



'A growing DANGER'

NGA ANALYSTS CRITICAL IN FIGHT AGAINST WMD PROLIFERATION

By Kristen Mackey, Office of Corporate Communications

LIKE NO TIME IN RECENT HISTORY, NATIONS LIKE Syria, Libya, Iran and North Korea have the potential to develop or obtain weapons of mass destruction, a serious and growing concern in the U.S. and throughout the international community.

TO ensure the intelligence community and Department of Defense are able to manage the threat of WMDs, a group of National Geospatial-Intelligence foundation GEOINT analysts work with mission partners at the Defense Intelligence Agency's Counterproliferation Office at the Army's Rivanna Station facility in Charlottesville, Va.

There is a continuously evolving landscape with potential for foreign acquisition, development or use of WMDs and numerous potential threats and actors – state and non-state, said Tom Francis, director of the Counterproliferation Office, or DCP.

Francis and his teams assess all aspects of biological and chemical weapons and foreign nuclear programs, including policy, security and the capability to produce or acquire nuclear material or weapons, he said.

Many countries are pursuing WMD programs and will continue to improve capabilities over the next decade, according to assessments of the proliferation threat, said Francis. The assessment

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also shows that biological and chemical materials and technologies move easily in a globalized economy, as do personnel with the scientific expertise to design and use them.

Additionally, terrorists or insurgent organizations, acting alone or through middlemen, may acquire nuclear, chemical and biological weapons – possibly even in states that do not currently have such programs, said Francis.

“I wish I could say WMDs were something we have seen the last of with treaties and handshakes, but the fact is, this mission is a growing danger to the U.S. and its allies, not a decreasing mission,” said Francis. “That makes our job at DCP more important than ever, and my analysts from NGA even more critical to me.”

Though there is a contingent of analysts supporting the DCP mission at DIA headquarters and at the combatant commands, Francis is a proponent of co-locating the people who work on this growing mission, he said. So, when a decision by the

Base Closure and Realignment Commission, or BRAC, relocated DIA from Herndon, Va., to Charlottesville, Francis advocated bringing NGA analysts, as well.

The NGA support team at the new DIA building on Rivanna Station and others there help facilitate DIA's ground intelligence mission and the Army's National Ground Intelligence Center there, said Francis. They work on many sensitive issues. Having NGA

analysts familiar with the intelligence allows them to engage early, anticipate the DOD's needs and quickly meet requirements.

The NGA analysts at DCP are good at getting Francis what he needs to meet his mission requirements, often providing much more than what was requested, said Tom Cooke, NGA's division chief, who oversees embedded GEOINT support to DIA at Rivanna Station.

"That is very true," Francis said. "NGA's analysts (here) are not just physically integrated with the mission. By working side by side with my guys, the mission is second nature to them. They know what I need, often before I need it."

The NGA analysts are able to provide tailored products critical to the mission that Francis cannot get elsewhere, he said. But despite that expertise, he knows that other agencies, including other offices at NGA, have intelligence that DCP may not. Cooperation and communication with those other offices is critical to making sound decisions.

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So, as events unfolded in Syria in 2013, Francis and his teams coordinated with analysts and experts from other agencies and offices to reach a sound conclusion, he said. In the end, they all agreed WMDs had been used in Syria.

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NGA SUPPORT TEAM AT RIVANNA STATION HAS MULTIPLE MISSIONS

ANALYSTS AND TECHNICAL EXPERTS ASSIGNED TO THE National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency Support Team at Rivanna Station provide direct GEOINT support to the National Ground Intelligence Center and Defense Intelligence Agency operations in Charlottesville, Va.

The NST is an extension of NGA's Analysis directorate and provides a holistic GEOINT solution for NGIC and DIA-Rivanna, said Army Col. Joe Secino, NST chief. The analysts there are embedded and engage in some of the most pressing intelligence challenges facing the nation. The NST's three divisions provide foundation GEOINT for order-of-battle assessments, myriad specialized geospatial analytic and image science capabilities, and detailed long-term analysis of ground weapon systems and potential adversaries.

The NST implements NGA's strategic vision by drawing on partner expertise to broaden and deepen analytic capabilities, said Secino. The team recently leveraged its expertise to develop an automated advanced mobility toolbar for determining the effects of terrain on artillery range rings – in direct support of NGA's goal of ensuring online, on-demand capabilities for mission partners.

This legacy of direct GEOINT support dates back to the U.S. Army's longstanding scientific and technical intelligence and general military intelligence analytic presence in the central Virginia location. The Rivanna Station NST was established at Charlottesville in July 2010 when DIA moved many of its missions and resources there.