

M422: Influencing FTX Mission Influence Case Study

Overview

In your battalion, LT Pete Quandry, has recently taken over an infantry platoon with 30 Soldiers and 4 Bradley's. Because he just came on board as a PL, he needs to learn a lot about weapon systems and procedures. The former PL left nothing on paper to help him get oriented.

The platoon is currently in a state of flux because PSG Joe Forte, just left. SSG Ed Newell, a squad leader, has been promoted from among his peers without a change in rank to replace him.

Apparently, the company commander CPT Powers was very dissatisfied with the previous PL but had a lot of respect for the former PSG because he kept the Soldiers in line. He clearly has high expectations of the new PL and the platoon and has already given him responsibility for a new tactical mission. He and the CPT agree that this will be a great opportunity for him to develop his technical skills. The PL also hopes it will be an opportunity to show him that his is competent.

Background

Apparently, CPT Powers found it so frustrating to work with the former PL that he often communicated directly with PSG Forte. PSG Forte had the reputation for being highly demanding and directive with the platoon. (See attachment 1.)

PSG Newell knows a lot about weapon systems and procedures. The new PL is pleased that he seems interested and willing to share his expertise. The new PL will need to rely heavily on him to successfully accomplish the mission next week.

The platoon has a mix of experienced and newly enlisted Soldiers. Several were in combat together. Attachment 2 is an early interaction with PSG Newell about the platoon.

The training records indicate that all of the Soldiers are current on their PT and weapons qualifications and Newell reports that the platoon has consistently met training standards. However, the new PL has some serious concerns about platoon performance because during recent FTX, he observed that the Soldiers piled out of the vehicles and lit cigarettes rather than setting up a secure perimeter as their battle drill dictated. He made an on-the-spot correction and later counseled Newell about this.

One week before the mission

On Monday morning this week the PL discovered that one of the leader books was not up to date in the garrison. He addressed this immediately with the appropriate squad leader and emphasized the importance of knowing the whereabouts of Soldiers at all times. Later in the day he discussed the issue with PSG Newell who expressed a great deal of frustration because he had addressed this and other issues with the squad leaders previously and they seem to "yes" him without following through.

On Tuesday, there was an accident with one of the Bradley's in a training exercise. PSG Newell verbally reprimanded the Soldier and squad leader who were directly involved. (See attached accident report.)

This morning (Wednesday) the PL met with PSG Newell to discuss details of the upcoming mission and his concerns about platoon performance. During the meeting he informs the PL that CPT Powers contacted him late in the day yesterday to inquire about how things were going with the mission. The PL was stunned to hear this because CPT Powers could have easily reached him yesterday at that time of

day.

There is only have a few days left to motivate the troops and prepare for the mission.

Attachment 1. An interaction with one of the NCOs

LT Quandry: How are things going?

SSG Pearson: Well, it's been much better now that Forte has gone.

LT Quandry: How so?

SSG Pearson: Well to be honest Forte was always breathing down our necks. I mean we need direction but we don't need to be told how to tie our shoelaces. Here's a classic example. Once he noticed that one of my Soldiers was late one morning. This Soldier was usually pretty good about showing up on time and I was planning on speaking with him about it afterward. Before I could get to him, Forte called me aside and told me what to say to the Soldier, how to say it and wanted me to report back to him about how the Soldier responded. I rarely got a chance to handle anything by myself. It wasn't just me...neither did anyone else.

LT Quandry: How do you think the Soldiers responded to him?

SSG Pearson: Well, some of them loved him, especially if he liked them. But mostly he intimidated them and all they really worried about was how he was going to react to things. It was like being a Squad Leader didn't really matter that much to them.

Attachment 2 (PS2). An interaction with PSG Newell about the platoon

LT Quandry: I would be interested in hearing any insights that you have about the platoon.

PSG Newell: Well, PSG Forte was hard on us, but everyone trained to standards.

LT Quandry: How about the personnel?

PSG Newell: They're good Soldiers, but two of our squad leaders, Amodio and Kane, don't get along very well. It's been going on a long time. Amodio was Forte's favorite so Forte always compared the other squad leaders to him. Kane didn't really hit it off with Forte, even though he had combat experience and so did Forte.

LT Quandry: How do the other Soldiers get along?

PSG Newell: Well to be honest with you there are a few Soldiers who have always seemed to be at each other's throats. It's been going on a long time and has never caused serious problems. I think because people were afraid of what Forte might do. But now that he's gone...well it kind of worries me.

LT Quandry: Sounds like something we need to keep an eye on.

Accident report attachment.

