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U.S. Intelligence Community Establishment Provisions

The concept of a unified U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) consisting of integrated component departments and agencies began to take shape after World War II, in part through the establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency. Before this, U.S. intelligence organizations had existed within the military services and largely operated independently of one another. U.S. government references to an “Intelligence Community” first appear in the mid-1950s. The components of the IC were first specified in statute by the Intelligence Organization Act of 1992 (Title VII of P.L. 102-496). The IC has since evolved into a federated community of 18 components spread across two

independent agencies and six separate departments of the federal government.

Table 1 summarizes dates and directives for the establishment of each of the 18 IC component organizations. Some organizations, such as the Navy’s Office of Naval Intelligence, predate the emergence of the IC concept. Although not included in statute as an element of the IC, the establishment of the position of Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence and Security) (USD(I&S)) is included in this listing to underscore the leadership the USD(I&S) exercises over Department of Defense intelligence programs in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence.

Table 1. U.S. Intelligence Community Elements: Establishment Dates and Mechanisms

Element ^a	Establishment Date	Mechanism of Establishment
Established by Congressional Action		
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)	September 18, 1947	P.L. 80-253 (National Security Act of 1947) §102, codified in 50 U.S.C. §3035.
Department of Energy, Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence (DOE/IN)	August 4, 1977	P.L. 95-91 (DOE Organization Act of 1977) §215, codified in 42 U.S.C. §7144b(b) and amended by P.L. 109-364 §3117 and P.L. 116-92 §6421.
Department of Defense (DOD), National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA)	October 1, 1996	The National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) was established by P.L. 104-201 (National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY1997). NIMA was renamed NGA in 2003 under §921 of P.L. 108-136 (FY2004 NDAA). Codified in 10 U.S.C. §441.
Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Coast Guard Intelligence (USCG/IN)	December 28, 2001	P.L. 107-108 §105 (Intelligence Authorization Act (IAA) for FY2002), codified in 50 U.S.C. §3003(4)(H). ^b
DHS, Office of Intelligence and Analysis (DHS/OIA)	November 25, 2002	P.L. 107-296 (Homeland Security Act of 2002) §201, codified in 6 U.S.C. §121.
DOD, Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence & Security) (USD(I&S))	December 2, 2002	P.L. 107-314 (FY2003 NDAA) §901, codified in 10 U.S.C. §137.
Department of the Treasury, Office of Intelligence and Analysis (Treasury/OIA)	December 13, 2003	P.L. 108-177 (FY2004 IAA) §105 established the OIA and the position of Assistant Secretary of Intelligence, codified in 31 U.S.C. §311.
Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI)	December 17, 2004	P.L. 108-458 §1011 (Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004), codified in 50 U.S.C. §3025.
Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Intelligence Branch (FBI/IB)	December 17, 2004	P.L. 108-458 §2002 created an FBI Directorate of Intelligence [DI], codified in 28 U.S.C. §532 note. In 2005, President George W. Bush directed the DI be aligned under the FBI’s National Security Branch (NSB). As of July 2014, FBI Director James Comey realigned the DI under the newly established FBI Intelligence Branch (FBI/IB). ^c
U.S. Space Force Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Enterprise (S2)	January 8, 2021	DNI and Chief of Space Operations announcement of January 8, 2021 in accordance with 50 U.S.C. §3003(4)(L) ^d Codified in 50 U.S.C. §3003(4)(H) by §6421 of the IAA for FY23 (Div. F of P.L. 117-263).
Established by Department of Defense (DOD) Action		
U.S. Navy Office of Naval Intelligence (USN/ONI)	March 23, 1882	The Secretary of the Navy, in General Order No. 292, established a headquarters (HQ)-level “Office of Intelligence” under the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation.

