

CHAPTER 3. MANEUVER AND MOBILITY SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Reconnaissance, security, and mobility are critical to successful military operations. In support of these requirements, military police conduct maneuver and mobility support operations (MMSO) across the full range of military operations.

During peace operations, military police aid the safe flow of food and supplies and assist local authorities with road and highway regulation during disaster relief operations. While performing MMSO functions, military police work closely with the logistic movement control center (LMCC) to implement plans for controlling the movement of combat resources along LOC. In multinational operations, this support integrates available HN and allied forces capabilities.

In wartime, military police expedite forward, lateral, and rear movement of forces on the battlefield. To assist the movement of forces across the battlefield, military police operate TCPs and conduct mobile patrols to help stragglers return to their respective units. In addition, military police help clear LOC by directing and controlling the movement of civilians whose location or direction of movement may hinder military operations. They also provide escorts to move U.S. noncombatants from assembly points to theater embarkation terminals.

During MMSO, military police perform—

- 1 Route reconnaissance and surveillance.
- 1 MSR regulation and enforcement.
- 1 MSR control measures (temporary route signing).
- 1 Support for river crossing operations.
- 1 Support for passage of lines.
- 1 Support for area damage control.
- 1 Straggler and dislocated civilian control operations.
- 1 Information collecting, reporting, and dissemination.

Route Reconnaissance and Surveillance

Military police conduct route reconnaissance and surveillance operations to assist operational and intelligence collection planning efforts by gathering

detailed information on a specific route and its surrounding terrain. Mobile MP teams record and report the condition of MSRs and other critical roadways to identify weather effects on road surfaces, trafficability, route damage, NBC contamination, and enemy activity. Military police continually monitor MSRs and the surrounding terrain to provide early warning of enemy activity to commanders.

In MOOTW, route reconnaissance is conducted to open new routes to support peace operations, humanitarian assistance, or areas devastated by natural or manmade disasters. Military police conduct detailed and continuous route reconnaissance to provide updated information to the commander and units traveling the MSRs.

Main Supply Route Regulation and Enforcement

To support force movement, MP units enforce MSR regulation plans by controlling highway traffic activities. Enforcement efforts focus on ensuring that only authorized traffic uses controlled MSRs.

The command with jurisdiction over the road network sets the highway regulation plan, which includes MSR regulation measures. These regulations appear in traffic circulation plans as well as in engineer route, bridge, and tunnel reconnaissance reports. Unit standing operating procedures (SOPs) and command directives also may contain MSR regulations. The LMCC establishes route classifications using information provided from MP route reconnaissance missions.

Military police use TCPs, roadblocks, checkpoints, holding areas, and defiles at critical points to monitor MSRs and enforce command regulations. Mounted MP teams patrol between static posts to observe traffic and road conditions, to gather information on friendly and enemy activity, and to assist stranded vehicles and crews. Changes in road condition and enemy activity along MSRs are reported immediately through MP channels.

Main Supply Route Control Measures

While performing MMSO, military police permit MSR traffic to flow as smoothly and naturally as possible. To keep traffic moving and regulate MSRs, military police move traffic through defiles; establish vehicle holding areas; set up roadblocks, checkpoints, and traffic control points; and monitor route signs.

Defiles

A defile is a narrow natural or manmade passage that constricts the movement of troops and vehicles. Military police use defiles to slow or restrict movement along MSRs.

Vehicle Holding Areas

Vehicle holding areas are locations where vehicles and troops using MSRs are staged temporarily. Military police often use vehicle holding areas with defiles, checkpoints, and roadblocks to temporarily control or suspend traffic movement.

Roadblocks

Roadblocks are manned or unmanned control sites that limit the movement of vehicles or close access to certain areas. Military police set up roadblocks to stop, slow, or restrict movement of vehicles along a route. A roadblock can help channel vehicles and personnel to checkpoints, holding areas, or defiles.

Checkpoints

Checkpoints are set up to control movement and to prevent illegal actions or actions that aid the enemy. At checkpoints, military police inspect cargo, enforce rules and regulations, and collect and provide information.

Traffic Control Points

The main purpose of a TCP is to ensure smooth and efficient use of the road network in accordance with the traffic circulation plan. Military police set up TCPs at critical sites along MSRs to control the movement of vehicles and personnel. Usually, TCP locations are identified during the transportation planning process.

