



6TH MISB(A)'S ESSENTIAL ROLE IN THE SOCEUR AOR

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FM 3-53, defines the United States Army's Military Information Support Operations, or PSYOP forces, as the Department of Defense's primary capability specifically organized, manned, trained, and equipped to achieve psychological effects in foreign target audiences in order to ultimately influence their behavior. PSYOP forces provide a low-visibility means for influencing hostile regimes, preventing insurgencies, and limiting conflicts that could potentially destabilize our allies and partners. This is an especially important capability in the 21st Century as global conflicts are smaller now than ever before and both state and non-state actors use unconventional, irregular warfare as their preferred method for creating conflict.

The importance of influence is nothing new in military operations. In

Joshua 6:1-27 of the Bible, Joshua lulls adversaries in Jericho into complacency through seven days of marching Israelite forces around the walls, accompanied by blasts of rams' horns. Joshua used influence techniques to set conditions for the success of the Israelite assault and seizure of the city. In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the famed Hussar Cavalrymen affixed feathered poles to their armor, simulating wings, inspiring their often numerically superior enemies, to panic, and retreat in fear during their initial horse-mounted charge into battle.

Today, influence activities are front and center in political and military leaders' minds. On September 4 2014, at the annual NATO Summit, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Gen. Philip Breedlove, characterized the initial Russian incursion into Ukraine territory

as "the most amazing information warfare blitzkrieg we have ever seen in the history of information warfare." The events in Ukraine shattered over a decade of relative peace in Europe, and reemphasized the importance of Psychological Operations to the U.S. and partner forces.

Acting in support of Special Operations Command Forward-Eastern Europe (SOCFWD-EE), Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR), and a host of interagency and military formations, the U.S. Army Psychological Operations Regiment, specifically the 6th Military Information Support Battalion (6th MISB), form the main effort in influence and information activities designed to prevent or end conflict and to counteract threats facing the U.S. and our allies in the European Command (EUCOM) area of operations (AOR). Acting in support of EUCOM, SOCEUR, SOCFWD-EE, Special Operations Command-Southern Europe, and the U.S. Department of State, PSYOP Soldiers are involved in every aspect of regional special operations forces (SOF) initiatives.

The 6th MISB, part of 4th Military Information Support Operations Group (4th MISG), is the primary force provider of PSYOP Soldiers to support special operations, conventional, and partner forces throughout the EUCOM AOR. 6th MISB Soldiers serve as influence advisors to supported commanders by assessing, shaping, disrupting, and ultimately influencing behaviors of foreign related to situations and issues through precision messaging. PSYOP Soldiers are also working on planning, coordinating, and executing training engagements with partner and allied nations focused on improving the existing capabilities of these countries and their emerging information operations programs. PSYOP Soldiers further demonstrate their

the 42-week PSYOP Qualification Course to earn a place in the Psychological Operations Regiment. 6th MISB Soldiers are airborne-qualified and trained in a six month language program at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School before they must test and demonstrate proficiency in a regionally aligned foreign language. Many 6th MISB are native speakers and possess fluency one or more European languages, which makes them critical assets in the countries they are assigned to serve.

The Soldiers of Fort Bragg's 3rd Military Information Support Battalion (3rd MISB), are the audio-visual specialists who execute the media production and dissemination tasks that are critical to the success of the PSYOP mission. 3rd



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versatility by providing military information support for interagency and intergovernmental efforts as well as civil authority information support activities aimed at reducing the negative effects of natural disasters and other humanitarian crises. PSYOP Soldiers are integrated across the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

6th MISB is composed of a diverse group of regionally aligned NCOs and officers who have a career focus on the political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, information, physical environment, history, and current events of a specific region of Europe. 6th MISB Soldiers are recruited from a variety of military occupational specialties and must pass the intense, demanding John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School's Psychological Operations Assessment and Selection, followed by

MISB Soldiers use their organic printing capabilities, radio and television broadcast facilities, and audio-visual production and communication capabilities to support special operations forces around the world. These Soldiers employ the latest media technology to include equipment, software, and media editing and production techniques to augment the efforts of their supported units. The expertise and creative ability of 3rd MISB Soldiers enable supported PSYOP units to effectively engage audiences across a wide variety of information platforms and deliver forward deployed commanders unprecedented access to specific audiences. 3rd MISB Soldiers also serve as a valuable tool in documenting operational events and providing material for use in strategic communication and public affairs initiatives.



