Creating Situational Understanding at Echelon Corps and Below

by

Colonel Richard D. Conkle
United States Army

Under the Direction of:
Colonel Richard M. Monnard

United States Army War College
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Abstract

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Creating Situational Understanding at Echelon Corps and Below

Intelligence is not an academic exercise, nor is it an end in itself. Its prime purpose is to help the commander make a decision, and thereby proceed more accurately and confidently with the execution of his mission.

— Lieutenant Colonel Robert Glass[1]

Current Intelligence Warfighting Function (IWfF) training strategies are inadequate to properly prepare Echelon Corps and Below (ECB) intelligence personnel to provide relevant, timely and predictive analysis to commanders and staffs. Fifteen years of war have focused intelligence efforts almost solely on network and kinetic targeting. While the shift from combined arms maneuver to network targeting and counter-insurgency operations was necessary in order to fight the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it also allowed core collective tasks such as Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) and predictive analysis to atrophy. Additionally, new challenges such as an increasingly complex intelligence focused digital network have arisen, but the intelligence officers responsible for these networks were never trained in how to create, integrate and maintain them. As the Army refocuses its efforts on getting "back to the basics" of maneuver warfare and training mobile headquarters elements that can operate in austere environments, senior intelligence officers (SIOs) are woefully unprepared to manage these changes on their own.

The Current State of Echelon Corps and Below Intelligence Officers

These shortcomings manifest themselves in a large number of SIOs -- primarily Brigade S2s and secondarily Division G2s -- unable to manage increasingly complex intelligence sections successfully. As a result, many of these officers find themselves sidelined and marginalized by their commanders. A 2015 study led by the FORSCOM (US Army Forces Command) G2 found that ~19% of all FORSCOM Brigade level S2s

were relieved and/or prematurely removed, a higher percentage than all other staff positions.[2] This alarming statistic is made more significant by the fact that FORSCOM holds "~45% of Military Intelligence Key Developmental positions, more than any other command."[3] The data feeds an anecdotal perception among junior MI officers that becoming an SIO (primarily Brigade S2) is not worth the risk of derailing an up-to-then successful career. Commanders listed as the top three reasons for the relief or early removal of their intelligence officer: "1) undeveloped skills in synchronizing intelligence techniques and associated capabilities, 2) limited experience as a maneuver BN S2, and 3) inability to establish relationships with maneuver commanders and S3s."[4]

Such perceptions among commanders are validated by both the Mission Command Training Program (MCTP), which assesses and trains primarily Corps and Division level staffs, and the Army's training centers (the National Training Center and the Joint Readiness Training Center), which assess and train primarily battalion and brigade level staffs. These organizations identify several challenges and trends that span all intelligence staffs from Battalion to Corps, which they generally categorize as unable to: 1) complete relevant and useful IPB, 2) conduct predictive analysis to inform effective fires and maneuver planning, 3) effectively synchronize intelligence with the larger staff, 4) "install, operate and maintain (IOM) their tactical Intel [sic] systems in order to operate successfully…"[5], 5) synchronize, employ and integrate intelligence assets.[67] While these are not new trends, they are certainly becoming more pronounced as the Army refocuses on readiness, training and training certification standards.

This paper posits that three significant concepts influence the success of Echelon Corps and Below intelligence officers and their ability to provide situational

understanding to commanders and staffs. The three concepts are: 1) the establishment of a graduated training strategy that culminates in an objective certification for intelligence officers and their sections, 2) the development of an institutional framework that teaches intelligence architecture to officers who likely have little understanding of what it is or what it is supposed to do, and 3) understanding the "intangibles" that can significantly enhance or detract from an intelligence officer's ability to provide situational understanding at echelon. This paper will also assess the state of the institutional Military Intelligence community in addressing those areas where applicable.

<center>Establishing a Graduated Training Strategy</center>

The intelligence community (primarily FORSCOM G2, Department of the Army G2 and the Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM)) are attempting to rapidly address these training shortfalls in order to enable echelon corps and below intelligence officers to succeed. The institutional MI Corps has long had training available to ECB intelligence sections; but it has historically lacked a coherent, comprehensive collective training and certification strategy that prepares SIOs to manage an increasingly complex intelligence apparatus. As the Chief of Staff of the Army GEN Mark Milley wrote in his initial message to the Army when describing his priorities, "Readiness is #1, and there is no other #1."[8] For the Intelligence WfF, the ability to create situational understanding for the commander and staff constitutes readiness.

