

## The Role of Culture in Intelligence Reform

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## **The Role of Culture in Intelligence Reform**

## The Role of Culture in Intelligence Reform

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### Introduction

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, demonstrated that the United States needs greater integration across the Intelligence Community, including improved information sharing to predict and respond to evolving threats. The new threat environment we face is dynamic and consists of states, non-states, traditional and non-traditional sources. Its players, their motivations and the methods they use emerge and evolve rapidly. The Intelligence Community is the country's frontline of defense against adversaries and the threats they impose.<sup>1</sup> As such, it is essential for the Community to have and utilize the tools and information needed to effectively and efficiently protect the nation against its enemies. However, a significant challenge that continues to hinder information sharing is the culture of secrecy that exists within the Intelligence Community. To protect our nation's security, it is essential for the Intelligence Community to adapt and evolve to address the increasingly complex threat environment. This requires a pragmatic need to share culture, an increase in timely access to information, as well as a decrease in turf wars and stove piping. In national security, a good defense is predicated on the receipt and analysis of timely information.<sup>2</sup> It is also predicated in our ability to not only efficiently and effectively respond to threats, but to put pieces of the many puzzles together and predict threats before they emerge. To accomplish this, both the structural and behavioral components of the Intelligence Community should be modified to fit the realities of today's threat environment. The Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 facilitated the structural reforms needed for the Intelligence Community. However, it did not provide measures for cultural modification, which is a vital component of the reform process. Given the dynamic and rapidly changing tactics of our enemies, it is essential to continue to build upon recent reforms. To truly build on recent progress, the Intelligence Community's cultural dimension should be analyzed with the goal of transforming the Community to enhance greater and more effective communication between members.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, based on the dynamic and dangerous realities of today's threat environment, cultural modification through the implementation of a multi-pronged and multi-level approach is needed to increase information sharing and improve the quality, relevance and usage of the results of the intelligence process.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence. United States Intelligence Community Information Sharing Strategy. February 22, 2008, available at: [http://dni.gov/reports/IC\\_Information\\_Sharing\\_Strategy.pdf](http://dni.gov/reports/IC_Information_Sharing_Strategy.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> "National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States," *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton & Norton & Company, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence. United States Intelligence Community Information Sharing Strategy.

## Background

### *Birth of the Intelligence Community*

From the ashes of World War II emerged two competing superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Allies during the war, the two states became ardent adversaries resulting in the Cold War.<sup>4</sup> This translated into a new complex and multi-faceted threat environment for the United States. It also presented the country's national security apparatus with new challenges to the nation's security, which included: political conflict, military tension, proxy wars and economic competition between the two superpowers.<sup>5</sup> The Cold War represented a strategic event and mandated a need to significantly modify the nation's intelligence apparatus.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the Intelligence Community underwent a significant modification process. The new intelligence system was born by the passage of the National Security Act of 1947.<sup>7</sup> This act established the Central Intelligence Agency, the military departments under the new Department of Defense and created the structure of the National Security Council.<sup>8</sup>

The Intelligence Community was developed and a type of culture that was necessary to successfully counter the threat of the new enemy.<sup>9</sup> Based on the overall threat environment and the nature of the enemy, the prevalent view at that time was that a centralized intelligence network based on a need to know principal was an effective method of sharing information. This information sharing principle infers that a demonstrated need to know is required before sharing information. It also assumes that it is possible to know in advance, who will need to use the information, as well as know that a particular piece of information is pertinent in predicting or thwarting a threat.<sup>10</sup> However, it does not take into consideration issues of redundancy or the importance of synthesizing information, particularly to the extent necessary in today's threat environment. Given the nature of our current threat environment and the importance of predicting and responding to threats to our security from states, none-states, traditional and non-traditional sources, it is vital to optimize information sharing between and among intelligence agencies. Nonetheless, this remains one of the challenges in the Intelligence Community today.<sup>11</sup>

### *Today's Intelligence Community*

The new threat environment indicates a new era in conflict, which requires new approaches to national security.<sup>12</sup> A major challenge is discovering and honing new ideas

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<sup>4</sup> Kort, Michael, *The Columbia Guide to the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> James Burch, "The Domestic Intelligence Gap: Progress Since 9/11?" *The Journal of the Naval Postgraduate School for Homeland Defense and Security* Supplement No. 2 (2008), available at: <http://www.hsaj.org/?special:fullarticle=supplement.2.2>.

