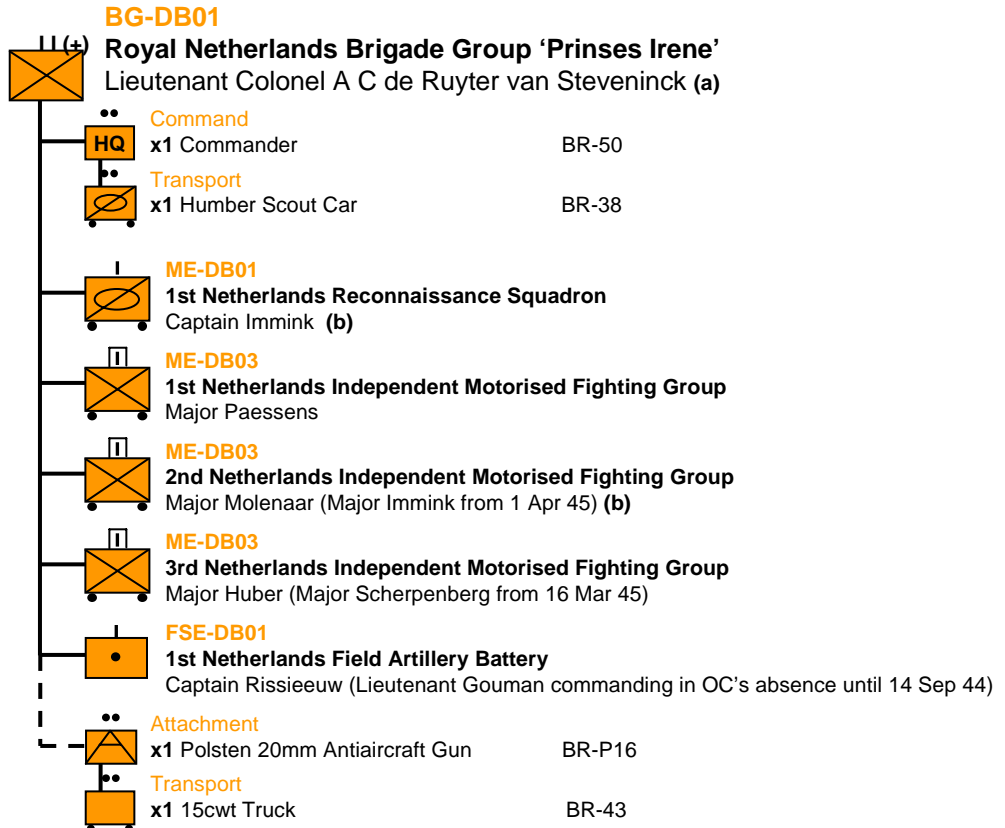


Royal Netherlands Independent Brigade Group 'Prinses Irene' Order of Battle July 1944 to May 1945



(a) Unlike the Belgian Brigade, the Netherlands 'Prinses Irene' Brigade remained a 'Brigade' in name only and was never expanded to the strength of a full, true Brigade Group. This was largely caused by the fact that the Netherlands was only partly liberated in 1944, with the bulk of the country still firmly in German hands until 1945.

(b) The Recce Squadron was disbanded in March 1945, with the personnel used to replace losses in the Fighting Groups. Captain Immink replaced Major Molenaar as commander of 2nd Fighting Group.