Unfortunately, "the ability to create situational understanding" is a fairly nebulous phrase, one that has been especially difficult to quantify and particularly challenging to certify. FORSCOM has recently focused on Objective-T, the Army's initiative to better quantify an organization's training level in order to assess readiness. This initiative takes the uncertainty out of training and replaces it with "calculated elements"[9] designed

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to test Mission Essential Task List (METL) proficiency, collective live-fire proficiency and individual, crew-served and weapons platform qualifications[10] (i.e.- gunnery). In its 2016 Commander's Training Guidance, FORSCOM stated that "commanders will develop comprehensive and rigorous gunnery training strategies that make no assumptions on the level of proficiency of the individuals and units."[11]

How does an SIO create situational understanding for his commander and staff? The first aspect of creating situational understanding is a solid foundation of sound intelligence practices by the individual intelligence Soldier. The section must have Soldiers who understand and can conduct tailored IPB that is relevant for their unit, and who know the functionality and how to use their digital systems. Second, the intelligence section must be able to function together as a team in order to synthesize analyzed information effectively, create finished intelligence products and disseminate fused, coherent intelligence products that are easily understood by their audience. These products are not limited to briefings, however important the briefings are. They include plugging into and operating effectively within the unit's digital battlefield command system (BCS) architecture and displaying relevant enemy information in real or near real time to the organization.

Creating trained and ready intelligence sections has always been an elusive concept for the Military Intelligence Corps. Because there have been little to no definable criteria for what makes a trained intelligence section, it has generally been left up to the individual SIO to determine how to train his section as well as the definition of "fully trained". Adding to the complexity, a Brigade S2 section is really the first time in an intelligence officer's career that he is responsible for merging multiple entities to create

one team. The melding of the S2 section with the brigade's military intelligence company (MICO), creating the brigade intelligence support element (BISE), is complex. It involves merging two entities that do not work together on a daily basis and, in fact, work for two different people. The Brigade S2 section works directly for the Brigade S2, while the MICO commander works directly for the Brigade Engineer Battalion (BEB) Commander. This often leads to, at best, conflicting guidance; but more often it leads to inefficient mission command processes that inhibit production. This also leads to confusion as to what "trained and ready" means. Training standards have thus far been subjective and usually vary greatly between the MI Major (the Brigade S2) and the Engineer Lieutenant Colonel who commands the BEB. Additionally, it is hard to find who is "in charge" of collective MI training on an installation. Because of this, training varies widely among tactical units. On installations that have only a brigade or division headquarters, the Brigade S2 or Division G2 is responsible for creating training standards. However, on installations that have an Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade (E-MIB) co-located with the Corps headquarters, that E-MIB usually becomes responsible for setting that installation's MI training curriculum.[12] An Army wide standard for MI collective training must be adopted to streamline and standardize training requirements.

A training process is beginning to gain traction within the Army intelligence community that is loosely based on maneuver gunnery tables, and the processes set in place to train and certify individuals, then crews, then platoons, in the art of combined arms maneuver. This training process, colloquially named "MI Gunnery", is slowly becoming the standard within the MI community.

MI Gunnery is critically important to the intelligence community because it represents the best chance at standardizing training and implementing certifications in a way that not only stair-steps the training from individual to collective, but packages it in such a way that a maneuver commander can understand it. The importance of the maneuver commander's ability to understand MI Gunnery cannot be understated. MI officers often have problems explaining training in such a way that the commander, S3 and XO can understand it. As a result, MI training is often an afterthought and one of the first things to get cut from the training calendar (if it makes it there in the first place!). MI Gunnery is not designed to focus specifically on the individual skills of the MI Soldier (although individual skills are a part of it), but is designed to focus on the integration of the skills of multiple Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) within an intelligence section. Existing doctrine, managed by TRADOC, remains the foundation of individual Soldier skills training and is not affected by the potential implementation of MI Gunnery. MI Gunnery, based on the Integrated Weapons Training Strategy (IWTS) published by the Maneuver Center of Excellence, is a series of four gates with multiple tables per gate.[13]

Gate Four is focused at the individual level with different tables broken into specific MOS skill tasks. This series of training tasks is not necessarily new; it is built on the individual task lists that the Army has used for decades to test and evaluate the MOS proficiency of the individual soldier in both basic soldier tasks as well as MOS specific tasks. However, the MI Gunnery concept takes these individual task lists and re-collates them into a construct that is designed to be similar to the combat arms gunnery skills test, a prerequisite for moving into gunnery.[14] Upon completion of Gate

Four, and theoretically, the certification of the individual Soldier in both the MICO and the BCT S2 section, the IWfF moves into Gate Three.

