

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the training strategy and combat conditions for the 40-mm grenade launcher, M203. The M79 model is discussed in Appendix A.

1-1. TRAINING STRATEGY

An effective overall training strategy produces well-trained grenadiers and trainers by integrating resources into an effective year-round training program. This program trains and sustains the individual and collective skills needed to perform the wartime mission, beginning with IET and continuing in other institutions (NCOES, IOBC, and IOAC) and in the unit. Both institutional and unit training programs implement specific training strategies; supporting training strategies are implemented through use of other resources such as publications, ranges, ammunition, training aids, devices, simulators, and simulations. The year-round program includes periodic preliminary marksmanship training followed by zeroing and range qualification firing. Other key elements of the program are training for the trainers and refresher training for nonfiring skills. Figure 1-1 provides an example that shows the flow of unit sustainment training.

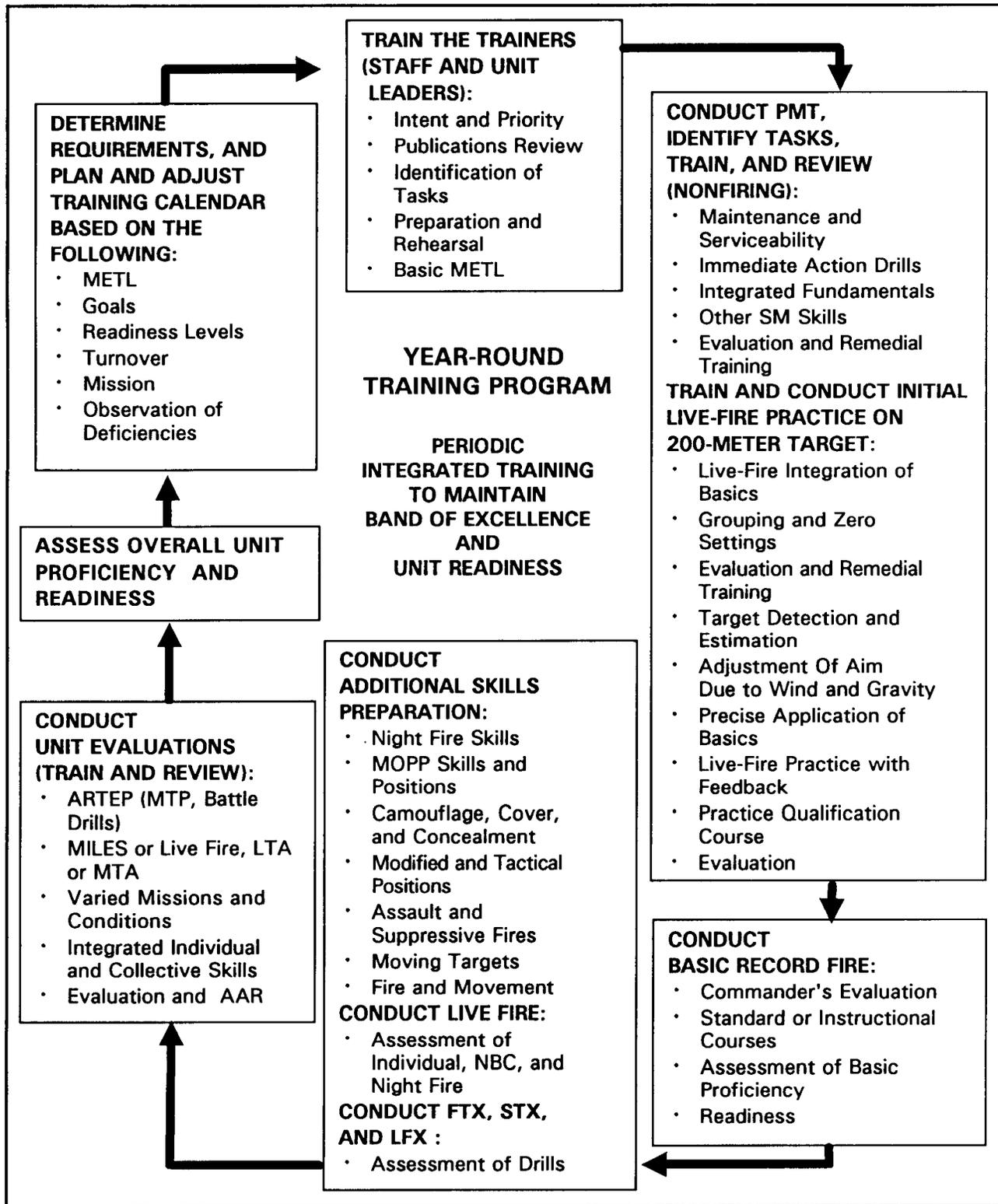


Figure 1-1. Unit gunnery sustainment strategy.

