

NOTICE

1. Information Bulletins, which have replaced Tentative Lessons Bulletins, have a dual purpose: (1) To provide all officers with reasonably confirmed information from official and other reliable sources, and (2) to serve as material for lectures to troops.

2. Nondivisional units are being supplied with copies on a basis similar to the approved distribution for divisional commands, as follows:

Inf. Div.	8	Cav. Div.	4	Armd. Div.	11
Div. Hq.....		Div. Hq.....		Div. Hq.....	
Rcn. Troop.....	1	Ord. Co.....	1	Rcn. Bn.....	1
Sig. Co.....	1	Sig. Troop.....	1	Engr. Bn.....	1
Engr. Bn.....	1	Rcn. Sq.....	1	Med. Bn.....	1
Med. Bn.....	1	Engr. Sq.....	1	Maint. Bn.....	1
QM Bn.....	1	Med. Sq.....	1	Supply Bn.....	1
Hq. Inf. Regt., 1 ea.....	3	QM Sq.....	1	Div. Train Hq.....	1
Inf. Bn., 1 ea.....	9	Hq. Cav. Brig., 2 ea.....	4	Armd. Regt., 4 ea.....	8
Hq. Div. Arty.....	1	Cav. Regt., 4 ea.....	16	FA Bn., 1 ea.....	3
FA Bn., 1 ea.....	4	Hq. Div. Arty.....	1	Inf. Regt.....	4
		FA Bn., 1 ea.....	3		
	30		—		32
			34		

Distribution to air units is being made by the A-2 of Army Air Forces. An additional distribution is being made to the armored forces, tank destroyer battalions, and antitank units.

3. Each command should circulate available copies among its officers. Reproduction within the military service is permitted provided (1) the source is stated, (2) the classification is not changed, and (3) the information is safeguarded. Attention is invited to paragraph 10a, AR 380-5 which is quoted in part as follows: "A document . . . will be classified and . . . marked *restricted* when information contained therein is for official use only, or when its disclosure should be . . . denied the general public."

4. Suggestions for future bulletins are invited. Any correspondence relating to Information Bulletins may be addressed directly to the Dissemination Branch, Military Intelligence Service, War Department, Washington, D. C.

Foreword

This bulletin is a translation of a captured German training manual on *The German Armored Division*, which was published in December 1940. At that time the number of German armored divisions was being increased and their organization changed. Comments by German commanders in Libya as late as October 1941 indicate, however, that the principles expressed in this manual have proved satisfactory with little or no modification.

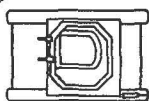
The charts that follow have been added to the original German manuscript. They have been compiled from G-2 sources.

TALPO.IT

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GERMAN TANKS

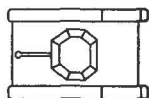


MARK I TANK

Length: 12 ft. 6 in.

Width: 8 ft.

Height: 5 ft. 7 in.

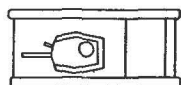


TANK HUNTER

47-mm antitank gun

mounted in chassis

of Mark I tank

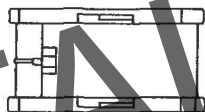


MARK II TANK

Length: 15 ft. 4 in.

Width: 7 ft. 2 in.

Height: 6 ft. 5 in.

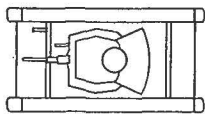


ASSAULT GUN

75-mm gun mounted in

chassis of Mark III

tank

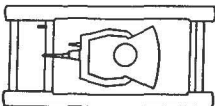


MARK III TANK

Length: 17 ft. 8 in.

Width: 9 ft. 9 in.

Height: 7 ft. 9 in.



MARK IV TANK

Length: 19 ft. 2 in.

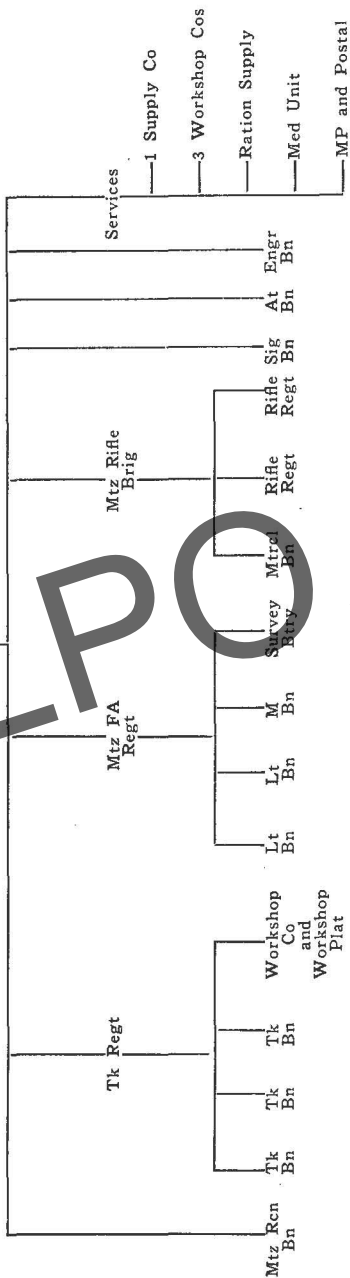
Width: 9 ft. 5 in.

