This project sought to understand intelligence support to long-range planning, especially the principal sources of friction between Army intelligence and the long-range planning community. One thing that stands out clearly as a source of trouble between the two is that Army intelligence is threat based, while its customers, as the earlier chapters of this report make clear, are largely capabilities based. These very different orientations cause trouble because ODCSINT understands the threat to be a multidimensional problem involving political, economic, social, geographical, military, and technological factors, among others, while most planners currently focus narrowly on technology. Moreover, in capabilities-based thinking, the planners tend to concentrate their attention on their ability to exploit U.S. technology, remaining satisfied with periodic assurances from Army intelligence that the United States remains technologically dominant. The planners, although not ignorant of them, pay too little attention to other facets of the threat, for example, asymmetric strategies and unusual modes of warfare.

The planners seem to stake the Army’s future on two important and potentially mistaken assumptions:

- Capabilities-based planning will produce superior forces.
- Preparing for a high-tempo, high-violence, force-on-force battle against a peer competitor is the most demanding challenge to confront the Army. If it can meet this test successfully, it can accomplish all other future missions.
The planners may be right, but the stakes are too high to allow betting or guessing. ODCSINT should test these assumptions and provide independent answers. The insights from such an intelligence effort should go far to inform acquisition, force development, strategic planning, and the ongoing reinvention efforts. Even if these assumptions prove to be entirely reasonable, their enduring validity is so vital to the Army that they bear careful monitoring by the intelligence staff for some time to come.

SOME SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

Based on our review of the evidence from the workshops, interviews, surveys, and other sources, we have a number of evaluative observations to make on intelligence support to Army long-range planning customers.

Strategic Planning

Support to strategic planners has been complicated by several factors that are well outside ODCSINT’s span of control:

• The planners have been saddled with “trickle down” guidance from OSD and the Joint Staff that establishes a conventional wisdom about the future and limits the contributions and effectiveness of intelligence that is not congruent with the conventional wisdom. Even though the planners have been saddled with this guidance, to keep the Army sufficiently hedged, ODCSINT needs to wrestle with less conventional conceptions of the future operating environment.

• Army planners have not been engaged in strategic planning so much as programming, thus confusing themselves—and their intelligence providers in ODCSINT—about the true nature of their intelligence needs. Because of this, it is not entirely clear that the Army senior leadership is being informed by the types of long-range intelligence it needs to organize, train, and equip the Army for future operations. ODCSINT should take a two-track approach, refining its understanding of the core strategic-level intelligence support needs of both the Army leadership and strategic
planners, and develop capacity for delivering this information to both audiences.

- Army strategic planners have historically been somewhat marginalized from higher-level Army decisionmaking, and their advice, therefore, has had at best only limited and indirect influence. Whatever the planners’ fortunes, ODCSINT should make it its mission to educate the senior leadership on the key intelligence and long-range planning issues—like the continued viability of capabilities-based planning and the use of a peer competitor as the most demanding test case for future field army designs.

- DODFIP and the ODCSINT product orientation make it even more difficult for Army intelligence to support strategic planning. Because DODFIP exercises partial control over Army intelligence resources, ODCSINT has limited flexibility in assigning resources in response to Army planner needs. ODCSINT might be able to make more effective use of available resources by developing less formal vehicles (not unlike the initial “flash” estimates on unemployment and inflation) that provide early, initial estimates with appropriate caveats about remaining uncertainties; information technologies might profitably be used both to disseminate this information and to make it seem less formal than a paper product.

**Acquisition**

It appears that intelligence support to long-range planning in ACQ is working fairly well; while there will most likely be demands for additional intelligence from planners (outlined in Chapter Three), there is one systemic problem in evidence—poor intelligence-to-customer communications channels. STAR reports, frequently questioned during the project’s workshops, serve a real purpose among laboratory and contractor personnel by providing data that serve at least as a starting point for considering the threat from foreign systems, even though the reports are often perceived solely as an administrative burden within ODCSINT. Complaints during the workshops about the timeliness and promptness of intelligence support suggest that ODCSINT lacks both a routine means to assess acquisition’s changing intelligence needs and flexible organizations and systems for allocating resources to ensure responsiveness to these needs. Communications and connectivity technology and the intelligence on
demand program should help address these concerns, but only if ODCSINT works to ensure that the Army IT technical architecture specifically addresses the needs for connectivity between ODCSINT and its ACQ customers.

**Force Development**

This group of planners could be great beneficiaries of Army intelligence. As noted in Chapter Three, throughout most of their reinvention efforts since World War II, intelligence and a wide array of other factors have played important roles. The narrowing focus of FD projects only became acute during the 1980s. Army intelligence should aggressively seek to reestablish a close relationship with TRADOC, where the major FD reinvention initiatives typically take form. By demonstrating to the reinvention community the potential influences of the factors beyond technology that ODCSINT monitors—political, economic, cultural, and strategic influences, to name but a few—Army intelligence can prove its worth in these endeavors.

