



**National Security  
Agency/Central Security  
Service**

8 April 2013

**Information Paper**

**(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) Subject: NSA Intelligence Relationship with Saudi Arabia**

**(U) Introduction**

(TS//SI//NF) Since the first Gulf War in 1991, NSA/CSS has had a very limited SIGINT relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The SIGINT relationship has been solely with the Ministry of Defense, Radio Reconnaissance Department (MOD RRD) which is the first of three ministry-level organizations that have a role in the defense and security of the Kingdom. The NSA/CSS SIGINT relationship with the MOD RRD is a complex and challenging one that, after several years of stagnation, is experiencing a period of rejuvenation. NSA/CSS is in the process of modernizing the MOD RRD High Frequency Direction Finding (HFDF) capability that assists in the monitoring of Iranian military threats to KSA. NSA/CSS' Middle East/Africa (MEA) and Counterterrorism (CT) Product Lines provide threat warning against terrorist targets and targets of interest to the KSA, specifically, intelligence related to Huthi conflicts along the Saudi/Yemen border.

(TS//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) On 11 December 2012, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) approved expansion of NSA's Third Party SIGINT relationship with Saudi Arabia to include the Saudi Ministry of Interior's (MOI) Technical Affairs Directorate (TAD). Prior to receiving DNI's approval of the relationship and under the auspices of CIA's relationship with the MOI's Mabathith (General Directorate for Investigations, equivalent to FBI), NSA had been collaborating with TAD since February 2011 on a sensitive access initiative. This capability is focused on internal security and terrorist activity on the Arabian Peninsula. With the approval of the Third Party SIGINT relationship, NSA/CSS intends to provide direct analytic and technical support to TAD.

(TS//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY) Lastly, using the Foreign Release Process, NSA/CSS shares threat warning and terrorist lead information produced by the Counterterrorism Product Line with the CIA Station in Riyadh to pass to CIA's intelligence partner the KSA Ministry of Interior Directorate of Investigations, Mabathith.

**Derived From: NSA/CSSM 1-52**

**Dated: 20130408**

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**(U) Key Issues**

(TS//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY) MOD RRD is interested in expanding the relationship with NSA/CSS. The MOD RRD seeks signals analysis equipment upgrades, decryption capabilities and advanced training on a wide range of topics. While NSA/CSS is able to respond to many of their requests, some must be denied due to the fact that they place sensitive SIGINT equities at risk.

(TS//SI//NF) NSA/CSS leadership anticipates a spring 2013 visit to Saudi Arabia to meet with TAD leadership to discuss current and future initiatives of mutual interest under the new relationship construct. NSA's primary goals for the partnership are:

1) (S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) to leverage Saudi Arabia's strategic location and unique access to communications - e.g. al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) terrorist activity currently not accessible by other means, and

2) (TS//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) to facilitate the Saudi government's ability to utilize SIGINT to locate and track individuals of mutual interest within Saudi Arabia.

**(U) What NSA Provides to Partner**

(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) NSA/CSS provides technical advice on SIGINT topics such as data exploitation and target development to TAD as well as a sensitive source collection capability.

(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) NSA/CSS provides a sensitive decryption service to the Ministry of Interior against terrorist targets of mutual interest.

**(U) What Partner Provides to NSA**

(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) NSA leverages MOD RRD access to remote geography in the Arabian Gulf but provides no finished SIGINT reporting to NSA/CSS, however; they have provided unencrypted collection against the IRGC QODS Maritime Force targets of mutual interest from their collection system [REDACTED]

(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) TAD provides sensitive access to unique collection containing AQAP terrorist targets of mutual interest.

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**(U) Success Stories**

(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) NSA's work with TAD on a sensitive access has shown early promise in producing SIGINT of value to the CT product line.

(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) A modernized HFDF sensor and HFDF antenna system was installed in September 2012 at a MOD RRD location new Riyadh. This HFDF system replaces a legacy sensor that has been inoperable for an extended period of time and will significantly improve NSA's regional HFDF architecture.

(S//SI//REL TO USA, SAU) MOD RRD supported a Quick Reaction Capability that deployed a [REDACTED] system [REDACTED] in the Arabian Gulf in response to a potential threat from IRGC QODS Maritime Force. A sustained collection platform is planned for deployment in May 2013.

**(U) Problems/Challenges with the Partner**

(S//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY) The MOD RRD would like to move expeditiously in their modernization efforts, to include the acquisition of additional SIGINT capabilities. NSA/CSS is cautiously moving forward with this partner and is not necessarily ready to move forward with initiatives that expose sensitive NSA/CSS SIGINT equities. This difference in strategic direction will sometimes be problematic and cause tension within the partnership.

(S//SI//NF) NSA/CSS has agreed to coordinate collection operations in Saudi Arabia with Chief of Station of Riyadh in an effort to protect unilateral HUMINT assets from scrutiny.

(TS//SI//NF) NSA/CSS does not expect the new relationship with TAD to usurp or negatively impact NSA/CSS' existing relationship with the Ministry of Defense Radio Reconnaissance Department (MOD RRD), as MOD RRD does not have similar access to internal Saudi telecommunications.

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