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## INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE NUMBER 655



### NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AWARDS PROGRAM

(EFFECTIVE: MAY 23, 2007)

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**1. AUTHORITY:** The National Security Act of 1947, as amended; the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (IRTPA) of 2004; Executive Order 12333, as amended.

**2. PURPOSE:**

**A.** This Directive establishes a National Intelligence Awards (NIA) program consisting of non-monetary and monetary honorary awards for distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to the United States (US) Intelligence Community (IC), according to the criteria set forth below. The NIA program includes:

**(1) National Intelligence Community Awards (NICA)** established and granted by or on behalf of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) in recognition of distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to the IC and/or the US; and

**(2) National Intelligence Professional Awards (NIPA)** established by the DNI and granted by or on behalf of IC Senior Program Executives (SPEs), as defined in paragraph 5.C below, in recognition of distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to a particular IC profession, function, or intelligence discipline.

**B.** This Directive establishes these awards to recognize individuals and/or groups for their distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to the security of the US; the development and execution of the US National Intelligence Strategy and its various implementation plans; the integration and transformation of the IC and/or the accomplishment of its mission; the implementation of the IRTPA; the stature and standing of one of the IC's professions, functions, and intelligence disciplines; and/or such other achievements as determined or identified by the Director.

C. This Directive does not replace or supersede any award for which provision is made under Executive Order or departmental, IC agency, or IC element regulation or instruction.

**3. APPLICABILITY:** This Directive applies to all IC agencies and elements, including the Office of the DNI and its Centers and components, as defined by the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, and other organizations designated by the President or established jointly by the DNI and the head of a department or agency as an element of the IC.

**4. POLICY:** It is the policy of the DNI to recognize and honor all individuals and groups for distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to the security of the US; the development and execution of the US National Intelligence Strategy (NIS) and its various implementation plans; the integration and transformation of the IC, and/or the accomplishment of its mission; the implementation of the IRTPA; the stature and standing of one of the IC's professions, functions, and disciplines; and/or such other achievements as determined or identified by the DNI, through the NIA program.

A. Receipt of an NIA program award will not preclude the receipt of any other honorary (monetary and/or non-monetary) or performance award or other official recognition that may be granted by any other department, agency, IC element, or organization, so long as the applicable eligibility and merit criteria are met.

B. This Directive complements the internal awards programs of the departments, agencies, and organizational elements with IC employees and may be applied using existing procedures consistent with those internal awards programs.

C. Normally, an individual should be not recognized by a NICA more than once for a single act, period of service, or accomplishment; however, under demonstrated exceptional circumstances, an individual recognized by a NIPA may, at the discretion of the DNI or designee, also receive a NICA, and/or, at the discretion of an appropriate management official, an award under an internal departmental or agency awards program, for the same act, period of service, or accomplishment.

D. This Directive authorizes expenditures of funds only when an NIA is endorsed by the head of the IC element or designated senior official(s).

E. This Directive authorizes the DNI at his or her sole and exclusive discretion to establish a new NIA award or award category, and/or to approve and issue an existing NIA award at any time without NIA Review Board (NIARB) action or recommendation.

F. This Directive authorizes designated IC Senior Program Executives (see Section 5.C below), at their discretion, to establish subordinate NIPA programs comprising non-monetary and monetary honorary awards to recognize distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to their particular IC profession, function, or intelligence discipline. NIPA programs are subject to the general requirements of this Directive and will be issued as Intelligence Community Policy Memoranda and issued as Appendices hereto.



## 5. DEFINITIONS:

**A. Honorary Award:** The formal recognition of an individual or a group for distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to the security of the US; the development and execution of the US NIS and its various implementation plans; the transformation and integration of the IC, and/or the accomplishment of its mission; the implementation of the IRTPA, the stature and standing of one of the IC's professions, functions, or intelligence disciplines; and/or such other achievements as determined or identified by the Director. Honorary awards may be monetary or non-monetary.

