

Interagency Personnel Rotation - National Defense Authorization Act of 2013

Early in January 2013, President Barack Obama signed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013 into law. The Act authorizes appropriations for Department of Defense (DoD) activities for fiscal year 2013, and addresses specific interagency issues, including personnel rotations.

Section 1107 of the NDAA establishes an interagency personnel rotation program, which the Simons Center assisted the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee in drafting. The program is meant to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the government by fostering greater interagency experience among executive branch personnel on national and homeland security matters involving more than one agency. The interagency personnel rotation program is designed to be carried out in at least two Interagency Communities of Interest—stabilization and reconstruction operations, and emergency management.

The interagency personnel rotation program requires national security professionals to complete a one-year assignment in another government agency outside their parent organization prior to elevation to senior leadership or Senior Executive Service positions. Participation in the program is voluntary, but requires the consent of the employee's head agency. After completing their rotation, the employee is permitted to return, within a reasonable amount of time, to their previous position at their parent agency, or a corresponding or higher position. Employees who have completed an interagency rotation are to be given strong preference when pursuing senior positions within the Interagency Community of Interest.

Section 1107 also establishes a Committee on National Security Personnel, which will be made up of members designated by Department heads and the President. Also included in this section of the NDAA is a provision for a National Security Human Capital Strategy. The Strategy, developed by members of the Committee, will establish the policies, processes, and procedures for the interagency personnel rotation program within National Security Interagency Communities of Interest.

The NDAA also makes provisions for review. According to subsection (g), the Committee on National Security Personnel must assess and report to Congress the performance measures used in the interagency personnel rotations no later than the end of the second fiscal year after the NDAA is enacted. Subsection (h) requires similar reporting by the Comptroller General of the U.S. no later than the second fiscal year after the NDAA is enacted. This report would address the extent to which the requirements set out in Section 1107 were implemented, the extent to which national security agencies have participated, the extent to which participants benefitted from the interagency rotation, and the extent to which the rotation improved or is expected to improve interagency integration and coordination. **IAJ**

State Bureau Focuses on Preventing/Responding to Conflict

The State Department's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) recently entered its second year of operation. CSO subsumed the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in November 2011, and helps prevent and respond to conflict by providing tools and resources for analysis, strategy, and operational support.