

# April 1998

## Volume II, Edition 4

**United States Naval Criminal Investigative Service**



**Plus . . . The 1997  
Special Agents  
Of The Year**





# April 1997

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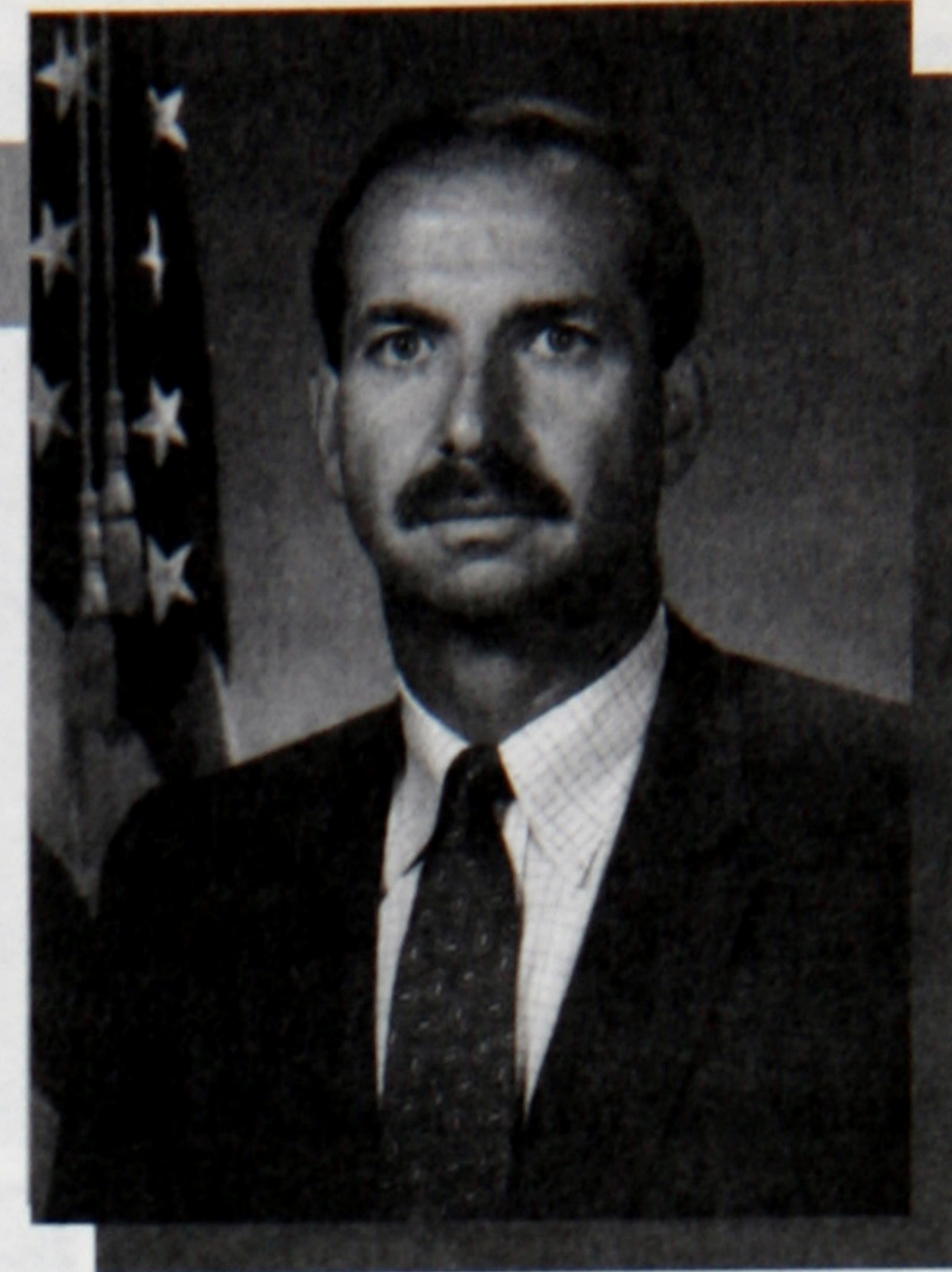
**On The Cover** Shown in the top left photo are Special Agents Carol Kisthardt (standing) and Dwight Clayton with an armored vehicle near Camp Pleso in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia. The photo at right shows Special Agent Joe Pizzino receiving the NATO medal for service in Croatia. The bottom left photo shows Special Agent Kelly Murphy in Egypt, where she participated in the joint exercise "Bright Star '95."

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## Director's Message . . .



"Force protection," keeping our Armed Forces ready and able to fight is a challenging mission.

We provide robust support to the Navy, Marine Corps and all of DoD with counterintelligence operations, criminal operations, physical security programs, and aggressive pursuit of computer intruders. This issue of the Bulletin highlights the impact our force protection support has on our national security.

I commend to you the articles in this issue by Special Agents Pat Hagen and Chris O'Gara. They illustrate how we have taken a multi-disciplinary, integrated approach to the force protection problem. We are integrating with our customers, DCIO counterparts, USMC CID, the Reserves, and base security forces to give our Armed Forces the world-class force protection support they need.

The future is clear: Special Agents like Doug Floto and Joe Pizzino leading teams of "purple" agents in a "contingency environment" will become more and more the norm, rather than the exception.

As this Bulletin underscores, we will work more closely with our counterparts in the DCIO "community" to meet the challenge posed by more sophisticated adversaries. Identifying and reversing disturbing trends such as those cited by Special Agent Ron Olive (page 6) will require ingenuity and teamwork.

Finally, keeping our Armed Forces ready to fight will require dedication -- the kind of dedication we salute when we honor our Special Agents of the Year. They set the standards for all of us. As we strive to build and strengthen the defense investigative community, look to their example and leadership. Aspire to meet or exceed their impressive professional standards.

I am proud that we are leading and working better than ever before as vital, innovative members of a "matrixed" defense investigative community. Our customers will reap the benefits of our vision and diligence, and our adversaries will rue the day... Keep up the good work!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David L. Brant". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "D" and a long, horizontal stroke at the end.

DAVID L. BRANT

There is a need for enhancing communication between headquarters and the field elements of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS). We can satisfy this need and increase our effectiveness in serving the Department of the Navy by selectively publishing information of interest to the members of NCIS. This Bulletin is intended for use by all members of NCIS.



## 1997 Special Agents Of The Year

# Cully, Floto, Titra Honored At Headquarters

*By Gary M. Comerford*  
*Bulletin Editor*

**F**or the first time since the Special Agent of the Year awards were instituted almost a decade ago, all three recipients were brought to Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) Headquarters for the official presentations.

In previous years, the awards for Special Agent of the Year in the general crimes, fraud and counterintelligence categories were presented at the field office level.

That changed, however, following a proposal by Director David L. Brant and Deputy Director John F. McEleny to enhance the recognition of the recipients by holding the ceremony at NCIS Headquarters.

On December 10, 1997, Special Agent Rob Cully of the Norfolk Field Office, Special Agent Doug Floto of the San Diego Field Office, and Special Agent Tony Titra of the Gulf Coast Office were honored for their outstanding efforts in a special ceremony in the atrium of NCIS Headquarters, in Washington, D.C.

Director Brant presented each of the 1997 Special Agent of the Year recipients with a plaque, check and Department of the



**Special Agent Cully, Director Brant, Special Agent Floto and Special Agent Titra pose for a group shot after the ceremony.**

(Photos by Lisa Shrosbree and Gary M. Comerford)

Navy Meritorious Civilian Service medal.

Prior to the presentations, representatives of each of the three disciplines summarized the accomplishments of these agents and highlighted the importance of the work being done in their respective fields.

### FRAUD

Deputy Assistant Director Scott Jacobs of the Fraud Investigations Department began his presentation by congratulating all nominees for the program's Special Agent of the Year honors.

"It was a difficult selection process because the caliber of the work submitted by all nominees

was exceptional," Jacobs said. "And all of this investigative excellence highlights the significant work being done by the Fraud Department in 1997. We continue to break new ground in environmental crimes, product substitution and undercover fraud investigations."

"In one such case a contractor manufactured defective gear boxes for the FA-18 Hornet," Jacobs continued. "The three-year investigation clearly documented the wrongdoing on the part of the company. The company not only plead guilty to various charges, but was fined \$88 million. A significant portion of that penalty...was directly returned to the Naval Air Systems Command.



These funds were later utilized to buy spare parts for the F-18's.

