Chapter 5
Preparation

5-1. Preparation consists of those activities performed by units and Soldiers to improve their ability to execute an operation (ADP 5-0). Preparation creates conditions that improve friendly force opportunities for success. Because many IO objectives and IRC tasks require long lead times to create desired effects, preparation for IO often starts earlier than for other types of operations. Initial preparation for specific IRCs and IO units (such as 1st IO Command or a Theater IO Group) may begin during peacetime.

5-2. Peacetime preparation by units or capabilities involves building contingency plan databases about the anticipated area of operations. These databases can be used for IO input to IPB and to plan IO to defend friendly intentions, such as network protection and operations security (OPSEC). IO portions of contingency plans are continuously updated. Normal IO working group participants maintain their own data to provide the IO officer with the latest information.

5-3. During peacetime, IO officers prepare for future operations by analyzing anticipated area(s) of operations' information environment and likely threat information capabilities. Examples of factors to consider include, but are not limited to—

- Religious, ethnic, and cultural mores, norms, and values.
- Non-military communications infrastructure and architecture.
- Military communication and command and control infrastructure and architecture.
- Military training and level of proficiency (to determine susceptibility to denial, deception, and IO).
- Literacy rate.
- Formal and informal organizations exerting influence and leaders within these organizations.
- Ethnic factional relationships and languages.

5-4. Preparation includes assessing unit readiness to execute IO. Commanders and staffs monitor preparations and evaluate them against criteria established during planning to determine variances. This assessment forecasts the effects these factors have on readiness to execute the overall operation as well as individual IRC tasks.

5-5. Preparation for IO takes place at three levels: staff (IO officer), IRC units or elements, and individual. The IO officer helps prepare for IO by performing staff tasks and monitoring preparations by IRC units or elements. These units perform preparation activities as a group for tasks that involve the entire unit, and as individuals for tasks that each soldier and leader must complete.

5-6. Chapter 3 of ADRP 5-0 provides a comprehensive overview of preparation activities. The activities most relevant to conducting IO include—

- Improve situational understanding.
- Revise and refine plans and orders.
- Conduct coordination and liaison.
- Initiate information collection.
- Initiate security operations.
- Initiate troop movements.
- Initiate network preparation.
- Manage and prepare terrain.
- Conduct confirmation briefs.
- Conduct rehearsals.

IMPROVE SITUATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

5-7. The IO officer/element must understand and share their understanding of the information environment with the commander and staff. During preparation, information collection begins, which helps to validate assumptions and improve situational understanding. Coordination, liaison, and rehearsals further enhance this understanding. Given the information environment's complexity, this task is never-ending and depends on everyone, not just the IO officer, to update and refine understanding of the information environment.

REVISE AND REFINE PLANS AND ORDERS

5-8. Plans are not static; the commander adjusts them based on new information. This information may be the result of analysis of unit preparations, answers to IO IRs, and updates of threat information capacity and capability.

5-9. During preparation, the IO officer adjusts the relevant portions of the operation plan (OPLAN) or operation order (OPORD) to reflect the commander's decisions. The IO officer also updates the IO running estimate so that it contains the most current information about adversary information activities, changes in the weather or terrain, and friendly IRCs.

5-10. The IO officer ensures that IO input to IPB remains relevant throughout planning and preparation. To do this, they ensure that IO input to the information collection plan is adjusted to support refinements and revisions made to the OPLAN/OPORD.

5-11. IO preparation begins during planning. As the IO appendix begins to take shape, IO officer coordination with other staff elements is vital because IO affects every other warfighting function. For example, planning an attack on a command and control (C2) high-payoff target requires coordination with the targeting team. A comprehensive attack offering a high probability of success may involve air interdiction and therefore needs to be placed on the air tasking order. It may involve deep attack: rocket and missile fires have to be scheduled in the fire support plan. Army jammers and collectors have to fly the missions when and where needed. The IO officer ensures the different portions of the OPLAN/OPORD contain the necessary coordinating instructions for these actions to occur at the right time and place.

5-12. Effective IO is consistent at all echelons. The IO officer reviews subordinate unit OPLANs/OPORDs to ensure IO has been effectively addressed and detect inconsistencies. The IO officer also looks for possible conflicts between the command's OPLAN/OPORD and those of subordinates. When appropriate, the IO officer reviews adjacent unit OPLANs/OPORDs for possible conflicts. This review allows the IO officer to identify opportunities to mass IO effects across units.

5-13. OPLAN/OPORD refinement includes developing branches and sequels. Branches and sequels are normally identified during war-gaming (COA analysis). However, the staff may determine the need for them at any time. The G-3 (S-3) prioritizes branches and sequels. The staff develops them as time permits. The IO officer participates in their development as with any other aspect of planning.

