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Our Reference: G7 Trg 3725-1

See Distribution

Date: 18 October 2010

EXERCISE CAMBRIAN PATROL 2010 - UNIT PXR

References:

- A. HQ 160 (W) Bde G7 Trg 3725-1 dated 28 Aug 09 (NOTAL)
- B. 2010 DIN 07-022

GENERAL

1. Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2010 (CP 10) was a patrolling exercise run by HQ 160 (W) Bde in the area of Fan Gyhirych, Black Mountain and Sennybridge areas of Wales during the period 8 - 17 Oct 10. Exercising troops moved approximately 50 km on foot with further ground being covered by vehicle. The weather was exceptionally good for this time of year with very little rain. Visibility at night varied from good to very foggy.
2. Entry numbers for the Regular was higher than previous years, which was largely due to a numbered Bde Comds realising the value of the exercise and directing their units to attend. TA numbers were lower than normal, it is thought that this is due to the MTD restriction effecting soldiers on step 2 of GCM. Operational commitments affected a number of Regular teams. A total of 78 patrols began the exercise, (compared with the 65 that took part in 2009), including 16 patrols from overseas units. The exercise was run as 7 identical and overlapping phases.
3. The aim of the unit PXR is to provide feedback to units and teams which took part in CP10, but it is also a useful aid to preparation for CP11. It accompanies the individual team PXR, which provides detailed comment on each team's performance.

THE EXERCISE

4. The Exercise was held almost entirely over private land around the area of Fan Gyhirych, Black Mountain and Sennybridge Training Area (SENTA). Patrols reported to an RV at Dixies Corner and then moved to an Assembly Area nearby; BG HQ within the scenario. The Exercise followed a logical sequence that was generated by the General and Special Idea, as follows: Battle Procedure, Orders, Infiltration/Route Selection, Target Reconnaissance, Support to Friendly Forces, Battlefield Drills, Exfiltration, and Debriefing. The main areas tested, in chronological order, were:

a. **Assembly Area**

Kit Inspection/Sanitisation
Signals
Extraction and issuing of orders

} Battle Procedure

b. **Task 1 - Enemy Positions**

Recce enemy positions	}	Infiltration / Target Reconnaissance
Navigation		
Tactical Awareness		
Command and Control		
Patrol Reports		
Foreign Equipment Recognition		

c. **Task 2 – Mine Strike / First Aid**

Clearance Drills	}	Support to Friendly Forces / Battlefield Drills
First Aid Drills		
Command and Control		
Tactical Awareness		

d. **Task 3 – Water Crossing**

Security	}	Exfiltration
Tactical Awareness		
River Crossing Drills		

e. **Task 2 – Arty Tgt Indication / Weapon and Mine Recognition**

Arty Tgt Procedure	}	Support to Friendly Forces / Battle Procedure
Tactical Awareness		
Command and Control		
International Wpn & Mine Recognition		

f. **Task 6 – Anti Personnel Ambush Drills**

Quick Battle Orders	}	Battlefield Drills
Reaction to Contact		
Offensive Action		
Command and Control		
Individual Skills and Drills		

g. **Task 7 – Ammo Replen**

Timed Movement of Ammo	}	Battlefield Drills
Command and Control		
Individual Motivation / Aggression		

h. **Task 8 - Debrief**

Information Retention	}	Debrief
Kit Inspection		

j. **Task 9 - Communications Throughout Exercise**

Signals / Report Lines
VP /

} Signals

PXR POINTS

5. The Exercise had to strike a balance to be challenging for the best patrols and yet still achievable for any well motivated and well led team, who perhaps were not necessarily as experienced or well prepared. All participants, whether they achieved a high medal award or withdrew after only a few hours, learned something from the Exercise. Feedback from patrols after the Exercise indicates that this was the case. General points to note on each activity are:

a. **Kit Inspection/Sanitisation.** Nearly all patrols arrived well prepared and sanitised with only a few units compromising themselves with unit insignia. The majority of teams had adhered to the kit list. Exact kit requirements are laid down in the Joining Instructions and yet some patrols were bringing far more than was needed. As with previous years overly heavy bergens resulted in several withdrawals due to injuries and extra fatigue. The team Comd or 2i/c should inspect kit prior to the exercise and remove any unnecessary equipment from within the team.

b. **Signals.** At least 10% of teams arriving at the signals stand did not have a complete understanding of how to use the signals equipment they were carrying. In some cases the team's equipment required some sort of repair before they could establish comms with 0. This was largely due to teams arriving with faulty equipment that had not been properly checked before the Exercise. None of the teams were allowed to start the patrol unless they had at least one working radio. For future Cambrian Patrols it is recommended that team managers bring spare equipment to the Assembly Area (team managers are held at the Assembly Area until after the kit check and signals check). Satellite telephones were issued to patrols on deployment from the assembly area; the 4th year that this signals safety measure had been employed. These were in sealed bags and were only to be used in the event of a non-exercise emergency. They proved useful on several occasions. The fact that patrols are issued with a satphone as a safety measure is not an excuse for arriving with incorrect or faulty radio equipment.

