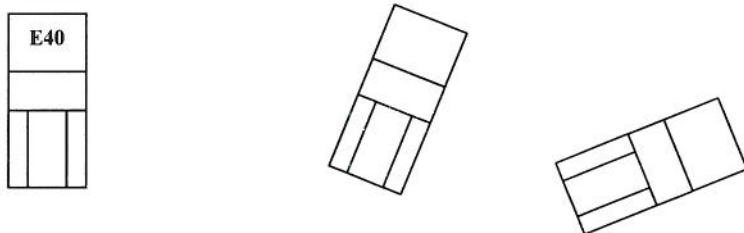


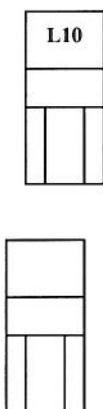
Appendix C

Tactical Markings for MAGTF Units

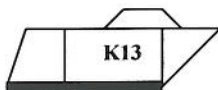
*“Roger, Kingpin. Nose of my vehicle points directly at the target, twenty-one hundred meters.”
The Cobras came up, low and searching. “I have a visual on your six humvees on the back side
of the knoll. I contact your vehicle, **Echo-Four-Zero**, and I tally the target at two clicks, over.”*



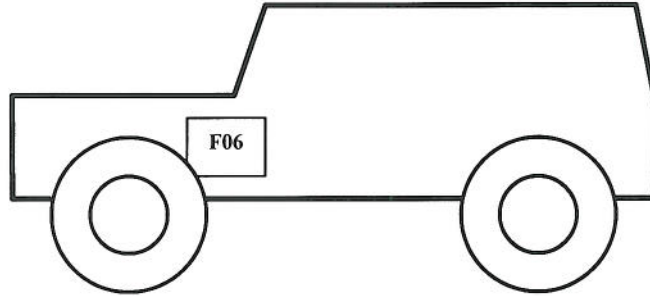
*We heard the command and control Huey overhead. “**Lima-One-Zero**, I am directly above you.
That smoke is a roadblock of burning tires near the traffic circle. Take a left at the next
intersection, go two blocks, and then turn right to bypass. I also have eyes on the Bravo LAR
column now moving past the stadium on route MCKINLEY.”*



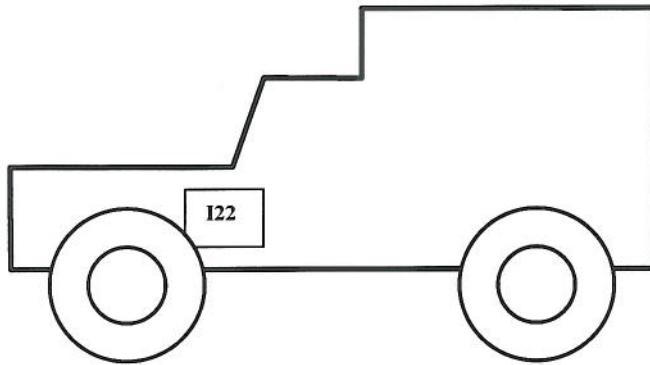
*“All stations, Check fire!” He raised his binos and scanned the line of tracks now entering the
valley. He could read the characters **Kilo-One-Three** on the fourth vehicle. “Gallagher! Get
battalion on the hook. Third battalion’s Kilo company is east of the river to our front!”*



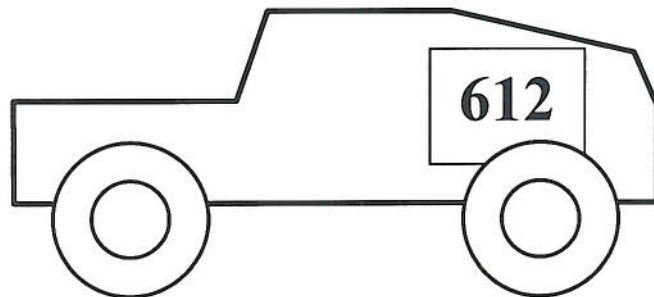
*“Road Guard. Stop the Fox battery convoy at your checkpoint. Relay the following message to the CO, his vehicle is marked **Fox-Zero-Six**: ‘Route TRUMAN is blocked. Use route TAFT. New firing position is WT 712 544,’ over.”*



