

# Maneuver and Intelligence: Bridging the Gap for Unified Land Operations

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Military-intelligence (MI) officers undergo various levels of specialized training to hone skills across various intelligence disciplines. However, little if any schoolhouse training focuses on preparing MI officers to serve effectively and successfully in a maneuver formation as an S-2 within a maneuver battalion or brigade staff. Although the Army needs MI officers to serve as subject-matter experts (SMEs) across the multiple intelligence domains, maneuver commanders require MI officers who are prepared to bridge the gap both doctrinally and practically between intelligence and maneuver.

As the U.S. Army continues to adjust its doctrine and training methodologies to fight and win in a complex world, it's important we continue to refine our best practices at the tactical level. More than a decade of low-intensity conflict yielded a skewed perception of the understanding or application of the tactical fusion of intelligence and maneuver. Although counterinsurgency (COIN) assessments of the enemy transcended traditional opposing-force (opfor) norms, somewhere along the way we lost the ability to produce relevant near-peer assessments during the operations process.

## COIN's impact

Arguably, COIN operations overall were very routine at the tactical level, whereas peer-to-peer combat operations such as division-size movements-to-contact are dynamic and require increased and committed integration between intelligence and maneuver. Unfortunately, the tactical necessities of 14 years of COIN support degraded our ability and willingness to bridge the gap between intelligence and maneuver in major combat operations.

This capability gap exists in several maneuver formations and is both the result of more than a decade of patrol-base operations and a decrease in the deliberate training of our MI officer corps in understanding and practically applying maneuver doctrine. The Army must apply solutions to this problem, close the gap and create conditions for MI officers to link intelligence analysis with the application of combat power through movement and maneuver. The infrastructure and intellectual capital exists to address and remedy this problem, and with minor adjustments to the training programs of instruction (PoI) within U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), the reality of ill-prepared maneuver battalion/brigade S-2s can diminish over time and establish a new precedent for the "fusion MI officers" who not only understand the requirements of a maneuver commander but demonstrate understanding in linking their analysis to the application of combat power through decisive action (DA).

Maneuver commanders, their operations officers (S-3) and executive officers often receive MI officers who are unprepared to execute analysis that directly relates to tactical actions and application of combat power in DA. Although the general perception among many non-maneuver military-occupational-specialty training programs is one that points to on-the-job training (OJT) as the medium for refining the required skills necessary to serve in a maneuver battalion or brigade, the intelligence warfighting function (IWfF) – and MI officers as a whole – stand to benefit from deliberate and directed training prior to selection of, and service as, a battalion or brigade S-2.

## Changes needed in training

The potential solutions to this issue must include both institutional and organizational adjustments within our tactical formations and professional schoolhouses. Modifications to the existing basic course and advanced course Pols are the starting point to ensure the next generation of MI officers receives the necessary training and tested proficiency in maneuver doctrine.

Setting the stage for more capable and doctrinally proficient S-2s cannot occur without buy-in from both the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) and the Intelligence Center of Excellence (ICoE). First, ICoE and MCoE must coordinate and dedicate a minimum of four days of training space to pollinating the MI officer PoI with maneuver development. The MCoE's contribution includes the commitment of temporary-duty costs to provide the requisite number of infantry or Armor field-grade officers (at least two per class), preferably former or newly

selected battalion or squadron commanders, to mentor MI lieutenants attending the basic course and MI captains attending the career course. The program should show preference to MI officers selected to serve in brigade combat teams (BCT) as their next assignment following the basic or advanced course. The ICoE's contribution to this effort is the allocated training space per class through modification of the existing Pol.

Training MI officers for success as S-2s requires teaching, exercising and assessing an MI officer's ability to apply maneuver-centric analysis to a previously developed scenario. Instructors of this curriculum should have access to DA training environment tactical-level scenarios, which will drive not only instruction but practical exercises (PEs) and assessment. Also, MI officers must receive instruction about offensive and defensive doctrine from the MCoE field-grade officer representatives, providing not only fundamental understanding but personal expertise from officers who have practically applied the doctrine in a training environment such as at a combat-training center.

