



Priority Intelligence Requirement Management in Divisions and Corps

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Introduction

In modern large-scale combat operations (LSCO), the sheer volume of data from intelligence collection sensors overwhelms division and corps G2s, making it difficult to distinguish critical information from irrelevant data. With critical decisions hanging in the balance, the intelligence picture may be fragmented and unclear. This scenario highlights a persistent challenge for the U.S. Army: effectively managing priority intelligence requirements (PIRs) – the key questions that drive intelligence collection and analysis.

While PIRs are the cornerstone of focused intelligence efforts in LSCO and multi-domain operations (MDO), units often struggle to create, refine, and assess them effectively. This struggle stems not only from unclear roles and responsibilities within the G2 but also from the difficulties in adapting PIRs to rapidly changing enemy situations. This paper argues that implementing a standardized PIR management process, coupled with clearly defined G2 roles and responsibilities, will enable more effective intelligence analysis and decision-making during LSCO.

Optimizing PIR Management for Enhanced Decision-Making

PIRs enable commanders to identify critical intelligence gaps that hinder operational success.¹ By focusing on essential information at the right time and domain, PIRs empower commanders to seize the initiative, respond to threats, and adapt to dynamic operational environments.² At the division and corps echelon, PIRs drive the analysis and collection of tactical, operational, and strategic intelligence, informing the synchronization of joint and multinational forces. In the complex information environment of LSCO and MDO, PIRs focus intelligence staff and assets, ensuring commanders make informed decisions. Furthermore, PIRs provide a framework for prioritizing information collection in resource-constrained environments, enabling commanders to mitigate risk, anticipate threats, and exploit opportunities in near real-time.

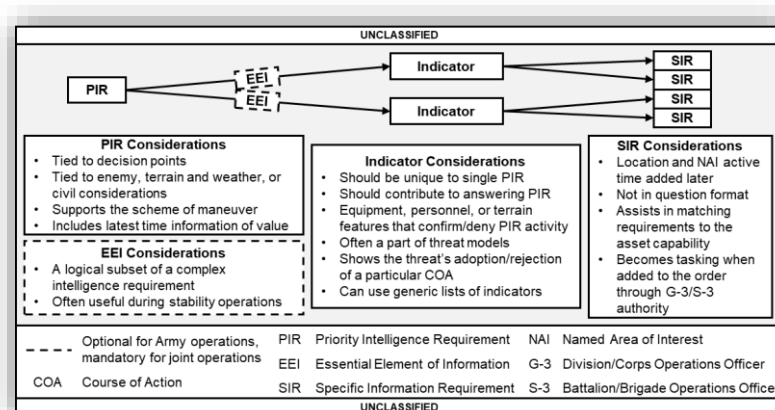
Effective intelligence operations require a flexible collection plan focused on the right requirements.³ This necessitates a whole-of-staff approach, leveraging diverse expertise. Doctrine assigns PIR responsibility to the intelligence officer, supported by the staff.⁴ However, a common challenge is delegating PIRs to a single G2 section without fully considering PIR components or the broader role of other G2 sections across planning horizons. The G2 must ensure efficient internal processes to enable the staff effort.

The G2 can improve PIR management and better support commanders by addressing three key areas. First, expand PIR management beyond the Analysis and Control Element (ACE) to include input from other key intelligence personnel throughout the planning process. Intelligence plans and G2 current operations (CUOPs) are crucial for

shaping effective PIR management. Second, adopt a holistic view of PIRs, considering all their components. This comprehensive understanding informs decisions about who best creates, refines, and assesses PIRs. Finally, the G2 must establish clear roles and responsibilities for PIR management and ensure collaboration across all sections. Current Army doctrine, while offering some guidance in ATP 2-01 (Table 2-1), primarily focuses on collection management and overlooks the roles of the ACE and fusion chiefs. While ATP 2-19.3 discusses the fusion element's role in requirement development, it lacks detailed guidance on PIR management collaboration and synchronization.⁵

Challenges in Translating PIRs into Actionable Intelligence

PIRs, while providing essential direction, are often too broad for effective daily intelligence work. The information collection matrix (ICM) and PIR crosswalk process (ATP 2-01, Table 2-3, graphic below) translate PIRs into actionable tasks.⁶ By breaking PIRs into specific indicators and specific information requirements (SIRs), the G2 focuses analysis, drives targeted collection, measures progress, and facilitates analyst-collector collaboration. This granular approach ensures efficient resource use and delivers timely, relevant intelligence to the commander.



Graphic: UNCLASSIFIED

Figure 1 (U) PIR to SIR Crosswalk, ATP 2-01 (August 2021), Figure 3.2

ATP 2-19.3 (Chapter 2) outlines G2 section contributions to requirement development but lacks detailed roles during this complex process.⁷ An indicator, in intelligence usage, is information reflecting an adversary's intention or capability regarding a specific course of action.⁸ Identifying and monitoring indicators, often forward-looking or predictive, are fundamental to intelligence analysis and avoiding surprise.⁹ While important for collection management, indicators are not specific enough to focus collection requirements. Instead, indicators help analysts create SIRs to support single-source analysts and collection managers.

