

Intelligence Support Teams' Support to Logistics Organizations

Company and battalion intelligence support teams can provide the additional intelligence support needed for brigade support and combat sustainment support battalion operations.

■ By Staff Sgt. Christopher Adair

When intelligence Soldiers arrive at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., as part of a brigade support battalion (BSB) or combat sustainment support battalion (CSSB), they often do not have a thorough understanding of the intelligence support that logistics organizations require.

The BSB and CSSB S-2 sections are authorized only three military intelligence personnel: one captain,

one noncommissioned officer, and one junior enlisted Soldier. However, the scope of military intelligence duties in a decisive action environment includes rear area security, brigade support area (BSA) defense, route analysis across the brigade area of operations, and route analysis of the main supply route between the BSA and the corps support area.

As with the brigade's maneuver elements, sustainment elements rely on the collection and analysis of in-

telligence at the lowest echelon. As such, company-sized sustainment elements should use properly manned company intelligence support teams (COISTs) or battalion intelligence support teams (BISTs). When properly established, COISTs and BISTs are a tremendous boon to BSB and CSSB S-2 sections, providing insight into intelligence needs, intelligence requirements, and vehicle capabilities and expanding the ability of attached companies to collect information.



Soldiers of the 2nd Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, provide security for a meeting between military and local civilian leaders during a training rotation to the National Training Center, at Fort Irwin, Calif., on June 24, 2013. (Photo by Sgt. Marcus Fichtl)

The BIST

The BSB S-2 section is often overwhelmed because of its heavy workload and small staff. Many units have had great success employing the BIST concept to create a more capable S-2 section.

In a BIST, a company attaches its personnel to the battalion S-2 section, augmenting the section's production capabilities and increasing the amount of relevant, timely, and accurate information available to the battalion and companies. A BIST answers to the S-2, while having a liaison relationship with the company from which it came.

A BIST serves to increase the knowledge base of S-2 personnel on sustainment-specific intelligence support requirements. The additional personnel assigned to the S-2 section also gain insight into the intelligence-gathering process, allowing them to more effectively serve as an interface between the S-2 and companies. This enhanced capability allows those personnel to conduct prebriefings that are better tailored to the patrol and its mission and debriefings that are more finely focused on priority intelligence requirements (PIRs).

The COIST

A COIST is designed to provide intelligence support to a company commander by developing products such as link diagrams, threat analyses, route analyses, and pattern analyses and by tracking and answering company-level PIRs.

A COIST's information collection comes primarily through patrol prebriefings and debriefings and information collected through Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment (HIIDE) or Secure Electronic Enrollment Kit (SEEK) systems.

A COIST will typically benefit a fully staffed and trained organization in which COIST personnel are equipped and uninhibited in the performance of their duties. COIST personnel should ensure that their communication with the S-2 is

scheduled, consistent, structured, and open. Failure to communicate will lead to a breakdown in the intelligence cycle.

Generally, a BIST will prove to be more useful to a BSB than a COIST when the BSB is short on personnel or when the personnel who will be performing the intelligence support duties have not received COIST training. The increase in personnel within the battalion S-2 section will benefit the whole BSB, and training shortfalls will be more easily overcome.

Proper Employment

Properly assigning personnel, whether in a BIST or a COIST, is instrumental to enabling them as force multipliers. For example, tasking transportation company intelligence support personnel with route analysis will result in information that enhances understanding of logistics vehicle capabilities.

In a decisive action environment, the BSB maintenance company typically is tasked with the responsibility of BSA defense and force protection. Accordingly, the maintenance company intelligence support personnel can best be used in intelligence preparation of the battlefield for selecting BSA sites. The S-2's intelligence estimate is best used for choosing the appropriate perimeter defense.

Ensuring all members of convoys down to the lowest ranking Soldier participate in patrol debriefings is critical to maximizing the information collection capability of the patrol. Field Manual 4-01.45, Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Tactical Convoy Operations, offers an example of what intelligence support a tactical convoy operation commander needs to consider before embarking on the convoy.

When a convoy returns, a COIST or BIST member should debrief all convoy members, focusing on route trafficability, local national reaction to the presence of U.S. forces, new construction, changes in the envi-

ronment, information pertaining to company and battalion PIRs, and recommendations for future routes. When debriefing patrols, the S-2 representative should use a standardized debriefing format and facilitate open communication. Developing a positive rapport with the patrol will aid the flow of information.

HIIDE and SEEK

Other effective information gathering methods are the HIIDE and SEEK systems. Providing and maintaining a serviceable, fully charged, and updated HIIDE or SEEK system, employed by properly trained and proficient operators, for all patrols, entry control points, and role 2 medical facilities will help ensure enrollment opportunities are not missed.

To the maximum extent possible, information about all local nationals within the battlespace should be entered into the system.

The importance of effectively establishing either a BIST or a COIST should not be underestimated. The advantages of establishing a BIST versus a COIST should be thoroughly weighed with consideration of input from company commanders, first sergeants, and the S-2 with regard to manning, training, and experience available in the companies and S-2 section. In either case, the selection of the properly trained personnel for the job should be given a high priority to ensure that any BSB or CSSB will enhance its mission capabilities, force protection, and intelligence capabilities.

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