

TEXT 7

Military Intelligence

Military intelligence is an agency of the armed forces that obtains, analyzes, and uses information of strategic or tactical military value. It focuses on information gathering, control, and dissemination about enemy units, terrain, and the weather in an area of operations. The information about the armed forces of another country is useful in terms of planning and conducting military policy or military operations.

Most armed forces maintain military intelligence structures such as staff divisions, departments, or sections. Officers and enlisted personnel assigned to military intelligence are selected for their analytical abilities and the ability to keep secrets. They receive appropriate training in order to develop these skills.

The general method of military intelligence is to package information to support decisions taken by policy-makers. Once the relevant information is available, standard procedures provide a very good set of tactical options. The value that expert policy-makers add is their ability to neutralize opponents' decisions and advantages by anticipating them.

A good intelligence officer is often quite annoying to a commander, insistently questioning the commander about the commander's intentions and desires with regard to tactics and strategy. Another major goal of military intelligence analysts is to reduce the time that decisions take. Military policy decisions come in two basic forms: tactical and strategic.

Military intelligence provides timely, relevant, accurate, and synchronized intelligence and electronic warfare (IEW) support to leaders at all levels across the range of military operations. In war, IEW operations support the winning of battles and campaigns. In low-intensity conflicts, IEW operations support the promotion of peace, the resolution of conflict, and deterrence of war.

The ever-changing and unpredictable international environment has made the role of the intelligence professional more crucial than ever, and the mission of understanding the threat and advising decision-makers on the capabilities and intentions of potential adversaries has become critical at all levels, including tactical, operational, and strategic.

Military intelligence officers command military intelligence units and serve not only within the structures of military intelligence but also in staffs of all services. Selection for service in the military intelligence corps is highly competitive, and there is no single qualification or course of study that ensures selection. Military intelligence officers must be versatile and able to take on the variety of challenges that face an intelligence officer in today's armed forces. Military intelligence officers are expected to know, understand, and function in all intelligence disciplines at all levels – tactical, operational, and strategic.