

CSW LOB 2.0 Rules Clarifications

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January 18, 2021

Note: The following rules clarifications are my interpretation of public discussions on the ConsimWorld (CSW) LOB discussion forum. As such, they are unofficial and subject to revision. They are intended to supplement V2.0 LOB rules. Entries date from the release of Version 2.0 in January of 2014 up thru January 18, 2021. They are based on statements from the game system designer (Dean Essig), and from experienced players of the game system when presented as rule interpretations and left without further correction or comment by the game system designer. All errors are mine alone.

All posted official errata as of 6/28/20 are included in these clarifications and noted as “(errata)”.

1.0 Game Components

1.7 Specialized terrain notes

1.7g Towns

- All column, mounted, and limbered units must use roads in town hexes and are subject to the intersections rule.
- There is no intersection at road forks if units are continuing in a generally straight line.

1.8 Smallness

- Artillery units are included in the small definition.

2.0 Game turns

2.2 The activity phase

- Completing each brigade’s activities sequentially is strongly recommended.
- It is not necessary to declare an activity type before beginning movement.

3.0 Movement

3.0a Road movement

- A unit must use road movement to cross a bridge.

3.0e DG and routed unit retreat movement

- DG units must end their retreat in column formation.

3.1 Formations

3.1b

- Fractions are dropped rather than rounded up when cavalry units change formation (errata).

3.1d Open order

- Open order units that unstack to become open order capable calculate their movement allowance proportionally.

3.2 Stacking

3.2a Stacking limit

- Line and column infantry, mounted cavalry, and limbered artillery can stack together.

3.2d Stacking and artillery

- Unlimbered artillery units can stack with other unlimbered artillery up to the stacking limits.
- Limbered artillery may stack with any unit type.

3.3 Facing

- All stacked units that have frontal facing must have the same facing.
- Open order capable units have all-around frontal facing and can fire in any direction (errata).

3.3d Charge facing restrictions

- A unit may change facing in a hex from which it intends to charge an adjacent unit (errata).

3.4 Zones of control

- Units exiting an EZOC due to new orders that are subsequently forced to move through another EZOC must lose 1SP for each subsequent hex exited with an EZOC.
- Exception 2)d applies only to attack orders.
- Mounted cavalry do not exert an EZOC since they cannot fire.

3.4a EZOCs and retreats

- Small units are required to take the loss from retreating into an EZOC.

3.4b EZOCs and facing or formation change

- Exception: Open order capable units that stack in an EZOC switch to line formation.

3.5 Closing rolls

- The DRM for 'artillery with canister' applies even if a charge target is in a different hex.
- The -3 DRM applies only if a unit attempts to close from a hex with breastworks; there is no modifier for attempting to close into a hex containing breastworks.
- The -3 DRM applies only to the first charge a unit makes in a turn.
- Open order units automatically succeed only if the unit is open order capable (errata.)

3.5a No closing roll needed

- No closing roll is needed if there is no enemy unit in a hex adjacent to the closing hex that has LOS, range and ammo to fire at the moving unit before it enters the closing hex.

3.5c 'Must succeed' closing rolls

- Movement points are not required to fall back after failing a 'Must Succeed' closing roll.

3.6 Artillery

3.6a

- Unlimbered artillery may change facing and fire in the same phase.

3.7 Reinforcements

3.7a Blocked entry areas

- There is no delay if an entry area is blocked by enemy forces.
- If all entry areas are blocked reinforcements may enter at any road or trail hex leading off a map edge.

4.0 Line of Sight (LOS)

- Firing and target units must be placed on the highest elevation in an end-point hex, including crests (errata).
- All obstacles block LOS at ranges of four or less, regardless of elevation.
- If a LOS traces through a blocking obstacle the LOS is blocked, regardless of the spatial extent of the symbol.
- Orchards or woods are additive with crests.

4.1 Slope table

- If possible, LOS situations should be eyeballed rather than resolved by use of the slope table.

