



BRITISH PLANNING BRIEFING

GENERAL

The Planning Session is a streamlined reconstruction of a number of planning meetings of high command staffs, carried out over many months prior to the actual campaign.

BACKGROUND

In summary then there are several basic tenets and political factors which any plan to defeat Germany must recognise:

- 1) **Belgian and Dutch neutrality cannot be violated** by the allied forces; we must await a German attack on Belgium and Holland (or an invitation) before either country can be entered.
- 2) While we should of course be seen to assist our allies in France, the French do have a very strong army and must be expected to **bear the brunt of the Continental land war**. The primary objective of the British armed forces must remain the defence of the United Kingdom and the Empire.
- 3) A major **political consideration** must be to remember that the UK government cannot *command* troops from the Empire. Canada has already sent a division to England, but it cannot be deployed outside the UK without specific permission from the Canadian government. Similarly there are influential factions in Australia and South Africa strongly opposed to the sending of any troops to Europe (or indeed to participation in the war at all)
- 4) Vitally, the British government has to remember the essential strategic objective of maintaining the **goodwill of America**. Many Americans (for example the ambassador to the Court of St.James) do not see the necessity for this war, and have a certain sympathy for Germany. Many more think of this as an essentially European war which has nothing to do with the States, and which America must stay out of. The British government realises the absolute necessity of maintaining the goodwill (and hopefully covert support) of the American administration.
- 5) The British Army consists of a highly mechanised and efficient regular Field Force. This is the main striking power of the Army, and **should not be squandered needlessly**. Given time, the new territorial divisions can be brought up to strength, and will in due course come to equal the fighting efficiency of the Regulars. What ever operations are decided upon, it is essential that the Field Force remain as far as possible intact and that it

operates as a single cohesive force throughout.

6) Remember, you are a government with a fairly **slim majority!** You will have to carry not only your party but also the House of Commons with you. The last thing that you need at the moment is to lose a vote of confidence in the House, which need not be solely over the conduct of the war. There are certain pressing domestic matters deserving of government attention, such as compulsory evacuation of civilians, the Moseleys, the strike in the Clydeside shipyards, and the new pay demand from the Kent coal fields. These are all items that take as much time for an average Cabinet Minister as the military affairs of war.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

You have to come up with a plan for Britain's involvement in the impending campaign in Europe.

The plan should only be in general terms, and should have the following information:

1. The initial deployment areas of the Army. This can be shown on a deployment map provided.
2. The operational tasks of the Army - in the form of short orders. This will include:
 - a. Initial objectives and routes to those objectives. Note that strategic moves that are the subject of a prepared plan are always faster than unplanned manoeuvres.
 - b. Conditional statements - what to do if...(the Germans invade Switzerland for example).
 - c. Timings (how soon to start moving etc).
3. Decide on the deployment policy for the Air forces including:
 - a. Initial target/defence priorities.
 - b. Any changes to deployment to air bases.
 - c. Initial allocation of air resources to Armies.

ARMY

It should be noted that whilst the British Army is the most advanced in terms of motorisation it was still not fully mechanised. Even in Regular Divisions there is not enough transport to lift the Division in one go, and in Territorial Divisions the situation is not as good because of a lack of vehicles. However it is not envisaged that a division would require to be lifted all at once.

Most Territorial Divisions do not yet have their full allotment of artillery of any type as they are still being equipped and trained. On the Anti-Tank gun front many units are equipped with the French 25mm gun in lieu of the 2 pdr as production cannot yet match demand. The Anti-Aircraft weapons in use include very few 3.7" guns and a handful of the new 40mm for the LAA units; most being equipped with the older 2 pdr guns and are awaiting re-equipment.

In general it is vitally important to any expeditionary force that the British Line Of Communication to Channel Ports is protected. To avoid German air interdiction supply shipping should be routed well to the West.

Overseas there are always threats to the Empire and Commonwealth. In particular there is a risk, should Italy enter the war, of an invasion of Libya. This might be further complicated by Arab disaffection in the middle east.

Finally, decisions have to be made as to the strength, composition and location of a strategic reserve to deal with increased tension throughout the world.

Army Units

The original pre-war plan was to raise 13 Territorial Divisions. This was revised just before the outbreak of war to an initial total of 26 TA Divisions. As a result of this expansion a severe strain has been imposed on the training organisation. Regular units have therefore been milked of officers and NCOs to stiffen the new divisions forming.

Full mobilisation started at the end of August 1939, and the current plan is to form a total of 32 divisions in the first year, rising to a total of 55 divisions by September 1941.

The availability dates below can be advanced, but this has a marked consequential reduction in unit quality - units brought in early lack training and substantial parts of their equipment allocation.

