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LIGHT INFANTRY TRAINING MANUAL

FMFM 2-1



IMPERIAL AND ROYAL (K.u.K)
AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MARINE CORPS

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FOREWORD

The K.u.K. Austro-Hungarian Army has a long and successful tradition of light infantry warfare. After a lapse of some centuries, Austria reintroduced light infantry to the central European battlefield during the Seven Years' War. Austrian and, later, K.u.K. Austro-Hungarian Jaeger regiments and battalions played important roles in Austria's defeat of Napoleon and in World War I, especially on the Italian and Carpathian fronts.

However, the K.u.K. Marine Infantry has, for historical reasons, been trained primarily as storm troops rather than light infantry. The Empire's increasing involvement in Fourth Generation wars means this must change. Because most Fourth Generation opponents fight as (often very good) light infantry, the K.u.K. Marine Corps must now also adopt light infantry tactics. This manual is published as a guide for making the transition from line to light infantry.

As with previous field manuals in this series, this manual is published as a draft. It will be improved in future editions as new information becomes available. In particular, the Admiralty would like to add a section on light infantry in urban combat. Because the K.u.K. armed forces lack recent experience in this, we encourage readers in other countries to submit material based on their

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own experiences. Anyone wishing to do so should contact our American liaison, Major Greg Thiele USMC at gregory.thiele@usmc.mil.

His Imperial and Royal Majesty Kaiser Karl has expressed his most gracious pleasure at the fact that the field manuals in this series have received world-wide attention. He has been so good as to grant his Imperial and Royal permission for foreign militaries to make unlimited copies of them for their own use, so long as credit for their origin is given to the K.u.K. Marine Corps.

Montecuccoli
K.u.K. Admiralty, Pola
October, 2012

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THE LIGHT INFANTRY CONCEPT

Why Light Infantry?

Current and emerging 4GW threats pose a significant challenge to the state. These threats have proven extremely difficult to deal with and little success has been attained against them by the line infantry deployed by most state militaries. The reason that line infantry is ineffective against 4GW opponents is that many are true light infantry. It is possible to wrest this advantage from 4GW opponents. How? By creating true light infantry of our own.

Differences between light infantry (LTI) and line infantry (LNI)

Light infantry (LTI) cannot be distinguished from line infantry (LNI) simply by the amount of gear each carries. Each variety of infantry has its own tactics, logistics system, training and mindset. Light infantry operates covertly. It employs stealth to surprise the enemy in places he believes himself safe, often using ambush or infiltration to do so. Line infantry (LNI), in contrast, is overt in its tactics, which largely amount to bumping into the enemy and calling for fire from supporting arms. LNI is not as flexible, agile or mobile on its feet as LTI.

Description of Light Infantry

Because it lacks the firepower of LNI, LTI does not assault into the teeth of an enemy's defenses, seeking to move a line forward. LTI is much more likely to infiltrate between enemy positions in small units, re-form in the enemy's rear and attack his vulnerable support elements, thus collapsing him from his rear forward. The staples of any LTI unit are stalking and ambush.

Nor does LTI hold a line in the defense. LTI conducts a defense by allowing the enemy to penetrate and ambushing him where the terrain and other circumstances favor friendly forces. Its goal is not to hold ground, but to destroy the attacking force.

LTI is self-reliant and does not require massive external firepower support. LTI units are organized and equipped to generate short, intense fires in support of their own attacks and ambushes.

Many enlisted Marines are familiar with true light infantry. Enlisted Marines that are assigned as "aggressors," when they do not have officers directing them, often act as light infantry. They ambush their opponents, avoid engaging on unfavorable terms and cache gear and equipment that they do not need and that will impede their ability to move quickly and quietly. Unfortunately,

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once the exercise is concluded, these Marines are required to forget successful tactics and techniques they have discovered and return to acting as Marine line infantry.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LIGHT INFANTRY

Self-reliant. Light infantry does not derive its effectiveness by acting as a sensor for fire support agencies. Light infantry possesses a varied tactical repertoire and is highly effective in its own right. When light infantry has access to supporting arms, of course it uses them. But it uses supporting arms to enhance its results rather than to make up for a lack of effectiveness in infantry tactics.

“Well-developed appreciation for the tactical aspects of the ground.” Light infantry must take full advantage of the ground upon which it is operating. Proper utilization of the terrain will often make the difference between victory and defeat. Light infantrymen are experts at reading the terrain and determining how best to use it to their advantage and to prevent the enemy from doing the same. LTI is skilled at the use of cover and concealment, covert movement and individual exploitation of micro-terrain.

Ability to adapt quickly. Light infantry may be called upon to conduct a variety of missions. Its mindset allows it to adapt quickly because it has a

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wide and varied tactical repertoire and is not wedded to any doctrinal tactics or techniques. Its mindset is, “Whatever works.”

Ability to improvise and innovate. Light infantry units may operate cut off from friendly support or resupply for extended periods. They must be prepared to be satisfied with the items that they carry or that can be scrounged. Light infantrymen do not become complacent or self-satisfied with their mastery of a given set of techniques. Techniques can and must change or they become predictable. Properly trained and educated light infantrymen are aware of this and are masters of innovation.

QUALITIES NECESSARY IN LIGHT INFANTRY

Patience. The need for patience is, perhaps, the greatest difference between LTI and LNI. LTI operations proceed much more slowly, primarily due to the requirement for LTI to operate stealthily. It takes time to discover targets, reconnoiter suitable ambush sites and move covertly. Training must reflect this. The tempo of operations will slow down and LTI training schedules must come to grips with this fact. One method is to schedule open-ended exercises in which the exercise does not

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end at a predetermined time; the exercise ends only when the training goals are accomplished.

Speed. While setting up a light infantry action requires patience, when action occurs, it must be over fast, before the enemy can react. The light infantry then normally goes covert again. Decision-making in the light infantry is also characterized by speed. Light infantry leaders must be prepared to react immediately to unforeseen situations with changes in their plans. They seldom have the luxury of other forces coming to their rescue. They cannot afford to be pinned down mentally. Snap decisions often mean the difference between success or failure. Delaying a decision once action commences is usually dangerous.

