INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE 203

Technical Amendment

Analytic Standards

A. PURPOSE

1. Pursuant to Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 101, Section G.1.b.(3), technical amendments are hereby made to ICD 203, *Analytic Standards*, signed January 2, 2015.

2. This ICD, as amended, conforms to Director of National Intelligence Memorandum ES 2022-01273, *Designation of the ODNI Analytic Ombuds as Head of the Intelligence Community Analytic Ombuds Community of Practice*, signed August 22, 2022. Amendments to this Directive include designating the Office of the Director of National Intelligence Analytic Ombuds as the head of the Intelligence Community Analytic Ombuds Community of Practice and establishing the position as an independent entity reporting directly to the Deputy Director for Mission Integration (DD/MI).

B. EFFECTIVE DATE: This technical amendment becomes effective on the date of signature.

Assistant Director
for Policy and Strategy

December 21, 2022
Date

INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

203

Analytic Standards

A. AUTHORITY: The National Security Act of 1947, as amended; the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004; Executive Order 12333, as amended; Presidential Policy Directive/PPD-28; and other applicable provisions of law.

B. PURPOSE

1. This Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) establishes the Intelligence Community (IC) Analytic Standards that govern the production and evaluation of analytic products; articulates the responsibility of intelligence analysts to strive for excellence, integrity, and rigor in their analytic thinking and work practices; and delineates the role of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) Analytic Ombuds.

2. This Directive supersedes ICD 203, *Analytic Standards*, dated 21 June 2007, and rescinds ICPM 2006-200-2, *Role of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence Analytic Ombudsman*.

C. APPLICABILITY

1. This ICD applies to the IC, as defined by the National Security Act of 1947, as amended; and to such elements of any other department or agency as may be designated an element of the IC by the President, or jointly by the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) and the head of the department or agency concerned.

2. This Directive does not apply to purely law enforcement information. When law enforcement information also contains intelligence or intelligence-related information, this Directive shall apply only to the intelligence or intelligence-related information and analysis contained therein.

D. POLICY

1. The IC Analytic Standards are the core principles of intelligence analysis and are to be applied across the IC. IC Analytic Standards shall be applied in each analytic product in a manner appropriate to its purpose, the type and scope of its underlying source information, its production timeline, and its customers. IC elements may create supplemental analytic standards that are tailored to their particular missions.

2. The IC Analytic Standards are the foundational assessment criteria for a regular program of review of IC analytic products. Each IC element shall maintain a program of product evaluation using the IC Analytic Standards as the core elements for assessment criteria.

3. The IC Analytic Standards serve as a common IC foundation for developing education and training in analytic skills. The results of analytic product evaluations will be used to improve materials and programs for education and training in analytic knowledge, skills, abilities, and tradecraft.

4. The Standards also promote a common ethic for achieving analytic rigor and excellence, and for personal integrity in analytic practice. Adherence to IC Analytic Standards is safeguarded by the ODNI Analytic Ombuds, who addresses concerns regarding lack of objectivity, bias, politicization, or other issues in Standards application in analytic products.

5. The Standards promote the protection of privacy and civil liberties by ensuring the objectivity, timeliness, relevance, and accuracy of personally identifiable information (PII) used in analytic products. Analysts should include PII in products only as it relates to a specific analytic purpose (e.g., necessary to understand the foreign intelligence or counterintelligence information or assess its importance), consistent with IC element mission and in compliance with IC element regulation and policy, including procedures to prevent, identify, and correct errors in PII.

6. The IC Analytic Standards guide analysis and analytic production. All IC analytic products shall be consistent with the following five Analytic Standards, including the nine Analytic Tradecraft Standards.

a. Objective: Analysts must perform their functions with objectivity and with awareness of their own assumptions and reasoning. They must employ reasoning techniques and practical mechanisms that reveal and mitigate bias. Analysts should be alert to influence by existing analytic positions or judgments and must consider alternative perspectives and contrary information. Analysis should not be unduly constrained by previous judgments when new developments indicate a modification is necessary.

b. Independent of political consideration: Analytic assessments must not be distorted by, nor shaped for, advocacy of a particular audience, agenda, or policy viewpoint. Analytic judgments must not be influenced by the force of preference for a particular policy.

c. Timely: Analysis must be disseminated in time for it to be actionable by customers. Analytic elements have the responsibility to be continually aware of events of intelligence interest, of customer activities and schedules, and of intelligence requirements and priorities, in order to provide useful analysis at the right time.

d. Based on all available sources of intelligence information: Analysis should be informed by all relevant information available. Analytic elements should identify and address critical information gaps and work with collection activities and data providers to develop access and collection strategies.

e. Implements and exhibits Analytic Tradecraft Standards, specifically:

(1) Properly describes quality and credibility of underlying sources, data, and methodologies: Analytic products should identify underlying sources and methodologies upon which judgments are based, and use source descriptors in accordance with ICD 206, *Sourcing Requirements for Disseminated Analytic Products*, to describe factors affecting source quality and credibility. Such factors can include accuracy and completeness, possible denial and deception, age and continued currency of information, and technical elements of collection as

well as source access, validation, motivation, possible bias, or expertise. Source summary statements, described in ICD 206, are strongly encouraged and should be used to provide a holistic assessment of the strengths or weaknesses in the source base and explain which sources are most important to key analytic judgments.