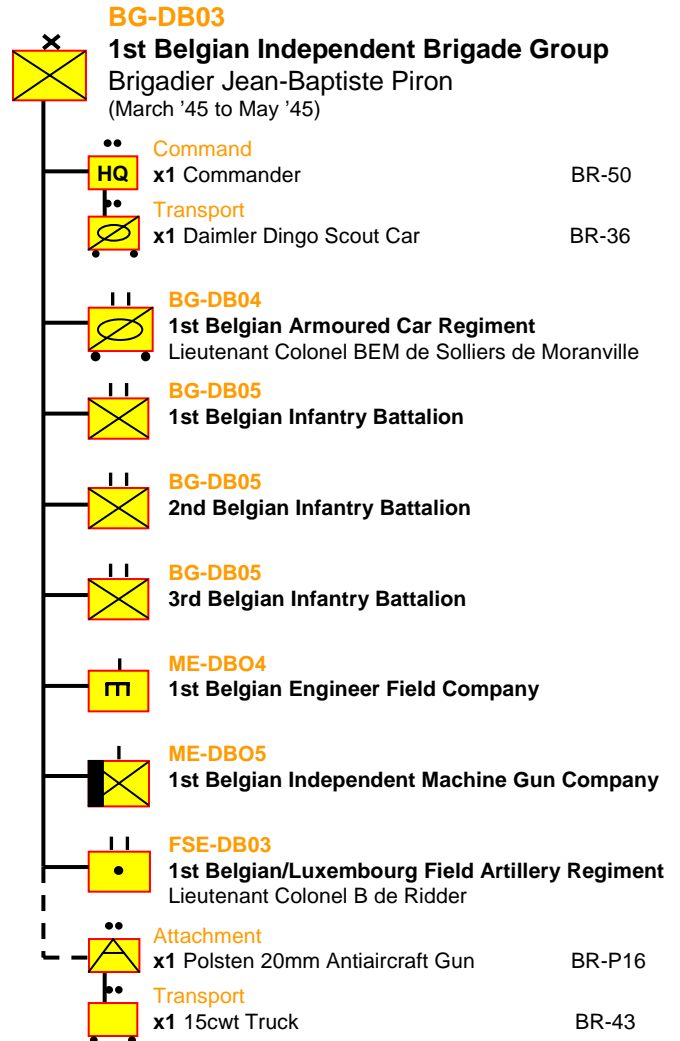
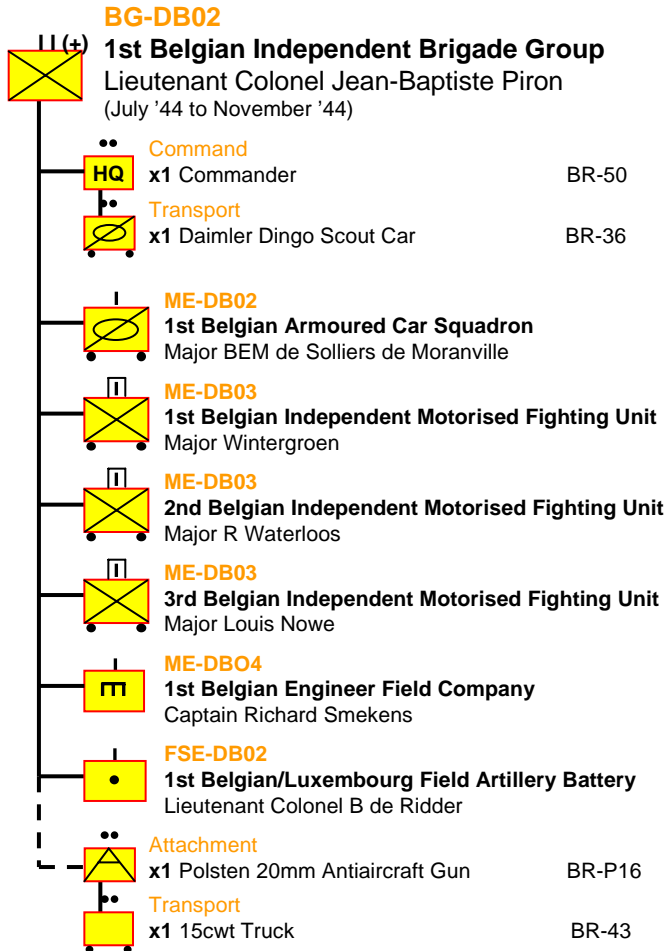


