

MQA-11 BDE: ARMY STAFF / BRIGADE TOUR

PREREQUISITES: MQA-9, 10

REQUIRED READING: Brigade TACSOP, ALO Smart Book

PURPOSE: Familiarize new ALO with Army staff functions and providing a tour of the brigade.

Introduction – (Slides 2 - 3)

Army staff activities focus on the purpose of the staff to assist the commander. This is accomplished mainly by staff contributions to the timely making and executing of decisions. The commander and staff should be continually alert to opportunities to streamline cumbersome or time-consuming procedures. Staff activities must contribute to mission accomplishment and the procedures employed must be the means to accomplish the mission in an effective manner not ends in themselves.

The staff will continuously provide information to the commander, sometimes before and sometimes after the information has been analyzed. This information is not necessarily provided to make an immediate decision, but to keep the commander abreast of the situation or big picture. This is critical during the battle. The staff must continuously feed the commander information on the progress of the battle. One piece of information alone may not be significant, but added to others; it may be the information that allows the commander to formulate the big picture and to make a decision. Commanders and staff must always remember that they are often required to work multiple issues at the same time. Information must be set into the proper frame of reference and be relevant to prevent wasting staff officers' and commander's time.

The staff prepares estimates to assist the commander in decision-making. A staff estimate consists of significant facts, events, and conclusions (based on current or anticipated situations) and recommendations on how available resources can be best used and what additional resources are required. The commander uses recommendations to select feasible courses of action for further analysis. Adequate plans hinge on early and continuing estimates by staff officers. Their failure to make or update these estimates may lead to errors or omissions in the development of a course of action. An example is staff officers maintaining a current estimate of the situation in their areas of interest, in coordination with other staffs. Staff officers make recommendations to assist the commander in reaching decisions and establishing policies. Staff officers also offer recommendations to one another and to their subordinate commanders. These recommendations are for information and assistance only. Whether the procedures are formal or informal, staff officers must carefully analyze and compare all feasible alternatives using the best information available. They must candidly and objectively present the alternative to the commander clearly showing the advantages and the disadvantages. They must be thoroughly prepared to recommend a best alternative to the commander. Their preparation includes coordinating with the staff officers whose areas of interest will be affected by the recommendation. The recommendations are stated in a form that requires only the commander's approval or disapproval.

This section will outline US Army staff functions and identify the principle Army staff positions and their areas of responsibility. While this information is detailed, it is presented in an effort to show the scope of their roles and how they interrelate. Some of the information in the lesson was taken from Army Field Manual, series 101-5 and it is recommended that this document be reviewed any time more information about an Army staff job is required. The topics discussed are as follows:

- Brigade Commander
- Executive Officer (XO)
- Command Sergeant Major (CSM)
- Personnel Officer (S-1)
- Intelligence Officer (S-2)
- Operations Officer (S-3)
- Logistics Officer (S-4)
- Signal Officer (S-6)
- Fire Support Officer (FSO) (next slide)
- Fire Support Coordinator (FSCoord)

- ❑ Air Defense Artillery Commander (ADA)
- ❑ Headquarters and Headquarters Commandant (HHC) Commander and First Sergeant
- ❑ Aviation Liaison Officer (LNO)
- ❑ Engineer Officer (ABE)
- ❑ COLT Platoon Leader

Brigade Commander – (Slide 4)

The brigade commander is in charge of and has the final say in matters relating to the brigade. He will rely on the recommendations made from the XO, FSCOORD, Engineer commander, and ALO to make his final decisions. All other staff personnel work through their chain of command to give information to the brigade commander.

It is very important to realize that one of the positions that have the ear of the commander is the ALO. The ALO will work primarily with the S3 shop for most planning considerations. But, if a particular item is extremely important and the S3 and XO are not willing to take it to the commander, then the ALO can bypass the S3 and XO and talk directly to the brigade commander. This is particularly important during a battle. CAS is so flexible and has such a short time on station that decisions must be made immediately. That is why the ALO must always have access to the brigade commander during battles.

While in garrison, the ALO must schedule an appointment with the brigade commander and explain exactly what CAS can do for him. The ALO must also explain what the functions of an ALO and ETAC are as per the MOA as well as what the maintenance concerns are in garrison and deployed. Another important thing to brief the brigade commander is what the Air Force chain of command is in garrison and deployed. He must realize that the ALO works **with** him and **not** for him. Lastly, the ALO must explain how CAS can be best employed. That will go a long way in the planning process if the brigade commander is behind you. No one will argue with him.

