**Building an Intelligence Section for Community Security**

An organization involved in community security (or what we call in the Army “stability and support operations”) must have an intelligence element, whether it’s one individual doing the best he or she can, a small team of individuals, or an entire section of trained Intelligence Analysts. For our purposes, this Intelligence element is called the Analysis & Control Element, or ACE.

ACE is likely to rely on data from Open Source Intelligence (OSINT), Imagery Intelligence (IMINT), Human Intelligence (HUMINT) and perhaps Signals Intelligence (SIGINT). This All-Source approach allows us to have a wider range of collection potential, as well as the ability to use information from one discipline to confirm or deny information from another. Intelligence is critical in our ability to stay a step ahead of threats. I was assigned a specific mission based on my strengths. Treat your ACE Team the same way. Let them excel in positions where they can play to their strengths.

When intel and ops are well-integrated, you typically get better intelligence, better decision-making, and a synchronization that can drive operations faster and farther. Intelligence and operations must be synchronized, whether we’re talking about community security, disaster response, or something worse. My best advice to integrate intel and ops is to identify each team involved in those two sections, and pick a leader from each team to attend a recurring synchronization meeting.

Identify your problem points, brainstorm some solutions, prioritize what you want done, and then execute. (I’m reading [Extreme Ownership](https://amzn.to/2Dtu3NL) by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin. Prioritize and Execute is a big part of my life now.) In the case of the operations staff, stress to the intelligence section: “These are our top priorities for today/tomorrow/next week.” That gears up the intelligence section to then satisfy those requirements so you can make better decisions.

**The Area Study**

I highly recommend that you build an Area Study. Whether you’re preparing for the effects of a hurricane, a prolonged power outage or grid-down event, or something worse, building an Area Study is going to give you an incredible advantage in navigating those complex environments. One benefit of having an Area Study is that we have a document that gets everyone on the same page. You can flip through an Area Study and quickly orient yourself to the area, its threats, and the infrastructure affecting the situation.

The first things you absolutely must have are some maps. I highly recommend having three types of maps: topographic, (recent) imagery, and a street map.

The next thing we need is to consider who and what‘s in our neighborhood. Who are your neighbors and what’s their contact information? What are their professions? Beyond our neighbors, let’s start looking at gang and criminal activity. There are lots of online databases with the names and pictures of sexual predators and if your jurisdiction reports crime activity, you can even view this information on a digital map. Beyond the good guys, the bad guys, and anyone in between, we also want to see what kind of infrastructure is in the area.

Next, let’s look at politics and governance. Who are you elected officials and what do they believe? Who’s in charge of what in the area? How can you contact these people, and if they’re trying to get a message out during an emergency, where will they do it? Find out that information and put it in your Area Study binder. Along those lines, we should also have some information about local law enforcement, military, and security outfits. Who are your local law enforcement officers? Are they corrupt? Are they great people? How can I reach that police officer that did the ride-along if I have a question?

And lastly, economic and financial data is also important to have. Who are the area’s major employers and economic drivers? Which areas are economically depressed, and which areas are more affluent? Where do the poorest and the wealthiest people live? What are the threats to the local economy? Which significant business operate in the area?

What we’ve just covered are the six layers of the Operating Environment, which is a formal way of saying *the six factors that affect our operations*. I recommend dividing your Area Study into the following six layers:

* Physical Terrain (maps; mountains, rivers, bridges, etc. that could affect you)
* Human Terrain (the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and culture of the people around you)
* Critical Infrastructure (the things that keep your world spinning)
* Politics & Governance (the people who make decisions that could affect you)
* Military/Security/Law Enforcement (the people with guns and badges who could affect you)
* Economics & Finance (the companies and money interests that could affect you)

**Gear is good.  Gear and knowledge is better.  Gear, knowledge, and experience is best.**

**ACE Gear List**

* Police Scanner – [Uniden Home Patrol 2](http://amzn.to/29Ygulb)
* SDR software defined radio – [NooElec R820T SDR](http://amzn.to/2ahxmHq)
* Team Communications – [Motorola DTR 550](http://amzn.to/2bnTyjP) (frequency hopping) or DTR650
* 24″ x 36″ Maps (Topo, Street, and Imagery) [MyTopo.com](https://mytopo.com)
* Overlays – [Duralar roll](http://amzn.to/2ahymv5)
* Markers – [Lumocolor 4-Pack](http://amzn.to/2ahzpve)
* [GoogleEarthPro](http://www.google.com/earth/download/gep/agree.html)
* http://communitycrimemap.com/ Laptops are also helpful

**HAM Radio station for long range comm and intel collection**

VHF, 2Meter, 10 Meter, 40 Meter, 60 Meter