



Functional Bureau Strategy

Global Engagement Center

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Table of Contents

1. Executive Statement2

2. Bureau Strategic Framework 3

3. Goals and Objectives 5

4. Cross-cutting Management Objectives or Management Goal..... 9

1. Executive Statement

The Global Engagement Center (GEC) was codified into law by Congress in the Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), with the directive to “lead, synchronize, and coordinate efforts of the Federal Government to recognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign state and non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts aimed at undermining United States national security interests.”

The GEC was established pursuant to Executive Order 13721 in April 2016, with the mandate to coordinate, integrate, and synchronize government-wide communication activities directed at foreign audiences for the purpose of countering violent extremism and terrorism. The NDAA expanded the GEC’s mission. As the leader of the U.S. government’s efforts to counter state and non-state propaganda and disinformation, the Center’s ability to operate as a forward-looking, innovative organization that shifts quickly to focus on an ever-changing adversary is increasingly more important. One of the Center’s overarching strategies is to identify, cultivate, and expand a global network of partners whose voices resonate with those most vulnerable to the propaganda, and drive a wedge between susceptible audiences and those nations, groups, and terrorists seeking to influence them.

The Center leads, coordinates, and synchronizes national security departments and agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, Treasury, and State as well as the Intelligence Community, to reduce duplication of efforts and promote the use of best practices and approaches for strategic communications. The Center also works closely with the private sector, academia, think tanks, and NGOs to develop policy and shape initiatives. Ultimately, all of the Center’s efforts are focused on driving and leading the interagency in this space.

Finally, by industry standard data science techniques, the Center assesses the reach and resonance of its efforts and uses that information to shape future initiatives. The Center is focused on ensuring that analytics, metrics, and subject matter expertise are core components of all USG messaging efforts across the spectrum to counter harmful propaganda and disinformation.

2. Bureau Strategic Framework

Strategy Outline

- Goal 1 :
- Objective 1.1
- Objective 1.2
- Objective 1.3
- Goal 2
- Objective 2.1
- Objective 2.2
- Degrade foreign terrorist organizations' ability to attract potential recruits and confront violent ideologies that threaten U.S. national security.
- Advance U.S. Government efforts across the federal government to preempt and counter terrorist disinformation, propaganda, and recruitment tactics, by leading and coordinating messaging activities, that champion American values and protect U.S. Government interests abroad.
- Augment foreign partners' ability to counter terrorist propaganda and disinformation.
- Strengthen connectivity between State regional bureaus, the R family, CT bureau, other department and interagency offices for counterterrorism communication activities.
- Confront, degrade, and deter foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation efforts that undermine U.S. national security.
- Strengthen U.S. Government capability to address foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation efforts by leading and coordinating activity across the federal government.
- Build our allies' capacity and understanding of current and emerging foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation efforts.

Objective 2.3	Preempt and expose propaganda and disinformation aimed at foreign audiences that undermine U.S. Government interests abroad.
Objective 2.4	Coordinate U.S Government efforts to reduce vulnerability to disinformation in key countries by strengthening civil society, media, and independent voices, and improving governance and transparency in these countries.
Management Goal	Institutionalize practices that foster innovation and agility, and support progress toward achieving the GEC's mission.
Objective 3.1	Recruit, engage, and employ the best available talent from domestic and international governments, the private sector, academia, and NGOs, by leveraging the GEC's hiring authorities.
Objective 3.2	Prioritize and deconflict the GEC's staff work load across state and non-state actor missions given that both mission sets draw from the same pool of employees to accomplish the work.
Objective 3.3	Strengthen GEC's opportunities and messaging capabilities of both domestic and foreign partners by shaping effective grants and sharing data analyses and evaluations for strong outcomes.
Objective 3.4	Foster an environment of collaboration and innovation in the GEC by creating new space and enhancing existing space for GEC personnel to work together.

3. Goals and Objectives

Bureau Goal 1. Degrade foreign terrorist organizations' ability to attract potential recruits and confront violent ideologies that threaten U.S. national security.

