
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
THE BASIC SCHOOL
MARINE CORPS TRAINING COMMAND
CAMP BARRETT, VIRGINIA 22134-5019

URBAN OPERATIONS IV
SECURITY OPERATIONS
IN AN URBAN
ENVIRONMENT
B4S5619XQ-DM
STUDENT HANDOUT

Security Operations in an Urban Environment

Introduction The purpose of this handout is to assist in your understanding of the application of security operations in an urban environment. The complementary class is approximately one and a half hours long and introduces you to theory and planning considerations associated with security operations; specifically vehicle checkpoint and cordon and search operations.

Importance Two of the most common operations conducted in an Urban environment are vehicle checkpoints and the cordon and search. Understanding the basics principles of these two types of operations, in addition to what you have already learned, will enable you to operate effectively in the uncertain urban environments. As provisional rifle platoon commanders, all Marine officers are required to understand the tactics, techniques, and procedures associated with these types of missions.

In This Lesson In this lesson, you will learn types and components of vehicle checkpoints and planning considerations for each. You will also learn the elements of a cordon and how to plan and task organize for cordon and searches.

This lesson covers the following topics:

Topic	Page
Vehicle Checkpoints	3
Vehicle Searches	6
Cordon and Search Operations	9
Interpreter Considerations	31
Summary	32
References	32
Glossary of Terms and Acronyms	32
Notes	33

Learning Objectives

Terminal Learning Objectives

TBS-MOUT-1003 Given checkpoint equipment and an order, lead a unit in a Vehicle Personnel Checkpoint to accomplish the mission and meet the commander's intent.

Enabling Learning Objectives

TBS-LDR-1007c Given a mission and civilian areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, personnel, and events, integrate civil considerations into tactical planning to develop an estimate of the situation.

TBS-MOUT-1001a Given an evaluation, identify the levels of urban environments without omission.

Security Operations in an Urban Environment (Continued)

Learning Objectives (Continued)

Enabling Learning Objectives (Continued)

TBS-MOUT-1001b Given a scenario, identify urban movement considerations without omission.

TBS-MOUT-1003a Given an order and commander's intent, task organize a Vehicle Control Point or Entry Control Point (VCP/ECP) without omission.

TBS-MOUT-1003b Given an evaluation, define Vehicle Check Point (VCP) layout without omission.

TBS-MOUT-1003c Given an evaluation, define vehicle control zones layout without omission.

TBS-MOUT-1003e Given a Vehicle Control Point (VCP) scenario, determine fire control measures to safeguard personnel and equipment and support the scheme of maneuver.

TBS-MOUT-1003f Given a mission, a unit, and hasty or deliberate vehicle control measures, search vehicles to accomplish the mission.

TBS-MOUT-1003g Given an evaluation, identify Entry Control Point (ECP) considerations without omission.

Vehicle Check Points (VCPs)

1. Introduction. The enemy commonly uses vehicles to transport personnel, weapons, explosives, and equipment. The enemy also employs vehicles as weapons systems; specifically as Vehicle Born Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs). This creates the necessity to plan for and employ active defensive measures to guard against and disrupt vehicle specific threats. Vehicle checkpoints are established to screen vehicles and disrupt enemy vehicular operations in order to influence the area of operations.

2. Types. The three types of vehicle checkpoints (VCPs) are as follows:

- Deliberate. A deliberate VCP is a permanent, fortified checkpoint usually placed along an approach to a built up or restricted area i.e. Forward Operating Base (FOB).
- Hasty. A hasty VCP is a pre-planned, temporary checkpoint in support of a specific operation or during a specific time of day/year.
- Snap. A snap VCP is an immediate checkpoint employed during a patrol based on a fragmentary order from higher or at the patrol leader's discretion. Snap VCPs are commonly used to target specific vehicles such as vehicles on a *Be On-The Look Out* (BOLO) List, but may also be used randomly to keep the enemy weary about using road to traffic weapons and equipment.

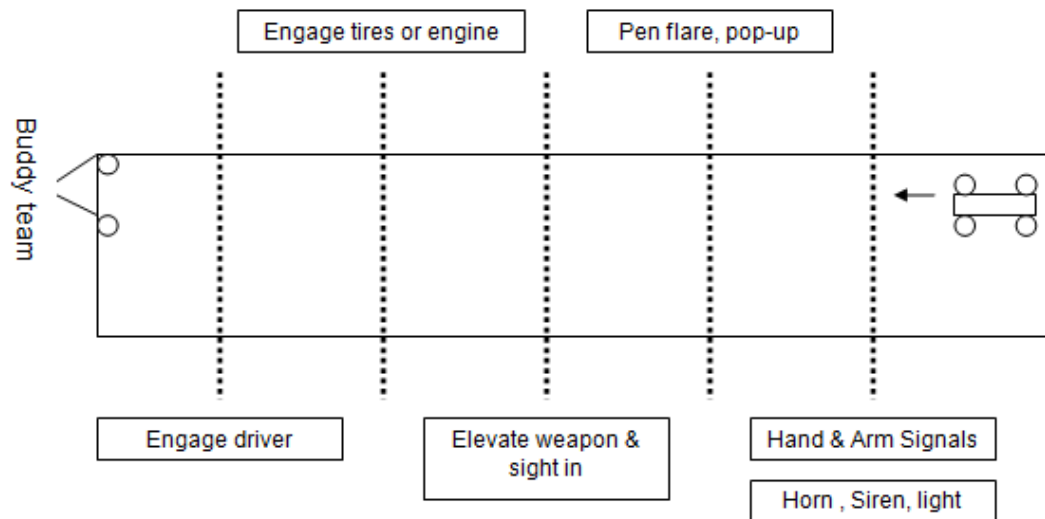
Vehicle Check Points (VCPs) (Continued)

3. **Components.** Vehicle checkpoints can be categorized in four components:

- Security. Positions in support of and around a VCP are established in order to provide security from external threats and cover vehicles within the checkpoint itself. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), terrain, posture, control measures, and standoff all must be employed effectively to provide protection. Sector of fire, trigger lines, Escalation of Force (EOF) measures and engagement criteria are used to control fires. *See example below.*
- Guardian Angel. Marines are placed in a covert overwatch position(s) in order to provide situational awareness and counter-ambush capabilities. Guardian angels are specifically tasked for this mission; they cannot accomplish this mission in conjunction with other VCP responsibilities.
- Serpentine. Physical barriers are emplaced to slow, canalize, turn, and stop vehicles entering the checkpoint. The serpentine component can range from a single set of spike strips employed in conjunction with smoke at a snap VCP to multiple layers of concertina wire and concrete barriers at a deliberate VCP. The overall goal of the serpentine is to control the approach speed of a vehicle to a manageable level.
- Search Area. Marines conduct vehicle and personnel searches at a designated area within the established serpentine to look for and prevent the flow of enemy personnel, weapons, explosives and equipment.

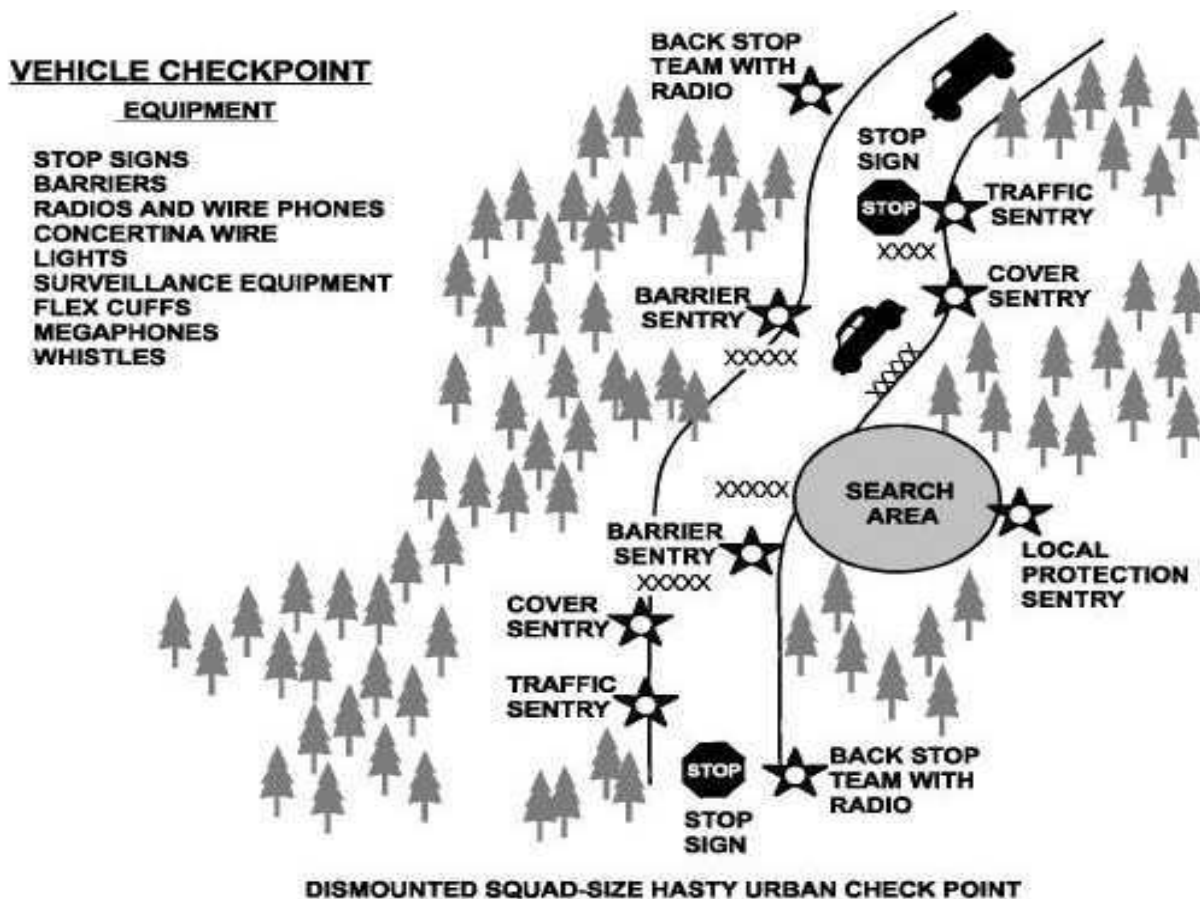
4. **Planning Considerations.** The static nature of checkpoints increases the using unit's vulnerability. Times and locations of hasty and snap VCPs should be varied and checkpoint locations should be selected to provide enough distance in order to allow Marines to conduct EOF procedures appropriately if vehicles do not stop. Additional equipment is often required for VCPs. Integration of local security forces and translators can be extremely beneficial. More detail on planning considerations can be found in Section 3-23, MCRP 3-33A Counter-guerilla Operations.

