

# Threat Tactics Report:

## *North Korea*



TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration

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## Introduction

The Korean peninsula is a location of strategic interest for the US in the Pacific Command (PACOM), and many observers note that North Korea is an unpredictable and potentially volatile actor. According to the Department of Defense in its report to Congress and the intelligence community, the DPRK “remains one of the United States’ most critical security challenges for many reasons. These include North Korea’s willingness to undertake provocative and destabilizing behavior, including attacks on the Republic of Korea (ROK), its pursuit of nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles, and its willingness to proliferate weapons in contravention of United Nations Security Council Resolutions.”<sup>1</sup> Some of the latest evidence of irrational behavior is the elevation of Kim Jong Un’s 26-year old sister to a high governmental post late in 2014, the computer hacking of the Sony Corporation supposedly by North Korea during late 2014 over the possible release of a film that mocked Kim Jong Un, and the April 2015 execution of a defense chief for allegedly nodding off during a meeting. Over the past 50 years, North Korea has sporadically conducted operations directed against its enemies, especially South Korea. These actions included attacks on South Korean naval vessels, the capturing of a US ship and holding American hostages for 11 months, the hijacking of a South Korean airline jet, electronic warfare against South Korean signals including global positioning satellites (GPS), and assassinations or attempted assassinations on South Korean officials including the ROK president. The attempted 1968 Blue House Raid by North Korean elite military personnel resulted in the death or capture of all 31 infiltrators involved in the assassination attempt as well as the death of 71 personnel, including three Americans, and the injury of 66 others as the North Korean SPF personnel attempted to escape back to DPRK territory.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this North Korean Threat Tactics Report (TTR) is to explain to the Army training community how North Korea fights including its doctrine, force structure, weapons and equipment, and the warfighting functions. A TTR also identifies where the conditions specific to the actor are present in Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) and other training materials so that these conditions can easily be implemented across all training venues.

## Executive Summary

- North Korea is an oligarchy with Kim Jong Un as its supreme leader.
- The DPRK is a militaristic society with about 1.2 million active duty personnel in uniform out of a population of 24 million with another 7.7 million in the reserve forces.
- All military personnel serve under the umbrella of the Korean People’s Army (KPA); the Korean People’s Air Force (KPAF) and Korean People’s Navy (KPN) primarily support the KPA ground forces.
- The KPAF focuses on homeland defense and close air support to the KPA.
- The KPN’s primary mission is to protect the North Korean coastline and support the KPA special purpose forces (SPF) in mission execution.

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- Much of the equipment in all military branches is old and obsolete, but the KPA has concentrated its modernization efforts on missile technology that may provide the means to successfully launch a nuclear warhead.
- North Korea possesses a nuclear weapon and is modernizing its missile fleet in order to increase the attack range for its nuclear arsenal.
- North Korea possesses both chemical and biological weapons.
- The KPA practices both passive and active camouflage to hide its units, headquarters, and other important resources from the air.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon S. Cleaves".

Jon S. Cleaves  
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Cover photo: Photo of a missile by [Stefan Krasowski](#) at a Victory Day parade in Pyongyang on 26 July 2013. Picture listed on Bing as free to modify, share, and use commercially.



## Section 1: Introduction to North Korea

The US military has been learning about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), commonly referred to as North Korea, since 1950 when the US, in conjunction with the UN, went to war against Kim Il Sung's military forces. The DPRK is a country in Asia run by an oligarchy led by Kim Jong Un. Most DPRK military and civilian leaders consist of second and third generation leaders who are familial or close friends of the DPRK's founder, Kim Il Sung; his son, Kim Jong Il; or grandson, Kim Jong Un. The Kim family has ruled North Korea since the end of World War II. Historically, the Korean peninsula has found itself ruled by outside forces for significant periods of time to include China and the latest, Japan, which occupied the entire Korean peninsula at the conclusion of the 1905 Russo-Japanese War until Japan's surrender to the allied powers in August 1945.<sup>3</sup>

In June 1950, North Korea invaded its southern neighbor in an attempt to unify the peninsula under Kim Il Sung. With the intervention of the UN, after the Soviet Union boycotted a UN Security Council meeting, the international coalition led by the US pushed the North Korean military back across the pre-1950 boundary between the two countries in September 1950. American General Douglas MacArthur then drove the UN forces all the way to the Yalu River where China, feeling threatened by anti-communist forces, interceded on behalf of North Korea with organized Chinese forces. The Chinese-led counterattacks pushed the American military and its allies back to the 38th parallel, the original dividing line between the two Koreas. Over the next two years, a stalemate ensued with only minor changes of territory between the warring sides. In late July 1953, the military commanders of the Korean People's Army, the Chinese People's Volunteers, and the United Nations Command (UNC) signed an armistice that ended the fighting and created a demilitarized zone (DMZ) 2,000 meters wide on either side of the then current unit disposition or what is known as the military demarcation line (MDL). Over 60 years after the armistice or ceasefire, the warring sides have yet to sign a formal peace treaty, and the MDL and the 4,000 meter wide DMZ still exists from the peninsula's east coast to the west coast. The DPRK, however, still seeks its ultimate goal, which is to unify all of Korea under its control. With a population of only 24 million people, over five percent or 1.2 million personnel serve on active military service in the DPRK. Another 7.7 million North Koreans serve in the reserve forces. Besides military operations, the DPRK government often uses its uniformed personnel for public service projects or to harvest crops.

The presence of the US military in South Korea deters the DPRK from crossing the border to reunite the two Koreas by force. Since the armistice was signed, North Korea has broken it many times with incursions into the DMZ and South Korea by land, sea, air, and even underground by tunnels. Today, the DPRK faces off against the Combined Forces of the ROK and the United States with a conventional regular force backed with a nuclear deterrent. North Korea also emphasizes SPF units that primarily use irregular tactics. The KPN uses a combination of tactics based on old Soviet doctrine, Chinese developments, and/or lessons learned by the North Koreans during the 1950–53 Korean War as well as the US's most recent actions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other locations around the world. North Korea, however, has no issues with initiating provocative actions against South Korea, Japan, or the US's in defiance of the armistice's terms. These actions, however comedic they are seen as by outsiders, are often used prior to international meetings in an attempt to obtain concessions from the other side of the negotiating table.<sup>4</sup>

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While the military hardware owned by North Korea is vast, much of it is outdated. The DPRK military loathes to abandon any hardware as evidenced by the retention of the T-34/85, a World War II-era tank, in some of its armor units. The age and variety of equipment from the former Soviet Union, Russia, or China and its own internally produced equipment generate major logistical issues for the KPA to effectively keep the assortment of weapons systems fully functional.

## Strategy and Goals

The DPRK espouses three primary goals with additional second-tier objectives that support its principal aims. From Kim Il Sung through Kim Jong Il to Kim Jong Un, North Korea's overarching intention is the unification of all of Korea under control of the DPRK government. While this ambition is probably not obtainable in the near future—as long as American forces remain on the peninsula—a unified Korea under the Kim family's control remains the DPRK's ultimate objective. North Korea's second goal is to remain an independent state free of outside interference, especially from the Western powers. North Korea's possession of a nuclear arsenal and its pursuit of missile technology is an attempt to ensure that external powers do not interfere with the DPRK's internal affairs for fear of a nuclear reprisal. North Korea's third goal is for Kim Jong Un and his family to maintain its position of authority in the regime through the ideological control of the country's population. The Kim family and its supporters will likely pursue any strategy necessary to remain firmly in power in the DPRK.<sup>5</sup>

North Korea's strategy is focused on the control of the DPRK government by the Kim family in pursuit of the long-term goal of the reunification of the entire Korean peninsula under the same government. The large military is not only used as a threat to North Korea's neighbors, but to maintain control of its own citizens. The DPRK uses limited military provocations to obtain diplomatic concessions at the negotiating table with South Korea, Japan, the US, and other countries. North Korea uses threats of possible war to obtain not only diplomatic concessions, but to obtain economic aid for its people. The North Korean government knows that the Western powers and South Korea do not want another active war on the peninsula so the DPRK's threats often lead to success at the negotiating table. The North Korean nuclear arsenal and fear by other countries that the DPRK will initiate a nuclear attack often serves as the trump card that forces the DPRK's enemies to acquiesce to the Kim regime's demands.<sup>6</sup>

While North Korea's leaders may seem cartoonish at times to the outside world, the Kim family is treated reverently and seen as almost godlike in its almost non-religious country. Kim Il Sung developed a personality cult around himself during his long period in power. His son, Kim Jong Il, continued to cultivate the myth of the Kim family during his time as the DPRK's supreme leader. The North Korean people treat the current ruler, Kim Jong Un, with almost the same awe the DPRK citizens held the previous two rulers or are too afraid not to do so. The Kim family cult status is a major component of the glue that holds the DPRK together.<sup>7</sup>

## Key Leaders

While the DPRK professes to still be a communist country where the people are in charge, North Korea is actually an oligarchy where a small number of people control the country. The DPRK supreme leader is currently Kim Jong Un—the grandson of the original founder of North Korea, Kim Il Sung—who took power in December 2011 upon the death of his father, Kim Jong Il. Kim Jong Un is not the only third generation leader in the DPRK as many of the current governmental officials' parents or grandparents



also loyally served the Kim family. In his mid-30s, Kim Jong Un has been busy over the last three years easing out an older generation of officials that owed their allegiance to Kim Jong Il or Kim Il Sung and replacing the old guard with younger supporters of himself. To take ultimate control of the DPRK, Kim Jong Un perpetuated the arrest, trial, conviction, and execution of his uncle, Jang Song Taek, then the second most powerful person in North Korea.<sup>8</sup>

Members of the government wield their power through the station a bureaucrat holds in the Korean Workers' Party (KWP), the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), the Korean People's Army (KPA), the National Defense Committee (NDC), or a cabinet post. The most powerful North Korean leaders often hold more than one position in their portfolio. Military personnel will also hold civilian positions and bureaucrats that rise through the civil service ranks may eventually receive a military title, for appearance purposes, upon reaching a certain senior level in governmental service or prior to the assumption of a more military-related job. The NDC is the most important group in the country with Kim Jong Un as First Chairman, three vice-chairman positions, and six additional members. The vice-chairmen include Vice Marshal Hwang Pyong So, currently considered the second-most powerful person in the DPRK; General O Kuk Ryol, a second-generation bureaucrat whose father fought with Kim Il Sung; and Vice Marshal Ri Yong Mu, the husband of one of Kim Jong Il's aunts. The other NDC members include Cho Chun Ryong, a civilian with an economics background; General Choe Pu Il, Minister of the People's Security; General Hyon Yong Chol (executed in late April 2015, but only announced on 13 May 2015), Minister of the People's Armed Forces; General Kim Won Hong, Minister of State Security; Colonel General Pak To Chun, a civilian with an industrial background and recently awarded a military rank; and General Ri Pyong Chol, a relatively unknown officer. Hwang Pyong So and several other North Korean leaders made an unexpected and last-minute visit to South Korea in early October 2014 when Kim Jong Un was unseen for several weeks. This led to some speculation on Kim Jong Un's status, but the North Korean ruler emerged several weeks later, still in charge, with the excuse for his absence from the public eye that he was recovering from foot surgery. See the [March 2015 Red Diamond](#) article on North Korean Leadership for additional details on most of these DPRK leaders.<sup>9</sup>

### Key Alliances

While North Korea practices an ideology of independence called *juche*, the DPRK does possess a few, but important, allies. Kim Il Sung began *juche* in 1972 and this national ethos places an emphasis on self-reliance, independence, resourcefulness, a display of one's strength, and self-defense, with the responsibility to internally solve problems without outside assistance. Despite the bravado of self-reliance, North Korea's most important ally and major benefactor is China. About 63% of DPRK exports go to China while the DPRK receives 73% of its imports from its northern neighbor. China usually opposes any economic sanctions that other countries may try to enact on the DPRK for its military and nuclear provocations. North Korea serves as a buffer state between the economically capitalistic and democratic South Korea and the communist People's Republic of China (PRC). China has ruled over the Korean peninsula at various times during the past 4,000 years and this somewhat disharmonious relationship between China and the peninsula continues. Both current regimes share a common foundation as the PRC and DPRK both arose by revolutionary means based on the Marxist model and both countries profess to still somewhat follow these communist teachings. The historical ties between North Korea and China continue to bind the two countries together and China's fear of a unified,

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economically powerful Korean peninsula under a democratic-style government is probably enough motivation to continue to support the status quo on the Korean peninsula.<sup>10</sup>

The second-most important ally for North Korea is Russia. While the closeness between the two countries is not the same as it was between North Korea and the Soviet Union, there are still some residual feelings based on the North Koreans' long-term relationship with the Russian leadership. In the early 1990s, the relationship suffered under then-Russian president Boris Yeltsin before rebounding later in the decade. During the Cold War, North Korea sent its military officers to the USSR to attend officer, technical, or aviation schools. Much of the North Korean conventional weapons and vehicles were produced in the USSR or former Soviet bloc countries, but are now produced in Russian or Eastern European factories. Due to the DPRK's inability to pay its financial debt to Russia, North Korea provides up to 10,000 construction workers and loggers to work in eastern Russia. For the near future, Russia will likely continue to tenuously support North Korea.<sup>11</sup>

North Korea has developed a relationship with a number of countries due to the export of weapons, especially ballistic missiles, and missile technology to states and actors willing to evade the various sanctions placed on the DPRK by the international community. These countries include Egypt, Iran, Libya, Pakistan, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. A North Korean ship, sailing from Cuba, was caught trying to cross the Panama Canal with MiG-21 jets and spare airplane parts. UN inspectors seized the weapons, but there has been no final disposition of the case. It is likely that North Korea will continue to engage in legal and illegal arms trades in order to gain much-needed hard currency.<sup>12</sup>

## Organizational Size and Structure

### General Information

While the DPRK operates both a navy and air force, all military forces technically fall under control of the Korean People's Army. North Korea is one of the most militarized countries in the world with 1,193,000 active duty and 7.7 million reserve personnel. The DPRK spends between 15.9% and 22% of its GDP on its military and about 25% of all North Koreans serve in some military capacity. Of the active duty personnel, approximately 1,020,000 serve in the army while 110,000 work for the air force, and 60,000 support the navy.<sup>13</sup>

### Army

The army comprises the largest portion of the North Korean military with 85% of all personnel serving in the ground forces. The army is responsible for all KPA ground units, the Special Purpose Forces (SPF), and low-level air defense missions. The KPA positions about 70% of all ground forces along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea. Much of the KPA artillery is located in hardened positions located forward along the border in order to maximize its weapons systems' ranges without needing to reposition to fire its opening salvos. While useful for offensive operations, the closeness of the artillery to the DMZ may make it vulnerable during defensive operations.<sup>14</sup>

The KPA features a combination of armor, mechanized, and basic infantry units. Besides the major units listed on the chart below, the KPA also fields seven tank regiments and five to eight independent river crossing regiments. The rocket brigades operate FROG [free rocket over ground], KN-02, KN-08, KN-09

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No Dong, or Musudan missiles. The KPA specializes its units for the tasks they are expected to complete if and when the war on the peninsula resumes between North and South Korea.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 1. KPA Units<sup>16</sup>**