(2) Properly expresses and explains uncertainties associated with major analytic judgments: Analytic products should indicate and explain the basis for the uncertainties associated with major analytic judgments, specifically the likelihood of occurrence of an event or development, and the analyst's confidence in the basis for this judgment. Degrees of likelihood encompass a full spectrum from remote to nearly certain. Analysts' confidence in an assessment or judgment may be based on the logic and evidentiary base that underpin it, including the quantity and quality of source material, and their understanding of the topic. Analytic products should note causes of uncertainty (e.g., type, currency, and amount of information, knowledge gaps, and the nature of the issue) and explain how uncertainties affect analysis (e.g., to what degree and how a judgment depends on assumptions). As appropriate, products should identify indicators that would alter the levels of uncertainty for major analytic judgments. Consistency in the terms used and the supporting information and logic advanced is critical to success in expressing uncertainty, regardless of whether likelihood or confidence expressions are used.

(a) For expressions of likelihood or probability, an analytic product must use one of the following sets of terms:

almost no chance	very unlikely	unlikely	roughly even chance	likely	very likely	almost certain(ly)
remote	highly improbable	improbable (improbably)	roughly even odds	probable (probably)	highly probable	nearly certain
01-05%	05-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%

Analysts are strongly encouraged not to mix terms from different rows. Products that do mix terms must include a disclaimer clearly noting the terms indicate the same assessment of probability.

(b) To avoid confusion, products that express an analyst's confidence in an assessment or judgment using a "confidence level" (e.g., "high confidence") must not combine a confidence level and a degree of likelihood, which refers to an event or development, in the same sentence.

(3) Properly distinguishes between underlying intelligence information and analysts' assumptions and judgments: Analytic products should clearly distinguish statements that convey underlying intelligence information used in analysis from statements that convey assumptions or judgments. Assumptions are defined as suppositions used to frame or support an argument; assumptions affect analytic interpretation of underlying intelligence information. Judgments are defined as conclusions based on underlying intelligence information, analysis, and assumptions. Products should state assumptions explicitly when they serve as the linchpin of an argument or when they bridge key information gaps. Products should explain the implications for judgments if assumptions prove to be incorrect. Products also should, as appropriate, identify indicators that, if detected, would alter judgments.

(4) Incorporates analysis of alternatives: Analysis of alternatives is the systematic evaluation of differing hypotheses to explain events or phenomena, explore near-term outcomes, and imagine possible futures to mitigate surprise and risk. Analytic products should identify and assess plausible alternative hypotheses. This is particularly important when major judgments must contend with significant uncertainties, or complexity (e.g., forecasting future trends), or when low probability events could produce high-impact results. In discussing alternatives. products should address factors such as associated assumptions, likelihood, or implications related to U.S. interests. Products also should identify indicators that, if detected, would affect the likelihood of identified alternatives.

(5) Demonstrates customer relevance and addresses implications: Analytic products should provide information and insight on issues relevant to the customers of U.S. intelligence and address the implications of the information and analysis they provide. Products should add value by addressing prospects, context, threats, or factors affecting opportunities for action.

(6) Uses clear and logical argumentation: Analytic products should present a clear main analytic message up front. Products containing multiple judgments should have a main analytic message that is drawn collectively from those judgments. All analytic judgments should be effectively supported by relevant intelligence information and coherent reasoning. Language and syntax should convey meaning unambiguously. Products should be internally consistent and acknowledge significant supporting and contrary information affecting judgments.

(7) Explains change to or consistency of analytic judgments: Analytic products should state how their major judgments on a topic are consistent with or represent a change from those in previously published analysis, or represent initial coverage of a topic. Products need not be lengthy or detailed in explaining change or consistency. They should avoid using boilerplate language, however, and should make clear how new information or different reasoning led to the judgments expressed in them. Recurrent products such as daily crisis reports should note any changes in judgments; absent changes, recurrent products need not confirm consistency with previous editions. Significant differences in analytic judgment, such as between two IC analytic elements, should be fully considered and brought to the attention of customers.

