

In a Dark Wood

FM 04-001: Battlefield Operations



FM 04-001: Battlefield Operations, version 3
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Operational Procedures

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Operational Procedures

Operational Procedures uses play examples to describe in detail the rules and mechanisms of the C3 Series.

The reader should keep in mind that this chapter is not a strategy guide, nor it describes any best practice for commanding units. Some of the actions explained here, despite being technically correct, are only intended to provide a procedural example and could lead to unpleasant results if used on the battlefield.

1. MOVEMENT

The exact movement cost for a hex considers the unit's Movement Type (Foot, Mechanized, or Motorized), determined by its equipment, and its Movement Mode (Column, Tactical, or Deployed), determined by its Posture. Tactical Movement Mode will probably be the most used, giving a unit a good mobility and allowing the use of roads.

A unit's Movement Mode determines which terrain it will be able to avoid or forced to traverse: A hex can be only a minor nuisance for a unit using Column Mode, and a major obstacle for a unit advancing in Deployed Mode.

1.1 Column Movement

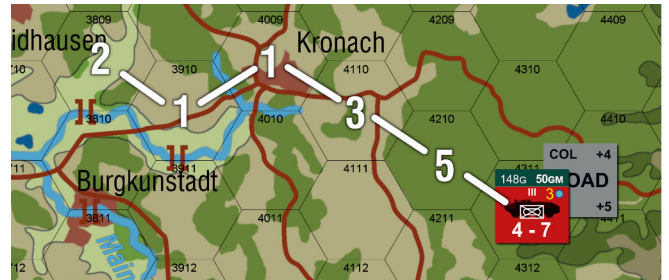
The 148th Guards Regiment, 50th Guards Motorized Rifle Division starts in hex 4311, in Road Posture. It is a Mechanized unit, as indicated by the unit type symbol, and it is moving in Column Mode as indicated by its Posture marker.

The unit uses the **Mechanized, Column** column on the Movement Table. As it is moving in Column Mode, the unit pays for the most favourable Terrain Type, for the most favourable Terrain Feature, and for any Obstacle crossed (see 8.2, Calculating Movement Costs).

Hex 4210 is completely covered by Forest Terrain Feature. The underlying Terrain Type can be identified by the forest colour and by the elevation lines, and in this case is Hill 2. The total cost is 5 Movement Points, as follows:

- 3 MPs for the Terrain Type (Hill 2). As it is the only Terrain Type in the hex, a more favourable one cannot be chosen.

- 2 MPs for the Forest Terrain Feature, that cannot be ignored as it covers completely the hex.
- No Obstacle is crossed, and no extra MPs are expended.



Hex 4110 contains Hill 2 Terrain Type, is partially covered by Forest Terrain Feature, and contains a Minor Road. The total cost is 3 MPs:

- 3 MPs for the most favourable Terrain Type (Hill 2).
- No MPs for the Forest Terrain Feature, as the unit is moving in Column Mode and any Terrain Feature not completely covering the hex is ignored (see 8.2, point 4).
- The Road cannot be used as the unit did not enter the hex from a Road hexside (see 8.3, Road Movement).

Hex 4009 contains Hill 2 and Town Terrain Types, is partially covered by Forest Terrain Feature, and contains a Minor Road. The total cost is 1 MP, as follows:

- The unit is entering the hex from a Road hexside, so it can use Road Movement and expend 1 MP. This decision can be changed for each hex moved, and the unit could revert to non-road movement at any time (see 8.3, Road Movement).
- No additional MPs for Terrain Type and Terrain Feature, as they are both ignored when using Road Movement.

The Regiment continues moving along the Road into hex 3910, and must cross an Obstacle, that is the bridged minor river:

- The unit may continue using the Minor Road as the hexside crossed contains a Road, for a cost of 1 MP.
- No MPs for the Bridged Minor River, as the unit is Column Mode.

Hex 3809 contains Hill 1 and Hill 2 Terrain Types, and is partially covered by Forest Terrain Feature. The total cost is 2 MPs as follows:

- Road Movement cannot be used as the Regiment is entering from a non-Road hexside.
- 2 MPs for the most favourable Terrain Type. (Hill 1).
- No MPs for the Forest, as the unit is in Column Mode and any Terrain Feature not completely covering the hex is ignored.

1.2 Tactical Movement

202nd Guards Regiment, 6th Guards Tank Division starts in hex 4011, in March Assault Posture (MASL). It is a Mechanized unit, as indicated by the unit type symbol, and it is moving in Tactical Mode as indicated on the Postures Chart.

The unit uses the **Mechanized, Tactical** column on the Movement Table. As it is moving in Tactical Mode, the unit pays for the least favourable Terrain Type, the least favourable Terrain Feature and for any Obstacle crossed (see 8.2, Calculating Movement Costs).

Hex 3911 contains Hill 1 and Hill 2 Terrain Types, and is partly covered by Forest Terrain Feature. The total cost is 5 Movement Points, as follows:

- 3 MPs for the least favourable Terrain Type (Hill 2).
- 2 MPs for the least favourable Terrain Feature (Forest).
- The Road cannot be used as the unit did not enter the hex from a Road hexside.



Hex 3810 contains Hill 1, Hill 2, and Town Terrain Types, is partially covered by Forest Terrain Feature, and has two Roads. The total cost is 2 MPs, as follows:

- The Regiment is entering the hex from a Road hexside, so it can use Road Movement and expend 2 MPs. This decision can be changed for each hex moved, and the unit could revert to non-road movement at any time (see 8.3, Road Movement).
- No additional MPs for Terrain Type or Feature, as they are ignored when using Road Movement.

