



The Director of National Intelligence (DNI)

As provided in statute, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) oversees the integration of the intelligence functions of the 18 statutory elements of the Intelligence Community (IC), spearheads the support the IC provides to the military and senior policymakers across the government, and serves as principal intelligence advisor to the President. The DNI is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

Creation of DNI Position

Congress created the position of DNI recognizing a need for a senior official to provide dedicated leadership of efforts to improve coordination and information sharing among IC elements and between intelligence and law enforcement agencies. Prior to the creation of the position of DNI, the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) was responsible for managing the diverse elements of the IC, in addition to leading the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and advising the President on intelligence matters. Following the attacks on the U.S. homeland of September 11, 2001, however, the *National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States* (also called the *9/11 Commission*) recommended replacing the triple-hatted position of DCI with a central coordinating authority over the IC elements. This position would be dedicated to mitigating administrative and operational barriers impeding the lawful sharing of information and intelligence. Acting on the commission’s recommendation, Congress established the DNI position through provisions in the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (P.L. 108-458 or IRTPA). With the passage of IRTPA, Congress abolished the position of DCI; the DNI assumed responsibility as both manager of the IC and principal intelligence advisor to the President, while leadership of the CIA was left 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	Ms. Avril D. Haines

Responsibilities

The IRTPA, as amended, includes provisions governing DNI responsibilities (50 U.S.C. §§3023-3024). Among them, the DNI is responsible for:

- 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.
- Overseeing the management and directing the implementation of the National Intelligence Program (NIP).
- Collaborating with the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security (USD(I&S)) 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 require sound IC-wide analytic methods and tradecraft, analysis based upon all available sources, and competitive analysis of analytic products.

- Develop and oversee implementation of the National Intelligence Program (NIP) budget.
- Direct how congressionally appropriated funds flow from the Department of the Treasury 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 reciprocation policy.
- Establish uniform security and information technology standards, protocols, and interfaces.
- Develop an IC information sharing architecture.
- Establish 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 Counterproliferation and Biosecurity Center (NCBC), the Director of the Foreign Malign Influence Center (FMIC), and the IC Chief Financial Officer (CFO), the Civil Liberties Protection Officer, and Chief 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&S), 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 U.S. Coast Guard).
- 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; and the National Intelligence Management Council (NIMC).
- Five Mission Centers: the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC); the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC); and the National Counterproliferation and Biosecurity Center (NCBC), the Foreign Malign Influence Center (FMIC); and the Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center (CTIIC).
- 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 (EEO); the Inspector General of the IC (ICIG), and the Office of General Counsel (OGC).

Office of the DNI

The IRTPA also established the Office of the DNI (ODNI), a statutory element of the IC, including permanent government employees, contractors, and those detailed from other IC agencies. The DNI has periodically reorganized the ODNI consistent with administration policy and priorities. Congress, too, has influenced ODNI organization. The Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2018, 2019, and 2020, for example, established within the ODNI both a Climate Security Advisory Council (Section 5321 of Division E of P.L. 116-92), Currently, the principal organizational components of the ODNI include:

Relevant Statutes
Title 50, U.S. Code, §§3023-3034a
CRS Products
CRS In Focus IF10525, <i>Defense Primer: National and Defense Intelligence</i> , by Michael E. DeVine
CRS In Focus IF10523, <i>Defense Primer: Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security</i> , by Michael E. DeVine
CRS In Focus IF10524, <i>Defense Primer: Budgeting for National and Defense Intelligence</i> , by Michael E. DeVine
Other Resources
Executive Order 12333, <i>United States Intelligence Activities</i>
ODNI <i>Intelligence Activities Procedures Approved by the Attorney General Pursuant to E.O. 12333</i>
ICD-900, <i>Integrated Mission Management</i>

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