- a. **Description and Linkages** This overarching goal is to expose violent extremist organizations (VEO's) true nature—and that of other non-state actors—thereby diminishing their influence and decreasing these organizations' allure in the eyes of potential recruits and sympathizers. Countering the propaganda and disinformation efforts of non-state actors is essential to protect the vital national interests of the United States, while recognizing the importance of protections for **freedom of expression. Any long-term strategy to defeat terrorist organizations cannot focus solely on military action. Counter-messaging—in other words, discrediting terrorists' nihilistic and hateful vision to potential and current sympathizers—is an essential piece of our multi-faceted, whole-of-government approach to preventing and countering terrorists' acts and their efforts to inspire external operations.**

Risk The GEC relies on credible foreign partners to execute its counterterrorism activities. That reliance puts those partners at greater risk. The GEC seeks to recruit top talent from the private sector including marketing experts and data scientists. The protracted security clearance processes as well as other bureaucratic hurdles put that at risk. The GEC seeks to leverage the latest technologies from the private sector to counter terrorist recruitment. The government's slow acquisitions process often put that effort at risk.

Bureau Objective 1.1 : Advance U.S. Government efforts across the federal government to preempt and counter terrorist disinformation, propaganda, and recruitment tactics, by leading and coordinating messaging activities, which champion American values and protect U.S. Government interests abroad.

- a. **Justification:** In order to most effectively harness the full capabilities of the U.S. government in countering terrorist propaganda and recruitment tactics, it is essential that the GEC lead the interagency in a coordinating capacity. Leading, convening, and coordinating the interagency requires creating a capacity within the GEC to bring partners together and analyze and counter terrorist messaging to develop best practices and prove innovative methods and approaches; understanding the breadth of USG activity in the messaging arena and the gaps and overlaps that exist to recommend mitigating measures; and helping to shape USG efforts to ensure the agencies and departments with messaging missions are following best practices and using innovative and effective methods.

Bureau Objective 1.2 : Augment foreign partners' ability to counter terrorist propaganda and disinformation.

- a. **Justification:** The need to counter terrorist recruitment is to be met not just by contributions from the United States, but through greater partnership with and contributions from our allies. In order to encourage and foster capability within partner nations to counter terrorist messaging, while amplifying and reducing duplication with U.S. government efforts, it is essential for the GEC to fill a coordination and facilitation role. Coordinating with and facilitating the efforts of foreign governments requires tracking and understanding the efforts of foreign nations to reduce duplicative initiatives; identifying and building the capacity of those already doing good work in this area, developing networks of partners engaged in counter terrorist messaging; and sharing and promoting best practices across this community.

Bureau Goal 2. Confront, degrade, and deter foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation efforts that undermine U.S. national security.

- a. **Description and Linkages** This overarching goal is to counter, degrade and deter foreign state-sponsored disinformation and propaganda. Countering the propaganda and disinformation efforts of foreign state actors is essential to protect the vital national interests of the United States, while recognizing the importance of protections for freedom of expression. Countering foreign state-sponsored disinformation requires a long-term strategic approach that leverages not only the whole-of-government, but also whole-of-society to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to disinformation.

Risk The GEC relies on credible foreign partners to execute its mission to counter foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation. That reliance puts those partners at greater risk. The GEC seeks to create coalitions of nations focused on countering disinformation from specific nations. Which countries are invited or not invited into those coalitions runs the risk of creating diplomatic tension. The GEC seeks to recruit top talent from the private sector including marketing experts and data scientists. The protracted security clearance processes as well as other bureaucratic hurdles put that at risk. The GEC seeks to leverage the latest technologies from the private sector to counter terrorist recruitment. The government's slow acquisitions process often put that effort at risk.

Bureau Objective 2.1 : Strengthen U.S. Government capability to address foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation efforts by leading and coordinating activity across the federal government.

- a. **Justification:** In order to most effectively harness the full capabilities of the U.S. government in countering state propaganda and disinformation efforts, it is essential that the GEC lead the interagency in a coordinating capacity. Leading and coordinating the interagency requires creating a capacity within the GEC to analyze and counter state propaganda to develop best practices and prove innovative methods and approaches; understanding the breadth of USG activity in the messaging arena and the gaps and overlaps that exist to recommend mitigating measures; and helping to shape USG efforts to ensure the agencies and departments with messaging missions are following best practices and using innovative and effective methods.

