

Chapter 7

Contingency Operations

Since the [Point Salines] runway was surrounded by construction equipment, bringing in engineer equipment from Fort Bragg was unnecessary. Equipment operators with the first-deployed engineer platoons quickly began using the captured equipment, which included Russian dump trucks and Komatsu bulldozers. As more operators, mechanics and combat engineers arrived, more captured equipment was put into operation.

*“Operation Urgent Fury”
LTC Lawrence L. Izzo
The Engineer, Winter 1983-84*

Contingency operations (CONOPs) under conditions short of war are politically sensitive military activities normally characterized by the short-term, rapid projection or the employment of forces. This chapter addresses the following types:

- Disaster-relief operations.
- Support to counterdrug operations.
- Security assistance surges.
- Noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs).
- Rescue and recovery operations.
- Shows of force and demonstrations.
- Operations to restore order.
- Strikes and raids.

The consistent feature of CONOPs is an effort focused on a specific problem (usually in a crisis) and guided at the national level by the crisis action system. This system has six phases and is designed for time-sensitive, joint military planning. Joint Publication (Jnt Pub) 5-02.4 contains details on the crisis action system.

CONOPs under conditions short of war frequently take place far from established military bases of operation. These operations may require temporary development of long lines of communication (LOC) in a hostile environment. They are often undertaken to avoid a crisis or to manage crisis situations requiring the use of military assets to enforce or support diplomatic and informational initiatives. These conditions distinguish CONOPs under conditions short of war from wartime CONOPs, which are often conducted for purely military objectives.

CONOPs may require a wide variety of engineer support. Specific operational requirements may limit participation to a small number of engineers. In other cases, engineer involvement on a large scale may be necessary. The type of operation determines requirements for combat- or construction-related engineering skills. These skills may be needed simultaneously or sequentially. Large areas of the world where CONOPs may occur are not yet covered by scale maps. The Defense Mapping Agency or Army topographic engineers may provide special

quick-response photomaps from satellite imagery, aerial photography, and so forth. Existing host-nation (HN) maps may also be revised or enlarged to meet specific mission requirements. During CONOPs, engineers may work with civilian agencies, such as the Red Cross. Engineers may support combat forces during joint or combined operations. Engineer command and support relationships vary considerably, depending on the circumstances of each specific operation. Logistical support for engineers also varies. Support procedures will be outlined in applicable operation orders (OPORDs).

DISASTER RELIEF

Disaster-relief operations provide emergency assistance to victims of natural or man-made disasters abroad. These operations are responses to requests for immediate help and rehabilitation from foreign governments or international agencies. Disaster relief may include refugee assistance, food programs, medical treatment and care, or other civilian welfare programs. While this section specifically addresses disaster relief, the same principals apply when assisting refugees resulting from other situations such as political turmoil. Army Regulation (AR) 500-60 provides additional information for disaster-relief operations.

In a low intensity conflict (LIC) environment, disasters can worsen already unstable situations. When properly executed, United States (US) participation in disaster-relief and refugee assistance can have significant, positive effects. The military can provide logistical support to move supplies to remote areas. They can locate and extractor evacuate victims as needed and provide emergency communications or conduct direct medical-support operations.

Military elements involved in disaster-relief operations may have a variety of missions. Military personnel assess the damage caused by the disaster and the HN's ability to deal with it. The military executes assistance programs developed by the Department of State or the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Army combat support and combat service support units play a major role in these operations. If needed, combat arms units can provide additional support.

Command and control during disaster-relief operations vary from situation to situation. A command structure may be established for US forces participating in these operations. In some cases, units may work directly for the US country team. Disaster-relief operations are generally joint in nature. Because of the quick response time necessary in disaster-relief operations, it is essential to establish liaison, communication, and operating procedures rapidly. Coordination with HN and international agencies is always essential.

