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FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



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OPERATION ASSESSMENT DURING CONTINGENCIES AND CRISES

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Assessment is a vital part of any operation. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, and subordinate commanders, interagency and multinational partners, and other stakeholders, should continuously monitor the operational environment and assess the progress of ongoing operations toward the desired end state.

Operation assessment is a continuous process that supports decision making by measuring the progress toward accomplishing tasks, creating desired effects, and achieving objectives. It supports judicious allocation of resources in order to make operations more effective. It also analyzes risks, opportunities, gaps, and trends in ongoing operations. In general, any operations assessment framework should organize intelligence and operational data, analyze that data, and communicate recommendations to a decision maker.

The operation assessment process helps to frame the clear definition of tasks, desired effects, objectives, and end states, and gives the commander's staff a method for selecting the information and intelligence requirements (including commander's critical information requirements) that best support decision making.

The process consists of the following steps:

- ★ **Identify information and intelligence requirements.** During planning, acquiring a baseline understanding assists in setting objectives and determining thresholds for success and failure.
- ★ **Develop or modify the assessment plan,** which should link information and intelligence requirements to appropriate measures and indicators, and contain a collection plan to gather appropriate data.
- ★ **Collect Information and intelligence.** During execution, forces use the collection plan and defined reporting procedures to gather information about the environment and ongoing operations.
- ★ **Conduct periodic or event-based assessment.** Commanders and their staffs normally conduct assessment based on events or at specified intervals in the course of an operation.
- ★ **Conduct change reporting.** Commanders are especially interested in learning how either friendly or adversary behavior has changed from expectations or norms established earlier in this or other operations. While many initial reports may prove

false or are regarded as outliers, once a pattern of change is reliably perceived or discerned by assessment, it should be highlighted for commanders' attention.

- ★ **Provide feedback and recommendations.** Assessment reports inform the commander and other stakeholders about current conditions and communicate progress toward desired objectives and end states.

For more in-depth information on this emerging area of joint doctrine, see [Joint Doctrine Note 1-15, Operation Assessment \(15 January 2015\)](#).