Vehicle Check Points (VCPs) (Continued)

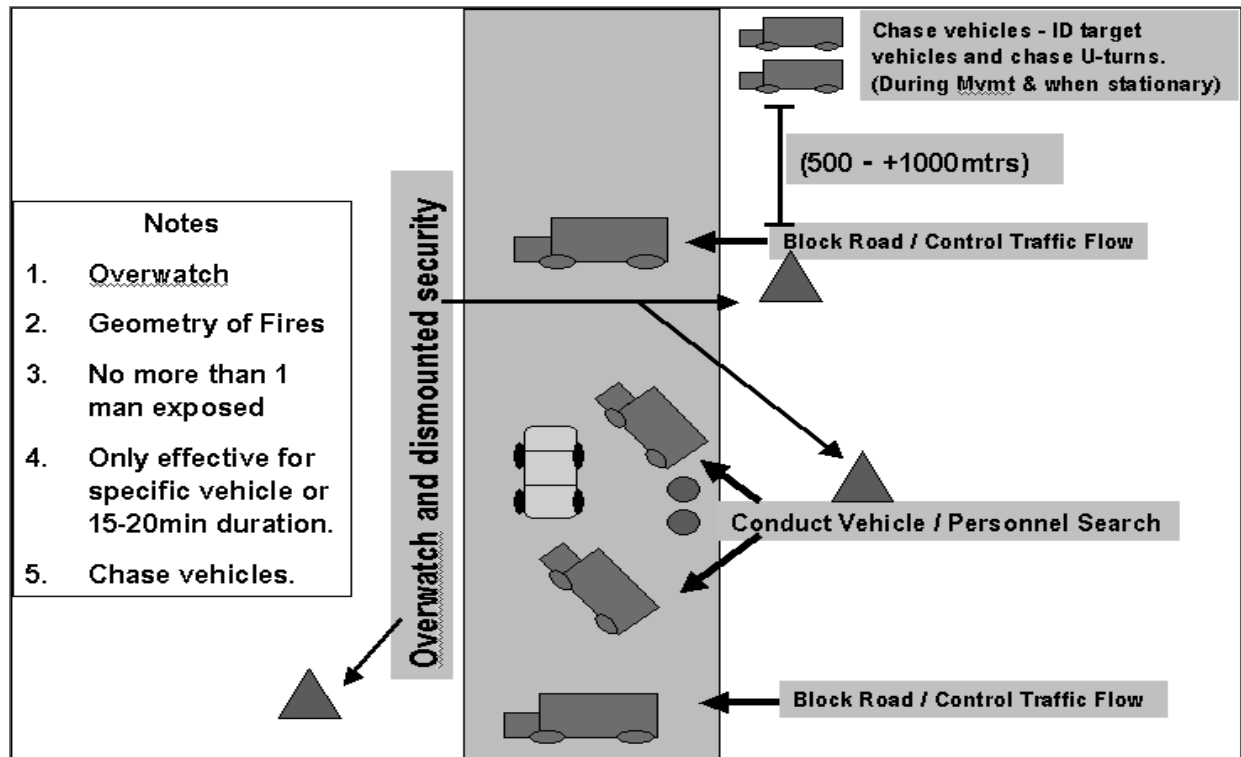


Trigger Line and Escalation of Force (EOF) steps for VCP

* - Distances between trigger lines are extended as far as the terrain allows the lines must be clearly identified. Buddy team works together to institute steps.



Vehicle Check Points (VCPs) (Continued)



Hasty vehicle checkpoint conducted by a mounted patrol

Mounted Section-Size Hasty Urban Check Point

* If only 4 vehicles, eliminate one at Conduct Vehicle / Personnel Search and Chase. Use Block Road and Chase Vehicle IOT pursue.

Vehicle Searches

Overview. Search techniques are divided into three categories. The categories vary according to the intensity of the search. There is no clear boundary between the categories and the extent of the investigation at each stage depends on the suspicion aroused. Categories include:

1. **Initial Check.** The initial check is the first part of the searching process carried out on all vehicles and used to select vehicles for a more detailed examination. Occupants are asked to step out of the vehicle and are quickly searched. Search personnel may ask the driver to open the trunk and hood. Search personnel at the entrance to barracks and other installations should know the threat from large vehicle mounted bombs. Up to three personnel are required for the search, and the search normally takes about 3 minutes per vehicle.
 - a. Ensure at least two people conduct the search:
 - b. One guard (driver and occupants)
 - c. One searcher (vehicle)
 - d. Stop the vehicle at the search site.
 - e. Have all occupants exit the vehicle and move them to one location.

Vehicle Searches (Continued)

- f. Instruct the driver to turn off the engine, and then open the hood, trunk, and all doors. Get phrases from interpreter prior to mission or tape record phrases from an interpreter.
 - g. Continue the search once the above is complete.
 - h. Question or search of the driver and occupants is optional.
 - i. Begin and end the exterior search at the front of the vehicle, moving in a clockwise direction.
 - j. Visually search of the exterior and top of the vehicle.
 - k. Visually search of the underside of the vehicle.
 - l. Search the interior starting at the front compartment, then the right side, then the rear compartment, then the left side, ending at the front.
 - m. Complete the search.
 - n. Instruct the driver and occupants to continue.
- 2. Primary search.** This is a full search of select vehicles. Vehicles may be selected randomly, In Accordance With (IAW) screening guidelines or due to similarities to vehicles associated with previous events (a Be-On-the-Look-Out (BOLO) list). This search usually entails checking the interior, exterior, engine and trunk compartments and mirror checks of the vehicle underside. It should take two to five minutes. Primary search include those of those of the initial search and may add the following—
- a. Question or search the driver and occupants.
 - b. Check the inside of the front hood.
 - c. Check the rear compartment.
- 3. Secondary search.** This is a detailed search of a suspect vehicle. A vehicle becomes suspect usually due to screening or discovery of items during a primary search. This thorough search is manpower and time intensive. It may include disassembling panels, checking interiors of wheels, and so on. At the basic level, to conduct a secondary search of a vehicle—
- a. Ensure at least four people conduct the search:
 - i. Two for the driver and occupants.
 - ii. Two more for the vehicle.
 - b. Assume that the driver and occupants or the vehicle itself is suspect.
 - c. If possible, have the vehicle stop in a safe and secure location.
 - d. Instruct the driver to turn off the engine, open the hood, open the trunk, and open all doors.
 - e. Obtain the keys from the driver.
 - f. Move the driver and occupants to a separate location.
 - g. Detain and search driver and occupants while searching the vehicle.
 - h. Begin the vehicle search at the front and end at the rear.
 - i. One searcher searches the right front, right side, and right rear.
 - ii. The other searcher searches the left front, left side, and left rear.
 - iii. Conduct a visual search of the exterior and top.
 - i. Conduct a visual search of the underside of the vehicle.
 - j. Without entering, conduct a visual search of the interior of the vehicle.

Vehicle Searches (Continued)

- k. Ensure the engine is off, and then ensure the hood, trunk, and all doors are open.
- l. Check the inside of the front hood.
- m. Check the interior left and right sides.
- n. Check the rear compartment.
- o. Complete the search.
- p. Return keys to driver.
- q. Instruct driver and occupants to continue.

4. Search Considerations.

- a. Be quick, thorough, and efficient. This will reduce complaints.
- b. Children, babies, pets, old people, young women, and infirmed civilians should not deter operations. If necessary, request special or additional assistance.
- c. Use common sense. Look for anything unusual, i.e., scratched screw heads, repaired upholstery, new bodywork etc.
- d. Low-riding or overloaded vehicles. Nervous driver or passengers.
- e. Remembering details of searched vehicles could be useful in future operations.

5. Vehicle Types - Vehicles are generally categorized into four types: Automobiles (cars), motorcycles and bicycles, buses, and heavy goods vehicles (trucks). Search considerations for the car are covered above as part of basic vehicle considerations. Search considerations for the three additional vehicles follow:

- a. Motorcycles and Bicycles - Basic motorcycle and bicycle search procedures include—
 - i. Ensure at least two people conduct the search.
 - ii. One for the driver and passenger.
 - iii. One for the vehicle.
 - iv. Have the driver or a passenger turn off the engine and dismount.
 - v. Visually inspect the vehicle and any compartments on the vehicle.
 - vi. Complete the search.
 - vii. Instruct driver and passenger to mount up and continue.
- b. Heavy Goods Vehicles (Trucks) - Basic heavy goods (truck) vehicle search procedures include—
 - i. Ensure at least three personnel conduct the search.
 - ii. One for the driver and occupants.
 - iii. Two for the vehicle.
 - iv. Set aside an area to search these vehicles due to their length and amount of cargo.
 - v. Instruct the driver to turn off the engine, open the hood, and open all doors. □
 - vi. Check the driver's credentials and cargo manifests.
 - vii. Inspect to the degree required for the cargo.
 - viii. Complete the search.
 - ix. Instruct driver and occupants to secure load and continue.
- c. Buses - Basic bus search procedures include—
 - i. Ensure at least four people conduct this search.
 - ii. Two for the driver and occupants.

Vehicle Searches (Continued)

- iii. Two for the bus itself.
- iv. Set aside an area to search buses due to their length, potentially large number of occupants, and lots of luggage.
- v. Instruct only the driver to turn off the engine and open all exterior compartments.
- vi. Initially, board the bus, check all occupants' identification, note seating arrangements, and check carry-on baggage.
- vii. If a full search is required, have all occupants exit the bus with their baggage, and then detain them while you search the bus and baggage.
- viii. Complete the search.
- ix. Instruct driver and occupants to reload and continue.

Cordon and Search Operations

1. **Purpose.** A cordon and search mission is conducted to systematically search for enemy personnel, weapons, supplies, explosives or communications equipment. Cordon and search missions can be conducted on varying scales, either large cities which harbor significant insurgent infrastructure or searching one house or building identified by intelligence as a possible weapons cache.
 - a. **Terms.** The following three terms are used when discussing cordon and search operations:
 - i. **Objective Area** - The area where the cordon and search takes place.
 - ii. **Target Area** - The area immediately surrounding the target, which may be a house, a series of houses, etc.
 - iii. **Target** - The location of the High Valued Target (HVT), weapons cache, etc.
2. **Principles.** Cordon and search operations are almost always inextricably linked with counterinsurgency operations. Accordingly, the basic principle of searching a populated area is to conduct it with limited inconvenience to the population. Target selection is based on a variety of intelligence developed through local sources or higher level assets. Task organization and levels of force employed are varied to mitigate effects on the populace. This is done based on the threat level of the target. A target where enemy contact or capture is less likely is executed with a lower level of force. This is often referred to as a *cordon and "knock"*; the search element knocks on the door of the target and requests permission to search. Cordon and search missions in more hostile areas or targets based on higher quality intelligence are usually executed more like raids; a breach usually mechanical is executed to gain entry into the target.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

Principles of Cordon and Search

- a. **Speed** - Cordons should be rapidly established with an immediate transition to a search of the target. Rapid tempo is critical to maintain the initiative and to reduce the enemy's ability to react or escape. Speed will limit the enemy's capability to react and mitigate organized opposition by the local populace.
- b. **Surprise** - All efforts must be made to deny the enemy the opportunity to react.
- c. **Isolation** - The target area and the target must be physically isolated by establishing a cordon around each site. The cordon serves to prevent escape from the area, repositioning by enemy elements, or reinforcement.
- d. **Target Identification** - Personnel must be properly tasked and trained to identify, capture, and/or exploit targeted enemy personnel and material.
- e. **Timeliness** - It is critical to strike a balance between actionable intelligence, target activities, desired end state, and execution of the cordon and search. Failure to do so allows the enemy to gain the initiative, reposition as he desires, and escape.
- f. **Accountability** - Frequently during a cordon and search several elements are executing decentralized operations. It is critical that all personnel and assets are accounted for and not left behind during the egress.
- g. **Minimization and Mitigation of Collateral Damage** - Cordon and search operations are focused on eliminating threats or potential threats. If the operations cause excessive or unnecessary collateral damage, this may create resentment, which emboldens the enemy's cause. Actions that cause extensive collateral damage may also constitute violations under both the law of war and the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
- h. **Detailed Search** - Target areas must be thoroughly and extensively searched to ensure all of the enemy's assets are captured. This requires proper coordination, marking, and adherence to unit SOPs. Target areas cannot simply be cleared they must be properly searched. Train elements within your unit to conduct Tactical Sight Exploitation (TSE).
- i. **Legitimacy** - Cordon and search operations focus on supporting the efforts of a legitimate Host Nation government. The use and integration of properly trained Host Nation Security Forces are a requirement toward this end.

