Chapter 6

Water-Tanker Resupply Operations

6-1. Fixed water-supply systems in a combat environment will be rare. Fire-fighting teams must be able to locate and plot all possible water sources on a map. These areas must be secure and accessible, and if possible, have more than one route to and from the site. Relying on water tankers and temporary water supplies will be the standard operation. Water tankers are allotted one per LB team.

MISSION

6-2. The mission of an LC team is two-fold. The primary mission is to provide LB teams with an additional water supply and to maintain temporary water-supply points when in place. An LC team must also be aware of water-resupply points and drafting locations.

RESUPPLY OPERATIONS

6-3. When LB teams deploy to an emergency, an LC team will respond simultaneously. Once the LB teams are in position, the LC team will set up to resupply the primary fire-fighting unit. It can do this either through a direct connection or by using a resupply portable drop tank, if available. Once the tanker's water tank is empty, the crew will go to the closest water resupply/ drafting point and reload the water tank. Meanwhile, a second tanker, if available, will be supplying the fire-fighting units.

TEMPORARY WATER SUPPLY

6-4. Temporary water-supply points will be constructed, when possible, in high-risk areas. Each will hold 3,000 gallons of water. Temporary water-supply points can be constructed from 3,000-gallon water-storage bladders or lined open-top pools. The bladders or pools should be clearly marked as shown in Figure 6-1.

For Fire-Fighting Use Only, Nonpotable.
Water-supply vehicle must have clear access into temporary water-supply sites.

Figure 6-2. Sign markings for bladders or pools

DRAFTING SITES

6-5. All team members should be familiar with the locations of the water-supply points. Drafting sites should be located during reconnaissance of an AO and recorded on the response plans. These sites should be deep enough to sustain continuous operations. Access to the sites should be able to sustain continuous traffic of fully loaded water-supply tankers. Team members must be careful when positioning the vehicles along side of the stream bank. The banks along a lake or stream are often very unstable, and improper positioning could result in the vehicle sliding or even overturning into the water.

6-6. When selecting a drafting site, an LC team must ensure that the flow is sufficient to support the draft. For example, an average stream that is 10 feet wide and 1 foot deep will need to flow about 15 feet per minute (fpm) to supply a 2500L fire truck. The team can measure the flow rate by throwing a stick into the stream and measuring the distance that it floats in 1 minute.

6-7. An area the size of a football field (120 by 50 yards) that is at least 1 foot deep will supply a 2500L for about 5 hours of continuous pumping. An LC team should keep those figures in mind when looking at a lake or pond as a possible drafting site. If an area has irrigation canals, the team should use them first. The flow from such canals is over 1,000 GPM, and they usually are easily accessible.

6-8. An LC team must maintain security during drafting operations at all times. A drafting site is the most vulnerable area because it is usually away from the incident site, and only a minimum number of crew members maintain security. If possible, a security team should assist when an LC team must resupply.

FIRE-FIGHTING OPERATIONS

6-9. An LC team performs several fire-fighting operations. It—

- Will assist LB teams in fire-fighting operations when required, unless it is involved in water-supply/shuttle activities. When an LC team arrives at an incident site, the senior crew member will report to the SFO for crew assignments and instructions.
- May also fight wildland fires as a single unit or with LB teams or other engineer assets. Because of this, an LC team needs to maintain a minimum of 200 feet of 1 1/2-inch attack line with a combination nozzle on its tanker.