
Signals Intelligence



U.S. Marine Corps

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FOREWORD

Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 2-15.2, *Signals Intelligence*, serves as a basic reference for understanding concepts, operations, and procedures for the conduct of signals intelligence (SIGINT) operations in support of the Marine air-ground task force. This publication complements and expands on Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 2, *Intelligence*, and MCWP 2-1, *Intelligence Operations*, which provide doctrine and higher order tactics, techniques, and procedures for intelligence operations.

The primary target audience of this publication is intelligence personnel responsible for planning and executing SIGINT operations. Personnel who provide support to SIGINT or who use the results from these operations should also read this publication.

MCWP 2-15.2 describes aspects of SIGINT operations, including doctrinal fundamentals, equipment, command and control, communications and information systems support, planning, execution, security, and training. Detailed information on SIGINT operations and tactics, techniques, and procedures is classified and beyond the scope of this publication.

MCWP 2-15.2 supersedes Fleet Marine Force Manual 3-23, (C) *Signals Intelligence/Electronic Warfare Operations* (U), dated 21 September 1990.

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS



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**Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine or feminine gender is used,
both men and women are included.**

Signals Intelligence

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Chapter 1

Fundamentals

All military forces use the electromagnetic spectrum to command and control operating forces acquire targets, guide weapons, and direct supporting arms. These military forces also use the electromagnetic spectrum to collect, process, and report intelligence and to support other administrative and logistics operations. Most facets of military operations involve the use of some device or system that radiates or receives electromagnetic energy via air waves, metallic cable, or fiber optics. Radios, radars, sensors, smart munitions, telephone systems, and computer networks use electromagnetic radiation. Both complex and unsophisticated military organizations depend on these systems and their inherent use of the electromagnetic spectrum. Signals intelligence operations are the principal way to exploit an adversary's use of the electromagnetic spectrum.

1001. What Is Signals Intelligence?

Signals intelligence (SIGINT) is "a category of intelligence comprising either individually or in combination all communications intelligence, electronic intelligence, and foreign instrumentation signals intelligence, however transmitted" (Joint Pub 1-02). Simply, SIGINT is intelligence gained by exploiting an adversary's use of the electromagnetic spectrum with the aim of gaining undetected firsthand intelligence on the adversary's intentions, dispositions, capabilities, and limitations.

a. Communications Intelligence

Communications intelligence (COMINT) is the technical and intelligence information derived

from foreign communications by anyone other than the intended recipient.

b. Electronics Intelligence

Electronics intelligence (ELINT) is the technical and intelligence information derived from foreign noncommunication electromagnetic radiation emanating from anywhere other than nuclear detonations or radioactive sources.

c. Foreign Instrumentation Signals Intelligence

Foreign instrumentation signals intelligence (FISINT) is the technical and intelligence information derived from the intercept of foreign instrumentation signals by anyone other than the intended recipients. (FISINT is primarily strategic in nature and will not be addressed further in this manual.)

1002. Concept of Employment

SIGINT can be employed in tactical situation when the enemy uses electromagnetic spectrum communications and/or systems. Optimal employment is against enemy forces that depend on tactical communications and noncommunications for command and control of their operations. SIGINT operations are more difficult against enemy forces that have established more permanent emplacements using land lines or other cabled communications systems.

SIGINT is one of several intelligence disciplines. The other key intelligence disciplines are imagery intelligence (IMINT), human resources intelligence (HUMINT), and measurement and signature intelligence (MASINT).