3. Phases of a Cordon and Search.

Planning - The planning phase is used to define the sequence of action by each element to synchronize their tasks to ensure mission success. As time available to plan and prepare for a cordon and search mission is generally limited, it is often necessary to conduct planning while reconnaissance and intelligence collection are ongoing. As additional information becomes available, it is integrated and the plan updated as necessary. While many of the tasks required by a cordon and search is part of a unit SOPs, it is necessary that pre-mission rehearsals be conducted to identify any gaps or seams and that all mission elements and teams understand their tasks (i.e. "B"AMCIS).

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

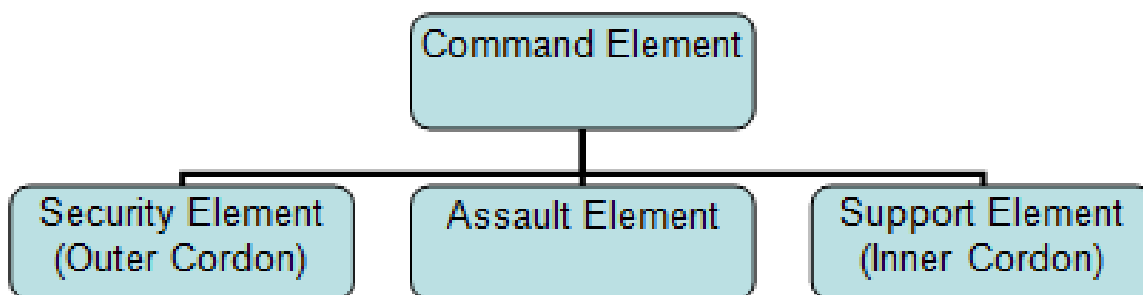
- a. **Reconnaissance** - Every target area should be reconnoitered prior to execution using many of the available resources. The reconnaissance plan must not provide the enemy with indicators of an impending cordon and search. For example: A reconnaissance patrol should not be conducted in an area where our forces do not habitually operate since it could compromise execution of the cordon and search. Often reconnaissance is conducted with overhead imagery (UAV/Satellite).
 - b. **Movement to the Objective** - The timing, routes, and execution of movement to the objective should consider the factors of METT-TC and whether it should be simultaneous or phased. A route recon should be conducted both during the day and night for planning purposes.
 - c. **Isolation** - This is key to successful execution of the search. It consists of an outer cordon and an inner cordon. The objective may be isolated simultaneously or sequentially. Frequently, the search may have to be executed immediately after the cordon is established. The outer cordon isolates the area and the inner cordon isolates the objective.
 - d. **Search** - This includes everything from clearing and search of target areas, consolidation and reorganization, and mitigation of negative effects caused by the search. The search should be conducted by trained members of the Assault Force.
 - e. **Withdrawal** - During this phase the unit may be the most vulnerable. To mitigate risk, stay-behind elements may be left to cover the withdrawal, different routes and timing may be used, or other techniques may be employed such as simultaneous or phased withdrawals to mitigate the enemy's ability to attack.
4. **METT-TC Considerations.** A commander should use the full range of intelligence from his subordinates and staff and apply all lessons learned about his Area of Operations (AO) to each mission (civilian considerations may change on a daily basis).
- a. **Mission** - Most cordon and search operations are enemy-oriented and designed to capture or destroy enemy forces, material, or capability to operate covertly.
 - b. **Enemy** - Enemy considerations drive the tactical planning. Commanders should consider the following enemy actions when planning a cordon and search:
 - i. **Enemy resistance in the route or routes into the target area** - This includes the emplacement and use of IEDs and booby traps as well as ambushes. Using aviation, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), or mounted patrol reconnaissance just ahead of the cordon and search force will assist the commander in finding and using the path of least resistance into the target area.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- ii. **Enemy resistance in the objective area** - In an urban area the commander must consider the possibility of enemy outposts in adjacent houses or courtyards, on the roofs of adjacent buildings, in subterranean hide positions, etc. The cordon forces must be aware of these suspected enemy positions.
- iii. **Enemy resistance at the target** - During planning the commander must assess the type and level of resistance expected. Intelligence and other information sources will assist in defining the necessary Scheme of Maneuver (SOM) based on the threat.
- iv. **Enemy resistance departing the objective area** - Again, this includes emplacement and use of mines, booby traps, and ambushes. Using aviation or UAS reconnaissance assets will assist the commander in a quick egress. Commanders should strongly consider using a separate ingress and egress route or a stay behind force.
- c. **Terrain** - Terrain considerations for a cordon and search are similar to those for most other operations in urban terrain. Commanders must consider obstacles, avenues of approach (to include enemy avenues of withdrawal), key terrain, observation/fields of fire, and cover and concealment when evaluating the terrain.
- d. **Time** - The time available before mission execution determines whether the unit will execute a hasty or deliberate cordon and search. Commanders must also consider the time of day they are conducting these operations, whether they want to conduct them in the early morning hours before people arise and go to work or if in warmer climates they want to conduct them in the middle of a hot afternoon when people are likely to be indoors trying to escape the weather. Plan for the time of day the HVT is most likely to be home.
- e. **Troops and Fire Support Available** - Commanders must thoroughly evaluate the number of assets available for each cordon and search mission. The composition of each element of the cordon and search will vary from unit to unit, but commanders must ensure they have adequately resourced each element to meet the possible threats and accomplish their task and purpose. Plan for attachments.
- f. **Civilian Considerations** - Most cordon and search operations will occur in populated areas and civilians must be considered in the planning process.
 - i. **Occupants and Neighboring Buildings**—Commanders must consider the various categories of occupants they will find and how to separate them from the search activities. Units must be prepared to deal with women, children, ill, and elderly occupants of the target and to provide for their security and safety. The cordon and search elements must be prepared to search buildings immediately neighboring the target site. Neighboring buildings may share walls or fences with the target site and provide either a covered means of escape or additional cache sites for equipment.
 - Neighbor(s)**—Units must plan to communicate with the people in the surrounding area. Commanders must plan to use a megaphone or tactical psychological operations (PSYOP) team to inform the neighbors of any specific instructions the unit needs the community to follow.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- ii. Cultural Sensitivity—Marines must be aware of cultural taboos and ensure that their action or inaction does not incite the non-combatants in the target area.
 - iii. Perception Management (Neighborhood Follow-up)—Units may plan to follow-up with the neighborhood after a cordon and search. Either through a Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT) or civil affairs (CA) team or through conversations with local leaders, the unit may communicate some information about the cordon and search. For instance, if the unit found an insurgent with bomb-making materials, the unit may communicate that to the neighborhood. If a unit fails to communicate that information to them, then the neighborhood may perceive the detention of their neighbor as a sign of American cruelty or unfairness. The benefit of the neighborhood understanding cordon and search operations could be the difference between that neighborhood supporting and harboring insurgents or that neighborhood denying safe haven to future insurgents. It may be necessary to prepare a PRT or CA team to document damage caused during a search and reimburse the occupants on-site.
- 5. Task Organization** - The elements within the Cordon and Search Force are similar to the methods used in task organizing a patrol or raid force, in that a general organization to conduct major tasks is established. This breaks the unit into sub-elements. Sub-elements can be further broken down into teams to conduct special tasks based on mission requirements. The below figure depicts the task organization of a cordon and search force. Command Element - The command element is the headquarters of the unit conducting the mission. It provides command and control for the operation, coordinating the various assets.



- a. Security Element - The security element is responsible for isolating the objective area. The security element prevents possible outside influence affecting the mission of the search/assault and Support force and prevents ingress/egress of enemy and indigenous personnel from the objective area.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

Outer cordon prevents anyone from entering the objective area and assists the inner cordon in preventing the enemy from escaping from the objective area.

Possible tasks include:

- i. Block - to deny the enemy access to a given area or to prevent enemy advance in a given direction or an avenue of approach.
 - ii. Interdict - to prevent, hinder, or delay the use of an area or route by enemy forces. To seal off an area by any means; to deny use of a route or approach.
 - iii. Isolate - to seal off, both physically and psychologically, an enemy from his sources of support, to deny an enemy freedom of movement, and to prevent an enemy unit from having contact with other enemy forces.
- b. Support Element - The support element is responsible for isolating the objective. The security element prevents possible outside influence affecting the mission of the search/assault and prevents ingress/egress of enemy and indigenous personnel from the target area.
- Inner cordon accomplishes a similar task as the outer cordon but only for a specific area such as a block, building, or portion of a building. An inner cordon is established to isolate the specific objective in which the target is located. An inner cordon prevents enemy movement within the specific area and prevents enemy ingress into and egress from the target area.
- i. Fix—to prevent the enemy from moving any part of his force from a specific location for a specific period of time.
 - ii. Isolate—to seal off, both physically and psychologically, an enemy from his sources of support, to deny an enemy freedom of movement, and to prevent an enemy unit from having contact with other enemy forces.
 - iii. Block—to deny the enemy access to a given area or to prevent enemy advance in a given direction or an avenue of approach.
 - iv. Interdict—to prevent, hinder, or delay the use of an area or route by the enemy forces. To seal off an area by any means; to deny use of a route or approach.
 - v. Suppress—to temporarily degrade the performance of a force or weapons system below the level needed to accomplish the mission.
 - vi. Contain--To stop, hold or surround enemy forces or to keep the enemy in a given area and prevent his withdrawing any part of his forces for use elsewhere.

Assault Element - The assault/search element's mission is to clear, search, and assault targets within the specific building or area that the target(s) are located and to capture, kill, or destroy the target. The assault element initiates action once the outer and inner cordons are in place. It is imperative that this element not only understands but can comply with Rules of Engagement (ROE) in a dynamic environment and this issue is addressed upfront during planning and throughout all phases of the cordon and search. The commander of the unit conducting the cordon or the assault/search element leader may break this element down into separate groups to accomplish its assigned tasks. Possible tasks include:

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- i. Search - to conduct a movement to go over or look through with the intent of finding something.
 - ii. Seize - to clear the target area and obtain control of it.
 - iii. Clear - to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance in an assigned zone, area, or location by destroying, capturing, or forcing the withdrawal of enemy forces.
 - iv. Secure - to gain possession of a position or terrain feature with or without force and to prevent its destruction or loss by enemy action.
 - v. Destroy - to physically render an enemy force combat ineffective. To render a target so damaged it cannot function as intended nor be restored to a usable condition without being entirely rebuilt.
- c. Special Teams and Assets. The following special teams and assets should be considered during planning. Team leaders should be included where applicable in the planning phase of the operation to enhance commanders on their capabilities. These functions may be performed by multiple personnel/teams and may include:
 - i. Host Nation Security Forces
 - ii. Field Interview Teams
 - iii. Documentation Teams
 - iv. Demolition Teams
 - v. Mine Detection Teams (EOD)
 - vi. Tunnel Reconnaissance Teams
 - vii. Fire Support Teams
 - viii. Joint Terminal Attack Controller
 - ix. Aviation assets
 - x. Tactical HUMINT Teams
 - xi. Tactical PSYOP Teams
 - xii. Civil Affairs (CA) Teams / Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRT)
 - xiii. Interpreters
 - xiv. Detainee Teams
 - xv. Military Working Dogs
 - xvi. Medical Teams
 - xvii. Sniper Teams

6. Geometry of Fire and Indirect Fire Planning - The commander's fire plan must explain how the unit will achieve its purpose while maintaining the safety of his unit members. This is enabled by taking into account the dispositions of the friendly elements conducting the cordon and search operation and the ballistics of the direct and indirect fire weapons supporting the operation.

