

Leveraging Multifunctional Brigade Expertise in Support of the Division Deep Fight

by Major Michelle S. McCarroll

Deep attack is not a luxury; it is an absolute necessity to winning.

—GEN Donn A. Starry

Introduction

FM 2-0, *Intelligence*, and ATP 2-03.1, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield*, both identify intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) as a collaborative staff effort led by the J-2/G-2/S-2.¹ The staff's collaboration ensures a thorough description of the operational environment and associated threat. Each warfighting function refines the intelligence staff's analysis with the application of function-specific operational expertise. Historically, intelligence professionals and planners have referred to this concept as reverse warfighting function IPB.² At the division, the G-2 must lever-

age this expertise not only from the organic division staff but also from its associated functional and multifunctional brigades, especially its combat aviation brigade and division artillery.

In large-scale ground combat operations, the division's IPB must pay particular attention to enemy long-range artillery and air defense in the deep area, beyond the range of the brigade combat teams (BCTs) engaged in close operations.³ In addition to identifying opportunities for the BCTs to exploit, disrupt, and mass effects, the division must shape the deep area to create conditions that support the BCTs' present and future maneuver. Outside of the BCTs, the division must integrate and synchronize the operations of its



United States and Kuwaiti soldiers fire mobile artillery rockets during a joint live-fire exercise near Camp Buehring in Kuwait, January 8, 2019.

Photo by U.S. Army SGT James Lefty Larimer

functional and multifunctional brigades. In the deep area, this means leveraging multifunctional brigades that share the division area of operations and are the only forces able to range the division deep area. In particular, the division artillery S-2 (or field artillery brigade acting as the division artillery and force field artillery headquarters) and combat aviation brigade S-2 have important roles in assessing enemy formations operating in the division's deep fight.

The division artillery commander is the fire support coordinator for the division and primary advisor to the division commander for the fires warfighting function, and the combat aviation brigade commander is the senior Army aviation officer in the division charged with advising adjacent and higher echelon commanders on aviation system employment. These commanders and their staffs have a significant role in the division's IPB as a complete, collaborative staff effort.⁴ Without the division artillery S-2 and combat aviation brigade S-2's input, the division's IPB risks being incomplete with regard to the operational environment, threat, and potential impacts on friendly operations emanating from and operating within the division's deep area. In warfighter exercises, this area accounts for the preponderance of a BCT's combat losses, which they are organically unable to impact. Furthermore, without the same organic intelligence capabilities as the BCTs, the division artillery and combat aviation brigade S-2s rely on capabilities and functions only available within the division G-2 or through coordination for outside augmentation. This codependency to tackle the critical deep area problem set in large-scale ground combat operations signals the need to update our standard operating procedures and, eventually, doctrine on the role of the division artillery and combat aviation brigade in IPB and the integration of the division intelligence warfighting function, including multifunctional brigade S-2 sections.

During Initial Military Decision-Making Process

Observer coach/trainers (OC/Ts) for the Army's Mission Command Training Program see at least five warfighter exercises with one or more divisions per exercise focused on large-scale ground combat operations against a hybrid near-

peer opposing force. Within the multi-domain operations construct, these operations most closely align with the disintegrate and exploit phases during which friendly forces defeat enemy long-range and mid-range systems.⁵ OC/Ts watch the military decision-making process and execution, capturing key observations for the division and its multifunctional brigades, including the division artillery/field artillery brigade and combat aviation brigade. At least 80

to 90 percent of divisions and multifunctional brigades conducted separate IPB and military decision-making process cycles using parallel planning, while 10 to 20 percent use collaborative planning.⁶

Though staffs coordinate across echelons during parallel planning, they must both conduct their own IPB and military decision-making process. Therefore, two separate assessments of the opera-

tional environment and the resulting recommendations on fire support, targeting, and aviation support must be synchronized, de-conflicted, and adjusted to varying degrees during the divisions' combined arms and fires rehearsals. While ADP 5-0, *The Operations Process*, highlights that parallel planning can "significantly shorten planning time," in the case of the division's multifunctional brigades, the back and forth that often results from resynchronizing the IPB and adding the multifunctional brigades' expertise decreases the time available for their staff's planners, affecting the timing and efficacy of field artillery and combat aviation.⁷

Often, multifunctional brigades use the division IPB as a starting point and add a layer of expertise with regard to those systems or units most pertinent to their organization—whether air defense, long-range artillery, or electronic warfare. The IPB efforts of the division artillery/field artillery brigade and combat aviation brigade usually address and refine the analysis of those threat systems in the deep area that, due to range, lethality, and/or ability to create standoff, will ultimately constitute the division's high-payoff target list. This is information that affects the BCTs' planning as well as the division's initial information collection requirements and requests. Too frequently, this refinement to the division collection plan is not captured because



