

## RP0503 - Squad Size Attacks

### TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Given a tactical scenario, given an oral five-paragraph operations order issued by the squad leader, individual combat equipment, and prescribed weapon with ammunition, participate in squad-size attacks, to support mission requirements. (RP00.05.09)

### ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the purpose of offensive combat, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09a)
2. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the three phases of offensive combat, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09b)
3. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the advantages of a daylight attack, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09c)
4. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the disadvantages of a daylight attack, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09d)
5. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the purpose of a night attack, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09e)
6. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the three phases of a night attack, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09f)
7. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the advantages of a night attack, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09g)
8. Without the aid of references, given a list, identify the disadvantages of a night attack per the student handout. (RP00.05.09h)
9. Given a tactical scenario in a simulated combat environment and individual combat equipment, participate in offensive combat operations, per the student handout. (RP00.05.09i)

### 1. PURPOSE OF OFFENSIVE COMBAT

To destroy the enemy and their will to fight.

### 2. TYPES OF ATTACKS

**Frontal Attack** - moving directly forward on line to the enemy's position after gaining fire superiority.

Advantages - it is simple and requires little time and coordination.

Disadvantages - offers little chance of surprise and may move into the enemy's prepared strong points and fields of fire that may cause more casualties.

**Single Envelopment** - under cover of the base of fire, the maneuvering element attacks against the flanks (left or right) of the enemy.

Advantages - splits the enemy's defensive fire and surprise is easier to attain.

Disadvantages - hard to control and is vulnerable during the attack.

### 3. DAYLIGHT ATTACK

Advantages

- The attacker has the initiative
- The attacker has better control of personnel

**Disadvantages**

- The attacker may sustain heavy casualties due to lack of surprise
- The attacker must rely on supporting arms to neutralize the enemy and his barriers

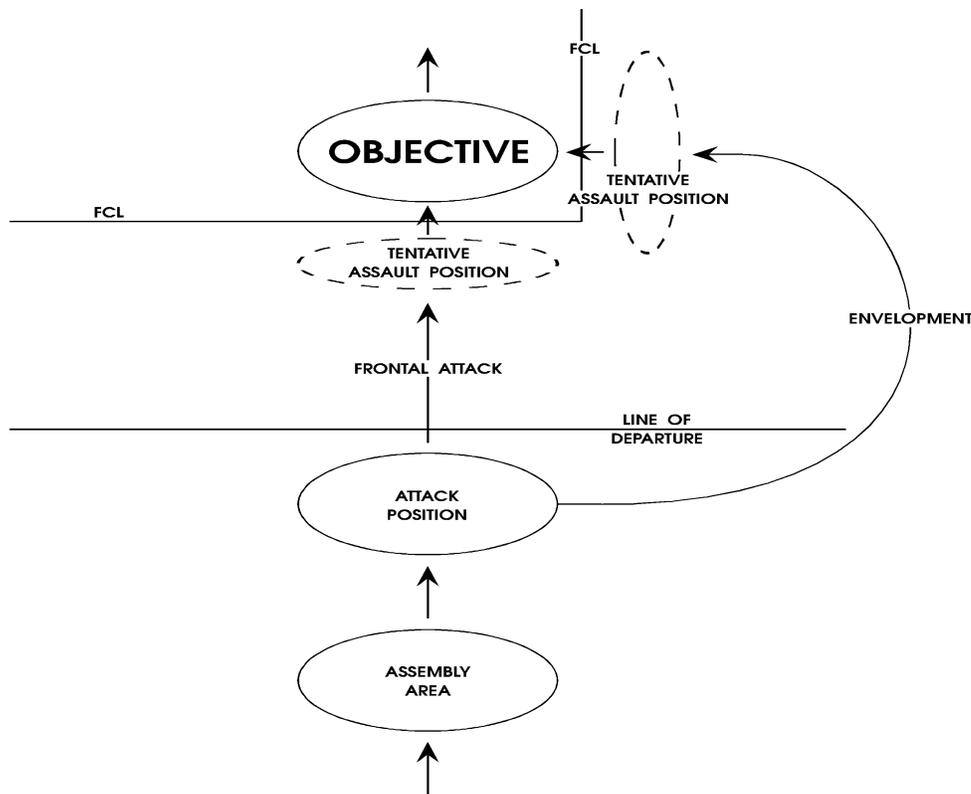
**Phases of Daylight Offensive Combat** - there are three phases of offensive combat; Preparation Phase, Conduct Phase, and Exploitation Phase.

