

OPERATION STEADFAST

Readme & Guide



About

Operation Steadfast is a wave defense mission based around close air support and interdiction, with a little bit of strike mixed in for good measure. The goal was to build a mission which would bring players together in both frontline combat and transport roles, and to provide a battlefield that wasn't simply a glorified target range. It's an opportunity to shine light on some aspects such as logistic duties in transport helicopters and aircraft, road base short field operations in the Harrier, and other tasks that are often neglected but come with their own excitement and challenge.

Under the hood, the idea was also to provide a very adaptable and customisable scripting base to build off of, allowing the players to easily tweak their mission experience without knowing anything about mission editing or scripting. In addition, a major goal was to make as much of it as self-contained as possible, so porting to other parts of a map, eras, or entirely different theatres of war could be done with only minor adjustments.

As I learn more about the intricacies of scripting, the mission will hopefully grow and develop further and further beyond what you see now. I hope one day it'll be everything I set out to create and more, but for now, thanks for coming along for the ride, and happy hunting!

Gameplay

Capture Zones

The mission has 3 zones that act as capture points. Your goal is to defend these points for either a certain number of attack waves, or a specified amount of time. If the enemy captures one, you can still retake it with troops and vehicles deployed from friendly transport aircraft - however, if you lose all 3 zones, the mission is a failure.

Each zone starts with a number of defenders set up in positions guarding the zone from incoming enemies, but alone they won't be able to hold out for long. It's up to the players to deploy additional troops and vehicles into the zones and stop the incoming enemies before they get there.

If at least one zone is still held by your team by the allotted amount of waves or time, and none of the zones you hold are currently being contested by the enemy, the mission is a victory.



The zones are marked on the map, and they also have fire and smoke effects for you to easily find them in the heat of the moment!

Zone FOBs

In the center of each zone is a FOB. If you're close enough to the FOB, you can rearm, refuel, and repair your aircraft (not just helicopters - if you're a confident Harrier pilot you'll get a lot of use out of this!), and helicopters can pick up additional infantry squads. However, the ammo, fuel, and communications vehicles at the FOBs are very much vulnerable to the enemy. If they're destroyed, you won't be able to use those facilities unless you airlift more units in to replace them!

The amount of infantry squads available for pickup at the FOB is a finite number. However, as time progresses in the mission, more squads will be added to each of the FOBs so that you can continue fighting from the front. If you have a squad of infantry that have taken damage or losses, you can also lift them back to the FOB to refund them and get a fresh replacement squad.



Make the most of your ability to rearm on the front lines!

Logistics

Helicopters can use the CTLD script (accessed through the radio menu "F10 Other" option) to load infantry squads and crates containing various vehicles. Helicopters have limits on the amount of troops they can carry based on their type, e.g. an Mi-8 can carry an enormous mixed squad of troops, while a Gazelle can only carry a small team, while the Ka-50 cannot carry troops at all.

Infantry and vehicles you carry can be deployed wherever you like in the field, allowing you to drop forces in ambush positions quickly and effectively. In addition, dropping two of the FOB Crates near each other lets you deploy a FOB, which will allow you to pick up infantry and spawn more crates from its location. This is incredibly useful when done near a zone, so you can quickly return to your FOB and build plenty of vehicles to help in the defense! Infantry and crates can be collected from the bunker at the center of the helicopters' starting FARP, while infantry can also be collected at each of the zones as detailed in the section above.

In versions of the mission that use the C-130J Hercules mod by Anubis, you can also use this plane to quickly transport all manner of vehicles and paratroopers to the front line. This is extremely effective at retaking a lost position, deploying a flanking or ambushing force, or quickly reinforcing a defensive line. Paratroopers that are dropped by the Hercules can be picked up with helicopters via CTLD and redeployed if needed elsewhere.



Transport and logistics is just as important as frontline combat!

