What Should the Brigade Be Doing Right Now?
Deconstructing the 'Brigade Fight'

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"Army leaders are responsible for clearly articulating their concept of operations in time, space, purpose, and resources."

— **Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0,** *Operations*, **4-20**

INTRODUCTION

Throughout one's career, it is likely you have heard this timeless saying: "Battles are won at the company and below level." Clearly, training in our Army is largely focused at this echelon and rightly so; however, this is not an excuse to not train staffs at the battalion and brigade level. At the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Germany, we often observe very good companies and platoons, but we do not necessarily observe brigade and battalion staffs properly influencing the enemy prior to contact or fully enabling companies to exercise their missions and achieve their purpose. In particular, the "brigade fight" is often misunderstood, not planned or executed, and the enemy maneuvers unimpeded to first contact with companies.[1] In all fairness, we have not had to fight this way in some time. However, given the nature of the current and future operating environment and emerging enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), brigades must influence the enemy prior to contact with companies and then continue to do so as long as the enemy remains in the brigade's assigned area — they must fully leverage all brigade assets and set conditions for their companies' success. The intent of this article is to define the brigade fight, provide a framework for simplifying its complexity, and share some best practices.

17 Years of Conditioning

"Today, nearly every mid-grade leader in the U.S. Army and Marine Corps has significant experience battling insurgents and conducting combat operations in complex and demanding irregular warfare environments. Yet, virtually none of those leaders have been under massive, sustained artillery, mortar, or rocket fire. None have been attacked with precision strikes from guided missiles or bombs. No Army or Marine unit was struck with chemical weapons during the recent wars, or faced fallout from a nuclear blast. Few have dealt with jamming or serious disruption of tactical communications networks, and none have faced air attacks from enemy fighters, cruise missiles, or drones."

— **LTG (Retired) David W. Barno and Dr. Nora Bensahel[2]**

Over the better part of the last two decades, the Army and its leaders engaged in counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, and much of our Army's focus was below the brigade level. This focus deprived a generation of mid-career leaders the experience of fighting at the brigade and above level. The junior leaders who entered the Army as operations in Afghanistan and Iraq were at their height are the field grade staffs and brigade-level leaders of today. The growth and experience of multiple deployments and years of combat were critical, but we must now relearn some of the best practices of fighting at the brigade and above level.

While relearning how to fight at these levels, U.S. forces will need to operate as part of a joint and combined force to include multinational alliances and coalitions.[3] At JMRC, our focus is to train U.S. forces, our allies, and partners the way we will fight as an integrated force. All exercises are multinational and are designed to replicate operational realities. Based on our observations of U.S., allied, and partnered brigades, the commander of the Operations Group and senior observer- coach-trainers (OCTs) developed a definition and framework for understanding the brigade fight.
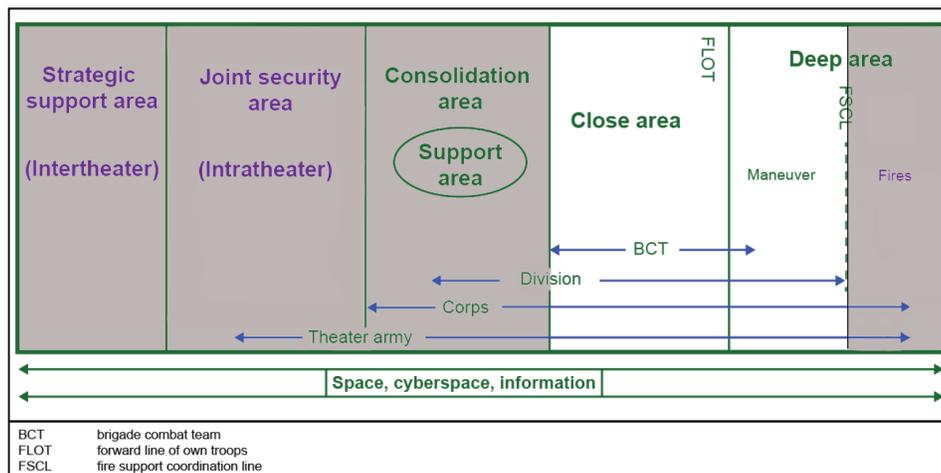
Figure 1 — Corps Area of Operations Within a Theater of Operations[9]

DEFINING THE BRIGADE FIGHT

Where Brigades Fit

Brigade combat teams are the Army's primary tactical fighting formation for the near future.[4] By design, they are the first echelon organized to conduct decisive action as part of unified land operations as well as the emerging concept of cross-domain maneuver.[5] Decisive action has evolved from the linear concept of massing combat power at a specific time and place to "the continuous, simultaneous combinations of offensive, defensive, and stability or defense support of civil authorities' tasks."[6] As the Army's primary combined arms, close combat force, brigades maneuver against, close with, and destroy the enemy by seizing and occupying decisive terrain, exerting constant pressure, and breaking the enemy's will to fight.[7]

At the tactical level of war, brigades execute battles and engagements.[8] Divisions typically leave the details of executing battles and engagements to brigade commanders. In its role as a tactical headquarters, the division shapes operations for subordinate brigades; resources them for missions; and then coordinates, synchronizes, and sequences their operations in time and space.[10] In turn, brigades prepare to act semi-independently to develop situational understanding of the operational environment, gain multiple positions of advantage across multiple domains, and consolidate gains to achieve objectives.[11] While subordinate battalions focus on specific tactical tasks tied to a specific offensive, defensive, or stability operation, the brigade integrates sufficient mobility, firepower, protection, intelligence, mission command, and sustainment capabilities across the formation to shape the fight, manage transitions, sustain operations, and prepare for the next phase. Using the deep, close, support, and consolidation area operational framework, brigades continuously and simultaneously influence each of these areas within their area of operations — shape the deep fight, enable the close and support fight, and manage transitions.