Logistical support from an HN or nearby country maybe provided for disaster-relief operations. A nation that experiences a disaster severe enough to request external support may have difficulty providing for its people. The nation may also be unable to support relief personnel from the US and other nations. Logistical support for disaster-relief operations often flows through LOCs stretching from the US.

Engineers may become involved in disaster-relief operations as individuals, teams, or complete units. Individuals may provide technical assistance to HNs in the areas of damage assessment or engineer work estimation. Teams may provide specialized support such as well

drilling, power supply and distribution, or utilities repair or reconstruction. Units may perform these missions:

- ‡ Support for search and rescue operations.
- ‡ Clearance of rubble areas.
- ‡ Opening of roadways for emergency and medical traffic.
- ‡ Restoration of critical facilities, services, and utilities.
- ‡ Provision of emergency topographic engineering support.
- ‡ Engineer environmental studies.
- ‡ Construction of roads.
- ‡ Provision of water facilities and distribution.
- ‡ Provision of sanitation facilities.
- ‡ Construction of displaced-persons camps.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) can support disaster-relief efforts by providing expertise through its engineer districts and divisions. Support can include damage survey and assessment teams, contracting support, and technical advice. The US Army Engineering and Housing Support Center (USAEHSC), a field operating agency of USACE, can provide prime power teams and equipment to provide temporary electrical power to key locations and to help restore electrical services. (See Chapter 2 for more information.) Planners must resolve funding issues with USACE early in the disaster-relief response process.

Engineer units supporting disaster-relief operations must take adequate tools and equipment to support all potential missions. For example, a unit deploying to an earthquake disaster area should take all squad and platoon tool kits. The unit should also take specialized tool kits, such as carpenter's, pipe fitter's, and electrician's tool kits. Pioneer-type tools are used to clear rubble, open air holes, assist in entering structures, and so forth. When conducting search operations, specialized tool kits are used to turn off water systems, turn off or seal gas leaks, disconnect electrical systems, and temporarily buttress damaged structures. Construction equipment is used to clear emergency routes, remove rubble, and demolish unsafe structures. When searching partially collapsed structures, cutting torches are needed to cut reinforcing bars. In the same manner, units deploying to a flood disaster area need to consider the mission types they may face based on initial reconnaissance reports. If displaced-persons camps are to be constructed, heavy horizontal and vertical engineer equipment assets will be required. Planners must also design units' support packages (fuel, water, communications assets, maintenance support, and so forth) to facilitate the success of their operation.

When conducting disaster-relief operations, it is critical to maintain personnel accountability. Leaders must keep track of subordinates at all times. Close supervision and personnel training is necessary to prevent the perception of looting. During a crisis situation, a soldier may become separated from his unit and be trapped in a hazardous area. Unit leaders must develop a system to track the location of their soldiers at all times (to include during rest or sleep breaks).

When conducting disaster-relief operations overseas, failure to obtain proper funding sources and authorizations may become a "show stopper" for engineer operations. Immediate efforts must be made to identify find sources and authorizations to procure materials and issue construction contracts.

Another critical factor in disaster-relief and/or refugee operations is to observe ethnic and cultural mores in types of construction and operations. Failure to construct facilities (for example occidental versus oriental style latrines) according to local values may result in unused facilities and/or poor relationships with the local populace.

SUPPORT TO COUNTERDRUG OPERATIONS

Military support to counterdrug operations reduces, as much as possible, the supply of illicit substances available in the US. Military efforts support national drug control strategies and provide an integrated program of counterdrug actions. Military counterdrug efforts always complement, rather than replace, the efforts of other US agencies, the states, and/or cooperating foreign governments. The commitment of military resources is always consistent with US national values and legal framework. The primary legal restraint on military involvement in counterdrug activities is the Posse Comitatus Act. It prohibits military enforcement of civil statutes except in cases and circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution or Act of Congress.

