

ACC

10000/120/4764

F

10000/120/4764

"F" BLU / A 1

DIRECTIVES

MAR. 6, 1945 - MAY 25, 1945

6186
6198

FILE X

SUBJECT :- RA Notes.'G' Training Unit to the Italian Army
C. M. P.

Ref HU/A.2/403

25 May 45.

10 Training Team RA.

The attached report on RA Notes has been received from 51 HU on their recent operations, and will no doubt be useful to you.

RMV/rav

WMM
RMJ
GS

6198

1280000000
AP2
Subject :- R A Notes

51 British Liaison Unit

RA/G 6

- 1 Following appear to be the weakest points.
- 2 The employment of the arty in mobile ops has not been fully considered.
The use of Tac HQ is not understood.
The grouping of say two batteries in support of one regiment was not done.
The tendency is for the artillery to act as four independent batteries, thus sacrificing the concentrated fire possible with wireless and with the range of the 25 pdr.
- 3 Reps at rectl and bn HQ did not appear to be sufficiently in the inf comd's pocket.
- 4 Deployment is slow. The necessity for getting recon parties forward early is NOT fully understood, nor I think the composition of recon parties.
- 5 Officers' wireless is poor.
- 6 Points such as the above are numerous and are to be expected with the amount of training the arty regt has had and with the outlook, age and experience of the senior officers.
- 7 Maintenance is poor ; officers do NOT supervise Nos 1 and fitters and see that they know what is required and do it.
- 8 It is considered that the standard of the arty can be raised. But only by getting rid of the older officers and bringing forward the keen and thinking officers who do exist.

- 4 Deployment is slow. The necessity for getting recon parties forward early is NOT fully understood, nor I think the composition of recon parties.
- 5 Officers' wireless is poor.
- 6 Points such as the above are numerous and are to be expected with the amount of training the arty regt has had and with the outlook, age and experience of the senior officers.
- 7 Maintenance is poor; officers do NOT supervise Nos 1 and fitters and see that they know what is required and do it.
- 8 It is considered that the standard of the arty can be raised. But only by getting rid of the older officers and bringing forward the keen and thinking officers who do exist.

Field
16 May 45
IA/RCT

6197
Major
II RA

CONFIDENTIAL.Notes on Operations covering the Four Months
the Cremona Gruppo were in the Line.

The Gruppo always carried out successfully the Intention of the Higher Formation. They inflicted quite heavy casualties on the Enemy and captured many prisoners, while their own casualties were light. The following points are on a Company and Platoon level, and are the most important, and are general right through the Gruppo.

It must be realized that it would be impossible to list the many points which have arisen, that in many ways the Gruppo have been very fortunate that they have never run into any serious opposition nor have they ever been counter attacked soon after the crossing of an obstacle, which if it had happened would have been disastrous.

Discipline. This is of a very low standard. It has deteriorated a lot recently owing to being in close contact to the Partisans. The O.Rs have very little regard or respect for Junior Officers and N.C.Os, who consequently have no control over them. Saluting, Dress and turn-out is ^{bad} and certainly will not improve until the standard and example of Junior Leaders and N.C.Os improve. It is suggested that Junior Officers Battle School within Gruppi should be started, and if possible Sgts Messes would be a great asset.

Fire Control. This has been brought out time and time again during training, but it still seems not to exist; Men fire their weapons when and how they like, and consequently have frequently run out of ammunition. Fire Orders must be enforced during training.

Care of Arms. However much this has been brought home to them, it is still frightful. On Armourers inspections it has been necessary to clean each rifle and weapons before it could be inspected, it improves for a short period after everyone has got excited and annoyed, and shortly afterwards is back at the same low level.

Junior Leading. Platoon Commanders Orders are really a ~~g~~ Committee meeting, much time being wasted by discussion and argument. Procedure of giving Orders must be taught, and of course this will not improve until the standard of Officer is improved.

Consolidation: There is much too much swanning about on an Objective, they been instructed in the importance during training of this, but it falls down owing again to the lack of control of the Officers and N.C.Os;

Field Craft.

It was noticed how road-bound Platoons and Companies were during a fluid battle. On many occasions they could have taken an objective and suffered less casualties if they had made use of ground and country.

Patrolling.

This on occasions was good, but it was also found that information on many occasions could not be relied on. They must be taught not to exaggerate.

Use of Platoon

This improved towards the latter stages, but at the beginning they were far too fond of calling for the fire of supporting arms, without trying to deal with themselves. If they could feel the Fire Power of a Platoon passing over their heads, they would appreciate its power more.

