



CLOSE AIR SUPPORT

TRENDS ON THE NTC BATTLEFIELD



NECESSARY PROCEDURES

" AMONG MILITARY MEN IT IS A COMMONPLACE THAT INTERALLIED AND INTERSERVICE OPERATIONS INESCAPABLY POSE GRAVE DIFFICULTIES IN EXECUTION. DIFFERENCES IN EQUIPMENT, IN DOCTRINE, IN ATTITUDE AND OUTLOOK STEMMING FROM CONTRASTING PAST EXPERIENCE ALL INHIBIT AND COMPLICATE HARMONIOUS INTERACTION. PAST SUCCESSES HAVE SHOWN THAT THESE DIFFICULTIES CAN BE OVERCOME BY DETERMINATION AND EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES APPLIED BY PROPERLY TRAINED TROOPS. EXPERIENCE HAS ALSO SHOWN THAT ARMED FORCES...HAVE BEEN SLOW TO HAMMER OUT THE NECESSARY PROCEDURES. OFTEN, CORRECTIVE STEPS HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED ONLY AFTER MANY FAILURES IN BATTLE. **IN NO AREA OF INTERSERVICE OPERATIONS HAS THIS PHENOMENON BEEN MORE PRONOUNCED THAN IN THE MATTER OF CLOSE AIR SUPPORT"**

PROFESSOR I. B. HOLLEY, JR.

CASE STUDIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAS



LACK OF TIMELY TARGETING



WHAT WE SEE:

- * **TARGET IDENTIFICATION TAKES TOO LONG AND IS FOLLOWED BY LENGTHY DELAYS IN COMMANDER'S APPROVAL (i.e. SORTIES RUN OUT OF FUEL BEFORE BEING GIVEN TARGET GRID AND PERMISSION TO ATTACK).**
- * **TARGETS OFTEN STRAY FROM HPT LIST, WE LOSE OUR FOCUS AND FRITTER AWAY CAS ON INSIGNIFICANT TARGETS.**



LACK OF TIMELY TARGETING



WHY DOES THIS OCCUR:

- * **COMMANDER AND STAFF INDECISION**
 - **CDR'S INTENT DOES NOT SPECIFY IN DETAIL, WHAT THE CAS HPTs ARE**
 - **STAFFs ARE NOT CONTINUOUSLY TRACKING/REFINING CAS HPTs**
 - **WE DON'T ASK PILOTs / FAC-As FOR INTEL**
- * **STAFF ORGANIZATION**
 - **COMMAND POSTs DO NOT CONDUCT EFFICIENT TARGETING CELL MEETINGs**
 - **ALOs AND FSOs ARE NOT WORKING SIDE BY SIDE**
- * **WE ARE UNPREPARED TO UTILIZE IMMEDIATE CAS - NOT LEANING FORWARD**
- * **BDE CDR's ARE CHANGING CAS TARGETS RIGHT UP TO EXECUTION**



LACK OF TIMELY TARGETING



HOW CAN WE FIX IT:

- * **COLLECTIVE PLANNING, REHEARSALS, AND TARGETING CELL HUDDLES (PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE: ALO, ADO, XO, S2, S3 AIR, AND FSO)**
- * **ANTICIPATION:**
 - **TARGETING CELL HUDDLES (1 HR OUT, 30 MIN OUT, AT EXECUTION)**
 - **BOS CHIEFS SET THE CONDITIONS PRIOR TO EXECUTION**
- * **ESTABLISH STAFF BATTLE DRILL FOR CAS BASED ON IMMEDIATE CAS CONDITIONS**
 - **TREAT IMMEDIATE CAS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLOIT ADDITIONAL COMBAT POWER**
 - **CONTINUOUSLY TRACK HPTs, MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO COORDINATE THE AIRSTRIKE PRIOR TO AIRCRAFT ON STATION**



CLOSE CAS



WHAT WE SEE:

- * **BDE/REGT RARELY ALLOCATE CAS TO THE BN/TF/SQDN**
- * **LACK OF TF/SQDN PLANNING FOR CAS**
- * **BDE/REGT IS CONTROLLING CAS IN THE CLOSE FIGHT - INSTEAD OF PUSHING ASSETS TO FORWARD ALOs/ETACs FOR FINAL CONTROL**
- * **GROUND EYES ARE NOT IN POSITION TO PROVIDE FINAL CONTROL, CAUSING THE FAC-A TO INTERRUPT BDE/REGT CDRs INTENT FOR CAS**



CLOSE CAS



WHY DOES THIS OCCUR:

- * **BDE/REGT ARE TOO ABSORBED WITH THE DEEP BATTLE, TO THE EXPENSE OF THE CLOSE FIGHT**
- * **FAULTY WARGAMING:**
 - **BDE/REGTs ARE DOING CENTRALIZED PLANNING AND CONTROL FOR ALL MISSIONS**
 - **BDEs/REGTs DO NOT IDENTIFY CAS CONTRIBUTION NEEDED TO SET THE DESIRED COMBAT RATIOS FOR THE CLOSE FIGHTS**
 - **BDEs/REGTs DO NOT IDENTIFY THE FORMATION/FUNCTION FOR CAS TO ENGAGE**
- * **BDE/REGTs DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE INHERENT RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH “INDIRECT CONTROL” IN THE CLOSE FIGHT**



CLOSE CAS



HOW CAN WE FIX IT:

- * **TARGET ENEMY BY FORM/FUNCTION. RECOGNIZE THAT YOU WILL NOT ALWAYS FIND/DEFEAT ENEMY ELEMENTS IN THE DEEP BATTLE.**
- * **RESOURCE TFs TO UTILIZE CAS TO OBTAIN FAVORABLE COMBAT RATIOS**
 - **TRAIN TF/SQDN TO EMPLOY IMMEDIATE CAS.**
 - **TF/SQDN MUST HAVE A BATTLE DRILL TO RAPIDLY / CLEARLY MARK THE FLOT (DAY AND NIGHT).**
 - **NEED A MARKING ROUND ON THE TARGET.**
 - **MUST HAVE ETAC IN POSITION TO SEE BOTH AIRCRAFT AND TARGET AND PROVIDE DIRECT CONTROL**
 - **BDE/TF WORK RAPIDLY TOGETHER TO DECONFLICT ALL OTHER AIRCRAFT AND FIRES (ARTILLERY, MORTARS, DIRECT FIRE WEAPONS, HELICOPTERS)**



SUPPRESSION OF ENEMY AIR DEFENSE (SEAD)



WHAT WE SEE:

- * RARELY PROVIDE SEAD IN A TIMELY FASHION**
- * SEAD IS INEFFECTIVE WHEN EXECUTED**
- * UNITS DO NOT “TAG” CALL FOR FIRES AS “SEAD”,
THUS IT GETS INTO THE SYSTEM AND BECOMES A
ROUTINE FIRE MISSION DURING DISSEMINATION**
- * SEAD IS USUALLY REACTIVE (OPPORTUNE)
VERSES PREPLANNED/PROGRAMMED
(LOCALIZED).**
- * UNITS FIRE ONLY ON AN ENEMY POSITION
VICINITY OF THE CAS TARGET AND CALL IT SEAD**



SUPPRESSION OF ENEMY AIR DEFENSE (SEAD)



WHY DOES THIS OCCUR:

- * IDENTIFICATION OF ENEMY AIR DEFENSE IS NOT IDENTIFIED AS PIR**
- * ADA IS IDENTIFIED AS HPT, BUT WE DO NOT ACCURATELY RESOURCE TO SHOOT IT**
- * STAFF TARGETING DOESN'T REACT OR ARE TOO SLOW TO ACT ON REPORTED ADA SYSTEMS**
- * SEAD IS NOT PLANNED AS A CRITICAL FIRE SUPPORT TASK(CFST) IN THE UNIT SCHEME OF FIRES**
- * WE SHOOT IT TECHNICALLY INCORRECT - THE MISSION DOESN'T ACHIEVE ITS REQUIRED SUPPRESSIVE EFFECTS (i.e. UNTIMELY, INSUFFICIENT VOLUME ETC.)**