4.2 Special situations

4.2c Same hill

- The intent is to compensate for the artificial ‘layer-cake’ effect represented by contour lines; contour lines usually represent gradual change rather than a sharp break.

4.2d Orchards

- Intervening orchard hexes do not block LOS if the orchard is present in either end-point hex.

4.2e Units and LOS

- If the range is four hexes or less, units other than open order capable units always block LOS.
- Artillery fire at five hexes or more is never blocked by units.
- The hexside provision for units requires a hex center to hex center determination regardless of the actual LOS (errata).

4.2f Danger close

- The danger close rule only applies to artillery fire at five or more hexes.
- Only apply the casualty losses from the Combat Table; i.e., ignore morale checks.

5.0 Combat

5.2 Restrictions

- Combat fire at hexes containing only leaders is not allowed (leaders are not combat units).
- Combat units are not required to fire at units in their EZOC.

5.2c

- A unit may join a stack that made an unsuccessful charge and then fire.

5.3 Specialized fires

5.3b Splitting fire

- Units that fire after stacking with units that have already fired trigger another opening volley.
- Stacks may split with units moving to multiple locations and then firing or charging.
- A single unit cannot split its fire between two target hexes.

5.3c Pre-fire movement

- Units/stacks moving from different locations to a new hex can fire together.

5.4 Opening volley

5.4a

- Units must be in a formation with facing that allows fires, and be in range with ammo, to fire an opening volley; the only exception is units being charged do not have facing requirements.
- Disorganized units can fire an opening volley.
- Open Order units can provide an opening volley if not the target of the phasing unit's fire.
- If artillery changes facing and does not fire there is no opening volley.

5.4c

- Artillery modifier is based on the hex the offensive unit is in prior to closing.

5.4g

- If a unit other than the unit being charged fires the opening volley, the opening volley is resolved on the range columns, not the charge column (prior to any column adjustment).

5.6 Combat table

- Testing for a rear shot is based solely on geometry from center hex to center hex, i.e., LOS obstacles and units on this center line are not blocking.
- Breastworks provide a column shift against artillery fire; stone walls do not.

5.6c

- The reference to leaders left without combat units is in error and should be deleted (see 9.1d).
- Destroyed artillery generates a cowardly legs marker.

5.8 Counter Battery Fire

- Artillery is subject to all of the effects from the combat and morale tables.

5.8d

- CBF markers apply to all artillery units in the hex.

6.0 Morale

6.0a Morale and stacking

- Routed units affect other stacked units even when small.
- Exception to Exception: Unlimbered artillery are not affected by routing units.

6.1 Morale checks

- The morale table DRM for 'artillery or cav' applies when units of either are charged.
- The stone wall DRM applies to morale checks caused by artillery fire.
- The stone wall DRM does not apply to morale checks by units with attack orders.
- Breastworks and sunken road DRMs only apply if fire was received through the protected side
- Terrain DRMs apply to morale checks caused by charges; i.e., 'fire' applies to charges.
- Crests modify firing and target hex elevations to determine elevations for the 'slope' DRM.
- Terrain modifiers are not cumulative; i.e., -1 is the maximum terrain DRM.
- There is no DRM for being routed, but routed units have 0 SPs capable of firing (charge DRM).

6.3 Retreat

- Retreating units may swerve slightly to avoid EZOC, friendly units, or map edges.
- Retreating units do not have any effect on solitary leaders, or vice-versa.

6.3d

- Combat losses cannot cause a unit to become small until after a retreat.

- HQs are never forced to displace; pass through is an option.
- When units are displaced, only the displaced unit suffers the morale penalty.
- Open order capable units do not cause retreat effects, and are not affected by retreating units.

6.3e EZOC & retreats

- The 1 SP loss does not trigger a leader loss check.

6.3f Artillery

- Retreating artillery passing through friendly units are unaffected, unless the retreat is extended.
- Batteries that retreat can remain in place, return to command radius, or wait to be reposted.
- Retreating artillery cannot unlimber at the end of the retreat.
- Units retreating through unlimbered artillery do not incur pass-through effects, and do not incur morale effects if forced to extend their retreat (errata).
- Units retreating through limbered artillery follow normal retreat rules.