- a. Direct Fire Planning Considerations Specific to Cordon and Search.
 - Outer Cordon - The outer cordon force commander needs to establish clear sectors of fire that are oriented away from the cordon. Planners must analyze the area of the outer cordon and identify local conditions that will restrict or limit direct fire capability. Weapons mix and capabilities will be adjusted based on the analysis of the objective area.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- i. Inner Cordon - The inner cordon element must use strict and well planned fire control measures to avoid fratricide with the assault/search element and the outer cordon. The personnel of assault/search element must recognize the hazard to both the inner and outer cordon forces caused by firing through exterior doors and windows. Planning for the cordon and search must position each element and establish clear fire control measures to prevent fratricide.
- b. ROE and Escalation of Force Training. ROE specify the circumstances and limitations under which forces may engage. They include definitions of combatant and noncombatant elements and prescribe the treatment of noncombatants. Factors influencing ROE are national command policy, the operational requirements, and the law of war. ROE always maintain the right of US personnel to use the force necessary to accomplish self-defense and specify the conditions which allow the use of deadly force. ROE must be briefed and checked during the preparation phase of the operation to ensure all members of the cordon and search have a clear understanding. Changes to the ROE must be immediately disseminated by the chain of command and briefed to each Service member and leader in the cordon and search mission. Both lethal force and nonlethal force are included in the planning for the various conditions or circumstances that require force escalation. Escalation procedures are briefed and rehearsed during the preparation phase of the cordon and search mission. Escalation procedures should be planned for and briefed during the orders process to include transitions to a higher threat environment; i.e., assault or raid. The procedures should be based on the theater ROE.

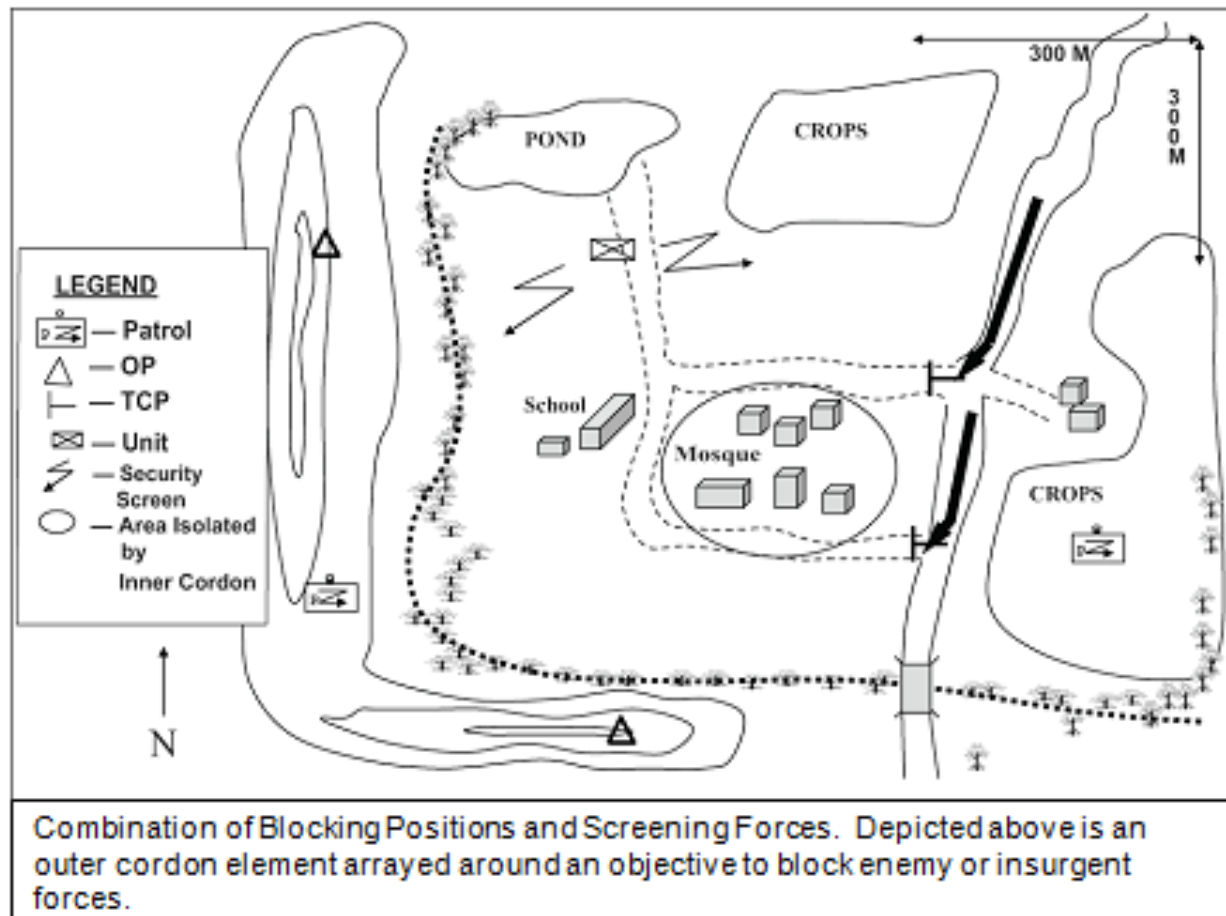
7. The Outer Cordon - The outer cordon isolates the objective area and prevents enemy or civilian influence. As such it requires detailed planning, effective coordination, and meticulous integration and synchronization to achieve the combined arms effects, lethal and nonlethal, required for mission execution.

- a. Some considerations for the outer cordon include:
 - i. Vehicles for VCPs and/or blocking positions
 - ii. Battlespace geometry—fire planning and coordination
 - iii. Over watch positions
 - iv. Aviation assets to observe target area and inform outer cordon if vehicles or persons leave the target area. Constant communication between the aviation element and the outer cordon will better facilitate the isolation of the target area.
 - v. An initial detainee collection point for the receipt and temporary holding of detainees.
 - vi. An initial material collection point for consolidation of captured material.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- b. Each subordinate outer cordon element (VCP, blocking position) must have a designated leader and a clear task and purpose. Weapon systems to consider for outer cordon positions are tracked and wheeled vehicles with weapons systems, crew-served weapons, javelin with the Command Launch Unit (CLU), and snipers or designated marksman.
- c. The leader of the outer cordon element must develop and maintain situational awareness (SA) of his area of responsibility as well as the areas of the inner cordon and the search elements. This will enable him to anticipate threat activity, control direct and indirect fires, and facilitate the achievement of the outer cordon's task and purpose. Aviation assets, communications systems, and reporting procedures must be implemented to facilitate SA for the entire element. Methods to consider when establishing outer cordon positions:
 - d. Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)
 - i. Hasty VCP. One method of executing the outer cordon is by the employment of hasty VCP, which will allow personnel and/or vehicles to depart or enter the outer cordon at the commander's discretion. VCPs will typically be used in long duration cordon and search operations. Subordinate elements use Class IV materials to construct a VCP to facilitate personnel and vehicle searches IAW the cordon and search commander's intent. This method is used when cleared traffic will be allowed through. Construction of vehicle, personnel, and material holding areas will aid in security and improve overall operations. See the tactical control measures section of this chapter for detailed information.
 - ii. Blocking Position. Another method of executing the outer cordon is the blocking position. Differing from the VCP, the blocking position does not allow for the passage of personnel or vehicular traffic. When planning cordon and search operations consider the ramifications of not allowing any traffic through the outer cordon during the operation. This impact may be minimal during low traffic hours, but may cause a riot if conducted when people are attempting to get to work.
 - iii. Screening Forces. The outer cordon area may be too large to be covered entirely by blocking positions or VCPs. The use of mounted or dismounted patrols, listening posts (LPs)/observation posts (OPs), guardian angels and snipers may augment the outer cordon. If employed, ensure that each element knows the routes and positions of the screening forces. The elements can be used to provide observation of fleeing personnel or deter infiltration along secondary routes. Ensure that screening forces have adequate combat power.
 - e. The outer cordon is NOT an independent operation. Rather it is an integral part of the cordon and search. The outer cordon secures the objective area and in doing so contains the enemy and is the initial barrier to enemy reinforcements.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)



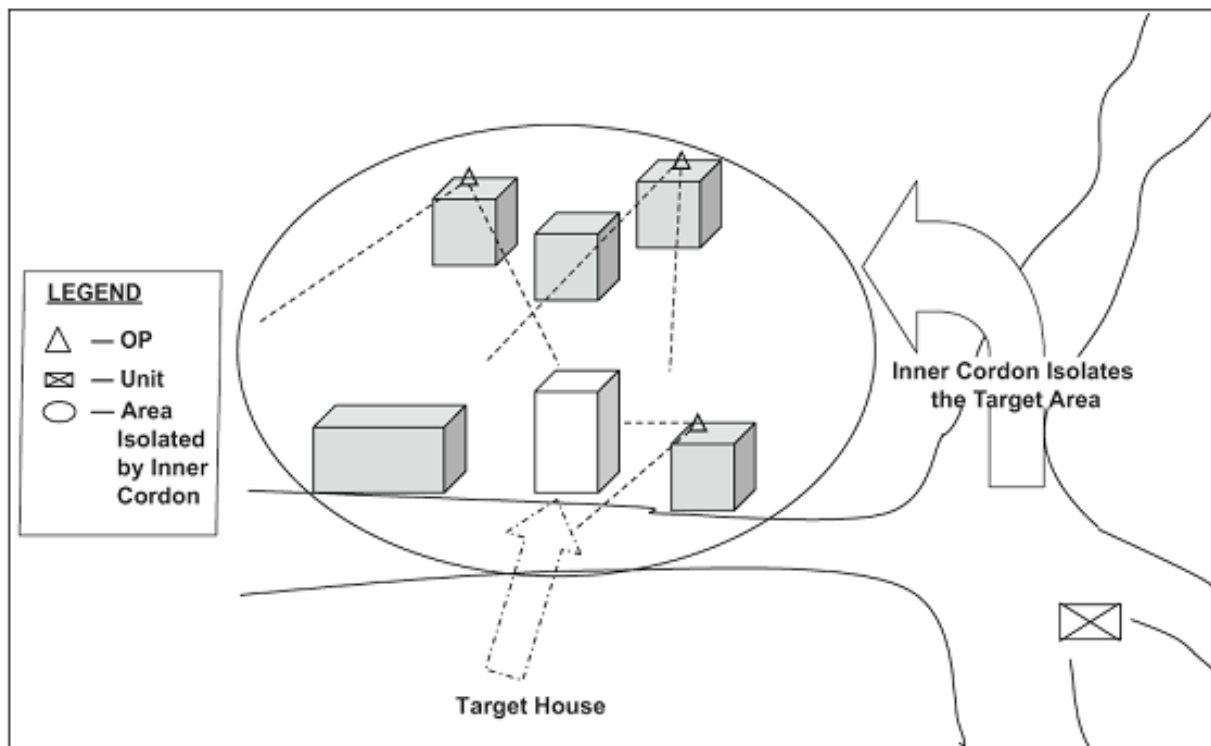
8. The Inner Cordon - The inner cordon isolates the target in order to protect the assault/search element from threat activity such as direct fire, grenades, explosives, or civil disturbances and prevents escape from the immediate area. As such it requires detailed planning and effective coordination, as well as meticulous integration and synchronization to achieve the combined arms effects, lethal and nonlethal, sought by the commander. (See figure III-2.)

