



This manual has been scanned by the  
Vickers MG Collection & Research  
Association

[www.vickersmachinegun.org.uk](http://www.vickersmachinegun.org.uk)

If it is of use, please make a donation at:

[https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=s-xclick&hosted\\_button\\_id=NKSHEDAMHTJ3G](https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=s-xclick&hosted_button_id=NKSHEDAMHTJ3G)

**RESTRICTED**

The information given in this document is not to be communicated, either directly or indirectly, to the Press or to any person not authorized to receive it.

20  
His Majesty's Stationery Office  
1944



Printed in  
AGIS  
ON MAY  
1944

# Field Service Pocket Book

Part I—Pamphlet No. 1

## GLOSSARY OF MILITARY TERMS

1944

*(This pamphlet supersedes FSPB Pamphlet No. 1, 1940)*

*Crown Copyright Reserved*

*By Command of the Army Council.*

*L. D. D. D.*

THE WAR OFFICE,  
6th May, 1944

20371

REVISED

PRINTED AND BOUND BY THE VICKERS MACHINE GUN CO. LTD., LONDON, E.C. 4, ENGLAND.



Field Service Pocket  
Book

Part I—Pamphlet No. 1

GLOSSARY OF MILITARY TERMS

1944

THE VICKERS MACHINE GUN CO. LTD., LONDON, E.C. 4, ENGLAND.

Copyright Reserved

Printed in Great Britain

*Handwritten signature*

1944  
1101 1000 00

FIELD SERVICE POCKET BOOK  
Part I—Pamphlet No. 1, 1944

GLOSSARY OF MILITARY TERMS

INTRODUCTION

The object of this pamphlet is to define tactical and administrative terms and expressions in general use in the Army. Note that—

- (a) A term not listed under the first word may be found under one of the other words.
- (b) Authorized abbreviations are shown in brackets.
- (c) Only terms that might not be familiar to regimental officers have been included. Blank pages are provided at the end of the pamphlet on which individual additions to the glossary can be made.

GLOSSARY

**Advanced base (adv base)**

When a force is maintained partly from outside the actual theatre of operations, that part of the base inside the theatre will be called the advanced base.

**Advanced depot of medical stores**

A corps medical unit for the supply of medical stores to medical units in corps and divisions.

**Advanced dressing station (ADS)**

A divisional medical dressing station formed by one or more companies of a field ambulance or light field ambulance, where casualties are given first aid, sorted and labelled, and from which they are evacuated.

**Advanced surgical centre**

A corps medical unit formed by a field dressing station, to which is attached a field transfusion unit and one or more field surgical units. Casualties requiring urgent surgical treatment in the field are evacuated to this centre from the advanced dressing station.

**Air Liaison officer (ALO)**

An army officer attached to an RAF unit or formation, whose duties include the briefing and interrogation of pilots undertaking reconnaissance, and assisting the commanders of squadrons carrying out any Army tasks in the briefing and interrogation of air crews. He is responsible for passing on the results of the interrogation and for keeping pilots fully informed about the military situation. He also carries out a quick scrutiny of all air photographs received.

**Air observation post (air OP)**

A specially designed light aircraft from which an artillery officer directs the fire of the artillery by flying at a low altitude over our own lines.

**Air photograph (air pb)**

A photograph of an area of ground taken from an aircraft. There are two types:—

- (a) *Vertical photograph*—Presents a view of an area of country as seen from a point immediately above the centre of that area.
- (b) *Oblique photograph*—Presents a perspective view of an area of country as seen from the point of exposure.

**Air reconnaissance (air recce) (see also Reconnaissance)**

Reconnaissance, either visual or photographic, carried out from aircraft. There are four types:—

- (a) *Strategical (strat R)*—The search, usually by high-level photography of distant areas, for information that may influence the general course of the campaign.
- (b) *Tactical (tac R)*—The search, by visual observation or photography, for information that may have an immediate effect on operations.
- (c) *Artillery (arty R)*—Reconnaissance for artillery targets, and observation and control of artillery fire.
- (d) *Contact (con R)*—Reconnaissance to locate the position of our own forward troops.

**Airborne**

Term applicable to all personnel who, normally forming part of airborne divisions, are specially organized and

trained for operations involving transport by air. The term applies both to parachute troops and to air landing units, as well as to their equipment.

**Airportable**

Term applicable to the equipment, modified as necessary, that accompanies airtransported troops.

**Airtransported**

Term applicable only to troops who do NOT form part of airborne divisions but who may be transported by air for a special purpose.

**Ammunition point (AP)**

A point where a forward holding of ammunition on wheels is established by a second line RASC company to facilitate rapid replacement of expended ammunition direct to units, by refilling unit ammunition vehicles or by an artillery unit calling forward one or more vehicles to the gun or wagon lines.

