

Another Day Afloat

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Situation

You are the commander of a Marine expeditionary unit (special operations capable) (MEU(SOC)) sitting 25 miles off the coast of the country Exbeyond.

Exbeyond is a mountainous country recently liberated by coalition forces with an interim government friendly to the United States. The countryside, however, is still sympathetic to the terrorist forces that were recently driven from power. The country is war torn and in need of humanitarian assistance and military support while it rebuilds its infrastructure.

It is now 1900. There are currently two missions that the MEU is conducting. The first is a humanitarian assistance operation. A platoon-sized element (1st Platoon) is providing medical, dental, and food services to the port of Jassim, the second largest city in the country. Jassim is located 70 nautical miles southwest of the amphibious ready group's position. They are supplied daily after nightfall.

The second mission is a close air support (CAS) mission being conducted by three of the MEU's four AV-8s. The fourth AV-8 is down for maintenance. The CAS is in support of an Exbeyond battalion engaging a terrorist base camp 200 miles to the southeast.

At 1930 collection assets detect a terrorist base camp consisting of 30 to 40 men, 75 miles due south of the MEU. Intelligence indicates that Abdul bin Wazaid is present. Wazaid is the operations chief for the entire terrorist organization in Exbeyond and is responsible for a number of attacks on U.S. forces. Intelligence also indicates that Wazaid will be moving at 0300 to another loca-

tion. This is the first time that Wazaid has been positively identified, and it will likely be some time before he is located again.

You give the warning order for a heliborne raid to be conducted no later than 0200. Your plan is to use four CH-53Es for the raid and four AH-1s for CAS.

At 2037 1st Platoon reports that a large crowd of Exbeyondians has gathered requesting health care and food. The majority of these Exbeyondians appear to be refugees from the local countryside. The platoon is out of medical and dental supplies and requests resupply in order to continue providing services to the Exbeyondians. The crowd is currently peaceful, but it is becoming increasingly hostile as the platoon is forced to turn them away.

At 2105 one of the returning AV-8s is shot down by a man-

Assets Available	
3	AV-8s
4	CH-53Es
12	CH-46s
4	AH-1s
2	UH-1s

portable air defense missile. The remaining two AV-8s are returning after locating the crash site. Both AV-8s have taken damage from anti-aircraft artillery fire while conducting the CAS. The pilot has established contact with friendly forces and is moving to an evasion and recovery site. The S-2 (intelligence) informs you that the terrorist forces are aware of the pilot's position and will close in on it by 0200.

The MEU is the only friendly unit in the area capable of conducting these missions. Joint and theater assets are hundreds of miles to the south supporting a coalition of-

fensive near the southern border. The CH-53E is the only asset that can recover the downed pilot.

You have a hostile crowd, a downed pilot, and one shot at catching one of the world's most wanted terrorists. What do you do, Colonel?

Requirement

In a time limit of 3 minutes issue your orders to your platoon commanders. Provide a fragmentary order, overlay of your scheme of maneuver, and the rationale for your actions. Submit your solution to *Marine Corps Gazette*, TDG #03-1, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, fax 703-630-9147, or e-mail <gazette@mca-marines.org>.