- a. Inner cordon tasks include the following:
 - i. Serves as overwatch/support by fire/security for the assault/search element.
 - ii. Serves as an immediate reserve for civil disturbances and for the assault/search element.
 - iii. May establish multiple inner cordons for multiple targets.
 - iv. Maintains communication with the search element and coordinating fires within the inner cordon element.
 - v. Uses supporting structures in built up areas. This may require forces to clear and secure surrounding buildings to provide overwatch to the target/building.

The unit performing the inner cordon (SBF, overwatch positions) must have a designated leader and a clear task and purpose. Weapon systems to consider for inner cordon positions include, but are not limited to, medium or light crew-served weapons and small arms, light antitank weapons (LAWs), and grenades.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

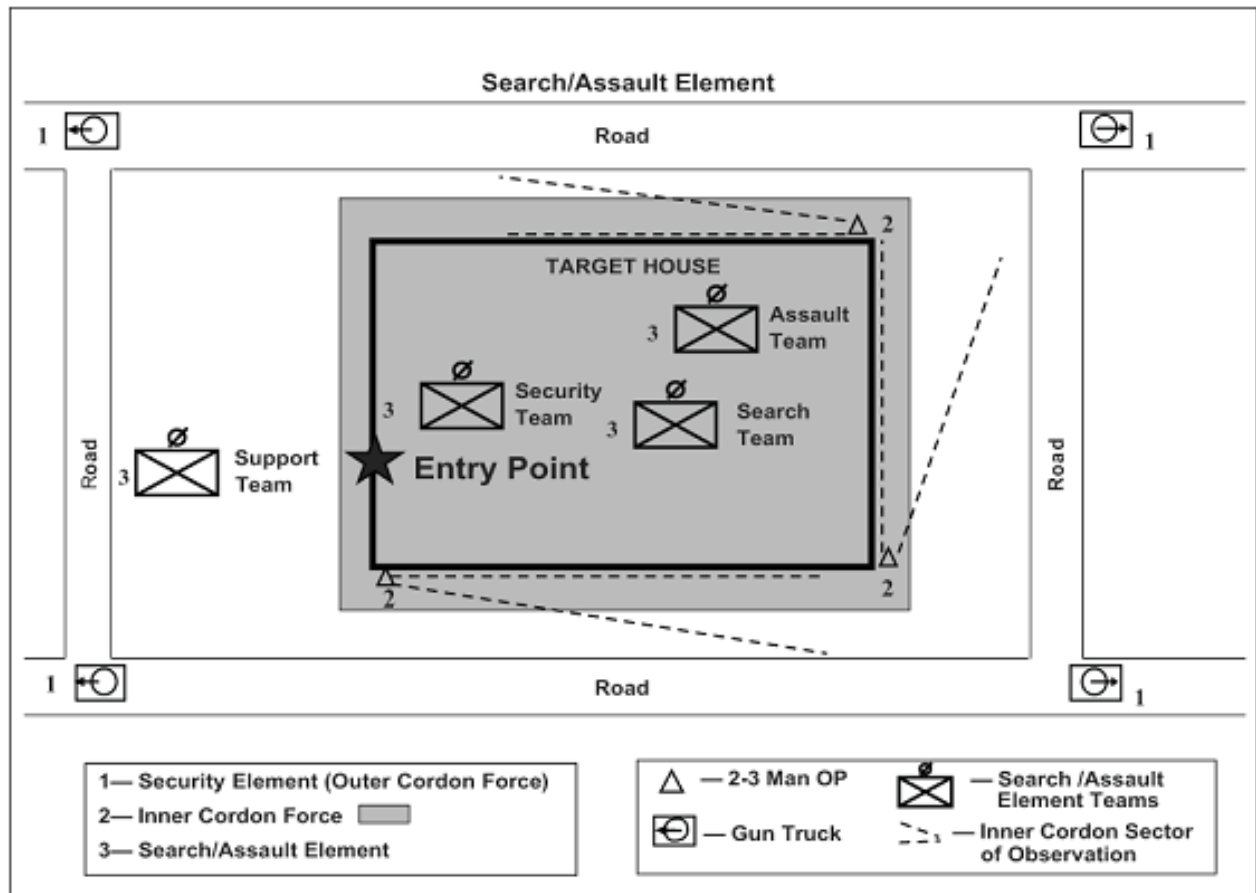
- b. The leader of the unit conducting the inner cordon must develop and maintain situational awareness of his area of responsibility as well as the areas of the outer cordon and the assault/search element. Close coordination with the assault/search element is essential. This will enable him to anticipate threat activity, control direct fires, and facilitate the achievement of the inner cordon's task and purpose. Aviation assets may be able to assist the inner cordon force in locating and tracking escaping personnel, but typically the inner cordon commander does not control the air assets. The mission command element will direct the air assets and relay information to either the inner or outer cordon as necessary.
- c. The inner cordon is typically established by emplacing SBF or overwatch positions where they can best isolate the target area with overlapping sectors of observation and fires. Depending on the size or complexity of the target area, multiple inner cordons may be required.
- d. The inner cordon is also not an independent operation. Rather it is an integral part of the cordon and search. The inner cordon isolates the target area, provides security for the assault/search element and prevents potential enemy forces from escaping.



Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- 9. Assault/Search Element** - The assault/search element's mission is to assault, clear, and search the target to capture kill or destroy the targeted individuals and/or materials. The assault/search element initiates action once the outer and inner cordons are in place. The element accomplishes its mission by gaining a foothold on or in the target to clear all enemy and noncombatant personnel, and by conducting a systematic search of the target. These areas may be searched selectively (only specific rooms/buildings/blocks) or systematically (everything within a given area). Due to the split second decisions that have to be made by small unit leaders, it is imperative that this element not only understands but can comply with rules of engagement (ROE) in a dynamic environment.
- a. To accomplish its mission the assault/search element has three primary tasks: securing, clearing, and searching the target. The assault/search element may be task organized into four teams—assault, search, security, and support—in order to facilitate accomplishing its mission. All of these teams must understand and be prepared to assume the role of the other teams in the search/assault element. The assault/search element teams may conduct the following tasks:
- i. **Assault Team(s).** The assault team/teams are responsible for entering, clearing, and searching buildings in order to capture or destroy enemy forces or equipment. The assault team conducts the initial assault into the target and uses speed and violence of action to move through the target to completely clear and seize the objective. In most circumstances, the target must be cleared of enemy forces, noncombatants, and/or booby traps before the search begins. The assault team can transition into the search team once the target is cleared (i.e., the assault team clears a house from bottom to top, transitions into the search team, and conducts a search from top to bottom).
 - ii. **Search Team(s).** Once the target is cleared of combatants and secure, the search team will conduct its primary task of searching the target to capture or destroy the targeted individuals and/or materials.
 - iii. **Security Team(s).** The security team provides immediate overwatch inside the target to the unit conducting the search. The security team also provides immediate security of detainees and noncombatants.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)



10. Movement to the Target

- Techniques of Movement. Movement techniques to and from the target will be dictated by METT-TC. Commanders and staffs should make every effort to have subordinate units travel along different but converging avenues of approach, thus aiding in security, speed, and surprise. Commanders must develop primary and alternate routes and be prepared to react to any contingency while traveling to the target (i.e., small arms, IED, vehicle damage/breakdown, etc.).
- Order of March. The Order of March (OOM) will be dictated by the commander's overall plan and scheme of maneuver formed during Course of Action (COA) development.
- Method of Movement. There are two primary methods of movement to the target: single point ingress and multidirectional ingress.
 - Single Point Ingress-- Movement to the target in a column along a single path facilitates easier command and control. All units approach the target and assume their position as a single unit and break off from the main body at predetermined release points. This technique reduces problems with command and control, timing and deconfliction of fires. However, this movement technique produces a much larger signature and is slower to seal

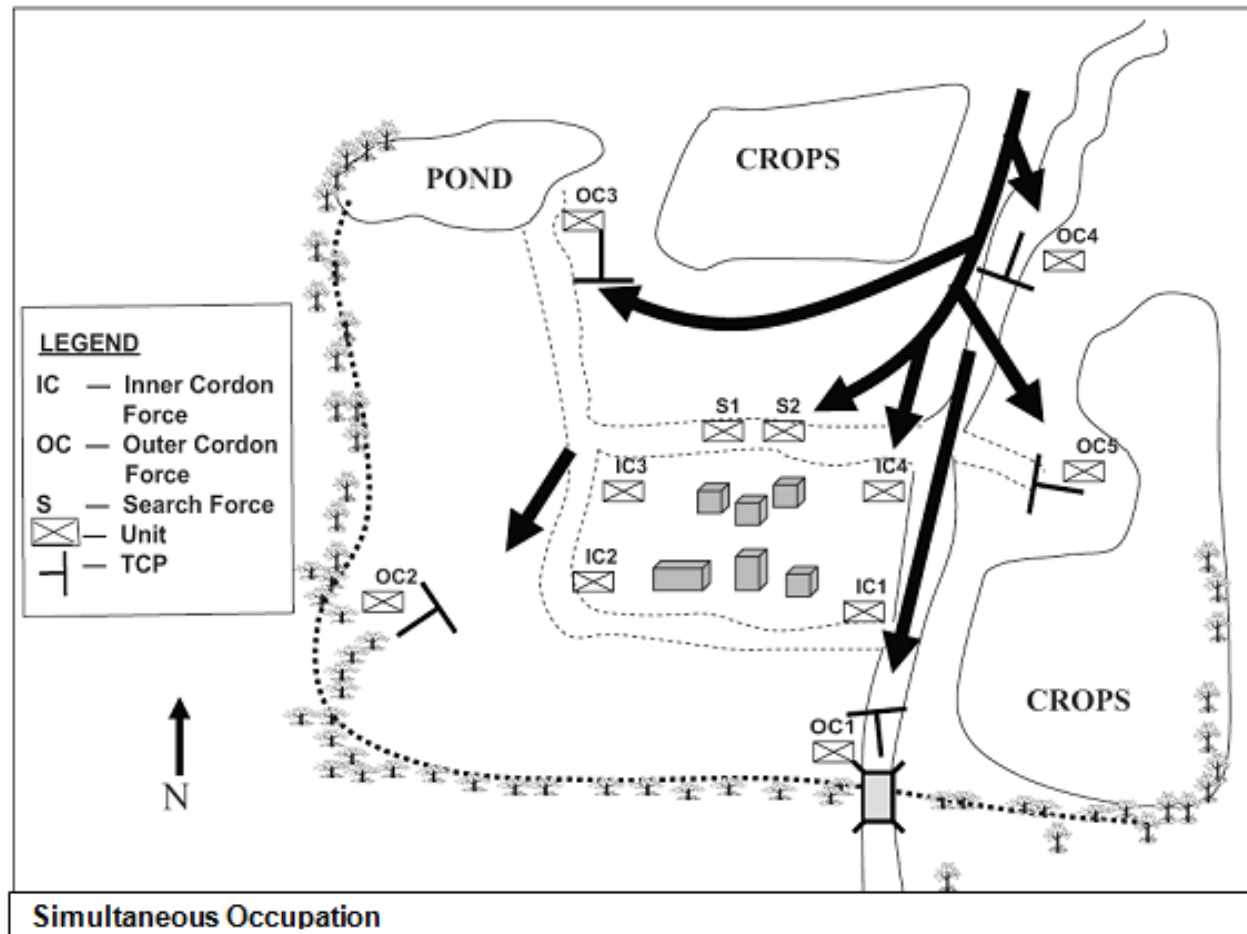
Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- off a cordon area. See figure III-4 for an example of a single point ingress to the target.
- ii. **Multidirectional Ingress.** Ideally, a cordon and search force moves to the target from multiple directions. Movement to the target through multiple directions provides a lower signature with fewer vehicles collocated during approach. This technique can be more effective by sealing off multiple avenues of egress simultaneously. Drawbacks to this technique include difficulty with command and control, division of forces, and deconfliction of fires. The multidirectional approach will require units to depart from the same assembly area at different times or from multiple assembly areas. See figure III-5 for an example of a multidirectional approach to the target.

