

22. COMMUNICATIONS

Briefing

Communications are the means by which troops pass information on to each other and to the battlenet regarding the actions and the locations of enemy forces. Communications are also used to provide targeting information for indirect fire weapons.

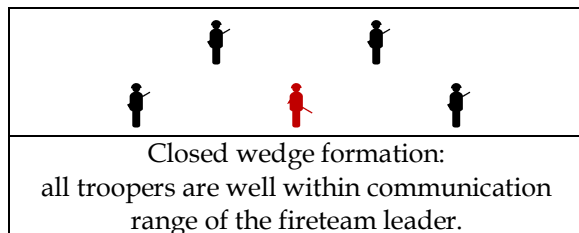
Control and Cohesion

1. Communications are used by officers and noncoms to control and direct the soldiers under their command and to maintain unit cohesion.

2. In the systems of advanced nations, when a trooper moves out of communicator range of his superior a light in his helmet indicates the direction of the superior when the trooper was last within communicator range. The trooper moves in that direction until he re-establishes contact.

3. Distance between unit members:

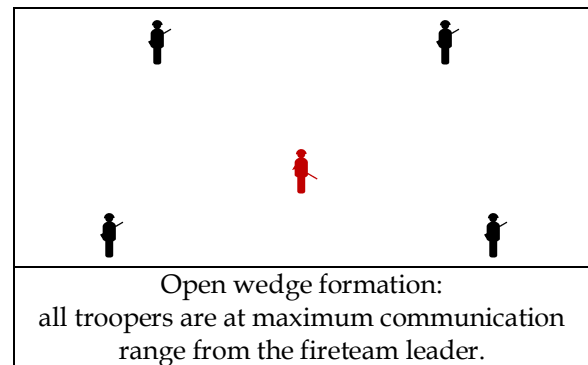
a. All troops and vehicles must be in communication range of their immediate superiors at the end of a turn. The range of the subordinate's communication device determines the communication range.



b. If for some reason a trooper or vehicle is outside of the communication range of his immediate superior at the beginning of a turn, he (or the superior) must move so that the subordinate is in range at the end of the turn.

Example: A trooper has a communicator with a range of 18 inches. He reports to the corporal in charge of the second fireteam of a squad. The trooper must be within 18 inches of

the corporal at the end of a turn. If the corporal is eliminated, the trooper must be within 18 inches of the squad leader (the sergeant or corporal in command of the first fireteam) at the end of the next turn



c. If a subordinate is not in range at the end of a turn, he will continue moving to get into range during the next turn.

d. If a superior is eliminated, a replacement within the unit may be designated. The subordinate troopers in the unit must move to be within range of the new leader.

2. The communication range restrictions prevent players from spreading the individual troopers of a fire team or squad across the board. They also simulate the technological differences between armies in controlling and directing their forces. An army with more sophisticated equipment will have a greater ability to command and direct its forces on the battlefield. This will have a substantial impact on its ability to win battles.

3. Pieces with broken morale will ignore the communication distance requirements. Their priority is to reach safety or exit the battlefield. Refer to Rule 27. Morale, for more information.

Communication networks

1. All information is passed on through communications networks. When information is sent to the command level it is stored on the battlenet.

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2. **Standard** communications networks are those which are normally established and maintained. These networks are generally very tight because they share the same frequency, are more dependable because of user familiarity and experience, and have a greater chance of success in establishing communications. Some examples of standard networks are:

- a. An infantryman to all other men in the same unit (usually not larger than a squad).
- b. A ground vehicle to another ground vehicle in the same unit (usually not larger than a platoon).
- c. A forward observer to the indirect fire weapons for which he is serving as a spotter.
- d. A controller to the remotely-controlled vehicle he is controlling.

3. **Nonstandard** communication networks are those that attempt to bridge or link standard networks. Since they do not share the same frequency and are not regularly maintained, they have to be specifically created each time an attempt will be made to establish communications.

A nonstandard network is not as dependable as a standard network and does not offer as great a chance of success to establish communications. Some examples of nonstandard networks are:

- a. An infantryman to a man in a different unit.
- b. An infantryman attempting to contact a vehicle.
- c. An infantryman or a vehicle attempting to contact an indirect fire weapon.
- d. An infantryman or a vehicle attempting to contact an aircraft.

4. The following table gives the die rolls needed

for standard and nonstandard communication networks.

Sender	Standard network	Nonstandard network
Trooper	1-5	1-4
Noncommissioned officer	1-5	1-4
Officer	1-6	1-5
Forward observer or Warder	1-7	1-6
Radioman or Communications specialist	1-7	1-6
Reconnaissance drone	1-5	1-3
Warbot or Wardrone	1-4	1-2
Vehicle crewmember	1-6	1-5
Command vehicle	1-8	1-7
Uncrewed vehicle	1-4	1-2
Strongpoint crewmember	1-6	1-5
Uncrewed strongpoint	1-4	1-2
Remote controller	1-8	1-4

Creating communication networks

1. Players should establish all of their standard communication networks before the beginning of a game. Each piece may be on only one standard network. Any other communications it establishes during a game will be considered nonstandard. There are several exceptions:

- a. An officer may be on two standard networks.
- b. A forward observer may be on two standard networks.
- c. A radioman or communications specialist may be on two standard networks.
- d. A command vehicle may be on four standard networks.

