In 2012 the Navy MOC Training Team identified the dual-hatting of the Numbered Fleet Intelligence Director (N2) as MOC Deputy Director as an effective practice, highlighting that such a construct reinforces cross-functional integration at the MOC leadership level, mitigates seams between operations and intelligence, and assures activities are executed with an inclusive perspective. Surprisingly, despite this recognition, currently only two of the eight MOCs (at FOURTH and FIFTH Fleets) are organized in this way.

The N2 as Deputy MOC Director reinforces the fact that intelligence activities at the operational level ARE operations and not simply a supporting operational function, and when rapid decisions are required within the MOC, they are executed by a consolidated leadership. The arrangement is also a model of the cross-functional integration essential at all levels, a foundational tenet of effective MOC processes. This paper details the efficacy of the Director of Fleet Intelligence serving as the Deputy MOC Director, and explains its advantages and highlights practical examples of its utility. More importantly, the article provides commentary from previous Fleet Commanders, and current and past MOC Directors and Deputies who have profited from the construct and who attest that the model drives unprecedented synergy, collaboration, and agility across all MOC lines of operation.

**Operational Advantages of the N2 as Deputy MOC Director**

1. Integrates all Operational Activity

   Certain recurring intelligence activities managed by the FIFTHFLT and FOURTHFLT Deputy MOC Director-N2s are examples of operations that dispel the notion of intelligence as a supporting role. At FIFTHFLEET, the Kinetic and Non-kinetic Integrated Fires Element (KNIFE), a standing cross-functional team (CFT) within the MOC, is responsible for the integration of lethal and non-lethal effects planning and operations. The KNIFE includes an 1810 IO planner whose expertise, as a graduate of the Joint Targeting School well-versed in the kinetic targeting cycle, extends beyond his core competency of cryptology; he is an integral member of the cross-functional team, and drives the targeting cycle alongside the traditional kinetic targeteer.

   "I am a firm believer that being fully invested in the operational side of the MOC, the N2 helps generate better operations, that develops better intelligence, that supports better operations, and so on in a virtuous cycle. At the operational level of war, ops and intel are actually two sides of the same coin." (VADM Kurt Tidd, FOURTHFLT Commander in 2012)
CAPT Dave McAllister, recent Deputy MOC Director and N2 at FIFTHFLT (2013-14) who managed the KNIFE’s activities, notes that the ops-intel integration is actually pervasive throughout all lines of operation. "With the KNIFE, we had fantastic targeting and fires planning and operational capability because of the one team operational concept and mind set. Other areas where this paid dividends include HUMINT ops, which I believe are more closely aligned to and directly supportive of other fleet operations within a MOC construct which has the Fleet Intel Director as the Deputy MOC Director.”

RDML Bob Sharp, Deputy MOC Director and N2 at FIFTHFLT in 2008-10, explains that the ops-intel partnership there was and remains foundational to the MOC construct and processes. "When wrestling with the age-old question ‘does intel drive ops, or does ops drive intel?’ The correct answer is ‘yes’, in support of the Commander’s Objectives and Guidance. We move people, platforms and sensors around the battle space in order to know things we don’t know...that we need to know...in order to inform the Commander and provide him options for the employment of the force.”

In 2011-13, this author served as the Deputy MOC Director and N2 at FOURTHFLT, and developed a unique operational partnership between the MOC and NIOC-Texas (CTF-1040), NCIS South East Field Office and Joint Interagency Task Force -South (JIATF-S) that integrated and synchronized their respective capabilities to achieve measurable effects in countering illicit trafficking activity. This model has stood the test of time -- since January 2014, this blue-force network has been responsible for cueing approx 85% of all successful interdictions by JIATF-S assets in the Eastern Pacific. CAPT Juan Hogan, the Deputy MOC Director and Intelligence Officer at FOURTHFLT today, believes such successes could not be achieved without the N2 being mindful of operational implications. "You are not a good intelligence officer if you are not always considering operational implications. Being dual hatted allows us an even greater appreciation of the operational aspects of a mission – I have learned more about FFG fuel percentages and JHSV thruster plates than ever anticipated, but it helps me better understand the operational implications."