U.S. ARMY ABBREVIATED GROUND ACCIDENT REPORT (AGAR)										REQUIREMENT CONTROL SYMBOL CSOCS-308													
For use of this form, see AR 385-40 and DA Pamphlet 385-40; the proponent agency is OCSA																							
1. TIME & DATE OF ACCIDENT		a. Yr 02		b. Mth 07		c. Day 11		d. Time 13		2. PERIOD OF DAY		X Day		3. ACDT CLASS		C		4. ACDT OCCURRED DURING		X Combat		X Non-Combat	
5. UNIT IDENTIFICATION		a. UIC (6-digit Code)		WABCCO		b. Name of Unit		Co C.		3d BN, 6th IN		c. Unit's Branch		IN		d. MACOM							
6. LOCATION OF ACCIDENT		a. Exact Location		(Detailed enough to locate site)		d. Off Post		X		On Post Name:				7. EXPLOSIVES/AMMO		a. Present		X Yes		b. Involved		X No	
8. MISSION		a. Briefly describe the mission		Battle Drill enter and clear a trench																			
9. VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT/MATERIAL INVOLVED																							
a. Type of Item (Nomenclature)		b. Model #		c. Ownership		d. Estimated Cost of Damage		e. Vehicle Collision		f. Failure Mode		g. Part Nomenclature		h. Part #		i. Part NSN		j. Part Manufacturer Code		k. EIR/QDR Submitted			
#1 BFV		M2A3		DA		0														X Yes		X No	
#2																				X Yes		X No	
10. WHY DID THE MATERIEL FAIL/MALFUNCTION? (Check the root causes; in Block a in Block b, explain how the root caused led to the materiel failure/malfunction.)																							
a. LEADER (Not ready, willing to enforce standards; (Not clear, Not practical))																							
b. SUPPORT (Shortcomings in type, capability, amount or condition of equip/supplies/services/facilities)																							
c. DIRECT SUPERVISION																							
d. UNIT COMMAND SUPERVISION																							
e. HIGHER COMMAND SUPERVISION																							
f. EQUIP/MATERIEL IMPROPERLY DESIGNED																							
g. EQUIP/MATERIEL NOT PROVIDED																							
h. INADEQUATE FACILITIES/SERVICES																							
i. OTHER																							
11. NAME (Last, First, MI) (Include Address & UIC if different than Bk's 5a & 6b.)																							
Johnson David D.																							
12. SOCIAL SECURITY #																							
304-76-9414																							
13. PERSONNEL CLASSIFICATION																							
14. MOS																							
15. DUTY STATUS																							
16. PAY GRADE																							
17. SEX																							
18. AGE																							
19. FLIGHT STATUS																							
20. MOST SEVERE INJURY (See instructions)																							
a. Degree																							
b. Type																							
c. Body Part																							
d. Cause																							
21. DAYS HOSPITALIZED																							
0																							
22. WORKDAYS																							
a. Lost																							
b. Restricted																							
23. CODE																							
24. SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY/TASK																							
Platoon conducting a battle drill to enter and clear a trench. The BFV was slowing to a stop when the accident occurred.																							
25. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIP																							
a. Required																							
b. Type of equip																							
c. Available																							
d. Used																							
26. ALCOHOL/DRUGS CAUSE/CONT																							
27. EQUIP THIS PERSON WAS ASSOCIATED WITH? (Enter item No. from Bk 5a)																							
28. LICENSED TO OPERATE EQUIP																							
29. HRS ON DUTY																							
30. HRS SLEEP																							
31. TACTICAL TRAINING																							
32. TYPE TRAINING FACILITY																							
33. LAST TRAINING																							
34. FIELD TRAINING EXERCISE																							
35. NIGHT VISION SYSTEM USED																							
36. DID INDIVIDUAL MAKE A MISTAKE THAT CAUSED/CONTRIBUTED TO ACCIDENT? In Bk a, indicate if individual made a mistake. If yes provide the code from instructions in Bk b, and describe in Bk c.																							
a. Mistake																							
b. Code																							
c. Tell what the mistake was and how it caused/contributed to the accident																							
PVT Johnson stepped out of a moving BFV without waiting for communication from the squad leader. PVT Johnson was not wearing his helmet at the time of the accident.																							

