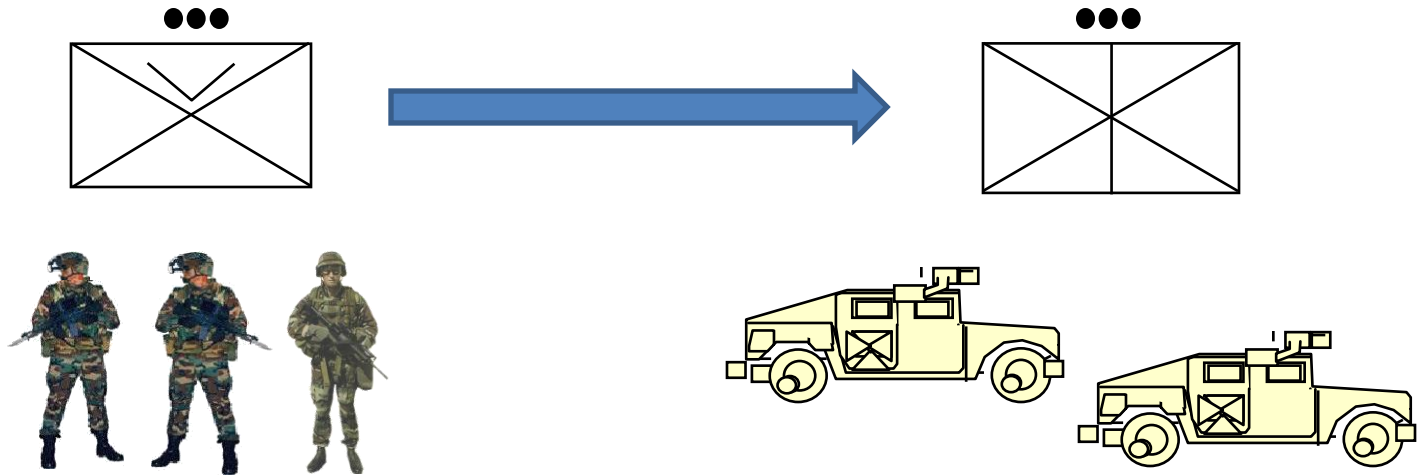




# Motorizing an Air Assault Infantry Platoon



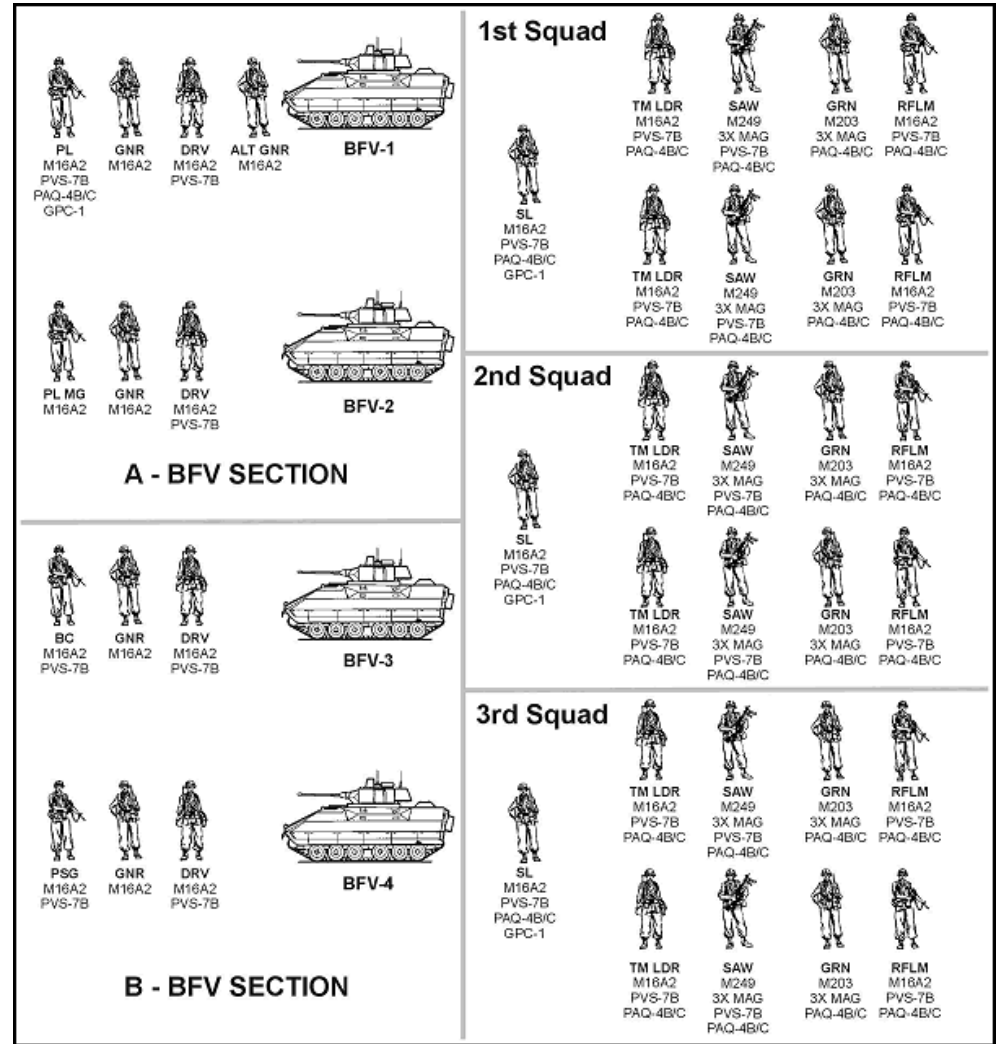
CPT Shawn Tabankin  
shawn.tabankin@us.army.mil



