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V-COMMANDOS: ALL THE RULES

To achieve the extirpation of Nazi tyranny there are no lengths of violence to which we will not go.

— Winston Churchill, September 21, 1943.

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Introduction and Definitions

This document integrates and rewrites the rules of *V-Commandos*, including its expansions *Résistance* and *Secret Weapons*.

Definitions

An OPERATION (e.g. Wipe, Green, Time Pencil) consists of one or more TERRAINS (e.g. Lighthouse, Water Tower, Forest Road), read from left to right. Terrains in the same vertical column (CONCURRENT TERRAINS) will be played at the same time, with the players' forces split between them. Follow the arrows between Terrains within an Operation to see where forces must be split and combined.

A TERRAIN consists of one or more TILES; a tile can be Large, Medium or Small, and Indoor or Outdoor. The artwork on a tile has no game effect.

ADJACENT tiles are those touching along an edge (not just diagonally); if at least one of them is an indoor tile, there must also be an open door between them for them to count as Adjacent.

Whenever a Stealthy commando enters a tile with an enemy on it, or vice versa, the commando makes a STEALTH CHECK to stay hidden. Each enemy rolls one die for each commando newly sharing a tile with them; on a 1-2, that commando becomes Visible, which will also trigger the alarm.

The ALARM determines the rate of arrival of enemy reinforcements. When it is triggered, turn the triangular Alarm token and all enemy entrance tokens on that Terrain to their orange sides.

Each tile has a stacking limit (4 commandos plus enemies for small tiles, 8 for medium, 16 for large; a machine gun or Goliath nest takes up two spaces and provides one). If the tile is full, nobody may enter it.

Rules on cards override these rules; rules on Operation cards also override rules on Terrain cards. Some rules on Operation cards only apply in Veteran mode; they are noted with a red rather than a black SPECIAL stamp, and a V-Commandos logo.

Setup

1. Taking into account the number of players, choose a Terrain (for a short game) or an Operation (for a longer game). Note whether Résistance [R] or Secret Weapons [S] rules are in use based on the symbol on the Operation/Terrain card (a Croix de Lorraine against a triangle for Résistance, a V-2 for Secret Weapons). Also decide whether you wish to play in the harder Veteran mode [V].
2. If in an Operation, find the relevant Terrain cards.
3. Place tiles for the Terrain(s) in play.
4. Assemble and shuffle the Event deck: 37 standard cards, 18 more from [R] or [S] if they are in play.
5. Place markers on the tiles as shown on Terrain cards, potentially modified by Operation rules.
6. Place one MP40 (two-box) regular enemy on each triangular item (objectives, alarms, bunkers).
7. [V] Place one MP40 (two-box) regular enemy on each entrance point.
8. Make up the enemy reserve bag:
 - 23 regular enemies (minus any already placed)
 - [S] or [R]: 9 gas-mask enemies. Otherwise, 9 more regular enemies.
 - 5 sledgehammer enemies.
 - 7 Ø tokens.
 - 3 black-bordered Special enemies. Double-sided 3-box for the base game; [R] Officer/Dog; [S] Fallschirmjäger/Goliath.
9. Make up the equipment reserve bag (less anything allocated to commandos or placed on the Terrains):
 - 16 Spotted, 9 Grenade, 9 Crowbar, 7 First Aid, 7 Enemy Uniform, 7 TNT, 3 Bombardment, 4 MP40, 3 StG44, 1 MG42

If continuing an Operation, do not alter the Event deck from its previous state.

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- [R] add 7 Airdrop, 3 Binoculars
- [S] add 6 Smoke, 4 Panzerfaust

10. Each player chooses a commando from among those suitable for the rules in play and takes their card (choosing one side of it), two counters (Stealthy/Visible and Enemy Uniform/Critical Condition), and any starting equipment. Gander is played as a supernumerary character attached to another commando. If a player's commando was eliminated in a previous Terrain of this Operation, they choose a new one, but do not get starting equipment. If no commandos are available because too many have been eliminated, the Operation fails.

- Officer, Medic, Sapper, Scout, Sniper; Kickstarter extras Gander, Sergeant Bruno, Death Cheater.
- [R] also Saboteur, SOE Agent, Spy; Kickstarter extra Jamie Finnlock (= Saboteur).
- [S] also Butcher, Intel Officer, Mortar Gunner; Kickstarter extras VF Intel Officer (= Intel Officer), Anneke (= Butcher).

11. If there are two or more Terrains in play, split the available Commandos between them; note that if the commando count for the Terrain is exceeded the alarm will sound automatically. All commandos begin Underground.

If continuing an Operation, keep the surviving commandos and their equipment. Any eliminated commando is replaced by one from the unused cards, and does not get any starting equipment.

Sequence of Play

Event Phase

[R] Reset all Binoculars (see Using Equipment).