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The heart of Psychological Operations is the Seven-Step PSYOP Process detailed in FM 3-05.301. This process provides a structured framework for PSYOP Soldiers to accurately and effectively determine the right audience, the right message, and the right medium to achieve a desired behavior change in support of overall mission objectives. The seven-step PSYOP process also isolates impact and effectiveness measures that are observable, quantifiable, and specific in order to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of PSYOP efforts. This data, known as measures of effectiveness, is then used to refine PSYOP activities to adjust to ever-changing conditions, ensure influence activities are conducted using the most effective means, and that resources are efficiently apportioned to achieve a supported commander's desired end state.

In a February 2013 edition of the Russian military publication, *Russian Defense*, then newly appointed Russian Federation Chief of the General Staff, Valery Gerasimov revealed a new doctrine for Russian warfare. Gerasimov's doctrine stresses that the broad use of political, informational, humani-



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Soldiers from 6th MISB(A) utilize their real world experience to serve as role players for a Military Information Support exercise during a JRTC Rotation.

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Members of Regional MISO Team-Baltic exchange knowledge with a colleague from the Polish's Army's PSYOP Central Group at their base in Poland.

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A Soldier from the 3rd MISB(A) operates a printing press.

U.S ARMY PHOTO

tarian and other non-military measures can outweigh traditional military power. Gerasimov also stresses that effective mobilization should be initiated long before any declaration of war.

Shortly after its debut, Gerasimov's doctrine was put into practice during the 2014 Russian invasion and annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region. Russian sources effectively flooded the information environment with messages crafted to ease follow on combat operations and political actions. The Gerasimov doctrine was further demonstrated in Russia's intense media blitz accompanying insertion of ground and air forces into Syria in support of the regime of Bashar Al-Assad in Syria.

SOF's primary tool in this new "information battlefield" are the Soldiers, NCOs and officers of the 6th MISB. PSYOP Soldiers are deployed throughout the EUCOM AOR in a variety of assignments. PSYOP Soldiers are working in the EUCOM AOR as staff planners helping to plan, coordinate, and execute training with allies and partners. PSYOP Soldiers are also on the ground conducting military to military training engagements with allies and partners aimed at countering the threat

of violent extremist organizations and other forms of foreign aggression.

Invigorated adversary focus on influence activities is mirrored in regional partner nations' continued commitment to ensuring the capabilities and strengths of their own PSYOP forces. Accordingly, the SOCFWD-EE Commander and 6th MISB established Regional Military Information Support Teams (RMT), whose persistent forward presence will promote close engagement, ensure interoperability and build on existing relationships developed through past cooperation and partner attendance in the PSYOP Qualification course. The RMT consists of regional and tactical PSYOP specialists and all necessary audio/visual capability, allowing them to engage in a full spectrum of PSYOP-related collaboration with both special operations and conventional partner forces.

PSYOP support to EUCOM, SOCEUR, SOCFWD-EE and SOCFWD-SE, the Army's PSYOP Regiment and 6th MISB (A) provides a discreet yet robust, cost-effective, highly adaptable, and diverse tool ideally suited to the contemporary operating environment. The influence professionals continue to

live the PSYOP Regiment motto, "Persuade, Change, Influence," in their daily work across not only the EUCOM AOR, but also the world.

Though 21st century PSYOP Soldiers have replaced Joshua's Rams' horns with portable loudspeaker systems and the Hussar's winged armor with expertly crafted electronic messaging to accompany and magnify the effects of kinetic operations, the principles and commitment to influence in the military domain remain the same. Providing capabilities such as target audience analysis, influence techniques, propaganda analysis, and social media exploitation, PSYOP forces remain uniquely postured to support SOF commanders' campaign goals. **SW**

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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