FORCES IN THE UK:

Regular Field Force in UK:

Unit	Available
1st Division	Sept 39
2nd Division	Sept 39
3rd Division	Sept 39
4th Division	Sept 39
5th Division	Nov 39
1st Armoured Div	May 40
2nd Armoured Div	June 40
1st Lt Armd Recce Bde	March 40
2nd Lt Armd Recce Bde	April 40
1st Army Tank Bde	March 40

Territorial Divisions being raised in UK:

Unit	Available
12th Eastern	June 40
15th Scottish	May 40
18th East Anglian	Nov 40
23rd Northumbrian	July 40
42nd East Lancs	April 40
43rd Wessex	Sept 40
44th Home Counties	April 40
46th N. Midlands	Aug 40
48th South Midland	Jan 40
49th West Riding	Nov 39
50th Tyne & Tees	Feb 40
51st Highland	Feb 40
52nd Lowland	Mar 40
53rd Welsh	Oct 40
56th London	Nov 40
59th	Dec 40
78th	Jan 41

Some other TA units are forming, but as yet have only reached cadre size.

Anti-Aircraft Command. Territorial Army:

5 x AA Divisions for Home Defence.

28xAA-defended ports, providing light protection.

Commonwealth Forces:

Unit	Available
1st Can Div	Jan 40

EGYPT:

Armoured division (forming)

11th Indian Division

3 x British infantry brigades

Supporting Artillery and Engineers etc.

PALESTINE:

7th and 8th Infantry Divisions

3 x British infantry brigades

OTHER GARRISONS:

Malta, Gibraltar, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya and British Somaliland all have small garrisons, mainly composed of African Troops.

In Sudan : 2 Battalions of British infantry.

AFRICA:

Local defence forces are forming 5 infantry battalions of the King's African Rifles and the Royal West African Frontier Force. These are not regarded as suitable for deployment overseas.

INDIA:

Local forces are being organised, but are a long way from providing additional forces for

use outside the region. The only force that might be available is one Divisional HQ and an infantry brigade group.

MALAYA

1 x British infantry bde
1 x Indian infantry bde

HONG KONG:

1 x British infantry bde
1 x Indian infantry bde

SHANGHAI:

1 x British infantry bde

ROYAL NAVY

BATTLESHIPS: (18)
BATTLE CRUISERS: (3)
AIRCRAFT CARRIERS: (12)
HEAVY CRUISERS: (34)
LIGHT CRUISERS: (42)
AA CRUISERS: (6)

ROYAL AIR FORCE

Fighter Command. The primary task of RAF Fighter command is the defence of the United Kingdom, in the context of the current crisis this is protection of cities from attacks by enemy bombers – particularly London and the channel ports. For this reason it is essential that the minimum number of fighter wings are deployed to France, consistent with the needs of an expeditionary force. Deploying more than 2 wings outside the UK would be a cabinet-level decision, which would only be countenanced under exceptional circumstances.

FIGHTER COMMAND: 4 fighter wings Based in SE England
1 Fighter wing based in the Midlands
1 Fighter wing based in North

Bomber Command. Bomber Command's role is to take offensive action against and enemy – but only military targets may be attacked. Attacks on major centres of population, even if they might contain potential targets is not approved of, as this would give the enemy a pretext to retaliate in kind.

BOMBER COMMAND: 1 Light Bomber wing based in Southern England
1 Light Bomber wing based in East Anglia
1 Bomber wing based in Yorkshire
1 Bomber wing based in Lincolnshire

Coastal Command. The main role of Coastal command is mainly protecting shipping in the North Sea and North of Scotland by searching for enemy submarines. It is also supporting operations in Norway.

COASTAL COMMAND : 2 Recce / Bomber Wings

Operational Radius (Km)

	Km
Fighter Wing	160
Light Bomber Wing	800
Bomber Wing	1200
Recce Wing	1600

Annex A

EXTRACT FROM GAME HANDBOOK

7. Orders

General

The contents of the orders you issue are, of course, very important. What will be even more important is how you write them. If the Team Control and other umpires do not understand you, then even the greatest tactical stroke in the annals of military operations will go for nothing.

To help you and the umpire team we have devised a standard order form. You will be issued with enough of these to last the day - please do not use them to mop up spilt tea or as scrap paper.

You will undoubtedly wish to amplify the broad orders given on your daily orders sheet - try and make your additional material short and simple.

Issuing Game Orders

The orders form (Annex A) does not attempt to emulate the layout of historical military orders - which at this level would have been both longer and more detailed.