Height: 8 ft. 7 in.



ARMORED DIVISION (STANDARD)

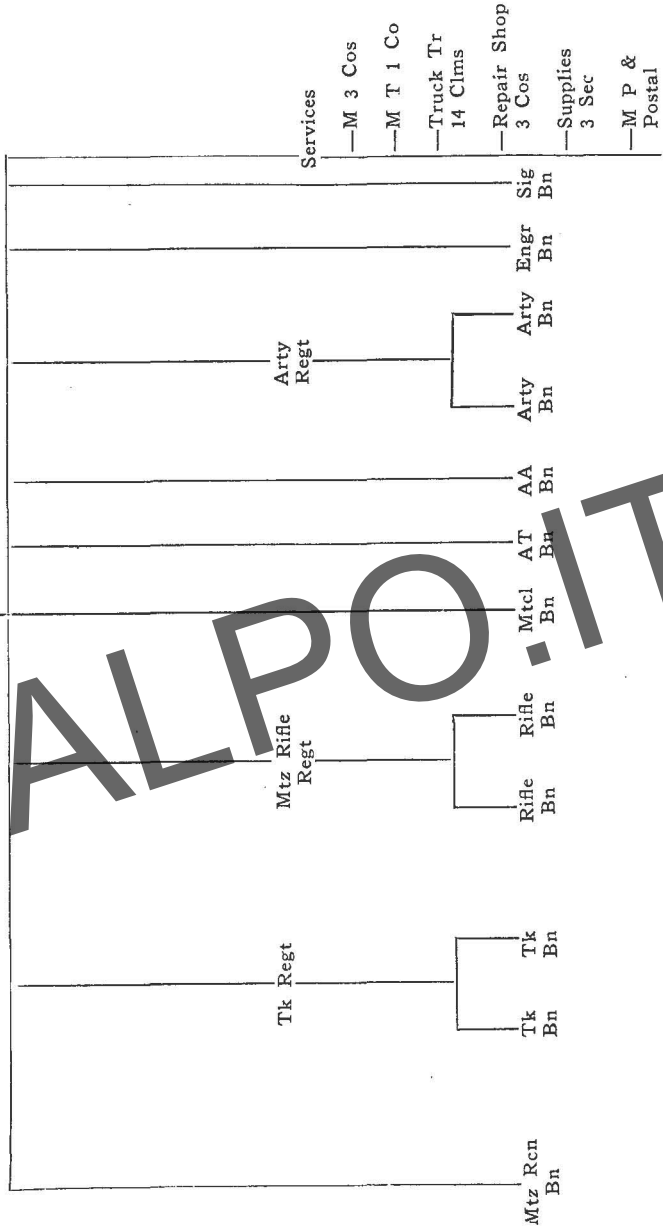
DIV HQ



NOTE.—When engaged in operations, an armored division may have some of the following attached: assault artillery battalion, antitank battalion with self-propelled mounts, motorized antiaircraft battalion, mixed antiaircraft battery. It should be borne in mind that the organization of the armored division is very flexible, and is changed in accord with matériel available, the terrain, and the equipment of the enemy.

ARMORED DIVISION (LIBYAN)

DIV HQ



THE GERMAN ARMORED DIVISION

Chapter 1

CHARACTERISTICS AND ORGANIZATION

1. The armored division is intended for strategic roles. It combines great fire power with high mobility, and its armor and speed restrict the effectiveness of enemy weapons.

2. Its strength lies in attack. It is especially suited for surprise appearances on the battlefield, rapid concentration of considerable fighting power, obtaining quick decisions by break-throughs, deep penetrations on wide fronts, and the destruction of the enemy. The attack of the armored division has a serious effect on the enemy's morale.

3. The nature of the terrain is a decisive factor for successful employment of the armored division. Full use of its speed can be insured by choice of good roads with bridges of adequate capacity, and by their being kept clear of other troops. Speed across country depends upon weather, formation of the ground, nature of the soil, and density of vegetation. It is slower than on roads. The full striking power of the armored division can best be developed in attack over rolling country with few features. Marshy, wooded, and rough country allows movement off the road only for short stretches, with reduced mobility. It may exclude the employment of tanks.

