



# CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



## ANNEX 2-0 GLOBAL INTEGRATED INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE & RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS

### **IRREGULAR WARFARE AND ISR**

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Air Force global integrated [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#) (ISR) provides significant capability in [irregular warfare](#) (IW), but in many ways its role is different from its role in conventional warfare. IW typically has different objectives, intelligence requirements, and targets than conventional warfare. AF global integrated ISR must consider these differences in both planning and executing operations. The objectives in IW are often different than those in conventional warfare. IW typically focuses on gaining the support of the population through utilizing the political, military, and economic means available. IW requires integration of these means at lower echelons to achieve desired effects.

Also, the targets of ISR in IW frequently differ from target sets in conventional warfare. In conventional warfare, ISR is traditionally concerned with discovering the intent, order of battle (OOB), and tactics of governments and armed forces. Additionally in conventional warfare, ISR typically seeks to find the enemy's massed formations which can pose a threat to friendly forces. Irregular adversaries tend to operate in the opposite fashion. They rely on distribution and decentralized operations for security and protection. They are agile and often embedded within local societies. Their tactics are likely to be significantly influenced by the local societies' norms and values. They commonly operate in unrecognizable organizational structures where adversary decisions are not centralized but instead made quickly and communicated laterally across the organization. They adapt to the areas they operate within and from, using available technology to closely link with dispersed operators or cells. They are usually a constellation of fighters organized on the basis of relationships and acquaintances, reputation and fame. Their networks are typically self-forming with new nodes constantly being created and absorbed. Evolving tactics, techniques, procedures, and financial resources enable propaganda and information to flow at increased rates, allowing powerful and nimble coordination.

IW increases the demand for global integrated ISR from lower echelon commanders. This is due in large part to the adversary's ability to live undetected among a population with which they are closely tied. The areas they operate within and from generally allow for increased flexibility and an impressive ability to grow support and overcome losses. In warfare, decisions are frequently based on indicators. Because of the dispersed nature of IW, adversary indicators are typically best noted by local personnel. Therefore, to the maximum extent possible organic assets should fill local ISR demand. Air Force global integrated ISR, which is typically allocated to the commander Air Force

forces (COMAFFOR), can augment local organic ISR. When augmenting local organic ISR, Air Force global integrated ISR should plan and coordinate closely with the supported forces to enable successful operations.

Further, indicators pop up everywhere, unevenly, unexpectedly, and fleetingly. Intelligence sharing within the operational environment should include everyone regardless of organizational size, diversity or location. Decision-making should be decentralized as much as possible.

Due to the highly complex environment of IW, ISR forces should maintain an adaptive, deep, and broad view of ISR operational capabilities. ISR forces need to embrace information collected from a variety of sources with an eye on those sources in the best position to provide or collect information to fill intelligence gaps. Care should be given to validate the credibility of these various sources in order to overcome adversary denial and deception and information operations.

Although [rules of engagement](#) (ROE) and operational objectives drive operations, analysts should craft their intelligence requirements to account for both available kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities to prevent adverse effects on the population. Analysts should recognize an increased need to make correlations between various development projects and levels of cooperation with local nationals. Additionally, ISR forces should be aware that one of the basic underpinnings of successful IW operations is the capability to train partners to conduct independent operations and participate in coalition operations.

IW conflicts are historically protracted. The IW force should be able to maintain a steady-state rotation policy throughout a decade or more of conflict. Air Force global integrated ISR is well suited to steady-state IW operations because of its capability to leverage distributed operations. Currently, many of the Air Force's global integrated ISR positions are operating from home station. Overseas contingency operations require Air Force global integrated ISR forces and capabilities that are as competent and capable in IW as they are in conventional warfare.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *USAF ISR Strategy: ISR in Irregular Warfare Annex* (2 Jul 2009). Derived from Gen Stanley McCrystal's "It Takes a Network," *Foreign Policy*, 2011.