Bureau Objective 2.2 : Build our allies' capacity and understanding of current and emerging foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation efforts.

- a. **Justification:** In order to encourage and foster capability within partner nations to counter harmful propaganda and disinformation, while amplifying and reducing duplication with U.S. government efforts, it is essential for the GEC to fill a coordination and facilitation role. Coordinating with and facilitating the efforts of foreign governments requires tracking and understanding the efforts of foreign nations to reduce duplicative initiatives; identifying and building the capacity of those already doing good work in this area, developing networks of partners engaged in countering propaganda; and sharing and promoting best practices across this community.

Bureau Objective 2.3: Preempt and expose propaganda and disinformation aimed at foreign audiences that undermine U.S. Government interests abroad.

- a. **Justification:** In order to execute the GEC's mandate in the 2017 NDAA § 1287, the Center shall expose state sponsored propaganda that undermines U.S. national interests abroad. Expanding on the act of exposing is strategic placement of U.S. Government messaging activities as a means of not waiting to expose and counter disinformation, but actually getting ahead of threat actors' disinformation.

Bureau Objective 2.4: Coordinate U.S. Government efforts to reduce vulnerability to disinformation in key countries by strengthening civil society, media, and independent voices, and improving governance and transparency in these countries.

- a. **Justification:** In order to encourage and foster capability within partner nations to counter harmful propaganda and disinformation, while amplifying and reducing duplication with U.S. government efforts, it is essential for the GEC to fill a coordination and facilitation role. Coordinating with and facilitating the efforts of The U.S. Government requires tracking and understanding the efforts of U.S. Government partners to reduce duplicative initiatives; identifying and building the capacity of those already doing good work in this area, developing networks of partners engaged in countering propaganda; and sharing and promoting best practices across this community.

4. Cross-cutting Management Objectives or Management Goal

Management Goal 3 Institutionalize practices that foster innovation and agility, and support progress toward achieving the GEC's mission.

- a. **Description and Linkages** This overarching goal is to ensure the GEC's personnel and resources are managed to allow it to achieve Bureau Goal 1 and Bureau Goal 2.

Risk The GEC relies on cooperative agreements with domestic implementing and foreign partners to execute its mission. The GEC seeks to recruit top talent from the private sector including marketing experts and data scientists. The GEC also seeks to leverage the latest technologies from the private sector to counter terrorist recruitment and foreign disinformation. If the GEC's resources and personnel are not managed properly it puts Bureau Goal 1 and Goal 2 directly at risk.

Management Objective 3.1: Recruit, engage, and employ the best available talent from domestic and international governments, the private sector, academia, and NGOs, by leveraging the GEC's hiring authorities.

Justification: Achieving the GEC's mission to counter propaganda and disinformation will require leveraging expertise from across government, tech and marketing sectors, academia, and NGOs.

Management Objective 3.2: Prioritize and deconflict the GEC's staff work load across state and non-state actor missions given that both mission sets draw from the same pool of employees to accomplish the work.

Justification: The Global Engagement Center is charged with addressing an imminent and critical national security challenge. It is undertaking this counter-state mission utilizing many of its CT/CVE focused staff. While the GEC is increasing its staffing numbers for the counter-state mission, it faces constraints which cannot be undertaken all at once due to capacity of human resources and State space requirements. The GEC must prioritize missions and work requirements of its staff in order to realistically task work across missions.

Management Objective 3.3: Strengthen GEC's opportunities and messaging capabilities of both domestic and foreign partners by shaping effective grants and sharing data analyses and evaluations for strong outcomes.

Justification: Achieving the GEC's mission to counter propaganda and disinformation will require supporting non-governmental partners and grant-making is an effective way of enabling those partners.

Management Objective 3.4: Foster an environment of collaboration and innovation in the GEC by creating new space and enhancing existing space for GEC personnel to work together.

Justification: As an entity made up of detailees from multiple Federal Agencies across government, experts from the private sector and academia, Personal Services Contractors, and staff from a variety of State Department bureaus, the GEC's ability to communicate and conduct its mission effectively requires its staff be collocated in an a collaborative, tech-friendly office.