

Owning the Night: A Guide to Nocturnal Operations



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

Battle Quotes

"In darkness, the eyes of the brave and the cowardly are the same."

— Japanese Proverb

1. PURPOSE

To establish the doctrine for conducting operations during the hours of darkness. The night is a unique operational environment that nullifies many of the enemy's technological advantages and plays to the strengths of a guerrilla force: stealth, patience, and surprise. This document provides the framework for turning darkness into our most powerful ally.

2. SITUATION

a. The Asymmetric Advantage

The enemy, while often equipped with night vision technology, operates with the mindset of a conventional army. They are garrisoned, road-bound, and psychologically conditioned to view the night as a time of rest and heightened danger. For us, the night is our natural habitat. It masks our numbers, conceals our movements, and amplifies the psychological impact of our attacks.

b. The Duality of Darkness

The night is a double-edged sword. It is our cloak, but it also creates immense friction. It degrades command and control, complicates navigation, and increases the likelihood of friendly fire incidents. Success at night demands superior discipline, meticulous planning, and adherence to specialized procedures.

3. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Our doctrine for nocturnal operations is founded on a single principle: **Control the Signature**. This means mastering our own light, sound, and thermal profile while detecting and exploiting the enemy's. Every action, from movement to communication to engagement, must be conducted with the goal of remaining invisible until the moment of decisive violence.

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a. The Four Pillars of Night Operations

(1) Stealth

Movement must be slow, deliberate, and quiet. The “night walk” is a pace, not a race. Frequent listening halts are mandatory.

(2) Security

Maintain 360-degree security at all times. Sound travels in strange ways at night; threats can come from any direction.

(3) Simplicity

Complex plans fail in the dark. Missions must have simple, clear objectives. Formations, routes, and signals must be unambiguous.

(4) Violence of Action

When contact is initiated, it must be sudden, overwhelming, and brief. The goal is to shatter the enemy's cohesion through shock and awe before they can orient themselves.

4. EQUIPMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Success at night begins before the mission starts.

a. The Tools of Darkness

(1) Night Vision Goggles (NVGs)

The basic requirement. Understand their limitations, especially their narrow field of view.

(2) Thermal Optics

The ultimate detection tool. Use them to scan for enemy heat signatures, but rely on NVGs or the naked eye for positive identification.

(3) Suppressors

A mandatory piece of equipment. A suppressed weapon masks the muzzle flash and dramatically reduces the sound, making it nearly impossible for the enemy to locate the shooter.

(4) IR Lasers/Illuminators

The primary tool for target designation and aiming without revealing your position with visible light. All team members must be proficient in their use.

b. Light and Noise Discipline

This is non-negotiable. One mistake can compromise the entire operation.

1. **NO white light.** Weapon flashlights are for emergency use only. Use red-filtered lights for map reading if absolutely necessary.
1. **NO visible lasers.** IR lasers only.
1. **ALL vehicle lights off.** Drive slowly and carefully using NVGs.
1. **Suppressors on ALL primary weapons.**
1. **Verbal communication** must be kept to an absolute minimum. Use hand signals or whisper.

5. TACTICAL APPLICATION

a. Navigation

Do not rely solely on GPS. Every fighter must be able to navigate by compass, terrain features (silhouettes against the skyline), and stellar alignment. Plan routes that follow low ground (valleys,

creek beds) to avoid being silhouetted.

b. Engagement

(1) **Positive Identification (PID):** The cardinal rule of night combat. Never fire at a target you have not positively identified as hostile. Thermal signatures and shapes can be deceptive. (2) **IR Laser Discipline:** Use your laser to designate targets for your team. A designated leader should “paint” the priority target for the squad to focus fire. Do not leave your laser on constantly. (3) **The Night Ambush:** The quintessential night operation. Utilize command-detonated explosives (Claymores, IEDs) as your primary killing mechanism, initiated by the leader. Follow up with a short, violent burst of suppressed fire, then withdraw into the darkness.

Guerilla Commander's Tip



In the dark, you control the tempo. The enemy is a guest in your house. Use sound to your advantage; a single thrown rock can draw a panicked burst of fire, revealing an enemy position. Be patient. The fighter who owns the silence owns the night.

c. Countering Enemy Illumination

If an enemy flare is deployed, the immediate action for all personnel is:

1. **FREEZE.** Do not move. Motion is easily detected.
2. **Avert your eyes** from the flare to preserve your natural night vision.
3. **Seek the nearest deep shadow** or go prone only if cover is immediately available. Do not run across open ground.

6. SUMMARY

The night is not to be feared; it is to be mastered. For the guerrilla, it is the great equalizer, a force multiplier that costs nothing but discipline. By controlling our signatures, adhering to simple plans, and executing with controlled violence, we can move, strike, and vanish with impunity. We can make the enemy dread the sunset. We must own the night.

Battle Quotes

“By night, an army is overcome with a thousand groundless terrors.”

— Vegetius

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