*“India-Two-Two, hold in place. Raise the hood on your downed vehicle. A maintenance contact team, vehicle marked **One-Mike-Romeo**, is inbound on your pos. Two resupply vehicles are in trace. I told them to look for your vehicle marked **India-Two-Two**, over.”*



*In the streambed, the Marines stayed low, under the guns of the enemy. “Stand by for suppression,” crackled the radio. “SBF, I see your gun vehicle **Six-One-Two** in position, over.” “Roger, we have a visual on you, your exploitation force, the mortars, and the engineers. All units are in place and ready, over.”*



1.0 Background

2.0 Tactical Marking Requirements and Guidelines

3.0 Tactical Marking System for Battalions

3.1 Tactical Numbers

3.2 Tactical Symbols

3.3 Tactical Marking Guidelines for Unit SOPs

4.0 Tactical Marking System for Task-Organized Formations

1.0

Background

The above examples demonstrate how friction can be minimized by tactical markings. For helicopter CAS, helicopter command and control, adjacent unit identification and fratricide avoidance, convoy control, maintenance and resupply, and supported attacks or other tactical operations, Marines and leaders benefit when they can rapidly identify units on the battlefield.

Marines and leaders also benefit if weapons, equipment, ammunition, and supplies can be rapidly identified. At sea, tactical markings assist embarkation, storage, and security and maintenance operations on vehicles, weapons, and equipment. Ashore, tactical markings assist casualty evacuation, resupply, accountability of equipment, and maintenance and salvage operations. Tactical markings serve to eliminate confusion and speed execution of operations.

In 1942, General G.S. Patton recommended, "To insure...tactical control of trucks and armored vehicles it is vitally necessary that they bear markings showing the company, regiment, and division." Two years later, in 1944, the Marine Corps introduced a three-digit tactical marking system, the Unit Numbering and Identification System (UNIS), designed to minimize friction by marking those units that would conduct the assault on Iwo Jima.

During the October, 1993 raid by U.S. Army Rangers in Mogadishu, Somalia, relief convoys were delayed and lost in the narrow streets of the city. Command and control helicopters had difficulties identifying and directing the relief convoys. Major Martin N. Stanton, writing in the September, 1994 *Military Review*, stated that a key lesson of this action was that friendly vehicles should have visible markings to assist airborne platforms conducting observation, command and control, and close air support.

Current Marine Corps markings, including vehicle numbers, Reporting Unit Code (RUC) numbers, Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) symbols, maintenance markings, and commander's placards, do nothing to assist units fighting on the battlefield. RUC numbers refer to the equipment account and not the tactical unit. Combat units need a **tactical marking system** that is simple, universally understood, and serves to increase the combat power of Marine Corps units.

2.0

Tactical Marking Requirements and Guidelines

1. **Requirements.** A tactical marking system must have:
 - a. Universal application. All units must be able to use the same system.
 - b. Universal differentiation. All units down to the squad and section level must be provided with a unique mark.
 - c. Universal flexibility. All units must be able to adjust the system to meet local requirements.
 - (1) Not location-specific. Not size-specific. Commanders specify the location and size of markings to meet unit needs.
 - (2) Not color-specific. Markings must work with camouflage patterns, with black or white stencils, or on paper. Markings must be able to be seen through binoculars. Commanders specify colors to meet unit needs. Color differentiation should be reserved for small units that operate within close sight on one another
2. **Guidelines.** Marine Corps tactical markings will meet the following guidelines:
 - a. One character per echelon. Characters will correspond to actual unit designations for company-level units and below. Standard keyboard characters will be used. The character Zero '0' will be used to designate unit headquarters. 1-9 will be used for subordinate units.
 - b. Above company-level, opsec requirements require unit symbols instead of actual unit designations. Each battalion will have a unique symbol. Symbols will consist of geometric symbols formed solely by straight lines. Straight lines permit the use of tape for temporary markings and reduce the need for stencils when markings are painted.
 - c. Symbols will include no unit heraldry, no artwork logos, and no shading or color requirements.
 - d. All markings will reflect Marine Corps standing organizations.
 - (1) Short-term attachments retain the tactical marking assigned by their parent unit.
 - (2) Long-term attachments may be directed to use temporary markings of their new parent unit. AAVs or trucks attached to an infantry battalion should be marked to reflect the infantry organization. Combat Service Support Group detachments should be marked to reflect the MSSG or other task-organized CSS parent unit.
 - (3) Separate additional markings for task-organized formations may be assigned. See paragraph 4.0.

