



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER ACADEMY FORT MCCOY
1361 SOUTH O STREET
FORT MCCOY, WI 54656-5127

FRTV-FKN-MCM

02 December 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR U.S. Army Battle Staff NCO Course, Class 003-26

SUBJECT: U.S. Army Battle Staff NCO Course (BSNCOC) Welcome Letter

1. You are receiving this letter because you have a valid reservation in ATRRS for the upcoming class. **If your unit swaps another Soldier for your reservation, please forward this welcome letter to that individual and/or your Training NCO/ATRRS operator. ATRRS is a unit responsibility.**
2. Congratulations on your selection to attend the Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer Course. The purpose of this MFR is to provide information to help you prepare for your days here at the course. **Please read thoroughly before making any travel arrangements or calling the NCO Academy Fort McCoy with questions.** Additional information can be found at:
 - a. ATRRS E400 SH Screen for course 250-ASI2S.
 - b. NCOA Fort McCoy public website: <http://www.usar.army.mil/NCOAFortMcCoy/>
 - c. NCOA Fort McCoy Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NCOAFortMcCoy>
3. The dates/times/location for this course are:
 - a. Report: NET Wednesday, **04 February 2026**. Make your flights for as early as possible. There are limited flights into La Crosse, WI (LSE) so book as early as possible. In-processing runs from 1000-2300 hours in building 1361.
 - b. Start: Thursday, **05 February 2026**- The Commandant/Course Manager orientation will be completed at the given time/location provided to you at in-processing. Classes will begin after orientation.
 - c. Graduation: **26 February 2026**, time 1130 hrs. Schedule return flights as early as possible on **27 February 2026**. Drivers will also depart NET 0600 on **27 February 2026**.
4. Travel:
 - a. DTS is the unit's responsibility. The NCO Academy Fort McCoy does not prepare, review, or approve DTS Authorizations or Vouchers.

b. Commercial Air Travel: *NOTE – OCONUS TRAVELERS: You are authorized to travel up to two days early to allow for time zone acclimation. Lodging is NOT available until **04 February 2026**.

(1) Shuttle Service to Fort McCoy from the La Crosse airport are at no cost to the SM or the unit. The shuttle service can be reached at (502) 898-6765.

(a) Shuttle services run seven days a week to the La Crosse Airport. There is a kiosk in the La Crosse Airport. If you are waiting for a shuttle, it is the responsibility of the Soldier to watch outside of the airport when the shuttle arrives. The drivers will NOT enter the airport or put an announcement across the internal intercoms of the facilities.

(b) If you have a flight arriving in Rochester, Minneapolis, or Madison, Fort McCoy transportation will **NOT** pick you up. Transportation from any other location besides the La Crosse airport will not be serviced. Transportation from these remote locations is the responsibility of the Soldier attending BSNCOC and their unit. Taxi services from Madison can cost up to **\$350.00 one way**. Uber is not a common way of transportation in the rural area of Fort McCoy.

(2) Make flight arrangements to ensure you are here for in-processing between the hours of 1000 - 2300. Failure to arrive on time may constitute denied enrollment and result in a “no show.” **If you are going to arrive later than 2300 hours on the report date, to include flight delays, call Staff Duty at 804-873-5964. You may contact the Course Manager or Senior Facilitator via email prior to the report date for itinerary questions (see below).**

c. Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) travel:

(1) DO NOT BRING YOUR PRIVATELY OWNED WEAPONS / ISSUED SERVICE WEAPONS. CONCEALED CARRY IS NOT AUTHORIZED ON FT. MCCOY

(2) You may be required to present a valid driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance if requested by the DoD police. The DoD police conduct random security checks on all vehicles entering Fort McCoy.

(3) Ensure you follow all DoD guidance on POV travel; plan for rest stops and check weather forecasts.

d. Lodging: Lodging is provided at no cost to the Soldier. All students will be housed one per room dependent on space availability.

e. Meals: The Fort McCoy Dining Facility (DFAC) is available (meals provided) at no cost to those Soldiers who are **NOT** in AC/AGR status. **AC/AGR Soldiers will follow current DTS guidelines for DFAC provided meals on an installation.** The dining facility does accept debit cards for payment. DFAC location is within the NCOA footprint for

the winter months. The summer/alternate DFAC location can change at a moments notice and is not within reasonable (3/4 mile) walking distance.

a. Breakfast: \$4.35

b. Lunch: \$7.05

c. Dinner: \$6.05

f. **Rental cars during the course are highly recommended and encouraged.** The nearest town is 8 miles away and La Crosse (LSE) airport is 35 miles away.

5. On **04 February 2026**, students will sign-in, be assigned a barracks room, receive linen (if required), and receive information on the following day's events which includes in-processing, Commandants in-brief and classroom instruction.

a. Administrative:

(1) S1. Students will verify personal information and ensure all required digital copies of documents have been received by the S-1. If you are missing any required documents (**not including orders or approved DTS screen shot (Active Duty/AGR)** **This source document is required at sign-in**), you are given **72 hours** to have the documents sent. Failure to provide required paperwork may result in dismissal from the course. See 6. below for the list of required documents.

(2) S4. Assignment of Barracks Room, Linen, and Access Cards (if required). Towels are not provided.

(3) S6. Verification/Creation of ARNet Student Account. See 6. below for the list of required documents. **ALL students must validate their Army 365 software is accessible prior to reporting. The NCOA will NOT be able to assist students once they are on ground with any Army 365 account issues.** If you have another type of M365 account that doesn't end in @army.mil such as a health.mil or mail.mil account, you **MUST** request at Joint account from AESMP Tier 1 Help Desk prior to arriving at school. Call the AESMP Help desk at 866-335-2769 (ARMY) for faster service, or submit an

AESMP ticket to process the request to get email provisioned:

https://www.aesmp.army.mil/csm?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=fb50383ad00cf4108fd61f36ac65b448

Soldiers attending courses at the NCOA Ft. McCoy must have favorable background check or you will be denied enrollment into the course. Ref: Army IT User Access Agreement, SEP 2021; AR 25-2. Para 2-37; DoDM 5200.02, April 3, 2017; Army Implementation of Department of Defense Policy on Background Investigation and National Security Adjudication Requirements for Military Personnel (09APR21).

6. Documentation: Soldiers are required to provide the following documentation to Battle Staff Course to email address **labeled with PII redacted accordingly**. Do not send individual emails for each document. Send multiple documents in a single email. The email box you send your documents does not have the capability to respond. It is only used for collection of documents. Ensure you put your Rank, Last Name, First Name and class number for the email subject.

USARC-FC-TC80-TD100-BDE83-NCOAFortMcCoy-BSNCOC-Inprocessing@army.mil

How to label your files:

Rank Last name, First name MI – Document name

Ex: MSG Sage, Jeffrey A. – Bio Sheet

- a. Orders - You **MUST** provide orders before or upon arrival, or you will **NOT** be permitted to sign in (72 hour rule does not apply to orders). Those who do not receive orders (Active Component or AGR) need to provide a screen shot of your stamped approved DTS. Those who need signed orders when they depart the course need to keep a copy with them until the last day. The NCOA McCoy S1 will not provide copies of signed orders.
- b. Flight itinerary (fliers only).
- c. Individual Student Assessment Plan (ISAP); see attached.
- d. TRADOC Form Pre-Execution Checklist (PEC) 350-18-2-R-E; see attached (**WALK-ON & ACTIVE COMPONENT ONLY**).
- e. BSNCOC BIO Sheet; see attached.
- f. Medical profile (ONLY if your profile limits your participation in the class). See section 10 below.
- g. MEDPROS Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) Report (for Soldiers over 40 years old).
- h. For USAR SM's ONLY, ensure your AR net access is up to date and not restricted.

7. Dress and appearance: **All Soldiers will remain in compliance with AR/DA PAM 670-1 and all appropriate ALARACTS while attending the Battle Staff NCO Course. The Duty uniform will be OCPs (authorized pattern only). Effective FY23 students attending BSNCOC will wear either the Army Service Uniform or Army Green Service Uniform for graduation ceremonies.** The drill sergeant hat is **NOT** authorized in

a school environment. The wear of “brassards” (MP, CBRN, etc.) is **NOT** authorized. Consider the time of year and length of this course when packing uniforms. Appropriate Civilian dress is recommended for evenings after class and during study hall.

8. Common Access Card: Soldiers must have in their possession a valid military ID and it must have a current valid PIN.

9. Computers: All students are required to use computers as part of the class. You will sign for your own laptop from your Facilitator. You may bring a personal laptop; however, you will conduct classroom work from your issued laptop. **DO NOT attempt to plug your personal laptop or Army issued laptop into the network. Any external data storage device (“memory stick” or portable hard drive, etc.) is prohibited from all government computers.**

10. Profiles (permanent, temporary, and pregnancy): Soldiers may attend the Battle Staff Course if the profile does not limit their participation in the course. Soldiers are expected to sit at a computer/desk for 8-10 hours a day, verbally interact with peers/class, stand to present briefings, produce drawn graphics/map overlays, etc. If your profile limits these activities or prevents you from fully participating, you may be recommended for removal from the course.

11. Required/Recommended items:

a. Required items: ACU; writing utensils (pens), personal hygiene items.

b. Recommended items: Alarm clock, notebook, super fine (.03 mm) permanent markers for graphics (not required, but you are welcome to bring your own). Army linen (wool blanket, sheets, pillow and pillowcase) is available upon request, but you may bring your own.

c. Fort McCoy can have various weather conditions depending on the time of year you are attending the course. It is recommended between the months of November and April that you bring cold weather clothing for both military and civilians. Gloves are highly recommended during this timeframe as well.

12. Wi-Fi and Cell phone use: The only public-access wireless internet offered is at McCoy’s Community Center, which is within walking distance of the NCOA. Check with your cell phone carrier for quality of service. ARNET wireless is available for use in both the classroom and billets. ARNET does **not** have the bandwidth to handle streaming, college, or any other demanding internet usage.

13. Alcohol: Alcohol is **prohibited** on the NCOA Fort McCoy’s campus. You are not “locked down” while attending the course. You are responsible NCO’s and treated as such. NCO’s can be sent home for disciplinary actions.

14. Read ahead materials: BSNCOC is research intensive. Participation in class, teamwork, and personal study are the keys to success.

a. Read: (13 pages) [13 minutes] ATP 6-22.6, Army Team Building, 30 October 2015, para 1-1 thru 1-18. This read supports team building fundamentals.

b. Scan: ATP 6-22.6, Army Team Building, 30 October 2015, para 1-19 thru 1-81. This scan supports team-building fundamentals.

c. (23 pages) [40 minutes] CMH Pub 7-6-1, The Lorraine Campaign, Chap III, The XX Corps Crossing of the Moselle 6-24 September, pp 117-146. This reading supports large-scale combat operations and the learning activity.

d. FM 1-02.1 Operational Terms and FM 1-02.2 Military Symbols. Familiarize yourself with graphics and symbols prior to your report date. Understanding the components and fields of each graphic is **vital** to your success as a BSNCOC student. Practice depicting basic symbols and plotting on a military scaled map before reporting. The template used during your course is the Pickett - military map symbols No. 1700I. **Plotting on a military scale map is required and should be understood prior to attending the course.**

e. Ensure you are aware/understand the Army writing style.

15. Your unit Training NCO, Quota Source Manager, and DTS manager did not receive a copy of this memorandum. The only information they have is found in the SH screen on ATRRS. Ensure you attach this memorandum to your DTS Authorization for their review.

16. If you have travel issues, call the Staff Duty phone number: 804-873-5964 on the report date. Contact the Course Manager or Senior Facilitator via email prior to the report date for itinerary questions (itineraries will be discussed on Day 1 with your instructor). Senior SGL: SFC Joshua Caires joshua.a.caires.mil@army.mil or Course Manager: MSG Jeffrey Sage, jeffrey.a.sage2.mil@army.mil.

17. The point of contact for this memorandum is the undersigned who can be reached at (608) 388-7648 or email at jeffrey.a.sage2.mil@army.mil.