5-14. A key focus during preparation is on assessment of the current state of the information environment. This assessment is performed to establish baselines, which are subsequently used when assessing whether IO objectives and IRC tasks were effective in creating desired effects.

CONDUCT COORDINATION AND LIAISON

5-15. IO requires all units and elements to coordinate with each other continuously, as well as liaise. Coordination begins during planning; however, input to a plan alone does not constitute coordination. Coordination involves exchanging the information needed to synchronize operations. The majority of coordination takes place during preparation. It is then that the IO officer follows through on the coordination initiated during planning. Exchanging information is critical to successful coordination and execution. Coordination may be internal or external and is enhanced through liaison.

INTERNAL COORDINATION

5-16. Internal coordination occurs within the unit headquarters. The IO officer initiates the explicit and implicit coordinating activities with other staff sections, as well as within the IO element, if one exists. Much of this coordination occurs during IO working group meetings; however, IO working group members do not wait for a meeting to coordinate. They remain aware of actions that may affect, or be affected by, their functional responsibilities. They initiate coordination as soon as they become aware of a situation that requires it. The IO officer remains fully informed of IO-related coordination. The IO officer corrects or resolves problems of external coordination revealed by command and staff visits and information gathering. During internal coordination, the IO officer resolves problems and conflicts and ensures that resources allocated to support IO arrive and are distributed. Examples of internal coordination include, but are not limited to:

- Deconflicting military information support operations (MISO) with public affairs activities and products.
- Monitoring the progress of answers to IO RFIs.
- Monitoring RFIs to higher headquarters by the G-3 (S-3) current operations.
- Checking the air tasking order for missions requested by the IO officer/element.
- Monitoring the movements and readiness of IRCs.
- Determining space asset status and space weather implications.
- Participating in the integration of IO-related targets into the targeting process.
- Continuous monitoring and validation of OPSEC procedures, particularly in preparation for military deception. This could include a short statement on physical security, particularly during movement.

5-17. The IO officer remains mindful that training is conducted during planning and preparation. This training occurs as new soldiers and IRCs are integrated into the command and its battle rhythm. Additionally, the IO officer provides training to subordinate elements, as requested, to fill gaps in their IO capacity.

5-18. Internal coordination is especially important to ensure requisite staff support to various IRCs in order to enhance their readiness and effectiveness. Examples include but are not limited to—

- Electronic warfare (EW).
  - G-2 (S-2)—Coordinates intelligence gathering in support of the EW mission. Recommend the use of EW against adversary systems that use the electromagnetic spectrum.
  - G-3 (S-3)—Coordinates and prioritizes EW targets.
  - G-4 (S-4)—Coordinates distribution of EW equipment and supplies, less cryptographic support.
  - IO officer—Coordinates EW tasks with those of other IRCs and assists with preparation of the cyberspace electromagnetic activities appendix.
  - EW officer—Monitors the preparation of military intelligence units to support EW missions; prepare cyber effects request forms and electronic attack request forms; monitors other staff functions that support or affect EW.
- MISO.
  - G-2 (S-2)—Prepares intelligence estimate and analysis of the area of operation.
  - G-3 (S-3)—Requests additional MISO units as required.
  - IO officer—Identifies requirements for additional MISO units to the G-3 (S-3).
  - G-4 (S-4)—Prepares logistic support of MISO.
  - Psychological Operations (PSYOP) officer—Prepares the MISO appendix to Annex C. Prepares the MISO estimate.
- OPSEC.
  - G-2(S-2)—Provides data on threat intelligence collection capabilities.
  - IO officer—Determines the EEFIs.
  - G-4 (S-4)—Advises on the vulnerabilities of supply, transport, and maintenance facilities, and lines of communications.

- G-5 (S-5)—Determines availability of civilian resources for use as guard forces.
- OPSEC officer—Prepares the OPSEC estimate and appendix.
- Provost marshal—Advises on physical security measures.

- Military deception.
  - G-2 (S-2)—Determines adversary surveillance capabilities.
  - G-3 (S-3)—Coordinates movement of units participating in military deception.
  - G-4 (S-4)—Coordinates logistic support to carry out assigned deception tasks.
  - G-9 (S-9)—Coordinates host-nation support to implement the military deception plan.
  - Military deception officer—Prepares to monitor execution of military deception operation.

EXTERNAL COORDINATION

5-19. External coordination includes coordinating with or among subordinate units and higher headquarters, as well as IO support units, IRCs, and resources that may not be under the unit's control during planning but are necessary to execute the plan. External coordination also includes coordinating with adjacent units or agencies. (Adjacent refers to any organization that can affect a unit's operations in and through the information environment.) This coordination is necessary to integrate IO throughout the force. Examples of external coordination include:

- Assessing unit OPSEC posture.
- Making sure the military deception operation is tracking with preparation for the overall operation.
- Periodically validating assumptions.
- Ensuring military deception operations are synchronized with those of higher, lower, and adjacent units.