For each Terrain, draw an event card. This includes both descriptive text (which is normally resolved immediately) and a direction indicator at the bottom; that is the compass direction in which enemies will move during the Enemy Phase, unless any commando ends the turn Visible. A “?” direction indicator indicates that the direction is not yet known. Effects on event cards only affect the Terrain for which they are drawn.

Commando Phase

Players take turns to activate their commandos. This may be done in any order, but one commando must finish their turn before the next one begins. Each commando has actions equal to the circular spaces at the top left of their commando card; most commandos have three. Each [-1] wound token subtracts one action.

Movement

A commando may move to an adjacent tile (or from Underground onto a tile with an open trapdoor) for one action.

- If the tile is small, this causes the commando to become or remain Stealthy.
- If the tile is medium, this causes the commando to become or remain Visible.
- If the tile is medium and they spend an extra action (two in total), this causes the commando to become or remain Stealthy.
- If the tile is large, this causes the commando to become or remain Visible.

If the commando is Visible during any part of this movement, the alarm is activated and any enemies on the tile they are entering or leaving will shoot at them, using the size of the tile they are *leaving*; see below under Enemy Fire.

If a Stealthy commando enters a tile with enemies, they must immediately make a Stealth Check.

Leaving a tile through an open trapdoor to Underground costs one action and ends the commando's turn. On their next turn they may enter any Terrain in play through this or another open trapdoor.

Shooting and Close Combat

A commando may shoot at a valid target, spending one action and using any weapon they are carrying. If the weapon has an [eye] symbol, this will cause them to become Visible; if it has a [loudspeaker] symbol, it will trigger the alarm.

A locked door may be shot at from either of the tiles which it connects. Any shot automatically opens it.

A group of one or more enemies on a single tile may be shot at from the same or an adjacent tile. Roll a number of dice equal to the number of boxes on the weapon counter. The target number is printed on the terrain: 4+ for Small, 3+ for Medium, 2+ for Large (and 5+ for an enemy in a machine-gun nest). Dice are allocated to enemies *after* they are rolled.

A Stealthy commando may perform Close Combat against any enemy on the same tile, for one action. This automatically succeeds.

One hit eliminates any enemy except Goliaths; replace them in the enemy reserve bag, and draw an equipment token from the equipment reserve bag. If it is a Spotted token (orange [eye] marker) *and* there are any enemies left on that tile at the conclusion of the attack, the attacking commando becomes visible even if they would not otherwise have done so. In any case, move the Spotted token to the equipment discard pile. Other equipment is placed on the tile where the enemy was.

Eliminating a Guard Dog does not trigger an equipment draw.

Goliaths must be attacked in a different way:

- Using an [explosion] effect in its tile will destroy it;
- Spending 1 AP while on the same tile as the Goliath will cut the control wire; replace the Goliath with a TNT token.
- A commando in a Goliath nest may spend 1 AP to move a Goliath on their terrain one tile, or to detonate it.

[R][S] Gas Barrels

A gas barrel may be attacked like an enemy unit, but need not take spillover damage (e.g. from grenades and bombardments) unless the player chooses. When it is destroyed, flip the token. Until the end of the turn, all units which enter or are in that tile and do not have the [gas mask] symbol are eliminated, dropping equipment as normal.

Cancelling the Alarm

If the alarm token shows its orange side a commando on its tile may silence it by spending one action. Return all entrances to their black side and remove the alarm token from the game; if the alarm sounds again, it cannot be silenced. Note that if any commando on the Terrain is Visible the alarm will sound again immediately.

Unblocking a Trapdoor

A blocked trapdoor may be opened for one action – but only by a commando on its tile. It may not be opened from below.

Saving an Action

If you have an open [+1] space on your commando card, you may spend an action to take a [+1] token and place it there.

Using Equipment

Equipment typically costs one action to use and is discarded once used.

- Grenade: is a one-use four-die weapon which may be used against the same or an adjacent tile. If hits remain after all enemy units are eliminated, they must be distributed among other visible characters on the tile.
- Bombardment: targets a single outdoor tile *of any Terrain in play*. As with Grenades, if hits remain after all enemy units are eliminated, they must be distributed among other visible characters on the tile.
- Crowbar: open a locked door for one action, not becoming Visible in the process. Or for one action barricade an enemy entrance on your tile to delay their entry; see Enemy Reinforcements for the effects.
- First Aid: remove all [-1] wound markers from a character in the same space (which can be the operator of the First Aid kit).