**(1) Monetary Honorary Awards** convey tangible recognition to an individual or a group for an exceptional contribution or accomplishment in the form of financial remuneration that otherwise qualifies as taxable income under the Internal Revenue Code. A keepsake with a substantial monetary face value may qualify as a monetary award, and thus be treated as taxable income. This Directive covers only those monetary awards granted by the DNI or a designated IC SPE (see Section 5.C below) for an exceptional contribution or accomplishment that are *not* otherwise granted as the result of an annual performance evaluation or appraisal in the form of a performance bonus. Monetary honorary awards granted by an IC SPE that are in excess of \$5,000 and up to a maximum of \$25,000 per individual employee (as a result of an individual award, or as part of a group or team award) require prior DNI approval, either individually or generally as part of an NIPA program submitted for the DNI's approval. In the case of an IC SPE that does not report directly to the DNI, approval for an individual award that is not part of a DNI-approved NIPA program may be granted by the head of the IC SPE's agency or element, or other designated senior management official, in accordance with procedures established by that agency or element.

**(2) Non-Monetary Honorary Awards** convey intangible recognition to an individual or a group for distinguished service and/or an exceptional contribution or accomplishment. Non-monetary honorary awards normally are in the form of a medal or medallion, plaque, certificate, or other keepsake that has a lasting trophy value, is clearly linked to the recipient's relationship to the IC (as an employee, contractor, etc.), is otherwise appropriate for purchase with public funds, and is of nominal monetary face value. Non-monetary honorary awards do not provide the recipient with any form of direct financial remuneration that qualifies as taxable income under the Internal Revenue Code.

**B. IC Element:** One of the several organizational entities officially comprising the US Intelligence Community (IC), as defined in the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, or any other organization designated by the President or established jointly by the DNI and the head of a department or agency as an element of the IC. There are presently 17 IC elements, including the ODNI.

**C. IC Senior Program Executive:** A senior IC official on the DNI's immediate staff or the head of an IC element or sub-element vested by the DNI with IC-wide policy and/or program responsibility for a particular professional community (for example, intelligence analysis and production), professional discipline (such as financial management or acquisition), or mission function (such as counterterrorism, open source collection, or clandestine operations). Each IC SPE is authorized to establish a NIPA program, in accordance with this Directive. IC SPEs

include: the Deputy Directors of National Intelligence; the Directors of the National Counterterrorism Center and National Counterproliferation Center; the National Counter Intelligence Executive; Associate Directors of National Intelligence; IC Chief Officers; and other senior ODNI and IC officials designated by the DNI.

**D. Keepsake:** A form of honorary award and includes items such as badges; medals or medallions; statues etc., that depict an agency or office emblem/logo or has some logical relationship to the service or contribution for which the award is given. To avoid qualifying as taxable income, keepsakes must have a nominal monetary face value that cannot readily be converted to cash or credit toward another item or service.

**E. National Intelligence Awards Review Board:** A Board established by the DNI to review NICA nominations. The DNI or his/her designee appoints eight NIARB members annually, from among nominations submitted by the heads of each of the IC agencies and elements, IC SPEs, and the ODNI. Generally, the NIARB will recommend DNI action (approval, disapproval, or conditional approval with revision) by consensus or majority vote. The Board will note any minority opinion or objection for the DNI's consideration. The DNI will also appoint a Chair of the Board, who will be responsible for calling meetings and documenting Review Board actions.

**F. Performance Bonus or Award:** A one-time monetary payment to and/or permanent increase in base pay of an employee as the direct result of an annual performance rating. This Directive does not apply to performance bonuses and awards.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES:

**A. Director of National Intelligence.** The DNI (or senior designee) is responsible for authorizing, establishing, and funding the NIA program; approving each NICA nomination and each NIPA program; taking appropriate action on recommendations on award nominations made by the NIARP; presiding over NIA presentation ceremonies, as appropriate; and, at his or her sole and exclusive discretion, establishing a new, one-time NIA award and/or approving and issuing an existing NIA award at any time, without NIARB action or recommendation. The DNI or senior designee also approves nominations for monetary awards exceeding \$5,000, but not more than \$25,000, that are not made under an approved NIPA program.