Hex 3711 contains Hill 1 and Hill 2 Terrain Types, Forest Terrain Feature, and a Minor Road. A Bridged Minor River Obstacle must also be crossed, and 3rd Guards Battalion is already in the hex, in Recon Posture. The total cost is 5 MPs, as follows:

- 2 MPs for the Minor Road, again using Road Movement and ignoring Terrain Types and Terrain Features.
- 1 MP for the Bridged Minor River Obstacle.
- As the Regiment is using the Minor Road, 2 extra MPs are expended for the traffic jam created by another unit in Tactical Movement Mode in the hex.

1.3 Deployed Movement

The 148th Guards Regiment, 50th Motorized Rifle Division starts in hex 2507, in Assault Posture (ASL). It is a Mechanized unit, as indicated by the unit type symbol, and it is moving in Deployed Mode as indicated by the Postures Table.



The unit uses the **Mechanized, Deployed** column on the Movement Table. As it is moving in Deployed Mode, the unit pays for the least favourable Terrain Type, the least favourable Terrain Feature and for any Obstacle crossed (see 8.2, Calculating Movement Costs).

Hex 2406 contains Hill 1 and Hill 2 Terrain Type, and is partly covered by Forest Terrain Feature. The total cost is 7 Movement Points, as follows:

- The unit cannot use Road Movement as it is moving in Deployed Mode (see 8.3).
- 4 MPs for the least favourable Terrain Type (Hill 2).
- 3 MPs for the least favourable Terrain Feature (Forest).

Hex 2307 contains Hill 1 Terrain Type, some Roads, and It is also behind a Major River crossed by a Permanent Bridge. The total cost is 8 MPs, as follows:

- 3 MPs for the least favourable Terrain Type (Hill 1).
- 3 MPs for the least favourable Terrain Feature (Forest).
- 2 MPs for crossing the Permanent Bridge Obstacle.

This would bring the total expended to 15 MPs, so the Regiment must stop in hex 2406 or execute a Forced March to increase its movement from 12 to 15 MPs (see 8.5).

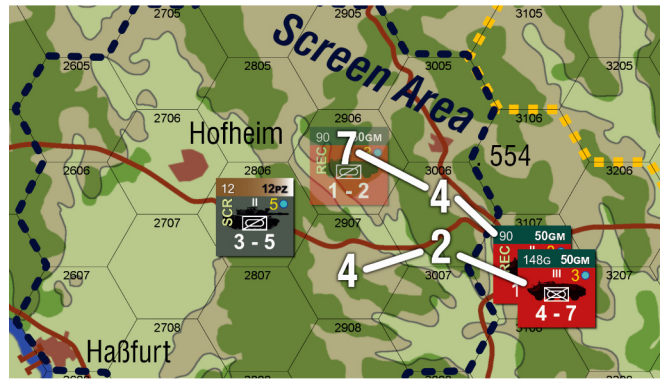
1.4 Enemy Screening

Two Soviet units are approaching a Screen Area covered by West German 12th Battalion (see 6.3.1, Screen Posture).

Soviet 90th Reconnaissance Battalion moves first, in order to open a corridor in the enemy screening. The unit moves in Tactical Mode as follows:

- 4 MPs for hex 3006: 2 for Road, 2 for enemy screening

- 7 MPs for hex 2906: 3 for Hill 2, 2 for Forest, 2 for enemy screen.



Soviet 148th Guards Regiment moves second, in Tactical Mode, as follows:

- 2 MPs for hex 3006, using Road Movement. The enemy screen is neutralised by the 90th Recon battalion in hex 2906, as it is adjacent to the moving unit and nearer to the enemy unit exerting the Screen Area.
- 4 MPs for hex 2907: 2 for Road, 2 for enemy screen. The enemy screen is no more neutralised, as the friendly Recon battalion is not nearer to the unit exerting the screen than the moving unit.
- Having spent a total of 6 MPs, the Soviet regiment could now assault the enemy position without executing a Forced March.

2. ORDERS

An Order has three distinct phases, each with a different effect: The Issue Phase, the Execution Phase, and the Completion Phase.

During the Issue Phase, the order is conceptualised, written, and transmitted to the subordinate units. In this phase the units are not directly affected by it, but the workload at staff level impacts the number of Command Points available until the order has been issued. For complex orders like moving a whole Soviet Army, this impact could hamper the capability to react quickly to events unfolding at the same time.

During the Execution Phase, the affected units begin taking all the requested actions, including preparing more detailed orders to their subordinate units such as single companies. In this phase the units must reorganise their deployment and coordinate with nearby forces, making them more vulnerable to enemy action.

When the Order is completed, the affected units are finally deployed in the requested Posture.

2.1 Issue an Order

NATO decides to commit West German 36 Panzer Brigade, currently in reserve, to bolster defence in a section of the front.

The brigade is composed by four combat battalions and one artillery battalion, plus one artillery battalion from 12 Panzer divisional artillery as attached unit (see 14.2, Formation and Attached Units). All the units are currently in **Tactical** Posture.

The four combat battalions will change to **Defense** or **Active Defense** Posture (The exact posture can be decided later, during the Execution Phase), while the self-propelled artillery will deploy in **Shoot&Scoop** Posture to give the maximum possible support (see 17, Artillery).



Considering the above, NATO decides to issue a **Brigade Defense** order. The order will allow the subordinate units to assume the desired Posture, as specified in the "Valid Postures" column of the Orders Chart. The order costs 2 Command Points and takes 2 turns to be issued under optimal conditions (see

Orders Chart).

During the friendly Order Issue Phase of turn D0 H09, NATO checks the Command Chain required to issue the order. The involved HQs are:

- 36 Panzer Brigade, as Issuing HQ.
- 12 Panzer Division, as Parent HQ of 36 Panzer Brigade.
- US VII Corps, as Top HQ of 36 Panzer Brigade.



The status of the Command Chain must now be verified, so NATO checks if all the HQs involved are within the Command Range of their Parent HQ.



Unfortunately, 36Pz Brigade HQ is Out of Command, as 12Pz Division HQ is in Moving Posture and has therefore its Command Range reduced to four. This means that the Command Chain is **Invalid** and the Issue Time for the order is increased by one, bringing it to 3 Turns.