8 Encls:

1. NCOA Map
2. Fort McCoy Map
3. BSNCOC ISAP
4. BSNCOC References

JEFFREY A. SAGE

MSG, USA

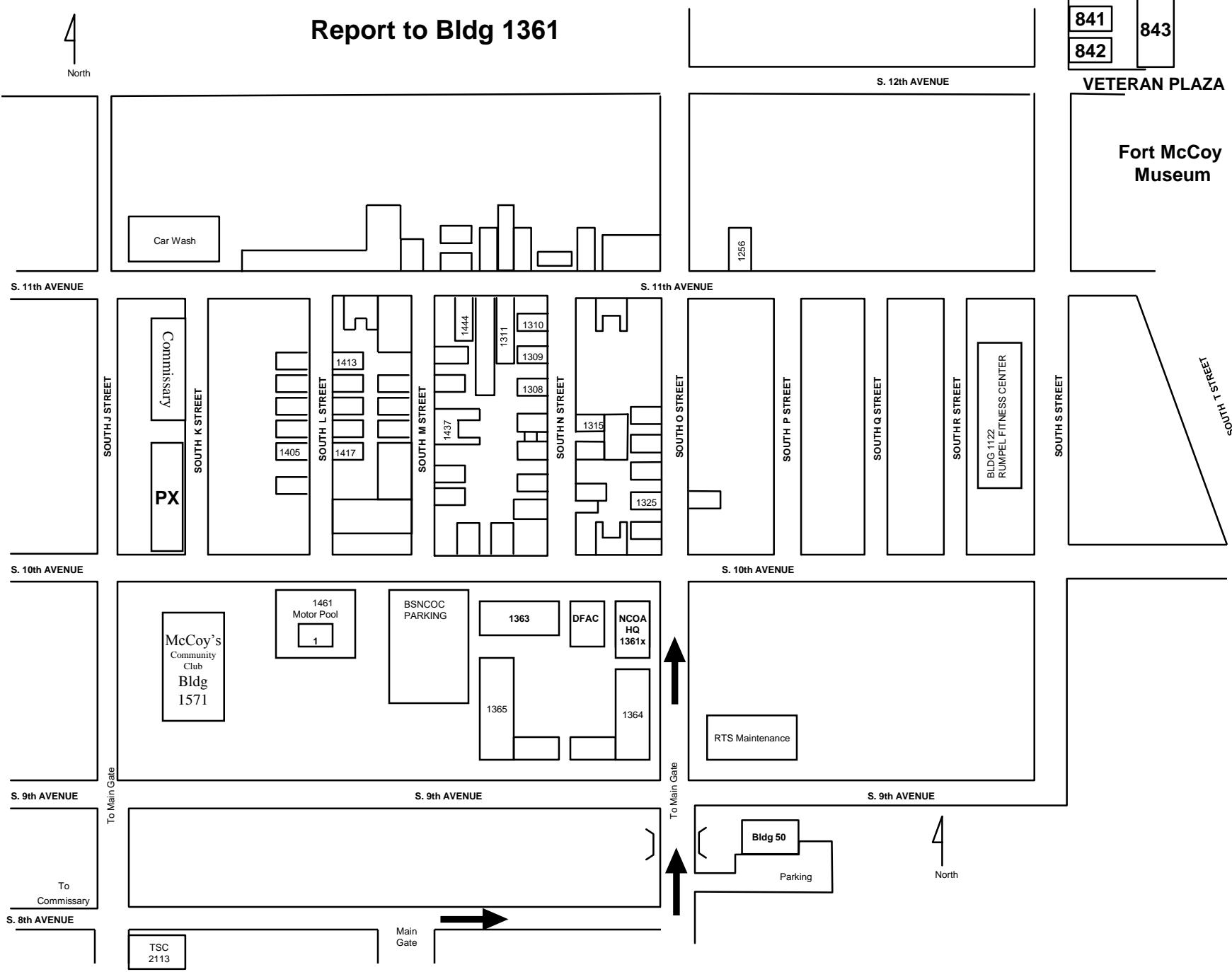
Battle Staff Course Manager

FRTV-FKN-MCM

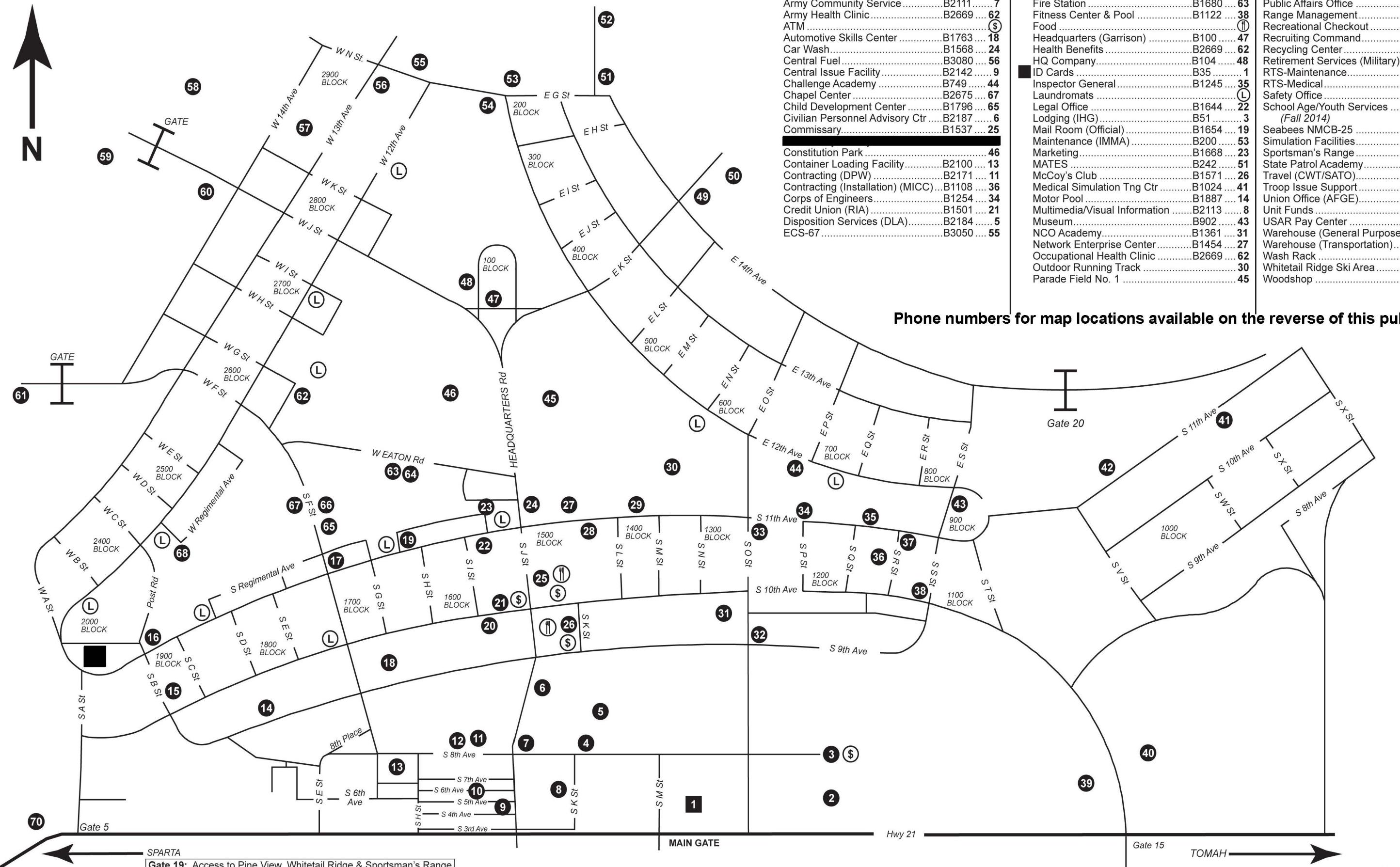
SUBJECT: U.S. Army Battle Staff NCO Course (BSNCOC) Welcome Letter

5. BSNCOC BIO Sheet
6. AGSU or ASU ETP Example
7. XX Crops Crossing the Moselle
8. Introduction to Military Symbols

Report to Bldg 1361



Fort McCoy, Wisconsin



SPARTA
Gate 19: Access to Pine View, Whitetail Ridge & Sportsman's Range

Ginger Road: South Post Housing, Family Housing Office, B6158; Sparta/McCoy Airport

86th Training Division	B50	3	Permit Sales	B2168	12
88th Regional Spt Command	B60	2	Pine View Campground	B8053	59
181st Infantry Brigade	B1920	15	Police Department	B1681	64
426th RTI & WI Military Academy	B90	39	Post Office	B1654	19
Alcohol/Drug Referral/Info	B1344	33	Printing (DLA)	B1654	19
Army Community Service	B2111	7	Public Affairs Office	B100	47
Army Health Clinic	B2669	62	Range Management	B2954	57
ATM	\$		Recreational Checkout	B8053	59
Automotive Skills Center	B1763	18	Recruiting Command	B1446	29
Car Wash	B1568	24	Recycling Center	B2218	70
Central Fuel	B3080	56	Retirement Services (Military)	B35	1
Central Issue Facility	B2142	9	RTS-Maintenance	B1370	32
Challenge Academy	B749	44	RTS-Medical	B10000	42
Chapel Center	B2675	67	Safety Office	B1678	20
Child Development Center	B1796	65	School Age/Youth Services	B1792	66
Civilian Personnel Advisory Ctr	B2187	6	(Fall 2014)		
Commissary	B1537	25	Seabees NMCCB-25	B2880	60
Constitution Park		46	Simulation Facilities	B221-227	54
Container Loading Facility	B2100	13	Sportsman's Range	PWR01	58
Contracting (DPW)	B2171	11	State Patrol Academy	B95	40
Contracting (Installation) (MICC)	B1108	36	Travel (CWT/SATO)	B2180	4
Corps of Engineers	B1254	34	Troop Issue Support	B490	49
Credit Union (RIA)	B1501	21	Union Office (AFGE)	B1411	28
Disposition Services (DLA)	B2184	5	Unit Funds	B1668	23
ECS-67	B3050	55	USAR Pay Center	B1951	14
■ ID Cards	B35	1	Warehouse (General Purpose)	B495	50
Inspector General	B1245	35	Warehouse (Transportation)	B2123	10
Laundromats	L		Wash Rack	B250	52
Legal Office	B1644	22	Whitetail Ridge Ski Area	B8061	61
Lodging (IHG)	B51	3	Woodshop	B1133	37
Mail Room (Official)	B1654	19			
Maintenance (IMMA)	B200	53			
Marketing	B1668	23			
MATES	B242	51			
McCoy's Club	B1571	26			
Medical Simulation Tng Ctr	B1024	41			
Motor Pool	B1887	14			
Multimedia/Visual Information	B2113	8			
Museum	B902	43			
NCO Academy	B1361	31			
Network Enterprise Center	B1454	27			
Occupational Health Clinic	B2669	62			
Outdoor Running Track		30			
Parade Field No. 1		45			

Phone numbers for map locations available on the reverse of this publication.

NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER LEADERSHIP CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
(NCOLCoE)

BATTLE STAFF NCO (BSNCOC)

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT PLAN (ISAP)

Instructions to the learner: Effective date of this ISAP is **1 FEBRUARY 2021**. Read this ISAP and complete the learner acknowledgement on the last page. You will keep this ISAP for your records.

This ISAP establishes learner responsibilities and graduation criteria, details how noncommissioned officer academies/regional training institutes (NCOAs/ RTIs) will determine if the learner has demonstrated a sufficient level of competency to pass, and informs the learners of the testing strategy used to evaluate them on the training. This ISAP also informs learners, facilitators, and other personnel of the course graduation requirements. NCOAs/RTIs will explain this plan to the learner at the beginning of the course, ensure the learner has read and understood this ISAP, and post an unsigned blank copy in the BSNCOC area for the learners' reference.

9-1. Learner Responsibilities

- a. The method of instruction for this course is the ELM. This method places the responsibility for learning on the learner through participation in small groups led by facilitators who serve as role models and facilitate throughout the course. A facilitator uses collaboration and experiences to stimulate learning.
- b. This method capitalizes on learner experiences, requires intensive learner interaction, and makes each learner responsible for his/her own learning. Cooperation takes precedence over competition. ELM provides individualized learning, team building, and maximum exchange of ideas.
- c. It is the responsibility of the learner to learn and achieve the learning objectives of this course. This includes adhering to the advance sheet, reading assignments, completing the homework assignments, completing the learning activities, and fully participating in classroom/group room discussions and learning activities. Learner is encouraged to ask questions pertinent to the lesson prior to the assessment.

9-2. General Standards

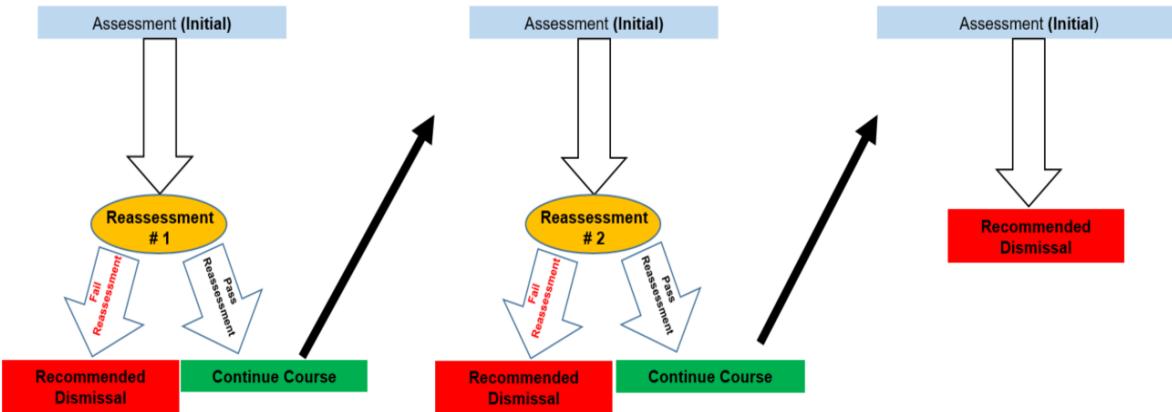
- a. Minimum Achievements. Learner must complete all graded requirements, all homework assignments, all learning activities, and all performance assessments. Learner will attend all classes and activities. Failure to pass any of the course graduation requirements will constitute failure to meet course standards and the learner will not graduate.

b. Standards of Conduct. Learner will conduct themselves in a manner expected of a noncommissioned officer. This includes demonstrating law-abiding personal conduct and behavior, both on and off duty. Commandants may dismiss a learner from the course for any conduct or behavior that violates local, state, or federal law, including the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) or for any conduct or behavior that violates any DOD, Army, local regulation, or policy. This includes, but is not limited to, substantiated cases of lying (oral or written, sworn or unsworn), cheating, plagiarism, and improper relationships, e.g., senior-subordinate or learner-facilitator. Learner shall be at their appointed place of duty on time. Learner may only miss a total of four academic hours. If a learner misses more than four hours, he/she will be dismissed from the course. Any learner who demonstrates a pattern of lateness may receive dismissal consideration.

c. Physical Readiness Training (PRT) standards. There is no organized PRT during BSNCOC. Learners are highly encouraged to conduct PRT on their own in order to maintain physical readiness.

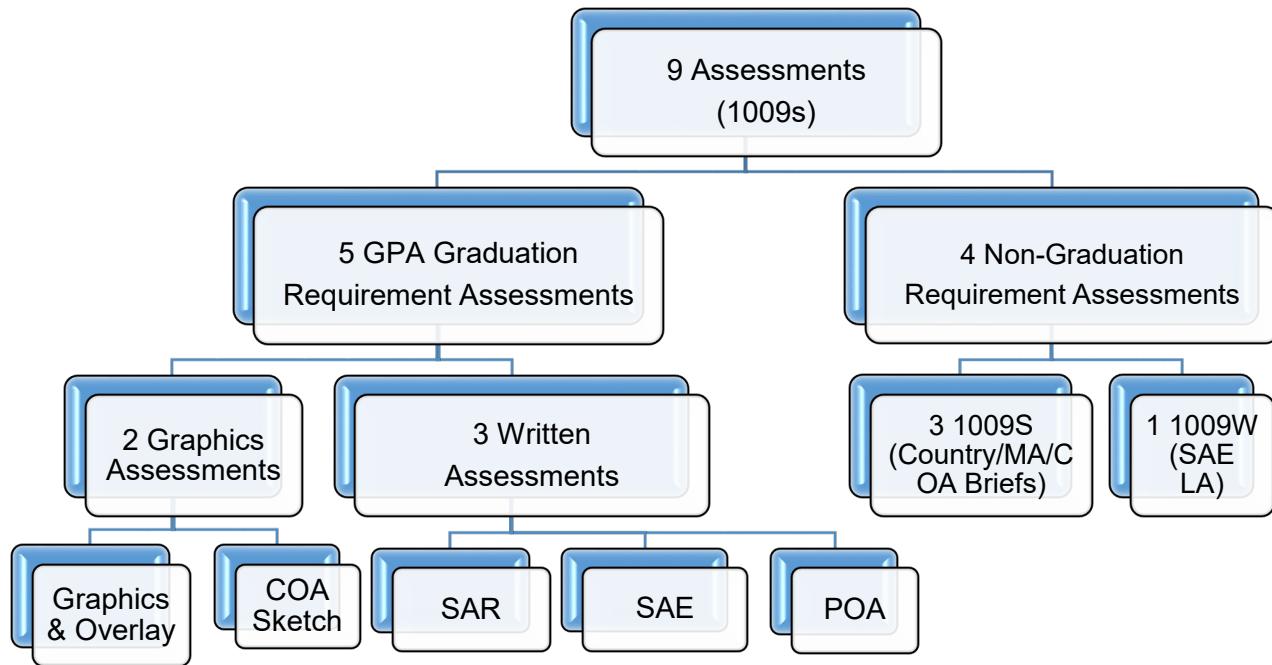
d. Remedial instruction and reassessments. The facilitator will formally counsel learners who fail an initial assessment. They shall provide remedial instruction and a reassessment. The reassessment for the Graphics and Overlay and Course of Action Sketch will be administered two duty days after the initial assessment. Short Answer Response, Short Answer Essay Learning Activity, Short Answer Essay and Plans Orders and Attachments writing assessments will be due 48 hours after retraining has been conducted. Learners are allowed no more than two reassessments during their enrollment in BSNCOC; additional reassessments are not authorized. Learners who require and pass a reassessment will receive the minimum passing score of 70% for that event and will automatically be removed from class honors consideration. The highest final grade for an assignment a learner can obtain on a reassessment is 70% (regardless of the score obtained). If a learner fails the reassessment or requires more than two reassessments, they will be recommended for dismissal to the Commandant or the BSNCOC Chiefs at other NCO Academies and RTIs are the approving authority for dismissal and disenrollment from the course. The senior facilitator is responsible for reassessments.

