

Technical Perspective

by Chief Warrant Officer 5 Aaron Anderson
Chief Warrant Officer of the MI Corps
U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence



As we gaze into the future and examine what large-scale combat operations might look like in a multi-domain environment, one thing is clear—achieving overmatch and dominating in the information space will be critical. Within intelligence circles, we have used the term *information dominance* for many years, but more recently, the phrase *information advantage* has entered the Army lexicon. While discussing information advantage in September 2020, LTG Stephen Fogarty, Commanding General, U.S. Army Cyber Command, indicated the intent “is for future commanders to be able to see what’s happening ‘in real time—not just the physical effects [e.g., weapons fire], and the physical space within the spectrum [i.e., radio and radar signals], but then also that information space, where ideas are being bounced around like crazy.’”¹



Inside the information space, peer and near-peer competitors will continue to operate void of restrictive policies. In recent years, several nation-states have proven they are capable, and in some cases adept, at combining physical and information-based effects to achieve operational and strategic ends. “Russian analysts conducting an early after-action report (AAR) of the Russian deployment to Syria in January 2016 concluded that Russia must sharply increase its attention to the information space to enable successful kinetic operations, demonstrating an immediate recognition of this priority after only 3 months of operations.”² Our ability to counter and disaggregate these adversary capabilities will be critical in creating windows of opportunity and ensuring freedom of movement in a large-scale combat operations fight.

From an intelligence perspective, ongoing modernization efforts within the Military Intelligence Corps will continue to enhance our sensing and analytic capabilities, significantly contributing to the establishment of information advantage. The intent is that information advantage will ultimately lead to “decision dominance,” giving U.S. commanders greater flexibility to act in both competition and conflict. Decision dominance “is a desired state in which a commander can sense, understand, decide and act faster and more effectively than an adversary.”³ By establish-

ing decision dominance, we increase efficiency and situational understanding, shorten the “kill-web,” and allow the prosecution of more targets across multiple domains.

Achieving decision dominance will ultimately require changes in the realms of structure, training, and equipping across multiple formations. In one example of this, as part of the Multi-Domain Task Force, the Army “created a multi-disciplinary battalion for Intelligence, Information, Cyber, Electronic Warfare, & Space (I2CEWS) and merged headquarters staff sections for space, command & control, and information.”⁴ The intent of the I2CEWS battalion is to fuse multiple data feeds to create joint situational awareness in support of kinetic and non-kinetic operations, as well as create offensive and defensive cyberspace effects and employ electromagnetic warfare and space capabilities against adversary forces. Clearly, having dominance of the information space is vital to shaping and winning future conflicts. Having said that, without a doubt, these concepts will continue to evolve as thinking matures in relation to how the U.S. Army executes multi-domain operations.

As always, I would like to thank you and your families for your daily sacrifice, selfless service, and contributions to the Army in defense of our Nation. I continue to wish you good health and safety as we continue to work through the impacts of this ongoing pandemic and engage in operations across the globe. ✨

Endnotes

1. Sydney J. Freedberg Jr., “Army Wrestles with Information Advantage,” *Breaking Defense*, September 29, 2020, <https://breakingdefense.com/2020/09/army-wrestles-with-information-advantage/>.
2. Mason Clark, *Russian Hybrid Warfare: Military Learning and the Future of War Series* (Washington, DC: Institute for the Study of War, September 2020), 21–22, <http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Russian%20Hybrid%20Warfare%20ISW%20Report%202020.pdf>.
3. Mark Pomerleau, “Out: ‘information warfare.’ In: ‘information advantage,’” *C4ISRNET*, September 29, 2020, <https://www.c4isrnet.com/information-warfare/2020/09/29/out-information-warfare-in-information-advantage/>.
4. Freedberg, “Information Advantage.”

Always Out Front! and Army Strong!