What Should the Brigade Be Doing Right Now?

To a much greater extent than at lower echelons, brigades engage in multiple staff activities simultaneously to achieve success. In common parlance, Army leaders generally refer to this as prosecuting the brigade fight. Army doctrine offers instructive language to scope the brigade fight:

"The division close area is primarily where brigades operate. Brigades focus on reconnaissance and security, defending areas, and securing or seizing objectives... Weapon ranges, both direct and indirect, and the mobility of formations define the characteristics of the close area."[12]

Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, visually depicts the close area where brigades operate in the following manner, indicated by the non-shaded portion of Figure 1.[13]

The visual depiction of a physical operational framework is deceptively simple given its sole focus on physical aspects — geography, terrain, weapons ranges, and enemy locations. The broader operational framework may include what assets are allocated to each echelon within a brigade, what elements of the staff are responsible for planning various phases of an operation, and what effects a commander wants to have on an enemy across multiple domains in time and space.[14]
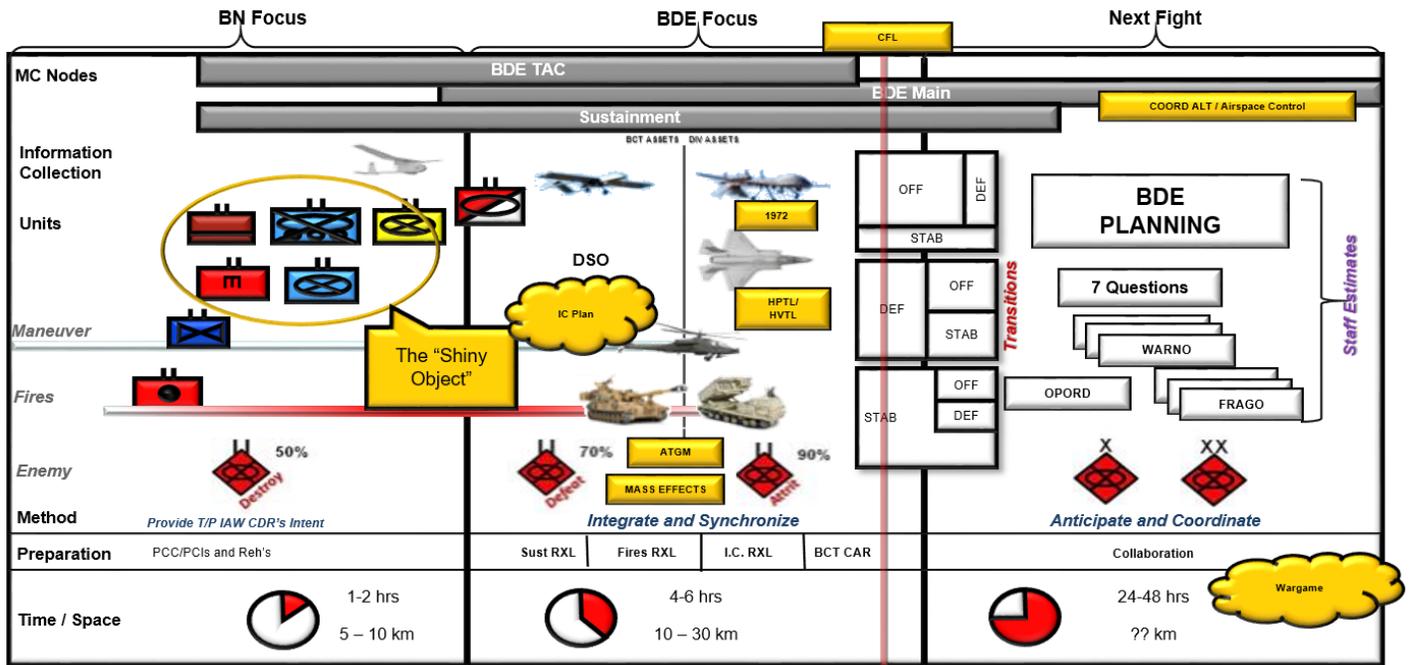
BN Focus BDE Focus Next Fight

MC Nodes				

CFL

BDE TAC

BDE Main

Sustainment

COORD ALT / Airspace Control

Information Collection

BCT ASSETS DIV ASSETS

Units

1972

BDE PLANNING

OFF / DEF / STAB

7 Questions

DSO

IC Plan

The "Shiny Object"

HPTL/ HVTL

OFF / DEF / STAB

Transitions

WARNO

Maneuver

OFF / DEF / STAB

OPORD

FRAGO

Fires

Staff Estimates

Enemy

50% Destroy

70% Defeat ATGM MASS EFFECTS

90% Attrit

X XX

Method

Provide T/P IAW CDR's Intent

Integrate and Synchronize

Anticipate and Coordinate

Preparation

PCC/PCIs and Reh's

Sust RXL | Fires RXL | I.C. RXL | BCT CAR

Collaboration

Wargame

Time / Space

1-2 hrs / 5 – 10 km

4-6 hrs / 10 – 30 km

24-48 hrs / ?? km

Figure 2 — The Brigade Fight — "A Way"[15]

The complexity of the brigade fight (JMRC version depicted below) can rapidly overwhelm the brigade staff. This is especially true if we fail to leverage all of the staff's capabilities against the problem set. The capabilities available to contemporary brigades and breadth of processes the staff must navigate can be simplified into three general areas:

• **ENABLE** subordinate battalions with actual assets or with capabilities that exist only at the brigade level and above;

• **FIGHT**, defined as achieving effects on an enemy force using the decide, detect, deliver, and assess (D3A) or other targeting construct in between the forward line of troops (FLOT) and as far as the division fire support coordination line (FSCL);[16] and

• **MANAGE TRANSITIONS** for the brigade as a whole by applying continuous pressure to an enemy even as subordinate battalions transition between the offense and the defense or conduct consolidation activities, and in support of subordinate units leveraging the weight of the brigade's plans staff to facilitate rapid transitions by those subordinate units.