Gate Three is the first collective training and certification gate. It contains "the unit collective and drill tasks that teams, sections, and platoons must be proficient in performing before proceeding to higher level…multi-echelon training events."[15] It is important to note that at this stage, crews (a "crew" in this instance can be categorized as a team, section or platoon) are trained and certified as a collective entity. Once this entity is certified, that entity cannot change. "Crew destabilization" occurs when one or members of a certified crew changes, requiring the entire crew to be certified again. This is new in the MI community as it hasn't been held to this standard before. It's worth noting that gates Three and Four are primarily NCO led gates.

Gate Two is especially significant for the Brigade S2. Here, the BISE will be exercised and evaluated as an entity. Up to this point, the training has largely been executed by NCOs and managed by Lieutenants and Captains. Gate Two is most likely the stage where the SIO will design the training and tailor the gate so that his BISE is trained on skills that match the unit's mission and the Brigade Commander's intent. This gate will also will likely overlap with maneuver battalion and company field training events, and as such, this is the first gate where the HUMINT control teams (HCT), PROPHET Teams, Multi-Functional teams (MFT), or the Company Intelligence Support Teams (COIST) may begin supporting their respective battalions and companies.[16] However, while the functional teams may support their units, this gate does not include supporting the brigade headquarters in its brigade field training exercise (FTX) or

command post exercise (CPX). At the BISE level, the gate remains largely IWfF focused and should culminate with an IWfF CPX.

The culminating event for MI Gunnery prior to the brigade's FTX should be an intel focused CPX (an INTELEX), run by the Brigade S2 and consisting of the full BISE S2 section, the MICO, and if possible, the Battalion S2 sections. The INTELEX should replicate, as closely as possible, the upcoming brigade training event [i.e.- it should match as closely as possible the Brigade Commander's training objectives- joint forcible entry, multiple air assault operations, river crossing (doctrinally known within the Army as a "wet gap" crossing), etc.] and must occur before the brigade's culminating training event. This INTELEX is potentially the most important collective training event a Brigade S2 can run.

A well planned, well executed INTELEX does four very specific and important things for the Brigade S2. First, it provides an actual simulation for the analysts and systems operators to implement their running estimates and battle tracking, and this is often the first point in the training cycle that a CPX is viable. Second, the simulation ensures that the mission command systems within the S2 section, the MICO and the Battalion S2 sections can connect during a CPX and can communicate internally within the IWfF. Third, it provides the Brigade S2 his first opportunity to manage the entire IWfF during that simulation. Finally, the INTELEX ensures that the Brigade S2 section, the MICO and the Battalion S2s are not operating together for the first time during the brigade's training event. While these can seem like small, inconsequential items, the value in the Brigade S2 managing these at a speed that allows him to make adjustments during the exercise is invaluable.

Gate One is still under development, but its defining characteristic will likely be that it is conducted during the brigade's CPX or FTX and will certify that the BISE can integrate and operate effectively alongside the other warfighting functions.[17] Gate One will consist of primarily an evaluation, not multiple training tables.[18] It should occur prior to the brigade's combat training center (CTC) rotation and will be designed to evaluate whether or not the IWfF can perform its duties within the context of an operational deployment, which includes operating with the full complement of brigade staff, subordinate units and a higher headquarters.

The maneuver brigade's culminating training event is not designed to train the intelligence section or even provide a venue to "work out the bugs". It is meant to train the brigade's ability to provide mission command and to effectively close with and kill the enemy. A significant portion of the training event is missing if the intelligence section is unable to perform during this event. Additionally, if the BISE and the Brigade S2 fall short of expectations (and the expectation is usually that everything runs smoothly, the BISE provides good intelligence staff products, the intelligence architecture connects with the rest of the Army battlefield communications systems, and the IWfF does not, in any way, hinder the brigade's mission command) during the culminating FTX or CPX, the IWfF loses a good portion, if not all, of its credibility and likely deploys into theater with a trust deficit with the commander and staff.