The recognition of the ops-intel linkage as an operational imperative is not limited to the 1830s who have had the privilege to serve as both the N2 and Deputy MOC Director, but is shared by several current and former URL MOC Chiefs. CAPT Pat Shea, USN (ret.), MOC Director at FOURTHFLT in 2012-13, highlights the importance of a multi-dimensional, partnered approach to operations, observing that "there are no single or even dual dimension missions anymore. Everything we do needs to be multi-mission. The GWOT taught us that clues are everywhere. We need to be ready to read them and understand. In both kinetic and non-kinetic ops, during theater security activities and exercises, speed of good decision making is essential to achieve favorable outcomes. A commander needs seamless information flow to achieve that speed. What better way than to marry the functions at the top?"

CAPT Ed Cashman, MOC Director at FIFTHFLT in 2013-14, emphasizes that with the N2 dual hatted as MOC Deputy Director, the benefits of the partnerships with components and joint interagencies habitually enjoyed by the intelligence community actually permeate into the rest of the MOC processes. "The fusion of Joint and National systems in the intel world is way ahead of where we are on the ops side of Joint operations, at least at the component level. Routine operations with the intel side of the ops/intel team working with Air Force, Army, and national agency partners, on the watchfloor and with the whole team working together, was a huge advantage during a number of our operations."

The current MOC Director at FIFTHFLT, CAPT T.J. Trent, summarizes the relationship succinctly while identifying the risks when ops and intel are not cohesively wedded. “Ops and intelligence are inextricably linked at the execution (tactical) level: therefore, they should naturally be linked within the operational HQ. If not, we run the risk of delivering mixed messages and/or disrupting efforts to maintain unity of command.”

2. Streamlines Commander’s Decision Cycle

"My Deputy MOC Director/N2 had vast experience in targeting, ground based ops and how events ashore influenced us at sea. Understanding the changing security environment is
crucial to our kill-chain and it is not as simple as finding, fixing, and engaging the target anymore. Decision making not only relied on DMOC’s targeting experience, but more importantly, on his understanding of the enemy as well as the scope of interactions between host nation, partner navies, and intergovernmental agencies. Experienced intel officers grasp the contextual features of the environment and help assess tactical impacts to strategic end states – this is an important part of the planning and assessment process that provide our leaders with better options and decision space while optimizing our valuable time and resources. The complementary Operator-Intel relationship provides improved access to information and delivers an enhanced depth of analyses for speed of decision that makes the MOC a weapon system.” (RDML Rick Williams, FIFTHFLT MOC Director in 2009)

Navy doctrine recognizes that a flattened vice hierarchical MOC CFT organizational structure can accelerate the commander’s decision cycle. As RDML Williams suggests, this cross functional concept also applies to MOC leadership, where the equally relevant and mutually supportive functional expertise embodied in the URL MOC Director-with-N2-as-Deputy partnership provides a winning combination of depth and agility that can expedite the Commander’s decision calculus and command and control.

RDML Andy Lewis, FIFTHFLT MOC Director in 2011, expands on the theme of MOC as a weapon system, recognizing the MOC Director and N2 Deputy relationship as instrumental in supporting accelerated decision making, and suggests the model may even have application at the high-tactical level. "Although the N2 as the Deputy MOC D is generally valid, I think the power of the MOC...is that it is part of the weapon system. It doesn’t really matter what warfare designations are worn in each position in the MOC. The fusion of information, monitoring of the fight, making changes with a broader perspective and better SA, and quick decision making are the keys. I am applying the same concepts at the tactical level in the CSG Command."

Offering a view from a different perspective, CAPT Shea explains that the scope of expertise and experience inherent in the MOC Director-N2 partnership actually provides a filter to protect ideas or COAs that may still need time to develop from reaching the boss. “The best teams fill in gaps, they optimize strengths and mitigate shortfalls. Integrating MOC leadership with line operators and Info Dominance makes perfect sense. It leaves little space for bad ideas to incubate, or worse, make their way to the Commander only to find out at the decision brief, wow, this was a bad idea. Instead, the Commander will have confidence that he is getting fully vetted and supported recommendations.”