**Is Army Intelligence Broken?**

Army intelligence is not broken, but it has serious deficiencies in its ability to support and to interact with its customers. At present, ODCSINT’s channels of communications to its customers are badly underdeveloped. Army intelligence, like its counterpart intelligence agencies, is awash both in raw, unevaluated information and in intelligence, and it lacks adequate numbers of analysts and technical processing support to exploit fully all the information at its disposal. The logjam resulting from too much information and too few analysts is exacerbated by the insistence both within Army intelligence and among its customers on formal products that are fully staffed, vetted, and approved.

Despite its serious deficiencies in its ability to satisfy its long-range planning customers, Army intelligence performs a valuable service to the planners by assuring them of the continued viability of their preferred capabilities-based planning approach and by insisting that they periodically consider military, political, economic, and other factors that do not fit neatly within their preferred planning system.
A POSSIBLE STRATEGY: CHANGING THE WAY ODCSINT DOES BUSINESS

In changing the way it does business, ODCSINT should attempt to further refine its understanding of ACQ and FD futures intelligence needs, at the same time stepping into the breach to attend to strategic planning more directly, reestablishing a close relationship with the reinvention planners and making a more aggressive effort to exploit communications and connectivity technologies.

In changing its approach to strategic planning, Army intelligence should attempt to overcome the planners’ fixation on programming issues by showing them the potential benefits of monitoring and studying the Army’s most important assumptions. DCSINT should elicit from the Army senior leadership their strategic concerns and use them to fill out ODCSINT’s strategic agenda for Army intelligence.

Over the long term, communications and connectivity technology also offers ODCSINT the potential to transform Army intelligence by linking intelligence experts with decisionmakers and their staffs. Army intelligence must have sustained, close interaction with the planners and senior leaders if it is to win the competition with other information sources for credibility and influence—the ingredients it needs to do its job of preventing surprise and providing warning to the Army. Better managing knowledge and intellectual capital—what experts know and where they can be reached—will be key. ODCSINT must understand that its experts, not its formal reports, are becoming its real products. Experts should contribute to solving the Army’s problems based upon what they know rather than on where they sit in the organization chart. Information technology is not a panacea for the problems facing Army intelligence, but communications and connectivity technology can help provide the linkages so that senior leadership can reach the appropriate intelligence expertise no matter where the expert is assigned. ODCSINT can use communications and connectivity technology to accelerate the Army’s movement toward becoming a knowledge-based organization, where knowledge and expertise on the intelligence staff become increasingly valued and better tools become available for tracking and using this knowledge.
Finally, as experts become more central to Army intelligence, ODCSINT should consider different professional development paths for them that allow them to deepen their expertise through the years. The foreign area officer program is an obvious pathway for regional experts, but functional experts also require a special career track if they are to be seriously regarded throughout the Army and across the defense establishment. Tours of duty with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and similar assignments might provide useful experience for functional experts. ODCSINT should consider ways to manage its Military Intelligence officer personnel and civilian professionals to ensure that high-quality, credible expertise will always be available.

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

The ability to act on the foregoing suggestions is dependent on four things.

- ODCSINT must be able to fence some intelligence production assets for Army needs above those documented through the DODFIP if it is to work the types of Army-unique issues and scenarios discussed in this report. ODCSINT should negotiate with DODFIP to secure sufficient resources.

- Monitoring the Army’s key assumptions is essential business in support of the planners. Whether long-range planners appreciate it or not, by monitoring the important assumptions, Army intelligence provides an umbrella under which the planners can pursue their narrower methodologies with some degree of safety and can have some warning if their preferred capabilities-based approach becomes vulnerable.

- Communications and connectivity technology is not a cure-all, but it plays an important role in connecting ODCSINT’s smaller staff of experts with planners and other intelligence consumers. ODCSINT should make it a priority to work closely with DISC4 and the others involved to ensure the technical architecture will support the kind of connectivity Army intelligence wants and to broaden and deepen the channels to its long-range planning customers.
• It may be a truism that we live in a complicated world, but experts help make sense of it. ODCSINT must cultivate and grow the experts it needs in order to monitor assumptions and advise the leadership.

SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS

The job of Army intelligence has changed since the Cold War. No longer a case of “getting the Soviets right,” it now revolves around performing the more demanding task of keeping the Army hedged against greater uncertainty so that it can always fulfill its responsibilities in the National Military Strategy. Doing so means taking a sharper and more catholic view of both the global security environment and the Army’s intelligence needs, since not all the developments of concern to the Army will necessarily be visible in “trickle down” estimates and guidance drafted above the service. ODCSINT must be on the lookout for Army-unique threats that may lurk in domains not covered in illustrative planning scenarios or other high-level guidance. This is a tall order, but one to which ODCSINT must rise.