"On the environmental crimes front, our investigations have led to the conviction of unscrupulous contractors for polluting our environment, while billing the U.S. Navy for bogus cleanup costs," Jacobs said, citing one investigation in which a contractor dumped hazardous chemicals and asbestos in the Chesapeake Bay.

"Do our efforts contribute to the Navy's Mission? Definitely!" Jacobs exclaimed. "Do our efforts contribute to the Navy having the best equipment for the men and women who defend our country? Definitely! And do our efforts insure that the Navy gets what it really pays for? Definitely!"

Then Jacobs began to focus on the outstanding work done by the 1997 Special Agent of the Year for Fraud.

"Special Agent Cully's achievement highlight what initiative and dedication are all

initiative and efforts to review Defense Reutilization Marketing Office (DRMO) records pertaining to materials "donated" through the GSA's Federal Surplus Property Donation Program.

"You uncovered an elaborate scheme whereby an administrator of a technical college system foundation was illegally earmarking various Navy and Air Force helicopters, planes, and aviation component parts for an end user through a process of financial maneuvers disguised as "donations.

"Your investigative proficiency and use of cooperating witnesses resulted in a recovery of \$21.6 million.

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***"Your investigative proficiency and use of cooperating witnesses resulted in a recovery of \$21.6 million."***

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**- From Director Brant's letter to Special Agent Cully**

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about," Jacobs said, as he summarized a highly complex and difficult investigation involving the diversion and illegal sale of helicopter parts through a technical college foundation.

That investigation, along with Cully's other accomplishments, were detailed in a letter from Director Brant, which accompanied the award.

In that letter, Director Brant told Cully, "Most notable among your many achievements was your

"Some of your other impressive achievements include: Annual recoveries totaling \$22.35 million; conclusion of a three year investigation of fraud in the trucking industry impacting the Department of the Navy, resulting in a corporate plea of guilty and a global settlement in excess of \$750,000; a personal commendation from the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia for your outstanding work; and a certificate



***Director Brant presents the Fraud Agent of the Year plaque to Special Agent Cully.***

of appreciation from the Chief of the Criminal Division, Internal Revenue Service, Virginia-West Virginia Office, for outstanding assistance and support."

Director Brant concluded the letter by saying, "Through your tenacity, dedication and demonstrated expertise in the field of fraud investigations, you have gained professional respect from counterpart law enforcement and prosecutive agencies, and significantly enhanced the reputation of the NCIS. Congratulations on an outstanding job."

## **COUNTERINTELLIGENCE**

Special Agent Tom Betro, Chief of the Pacific Division, spoke on behalf of the Counterintelligence Directorate prior to Floto receiving the 1997 Special Agent of the Year Award for Foreign Counterintelligence (FCI).

"Although I've only just met Doug in person for the first time today, I can tell you that I am very familiar with his work, the quantity and quality of which are very deserving of recognition," Betro said, as he began to explain that 1997 was an "extremely busy and





**Director Brant presents the Department of the Navy Civilian Meritorious Service medal to Special Agent Floto.**

productive year for the counterintelligence program.

"I could never, in just a few minutes, accurately portray the positive impact the NCIS foreign counterintelligence program has had on the security of Navy and Marine Corps personnel, property and technologies in 1997. I can only provide a glimpse.

"During the past year, NCIS FCI agents deployed to virtually every continent and literally hundreds of countries to provide real-time, comprehensive threat reporting to operational commanders.

"As part of our ever-increasing force protection mission, we deployed personnel in support of over 47 major military exercises. We also deployed personnel, including Doug as I'll describe in more detail in just a minute, to support actual contingencies in Cambodia, Zagreb, Haiti and

Albania.

"Our success over the past year was certainly not limited to special agents," Betro said, as he praised the work done by the Navy Antiterrorist Alert Center (ATAC), which is part of the

NCIS Counterintelligence Directorate. The ATAC provides critical 24-hour-a-day indications and warning threat reporting to the fleet, and "continues to be recognized as the center of the Department of the Navy's force protection excellence."

Betro went on to note that in 1997, NCIS special agents had produced almost 3,000 intelligence information reports (IIRs), "a significant number of which were rated as being of 'high' value to the national intelligence and security communities."

Betro also touched briefly on the success of NCIS double agent operations, and systems and technology protection.

"What this means is that there were a lot of people doing a lot of great work over the past year," Betro said. "And just like Tony (Titra) and Bob (Cully), Doug had a lot of competition for this award."

"With the competition he faced, Doug can be proud of this award," Betro continued. "Doug's accomplishments were indeed noteworthy. As many people here know, Doug deployed for a six month period to Croatia in support of operation 'Joint Guard.'

"Although this was, as we can all imagine, a personal sacrifice for Doug, his selection is not simply to reward him for his sacrifice. It is to reward him for his outstanding

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***"Displaying exceptional leadership skills during that six month period, you supervised a 'purple team' comprised of five special agents from different U.S. military services.***

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**- From Director Brant's letter to Special Agent Floto**

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performance.

"His outstanding performance, not only in Croatia, but in several other initiatives, including a sensitive operation against a foreign target...and a significant counterintelligence investigation."

Floto's accomplishments were



further highlighted in a letter of congratulations from Director Brant.

"Most notable among your many achievements was your performance as the Team Leader for Force Protection Team 40, Zagreb, Croatia, as part of Operation Joint Guard," Director Brant said in his letter to Floto. "Displaying exceptional leadership skills during that six month period, you supervised a 'purple team' comprised of five special agents from different U.S. military services.

"You provided focus and direction to Team 40's force protection program, establishing a targeting strategy in which specific collection priorities were established for East Slavonia, the most contentious region within Croatia.

"You reorganized the team to maximize the capability of Team 40, tripling its productive level as measured by intelligence collection reports, some of which received Seat of Government attention.

"You upgraded the overall quality of the sources registered by the team, to include very senior Croatian government officials.

"You further established a proactive counterterrorist program, which sought to identify potential terrorist threats to the stabilization force, and developed a first ever force protection working group consisting of all force protection teams operating in Croatia.

"Your personal efforts significantly enhanced the U.S. Force Protection program in Croatia during a period of increased tension in the Balkan region.

"Words like professionalism, outstanding performance, highly motivated, great strides and 'the best representative in there yet' were used by senior European Community (EUCOM) staff

members to describe your tour in Croatia.

"Your other impressive achievements include your continuing work as the case officer of the only successful operation of its kind against a specific target country. Additionally, you were simultaneously the co-case agent of a significant National Security investigation which was briefed to the Commandant of the Marine Corps."

Director Brant concluded the letter by saying, "Through your diligence, competence and professionalism you succeeded at a very difficult task, and significantly contributed to a highly favorable and visible reputation of the NCIS with the international community. Congratulations on an outstanding job."

#### GENERAL CRIMES

Like the speakers before him, Special Agent Ron Olive, Head of the General Crimes Division noted that the competition for 1997 Special Agent of the Year Award

was very keen and that all the nominees had done truly exceptional jobs under difficult circumstances.

"To truly honor agents like Tony, I think it is important to understand what he and our agents are up against and what we are doing at headquarters to try and make their job easier," Olive said.

"As I see the open criminal cases from all over the world come across my screen," Olive continued, "it appears obvious violent crimes and crimes against persons are on the rise. Rapes, assaults, sexual child abuse, molestation and exploitation of children on the Internet are at an all time high.

"It is ironic, but last night at a check out counter I noticed the cover of *People* magazine with a special report on 'The Fight Against Child Abuse' -- a reason we are honoring Tony here today. A child abuse case of a three year old that ended in death.

"Tony refused to accept the results and challenged a coroner



**Director Brant presents Special Agent Titra with a check and General Crimes Agent of the Year plaque.**





**Special Agent Titra is congratulated by Special Agent Olive.**

and his findings of accidental death.

"Thank you Tony for your perseverance and dedication, for going that extra mile and beyond in search of the truth. This effort resulted in Tony proving and obtaining a confession that the child's death was not an accident. It was in fact, murder."

Olive noted how trends in violence in the civilian community frequently spill over into the military.

"Just yesterday I received some preliminary results from a year-long Navy questionnaire survey taken of new recruits in their first week of training," Olive said. "The survey was anonymous. Approximately 2,600 women and 3,000 men responded. Their average age was 20.

"One question under the category of 'Experienced Violence' was 'Were you ever attacked or stabbed with a knife prior to entering the Navy?

"Of those who responded, 7.7 percent of women and 33 percent of men answered yes."

"Under the category of 'Witnessed Violence,' 29.9 percent

of women and a staggering 42.8 percent of the men answered yes to the question, 'Were you ever present when someone was killed?'"

