

Integrating Fires into the Brigade Battle Plan

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What is fire support planning? How does fire support planning relate to the military decision-making process (MDMP)? Where does the targeting process fit in reference to the fire planning process and the MDMP?

These are perplexing questions wrestled with by many who train at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk, Louisiana. Many

fire supporters demonstrate expertise in all three processes, but few can successfully integrate fire support planning and the targeting process into the MDMP.

This article describes an integrated fire support planning process that incorporates targeting methodology and is embedded in the MDMP. The process follows three of the MDMP steps: mission analysis, course of action (COA) development and COA analysis or

wargaming. The process culminates with the brigade's issuing its operations order (OPORD), which includes all the fire support products subordinate units need to plan fires to meet the brigade "Commander's Intent." (See Figure 1.)

Mission Analysis. Fire support mission analysis begins when the brigade receives the mission in the division OPORD, warning order (WARNO) or fragmentary order (FRAGO). The brigade fire support officer (FSO) and his staff analyze the orders to determine specified and implied fire support tasks derived from the fire support estimate process. These tasks are further scrutinized to determine the essential fire support tasks (EFSTs). Fire support planners—the FSO, the naval gunfire liaison officer (NGLO), the air liaison officer (ALO) and the electronic warfare support officer (EWSO)—deduce

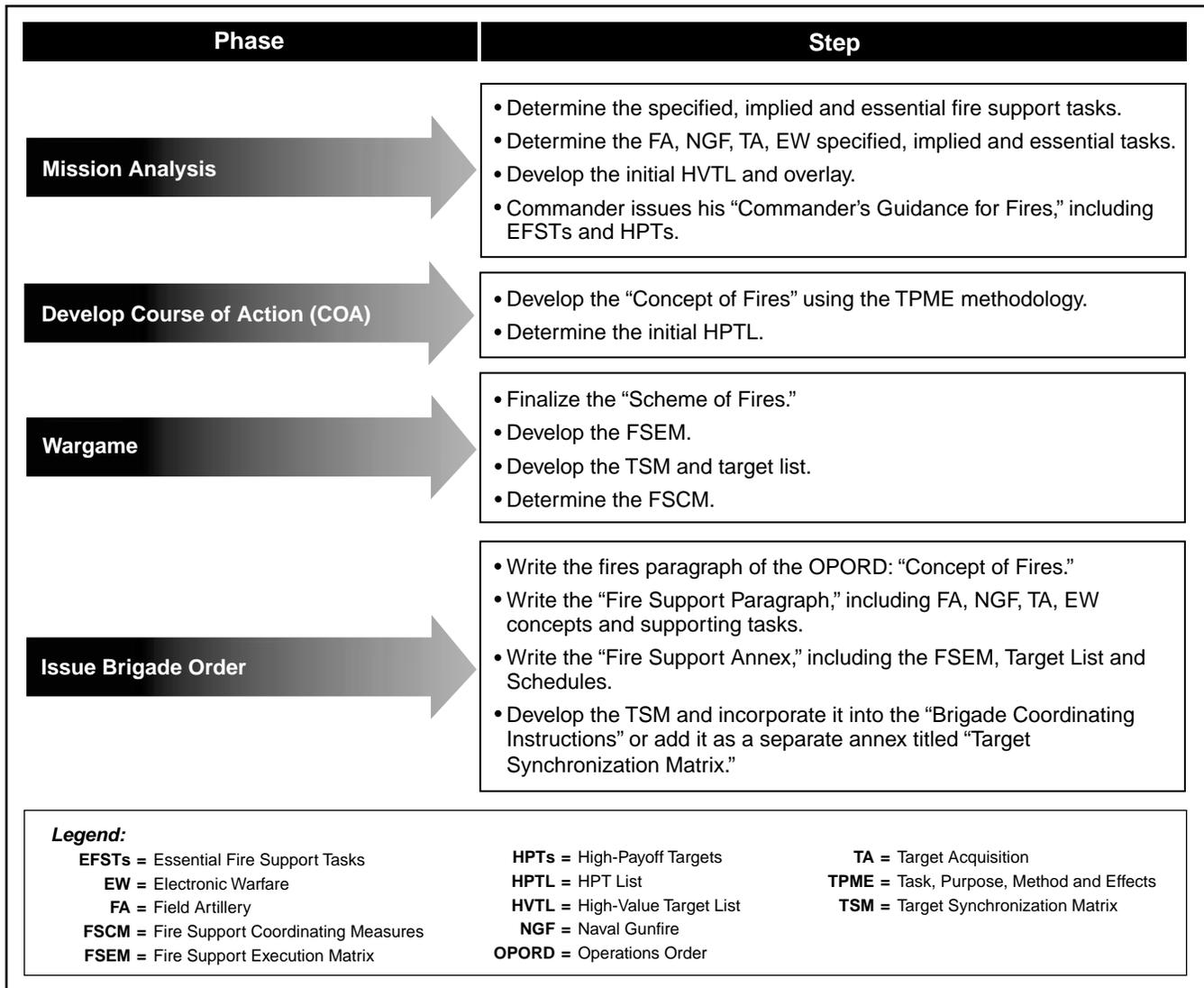


Figure 1: Brigade Fire Support Planning Process. Information for this figure and article was taken from FM 6-20-10 *The Targeting Process* and the Fort Sill White Paper "Fire Support Planning for the Brigade and Below," Draft 4.

Essential Fire Support Tasks	Field Artillery Supporting Tasks	Naval Gunfire Supporting Tasks	Tactical Air Supporting Tasks	Electronic Warfare Supporting Tasks
Deny enemy use of mortars.	Conduct counterfire operations.	Provide interdiction fires.	Support close air support (CAS).	Jam mortar nets.
Disrupt enemy use of ADA (air defense artillery).	Provide suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD).	Provide SEAD.	Support interdiction fires.	Jam ADA nets.

Figure 2: Fire Support Mission Analysis. This figure is a sample of essential fire support and supporting tasks determined from the specified and implied fire support tasks derived during the estimate process.

Field Artillery (FA), naval gunfire (NGF), tactical air and EW specified, implied and essential tasks. (See Figure 2.) EFSTs are used to develop both the “Fires” paragraph and “Fire Support” annex of the brigade OPORD. As a result, this portion of mission analysis concludes with the initial ingredients for the “Commander’s Concept of Fires” and the supporting FA, NGF, tactical air and EW concepts.