Military counterdrug support must be a balanced effort to stop the flow of drugs in each phase of the supply cycle: at the source, while in transit, and during distribution. HN that are source or transit countries receive direct financial and technical assistance. The US government provides operational assistance to HN forces to attack drug-production facilities. The US collaborates with HN law enforcement agencies and armed forces to prevent the export of illegal drugs from those countries. Within the US, military forces can provide support to federal, state, and local agencies (within the restrictions of the Posse Comitatus Act) to locate narcotics sources. An example is locating marijuana plants on public lands.

Military support to efforts to stem the flow of drugs will always be conducted in coordination with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. Military support for interdiction includes two operational areas. The first is interdicting drugs in air, sea, and land traffic lanes. The second is detecting, monitoring, and seizing drugs at the nation's borders and ports of entry. Within the US, the military provides support for domestic counterdrug operations to attack the flow of drugs by several methods:

- Military planning and training assistance for domestic law enforcement agencies.
- Equipment loans and transfers.
- Use of military facilities.
- Enhanced roles for the National Guard.

Engineer-specific missions supporting counterdrug operations include-

- Constructing target ranges for law enforcement personnel.
- Constructing temporary operational bases. Facilities may include helipads, fuel storage facilities, maintenance facilities, and billets.
- Producing photomaps of areas where counterdrug operations will take place.
- Constructing or upgrading access roads for drug interdiction patrols.
- Clearing fields of observation for counterdrug teams.

- Locating infiltration tunnels.
- Supporting efforts to encourage farmers to develop alternative crops to those that support the drug trade.
- Rehabilitating existing drug-law enforcement agency (DLEA)-owned buildings to accommodate counterdrug operations or activities, such as an evidence processing facility or operations center.
- Any other mission that is within the capability of military engineer troop units and is also within the legal framework of DOD support to DLEAs.

Army National Guard units have also supported local law enforcement agencies by demolishing buildings used to distribute drugs in the inner city.

During counterdrug operations, engineers must be sensitive to the legal aspects of support to civilian authorities and abide by the Posse Comitatus Act. They must also be aware of the capabilities of the threat. Many narcotics traffickers are well-equipped and heavily armed. The fact that counterdrug operations are peacetime activity must not lull leaders into a false sense of security. Military support to civil authorities in counterdrug operations capitalizes on inherent capabilities of the US military.

SECURITY ASSISTANCE SURGES

The US may accelerate security assistance when a friendly or allied nation faces a threat of imminent harm. Activities are frequently focused on providing logistic support. This includes the provision of additional weapons systems, equipment, and supplies. However, support may include the full range of assistance to include training and financial support. Engineers may aid these surges through mobile training teams (MTTs) designed to transfer skills or to assist in fielding engineer equipment.

NONCOMBATANT EVACUATION OPERATIONS

NEOs relocate threatened civilian noncombatants from locations in a foreign land or an HN. These operations normally involve US citizens whose lives are in danger. NEOs may also include selected HN and third-country personnel, based on the current situation or previously arranged agreements. AR 525-12 outlines responsibilities, policies, and procedures for planning and conducting NEOs.

Military, political, or other emergencies in any country may require evacuation of designated personnel as the situation deteriorates. The Department of State initiates requests for military assistance and obtains necessary clearances from other governments. These clearances can include basing and overflight authorizations and the use of facilities essential to performing the evacuation.

A NEO in a LIC environment usually involves the swift insertion of a force; the temporary occupation of an objective; and a planned, rapid withdrawal. Only the degree of force required for self-defense and the protection of the evacuees is used. Ideally, there should be little or no

opposition to an evacuation. In reality, this may not always be the case. A number of factors impact on the specific manner in which forces conduct a NEO. These include the—

- Required speed of the evacuation.
- Potential for violence (threat level).
- Number of individuals to be evacuated.
- Dispersion of individuals to be evacuated.
- Status of ground LOC.

The speed at which an evacuation must be conducted will depend on how rapidly the situation in an HN deteriorates. If intelligence assets provide early warning of the need for an evacuation and the political decision is made to initiate an evacuation, a gradual withdrawal is possible. If destabilization occurs quickly or if a political decision is made to provide an in-country presence as long as possible, a rapid evacuation may be needed. Ideally, dependents and nonessential personnel will have already departed at the direction of the US ambassador before the start of a NEO.

