Insights and Best Practices Focus Paper

Intelligence Operations

Third Edition

Deployable Training Division
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Approved for public release

This is the Third Edition of the Insights and Best Practices Focus Paper on *"Intelligence Operations."* It is written by the Deployable Training Division (DTD) of the Joint Staff J7 and released by the J7 Deputy Director for Joint Training.

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Scope: Joint HQs

- Understanding the Operational Environment (OE).
- Integrating and focusing the intelligence enterprise.
- Supporting Decision-Making.
- Intelligence staff organization.

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Terminology and Acronyms: Numerous military acronyms and organizational names are used in this paper. They are defined in the glossary to improve readability in the body of the paper for the intended readership.

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Releasability: Approved for public release.

PREFACE

This paper discusses insights and best practices related to intelligence operations and intelligence support to operations and planning. We pull these insights directly from the joint forces executing operations.

This paper may be beneficial to three main audiences:

1. CCMD and JTF Chiefs of Staff as they synchronize the staff to support decision making and execution.
2. J2s and their staff to provide better support to their Commands, subordinates, and partners.
3. Subordinate HQs and other mission partners to improve synergy of actions.

Six considerations:

1. Gain an understanding of the operational environment to see risks and opportunities.
2. Leverage the broader intelligence enterprise. Don't try to do it alone.
3. Develop PIR to prioritize employment of collection assets and analysis resources, and inform flow of information within, to, and from the headquarters to understand the environment and support decision making and operations.
4. Drive design, planning, operations, and targeting through anticipatory intelligence support.
5. Provide decision quality "so whats" to inform staff planning, commander decision making, and mission partners / subordinates.
6. Inculcate a culture of "write for release" to empower and leverage Coalition and Interagency partners.

This and other focus papers summarize observations and insights on joint force HQs shared by the Joint Staff J7 Deployable Training Division. The DTD gains insights on operational matters through regular contact and dialogue with CCMD and operational level commanders and staffs as they plan, prepare for, and conduct operations and exercises. They incorporate these insights in functionally-based focus papers, refine them through senior flag officer feedback, and then share them with the operational force, and joint lessons learned and joint doctrine communities. These papers are approved for public release and found on the site noted on the inside front cover.

Please share your thoughts, solutions, and best practices as you think, plan, and work your way through operational challenges to DTD's POC, Mike Findlay. Email: js.dsc.j7.mbx.joint-training@mail.mil.

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. Successful joint HQs possess an intelligence-driven operational mindset to support decision-making. A forward-looking, proactive J2 staff that builds a network of organizations, people, and technology and focuses on providing "so whats" helps the commander understand the OE, risks, and opportunities.

> "Understanding the operational environment is the hardest part of your job. Harness the capacity and capability of the Intelligence Community."
>
> *- Senior Flag Officer*

Challenges:

- Understanding the operational environment (OE).
- Integrating and focusing the intelligence enterprise.
- Anticipating and providing decision quality information to the commander, staff, subordinates and partners.

Insights:

- Understand the Operational Environment to see risks and opportunities: A comprehensive JIPOE addresses all domains, the adversary, and the environment to provide the means to look ahead to see both risks and opportunities. Identifying risk and opportunities enables intelligence to inform planning, enrich decisions, and support execution. The J2 coordinates this iterative JIPOE effort supported by the entire staff and mission partners. JIPOE products are crucial to effective design, planning, targeting, execution, and assessment.
- Build a network of organizations, people, and technology: A J2 staff can't do it alone; it needs the broader network. A network provides the federated depth in analysis and production necessary to effective intelligence support. Reach out to the relevant organizations, develop trust-based relationships with the right people, and build the necessary technical network to collaborate and share data, information, and knowledge. Augment organic capacity with federated reachback to gain depth in analysis and support. Do not allow federation support to be informal or makeshift; other competing demands could quickly turn off required analysis and production support. Leverage the HHQ to codify federated relationships with supporting intelligence organizations.
- Focus and prioritize intelligence operations across the intelligence process: Focus and prioritization is a key responsibility of the Commander, J3, and J2. Design, planning, targeting, and assessment all inform PIR and the broader intelligence efforts. PIR enables apportionment and allocation of limited resources, for Collection as well as Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination (PED). Collection is an operations-intelligence teamed effort; do not delegate this to the J2 collection manager. PIR also drives the analysis and production support within the HQ and with its supporting agencies. Implement a recurring PIR review process within the battle rhythm to retain focus of the intelligence resources and activities.
- Drive design, planning, operations, and targeting through anticipatory intelligence support. Visit with the analysts, conduct deep dives on key topics, let analysts and subordinates brief, and leverage external military and non-military organizations to provide different perspectives - especially during assessment. Encourage dissent and employ red cells to understand adversary decision calculus, reduce blind spots, and provide better advice. Develop a climate of transparency and open discourse, even dissent, through both words and actions. Open communications reduces the likelihood of missing a key blind spot, and better allows the staff and commander to see risks and opportunities.
- Share: Inculcate a culture of "write for release" and define production requirements to empower and leverage Coalition and Interagency partners. Partners have capabilities and authorities beyond that of the U.S. Understand foreign disclosure and network access processes; pursue them early. Invest in and resource the FDO and FDR program.

2.0 THE COMMANDER'S LEADERSHIP ROLE.

Commanders are instilling intelligence-driven operational mindsets in their HQs, increasing synergy between intelligence and operations personnel to leverage this mindset. We observe successful Joint Force Commanders drive intelligence by: understanding their intelligence responsibilities; ensuring cross-functional integration of intelligence planning; developing shared understanding of the OE to shape planning and operations; ensuring operational priorities shape collection management; and tailoring the intelligence structure to support requirements. Commanders and their J2s and J3s set conditions for success by:

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- Understand Commander's Intelligence Responsibilities: Commanders who understand the responsibilities outlined in JP 2-0, *Joint Intelligence*, are better able to leverage intelligence capabilities to accomplish operational objectives and to ensure the intelligence enterprise is responsive to the commander's priorities.
  - ✓ Prioritization: The commander's role in prioritization is crucial, because operational needs for intelligence often exceed intelligence capabilities. At all levels, the commander's identification of intelligence needs focus the enterprise.
  - ✓ Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIR): As an element of Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIR), the commander's PIR focus intelligence collection and analysis to facilitate allocation of limited resources, resulting in enhanced understanding and timely and effective decision-making.
  - ✓ Linking PIR to Decision Points: Link PIR to decision points so that intelligence products and assessments provide decision-quality information that is timely, fused, analyzed, predictive, and answers the "so what" to drive planning and support execution, versus simply "reporting the news."
  - ✓ PIR Review Process: Successful commanders and J2s implement a formal PIR review process within the battle rhythm so that the re-prioritization of intelligence resources and activities keeps pace with the mission and changes in the OE. J2s advise and assist in this effort by recommending intelligence priorities based on the commander's guidance and operational needs.

> "PIR aren't just an intelligence function, they're a whole-of-staff requirement to ensure that decision-quality information is getting to the commander."
> *- Deputy CCDR*

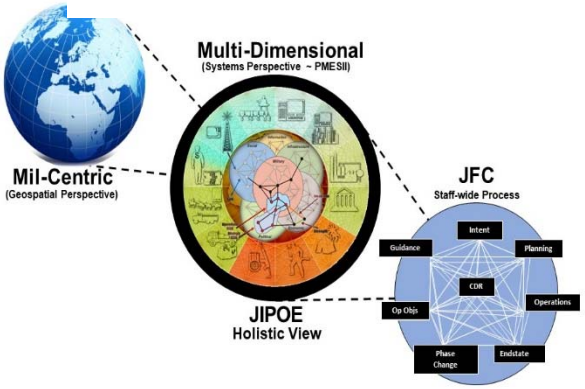
- Ensure Cross-functional Integration: We have observed an increasing level of integration between the J2, J3, J5, and other J-Code staff during the intelligence planning process.
  - ✓ Multi-level coordination: Effective integration requires close coordination at multiple levels across the range of B2C2WG events (e.g., J3 representation at Joint Collection Management Boards, J2 representation in Joint Targeting Coordination Boards, tailored intelligence briefings across the battle rhythm). This integration enables the J2 to better understand and support operational requirements, while increasing access to the J2 and understanding of intelligence capabilities across the staff**.**
  - ✓ Cyber and Information Operations: We have observed commands proactively considering and addressing intelligence gaps and seams by providing embedded intelligence support to the planning, targeting, and analytic efforts of their cyber and IO-centric staff elements.

