

FIFTH ARMY ENGINEER TRAINING CENTER
A. P. O. #464, U. S. Army

18 March 1943

OPERATIONAL MINELAYING
(by Arms other than Engineers)

1. After capture of an objective, the reorganization of that objective must nearly always include the laying of an A/Tk minefield to protect the position against enemy tank attack.

2. Such a minefield must be laid quickly, simply and usually in darkness by the forward troops themselves.

3. The minefield so laid will be a very rough and ready affair and should be replaced by a properly sited, fenced and recorded minefield as soon as conditions permit and if still required.

4. The HAWKINS mine is the ideal "operational" mine and the drill for rapid laying given below has been used successfully.

5. DRILL: (a) The minefield is laid in blocks 150 yds. long - each block being laid by a party of 32 Inf.

(b) Unloading points are fixed as near the proposed minefield as possible, but if enemy shelling is heavy this may be as much as 1/2 mile in rear and necessitate carrying parties.

(c) The mines are brought up in trucks to the unloading point - each 2 1/2-ton truck carrying sufficient mines and wire for 3 blocks (450 yds).

(d) At the unloading point the mines are unloaded and the igniters made up (i.e. detonators and ampoules joined together, open end to open end by the rubber sleeve).

(e) Each party of 32 men reports at the unloading point, 30 men each carrying away 5 mines and 5 igniters (for method of carrying see para 6) and 2 men each carrying 8 screw pickets.

(f) The party carries the mines to a start line (usually immediately in front of the F.D.Ls) and line up in a single line spaced at 5 yd intervals.

(g) When ready the 30 men advance in line for a given number of paces when they halt, turn about and lay the 1st line.

(h) The laying of the remaining mines is then done as follows:

Forward 5 paces, 2 paces to RIGHT and lay 2nd mine

“ “ “ “ LEFT “ 3rd mine

“ “ “ “ RIGHT “ 4th mine

“ “ “ “ LEFT “ 5th mine

(i) When the last row has been laid the pickets are driven in clear of the last row and the whole party returns to fetch concertina wire.

(j) 18 men working in pairs carry out 9 coils of concertina wire – stretch them out and drop them over the pickets. If a triple fence is required this must be done 3 times.

6. CARRYING: HAWKINS mines can be carried in two ways fused and unfused.

(a) Fused: This reduces the time spent in actual laying, but increases the danger from accident, e.g., from a man falling down. If fused the mines should be carried in a haversack.

(b) Unfused: Mines can be carried in the arms and igniters in the haversack – or, mines in the haversack and igniters in the hand or pocket.

Note: It is generally better to carry unfused mines but in circumstances where any delay on the minefield must be avoided they may be carried fused.

7. HAWKINS mines can be picked up from a minefield and used over and over again, but they must have the igniters taken out immediately on picking up and on no account must they be stacked or oaded in M.T. when fused.