

What You Need To Know | The Horowitz IG Report

“The Inspector General’s report now makes clear that the FBI launched an intrusive investigation of a U.S. presidential campaign on the thinnest of suspicions that, in my view, were insufficient to justify the steps taken. It is also clear that, from its inception, the evidence produced by the investigation was consistently exculpatory. Nevertheless, the investigation and surveillance was pushed forward for the duration of the campaign and deep into President Trump’s administration. In the rush to obtain and maintain FISA surveillance of Trump campaign associates, FBI officials misled the FISA court, omitted critical exculpatory facts from their filings, and suppressed or ignored information negating the reliability of their principal source. The Inspector General found the explanations given for these actions unsatisfactory.” – Attorney General Barr

Top Takeaways:

- The applications contained “numerous factual errors and omissions” and they failed to vet the information.
- There were “numerous serious performance failures” by those handling the FISA applications.
- The applications relied on the discredited work of Christopher Steele, despite its numerous factual inaccuracies and Steele receiving funding from the Democrats.

SIGNIFICANT ERRORS AND SERIOUS FAILURES

There were “numerous serious factual errors and omissions” in the FISA applications.

performing the factual accuracy review during the Woods process. However, as we discuss below, we identified (1) numerous serious factual errors and omissions in the applications, (2) a failure across three investigative teams to advise NSD

There were “serious performance failures” by those responsible for the FISA applications.

We concluded that the failures described above and in this report represent serious performance failures by the supervisory and non-supervisory agents with responsibility over the FISA applications. These

The IG “identified at least 17 significant errors or omissions in the Carter Page FISA applications.”

We identified at least 17 significant errors or omissions in the Carter Page FISA applications, and many additional errors in the Woods Procedures. These

The IG “did not receive satisfactory explanations” for the errors in the applications.

Procedures, we also did not receive satisfactory explanations for the errors or problems we identified. In most instances, the agents and supervisors told us that they either did not know or recall why the information was not shared with OI, that the failure to do so may have been an oversight, that they did not recognize at the time the relevance of the information to the FISA application, or that they did not believe the missing information to be significant. On this last point,

FBI personnel “fell far short” of the requirement that they ensure all information in a FISA application is accurate.

Our review found that FBI personnel fell far short of the requirement in FBI policy that they ensure that all factual statements in a FISA application are “scrupulously accurate.” We identified multiple instances in which factual assertions relied upon in the first FISA application were inaccurate, incomplete, or unsupported by appropriate documentation, based upon information the FBI had in its possession at the time the application was filed. We found that the problems we identified were primarily caused by the Crossfire Hurricane team failing to share all relevant information with OI and, consequently, the information was not considered by the Department decision makers who ultimately decided to support the applications.

COMEY, MCCABE, STRZOK, PAGE, AND OTHERS

McCabe, Comey, and others wanted to rely on Steele despite knowing of concerns that Steele was being funded by Clinton and the DNC.

Crossfire Hurricane team. We further determined that FBI officials at every level concurred with this judgment, from the OGC attorneys assigned to the investigation to senior CD officials, then General Counsel James Baker, then Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, and then Director James Comey. FBI leadership supported relying on Steele's reporting to seek a FISA order on Page after being advised of, and giving consideration to, concerns expressed by Stuart Evans, then NSD's Deputy Assistant Attorney General with oversight responsibility over OI, that Steele may have been hired by someone associated with presidential candidate Clinton or the DNC, and that the foreign intelligence to be collected through the FISA order would probably not be worth the "risk" of being criticized later for collecting communications of someone (Carter Page) who was "politically sensitive."

Comey and McCabe pushed for Steele's debunked reporting to be included in the Intelligence Community Assessment on the 2016 election, despite pushback from the CIA.

Starting in December 2016, FBI staff participated in an interagency effort to assess the Russian government's intentions and actions concerning the 2016 U.S. elections. We learned that whether and how to present Steele's reporting in the Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) was a topic of significant discussion between the FBI and the other agencies participating in it. According to FBI staff, as the interagency editing process for the ICA progressed, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) expressed concern about the lack of vetting for the Steele election reporting and asserted it did not merit inclusion in the body of the report. An FBI Intel Section Chief told us the CIA viewed it as "internet rumor." In contrast, as we describe in Chapter Six, the FBI, including Comey and McCabe, sought to include the reporting in the ICA. Limited information from the Steele reporting ultimately was presented in an appendix to the ICA.

There were concerns that Strzok and Page were bypassing the chain of command to advise McCabe.

from the team, but his decision was overruled by McCabe. Steinbach told us that he had concerns about Strzok and Lisa Page working together because he was aware of instances where they bypassed the chain of command to advise McCabe about case related information that had not been provided to Priestap or Steinbach.

The IG concluded that Bruce Ohr “committed consequential errors in judgement.”

We concluded that Ohr committed consequential errors in judgment by (1) failing to advise his direct supervisors or the DAG that he was communicating with Steele and Simpson and then requesting meetings with the FBI’s Deputy Director and Crossfire Hurricane team on matters that were outside of his areas of responsibility, and (2) making himself a witness in the investigation by meeting with Steele and providing Steele’s information to the FBI. As we

THE DISCREDITED STEELE DOSSIER

The FBI received information “raising significant questions” about Steele’s findings and “did not press Steele for information” about who was funding his work.

However, as we describe later, as the FBI obtained additional information raising significant questions about the reliability of the Steele election reporting, the FBI failed to reassess the Steele reporting relied upon in the FISA applications, and did not fully advise NSD or OI officials. We also found that the FBI did not aggressively seek to obtain certain potentially important information from Steele. For example, the FBI did not press Steele for information about the actual funding source for his election reporting work. Agents

Steele’s information played a “central and essential role” in the decision to seek the FISA order.

We determined that the Crossfire Hurricane team’s receipt of Steele’s election reporting on September 19, 2016 played a central and essential role in the FBI’s and Department’s decision to seek the FISA order. As noted above, when the team first sought to pursue a FISA order for Page in August 2016, a decision was made by OGC, OI, or both that more information was needed to support a probable cause finding that Page was an agent of a foreign power. As a result, FBI OGC ceased discussions with OI about a Page FISA order at that time.

The FBI did not have any information corroborating the allegations Steele made against Page.

We found that the FBI did not have information corroborating the specific allegations against Carter Page in Steele's reporting when it relied upon his reports in the first FISA application or subsequent renewal applications. OGC and NSD attorneys told us

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