



(S//SI) Drawing Up a SIGINT Strategy for Latin America

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Run Date: 05/25/2005

Talking to customers to ascertain their "must-have" intelligence needs, and making a plan to fulfill them (S//SI)

(S//SI) I recently returned from a community-wide session in San Antonio, Texas that focused on developing a new SIGINT strategy for Latin America. It was a great event, and the processes we are using to forge this strategy should serve as a model we can apply across all of our targets.

(S//SI) The SIGINT strategy for Latin America expands upon a strategy developed in 2002 that focused on US. Southern Command -- answering the question, "What are SOUTHCOM's most critical SIGINT needs on Latin America, and how can we best fulfill them?" The new strategy pilot program will apply the same questions to **all major customers** who are interested in Latin America.

(S//SI) The core principle guiding the process is a "decision-based needs assessment," meaning that we ask senior customers what key decisions they will need to make regarding Latin America. We then determine how best to apply our limited resources, USSS-wide, to provide the SIGINT that will help them make those key decisions. The Issue Management Teams (IMT's) are crucial in both conducting the needs assessment and formulating the SIGINT strategy

(S//SI) We are now dealing with about 20 customers in this effort, developing truly close relationships to understand their needs and weaving it all together into a plan of attack. This process takes a lot of effort, but it **saves** effort in the long run, because it allows us to realize the things the giant global SIGINT system should really focus on. Or to put it another way, this how the "intelligence discipline disciplines itself." Moreover, the needs assessment includes customer prioritization of intelligence gaps, which helps the SIGINT system focus on truly essential elements of information and provides a concrete metric against which to measure SID's performance. It is really the operationalization of the Customer Relationships Directorate, which is tasked with informing the rest of the system of the crucial priorities.



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