

# TACTICAL EMPLOYMENT OF ANTIARMOR PLATOONS AND COMPANIES



HEADQUARTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

DECEMBER 2002

# TACTICAL EMPLOYMENT OF ANTIARMOR PLATOONS AND COMPANIES

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\*This publication supersedes FM 7-91, 30 September 1987.

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## PREFACE

This manual is based on the premise that although the unit organization, weapons systems, and conditions have changed, antiarmor company and platoon maneuver, fire, and movement have not changed.

FM 3-21.91 (FM 7-91) provides doctrine for employing the antiarmor company and platoon. It contains guidance on tactics and techniques that antiarmor companies and platoons use in offensive, defensive, stability, and support operations.

This manual borrows from “nested” concepts found in FM 7-10 and FM 71-1 and reemphasizes information from other manuals that are of critical importance. The target audience includes antiarmor platoon leaders, company and battalion commanders, and battalion staff officers. This manual provides training developers with the combat-critical tasks and missions of antiarmor companies and platoons, and it enables combat developers to refine and revise operational concepts for antiarmor organizations.

The proponent of this publication is the US Army Infantry School. Send comments and recommendations to [doctrine@benning.army.mil](mailto:doctrine@benning.army.mil) or on DA Form 2028 directly to Commandant, US Army Infantry School, ATTN: ATSH-ATD, Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5000.

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

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## CHAPTER 1

# THE ROLE OF ANTIARMOR ORGANIZATIONS

*Antiarmor companies and platoons can fight and win engagements within the full spectrum of operations (offense, defense, stability, and support). The antiarmor company is normally task organized by the airborne/air assault infantry battalion commander or the Stryker brigade combat team (SBCT) commander, based on his estimate of the situation, to perform a variety of tactical missions as part of battalion or SBCT operations. The light infantry battalion commander task organizes his antiarmor platoon in much the same manner. In filling this combat role, the antiarmor unit integrates with combat, combat support (CS), and combat service support (CSS) elements. The company and platoons are capable of deploying as part of the Army's force projection requirements. This chapter addresses antiarmor doctrine, organization, fundamentals, and capabilities and limitations.*

### 1-1. ANTIARMOR DOCTRINE

Antiarmor systems operate on the battlefield with infantry, armor, and other elements of the combined-arms team as well as with the SBCT. Long-range antiarmor fires are important to destroying the integrity of the enemy's combined-arms team. US tactical doctrine prefers to use a base-of-fire force or a fixing force along with a maneuver force. A commander's situational understanding (SU) will allow units to effectively find and fix the enemy force while maintaining sufficient combat power for decisive maneuver and sufficient depth to reduce the risk and exploit success. Mass and depth are the keys to employing antiarmor assets. When terrain and fields of fire allow, an antiarmor commander (or platoon leader) should control antiarmor subordinate units, planning and directing antiarmor fires in accordance with the higher commander's scheme of maneuver. During tactical operations, antiarmor units suppress, fix, or destroy enemy at long ranges, allowing infantry forces to maneuver. Commanders should task organize and employ antiarmor units based on an analysis of the factors of mission, enemy, terrain, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations (METT-TC).

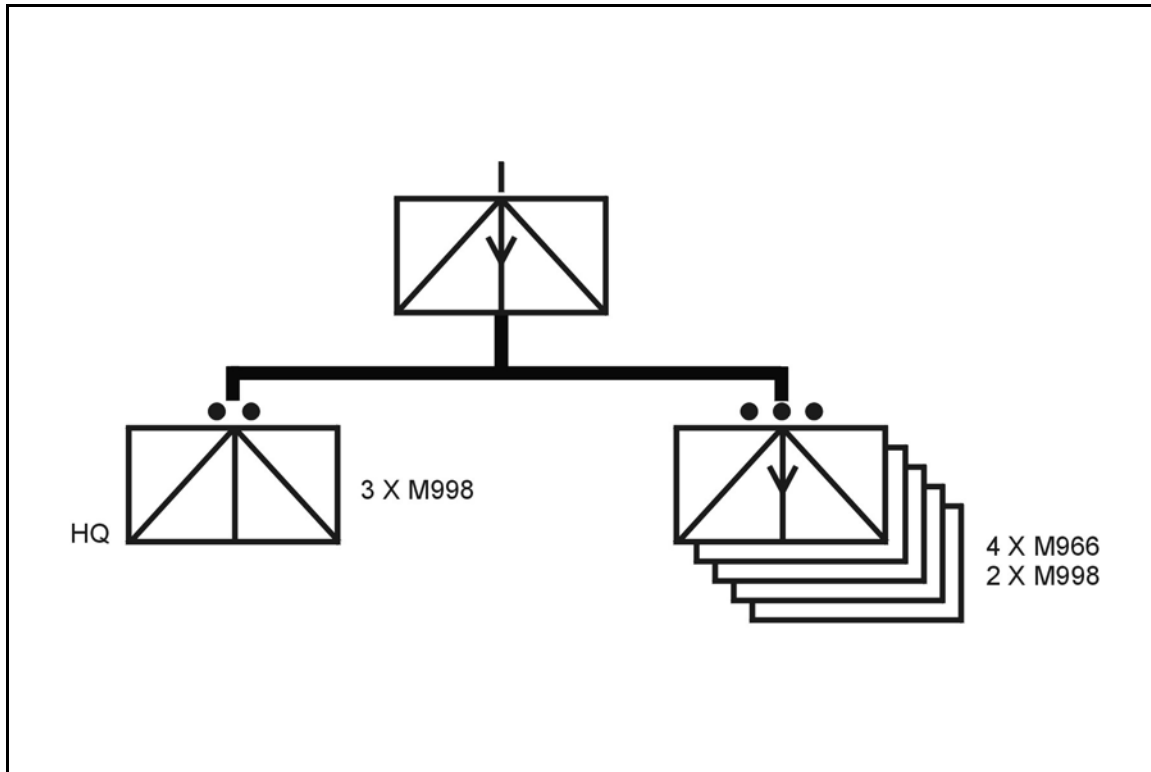
### 1-2. ORGANIZATION AND CHARACTERISTICS

The armor and motorized threat of potential enemies has led to organizing light, airborne, and air assault battalions, and the SBCTs, with antiarmor units. Although they may differ in their organization and equipment, they all have the tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) weapon system as a centerpiece. In the light, airborne, and air assault battalions, each antiarmor platoon has two sections, and each section has two vehicles. The SBCT antiarmor company consists of three platoons with three TOW-equipped antiarmor interim armored vehicles (ICVs) in each platoon. Table 1-1, page 1-2, depicts the table of organization and equipment (TOE) for antiarmor units.

| SIZE ALLOCATED                 | TYPE OF TOE                                    |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Antiarmor Company (5 Platoons) | Infantry (air assault and airborne) battalions |
| Antiarmor Company (3 Platoons) | Stryker brigade combat team                    |
| Antiarmor Platoon              | Light infantry battalion                       |

**Table 1-1. Antiarmor organization options.**

a. **Antiarmor Company in the Airborne and Air Assault Battalion.** Each infantry battalion in the airborne or air assault division has an *assigned antiarmor company* (Figure 1-1). The antiarmor company commander is responsible for advising the battalion commander on the tactical employment of the company and its platoons.



**Figure 1-1. Air assault (or airborne) infantry battalion antiarmor company.**