Another vital function of fire support mission analysis is to develop high-value targets (HVTs). The targeting officer (TO) becomes an integral player in the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process. In conjunction with the intelligence staff, the TO helps determine the HVTs, based on the doctrinal and situational templates. Then using either a target list worksheet or the target synchronization matrix (TSM), the TO lists the HVTs and associated templated or known grids, producing the high-value target list (HVTL). (See Figure 3.) The TO also graphically portrays the HVTs on an overlay or, even better, on the situational template. The result is the initial visualization of potential targets associated with the predicted enemy array.

During the mission analysis briefing to the brigade commander, the FSO articulates the possible fire support and associated FA, NGF, tactical air and EW supporting tasks, emphasizing the potential EFSTs. In conjunction with the S2, the FSO graphically displays the HVTs in relation to the situational template and explains the rationale for the targets’ selection as HVTs. The brigade commander then has the initial information to develop his fire support and target planning guidance, which delineates the EFSTs and likely high-payoff targets (HPTs) that will facilitate accomplishing his intent. (See Figure 4.) Thus, fire support and target planners are properly focused and equipped to help the commander develop his Concept of Fires and synchro-

(1) Air Defense Artillery	SA-8	102435
	SA-14	112447
	SA-7	098404
(2) Fire Support	82-mm Mortar	126459
	82-mm Mortar	087438
(3) Command and Control	Battalion Command Post	111467

Figure 3: High-Value Target List (HVTL). During the IPB, the TO helps determine the HVTL from the doctrinal and situational templates.

Commander’s Guidance for Fire Support. During Phase I, disrupt the enemy’s ability to use his ADA [air defense artillery] assets to allow TF 1 [Task Force 1] unrestricted air movement to Obj [Objective] Hound. During Phase II, deny the enemy the use of indirect fires in and around Obj Beagle. Furthermore, disrupt and limit his capability to move forces on Obj Beagle. Phase III, delay the enemy’s ability to reinforce Obj Hound from the north for 45 minutes or until Task Force 1 is in Obj Hound. The HPTs [high-payoff targets] are ADA, 82-mm mortars and maneuver (reinforcements).

Figure 4: Based on the FSO’s fire support mission analysis briefing, the brigade commander articulates his guidance for fire support, including EFSTs and some likely HPTs that will accomplish his intent.



The MDMP process culminates with the brigade’s issuing its operations order (OPORD), which is practiced in a brigade rehearsal as shown here.

