

ECC at the International School

by Capt Sean P. Smith

Situation

You are assigned to the Marine expeditionary unit (MEU) service support group (MSSG) evacuation control center (ECC) team as one of the section noncommissioned officers in charge (NCOICs). The ECC team has been activated to assist in the orderly and systematic evacuation of U.S. citizens and other individuals friendly to the United States identified by the Department of State (DoS). The MSSG ECC team has been inserted into the International School compound in the city of Noroba, Kurkleshstan in order to conduct ECC operations. Once they are processed they will be flown via helicopter to an airfield for evacuation out of Kurkleshstan.

The DoS estimates that there will be approximately 2,000 people who will need to be evacuated. The International School is located on the edge of the city in an enclosed compound that is roughly the same size as a football field. The compound walls are constructed of reinforced steel bars and concrete 12-feet high and 2-feet thick. You have visibility outside the compound through the steel bars in the wall. There are small outposts in the northwest and southwest corners of the compound. The eastern side of the compound consists of a two-story building (the school itself) that can accommodate one CH-46-sized helicopter at a time on the roof. There is one main gate for the compound located in the north wall. The terrain around the compound consists of dirt roads, mild scrub vegetation, and small, one-story shacks and huts.

The ECC team was inserted via helicopter from the MEU amphibious ready group into the compound at 0500 in order to start processing at 0630. A section of

the artillery battery is providing security at the compound. They have one fire team in each corner of the compound situated in the outposts and on the corners of the building rooftop. The remainder of the battery section is augmenting the ECC security and escort teams.

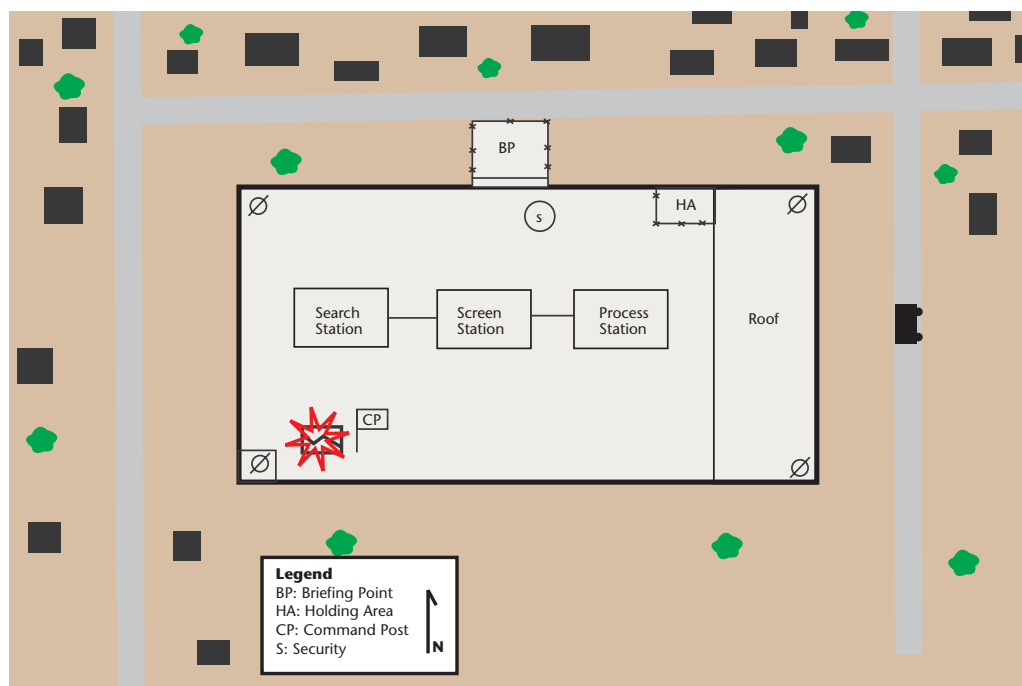
The briefing point is located at the entrance to the compound. The ECC team has set up its security, search, and screening/processing stations in the compound. Staging/embark is located on the second floor of the building. There is a MEU interrogation area located on the first floor of the building. The medical station is also located on the first floor of the building in a separate room. There is a temporary holding area surrounded by barbed wire in the northeast corner of the compound with four people detained in it.

The light armored vehicle platoon is currently in the city center approximately 5 miles away providing security on the main supply route in the vicinity of the U.S. Embassy and is available for backup if needed.

Processing began at 0630 and hasn't slowed down in the last several hours. Only a small number of individuals were American citizens. They were the first ones evacuated from the compound. The remainder of the evacuees are mostly native Kurkleshstani's and foreign nationals who were told they would be evacuated out of the country by the DoS. Most of them are legitimate; however, several have appeared on the black lists, and the MEU interrogator-translator team has determined that at least four have ties to the Taliban and Osama bin Laden.

As you look out of the compound, you estimate that there must be at least several hundred people with baggage congregated outside the briefing point wire waiting to be processed. Mixed in with them, and spread outside the compound walls, are hundreds of locals. The crowds are loud, carrying anti-American signs and banners. You begin to hear Muslim chants coming out of a microphone from the crowd north of the compound. You

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then hear sporadic gunshots off in the distance, and one of the fire teams on the roof reports that an old van drove slowly around the outside of the Embassy and moved out of sight.

Just then an explosion rocks the communications site, killing the ECC site commander and severely wounding the assistant commander and the battery staff NCOIC. The only working communications you have are with the stations and outposts via saber radio. The rooftop outposts report that there are possibly one or more snipers in the adjacent crowd starting to take shots at the compound. Last word was that another helo would not be on the deck for at least another 30 minutes. The crowd is becoming more violent, and more rifle fire is heard. Right now you have 15 evacuees in the com-

pound, and some appear wounded. You realize that you are the senior Marine on the scene.

The security force has M9 pistols, M16s, and squad automatic weapons. They also have two M240G machine-guns on the northeast and southeast corners of the rooftop, a limited amount of pepper spray and tear gas (CS) hand grenades/M203 grenade launcher rounds, and four red star clusters. ECC personnel have standard small arms security rounds. The security team has pepper spray, CS grenades, and two red star clusters. Standing MEU rules of engagement include the following provisions: deadly force is authorized if directly fired upon from a known target, and all weapons systems will be in Condition One.

What do you do now, Sergeant ?

Requirement

In a time of 2 minutes, write down your plan on how to handle the situation. Keep in mind all factors involved with the scenario. Be prepared to brief your plan and scheme of maneuver. Submit your solution to *Marine Corps Gazette*, TDG #02-7, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, fax 703-630-9147, or e-mail <gazette@mca-marines.org>.

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