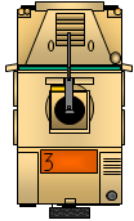
# Issue:

Motorized and Mechanized TOEs typically assign Drivers, Gunners and Vehicle Commanders **separate and aside** from the personnel assigned to the dismounted infantry squads.

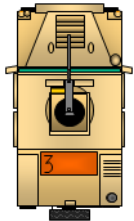
Air Assault platoons have **no such assigned personnel**. Drivers, Gunners, and Vehicle/Track Commanders for HMMWVs or MRAPs must come from the dismount squads themselves, stripping them of combat power.



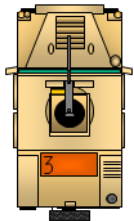
FM 3-21.71, Figure 1-1, Mechanized Platoon Organization



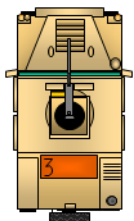
Driver  
Gunner



Driver  
Gunner



Driver  
Gunner



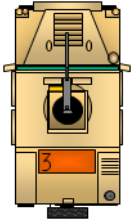
Driver  
Gunner

In a typical 4 x HMMWV patrol, a minimum of 8 PAX are required to crew the vehicles. These are personnel that **MUST** remain with the vehicles in any scenario where dismounted infantry are necessary to assault an objective.

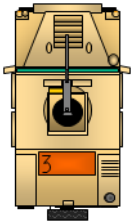


If each Infantry Squad is simply given two vehicles, then each Squad will lose a Fire Team in order to crew the vehicles.

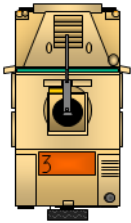
**As a result, the dismounted element will consist of two irregular fire teams from two separate squads.**



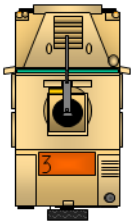
Driver – 1<sup>st</sup>/Alpha M203  
 Gunner – 1<sup>st</sup>/Alpha M4  
 TC – 1<sup>st</sup> Squad Leader  
 RL – 1<sup>st</sup>/Alpha Team Leader  
 RR – 1<sup>st</sup>/Alpha M249



Driver – 1<sup>st</sup>/Bravo Team Leader  
 Gunner – 1<sup>st</sup>/Bravo M203  
 TC – Patrol Leader (PSG or PL)  
 RL – FO/RTO or RTO  
 RR – 1<sup>st</sup>/Bravo M249



Driver – 2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha M203  
 Gunner – 2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha M4  
 TC – 2<sup>nd</sup> Squad Leader  
 RL – 2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha Team Leader  
 RR – 2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha M249



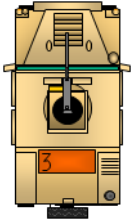
Driver – 2<sup>nd</sup>/Bravo M203  
 Gunner – 2<sup>nd</sup>/Bravo M4  
 TC – 2<sup>nd</sup>/Bravo Team Leader  
 RL – Medic  
 RR – Interpreter

Dismount/Assault Element Available:

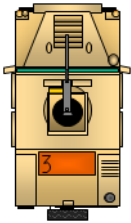
Patrol Leader (PSG or PL)  
 FO/RTO or RTO  
 Interpreter  
 Medic

1<sup>st</sup> Squad Leader  
 1<sup>st</sup>/Alpha Team Leader  
 1<sup>st</sup>/Alpha M249  
 1<sup>st</sup>/Bravo M249

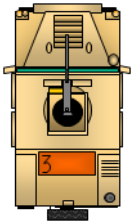
2<sup>nd</sup> Squad Leader  
 2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha Team Leader  
 2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha M249  
 2<sup>nd</sup>/Bravo Team Leader