Corps/Divisions		Brigades	
Mechanized Corps	2	Armor Brigade	11-15
Infantry Corps	9	Infantry/Motorized Infantry Brigade	68
Capitol Defense Corps	1	Mechanized/Mechanized River Crossing Brigade	14-20
Armor Division	1	Light Infantry Brigade	12
Mechanized Division	4	Airborne Brigade	3
Infantry Division	27	Sniper Brigade	7
Light Infantry Division	7	Reconnaissance Brigade	3
Artillery Division	1	Coastal Security/Border Security Brigade	10
Reserve Infantry Division	40	Artillery, Multiple Rocket Launcher, Heavy Mortar	21-26
Reserve Military Training Unit	10	Engineer River Crossing Brigade	1
		Rocket Brigade	4-7

The KPA also fields a large SPF of approximately 200,000 personnel that consists of eight Bureau of Reconnaissance Special Forces (SF) battalions; a reconnaissance group with 17 additional battalions; a light infantry group with nine light infantry brigades and six sniper brigades; an air maneuver group with three airborne brigades, one airborne battalion, and two sniper brigades; and an amphibious group with two sniper brigades. Despite the KPA's large size, much of its training is conducted without vehicles due to the lack of fuel and the high cost to properly maintain vehicles.<sup>17</sup>

Equipment issues as well as the lack of spare parts and fuel hinder the ability of the KPA, especially the armor and mechanized units, to conduct a large number of realistic training exercises. Units that would normally move in vehicles must conduct its training as dismounted forces. Further reducing training time is the requirement that certain KPA units must send their soldiers to the countryside to help the farmers bring in the rice crop at harvest time.<sup>18</sup>

Most of the KPA reserve consists of ground forces personnel. The army reserve consists of about 940,000 Red Youth Guard (RYG) participants, 620,000 Reserve Military Training Unit (RMTU) members, 5.7 million Workers' Peasants' Red Guard (WPRG) members, and 420,000 members of other paramilitary groups. The RYG began in 1970 and, similar to the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program in the US, the participants consist of male and female students from the age of 14 to 17. The RYG conducts 450 hours of classroom training and seven days of military training each semester. The RYG seeks to locate potential anti-government militants or counter-revolutionaries, and can even be called upon to defend the country at a time of war. The ages of RMTU members range from 17 to 45 for males and 17 to 30 for females. The RMTU inducts those 17-year olds who did not join the regular army or who have completed their active-duty obligation. The Ministry of People's Armed Forces (MPAF) controls the 37 RMTU infantry divisions, which conduct 30 days of mobilization training and 10 days of self-defense training annually. When males reach the age of 46, they are transferred to the WPRG until discharged at the age of 60. Begun in January 1959, the WPRG provides basic military training to the North Korean people and is responsible for internal security, rear area defense, guerrilla warfare, and support to the active duty KPA. The WPRG's structure mirrors the military with regiments, battalions, and companies based on the available population. Company-size WPRG units can be found in the rural areas while the larger units are found in the more urban areas. The WPRG conducts 15 days of mobilization and 15 days of self-defense training annually. The MPAF is responsible for other

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paramilitary training units that consist primarily of former soldiers. Units from squad to division are based on the unit's location, its association with a factory or business, or a university. About 35-40% of the members come under control of one of the 36 MPAF Paramilitary Training Unit divisions. These units provide a trained reserve for the KPA and can be incorporated into the KPA in time of war, serve as fillers or replacements for KPA units, deploy as independent units directly subordinate to the MPAF, or provide security for large government facilities, rear area defense, or security missions. Most of the units operate as infantry, but there may be some specialized units such as anti-aircraft, artillery, rear service, or possibly even armored units.<sup>19</sup>

## Air Force

The KPAF's primary mission is to defend its homeland from the air with secondary missions to provide tactical air support to the army and navy, transportation, logistical support, and SPF insertion/extraction. To accomplish its mission, the KPAF fields three air combat divisions, two air transportation divisions, and a single air training division. Subordinate combat units include eighteen fighter regiments, three light bomber regiments, one fighter/ground attack regiment, one ground attack regiment, and one attack helicopter regiment. In addition, the KPAF operates a number of transportation regiments, helicopter regiments, training regiments, and nineteen surface-to-air missile (SAM) brigades.<sup>20</sup>

There are approximately 110,000 personnel in the KPAF with approximately fifty percent of the aviation assets located within 100 km of the DMZ. Many of the forward deployed air force regiments operate from underground airfields, or as a minimum, the airplanes are stored in underground bunkers. The KPAF can convert several stretches of road in North Korea to auxiliary airstrips. The SAM brigades operate in three sectors—northeast, northwest, and south—with most of the SA-2 and SA-3 battalions in position along the coasts with the newer SA-5 battalions near Pyongyang or the DMZ. The KPAF operates over 50 ground-based early warning radar systems that provide overlapping coverage throughout the country, but with extra emphasis on the west coast and the DMZ. There are fewer radar systems, however, along the North Korea/China border in the north. The mountainous terrain of North Korea causes problems with radar and is the reason for the large number of overlapping systems needed to prevent dead space in the KPAF radar coverage.<sup>21</sup>

The 84th Air Division (Training) conducts all KPAF training. Both pilots and ground personnel attend the same ground school training. When pilots head off to learn how to fly, the ground personnel receive their training in an aviation specialty. It takes about four years of instruction for a KPAF pilot to learn how to fly. The pilots receive about 70 hours of primary flight instruction training, mostly in a CJ-6 aircraft, before they are assigned to a unit. Fewer than five years ago, pilots flew only 20–25 times per year for a total of 15–25 flight hours annually due to the cost, the shortage of aviation fuel, and the lack of spare parts. Each training flight usually lasted only 30–45 minutes and focused mainly on taking off and landing the aircraft safely. There were few resources available to devote to actual air combat maneuver training or close air support training. Some units, usually those that fly the MiG-29, the MiG-23, or the Su-25 may have received more flight time than the others. Since Kim Jong Un took power over three years ago, however, the number of hours each pilot flies increased from 25 to approximately 50 hours annually. While the doubling of flight hours in the last three years is impressive, the KPAF pilots still do not receive the flight hours to become truly proficient in their aviator tasks. KPAF pilots are likely sub-standard when compared to most Western military pilots who receive many more flight hours than their North Korean counterparts.<sup>22</sup>

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## Navy

The KPN is essentially a brown water force, with little capability to operate more than 50 miles off the North Korean coastline. Even with approximately 60,000 personnel, the KPN fields no aviation units as almost all aircraft come under KPAF control. The purpose of the navy is to primarily support SPF missions and to conduct amphibious assaults. To accomplish its clandestine missions, the KPN deploys 40 SANG-O 37-meter Class special operations midget submarines, 33 YUGO 20-meter Class special operations midget submarines, and ten YONO 29-meter submarines. The KPN also can deploy 20 Romeo-class attack submarines against surface ships. To support landing operations of ground troops, the KPN operates four HANTAE-class medium landing ships, four HANCHON-class utility landing craft, 60 NAMPO-class personnel landing craft, and 40 KONG BANG-series personnel landing craft. Between 10 to 20 percent of all KPN vessels are stored in dry dock, on land, or in tunnels, and many of the KPN ships would need significant repairs to make them combat ready. The major exceptions to the poor readiness rates are the submarines and small combatant ships that are often used to support the KPA's SPF units.<sup>23</sup>

The KPN is also responsible for protection of its shores through the use of coastal defense guns and surface-to-surface missiles. The KPN fields a large, but unknown number of coastal artillery ranging from 122-mm to 152-mm guns as well as missiles including the SSC-2B Samlet, HY-2, and SS-N-2 Styx. Most of these guns are in hardened sites and would be very difficult to reposition during combat operations. One of the KPA's newest missiles, the KN-08, is a mobile launcher with a range of 9,650 km. This distance places California within the outer fringes of the KN-08's maximum range.<sup>24</sup>

The KPN is known to conduct aggressive patrolling and has been known to accost fishermen from other countries outside of the internationally recognized territorial waters and trespass south of the Northern Limit Line (NLL), the boundary on the west coast that is supposed to serve as the demarcation between the two Koreas. Notable naval incidents between North Korea and South Korean occurred in 1999, 2002, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 including one North Korean vessel sailing 3.7 km south of the NLL where it remained for two hours in South Korean waters. The KPN was also likely responsible for one of its submarines sinking the South Korean corvette, *Cheonan*, in March 2010, even though the DPRK denied any culpability in the incident.<sup>25</sup>

## Strengths

While analysts may debate the North Korean military's capabilities, the KPA does possess some strengths. First is the sheer size of the active and reserve military. With over a million active duty personnel and over seven million more in reserve, the DPRK can mobilize higher percentage of its population for military service than almost any other country in the world. Second is the idea that the military comes first. Any resources that the country possesses goes to the military before it is provided to the North Korean people. In a country where starvation is at times rampant, the DPRK military personnel receive their larger rations before most civilians. During any war, the KPA would only take even more of any available resources in order for the DPRK regime to survive. Third, both the North Korean military personnel and civilians are used to hardships. Due to the tough life most North Korean people already endure, the ravages of war would not have the same effect that military conflict would cause most other countries. Lastly, the DPRK possesses nuclear weapons as well as chemical and offensive biological weapons. The fear of a CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear) attack,

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especially nuclear, may cause Western inaction as North Korea's enemies debate whether to act or not due the high possibility of the DPRK's threats of weapon of mass destruction (WMD) reprisals.<sup>26</sup>

## Weaknesses

Although the North Korean military may feature some positive attributes as a fighting force, the KPA also suffers from many weaknesses as well. Much of the military's equipment is old and obsolete. The North Korean military consciously refuses to rid itself of any equipment and still operate tanks that date back to World War II. This wide range of military hardware from many generations of warfare also generates logistical issues. The KPA's supply personnel must not only find the spare parts for a large variety of equipment, the KPA maintenance personnel must be well-versed in the repair of a great assortment of vehicles and weapons. In addition, the DPRK lacks the logistical capability to support the KPA beyond a few months. Due to the shortage of fuel and the cost to operate vehicles for a cash-strapped country, many of the KPA soldiers find themselves involved in public works projects or helping farmers bring in their rice crops. Any time spent in non-military support is less time that the KPA soldiers can spend training for combat. Even the mechanized and armor forces, due to resource restraints, spend much of their training time doing light infantry training instead of mounted operations. While KPA soldiers may be well trained in individual skills or small unit tactics, the amount of time spent on larger exercises pales in comparison to most Western militaries. Without adequate time and resources to practice large scale military operations, the KPA will always face a steep learning curve when the KPA is forced to perform them in actual combat for the first time.<sup>27</sup>

## Current Locations

While North Korean military units are scattered throughout the country, approximately 70 percent of the ground forces are located between Pyongyang and the DMZ. The KPA ground forces are often located in hardened positions and their artillery can easily reach South Korea with nearly every artillery piece situated so that two-thirds of the weapon's range covers South Korea's side of the border. The South Korean capital city, Seoul, is within range of some of some 250 of DPRK's longest-ranging artillery and missile systems. The KPAF is also focused on South Korea with many of its runways in the southern third of the country. The KPN operates off the east and west coast of the country as North Korea possesses few navigable rivers. There are very few military units located along the DPRK's northern border with China. See the map in the military organization section for locations of major bases of the army, air force, and navy as well as most runways throughout North Korea.<sup>28</sup>

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Figure 1. North Korean military installations. Numbers correspond with the map numbers under Section 4, Military Organizations, below. Locations on map are approximate.



## Section 2: KPA Tactics and Techniques

The DPRK believes that the average KPA soldier is physically, mentally, militarily, and politically better trained and prepared for war than any individual soldier the North Korean will meet on the battlefield—American, South Korean, Japanese, or other Western army. Due to the materiel weakness that the DPRK will face in any war on the Korean peninsula, the KPA teaches its soldiers that the next war will not be decided by technology or weapons, but by the revolutionary spirit as the soldiers fight for the liberation of their comrades. The KPA soldiers are also indoctrinated with the idea that one of them is more than a match for 100 of the enemy. The KPA trains every soldier to serve one level up from his current position. With this type of mental indoctrination, it is likely that many KPA military personnel would rather fight to the death than surrender.<sup>29</sup>

Throughout this TTR, North Korean doctrinal terms, when known, will be used instead of the terms found in TC 7-100.2, **Opposing Force (OPFOR) Tactics**. Where there is collation, the TC 7-100.2 OPFOR term will be inserted in parenthesis to demonstrate the connectivity between real-world actors to the composite OPFOR in the TC.

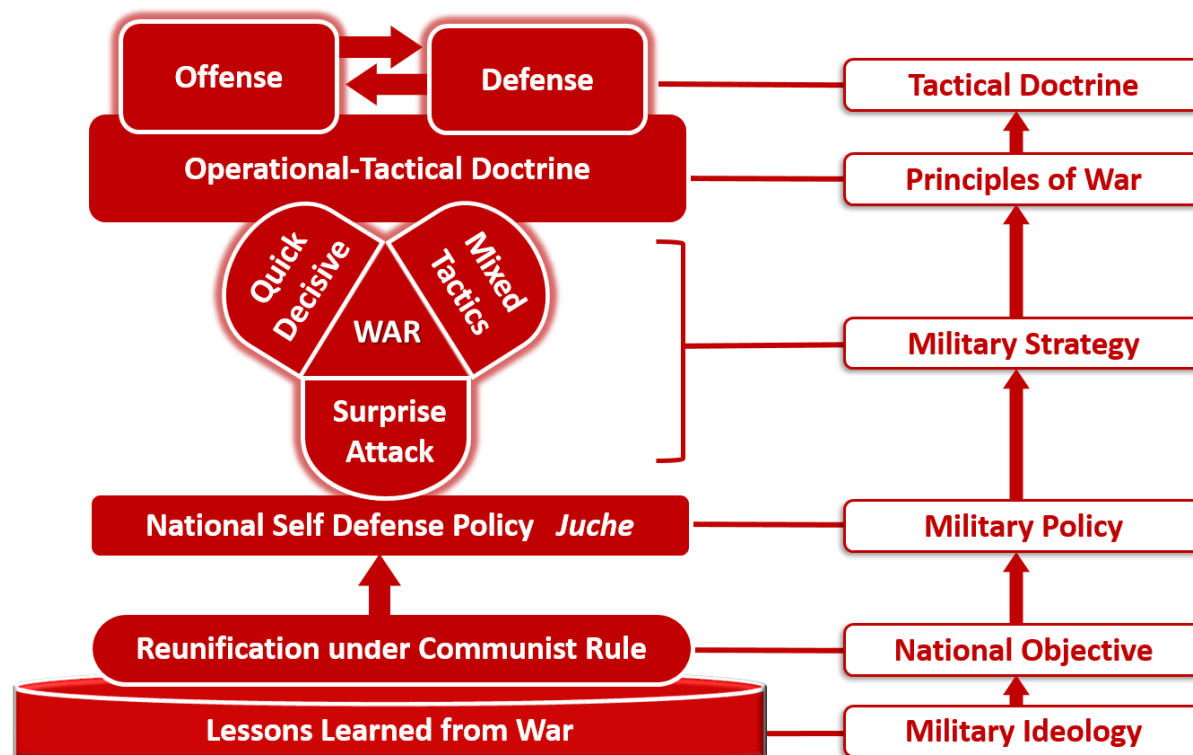


Figure 2. Building blocks of KPA tactical doctrine. Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics, 2005, p 66. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.



