



The Director of National Intelligence (DNI)

The United States Intelligence Community (IC) is a collection of 18 statutory elements within 6 cabinet departments and an independent agency that all carry out intelligence-related functions. As provided in statute, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) oversees the integration of these intelligence functions, spearheads the support the IC provides to the military and senior policymakers across the government, and serves as principal intelligence advisor to the President.

Creation of DNI Position

In 2004, the *National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*, (also called the *9/11 Commission*) recommended the creation of a central coordinating authority among the then-16 component organizations of the IC to mitigate administrative and operational barriers, and promote the sharing of intelligence and information. Congress acted on this recommendation, creating the position of the DNI through passage of the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (P.L. 108-458, or IRTPA). The law also eliminated the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) position, which had existed since 1946. 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.

Table I. 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
2017-2019	Former Senator Daniel Coats
2019-2020	VADM (Ret.) Joseph McGuire (acting)
2020-2020	Ambassador Richard Grenell (acting)
2020-2021	Former Representative John L Ratcliffe
2021-present	Avril D. Haines

Responsibilities

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

- Serving as head of the IC and principal advisor to the President on intelligence matters.

- Ensuring that timely, accurate, and objective national intelligence is provided to policymakers.
- Overseeing and providing advice to the President and the National Security Council with respect to all ongoing and proposed covert action programs.
- Establishing objectives and priorities for collection, analysis, production, and dissemination of national intelligence.
- Collaborating with the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security in the development and execution of the Military Intelligence Program (MIP).
- Managing intelligence and counterintelligence relationships with domestic and foreign intelligence partners.
- Developing personnel policies and programs to enhance joint intelligence operations, and facilitate community management functions.

Authorities

To carry out these responsibilities the DNI has the statutory authority to

- Act as the decisionmaking authority on major intelligence-related acquisitions, with the exception of acquisitions involving DOD programs. In those cases, the DNI shares authority with the Secretary of Defense.
- Establish Mission and Functional Managers to serve as principal substantive advisors on intelligence collection and analysis related to designated countries, regions, or functional areas such as cyber threat intelligence.
- Establish councils related to IC-wide management and intelligence integration.
- Establish policies and procedures that (1) encourage sound IC-wide analytic methods and tradecraft; (2) ensure analysis based upon all available sources; and (3) ensure competitive analysis of analytic products.
- Develop and oversee implementation of the National Intelligence Program (NIP) budget.
- Direct how congressionally appropriated funds flow from the Treasury Department to each of the cabinet level agencies containing IC elements, including through transferring or reprogramming funds within certain limits and with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval.

- Spearhead security clearance process improvements, and IC-wide security clearance reciprocity policy.
- Establish uniform security and information technology standards, protocols, and interfaces.
- Develop an IC-wide information sharing architecture.
- Establish, operate, and direct national intelligence centers.
- 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.
- Establish and implement procedures to protect intelligence sources and collection methods.
- Manage and direct the tasking, collection, analysis, production, and dissemination of national intelligence by approving requirements and promoting integration and efficiency of effort.
- Appoint the deputy directors of national intelligence, the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCPC), the IC Chief Financial Officer (CFO), the IC Director of the Civil Liberties Protection Office, and the IC Director of Science and Technology.
- Coordinate with cabinet secretaries who require DNI concurrence on nominations of departmental intelligence component heads. Consult in appointments to positions for which DNI concurrence is not required: the USD(I), the Assistant Attorney General for National Security, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and the uniformed heads of Service intelligence elements (including the intelligence element of the United States Coast Guard).

Office of the DNI

The IRTPA also created an Office of the DNI (ODNI), a statutory element of the IC, including permanent government employees, contractors, and detailees from other IC agencies. The DNI has periodically reorganized the ODNI consistent with administration policy and priorities, most recently in 2020. Congress, too, has influenced ODNI organization. For example, the

Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2018, 2019, and 2020 established within the ODNI both a Climate Security Advisory Council and a Foreign Malign Influence Response Center (Sections 5321 and 5322 of Division E of P.L. 116-92). Currently, the principal organizational components of the ODNI include

- The Mission Integration Division, which includes some of the most visible responsibilities of the DNI involved with intelligence analysis, integration and prioritization, such as the National Intelligence Council (NIC); the President's Daily Brief (PDB); Mission Performance, Analysis and Collection; the National Intelligence Management Council (NIMC); Election Threats Executive; Cyber Executive; and Space Executive.
- Three Mission Centers: the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC); the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC); and the National Counterproliferation Center (NCPC).
- The Policy and Capabilities Division, which includes offices involved with community management, planning, and acquisition, such as IC Human Capital; IC Acquisition, Procurement and Facilities; Requirements, Cost and Effectiveness; Policy and Strategy; and Domestic Engagement and Information Sharing. The Division also includes the Intelligence Advanced Projects Research Agency (IARPA).
- The ODNI also includes offices responsible for various aspects of oversight: Civil Liberties, Privacy and Transparency (CLPT); Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity (EEOD); the Inspector General of the IC (ICIG), and the Office of General Counsel (OGC).

CRS Products

CRS In Focus IF10525, *Defense Primer: National and Defense Intelligence*, by Michael E. DeVine

CRS In Focus IF10428, *Intelligence Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Evaluation (IPPBE) Process*, by Michael E. DeVine

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IF10470

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