**B. IC Chief Human Capital Officer (IC CHCO).** The IC CHCO is responsible for developing and administering the NIA program, in consultation with the heads of the IC agencies and elements and their respective departments, as well as senior ODNI officials (including the Associate and Deputy Directors of National Intelligence, the Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Administration, and the Chief of the Office of Protocol); promulgating and revising, from time to time, the NIA program's enabling IC Directive; assisting in the development of, and as the DNI's senior designee, approving proposed NIPA programs developed by IC SPEs; and overseeing and periodically evaluating the NICA and NIPA programs and recommending improvements to the DNI.

**C. IC Senior Program Executives.** Subject to the approval of the DNI or his or her senior designee, designated IC SPEs are responsible for designing, developing, establishing and



funding, at their discretion and in accordance with applicable budget procedures, NIPA programs to recognize distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to their particular national intelligence profession, function, or intelligence discipline, in coordination with appropriate IC elements and the IC CHCO, and in accordance with this Directive. IC SPEs or their senior designees approve nominations for awards granted under their particular NIPA program; where required, endorse nominations for monetary awards made under their respective NIPA programs, as well as other non-monetary awards, as appropriate, to the DNI (or where applicable, the appropriate departmental or agency head) for approval; and preside over their respective NIPA presentation ceremonies, as appropriate.

**D. Heads of IC Elements.** The heads of IC elements and/or their designees are responsible for nominating and/or endorsing, as applicable, eligible and deserving individuals and groups for NICA and NIPA recognition, using DNI Form 655-01 *Recommendation for a National Intelligence Community Award*; budgeting for a NIPA program established by an SPE under their organizational authority; making recipients of awards available to attend recognition ceremonies; providing administrative support and travel funds for nominees/award winners, as appropriate; and encouraging award winners' available superiors and coworkers to attend recognition ceremonies.

**E. National Intelligence Awards Review Board.** The NIARB, through a Chair designated by the DNI, is responsible for calling for, receiving, and timely reviewing appropriate NICA nominations; confirming that a nominee meets all appropriate eligibility criteria; and recommending appropriate DNI action on nominations, in accordance with the provisions of this Directive.

**F. Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Administration.** The Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Administration (ADDNI/Administration) is responsible for providing administrative support to the IC CHCO, the NIARB, and the Office of Protocol with respect to budgeting for appropriate NIA program awards and other appropriate expenses, including appropriate presentation ceremonies expenses, and processing of appropriate personnel and/or procurement actions necessary to carry out the requirements of this Directive.

**G. ODNI Protocol Officer.** The ODNI Protocol Officer is responsible for planning and conducting periodic and special NIA program presentation ceremonies hosted by the DNI or other senior designee(s), and for providing advice to the NIARB and the IC CHCO on such matters.

**7. ELIGIBILITY:** All current US Government (USG) civilian employees, including those employed by or assigned to a department or agency outside of the IC, are eligible for all awards covered by this Directive. In addition, uniformed military personnel, including those assigned to a department or agency outside of the IC, and contractors who directly support an IC agency or element, are eligible for certain *non-monetary* awards covered by this Directive, as specified below. An appropriate contracting officer or other authorized IC management official must approve the nomination of a contractor. Individuals must be nominated within one year of the event, accomplishment, and/or service that provides the basis for the nomination. Further, all USG employee nominees must have an official annual performance rating of record, or other applicable periodic evaluation of their performance, documenting that their performance is at

least “fully successful” or equivalent, and must not have any disciplinary, adverse, or other comparable administrative action taken or pending against them at the time of nomination, as well as for the period covering such nomination.

**8. NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AWARDS:** *National Intelligence Community Awards*, as set forth in subparagraphs A through K below, are intended to recognize an individual or a group for distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to the security of the US; the development and execution of the US NIS and its various implementation plans; the transformation and integration of the IC, and/or the accomplishment of its mission; the implementation of the IRTPA, the stature and standing of one of the IC’s professions, functions, or intelligence disciplines; and/or such other achievements or accomplishments as determined or identified by the Director. The head of the applicable employing and/or nominating IC element must endorse all NICA nominations. Recipients of a NICA may *not* use this recognition in any commercial advertising, promotion, or activity.

