



(U//FOUO) On the SID Leadership Transition

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(U//FOUO) Charlie Meals departs and Jim Cusick becomes the Acting SIGINT Deputy Director; part of a continuing transition in leadership.

(U//FOUO) As we in SID bid farewell to the exciting year 2005, we also say goodbye to Charlie Meals, who has been the Deputy Director for over two and a half years. He has been a greater factor in our success than anyone realizes - anyone except for me, that is. Charlie is the epitome of the professional Signals Intelligence officer. Generations of SIGINT professionals at NSA and elsewhere have attested to that fact as the two of us walked around in the building or attended meetings. I suspect that all of you are happy that he was on the job.

(U//FOUO) For me, Charlie was the most trusted of advisors who enabled me, as an outsider, to make the best possible decisions regarding SIGINT and the SIGINT work force. He was your strongest advocate and my best mentor.

(U//FOUO) It is fortunate for all of us that he will be back here in a few months as a senior mentor to professionally develop the employees of today and tomorrow. His influence will be magnified by the people he has touched.

(U//FOUO) We are entering a continuing period of leadership transition that began with the arrival of LTG Alexander as Director and will continue through Charlie's departure and my retirement this summer. The Director is currently working the replacements for Charlie and me. We are fortunate, however, that Jim Cusick has consented to move into Charlie's job until a permanent appointment is made in the early summer months. Likewise, Rick Ledgett, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are also stepping up as great Americans to temporarily fill leadership vacancies, although this takes them away, for a time, from jobs they love. (See the Director's message ["Changes in SID Management"](#).)

(U//FOUO) Jim Cusick and I first worked together in 1977 in Field Station Berlin, when "Captain Quirk" was a Company Commander on his very first SIGINT assignment, and Mr. Cusick taught him everything he needed to know about SIGINT. Jim, like Charlie Meals, is very concerned about the welfare of the SIGINT work force.

(U//FOUO) All authorities that I once delegated to Charlie, I am now delegating to Jim -- a decision made by one of us is a decision made by both. I welcome Jim to his new position and look forward to working with him in the months ahead.

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