3.0

Tactical Marking System for Battalions

1. Battalion tactical markings consists of two parts:

- A Tactical Number. A three-character number, one character for each echelon: company, platoon, and squad or section.
- A Tactical Symbol. A unique straight-line geometric symbol that specifies the battalion.

Both of these symbols have a separate scheme, explained in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2.

2. A complete tactical marking for any unit of any battalion consists of a three-character tactical number superimposed on the battalion tactical symbol. If required, the tactical number can exceed the geometric boundaries created by the tactical symbol.
3. A tactical mark corresponds to a unit, NOT an individual vehicle, weapon or Marine. The owning unit marks all vehicles, weapons, equipment, and supplies with the same mark. A section with more than one vehicle will have the *same* marking on each vehicle.

3.1

Tactical Numbers

1. Tactical numbers consist of three characters. See Figure C-1. The first character represents the company or battery-level organization, the second character represents the platoon-level organization, and the third character represents the squad or section-level organization.



Figure C-1. Tactical Number Scheme.

- a. **The number '0' is always the HQ unit.** Lettered companies and batteries use their assigned letter. Named companies use a unique letter or number assigned by their battalion. Numbered units, platoons and squads, use their assigned number.
 - b. **Plain language callsigns** should parallel this scheme.
2. **First Character** designates Company or Battery. For infantry and artillery regiments, the unique first character serves two purposes. It indicates the company or battery *and* the

specific battalion.

0	Regiment / HqCo
1	1st Battalion / H&S Co / HqBtry
A	Alpha
B	Bravo
C	Charlie
D	Delta (cadred)
6	Weapons Co (Infantry Bn)
2	2nd Battalion / H&S Co / HqBtry
E	Echo
F	Fox
G	Golf
H	Hotel (cadred)
7	Weapons Co (Infantry Bn)
3	3rd Battalion / H&S Co / HqBtry
I	India
K	Kilo
L	Lima
M	Mike (cadred)
8	Weapons Co (Infantry Bn)
4	4th Battalion / H&S Co / HqBtry
N	November
O	Oscar
P	Papa
Q	Quebec
9	Weapons Co (Infantry Bn)
5	5th Battalion / H&S Co / HqBtry
R	Romeo
S	Sierra
T	Tango
U	Uniform

3. **Second Character** designates the platoon-level organization.
 - a. For rifle companies, 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 correspond to HQ, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Weapons Platoons. Weapons companies follow a similar scheme.
 - b. For HqCo and H&S Companies, single characters are assigned to *tactical* organizations as assigned by the commander, for example: Main and Forward COC, LOC, Log Train, BAS, and Security Platoon could be assigned numbers 1 through 6.
 - c. Other units assign unique letters or numbers to each platoon-level unit.
4. **Third Character** designates the Squad or Section-level organization. In most cases this character corresponds to a single platform or leader. Sections that consist of more than one vehicle mark *both* vehicles with the same tactical number. Tactical markings are NOT vehicle numbers. A fourth character is NOT used.

