

CHAPTER 1

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE COMBAT OPERATIONS CENTER

Efficiently organized and executed command and control operations are essential for any combat operation to be successful. Many battles have been lost because of poor execution of command and control activities. A major reason for the success of Operation Desert Storm was the manner each unit maintained and supported a vigorous command and control structure.

A comprehensive knowledge about higher and lower echelons in the area of operations assigned to a Seabee battalion is crucial to personnel executing command and control functions. This chapter provides detailed information on the Combat Operations Center (COC). Also, described in this chapter is the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF).

NOTE: During combat operations, Seabee units are normally assigned to a MAGTF.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MARINE AIR-GROUND TASK FORCE (MAGTF)

A Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) is normally formed for combat operations in which substantial Marine aviation and Marine ground units participate. Trends in national strategy show that the most probable employment of MAGTFs will be in the execution of force-in-readiness missions. Accomplishment of such missions requires the employment of MAGTFs as landing forces in amphibious operations and later operations ashore. The MAGTFs must have the capability in such commitments to operate in close coordination with other U.S. Armed Forces and the forces of Allied nations. MAGTFs are characterized by operational concepts, organizational structures, equipment, and systems that are suited for employment in Navy-Marine, joint, or combined operations.

The fact that a Seabee battalion is attached to a MAGTF during combat makes it critical that you understand the MAGTF organization. No matter how large, a MAGTF consists of at least four elements with

seven primary engineer (fig. 1-1) assets spread out among the elements.

The four elements (fig. 1-2) are as follows:

- Command Element (CE)
- Ground Combat Element (GCE)
- Aviation Combat Element (ACE)
- Combat Service Support Element (CSSE)

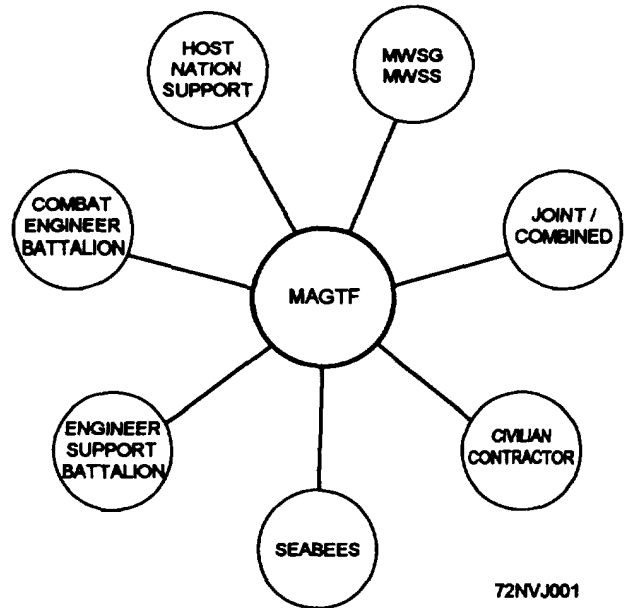


Figure 1-1.—Primary MAGTF Engineer Assets.

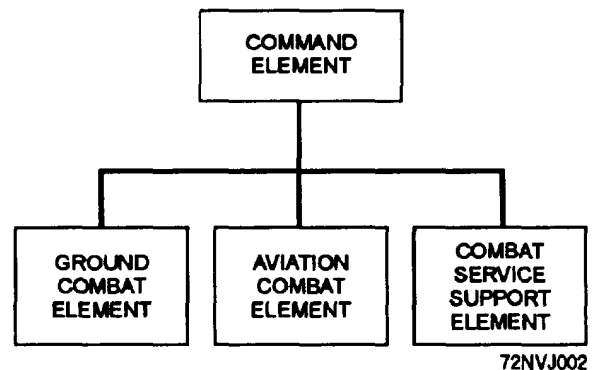


Figure 1-2.—Elements of a MAGTF organization.

COMMAND ELEMENT (CE)

The Command Element (CE) is the MAGTF headquarters and is established for effective planning and execution. It extends and complements the capabilities of subordinate MAGTF elements but do not duplicate them under normal circumstances. Direct liaison among the four elements is desirable to achieve the necessary coordination required for the effective conduct of air-ground operations.

A CEC officer is attached to the Command Element, engineer staff. The CEC officer serves as an advisor to the MAGTF engineer officer on matters relating to the capabilities and employment of the Naval Construction Force. A large portion of the MAGTF Command Element is concerned with matters involving higher, adjacent, and supporting commands.

GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT (GCE)

The Ground Combat Element (GCE) is a task organization tailored for the conduct of ground maneuver operations. The GCE is constructed around a combat infantry unit, and it also includes appropriate combat support and combat service support (CSS) units.

Normally, there is only one GCE in the MAGTF. A requirement for more than one GCE may occur in certain operational situations, such as joint or combined operations.

AVIATION COMBAT ELEMENT (ACE)

Normally, there is only one Aviation Combat Element (ACE) in a MAGTF. This element is task-organized for the conduct of tactical air operations. It includes the aviation commands (including air control agencies), combat support, and combat service support units required for the mission. The varied aviation resources of a Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW) and appropriate force units provide these capabilities.

At the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and Marine Expeditionary Force-Forward (MEF-F) level, the ACE includes both fixed-wing and helicopter assets as well as an air defense capability.

Air operations are conducted under the principle of centralized control at the MAGTF level. When the MAGTF commander assumes responsibility for control of air operations, he or she exercises control

through facilities provided by the ACE. He normally appoints the commander of the ACE to act as the MAGTF tactical air commander (TAC).

COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT ELEMENT (CSSE)

The Combat Service Support Element (CSSE) provides the combat service support (CSS) to the MAGTF that is beyond the organic capability of the subordinate elements. Depending on the assigned mission, it is task organized to provide all of the following functions: supply, maintenance, engineer, medical/dental, automated data processing, material-handling equipment, personal services, food services, transportation, military police, disbursing, and financial management.

SEPARATE TASK ORGANIZATIONS

Although there are always four major elements within a MAGTF, separate task organizations required to perform combat support or combat service support functions may be formed. Naval Construction Force Units come under this type of organization. Under these circumstance, the NCF is OPCON (see Glossary) to the MAGTF commander within the Command Element (fig. 1-3).

TYPES OF MAGTFs

The type of MAGTF Seabees would be supporting is dictated by the contingency. The three types of MAGTFs are as follows:

- Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU)
- Marine Expeditionary Force-Forward (MEF-F)
- Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF)

MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT (MEU)

The Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is a task organization that is normally commanded by a colonel and is capable of performing combat operations of a limited scope. The MEU is the air-ground team organization that is normally used for routine, forward afloat, and deployment requirements. The MEU provides an immediate reaction capability to crises and, when committed, is normally supported from its sea base. Normally, an Air Det from a Seabee battalion is assigned to an MEU (fig. 1-4).

