

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Office of the Secretary

June 17, 2003

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
United States Senate
Ranking Member
Committee on Governmental Affairs
Washington, DC 20510-6250

Dear Senator Lieberman:

Thank you for your recent letter to the President regarding the Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC). You state that the President's decision to create TTIC was "a positive step in our government's war on terrorism," and the Administration agrees with your assessment. This new Center will integrate and analyze terrorism-related information collected domestically and abroad in order to form the most comprehensive possible threat picture. The result will be enhanced federal, state, local and private counterterrorism efforts. Of course, the creation of the Center, or any other governmental initiative, cannot guarantee our safety from terrorist attacks, but it will be a useful tool in the war on terrorism.

We also understand, however, that you have certain concerns regarding TTIC. Specifically, you believe that the "location, composition, and control" of TTIC is misguided and that the implementation of TTIC runs afoul of the Homeland Security Act ("HSA"). Your concern appears to stem from some misconceptions about TTIC. Hopefully, this letter will clarify these issues.

Control of TTIC

You voice the concern that the Center is under the control of the CIA and that it reports to the CIA Director. TTIC is not under CIA control, nor does it report to the CIA Director. TTIC is a joint venture of its partners – including the Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"), the FBI, the Department of Defense, the CIA, and the Department of State. As both the Presidential Fact Sheet "Strengthening Intelligence to Better Protect America" dated February 14, 2003 and the Director of Central Intelligence Directive 2/4 ("DCID") confirm, the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) will oversee the activities of TTIC *in his capacity as head of the U.S. Intelligence Community*. This distinction is important and based in law. Given that all the members of the TTIC, including portions of DHS, are part of the Intelligence Community, the DCI, as statutory head of the Intelligence Community is the most appropriate official to oversee the activities of the joint venture. The DCI's statutory responsibility and authority reach well beyond the CIA, making the DCI uniquely situated to provide oversight of this necessarily combined approach to terrorist threat analysis. It should also be noted that no CIA officers are in the chain of command between the Director of TTIC and the DCI.

TTIC is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Director of TTIC and the Principal Deputy Director. As the February 14, 2003 White House Fact Sheet states, the position of Director of TTIC will be filled by a U.S. government employee appointed by the Director of Central Intelligence, in consultation with the Director of the FBI and the Attorney General, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security. (The first, and current, Director of TTIC happens to be a career CIA officer, as are the heads of other Intelligence Community entities from time to time, but the Presidential statements, as well as the DCID, clearly anticipate that the Director may well come from DHS, FBI, or another partner agency in the future.) Reflecting TTIC's design as a joint venture structure rather than a single-agency entity, the Principal Deputy, chosen by the Director of TTIC in consultation with other TTIC members, shall never come from the same department or agency as the Director of TTIC. (See DCID.) Accordingly, neither the day-to-day management of TTIC, nor the oversight of TTIC activities is "under the command of the CIA." Instead, TTIC management is structured according to the TTIC concept itself – a joint venture of numerous full partners. The CIA is represented in that structure, but the CIA is only one of several partners. It in no way controls TTIC.

You strongly recommend placing TTIC under the control of DHS, noting your concern that TTIC be truly independent and removed from any possible institutional rivalries. The joint venture structure that the President has created addresses your concerns by bringing all the appropriate entities and agencies together, where they can collaboratively do their analytic work side-by-side, without the control of any one department.

Furthermore, DHS should not control TTIC because the missions of DHS and TTIC differ. DHS's overarching goal is to protect the American homeland, whereas TTIC's mission is to integrate and analyze terrorist-related information, whether it pertains to threats overseas or to the homeland, to form the most comprehensive possible threat picture. One of the functions of the Department is to access and analyze information related to threats of terrorism against the United States, as defined in the Homeland Security Act. This is a critical function, and it is important that the Department perform this function from the perspective of its mission of protecting the homeland. (Other agencies have specific analytic functions that relate to the war on terrorism performed to support their respective and specialized missions.) As important as DHS's analytic mission is, that mission does not cover every responsibility in the area of analysis of terrorism information. For example, other agencies develop, receive and analyze terrorist threat information that does not relate to threats of terrorism against the homeland. Information pertaining to threats overseas is an important part of the overall analytic mosaic supporting the global war on terrorism. DHS, given its critical focus and authority oriented to homeland security, is, however, not the appropriate agency to oversee the analysis of this material. Indeed, due to the unique contribution and focus of all the partner members, no one entity should control TTIC. Instead, it should be, as established, a joint venture where each agency contributes to the overall picture of terrorist threats by providing its knowledge and expertise derived from the particular focus of that partner entity.

