
INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE NUMBER 203



ANALYTIC STANDARDS (EFFECTIVE: JUNE 21, 2007)

A. (U) AUTHORITY: The National Security Act of 1947, as amended; the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA); Executive Order 12333, as amended; and other applicable provisions of law.

B. (U) PURPOSE:

1. (U) This Intelligence Community (IC) Directive establishes the IC Analytic Standards that govern the production and evaluation of national intelligence analysis. It also delineates the associated authorities and responsibilities of the Office of Analytic Integrity and Standards (AIS) under the Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analysis (DDNI/A).

2. (U) It directs the DDNI/A to ensure the effective implementation of this policy collaboratively with the Heads of all elements of the IC, Directors of Analysis, and all IC education and training program directors, in coordination with the Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Education and Training (ADDNI/E&T).

3. (U) The IC Analytic Standards articulate the mission and commitment of all analytic elements of the IC to meet the highest standards of integrity and rigorous analytic thinking. The standards act as guidelines and goals for analysts and managers throughout the IC who strive for excellence in their analytic work practices and products.

C. (U) APPLICABILITY: This directive applies to the IC, as defined by the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, and other departments or agencies that may be designated by the

President, or designated jointly by the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) and the head of the department or agency concerned, as an element of the IC.

D. (U) POLICY:

1. (U) The IC Analytic Standards, as the core principles of the analytic craft, will be distributed community-wide. They will serve to guide the writing of intelligence analysis in all IC analytic elements, be the basis for evaluation of the analytic production of the IC, and be included in analysis teaching modules and case studies for use throughout the IC, the latter in coordination with the ADDNI/E&T.

2. (U) IC analytic elements will apply the IC Analytic Standards in a manner appropriate to the length, purpose, classification, and production timeframe of each product.

3. (U) The Office of DNI's (ODNI) AIS office will use the IC Analytic Standards as core elements to conduct evaluations of intelligence analysis produced by any element or elements of the IC. Individual analytic elements in the IC will ensure that their own analytic evaluation programs use these standards as core elements. Analytic elements that do not have an existing evaluation program will establish one and ensure that it uses the IC Analytic Standards as its core elements. Analytic elements may also at their discretion create additional standards relating to their particular mission. This will allow ODNI and other IC organizations to assess trends in analytic performance and shape new initiatives for educating and training individual analysts.

4. ~~(U//FOUO)~~ The IC Analytic Standards are:

a. ~~(U//FOUO)~~ Objectivity: This standard requires that analysts and managers perform their analytic and informational functions from an unbiased perspective. Analysis should be free of emotional content, give due regard to alternative perspectives and contrary reporting, and acknowledge developments that necessitate adjustments to analytic judgments.

b. ~~(U//FOUO)~~ Independent of Political Considerations: Analysts and managers should provide objective assessments informed by available information that are not distorted or altered with the intent of supporting or advocating a particular policy, political viewpoint, or audience.

c. ~~(U//FOUO)~~ Timeliness: Analytic products that arrive too late to support the work of consumers weaken utility and impact. Analysts will strive to deliver their products in time for them to be actionable by customers. Analytic elements have a responsibility to be aware of the schedules and requirements of consumers.

d. ~~(U//FOUO)~~ Based on All Available Sources of Intelligence: Analysis should be informed by all relevant information that is available to the analytic element. Where critical gaps exist, analytic elements should work with collectors to develop appropriate collection, dissemination, and access strategies.

e. ~~(U//FOUO)~~ Exhibits Proper Standards of Analytic Tradecraft, Specifically:

(1) (~~U//FOUO~~) Properly describes quality and reliability of underlying sources.

(~~U//FOUO~~) Analytic products should accurately characterize the information in the underlying sources and explain which information proved key to analytic judgments and why. Consistent with classification of the product, factors significantly affecting the weighting that the analysis gives to available, relevant information, such as denial and deception, source access, source motivations and bias, or age and continued currency of information, or other factors affecting the quality and potential reliability of the information, should be included in the product. When appropriate, analytic products may identify a prospective information strategy to improve the reporting base when significant gaps exist. If classification of the disseminated product precludes inclusion of important information related to quality and reliability of the information upon which the product is based, a more highly classified version of the product should be created that contains the relevant information, retained as a document of record, and deposited in an approved record keeping system and in the Library of National Intelligence when it is operational.

