

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Concepts for the Army Training Tests

1. Since the tank battalion and the mechanized infantry battalion fight intermixed, there should be no such thing as an Army training test for one or the other: there should be one Army training test for battalions that fight mounted: the armored/mechanized maneuver battalion test.

2. An Army training test is primarily useful as a training objective. That statement leads to two corollaries:

a. Army training tests must be so structures as to permit a division commander's testing the ability of the maneuver battalion undergoing tests to perform the tasks which he described in the division training objectives.

b. The tested unit is measured not against an absolute standard, but against a ladder of achievement, set forth in the Army Training Program, which lays out the training tasks or objectives of which a unit with that table of organization and equipment ought to be capable, in a hierarchy of difficulty or complexity.

The report of tests should characterize the unit's competence with the performances tested, and relate the unit's tested proficiency specifically to the hierarchy of training tasks laid out in the Army Training Program.

3. An Army Training test should be a realistic field exercise. The best way to assure realism is by preserving the unexpected. Tested commanders should be required to cope with missions and events which are presented in an unanticipated sequence. Accordingly, no set scenario for an Army training test should be written. Nor should there be prescribed phases to an Army training test, if such phases permit the unit to forecast a specific sequence of missions or type undertakings.

4. An Army training test at a battalion level should be a field exercise with a brigade environment, with the brigade headquarters in the field, and the brigade slice of divisional support in the field, and at the disposal of the battalion.

Incl 5

ATTS

7 January 1974

SUBJECT: Concepts for the Army Training Tests

5. The chief evaluator of the battalion should be a senior officer from outside the normal training chain of command. Usually, this will mean that division evaluates battalion or it could mean that division would detail an officer from another brigade to act as the chief evaluator for a given battalion test. But the principal operative in all Army training tests should be that each commander trains and tests echelons subordinate to him, and presents his command to next higher for testing. At brigade level, however, there is a departure from this indicated: battalions are the division commanders tactical asset, and he should participate directly in the testing procedure so as to inform himself of the state of training among his battalions, and to provide for interchangeability.

6. Each Army training test of a maneuver battalion should incorporate testing by sample, at least, of all performances critical to the accomplishment of the combat mission of the tested unit. Thus, even though a mortar platoon organic to the tested battalion may have taken and passed an Army training test at platoon level, the test should sample the capability of the platoon to place fire upon a surprise target within a specified time, meeting standards of accuracy. A tank organization should be sampled to determine the gunnery proficiency of tank commanders, and the maintenance capability of its first and second echelon maintenance personnel. A mechanized infantry unit should be sampled for physical fitness, and for individual weapon's marksmanship. This sampling might be done during the conduct of the field training exercise by detaching a company, and pulling it aside to an impact area where it can shoot and undergo tests, or as part of the pre-exercise or post-exercise procedures. But wherever training objectives stipulate the achievement of standards of proficiency by individuals, crews or teams, these should be tested, in part, during the overall tests, and in the same timeframe.

7. The training objectives set forth by commanders for use by subordinate training managers should, therefore, describe the performances the unit might be tested upon, and indicate the standards they will have to meet. These performances and standards then become the objectives for the training programs, and each maneuver battalion commander trains his organization to be able to meet or surpass the stated standards. The conduct of the test involves the evaluator and the umpires setting up mechanisms to bring the training tasks into play, and to measure the performance of the tested units against the stated standard. Their plan for the conduct of the test should be developed with as many options, or variance, as the terrain will permit. Attacks for one tested battalion might proceed from north to south, for another south to north, and still another east to west. Defense for one battalion might be directed in one direction, for another the opposite, and so forth. The sequence of events should be varied from one battalion tested to the next.

ATTS

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Each maneuver battalion, in effect, should be given a unique set of circumstances with which to cope. Further, the use of a sampling technique should be resorted to on a random basis by the umpires. For example, if the division had stipulated that the battalion should be capable of river crossing at night, the umpires might test only one or two companies of each battalion in such an exercise, giving an order during the FTX to the battalion to detach a company, and have it effect the river crossing independently. In theory, if one company of an organization can do it, indications are that the battalion has trained all.

8. The length of the test is a function of the performances tested. If the organization is being tested mainly at fundamental performances, the test can be relatively short - 24 to 48 hours. If, on the other hand, the battalion is being tested against its ability for sustained operations of a complex and intensive nature, at the upper end of the ladder of battalion achievements, a five-day exercise may be required in order to accommodate the full range of combat, combat support, and combat service support achievements involved.

9. It is of paramount importance that the testing of a maneuver battalion take place within the full environment of the brigade. There must be artillery play throughout, and the artillery should be tested concurrent with the supported unit in the full range of its capabilities, to include live fire in an impact area if feasible.

