



Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General

DHS' Counterintelligence Activities (Summary)





Homeland Security

JUL 29 2010

Preface

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107-296) by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*. This is one of a series of audit, inspection, and special reports prepared as part of our oversight responsibilities to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within the department.

This report addresses the strengths and weaknesses of DHS' counterintelligence activities. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observations, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations herein have been developed to the best knowledge available to our office, and have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. We trust this report will result in more effective, efficient, and economical operations. We express our appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard L. Skinner".

Richard L. Skinner
Inspector General

OIG

*Department of Homeland Security
Office of Inspector General*

Summary

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is one of the largest and most visible federal departments. Throughout DHS, designated personnel have access to classified information and systems. Protecting the department involves safeguarding personnel, information, operations, programs, and technologies from intelligence threats. To counter these threats, the department has developed capabilities to detect and neutralize intelligence vulnerabilities.

We assessed DHS' counterintelligence activities. Specifically, we focused on the program's history, evolution, activities, and coordination and collaboration efforts. Executive Order 12333, as amended, defines counterintelligence as information gathered and activities conducted to identify, deceive, exploit, disrupt, or protect against espionage, other intelligence activities, sabotage, or assassinations conducted for or on behalf of foreign powers, organizations, or persons, or their agents, or international terrorist organizations or activities.

The DHS Counterintelligence Program conducts the department's counterintelligence mission activities at the direction of, and under the authority of the Secretary. The primary mission of DHS' Counterintelligence Program is to prevent adversaries from penetrating the department to exploit sensitive information, operations, programs, personnel, and resources. In addition, the United States Coast Guard provides Coast Guard specific counterintelligence support to the department. Their primary mission is to preserve operational integrity by shielding operations, personnel, systems, facilities, and information from intelligence threats. Although the United States Coast Guard has been successful in developing its counterintelligence program, the DHS Counterintelligence Program has experienced some organizational challenges.

We made multiple recommendations to help the department enhance its coordination of counterintelligence activities, define roles and responsibilities, and to improve its oversight.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND COPIES

To obtain additional copies of this report, please call the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at (202) 254-4100, fax your request to (202) 254-4305, or visit the OIG web site at www.dhs.gov/oig.

OIG HOTLINE

To report alleged fraud, waste, abuse or mismanagement, or any other kind of criminal or noncriminal misconduct relative to department programs or operations:

- Call our Hotline at 1-800-323-8603;
- Fax the complaint directly to us at (202) 254-4292;
- Email us at DHSOIGHOTLINE@dhs.gov; or
- Write to us at:
DHS Office of Inspector General/MAIL STOP 2600,
Attention: Office of Investigations - Hotline,
245 Murray Drive, SW, Building 410,
Washington, DC 20528.

The OIG seeks to protect the identity of each writer and caller.