Improving Command and Control Procedures on Multinational Base Camps

By Major Karlus L. Cozart

When unexploded ordnance (UXO) were discovered within the confines of the base camp occupied by the Multinational Division (North) (MND(N)) of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia, commanders and staffs realized they needed to revise existing annexes to the base emergency-reaction plan. In some cases, they had to develop new annexes. This article describes significant command and control (C2) lessons that commanders and staffs assigned to the MND(N) learned as a result of this force-protection-related incident.

Organization

One unique aspect of MND(N) is its task organization. It is a division-level, multinational "combined-forces" task force (TF) made up of military and civilian personnel from both NATO and non-NATO countries. TF Eagle's command structure is a skeleton division headquarters staff. The forward division staff consists of a U.S. brigade combat team (BCT), three organic maneuver battalions, elements from the U.S. division's support command, and liaison officers from sister services and a dozen other nations. The BCT and two of the three battalion task forces simultaneously execute split-based C2 operations. For example, BCT staff sections execute dual functions as the division-and brigade-level staffs, while battalion task forces execute duties associated with operating two separate base camps.

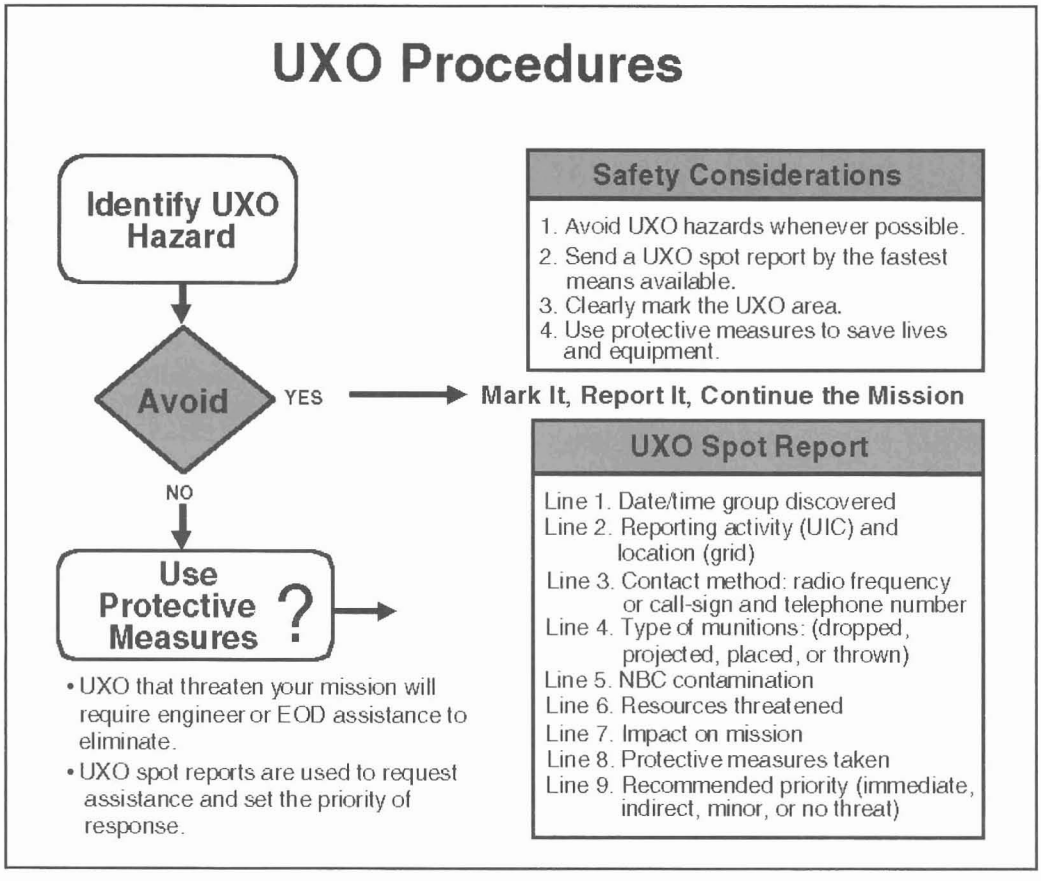
Command and Control

Commanders of units deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina to support Operations Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard exercise authority and direction, referred to as C2, over multinational and U.S. forces. Commanders perform C2 activities through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, facilities, and communication processes. A thorough understanding of established C2 procedures is essential for military units to accomplish missions successfully, especially during major campaigns and operations, such as Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard.

Army doctrine refers to the C2 function as "battle command," which is the art and science of battlefield decision making, troop leading, and motivating soldiers and organizations to accomplish missions at the least cost. According to Field Manual 100-5, *Operations* (the Army's doctrine on battle-command functions), "To command is to direct, and this process contains two vital components—decision making and leadership; control is inherent in battle command." Control monitors the status of organizational effectiveness, identifies deviations from set standards, and corrects them. Control serves its purpose if it allows commanders freedom to operate, delegate authority, lead from any critical point on the battlefield, and synchronize actions across the entire area of operations.