The potential for violence during a NEO depends on the strength of local forces opposing the HN's government. The ability of that government's police, paramilitary, and military forces to maintain order is also key. US forces conducting a NEO may enter a situation where there is little threat from opposing forces and the HN is able to effectively shield US forces from contact with the threat. Sometimes forces opposing the HN may actively attempt to disrupt the evacuation, but the HN is still able to support the NEO. US forces may also conduct a NEO under conditions of strong and heavily armed opposition, with the HN's forces unable to provide any support. In a worst-case scenario, the "host" nation's forces may actually be part of the threat. In each of these situations, accurate intelligence and detailed planning is essential to ensure a successful operation. The US evacuation-force commander must always be prepared to defend the evacuation effort and provide protection for his forces.

Planning for force protection during NEOs requires detailed analysis of the threat level. Military planners must assess the strength of forces opposing the HN's government and the HN's ability to maintain law and order. Rules of engagement (ROE) must be developed for the operation. They must be understood by all members of the force conducting the operation. Generally, NEOs are conducted during politically sensitive and potentially unstable situations. Local conditions may change rapidly. Commanders should remember that NEOs can quickly turn into peacekeeping operations and plan for these contingencies. All participants in the operation must understand the environment they will enter.

Engineers providing support for a NEO generally operate as part of a joint force. Engineer units may be part of the force actually conducting the operation. In other cases, they may provide support in another country by constructing temporary support facilities for either US forces or the evacuees. Engineer units may also provide topographic products and data tailored to the operation.

Engineers directly participating in the evacuation may perform a variety of tasks, depending on the situation. In a high-threat environment, engineers may perform combat-related engineering tasks. They may construct protective structures for both US forces and evacuees, if necessary. Airfields designated for use in evacuation operations could become damaged—

engineers must be prepared to repair them in case the HN cannot or will not. Engineers may clear landing zones if helicopters will be used either to consolidate evacuees from outlying areas or to move them to waiting ships or other secure areas. If evacuees must be transported on the ground due to a lack of aviation assets or an air defense threat, engineers may be involved in route reconnaissance and mobility-type operations. Field Manuals (FMs) 5-100, 5-101, 5-103, 5-105, and 100-20 and other related doctrinal manuals provide information relating to engineering tasks.

Facility construction may be required to support a NEO. Evacuees may move to another country temporarily before returning to the US. US forces may require a staging area near the country where the NEO will be conducted. If existing facilities are inadequate or not available, engineers may construct a temporary base. The Department of State conducts necessary coordination to obtain clearance to construct and maintain these facilities (early identification of funding sources and authorizations is essential). FMs 5-104, 5-116, 5-166, 31-82, and 100-20 and Technical Manuals (TMs) 5-301-1 through 5-304 provide doctrine relating to facility construction.

RESCUE-AND-RECOVERY OPERATIONS

Rescue-and-recovery operations are sophisticated actions requiring precise execution, especially when conducted in hostile countries. These operations maybe clandestine or overt. They may include the rescue of US personnel or friendly foreign nationals or the location, identification, and recovery of sensitive equipment or items critical to US national security.

Hostile forces can oppose rescue-and-recovery operations. However, these operations may remain unopposed if potentially hostile forces are unaware of them or unable or unwilling to interfere. Stealth, surprise, speed, and the threat of overwhelming US force are some of the means available to overcome opposition. Rescue-and-recovery operations require timely intelligence, including current topographic information. They also require detailed planning, deception, swift execution, and extraordinary security measures. These operations usually involve highly trained special units, but they may also receive support from general purpose forces.

The threat level during rescue and recovery varies depending on the circumstances of the specific operation. Rapid execution of the mission, as well as tight security before and during the operation, will minimize risk. ROE will be established before the operation begins. These rules must be clearly stated and understood by all participants.

