

NEWS FROM THE CTC

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Intelligence Support to Sustainment

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Introduction:

Today's Army Logisticians rely on a robust intelligence enterprise to provide timely and accurate information to deter threats and minimize interruptions to sustainment operations. Within combat sustainment support battalions (CSSBs), the intelligence cell is required to provide intelligence information to support current and future operations and plans. The Army's active duty and reserve CSSBs test this support requirement regularly at the combat training centers (CTCs).

This article will discuss the intelligence war fighting function in CSSBs during sustainment operations in the decisive action training (DATE) scenario 2.2. The author uses her recent experiences at the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California and the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, Louisiana, to highlight the methods in which a CSSB S-2 can be successful at CTCs.

This article address the gap in and academic literature regarding intelligence support to sustainment operations at CTC rotations and provides a list of actions required of a CSSB S-2 to ensure successful operations. This article begins by discussing the role of the CSSB in DATE 2.2, followed by an analysis of the relationship between the CSSB S-2 with the brigade combat team (BCT) S-2 and battalion (BN) S-2s, the role of enablers in security operations, and the importance of information collection during convoy operations. It concludes with recommendations for future CSSB S-2s at CTC rotations.

DATE 2.2 and the CSSB:

The Army published DATE 2.2 in April 2015 to provide Soldiers and units with a realistic training experience regarding threats that BCTs will face in a conventional or hybrid-threat environment. The CTCs previously focused on preparing Soldiers and units for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, heavily integrating counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine. DATE 2.2 focuses instead on the hybrid threat of a near-peer conventional military threat, coupled with regional non-state actors, and criminal elements. "The newly implemented [DATE] presents that complex environment where the core competencies of combined arms maneuver and wide-area security must constantly be balanced by agile commanders through the execution of mission command."ⁱ Adapted to meet the training expectations for current and future conflicts, DATE 2.2 prepares units to fight an array of actors in austere environments.

There are several critical tasks that the CSSB S-2 must perform in order to support the battalion: provide both short-term and long-term threat assessments, support operations and initiatives that may mitigate the improvised explosive device (IED) threat; coordinate for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets to provide

direct support or peripheral coverage for convoys; and leverage convoys as ISR assets to contribute to the overall intelligence picture.

To accomplish these critical tasks the CSSB S-2 must consider three factors in regards to intelligence support to sustainment operations: (1) harmonizing the relationship with the forward-deployed brigade and subordinate battalion S-2s, (2) developing interoperability with enablers, and (3) conducting intelligence briefs and debriefs for all tactical convoy operations (TCOs).

Relationship with Higher and Adjacent S-2s

The strength of the relationship between organizations can enhance or weaken both unit's effectiveness. At NTC and JRTC, the BCT does not have tactical control (TACON) of the CSSB, and both units are task organized under 52nd ID, and 21st ID, respectively. As such, the CSSB and BCT should communicate through their higher headquarters for mission command and tasking authority. Yet, due to the non-standard command relationship at CTCs, doing so would severely weaken communication and interoperability. It is imperative that both units develop effective means of communication along intelligence channels to ensure successful integration and mutual support in three particular areas: (1) verifying communication on digital intelligence platforms, (2) maintaining communication with subordinate BN S-2s, and (3) communicating task and purpose with BCT collection management.

Firstly, the CSSB S-2 must develop a relationship with the BCT S-2 and S-6 in order to nest into all BDE-level intelligence communication channels. Doing so will ensure that the S-2 understands the common intelligence picture (CIP) which drives intelligence dissemination process. The BCT S-2, subordinate BN S-2s, and to an extent, the MICO, must communicate on all platforms with the CSSB S-2 during force-on-force. This communication includes but is not limited to: DCGS-A, CPOF, and JCR/BFT. Each system provides a myriad of communication tools to help build the CIP. In addition, the S-2s must link through classified and unclassified internet portals, share drives, and email. A former BCT S-2 noted in response to his experience at NTC that "unit processes that are uniform, understood by all, and 'flatten' the intelligence network through redundancy in analog and digital systems are proven to be the most effective."ⁱⁱ Too often, the CSSB is not included in the BDE's digital hierarchy and must request access early during reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI) at the rotational unit bivouac area at NTC, and intermediate staging base at JRTC. If the CSSB S-2 does not make efforts early on to develop and validate access through S-2 and S-6 cells and frequently validate that access, it is likely that he or she will not have the diverse array of intelligence sharing platforms to communicate and share information horizontally or laterally during force-on-force.