Reassessment Flow chart



e. Learner Dismissal/Disenrollment. Commandants or designated persons may remove a learner from the course before completion for disciplinary reasons, lack of motivation, and other valid reasons (such as illness, injury, or academic deficiencies). A learner's failure to maintain standards during the course may constitute an infraction of the UCMJ or may simply indicate a lack of motivation or aptitude. A learner who violates the UCMJ may receive a suspension or dismissal from the course. Commandants may require a learner to report to the court-martial convening authority. The facilitator will counsel a learner whose actions demonstrate a probable lack of motivation and may consider them for dismissal/disenrollment for motivational, disciplinary, or academic reasons.

9-3. Course Graduation Requirements, Academic Grading, and Assessment Plan



a. There are **NINE** assessments used in this course. To meet course graduation requirements learners **must** achieve an overall rating of **70 percent** or higher on **FIVE** of the assessments which also determine the GPA.

(1) The five GPA driven assessments.

(a) Form 1009W Assessing Short Answer Response – weight = 10 percent of GPA.

(b) Form 1009W Assessing Short Answer Essay – weight = 30 percent of GPA. The assessment is divided into two requirements, each worth 15 percent.

(c) Form 1009W Assessing Prepare an Overlay – weight = 30 percent of GPA.

(d) Form 1009W Assessing Plans, Orders, and Attachments – weight = 20 percent of GPA.

(e) Form 1009W Assessing Course of Action Sketch – weight = 10 percent of GPA

(2) The **FOUR** non-graduation requirement assessments.

(a) Form 1009W Assessing Short Answer Essay Learning Activity – This assessment will be used as a learning activity to prepare the learner for the Short

Answer Essay assessment. This assessment will not be a graduation requirement or used to determine the GPA.

- (b) Form 1009S Assessing Country Briefing learning activity.
- (c) Form 1009S Assessing Mission Analysis Briefing learning activity.
- (d) Form 1009S Assessing Course of Action (COA) Decision Brief learning activity.

b. Learner may not get credit or take any tests prior to receiving the training. In the event a learner fails the primary assessment but passes the reassessment, the learner will only be given a 70 percent for that assessment regardless of their score on the reassessment. Learners who fail either one reassessments or three initial assessments are subject to dismissal. The dismissal authority for learners in the BSNCOC is the Deputy Commandant at the NCOLCoE; local BSNCOC Chiefs at other NCO Academies and RTIs are the approving authority for dismissal and disenrollment from the course at Camp Williams, UT; Fort McCoy, WI; or Fort Indiantown Gap, PA. A learner wishing to appeal this dismissal must submit appeal through the BSNCOC Chief Instructor to the Deputy Commandant NCOLCoE, if attending at Fort Bliss or through the BSNCOC Chief at the learner's location (Camp Williams, UT; Fort McCoy, WI; or Fort Indiantown Gap, PA) to the Commandant at the respective location. Once the final decision is made, a memorandum will go through the Chain of Command to the learner.

c. NCOAs/RTIs Responsibilities

(1) NCOAs/RTIs conducting the BSNCOC will use the aforementioned written assessments and performance assessments to ensure learner can demonstrate overall mastery of course material and meet course graduation requirements.

(2) NCOAs/RTIs will provide remedial/refresher training to the learner who fails an assessment and offer them one reassessment (unless additional reassessments are approved by the commandant). The reassessment will cover the entire assessment for Plans, Orders, and Attachments, Prepare and Overlay, and COA Sketch. SAR and SAE assessments require the learner to correct the deficiencies identified during their counseling for failure to meet the standard. Should a learner fail the reassessment, the Deputy Commandant at the NCOLCoE or the BSNCOC Chiefs at other NCO Academies and RTIs will dismiss them from the course. Learner may request second reassessment based on matters of extenuation only. The desire to complete the course is not grounds for a second reassessment.

(3) NCOAs/RTIs will award the learner passing the reassessment the minimum passing score, which is 70 percent, regardless of the learner's actual grade point achieved on the reassessment. NCOAs/RTIs will record the final reassessment score in learner course records along with counseling and remediation documentation.

Note: The following items are **UNAUTHORIZED** during the assessment: cell phones, smart watches, tablets, cameras, or other unauthorized electronic devices. If a learner is caught using any of the aforementioned electronic devices, the learner will be subject to dismissal.

<u>Primary Assessments</u>	<u>Weight Percentage</u>
Form 1009W, Assessing Short Answer Response =	10 percent
Form 1009W, Assessing Short Answer Essay =	30 percent
Form 1009W, Assessing Prepare an Overlay =	30 percent
Form 1009W, Assessing Plans, Orders, and Attachments =	20 percent
Form 1009W, Assessing Course of Action Sketch =	10 percent
TOTAL = 100 percent	

f. The above five weighted assessments determine the learner's overall grade point average (GPA). Calculate weight percentage to the second decimal place (0.00 %). Determine the 4.0 GPA by multiplying the overall GPA by 4 (i.e. $90.00 \times 0.04 = 3.6$) (see chapter 11 for more details).

9-4. Learner Grievances and Redress

Learners having a grievance will address that grievance to the facilitator or senior facilitator and then to the course Chiefs immediately. Learner may also address their grievance to the Commandant, if necessary. Learners having a grievance involving discrimination or violation of policy should use the Chain of Command up to the Commandant.

9-5. Learner Honors and Recognition

- a. Learners who successfully complete the BSNCOC will receive a DA Form 87.
- b. The learners who earn the top two highest GPAs will have Distinguished Honor Graduate or Honor Graduate annotated on their DA Form 87. In the event of a tie, the tiebreaker will be used in the following order Mission Analysis Brief, COA Decision Brief, Country Brief, and SAE LA. All briefs will only use individual awarded points in the event of a tie.
 - (1) Distinguished Honor Graduate (DHG): To achieve the distinction of DHG, the learner must have the highest GPA; pass all initial assessments; and receive no negative counseling.

(2) Honor Graduate (HG): To achieve the distinction of HG, the learner must have the second highest GPA; pass all initial assessments; and receive no negative counseling.

9-6. Point of Contact for ISAP

- a. BSNCOC Senior SGL, NCOA Fort McCoy, (608)388-2332.
- b. BSNCOC Course Manager, NCOA Fort McCoy, (608)388-6341.

9-7. Learner Acknowledgement and Understanding of this ISAP

Rank	Last Name	First Name	Signature	Date
------	-----------	------------	-----------	------

BSNCOC REFERENCE'S

ATP 6-22.6, <i>Army Team Building</i>
ADP 1-02, <i>Terms and Military Symbols</i>
ADP 3-0, <i>Operations</i>
ADP 3-07, <i>Stability</i>
ADP 3-28, <i>Defense Support of Civil Authorities</i>
ADP 3-90, <i>Offense and Defense</i>
ADP 5-0, <i>The Operations Process</i>
ADP 6-0, <i>Mission Command and Command and Control</i>
ADP 7-0, <i>Unit Training Management</i>
AR 5-13, <i>Total Army Munitions Requirements and Prioritization System</i>
ATP 2-01.3, <i>Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield</i>
ATP 3-34.81, <i>Engineer Reconnaissance</i>
ATP 5-0.1, <i>Army Design Methodology</i>
ATP 5-19, <i>Risk Management</i>
ATP 6-0.5, <i>Command Post Organization and Operations</i>
CALL Handbook 19-18
CALL; OE Watch; Red Diamond; Duffer Dream
Center of Military History (CMH) Pub 7-6-1, <i>The Lorraine Campaign</i>
DATE Version 3.0, <i>Decisive Action Training Environment</i>
Dictionary.com
FM 3-0, <i>C1, Operations</i>
FM 3-14, <i>Army Space Operations</i>
FM 3-14, <i>Space Operations</i>
FM 3-24, <i>Insurgencies and Counter Insurgencies</i>
FM 3-55, <i>Information Collection</i>
FM 3-90-1, <i>Offense and Defense</i>
FM 3-96, <i>Brigade Combat Team</i>
FM 6-0, <i>Commander and Staff Organization and Operations</i>
JP 3-0, <i>Joint Operations</i>
JP 3-05, <i>Special Operations</i>
JP 3-08, <i>Interorganizational Cooperation</i>
JP 3-16, <i>Multinational Operations</i>
JP 5-0, <i>Joint Planning</i>
Louisiana State University Center for Academic Success
Merriam-Webster
OE Data Integration Network (ODIN)
OE Data Integration Network (ODIN)
Operational Environments to 2028: <i>The Strategic Environment for Unified Land Operations</i>
TC 25-8, <i>Training Ranges</i>
TP 525-3-1, <i>Multi-Domain Operations</i>

Battle Staff NCO Course Class # (example; 001-22): _____

VTT Students ONLY - Location of attendance: _____

Resident Students ONLY - Battle Room: _____

Data Required by the Privacy Act of 1974

1. Authority. Title 10, USC 3012.

2. Principal Purpose. Initiate individual academic records and establish a composite class profile.

3. Routine Uses. Provide administrative information to instructors, staff, faculty, academic records, and proponents from higher headquarters.

4. Disclosure. Voluntary; however, failure to provide social security number and other information may result in a delay or error in processing the individual to student status.

Name	Last, First MI.					
Email Address						
Marital Status (check one)	Married_____	Single_____	Divorced_____	Separated_____	Widowed_____	
	Age:	Gender:	Cell Number:			
(Resident Course Only) Billet Bldg#:		Resident Course Only) RM# or Local Address:				
Component	Active Army_____ Army National Guard_____ Army Reserve_____ Other (specify USAF, USCG, USN, USMC, International country/service): _____					
Career Field	OPERATIONS DIVISION (OD)_____ Air Defense Artillery, Armor, Aviation, Field Artillery, Infantry, Special Operations Forces OPERATIONS SUPPORT DIVISION (OSD)_____ Military Intelligence/Language, Chemical, Engineer, Military Police, Public Affairs, Signal FORCE SUSTAINMENT DIVISION (FS)_____ Health Services, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Transportation, Soldier Support (AG, FI, JAG, CH, Retention, Army Band)					
	Rank:	Time in Grade:	Time In Service:	PMOS (i.e. 11Z):		
How many times have you been deployed?		To what locations have you been deployed?				
What is the highest level of civilian education you have completed?		GED _____	2 Years of College _____	Associates Degree _____		
		High School _____	3 Years of College _____	Bachelor Degree _____		
		1 Year of College _____	4 Years of College _____	Master Degree _____		

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING**YES NO**

I am currently serving in a 2S coded position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am projected on assignment to serve in a 2S coded position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am/have been an S-1 PAC Supervisor / PSNCO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am/have been an S-2 Intelligence Sergeant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am/have been an S-3 Operations Sergeant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am/have been an S-4 NCO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Unit name and complete street address:	Unit, Post/State/APO/Zip Code:	
Unit Telephone Number:	Commercial:	DSN:
Walk on complete Home Address:		
FIRST LINE SUPERVISOR PHONE NUMBER: FIRST LINE SUPERVISOR NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS: BN CSM NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS: BN CSM PHONE NUMBER: BDE CSM NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS: BDE CSM PHONE NUMBER:		
Emergency Contact Information		
Name:		
Relationship:	Commercial Telephone Number:	

The information I have provided on this form is, to the best of my knowledge, correct. Any errors are solely my responsibility as evidenced by my signature below.

(Signature and Date)

ORGANIZATION
ORGANIZATIONAL NAME/TITLE
STANDARDIZED STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE 12345-1234

OFFICE SYMBOL

Date

MEMORANDUM FOR ~~XXXX~~ NCOA COMMANDANT

SUBJECT: Incomplete or unserviceable Army Green Service Uniform (AGSU) or Army Service Uniform (ASU) to no fault of the Soldier

1. The unit Supply Sergeant listed below certifies that the listed Soldier(s) do not have a complete and/or serviceable AGSU or ASU to no fault of the Soldier.

2. Point of contact for this memo is **XXXX** at (email address) or (phone number).

NAME (ALL CAPS)
SSG, XX
Supply Sergeant

NAME (ALL CAPS)
CPT, XX
Commanding

CHAPTER III

The XX Corps Crossing of the Moselle¹ (6-24 September)

Preparations for the Moselle Crossing

On 28 August the exhausted and disorganized enemy forces were reeling back to the east, leaving only a few small groups of isolated infantry and stubborn antitank gunners from the *17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division* and the *48th Division* to delay the American advance. But at the same time gasoline began to run low in the tanks, trucks, and armored cars of the XX Corps. By 29 August the shortage was acute. The 90th Infantry Division, on the north flank, came to a halt at Reims with hardly enough gasoline left to keep the field ranges on the kitchen trucks burning. By siphoning fuel from supply and transport vehicles, elements of the 7th Armored Division and 5th Infantry Division were able to make the last few miles to the Meuse River and establish a bridgehead there. Contact with the main rear guard of the fleeing Germans no longer existed, and shortly after noon on 31 August tanks from CCA, 7th Armored Division (Colonel Rosebaum), rumbled across the Meuse on a bridge which had been found intact in the ancient city of Verdun. The crossing at Verdun was close to the last step in the rapid 400-mile advance which the XX Corps had made since 6 August. Of the seventeen tanks in the task force dispatched to Verdun only three reached their objective; the rest had

¹ This chapter is based on the After Action Reports and unit journals of the XX Corps, 7th Armored Division, 5th Infantry Division, 90th Infantry Division and 3d Cavalry Group, including those of infantry regiments, rifle battalions, and cavalry squadrons. Important information at the level of command has been obtained from the telephone journals attached to the daily G-3 Journals of the 7th Armored Division and 5th Infantry Division as well as from postwar correspondence with several of the staff officers and commanders involved in this operation. The Historical Division Combat Interviews for this period are very detailed and extremely useful. See also *The Reduction of Fortress Metz; XX Corps Opérational Report 1 September-6 December 1944; Pass in Review—the Fifth Infantry Division in ETO* (Atlanta, 1946) (hereafter cited as *Fifth Infantry Division*); *History of the Eleventh United States Infantry Regiment* (Baton Rouge, 1947) (hereafter cited as *Eleventh Infantry*); *Historical & Pictorial Review, 2d Infantry Regiment* (Baton Rouge, 1946). Enemy information is taken from the KTB's of Army Group G, OB WEST and OKW. In addition various *Anlagen* to these KTB's have been used, plus the operations maps (1:300,000) of the *OKH, Gen. St. d. H./Operations Abteilung*.

run out of gasoline. The 5th Division followed as far as Verdun, outposted the east bank of the Meuse, and with this bridgehead in hand the XX Corps eastward drive stalled. For five days General Walker waited for gasoline, rationing the few hundred gallons left so as to send his armor and cavalry out on scouting missions to the north and east.