Weapons

Communications It is essential that there should be a 38 Set between Coys and Platoons. Signals worked very well at all times.

With regard to Bn and Regt Comd, and H.Qs, they were always trying to command the lower formations. Regt Comds, especially, sometimes went off even on a motorbike, in a middle of a battle, to forward Companies.

At first, improving later, but still not good, was the knowledge and appreciation of supporting Arms. Regt H.Qs sometimes moved without even informing their Gunner Rep as he seemed to be unimportant.

Another big point is Road discipline. Their C.C.R. are very weak and need a lot of training under British Provost. Not having a lot of training in fluid warfare, they also do not grasp the need to split their vehicles into echelons.

As will be seen, all this really sums up to Discipline and Control of Junior Leaders, this includes in a good many cases the Company Commanders; Regtl and Bn Comds must set a standard which if not reached by any Officer or N.C.O., they must be got rid of;

Coys and Platoons. Signals worked very well at all times.

With regard to Bn and Regt Comd, and H.Qs, they were always trying to command the lower formations. Regt Comds, especially, sometimes went off even on a motorbike, in a middle of a battle, to forward Companies.

At first, improving later, but still not good, was the knowledge and appreciation of supporting Arms. Regt H.Qs sometimes moved without even informing their Gunner Rep as he seemed to be unimportant.

Another big point is Road discipline. Their C.C.R.R. are very weak and need a lot of training under British Provost. Not having a lot of training in fluid warfare, they also do not grasp the need to split their vehicles into echelons.

As will be seen, all this really sums up to Discipline and Control of Junior Leaders, this includes in a good many cases the Company Commanders; Regtl and Bn Comds must set a standard which if not reached by any Officer or N.C.O, they must be got rid of; when Officers have been changed through their incapability, they have only turned up within the Gruppo in some other position.

14. 5. 45.

J.C.Fisher.

G.S.O.II. Trg. 51 B.L.U.

6195

1608

Confidential.

11. 5. 45.

Notes on Recent Operations.

During the recent operations the groups succeeded in its Object, and almost under most difficult circumstances. There was no special equipment for the most difficult obstacles they could have met, the river Po and River Adige; beating, working out; but the speed of the advance was almost unbelievable, and the divisions which had been killed employed excellent mobility.

The offensive spirit and morale was high, and although substantial casualties were covered under difficult conditions, the only thought was to push on. Although no serious opposition was met, this may have been to high casualties, as no preparation was made to build up in strength as supplies before advancing again, sometimes long distances.

It can be appreciated, that was largely a matter of supplies, and it was a great pity that the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Divisions, as that it could have moved such an early other way forward, and so kept in touch with forward troops such as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Divisions, and the 1st and 2nd Divisions, as they were only able to do so, and the 1st and 2nd Divisions, as they were only able to do so, and the 1st and 2nd Divisions, as they were only able to do so.

The following points were added by the Training Major and staff both Regiment:-

- Regt, 1st. The situation moved too quickly, even when the battle was very quiet. Regt 1st was too slow of moving to control the line and not allowing the 1st to take any part. They were seen trying to get them to control by physical contact and not by the position of fireless. In such an extent that the Regt 22 lost went off on a mission for long periods.
- The Regt of 21 Regt always had the picture, sometimes slightly congested, and had control of the situation.

Discipline. Out of the line has deteriorated, but out as cleverly and must effect would not self suggest. In the line it was evident that Officers and N.C.O.s lacked control, in particular as an objective

have moved each of every other day forward, and so kept in touch with forward troops much better. No communication seemed to be planned to moving a the H.C., consequently on the second phase of the battle starting at 2000 hours, it only moved once to H.C., and showed through were on occasions that they did not have sufficient ammunition to allow them to

The following points were noticed by the remaining Major and officers both companies:-

Regt. H.C. The H.C. was sometimes moved too quickly, even when the battle was very fluid. Regt. Comd was too fond of trying to control the line and not allowing the Co Comd to make his own plan. They were both trying to often to control by physical contact and not by the medium of fireless, to such an extent that the Comd of Regt was off on a motorbike for long periods. The Comd of 24 Regt always had the picture, sometimes slightly exaggerated, and had control of the situation.

Discipline. Out of the line this has deteriorated, burn out in unevenly and must effect morale and self respect. In the line it was evident that officers and N.C.O.'s lacked control, in particular as an objective

Fire Control. This may be said not to exist. The line their responsibility and they do think in with. H.C. at first control the firing of weapons is only to conserve ammunition.

