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6 JUL 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: DCID 1/2 Ad Hoc Group

FROM:

[Redacted]

Chairman, DCID 1/2 Ad Hoc Group

SUBJECT:

Intelligence Requirements Primer

1. [Redacted] Attached is the first rough draft of a proposed Intelligence Community Staff document designed to provide an introduction to the substantive intelligence requirements process in the US Intelligence Community.

2. [Redacted] Your comments and suggestions by 15 July 1977 on the scope and approach taken and on correlation of your input sections with the design of the paper will be appreciated.

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Attachment

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INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY STAFF  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND PLANNING

THE SUBSTANTIVE INTELLIGENCE  
REQUIREMENTS SYSTEM  
STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

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Copy No. 11

Coordination Draft  
30 June 1977

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FOREWARD

25X1  This document is designed to provide an understanding of the substantive intelligence requirements system which exists in the National Intelligence Community. It is a companion document to the recently updated Intelligence Community Planning System and is published annually to describe the existing requirements system for purposes of basic orientation and reference. It is designed to be of value to the incoming generalist at the middle and upper management and staff levels through presentation of a broad appreciation of how requirements are handled in the Intelligence Community. For newly-assigned specialists who are working in a single area, the document should assist in providing an overall context and perspective. Personnel outside the Intelligence Community, those conducting evaluations of intelligence and those who have oversight responsibilities, may wish to use this document as an initial reference. Throughout, an attempt has been made to stay away from technical detail but yet provide a broad base of common understanding. Suggestions which will assist in attaining this objective are welcome.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose and Scope

25X1 1.  This document is designed to provide an understanding of the substantive intelligence requirements system structure and process in the US Intelligence Community. The focus is on national intelligence but the system described serves the entire Community and therefore applies in some measure to departmental and tactical intelligence as well.

25X1 2.  To provide a summary background for discussing the system structure and process, the following paragraphs describe the related Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) responsibilities and pertinent directives, discuss the evolution of the system and explain its overall operation. With respect to the nature of the system design, Section II then presents the theoretical requirements system structure in conceptual terms with emphasis on the major functional roles involved. This is followed in Section III by an explanation of the actual requirements process focusing on production and collection requirements management and procedures.

25X1 3.  The process for responding to current intelligence requirements differs from that established for processing scheduled substantive intelligence requirements. Priorities,

for example, are determined by the situation occurring at a particular time. The need for near-real-time responses has dictated the evolution of a special requirements system for handling current intelligence requirements. This special system is described in Annex A.

25X1 4.  Because some are interested in how a requirement can be followed through the intelligence process, the specific nature of an intelligence requirement is explained in Annex B. The senior individuals, organizations and entities identified with the functional roles in the requirements system are listed in Annex C. The table at Annex C which illustrates the geographical and topical parallelism in consumer and producer organizations, also lists the senior points of contact in each area at the time this paper was published.

B. Responsibilities and Directives

25X1 1.  The DCI, as the principal intelligence officer to the President and the National Security Council (NSC), is inherently responsible for determining Presidential and NSC interests, needs and priorities. His authority over intelligence requirements is based on the duty assigned to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) by the National Security Act of 1947 to "make recommendations to the NSC for the coordination of such intelligence activities of



the departments and agencies as relate to the national security." Executive Order (EO) 11905 instructs the DCI to "develop national intelligence requirements and priorities." In carrying out these responsibilities, the DCI determines the needs of other departments and agencies in several ways.

25X1 2.  The DCI uses the Intelligence Community Planning System to promulgate basic guidance and to provide a broad Community framework for substantive requirements and priorities. In this he is supported by the National Foreign Intelligence Board (NFIB) which provides (DCID\* 1/8) advice and assistance with respect to "the establishment of appropriate objectives, requirements and priorities for substantive intelligence." To ensure that guidance is kept current with respect to priorities, a separate DCID 1/2 prescribes a system which enables priorities to be adjusted consistent with a dynamic world environment.

25X1 3.  The National Intelligence Officers (NIOs) act for the DCI, both within and external to the Community, to identify substantive intelligence needs within their respective areas of interest. The DCI is also supported by systems-specific collection committees in the areas of imagery (DCID 1/13), signals intelligence (DCID 6/1), and human resources (DCID 1/17). These committees translate

\*DCID - Director of Central Intelligence Directive

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basic guidance into tailored collection requirements and priorities for each of these major types of collection activity.