Self-discipline. Self-discipline may be the most important quality in light infantrymen. Without self-discipline, individuals will be unable to cope with the privations and stresses that are an inherent part of being light infantry. Troops that do not demonstrate self-discipline are a positive danger to the mission and to their comrades and have no place in the light infantry.

Therefore, one of the most important goals of training light infantry is to substitute self-discipline for imposed discipline. Senseless or unnecessary rules should be done away with. As maneuver warfare doctrine requires, orders should normally

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specify only the result to be obtained, not methods. Leaders should expect and encourage their Marines to maintain a high level of discipline, not through fear of reprisal, but because of a desire to demonstrate their professional qualities.

Physical fitness. Being a light infantryman is physically demanding. Troops must maintain the ability to move long distances quickly, with or without gear loads. At the same time, the “soldier’s load” should not exceed 50 pounds, beyond which march performance is degraded regardless of physical conditioning.

Light infantry also requires a different physical fitness from that which is measured by the current physical fitness test (PFT) or even the current combat fitness test (CFT). Light infantry requires endurance far more than physical strength. Marines must be able to march long distances; they must be prepared to move all night carrying their combat load in difficult terrain. The current requirement to run 3 miles in shorts and a t-shirt is inadequate as a measure of fitness for a light infantryman.

“Jäger” mindset. Light infantrymen are hunters on the battlefield and every effort should be made to impress this upon new members of the unit. All hunters require field craft of a high order. Marines should hunt enemies the same way they hunt game.

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Stalking skills. Good stalking skills are essential in order to surprise and ambush enemy forces. Poor stalking skills expose a LTI force to detection, which often means defeat and destruction.

Proficient with organic and threat weapons. Every Marine must be intimately familiar with all of the weapons found throughout his unit. This is particularly important in LTI units which operate primarily as small units; it provides a high degree of flexibility to the unit, especially when it suffers casualties. The ability to utilize threat weapons allows LTI to use captured items, which may at times be all that is available. LTI units in combat have only occasional, not continuous, logistics pipelines.

Comfortable operating at night and in varying terrain. Because stealth is so critical to the survival of LTI, it is important that LTI is able to operate effectively at night. In fact, the vast majority of LTI training should be focused on improving proficiency operating at night. It is impossible to know where the next conflict will occur, so LTI must also be able to operate in any type of terrain, except open terrain, where all foot-mobile infantry is vulnerable to being bypassed and pocketed by mechanized forces.

Proficient utilizing demolitions. Given the fact that LTI operates most effectively in small units,

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every light infantryman should be capable of utilizing demolitions. Demolitions are an important element in ambushes or raids, staples of LTI offensive actions. Light infantrymen know how to improvise explosives where necessary. One writer on tactics noted, “An illustrative difference between light and line infantry is how each uses chicken shit. Light infantry uses it to build IEDs [improvised explosive devices]. Line infantry employs chicken shit to consume its own time.”

Broad Perspective. Light infantry must consider their actions in the widest context possible. In referring to the actions of light infantry more than 200 years ago, Johann von Ewald, a Hessian Jäger company commander, wrote that a light infantry leader “has to do on a small scale what a general does on a large scale.”¹ This means that light infantry leaders must consider how their actions will impact the mission at the highest levels. While an action may be beneficial at a local, tactical level, will it aid in achieving victory at the more powerful operational or strategic levels? All leaders, no matter how junior, must be educated, encouraged and rewarded for thinking in as broad a context as possible.

III. OPERATION MOSBY

¹ Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, 68.

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Nobody wanted to say it, but the Marines of K.u.K. Marine Battalion 3, Company 2 knew that they had gotten their butts kicked – again. This time, two Marines were dead, seven had to be medevaced and the mission had to be cancelled. It wasn't the first time. Sometimes, the only thing that saved the company from being overrun was support from Marine air.

By all normal accounting, the Marines knew they should win every engagement. Their enemy had none of their advantages. He didn't have any air support or air reconnaissance. He had no artillery. He hadn't any body armor, not even helmets. He had to leave his badly wounded on the field for Marines to take care of, because he had no medical transport. None of his men had been to Boot Camp, the School of Infantry (SOI) or The Imperial Basic School (TIBS).

He was good at only two things. He knew how to place improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and he knew how to appear out of nowhere, ambush 2nd Company, then vanish. But at those two things, he was very, very good. The enlisted Marines called their enemies “ghosts.”

After they got back to base, just as the company commander, Captain Mosby, had taken off his gear, the company gunny came up to him. “Sir, may I speak frankly?”, asked Gunny Blau.

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“Of course, Gunny,” replied Captain Mosby. Mosby knew his Marines and he had a pretty good idea what was coming.

“Sir, the men have had it. We’re tired, morale’s hanging down lower than a Bassett’s balls and we’re effing sick of getting beat. There has to be a better way to fight this goddamn war than wandering around waiting to get blown up or ambushed by someone who vanishes into thin air before we can hit him back. Sir, you’re our leader. Isn’t there something we can do differently?”

Captain Mosby sat down on his pack. He had been thinking the same thing for a long while now. The time had come to decide and act.

“Yes, Gunny, there is. We can become what our enemy is. We can become light infantry,” he said.

“I thought we were light infantry,” the Gunny replied. “We’re not mech infantry.”

“I know that is what you were taught, Gunny, but that isn’t the main difference,” Mosby said. “True light infantry has a whole different way of fighting and of thinking from what we do. We’re line infantry, not light infantry, and that is the core of the problem. And I know what we have to do about it.”

When Captain Mosby went through TIBS, the TIBS Commanding Officer had been a colonel - - one of the few -- who knew the difference between line and light infantry. He had personally taught an after-hours seminar for those lieutenants who were

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interested (most weren't) in true light infantry tactics. Mosby took the seminar. He read things like Johann von Ewald's *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Franz Uhle-Wettler's *Battlefield Central Europe: The Danger of Overreliance on Technology*, and Steven Canby's *Classic Light Infantry and New Technology*.