3.0 UNDERSTANDING THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT (OE). The complex nature of today's challenges require detailed analysis beyond a military-centric perspective to provide a more holistic understanding of the OE. The OE consists of an interwoven "system of systems" of relationships, patterns, behaviors, and activities in which today's joint force must operate. These systems and their connectedness are broadly determined using Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Environment (JIPOE), PMESII, and ASCOPE approaches. These methods provide an initial foundation to aid in visualization of the environment; subsequent assessment and continued analysis continue to enrich understanding.

> We acknowledge the uncertainties of war and recognize that most of the systems joint commanders face are open, adaptive systems vs the much more predictable closed systems. That said, analysis of the noted systems of systems can provide an initial perspective on key nodes and linkages to understand the OE.

Insights

Multi-Dimensional Perspective



- Help frame the problem: Understanding the OE supports design, planning, and targeting. The JIPOE process is the most common analytic practice used by joint HQs and intelligence organizations to build intelligence estimates and produce relevant intelligence products supporting these activities. JIPOE also serves as the basis for target systems analysis (TSA), providing the foundational intelligence necessary for detailed targeting in complex operational environments. It further helps target developers prioritize an adversary's target systems based on how much each contributes to the threat's ability to conduct operations.
- Intelligence Estimate: The intelligence estimate informs both staff actions and commander decisions.
- JIPOE in Operational Design: The JIPOE process forms the foundation of operational design, and informs all phases of the Joint Planning Process (JPP). As such, it must include all staff members continuously throughout the process. This approach aids the visualization of the environment for the commander and sub-commander's need for situational awareness, comprehension and understanding. Commands that incorporate a systematic target systems analysis effort as part of JIPOE and the larger JPP are better able to plan, execute, and assess the effectiveness of intelligence as well as targeting operations.
- Employ red cells: Red cells focus on understanding an adversary's decision calculus to provide better insights into how the adversary will view and respond to their perceptions of what the "blue force" is doing.
- Globally Integrated Operations (GIO): GIO present a new dimension in modern warfare. Conflicts are no longer contained to a single CCMD AOR or JTF AO, and require an understanding of multiple environments, dimensions, domains, threats, and responsibilities.

As a result, J2 staffs have been forced to build understanding of events outside CCMD and JTF boundaries by integrating JIPOE efforts with other organizations and staffs.

- ✓ While the JIPOE process generally uses a doctrinal approach through the PMESII construct as a framework for understanding the OE, we have seen commands succeed when intelligence organizations use a model that fits their mission requirements.
- ✓ Leverage staff integration events such as the various B2C2WGs to focus and refine intelligence estimates tailored to specific design, planning, or decision requirements.
- ✓ Intelligence assessments are the most useful when they include recommendations to take advantage of opportunities in the environment, instead of merely presenting data points and past adversary activity.
- ✓ Successful J2 staffs integrate a variety of sources outside the command such as mission partners, subordinate commands, and the wider Intelligence Community (IC).
- ✓ Non-traditional sources as well provide a crucial role in developing an understanding of the OE. Open source information from the media, academia, and interagency organizations can provide perspectives that inform traditional military thinking.
- ✓ Achieve a more holistic understanding of the OE by integrating as many staff and subordinate command(s) unique perspectives and experiences as possible into the JIPOE process.
- ✓ Consider the global impacts of their operations. We have seen success when J2 staffs closely coordinate between other CCMDs, the Joint Staff, and the IC to discuss cross-boundary operational effects.
- ✓ Just as the J2 is the JIPOE coordinator within a command, designate who is the lead coordinating agency or J2 to synchronize JIPOE efforts across CCMD boundaries.