Secondly, the CSSB S-2 must use the information gained from the BDE S-2's CIP and common operation picture (COP) to battle-track the location of each subordinate level

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BN S-2 during each phase of the operation. This is vital to understanding the threat picture along routes as the CSSB conduct tactical convoy operations through those battalion areas of operation (AOs). The CSSB convoys will typically cross through several CO and BN AOs prior to reaching the brigade support area (BSA). It is necessary to determine the threats to the convoy along the routes while the convoy moves through each AO. There is no one better suited to communicate with than the battle-space owner's corresponding S-2. This point evokes the aforementioned requirement to validate communication platforms during RSOI to ensure that the CSSB S-2 has the ability to communicate on a variety of platforms with the subordinate BN S-2s.

Thirdly, the CSSB S-2 must generate and maintain a relationship with the BDE collection manager in order to understand the BDE's processes for requesting ISR assets in support of TCOs. Typically, the collection manager will publish the intelligence synchronization matrix (ISM) daily, projecting templated missions 120 hours out, and require that ISR requests are submitted in as much time. The CSSB S-2 must work with the CSSB S-3 and support operations officer (SPO) in order to anticipate future TCOs that will require support and the S-2 must determine which ISR asset best supports the operation. It is highly recommended that the CSSB S-2 bring an OSRVT to the rotation and integrate it into operations. The CSSB does not have internal unmanned aerial vehicle equipment or personnel, but can leverage lateral systems in order to receive and monitor live video feed. This will require obtaining the named areas of interest (NAI) overlay from the BCT's Annex B, and developing internal NAIs from which to answer the BN PIRs. Together, the S-3 and SPO should inform the S-2 of anticipated mission-requirements to allow him to submit request for ISR coverage. Overall, ISR support to TCOs is a combat multiplier, and requires coordination with the brigade collection manager.

Role of Enablers

At CTCs, it is common for elements of military police (MP) to augment the CSSB and support wide area security operations, information and intelligence collection, and base defense operations. While the CSSB does not have TACON, the MP platoon secures the division support area (DSA) and they are an additional intelligence asset that the CSSB S-2 should capitalize on to gain useful information.

It is vital to understand the mission set of the MPs, to include their tactical relationship with the CSSB, gain rapport with key leaders, and develop a plan to gather and share information on the operating environment (OE). By integrating the MPs and developing a two-way conversation between their leadership and the CSSB S-2 on the battalion's PIRs, the MPs can act as a sensor to develop the threat scenario further.

The MPs act as a hybrid between a military intelligence company's human collection team (HCT) and a company intelligence support team (COIST). While not under the

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CSSB S-2's command, the MPs can still act in those capacities to develop the threat scenario and answer PIRs through routine collection including control points, convoy security, routine patrols, and base defense operations. Specifically, the MPs train on systems that the CSSB S-2 does not have on their modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE), including the Biometrics Automated Toolset (BAT), Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment (HIIDE), and/or Secure Electronic Enrollment Kit systems (SEEK). Employed and maintained by trained operators in the MP company, these systems can assist the S-2 with developing an understanding of the threats in the CSSB's battlespace and further the threat picture.

Furthermore, there may be additional enablers in the DSA that can assist with intelligence collection and/or analysis including joint, interagency, or defense contractors. The new "Combat Sustainment Support Battalion" manual published in June 2017 states that "the S-2 develops a means to collect, analyze and disseminate information from battalion personnel returning from convoy operations and other support missions. This includes any contractors or civilian personnel who participated in the support mission."ⁱⁱⁱ Depending on their mission and availability, these assets may be able to provide information on route analysis, IED trends and patterns, and threat tactics, techniques, and procedures. Notably, the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Organization (JIDO) representatives typically have IED products for DATE 2.2 scenarios at JRTC and NTC which they provide unit S-2s. Use this asset whenever possible.

In summation, enablers including the MPs and contractors can augment the CSSB S-2 to help develop the immediate threat scenario in support of base defense security and tactical convoy operations.

Tactical Convoy Operations

The mission of the CSSB is to provide accurate and predictable logistics support to BCTs across the battlefield. The CSSB S-2 assists with developing the threat scenario through continuous intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). The convoys can assist in developing the IPB by capturing relevant information that the S-2 can analyze to develop actionable intelligence. To accomplish this critical task, the S-2 must be prepared to manage the pre-brief and debrief process.

Firstly, each CSSB's unit TACSOP will address the requirements for a convoy pre-brief, however, an S-2 pre-brief with an intelligence assessment should be a staple requirement. During this brief, provide an overview of the terrain and weather, current enemy disposition, and threat courses of action (COAs) at a minimum. Provide the convoys with collection requirements to focus their attention; each convoy commander (CC), assistant convoy commander (ACC) and troop commander (TC) should be familiar with the Battalion Commander's PIRs prior to departing on his or her mission. Be cautious not to deliberately task Soldiers with intelligence collection – that is not their mission. Instead, articulate an understanding that they are reporting their own

observations of threats to the convoy. A common understanding generated prior to departure will ensure that the Soldiers return with relevant and focused information.