Finally, because unified land operations (ULO) includes stability and/or defense support of civil authorities (DSCA) tasks, the curriculum must include instruction, practical application and assessment of these principles. The practical application of offensive and defensive analysis receives priority, however, simply because these tenets of DA more easily translate into the interaction between an S-2 and his/her battalion/squadron commander.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Offense	Defense	Offense/Defense PE	Stability/DSCA
Army Doctrinal Publication 3-0, <b>Operations</b> (1.5 hours) (MCoE)	FM 3-90-1, <b>Characteristics of the Defense</b> (1.5 hours) (MCoE)	PE Steps 1 and 2 of MDMP (focus: ability to apply relevant analysis against principles of offense and defense) (1.5 hours)	FM 3-07, FM 3-28, <b>Stability / DSCA</b> (1 hour)
Field Manual (FM) 6-0, <b>Command and Staff Organization and Operations</b> (focus: Chapter 9, military decision-making process (MDMP)) (1.5 hours) (ICoE)	Assessment: defensive characteristics (1 hour) (MCoE/ICoE)	IPB brief to commander (MCoE field-grade officer provides feedback and assessment) (Group 1)	Assessment: stability operations/DSCA characteristics (MCoE/ICoE) (1 hour)
<b>Lunch/Group Study</b>			
FM 3-90-1, <b>Characteristics of the Offense</b> (1 hour) (MCoE)	Expectations of S-2 (1.5 hours) (MCoE/ICoE) (infantry / Armor majors/lieutenant colonels post-KD or pre-command)	IPB brief to commander (MCoE field-grade officer provides feedback and assessment) (Group 2)	PE Steps 1 and 2 of MDMP (focus: ability to apply relevant analysis against principles of stability operations/DSCA) (1.5 hours)
Assessment: offensive characteristics (1 hour) (MCoE/ICoE)	Analysis for maneuver for battalion/brigade S-2 (1.5 hours) (MCoE/ICoE)	IPB brief to commander (MCoE field-grade officer provides feedback and assessment) (Group 3)	IPB brief to commander (MCoE field-grade officer provides feedback and assessment) (select personnel)

**Table 1. Possible curriculum.**

Although a focus on the entry- and mid-level MI officers begins populating our MI officer corps with more doctrinally capable officers, it does not address the issue of those field-grade MI officers who may struggle with the same shortcoming. The intermediate-leadership education (ILE)/Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Pol offers an advanced-tactics studies (ATS) focused program that aims to “enhance [field-grade officers’] understanding of the art and science of tactical operations.” This is specifically conducted during the electives period of the course. Furthermore, the curriculum “offer[s] students the opportunity to gain subject-matter expertise in the area of tactical operations that will serve student officers in their future assignments with battalions, brigades and divisions.”<sup>1</sup>

Competing career requirements for MI field-grade officers certainly won't allow participation in the full course curriculum. However, MI field-grade officers who are bound for assignment as a brigade S-2 with no previous experience in maneuver formations must (at a minimum) complete courses within ATS that focus on the operations process within maneuver formations.

Although adjustments to the existing PoI along the path of MI-officer development offer several advantages to improving the doctrinal proficiency of battalion/brigade S-2s of the future, they do not directly address those already serving in said positions who are perhaps struggling to bridge the gap between Red analysis and Blue action.

## TTRs

The TRADOC Intelligence Support Activity (TRISA) at Fort Leavenworth, KS, could perhaps provide the solution to current doctrinal shortcomings among MI officers of all tactical ranks. TRISA conducts two one-week (five days each) hybrid-threat tactics courses (TTR) per fiscal year.<sup>2</sup> Although the TTR curriculum focuses mainly on proficiency with opfor or Red doctrine, the addition of a week to the already stellar curriculum offers another option to remedy this issue.

The TTR introduces and provides supervised PEs in planning opfor operations. The course bases its curriculum on the Training Circular (TC) 7-100 series of opfor manuals, including TC 7-100.2, **Opposing Force Tactics**, and TC 7-100.3, **Irregular Opposing Forces**. The course is unquestionably effective at teaching and practically applying opfor doctrine, and its graduates are drastically more capable of understanding and applying Red doctrine than non-graduates. In the context of creating MI officers with the ability to apply maneuver more effectively to Red analysis, however, there is opportunity to leverage the existing infrastructure and teaching cadre, thus creating even more tactical proficiency among our MI officers.

The high-quality instruction and knowledge within the TTR cadre provides the intellectual capital necessary to expand on the TTR's stellar curriculum. Upon completion of PEs or during planning of opfor operations in Week 1, a second week would focus on applying the opfor assessments to previously coordinated BCT training scenarios. Again, this program cannot operate effectively without buy-in from sister organizations. The Combined Arms Center's Department of Army Tactics (DTAC) at ILE is the most relevant and feasible option to apply to the maneuver portion of this development plan.

Week 2 focuses exclusively on S-2 proficiency in leading the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). DTAC provides at least two post-command lieutenant colonels or post-key and developmental (KD) majors to oversee and provide guidance and feedback during Week 2's focus on IPB. The focus of TTR during Week 2 centers on understanding and practically applying what the Army refers to as "reverse IPB" specifically as it relates to tactical-level planning of maneuver formations.

Just as in the recommended curriculum described for MI lieutenants and captains (MI Officer Basic Course and MI Captain's Career Course), Week 2 focuses on increased understanding of ULO, prioritizing analysis relevant to offensive and defensive operations. The combination of intelligence SMEs from the TTR teaching cadre and maneuver SMEs from DTAC enables the continuation of learning and practical exercises in Week 1 (Red analysis) to pre-planned training scenarios in Week 2.