Example JIPOE Participation

Political: J2, J3, CMO, SJA, PMO, POLAD

Military: J2, J3, J4, PMO

Economic: J2, J3, CMO, SJA, PMO, POLAD

Social: J1, J2, J3, J4, PMO

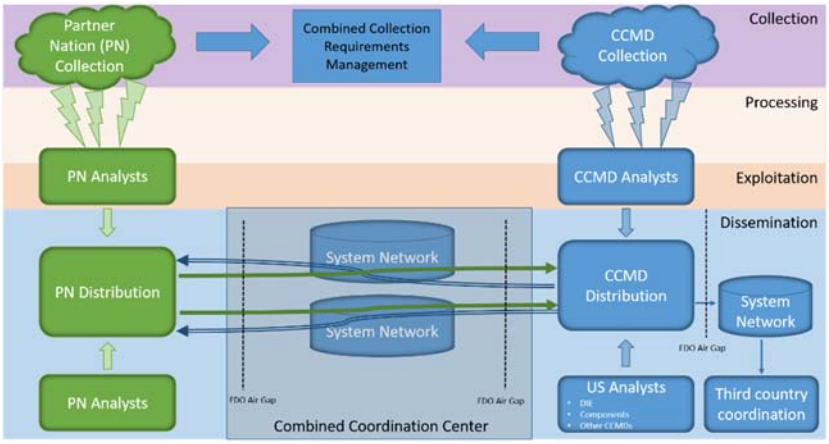
Information: J2, J3, J6, J8, PAO, POLAD

Infrastructure: J2, J3, J4, CMO

4.0 INTEGRATING AND FOCUSING THE INTELLIGENCE ENTERPRISE. Joint commanders use federation to gain more robust intelligence support than that only of organic assets to support their requirements and those of their subordinates. Today's reality of limited resources, shrinking budgets and the need for efficient use of limited resources has driven the intelligence community to federation, a distributed, collaborative effort heavily dependent on communications architectures and broad bandwidth. This distributed effort with analytic capabilities, coordinated assessments, and other intelligence assets has generated vast and complex prioritization processes within the defense intelligence enterprise (DIE) to efficiently leverage limited resources like problem or country specific subject matter experts (SMEs) within the Combat Support Agencies (CSAs).

Insights

Example CCMD Intelligence Federation



- Federated efforts. Successful intelligence federation begins with CCMDs and JTFs clearly defining relationships within a federated intelligence architecture, whether static or ad hoc, in planning documents such as OPLANS and CONPLANS. This deliberate planning serves to enhance a command's intelligence capability; however, it requires early decisions for the integration, collaboration and communications support to make it work. We have seen where Annex Bs, the intelligence annex, have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the federated organizations; delineated level of support, augmentation, communication pathways and methods; and when this larger network will stand up in support of deliberate or crisis action.
- Leveraging Partners: Partnering in a federated intelligence enterprise plays a vital role in how a networked intelligence effort focuses and gains momentum in the rapidly developing and complex operating environment of today. These partnerships can be with the CSAs within the DIE, the larger USG intelligence community, or our mission partners in an alliance or coalition. Modern conflict and humanitarian assistance or disaster relief (HA/DR) efforts have proven that a broad set of capabilities are required for mission success, but are often beyond the timely response of any one nation. Circumstances such as HA/DR in the Pacific, Department of Justice (DOJ) Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) support for counter-narcotic missions, and Partner Nation (PN) Five-Eye access in anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) regions of the globe all require federated intelligence support outside of the traditional military channels.
  - ✓ Codify supported/supporting and direct or general support military relationships.
  - ✓ Employ LNOs and other imbedded elements within higher staffs to establish or update MOUs or MOAs to define responsibilities from Service intelligence centers and CSAs.

CCMDs leverage PNs and other USG agencies by building relationships prior to crisis. CCMDs often work well with PNs and established points of contact within USG agencies. Maintaining open dialogue is equally important to sustaining the working relationship outside of crisis.

5.0 THE JOINT INTELLIGENCE PROCESS. The joint intelligence process consists of six interrelated categories of intelligence operations characterized by broad activities conducted by intelligence staffs and organizations to provide commanders and national-level-decision makers with relevant and timely intelligence.