This training and certification initiative is a significant step forward by the institutional MI community to enable echelon Corps and below intelligence officers to provide situational understanding and improve their chances of success. However, one

area where the institutional MI community can still improve is in intelligence architecture.

<center>Development of an Institutional Framework</center>

Intelligence architecture has become one of the most critical tools an SIO has at his disposal. In an increasingly interconnected world, an intelligence section must be able to gather information from increasingly disparate sources and fuse them together in such a way that the SIO can give a commander and staff not only tactical-level knowledge of what is on his battlefield but an understanding of how that information affects his maneuver. An SIO's intelligence architecture is his primary tool for gaining and displaying this knowledge and affecting situational understanding. For the purposes of this paper, intelligence architecture is the intelligence network that is must do several things for the intelligence section. A complete list includes dozens of tasks, but a truncated list of the most basic tasks is: 1) gather information either by automatic RSS feed or analyst search tools, 2) display that information through geospatial tools or other medium, 3) connect to other Warfighting Function networks (i.e.- the Army Battle Command Systems) and higher echelon intelligence feeds and organizations, and 4) integrate intelligence into the commander's common operating picture (COP).

Unfortunately, Army Military Intelligence officers are currently not trained on intelligence architecture and are generally not involved in the planning or establishment of their network.[19] A Brigade S2 (and, for that matter, a Division or Corps G2) is expected to assume his position as the SIO and immediately be able to create (if one doesn't already exist), implement and maintain a relevant digital intelligence network immediately. Often, that US Army Major has had little-to-no experience putting such a network together. While the S2 isn't the only person in his section responsible for this

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(he has a Warrant Officer 353T on the Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) to help), he must have at least a working knowledge of what he wants his network to do in order to provide oversight and direction. A recent, informal study conducted by the US Army Intelligence Center of Excellence's (USAICOE) Tactical Engagement Team (TeT) presents a bleak picture of current BCT S2 intelligence architecture readiness:

> Officers (other than some WOs and LTs) are not involved in planning the automation requirements or architecture. They rely on the WOs to do it. Very few officers know all the systems at their disposal, and fewer still understand what those systems are capable of. They do know enough to account for them on inventory.[20]

> BCT S2s do not practice establishing the architecture. They deploy for an exercise unprepared and struggle to establish the architecture during the COMMEX [communications exercise]. We have not seen a single unit successfully establish the architecture and conduct communications checks on all systems during their scheduled COMMEX.[21]

> We have not seen any unit conduct collective training prior to COMMEX/CPX/FTX… They don't really know what they want the intelligence architecture to do.[22]

Clearly, the intelligence community has some work to do with SIOs and their ability to manage intelligence architecture. Intelligence architecture training begins with not only training mid-grade officers on how to establish and run their own networks, but also relentlessly driving home the point that intelligence readiness depends on that network. Without this most essential tool, intelligence officers are unable to provide effective situational understanding. In a time when the MI Corps is trying to better prepare MI MAJs to be Brigade S2s through the establishment of Brigade S2 courses and certification standards, there must be a comprehensive block of instruction to MI Majors that teaches intelligence architecture management. Very few MI field grade

officers will dispute the need for an intelligence network, but even fewer can detail what that network should look like and how to effectively manage it.

Architecture management is not a skill inherent to the Military Intelligence Corps, and is best summed up in the 2014 Army Intelligence Training Strategy when discussing training, but it is just as applicable when discussing intelligence architecture: Many ECB units "lack resident expertise to develop intelligence proficiency within their formations…the G2/S2 serves a critical role in securing expertise from outside the formation… through a Mobile Training Team (MTT)… or from a higher headquarters, to ensure readiness and proficiency."[23] MTTs have all too often been the technique used by SIOs: get an external entity to analyze the network and propose a solution, then work to implement that recommendation with little-to-no understanding of what they are actually trying to provide. A system that relies on MTTs to solve institutional architecture problems results in the MTT's having to come back to the unit several times to ensure the architecture is progressing satisfactorily. Such reliance is neither effective nor efficient as a long-term solution.

