

# *Improving Capabilities for Operations in the Information Environment*

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*Information Forces and Intelligence Support*

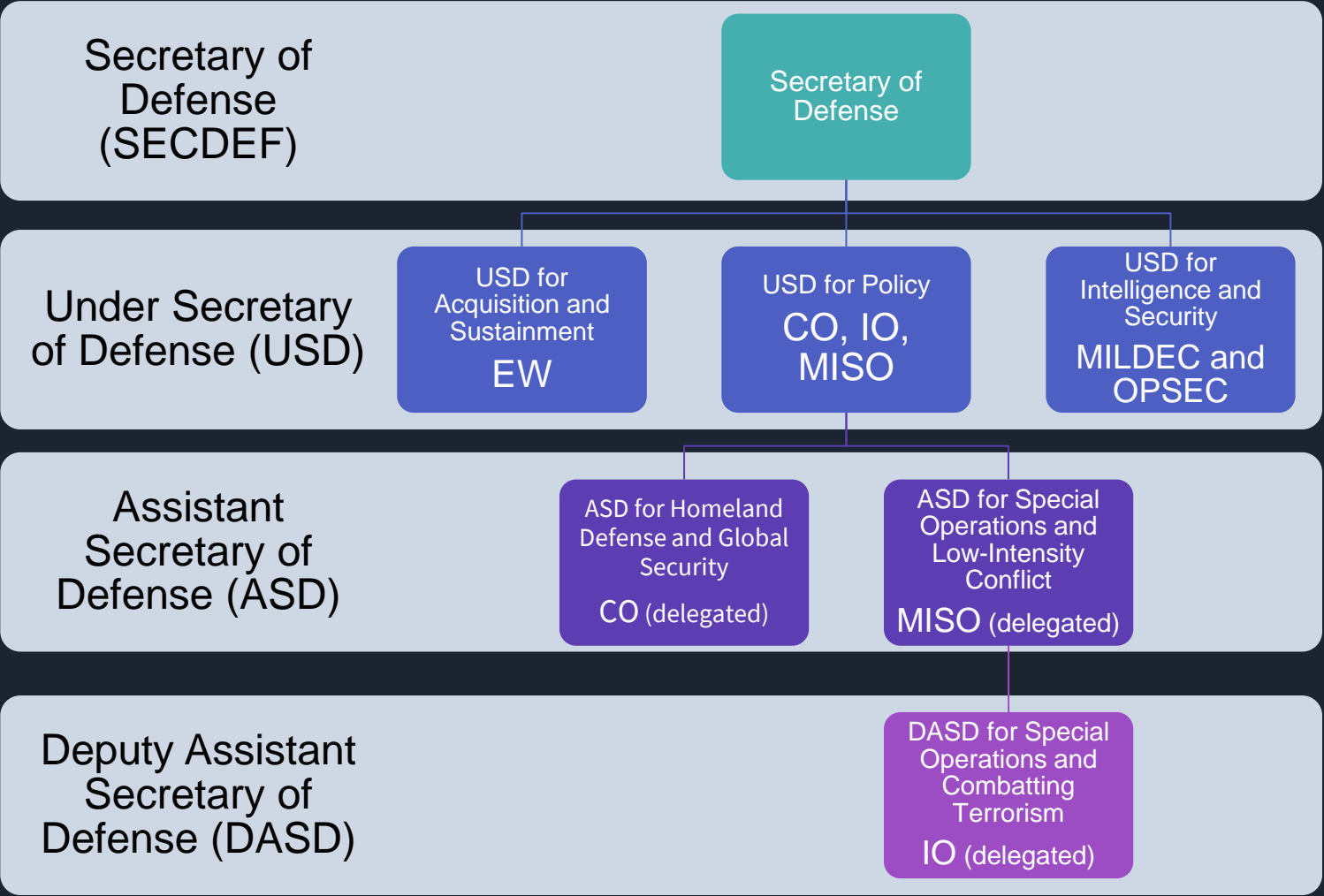
*Mike Schwille and Christopher Paul*

# *Requirements for Information Forces*

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- **The requirement for Information Forces has been building for some time**
  - Information Operations Roadmap – 2003
  - Information Operations Reviews – 2003, 2009, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2019
  - DoD Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment – 2016
  - Information added as a joint function – 2017
  - Joint Concept for Operations in the Information Environment – 2018
  - GAO Report, “Information Operations: DOD Should Improve Leadership and Integration Efforts”- 2019
  - National Defense Authorization Acts
- **This brief brings together findings from two separate efforts**
  - RAND Report, “Improving Intelligence Support for Operations in the Information Environment”
  - JFQ Article, “The Evolution of Special Operations as a model for Information Forces”