Element ^a	Establishment Date	Mechanism of Establishment
U.S. Army Office of the Adjutant General, Military Information Division (MID)	April 12, 1889	HQ-level intelligence organization, in accordance with confidential orders of the War Department, April 12, 1889. ^e
U.S. Marine Corps, Intelligence Section (USMC/MCISR-E)	December 1, 1920	HQMC Memo of December 1, 1920. Major General Commandant, Major General Lejeune's HQMC staff reorganization included a Military Intelligence Section within the Operations and Training Division of Headquarters Marine Corps. ^f
U.S. Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (AF ISR)	September 18, 1947	HQ-level intelligence organization became HQ USAF/A-2 when the U.S. Air Force (USAF) was established as a separate department via the National Security Act of 1947 (P.L. 80-253 §208) ^g
DOD, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)	October 1, 1961	DOD Directive 5105.21 of August 1961, updated March 18, 2008.
DOD, National Reconnaissance Office (NRO)	August 7, 1961	Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretary of Defense and the Director of the CIA of August 7, 1961 (declassified on October 1, 2012).
Established by Executive Action		
Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (DOS/INR)	October 1, 1945	E.O. 9621, "Termination of the Office of Strategic Services and Disposition of its Functions," effective October 1, 1945. ^h
DOD, National Security Agency (NSA)	December 29, 1952	National Security Council Intelligence Directive (NSCID) 9 Revised, "Communications Intelligence," Dec. 29, 1952, and NSCID 6, Feb. 17, 1972. See also 50 U.S.C. §§3601-3618. ⁱ
DOJ, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Office of National Security Intelligence (ONSI)	February 7, 2006 ^j	DNI memorandum of February 7, 2006 pursuant to joint DNI-Attorney General decision in accordance with 50 U.S.C. §3003(4)(L).

Source: CRS.

Notes:

- IC elements are defined in 50 U.S.C. §3003, which also includes a provision for admitting additional elements to the IC by a decision of either the President or jointly by the DNI and the head of the department of agency concerned.
- See also Kevin Wirth, *The Coast Guard Intelligence Program Enters the Intelligence Community*, Occasional Paper Number Sixteen (Washington, DC: NDIC Press, May 2007) at https://media.defense.gov/2022/Sep/27/2003085918/-1/-1/0/COAST_GUARD_INTELLIGENCE_PROGRAM.PDF.
- The FBI's DI can be traced back to the origins of the FBI (established January 26, 1908 as the Bureau of Investigation; renamed FBI in 1935). December 17, 2004 marks the first of a number of changes to integrate the FBI's intelligence-related activities with those of the IC. See George W. Bush, *Memorandum on Strengthening the Ability of the Department of Justice to Meet Challenges to the Security of the Nation*, June 28, 2005. In March 2006, §506 of P.L. 109-177 created the National Security Division (NSD) within the Department of Justice (DOJ) headed by an Assistant Attorney General for National Security. Within the NSD is DOJ's Office of Intelligence (OI), which is *not* an IC element.
- See ODNI News Release 03-21 of January 8, 2021, at <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/press-releases/press-releases-2021/3509-dni-ratcliffe-welcomes-u-s-space-force-as-18th-intelligence-community-member>.
- The MID originated informally in 1885 within the Office of Army Adjutant General. See James Finley, ed., *U.S. Army Military Intelligence History: A Sourcebook*, Ft. Huachuca, AZ: U.S. Army Intelligence Center, 1995, pp. 63 and 91 at <https://nebula.wsimg.com/527c865c88886f79b6957effbf4eac6f?AccessKeyId=E883D7F0A92E197D224D&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>.
- Michael H. Decker and William Mackenzie, "The Birth and Early Years of Marine Corps Intelligence," *Marine Corps History*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Winter 2019), pp. 39-53. See also Kenneth W. Condit, Major John H. Johnstone, USMC, and Ella W. Nargele, *A Brief History of Headquarters Marine Corps Staff Organization*, Marine Corps Historical Reference Pamphlet, Historical Division, HQ USMC, Revised 1970, footnote 59, at <https://www.usmcu.edu/Outreach/Marine-Corps-University-Press/MCH/Marine-Corps-History-Winter-2019/The-Birth-and-Early-Years-of-Marine-Corps-Intelligence/#:~:text=Intelligence%20Marines%20often%20point%20to,as%20the%20birth%20of%20the>.
- Harold P. Myers and Gabriel G. Marshall, *USAFSS to AF ISR Agency 1948-2009: A Brief History of the AF ISR Agency and Its Predecessor Organization*, 5th ed., San Antonio: AF ISR Agency History Office, 2009, p. 1, at <http://www.afisr.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-091130-022.pdf>.
- E.O. 9621 transferred several functions of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to other departments. The OSS's Research and Analysis Branch was resubordinated to the State Department and renamed the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR). See <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/executive-orders/9621/executive-order-9621>.
- See *The Origins of NSA*, Center for Cryptologic History, National Security Agency, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland., at https://media.defense.gov/2021/Jul/13/2002761891/-1/-1/0/ORIGINS_OF_NSA1.PDF.
- A memo from then-DNI, John Negroponte, dated February 7, 2006, announced the establishment of ONSI as an element of the IC by means a joint agreement between the DNI and the Attorney General. See ODNI News Release 6-06 announcing ONSI's establishment is dated February 17, 2006. See https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Press%20Releases/2006%20Press%20Releases/20060217_release_content.htm.

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