## KPA Tactical Doctrine Building Blocks

The KPA tactical doctrine is based on a series of six “building blocks” as demonstrated in Figure 2. The Military Training Bureau serves as the KPA’s military think tank and has studied conflict from World War II to the present. With that knowledge, the KPA has developed a military ideology based on its experiences from 1950-53 fighting the US, old Soviet theory, and Chinese light infantry tactics modified by the most recent US experience in numerous locations around the world over the past three decades. Due to the United States’ ability to overwhelm almost any enemy with technology and firepower, the KPA emphasizes asymmetric warfare in conjunction with large numbers of SPF units. Even with the emphasis on asymmetric warfare, the KPA plans the use of large amounts of artillery including multiple rocket launchers in lieu of air support, heavy reliance on anti-tank guns, and anti-armor support by a variety of first and second generation wire-guided anti-tank missiles. The KPA will attempt to concentrate and coordinate the firing of large numbers of older weapons systems in order to make up for a shortage of the latest technologically advanced equipment.<sup>30</sup>

The second building block is the national objective discussed in the section on strategy and goals early on in this TTR. *Juche*, or self-reliance, is discussed in the section on key alliances above. From these three building blocks, the KPA military strategy of a surprise attack, a quick decisive war, and one fought with mixed tactics emerges to become the fourth block. Based on the military strategy, the KPA’s principles of war generate the fifth block. From the principles of war, the KPA develops its offensive and defensive tactical doctrine.

## Military Strategy

### Surprise Attack

The KPA will attempt to attack its enemy in an unexpected place, time, or means. The characteristics of a surprise attack could include the use of inclement weather, nighttime operations, or rugged terrain; a detailed deception plan; skilled infiltration units to include SPF units; parachute or air assault operations; the massing of fires; the quick concentration of forces at the decisive point and time; or the unexpected employment of large scale mechanized or armor forces.<sup>31</sup>

### Quick Decisive War

The DPRK lacks the resources to fight a protracted war and therefore any war the KPA fights must be quick and decisive. Based on recent experience, the DPRK also realizes that the US democratic system takes time to react as the Americans attempt to build a coalition. If the war is over before the Americans can react, the US may have to let the status quo remain, such as in the recent action in Crimea by the Russians.<sup>32</sup>

### Mixed Force Tactics

Offensively, the KPA plans a two-front war through both conventional and unconventional means. The DPRK is willing to launch a pre-emptive strike and is willing to risk its country’s annihilation in order to defeat its enemies. The first front would consist of a massive conventional assault across the DMZ with substantial firepower and chemical attacks on selected forward position targets in order to surround Seoul and then move farther south. Additionally, ballistic missile strikes, including some with chemical warheads, would hit South Korean and US air bases; ports; and command, control, communications,

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computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) assets throughout South Korea and in Japan. There is also a real possibility that North Korea would attempt to use offensive biological weapons in its attacks.<sup>33</sup>

The second front would be an attack by the large KPA SPF units throughout the South Korean rear area in conjunction with North Korean agents already in place. The SPF could reach South Korea by a number of means including helicopters, hovercraft, light planes, parachutes, small boats, submarines, or infiltration tunnels. These SPF personnel would also simultaneously hit US bases in Japan including Okinawa. In addition, the DPRK would focus on asymmetric warfare attacks using lessons learned from American military actions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, and other places over the last thirty years. Since 1992, North Korean leaders have espoused that its military forces could reach Pusan in just three days. While totally unrealistic, some DPRK leaders actually believe that in the right military and political conditions, its goal of reaching Pusan could occur in less than a month. Some South Korean reports indicate that some KPA generals now believe that the capture of the entire peninsula is an impossibility and that after the capture of Seoul, North Korea would need to sue for a negotiated peace treaty based upon its position of greater strength. It is not known how Kim Jong Un stands on this change in policy, but some of the KPA's military plans reflect this change in attitude about taking over the entire peninsula. If war were to resume on the Korean peninsula, the US and its allies would face a formidable foe both on the front line and in its rear areas.<sup>34</sup>

## Operational/Tactical Doctrine

The KPA's doctrine is based on five fundamental principles of war: surprise attack, mass and dispersion, increased maneuverability, cunning and personified tactics, and secure secrets. The use of surprise attack has been covered under military strategy, above.

### Mass and Dispersion

The KPA will concentrate its combat power at the decisive point and time and will weight its main effort. Unlike US doctrine, the KPA believes that its forces will only need a 2:1 ratio of its forces at the decisive point to the enemy to find success in offensive operations. The main effort will operate on a narrower front than the attacks to its flanks and the supporting attacks will disperse over a wider front to deceive the enemy about where the attack may occur. The KPA will use the terrain to maximize its success and use deception operations when dispersing to avoid excessive concentration that will make the force a lucrative target.<sup>35</sup>

### Increase Maneuverability

The KPA wants to fight and win a quick and decisive war and to achieve this objective, the combat units will seek to use the terrain to their advantage. The KPA will employ ground vehicles to quickly reposition artillery, armor, and infantry on the battlefield using the existing high-speed networks or aircraft. The KPA, however, will conduct night moves and use the minor roads as well as the rugged terrain to surprise its enemy. The SPF or other forces will conduct raids to seize key transportation nodes from other forces and the KPA emphasizes maneuverability as a basic element of combat power during training.<sup>36</sup>



## Cunning and Personified Tactics

The KPA focuses on cunning in all planning for its troops and emphasizes to its leaders to use its initiative and aggressiveness with no hesitation. While the KPA conducts comprehensive planning and keep these plans close-hold, the leaders expect its subordinates to conduct quick estimates and conduct bold operations that will result in a quick but decisive war.<sup>37</sup>

## Secure Secrets

North Korea not only keeps a close hold on all plans, but also distributes false information to confuse its enemy. Activities to secure the KPA's secrets could include reconnaissance, counter-reconnaissance, deceptions, counterintelligence operations, and conducting operations in inclement weather or darkness.<sup>38</sup>

## Defensive and Offensive Tactics

The KPA professes both a defensive and offensive strategy in case of war. The defensive strategy is to prevent any invasion across the DMZ or an amphibious landing on either of its coasts. If such an attack would occur, the DPRK would mobilize not only its 7.7 million reserve personnel but likely declare a total war in which all North Korean citizens would be obligated to defend their country. To deter any foe from attacking the country, the DPRK has threatened the use of nuclear weapons against South Korea, Japan, or any reachable US military facility in Asia. The DPRK also has no qualms about the use of chemical or offensive biological weapons. The military decision-making process to invade North Korea could be delayed as its enemies debate its ramifications as long as the DPRK still retains control of its NBC arsenal.<sup>39</sup>

## Other Techniques

Besides the military strategy and operational/tactical doctrine previously discussed, there are also a number of techniques that the KPA will employ for an offensive or defensive operation.<sup>40</sup>

## Adequate Logistics

The KPA doctrine calls for each commander to ensure that there are sufficient supplies to successfully complete the mission. Due to the lack of supplies faced by the KPA, most commanders will plan to use captured supplies, military or civilian, to adequately complete the assigned mission. The KPA weapons systems, mortars, and artillery, are often of a slightly larger caliber than those of its enemy allowing the DPRK military to use captured military stores while denying the same option to its opponent.<sup>41</sup>

## Annihilation

The KPA offensive doctrine calls for the destruction of the enemy at all costs by continuing the pursuit, staying close to the enemy to reduce the likelihood of its foe's superior artillery and close air support coming to the rescue, and continual contact to prevent the enemy from withdrawing or regrouping for a future attack. The taking of terrain is a secondary mission to the enemy's destruction. In the KPA's seven designated offensive movements—penetration, thrust, holding, turning, infiltration, besetment, and encirclement—the focus is on the destruction of the enemy or the movement of ground forces in order to set up another maneuver that will aid in the enemy's annihilation.<sup>42</sup>

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The KPA will often use a combination of the seven offensive forms of movement as seen from any unit level of operation. The purpose of the *penetration*, a division-level movement, is to destroy the defending unit by using the first tactical echelon to penetrate the initial defensive position on a 2- to 3-km front to allow the passage of the second tactical echelon to conduct a deep fight in the enemy's rear.<sup>43</sup>

The *thrust* is an offensive movement form used by the KPA at the company, battalion, or regimental level to attack a terrain-oriented defense. Once the defensive position is breached, the remainder of the unit passes through quickly to conduct one of three follow-on missions—strike the enemy in the flank, conduct a turning movement, or initiate a besetment. See the tactical example diagram of an integrated attack below for more details.<sup>44</sup>

A KPA *holding* movement is used by units conducting an attack that is not part of the main attack. These units receive a much larger front to operate in compared to the main attack. The holding maneuver may consist of a demonstration or feint in order to draw off enemy forces from the main attack's primary route of attack.<sup>45</sup>

The KPA *turning* movement is normally the prelude for another type of KPA attack in the enemy's rear area. The turning maneuver force often follows behind a penetrating or thrust force to rush armor or mechanized forces to the enemy's vulnerable rear areas. Upon the completion of the turning movement, the exploitation force may then become part of an *encirclement* or *besetment* maneuver.<sup>46</sup>

A KPA *infiltration* movement is just as it sounds as the force uses covert means to pass through the enemy's lines to attack positions in the enemy's rear area. In an infantry corps-level operation, approximately two-thirds of the light infantry brigade and sniper brigade or a total of eight battalions may be given the mission to conduct raids on key targets in the enemy's rear—artillery positions, vital chokepoints on major roads, or command posts. This focus on infiltration continues down to all levels: four of six companies from the division light infantry battalion at the division level, one regular infantry company in each regiment, and one regular infantry platoon in each battalion may all receive infiltration missions.<sup>47</sup>

The KPA *besetment* movement is the surrounding of an enemy strong point in order to inflict maximum casualties on the defensive force. There are four types of besetments: front and one flank; front and two flanks; front and rear; and front, rear, and two flanks. No matter what type of besetment is chosen, indirect fire will attempt to seal any enemy side not covered by the direct fire.<sup>48</sup>

*Encirclement* is the final KPA offensive movement and is used when the majority of a retreating force can be intercepted, encircled, and annihilated. The preferred location for the attack is between the enemy's frontline defensive positions and the reserve force's location(s). KPA Army and Corps headquarters may deploy up to two divisions to conduct an encirclement operation. Lower level units will use whatever forces are available. There are four sub-categories of KPA encirclement operations: *partitioned* destruction for large forces; *compressed* destruction for smaller forces; *fire power* destruction in narrow areas; and *raid* destruction for built up areas. See the operational example diagram of a dispersed attack below for more details.<sup>49</sup>



## Camouflage, Concealment, and Deception

Keeping secrets secure involves the use of camouflage, concealment, and deception by all units. Since North Korea will likely not obtain even local air superiority, the KPA doctrine calls for denying the enemy any intelligence it may receive from aerial platforms through the use of both active and passive camouflage, concealment, and deception techniques. The KPAF uses both underground runways and hardened sites to hide aircraft from aerial attack. The KPN not only hides its ships in caves that are connected to the sea by fortified tunnels, it will also attempt to hide its vessels among civilian fishing boats found in small villages. All three services will use decoys in order for the enemy to waste ammunition, something North Korea gleaned from the American aerial strikes on Serbia where the US Air Force fired at fake sites almost as often as actual positions. The KPA armed forces believe that each operation should include a deception plan that may include a demonstration, feint, raid, or an attempt to create fratricide among enemy units.<sup>50</sup>

## Combined Operations

KPA doctrine emphasizes that all actions, conventional or SPF, must be coordinated at all levels and between the different types of units. Much of this coordination will be done through liaison or courier that reduces the likelihood that an enemy can learn KPA intent by an increase in radio chatter or the interception of electronic signals. The KPA has many specialized units including river crossing brigades and regiments, sniper brigades in all three services, and large numbers of SPF units. Any major KPA attack will coordinate the use of all the different arms to attack the decisive point at the proper time.<sup>51</sup>

## Echelon Forces

The KPA takes from old Soviet doctrine in its use of echelons during both offensive and defensive operations. In the offense, the KPA will likely place two-thirds of its ground forces in the first echelon and two-ninths in the second echelon, with only one-ninth in operational reserve or as a third echelon. The KPA ground forces will also use echelons when forced to go on the defense, as the KPA believes echeloning its forces provides for defensive depth with rapid counterattack possibilities.<sup>52</sup>

## Firepower

Like the old Soviet Union doctrine that dates back to World War II, the KPA doctrine also expounds the use of large quantities of artillery fire on a single target. The KPA will use massed fires, including chemical weapons, from artillery, missiles, or multiple rocket launchers to both psychologically frighten as well as annihilate the enemy position. The KPA fields over 4,400 artillery pieces of all types and the KPAF is focused on support of the ground forces. With this large amount of indirect fire support available on the battlefield, the KPA can ensure that almost all targets receive the emphasis they deserve. When not otherwise employed, KPAF aircraft will fly in support of ground troops.<sup>53</sup>

## KPAF and KPN Employment

The KPA doctrine states that joint operations should be used for most missions. Any major attack by the DPRK will likely use KPAF and KPN assets to deploy KPA units into the enemy's rear areas. The KPAF will fly SPF units in with small airplanes such as the recently repainted Antonov An-2 fleet or helicopters. The KPAF can also use its airplanes or helicopters to parachute drop the KPA's airborne units to conduct an

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air assault operation. The KPN will use its small boats and submarines to clandestinely transport SPF behind the enemy's lines on both coasts of South Korea.<sup>54</sup>

## Mobility

The KPA doctrine also stresses the use of armored vehicles in all its operations. The KPA ground forces will use the speed of vehicles to exploit all openings and, when on defense, the KPA will employ its mobile forces to counterattack any enemy penetration. KPA vehicles will use the major and minor roads to move quickly, but the KPA light infantry units possess the ability to travel on foot through the rugged mountainous terrain to sneak up on enemy positions from an unexpected direction.<sup>55</sup>

## Rear Area Protection

The KPA understands the vulnerability of rear areas as the KPA leaders see its enemy's rear area as an operational center of gravity for American forces. Much of the DPRK's SPF effort will be directed at its enemy's rear area. Conversely, the KPA will also defend its own rear area against ground attacks. The DPRK will deploy its vast number of paramilitary units to defend against enemy rear area attacks in order to free up its regular KPA units for more conventional offensive operations.<sup>56</sup>

## Reconnaissance

Reconnaissance is very important to KPA military doctrine. The KPA will strive to conduct reconnaissance continuously at all levels to include the enemy's rear area in order to achieve surprise when attacking and to prevent surprise when on defense. Each forward-deployed KPA infantry corps fields a reconnaissance battalion and each KPA infantry division contains an organic reconnaissance company. Each KPA infantry regiment possesses its own organic reconnaissance platoon, but there are also three independent reconnaissance brigades that could be deployed anywhere on the battlefield for additional intelligence-gathering operations.<sup>57</sup>

## Two Front War

KPA doctrine calls for a two-front war, but not in the traditional sense of the term such as in World War I or World War II. Instead, the DPRK will use its SPF units and agents already on the ground in South Korea to create a "second front" in the enemy's rear areas while its enemy must continue to deal with the conventional battle on the primary front. The SPF units will attack enemy key command and control (C2) facilities, important logistical centers, and attempt to create fratricide between enemy rear echelon units.<sup>58</sup>

