(U) SID's Interactions with Congress: Setting the Budget

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(U//FOUO) Although SID provides intelligence primarily for the use of the Executive Branch of the government, it is the U.S. Congress that provides oversight and determines the Agency's budget. That is why our dealings with Congress are so important. In this series, we'll look at how SID interacts with Congress-- we think you'll be surprised at how much work goes into this effort, most of it invisible to the general SID workforce. The focal point within SID for these interactions is SID Legislative Affairs (SID LA).

(U//FOUO) Our main contacts in Congress are with the following four committees:

- House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI)
- Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI)
- House Appropriations Committee (HAC)
- Senate Appropriations Committee (SAC)

For budgeting purposes, the first two committees are known as "authorizors", while the latter two are the "appropriators". Let's look briefly at the budget process (we'll try to keep it simple!)...

(U) The Budget

(U) "Marking Up" the President's Budget

(U//FOUO) Since Congress controls the governmental purse strings, many of our dealings with Congress are related to budget issues. The process works like this:

- The President submits a budget to Congress (with SID's portion detailed in a document called the Congressional Budget Justification Book - CBJB) requesting specified amounts of money for NSA and 12 other agencies that are part of the National Foreign Intelligence Program. Every year, NSA's DF2 (Accounting and Financial Services) puts together the CBJB based on input from SID and the rest of the Agency, excluding IAD.
- The above four congressional committees then review the CBJB and "mark it up"- i.e. they indicate whether they think the funding should be raised, lowered, or left the same. The committee staffers also may request briefings on various projects, to help them gauge the appropriate level of funding.
- The congressional committees then reconcile (this is referred to as "conference") the various versions of their mark ups, which result in the Intelligence Authorization Bill and the Intelligence Appropriation Bill. At that point, it is submitted to the full Congress for a vote and (if passed) sent to the President for signature or veto.

(U) More on the CBJB

(U//FOUO) The compilation of the CBJB is a major project. Personnel from NSA's DF3 (Program and Budget Build) coordinate with SID budget managers to gather together cost figures and justifications for every program across the directorate and present the data in a consistent format for the congressional committees. The CBJB is due to the committees on the first Monday in February. The recently completed Fiscal Year 2004 CBJB totaled 761 pages, and took 5 months to assemble.

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