c. **Patrol Orders.** The standard of orders was generally very good and some were excellent. Nevertheless there were a number of areas where patrol commanders made common mistakes. This generally stemmed from a failure to adhere to the Orders format in the TAM. Details of routes, legs, OOM, RV drills, and Actions On tended to be weak. These must be stated for each separate phase of the patrol action. For those patrols that had developed their own SOPs beforehand, this area was covered more comprehensively. Some patrol commanders did not make best use of the model during their orders (which was a waste as these had generally been well prepared by team members). This would have related the information to the ground more effectively.

d. **Navigation.** Movement during the day was steady however once night fell navigation proved more challenging. Generally this was covered well with most patrols hitting the relevant location close to their timings. Marching on a compass bearing was critical to success and pacing was key (especially in the wooded areas) in order to verify distance of travel in the low visibility. Methodical use of pacing and bearings made the difference between teams meeting the timings or failing to keep up with the pace of the exercise. Quite a few patrols became inaccurate with their navigation through trying to move too fast without proper navigational checks, which resulted in them becoming geographically embarrassed.

e. **Physical Fitness.** There were the usual occurrences of injuries on this year's route. The steep undulating ground and night movement accounted for many lower limb and

back problems. Fitness standards varied greatly within teams, who were often let down by one or two individuals. Patrols must remember that they are only as fast as their slowest member. There were of course a few 'mental injuries' that would see soldiers unable to continue due to a lack of moral fibre. The weather this year was exceptionally good, without much of the characteristic rain, which made movement much easier than in previous years. However, physical and mental fitness let a lot of patrols down. The speed is worked out on 2 km an hour with time for administration stops. The time is further increased on legs that are conducted at night and/or over particularly difficult terrain. This should be achievable by all military units, however, navigational errors eroded some of this allowance. The distance covered this year was 50 kms. Teams should note that Cambrian Patrol is an exercise and not a race; there are no extra points for arriving ahead of the timings given.

f. **Recce Skills and Reports.** Patrols were required to confirm and recce an enemy position which the enemy would be patrolling on foot. A number of patrols were compromised by the enemy on this leg because they sacrificed tactics for speed during their recce of the objective. The information gained was passed on in a patrol report, in most cases written by the patrol as a whole. Many of the reports were outstanding and clearly demonstrated the time and effort which had been put into them, but standards varied enormously. Those who performed best clearly understood that their prime reason for deploying was to give quality feedback to the Chain of Command. Their reports were in most cases detailed and comprehensive, covering all the major points. In addition, good sketches significantly improved the overall quality and utility of the information. A patrol report must, if at all possible, give a set of recommended courses of action or contingency planning options to the Chain of Command for future operations. A very small number of commanders were more interested in sleep than putting some time and effort into their reports, therefore losing valuable points.

g. **Lie Up Point (LUP).** The patrols then moved on foot to a LUP location where the patrol report was prepared. The patrols were in this location for approximately 2-5 hours, depending on their navigation and speed across the ground during the first part of the route. This provided the opportunity to put final detail onto patrol reports and to conduct administration.

j. **Mine Strike/First Aid.** The patrols were tasked to move to a FF location. On arrival the patrol were briefed that a local army QM had just driven his veh into a FF minefield and was badly injured. The patrol had to clear a safe route to the cas, administer first aid and extract him to a HLZ approximately 100 mtrs from the accident site. The position was enhanced with members of Amputees in Action. Once again standards varied greatly between patrols. The good patrols quickly secured the location and assessed the situation. Correct first aid was carried out and the casualties moved to the RV correctly. A minority of patrols were unsure on how to deal with the situation and displayed poor first aid procedures.

k. **Release Point.** The patrol then moved to a release point where the ptl comd could finalise his patrol report whilst the 2i/c received new orders. The patrol were tasked to confirm a poss rebro site, and to liaise with local police at a police outpost before continuing on to their next task.

h. **Border Crossing RV.** At the Border Crossing RV the patrol were told that the border had been heavily mined and the only way to cross the border was by boat, which had been positioned for them at the waters edge.

i. **Water Crossing.** The Water Crossing Point was at the NW corner of Usk Reservoir. On arrival at the waters edge, the patrol given further orders and told that the boats had been sabotaged and the only way to their next task was to swim across. This task took place late afternoon to early evening, with some patrols crossing in the dark. The standard varied enormously from those that had clearly rehearsed their drills and those who had not even considered this as a likely task. Patrols that arrived on time and were well

motivated generally performed best. Common faults were lack of protection/sentries and slow action on the far bank. All too often patrols switched off once the crossing had been completed.

