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THE HISTORY OF OCR

1953 - 1966

COLLECTION AND PROCUREMENT

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### INTRODUCTION

In retrospect, collection and requirements coordination functions are often overlooked both in terms of their major importance as an OCR responsibility and their co-existence with an activity whose basic function progressively evolved toward information handling and reference services.

Yet during the first ten years covered by this History, OCR, through its Liaison Division, Acquisition Branch of the CIA Library, Graphics and Biographic Registers, played a major role in effectively responding to major customer needs by establishing facilities to collect required intelligence information and to coordinate related requirements both within the Agency and in the Intelligence Community.

The Graphics, Biographic Registers' and the Acquisition Branch's activities continue today, although under a different organizational Office structure. The Liaison Division's collection and requirements coordination activities served the need until Collection Branch was merged in 1961 with the Contact Division, DCS, and requirements coordination was assigned in 1963 to the newly created Collection Guidance Staff in the DDI's Office.

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This is a story of how OCR responded dynamically to rapidly changing needs, pioneered in creating means to meet them, and made a substantial contribution during the growth period of the Agency and the Community. It is a story of initiative, flexibility and accomplishment.

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1. OCR IN 1953

In reviewing OCR's collection and requirements coordination activities within the time period covered by this History, a brief outline of their nature and scope as of 1953 will be useful both as a point of departure and as perspective for what subsequently transpired. In this context, the OCR operating components involved were engaged in the following activities:<sup>2</sup>

The Liaison Division was providing a central Agency service for the coordination of CIA and other USIB Agencies' ad hoc foreign intelligence requirements, assigning and monitoring collection action as appropriate to CIA and other Agencies' collection facilities. The Division also collected and procured information directly from government agencies, both USIB and non-USIB, available in Washington. Effective January 1953, the International Conference Branch was established, providing a central Agency service for the collection of intelligence information on International Conferences, Trade Fairs and Exhibitions.<sup>3</sup>

The year 1953 marked the beginning of OCR's major role in the Foreign Publications Procurement Program. As a result of NSCID No. 16 (7 March 1953) assigning the coordinating responsibility for

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such procurement to the Director of Central Intelligence, and the concomitant abolishment by the Department of State of its Foreign Publications Branch due to budget and manpower reductions, CIA took on the operational responsibility for the program in Washington by establishing in April 1953 the Foreign Branch in the CIA Library (later the Acquisition Branch). The Foreign Branch provided a central Agency service for the procurement through Foreign Service facilities of foreign language publications of interest to the Intelligence Community. Such responsibilities involved providing Publications Procurement Officers with collection requirements, directing their collection actions and developing and exploiting sources of foreign language publications in other agencies which were of interest to CIA.

Graphics Register was providing a central reference collection service of motion pictures and still photography on foreign areas, subjects and personalities for use by CIA and other USIB agencies, coordinating the development of specific and standing collection requirements of CIA and other USIB agencies and levying requirements on available government and commercial collection sources. The Register maintained direct procurement arrangements with U.S. Government counterparts and selected commercial sources of motion pictures and still photography in the New York and Washington areas. A major function

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of the Register involved the coordination of all Agency aerial photography requirements and subsequent procurement directly from the U.S. Navy and Air Force.

Effective January 1953, by State Department and CIA agreement, the Department assumed the responsibility for providing complete biographic service to the CIA for political, diplomatic and cultural personalities.

The Biographic Register continued its responsibilities for supplying information on personalities in the scientific and economic fields and on the organizations with which they were affiliated, conducting liaison with other Government Agencies for the exchange of biographic information and materials, and coordinating Agency requirements for levying on Foreign Service Post facilities. The Register also briefed CIA and other USIB Agencies' officials on special and general biographic requirements.

Over-all guideline OCR philosophy and objectives were specifically laid out in a "Memorandum to All Hands, OCD" issued on 12 November 1948 by the Assistant Director, James M. Andrews. OCD's major function was to provide service to the Offices of the Agency. "It must be the objective of everyone in OCD to see that prompt and efficient service is given to every worker from another Office in CIA

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who requested it and never to deny a request save when, on practical grounds, it seems certain that compliance would work harm to the Agency by interfering with other services which are being and must continue to be performed." No hint would be tolerated of the former "ritualistic approach" of the old OCD. "Channels and procedures are created to yield practical results; if they fail to yield the practical results . . . then they are inadequate and must be changed.

Prerogatives are sterile, and must never be cited as a reason for denial of a request." This philosophy carried over into the ensuing years and was a contributing factor in OCR's initiative and flexibility in meeting the fast changing and increasing needs of those it served.

The year 1953 was significant in terms of its reflecting the evidence of the Agency's transition from its initial organizational and formative period to that of growth, adjustment and development. The effects of the Agency's reorganization during FY 1951 became apparent<sup>8</sup> in the increasing workload placed upon OCR. During FY 1952, the recently established research and production offices of ORR, OSI and OCI were launched on their respective programs. The operational offices of OSO and OPC continued to expand. The continued growth

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and development of these offices resulted in increased requirements for OCR services, including its collection, procurement and requirements coordination activities. OCR's Liaison Division, the CIA Library and the Graphics Register were particularly involved.

As the Agency's organizational pattern settled down, personnel staffing filled out, and operating components began to implement planned programs, OCR's collection and requirements coordination resources faced the challenge of meeting new and expanding requirements of an organized and rapidly developing agency.

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2. FACTORS AFFECTING OCR DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS

A brief summary of the factors affecting OCR's operations and development as they took place will lend realistic perspective in reviewing past activities in collection operations from the vantage point of present day emphasis on information handling and computerized reference systems.

