

Interview of Mr. Patrick Gorman
Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Strategy, Plans, and Policy

With Amy Morris – Federal News Radio – Washington, DC

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AMY MORRIS (Federal News Radio): Do you know where you're going to be in 2015? Well, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence has a plan called the Vision 2015, a globally networked and integrated intelligence enterprise. [Patrick Gorman is] Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Strategy, Plans, and Policy.

PATRICK GORMAN: When the Director came on last March, you know, the discussion was do we sit down and try to figure out a strategy and a vision and a way forward, or do we focus on execution. And so the decision was – the default mechanism was to go forward with an implementation plan because we knew the things that needed to be done. Fix the IT, work policy issues, you know, all the things that have been listed for the last 40 years of studies about the intel community. So the bias was we need to focus on execution and not work on vision and strategy at that point; we felt we had a strategy and knew where we were going.

As we got into it, a lot of people kept asking us well, okay, we're doing an integration collaboration with what end; what's this thing start to look like. Can you describe it? You know, if you look out 10 years, what would be the contours of this new organization or this enterprise? And so last fall, we sat down with the seniors from all the agencies and developed a basically division, that you have a division document, and then we've been working and socializing with the community since then, until the release.

So the intent – there's two different pieces. Part of the plan's about execution, the milestones, initiatives, deliverables, and the vision is about articulating an instate. What will come out of this will be basically a strategic roadmap that will say over the next six years – here's what needs to be done and here's who needs to do it, and here's the type of money that will have to be aligned to make these things happen, in terms of people and budget.

MS. MORRIS: I want to get back to the people and the budgets in just a second, but I also want to hit on the long-term goals and the short-term goals, and see how those sort of work together. Let's start with the short-term goals: What's at the top of your list?

MR. GORMAN: I'd say top of the list on short-term goals are things like the single information environment, so if you look – you know, the division has a net-centric information environment, but there are very tactical things that have to happen, in terms of collapsing networks, common e-mail systems, et cetera. So this is no small feat, so it's been divided up. So there's something called single information environment that's been worked under the 500-day plan, so that would be at the top.

Security clearance reform is critical, so a lot of progress has been made in the last year, but now that has to go from a lot of the concepts and policies and start going into the implementation, probably over the next year or so. (Inaudible) – three is basically in the policies associated with, you know, clarifying roles and responsibilities; that will be at the top of the list. Things like the National Intelligence University, setting that up; we just appointed a new provost. And so that should be at the top of the list, and other things like lessons learned, down at the lessons learned center, and capability for the intel community.

MS. MORRIS: And long term, we're talking 2015, this should be able to carry through the next administration and the next.

MR. GORMAN: Well, I mean, if you start looking at, really, transformation as a process. Quite frankly, 2015, we started this out with something called IC 2020. We developed a vision, came up with this, and so the feedback we got from people is, you know, we should be doing this a lot sooner. We don't have 12 years to do this; we have to do this a lot sooner. And so we picked 2015 as a milestone to back it up, to give some acceleration to this, but I would argue that when you get to 2015 there's going to be more things you're going to have to do. So this is – it doesn't stop at 2015. You know, it's not a close-the-doors and declare success at that point.

MS. MORRIS: What are some of the lead offices that are going to help carry this through for you?

MR. GORMAN: Well, I think there's two ways you got to think of this. One is there are things that the ODNI will be doing directly, in terms of initiatives, and there are things that the agencies will be doing, so it'd be working at both levels. A lot of the projects that we have are actually being done through the agency, so they have an executive agent role when they take these things on. But I would say if you look at some of the primary offices could be things like the Chief Information Officer, General Meyerrose; it's going to be things like the Chief Human Capital officer, Ron Sanders, who's been working with joint duty and pay-for-performance, and the larger pay modernization piece. And it's going to be things like policy, in terms of trying to get the authorities and all the policies in line so that you have clear decision rights and, you know, we don't have kind of layers of bureaucracy and trying to figure out who has what right to make what decisions on what issue.

MS. MORRIS: You know, a lot of what we've been covering here at Federal News Radio is the concept of information sharing, no longer stove-piping, and having a more uniform sharing of the information. It seems like this would fall right into that, that this falls right under the whole need-to-share versus the need-to-know.

MR. GORMAN: Yeah, I think that's correct. But I would – I think when you look at these things, you go, well, we should be – how come we're not sharing information and we haven't been? What are the issues? There's this inherent tension between secrecy, which is necessary, and sharing information. And I would argue that over the last five or six years, the committee has done a report on this, it's been hard to strike the balance between those two. And I think if this project continues that further, I think we can get a lot of progress in terms of, you know, there's a lot more information being shared when you look at the National Counterterrorism

Center and some of the new organizations that sprung up after this, the PM for Information Sharing Environment.

So these things, I think, have helped a lot. We have policies in place. Now I think the next phase of this is really get a platform in place, especially the IT infrastructure, to really enable this and make this much more robust.

MS. MORRIS: Do you see their having to be sort of a sea change in how people think about such things?

MR. GORMAN: Well, I think when you go back to the core of information sharing, a lot of this, there's things like policies. There's obviously IT. There's things like XNL standards. So those are important. At the core of this is culture. And if you don't address the cultural piece and it gets so that people have trust, that they know each other and they're comfortable sharing, you're not going to make a lot of headway in information-sharing.

So I would think, like, I would suggest things like joint duty, things like the National Soldier's University do a long way to building this relationship, building that trust because people are working side-by-side and they're rotating and they know each other. I would say that's just as important for information-sharing as the information technology is.

MS. MORRIS: So does it look to you then that this is going to really change how the intelligence community does its job? Is it going to be a huge change?

MR. GORMAN: I would say, what you're going to see in the short term with most of these efforts, the short term, you're going to see changes and I would say you're going to have some impact, you're going to have policy, you're going to have better tools, better alignment with the budget, you know, all of the kind of mechanical things. But, long term, it will have major impact. And I think if you look at what happened with the OD with Goldwater-Nichols, when that came out in 1986, you didn't see changes in '88 or '89. But by the mid-'90s, you saw major changes.

So it takes a while to change the culture and change practices and the infrastructure in places to support all of that stuff. So I would say short term we'll have impact, long term would be major impact.

MS. MORRIS: And how are you going to be able to measure progress when you implement your vision?

MR. GORMAN: Well, I think there's several ways. One of the things we did with the 500-day plan was build this into the management agenda so that this is something that's front and center instead of – on the management agenda when the seniors meet and have discussion. How are you doing on the project? Are you behind? What do we have to do? Do you need more support to do this? And then there's metrics against it to understand – not to measure the activity, like did I do X, Y, or Z, but also measuring the outcome and the impact. What difference does it make and can you translate all of this stuff in some type of mission impact?

So there's a whole series of performance-management activities that are taking place to support this and, again, to try to put this again – not a kind of bureaucratic performance management, but, really, what does all of this mean in terms of mission? And we always have to go back to understanding what the mission impact is as we transform the intel community.

MS. MORRIS: And we touched on this briefly at the beginning and I wanted to circle back and focus on it a bit more. And that is the budget, the human capital, the resources, what it is you're going to need to pull this off?

MR. GORMAN: Well, I think our feeling is that we have existing resources that were already resourced, we funded that. And as we start rolling this out in terms of the implementation plan, as I said earlier, the strategic roadmap, we are doing basically training programming guidance to understand, okay, if we have to do these things, what type of resources do we need? Do we need more? Do we need to reallocate? And we're still in the process of working that.

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