- **Enemy Uniform:** on donning (one action), immediately become Stealthy (and replace the commando token with the Enemy Uniform one). Treat all sizes of tile as though they were Small for movement and visibility purposes. The uniform is lost when the commando becomes Visible for any reason.
- **TNT:** may be emplaced for one action. Thereafter it is a zero-cost action for any commando to detonate it. This generates an [explosion] effect: destroy all tokens on the tile other than triangular ones (objective, alarm, emplaced weapon nest) and activate the alarm.
- **MP40, StG44, MG42:** these weapons are resolved normally (see Shooting and Close Combat).
- **[R] Binoculars:** may be used (without action cost) once per turn to reroll any single die that affects that commando (stealth check, own shooting, enemy shooting, etc.). Turn it to its exhausted side.
- **[R] Equipment Airdrop:** choose an outdoor tile on any Terrain. Discard the Airdrop token and draw three tokens from the equipment reserve, placing them on the tile. Each Spotted token moves the drop location one tile in the direction indicated by the terrain's event card. A move off the edge of the Terrain is ignored. The Airdrop is lost if:
 - all three tokens are Spotted tokens; or
 - the airdrop is moved onto an indoor tile; or
 - the indicated direction is “?” and the airdrop is moved at all.
- **[S] Panzerfaust:** can be fired into its own or an adjacent tile, where it detonates as a TNT charge.
- **[S] Smoke Grenade:** is deployed into its own or an adjacent tile, which is then treated as a Small tile for movement and visibility purposes. This effect persists until the Terrain is dismantled.

Using a zero-cost action

You may use a zero-cost action (such as collecting or dropping equipment, detonating a TNT charge, or spending a +1 action token to take a 1-cost action) before or after but not during another commando's actions, or before or after but not during any of the three steps of the Enemy Phase.

Enemy Phase

Enemy Reinforcements

If at the start of this step there is at least one enemy in a Goliath nest, all Goliaths are considered activated for the remainder of this enemy phase.

For each enemy entrance, draw one (or two if the alarm is sounding) enemy tokens from the reserve and add them to any enemies already outside that entrance.

If an Ø token is drawn, remove it from the game and take a Special Enemy from the stack; once all reinforcements have been drawn, add the Special Enemies to the enemy reserve.

If a tile connected to an entrance is full, leave the enemies on the table next to the entrance; otherwise move them from outside the entrance onto the tile.

If the entrance is blocked by a crowbar, the enemy remain on the table until there are four or more of them (each enemy with a sledgehammer icon counting as two). At that point the crowbar is discarded and the enemies enter the tile normally.

If you run out of enemy in the reserve, the game is over and the operation has failed.

For any enemy that has arrived in a space with a Stealthy commando, immediately make a stealth check.

Enemy Movement

If at the start of this step there is at least one enemy in a Goliath nest, all Goliaths are considered activated for the remainder of this enemy phase.

If any commando is visible, each enemy moves towards the closest visible commando by the shortest available route; enemies closest to the visible commandos should move first. Otherwise, enemies move in the direction shown on the event card (if this was a "?", now draw event cards until you get one with a direction, ignoring all other text); enemies

If enemies have a choice of movement (e.g. moving from a large tile into two small tiles, or where there are two equally short routes to a visible commando) they must be distributed as evenly as possible between them, but the players may choose which goes where.

The German Officer special enemy moves *two* tiles, and takes with them any enemy units on their starting tile.

Goliath special enemies move like other enemies, if any only if they are activated.

A regular enemy (i.e. not one of the solid-black-bordered Special

Enemies) which is in a space with an unguarded triangular token (alarm, objective, machine gun or Goliath nest) will guard it (overlap the tokens); that enemy will never voluntarily leave that spot.

Enemies normally treat locked doors as open; but [S] a Goliath or [R] a Guard Dog may not move through a locked door unless it shares its starting tile with at least one regular enemy, Paratrooper, or German Officer.

Note that if a commando becomes Visible as the result of a failed Stealth Check during this phase this does *not* affect the moment of the remaining enemies.

Enemy Fire

If at the start of this step there is at least one enemy in a Goliath nest, all Goliaths are considered activated for the remainder of this enemy phase.

If any enemy shares a tile with a visible commando, it will attack, rolling dice equal to the number of boxes on its counter and attempting to beat the tile's target number (see Shooting and Close Combat).

If Goliaths are activated, any Goliath which is on a tile containing at least one visible commando will detonate: [explosion], like TNT.

If any enemy has no visible commando on its own tile but has one on an adjacent tile, it will attack as above. If it has a choice of commandos, the attacks from a single tile must be split as evenly as possible.

Each hit places a [-1] wound token on the character card. When all the [-1] slots are filled, the commando is in Critical Condition (use the appropriate token). A commando still in Critical Condition at the end of the *next* game turn is Eliminated; remove the token from the board and drop all equipment on that tile, and that player will take no further actions in this phase of the operation (see Setup for how they can return to play in the next phase). If all commandos are Eliminated, the game is over and the operation is a failure.

End Phase

Remove any Gas markers.

If all objectives on a Terrain have been completed, and no Commando remains on the Terrain, that Terrain is complete. If other concurrent Terrains are not yet complete, this Terrain remains in play for purposes of enemy reinforcements, and can still exhaust the enemy reserve.

If an Operation is being played and all concurrent Terrains are complete:

Put all enemies from the board and table into the Enemy Reserve bag.

Put all equipment from the board and table (except what the commandos are carrying) into the Equipment Reserve bag.

If all Terrains are complete, the Operation is a success.