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TO : Consultant, Special Staff

FROM : Chief, Plans & Policy Division

SUBJECT: Non-Communications Signal Surveillance Activities.

DATE: 25 August 1952

1. On 21 August 1952, Mr. Dingley of the Office of Research and Development requested that I forward Inclosure 1 to you.

2. This Division has drafted a related paper, a copy of which is attached as Inclosure 2 for your information and comments. When the draft has been coordinated with all AFSA elements concerned, it will be put in final form as a report to DIRAFSA.

*Russell H. Horton*  
RUSSELL H. HORTON  
Lt Colonel, SigC  
Asst. Chief, Plans & Policy Division

## Inclosures - 2

1. AFSA Serial 00547, dtd 8 Aug 52, subj: Support of COMINT Activities.
2. Draft, dtd 8 Aug 52, subj: Relationship between COMINT Intercept and Processing Activities and Non-Communications Signal Surveillance Activities

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
ARMED FORCES SECURITY AGENCY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Serial: 00547  
8 August 1952

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**SUBJECT:** Support of COMINT Activities

**TO:** Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, U.S. Army  
The Pentagon

Director, Naval Communications  
U.S. Naval Security Station

Director of Intelligence, U.S. Air Force  
The Pentagon

1. The volume and usefulness of COMINT produced by this Agency is greatly dependent upon the thoroughness and efficiency of the COMINT collection program. Deficiencies in Service interception of communications for COMINT processing at this Agency are brought to the attention of appropriate authorities as they are noted. One notable problem requires your consideration: transmissions which probably would be vital sources of COMINT, exploitable for strategic and tactical purposes, are appearing regularly on experimental and operational communications circuits in frequency bands which are too low or too high for coverage at most COMINT facilities. In many instances, these transmissions could be recorded suitably, if certain facilities of the Armed Forces engaged in non-COMINT activities, such as electronic countermeasures activities, were used.

2. Until such time as the necessary COMINT facilities are available, I would be grateful for whatever support you may furnish. The type of support required would be preparation, for forwarding to this Agency, of recordings of communications signals, and unknown signals which may be communications signals, observed in the course of non-communications intercept activities. It is expected that such observations would be made frequently during spectrum searches for non-communications signals.

3. In some instances, the requirements for such support have been recognized and fulfilled (not necessarily upon requests from this Agency) by authorities in the Services. The purpose

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of this correspondence is to obtain whatever additional support may be furnished upon formal request. Therefore, it is requested that, within the limitations of existing capabilities and directives, all non-communications intercept activities controlled or coordinated by you be instructed (in whatever detail you may consider appropriate) to furnish the greatest possible support of the type indicated in paragraph 2 above. It is suggested that whatever assistance I might furnish in the way of preparing detailed instructions, providing certain recording materials, etc., be arranged on a working level between Mr. R. E. Miller (Ext. 60289 on the Pentagon exchange) of my staff, and personnel or organizations designated by you.

4. Reciprocal support by this Agency to appropriate activities of the three Services (i.e., furnishing them recordings of non-communications signals observed in the conduct of COMINT activities) is already in effect. Although such support has not necessarily been requested it may be understood that it has been furnished to the greatest possible extent, and will continue indefinitely.

*Ralph J. Canine*  
RALPH J. CANINE

Major General, US Army  
Director, Armed Forces Security Agency

Copy to:  
Adj. Gen. (3)  
Plans & Policy Div. (3)  
Off. of Opns.  
Off. of R & D

Mr. W.B.Ryan/P&PDiv/60548/gam/5Aug52

MEMO FOR RECORD

Intra-Service coordination of non-communications intercept activities is performed by the addressees. The correspondence otherwise is self-explanatory.

~~TOP SECRET~~~~TOP SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION~~RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMINT INTERCEPT AND PROCESSING ACTIVITIES AND  
NON-COMMUNICATIONS SIGNAL SURVEILLANCE (NCSS) ACTIVITIES

1. COMINT intercept and processing activities and NCSS activities are conducted separately as a matter of well established national policy. Relationships between these COMINT activities and NCSS have not been given much consideration heretofore principally because, until recently, there has been virtually no relationship of a type which would cause the conduct of one to be affected by the conduct of the other. For example:

- a. Communications signals and non-communications signals ordinarily were transmitted in separate portions of the frequency spectrum.
- b. Personnel and equipment specialties were dissimilar.

