

U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to XVIII Airborne Corps exit a CH-47 Chinook helicopter at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, April 16, 2025. (U.S. Army photo)



THE EXPEDITIONARY MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS: A VALUE-ADDED INTELLIGENCE FORMATION

BY COLONEL JARED “JAY” HARTY
AND MAJOR FRED CHRISTOPHERSON

The [expeditionary-military intelligence brigade] E-MIB is an essential corps enabler—it provides the first point of multidomain convergence for our Army’s tactical formations. Its ability to train, maintain, sustain, and employ intelligence capability across the corps close and deep fight is exclusively unique. Without it, Army commanders’ options and access to enterprise intelligence services become prohibitively limited.

—LTG Anthony R. Hale, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-2

Introduction

Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 2-19.3, *Corps and Division Intelligence Techniques*, states that “E-MIBs conduct multi-discipline intelligence operations across multiple domains to support field army/corps/combined joint task force (CJTF)/division operations.... E-MIB headquarters serve as the corps’ entry points to national to tactical organizations, units, capabilities, and data and information and intelligence holdings. E-MIBs receive, integrate, employ, and sustain external intelligence capabilities and elements to support named operations and exercise command and control (C2) over all assigned and attached intelligence elements.”¹

In August 2024, the 525th E-MIB headquarters (HQ) participated in the XVIII Airborne Corps Warfighter Exercise (WFX) 24-05. This article will demonstrate the value an E-MIB HQ, in this case the 525th E-MIB HQ, brings to corps and division commanders by serving as the military intelligence (MI) “anchor point,” providing C2 for all assigned and attached

joint, combined, allied, and interagency MI systems and capabilities. We will discuss the significant support an E-MIB provides to field army, corps, CJTF, and division operations during large-scale combat operations through management and execution of the corps-level MI reception, staging, onward movement, and integration process. Additionally, we will explore how the 525th E-MIB meets future XVIII Airborne Corps, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), and Army requirements by employing a Total Army approach via routine collaboration, training, and certification with U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard E-MIB units, as directed in the Army’s 2015 Total Force Partnership Program (TFPP).

Command and Control

The 525th E-MIB, headquartered at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, is assigned one intelligence and electronic warfare battalion (IEW BN) (corps) and three (IEW BNs) (division). These units are:

- ◆ The 519th IEW BN from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, supporting XVIII Airborne Corps HQs.
- ◆ The 319th IEW BN from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, supporting the 82nd Airborne Division.
- ◆ The 302nd IEW BN from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, supporting the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).
- ◆ The 103rd IEW BN from Fort Stewart, Georgia, supporting the 3rd Infantry Division.

For WFX 24-05, the brigade headquarters, the 519th IEW BN (Corps), and the 302nd IEW BN (Division) were the WFX training audience, working as response cells in direct support of the corps and division headquarters.