a. **Institutional Training.** Training strategy begins with combat arms initial entry training (IET), which trains soldiers in the standards of M203 gunnery tasks. Soldiers graduate with basic and advanced M203 skills. This includes maintaining the M203 and using it to hit a variety of targets. These skills are reinforced in other institutional training, such as NCOES, IOBC, and IOAC, and in unit training. Related soldier skills are integrated into tactical training (STP 21-1-SMCT).

b. **Unit Training.** Training continues in units, where leaders and soldiers sustain proficiency in skills gained in institutional training. Each person also develops and sustains new skills such as suppressive and supporting fire. These skills are integrated into collective training exercises to develop combat readiness. Preliminary marksmanship training is conducted before firings and as other opportunities arise. (Appendix B discusses an M203 unit training program.) To be effective, a unit training program focuses on three battlefield variables:

(1) **Target.** Is the target moving or stationary, single or multiple?

(2) **Grenadier.** Is the grenadier moving or stationary? Is he kneeling, prone, or standing?

(3) **Conditions.** Is visibility full or limited? Must soldiers wear protective masks or not? Is it day or night?

c. **Initial and Sustainment Training.** A task that is taught correctly and learned well is retained longer, so initial training is critical. Well-trained skills are more easily sustained and, if not used for some time, regained than poorly trained skills. However, if too much time elapses, training doctrine changes, or personnel turnover is high, retraining may be needed.

(1) **Collective training.** The collective training exercises progress from drills (squad, section, and platoon) to STXs, then to LFXs. Drill books and MTPs provide tasks and guidance needed to plan and conduct the exercises. After each, leaders and trainers conduct an AAR to evaluate both individual and unit proficiency. The results provide readiness indicators and requirements for future training. Once soldiers complete the drills and STXs, they participate in collective live-fire tactical exercises (LFXs). These exercises provide leaders with an overview of unit proficiency and training effectiveness. LFXs can be conducted on any range approved for M203 firing.

(2) **Leader training.** The most critical part of the Army's overall gunnery training strategy is to train the trainers and leaders first. However, leader courses include only limited M203 training, so officers and NCOs should use available publications to develop their proficiency with the M203. These enable them to plan and conduct gunnery training and to evaluate the effectiveness of their gunnery programs. Proponent schools provide training support materials (field manuals, training aids, devices, simulators, and audiovisual programs), which provide the doctrinal foundations for training the force.

(3) **Advanced training.** Once the soldier knows the weapon and has demonstrated skill in zeroing, training strategy provides for additional live-fire training and target-acquisition exercises, which are conducted at various ranges. To develop proficiency, soldiers must master different types of targets and scenarios of increasing difficulty.

(4) **Proficiency assessment.** This is conducted on the zeroing and record live-fire exercise range when soldiers complete IET.

1-2. COMBAT CONDITIONS

The trainer must realize that qualification is not an end, but a step toward reaching combat readiness. To reach combat readiness, the grenadier should consider his position, the capabilities of his weapon, and the following combat conditions:

- a. Enemy personnel are seldom visible except when assaulting.
- b. Most combat fire must be directed at an area where the enemy has been detected or where he is suspected, but cannot be seen. Area targets consist of objects or outlines of men irregularly spaced along covered and concealed areas (ground folds, hedges, borders of woods).
- c. Most combat targets can be detected by smoke, flash, dust, noise, or movement, and are visible only for a moment.
- d. Some combat targets can be engaged by using reference points, predetermined fire, or range card data.
- e. The nature of the target and irregularities of terrain and vegetation may require a grenadier to use a variety of positions to place effective fire on the target. In a defensive situation, the grenadier usually fires from a supported fighting position.
- f. Most combat targets have a low-contrast outline and are obscured. Therefore, choosing an aiming point in elevation is difficult.
- g. Time-stressed fire in combat can be divided into three types:
 - A single, fleeing target that must be engaged quickly.
 - Area targets engaged within the time they remain available.
 - A surprise target that must be engaged at once with instinctive, accurate fire.