The Order being issued is now placed on the Time Track. NATO takes a Brigade Defense Order Marker, the 36Pz Bde HQ Chit, and place them face-down three turns ahead, in the H18 slot.



As a last step, the cost in Command Points for the order must be paid. NATO decreases both the Maximum and Current Command Points of US VII Corps (the Top HQ) by two.

The reduction in Maximum Command Points will remain in effect until the order reaches the Execution Phase at D0 H18. Should the Corps need more Command Points before that time, the order could be cancelled (see 14.8, Cancel an Order).

2.2 Reveal an Order

During the friendly Order Reveal Phase of Turn D0 H18, the Brigade Defend order for West German 36Pz Brigade is revealed. NATO takes the Order and HQ Chits from the Time Track, turns them face-up, and increases the Maximum Command Points for US VII Corps by two (the same number they were decreased when the order has been issued, see 2.1 above).

2.3 Execute an Order

During the friendly Order Execution Phase, NATO defines which units will execute the order. The involved units must be under command of 36Pz Brigade, under command of an HQ subordinate to 36Pz Brigade, or attached to the 36Pz Brigade (see 14.2, Formation and Attached Units).

Please note that while the order was being issued, the units that will execute it were free to act within their current posture limitations, so they moved to the positions to defend.



Each executing unit will be able to change its current Posture to

one of the postures allowed by the Order (see "Valid Postures" column on the Orders Chart). The change is not immediate, and under optimal conditions takes a number of turns equal to the order's Deploy Time. An Invalid Command Chain, Attrition on the HQs involved, and enemy attacks may increase the Deploy Time.

The Command Chain is now defined. Differently from the check during the Order Issue Phase, the units executing the order are also involved, giving the following Command Chain:

- The unit executing the order.
- 36 Panzer Brigade, as Issuing HQ.
- 12 Panzer Division, as Parent HQ of 36 Panzer Brigade.
- US VII Corps, as Top HQ of 36 Panzer Brigade.



The status of the Command Chain must now be verified for each unit executing the order, and each unit could have a different status (Valid, Invalid, or Broken).



In this case, all the involved HQs and units are within the Command Range of their Parent HQ.

The only problem is with 362 PanzerGrenadier Battalion, that has been bombed by enemy artillery and is now Half-Engaged. Consequently, its Deploy Time will be increased by one Turn.

NATO now places under each unit executing the command:

- A Posture marker, identifying the Posture that the unit is going to assume. In most cases, the desired Posture is printed on the back of the counter and no marker is needed.
- A Time marker, identifying the Turn in which the deployment into the new Posture will complete. For most units this will be D0 H21 (H18 plus one Turn, the Deploy Time of the order); The only exception is 362/36/12Pz, that will complete its deployment at D1 H00 due to its Half-Engaged status.



Please note that units having a Time Marker are considered in Posture Transition. This severely limits their capabilities and combat value (see 6.2, Posture Transition).

2.4 Complete an Order

At the beginning of the friendly Order Execution Phase of Turn D0 H21, most of West German 36 Panzer Brigade completes deploying into the ordered Posture.

NATO removes the H21 Time Marker from the affected units. The units are no longer considered in Transition and can move and fight normally, within the limits dictated by their Posture.

2.5 Authorized Posture Change

An Authorized Posture Change allows a unit to change its current Posture to another one compatible with the general orders received from the Headquarters. This action needs only a minimal Command Chain, used for requesting authorisation and updating the Parent HQ about the changes in the unit's deployment.



At D1 H03, West German 36Pz Brigade is preparing to defend Schweinfurt from an imminent Warsaw Pact assault. NATO considers the position held by 362 PanzerGrenadier battalion (362/36/12Pz) as the most vulnerable one, so the battalion will change its Posture from Defense to Rigid Defense in order to maximise its defence capabilities.

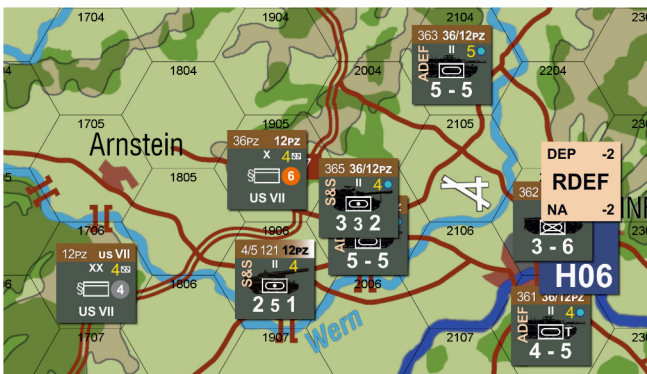
The Posture Chart lists Rigid Defense as a possible Authorized Posture Change for a unit currently in Defense Posture, with a Deploy Time of one Turn (see 6.1.2 and the "Authorized Posture Change" column on the Postures Chart).

The Deploy Time would increase by one Turn if the executing unit is not within the Command Range of its Parent HQ, but this is not the case for 362 PanzerGrenadier battalion. West German units could normally ignore this requirement as they use Mission-Type Orders (see 6.1.4), but WG 12Pz Division is under US VII Corps command, and cannot employ this specific doctrine (see 58).

The Deploy Time could also increase by one additional Turn if the executing unit is Engaged, Half Engaged or Delayed, but none of these conditions apply.

Having completed the checks, NATO places under the unit:

- A Rigid Defense (RDEF) Posture marker, identifying the Posture that the unit is going to assume. To avoid confusion, the unit is also flipped on the side with no predefined Posture printed on it.
- An H06 Time Marker (H03 plus one Turn), identifying the Turn during which the unit will complete deploying into the new Posture.