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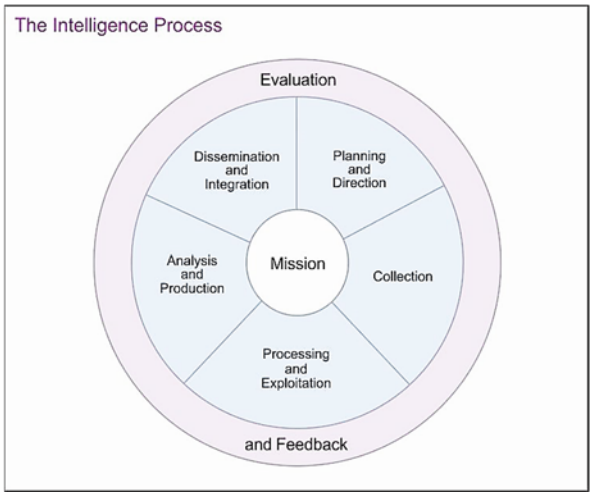
- Planning and Direction: The J2 has overall responsibility for supervising and directing the resources that govern intelligence operations including support to PIR, ISR, and RFI management. Successful PIRs are tied to decision points, ensuring limited collection assets are employed efficiently, and must be continuously assessed or updated depending on the progress of the operation.



- Collection: ISR employment is a J2 operation that must be deliberately integrated into all aspects of the planning process. Collection priorities must be synchronized with operational priorities and the Air Tasking Order (ATO) in conjunction with the J3, creating a synchronized effort between operations and intelligence. While the J2 is responsible for prioritizing collection operations, the J3 must approve the allocation of collection assets.
- Processing and Exploitation (P&E): J2 staffs must consider available resources and capacity for the processing of raw information, and then augment organic PED with federated reach back to ensure speed and depth of analysis and support.
- Analysis and Production: J2 staffs often struggle with providing operational- and strategic-level assessments, leaving JFCs to perform their own analysis. A comprehensive Ops/Intel brief provides the JFC with predictive analysis through the use of detailed Indications and Warnings (I&W) supported by extensive analysis of intelligence. J2s can succeed in this area by providing tailored intelligence assessments for different staff sections (such as TSAs to the JFE), and contain relevant information required for decision making in that venue.
- Dissemination and Integration: J2 analysis and assessments are best disseminated when there is a formal process for being shared both intra-staff and inter-staff; this includes subordinates, foreign partners and other US government (USG) agencies. The robust use of Foreign Disclosure (FD) is critical, especially in a multinational environment. FD, however, is not just an Intelligence function. Of the eight categories of information under the FD program, only one category is Intelligence. It is often necessary to use multiple FDOs. FDO training is also critical so that the entire staff knows how and when staff members can share classified information and to help drive a culture of "write for release." Overall, disseminating and integrating intelligence throughout the staff -- outside of

> "U.S. allies and partners are central to how the Joint Force operates globally. The Joint Force will continue to work closely with allies and partners and leverage the advantages of the many over the few. We will always prioritize allies and partners to ensure that when conflicts do occur we enter it as part of a capable and responsive coalition".
> *- National Military Strategy 2017*

B2C2WGs -- is best achieved through a usable portal where products are easily found, facilitated by an active IM/KM program.

