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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON
THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY POST 9/11

OVERVIEW

Following the September 11th terrorist attacks, which instantly transformed the U.S. threat environment, the nation turned to the Intelligence Community with a massive and urgent tasking: to secure the homeland.

In 2004, Congress and the Administration, in the midst of two wars, mandated structural Intelligence Community reforms and created the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) to mobilize a new, integrated Intelligence Community (IC) workforce and eliminate barriers to information sharing. Many of those reforms are less than five years old. While we have made significant progress, much work remains.

REDUNDANCIES AND OVERLAP

Since 9/11, has there been a proliferation of new intelligence offices?

- In terms of major IC organizations, the number has remained fairly stable. What has changed is the *emphasis*. The IC shifted major resources from broad terrorist threats to al-Qa`ida and its sympathizers. Today's diverse global threat environment requires comprehensive and robust intelligence capabilities to enable us to track these proliferated threats and national security challenges.

- Additionally, many organizations that appear to be new were actually long-standing functions that were re-purposed, and in some cases renamed, for the post-9/11 environment. (See Mission and Support Activities for the IC, on page two.)

Why are there so many organizations doing the same thing, especially in analysis?

- "Competitive analysis" avoids single points of failure and unchallenged analytic judgments. The lack of competing analytic judgments was a criticism by several post-9/11 commissions.

- Also, what may appear to be unnecessary redundancy in analysis and analytic products is, in many instances, *intentional* overlap. The IC must be equipped to produce tailored intelligence for different customer sets. For example:
    - Department of Defense (DOD) analysis must support military forces with information such as locations of IEDs (which were responsible for 7,200 attacks in Afghanistan last year) and identification of terrorist elements in theaters of conflict.
    - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) analysis focuses on disrupting homeland plots such as the Zazi and Headley cases.
    - National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) provides strategic and tactical level threat warnings for the full range of terrorist organizations with an overseas nexus, with special focus on threats to the homeland, and maintains the terrorist identities database.

- The IC must also produce integrated products, such as the President's Daily Briefing, that synthesize multiple analysts' perspectives.

Does the IC need to conduct a systematic review to eliminate duplication and redundancy?

- Review of IC processes is aggressive and continuous, including through the annual budget process, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviews, Congressional oversight, and ODNI Inspector General reviews.

- For example, in the wake of the failed Christmas Day bombing attempt, the DNI worked with the Intelligence Community to clearly define the appropriate areas of responsibility and accountability for the major organizations with counterterrorism analytic missions.

INFORMATION SHARING AND INTEGRATION

After five years, why are there still so many problems related to information sharing?

- Information sharing, while better than it has ever been, remains a significant challenge for the IC. Complex technical, legal and institutional barriers remain such as multiple information systems and legal regimes to protect privacy and constitutional rights.

- We have always acknowledged that there is much work to be done, but no assessment of the IC is accurate or complete without recognizing that progress in information sharing is real. Consider the areas of:
    - Policy: ODNI advanced IC transformation by implementing Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 501, "Discovery and Dissemination or Retrieval of Information," which mandates wide-ranging actions to facilitate information sharing, including the ability to discover and request information from all IC elements.
    - The Information Sharing Environment (ISE): The ISE is comprised of policies, procedures, and technologies linking the resources (people, systems, databases, and information) of federal, state, local, and tribal entities with the private sector to facilitate terrorism information sharing, access, and collaboration. Working with our homeland security partners, fusion centers are able to access needed intelligence information for their missions.
    - Library of National Intelligence (LNI): By creating the LNI, ODNI improved sharing of "finished intelligence" across the IC.

- o Collaborative Tools/Capabilities: Creation of Intellipedia, the IC's version of the user-annotated online encyclopedia Wikipedia, and A-Space, a virtual work environment, is fostering spontaneous, collaborative analytic efforts.

How can you claim progress in information sharing when the failure to share has been central to recent attacks such as Ft. Hood or the attempted airline bombing on Dec. 25?

- First, the IC has taken aggressive action to respond to recently identified vulnerabilities in information sharing, especially as it relates to counterterrorism efforts. For example:
  - o NCTC is leading a community-wide effort to develop an integrated response focused on: finding terrorists in the data, enhancing information technology support, and closing mission seams.
  - o The IC is responding to recent events with innovations such as an analytic Pursuit Group, dedicated to investigating emerging threat threads, and refined watchlisting procedures.