The MAGTFs elements for a MEU are as follows:

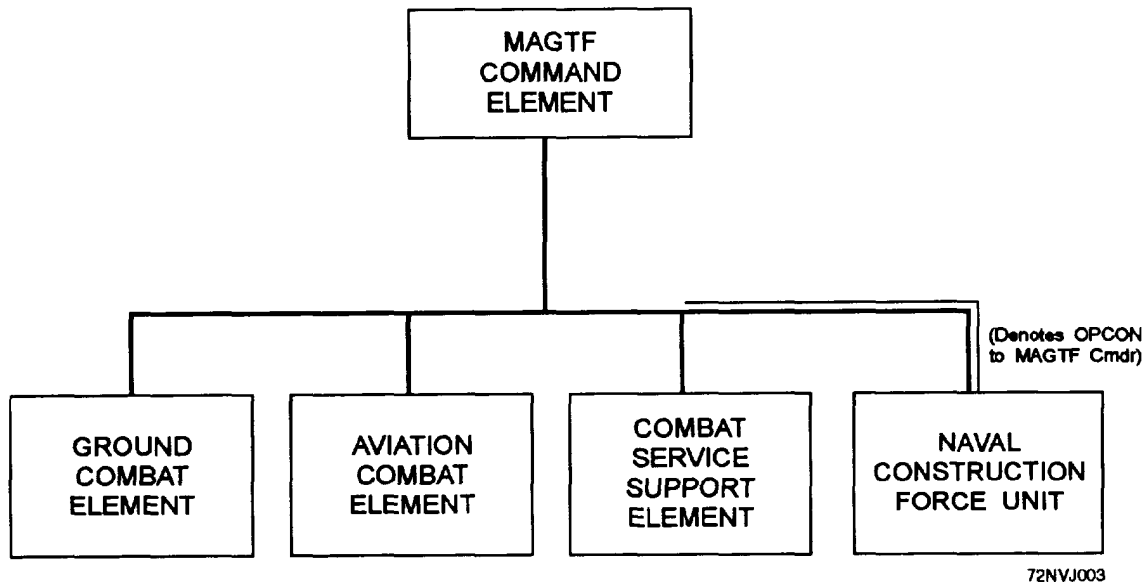


Figure 1-3.—MAGTF command relationships.

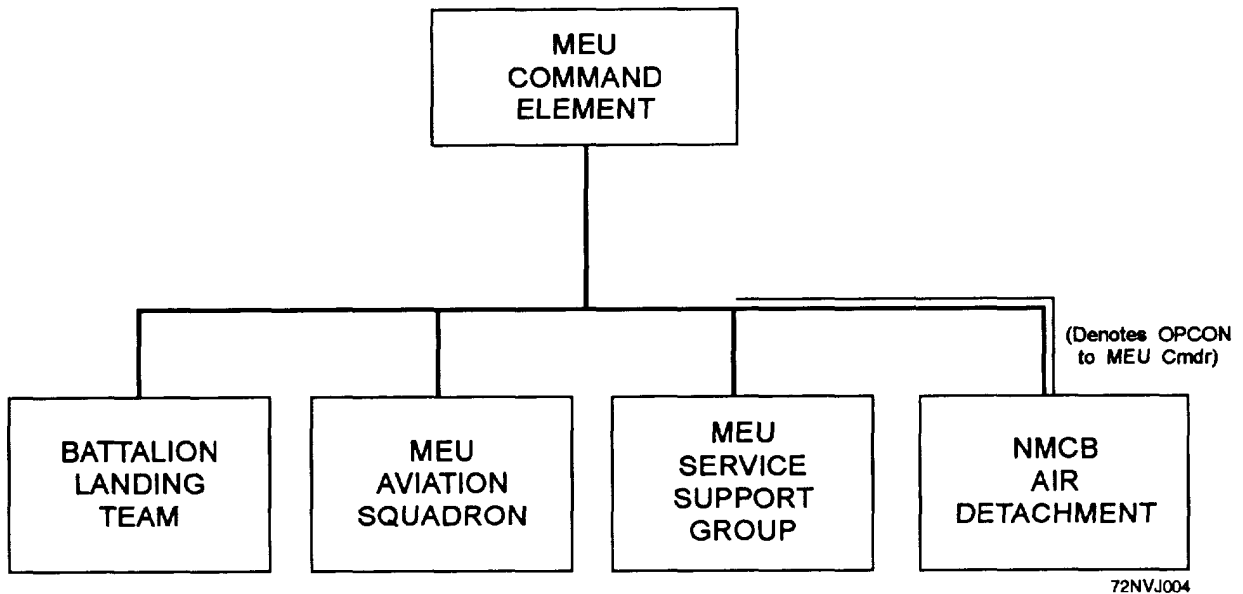


Figure 1-4.—MEU command relationships.

1. Ground Combat Element (GCE): Normally, a battalion landing team (BLT). Only under unusual circumstances would the GCE consist of two BLTs.

2. Aviation Combat Element (ACE): Normally, a composite helicopter squadron. However, in certain instances, the ACE may consist of an attack squadron, a helicopter squadron, and elements of an observation squadron.

3. Combat Service Support Element (CSSE): Within an MEU, normally called a service support group (MSSG). The MSSG is task-organized primarily

from the force service support group (FSSG) with appropriate attachments from division and wing assets.

MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE-FORWARD (MEF-F)

The Marine Expeditionary Force-Forward (MEF-F) (formerly called Marine Expeditionary Brigade [MEB]) is a task organization that is normally commanded by a brigadier general. An MEF-F is capable of conducting operations in low- and mid-intensity conflict environments. During

potential crises, the MEF-F maybe forward deployed afloat for an extended period to provide immediate response. Under these conditions, MEF-F combat operations may be supported from the sea base, facilities ashore, or a combination of the two. The MEF-F is normally organized to wcomplish a mission of limited scope and an NMCB is normally assigned to an MEF-F. The MAGTFs elements of an MEF-F are as follows:

1. Ground Combat Element (GCE): Normally, the GCE is a regimental landing team (RLT).
2. Aviation Combat Element (ACE) Normally, the ACE is a Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) that can provide all of the functions of Marine aviation. Unlike the MEU, the Aviation Combat Element of the MEF-F is organized and equipped for early establishment ashore. Should the landing area not contain suitable airfields, an expeditionary airfield will be developed using assets organic to the MEF-F.
3. Combat Service Support Element (CSSE): The CSSE is a brigade service support group (BSSG). The BSSG is task-organized primarily from the force service support group (FSSG) with appropriate attachments from division and wing assets.

MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (MEF)

The Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), the largest of the MAGTF, has many variations in its task organization structure. It is commanded by either a major general or a lieutenant general, depending on its size and mission. The MEF can conduct a wide range of amphibious and ashore operations. An MEF can be

tailored for any intensity of combat and to any geographic environment. The CEC officer attached to the Command Element, engineer staff, is the liaison between the MEF engineer staff and NCF units (fig. 1-5).

