

# Terrain Description

# Terrain Appreciation



INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

Operační program Vzdělávání pro konkurenceschopnost

Název projektu: Inovace magisterského studijního programu Fakulty ekonomiky a managementu

Registrační číslo projektu: CZ.1.07/2.2.00/28.0326

## Warm-up

*Answer the questions:*

- How can terrain affect military operations?
- How can weather affect military operations?
- What are the types of terrain?
- What are terrain features?
- Why is it important to appreciate terrain?
- What is “terrain-oriented reconnaissance”?
- What is the main goal of terrain reconnaissance?

*After reading the text compare your answers with the facts mentioned in it.*

*Read the text.*

## **Terrain**

Terrain is a very important factor for all armies and soldiers. History has many examples of this. Wars in Vietnam were fought in jungle which is ideal terrain for guerrilla warfare. Wars in Afghanistan were fought in mountainous terrain which is also ideal for guerrilla warfare. Flat and open terrain, such as desert, is ideal terrain for warfare between conventional armies with tanks and armoured vehicles. Therefore, we can say that terrain often determines type of combat for soldiers.

Weather conditions are also important: e.g. heavy rains can change flat and firm terrain into mud. Such a change of terrain would make movement of tanks and vehicles very difficult. i.e. weather conditions also determine combat conditions.

The purpose of terrain reconnaissance is to acquire information about terrain, local population, installations and environmental conditions.

Terrain reconnaissance provides information necessary for movement, cover, concealment and obstacles. The study of maps is also an important source of information about terrain.

Terrain reconnaissance also deals with environmental conditions. Weather conditions are studied to find out how visibility, temperature, rain, snow and ice affect both the decisions of commanders and the activities of troops.

Terrain contains obstacles. The purpose of terrain reinforcement is to make these obstacles bigger by building barriers. Barriers (e.g. tank traps) stop or limit an opponent

in the way he can use terrain. This construction work is done by military engineers. The purpose of improving terrain trafficability is to provide, maintain or improve the mobility of friendly forces. These improvements are done by military engineers.

*Now answer the following questions:*

- 1 What terrain is suitable for guerrilla warfare / tanks?
- 2 Why do weather conditions have an effect on combat conditions?
- 3 How can weather conditions change the commander's decision?
- 4 What is terrain reconnaissance aimed at?
- 5 What does the acronym NATINADS stand for?
- 6 What is the purpose of terrain reinforcement?
- 7 What is the purpose of terrain trafficability?
- 8 Explain the term *terrain reinforcement*.
- 9 Explain the term *terrain trafficability*.

Resource: J. Dvořák, H. Hrdlička. Vojenské odborné texty z jazyka anglického. 1997

*Read the statements and decide whether they are true or false.*

- 1 Jungle and mountainous terrain are suitable for guerrilla warfare.
- 2 Weather conditions can impact the commander's decision.
- 3 The purpose of improving terrain trafficability is to improve the mobility of enemy forces.
- 4 Terrain often determines type of combat.
- 5 The construction work is done by recce patrols.
- 6 Terrain reconnaissance deals with environmental conditions too.
- 7 Barriers stop or limit an opponent in the way he can use terrain.

*Complete the chart with suitable nouns and verbs*

verb	noun
determine	
	change
provide	
reinforce	
	maintenance
improve	
	limitation

## *Match the words with the definitions*

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1 to fight     | a to keep a road, machine, etc. in good condition          |
| 2 to determine | b to restrict; to restrain                                 |
| 3 to maintain  | c to make stg. stronger or more intense                    |
| 4 to reinforce | d to hide something  |
| 5 to obtain    | e to take part in a battle                                 |
| 6 to provide   | f to have to do (with); to conduct oneself; to do business |
| 7 to conceal   | g to make a firm decision to do stg.;                      |
| 8 to deal with | h to comprise; to hold                                     |
| 9 to limit     | i to get possession of; to acquire; to earn                |
| 10 to contain  | j to prepare; to supply; to procure beforehand             |

*Fill the gaps in the text. Use the following words.*

### **Terrain Appreciation**

hampering natural dispositions opposing operations movement  
man-made opportunity advance evaluation purpose situation

Terrain appreciation is the 1\_\_\_\_\_ of the area of probable military 2\_\_\_\_\_ to determine the effect of the terrain on the lines of action open to 3\_\_\_\_\_ forces in the area. The 4\_\_\_\_\_ of this article is to describe the means of evaluating terrain and to show the effects of terrain on tactical 5\_\_\_\_\_.

The important factors to be considered in evaluating terrain include not only 6\_\_\_\_\_ features such as ridges, streams, bodies of water, woods, and open spaces but also 7\_\_\_\_\_ features such as roads, railways, and towns.

Ground forms such as a succession of ridges and valleys may influence military operations by aiding or 8 \_\_\_\_\_ the movement of military forces. An 9 \_\_\_\_\_ parallel to the ridges and valleys is mechanically easier than 10 \_\_\_\_\_ across successive ridges. The 11 \_\_\_\_\_ to utilize favourable terrain features may determine the characteristic features of the commander's plan of action.

No matter what the type of terrain and no matter what the tactical 12 \_\_\_\_\_, terrain can always be evaluated in terms of the following five factors: observation, fields of fire, concealment and cover, obstacles and communications.



# Thanks for your attention.



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