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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE | OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

SUBJECT (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Management and Program Analyst (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)		CASE NUMBER 2018-009676
OFFICE CONDUCTING INVESTIGATION Washington Field Office		DOJ COMPONENT Federal Bureau of Investigation
DISTRIBUTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Field Office WFO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AIGINV <input type="checkbox"/> Component FBI <input type="checkbox"/> USA <input type="checkbox"/> Other	STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> OPEN <input type="checkbox"/> OPEN PENDING PROSECUTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CLOSED PREVIOUS REPORT SUBMITTED: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO Date of Previous Report:	

SYNOPSIS


The Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of the Inspector General (OIG) initiated this investigation upon the receipt of information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) concerning a memorandum that it received from another federal agency reporting possible unauthorized communication between Management and Program Analyst (MAPA) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter. The communication allegedly included email contact and possible meetings between (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The OIG conducted this investigation in coordination with the FBI.

Subsequent to receipt of the initial allegation, the OIG received information from the predating agency that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) may have provided the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with a non-public intelligence assessment to which he had access through his position (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

During the course of the investigation, the OIG found indications that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) may also have disclosed law enforcement or other sensitive, non-public information to other members of the media without authorization and

DATE January 17, 2023 (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)	SIGNATURE (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
PREPARED BY SENIOR SPECIAL AGENT DATE January 17, 2023 Russell W. Cunningham	SIGNATURE  Digitally signed by RUSSELL CUNNINGHAM Date: 2023.01.17 10:54:15 -05'00'
APPROVED BY SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	

OIG Form III-210/1 (04/15/2022)

Portions of the Report of Investigation may not be exempt under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a).

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may have accepted gifts from them on occasion, including free meals at restaurants. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The OIG investigation substantiated the allegation that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had unauthorized communications with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, a (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The OIG investigation further substantiated that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) provided Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU) law enforcement information and law enforcement sensitive (LES) information, as well as other non-public FBI information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter. For example:

- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosed to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Four minutes later, the reporter replied, "Thanks!" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) approximately one hour prior to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosure to the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) acknowledged he was (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he disclosed this information to the reporter, and admitted he was therefore not authorized to release the information about the FBI investigation to the media.
- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an internal email chain (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) discussing (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The email included an 8-page attachment, consisting of a memorandum (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) describing the operation, and including "talking points" and a timetable for press conferences to begin on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The memorandum states, in part,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The email string and internal FBI documents described (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) cautioned the reporter not to forward this email by stating, "FYSA - please don't forward. Thanks, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) See you next week." The email string reported (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The FBI Director publicly announced the operation three days later, on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). A subsequent search of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) revealed that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had forwarded to the reporter (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he forwarded this information to the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not know why he sent this information to the reporter and added that it was wrong for him to have done so. He further stated that it was "a huge mistake" to send the information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter.

The OIG concluded that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) actions violated FBI Media Relations at FBI HQ and in Field Offices Policy Guide, dated October 13, 2015, as well as FBI Public Affairs Policy Guide: Media Relations, External Communications, and Personal Use of Social Media (FBI 1002PG), issued on November 14, 2017. The policy guides prohibit FBI personnel other than those specifically designated from having official contacts with members of the media without authorization. Additionally, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosure of SBU and LES information violated the FBI Law Enforcement Sensitive (LES) Information Policy Guide dated December 15, 2014. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) actions also violated the Standards

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of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, which prohibit the improper use of nonpublic information. 5 C.F.R. § 2635.703(a).

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The OIG investigation also concluded that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) lacked candor when he falsely claimed to the OIG to have notified members of FBI Office of Public Affairs (OPA) of his contacts with and dissemination of information to members of the media. Under the FBI offense codes, lack of candor is defined to include "false statements, misrepresentations, the failure to be fully forthright, or the concealment or omission of a material fact/information."

Finally, given that: (1) these reporters sought contact with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) because of his position with the FBI; (2) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) met the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter at least five times in one calendar year for meals; (3) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted that the journalists he met with paid for the meals "more often than not"; (4) the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter paid for their lunch at the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) restaurant; and, (5) the current prices of food items and alcoholic beverages at these dining establishments make it basically impossible that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) could have consumed less than \$20 in food and drink on any given occasion, the OIG investigation concluded that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) violated the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, which prohibits executive branch employees from accepting certain gifts valued at more than \$20 per occasion or more than \$50 from a single source in the same calendar year. 5 C.F.R. § 2635.204(a).

The OIG reviewed information gathered from FBI records which showed that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had contact with several members of the media, including the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) where he initially formed a business relationship, and in some cases a personal relationship, with media members. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) his continued contacts with and dissemination of FBI information to the media were not authorized by OPA.

The OIG's review of FBI records found no documentary evidence that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had been authorized by OPA or anyone else in the FBI to communicate with members of the news media (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Additionally, current and former FBI OPA officials interviewed by the OIG had no recollection of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) ever making them aware that he had contacts with members of the media

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) except for (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG he was aware that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) knew the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, and that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sometimes got together socially with the reporter for meals or drinks, but was unaware of OPA giving (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) authorization to contact the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter or other reporters (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he had no reason to believe that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) discussed any non-public FBI information with any member of the media, including the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter.

During a voluntary interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted that he formed relationships with several journalists while working in FBI (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and that he occasionally met with them informally and answered questions they had about FBI personnel matters, policies, initiatives, and sometimes specific cases. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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claimed that he was encouraged by (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to form positive relationships with the press, to include correcting journalists who were planning to publish stories involving FBI operations that were not factually correct. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he did not receive extensive guidance in the acceptable boundaries for those relationships, and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) never counseled him to suggest that he had engaged in improper or unethical conduct. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted that he should have ceased direct contact with these journalists (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) but he stated that they continued to contact him, and that he felt he could meet with them based in part on their prior relationship. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

Immediately following his OIG interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) underwent a compelled administrative and national security interview with the FBI. The OIG did not participate in that interview. The FBI placed (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) on unpaid suspension later that same day.

Subsequently, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) voluntarily provided the OIG with his personal iPhone and iPad for forensic examination. The OIG's review of the devices showed that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had communicated with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter via the Signal application on his personal iPhone, and that the reporter had used Signal occasionally to ask (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) for sensitive, non-public information to either confirm or refute news stories that the reporter was working on. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not provide the requested information in writing within the Signal app, but he did indicate on more than one occasion that he would work on obtaining the requested information. In addition, there is a calendar entry on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) personal iPhone dated (b)(6); (b)(7)(C), stating, "Signal Audio [the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter]."