During rescue-and-recovery operations, engineer units may provide support to combined arms teams or joint task forces (JTFs). Engineers may provide route reconnaissance, mobility-type operations, construction of helicopter landing zones, and so forth. In these situations, FMs 100-5, and 5-100 and related manuals provide supporting doctrine.

Engineer units may also become involved in constructing staging areas for rescue-and-recovery operations. These areas may include billeting, administrative, and logistical support facilities. The extent of these facilities depends on the projected duration of their occupation.

Construction of staging areas may include mock-ups of buildings, airfields, ports, and so forth to support rehearsals by units participating in the operation.

SHOWS OF FORCE AND DEMONSTRATIONS

US forces deployed abroad lend credibility to US promises and commitments. Shows of force increase the regional influence of the US and demonstrate its resolve to use military force as an element of national power. In addition, the National Command Authorities (NCA) give orders for shows of force or demonstrations to bolster and reassure friends and allies. These operations can influence another government or political–military organization to respect US interests or to enforce international law. These are some examples:

- Forward deployment of military forces.
- Combined training exercises.
- Aircraft and ship visits.
- Introduction or buildup of military forces in a region.

The objective of shows of force and demonstrations must be well-defined and clearly understood. To be effective, the force tasked with the mission must be demonstrably mission-capable and sustainable. The specific requirements for sustainment include adequate command, control, and communications (C³); intelligence support; interdepartmental and international liaison; and ready and responsive forces. Logistical support for these operations should be based on the possibility that the mission may require the actual use of force.

Political concerns dominate shows of force and demonstrations. Military forces conduct these operations with delicate legal and political constraints. The political will to employ actual force, should a demonstration of it fail, is vital to the success of these operations. Actual combat is not the goal of the operation, but it is a possible outcome. Soldiers involved in these operations must enter them physically and mentally prepared to conduct combat operations. The force coordinates its operations with the country team (or teams, if more than one country is involved). Before commitment, the chain of command must ensure that the members of the force understand the national purpose, ROE, and inherent risks of the operation.

Engineer support to shows of force and demonstrations will normally be conducted in the context of support for a joint or combined force. FMs 5–100 through 5–103 and related manuals provide applicable doctrine for these operations. If a show of force or demonstration continues for a protracted period of time (particularly if it is conducted in an undeveloped area), base-camp, logistical-facility, and LOG construction will become necessary. Under these conditions, manuals such as FMs 5–104, 5–105, and 31-82 and TMs 5-301-1 through 5-304 outline engineer activities required to support the force.

OPERATIONS TO RESTORE ORDER

The US conducts operations to restore order when it is in the national interest to stop a violent conflict in a country or region and to force a return to political and diplomatic methods. (Operations to restore order were previously called “peacemaking.”) The US

typically undertakes these operations at the request of appropriate national authorities in a foreign nation or to protect US citizens as part of an international, multilateral, or unilateral operation. The long-range goals of an operation to restore order are often unclear. Therefore, these operations are best terminated by prompt withdrawal after a settlement is reached or by rapid transition to a peacekeeping operation (PKO) (see Chapter 6).

The political complexities of operations to restore order require that the available force be sufficient to achieve US objectives and that its use be applied with discretion. ROE tend to be restrictive because the purpose of the force is to maintain law and order. Political considerations may influence force size and composition. The force commander must prepare himself to deal with external pressures not normally associated with military operations. He may have to adjust his operations to reconcile the conflicting demands of political considerations, mission accomplishment, and force protection.

The threat level during an operation to restore order depends on the political and military situation within the area of operations. If one or more of the belligerents in the area oppose the presence of US forces, their capabilities must be considered in the threat assessment. The capabilities of the party that requested US involvement, if one exists, must also be considered. The threat assessment must be continuously updated. It will assist the commander in establishing appropriate steps to ensure adequate force protection.