6.5 Cowardly legs

6.5a

- Cowardly legs markers are not placed where unlimbered artillery are forced to retreat.
- Cowardly legs markers are not placed due to destruction of a unit if other unit(s) remain in the hex.

6.5c

- If a stack retreats or displaces one hex it is not affected in subsequent morale checks by the cowardly legs marker placed in its former location.

7.0 Charge!

- Defending units may charge provided it is reasonably construed as a defensive action.

7.0f Leaders

- Leaders participating in the 1st closing roll should participate in a 2nd closing roll & charge.

7.0g Charge morale table modifiers

- SP's in excess of the max fire limit count in the size differential DRM.
- 'Capable of firing' excludes limbered, column, or routed units.

7.2 Charge restrictions

7.2a

- Stack size is only limited by the stacking limit in 3.2a (16 SPs).

7.2d Status changes

- If the attacker is eliminated by the opening volley the charge ends and the defender does not make a morale check.

7.3 Advance after combat

7.3c

- Exemption from EZOC restrictions applies to all hexes entered for the rest of the move.

7.4 Mounted charges

- Open order units that are not open order capable cannot be a target of mounted charges (errata).
- Open order capable units must stand against mounted charges.

8.0 Supply

8.2 Artillery depletion

8.2a When depletion occurs

- Only the section of a multi-section battery that receives a depletion result suffers depletion.

8.2d Effects of depletion

- A battery can choose to fire shell within canister range.

8.4 “By caisson” replenishment

- A battery may fire in the turn it is replenished by caisson.

8.5 “By battery” replenishment

8.5b

- A battery may move on the turn the battery returns to play.

8.5d

- The reference to "8.5c" is an error and should be "8.5a".

9.0 Special Rules

9.1 Leaders

9.1a Leader loss

- Any “Removal” of a leader or unit in the Order of Arrival is done as the very first thing in that game turn, before that leader or unit can execute any function whatsoever (errata).

9.1b Promotion

- Promoted brigade leaders use their same face-up counter as a new division leader; use the flip side of the replaced division leader as the generic replacement brigade leader.

9.1c Artillery leaders

- Corps artillery leaders can only post batteries and direct fires for batteries in its corps.
- Artillery leaders that direct additional shots can be from a different Command.
- Additional artillery shots can be fired at units that retreated into a new location.
- Batteries outside of command radius can be posted.
- Posted batteries cannot unlimber until reaching their posted destination.
- Artillery leaders can move in the movement phase after posting a battery.
- A battery corresponds to a single artillery unit (counter) for posting purposes.
- Posted batteries whose destination is occupied by enemy units can keep trying to reach their ordered location, or return to command radius.
- Posted batteries that come within range and LOS of an enemy unit while in transit can halt, or return to command radius.

9.1e Zeroes

- Units can conduct fire activities even if their leader fails his zero-brigade movement roll.
- Complete all activity in one zero-leader brigade before rolling for a second (errata).
- In contrast to example box units cannot use 2MP and then fire (errata).

9.2 Headquarters (HQs)

9.2a The army HQ

- The army commander must be stacked with the army HQ to order the HQ to move.

9.2b

- An HQ forced to retreat by artillery fire does not execute a skedaddle.

9.3 Loss recovery

- Units in Reserve cannot conduct loss recovery (because they are following an order.)

9.4 Open order and sharpshooters

9.4a Identification and basic handling

- Open order units that are not currently open order capable have normal line facing.
- Open order provisions do not apply to mounted cavalry (except 9.4h).

9.4d Combat & morale

- The 3 SP fire combat limit doesn't apply to open order units that are not open order capable.