At the beginning of the friendly Order Execution Phase of Turn D1 H06, the Time Marker is removed from the unit. The unit is no longer in Posture Transition (see 6.2) and has the full benefits and limitations of the Rigid Defense Posture.

2.6 Unauthorized Posture Change

An Unauthorized Posture Change allows a unit to change its current Posture to any other allowed by its type, ignoring the general orders received from its Headquarters. As this action is not coordinated with logistic service or other formations, it has a negative impact on the unit and also forces the HQ staff to update their planning in an unexpected manner.

West German 12 Panzer Brigade is currently deployed to defend Schweinfurt from an imminent Warsaw Pact assault.

An unexpected breakthrough in another area forces NATO to quickly redeploy one of the artillery battalions attached to the brigade. The 4/5 121 Artillery Battalion (4/5 121/12Pz) must therefore quickly change from Shoot&Scoot to Tactical Posture.

The change can be executed using an Unauthorized Posture Change (see 6.1.3). The Deploy Time can be found in the Posture Chart, using the row of the desired Posture and the "Unauthorized Posture Change" column. In this case, assuming a Tactical Posture takes one Turn.

During the friendly Order Execution Phase of Turn D1 H03, NATO

checks the Command Chain. The only requirement for an Unauthorized Posture Change is that the unit must be within the Command Range of its Parent HQ. Should this not be the case, the Deploy Time is increased by one Turn.



The artillery battalion is attached to West German 36 Panzer Brigade, so the 36Pz/12Pz brigade HQ is used as Parent HQ. The battalion is within the 6 hexes Command Range of the HQ, therefore the Deploy Time is not increased.

The Deploy Time would also increase by one additional Turn if the unit is Engaged, Half Engaged, or Delayed, but none of these conditions apply.

Having completed the checks, NATO executes the following steps:

- The 4/5 121/12Pz counter is flipped on the side with no predefined Posture printed, to indicate it is in Tactical Posture or moving into it.
- An H06 Time Marker (H03 plus one Turn) is placed under the unit, to indicate the unit is in Transition to Tactical Posture and the Turn in which it will complete deploying.
- The Attrition of the unit is increased by one, as the battalion is under US VII Corps command (see the Top HQ on the brigade HQ counter) and cannot use the West German Mission-Type Orders (see 6.1.4).
- The Current Command Points of US VII Corps (The Top HQ) are decreased by one.

At the beginning of the friendly Order Execution Phase of Turn D1 H06, the Time Marker is removed from the unit. The unit is no longer in Posture Transition (see 6.2) and has the full benefits and limitations of the Tactical Posture.

3. BOMBARDMENT

Soviet 6th Guards Tank Division is launching an assault against the sector held by West German 36 Panzer Brigade. A heavy bombardment will soften up the enemy defense before the attack.

During the Bombardment Phase, Warsaw Pact declares a bombardment against the 363 Panzer battalion (Hex 2104).



Four artillery battalions are assigned, highlighted in white:

- Three self-propelled artillery in Close Support Posture (CSUP), using their full Barrage Strength (value on the left).
- One Missile artillery in Shoot&Scoot Posture (S&S), also using its full Barrage Strength.

Range is also checked (center value), and all the units can reach the target (see 17, Artillery).

Warsaw Pact must increase the Attrition of every involved artillery unit by one, so a "1" Attrition marker is placed under each unit. The total Bombardment value is 12, so WP will use the "11-12" column of the Bombardment Table.

The Detection Value of the target is calculated (see 23, Detection

and the Detection Level Table):

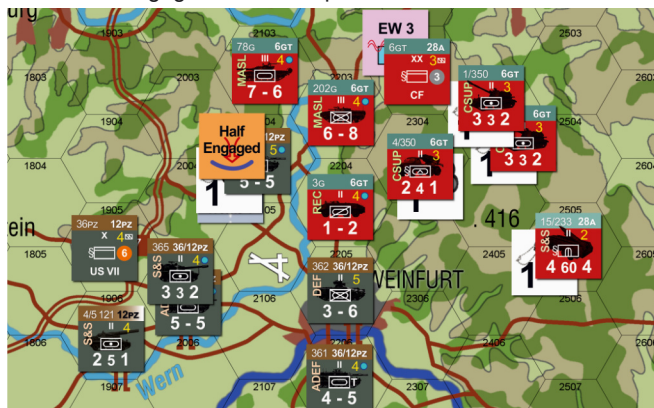
- The target is a Combat Unit adjacent to friendly units, giving a Detection Level of 3.
- No additional Detection Level Modifiers can be applied.

Die Roll Modifiers are calculated. As the target is in Active Defense Posture (ADEF), it is using a Deployed Movement Mode and the Depl / Fix column of the Bombardment Die Roll Modifiers table is used:

- The target is in Active Defense Posture, giving no modifiers for Bombardment (see Postures Chart).
- The target is in a hex containing Forest, giving a -1 DRM.
- The hex contains Defensive Work 1, giving an additional -1 DRM.

Warsaw Pact rolls a 9, modified to 7. The result on the Detection Level 3, 11-12 Bombardment value columns is **1/2**:

- As the target is a Combat Unit, the left value is applied, and the Attrition of 363 Pz battalion is increased by one.
- As the result is printed in red, the target is also Half-Engaged. A "Half-Engaged" marker is placed under the NATO unit.



4. GROUND COMBAT

Players are highly encouraged to use the Ground Combat Chart to resolve combat, as it greatly helps to keep things simple. In this example, a running total of the Combat Differential is given in a separate box on the right of the text describing the modifier.

After some preparatory bombardment, Soviet 78th Guards Tank Regiment (78G/6GT, hex 2103) assaults the West German defensive positions.

4.1 The Assault

The Ground Combat Sequence (15.1) and Ground Combat Chart are used to resolve the assault.

4.1.1 Attack Type

Warsaw Pact declares a Prepared Assault against hex 2104. As the Soviet Regiment is in March Assault Posture (MASL), the assault will cost 6 Movement Points instead of 8.