On the morning of 1 September, CCR (Lt. Col. J. W. Newberry) of the 7th Armored Division moved east along the main Verdun-Metz highway and reached Etain, some twelve miles from the Meuse, where on the previous night a raid by the 3d Cavalry Group (Col. F. W. Drury) had captured 4,000 gallons of gasoline—enough to send cavalry patrols on eastward to the Moselle River. For the next few days the 3d Cavalry Group acted with the élan of the old mounted cavalry tradition. But its accomplishments could lead to no substantial gain and did little more than indicate what might have been the story had not the iron grip of logistics intervened to thwart a Third Army dash across the Moselle. A platoon of B Troop, 3d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, commanded by 1st Lt. James D. Jackson and guided by a French Marine, made a seventy-mile foray deep into the enemy rear and on the afternoon of 2 September reached Thionville, the large bridgehead city north of Metz. For two hours Lieutenant Jackson's little force—three armored cars and six jeeps—shot up the town, and Jackson even succeeded in cutting the demolition wires on the main bridge spanning the Moselle River; but eventually the Americans were driven off, and returned to their command. Jackson, who had been wounded twice at the bridge, was awarded the DSC. On this same day a platoon from the 43d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron made a reconnaissance toward Longuyon, twenty-eight miles northeast of Verdun, and penetrated the outskirts of that town before the surprised Germans mustered enough tanks and artillery to drive the American cavalry out. Another platoon of the 43d, led by 2d Lt. R. C. Downs, reached the Moselle River on 2 September and set up an observation post on the heights at Haute Kontz, north of Thionville, reporting by radio: "No enemy visible on other side of the Moselle. Many good places for bridges, all undefended. Rolling ground back of river." So disrupted were the German forces west of the Moselle that Lieutenant Downs was able to retain his point of vantage by dodging about until 5 September, when the lowering level in the gas tanks forced the platoon to cut back to the west and rejoin its squadron.

Elsewhere the 3d Cavalry Group was forced to curtail scouting operations between the Meuse and the Moselle as the limited gasoline supply began to

fail. By the morning of 3 September the 43d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, which had pushed out on the left wing of the XX Corps zone of advance, had to report that it could operate neither its vehicles nor its motor-driven radios. The remaining squadron, the 3d, was able to maintain contact with the retreating enemy all through 3 September and as night fell was approaching the Moselle River south of the city of Metz. But already there were signs of stiffening German resistance in front of the cavalry patrols and the FFI reported that its informants across the river had seen enemy troops entering Metz and strengthening positions south of the city near Arnaville. Contrary to rumors that later circulated through the Third Army, no American cavalry were able to enter Metz or its environs.

Meanwhile General Walker decided to make what use of the stalemate he could in hopes of adding to the enemy confusion. On 2 September, as an indication to the enemy that the XX Corps intended to turn to the north and northeast and move in the direction of Luxembourg alongside the VII Corps of the First Army, two armored task forces from the 7th Armored Division were sent north from Verdun, advancing on both sides of the Meuse with orders to make a feint at Sedan. The task forces ran out of gasoline before reaching Sedan, and on the afternoon of 3 September General Walker ordered them to return to Verdun. Some gasoline was available the following day and the armor then rejoined its division. It appears that the enemy initially reacted to this demonstration as General Walker had hoped. On 4 September German intelligence reports prepared in *Army Group B* headquarters noted: "The Third Army appears to be regrouping for a further drive to the *northeast*. A great attack on the line Mons-Charleville-Montmédy is to be expected soon." But the failure of American reconnaissance to follow up these first probing efforts on a northeasterly axis quickly convinced the German higher staffs that the Third Army attack would take some other course, and no troops were shifted to the Sedan sector.

During these days of enforced inactivity the XX Corps commander and his staff were busy with plans for a drive that would reach Mainz, on the Rhine, 140 air-line miles east of the XX Corps forward positions, before the German West Wall could be manned. This scheme of attack had been discussed by General Patton and General Walker during March 1944, while the Third Army was in the United Kingdom. It had been promulgated as a written order from General Bradley's headquarters on 29 August and now remained on the planning maps for immediate use once the gasoline drought

was ended. In the first days of September, however, there was little the XX Corps could do but commit ambitious future plans to paper, wait, make a sterile record of the optimistic and pleading messages radioed in by the cavalry, put out daily periodic reports with the dour phrase, "no change," engage in gunnery practice when German planes came over at night in fruitless attempts to destroy the Verdun bridges, and hope that gasoline would soon arrive. Even the foot soldiers of the two infantry divisions had to wait on the life blood of mechanized warfare, for without gasoline no artillery, bridging equipment, rations, or ammunition could be moved forward to support them in any extended advance.

In the meantime the 315th Engineer Combat Battalion of the 90th Infantry Division worked feverishly to repair a large airfield near Reims which had been badly damaged by German ground crews before its capture. By noon of 3 September the main runways were in shape to receive cargo planes; this, coupled with reports that there was a plentiful supply of gasoline on the beaches back in Normandy, promised an early end to the shortage.

By the afternoon of 4 September enough fuel was on hand to extend the radius of cavalry action and the 3d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron began to push its patrols toward the Moselle between Thionville and Pont-à-Mousson, the projected zone of a renewed advance by the XX Corps. General Walker ordered the squadron to seize any bridges over the Moselle still standing, but the German defensive positions west of the river were rapidly being manned and apparently were fairly well co-ordinated. The FFI told the American cavalry that some bridges south of Metz were still intact. When a cavalry patrol reached the bridge at Pont-à-Mousson, however, it found the structure demolished. Scouting north along the river the cavalry tried to pass through the defiles leading down to the west bank of the Moselle at Arnaville, which commanded another bridge site. Three separate attempts to get into the town were checked by the German infantry and artillery posted along the defiles, and when night came the XX Corps was still without a bridge, though scouts had heard of a fording site at Ars-sur-Moselle some five thousand yards south of the Metz suburbs. The following day brought no greater success and the five cavalry task forces probing toward Metz and the river met strong resistance at every point. In one brush with the Germans near Gravelotte, the commanding officer of the 3d Cavalry Group, Colonel Drury, was ambushed and captured. As reports came back from the cavalry indicating that a German line was beginning to form for the defense of the river and the Metz-

Thionville position, the corps commander had to consider whether he should commit his one armored division at the river line in the hope of forcing a quick passage and making immediate exploitation deep in the enemy rear, or whether a systematic infantry assault would be necessary before the armor could be put across the Moselle and started on a dash toward the Rhine. Alternate plans finally were formulated to allow either the 7th Armored Division or the 90th and 5th Infantry Divisions to initiate the attack and seize a bridgehead over the Moselle. General Walker favored the use of the armor, with the hope of securing a bridge in a quick stroke. General Silvester and his officers believed that the infantry divisions should be committed in advance of the 7th Armored Division.²

Late in the evening of 5 September, General Walker returned from the meeting at the Third Army headquarters with the long-awaited word to resume the offensive. He hurriedly phoned his divisions and relayed the news, adding that the orders from General Patton "will take us all the way to the Rhine." Early the next morning the XX Corps headquarters followed up his alert with instructions that Field Order No. 10, the most ambitious and far-reaching of the various plans considered during the waiting period, would be put into operation at 1400 that afternoon. This field order reflected the optimism so strongly felt in the Third Army. It defined the initial corps mission as the seizure of crossings on the Sarre River, some thirty miles east of the Moselle. Beyond this the field order provided that, on the receipt of additional orders from army headquarters, the XX Corps would continue its advance to Mainz on the Rhine River. The 7th Armored Division now was assigned the mission of making the Moselle crossing in advance of the infantry, apparently in the hope that the armor would find a bridge intact at the Moselle, as had been the case at both the Marne and Meuse. The corps commander specifically enjoined General Silvester to make the approach march to the Moselle on a wide front and in multiple columns, but no decision was made as to whether the division should fight for a crossing both north and south of Metz or confine its efforts to the establishment of a single bridgehead. Once the 7th was beyond the Moselle, the role envisaged for the armor was clearly defined, both by General Patton's customary use of armor in the exploitation of a breakthrough, and by General Walker's instructions that the 7th Armored Division must bypass Metz—"if it doesn't fall like a ripe plum"—striking straight for

² XX Corps G-3 Jnl, 4 Sep 44; Ltr, Lt Col C. E. Leydecker (then CofS, 7th Armd Div) to Hist Div, 29 Jul 47; Ltr, Lt Gen Walton H. Walker to Hist Div, 8 Oct 47.

the Sarre River and its bridges. The two cities that formed the anchor positions for the German main line of resistance in front of the XX Corps, Metz and Thionville, were labeled as "Intermediate Objectives" and assigned as targets for the 5th and 90th Infantry Divisions respectively. But here again, as in the case of the armor, details of any long-range scheme of maneuver would have to await the seizure of a bridgehead east of the Moselle and more exhaustive intelligence on the enemy and the terrain.

The XX Corps commander now faced much the same problem as that encountered by von Moltke during the westward German advance in August 1870. Von Moltke, famous for the detail and exactness of his planning, had waited for the situation to clarify before deciding whether to make his flanking movement north or south of Metz. The head of the German *First Army* was on the Moselle before von Moltke finally gave the order for the southern crossing. Later, at the turn of the century, von Schlieffen examined this problem in a series of staff exercises on the defense of Metz, then, as in 1944, in German hands. Three factors led von Schlieffen to conclude that an advance along the western approaches to Metz offered considerable operational freedom and initiative to the attacker. First, defending field forces moving from east of the Moselle to counterattack would find it extremely difficult to defile in any strength through Metz and across its bridges. Second, the road net west of the Metz-Thionville position would permit the attacker to shift his weight quickly and with reasonable ease. Finally, the terrain to the north and the south would give almost equal facility for an advance from west to east.

The Enemy Situation

The XX Corps headquarters and higher intelligence echelons had relatively little information about the strength and the dispositions of the German forces along the Moselle. Earlier messages from the cavalry had indicated that the Germans were scattered and confused, and as late as 3 September the XX Corps G-2 reported: "There is every indication of enemy withdrawal." But on the following day additional information from the reconnaissance units to the front changed this optimistic appraisal with word of a considerable movement to reinforce Metz. By the night of 5 September the corps cavalry had encountered enough enemy resistance to give a general idea of the main German concentrations. A strong, close-in defense system was already evident west of Metz, and the Germans showed every indication of making a stand

at the Thionville bridge site. Some withdrawal was still in progress between Conflans and Briey, opposite the north wing of the XX Corps, but even in this area there were signs that the Germans would fight a delaying action in the rugged terrain west and northwest of Thionville. Few prisoners were being taken and their attitude had changed considerably, as compared with the demoralized and submissive mien shown in preceding days. Most of the captured now displayed the old German arrogance.

On 6 September, D Day for the new offensive, the XX Corps G-2 drew up an estimate of the possible German strength in front of the corps. He cautioned that, since the Metz-Luxembourg area was probably the most important center for German troop concentration and regrouping on the Western Front, enemy units might be found temporarily in the sector en route from this way station to other parts of the line. The *17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division* was known to have troops opposite the XX Corps, and some clues pointed to the possibility that elements of the *Panzer Lehr Division* and *21st Panzer Division* also might be encountered. Two panzer grenadier divisions, the *3d* and *15th*, had been identified on the Western Front in August, and since scattered detachments of the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* had been thrown against the XX Corps during the withdrawal toward the Moselle it was expected that one or both of these divisions might be committed when the Americans resumed the advance. In addition, numerous small units, such as training and fortress battalions, had been engaged in delaying actions at the end of August and might substantially increase the strength of the German forces ahead. Altogether the XX Corps expected to meet a maximum of 38,500 enemy troops and 160 tanks and assault guns.

Less was known about the type, strength, and precise locations of the fortifications around Metz and along the Moselle than about the enemy troops. Existing aerial photographs gave very little detail of tactical value.³ Camouflage was excellent throughout this fortified zone, as the Americans later learned to their cost, and on many of the works it had been enhanced by the natural growth of sod, bushes, and cultivation during the four years past. French intelligence officers from the 1940 *Deuxième Bureau* were consulted, but they, of course, knew little about the changes the Germans had made since the seizure of the Metz forts in the spring of 1940. American cavalry had fought for information, but were too weak to penetrate past the outlying

³ TUSA MII (Military Intelligence Interrogation) Rpt, 8 Sep 44.

German positions. Furthermore, the American divisions had long since run out of detailed terrain maps and now were operating on road maps of the Michelin variety which gave little information on the configuration of the ground. As a result, all appraisals of the Metz-Moselle fortifications were little more than guesswork. In general, the XX Corps staff believed that this fortified system was of an outmoded, World War I vintage, in whose works the Germans might not be willing to risk a stand. Both the Third Army and XX Corps headquarters at this time tended to assume that the German forces at most would fight a delaying action at the line of the Moselle and that the main enemy stand would be made east of the Sarre River behind the works of the West Wall.⁴

Contrary to American intelligence estimates, Hitler and his military advisers in the headquarters of OKW had no intention of permitting the forces in the Metz-Thionville area to withdraw to the West Wall—or even so much as retreat behind the Moselle. Any organized resistance in the Metz area, as part of the defense of the Moselle “position” ordered by Hitler, entailed the disposition of German forces on the west bank of the Moselle, since the fortified system at Metz extended west as well as east of the river. And ultimately, when the Germans had been forced to withdraw behind the river line elsewhere along its length, they would continue the battle to hold the Metz “bridgehead” on the western bank.

On 5 September *OB WEST* estimated that the German troops available in the Metz-Thionville sector were equivalent in strength to four and a half divisions. Some order had been brought out of the chaos current in the last week of August, stragglers had been returned to their proper units, and an organized front could be presented to meet a continuation of the American advance. But the forces arrayed opposite the XX Corps represented a hodgepodge of miscellaneous battalions, detached regiments, and understrength divisions, which varied greatly in training, armament, and combat value from very good to poor.

Between Longuyon and Thionville, disposed at right angles to the Moselle, lay remnants of the *48th Division*, which had taken a severe beating in the retreat from the Chartres area during the last part of August and was due to be relieved as soon as fresh troops could be procured. Southwest of Thionville the *559th VG Division*, one of the new volksgrenadier divisions created by Hit-

⁴ See XX Corps G-2 Jnl for this period. See also TUSA G-2 Periodic Rpt, 3 and 8 Sep 44.

ler to replace the units destroyed in the early summer, had just come up from Germany and by the night of 5 September had two of its infantry regiments in the line.⁵ On the left of the 559th, a miscellany of school and fortress troops, brigaded together under the staff of *Division Number 462*, was charged with the defense of Metz. Actually this "division" was an organizational makeshift, commanded by the faculty and administrative personnel of the German military schools located at Metz, and lacking both the service units and heavy weapons organic to a regular division. However, the rank and file of the student troops, picked for the most part for further training as officers and non-commissioned officers after having demonstrated superior abilities in the field, were among the elite of the German Army.⁶ West of Metz small units of the 17th SS *Panzer Grenadier Division* formed a covering force deployed along the Abbéville-Mars-la-Tour road, on the left of the 462d. Although the 17th SS had been heavily engaged in the Normandy battles and had fought a running rear guard action against the Third Army during the August retreat, it was still one of the better German divisions on the Western Front. The gaps in its ranks had been partially filled by the absorption of two SS panzer grenadier brigades, the 49th and 51st, which had been hurried into France from Denmark during the latter part of August. Since *OB WEST* was anxious to reconstitute reserves, almost entirely lacking during the withdrawal across northern France, orders had been given that the 17th SS *Panzer Grenadier Division* be pulled back across the Moselle into a reserve position south of Metz and there refitted. This move began on 2 September, with the 462d taking over the major share of the security line west of the city, but a few of the SS troops still were west of the river when the XX Corps began its attack. Actually, the 17th SS did not complete its reorganization until 12 Sep-

⁵ MS #A-972 (Muehlen). The 559th VG Division had been intended for the Eastern Front and was officered by young veterans of the Russian fighting. The enlisted personnel was of fairly good caliber—some 60 percent of the division were in their twenties. The 559th had been activated on 31 July and had little training as a unit.