Secondly, upon return of each convoy, the CC or ACC should make contact with the S-2 within an hour after return. The convoy debrief should be an integral part of all tactical convoy operations. It is most effective when the task is included on the S-3's trip ticket as a return requirement. There are several methods to conduct a successful debrief including: debriefing the entire convoy one at a time, debriefing the CC and other key leaders, or debriefing the CC after he or she has consolidated their observations. The last method is most preferred as it limits the number of personnel who have to rotate through the S-2 to participate in the debrief, but still captures the observations of the entire convoy. Nevertheless, sometimes the CC will not actively collect all the observations during the debrief, so it is recommended that you spot-check by discussing observations with the TCs. By spot-checking the convoy, you can ensure that the S-2 is receiving accurate and complete information.

Recommendations for Future CTC Rotations

While the aforementioned points address several recommendations for S-2s at the NTC and the JRTC that were applied by the author, the following methods, namely the expansion of the intelligence cell through the development of COISTs or battalion intelligence support teams (BISTs), are recommended for S-2s on future CTC rotations.

The updated CSSB manual, ATP 4-93.1, discusses the CSSB's functional cells by war fighting function, including the task and purpose of the intelligence cell. Doctrinally, this cell must "request, receive, and analyze information from all sources to produce and distribute intelligence products."^{iv} The intelligence cell is not robust; in fact, often the CSSB S-2 section is undermanned, with two or three personnel covering down on 24/7 intelligence coverage, analysis, and dissemination. While it is unlikely that authorization documents will change to include more analysts or equipment, the S-2 OIC should creatively expand using resources at his or her disposal. The creation and utilization of a COIST or a BIST may alleviate the burden of a small S-2 section, while assisting with information collection at the lowest level. Through the implementation, standardization, and application of these teams, the S-2 may be better able to provide the commander with an accurate intelligence picture.

The COIST, which operates at the company level, may assist the battalion S-2 with collecting information, developing intelligence products, and generating PIRs and intelligence RFIs. The COIST, led by the XO or another designated leader at the company-level with a small team of support personnel may be able to provide a reachback link for information collection. They can also pose as the direct link to the company in order to collect convoy debrief observations. This is most important when the companies are not co-located across the battlefield. In the event that the CSSB companies are geographically separated, each COIST can provide vital information for the S-2. The U.S. Army Company Intelligence Support Team (COIST) Handbook

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outlines the recommend task and purposes of a COIST in a BCT, which serves as a baseline that a CSSB can adopt. While different in structure, the task and purpose largely remains the same. The COIST is another enabler to assist the S-2 with driving intelligence operations.

The collective COISTs make up the BIST and operate as an integrated system for intelligence analysis, collection, and dissemination. Each TCO should have a COIST representative whose mission during TCOs is to assist with information collection in order to assist the BN S-2 with convoy debriefs at the end of the mission. He or she should also be prepared to liaison with the BSB S-2 staged at the BSA. The COIST representative should update the convoy commander or the assistant convoy commander with intelligence prior to departure back to the DSA or their next location. This is paramount, especially in circumstances of limited communication or extended lines of communication that prohibit the effective use of FM or JCR communications. The BIST representative then collects the information and provides a detailed report to the S-2, including recommended updates to the PIRs which may in turn drive intelligence collections efforts and support to future operations.

Conclusion

The CSSB S-2 is fundamental to ensuring “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”^v through continuous analysis of the threat factors. By harmonizing the relationship with the BCT S-2s, developing interoperability and leveraging enablers, and by utilizing the tactical convoys as ISR assets for further intelligence analysis, the CSSB S-2 can ensure that he or she is successful in supporting the battalion in all operations.

Biography:

CPT Elizabeth A. Brunette served as the executive officer for the military intelligence company and S-2 of the 173rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) Special Troops Battalion from June 2014 to March 2016. She is currently the S-2 of the 87th Command Sustainment Support Battalion in the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, GA. She is a distinguished graduate of the Maneuver Captain’s Career Course at Fort Benning, and her military education also includes the Military Intelligence Basic Officer Leadership Course and the Advanced Airborne Course. CPT Brunette holds a bachelor of science in Comparative Politics from the U.S. Military Academy.

ⁱ Paul T. Calvert, Col AR, "Commander NTC Operations Group." NTC Decisive Action Training Environment, Vol II, 13 December 2014.

ⁱⁱ Ch 14, "Intelligence Standard Operating Procedures and Success at the National Training Center." – MAJ Kelly Mitchell DATE at the NTC, Vol III. 15 September 2017.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Combat Sustainment Support Battalion," ATP 4-93.1. 19 June 2017, 1-9.

^{iv} "Combat Sustainment Support Battalion," ATP 4-93.1. 19 June 2017, 2-5.

^v "Intelligence Support Teams' Support to Logistics Organizations," Army Sustainment Magazine, accessed July 15, 2017, <https://www.army.mil/article/117844>.

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