Trends like those aren't the only challenges law enforcement now faces, either, Olive said.

"Today, more than ever, for agents like Tony and all the rest of us, we are finding that criminal investigations are becoming more

challenging and complex, and that crime scene processing is becoming more exact and technical," Olive said. "Police departments are requesting our assistance more and more in off-base incidents,

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***"Tony (Titra) refused to accept the results and challenged a coroner and his findings of accidental death . . . This effort resulted in Tony proving and obtaining a confession that the child's death was not an accident. It was in fact, murder."***

**- Special Agent Olive**

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where members of the Navy and Marine Corps are victims or subjects of violent crimes.

"Juries and judges both in civilian and military courts, are not

so quick to accept testimony of law enforcement officers and experts. They want more details on policy and procedures and clearer explanations of our actions. Defense attorneys are also getting smarter in procedures and policies for law enforcement agencies in the handling of major crimes and processing of crime scenes.

"To meet these ever increasing challenges we must keep pace and move forward with the times into the new millennium. Code 23B -- the General Crimes Department -- is striving to meet that challenge in assisting the field in every way we can in the general crimes arena.

"We are preparing to put on another death investigations course. A refresher training course in crime scene processing will follow, to keep up to date with the new, ever-changing technological advances in this field and proper evidence handling procedures. The days of the crime scene kit brief case for processing major crimes scenes are over.

"Field offices are being encouraged to initiate major case response teams for a total professional package, which produces standards and continuity for crime scene management and processing.

"We are continuing to work even closer with commands to address and meet their needs while at the same time upholding our commitment to find the truth in solving crimes, where ever the investigation leads."

"Tony and the other agents receiving this award today are a symbol of our commitment and dedication to meet these challenges and are an encouragement to every agent within NCIS."

"Tony, you are a credit to



yourself, your family, NCIS and the Department of the Navy. We congratulate you for being the professional you are, and for the commitment and accomplishments you have achieved in the criminal investigations field."

Director Brant highlighted those accomplishments in his letter to Titra, saying: "Most notable among your many achievements was your investigation into the death of a three-year old Navy dependent. Although the medical examiner ruled the manner of death as accidental and the local police department closed their case, you diligently continued your investigation, and with the assistance of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology found that the physical evidence did not support the autopsy's conclusion.

"Through extensive additional inquiries and investigative expertise, you determined the boyfriend of the victim's mother was probably responsible for the child's death. You then traveled to Virginia to interview the suspect, resulting in his confession. As a result, the suspect was charged with capital murder and felony child abuse under Mississippi state statutes and extradited.

"Your tenacity, thoroughness and dedication to the victim resulted in the suspect subsequently pleading guilty to avoid the possibility of receiving the death penalty, and was sentenced to life in prison plus 20 years.

"Your other impressive achievements include the pursuit of a 'Cold Case' regarding two homicides in 1980 and 1982. Through

sheer determination you have developed a case sufficient for prosecution of a suspect by the Office of the Alabama State Attorney General for at least one of the murders.

"Your efforts also produced evidence and witnesses that allowed for the successful resolution of an unrelated arson for hire, wherein the same suspect was prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced to one year imprisonment."

Director Brant concluded the letter by saying, "Your tenacity, dedication to the success of every assignment, and unselfish use of your time have greatly enhanced the reputation of the NCIS. Congratulations on an outstanding job."

## ***That's My Dad***

*As soon as the Special Agents of the Year ceremony was over, Bradley Cully got a close-up look at the Department of the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service medal presented to his father, Special Agent Bob Cully. In the background is Cully's wife, Barbara.*

(Photo by Gary M. Comerford)





# Counterintelligence Force Protection



## NCIS Performs Vital Mission For U.S. Forces Deployed Overseas

*By Special Agent Pat Hagen  
New England Field Office*

**T**o use the words "Force Protection" in a conversation evokes varying responses depending upon the person with whom you are speaking.

Those who are unaware of what, why, and how it is accomplished may refer to "it" along with snake-eaters, ninja, or other more colorful phrases. On the other hand, those who understand the program and issues take a more "been there, done that" approach.

Force Protection as a stand alone phrase is a misnomer. NCIS does not perform Force Protection; we provide "counterintelligence support to Force Protection," "criminal investigative support to Force Protection," "fraud support to Force Protection," and antiterrorism and physical security support to Force Protection."

Assault, theft, rape, narcotics, procurement fraud, homicide, terrorist, and espionage investigations all contribute to limiting the damage of hostile persons or entities targeting the Department of the Navy.

Force Protection is more than exercise/contingency deployments. It is a philosophical approach to providing support to the Depart-

ment of Defense, joint commands, Navy, and Marine Corps. NCIS is doing what has always been done, just focusing the efforts to customer needs.

NCIS deploys daily to remote locations around the world to acquire information on threats, support port calls, investigate crimes, and conduct liaison. All of

unilateral NCIS concept, nor a NCIS FCI imaginative marketing strategy.

It is a program developed by the Department of Defense which mandates that counterintelligence organizations acquire information in coordination with Marine Corps Counterintelligence when appropriate on activities that may be



**Special agents from the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) and NCIS gather for a group shot at Camp Pleso.**

these activities are integral factors in a successful Force Protection Program.

Recognizing that all the major disciplines of NCIS conduct "Force Protection" related activities, I will focus primarily on the FCI efforts in this article.

Counterintelligence support to Force Protection is not a

detrimental to deployed U.S. personnel and assets.

NCIS carries the responsibility to fulfill this mission for the Department of the Navy (DoN) to the best of our ability.

No program can exist in a vacuum and survive, so the NCIS concept of Force Protection brings together organizational capabilities



and links them directly to a consumer.

The most obvious aspects of Force Protection are the Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) Support; staff integration within Navy, Marine Corps, and Joint Commands; Special Contingency Group formation; and deployments to military exercises and operations.

Force Protection is a proactive, vice-reactive, approach to counterintelligence. NCIS has taken the initiative to place personnel in key locations which, in some cases, facilitate proactive operational capability. Short-term benefits of integration have been command recognition that NCIS is an important part of a joint staff.

The long-term benefits are only now surfacing in the form of other Navy commands saying "I want one of those (Special Agents) also." Some senior commanders upon transfer to new commands have called NCIS and requested support for their new commands. In some areas of the Navy, the demand for NCIS integrated support exceeds the supply.

Another more recent example of the importance of integrated staff personnel are the results of the "Downing Commission" in response to the Khobar bombings in Saudi Arabia.

As the impacts of the Downing Commission hit the Department of the Navy, NCIS staff personnel within the fleet, numbered, and special warfare communities were directly involved in outlining and defining the Navy's antiterrorism role. NCIS has become the integral player to senior Navy staffs on how to perform antiterrorism from physical security through counterintelligence collection and operations.

An evolving area of Force Protection is the support to contingencies and exercises either through Special Contingency Group (SCG) or ARG deployment. Is that our role? Should we be there?

The short answer is "it is our job." A longer answer is it is very difficult to investigate a crime, identify a threat, or provide a service, if you do not have access to the crime scene, incident, command, or target.

In the past, NCIS watched ships leave the pier, were unaware of special deployments, and generally did not understand what the Navy was doing in many exercises and contingencies. Now NCIS is there, understands the

lems. NCIS special agents are independent, flexible, imaginative, and self-motivated.

Rigid force structure is important for military activities and NCIS is learning how to function within that structure. However, rigid structure is the antithesis to flexibility, and deploying NCIS personnel are learning to apply NCIS strengths in support of the military apparatus.

Each command that has fully used NCIS capabilities has been surprised by the almost natural capacity to liaison with our counterpart organizations (foreign and domestic). Due to the NCIS law enforcement status, special agents have a natural affinity to law enforcement

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### ***Force Protection has become a significant part of the organizational mission.***

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mission, and is becoming an integral part of the success of the Navy's mission.

The most significant tool NCIS brings that no other Department of Defense counterintelligence service has is a strong civilian 1811 approach to issues and problems. This revolves around the "tools" of the NCIS special agent.

"Tools" of the special agent are investigative techniques and experience, forensics capabilities, databases, worldwide contacts, experiences in interrogations/ interviews, experience in liaison at all levels of an organization, real-world operational experience, streetcraft, and training.

What has served NCIS the most in critical Force Protection activities has been the unique NCIS mental approach to prob-

organizations around the world.

Furthermore, NCIS personnel are experienced in dealing with military, intelligence, contractors, and other civilian organizations. The ease with which NCIS functions at all levels within an organization, from the lowest echelons through the most senior levels, is a flexibility not easily matched by other CI services.