Route Signs

A signed military route system, like the signed U.S. highway system, enables road users to reach their destinations by following signs and road markings displayed along the roadside. Route signs provide MSR users with locations of detours, key units, and facilities. In addition, signs provide directions and distances, identify routes or hazards, and provide general information to assist movement. Signs also reduce manpower requirements by eliminating the need to post a military police along a route. Military police routinely monitor signs before critical moves to ensure the signs are not damaged, destroyed, or moved by weather, saboteurs, or battle.

Support for River Crossing Operations

Military police support river crossing operations by helping units to move rapidly across river obstacles. River crossing MP support serves to reduce congestion, speed the crossing, and enable the maneuver forces to maintain momentum. The MP employment for a river crossing is influenced by the battlefield situation.

The number and placement of MP assets supporting this operation vary with the size of the force crossing the river and the degree of enemy resistance expected or encountered. Military police perform maneuver and mobility support activities leading up to, within the crossing area, and on the entry and exit sides of the river. To support river crossing operations, military police—

- 1 Establish holding areas.
- 1 Enforce MSR regulations.
- 1 Direct units to proper crossing locations.
- 1 Move units through crossing areas on schedule.

Support for Passage of Lines

Moving a maneuver unit through the position of an emplaced unit that is in contact with the enemy is a critical action. The degree of MP support depends on the commander's needs and the number of military police available. The MP commander, the division logistics staff officer (G-4), and the division G-3 plan

and coordinate the passage of lines operation. Military police support a passage of lines by—

- 1 Establishing TCPs.
- 1 Escorting and guiding vehicles.
- 1 Setting up temporary route signs.

Support for Area Damage Control

Area damage such as downed trees, urban rubble, damaged or destroyed bridges, cratered roads, and contaminated road networks affect military operations. Area damage control (ADC) measures taken before, during, and after hostile actions and natural or manmade disasters minimize effects and reduce damage. The focus of ADC is to limit the impact of military operations and to restore normal operations to the local populace as quickly as possible.

The amount of MP support needed for ADC operations depends on the extent of the damage, the importance of the affected area, and the impact of the damage on military operations. Damage to an area may be so great that roads may be closed and MSR traffic may be rerouted. If roadways are passable, military police conduct MMSO in the affected area. Military police conduct route and area reconnaissance to determine the trafficability of the routes into, out of, and around affected areas. When supporting ADC operations, military police operate mounted and dismounted mobile patrols, checkpoints, roadblocks, and defiles to—

- 1 Enforce emergency restrictions on movement into, within, and out of the affected area.
- 1 Enforce curfews, orders, and movement authorization and prioritization.
- 1 Watch for theft, pilferage, or arson against military property.
- 1 Direct dislocated civilians.
- 1 Collect stragglers.

Straggler and Dislocated Civilian Control Operations

Military police conduct straggler control operations to assist commanders in maintaining combat strength by

locating and returning stragglers to their units. Military police locate stragglers at TCPs, checkpoints, roadblocks, defiles, or on patrol. For large numbers of stragglers, special posts and collecting points are set up along MSRs or military police can operate straggler posts at established TCPs, checkpoints, and roadblocks.

To expedite movement on MSRs, military police conduct dislocated civilian control operations. Although the HN usually takes measures to control the movement of their populations during a conflict, a mass flow of civilians can seriously affect the movement or security of military units. If needed, military police redirect or prevent the movement of civilians when their location, direction of movement, or actions hinder military activity. During control operations, military police direct dislocated civilians to secondary roadways and areas not used by military forces.

Information Collecting, Reporting, and Dissemination

Through information collecting, reporting, and dissemination operations, military police contribute to the initial intelligence preparation of the battlespace (IPB) by providing input on—

- 1 Terrain that helps or hinders a combat support operation (e.g., presence of a water supply for a chemical decontamination point).
- 1 Terrain that can be critical to the AO security mission (e.g., presence of potential DZs or LZs, communications sites, depot sites).
- 1 Civil-military considerations (e.g., presence of built-up areas, refugee evacuation routes, populated areas sympathetic to the friendly or enemy cause).

Military police contribute to the intelligence cycle process by conducting reconnaissance patrols to fill intelligence gaps or to update information on critical areas and high-value targets. For example, after G-3/G-4 planners assign MSRs from the MEF support area forward, military police check the terrain for the presence of high-value targets (HVTs). Once identified, critical bridges, routes, and other HVTs, which the enemy will want to interdict or destroy, can be surveilled or replacements planned.