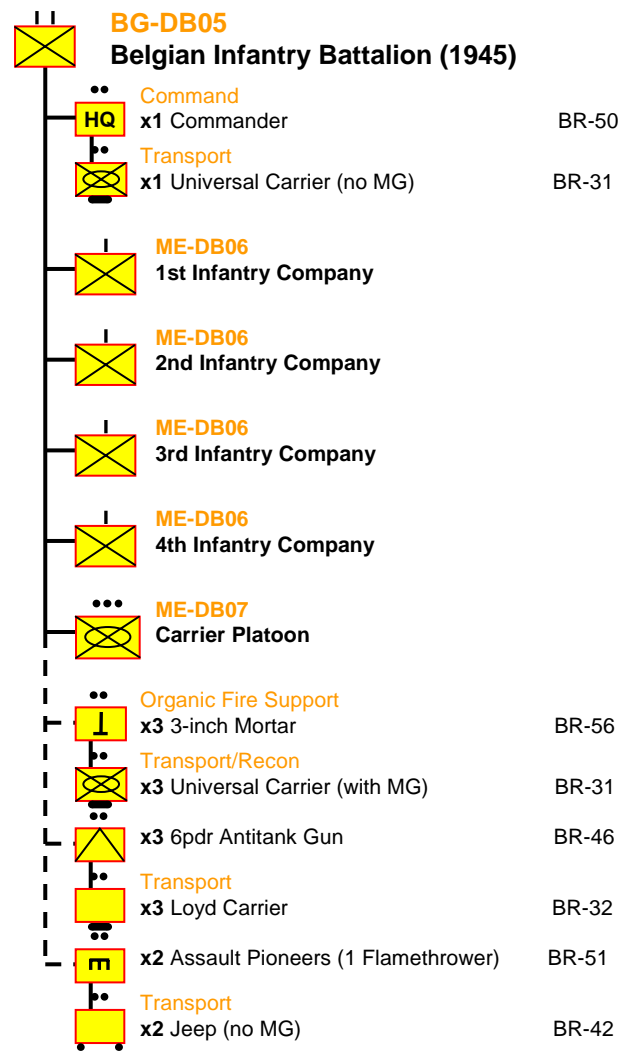
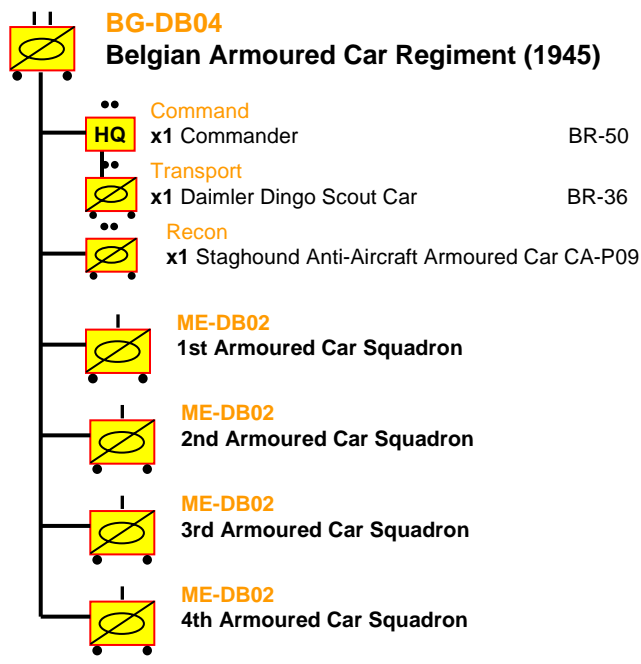
Royal Belgian