**A. *National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal (NIDSM).*** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes sustained, selfless service of the highest order, and/or extraordinary and long-lasting contributions to the IC and the US by an individual in a position of great responsibility. The NIDSM is awarded only when appropriate and on a highly selective basis. The NIDSM is the highest award granted by the DNI and is open to all eligible USG civilian and military personnel.

**B. *National Intelligence Career Achievement Medal (NICAM).*** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes distinguished service and/or lasting contributions to the IC and the US over a sustained period by an individual. The NICAM is awarded only when appropriate on a highly selective basis and is open to all eligible USG civilian, and military personnel.

**C. *National Intelligence Reform Medal (NIRM).*** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes extraordinary individual or group contributions to the goals and objectives of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 and the transformation and integration of the US IC. The NIRM is awarded on a very selective and limited basis and is open to all eligible USG civilian and military personnel.

**D. *National Intelligence Achievement Medal (NIAM).*** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes a single exceptional contribution to the IC and the US by an individual or group of individuals. The NIAM is awarded on a very selective and limited basis and is open to all eligible USG civilian and military personnel.

**E. *The Director of National Intelligence Award for Collaboration Leadership (DNIACL).*** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes extraordinary individual and/or group achievements that demonstrate, promote, and above all, institutionalize a culture of collaboration and information-sharing between and among the various agencies and elements of the IC. Awarded annually on a highly selective basis, the DNIACL is open to all eligible USG civilian employees and military personnel.

**F. *National Intelligence Community Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Awards (NICEEODA).*** NICEEODA are honorary awards that recognize outstanding



contributions of IC USG civilians and military personnel in recruiting, hiring, supporting, and/or developing an IC workforce that reflects the diversity of the US and the world. These awards are open to all eligible USG civilian and military personnel, and may, at the DNI's discretion, include accompanying monetary recognition for eligible USG civilian employees, only:

**(1) Intelligence Community EEO and Diversity Exemplary Leadership Award.** The IC EEO and Diversity Exemplary Leadership Award recognize outstanding achievement and performance by a senior IC officer (civilian or military) in creating an environment of equal employment opportunity, diversity, and inclusion.

**(2) Intelligence Community EEO and Diversity Outstanding Achievement Award.** The IC EEO and Diversity Outstanding Achievement Award recognize a significant act or noteworthy accomplishment by a manager, individual employee, or group of employees related to equal employment opportunity, diversity, and inclusion.

**G. National Intelligence Meritorious Unit Citation (NIMUC).** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes a meritorious single act or service performed by an IC organizational unit or team, with particular emphasis on those units or teams that involve individuals from two or more IC elements whose collective contributions on behalf of the IC deserve special recognition. Normally, individual citations are not awarded to members of the unit or team, but special recognition of individual contributions is permissible. This award is open to all eligible USG civilian, military, and contractor personnel. The number of contract personnel included in a NIMUC nomination shall not exceed 50% of the total number of USG civilian and military personnel nominated.

**H. National Intelligence Medallion (NIM).** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes an important achievement or commendable contribution involving a single act or service to the IC and the US by non-IC civilian or military personnel, or by contractors, consultants, or other non-USG personnel. The NIM recognizes special and unique contributions to the successful accomplishment of an IC mission.

**I. National Intelligence Certificate of Distinction (NICD).** This non-monetary honorary award recognizes a notable achievement involving a single act or service by an individual or group. The NICD may be awarded for sustained superior performance, a single accomplishment, or a contribution, act, or service of merit and is open to all eligible USG civilian and military personnel.