A number of professional resources exist addressing how brigades fight, with particular attention given to the brigade's deep fight. While this article addresses trends and recommendations for prosecuting the brigade's deep fight, the broader aim is to offer a more holistic perspective. Effective brigades continuously enable subordinate battalions from reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI) to execution of large-scale combat operations and then into a stabilization phase. Simultaneously, those brigades achieve effects on or fight the enemy with the ultimate goal of leaving subordinate formations with nothing to do in the close fight. Throughout, brigade staffs continuously manage transitions to facilitate "rapid decision making to exploit opportunities."[17]

ENABLING SUBORDINATE UNITS

Brigades often equate enabling subordinate units as simply providing enablers or establishing command relationships with brigade assets. In some cases, enabling equates to retaining assets at the brigade level to achieve the benefits of mass.

Brigade planners and the current operations integration cell (COIC) typically focus on the "shiny object" and rarely set conditions for enabling battalion success.[19] Often, the enemy main body is first identified when infantry or armor battalions make first contact. Naturally, after almost two decades of conditioning, brigades immediately shift all assets in support of the battalion. Brigades are rarely observed conducting successful shaping operations.[20] At the same time, little to no attention is given to the support and consolidation areas as enemy forces disrupt these
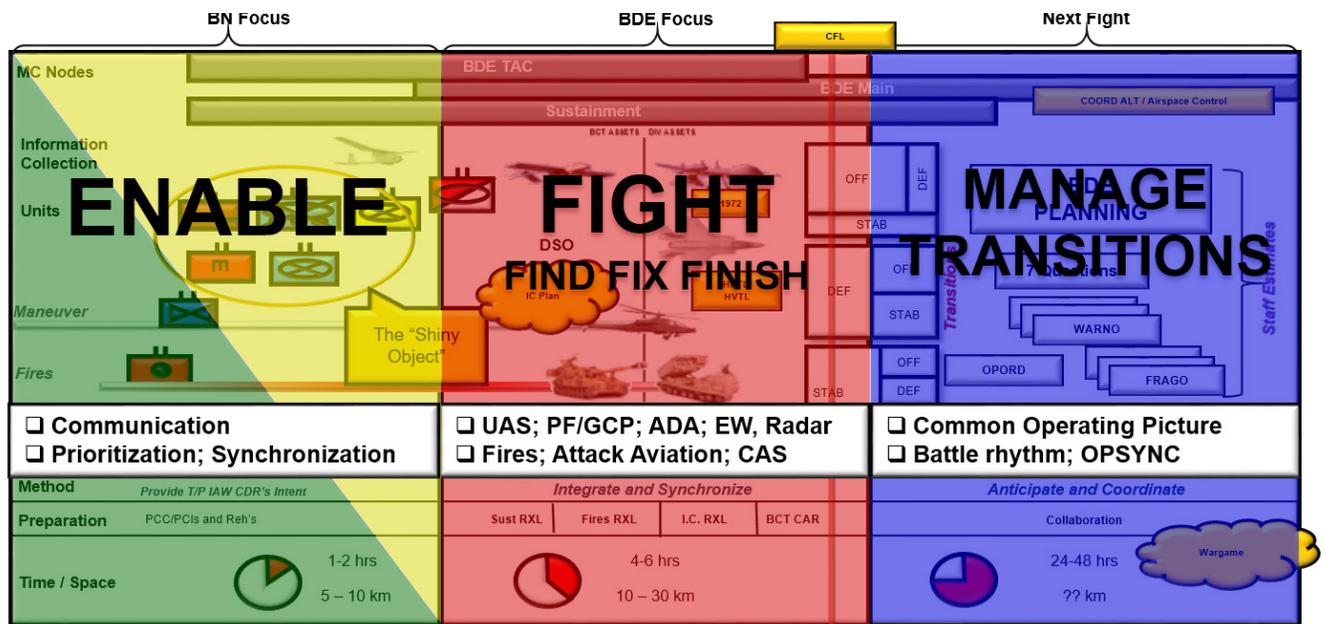
Figure 3 — The Brigade Fight[18]

areas. Additionally, brigades typically task organize brigade-level assets to battalions. Potential examples of how brigades can enable battalions include intelligence analysis, air defense and airspace coordination, and sustainment. Brigades can also offer unique capabilities such as military police (for security and detainee operations) and chemical reconnaissance.

Perhaps self-evident but difficult in execution, the best way to enable battalions is for the brigade to achieve the effects it says it will. Specifically, the brigade should focus on degrading or destroying the enemy's enabling capabilities — aviation, air defense, artillery, electronic attack, special purpose forces — and to some extent, a portion of their maneuver forces.

PROSECUTING THE DEEP FIGHT

A brigade's focus on the deep fight creates necessary conditions for subordinates to succeed in the close fight. The deep area is defined as the portion of the commander's area of operations that is not assigned to a subordinate.[21] The brigade focuses on "preventing uncommitted enemy forces from being committed in a coherent manner."[22] Commanders set the conditions by diverting, disrupting, delaying, or destroying enemy forces with multiple forms of contact in the deep area. Capabilities include (but are not limited to) artillery, attack aviation, air assault raids, information operations, and electromagnetic activities. Commanders and staff must also consider additional capabilities present from higher echelons to support nonlethal and lethal engagements in the deep area. Engaged staffs will explore numerous ways to engage the enemy within the multi-domain environment that lack range constraints, to include cyberspace or space operations. The deep area is not static and continues to shift based on the type of operation along with the phases of the operation.