Communications. These worked very well. It is suggested that a job set from boys to situation is essential.

Approach March. There is no proper appreciation given and consequently lack of any plan. Ammunition was always short for reloading in the line, when this particular action involving was no important. **0194**

Coordination. Again it may be said not to exist. If leading boys has been properly attached to anything, they would have suffered unnecessary casualties, in that situation.

Night Operations. Whether it can be put down to the small amount of training that has been done in this operation or ~~or~~ not, there is an apparent inability or unwillingness to fight by night.

Major.

G. J. M. S. S.

6193

K. J. M. S. S.

11
 FILE ✓ 35
 SUBJECT :- Signal Lessons Learnt from Recent Battles.

10th Training Unit to the Italian Army
 C. E. F.

Ref BEV/A.2/402

25 May 45.

CO. S. Sigs 'B' MIL INFO REG.

The attached report on Signal lessons from recent battles has been received from 5th MLU, in fact, was handed on to us by GSO III (Training) last week end, and will no doubt be of interest to you.

HEC/rmw

rmw
 Maj
 GS

6192

25 MAY Recd

242 - SIGNAL LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT MATTERS.

1. Wireless Communications.

- (a) When Div H.Q. had only Wireless communications to higher formations, the 3 sets provided i.e. R/T, W/T to Corps and R/T to CCRA were hopelessly inadequate to deal with the volume of traffic.
An extra Q Link is essential.
- (b) From Div to Bde and Bde to Regt, Regt to Coy the communication is adequate.
- (c) From Coy 2nd it is essential to have '33' Sets, both for pms and for patrol work.
- (d) Army Comms are adequate but could be improved by additional wireless sets. The wireless groups tend to be too unwieldy.
- (e) In general, insufficient training had been done in the use of wireless, especially on the part of officers, and when R/T was the only means of comm, insufficient use was made of it mainly through officers being unaccustomed to speaking on the air.
- (f) There are insufficient Cipher personnel at B.L.U. to deal with traffic to higher formations when there is no line com.

2. Lines.

- (a) Line com was invariably good but Signals must train to reel in cable whenever possible. The Grappo used far more cable than a normal Bn Div during similar periods. The Div and Regt Signals think there is an inexhaustible supply of cable. This is NOT so and cable is in extremely short supply.
- (b) When the Div moved to a sector which had been held previously by another Bn Formation, inadequate use was made of existing lines, with the consequent wastage of cable.

3. Reccees.

When recon parties went out to find new locns for Hqs Sigs, reps were NOT included. Sigs must always be consulted in the siting of an Hq.

4. There is a general tendency to procrastinate and if there is anything that is not required at one particular time, and it is dis or not available the practice of regular testing or checking of stores held is not adopted with a result that a "flap" ensues later when the means of com or the material is essential.

2. Lines.

- (a) Line exam was invariably good but Signals must train to reel in cable whenever possible. The Gruppo as a whole used far more cable than a normal Bt Div during similar periods. The Div and Bt Signals think there is an inexhaustible supply of cable. This is NOT so and cable is an extremely short supply.
- (b) When the Div moved to a sector which had been held previously by another Bt formation, inadequate use was made of existing lines, with the consequent wastage of cable.

3. Recces.

When recon parties went out to find new loops for the Sigs, recces were NOT included. Sigs must always be consulted in the siting of an HQ.

4. There is a general tendency to procrastinate and if there is anything that is not required at one particular time, and it is in dis or not available the practice of regular testing or checking of stores held is not adopted with a result that a "flap" ensues later when the means of exam or the material is essential.

5. There is not enough central control of Sigs. The C.O. Sigs could not give direct orders to his Pln Commanders without the permission first of the ^{capt} to whom the Pln was attached. This is an impossible situation. Div Signals must be considered as a unit.

This is probably due to the Sigs Coy being part of the Engineers Im and also to the fact that C.O. Div Sigs is only a lieutenant. The latter is absurd and he should be a major; this giving him greater prestige with Bde Staffs, etc.

6. In general, in spite of lack of equipment and deficiencies of personnel, Sigs worked reasonably well considering that they were not trained for mobile warfare.

7. There is the great failing that all Italian officers are too verbose both on R/T and Line. They must be made to be more concise.

Field
16 May 45

File
...
...
...	File #

Pratt
Capt
SO R Sigs

Pratt

A2 X FILE

(31)

SUBJECT :- Report on Training of Tradesmen.

'G' Training Unit to the Italian Army
C. M. F.

Ref BTU/A/A7/305

25 Apr 45.

Training Branch, MAIA.

