Trends in Defensive Operations

by COL Esli T. Pitts

Dragon 6 was frustrated. It sounded like the enemy's Boyeva Mashina Pekhoty (BMP) *vehicles were bypassing his company to the south.*

His executive officer reported to Hammer Main that the company's battle position (BP) had been bypassed and the battalion's defense had been penetrated. Dragon 6 pounded the cupola in frustration; it had taken nearly 48 hours to build the engagement area (EA). Why hadn't the enemy come? How did they get around the obstacles? Why couldn't the crews see the enemy?

Hammer 6 monitored Dragon's report to the tactical-operations center (TOC) on battalion command and called Hammer 3. "We need some combat power to our rear, time now. Those guys are on their way to the brigade-support area (BSA). What are our options?"

The 3 had none. It was at that moment that Dragon 6 and both Hammer 3 and 6 realized the fundamental problems in their defense: it was stretched too thin and it lacked depth, synchronization and flexibility.

This was driven home in the after-action review (AAR) 12 hours later as the leaders watched the instrumented playback. The advancing enemy had identified the obstacles and paused there for 20 minutes before deciding to bypass rather than breach. Unobserved, the opposing-force battalion continued movement on another covered route and eventually penetrated the seam between defending companies.

With two opfor companies inside Hammer's defensive positions and a third on the way, the observer/coach/trainer (O/C/T) played a commo cut: "Hammer Main, this is Dragon 5. Slant 10 and 4, continuing to defend. Audio contact with a possible enemy force to our south. Believe that we have been penetrated."

The O/C/T played another commo cut: "Hammer 5, this is 6. What's on the [decision-support matrix]?" There was a long pause before the executive officer replied that they had not finished developing the decision-support products. With an edge to his voice, the commander acknowledged the answer.

As the instrumented playback continued to play, the leaders thought back to the fight and how slow they had been to react to the penetration while the enemy had continued to advance. Finally, Hammer 6 had pulled Axe Company out of position and launched them to attack the enemy to their rear. By then, it was a losing footrace against an enemy force that nobody had really identified or tracked until way too late. An attack by Red air had not helped.

As the playback finished, the O/C/T asked one question: "What happened?"

Training units at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany, generally get two shots at the defense: once during maneuver training at company level and again during force-on-force training. Typically, most leaders within the training unit are new in their positions; across the board, they lack experience in traditional combined-arms maneuver. If they do have experience, it was acquired at the National Training Center (NTC) or the Joint Readiness Training Center, but they are unfamiliar with the unique terrain found in Germany. Either way, the learning curve is steep.

This article will help flatten that curve by highlighting common trends in defensive planning and preparation.

Mission command

The commander drives the operations process using the elements of *understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead* and *assess*. Commanders at JMRC will often skip an early leader's recon in an effort to get the staff working on the order. This lack of reconnaissance, combined with a rushed order from brigade and incomplete mission analysis by an inexperienced staff, results in the commander lacking *understanding* of the mission. Lacking understanding, the commander's *visualization* is incomplete, and his/her ability to *describe* the mission is minimal. Subsequently, the staff then builds an incomplete course of action (CoA) that does not address the commander's key points. Too often commanders say, "I knew the opfor was going to do that!" However, they fail to *describe* that to their staff as an element of planning guidance.

Commanders generally *understand* the terrain in the Hohenfels Training Area as compartmentalized and therefore as disparate platoon and company fights. With that in mind, they fail to *visualize, describe* or *direct* a coherent battalion defense. Commanders have two key opportunities to *describe* their *vision* of the defense: first, in the planning guidance they issue to their staff; and, second, during their personal reconnaissance of the battlefield.

The leader's recon is the essential element that enables the commander to *understand*, *visualize* and *describe* the defense. It should occur as early as possible after mission analysis and before development of the CoA. At minimum, the subordinate commanders and the intelligence officer (S-2), operations officer (S-3), fire-support officer (FSO) and task-force engineer should participate; they all should walk away with a common understanding of the commander's intent for obstacles and both direct and indirect fires.