- It is also important to understand the challenge we face in identifying terrorist plots. Here's what we're up against:
  - o Terabytes of foreign intelligence information come in each day, vastly exceeding the entire text holdings of the Library of Congress, which is estimated at 10 terabytes.
  - o NCTC's 24-hour Operations Center receives 8,000 to 10,000 pieces of counterterrorist information, roughly 10,000 names, and 40-plus specific threats and plots, every day.
  - o Western naming conventions – first/middle/last – don't apply.

  - o Our enemies are aware of our attempts to track them and are adapting their methods to avoid detection.

Doesn't the increase in compartmented programs complicate or hinder information sharing?

- Compartmented programs can actually facilitate information sharing by fusing, analyzing, and producing intelligence in a manner that separates out the highly sensitive portions (i.e. sources and methods), and leaving the remaining information in a form that can be more widely distributed.

How can you possibly ensure visibility and deconfliction when there are so many highly compartmented programs?

- There are two key ways: one, through the use of so-called "Superusers" who have visibility into both IC and DOD-related programs to ensure that information is being shared; and two, through a senior group of officials within ODNI who meet regularly and frequently to review security requirements and facilitate awareness and coordination across the Community. In addition, many individuals who have access to a wide variety of programs within their areas of responsibility are able to take steps to deconflict as necessary.

CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Is there sufficient Congressional oversight?

- The leadership of the Intelligence Community is committed to transparency with the Congress and ensuring the congressional oversight committees are kept fully and currently informed of all significant intelligence activities.

- This continuous and open communication included more than 100 Intelligence Community Oversight Hearings in 2009, more than 70 such Oversight Hearings in 2010 to date, and thousands of Intelligence Community briefings and meetings--dozens each week--on all aspects of intelligence capabilities, policies, programs, operations, budgets, and authorities. In addition, Intelligence Community agencies provided the intelligence oversight committees with hundreds of thousands of pages of classified information on global threats, programs, and national security concerns. On a daily basis, the Intelligence Community agencies also respond to letters from Members and reach out to Members and staff to ensure they are informed of the most recent intelligence issues.

- This level of interaction and communication has resulted in greater Congressional oversight and involvement in Intelligence Community activities.

THE VALUE OF THE ODNI

Is the ODNI an unnecessary layer? Has it really made any progress?

- ODNI was established by Congress to coordinate a large, complex enterprise, and is accountable to the President and Congress for the actions of the Community.

- The ODNI staff sets policy, manages the National Intelligence Program budget of approximately $48 billion, and ensures integration across the IC workforce. ODNI staff also supports 15 Mission and Support Activities (MSAs) that serve the entire Intelligence Community of roughly 100,000 people. They include the National Counterterrorism Center, the National Intelligence Council, the National Counterproliferation Center, and the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity.

- The ODNI is necessary. It is the only IC element whose mission is dedicated to the improved operations of the entire U.S. Intelligence Community.

What has ODNI accomplished?

- ODNI revamped the President's Daily Briefing to incorporate analyses from across the Intelligence Community, thus ensuring that reports to senior policymakers provide diverse perspectives and encompass the breadth and depth of IC experience.

- ODNI applied standards to analytic tradecraft community-wide. These standards are used across the IC to promote more rigorous analytic thinking against our hardest targets. ODNI also established an entity to evaluate the quality of IC analytic products against these standards, and developed an "Analysis 101" course open to all new IC analysts for instruction in critical thinking in a joint training environment.

- ODNI established geo-specific mission managers to address matters of collective national security importance. The ODNI also established transnational mission managers to integrate IC intelligence on counterterrorism, counterproliferation, and counterintelligence.

- By enhancing acquisition oversight, ODNI is delivering new capabilities on time and on budget.

- To ensure adequate coordination and resolution of cross-cutting issues across the IC, the leaders of all IC elements meet weekly in an Executive Committee or Deputy Executive Committee – a joint body that did not exist prior to the ODNI.

- ODNI has brought together individual agency science and technology research efforts through a coordinated science and technology investment plan and establishment of the Intelligence Advanced Research Project Activity (IARPA), which produces an integrated investment strategy and enhanced technology transition for the IC.

- ODNI led the modernization of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) to enhance foreign intelligence collection while protecting the privacy of U.S. citizens and legal residents.

- ODNI focused the Community, and ultimately the nation, on the Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative (CNCI); no single agency could have pursued the CNCI independently.

- ODNI established a civilian joint duty program to expedite the break-down of cultural silos and build a new generation of intelligence leaders for whom a joint focus is becoming business as usual.

- To ensure the most talented workforce, and to share information among agencies, the ODNI, DOD, OMB, and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) established the Joint Security and Suitability Process Reform Team, which developed a process that has reduced initial security clearance from an average of 165 days to 57 days.