Visually depicting the physical battlefield framework can assist staffs in federating their efforts to ensure the brigade remains focused on the deep fight, enabling battalions in the close fight and managing transitions to the next phase of the operation.

Typically for both the offense and defense, brigades should focus the deep fight on destroying high-payoff targets (HPTs), disrupting enemy maneuver in depth, and disrupting enemy command and control at critical times. The staff can focus on two simple questions when focusing on what to attack of the enemy:
1) Are we denying the enemy the initiative, and
2) Are we limiting the enemy commander's decision-making ability or options?[23]

At JMRC, units identify what they want to target in the deep fight; however, most units fail to identify how much

of the enemy they need to destroy in order for the close fight to be successful.[24]

During the military decision-making process (MDMP), particularly during course-of-action development, brigade staffs identify the exact number of the enemy to achieve effects on and then where and when to apply those effects. For example, a brigade deep fight area can have an attrition line where an assessment is conducted on whether the brigade was successful. If not, then the brigade may have a trigger or decision point to reallocate combat power to the close fight to ensure success. As a tactical illustration, a brigade in the defense conducted a deliberate attack with attack aviation in the deep area and only destroyed 15 of the required 20 T-90s.[25] The commander's decision is whether to leave attack aviation as a striking force for the brigade or reallocate it to the subordinate unit being impacted by the five T-90s. It is essential the staff plans for assets and conducts battle damage assessments so the brigade can determine if the conditions are set for the close fight. Additionally, it is important that an intelligence collection handover from the deep fight to the close fight occurs to maintain contact with enemy forces as they approach the subordinate unit's AO.

At times, a brigade may need to dynamically re-task assets to the close fight; however, a commander should always keep assets looking deep.

"Deep operations are conducted to set the conditions for subordinate commanders in the close area. The success of future operations and other units depends on the success of the planned deep operation. Therefore, some deep operations may proceed despite the presence of circumstances that would normally abort the mission. Conversely, significant or unexpected decisive events in the close area may cause the commander to redirect forces from deep operations to reinforce other operations."

— **Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-94.2,**
Deep Operations

MANAGING TRANSITIONS

Transitions take place when the commander determines to shift focus from one military operation to another.[26] However, the process of anticipating and managing transitions occurs throughout the brigade fight. Commanders and staffs consider physical, temporal, virtual, and cognitive factors when establishing their operational framework.[27] When managing transitions between phases and types of operations, they must factor each of these considerations into planning and execution, but generally place the greatest emphasis on space (physical) and time (temporal) dimensions.
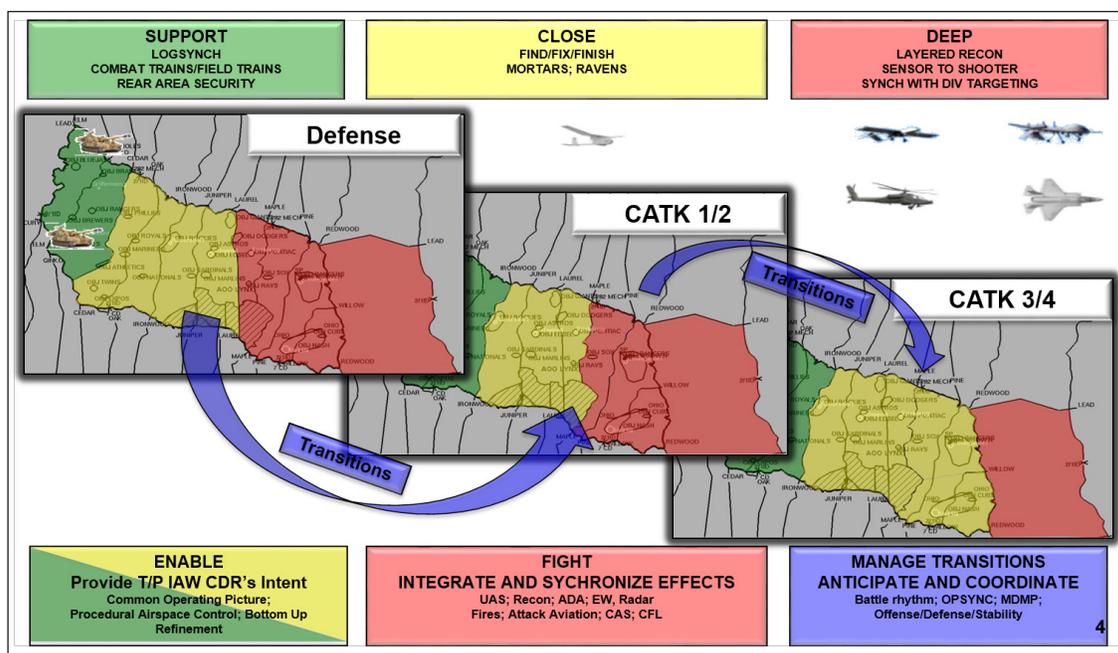

Figure 4 — The Deep Fight

Observations at JMRC reveal the complexities of the brigade fight and areas where brigades can improve across all three categories — enable, fight, and manage transitions. However, observations over the last two years of decisive action training also reveal best practices for brigade success. These best practices have been developed into five fundamentals that incorporate all three categories of the brigade fight. Brigades able to achieve all five fundamentals will be postured to succeed at fighting at the brigade level.