<sup>7</sup> Arthur S. Hulnick and Joe Wipple, *Intelligence Issues: 2010-2011: An Edited Collection of Significant Government Documents* (San Diego: University Readers, 2011).

<sup>8</sup> "National Security Act of 1947," available at: [http://www.hirhome.com/nat\\_sec\\_act.htm](http://www.hirhome.com/nat_sec_act.htm).

<sup>9</sup> Burch, "The Domestic Intelligence Gap."

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

to better understand and defeat threats.<sup>13</sup> Another challenge is associated with the Cold War culture that exists in the Intelligence Community that hinders information sharing and collaborative efforts that are essential to defeating our enemies.

The Intelligence Community and including its need to know culture were developed as a result of systems and methods that were effective during World War II and the Cold War. This type of culture and information sharing principle facilitated the needed strategy for that type of threat environment.<sup>14</sup> While they were correct for that time period, they are not completely applicable today.<sup>15</sup> Today's threat environment is significantly different in terms of its composition, characteristics and its challenges. It is essential to develop and implement a cultural strategy and methods of operation that coincide with the current threat environment.

Overall, the culture of the Intelligence Community does not foster collaboration and intelligence sharing. This was evident when analysis was not pooled and effective operations were not launched to prevent the 9/11 attacks. The inability or unwillingness to share information was recognized as an Intelligence Community weakness by both the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission and the 9/11 Commission.<sup>16</sup> Each intelligence agency has its own core competencies, systems and data warehouses, which makes it difficult to piece together factors that together could help provide warning of future threats and give us greater insight regarding our adversaries. However, turf wars, stove piping or the simple inability to share information continues to hinder effective information sharing and the Community's ability to put pieces of the puzzle together as effectively and efficiently as possible. To decrease our vulnerability to the diverse threat environment, the Intelligence Community needs to be able to synthesize intelligence from a variety of sources in a timely manner. However, the need to know culture, once an imperative, is now an obstacle to uncovering responding and protecting against terrorism and asymmetric threats.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, there is a need to modify cultural mechanisms within the Community in order to enhance information sharing.

Information sharing is a key element to providing better support for our nation's protection. To accomplish this, we need to create a community wide cultural reform process that facilitates collaboration and information sharing. A functional culture that is aligned and supports such behavior patterns does not only provide a platform for growth, but can also provide a bridge between members of the Intelligence Community. As such, there is a need to develop new organizational culture mechanisms that foster greater information sharing and enhance intelligence reform.<sup>18</sup> Such mechanisms should have the goal of modifying the Intelligence Community's need to know culture to one that embraces a need to share culture.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Hulnick, Arthur S., *Keeping Us Safe* (Westport: Praeger, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> Kilcullen, David, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars In the Midst of a Big One* (Oxford University Press: New York, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Burch. *The Domestic Intelligence Gap*.

### *New Threat Environment*

Since the late 1990s, the United States has become increasingly conscious that despite the country's great military power we are vulnerable to a new threat environment (i.e.: states, non-states, traditional and non-traditional sources). This includes, transnational terrorism, which has increased substantially since the 1990s and is predicted to continue far into the future.<sup>19</sup> Due to terrorist's utilization of asymmetric tactics, it is generally more complicated to combat these threats.

“Asymmetric warfare can be described as war or conflict between parties whose relative military powers differ significantly or whose strategy or tactics differ significantly. Such struggles often involve strategies and tactics of unconventional warfare, the weaker combatants attempting to use this strategy to offset deficiencies in quantity or quality.”<sup>20</sup>

The use of these tactics makes it more difficult to predict behavior patterns, threats, as well as to devise ways to counter this type of aggression. The results of such tactics often have a destabilizing affect that far exceeds the actual physical damage caused<sup>21</sup> and undermines our security.<sup>22</sup>

The new threat environment is dynamic, adaptive and highly complex. As such, security concerns are less straight forward than in the past. We are potentially more vulnerable as a result and need new approaches to intelligence and national security.<sup>23</sup> The tragedy of 9/11 was a wake up call for the Intelligence Community and for the nation. It served as a catalyst for re-examination of the intelligence system, as well as the problems that may have contributed to our inability to prevent the attacks. One such re-examination was the investigation of the September 11, 2001 attacks, which