Task: Disrupt enemy ADA fires against AAslt TF 1 [Air Assault Task Force 1] from PZ [Parachute Zone] Black to Obj Hound (support by fire position).

Purpose: To allow AAslt TF 1 unrestricted air movement into Obj Hound.

Method: POF [priority of fires] to brigade to execute the SEAD [suppression of enemy air defenses] program, then to TF 1 to conduct pre-assault fires on to Obj Beagle. TF Avn [Aviation] will provide 4 x AH-64 for route security then 2 x AH-64 to TF 1 to assist in observing pre-assault fires. One x FA battery will shoot the SEAD (Tgt # AF 2000, 2001 and 2002). CAS [close air support] will be used to look for reinforcements coming from the north (TA 2 [Target Acquisition 2]) NGF [naval gunfire] will BPT [be prepared to] assume responsibility for firing SEAD program. IEW [intelligence and electronic warfare] will acquire and o/o [on order] jam ADA nets. Restrictions: CAS minimum altitude is 6000 ft AGL [above ground level] and rotary wing aircraft is 300 ft AGL.

Effects: Neutralize enemy ADA along air corridor with no aviation lost to ADA and AAslt TF 1 in Obj Hound.

Figure 5: Concept of Fires. Based on the brigade Commander's Guidance for Fire Support, the FSO develops the Concept of Fires.

nize HPTs with detectors, delivery assets and assessors in subsequent steps of the MDMP.

COA Development. After receiving the "Commander's Guidance," fire support planners become integral players in COA development. The FSO uses the EFSTs as the basis for developing a Concept of Fires in conjunction with the "Scheme of Maneuver." The ALO, NGLO and EWSO assist the FSO and are responsible for developing the air, NGF and EW supporting concepts. The FSO or the direct support (DS) FA battalion S3, if present, develops the FA supporting concept. When developing the Concept of Fires, the FSO follows the *task, purpose, method* and *effects* (TPME) format as described in the Fort Sill White Paper titled "Fire Support

Planning for the Brigade and Below," Draft 4. (See Figure 5.) The FSO bases the EFSTs required to support the Scheme of Maneuver on the tactical effects of disrupt, delay, divert, destroy, damage and limit rather than the technical effects of suppress, neutralize, destroy and harass. *FM 6-20-10 The Targeting Process* defines these tactical effects in a chart titled "Targeting Objectives" on Page 1-2.

The *purpose* for each EFST is nested in the maneuver purpose for which the EFST is designed to support. The *method* uses the FA, NGF, tactical air and EW supporting tasks determined during mission analysis along with priority of fires (POF), allocation of resources and restrictions to describe how the EFST is to be accomplished. Lastly, the *effects* provide a quantifiable measure of when

the tactical effects of fires are achieved. The technical effects of suppress, neutralize, destroy or harass also may be used to provide initial attack guidance to delivery assets. For a more detailed explanation of how to craft the Concept of Fires using the TPME methodology, consult the previously mentioned White Paper available on the Fort Sill Home Page in the "Training Command" portion: <http://sill-www.army.mil/index.htm>.

While the FSO is developing the Concept of Fires, the TO develops the initial HPTL. (See Figure 6.) Using the commander's initial HPT guidance, the TO selects those HVTs (from the mission analysis HVTL) that support accomplishing the EFSTs and associated maneuver tasks. The TO records the HPTs and suspected grid locations on either a target list worksheet or TSM, thus producing the initial HPTL.

COA Analysis/Wargaming. Fire support planners are now prepared to enter the COA analysis or wargaming process. The purpose of the process is to synchronize the fire support and supporting FA, NGF, tactical air and EW concepts with the "Scheme of Maneuver" and the collection plan. The synchronizing documents are the TSM and the fire support execution matrix (FSEM). (See Figure 7.) In conjunction with the NGLO, ALO, EWSO and the FA battalion S3 (if present), the brigade FSO updates and synchronizes the Concept of Fires while the TO with the targeting staff produces the TSM.

