

NDIC: From Concept to Creation to GCIP

The origin of NDIC can be traced to September 5, 1989 when President George H.W. Bush unveiled his National Drug Control Strategy. The plan, developed by the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), William Bennett, outlined the President's strategy for coordinating the combined efforts of various federal programs to reduce drug use and drug trafficking in the United States. Included in the inaugural plan was the announcement that ONDCP would chair a working group to develop plans for an intelligence center to unite U.S. drug-related analytical capabilities and to improve intelligence capabilities.

ONDCP released the second National Drug Control Strategy in January 1990 and with it, plans to create a National Drug Intelligence Center to "consolidate and coordinate all relevant drug intelligence information gathered by law enforcement agencies and analyze it to produce a more complete picture of drug trafficking organizations." What distinguished the intelligence to be developed by NDIC from that of other agencies was the focus on strategic intelligence.

In the FY1993 Department of Defense Appropriation (PL 102-396), Congress provided statutory backing to the President's vision for NDIC. In that law, the mission of NDIC was "to coordinate and consolidate drug intelligence from all national security and law enforcement agencies, and produce information regarding the structure, membership, finances, communications, and activities of drug trafficking organizations."

Initially staffed with intelligence analysts and agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and administered by the FBI, NDIC opened its doors in Johnstown, PA in August 1993. The Center's early work often involved providing operational support to other law enforcement and intelligence agencies. NDIC also prepared assessments on drug trafficking organizations from intelligence provided by a requesting agency specifically for an assigned tasking.

In a House Report accompanying the FY1998 Intelligence Authorization (H.R. Rep. 105-350), Congress directed ONDCP to "examine current and proposed efforts to structure the NDIC to effectively coordinate and consolidate strategic drug intelligence...and describe what steps have been taken to ensure that the relevant national security and law enforcement agencies are providing the NDIC with access to data needed." While ONDCP was expected to include this review in its National Counter-Narcotics Architecture Review, it instead delineated the role of NDIC and other counterdrug agencies in its 2000 General Counterdrug Intelligence Plan (GCIP), which was endorsed by the President and eight Cabinet-level officials. The GCIP designated NDIC as the principal center for *domestic strategic* counterdrug analysis in support of policymakers and resource planners. In fulfillment of this charge, NDIC provides national policy decision makers with timely strategic domestic drug intelligence assessments including our signature product the annual *National Drug Threat Assessment*. In 2002, the GCIP revalidated NDIC's designation as the nation's principal center for domestic strategic counterdrug intelligence analysis.