Few situations place a special agent under the same rigors professionally or personally than deployment on a contingency operation. Safety, liaison skills, and operational prowess are the paramount factors for a successful deployment.

The main function of a deployed Force Protection Special

(Continued on Page 10)



# Force Protection Training Gives Agents 'Baseline Skills'

The NCIS Force Protection Program has developed a training curriculum specifically designed to provide the deploying NCIS personnel with baseline skill sets. NCIS personnel are cross-trained with other counterintelligence organizations to better understand their missions and functions, as well as the joint arena.

These courses include several intelligence, communications, surveillance, countersurveillance, antiterrorism, and computer courses.

NCIS also designed the Special Contingency Group (SCG) Course to close some of the gaps in training, as well as some of the NCIS organizational skill gaps required to professionally accomplish the Force Protection mission.

The primary areas of focus in the SCG course are:

- 1) Joint and Department of the Navy force structure and the NCIS role within that structure.
- 2) Operational capability to complete the NCIS mission in peacetime, operations other than war, and war.
- 3) Raising technical proficiency of personnel to facilitate professional products and distribution through use of sources, contacts, and liaison.
- 4) Understanding of terrorism development, foreign intelligence methods, and specialized training to detect and counter those activities.
- 5) Baseline required safety skills (i.e., swimming, dunk tank, firearms, and basic discussions on terrorist threat development).
- 6) Weapons familiarity for those individuals deploying to extremely hostile environments.

The four-week SCG Course curriculum is not seminar based, but is designed to train participants in specific skills. These skills may include source handling techniques, interplay with U.S. and foreign military personnel, operational planning, force structure, and tactics.

To date, three regular SCG courses have been held training a total of 81 special agents and analysts, along with a two-week condensed version attended by 33 Naval Reservists.

Since the first SCG course in 1995, SCG personnel have provided force protection support to U.S. forces in Croatia, Bosnia, Haiti, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, in addition to participating in a number of joint exercises to include "Cobra Gold" in Thailand, "Bright Star" in Egypt, "Northern Edge" in Alaska, and "Vigilant Shield" in Hawaii.

(Continued from Page 9)

Agent is to meet people and develop relationships that may assist in keeping the Department of Defense and Department of Navy personnel, equipment, and facilities safe.

It is an almost entirely proactive effort with few individuals voluntarily contacting NCIS to "help out." In many deployments there are language barriers and no telephones in existence.

Consequently, the special agent must be aggressive and imaginative to communicate with potential contacts, as well as pass on important information to the consumers.

The special agent must be politically savvy and capable of acting rapidly to an ever-changing and potentially dangerous environment.

Furthermore, as a civilian functioning in two foreign environments (i.e. foreign country and military structures) the special agent must be flexible and willing to do "other duties as may be assigned."

All the CI services in the Department of Defense are involved in the same efforts. NCIS is an equal partner in this effort and involved in regular meetings on future policy and direction.

Force Protection has become a significant part of the organizational mission. As long as terrorist, criminals, and foreign intelligence services attempt to impede the mission accomplishment of the Navy and Marine Corps, NCIS will be aggressively detecting, countering, and deterring those activities on behalf of the Department of the Navy.

**Editor's Note:** Special Agent Patrick Hagen was the coordinator for the NCIS Counterintelligence Force Protection Program before assuming his current assignment at the Northeast Field Office.



# **Assignment: Croatia**

## **Tour In The Former Republic of Yugoslavia Provides Agent With Real World Experience In "Purple" Environment**

**By Special Agent Joe Pizzino**  
**Sigonella Resident Agency**

**I**n late February, 1995, Resident Agent-in-Charge Bob Watson, informed me that "word" had come down from the field office that I'd be replacing the NCIS agent in the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). I told Mr. Watson that the field office had surely erred since I hadn't volunteered to go there.

As things turned out, three weeks later I found myself on-ground at the Joint Task Force Provide Promise (JTFPP) Forward, Camp Pleso, Zagreb, Croatia. After a four-day turnover with the outgoing NCIS agent, I was considered "settled in" and ready to do what I had been sent there to do - conduct counterintelligence operations in support of

U.S. Forces in the former FRY.

My new home was a conex box, which was conveniently located less than one minute from the nearest bunker. The U.S. compound was surrounded by concertina wire and guarded by Air Force Special Police.

Camp Pleso, which is a former Yugoslavian Air Force Base, is currently occupied by United Nations Peace Keeping Forces. It is located northwest of the Croatian capital city of Zagreb, which is adjacent to the Zagreb commercial airport.

One of the first things we are told when arriving at Camp Pleso is to stay on the hard surface since much of the soft ground in the camp was mined by departing Serbs in 1991 - after Croatia seceded from Yugoslavia.

Topics of conversation at the mess hall are normally generated by the day-to-day activities at

Camp Pleso. For instance, the political situation in the former FRY, the incessant rain, the muddy footpaths, the frequent cold showers in the morning, the Serbian rocket attack on May 2, 1995, which impacted only a few hundred yards from the U.S. Compound at Camp Pleso, and, of course, how many days one had left in-country were all favorite topics of conversation.

The JTFPP (FWD) consists of about 335 U.S. service members from all services and one civilian (the NCIS agent).

Although most of the U.S. Contingent is located in Zagreb, Croatia, about 15 U.S. service members are assigned to Bosnia - Herzegovina.

The force protection office, which is comprised of credentialed agents from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the

(Continued on Page 12)

### ***"Watch Your Step!"***

*That's the advice NCIS special agents receive, when they deploy for force protection assignments in places like the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).*

*Although hostilities appear to have ceased, unexploded ordnance is still a big threat.*

*At right are land mines, explosive projectiles, and grenades which have been put on display during a training course for special agents who have just arrived in the FRY.*

*Another favorite piece of advice is, "Stay on the hardpack!" In other words, stay on well-used roads and walkways whenever possible.*





# SCG Members Support Variety Of Exercises And 'Contingencies'

*By Lt. Sean McCann, USNR  
SCG Coordinator*

The Special Contingency Group (SCG) is a Force Protection concept that evolved from lessons learned during the Gulf War and subsequent deployments of NCIS personnel. SCG deploys in support of Joint Task Forces, exercises and special missions. One such exercise is Cobra Gold.

Exercise Cobra Gold '97 (May - June, 1997) is a Joint U.S. and Kingdom of Thailand Combined Military exercise that provided the venue for Special and Reserve Agents alike to deploy and apply their SCG training. During Cobra Gold, the various services jointly exercise command, control, and communications in a deployed environment.

In May 1997, the NCIS team leader, Special Agent Chuck Howard from the Singapore Resident Unit, assembled the participating NCIS agents in Bangkok to discuss team assignments, objectives, expectations and reporting.

Agents were then broken-up into teams and deployed to geographically diverse locations like Pattaya Beach to the south and Phitsanulok to the north.

Each team deployed with a Theater Rapid Response Intelligence Package (TRRIP) that provided the means by which Agent's were able to pass secure information, including digital imagery, "real-time" to one another and the supported commands.

Liaison with local officials was critical during the exercise. Information was developed regarding narcotics activities, criminal and foreign intelligence threats, vulnerability assessments, route surveys and personnel profiles. This information was then briefed to the component and JTF Commanders. NCIS agents in each location worked closely with their counterparts in the other military counterintelligence organizations to ensure force protection support was provided to all participants of the exercise.

The Far East Field Office is leading the effort in preparation for Cobra Gold '98. Threat assessments have been updated, planning conferences attended, and liaison contacts renewed in preparation of Cobra Gold '98 which will occur April - June, 1998.

**Editor's Note:** Lt. Sean McCann is a Reserve NCIS agent who is serving on a three-year recall to active duty. He is currently assigned to the Counterintelligence Department at NCIS Headquarters.

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Army Military Intelligence and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, is a special staff element.

Collectively, the office gathers threat information through the conduct of debriefings, employment of casual sources, as well as through liaison and operational coordination with the United Nations, the host nation police and military, and security agencies of the United States and the European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM).

Through the use of the Theater Rapid Response Intelligence Package (TRRIP), collected information is securely and rapidly passed to the JTFPP (Main) in Naples, Italy, by means of Force Protection Information (FPIRS). These FPIRS were subsequently released by the JTFPP in Naples as IIRs for wider dissemination.

The Force Protection Office also conducts port overviews, threat assessments and vulnerability assessments; provides limited protective service support to visiting VIPs; conducts initial criminal and counterintelligence investigations; and any other assignment which may be imposed by the JTFPP (FWD) Commander.

