

How to Generate a METL

Procedure

STEP 1. The unit commander READS and ANALYZES:

- His higher headquarters' METL
- His unit's standard mission statement
- War plans and contingency plans

STEP 2. The unit commander LISTS:

- The tasks that will be assigned to his unit in combat

STEP 3. The unit commander SELECTS:

- Only those tasks *essential* to his wartime mission

STEP 4. The unit commander COMMUNICATES the METL:

- To his higher headquarters for approval
- To his subordinate units as training guidance

Format

A METL is usually a short numbered list of generic task statements. Some tasks may be broken down into separate types of tasks.

1. Conduct Attack

- a. Conduct Deliberate Attack**
- b. Conduct Counterattack**
- b. Conduct Movement to Contact / Hasty Attack**
- c. Conduct Night Attack**

2. Defend

- a. Block**

- b. Defend a Fixed Location
- c. Conduct Linear Defense

3. Conduct Relief Operations

4. Conduct Security Operations

5. Move

Each task may include additional information. A sample mission statement puts the task in a combat context. A short outline of conditions and standards – a mission profile – is the first step in developing training plans to train to the task.

2.a. Defend / Block

“Establish block vicinity of Objective B IOT protect East flank of main effort’s advance.”

Prepare defensive positions in depth in close terrain. Plan fire support. Integrate fire support with direct-fire engagement areas. Develop obstacle plan. Integrate anti-armor plan. Develop counterattack plan.

METL: Mission Essential Task List

Definition. A Mission Essential Task List (METL) is a list of tasks that a unit *must* accomplish in combat. The METL is a written requirement of wartime missions.

Purpose. Training prepares a unit for combat. The METL, as a list of combat tasks, describes the end-state of training. All training must be battle-focused on the METL.

Training Management. The METL is a unit’s primary and most important training management document.

Units. All infantry units from regiment to company require a METL. Unit below company level do not have a METL.

Common Errors:

- **Priorities.** All METL tasks are equally important. The METL does not set training priorities, the training plan does.
- **Resources.** The METL is an end-state. It is unconstrained by resources. The METL does not acknowledge limited training resources, the training plan does.
- **Higher Headquarters' METL disconnect.** A unit's METL must support its higher headquarters METL. A unit's METL does NOT include those higher headquarters tasks that the higher headquarters accomplishes by itself.
- **Length.** The METL should be as short as possible. *Essential* tasks receive focus.
- **Copying.** Identical units do NOT have identical METLs. War plans, geography, and higher headquarters all generate varying tasks for identically organized units.
- **Regurgitation of training standards.** A list of training standards or doctrinal tasks is NOT a METL. A unit's METL defines specific combat tasks, not generic capabilities.
- **Environments or conditions listed instead of tasks.** Each listed task could be assigned to the unit in combat. Including an example mission statement for each listed task solidifies this linkage. Generic environments, platforms, equipment or conditions may apply to an essential task, but are NOT standalone tasks.

“Operate in an NBC environment” is NOT a METL task
“Operate in MOU” is NOT a METL task
“Conduct Mechanized Operations” is NOT a METL task
- **Subordinate tasks.** The METL includes only those highest-level collective tasks that apply to the entire unit, tasks that would be assigned by higher headquarters to the unit as a whole. Including an example mission statement for each listed task solidifies this linkage. Staffs and subordinate units have their own tasks that *support* the METL but are not standalone tasks in the

METL.

“Coordinate Fire Support” is a subordinate task

“Command Control Unit” is a subordinate task

“Provide internal CSS” is a subordinate task

- Secondary activities. Fire fighting, community support, base operations, ceremonies, formal training requirements, and other similar activities are not *mission essential* tasks and are NOT part of the METL.

Training Plans

The METL provides the foundation for the Training Plan. A training plan selects one or more METL tasks, identifies the collective and individual training needed to accomplish the METL task, and allocates time and resources to train to that task.

METL training is first priority above formal training requirements and ancillary training requirements. A commander whose training plan is NOT focused on a specific METL task, but addresses only formal training requirements, is NOT preparing his unit for combat.