3. Exemplifies Cross Functional Integration - a model for the staff

"Planning, executing, and learning from an operation requires cognitive skills not contained in a single occupational specialty. It requires integration. It requires analytics. It requires collaborative processes. It requires fundamental information systems agility. Inherent in the Information Dominance DNA is an ability to assess and evaluate. Grafted in with the URL communities, this is pretty hard to beat.” (CAPT Pat Shea)

The Director of Intelligence at a Numbered Fleet, as the senior Information Dominance Corps (IDC) officer on staff, oversees the fusion of the various warfighting elements of Information Dominance into MOC planning efforts and missions in execution. As the Deputy MOC Director, the N2 is the natural nexus for this integration, optimally postured to ensure both lethal and non-lethal options are considered as means to achieve intended effects. This is especially important now with the introduction of defensive and offensive cyber operations, additional tools (albeit still developing) in the Commander’s warfighting kit. As the IDC Senior and Deputy MOC Director, the N2 also has the bully pulpit to emphasize to the staff that network security is more than just information assurance, but is in fact essential to the Fleet’s operational mission assurance. But there is also a personal dimension to the organizational construct that, though unquantifiable, is no less critical to its success. The relationship between the MOC Director and N2 Deputy is one marked not by subordination, but by mutual respect, trust, and near constant collaboration – the two spend a significant amount of time together, and simply put, know how the other thinks. When not with the Commander or providing guidance to
the staff in battle rhythm events, the two typically can be found together, discussing operational focus and priorities, identifying potential seams and methods to mitigate, or coordinating the synchronization of MOC activities.

CAPT Shea likens the relationship between the MOC Director and Deputy and their staff as a familial one in which the pair provide guidance and oversight to ensure harmony across the unit and assure smooth operations. “Just like our kids need Mom and Dad to be on the same page, so too does our staff. So much of what we do begins with sifting wheat to throw out the chaff. Seeing the MOC organization as a family is not far-fetched or a bizarre metaphor. Sibling rivalry can take over on staffs – integrating at the top helps ensure this does not happen.”

The professional and personal bond between the MOC Director and Deputy has a positive influence over the staff, as it tacitly transmits a signal regarding the value of cross-functional integration and underscores the importance of teamwork. As CAPT Trent notes, “ensuring the Deputy MOC D/N2 is able to routinely fill the MOC D role is critical to sending the message to the team that the N2 is fully capable of leading the combined effort, and shows that the command is willing to walk the talk.” In fact, at FIFTHFLT, the staff has come to view the MOC Director and Deputy as an interchangeable head of a single “cohesive organism.” CAPT Cashman continues, “the respective BWC and IWO watch teams quickly got used to reporting to me both as the MOC Director and to Dave McAllister as the Deputy. Based on our experience and perspective, we might ask them different questions, or explain/discuss what we were trying to do from a different perspective. I think they benefited from that experience, both in real time during ops in progress, as well as being good professional development.”

Another feature that can contribute to the staff’s mirroring of the partnership between the MOC Director and Deputy is the elimination of physical barriers between the operations and intelligence work centers. At FIFTHFLT, the two functions are collocated in a SCIF, with no walls to divide them. CAPT Cashman describes the positive impact this has on MOC operations. "Being physically collocated helps drive the collaboration and common situational understanding. It changes the organizational culture and behaviors, not just at the decision making level, but all the way to the deckplates. In addition to the added situational awareness the collocation of the ops and intel watchstanders creates, the individuals get used to working together face to face, overhearing conversations and processes, and understanding each other. We’re raising a generation of intel analysts and officers who won’t understand in the future if they do not have direct access to the ops watchstanders.”

Given today’s resource constraints, breaking down the walls that separate ops and intel to establish a common workcenter may be a bridge too far for most MOCs, and also presents separate challenges relative to coalition integration. But the placing of the Battle Watch Captain immediately adjacent to the Senior Intel Watch Officer on the floor is likely more reasonable to implement, and is itself an effective practice, as CAPT Trent explains, “nothing happens on the ‘2’ side of the aisle without the ‘3’ team gaining and maintaining situational awareness, and vice versa. Barriers to communication/coordination do not exist on the watch floor due to this arrangement.”

