Fire Support Certification Written Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide

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Questions

1. Which of the following best defines 'suppressive fire'?

- **A. Fire aimed to destroy enemy resources**
- **B. Fire intended to pin down enemy forces**
- **C. Fire that targets civilian infrastructure**
- **D. Fire aimed at marking enemy positions**

2. What is the purpose of collateral damage estimates in fire support planning?

- **A. To assess the cost of munitions used**
- **B. To ensure operations minimize harm to civilians and infrastructure**
- **C. To analyze enemy casualties**
- **D. To evaluate the effectiveness of firepower**

3. A coordinated fire line (CFL) is established by which level of command?

- **A. Brigade or higher**
- **B. Company level**
- **C. Platoon level**
- **D. Division level**

4. During a precision registration, if you fired 2 rounds over and 2 rounds short, with the last round nearest to the registration point, what is your refinement?

- **A. Range refinement needed**
- **B. No range refinement**
- **C. Adjust 100 meters down**
- **D. Adjust 100 meters up**

5. What is the purpose of concentrating fire in military strategy?

- **A. To evenly distribute fire across multiple targets**
- **B. To focus multiple fire support assets on a single target area**
- **C. To minimize the use of ammunition**
- **D. To provide cover for advancing troops**

6. What is the primary purpose of an illumination mission in support of ground troops?

- **A. To provide cover fire**
- **B. To enhance visibility of enemies**
- **C. To signal for reinforcement**
- **D. To disrupt enemy communication**

7. What common tool do Forward Observers use for target acquisition?

- **A. Binoculars**
- **B. A laser rangefinder**
- **C. Mapping software**
- **D. Field manuals**

8. If during the FFE phase of a CFF your rounds are inaccurate and sufficient, what should be your next action?

- **A. Fire for effect**
- **B. Refinement, end of mission, and surveillance**
- **C. Request re-evaluation of target**
- **D. Adjust the target location**

9. What does 'fire support synchronization' entail?

- **A. Aligning all fire support efforts for maximum combined effect**
- **B. Conducting joint operations with air and ground units**
- **C. Scheduling fire support missions**
- **D. Implementing automated fire control systems**

10. The armed OH58D can carry which type of machine guns?

- **A. 7.62mm**
- **B. .50 cal**
- **C. 12.7mm**
- **D. 20mm**

Answers

1. B
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. B

Explanations

1. Which of the following best defines 'suppressive fire'?

A. Fire aimed to destroy enemy resources

B. Fire intended to pin down enemy forces

C. Fire that targets civilian infrastructure

D. Fire aimed at marking enemy positions

Suppressive fire is defined as fire that is intentionally directed at enemy positions to neutralize their ability to effectively engage friendly forces. This type of fire aims to pin down the enemy, limit their movement, and reduce their combat effectiveness, creating a tactical advantage for friendly units. By applying suppressive fire, a unit can provide cover for maneuvering troops or facilitate other operations, such as troop movements or assaults. Understanding the purpose of suppressive fire highlights its role in combat situations, where maintaining the initiative and protecting forces is critical. While destroying enemy resources, targeting civilian infrastructure, or marking enemy positions can be objectives in a broader combat strategy, they do not describe the specific function of suppressive fire as clearly as the intention to pin down enemy forces.

2. What is the purpose of collateral damage estimates in fire support planning?

A. To assess the cost of munitions used

B. To ensure operations minimize harm to civilians and infrastructure

C. To analyze enemy casualties

D. To evaluate the effectiveness of firepower

Collateral damage estimates play a critical role in fire support planning as they aim to ensure that military operations minimize harm to civilians and infrastructure. This is particularly important in modern warfare, where distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants is essential to uphold both ethical standards and the laws of armed conflict. By conducting collateral damage estimates, military planners can analyze potential impacts of fire support on surrounding civilian areas and structures. This helps to inform decision-making processes, ensuring that necessary precautions are taken to limit unintended destruction and protect civilian lives. The intent is not only to achieve military objectives effectively but also to maintain public support, international legitimacy, and compliance with legal obligations. In contrast, options related to analyzing costs, assessing enemy casualties, or evaluating firepower effectiveness do not directly address the essential objective of minimizing civilian harm, which is the fundamental purpose of collateral damage estimates in the context of fire support operations.

