

## ‘A new kind of super-warrior’: US military pursuing mind controlled drones

Surgery is expensive, and surgery to create a new kind of super-warrior is ethically complicated. A mind-reading device that requires no surgery would open up a world of possibilities. Brain-computer interfaces, or BCIs, have been used to help people with quadriplegia regain limited control over their bodies, and to enable veterans who lost limbs in Iraq and Afghanistan to control artificial ones. [Next-generation Nonsurgical Neurotechnology Program or N<sup>3</sup>] is the US military’s first serious attempt to develop BCIs with a more belligerent purpose. “Working with drones and swarms of drones, operating at the speed of thought rather than through mechanical devices—those types of things are what these devices are really for,” says Al Emondi, the director of N<sup>3</sup>.

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The science is undoubtedly exciting. But that excitement can obscure how ill-equipped the Pentagon and corporations like [Facebook, which are also developing BCIs](#), are to address the host of ethical, legal, and social questions a noninvasive BCI gives rise to. How might swarms of drones controlled directly by a human brain change the nature of warfare? Emondi, the head of N<sup>3</sup>, says that neural interfaces will be used however they are needed. But military necessity is a malleable criterion.

**Read full, original post:** [The US military is trying to read minds](#)