## Use the Terrain

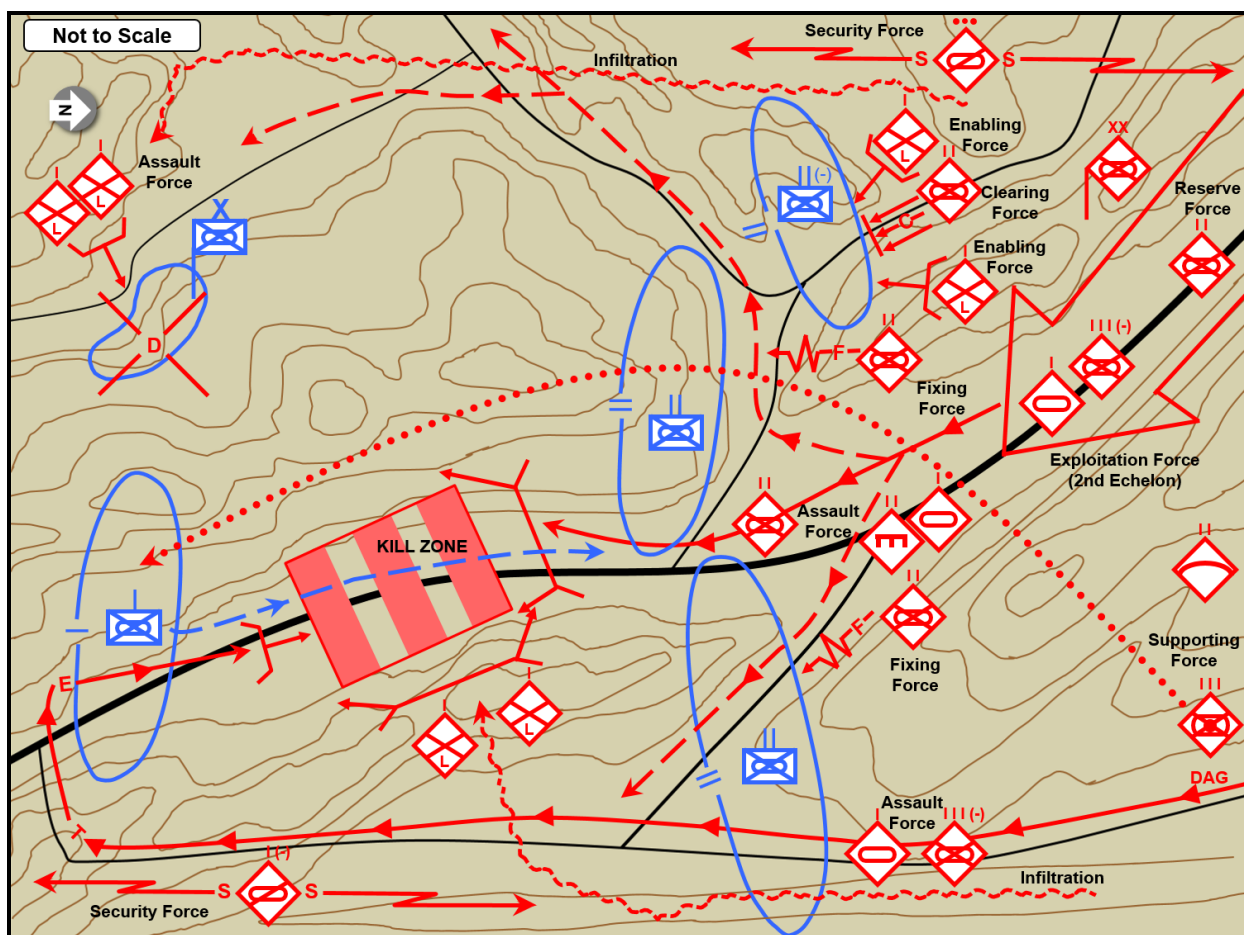
Lastly, the KPA doctrine calls for its forces to use the terrain to its best advantage with a focus on the mountains, poor weather, or night operations in order to minimize the effects of a technologically superior foe. Just like during the Korean War, the KPA will likely use the mountain ranges and ridges as an avenue of advance in bad weather or at night while its enemy focuses on the more easily accessible valley floor with its highways.



## Tactical Vignettes

The following vignettes explore two operational level and two tactical level actions in detail, accompanied by tactical diagrams to graphically depict the actions. Throughout the following four examples, references will be made to North Korean tactics and, when applicable, related to OPFOR tactics found in TC 7-100.2, *Opposing Force Tactics*. The terms will be shown in parenthesis where the North Korean tactic or term is translatable into TC 7-100.2 terminology.

### 1. Operational Offense: Encirclement (Dispersed Attack)



**Figure 3. KPA Division encirclement movement (dispersed attack) of an enemy brigade position. Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, *The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics*, 2005, pp 86-87. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.**

Though a KPA division may conduct an encirclement movement at its operational level, many of the subordinate KPA units are involved in other forms of military movement as defined by KPA offensive doctrine. A KPA encirclement movement is the functional equivalent of the OPFOR dispersed attack described in TC 7-100.2, pages 3-13 to 3-16. While the KPA assault forces conduct the main attack in the form of an encirclement movement, the fixing forces may conduct thrust, penetration, or holding

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movements in its own areas of operation. In this example, one of the assault forces also conducts a turning movement before becoming part of the encirclement forces.<sup>59</sup>

A dispersed attack requires deliberate planning and can be accomplished with or without an advantage in forces over the defensive foe. To make an attack, the KPA requires only a 2:1 advantage at the point of the attack. The KPA doctrine designates that the main attack advance on a much narrower attack zone and this requires the rest of the division to disperse more widely throughout the remainder of the divisional front. The KPA commander's intent is to provide the appearance to the enemy that there is significant military force to its front to keep them from assisting other units. The division's four artillery battalions, three conventional and one rocket, are located in the Division Artillery Group (DAG). The DAG may receive additional indirect fire assets from the corps dependent upon whether the division is conducting the main or supporting attack. The DAG initiates the dispersed attack by indirectly firing artillery and rockets not only at the front line units, but at the brigade command post and brigade reserve as well. (For ease of clarity in this example, only one artillery round is shown.) The DAG's task is to provide adequate indirect fire in order to achieve neutralization of the brigade reserve; disrupt the command and control of the battalion command post; and to harass as minimum or neutralize, if possible, the front line units (see TC 7-100.2, p 9-2 to 9-3 for the definition of the terms harass, disrupt, and neutralize in regard to artillery battle damage assessment).<sup>60</sup>

The KPA Division uses its light infantry units (one battalion with six companies) on infiltration missions to initiate the attack during the night, a period of inclement weather, or during poor visibility. All six light infantry companies in the division take part in this example, but only two companies are involved in the actual main encirclement movement. On the western flank, two light infantry companies assist the mechanized battalion to clear a mountain pass that is a terrain chokepoint. The task of the light infantry company and the mechanized infantry battalion is to clear the pass to gain freedom of movement and allow possible exploitation from second echelon units (TC 7-100.2, p 3-1). (See Figure 4 below and its accompanying details for an example of a possible KPA thrust attack that could be used to clear this type of chokepoint.) Two other light infantry companies on the same flank infiltrate farther to the south to attack the enemy's brigade command post by fire in order to destroy it if not already eliminated by the artillery fire. On the eastern flank, the remainder of the light infantry battalion—two companies— infiltrate over the mountain ridge to serve as the support force on the eastern side of the planned kill zone. Even though there are adjacent KPA divisions also attacking, the division's recon company still protects the eastern flank of the main attack, especially as the main assault force makes its turning movement to the west and then north again. A single platoon screens the division's western flank by screening to prevent a surprise attack from the enemy from the adjacent division's areas of operation.<sup>61</sup>

Away from the main attack and the light infantry battalion activities, there are three other supporting attacks that occur almost simultaneously. This includes the thrust attack on the west flank already mentioned above, a holding maneuver to the west of the main attack (fixing attack in TC 7-100.2, p 3-5) and a penetration movement to the east of the main attack (also designated a fixing attack in TC 7-100.2, p 3-5). The engineer battalion and first echelon tank company are prepared to follow the main attack along the major road or along possible secondary avenues of approach to the east. The engineer battalion is prepared to assist with any breach operations required along the main axis of advance or the secondary axis located to the east. The second echelon units consisting of a tank company and two mechanized infantry battalions serve as the division's exploitation force and are back farther to follow

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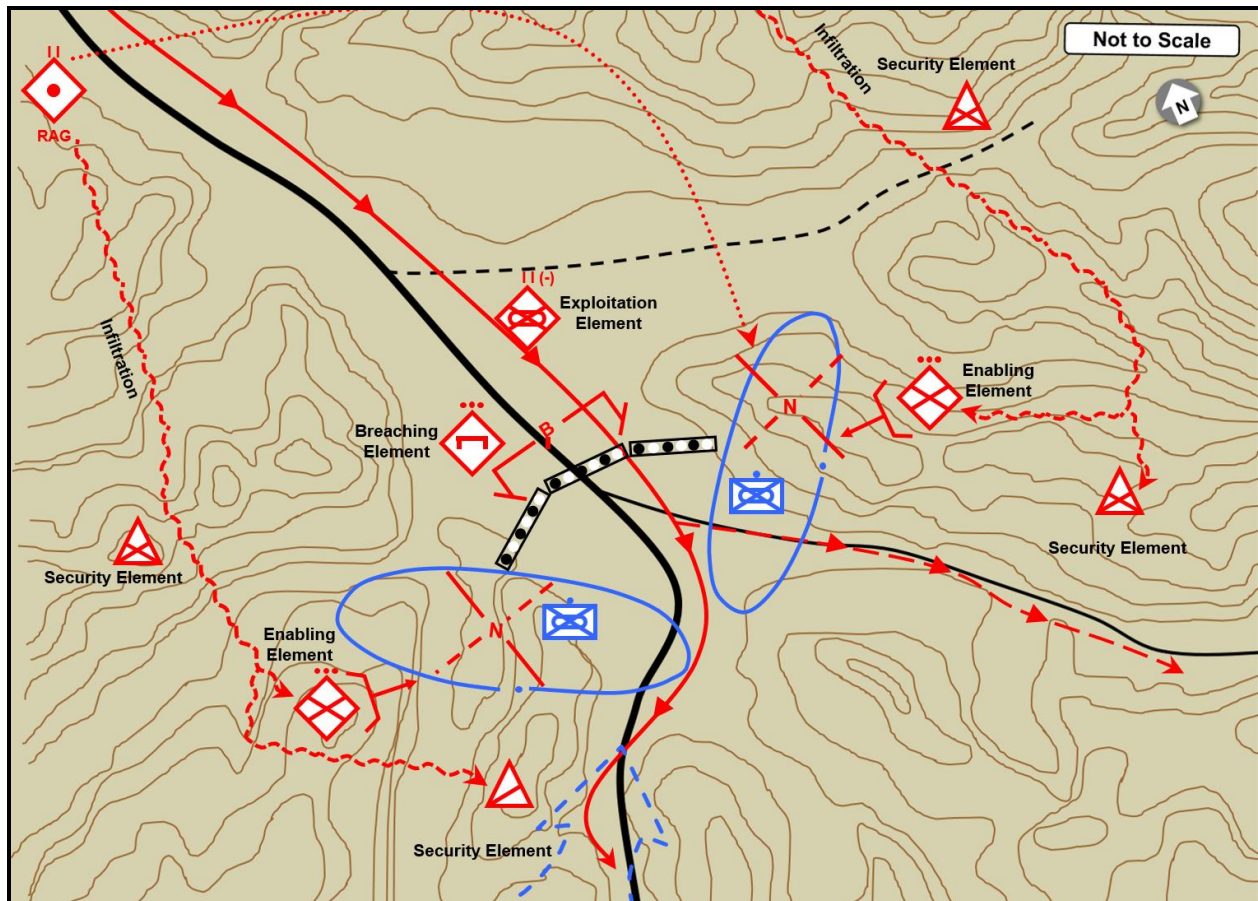
whichever first echelon unit is most successful. The planned exploitation is along the main axis of advance, but could possibly go west through the cleared chokepoint to the west or if the penetration attack has been more successful than the main attack, farther to the east.

The main attack has many moving parts. One tank company and two mechanized infantry companies (Assault Force) would then conduct a turning movement from the east to attack the enemy's brigade reserve from the south. Its task is to get behind the enemy's brigade reserve with the purpose to drive it into the planned kill zone. If possible, the timing of this attack would occur just after the enemy's brigade reserve initiated its movement from its assembly area in a move to reinforce a gap in the front lines to its north. The planned KPA kill zone is located between the front line units and the brigade reserve force. If executed correctly, the tank company and two mechanized infantry battalions would attack by fire from the south; one mechanized infantry battalion with possibly a tank company would support by fire from the north. The intent is for the main assault force to annihilate the brigade reserve at its most vulnerable time, just as it begins its movement from the reserve assembly area. The two light infantry companies that infiltrated earlier support by fire from the east to prevent the reserve from escaping in that direction. The kill zone's fourth flank to the west is blocked by high ground. If necessary, indirect fire from artillery and rockets in the DAG could cover the west flank not covered by direct fire from ground units. Besides the second echelon units that will exploit the success of the first echelon assaults, the division will keep approximately one battalion in reserve for other contingencies. The division's organic air defense battalion will provide sector coverage for the area of operation (see TC 7-100.2, Chapter 11).<sup>62</sup>

Upon completion of the encirclement of the brigade reserve and any front-line units falling back into the kill zone and their annihilation, the KPA would continue its movement to the south. Based on its experiences during the Korean War, the KPA expects that if a significant penetration of the enemy's front lines occur, enemy adjacent units often conduct retrograde operations to maintain contact with its flanks and to avoid being cut off. If the KPA first echelon forces still maintain adequate forces, these units would continue to press the attack southward. If not strong enough to remain a viable force or based on the situation, the KPA division's second echelon forces could then pass through the first echelon to attack the enemy's combat support, combat service support, and C2 units in the division and/or corps rear area. The second echelon could follow the planned primary avenue of approach as the Assault Force (TC 7-100.2, p 3-5 to 3-6) or along the secondary roads to the east or west if either of those attacks yielded better success. In the tradition of old Soviet doctrine, the KPA will reinforce success and any KPA division plan will contain different route options for the second echelon units to follow based on the success of the first echelon units.<sup>63</sup>



## 2. Tactical Offense: Thrust (Attack to Gain Freedom of Movement)



**Figure 4. KPA Thrust Attack (Attack to Gain Freedom of Movement) of an enemy strong point. Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics, 2005, pp 82-83. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.**

At the tactical level, the KPA thrust maneuver is an example of one of the six offensive tactical missions found in TC 7-100.2 (pages 3-1 to 3-2)—an attack to gain freedom of movement. The other five tactical offensive missions in TC 7-100.2 are to restrict freedom of movement; gain control of key terrain, personnel, or equipment; or gain information, dislocate, or disrupt the enemy. The KPA most often uses the thrust maneuver at the regimental, battalion, or company level. An enabling force attacks the enemy position and once the blue forces are defeated, the exploitation force then passes through the cleared axis of advance to continue the attack in the enemy's rear area as the battalion or higher unit regains its freedom of movement. This example is conducted by a mechanized battalion without assistance from any light infantry company, but the mechanized battalion could possibly receive additional assets, if they were available.<sup>64</sup>

While the size of the operation may vary depending on the level of command involved, the actions are very similar. Initially, the KPA will use artillery or mortars from the DAG or RAG (Regimental Artillery Group) to support the operation by providing indirect fire on the enemy positions. (For ease of clarity in