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the FBI issued a letter suspending (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) security clearance.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) However, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) retired from the FBI on September (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) 2019, and subsequently notified the OIG that he no longer consented to a polygraph examination.

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the FBI issued a letter permanently revoking (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) security clearance.

The OIG has completed its investigation and all criminal and administrative actions are complete. The OIG is providing this report to the FBI for its information.

Unless otherwise noted, the OIG applies the preponderance of the evidence standard in determining whether DOJ personnel have committed misconduct. The Merit Systems Protection Board applies this same standard when reviewing a federal agency's decision to take adverse action against an employee based on such misconduct. See 5 U.S.C. § 7701(c)(1)(B); 5 C.F.R. § 1201.56(b)(1)(ii).

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DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

Predication

The Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of the Inspector General (OIG) initiated this investigation upon the receipt of information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) concerning a memorandum that it received from another federal agency reporting possible unauthorized communication between Management and Program Analyst (MAPA) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter. The communication allegedly included email contact and possible meetings between (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The OIG conducted this investigation in coordination with the FBI.

Subsequent to receipt of the initial allegation, the OIG received information from the predicated agency that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) may have provided the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with a non-public intelligence assessment to which he had access through his position (b)(6); (b)(7)(C).

During the course of the investigation, the OIG found indications that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) may also have disclosed law enforcement or other sensitive, non-public information to other members of the media without authorization and may have accepted gifts from them on occasion, including free meals at restaurants.

Investigative Process

The OIG's investigative efforts consisted of the following:

Interviews of:

- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Management and Program Analyst, FBI

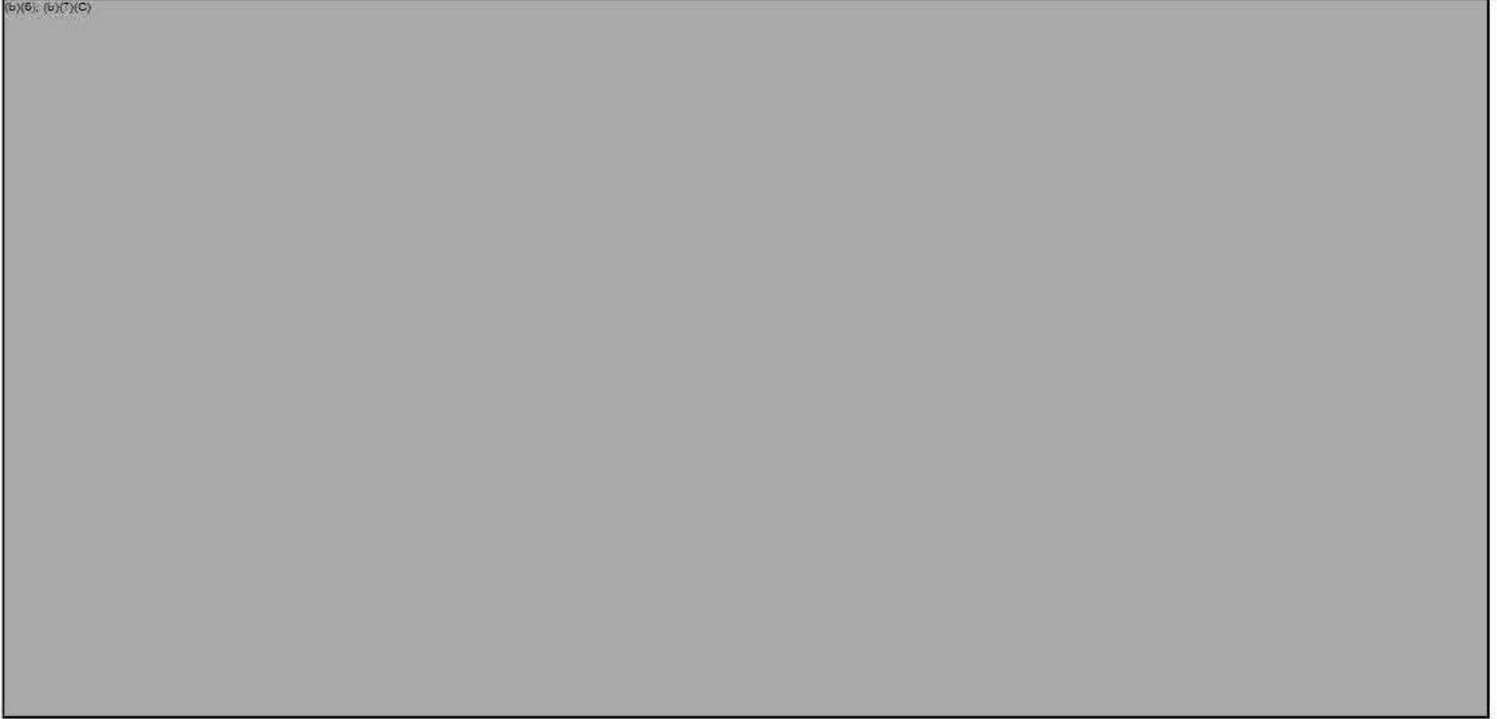
- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

Reviews of the following:

- FBI-302 reports of investigation
- Forensic examination of information contained in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) FBI issued cell phone
- Forensic examination of information contained in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) personal iPhone
- Forensic examination of information contained in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) personal iPad
- All sent, received, deleted, and/or archived electronic messages from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) UNET and FBINET email accounts and attachments, to include communication with the following media personnel: an (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- Open source searches on news articles

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Background



(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Unauthorized Contacts with Members of the Media and Improper Dissemination of Sensitive, Non-Public Information to Certain Reporters

The OIG's analysis of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) FBI communication records show that he had extensive contacts with members of the media, including meeting privately for lunch, drinks, or dinner. In addition, as discussed in greater detail later in this report, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosed sensitive, non-public and law enforcement sensitive information to members of the media in violation of the FBI's media policy, and occasionally allowed them to pay for meals when they met together.

FBI Policies on Contacts with Media

The FBI Media Policy in effect at the time of these events authorized only four employees at FBI Headquarters to speak directly to the media without prior authorization. Those four employees were the Director, Deputy Director, Associate Deputy Director, and the Assistant Director of the Office of Public Affairs (OPA). All other headquarters employees were required to coordinate with OPA prior to any contact with the media. In FBI Field Offices, only the head of the Field Office and a designated Public Affairs Officer were authorized to speak to the media. The policies required these authorized Field Office officials to coordinate with OPA on stories with national interest.

FBI Law Enforcement Sensitive (LES) Information Policy Guide, dated December 15, 2014, states that LES information must not be released to, or discussed with, the media and that release of information to the media must be coordinated with the FBI Office of Public Affairs (OPA).