4.1.2 Retreat Before Combat

The unit in the hex under attack does not have the requisites for attempting a retreat before combat (see 15.3), and in any case NATO has no intention to give up that easily.

4.1.3 Defending Units

The hex contains only one NATO Combat Unit, so the 363 Battalion (363/36/12Pz) must be designated as the Defending Unit (see 15.4).

4.1.4 Initial Combat Differential

As an armoured unit is attacking another armoured unit, both sides use their Attack Strength (see 15.5). The Initial Combat Differential is therefore +2 (7 attack – 5 attack).

+2

4.1.5 Commit Recce and Sappers

The attacking Soviet unit also has Sappers, and WP commits them to the assault. This gives WP an advantage, but the sappers could become combat casualties (see 37, Sappers).

The use of Sappers also allows WP to avoid paying one extra MP for assaulting an enemy position with Level 1 Defensive Works (see 37.3, Sappers Effects).

WP also commit the adjacent 3rd Guards Recon battalion to get an additional advantage (see 15.6.11). The battalion has its Attrition increased by one.

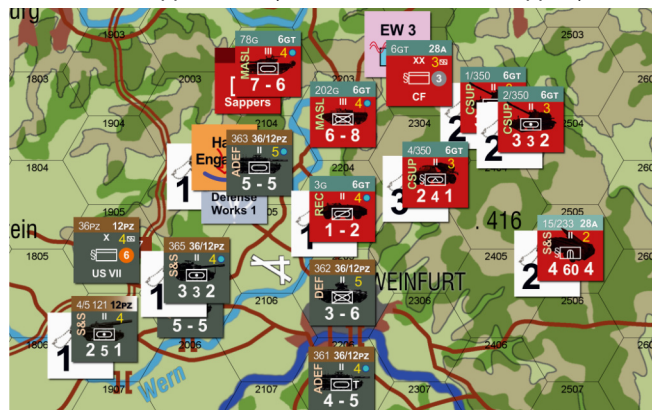
4.1.6 Combat Support Assignment

Warsaw Pact assigns 1/350, 2/350, and 15/233 artillery as Combat Support, for a total of 10 artillery points, and increases the Attrition of each unit by one (see 17, Artillery).

4/350 Rocket Artillery battalion is also assigned using its maximum firepower: the unit increases its Attrition by two and double its Barrage Strength, bringing the total artillery points to 14 (see 17, Artillery, point 6).

NATO assigns 365 and 4/5 121 artillery as Combat Support, for a total of 5 artillery points. The Attrition of each committed artillery unit is increased by one.

NATO also assigns 3 Air Points. As the attacked hex is not inside a NATO CAS Area, each surviving Air Point will only add one to the Combat Support Total (see 16.3, Air Combat Support).



4.1.7 Anti-Aircraft Fire

As NATO has assigned Air Points, Anti-Aircraft Fire is now resolved (see 22.1):

- Warsaw Pact AA value is 2 for the attacking unit, plus 2 for having two additional units adjacent to the attacked hex.
- Warsaw Pact rolls a 6 on the "3-4" column of the AA Fire Table, inflicting an A1 result to supporting aircraft. NATO assigned Air Points are decreased from 3 to 2.

4.1.8 Electronic Warfare

As 6th Guards Tank HQ has 3 Electronic Warfare points assigned and is within 4 hexes from the defender's hex, Warsaw Pact can use Electronic Warfare (see 24.3 and Electronic Warfare Table):

- Warsaw Pact EW has a -1 die roll modifier when used against NATO.
- Warsaw Pact rolls a 9, modified to 8, on the "3" column of the Electronic Warfare Table. This gives a Combat Modifier of +2 and additional E1 and E2 effects.
- E1 affects air – ground communications, halving enemy air or helicopter support. NATO assigned Air Points are decreased from 2 to 1 point.
- E2 affects ground communications in general, halving enemy artillery support. NATO assigned Artillery is decreased from 5 to 2 points (fractions are rounded down).

4.1.9 Combat Support Resolution

Warsaw Pact now determines the effectiveness of his Combat Support (14 points): A roll of 2 on the "13-15" column of the Attacker Combat Support Table gives a +2 result.

+6

NATO determines the effectiveness of his Combat Support (2 artillery points plus 1 surviving Air Point, for a total of 3 points). A lucky roll of 10 on the "3 – 4" column of the Defender Combat Support Table gives a -3 result.

+3

4.1.10 Additional Combat Modifiers

Additional Combat Modifiers are now calculated, to obtain the Final Combat Differential that will be used on the Ground Combat Table (see 15.6 and the Combat Modifiers Summary on the Ground Combat Chart).

- The attacking unit is in March Assault Posture (MASL), giving a -2 combat modifier when attacking (see Postures Chart).
- The defending unit is in Active Defense Posture (ADEF), giving a +1 combat modifier.
- Cadre Rating is 4 for the attacker and 5 for the defender, giving a -1 combat modifier (4 – 5).
- The defending unit is in Deployed Movement Mode and in Forest terrain, giving a -2 combat modifier.
- The defending unit is in a Defensive Works 1 hex, but its effect is cancelled by Warsaw Pact Sappers (see

+1

+2

+1

-1

-1

37.3, Sappers).

- Attacking unit has no Attrition, and defending unit has 1 Attrition, giving a +1 combat modifier (1 – 0).
- Warsaw Pact committed the adjacent Reconnaissance unit to the combat, giving a +2 combat modifier.
- Warsaw Pact committed Sappers to the combat, giving a +2 combat modifier.
- The attacker has two additional Combat Units adjacent to the attacked hex, giving a +4 combat modifier.
- The defender has no additional Combat Unit adjacent to the attacked hex, so there is no modifier.
- The defender is Half-Engaged, giving a +1 combat modifier.
- Both sides are within the Command Range of their parent HQ, so there is no combat modifier for being Out of Command.