**Editor's Note:** Special Agent Joe Pizzino, who served in the former FRY from March 15, 1995, to September 14, 1995, is the sixth NCIS special agent to deploy there since the UN Mission began in 1992. For his outstanding performance, he received the Department of the Navy Superior Civilian Service award by the on-ground JTFPP (FWD) Commander.



# **Assignment: Navy SEALs**

## **Agent Finds Force Protection Duty In Navy Special Warfare Challenging And Fast Paced**

*By Special Agent Scott M. Bernat  
Norfolk Field Office*

**T**he Navy SEALs are regularly tasked with accomplishing some of the toughest and most physically demanding military missions assigned to our naval forces.

These missions take the Sea, Air and Land (SEAL) commandos to all corners of the globe, ever increasing their susceptibility to targeting by terrorists, foreign intelligence and criminal entities. Force Protection is an essential element in maintaining SEAL mission integrity and the safety of these professional warriors.

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) Field Office in Norfolk, Virginia, has spearheaded the force protection concept, successfully integrating a Foreign Counterintelligence (FCI) trained special agent onto the staff of Commander, Naval Special Warfare Group Two (NSWG-2), based on board the Naval Amphibious Base (NAB) Little Creek, Virginia.

The mission of Force Protection, as it relates to Naval Special Warfare, is to provide continuous comprehensive counterintelligence and threat assessment support to the SEAL operator. The focus is on early indications and warnings of threats posed by terrorists, unconventional warfare, criminals and foreign intelligence.

The unique mission of Naval Special Warfare, to include deployments of small groups to remote locations throughout the world, obviously identifies Navy SEALs as prime targets for exploitation and attack.

NCIS Field Office Norfolk determined that an effective Force Protection Program would enhance personnel safety and ensure mission integrity for the SEALs of NSWG-2.

NSWG-2 is physically comprised of SEAL Teams Two, Four, Eight and Seal Delivery Vehicle



***Special Agent Bernat In Puerto Rico***

Team Two, all based at NAB Little Creek. NSWG-2 SEALs routinely deploy to Naval Special Warfare Unit (NSWU) Two, Germany; NSWU-4, Puerto Rico; NSWU-8, Panama; and NSWU-10, Spain. These units are all administratively dependent on NSWG-2, but are operationally controlled by their respective Theater commands.

The NSWG-2 Force Protection program was designed to be accomplished in three phases: Pre-Deployment, Deployment and Post-Deployment. The program is premised in the fact that Force Protection education and information will complement and increase the mission readiness and success rate of supported Naval Special Warfare commanders.

The pre-deployment phase concentrates on developing, organizing, and disseminating specific mission area threat information. Counterintelligence/counterterrorism awareness briefings are also provided to sensitize the operators to the modus operandi of the threat.

Coordination with NCIS worldwide counterintelligence/force protection assets during deployments serves to keep operational commanders informed of



the threat, and allows deployed personnel to maintain a proper and well-informed OPSEC posture while in a mission or liberty status.

Post-deployment debriefings and "lessons-learned" are used to provide operational commanders with Force Protection information for use in planning and implementation of current and future missions. The Force Protection threat information is coordinated, obtained and organized through a variety of sources, to include:

- NCIS liaison/research;
- NCIS offices worldwide;
- Theater Joint Intelligence Centers, including the Atlantic Intelligence Command (AIC) Counterintelligence and Counterterrorism Analysis Branch;
- and the NCIS Antiterrorist Alert Center (NAVATAC).

Threat assessments are tailored specifically for the NSWG-2 community. These assessments are consistently updated, with NCIS FCI special agents in the European Command (EUCOM), Sixth Fleet and Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) areas of responsibility monitoring the threat through on-site liaison with host nation officials and coordination with counterpart agencies.

The NSWG-2 Force Protection cell has also expanded its assistance to the Naval Special Boat community via Commander, Special Boat Squadron Two (SBR-2), based on board NAB Little Creek. High speed boats, rigid hull inflatable boats, and patrol coastal ships, all designed to play an integral part of the SEAL mission, are the trademarks of this community.

Tailored threat assessments and training are

routinely provided to SBR-2 subordinate units, specifically Special Boat Unit (SBU) 20 (Little Creek), SBU-22 (New Orleans, Louisiana) and SBU-26 (Panama), through affiliated NCIS special agents.

Special Agent Rich Wilson of the New Orleans Resident Agency and Special Agent Jeff Jenkins of Panama Resident Agency provide on-site support, to include liaison with host nation law enforcement and U.S. Country Team members, during SBU and SEAL missions conducted within their respective areas of responsibility.

Appropriate debriefings of SBU personnel are designed to gather information for use in future mission planning and later deployments.

U.S. Military forward presence requires the Naval Special Warfare Community to maintain a high state of readiness to respond to any contingency. NCIS Force Protection support to both NSWG-2 and CSBR-2 enhances this posture, protecting personnel and mission capabilities, thereby ensuring the success of SEAL and Special Boat operations worldwide.

**Editor's Note:** Special Agent Scott Bernat is a member of the Norfolk Field Office's Foreign Counterintelligence Squad. Bernat recently transferred from his assignment as the force protection / counterintelligence staff officer for Commander, Naval Special Warfare Group Two. In 1997, he was awarded the Department of the Navy's Meritorious Civilian Service Medal for his outstanding performance with Special Warfare Group Two. Special Agent Gary Van Orden now fills that position at Special Warfare Group Two.

## ***Establishing A Vital Link In Communications***

***TRRIP, short for Theater Rapid Response Intelligence Package, is a portable, secure communications link used by NCIS. Shown at left, an Australian naval officer and NCIS Special Agents Tom Meyer and Kelly Murphy set up a TRIPP during the "Vigilant Shield" exercise in Hawaii.***





# Reserve Tour Gives Special Agent A Military Customer's Perspective On The Importance Of Force Protection

*By Special Agent Christopher J. O'Gara  
Information and Personnel Security Department*

**T**he rapid proliferation of Force Protection is re-defining the nature of peacekeeping operations conducted by the U.S. Armed Forces.

This article will provide NCIS agents with additional insight into the Joint Chiefs of Staff's "Joint Vision 2010" by providing them a look at force protection from the military customer's standpoint.

Joint Vision 2010 is the road map for integrating new concepts, leveraging technological advances and channeling that vitality toward successful combined / joint warfighting and peace-keeping operations.

It focuses on four operational concepts: dominant maneuver, precision engagement; full dimensional force protection; and focused logistics. The United States has been involved in numerous peace-keeping operations and will continue to be through the 21st century.

Peace enforcement operations are designed to hold parties to an agreement such as the Dayton Peace Accords which all Serbians, Croatians and Muslim parties do not endorse.

Operation Joint Guard (OJG) will hopefully buy the time needed to raise the level of trust between the belligerents and create an atmosphere in which they can participate in peaceful resolutions to their problems. The world looks to the U.S. not only for its military preparedness, but also its leadership when conflict arises.

Having just spent a seven month selective reserve call up tour in support of OJG, I can assure all NCIS agents involved in force protection that there is a critical shortage of seasoned force protection

experts at the tactical, strategic and operational levels within the total force.

Almost without exception, every operations order emphasizes force protection in the Commander's intent. Commander's will expect special agents to capitalize on information superiority.

A full dimensional force protection plan will include battlespace control operations, (known as "The Box" in Bosnia). A superior plan will provide a multidimensional awareness for the command to detect, identify, locate, track and deny enemy attacks on joint forces.

What the military needs is a real time, true representation of the operational area. This will allow

the military the ability to respond and coordinate horizontally and vertically to the degree necessary to successfully accomplish the mission in that space with minimal casualties.

During a February, 1998, joint antiterrorist working group meeting held at SHAPE Headquarters in Mons Belgium, Gen. Wesley Clark, USA, USCINCEUR, provided focused

comments to attendees relative to force protection. Gen. Clark stated it is his number one priority. He stressed the elevation of force protection issues which can become stalled. The thrust of his remarks was for those responsible for force protection to be proactive. He was quoted as saying "When it is in the balance, give the nod to force protection."

The dynamic operational space of the 21st century requires a responsive force protection doctrine that will adapt and evolve with new technolo-

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**Two U.S. Army Reservists, Capt. Dan Fricke and the author, Maj. Chris O'Gara, are shown in Sarajevo. In his civilian profession, Fricke is a detective with the Los Angeles Police Department.**



# Computer Investigations Play Key Role In Force Protection

*By Special Agent Al Zane  
Deputy Assistant Director  
Computer Investigations & Operations*

Think of it. Is there any area of the military today which is not impacted by computers?

