



WHAT IS MILITARY COMMUNICATION AND HOW DOES IT EMPOWER THE DEFENCE SYSTEM OF A COUNTRY?

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Abstract

Within this paper, we discover and come to a solid understanding of military communication and the empowering role it plays in supporting a country's defence system. It describes to us the duty and efficiency of the various forms and functions of military communication and how they each accomplish their common goal of passing on a message. Utilizing real-life examples, this paper outlines how due to rapidly improving technology, military communication has transformed over the years and that it is and always will be, a tremendously important part of any country's defence system.

Keywords:-The Defence System, Military communication and its functions, The forms of military communication, How military communications transformed over time, The importance of military communication

Introduction

Military communication is widely recognised as the 'transmission of information from reconnaissance and other units in contact with the enemy and the means for exercising command by the transmission of orders and instructions of commanders to their subordinates,' [1] In essence, it is comprised of all aspects of transmitting messages, or the conveyance of information by armed forces, on both land and sea. The main mission of military communication is to ensure that control and the chain of command is always maintained. It should also provide the communication of messages and signals to the forces at a proper time, concerning the threat of an enemy attack. The objective of this paper is to discuss the importance of military communication and to understand whether or not military communication is truly vital to the defence system.

The Defence System

The Defence System is known as 'the weaponry available for the defence of a region, including arms, implements of war and munitions.' [2] Worldwide, there are four main sectors of each and every defence system. These are known as:

- The Army. An Army is 'a large, organised body of armed personnel that fights primarily on land.'
- The Navy. A Navy is 'a branch of the military that operates at sea.'
- The Marine Corps. The Marine Corps performs both on land and sea and serves as a quick reaction force in order to respond to a crisis when it is necessary.
- The Air Force. An Air Force is 'a branch of the military which deals with aerial warfare.'



- The main purpose of the Defence System is to provide protection for its nation. It is a core element of the national security system and without it, the nation would be vulnerable to any form of attack.

The forms of military communication

There are many communication systems in the military, and each of them has their own roles and advantages. Some of the forms of military communications consist of:

- Military Radio Systems. This is an important form of communication, since it allows armed forces to communicate directly with one another and to send each other urgent messages quickly.
- Cryptography. This is the study of turning messages into codes unreadable to anyone besides someone who is able to decrypt it. Codes are commonly used in the military to avoid information leaks and to stop important secrets from falling into the wrong hands.
- Alert Measurement Systems: These are systems designed to measure the various states of readiness for armed forces around the world. They can be used at many times such as, during an act of terrorism, or even during a state of war.
- Signal corps. This is a branch of the military which specialises in managing all the communications. Signals, such as, lights, flags and sirens are used in the military to communicate short commands and as warnings.
- Network-centric warfare- This is a theory of war that seeks to provide awareness of the battlefield and to translate an information advantage into a competitive advantage.

How military communication has developed over the years

For as long as there have been militaries, military communications have been a constant part of all armies, ranging from olden times to the modern day. One of the most well known methods of early military communication was brought to life in the ancient Roman Empire. Now known as the first code writer in history, Julius Caesar was tired of having his foot-messengers ambushed and his secret communications stolen, he devised a simple cipher. Since every message had a letter count that made a perfect square, the key to decrypting his messages was to transcribe the text into a square grid and read it from top to bottom. To someone who didn't know how to do this, the message would be meaningless. This was the first time cryptography was used to communicate in the armed forces. Over time, this concept of rearranging letters was modified by others to make the codes more difficult to crack. In fact, during World War 2, the Nazis created a machine called the Enigma. This device shuffled clear text into seemingly senseless arrays of letters that could only be decrypted by another Enigma machine of the same calibration. From this example, we can see that as technology rapidly changed and improved through time, so did the methods of military communication. Initially, military communications were maintained through foot-messengers and simple signals such as fires or landmarks were used. Then, as technology progressed, in the mid 19th century, the electric telegraph was first used in the military. In the early 20th century, radios, radio telegraphs and telephone communications were adopted. Nowadays, at the peak of technology, various types of communications are used within the armed forces. Data transmission communications are carried on using radios. Messenger and postal communications are performed using vehicles including aeroplanes and helicopters and commodities such as rockets, lights, flags and sirens are used to create signals. [3]



The importance of military communication

Communication is critical in the military. This is because a lack of communication would bring about disruption within the army due to the fact that important information and orders would not be passed down the chain of command. As a result, simple information would not be transmitted, missions would be misconstrued and most importantly, the lives of both soldiers and civilians would be in jeopardy. Without military communication, there would be disarray in the armed forces, as soldiers will not know what to do, where to be and when to be there.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has discovered that military communication empowers the Defence System through the transmission of information. The Defence System plays a predominant role in the protection of its nation, and if it were to fail, many countries would fall victim or become vulnerable to attacks. To prevent this from happening, we must consider military communication with the utmost importance because, 'the clear and concise exchange of information has always been vital to any successful military operation.' [4] Communication is truly at the heart of the military.

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