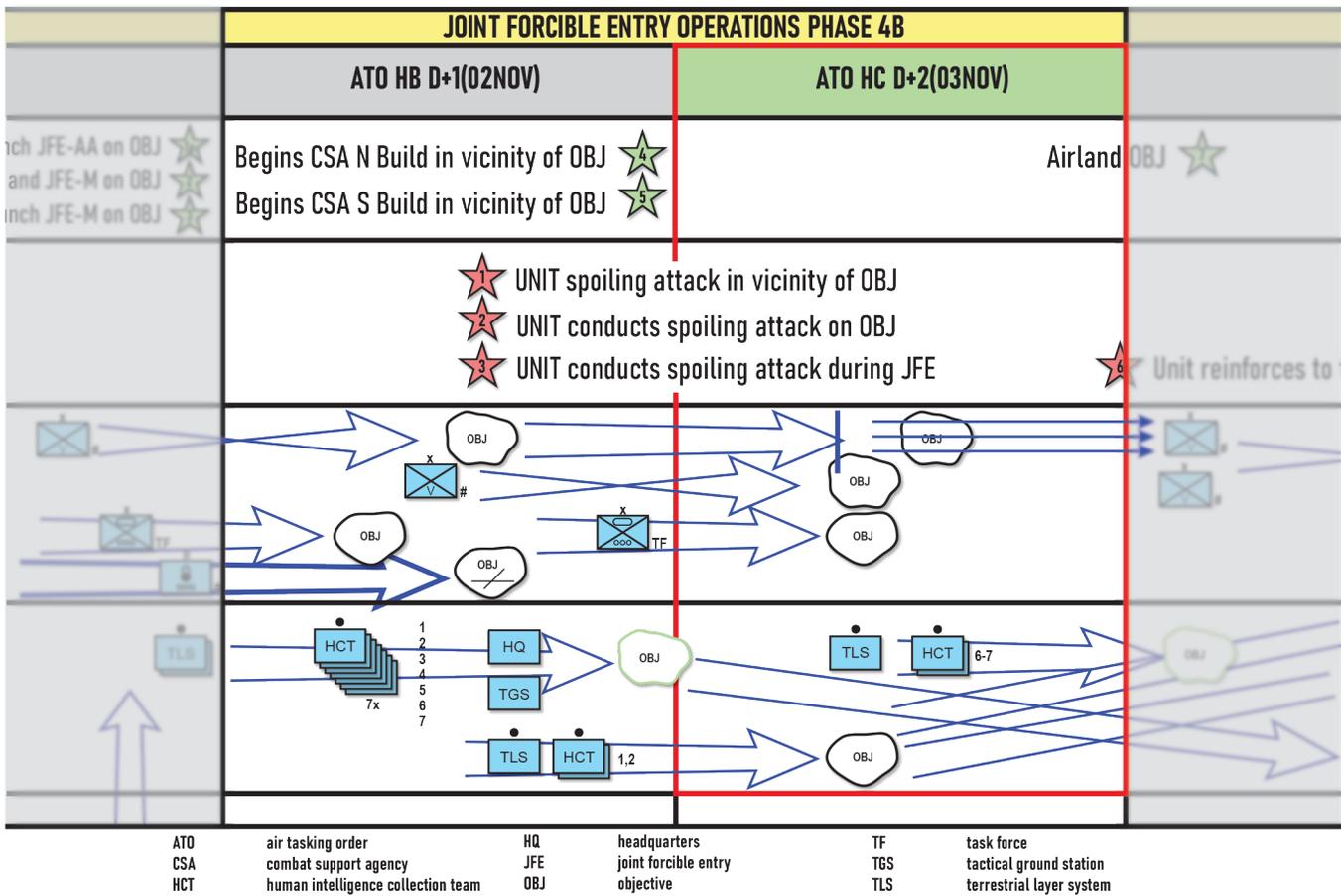
This exercise was the first mission command training program-enabled corps warfighter exercise that the 525th E-MIB HQ participated in as a training audience since its 2019 force design update when the brigade transitioned from an MI brigade to an E-MIB with subordinate IEW BNs. The exercise provided the unit HQ with an excellent opportunity to certify its mission-essential task list functions:

- ◆ Direct operational intelligence activities.
- ◆ Collect relevant information.
- ◆ Distribute operational intelligence.
- ◆ Conduct expeditionary deployment operations at the brigade level.

As the introduction notes, ATP 2-19.3 informs us that E-MIBs maintain C2 over their intelligence elements. During WFX 24-05, the 525th E-MIB staff leveraged multiple products and tools, corps and brigade battle rhythm events, and the XVIII Airborne Corps orders process to help the commander effectively exercise C2 over all assigned and attached intelligence elements. The 525th E-MIB staff also built an updated tactical standard operating procedure to capture the brigade’s warfighting concept and plan accurately.

Participating in commander-to-commander dialogue. The E-MIB commander actively participated in the daily commander-to-commander dialogue meeting with the XVIII Airborne Corps commander. This meeting served as an opportunity to provide the corps commander with a status update on the brigade’s ground-based collection assets, articulate any concerns or risks, and ensure that the brigade remained well-postured to support adjustments to the corps scheme of maneuver. It was immensely valuable for the E-MIB commander to have a seat at the table alongside the other corps separate brigade commanders, as it provided a forum for routine updates to the corps commander on the E-MIB’s ground-based collection capabilities.

Implementing an operations schedule. The brigade’s effective use of the operations schedule, or OPSKED (figure below), helped to enhance the E-MIB commander’s ability to understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, and assess the brigade’s assigned and attached intelligence elements. The OPSKED effectively enabled the E-MIB commander to “see itself” and served as the brigade’s overall running estimate. In addition to the OPSKED, the brigade leveraged the Maven Smart System,² the XVIII Airborne Corps common operating picture tool. The OPSKED and Maven Smart System helped to enhance and sustain the E-MIB commander’s C2 of their ground-based collection systems more effectively.



The 525th E-MIB Operations Schedule Cut-Out

The Operations Schedule

The operations schedule (OPSKED) is a graphic representation of unit movements depicting the main and supporting efforts of the corps in time and space. The main Blue Forces or BLUFOR decision points and potential RED decision points are also annotated. The OPSKED allows the 525th E-MIB commander to see how the brigade's forces support the main efforts and provide recommendations to the corps commander. Having the OPSKED synchronized with the mission phase and air tasking order cycle allows greater flexibility and the provisioning of recommendations. The E-MIB commander can use the OPSKED to deconflict operational movements and ensure support is provided at the time of need. The OPSKED further allows the brigade staff to ensure resourcing and synchronization of subordinate units with their potential movements.

