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National Security Agency

Fort George G. Meade, Maryland

29 SEPTEMBER 1971

Superseded by USSID 1, 28 Jul 72

UNITED STATES SIGNAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTIVE

1

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USSID 1
29 September 1971

UNITED STATES SIGNAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTIVE

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OPERATING POLICY (U)

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LETTER OF PROMULGATION

The United States Signal Intelligence Directive (USSID) System is the mechanism I use to exercise operational and technical control of United States SIGINT activities. I expect all elements to operate within the spirit and the letter of its principles and procedures.

United States Signal Intelligence Directive 1 is the foundation of the System and sets forth the basic concept for the direction and operation of the United States SIGINT System. The concept is that the United States SIGINT mission will be discharged through central management and planning, with centralized or decentralized operations as appropriate to the problem. Participation and important tasks will be assigned to all elements in a mutually supporting way.

The United States Signal Intelligence Directive System replaces the Manual of U. S. SIGINT Operations. Directive 1 replaces the Statement of General Operating Policy, dated 5 March 1962, and is effective upon receipt.

Noel Gayler

NOEL GAYLER
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy
Director

CHANGE REGISTER

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OPERATING POLICY (U)

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE

1.1. This directive establishes policy and procedures for the direction and operation of the United States SIGINT System.

SECTION 2 - AUTHORITY

2.1. National Security Council Intelligence Directive (NSCID) No. 6, "Communications Intelligence and Electronics Intelligence," 15 September 1958, is the basic national directive on SIGINT. 1/ It establishes the COMINT and ELINT missions of the National Security Agency (NSA), assigns to the Director NSA, the responsibility for accomplishing those missions, and defines relationships between NSA and other departments and agencies.

SECTION 3 - RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. The Secretary of Defense is the executive agent of the government for the conduct of COMINT and ELINT activities in accordance with the provisions of NSCID No. 6 and for the maintenance and operation of the National Security Agency.

3.2. The Director, NSA, is required to provide an effective, unified organization and control of the COMINT and ELINT intercept and processing activities of the United States, to provide for integrated operational policies and procedures pertaining thereto and to produce COMINT information and ELINT information in accordance with objectives, requirements and priorities established by the U. S. Intelligence Board.

1/ Signal Intelligence: A generic term including communications intelligence and electronics intelligence. Abbr. SIGINT. (SIGINT refers to the combination of COMINT and ELINT, or to either when one of them is not specifically identified.)

3.3. The Director, NSA, exercises operational and technical control 2/ over all United States COMINT and ELINT activities with two exceptions:

a. Certain COMINT and ELINT activities undertaken under the authority of NSCID No. 5 are specifically exempted by NSCID No. 6 from the operational and technical control of the Director, NSA.

b. Operational control over certain ELINT activities has been delegated by the Secretary of Defense to the commands which conduct them. Technical control over these ELINT activities is retained by the Director, NSA.

3.4. In providing for SIGINT support to departments, agencies, commands, and other government activities, the Director, NSA, determines the extent of the SIGINT effort to be committed. When he decides it will best meet SIGINT support needs, operational control of specified COMINT and ELINT facilities and resources will at times be delegated by the Director, for such periods and for such tasks as are determined by him, to an appropriate agent. He will retain technical control of and will provide technical support to these resources.

3.5. When action by the Chiefs of the operating agencies of the Services or civilian departments is required, the Director shall normally issue instructions pertaining to COMINT and ELINT operations through them. The Director is authorized to issue directly to any operating element under his operational control task assignments and pertinent instructions which are within the capacity of such elements to accomplish. He shall also have direct access to, and direct communications with, any elements of the Service or civilian COMINT and ELINT agencies on any other matters of operational and technical control as may be necessary, and he is authorized to obtain such information and intelligence material from them as he may require. The Director will inform the Chiefs of the operating agencies of the Service or civilian departments of task assignments issued directly to operating elements. They keep the Director, NSA, informed of progress in completing their assigned tasks, and notify him of any matters bearing on the fulfillment of their SIGINT responsibilities.

2/ SIGINT Operational Control - the authoritative direction of SIGINT collection and processing activities by the assignment of tasks, designation of specific targets, and the allocation of effort. SIGINT Technical Control - the authoritative prescription of those uniform techniques and standards by which SIGINT information is collected, processed and reported in satisfaction of technical as well as intelligence requirements without interference to operational control. Technical control includes the authority to conduct technical review of SIGINT plans and programs to insure technical adequacy.

