

# MECHANIZED INFANTRY

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**Amphibious vehicles are fighting vehicles.** In addition to *mobility* and *protection*, AAVs give the infantry an increased capability to *fight*.

## The Mechanized Attack

*It's all about suppression.* The strength of mechanized infantry is its significant organic firepower. The mechanized infantry attack places a small dismounted assault element against a vulnerable penetration point, supported by the overwhelming firepower of a *vehicle-mounted* support element.

The support element suppresses the enemy while the assault element closes to assault. The only difference between this attack and the standard infantry attack is the firepower, protection, and mobility of the support element.

The vehicles are the support weapon for the squads—a mobile base of fire with heavy weapons and plenty of ammunition.

## Weapons Vehicles

Heavy weapons mounted on HMMWVs or other vehicles serve the same purpose. They are mobile bases of fire. Unlike armored vehicles however, HMMWVs have no protection and add no mobility to the infantry units they support.

## The Mechanized Defense

The mechanized infantry defense can be organized three ways.

- **Dismounted and co-located.** The preferred method is to have the armored vehicles and infantry co-located in the same battle position. This is ideal for control, ability to move rapidly, mutual support, and ability to counterattack.
- **Mounted and co-located.** Keeping the infantry inside the vehicles should only be done for a hasty defense. The unit is ready to move, but observation and security are reduced.
- **Separated.** Vehicles and infantry in separate battle positions can interlock their fire on a single avenue of approach or cover two avenues of approach. The separate positions should still provide each other with mutual support. Command and control is more difficult, and follow-on operations require time to link-up and load the vehicles.

## Internal Friction

Commanders of infantry units and commanders of amphibious vehicles need to understand each other's strengths and weaknesses, weapons capabilities, vulnerabilities, and preferred tactics. Amphibious vehicles cannot survive against AT missiles, tank fire, or heavy enemy armored vehicle fire.

*Fighting* as an integrated combined-arms team requires much more training, coordination, and preparation than simply *moving* together.

## Tanks and Mechanized Infantry

When supporting tanks, mechanized infantry units protect the tanks, clearing complex terrain to allow them to move through or defending them against foot-mobile enemy in close terrain.

When tanks support the infantry, the tanks contribute to the base of fire, providing significant firepower against hardened defensive positions and buildings. Although necessary in some situations, using tanks to support infantry is usually an underutilization of their capabilities.