SUPPRESSION OF ENEMY AIR DEFENSE (SEAD)



- **HOW TO FIX SEAD:**
 - * **REQUIREMENT IS DETERMINED BY METT-T**
 - * **MAKE A COMMITMENT TO KILL (i.e... RESOURCE AS A HPTs) ALL ENEMY AIR DEFENSE ASSETS AS THEY ARE LOCATED ON THE BATTLEFIELD. DON'T WAIT...IT MAY RELOCATE (DOES IT MEET TARGET SELECTION STANDARD (TSS)).**
 - * **ALSO CONSIDER EXECUTING SEAD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AIR STRIKE TO SUPPRESS SA-14, ZSU, etc., USING:**
 - **SIMULTANEOUS ENGAGEMENT / ALTITUDE DECONFLICTION**
 - **TIME SEPARATION**



THE 3D BATTLEFIELD



DEEP CAS

- REQUIRES AIR OBSERVERS (USUALLY AIR FAC) FOR DIRECT CONTROL, BDEs MUST BE SITUATIONALLY AWARE OF ADJACENT/HIGHER ELEMENTS TO EXECUTE INDIRECT CONTROL.
- SEAD IS DIFFICULT TO COORD. BECAUSE IT IS PROBABLY DEEP INTO DIV ZONE AS WELL.
- CAS UNDER BDE C2.
- ALTITUDE SEPARATION CONSTRAINTS ARE BASED ON MAX ORD FOR MLRS; FOR CANNON "ORD 1" FOR SIMO TGT ATTACKS OR MAX ORD FOR A/C CROSSING GTLs.

MID CAS

- REQUIRES AIR OBSERVER (USUALLY AIR FAC) FOR DIRECT CONTROL, INDIRECT CONTROL IS MODERATE RISK.
- MUST DECONFLICT AIR WITH ARTY (TIME, SPACE, OR ALTITUDE).
- CAS USUALLY UNDER BDE/REGT C2
- ALTITUDE SEPARATION CONSTRAINTS ARE BASED ON "ORD 1" FOR A SIMO TGT ATTACK OR MAX ORD FOR A/C CROSSING OVER GTLs.
- NEED MARKING ROUND FOR INDIRECT CONTROL.
- SEAD IS WELL WITHIN BDE/REGT's ABILITY TO PROVIDE.

CLOSE CAS

- FOCUS ON USING GROUND OBSERVER (ETAC) TO DIRECT CONTROL CAS, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT.
- CAS USUALLY UNDER TF/SQDN C2, THE CLOSE FIGHT.
- FOR ETAC TO CONFIRM A/C ORIENTATION HE MUST SEE AIRCRAFT (USUALLY 6000FT OR LOWER) AND TARGET.
- AIRCRAFT MUST BE 5000FT OR HIGHER TO AVOID RICOCHETS OF A DIRECT FIRE BATTLE (HEAVY MANEUVER).
- MUST DECONFLICT AIR WITH ARTY AND MORTARS (TIME, SPACE, OR ALTITUDE).
- BDE/REGT/TFs CAN SEAD
- NEED MARKING ROUNDS TO ASSIST WITH ANTI-FRAT, HISTORICALLY TO DRAMATICALLY INCREASE ACCURACY.

