

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.

CSO utilizes many tools in analyzing conflict, including rapid conflict assessments, scenario-based brainstorming sessions, and open-source trend analysis and scenario modeling. CSO can then build on that analysis through interagency strategic planning or support to host nation stabilization planning. It can also incorporate conflict analysis into Joint Regional Strategies, Functional Bureau Strategies, and Integrated Country Strategies. CSO provides operation support of local initiatives through its network of civilian responders, which includes experts in strategic communications, security sector reform, election assistance, community mediation, international negotiations, rule of law, and civilian-military relations. When collaborating with interagency and other partners outside the U.S. government, CSO can also offer lessons learned and best practices on a variety of issues.

Prior to committing to an engagement, CSO examines the situation, evaluating U.S. national security interests, urgency for action, and opportunities for impact within the next 12 to 18 months. CSO also works with a select number of countries to test innovation where there is opportunity to learn from new approaches to conflict prevention and mitigation.

CSO is part of State Department's "J Family," a team of offices and bureaus that contribute to conflict prevention and crisis response missions. This team also includes the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL); the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL); the Office of Global Criminal Justice (S/GCJ); the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM); and the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT).

CSO's work is defined by four core principles: agility, strategic focus, local ownership, and partnership. CSO partners with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Defense, and other U.S. government agencies, as well as other offices and bureaus within the State Department. USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) is a major player in CSO's conflict and crisis operations, as are the Joint Chiefs of Staff and regional Combatant Commands within DoD, and the Civilian Response Corps.

In 2012, CSO provided non-lethal equipment and training to the Syrian civilian opposition, increasing their effectiveness against the assaults of the regime. The training provided by CSO covered transition planning, civil administration, civil resistance, strategic communications, and countering sectarian violence. In Belize, CSO supported the office of the prime Minister, strengthening a gang truce and training 38 local mediators. CSO also supported efforts aimed at weakening the Lord's Resistance Army in Central Africa. **IAJ**

Homeland Security Partnership Council Established

On October 26, 2012, the Obama Administration established the White House Homeland Security Partnership Council. The Executive Order increases the U.S. government's ability to develop local partnerships to support homeland security priorities. This collaboration enables the federal government and its partners to use resources more efficiently while strengthening homeland security capabilities.

The Council will foster local partnerships between the federal government and the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, foundations, community-based organizations, and state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and law enforcement agencies. Council members will include representatives from a variety of executive departments, agencies, and bureaus. Prospective Council members will be nominated by their agency heads before being selected by the Steering