C. System Evolution

25X1 1.  The Substantive Intelligence Requirements System has evolved over a period of years without there having been a predesigned formal plan, any comprehensive overall guidance or a stated Community-wide doctrine. A feature of it has been the collegiality which has existed among the members of the Intelligence Community in providing support to the decision-making process at many governmental levels. Foremost among the several driving factors behind the evolution of a requirements system has been the desirability of developing a systematic way of furnishing intelligence support to a great variety of consumers with both similar and varying interests. There is also a continuing need for a method of determining and prioritizing those intelligence requirements which should be accepted for action. The logic of relating intelligence collection activity as closely as possible to the needs of consumers and to the input required for intelligence analysis and production is another factor which has become increasingly important as expensive technical collection systems have come on stream. A related aspect is the urgent necessity to exploit, as fully as possible, the potential output from these technical systems. As the

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spectrum of intelligence collection capability and demand has broadened, emphasis has been sustained on economy and efficiency. This has resulted in an increased focus on guiding the initiative exercised by intelligence collectors to exploit unforeseen opportunities.

25X1 2.  As requirements systems have evolved in each of the major areas of intelligence production and collection activity, the necessity to relate them to each other has become more and more apparent. Refined and expanded Community guidance has been called for to provide a common basis for prioritization and standardization of terminology so that correlation can be enhanced and overall effectiveness can be improved.

D. System Operation

25X1 1.  It should be recognized that guidance for collectors and producers alike stems from more than one source, and that this is the normal and desirable situation. Ongoing routine guidance on the whole realm of intelligence concerns is provided by the matrix of requirements priorities established and periodically revised in the Attachment to DCID 1/2 (discussed in detail later in this paper). This is a dynamic system which permits revision of the priorities as changing intelligence needs or changes in the external environment necessitate.

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2.  The second realm of requirements are those which stem from the immediate concerns of the top level policymakers in the government. Whereas the assignment of priorities to topics in the DCID 1/2 Attachment is governed by a strict set of definitions (such as being "vital to US national survival" to qualify as a priority one requirement), the only criterion for inclusion of topics of Presidential interest is simply that of an expressed need for information on the topic by the potential user of that intelligence. This list of topics, whether expressed in terms of Key Intelligence Questions or some successor document, may be revised whenever necessary.

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3.  There is yet a third set or realm of requirements, those which may be described as ad hoc. In following current events, situations come up which make intelligence on certain topics of greater interest or importance than usual, or which necessitate obtaining additional intelligence quickly. Such situations can be anything from a developing international crisis to an upcoming international negotiating session. They may relate to an upcoming unusual collection opportunity which, if not exploited, is unlikely to come along again soon.

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4.  Experienced intelligence professionals recognize these three realms of requirements and are accustomed to

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responding to them and to making necessary adjustments as circumstances dictate. In practice there is seldom any disagreement as to what takes precedence. In point of fact, most requirements whose importance warrants it are satisfied, within the limitations of technical capabilities and the nature of the target. While it is clear that professional judgment routinely comes into play in making detailed decisions as to how to respond to these various realms of requirements, the judgments are made neither arbitrarily nor in isolation, and the interaction among professionals and the experienced judgment of those making the decisions are what make the system work.

25X1 5.  Another way of looking at the same phenomenon may be helpful in understanding it for those not working within the system. There are certain topics of high level intelligence interest, and these are expressed by means of Key Intelligence Questions or other such selective lists. Collection strategies, devised by the National Intelligence Officers, ensure that the questions are adequately addressed by the appropriate collection systems and production analysts. Thus the several questions which stem from each topic of concern are translated into a larger number of requirements. At the operational level, these requirements are in turn responded to by issuance

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of an even larger number of detailed taskings -- very specific instructions to a given collection system to take certain actions. The take of these multiple collection efforts then flows back up the request chain, and eventually is incorporated into answers to the questions, and judgments on the issues, which stimulated the process in the first place.

25X1 6.  Supplementing the requirements represented by the very selective list of high level intelligence interests is the larger and more comprehensive range of intelligence concerns expressed in the DCID 1/2 Attachment. These requirements have associated priorities which represent the best judgment of the Intelligence Community acting collectively. Ad hoc requirements, the third realm, act to temporarily alter the priorities of certain requirements, and the system expects and can accommodate this routinely.

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