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this example, only one artillery attack is shown.) The RAG's task is to neutralize (TC 7-100.2, p 9-3) the enemy platoons to allow the enabling elements to successfully assault and occupy the positions overwatching the minefield placed on the road. Additionally, the artillery would be used as a fixing force to prevent any potential enemy forces from coming to the attacked unit's assistance. In this role, the artillery would neutralize (TC 7-100.2, p 9-3) the enemy artillery or enemy ground units that react to the attack on the enemy forces. SPF, spies, or forward observers that infiltrated (TC 7-100.2, p 9-15 to 9-17) to observation positions would provide the call for fire on arriving units attempting to reach the attacked units. For a battalion level thrust, 110 to 150 tubes (artillery, mortar, or rocket) could be allocated to the unit making the attack. Even though this battalion will have adjacent friendly units, the battalion commander would still provide security on his flanks to avoid an attack by the enemy without warning. The KPA commander would most likely use observation posts on high terrain or likely avenues of approach to warn the main body composed of soldiers internal to his battalion or the attached light infantry company.<sup>65</sup>

Due to the rugged terrain on the Korean peninsula, the KPA will likely use light infantry or possibly mechanized infantry operating dismounted to attack enemy units holding a physically difficult terrain feature. While the KPA would like a better force ratio, its ground forces will attack even if the assault force only possesses a 2:1 ratio advantage against the defenders. If possible, the KPA ground forces will use an indirect approach to attack the position from a direction the defensive unit least expects an assault. The enabling elements would eliminate the squad positions on either side of the road that are providing observation to the minefield for its breaching and then to give the battalion back its freedom of movement. While the attack by the enabling elements and the breaching occurred, additional security personnel would place observation posts on the most likely avenues of approach by enemy reserves that may come to the assaulted squads' assistance. Either the engineers, the infantry, or an attached obstacle removal company (only in forward divisions) would conduct the breaching operation in order to continue the advance as rapidly as possible to gain the freedom of movement needed by the mechanized battalion. If the infantry that made the actual enabling assault on the enemy squad positions were dismounted mechanized or motorized infantry, the successful attackers would rejoin their vehicles as the battalion regains its freedom of movement down the primary avenue of advance or secondary avenue if that route proved easier to traverse.<sup>66</sup>



### 3. Operational Defense: Anti-Tank Defense System (Maneuver Defense)

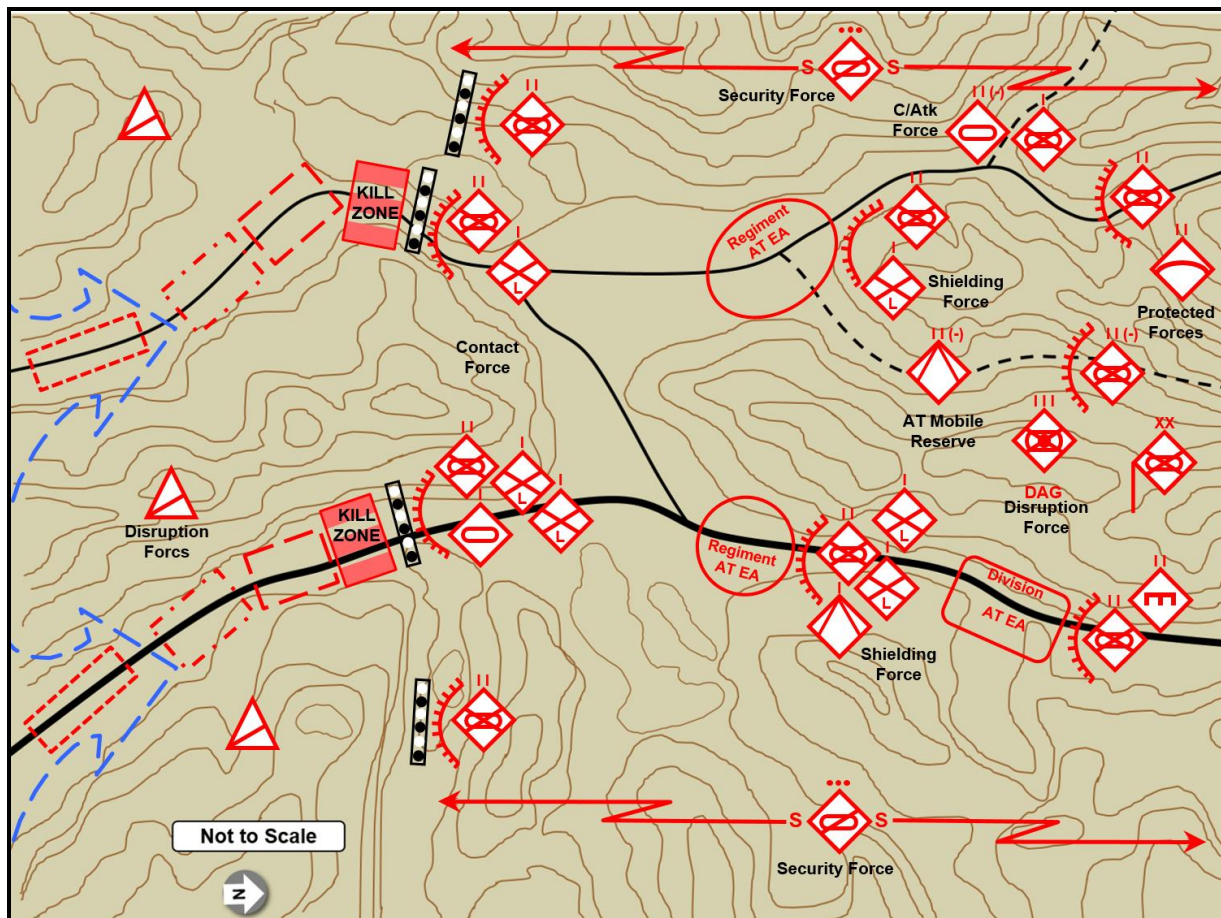


Figure 5. KPA Division Anti-Tank Defense System (Maneuver Defense). Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, *The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics*, 2005, pp 93-99. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.

The area defense is the KPA's principal defensive tactic, which it designs around stopping the enemy's armor as the KPA leaders consider tanks as the enemy's most lethal ground attack vehicle. If on defense, the KPA plans to fight an anti-armor battle along the predictable routes that the enemy's vehicles will likely travel. The KPA's area defensive doctrine is the functional equivalent of the Maneuver Defense found in TC 7-100.2 (pp 4-10 to 4-14). The KPA breaks down its defensive plan into six phases: anti-armor obstacles, anti-armor fire plan, anti-tank defensive positions, anti-tank engagement areas, the anti-tank reserve, and the counterattack force.<sup>67</sup>

The KPA's defense phase 1 is the **Anti-Armor Obstacle Plan** that takes place in front of the forward defensive positions and within each anti-tank (AT) engagement area or kill zone (TC 7-100.2, p 2-15). The KPA will place these obstacle belts so they tie into the terrain and include a combination of AT and anti-personnel (AP) mines. The KPA will cover each concealed obstacle belt with both observers to call in

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indirect fire and direct fire weapons. The obstacle belts will consist of several layers positioned to take advantage of the KPA's various AT weapons' ranges, normally from 400 to 1,000 meters.<sup>68</sup>

Phase 2 or the **Anti-Armor Fire Plan** contains four sub-phases conducted by Disruption Forces based on the location of the enemy observed by security elements located ahead of the forward defensive line whose task is to call in indirect fire for the purpose of preventing an effective attack by the enemy (TC 7-100.2, p 4-4 to 4-5 and pp 9-15 to 9-17). During Phase 2a, the KPA plans *area fires* at potential chokepoints along the suspected avenues of approach, often along main roads. The KPA allocates two artillery battalions per each enemy company to its front. The KPA will fire mortars, artillery, or rockets at these chokepoints. The normal size of a battery target is approximately 100 meters wide by 900 meters deep. Phase 2b is a set of planned *rolling fires* approximately 2,000 meters in front of the forward battle positions with the purpose to disrupt and destroy armor march units as they transition to battle formations. The normal width for these barrages are 400 to 700 meters and may occur every 500 to 800 meters for a maximum of four times. Phase 2c or *anti-armor rectangular target fires* occurs immediately after Phase 2b. The primary difference between these two types of fire is that while the width is approximately the same (400 to 700 meters), the depth of the fire is less, 300 to 500 meters, and is fired in three sequential volleys first by rockets, then by artillery, and lastly by mortars as opposing forces approach the obstacle belts. Anti-armor rectangular fire will cease at the obstacle belt along the forward battle positions. Phase 2d or the *direct-fire fight* begins at the forward defensive obstacle belts where tanks, AT guns, recoilless rifles, and RPGs fire at their maximum ranges while KPA soldiers fight the enemy's infantry. The KPA plans indirect final protective fire when the enemy closes to within 300 meters of the KPA's front line forces.<sup>69</sup>

Phase 3 is the **AT Defensive Position** planned by the regimental commander, but executed by the battalion commander. The AT defensive position is not shown in detail on this map, but see the next example for a diagram and a detail description of the KPA's defensive position. The AT defensive position will be set up along the most likely armor avenue of approach into the forward infantry regiment's area. Any units or personnel in the forward units that are not killed by the enemy will remain behind to set up stay behind ambushes of enemy combat support and combat service support units as they enter the overrun unit's area of operations.<sup>70</sup>

Phase 4 or the **AT Engagement Area** is similar to the AT defensive position, but occurs at the regimental or divisional level. Any enemy forces that pass successfully through the forward regiments' battalion AT defensive positions will likely run into an AT engagement area set up by other first or second echelon units. The KPA will likely allocate two platoons of SU-100 howitzers to use in a direct fire role and up to two RPG-7 platoons for a regimental or divisional level AT engagement area. Any additional weapons systems that might be available such as tanks and recoilless rifles can also be used. The regimental or divisional commander will select a location so that the enemy force will be channelized and then can be attacked on three, if not four sides. The attack is similar to the AT defensive position described in the example below, but on a much larger scale.<sup>71</sup>

Phase 5 is the **AT Mobile Reserve** (TC 7-100.2, p 4-6) that is designed to destroy any tanks that appear unexpectedly within the KPA's defensive system, especially in the vulnerable rear areas. This AT mobile reserve would confront any enemy tanks that manage to get through the AT defensive positions, the regimental engagement areas, and the division engagement areas. Each KPA division normally keeps two AT companies for this role and locates them between the division's first and second echelons.<sup>72</sup>

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The counter attack conducted by the **Counterattack Force** (TC 7-100.2, p 4-5 to 4-6) is Phase 6 and the final piece of the KPA defensive plan. All regimental and higher units will possess a plan to conduct a counterattack to eliminate any enemy penetrations into its lines. Only the division counterattack force (two tank companies and a mechanized infantry company) is shown on the diagram, but each battalion, regiment, division, and corps will designate a counterattack force. Once a penetration becomes a possibility, the appropriate KPA commander will attempt to predict the direction the penetration will continue and then select a counterattack position, normally one kilometer to the rear of the penetrated unit. The type of counterattack chosen by the KPA commander will depend on the depth of the penetration (the rear area of that level of unit) and the criticality of the position penetrated. The normal KPA procedure is to conduct a rapid counterattack for a company-level penetration, a standard counterattack for a battalion-level penetration, and a delayed counterattack for a regimental penetration level. The difference between the types of counterattacks is how fast the mission can be executed. The key to reading the counterattack chart below is that if a KPA infantry regiment received the mission to counterattack the penetration of one of its first echelon battalions, it would need to conduct a delayed counterattack (the longest of the three types of KPA counterattacks before the mission can be accomplished) that takes additional time and planning to execute. The division, however, might be able to respond quicker with a standard counterattack against the same penetration while the corps could respond the fastest with a rapid counterattack. The situation at the time and what counterattack force was available could also dictate what unit received the counterattack mission. Once the unit chosen for the counterattack method is designated, the depth of the penetration into the KPA's lines would determine what method the counterattack force would employ against the penetration.<sup>73</sup>

**Table 2. KPA Counterattack Type/Criteria<sup>74</sup>**

Counterattack Type	Regiment	Division	Corps
Rapid Counterattack	1st Echelon Platoon Penetration	1st Echelon Company Penetration	1st Echelon Battalion Penetration
Standard Counterattack	1st Echelon Company Penetration	1st Echelon Battalion Penetration	1st Echelon Regiment Penetration
Delayed Counterattack	1st Echelon Battalion Penetration	1st Echelon Regiment Penetration	1st Defense Zone Penetration



### 4. Tactical Defense: Anti-Tank Defensive Position (Area Defense)

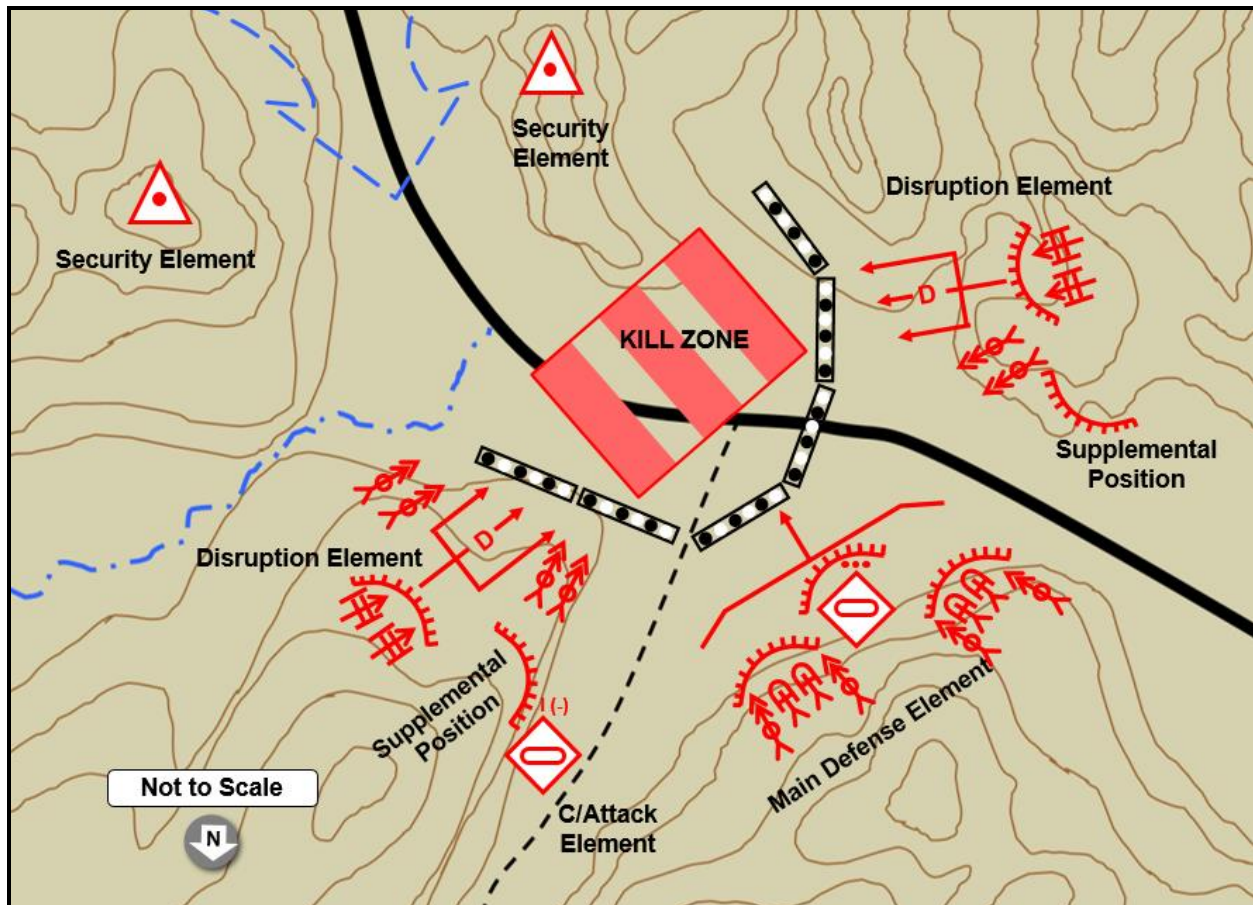


Figure 6. KPA Battalion Anti-Tank Defensive Position (Area Defense). Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, *The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics*, 2005, pp 96-97. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.

