



HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

EST. 1977

Background on Development of the 2017 HPSCI Majority Staff Report

July 2025

On January 25, 2017, the Committee released a joint statement on the launch of a bipartisan inquiry into Russian intelligence activities during the 2016 U.S. election, to include an examination of the sources and analytic tradecraft behind the Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA), *“Russia’s Influence Campaign Targeting the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election.”*

The objective was to verify the analytic tradecraft employed in the ICA, and specifically, to verify that the raw intelligence in the ICA supported the assessment’s key judgements.

COMMITTEE ACCESS

- The Majority reviewed all raw intelligence reports the then-DNI said were cited as sources for ICA judgments. This included the most sensitive, limited-access memos from the Directors’ Fusion Cell, Top Secret HUMINT and SIGINT reports.
- The Committee also saw tightly held counterintelligence operational leads that CIA gave to the FBI for potential investigative purposes.
 - This intelligence reporting had been made available to Fusion Cell members.
- Majority **staff spent about 1,400 hours on the review of the ICA and its source reports**, mostly at CIA Headquarters in the compartmented reports vault, and **another 300 hours on outside research and 20 interviews**.
- **Over a thousand documents were reviewed** (ICA citations were about a third of the total, with the rest coming from Directors’ Fusion Cell reports, counterintelligence leads sent to FBI, and a large number of NSA documents).
- Committee staff interviewed intelligence officers or FBI agents who were associated with drafting the ICA or the production of its reporting, to include officers from the Mission Center that oversees Russia House, the Counterintelligence Mission Center, and the 15-person Fusion Cell that oversaw compartmented analysis of Russian activities from July to November 2016, senior officers for operational reporting, the CIA analyst who was the primary drafter of the ICA, four CIA analysts who assisted in drafting and various analytic managers who reviewed the ICA. Committee staff also interviewed a senior FBI analyst and an FBI Special Agent.

RESTRICTIONS ON COMMITTEE ACCESS

- For the most part, endnote sourcing of ICA paragraphs was extensive, and the Committee could verify each citation. It is worth noting, however, that the Committee only saw those raw intelligence reports that the DNI said were cited in the drafting of the ICA.
- The Committee would have no way of knowing about reports affecting ICA judgements that were not cited or otherwise given to staff.
- The Committee **was not given the ability to do broader searches of IC raw reporting to which ICA drafters had access.**
- FBI **denied the Committee access to working-level analysts** who supported the Fusion Cell and the drafters of the ICA.



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OBSTRUCTION OF THE INVESTIGATION

- After the Committee agreed, for security reasons, to conduct compartmented document review, drafting, and storage exclusively inside a limited-access CIA vault, **then-DNI Congressional Affairs imposed arbitrary restrictions that delayed** the investigation and hindered its efficiency.
 - Productive work was **delayed by four months** as Committee staff **were denied use of computers needed to draft** their report.
 - For **10 months**, the then-DNI denied permission to link Committee computers so that staff could work simultaneously on the report.
 - **Deliberate technical modifications to the computers**, ostensibly to prevent the removal of data, made the machines unstable and unreliable. Multiple dozens of service calls, some lasting many hours, prevented investigators from working efficiently.
 - **Peculiar machine glitches caused lines of text to appear fuzzy, forcing restarts to correct and sometimes resulting in lost text or footnotes.**
 - **Printing one color copy of the report for members required 35 minutes.**
 - Preparing a document for members also required about **an hour to rearrange text that would inexplicably move about between work sessions.**
- **At no point** during the report drafting process did Majority **staff have the use of a stable, reliable system**. Repeated requests for proper computers to support the review were met with promises for action, followed by failure to deliver.
- The then-DNI similarly **prohibited** the use of **standard** IC productivity software tools designed for efficiently and securely searching and managing voluminous and complex classified and unclassified reporting, even though many of the source materials were unclassified or classified at levels that were compatible with basic IC analytic tools.
 - **Thousands of pages of reports were available only in paper copy** in large, cumbersome to use, heavy notebooks that complicated finding specific information or analyzing factors involving multiple reports.
- Some reports were provided without tab dividers, further complicating searches. Notebooks with broken rings were initially used to hold the reports, forcing Majority staff to remove reports individually to sift through reams of material.
- It took nearly **five months for Committee staff to be allowed to interview the ICA authors**. The FBI ignored for months informal and formal requests to interview agents and working-level analysts associated with the dossier. Some 30 key personnel at FBI were not allowed to speak with the Committee, despite informal and formal requests.