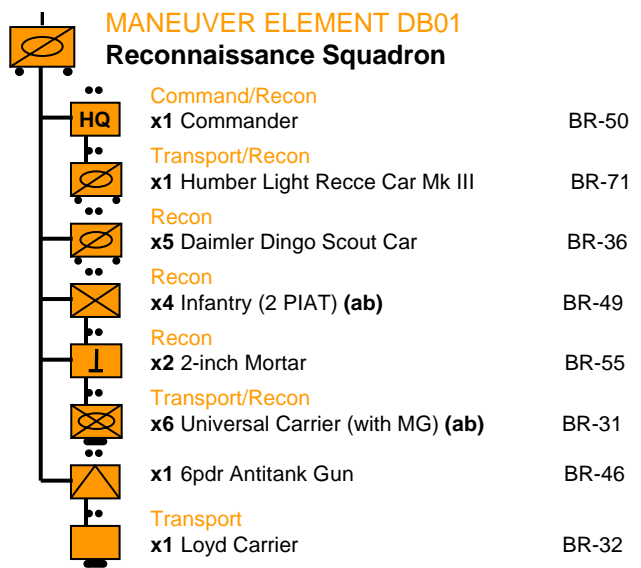
1st Independent Brigade Group

('Brigade Piron')

Order of Battle July 1944 to May 1945

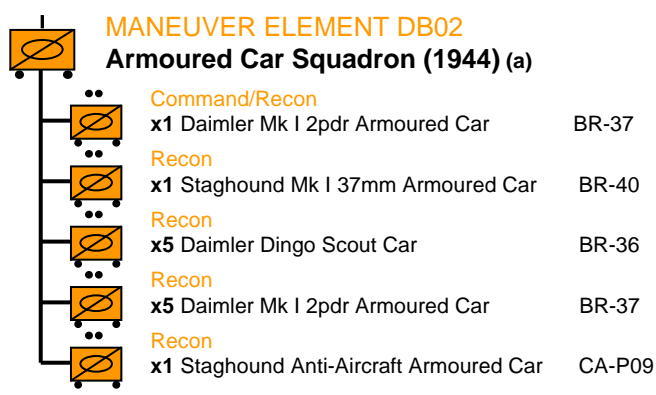




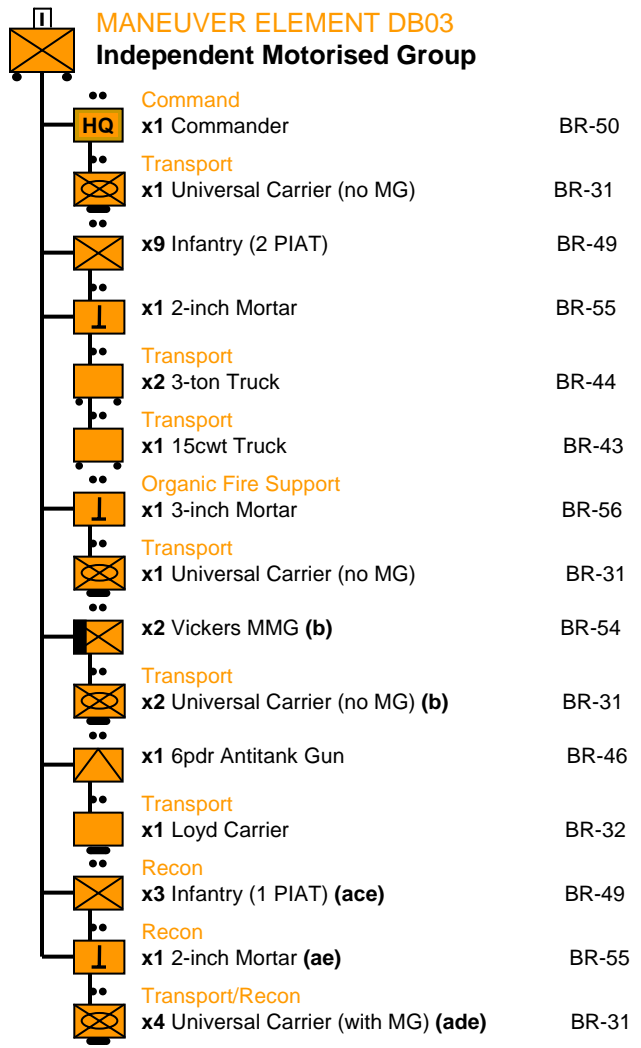


(a) The Infantry may alternatively dismount as:
Bren Light Machine Gun BR-53

(b) Carriers fire without Machine Gun rating when infantry dismount as Bren LMGs.