2. It is now considered necessary to clarify the relationships between COMINT intercept and processing activities and NCSS activities, and to plan for their coordination, as required, in the interests of efficiency and economy principally because incomplete coverage of so-called non-communications signal bands indicates that there is a trend toward wider use of these bands for communications signals. AFSA therefore should determine (as a continuing project) which of these communications signals can and should be copied.

3. As this trend continues without clarified relationships and planned coordination of the activities in question, an appreciable amount of duplicated effort will develop, and at the same time, neither activity will benefit by the specialized abilities of the other. For example, the following situations are foreseen:

- a. NCSS activities may handle certain COMINT functions, such as (1) interception and analysis of "unidentified" signals which later prove to be communications signals and, (2) interception, analysis, and exploitation of operating instructions and other communications signals appearing on circuits used primarily for non-communications signals.

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- b. NCSS activities may intercept, identify, and discard certain communications signals which might be of important value to AFSA.
  - c. AFSA may have to develop certain personnel and equipment specialities similar to those now employed for NCSS purposes, in lieu of arrangements which might be made for a sharing of these specialities.
4. Proposed relationships between the COMINT and NCSS activities in question and planning for coordination of those activities may follow one of several possible general courses, such as:
- a. Organization of NCSS activities within the framework of AFSA and the Service Cryptologic Agencies. This is the course taken by the British, who conduct both under GCHQ. The U.S. Navy also is organized along these lines with both activities under OP-202, but always makes the distinction between cryptologic effort and NCSS effort as far as joint activities are concerned. The U.S. Army and Air Force have kept NCSS operations separate from cryptologic operations, both joint and intra-Service; NCSS operations are under Signal Officer direction and Intelligence Officer coordination. There is no joint or National agency or coordinating authority for NCSS Matters as counter-parts of those for cryptologic matters. By placing the COMINT and NCSS activities under a single authority, the problem of clarifying relationships would diminish, and coordination might be insured. However, complex problems of logistics, clearances, and other administrative details would be introduced and it is expected that the Services would be strongly opposed to the establishment of such an organization.
  - b. Establishment of a joint NCSS Agency. A proposal for such an Agency is now being studied by JCEC. If it were established, coordination between the COMINT activities and the NCSS activities would be accomplished by contacts between AFSA and the new agency and coordination would be greatly simplified thereby. Controversial

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matters would be referred to JCS. However, although coordination would be simplified, it would still be necessary to have clarified the relationships between the COMINT activities and the NCSS activities.

c. Relinquishing of certain COMINT responsibilities to NCSS activities.

Under this course, arrangements would be made whereby NCSS activities would be responsible for handling all signals (including communications signals) appearing on non-communications circuits, or all "unidentified" signals in certain bands, etc., calling upon the cryptologic agencies for assistance when required.

5. The recommended position of the Director, AFSA, on proposed relationships between COMINT intercept and processing activities and NCSS activities, and on plans for coordination of these activities is outlined below. Upon approval by the Director, AFSA, Plans and Policy Division will initiate action toward adoption of this position, as a National policy, by all concerned:

- a. Existing responsibilities of AFSA and the Service Cryptologic Agencies will not change for the purpose of establishing the relationships and coordination in question (i.e., no COMINT responsibilities will be relinquished to, or shared with non-COMINT agencies, and no non-COMINT functions will be assumed by the COMINT agencies).
- b. In accordance with existing responsibilities, the COMINT agencies will handle all COMINT tasks including those which may border on non-communications intercept and analysis, such as:
  - (1) Unidentified signals which might reasonably be expected to be communications signals.
  - (2) Communications signals from stations which ordinarily transmit non-communications signals.
  - (3) Communications signals on bands which ordinarily are employed for non-communications signals.

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- c. A joint agency for coordinating the NCSS activities of the Services, and for coordinating with AFSA on all NCSS matters pertaining to COMINT, should be established.
- d. Directives should be promulgated by appropriate authority to insure that all COMINT materials obtained in the course of non-COMINT activities are furnished to AFSA (with provisions for reciprocity).
- e. Agreements should be reached on the extent to which COMINT agencies and NCSS agencies will assist each other in performing certain intercept and processing functions (as distinct from responsibilities). For example, in the interests of National security, it may be agreed that certain NCSS facilities should be placed under the operational control of the Director, AFSA, at the sacrifice of non-communications coverage; certain non-communications signals may have security features based on cryptologic principles and may be handled more successfully if analyzed by AFSA technicians.

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