The next morning, Captain Mosby went to see the battalion commander. He found Lieutenant Colonel Franz Josef Marion outside chewing on a cigar and swearing quietly to himself.

"How are you this morning, sir?" asked Mosby.

"Pissed off with the world, Mosby. I'm frustrated. The fight you were in yesterday seems like every other fight each of the battalion's companies get into. I'm tired of our troops chasing ghosts and catching shit. When we do find the enemy, it's because he wants to be found and is waiting for us. Then, he vanishes either into the terrain or into the civilian population. There's got to be another way for us to fight!"

"That's exactly what I wanted to talk to you about, sir. I feel the same way, and so do my men," said Mosby, "The problem is that we're not true light infantry, sir, but the enemy is. What we need to do is beat the enemy at his own game."

"What do you have in mind?" asked Lieutenant Colonel Marion.

Mosby decided to dive right in, "Take my company off-line, sir. Let me retrain them as true

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light infantry. I stayed up last night working on a training plan. Give me a month and I'll be able to retrain my Marines to operate as light infantry at the squad level. In another month, we'll be proficient at the platoon level and in three months, we'll be capable of company operations."

Lieutenant Colonel Marion took a moment to think. "You're asking a lot, Mosby. As it is, I don't have the troops to cover our entire area of operations and you want me to take your entire company off-line? How can I do that?"

Mosby was ready with his reply, "If we don't retrain our Marines, sir, then we shouldn't expect things to change. We're both tired of Marines getting killed without the ability to hit back. Becoming true light infantry will give us the chance to hunt the enemy rather than being hunted."

Another pause. Marion exhaled. "Alright, do it," he said. "I'm ready to try anything that will give us a real chance against these guys. I'll talk to the Operations Officer and Sergeant Major and let them know what's going on."

Mosby immediately returned to his company headquarters to put into action the training schedule he had developed. The first thing was to inculcate in his Marines a light infantry mindset. His Marines would have to be prepared for anything at any time, day or night and they would have to be able to improvise if they did not have the proper gear or some drill learned at a school. Developing this mindset would be a theme that ran throughout the

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training. Mosby decided that he would not publish his training schedule. At all costs, he wanted to keep his Marines from becoming comfortable or complacent.

Mosby needed to explain to his Marines what they were doing and why. The troops needed to know what it meant to be light infantry and how that differed from what they had been taught. He ordered the Company First Sergeant to get the Marines together.

Captain Mosby knew he would have to undo in weeks what the K.u.K. Marine Corps had spent years in creating. Undoubtedly, some of his Marines would not be able to measure up. Those that did not possess minds agile enough to adapt quickly or those that could do little beyond implementing a checklist would likely have to go. He would have to be ruthless in his evaluations.

As Mosby stepped outside the tent, his head cleared. Stepping in front of his men, he felt sure of what he was doing.

“Marines, we’ve had a tough couple of days. In fact, we’ve had a tough deployment so far. What we’ve been doing hasn’t been working, and we all know it. So we’re going to change. We’re going to become true light infantry. Some of you might think we’re already light infantry. That’s not correct. The enemy is true light infantry, but we’re going to learn to beat the enemy at his own game. We’ve got some ground to make up, but we’re going to be better because we’re going to train

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harder than he does. He's got a day job to keep up. This is our day job.

“What does it mean to be true light infantry? It means you are a hunter. How many of you hunt?”

Most hands went up.

“Would you hunt a deer the way we've been operating?”

“Shit, no!” came a reply from the back of the group.

“Well, we're going to start hunting the enemy the way you would hunt a deer. From now on, you live out of your pack and your pack will be light. You will stalk the enemy instead of letting him stalk you. You will go where he thinks you can't and ambush him where he thinks he's safe. You will learn to move without being seen, ambush the enemy and disappear. If he's a ghost, you will be wraiths.”

“From now on, you will live off the land, sleeping outside with no internet and no contractor-run chow halls. You will welcome self-discipline, hard work and being ready for anything at all times.

“Put together, all this means that we will finally have the advantage when we take on the enemy. He will learn to be afraid of us because he will never know where we might hit him or how. Starting now, we will learn to be better light infantry than he is.”

The Marines were listening intently as Mosby spoke. He could see they were engaged.

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Each had lost good friends and all were eager to give the enemy a taste of his own medicine. He could also read uncertainty in some faces. He was asking them to take a leap of faith and forget much of what they had been taught. He paused for a moment, knowing that any doubts would grow with his next order.

“I want all these tents folded up and returned to supply. Sort all of your gear and personal effects. If you keep it, you will have to carry it. Your total load may not exceed 50 pounds, and I will weigh it. Store whatever you are not going to carry in your seabag. All seabags will be turned in to supply. We sleep wherever we are, under the stars, rain or shine. You have two hours to get this done. Move.”

Mosby turned away as pandemonium broke out in his wake. No one knew that in just one hour, Mosby would order the company to hike the short distance to the camp’s small arms range. That afternoon, while the company conducted a small arms shoot with the marksmanship of all hands individually evaluated, the company area would be swept clean. All remaining seabags would be taken to supply. Tents left in various states of disorder would be rolled up and taken as well. When the company returned from the range, they would find no trace of their previous existence. The Marines would be unencumbered and free to go wherever their missions took them.

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Working on the company's mindset as light infantrymen was the first step. Mosby's next was to make all of his Marines proficient with all of the unit's weapons. Every Marine had to know how to employ machineguns, which would be among the most important weapons in any ambush. Marines also needed to know how to fire the 60mm mortar in the hand-held mode. Mosby's Marines moved from station to station, learning to disassemble, assemble and maintain the weapons when they were not on the firing line actually shooting them. Mosby wanted to ensure that all of his Marines (even his corpsmen) were proficient with each weapon they might be called upon to use in combat.