**Preparation Phase** - begins with receipt of a warning order. The preparation phase ends when the attacking unit crosses the line of departure (LOD) or enemy contact is made.

**Movement To The Assembly Area**

*Route Column* - probability of contact with the enemy is remote. Units within the column are administratively grouped for ease of control and speed of movement.

*Tactical Column* - probability of enemy contact has changed to possible. This column provides all around security when employed. The members are more dispersed than in the route column.



**Figure 1. Daylight Offensive Combat**

Final Preparation In The Assembly Area (see figure 1)

Assembly Area - an area where units assemble prior to further tactical action.

Assembly areas should provide cover, concealment, and security from a ground or air attack. Steps to accomplish in the assembly area are:

- Conduct a reconnaissance of the objective
- Rehearse the attack
- Distribute ammunition
- Check weapons, equipment, and personnel for readiness
- Extra equipment is left behind
- Personnel should rest as much as possible
- Communication equipment should be checked and call signs coordinated
- BAMCIS

#### Movement to the Line of Departure (LOD)

Approach March - the squad leaves the assembly area and continues the movement toward the enemy in the approach march formation. The approach march formation is used when contact is imminent.

Attack Position - is the last covered and concealed position used to make any changes to the attack plan. The attacking unit deploys into its initial assault formation in the attack position.

**Conduct Phase** - begins when the attacking unit crosses the LOD or the attacking unit is forced to fire on the enemy in order to advance. The conduct phase ends when the attacking unit has secured the objective.

#### Movement from the LOD to the Assault Position - Individual and Unit Movement

Fire and Maneuver - using a base of fire while the other element maneuvers to attack from the flank. The base of fire draws the attention away from the maneuvering element and keeps the enemies' heads down by putting the maximum amount of well-aimed rounds on the objective.

Fire and Movement - once the maneuver element meets enemy opposition and can no longer advance under the cover of the base of fire, it employs fire and movement to continue its forward movement to a position from which it can assault the enemy's position. In the squad, fire and movement consist of individuals or fire teams providing covering fire while other individuals or fire teams advance toward the enemy or assault the enemy position.

#### Movement from the Assault Position through the Objection

Use Of Supporting Arms - when the attacking unit crosses the LOD and is in the attack, it calls for its supporting arms. Examples of supporting arms could be artillery, mortars, naval gunfire, attack helicopters, or fixed wing aircraft. With the coordinated use of supporting arms, the enemy will not be able to shoot back. This allows the attacking unit to advance up to the enemy's position.

Assault Position - the assault position is tentatively established during the squad leader's planning and reconnaissance. It is the position between the LOD and the objective from which the assault on the enemy position is launched.

Final Coordination Line (FCL) - used to coordinate the ceasing or shifting of supporting fire and movement into the final formations just prior to the assault. It is located as close as possible to the objective.

Objective - the actual piece of terrain the enemy is holding. The mission of the attacking unit is to locate, close in, and destroy the enemy on the objective.

### **Exploitation Phase**

Pursuit by fire - firing on the withdrawing enemy until they are no longer visible or are beyond effective range.

Continuation of the attack - to maintain pressure on the retreating enemy and destroy their combat power.

Consolidation - a rapid organization of a hasty defense to hold the objective just seized during enemy counter attacks

- Re-distribute ammunition
- Place firepower to defend objective
- Treat casualties
- Enemy Prisoners of War (EPWs) are disarmed, searched, and guarded

Reorganization - when immediate threat no longer exists, re-organization commences. Re-organization is given special emphasis upon seizure of the objective.

- Make spot assignments
- Re-distribute ammunition
- Remove casualties
- EPWs are delivered to platoon commanders

## 4. **THE NIGHT ATTACK**

**Purpose** - gain surprise, maintain pressure, and exploit a success in the continuation of the daylight attack to avoid heavy losses by using the concealment of darkness.

### **Characteristics**

- A decrease in the ability to place aimed fire on the enemy
- Difficulty of movement
- The attacker having the psychological advantage in that it magnifies the defenders' apprehensions and the fear of the unknown. Planning and preparation can overcome the attacker's difficulties.

