

The Signal Leader's Guide

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Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns and pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

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Preface

Purpose and Scope

This manual is a hip pocket-sized field reference guide for junior signal leaders (officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs)). It is intended to help the signal leader to understand and to implement signal support under the Information Mission Area (IMA) concept.

This manual covers commonly needed information such as signal site reconnaissance, leading convoys, profiling line-of-sight (LOS) links, and troubleshooting signal equipment. It also contains an overview of signal support doctrine and currently fielded communications systems. It is targeted at junior signal officers and NCOs in tactical environments from battalion through echelons above corps (EAC).

The Principles of Leadership

- Know yourself and seek self-improvement.
- Be technically and tactically proficient.
- Seek and accept responsibility for your actions.
- Make sound and timely decisions.
- Set an example.
- Know your soldiers and look out for their well-being.
- Keep your subordinates and superiors informed.
- Develop a sense of responsibility in your subordinates.
- Ensure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished to standard.

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- Build a team.
- Employ your unit according to its capabilities

FM 22-100, *Military Leadership*, covers this subject in detail.

Troop-Leading Procedures

- Receive the mission.
- Issue warning order.
- Make tentative plan.
- Start necessary movement.
- Conduct reconnaissance.
- Complete the plan.
- Issue the order.
- Supervise.

FM 71-123, *Tactics and Techniques for Combined Arms Heavy Forces: Armored Brigade, Battalion/Task Force, and Company Team*, covers this subject in detail.

User Information

The proponent of this publication is the United States Army Signal Center. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 directly to Commander, United States Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon, ATTN: ATZH-DTL, Fort Gordon, Georgia 30905-5075. Key comments and recommendations to pages and lines of text to which they apply. If DA Form 2028 is not available, a letter is acceptable. Provide reasons for your comments to ensure understanding and proper evaluation.

Introduction

Successfully supporting the commander with reliable and redundant communications is a direct result of **detailed planning**. Planning signal support operations should not occur in a vacuum or just among signalers. For communications to successfully support the commander, several steps must occur with absolute conviction. The most critical step in understanding what is expected from a signal leader and planner is understanding the commander's intent. From the commander's intent, all planning can begin among sections, staffs, units and individuals. The staff planning process per the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Student Text (ST) 101-5 and the wargaming process begin immediately. Warning orders and fragmentary orders (FRAGOs) can be issued to subordinates so they can make maximum use of the time available and execute the appropriate troop-leading procedures.

Soldiers' lives hinge on our ability to plan tactical operations. Planners must successfully synchronize and integrate the plan to support the commander. Communications must support the scheme of maneuver as every other battlefield functional area (BFA) must in a synchronized and integrated effort put maximum focus on a specific objective at a specific time. This will ensure the commander accomplishes the mission. Today's battlefield is three dimensional and signal planning must be done with

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the same application of thought. Planning and coordinating joint operations or operations other than war (OOTW) also must be done with great detail and forethought. Soldiers and signal teams deserve the opportunity to survive based on solid plans and viable contingencies to support unstable situations.

Soldiers must understand several issues for success in a tactical environment. Leaders must keep soldiers informed and updated on all key information. The first issue is an understanding that **a communications problem is everyone's concern until it is solved**. The second issue involves signal soldiers who are highly qualified representatives of the Signal Corps and as such we are all trainers. This means when a user has a communications problem we try our best to educate them so they become **self-reliant**. If we fail to educate, then we must not only do our own work, but we must also do someone else's work. Next, we must train as if we are going to war/conflict. This means we cannot accept the training standard that communications assets go unescorted into the maneuver boxes/threat areas days in advance just to ensure communications are ready. Once in a tactical situation, specific channels for accurate and timely intelligence, battle tracking, and environmental and situational awareness must be developed. This information must be disseminated to the lowest levels possible. All node centers (NCs), radio access units (RAUs), retransmission (RETRANS), and relay teams must get this information promptly. The information

ensures the teams understand and can support the maneuver schemes and are synchronized with other BFAs across the battlefield. Awareness of the enemy or threat enables the soldier to feel secure in their surroundings.

As a signal leader, you are tasked with great responsibility. Plan for success and win the information war.

Chapter 1

Signal Support

Section I.

Signal Support Disciplines

1-1. Information Mission Area (IMA)

Under the IMA concept, signal support provides the commander the means to command and control (C²) on the battlefield. The IMA doctrine covers all aspects of information management. It consists of five disciplines:

- Communications.
- Automation.
- Visual Information (VI).
- Records Management.
- Printing and Publications.

The signal support responsibilities to each of these disciplines differ at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war. All signal personnel must understand the IMA disciplines and the need for signal support.

FM 11-75 covers this subject in more detail.