

An Introduction to Combined Arms, Guerilla-Style



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

Battle Quotes

“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

— Aristotle

1. PURPOSE

To establish the doctrine for integrating dissimilar weapon systems and tactical elements to achieve a synergistic effect on the battlefield. This document will move the individual fighter's mindset from that of a lone rifleman to that of a member of a cohesive, mutually supporting team: a force that is exponentially more lethal than the sum of its parts.

2. SITUATION

Our force is consistently outnumbered and outgunned in any symmetrical engagement. We cannot match the enemy rifle-for-rifle, nor can we trade blows with their armored vehicles (at least, not until late game). Our tactical advantage, therefore, must be manufactured. We achieve this by creating complex dilemmas for the enemy: forcing their rigid command structure to react to multiple, simultaneous threats from different directions. This is the essence of guerrilla-style combined arms.

Battle Quotes

“The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy's not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we have made our position unassailable.”

— Sun Tzu

3. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

We will achieve tactical superiority by presenting the enemy with concurrent problems that their doctrine cannot solve. Combined arms is the art of using one element to enable the success of another. A machine gunner suppresses the enemy so a rifle team can flank. A sniper eliminates a key threat so an assault element can advance. A mortar provides smoke to conceal a retreat. This isn't about employing tanks and jets; it's about the intelligent orchestration of the assets we possess.

a. The Core Functions of Combined Arms

graph TD; subgraph "Enablers" A[

Suppression

Pin the Enemy

]; B[

Obscuration

Blind the Enemy

]; end subgraph "Decisive Action" C[

Maneuver

Kill the Enemy

]; end subgraph "Protection" D[

Security

Protect the Force

]; end A --> C; B --> C; D -.-> A; D -.-> B; D -.-> C; style A fill:#8d2222,stroke:#333,stroke-width:2px,color:#fff style B fill:#555,stroke:#333,stroke-width:2px,color:#fff style C fill:#1e6a2e,stroke:#333,stroke-width:2px,color:#fff style D fill:#1b4f72,stroke:#333,stroke-width:2px,color:#fff

(1) Suppression

This is the act of placing a high volume of fire on an enemy position to force them into cover. Effective suppression degrades the enemy's ability to observe, move, and return accurate fire. It fixes them in place, making them vulnerable to other actions.

1. **Primary Tool:** The General-Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), automatic rifles.

(2) Obscuration

This is the act of denying the enemy visual information. Using smoke to conceal friendly movement across dangerous areas (e.g., open fields, roads) is a key enabler for maneuver. It allows us to move where the enemy does not want us to.

1. **Primary Tool:** Smoke grenades, 40mm smoke rounds, mortar smoke shells.

(3) Maneuver

This is the movement of a force to a position of tactical advantage, typically the enemy's flank or rear. This movement is almost always enabled by effective Suppression or Obscuration. The maneuver element is the "killing" element that closes with and destroys the fixed enemy.

1. **Primary Tool:** The main rifle or assault team.

(4) Security

This is the act of protecting the main force from outside threats. While the suppressive and maneuver elements are engaged, the security element observes likely avenues of approach to provide early warning of the enemy's Quick Reaction Force (QRF).

1. **Primary Tool:** A designated overwatch team, often with magnified optics.

Battle Quotes

"Find the enemy. Fix the enemy in place. Strike the enemy. And move on."

— General Frank Kitson

4. TACTICAL APPLICATION: COMMON PAIRINGS

(1) The "Suppress and Flank"

This is the foundational tactic of small-unit infantry combat. A Support-By-Fire (SBF) element, ideally with a machine gun, provides heavy, continuous suppression on a known enemy position. While the enemy is pinned, a Maneuver element uses a concealed route to move to the enemy's flank. On signal, the SBF shifts or lifts fire, and the Maneuver element assaults and destroys the enemy.

sequenceDiagram participant SBF as Support By Fire participant Enemy participant Maneuver as Maneuver Element SBF->>Enemy: 1. Open Fire & Suppress Note over Enemy: Pinned Down! Cannot return effective fire or move. Maneuver->>Maneuver: 2. Use Concealed Route to Flank Maneuver->>SBF: 3. Signal "Ready to Assault" SBF->>SBF: 4. Shift or Cease Fire Maneuver->>Enemy: 5. Assault and Destroy

(2) The "Sniper and Assault"

This is the decapitation and exploitation model. A sniper or Designated Marksman (DM) team

engages and eliminates high-value targets from a distance—enemy machine gunners, anti-tank soldiers, officers, and radio operators. With these key threats removed, the main assault element can advance on a weakened and disorganized enemy.

sequenceDiagram participant Sniper participant Enemy participant Assault as Assault Element
Sniper->>Enemy: 1. Eliminate High-Value Targets (Officer, MG, AT) Note over Enemy: Command structure broken, key weapons neutralized.
Assault->>Assault: 2. Begin Advance Assault->>Enemy: 3. Assault a Disorganized Foe

(3) The "Mortar and Maneuver"

This is the application of indirect fire to enable movement. A mortar team, directed by a forward observer, can provide High Explosive (HE) fire to suppress, disorganize, and destroy enemy positions, or provide smoke screens to obscure the advance of the main body across open terrain. Precise communication is critical for this tactic.

sequenceDiagram participant Obscuration as Smoke Element (Mortar/Grenadier) participant Enemy participant Maneuver as Maneuver Element
Obscuration->>Enemy: 1. Deploy Smoke Screen between Enemy and Maneuver path Note over Enemy: Vision Blocked! Cannot see the advancing element.
Maneuver->>Maneuver: 2. Cross the Dangerous Area
Maneuver->>Enemy: 3. Emerge from smoke to Assault

Exploiting the Digital Mind



The enemy AI is highly susceptible to suppression. A single, well-placed machine gun can effectively pin an entire enemy squad, allowing friendly elements to maneuver with relative freedom. Exploit this weakness relentlessly.

5. THE COMBINED ARMS CHECKLIST

Before initiating an assault, the team or squad leader must confirm the following:

(1) What Is My Suppression Element?

1. **Who is responsible for pinning the enemy down?**
 1. What is their position and their sector of fire?

(2) What Is My Maneuver Element?

1. Who is responsible for the final assault?

1. What is their route to the objective?

(3) What Is Their Relationship?

1. How will the two elements coordinate?

1. What is the signal to initiate the assault? What is the signal to shift or lift suppressive fire?

(4) How Will We Use Obscuration?

1. Do we have smoke?

1. Where and when will it be deployed to best support the maneuver element?

(5) Where Is Security?

1. Who is watching our back?

1. What is their position and what are they looking for?

6. SUMMARY

Combined arms is a mindset, not a specific inventory of equipment. It is the conscious and deliberate synchronization of all available assets to achieve a goal. By orchestrating suppression, maneuver, and security, we create tactical dilemmas the enemy cannot solve. A lone fighter is a target. A coordinated team applying the principles of combined arms is an unstoppable force.

The Perfection of Simplicity

“A designer knows he has achieved perfection not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.”

— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

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Last update: **2026/01/04 06:44**

