



Always Out Front

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In order to counter the United States overwhelming military power, our peer adversaries and other threats are employing information through various means below the threshold of armed conflict. In many cases, these means are relatively inexpensive and disproportionately effective. Our adversaries seek to control the information environment through the spread of disinformation and misinformation and combine those efforts with nonlethal actions. This coordinated convergence of information activities influences a population's emotions, thoughts, and actions. This could jeopardize our posture across multiple theaters or U.S. interests. The Department of Defense, U.S. Army, and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command recognize these challenges and are taking action now while planning and building capabilities for the future.

This quarter's *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* (MIPB) will offer insight into how our adversaries treat the information environment as a battlespace and how we are adapting our formations to compete in that battlespace. COL Christina Bembenek's article, "Truly Understanding the Adversary," provides a succinct overview of how our main state rivals, Russia and China, are testing their abilities to influence the cognitive information space. Because of this, it is more critical than ever that intelligence professionals understand our adversaries' intent, processes, and methods to integrate information with operations.

In their book *LikeWar*, P. W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking state that Russia, formerly part of the Soviet Union, was the first to study the "weaponization" of information. Citing Ben Nimmo, a British analyst of Russian information warfare and strategy, the authors identify four principles of Russian disinformation: dismiss the critic, distort the facts, distract from the main issue, and dismay the audience. To these "4 Ds," they add a fifth—




divide the target population.¹ In his article, "Spinning Victory," SFC Sergei Volodin provides an in-depth look into these concepts. "The objective of Russian psycho-informational activities," he writes, "is to gain a commanding level of influence of all nation-state domestic and international decision making through a systematic degradation or destruction of a nation's cognitive sovereignty." Through SFC Volodin's thorough analysis, we are able to understand how the Russian Federation has recently been able to target and employ weaponized narratives into other countries' cognitive space.

As intelligence professionals, we must analyze and describe relevant aspects of the information dimension, and as an inherent part of the operational environment, we must also drive offensive and defensive actions in the information domain at the appropriate echelons. For the future force, we must deliberately assess how we are structured and educated to compete in the information environment. However, across our force, leaders on the "information front lines" are spearheading efforts to maintain the information advantage. Some of those leaders have shared their experiences and lessons in this quarter's MIPB. MAJ Owen Ryckman discusses how his Multi-Domain Task Force military intelligence company broadens analysts' exposure to the information environment. MAJ Wallie Lacks offers observations of the current force structure, describes the three key layers of cyberspace, and discusses how intelligence professionals can arrange data to identify, characterize, and track enemy activity within cyberspace.

The importance of information to strategic competition and military operations is not new. However, the means of employing information and the severity of potential consequences within the information domain have changed significantly in the last 10 years. The information

dimension is changing rapidly with an acceleration in competition. Army intelligence is at the forefront of confronting these challenges. The Department of the Army G-2, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, and U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence are aggressively participating in a myriad of initiatives, programs, and actions involving the information dimension, including the

development of ADP 3-13, *Information*. We all have a responsibility to contribute to the solutions as these efforts progress. – Desert 6 

Endnote

1. P. W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking, *LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018).

Always Out Front!

Emerging Army Doctrine on Information

Introduction

The Army doctrine community is busy assessing its doctrine across many areas. One area involves reexamining the information dimension from a fundamental standpoint and the use of information from competition to conflict. The primary publications that will address the various aspects of information are FM 3-0, *Operations*, and ADP 3-13, *Information*. ADP 3-13 will provide fundamental doctrine on the information dimension. This article is a quick look at the basic information constructs within ADP 3-13.

Information Means Different Things

The writer's draft of ADP 3-13 is currently in development and will provide a foundation for thinking about information and the information dimension, as well as a framework for how Army forces, as part of a joint force, gain and maintain an information advantage. ADP 3-13 will describe an information advantage and explain how information advantage activities contribute to achieving positions of relative advantage and decision dominance.

Information means different things depending on context. In one sense, information is an element of national power that the U.S. Government employs in combination with diplomatic, military, and economic power to advance national interests. In another sense, information is a method of war as in the Russian construct of information warfare. Depending on context, information is a joint function integrated with command and control, intelligence, fires, movement and maneuver, protection, and sustainment to assist commanders in directing campaigns, operations, and activities. For Army forces, information is a contested dimension where both sides seek an advantage. This information advantage occurs when a force holds the initiative in terms of understanding, decision making, and influence on relevant actor behavior.


Information Advantage Activities

Commanders gain and maintain a relative information advantage by conducting information advantage activities. **Information advantage activities are the employment of capabilities to enable decision making, protect friendly information, inform domestic audiences, influence international audiences, and conduct information warfare.**¹ Commanders conduct information advantage activities using all available military capabilities integrated across the warfighting functions and synchronized through the operations process.

Information advantage activities consist of the core combination of tasks and sub-tasks conducted in a joint and combined arms approach. The first two tasks—enable decision making and protect friendly information—focus on outcomes internal to Army forces. The other three tasks—inform domestic audiences, influence international audiences, and conduct information warfare—focus on outcomes external to Army forces. Commanders and staffs coordinate and synchronize these five core tasks throughout the operations process to attempt to create and exploit an information advantage.

Information advantage tasks help focus the employment of capabilities resident in the various warfighting functions. An information advantage task may involve the employment of capabilities from all, multiple, or a single warfighting function depending upon the intended effect. The more capabilities brought to bear in a combined arms approach simultaneously, the more powerful the effects during the operation.

Conclusion

The development of ADP 3-13 will drive changes to many other Army doctrinal publications. It is critical that the Army Military Intelligence Corps maintain awareness and stay knowledgeable of these changes in order to be successful during multi-domain operations. Obviously, the intelligence warfighting function plays an integral role in almost every aspect of the information dimension. In the next issue of the *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin*, we will discuss initial thoughts on those roles and potential new requirements for the intelligence warfighting function within the information dimension. 

Endnote

1. This definition is from the current writer's draft of Army Doctrine Publication 3-13, *Information*.