In addition, FBI Media Relations at FBI HQ and in Field Offices Policy Guide, dated October 13, 2015, states:

At FBI headquarters, the Director, Deputy Director, Associate Deputy Director, Assistant Director for Office of Public Affairs, and Office of Public Affairs personnel designated by the Assistant Director are authorized to speak to the media. FBI executives, including the Executive Assistant Director, Assistant Directors, Deputy

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Assistant Directors, and Section Chiefs are authorized to speak to the media and must do so in coordination with the Office of Public Affairs at FBI headquarters. Other FBI headquarters personnel such as managers and SMEs, subject-matter experts, must only speak to the media at OPA, Office of Public Affairs' request in coordination with an approval by the Office of Public Affairs at FBI headquarters.

All employee contacts with the media, including those not authorized and not part of the employee's official duties, are governed by FD-291 FBI Employment Agreement, which states:

As consideration for my employment, or my continued employment, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), United States Department of Justice, I hereby agree to be governed by and to comply with the following provisions:

1. Unauthorized disclosure, misuse, or negligent handling of information contained in the files, electronic or paper, of the FBI or which I may acquire as an employee of the FBI could impair national security, place human life in jeopardy, result in the denial of due process, prevent the FBI from effectively discharging its responsibilities, or violate federal law. I understand that by being granted access to such information, I am accepting a position of special trust and am obligated to protect such information from unauthorized disclosure.
2. All information acquired by me in connection with my official duties with the FBI and all official material to which I have access remain the property of the United States of America. I will surrender upon demand by the FBI, or upon my separation from the FBI, all materials containing FBI information in my possession.
3. I will not reveal, by any means, any information or material from or related to FBI files or any other information acquired by virtue of my official employment to any unauthorized recipient without prior official written authorization by the FBI.
4. Prior to making any disclosure, I will seek a determination of whether the information may be disclosed. I agree to be bound by the guidelines governing prepublication review found in the FBI's Prepublication Review Policy Guide (0792PG) as those procedures may from time to time be amended. I understand that, in this context, "publication" includes disclosure of information to anyone by any means. I will submit for review the full text of any proposed disclosure addressed by the FBI's Prepublication Review Policy or this employment agreement as required by the policy at least thirty (30) working days prior to the proposed publication.

....

7. Violations of this employment agreement may constitute cause for revocation of my security clearance, subject me to criminal sanction, disciplinary action by the FBI, including dismissal, and subject me to personal liability in a civil action at law, including but not limited to injunctive relief, the imposition of a constructive trust, and the disgorging of any profits arising from any unauthorized publication or disclosure. In that regard, I hereby irrevocably assign all rights, title, and interests in any such profits to the United States.

PROHIBITED DISCLOSURES

Employees shall not disclose the following types of information to unauthorized recipients, except in the performance of official duties or as authorized under the Prepublication Review process.

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Information protected from disclosure by the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended;

Information that is classified or the disclosure of which could harm national security;

Information that reveals sensitive law enforcement, intelligence, counterintelligence, or counterterrorism techniques, sources, or methods of the FBI or any other governmental entity;

Information that would reveal grand jury material protected from disclosure by Rule 6(e) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure...

Information that relates to any sensitive operational details or the substantive merits of any ongoing or open investigation or case...

...Any other information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law, Executive Order, or regulation; or

Any other information that the FBI would have discretion to withhold from disclosure pursuant to civil discovery obligations, the Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act, or any other statute, law, or regulation.

The Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch describes a process by which an employee can resolve an appearance of personal conflict of interest. Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, § 2635.502(a) provides:

Where an employee knows that a particular matter involving specific parties is likely to have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interest of a member of his household, or knows that a person with whom he has a covered relationship is or represents a party to such matter, and where the employee determines that the circumstances would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question his impartiality in the matter, the employee should not participate in the matter unless he has informed the agency designee of the appearance problem and received authorization from the agency designee in accordance with paragraph(d) of this section.

Section 2635.502(a)(2) further states that "an employee who is concerned that circumstances other than those specifically described in this section would raise a question regarding his impartiality should use the process described in this section to determine whether he should or should not participate in a particular matter."

The Standards of Ethical Conduct also provide that "an employee shall not . . . allow the improper use of nonpublic information to further his own private interest or that of another, whether through advice or recommendation, or by knowing unauthorized disclosure." 5 C.F.R. § 2635.703(a).

[REDACTED] Relationship and Contacts with a [REDACTED] reporter

The OIG's review of unclassified FBI emails revealed frequent contact between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] reporter [REDACTED] including the following:

Outlook calendar invitations indicated that [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] reporter were scheduled to meet on [REDACTED] for [REDACTED] (sic)." The location of the meeting was listed as [REDACTED]

Approximately two weeks later, on [REDACTED] was among a group of FBI employees, which included [REDACTED] whom the [REDACTED] reporter queried regarding a story he was working on about [REDACTED]. An exchange of emails among that group showed

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that the FBI agreed to provide information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter "on background." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was not identified as the FBI employee tasked with providing information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter concerning the story.

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to The (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with the subject line: "5pm is GOOD!" There was no text in the body of the email.

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with the subject line: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) In the body of the email, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) wrote, "Well, your story made it into the FBI clips this morning – but sadly trumped by (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) news."

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with the subject line, "your question." The body of the email states, "Sorry, I have no info/details re: memo... good luck! Man, you were up early! (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) soon?"

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email with the subject line, "does 4:45 work for you?" Six hours later on the same day, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email stating "as much as I don't want to, I think I need to get home – can we push our (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) time (haha) to next week? (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an article from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) In the body of the email, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter stating "I've lost my phone."

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter stating, "Hey man – (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) can we try Monday? My apologies (again!) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email stating "Are you going to be to (b)(6) [sic] at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Thursday?? ;)"

An Outlook Calendar appointment that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with the subject line (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) indicates that an appointment was scheduled for (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) between 9:00 PM and 9:30 PM.

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with the subject line, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The body of the email states, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) If you call me, I can read to you (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter responded to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email. The body of the response included a 😊 emoji and the Internet link (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The link leads to a story authored by the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter and published on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) at 6:09 PM, titled (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The story states, in part:

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(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with the subject line, "hey". The email states, "I hate to ask (and I regret being unable) if we could postpone to another day this week? I got a project dumped on me, and it's going to keep me here, probably way past our meeting time!"

