



## (U) Second Party Relationships - Something to Celebrate

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(U//FOUO) A major milestone was reached recently: the UK-USA SIGINT partnership hit the 60-year mark, and the 5-EYES relationship turned 50. We have two articles (courtesy of GCHQ) on the topic: the one below from GCHQ's [REDACTED] (pictured), and [another](#) penned by NSA's Deputy Special US Liaison Officer - London (SUSLOL), [REDACTED]

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(U) This month we celebrate a quite remarkable double anniversary: 60 years of UKUSA and 50 years of 5-Eyes partnership. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to write a few words about these partnerships, the solid cornerstones of our business. I'm only slightly alarmed to realise that I have been in GCHQ for the most of the time since they were established!

(U//FOUO) The first thing I was given to read on my first day in the office was an NSA publication (actually it was the TEXTA manual, which was possibly the most boring publication in the history of Sigint); and I soon came to recognise that UKUSA is part of the air we breathe in GCHQ. I've had the privilege of visiting all our partner Agencies in the course of my career - most recently GCSB\* earlier this year - and when I do I'm always struck by how much they feel like home (much more so to me at least than some other UK Government Departments).

(U//FOUO) One gets so used to it that it's easy to forget just how astonishing the openness of the relationship is: 5 sovereign nations sharing quite freely some of their most sensitive and sophisticated secrets for half a century or more is utterly astonishing and without parallel in any other relationship in history. What began tentatively in the dark days of World War II flourished in a remarkable way in the Cold War era and remains strong in the new world of the Global Campaign against Terrorism.

(U//FOUO) Why does it work so well? I think there are four reasons, all important:

- Mutual benefit. Sigint is a complex and expensive business and each of us is stronger and more capable through drawing on the achievements of our partners. And each of us does some things not for our own good, but for the benefit of other members of the club. That's the key difference between 2nd and 3rd Party relationships.
- A common view of the world. This was easy to take as read during the Cold War part of my career. The world is more complex now and one might suppose that our interests would have diverged significantly. This year I have attended several high-level bilateral or 5-eyes conferences, and I have been much struck by the extent that we still agree on what the Big Issues are for Sigint and for our respective Governments.
- Mutual respect. Each of the 5-eyes partners aims to be world class: we may be different in scale and approach but we are all good at what we do. That means we can each trust the work, and value the views and insights, of the others.
- Personal relations. The institutional relationship between the partner Agencies is underpinned by real strong and in many cases lifelong friendships between those from different nations who work together on any aspect of the work. That adds huge value to our lives as individuals, and it makes the formal stuff very much easier.

(U) The 5-Eyes partnership is a very special gift; but like every relationship it should not be taken for granted. I'm part of the history we celebrate this month; but you're part of the future too. Up to you to ensure we can still celebrate our partnership in another half-century!



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(U) Notes:

GCSB = New Zealand's Government Communications Security Bureau

(U//FOUO) This article is reprinted from the "*Ops Latest*" GCHQ publication.

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