5. Examples of Tactical Numbers

a. Infantry Regiments

K11	Kilo Company (3rd Battalion), 1st Platoon, 1st Squad
E30	Echo Company (2nd Battalion), 3rd Platoon, Platoon HQ
A41	Alpha Company (1st Battalion), Weapons Platoon, MG Section
611	Weapons Company (1st Battalion), HMG Platoon, 1st Section
728	Weapons Company (2nd Battalion), 81mm Mortar Platoon, mortar number 8
04T	Regimental COC, Log Train, Water Det
302	H&S Co (3rd Battalion), Bn CP, Bravo Command

b. Artillery Regiments

K22	Kilo Battery (3rd Battalion), Guns Platoon, Gun 2
062	Regimental COC, Survey MET Platoon, Team 2

c. 3rd LAAD Battalion

A13	Alpha Battery, 1st Platoon, 3rd firing section
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d. 1st Tank Battalion

B31	Bravo Company, 3rd Platoon, Tank 1
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e. CSSD-13

1M2	MCSSD-131, Maintenance Det, Contact Team 2
------------	--

f. 1st LAR Battalion

A30	Alpha Company, 3rd Platoon, Platoon Commander's Vehicle
------------	---

3.2

Tactical Symbols

1. **Tactical Symbols for infantry and artillery regiments.** Unit tactical numbers are superimposed on the following symbols, shown in **Figure C-2**. For infantry and artillery regiments, the first character of the superimposed tactical number serves two purposes. It indicates the company or battery *and* the specific battalion within the regiment.

