

Armor in the Insurgency: The Steel Beast



This article is part of the [Antistasi Commander's Handbook](#).

Battle Quotes

“Lead me, follow me, or get out of my way.”

— General George S. Patton Jr.

1. PURPOSE

This document establishes the official doctrine for the acquisition, classification, employment, and preservation of captured Armored Fighting Vehicles (AFVs). The successful integration of armor provides an asymmetric advantage, enabling our forces to transition from harassment to decisive offensive action. However, these assets are finite, irreplaceable, and magnets for enemy retribution. Their misuse guarantees not just tactical failure, but strategic loss.

2. SITUATION

a. The Armored Paradox

As an insurgency, our relationship with armor is defined by a fundamental paradox: the enemy's greatest ground-based strength becomes our most potent, and most vulnerable, asset upon its capture. It is both the primary threat we face and our single most powerful conventional weapon.

b. The Core Constraint: The Law of Scarcity

We are scrappers, not manufacturers. Every AFV in our arsenal is a battlefield prize won with blood. We possess no factories for replacement, limited depots for repair, and finite caches of ammunition. **The preservation of captured armor is a strategic imperative equal in importance to its effective employment.**



Guerilla Commander's Warning

A captured vehicle is a fleeting opportunity. The enemy will immediately vector air assets, quick-reaction forces (QRF), and hunter-killer teams to destroy it. Your first battle



with a new AFV is not against the next garrison, but against the clock. Have a recovery and concealment plan *before* you initiate the capture.

3. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Our armor doctrine is built on a single, non-negotiable principle: **The Combined Arms Team**. An AFV operating without infantry is a blind, clumsy giant waiting to be slain. Infantry operating without armored support against a fortified foe is sacrificial. The relationship is symbiotic and mandatory.

a. The Symbiotic Combat Team

graph TD
subgraph Combat Team A(Armored Vehicle
Mobile Firepower &
Hardened Protection)
B(Infantry Screen
360° Security, ATGM Hunters,
Target Designation)
C(Assault/Support Element
Exploits Breaches,
Secures Flanks & Buildings)
D(Commander
Orchestrates Movement,
Manages Fire Control)
end
A -- Provides Overwhelming Fire Support --> C
B -- Identifies & Eliminates AT Threats --> A
C -- Clears Terrain Unsafe for Armor --> A
A -- Creates Breaches For --> C
D -. Controls & Coordinates .-> A
D -. Commands .-> B
D -. Leads .-> C
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style B fill:#1b4f72,stroke:#333,stroke-width:2px,color:#fff
style C fill:#2874A6,stroke:#333,stroke-width:2px,color:#fff
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Battle Quotes

“Tanks are a new and powerful weapon, but they are not a cure-all. They cannot replace infantry, and they are helpless without their support.”

— Heinz Guderian

b. Core Tactical Roles

(1) **The Breacher (MBT/IFV):** Used against static, fortified positions. The AFV advances methodically *behind* its infantry screen. The infantry identifies threats (mines, AT teams), and the AFV eliminates them with precision fire from its main gun or autocannon. It creates the breach through which the main assault element storms.

(2) **The Hammer and Anvil (MBT/IFV/SPAA):** A classic maneuver. The AFV serves as the “anvil,” fixing an enemy force in place from a hull-down or concealed support-by-fire position. The enemy becomes decisively engaged with the AFV, allowing our infantry “hammer” to maneuver, unobserved, onto their flank or rear and annihilate them.

(3) **Shock and Awe (IFV/LAV):** Used to shatter enemy morale and cohesion during a fast-moving, violent assault. Best deployed against disorganized or “soft” targets (e.g., a retreating enemy, a lightly defended convoy). This tactic requires precise timing to prevent the AFV from outrunning its infantry support and becoming isolated.

4. TAXONOMY OF CAPTURED STEEL: KNOW YOUR BEAST

Not all armor is created equal. Misunderstanding a vehicle's intended role is a fatal error. A commander must employ each AFV according to its specific strengths and weaknesses.

Vehicle Class	Primary Role	Strengths	Critical Weaknesses	Example
MBT	Breakthrough / Anti-Armor	Heavy armor, powerful main gun	Poor visibility, slow, vulnerable to air/ATGM	T-72, M1 Abrams
IFV	Infantry Support	Autocannon, ATGM, carries troops	Lighter armor, vulnerable to cannons	BMP-2, M2 Bradley
APC	Protected Transport	Carries a full squad, HMG	Thin armor, purely defensive	M113, BTR-60
MRAP/LAV	Recon / Fire Support	High speed, resistant to mines/IEDs	Vulnerable to all AT weapons	Hunter, Ifrit, Strider
SPAA	Air Defense / Infantry Shredder	Very high rate of fire	No anti-armor capability, thin armor	ZSU-23-4 “Shilka”
SPA	Indirect Fire Support	Long-range artillery, area denial	No direct-fire ability, helpless if spotted	M109, 2S1 Gvozdika

a. Main Battle Tank (MBT)

- Use for:** Spearheading assaults on bases, forming a base of fire, and hunting enemy armored columns.
- Do NOT use for:** Routine patrols or as a battle taxi. Its fuel consumption and high profile are prohibitive.

b. Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV)

- Use for:** Aggressive flanking maneuvers, urban combat support, and destroying lighter vehicles.
- Do NOT use for:** Engaging MBTs head-on without a decisive ATGM advantage.