5000ft AGL

3000FT AGL
"ORD 1" OR
ABOVE MAX
ORDINATE

**TANK/M2
SURFACE DANGER
AND RICOCHET
ZONE**

30000M (MLRS/PALADIN) 18000M (CANNON/MLRS)

7500M (CANNON & MORTARS)



CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE CLOSE AIR SUPPORT



- **AIR SUPERIORITY**
- **SUPPRESSION OF ENEMY AIR DEFENSE**
- **TARGET MARKING**
- **FAVORABLE WEATHER**
- **PROMPT RESPONSE**
- **AIRCREWS AND TERMINAL CONTROLLER SKILL**
- **APPROPRIATE ORDNANCE**
- **COMMUNICATIONS**
- **COMMAND AND CONTROL**
- **TACP MUST TAKE CHARGE**

J PUB 3-09.3



CAS EXECUTION REQUIRED STAFF ACTIONS



COMMANDER:

- * **PROVIDE CLEAR INTENT (GIVE DEFINITIVE GUIDANCE OF WHAT TO KILL, IN PRIORITY). ONCE IN BATTLE AUTHORIZE YOUR STAFF TO EXECUTE HPTs WITH LITTLE GUIDANCE.**

XO:

- * **UNDERSTAND CDRs INTENT AND LEAN FORWARD TO DIRECT EXECUTION THROUGH STAFF HUDDLES (TRAIN YOUR STAFF TO EXECUTE IMMEDIATE CAS, PRE-PLANNED IS A LUXURY)**

S2:

- * **IDENTIFY AND CONTINUOUSLY TRACK CAS TARGETS.**
- * **LOCATE ADA FOR TARGETING, ESPECIALLY 30 MINUTES OUT FROM AIR STRIKES.**
- * **NON-LETHAL SEAD THE IEWSO (ALT)**



CAS EXECUTION REQUIRED STAFF ACTIONS



S3 / S3 AIR:

- * **SUBMIT CAS REQUESTS PER DOCTRINE AND UNIT SOPs.**
- * **UNDERSTAND HOW TO REFINE CAS TARGETING INFORMATION WITHIN THE DIVISION/BRIGADE.**
- * **FINAL APPROVAL FOR FSCMs (ACAs, AIR BPs, AIR CORRIDORS, ARTILLERY/MORTAR PAs, MANEUVER ZONES, etc...)**
- * **PRIORITIZE EXECUTION OF THE CLOSE BATTLE BY LOCATING OBSERVERS / ETACs NEAR TARGET AREAs... KEEP TARGET AREAs CLEAR!**

FSO:

- * **RAPIDLY EXECUTE LETHAL SEAD (OPPORTUNE AND LOCAL).**
- * **ALWAYS PROVIDE MARKING ROUNDS, ESPECIALLY CLOSE.**
- * **COORD ALT/TIME/LAT SEPARATION WITH ALO DURING MISSION EXECUTION AS WELL AS PLANNING PHASE.**
- * **INCLUDE CAS IN SCHEME OF FIRES**



CAS EXECUTION REQUIRED STAFF ACTIONS



ALO:

- * PLAN, COORDINATE, EXECUTE CAS AGAINST BCT HPTs
- * PREP 9-LINE MESSAGES FOR EAs AND OBJECTIVESs
- * COORDINATE WITH GROUND AND AIR FACs
- * DIRECT ALOs/ETACs TO DEVELOP DETAILED PLANS FOR EAs AND OBJECTIVESs
- * CONFIRM COMMUNICATION LINKS
- * REFINE TRIGGERS
- * COLLECT PILOT INTEL
- * WORK 1972, FOCUS ORDNANCE, EXPECTED TIME WINDOW, TYPE OF AIRCRAFT PREFERRED
- * TRAIN TO EXECUTE IMMEDIATE CAS AS THE NORM



CAS EXECUTION REQUIRED STAFF ACTIONS



ADO:

- * ALERT SHOLAR OF BLUE AIR
- * PLOT FRIENDLY ADA LOCATIONS
- * ACKNOWLEDGE AIRCRAFT TRAFFIC REPORTING
- * MODIFY ADW/WCS, NOTIFY STAFF WHEN ADA SYSTEMS ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHANGES

UNIT:

- * PLAN TO USE CAS, EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN INITIAL ALLOCATION
- * BUILD ALO/ETAC OBSERVER PLAN FROM THE CLOSE FIGHT OUT (DIRECT/INDIRECT CONTROL)
- * MARK FLOT ON COMMAND