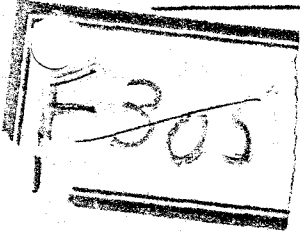


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COMMANDER CRUISERS, SCOUTING FORCE
AND
COMMANDER CRUISERS, BATTLE FORCE

1941

Reprint 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

CURRENT DOCTRINE
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U. S. F. 21

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AND
COMMANDER CRUISERS, BATTLE FORCE

1941

Reprint 1944

Pearl Harbor, T. H.,
9 January, 1941.

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Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy,
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CHAPTER I

EMPLOYMENT AND ORGANIZATION

100. The Current Doctrine, Cruisers, enunciated herein is derived from War Instructions, General Tactical Instructions, and current U. S. Fleet Doctrine and Tactical Orders. By reference it indicates provisions of those publications which are of special importance to commanders of cruiser units. It is further implemented by current Type Tactical Orders, Cruisers, U.S.F. 20.

101. The Foreword and Chapter V of the War Instructions will be thoroughly studied by all cruiser commanders. In executing directives in which they are required to exercise initiative, cruiser officers shall be guided by these basic principles and such amplification thereof as are contained in this Current Doctrine.

102. General Cruiser Doctrine.

- (a) Sound decision, founded in thorough indoctrination and alertness to grasp changing situations.
- (b) Determination and rapidity in execution of tasks.

103. There are four classes of cruisers in service in the United States Fleet:

- (a) Light Cruisers — 6" guns, unprotected.
- (b) Heavy Cruisers — 8" guns, unprotected.
- (c) Light Cruisers — 6" guns, protected.
- (d) Heavy Cruisers — 8" guns, protected.

In addition, merchant vessels doubtless will be converted into auxiliary cruisers for war.

104. Each of these classes of cruisers is especially suitable for definite duties. Cruisers' officers charged with assignment of cruisers to specific tasks will be guided by the individual characteristics of the classes listed.

105. The general classes of activities of cruisers are as follows, and ships should be prepared to undertake them:

(a) Fleet Activities, which includes:

- (1) Screening.
- (2) Scouting.
- (3) General Engagement.
- (4) Cooperation with other forces.
- (5) Landing Force.
- (6) Fleet Emergency Force.

(b) Independent Activities:

- (1) Strategic control; enforcement of neutrality.
- (2) Detached operation against enemy naval forces.
- (3) Commerce destruction; raids on commerce, enemy ports and bases; blockades; visit and search.
- (4) Commerce protection; escort; patrol.
- (5) Intelligence service; reconnaissance.
- (6) Bombardment.
- (7) Despatch duty and communication relay.

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CHAPTER II
FORMATIONS AND MANEUVERS

Reference: U.S.F. 20, Chapter II.

NO TEXT

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CHAPTER III

SCREENING

Reference: F.T.P. 143, Chapter X, Sections 4 to 8; F.T.P. 188, Chapter X; U.S.F. 20, Chapter III.

300. The antiaircraft screen is a special screen, whose functions are the early detection of approaching air attacks and prompt defensive action against them. Such a screen may be composed of an outer screen of light vessels, with an inner screen of vessels of heavy antiaircraft batteries. The screening distance should be such as to make undiscovered passage of attacking planes improbable and, upon discovery, to permit effective gunfire by one or more screening vessels before a position of effective attack has been reached. The screening interval should be the maximum practicable considering the screening vessels available and the desirability of keeping attacking planes under effective fire throughout their approach, particularly just before reaching the bomb release point, having consideration for a steep dive bombing attack. Where the number of screening vessels available is insufficient to establish an all around screen, the screen should be stationed to cover the most probable directions of approach, such as down sun, down wind, or from known enemy bearing.

301. The threat of enemy planes should be indicated by prompt gunfire if they come within effective range as well as by contact reports.

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CHAPTER IV

SCOUTING

Reference: F.T.P. 146, Chapters I & V; F.T.P. 143, Chapter X, Section 9.

