Simple Target Designation

Leaders point out key locations to orient their units and establish control measures – a TRP, the left and right limits of a sector, a PDF or FPL, the limits of an EA, the location of an OP, or a destination for movement. These ‘targets’ are terrain features, not enemy positions. Sometimes called a ‘talk-on’ – since the leader talks the shooter on to the target.

Leaders direct fire by pointing out actual or suspected enemy positions. Designating targets precedes fire commands. For enemy targets, a mark is quicker and better than a talk-on. But often a laser pointer, tracer round, or smoke round cannot be used. Even if a mark is fired, a talk-on may still be needed for adjustments.

Simple Target Designation

Used when the leader and the shooter are co-located, looking at the same ground, pointing at objects, and talking directly to each other.

General Talk-On Procedure

1. Choose a large landmark that you both can see. Estimate the range. This is your first anchor point.

   L: “From the farmhouse [anchor] at nine-hundred meters [range], come left [direction] three fingers [distance] along the ridge to two small buildings [anchor]. Seen?”

   S: “Seen.” [Confirmation.]

2. Direct the shooter’s vision from one anchor to another, moving from large to small, until you reach the target.

   L: “Come down [direction] one finger [distance] to a bare patch of wet ground [anchor]. Seen?”

   S: “Seen.” [Confirmation.]

3. Have the shooter confirm the target.

   L: “That is the left limit of your sector. The farmhouse is TRP two-one, your right limit. Brief-back.”

   S: “The bare patch is our left limit at one-three-five degrees magnetic, and TRP two-one is our right limit at one-five-five degrees magnetic.” [Brief-back confirmation with azimuths.]

Alternate Simple Techniques to use when the leader and shooter are co-located:

- Anchors can be control measures, especially TRPs or building numbers.
- Direction can be indicated using the clock method – superimposing a vertical clock face on a distinctive elevated landmark on the horizon.
- Distance can be estimated in meters.
- Confirmation. The shooter can confirm each anchor with a brief-back, describing what he sees in different words.
Simple Distances

- Use fingers. With hand extended at arm’s length, measure the number of fingers, fist, or hand’s width.

Simple Confirmation

- Confirm each anchor by asking, “Seen?” The shooter responds, “Seen” or “Not Seen.”

  L: “TRP two-one is the farm house [anchor]. Seen?”
  S: “Seen. The square stone building with the red roof.”
  [Brief-back confirmation of anchor.]

  L: “Go about three-hundred-fifty meters [distance] at three o’clock [clock direction] to a pair of pine trees [anchor]. Seen?”
  S: “Seen. Two pine trees blocking the cut in the hills beyond.”
  [Brief-back confirmation of anchor.]

  L: “The base of those trees is your machinegun FPL. Brief-back.”
  S: “The dip in the hill blocked by the double trees is machinegun FPL at one-nine-zero degrees magnetic.” [Brief-back confirmation with azimuth.]
Advanced Target Designation

Leaders establish control measures or direct fire against enemy targets by radio. Distant support weapons – TOWs, heavy machineguns, mortars, tanks, amphibious vehicles, LAVs, and rotary wing and fixed wing aircraft – need an accurate, well-communicated talk-on to find and confirm their targets.

Advanced Target Designation

Used when the leader and shooter are NOT side-by-side, and a talk-on is done by radio.

Do NOT use right, left, up or down, or the clock method for direction.

Do NOT estimate the range for distant weapons. Do NOT use fingers for distance.

Do NOT use control measures for anchors – TRPs or building numbers – that are not understood by supporting weapons.

General Talk-On Procedure

1. Choose a large landmark that you both can see. This is your first anchor point.

2. Direct the shooter's vision from one anchor to another, moving from large to small, until you reach the target.

3. Have the shooter confirm the target.

4. If the shooter gets confused, STOP. Go back and re-establish the last good anchor and continue from there.

Advanced Anchors

- Use a map for a larger perspective. Select distinctive landmarks that appear on both the map and the ground.

- Your position – marked with smoke, laser, or signal mirror – can be your initial anchor.

- A mark – laser, tracer, burst, or smoke – can be your initial anchor.

Advanced Target Designation Example

(L) is Leader, (S) is Shooter

L: “The river runs East – West. Highway Four crosses the river on a steel girder bridge [anchor]. Say Contact.”
S: “Contact.” [JCAS confirmation of anchor.]

L: “From the steel bridge [anchor], follow the river West [direction] about two-thousand meters [distance] to a secondary stone bridge [anchor].”
S: “I contact the stone bridge.” [JCAS confirmation of anchor.]

L: “From the stone bridge [anchor], follow the dirt road North-North-West [direction] about three-hundred meters [distance] to the village town hall, a large sand-colored building [anchor].”
S: “I contact the building.” [JCAS confirmation of anchor.]

L: “Your target is a vehicle parked at the East end of that building in the courtyard.”
S: “I tally a black truck in the yard.” [JCAS confirmation of target.]

Alternate Advanced Techniques to use for radio talk-ons between distant units.

Direction can be indicated using an azimuth.

Distance can be indicated by establishing a unique unit of measure such as the distance between two objects or the height or length of a distinctive landmark.
• When moving from anchor to anchor, describe terrain that is easily seen at a distance – color changes in terrain, large bodies of water, and distinctive man-made landmarks. Try to envision the terrain as the shooter sees it.

**Advanced Direction**

• Use North, South, East, and West.

**Advanced Distance**

• Use meters. Convert mils – from binoculars, optics, or finger estimation – to meters.

**Advanced Confirmation**

• Use JCAS terminology to confirm exactly each type of landmark. Standard targeting terms should be used by both ground and air units.

  (1) If the shooter sees an anchor, he says “Contact.” If not, he says, “No Joy.”

  (2) If the shooter sees the target, he says, “Tally.” If not, he says, “No Joy.”

  (3) If the shooter sees the leader’s friendly position, he says, “Visual.” If not, he says “Blind.”

• Confirm anchors by asking “Say Contact.”

• Confirm target with a brief-back.

**Confirmation.** Ask the shooter, “What do you see?” or request specific information about the anchor or target to confirm: “How many do you see?” This is sometimes called a reverse talk-on.

L: “How many vehicles do you see?”
S: “On the South side of the church is a line of trees along the road. I count six vehicles lined up alongside the trees.”

**Alternate Advanced Target Designation Example**

L: “Can you see my position?”
S: “I have a visual.” [JCAS confirmation of friendly position.]

L: “South of my pos is a narrow lake [anchor]. What do you see?”
S: “I contact a long North-South lake with a dam at the Southern tip.” [JCAS confirmation of anchor.]

L: “Use the length of the lake as one unit-of-measure. From the dam, go two units-of-measure [distance] West-North-West at one-nine-five degrees magnetic [direction] to a series of long, low factory buildings [anchor].”
S: “Wait one. I contact four long grey buildings.” [JCAS confirmation of anchor.]

L: “Counting from the South, locate the third building [anchor]. How many roof-top air conditioning units do you see?”
S: “Standby. I count three systems on the roof.” [Confirmation.]

L: “The middle unit is your target – RPG gunners and a machinegun on the roof.”
S: “Tally. Targets on roof of third building behind middle air conditioning unit.”

---

**JCAS Terminology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do You See</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchor (or Mark)?</td>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>NO JOY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target?</td>
<td>TALLY</td>
<td>NO JOY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Position?</td>
<td>VISUAL</td>
<td>BLIND</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Major B.B. McBreen, SAW, 2002