(a) In 1945: When the Armoured Car Squadron expands to a full regiment, the individual Squadron organisation changes to match the British organisation:



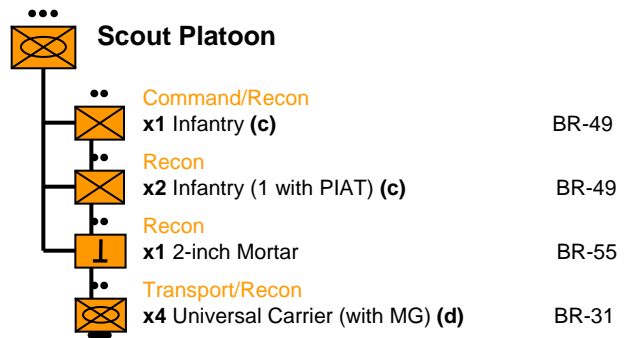
(a) In the Netherlands Brigade: Delete the Scout Platoon (x3 Infantry, x1 2-inch Mortar and x4 Carrier).

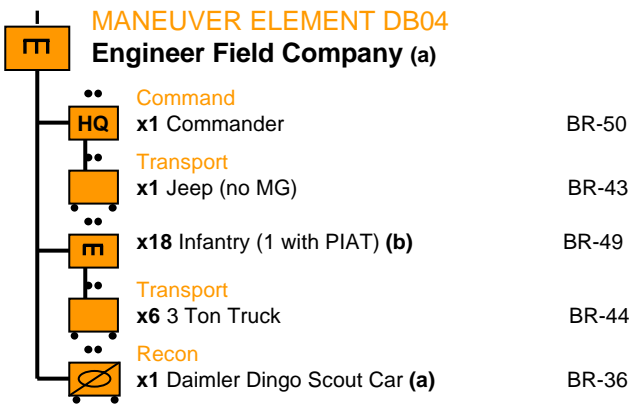
(b) Vickers MMGs may fire from their carriers when mounted, but may not conduct Grazing Fire while so doing (see website Playtest Rules page).

(c) The Scout Platoon Infantry may alternatively dismount as:
Bren Light Machine Gun BR-53

(d) Carriers fire without Machine Gun rating when infantry dismount as Bren LMGs.

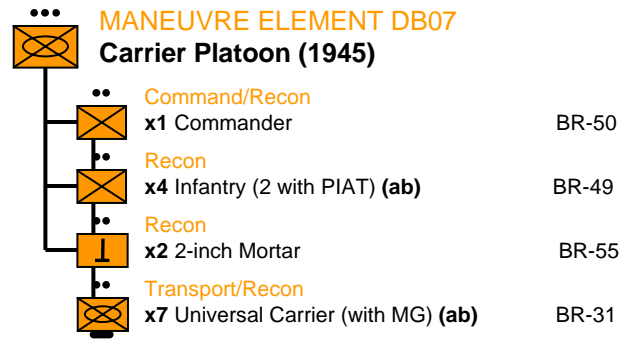
(e) The Scout Platoon may alternatively operate as a separate maneuver element:





(a) I have been unable to discover the exact composition and equipment of the Belgian Engineer Field Company, so have based it on the British organisation of three platoons, each with six sections. The British generally used obsolete Light Recce Cars in the engineering recce role, but the Belgians seem to have used the Dingo as their standard scout car, so I have included a Dingo here.