# There are Many Stovepipes Within the Information Community

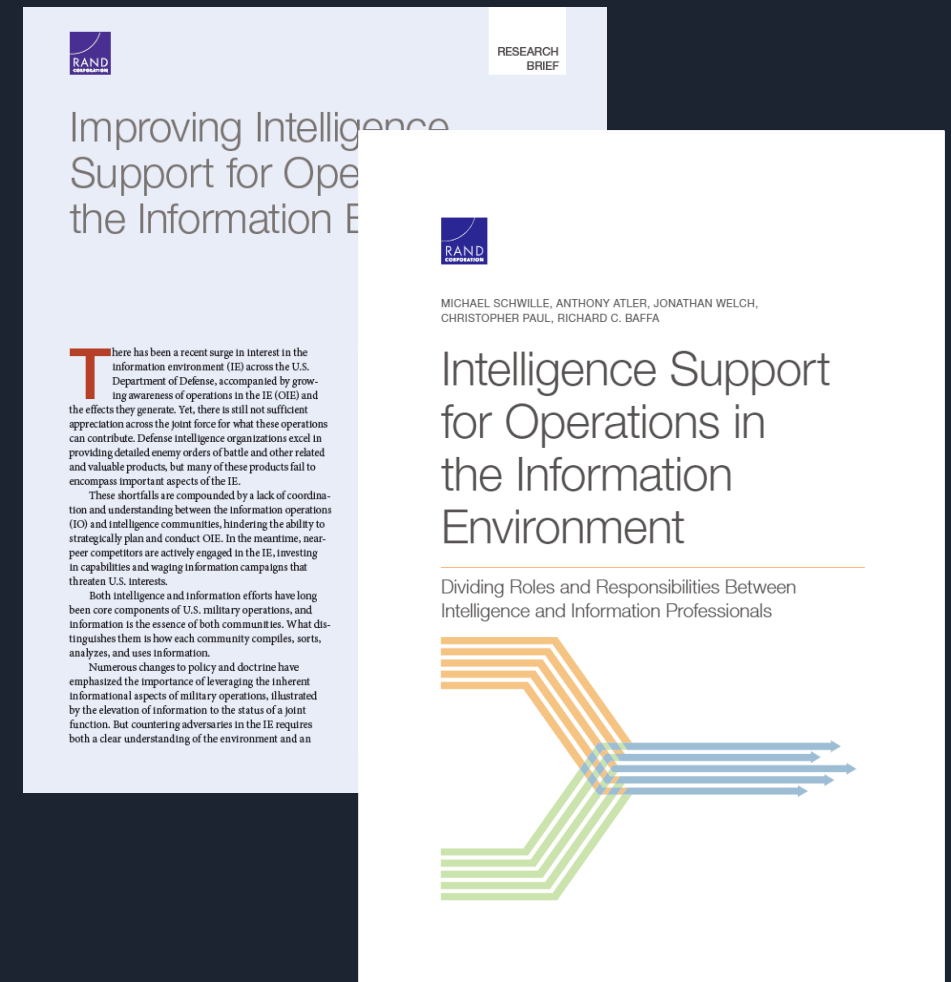


EW – Electromagnetic Warfare  
 CO – Cyberspace Operations  
 IO - Information Operations  
 MISO – Military Information Support Operations  
 MILDEC – Military Deception  
 OPSEC – Operations Security

Army DOTMLPF-P Functional Process Responsibilities	
Designated Area	Force Modernization Proponent
Civil Affairs	Commander, U.S. Army Special Operations Center of Excellence
Cyber Operations	Commander, U.S. Army Cyber Center of Excellence
Electronic Warfare	Commander, U.S. Army Cyber Center of Excellence
Information Operations	Commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center
Intelligence	Commander, U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence
Military Deception	Commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center
Military Information Support Operations	Commander, U.S. Special Operations Center of Excellence
Operations Security	Commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center
Public Affairs	Chief, Public Affairs

# Background

This study was asked to –  
Identify and refine the challenges,  
requirements, and opportunities to improve  
intelligence support to operations in the  
information environment in order to help  
the joint force (specifically the geographic  
combatant commands) better organize,  
invest, conduct and support this important  
mission



Report and Research Brief were released in  
December 2020 can be found at -  
[https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR3161.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3161.html)

# *Bottom Line Up Front*

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- The intelligence and information communities are beset by challenges that impede close coordination
- The greatest friction point between these communities is over whose responsibility it is to collect and conduct the analysis necessary to support Operations in the Information Environment (OIE)
- We identified six types of challenges that hinder support for OIE and four ways to improve support
- The responsibility for fixing these challenges falls equally on both intelligence and information professionals