“...concluded that a central obstacle to acquiring advance information on the plot was the inability to bring together all information that had been acquired about the plotters-there were many clues but they were retained in the files of different agencies.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Michael Mihalka and David Anderson. “Is the Sky Falling? Energy Security and Transnational Terrorism,” Center for Contemporary Conflict. *Naval Postgraduate School*, available at: <http://www.nps.edu/Academics/centers/ccc/publications/OnlineJournal/2008/Jul/nihalkaJul08.pdf>; “Terrorism in 2025: Likely Dimensions and Attributes,” *The Canadian Centre for Intelligence and Security Studies* Volume 2007-3 (2007): available at: [http://www.itac-ciem.gc.ca/pblctns/tc\\_prsnts/2007-3-eng.asp](http://www.itac-ciem.gc.ca/pblctns/tc_prsnts/2007-3-eng.asp).

<sup>20</sup> Stepanova, Ekaterina, SIPRI Research Report No. 23 *Terrorism in Asymmetrical Conflict Ideological and Structural Aspects* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Intelligence.gov. “About the Intelligence Community,” available at: <http://www.intelligence.gov/about-the-intelligence-community/protecting-america/index.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Richard A. Best Jr., “Intelligence Information: Need-to-Know vs. Need-to-Share,” *Congressional Research Service*, (June 2011), available at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/intel/R41848.pdf>.

The lack of bringing information together was partly a result of a culture that did not promote information sharing between agencies.

“Future threats will only continue to evolve as our adversaries learn to counter our security measures. This wide-ranging and dynamic array of challenges illustrates the range of need for timely and effective information sharing and safeguarding.”<sup>25</sup> Based on the realities of the threat environment, there is an urgent need to develop an Intelligence culture that enhances greater and more effective information sharing within the Community. The information sharing strategy must overcome the cultural based challenges that have accumulated for more than half a century. While organizational reforms such as the Intelligence Reform Act of 2004, have had a positive impact on the Intelligence Community, more reforms are needed.

A key to adapting the Intelligence Community to today’s threat environment is the Community’s culture. Therefore, in order to overcome the obstacles related to information sharing, it is vital to give the Intelligence Community the tools it needs to further adapt to protect the nation against the highly complex and evolving threat environment. Careful attention to the Intelligence Community’s culture will enhance understanding of the implicit and explicit nuances and layers of the Community and will help hone its strengths and remedy its weaknesses. Consequently, it will foster measures that can be used to manipulate (i.e.: reconstruct) the culture to best serve national security needs.

## Culture

An organization’s culture is a powerful force, and every organization has its own distinctive patterns of culture ...yet it is a component of organizations that many fail to consider.<sup>26</sup> Although it is invisible and generally exists on a subconscious level, it is the single most important factor accounting for success or failure in organizations.<sup>27</sup> According to Edgar Schein, culture is defined as:

“A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way you to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.”<sup>28</sup>

A lack of understanding on what defines, impacts and is impacted by culture can create instability and dysfunction.<sup>29</sup> According to Gareth Morgan, “in talking about culture we are really talking about a process of reality construction that allows people to see and

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<sup>25</sup> The White House, National Security For Information Sharing and Safeguarding, (The White House, 2012), available at: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012sharingstrategy\\_1.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012sharingstrategy_1.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> Schein, Edgar, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass 2010); Morgan, Gareth, *Images of Organization* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1997), 129.

<sup>27</sup> Deal & Kennedy, A. *Corporate Cultures*. Reading, M.A.: Addison-Wesley. 1982.

<sup>28</sup> Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

understand particular events, actions, objects, utterances or situations in distinctive ways.”<sup>30</sup>

Culture can promote efficiency and effectiveness or it can foster dysfunction and slow (if any) growth. In a healthy culture, the culture is up to date, and is aligned with the organization’s mission and vision. It serves as a unifying agent, as well as a linking mechanism. On the other hand, if an organization’s culture is out of date and is not aligned with its mission and vision it will have a detrimental impact on efficiency and effectiveness and create obstacles.<sup>31</sup> As such, to enhance the effectiveness of intelligence reform it is essential for leaders to understand the importance and scope of culture, as well as its influence. This includes a firm understanding of its components and their individual impact. An organization’s culture can be examined by looking at:

1. Observed behavior,
2. Groups norms,
3. Espoused values,
4. Formal Philosophy,
5. Rules of the Game,
6. Climate,
7. Embedded skills,
8. Habits of thinking, acting, paradigms,
9. Shared meanings of the group,
10. Metaphors or symbols,
11. Artifacts, and
12. Myths and stories.<sup>32</sup>

It is beneficial to understand not only what factors impact organizational culture, but also how these elements interact with one another.