Enemy Attacks

You will be warned that an enemy attack has been launched on a zone when it initially spawns. A zone will randomly be chosen as the target, however the enemy will not target a zone they have already captured. Zones that the enemy is already currently attacking or are neutral will still be considered valid targets.

The primary enemy attacks consist of ground convoys. These convoys will have a mix of transport, armor, and air defence vehicles. However, if the relevant options are enabled, they will also have attack aircraft present to support their attack.

The convoys will move towards the center of the zone from a number of predetermined directions. Keep a sharp eye out for dust clouds of moving vehicles and on roads leading into the zones. Understanding their common routes and setting up killboxes and ambushes on these routes is the key to success.



Learn their routes, and set an ambush!

Command Centers

The enemy has two command centers near the front lines: an Air Command Center, and a Support Command Center. The Air Command Center coordinates their efforts with helicopter and fixed wing aircraft, while the Support Command Center dispatches artillery units and handles the escalation of the Alert Level.

If enemy aircraft spawns are enabled through the options, destroying the Air Command Center will stop any further spawning of aircraft to support their ground convoys.

If enemy artillery spawns are enabled through the options, destroying the Support Command Center will stop any further spawning of artillery batteries. In addition, if the Support Command Center is destroyed, the Alert Level will no longer increase (see next page for Alert Level details).



Taking the time to destroy the command centers means less threats to deal with!

Alert Level

If the option is enabled, the enemy will operate on an "Alert Level" system. The Alert Level starts at 1, and goes up to 5. As time passes in the mission, or every set amount of waves, the Alert Level will increase.

As the Alert Level becomes higher, the enemy will start to deploy more powerful vehicles in their attack convoys. For instance, at Alert Level 1, the scariest tank you might face would be a T-55, but at Alert Level 5, you'll be very accustomed to seeing T-72s and T-90s. Each time the Alert Level increases, you will be warned. The current Alert Level can also be checked via the Mission Status Report radio option.

If the Support Command Center is destroyed, the Alert Level will no longer increase, and be frozen at the current level. If you're worried about the enemy bringing stronger units into the fight later on, it may be wise to pay their command center a visit with some heavy ordnance early in the battle!

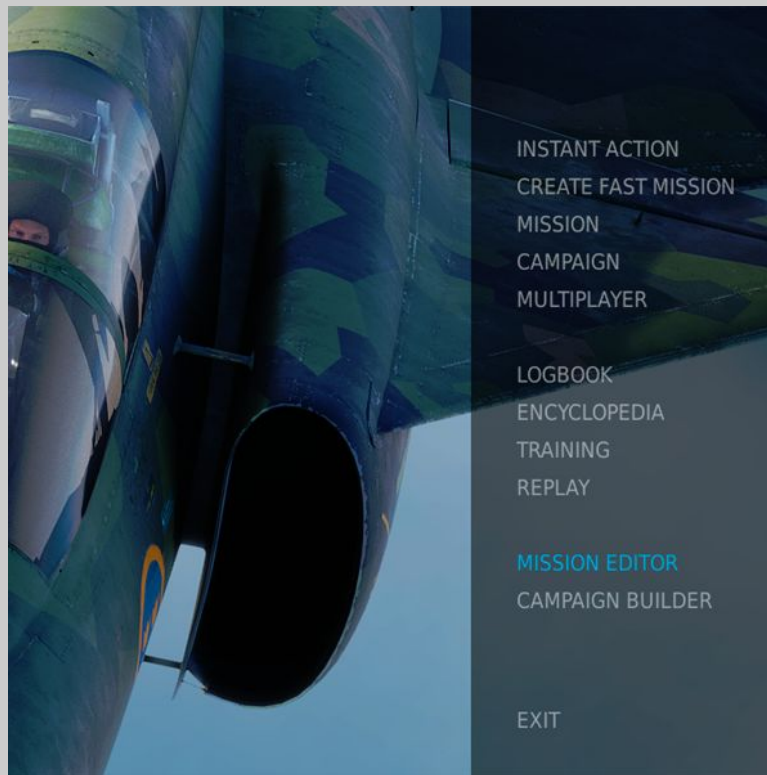


Be prepared for some tough customers if you let the enemy keep escalating the Alert Level!