# *Challenges to Improving Intelligence Support to OIE*

## Coordination and Collaboration

- Lack of mutual understanding, underdeveloped or nonexistent relationships, and immature or absent shared processes

## Division of Labor

- Challenges stem from tensions over who should be responsible for staffing decisions and information fusion, and expectations regarding analytic rigor

## Missing Expertise

- Gaps in the skills and knowledge necessary for effective analysis of the IE are largely a result of shortfalls in training and education

## Prioritization

- Challenges stem from a failure to sufficiently prioritize intelligence and IO integration of the IE
- Requirements could be met but are not because resources are allocated elsewhere

## Gaps in Concepts or Doctrine

- New concepts have been disseminated at both the joint and service levels, accompanying doctrine is being written
- When doctrine and concepts are in a state of flux, practice inevitably lags

## Intelligence Authorities

- Rules and oversight mechanisms that apply to the intelligence community may have implications for open-source intelligence collection in support of OIE

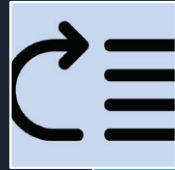
# Four Approaches to Improving Intelligence Support to OIE



## Improve Processes

### 26 Solutions

- Process solutions address shortcomings or deficiencies in existing processes in the intelligence and IO communities
- Improve support for OIE by increasing mutual awareness of processes and practices across the two communities



## Prioritize Support

### 16 Solutions

- Prioritization solutions address gaps in support for OIE due to low priority or competition for resources and attention at all level
- Ensure that intelligence requests are vetted for importance and clarity, prioritize analytic support for OIE, and ensure that intelligence products are relevant and useful



## Train and Educate

### 13 Solutions

- Training and education solutions address gaps in expertise and understanding of intelligence requirements for OIE
- Promote a common lexicon, provide OIE-specific training to intelligence professionals about targeting and the production of intelligence estimates



