

Chapter 7

The Urban Environment and Restrictions to Operations

“The responsibility of officers . . . and the training necessary are of a very different order from their responsibilities and training in ordinary military duties. Instead of striving to generate the maximum power with the forces available, the goal is to gain decisive results with the least application of force and the consequent minimum loss of life.”

USMC, 1940 (FMFRP 12-15, *Small Wars Manual*)

Section I

Military Operations Other Than War

7101. Introduction. One of the most likely missions that U.S. Marines will undertake abroad will be military operations other than war (MOOTW). These missions typically will take place in the Third World and are normally associated with urban areas. MOOTW focuses on deterring war, resolving conflict, promoting peace, and supporting civil authorities in response to domestic crises. It is important to remember that political considerations permeate at all levels. Although some types of MOOTW, such as peace enforcement, may have the same characteristics of war, they normally have more restrictive rules of engagement (ROE).

Urban environments are inherently complex, and sometimes unpredictable. Local governments may have limited functions. Services may be overburdened, leading to allocation on the basis of personal connections and corruption. Services may be provided by a mixture of formal, high-technology and informal, labor-intensive systems. Large portions of the population may be poor, young, and underemployed. Nevertheless, there may be a high degree of social organization and interaction. Word of mouth and informal organizations may be as important as mass media and formal organizations to the communication structure of the area. Indigenous populations may have experienced centuries of foreign interventions and become quite adept at innovative ways of communicating. These factors and others often combine to make MOOTW a challenging and frustrating endeavor.

7102. Types of MOOTW. MOOTW encompasses a wide variety of military operations, that may take place in an urban environment. Forward deployed MAGTFs are ideal forces to respond to contingency operations involving MOOTW. These operations include:

- Combatting Terrorism
- DOD support to counterdrug operations
- Enforcement of Sanctions/MIO
- Enforcing Exclusion Zones

- Humanitarian Assistance
- Military Support to Civil Authorities
- Nation Assistance/Support to Counterinsurgency
- NEO
- Peace Operations
- Recovery Operations
- Show of Force Operations
- Strikes and Raids.

7103. Recent Experience and Lessons Learned. Recent Marine Corps urban experiences^C Lebanon (1982 - 1984); Grenada (1983); Panama (1989); and Somalia (1992 - 1994)^C are examples of MOOTW. Although each operation was unique, the lessons learned are similar. For detailed information, commanders may obtain after action reports through the Marine Corps Lessons Learned System (MCLLS). Some of the lessons learned include:

- (1) Demonstrate a powerful military presence. Where and when possible, use tanks, armored vehicles, heavy automatic weapons, fixed-wing aircraft, and attack helicopters.
- (2) PSYOP, CI, HUMINT teams, and linguists, are essential to communications and intelligence gathering.
- (3) Topographic detachment is useful to provide necessary sketches and maps.
- (4) UAVs can be used for security, reconnaissance, and surveillance.
- (5) Whenever entering an AO, isolate the area, patrol, and use intelligence to evaluate specific buildings or groups of buildings for search-and-clear operations. PSYOP, CI, HUMINT teams, and linguists can be used, as appropriate, to support patrols.
- (6) Take advantage of the night by using night vision devices.
- (7) The most effective means of dealing with snipers is with counter sniping operations.
- (8) Snipers are also a tremendous asset to overwatch patrol movements, provide intelligence, and direct fire support. (See MCWP 3-15.3 [under development].)

Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain

(9) Random patrolling, traffic control points, random checkpoints/roadblocks, and ambushes disrupt enemy movements, reduce looting, seize curfew violators, and convince the population that order has been restored.

(10) Use armored vehicles to move quickly to new checkpoints and set up roadblocks or ambushes. They also increase protection for infantry. Their night vision sights also provide increased security and recognition during periods of limited visibility.

(11) Extensive patrolling provides current combat information used to maintain situational awareness. It helps to familiarize units with the AO and presents a strong military presence. (See Appendix A, Section VII)

(12) Tanks, armored vehicles, or attack helicopters increase military presence and can provide immediate, accurate gunfire.

(13) Before search and clear of a building, use loudspeakers to explain your intentions to noncombatants and enlist their cooperation.

(14) Use a minimum amount of force when dealing with noncombatants and their property. This will assist you in obtaining them to cooperate and may prevent turning them into active combatants. Assign engineers to search-and-clear forces, as necessary.

(15) MPs can instruct small unit leaders on the proper method of conducting vehicle, individual, and room search techniques. In some cases, it may be appropriate to attach MPs to search-and-clear forces. (See MCWP 3-34.X, *Military Police in Combat*.)

(16) Maintain a strong, mobile reserve.

(17) Avoid becoming predictable.

7104. Urban Terrorism. Terrorism is “the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological” (Joint Pub 1-02). Terrorism is a criminal act that is symbolic in nature. Its intent is to influence an audience other than the victim.