9.4e Tactical flexibility

- An open order capable unit must be the target of the attempted fire or charge to trigger these provisions.
- If an opening volley by an open order capable unit is triggered, the opening volley and all fire and charge activities do not occur; the open order unit withdraws and the active unit is done.
- The defender can apply the opening volley from another nearby unit negating the retreat requirement.
- If a charge triggers withdrawal the active unit can advance into the target hex, unless the active unit is also in the EZOC of a different inactive unit.
- Active units moving and firing outside of opening volley range, or that fire without moving or changing facing, do not trigger this provision.

9.4h Mounted flexibility

- Mounted cavalry that chose to stand undergo normal fire and charge activities.
- Even with this flexibility mounted cavalry are not open order capable units.

9.5 Breastworks

9.5c Removing breastworks

- Units can voluntarily remove breastworks without orders.

10.0 Command and Control

10.1 Commands

10.1a

- The highest-ranking leader of a formation on the map prior to the arrival of its Command HQ acts as its own Command HQ, and may receive orders from the Army Commander.
- Commands only exist below the army level; i.e., an army is not a Command.

10.2 Command radius

10.2d

- Leaders acting as their own Command HQ prior to arrival of its Command HQ mark a command radius center and follow all rules for Command HQs.

10.2g

- Units that are out of command radius can stay in place and fire.
- Units out of command radius in an EZOC can change facing and fire; otherwise, units out of command radius cannot change facing except to move back into command radius.
- Units can use reasonable tactics to protect themselves while moving to get back into command radius (for example, units in column can switch to line formation at the end of their move.)
- A stack that starts its movement in radius can move out of radius without penalty.
- Units tracing command radius to a leader acting as a Command HQ function normally.

10.3 Orders

10.3b

- Orders should only have one primary objective; secondary objectives conditional on accomplishing the primary objective are not within the intent of the orders system.
- Only move orders require a specific destination hex.
- There is no requirement for the commander to have a LOS to an ordered objective.

10.3f Orders and ‘vet to arrive’ reinforcements

- Reinforcements under orders to rejoin its Command adopt the orders of its Command when it comes within command radius, including ‘no order’ status.
- Reinforcements with no orders march to join their HQ and await orders.

10.4 Order types

- Artillery battalions only have move orders, never attack orders.

10.4b Move orders

- Move orders are intended for large-scale movement, not minor adjustments to positions.
- Move orders cannot specify that a formation is to be left behind out of command radius.
- Regiments within each brigade on a road must be adjacent and in column front-to-back; if off-road regiments within a brigade must stay adjacent or stacked.
- A Command in transit to its destination cannot deploy or change direction when confronted by enemy units unless they receive a new order, initiative, or choose to skedaddle.
- Infantry with orders to move to a location that is within enemy small arms range cannot deploy early without initiative, but may halt their move once within LOS and await initiative.
- Units can deploy within command radius to secure the objective once the HQ has reached its destination hex.

10.4c Reserves

- Orders creating Reserves should specify the intent and scope of their future use.
- Open order capable units in Reserve cannot act on offense, and can only fire in defense.
- Reserve formations may move normally and follow their Command’s movement.
- Orders that establish Reserves to Commands under move orders, or in no-orders status, do not need to be relayed (errata).
- Orders that establish Reserves to Commands under attack orders do need to be relayed, except division Commands that designate a brigade Reserve which do not need to be relayed (errata).
- If relay is required, the relay is initiated when the specific Reserve formation is identified.
- A Command or formation placed into Reserve may remain in Reserve indefinitely.
- When released, Reserves can immediately begin following existing orders.

10.4d Conditional orders

- Orders cannot be conditioned on order acceptance by another Command.

- Corps start command rolls when the condition is fulfilled.
- Divisions determine order relay delivery time from the time the order arrives at corps HQ, independent of corps order acceptance.
- If the division relay delivery time has passed when the condition is fulfilled divisions start command rolls immediately; if not, then as soon as the relay delivery time has passed.
- Divisions that have accepted a conditional order begin rolling for fluke stoppage when the condition is fulfilled, independent of corps order acceptance.
- Divisions cannot begin executing conditional orders until both corps and division have accepted the order.