XO – (Slide 5)

The XO is the commander's principal assistant for directing, coordinating, supervising, and training the staff, except in areas the commander reserves. The commander normally delegates executive management authority (equivalent to command of the staff) to the XO. The XO frees the commander from routine details and passes pertinent data, information, and in-sight from the staff to the commander and from the commander to the staff. The XO must be able to anticipate battlefield events and share with the commander a near-identical battlefield vision of operations, events, and requirements. He must understand the commander's intent better than, or at least as well as, subordinate commanders. The XO must understand the commander's personality, style, and instincts as they affect the commander's intentions. Staff members must inform the XO of any recommendations or information they pass directly to the commander or have instructions they receive directly from the commander. During battle operations, the XO will run the Tactical Operations Center (TOC). During non-battle field time, the XO primary concerns are generating combat power through maintenance. For specific duties of the XO, reference Army FM 101-5.

The major interaction between the ALO and the XO will be during the actual battle. The XO runs the TOC and is normally in charge of the CAS targeting cell. Realize that the ALO Liaisons for the Commander and will frequently receive information on how the commander wants to employ CAS that the XO has not received yet. The delay to the XO is due to Army communication problems and the ALO has his own communication network with the commander (usually the ALO is co-located with the commander or has an Air Force representative co-located who will pass information directly to the TOC through Air Force communication systems).

CSM – (Slide 6)

The command sergeant major is a member of the commander's personal staff by virtue of his being the senior noncommissioned officer of the command. The CSM is responsible for providing the commander with personal, professional, and technical advice on enlisted soldier matters and the noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps as a whole. A command sergeant major is located at every echelon of command from battalion through corps. The CSM duties and responsibilities vary according to the commander's specific desires and the unit's type, size, and mission. For specific duties of the CSM, reference Army FM 101-5.

The only interaction between the ALO and the CSM is when there is Air Force to Army enlisted conflict in the field. All Army enlisted personnel will listen and obey the CSM. So, it is important to remember this when it appears the normal chain of command is not working. An example would be with maintenance problems. If the

HHC First Sergeant refuses to work on AF vehicles and the HHC chain-of-command does not take action, the ALO can also work the problem through the CSM.

S1 – (Slide 7)

The S1 (“S” is for brigade and echelons below brigade and “G” is used for echelons above brigade. Example is G1 is the division personnel officer while the S1 is a brigade or battalion personnel officer) is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning human resources (military and civilian), which include personnel readiness, personnel services, and headquarters management. A personnel officer is located at every echelon from battalion through corps. For specific duties of the S1, reference Army FM 101-5.

An ALO will interact with the S1 when it comes time to transport personnel. The S1 is normally in charge of where and when sections move. Developing a good report with the S1 will help when it comes time for major deployment like NTC. The S1 can put the Air Force on the last train and plane to go to NTC and on the first ones coming back.

S2 – (Slide 8)

The S2 is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning military intelligence (MI), counterintelligence, security operations, and military intelligence training. An intelligence officer is located at every echelon from battalion through corps. For specific duties of the S2, reference Army FM 101-5.

There is a considerable interaction between the ALO and the S2. All CAS planning will require S2 inputs on timing of the enemy movement, size of enemy echelons, and tactics. The ALO can help the S2 determine the best avenue of approach for enemy fixed wing aircraft. During the planning process, the Army will continually fall back on event driven situation. This is where the S2 shop can really help the ALO translate events into a pretty accurate time sequence. The S2 shop can also be effective in predicting enemy ADA sites (along with the ADA officer) and if certain locations are safe for ETAC placement when controlling air. Finally, the S2 will receive the division OPORD as soon as it is available and start deciphering it. The good S2 will get a fairly accurate read on the enemy and will help the ALO understand what the next battles will entail and how to best fight with the given resources.

In brigades with a Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), the UAV Platoon Leader can be thought of as the “UAV Pilot.” While the S2 will direct the UAV to specific areas of interest, it is the UAV Platoon Leader who directs the aircraft’s movement. The ALO should closely coordinate with the UAV Platoon Leader during both the planning and execution phases to ensure UAV and CAS deconfliction.

S3 – (Slide 9)

The S3 is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning training, operations and plans, and force development and modernization. An operations officer is located at every echelon from battalion through corps. For specific duties of the S3, reference Army FM 101-5.

The S3 Air will be the individual who will fill out the DD Form 1972’s and retrieve the ATO/ITO and SPINS from division. It is important to develop a good working relationship with the S3 Air because he can make your life so much easier. The ALO must train the S3 Air on the proper way to fill out the 1972’s and make sure he has all the information to put in the 1972’s from the planning process. The S3 Air is also the Army airspace manager. Make sure he lets you know where Army aviation is located throughout the battlespace and when it will be there. It will affect the ACA plan.

