AIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON GLOBAL INTEGRATED INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE AND RECONNAISSANCE (ISR)

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Global integrated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operations are domain, Service and platform neutral. The focus is on meeting information requirements and providing actionable intelligence to commanders. Global integrated ISR is further enhanced when integrated with joint, Departmental, national, and multinational ISR. Global integrated ISR is the linchpin of effects-based operations and enables integration and synchronization of assets, people, processes, and information across all domains, to inform the commander's decision cycle.

The evolution of technology and information enabled a move from the segregation to integration of operations and intelligence. The elements of ISR are interdependent and mutually supporting to compress the find, fix, track, target, engage, and assess (F2T2EA) process from days to minutes.

Global integrated ISR operations enable operations throughout the range of military operations (ROMO) in permissive and non-permissive environments by serving as a theater capability. Global integrated ISR operations also facilitate the integration and synchronization of joint, Departmental, national, and coalition ISR capabilities. Other Services may focus organic elements of ISR efforts towards the tactical level of war, specifically in support of organic component operations (i.e., supporting a specific mission or unit). These forces are typically organic to a service echelon. Coalition members or allies will tend to focus their ISR efforts to meet their own informational needs.

The Air Force currently uses the majority of its ISR assets to directly support national objectives and the joint force commander's (JFC's) strategic and operational goals and component-level requirements. One of the most valuable attributes of airpower is its flexibility, the inherent ability to project power dynamically across large swaths of an operational area. Flexibility of ISR operations is exponentially enhanced with distributed ops. Global integrated ISR monitors both friendly and adversary movements and capabilities in a dynamic environment, and drives the F2T2EA process. The Air Force may designate some assets as organic assets to satisfy Service-specific collection requirements. An example is the use of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) to support base defense or special operations or cyberspace sensors to protect the AF network. The Air Force conducts global integrated ISR operations through a five-phase process: planning and direction; collection; processing and exploitation; analysis and production;

and dissemination (PCPAD). The process is not linear or cyclical, but rather represents a network of interrelated, simultaneous functions that can, at any given time, feed and be fed by other functions. The planning and direction phase begins the process by shaping decision-making with an integrated and synchronized ISR strategy and collection plan that links global integrated ISR operations to the JFC's intelligence requirements and integrates them into the air tasking order (ATO) and its reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition (RSTA) annex. The collection phase occurs when the mission is executed and the sensors actually gather raw data on the target set. The collected data in its raw form has relatively limited intelligence utility.

The processing and exploitation phase increases the utility of the collected data by converting it into useable information. During the analysis and production phase analysts apply critical thinking and advanced analytical skills by fusing disparate pieces of information and draw conclusions resulting in finished intelligence.

Finished intelligence is crucial to facilitating informed decision-making, but only if it is received in a timely manner. Dissemination, the final phase of PCPAD, ensures the commander, planners, and operational forces receive the derived intelligence in time to make effective decisions and conduct effective operations. The Air Force's distributed operations capability enables it to conduct global integrated ISR operations and provide timely and tailored intelligence on a global level to multiple end users. The analyzed intelligence can be disseminated or stored for future use. Properly formatted and archived data makes previously collected and exploited information readily available to correlate and provide context to data.