10.6 The command roll

- All command rolls for Reserve release get the benefit of the +2 DRM.
- An order to move the army HQ counts towards the limit if one command roll per turn.
- Posting batteries does not count towards the command roll limit.

10.6a Delivery times

- ‘Awareness’ applies only to the army commander.
- On the Order Delivery chart:
 - ‘(...if any)’ refers to the potential for a leader serving as his own HQ.
 - ‘Within Command Radius’ includes the HQ's, so there is always a delay of at least 1.
 - "Order to Reserve" means "Order to [a unit that is in] Reserve".

10.7 Ending orders

10.7a

- Orders are fulfilled at the end of the player’s turn when the order’s conditions are met.
- Once an attack order is fulfilled the HQ must bolt near the center of its activities.
- Only attack orders can be ended due to futility.
- Declaring an attack ‘futile’ is a judgment call; players do not need to wreck units for no gain.
- An order ended due to futility applies to all formations of a Command controlled by the order.
- Commands ending orders due to futility, including Reserves, must follow the same withdrawal procedure as fluke stoppage (10.7b); then the HQ locks down and returns to ‘no orders’ status.
- Attacks can be ended due to futility at any point in a player’s turn; units that already moved or fired wait until the next turn to move; units that have not yet moved or fired follow 10.7b.

10.7b Fluke stoppage

- Fluke stoppage checks begin when an attack order is accepted, even if the attack start is delayed by a condition in the order.
- Counter attacks when in no-orders status do not trigger fluke stoppage checks.
- Reserves established under attack orders that release to attack require fluke stoppage checks.
- Reinforcements with attack orders start rolling for fluke stoppage in the command phase after entry.
- Reinforcing formations under attack orders that are still marching to the attack after the order has been fulfilled continue marching and checking for fluke stoppage.
- Artillery from fluked divisions can stay unlimbered and fire if outside enemy small arms range.
- Divisions with reinforcements start fluke stoppage checks when the division leader enters.
- The initial two-hour grace period does not cover new orders.
- Fluke stoppage retreats through eZOCs cause the loss of one SP per EZOC hex entered.

- Divisions moving in column under attack orders roll for fluke stoppage.
- Artillery battalions are not affected by fluke stoppage and can still receive and act on orders.
- Artillery that is part of a division suffering fluke stoppage can still be posted.
- Fluked divisions that are out of command radius should return to command radius.
- Units in Reserve that are part of a Command that flukes out lose Reserve status.
- Units that fail a fluke stoppage check are not required to form column.
- Units that fail a fluke stoppage check cannot advance, even if there are no enemy units nearby.

10.7c Reserve modifier

- Nearby off-map reinforcements can serve as Reserves for fluke stoppage purposes.
- Units in Reserve need not be at full strength.
- Each division requires its own Reserve; i.e., there is no corps or army Reserve DRM.

10.8 Special order situations

10.8a No orders

- Units have flexibility to counter-attack within the area held or recently held by the Command, including temporary short (i.e., one or two hexes) advances to gain a flank advantage.
- Units can move to protect flanks and defend re-acquired territory.
- Formation leaders below the Command level can move within command radius.

10.8c Attack recovery

- Attack recovery is required for any Command executing an attack order, even if never fired on.
- Artillery should be included in the Attack Recovery Table footnote (errata).
- Use the division leader's command value for the Attack Recovery Table.
- If attack recovery fails at the second step, you start over on the next turn.
- Command leaders can send attack orders to divisions rolling for attack recovery.
- Divisions undergoing attack recovery can fire defensively or accept a move order.
- Twilight for attack recovery happens in the morning, before dawn.
- Divisions cannot undergo attack recovery if currently skedaddled.

10.8d New orders to Commands still executing attack orders

- Divisions still executing attack orders do not require attack recovery to accept new orders.