S3 Plans is where the orders are published. A lot of the time the CAS is left out of the order or at least part of the information like ACAs, EAs, etc. A way to fix the problem is to develop a CAS annex similar to the one in attachment 5 of the lesson MQA-8 BDE. This will help when it come time to activate ACAs during the battle because all echelons will have the information. If it is left to the Army to write the information in the order, it will be left out 90% of the time.

S4 – (Slide 10)

The S4 is the principal staff officer for coordinating the logistics integration of supply, maintenance, transportation, and services for the command. The S4 is the link between the support unit and his commander plus

the rest of the staff. The S4 assists the support unit commander in maintaining logistics visibility with the commander and the rest of the staff. The S4 must also maintain close and continuous coordination with the S3. A logistics officer is located at every echelon of command from battalion through corps. At brigade and battalion levels, the S4 not only coordinates activities but also executes requirements for the commander and unit. For specific duties of the S4, reference Army FM 101-5.

The interaction between the S4 and the ALO only occur when it is time to transport vehicle to or from a deployment. Make sure the S4 understands that the MRC-144 is a weapon system and must be treated like a "Pacer" item. It must be secured in a locked rail car during transport or in the secure truck during line haul operation. Since the Air Force has so few vehicles to move as compared to the Army, the S4 can normally move the vehicles to the last train when leaving for a deployment and make them the first vehicles loaded coming back for a deployment. Lastly, the S4 can get many of the supplies the ALO will need for operations like acetate, pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.

S6 – (Slide 11)

The S6 is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning signal operations, automation management, network management, and information security. A S6 is located at all echelons of command from battalion through corps. For specific duties of the S6, reference Army FM 101-5.

The S6 is the Army focal point for communication related material. If batteries are required, the S6 can order them for the ALO. If the ALO computer needs to be connected to the TACLAN, the S6 can do that as well. The S6 will also connect phones for communication to all echelons within the Army. This is important when the Air Force primary modes of communications go down. The S6 shop can also help get fills for the COMSEC radios, especially for the FM radios.

FSO – (Slide 12)

The FSO is the primary individual in the TOC during planning and execution that controls the Army artillery. The ALO and the FSO must work as one to determine the best plan for maximizing fires on the battlefield. It is important to remember that artillery is an indirect weapon while CAS is a direct fire system. But, only CAS and Artillery can affect the enemy before it comes in direct contact with the brigade. A lot of FSOs do not understand the concept of ORD-X to maximize firepower on the enemy. Make sure you go into great depth when instructing the FSO shop on CAS timing and execution. This will pay big dividends in actual execution. The more the FSO understands the abilities and limitations of CAS, the more likely he will back you up when you plan for CAS during a battle. The more the FSO and ALO become one in mind, the better the success of the brigade. The FSO should always be at your side and you should be at his. Unity in action will help expedite the targeting and execution of CAS during the battle.

FSCOORD – (Slide 13)

The fire support coordinator is the special staff officer for coordinating fire support and field artillery assets and operations in the command. The FSCOORD is the senior field artillery officer in the force. He is the commander of a field artillery unit supporting the force, normally the direct support artillery commander. The assistant or deputy FSCOORD is a permanent staff officer on the staff representing the FSCOORD in his absence. There is a FSCOORD with the maneuver force at every echelon of command from battalion through corps. At brigade, regiment, and below, the FSCOORD's representative is the FSO. For specific duties of the FSCOORD, reference Army FM 101-5.

The FSCOORD is one of the primary individuals, along with the ALO, who have the ear of the commander. During normal execution, the FSCOORD is the brigade commander's right hand man. A great FSCOORD will rely on the ALO's opinion and work to integrate fires with CAS to the maximum extent. As mentioned before, this is why the ALO or a senior Air Force representative should always be near the brigade commander and FSCOORD during the battles.

During the Rock Drill, The ALO and FSCOORD must be on the same page. The Army fights with fires then maneuver. That is why CAS is important because it will directly influence the ground battle. When the FSCOORD speaks during the Rock Drill, the ALO should be right at his side to insert anything that CAS will do during the battle. A good ALO will make the FSCOORD look great during Rock Drills and during execution.

Make sure that all information the ALO briefed with the FSO is also briefed to the FSCOORD. Normally, the FSO will share that information, but it is the ALO's job to make sure the FSCOORD understands it completely and will adhere to it.