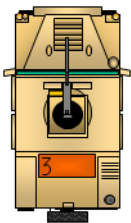
Driver – 1st Squad Leader  
 Gunner – 1st/Alpha M249  
 TC – 2nd/Alpha Team Leader  
 RL – 2nd/Alpha M249  
 RR – 2nd/Alpha M4



Driver – 1st/Alpha Team Leader  
 Gunner – 1st/Alpha M203  
 TC – Patrol Leader (PSG or PL)  
 RL – FO/RTO or RTO  
 RR – 2nd/Alpha M203



Driver – 1st/Bravo Team Leader  
 Gunner – 1st/Bravo M4  
 TC – 2nd Squad Leader  
 RL – Interpreter  
 RR – Medic



Driver – 1st/Bravo M249  
 Gunner – 1st/Bravo M203  
 TC – 2nd/Bravo Team Leader  
 RL – 2nd/Bravo M203  
 RR – 2nd/Bravo M249

## Suggested Solution:

**1<sup>st</sup> Squad = Drivers & Gunners**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Squad = Dismount/Assault Element**

(For sustainment purposes, Squads can alternate roles each day)

### Dismount/Assault Element Available:

**Patrol Leader (PSG or PL)**  
**FO/RTO or RTO**  
**Interpreter**  
**Medic**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Squad Leader**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha Team Leader**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha M249**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha M4**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/Alpha M203**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/Bravo Team Leader**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/Bravo M249**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>/Bravo M203**

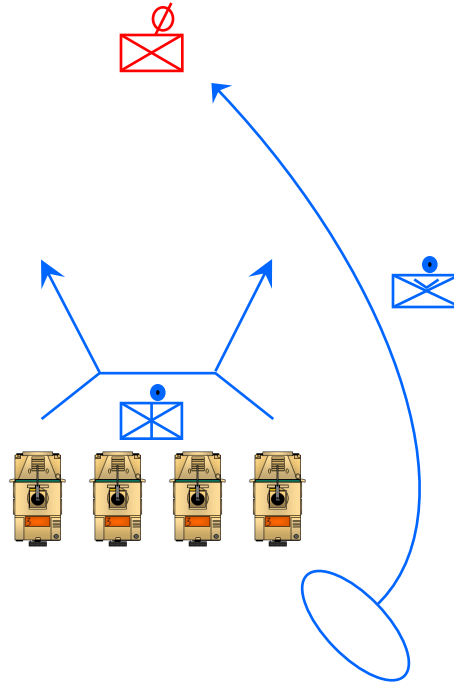
NOTE: While rarely an issue since most Squads are not manned at 100% (due to attrition, R+R programs, etc.), 2 Rifle Squads + Patrol Leader + RTO + Interpreter + Medic = 22 Seats, while 4 x HMMWV = 20 seats. If the PL elects not to truncate PAX for that particular patrol (as in the above example), a 5 x HMMWV patrol extrapolating on the above concept could be used to accommodate all PAX.



## Advantages:



- Train as you fight, fight as you've trained: Assault/Dismount element consists of one, organic Rifle Squad.



- When using the vehicles in a Support-by-Fire capacity, the Squad Leader of the 'Driver & Gunner' Squad can act as the Asst. Patrol Leader, controlling the turret-mounted machine guns.
- Scalability: Concept easily scales for Platoon-level missions (8 HMMWVs, 2 Driver/Gunner Squads, 2 Dismount Squads).



## Disadvantages:

- Vehicle Maintenance can not be “owned” by one particular vehicle crew.

### Controls:

- Pre-operation PMCS, Post-operation PMCS, and spot 10-level maintenance is performed by the mission crew.
  - 20-level maintenance is performed via the company maintenance plan by detailed PAX (see suggested sustainment in slides that follow).
  - An NCO is administratively assigned to each vehicle, as an additional duty, to supervise its maintenance (i.e. spot check, make corrections as necessary, report issues to the PSG).
- Odd Driver/TC combos can result (i.e., an E-6 driving for an E-5).
- ### Control:
- Highest ranking individual will always take charge if a single vehicle becomes isolated.



# Suggested Sustainment Concept

(Platoon Level)

**Hypothetical Mission**: Conduct full spectrum operations in a tactical environment via mounted patrolling while maintaining a robust dismounted capability. Maintain 1 HMMWV w/ crew for contribution to company QRF (QRF consists of 3 x Platoon Contribution + Company Commander's vehicle and crew). Provide soldiers with one day off every six days.





## Suggested Sustainment Concept

(Platoon Level)

**Task Organization:** The Platoon will be split into two “Sections.” One Section being 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Squad. The second Section being 3<sup>rd</sup> & Wpns. Squad. Each day there will be one Section on “Mission Day,” while the other Section is on its “Non-Mission Day.”



## Suggested Sustainment Concept

(Platoon Level)

**Execution:** The Section on “Mission Day” will perform any missions that are assigned to the platoon that day (e.g. scheduled or unscheduled patrols, FOB Security, Escort Missions... anything).