Mosby next had to train the Marines to use the enemy's weapons. While the battalion had not taken many weapons in combat with the enemy, they had found a number of caches. These caches provided all of the weapons needed to teach Mosby's Marines how to shoot, break down, clean and reassemble everything the enemy used except IEDs. The enemy's ammunition was not stored or cared for very well, so Mosby mandated that the Battalion Gunner also teach his Marines how to inspect and clean captured ammunition to ensure it was safe to use. After a week and a half of non-stop live fire, including becoming comfortable using grenades at close quarters, Mosby was confident that his Marines could use any of his unit's weapons, or any of the enemy's, that came to hand.

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One of the most important tenets of all of Mosby's training was that it had to be truly free play training. In every training event he planned, there had to be an untethered opposing will. In the past, he had heard his superiors bleat endlessly about the training standards for a given action, for instance how much time was acceptable to set up mortars for a hip shoot. He had found that none of this made any difference in combat. The only thing that mattered was whether or not his troops were better than the enemy, could out-fight the enemy and, most important of all, could out-think the enemy. The ability to do these things could not be created, measured or improved by any comparison against irrelevant "standards." The only true measure, the only measure that matters, is how forces measure up against another hostile, independent will.

Mosby felt that free play training not only provided the best training for his men, but also contributed to the creation of new techniques that could be shared throughout his unit. To further facilitate his men's creativity, he intended to issue only vague orders in training. He would tell each side to "destroy the enemy force" and let them figure out how to accomplish this goal. To remind his troops of the need to discard any preconceived notions regarding what they must or must not do, Mosby also wished to inculcate two mottos in the company. First, he would tell his men, "Do what works." Second, he wanted to remind them of the

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freedom that they had as aggressors in other previous training exercises with the phrase, “Every Marine an aggressor all the time.”

As he considered his training plan, Mosby decided that it was best to take a building-block approach and start with the skills that he wanted every Marine to possess. Once these were cemented, he could move on to the squad level, then to the platoon level and finally to the company level. Mosby ticked off the list of training goals that he still needed to accomplish: fieldcraft, especially concealed, soundless movement; basic survival skills to allow his Marines to live off the land for short periods of time; demolitions to destroy enemy equipment that could not be carried away and also to initiate ambushes; advanced life-saving skills to help keep alive Marines that could not be immediately evacuated. Last would come supporting arms training. Supporting arms were useful, but he wanted to break his Marines’ dependence on external agencies; they had to become self-reliant.

In the confines of the forward operating base, Mosby’s Marines became an object of intense interest to other units. They were firing weapons of every description day and night. When they were not shooting, they walked for hours along the circular perimeter berm, with their crazy company commander occasionally preparing surprises for his Marines. On one occasion, he quickly designated one Marine in each squad to be a casualty and

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forced the squad to build a stretcher out of whatever they had with them and to carry the individual for the next hour. During one march, squad leaders were called away to conduct a sand-table exercise (sand was one thing the Marines had plenty of) and while their leaders were away the squads got “ambushed” by host-nation militiamen.

Captain Mosby carefully observed his leaderless squads’ reactions. Some reacted quickly without orders, others hesitated. Sometimes, the senior remaining Marine in the squad led the group. In other cases, it was a junior Marine. Mosby took note of the informal leaders who showed promise and quietly spoke to the Company First Sergeant about them. They would be given their stripes if they continued to develop.

One day the battalion commander approached Captain Mosby. He had a serious look on his face.

“Johann, we’ve been holding the fort with a skeleton force while you trained. I’ve given you a few weeks. Are your Marines ready to operate as squads yet? We need the help out there.”

Mosby was uncertain. He wished he could complete the entire training program before he committed his Marines to combat. He wished he could have conducted all of this training back home, before the deployment. He knew that the pressure on the battalion was mounting, but he didn’t want to send his Marines out just to become targets again if they were not ready.

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“Sir, about three-quarters of my squads are ready. The others are not too far behind. If we rotate the Marines outside the wire, so that about half are out at any given time, that will allow me to conduct concurrent training with the Marines that are at the forward operating base.”

“How long will your squads stay out?”, asked Lieutenant Colonel Marion.

“That depends on their mission, sir. They can stay out for a while without being resupplied. They can buy food in a few places, and in the higher areas, they can trap some game. They won’t eat well, but they won’t starve. The bigger concern is water. There are not many water sources, so they’ll probably have to sneak it from someone’s well in the dark of night. The mission will determine how long they stay out, rather than logistical considerations. The other concern I have, sir, is that we haven’t had the chance to work on the Marines’ land navigation skills because we’re confined to the FOB. In the initial stages, I don’t want to push the Marines too far. As they become more proficient navigating at night with a map and compass, not just GPS, we can push them further out.

“I’ve been working with the Intelligence Officer on some missions that I think will meet the battalion’s needs as well as suit the limitations I’ve just described, sir.”

“Roger, Johann. What have you got?”, asked Marion.

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In the discussion that followed, Mosby outlined his plan for the battalion commander. Squads would be inserted by a variety of covert methods over a 24 hour period. Each squad was to make its way to a different enemy-controlled area and establish ambushes. Some squads would place ambushes near suspected enemy infiltration routes. Others would establish ambushes along the routes the battalion usually used.

The Marines' logistics convoys had been ambushed repeatedly by the enemy from high, rocky terrain at a bend in the main supply route. The Marines had never been able to catch the enemy and had tried everything from ground sensors to preemptive artillery strikes in an effort to disrupt the insurgents. Nothing worked for long. Mosby believed that the insurgents came from one of the villages to the north of this hill mass. They usually ambushed the convoys with RPGs and medium machineguns. The fact that the insurgents conducted attacks in the same general area and the speed of their withdrawal afterward indicated that they probably cached weapons and ammunition in the vicinity of their ambush site.