37. WHY WAS THE MISTAKE MADE (ROOT CAUSE) (Check the root cause(s) in Blk a. In Blk b. tell how the root cause(s) led to the mistake.)									
LEADER		TRAINING		STDS/PROCEDURES		SUPPORT		INDIVIDUAL	
(Not ready, willing to enforce standards)		(Insufficient in Content/Amount)		(Not clear/Not practical)		(Shortcomings in type, capability, amount or condition of equip/supplies/services/facilities)		(Mistake due to own personal factors)	
☒	Direct Supervision	School		AR	SOP		Equip/Material improperly designed		Poor/Bad attitude
	Unit Command Supervision	Unit		TM	Other		Equip/Material not provided		Overconfident
	Higher Command Supervision	Experience, OJT		FM	None exists		Inadequate Facilities/Services		Fatigue
b. Describe root cause(s) (reason) and tell how it/they caused the mistake									
The squad leader did not use proper communication with the BFV crew to dismount. PVT Johnson opened the combat door before the BFV had come to a complete stop, and jumped to the ground. PVT Johnson lost his footing and fell backward striking his head on the base of the BFV door frame. PVT Johnson was not wearing his helmet and subsequently received a minor concussion.									
38. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS									
a. Present:									
#1 <u>A</u> Yes ☒ No ☐ Unk ☐									
#2 <u> </u> Yes ☐ No ☐ Unk ☐									
#3 <u> </u> Yes ☐ No ☐ Unk ☐									
39. PROVIDE BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF ACDT (Use additional sheets if required) (Explain sequence of events, tell how and happened.)									
During an exercise, PVT Johnson was injured when he exited a BFV through the combat door before the vehicle had come to a stop. He lost his footing and fell backwards, striking his head on the base of the BFV combat door frame. PVT Johnson received a concussion and was unable to perform his duties for the remainder of the day. Contributing factors were the misuse of communication procedures, improper dismounting of the BFV, and PVT Johnson's failure to use regulation headgear.									
40. CORRECTIVE ACTION(S) TAKEN OR PLANNED									
A review of proper communication procedures for BFV operations has been initiated and the platoon has rehearsed crew drill 07-3-D9233.									
41. POINT OF CONTACT FOR INFORMATION ON THE ACCIDENT									
a. Name (Last, First, MI)		b. Telephone #		DSN:					
Quandry		Pete R.				COM:			
42. COMMAND REVIEW									
a. Name		c. Rank		43. SAFETY OFFICE REVIEW		b. Date			
b. Signature		d. Date		a. Name					

REVERSE OF DA FORM 285-AB-R, JUL 94

In another platoon, is 1LT Anthony Santo, PL of a FSMC ambulance platoon with 5 wheeled- ambulance squads. His platoon has been deployed for three months in a DSCA mission. There has been no activity, but the need for emergency medical services could occur at any time.

It has been difficult to keep the troops motivated this period of deployment. The environment is extremely hot and buggy. The PL senses a gradual decline in morale in many of the units, not just his own.

The PSG, Tim Loyola, has been having a lot of difficulty with SSG Lewis, an ambulance squad leader in the platoon. The PL has a close working relationship with PSG Loyola, whose judgment in general is respected and trusted. However, while he usually exhibits a high level of restraint and composure when dealing with personnel discipline issues, increasingly the PL has noticed that he has been losing his temper, particularly in dealing with SSG Lewis.

Background

Loyola complains that Lewis isn't getting his job done properly and drinks too much. He finds it totally unacceptable that Lewis is not more conscientious about following SOPs. Loyola believes firmly in adherence to procedures and regulations. He thinks that something should be done about it. Although the PL agrees that maintaining standards in the field is important, he wonders if the PSG is sometimes overreacting to what seem to be minor infractions.

On more than one occasion Loyola observed Soldiers performing tasks that really should be handled only by Lewis. When asked about this, they say, "our SSG trusts us" or "he's asked us to help him out." The last time it happened Loyola insisted on knowing where Lewis was. The Soldiers said that they didn't know. Later Lewis told Loyola that he wasn't feeling well that morning.

SSG Lewis' record of past work performance is mostly good. His rescue efforts in combat are practically legendary. When he was a CPL, he extracted a Soldier who was impaled on a steel pole and administered emergency care, which kept him alive until he reached the treatment facility at BSA. The PL that he served under during that time is now CPT of the medical company. CPT Mahan still remembers Lewis and even asks about him from time to time. However, Lewis has had more than his share of "counseling sessions" for minor infractions mostly associated with preventative maintenance checks and services over the past few years. And there is a letter of reprimand (attachment 1) in his file for disorderly conduct some time ago.

The PL is aware of "personal history" between PSG Loyola and SSG Lewis. Apparently they were good friends but had a falling out several years ago prior to Loyola's promotion to PSG.

SSG Lewis is very well liked in the platoon; he is quick witted and entertaining. It seems that the Soldiers in his squad trust him and will do almost anything for him.

The CO CDR, CPT Mahan, is primarily concerned with ends rather than means. As long as the job gets done, he is not too concerned with official policy. He takes a hands-off approach and feels that any good PL should be able to handle personnel problems within the platoon. He also has an extremely liberal attitude concerning alcohol and has been very lenient about enforcing alcohol policies in the past. He believes that "Soldiers need to unwind" and he seems to recall fondly his own youthful bar room adventures that were a source of good fun and camaraderie.

Shortly before the unit was deployed, there was a very serious alcohol related accident that resulted in significant damage to emergency service equipment in another medical company. The battalion commander posted a memo on the Army's substance abuse prevention policy (attachment 2) at that time.