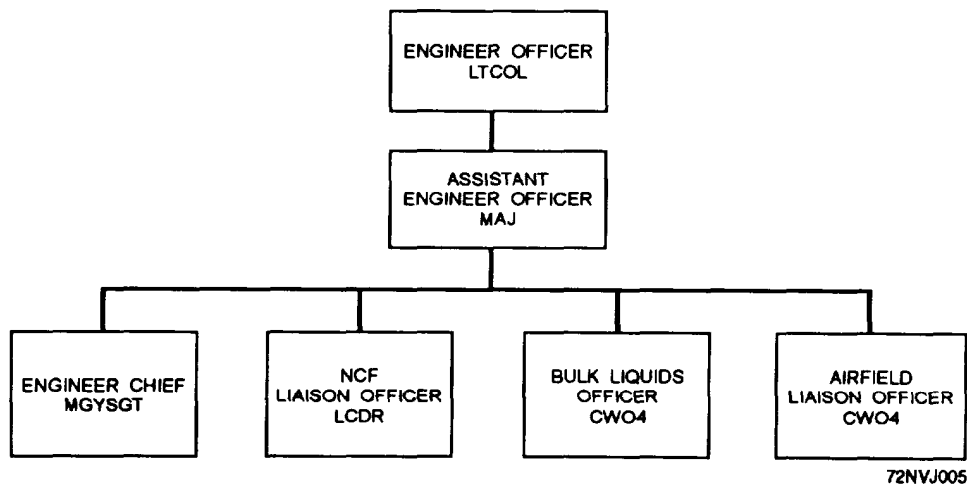
The regiments will be OPCON to the MEF's Command Element and all other NCF units will be OPCON to the regiments (fig. 1-6).

The MAGTFs elements of an MEF are as follows:

1. Ground Combat Element (GCE): The GCE is usually a Marine division with the appropriate combat units. Certain situations may require more than one GCE in the task organization, conceivably up to two reinforced Marine divisions.
2. Aviation Combat Element (ACE): The ACE is usually a Marine Aircraft Wing task organized to conduct all types of tactical air operations. The element is designed for operations in an expeditionary environment. Certain situations may require more than one ACE in the task organization, conceivably up to two Marine Air Wings (MAWs).
3. Combat Service Support Element (CSSE): The CSSE is the force service support group (FSSG) with appropriate attachments from division and wing assets.

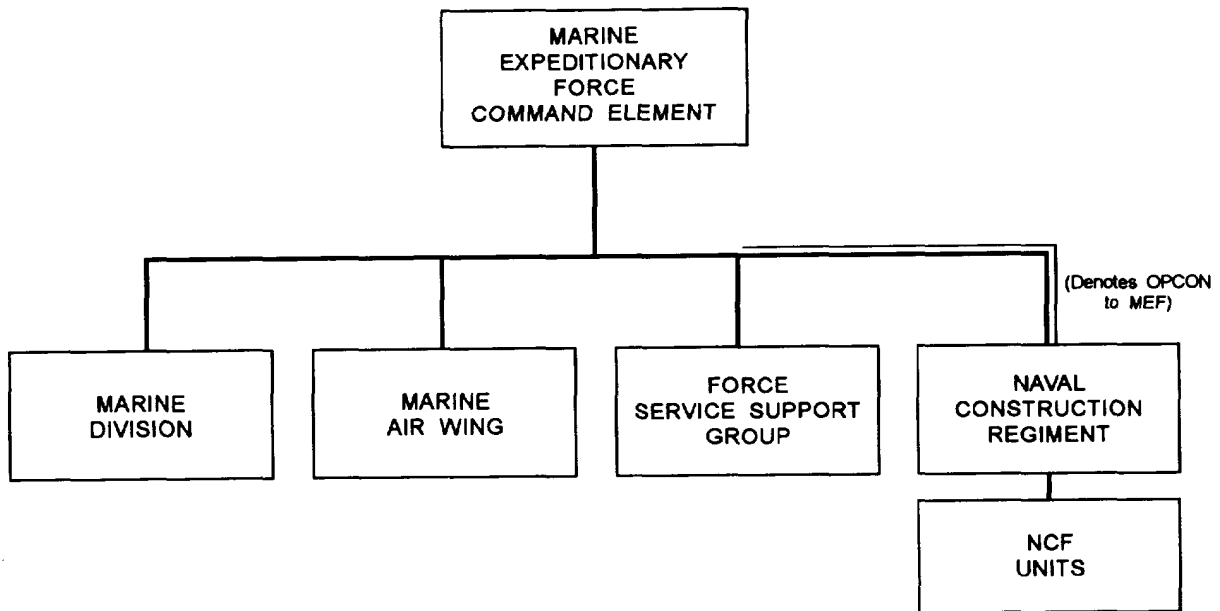
REAR AREA SECURITY

Throughout the spectrum of conflict, rear support areas have increasingly become major targets. Modern weaponry has made rear areas extremely vulnerable. Rear area security must counteract the effects of modem weaponry to protect rear support areas. Seabees are primarily assigned to the rear area



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Figure 1-5.—Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Branch.



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Figure 1-6.—MEF major subordinate commands.

and therefore must be familiar with the rear area organization.

The main objective of rear area security (RAS) is to minimize the effects of an enemy attack. Tactics used by the RAS include measures taken prior, during, and after an enemy airborne attack, sabotage, infiltration, guerrilla action, or initiation of psychological or propaganda warfare. The MAGTF rear area is the area extended rearward from the rear boundary of the Ground Combat Element (GCE) to the MAGTF rear boundary.

The objective of RAS is to provide defense for all forces operating within the MAGTF rear area so those functions associated with rear area operations, in support of combat operations, are not interrupted. All units in the rear area must be prepared to defend themselves to accomplish this objective. A cluster concept is used within the rear area so base facility operations centers are established. An NMCB has a formidable array of weapons and has a significant capability for defensive operations within the rear area.

BASE FACILITY COMMANDER

The base facility commander is responsible for the facility assigned to him or her. Each unit is assigned to a base facility and reports to the base facility commander by way of the COC (fig. 1-7).

REAR AREA SECURITY COORDINATOR (RASC)

The CSSE or the ACE commander is usually appointed by the MAGTF commander to coordinate rear area security (RAS) and normally functions as the rear area security coordinator (RASC). The RASC monitors the day-to-day operations of the rear area through the combat service support operations center (CSSOC) and the rear area operations center (RAOC). The NCF commander coordinates with the RASC to ensure that NCF assets and capabilities are incorporated into the RAS effort.

PROVISIONAL SECURITY FORCES

An MEF RASC can organize two types of provisional security forces: the provisional mobile security platoons (PMSPs) and the provisional helicopter-borne security company (PHSC). MAGTFs, smaller than an MEF, will have a tailored provisional security force. Based on the mission and threat assessment, these units can be used to support local defense efforts in the support of the RAS. These units should be included in your defense plan.