A soldier from the EOD Detachment prepares to destroy the UXO with blocks of C4 explosives.



The MND(N) commander, referred to as COMEAGLE, was responsible for more than 42,000 DoD military and civilian personnel and their family members in the Central and Southern European Regions. COMEAGLE used several methods to determine where to strategically locate commanders throughout the battlespace. He moved them to specific areas when necessary but also employed modern technology, such as video teleconferences, when a commander's presence was required at several locations simultaneously. COMEAGLE's leadership in these situations placed commanders where they had the greatest C2 impact over the 13,000 deployed U.S. military personnel.

During Operation Joint Guard, TF Eagle's force structure was smaller than its Operation Joint Endeavor predecessor. Nevertheless, TF Eagle commanders clearly exceeded the doctrinal definition of what a U.S. division is expected to successfully command and control.

UXO Alert

Early one afternoon, personnel throughout the task force base camp were notified that UXO had been found within the confines of the base camp and that Air Force Explosives Ordnance Detachment (EOD) personnel would soon destroy them.

Alert notification personnel instructed that facilities located near the suspected UXO be evacuated. They also advised that office doors and windows throughout the base camp be opened to reduce possible injuries from flying glass when the UXO were detonated. Task force personnel implemented instructions provided as part of the alert notification process but suspected that the following information would have improved their situational awareness:

- ❒ What C2 structure is in place to respond to the incident?
- ❒ Where are the UXO located?
- ❒ When and where will the UXO be destroyed?

Some of the personnel conducting the notification were unable to answer these questions. Other C2-related questions asked before the UXO were destroyed revealed that individuals participating in the notification process also had different perceptions concerning the type of UXO found. For example, some military police advised that three 500-pound antitank bombs were found near one of the tent cities. Several other personnel tasked to direct or assist with evacuation of the tent cities had very little situational awareness. After being evacuated, some personnel within the safe-blast radius of the UXO stated that they did not know where the UXO were located. The location of UXO would have been critical had large munitions or scatterable mines been nearby.

New Annexes

Although the UXO were destroyed safely, the task force's command element discovered that the current execution checklist, standing operating procedure (SOP), and base emergency-reaction plans did not establish actions, responsibilities, or authorities needed for this situation. We concluded that revised annexes should address actions, authorities, and responsibilities during the following types of emergency situations:

- Reaction to UXO that present an immediate threat to base camp personnel.
- Base camp security when reacting to interior or exterior perimeter threats.
- Employment of quick reactionary forces in case of terrorist actions, hostage situations, and civil disturbances.
- Reactions to potential threats from natural disasters; bombs threats; and ground, air, and sniper attacks.
- Maintenance of base camp law and order through establishment of access control points, detainee processing measures, pedestrian and vehicle traffic-control routes, and facility security and emergency-evacuation plans.
- Siren notification drills.

Lessons Learned

Discovery of UXO on the MND(N) base camp taught commanders and staff that units must—

- Develop, consolidate, or update base emergency-reaction plans, SOPs, or execution checklists when occupying new base camps or areas of operation.
- Rehearse and update procedures for various force-protection situations.
- Establish and distribute policy regarding penalties for unauthorized personnel found in restricted areas or vehicles or caught tampering with sensitive equipment.

When developing emergency-reaction plans or during a UXO alert notification, commanders must—

- Rehearse established tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) during hours of darkness and adverse weather conditions.
- Determine the UXO safe-blast radius and the location of rally points for personnel evacuated from facilities.
- Determine where evacuated personnel (military, civilians, and noncombatants) are to assemble (in predesignated bunkers or basements or remain in current facilities).
- Determine the appropriate uniform (modified battle dress, physical training uniforms, or the first thing each person can grab) for personnel who must evacuate various types of facilities (offices, aid stations, sleep tents, motor pools, dining facilities, recreation fields, etc).
- Prepare a list of personnel authorized to enter certain C2 facilities (the White House, Provost Marshal Office, or battle-update briefing tent) before completing emergency-reaction missions.
- Ensure that all personnel (military, civilian, and allies) and sensitive items are accounted for before and after UXO are destroyed.
- Determine who has release authority and who decides when it is safe to set off a high-order detonation.
- Know how many detonations are scheduled as part of the actual destruction process to ensure that personnel are not prematurely released into previously evacuated or restricted areas.
- Develop and rehearse joint service and combined forces battle drills, TTPs, or emergency-response plans (Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and multinational).
- Distribute compatible joint service and multilingual communications equipment (flags, radios, bull horns) that all parties/personnel can use.
- Update and distribute essential personnel notification rosters (for example, C2 structure, mayor's cell, EOD, military police, security police, engineers, fire department, medics, tactical operations center, quick reaction force, VIPs, liaison officers, etc).
- Develop clearing instructions for quarantine/road blocks and facilities (entry control points, engineer tape, or brightly colored area tape to close restricted areas).

DTLOMS Implications

These lessons learned have a training implication. Deployed units must have processes in place to ensure that all personnel, especially newly arriving personnel, are familiar with actions to be taken during various emergency situations.

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