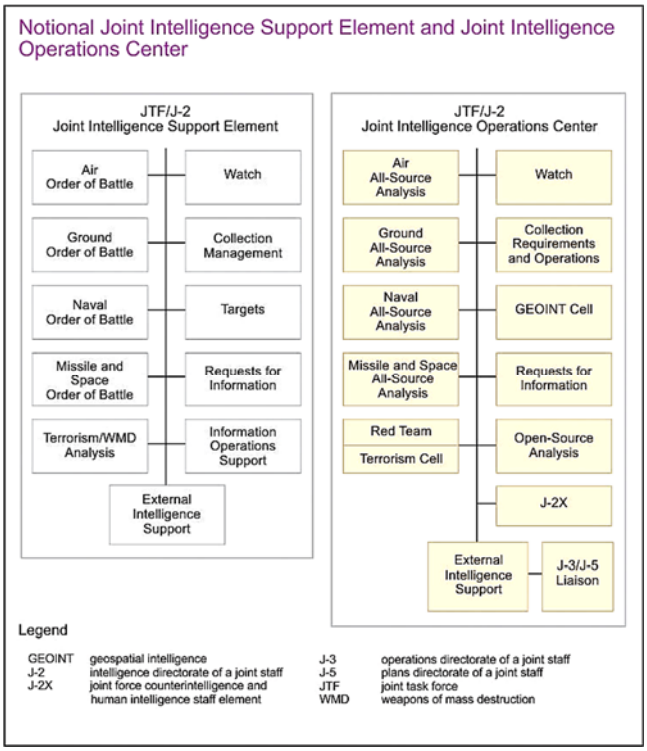
- Evaluation and Feedback: Evaluation and Feedback are often the least observed aspects of the Joint Intelligence Process, but they are critical in maintaining an effective intelligence apparatus. It is key to have an intelligence representative within the J5, and actively taking part in assessment working groups. This provides a venue for the J2 to receive feedback on whether intelligence is answering the command's priorities. Feedback from intelligence support to all B2C2WGs is critical if intelligence is to be relevant to planning and operations. Actively sought feedback encourages the staff to inform the J2 on how the customer needs tailored intelligence to support staff-wide efforts.
  - ✓ A periodic formal PIR review process within the battle rhythm allows for methodical review of intelligence priorities. An efficient and successful way this is accomplished is through a theater daily intelligence synchronization meeting with J2 staff and component J2s to ensure guidance is clearly delivered and understood.
  - ✓ A formal and simple RFI process should be followed. This process should include how RFIs are answered or directed to another staff (if not intelligence specific), careful management to ensure tasking is not duplicated in the system of record, as well as ensuring RFIs are answered in a timely manner.
  - ✓ One way to facilitate retasking or refining RFIs, is through evaluation and feedback from customers offered through the system of record. A successful technique observed at one CCMD required customers to submit an evaluation of referenced reports prior to submitting related RFIs.
  - ✓ The J2 and J3 attend the Joint Collection Management Board. These collection priorities need to be incorporated into planning and linked to all staff efforts, ensuring all requirements are met.
  - ✓ Experienced single-source collection managers have proven successful in developing information requirements for collection through robust and continuous touch points with all staff sections using formal battle rhythm events and established collection management tools such as ISR synch matrices.
  - ✓ It is particularly important for weather impacts to ISR be presented to the command, highlighting potential intelligence gaps.
  - ✓ Successful JFCs and J2s tailor intelligence capabilities to support their operation through the use of SOPs for organic P&E and establishing formal relationships for reach back support. This makes an efficient use of personnel through federation and can highlight any gaps in P&E capability.
  - ✓ Daily intelligence assessments should contain decision-quality analysis through synchronization between operations and intelligence.
  - ✓ Avoid providing the same information at B2C2WG that was provided to the JFC during the morning and/or evening update briefings. Daily briefings to the JFC may provide good information for the JFC, but is not appropriate for focused battle rhythm events, requiring detailed and functional intelligence.
  - ✓ We have seen successful use of one FDO in the J2 to work intelligence-related requests and one FDO placed with the Chief of Staff or J3/5 to work non-intelligence requests.
  - ✓ FDO training is also critical so that the entire staff knows how and when staff members can share classified information and to help drive a culture of "write for release." Often,

a lack of understanding of classification guidelines and releasability requirements result in over-classification, inhibiting intelligence and operational sharing.

- ✓ J2 staff members should also be aware of the request process for tear-line reporting for each intelligence agency. The best way to accomplish this is through SOPs detailing the different processes.
- ✓ Often, no feedback is interpreted by the J2 staff to mean that the JFC is satisfied with the level of analysis being done. JFCs must inform their J2s about, and the J2 must actively seek feedback on, intelligence analysis to determine if it is assisting with decision making or falling short.
- ✓ J2s must also self-assess the performance of their organizations to effectively manage ISR, PED, and analysis, identifying if the commands' needs are being met to facilitate predictive analysis.