Provisional Mobile Security Platoons (PMSPs)

The force service support group (FSSG), located within the rear area, can field two provisional mobile

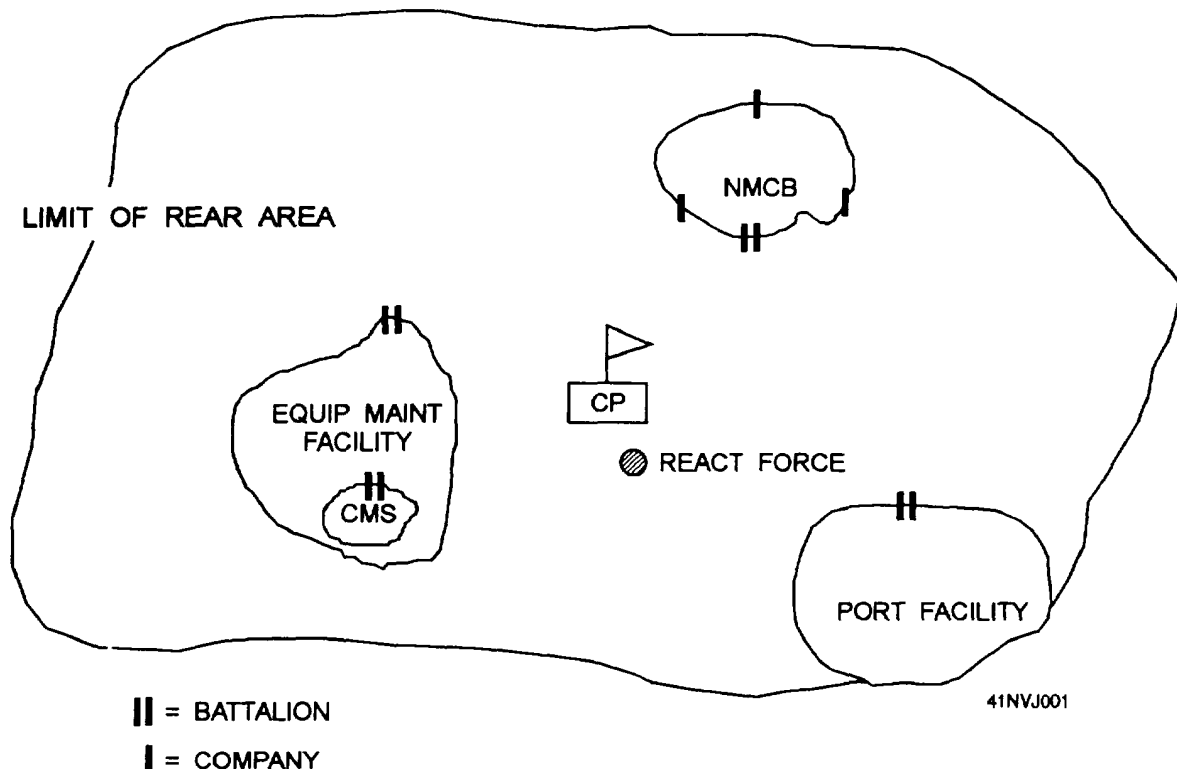


Figure 1-7.—Security of base facilities.

security platoons (PMSPs) to act as a quick reaction force in support of RAS efforts. The PMSPs can be tasked with the following missions:

- Relief/rescue of attacked installations/units
- Route patrolling and convoy protection
- Surveillance/reconnaissance
- Defense of possible enemy drop/landing zones
- Finding, fixing, destroying enemy forces operating in the rear area

Force Service Support Group Military Police

The force service support group military police are the MPs for the rear area and can be tasked with the following missions:

1. Provide military police to conduct battlefield circulation control for the MAGTF (material supply routes security).
2. Provide military police for law enforcement, criminal investigation, U.S. prisoner confinement, and counteract terrorist activities.
3. Establish surveillance and conduct route reconnaissance in the MAGTF rear area.

4. Provide for the collection, processing, and evacuation of enemy prisoners of war (POW) and civilian internees in the MAGTF rear am.

COMBAT OPERATIONS CENTER (COC)

The COC is established to provide the battalion commander centralized command and control facilities for all combat tactical and operational operations conducted under his or her command. It is the focal point for the battalion and the terminating point for all tactical and nontactical radio nets.

The primary purpose of the COC is to monitor and record the tactical and nontactical operations of the battalion continually. The specific composition and functions of the COC will vary with the desires of the individual commander. Normal COC functions include the following:

- Receiving and recording operational reports from subordinate elements and companies
- Maintaining current plots of the friendly and enemy situations and displaying this information within the COC

- Preparing and submitting operational reports to higher headquarters
- Providing dedicated communication channels for tactical and operational reporting
- Transmitting orders and tactical decisions of the battalion commander to companies subordinate elements, and higher headquarter as required
- Monitoring the progress of the battalion's tactical operations and expeditiously reporting significant events or incidents to the S-3 or the commander
- Advising the fire support coordination center (FSCC) and interested staff sections of events or infomation of immediate concern to them
- Serving as the principal point of contact for liaison personnel from subordinate, supporting, or adjacent tactical elements

The COC controls the battalion's tactical nets established by higher headquarters. A COC normally has direct sole-user telephone circuits (hot lines) to major subordinate tactical units and to the COC of higher headquarters. Besides voice radio nets and telephones, the battalion's COC normally maintains direct teletype links with major subordinate elements and with the COC of higher headquarters.

The operations officer (S-3) exercises staff supervision over the COC in coordination with the training (S-7) and intelligence officer (S-2).

LOCATION OF THE COMBAT OPERATIONS CENTER (COC)

When establishing a COC, you should give special consideration to location. The location of the COC must be hard to detect by enemy forces, easy to defend, and be established in a centralized location that is easily accessible to battalion personnel. Other factors to consider are centralized communications and vehicle traffic.

Centralized Communications

The main COC is centrally located to each company's command post to ensure positive control by the battalion commander.

Vehicle Traffic

As previously stated, the COC is the principal point of contact for liaison personnel from subordinate, supporting, or adjacent tactical elements. Strict traffic control measures are essential when these

supporting elements visit the COC. These include the following:

- At least two dismount and two entry points are used to reduce traffic concentrations.
- Passenger dismount points are concealed from direct observation.
- Vehicles are parked and camouflaged in one or more parking areas within the local security perimeter of the COC.
- Construction of new roads into or by the COC is normally prohibited. To lessen the chance of detection by the enemy, you can use existing roads.
- Vehicles entering or departing the area of the COC are required to use exits that are concealed by are cover or camouflage.

COMMUNICATIONS

Superior communication is critical to COC operations. The location of the COC is one of the factors that determines the communication assets required when establishing a communication plan. Also affected by the location of the COC is the location of the "Antenna Farm" discussed later in this chapter.

DEFENSE AND SECURITY

To protect the COC from a direct attack or enemy infiltration, you must consider vital defense and security measures, such as the following:

1. Security force: A well-trained and organized security force assigned to the COC.
2. Terrain that enhances security: An area of irregular, well-forested ground hampers aerial observation and, if it includes high brush and low trees as well, it makes enemy ground observation more difficult. Full use is made of natural cover, concealment, and supplementary camouflage measures. Individual camouflage discipline is rigidly enforced.
3. Location: Located near a unit that can assist in furnishing security.
4. Entanglements: Barbed and tactical wire entanglements.
5. Night noise and light discipline: Ensure the generator supplying power to the COC is located a good distance from the COC and is sandbagged to muffle the

sound of the generator. Also, ensure the tent used for the COC maintains light discipline.

ALTERNATE COC

In case the COC is destroyed, an alternate COC is established. All the consideration for a COC are duplicated in the alternate COC. Location of the alternate COC is away from the main COC and security is similar to the main COC. In the event the main COC is destroyed, operations are expediently assumed in the alternate COC.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMBAT OPERATION CENTER

The internal organization of the COC may vary with each battalion commander or contingency operations. Written Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) are established to avoid any confusion (fig. 1-8). Personnel duties, maps, and various boards are usually standard within any COC organization.