⁶ MS #B-042 (Krause). Generalleutnant Walther Krause commanded *Division Number 462*. One regiment came from the 1,800 members of the *Fahnenjunkerschule* (Officer Candidate School), reinforced by Wehrmacht stragglers who had been apprehended as they fled through Metz in late August. Its artillery consisted of six captured Russian guns, drawn by sick horses from the veterinary hospital at Metz. The second regiment was composed of about 1,500 men from the *Unterfueherschule* (NCO School), plus one battery. The 1010th Security Regiment, which had fled east in front of the American drive in August, filled out *Division Number 462*. It numbered six companies, totaling about 600 men—mostly over-age and poorly armed. The Metz garrison also included two replacement battalions, one machine gun company, one engineer battalion, one or two Flak battalions, one artillery battalion, four companies of the *Waffen-SS Nachrichtenschule* (Signal School), and a few Luftwaffe troops.

tember. Farther to the south the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division*, deployed around Pont-à-Mousson on the east bank, covered the flank of the Metz position. This division subsequently engaged the XII Corps and took part in the fighting around Metz only during the first few days of the battle.

The two German armored divisions (*Panzer Lehr* and *21st Panzer*), which American intelligence had predicted might be encountered by the XX Corps, were no longer in the Metz sector, having been moved to other endangered parts of the front during the lull in the first days of September. A few tanks and assault guns had been salvaged by the infantry divisions, particularly the *17th SS*, but the only armored reserve available to the commander of the *First Army* was the untried *106th Panzer Brigade*, assembling in Luxembourg behind the *48th Division*.

The total German strength facing the XX Corps made a fairly impressive showing when paraded on the map in order of battle. In reality, however, the enemy forces constituted one demoralized and burned-out division, one untried and incomplete volksgrenadier division, one battle-weary SS division —lacking most of its tanks and assault guns but still possessed of good morale —one scratch “division” of heterogeneous units varying from very poor fortress troops to the trained and determined men from the Metz schools, and one panzer brigade whose potential strength was hardly that of an American armored combat command.

The Metz forts, when compared with the works of more modern construction in the Maginot Line and West Wall, were hardly formidable; but the attackers would assume that they were as the Lorraine Campaign progressed and the Germans proved their will to resist. Little had been done to modernize these fortifications during the years following 1919. The French had concentrated on the Maginot Line, farther to the east; and the Germans, after 1940, had given priority to arming the Channel coast. Some guns and steel plate had been taken from the Metz works and sent to the Atlantic Wall. Steel cupolas and bombproofs had been moved bodily to the industrial areas of the Ruhr and Rhineland as part of an air defense program. In July 1944, a few hundred civilian laborers had been drafted to work on the Metz fortifications, but they lacked equipment, concrete, wire and steel, and had accomplished little or nothing by the time the American attack finally came. Most of the forts lacked usable guns, ammunition, and fire control apparatus. Only Fort Driant had its fixed batteries functioning properly by 6 September, and even here some of the pieces were under repair as the Americans approached.

Communications between the various works were poor. Some of the lesser forts had no occupants at all; others were manned by skeleton garrisons. In short, the Metz garrison could not hope to rely upon a purely static defense behind an organized, modern, and well-armed wall of steel and concrete, for "Fortress Metz" possessed no such defensive capabilities at the moment of the XX Corps attack.

The military value of the Metz position lay not in the size of its garrison nor in the intrinsic strength of its numerous fortified works. Instead the long defense of Metz must be ascribed to a combination of factors favorable to the Germans: the presence of elite troops during the initial stages of the battle; the moral and physical strength derived from steel and concrete, even in out-dated fortifications; and the possession of ground that favored the defender.

The eastern face of the Meuse plateau, whose heights average some 380 meters, falls sharply away to the plain of the Woëvre and a mean elevation of not more than 220 meters. In this plain the Imperial German armies had deployed for the bloody frontal attacks against the Verdun salient in 1916. Beyond the Woëvre the Moselle Plateau rises gradually to command the western approaches to Metz. The western edge of the plateau coincides roughly with the Conflans-Mars-la-Tour-Chambley road. The eastern heights, averaging 370 meters, drop abruptly to the Moselle River. East of the river some blocks of the Moselle Plateau reappear, but these are dominated by the higher ground on the west bank. The main plateau, if measured from Conflans to Metz, is about ten miles in depth. The western half is moderately rolling; on some roads the ascent to the east is barely perceptible. The eastern half of the plateau is high, rugged, and wooded, grooved by deeply incised ravines and innumerable shallow draws. It would be hard to imagine a terrain more compartmentalized and conducive to defense by small tactical bodies.

The Metz salient, as it confronted the XX Corps at the beginning of the September operation, extended for some eighteen miles in a perimeter west of Metz and the Moselle. On the left the German position rested on the Moselle near Arnaville, about nine and a half miles from the center of Metz. On the right a western affluent of the Moselle, the Orne, marked the limits of the German line, which was anchored near the village of Mondelange, approximately ten miles due north of Metz.

At the southern end of this bridgehead position, three ravines cut obliquely through the wooded Moselle scarps and defile down to the river channel. The Rupt de Mad, farthest from Metz, is traversed by a road that angles from

Mars-la-Tour via Chambley and reaches the Moselle at Arnaville. The middle road riverward can be entered either at Mars-la-Tour or at Rezonville. It then passes through the village of Gorze, lying in the main throat of the gorge to which it gives name, and attains the Moselle bank at Novéant. The third and northernmost of these ravines, the Mance, forms an "L" whose upright runs from north to south through a small depression in the Bois des Génivaux. Near Gravelotte this shallow gully descends into a deep draw, finally turning toward the east as a sharp cut between the plateaus crowned by the Bois de Vaux and the Bois des Ognons. Just east of Gravelotte the main highroad between Verdun and Metz dips to cross the Mance, while a secondary road branches south at Gravelotte and follows along the bottom of the ravine to Ars-sur-Moselle and the river.

These three defiles would canalize any attempt to turn the Metz position on the south by a drive to and across the Moselle. But a close-in envelopment or a frontal attack in this section would be hampered chiefly by the ravine of the Mance. In effect, therefore, the natural anchor position on the German left was formed by the lower Mance ravine, the plateau of the Bois de Vaux north of the ravine, and the plateau of the Bois des Ognons to the south. On the eve of World War I the German governors of Metz had reinforced this natural abutment by the construction of a heavily gunned fort on the river side of the Bois de Vaux plateau about a mile southwest of Ars-sur-Moselle. This strong work, renamed by the French in 1919 as Fort Driant, was sited so that its batteries dominated not only the southwestern approaches to Metz but the Moselle valley as well.

North and west of the Bois de Vaux two villages, Rezonville and Mars-la-Tour, served as outpost positions for the southern sector of the German front. They blocked the main road to Metz and controlled passage from north to south through the Mance and Gorze ravines. Beyond Gravelotte the Bois des Génivaux and the wood-bordered Mance combined in a strong defensive line and masked the German forts farther to the east. These rearward positions lay on the open crest of a long ridge whose western slopes were outposted by a sprinkling of isolated but strongly built farms.

North of the Bois des Génivaux the forward German troops occupied a plateau marked by the villages of Vernéville and Habonville. The strongest position in the German center, however, was farther to the east. Here the village of Amanvillers, located on a tableland, lay under the guns of forts hidden on wooded ridges to its rear. The Amanvillers plateau continued north-

ward on the German right. In this area the forward defense line included the villages of St. Privat and Roncourt. To the rear rose a welter of rugged heights and heavy forests, running diagonally northeastward to the Orne. This northernmost portion was held only lightly. The main German line was a kind of switch position extending from the Bois de Jaumont along the Bois de Fêves ridge. This switch position was strengthened by a series of forts and walls. In this sector, however, the Moselle scarps do not come clear to the Moselle, as they do south of Metz. Here, in the area of Semécourt and Maizières-lès-Metz, a wide, level flood plain offered a gateway to the Metz position, once an attacker had cleared the western escarpment.

In sum, the ground west of Metz gave very considerable advantage to the defender. Long, open slopes provided a natural glacis in front of the main German positions. Wooded crests and ravines screened the movement of troops and supply from the eye of the attacker. Broken terrain permitted the most effective use of small defending groups. Ravines, draws, and thick wood lots offered ample opportunity for counterattack tactics, both in force and in patrol strength. Finally, the German soldier had used this terrain as a maneuver area and was prepared to exploit every accident of the ground.

The XX Corps Advance to the Moselle

On 5 September enough gasoline reached the XX Corps, by truck and plane, to permit General Walker to begin a concentration east of the Meuse bridgehead. The 5th Infantry Division moved forward from Verdun with no opposition and assembled along the line Jeandelize-St. Maurice, in what would be approximately the center and right when the corps began the attack toward the Moselle. (*Map XII*) In this position the infantry now screened the assembly areas around Verdun and Etain occupied by the 7th Armored. Since only enough gasoline remained to move one regimental combat team of the 90th Infantry Division, the 357th Infantry and the 90th Reconnaissance Troop advanced from Reims to cover the left wing of the corps northeast of Verdun. Bridging equipment, scattered in immobile trucks along the roads to the rear, and the corps artillery, mostly still west of the Meuse, were brought over the Verdun bridges as fast as quartermaster trucks laden with five-gallon gasoline cans arrived. By midmorning of 6 September, the day scheduled for the XX Corps attack, all battalions of the corps artillery were east of the Meuse and most of the bridging convoys were on the move to forward areas.

The remainder of the 90th Infantry Division assembled near Etain on 6 September, echeloned to the left and rear of the 5th Infantry Division and the 7th Armored. This movement completed the initial disposition of the corps for the eastward advance.

General Sylvester, commanding the 7th Armored Division, had recommended that elements of his division be dispatched toward the Moselle, because of the obscure situation ahead, to undertake a reconnaissance in some force before the commitment of the main armored columns.⁷ General Walker also wished to reinforce the corps cavalry and screen the advance scheduled for the afternoon of 6 September. About 0300 on the morning of the 6th, a strong combat reconnaissance force, commanded by Lt. Col. Vincent L. Boylan, set out toward the Moselle in four parallel columns, with orders to seize any intact bridges in the neighborhood of Metz.

The small cavalry detachments which had pushed out to the wings and already were engaged to the east had rough going as Boylan moved forward to their aid. South of Metz a small task force of the 3d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron succeeded in getting a few vehicles into Arnaville, but was driven out by artillery fire. Another task force that tried to cross on a ford at Ars-sur-Moselle was also beaten back. North of Metz the 43d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron had no better luck. But the cavalry actions had located possible fording sites south of Metz, near Pagny, Arnaville, and Ars-sur-Moselle, and had finally determined that all bridges in this sector were demolished.

Colonel Boylan's columns found the German resistance west of Metz stiffening as the morning wore on. When the four columns struck the *Fahnenjunkerschule* (Officer Candidate School) security line along the Fléville-Abbéville-Mars-la-Tour road, the enemy outposts, carefully dug in and supported by antitank guns, poured in a heavy fire. Colonel Boylan decided that his separate columns were too weak to advance alone, and about 1400 he shifted those on the left to reinforce the two columns on the right in an attempt to push through and join the cavalry south of Metz.

At this same hour the rest of the 7th Armored Division moved forward to mount the main attack. Since it was anticipated that the combat reconnaissance force under Boylan would either secure a crossing site or determine the most feasible location for bridging, no precise point seems to have been

⁷ Ltr, Col Leydecker to Hist Div, 29 Jul 47.

fixed for the main division attempt to cross the Moselle.⁸ The armor moved on an axis along the main highway linking Verdun and Metz, with CCA (Colonel Rosebaum) in two parallel columns on the left, CCB (Brig. Gen. John B. Thompson) deployed in the same fashion on the right, and CCR (Col. George H. Molony) following CCB. Most of General Sylvester's command was refueled in time to take to the road, though even now the gasoline shortage forced CCB to leave the bulk of the 23d Armored Infantry Battalion, a company of light tanks, and a company of armored engineers back in bivouac. In the first hours of the advance only scattered German outposts were encountered. It therefore appeared that after Boylan's initial attack the enemy had begun to withdraw from the Fléville-Mars-la-Tour position. But about 1800 CCA found the Germans entrenched and waiting for a fight near Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes. Here the enemy fought stubbornly and the battle continued through the night. CCA did not reach the Moselle until the next morning.

Over to the right, CCB in the late afternoon met part of Colonel Boylan's force engaged in a fire fight west of Gravelotte, near which the Germans had emplaced a battalion of 88's. General Sylvester ordered General Thompson to swing his combat command to the south of Boylan and continue toward the river. The north column assembled near Rezonville and in the twilight fought to dislodge a considerable body of German infantry and machine gunners located in the ravine east of the town on the edge of the Bois des Ognons. Farther to the south General Thompson's right column, commanded by Lt. Col. R. C. Erlenbusch, met raking shellfire as it passed around elements of the combat reconnaissance force at Buxières and approached the village of Gorze, which blocked the entrance to one of the narrow defiles leading to the Moselle. (*Map XIII*) One medium tank company of the 31st Tank Battalion attempted to thread a path past the town but was stopped by mines and anti-tank fire. Colonel Erlenbusch withdrew the tanks and sent B Company of the 23d Armored Infantry forward in an attempt to reach and cross the river under cover of night. The riflemen reached the canal west of the river; but as daylight came on 7 September the enemy troops in Arnaville and Novéant, discovering the Americans between them, concentrated their fire on the exposed company, causing heavy casualties. The infantry finally were withdrawn under covering fire from the American tanks west of Novéant and mortars firing smoke shells.

⁸ *Ibid.* Cf. 7th Armd Div G-3 Jnl, 6 Sep 44. Here a field order, issued by 7th Armored Division headquarters at 1100 of that day, gives the division mission as the seizure of a crossing *north* of Metz.

Nevertheless CCB did succeed in reaching the Moselle. Just as General Thompson's north column was driving the German rear guard detachments out of the draw east of Rezonville on 6 September and night was coming on, Lt. Col. Leslie Allison arrived with a part of the 23d Armored Infantry Battalion, which had finally obtained gasoline for its half-tracks. General Thompson at once ordered the 23d (—) to push on to the river. The main road from Gravelotte to the Moselle descended through a narrow gorge which was strongly held by the enemy and heavily mined. Allison's scouts discovered a parallel road running through the woods on the right, and under cover of darkness the battalion fought its way along this woods road. About 0400, on 7 September, the 23d reached a little cluster of houses, known as le Chêne, on the river just north of Dornot. Now the battalion found itself in a precarious position, for as daylight came the Germans opened up with mortar fire and bullets from both sides of the river, while Fort Driant rained in shells from the heights southwest of Ars-sur-Moselle.⁹ Colonel Allison turned the battalion to clear out Dornot, from which the fire was particularly deadly, and late in the afternoon the 23d attempted to put a patrol across the Moselle. This patrol was driven back by direct machine gun fire; two of the three assault boats were destroyed and a large number of the men in the patrol were killed.