3. A coordinated fire line (CFL) is established by which level of command?

A. Brigade or higher

B. Company level

C. Platoon level

D. Division level

A coordinated fire line (CFL) is a critical element in the coordination of indirect fire support and is established to ensure that friendly forces can receive effective fire while minimizing the risk of friendly fire incidents. This tactical concept is typically managed at a higher command level, specifically at the brigade level or higher. Establishing a CFL requires an integration of various combat assets and the assessment of the operational situation on the battlefield, tasks that go beyond company or platoon levels which are more focused on tactical execution rather than overarching coordination. A brigade or higher command possesses the broader situational awareness and the authority to manage multiple units and their interactions, making it the appropriate echelon for setting up a CFL. The role of higher command is vital in assessing the effectiveness and positioning of artillery, ensuring cavalry and infantry units are properly coordinated, and providing the necessary guidance for engagement rules within a given operational area. This level also has the ability to communicate across units effectively, which is essential for the timely dissemination of fire support orders and deconfliction of close air support.

4. During a precision registration, if you fired 2 rounds over and 2 rounds short, with the last round nearest to the registration point, what is your refinement?

A. Range refinement needed

B. No range refinement

C. Adjust 100 meters down

D. Adjust 100 meters up

In a precision registration exercise, the goal is to establish an accurate firing point using a series of rounds. When you fire rounds, an optimal situation occurs when you hit close to the intended target area. In this scenario, firing two rounds over the target and two rounds short, with the last round being the closest to the registration point, indicates that the pattern of fire has a clear proximity to the desired target. Since the last round fired was closest to the registration point, this shows that the adjustments made earlier were effective and that the firing solution is sufficiently accurate. Therefore, there is no need for further adjustment to the firing solution regarding range refinement. The rounds have effectively bracketed the target, indicating that the calculated range is already optimal. Additional options, such as adjusting the range up or down, would imply that either the previous rounds were too far or too short, which contradicts the information that the last round is nearest to the intended target. The lack of a need for adjustments reinforces the assessment that the current firing position is already effective. Therefore, the correct understanding is that no range refinement is required, confirming the firing is accurate enough without further changes.

5. What is the purpose of concentrating fire in military strategy?

A. To evenly distribute fire across multiple targets

B. To focus multiple fire support assets on a single target area

C. To minimize the use of ammunition

D. To provide cover for advancing troops

The purpose of concentrating fire in military strategy centers on the effectiveness and efficiency of fire support operations. Focusing multiple fire support assets on a single target area enhances the destructive impact on that target, thereby improving the likelihood of mission success. This method allows forces to apply overwhelming firepower to defeat an enemy position or reduce its capabilities significantly. When fire is concentrated, it can create a psychological effect on the adversary, often causing confusion and fear, which can disrupt their operations. Additionally, concentrating fire enables a more efficient use of resources and can reduce collateral damage by ensuring that the fire is directed at a specific area rather than spreading it thinly across multiple locations. This strategic approach is especially important when dealing with fortified enemy positions or during critical moments in battle when decisive action is required. In contrast, evenly distributing fire across multiple targets may lead to insufficient damage to any one target, diminishing overall effectiveness. Minimizing ammunition use is more of a secondary consideration that comes after the primary goal of achieving tactical or operational objectives through concentrated fire support. Providing cover for advancing troops is also a vital aspect of fire support, but it typically involves different tactics and operational considerations than fire concentration.

6. What is the primary purpose of an illumination mission in support of ground troops?

A. To provide cover fire

B. To enhance visibility of enemies

C. To signal for reinforcement

D. To disrupt enemy communication

The primary purpose of an illumination mission in support of ground troops is to enhance visibility of enemies. This type of mission is designed to light up a specific area on the battlefield, typically using flares or other illumination devices. By illuminating the environment, friendly forces can better recognize enemy positions, movements, and tactics during nighttime operations or in low-visibility conditions. This increased visibility allows for informed decision-making and enhances situational awareness, ultimately improving the effectiveness of ground troop operations. While cover fire, signaling for reinforcements, and disrupting enemy communication may be tactics employed in different contexts during combat, they do not represent the main objective of illumination missions. The focus for illumination is strictly to enhance visibility, making it easier for troops to see threats and dangers in their vicinity.

