Five Intelligence Essentials for Community Security

0 0 0 0
by Sam Culper , January 12, 2016

We as veterans are blessed. Not only can we say that we answered the call and served in our nation's military (many of us at time of war), but we also received some of the best training the world has to offer. I enlisted as an aimless 20 year old, and military service instilled in me discipline and taught me a skill, as well as the purpose, direction and motivation for providing value to society outside of the Army, too. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have similar stories.

As veterans, we may very well be called on again to lead our communities during turbulent times. There are few areas outside the military that require its teams to complete tasks and accomplish the mission during stressful and often dangerous situations. And there are few greater examples of leadership right now than preparing your community today for tomorrow's emergency.

Although we encourage veterans to get involved, civilians play a critical role in community security as well. Here are five areas where veterans, patriots, and preparedness-oriented Americans should work together to build an intelligence capacity for community security.

If you're not very familiar with intelligence, then it's your job as a leader to become familiar and get someone on your team trained up to fill the role of S2. We're not talking about being James Bond or leading top secret missions; instead focus on conducting **threat analysis** and developing **early warning intelligence**. It's the S2's job to immediately begin contributing to these areas for a future SHTF event.

Here are five ways that you can better prepare for community security through intelligence.

1) **Maps** – You simply must have maps of your area of operations (AO). In order to understand the mission of community security, you'll need to identify just what your AO is — in other words, the boundaries of what you're going to protect. Identifying the AO is the first step in a line of several steps that we'll cover later in the article.

Step into any tactical operations center, or TOC, in Iraq or Afghanistan and you're likely to see several types of maps of the AO. The first map we'll need is a topographical map at 1:24,000 scale available from the USGS. Printing off a map at your home or office printer is better than nothing, however, what's best is having a large map hung up on the wall. You're going to need at least a 24″x36″ map if you want to be the best prepared. You'll also be interested in having plenty of street maps and imagery of the AO, too.

2) **Police Scanner** – Scanning local emergency services frequencies is the absolute best way to get up-to-the-second intelligence information during an emergency. Unless you live in an area where this traffic is encrypted, you'll have access to some of the same information that law enforcement does. And when it comes to making informed, time-sensitive decisions, a police scanner will be your best friend. They're expensive, however, I highly recommend the Uniden Home Patrol 2. It's my police scanner of choice for several reasons, one of which is because, unlike other scanners, its screen shows me what agency is transmitting. That goes a long way in my ability to determine the area of transmission.

3) **Intelligence Preparation of the Community –** I modified the Army's Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield for civilian use in my book SHTF Intelligence, and designed Intelligence Preparation of the Community (IPC). Once we have our maps and map overlays set up, we need to identify and mark on our maps any critical infrastructure in the area, along with what's called the *human terrain.* Critical

infrastructure includes police and fire stations, government buildings, power plants, and fuel depots (among many others), and the human terrain includes community leaders and demographics (among many others). We need to pay attention to the people, places, and things that keep life-as-we-know-it up and running, and we need to not only know exactly where they are in relation to our AO, but also how they'll affect our AO. Doing the legwork now in order to understand the community is a top priority for the S2, and this step never ends.

4) **Threat Analysis** – We need to begin identifying threats in our AO, which includes threats from outside the area that have the potential to migrate into the AO. Threats are broken down into four categories: conventional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive. Once identified, we begin developing intelligence requirements so we can learn more about each threat and provide better analysis. If you don't know the threat, then you can't defend against it, and if you can't defend against it, then it's going to eat your lunch. In other words, understand each threat as he understands himself. In the Military Intelligence Creed, that would be "find, know, and never lose the enemy."

5) **Early Warning Intelligence** – Once we've identified and analyzed current and potential threats, it's imperative for us to find ways to provide early warning for them. For current threats, our greatest early warning, in general, will be the effects of the SHTF event, which are likely to cause criminal behavior. But beyond that, how can we develop tactical early warning intelligence? Having 'eyes on' our community's avenues of approach is one of the best ways. Through our threat analysis, we should know from what direction these threats will migrate and, therefore, we need to identify these threats as they're migrating as quickly as possible. For potential threats — that is, threats that have yet to arise — we need to begin looking for 'indicators' of their activity. We might begin looking for tagging on signs and walls, gang-related clothing and hand signs among the populace, noticeable surveillance of potential targets — anything you'd expect to happen *before* an attack occurs. If we can identify these indicators soon enough, then we'll be a leg up on the competition and know they pose a threat to us before it's too late.

Samuel Culper is a former Military Intelligence NCO and contract intelligence analyst who spent three years in Iraq and Afghanistan. He's the executive editor of [Forward Observer Magazine](#) and the author of [SHTF Intelligence: An Intelligence Analyst's Approach to Community Security](#).

NOTE FROM STEWART RHODES:

We are honored to have Samuel Culper now contributing articles here at Oath Keepers, and we encourage all of you to read his work and take his intelligence classes. Oath Keepers sponsored one of his weekend classes last year, in Idaho, with Oath Keepers from several mountain states in attendance, and it was an incredible, vital class.

Oath Keepers, we need to add intelligence as one of our core vital skill categories in CPT, and each local chapter and CPT needs to develop an intelligence team and get it to work doing the ground work assessments Sam recommends. And likewise for county and state chapters. And no matter what group you are in, or even if you are not in one, you need intel. Now is the time to get it done, and there has never been a more vital need. Unfortunately, there are no shortage of threats to take into account.

Categories: [All](#), [all-oathkeeper-posts](#), [CPT - Preparedness](#), [CPT - Security](#), [CPT-Community-Preparedness-Teams](#), [Featured](#), [Oath Keepers](#)

About Author

[Sam Culper](#)

Samuel Culper is the director of Forward Observer, an Open Source Intelligence provider. He was an

Army and contract Intelligence analyst with multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is also the author of two books: Security and SHTF Intelligence.