Composition of TTIC

You raise a concern regarding the composition of TTIC that appears to be centered around the issue of input from state, local and private entities. TTIC will have access to, and will

aggressively analyze, information from state and local entities, as well as data voluntarily provided by the private industry. TTIC will have ready access to this information in several ways. First, pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Intelligence Community, Federal Law Enforcement Agencies, and the Department of Homeland Security Concerning Information Sharing, dated March 4, 2003 ("MOU") and the DCID, TTIC will receive all such information. In addition, the members of TTIC – many of whom work with state and local officials and the private industry in different ways – will bring their information and first-hand experience with them. DHS members will bring to the table the knowledge and relationships developed through their work with state, local, and private sector officials on a variety of homeland security matters; FBI members will bring with them the special relationship with state and local law enforcement they have developed working with them on investigations and operations through the Joint Terrorism Task Forces, and on day-to-day law enforcement coordination efforts; Department of Defense members will bring the contacts and working relationships they have developed with the state and local officials and private industry. Department of State and Central Intelligence Agency members will contribute a different, and equally necessary, focus on the collection of foreign information and intelligence.

TTIC will not only benefit from and make full use of information derived from state and local authorities as well as private industry professionals, but it will also benefit those very same entities. TTIC currently produces coordinated, national level analysis at various levels of classification, including sensitive-but-unclassified, for ready dissemination to appropriate officials involved in the war on terrorism – be they part of federal, state, local, foreign or private entities – through established and legislatively created mechanisms.

Location of TTIC

You voice a concern about TTIC's physical location at the CIA. TTIC's permanent location will not be at the CIA. It will be located in a separate facility along with the FBI's Counterterrorism Division (CTD) and the DCI's Counterterrorist Center (CTC). TTIC will be located at Langley, as are many other Intelligence Community-wide entities which require a high degree of physical and communications security, only for a short period of time before moving to its permanent, separate facility.

This arrangement facilitates the goals discussed in your letter. Housing TTIC in a separate facility reinforces the independent nature of the Center and the joint venture philosophy behind TTIC. Also, it should be noted that the President's call for the co-location of the CTD and the CTC along with TTIC goes much further in terms of intelligence reform than other proposals. The co-location of FBI and CIA counterterrorism analysts and operators will further enhance the synergy of worldwide efforts in our war on terror.

Homeland Security Act


Finally, you state that the President's proposal for TTIC ignores the mandates of the Homeland Security Act. TTIC is entirely consistent with both the language and goals of the Homeland Security Act. DHS retains the authority and responsibility to access and receive all the information it is entitled to under the Act, to analyze that information, identify and assess the

nature and scope of terrorist threats to the homeland, and to detect and identify threats of terrorism against the United States. Indeed, TTIC will enhance DHS's ability to carry out these functions. DHS analysts from IAIP located at TTIC will be seated side-by-side with analysts from other agencies working on terrorist threat related matters, providing DHS analysts at TTIC with unfettered access to all information available to TTIC (in addition to the information DHS receives under the Act), and with the ability to seamlessly discuss their analysis with key counterparts. The establishment and implementation of TTIC in no way transfers the authority or mission of DHS to any other entity; certain DHS analysts will simply perform part of their functions at TTIC.

Furthermore, the Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection (IAIP) directorate at DHS headquarters will perform key DHS analytic functions, and their ability to do so will only be enhanced by the products that they receive from TTIC and the collaboration with their IAIP colleagues there. IAIP will maintain and utilize a robust capability for fully independent terrorism threat analysis at DHS Headquarters, completely independent of the efforts of DHS analysts physically located at TTIC. This analytic force will focus entirely on DHS's unique overarching mission: protecting the homeland. IAIP analysts will support DHS Headquarters, DHS components, and state and local and private sector partners in their efforts to secure America by, among other duties and responsibilities, conducting independent and tailored analysis, competitive analysis, and red team analysis.

No one is more devoted to the protection of the homeland than the President. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security was a critical step in better securing America. The stand-up of TTIC is simply the next logical phase in the dramatic enhancement of the government's counterterrorism effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Ridge". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Tom Ridge