Mosby planned on accompanying the squad tasked to establish this counterambush. This would allow him to demonstrate to his Marines that he asked nothing of them that he was not prepared to do himself. He also wanted to see how the squad leader conducted himself. The Company Executive Officer could hold down the fort back at the FOB

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this time. There should not be much for him to do other than conducting the training that Mosby had planned. The squads that were hunting the enemy would operate under radio silence.

The next night, Mosby found himself rolling out of the back of a slowly moving local civilian truck. He and his Marines had been concealed for nearly an hour as part of a convoy moving in the dead of night. The Marines moved quickly away from the road and established a hasty perimeter, waiting in case the enemy had discovered them and allowing their senses to adjust from the noise of the trucks to the quiet that now enveloped them. Moving closer to the squad leader, Lance Corporal Hummel, Mosby was gratified to see that Hummel had carefully tracked their location in the moving truck and was ready to move.

The squad silently arose and began to walk. The night was cold and all were glad to be moving. The Marines stopped frequently. These pauses allowed them to listen for the enemy; it was difficult to listen as effectively while moving. The stops also allowed Hummel to check his land navigation. Mosby checked it, too, to see how Hummel was doing. The squad moved, slowly and silently, for hours that night.

The Marines occupied their chosen ambush site several hours before dawn. They spent all day concealed, watching for a sign of the enemy, but they saw nothing. The squad did not remain more than one day in the same place. They were careful

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to leave no trace of their presence either in their hide sites or in their ambush positions.

Each Marine had started the mission with 4 quarts of water and some food. As the mission went on, the Marines' packs got lighter and their belts got tighter. The water ran out after several days. Everyone shared what they had until each Marine was down to less than a quart, then the squad moved to one of the few small streams that ran through the area. The stream was 10 kilometers away over rough terrain. It took most of one night just to get to the stream and fill up the squad's canteens. The water tasted bad with the iodine necessary to purify it, but every water receptacle was full. Although they planned on topping off their canteens the next night before moving out, no one drank the water too greedily; they had to make it last in the event that they were unable to fill up again tomorrow. They all knew the allowance was one-and-a-half quarts per man per day, away from water sources. The group occupied an ambush site near the water that night, but saw nothing but a few small animals that came to drink. They now knew where they could find meat if they needed food.

In the evening on the eighth day of the patrol, a signal came down the tug line, a piece of string that linked every Marine in the ambush site: someone was entering the kill zone from the northwest. From his position near the center of the ambush site, Mosby had no idea if it was the enemy or not or how many there were. He could only wait

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and see. He heard them before he could see them. They were speaking in hushed tones. He could not understand their language, but certain of their invulnerability, they were making little effort to be silent in the deepening twilight. There were six men. They were armed with a mixture of AK-47s and RPGs; it was certain that these men were not shepherds out looking for a lost lamb.

The men were close. It seemed to Mosby that he could reach out and touch them, but he reassured himself that they were still at least 30 meters away. They passed in front of him from right to left headed toward an area that Mosby and Hummel both agreed would be an excellent position from which to ambush coalition convoys through the area.

Mosby was concerned that the men were going to get away. He was about to initiate the ambush himself when the world seemed to explode around him. The roar was deafening, but it ended as quickly as it had begun. Around him, Mosby could hear Marines moving quickly. Two Marines swept through the kill zone, checking the bodies for anything of intelligence value. A few minutes later, one of the Marines came over and crouched beside him and Hummel.

“We got all six. It was hard to miss them, they were so close! Five are dead, but the sixth is alive. I’ve got Doc working on him right now. He’s in rough shape, but if we get him back to the

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FOB, Doc thinks we can save him. We've secured all the weapons and we found some papers."

Hummel took all this in and rapped out his orders in a voice that was strong, but barely audible, "Good. Make sure to get DNA samples. We'll move in two minutes." Turning to Mosby, Hummel continued, "Sir, I recommend we call in a MEDEVAC bird and get this guy out. We can put one of the Marines on it with him to take all of the intel back and do an initial debrief with the Intelligence Officer. We can make our water last at least another 2 days. If we stay out, we might catch some of the bad guys coming to look for their friends."

Mosby had been thinking the same thing. Hearing these words from Hummel reinforced Mosby's high opinion of the young Marine.

"I agree," said Mosby. "Where do you think we ought to go next?"

"Well, sir, I think we ought to stay nearby and let them come to us. They won't expect us not to move, and they won't be able to see us here even if they're looking."

When Mosby and the squad got off the helicopter at the FOB several days later, it looked like a mob had assembled to greet them. The noise of the helicopter drowned out every other sound. Lieutenant Colonel Marion stepped away from the group and launched himself toward Mosby. In the dark, Mosby could not see that Marion was smiling until he was quite close.

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“Congratulations, Mosby! Great job out there. Your Marines really came through!”, exclaimed Marion.

“Thanks, sir. In addition to that ambush a couple days ago, we ambushed another group of enemy yesterday. There were about 20 of them. We killed eight that we know of; they left the bodies behind. We found a couple items we want the Intelligence Officer to take a look at. The rest ran as soon as we opened up, but there were a bunch of blood trails.” If his Marines’ aim had been a little better, there would have been no enemy survivors. Mosby made a mental note to adjust his training program.

“Your Marines managed to kill more of the enemy in two weeks than the rest of the battalion has in the previous two months, and all without a single casualty or any civilians hurt!”

Mosby was quickly jerked back to reality. His squad had not radioed back to the battalion, except to set up the MEDEVAC and the final exfiltration. Those calls had been extremely brief. He had little idea how the other squads had fared. As he now found out, each had laid at least one successful ambush. Better, none of his Marines had been injured. His feeling of pride in his men and relief did not last long, however. He realized that somewhere out in the darkness, the enemy was already working to find a way to counter his tactics and to get revenge for the Marines’ recent successes.

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“Sir, remember that the enemy learns. I need to get to work training my Marines to operate as part of a platoon in case the enemy tries to mass their forces. This will allow us to do a lot of other ambushes. I once read about X and Z shaped ambushes ...”