At NTC, units with large multi-company EAs learn that the commander should drive a target-reference point in the ground and announce, "We will kill the enemy here!" At JMRC, with compartmentalized terrain and many avenues of approach, that sounds more like, "We will kill the enemy here. And here. And here." Any route is a potential platoon, company or even battalion mobility corridor for vehicles in column. Therefore, the commander's reconnaissance at all echelons must enable this understanding of the terrain and must also clearly establish how units will tie in at their flanks. However, the reality is that, because of the compartmentalized terrain, commanders often "power down" defensive preparations and skip reconnaissance to "get the order out." The fact is that good reconnaissance helps build the order and serves as a detailed warning order to subordinates that allows them to begin defensive preparations with their own companies, including obstacle planning and battle position.

Operational framework

Battalions generally fail to build an operational framework within which to plan. Conceptually, we have a variety of operational frameworks from which to choose: decisive, shaping and sustaining operations; main effort and supporting efforts; and the deep, close and security framework. Equally important is the literal framework of graphics upon which the operations order should be planned.

Most units generally apply a scant mix of intent and operational graphics on a PowerPoint image of the terrain and call it sufficient. At minimum, the framework must establish whether you are directing battalion EAs with associated assigned BPs, or if you are allocating defensive sectors to subordinate companies to defend. Subordinate units then establish their own BPs and EAs. Either way requires direct fire-control measures (DFCM) and company boundaries. Over and above this basic framework, we should establish passage lanes, contact points and alternate / supplementary / subsequent BPs as necessary. Then we build a level of detail for each warfighting function.
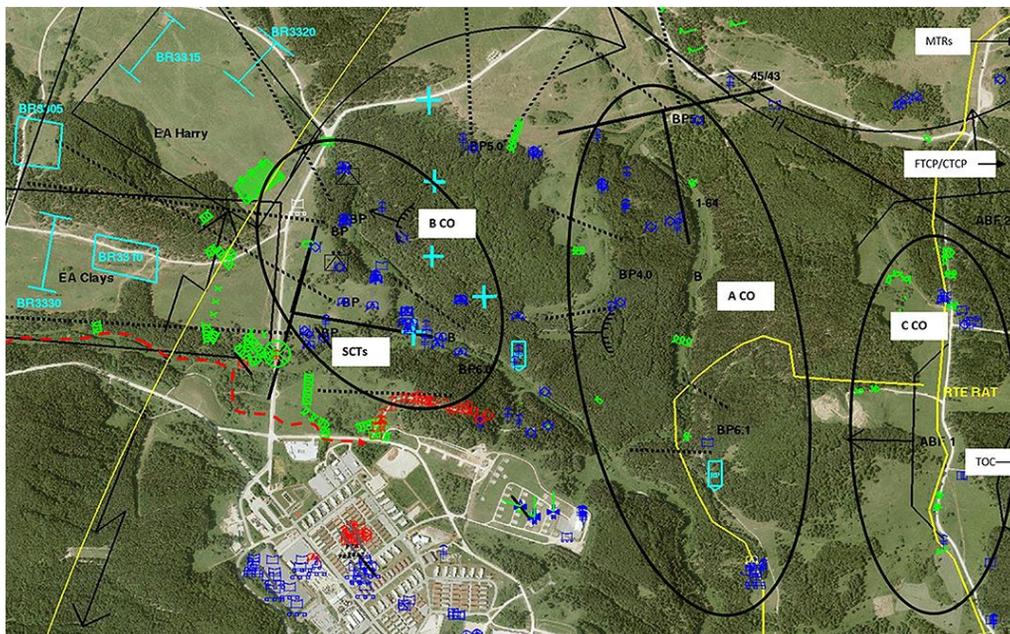
Figure 1. The opord is planned upon a framework of graphics. *(Graphic generated by instrumentation system)*

Critical to the operational framework is flexibility. It is a safe bet that at JMRC, your unit will be tasked with more frontage than it can successfully defend. Excessive frontage means limited depth and requires flexibility to react to unforeseen enemy actions such as a penetration. Flexibility or depth primarily comes from supplementary or subsequent BPs or else from attack-by-fire positions, which allow forces to reposition to the rear to react to penetration.

