

Section Formations

A section must be able to function at maximum efficiency in accordance with the section commander's orders at all times. This is more difficult when on the move, particularly when in contact with the enemy.

Movement

A section must always move so that the section commander can control instantly by word of mouth or signal, and the members of the section must be able to react to his orders instantly. This will not be possible if the members move as individuals having no regard for other members of the section. There are, therefore, two basic formations in which a section can move during an advance to contact. In addition a section may use three formations during patrol movement. The formation will depend upon:

- a. The type of ground you are moving across.
- b. How far you can see.
- c. The likely direction from which the enemy may fire on you.
- d. How your section can best control the section.
- e. The need for the section to produce maximum fire with minimum delay.

Section Formations

Section formations are used to meet the above factors and are mostly and are mostly decided upon by the section commander, will change the formations as the section moves over different types of ground during its advance.

Single File: Spacing – 5 – 7 metre intervals between cadets except for scouts. (scouts are walking ahead checking the route in front of the section).

Advantages

- a. Good for moving along hedges or ditches or along the edge of woods which give cover.
- b. Good control for the section commander especially at night.

Disadvantages

- a. Bad formation to produce fire to the front.
- b. Vulnerable from frontal fire, especially down a ditch or sunken road/stream.
- c. Bad for observation to the flanks as cadets tend to allow their eyes to rest on the person on front of them.
- d. Passage of commands and information is slow.

File/ Staggered file: Spacing – 6 – 8 metre intervals between cadets except for scouts.

File may be used when a path or track is wide enough to permit alternate men to move on opposite sides of the track, or either side of a small bank or hedgerow.

Advantages

- a. A good formation for control and night movement.
- b. Can be used going down a track or either side of a hedge.

Disadvantages

- a. Not good for observation or passing information to members of the section.

- b. Makes a good target for the enemy, bad protection to the front and back.
- c. It makes a good target for the enemy, bad protection for front and back.

Arrowhead: Spacing – 5 – 7 metre intervals between cadets.

Arrow head is probably the best for moving on a broad front in open country. If only one LSW, it is positioned on the flank most likely to be attacked.

Advantages

- a. Best for moving across open country, produces effective fire against frontal attack.
- b. Easy to control, has good all round observation and protection, each person can see the next, the section commander can be in the front or the middle.

Disadvantages

- a. Bad for exposing good target to enemy fire.

Diamond: Spacing – 5 – 7 metre intervals between cadets less if dark.

This formation is only used when crossing open country at night. It is an easy formation to control and gives good all round observation and protection. Each man in the diamond must be able to see the next man. The commander may be either at the front or in the middle.

Advantages

- a. Easy to control, has all round observation and protection, each person can see the next and section commander can be in the front or the middle.

Disadvantage

- a. Is a vulnerable target after dark when illuminated.

Extended line: Spacing – 4 -6 metre intervals between cadets.

Formation used for the “final assault” it is difficult to control and needs good field “discipline” by members of the section to watch and listen.

REMEMBER

When moving in a section formation:-

- 1. Watch your section commander for hand signals.**
- 2. Keep in contact with members of the section on each side of you – but not to close.**
- 3. Keep quiet and listen for commands and anticipatory orders.**
- 4. Keep in correct position for formation.**
- 5. Be observant.**
- 6. Be ready to change to a new section formation. .**

End of lesson