# **Suggested Sustainment Concept**

(Platoon Level)

**Execution (cont.)**: The Section on its “Non-Mission Day” will be split into three groups, each with at least one NCO in it.

The first Group will be designated “Detail,” and will perform all of the platoon details (20-level vehicle maintenance at the motor pool, platoon laundry pick up or drop off, ice resupply, water resupply, anything 1SG tasks the platoon with).

The second Group will be designated “QRF” and remain in a mission-ready posture.

The last Group will be designated “Off” and will have the day completely off within the limits of military necessity (e.g. platoon or company raid missions, etc.).



# Suggested Sustainment Concept

(Platoon Level)

**Alternating Squad Roles:** On each Mission day, the Squads within the Section can switch mission roles (i.e. if 1<sup>st</sup> Squad was the 'Dismount Squad' on the last Mission Day, then 1<sup>st</sup> Squad will be the 'Drivers and Gunners Squad' on the next Mission Day).

**Battle Rhythm:** To an individual soldier, his 6-day battle rhythm would be: (1) Mission Day, (2) Detail Day, (3) Mission Day, (4) QRF Day, (5) Mission Day, (6) Off Day. The Platoon Leader and Platoon Sergeant can lead patrols by either alternating Mission Days or mission times (i.e. PSG leads morning patrols, PL leads night patrols) depending on competing responsibilities.



# Suggested Sustainment Concept

(Platoon Level)

## Sample MTOE & Sustained Operations Matrix:

### Modified Table of Organization

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Section

Section Leader – SGT Donley (1<sup>st</sup> Squad)  
 Asst. Section Leader – SGT Slick (3<sup>rd</sup> Squad)  
 RTO – SGT Serio  
 Medic – SPC Trask

#### A Group

SGT Donley  
 SGT Serio  
 CPL Field  
 SPC Moore  
 SPC Trask  
 SPC Holmes

#### B Group

SGT Slick  
 SGT Goheens  
 SPC Eckler  
 SPC King  
 SPC Akin  
 SPC Gianelli

#### C Group

SGT Golovach  
 SPC Harp  
 SPC Cannon  
 PFC Healy  
 PV2 Lias

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Section

Section Leader – SSG Derocher (2<sup>nd</sup> Squad)  
 Asst. Section Leader – SSG Leduc (Wpns)  
 RTO – SPC Turner  
 Medic – 1-77 AR Attachment

#### A Group

SSG Derocher  
 SPC Munn  
 SPC Rodriguez  
 SPC Hibbard  
 SPC Guynup

#### B Group

SSG Leduc  
 SGT Stokes  
 SPC Quinn  
 SPC Drollette  
 SPC Olsen  
 PV2 Sullivan

#### C Group

SGT Meyer  
 SPC Liberty  
 SPC Benjamin  
 SPC Turner  
 SPC Eckert

NOTE: The A, B, and C groups only pertain to non-patrol days, they are not combat organizations.

### Sustained Operations Matrix

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			28Sep04	29Sep04	30Sep04	1Oct04	2Oct04
Mission			1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A
Detail			2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A
Mission			1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B
QRF			2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B
Mission			1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C
Off			2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C
	3Oct04	4Oct04	5Oct04	6Oct04	7Oct04	8Oct04	9Oct04
Mission	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C
Detail	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A
Mission	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A
QRF	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B
Mission	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B
Off	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C
	10Oct04	11Oct04	12Oct04	13Oct04	14Oct04	15Oct04	16Oct04
Mission	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C
Detail	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C
Mission	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A
QRF	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A
Mission	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B
Off	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B
	17Oct04	18Oct04	19Oct04	20Oct04	21Oct04	22Oct04	23Oct04
Mission	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B
Detail	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C
Mission	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C
QRF	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A
Mission	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A
Off	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B
	24Oct04	25Oct04	26Oct04	27Oct04	28Oct04	29Oct04	30Oct04
Mission	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B
Detail	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B
Mission	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C
QRF	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A	2-C
Mission	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A	1-A
Off	2-A	1-A	2-C	1-C	2-B	1-B	2-A



# Suggested Sustainment Concept

(Platoon Level)



## Advantages:

- Sustainment considerations are internal to the platoon; the company has three elements to maneuver at any given time.
- The QRF is an additional, fourth maneuver element.
- A battle rhythm is established at the platoon-level, even if none is established at the company or battalion-level.

## Tradeoff:

- Patrols consisting of 2-Squads, rather than an entire platoon, trades Mass for Economy of Force.

## Caveat:

The task organization and sustainment matrix outlined in this slide deck worked in one particular city (Balad), in one particular theater (Iraq), at one particular time (2004). METT-TC considerations from different Areas of Operation could drastically alter its feasibility.