The battalion commander put a hand on his shoulder and brought him up short.

“Whoa, whoa, whoa! I absolutely agree with you, but there’s one other thing we have to do, too. I want to convert the rest of the battalion to true light infantry as well. Get with the Operations Officer as soon as you can and help him come up with a plan to retrain the other companies.”

IV. TRAINING LIGHT INFANTRY UNITS

The rest of this manual assumes you are the commander of a line infantry unit – platoon, company or battalion – that you want to convert to light infantry. How could you do it? The same way Captain Mosby did.

Flexibility

The first step must be to give your Marines a light infantry mindset. The way in which light infantry think is much different from the way that line infantry operate. Retraining your Marines without changing the way that they think will give you light infantry in name only.

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Changing the mindset of your Marines is not a “one off” event. It must start immediately and continue throughout training. One part of this is an ongoing education program to teach Marines about the basics of light infantry. Such an education program may consist of guided professional reading with linked discussions, tactical decision games, sand table exercises and tactical exercises without troops.

Another important method is to create situations that compel leaders to adapt to unexpected and constantly changing circumstances. Such situations should arise randomly, not just during scheduled training. Change the training schedule during the training. When units are on a mission during a field exercise, radio them and change their situation or mission and see how well they adapt. The new mission should be one for which they did not prepare and have little or no specialized gear. Run them through problems in the Field Leaders’ Reaction Course (FLRC), if your station has one. The best book on how to train for adaptability is Don Vandergriff’s *Raising the Bar*. Vandergriff spells out in detail why adaptability is so critical and how to inculcate it in your subordinates.

Some of your Marines will thrive in this environment. Others will not. They joined the military for the certainty and structure they thought it would provide them. To reduce uncertainty, they

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will seek sources of “gouge.” Be careful entrusting anyone with information about upcoming events, especially company clerks! Your real training plan should exist only in your own (paper, not electronic) notebook.

The military culture of order that reached its zenith with the Second Generation of modern war has often been reinforced by the personalities of those who chose to join the military. People who need structure and order work to create or preserve those qualities. But war is inherently disorderly; chaos and friction reign. Light infantry training must accept this reality and immerse Marines in it. That is the first thing you do to create the light infantry mindset.

Free-Play Training

The next step that you, the commander, take is to make virtually all training free-play. The best way to train your Marines is to replicate the conditions of combat as closely as possible. The best method for doing so is to utilize free-play training. One of the salient features of war is that it is a clash of opposing wills. Training that does not incorporate this in the form of free-play will not be very effective in preparing Marines for combat. On the rare occasions that Marines get the opportunity to act freely as “aggressors” during current training exercises, they unleash their creativity and often

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cause great difficulty for their opponents. The philosophical goal for training light infantry is to make this “aggressor” mindset the mindset of your Marines all the time.

Weapons Proficiency

Third, ensure your Marines are proficient with every weapon that they are likely to use in combat, including enemy and improvised weapons. Shoot under conditions that approximate combat (e.g., unknown distance at night) and evaluate how well each individual Marine shoots under all of these conditions. Do not succumb to the trap of conducting “familiarization” shoots. They are a waste of ammunition! Teach Marines how to disassemble, clean, reassemble, conduct a function check, and take immediate and remedial action for every weapon. Teach them how to inspect ammunition for serviceability, particularly ammunition for threat weapons with which they were previously unfamiliar. There should also be at least one designated marksman (DM) per squad. Even one well-trained DM can have a devastating effect upon the enemy. The DMs should be appropriately trained and provided with a sniper rifle.

Every light infantryman should also be well-trained and comfortable using hand grenades. Ambushes are the preferred offensive and defensive method

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for LTI and LTI almost always operates in close terrain. The result is that most combats are likely to be at short range. In such fighting, grenades prove extremely useful. Light infantrymen who are unfamiliar or uncomfortable employing hand grenades will be at a disadvantage during such fighting.

Learning to Operate Patiently

Next, teach your Marines to operate patiently. Because light infantry is primarily foot-mobile and must remain concealed, even while moving, it will take time to obtain results. This change in the pace of operations must be reflected in the way units are trained. Troops should not be told when a field exercise is to end, nor should the training plan schedule an “ENDEX.” Units should go to the field on the understanding that once there, they will be required to remain and to sustain themselves until they complete their mission.

To inculcate patience in your Marines, avoid issuing orders that specify a time when something must be accomplished. Allow the unit leader to determine his own timeline. This timeline should be driven by tactical considerations, such as the time it takes to move stealthily or to conduct covert surveillance of an objective. The timeline should never be driven by the fact that an exercise must accomplish 13 training objectives in 4 days.

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Stealth and Stalking

Most enlisted Marine infantrymen hunt. Your training should build on the ways they know to hunt. Operating patiently and hunting skills, including stealth and stalking, go hand-in-glove. LTI that does not hunt its enemies because it has poor stalking skills are more likely to get ambushed than to ambush. Operating away from the aid of other friendly units, LTI must rely on superb field skills to survive. To be observed is to invite attack and destruction. A question to ask your Marines frequently in training is, “Will what you are doing here make you the hunters or the hunted?”

The best way to train Marines in stealth and stalking is to let the experienced hunters lead and critique the others, regardless of rank. It is likely that there will be several who possess superior field craft. As always, in garrison field training exercises, the best way to build these skills is for Marines to take part in free play force-on-force exercises. Marines’ competitive nature will be unleashed and each unit will strive to hunt better than the others because those who have the best stealth and stalking skills will usually win.

Survival Training

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Marine light infantry will often be forced to live off the land. Often, this will mean buying food from local merchants and farmers. But the ability to identify plants and animals that will sustain life should be taught and these skills should be regularly exercised. Marines should be taught how to purify water from streams and lakes. Light infantry does not depend on bottled water. During exercises, Marines should not be regularly resupplied. This will increase their ability to live off the land and force them to make do with the items on hand.

