ATSS-MH (870)

MEMORANDUM FOR Commandant, United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas 79918-8002

SUBJECT: Access Agreement for Personal Experience Papers

1. I, DAVID M. SAELENS, have submitted a Personal Experience Paper to the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy archives regarding events and experiences from my participation in BATTLE DRILL DEVELOPMENT that may be of historical significance to the United States Army and the Noncommissioned Officer Corps.

2. I understand the manuscript and attached documents will be accessioned into the historical holdings of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy archives and will belong to the United States Government to be used in any manner deemed in the best interests of the United States Army as determined by the Chief of Military History or his representative. I also understand that I may retain a copy for my own use subject to classification restrictions.

3. I hereby expressly and voluntarily relinquish all rights and interest in the paper to the United States Army with the following caveat/exception:

(X) None
( ) Other:

I understand that the information in this paper may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act, and therefore, may be releasable to the public contrary to my wishes. I further understand that, within the limits of the law, the United States Army will attempt to honor the restrictions I have requested to be placed on this material.

Date: 15 SEP 2010

Printed Name: DAVID M. SAELENS

Signature:

Accepted on behalf of the United States Army by:

Printed Name/Date:

Signature:

USASMA FORM 7273-R, APR 06

Running Head: BATTLE DRILL DEVELOPMENT

Battle Drill Development of Non-standard Equipment

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Abstract

This paper describes the development, validation, integration, and execution of detailed Battle Drills into a focused training plan and training assessment during the entire training and pre-deployment cycle. Battle Drills included general system training, mission planning, site selection, equipment setup, and sustainment of a non-standard, transit-cased signals intelligence (SIGINT) survey system referred to as the Collection, Analysis, and Recording Tool (CART). I will briefly discuss the development of the Detachment, Detachment task organization, CART system equipment, the initial assessment process, development of the battle drills, and validation of the entire training cycle.

Development of the Detachment

In May of 2001, I PCSed to Germany and was assigned to Charlie Company, 533rd Military Intelligence Battalion (MI), 66th MI Group. The 66th MI Group Headquarters was in Darmstadt, Germany, while the 533rd MI Bn was based at Bad Aibling Station in Bad Aibling, Germany. During my initial office call with the 66th MI Group CSM, I was asked if I would be interested in standing up a Signals Survey Detachment (SSD) that would be collocated with a National-level agency at the European Technical Center (ETC) in Wiesbaden, Germany. The CSM stated that I would be the Detachment NCOIC and that I would move to Wiesbaden as soon as I finished in-processing. I accepted the job and started coordinating housing in Wiesbaden, which was when I realized the difficulties that lay ahead trying to coordinate what would be considered the simplest of tasks without an established command presence in the local area. After six visits to the housing office and three office calls with the Base Support Battalion CSM, I was finally placed on the housing waiting list.

I then coordinated a meeting at ETC in order to introduce myself, discuss the timeline for the initial integration into their spaces, and identify what actions needed to be accomplished on the my part. The first office call was with the Director of ETC and the 485th Intelligence Squadron (IS) Command and was basically just a meet and greet and a "looking forward to working with you" meeting. Immediately following, I had a meeting with the Division Chief and the two Department Heads that the SSD would be augmenting. Right from the start, it was evident that coordination below the Commander level had not occurred, as nobody knew what their responsibilities were, what they were required to provide, who was paying for the required

office furniture and computer equipment, or where the single Soldiers would be billeted. We all agreed that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between ETC, the 485th IS, and the 66th MI Group should be drafted to protect all parties' interests and identify everyone's responsibilities.

As expected, the MOA process was very slow, and after several meetings with ETC, it was decided that it would be best if I started working out of ETC spaces prior to the MOA being signed. On 17 September, 2001, I was assigned a cubicle at ETC and integration into the Electronic Maintenance Facility.

Task Organization

The Signals Survey Team (SST) was a six member team that was compiled from various sections from within C Company, 533rd MI Bn and was located at Bad Aibling Station. The team consisted of 1x 98H – Communications Locator and Interceptor (E-6), 5x 98K – Signals Collection and Identification Analyst (1x E-5 and 4x E-4). The equipment was maintained by the 33Ws – Military Intelligence Systems Maintainer and Integrator that were assigned to the Electronic Maintenance Shop. All team members were still assigned to their regular platoons and sections and were required to work their assigned jobs. The SST was manned out of hide and training was only conducted once or twice a month.

The vision was to transfer the SST to ETC and establish the SSD. The SSD would consist of 12 billets, 1x Detachment OIC, 1x Detachment NCOIC and 10x Soldiers. The MOSs would consist of 33W and various MOSs from the 98 series. The 33Ws would augment the Electronic Maintenance Facility and the 98s would augment the Signals Survey and Analysis Section.

System Equipment

The CART was a 4 transit-case transportable SIGINT collection system capable of collecting in the HF, VHF, and UHF frequencies ranges (2 MHz -2 GHz). The major components mounted in the transit cases were 2x WJ 8700 HF receivers, 2x WJ 8607 VHF/UHF receivers, 2x DAT 8mm recorders, 2x ruggedized computer terminals, a muticoupler, and an antenna patch panel. The system included two pneumatic masts, one 24' foot high and the other 35' high. There were 2x log periodic antennas, 3x omni directional antennas, and 2x parabolic dishes, each specifically designed to collect on specific frequency bands. There were 2x Honda gas generators for power and 2x 16'X16' ARFAB (tents) for shelters and 2x Ford extended cargo vans for transportation.