A Critical Eye

Some may question whether the additional responsibilities levied on the Senior Intelligence Officer who is dual-hatted as Deputy MOC Director usurps time from traditional N2 responsibilities, and impacts the ability to guide a less mature Numbered Fleet MIOC, manage the naval component intelligence enterprise, or coordinate with interagency and component counterparts. Also at question is whether the model stands up well during crisis, or simply elevates the ops-intel relationship during Phase 0 steady-state operations, subsequently requiring adjustments during a MOC’s transition to crisis.

However, several years of operational experience at FOURTH and FIFTH Fleet MOCs employing this construct have proven to be effective and efficient during steady-state ops, and absolutely resilient and agile during crisis. Also, the proactive leadership of an experienced O5 as MIOC Director (a milestone assignment) assures that this critical MOC
component continues to function at its highest level of readiness, integrated within all MOC lines of operation, regardless of phase. Further, during a transition to crisis, a temporary Crisis Action Team could be established (as is often the case) to augment identified shortfalls. Nonetheless, MOCs should recognize the N2 must still provide meaningful assessments for the Commander and staff regarding adversary behavior - this remains the N2's responsibility, and is a must-have to support operational planning and mission execution.

The operational efficiencies achieved by the Deputy MOC-Intelligence Director combination may offset any concern that the N2's core intelligence responsibilities would be otherwise diluted or diminished -- the Senior Intelligence Officer still provides strategic direction for the intelligence enterprise and remains synchronized with counterparts up, down, and across echelon. When dual-hatted as Deputy MOC Director, the N2 is actually better equipped to integrate intelligence activities throughout Fleet operations.

**Conclusion**

"Formerly perceived by many as a collection of support activities performed by specialized restricted line officers, information dominance is increasingly recognized by Fleet operators as a critical force multiplier. It's no longer just an adjunct to war fighting. It is war fighting." (VADM Ted Branch, OPNAV N2/N6)

When the Senior Intelligence Officer is designated as the MOC Deputy, the N2 is recognized by the Commander and staff as the principal responsible for managing Fleet operations when the MOC Director is unavailable, and is entrusted with essentially the same authorities and responsibilities. This represents a unique and welcomed challenge for the IDC officer, who can now work outside a traditional comfort zone and in a key leadership role. Professionally challenged as never before, and keenly aware there is much more unknown than known, the 'Deuce' is motivated to constantly question and learn from the functional subject matter experts on staff and becomes a more effective military professional and naval operator. This experience is personally rewarding -- it can even be fun.

As VADM Branch notes in his article, *A New Era in Naval Warfare*, the distinction between unrestricted and restricted line officers has become blurred, with the Information Dominance Corps and the unique skill sets it represents recognized more frequently now as another element of combat power. "Information dominance is much bigger than the IDC, but the corps' leaders are the ones who understand it best. They are fully integrated with the Fleet and are gaining recognition as warfighters in their own right. From its beginnings in 2010, the Corps has quickly matured, aggressively adapting to its warfighting mission. It has greater operational relevance and more warfighting credibility than ever before. Most important, IDC members are increasingly accepted as legitimate warfighters by traditional operators."

There is also some anecdotal evidence that the operational focus of an Intelligence Officer who has been dual hatted as a Deputy MOC Director is a career characteristic trait, versus a one-tour experience -- the Director of the Naval War College's Assist and Asses Team, a group of mostly URLs responsible for advising Fleet Commanders and their staffs on MOC processes to employ the force and conduct operational planning, is an 1830 IDC professional and former Deputy MOC Director, and the author of this article.

Ultimately a MOC’s structure is shaped to conform with the desires of the Commander who knows the organization best, and who may determine the model to be not the right fit, or the timing with which it is introduced premature. But Fleet Commanders and MOC principals are encouraged to at least pause and consider the construct’s relevance and the advantages it brings, to include seamless integration of operational activity, streamlining of the decision process, and exemplary modeling of cross functional teamwork. CAPT Shea captures the advantages of designating the Senior Intelligence Officer as the Deputy MOC Director best with his remark, "There are sound leadership fundamentals at work in the goodness of integrating operations and intelligence in the MOC at the top. It represents teamwork, it represents empowerment, it represents collaboration. It represents mission first, leave your parochialisms at the door, and let’s get to work.”
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References:

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