4. The components of an armored division are so proportioned that the detachment of individual units, especially of tanks, or their attachment to other units, restricts the fitness of the division for employment in strategic roles.

5. The main striking force of the division lies in its tank brigade. Its offensive infantry element is the motorized infantry brigade. In addition the armored division comprises motorized reconnaissance elements, motorized artillery, antitank units, armored signal units, antiaircraft machine-gun troops, and supply and maintenance services. In active campaigns an observation squadron (serves also for artillery observation) and a light antiaircraft battalion are attached to the division.

Chapter 2

ROLE OF THE ARMORED DIVISION

6. The armored division normally fights in the framework of the armored corps, but is also suited to carry out independent operations, in which case reinforcement with motorized infantry and artillery is usually necessary.

7. Its supreme role is to obtain decision in battle. Within the framework of the armored corps it can carry out the following tasks:

a. Break through an enemy protective screen to make early contact with the enemy's main force;

b. Obtain early possession of topographical features and sectors of decisive importance for further fighting;

c. Gain surprise in an attack on the advancing enemy to frustrate his plans and take the initiative from him;

d. Attack an enemy incompletely prepared for defense;

e. Attack on a narrow front against a prepared enemy;

f. Restore momentum to an attack which has come to a standstill;

g. Break through on a wide front against a demoralized enemy;

h. Exploit success and complete the destruction of the enemy by deep penetration or flank attack;

i. Pursue a defeated enemy;

j. Carry out strategic envelopment;

k. Attack to destroy enemy tank units;

l. Cooperate with parachute and air-borne troops.

8. The armored division acting independently can carry out the following strategic tasks:

a. Reconnaissance in force in cooperation with strategic aerial reconnaissance;

b. Early occupation of sectors important for further operations, of politically and economically important localities, and of industrial installations;

c. Delaying the enemy advance, providing a protective screen, or acting as a flank guard to a larger unit.

9. The armored division is equally suitable for breaking through a prepared position when the position is strengthened by isolated permanent fortifications. The cooperation of medium artillery and bombardment aviation then becomes necessary.

In an attack on a prepared position, the speed and mobility of an armored division cannot be exploited. There is a danger that tanks may be exposed to such heavy casualties against a prepared defense that the further employment of the division becomes impossible.

Armored divisions are therefore only to be used for breaking through a permanent front if infantry divisions are not available, if the delay in bringing them forward may result in losing an opportunity to exploit the success with armored divisions well forward, or if the enemy is already demoralized. The armored division must then be reinforced by motorized infantry, artillery, and motorized engineers, weapons capable of assaulting concrete works, and smoke troops. They must also be supported by bombardment aviation.

10. The armored division can attack across a river. The necessary amount of reinforcement by other arms, especially engineers, depends on the strength of the enemy and his defense, and on the width of the river.

11. The role of the armored division in a protective task is generally offensive. It carries out counterattacks to relieve parts of the front under heavy pressure, breaks up enemy tank attacks by surprise thrusts, is employed against the flanks of an enemy who has broken through, or attacks the enemy from the flanks or rear while he is held frontally.

If the armored division has to take part in a defensive operation, which will be exceptional, every effort must be made to relieve it as quickly as possible by infantry units.

12. The armored division can also be used independently to screen the withdrawal of large units. This task is usually carried out offensively.

Chapter 3

EMPLOYMENT OF THE ARMORED DIVISION

13. The speed and mobility of the armored division demand of all commanders boldness, powers of rapid decision, and ability to convert decisions into brief commands.

14. The strength of the armored division lies in concentrating the force of the tank brigade. This is the normal practice. It is the task of the commander to see that all arms of the division are used to support the tank attack. Individual arms must be mutually supporting, and each must be prepared to exploit the success of the other.

15. Task forces can be formed temporarily for specific missions:

a. In the attack, when the division is advancing on a broad front over several roads against a weaker enemy, or in traversing wooded or mountainous country;

b. In a rapid pursuit when the division has to anticipate the enemy in occupying important points, road junctions, potential bottlenecks, etc.;

c. In a withdrawal, to cover disengagement from the enemy.

Task forces are employed in accordance with the same principles that apply to the armored division as a whole. The division commander can influence the battle by employing reserves of all arms. Task forces, however, must be provided at the outset with all means necessary for the task allotted. The division commander must make every effort to reconcentrate all parts of the division under his direct command.

16. The object of the armored division in battle is destruction of the enemy, either by break-through or envelopment. The mobility of the armored division enables it to avoid a frontal engagement and to maneuver to the enemy's rear.

Foresight in choice of the terrain over which an anticipated engagement is to take place is of great importance. This terrain should be thoroughly covered by air reconnaissance. The art of