11. Emplacement Techniques and Timing of the Cordon and Search Elements

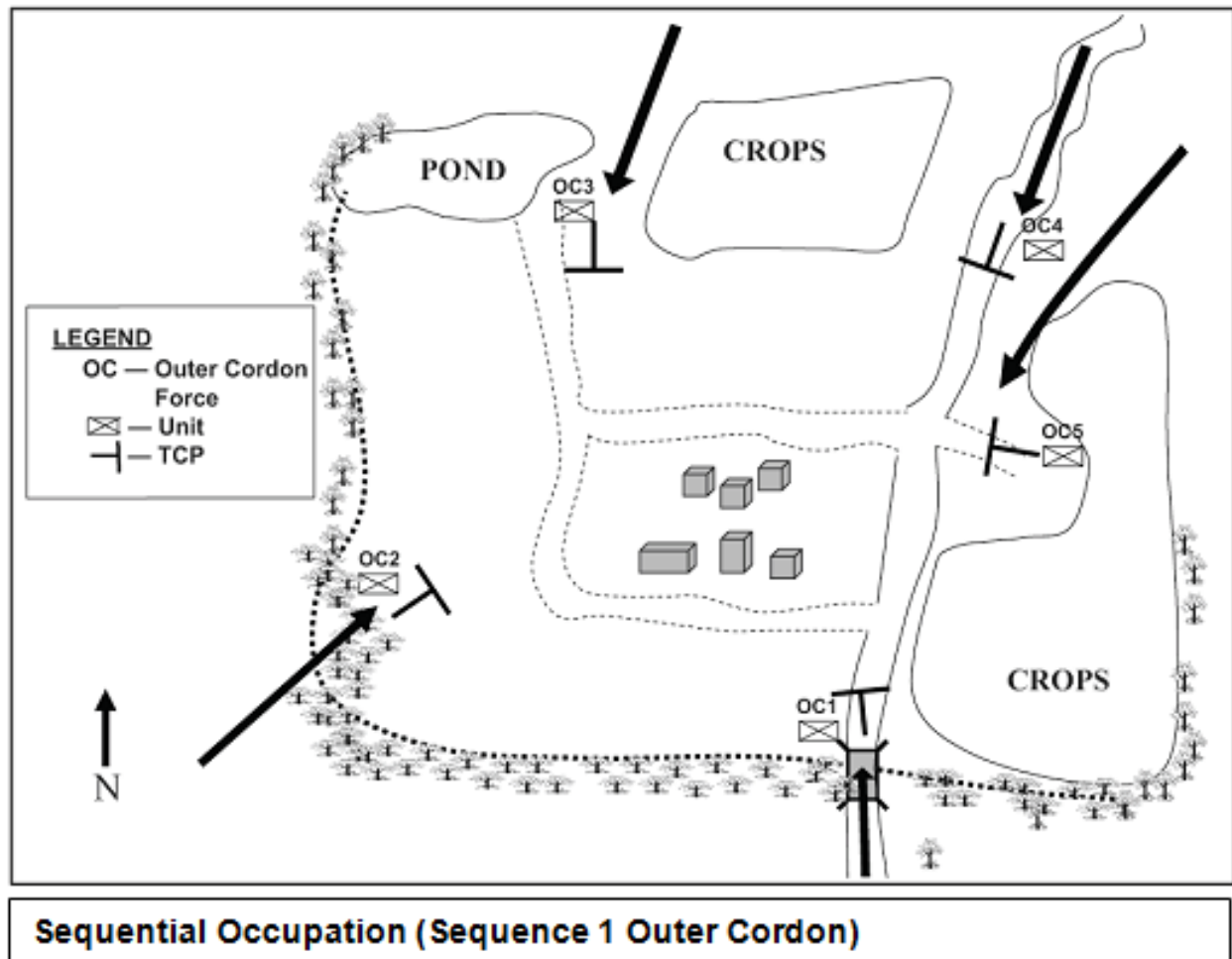
- a. **Techniques.** There are two techniques for emplacement of the cordon and search elements: simultaneously or sequentially. Careful consideration must be given to both as there are advantages and disadvantages to each technique.
 - i. **Simultaneous Occupation.** This occurs when the cordon and search elements occupy multiple positions at the same time.
 - 1. Security elements may occupy the outer cordon simultaneously to completely isolate the objective area at one time. This requires precise timing and control.
 - 2. Security elements (both inner and outer cordons), search elements, and support elements can occupy their initial positions simultaneously.
 - ii. **Simultaneous occupation facilitates the element of surprise,** with rapid, synchronized emplacement of the inner cordon and search elements. It maximizes the unit's ability to ensure that targeted individuals/materials do not escape.
 - iii. **Some disadvantages of this technique** are that it requires multiple routes, control measures/battle tracking (i.e., phase lines or check points to ensure that the positions are emplaced simultaneously), makes control a little more difficult for the commander, potentially makes CASEVAC more difficult, and spreads out the elements' combat power. It may also increase the probability of the outer cordon elements coming into contact with IEDs or direct fire engagements. Vehicles and the Local National (LN) populace may get trapped between the inner and outer cordon and cause unnecessary panic and control issues. In summary, disadvantages include:
 - 1. Difficult to control.
 - 2. Multiple routes required.
 - 3. Additional control measures required.
 - 4. CASEVAC is more difficult.
 - 5. Combat power is spread out.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

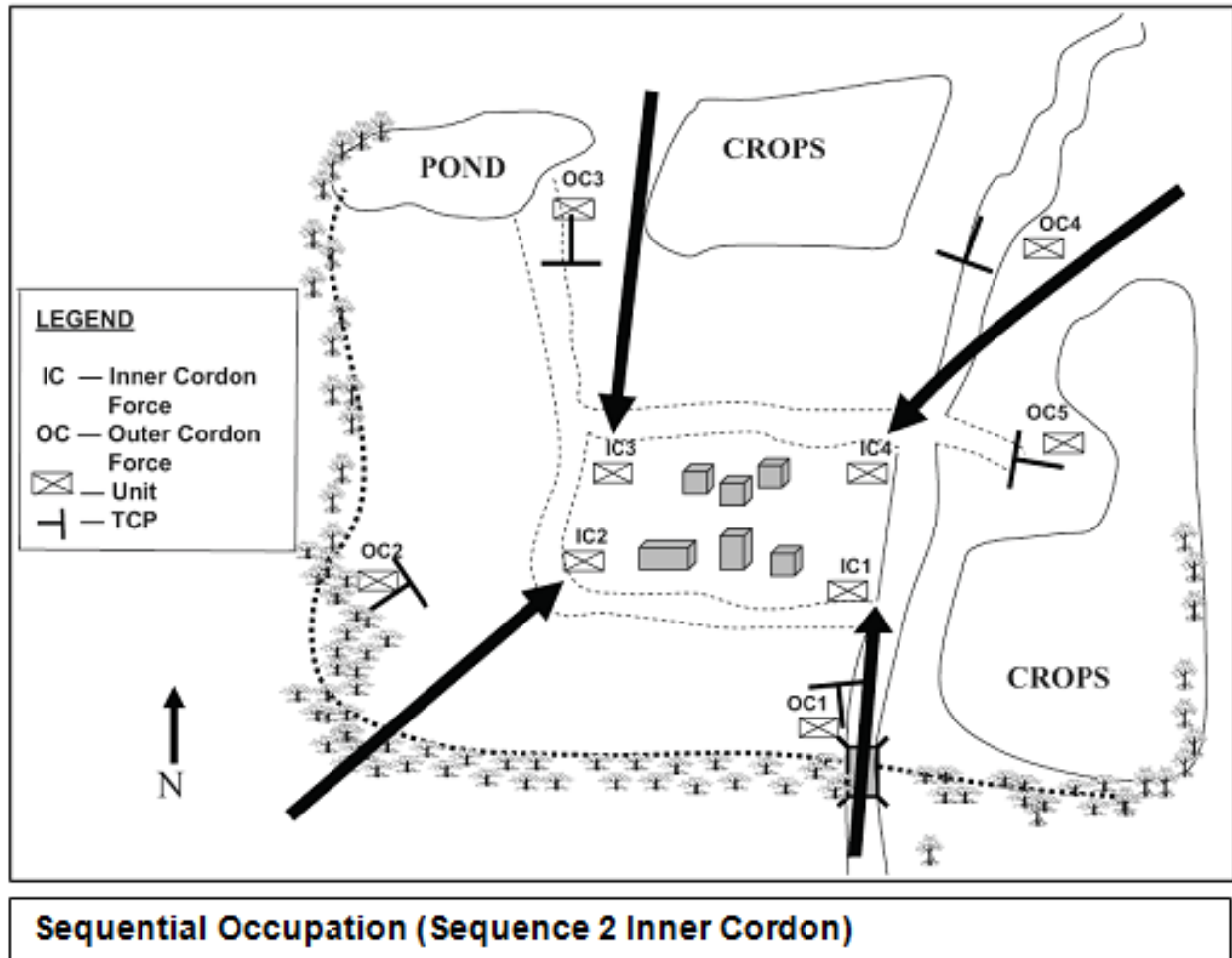


- a. Sequential Occupation. This occurs when the elements occupy multiple positions in sequence. (See figures III-7, III-8, and III-9.)
 - iv. The outer cordon is established first to isolate the objective.
 - v. The inner cordon is the next step to further isolate specific target areas and entry points.
 - vi. The support element should be positioned where it can best support the other elements based upon established planning priorities.
 - vii. The assault/search element should move in and begin executing when conditions have been set by the other elements.
 - viii. Advantages
 1. Ease of control.
 2. Simplicity for planning and execution.
 - ix. Disadvantages
 1. Less effective at timely isolation of the objective area and the target.
 2. Allows the enemy initial freedom to reposition or hide personnel and materials.