There are six questions that will help to assess whether we have enough operational framework:

- First, did we use one of the conceptual frameworks?
- Second, do we have operational graphics associated with most of our tasks to subordinates, or only intent graphics, or nothing at all?
- Third, does it look like a battalion plan, even if that plan is primarily synchronizing multiple company fights? Or is it really just a CoA sketch on PowerPoint?
- Fourth, do our graphics enable flexibility?
- Fifth, does our plan generate gaps between adjacent units, or does it fix responsibility for all terrain between defensive positions?
- Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, can we "stack overlays" and see that the plan is integrated?

EA development

Most armor leaders have studied the steps to EA development, but it is consistently difficult for units at JMRC because they don't do effective intelligence preparation of the battlefield and don't understand the nature of the enemy or how they will maneuver. Simply put, the map of JMRC is like a chessboard with green and white squares on it. The green squares represent rolling, heavily wooded terrain, while the white ones indicate wide-open spaces, generally in the low ground. Invariably, the training unit will assess the white squares as mobility corridors and the green as no-go or slow-go terrain. Given a choice, the opfor will always maneuver in, and fight from, the green squares and will not voluntarily move from the green squares into the white ones where we habitually build our EAs. An associated consideration is that the enemy is focused on penetrating the defense to attack the BSA and will generally not attack along a broad frontage.

In my opinion, there is a step missing from EA development. As written, Steps 1 and 2 identify the enemy's avenue(s) of approach and scheme of maneuver (which is to move through the green squares). Step 3 is to determine where to kill the enemy (which will likely be in the white areas on the map). In non-doctrinal Step 3.5, we must ask, and answer, the question of how we will get the enemy to move from his preferred scheme of maneuver into our preferred EAs. If we skip this step and go straight to positioning obstacles, indirect and direct fires in the white squares, then we will get penetrated or bypassed (the opfor's preferred CoAs) every time by an enemy force that will not shift from his preferred scheme of maneuver into where we have determined to kill him.

We must first understand and plan for how we will get the enemy from where he wants to go into where we want to kill him before we plan targets, dig holes, run wire and pound pickets in support of an EA. If the enemy is moving in the green areas, then some portion of our obstacle effort should actually be in the woods rather than the open areas to deny the enemy freedom of movement through the green squares. Ideally this forces him to move into white squares where we can continue to disrupt, fix, turn or block him with more obstacles and kill with direct or indirect fires.

Bear in mind that this obstacle effort in the woods must all be overwatched by, at minimum, a guy with a radio and a planned target, and ideally with an anti-armor ambush or a combat vehicle.

There are a variety of trends that all contribute to lack of effectiveness in our EAs:

- **The plan is not integrated.** The output of the leader's recon and the operational framework should be a plan that roughly stacks the overlays on obstacles, indirect and direct fires. This recon and these outputs must occur at both battalion and company levels. And then, as it gets refined from the bottom up, those refinements must be updated at battalion and reviewed by the staff to ensure the plan remains synchronized. This occurs through pushing up company graphics and updating the battalion's

consolidated graphics. Not a PowerPoint product, but operational graphics, preferably built in Blue Force Tracker or Joint Capabilities Release.

- **The plan lacks DFCMs.** Even if the battalion's plan consists of compartmentalized company defenses, it should be clear from the DFCMs where the battalion expects companies to engage enemy forces with direct fires. DFCMs should also indicate where adjacent units are responsible for planning fires relative to each other. Critically, but neglected in the Multiple Integrated Laser-Engagement System battlefield, is that DFCMs also serve to deconflict surface-danger zones for various weapons. Ultimately, the battalion requires companies to submit their DFCMs to build a common operating picture. Too often, neither echelon develops DFCMs. Our DFCMs should allow us to focus, distribute and shift direct fires. If we don't have them, we are making them up in contact.

