



OFFICE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES, PRIVACY & TRANSPARENCY
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

TRANSPARENCY FACT SHEET

ODNI OFFICE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES, PRIVACY AND TRANSPARENCY

TRANSPARENCY OVERVIEW

In 2013, President Obama directed the Intelligence Community (IC) to make public as much information as possible about its surveillance programs, with the goal of enhancing transparency. The strategic effort was launched with the goal of earning and retaining public trust. In keeping with this goal, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) directed an interagency effort, resulting in the 2015 publication of the “Principles of Intelligence Transparency for the Intelligence Community” and their corresponding implementation plan.

These principles are intended to guide IC decisions as it makes every effort to increase transparency and openness, while protecting classified and sensitive national security information, and intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure.

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSPARENCY

There are four Principles:

- Provide appropriate transparency to enhance public understanding of the IC
- Be proactive and clear in making information publicly available
- Protect information about intelligence sources, methods, and activities
- Align IC roles, resources, processes, and policies to support transparency implementation

To be transparent, as provided by the Principles, the IC must institutionalize a strategic, coordinated, and proactive approach to inform and enhance the public’s understanding of the IC, its activities, and its governance framework. Transparency includes not only sharing information about the rules that apply to the IC and its compliance under those rules, but also sharing information about what the IC actually does in pursuit of its national security mission.

Transparency efforts must first be guided by the vital responsibility the IC has to protect intelligence sources,

methods, and activities from unauthorized disclosure. The IC can only be effective at protecting against threats if intelligence sources, methods, and activities remain unknown to our adversaries. Because informing the public inevitably includes the unintended consequence of informing the nation’s adversaries as well, the IC must find a way to enhance transparency while continuing to preserve the nation’s secrets.

INTELLIGENCE TRANSPARENCY COUNCIL

In October 2015, Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper designated Alexander W. Joel as the Chief Transparency Officer. This role aligned with his position as the Civil Liberties Protection Officer, and positioned him as the chair of the newly formed Intelligence Transparency Council.

The Council meets twice quarterly and is composed of representatives from across the IC. It is responsible for overseeing the Transparency Implementation Plan and ensuring that transparency is a comprehensive and sustainable part of the IC.

TRANSPARENCY HIGHLIGHTS

- Increased transparency is vital to earning and maintaining the public’s trust
- The four Principles are intended to guide IC decisions on making information publicly available so that public understanding of intelligence activities is enhanced, while also protecting national security