



TACTICAL

C O N C E P T S

By Sid Heal

TOPIC AREA: PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING (NAPOLEONIC STAFF)

Tactical operations come in all shapes, sizes and colors. No two look the same. In fact, probably their most common characteristic is that they are all different. Another common characteristic is that, regardless of their size, they share four functions that need to be accomplished to ensure a successful operation. These are command and control (often identified as “C2”), operations, intelligence (sometimes called “planning”), and logistics. For very small operations, a single person may perform several, or even all of them, but large operations may require considerable staffs for each function. Regardless of their size, the fundamental requirements are intrinsic.

Command and control (C2) — As used here, the command and control function does not refer to a particular person or level in an organization but rather to the responsibility in general. Initially, it describes the responsibility for handling a situation during normal operations. This usually means a watch commander and shift supervisors. When an event occurs that requires significant additional resources or personnel, the decision-making responsibility is sometimes, but not always, moved higher up the organization. For example, a decision to ask for mutual aid from adjacent jurisdictions or support involving other disciplines might require higher authority.

The primary responsibility of the command and control function is to identify and state the ultimate objectives to be accomplished as well as providing essential planning guidance to achieve the necessary cooperation and coordination among the other functions. All other functions are subordinate to this one. This function provides the essential focus to assure that all efforts are concentrated on com-

pleting essential tasks necessary for a satisfactory resolution.

An implied responsibility for this component requires the monitoring of all activities within the tactical organization, especially concerning the other three functions. Monitoring refers to the necessity of continually and systematically reviewing the quality of work from the other functions and ensuring the requisite level of interaction and coordination is occurring. This will require varying degrees of guidance and supervision to ensure that the efforts of the three other functions remain focused on the ultimate objective and are coordinated to achieve maximum effectiveness.

Operations — The operations function is responsible for the planning, assignment, coordination, execution and evaluation of tactical missions. In more general terms, this function receives guidance and instructions from the command and control component and is responsible for implementing them.

An implied responsibility for the operations component is that of implementing the will of the command and control element. Implementing refers to the responsibility for achieving the will of a commander while relieving him or her of the necessity of personally supervising each of the essential subordinate tasks. This always requires support from the intelligence and logistics functions and it is the responsibility of the operations section to coordinate their efforts in supporting the overall effort.

Intelligence — The intelligence function has the responsibility for the gathering, recording, evaluating and disseminating of all

pertinent information relating to an incident. This component is usually the second fully-functional component to be employed in an operation, preceded only by the command and control element, because of the need to monitor developing situations even if no other resources are committed. Once an intervention is necessary, the intelligence function includes all facets of intelligence gathering and analysis.

An implied responsibility for this component is the continual assessment of all information to determine relevance, accuracy and timeliness in forecasting the impact on the overall operation. Of all the components, the intelligence section is most concerned with the future since virtually all planning and refinements to an existing plan will be dependent upon the availability and usefulness of the intelligence provided.

Logistics — The logistics function is responsible for the acquisition, identification, tracking, staging and recovery of all personnel and logistical assets. Additionally, this function determines future logistical needs, identifies and acquires resources and provides any required maintenance to ensure sustainment of the operation. Once the operation reaches a conclusion, this function is also responsible for servicing and returning equipment from lenders and/or staging areas.

An implied responsibility for this component requires the sustainment of logistical support for a given period of time. Sustainment refers to the responsibility to install, maintain and operate logistical support. This may require food, water, fuel, dedicated operators, electricians or maintenance personnel and the like. For example, when a commander calls for a helicopter, it should be assumed he or she also wants the pilot and fuel to fly it. Sustainment may also require making reliefs, assigning shifts and other essential planning measures to assure the continued support of a piece of equipment or support of personnel.

FOUR FUNCTIONS ALWAYS EXIST

By now it should be clear that regardless of the size or nature of the organization assigned to handle tactical problems, these four functions must always exist in one form or another. The operations element ensures that the specific missions are implemented in an effective and efficient manner. The intelligence component provides continual assessment of the effectiveness of the efforts and identifies future opportunities and threats to the plan as outlined by the command and control element. Likewise, the logistical component ensures sufficient personnel and equipment are available, as well as providing essentials such as food, water, fuel, reliefs and the like, to sustain the effort.

These functions comprise the core of what is often referred to as a "Napoleonic Staff" because Napoleon Bonaparte used them to such great advantage.

Depending on the complexity and size of the operation, each of the functions can be further subdivided into additional specialty assignments. For example, the operations section may be subdivided into containment, traffic control, crowd control, rescue efforts, investigations, and so forth. Intelligence may be subdivided into current operations and future operations and logistics may be subdivided into equipment, personnel, finance, and the like.

It should also be apparent that none of these functions can succeed without close coordination with the others. The command and control element decides what is necessary to achieve a satisfactory resolution but a commander will soon become overwhelmed with details without an effective and efficient operations component. In the same way, the operations function may require additional

personnel but depends upon the logistical component to provide them. Likewise, the intelligence component provides information as to weather, lighting conditions, expected problems and the like, which dictates what to wear and what to bring.

These functions comprise the core of what is often referred to as a "Napoleonic Staff"

because Napoleon Bonaparte used them to such great advantage. A good staff provides a broader perspective and more realistic understanding of risk, as well as attenuating personal prejudices, lack of training and experience. Their utility in modern tactical operations needs no further justification. ■

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