PERSONNEL AND THEIR DUTIES

The operations officer (S-3) is primarily responsible for coordinating, organizing, operating,

Following factors to be considered:

1. Must provide adequate light
2. Light-proof for night operation
3. Collocate all situation boards
4. Use remote equipment for radios
5. Security post to control access
6. Communications wiring must not impede foot traffic

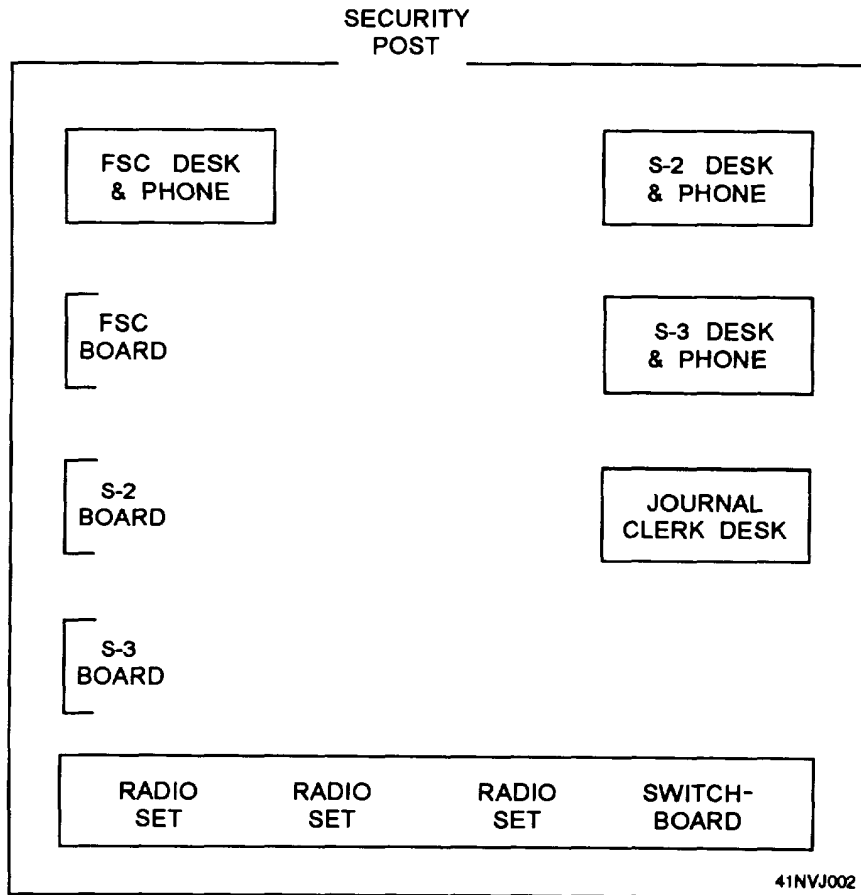


Figure 1-8.—Internal arrangement of COC.

and training COC watch stander personnel. Personnel are kept to a minimum to simplify operational efficiency. The following watch sections are manned on a 24-hour basis:

Intelligence Watch Officer (S-2)

- Provides complete supervision of handling and processing information relating to intelligence.
- Gathers and distributes information gained from intelligence (INTEL) sources.
- Prepares written and oral briefings as required.
- Maintains overlays for the enemy situation map (INTEL MAP).
- Promptly informs the operations officer (S-3) of significant or unusual incidents.
- Supervises the maintenance of the intelligence situation board, such as enemy and friendly updates.

COC Watch Officer

- Before assuming watch, reads message board, is briefed on the present situation from the current COC watch officer, and makes liaison with other staff sections.
- During watch, keeps current on the tactical situation, makes routine decisions, and notifies S-3 of incidents of an unusual nature.
- Reads all incoming and outgoing messages. Takes action by delivering messages to the cognizant section and ensures the appropriate action is taken.
- Has releasing authority on all outgoing messages.

Journal Clerk

- Maintains the unit journal according to established practice.

Communications Chief

- Supervises the actions of the communication personnel, such as radio and telephone operators (RTOs).
- Ensures incoming and outgoing messages adhere to established routing procedure.

- Verifies correct communication security measures are used by all assigned communicators.
- Determines communication nets for all outgoing message traffic.
- Requests technical assistance in case of equipment or net failure.
- Informs the COC watch officer the status of all nets.
- Maintains a log on radio nets, noting opening and closing times, frequency changes, traffic delays, or other pertinent incidents.

Communicators (Radio/Telephone Operators [RTOs])

- Monitors and operates radios and switchboards as assigned.
- Familiar with authentication and encryption methods.
- Message drafting.

Messengers/Security

- Performs all duties as assigned.
- Ensures all personnel entering the COC appear on the access list.

FSC Watch Officer

- Advises the battalion commander on all fire support matters.
- Ensures fire support plans are carried out with the fire support means available.
- Approves or denies all calls for fire missions.
- Distributes target information through FSC channels to senior, subordinate, and adjacent units.
- Maintains close communication with the battalion's Fire Direction Center (FDC) by monitoring the mortar platoon's call for fire net (COF).
- Maintains a map of the area of operations (AO).
- Verifies all on call targets.
- Requests fire support from higher or adjacent units.

Plotters

- Ensures the proper maintenance of section journals, situation charts, and maps

- Assists the section watch officer as required.

NBC/CBR Officer

The NBC/CBR officer plays a critical role in the early warning of a nuclear, biological, or chemical attack. The NBC/CBR officer should hold the proper Naval Enlisted Classification Code (NEC) to fill this position proficiently. The NBC/CBR officer's duties include the following:

- Responsible for organizing, training, and supervising personnel assigned to the battalion's decontamination teams.
- Monitors all incoming messages related to weather information.
- Responsible for all outgoing and incoming NBC reports.
- Establishes NBC fallout zones to provide early warning of an NBC attack.
- Advises the section watch officer on the setting of mission-oriented protective posture levels (MOPP levels).

CHARTS AND MAPS

The types of charts and maps required within the COC vary according to the mission and the battalion commander. All charts and maps must be visible to all personnel in the COC. Ensuring proper placement enables all personnel standing watch in the COC to monitor current situations and to respond to any incoming messages expediently. The maps and charts provide detailed operations and INTEL information. Also posted in the COC is a clipboard for an incoming/outgoing message reading file.

The operation map shows the area of operation and should include the following:

- Friendly troop positions including the battalion's fire plan
- Current locations of command posts in the area of operation
- Location and status of patrols
- Landing zone locations
- NBC corridors/fallouts

The operation charts should show the following:

- Personnel strength
- POWs or EPWs

- Report status
- Equipment status
- Call signs and frequencies
- Convoy status
- Casualties wounded/KIA
- Food/water/ammo status

The INTEL map should show the following:

- Enemy troop disposition/strength within the AO
- Enemy equipment/weapons
- Weather and astronomical data
- NBC corridors/fallouts

The INTEL charts should show the following:

- Current INTEL
- Challenge and passwords
- Current MOPP level

COMMUNICATION PLAN

On a modern battlefield, the ability of a battalion commander to pass information between his or her troops and superiors is critical for the success of any mission. An uncomplicated, reliable, flexible, and responsive communication plan will enable the battalion commander to carry out his or her operational plans effectively. A well-thought-out communication plan is paramount to command and control. Communication is the instruments by which a battalion commander makes his or her orders known and, as such, is the voice of the command. Communication permits the battalion commander to exercise command and control of assigned forces, supporting fires, and combat service support over larger areas. Any transmission speaks only for and with the authority of the battalion commander who originates the transmission. A secondary purpose of communications is to simplify the transfer of information between individuals and groups of individuals that is necessary to the exercise of command and control.