Leveraging the corps orders process. The E-MIB strove to maximize the XVIII Airborne Corps orders process and implement several corps working groups to help the brigade staff synchronize and stay nested with the corps headquarters. In addition to leveraging the orders process for operational reasons, the brigade's senior warrant officer technicians utilized the orders process to disseminate collection emphasis messages, facilitating uninterrupted intelligence collection operations. Collection emphasis messages highlight specific time-sensitive intelligence requirements that enable the commander's decision-making process.

Developing a new tactical standard operating procedure. The 525th E-MIB staff updated and ultimately created a new E-MIB tactical standard operating procedure to capture the brigade's warfighting concept and plan accurately. This allowed the staff to standardize its systems processes rapidly and better synchronize support for the corps and divisions.

The brigade's experience during WFX 24-05 was challenging. Because the 525th E-MIB HQ and the 519th IEW BN (Corps) just completed a 9-month deployment to Europe immediately preceding WFX 24-05, the brigade missed an opportunity to ensure that its intelligence equities were properly accounted for and task-organized with the appropriate command and support relationships. As a result, the brigade was not actively involved in the WFX planning, which led to the XVIII Airborne Corps WFX 24-05 administrative order containing several inaccuracies and omissions. Once the WFX commenced, the brigade spent several days adjusting its task organization and command and support relationships with the XVIII Airborne Corps and divisions.

An added challenge derived from the Army Force Design Update changes to the E-MIBs and their battalions. These organizational revisions and the doctrine on how the units will be operationally employed are still new within the Army. As a result, the brigade spent considerable time educating the corps and division G-2s and G-3s on correctly tasking and allowing the E-MIB HQs to provide C2 for the corps and division intelligence capabilities.

The E-MIB as the Joint Operational Area's Intelligence Anchor Point

The E-MIB, serving as the MI anchor point, oversees and maintains intelligence elements for the corps area of operations,³ providing many benefits to a corps commander. These benefits include—

- ◆ Providing a single inject point into the corps HQs allows the E-MIB commander, through commander-to-commander dialogue, to assist the corps commander with building a situational understanding of all current and future intelligence capabilities and elements.
- ◆ Receiving, integrating, and sustaining new intelligence systems and capabilities and ensuring their rapid and effective inclusion in the corps G-2's collection plan.
- ◆ Leveraging existing relationships with the Army Service component command, MI brigade-theater, and other intelligence HQs and formations to facilitate replacing and replenishing lost or damaged intelligence systems or capabilities.
- ◆ As an integral part of the command group, the E-MIB commander "serves as the senior national to tactical intelligence integrator for the corps/CJTF command."⁴

During WFX 24-05, the 525th E-MIB exercised two critical intelligence anchor point functions that offer examples of the value added for the corps area of operations. One example was the rapid acquisition of a counterintelligence team. The XVIII Airborne Corps operation called for a turnover of regained territory to host nation forces while building sustainment capability in the corps rear area in a noncontiguous battle space. When the E-MIB HQs conducted the military decision-making process for the mission, it became clear that the 519th IEW BN (Corps) had insufficient counterintelligence capacity to provide adequate collection. The brigade S-3 quickly developed and sent a request for forces (RFF) to the corps G-3; the request was approved, and an additional counterintelligence team was dispatched into the joint operational area. The RFF provided a real-time opportunity for the E-MIB staff to conduct a rapid military decision-making process, identify potential shortfalls in collection capability, and request the necessary reinforcements be sent through the corps up to the Army Service component command quickly and efficiently.

Another example of the value of the E-MIB as an intelligence anchor point in the corps rear area was the rapid reallocation of intelligence capabilities after a battlefield loss. As the divisions were conducting movement from their intermediate staging bases to their assembly areas, the transports carrying a human intelligence collection team (HCT) came under attack and the team was lost. This loss of the human

Soldiers assigned to the 103rd IEW Battalion participate in classroom training using their signals intelligence equipment at Fort Stewart, Georgia, May 07, 2025. (U.S. Army photo)



intelligence collection function reduced the 302nd IEW BN's ability to support the mission of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) to seize a key XVIII Airborne Corps objective. Working with the 519th IEW BN (Corps), the 525th E-MIB staff quickly identified and made available an HCT not scheduled to conduct collection operations until the next phase of the corps operations. Using tools such as the OPSKED and Maven Smart System, the brigade reallocated the available HCT to the 302nd IEW BN in a matter of hours.