GENERAL

400. Searching should be done preferably by the heavy rather than the light cruisers. If a mixed force of heavy and light cruisers and destroyers is employed, the strongest units ordinarily should be stationed in the center of the scouting line and the weaker units toward the flanks.

401. All scouts, all unit commanders on the scouting line, the task group commander, and all commanders of striking or attack groups should be kept informed and should inform themselves of the names and relative positions of scouts on a scouting line.

402. Whenever operating conditions permit, full use should be made of cruiser aircraft to effect earlier contact, to extend the area covered by search, or to examine behind a screen which the surface scouts are unable to penetrate.

POSITIONS OF SCOUTS

410. The position of ships on the scouting line must be accurately determined and maintained at all times in order to insure (1) accuracy of contact reports and, (2) expeditious concentrations.

411. Correct relative positions on the scouting line are determined by navigational fixes or dead reckoning.

(a) Navigational Fixes.

In this method scouts take and maintain stations on the scouting line and base contact reports on navigational fixes obtained by best available means.

(b) Dead Reckoning.

In this method the scouting task group commander, with scouts assembled in visual contact, gives the "reference position" of his flagship. Scouts take station on the scouting line from this position as a point of departure; maintain position on line and base contact reports on dead reckoning from the original reference position.

412. Scouting positions should be determined by the best navigational fixes available unless the scouting order specifically authorizes the dead reckoning method.

413. The Scouting Task Group Commander, unless precluded by radio silence, should inform all scouts and interested Task Force Commanders of his noon position each day as obtained by the method of navigation in use for the operation, and at such other times as may be helpful and important.

414. Should the Scouting Task Group Commander direct a change in method of obtaining geographic positions from "Navigational Fixes" to "Dead Reckoning", the last noon position (or other fix) reported by the scout commander should be used as the reference point from which all dead reckoning positions are reckoned. This position with time and date should be included in the order directing the use of the dead reckoning method.

415. When within a prescribed distance or if not in sight contact and radio silence does not prohibit, any scout should attempt to determine accurate position after a protracted period of bad weather should inform the commanding officer if it is believed that the other scouts have not had an opportunity to fix their positions.

RECOVERING AND REGAINING POSITIONS

416. **Regaining Positions.** The scouting line should be advanced (or retired) at the prescribed scouting speed unless otherwise directed. Ships which lose position while recovering aircraft or otherwise should regain their correct scouting positions.

ACTION ON CONTACT

420. Orders for scouting should designate the objective of the search and describe action to be taken when the objective has been located.

421. The varied situations that develop after contacts have been made prevent fixed rules for action by scouts making contact. The duty of the scout making the contact is twofold:

- (a) To report the contact properly.
- (b) To develop the contact and determine if the objective has been located.

CONTACT SCOUTING

430. No set plan covering all the conditions of Contact Scouting is feasible. Pending the receipt of coordinating orders for such scouting from the scouting Task Group Commander, each Commanding Officer and Division Commander concerned should use his initiative to accomplish the assigned task.

431. For Contact Scouting, sectors should be assigned based on the center of the enemy's disposition. These sectors should be designated by true compass bearings around this center, or in appropriate cases relative to enemy heading. The position, course and speed of the enemy's center should be furnished all scouts at the time contact scouting starts, and should be furnished from time to time thereafter. Contact Scouting and reports thereof will be greatly facilitated if ship and Unit Commanders develop progressively a picture of the disposition of the enemy forces.

432. Individual scouts should attempt to protect themselves from attack by enemy air and surface craft by making contact from different directions, at irregular times, and by heading and having their own airplanes head on false courses while in sight of enemy ships or when approaching or leaving the enemy's outer screen. When enemy capital ships, or other superior forces are sighted, cruisers should take steps to remain outside the effective range of superior enemy gunfire, provided the task situation permits.

TRACKING INSTRUCTIONS

440. General Considerations.

- (a) Difficulty may be experienced in avoiding excessive damage to scouts when tracking an enemy disposition which contains a powerful air force.
- (b) After the enemy disposition has been developed following initial contact, scouts should remain in their assigned sectors, outside the radius of the enemy's air patrols, and make intermittent contacts with the enemy's outer screen by airplanes or by ships if non-flying weather is encountered.
- (c) Negative information should be utilized.