**Ammunition railhead (ARH)**

A terminal point on the railway L of C at which ammunition and explosives are transferred from rail to dumps or for onward transmission by road transport.

**Army air support**

Term which, in its widest sense, includes the provision of fighter protection, air reconnaissance, attack on ground targets, and all forms of air transport. Air support may be:—

- (a) *Direct*—Air intervention against enemy land forces actually engaged in the battle.
- (b) *Indirect*—Air action having a general influence on the course of the campaign.

Requests for air support are passed through air support signal units, which provide the necessary tentacles to Army and RAF formations.

**Axis of advance**

The line giving the general direction of movement astride which a formation or unit moves.

**Base**

When a force is wholly maintained within the actual theatre of operations, the term "base" takes the place of the term "advanced base."

**Base sub area**

An area round a base port which contains base depots and installations required to handle the type of traffic to be imported through the port. The local administration of these depots and installations and of the port is the responsibility of the HQ base sub-area.

**Beach maintenance area (BMA)**

An area in the vicinity of the beaches comprising service units and detachments for the maintenance, in the initial stages, of troops landed in a combined operation.

**Bomb line**

A line, usually delineated by well-defined geographical features, beyond which the air forces are free to attack any target. Targets on the friendly side of the bomb line will only be attacked by special arrangement with our ground forces.

**Bound**

A tactical feature of importance used during an advance to co-ordinate movement. Having reached a bound, the unit or formation will continue without a pause unless otherwise ordered, or unless it is necessary to secure the feature for tactical reasons.

**Casualty collecting post (CCP)**

A medical post formed by a section, or part of a section, of a field ambulance, to which casualties are brought from the regimental aid post, and to which ambulance cars of the field ambulance are sent to collect casualties.

**Centre line (CL)**

The route along which the HQ of a formation, unit, or sub-unit moves.

**Code name**

A non-secret word, standard throughout a field force, used to denote a feature, a route, or an individual at a headquarters, etc.

**Code sign**

A secret group of letters, or letters and figures, which is changed at frequent intervals, used to identify a headquarters.

**Code word**

A pre-arranged secret word used to convey instructions or information.

**Covering troops**

A major detachment of troops operating in advance of a main force to prevent or delay enemy interference with the activities of the main force, especially during the preparation of a defensive position, or during a strategical withdrawal.

**D day**

The day on which an operation is planned to begin. Subsequent days are referred to as D plus 1, D plus 2, *et seq*.

**Defilade**

A position protected from observation or fire, or both.

**Delivery point (DP)**

The place where RASC transport hands over its load to unit transport.

**Density**

The general spacing of vehicles on a route, expressed in the number of vehicles to the mile (vtm).

**Divisional administrative area (div adm area)**

An area in which the administrative units and unit B echelon vehicles, whose functions do not require them to be elsewhere, are situated.

**Divisional administrative group (div adm gp)**

The administrative units and unit B echelon vehicles located in the administrative area.

**Dropping zone (DZ)**

An area on to which parachute troops land or where stores are delivered to a formation by dropping.

**Echelon (ech)**

1. **Organization**—Division of a particular organization into front and rear parts, e.g. A and B echelons of first line transport. *DAG GHQ 2nd Echelon* refers to the officer in charge of the DAG's office at the base.

## 2. Tactics

- (a) The layout, in defence, of posts or localities in depth, each to the rear and flank of the post or locality immediately in front.
- (b) In a combined infantry and tank attack, the successive groups of attacking troops. These groups are usually sub-divided into—
- (i) The assault echelon.
  - (ii) The support echelon.
  - (iii) The reserve echelon.

3. **Repair**—Repair expected by various types of workshops.

### Enfilade

Fire from a flank, sited to sweep a target from end to end.

### Forward base (fwd base)

When the distance between the forward formations and the base, or advanced base, becomes too great to guarantee punctual delivery, it may be necessary to establish forward holdings and installations.

### Forward maintenance area (FMA)

An area formed, when considered necessary, into which RASC transport under army control empties, and from which second line transport draws, and at which small stocks are held.

### Forward observation officer (FOO)

An officer sent forward during either an advance or an attack to observe fire from a series of OPs in succession, and to keep in direct touch with the local situation.

### Group (gp)

- (a) A body of troops, based on the formation, unit, or sub-unit specified, with the addition of other arms under command as required for a specific operation, e.g., brigade, regimental, company group.
- (b) (i) *R (recco) group*—Contains all the personnel a commander may require to help him during his reconnaissance, and in the preparation of his plan.
- (ii) *O (order) group*—Contains the minimum personnel necessary to receive a commander's orders, so as to put his plan into operation.
- (iii) *F (fighting) group*—Contains the personnel, vehicles, and equipment necessary to carry out the commander's plan.