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent an email to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stating "I'm meeting with [the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter] at 4:45 at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) you're welcome to come with. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) – have a 3:15 meeting with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Ugh." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email with the message, "Sounds good. I can join you. In the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Mtg now." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email with a message stating, "Well, I just saw a picture online you posted from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) figured you weren't there, and canceled drinks with [the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter]!" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email with a message stating, "Oh, darn. I'm here. Reluctantly."

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) an email stating, in part, "Meeting [the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter] at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) at 4:45 PM – please join." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not respond to this email.

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email stating, "Were we on for tonight? Hope not, as I now need to get home. How about Friday?"

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email stating, "Big news – (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Wow!" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email with the subject line: "Let's take a needed vacay". The body of the email stated (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter a string of emails from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The emails included (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) new contact information (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) including his building and office number, and his secure and unsecure telephone numbers.

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On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email stating, "I have to go to a different floor to get access to the outside world – at any rate, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) is open tomorrow (Tuesday) (and it should be), want to meet there around 4:15 p.m.?? Hope so... sorry I'm not as easy to access! (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter responded to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email with a message stating, "That sounds good!" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter with a message stating, "Great! See you there!"

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an email stating, "No sign anywhere of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) He's OFF THE GRID! (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Not sure if he's still doing that." The reporter responded to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email with a message stating, "Thanks!"

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the reporter an email stating, "Sorry I've been out of touch... we home Wednesday for (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) birthday. Still reeling from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) oped (and did you see (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) less than enthusiastic reaction to it? Plus, the majority of comments on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) were negative. I still don't get what's going on. Trying to get together with you by coming down to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) for drinks – does Wed or Thurs this week work for you? I might also see if (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) can come? Or is that stupid? Hope you're well... (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the reporter an email stating, "As of almost an hour ago – (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

During his voluntary interview with the OIG, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) described the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter as a "sort of friend" whom he meets for drinks occasionally. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that they first met either during or prior to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) assignment to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that years ago, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) organized occasional happy hours bringing together public relations officials across DOJ with members of the news media; these meetings were referred to as (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and initially occurred approximately every two months, then gradually became less frequent. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter attended these gatherings, as did several other reporters from a variety of news outlets. Over the years (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) became friends with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter. They met on weekdays after work, at locations (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) They have not visited each other's houses. At the time of the interview, they had not met for several months.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter would sometimes tell (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) about a story he was working on, then ask, "what do you guys know about this?" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) could not recall particular stories that reporter asked him about, but said that usually it was whatever happened to be in the news. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) said that he might have forwarded to the reporter internal FBI emails concerning statements made by the Director, for instance, that were already a matter of public record, and he sometimes forwarded to both the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) links to published stories that were in the news.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that when (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) wanted to meet the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter at the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) he would sometimes send him an Outlook calendar invitation for (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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During his OIG interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reviewed emails the OIG had obtained from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) FBI UNet account concerning the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter's interest in the FBI's investigation of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The reporter published an article on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The article includes attributed quotes from government reports and from individuals, but also includes information that is attributed only to "[c]urrent and former U.S. officials." The third and fourth paragraph of the article state, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C).

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) acknowledged, based on an Outlook calendar invitation in his UNet account, that he met with the reporter prior to the publication of the story. He further acknowledged that the reporter must have asked him for input on the story, such as to confirm whether certain information was accurate. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) never reviewed draft articles written by the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, but the reporter would ask him questions prior to publication. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) denied telling the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter anything he was not "supposed to."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that in addition to emails, he and the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter would exchange calls, texts, and messages by phone. The reporter contacted (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) on both his government and his personal cell phone. When it was his personal cell phone, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) would sometimes use the messaging app "Signal" to communicate with the reporter. At first, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) claimed that he could not recall whether he or the reporter suggested the use of Signal. He further claimed that they did not specifically use it to be "covert." He later stated that the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter suggested using the app, and that probably occurred after (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) left (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he still had Signal on his personal cell phone, and he agreed to allow the OIG to examine his phone. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) believed that the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter was the only reporter with whom he communicated using a messaging app.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted to the OIG that he contacted the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter by email in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and offered to read to him a statement made by Director Wray to all FBI employees. When asked why he proposed to read the statement to the reporter over the phone as opposed to sending him a written copy of the text, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) claimed that he did not know, but he speculated that it might have had something to do with a time-sensitive deadline that the reporter was facing.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that his contacts with the reporter became much less frequent following his assignment to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). When asked specifically how often he met with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter while at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C), (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he did not know. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he felt badly about not meeting with the reporter more often but that he had been busy with work.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he "pulled back" and reduced the frequency of his contact with journalists and media personalities after Director Wray issued clear direction that FBI employees not assigned to the Office of Public Affairs should have no contact with the media. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) could not recall when that occurred. However, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reviewed an email dated (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he told (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) "Hi [first name] - We've been told we cannot talk to the press." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent that email to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) five weeks before (b)(6); (b)(7)(C).

When the OIG asked (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) about an email he sent to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stating that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) denied knowing who he meant by (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). He was asked if that referred to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C).

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) claimed that it did not, as he had never heard of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) denied supplying the reporter with an image of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). He speculated that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) might have been a mutual friend that he and the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter

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both knew, but who was out of touch. When advised that the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter was the first reporter to publish an article concerning (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and that the article was published after (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email exchange with the reporter, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) insisted that he did not discuss the matter with the reporter, although he admitted that the reporter "probably" asked him about (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reviewed an email he sent to the reporter on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

the OIG

determined that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was not announced publicly until (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email also referenced the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

the OIG determined that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

was announced

publicly on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he

probably shared that information with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter after reviewing FBI emails announcing the changes.

He said that was the type of information that he felt comfortable sharing with reporters without being asked.

However, he could not recall whether his email was in response to a question from reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted

that he sent this email after Director Wray's directive was issued forbidding contact with the media. However, he

said that Director Wray's policy did not "register" with him until he went to a (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) meeting with Director Wray (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reviewed an email dated (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) in which he forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an internal email chain within (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) discussing (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The email included an 8-page attachment, consisting of a memorandum from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) describing the operation, and including "talking points" and a timetable for press conferences to begin on

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The memorandum states, in part,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

In his email message to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter concerning (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated, "FYSA - please don't forward. Thanks (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) See you next week."

When the OIG asked (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) why he forwarded that email and attachment, and thereby notified the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter of the operation before the date scheduled for the first press conference, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that it was standard practice during this annual enforcement operation, and that video journalists often were invited in advance to film enforcement actions as they took place. He further claimed that it was common at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to forward memos similar to the attachment to trusted journalists, despite being labelled "for internal use only," as it was the most efficient way to convey the information correctly and completely. When asked why he felt it necessary to share this information with the reporter three days prior to the national press conference, and four days prior to the field press conferences, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "giving the reporters a heads up." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) identified (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

as someone who did this sort of thing as well. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

could verify his characterization of allowable dissemination of information of this type.