**J. National Intelligence Special Act or Service Award (NISASA).** This monetary honorary award recognizes a significant act or contribution by an individual or group that results in significant, quantifiable savings or other tangible benefits to the US and/or the IC. This award is granted annually to eligible USG civilian employees only. NISASA nominations must provide specific evidence of the tangible savings or benefits that accrue as a result of the special act or contribution (for example, a suggestion that if adopted, would yield significant monetary savings), and must, to the extent possible, quantify such benefits in terms of their actual or estimated dollar value. Nominations must include a recommended award amount for each recipient. The maximum award recommendation is \$5,000 for each recipient; however, the DNI may, under extraordinary circumstances, approve an award of up to \$25,000. The President must

approve awards of more than \$25,000 for a single individual. NISASA may not duplicate other monetary awards for the same tangible benefits.

**K. Galileo Award.** This award recognizes innovative and creative solutions to our Nation's future intelligence challenges. It is normally granted on the basis of competitively judged papers submitted annually by individuals for juried review and is open to all eligible USG civilian and military personnel. USG civilian awardees receive accompanying monetary recognition. Nomination and approval procedures for Galileo Awards will be issued as an appendix hereto.

**9. NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE PROFESSIONAL AWARDS:** *National Intelligence Professional Awards* programs are established by designated IC SPEs and must meet the general requirements of this Directive; in this regard, they are subject to coordination with and approval by the DNI or his or her senior designee. Upon such approval, each NIPA program will be attached as an Appendix to this Directive.

**A.** Designated SPEs include the Deputy Directors of National Intelligence; the Directors of the National Counterterrorism Center, the National Counterproliferation Center, the Open Source Center, and the National Clandestine Service; the National Counter Intelligence Executive; Associate Directors of National Intelligence; IC Chief Officers; and such other ODNI and/or senior IC officials as the DNI may determine.

**B.** Each NIPA program must be developed in consultation with the SPE's senior counterparts from the various IC agencies and elements. In addition, each such program must meet the following requirements:

(1) Each NIPA program must specifically identify and describe in detail the honorary awards established to recognize distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to the particular IC profession, function, or intelligence discipline, including the type of award (monetary or non-monetary) and specific eligibility, nomination, and selection criteria. If the award is monetary, the maximum amount, not to exceed \$25,000 for any one individual, will also be specified. Monetary awards in excess of \$5,000, up to the \$25,000 limit, require specific DNI (or where applicable, an appropriate departmental or agency head) approval, in accordance with Section 6 above, unless awards of such amounts are part of a NIPA program approved by the DNI or designee.

(2) Each NIPA program must specifically identify and describe the nomination and review process or processes to be used to determine recipients of each award. Each process must describe how individuals and/or groups are nominated for each award, as well as how nominees will be screened to determine their basic eligibility. Further, each process must ensure that every nomination (including self-nominations, where permitted) is subject to review and endorsement by the head of the nominee's employing and/or nominating IC element, or senior designee.

(3) Each NIPA program must also include and describe the process to be employed for confirming the eligibility and suitability of a nominee; reviewing, evaluating, and approving each nomination on its individual merits; providing appropriate feedback to nominees and/or nomination officials on the results of such review; and publicly recognizing recipients.



C. To the extent that any particular award involves the expenditure of funds as a direct monetary payment to an individual or group, each NIPA program must identify the source of funds and describe a process for ensuring that an appropriate amount is budgeted, appropriately expended, and accounted for by the SPE and/or other responsible ODNI and/or IC element management official. Further, to the extent that any particular award requires administrative support (for example, to take a particular personnel or procurement action, or complete an appropriate financial transaction), each NIPA program must address how those requirements are to be met.

D. A particular IC SPE (or as specified in an approved NIPA program, a senior designee) is authorized, in coordination with the IC CHCO, to grant an existing NIPA at any time, subject to the monetary limitations set forth above, in order to recognize and honor an individual or group under extraordinary circumstances.

E. Legacy or existing awards programs separately or independently established and/or continued by a designated IC SPE to recognize distinguished service and/or exceptional contributions to a particular IC profession, function, or intelligence discipline will be incorporated into an approved Appendix to this Directive within 120 days of the effective date of this Directive.