SECTION 4 - THE UNITED STATES SIGINT SYSTEM

4.1. Elements of NSA, the Service Cryptologic Agencies (SCA's), 3/ the Central Intelligence Agency, and other departments and agencies which conduct COMINT or ELINT activities under the operational or technical control of the Director, NSA, comprise the United States SIGINT System (USSS).

4.2. Certain non-United States SIGINT organizations supplement the USSS.

SECTION 5 - OBJECTIVES

5.1. The objectives of the United States SIGINT System are:

a. To provide SIGINT information and support to departments, agencies, commands, and other government activities in satisfaction of objectives, requirements and priorities.

b. To produce reliable, timely SIGINT product of high quality.

c. To transmit SIGINT information and operational data rapidly and securely.

d. To maintain a research and development program which will satisfy requirements for SIGINT collection and processing systems and equipments.

e. To provide effective SIGINT training.

f. To develop plans for SIGINT operations under wartime, emergency, or other contingencies.

g. To use SIGINT resources economically and effectively.

h. To safeguard SIGINT activities and materials by prescribing security regulations for operating practices, and the transmission, handling, and distribution of SIGINT materials.

3/ United States Army Security Agency, Naval Security Group Command, United States Air Force Security Service.

SECTION 6 - UNITED STATES SIGNAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTIVE SYSTEM

6.1. The Director, NSA, uses the U. S. Signal Intelligence Directive (USSID) System to exercise operational or technical control of the USSS. The System includes all of the means by which instructions may be passed within the USSS, for example, OPSCOMM, formal messages and hard copy United States Signal Intelligence Directives (USSID).

6.2. Only USSID or vehicles authorized in USSID will be used to direct the SIGINT activities of the USSS. 4/

6.3. The Director, NSA, promulgates procedures and controls for the preparation, issuance, and maintenance of USSID.

SECTION 7 - RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

7.1. The Secretary of Defense has established the Combined Cryptologic Program (CCP) as the means of presenting SIGINT dollar and manpower resource needs. The Director, NSA, is the Program Manager of the CCP. In this capacity he:

a. Issues guidance to the military components of the USSS for the submission of their requirements,

b. Develops the CCP in collaboration with the military components, based upon requirements of the USIB, member Departments and Agencies and the military commands, and presents it to the Secretary of Defense,

c. Maintains the CCP System,

d. Reviews proposed changes to the CCP,

e. Supervises program execution for effective implementation.

7.2. The SCA's perform their SIGINT missions in accordance with the program objectives approved by the Secretary of Defense and with resources he authorizes for that purpose. They will inform the Director, NSA, of any changes in the quality or quantity of resources which prevent their reaching a given program objective within the resource levels authorized.

4/ Those elements which conduct ELINT activities outside the operational control of the Director, NSA, (see 3.3.b) receive only those USSID dealing with technical control matters.

7.3. The Military Departments are responsible for the establishment, maintenance, and administration of military facilities for the conduct of SIGINT activities under the operational or technical control of the Director, NSA.

7.4. The Military Departments assign personnel to NSA to meet requirements approved by the Secretary of Defense.

SECTION 8 - SIGINT SUPPORT

8.1. The Director, NSA, provides for SIGINT information and support to departments, agencies, commands and other government activities. The objective is expeditious response to user needs.

8.2. In determining how best to meet these needs, the Director will consider all SIGINT resources available to him and will task elements as appropriate to the problem.

SECTION 9 - SECOND PARTY RELATIONSHIPS

9.1. The Director, NSA, is responsible for COMINT and ELINT arrangements with the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, in general consultation with the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI). These are known as Second Parties.

9.2. The Director, NSA, determines the extent of liaison to be conducted and specifies the technical material and product to be exchanged between units of the USSS and elements of the Second Parties.

9.3. Planning and programming of U.S. SIGINT resources will take into account the use of material provided by Second Parties.

9.4. Combined United States - Second Party planning will be conducted, when appropriate, to make the best use of the resources of all parties.

SECTION 10 - THIRD PARTY RELATIONSHIPS

10.1. Nations other than the U.K., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand with which the U.S. Government has COMINT or ELINT arrangements are known as Third Parties. The Director of Central Intelligence is the executive agent of the Government for any COMINT or ELINT arrangements with them. [redacted]

EO 3.3b(3)

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SECTION 11 - STANDARDIZATION

11.1. The Director, NSA, prescribes standards to be used in COMINT and ELINT activities. Included are data standards to provide a body of terms, codes, and abbreviations which will facilitate processing and exchange of information.