The obvious answer is a resounding "no!" Everything from day-to-day logistics to command and control relies on automated information systems. Is this the military's new center of gravity?

***Reliance creates dependence.***

***Dependence creates vulnerability.***

That's why the Computer Investigations & Operations Department (CIO) was formed, and that is why it is becoming increasingly more involved in all aspects of force protection.

A story which recently hit the newspapers points to the dramatic impact intrusions can have on the reliability of information used by our force planners.

As the United States was gearing up for a potential military operation in Iraq, a series of intrusions were detected at critical information nodes, which were viewed by members of the analytical community as a potential attack on our national infrastructure.

An intense and extensive investigation diffused this potentially volatile situation by identifying and locating the hackers.

In this particular situation, the hackers were simply amateurs with a moderate degree of expertise. Nonetheless, the impact of the intrusions was significant. Systems carrying critical information had been compromised.

What if the hackers had been trained professionals executing an organized attack on our information infrastructure?

Even a small country with moderate conventional capabilities can now manipulate the levers of power with a modest investment in computer technology and trained computer personnel.

With the establishment of the CIO, NCIS is now engaging both criminal and counterintelligence adversaries in this emerging area.

(Continued from Page 15)

gies and emerging threats. Minimizing these threats involves a three step process.

Step 1 involves conducting a detailed threat assessment. The threat assessment should be prepared to use all sources including; civil affairs surveys, the media, HUMINT, SIGINT, ELINT, emigres and academia. Familiarity with the command's operation order, particularly the mission, the commanders' intent and the priority intelligence requirements (PIR) are important in preparing a threat assessment.

Step 2 involves a Command risk assessment including safety, for it is a component of protection. The serviced Command, Joint Mission Commander and Intelligence personnel must assess risk for current and future missions. To do this you must gather and analyze the mission, equipment, personnel, terrain/port and time involved to identify hazards which could result in the loss of life.

To assess hazards an assessment must be done for each course of action developed by the operations officer. Be prepared to develop controls and to make risk decisions as a team with members from the intelligence and security staffs of the supported command.

Step 3 requires chain of command approval to fund and establish controls that eliminate the hazards or reduce the risk.

Learning staff procedures and foreign military chains of command are critical for this step in a multinational peace enforcement operation. Once the controls are in place, they should be evaluated for their effectiveness and modified as necessary.

Subsequent to the Khobar tower terrorist incident, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, established the Joint Staff Integrated Vulnerability Assessment team (JSIVA). The team is made up of civilian and special forces personnel with expertise in counterterrorism, operational readiness, structural engineering and infrastructural engineering.

The JSIVA just completed an assessment of several OJG multinational sites and many of their recommendations are being implemented dependent upon funding.

As the Security, Plans & Operations Officer for the United States Army Europe (USAREUR) National Support Element (NSE) G5, I made a point of reading daily intelligence summaries thoroughly, attending force protection meetings, studying current situation map graphics, debriefing civil affairs person-



nel and talking with local nationals.

This enabled me to make positive suggestions and contributions to the command's force protection posture. For example, we started conducting civil-military operations in non-tactical vehicles which were not as easy to track or target. I also noticed personnel were becoming complacent when crossing the border from Hungary to Croatia.

Many were observed leaving their weapons and protective gear in the back seat of the vehicle, sacrificing comfort for protection in the event they drew fire.

Changes to the standard operating procedures and enforcement improved the situation. Incidents such as the compromise of International Police Task Force (IPTF) members telephone numbers led to death threats and in some instances attacks on members vehicles. Special operations command members living outside base camps were forbidden to

sleep on the first floor of their dwellings which saved the lives of several servicemen after a grenade attack.

One special forces reserve soldier I served with who was a San Francisco Police Department SWAT member in civilian life also developed a Force Protection card currently in use by the NSE which contains emergency contact information in several languages. Additionally, joint U.S. and Hungarian security patrols reduced criminal activity in the NSE area of responsibility. These are just a few examples of the overall force protection posture for the Stabilization Forces.

Military operations other than war have and will take place in a growing number of impoverished and unstable nations seeking wealth, power, peace or security. It can include combat and noncombatant operations in areas in: arms control, antiterrorism, nation assistance, noncombatant evacuation, sanction enforcement, counterdrug operations and humanitarian missions.

Additionally, a situation like the one in Bosnia may require the total force to make a quick transition to sustain combat operations. The force protection professional must have a broad knowledge of the theater of operations and the underlying reasons for conflict.

Force protection is both offensive and defensive in nature. It is supported by all intelligence functions, but it is executed primarily through counterintelligence and security measures. To minimize or destroy hostile efforts, counterintelligence and security professionals are essential.

These people protect information against espionage, personnel against terrorism, and installations against sabotage. Our adversaries are expected to use every available means to impede the operations of our forces.

Counterintelligence and security aid in identifying

our own vulnerabilities and reducing risks.

Peacekeeping in the 21st century demands responsive force protection doctrine which adapts to emerging threats.

By focusing on a professional force protection product tailored to command, control, communications, computers,

intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR), the NCIS can be assured of a more secure total force military which we "Protect and Serve".

## Endnotes

1. *Surface Warfare magazine*, "Copernicus C4ISR for the 21st Century" pages 37-38, July/August, 1997.
2. *Naval Doctrine Publication 2 "Naval Intelligence"*, page 44, September 30, 1994.
3. *Force Protection XXI, Commander & Staff Risk Management Card*, August, 1996.
4. *Command Arrangements For Peace Operations*, "Key Concepts", page 21, May, 1995.

**Editor's Note:** Special Agent Chris O'Gara joined NCIS in 1986 and is currently assigned to NCIS Headquarters. A major in the Army Reserve, he was recalled to active duty and served from June, 1997, through January, 1998, in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia. For his services during that period he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and the NATO Medal.



# New Senior Advisor To The Director Brings Valuable Experience To The Job

**By Gary M. Comerford**  
**Bulletin Editor**

A quiet office at the Washington Navy Yard with windows overlooking the Display Ship Barry was not something a man as detail-oriented and methodical as Thomas F. Houston had really planned on.

For that matter, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) wasn't exactly something Houston had spent much time thinking about, either!

"I never really paid close attention to NCIS until (Special Agent) Scott Jacobs came around looking for a job on the Hill," said Houston. At the time, Houston was the Chief of Staff for U.S. Rep. Jim Saxton (R-New Jersey) in 1995, and Jacobs was a LEGIS Fellow looking for a position where he could learn and contribute.

"Scott struck me as mature, experienced, bright and aggressive, and he was available as a fellow for a year at no cost to me," Houston explained. "So I found a place for him and put him to work. A year-and-a-half later, Scott was still there. Each time he was scheduled to leave, the Congressman would appeal to the Director and Scott would end up staying longer. That's when I really began to learn a lot about NCIS. Scott, after all, is a walking advertisement for NCIS."

A veteran of several fraud investigations involving environmental crimes, Jacobs served as Rep. Saxton's legislative assistant for environmental issues and quickly impressed those with

whom he worked — especially Houston.

The two parted company in the summer of 1996, when Houston left Rep. Saxton's office, where he led a staff of 10, to become Chief of Staff for U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas), where he led a staff of 52. Jacobs left Rep. Saxton's office a few months later and returned to NCIS, where he was appointed Deputy Assistant Director for Fraud Investigations.



**HOUSTON**

In late 1997, their paths crossed again. Jacobs had heard during one of his frequent visits to the Hill that Houston had decided to retire after nearly 28 years of federal service. Jacobs and Mr. Dan Butler, the Executive Assistant to Director David L. Brant, had other ideas and they quickly set out to convince Houston of their interest. They explained that NCIS could use someone with

Houston's broad range of experience, understanding of the legislative process, and personal contacts with members of Congress and congressional staffers.

"I was more than a little surprised," Houston recalls, "but because I respect Scott and Dan, I was willing to listen. They were persuasive, as was Dave Brant in a subsequent visit to my office. They described an advisory role that would draw from virtually every experience in my career. The more they talked, the more it seemed a perfect fit. By mid-January, their concept had turned into reality and they formally offered me a job."

His "experience" is what attracted NCIS to Houston.

Following a two-year enlisted tour in the U.S. Army in the late sixties, he returned to his hometown of Pascagoula, Mississippi, where he worked briefly as a reporter for the *Mississippi Press Register*. He later took a job with the public affairs office at Mississippi State College for Women before becoming assistant sports information director at his alma mater, the University of Mississippi.