Engineers involved in operations to restore order support combat operations and perform sustainment and topographic engineering missions. Engineers also support efforts to develop a logistical support base elsewhere in the region, if one is required. Initial force deployment in support of operations to restore order may be conducted by airdrop, airland interdiction, or amphibious operations. To support the buildup of combat forces and permit the flow of logistical support, engineer units may construct new airfields or repair damage to existing ones. Once a forward operating base has been established, expansion of the lodgment area involves engineer support. This may involve constructing protective structures, hardening key facilities, and other activities based on the situation. The duration of the operation, the amount of resistance met by US forces, and the availability of existing facilities will dictate the actual amount and type of engineer support required in the area of operation. FMs 5-100 through 5-103 and related manuals provide applicable doctrine for combat operations. FM 5-104 and related manuals provide guidance relating to sustainment engineering. FM 5-105 provides information on topographic support.

If operations to restore order are conducted in a remote area, it may be necessary to establish a logistical support base or staging area outside the area of operations but still within the region. The Department of State conducts the coordination required to obtain clearance to construct and maintain these facilities. When engineer units support base development, FMs 5-104 and 31-82, TMs 5-301-1 through 5-304, and other related manuals outline engineer activities required to support the force.

STRIKES AND RAIDS

The US executes strikes and raids for specific purposes other than gaining or holding terrain. Strikes and raids can support rescue or recovery operations or destroy or seize equipment or facilities that demonstrably threaten national collective security interests. Strikes and raids can also support counterdrug operations by destroying narcotics production or transshipment facilities or supporting HN activities in this arena. Strikes and raids are the most conventional CONOPs under conditions short of war. The principles of combat operations apply directly (see FMs 5–100, and 100-5 and related manuals). The combatant commander normally plans and executes them.

Before a strike or raid, engineers may construct rehearsal sites for the forces involved in the operation. Topographic engineers may produce large-scale photomaps or graphics to help guide forces to their objectives. Those engineers actually participating in the mission may require refresher training in specialized skills, depending on the specifics of the operation. These skills may include air assault techniques, military operations on urbanized terrain (MOUT), or reorganization as infantry. During strike or raid operations, engineers may be called upon to perform unique missions, in addition to traditional engineer tasks. These missions could include-

- Emplacing and manning roadblocks.
- Moving or disposing of captured equipment.
- Using captured equipment to perform missions.

In some cases, the US may assist with reconstruction in an area where a strike or raid has been conducted. USACE, through an engineer district, can provide teams to assist with damage assessment and contracting for cleanup and repair work. US engineer troop units, if located in the region, may assist by clearing rubble; opening roadways for emergency and medical traffic; and restoring critical facilities, services, and utilities. If USACE teams or engineer troop units are used, they must deploy rapidly to the area to restore key facilities and limit suffering by the local populace.

CORPS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

In many CONOPs, an Army corps plans and conducts Army operations as part of a joint or combined force commanded by a Commander in Chief (CINC) (combatant commander) or joint force commander. Sometimes, the corps commander will serve as both Army force (ARFOR) and land component commander in the joint operation. The corps may contribute to a contingency JTF headquarters for campaigns involving all services. A corps that is the largest land force in a theater of operations will often translate strategic goals into tactical objectives. If the corps functions as the nucleus of a JTF headquarters, it is responsible for developing a campaign plan or outline.

To achieve quick, decisive results in CONOPs, the corps must be prepared to deploy and employ its forces simultaneously. In a large operation, while the majority of the force is deploying into the area of operations, lead echelons must lead the way by seizing (if necessary)

and securing arrival points for the remaining force. Corps CONOPs will be phased. Phases should begin with planning and preparation and end with contingency force redeployment. However, some phases may not occur at all. The following phases provide the general structure for a CONOPs; they can be adjusted to fit each contingency:

- Predeployment/crisis action.
- Deployment/initial combat operations.
- Force buildup/combat operations.
- Decisive combat operations,
- Redeployment.

For additional information relating to corps contingency planning, see FM 100-15.