5-20. The IO officer remains aware of the effectiveness of cybersecurity tasks taken by the G-6 (S-6). Proper protection of plans and orders, and refinements to them, are essential during operations.

5-21. Coordination with joint, interorganizational, and multinational partners is essential to the conduct of IO, as these entities and organizations affect the information environment and are affected by it. The IO working group is the primary means for this coordination but direct, face-to-face coordination is frequently necessary to ensure unity of effort.

LIAISON

5-22. Establishing and maintaining liaison is one of the most important means of external coordination. The IO officer may perform direct liaison but units may select another staff member to be part of the liaison team. Establishing liaison during planning enhances subsequent coordination during preparation and execution.

5-23. Practical liaison can be achieved through personal contact between IO officers or between the IO officer and agencies/organizations involved in affecting the information environment. This coordination is accomplished through exchanging personnel, through agreement on mutual support between adjacent units or organizations, or by a combination of these means. Liaison should, when possible, be reciprocal between higher, lower, and adjacent units/organizations. Liaison must be reciprocal between IO sections when U.S. forces are operating with or adjacent to multinational partners.

5-24. Liaison also has a force protection mission. Where host-nation security forces retain some operational capability, liaison is vital to coordinate actions. They provide intelligence and other related information about conditions in-theater.

INITIATE INFORMATION COLLECTION

5-25. Execution requires accurate, up-to-date situational awareness. During preparation, the IO officer updates IRs to ensure the most current information possible. The IO officer also works with the G-2 (S-2) to update collection asset taskings necessary to assess IO.

INITIATE SECURITY OPERATIONS

5-26. Security operations serve to protect the force from surprise and threat attacks during preparation. While often considered in terms of specific missions that physically screen, guard, cover, or provide area or local security, security operations should also include IRC tasks that provide these same protections in the informational and cognitive dimensions of the information environment. Military deception, OSPEC, space operations, and cyberspace operations all support security operations. Not including these IRC effects into plans potentially puts the force at risk.

INITIATE TROOP MOVEMENTS

5-27. During preparation, IRCs are positioned or repositioned, as necessary, to ensure they can fulfill their assigned tasks. IO unit augmentation and integration also occurs during preparation.

INITIATE NETWORK PREPARATION

5-28. IO supports the commander's ability to optimize the information element of combat power. In terms of establishing and readying the network, units must think in terms of both technical and human networks. Technical networks have to be set up, engineered, tailored, and tested to meet the specific needs of each operation. Similarly, human networks have to be initiated, cultivated, and refined during preparation. The IO officer coordinates the establishment of networks that help shape the information environment favorable to friendly objectives. The goal of establishing each category of network is to ensure the availability, reliability, accuracy, and speed of information to facilitate shared understanding and decision making.

MANAGE AND PREPARE TERRAIN

5-29. *Terrain management* is the process of allocating terrain by establishing areas of operation, designating assembly areas, and specifying locations for units and activities to deconflict activities that might interfere with each other (ADRP 5-0). While terrain is physical and geographic, it is a subset of the operational and information environments. When commanders designate areas of operation, they are simultaneously assigning responsibility to specific portions of the information environment. One of the most important reasons for managing physical terrain is to avoid fratricide. The same rationale exists for the information environment: to avoid information fratricide. For example, the IO officer can ensure control measures are established to deconflict EW activities with MISO efforts to inform the local populace through radio broadcasts.

5-30. Analysis of the information environment during IPB leads to an understanding of aspects of the information environment in which friendly forces have an advantage and in which they are disadvantaged. During preparation, the IO officer, in concert with the IO working group and its members, undertake actions to exploit the advantages and overcome the disadvantages. For example, if cellular phone communication is essential to strengthen coordination between U.S. forces and an indigenous ally and cell towers are non-existent or degraded, mobile towers could be deployed.

CONDUCT CONFIRMATION BRIEFINGS

5-31. A confirmation brief is a briefing subordinate leaders give to the higher commander immediately after the operation order is given. It is the leaders' understanding of the commander's intent, their specific tasks, and the relationship between their mission and the other units in the operation. The IO officer assists subordinate commanders and their IO representatives with these briefings when the commander's intent and specific tasks are IO-focused or have aspects related to IO. They also assist subordinate commanders to deduce IO implied tasks and to understand the information environment in their area of operations.

CONDUCT REHEARSALS

5-32. The IO officer participates in unit rehearsals to ensure IO is integrated with overall operation and to identify potential problems during execution. The IO officer may conduct further rehearsals of tasks and

actions to ensure coordination and effective synchronization of IRCs. Before participating in a rehearsal, the IO officer reviews the plans or orders of subordinate and supporting commands.