- **The obstacle plan is not integrated into the overall plan and is ultimately ineffective in shaping the EA.** This occurs for a variety of reasons:
    - *Obstacles are not achieving the assigned effect.* While the task-force engineer will plan the details, the battalion owes the companies planned obstacle groups, which appear on the graphics as a green outline with an obstacle effect (turn, block, fix, disrupt). The order should also specify **target** (what enemy is being targeted) and **relative location**. The maneuver companies are then responsible to plan and build obstacles that achieve this. Also associated with planning is a **resource factor** that assists with allocating barrier materials. As an expression of the width of an avenue of approach, **disrupt** is .5, **fix** is 1.0, **turn** is 1.5 and **block** is 2.0. This allocates enough Class IV to achieve the effect but does not mean one long obstacle. In reality, regardless of assigned effect, units will generally emplace a single row of concertina with no depth.

For example, one row of wire 300 meters in front of the BP does not create a turning effect. To turn, we may plan five or six points or linear obstacles layered in depth that gradually create that "turn" effect by tying into natural obstacles and forcing the enemy to actually keep turning. Likewise, one strand of wire pulled as tight as we can get it does not create a block effect, but an 11-row obstacle in a defile might.

    - *Obstacles are not integrated with direct-fire systems.* Obstacles are not generally well-positioned. Not only must we be able to see the obstacles, but we must be able to see and fire into the terrain the enemy will use as a result of coming into contact with our obstacles. The obstacles must be "sighted in" by our direct-fire crews so we can kill vehicles that go where we planned on making them go. A way to sight in obstacles is for the engineers at the templated obstacle to talk with the vehicle crews over the radio and drop cones or pickets with engineer tape along the proposed trace of the obstacle while the vehicle crews confirm observation at and beyond the trace.
    - *Obstacles are not integrated with indirect-fire plans.* I recently watched an opfor battalion make contact with an obstacle while attacking in column along a narrow axis. The obstacle was effective, and the opfor halted for 20 minutes while they debated breaching it or bypassing it. Eventually they used covered terrain to bypass the obstacle and penetrate the defense for a win. Unfortunately there was no observer plan or indirect-fire targets planned in conjunction with this obstacle. Had there been, a responsive firing battery could have saved the day. As with direct-fire planning, the planned target doesn't go right on the wire but is refined to be at the place where we think the enemy will go as a result of contact with the obstacle. (See Figure 1.)

- **Poor obstacle positioning is usually the result of a lack of practical experience in obstacle planning by the company leadership.** The biggest killer, though, is that battalions invariably work to build and issue the operations order and so, because company commanders don't participate in an early leader's recon, they spend daylight hours waiting for the plan and then do not have enough daylight available to begin to build obstacles. As such, they build what they can finish, not what they should build.

- **There is insufficient obstacle effort.** Typically we see a battalion with 48 or more available hours emplace between 1,000-2000 meters of wire. When we are building a defense, obstacle construction should be an all-out effort with even the cooks running some wire. Doctrinally, a platoon with 30 Soldiers should be able to emplace 300 meters of triple-strand wire per hour. Factoring in small tank platoons, if we task

each company in the battalion to have at least one platoon at a time emplacing obstacles for at least 25 percent of the available time, we can assume that six organic companies plus the engineer company should be able to emplace 10,800 meters of wire every 24 hours.

Battalions should, but generally do not, plan battalion-directed obstacles that can be emplaced immediately upon completion of reconnaissance. This addresses the commander's priority as well as getting the engineers working immediately.

Figure 2. Soldiers from Regimental Engineer Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, set up a concertina-wire obstacle while constructing defensive obstacles during Exercise Saber Junction 2015 at JMRC in Hohenfels, Germany. Saber Junction prepares NATO and partner-nation forces for offensive, defensive and stability operations and promotes interoperability among participants. Saber Junction 2015 had more than 4,700 participants from 17 countries. (*Photo by SPC Tyler Kingsbury*)

When we talk about stacking overlays, we should be able to look at our plans for obstacles, direct and indirect fires, and it should be apparent whether they represent an integrated plan or are the results of "stovepipes of excellence." The battalion should "stack overlays" at two points: first, in building the plan; and, second, when they consolidate the results of bottom-up refinement.