The 23d Armored Infantry Battalion had been the first unit of the corps to reach and hold a position at the river. Later in the morning the left column of CCA broke through to Mondelange, ten miles north of Metz, and turned south of the riverside highway leading to Maizières-lès-Metz with the intention of finding a suitable site for a crossing attempt.¹⁰ Shortly after noon the right column of CCA, which had been held up by a fight at St. Privat,¹¹ met the left column south of Talange. All the bridges in the sector had been destroyed, but a crossing site was found near Hauconcourt. The command came to a halt and waited for bridging materials and further orders, all the while under artillery fire from across the river. Colonel Rosebaum still expected to fight for a crossing north of Metz, as did General Sylvester, who advised the corps commander that CCA had found a possible crossing site.

⁹ Both banks of the Moselle at this point were held by the two replacement battalions, the 208th and the 282d. The contingent on the east bank crossed by ferry just ahead of the Americans. MS #B-042 (Krause). The approach by the south column, CCB, is described in a letter from Lt. Col. R. C. Erlenbusch to the Historical Division, 9 April 1948.

¹⁰ This sector was held by a thin outpost line, formed by troops of the *Unterfuehrerschule*.

¹¹ At this point a battery of four 105-mm. howitzers reinforced the *Fahnenjunkerschule* positions.



MAJ. GEN. WALTON H. WALKER, XX Corps Commander (center), with Maj. Gen. S. Leroy Irwin, 5th Infantry Division, and Col. Paul O. Franson, General Irwin's chief of staff. Using a terrain model, General Irwin points out features of Verdun forts across the Moselle River at Dornot.

On the morning of 7 September a part of CCB shook itself free from the Gorze defile and joined Colonel Allison's force on the river bank near Dornot. The combat command had no assault boats save the three with Allison and, indeed, was hard pressed to hold on the near bank as the German fire intensified and counterattack followed counterattack. Ars-sur-Moselle, north of Dornot, served the enemy as an assembly point for the most severe of these attacks. General Thompson, anxious to ease the pressure on the left flank of the 23d Armored Infantry Battalion and secure the crossing site, asked the division commander, who was at the combat command headquarters, to lend him CCR.¹² General Silvester agreed, and around 1120 CCR moved through Mars-la-Tour en route to launch an attack toward Ars-sur-Moselle. When the combat command was about halfway to the river the corps commander ordered the column to halt, in order to let the 5th Infantry Division through; CCR was then to return to corps reserve.

On the previous evening General Walker had told General Irwin to "pin onto" the tail of the 7th Armored Division and be prepared to fight for a bridgehead in the event that the armored attack failed. General Irwin was extremely concerned as to whether these orders called for the 5th to establish its own bridgehead on the corps' right, or pass through the 7th Armored elements already engaged. In the confused situation, with the corps headquarters meagerly informed as to the progress of CCB, no answer was forthcoming.¹³ The 5th Infantry Division was somewhat dispersed on the morning of 7 September. General Irwin had expected to put its weight in an attack to the south of the 7th Armored elements and now found his division caught off balance. The 2d Infantry (Col. A. W. Roffe) had been brought forward behind the right wing of CCA with the mission of containing Metz by direct attack from the west. The 11th Infantry (Col. C. W. Yuill) was on the move east of Buxières, strung out along the roads behind and beside CCB. The 10th Infantry (Col. Robert P. Bell) remained in division reserve. Just before dawn twenty-two trucks rolled up with enough gasoline to fuel the vehicles of the 5th Division and mobilize it for the advance. At 0830 the 2d Infantry jumped off in a frontal attack with two battalions and moved past the Franco-Prussian War tombs and monuments. Three hours later, quite unaware of the enemy works ahead, the 2d slammed hard into a well-organized German defense line on the spur between Amanvillers and Vernéville held by the tough troops of

¹² Ltr, Col John B. Thompson (ret) to Hist Div, 17 Feb 47.

¹³ 5th Inf Div G-3 Jnl, 7 Sep 44.

the *Fahnenjunkerschule* regiment. Losses were heavy, with fire from cleverly concealed machine guns and artillery sweeping across the front and flanks of the regiment. Here the 2d Infantry finally was checked in the first of a series of fruitless assaults on the western outworks of the Metz position.

At noon on 7 September, word reached General Irwin that he was to move through the 7th Armored Division and force a crossing at Dornot. He sent the 11th Infantry forward, CCR vehicles pulled over to the roadside to let the infantry through, and as night fell the regiment toiled slowly toward the high ground between Novéant and Dornot which was its objective. Mine fields and road blocks had to be cleared so as to bring up the trucks carrying assault boats, and the advance detachments were forced to break through the thin crust of German infantry that had re-formed in the wake of the American armor. Late in the evening General Walker told General Irwin to cross the Moselle on the following morning and use the 23d Armored Infantry Battalion to augment his own infantry. By midnight the 1st and 3d Battalions were about a thousand yards from the Moselle, and ready to cross the river to the south of CCB.

The Dornot Bridgehead¹⁴

Rain fell on the morning of 8 September and made the narrow and precipitous road through the Gorze defile slippery and treacherous. Troops and vehicles of CCB and the 11th Infantry were compressed on the narrow strip along the river between le Chêne and Dornot with enemy fire raking into the mass from the flanks, where the Germans still held on the west bank, and from across the river. Attempts were made to pull the armored vehicles out of the area, but this two-way movement resulted only in a traffic jam at Gorze. Orders were confused and, although General Walker verbally had given General Irwin command of all troops in the Dornot area, some time elapsed before a real co-ordination between CCB and the 5th Division troops could be introduced.

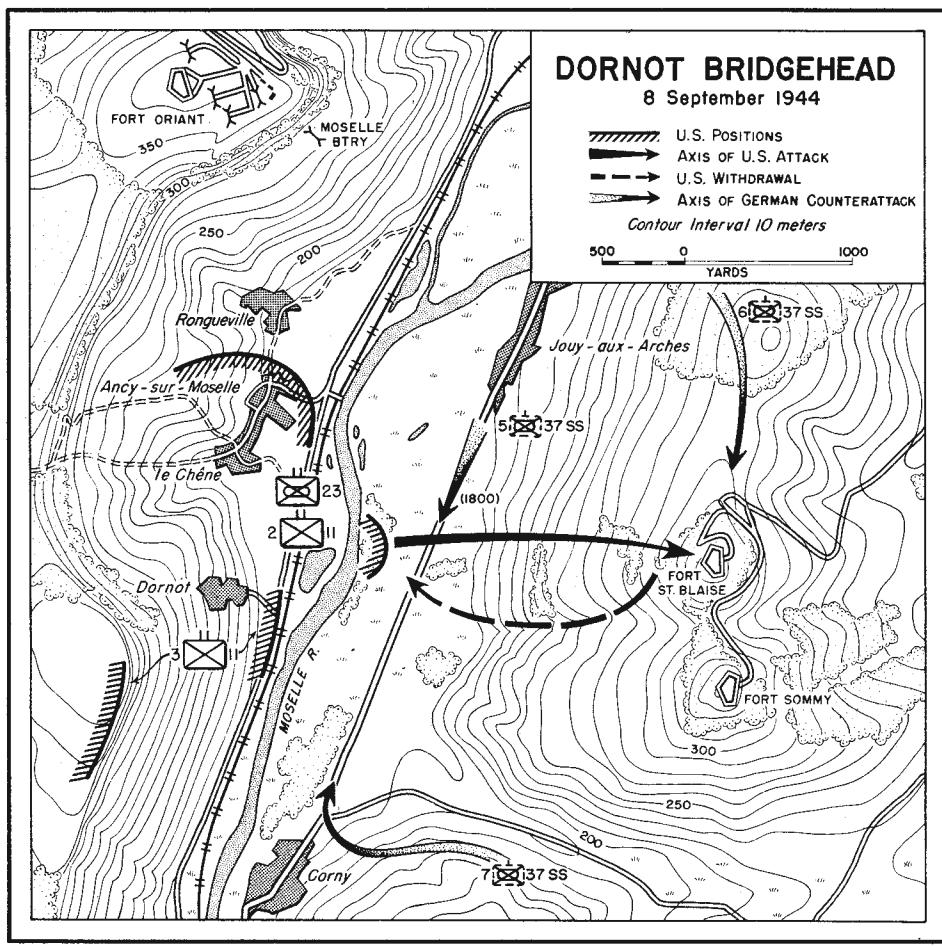
Around 0600 the 7th Engineer Combat Battalion reached the river's edge with some infantry assault boats, and the 2d Battalion of the 11th Infantry

¹⁴ The history of the Dornot bridgehead is taken from Historical Division Combat Interviews obtained by 2d Lt. F. M. Ludden. The S-1 Journal of the 2d Battalion, 11th Infantry, is fragmentary; that of the 23d Armored Infantry Battalion has little for this period. See *Eleventh Infantry*, which derives most of its information from the Historical Division Combat Interviews.



RIVER CROSSING AT DORNOT. *Infantrymen (above) carry assault boat down to the Moselle, and (below) members of 2d Battalion, 11th Infantry, cross the river at Dornot.*





MAP NO. 3

(Lt. Col. Kelly B. Lemmon), chosen to make the first crossing, was in position to embark. During the previous night, General Thompson, the CCB commander, despairing of receiving the needed assault boats, had gone back in person and secured them. These boats, added to those brought down to the river by the infantry, seemed sufficient for the attempt. All chance of success by speed and surprise had long since vanished. This would be a frontal attack against what appeared to be a well-fortified position, with an enemy already engaging in continuous fire from *both* banks of the river. Under these circumstances General Irwin decided to postpone the attack until his artillery

TO JOUY-AUX-ARCHE



DORNOT BRIDGEHEAD

FORT ST. BLAISE

FORT SOMMY TO CORNY



could displace forward to firing positions on the bluffs and some degree of co-ordination could be achieved between the armored infantry battalion and his own. Eventually the two commanders concerned made their own arrangements and General Thompson organized the crossing attack.¹⁵ The 23d Armored Infantry Battalion by this time had incurred such losses as to reduce it to less than half its normal strength, and was further depleted when one company was committed to hold the left flank on the near side of the river. The 2d Battalion of the 11th Infantry, therefore, had to furnish the major share of the strength in the assault crossing.

Three battalions of 105-mm. howitzers finally were brought into position to support the assault, and about 1045 the crossing began just east of Dornot, where the river was only some hundred yards wide. The rest of the 11th Infantry and elements of CCB squared off to hold the position on the west bank. (*Map 3*) By 1320 Companies F and G, reinforced by a few armored infantrymen, were across the Moselle, together with heavy machine guns and 81-mm. mortars. Here the assault force re-formed in a patch of trees close to the river bank. German fire thus far was sporadic. But the American howitzers were strictly rationed in their use of ammunition, and whenever they ceased fire enemy mortars lobbed shells onto the crossing site, destroying several assault boats.¹⁶ Little was known about the structure of Forts Sommy and Blaise, but they were obviously impervious to light artillery, and urgent requests for air support filtered back through higher headquarters all through the morning. At 1330 General Irwin was told that he could expect no planes because, as was so often the case early in that September, all available aircraft were being diverted far back to the west in an all-out attempt to smash the great fortifications at Brest.¹⁷

In the late afternoon the two assault companies, commanded by Capt. Ferris Church, S-3 of the 2d Battalion, moved out of the shelter of the trees and began a slow advance up the slope toward the forts, more than two thousand yards east of the river. The forts themselves were strangely quiet,¹⁸ and the

¹⁵ On this same date Brig. Gen. John B. Thompson was relieved, despite his personal efforts to restore some order in the confused situation at the crossing site. Lt. Col. A. J. Adams took command of CCB.

¹⁶ Pvt. William E. Hall, 7th Engineer Combat Battalion, 5th Infantry Division, had two assault boats sunk under him by artillery fire on 8 September but continued to man a third all through the night and into the next day, when he was killed by a shell. He was awarded the DSC posthumously.

¹⁷ See Chap. I, p. 20.

¹⁸ The Germans had manned neither of the two forts and, when the American advance began, had only a small covering force along the east bank. MS #B-042 (Krause).

Americans suffered no loss until a sniper killed the commander of Company F near the top of the hill. Here the infantry came to the wire at the north fort (Fort Blaise), cut it, and then, faced by a moat and a causeway barred by an iron portcullis, drew back to radio for help from the artillery. While so disposed the two companies suddenly were hit by the 2d Battalion of the 37th SS *Panzer Grenadier Regiment* which swept in on both flanks and filtered through to their rear. Captain Church called for Companies E and K to come forward from the east bank, to which they had crossed during the afternoon; but they could not advance through the heavy enemy fire now traversing the slope, and the two forward companies began to withdraw, leaving dead and wounded marking the path. For nearly three hours the infantry crawled back through the gauntlet. The company aid men tried bravely to give help to the wounded left behind but were shot down at their tasks.¹⁹ Most of the survivors did not reach the clump of woods near the river until 2300, here joining the rear companies in the defense of the minuscule bridgehead.

The four infantry companies, reinforced by forty-eight men of the 23d Armored Infantry Battalion whom Colonel Allison had brought across the river, dug a horseshoe line of foxholes just inside the edge of the woods and prepared to defend this narrow pocket, only 300 yards deep and 200 yards wide. East of the woods a highway paralleled the tree line and in the darkness enemy Flak tanks drove up and down, spraying the bridgehead with bullets and shell fragments. Fortunately, the German tanks, though protected by "bazooka pants," would not close with the Americans in the woods, and the attacks that followed through this night and succeeding days devolved on the enemy infantry.

The Arnaville Bridgehead

The precarious American foothold on the enemy bank east of Dornot was only nominally a bridgehead. There was no space for maneuver and no room through which additional troops could be passed to expand the line. In addition German 88's were sited for direct fire on the river segment west of the woods and made bridging impossible. General Irwin still had at hand the 10th Infantry, in the vicinity of Chambley, nearly two battalions of the 11th

¹⁹ Cpl. William G. Rea, an aid man with the 11th Infantry, was awarded the DSC for heroic efforts to evacuate the casualties in front of his own lines. He carried one wounded soldier for three hundred yards under direct enemy fire.

Infantry, and the heterogeneous elements of CCB. On the night of 8 September he decided to bring up the 10th Infantry and commit it in a crossing about two and a half miles south of the 11th Infantry. Only vague reports filtered across from the 2d Battalion, 11th Infantry, during 9 September, and repeated requests for air support to ease the pressure on the bridgehead brought no help. General Irwin believed that the Dornot bridgehead was too rigidly contained to be of further value and wished to withdraw the troops there. But General Walker insisted that this foothold on the east bank would have to be maintained until another bridgehead was secured. Uncertain as to the exact situation across the river the division commander sent word for the 2d Battalion to push to the south and there link up with the 10th Infantry, whose crossing was set for the early hours of 10 September.