Customising Your Experience

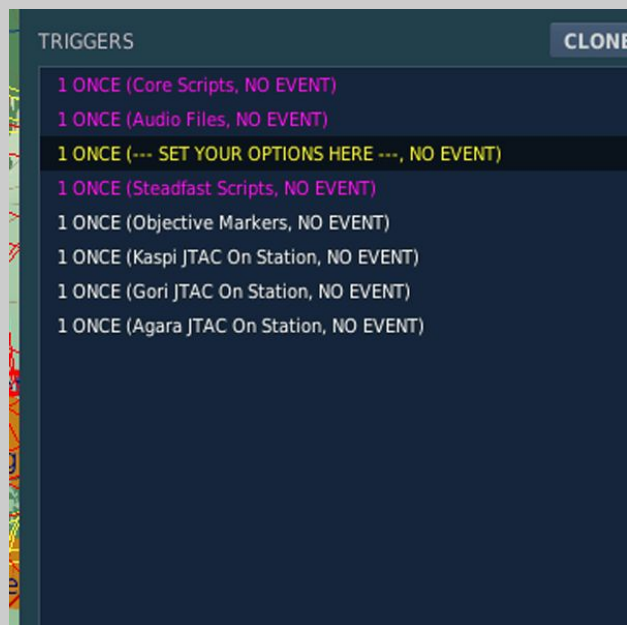
As noted in the About section, giving players a way to easily adjust the difficulty and various aspects of the mission was an important goal from the beginning. With that in mind, I've done my best to provide a way to tweak some aspects of the mission without the player needing any knowledge of the mission editor or scripting.

The first step is to go into the DCS Mission Editor and open the mission file.

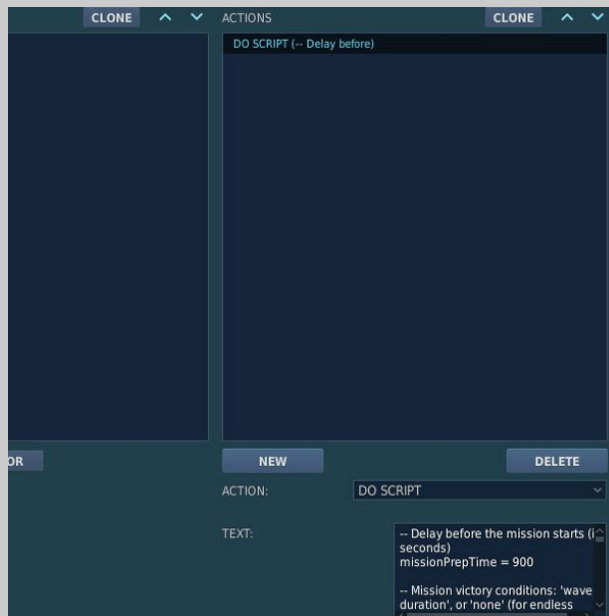




Next, select the “Set rules for trigger” option on the left hand side toolbar.



Select the “--- SET YOUR OPTIONS HERE ---” line.



On the right hand side will be an action called DO SCRIPT, and clicking on it will show a box in the lower right of the panel with some code in it. You can edit the code from here, but it's probably easier to copy and paste it into Notepad or a similar text editor for easier reading.

```
-- Delay before the mission starts (i
missionPrepTime = 900

-- Mission victory conditions: 'wave'
missionWinCondition = 'wave'
missionSuccessAmount = 15

-- Set the minimum and maximum random
zoneAttackTimeMin = 600
zoneAttackTimeMax = 1200

-- Set the amount of enemy ground gro
zoneAttackQuantity = 3

-- Set whether helicopters and planes
zoneAttackHelicopters = true
zoneAttackAircraft = true

-- Enable/Disable and set the update
```

These are the options you can edit. Lines with a "--" in front of them are comments. Don't remove the "--" in front of these! The comments explain the options, but they are also listed on the following pages.