The solution is a USAICOE led, executive level block of instruction that would teach SIOs (primarily at the brigade, but applicable at division) what their networks are trying to achieve. This block of instruction should not be designed to make subject matter experts of Brigade S2s or to troubleshoot networks. Technical proficiency is the job of the 353T and his section of 35Ts. Instead, this course should be designed to do three things:

First, provide intelligence officers a holistic and conceptual overview of what intelligence architecture is and how to implement and manage it at the pseudo-

executive level. The S2 must understand conceptually *why* the network is needed and what the network is supposed to do before he can envision the practical steps he must take.

Second, explain the critical pieces of the network. This section should detail what a standard architecture looks like based on a doctrinal equipment set looks like at the brigade and division level. This involves identifying the equipment that belongs to each intelligence discipline, what it does and how it all looks when combined into an architecture diagram. What should also be identified are those pieces of equipment that don't belong to a specific intelligence discipline but are critical to the functionality of the network. For instance, a Data Dissemination Service (DDS) is a piece of equipment that doesn't belong to a specific intelligence discipline and doesn't perform an inherently intelligence function. However, what it does do is receive data and format it in such a way that it can be understood by the other BCS systems, and then send the data to those systems. It also works in the reverse. This equipment, because it isn't intelligence discipline specific, is rarely understood by the SIO, who may not even know it exists. But the DDS is critical because it is the primary data link between the IWfF Distributed Common Ground Station and the rest of the staff's BCS systems. An overview of the critical pieces of the network would instill that knowledge into the SIO.

Third, a block of instruction on how to tailor a system to mission requirements. This will help the SIO know what to look for when given a new mission in order to efficiently and effectively create an architecture that doesn't try to do too much, but provides enough functionality that he can execute the mission. This block on instruction is only possible when the first two topics are covered sufficiently and the SIO truly

understands his network. This course should be taught as part of the Brigade S2 course that is currently being created and implemented at the Army's Command and General Staff College, as part of the Army's Intermediate Level Education (ILE) requirement. For those intelligence officers that don't attend the Army's CGSC, they can attend the same course using FOUNDRY funds. FOUNDRY, as the Army Intelligence community's method of providing intelligence training to the force, is the logical means to get SIOs into the program.

<div align="center">Understanding the Intangibles</div>

MI Training and certification as well as intelligence architecture are tangible means to gauge intelligence readiness and provide situational understanding to the commander and staff. Yet there are several intangibles that are not necessarily quantifiable, but are critical to an SIOs ability to gain the commander's trust and thus increase his "wasta" within the organization. "The intangibles" are often just as important as the tangibles. They are things that, if not done effectively, can dramatically reduce the SIO's credibility within the command, thus reducing the ability of the SIO to provide situational understanding. On the other hand, if the intangibles are effectively used, they can dramatically increase the credibility of the SIO. The intangibles are relationships (primarily the commander and SIO relationship as well as the S3/S2 relationship), organizational management (an ability to effectively manage a large-ish organization of disparate MOSs, managing the sometimes-conflicting chains of command between the MICO and S2), and finally, understanding context and why that matters in fluid tactical situations.

The relationship between a commander and his S2 is both fluid and fickle, but also incredibly important. There is no more important relationship in an organization.

FORSCOM lists this as the number three reason for the premature removal or relief of

Brigade S2s.[24] While the Operations Officer (S3) or Executive Officer (XO, or Chief of

Staff) and commander relationships normally receive the most attention, the Intelligence

Officer and commander relationship is often more important. In fact, the Army's (now

superseded) FM 6-0, Mission Command: Command and Control of the Army Forces

detailed the relationship of the Chief of Staff and the commander as follows:

> The value of a close relationship between the commander and COS
> cannot be overstated. During operations, the COS must anticipate events
> and share a near-identical visualization of operations, events, and
> requirements. An effective COS understands the commander's
> personality, style, and instincts as they affect the commander's
> intentions.[25]

This statement almost perfectly describes the importance of the commander and S2

relationship. Modified slightly to reflect the peculiarities of the intelligence officer's role

the statement reads: "The value of a close relationship between the commander and S2

cannot be overstated. During operations, the S2 must anticipate both enemy and

friendly events in order to provide an enemy foundation on which the commander can

formulate a plan. The S2 must understand the commander's visualization of operations,

events, and requirements. An effective S2 understands the commander's personality,

style, and instincts and tailors his recommendations to fit the commander's style."