Physical Fitness

LTI units require a level of physical fitness that is both greater and different from their LNI counterparts. The current physical fitness test (PFT) is not an accurate appraisal of a Marine's ability to serve as a light infantryman. Light infantrymen must be able to march great distances rapidly while carrying mission-essential gear. Minimum sustained march rate is 40 km per day; historically, some LTI units have sustained rates as high as 70 – 80 km daily. Physical fitness events that build such performance should be incorporated into each training exercise. Running is irrelevant and a waste of time.

In order for light infantry to be mobile, the gear load must be strictly maintained at no more than 50 pounds. Studies over centuries have shown that

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weights greater than 50 pounds (total to include individual clothing, weapons and other equipment) rapidly degrades an individual's ability to walk great distances. It must be borne in mind that not only must LTI be prepared to make long foot movements, they must be prepared to fight once they arrive. There can be no individual exceptions to the weight limit; the unit's march performance will be that of its slowest member. However, where circumstances permit, LTI can and does make use of carts, bicycles, pack animals, etc., to carry heavier loads.

Physical fitness, like the light infantry mindset, is an ongoing training goal. Not only can physical training be a stand-alone event, it should also be part of every activity. Units should hike most of the places they go.

Demolitions

Train your Marines to use demolitions, to the point where they are both comfortable and creative with them. Demolitions are of inestimable use in initiating an ambush and can also be used to destroy enemy equipment following the ambush if it cannot be carried away. During an attack, demolitions can be used to breach enemy obstacles to permit the assault force to penetrate the defense. You should use IEDs better than your enemy uses them against you. The small size of LTI units and the need to

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conduct demolitions quickly makes it imperative that every Marine is trained to conduct them.

Land Navigation

Land navigation is a critical skill for all hunters. Land navigation practice, both day and night, should begin very early in the training program. Each training exercise should consider how to incorporate missions that will challenge and develop land navigation skills in the unit. Unit leaders should ensure that navigation duties are rotated throughout the unit.

The issue is not just technical skills. Light infantry need the ability to know instinctively where they are. Electronic land navigation aids work against this. You should train without them. Electronic aids also require batteries. Stocks of batteries add weight and take up space in Marines' packs, not to mention requiring resupply missions that could compromise the unit's position.

Marines should become expert in land navigation using a map and compass. No electronic aids of any kind should be permitted. Every Marine must be made to demonstrate his ability to navigate effectively. Do not allow any of the Marines to "hide" and rely on their comrades. Their life or the lives of their friends may one day depend on how well they navigate, particularly at night, which is

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when LTI often moves. No light infantryman who lacks an instinctive sense for his location should serve in a leadership position.

Surveillance / Tactical Site Exploitation

LTI units must be experts in surveillance and must be able to discern the slightest weaknesses in the enemy's positions or posture. Light infantry tactics rely on exploiting such weaknesses. Marines must also be able to communicate this information clearly and succinctly to others. The ability to draw a quick sketch of the situation is valuable and should be developed in training.

Marines must also be trained to pick up items of intelligence value following successful attacks or ambushes. Marines must know what to take, how to preserve it and how to catalog it for later exploitation. They should also be trained to cover the fact that they have found and taken material with intelligence value. Intel the enemy does not know we have is the best kind.

Medical Training

Light infantry units should be taught to treat and care for casualties until they can be evacuated. In some circumstances, evacuation may take several days. Medical training, once taught, should be incorporated into every field exercise. Marines

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should be forced to treat, transport, and evacuate casualties until procedures are second nature.

Supporting Arms

The lowest training priority should be given to teaching your Marines to utilize supporting arms. This is not because supporting arms are not useful. While light infantry relies on its own weapons, it does make use of supporting arms when they are available. Light infantrymen should be trained to call for and adjust indirect fires and to communicate with close support aircraft, but the way they do these tasks are essentially the same as for LNI.² Some of your Marines, certainly your junior officers and staff noncommissioned officers, should have received this training in school. They can teach others. The ability to call in supporting arms is a skill that all hands must possess.

Conclusion

In training LTI units, it is critical to consider how these units will be employed. As LTI generally

² In order to support true light infantry most effectively, pilot training and even aircraft types must change. Back in the mid-1990s, the U. S. Navy and Marine Corps experimented with a concept called “Jaeger Air.” While this experiment was cut short, it showed definite promise and should be revived. See also the K.u.K. Air Cooperation Field Manual FMFM 3-23, available at <http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/lind/>.

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operates as small units, it is important to focus LTI training at the lowest levels first and work upward. Good teams contribute to good squads. Good squads contribute to good platoons, and so on. In LTI units, it is individual and small unit skills that are most vital for larger unit success. Only a company of skilled individual hunters can hunt.

V. LIGHT INFANTRY CONVERSION TRAINING PLAN

The proposed training plan makes the following assumptions:

1. Each Marine has completed basic military occupational specialty (MOS) training (although some of this training may have been counter-productive from a light infantry perspective).
2. Each Marine has achieved basic proficiency with his individual weapon.
3. LTI training must operate within existing Table of Equipment (T/E) restraints. While converting from LNI to LTI will require some changes in gear, there is no money for large, expensive programs.

