



The Director of National Intelligence (DNI)

The United States Intelligence Community (IC) is often discussed as if it is a single entity, like a corporation, with the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) as CEO. In reality, the IC is a collection of 17 component organizations within six separate departments headed by cabinet secretaries and an independent agency that all carry out intelligence-related functions.

Creation of DNI Position

The position of DNI was created in accordance with a recommendation of the Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, more commonly known as the 9/11 Commission. In making its recommendation, 9/11 Commission observed a lack of central coordinating authority among the then 16 component organizations of the IC, partly as a result of separate statutory missions and administrative barriers to intelligence and information sharing.

Congress created the position of the DNI through passage of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (P.L. 108-458, or IRTPA) in 2004. By creating the position of the DNI, the IRTPA eliminated the position of the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI). The DCI position was created by presidential letter in 1946 and formally established through the National Security Act of 1947 (P.L. 80-253). Through a “triple-hatted” arrangement, the DCI simultaneously served as community manager of the IC, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and chief intelligence advisor to the President. With the passage of IRTPA, the DNI assumed responsibility as manager of the IC and principal intelligence advisor to the President, leaving leadership of the CIA to the Director of the CIA.

Office of the DNI

The IRTPA also created an Office of the DNI (ODNI), an organization of approximately 1,500 IC professionals, including contractors, and employees of other agencies detailed to the ODNI. The ODNI enables the DNI to facilitate integration of intelligence collection and analysis, information and intelligence sharing, and budgeting and execution across the other 16 IC components. The ODNI also includes the staff for the President’s Daily Briefing.

In 2007, the establishment of the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA) enabled the DNI to leverage operational and R&D expertise to facilitate the transition of research results to the IC for operational application.

In March 2018, DNI Daniel Coats announced a reorganization of the ODNI aimed at optimizing (1) integration of intelligence from across the IC; (2) allocation of National Intelligence Program (NIP) resources; (3) promotion of partner nation and private sector national

security relationships; and (4) development of a strategy for response to emerging and future threats.

Table 1. DNIs to Date

2005 - 2007	Ambassador John Negroponte
2007 - 2009	VADM (Ret.) J. Michael McConnell
2009 - 2010	ADM (Ret.) Dennis Blair
2010 - 2017	LTGEN (Ret.) James Clapper
2017-present	Former Senator Daniel Coats

Table 2. Office of the DNI

Director of National Intelligence	
Principal Deputy Director (DDNI) Chief Management Officer	
Core Mission	
DDNI for Intelligence Integration	
Cyber Threat Intel. Integration Ctr	Nat’l Counterproliferation Ctr
Mission Integration Division	Nat’l Counterterrorism Ctr
National Intelligence Council	Nat’l Counterintel. Security Ctr
Nat’l Intel. Management	
Enablers	
Acquisition, Tech., & Facilities	Partner Engagement
Chief Financial Officer	Policy & Strategy
Chief Human Capital Officer	Systems & Resource Analyses
IC Chief Information Officer	
Oversight	
Civil Libs., Privacy & Transparency	Office of the General Counsel
Equal Employ. Opp. & Diversity	Office of Legislative Affairs
IC Inspector General	Public Affairs Office

Source: Adapted from ODNI org chart at dni.gov.

Responsibilities

According to provisions in the IRTPA, as amended and codified in 50 U.S.C. §3024, and Executive Order 12333 (as amended), DNI responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that timely and objective national intelligence is provided to policy makers;
- Overseeing and providing advice to the President and the National Security Council with respect to all ongoing and proposed covert action programs;
- Ensuring the most accurate analysis of intelligence is derived from all sources;
- Ensuring maximum availability of, and access to, intelligence information within the IC;

- Managing intelligence and counterintelligence arrangements with foreign governments and international organizations;
- Overseeing the development and implementation of a program management plan for acquisition of major systems, and doing so jointly with the Secretary of Defense for Department of Defense (DOD) programs;
- Establishing objectives and priorities for collection, analysis, production, and dissemination of national intelligence;
- Developing personnel policies and programs to enhance the capacity for joint operations and to facilitate staffing of community management functions;
- Developing and ensuring the execution of an annual budget for the National Intelligence Program (NIP);
- Collaborating with the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)) in the USD(I)'s development and execution of the Military Intelligence Program (MIP) (the USD(I) is the senior representative of the Secretary of Defense to the ODNI); and
- Leading IC-wide efforts to increase efficiency and effectiveness (e.g., providing a service of common concern to two or more IC elements).

Authorities

To carry out these responsibilities (within the following subject areas) the DNI has the authority to:

Acquisition

- Act as the exclusive milestone decision authority on major acquisitions, unless the acquisitions concern DOD programs. In those cases, the DNI shares authority with the Secretary of Defense.

Advice

- Establish "Mission" Managers to serve as principal substantive advisors on intelligence related to designated countries, regions, topics, or functional issues such as cyber.
- Establish "Functional" Managers to serve as principal substantive advisors on collection disciplines such as human or communications intelligence.
- Establish councils related to IC-wide management and intelligence integration.

Analysis

- Establish policies and procedures that (1) encourage sound analytic methods and tradecraft IC-wide; (2) ensure that analysis is based upon all sources available; and (3) ensure competitive analysis of analytic products.

Appointments

- Appoint the DNI's deputy directors, the Director of the National Counter Proliferation Center, the IC Chief Financial Officer, IC Civil Liberties Protection Office and the IC Director of Science and Technology.
- Note that the President appoints most IC leadership positions with the advice and consent of the Senate. However, during the nomination process, respective department secretaries need DNI concurrence in filling

positions such as the Director of NGA and the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research (INR).

- The DNI may be consulted but his or her concurrence is not required in the appointment of the USD(I), the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the uniformed heads of service intelligence elements to include the USCG, and the Assistant Attorney General for National Security.

Budget

- Develop and determine the NIP budget.
- Monitor implementation and ensure the effective execution of the annual budget for intelligence and intelligence related activities.
- Direct how congressionally appropriated funds flow from the Treasury Department to each of the cabinet level agencies containing IC elements.
- Transfer or reprogram funds, within certain limits, with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval.

Classified Information

- Ensure IC-wide recognition of agency clearances.
- Establish uniform standards and procedures related to information access, investigation and adjudication—to include continuous monitoring of anyone with access to classified information.

Information Sharing

- Establish uniform security and information technology standards, protocols, and interfaces.
- Develop an IC-wide information sharing architecture.
- Establish, operate, direct national intelligence centers.

Personnel-Related

- Transfer IC personnel for up to two years, with OMB and agency head approval.
- Encourage assignment rotation whereby IC personnel have a chance to work in other IC elements.

Protecting Sources and Methods

- Establish any number of procedures to protect intelligence sources and collection methods to include the security clearance process and classification requirements for IC communications.
- Waive U.S. admission requirements for aliens, if acting jointly with the Secretary of State and Attorney General—a lesser known example of this protection authority.

Tasking Authority

- Manage and direct the tasking, collection, analysis, production, and dissemination of national intelligence, by approving requirements and resolving conflicts.

CRS Products

CRS In Focus IF10524, *Defense Primer: Budgeting for National and Defense Intelligence*, by Michael E. DeVine and Heidi M. Peters.

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