



(U//FOUO) Mr. Black Speaks at Intelligence Analysis Off-Site

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(U//FOUO) On Friday, 27 January, the leadership of the Intelligence Analysis Skill Community (IASC) held an "on-site off-site" in OPS 1. Our purpose was to come together as a group, step back a bit from the press of daily business, and take a strategic view of where we need to focus our efforts over the coming year. Those of us present feel it was a resounding success, and we will fill you in on the results - and seek your help - over the next few months. As the first shot across your bow (so to speak), we wanted to share with you the guidance and direction provided to us by NSA Deputy Director Bill Black, who at our invitation kicked the day off for us.

(U//FOUO) Mr. Black began by reminding us of how profoundly the world has changed in such a short time. He also reminded us that we are the preeminent information producer for our customers. We have accomplished this by deepening our subject-matter knowledge to include not only the "who, what, where, when, and why" of traditional single-frame targets, but we're also becoming the experts on deriving meaning from examining the shifting networks of associations and relationships among multiple targets and across target domains. Our business is not easy to understand, and there is no one else in the Intelligence Community who can do what we do. **It is our ability to see into and exploit the new universe of cyberspace, and to create knowledge from it for our customers, that makes us unique.** The old (and never accurate) view of NSA as primarily a "collection agency" is changing forever, as it should.

(U//FOUO) We also like to think of ourselves as "victims" of the 3V problem - the volume, variety, and velocity of modern telecommunications - since we know we cannot possibly get to all that content, even if all of it were readable. But **we are also experts at producing meaningful intelligence without reading the content at all.** Let's face it: NSA's analysts *invented* that concept! As a result, the fine art of analyzing message externals has once again become a significant tool in the IA toolkit. But whether it's about content or metadata, our biggest problem remains identifying and isolating the key streams of information within that vast river of data and putting them into a format that enables us to make sense of it and deliver its secrets.

(TS) Mr. Black pointed out other significant changes for us. First, more and more frequently **our targets are also our partners.** We know them personally, in some cases we've worked side by side with them, and we share information in ways we've never done before, yet we must also continue to anticipate their actions and understand their intentions. Second, global events now move so quickly that **we have become locked in the tyranny of the "current" queue, to the detriment of the longer term analysis we used to do.** The "current" will always dominate, of course, so that we may anticipate and warn. But it is our challenge to ensure that we also do the deeper analysis, to understand, theorize, and forecast.

(U//FOUO) IAs must also be able to relate our knowledge of what our targets are doing and planning directly to our understanding of how our customers will want to use that information. They need our assessments - the cryptologists' perspective - as much as they require the facts. **We must learn to think of ourselves not as a production organization - a factory floor - but as a service provider that defines its own success in terms of its customers' success.**

(U//FOUO) These concepts set the tone and direction for the rest of the IASC off-site. In the next few months we will share our strategic goals with you and will call on individuals and organizations to be a part of our effort to grow and nurture this critical element of our workforce. If you're interested in helping, please drop me (cmfarku) or Deputy/SIA Deborah Maklowski (dkmaklo) an email or give us a call! We look forward to hearing from you.

Cindy M. Farkus

(U//FOUO) Check the [IFA web page](#) ("go ifa") for an [interview with Mr. Bill Black](#).

(U//FOUO) Mr. Black started in this business as an Army analyst/linguist - beginning with the Soviet Union military target - and over the years he has remained on the cutting edge of analytic tradecraft. (Read more about Mr. Black at: [Mr Black bio](#).)

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