(8) Makes accurate judgments and assessments: Analytic products should apply expertise and logic to make the most accurate judgments and assessments possible, based on the information available and known information gaps. In doing so, analytic products should present all judgments that would be useful to customers, and should not avoid difficult judgments in order to minimize the risk of being wrong. Inherent to the concept of accuracy is that the analytic message a customer receives should be the one the analyst intended to send. Therefore, analytic products should express judgments as clearly and precisely as possible, reducing ambiguity by addressing the likelihood, timing, and nature of the outcome or development Clarity of meaning permits assessment for accuracy when all necessary information is available.

(9) Incorporates effective visual information where appropriate: Analytic products should incorporate visual information to clarify an analytic message and to complement or enhance the presentation of data and analysis. In particular, visual presentations should be used when information or concepts (e.g., spatial or temporal relationships) can be conveyed better in graphic form (e.g., tables, flow charts, images) than in written text. Visual information may range from plain presentation of intelligence information to interactive displays for complex information and analytic concepts. All of the content in an analytic product may be presented

visually. Visual information should always be clear and pertinent to the product's subject. Analytic content in visual information should also adhere to other analytic tradecraft standards.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Deputy Director for Mission Integration (DD/MI) shall:

a. Confirm and direct the application of these Analytic Standards by IC elements in analytic intelligence products;

b. Conduct an IC-wide program of periodic review and evaluation of analytic intelligence products, guided by the annual identification of functional or geographical areas of analysis for specific review:

(1) Disseminate ODNI Analytic Tradecraft Standards Evaluation Rating Criteria to IC elements;

(2) Prepare findings of analytic intelligence product reviews for reporting to Congress and relevant IC elements;

(3) Develop lessons learned and identify exemplary products for use by IC elements in training;

(4) Refine the IC-wide program of periodic review and evaluation based on new lessons learned and best practices identified.

c. Assist IC elements in effective application of the Analytic Standards; and

d. Oversee analytic product evaluation programs in individual IC elements to ensure standards and practices are compatible with the IC-wide program.

2. The ODNI Analytic Ombuds shall:

a. Serve as the DNI's principal advisor on safeguarding objectivity in intelligence analysis;

b. Be a senior executive who reports directly to the DD/MI, but operates independently and holds no other position within the ODNI to ensure a dedicated focus and to preserve neutrality;

c. Serve as head of the IC Analytic Ombuds Community of Practice to posture the IC with an integrated analytic ombuds program;

d. Issue guidance to analytic ombuds partners for consistent and effective practices and promote awareness of the role, responsibilities, and practices, and how to engage ombuds;

e. Establish requirements for tracking and categorizing analytic complaints and identifying performance measures to assess program effectiveness;

f. Adhere to International Ombuds Association Standards of Practice, which are; independence, impartiality, informality, and confidentiality;

g. Remain current and well-informed of issues affecting IC analysis and promote awareness of the requirement for analysis that is objective and independent of political consideration;

h. Be available to analysts to counsel, conduct arbitration, offer recommendations, and, as appropriate, initiate inquiries into real or perceived problems of analytic tradecraft or politicization, biased reporting, or lack of objectivity in intelligence analysis.

(1) Analysts in IC elements other than the ODNI must first use existing administrative procedures within their own IC element to raise concerns about adherence to analytic standards;

(2) When these internal administrative procedures have been exhausted, or when an analyst believes that those procedures will not preserve confidentiality, the analyst may bring these concerns to the ODNI Analytic Ombuds;

(3) In such instances, the ODNI Analytic Ombuds will carry out responsibilities in the same manner as if responding to an ODNI analyst's concerns. The ODNI Analytic Ombuds may address concerns that span more than one IC element; and

i. Perform all responsibilities confidentially so that analysts may raise concerns without fear of reprisal. However, confidentiality will not extend to significant misconduct, to violations of law or ethics, or when otherwise precluded by law.

3. Heads of IC elements shall:

a. Ensure that analytic intelligence products produced and disseminated by their element properly apply the IC Analytic Standards;

b. Designate an individual or office responsible for responding to concerns raised by the element's analysts about adherence to analytic standards (including tradecraft standards) in analytic products;

c. Conduct internal programs of review and evaluation of analytic intelligence products utilizing the IC Analytic Standards as the core criteria, and provide annual status reporting to the DD/MI according to DD/MI guidelines; and

d. Ensure that the IC Analytic Standards are properly addressed in their elements' education and training programs.

F. EFFECTIVE DATE: This Directive becomes effective on the date of signature.

Signed//James R. Clapper
Director of National Intelligence

2 January 2015
Date