So why don't we achieve this? Several factors combine to result in limited obstacle effort: We are too busy with other things; we don't task out and track obstacle effort to completion; we fail to deliver Class IV materials early enough; we aren't experienced in building obstacles; and we wait too long to start them. Principally, however, we are too reliant on the engineers. We should view the engineers as subject-matter experts to whom we provide additional cooks, loaders or riflemen to build obstacles.

Fire support

There are realistically only three to four opportunities to employ fires effectively in the defense. Beginning with the commander's recon, fire supporters must be tied into planning and rehearsals. Commanders shape the fight with fires by planning targets that are integrated with the obstacle and direct-fire plans. These targets have an effective and redundant observer plan and both technical and tactical triggers that are understood and rehearsed. Only then are remaining assets allocated to subordinates for their use.

The battalion's mortar platoon is both the most responsive and most overlooked indirect-fire system available. Once artillery units work out early friction, it generally takes five to six minutes to enter fire-for-effect (FFE), though it is not unusual to take nearly 20 minutes. Depending on their level of training, mortar crews can

consistently fire faster and get to FFE in three to five minutes. Despite this edge, the trend is that mortar platoons account for less than 10 percent of missions fired during a rotation. Battalions often plan to manage the movement of the mortar platoons but then neglect them in execution; this leaves them out of position to fire. Another shortfall happens when the FSO habitually sends all missions to the field artillery rather than to the mortars. If we train at home station to provide high volumes of fires, establish digital connectivity and give platoon leaders clear guidance and autonomy, they will get into the fight.

Management of mortar ammunition is critical. By JMRC exercise procedures, it takes 90 rounds of 120mm high explosive to destroy one BMP. Units usually fire insufficient rounds and then get frustrated when the target drives away with no effects. Given the relatively small basic loads on an M1064 mortar track or Stryker Mortar Carrier, units must pre-stock ammunition to be able to achieve tangible effects. Giving them a cargo truck with trailer is a way to solve this problem.

Units are also challenged to build an observer plan that enables forward observers to be in the right place at the right time. Even when they get that right, they struggle with the additional problems of redundant observers, establishing digital communications and identifying triggers. Despite modern devices, the observers often default to binoculars and a radio, with resultant target-location errors ranging up to 400-600 meters in light units. All these factors combine to make timely and accurate fires consistently difficult to achieve.

Units' effects with fires are also limited by inadequate trigger development. Consider this notional example of a poorly developed trigger: "Fire AG 1040 when the enemy lead echelon crosses Phase Line [PL] Red." In execution, the observer sees the enemy's lead tanks cross PL Red and calls for the planned target. Unfortunately, the firing unit was unaware that AG 1040 was imminent and was already firing a different mission (AG 1035). When "Fire AG 1040" came across the net, they first finished AG 1035 and then shifted to AG 1040. Meanwhile, the tanks continued to advance and by the time the mission was fired, it missed. If this planned mission was important to the commander, developing a *technical trigger* that laid the guns on AG 1040 prior to PL Red and then fired when the tanks crossed the *tactical trigger* of PL Red, they could have killed tanks.

Like everything else in the defense, the fire-support plan should be subject to bottom-up refinement. A simple way for leaders to check is to review the target numbers they are allocated. Each time the battalion or company FSO refines a target, it is assigned a new target number. If AG 1040 remains AG 1040, nobody ever refined it.

Figure 1 is an overview of an actual battalion defense conducted at JMRC. In addition to the previously mentioned vignette on observers and fires, this graphic illustrates the lack of integration of obstacles with direct or indirect fires as well as the opfor's tendency to move through the woods. Note the lack of boundaries between companies, with the resultant lack of understanding of who was responsible for what battlespace. Note also the use of intent graphics rather than operational graphics.