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	Schwerpunkt	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1	Phase I: Individual Skills Introduction to LI	Field Leader's Reaction Course (FLRC) LI TDG 1 Basics of LI	Land Navigation (classroom)	Land Navigation I (prac app)	Basic Survival Skills I Surveillance I LI TDG 2	6 mile conditioning hike	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 2	Phase I: Individual Skills Field Firing Techniques	Basic Tracking I Communications (Prac App) Advanced Marksmanship	Basic Survival Skills II	Hike to unknown distance range (Day / night fire)	Unknown distance firing, use of optics, NVDs)	Advanced Survival Skills I 9 mile hike back from range	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 3	Phase I: Individual Skills Threat Weapons	Hike to range Threat Weapons classes at range	Threat Weapons live fire (day / night)	Threat Weapons live fire (day / night)	Threat Weapons Live Fire	Hike back from range Weapons Cleaning LI TDG 3	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event

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	Schwerpunkt	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 4	Phase I: Individual Skills Hand Grenades	Land Navigation III	Hike to grenade range Throw practice, live grenades	Hike to MOUT LF range Throw practice, live grenades in MOUT	Hike to fortified position range Throw practice, live grenades in fortified position	Hike back from hand grenade range	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 5	Phase I: Individual Skills Demolitions	Basic Demolitions Basic Survival Skills II	Hike to demolition range Conduct demo	Demolition Range	Demolition range	12 mile hike back from demolition range	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 6	Phase I: Basic Skills Crew Served Weapons Employment	Basic Survival Skills III LI TDG 4 (MGE) Machinegun employment	Land Navigation II	Call For Fire Mortar Employment	CFF Prac App STEX Supporting Arms Employment STEX	Aviation Integration	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event

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	Schwerpunkt	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 7	Phase I: Basic Skills Crew Served Weapons Employment	Advanced Survival I Hike to mortar range	Mortar live fire	Mortar live fire Hike to machinegun range	Machinegun live fire	Machinegun live fire 15 mile hike back from machinegun range	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 8	Phase I: Individual Skills Combat Life Saver	CLS	CLS	CLS	CLS		Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 9	Phase II: Unit Skills Ambush Fundamentals	LI TDG 5 Ambush STEX	Land Navigation IV	Basic Tracking II Ambush TEWT		Field Preparation	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 10	Phase II: Unit Skills Field Exercise	Exercise Preparation	Field Exercise I Hike to laager site	Field Exercise I Receive mission in laager site	Field Exercise I Conduct reconnaissance	Field Exercise I Conduct mission	Field Exercise I Receive mission in laager site	Field Exercise I Conduct reconnaissance

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	Schwerpunkt	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 11	Phase II: Unit Skills Field Exercise	Field Exercise I Conduct mission	Field Exercise I Receive mission in laager site	Field Exercise I Conduct reconnaissance	Field Exercise I Conduct Mission	Hike back from training area Weapons maintenance	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 12	Phase II: Unit Skills LI Squad Live Fire	Sensor employment LI Logistics Hike to training area	Squad offense FEX	Squad ambush / defense FEX Hike to live fire range	Squad assault live fire (day/night)	Squad assault live fire (day) 15 mile hike back from range	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 13	Phase III: Platoon Phase LI Platoon	LI TDG 7 Platoon Offense STEX	Platoon Offense TEWT	Platoon Defense STEX	Platoon Defense TEWT	LI TDG 6 Platoon Operations Field Prep	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 14	Phase II: Unit Skills Field Exercise	Field Exercise II	Field Exercise II	Field Exercise II	Field Exercise II	Field Exercise II	Field Exercise II	Field Exercise II

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	Schwerpunkt	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 15	Phase II: Unit Skills Field Exercise	Field Exercise II	Platoon live fire attack	Platoon live fire ambush	15 mile hike back from training area	Possible surprise training event	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 16	Phase III: Company Level Operations LI Company	LI TDG 8 Company Offense STEX	Company Offense TEWT	Company Defense STEX	Company Defense TEWT	LI TDG 9 Field Prep	Possible surprise training event	Church services Possible surprise training event
Week 17	Phase III: Company Level Operations Field Exercise	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III
Week 18	Phase III: Company Level Operations Field Exercise	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III	Field Exercise III	15 mile hike back from training area			Church services

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Notes:

- The FLRC presents units with problems that require teamwork and resourcefulness to solve. They can be extremely difficult. This course will give the unit commander insight into the qualities that his junior leaders possess. More information can be found in the reference.
- Throughout this transition program, subordinates should be given incomplete information, or the training schedule changed at short notice. The purpose of such changes is to accustom the Marines to rapid change and to engender in them an ability to adapt.
- Threat weapons package consists of assembly, disassembly, maintenance, immediate and remedial action on AK-47, PKM, RPG
- Field Exercise I will last at least 7 days, but can take more time, based upon the pace of the unit in conducting missions. In order to force leaders to become accustomed to rapid changes, at least twice during the exercise, units should be retasked after they have completed mission planning. Students should be given no water beyond their initial load and only 4 days of food. Units that request resupply should be told that enemy activity prevents resupply operations.

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VI. ESSENTIAL READING

Your educational plan should incorporate as many of these works as possible including for the enlisted Marines.

- Austro-Hungarian Marine Corps. *Fleet Marine Force Manual 2 (FMFM-2): Light Infantry*. Imperial and Royal Publishers: Vienna, 2008. Available at <http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/lind/>
- Canby, Steven L. *Classic Light Infantry and New Technology*. C&L Associates Report, n. p., 1983. (DOD Contract No. MDA 903-81-C-0207)
- Ewald, Johann von. *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*. Ed. by Joseph P. Tustin. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.
- Ewald, Johann von. *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*. Trans. by Robert A. Selig and David Curtis Skaggs. Contributions in Military Studies, Number 16. New York: Greenwood Press, 1991.
- Fuller, J. F. C. *British Light Infantry in the Eighteenth Century*.
- Lind, William S. "Light Infantry Tactics." *Marine Corps Gazette* (June 1990), 42 - .
- McMichael, Scott R. *A Historical Perspective on Light Infantry*. Combat Studies Institute Research Survey No. 6. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1987. A PDF

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of this monograph may be found at:
<http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cgsc/carl/download/csipubs/HistoricalPerspectiveonLightInfantry.pdf>

Schmitt, John F. "Light Infantry Tactics at the Company Level and Below." *Marine Corps Gazette* (June 1990), 48 - .

Vandergriff, Donald E. *Raising the Bar: Creating and Nurturing Adaptability to Deal with the Changing Face of War*. Washington, D. C.: Center For Defense Information, 2006.

Uhle-Wettler, Franz. *Battlefield Central Europe: The Danger of Overreliance on Technology by the Armed Forces*, 1981. This book can still be found for sale on the internet.

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