SECTION 12 - SIGINT OPERATIONS

12.1. The Director, NSA, assigns or authorizes all SIGINT activities conducted by elements of the USSS and determines where and how they can best be performed.

12.2. While SIGINT operations will always be coherently organized, they may be centralized or decentralized as the problem demands.

SECTION 13 - SIGINT CONTINGENCY PLANNING

13.1. The Director, NSA, develops plans for SIGINT operations conducted by NSA and the SCA's under contingencies, emergencies or wartime. These plans include arrangements to satisfy user needs expressed in operations plans (OPLANS) for a given contingency.

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SECTION 14 - SECURITY

14.1. The United States Intelligence Board (USIB) determines the degree and type of security protection to be given COMINT activities through the protection of information about them or derived from them.

14.2. The Director, NSA, issues security regulations covering practices of the USSS, including the transmission, handling, and distribution of COMINT material within and among elements of the USSS. The Director monitors compliance with regulations and conducts inspections if necessary.

14.3. The Director, NSA, prescribes procedures for special protection of unusually sensitive COMINT operations. These procedures may apply to handling of material in its initial stages as well as to its inclusion in intelligence product.

14.4. The conduct of COMINT activities in exposed areas (dangerous or risky situations) requires the prior approval of the Director, NSA.

14.5. The USIB determines the degree and type of security protection to be given ELINT activities through the protection of information about them or derived from them. Special COMINT security standards and procedures generally do not apply to ELINT and ELINT activities.

SECTION 15 - COMMUNICATIONS

15.1. DoD Directive S-5100.19, "Implementation of NSCID No. 7", 19 March 1959, established a Critical Intelligence Communications System (CRITICOMM). Its purpose is timely transmission of Critical Intelligence (CRITIC) 7/ to the President, members of USIB, and other authorities. The Directive requires the Director, NSA, to:

7/ Criteria for the selection of materials which qualify as CRITIC, and the handling of items required, appear in Director, Central Intelligence Directive (DCID) 7/1. Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum of Policy 125 describes the preferred means of transmission of CRITIC to the Unified and Specified Commands.

"a. Control the traffic and cryptographic operations of the CRITICOMM system.

"b. Establish, after coordination with the organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other appropriate agencies, the operational procedures for handling COMINT and critical intelligence traffic within the CRITICOMM system."

15.2. In discharging these responsibilities, the Director, NSA:

a. Validates USSS communications requirements.

b. Coordinates doctrine and policies for electrical exchange of SIGINT with non-U.S. Government organizations, and

c. Monitors compliance with procedures and conducts inspections.

SECTION 16 - RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

16.1. In fulfilling the Research and Development responsibilities placed on him by NSCID No. 6, and acting under the supervision of the Director of Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E), the Director, NSA:

a. Reviews the SIGINT Research and Development requirements of the USSS,

b. Establishes, in collaboration with all participating agencies, procedures for the planning, coordination, technical evaluation, integration, and implementation of research and development projects carried out in the USSS,

c. Disseminates technical information resulting from SIGINT research and development, including that which has potential application to [redacted] EO 3.3b(3)

d. Conducts and maintains a research and development program to satisfy the USSS needs for SIGINT collection and processing equipments.

SECTION 17 - TESTING AND EVALUATION

17.1. The Director, NSA, has established an Operational Techniques Test and Evaluation (OTT&E) program to develop new or improve existing SIGINT systems, equipment, and operations techniques. OTT&E projects may be originated either by NSA or by the other components of the USSS in coordination with NSA.

SECTION 18 - SIGINT TRAINING

18.1. The Director, NSA, conducts or otherwise arranges for instruction to meet the cryptologic training requirements of all U. S. Government agencies. He also coordinates the cryptologic education and training activities of the USSS. He prescribes minimum standards for them and provides them technical guidance and support. SIGINT training may be conducted at schools maintained by NSA or by the SCA's.

18.2. The National Cryptologic School, established in DoD Directive No. 5100.47, exercises staff supervision over SIGINT training for the Director. This includes management of a consolidated cryptologic training program through Executive Agents. An Executive Agent is the organization selected by the Director, NSA, to conduct training designed to satisfy skill requirements common to more than one member of the USSS.

18.3. The National Cryptologic School promulgates policies, procedures, and instructions in the NSA Circular 40 series (Training). On occasion, training instructions applying to SIGINT operations may also appear in USSID documents.