The DTAC portion of the teaching cadre, acting as either S-3/executive officer or maneuver commander, provides feedback and guidance for each assessment, which is graded heavily on the student's ability to demonstrate and clearly communicate comprehension of the Red analysis in support of tactical maneuver. For example, a training scenario that uses an armored BCT (ABCT) (or subordinate battalion) with a tactical task of *destroy* examines the student's ability to pull pertinent data points on the opfor (enemy armored formations, range and capabilities, task organization, etc.) and develop a relevant comparative analysis against the doctrinal requirements for an ABCT's ability to destroy an enemy formation.

There are several examples of "reverse IPB worksheets" that aim to capture this comparative analysis. However, MI officers' exposure to such a product, as previously discussed, is often part of OJT upon arrival to a battalion or BCT. TTR Week 2 aims to provide deliberate focus on such a mechanism for analysis to enable our MI officers' ability to generate analysis relevant to a specified tactical task.

## Change to MTOE?

Another potential and perhaps controversial solution to this issue is the redesign of maneuver battalion/brigade modified tables of organization and equipment (MTOE). An addition or subtraction of specific coded billets within the S-2 section is not necessary to begin to solve the MI officers' lack of doctrinal foundation. Instead, an internal shift of personnel is needed. The definitive transfer of ownership of the S-2 section to battalion or squadron S-3 addresses the gap in fusion between maneuver and intelligence. This proposed solution does not necessarily require Army-wide adoption; however, future or current S-3s/executive officers and battalion/squadron commanders should consider such a move. (We fully acknowledge the challenges to applying this model to BCT-level staffs, so we advocate this shift at the battalion/squadron level only).

Under the design of this proposal, the S-2, ideally an MI captain, works in concert with the battalion plans officer and reports directly to the S-3. The S-3 plans officer and the S-2 establish the organizational relationship, ensuring Red assessments are relevant to the tactical task at hand. This relationship and organizational change ensures that the commander's understanding and visualization of the specified task or environment is fully coordinated and synchronized between the S-2 and S-3.

The counterargument against this proposal is that the transition of the S-2 to the ownership of the S-3 dilutes the authority and influence of the executive officer. The executive officer remains the chief of staff and an integral part of the operations process. The value of having a direct relationship between the S-3 and S-2 far outweighs any concern that the executive officer loses a portion of his or her staff to another field-grade officer. On the contrary, the quality of products due to deliberate and focused integration between the S-3 and the S-2 will increase the capability and effectiveness of the entire staff.

Our current model isn't working and, as demonstrated, it yields a dilution of the potential benefits of fusing intelligence and maneuver. Moreover, the current training methodology for MI officers, specifically those at the entry- and mid-level of service (lieutenants and captains) is akin to a chef never learning the menu of his own restaurant and expecting his/her patrons to order only the foods he/she can cook.

The movement and maneuver of combat formations demands intelligence that adequately assesses the capabilities and intentions of the enemy as that enemy relates to friendly action. Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 2-0 tells us that intelligence must be relevant, predictive and tailored.<sup>3</sup> Although our doctrine lends itself to this ideology, our MI officers continue to struggle with its application because of a lack of training. As described above, there are several feasible options ranging in scale and commitment that directly address this issue.

As we continue training for and winning in a complex world, it's imperative to address issues such as these now and avoid the potential tactical costs during future ground combat. All the tools exist to remedy this issue. Our Army only requires a push in the right direction and recognition of the importance of the bridging the gap between intelligence and maneuver in support of ULO.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> ATS focused program, CGSC course catalog; accessed Jan. 16, 2017, <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cgsc/repository/350-1.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> TTR, TRADOC G-2 Analysis and Control Element Threats Integration, [https://atn.army.mil/dsp\\_template.aspx?dplD=447](https://atn.army.mil/dsp_template.aspx?dplD=447); accessed Dec. 12, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> ADRP 2-0, *Intelligence*, Department of the Army, August 2017.

## Acronym Quick-Scan

**ABCT** – armored brigade combat team

**ADRP** – Army doctrinal reference publication

**ATS** – advanced-tactics studies

**BCT** – brigade combat team

**CGSC** – Command and General Staff College

**COIN** – counterinsurgency

**DA** – decisive action

**DCSA** – defense support of civil authorities

**DTAC** – Department of Army Tactics

**FM** – field manual

**ICoE** – Intelligence Center of Excellence

**ILE** – intermediate-level education

**IPB** – intelligence preparation of the battlefield

**IWF** – intelligence warfighting function

**KD** – key and developmental

**MCoE** – Maneuver Center of Excellence

**MCTP** – Mission Command Training Program

**MDMP** – military decision-making process

**MI** – military intelligence

**MTOE** – modified table of organization and equipment

**OJT** – on-the-job training

**Opfor** – opposing force

**PE** – practical exercise

**Pol** – program of instruction

**SME** – subject-matter expert

**TC** – training circular

**TRADOC** – (U.S. Army) Training and Doctrine Command

**TRISA** – TRADOC Intelligence Support Activity

**TTR** – threat-tactics course

**ULO** – unified land operations