

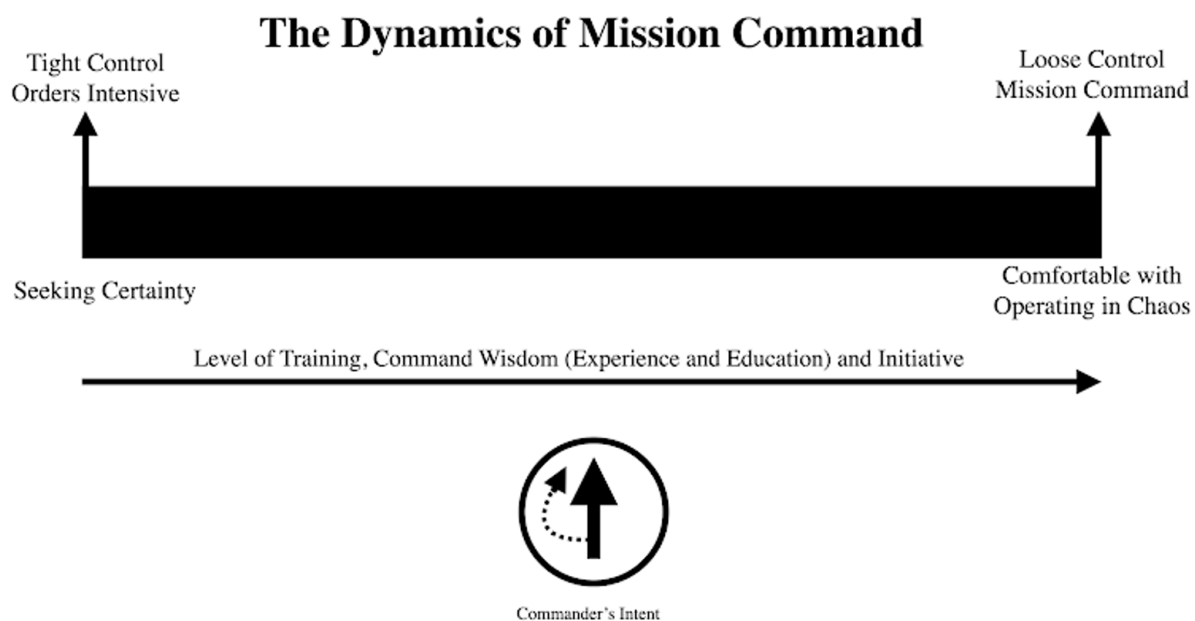
21 Command Post Rules To Live By

COL (Ret.) John Antal

1. Understand that the purpose of a CP is to facilitate **MISSION COMMAND** in order to win. Every leader **must strive to understand and live mission command**. Destroying command is the essence of 21st Century warfare. Mission Command empowers leaders to act when the situation has changed, orders no longer apply, and communication with higher command is lost. For Command Groups and Command Posts (CPs) to survive in the modern battlespace we must be **excellent at mission command across the force**.
2. Know that the battlespace has changed. **In today's battlespace, every command post can be located, targeted, and hit**. There are **no sanctuaries, no rear areas, and no safe areas**.
3. **Embrace MASKING to survive**. Masking is the full-spectrum, multi-domain effort to deceive enemy sensors and disrupt enemy targeting. All warfare is based on deception. Consider Masking in all decisions. We must MASK in the optical (be the best at camouflage), thermal (reduce heat signatures), electronic (lower emissions), and acoustic (dampen sounds) arenas.
4. **Train as you fight**. You don't rise to the **level of your expectations; you fall to the level of your training**. Train CP crews to perfection with CP battle drills, just as you would train a professional sports team.
5. **Go MICRO in all things and avoid the MACRO**. Bigger is not better. Bigger will get you killed. Ditch the screens for smaller communication surfaces.
6. **Red Team** your CP set up – every time. Dedicate someone or a small team to “play” the enemy and unlock your CP's weaknesses.
7. Organize in threes. **No more than three vehicles together at all echelons of command**. Network groups of three with each other to form a mesh CP structure.
8. Practice **Mission Command on the Move**. Moving targets are harder to hit.
9. **Maximize available armored vehicles for Mission Command on the Move**. Employ networked M1068 SICPS, MRAPs, M1130 Strykers, or AMPVs.

10. Organize all CPs to operate from **distributed, dispersed and integrated cells**. Each cell should be able to perform all necessary C5ISR functions.
11. Train every CP Cell to take over the fight in case another is destroyed. **Redundancy is key.**
12. **Operate CPs from towns and cities.** Avoid open fields. Reverse slope positions are no longer safe. Built-up areas make it harder for the enemy to target, provide false positives, and choosing the right building or basement may offer better physical protection.
13. **Know what the CP looks like from above.** Fly a sUAS overhead and take images for a frequent After Action Reviews (AARs) on CP survivability. Use sUAS to **observe and video CPs from above in ALL exercises.** Adjust TTP and training accordingly.
14. Employ **decoys**. Give the enemy false positives to shoot at. Decoys can be as simple as smudge pots (thermal) to thermal targeting panels. Remember, most targeting today is from overhead systems, so use decoys that provide overhead imagery with false targets.
15. Develop a “**What if the enemy hit me with fires in this location**” **plan** for every CP location. Fires include Long Range Precision Fires (LRPF), artillery, and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS).
16. **MASK resupply.** Resupply gives CPs away to the enemy.
17. When attacked, employ every form of **obscuration**, including smoke, preferably multi-spectral smoke.
18. **Reduce electronic signatures.** Determine how to link distributed and dispersed CPs to be very hard to detect in the electronic spectrum. Use wire and cable. Do not allow Soldiers to carry mobile phones in the battlespace as they are extremely easy to locate.
19. Develop and enforce the **discipline and TTP to be able to go to electronic silence** for periods of time, where all systems are turned off. CPs that can go dark, on command, and restart according to plan, have developed an extraordinary defensive measure.
20. Develop an **All Domain Common Operational Picture (ADOCOP)** that facilitates Mission Command.
21. Act now! A pint of sweat saves a gallon of blood. **Don't wait on someone else to solve the problem.** Discuss, develop, and wargame the TTP to **MASK your CPs now.**

“Enhanced Mission Command is the ability of a commander to lead with greater speed, agility, and synergy than his opponents (OODA Loop). Mission command speeds up the ability to command through trust (individual, organizational and inter-organizational), the disciplined initiative of every member of the team (acting with initiative to achieve the commander’s intent), and the harmonization of the commander’s intent (in all domains) with the intent of higher echelons of command (nested concept). Mission command accelerates multi-domain operations and is the most effective method to operate in degraded and hostile environments.” COL John Antal, US Army (Ret.)



Visualizing Commander's Intent

- The Plan is the dark arrow.
- The dotted line is a Branch Plan.
- The circle represents the Commander's intent
 - other ways to accomplish the mission