0
+2
+4
+8
+8
+9
+9

4.1.11 Combat Resolution

The Final Combat Differential is **+9**. Warsaw Pact rolls a 5 on the +9 column of the Ground Combat Table, giving a **1/2s** result.

The 1 value on the left applies to the attacker, and the 2s value on the right to the defender (see 15.7, Combat Results). The **s** part of the result, meaning that any committed Sappers has been eliminated, is ignored as the defender has no Sappers committed.

The attacker has no tactical choices and must implement the result immediately. Warsaw Pact increases the Attrition on 78th Guards Regiment by one.

The defender may choose to hold his ground and increase Attrition by two points, or Retreat After Combat and possibly reduce the losses to one Attrition Point.

Moreover, as an Attrition result has been inflicted to the defender, the Defensive Works are reduced by one level and therefore destroyed (see 31.4, Reducing Defensive Works).

4.2 Retreat After Combat

NATO opts for retreating, and must therefore execute a Disengagement attempt **before** implementing the combat results (see 15.8, Retreat After Combat).

The die roll modifiers are calculated (see Disengagement Die Roll Modifiers Table):

- Not including the attacker's hex, the disengaging unit is adjacent to two additional hexes containing enemy Combat Units, giving a -2 DRM.
- No adjacent hex contains friendly Combat Units, so there is no favourable die roll modifier.
- The unit was Half-Engaged before the combat started, giving a -1 DRM.
- The unit is in a Forest hex, giving no modifier during Disengagement.
- NATO assigns the 365 artillery battalion as support, and increases its Attrition by one. The unit has a Barrage Strength of 3, giving a +2 DRM.

The final die roll modifier is -1. NATO consults the Disengagement Table, using the "Mechanized" and "ADEF" columns. The roll is 6 modified to 5, giving an **S0** result: the disengagement has been successful (S), and the unit takes no additional Attrition (0).

As the disengagement is successful, NATO increases the Attrition of the West German battalion by one point only (the combat result originally called for an increase of two points) and retreats southwest into hex 2004.

The successful disengagement also allows the retreating battalion to keep its current Half-Engaged status and to avoid becoming Engaged.

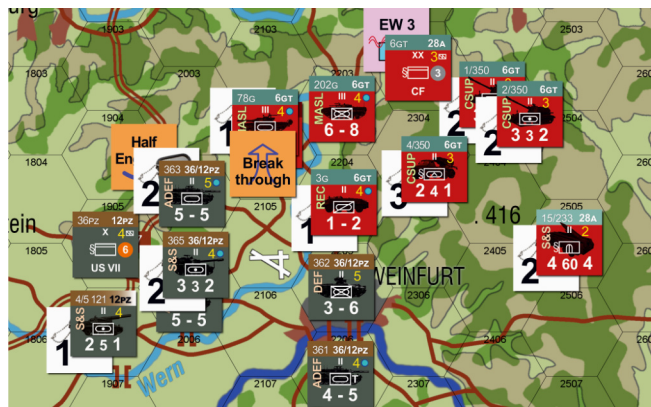
4.3 Breakthrough

As the attacked hex is now vacant, a Breakthrough marker is placed in hex 2104.

4.4 Advance After Combat

As the attacked hex is now vacant, Soviet 78th Guards Regiment must advance after combat into hex 2104 (see 15.10, Advance After Combat).

The cost for entering the hex is 5 Movements Points (3 MPs for "Hill 2" Terrain + 2 MPs for Forest). As this is lower than the 6 MPs expended for the Assault, no extra Movement Points are expended, and the Soviet unit advances into the hex.



Operational Planning

Any operation will need a plan bound to fail and some serious planning. Plans should not necessarily include every detail, but a generic framework should be defined before deploying the first unit.

This chapter define a possible plan to execute some standard operations. Any direct reference to the rules is avoided whenever possible in order to focus on the concepts and help immersion, but players should find that the rules framework will make little difference on how a plan is conceived.

Each operation includes the orders received from higher command to help clarify the elements considered when preparing the plan.

5. RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

One of the first things NATO will need is using its covering forces to delay the enemy, defined as a Retrograde Operation in military jargon. In this example, the covering forces of US VII Corps must plan how to slow down Warsaw Pact's First Echelon while the bulk of the troops reach the assigned defensive positions.

Here's the US VII Corps EXORD for 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment:

SHAPE confirms a major, coordinated Warsaw Pact offensive could be expected within the next 48 hours. Short of any radical change in the current situation, DEFCON 2 will be declared at 23071985 1500ZT. 2ACR execute OPLAN 33001, details follow:

- Czech 1st Army, composed by 4 divisions plus Soviet support units, expected to cross IGB at any time starting from 24071985 0300ZT.*
- 2ACR move to PL BUICK immediately.*
- 2ACR operate as screening force, with northern Flank linked to WG 12Pz Division and southern Flank partially linked to WG II Corps.*
- Upon contact with enemy forward elements, 2ACR conduct retrograde operations toward PL CADILLAC and DODGE.*
- Once enemy forward elements has been forced to deploy, it is imperative to avoid full engagement.*
- Bridge mining authorized, proceed at your discretion. 2x Additional Engineer Coy are under 2ACR TACON until 24071985 0300ZT.*
- US 3ID elements are expected to be in position on PL DODGE not before 24071985 1200ZT.*
- US 1AD elements are expected to be in position on PL DODGE not before 24071985 1500ZT.*
- Upon reaching PL DODGE, 2ACR will conduct a passage of lines through US 3ID and US 1AD units, proceed to Bamberg Assembly Area to R&R and assume operational reserve role.*
- Heavy enemy air strikes expected from H+0 to H+15.*

Assigned forces are:

- 2ACR/US VII (3x AC Sqdn, 1x AH-1 Bn, OPCODE)*
- 6-10/US VII SPART Bn (Attached, TACON)*
- 1-30/3ID ARM Bn (Attached, TACON).*
- 1x Combat Engineers Bn (1 Engineer Point)*
- 1x A-10 Sqn CAS (4 Air Points)*

As we had a decent warning time, we will be able to assemble, give initial orders and move out before the outbreak of hostilities, but the main problem remains: The Area of Responsibility is too extended for our forces, and in some points too far.