Rehearsals

Training units generally neglect rehearsals during the defense with the result that they don't know routes or understand how long it takes to remount Soldiers and displace from primary to subsequent or supplementary BPs. This means that when triggers to move from primary to alternate, supplementary or subsequent positions are met, they are usually executed too slowly.

Quality rehearsals usually don't happen for two reasons. First, there is little time available by the time orders are briefed and defensive prep has begun. Second, because the battalion has probably decentralized the defense into company fights, it seems as if there is little for the battalion to rehearse. Even if this is the case, the battalion must rehearse fires, including employment of the reserve and planned movements from hide positions to primary, subsequent and supplementary positions. It's also important to rehearse movement to all contingency positions in the rear.

The primary fix is time management. If we can get a leader's recon done early on, then subordinates can begin rehearsals immediately while the battalion is working the order. If we can extricate our company commanders from the brigade rehearsal, and we don't bring platoon leaders to the battalion's rehearsal, we also free up more time with their platoons and companies for rehearsals.

Sustainment and fires rehearsals are essential but also neglected. Unfortunately, they generally turn into a briefing of the finalized plan to the companies rather than a rehearsal of the battalion's plan.

Decision points

Decision points (DPs) are overlooked in planning. Two likely areas that require a commander's decision are commitment of the reserve and the repositioning of significant forces into supplementary, subsequent or contingency positions to react to an enemy penetration. The battalion's information-collection (IC) plan should be primarily focused on providing information that allows the commander to recognize these conditions emerging and then make the decision early enough for it to be implemented.

The main problem in this area is generally a lack of depth, such that the defending unit recognizes conditions too late. Consider that the opfor achieves penetration and is moving two to three kilometers in 15 minutes. By the time the defender recognizes and reports penetration, and then analyzes and recommends a reaction to it, the defending unit is already in a losing footrace to reposition forces quickly enough to impact the enemy's scheme of maneuver. If that reaction does not include executing a rehearsed movement to known graphics, it will be even slower.

Identification of DPs is an operational responsibility, and the S-3 officer and/or the executive officer have a responsibility to be involved in the development of decision-support products as well as to ensure the IC plan supports the DPs.

Seeing ourselves

Battalion commanders are always surprised in the AAR when they see how little obstacle effort they achieve. Battalions (and companies) rarely have a system in place that allows them to see themselves. Call it a "daily dozen" or any number of options; the norm is that battalions task a lot of things out but do not effectively track them to completion, leaving subordinates to decide for themselves what they can achieve.

Figure 3. A photo taken by a UAS camera of a unit's field trains highlights the lack of camouflage and ease of detection from the UAS. *(Photo by 1-4 Infantry opfor)*

It's obvious-but-routine things like subordinate opords, rehearsals and even boresight – these are frequently skipped by subordinates in a seemingly time-constrained environment. Building the trackers in the TOC and requiring subordinates to report completion highlights, shortcomings and trends is crucial to success. It allows the battle captain/noncommissioned officer to identify emerging issues. It also allows senior leaders to focus on fixing them. Similar tracking at company command posts enables the battalion executive officer or gunners to track completion and frees the command group to focus on issues.

Two specific examples of defensive tasks that are neglected are the tracking of obstacle construction and the employment of blade assets. The start point for tracking is mission analysis and CoA development, during which the battalion's expectations are generated and then tasked in the battalion's opord. For obstacles, this analysis should include how much wire subordinates should expect to emplace, the general obstacles they are tasked to build and the priority for each of them. We can then expect our subordinates to report the percent complete for each obstacle and should see the obstacle effort appearing on tracking charts in the TOC as each obstacle is emplaced. As the battalion tracks, it should then be able to anticipate and react to problems, such as realizing that a company has insufficient Class IV.

