

## CHAPTER 6

# FIELD ARTILLERY BRIGADE TARGET ACQUISITION

*One option a division commander may have for using a reinforcing or attached FA brigade headquarters provided by the corps is to conduct counterfire operations for the division. Using an FA brigade headquarters as the division counterfire headquarters does not relieve the div arty commander of his responsibility for orchestrating counterfire. The div arty commander is still responsible to the division commander for all matters relating to fire support. Using an FA brigade headquarters to execute the division counterfire role gives the div arty commander and his staff more flexibility in performing the overall fire support mission. This chapter shows an example of how the counterfire battle can be accomplished by using an FA brigade as the controlling headquarters.*

### COUNTERFIRE ROLE

As the division FSCoord, the div arty commander may choose to divide artillery tasks with an available reinforcing or attached FA brigade headquarters to improve planning and execution. One way to divide the tasks is to have the div arty, still the force artillery headquarters, retain overall responsibility for fire support for the division and specific responsibility for close support and interdiction (attack at depth) roles. The FA brigade takes responsibility for accomplishing the counterfire tasks. This division of responsibilities allows each headquarters to concentrate on specific tasks and improve overall ability to plan and control execution.

### COMMAND AND CONTROL

When tasked to perform the counterfire mission, the FA brigade must be augmented with TA assets and additional targeting personnel. Normally, the FA brigade has operational control (OPCON) of the TAB or CTAD. By making the TAB or CTAD OPCON to the FA brigade, the div arty commander centralizes target acquisition command and control under one headquarters and provides to the FA brigade the major source of FA targeting information. The processing section from the TAB or CTAD provides the essential additional personnel to form a target production section in the FA brigade TOC. Thus augmented, the FA

brigade can determine where the radars should be positioned and when they should move in support of the operation. In coordination with the division FSE, the brigade can implement the commander's decisions as to what Firefinder zones best support the operation, who should be designated as cueing agents, and under what circumstances they should cue. In this way, the FA brigade optimizes radar coverage, reduces target duplication, and provides better counterfire support to the division.

The way the FA brigade receives information from the radars differs depending on the tactical situation and METT-T. The FA brigade commander in coordination with the div arty commander recommends an organization for combat of TA assets to best meet the division commander's intent. He considers the tactical situation, the overall artillery organization for combat, and radar capabilities (especially planning ranges). He also must continually reassess his organization for combat as the situation changes to ensure the most efficient and responsive counterfire is being provided.

## LIAISON

Liaison officers (LOs) are sent from the FA brigade and reinforcing FA battalion headquarters to facilitate the transfer of information to support counterfire operations. Normally, LOs will be sent from the FA brigade headquarters to the supported FA headquarters as part of inherent responsibilities. At the supported field artillery TOC, the LO has access to the most current battle information. His position facilitates the exchange of targeting information, and he can provide his FA brigade or battalion with updates to friendly and enemy situations and changes to the FLOT and CFL.

However, the reinforcing FA battalion LOS may be sent instead to a maneuver brigade TOC. There the LO is better positioned to have TA input to brigade plans in a fast-changing situation; to clear radar positions,

routes, and times of march; to clear fires short of the CFL; and to recommend changes in radar coverage (that is, sectors of search and zone management). At the maneuver brigade TOC, the LO can help to ensure that radars respond early and quickly to the fast-moving tactical situation. As the counterfire representative at the maneuver brigade TOC, the LO must have a working knowledge of how FA target acquisition can support the maneuver unit. In particular, this includes radar capabilities and Firefinder employment techniques. Like the LO at the supported field artillery TOC, the LO at the maneuver brigade TOC monitors the developing situation and makes recommendations as required on the designation of cueing agents, cueing and cueing agent priorities, and cueing guidance. However, the LO at the maneuver brigade TOC may be designated as a cueing agent himself.

In a like manner, the FA brigade headquarters may instead send its LO (equipped with a variable-format message entry device [VFMED]) to the division main CP. The FA brigade LO works with the field artillery intelligence officer (FAIO) to provide a timely exchange of targeting information. This should result in more responsive counterfire in support of the maneuver commander.

## COMMUNICATIONS

A major challenge when the FA brigade does counterfire is the integration of command, control, and communications (C3). Counterfire must fit in the overall concept of the force artillery and yet be flexible enough to change priority of fire support tasks during battle.

**NOTE:** The rest of this chapter is an example of how an FA brigade may establish command, control, and communications for TA assets in an offensive situation.