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(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter has never told him the names of other individuals within the FBI whom he cites as unattributed sources of information in his articles, but (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that his "gut" tells him that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) is probably one.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) used government databases and documents to assist the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) he had access to several sensitive information databases, and the FBI network, all of which contain sensitive national security information up to the Top Secret classification level. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he used certain databases more when he "was upstairs" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and that he has used the system to check names, but not on a regular basis. If he saw a terrorist's name in the news, he might look him up in one of the databases.

When the OIG asked (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) whether it was possible that he printed information from any of the databases to supply to reporters, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) initially stated, "No. I would say no. I wouldn't have done that. If I did something like that... wow." Subsequently, when asked whether it was possible that he printed information from a database, met soon thereafter with a reporter, and then that reporter published a story which referenced the information that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) printed from the database, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "I don't think so... It's possible, but not intentional." He then stated that he would not have released classified information but could have released information that could have been verified in another way, such as open source data.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he remembered discussing something with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter concerning a (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) that reporter was interested in, but he could not specifically recall (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). However, he did recall that the reporter asked him whether (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

When asked whether he gave the reporter any official information concerning (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated "I don't think so." When asked whether he gave The (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter any government documents containing sensitive, non-public information concerning (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated, "I don't recall doing that either." When asked whether he could say with absolute certainty that he did not give the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter any government documents, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated, "No, because I just seem to be in a mental fog about a lot of this stuff."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) later admitted to the OIG that it was possible that he shared government documents containing sensitive, non-public information with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter on three or four occasions, but nothing that was classified. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he knew he did not release classified information, because "that's the bright line, for me." He stated that it was possible that he might have given the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an FBI Electronic Communication (EC). (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that "we" - meaning he and other FBI employees - would sometimes pass to reporters, information that was marked "For Official Use Only," but not "Secret" or "NOFORN."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reviewed a tweet that the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter posted on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) concerning information he credited to "sources" saying that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) denied being a source of information for that tweet. He claimed that the reporter independently found out (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and the reporter informed (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) of that. When questioned further, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated, "I may have looked up a name, because I've looked up lots of names." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he did not specifically recall looking up the name (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). He stated that it was possible that he met with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter prior to the release of the reporter's tweet, and it is possible that he told the reporter that he "checked around" concerning (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted that if an audit were conducted of his database searches at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) there would probably be, on two or three occasions, a correlation between the searches, contact with the media, and subsequent publishing of

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information by a journalist related to the information that he searched. He said that the last time we would see that correlation would be six to eight months prior to his OIG interview. He claimed not to be able to recall specifics, beyond the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) then said that the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter might have asked him whether someone was a terrorist, and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) might have "looked him up" in one of the databases (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). He later clarified that he "probably did look him up." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he then would probably "try to steer him [the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter] in the right direction... that would be appropriate with the relationship we had."

The last time that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) met with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter was in approximately (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) received a subsequent message from the reporter stating something to the effect that he (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had fallen off the radar.

Following his interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) provided the OIG with his personal iPhone and iPad and consented to a search of those devices. The OIG's Cyber Investigations Office (CIO) extracted all data from those devices, whereupon they were returned to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). Subsequent to that, the FBI located and provided the OIG with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) FBI cell phone, which was mirrored and examined as well.

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) personal iPhone, messages were found between (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter within the Signal messaging application. A review of the data within the application shows the following:

- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) set the "disappearing message time" for all Signal app messages on his personal iPhone to 12 hours.
- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disabled the "disappearing message time" feature in the Signal app.
- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter sent (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) a message stating, in part, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) "I'm super skeptical." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "Will check this ayem (sic) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and send you a yes no or not sure email." On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C), the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter sent (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) a message stating, "... (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) story is wrong. An amazing mistake on their part." On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "And yet it makes perfect sense in the scheme of things - and big picture."
- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the reporter sent (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) a message stating, in part, "...quick work-related question: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Who is he, and is it legit (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded with a message stating, "I was wondering about (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) but I don't go back to work till Thursday. I have a suspicion (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter responded, "I totally agree with you!" On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent a message to the reporter stating, "Long answer to your question will need to wait till we get together." The reporter responded with "Ha sounds good! I'm gone all next week, but let's get together the week after!" On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent a message to the reporter stating, "Where are you going? And, yes!" There are no further messages on this thread.
- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the reporter sent a message to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stating, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Is that real? Wow." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "I've been in training and don't know." The reporter responded, "Training for what?? (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the reporter sent a message stating, "Hi! I feel like I haven't seen you in forever. Can we do drinks or dinner soon??... Question: Did you by any chance get this (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) that went out last night about (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not respond to this message.

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- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the reporter sent a message stating, "Hi!! How was (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Question: do you have any insight (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Who knows if true." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not respond to this message.

In addition, there is a calendar entry on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) personal iPhone dated (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stating, "Signal Audio [the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter]."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) made similar admissions of misconduct during an FBI Administrative National Security Interview

Following the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) the OIG reviewed FBI analytical work product and statements made by (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) during a compelled interview by the FBI (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) concerning his relationship with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter. The interview was conducted during an internal FBI administrative security investigation. The OIG did not take part in that interview. During the interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted to making several disclosures of sensitive, non-public information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, including the following:

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to the reporter - (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) provided the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter information, which (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) obtained from the FBI (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) When asked why he provided this information to the reporter, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated there is a need for the public to know about these (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) however, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not disagree when told it was the opinion of the interviewing (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) that disclosure to the media is the responsibility of the agency (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email exchange between (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and the reporter - At 3:59 p.m., (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosed to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter the FBI had opened a (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) investigation regarding the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The reporter responded to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email four minutes later with the comment, "Thanks!" A subsequent review of Sentinel identified file (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) investigation in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) regarding (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) which had been opened by the FBI (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) approximately one hour prior to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosure to the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) acknowledged he was assigned to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he disclosed this information to the reporter, and admitted he was therefore not authorized to release the information about the FBI investigation to the media.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to the reporter - (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an FBI email string which included (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) documents marked "for internal use only." The email string and internal FBI documents described (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) cautioned the reporter not to forward this email by stating, "FYSA - please don't forward. Thanks, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) See you next week." The email string reported that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The FBI Director publicly announced the operation three days later, on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) A subsequent search of Sentinel revealed that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had forwarded to the reporter (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) attached to file (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) again confirmed he was assigned to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he forwarded this information to the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not know why he sent this information to the reporter and added that it was wrong for him to have done so. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) advised even though he had left (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) he was still included in distribution emails meant for (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) employees (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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added it never occurred to him to ask to be removed from the distribution list and it was "a huge mistake" to send the information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to the reporter (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an FBI email string, including a reply (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) received from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) alerted the reporter, at 3:34 p.m., that a public announcement would be made by the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) regarding (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). A subsequent review of Sentinel revealed (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosure to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter was directly linked to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) provided information to the reporter about the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) investigation so the reporter could have a "heads up" about the press release (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) confirmed the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter would frequently ask "a lot of things to confirm stories." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) also mentioned he may have told (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) about some of his contacts with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to the reporter - (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an FBI email string which included (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) regarding (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) cautioned the reporter, "Please don't forward!" Asked directly if his instructions to not forward his email was an acknowledgement that he knew it was wrong for him to forward the email, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) replied that he operated under the opinion that if he saw something of interest to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, then (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) would "send it along." In a moment of reflection, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated he should not have forwarded this information outside the FBI.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) email from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to the reporter (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) emailed the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) - he got caught up in work." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated his use of the word (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was not a reference (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). Initially (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) could not state why he used the term (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) in his email to the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) subsequently claimed he may have been referring to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and added this was a term reporters used.

The FBI report continued:

"Over the years (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) has met with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) [reporter] at restaurants and bars. Although he could not provide exact details, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated he may have printed documents from FBI computer systems and handed them to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) [reporter] during in-person meetings, but (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) could not recall what any of the documents contained or what was on the documents. After reflecting for a period of time (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) speculated the printed documents he may have given to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) [reporter] were of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C).

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Relationship and Contacts with a (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The OIG's review of unclassified FBI emails and information extracted from his personal iPhone revealed frequent contact between (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C), including plans to meet for meals.

During his OIG interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he thought he had met with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) for lunch possibly one time following his assignment (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). They kept in touch after (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) worked with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). They kept in touch after that and would occasionally meet for meals or coffee. When a story broke that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was interested in, she would call everyone she knew for comment, including (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). He described her as "very persistent."

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(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that when he met with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) would sometimes accompany him. The (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) would "always" have specific questions for (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). Even if they initially discussed meeting for coffee for ten minutes, it would always turn into a long lunch.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) denied providing the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) with any government documents; he denied ever being one of the unnamed sources in her articles; and he denied being the source of non-public information cited in her articles.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) then told the OIG that it was possible that he had given (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) information that was not in the public domain but would not be out of the range of what "we would normally talk to reporters about."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) defined "normally" as what he would have shared with reporters (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he struggled "with these people" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) dealing with them and their persistent questions. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated, "I would try to be helpful to them when I could, but I was by no means funneling information to them on a regular basis."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reviewed an email dated (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he told (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) "Hi [first name] - We've been told we cannot talk to the press." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "Okay. No worries. I respect that. Can we still get together as friends?" to which (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) replied, "The day they say I can't have a reporter friend is the day I walk out the door!" (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he sent that email at a time that he was trying to distance himself from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) as she had become "a complete and total pest and would call ten times a day at minimum." When asked what recent media policy instruction he referenced in his email, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) could not recall, but he speculated that it had something to do with a directive issued after "leaking" occurred concerning the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) investigation or some other matter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that his understanding of the policy was that "you really shouldn't be talking to reporters unless you know what you're doing." (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) continued by stating that he had (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) but he acknowledged that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he was meeting and exchanging emails with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). Although he claimed that he sometimes notified someone at OPA, such as (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) of his meetings with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and others, he stated that he "didn't make [it] a practice" to notify them in advance of any specific FBI matter that he believed interested the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) said that after a meeting with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) or the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, he would advise someone at OPA of topics discussed at the meeting only if he happened to engage in conversation with them, either through randomly encountering them at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) or through occasional contacts between (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) OPA to keep in touch, and only then "if it came up in conversation," but he did not make a point of initiating those notifications himself.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he last met with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) for lunch (either in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) in approximately (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). They have had no conversations since then, although she might have sent him an email stating something to the effect of "well, where are you?"

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Relationship and Contacts with a (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter

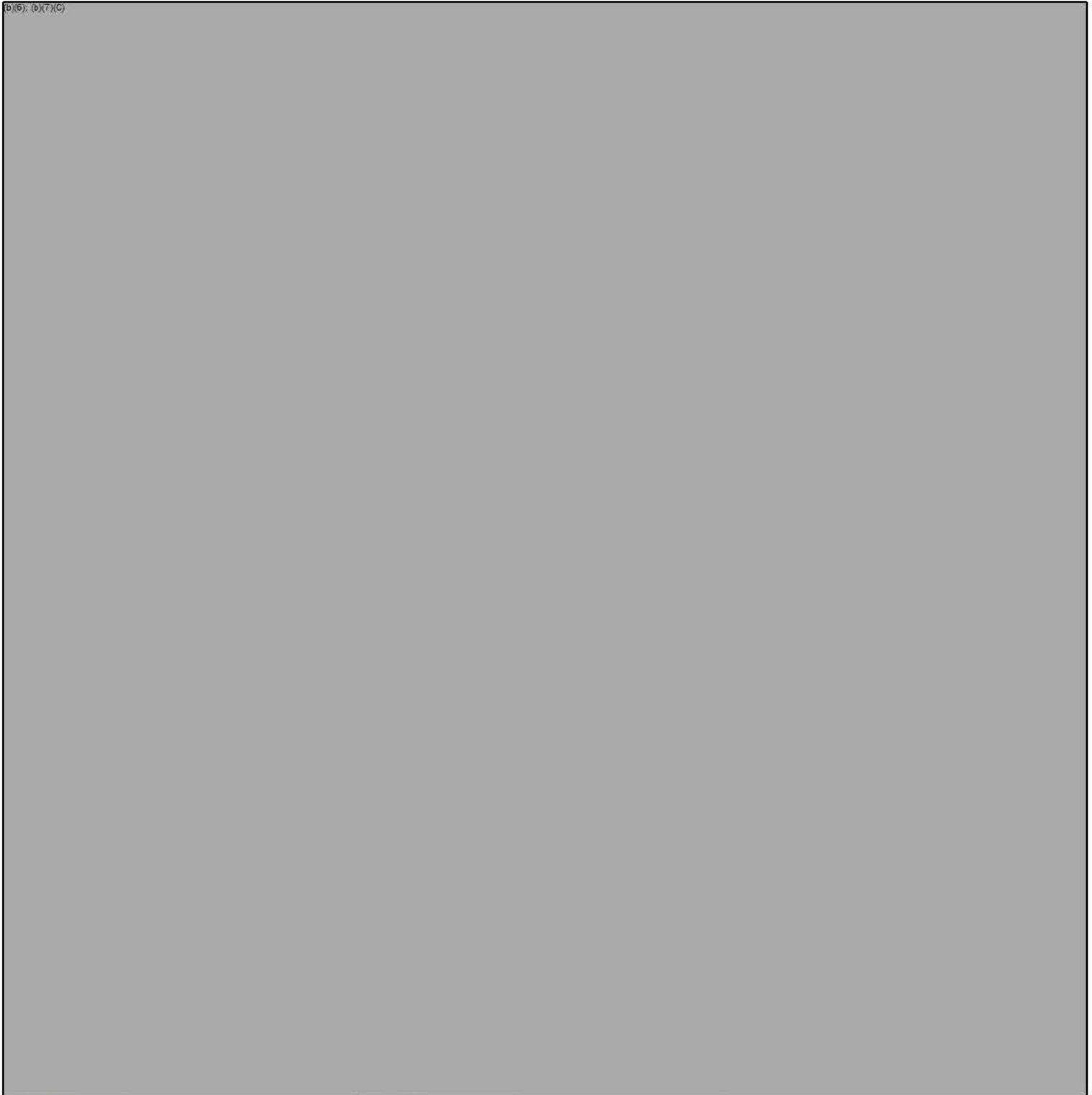
The OIG's review of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) emails revealed communication with a (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter. A review of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) personal iPhone also showed two messages from the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) within the Signal App, but no indication that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded to them. The (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter did not ask for any official information in either message.

