



ODNI Releases Transparency Implementation Plan

NEWS RELEASE

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The Office of the Director of National Intelligence published today the implementation plan for the *Principles of Intelligence Transparency for the Intelligence Community*.

The principles, published in February 2015, are intended to facilitate intelligence community decisions on making information publicly available in a manner that enhances public understanding of intelligence activities, while continuing to protect information when disclosure would harm national security.

The implementation plan sets IC priorities for transparency, translating the principles into concrete, measurable initiatives.

“We believe transparency is worth the cost,” said Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper during a speech at George Washington University, in Washington, D.C., today.

“Because if the American people don’t understand what we are doing, why it’s important and how we’re protecting their privacy and civil liberties, we will lose their confidence and that will affect our ability to perform our mission – which ultimately serves them.”

The principles and implementation plan come in response to a directive from President Barack Obama, who signed a memorandum on transparency and open government on his first day in office, and in October 2009, the White House issued an unprecedented open government directive requiring federal agencies to take specific steps to achieve key milestones in transparency, participation and collaboration.

In 2013, the president directed the IC to declassify and make public as much information as possible about certain U.S. government surveillance programs while protecting sensitive classified intelligence and national security information.

These principles are intended to facilitate IC decisions on making information publicly available



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in a manner that enhances public understanding of intelligence activities, while continuing to protect information when disclosure would harm national security. There are four principles:

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

“Our first priority is to make more information available about our governance framework,” said Alexander W. Joel, ODNI’s civil liberties protection officer. “We’ve already done a huge amount of work on that and we need to do even more to get that information out. We have some ideas on how to make that more understandable and comprehensive for the public.”

In recent years, the IC has made major strides toward enhancing transparency. For example:

The ODNI established *IC on the Record* as a repository for declassified documents, official statements, speeches and testimony. *IC on the Record* has published more than 5,000 pages of officially released documents.

The ODNI, in coordination with IC elements, published a detailed report describing the measures taken to implement intelligence reforms in the year since January 2014. The report included links to IC elements’ policies specifying how they will safeguard personal information collected via signals intelligence activities, regardless of nationality, consistent with section four of Presidential Policy Directive 28 Signals Intelligence Activities.

The IC facilitated oversight by the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board by conducting intensive classification and declassification reviews of sensitive information to support the board in publishing comprehensive descriptions of intelligence activities under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

The IC prepared and published two annual statistical transparency reports that presented data on the use of key surveillance authorities. In addition, the IC reached agreement with providers so that they can publish statistics on the national security orders they receive.

The IC publicly supported the passage of the USA Freedom Act, which includes additional transparency requirements that the IC will implement over the coming year. IC officials participated in a wide range of public engagements, including speeches,



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media interviews, panel discussions and meetings with civil society and other external stakeholders.

IC offices carefully reviewed and responded to large numbers of Freedom of Information Act requests and conducted pre-publication reviews of official information, resulting in the authorized release of substantial volumes of information.

The *Principles of Intelligence Transparency for the Intelligence Community* isn't intended to be a definitive 'how to be more transparent' guide. More accurately, it is designed to be the starting point for a new way of conducting business throughout the intelligence community.

"We view it as a living document," Joel said. "We will track what we are doing to implement the various initiatives and solicit feedback on what the next version ought to look like."

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