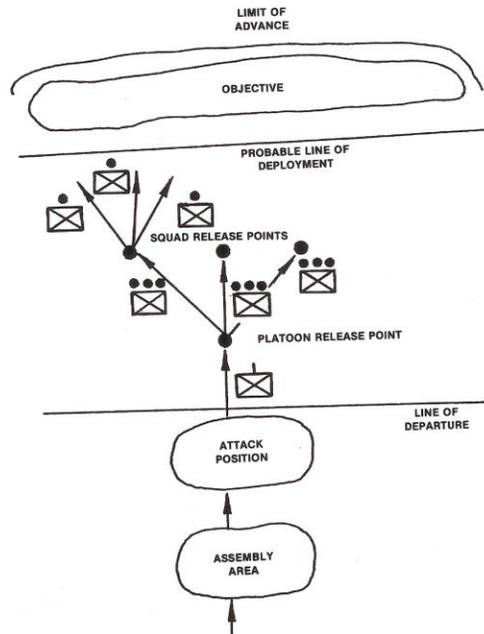
### **Advantages/Disadvantages**

#### Advantages

- Individuals are concealed by darkness
- Units can avoid heavy losses because of concealment
- Units can gain surprise on the enemy

#### Disadvantages

- Time consuming
- Easy to lose individuals during the movement
- Confusion sets in



**Figure 2. Tactical Control Measures**

**Tactical Control Measures** - used for control and coordination of military operations, usually a prominent terrain feature extending across the zone of action. (See figure 2).

**Assembly Area** - may be closer to the LOD than for a daylight attack.

**Attack Position** - need not offer as much concealment as in daylight and should be easy to move into and out of at night.

**Line of Departure** - a line established to coordinate attacking units when beginning the attack.

**Objective** - may be enemy reserves, artillery units, or command and logistic installations. May also seize key terrain or establish roadblocks.

**Release Points** - clearly defined points on a route where units are released to the control of their respective leaders.

**Probable Line of Deployment (PLD)** - an easily recognized line selected on the ground where attacking units deploy in line formation prior to beginning a night attack.

**Limit of Advance (LOA)** - designated beyond the objective to stop the advance of attacking units. It should be recognizable in the dark (stream, road, edge of woods) and far enough beyond the objective to allow security elements space to operate.

**Phases of A Night Attack** - there are three phases of a night attack; Preparation Phase, Conduct Phase, Consolidation and Reorganization Phase.

**Preparation Phase** - is generally the same as a daylight attack, however, special emphasis is placed on:

Reconnaissance by Squad and Fire Team Leaders - to locate assigned contour features for night operations, the reconnaissance should take place in three different conditions of visibility:

- Daytime
- Dusk
- Night-time

Rehearsal - practice during the day and night continuously until each member can perform their own job, as well as every member's job without a mistake.

Equipment - carry only the equipment absolutely necessary for the attack.

Camouflage - individual and equipment must be covered completely so that no shiny objects give away your position.

Test Fire Weapons - avoid the test firing of weapons and unnecessary movement or do this in a way that will not prematurely disclose the forthcoming attack.

Night Vision - ensure that the night vision of the members of the attacking force is not destroyed prior to the attack. Ensure that you inform members to hit the ground when a flare goes off, close one eye and leave one open in order to see the enemy if they decide to attack. Do not look directly into the light of the flare.

**Conduct Phase** - this phase begins when the attacking unit crosses the LOD and is over when the unit hits the LOA.

Movement to Probable Line of Departure

- Security is sent out to destroy the enemy's listening post and security patrols. This will enable the attacking unit to move undetected to the objective.
- Platoons move in column formation from the assembly area to the platoon release point where they meet their guides from security patrols and move to squad release points.
- Once the unit crosses the LOD, movement to the PLD is continuous and slow enough to permit silent movement.
- If a flare goes off during the movement forward all hands hit the ground. If the flare goes off during the attack, attacking units ignores the flare and continues the attack.
- On arrival at the squad release point, the rifle squads are released from the platoon column formation to deploy online at the PLD.
- On command, the squad moves forward silently from the PLD maintaining the squad line formation and guiding on the base squad.
- Once the enemy has discovered the attack and begins to fire, then, and only then is the assault commenced. You assault through the enemy objective, short of the LOA.

**Consolidation and Reorganization Phase** (same as daylight attack)

Consolidation - a rapid organization of a hasty defense to hold the objective just seized during enemy counter attack. Things to be done in this phase include:

- Re-distribute ammunition
- Place firepower to defend objective
- Treat casualties

- EPWs are disarmed, searched, and guarded

Re-organization - when immediate threat no longer exists, re-organization commences. Reorganization is given special emphasis upon seizure of the objective.

- Make spot assignments for casualties
- Re-distribute ammunition
- Remove casualties
- EPWs are delivered to platoon commanders

**REFERENCE: Marine Rifle Squad, MCRP 3-11.2, Ch 4**