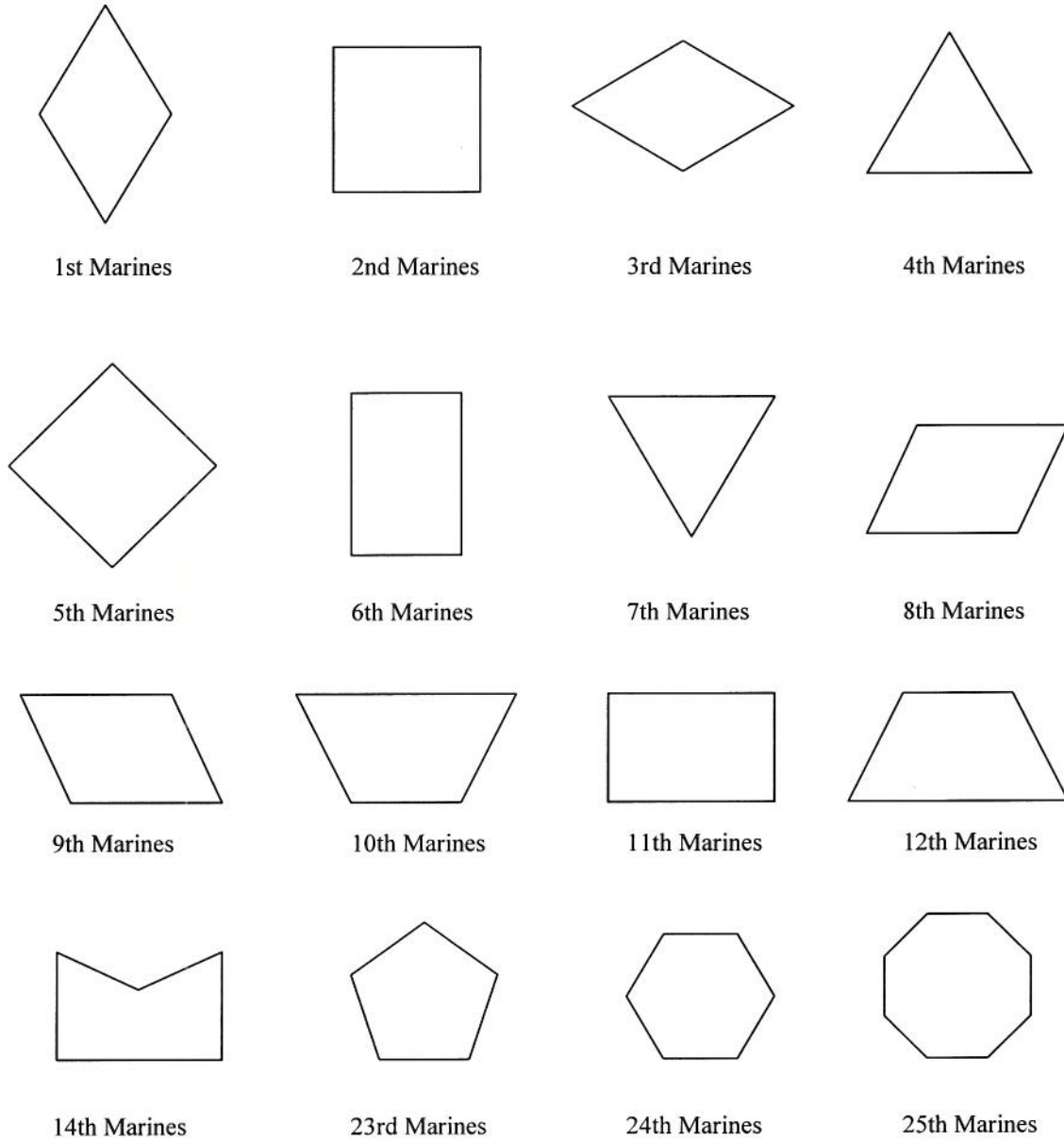


Figure C-2. Tactical Symbols for Infantry and Artillery Regiments.

2. **Tactical Symbols for Separate Battalions** are based on standard functional unit symbols.
- Unlike infantry and artillery regimental symbols, separate battalions require a single character prefix to the left of their tactical symbol to indicate the specific battalion. For numbered battalions, this is a number. For other battalions, this can be a letter or a number. See **Figure C-3**.

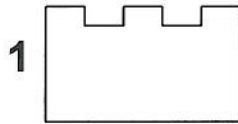


Figure C-3. Tactical Symbol of 1st Combat Engineer Battalion.

- Tactical Numbers may exceed the boundary of the tactical symbol
- Tactical symbols for separate battalions are shown in **Figures C-4, C-5, C-6 and C-7**.

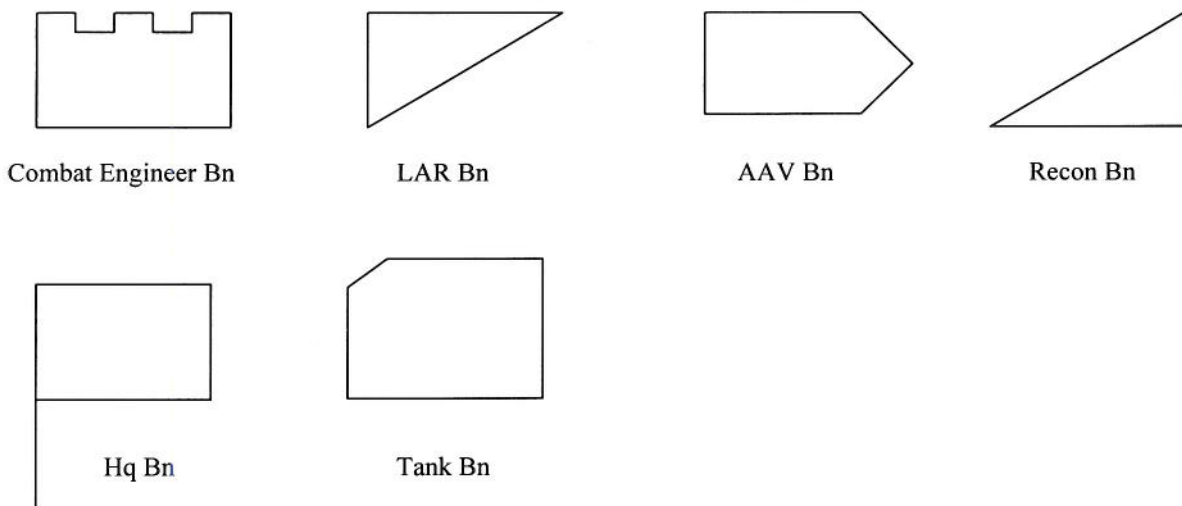


Figure C-4. Tactical Symbols for Separate Battalions of the Marine Division.