Since the COC is the nerve center for the battalion and the terminating point for all tactical and nontactical radio nets, a well-thought-out communication plan must be established. Like everything else, the communication plan is based upon the mission. The communication officer is usually tasked with the development of the communication plan. He or she should include in the plan

communication requirements for the COC, the setup of a remote antenna farm, and a communication network.

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

Communication requirements within the COC may vary according to the mission but the communication equipment used to fulfill the requirements is the same. Communication equipment will include one radio per operating net and field telephones (TA-312/PT) for S-3, S-2, and FSC. In general the requirements are as follows:

1. AN/PRC-77 or AN/PRC-119A: Radios used to communicate with the base facility commander, company command posts, convoys, forward observer, and other units located within the base facility.
2. TA-312/PT (Field Phone): A direct phone line to the company command posts and the Fire Direction Center (FDC battalion mortars).
3. AN/PRC-104: A high-frequency (GF) radio usually used to communicate with higher authority outside the base facility.
4. SB-22/PT: A switchboard used to connect numerous TA-312s.
5. AN/GRA-39: A remote unit that enables the operator to transmit and receive voice communication through a radio set from a distance of up to 2 miles. It is used to link radio communication from a remote antenna farm to the COC.

ANTENNA FARM

The antenna farm or communication site is the primary location of various antennas and communication equipment needed to establish communication in the field. Special consideration is given for selecting a location for the antenna farm because all radio communication in the COC depends on it.

An important consideration in selecting your site is accessibility. Time should not be wasted by establishing accessibility. Whenever possible, a site should be located near good roads. This will minimize any difficulty in supplying the site with water, fuel, oil, food, and ammunition.

Avoid obstructions like steel bridges, underpasses, power lines, or power units that can cause a weak or distorted signal coming from your communication equipment. Better results are obtained when the antennas are high and clear of hills,

cliffs, buildings, densely wooded areas, and other obstructions.

Other factors that must be considered are physical security and a location where terrain will not interfere with transmissions. A relatively flat hilltop is usually the most desirable site location.

COMMUNICATION NETWORK

A communication network is a written detailed plan accompanied with a wire and radio plan detailing where each type of communication equipment transmits to (figs. 1-9 and 1-10).

To produce a communication network, you must know what frequency nets will be required for the mission. Higher authority will issue a Communication Electronic Operating Instruction (CEOI) to assist you with determining the frequency nets required.

CEOI contains the technical guidance required to establish and maintain communications in support of operations. The CEOI provides the details required to coordinate and control the various communications means and functions within a unit. This document normally contains call signs, call words, and frequencies to be used by designated operating units. By providing a standardized source of information, the CEOI enhances both operational communications capabilities and communications security. In case of loss or compromise, the standardized format simplifies rapid identification, destruction, and replacement. The following information and instructions are normally included in the CEOI:

- General communications instructions
- Call sign assignments
- Frequency assignments
- Radio net circuit designator
- Wire/cable trunk circuit designations
- Wire/cable tagging codes
- Telephone directory names and numbers
- Teletype and data muting indicators
- Identification and marking panel codes
- Signal panel message instructions
- Pyrotechnic and smoke codes
- Ground-air signals
- Sound warning signals

