Issue: Battery RTF Times

Discussion: A recent trend at the National Training Center has been excessive Ready To Fire (RTF) times at the battery level. The primary reason is a result of an incomplete, desynchronized FDC occupation crew drill. The second reason is FDC's simply do not know what RTF means. As a result, we are unable to provide fires to the maneuver.

Recommendation: Artillery batteries must develop a crew drill that covers all phases of the occupation sequence that result in their ability to be RTF. Additionally, the section must follow the battle drill/SOP down to the lowest level; each member of the section must know what specific tasks must be completed upon occupation in order to allow the FDO/FDNCO to supervise and verify the occupation.

Tasks that can be accomplished prior to the FDC occupying the new position that facilitate a more rapid RTF time include: the FDC advanced party personnel sending back initial weapon data to the FDC and having the Gunnery Sergeant computing initial XO's minimum QE. Some common pitfalls that result in excessive RTF times include: howitzer locations not passing rapidly from the Gunnery Sergeant to the FDC, howitzer locations input into the BCS not being verified by the FDO/FDNCO, incorrectly computing site, or conducting gunnery position improvement tasks such as computing TGPC's prior to achieving two independent means of computation.

It is also imperative that the FDO or FDNCO be able to recognize what troubleshooting measures must be used in order to identify a deficiency. For example, if the BCS range and chart range do not bump, then every automated and manual entry that affects range must be checked.

The FDC occupation crew drill should be rehearsed as part of the unit's preparation for combat. This rehearsal is commonly overlooked and as a result, the maneuver pays a steep price on the battlefield. The following chart is an example of an FDC RTF crew drill and can be tailored to meet unit standards/requirements.

DRILL TASKS	CHECKS
INITIALIZE BCS FOR FORWARD POSITION ENROUTE – DATA SENT FM VOICE BY AP IF TIME PERMITS:	-FDO/FDNCO VERIFIES ENTRIES
FDC STOPS IN POSITION (**TIME STARTS)**	-FDNCO VERIFIES POSITION SUITABLE; OE-254 IS PROPERLY POSITIONED.
COLLECT DATA SHEET/HTU/BUCS FROM AP MAN	-FDO VERIFIES ORSTA VS MAPSPOT. CHECKS

	M17 FOR GUN DISTRIBUTION
ESTABLISH COMMO W/GUNS, FO'S, BN (USE RADIO INTERNAL NET IF WIRE INOP)	-FDNCO CHECKS OE-254 ON PRIORITY NET. SET UP 2D OE-254 IF REQUIRED
INITIALIZE BCS (IF NOT DONE EN ROUTE)	-FDO/FDNCO VERIFIES ENTRIES
RECORD LAY DF AS GUNS ARE LAID AND UPDATE BCS AS REQUIRED. VERIFY XO MIN QE.	-FDO VERIFIES PIECE SITE TO CREST/PTC RANGE AS IN ORDER DISPLACEMENT/CHECK MVV VS BUMPER NUMBER
LAY CHART (ADD OBSERVERS, KNPT'S, RADAR AS TIME PERMITS)	-FDO VERIFY LAY OF CHART
CONDUCT BCS TO CHART TO BUCS/HTU CHECK	-VERIFY 15 MIL/30 METER, METUSE, BCS RESIDUALS, POWER TEMP, AZ OF FIRE, REG FILE
ANNOUNCE "FDC IN ORDER" (**TIME STOPS**)	-STANDARD > 8 MINUTES
SEND READY X TO BN	-VERIFY UPDATE DATA/BN RECEIPT
CONDUCT POSITION IMPROVEMENT (TGPCs, MIN QE's FOR EACH CHARGE, ECT)	- FDO/FDNCO VERIFY DATA

NOTE: FIRING CAPABILITY WILL BE ESTABLISHED WITH BEST AVAILABLE DATA AND WILL BE IMPROVED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.