## 10. ADMINISTRATION OF THE NIA PROGRAM:

A. **Costs and Expenses.** Subject to availability of funds and consistent with applicable law and regulations, this Directive authorizes the expenditure of funds for the operation of the NIA program, including approved NIPA programs. The IC CHCO will work with the ADDNI/Administration, the Chair of the NIARB, the ODNI Protocol Officer, and designated IC SPEs to ensure appropriate funding for the NICA and NIPA programs.

(1) **Travel Expenses.** To the extent permitted by applicable law and regulations, the DNI may extend invitational travel orders, as appropriate, to award recipients and family members, and this Directive authorizes designated IC agency and element management officials to reimburse NICA and NIPA recipients for travel expenses for NIA presentations. The following conditions apply:

(a) Travel expenses incurred by an NICA or NIPA recipient and one member of the recipient's immediate family (spouse, parent, child, sibling, etc.), as determined by the recipient, may be authorized when approved in advance by the appropriate ODNI representative or the designated IC element management official.

(b) Travel expenses incurred by an immediate family member(s) of a deceased employee who is receiving a posthumous NICA or NIPA may be paid by the ODNI or the designated IC element when the travel has been approved in advance by the appropriate ODNI representative or the designated IC element management official. In such instances, travel is not limited to one member of the immediate family, but the number of family members (to include immediate family of children or siblings) approved by the authorized ODNI or IC agency or element management official to attend the posthumous award ceremony.

**(2) Refreshment Expenses.** To the extent permitted by applicable law and regulation, refreshments at award receptions associated with NICA presentation ceremonies hosted by the DNI or other senior designee(s), as well as NIPA presentation ceremonies hosted by an IC SPE are considered a usual and necessary expense. This Directive authorizes payment for such refreshments and expenses by the ODNI Protocol Officer and /or designated IC SPE to the extent permitted by law.

**(3) Keepsakes.** The IC CHCO, in conjunction with the Chair of the NIARB and the ADDNI/Administration, will budget for NICA keepsakes (as defined in Section 5 above). Designated IC SPEs will budget for and fund keepsakes for their respective NIPA programs.

**B. Nomination, Endorsement and Review Procedures.** The NIARB, with assistance from the IC CHCO or his/her designee, may develop and publish additional nomination, endorsement and review procedures for NIA programs as an appendix to this Directive.

**C. Security and Cover Considerations.** IC elements, employees and contractors must consider all applicable IC security and cover standards, including the possible need for future cover status of nominees, applicable to NICA and NIPA nominees, from their initial nomination and evaluation, to selection and presentation.

(1) Individuals and group members affiliated with, using, or potentially requiring covert status may be nominated by their cover organization for a NICA or NIPA, as applicable, subject to the above standards.

(2) When nominating an individual, group or group member described in (1) above for a NICA or NIPA, the IC official or employee preparing the nomination, (including the nominee, where self-nomination is permitted) must obtain written approval and clearance from the appropriate Security and Cover Office(s) prior to submission of the nomination for review, endorsement, and consideration.

(3) Before the submission of a NICA nomination to the NIARB (or in the case of a NIPA, the applicable reviewing body or individual), the IC element must confirm that the appropriate Security and Cover Office (s) has approved and cleared the nomination for release.

(4) The NIARB (or in the case of an NIPA, the designated IC SPE) will establish procedures for processing and limiting access to award nominations with Security and/or Cover Office releases.


(a) The disposition of awards is determined by the applicable cover organization or affiliation, subject to appropriate operational considerations. Recipients (both individual and group) may receive the award when the recipient is overt and a future covert assignment is unlikely, or when the operational cover considerations that precluded the initial receipt no longer apply.



(b) Covert recipients must complete an Awards Retention Agreement when separating from an IC element. The IC element and/or ODNI retain(s) the award when the individual is covert or a future covert assignment or affiliation is likely.

**11. EFFECTIVE DATE:** This Directive is effective upon signature and supersedes Director of Central Intelligence Directive (DCID) 7/1P, dated 15 August 1993, which established the "Intelligence Community Awards."

  
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Director of National Intelligence

  
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Date