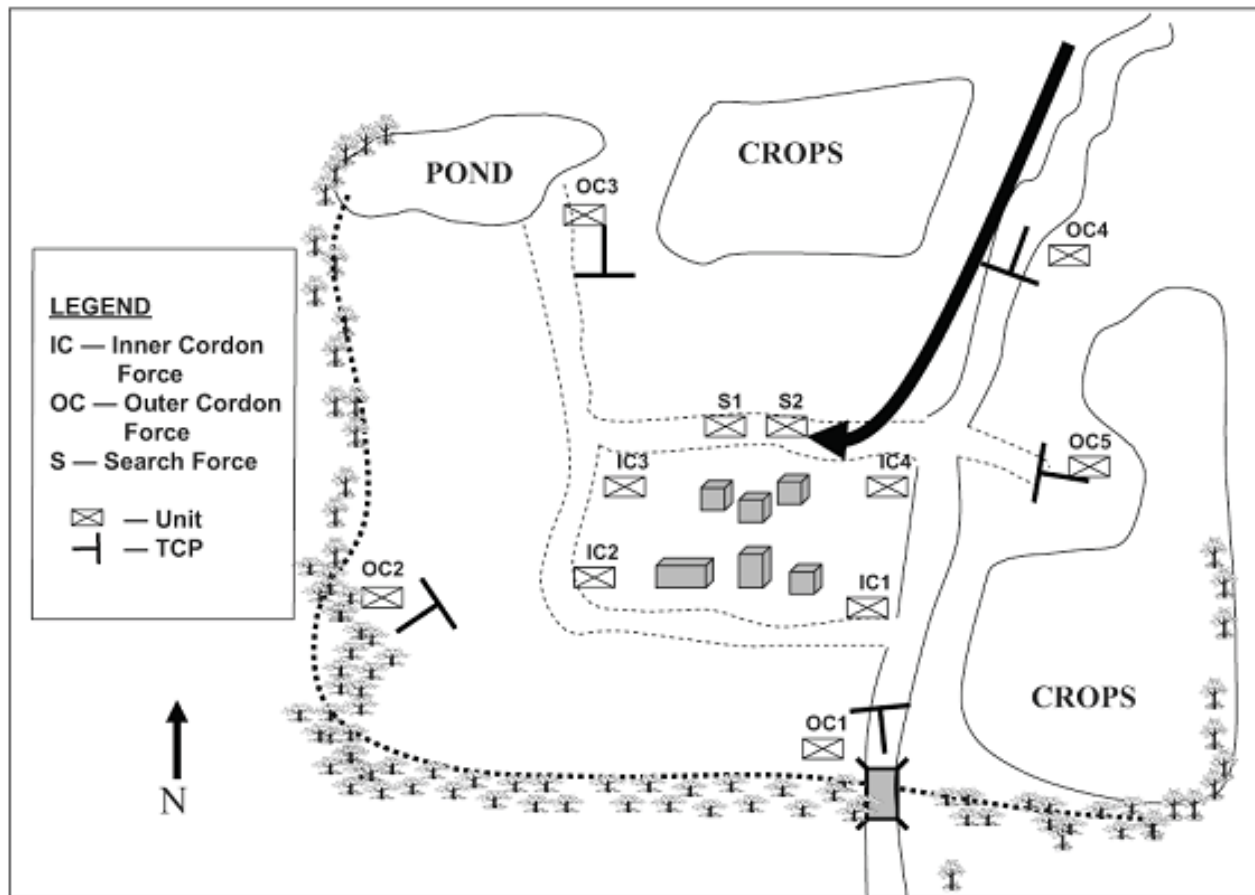
Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)



Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)



Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)



Sequential Occupation (Sequence 3 Search Element)

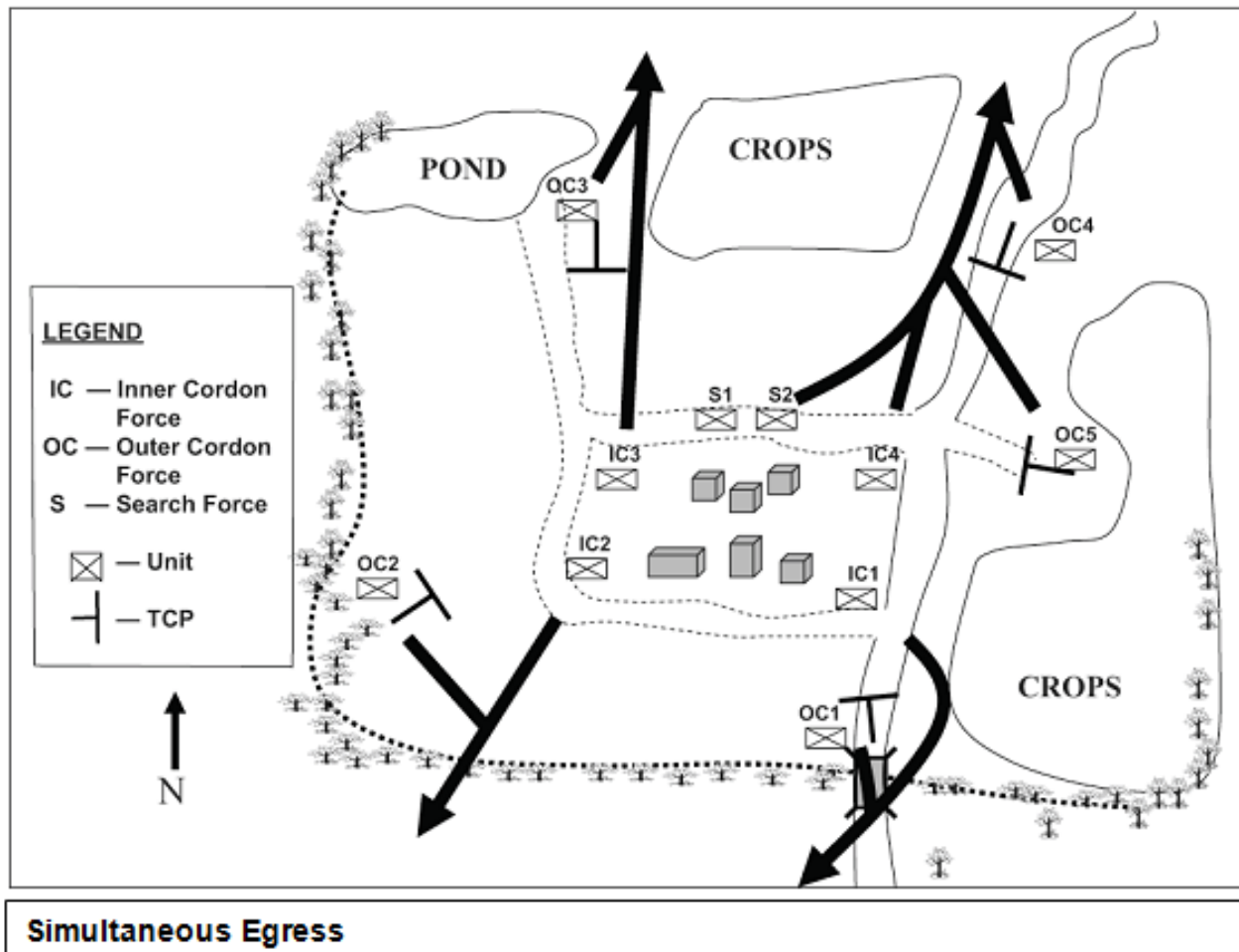
- a. Sequential emplacement of the outer cordon elements, or using one route in, and having outer cordon elements pass through the objective area is another technique. This technique facilitates C2, keeps combat power massed, facilitates CASEVAC, requires less planning, and the need for additional control measures and battle tracking to ensure synchronization. However, the elements approaching the objective from one side may be observed by the enemy and the targeted individual(s) may be able to escape, hide, prepare a counter attack, or emplace an IED.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

12. Withdrawal from the Objective

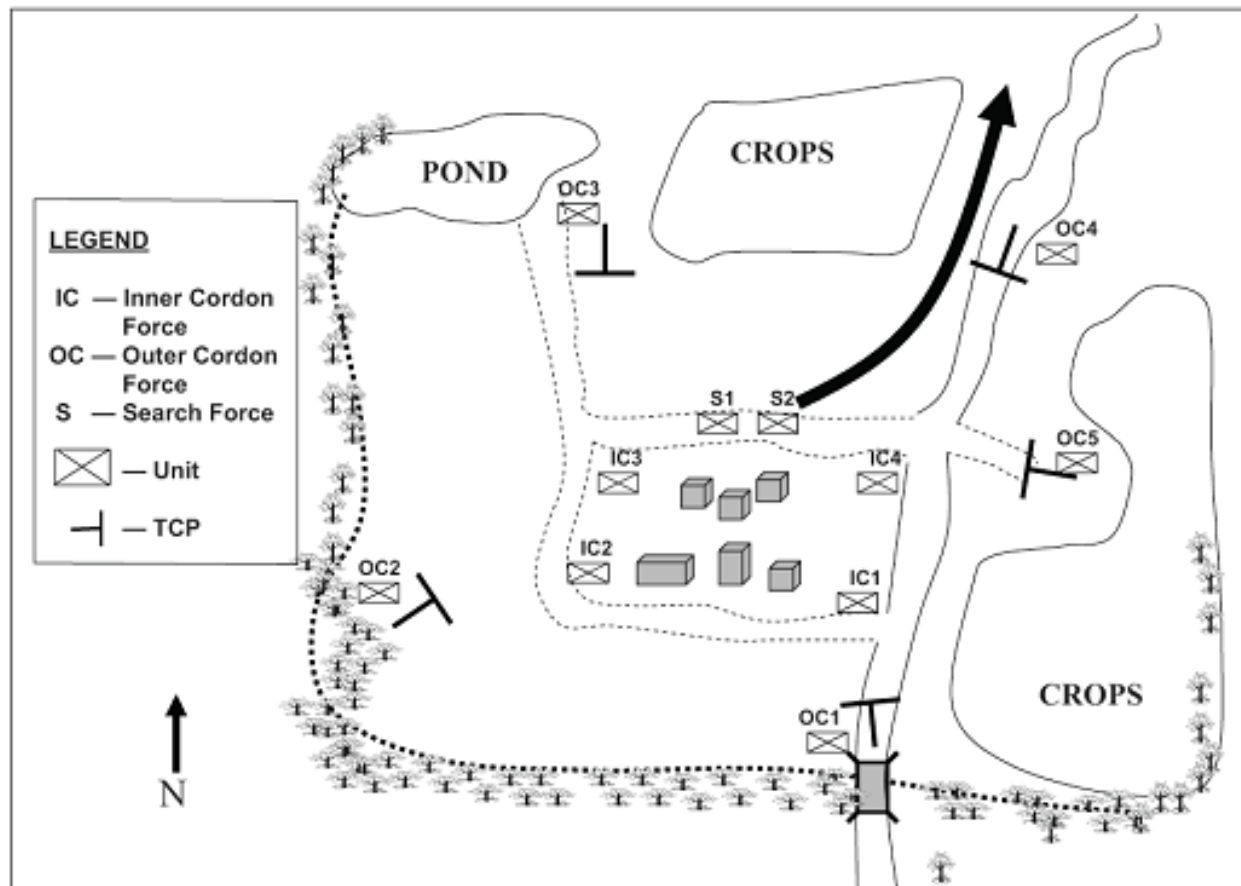
a. Methods of Egress

- i. Simultaneous. The simultaneous egress method is least preferred. It lacks overwatch as units leave the area. Moreover, the major element of surprise is lost. If this method is employed, care should be taken to use different egress and ingress routes whenever possible to avoid ambush.