FUNDAMENTALS FOR SUCCESS

Simplifying the brigade's focus areas to enabling subordinate units, prosecuting the deep fight, and managing transitions address the complexity that brigade staffs are often stymied by, but the paradigm doesn't address other fundamental tasks that generate broader success when executed effectively. There are five fundamentals that, when executed well, impact overall brigade success in the offense, defense, and when conducting stability operations.
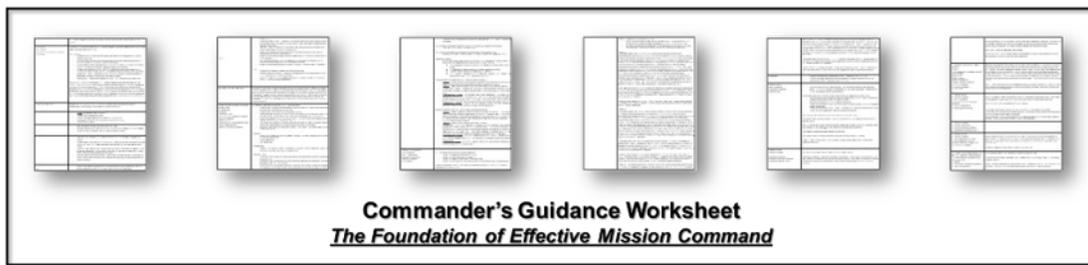
Mission Command

The logical first fundamental for brigade success is mission command. The entry point during a brigade operation is the brigade commander's guidance. Issued early in the MDMP, the commander operationalizes the philosophy of mission command through broad but clear guidance. It affirms the commander's place at the helm of MDMP and drives the operations process through the activities of understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, and assess.[28]

While commanders articulate their guidance differently, effective guidance consists of key components. Detailed intent, initial information requirements, risk assumption and mitigation considerations, and guidance specific to each warfighting function (WfF) communicate the commander's understanding of the mission. These also enable staff and subordinate units' understanding of how the commander visualizes the operation and directs necessary action.

An ongoing trend is a lack of understanding by the brigade staff and subordinate units of how the commander visualizes his fight in time and space, leading to ambiguity regarding how the brigade enables the battalions and manages transitions. Vague guidance, such as "we will focus fires deep" and "I need to know where the enemy will commit," is insufficient to enable staffs and subordinate commanders to develop effective plans that bifurcate brigade assets and responsibilities from those of subordinate units.[29] Every commander will have his preference regarding how and when to communicate guidance; however, the use of the commander's guidance worksheet is an example of a successful technique that includes guidance pertaining to the core functions of the brigade fight.

Figure 5 — Five Fundamentals for Brigade Success

#	Fundamentals for Success
1	**MISSION COMMAND** Can you communicate, are you leveraging all systems, and do you have a shared understanding/common visualization across the brigade?
2	**BATTLE RHYTHM** Do you have an effective battle rhythm to enable mission command — commander's update brief (CUB)/battle update brief (BUB); intelligence synchronization, logistics synchronization, and targeting meetings inform OPSYNC; plans to CUOPs transition; and frequent commander dialogue/touchpoints in battle rhythm?
3	**TARGETING** Is your targeting process having effects (lethal and non-lethal) on the enemy prior to direct fire? Dynamic vs. deliberate? Is observer plan tied to fires? Are we fighting off HPTL? Counterfire — are we good enough at predictive and reactive?
4	**COMMON OPERATING PICTURE** Do we maintain analog and digital COPs (blue forces with multinational forces, opposing forces, logistics, engineer) in real time? COP, in coordination with commander's critical information requirements, feeds the decision support matrix and facilitates synchronized operations and shared understanding/common visualization.
5	**PLANNING AND REHEARSALS** Does planning and rehearsals reflect commander's guidance? Have we moved beyond the conceptual to provide enough detail to synchronize operations? Are we getting warning orders 1-3 and operation order within one-third, two-third standard? Anticipating transitions? How effective are Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR)/fires, sustainment, and combined arms rehearsals to shared understanding/common visualization? Are we rehearsing brigade commander's intent and fight or just backbriefing battalion operations?

Commander's Guidance Worksheet
The Foundation of Effective Mission Command

Enable	Fight	Manage Transitions
• Establish a BDE unified observer plan that enables the employment of fires at echelon. • Once the AGMB is positively identified, collection focus needs to become enabling the targeting of air defense, radar, and artillery assets (we need to help DIV see his fires assets to enable both DIV and BCT fires to destroy. • BDE artillery fires must suppress any enemy forces at breech location and provide obscuration for breach operations.	• Focus brigade collection efforts on identifying and enabling the targeting of the lead elements of the 133rd BTG AGBM • Disrupt the movement of the 133th BTG Advanced Guard from Weiden to PL RAIDERs (BDE CFL) in order to allow the BCT to establish a hasty defense. • Delay the movement of the AGMB into sector in order to allow execution of breaching operations.	• I need to know along which axis the first echelon of the enemy main body will commit and when he will arrive... this is critical to shifting the focus of the brigade's fires from the deep fight to supporting the battalion close fight. • I need to know when conditions are met to shift focus of fires from deep to close to support breeching operations. Similarly, I need to know when conditions are met to transition back to fighting the deep fight.

Figure 6 — The Foundation of Effective Mission Command

As critical as initial guidance is, and as well as many commanders provide it, deliberate guidance to staffs following battlefield circulation or dialogue with subordinate commanders is equally or more important. Deliberate touchpoints between a commander and the staff in the battle rhythm provide an opportunity to update commander's guidance.

Battle Rhythm

Historically at JMRC, units struggle with managing a battle rhythm, which results in missed opportunities for the brigade to influence the fight. A battle rhythm is not a "one-size-fits-all" standard across all formations. It must accommodate the fight and not remain static.[30] When developing a battle rhythm, brigades must consider higher and subordinate headquarters' battle rhythm and reports, the duration and intensity of the operation, as well as how to integrate staff planning requirements to ease transitions.[31]

Field Manual (FM) 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations*, highlights the operations synchronization (OPSYNC) meeting as the key event in a unit's battle rhythm.[32] However, current and future operating environments require a continuous OPSYNC process and reassessment. Our frame of reference must change from the COIN mindset and consider targeting cycles and mini-OPSYNCs as the norm to achieve effects in a multi-domain environment.

