 4.

In the meantime, we will look to our HPTL.
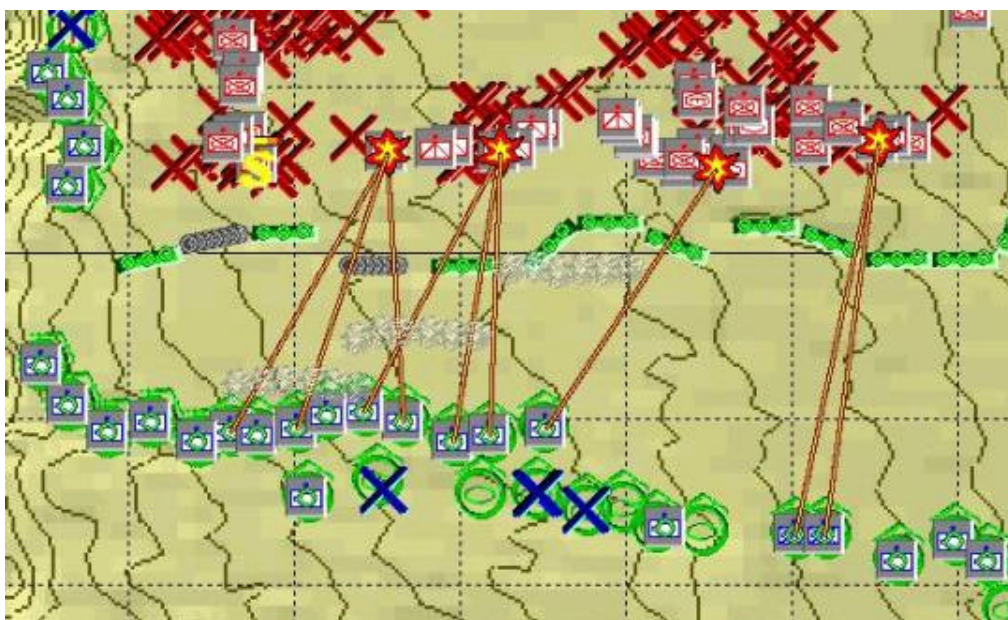
Phase V:
      Stationary Engineer vehicles
      2B11 120mm mortar trucks
      Stationary BMP-2s in the engagement area (D)

Unfortunately, there is nothing stationary in this category to shoot at, so we will have to wait. In the meantime, this is a direct fire fight.
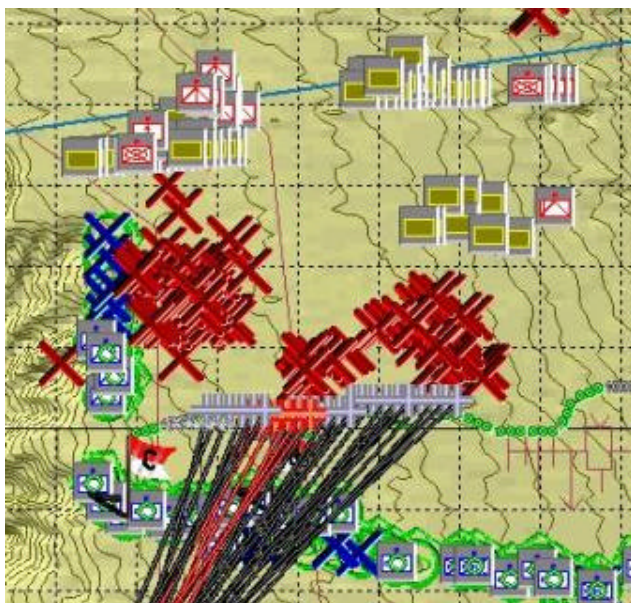
After a brief tactical pause, the enemy second echelon begins their attack. I begin to fire smoke in support of EFST 4. I still have no stationary targets to suppress.
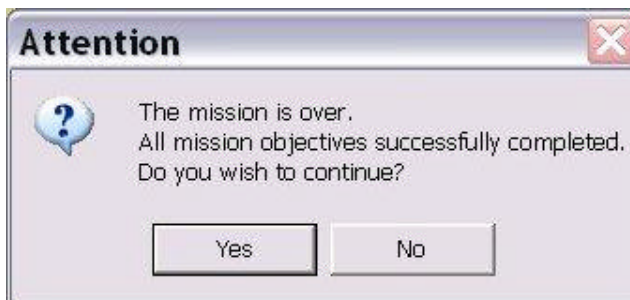
As the enemy attack continues, the smoke is shifted to the final battery. I still have no good, stationary targets to suppress. I seem to have no problem gaining fire superiority, though, since the enemy cannot see to shoot through the smoke.
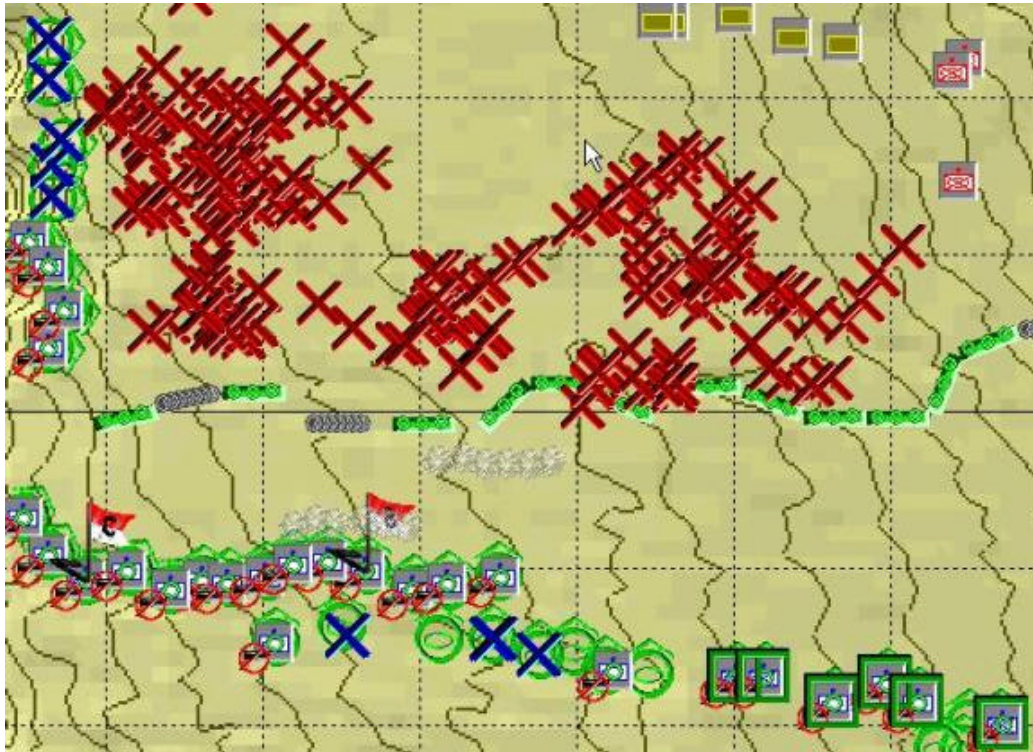
In just a few minutes, it is all over. The engagement area is a mass of smoking hulls.