U.S. Army photo by SGT Thomas Mort
An AH-64 Apache helicopter with 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, flies out into the box as an observer coach/trainers' helicopter trails behind, during a simulated attack mission, as part of the culminating force on force exercise of Combined Resolve XII at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, August 19, 2019.

of a lack of designated and/or qualified collection managers at the multifunctional brigades. This is a product of the multifunctional brigade S-2 sections' current composition, not a unit's lack of emphasis or effort toward collection management. However, closer integration with the division G-2 and incorporation of the multifunctional brigades into the division's IPB can decrease the gap between the division collection plan and the multifunctional brigades' requirements, particularly with regard to the deep fight.

The integration that occurs by doing IPB with the division allows the multifunctional brigades to leverage the division collection manager and allows him or her to be aware of requirements to support deep targeting earlier in the operations. Doing so ensures that fires can continue to be the "maneuver commander's most responsive combat arm and by doing so assist the other arms in accomplishing their battlefield missions."⁸

continuous assessments and updates. The multifunctional brigades continue to be a hub of specialized expertise critical to providing the division a complete picture. From the division artillery's target acquisition radar analysis to the combat aviation brigade's aviation mission survivability officer's input, multifunctional brigades continue to provide critical portions of the division's IPB overlays; however, they cannot complete the task alone.

Unlike their BCT counterparts, the multifunctional brigades often lack the military occupational specialties, functional sections, and/or equipment to process specific intelligence disciplines. Integration with the division G-2, especially the analysis and control element, provides multifunctional brigades the support required to create true fused all-source intelligence. Developing standard operating procedures, and eventually doctrine, to define these relationships is critical to maintaining analytic exchange and

support at the speed of large-scale ground combat operations.

The greater the integration between the division and its multifunctional brigades prosecuting the deep fight, the more capability and capacity the division has to assess the threat in both the close and deep areas, ultimately allowing the division to provide better support to its BCT maneuver forces. Speed and integration in the deep fight create time and space for the BCTs. They also prevent a common problem that Mission Command Training Program OC/Ts see with multifunctional brigades. When multifunctional brigades are not well integrated with the division, their planning and synchronization timeline become the same

as their BCT counterparts. However, within the operational framework, these multifunctional brigades are usually conducting operations ahead of the BCTs in time and space to shape the environment and support their maneuver. Especially in the case of the combat aviation brigade and division artillery, their close ties to the air tasking order cycle, airspace planning, and requirement to receive division and higher battle damage assessments that they cannot generate organically drive a need to plan concurrent with the division, ahead of the BCTs.



U.S. Army National Guard photo by SGT Saul Rosa

Virginia National Guard Soldiers assigned to the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team use a magnetic map board to track troop movement during a command post exercise April 14, 2018, at Fort Pickett, VA. Overseeing the exercise were observer coach/trainers from the Mission Command Training Support Program.

During Operations

Once operations (particularly large-scale ground combat) begin, the integration between the division G-2 and its multifunctional brigade S-2s becomes more important. The fight is fast, deadly, and dynamic, making IPB's ongoing assessment and updates challenging while they remain critical to success. Thorough, complete products synchronized across the division and its multifunctional brigades from the initial IPB make both organizations more agile, but they must also have standing processes in place to ensure shared

Conclusion

Multifunctional brigade S-2s are an integral part of the division's intelligence warfighting function. Without their input, the G-2 is missing valuable expertise and information on the threat picture. This information is critical to the division's responsibilities within its deep area, both in support of its BCTs and within the larger context of multi-domain operations' dis-integrate and exploit phases.⁹ Likewise, the multifunctional brigades have significant gaps, especially in large-scale ground combat operations, if they are not well incorporated and synchronized with the division G-2. Incorporating multifunctional brigades in the division intelligence warfighting function, and ensuring they are able to provide their expertise to the division's IPB while leveraging the intelligence enterprise to refine their analysis, begins well before receipt of mission. Divisions must establish the standard operating procedures, architecture, and support relationships to connect and synchronize their multifunctional brigades with the division's intelligence warfighting function to shape the deep area and secure the consolidation area at a pace that supports the speed and lethality of large-scale ground combat operations. ✨

Epigraph

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Endnotes

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4. *Ibid.*, 2-14, 2-16.
5. Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028* (Fort Eustis, VA: TRADOC, 6 December 2018), 32.
6. CW3 Stephen Barber, e-mail message to author, 6 July 2019; and Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 5-0, *The Operations Process* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 31 July 2019), 2-24.
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9. Department of the Army, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *Multi-Domain Operations*, 32.

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