j. **Arty Target/Mine and Weapon Recognition.** On arrival at this task the plt comd and one other was asked to help the local army with giving Arty Tgt Indication. Concurrently, two members of the team were tasked to identify international weapons and mines currently in use in Afghanistan. The ability to call in indirect fire by commanders varied considerably from very good to poor, all comds should have been able to carry out this task. Weapon and mine recognition on the whole was good with most of the items being recognised.

k. **Anti Personnel Ambush.** On arrival at an RV the patrol commander was issued a set of QBO's informing him that his they were to be guides through a freindy village to a safe area. The patrols were then ambushed at very close range and by a enemy in depth. The ferocity of the reaction from the teams showed wide variation. The more robust call signs carried out fast and aggressive assaults on the enemy whereas others were slow to respond to the threat. The range was supported by overhead and flanking fire and to enhance the scenario high Explosive bangs and a sound system was used.

l. **Ammunition Resupply.** On completion of the Anti Personnel Ambush, Patrols were informed that a local village was under siege and required an ammunition resupply. The Patrols had to carry 3 GPMG liners (20Kg each) at best speed to the village, which was approx 1.5 miles away.

n. **Patrol Debrief.** The whole patrol was then given a detailed inspection followed by a debrief which lasted approx 1 hour on their patrol action. The aim was to extract as much information from them as possible and confirm that they had achieved their stated mission. Most patrols seemed to be aware of the requirement and performed reasonably well. Some were outstanding and had clearly worked hard as a team throughout to gather as much information as possible. Other patrols had not shared intelligence amongst the team members and only the patrol comd and 2i/c had any information. After debrief the patrols were informed they were moving to a holding area before being re-tasked. It was at this point the patrols where met by their Team Managers and informed they had successfully completed Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2010.

o. **Administration in the Field.** Timings were worked out at 2 km an hour. This was designed to allow teams to stop to eat and prepare hot drinks. Patrols should take in hot drinks and hot food at every opportunity. It was noticed in several of the holding areas of the exercise that patrols would just sit demoralised on their bergens instead of administering themselves. Quite a few patrols had problems due to not looking after their feet during administration stops

OTHER PXR POINTS

6. **Leadership.** The single most important factor in completing the exercise was the calibre of the Ptl Comd and 2IC. It was necessary to have a Comd and 2IC who:

- a. Could navigate using map and compass, and be confident in other navigational skills.
- b. Were physically fit.
- c. Had moral courage. A number of teams or further team members withdrew as soon as they had one casualty, when they could have carried on.

- d. Could lead and motivate their team, particularly at the low points during the patrol. Commanders need to be robust with patrol member when they want to “give in”. Strong leadership is required in these type of situations
- e. Could carry out an estimate, give orders and make a reasonable plan.

It is right to expect this of any patrol commander or 2i/c and the Exercise was designed to test these very qualities.

7. **Core Capabilities.** The great majority of teams this year understood that all members of the patrol needed to be competent at core military skills up to MATTs Level 1 standard.

8. **Overseas Teams.** The standard of the overseas teams varied greatly. There were a number of overseas units that performed exceptionally well. It is advised that overseas units are fully aware of the physical requirements for Exercise Cambrian Patrol. Overseas teams may also benefit from using a UK patrol report format, which is rigidly structured and guides the user towards providing the level of detail required.

9. **Maintaining the Element of Surprise.** The Exercise is redesigned each year so the route will be unfamiliar. Other features that helped to prevent units becoming aware of the requirements of the exercise were:

- a. The location of the Assembly Area was only revealed to patrols when they reported to the RV at the start of the phase.
- b. Patrols were given only the map requirements for the RV in their joining instructions. The exercise mapping was then issued to them at the RV.
- c. Patrols were re-tasked to new areas on their way around the patrol route. They were not aware of the whole route in the initial orders.

CONCLUSION

10. The Exercise is designed to be testing but achievable for any patrol which is well led and well motivated, and which had carried out some but not an excessive amount of preparation. The weather this year was uncharacteristically good with no rain, which made personal administration more straightforward. The difficult terrain exposed shortcomings in the patrols and did not in itself make the exercise unachievable. Hopefully all participants will now pass on the lessons identified to other members of their unit.

11. The Cambrian Patrol is run on an annual basis with applications accepted from all 3 Services (Regular and Reserve Forces), and a variety of overseas military units. Cambrian Patrol has evolved into a ready-made exercise that Commanding Officers can use to test the training standards of their soldiers, in preparation for future operations. We seek to encourage a wider participation from across all the arms and services and stress that the entry standards are not based on any specialist skills but on MATTs. The date for Cambrian Patrol 2011 will be from the 21 to 30 Oct with the DIN being published in early February. The initial point of contact for all entrants is WO1 (RSM) Pratt on 94351 2280 / 01874 613280 or e-mail 160Bde-CambrianPat-WO / brian.pratt683@mod.uk.

HQ 160(W) Bde

Annexes:

- A. Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL 2010 - Overall Results.
- B. Individual Team PXR(s).

Distribution:

All Units participating in CP10

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