



"A Message from the Inspector General: Audit of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Security Undercover Operations," December 2022

Hello, I'm Michael Horowitz, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Today, my office released a report on the FBI's oversight of national security undercover operations, which the FBI uses for some counterterrorism, counterintelligence, and cybercrime investigations. We found that the FBI is directing its undercover operations resources to the highest priority threats.

However, we also identified several aspects of the program that should be improved.

For example, we found that the FBI does not track short term undercover activities that are not part of a full, authorized operation. This can lead to an increased risk of compromising agents' safety, and it can also undermine the integrity of other ongoing investigations.

We also found that the training for undercover employees was insufficient and not centrally managed.

In addition, for certain undercover activities that required Attorney General exemptions, we found that the approval process was time consuming and often delayed the start of some operations. And we identified concerns with aspects of FBI's tradecraft that could impact FBI operations beyond undercover operations.

National security undercover operations are a critical tool for successful counterintelligence investigations, and for the detection, prevention and prosecution of terrorism and cybercrime. We believe that the FBI should improve its management and oversight over these important programs.

To read our report and our 10 recommendations, visit our website oig.justice.gov, or go to oversight.gov.

Thank you for joining me today.

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