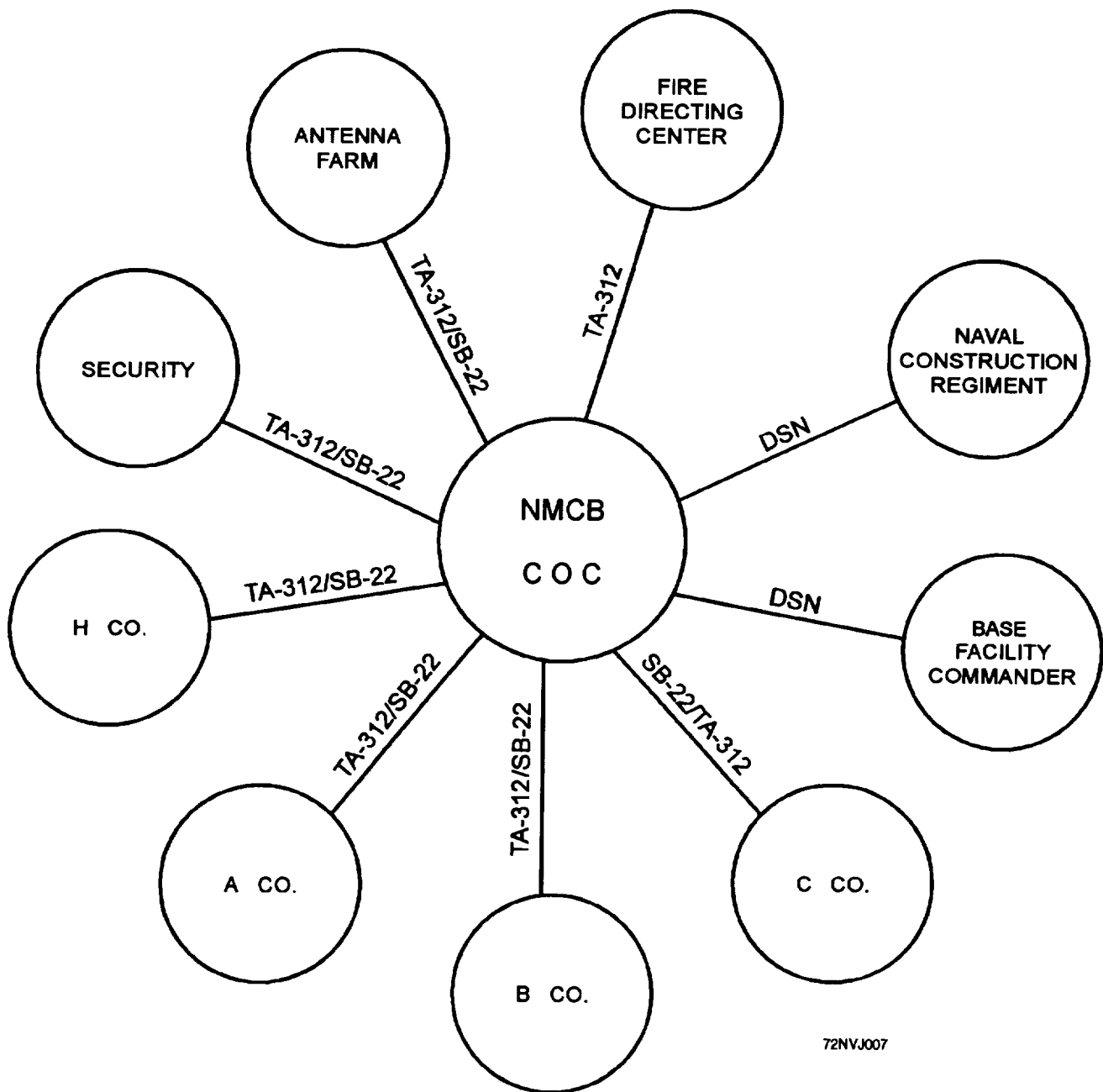


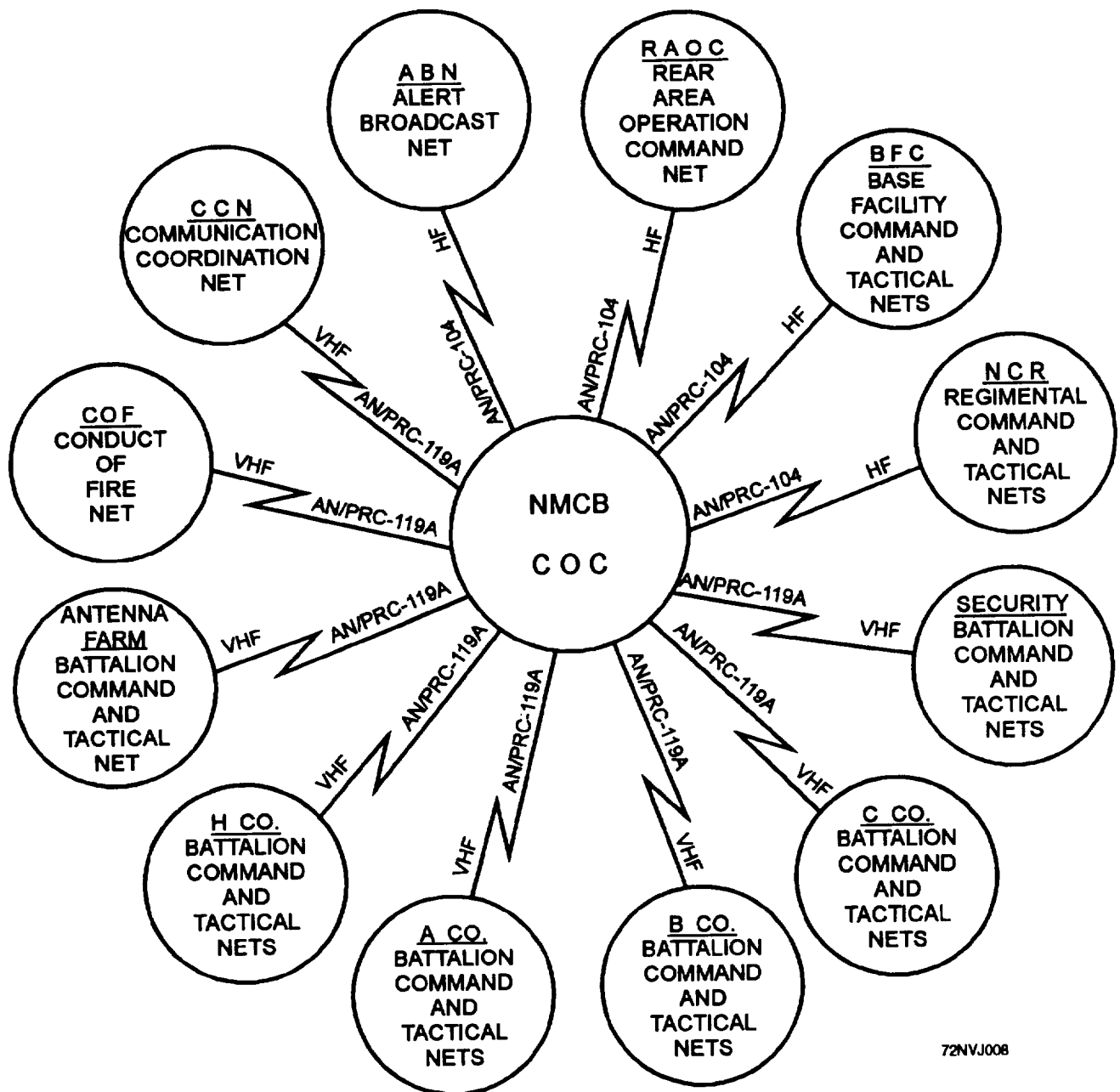
Figure 1-9.—COC wire plan.

- General cryptographic instructions
- Cryptographic devices to be used
- Current effective editions of the cryptographic key lists
- Codes and ciphers
- Passwords/challenge
- General authentication instructions

- Effective authentication tables

Each CEOI is classified according to content. General classification of the CEOI is based on the highest classified instruction it contains. Some of the frequency nets that may be listed in the CEOI and may be required in the COC areas follows:

1. Battalion Command Net: Establishes communication to the companies for administrative and logistics issues.



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Figure 1-10.—COC radio plan.

2. Battalion Tactical Net: Establishes communication to the companies for tactical purposes and various reports, such as SPOT, SALUTE, AMMUNITION, CAUSALTY, and SITREPS.

3. Regimental Command Net: Establishes communication from the battalion's COC to the regiment when the battalion is OPCON to the regiment. Used for administrative and logistics issues.

4. Regimental Tactical Net: Establishes communication from the battalion's COC to the regiment when the battalion is OPCON to the regiment. Used for tactical purposes and various reports, such as SPOT, SALUTE, AMMUNITION, CAUSALTY, and SITREPS.

5. Base Facility Command Net: Establishes communication from the battalion's COC to the base facility commander. Used for administrative and logistics issues.

6. Base Facility Tactical Net: Establishes communication from the battalion's COC to the base facility commander. Used for tactical purposes and various reports, such as SPOT, SALUTE, AMMUMTION, CAUSALITY, and SITREPS.

7. Conduct of Fire Net: Establishes communication from the battalion's COC to the battalion's Fire Direction Center (FDC). Used by the companies to call in fire missions and by the fire support coordinator to call in fire support.

8. Rear Area Operating Command Net: Establishes communication, usually by a high-frequency radio (HF), from the battalion's COC to higher authority (i.e., RASC) located outside the base facility, such as RAOC.

9. Communication Coordination Net: Used solely for communication problems within the battalion.

10. Alert/Broadcast Net (HF): Used to pass alert warning traffic or general traffic about all (or the majority) of the units within the area of operations.

OPERATION OF THE COMBAT OPERATION CENTER

Once you know the units within your area of operations, who you are OPCON to, and have established a communication network, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) instruction for the Combat Operation Center should be prepared. All key personnel involved with the operations of the COC should be involved. Special consideration must be given to message handling procedures, situation boards, unit journal, fire support coordinator, and staff briefings.

NOTE: The following paragraphs contain a typical SOP for the Combat Operation Center. The one you may be tasked to design maybe different but should contain the same basic topics.

INCOMING MESSAGES

All incoming radio traffic will be written down on authorized message pads with an original plus two copies (fig. 1-11).

A guide for handling messages is as follows:

- **FLASH:** Not fixed. Handle as fast as humanly possible; objective is less than 10 minutes.
- **IMMEDIATE:** 30 minutes-1 hour.
- **PRIORITY:** 1-3 hours.