Preparations for the 10th Infantry assault crossing were carefully made. Artillery and tank destroyers were emplaced forward but found that the self-propelled guns across the river made difficult targets. The night before the attack the 84th Smoke Generating Company arrived on the scene. For some time past this company had been assigned to supply duties on the Red Ball Express route. The tactical employment of the 84th, now to be engaged in its first fight, would mark the initial attempt by the Third Army at large area smoke screening. Subsequently the use of smoke was to become standard procedure in Third Army river crossings. At this stage, however, the chemical troops were inexperienced and their use was not widely understood. But so long as the casemate artillery at Fort Driant had observation on the river from the west bank, and so long as the roving guns on the east bank could move freely within range of the river, all hope of throwing a bridge across, or of keeping it intact, rested with the smoke generators.

About 0200 that morning the 10th Infantry sent its first boatloads across the Moselle, choosing a site between Novéant and Arnaville. (*Map XIII*) The crossings were made quickly and easily, catching the enemy, whose attention was riveted on the 11th Infantry, completely by surprise. By 0720 the leading companies of the 1st and 2d Battalions were east of the river and astride the initial regimental objective. This objective had been chosen after a study of the only detailed maps available (the 1:50,000 sheets). These showed a partially wooded ridge line about a thousand yards from the river, running north from Hill 386, which rose in the midst of the Bois des Anneaux. Since no map sheets were at hand for the area east of this ridge line it was designated as an objective without knowledge of the fact that Hill 386, instead of

being the key feature in the area, was commanded by Hill 396, a thousand yards farther to the east.

The 1st Battalion (Maj. W. H. Haughey) had little difficulty and occupied Hill 386 after dispersing a small enemy detachment in a short, sharp attack with marching fire and the bayonet. On the left the 2d Battalion (Maj. W. E. Simpson) took Hill 370 and the Bois de Gaumont in much the same way. The 1st Battalion was just in the process of deploying along an outpost line when the first German counterattack, made by tanks and infantry of the *17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division*, came out of Arry and struck the two companies on the right flank. A wild melee ensued, but the Americans finally beat off the tanks with bazookas, dispersed the German infantry, and gained a breathing spell in which to reorganize and entrench. About noon the enemy in Arry gathered a battalion of infantry, plus what the American outposts estimated to be a score of tanks or assault guns, and returned to the attack. This time the 1st Battalion was forced to give ground.²⁰ Eventually the German assault was smashed by the fire of American artillery and tank destroyers across the Moselle, reinforced by the machine guns and bombs of some P-47's which arrived on the scene late in the afternoon.

This intervention by the Third Army's old ally, the XIX Tactical Air Command, marked the beginning of nearly continuous air-ground co-operation in the fight to cross the Moselle and capture Metz. Early on 9 September the Ninth Air Force had turned down the Third Army request for support at the river, ruling that the XX Corps assault could be adequately supported by artillery. That evening the reports of a steadily worsening situation at the 5th Infantry Division crossing site convinced the G-3 air officer in 12th Army Group headquarters that help must be given or the shaky foothold east of the river lost. Thereupon, he authorized the Ninth Air Force to release as many of the XIX TAC fighter-bombers from the primary target at Brest as General Weyland, commanding the XIX TAC, should deem necessary for air support at the bridgehead.²¹ General Weyland's command still had many responsibilities—bombing at Brest, attacking at Nancy, protecting the exposed southern

²⁰ Capt. William B. Davis, commanding officer of C Company, was wounded in both legs but strapped a radio on his back and continued to direct the American artillery fire. When the Germans were close to his company he dragged himself back to organize a defense. His men forcibly placed Captain Davis on a stretcher, but he was killed by a shell fragment as he lay there. *Fifth Infantry Division*. Major Haughey, commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, also distinguished himself by personal bravery and leadership in repelling the fierce German counterattacks. He received the DSC.

²¹ Ninth AF Opns Jnl, 9 Sep 44.

flank of the Third Army, and flying cover for the heavy bombers over Germany.²² But on 10 September the P-47's arrived opportunely to aid the troops in the Arnaville bridgehead.

Through the afternoon the enemy in Arry threatened to roll up the south flank of the 10th Infantry, launching attack after attack but to no avail, for across the river thirteen artillery battalions now were in position to support the bridgehead force. The few German tanks that managed to get through the shellfire were driven off by the infantrymen's bazookas. Late in the evening Colonel Bell sent two fresh companies of the 3d Battalion, which had just arrived in the bridgehead, to make a sortie into Arry. They took the town, but the 10th was spread too thinly to permit such a diminution of its rifle strength and the two companies were pulled out of Arry, shortly before midnight, to form a bridgehead reserve.

Back at the river a series of mishaps had occurred. About 1000 the winds over the Moselle valley had shifted, blowing the American smoke screen away to the west. German fire promptly searched out the generators, some of the green crews left their apparatus, and conflicting orders delayed reorganization. Eventually the 84th was shifted to new positions and by nightfall had a fog oil screen floating for a distance of between six to eight miles over the valley.

During the night of 10-11 September the 1103d Engineer Combat Group (Lt. Col. George E. Walker) began to put in a bridge, a task that had proved impossible in daylight, under constant enemy artillery fire accurately directed by forward observers close to the bridging site. A ferry was started and worked steadily during the night. By this means a smoke generator platoon was crossed to cover the operations at the river in the event of a shift in wind. All of the battalion 57-mm. antitank guns were ferried over, as well as extra bazookas and ammunition.²³ Evacuation of casualties had continued all through the day despite the German fire, and by dark 142 dead and wounded had been removed from the bridgehead—representing only a part of the day's losses.

The plan to sideslip the meager forces in the 11th Infantry bridgehead, opposite Dornot, and join them with the 10th Infantry was abandoned when

²² This period is covered in outline in XIX TAC, A Rpt on the Combat Ops of the XIX TAC, 30 May 45.

²³ During the night German patrols infiltrated back to the river and attacked American carrying parties. Next day 1st Lt. Eugene Dille, who had crossed with extra bazookas, was found dead surrounded by thirty-five dead Germans. *Fifth Infantry Division*.

the regimental commander reported that "the men are all shot." Since the 10th Infantry now had a foothold on the east bank of the Moselle, General Irwin ordered the evacuation of the Dornot bridgehead. The withdrawal by the 2d Battalion and the little contingent of armored infantry on the night of 10-11 September ended an episode colored by countless deeds of personal heroism and distinguished by devotion to duty. Thirty-six separate assault attempts had been hurled against the men in the horseshoe without breaking the thin American line. Indeed, on the morning of 10 September, the Americans had the superb effrontery to send a demand that the Germans surrender, The War Diary of the 37th SS *Panzer Grenadier Regiment* noting that the Americans promised such a concentration of fire as their enemies had never seen before if they did not capitulate forthwith. The determined infantry and their supporting artillery killed an estimated six hundred Germans in this bitter fight, and the toll of enemy wounded was probably very high. Detachments of at least four enemy battalions, reinforced by tanks and assault guns, were thrown against the bridgehead in the three-day battle, making their attacks with a ferocity and determination that astounded the Americans.²⁴ The American commander in the bridgehead, Capt. Jack Gerrie, passed word back to the 10th Infantry on the morning of 10 September: "Watch out for these birds, they are plenty tough. I've never run across guys like these before, they are new, something you read about. . . ." Time after time the German grenadiers came forward in close order, shouting "Heil Hitler" and screaming wildly, only to be cut down by small arms fire from the woods and exploding shells from the field guns on the opposite side of the Moselle. But each attack took its toll of the defenders in the horseshoe. The wounded were forbidden to moan or call out for aid, so that the Germans would not know the extent of the losses they had inflicted. The mortar crews abandoned their weapons, whose muzzle blast betrayed the location of the foxhole line, and took up rifles from the dead. A lieutenant operated his radio with one hand and fired his carbine with the other. Nearly all the officers were killed or wounded when they left their foxholes to encourage the riflemen or inspect the position. Each night volunteers carried the wounded to the river, crossed them in bullet-

²⁴ Enemy units identified here were: the 208th Replacement Battalion (a stomach ulcer battalion); the 2d Battalion, 8th Panzer Grenadier Regiment (3d Panzer Grenadier Division); the 2d Battalion, 51st SS Panzer Grenadier Brigade (17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division); and the 4th SS Signal Battalion (part of the Waffen-SS Nachrichtenschule). A detailed report of this action (as seen from the enemy side of the hill) was prepared by the 37th SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment, 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division. It may be found in the *Feldgericht* file of the same unit in GMDS.

ridden and leaking assault boats, then returned immediately to the firing line.²⁵

The final evacuation of the bridgehead began at dark on 10 September, after two men swam the river to carry the order to Captain Gerrie, and was completed about midnight under cover of an intense protective barrage. Weapons and clothing were left behind as the able-bodied stripped to swim the river, leaving space in the assault craft for the wounded. Many drowned in the swift current. Others were killed by enemy fire sweeping the river. Company K of the 3d Battalion, which had reinforced the 2d Battalion in the horseshoe, came out of the three-day battle with fifty men and no officers. The three rifle companies of the 2d Battalion had only two officers among them and their total casualties numbered over three hundred.²⁶ The 23d Armored Infantry Battalion, which had fought on both sides of the river, likewise suffered severely and sustained two hundred casualties in its four days of action.²⁷

The Fight to Expand the 5th Division Bridgehead

In the early hours of 11 September the 10th Infantry, in the Arnaville bridgehead, held the only footing the XX Corps possessed on the east bank of the Moselle River. East of Toul, in the XII Corps zone, the 3d Battalion of the 319th Infantry had a small bridgehead at the tip of the Moselle tongue. South of Nancy assault units of the 35th Infantry Division and the 4th Armored Division were forming up for a predawn crossing attempt between

²⁵ Pfc. George T. Dickey and Pfc. Frank Lalopa, both of K Company, 11th Infantry, were awarded the DSC posthumously for bravery in the fight for the bridgehead. The two soldiers volunteered to man a forward observation post during the night. When the Germans attacked, Dickey and Lalopa were warned to return to their lines. Instead they stayed at their posts and fired into the advancing Germans until they were both killed. Next morning twenty-two enemy were found by their bodies, some within three yards. Pvt. Dale B. Rex, G Company, 11th Infantry, also was awarded the DSC and was cited by his comrades as one of the leading figures in the bridgehead defense. For three days Rex manned a machine gun at an outpost. It was later estimated that he had killed some three hundred Germans. On the night of the evacuation Rex swam the river four times under shellfire in order to bring back assault boats to carry the wounded. Numerous deeds of heroism by other members of the little force in the bridgehead went unnoticed in this battle where personal bravery became the commonplace.

²⁶ 11th Inf Periodic Rpt, 11 Sep 44. The anonymous writer of *Eleventh Infantry* sets the casualty figures for the 2d Battalion and K Company at 363.

²⁷ 23d Armd Inf Bn AAR, Sep 44. Colonel Allison, commanding officer of the 23d Armored Infantry Battalion, was evacuated from the bridgehead on 10 September with a serious wound from which he died six days later. He had commanded the elements of B and C Companies, 23d Armored Infantry Battalion, that fought as a platoon of G Company, 11th Infantry.

XX Corps Crossing of the Moselle Vignette acronyms

Bazooka pants - Additional armor to protect tank tracks from antitank fire

CCA - Combat Command A, one of the major, flexible, combat formations in armored division

CCB - Combat Command B, in armored division

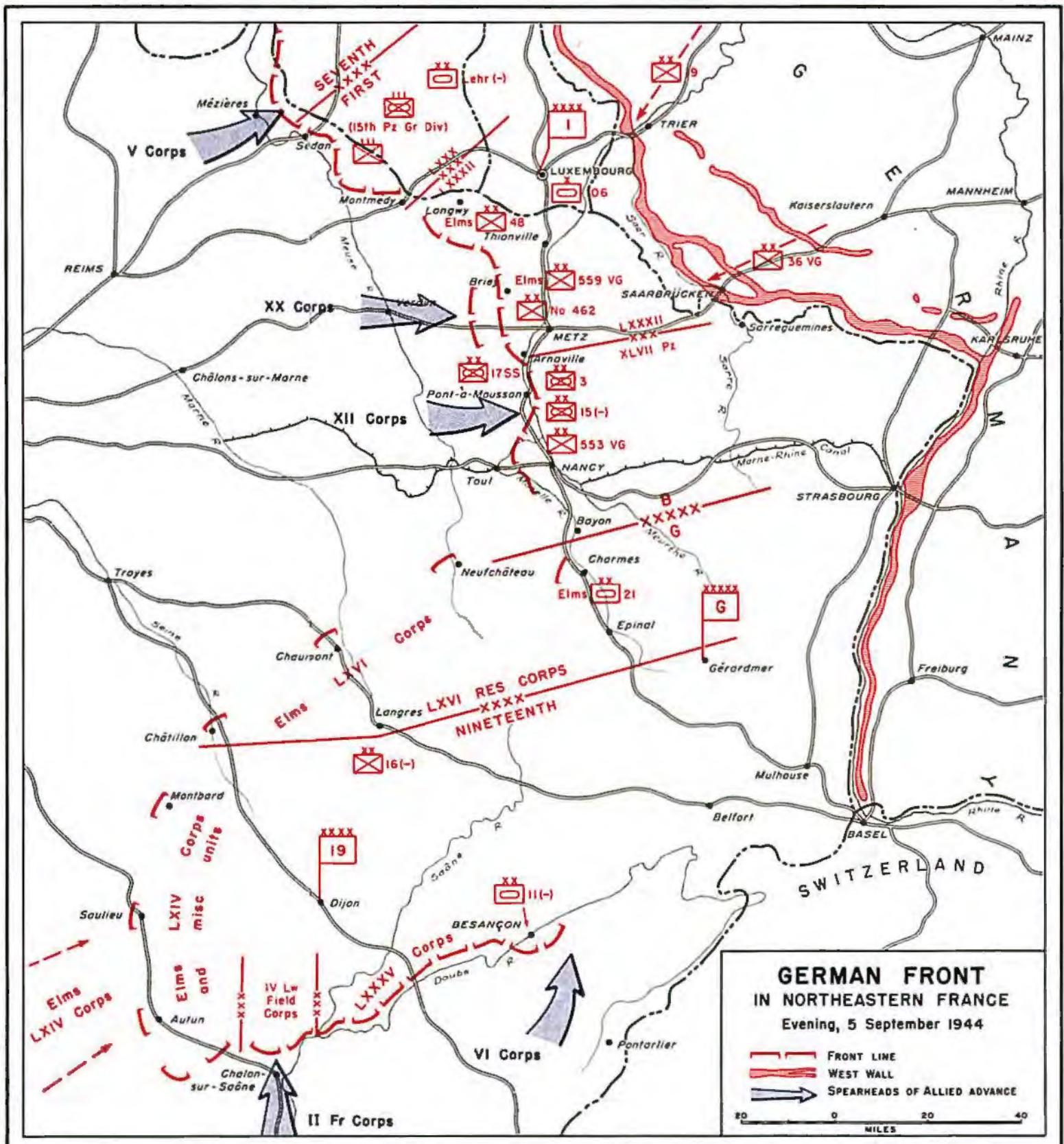
CCR - Reserve Combat Command, in armored division

