

(UNCLASSIFIED)

PATROL BASE OPERATIONS - TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Exercise Name: PB THUNDER Overnight Occupation **Location:** MP 058 152, AO COTTO (Camp Blanding)
Execution: Single overnight occupation with leadership-centric feedback **Candidate Population:** 26 intermediate status OCS candidates **Cadre Requirement:** 2-3 personnel (minimal staffing model)

TRAINING OVERVIEW

This guide operationalizes OPORD #008 (Patrol Base Operations) as a **realistic overnight leadership exercise** that surfaces decision-making under stress—darkness, fatigue, sustained operations—while evaluating candidates against **intermediate status standards** (competent execution, independent judgment, decreasing supervision, ownership).

Candidates have completed WARNO-based TLP planning. This exercise focuses on **execution and leadership management** of the occupation.

ORGANIZATION & ROLE ASSIGNMENTS

Platoon Structure (26 Candidates):

- 1 Platoon Leader
- 1 Platoon Sergeant
- 3 Squad Leaders (one per squad)
- ~7-8 Squad Members per squad (18-21 total squad members)

Role Selection Approach:

- PL/PSG: Select based on second-look evaluation status or rotate if multiple candidates need experience
 - SLs: Assign 3 candidates who are ready for mid-level leadership assessment
 - Squad Members: Remaining candidates fill squad positions; serve as active participants and observers of leadership
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EXECUTION TIMELINE

Pre-Exercise Day (Before Movement)

- Brief all 26 candidates on MP 058 152 location and occupancy deadline (NLT 2200)
- Clarify role assignments and intermediate status evaluation context
- Confirm OPORD understanding: occupation technique choice, sector assignments, security priorities
- Review patrol base sustainment expectations (water, meals, rest plan, stand-to procedures)
- Brief cadre on observation focus: leadership independence, ownership, supervision quality

Movement & Occupation (Daylight to Darkness)

- Candidates move to MP 058 152
- Transition to darkness during movement to occupation
- **Occupation complete NLT 2200:** Platoon occupies PB THUNDER using triangle or cigar technique

- Squads occupy assigned sectors (north, southeast, southwest per OPORD)
- Security established: fighting positions, LP/OPs, comms with higher

Overnight Operations

- **EENT Stand-To** (30 min before Evening Nautical Twilight): 100% alert, all personnel in fighting positions
- **Sustainment Phase:** Squad leaders manage rest rotation, water resupply, security patrols, CCIR monitoring
- **Night Management:** PSG supervises priorities of work; SLs manage sectors independently; PL maintains overall command
- **Cadre Observation:** Roving observers note leadership decisions, initiative, deference patterns, problem anticipation vs. reaction

Early Morning Operations

- **BMNT Stand-To** (30 min before Beginning Morning Nautical Twilight): 100% alert, all personnel in fighting positions
- **PL/PSG Assessment:** Platoon leadership assesses security posture before stand-down order
- **Stand-Down:** Only after PL or PSG conducts assessment and issues order

AAR & Debrief (Post-Stand-Down)

- 45-60 minute leadership-focused AAR
- Feedback directly tied to intermediate status standards and second-look evaluation context
- Return to primary location

CADRE OBSERVATION FRAMEWORK (MINIMAL STAFFING)

Senior Cadre (1 person) - Platoon Leadership Focus

- Position at PL CP during occupation and overnight
- Observes: PL occupation decisions, PSG management of priorities, communication clarity to squad leaders
- Records: Independence of decision-making, who is directing vs. reacting, PSG active vs. passive supervision, PL situational awareness
- **Key observation moments:** Occupation start, first CCIR report, overnight sustainment decisions, stand-to procedures

Roving Cadre (1-2 people) - Squad Leader Focus

- Rotate through squad sectors during occupation and overnight
- Observes: Individual SL sector management, proactive vs. reactive leadership, communication with squad
- Records: SL positioning to observe sector, position checks vs. passive monitoring, proactive problem identification, deferral patterns to PSG
- **Key observation moments:** Squad occupation completion, mid-night security checks, stand-to procedures

Cadre Posture: Silent observation except for safety. Collect specific examples for AAR feedback.

Intervention Threshold: Medical emergency, loss of unit control, darkness safety hazards only. Do not intervene in leadership decisions or problem-solving.

AAR & LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

AAR Structure (45-60 minutes)

1. What Happened (10 min)

- PL summarizes occupation decisions and overnight management
- PSG describes squad leader supervision approach and priorities management
- Squad leaders briefly summarize sector management

2. What Was Supposed to Happen (5 min)

- Reference OPORD intent: secure patrol base, maintain security, enable sustainment
- Establish standard: **Intermediate Status** = competent execution with decreasing supervision, independent judgment, proactive ownership

3. What We Learned (20-30 min) — LEADERSHIP-CENTRIC

PL Feedback:

- Did you make independent decisions about security, or seek approval?
- Did you anticipate problems or react to them after they emerged?
- How did you ensure squad leaders understood your intent without hand-holding?
- *Frame:* Command presence, judgment quality, decreasing supervision expectations