- **ROUTINE:** 3-4 hours or start of business on the following day.

The message is passed to the communication chief who checks the message for form at, spelling, and legibility. After checking the message, the communication chief passes the message with all copies to the COC watch officer. The COC watch officer assigns the action as appropriate and indicates the action section on the message, such as FSC and S-2. The watch officer gives the original to the journal clerk for logging, gives one copy to the action section, and places one copy on the reading board.

Incoming messages received by runner or field telephone are handled in the same manner as incoming radio messages, except they are delivered to the COC watch officer without routing through the communication chief.

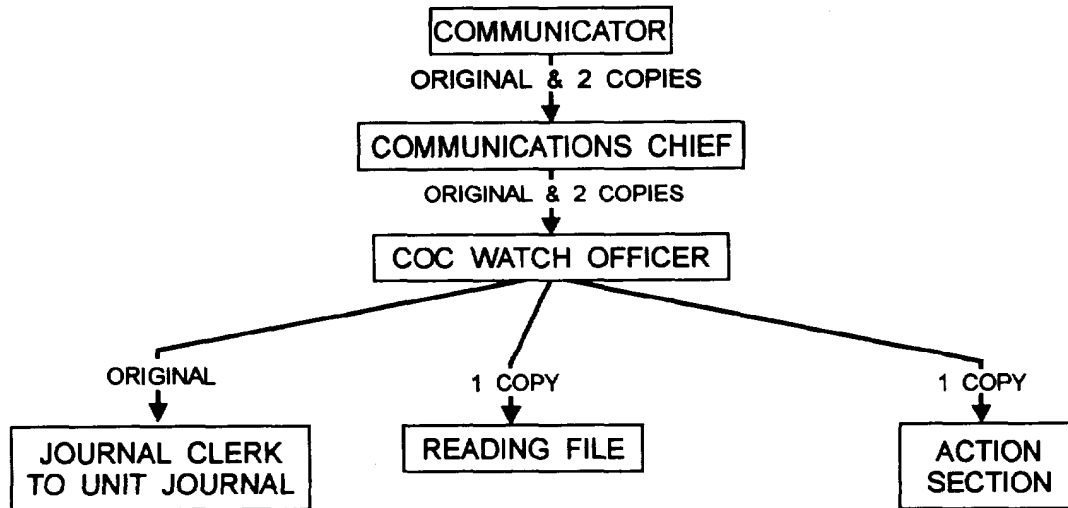
OUTGOING MESSAGES

The originating staff sections, such as FSC and S-2, prepare an original and two copies of each message prepared. All copies are passed to the COC watch officer. The COC watch officer reviews the message, signs the releasing block, and passes one copy to the journal clerk for logging. The COC watch officer then gives the original plus one copy to the communication chief. The communication chief passes one copy to the communicator. After transmission, the communicator returns this copy with the time of transmission indicated back to the communication chief. The communication chief returns a copy to the originator. The COC watch officer gets the original with the time of transmission noted. The original is then placed on the outgoing reading board after the journal clerk logs the time of transmission.

SITUATION BOARDS

Each cognizant staff section, such as Ops and INTEL, is responsible for maintaining current situation maps and other tactical information aids. Close monitoring of the developing tactical situation is required to ensure that request for support or information are provided expeditiously. The COC watch officer should ensure that any information requiring the updates of maps or charts is forwarded to the staff sections rapidly.

INCOMING



OUTGOING

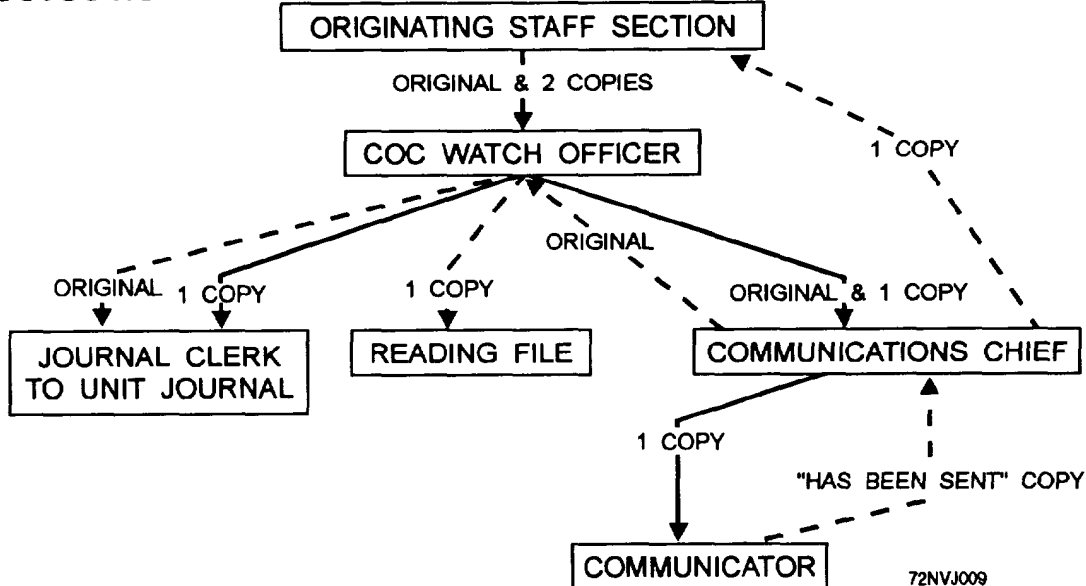


Figure 1-11.—COC message handling routing.

UNIT JOURNAL

The unit journal provides a summary of activities that is used by commanders and oncoming duty personnel to determine the current tactical situation. It covers a 24-hour period beginning at 0001 local time. The journal clerk prepares the journal under the direction of the COC watch officer. All items will be entered in a brief, accurate form. Periodic reports, such as SITREPs, will be referenced only.

FIRE SUPPORT COORDINATOR

This activity is included in the COC only when the battalions are using their mortars or providing liaison with higher commands for supporting arms. The FSC maintains maps, charts, and target lists for use during the defense.

STAFF BRIEFINGS

The operations officer (S-3) coordinates briefings that present the current tactical situation to the

battalion commander. The order for this staff brief is Intel (S-2), communication chief (S-3), and FSC.

SUMMARY

To be proficient while performing duties related to COC operations, you must see the “Big Picture.” Part of the “Big Picture” is to know about the MAGTF organization. There are three types of MAGTFs: Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), Marine Expeditionary Force-Forward (MEF-F), and Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). All MAGTFs contain four elements: Command Element, Ground Element, Aviation Element, and Combat Service Support Element. Seabees can be attached to any type of MAGTF as a separate

task organization or to any element within the MAGTF.

Seabees play a vital role in rear area security. They are expected to know the organization in the rear area from the rear area operations commander (RAOC) to the base facility commander (BF). The rear area is broken down into clusters called base facilities. Seabees must know how to command, control, and defend the area assigned to them within the base facility.

It is important that you understand your duties as well as all of the other duties in the COC. Training is the key. A well-thought-out communication plan and standard operating procedures within the COC will help to eliminate the “fog of war.” As our motto states: “we do more than just build; we can defend what we build.”