Though each of the mechanisms previously stated individually plays a crucial role, by far the most important factors that impacts culture is the organization’s founders and leaders. Founders not only choose the basic mission and environmental context in which an organization will operate, but they choose the group members and bias the original response that the group makes regarding its environments and integration.<sup>33</sup> However, since culture is an ongoing process of reality construction and is directly impacted by current leaders, it is dynamic in nature and can be re-shaped, reconstructed and used as a tool to motivate specific behavior patterns and control employees.<sup>34</sup> By understanding cultural forces within the Intelligence Community leaders will be better able to modify characteristics that are not conducive to intelligence reform.<sup>35</sup>

#### *Recommendation: Cultural Assessment*

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<sup>30</sup> Morgan, Images of Organization, 138.

<sup>31</sup> Schein, Organizational Culture and Leadership.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.



The purpose of conducting a cultural assessment is to facilitate an understanding of the Intelligence Community from a human perspective. Moreover, an assessment will help, "...uncover the mundane as well as the more vivid aspects of the reality construction process."<sup>36</sup> An assessment will also help diagnose and provide information on elements of the Intelligence Community's culture and sub-cultures that are not aligned with its strategic objectives and new realities.

Conducting a cultural assessment will facilitate an understanding of what components are functional and dysfunctional and how cultural chasms can be remedied. Some of the measures that can be used during the cultural assessment process are:

1. Identifying cultural assumptions,
2. Assessing these assumptions,
3. Identifying strengths or constraints on what the Intelligence Community is trying to do,
4. Examining the Community's performance as it relates to its vision, mission, and benchmarks,
5. Figuring out how and why conceptions are created regarding each individual, agency, and the Intelligence Community as a whole,
6. Allocating time and resources necessary to study, assess and alter the culture as needed, and
7. Using focus groups and/or interviews to attain a good assessment of how the culture has evolved.<sup>37</sup>

These assessments can provide comprehensive and accurate insights into behavioral patterns, potential strengths and weaknesses of the Intelligence Community and its individual agencies and their members. The result will be a better understanding of what components need to be infused with change mechanisms in order to create a more unified collaborative system. Furthermore, periodic assessments should be conducted in order to ensure the culture of the Intelligence Community continues to be aligned with its mission, vision and strategy.

#### *Recommendation: Strategic Vision*

An essential factor to a successful cultural change process is developing a strategic vision that is compelling and positive. The development and implementation of a strategic vision can create a psychological safety net and be an important step in the behavioral change process. It can also enhance the belief among members that the new direction is vital to the quality of their individual roles to their agency and the Intelligence Community as a whole. Such a vision should provide clear decision making criteria, define the intended future state of the Intelligence Community as it pertains to its cultural change process and define its fundamental objectives and direction.<sup>38</sup>

#### *Recommendation: Focus Groups*

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<sup>36</sup> Morgan, *Images of Organization*, 143.

<sup>37</sup> Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

Focus groups can provide qualitative based data that can be used in analyzing the main culture and sub-cultures of the Intelligence Community and help attain key information for the transition process and in the future. They can also provide information regarding the layers associated with perceptions, assumptions and behavior patterns of members. As such, it would be beneficial to bring together different groups of employees who represent the different agencies. These focus groups should consider discussing and examine factors such as: artifacts, espoused values and shared tacit assumptions in the main areas of mission, goals, means, measurement, corrective mechanisms, language, group boundaries, status and reward systems.<sup>39</sup>

The discussion group should be facilitated in a manner that makes its participants feel comfortable, safe and secure regarding their positions and consequences related to the content of their conversation. Overall, examining the Intelligence Community through this flexible research technique is a great way of receiving several perspectives on the same topic and provides unique insight into the Community's cultural layers.

*Recommendation: Cultural Embedding Mechanisms*

The culture of the Intelligence Community is undergoing reform from the Cold War model to one that is aligned with current strategic objectives. Given the realities associated with the diverse and complex threat environment, it is vital that the Intelligence community become more adaptive and fluid. To cultivate a culture that promotes seamless information sharing, leaders of the Community need to employ measures that build bridges between agencies and decrease gaps within and among agencies. A comprehensive understanding of the culture of the Intelligence Community in particular, will provide vital insight into abstract human components that impact securing our nation. Cultural embedding mechanisms will also provide an opportunity to facilitate much needed change and develop an integrated, collaborative and adaptive culture.