At the OPSYNC, the brigade staff must decide if an asset or capability should remain as part of the brigade fight or allocated to enable a subordinate. The outputs of meetings such as the intelligence or logistics synchronization

Figure 7 — Battle Rhythm to Shared Understanding
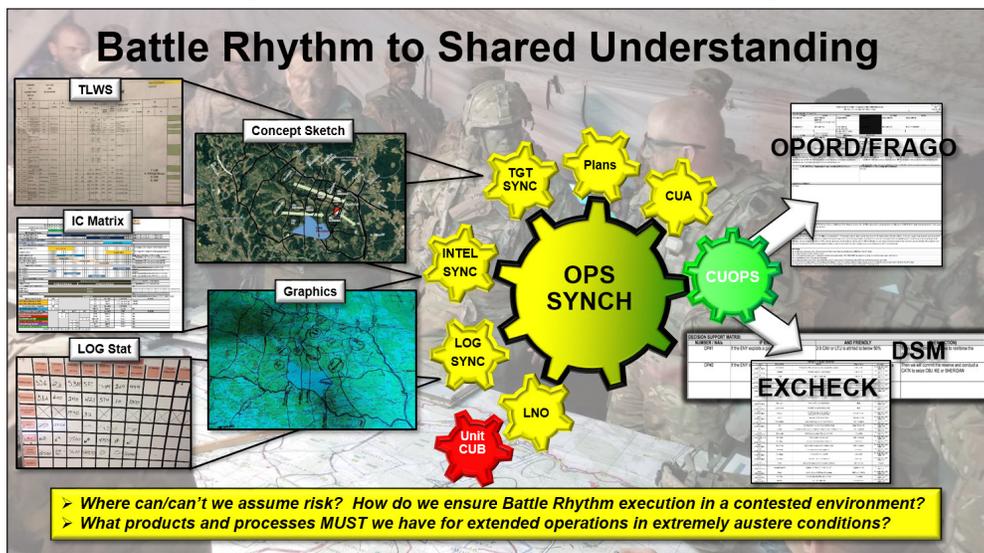
meeting feed the inputs into the OPSYNC. At the conclusion of the OPSYNC, WfFs are synchronized, the decision support matrix is updated, and the daily fragmentary order is ready to issue. Repetition is critical to success.[33]

Often absent from observed OPSYNCs is the synchronization of current and future operations. According to FM 6-0, the sole purpose of conducting a battle rhythm is to synchronize current and future operations to alleviate friction normally experienced as a brigade transitions between phases of an operation.[34] Each WfF has a responsibility to internally synchronize current and future operations so everyone clearly understands upcoming operations and decision points. Once current operations has a shared understanding, the plans team needs to continue to focus on "What's the next fight?" Done correctly, battle rhythm supports brigade efforts to synchronize how they enable subordinate units, evaluate and plan effects in the brigade's fight, and prepare to manage transitions.

Targeting

The brigade's targeting cycle is a holistic, central process that continuously accounts for the physical and temporal dimensions of the brigade's fight — close and deep. The targeting process commences early in the MDMP, is nested with the division's targeting cycle, and persists to achieve the effects necessary to shape across the breadth and depth of the brigade fight. Simply, units should "develop a useful SITEMP (situation template)/event template to execute a simple HPTL (high-payoff target list), linked to our EFSTs (essential fire support tasks), linked to collection, linked to PIR (priority information requirements)..."[35]

During a recent rotation at JMRC, the brigade's fire support coordinator (FSCOORD) aptly identified the challenge of executing the targeting process to facilitate the transition between phases. "From a targeting perspective," he questioned, "how do we fill that transition period to enable the maneuver to reconstitute? We could have maintained contact with the enemy with fires... we're defending... and then we are going to go on the offense, but we didn't think about how we were going to buy the subordinate units time to be able to reconstitute and go into the attack."[36]

At JMRC, the brigade's deep fight is commonly executed between the brigade coordinated fire line (CFL) and the brigade/division boundary.[37] The execution of the deep fight consists of targeting and engaging brigade HPTs through the integration of combined and joint lethal and non-lethal enablers and shaping fires to set the conditions for battalion and company success and transition to the next phase of the operation. As the deep transitions to close — be it during the offense or defense — the deep fight persists in time and space.

Units at JMRC habitually establish and execute a targeting battle rhythm but do not conduct requisite analysis to understand when transitions should occur. For example, due to the threat they pose, enemy air defense systems are commonly the brigade's number one HPT. However, brigade staffs rarely plan for the suppression or destruction of enemy air defense systems, nor do they understand or accurately assess conditions that make it safe to fly. This gap does not allow the brigade to adjust its HPTL, reallocate enablers, promulgate effective situational understanding among its formations, or anticipate requirements necessary to facilitate effective transitions.

The brigade's close fight occurs in its close and support/consolidation areas. Targeting efforts are frequently focused on engagement of the local populace in population centers and countering unconventional threats.[38] The targeting process should account for the changing conditions that exist relative to the phase of the current operation in the close fight, with particular attention to the status of population centers and the level of engagement required over time. A trigger should be tied to conditions identified during the targeting process that once met signals the initiation of transition of population center control from one brigade echelon to another or from military to civilian authority.

During one recent rotation's final after action review, the FSCOORD lamented the opportunities missed by ignoring the local populace and integration of non-lethal enablers during the brigade's targeting battle rhythm until late in the rotation. He stated, "Early on in the targeting meeting, it was an hour of lethal actions and five minutes of non-lethal actions... As we transitioned, we began to realize these non-lethal guys are pretty important because they have information; they are effectively observers for us in many ways and they have tremendous influence."[39] His thoughts reflect the common trend of brigades overlooking targeting as a fundamental for success.