The anti-tank (AT) defensive position is phase 3 of the six phases of the KPA's defensive battle plan described previously. The regimental commander designates and plans the main effort battalion's AT defensive position. The regimental commander will often select a parallel forward ridgeline so that the armor vehicles can be hit by a crossfire from two, if not, three directions. The battalion creating this defensive position will receive additional resources such as anti-tank missiles and/or recoilless rifles. (See area defense in TC 7-100.2, pages 4-14 to 4-18.) The purpose of the area defense is to force the enemy's offensive operations to culminate before its objectives are obtained and to deny the enemy its objectives while preserving combat power until a decision in the KPA's favor can be reached through operational or strategic operations.<sup>75</sup>

The KPA considers enemy armor to be the most deadly ground threat, and the elimination of the armor threat takes priority during defensive planning. When the enemy armor enters artillery range, the Observation Posts' (TC 7-100.2, p 8-13) task is to locate and observe the armor and its purpose is to provide security for the main defensive position as well as to call for indirect fire from the disruption



force. See previous example for additional indirect fire details, but the artillery is not shown in this example for simplicity. When the enemy armor is within range, the Main Defense Force Element (TC 7-100.2, pp 4-5 and 4-21) composed of tanks and AT guns, such as Sappers, engages the enemy with direct fire. The main defense force's task is to attack by direct fire with a mission to destroy the enemy armor. As the enemy armor continues to advance, the vehicles will meet an AT/AP minefield where disruption elements with recoilless rifles and RPG-7s will engage as the vehicles become bogged down trying to breach the minefield. The disruption elements' (TC 7-100.2, pp 4-5, 4-20 to 4-21) task is to support by fire with its purpose to contain the enemy within the kill zone and to prevent the armor from flanking the defensive battalion's position. During this time, the main defense force continue to engage the enemy in the kill zone. Any armor vehicles that make it through the minefield will be attacked by additional RPG-7 teams of the Disruption Force with the task to support by fire with the mission to prevent the armor from escaping from the desired axis of advance. Any AT weapons from the forward position disruption forces that are still operational can relocate to supplemental positions to continue to engage the enemy armor that made it successfully through the kill zone to eliminate those vehicles. The KPA battalion commander will possess a counterattack element (TC 7-100.2, p 4.5 and 4-21) composed of armor and/or AT weapon systems, often hidden from view and shielded from direct fire on the reverse slope of a hill. On order, the counterattack element of two tank platoons will maneuver and attack the enemy's flank with the purpose to destroy the remaining armor threat before the enemy escapes the AT defensive position. Even if some armor vehicles pass through this first echelon AT defensive position, those elements could face other AT defensive positions, regimental AT engagement areas, or even possibly a division engagement area. Any surviving soldiers and operational weapons systems will continue to engage the attackers, often as a stay behind ambush force focused on unsuspecting combat support or combat service support units that may pass along the avenue of advance.<sup>76</sup>

## Section 3: KPA Weapons and Equipment

North Korea fields one of the world's largest militaries, but its equipment ranges from World War II vintage to the most modern. The modern equipment, however, is only in niche areas such as ballistic missiles. There are many sources, such as *Jane's* or *Military Periscope*, for a breakdown of the quantity and types of equipment. Only selected equipment will be discussed here.<sup>77</sup>

### Army

The KPA is composed of both armor and light units, with large quantities of artillery to provide indirect fire support to both types. The KPA possesses at least 3,700 medium and light tanks that range from the T-34/85 produced in World War II to the *Songun-ho*, North Korea's internally-produced tank that combines technologies of the Soviet/Russian T-62, T-72, 7-80, and T-90, and the Chinese-produced Type 88 main battle tank (MBT). For information on North Korean tanks, see the two-part series in the TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration [Red Diamond](#) newsletter (published in the May and June 2015 issues). The KPA can also deploy at least 2,100 infantry fighting vehicles or armored personnel carriers, many of them in the BTR family of vehicles. See the TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration product, "[The BTR Handbook-The Universal APC](#)," for additional details on the BTR's capabilities. The KPA ground forces receive indirect fire support from over 13,500 artillery pieces that include mortars, cannons, guns,

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and howitzers that range from 1930s technology to more modern vintage; free-rocket-over-ground (FROG) missiles based on 1960s and 1970s knowledge; and multiple rocket launcher systems (MRLS) that consist of Soviet-era types to present-day production models. The KPA also possesses over 15,600 anti-aircraft artillery (AA) pieces including single, double, and quad AA guns; missile launchers; and man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS).<sup>78</sup>

## Air Force

The KPAF, a subordinate element of the KPA, operates an air fleet of approximately 1,600 aircraft of all types. This includes approximately 80 bombers, 780 fighters, 300 An-2 biplanes, 100 support aircraft, and 300 helicopters. Many of these aircraft are outdated, but the KPAF does fly some formidable fighters, such as the MiG-29 and the slightly-outdated MiG-21 and MiG-23. The An-2 biplane is used to insert KPA SPF elements. The KPAF operates approximately 139 Mi-2 Hoplite and 20 Mi-24 Hind helicopters. The KPA SPF forces can also use MD-500D/E helicopters, ironically originally produced in the US, to insert SPF personnel. The KPAF is also taking advantage of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and possesses over 300 UAVs of various models and technological levels.<sup>79</sup>

## Navy

While the KPN operates approximately 1,000 vessels of all types, most of them are not that large and are used primarily for SPF operations, amphibious assaults, and coastal defense. The most formidable of the KPN's ships are the 20 ROMEO Class attack submarines that could operate against enemy surface ships. The KPN also fields over 80 midget submarines that would likely deliver SPF personnel to either coast of South Korea. The KPN operates approximately 430 surface combatant ships and 260 landing craft. Many of these, however, are in dry dock and inoperable. In addition, the Ministry of People's Armed Forces Coastal Security Bureau operates 150 corvettes, guided-missile patrol boats, torpedo boats, and fire support boats. The KPN also is responsible for coastal defense, with coastal defense guns on both its east and west coasts as well as surface-to-surface missile batteries.<sup>80</sup>

## Section 4: North Korean Military Organization

North Korea operates a conventional military with a strong SPF capable of irregular warfare. Due to the lack of modern weapons and equipment with a few exceptions—nuclear weapons, missiles, and submarines—even the conventional army may use a number irregular force tactics including information warfare (INFOWAR) in its operations. The following tables provide the locations of the major KPA, KPAF, and KPN units or bases as well as the locations of most North Korean runways. The numbers in the last column of each chart correspond with its approximate location on the associated map in Section 1 under locations.

**Table 3. Major North Korean Army Unit Locations**

Unit	Headquarters	Map #
<b>I District Command</b>	Wonsan	1
<b>I Army Corps</b>	Hoeyang	2
<b>II Army Corps</b>	Hanpori	3

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Unit	Headquarters	Map #
III Army Corps	Kaechon	4
IV Army Corps	Haeju	5
V Army Corps	Hupyong Ni	6
VII Army Corps	Tongsin	7
VIII Army Corps	Tongnim (Changhong)	8
IX Army Corps	Hamgyong Province	9
X Army Corps	Yanggang Province	10
108 Mechanized Corps	Hamhung	11
425 Mechanized Corps	Chongju	12
Pyongyang Defense Command	Pyongyang Si	13
Pyongyang Air Defense Command	Sonnae-san	13
11 'Storm' Corps (Light Infantry Training Guidance Bureau)	Unknown	NA
Strategic Rocket Forces Command	Suhoe Dong	14

**Table 4. Major Air Force Unit Locations<sup>81</sup>**

Unit	Locations	Map #s
<b>1 Air Combat Division</b>	Kaechon Military Air Base (MAB), Uji MAB, Sunchon MAB, Onchon Up MAB, Pukchang Ni MAB, Panghyon MAB; Yonggang Ni Helicopter Base, Kangdong MAB, Sonchon Helicopter Base, Sunan International Airport	4, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 13
<b>2 Air Combat Division</b>	Toksan MAB, Hwangsuwon MAB, Iwon Airport, Changjin MAB	21, 22, 23, 24
<b>3 Air Combat Division</b>	Hwangju MAB, Koksan Airport, Kwail MAB, Hyon Ni MAB, Nuchon Ni Airport, Taetan MAB	25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30
<b>5 Air Transport Division</b>	Kwakson MAB, Manpo MAB, Taechon MAB, Sunan International Airport, Sonchon Helicopter Base, Pukchang East Helicopter Base, Sinjju Airport	31, 32, 33, 13, 17, 34
<b>6 Air Transport Division</b>	Sondok MAB, Yonpo MAB	35, 36
<b>8 Air Training Division</b>	Orang MAB, Samjiyon MAB, Kyongsong Chuul MAB, Sungam Ni Air Base, Kuktong MAB	37, 38, 39, 40

**Table 5. Major Navy Unit Locations**

Unit	Location	Map #s
<b>Naval Headquarters</b>	Pyongyang	13
<b>East Fleet (Headquarters)</b>	Toejo Dong	41
<b>1 Naval Squadron (East Fleet)</b>	Kosong	42
<b>2 Naval Squadron (East Fleet)</b>	Munchon Up	43
<b>3 Naval Squadron (East Fleet)</b>	Nagwon Up (Yoho Ri)	44
<b>4 Naval Squadron (East Fleet)</b>	Mayang Do	45

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Unit	Location	Map #s
5 Naval Squadron (East Fleet)	Chaho	46
6 Naval Squadron (East Fleet)	Puam Dong	47
7 Naval Squadron (East Fleet)	Najin	48
West Fleet Headquarters	Nampo	16
8 Naval Squadron (West Fleet)	Sagon Ni	49
9 Naval Squadron (West Fleet)	Chodo	50
11 Naval Squadron (West Fleet)	Pipa Got	51
12 Naval Squadron (West Fleet)	Yongdok and Yomjugun (Yongampo)	52, 53

## Military Capabilities

### Command and Control

The KPA's ground units are the DPRK's primary military force. The KPAF and KPN support the KPA ground forces, primarily through defense of the homeland and the deployment of SPF in the enemy's rear area. The KPA uses the old Soviet C2 structure with a highly structured chain of command. While the KPA trains its soldiers to operate at the next higher command level, many commanders may hesitate or show the initiative desired by the chain of command in fear of doing the wrong thing if out of communication with his/her superior for an extended period or if a break occurs in the chain of command. Since he took over in December 2011, Kim Jong Un has selected four different officers to lead his military, showing that the DPRK's supreme leader may possess little tolerance for failure.<sup>82</sup>

### Maneuver

The KPA will use old Soviet tactics along the mobile corridors that are usually found on the valley floors. The armored and mechanized forces will likely place two-thirds of its ground forces forward in the first echelon and a little less than one-third in its second attack echelon. The light infantry will likely travel via the mountain ranges or ridges on foot. KPA SPF will likely land in its enemy's rear areas by sea, helicopter, plane, or via a tunnel. While the US and South Korean forces may become mesmerized by the mobile units in front of them and concentrate their attention on the armor units, the US/South Korean forces will need to watch their flanks and sides for attacks on foot by light infantry forces or SPF units coming from an unexpected direction.<sup>83</sup>

### INFOWAR

The DPRK will likely use the seven INFOWAR capabilities—electronic warfare (EW), computer attack, information attack, deception, physical destruction, protection and security measures, and perception management—as best they can. North Korea has already practiced EW with several previous attacks against South Korean GPS systems. The hacking of Sony shows that the DPRK, despite North Korea's denial of the cyberattack, also possesses the ability to attack its enemy's computer networks. As discussed earlier, the KPA places great emphasis on camouflage, a major component of deception operations. The common North Korean cannot access the Internet so there is little social media in the



DPRK. The DPRK attempts to manage the perception of its own people through the control of the information environment. The KPA will also likely use old school techniques such as leaflets and other propaganda methods to attempt to turn South Koreans. See the *Red Diamond* articles from November 2014 and January 2015 for additional details on North Korean [INFOWAR](#) capabilities.<sup>84</sup>

## RISTA

The KPA emphasizes reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance, and target acquisition (RISTA) capabilities and will use its intelligence resources to gain information about its enemies. North Korea will also use spies and SPF units in its enemy's rear area to conduct its RISTA activities. The KPA can deploy up to three separate reconnaissance brigades from theater-level assets to conduct RISTA activities. The SPF and agents already planted in country could assist with the location of strategic targets. In addition, each KPA ground unit from corps to regiment fields its own reconnaissance unit—battalion for the corps, company for the division, and platoon for the regiment. The KPA will also be able to use its UAV fleet of over 300 unmanned aircraft to obtain additional information on the enemy.<sup>85</sup>

## Fire Support

The KPA doctrine is similar to old Soviet doctrine with heavy emphasis on artillery, missiles, and multiple rocket launchers combined on a single target. If aviation assets are available and not involved in homeland defense, the KPAF will most likely use any additional aviation assets to provide close air support to the KPA ground forces.<sup>86</sup>

## Protection

KPA doctrine, due to its belief that its forces cannot achieve air superiority against most of its enemies, expounds maximum use of both active and passive camouflage, concealment, and deception in order to prevent the enemy from locating KPA units and important static positions. The more ordnance that its enemy uses against decoys, the less ordnance will hit actual KPA units, positions, buildings, and weapons.<sup>87</sup>

## Logistics

While KPA doctrine states that adequate logistics is important, it is most likely that the DPRK will run out of vital supplies within a short time of the onset of any military operation. It is likely that South Korea maintains a two- to three-month stockpile of food and POL (petroleum, oil, and lubricants). North Korea maintains at least one million tons of rice in storage for potential military operations and only under the severest conditions will it release some of its stores to help the North Korean citizens avoid starvation. In any case, the capture of enemy food, equipment, and ammunition will become a priority for the KPA in order to continue its military operations for a sustained period of time. The DPRK may have up to 10 million barrels of fuel in storage for wartime use. In 2011, the DPRK purchased between 3,000 and 4,000 trucks from China for its military. There are 180 arms factories in North Korea along with about 115 nonmilitary factories that have a dedicated wartime materiel production mission. The theory of *sonjun* or "military first" means that any supplies that are available will go to the KPA before civilians.<sup>88</sup>

The General Rear Service Bureau is responsible for all KPA logistics and combat service support operations. This bureau appears to be bloated with at least 15 different subordinate organizations including bureaus for Buildings Management, Clothing, Energy, External Affairs, Farm Management,

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Finance, Medical Service, Military Decorations Management, Munitions Production, Organization and Planning, Provisions, Rear Service Political Operations, Road Management, Vehicle Management, and Veterinary Services. This large bureaucracy may reduce the effectiveness of the KPA in military operations.<sup>89</sup>

## Air Defense

KPA's air defense operates primarily from the ground and not from counter-air operations in the sky. While North Korea possesses one of the most dense air defense networks in the world, it is comprised mostly of obsolete weapons, including its radar, and its air defense weapons are most effective at low altitude targets. Many of the air defense units are situated to protect Pyongyang, the DPRK capital city, instead of military units or installations.<sup>90</sup>

## UAVs

North Korea operates at least eight different types of UAVs and maintains an inventory of at least 300 UAVs. Many of these UAVs are outdated models and include the D-4, the Durumi, the MQM-107D, the Panghyon I/II, the Pchela-1T, the Sky-09P, the Shmel, and at least one other unidentified model. The KPAF and the Reconnaissance General Bureau operate the North Korean UAV fleet. There have been known cases where DPRK UAVs have violated the southern boundary of the DMZ, but the North Korean government always denies that the downed UAVs in South Korean territory belong to them.<sup>91</sup>

## Conclusion

The DPRK's unorthodox use of provocation in order to obtain concessions from its enemies—especially the US, South Korea, and Japan—is a danger. One never knows what North Korea will do next as, in the past, the DPRK has sanctioned assassination attempts on South Korean political leaders and conducted bombings when South Korean contingents are in another country, unannounced attacks on ships by submarines, unprovoked artillery attacks, or has tunneled underground into another country. US military personnel stationed in South Korea must be prepared for the unexpected from the DPRK.<sup>92</sup>

One of these incidents could ignite the Korean peninsula back into a full-blown war. While an armistice has been in place since 1953, an armistice is just a ceasefire waiting for a peace treaty to be signed or for the resumption of hostilities. Any conflict between North and South Korea would inevitably bring the US into the conflict as the ROK has been an ally for over six decades.

