



## Defense Primer: Intelligence Support to Military Operations

The U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) is a collection of organizations charged with providing intelligence that is “timely, objective, independent of political considerations, and based upon all sources available to the intelligence community” to decision makers in the national security policy process. According to IC expert Mark Lowenthal, *intelligence* refers to information that meets the needs of decision makers and has been collected, processed and narrowed to meet those needs.

The **Director of National Intelligence (DNI)** serves as community manager and the principal intelligence advisor to the President. The bulk of the IC resides within the Department of Defense (DOD)—to include the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), National Security Agency (NSA), the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), and the intelligence components of the military services. Non-DOD elements include the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and intelligence entities within the Departments of Energy, Homeland Security, Justice, State, and Treasury. The core mission of the DNI is to lead the IC as a whole in intelligence integration to ensure it operates as one team.

Organizations such as CIA integrate intelligence from all sources into *national intelligence* in support of the national-level policy process while organizations such as DIA focus more on integrating service-specific intelligence into *defense intelligence* for the warfighter. Furthermore, joint intelligence elements exist within the DOD to provide a common, coordinated picture for military commanders by fusing national and theater intelligence information into *all-source* assessments and estimates.

The DOD intelligence elements are managed by the **Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence)**. The USD(I) position is *dual-hatted*. When acting as the USD(I), the incumbent reports directly to the Secretary of Defense and serves as the Secretary’s principal staff assistant regarding intelligence, counterintelligence, security, and other intelligence-related matters. When acting as Deputy Director for Intelligence, the incumbent reports directly to the DNI and serves as his principal advisor regarding defense intelligence matters. Together, the DNI and USD(I) coordinate a number of interagency activities designed to facilitate the seamless integration of national-level and tactical-level intelligence.

### Customers: Strategic and Tactical-Level

Decision makers in need of intelligence are thought of as “customers”—the President, National Security Council (NSC), heads of departments and agencies of the executive branch, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, senior military commanders, Members of Congress, and others as the DNI determines appropriate.

### Types of Military Operations

The IC supports the entire spectrum of DOD missions, from peacetime operations to full-scale war. Joint Publication 2-0, *Joint Intelligence*, loosely groups DOD missions under these three headings:

- **Military Engagement, Security Cooperation, and Deterrence:** Examples include military exchanges; arms control verification; sanction enforcement; protection of shipping lanes; shows of force; and support to insurgency and counterinsurgency operations.
- **Crisis Response & Limited Contingency Operations** Examples include noncombatant evacuation operations; peace operations; humanitarian assistance; recovery operations; and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear response actions.
- **Major Military Operations and Campaigns** These types of operations include U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The examples listed above (associated with more limited operations—such as humanitarian assistance) may also occur within this category as part of a larger military operation.

### Intelligence Support

**Figure 1** summarizes ways in which intelligence can help commanders to decide which forces to deploy; when, how, and where to deploy them; and how to employ them in a manner that accomplishes the mission.

#### Figure 1. Roles & Responsibilities of Intelligence to Military Operations

- Inform the Commander
- Describe the Operational Environment
- Identify, Define, and Nominate Objectives
- Support Planning and Execution of Operations
- Counter Adversary Deception and Surprise
- Support Friendly Deception Efforts
- Assess the Effectiveness of Operations

**Source:** Joint Publication 2-0, *Joint Intelligence*, Figure 1-2, p. 1-3.

Intelligence to “**inform the commander**” may include information about actual and potential threats, terrain, climate and weather, infrastructure, cultural characteristics, medical conditions, population, and leadership.

Intelligence that “**describes the operational environment**” helps to identify and characterize variables such as political backdrops, military tactics/procedures, economic strength, social stability, information flow, and physical setting.

Intelligence to “**identify, define, and nominate objectives**” includes developing an understanding of the commander’s

priorities; creating an intelligence collection plan based on those priorities; and creating possible battlefield targets focused on achieving the commander’s objectives.

