



(S//SI//REL) Pilot Effort Will Add 'Intelligence Source Descriptors' into NSA Reports

FROM: [REDACTED]
Reporting Policy & Guidance (S12P1)
Run Date: 09/22/2006

(S//SI//REL) Since November 2005, GCHQ ¹ has included what it refers to as Intelligence Source Descriptors (ISDs) in its end-product reports. NSA and the other Second Parties have followed the program since its pilot effort, in which NSA participated. During that time, NSA was assessing the added value of ISDs, determining the Second Party standard, and noting lessons learned. NSA maintained discussions with its GCHQ counterparts throughout the implementation process. NSA has now decided to execute its own pilot effort for ISD usage with the Iran Diplomatic and Intelligence Branch (S2E41) to mirror GCHQ's successful pilot.

(S//REL) GCHQ's approach to intelligence source descriptors is one of simplicity and one NSA will mirror. There are four components to their ISDs:

- **Access** (direct, indirect) - This describes the access the target(s) has to the origins of the information being conveyed.
- **Identity** - One side or both sides of the communication, to whatever degree of specificity is required so that the customer can make a determination of the nature of the information.
- **Reliability** (reliable, uncertain, unknown) - This describes the source's previous reporting record.
- **Amplifying Comment** - Any other information that might provide insight into the quality and/or reliability of the information.

A lexicon explaining the ISD components will appear at the end of each report.

(S//SI//REL) Reporting Policy and Guidance (S12) and the A&P Operational Support staff (S203) are working to develop ISD training and policy. The Iran Diplomatic and Intelligence Branch (S2E41) will be NSA's pilot for the ISD implementation, which will begin in October 2006. "Train the trainer" classes for the pilot branch, senior reporters, S12, and other reporting champions throughout A&P will be held 25 and 26 September 2006 and will be taught by GCHQ instructors. S12 and the A&P staff will be providing names for these classes. NSA will then adapt NCS classes for the rest of the NSA workforce, including the Extended Enterprise. The current timeline has the NSA/Extended Enterprise trained and using ISDs by October 2007.

(S//REL) Intelligence Source Descriptors will be of great benefit to both customers and analysts because it is a platform where the analyst can express their target expertise and effectively qualify reports. ISDs will help our customers reach a better understanding of the value of our reports and will help analysts to assess the value of intelligence items and encourage them to build knowledge of sources.

(S//REL) Although GCHQ started using ISDs in November 2005, they were stripped off prior to reaching the Second Parties. Beginning 18 September 2006, NSA was able to see the ISDs on GCHQ reports.

(U//FOUO) If there are any questions, contact RPG at [REDACTED]

Notes:

1) GCHQ = the UK's Government Communications HQ

(U//FOUO) For background, see ["Coming Soon to GCHQ Reports: Source Descriptors"](#).

"(U//FOUO) SIDtoday articles may not be republished or reposted outside NSANet without the consent of S0121 ([DL sid comms](#))."

DYNAMIC PAGE -- HIGHEST POSSIBLE CLASSIFICATION IS
TOP SECRET // SI / TK // REL TO USA AUS CAN GBR NZL
DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED 08 JAN 2007 DECLASSIFY ON: 20320108