With blade assets, the battalion staff should understand available assets and available time, and then allocate assets to subordinates for a specific amount of time to achieve a specific amount of work. The battalion should require subordinates to report completion of fighting positions and/or anti-tank ditches and then monitor results for deviation from the plan. The blade assets are moved from company to company in accordance with the plan by a senior leader designated as "commander-in-chief of dozers" to ensure that no unit keeps the assets longer than authorized without approval from higher.

Counter-reconnaissance

It is a statistical truth that whoever wins the counter-reconnaissance fight will likely win the subsequent battle. Battalions frequently task their scout platoon, which is probably undermanned and unable to screen the battalion's frontage or unable to screen for the duration required. The battalion is then over-reliant on this screen, unaware that they are under surveillance by enemy reconnaissance. Then, the battalion's leaders get caught by surprise when the enemy launches a spoiling attack.

How is this fixed?

First, designate a counter-recon force built on the scouts but augmented by the mortar platoon and a tank platoon, or one of the line companies can also be assigned to augment the scouts. Either option ensures the counter-recon force has enough combat power to both identify and destroy enemy reconnaissance assets. This force must be prepared to displace prior to the main fight.

Second, the battalion should establish a security area forward of defensive preparations and ensure it has adequate depth to deploy the counter-recon force into it. This area should be clearly delineated on unit graphics. This security area must have enough depth to enable the counter-recon force to find and kill enemy reconnaissance assets before they enter the main battle area without compromising themselves to following echelons (see Figure 1). In the picture displayed in Figure 1, note that the scouts are essentially co-located with Company B. They had been out more to the front but were driven back by enemy contact. Ultimately, they were not in a position to provide depth or early warning to the battalion.

Third, companies must understand they are responsible for providing local security in and around their defensive positions and as far forward as the rear of the security area within established company boundaries. They must deny the enemy the ability to infiltrate along gaps and seams and establish their own observation points in close proximity to friendly defensive positions. The best deterrent to opfor reconnaissance is active patrolling to deny terrain to the enemy.

Fourth, understand that it's a live operational environment with civilian elements who may be hostile and who may be collecting intelligence and passing it to enemy forces. This requires friendly forces to deny freedom of movement to hostile local nationals or special-purpose forces *without* adversely impacting local nationals' daily lives.

Figure 4. A Soldier from Company A, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, scans his sector of fire from an M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle while conducting defensive operations during Exercise Combined Resolve VI at JMRC in May 2016. Exercise Combined Resolve VI was designed to exercise the U.S. Army's regionally allocated force to the U.S. European Command area of responsibility with multinational training at all echelons. About 570 participants from five NATO and European partner nations participated in training designed to allow participants to function together in a joint, multinational and integrated environment and to train U.S. rotational forces to be more flexible, agile and better able to operate alongside their NATO allies. *(Photo by PFC Michael Bradley)*

Fifth, noise and light discipline, concealment and effective camouflage are essential. The opfor is adept at employing unmanned aerial systems (UAS), aviation, special-purpose forces and ground reconnaissance to find and target us. The better we hide, the less we are targeted for artillery attacks at the most inopportune time. In particular, this requires reducing the TOC footprint and getting it off the main routes and tucked away in the woods. Our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and partners are particularly effective at camouflage.

The bottom line is that everyone has a responsibility for both active and passive measures to defeat enemy reconnaissance.

In summary, many units tend to take defense for granted. It is not as exciting as the attack and maybe not as fun to execute. However, it is perhaps the most difficult operation to plan, synchronize and execute successfully. This article only discusses some of the most common trends. To fight and win, units should begin a program of home-station professional-development training to build the necessary skills.

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Acronym Quick-Scan

AAR – after-action review

BMP – *Boyeva Mashina Pekhoty*
BP – battle position
BSA – brigade-support area
CoA – course of action
DFCM – direct fire-control measure
DP – decision point
EA – engagement area
FFE – fire-for-effect
FSO – fire-support officer
IC – information collection
JMRC – Joint Multinational Readiness Center
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NTC – National Training Center
O/C/T – observer/coach/trainer
PL – phase line
TOC – tactical-operations center
UAS – unmanned aerial system