As a continuous defensive front is not possible, our best chance is to place our combat units in Screen Posture, slow down the

enemy advance along the roads the Pact needs to supply its troops, while at the same time avoid being pinned. The rough terrain in the sector will make the enemy attempt to bypass our road blocks difficult, also giving us enough time to disengage.

Our AH-1 battalion will activate a predefined FARP about 10km east of Forchheim, as the coordinates of airfields are known to the Soviets, making them a perfect target for an air or missile strike.

The attached SP Artillery Battalion will be best used in the northern sector, where the space to trade for time is very limited.

Our Engineers already mined several bridges. This is a definite advantage as the 6 hours required to mine an Autobahn bridge could be unavailable once war starts.

Engineers also placed defensive works at two important crossroads, Burgkunstadt and Münchberg. We are not going to make a stand, but a stronger defensive position could force the Czechs to spend more time to dislodge us.

Finally, we defined a CAS Area centred on Weidhausen, with some A-10 aircraft on call, and positioned a Supply Hub in the rear areas for Rest&Refit.

Once the dance starts, our battalions will hamper the enemy advance, avoid being engaged, and slowly retreat toward phase line DODGE. Our meagre artillery and air support should be saved for interdiction and helping any disengagement attempt.



6. TACTICAL MOVEMENT

Another typical task for NATO is moving to an area and defend it. Here, a NATO Brigade is required to set up an Area Defense – but first, the tactical movement to the assigned area must be planned.

Let's see the details of US VII Corps orders for 3rd brigade, 1st Armored Division:

SHAPE notifies that a major, coordinated Warsaw Pact offensive against NATO is expected at 24071985 0600ZT (H+0). A mobilization order has been issued and DEFCON 2 has been declared by National Command Authority. Your orders follow.

- 3/1A Bde main task is to defend Bayreuth area and block enemy penetration until at least H+36.
- 3/1A Bde start assembling immediately and move out Warner Barracks at 24071985 0000ZT.
- Upon reaching Bayreuth, 3/1A Bde establish a 22 Km frontage Area Defense on PL DODGE, with northern flank linked to US 3ID and southern flank linked to US 2/1AD Bde.
- Czech 1st Army is expected to advance along Autobahn 9 toward Bayreuth, with 2ACR covering forces slowing it down until H+12.
- Heavy enemy air strikes expected from H+0 to H+15.

Assigned Forces are:

- 1-52, 1-54 INF Bns (OPCON)
- 3-35 ARM Bn (OPCON)
- 1-1C ARMCAV Bn (OPCON)
- 2-78, 1-94 SPART Bns (OPCON)
- B/503 Attack Helicopter Coy (TACON)
- 1x Combat Engineers Bn (1 Engineer Point)
- 1x A-10 Sqn Close Air Support (3 Air Points)

Forming a solid defense line is a difficult task that requires good timing. You cannot simply move your forces toward the enemy and entrench when contact is made, as changing posture in front of the enemy is definitely a bad idea.

One solution is assigning some combat units as covering forces while the rest of the formation changes to Defense Posture, but with a 22 km front line and only 4 battalions we don't have enough troops. We should try to have the brigade deployed before contact

is made with the Warsaw Pact forces.

As a first step, we need to know how long moving to Bayreuth will take. Road Posture is out of question as the enemy controls the skies in the first hours, so we'll have to stick to the slower Tactical Posture. Moreover, night hours will slow us down, and when hostilities begin at 0600ZT panicked civilians will turn roads into horrible traffic jams. This brings up the following march table:



In the end, the brigade could be at Bayreuth in Tactical Posture around 1200ZT, except two units based at Nürnberg arriving at 1500ZT. Forced march could speed up things, but on the other hand we are not taking enemy interdiction strikes into account.

7. AREA DEFENSE

Now that we have the march table, it's time to think about defending the town. Deploying in defense should take 9 hours, with 6 hours for HQ planning and 3 hours for deploying the manoeuvre units. As we will be at Bayreuth in Tactical Posture not before 1200ZT, this means that we will issue a "Brigade Defend" order at 0900ZT, our units will start deploying at 1500ZT, and will be ready for enemy contact at 1800ZT.

A little tight. Moreover, time needed for preparing orders will increase considerably should an air strike hit a vital Command Post, leaving the brigade half-deployed with the enemy assaulting its positions. We need to gain some time.

As there's not much we can do about the marching time or the possibility of a disrupted command chain, we're back to using one of our battalions as covering force, in order to gain time should the necessity arise.

Despite starting farther away, 1-1C ARMCAV is our best candidate. It will move out first from the barracks, already in Screen Posture, and force march to Bayreuth. Once there, it will slow down the enemy's forward elements approaching the town. After the brigade completes its deployment at 1800ZT, it will move to the rear areas and switch to a reserve role.

The next thing to define is the deployment of the brigade in the Forward Edge of Battle Area, better explained by a map:



Given the length of the front, we must rely on maintaining a strong link with the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division on our northern flank. Our initial reserve battalion (3-35 ARM) could be used in three different ways:

- Block enemy attempts to outflank our positions.
- Stop a breakthrough and become the new defense line.
- Being in Active Defense, counterattack an enemy unit advancing in a vulnerable position.

The two SP Artillery Battalions will use Shoot&Scoot, giving full firepower and a decent protection against enemy air strikes and counter-battery fire.

The AH-1 Cobra company will give additional support as needed, while our scarce air support will interdict roads and help critical disengagements. Available CAS could increase as NATO fighters

gradually gain control of the skies.