During his voluntary OIG interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he met the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when a group of media representatives and FBI employees went out for drinks

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and dinner. Shortly thereafter, the reporter began calling [REDACTED] to ask him questions. [REDACTED] stated that he met with the reporter for lunch "once or twice." He described the [REDACTED] reporter as "very persistent," and claimed that he "stopped talking to him" after possibly two meetings.



[REDACTED] reviewed an email dated [REDACTED] sent four months after [REDACTED] in which [REDACTED] told the [REDACTED] reporter, "You're on TV right now, looking and sounding good. Figuring you're all memo all

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the time. I didn't bug you about coming out to [REDACTED] for lunch. Maybe Monday or Tuesday of next week. Have a good weekend. [REDACTED] claimed that they did not meet, and (probably) have not met since. [REDACTED] stated that he "stopped engaging" with the reporter and ignored his efforts to establish contact. [REDACTED] claimed that an audit of his email and phone use would verify the lack of contact, but if it showed otherwise, he would "stand corrected."

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] may have met with the [REDACTED] reporter once or twice soon after [REDACTED] but he does not specifically recall that happening. He has had no contact with the reporter since then.

[REDACTED] Relationship and Contacts with [REDACTED]

The OIG's review of [REDACTED] emails revealed communication with [REDACTED]

During his OIG interview, [REDACTED] stated that he met the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. He described her as a "good reporter, good person." They shared a bond because [REDACTED] but they had not met before [REDACTED] employment with the FBI.

[REDACTED] told the OIG that he had lunch with [REDACTED] "a couple of times," but he had not seen her for two or more years prior to his OIG interview. The [REDACTED] never asked [REDACTED] for information beyond an occasional "well, what do you know about that?"

[REDACTED] told the OIG that he met with [REDACTED] more frequently in [REDACTED] than in subsequent years. He stated that it is possible that he gave her FBI documents during that time. If so, they were probably along the lines of a Director's statement to all FBI employees, or personnel related changes. He may have given her other government documents, as well to assist her in developing her stories, but not in a "nefarious" way.

[REDACTED] reviewed an email exchange he had with [REDACTED] dated [REDACTED] with the subject line, [REDACTED]. The exchange included an email from [REDACTED] stating, "Hope you are ok! Miss talking with you. Let's try for lunch soon." Other messages in the exchange discussed [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] told the OIG that he could not recall what the subject line of the email exchange referred to.

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(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Claims to have Notified the Office of Public Affairs Were Refuted

When the OIG asked (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) whether he notified anyone at the FBI's Office of Public Affairs of his contacts with the media (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he often did. He claimed that those he spoke to included (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). Although he "possibly" sent them something in writing, the contact more likely occurred if he "ran into them in the hall," meaning that he did not proactively initiate the contact and notification. The OIG review of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) FBI emails revealed no evidence that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) formally requested permission from OPA prior to meeting with his media contacts, or that he notified OPA in writing after the fact, in order to summarize what was discussed.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that during the last year of his employment, when he had contact with media representatives he would have notified (b)(6); (b)(7)(C), either by telephone or email or "something." When asked whether (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) would recall these notifications, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "possibly... yeah, I think she would."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he realized that he had an obligation to report contacts with the media. He also stated, "and I'm sure that I've failed that test."

During a voluntary interview (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that she had no specific recollection of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) notifying her of any meetings or lunches he had with journalists or other media officials, or of any information he may have provided to journalists through other means. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that although there was no prohibition against FBI personnel meeting with journalists when (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was employed by the FBI, particularly if they had an existing relationship formed through official channels such as prior employment with the FBI's Office of Public Affairs, all employees were required to notify her of contacts with journalists in which non-public FBI information was discussed.

Subsequent to the interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the OIG an email stating, "I have gone through my emails with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) during the time period you suggested - (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) I did not find emails in which he notified me of contact he had/was planning to have with the media. I also do not recall ever receiving a call or voicemail from him about contact either."

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During a voluntary interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he has known (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) since (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). He was aware that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) knew the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, and that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sometimes got together socially with the reporter for meals or drinks. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) also developed a personal relationship with the same (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter when (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had, in the past, invited (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to join him and the reporter for meals, but due to scheduling conflicts (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) never actually did so. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not know whether (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had a personal relationship with any other member of the media.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he had no reason to believe that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) discussed any non-public FBI information with any member of the media, including the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he understood that before (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) met with journalists to discuss FBI matters, they needed prior authorization from the FBI National Press Office, within the Office of Public Affairs. When (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) he did not receive such requests directly, but he did review them. Prior to granting authorization for such meetings and discussions, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) would coordinate with the appropriate field office, as well as the FBI's Office of General Counsel and the DOJ Office of Public Affairs. Ultimately the Assistant Director for the FBI's OPA made the final decision whether to approve the meeting.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he did not see (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) or speak to him much after (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The last time he spoke to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was shortly after (b)(6); (b)(7)(C).

