

Battle of Signatures

Tomorrow's fights will involve conditions in which "to be detected is to be targeted is to be killed." Adversaries will routinely net together sensors, spies, UAS, and space imagery to form sophisticated "ISR-strike systems" that are able to locate, track, target, and attack an opposing force. In complex terrain, adversaries will collect targeting information through eyes and ears and spread it through social media. No matter the means of detection, unmanaged signatures will increasingly become a critical vulnerability.

We must acquire the offensive capabilities to raise and detect enemy signatures across the spectrum, quickly and accurately assign meaning to what we observe, and rapidly take action to exploit any opportunity. Defensively, our units will need to adapt how they fight, emphasizing emissions control and other means of signature management to increase their survivability. We will also need deception capabilities that cause an adversary to form inaccurate impressions about our actions and intentions. Further, we will need to improve our counter-intelligence capabilities and social media discipline.