

APPENDIX M

PRIORITY TARGET ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

This appendix addresses the use of priority targets, Copperhead priority targets, and final protective fires.

Your FSO may use different fire planning techniques to better support maneuver. For example, he can task-organize his available assets to mass fires on predetermined targets at a specified time. Other options are as follows :

- **Priority targets** –a priority target is a target which, when requested, takes priority over all other requests. Priority targets are designated by the maneuver commander. He also gives specific guidance as to when the targets will become priority, what munitions will be used, what accuracy will be required, and what will be the desired effects. When not engaged in fire missions, firing units lay on priority targets. The brigade FSO can allocate as many as three priority targets from a six-gun battery or four priority targets from an eight-gun battery. Two priority targets may be assigned to a 107-mm mortar platoon, one target per section.
- **Copperhead priority targets** –a Copperhead priority target is normally allocated by platoon-sized firing units. The number of tubes actually laid on the target is determined by the target size and type. It should be treated as a priority target with the purpose to destroy a specific HPT. Ensure that an observer equipped with a laser designator is in position. Ensure that artillery units are instructed to preassemble Copperhead rounds before execution. There is no such thing as an **immediate** Copperhead mission. It is a time-intensive munition. Have your FSO make you Copperhead smart, to include limitations based on weather, smoke, angle of the observer in relation to the target, and the posture of the target.

Final protective fires (FPFs) –by definition, FM 6-20-40 states FPFs are designed to create a final barrier of steel that keeps the enemy from moving across defensive lines. They are desperation fires. The FPFs take priority over all fires, to include priority targets. The firing unit will only stop firing when told to do so by the initiator or when the unit runs out of ammunition. The FPFs may create a barrier of steel against dismounts, but armor vehicles may simply button-up, speed-up, and drive through. FPFs are planned targets with a purpose. Adjust FPFs as time, mission, and ammunition allow.