ADA – (Slide 14)

The air defense coordinator is the special staff officer responsible for coordinating matters concerning the planning and employment of ADA systems, assets, and operations. The ADA officer is the senior air defense artillery officer in the command. For specific duties of the ADA officer, reference Army FM 101-5.

The interaction between the ADA officer and the ALO is very important. Any time CAS is inbound into the area of operation, the ADA officer must know what kind of aircraft is inbound, their squawk, their route of flight, and the time they will be in the area. Failure to do so could end up with friendly ADA shooting at friendly aircraft. Remember to update ADA anytime there is changes with aircraft, to include squawk rollovers.

HHC Commander – (Slide 15)

The headquarters commandant is the special staff officer responsible for OPCON over soldiers assigned to the specific headquarters that are not assigned or attached to subordinate commands. A headquarters commandant is located at corps, division, and major support command levels. For specific duties of the HHC commander / First Shirt, reference Army FM 101-5.

Most of the interaction between the HHC commander / First Shirt were discussed in lesson MQA-5 Maintenance. Just keep in mind that the HHC is responsible to do all work on your vehicles regardless of what you do for them. There have been problems in the past where the HHC won't fix broken Air Force vehicles because they say, "What are you doing for me? Like KP, guard duty, etc ...". Do not give in to that statement. It is in direct violation with the 4 star MOA which dictates that Air Force personnel work only on manning radio in respect to CAS sorties and liaison with the maneuver commander. The HHC shop is just the brigade commander's pawn to fix our vehicles. Just make sure you always get the 5988's in on time every day while in the field.

LNO – (Slide 16)

The aviation LNO is the special staff officer responsible for coordinating Army aviation assets and operations. The aviation LNO is a liaison officer to the brigade and will request aviation from division. The aviation LNO normally will have little interaction with the ALO. The few things to work out with the LNO would be for ETAC insertion (not recommended to insert ETACs deep!) or for JAAT missions. Some brigades will have the LNO as the runner to and from Division who will take DD Form 1972 Air Request to division and pick up ATO/ITO and Spins for the S3 Air.

ABE – (Slide 17)

The engineers, also called ABE in the TOC, will determine terrain characteristics and the best placement of obstacles for both the enemy (helping the S2 figure where the enemy will put their obstacles) and for the Army. It is important to work closely with the engineers because every obstacle has a great artillery and CAS target associated with it. And, if the engineers do not put in a planned obstacle because of time constraint or equipment failure, the ALO must know that so CAS can be planned to "fill in the gap". The ABE will also help the ALO terra base the terrain to figure the best communication solution for Air Force radios as well as the best locations of ETACs to view the expected CAS targets. The engineers can also develop map of any size for target areas or routes of travel to observation points. The planning the ABE will do can allow the ETAC and ALO to fly the route of travel by viewing the computer screen. This program will pay big dividends during night operations and allows the ETAC to become familiar with the terrain.

COLT Platoon Leader – (Slide 18)

The COLT Platoon Leader works directly for the FSO and the FSCOORD. His duties are to observe fires and adjust them as appropriate. If trained by the ALO, the COLTs can also call in CAS strikes deeper in the

battlespace than ETACs will normally go. This can be very effective in shaping the fight for the Army. Artillery is an indirect weapon and normally will not cause devastating effects on the enemy. CAS, on the other hand, is a direct weapon and can adjust immediately to hit the enemy on the move to cause devastating effects. The best way to train the COLTs is to give them academics followed up with TDYs on CAS trips. Remember that COLTs carry Lasers and can laze targets for CAS aircraft; very effect at night. Lastly, COLTs can provide great intelligence of the enemy movement. They will normally be the brigade's deepest eyes on the battlefield.

In some brigades, the COLT Platoon Leader is called the Brigade Reconnaissance Troop (BRT). When there is a BRT, he will not fall under the chain-of-command of artillery, but will work directly for the brigade commander.

Conclusion – (Slides 19 - 20)

The structure of the Army staff is designed to allow autonomous action and still be mutually supportive. As the preceding description of staff duties indicates, every key staff position is the coordinating officer responsible for parallel operations. This system foments a collegial approach to problem solving and builds redundancy into the planning process. On the other hand, it is also stove-piped, painfully methodical and plodding.

Until one sees the staff in action, it is hard to visualize the interdependencies that exist and determine exactly who works for who, how things get done, and which agency is responsible for the key elements required of the ALO to coordinate. The recommendation made in MQA-3 regarding steps to take upon assuming the office, is most applicable in designing a plan to get to know the staff officers. The type of coordination required must be done prior to engaging in any exercise or contingency. Arrange the proper introductions, have questions prepared and be ready to comment on the supported unit's SOPs as they affect ALO duties.