In January, 1972, he took a call from a Pascagoula friend who urged him to take a job as press secretary for U.S. Rep. William M. Colmer (D-Mississippi), the 83-year-old chairman of the powerful House Rules Committee, who would announce his retirement within months of Houston's arrival.

The "friend" was the Congressman's top staffer, who later that year won the general



election to succeed Colmer as the duly-elected representative from the Fifth Congressional District of Mississippi.

Houston stayed on to serve as press secretary for his friend, Congressman Trent Lott, who later was elected to the U.S. Senate and now serves as Senate Majority Leader.

Houston worked with Lott from 1973 to 1977, with the exception of a three-month period in the fall of 1976, when another Mississippi friend, Larry Speakes, encouraged him to serve as deputy press secretary for Vice Presidential candidate Robert Dole in the Ford-Dole campaign. Speakes, who was serving as Dole's spokesman during the campaign, would later serve as White House spokesman for President Ronald Reagan.

In 1977, Houston left Lott's staff to become a professional staff member of the House Committee on Government Operations, where he was responsible for the broad oversight of government activities and programs.

In 1989, Houston joined the staff of Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. While serving in that position, he was director of the Pentagon's public affairs unit handling Desert Shield/Desert Storm information.

"We did all the scrub of the information Pete Williams and Gen. Tom Kelly, USA, (Director of Operations for Joint Staff) released during their press conferences," Houston said. "As a result of that experience, Pete decided that we needed a comprehensive, consolidated *DoD Fact File* that had descriptions of common

weapons platforms and equipment."

Houston directed that effort, hired an editor, and several months later produced the directory of U.S. military arms and equipment that is used extensively by reporters today.

In 1993, Houston became the Director of Communications and Public Affairs for the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC).



If Houston was looking for a fast-paced, contentious working environment, his timing couldn't have been better.

It was the year the second of three scheduled base-closing rounds took place. The Commission held 125 base visits, 17 regional hearings around the country, and 16 more investigative hearings in Washington, D.C. -- all in a period of five months.

The 1993 Commission recommended the closure of 130 bases and the realignment of 45 others, actions estimated to generate

savings of \$2.33 billion annually.

The following year, Houston was elevated to the position of staff director for the independent Commission.

He left the Commission on January 2, 1995, to become Chief of Staff for Congressman Saxton, a senior member of the National Security Committee and Vice Chairman of the Joint Economic Committee.

In July, 1996, he was named Chief of Staff for Sen. Hutchison, a prominent member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Intelligence Committee, and later a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the panel that actually funds government programs and activities, including the NCIS. He served in that high-profile capacity until January, 1998, when he joined NCIS as Senior Advisor to the Director.

"Clearly, I have a lot to learn about NCIS," Houston said as he looked out the window of his

second-floor office at NCIS Headquarters, "but I like what I see, not only of this organization's distinguished history, but of its promise for a bold future. I am proud, truly honored, that I may be in a position to help chart that important course."

**Editor's Note: Although Mr. Tom Houston's name is spelled the same as the city in Texas, it is pronounced "HOUSE-TON."**





# 'Keeping The Field Informed' About SPG Issues Is One Of The Director's Top Priorities

**A**s charged by Director Brant, the NCIS Strategic Planning Group (SPG) is continuing to examine how we do business. The SPG is also developing a five year strategic plan for NCIS. During visits to the field, the Director frequently receives questions regarding the activities of the SPG.

"I have asked the coordinator of the SPG, Mr. Dan Butler, to ensure the field is kept informed of SPG reviews and planning. I also encourage folks in the field to communicate with the SPG if there are things we could be doing smarter, better, more efficiently," stated Director Brant.

"Every member of the NCIS team has the opportunity to read the NCIS Bulletin, so we will be using the Bulletin as a key communication medium," Mr. Butler offered.

"I invite NCIS employees worldwide to communicate ideas to the SPG. We've received excellent ideas from several people. Some ideas we factor into ongoing reviews, others we submit to the Director's Advisory Board for consideration," said Special Agent Ralph Blincoe, Executive Assistant to the Deputy Director and a member of the SPG.

NCIS personnel can contact the SPG directly via e-mail to Mr. Butler (DBUTLER) or Mr. Lou Beyer (LBEYER).

### Involvement of Retirees

The Strategic Planning Group reaches out in many directions for ideas. According to Mr. Butler, "Recently, I was drafting a section of the strategic plan and realized I needed the candid perspective of a retired NCIS special agent working in a challenging and rewarding 'second career.'"

"I called Al Sipe -- he's still fighting crime as a criminal intelligence analyst with the Western States Information Network/Narcotic Information Network. He offered insight that helped us shape an important part of the draft NCIS recapitalization plan," Butler explained.

"Our retirees are a wealth of knowledge and a critical resource. They built this agency into what we are today, and we'd be wise to consult them as we strive to build on their legacy," Director Brant stated.

### Involvement of DAB and Program Managers

On the question of how the SPG conducts its work, Butler explained, "The SPG develops recommendations for the Director, his executive staff, and field office special agents in charge (SACs). In order to serve them properly, we seek out input and critical scrutiny from several key 'constituencies' inside and outside NCIS.

Butler continued, "After reviews are completed, SPG proposals and recommendations are refined into decision briefs by Special Agent Blincoe and referred to the ERB (Executive Review Board) for review. The ERB might kick the issue back to the SPG, or it can send a proposal forward to the Director for a decision."

The Director's Advisory Board chairperson is frequently invited to comment during SPG reviews and program managers are consulted on strategic issues under consideration.

"We anticipate that program managers will become increasingly involved in the strategic planning process as we move from broad, overarching themes to the more nitty-gritty development of supporting action plans," Butler stated.

### Surveys

The SPG is eliciting feedback from customers and employees. "Dr. Christy Strosnider and Special Agent Gerry Nance (members of the SPG) have designed a survey we will be sending to over 100 NCIS 'customers' in the Navy and Marine Corps later this month," Butler said.

On the heels of that survey we will be sending out a survey to NCIS personnel to help us assess



internal attitudes regarding NCIS."

Currently, the SPG plans to survey customers and NCIS employees at least annually.

### **Part of the Vision: Recapitalization**

A key tenet of the draft NCIS strategic plan is the need to recapitalize the agency. "NCIS is people..." Director Brant likes to say. "As a service provider our people are our capital. Our people produce investigations, operations and analysis. It's our people who gather, analyze, synthesize and communicate information to the Navy and Marine Corps.

"Seventy-eight percent of our budget is spent on salaries and training," Mr. Butler explained. "In the same way that the Navy can't hope to compete successfully against adversaries without modernizing and recapitalizing on a continuous basis -- try to imagine how a 1960s sailor would fare in today's high tech combat environment -- NCIS has to recapitalize, too.

Ask what recapitalization would mean in concrete terms, Director Brant offered, "We have to hire more agents every year; we have to train our agents and professional support personnel in the latest crime fighting methods; we have to pay our people what they're worth; and we have to equip our crime fighters with the tools they need to successfully defeat an increasingly sophisticated criminal adversary."

The SPG is grappling with how to realize Director Brant's vision. "Obviously, it's easy to recapitalize when the Department of Defense (DoD) has plenty of funds; it's difficult when money is tight like it is right now," Butler stated.

### **Three-Prong Approach**

"We can recapitalize in an austere budget environment by doing three things," Butler explained.

"First, we have to make an honest effort to find efficiencies in-house -- properly align resources to our mission, prioritize, and improve our way of doing business.

"Secondly, we have to leverage off of our counterparts -- share expensive resources, share infrastructure where it makes sense to do so, and work more effectively, and efficiently as members of a DCIO (Defense Criminal Investigative Organization) team focused on a common adversary.

"After we've done that we have to market our service and value effectively to our customers," Butler concluded.

Significant steps are already being taken to accomplish recapitalization.

According to Director Brant: "On the first prong we are scrutinizing our field alignment. Mr. Lou Beyer, with help and input from special agents in charge (SACs), program managers and the NCIS Comptroller, is evaluating where we need people most.

"The SPG will be making recommendations to me and my staff to shift talent and resources from places where our reactive and proactive production is low relative to other areas. The objective is to put talented professionals where we need them most."

### **Need for Change**

Some wonder why NCIS is taking the initiative to realign and reprioritize. Butler explained, "Sun-Tzu, an ancient Chinese general wrote: 'If there is nowhere to go, it is fatal terrain...'