(iv) *T (transport) group*—Contains the personnel, equipment, and A echelon transport not required in F group.

### H hour

The time relative to which all timings in a given operation are fixed. All figures shown in conjunction with H hour will be followed either by "minutes" ("mins") or by "hours" ("hrs"), unless the context clearly indicates which is meant.

### Head

Used as a suffix to terms denoting the method of transportation used on the L of C (e.g., railhead, roadhead, riverhead, airhead, etc.) indicates a forward terminal of L of C communications. The place so named, with the exception of roadhead, denotes a point of trans-shipment from one form of transport to another.

### Junction point (junc pt)

Distinctive topographical feature, on or in the neighbourhood of a unit or formation boundary, generally selected from the map before an operation to facilitate co-ordination between the flanks of adjacent formations or units during that operation.

### Lines of communication (L of C)

The system of communication to a theatre of operations and in a theatre of operations. The latter starts at the base ports and ends at the terminal of each means of communication, i.e., rail, motor transport, inland water transport.

### Lines of communication area (L of C area)

The area between the base ports and the rear boundaries of armies, through which the various means of transportation run. This area may be divided into two or more L of C areas, which are sub-divided into L of C sub-areas.

### Lines of communication terminal (L of C terminal)

A general term to cover road, rail, sea, or airhead, used when no specific head is referred to.

### Main base

When a force is partly maintained from outside the actual theatre of operations, that part of the base outside the theatre will be called the main base.

### Meeting point (MP)

A rendezvous where RASC transport is met by unit guides and guided to unit transport areas where loads are transferred (see also Delivery point).

**Notice**

The period of time, laid down by a superior commander, that will be available for preparation after units have been named for action and before they are required to move. The length of time governs the state of readiness. Thus, "one hour's notice" means that the unit or formation must be able to move one hour after it receives its orders to do so.

**Park (pk)**

The location of a unit holding a collection of reserve war material, organized to facilitate rapid supply to troops.

**Petrol point (PP)**

A point where a forward holding on wheels is established by a second line RASC company to facilitate the replacement of petrol and lubricants to forward units.

**Railhead maintenance area (RHMA)**

An area in the vicinity of railheads in which are situated advance depots and dumps for the maintenance of forward formations, served by these railheads, and of local units.

**Rear maintenance area (RMA)**

An area in which are located the temporary depots which maintain the force ashore, from the time when issues from beach maintenance areas cease, and until permanent base depots start to issue.

**Reconnaissance (recce) (see also Air reconnaissance)**

- (a) *Close reconnaissance*—Carried out at close quarters to the enemy to obtain detailed information of the ground, and of the enemy's location, strength, and movements.
- (b) *Medium reconnaissance*—Carried out to obtain general information about the enemy's movements and dispositions on which to base a plan of offensive or defensive action.
- (c) *Distant reconnaissance*—Carried out to discover the enemy's strategical movements and concentrations in a theatre of operations.

**Refilling point (RP)**

A place where the transfer of loads from one detachment of RASC lorries to another takes place. It will only be used when the distance between the forward maintenance area and

the delivery points is beyond the range of second line transport, or when forward formations are being maintained direct from the railhead maintenance area. It is in no sense a dump.

**Report line**

A line having no tactical significance, such as a lateral road or railway, on which units or formations report but do not halt.

**Roadhead maintenance area (RHMA)**

An area in the vicinity of roadheads in which are situated advance depots and dumps for the maintenance of forward formations, served by these roadheads, and of local units.

**Supply point (sup P)**

The place at which supplies are transferred from RASC transport to unit transport (see also **Delivery point**).

**Tentacle (tcl)**

A wireless detachment from an air support signal unit used to request Army air support, and to pass information of interest to both Army and RAF.

**Transport (tpt)**

- (a) *First line*—Transport borne on the war establishment of a unit, intended to carry loads for its own use.
- (b) *Second line*—Divisional, corps, or army troops companies RASC, whose duty it is to deliver supplies, etc., to first line transport. Second line transport draws from a maintenance area or railhead. The second line army troops transport may draw from a forward maintenance area, or from a railhead maintenance area.
- (c) *Army transport companies*—RASC companies under the control of army HQ, primarily used to carry the requirements of corps from a L of C terminal to within range of second line transport.
- (d) *General transport companies*—RASC companies provided as GHQ troops, primarily for duties on the L of C and in bases.

### Vehicle casualties

Every vehicle that breaks down is classified into one of three groups:—

- (a) *X casualty*—Due to a temporary stoppage only, and repairable by the crew of the vehicle without other assistance.
- (b) *Y casualty*—Requires assistance from repair personnel, and likely to be repairable by unit fitters and light aid detachments or second line workshops.
- (c) *Z casualty*—Requires extensive repair or replacement, involving evacuation.