I only take a few rounds of suppressive mortar fire during the whole of phase IV and V. I can only assume that the DAG gun battalion has either been pulled back, out of range, or is out of ammo. The enemy indirect fire capability has been decimated. Meanwhile, I have only lost one tube of mortars.

Finally, the mission is completed.

Here are the results for the scenario:

MISSION COMPLETE

All mission objectives completed.

Good work, colonel! You stopped the 32nd Guard Motorized Rifle Regiment dead in its tracks. Now lets get some passage points open and pass the 2nd BCT through to complete the destruction. Ironhorse 6, out.

Mission Objectives:

1. Achieve mission objectives no later than 151130SEP97.
2. Prevent penetration of PL SCOTT by 24 or more enemy vehicles or teams.

Results:

1. Mission objectives were maintained beyond 151130SEP97.
2. The enemy has penetrated PL SCOTT with 1 vehicle or team.

Enemy Starting and Ending Combat Power:

Vehicle Type	Starting	Ending
BMP-2 IFV	116	0
T-80B MBT	24	0
BRDM-2 with ATGM	36	6
AT-5 Team	16	16
Enemy Fire Team	16	12
2B11 120 mm Mortar	24	3
2S19 152 mm SP Howitzer	18	18
ACRV (MT-LBu 1V13)	30	6
Enemy M9 ACE	24	0
T-80B MBT with Plow	12	0
Enemy M728 CEV	3	0
BM-21 122mm MRL	18	18
2S1 122mm SP Howitzer	48	48
2S5 Giatsint-S 152mm SP How.	18	18
2A45 (125 mm Towed) with MT-LB	3	3

Friendly Starting and Ending Combat Power:

Vehicle Type	Starting	Ending
M1025 Scout HMMWV	6	3
M9 ACE	3	3
M60 AVLB	2	1
M113A3 with MCLiC	3	1
M1A2 MBT	19	18
M1A2 MBT with Mine Plow	5	4
M2A2 Bradley IFV	18	3
Javelin Team	16	6
Fire Team	16	13
M109A6 Paladin 155 mm SP How.	18	17
M1068 Fire Direction Center	6	6
M1064A3 120mm Mortar Carrier	2	1

Allied Starting and Ending Combat Power:

No allied vehicles in this scenario.

Fire Support in the defense.

Let me answer the question a military professional might ask when reading this:

"Why weren't we massing artillery in the engagement area?"

There are several answers to this question.

1. Ammo and assets are severly constrained. We have no ammo resupply at all in this scenario, even on FAASVs with the battalion. Thus, we had a grand total of 31 killing volleys and 24 minutes of smoke available. We had to make a decision, attack the enemy's maneuver elements or attack the other elements of the BOS (battlefield operating system).

I choose to do what the enemy does to you when you attack: try to destroy my opponents HVTs. When you are attacking (as in *Death Valley: Task Force Attack*), the enemy targets your FDCs, artillery, and scouts in order to try to prevent you from suppressing or obscuring him. He targets your engineers to try to prevent you from breaching. Then, while you flounder on the far side of the obstacle, he hammers you with direct fire.

If he does everything right, you never get to the breach.

This is exactly the way I execute fires in this scenario.