c. Armored Personnel Carrier (APC)

1. **Use for:** Rapidly deploying squads, providing a mobile HMG base of fire, and casualty evacuation.
1. **Do NOT use for:** Assaulting positions. Its thin armor will be shredded by anything heavier than small arms.

d. Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) / MRAP

1. **Use for:** Reconnaissance, QRF duties, and hit-and-run attacks on soft targets.
1. **Do NOT use for:** Any form of direct, sustained engagement. Speed is its only true armor.

e. Self-Propelled Anti-Aircraft (SPAA)

1. **Use for:** Area air defense, and secondarily, for psychological terror and shredding massed infantry in the open.
1. **Do NOT use for:** Any anti-armor role. It is a high-priority target for all enemy ground forces.

f. Self-Propelled Artillery (SPA)

1. **Use for:** Area denial and destroying static enemy fortifications from extreme range. A strategic asset for softening up a target before an assault.
1. **Do NOT use for:** Anything other than indirect fire. If an enemy sees your SPA, it is already dead. Requires a dedicated security element.

5. ACQUISITION AND EMPLOYMENT

a. Acquisition: The Four "I"s

Capturing an AFV is a specialized ambush focused on disablement, not destruction. (1) **Immobilize:** Target the tracks or engine with LAT or MAT launchers. A stationary vehicle is a potential prize; a burning wreck is a failure. (2) **Isolate:** Immediately eliminate or suppress any supporting enemy infantry. (3) **Intimidate:** Use heavy machine gun fire to suppress the vehicle's crew, forcing them to button up or bail out. (4) **Initiate Recovery:** Once the crew is eliminated and the area is secure, the designated engineer must move in immediately to repair the vehicle for extraction to a pre-planned hide site.

b. Target Priority

Gunners must engage threats in a specific order to ensure the survival of the AFV and the success of the mission: (1) Known ATGM Teams / Launchers. (2) Enemy MBTs. (3) Enemy IFVs / LAVs that pose a direct threat. (4) Crew-Served Weapons (HMG, GMG). (5) Massed Infantry (use coaxial MG to conserve main gun ammunition).

6. COMMANDER'S DEPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

1. **OBJECTIVE:** Is the mission's importance worth the potential loss of this irreplaceable asset?
1. **INTELLIGENCE:** Do we know the likely enemy composition, especially their AT and air capabilities?
1. **ASSET & CREW:** Is the AFV fully repaired, fueled, and armed? Is the crew experienced and briefed?
 1. (a) **Commander:** Calm, decisive leader.
 2. (b) **Gunner:** Best shot available.
 3. (c) **Driver:** Skilled in tactical movement.
1. **SUPPORT PACKAGE:** Is there a dedicated, full-strength infantry squad assigned as a screen? Do they understand their role?
1. **PLANNING:** Is the route planned? Are support-by-fire and hull-down positions identified?
1. **WITHDRAWAL:** Is there a primary and alternate withdrawal route? Are rally points designated?

Guerilla Commander's Note



A tank is a command-level asset, not a squad-level toy. Its deployment is a deliberate decision, not a whim. If you cannot answer "Yes" to every item on this checklist, the vehicle does not leave its hide site. Patience in planning prevents catastrophic loss in execution.

7. LOGISTICS & PRESERVATION: TAMING THE BEAST

An AFV is a logistical black hole. Its hunger for fuel, ammunition, and repair parts will dictate the tempo of your operations.

a. The "3 R's" Drill: Rearm, Refuel, Repair

This is the mandatory, immediate action upon mission completion.

1. **Rearm:** Tally expended ammunition and immediately replenish it from captured supplies.
2. **Refuel:** An AFV should never be stored with less than a full tank of fuel.

3. **Repair:** Conduct a full systems check. Repair any and all damage *immediately*.

b. Hide Your Fist

When not in use, an AFV must be invisible. (1) **Concealment:** Large barns, dense forests, industrial warehouses, or underground garages are ideal. Use camouflage nets. (2) **Security:** The hide site must be guarded at all times by a dedicated security element.

8. THE CARDINAL SINS OF GUERRILLA ARMOR

Violation of these rules will result in the loss of the vehicle and the death of its crew!

1. **The Lone Wolf:** Deploying an AFV without a dedicated, integrated infantry screen.
 2. **Ignoring the Sky:** Failing to account for enemy attack helicopters. If air threats are active, armor stays hidden.
 3. **Ammunition Profligacy:** Firing the main gun at infantry when machine guns will suffice.
 4. **Forgetting the Exit:** Committing to an attack without a planned and reconnoitered withdrawal route.
 5. **Static Defense:** Using an AFV as a fixed turret. A stationary tank that has been spotted is a dead tank.
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9. SUMMARY

Armor is a tool of escalation. It is not an “I win” button but a complex weapon system that demands discipline, forethought, and unwavering adherence to combined arms doctrine. It is a scalpel for specific, high-stakes tactical problems, not a sledgehammer for every nail. Protect it, support it, and employ it with intelligence and controlled violence. Used correctly, your steel fist will punch a hole through the enemy's lines and pave the road to victory. Used poorly, it will become a burning tomb, a monument to your tactical failure.

Battle Quotes

“The battle is won by the victory, not by the number of corpses.”

— Latin Proverb

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