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2. The following examples illustrate some of the factors that may be considered when communication networks are established:

a. If an armored personnel carrier will be providing close fire support to the infantry fireteam it transports, it should be assigned to a standard communication network with the infantry.

b. If an armored personnel carrier will be operating in support of other armored vehicles it should be assigned to a standard communication network with the armored vehicles.

3. If a forward observer is assigned to an infantry unit and he is assigned to the standard communication network of the unit, its troops will be better able to contact him. Since a forward observer has a higher than average ability to establish communications on his own, it may be best to have him on the infantry network. If he is also on a standard communication network with the battlenet, he will maximize his chances of getting information to headquarters where it can be accessed by all friendly units. He will still have a good chance of contacting the artillery despite the fact that he will be contacting them on a nonstandard network.

4. Forward observers make excellent scouts since the range of their radio equipment allows them to move far out in front of the regular troops in their unit. This is the role performed by **warders** in those units that have these troopers assigned to them.

5. Some communication networks are restricted and cannot be contacted. For example, only the operator of a remotely-controlled piece can establish a control link with that piece. If the original operator is eliminated no other piece can establish a control link.

Battlenet

1. The battlenet is the ongoing repository of command, control and communications information at the headquarters level. Combining information automatically provided by electronic devices fielded by friendly troops and vehicles with reported sightings of enemy forces, the battlenet develops an image of the terrain that superimposes known enemy and friendly locations as well as terrain information.

2. When a friendly piece successfully reports an enemy piece to the battlenet that information remains posted on the battlenet for other friendly pieces to access.

3. Reporting information to the battlenet and accessing information from the battlenet are both accomplished by making successful communication attempts to the battlenet.

4. The battlenet can be conceptualized as being on the same level as the player commanding the battlegroup on the tabletop. The information reported to the battlenet is information the player can use directly to plan artillery and air strikes against reported enemy locations.

Making contact

1. The **Communications** table is used to determine the success of a soldier or vehicle attempting to establish communications.

2. A ten-sided die is rolled to determine success. If the number rolled falls within the range given in the table, the attempt was successful and communications have been established.

3. If the individual attempting to make contact is equipped with a battlenet **datapad**, the chance to successfully contact the battlenet is increased by +1 for a basic datapad, and +2 for an enhanced datapad.

4. When communications are established the information that is transmitted is available to

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every piece on the network that attempts to access it.

5. Robots, warbots and wardrones should be treated as uncrewed vehicles because there are no sentient crew members within them. Remotely-controlled and automated turrets and strongpoints are also considered to be uncrewed.

Communication Attempts

1. An individual soldier can make a number of communication attempts per turn based on his rank. This represents the fact that higher-ranking soldiers have radios and communicators with more channels and greater capabilities.

2. Officers at ranks higher than Lieutenant are usually provided with additional communications support such as a radioman, communications specialist or a command vehicle with communications equipment.

3. Vehicles generally have more than one communications device built into them or have automated systems that enhance their ability to make contact. Command vehicles have a very extensive communications array.

Rank or type	Attempts per turn
Trooper	1
Noncommissioned officer	2
Officer	3
Forward observer or Warder	2
Radioman or Communications specialist	3
Reconnaissance drone	2
Warbot or wardrone	1
Command vehicle	5
Vehicle or strongpoint crew member	2

Rank or type	Attempts per turn
Uncrewed vehicle or strongpoint	1
Remote controller	2

4. Communications must follow chains of command. A soldier must attempt to contact his immediate superior. This ensures that leaders know what is going on, and maximizes the chance that vital information will be passed upward since the higher ranks have more communication attempts. (Examples: A trooper in a fireteam will contact the squad leader. A squad leader will contact the platoon commander.)

5. Forward observers always have radios in addition to any communicators built into their helmets. Forward observers may make contact with any level, including the battlenet, in order to pass on their information.

Communicators and radios

1. Communicators and radios are the most common devices used to contact friendly forces and transmit information.

2. Communicators are small, short range radios that are generally built into the helmets of troops, particularly those of the advanced stellar nations. Less advanced nations may use hand-held devices similar to walkie-talkies.

Communicators	Maximum range
Short range	18
Medium range	36
Long range	72

3. Light radios have a longer range and are generally the size of a briefcase. The light radios mounted in vehicles are usually less compact.

Light radios	Maximum range
Short range	180
Medium range	360
Long range	720

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4. Field radios are larger and heavier, reaching the size of a full field pack.

Field radios	Maximum range
Short range	1800
Medium range	3600
Long range	7200

Natural (unenhanced) communications

1. Troops that lack communicators and radios can fall back on natural methods of communication.

2. Most species have evolved vocal means of communication. Some species have evolved

telepathy in addition to, or as a substitute for, vocal communications.

Type	Maximum range
Vocal	9
Telepathic	6
Heightened telepathic	12

3. The communication range restrictions will force players with low technology forces to concentrate the soldiers into small areas, making them vulnerable to area effect weapons. If the players agree, all troops can be considered to have at least short range communicators.

Chains of Command and Lines of Communication