6.0 INTELLIGENCE STAFF ORGANIZATION. Intelligence staffs are unique to each command and designed to best support the commander's decision-making process, staffing efforts, and operations specific to the command. Based on the scope of the mission requirements, the intelligence directorate may be supported by any number, or all 17 members, of the Intelligence Community as well as other joint, multinational, and interagency partners. Effectively organizing and focusing these efforts facilitate joint intelligence operations.

Insights:



- Joint Intelligence Support Element (JISE). Successful joint commands utilize the JISE as a way to incorporate the joint perspective in intelligence analysis. Representatives from all Services may be used in the JISE to focus on their respective domain (i.e., ground, air, and maritime). Analysis can then be fused to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the OE.
- National Intelligence Support Team (NIST). Some joint commands rely solely on one or two collection methods or assets. Collection capacity and a more comprehensive view of the OE may be obtained by utilizing national agencies. This is most effectively done through a NIST within the intelligence directorate.
- Reserve augmentation. Reservists offer a great source of knowledge, experience, and capability that often facilitate mission success; however, joint commands must plan for Reservist augmentation personnel early to ensure they can be properly integrated to provide value-added support as they often take upwards of 30 days to mobilize and deploy. Joint commands that have strong relationships with their JRISE will assign Reservists to specific billets on the JMD to facilitate mobilization and Reservist integration.
- Partners and Allies. Building an organization that incorporates partners and allies from the inception of an operation reduces limitations on intelligence sharing and increases collaboration. J2s should understand multinational parter legal, system architecture, and resource capabilties and limitations in order to bridge gaps and seams in joint force intelligence capability.
    - ✓ Successful commands establish training plans and certification programs for their assigned JRISE and incorporate them into their steady state operations to gain knowledge on the problem set.
    - ✓ Having accounts and the required access to systems, workspace, and portals for personnel prior to augmentation is critical for rapid integration. This is especially important during a crisis, when time is crucial.
    - ✓ Resourcing bilateral/multinational communication systems and processes and procedures streamlines intelligence collaboration and allows for partners to be actively involved in the intelligence process.

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Glossary
Abbreviations and Acronyms

A2/AD – Anti-Access/Area Denial
AO – Area of Operations
AOR – Area of Responsibility
ASCOPE – Areas, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People, and Events
ATO – Air Tasking Order
B2C2WGs – Boards, Bureaus, Centers, Cells and Working Groups
CMO – Collection Management Office(er)
CONPLANS – Concept Plan
CSA – Combat Support Agency
DIE – Defense Intelligence Enterprise
DOJ – Department of Justice
FD – Foreign Disclosure
FDO – Foreign Disclosure Officer
GIO – Globally Integrated Operations
HA/DR – Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief
HHQ – Higher Headquarters
I&W – Indications and Warnings
IC – Intelligence Community
IM/KM – Intelligence Management/Knowledge Management
ISR – Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
J2 – Intelligence Directorate of a Joint Staff
J3 – Operations Directorate of a Joint Staff
J4 – Logistics Directorate of a Joint Staff
J5 – Plans Directorate of a Joint Staff
J6 – Communications System Directorate of a Joint Staff
J8 – Force Structure, Resource, and Assessment Directorate of a Joint Staff
JFC – Joint Force Commander
JFE – Joint Fires Element
JIPOE – Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Environment
JISE – Joint Intelligence Support Element
JMD – Joint Manning Document
JPP – Joint Planning Process
JRISE – Joint Reserve Intelligence Support Element
LEA – Law Enforcement Agency
LNO – Liaison Officer
MOA – Memorandum of Agreement
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
NIST – National Institute of Standards and Technology
OE – Operational Environment
OPLANS – Operation Plan
P&E – Processing and Exploitation
PED – Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination
PIR – Priority Intelligence Requirement
PMESII – Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, and Infrastructure
PN – Partner Nation
POLAD – Policy Advisor; Political Advisor
RFI – Request for Information
SJA – Staff Judge Advocate
SME – Subject Matter Expert
SOP – Standard Operating Procedure
TSA – Target System Analysis

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