North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons and the missiles to transport it up to 9,650 km makes it a threat to US forces stationed in Korea, Japan, Alaska, or even the west coast of the continental United States. Even more concerning was the DPRK's first successful test launch of a KN-11 missile from a submarine on 23 January 2015 since, in the near future, the North Korean submarines could silently move closer to their targets before launching a nuclear missile that would give the US less warning time. If the DPRK thought that the survival of its country or the Kim regime was at stake, North Korea might use any nuclear weapons at its disposal. The KPA also possesses chemical weapons and its doctrine calls for their employment. The DPRK is also involved in biological weapons research and would likely use those with offensive capabilities. US military personnel training for deployment to South Korea must be prepared to fight in a chemical, biological, or nuclear environment.<sup>93</sup>

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The KPA fields a large conventional military force of over one million soldiers, airmen, and sailors with over seven million uniformed personnel in reserve. North Korea also possesses one of the largest SPF in the world. The KPA will fight using conventional tactics, but will also use unconventional tactics on the “second front,” especially against rear areas. The US military must be prepared to fight this dual threat—conventional war on the ground from the north with irregular warfare in its rear areas. The KPA emphasizes the attack on an enemy’s rear, so US combat support and combat service personnel must be vigilant and be ready to fight the enemy while they continue to provide support to the American combat soldier on the front lines.

## REAL-WORLD CONDITIONS APPLIED TO TRAINING

Of the five DATE countries, the one that most resembles North Korea is Ariana. Militarily, Ariana is the second strongest country in DATE, but is more representative of North Korea than the strongest country, Donovia. Ariana, however, fields more modern equipment and weapons than North Korea. Exercise planners may need to reduce the equipment tier level for Ariana to more closely replicate North Korea. While politically Ariana is a theocracy and North Korea an oligarchy, both countries are ruled by a small group of people. The difference is that Ariana is ruled by elites from a particular religion while North Korea is ruled by a small number of elites being related to or are close friends with the three generations of the Kim family, the family that has ruled North Korea since the end of World War II. For the other six variables, the DATE could be easily modified to replicate conditions in North Korea.

- North Korea primarily uses Soviet/Russian/Eastern bloc weapons systems. These are the legacy systems that the OPFORs have used at the Combat Training Centers (CTCs) for years. There should be no issues with replication of these former Eastern bloc weapons systems at the CTCs, but it could be more difficult to successfully imitate these weapons systems during home station training.
- All tactical tools needed to recreate North Korean tactics in training exercise are available in the TC 7-100 series; many of them are based on old Soviet tactics modified for the Korean peninsula. Home station OPFOR personnel would likely need some additional training to better use the tactics and techniques favored by North Korea, but the training will be more greatly enhanced than if the OPFOR used modified American methods.
- The terrain of North Korea would be hard to replicate at any of the CTCs. Fort Irwin is in the desert and there is no similar environment in either one of the Koreas. The Korean peninsula is very mountainous and that is not the terrain found at either the Joint Readiness Training Center in Louisiana or the Joint Maneuver Training Center in Germany. Home station training may be difficult depending on the location of the unit. For the most part, however, most infantry and armor divisions are stationed at posts that are not mountainous enough to resemble North Korea. Some Army National Guard combat arms units could find similar terrain to what is found in North Korea, but others could not.

The [Army Training Network](#) (ATN) provides US Soldiers with access to a variety of resources that would assist them with their preparation for deployment to South Korea. These products include.

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- Field Manual (FM) 7-100.1: [Opposing Force Operations \(December 2004\)](#); This manual is one of a series that describes a contemporary opposing force (OPFOR) for training US Army commanders, staffs, and units. It and the other manuals in the series outline an OPFOR that can cover the entire spectrum of military and paramilitary capabilities against which the Army must train to ensure success in any future conflict.
- Training Circular (TC) 7-100.4: [Hybrid Threat Force Structure Organization Guide \(June 2015\)](#): The OPFOR organizations outlined in TC 7-100.4 and the associated online organizational directories represent a realistic composite of potential adversaries the Army might encounter in real-world situations of the near- and mid-term.
- TC 7-100: [Hybrid Threat \(November 2010\)](#): This TC describes hybrid threats and summarizes the manner in which such future threats may operationally organized to fight US forces. It also outlines the strategy, operations, tactics and organization of the Hybrid Threat that represents a composite of actual threat forces as an OPFOR for training exercises.
- TC 7-100.2: [Opposing Force Tactics \(December 2011\)](#): Provides tactics for an OPFOR that exists for the purpose of training US forces for potential combat operations.
- TC 7-100.3: [Irregular Opposing Forces \(January 2014\)](#): This TC addresses the irregular opposing force (OPFOR) and represents a composite of actual threats and enemies that comprise irregular forces. The three primary categories of irregular forces are insurgents, guerrillas, and criminals. These actors may operate separately or in conjunction with one another and/or combined with regular military forces as the Hybrid Threat. Included are functional tactics for irregular forces.
- TC 7-101: [Exercise Design Guide \(November 2010\)](#): This TC outlines a methodology for designing and executing training exercises.
- TC 7-102: [Operational Environment and Army Learning \(November 2014\)](#): This TC presents concise and enduring doctrine-based guidance on how to integrate the variables of an operational environment (OE) into Army training, education, and leader development.
- US Army TRADOC G-2 Handbook No. 1.08, [Irregular Forces \(December 2010\)](#): This handbook describes the contemporary irregular forces and summarizes irregular threat actions to counter US forces in the OE. The handbook describes irregular force tactics; forms of offensive and defensive operations; irregular tactics, techniques, and terrorism; and the irregular forces planning cycle.
- [Worldwide Equipment Guide \(WEG\)—2014](#): The WEG is a list of equipment that US forces would most likely find used by its enemies on the battlefield. While not all weapons and weapons systems are listed in the WEG, similar weapons can be found. The WEG also tells how an exercise planner substitutes a weapon or vehicle in the WEG for one found in the actual military that is being replicated for the exercise.
- [Decisive Action Training Environment](#) (April 2015): The purpose of this Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) document, version 2.2, is to provide the US Army training community with a detailed description of the conditions of five composite OEs in the Caucasus region. It presents trainers with a tool to assist in the construction of scenarios for specific training events, but does

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not provide a complete scenario. The DATE offers discussions of OE conditions through the political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time (PMESII-PT) variables. The DATE incorporates real-world data and artificial data in order to set the conditions for a wide range of training events, to include decisive operations.

- Regionally Aligned Forces Training Environment (RAFTE) [Pacific](#) (September 2014): A RAFTE is intended to be used when already familiar with DATE. A RAFTE is a supplement to DATE that can be used when training must occur for operations in a known part of the world. A RAFTE identifies the conditions of a selected OE that are unique from what is already in the DATE. It will enable training based on current conditions specific to an OE, in this case most of the countries that fall under the responsibility of the Pacific Command (PACOM). RAFTEs are different but not separate from the DATE.
- RAFTE [North Korea](#) (April 2014): This is a RAFTE specifically focused on North Korea.
- [Information Environment Assessment](#) (June 2008): This product describes the Information Environment for a number of countries including North Korea.
- [North Korea Operational Environment Assessment](#) (OEA) (2006): This is the most current OEA published by ACE Threats Integration, but is mostly outdated since it is nearly a decade old. Many changes have occurred since its publication including the death of Kim Jong Il and the succession of his son, Kim Jong Un. Some information, especially in the Physical Environment variable, is still valid.
- Asymmetrical Warfare Group (AWG) [Subterranean Warfare Handbook](#). This FOUO handbook contains a section on North Korean use of tunneling operations.
- [Red Diamond Newsletters Articles](#)
  - March 2015: [North Korean Leadership Turmoil](#)
  - January 2015: [INFOWAR-North Korean Capabilities \(Part 2\)](#)
  - November 2014: [INFOWAR-North Korean Capabilities \(Part 1\)](#)
  - July 2014: [Unmanned Aircraft System Vulnerabilities](#)
  - May 2014: [The BRDM: The Multi-Purpose Reconnaissance Vehicle](#)
  - August 2013: [Shaping the North Korean EMP Threat](#)
  - June 2012: [North Korean Jamming of GPS Systems](#)
- [North Korea GPS Jamming](#): This ACE Threats Integration Threat Report examines the jamming of South Korean GPS signals by North Korea.
- [BTR: The Universal APC Handbook](#): This ACE Threats Integration Handbook describes the various BTR variants on the battlefield. The KPA fields a large number and a variety of BTRs.

The following chart provides a connection between the real-world condition in North Korea, a comparable example of the condition in [DATE](#) as well as the relevant pages from the threat Field Manuals, Training Circulars, or other product. The page numbers where these connections can be found

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are also listed in the chart. To find the product, use the links to the documents listed in the previous section.

## Conditions in DATE and Doctrine

Real-World Condition	Comparable Condition in DATE	Chapter/section/word or phrase to search	Relevant Information in Threat Doctrine	Manual and Page(s)
<b>DPRK Oligarchy Government</b>	National Command Authority; Centers of Political Power-Family Authority	DATE 2A, 2B, 2D, 2E; National Command Authority; Centers of Political Power	National Command Authority	FM 7-100.1, 1-2; TC 7-101, 3-2 to 3-6; TC 7-102, 1-4; TC 7-100.2, 1-1 to 1-2
<b>DPRK Strategic Goals</b>	National Strategic Goals/Strategy	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; National Strategic Goals; Strategy	National Strategic Goals	FM 7-100.1, 1-2; TC 7-100.2, 1-3 to 1.4
<b>DPRK National Security Strategy Framework</b>	Military Authority	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Military Authority	Framework for implementing National Security Strategy	FM 7-100.1, 1-2 to 1-5; TC 7-100.2, 1-4 to 1.5
<b>DPRK Strategic Operations</b>	Strategic Operations	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Strategic Operations	Strategic Operations	FM 7-100.1, 1-8 to 1-9; TC 7-100.2, 1-5
<b>DPRK Regional Operations</b>	Regional Operations	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Regional Operations	Regional Operations	FM 7-100.1, 1-9 to 1-10; TC 7-100.2, 1-5 to 1-6
<b>DPRK Transition Operations</b>	Transition Operations	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Transition Operations	Transition Operations	FM 7-100.1, 1-10 to 1-12; TC 7-100.2, 1-6
<b>DPRK SPF Operations</b>	Adaptive Operations/Hybrid Threats	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Adaptive Operations; Hybrid Threat	Adaptive Operations/Hybrid Threats	FM 7-100.1, 1-12; TC 7-100; TC 7-100.2, 1-6
<b>DPRK Nuclear Capability</b>	CBRN; Nuclear Power	DATE 2A, 2B, 2E; Nuclear; CBRN	Cause Politically Unacceptable Casualties	FM 7-100.1, 1-15
<b>DPRK Lack of Technology</b>			Neutralize Technological Overmatch	FM 7-100.1, 1-15 to 1-16
<b>DPRK Annihilation Doctrine</b>			Allow no sanctuary	FM 7-100.1, 1-17
<b>DPRK Paramilitary Forces</b>	Government Paramilitary Forces; 7 million reservists	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; RAFFE-North Korea; Paramilitary; Reserve	Role of Paramilitary & Irregular Forces in Operations	FM 7-100.1, 1-20; TC 7-100, 2-5; TC 7-100.2, 1-16
<b>DPRK Internal Security Forces</b>	Internal Security Forces	DATE 2E; Internal Security	Internal Security Forces	FM 7-100.1, 1-20 to 1-21
<b>DPRK Centralized Planning</b>			Centralized Planning	FM 7-100.1, 2-2
<b>DPRK</b>			Decentralized	FM 7-100.1, 2-2

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Real-World Condition	Comparable Condition in DATE	Chapter/section/ word or phrase to search	Relevant Information in Threat Doctrine	Manual and Page(s)
Decentralized Execution			Execution	
DPRK C2	Command & Control	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Command; Control; C2	Command & Control Structures	FM 7-100.1, 2-3; TC 7-100.2, 2-1 to 2-34
KPA Peacetime Structure	Army Overview; Army Size & Structure; Order of Battle (OB)	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Force Structure; Order of Battle; OB	Administrative Force Structure	FM 7-100.1, 2-6; TC 7-100.4, 2-1 to 2-20; TC 7-101, 3-6 to 3-11; TC 7-100.2, 1-2 to 1-3
KPA Wartime Structure	Army Size & Structure	DATE 2A; 2B; 2E; Wartime Force Structure	Task-Organizing	TC 7-100.4, 3-1 to 3-25 & Appendix B; TC 7-100, 6-1 to 6-8
KPA Strategic Forces Rocket Command	Strategic Forces	DATE 2E; Rocket	Integrated Fires Command	FM 7-100.1, 2-14
KPA General Rear Service Bureau			Integrated Support Command	FM 7-100.1, 2-17
KPA "Two Front" War			Battlefield Geometry	FM 7-100.1, 2-18 to 2-22
KPA Operations Security			Operations & Information Security	FM 7-100.1, 2-50
KPA Offensive Doctrine	Army Doctrine & Tactics; Maneuver	DATE 2A; 2E; Offensive Doctrine; Tactics; Maneuver	Offensive Operations	FM 7-100.1, 3-1 to 3-28; TC 7-100.2, 3-1 to 3-43
KPA Defensive Doctrine	Army Doctrine & Tactics	DATE 2A; Defensive Doctrine; Tactics	Defensive Operations	FM 7-100.1, 4-1 to 4-28; TC 7-100.2, 4-1 to 4-35
DPRK INFOWAR	INFOWAR	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E INFOWAR; Information Warfare	Information Warfare	FM 7-100.1, 5-1 to 5-18; TC 7-100, 3-5 to 3-6, 5-1 to 5-2; TC 7-101, 3-20 to 3-25; TC 7-102, 1-5; 2-3, 3-4; TC 7-100.2, 7-1 to 7-16; IEA
KPA RISTA	RISTA	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; RISTA; Reconnaissance	Reconnaissance	FM 7-100.1, 6-1 to 6-10; TC 7-100.2, 8-1 to 8-18
KPA Fire Support Operations	Fire Support	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Fire Support; Artillery; Close Air Support; CAS	Fire Support	FM 7-100.1, 7-1 to 7-17; TC 7-100.2, 9-1 to 9-26
KPAF	Air Force Overview; Air Force Size & Structure	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Air Force Structure	Aviation	FM 7-100.1, 8-1 to 8-14; TC 7-100.2, 10-1 to 10-31
KPN	Naval Forces Overview; Navy Size & Structure	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Navy Structure		
KPAF Air Defense	Air Defense	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Air Defense; AD; ADA	Air Defense Support	FM 7-100.1, 9-1 to 9-34, TC 7-100.2, 11-1 to 11-30