1. This report is in reply to letter dated 21 April, from
Commander No 1 District.

2. The main difficulty in training tradesmen in the trades
mentioned, is one of the time required for training. It will be seen
from the attached syllabus of the RTC ICF Signal School, that instrument
mechanics take 17 weeks training, and as the courses only started at the
end of February, the first trained men will not be available until the
end of May. However, it will be seen from the syllabus, also the
Intake and Output in Appendix "B" that a fair proportion of tradesmen
will be available in the future.

3. With regard to the other trades, i.e. Sheet Metal Workers,
Welders, etc, the Mechanics School are at present training Vehicle Mechanics,
Driver Mechanics, Gun Fitters and Armourers and cannot extend this course
to include the other specialist REEF trades, which will take 2 - 3 months
training at least.

4. The only item, Storemen, are at present undergoing
training at this Centre, and should be available next month in small
numbers.

5. The best arrangement to ~~convert~~ ^{provide} a plentiful supply of these
specialists trades would be to arrange for a proportion of specialists in
the West "pull up" - they could then be converted to the Italian Army
Standard.

Maj
CS

2. The main difficulty in training mentioned, is one of the time required for training. It will be seen from the attached syllabus of the RFC ICF Signal School, that instrument mechanics take 17 weeks training, and as the courses only started at the end of February, the first trained men will not be available until the end of May. However, it will be seen from the syllabus, also the Intake and Output in Appendix "B" that a fair proportion of tradesmen will be available in the future.
3. With regard to the other trades, i.e. Sheet Metal Workers, Welders, etc, the Mechanics School are at present training Vehicle Mechanics, Driver Mechanics, Gun Fitters and Armourers and cannot extend this course to include the other specialist REEF trades, which will take 2 - 3 months training at least.
4. The only item, Storemen, are at present undergoing training at this Centre, and should be available next month in small numbers.
5. ^{produce} The best arrangement to ~~train~~ with a plentiful supply of these specialists trades would be to arrange for a proportion of specialists in the next "boom up" - they could then be converted to the Italian Army standard.

HWK/rav

Maj
GS

V.M.A.

6190

TRAILHEAD SIGNALS SCHOOL, RTC ICF.

Name of course.	No of Students.	Duration of course.	
(a) Operators wireless course.	50	17 weeks	Operating Instrument Batteries Exercises
(b) Operators Line course.	27	13 weeks	Operating Instrument Exercises
(c) Switchboard Operators course.	3	4 weeks	S & H - T Instrument DC 10 Hz Operating
(d) Short Courses for Linemen	9	4 weeks	S & H - T Puller Units. Maintenance
(e) Instrument Mechanics Course.	19	17 weeks	Knowledge Testing tools.
(f) Electrician Signals Course	5	8 weeks	Knowledge Electric Manipulation

ITALIAN SIGNALS SCHOOL, REG ICF.Appendix "A" to LTU letter
BTU/A/R7/305 dated 25 Apr 45.

Students.	Duration of course.	Brief Syllabus.
	17 weeks	Operating, procedure, ET wireless theory Wireless Instruments, - 9, 19, 22 set, fault finding & maintenance Batteries and charging. Exercises. Periodical testing.
	13 weeks	Operating, procedure, E & M elementary principles. Instruments - Testing, practical testing & maintenance. Exercises. Periodical testing.
	4 weeks	E & M - Telephones, indicators and switchboards. Instruments. Telephones D5 & F and Lines. Switchboard DC 10 Line. E & M. Procedure. Signal Security. Operating - Schedules and phonograms.
	4 weeks	E & M - elementary principles. Instruments- Telephones, Mullerphones, switchboards. Test Set. Superimposing Units. Cable Laying Drill. Line Testing and Maintenance.
	17 Weeks	Knowledge of Training Manuals, E & M. Instruments and Testing - wireless and line. Practical bench work with tools.
	8 weeks	Knowledge of Manuals applicable to apparatus in use. E & M Electrical Testing and Measuring Instruments. Telephones Manipulative work. Charging engines. Map reading.