During the wargame, the FSO develops the "Scheme of Fires," validates the

Unit: 21st ID (L)				Phase:			FRAGO No:		As Of:		
Decide				Detect			Deliver		Assess		
Pri	Cat	HPT	Location	NAI/TAI	Agency	Asset	When (I.A.P)	Asset	Effect (D,N,S,H)	Asset	
1	ADA	SA-14	102435	301	TF 1/Avn	Man/AH-64	A	FA, NGF	N	TF1	
2	FS	82-mm Mtr	126459	311	FA/Avn/TF1	236/AH-64/Man	I	FA, Avn, TF1	D	TF1	
3	C ²	BnCP	111467	333	EW/TF2	TRQ-32/Man	P	EW, FA, TF2	N	TF2	

Legend:

ADA = Air Defense Artillery	EW = Electronic Warfare	Mtr = Mortar
Avn = Aviation	FRAGO = Fragmentary Order	NAI = Named Area of Interest
BnCP = Battalion Command Post	HPT = High-Payoff Target	NFG = Naval Gunfire
C ² = Command and Control	I.A.P. = Immediate as Acquired or Planned	Pri = Priority
Cat = Category	ID (L) = Infantry Division (Light)	TAI = Target Area of Interest
D,N,S,H = Destroy, Neutralize, Suppress, Harass		TF = Task Force

Figure 6: High-Payoff Target List (HPTL). While the FSO is developing the Concept of Fires, the targeting officer records the initial HPTs and their suspected grid locations on the target synchronization matrix (TSM).

Unit	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Brigade	POF-SEAD-AF 2000, 2001, 2002	POF CAS	POF
Task Force 1	2 x AH-64, o/o POF FA	POF FA Adjust Prep AF 2003, 2004, 2005	
Aviation	SEAD AF 2000, 2001, 2002 4 x AH-64 AAslt Security 2 x AH-64 TF 1	o/o Adjust Prep AF 2003, 2004, 2005 o/o Adjust Smoke	POF o/o NGF, CAS TA 2, AF 2006
Field Artillery	SEAD AF 2000, 2001, 2002 POF Bde, o/o TF1	POF TF 1, o/o TF 2 Counterfire Prep Fires 2003, 2004, 2005 Smoke Breach 30 Min.	POF Bde, o/o Avn AF 2006
Tactical Air	Bde o/o Avn Air Security	Bde o/o TF 2 TA 2, AF 2006	Bde o/o Avn TA 2, AF 2006
Electronic Warfare	Jam ADA Nets	Jam Mortar Nets	Monitor C ² Nets

Legend:

AAslt = Air Assault	C ² = Command and Control
ADA = Air Defense Artillery	NGF = Naval Gunfire
AF = Air Force	o/o = On Order
Avn = Aviation	POF = Priority of Fire
Bde = Brigade	SEAD = Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses
CAS = Close Air Support	TA = Target Acquisition

Figure 7: Fire Support Execution Matrix (FSEM). The FSO develops the FSEM and updates the initial Concept of Fires, especially the methods for accomplishing the EFSTs.

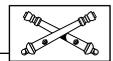
POF, allocates fire support resources and clarifies restrictions on fires. The Scheme of Fires sequences the HPTs and specifies triggers and execution responsibilities for sensors and shooters. Simultaneously, the FSO, in coordination with the battle staff, verifies the POF and determines the time, event or conditions requiring a change in priorities. Additionally, the FSO and his supporting staff select appropriate fire support assets (lethal and non-lethal) for HPT engagement at the right time and place to support the battle plan. Lastly, the FSO recommends the fire support coordinating measures (FSCM) and other restrictions needed to rapidly clear fires, adhere to the rules of engagement (ROE) and prevent fratricide.

The Scheme of Fires, POF, allocation of resources and restrictions analysis, development and verification occur as the battle staff executes the action, reaction and counteraction drill for each critical event or phase of the operation. The FSO records this vital fire support information on the FSEM and updates the initial Concept of Fires, especially the methods for accomplishing the EFSTs. The Concept of Fires—a synchronized Scheme of Fires and associated FSEM—are included in the brigade battle plan.

While the FSO and fire support planning staff develop the Scheme of Fires and FSEM, the TO and targeting team synchronize identified HPTs with detectors, deliverers and assessors. As

targeting decisions are made during the wargaming process, the TO records them on the TSM. The TO also records attack guidance—suspected or known location and named area of interest (NAI) for each HPT—thus producing a complete targeting product for inclusion in the brigade OPORD.

Conclusion. The fire support planning process is a derivative of the MDMP and targeting process. By incorporating fire support planning into these three processes, fire support planners formulate all the products required for subordinate fire supporters to focus their planning efforts efficiently and effectively. As a result, subordinate planners don't have to wait for essential elements of the brigade fire support plan before executing their decision-making processes. Timely, focused fire planning can occur at subordinate levels in concert with the brigade's vision of fighting with fires.



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