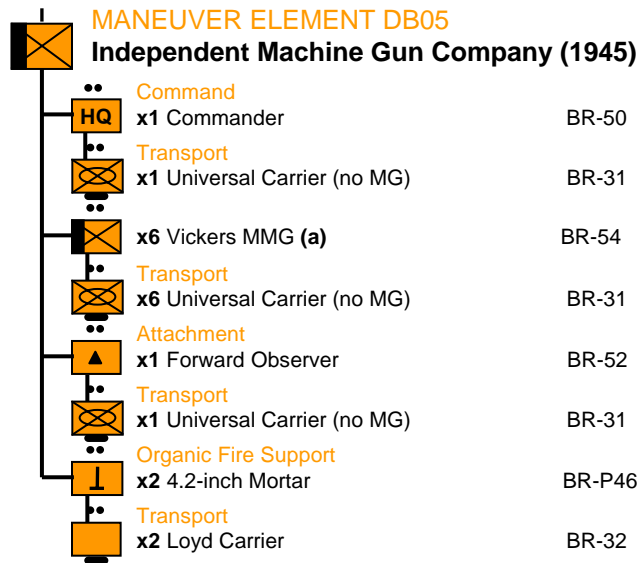
(b) May conduct engineering tasks as detailed in the website playtest engineering rules. Note that the Assault Pioneer card (BR-51), with its enhanced close-combat values, does not really reflect the role of the Belgian Engineers in this instance.



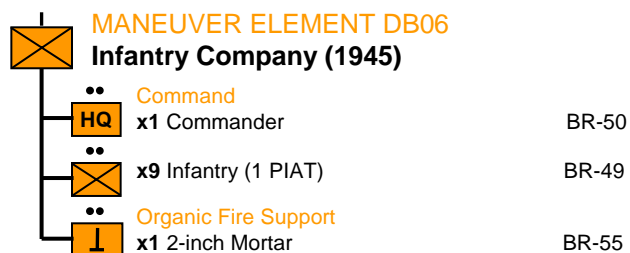
(a) The Infantry may alternatively dismount as:
 Bren Light Machine Gun

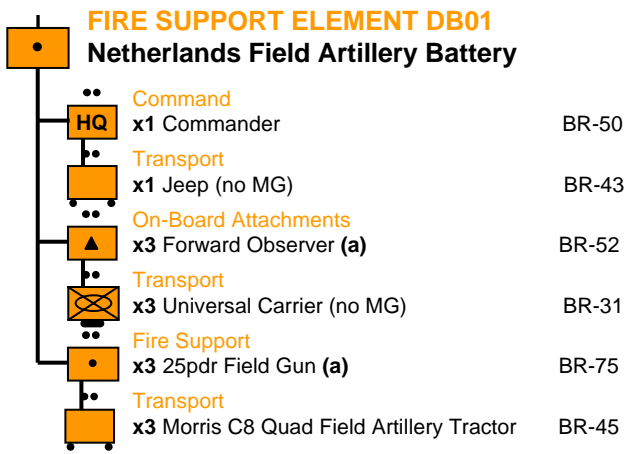
BR-53

(b) Carriers fire without Machine Gun rating when infantry dismount as Bren LMGs.



(a) Vickers MMGs may fire from their carriers when mounted, but may not conduct Grazing Fire while so doing (see website Playtest Rules page).