Recent events

Late in the day yesterday SSG Lewis approached the PL and asked to speak with him about problems that he is having with PSG Loyola. The PL told him that he could not meet with him at that time and would get back to him about it.

It is morning, and the PL is walking through camp when he comes across SSG Lewis and PSG Loyola in the middle of an argument:

PSG Loyola (forcefully): And what's up with these sloppy supply records? Can't you keep anything straight?

SSG Lewis (calmly): I am sorry they're out of order, here I'll double check them and...

PSG Loyola (shouting): Is that alcohol I smell on your breath? Huh? Drunk on duty! I am going to nail you for this!

SSG Lewis (defensively): I am stone sober! I drank until late last night, off duty. I am sober this morning...

PSG Loyola (shouting): Bull! If you didn't drink so much maybe you could keep things straight around here!

SSG Lewis (shouting): What the hell is your problem? You don't treat other squad leaders like this.

PSG Loyola (shouting): Like what? Huh? How do I treat you? You must think I'm stupid...

The PL can see that SSG Lewis' eyes are blood shot, but he does not appear to be drunk otherwise. The argument is escalating.

Attachment 1: PS 3

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY XXX MEDICAL BATTALION UNIT #XXX
APO AP XXXXX-XXXX

XXXX-XX 14 April, 2005

MEMO FOR: CPL John Lewis From: XXX MED BN

Subject: Letter of Reprimand

1. Investigation has shown that you, CPL John Lewis, did, on or about December 18, 1999, at 129 Sentinel St. Norfolk, VA disturb the peace and engage in drunk and disorderly conduct, in violation of Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). This offense is so serious that, had I elected to punish you under the provisions of Article 15 of the UCMJ, you could have been subject to incarceration or involuntary separation from the United States Army.
2. You are hereby reprimanded. Your actions have brought discredit upon yourself and require me to seriously question your judgment and sense of responsibility. Drunk and disorderly conduct is a serious offense which reflects badly not only on you as a person but as a member and representative of the United States Army.
3. I will not tolerate this type of behavior from a member of my unit. Be advised, should I be made aware of any future information concerning this type of behavior, I will take swift action, possibly resulting in your punishment under the provisions of the UCMJ and possibly your involuntary separation from the United States Army.
4. Examine your career objectives and determine which course you will follow. It's up to you.
5. You will acknowledge receipt of this reprimand below. If you wish, you may attach a written statement

or additional documents to this reprimand which will be attached to this document in file. If you choose to do so, such attachments must reach my office by 15 January, 2000.

LTC Paul Jarmin, Commander, XXX MED BN

Attachment 2. PS 3

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY XXX MEDICAL BATTALION UNIT #XXX
APO AP XXXXX-XXXX

XXXX-XX 8 July, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR BATTALION LEADERSHIP

SUBJECT: Alcohol Awareness

1. References: AR 600-85 Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)

2. Most of you are aware of the recent alcohol-related accident that resulted in serious injury to Army personnel and irreparable damage to medical equipment in our BN. In the aftermath of this unfortunate accident, I direct your attention to Army policy and procedures aimed at preventing alcohol abuse in the workplace. Outlined below are key aspects of the policy. I urge you to review AR 600-85 Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) in full and be prepared to fully implement this program as necessary.

3. Alcohol Policies and Controls

- a. We will keep the workplace alcohol free. Also, alcohol will not be the center of attention at Army functions.
- b. Misconduct resulting from drinking alcohol, or impairment while on duty will not be tolerated.
- c. Leaders will ensure that subordinates are held responsible for their actions and are aware of alcohol abuse and its consequences.
- d. Leaders will refer Soldiers for screening, treatment, or prevention training if they know that Soldiers are abusing alcohol.
- e. Leaders are encouraged to do surprise inspections in the unit, not only to ensure alcohol is not present on duty, but also to promote safety and good order and discipline.
- f. If leaders suspect alcohol abuse, they must confront the suspected Soldier regardless of rank or performance or conduct.
- g. Even if a Soldier refers him/herself for treatment, he or she is still responsible for his/her actions. Furthermore, if treatment fails, he or she must be removed from the Army.
- h. If a Soldier is identified as having a problem with alcohol, he or she must successfully complete ASAP education or a rehabilitation program in order to remain in the Army.

4. Alcohol Sanctions

- a. Soldiers may be punished under UCMJ (Articles 111 and/or 112) or separated from the Army if they are involved in serious alcohol related offenses (more than two DWI convictions in a 1-year period).
- b. Any Soldier who performs duties with a blood alcohol level of .05 percent or above will be subject to UCMJ and administrative disciplinary action. The only exception to this is if the Soldier was unaware of the duties that needed to be performed at the time the Soldier became impaired.
- c. Detoxification and appropriate treatment will be provided to any Soldier diagnosed as alcohol dependent.

Jim T. Swagart LTC, XX
Commanding