Orders include an INTENTIONS section. You must circle one of the options. They mean the following:

- a. PREPARE. This is preparation for a formal attack. Preparation normally takes an entire day, during which time you may not be engaged in combat. Attacking without prior preparation is at a significant disadvantage. Preparation is specific – so the order will take the form of “*Prepare to attack and capture the city of Borchester*”. If the objective changes then preparation starts over again.
- b. ALL OUT = All Out Attack : The units will expend everything in the attack, probably attacking more than once a day, and expending most of their reserves of ammo etc. It will leave the unit much more 'tired' at the end, but its actions are briefly much more intense. Note the times taken to prepare given in Section 10.
- c. ATTACK = Attack : Deliberate assault on an enemy or position with the aim of destroying or defeating him. This is sustainable over a longer period, since not all reserves are consumed at once. Note the times taken to prepare given in Section 10.
- d. PROBE = Probe : A probe is a forward move to find or maintain contact with the enemy – without necessarily engaging in much combat. It is likely to be used during an advance to contact where you wish to avoid falling into an unwanted combat by accident. Intelligence will be gathered about any enemy units you encounter.
- e. HOLD = Remain in position. It is assumed that the units will adopt a basic defensive posture and dig in. The unit can prepare to attack whilst holding. This is the activity assumed if no orders are given for a unit.
- f. TACMOVE = Move Tactically : A move forward in bounds, with lead units prepared for combat. This represents the usual advance to contact speed. A unit cannot move and prepare to attack.
- g. Non Tac MOVE = Move Non-Tactically : A road-column move, with only rudimentary tactical deployment if any. If engaged whilst in this mode the unit has a very low chance of survival. It does, on the other hand, move much faster than the tactical move. A strategic move by rail is also, by definition Non-Tactical, as are the units being loaded or unloaded from trains. A unit cannot move and prepare to attack.
- h. REST = Unit takes leave, troops are rested and the unit 'stood down' from operations. A unit cannot move or fight while resting. It takes this opportunity to rebuild itself if badly battered. It takes one day to make ready for further operations after resting. A unit cannot rest and prepare to attack.

It is important also for ground units to include orders for Close Air Support if necessary. The Air command may have issued orders to the air units, but without complementary orders from the ground units it is assumed that the necessary cooperation was not achieved, and the close air support will be ineffective. It is up to players to ensure they get it right.

8. Logistics

In a game set at this level we will not be concerning ourselves too closely with the detail of logistics. So long as a unit can trace an unblocked path back to a major city of their homeland, they are probably ok. The combat umpires will rule as to whether a unit has been cut off, and players will be informed via their Team Control in the normal way.

Note also that all the armies have very long logistic tails. If, in manoeuvring armies, the 'tails' cross over, this will have a logistic effect as the supporting services get stuck in a long traffic jam.

The overall effect will be to delay most movement, but it can, in extreme cases, mean that units have lower combat effectiveness. The umpires will advise you as necessary.

9. Movement

General

Map references will be simplified, and you will not be required to give standard 6-figure references. The key thing is to make it clear where you are referring to. A position relative to a town is usually sufficient.

Time Scale: Each move represents one day.

Ground

The main type of terrain represented on the map will be as follows:

Open : Open countryside, containing fields and small woods etc, with the occasional farm or small village. A reasonably dense road-net is assumed. No serious obstacle to movement of all types of troops.

Rough : Closer country, forest and or hills. A low-capacity road net and difficult terrain.

Low Country : As open country, but criss-crossed by canals and waterways and marshy or susceptible to flooding. A dense road net, but off-road movement for vehicles is very restricted.

Roads : Only the main roads are marked. These are very good quality and when clear will facilitate rapid movement. There are many minor roads which will not be marked on your maps, these are assumed to make little additional difference to the overall movement of units, and are factored into the movement rates used by the umpires.

Rivers : The rivers marked are usually wide, fast-flowing and are often difficult to cross. Not all crossing points have been marked. If a crossing has been marked is is a significant one and can easily support the logistic rear-echelons of an army. Minor (unmarked) crossings are usually of low capacity and will delay movement and are more easily interdicted.

Rates of Advance

As a guide only, absolute maximum movement speeds in km per day on your map are as follows:

Kilometres per day:

Unit type	Situation	Tactical move	Non-tactical move	River crossing delay
TA INFANTRY	All terrain	10	30	1 day
BRITISH REGULAR DIVISION & BRITISH ARMOUR	Main Road	40	130	1/2 day on bridge
	Open	30	110	1 day to bridge using army assets
	Rough	20	95	n.a.
	Low country	10	110	n.a.
HQ	Main Road	75	150	1 Day
	Other terrain	50	120	n.a.

Movement can be interrupted or delayed by combat, enemy air activity etc.

Movement can be only at night, and it is at half the above speed, but is proof against air attack.