The likelihood of Marine involvement with terrorism increases in the urban environment. Terrorism in an urban environment can occur across the spectrum of conflict. Terrorists are an integral element in an insurgency and also play a major role in unconventional warfare. Terrorists can disrupt economic functions, expose a government’s incompetence, eliminate opposition leaders, and elevate social anxiety. (See MCRP 3-02D, *Combating Terrorism*; and MCRP 3-02E, *The Individual’s Guide for Understanding and Surviving Terrorism*.)

In countering this threat, Marines should determine whether it is internally or externally directed terrorism. Terrorism rooted externally must be severed from its roots. Against internal terrorism,

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Marines should attempt to penetrate the infrastructure and destroy the leadership of the terrorist groups.

The keys to defeating terrorists are awareness, education, and intelligence in order to deny, deter, delay, and detect terrorist acts. Rapid coordination among military units, military services, local police, and other government agencies is essential in denying the terrorists targets and refuge.

a. Nature of Urban Terrorism. Terrorism is generally an urban phenomenon. Incidents of terrorism are increasing in the international community, and in the United States, and pose a significant threat for U.S. military forces. Military personnel in noncombatant roles are considered terrorist targets. For example, the attack on the Marine compound in Lebanon can be considered a terrorist attack instead of a military action because the Marines were officially in a noncombat activity (a multinational peacekeeping activity).

b. Terrorists in the Urban Area. Cities are target rich environments for terrorists. They offer ample cover and concealment. They contain large amounts of resources, transportation, communications, and potential recruits or sympathizers to their cause. Cities also provide the media attention essential for terrorists to accomplish their mission.

c. Combating Terrorism

(1) Counterterrorism. Counterterrorism includes the full range of offensive measures to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism (Joint Pub 1-02). Population protection and control to combat the terrorist threat may be a major effort within the urban environment. The ability to protect the general population from attack and intimidation is essential.

(2) Antiterrorism. Antiterrorism includes defensive measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts, to include limited response and containment by local military forces (Joint Pub 1-02). The extent of these measures varies based on assessments of the local threat. These include personnel awareness and knowledge of personal protection techniques. They also include crime prevention and physical security programs to "harden" the target, making installations and personnel less appealing as terrorist targets.

Section II

Restrictive Conditions

7201. Introduction. Commanders can expect to encounter restrictions on the use of force in MOOTW, especially in the urban environment. While we tend to focus on a traditional image of urban combat, MOUT extends beyond the house-to-house, close-combat effort to seize a city. Recent history provides many examples of the need for precise application of force to minimize collateral damage. MOOTW generally requires the application of force in varying degrees. Future missions in urban areas will likely follow this same pattern. While Marine forces must be prepared for more intensive urban combat, they must also train to apply only the level of force necessary to accomplish the mission. *Our tactics may have to rely more on innovation than firepower.*

Basic tenets of maneuver warfare remain the same in MOOTW, but the tactics, techniques, and procedures may have to be modified to stay within established ROE and to avoid unnecessary collateral damage.

7202. Rules of Engagement. ROE are “directives issued by competent military authority which delineate the circumstances and limitations under which United States forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered” (Joint Pub 1-02). ROE for Marine forces are usually set by the JTF commander. They are based on National Command Authorities (NCA) guidance, the mission, the threat, the laws of war, and host nation constraints on force deployment.

MOOTW focuses on deterring war, resolving conflict, promoting peace, and supporting civil authorities in response to domestic crises. It is important to remember that political considerations permeate at all levels. Although some types of MOOTW, such as peace enforcement, may have the same characteristics of war, they normally have more restrictive rules of engagement (ROE). Restraint requires the careful balancing of the need for security, the conduct of operations, and the political objective. Excessive force antagonizes those parties involved, thereby damaging the legitimacy of the organization that uses it while possibly enhancing the legitimacy of the opposing party. Ensure all personnel understand the ROE and incorporate the practice into training exercises at all levels.

ROE must be fully integrated in the MAGTFs plans. As an example, table 7-1, presents the ROE used in Operation United Shield:

ROE Used for Operation United Shield	
Nothing in these Rules of Engagement limits your right to take appropriate action to defend yourself and your unit.	
a.	You have the right to use deadly force in response to a hostile act or when there is a clear indication of hostile intent.
b.	Hostile fire may be returned effectively and promptly to stop a hostile act.
c.	When US forces are attacked by unarmed hostile elements, mobs and/or rioters, US forces should use the minimum force necessary under the circumstances and proportional to the threat.
d.	Inside designated security zones, once a hostile act or hostile intent is demonstrated, you have the right to use minimum force to prevent armed individuals/crew-served weapons from endangering US/UNOSOM II forces. This includes deadly force.
e.	Detention of civilians is authorized for security reasons or in self-defense.
Remember:	
1.	The United States is not at war.
2.	Treat all persons with dignity and respect.
3.	Use minimum force to carry out mission.
4.	Always be prepared to act in self-defense.