7. What common tool do Forward Observers use for target acquisition?

A. Binoculars

B. A laser rangefinder

C. Mapping software

D. Field manuals

The use of a laser rangefinder is crucial for Forward Observers (FOs) during target acquisition because it provides precise distance measurements to the target. This capability is essential for accurately calculating the necessary adjustments for fire support, ensuring that artillery or air strikes hit their intended target with minimal collateral damage. The laser rangefinder allows FOs to quickly determine the target's range, which is fundamental in the calculation of the correct firing solution and enhances the effectiveness of indirect fire systems. While options like binoculars, mapping software, and field manuals might assist FOs in other aspects of their duties—such as gaining visual confirmation or understanding terrain features—they do not offer the same level of precise measurement necessary for accurately engaging targets as the laser rangefinder does. The laser rangefinder's ability to quickly measure distances improves situational awareness and reaction time in dynamic environments typically encountered during military operations.

8. If during the FFE phase of a CFF your rounds are inaccurate and sufficient, what should be your next action?

A. Fire for effect

B. Refinement, end of mission, and surveillance

C. Request re-evaluation of target

D. Adjust the target location

In the Fire For Effect (FFE) phase of a Call for Fire (CFF), if the rounds are found to be inaccurate but sufficient, the appropriate action is to conduct refinement, end the mission, and initiate surveillance. This step is crucial because it emphasizes the need to gather information on the effectiveness of the fire support rather than just continuing to fire rounds that may not be correctly adjusted to achieve the intended effects on the target. Refinement involves adjusting the targeting process to ensure subsequent rounds are more accurate based on the feedback received from the previous fire mission. Ending the mission at this stage allows the Fire Support Team to take stock of the current situation and determine the effectiveness and accuracy of the response. Surveillance is imperative to monitor the target area for any changes, ensuring a full understanding of the impact the initial fire had on the target and its surroundings. Together, these actions help to maintain operational effectiveness and efficiency, allowing for a more coordinated approach in future engagements and minimizing any potential unintended consequences of inaccurate fire.

9. What does 'fire support synchronization' entail?

A. Aligning all fire support efforts for maximum combined effect

B. Conducting joint operations with air and ground units

C. Scheduling fire support missions

D. Implementing automated fire control systems

Fire support synchronization is a crucial aspect of military operations which focuses specifically on ensuring that all fire support assets—such as artillery, mortars, and air support—are coordinated effectively to achieve the greatest impact on the battlefield. This concept entails integrating the various forms of fire support into a cohesive plan, allowing for a seamless and efficient use of resources. When fire support efforts are aligned, it maximizes their combined effect, allowing forces to capitalize on timing and positioning. This ensures that different fire support assets are not operating in isolation but rather complementing one another, which can significantly enhance the overall lethality and effectiveness of the forces involved in a mission. In this context, while conducting joint operations with air and ground units, scheduling fire support missions, and implementing automated fire control systems are important components of fire support operations, they do not fully encapsulate the broad and essential objective of synchronization, which is to create a unified effort among various fire support sources for maximum combined effect. This strategic alignment is what distinguishes effective fire support in complex combat scenarios.

10. The armed OH58D can carry which type of machine guns?

A. 7.62mm

B. .50 cal

C. 12.7mm

D. 20mm

The armed OH-58D Kiowa Warrior is primarily equipped to carry .50 caliber (12.7mm) machine guns. This heavy caliber provides an effective range and firepower suitable for the helicopter's reconnaissance and support roles, enabling it to engage both ground and air targets with sufficient stopping power. The .50 cal is versatile for operations involving light armor and personnel, making it a suitable choice for the OH-58D's operational requirements. Other machine gun calibers, such as 7.62mm or 20mm, may be found in different weapon systems but are not the main armament for this particular helicopter. The 7.62mm is a lighter round typically used in smaller support roles, while the 20mm is often associated with aircraft that require higher firepower for anti-aircraft applications. Thus, the .50 cal is the most appropriate option for the OH-58D's design and combat capabilities.