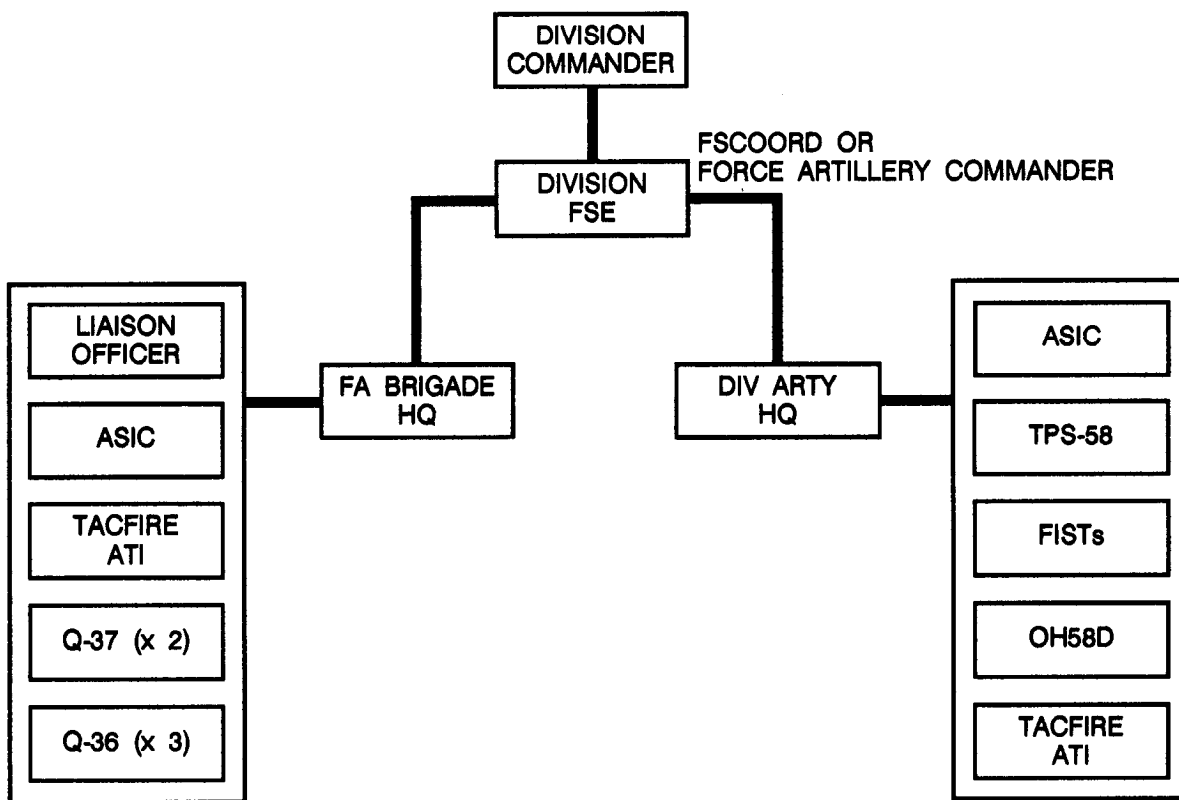
**EXAMPLE**

The FA brigade in this situation is attached to the div arty. Each of the cannon battalions of the brigade has been assigned the mission of general support reinforcing a DS battalion, and the brigade MLRS battalion is GS to the division. On the basis of the situation and the commander's intent, the FA brigade commander has determined that one Q-36 radar should be linked into each GS reinforcing cannon battalion TACFIRE for communications and fire mission processing. The Q-37 radars will link directly into the FA brigade TACFIRE. The FA brigade commander has sent his LOs to the division

main CP and has directed that the GS reinforcing battalion LOs be sent to the TOCs of their supported maneuver brigades.

The targeting agencies depicted in the figure provide information to plan and execute the close support and deep fires roles. Most of the assets on the right are observers who provide real-time or near-real-time information. The assets on the left provide information to plan and execute counterfire. The WLRs are assumed to be linked to their cueing agents.

**EXAMPLE CONTROL RELATIONSHIPS OF TARGET ACQUISITION ASSETS**



**LEGEND:** ASIC = all-source intelligence center      ATI = artillery target intelligence



**EXAMPLE (Continued)**

The Q-36 radar communicates directly with a counterfire battalion. When the radar acquires a target, either a fire mission or a coordinate report is transmitted digitally to the battalion TACFIRE computer. If a fire mission is transmitted, the battalion shoots the mission. If a coordinate report is transmitted or if the battalion is not able to fire the fire mission, the target is passed up to the FA brigade TACFIRE. The FA brigade TACFIRE then goes through its tactical fire mission processing and stores the target data or selects another battalion to fire the mission.

The net structure shown in the preceding figure offers several advantages and performs two major functions. First, the two headquarters continuously share information by using TACFIRE message of interest (MOI) processing. But more importantly, each headquarters accesses the battalions of the other by using the TACFIRE automatic relay capability. This last feature is especially important in the initial stages of war when we expect massive enemy artillery preparations to generate a target-rich environment. If the FA brigade receives a target from a Q-37 radar and its battalions are shooting other missions, the mission is passed through the div arty TOC to one of the div arty battalions. In other words, the entire force artillery is available to fire counterfire, if necessary.

In a like manner, if the div arty needs FA brigade support on a close support or deep fires target, it may pass this target through the FA brigade

TOC to one of its battalions. This also enables the force artillery commander to mass fires and shift priorities between counterfire, close support, and attack at depth.

The nondigital or voice net structure used when the FA brigade executes the counterfire mission is no change from current doctrine except for a second FA brigade VHF-FM voice net. This net is needed for controlling counterfire and issuing instructions to the Q-37 radars and liaison officers. When a digital communications means is operational, it is used primarily to pass nonformatted instructions and to clear radar positions and counterfire. The second FA brigade net also provides a communications link between the LOs at the maneuver brigade headquarters and the target production section at the FA brigade TOC. When digital communication is interrupted, the second FA brigade net becomes the primary means of receiving and passing targeting information. Other nets available to pass information between the two headquarters include the brigade and div arty VHF-FM voice nets, radio teletypewriter (RATT), and voice and digital pulse code modulation (PCM).

This communications structure facilitates the dissemination of information and transfer of control from one headquarters to another. It also provides the force artillery redundant communications capabilities and improves its ability to maintain continuous operations and support for maneuver forces.