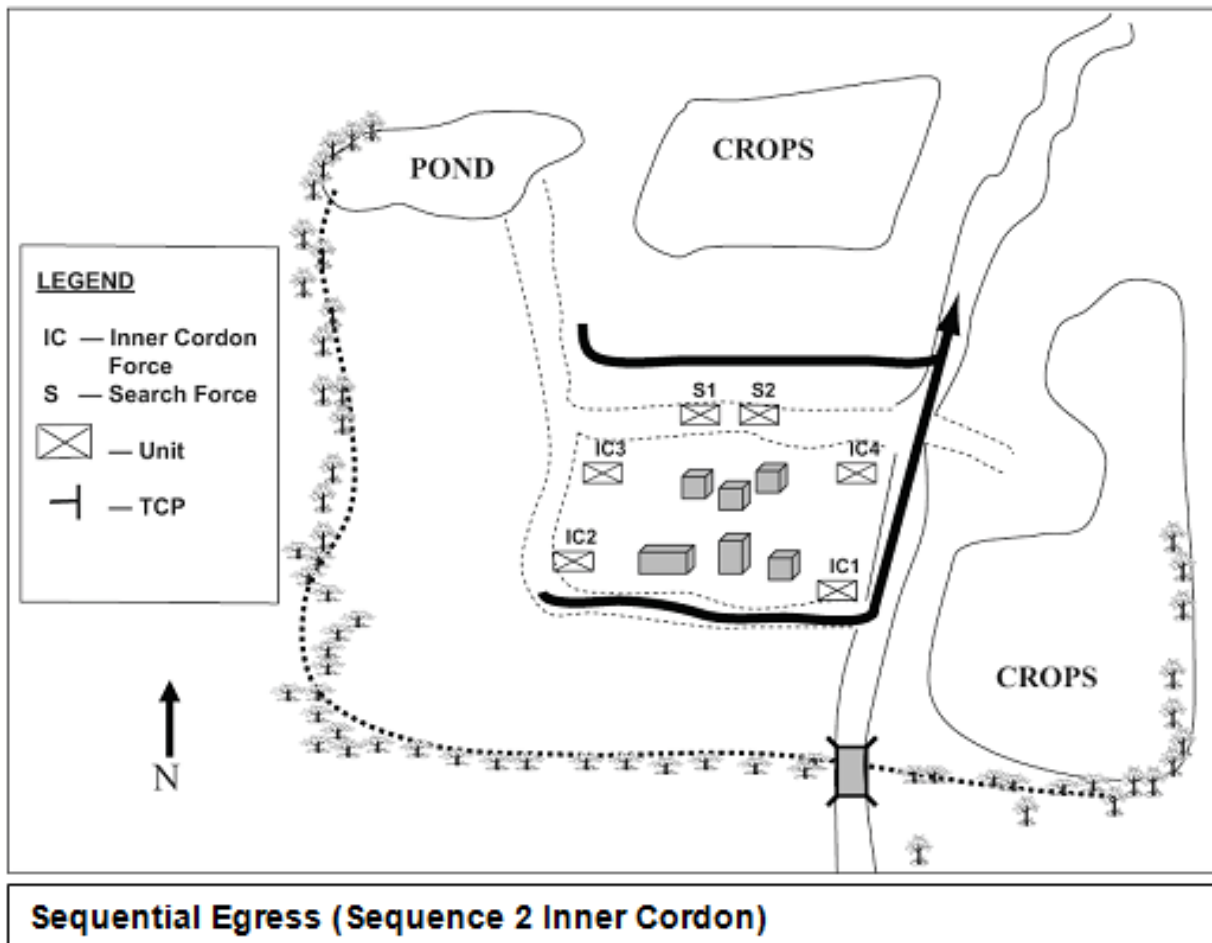
Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

- a. Methods of Egress (Continued)
 - ii. Sequential. A sequential withdrawal from a cordon and search objective area will provide greater security for forces leaving the cordon area.

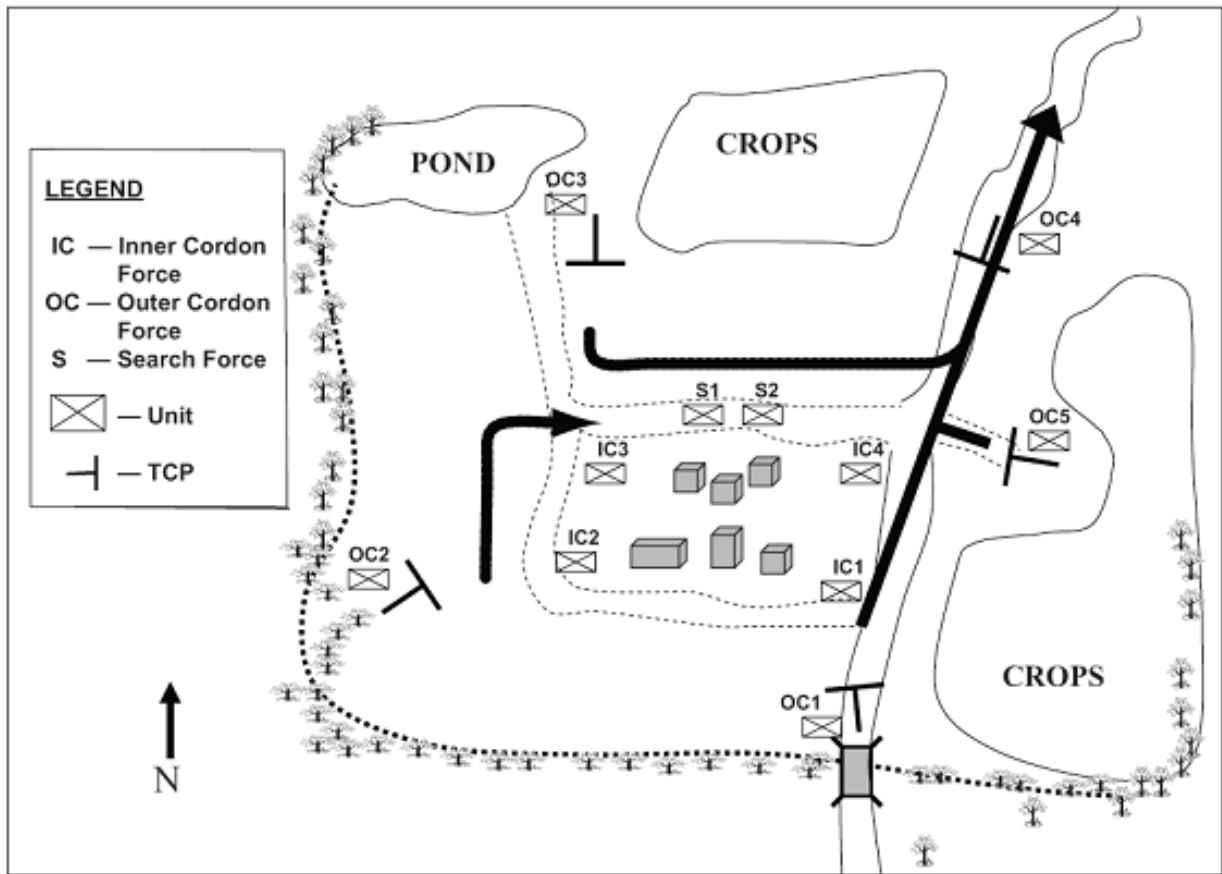


Sequential Egress (Sequence 1 Search Element)

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)



Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)



Sequential Egress (Sequence 3 Outer Cordon)

a. Egress Route Selection

- i. Single Point. (See figure III-14.) Single point egress provides simplicity in movement from the objective area to a predestinated rally point. However, a single assigned point of egress may not be the simplest route off target for all elements of the cordon and search force as elements may have to move through the cordon site itself to reach the designated egress route. Depending on the terrain surrounding the target area a single point egress may be the only option. Care must be taken to ensure that the route is properly secured to avoid the possibility of enemy attack.
 1. Advantage. C2 of all cordon and search force elements will generally be easier with this type of movement, as well as, ability to mass fire power if attacked.
 2. Disadvantage. Single point egress canalizes the cordon and search force with the possibility of the egress route being blocked or overrun by insurgents entrapping them.
- ii. Multidirectional. (See figure III-15.) Multidirectional egress requires greater coordination for each cordon and search element. Accountability of personnel, detainees and equipment is essential. Well established rally points are essential for multidirectional egress.

Cordon and Search Operations (Continued)

1. Advantages
 - a. Flexibility
 - b. Security
 - c. Speed
2. Disadvantages
 - a. Accountability
 - b. Control
 - c. Requires greater communication assets
 - d. Ability to reinforce

Interpreter Considerations

1. Enablers. Enable communication between a provider and a client who do not speak the same language.
 - a. Enable communication as if no language barrier existed.
 - b. Culture mediation.
 - c. Recognize cultural barriers that impede effective communication.
 - i. Social Values
 - ii. Time
 - iii. Authority
 - d. Styles of communication.
 - e. Determine in advance any specialized vocabulary to be used.
 - f. Maintain a professional relationship with both parties in order to appear unbiased.
 - g. Strive to remain objective without display of personal emotion.
 - h. Perform duties as unobtrusively as possible.
2. Interpreter's Role.
 - a. Accurate interpretation of what is said, without embellishments, omissions, or editing. Including vulgar or embarrassing comments.
 - b. Maintain the tone and style of the speaker.
 - c. Never correct facts presented by a speaker.
 - d. Conduct communication in the first person.

Note: The interviewer speaks directly to the subject, not through the interpreter.
Example: Use the phrase "What is your name?" **NOT** "Ask him what his name is."
3. Modes of Interpreting.
 - a. Consecutive. Recommended. Speaker completes a phrase or thought followed by the interpreter's re-stating in the target language.
 - b. Simultaneous. NOT recommended. Interpreter speaks almost contemporaneously with the speaker.
 - c. Summary. NOT recommended.
 - i. Interpreter listens to the speech of a speaker then summarizes and condenses the thoughts.
 - ii. Opportunity is great for omission of necessary information.

Interpreter Considerations (Continued)

- d. Intervention. An interpreter may at times need to intervene, or interrupt, during an interpreted session. For instance when:
 - i. They did not hear correctly or completely.
 - ii. They need to clarify a technical term.
 - iii. They were interrupted by other parties.
 - iv. They state the interpretation is not yet complete.

Tactical Questioning with the Interpreter. Place the interpreter behind the LN that you are communicating with in order to read the body language of the LN. Do not let the interpreter and LN look at each other when translating. Ensure the LN maintains eye contact with you the entire time.

Summary

This class exposes you to basic TTPs and planning considerations for vehicle checkpoints, vehicle searches, and cordon and search operations. There are many different ways to execute these operations. The threat level and enemy situation should guide the unit leader with respect to levels of violence, aggressiveness and force protection required. The guidelines outlined here are intended more for consideration and application at the platoon level and below.

References

Reference Number	Reference Title
MCWP 3-11.2	Marine Rifle Squad
MCWP 3-11.3	Scouting and Patrolling
MCWP 3-35.3	Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT)

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term or Acronym	Definition or Identification
Cordon and Knock	Term used to describe a cordon and search operation with a low level threat; the search team “knocks” on the door of the target and asks to search the objective.
Guardian Angel/Covert Overwatch	These are the alert Marines placed in ambush, unseen by the enemy, watching over their units. The purpose of these Marines is to occupy a position of advantage over any approaching hostile force or individual.
ROE	Rules of engagement
TTP	Tactics, techniques, and procedures
VCP	Vehicle checkpoint

Notes