Common Operating Picture (COP)

Every command post maintains a form of a COP whether digital, analog, or both. Units typically do not struggle with understanding the purpose or benefits of a COP, but tend to struggle with updating the COP and what to display. Just like a brigade's battle rhythm, a COP is not "one size fits all," and there is no standard checklist of required
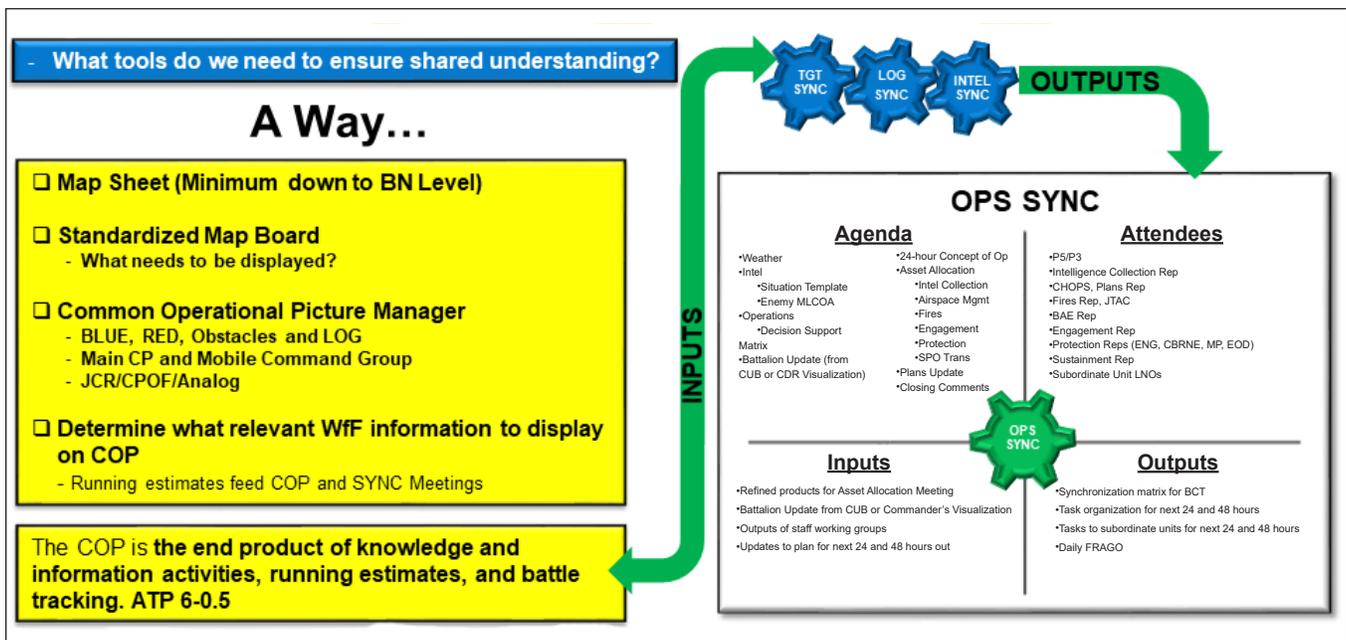
Figure 8 — Common Operating Picture

items for display. However, at a minimum, each WfF should also maintain an accurate and up-to-date COP as the significant activities and information can feed the command post COP.

A COP is defined as a single display of relevant information within a commander's area of interest tailored to the user's requirements and based on common data and information shared by more than one command.[40] Another frame of reference is to consider the COP as the visual two-minute drill. Brigade staff sections develop running estimates that provide relevant data for the COP to promote shared understanding throughout the command. At JMRC, units typically allow COPs to go stale with information due to an inability to receive real-time data, resulting in missed opportunities during the fight or confusion during transition periods.[41] The COP serves as the end product of a staff's ability to accurately receive and track real-time data informing the commander's critical information requirements, enabling rapid decision making, and supporting a shared understanding for all involved in the operation.

Inputs into the COP should change throughout the phases of an operation. A brigade staff continually modifies and assesses the information displayed. For example, as a brigade transitions from offense to defense, the brigade engineer needs to display the obstacle emplacement updates to the overall COP.

Planning and Rehearsals

Brigade staffs commonly surge personnel based on a higher-level operation or fragmentary order, complete the planning process, issue an order, conduct some type of rehearsal, execute... then wait for the next order before completing the cycle again. Commanders typically do not assess the progress of one operation and transition to the next (e.g., defensive to offensive operations) looking for opportunities to exploit success or recognizing when the brigade reaches culmination. Staffs routinely fail to ask the key question "what next" during initial planning sessions. Commanders are not provided with branch plans during execution or follow-on sequels once the commander decides it is time to change the brigade's focus. Successful brigades typically execute combined arms, sustainment, and fires/intel rehearsals for each operation.

During a typical rotation at JMRC, brigades conduct a defense, then seize intermediate objectives, and then conduct a final offensive attack to finish the destruction of the enemy forces. As the brigade transitions from the defense to the offense — achieving success in the deep fight and creating overmatch for battalions in the close fight — the plans cell should shift the focus of the brigade deep fight to the counterattack, identifying objectives or key terrain to seize and exploit the initiative gained from the offense. As the brigade executes the counterattack, the plans cell should shift the brigade deep fight to the next objective, transitioning to the offense, further exploiting the enemy, and again setting the conditions for the maneuver battalions to achieve success.

