

# HOW WILL THE UK DIVISION ORCHESTRATE INTEGRATED ACTION?

The British Army's new doctrinal approach recognises that the expeditious evolution of new technologies has sparked a seminal change in the character of conflict and that its commanders will increasingly find themselves operating in an era of information manoeuvre. At division level, Integrated Action is already part of "everyday" life for the UK's Land Forces and officers have a firm understanding of the process of analysing the audiences relevant to the attainment of an objective; taking a view of the effect they need to achieve on various actors; and then looking into their locker of methodologies to establish the best means of orchestrating those effects to achieve the desired outcome.

The method demands commanders adopt as holistic a view of their operating environments as possible, consider the full spectrum of soft and hard 'levers' available to them, and plan when they are pulled. This balancing of kinetic and non-kinetic actions and synchronisation of tasks falls into the management element of leadership and requires an agility of mind far removed from a "paper, scissors, rock" approach to delivering military effect. Those commanding the warfighting division of 2025 must be cognisant that actions taken by the force – manoeuvre, fires, capacity building and information activity – happen at very different speeds and it would be beneficial for them to be armed with historical analysis of the rates that these elements vibrate. In order to further embed Integrated Action into the British psyche, attendees of the workshop suggested that consideration should be given to the way in which mission statements are written. Including actions, effects and outcomes in orders is likely to help instil a greater understanding across a division's hierarchy of command of who you are choosing to effect and to what end. As with any military doctrine, it is vital to remember that actions and space are contested and that the model of operating needs to account for frictions and the perceptions of your adversary. Your opponent will not share your regard of the plan and all actions should be examined through the lens of the enemy. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that, when there is a contest going on, there might be times when "your own side kicks the ball out of your hands".

Having demonstrated its aptitude for manoeuvre in respect of fire, movement, air and artillery on recent operations, the British Army should not now obsess with those actions of warfare that it already feels comfortable with. Instead, developing capabilities and competence within the 'information activity' component of Integrated Action should be a priority. Recognising the proliferation of media channels and ever-growing importance of the cyber domain to defence and national security, the UK division of the near future must be ready to fight a war and fight facts. Commanders have to accept that we live in an age when "people can read more and do so more quickly" and their actions will be conducted in a "goldfish bowl". Conflict is a global spectator sport – with audiences quick to form an opinion – and maintaining a competitive advantage in such an environment is a significant challenge. Given the sheer volume of information, finding a way of incorporating "this limitless thing" into planning is difficult, but a way must be found to mine data for intelligence.



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The ARRC is well-versed in how to combine the full spectrum of effects and, with plentiful experience of training multi-nationally, is perhaps more advanced in the field of information operations than most. However, lessons learnt from a recent exercise in Latvia highlight that even the ARRC is a "one-eyed man in the world of the blind" and that the UK requires an uplift in resources. Having established a cyber centre of excellence, Latvian forces have an army of elves ready to counter Russian trolls and, by virtue of training defensively, have an offensive capability. To this end, it was suggested that 77 Brigade – the British unit tasked with using non-lethal engagement and legitimate non-military levers as a means to adapt behaviours of opposing forces and adversaries – would benefit from having a hostile "78 Brigade" to test its mettle on exercise. In a broader training context, it was offered that an historical understanding of why enemies use information operations would provide a foundation for furthering expertise in how to "dispel and deny" opponents' information. It was also felt that a division would benefit from using the real world in training as opposed to fictional scenarios such as Atropia. The technology exists to "rewind history", whitewash elements of it if necessary and to superimpose blocks of data into an exercise. Such a tool would serve to hone the skills of intelligence analysts and allow authentic information to be integrated into a headquarters. There was a consensus that the British Army has given itself "the luxury of not defining the enemy", despite Russia representing one of the biggest threats to NATO, and that it was time to put sensitivities aside and exercise accordingly. Russia, after all, is not shy about its stance of conducting mission rehearsals rather than exercises.

Given that the Army is currently under-resourced in the realm of information activity, expectations of a division's time, space and resource should be bound, with its primary focus in conflict being the tactical fight and warfighting.