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Real-World Condition	Comparable Condition in DATE	Chapter/section/ word or phrase to search	Relevant Information in Threat Doctrine	Manual and Page(s)
KPA Emphasis on Camouflage	Protection	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Camouflage; Concealment; Cover; Deception	Camouflage, Concealment, Cover, & Deception	FM 7-100.1, 9-18
KPA Engineering & Tunneling	Subterranean Environment	DATE 2A, 2B, 2E; Subterranean; Tunnel	Engineer Support	FM 7-100.1, 10-1 to 10-15; TC 7-101, 3-26 to 3-30; TC 7-102, 1-5; TC 7-100.2, 12-1 to 12-32; AWG Tunneling Handbook
DPRK WMD	Biological Weapons Threat	RAFTE-North Korea, Biological	CBRN and Smoke Operations	FM 7-100.1, 11-1 to 11-18; TC 7-100, 2-7 to 2-8; TC 7-100.2, 13-1 to 32
KPA Logistics	Logistics; Defense Industries; Lack of motorized transportation	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; RAFTE-North Korea; Logistics; Supply	Logistics	FM 7-100.1, 12-1 to 12-22; TC 7-100.2, 14-1 to 14-17
SPF	Navy Doctrine & Tactics; 25 SPF Brigades	DATE 2A, 2E; RAFTE-North Korea; Navy Doctrine; SPF	Airborne, Special-Purpose Forces, & Amphibious Operations	FM 7-100.1, 13-1 to 13-20; TC 7-100.2, 15-1 to 15-34, 16-1 to 16-12
KPA Weapons Systems	Army Equipment & Weapons; Navy Equipment & Weapons; Air Force Equipment & Weapons	DATE 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; Equipment	Equipment Operations/OPFOR Tier Levels	TC 7-100.4, 4-1 to 4-12; TC 7-101, 2-9 to 2-11
Reverence of Kim Family	Cult of Personality	RAFTE-Pacific; RAFTE-North Korea; Personality Cult		
Inexperienced Dictator	Young dictator with no succession plan	RAFTE-Pacific; RAFTE-North Korea; Dictator		
Diplomacy by threat of WMB	Nuclear weapons trump card	RAFTE-Pacific; RAFTE-North Korea; Nuclear		
Military First Concept	Sanjun	RAFTE-North Korea; Sanjun		
Preemptive Attack Doctrine	Attack first if they feel threaten	RAFTE-North Korea; Preemptive Strike; Surprise Attack		

## North Korean Weapons in the WEG

Real-World Weapon	Type of Weapon	WEG Location
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Real-World Weapon	Type of Weapon	WEG Location
Russian T-34/85	Main Battle Tank (MBT)	Vol 1, Chapter 5
Russian T-54/T-55	MBT	Vol 1, Chapter 5
Russian PT-76B	Amphibious Tank	Vol 1, Chapter 6
North Korean M1985	Light Tank	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Chinese Type 63A	Light Tank	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian BRDM-2	Scout Car	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian BTR-60PB	Armored Personnel Carrier (APC)	Vol 1, Chapter 3
Russian BTR-80	APC	Vol 1, Chapter 3
Russian BTR-80A	APC	Vol 1, Chapter 3
Russian BTR-152	APC	Vol 1, Chapter 3
Chinese YW 531A/531C	APC	Vol 1, Chapter 3
North Korean VTT-323	APC	Vol 1, Chapter 3
Russian BMP-1	Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV)	Vol 1, Chapter 3
Russian BMP-1P	IFV	Vol 1, Chapter 3
North Korean M1978 & M1989	170-mm Self Propelled (SP) Gun (Koksan)	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Russian M-46	130-mm Towed Gun	Vol 1, Chapter 7
100/120-mm	Mortars	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Russian 2S9-1	120-mm SP Combination Gun	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Russian M-37	82-mm Mortar	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Russian 9P140	220-mm Multiple Rocket Launcher System (MRLS)	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Russian 9A51/PRIMA	122-mm MRLS	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Russian BM-21	122-mm MRLS	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Chinese Type 63	107-mm MRLS	Vol 1, Chapter 7
Russian B-11	107-mm Recoilless Gun	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian B-10	82-mm Recoilless Gun	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian D-44	85-mm Towed Anti-Tank (AT) Gun	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian Malyutka-2	Anti-Tank (AT)-3 Sagger Anti-Tank Gun Missile (ATGM) Launcher	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian 9P135 (9K111)	AT-4 Spigot ATGM	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian 9P148	AT-5 Spandrel ATGM	Vol 1, Chapter 6
Russian KS-19M2	100-mm Towed Anti-Aircraft (AA) Gun	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian ZSU-57-2	57-mm SP AA Gun	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian S-60	57-mm Towed AA Gun	Vol 2, Chapter 6

# Threat Tactics Report: North Korea



Real-World Weapon	Type of Weapon	WEG Location
Russian M-1939	37-mm Towed AA Gun	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Chinese Type 65	37-mm Towed AA Gun	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian ZSU-23-4	23-mm SP AA Gun	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian ZU-23	23-mm Towed AA Gun	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian ZPU-4	14.5-mm Heavy Machine Gun (MG)	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian SA-3	Surface to Air (SA) Goa Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian S-200V	SA-5B Gammon SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian 9K32M (Strela-2M)	SA-7B Grail SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian S-300-M	SA-10B Grumble SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian S-300PMU1	SA-20A Gargoyle SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian 9K35M3 (Strela-10M3)	SA-13B Gopher SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian 9K34 (Strela-3)	SA-14 Gremlin SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian 9K310 (Ingla-1)	SA-16 Gimlet SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian 9K38 (Igla)	SA-18 Grouse SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
US FIM-92	Stinger SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 6
Russian Scud-B/C	Surface to Surface (SS) Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 5
North Korean Nodong-1/2	SS Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 5
Chinese H-5	Beagle Light Bomber	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian Su-17	Fitter Close Air Support (CAS) Aircraft	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian Su-25tm & Su-39	Frogfoot Multi-Role Attack Aircraft	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Chinese F-6	Farmer Fighter	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian MiG-29	Fulcrum Multi-Role Fighter	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian MiG-23	Flogger Multi-Role Fighter	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian MiG-21	Fishbed Multi-Role Fighter	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Chinese J-7	Fishbed Fighter	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian An-2	Colt Transport Aircraft	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian Il-18	Coot Transport Aircraft	Vol 2, Chapter 3
Russian Shmel-1	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)	Vol 2, Chapter 4
Russian Pchela-1K	UAV	Vol 2, Chapter 4
Russian Mi-2	Hoplite Medium Multi-Role Helicopter	Vol 2, Chapter 2
Russian Mi-24/35	Hind Attack Helicopter	Vol 2, Chapter 2
US MD-500MD	Defender Light Helicopter	Vol 2, Chapter 2

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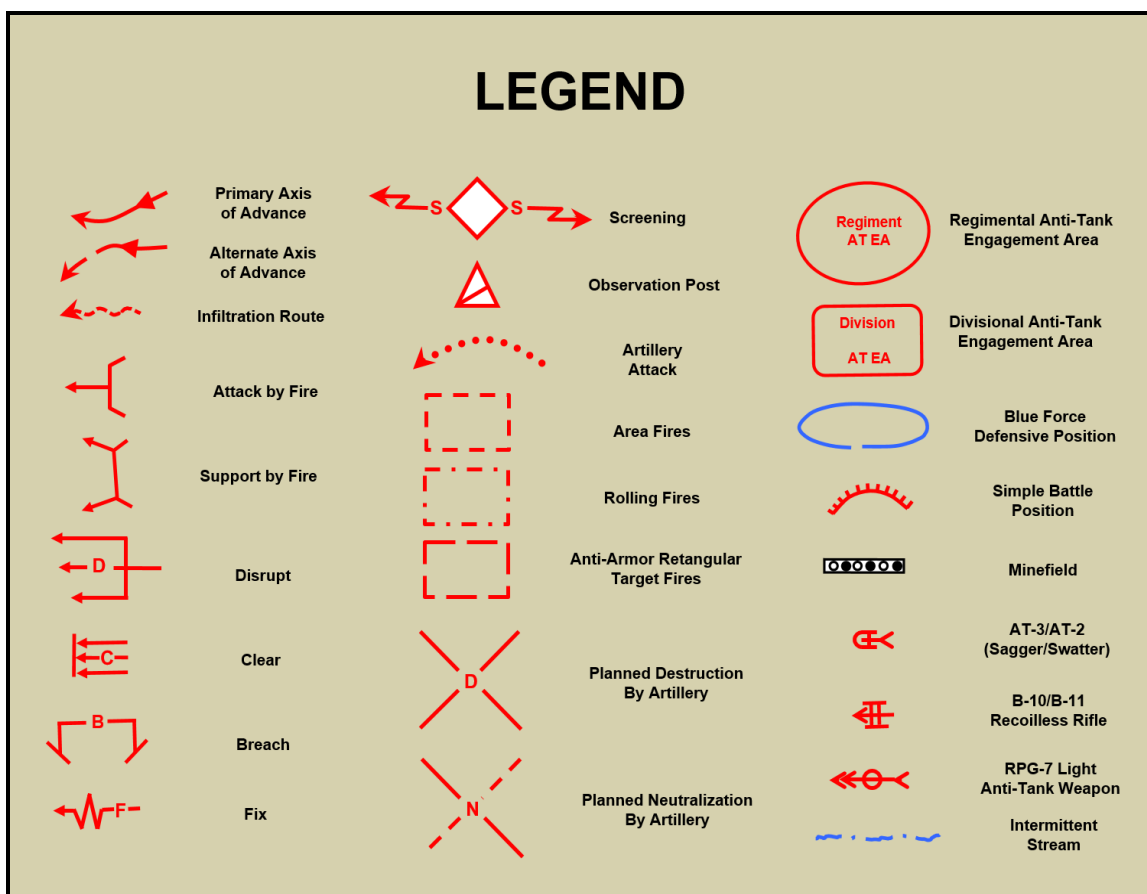


Real-World Weapon	Type of Weapon	WEG Location
Russian Mi-8	Hip-C Multi-Role Helicopter	Vol 2, Chapter 2
Russian AA-2	Atoll Air-To-Air (AA) Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 2
Russian AA-7	Apex AA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 2
Russian AA-8	Aphid AA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 2
Russian AA-10	Alamo AA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 2
Russian AA-11	Archer AA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 2 & 3
Chinese PI-5	Thunderbolt AA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 2
Russian Volga-75SM	Guideline SA Missile	Vol 2, Chapter 2
SANG-O	Coastal Infiltration Submarine	Vol 3, Chapter 3
North Korean SOJU	Guided Missile Patrol Craft	Vol 3, Chapter 3
North Korean SOHUNG	Guided Missile Patrol Craft	Vol 3, Chapter 3
Chinese HUANGFENG	Fast Attack Missile Craft	Vol 3, Chapter 3
North Korean Semisubmersible	Infiltration Landing Craft	Vol 3, Chapter 3
Russian 4K40	Surface-To-Surface (Anti-Ship) Missile	Vol 3, Chapter 1
Indian/Russian BrahMos	Supersonic Cruise (Anti-Ship) Missile	Vol 3, Chapter 5



## Legend for Tactical Diagrams

This legend presents the military symbols, mission task symbols, and control measures from a threats perspective as used in the tactical diagrams in this report. The primary adversary or enemy is presented in the color blue.



# Threat Tactics Report: North Korea



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**Note: Not all references listed in this publication are readily available to the public; some require a government common access card (CAC) to view.**

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## Diagram Credits

Figure 1. North Korean military installations and runways. Numbers correspond with the map numbers under Section 4, Military Organizations, below. Map from [CIA](#), modified by TRISA, 17 June 2015.

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- Figure 2. Building blocks of KPA tactical doctrine. Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics, 2005, p 66. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.
- Figure 3. KPA Division encirclement movement (dispersed attack) of an enemy brigade defensive position. Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics, 2005, pp 86-87. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.
- Figure 4. KPA Thrust Attack (Attack to Gain Freedom of Movement) of an enemy stop point). Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics 2005, pp 82-83. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.
- Figure 5. KPA Anti-Tank Defensive System (Maneuver Defense). Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics, 2005, pp 93-99. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.
- Figure 6. KPA Battalion Anti-Tank Defense Position (Area Defense). Adapted from COL James M. Minnich from his book, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics, 2005, pp 96-97. Modified by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats, 17 June 2015.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Military and Security Developments Involving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea," Annual Report to Congress, p 1, 2013.
- <sup>2</sup> Voice of America (VOA), "[North Korea Clarifies Political Role of Kim Jong Un's Sister](#)," 26 November 2014; Scott Smith, "[Kim Jong Un's little sister named to top leadership post in North Korea](#)," United Press International (UPI), 28 November 2014; North Korea Leadership Watch, "[Kim Yo Jong](#)," 10 March 2014; BBC, "[Timeline: North Korean attacks](#)," 1 April 2013; Troy P. Krause, "Countering North Korean Special Purpose Forces," pp 3-4, Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base AL, April 1999; KJ Won and Hilary Whiteman, "[North Korea publicly executes defense chief, South Korean spy agency says](#)," CNN, 13 May 2015.
- <sup>3</sup> North Korea Leadership Watch, "[Kim Jong Un](#)," Undated; BBC, "[Profile: Kim Jong-un](#)," 14 October 2014.
- <sup>4</sup> Steve Herman, "[Secret Manual Gives Glimpse of North Korean Military Tactics](#)," VOA, 18 September 2010; STRATFOR, "[Dispatch: Korea's Refocusing Policy Postures](#)," 18 November 2010; Charles Scanlon, "[North Korea: Past lessons will affect the next move](#)," 4 April 2013.
- <sup>5</sup> Vincent R. Stewart, "Statement for the Record: Worldwide Threat Assessment," Defense Intelligence Agency Director to the Armed Services Committee, United States House of Representatives, 3 February 2015; Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Military and Security Developments Involving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea," Annual Report to Congress, p 6, 2013; Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment, "Korea, North > Army," 1 September 2014; Associated Press (AP), "[Chronology of North Korea's missile program](#)," The Las Vegas Sun, 15 March 2012; NewsmaxWorld, "[SKorea: NKorea Can Launch Nuclear-Tipped Missiles](#)," 3 September 2013; Homer Hodge, "[North Korea's Military Strategy](#)," Parameters, pp 68-81, Spring 2003, Nautilus DPRK Briefing Book; James M. Minnich, The North Korean People's Army: Origins and Current Tactics Naval Institute Press, 2005, pp 68-69.
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