Informational newsletter on Counterintelligence and Counterterrorism issues affecting NASA

All Eyes on NASA

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NASA Counterintelligence Program

Since its establishment in 1958, NASA has realized invaluable accomplishments in the development of aeronautics and in the exploration of space, enabling the US to become a global leader in these fields. NASA has forged relationships with industry, academia, government, and international partners.

NASA’s unique span of activities ranges from partnering with multiple US government agencies on highly classified and/or sensitive projects to formal research and development with industry and foreign countries on projects such as the International Space Station. This unique environment presents NASA with many challenges and makes the agency potentially vulnerable to information and technology exploitation. Balancing its collaborative work with the need to protect classified and sensitive but unclassified information, NASA is often targeted by adversaries, both government and private, who seek to unlawfully acquire critical US technologies, trade secrets, and sensitive information.

NASA is a very visible symbol of US national power. As such, it provides a unique opportunity for terrorists to embarrass and challenge the view of American power around the globe. Terrorists know that a disruption or destruction of sensitive projects would send powerful messages around the globe about our vulnerabilities and the terrorist’s capabilities to continue to attack symbols of American strength, innovation, and freedom. To counter these threats, NASA administers a centralized Counterintelligence (CI) Program from NASA HQ. The program employs career professional counterintelligence special agents at each NASA Center responsible for delivering specialized CI and Counterterrorism (CT) services to Center personnel as well as serving as the principal advisor to Center Directors on CI and CT related issues.

The objective of the CI Program is to detect, deter, and neutralize potential threats posed by foreign intelligence services (FIS), other foreign entities, and acts of terrorism. This is accomplished in part by maintaining a close working relationship with the US Intelligence Community and by proactively integrating CI activities into Center awareness programs, foreign travel briefings and debriefings, foreign visitor escorts, technology protection programs, special threat assessments, and the dissemination of tailored analytical products designed to reduce NASA vulnerabilities.

The most essential element of the program is awareness. A strong CI and CT awareness among the general NASA population is vital to protecting NASA information (e.g., proprietary information, sensitive but unclassified, export controlled, ITAR, and classified national security information) and ensuring all NASA personnel are cognizant of current threats posed by FIS and terrorists. The monthly publication of the All Eyes on NASA newsletter will serve as a venue to meet that objective. We welcome your comments.

Counterintelligence Quote of the Month

“It is essential to seek out enemy agents who have come to conduct espionage against you…”
– Sun Tzu, The Art of War
Counterintelligence News

FBI: The Spying Game
Foreign Spy Activity Surges To Fill Technology Gap
Spying up to near Cold War Levels
Global Spies Target US Computers

Spy of the Month: Larry Wu-Tai Chin
Videos:
"You Are a Potential Recruitment"

Foreign Travel

Countries that target US technology
China
Russia
Cuba

For more Foreign Travel Information contact the CI office at your center and visit the following web sites:

Department of State
Department of Energy Travel Memo

Ways to protect yourself on travel:

1. Have a set travel itinerary and schedule
2. Watch for suspicious packages and individuals.
3. Do not dress like an affluent tourist. Maintain a low profile.

CI Awareness

Help your country and put money in your pocket: the Attorney General has recently authorized a reward of up to $500,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of a person who commits or conspires to commit an act of espionage or that leads to the prevention of an act of espionage.

CI Knowledge

140 nations spend part of their GNP on conducting intelligence activities against the U.S.

Did you know?
TRASHINT: The technique used to recover sensitive but unclassified information about US security operations and capabilities that has been carelessly thrown away. Also called "Dumpster Diving."
Foreign Intelligence Collection Efforts against US Technologies

Collection Activity Conducted against Aeronautics/Space Systems by Region

- East Asia and Pacific: 37.74%
- Near East: 16.54%
- South Asia: 16.54%
- Eurasia: 15.06%
- Western Hemisphere: 10.24%
- Africa: 02.22%

Percent of Aeronautical Systems Targeted
- Aerodynamics: 3.48%
- Aeronautical Propulsion: 13.04%
- Aeronautical Structures: 10.43%
- Aeronautical Vehicle Control: 2.61%
- Aeronautical Subsystems and Components: 17.39%
- Aeronautical Design and Systems Integration: 5.22%
- Aeronautics (Uncategorized): 47.83%

Methods of operation for gathering intelligence on Space Systems
- Request for Information: 29.35%
- Exploitation of a foreign visit (CONUS): 6.52%
- Exploitation of Relationships: 4.35%
- Acquisition of Controlled Technology: 46.74%
- Suspicious Internet Activity: 1.09%
- Cultural Commonality: 1.09%
- Targeting at Conventions/Seminars: 2.17%
- Solicitation of Marketing Services: 7.61%
- Other: 1.09%

Did you Know?

NASA Center program and project managers may request a tailored CI Threat Assessment to be conducted at their facility or special project to evaluate the overall susceptibility to foreign intelligence service or terrorism collection or targeting. The assessments are designed to provide decision makers with a tool to evaluate internal protection or security in order to further enhance the protection of NASA equities.