Another component in planning for transitions is the physical arrangement of forces in the deep, close, support,

and consolidation areas. As lines of communications become extended and the size of the civilian population in the brigade's support/consolidation area increases, the plans cell should consider options to account for the change in battlefield geometry.[42]

CONCLUSION

At JMRC, the brigade fight is often misunderstood, not planned or executed, and the enemy maneuvers unimpeded to first contact with companies. As is the case across the Army, 17 years of conditioning requires relearning how to fight at the brigade level. A framework for understanding the brigade fight revolves around three concepts: enabling subordinate units, prosecuting the deep fight, and managing transitions. Given the complexity and nuance involved within each of these three areas, JMRC developed five fundamentals based on observed best practices of multinational brigades training here over the last two years. Brigades achieve success across the components of the brigade fight by inculcating the five fundamentals. Given the current and future operating environment, the Army will need to continue to prepare to operate against near-peer threats leveraging multi-domain anti-access and area denial capabilities. To that end, brigades must influence the enemy prior to contact with companies and continue to do so as long as the enemy remains in the brigade's assigned area — they must set conditions for companies' success.

NOTES

[1] For purposes of this article, we define brigades as armored/Infantry/Stryker brigade combat teams though we use brigade fight throughout the article.

[2] LTG (Retired) David Barno and Nora Bensahel, "The U.S. Military's Protection Deficit Disorder," *War on the Rocks*, 5 July 2016, https://warontherocks.com/2016/07/the-u-s-militarys-protection-deficit-disorder.

[3] Future operational environments will likely consist of complex urban terrain, dense populations, and an increasingly adaptive adversary employing a mix of traditional, unconventional, and hybrid strategies to include cyber, electronic, and subterranean warfare. See the U.S. Army Operating Concept (AOC), TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *Win in a Complex World*, 31 October 2014.

[4] For purposes of this article, the term "brigade" is used in lieu of "brigade combat team;" TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-6, *U.S. Army Functional Concept for Movement and Maneuver 2020-2040*, February 2017.

[5] "Cross-domain maneuver is the employment of mutually supporting lethal and nonlethal capabilities in multiple domains to create a synergistic effect that increases relative combat power and provides Army maneuver forces with the overmatch necessary to destroy or defeat enemy forces." TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-6, 3-5.

[6] Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Operations*, October 2017, 3-2; however, at the brigade level and especially during large-scale combat operations, brigades will unlikely perform all three tasks simultaneously as all combat power may be required to execute a specific task. See Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, October 2017.

[7] FM 3-96, *Brigade Combat Team*, Chapter 1; Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-91, *Division Operations*, October 2014, 1-19.

[8] ADRP 3-90, *Offense and Defense*, Chapter 1, August 2012.

[9] FM 3-0, figure 1-7, corps area of operations within a theater of operations.

[10] ATP 3-91, 1-3.

[11] TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-6, Chapter 4.

[12] FM 3-0, 1-149.

[13] Ibid, figure 1-7, corps area of operations within a theater of operations.

[14] Ibid, 1-120-126.

[15] Original author/designer unknown, but it is a common graphic used to depict the complexity of the brigade fight at Combat Training Centers. Multiple variations exist and will be familiar to readers.

[16] ATP 3-60, *Targeting Process*, May 2015.

[17] FM 3-0, 1-149.

[18] This simplified brigade fight framework can also be useful as a guide to dividing staff functional responsibilities. Loosely analogous to current operations, future operations, and plans, the enable-fight-manage transitions framework offers simple lines of effort that functional experts on staffs can use to guide their efforts.

[19] "Shiny object" is a colloquial term used to define the battalion close fight.

[20] At JMRC, most training units do not achieve effects on enemy high-payoff targets in the brigade deep area.

[21] ADRP 3-0, 4-26.

[22] FM 3-96, 3-34.

[23] See generally FM 3-0.

[24] Very few units use the Correlation of Forces Model (COFM) that helps the staff establish a rough estimate of the combat power ratio between opposing forces. The Army has an additional method called Relative Combat Power Analysis (RCPA). This method utilizes the elements of combat power to compare enemy strengths against friendly weaknesses to identify relative advantages and disadvantages.

[25] Third-generation Russian battle tank that entered service in 1993.

[26] FM 3-90-1, *Offense and Defense Volume 1*, 1-42.

[27] When establishing their operational framework, commanders and staffs consider the physical, temporal, virtual, and cognitive aspects of their own AO, their higher echelon's AO, and subordinate AOs. The physical, temporal, virtual, and cognitive aspects of an operational framework vary in terms of focus and priority depending upon the echelon, force capabilities, and the OE (FM 3-0).

[28] ADRP 6-0, 1-3.

[29] For example, battalions need to know what assets the brigade commander will retain to achieve success shaping to enable the close fight.

[30] FM 6-0 defines a battle rhythm as "a deliberate daily cycle of command, staff, and unit activities intended to synchronize current and future operations."

[31] Ibid, 1-64.

[32] Ibid, 1-58.

[33] The Center for Army Lessons Learned published a handbook, *News From the CTC, The OPSYNC: Best Practices*, that is recommended to readers for further reference.

[34] FM 6-0, Chapter 1.

[35] Key task outlined by COL David W. Gardner, brigade commander during a recent rotation at JMRC.

[36] Allied Spirit VIII brigade end-of-rotation (ENDRO) after action review (AAR).

[37] Coordinated fire line — A line beyond which conventional and indirect surface fire support means may fire at any time within the boundaries of the establishing headquarters without additional coordination. The purpose of the coordinated fire line is to expedite the surface-to-surface attack of targets beyond the coordinated fire line without coordination with the ground commander in whose area the targets are located (JP 3-09). Considerations for terrain, weapon system capabilities and limitations as well as type of operation will influence where the deep fight is actually fought.

[38] At JMRC, unconventional threats are normally special purpose forces that target brigade mission command and sustainment nodes.

[39] Allied Spirit VIII brigade ENDRO AAR.

[40] ADRP 6-0.

[41] A commander's ability to make informed decisions is also degraded.

[42] Examples include moving the location of the civil military operations center to a more central location or out of the support area to a consolidation area; or jumping the brigade support area to decrease lines of communication and provide more responsive logistics in preparation for the defense or continued offensive operations.

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