FFI - French Forces of the Interior

OB WEST - Oberbefehlshaber West (Highest German ground headquarters of the Western Front)

SS - Schutzstaffel (Elite Guard)

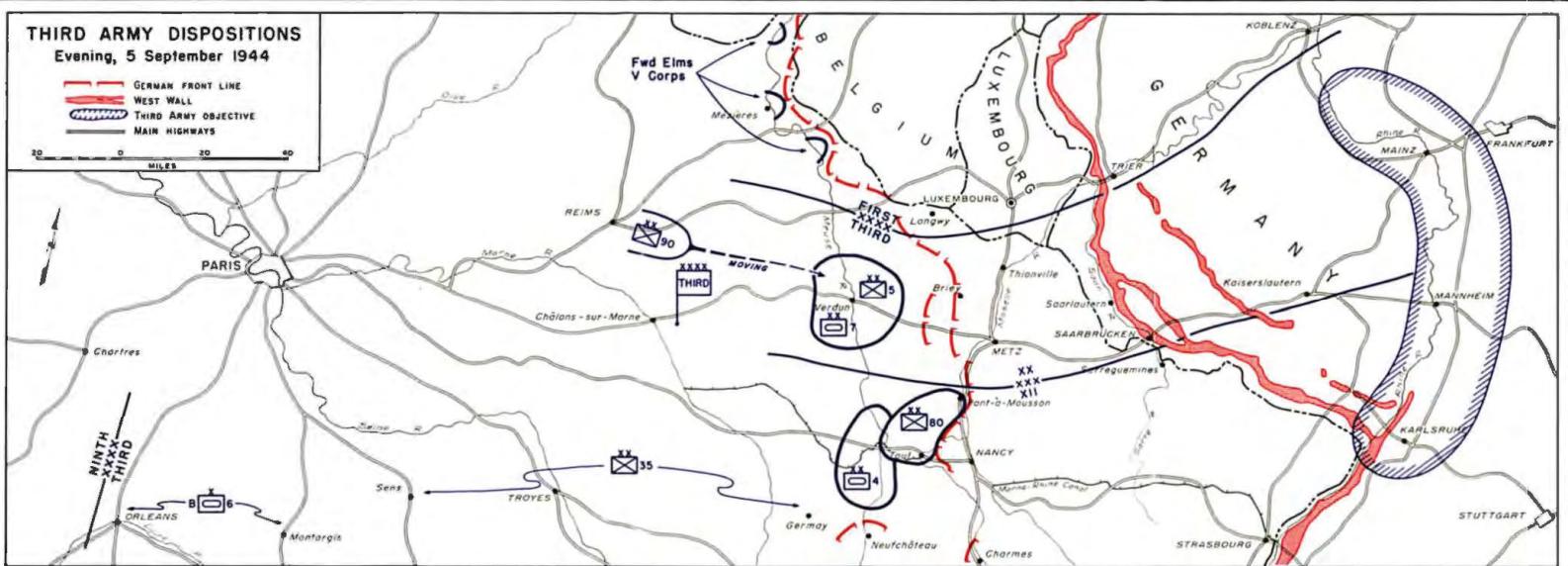
VG - Volksgrenadier



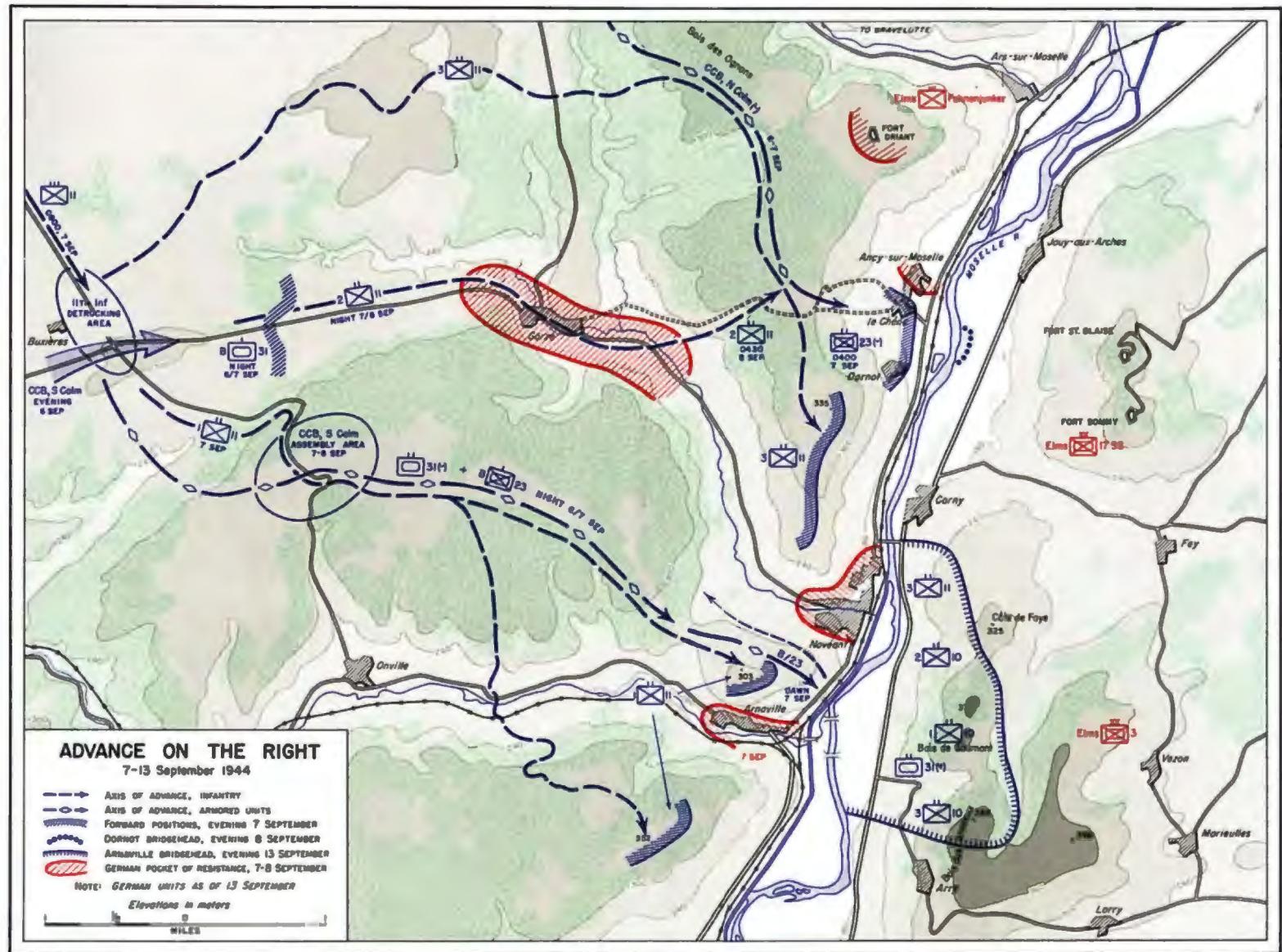
THIRD ARMY DISPOSITIONS
Evening, 5 September 1944

 GERMAN FRONT LINE
 WEST WALL
 THIRD ARMY OBJECTIVE
 MAIN HIGHWAYS

20 0 20 40 MILES



MAP NO. VI



MAP NO. XIII

Introduction to Military Symbols

Answer the following questions using FM 1-02.2

Use pencil, or blue to black ink (there is no need to draw in color on this worksheet)

1. Draw the standard identity frame shapes for land units.

a. Friendly

b. Hostile/Enemy

c. Neutral

2. What are the standard identity colors (hand-drawn) for the descriptions below?

a. Friend/assumed friend _____

b. Unknown/pending _____

c. Neutral _____

d. Hostile/enemy/suspect _____

e. Boundaries, lines, or areas _____ or _____

3. Identify the following main icon and amplifier fields.

a. Field A _____

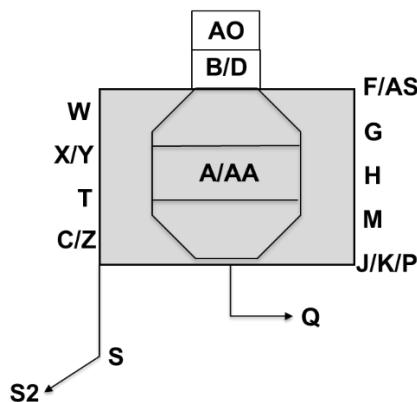
d. Field H _____

b. Field B _____

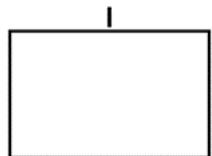
e. Field K _____

c. Field F _____

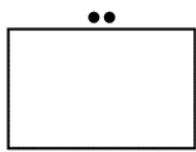
f. Field AS _____



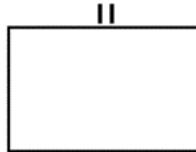
4. What echelon do the following field B amplifiers represent?



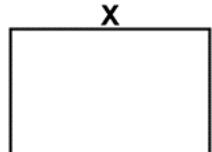
a. _____



b. _____

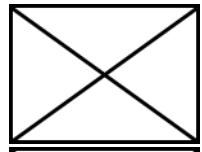


c. _____

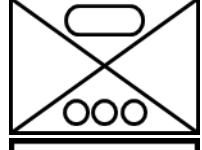


d. _____

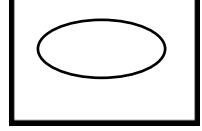
5. What do the following main and modifier icons represent?



a. _____



b. _____



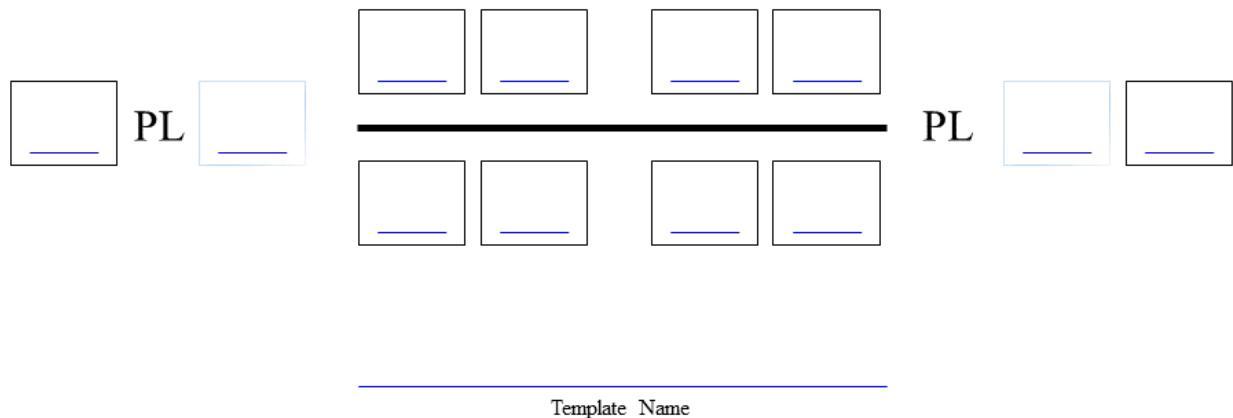
c. _____

6. Depict the following symbols

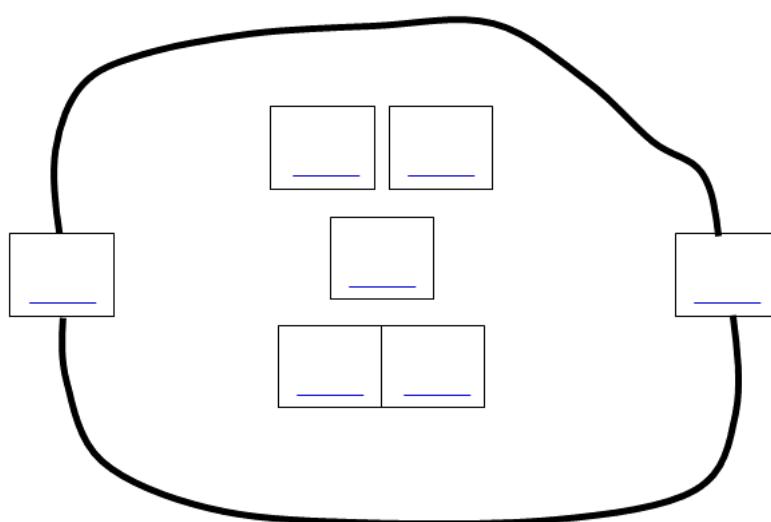
a. Neutral nongovernmental facility

b. Neutral nongovernmental activity

7. Label the template below.

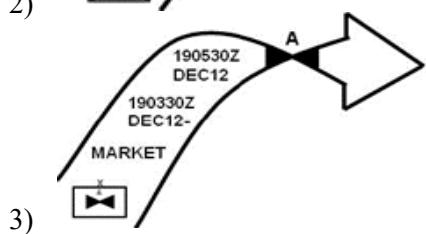
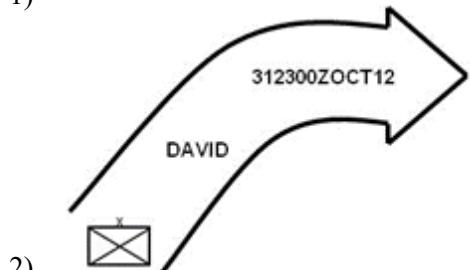
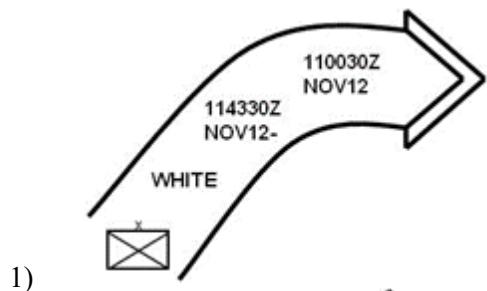


8. Label the template below.



9. Match symbols 1 through 5 with the correct control measure description

- a. Aviation axis of advance _____
- b. Suspected enemy direction of supporting attack _____
- c. Direction of main attack _____
- d. Supporting axis of advance _____
- e. Main axis of advance _____



10. Identify each mine with the appropriate name. Numbers 1) through 5) below are minefield sector 1 modifiers. Match each description to the correct modifier.

a. Unspecified _____

b. Antipersonnel mine _____

c. Antitank mine _____

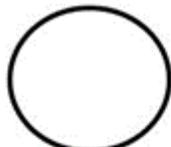
d. Antitank mine with antihandling device _____

e. Mine cluster _____

1)



2)



3)



4)



5)



11. Identify three differences between the tactical mission task symbols for **follow and assume** and **follow and support**.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

12. Provide the chapter number where you found each answer for the questions above as well as the table number if applicable.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____

9) _____

10) _____

11) _____

Student Name & Rank: _____ Class #: _____

Battle Staff Checklist

- **REDACTED ORDERS (MDAY/TPU)**
- **APPROVED 1610 (AGR/AC)**
- **FLIGHT ITINERARY**
- **INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT PLAN**
- **MEDPROS IMR (40 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER)**
- **BIO SHEET**
- **75R ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**
- **DA 2875**
- **DOD CYBER AWARENESS CERTIFICATE**

- **PRE-EXECUTION CHECKLIST** (AD & WALK ONS)
- **DA 4187** (WALK ONS ONLY)