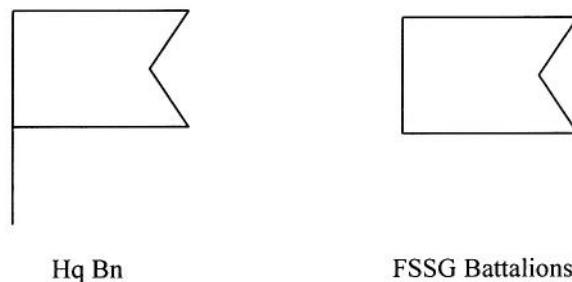
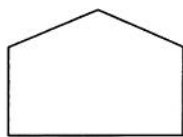


Figure C-5. Tactical Symbols for Battalions of the Force Service Support Group

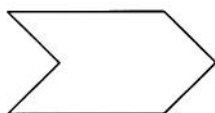


LAAD Bn

Figure C-6. Tactical Symbols for Battalions of the Marine Air Wing.



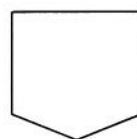
Force Recon Bn



Intel Bn



Comm Bn



Radio BN

Figure C-7. Tactical Symbols for Separate Battalions of the MEF.

3.3

Tactical Marking Guidelines for Unit SOPs

1. **Short-term, non-permanent tactical marks** can be applied to vehicles, weapons, and equipment with white 1"-wide medical tape.
2. **Long-term, semi-permanent tactical marks** can be painted on vehicles, weapons, and equipment. Stencils should be provided to insure uniform-sized characters.
3. **Convoys.** HMMWVs and trucks can be marked on the forward driver's side quarter panel. Visibility is best with characters that are at least 5" tall. Smaller tactical marks can be painted on the rear bumper. See **Figure C-8**.

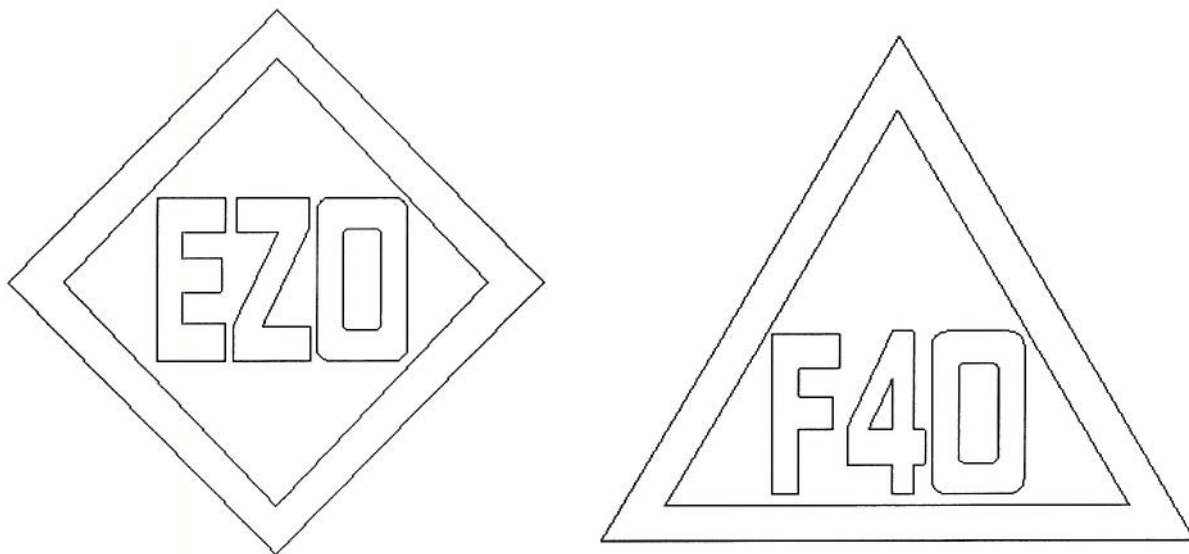


Figure C-8. Sample Short-term White-taped Tactical Markings for HMMWV and Truck Forward Quarter Panels. Characters are 5" high. Diamond symbol is 12" on each side. Triangle symbol is 15" on each side.