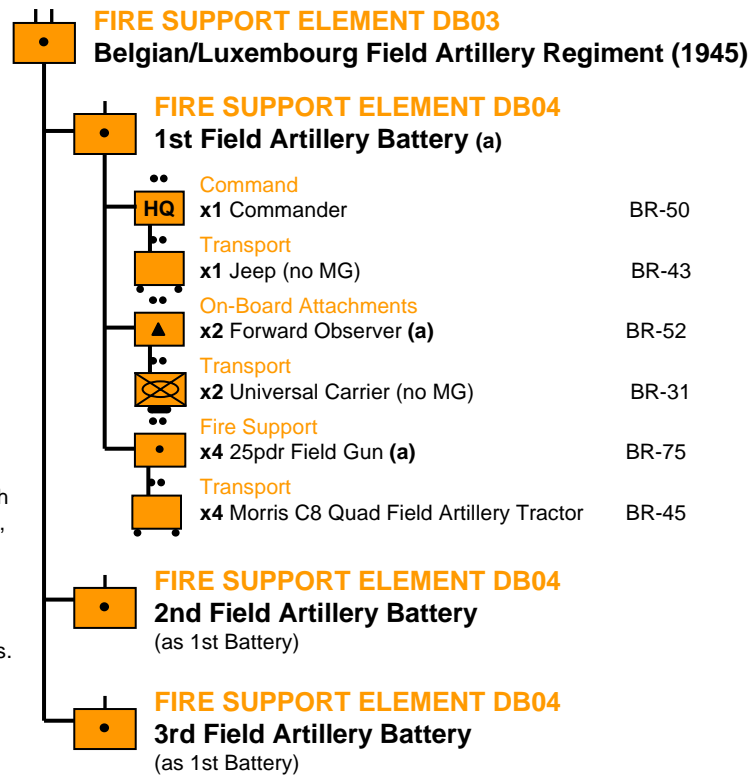





(a) The Netherlands Field Artillery Battery was organised uniquely with three Troops, each of x1 25pdr (each with a FO). As with British artillery, each Troop functions effectively as an independent 'battery', or all three may combine their fire in a Battery fire mission (in which case, only one FO may call for fire). The purpose of this triangular organisation was: if recruits became available from liberated Dutch territories, the battery could be rapidly expanded into a regiment of three batteries, using each troop as the nucleus for the new batteries.



(a) The battery's organisation was essentially the same as the Netherlands Battery, for the same reasons, but had twice as many guns in each Troop, due to a greater starting manpower pool. The battery's 3rd Troop was Luxembourgish, while the rest of the battery's personnel were Belgian. Unlike the Netherlands Battery, this battery was eventually able to expand into a full Belgian/Luxembourg Regiment (see below).



(a) Following the expansion to a full regiment, the battery organisation was changed to the British standard of two troops, each of x2 25pdrs, as shown here.



Vehicle Markings for Netherlands Independent Brigade Group 'Prinses Irene' July 1944 to May 1945



Netherlands Arm of Service Signs & Serials

The Arm of Service (AoS) sign was a system of coloured square markings devised by the British to quickly identify the type of unit to which the vehicle belonged. The AoS sign was then superimposed with a serial number, which identified different units of the same type within a formation. When used in conjunction with a formation sign, the exact unit could be determined by those who understood the system. The system was deliberately cryptic in order to confuse enemy intelligence-gathering efforts.

109 Headquarters, Netherlands Independent Brigade Group 'Prinses Irene'

109 1st Netherlands Signals Company

110 1st Netherlands Independent Motorised Fighting Group

111 2nd Netherlands Independent Motorised Fighting Group

112 3rd Netherlands Independent Motorised Fighting Group

113 1st Netherlands Reserve & Training Company

114 1st Netherlands Field Artillery Battery

116 1st Netherlands Supply & Ordnance Company

117 1st Netherlands Light Aid Detachment

118 1st Netherlands Transport Company

138 1st Netherlands Reconnaissance Squadron

Netherlands 'Prinses Irene' Brigade Formation Signs



The formation sign for the 'Prinses Irene' Brigade was the heraldic lion rampant of the House of Orange-Nassau, in orange, facing left, on a black disc.



One variation, seen on a Loyd Carrier of 3rd Independent Motorised Fighting Group, was to paint the title 'IRENE' in white beneath the sign.

I am not aware of any other formation signs being used by the Netherlands 'Prinses Irene' Brigade. Unlike other 'Free' European Allied forces, there were no national symbols painted on the brigade's vehicles (other than the Allied Star).





