



Training issues in combat SCORPION 2/2

Land Forces Doctrine Review

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Increased autonomy of subordinate levels

Historically, the autonomy conferred was explained by the difficulties and rudimentary nature of the liaisons (alternating command with voice and messengers of the heroic age, dispatchers and motorcyclists of the modern age, then transmissions). The isolated or remote detachment therefore had to have sufficient prerogatives to fulfil the extent of its missions, while at the same time dealing with contingencies. This was particularly true for distant overseas expeditions.

The constant improvement of links and data transmission, coupled with the digitisation of the battle space, could lead to fears of harmful and deadly micro-management for the initiative. However, this is not what the doctrinal experiments conducted in Saumur under the aegis of the SCORPION Combat Laboratory (LCS) have shown. On the contrary, tactical leaders were much more inclined to accept initiatives than they were able to follow their development in real time thanks to Blue Force Tracking.

This increased autonomy will mechanically imply specific training at two levels: for the leaders, who will have to encourage the initiative made possible by shared knowledge of the tactical situation, and for all the managers who will have to be able to integrate a wider range of effects from the level of the group leader, avoiding the pitfall of cognitive overload.

Building on the fundamentals

The two artisans of this acculturation will be the Centre for Doctrine and Teaching of the Command (CDEC), for the teaching part. Command, and the Inter-Army Combat Training and Schools Command (E2CIA COM) for assimilation by land forces. Created in 2018 in Mourmelon, this command now brings together under a single functional authority the training centres and training schools for operational functions. of contact combat. Does

that mean they'll have to reinvent everything? The future battle will certainly be faster and more decentralized, but just as violent and always fought in the midst of peoples. Likewise, it will always take just as long to emboss a vehicle or have an infantry platoon reembark. It is therefore through the tools and methods of command that we will be able to accelerate the decision-making cycle and the tempo.

The warrior spirit of the SCORPION fighter

The two a priori criticisms of the SCORPION system are that it underestimates the importance of esprit de corps by favouring frequent reconfigurations and that it could lead to a fight of "button pushers" unable to fight in degraded conditions. A real pedagogical work is therefore necessary from the training schools, as was the case with the arrival of each generation of NEBs: When the on-board digital terminals were put into service, for example, it was feared that the engine managers would no longer stick their heads out of their turrets. It is precisely for this reason that the mastery of high technology by the land forces is included in the army's "warrior spirit" action plan, alongside warfighting and esprit de corps. Indeed, it is indeed the whole of this triptych that will enable our land forces to outperform their future adversaries.

Assimilated to a logic of effects of an impersonal nature, the frequent reconfiguration of a unit is often opposed, rather artificially, to the knowledge of its brothers in arms. If, fortunately, the human springs will remain at the heart of our combat system, isn't this reproach often levelled at agility eminently dangerous? It amounts to advocating fixed structures, so contrary to all the lessons of recent conflicts, especially in urban areas. Moreover, the arrival of sophisticated equipment over the last few decades has not transformed our soldiers into individualistic, inward-looking geeks.

As noted above, pragmatism, not romanticism, must prevail in the area of adapting modes of operation to the new environment.

of combat, with a permanent question: how to make the most of new technologies?

The esprit de corps

To hear some of the arguments, one wonders whether one should not have spent his last vacation with the mortar room chief or the section chief of the engineering section that supports us to make the system work. This intention, laudable on the surface, is illusory. It would be even more illusory in the context of a high-intensity, coalition-delivered engagement, a scenario that is part of the armies' operational contract and that requires so take into account presuppositions, such as the fact that the neighbouring spindle may be occupied by an allied unit. Viewed in too simplistic or systematic a manner, personal knowledge can therefore become a dependency, or even a vulnerability. In order to win, one will therefore (sometimes) need know-how without it: this is what is at stake in the normative process underlying the doctrine.

Of course, esprit de corps will remain a multiplier of efficiency and one of the most powerful springs of combat: it is the spirit that leads one to surpass oneself for one's brothers in arms, one's "band of brothers". Similarly, the subscription of units for mutual knowledge such as the Liaison detachments, observation and artillery coordination observation with melee regiments will need to be continued, in order to maximize the effectiveness of our inter-service combinations. It must be remembered that deficiencies

in this area were a major cause of Israeli tactical failures during the 2006 War.³³ As such, the resumption of the inter-weapons operational readiness (POIA) will be a real opportunity, by allowing all units to train together again.

We find this aspect in the problems of interoperability, with the term "human interoperability", which explains, in addition to the links of This explains, in addition to the bonds of friendship and trust with the allied countries, the presence within the classes of the École de Guerre-Terre of officers from countries that are alongside the countries with which our forces are fighting (belonging in particular to the "G5 Sahel").

Technology at the service of tactics

While the very heart of the "tactical link" will not change, it will be expressed through different media, first and foremost the SICS mentioned above. More intuitive, simpler, in short more adapted to the requirements of modern combat, it is this link that will enable our units to better apprehend the tactical situation. This software has also been able to benefit from Feedback from the first NEB. In fact, this is what prevailed in the overall process, with an exploratory doctrinal reflection that preceded the arrival of the materials. The SICS will be implemented from 2019 onwards within the SCORPION Combat Expertise Force (FECS). Based in Mailly, this new structure will be in charge of running the LCS and training the first SCORPION units from summer 2019 onwards: initially, it will logically focus on the technical aspects. Little by little, tactical aspects as described above and those to be redeveloped, such as disappointment, will take centre stage. However, they will have to be declined, so as not to remain in the incantatory.

In the key area of leadership education, a number of practices have proven their worth and should be continued: historical field studies³⁴The aim of the course is to learn the basics, frame fighting, double-action exercises, etc. In the future, however, they will have to be supplemented by the possibilities offered by simulation. The forces would also benefit from the use of tools such as war games, whose potential is quite high. unknown or underestimated, apart from the wargaming of modes of action. They allow to confront a tactical situation and a non-mechanical opponent's intelligence at low cost. For the staffs indeed, tactical decision exercises are indeed operational preparation, just as much as a shot for a grenadier-voltigeur.

More generally, this must be part of the general tactics training effort initiated as part of higher military education. To put it trivially: before seizing opportunities, one must be able to identify them. We find here the notion of *vista*, which allows one to be able to answer the "what is it all about?" and the sense of initiative, which enables one to act or react accordingly. These two classic attributes of the leader in French military thought will find an unprecedented means of expression thanks to SCORPION.

Conclusion

The period ahead for the Army promises to be a hectic one for the tactical leaders we will be, with the rise in power of our land forces on the one hand and the SCORPION transformation on the other. The SCORPION transformation will be able to build on the current dynamics of Reinvestment of tactical know-how: creation of the first level joint qualification, densification of tactical training at the staff school, creation of the Land Warfare School with the passage to one year of the specific Land school for future

graduates or the resumption of the POIA. This prerequisite will enable the best possible use to be made of the opportunities offered by the new generation of integrated equipment. within SICS, not in a Promethean logic of technological prowess but of decisive kinetic effects.

By relying on a well-identified set of fundamentals, this tactical renewal will then be a true expression of our military culture, commensurate with our ambitions as Europe's leading army.

33 On this subject, see in particular the work of General PELLEGRINI, *Un été de feu au Liban*, Paris, Economica, 2010, 171 p.

34 Led by a military historian, Lieutenant-Colonel Christophe GUE, the "Pretelat" exercise on the German breakthrough at Sedan in 1940 is a model of its kind, placed in the middle of a series of exercises that were carried out by the French army.

the EDG-Terre trainees faced with concrete tactical dilemmas and tested their decision-making capacity in a time of constraint.

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