PSG Feedback:

- How actively did you supervise vs. direct? Did you check on initiatives or just give orders?
- Did you hold SLs accountable for sector results or compliance with instructions?
- At what point would you have relieved an SL from leadership?
- *Frame:* Supervision quality, holding subordinates accountable, immediate relief decision-making

SL Feedback:

- How often did you defer to the PSG before acting on a problem?
- What problems did you identify and fix independently?
- How did you communicate to your squad without PSG present?
- What didn't you think to check on?
- *Frame:* Ownership, initiative, independent judgment, anticipation

Connection to Second-Look Evaluation:

- Explicitly frame feedback: *"At intermediate status, this shows [competence/judgment/ownership issue]"*
- Reference blue card language: *"This demonstrates the independent decision-making we expect from a Second Lieutenant"* or *"This reflects [unacceptable attitude/motivation/judgment issue]"*
- Tie to relief criteria: *"Not Satisfactory performance in this area would result in recommendation for relief from OCS"*

4. What Now (5-10 min)

- Individual feedback to PL, PSG, SLs on specific leadership behaviors for next exercise
- Candidate self-assessment: What went well? What would you do differently?

PRE-EXERCISE CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Candidates Should Know:

1. **Patrol Base Occupation Techniques:** Triangle vs. cigar-shaped formations, sector advantages/disadvantages, terrain application
 2. **CCIR and Reporting:** What to report, when to report, format (SALUTE, SITREP, LACE per OPORD)
 3. **Stand-To Procedures:** Timing (30 min before BMNT/EENT), 100% alert requirements, stand-down criteria
 4. **Squad Leader Responsibilities:** Sector management, position checks, communication to squad, problem identification
 5. **Intermediate Status Context:** They are being evaluated on leadership judgment and ownership, not just task compliance. Mistakes at this level indicate judgment/attitude issues, not knowledge gaps. Phase I is complete.
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LOGISTICS & SUPPORT

Equipment/Resources:

- Radios (PACE plan per OPORD Section 5.c)
- Water resupply (candidates responsible; establish water point security per sustainment section)
- Medical support (aid bag at PL CP, MEDEVAC procedures per OPORD Section 4.b)
- Lighting: Candidates use available light discipline per patrol base security requirements
- Reporting channels: Established per OPORD; candidates report to higher per reporting schedule

Cadre Requirements:

- 2-3 personnel for observation and safety oversight
- Communication (radios or runners)
- Transportation to MP 058 152 area

Safety Oversight:

- Roving cadre monitor for darkness hazards (falls, disorientation, friendly fire risk)
 - Medical readiness (aid bag accessibility, MEDEVAC knowledge)
 - No dedicated safety observer; integration into cadre observation role
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REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- **OPORD #008:** Patrol Base Operations (full operational order)
 - Mission statement, task organization, situation, execution, sustainment, command & signal
 - Rules of engagement, CCIR, reporting requirements, stand-to procedures
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KEY EVALUATION LANGUAGE (INTERMEDIATE STATUS)

Leadership Competence at Intermediate Status:

- Evaluation measures performance against **Second Lieutenant standard**, not peer comparison
- Candidates are expected to demonstrate leader competence through **sound judgment with decreasing supervision**
- **Mistakes now indicate judgment or attitude issues**, not knowledge gaps (Phase I is complete)
- **Unacceptable attitude or motivation is grounds for immediate relief**
- **Not Satisfactory LER results in recommendation for relief from OCS**

Ownership-Based Leadership:

- Independent problem identification and correction
- Direct accountability without deferring to higher unless clearly necessary
- Proactive communication of status and issues
- Immediate execution of feedback with measurable improvement

Supervision Standards:

- Leaders held accountable for **results of subordinates, not intentions**
- Squad leader supervision means demanding competent execution, not providing support
- Platoon sergeants must be prepared to assume command immediately without hesitation

NOTES FOR CADRE CONDUCTING THIS EXERCISE

1. **Frame the context:** Candidates understand this is a leadership assessment exercise tied to their larger evaluation. Expectations are high; mistakes reflect judgment/attitude, not knowledge gaps.
2. **Observe silently unless safety:** Resist the urge to coach or correct during execution. Let leadership decisions emerge naturally. Document them for AAR feedback.
3. **Specific examples matter:** Generic feedback ("good leadership") is useless. Record specific moments: "At 2245, the SL did X, which showed ownership" or "At 0300, the PSG did Y, which shows passive supervision."
4. **Connect to evaluation standards:** Every piece of feedback should reference intermediate status language or second-look evaluation criteria. Candidates must understand how their performance maps to promotion/relief decisions.
5. **Use the OPORD as the objective standard:** All feedback references the OPORD mission and execution plan. Did leaders accomplish the mission? How well did they command during execution?
6. **AAR is the learning moment:** The overnight exercise is data collection. The AAR is where you transform observations into learning tied to evaluation standards.

End of Training Implementation Guide

ACKNOWLEDGE:

MATTHEW WAGNER
CPT, FA
FLORIDA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

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