(2) (~~U//FOUO~~) Properly caveats and expresses uncertainties or confidence in analytic judgments.

(~~U//FOUO~~) Analytic products should indicate both the level of confidence in analytic judgments and explain the basis for ascribing it. Sources of uncertainty—including information gaps and significant contrary reporting—should be noted and linked logically and consistently to confidence levels in judgments. As appropriate, products also should identify indicators that would enhance or reduce confidence or prompt revision of existing judgments.

(3) (~~U//FOUO~~) Properly distinguishes between underlying intelligence and analysts' assumptions and judgments.

(~~U//FOUO~~) For the purposes of this standard, assumptions are defined as explicit or implicit hypotheses that may affect outcomes or that affect the way in which information is interpreted or weighed. They deal with identifying underlying causes and/or behavior of systems, people, organizations, states, or conditions. Assumptions comprise the foundational premises on which the information and logical argumentation build to reach analytic conclusions. Assumptions may also span information gaps that would otherwise inhibit the analysis from reaching defensible judgments. Judgments are defined as logical inferences from the available information or the results of explicit tests of hypotheses. They comprise the conclusions of the analysis.

(~~U//FOUO~~) Analytic products should explicitly identify the critical assumptions on which the analysis is based and explain the implications for judgments if those assumptions are incorrect. As appropriate, analytic products should identify indicators that would signal whether assumptions or judgments are more or less likely to be correct.

(4) (~~U//FOUO~~) Incorporates alternative analysis where appropriate.

(~~U//FOUO~~) Where appropriate, analytic products should identify and explain the

strengths and weaknesses of alternative hypotheses, viewpoints, or outcomes in light of both available information and information gaps. Analytic products should explain how alternatives are linked to key assumptions and/or assess the probability of each alternative. To the extent possible, analysis should incorporate insights from the application of structured analytic technique(s) appropriate to the topic being analyzed and include discussion of key indicators that, if detected, would help clarify which alternative hypothesis, viewpoint, or outcome is more likely or is becoming more likely. (See Annex for a fuller discussion of the parameters of alternative analysis.)

(5) (U//~~FOUO~~) Demonstrates relevance to U.S. national security.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Analytic products should provide information and insight on issues relevant to the products' intended consumers and/or provide useful context, warning, or opportunity analysis. (See Annex for the definition of opportunity analysis.) The information and insight may be particularly difficult to obtain without extensive expertise. To meet this standard fully, analytic products should examine and explicitly address direct or near-term implications of the information and judgments for the intended audience and/or for U.S. national security interests, and, when possible, also examine longer-term implications or identify potential indirect or second-order effects.

(6) (U//~~FOUO~~) Uses logical argumentation.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Analytic presentation should facilitate clear understanding of the information and reasoning underlying analytic judgments. Key points should be effectively supported by information or, for more speculative warning or "think pieces," by coherent reasoning. Language and syntax should convey meaning unambiguously. Products should be internally consistent and acknowledge significant supporting and contrary information affecting key judgments. Graphics and images should be readily understandable and should illustrate, support, or summarize key information or analytic judgments.

(7) (U//~~FOUO~~) Exhibits consistency of analysis over time, or highlights changes and explains rationale.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Analytic products should deliver a key message that is either consistent with previous production on the topic from the same analytic element or, if the key analytic message has changed, highlights the change and explains its rationale and implications.

(8) (U//~~FOUO~~) Makes accurate judgments and assessments.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Analytic elements should apply expertise and logic to make the most accurate judgments and assessments possible given the information available to the analytic element and known information gaps. Where products are estimative, the analysis should anticipate and correctly characterize the impact and significance of key factors affecting outcomes or situations. Accuracy is sometimes difficult to establish and can only be evaluated retrospectively if necessary information is collected and available.

E. (U) AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: The DDNI/A is charged with implementing the DNI's responsibilities relative to the dissemination and adoption of these Analytic Standards, through the Assistant Deputy Director for Analytic Integrity and Standards (ADDNI/AIS) and the Analytic Ombudsman and in conjunction with appropriate Mission Managers.