A SIR specifies the information required, based on an indicator, within a specific time and location, that, when collected, could partially or fully answer an intelligence requirement.¹⁰ Crucially, SIRs allow collection management teams to align assets to confirm or deny a PIR. Representing the intersection of collection management and

analysis, SIRs form the basis for submitting collection requirements, ensuring focused use of limited assets and directing single-source analysts toward targeted analysis. This component perspective highlights the importance of involving the entire G2 for successful PIR management.

Too often, PIRs are delegated to a single G2 section without adequate contributions from other sections, neglecting their supporting roles in PIR management across planning horizons. This lack of clarity creates ineffective and inefficient support to the commander. While the G2 senior intelligence officer should ensure staff involvement, the larger issue is how G2 sections assign and manage PIRs internally. A disconnect between intelligence analysis and collection management degrades the overall effectiveness of intelligence support.¹¹

PIR Management and Intelligence Planning

Effective intelligence integration across planning horizons requires commanders and staff to synchronize processes, including intelligence preparation of the operating environment (IPOE) and information collection.¹² Beyond the ACE, intelligence planners and G2 CUOPs play vital roles in PIR management. G5/G2 intelligence planners, possessing the deepest understanding of the maneuver plan, contribute to developing and refining commander's decision points (DPs). They participate in discussions about transitions and supporting DPs, linking commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs) and PIRs to these points.¹³ Early planner coordination with the G2 senior intelligence officer (SIO) and ACE supports predictive analysis and collection management, including generating an initial collection plan with PIRs as an MDMP Step 2 output.¹⁴

ACE/Fusion sections develop the event template, supporting planners by identifying intelligence gaps relative to friendly force planning. Early intelligence planner involvement in PIR creation and refinement supports ACE predictive analysis and enables the collection management team to develop the collection plan and associated tools. Because PIR development begins at the start of the MDMP, synchronization with the planner is critical.¹⁵ The intelligence planner's participation in Army planning methodologies and their comprehensive understanding of operations and adversary problem sets makes their involvement in PIR management essential.

G2 CUOPs are ideally positioned to monitor adversary actions and assess collection effectiveness, enabling proactive PIR management. Integrating G2 CUOPs and collection operations management personnel ensures responsiveness to the evolving operational environment. While division and corps operations differ, each G2 must clearly define roles for PIR refinement and evaluation.

Defining G2 Roles and Responsibilities for PIR Management

A recurring challenge for G2s is synchronizing the collection management process, particularly PIR management. Unclear roles and responsibilities often lead to redundant work, unfocused analysis and collection, reactive requirements management, and

information overload. Observations from the Mission Command Training Program (MCTP) and Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) publications highlight issues such as underdeveloped PIRs, poor G2 synchronization, and infrequent PIR updates, ultimately impacting decision-making and the ability to gain information advantage. CALL publications, including “Properly Refining PIRs” and “Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIRs),” identify consequences of poorly managed PIRs, such as diminished decision-making timeliness and quality, and missed opportunities to gain information advantage and decision dominance.^{16 17 18 19}

The collection manager is responsible for the timely and efficient tasking of organic collection resources and developing requirements for theater and national assets.²⁰ The collection management team (CMT) executes information collection (IC) operations. However, especially during LSCO, the CMT often lacks the organic manning to perform all required IC functions. While CMT manning and roles support initial IC efforts, without well-defined G2 and staff support, continuous PIR creation, refinement, and assessment overwhelm its capacity. The CMT manages IC tools but relies on subject matter experts to lead PIR development. While current collection management doctrine does not explicitly define the ACE's role in IC operations, ATP 2-19.3 specifies that division and corps fusion cells develop and recommend requirements related to the operational environment.²¹

The fusion cell, typically the most heavily manned section within the division or corps G2, possesses the capacity and expertise to sustain IC and collection management activities, specifically managing PIRs and indicators. The fusion element develops and recommends requirements related to threats, terrain, weather, and civil considerations; develops and presents the enemy situation; and maintains the intelligence estimate.²² These roles position the fusion cell to monitor the evolving enemy situation for refinement and assessments while focusing on predictive analysis and identifying future intelligence gaps.

Most G2 single-source and all-source analytical capabilities reside outside the collection management section. SIRs, relying on single-source analysts, are necessary for creating collection requirements, ensuring prioritization, and using finite resources efficiently. SIR development requires detailed knowledge of specific intelligence disciplines, often exceeding the scope of all-source or collection analysts. Collection management should oversee SIR development and assist in writing or coordinating with single-source support. This aspect of the PIR crosswalk process is vital for focusing single-source analysts on key priorities.