To accomplish this daunting task, leaders should use the knowledge that they have of their culture and the role of cultural embedding mechanisms to reconstruct the culture of the Intelligence Community. These mechanisms can foster a sense of unity, decrease turf wars and to help evolve the need to know culture. Cultural embedding mechanisms that should be considered include:

1. Rites: They consist of elaborate, dramatic, planned sets of activities that consolidates various forms of cultural expressions from different agencies single event or series of social events.
2. Rituals: They are standardized, detailed sets of techniques and behaviors that manage anxieties associated with the cultural reform.
3. Myths: Dramatic narratives of fictional events should be developed to explain the practical benefits of certain techniques and behaviors that have not yet been supported by demonstrated facts.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

4. Stories: Narratives should be developed based on true events combining truth and fiction for maximized affect.
5. Folktales: Fictional narratives should be developed to the extent possible and disseminated in order to foster a greater sense of single community throughout the Intelligence Community.
6. Symbols: Objects, acts, events, etc. should be developed to serve as a vehicle for conveying persuasive messages that are pertinent for the change process.
7. Artifacts: Material objects should be manufactured and utilized to facilitate culturally expressive activities and sentiments for the Community.

Successful intelligence reform requires behavior change. By understanding the complex factors of the Intelligence Community and its individual agencies, leaders can better personalize the above points to fit with the strategic goals of intelligence reform. Moreover, the utilization of the above points will help cognitive redefinition (i.e.: restructuring) efforts, which will help bring about long-term positive change.<sup>40</sup>

#### Recommendation: Leaders as Cultural Embedding Mechanisms

The successful reform of the Intelligence Community requires an overall behavioral change. An organization's culture, including that of the Intelligence Community, is created and maintained by its leaders. Leaders are the primary source of developing and transmitting culture (i.e.: top down) in all organizations. Given this reality, it is important for leaders to understand the enormity of this task.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, given the breadth and scope of their impact on their culture, it is essential for them to be conscious of this reality and establish parameters that are conducive to the Community's mission and vision. If they are not conscious of this matter, then their organization's culture will manage them and become a source of dysfunction. This holds true for all organizations, including the Intelligence Community.

An updated culture can better facilitate the development of offensive and defensive measures against state and transnational enemies and help the nation be better prepared for an unknown future. Therefore, cultural understanding is essential for leaders if they are to lead and help the Intelligence Community transform its culture from an outdated, Cold War era style culture to a more adaptive, flexible and collaborative one.<sup>42</sup> In order to develop and implement measures to reinvent the Intelligence Community's culture, leaders need to understand not only the importance of culture and its many facets, but also that they themselves are cultural embedding mechanisms. Many factors contribute to a leader's role as a cultural embedding mechanism. These factors include:

1. What leaders pay attention to, measure and control on a regular basis,
2. How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crisis,
3. How leaders allocate resources,
4. Deliberate role modeling, teaching and coaching,
5. Observed criteria by which leaders allocate rewards and status,

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Morgan, *Images of Organization*, 143.

<sup>42</sup> Schein. *Organizational Culture and Leadership*.

6. Observed criteria by which leaders recruit, select, promote, retire and excommunicate members,
7. The structure of the Intelligence Community and individual agencies,
8. Design of physical space, facades and buildings,
9. Stories about important events and people, and
10. Formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds and charters.<sup>43</sup>

These factors highlight the numerous opportunities that leaders have to impact. Therefore, understanding these influential measures will help to further transform the Intelligence Community into one that is more aligned with the realities of its internal and external environments.

#### *Recommendation: Management & Change Process*

In order for the cultural reform process to be effective and have a far-reaching long-term impact on the Intelligence Community, it is essential for top leadership to involve managers in the change process. Managers are crucial to this process. They facilitate and enable change in all levels of the Intelligence Community and are fundamental to a successful cultural reform process. This will translate into enhanced pooling of pertinent information on what factors need to change and the best way to change them. Moreover, by allowing them to have input in this process, managers will better understand that they are a vital part of the reform process and will be more likely to cooperate.