Initial Team Assessment

While waiting for the lawyers to agree upon the exact verbiage of the required MOA, I coordinated for the SST to conduct a Situational Training Exercise (STX) at Bad Aibling Station. The purpose was to make an initial assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the team, identify any training shortfalls, and see the CART system setup in a tactical environment. Since the equipment and the existing SST members were still located at Bad Aibling Station, the concept of operations (CONOP) was for me to drive down to Bad Aibling three days before the exercise to inventory the equipment and receive some initial training on setup and operation of the system. While conducting this initial training, I realized that there was a vast difference in the competence and confidence levels from one team member to the next. I asked the Team Leader (TL) and he said that some of the team members were newer than the others and had very little training, but the main cause was that the team was comprised of Soldiers from several

different sections from within the Company and not all team members were released from their primary duties when CART training was conducted.

During that first STX, I just watched and evaluated to see how the team was interacting, if there were any noticeable problems, and who took the lead beside the NCOs. It was obvious that the TL was the only individual that knew how to properly setup the equipment or how the site should be organized. According to the SST capabilities briefing, it took approximately four hours for a six-member team to setup the entire CART system and establish collection operations, with an additional three hours for four personnel to setup the additional ARFAB and organize the site. It actually took over nine hours to complete the CART setup and establish collection operations, and over 13 hours for the complete site setup. Now bear in mind, this was just the setup of the equipment necessary for collection and sleeping space for six personnel. It did not include any force protection requirements or considerations.

After eating dinner, everyone sat down and wrote down three things that went well and three things that needed to be improved. The following day I sat down with each Soldier individually and listened to their issues that they had written down the night prior. After talking with everyone, I compiling the information and called the team back together to conduct an after action review. The top three things that the team thought they did well were, executed the established load plan, adhered to the timeline published in the OPORD (with regards to departure time from garrison), and setup the equipment correctly. The three improvements were, ensure there were more breaks scheduled into the timeline, identify the order that things should be accomplished, and assign Buddy Teams for particular jobs.

I provided them with my assessment and stated that I thought the setup went poorly and if the Commander asked my assessment, I would have to assess the team as non-deployable and untrained.

After we conducted recovery operations, I asked to see the Leaders Book and the Soldiers Job Books for the training required to be considered fully trained on the system. The only tasks that were listed pertained directly to the operation of the system gear. Site selection or setup of equipment was not addressed at all. This explained the poor performance and the discontinuity during the STX.

Identifying the Task List

I sat down with the TL and the Assistant TL and compiled a list of tasks required to deploy the system. This initial list encompassed everything from receiving the mission to filling sand bags for the sound dampening barrier around the gas generators. After identifying all of the required tasks, the tasks were grouped by who would have the primary responsibility to complete, i.e. 66th MI Group, 533rd MI Bn, Charlie Company, or the team. Our focus was solely on the tasks that the team would be responsible for, so the list was refined and organized into tasks and subtasks. For example, erecting the antenna mast would be the major task, selecting proper antenna location and assembling the appropriate antenna for the mission would be subtasks.

The tasks were further defined as system operation tasks and deployment tasks. The deployment tasks were subdivided again into pre-deployment preparation, deployment, and redeployment/recovery tasks.

I briefed the Company Commander and 1SG with my assessment and the readiness of the team. I made it clear that I wasn't pointing blame and all that I wanted to do was fix the issues and get the team ready to deploy in order to fulfill the Commander's requirements. I briefed the way ahead with regards to writing Task, Conditions, and Standards for each task, reconstructing the Job Books, and development of a focused training plan. I further requested that the TL be released from his assigned duties in order to focus on writing the Task, Conditions, and Standards and remain the conduit since ne was the subject matter expert and I was over six hours away without SIPRNET connectivity. They were both shocked and impressed with the assessment and the way ahead and quickly agreed that the TL would only focus on SST/SSD related matters and a strategy would be developed to release two additional Soldiers within 45 days.

Developing and Implementing the Standards

Now that all of the tasks were identified and grouped, I asked to see the Task, Conditions, and Standards for the tasks that were listed in the Job Book. The TL said that they didn't have any and that the vendor had provided a list. I said we could use that as a guide, but we were going to write individual Task, Conditions, and Standards for all tasks, as well as the required Performance Measures for each task. I stated that this was the only was that we could truly assess the team's training and ensure we were accurately reporting our training status to the Commander for the Quarterly Training Briefs.

I provided an example of what I wanted, and the TL and wrote the Task, Conditions, and Standards for three tasks. We then scheduled and conducted training using the Task, Condition, and Standards, and evaluated each team member using the performance measures. All six team

completed the training and evaluation satisfactorily, thus validating the task and proving the concept would work.

Training Cycle Validation

Over the course of two and a half months, the team wrote the Task, Conditions, and Standards for over 40 specific CART related tasks and incorporated over 30 other tasks from the Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks. In less than six months after the initial STX, all team members were trained and evaluated on all CART specific battle drills. Another STX was conducted to evaluate the team and validate the training process we had just refined. The results were outstanding. The time required for the CART setup and to establish collection operations went from nine hours down to five, with the entire site setup going from 13 hours down to eight. The overall setup time was reduced by almost 40%.

The end state of the training was that within a six month time period, the Commander went from having a useless SIGINT collection system to having a fully mission capable deployable asset, capable of conducting tactical HF, VHF, and UHF surveys and/or short term collection missions in support of United States Army Europe.