

SELECTION, OCCUPATION, AND CONSTRUCTION OF SNIPER POSITIONS

Selecting the location for a position is one of the most important tasks a sniper team accomplishes during the mission planning phase of an operation. After selecting the location, the team also determines how it will move into the area to locate and occupy the final position.

SELECTION

Upon receiving a mission, the sniper team locates the target area and then determines the best location for a tentative position by using one or more of the following sources of information: topographic maps, aerial photographs, visual reconnaissance before the mission, and information gained from units operating in the area.

a. The sniper team ensures the position provides an optimum balance between the following considerations:

- Maximum fields of fire and observation of the target area.

- Concealment from enemy observation.

- Covered routes into and out of the position.

- Located no closer than 300 meters from the target area.

- A natural or man-made obstacle between the position and the target area.

b. A sniper team must remember that a position that appears to be in an ideal location may also appear that way to the enemy. Therefore, the team avoids choosing locations that are:

- On a point or crest of prominent terrain features.

- Close to isolated objects.

- At bends or ends of roads, trails, or streams.

- In populated areas, unless it is required.

c. The sniper team must use its imagination and ingenuity in choosing a good location for the given mission. The team chooses a location that not only allows the team to be effective but also must appear to the enemy to be the least likely place for a team position. The following are examples of such positions:

- Under logs in a drift area.

- Tunnels bored from one side of a knoll to the other.

- Swamps.

Deep shadows.

Inside rubble piles.

OCCUPATION

During the mission planning phase, the sniper also selects an final rendezvous point {FRV). From this point, the sniper team then recess the hide position to determine the exact location of its final position. The location of the FRV should provide cover and concealment from enemy fire and observation, And be located as close to the selected area as possible, and have good routes into and out of the selected area.

a. From the FRV, the team moves forward to a location that allows the team to view the hide position area . One member remains in this location to cover the other member who recess the area to locate a final position. Once a suitable location has been found, the covering team member moves to the position. While conducting the reconnaissance or moving to the position, the team Moves slowly and deliberately,

using the sniper low crawl.

Avoids unnecessary movement of trees, bushes, and grass.

Avoids making any noises.

Stays in the shadows, if there are any.

Stops, looks, and listens every few feet.

b. When the sniper team arrives at the firing position, it Conducts a detailed search of the target area. Starts construction of the firing position, if required. Organizes equipment so that it is easily accessible. Establishes a system of observing eating resting, and latrine calls.

CONSTRUCTION

A sniper mission always requires the team to occupy some type of position. These positions can range from a hasty position, which a team may use for a few hours, to a more permanent position, which the team could occupy. for a few days. The team should always plan to build its position during limited visibility.

a. Sniper Position Considerations. Whether a sniper team is in a position for a few minutes or a few days, the basic considerations in. choosing a type of position remain the same.

(1) Location:

(a) Type of terrain and soil. Digging and boring of tunnels can be very difficult in hard soil or in fine, loose sand. The team takes advantage of what the terrain offers (gullies, holes, hollow tree stumps, and so forth).

(b) Enemy location and capabilities. Enemy patrols in the area may be close enough to the position to hear any noises that may accidentally be made during any construction. The team also considers the enemy's night vision and detection capabilities.

(2) Time:

(a) Amount of time to be occupied. If the sniper team's mission requires it to be in position for a long time, the team constructs a position that provides more survivability. This allows the team to operate more effectively for a longer time.

(b) Time required for construction. The time required to build a position must be considered, especially during the mission planning phase.

(3) Personnel and equipment:

(a) Equipment needed for construction. The team plans for the use of any extra equipment needed for construction (bow saws, picks, axes, and so forth).

(b) Personnel needed for construction. Coordination is made if the position requires more personnel to build it or a security element to secure the area during construction.

Construction Techniques. Belly and semipermanent hide positions can be constructed of stone, brick, wood, or turf. Regardless of material, every effort is made to bulletproof the front of the hide position. The team can use the following techniques:

Pack protective jackets around the loophole areas.

Emplace an angled armor plate with a loophole cut into it behind the hide loophole.

Sandbag the loopholes from the inside.

(1) trench. Hide construction begins with the trench since it protects the sniper team. All excavated dirt is removed (placed in sandbags, taken away on a poncho, and so forth) and hidden (plowed fields, under a log, or away from the hide site).

(2) Overhead cover. In a semipermanent hide position, logs should be used as the base of the roof. The sniper team places a dust cover over the base (such as a poncho, layers of empty sandbags, or canvas), a layer of dirt, and a layer of gravel, if available. The team spreads another layer of dirt, and then adds camouflage. Due to the various materials, the roof is difficult to conceal if not countersunk.

(3) Entrance. To prevent detection, the sniper team should construct an entrance door sturdy enough to bear a man's weight.

(4) Loopholes. The construction of loopholes requires care and practice to ensure they afford adequate fields of fire. Loopholes must be camouflaged by foliage or other material that blends with or is natural to the surroundings.

(5) Approaches. It is vital that the natural appearance of the ground remains unaltered and camouflage blends with the surroundings. Construction time is wasted if the enemy observes a team entering the hide; therefore, approaches must be concealed. Teams try to enter the hide during darkness, keeping movement to a minimum and adhering to trail discipline. In built-up areas, a secure and quiet approach is needed. Teams must avoid drawing attention to the mission and carefully plan movement. A possible ploy is to use a house search with sniper gear hidden among other gear. Sewers may be used for movement also.