#### *Recommendation: Training Programs*

The intelligence reform process seeks to modify parts of the Intelligence Community that have existed since its creation. The modification is intended to further strengthen the capabilities of the Intelligence Community and make us safer against our enemies. Nonetheless, the reform process can create a sense of instability and resistance among members of the Intelligence Community in regards to the transition process. The use of training programs in the change process can help develop a psychological safety net during and after the change process.<sup>44</sup> For example, they can be used to help reduce resistance, anxiety, feelings of instability and help in the re-socialization process.<sup>45</sup> Thereby gaining behavioral compliance at key points and to ensuring participation in activities likely to have influencing affects on intelligence reform. This is essential because the new way requires new knowledge, as well as new behavior patterns.<sup>46</sup>

To enhance their impact centralized and decentralized programs should be considered. Centralized training programs can foster a greater sense of singular community and decrease barriers between agencies. Decentralized training programs should be led by individual agencies, who can utilize a mixture of their own cultural components with those of the overall Community to build a sense of belonging to their agency, as well as to the larger community.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

The overall goal of the training programs should be re-socialization in which members learn to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the change process and the Community's new vision. Programs should reflect cognitive redefinition efforts including learning new concepts, learning new meanings for old concepts and adopting new standards.<sup>47</sup> This can create motivation to change, enhance member internalization of new concepts, meanings and standards.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, if structured and conducted in a meaningful way, training programs will help foster greater skill development, will help facilitate the cultural reinvention process and yield greater collaboration and information sharing across agencies.<sup>49</sup>

*Recommendation: Security Clearances*

The origin of security clearance reform is found in the 9/11 Commission Report.<sup>50</sup> The Report recommended that the system associated with security clearances be reformed to help decrease fragmentation and increase efficiency and effectiveness across the entire Intelligence Community.<sup>51</sup> Their recommendations included the development and use of uniform standards, uniform security questionnaires and financial report requirements, as well as maintaining a single database.<sup>52</sup>

The Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 also explicitly addresses security clearances in Title III Section 3001. The Act calls for reciprocity of security clearance and access determinations, establishment of a national database, use of all available technology in clearance investigations and a reduction in the length of time required for personal security clearances to be investigated and adjudicated.<sup>53</sup> It also requires that background investigations and clearance determinations completed by an authorized investigative agency or authorized agency be accepted by all agencies.<sup>54</sup>

The cultural impact of security clearance reform is significant. The mandated reforms foster a more unified environment and help adapt the need to know culture to one that is more conducive to today's diverse and highly complex threat environment. Security clearance reform can also help enhance the integration of the agencies comprising the Intelligence Community and help decrease fragmentation. Moreover, it can foster an environment that promotes sharing, seamless integration of information and can potentially increase the likelihood of higher numbers of effective joint activities.<sup>55</sup>

*Recommendation: Performance Benchmarking*

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States.

<sup>51</sup> Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States.

The implementation of a change process, including a cultural reform process requires measures, such as performance benchmarking to ensure that the direction and scope of the change process is progressing effectively and efficiently. Performance benchmarking is a systematic process for identifying and implementing best or better practices and measuring current performances against previously established points. The information gained through this method can then be used for identifying opportunities for improvement and for setting performance targets. Moreover, this standard of measure can be a useful tool to focus on results and any modifications that may be needed. In monitoring progress it will increase transparency and provide unbiased and timely updates on the Intelligence Community's progress towards cultural reform. Furthermore, a good set of measures will help leadership identify strengths and weaknesses, target areas for improvement, and recognize improvements when they occur.<sup>56</sup>

## Conclusion

The new threat environment is unlike anything we have faced before. It is dynamic, highly adaptive and consists of states, non-states, traditional and non-traditional sources. Its players, their motivations and the methods they use emerge and evolve rapidly. In order to be able to protect the nation's security in this complex threat environment, the Intelligence Community needs to be able to utilize all of the tools it has available, including information. An essential tool and component of a successful intelligence system is obtaining information in a timely manner, this includes receiving information from other members of the Intelligence Community. However, collaboration and information sharing are still hindered by a culture that does not completely facilitate such actions. Therefore, it is recommended that leaders of the Intelligence Community undertake the task of examining and reforming the Community's culture with the goal of reforming it to enhance greater and more effective communication, collaboration and information sharing. The results will include fostering a stronger, more resilient and more secure United States.

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<sup>56</sup> Osborne, David and Peter Hutchinson, *The Price of Government: Getting the Results We Need in an Age of Permanent Fiscal Crisis* (New York: Basic Books, 2004).