10.8e Artillery battalions

- The Army Commander can send an order directly to an artillery battalion HQ.
- Orders to an artillery battalion HQ that are embedded in an associated Command's order are automatically accepted when the associated Command accepts its order.
- Artillery battalion HQs can be outside an infantry or cavalry leader's command radius while moving, but must deploy within radius of an infantry or cavalry leader.
- Battalions in transit must stay limbered until reaching their destination or accepting new orders.
- Once artillery battalions reach their destination via a move order they enter no-orders status.
- Batteries in a no-orders status that are within command radius can freely limber, unlimber, fire, and move about within command radius.
- Artillery battalions with an additional Command named on its HQ counter are associated by default with that Command, and can be re-associated to a different Command.
- Any artillery battalion can be associated in an order with any friendly Command.

10.9 Skedaddle

- Commands can conduct skedaddles; formations cannot skedaddle independently.
- Artillery Commands can choose to skedaddle.
- Posted artillery of a skedaddled battalion must limber and move to command radius.
- Artillery battalions (with own HQ) do not skedaddle if their associated command skedaddles.
- Routed units do not skedaddle, but they can use voluntary retreat (3.0e).
- Reserve formations undergo skedaddle and lose Reserve status.
- Skedaddled units can move and fire, if formation allows, within command radius.
- Combat units must be in line or mounted formation to cause a skedaddle when entering a HQ's hex; open order infantry units cannot cause a skedaddle, even when stacked.

10.9a Army HQ

- A skedaddled army HQ cannot issue orders until the army HQ gets out of skedaddle (errata).
- Only the army commander of a skedaddled army needs to move within command radius.

10.9b Ending a skedaddle

- A Command can attempt to regain normal capabilities when all formations that were within command radius at the time of the skedaddle are back within command radius (errata).
- An army commander/HQ located in the command radius of a skedaddled Command can roll for initiative to end a skedaddle in the same turn as the leader of the skedaddled Command (errata).
- If an army commander gains initiative to end a skedaddle the skedaddle ends immediately.
- A Command ending a skedaddle can deploy into a nearby area occupied by another Command.

10.9c Skedaddles and orders

- Reinforcements that enter after a skedaddle are not affected and continue following orders.
- Reinforcements that enter command radius before a skedaddle is ended become part of the skedaddle and must remain in column.

10.10 Initiative

- At most two levels of command may attempt initiative for the same order in a turn: the leader of the targeted formation and the leader of the next higher formation.

10.10b Permissible initiative orders

- Initiative can be used to establish a Reserve (errata), provided the Reserve leader is within command radius.
- Artillery battalions can be associated with a Command through initiative.
- Reserves released by initiative do not need to be relayed.
- Higher leaders in the Command can release a Reserve if stacked with the Reserve leader.
- Army commanders cannot use initiative to release a Reserve.
- A formation or Command can gain initiative to deploy early for any reason.
- All leaders in the chain of command may roll for initiative to deploy a Command in the same turn; no re-issue is needed.
- Reserves released to counter-attack and support a different formation must have been established in an attack order and follow attack order requirements.
- Initiative cannot be used to move an HQ or locked-down leader.

11.0 Set Up Notes

- Orders are assumed to have been relayed down the chain of command, unless stated otherwise.

- An army commander can issue new orders, or division or corps leaders can use initiative, to change the timing of an attack specified in the pre-set orders.

12.0 Major Optional Rules

12.2 Defensive positions

- Defensive positions are an elaboration of ‘no orders’ status, not an order itself.
- Units and formations may condense positions within the defensive box to allow another Command or formation to assume responsibility for a portion of the area.

12.3 Advanced road columns

12.3a Creation and breakup

- Road columns are not necessary off road except when a road column has moved off road and has not yet spent the movement points to compress the column (errata).
- Road column markers use road movement and can compress back into their parent unit without violating the stacking restriction in 3.0a.
- A collapsing road column has used however many MPs the farthest marker has expended.
- A collapsing road column must remain in column formation to get 8 MPs.

12.3c Intersections

- Road column units must use roads in town hexes and are subject to the intersections rule.