1. (U) The DDNI/A is delegated the following authorities and responsibilities of the DNI:
 - a. (U) All authorities and responsibilities of the DNI with respect to establishing and disseminating Analytic Standards for the IC.
 - b. (U) All authorities and responsibilities of the DNI with respect to evaluation of analytic products.
 - (1) The DDNI/A supervises the IC-wide program that evaluates intelligence products.
 - (2) The DDNI/A has the authority to mandate the creation or modification of individual evaluation programs established in all the elements of the IC.
 - (3) The DDNI/A oversees evaluation programs in individual agencies to ensure that they use the IC Analytic Standards and practices compatible with the AIS evaluation methodology.
2. (U) The ADDNI/AIS is delegated the authorities necessary to implement the IC Analytic Standards and the IC evaluation program. The ADDNI/AIS has the authority to:
 - a. (U) Assist analytic elements throughout the IC to adopt and utilize effectively the IC Analytic Standards.
 - b. (U) Conduct evaluations of the analytic intelligence products of any element or elements of the IC.
 - c. (U) Accumulate analytic lessons learned from evaluation programs and in coordination with the ADDNI/E&T, to disseminate the lessons learned through IC training.
3. (U) Under the guidance of the DDNI/A, IC elements are responsible for the execution of their specific analytic activities and for creating and administering their evaluation programs. They are accountable for ensuring that these programs use the IC Analytic Standards as their core criteria and employ practices compatible with the AIS evaluation methodology. They are also accountable for providing the appropriate funding, appointing suitable personnel, and administering performance. All analytic elements are responsible for reporting on the progress of their planning, implementation, and evaluation findings to the DDNI/A on an annual basis using formats that will be specified by the DDNI/A.

F. (U) EFFECTIVE DATE: This ICD becomes effective on the date of signature.



Director of National Intelligence

21 JUN 07

Date

Attachment:

(U) Annex: Definition of Terms.

ANNEX: DEFINITION OF TERMS.

1. (U//~~FOUO~~) The term alternative analysis refers to rigorous, systematic analytic consideration of differing viewpoints, explanations for observed or reported phenomena, or possible future outcomes. Alternative analysis helps bound, clarify, and convey analytic uncertainty and helps minimize the risk of analytic surprise. It includes a range of structured analytic techniques, such as but not necessarily limited to, argument mapping, key assumptions checks, analysis of competing hypotheses, comparative analysis, statistical tests, and gaming and simulation that help analysts formulate and test alternative hypotheses against available information. They also facilitate examination of various explanations for reported phenomena, underscore and link differences in interpretation of evidence to differing assumptions, extrapolate data to consider “alternative outcomes,” and identify key drivers that are expected to shape the direction of future events. Analysts should utilize appropriate structured analytic techniques routinely in their analysis to enhance analytic rigor and critical thinking. Alternative analysis should be an integrated part of the critical thinking process, and its incorporation into analytic products is especially appropriate when:

- a. (U) Significant information gaps exist.
- b. (U) Available information is ambiguous, contradictory, potentially dated, or incomplete.
- c. (U//~~FOUO~~) Individuals, governments, or systems being assessed are unstable or highly sensitive to external influences, events, or other factors they do not control or that are not well understood by the analyst.
- d. (U//~~FOUO~~) Events or scenarios exist which, based on available information, analysts judge less probable, but which, if they occurred, would have major impact on U.S. interests. Space constraints may limit how much information can be provided in a finished intelligence product about the alternative techniques that were applied in preparation of the product. Whenever possible, however, finished intelligence products should convey to the reader that alternative analysis was conducted and explain how it contributed to analytic judgments and the confidence levels ascribed to them in the finished product.

2. (U//~~FOUO~~) Opportunity analysis applies analysis of foreign state or non-state actors' priorities, capabilities, vulnerabilities, intentions, goals, and/or constraints to identify and assesses potential points of political, military, economic, or other leverage that the U.S. could use to influence or coerce their behavior. Opportunity analysis should include assessments of both the potential benefits and risks associated with options under consideration.