This is not to say that the commander's personality and style influence the

intelligence section's analysis, but it should influence the *presentation* of that analysis in

such a way that the commander can rapidly understand it, digest it, and be able to use

that analysis to make sound decisions. The idea that the intelligence officer's

relationship with the commander is more important than the S3 or XO is not widely held

in operational circles because of the critical roles those two positions play in managing

operations and the organization itself. Those officers usually comprise the "inner circle"

of the commander (with the addition of the CSM). However, the commander already

understands the roles that those two officers play, having performed those roles multiple

times in his career already. The SIO provides a service that is unique to intelligence

officers: the staff officer whose function is dedicated primarily to understanding the

enemy and transmitting his intent in a way that forms the foundation for all of the unit's

operations. FM 100-5, circa 1954, reinforces the importance of this relationship: "It is

seldom that commanders have sufficient time to make the detailed studies necessary to

arrive at sound conclusions as to enemy capabilities; for this they must rely on their

intelligence staff officers. If…their intelligence staff…lack[s] a commander's full

confidence, the results may well be disastrous."[26]

Secondly, Brigade S2s often have difficulty with organizational management and

the managing of the BISE. JRTC and NTC Observer, Controller, Trainers (OC/T) list the

ineffective management of the BISE as their number three IWfF challenge.[27] While an

integrated BISE (the Brigade S2 section as well as the portion of the military intelligence

company that merges with it during operations) only consists of roughly 55+ personnel,

it's not the number of people involved that generally give these young Majors issues. It's

the integration of multiple MOSs, harmonization of numerous intelligence feeds based

on multiple intelligence disciplines (human intelligence, signals intelligence, open source

information, among others) and the talent management associated with *who*, exactly, is

going to turn that raw information into finished intelligence (intelligence architecture is

also a consistent issue with this integration, but that topic has already been covered).

The brigade is normally the level this becomes an issue. A Battalion S2 has to deal with

fewer MOSs, little intelligence integration to speak of, and often receives more direct interaction and mentoring from the Brigade S2 than a Brigade S2 does from a higher G2. Talent management is a critical component of the S2's ability to manage the BISE because the brigade level is the first time that the SIO has a large enough staff that he can place individuals into positions based on their ability to perform a particular function or task. That talent management is incredibly important given the broad scope of the Brigade S2's responsibilities. Responsible for executing the daily tasks of information processing; attending, briefing and running battle rhythm events; producing finished intelligence products; managing the intelligence architecture; as well as the responsibility for collection and asset management (an incredibly complex, time consuming and commander-centric issue that isn't addressed in this paper), a Brigade S2 has more work than he is capable of completing on his own. The IWfF enterprise will quickly break down if the SIO has not properly delegated tasks and created a system that runs and provides relevant information without him personally ensuring it happens.

The final intangible is context. The Merriam- Webster Dictionary defines context as: "1) the parts of a discourse that surround a word or passage and can throw light on its meaning. 2) the interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs;"[28] finally, 3) "the whole situation, background, or environment relevant to a particular event, personality, creation, etc…"[29] The context surrounding an intelligence analyst's analysis is often just as important, and sometimes more important, than the analysis itself. For an intelligence officer, context is most often derived from a unit's mission and environment. An example of why context matters: An intelligence report comes in that states 150 armed and angry citizens are protesting at the local government capitol,

which is a short distance (~150 meters) away from the brigade's headquarters

compound. How much does this matter to the brigade commander and staff? If the

brigade is conducting a humanitarian response mission, "lightly armed" means

handguns and hunting rifles, the populace has shown no animosity toward US Forces,

has protested peacefully in the recent past and welcomes the US presence, this event

is probably worth monitoring in the tactical operations center (TOC) and nothing else. If,

however, the brigade is in a semi to non-permissive environment, the populace resents

the US presence, has rioted violently against the US and a local leader has made

threatening statements regarding a demonstration this weekend, then the commander

will likely take a more active stance. While this is a simplistic vignette, it does contrast

two different scenarios that require an intelligence officer to provide the proper context

for his commander. Additionally, the more the commander realizes that his intelligence

officer understands the context surrounding the area of operations and tailors his

analysis within that context, the less concerned he is with the information presented.