## Allocate Personnel

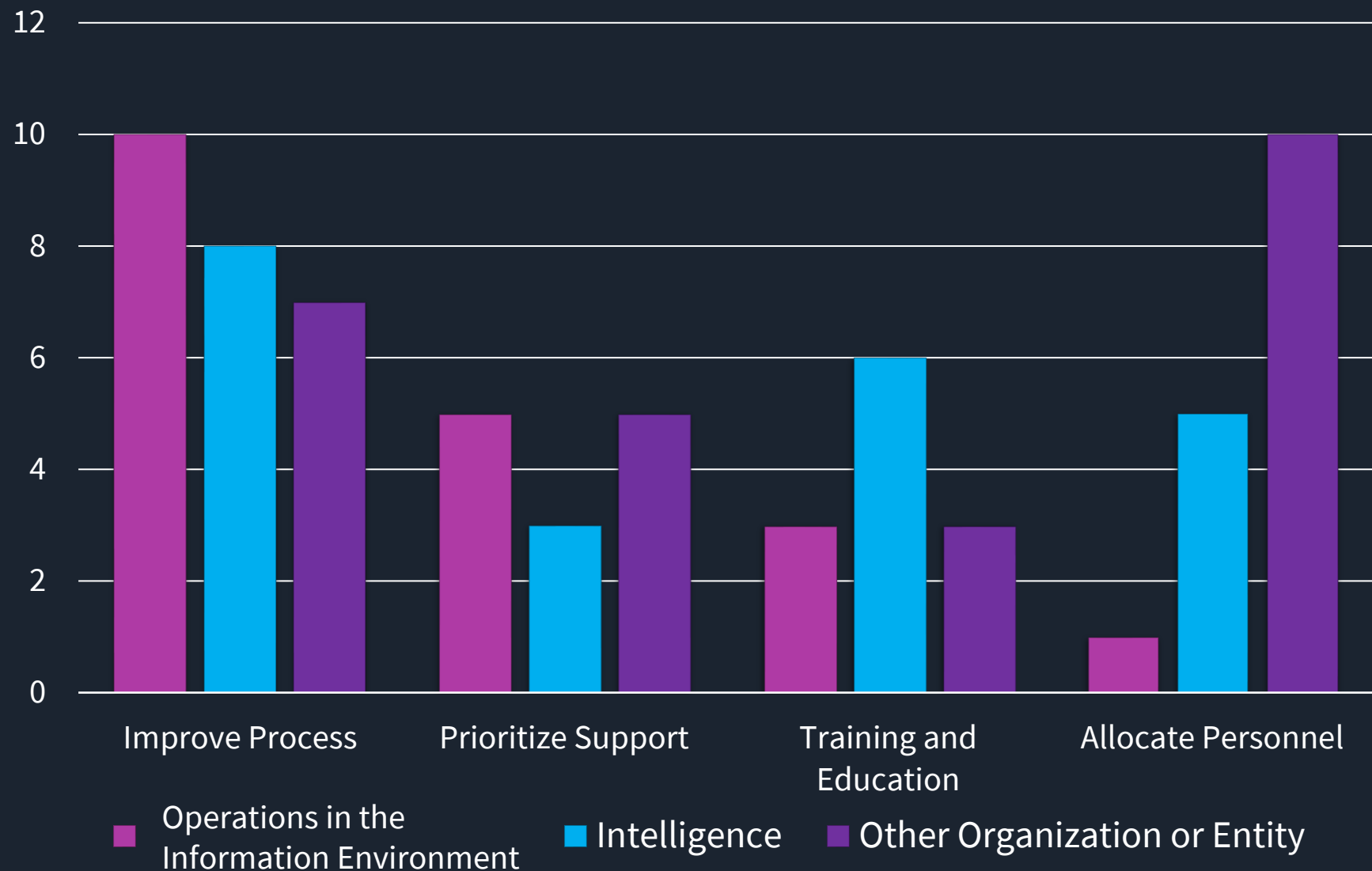
### 12 Solutions

- Address manpower shortages in the near term. Need to intelligence professionals dedicated to OIE support
- Dedicate personnel to IE-related intelligence requirements, designate a liaison to improve coordination, create cross-functional teams and clearly assign responsibilities

68 unique solutions - each issue had at least one solution, many had multiple



# *Who should be responsible for fixing the identified issues?*





# *Key Findings*

- The information community needs to work to increase understanding and awareness of operations in the information environment (OIE) within the intelligence community to bring about improvements in how these operations are planned and conducted
- Challenges to meeting the intelligence needs of OIE fall into six categories: coordination and collaboration, division of labor, missing expertise, prioritization, gaps in concepts or doctrine, and intelligence authorities
- Intelligence and information professionals need to work together to address these challenges; this is a two-side problem that requires a two-sided solution
- Potential solutions will require improving processes, prioritizing support for OIE and associated capability integration, expanding training and education opportunities for personnel involved with OIE, and allocating personnel appropriately

# *The Evolution of Special Operations as a Model for Information Forces*

What can the history of SOF teach us about the future of information forces?



techniques during austere high-altitude environment training, at Knik Glacier, Alaska, September 11, 2020 (Naval Special Warfare Group One)

## The Evolution of Special Operations as a Model for Information Forces

By Christopher E. Paul and Michael Schuille

Christopher E. Paul is a Senior Social Scientist at RAND. Michael Schuille is a Senior Policy Analyst at RAND.

U.S. special operations forces (SOF) withered from perennial neglect before a dedicated combatant command—U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)—was created, an assistant secretary was appointed, and major force program funding was allocated. This article draws an analogy between historical SOF and contemporary information forces and suggests that the history and evolution of SOF could serve as a possible model and provide cautionary lessons for the future development of information forces.

Information and the information environment are ascendant in Department of Defense (DOD) concepts and conversations. There has been a great deal of productive thinking related to the

# *The History and Evolution of Special Operations Forces*

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- The history of SOF was a boom-and-bust cycle, where forces developed and were valued during periods of conflict, then neglected and allowed to wither
  - SOF were the responsibility of the services, but service priorities always trumped SOF needs
  - SOF lacked MOSs, clear career progressions
  - SOF suffered from being of “precarious value” to the services
- A series of high-profile catalysts prompted congressional intervention
  - The 1983 catastrophe at Desert One, misuse during Urgent Fury in 1983
- 1986 Nunn-Cohen Amendment and subsequent legislation put in the structure present today
  - Established USSOCOM, ASD SO/LIC, and MFP-11

# *Many Parallels Between Contemporary Information Forces and Historical SOF*

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- Information Forces feel a lot like pre- Nunn-Cohen SOF
  - Not a coherent force (see earlier “stovepipe” slide)
  - Career fields disaggregated; career trajectories unclear
  - Do not have an institutional home, nor do they have a single unified policy champion or advocate
  - Suffer from a lack of resources, low priorities for personnel
  - Suffer from being of “precarious value”
- BUT, some notable differences: lack of a shared identity (all SOF are commandos), lack of catalytic failures
- Following a SOF model could be one way to increase DOD’s effectiveness in OIE
- It would be better to get there without the catastrophes or the acrimony

# *Lessons for Information Forces from the SOF Model*

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- Information forces need a unified organizational home
  - Could be a new command like (USSOCOM), or could be an existing command re-branded and re-missioned
  - Could centralize training, personnel and careers, advocacy, etc.
- Need a high-level dedicated advocate, like ASD/SO-LIC
  - This could be the PIOA or something like it
- Need an independent funding stream, protected from re-prioritization by the services
  - MFP-12?



# Questions?

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