PROJECTED INTAKE AND OUTPUT OF STUDENTS TO ITALIAN SIGNAL TRAINING CENTRE

Grade	I N T A K E					O U T P U T	
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Feb	Mar
Operators, Wireless	25	-	50	-	25	-	-
Operators, Line	27	-	-	27	-	3	-
Switchboard Operators	4	-	3	4	4	-	-
Linemen	-	-	9	3	9	-	-
DRs	11	-	11	-	11	-	-
Instrument Mechanics	16	3	-	-	15	-	-
Electricians Sigs	5	-	5	-	5	-	-
<u>Inf Sigs.</u>							
Regtl Opers (Inf)	49	-	28	49	49	-	-
Regtl Linemen (Inf)	-	-	22	22	22	-	8
Switchboard Opers (Inf)	9	-	9	9	9	-	-
<u>Arty Sigs</u>							
Regtl Opers (Arty)	30	-	60	30	30	-	-
Regtl Linemen (Arty)	-	-	18	18	18	-	-
Regtl Switchboard Opers (Arty)	9	-	9	9	9	-	8
Totals	185	3	299	177	204		19

NOTE :-

- (a) No intake during March owing to accommodation difficulties.
- (b) No intake of linemen (for signals, Arty and Inf) during Feb.

REPORT OF STUDENTS TO ITALIAN SIGNAL TRAINING CENTER.Appendix "B" to HCU letter
BTU/A/A7/305 dated 25 Apr 45.

		O U T P U T at end of each month.				
May	June	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
-	25	-	-	-	23	-
27	-	3	-	6	3	3
4	4	3	-	6	3	3
9	9	-	-	8	8	8
-	11	-	10	-	10	-
-	15	-	-	-	18	-
-	5	-	4	-	4	-
49	49	-	-	15	-	20
22	22	-	-	20	20	20
9	9	8	-	8	8	8
30	30	-	-	27	-	54
18	18	-	-	16	16	16
9	9	8	-	8	8	8
177	204	19	14	102	118	207

during March owing to accommodation difficulties.

linesmen (for signals, Arty and Inf) during Feb on instructions from MILA.

X

(A2)

(76)

SUBJECT: Report on JRIUM Combat Group.

CONFIDENTIAL

DIRECTORATE OF MILITARY TRAINING
AFHQ CMB

Tel: 16872

DMT/52/12/2/AM

19 Mar 45.

56 BEU

British Training Unit c/o ISIA

Attached report submitted by MEDEN Army is forwarded for your information.

Please take steps to correct these faults where possible and applicable.

18006/mt

NBO
Winters
Mr. G.
Brig.
D. T.

002X

SECRET

SUBJECT: Report on GRUPO FUJITA.HEAD HQ HIGHWAY AREA
T/S/TSS

6 Mar 45

HQ 15 ARMY GROUP

1. GRUPO FUJITA has now been in the line since 8 Feb. During this period there has only been light shelling and mortaring and no great enemy activity on this front. Under such enemy fire however the G's have remained steady and the GRUPO has held its sector. Morale, which is on the whole good, is adversely affected by casualties, particularly from mines and booby traps.

2. The chief points for correction appear to be as follows:-

(a) While bn coms are anxious to act offensively against the enemy, it would seem that higher coms do not always give full support to this policy as they appear anxious to avoid casualties.

Casualties to date are as follows:-

2 Officers	15 G's killed
2 Officers	54 G's wounded
	8 G's missing.

(b) Patrolling when carried out leaves a good deal to be desired. Little exceptions exist as to the composition or fraction of the various types of patrol. Briefing is bad and patrol reports are neither properly sifted nor checked.

(c) G's have insufficient entrenchment and those they have are usually bad sited.

(d) No attempt is made to maintain or improve defensive posts.

(e) There is too much movement both of personnel and G's in the A&D areas.

(f) Not sufficient use is made of the 2" or 3" mortar or the ILM. Patrols are too fond of using the 35 grenade with a 4 sec delay when meeting unexpected opposition, instead of instantaneous fire from 300

Casualties to date are as follows:-

2 Officers 15 ORs killed
 2 Officers 54 ORs wounded
 8 ORs missing.

- (b) Patrolling when carried out leaves a good deal to be desired. Little exceptions exist as to the composition or function of the various types of patrol. Briefing is bad and patrol reports are neither properly sifted nor checked.
- (c) ORs have inadequate certificates and those they have are usually bad sited.
- (d) No attempt is made to maintain or improve defensive posts.
- (e) There is too much movement both of personnel and apt in the bad areas.
- (f) Not sufficient use is made of the 2" or 3" mortar or the PIAT. Patrols are too fond of using the J5 grenade with a 4 sec delay when meeting unexpected opposition, instead of instantaneous fire from rifle or rifle.
- (g) ORs and ORs are fixed on too little promotion.
- (h) By British standards hygiene is deplorable.

DEP/AMR

Signed H. WOOD, Brig.

C of 3

For Lieut-General,
 GOC, KUTUBI AREA, 6186

0934