Intelligence to “**support planning and execution of operations**” could include enhancing information sharing; establishing mutual support with host country nationals; estimating the duration of operations; and/or warning of any possible escalation of violence.

Intelligence to “**counter adversary deception and surprise**” includes information on enemy capabilities and vulnerabilities; estimates of when, where, and how the joint force can exploit its information superiority; and the threat the enemy poses to friendly information and information systems.

Intelligence to “**assess the effectiveness of operations**” surveys the extent of damage to targets and can assist in activities such as planning for another strike or deployment of relief forces.

### Defense Intelligence Organizations

**Table 1** illustrates the variety of ways in which intelligence entities are organized at the service-, joint-, and national-levels to support military operations.

**Table 1. Selected Defense Intelligence Organizations**

<b>Service Intelligence Components</b>
United States Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, & Reconnaissance (AF/A2)
United States Army Intelligence (G-2)
United States Coast Guard Intelligence (CG-2)
United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity (MCIA)
United States Office of Naval Intelligence (N2)
<b>Joint Intelligence Elements within DOD</b>
National Joint Operations and Intelligence Center (NJOIC)
Joint Staff Intelligence Directorate (JCS J-2)
Combatant Command Intelligence Directorate (CCMD J-2)
Joint Force Command Intelligence Directorate (JFC J-2)
Joint Intelligence Operations Center (JIOC)
Joint Intelligence Support Element (JISE)
<b>Combat Support Agencies</b>
Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)
National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA)
National Reconnaissance Office (NRO)
National Security Agency (NSA)

**Source:** CRS, adapted from Joint Publication 2-01, *Joint and National Intelligence Support to Military Operations*, pp. xii-xiv and II 7-8, 13.

### Service Intelligence Components

Service intelligence components provide the service-specific expertise necessary for support to military operations. For example, the Army’s G-2 is responsible for intelligence, weather, and geospatial-intelligence activities

for Army units. Service intelligence personnel may also be assigned to joint intelligence and combatant command entities and combat support agencies such as the NRO.

### Joint Intelligence Elements

Elements such as the National Joint Operations and Intelligence Center (NJOIC) fuse information from the service intelligence components. The NJOIC maintains a continuous, *all-source*, multidiscipline intelligence alert center to provide defense situational awareness, early warning, and crisis management intelligence support.

### Combat Support Agencies (CSAs)

Combat Support Agencies provide department-level and tactical-level support to military operations. For example, some DIA assessments can identify the capabilities and intentions of adversaries while others focus on specific actors of concern with emphasis on how they are affected by the strategic environment.

### Intelligence Products

Defense intelligence organizations provide commanders with a variety of products that may include: briefings, maps, and charts; analysis, assessments, and estimates; and targeting suggestions and coordinates.

### A Note on Special Operations Forces

Special Operations Forces often deploy with limited intelligence personnel and equipment. These forces may be augmented with intelligence professionals on loan from other intelligence organizations. They also rely on the ability of their forces to *reach back* to CSAs in order to rapidly respond to emerging requirements.

<b>Relevant Statutes</b>
Title 10, U.S. Code, Chapter 21—DOD Intelligence Matters Title 50, U.S. Code, Chapter 44—National Security
<b>CRS Products</b>
CRS In Focus IF10525, <i>Defense Primer: National and Defense Intelligence</i> , by Anne Daugherty Miles. CRS In Focus IF10523, <i>Defense Primer: Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence)</i> , by Anne Daugherty Miles. CRS In Focus IF10470, <i>The Director of National Intelligence (DNI)</i> , by Anne Daugherty Miles. CRS Report R44681, <i>Intelligence Community Programs, Management, and Enduring Issues</i> , by Anne Daugherty Miles.
<b>Other Resources</b>
DOD. Joint Publication 2-0, <i>Joint Intelligence</i> , October 22, 2013. DOD. Joint Publication 2-01, <i>Joint and National Intelligence Support to Military Operations</i> , January 5, 2012.

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