

places. Enemy aircraft wanted to support the attack but these didn't get into effective action because of the well-aimed defensive fire of the light Flak. As a tank again crawled into the field of fire of an 8.8 cm Flak, it was immediately knocked out.

The enemy attack was completely broken up. The Flakbatterie of Regiment General Goering should be one of the first to be thanked that Dubno remained in German hands in spite of the strong enemy attacks. In accelerated marches, two Infanterie-Divisions reached Dubno early on 30 June 1941 and further rolled up the enemy front.

By late summer the German offensive had stalled and the Russians were attacking. The following account describes the difficulties encountered by Flak units in defending against Russian heavy and medium tank attacks.

Report on the employment of the 2. Batterie/Flak-Regiment 701 in protecting against tank attacks during the period from 2 to 5 September 1941

Introduction:

1. On 1 and 2 September 1941, the enemy broke through the main battle line between the Autobahn and Skatschkowo and threw back elements of the 28. Infanterie-Division and 14. (mot) Infanterie-Division to the Chatyni-Cholm-Kochonowa-Ossipowa line. It was reckoned that the attack would continue on 3 September.

2. The 255. Infanterie-Division was assigned to the VIII. Armee-Korps. This division was to be employed to retake the main battle line and then relieve the 14. (mot) Division from their defensive sector.

3. The attack of the 255. Infanterie-Division was set for early on 4 September with support from the artillery of the 28. Infanterie-Division and 14. (mot) Infanterie-Division. These divisions were ordered to hold the current main battle line until then by employing their last reserves.

On the late afternoon of 1 September, I was informed by telephone by the operations officer of the VIII. Armee-Korps that heavy Russian tanks had been identified on the front of the 14. (mot) Division that couldn't be successfully engaged by their anti-tank guns. The corps wanted this division to be supported by heavy Flak.

Thereafter, I immediately ordered the commander of the 2. Batterie to get in direct contact with the 14. (mot) Division to be briefed on the employment of his battery. Relocation of all four

Flak guns was to be prepared immediately. The commander of the 2. Batterie was informed by the 14. (mot) Division that they were to support the defense battle of Infanterie-Regiment 11 near Cholm.

What the battery experienced and accomplished is contained in the attached combat report.

The guns of the 2./Flakregiment 36 that had been emplaced southeast of Cholm were pulled out during the night of 3 September.

Motor traffic even outside the artillery zone was strongly hindered by heavy rain and on some stretches was made impossible. Because the 2. Batterie had only been outfitted with Henschel trucks to tow their guns, the 1. and 3. Batterie each loaned them a Zugkraftwagen that didn't get to the 2. Batterie until after about a 12-hour delay.

Ammunition supply could be accomplished only under considerable transport difficulties. Two ammunition trucks sent to the 2. Batterie remained stuck in clay for about 24 hours at a location 5 kilometers from the firing position. It was pure luck that they were pulled undamaged out of heavy enemy artillery fire by a Zugkraftwagen.

At my orders, the radio station of the battery was moved closer to the battery's firing position. Because they were taken under especially strong artillery fire after sending radio messages, the radio station changed position at about 1700 hours on 5 September.

Retaking the old main battle line was given up on 5 September because the objective was not worth the losses that would have to be taken.

In the interim, the 255. Infanterie-Division had taken over directing the defensive battle. Because heavy tanks were no longer seen and there were sufficient anti-tank forces available, I requested that the division release the 2./701 which, after darkness fell on 5 September, and after reporting to Infanterie-Regiment 11, pulled back to their old firing positions near K.

The losses in the northern sector of the VIII. Armee-Korps were heavy in view of the hard defensive battle. The front of our 255. Div. and 14. (mot) Div. lay opposite the Russian 38, 152, 64 infantry divisions and 1., 18. and 101. armored divisions. The enemy's intention was to retake Smolensk under all conditions, which was the basis for his tenacity and his considerable losses of men and material.