Vehicle Markings for 1st Belgian Independent Brigade Group July 1944 to May 1945



Belgian Arm of Service Signs & Serials

- 109** Headquarters, 1st Belgian Independent Brigade Group
- 109** 1st Belgian Signals Company
- 110** 1st Belgian Independent Motorised Unit (1st Infantry Battalion in 1945)
- 111** 2nd Belgian Independent Motorised Unit (2nd Infantry Battalion in 1945)
- 112** 3rd Belgian Independent Motorised Unit (3rd Infantry Battalion in 1945)
- 113** 1st Belgian Reserve & Training Company
- 114** 1st Belgian/Luxembourg Field Artillery Battery (1st Field Artillery Regt in 1945)
- 115** 1st Belgian Engineer Field Company (1st Engineer Regiment in 1945)
- 116** 1st Belgian Supply & Ordnance Company
- 117** 1st Belgian Light Aid Detachment
- 118** 1st Belgian Transport Company
- 138** 1st Belgian Armoured Car Squadron (1st Armoured Car Regiment in 1945)

When the Brigade expanded, the MGs were massed into a single MG Company. My guess is that this company filled the vacant '119' serial:

- 119** 1st Belgian Independent Machine Gun Company (1945 only – conjectural)

1st Belgian Brigade Formation Signs



B

The original Belgian formation sign was a simple 'B'. It was officially replaced prior to Normandy, but was still carried by many vehicles until the end of 1944 – especially softskins and carriers. It was originally ordered to be painted in concert with the Belgian roundel (see below).



This was the official formation sign in 1944, which replaced the 'B'. It was worn on uniforms as the unit patch and was also painted on many vehicles in the Brigade, especially the Armoured Car Squadron.



In the first order regarding the marking of Belgian vehicles, the Belgian Air Force roundel was to be painted on the centre-rear of vehicles when the 'B' was used as the formation sign. It was also seen on some vehicles after the 'B' was replaced by the new formation sign (above). Was also painted centrally on the Allied Star on many Carriers (see below).



This sign was universally adopted as the Brigade's formation sign late in 1944, when the Brigade was reorganised as a full Infantry Brigade Group. It was worn as the unit uniform patch and replaced the older formation signs on the Brigade's vehicles.



Although not strictly a formation sign, the Belgian roundel superimposed on the Allied Star was a common feature on Belgian Carriers (as mentioned above) and was probably also painted on other vehicles.

1st Belgian Armoured Car Regiment Squadron Tacsigs (1945 Only)



Regimental HQ

As the 1st Belgian Brigade initially had only a single squadron of armoured cars, squadron tacsigs were not used. The only turret markings were a small troop number on the turret sides and the vehicle's name (see list).



No.1 Squadron

However, when the Armoured Car Squadron was expanded to a full regiment of four squadrons during the winter of 1944/45, the British system of squadron tacsigs was adopted (see left). They were painted white; indicating an un-brigaded regiment.



No.2 Squadron

Troop numbers were painted in white within each sign (painted green in the case of No.4 Squadron).



No.3 Squadron



No.4 Squadron

1st Belgian Armoured Car Squadron Vehicle Names (1944)

Squadron HQ

Commander - Daimler Armoured Car - 'Amarante'
2IC - Daimler Armoured Car 'Amazone'
SSM - Daimler Armoured Car 'As de Pique'
Adjutant - Dingo - 'Ajax'
Intelligence Officer - Dingo 'Achille'
Signal Officer - Staghound - 'Ardent'
Air Defence 1 - Staghound AA - no known name
Air Defence 2 - Staghound AA - no known name

1st Troop

Commander - Daimler Armoured Car - 'Boute en Train'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Branle Bas'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Burkel'
Dingo - 'Bliksem'
Dingo - 'Blackswan'

2nd Troop

Commander - Daimler Armoured Car - 'Calamity'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Corsaire'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Casse-Cou'
Dingo - 'Cycloon'
Dingo - 'Cobra'

3rd Troop

Commander - Daimler Armoured Car - 'D'Artagnan'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Dur-à-Cuire'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Dynamite'
Dingo - 'Dendermonde'
Dingo - 'Diskmuide'

4th Troop

Commander - Daimler Armoured Car - 'Enragé'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Effronté'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Entêté'
Dingo - 'Eekhoorn'
Dingo - 'Egel'

5th Troop

Commander - Daimler Armoured Car - 'Franchimont'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Flandria'
Daimler Armoured Car - 'Fear-Naught'
Dingo - 'Furet'
Dingo - 'Féroce'