Effective PIR management requires clear roles and synchronized efforts. The G2 must assign PIR component development to the fusion cell (analysis and indicators) and single-source analysts (SIRs), with the CMT overseeing collaboration. This directly supports faster, more informed decision-making.

A Collaborative Approach to PIR Management

The G2 should manage PIRs by component, leveraging the fusion cell's responsibility for creating and refining PIRs and indicators. Collection management should participate in all information and intelligence requirement discussions to ensure efficient collection

strategies and support IC tool development. The fusion cell's analysis of the operating environment and predictive analysis are crucial for formulating and refining information requirements into intelligence requirements, including PIRs. The collection management team supports this effort but focuses on managing collection requirements, supporting intelligence requirements, and maintaining IC tools.

SIR development should be a collaborative effort between the collection management team and single-source subject matter experts (SMEs). Collection managers understand collection capabilities and the process of converting intelligence requirements into collection requirements, while single-source SMEs provide detailed disciplinary knowledge. Defining PIR component responsibilities from the outset of mission analysis and incorporating them into unit standard operating procedures (SOPs) will improve efficiency.

Collaboration between the ACE chief and fusion chief ensures initial feedback and approval before PIRs reach the G2 SIO for review. PIR creation should involve the intelligence planner, with early ACE feedback, to guide initial intelligence efforts. This early planning phase is crucial for collaboration with G2 planners, synchronizing with operations, and keeping the G2 informed.

G2 CUOPs must assess the effectiveness of existing PIRs. Positioned to observe ISR mission management execution, G2 CUOPs can evaluate whether collection efforts inform decision-makers. While the fusion cell ultimately evaluates PIR success through assessments, G2 CUOPs play a crucial supporting role.

Effective, collaborative PIR management requires the G2 SIO to clearly delineate roles and responsibilities. Units must train *all* G2 personnel involved in PIR management across current operations to future operations planning horizons. This comprehensive training, including establishing SOPs to codify roles and responsibilities, is essential to prevent stovepiped PIR management.

Conclusion

PIRs guide intelligence efforts and inform commander decision-making. While commanders approve and prioritize PIRs, effective management requires a coordinated G2 effort beyond simply assigning the task to a single section. The complexity of PIRs, especially in LSCO and MDO environments, demands a holistic approach, leveraging the expertise of the entire G2.

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are crucial for effective PIR development, refinement, and assessment. The fusion cell must lead PIR creation and indicator development. Single-source analysts must actively develop SIRs. The CMT must remain continuously engaged. Critically, the G2 must integrate intelligence planners and CUOPs into PIR management across all planning horizons. By implementing these recommendations and establishing clear SOPs, the G2 can transcend a compartmentalized approach and ensure a truly collaborative and synchronized effort. This optimized process delivers timely, relevant, and accurate intelligence, empowering commanders to achieve decision dominance in a complex future battlespace.

Endnotes

¹ FM 2-0, Intelligence, October 2023, para 1-34.

² Ibid, para 3-7.

³ Ibid, para 1-124.

⁴ FM 5-0, Planning and Orders Production, November 2024, para 1-84.

⁵ ATP 2-19.3, Corps and Division Intelligence Techniques, March 2023, para 2-45.

⁶ ATP 2-01.3, Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield, March 2019, table 2-3.

⁷ Ibid, chapter 2.

⁸ FM 2-0, Intelligence, October 2023, para 5-63.

⁹ ATP 2-01.3, Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield, March 2019, para 6-61.

¹⁰ ATP 2-01, Collection Management, August 2021, para 3-12.

¹¹ ATP 2-33.4, Intelligence Analysis, January 2020, para 1-32.

¹² FM 5-0, Planning and Orders Production, November 2024, appendix G-1.

¹³ FM 2-0, Intelligence, October 2023, para 8-22.

¹⁴ ATP 2-01, Collection Management, August 2021, para 3-4.

¹⁵ Ibid, table 4-1.

¹⁶ FY22 MCTP Mission Command Training in Large Scale Combat Operations Key Observations, March 2023, pg 28.

¹⁷ FY23 MCTP Mission Command Training in Large Scale Combat Operations Key Observations, March 2024, pg 31, 35.

¹⁸ Center for Army Lessons Learned, Handbook Number 22-712, News From the Front, Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIRs), 2022, pg 1, para 3.

¹⁹ Center for Army Lessons Learned, Handbook Number 24-832, The Importance of Refining Priority Intelligence Requirements for Mission Success, Oct 2023, pg 8, para 1.

²⁰ ATP 2-01, Collection Management, August 2021, para 2-2.

²¹ ATP 2-19.3, Corps and Division Intelligence Techniques, March 2023, para 2-45.

²² Ibid.