Motorised and armoured units make heavy use of roads. They have a vehicle 'tail' when moving (even when moving tactically) of 20km on a major road, or 40km on minor roads. This is made worse where the roads cut through rough or wooded areas, making passing and turning harder. There are obvious risks of traffic jams if complex manoeuvres are attempted with motor or armoured formations.

River Crossing

On the operational map only river obstacles of importance are marked. There are numerous minor obstacles which have been factored into the movement rates. Any river crossing not at the point of a major road crossing is assumed to involve Army bridging operations of some sort either to repair or strengthen minor bridges, and/or to add capacity.

10. Land Combat

Land Combat

We will be working on the following assumptions:

- ▶ Infantry have a slight advantage over tank formations when defending built-up areas or closely wooded country.
- ▶ Certain units were exceptionally heavily armed or well trained, and will be given a slight bonus in combat as a consequence.
- ▶ Armies are assumed to have their own supporting artillery, bridging and AA troops. All divisions operating within the Army gain a combat bonus for that support. Independent or detached divisions do not.
- ▶ ALL DIVISIONS MUST BE ATTACHED TO AN ARMY. Reserves held by High Command must therefore be allocated before they can be ordered into action. If not attached properly to a higher formation they will fight at a disadvantage - since the support of Army infrastructure is assumed in the combat calculations.
- ▶ It takes time to do anything. For the vast majority of units, the following timings apply:

To prepare a division/corps for an attack.	1 day.
Attach a division to a new corps/army.	1 day.
Load/unload a division on a train for strategic movement.	1 day.
Move a divisional-sized unit by train anywhere within the national rail network.	1 day.
Prepare an entire army for complete orderly withdrawal from its current position in the line	1 day.

Players must allow for these timings in their orders.

It is possible to attack unprepared, but this is regarded as very unlikely to be successful. Orders to prepare for an attack must be made on the order sheet.

Within guidelines such as these, the combat umpires will use their judgement as to the relative balance of advantage and disadvantage in each combat. No appeals on combat results will be accepted during the game - although you will have the opportunity to make comments at the end, and in the critique questionnaire.

Units will become progressively more tired as the battle goes on. The more often they fight, the lower their effectiveness. This is obviously made worse if they are losing. In extreme cases, units might disintegrate - this is especially the case with the poorer quality reserve units involved in heavy fighting.

Note that the vast majority of units in ALL the armies in this campaign are untested in battle. They are therefore particularly vulnerable to unusual or surprise events - they always need time to settle in.

11. Air Combat

Orders

Most air operational orders will emanate from Army Group level.

Since the vast majority of air operations on each side were flown in direct support of the ground forces it is intended that orders are issued in terms of air units supporting particular Armies or Divisions - or specific geographical points.

A specimen order form is at Annex B. Orders basically allocate resources to specific armies, with a mission profile.

Units

The basic unit is the Wing. The term 'Wing' had different historical meaning in different air forces. To keep a rather complex subject simple, we approximate the wing to a force of about 80-100 aircraft.

Air units can only conduct operations within a given radius of their base (see below)

Airfields

Major air bases are marked on the Air map. Minor bases or landing strips are not separately represented.

Unit Types

Fighter – very good at attacking other aircraft, intercepting transport, bombers and ground attack.

Bomber – moderately good at supporting Land Combat attacks. Also good at attacking airfield capacity, logistics, lines of communication and terror bombing civilians.

Ground Attack – includes dive bombers. Particularly good at supporting Land Combat attacks.

Transport – moving troops and logistics from airfield to airfield.

Recce – Good at observing deployments of the enemy and major troop movements.

Mission Types

The types of Mission that can be flown, and the aircraft that can fly them, are as follows:

- ⦿ Combat Air Patrol (CAP) (Fighters only): Defensive air cover over a particular Army's area of operations. CAP does not guarantee to intercept every raid but the more fighters (and raids) the better the chance of doing so.
- ⦿ Escort (Fighters only): Represents the close escort to accompany a specific mission.
- ⦿ Close Air Support (CAS) (Ground Attack and Bomber only): CAS missions aim to apply a modifier to the ground combat and so orders must specify the Army to be supported. This support should be included in Army orders - and those orders will indicate the Corps and attack to be supported.
- ⦿ Bomb (Ground Attack, Bombers): attacking geographical locations or units beyond the immediate front line.
- ⦿ Transport (Transports): generally of air units to new airfields or small numbers of troops from airfield to airfield. It would take about 5 days to transport an infantry division (less its heavy equipment) from one airfield to another.
- ⦿ Recce (Recce): Reconnaissance of specific geographic area, looking for troop movements, concentrations etc. Generally best used behind enemy lines. Typically one recce wing can cover up to 4 map squares (map squares are 20km x 20km).
- ⦿ Move: Units can move from one airfield to another. This takes one day during which no combat missions can be flown.