As a last thing, we'll use our engineers to build defensive works in Bayreuth. This will take 6 hours, so the HQ must be in proximity of the town by 0600ZT in order to coordinate the task and have it completed by 1200ZT. HQs can move very fast, so this should not be a problem.

At a higher level, Corps HQ will take care of two important aspects: a nearby Supply Hub to ensure supply, and definition of a Close Air Support area to coordinate support.

8. MOVEMENT TO CONTACT

In the opening phases of the conflict, Warsaw Pact will have to advance quickly against light enemy opposition. This example will use the same overall situation of the previous ones, as seen from the other side of the coin.

Let's look at the orders for the Czechoslovakian 1st Tank Division:

Comrade Major General,

GSFG HQ confirmed Operation Ladoga will begin at 06:00 24.07.1985 as planned. As First Echelon of 1st Army, your orders are:

1. Resolutely advance along Autobahn 9 along the Hof – Münchberg – Bayreuth axis (phase 1), and along the Bayeruth – Hollfeld – Scheßlitz axis (phase 2).
2. Take control of the crossroads along the advance axis, in order to ensure the safe passage of Second Echelon and follow-up supply columns.
3. Assault any NATO formations along the main advance axis, limiting preparation to the strictly necessary.
4. Take control of Scheßlitz by 06:00 26.07.1985 (H+48).
5. Prepare to be relieved by 19th Motorized Rifle Division and assume Operational Manoeuvre Group role.

Your division will partially link to 2nd Motorized Division to the south, and to 28th Combined Arms Army to the north. Rear areas security will be assured by Second Echelon forces.

Assigned support units are:

1. 322nd Cannon Artillery Bde (M-46, SpGH DANA)
2. 17th High Power Artillery Bn (2S7 Pion)
3. 74th Rocket Launcher Bde (RM-70 MLRS)
4. 311th Heavy Artillery Bde (9K72 SSM)
5. 11th Helicopter Rgt (Mi-24)
6. 20th Fighter Bomber Rgt, 30th Ground Attack Rgt (3 Air Points)
7. 4x Combat Engineers Coy (2 Engineer Points)

Expected enemy forces are elements of US 2nd Armored Cavalry Rgt, reinforced by an over-strength Bde from US 1AD within 18 hours.



As expected, the strategic plan requires a rapid, blitzkrieg-like advance and seems overly optimistic, particularly in point 4 – controlling Scheßlitz by H+48.

I doubt the division can sustain 48 hours of continuous attack unless NATO resistance is significantly weaker than anticipated. Regardless, objections would likely earn me a ticket to Siberia, potentially ending with a bullet to the head. Therefore, our first decisions are already taken:

- Our combat regiments will advance in Tactical Posture, as the troops are neither trained nor motivated enough to execute complex, risky manoeuvres like an Assault from March.
- The Reconnaissance battalion will adopt Recon Posture, allowing it to reconnoitre enemy positions before an assault, at the cost of some losses to reconnaissance units.
- Towed artillery will begin in Barrage Posture near the border, switching to Tactical later.
- Missile artillery will adopt Shoot & Scoot Posture, maximising firepower; it does not require rapid movement due to its long range.

I anticipate maintaining these orders for the first 24 hours. Switching to Assault or Full Assault would imply the plan has failed, as such a reorganisation would require at least 9–12 hours.

Having defined our marching posture, we now need to determine the division's deployment at the Inner German Border.

Two of our regiments will advance along Autobahn 9, utilising one of the few border sections without a "Protective Strip," which will avoid delays from last-minute mine and obstacle clearance.

The other two regiments will proceed along minor roads further south, flanking any NATO covering force positioned near the border.

Now, with these elements in mind, we can develop a more realistic march plan for our division:



Additional deployments and considerations:

- A predefined CAS area near Münchberg, to be redefined with Front Aviation as we advance.
- A Supply Hub to ensure resupply for at least the first 20 km of the advance; in reality, resupply remains a question mark, especially for artillery.
- Two engineer companies prepared to deploy ribbon bridges across the River Saale, should NATO destroy the bridges we plan to use.

Projected events and challenges:

- Per the 1st Army plan, we are to be relieved as the First Echelon at H+48. This exceeds the division's endurance, so we must minimise attrition to maintain combat effectiveness as long as possible. Forced marches and risky amphibious crossings will be reserved for extreme necessity.
- Roads are likely to be congested with fleeing civilians, impeding our march.
- We will need to advance the Supply Hub and potentially build a Panel Bridge across the Saale to ensure supply truck passage.
- Some artillery battalions may need brief firing pauses for refit and resupply.
- Short-range towed artillery will need to switch to Tactical posture as we advance, requiring 6 hours to redeploy in Barrage posture.
- Missile battalions should be used only when high-value targets, such as HQs or FARP bases, are located with high accuracy.
- Air support will initially focus on interdicting NATO withdrawal attempts and later shift to close air support (CAS) for combat units.

Anticipated timeline:

- **H+0:** Engineers will dismantle "security measures" on our side of the Inner German Border, estimated to take about an hour. This must be done at the last moment to avoid signalling the impending offensive.
- **H+3:** Potential first contact with US 2nd ACR covering forces, which may slow our advance.
- **H+9:** Possible urban combat in Münchberg.
- **H+15 – H+24:** Likely contact with at least one brigade from the US 1st Armored Division defending Bayreuth. Urban combat and nighttime conditions may extend control efforts by up to 9 hours.
- **H+24 – H+36:** Following the rout of the US brigade, we are to continue advancing until H+36. (Success here will require considerable luck, but I know what I am expected to write).

After H+36, the division will likely be exhausted and in urgent need of Rest & Refit. If STAVKA consents, we'll modify the plan to have the 1st Tank Division assume the OMG role earlier than planned. If STAVKA declines, I'll likely be shot for treason, and further planning will be unnecessary.