Table 7-1. ROE Used in Operation United Shield

7203. Planning. Commanders and planners thoroughly study each situation to identify the restrictive measures necessary to prevent needless civilian casualties and damage while also protecting the lives of the Marines who will execute the mission.

a. Mission/Command Guidance. The mission statement itself may determine much about the required level of force for a given operation. A humanitarian relief operation may require only individual weapons for security and personal protection. A raid on an insurgent communication center may need more. The requirements for an NEO conducted in a permissive environment would be different from those in a nonpermissive one. The key is to conduct a thorough analysis of the mission and determine the necessary combat power and how it must be applied to accomplish the mission. Many of these missions will be accompanied by a great deal of additional guidance concerning operational restrictions. These restrictions may come from the NCA, State Department, Department of Defense (DoD), or the joint task force (JTF) commander, and other sources. Such guidance must be carefully studied and incorporated into the plan. The commander can impose restrictions on his own forces that are more stringent than those dictated by higher authority. A careful analysis of the ROE will provide key insights into other restraints that the commander may wish to impose on his own forces.

b. Intelligence/Threat. Obtaining detailed and specific intelligence on the target and the area is essential to minimize collateral damage. Information on the physical layout of an area is often as important as information about the enemy. This is especially true for an NEO where avoiding conflict is a primary concern.

c. Location. The geographic area into which operations are to be conducted will normally dictate some restrictions on operations. In an urban environment, where the city is located in a desert, a common restriction is placed on the destruction of water producing facilities. If the operation is conducted where there is a large Hindu population, special protection may be given to cattle. If the operation is on an island nation, restrictions may be placed on destroying port or airfield facilities. In an urban environment with a large amount of shanty towns, restrictions may be placed on the use of incendiary devices.

d. Restrictions on Force Employment. The *right of self-defense is inherent in all military operations*. Marines should not be placed in a situation where they are not provided the means and authority to protect themselves or others. Beyond that, the restrictions placed on the forces conducting a particular operation depend on a variety of factors. These include:

- NCA guidance
- Type of mission
- Nature of the threat
- Political environment
- Host nation attitude.

e. Lethal Fires. Most restrictions in MOOTW are normally concerned with the application of fires. For instance, a NEO in a permissive environment may not require the landing of fire support assets. However, a raid may require supporting arms to be landed with detailed instructions on their use. Aviation in MOOTW is commonly restricted in the amount and type of ordnance it can deliver because of the potential for collateral damage. However, in both a permissive and nonpermissive environment, supporting arms still should be planned. The most common types of fire support assets that will be restricted in the urban environment include artillery mortars, tanks, armored vehicles, and fixed-wing attack aircraft.

f. Search and Clear Buildings. Marine forces organize to search and clear a building under restrictive conditions in the same ways as discussed in Appendix C. However, because noncombatants may be occupying rooms within the building, clearing procedures must be modified as follows:

- (1) Squad organization remains the same and is reinforced as appropriate (see Appendix A), except assault elements become search elements. Search elements enter and search

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rooms in the same manner as assault elements enter and clear rooms, as discussed in Appendix A.

(2) ROE must be identified and known by all personnel before entering or clearing a room or building.

(3) PSYOP or CA teams can help remove noncombatants before a search or battle starts.

(4) The building or area of search should be isolated with security forces and the intent to search the building should be communicated via loudspeakers.

(5) Assault forces move to the building and begin systematically to search room by room and floor by floor. Marines should carry ammunition and other equipment as in normal urban operations. However, Marines will be restricted in the use of their weapons and other equipment as dictated by the ROE. If permitted, a riot control agent (such as CS gas) can be used to assist in the clearing of a building. Additionally, shotguns and stun grenades are more appropriate than rifles and machine guns or fragmentation grenades for this type of restricted, close-combat operation.

g. Communications and Information Systems (CIS).

(1) CIS must be able to satisfy the C2 requirements of MOOTW. CIS systems must provide the commander with the ability to rapidly collect, process, analyze, and exchange information in order to keep the potential for violence to a minimum. These systems must make available the information needed, when it is needed, whenever it is needed. When supporting arms are on standby, fire support coordination and air traffic control nets are particularly critical.

(2) CIS officers (G/S-6) must carefully analyze the mission, situation, threat, and specific characteristics of the urban environment to design reliable, flexible, and responsive CIS. These systems should include single and multichannel radios, tactical telephones, and tactical satellite communications. A detailed backup CIS plan should also be prepared. The success of CIS in MOOTW depends on designing, planning, and employing CIS that satisfies the commander's C2 requirements.