

SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE DOESN'T THINK THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY INSPECTOR GENERAL DOES ENOUGH ALL-IC OVERSIGHT

The Intelligence Community Inspector General receives just two mentions in the Intelligence Authorization released earlier this month. First, in a standalone section that will permit it to hire expert auditors, as other Inspectors General can. The bill report explains that section this way.

Section 307. Inspector General of the Intelligence Community auditing authority

Section 307 permits the IC IG to hire contractor or expert auditors to meet audit requirements, similar to other Federal IGs. Section 307 responds to the Committee's concerns that the IC Inspector General (IC IG) is at risk of failing to meet its legislative requirements due to its inability to hire qualified auditors by granting the IC IG independent hiring practices identical to other IGs.

Good to see that eight years after it was created, the ICIG will be able to start doing competent financial audits.

In addition, the unclassified portion of the Intel Authorization includes the ICIG among those Inspectors General that must see whether its agencies are classifying and declassifying things properly.

Which suggests this passage – which goes far beyond those two passages – may correspond to some language within the classified portion of the bill.

Inspector General of the Intelligence Community role and responsibilities

The Inspector General of the Intelligence Community (IC IG) was established by the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 to initiate and “conduct independent reviews investigations, inspections, audits, and reviews on programs and activities within the responsibility and authority of the Director of National Intelligence” and to lead the IG community in its activities. The Committee is concerned that this intent is not fully exercised by the IC IG and reiterates the Congress’s intent that it consider its role as an IG over all IC-wide activities in addition to the ODNI. To support this intent, the Committee has directed a number of requirements to strengthen the IC IG’s role and expects full cooperation from all Offices of Inspector General across the IC.

The Committee remains concerned about the level of protection afforded to whistleblowers within the IC and the level of insight congressional committees have into their disclosures. It is the Committee’s expectation that all Offices of Inspector General across the IC will fully cooperate with the direction provided elsewhere in the bill to ensure both the Director of National Intelligence and the congressional committees have more complete awareness of the disclosures made to any IG about any National Intelligence Program funded activity.

language extending whistleblower protection to contractors. Instead there's just this language nodding, yet again, to protecting those who whistleblow.

But I'm as interested in SSCI "reiterate[d] the Congress's intent that [ICIG] consider its role as an IG over all IC-wide activities in addition to the ODNI."

Going back to 2011, the ICIG refused to do a community-wide review of the way Section 702 works (or count how many Americans get sucked up). With EO 12333 sharing raw data with other agencies, it behooves the ICIG to review how that process works.

The Intel Authorization also requires a review to make sure all the agencies shared the data they should have on Russian tampering with the election. It turns out the interagency "Task Force" John Brennan set up in the summer was a CIA-led task force. It wasn't until December that a broader set of analysts were permitted to review the intelligence, leading to new discoveries (including, it seems, new conversations between Trump officials and Russians of interest). And it seems highly likely that DHS was left out of the loop, which would be especially problematic given that that's the agency that talks to state electoral officials.

As Mike Pompeo seems intent on politicizing Iran intelligence and killing diversity at CIA, I hope ICIG gets directed to review CIA's approach to both of those issues.

There are likely more items of interest addressed in the "requirements to strengthen the IC IG's role." Which is a good thing.