Summary

Creating situational understanding is easy to say and harder to do. Yet it remains

a key component of readiness for the Echelon Corps and Below intelligence warfighting

function. Echelon Corps and Below intelligence officers have more tools at their

disposal to aid them in that task today than at any time previously, but remain unable

been able to quantify it. The initiative to create a standardized training pipeline and

certify those intelligence organizations goes a long way toward enabling Brigade and

Division senior intelligence officers to effectively quantify and gauge their readiness

before they integrate into their respective mission command structure, vastly improving

their chances of success. But it will only work effectively if SIOs embrace the system

and treat it as an effective tool to ensure they have trained and ready Soldiers and sections. If the SIO treats MI Gunnery as a distraction, then it will immediately become, both in theory and practice, a "check the block" series of training events with little meaning for anyone in the organization. Regardless, MI Gunnery is a huge step forward for the intelligence community and rectifies one of the most complicated problems that Brigade and Division intelligence officers have: how to tell if their organizations are even capable of providing situational understanding to their commanders and staffs; and if they aren't, what are the points at which they are deficient and how to fix them. While this is a significant step forward, there is still much left to do.

Senior intelligence officers are still underprepared to establish their intelligence architecture, the foundation upon which they communicate with everything and everyone; a not-insurmountable problem, but one which requires significant preparation and individual study. SIOs are currently too reliant on others to tell them what they need to do and as a result, often not only fall short of expectations, but in many cases, fail to effectively transmit critical data to those who need it. SIOs, because they don't understand the basics and can't conceptualize what the right answer is, often don't know why they failed. The US Army's Intelligence Community must provide a mechanism to enable SIOs to succeed in the realm of intelligence architecture. The course must: 1) provide intelligence officers a holistic and conceptual overview of what intelligence architecture is and how to implement and manage it. This block will help that SIO understand *why* he is creating this network and what this network is supposed to do; 2) Explain the critical pieces of a doctrinal intelligence network at the brigade and division level. This will allow the SIO to identify the equipment that belongs to each

intelligence discipline, what it does and how it all looks when combined into an architecture diagram; 3) A block of instruction on how to tailor a system to mission requirements in order to ensure the SIO doesn't spend precious time, energy, and resources developing, implementing, and maintaining an architecture that does unnecessary and irrelevant functions to the current mission.

Finally, the intangibles that surround an SIO's tenure are many times just as important as the initiatives being undertaken to ensure their success, and can be hidden traps that reduce the effectiveness and credibility of the S2. Relationships, organizational management, and understanding context in order to properly apply and deliver intelligence are all critically important to a senior intelligence officer's ability to function as a member of the commander's staff and are not always acknowledged. These are some of the most overlooked enablers available to an S2 or G2, and are often within his own control. But too often SIOs don't understand the damaging effect poor relationships within the staff have on how his information and analysis is received, or more alarmingly, whether he even gets a seat at the table with the commander when important issues are discussed. Poor organizational management in the context of running an intelligence section is also a dangerous trap. Many an S2 has believed that they are paid to provide information and analysis and, as result of focusing solely on that, overlook the criticality of a smooth-running and effective intelligence section. A section that has clearly defined roles and responsibilities and deliberate talent management to ensure all Soldiers are providing to their best capability and capacity. The final piece is context- what it is, the understanding of it and how to apply it. Context inherently underpins much, if not all, of the information and analysis presented to the

Commander and the staff and dictates how the information is presented and why it is important.

Conclusion

When all of this is taken together and implemented effectively: MI Gunnery, intelligence architecture and the intangibles of relationships, an SIO is significantly more credible in the eyes of his commander and fellow staff members. This inherently makes him more effective at providing situational awareness and less likely to become one of the ~19% of FORSCOM intelligence officers that were relieved or prematurely removed from their position as the Brigade SIO. This also increases the readiness of their units and addresses the Army's strategic warfighting challenge of how to develop and provide situational awareness and understanding to commanders and staffs.

Endnotes

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