Once you have set the options to your liking, you can copy and paste the code back into the DO SCRIPT box, then save the mission file to run it with your customised settings.

The variables, what they do, and the valid settings are listed below:

“missionPrepTime” is the amount of time (in seconds) from the mission being loaded, until the first attack wave spawns. You will be warned 5 minutes before this time that the enemy is about to attack.

“missionWinCondition” is the criteria that needs to be met before the mission enters the final phase. It can be:

‘wave’ - the mission will enter the final phase after the specified amount of waves;

‘duration’ - the mission will enter the final phase after the specified amount of time in minutes;

or **‘none’** - the mission will never reach a victory state and continue running.

“zoneAttackTimeMin” and **“zoneAttackTimeMax”** set the minimum and maximum time between an enemy attack wave spawning in seconds. The attack will be spawned at a random time between these values. For example, if you set these values to 1200 (20 minutes) and 1800 (30 minutes), then each attack will happen at a random time somewhere between 20 and 30 minutes since the last one.

“zoneAttackQuantity” sets how many convoys of ground vehicles will spawn for each attack wave.

“zoneAttackHelicopters” and **“zoneAttackAircraft”** set whether or not enemy helicopters and fixed wing aircraft will spawn to support the ground forces. **‘true’** will enable them, while **‘false’** will disable them.

“zoneStatusReportAutoDisplay” sets whether or not the mission status update dialog box will periodically show to give the players info on the zone statuses and other useful information. **‘true’** will enable these updates, while **‘false’** disables them. When set to ‘false’, players can still request one manually via the radio ‘F10 Other’ menu.

“zoneStatusReportTime” sets the time in seconds between automatic report popups if they are enabled.

“alertLevelType” sets the way the enemy Alert Level will increase during the battle, making them bring more powerful units onto the field. The valid options are:

‘wave’ - the alert level will increase after the specified number of waves;

‘duration’ - the alert level will increase after the specified amount of time in seconds;

‘none’ - the alert level will not increase and will always stay at level 1.

“alertLevelValue” sets the number of waves (in wave mode) or amount of time in seconds (in duration mode) for each alert level increase.

“supportArty” sets whether or not the Support Command Center will dispatch any artillery units periodically to bombard a zone. **‘true’** enables them, while **‘false’** disables them.

“supportArtySpawnTime” sets how frequently in seconds the support artillery units will respawn if enabled.

“zoneRestockTime” sets how frequently in seconds the capture zones will add more troops for CTLD pickup by transport units.

“zoneRestockQuantity” sets how many additional groups of infantry pickups are added to the capture zones when they get restocked.

Credits

All the people who contributed to the development of the MOOSE, MIST, and CTLD scripts, opening up so many more avenues to easily create these sorts of missions.

Dogpatch, for the US English voice lines and his endless patience with my passion for my most ambitious project yet.

The denizens of Funky Squadron for their tireless testing and feedback from the very barebones "I think I might have an idea" stage of the mission to where you see it now. May the Funk reign supreme.

Anubis, for the magnificent C-130J Hercules mod that inspired me to even try making a mission where something like a transport aircraft could really show its strength.

Everyone else who came along for the ride and jumped in to test the mission and give feedback. Even from the roughest mockup, having the encouragement and honest feedback of others is crucial in giving a project direction.

Legal Stuff

You're free to redistribute the mission wherever you like, host it on public servers, and modify and tinker with the mission to your heart's content. However, please give credit where credit is due, and don't claim it as your own creation, or distribute modified versions and claim them to be official updates from myself. If you do repost it somewhere, please also include this document alongside the mission file.

Contact

If you have any bug reports, suggestions, or general feedback, let me know at 'Mr Nobody#4680' on Discord. This is a process of constant improvement, so any help toward that end is welcome.



Thanks for playing!