Internal factors were of major significance. The initial build-up of files of information and material soon proved inadequate to the need. It became necessary to search out, locate and procure intelligence and information available in the files and facilities of U.S. Government Agencies in the Washington area in addition to depending upon the field collection facilities of the USIB community.

There occurred a steady expansion of requirements for OCR collection and requirements coordination services from the new intelligence components (ORR, OSI, OCI) established by the Agency reorganization of 1951 as these offices launched upon their assigned programs. Similar expansion of requirements came from the

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operations components of the Agency (OSO and OPC) as they increased the scope of implementation of their missions.

As basic coverage and needs were filled out in due time, emphasis shifted to current intelligence requirements, a greater need for new and current information. Requirements became more specific and definitive.

The impact of new technical collection programs, such as the U-2, was substantial, resulting in requirements for collateral support to help identify and/or confirm heretofore unavailable aerial photography on important target areas and installations. This type of support to the photo-interpretation program called for more information and ground photography on more areas (particularly on former non-priority areas), on more subjects and within a shorter time frame than before.

The 1960s reflected the progressively increased allocation of OCR resources to the design and development of ADP and computer systems in the information handling field, further straining adequate allocation of Office resources to collection and related requirements coordination responsibilities and functions of OCR.

Outside agency factors prior to the establishment of the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1961 primarily concerned the problems of OCR's

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inter-agency requirements coordination being handled on a decentralized basis, dealing with each collection/requirement component of the USIB agencies. OCR's role therefore was that much more important in the relatively un-coordinated requirements activities of the Intelligence Community, particularly in view of the coordinating role of the Director of Central Intelligence as stated in NSCID No. 2.

The establishment of DIA in 1961 necessitated considerable adjustments and changes in operating procedures involving the former direct contacts and relationships between OCR and the separate components and Commands of the military services. Adjusting to living with the organizational and growing pains of the new agency, OCR furnished support in advising its counterparts in DIA on organizing the latter's inter-agency operating procedures covering collection and requirements coordination activities of the new DIA and the former separate service components.

International conditions of intelligence interest also exerted their influence on OCR's collection and requirements activities. The 1950s were characterized by the Cold War period, with its priority emphasis on SOV-Bloc coverage, followed by the emergence of new nations, the

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increasing crises in non-Bloc areas (Korea, Cuba, Guatemala, Middle East, Vietnam, etc.), and the establishment of Communist China as a major threat. As a result, more coverage on new areas, rapidly expanding requirements, changing priorities, all required greater flexibility in handling strained collection facilities and the increasing complexity of requirements coordination.

The relaxation of Soviet restrictions on Free-World travel in the USSR and on the foreign travel and participation by Sov/Bloc nationals in international conferences and in the East-West Exchange Program created new collection exploitation opportunities.

Budget restrictions, manpower reductions and economy drives were also contributing factors. The scope of their impact ranged from varying degrees of curtailment to disestablishment of certain OCR activities and programs.

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### 3. COLLECTION AND PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES

OCR made a significant contribution to the overt collection activities of the Intelligence Community by its expansion of the scope of sources exploited. This was achieved without duplicating the collection efforts of the established USIB collecting systems. The OCR programs in fact complemented these systems and assisted in reducing the requirements burdens placed upon them.

In describing OCR's participation in collection and procurement activities, it will be useful to define just how these terms are used in this Chapter. They fall into two categories: 1) "direct" collection, in which OCR personnel dealt directly with sources; and 2) "indirect", wherein OCR was responsible for the operational management and administration of activities in which contact with primary sources or actual collection itself was performed by non-OCR and/or other agency personnel. OCR Liaison Officers' procurement of information and material already in the possession of other government agencies in Washington is also included in this category.

Examples of "direct" collection activities included: the OCR Liaison Collection Division program for the collection of foreign

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positive intelligence information from U.S. Government Officials acquired by their foreign travel, attendance at International Conferences and participation in the East-West Exchange Program (DCID 2/8); OCR Graphics Register collection, as authorized and delegated by Domestic Contact Service, of still and motion picture photography from U.S. Television Networks, Motion Picture Organizations, U.S. Commercial Photo sources; serving as the Agency contact with the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] involving Communist propaganda materials and motion picture films and publications of intelligence and operational interest.

Examples of the "indirect" activities included: CIA Library's Acquisition Branch's operational responsibilities in managing the procurement activities of the Foreign Service Officers under the Publications Procurement Program (DCID No. 2/5); OCR Graphics Register management of the Graphics Coordinator Program and the State INR/CS New York Office's graphics procurement activities; OCR Biographic Register's responsibilities in directing the collection of biographic information by Foreign Service Posts abroad (DCID No. 1/9); OCR Liaison Division collection of intelligence information and material in

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the possession of U.S. Government Agencies in the Washington area.

All of the above activities represented an expansion of the over-all Community overt collection effort. Each activity had its own particular capability and field of coverage, encompassing publications, biographic information, motion and still photography, and the broad field of general intelligence subjects recordable by the hand camera's lens, human observation, or in the form of documentation.

Soviet relaxation of foreign travel restrictions, attendance at international conferences and its participation in the East-West Exchange Program resulted in the creation of new overt collection opportunities.

Recognizing a void in the Community's established collection programs' capabilities to exploit these opportunities, OCR Liaison Collection Division initiated and established an overt collection program to fulfill the need (DCID No. 2/8).

Similarly, Soviet liberalized public information media release policies resulted in increased subject content of intelligence interest appearing in SOV-Bloc motion picture films, still photography and publications, which, in turn, challenged the collection and procurement capabilities of the Graphics Register and the Acquisition Branch programs.

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