"Applying that ancient wisdom to our case, if we don't adapt, evolve, change, and move with resolve in a direction of our choosing to 'terrain' of our choosing

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***"If there is nowhere to go,  
it is fatal terrain . . ."***

**- General Sun-Tzu**

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we are vulnerable as an agency. If we don't move to 're-engineer' NCIS, someone else -- the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) or Congress -- may do it for us."

Director Brant is moving deliberately, but carefully. "Unfortunately, change tends to unsettle people, and this aspect of recapitalization (realignment) frightens people. Inevitably it will probably entail closing or reducing a few more offices while building up others," he stated.

"I'm sensitive to the turbulence this can create in people's lives, but a little controlled realignment 'turbulence' of our own making is far preferable to turbulence over which we cede control," Director Brant explained.

"After we make real strides in realigning and finding internal efficiencies we'll be prepared to move more aggressively in coordinating our efforts with our DCIO counterparts -- the second prong of our recapitalization effort," Director Brant continued.

"We're not waiting, though. Already I'm having substantive discussions with our counterparts on



personnel exchanges, colocation of offices, and cooperation on computer crime."

### **DCIO Cooperation Expands**

The SPG is cultivating cooperative interaction with counterpart agencies. "On many issues we consult our counterparts. If we hope to move boldly to recapitalize NCIS we can't do it alone," Butler stated.

"The DCIOs will have to work together if we are to deliver world-class investigative support to all of DoD. General Taylor, (Commander of the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations [OSI]) refers to this effort as 'matrixing' our organizations to serve our personnel and our customers better," Deputy Director John F. McEleny said.

NCIS is taking the initiative to "jump start" DCIO matrixing in several areas. "Field Office SACs and their management teams are demonstrating leadership and setting the example," Director Brant explained.

"In San Diego, Special Agent in Charge Cliff Simmen initiated the discussions that are culminating in the colocation of OSI and (Army) CID agents in the San Diego Field Office and at Camp Pendleton.

"Special Agent in Charge Leon Carroll and Assistant Special Agent in Charge George Roberts in the Northwest Field Office have created their own 'Mini-DEW (DCIO Enterprise-Wide Working Group' with OSI and DCIS to explore colocation opportunities," Director Brant added.

In St. Louis NCIS now does all record center checks for NCIS and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS).

"This agreement was initiated locally between the Central Field Office (of DCIS) and the NCIS office in St. Louis, Missouri, and serves as an excellent example of mutual cooperation within the spirit of the (cross-servicing of leads) MOA," Ms. Carol Levy, Director of Investigative Operations, Department of Defense Inspector General (DoDIG), explained recently in a March 12, 1998, memorandum to DoDIG investigators.

Special Agent John Harris elaborated: "We are working closely with our counterparts to identify other colocation and cross-servicing of leads opportunities that make sense fiscally and operationally.

"If we can save money by collocating, enhance DCIO interoperability, and strengthen the entire DCIO community in the process, we should do it." Special Agent Harris is a member of the NCIS SPG and Chairperson of the DEW Group Colocation Panel.

### **Agent Exchange Program**

Expanded DCIO cooperation offers exciting professional opportunities. "I have asked General Taylor to consider agent exchanges. I think an agent exchange program would be good for our customers and good for our agents," Director Brant stated.

"For example, I've proposed integrating an NCIS agent into the OSI office at Izmir, Turkey, and, in return, we would integrate an OSI agent into our office in Bahrain," he explained.

"Over time, I see this program expanding. We've already agreed to detail key NCIS technicians to the DoD Computer Forensics Lab, and I foresee the day when NCIS analysts, agents and technicians could serve anywhere our DCIO counterparts are currently serving.

### **Computer Crimes**

"You'd have to be Rip van Winkle to miss the explosion in computer-related crime affecting DoD," Deputy Assistant Director Al Zane asserted.

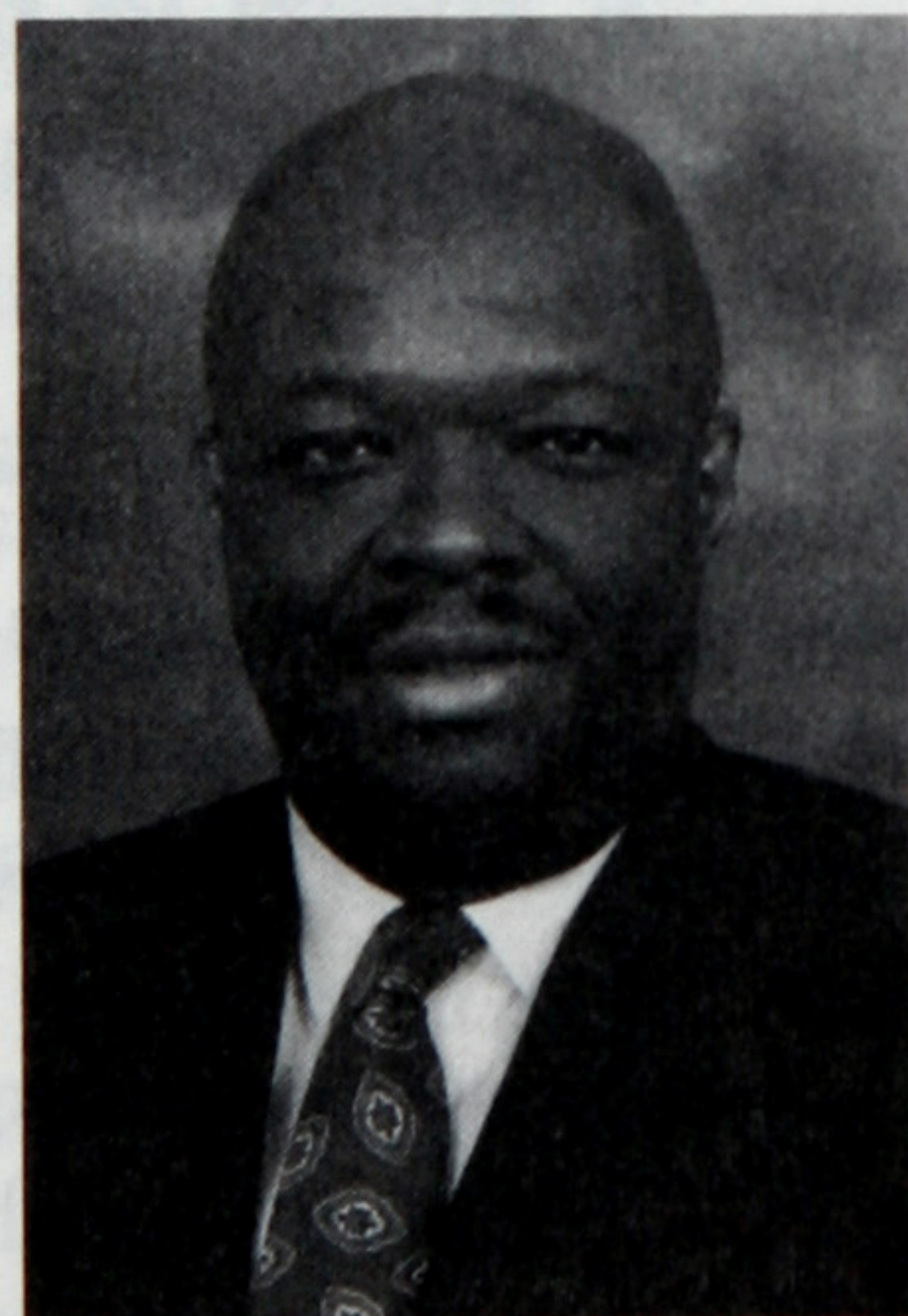
"This is an area where we're 'leveraging' intelligently off of our counterparts in Federal law enforcement through cooperation and sharing of talent and resources," Deputy Director McEleny said.

"We're also making sure the threat is recognized and understood by our customers, our role as investigators is appreciated, and we're moving aggressively to get out in front of potential adversaries," Director Brant explained.

"Beginning about 18 months ago, we and the Navy started briefing congressional staffers on the computer crime threat to the Navy. Partly as a result of that effort, Congress authorized a joint DoD approach to computer crimes and urged DoD to inject more funding into this area," Director Brant stated.

That effort is now culminating in a flow of more resources to a joint, Defense Computer Forensics Lab to be created around the existing Air Force OSI computer forensics lab. The new lab will be funded, in large part, by the Navy and DoDIG, and NCIS and DCIS will contribute technicians to the lab.

"NCIS will also manage a defense computer crimes training program that we hope will be colocated with the lab. Special Agent Greg Redfern



**CARROLL**