Platoon Headquarters, 2nd Platoon, E/2/5.
FiST (Weapons Platoon Headquarters), F/2/4.

4. **Large Tactical Numbers on Combat Vehicles.** On combat vehicles, a second large tactical number, at least 24" tall, *without the tactical symbol*, should be visible at hundreds of meters to assist battlefield communications. With binoculars, friendly combat unit identification is then possible at great distances.
 - a. For ground combat units, situational awareness and command and control *is significantly increased* if plain language radio callsigns correspond to the tactical markings visible on the side of the vehicles.

b. Air identification. Command and Control helicopters and CAS helicopters benefit significantly if plain language radio callsigns correspond to the overhead tactical markings visible on key vehicles. See **Figure C-9**.

- (1) Overhead tactical markings should be oriented *with* the vehicle, so that aircraft approaching from the rear can easily read them.
- (2) Vehicles with cloth roofs should mark the vehicle hood.
- (3) At a minimum, unit commanders, convoy commanders, and FACs should have overhead tactical markings on their vehicles.

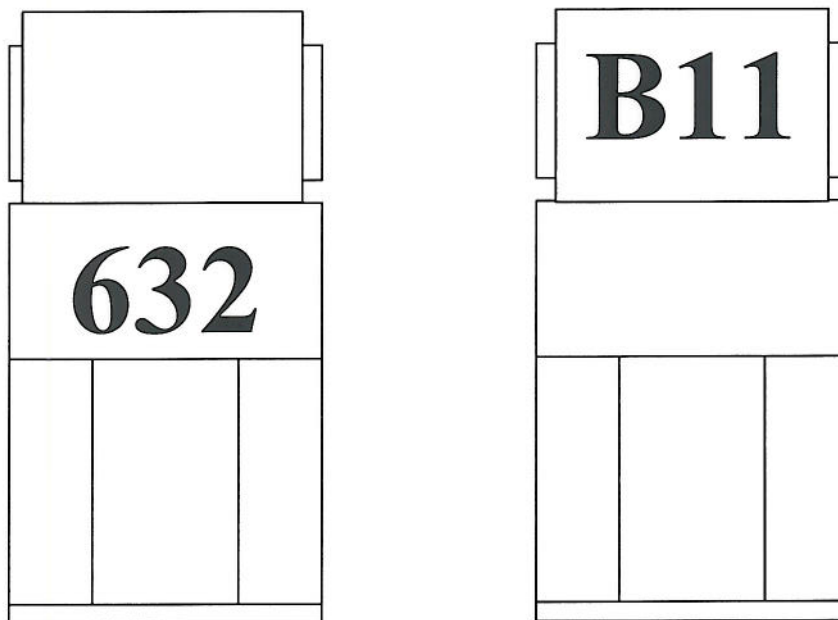


Figure C-9. Overhead tactical markings on HMMWVs for air coordination. Note that these are tactical numbers only. No tactical symbols are used.

4.0

Tactical Marking System for Task-Organized Formations

1. MAGTFs and other task-organized formations add their unique symbol to the upper right of the standard unit tactical mark. See Figure C-10.



Figure C-10. MAGTF Marking. 5th MEB marking, upper right, appended to the marking of an attached unit - part of Fox Battery, 2/11.

- a. This additional mark is *optional*. Task-organized formations, MEUs, MEBs, SPMAGTFs, and Task Forces are temporary. Small unit coordination and tactical maneuver does NOT require formation markings.
 - b. All attached units retain the markings of their standing organization.
 - c. Standing organizations, battalions, regiments, and divisions, when reinforced, do not create additional formation markings.
 - d. Formation markings are not restricted to straight lines. No guidelines or restrictions are placed on the composition of the formation marking.
2. **Examples.** In 1991, during Operation Desert Storm, the newly created Task Force Papa Bear used a paw print symbol on their weapons and vehicles to build unit identity. The 7th MEB, based out of Twentynine Palms, used a desert palm tree as their formation symbol.