

DECODING AN UNKNOWN ENVIRONMENT WITH MILITARY POLICE CORPS TECHNOLOGY

By Captain Benjamin R. Peden

The future Military Police Corps will continue to execute its mission set but will do so with the emergence of new technology on the world stage and on the battlefield. The advancement of drones, the integration of blockchain technology, and an upsurge in artificial intelligence (AI) applications will be at the forefront as the Military Police Corps moves toward 2040.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey in 2017, the Federal Emergency Management Agency used drones to conduct rapid damage assessments of critical infrastructure such as roads and bridges; these assessments enabled the prioritization of response efforts and more effective allocation of resources.¹ As unmanned aerial vehicle technology continues to advance, the Military Police Corps—specifically, the military police platoon—will most likely broaden its use of drones, incorporating them into the military police toolkit and integrating them for security and mobility tasks at the tactical level beyond 2040. For example, a young platoon leader in a disaster zone may need to use drone assets to obtain a local damage assessment following a natural disaster. By capturing data and detailed images, drones can provide a more complete and accurate damage assessment than is possible with a ground level inspection.

In 2017, the United Nations Development Programme launched a blockchain-based digital identity platform known as “ID2020” to assist refugees in Syria and Iraq in accessing essential services.² The platform provided refugees with a secure and verifiable digital identity that was used to access a range of services including healthcare, education, and financial support. Additionally, the system stored and verified the identity information, ensuring that it was secure and tamper-proof.³ In the future, the Military Police Corps may incorporate blockchain technology to identify refugees and displaced persons in support of military police missions, such as stability operations. For example, a company commander on the battlefield might receive an influx of displaced personnel who do not have formal identification documents. Blockchain technology could address this challenge by providing a secure, tamper-proof identity verification system accessible by multiple organizations. By creating a decentralized and immutable record of an individual’s identity, blockchain technology could provide a reliable and trusted source of identification similar to the automated biometric toolkit currently in use by the Military Police Corps. While the implementation of blockchain-based identification technology would require significant investment in infrastructure and training, it would significantly enhance the ability of the Military Police Corps to conduct stability operations in a large-scale operation.

In 2018, India deployed an AI-powered flood prediction and early warning system that uses machine learning to

predict the likelihood and severity of floods. The system provided accurate predictions of floods in the area during monsoon season, thus minimizing the impact of the natural disaster.⁴ A similar AI platform with real-time monitoring capabilities could be integrated into the Military Police Corps to significantly enhance the ability to predict natural disasters and shape operations for all mission sets. For example, AI weather analytics could help prepare a battalion or brigade commander to send military police Soldiers to assist with stability operations after a natural disaster. By leveraging advanced analytics and machine-learning algorithms to evaluate vast amounts of data from diverse sources, the Military Police Corps could gain valuable real-time insight into the risks and potential impacts of disasters, enabling the organization to proactively determine when and where to deploy its assets.

The Military Police Corps currently uses drone assets for real-world missions; thus, multifaceted drones could be easily adopted and integrated into the Military Police Corps arsenal. However, blockchain and AI technologies are novel and their use would require that the Army heavily invest in infrastructure changes and personnel training. Nevertheless, while the future is vast and unknown, implementation of these technologies by the skilled men and women of the Military Police Corps will assuredly result in a thriving Corps that successfully completes its mission into 2040 and beyond.

Endnotes:

¹Faine Greenwood et al., *Flying Into the Hurricane: A Case Study of UAV Use in Damage Assessment During the 2017 Hurricanes in Texas and Florida*, “PLoS ONE,” 5 February 2020, <<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0227808>>, accessed on 10 July 2023.

²“We Need to Get Digital ID Right,” ID2020 Alliance, <<https://id2020.org/>>, accessed on 10 July 2023.

³*Blockchain Against Hunger: Harnessing Technology in Support of Syrian Refugees*, World Food Programme, 30 May 2017, <<https://www.wfp.org/news/blockchain-against-hunger-harnessing-technology-support-syrian-refugees>>, accessed on 10 July 2023.

⁴Ragavendra Ashrit et al., “Predication of the August 2018 Heavy Rainfall Events Over Kerala With High-Resolution NWP Models,” Royal Meteorological Society, <<https://rmets.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/met.1906>>, accessed on 10 July 2023.



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