COL David P. Elsen is a native of Illinois where he graduated summa cum laude from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois and was commissioned as an Army ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate in December 1995.

Initially assigned to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky as an artillery officer, he served within the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in a variety of positions including Infantry Company Fire Support Officer, Firing Battery Fire Direction Officer, Firing Battery Executive Officer, and Battalion S4. Transitioning to Military Intelligence, he served as a G2 Operations Officer within 18th Airborne Corps Headquarters at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina and then as an Airborne Infantry Battalion S2 in the 82nd Airborne Division, including participation in the initial invasion of Iraq (OIF-1). He then commanded B Company, 313th MI Battalion, directly supporting 2nd Brigade of the 82nd. Selected as an Army Olmsted Scholar, he attended one year of Chinese Mandarin language instruction at Defense Language Institute-Washington followed by two years of graduate study at Peking University in Beijing, China. Assigned to the 501st MI Brigade in the Republic of Korea, he served as the 532nd MI Battalion Executive Officer and subsequently the Theater Analysis and Control Element Chief. He then completed a joint tour at the National Security Agency (NSA), serving as the Deputy Chief for NSA's Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Task Force Team, supervising numerous ISR projects in support of military operations, and then deploying as the Cryptologic Services Group – Bagram OIC, directly supporting Regional Command East in Afghanistan. He concluded his NSA tour as the Meade Operations Center J3, coordinating SIGINT operations, training, and deployments in support of expeditionary military forces. Returning to Korea, he commanded the 532nd MI Battalion, providing direct intelligence support to U.S. Forces Korea and Eight U.S. Army. COL Elsen's last assignment was on the Joint Staff in the Pentagon as Deputy Chief, J39 Cyber and Electronic Warfare Operations Division.

COL Elsen currently serves as the Brigade commander of 500th Military Intelligence Brigade-Theater.

COL Elsen's education includes a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Wheaton College, Illinois; a Master of Business Administration from Fordham University, New York, and a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy from the Eisenhower School, National Defense University. COL Elsen's military education includes the Field Artillery Officer's Basic Course, Military Intelligence Captain's Career Course, Army Intermediate Level Education, and Senior Service College at the Eisenhower School, National Defense University. In addition, he has completed the Army Ranger, Airborne, Air Assault and Jumpmaster Schools.

COL Elsen's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Cluster), Meritorious Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Cluster), Iraq Campaign Medal (2 Stars), Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and Korean Defense Service Medal.