The Expeditionary-Military Intelligence Brigade's Total Army Approach

We are a Total Army. By doctrine, by design, the very nature of our service. The only way that we win is when all our formations train and fight together.

—General Andrew Poppas, FORSCOM Commander⁵

The Army's 2015 TFPP creates a framework of partnerships among all components of the total force, enabling units to continue leadership development, share training opportunities, develop staff functionality, and share lessons learned. LTG Chris Donahue, former XVIII Airborne Corps Commander, expressed in his FY 2025 annual training guidance that XVIII Airborne Corps will never fight alone and will always fight as part of a Total Army alongside allies and partners. To that end, the 525th E-MIB has partnered with the 336th E-MIB (U.S. Army Reserve, New Jersey) and the 58th E-MIB (Maryland Army National Guard) to identify training and certification opportunities with the two units. The TFPP allows all three units to leverage their available resources to achieve and sustain a high level of mutual readiness. As of this writing, the 525th E-MIB, in coordination with the XVIII Airborne Corps G-2, subordinate division G-2s, and the 336th E-MIB, has conducted its initial semiannual planning conference to identify training and collaboration opportunities for FY 2025 through FY 2027. In partnership with the Army Reserve and National Guard E-MIBs, these planning events will enable

the XVIII Airborne Corps intelligence warfighting function to plan, resource, and execute quality intelligence training that maximizes each unit's unique capabilities.

The goal of this collaboration, as stated in the November 2023 FORSCOM TFPP order, is tactical-level integration of active and reserve components as a Total Army force supporting the national military strategy and Army commitments worldwide. In pursuit of that goal, the 525th E-MIB will continue to maximize its partnerships with the 336th E-MIB and the 58th E-MIB.

Army Structure Memorandum 25-29 instituted significant changes to the Army force structure, including developing general support MI companies attached to and under the administrative control of their respective division HQs. FORSCOM guidance directs MI brigade commanders to facilitate MI leader development and training. XVIII Airborne Corps leadership expanded on FORSCOM's guidance by directing the 525th E-MIB commander to—

- ◆ Review and provide MI unit training plans and recommendations.
- ◆ Participate in division mission training briefings.
- ◆ Provide guidance for and participate in MI leader development.

This exemplary guidance confirms the need for the E-MIB HQs and solidifies its role as the anchor point for MI capabilities at the corps level.

Conclusion

In this article, we have described how the 525th E-MIB integrated into the daily operations of the XVIII Airborne Corps and its subordinate division G-2s during WFX 24-05 to provide C2 for all MI systems and capabilities. We have provided examples of how the E-MIB's management and execution of the corps-level MI reception, staging, onward movement, and integration process for all assigned and attached joint, combined, allied, and interagency MI systems and capabilities provides vital support to field army, corps, CJTF, and division operations during large-scale combat operations. We have further demonstrated a Total Army approach as directed in the 2015 TFPP via routine collaboration, training, and certification with U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard E-MIB units. In acting as an MI anchor point, the 525th E-MIB demonstrates the significant value and important role of an E-MIB HQ to corps and division commanders. 

Endnotes

1. Department of the Army, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 2-19.3, *Corps and Division Intelligence Techniques* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office, 08 March 2023), 3-1.
2. Emilia S. Probasco, “How Project Maven and the U.S. 18th Airborne Corps Operationalized Software and Artificial Intelligence for the Department of Defense,” Center for Security and Emerging Technology at Georgetown University, August 2024, <https://cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/CSET-Building-the-Tech-Coalition-1.pdf>.
3. Department of the Army, ATP 2-19.3, *Corps and Division Intelligence*, 3-1.
4. Ibid., 3-2.
5. FORSCOM Public Affairs, “Poppas: ‘Our Soldiers Stand Ready; Readiness is a Total Army Effort,’” U.S. Army website, October 15, 2024, https://www.army.mil/article/280505/poppas_our_soldiers_stand_ready_readiness_is_a_total_army_effort.

COL Jared B. Harty is the Commander, 525th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC. He deployed six times to Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan, serving as an analysis and control element targeting officer in charge, G-2 operations officer in charge, battalion S-2, company commander, G-5 planner, and fusion cell officer in charge. He holds three master’s degrees: a master of arts in national security and strategic studies from the U.S. Naval War College, a master of military operational art and science from the School of Advanced Military Studies, and a master of science in administration and management from Central Michigan University.

MAJ Fred Christopherson III is the brigade S-3 for the 525th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC. He previously served as the collection manager for XVIII Airborne Corps. MAJ Christopherson has deployed several times throughout his career, most recently returning from Camp Kościuszko, Poland, where he served as the battalion S-3 for the 519th Intelligence and Electronic Warfare Battalion (Corps). He is a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School.