During a voluntary interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) recalled that he saw (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) perhaps once (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when they attended a conference together in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C).

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that approximately two or three times per year between (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) there were events where all DOJ officials involved in the public affairs branch of their respective component agencies met informally for drinks and food with members of the media. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) referred to these gatherings as "mandatory fun." He stated that the purpose of the events was to foster good relations with journalists throughout the media, and it was understood that government employees were not to "talk shop" or discuss non-public information with the journalists. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) could not recall whether (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) attended these events, but thought he probably did.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) he kept in touch with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) occasionally via telephone and email.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6);
(b)(7)(C)

(b)(5);

(b)(6):

During

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(5); (b)(7)(C)

(b) (5) DPP, (b) (7)(C)

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the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter at the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). He also met with other journalists at other unspecified dining locations.

Email evidence shows that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) planned to meet, with no subsequent indication of a cancellation, with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter for meals on the following dates:

- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
-
-
-
-

The OIG reviewed the menu prices in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) for restaurants that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted visiting with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter. At the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) entrees cost \$18 to \$32, and alcoholic beverages cost between \$9 and \$21 each. At (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) tuna tartare cost \$25 and a glass of Tempranillo wine cost \$16. Other wines ranged from \$14 to \$25 per glass. Appetizers were in the \$15 range, and entrees went from \$34 for chicken to \$115 for porterhouse steak. At the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) also located in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) a glass of Tempranillo wine cost \$15 per glass. Cheese and meat boards ranged from \$35 to \$65, and desserts were \$24 to \$32. Finally, at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) bottles of wine cost between \$25 and \$85. Appetizers cost between \$15 and \$28. The least expensive entrees were about \$20, but others cost between \$40 and \$60.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted to the OIG that he met with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter for a meal at the restaurant (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). The following day, on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter three emails, which stated in part: "Delicious lunch! And company!"; "Thanks, too, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)"; and "thanks again for the great lunch! Best, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)". The OIG infers from the email correspondence that the reporter paid for the lunch. The restaurant at that location permanently closed in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) but historical menu information revealed that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) a three-course lunch prix-fixe with a glass of house wine cost \$45. Other lunch entrees cost between \$19 for a burger and \$38 for lamb.

Title 5 CFR § 2635.202 (General prohibition on solicitation or acceptance of gifts) states:

(a) *Prohibition on soliciting gifts.* Except as provided in this subpart, an employee may not, directly or indirectly:

- (1) Solicit a gift from a prohibited source; or
- (2) Solicit a gift to be given because of the employee's official position.

(b) *Prohibition on accepting gifts.* Except as provided in this subpart, an employee may not, directly or indirectly:

- (1) Accept a gift from a prohibited source; or
- (2) Accept a gift given because of the employee's official position.

Title 5 CFR § 2635.203 (Definitions) states in part:

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(b) *Gift* includes any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value. It includes services as well as gifts of training, transportation, local travel, lodgings and meals, whether provided in-kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred.

(e) *Given because of the employee's official position.* A gift is given because of the employee's official position if the gift is from a person other than an employee and would not have been given had the employee not held the status, authority, or duties associated with the employee's Federal position.

Title 5 CFR § 2635.204 (Exceptions to the prohibition for acceptance of certain gifts) states in part:.

Subject to the limitations in § 2635.205, this section establishes exceptions to the prohibitions set forth in § 2635.202(a) and (b). Even though acceptance of a gift may be permitted by one of the exceptions contained in this section, it is never inappropriate and frequently prudent for an employee to decline a gift if acceptance would cause a reasonable person to question the employee's integrity or impartiality. . . .

(a) *Gifts of \$20 or less.* An employee may accept unsolicited gifts having an aggregate market value of \$20 or less per source per occasion, provided that the aggregate market value of individual gifts received from any one person under the authority of this paragraph (a) does not exceed \$50 in a calendar year.

Given that: (1) these reporters sought contact with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) because of his position with the FBI; (2) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) met the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter at least five times in one calendar year for meals; (3) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) admitted that the journalists he met with paid for the meals "more often than not"; (4) the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter paid for their lunch at the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) restaurant; and, (5) the current prices of food items and alcoholic beverages at these dining establishments make it implausible that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) would have consumed less than \$20 in food and drink on any given occasion, the OIG concludes that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) violated the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, which prohibits executive branch employees from accepting certain gifts valued at more than \$20 per occasion or more than \$50 from a single source in the same calendar year.

OIG's Conclusion

The OIG found that that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) violated FBI Media Relations at FBI HQ and in Field Offices Policy Guide, dated October 13, 2015, as well as FBI Public Affairs Policy Guide: Media Relations, External Communications, and Personal Use of Social Media (FBI 1002PG), dated November 14, 2017, and 5 C.F.R. § 2635.703(a) when he had unauthorized contact with the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter and other members of the media. The policy guides prohibit FBI personnel, other than those specifically designated, from having official contacts with members of the media without authorization. In doing so, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) also violated the terms of the FBI Employment Agreement, FD-291, concerning contacts with and disclosures to the media. In addition, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) violated ethics regulations which prohibit executive branch employees from allowing the improper use of nonpublic information to further their own private interests or those of another.

The OIG investigation substantiated the allegation that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) provided Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU) law enforcement information and other non-public government information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter and other members of the media without authorization. For example:

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- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosed to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter the FBI (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) A review of Sentinel identified (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) which had been opened (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) approximately one hour prior to (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) disclosure to the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) acknowledged he was (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he disclosed this information to the reporter, and admitted he was therefore not authorized to release the information about the FBI investigation to the media.
- On (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) forwarded to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter an internal email chain within (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) discussing (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) which was an enforcement action concerning (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The email included an 8-page attachment, consisting of a memorandum from (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) describing the operation, and including "talking points" and a timetable for press conferences to begin on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The memorandum states, in part,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The email string and internal FBI documents described an (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) cautioned the reporter not to forward this email by stating, "FYSA - please don't forward. Thanks (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) See you next week." The email string reported (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) The FBI Director publicly announced the operation three days later, on (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) A subsequent search of Sentinel revealed that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had forwarded to the reporter (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) attached to file (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) confirmed he was (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he forwarded this information to the reporter. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not know why he sent this information to the reporter and added that it was wrong for him to have done so. He further stated that it was "a huge mistake" to send the information to the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The OIG investigation concluded that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) lacked candor when he claimed to have notified members of FBI OPA of his contacts with and dissemination of information to members of the media.

The Offense Codes Applicable to the FBI's Internal Disciplinary Process punish FBI employees for "lack of candor." Offense Code 2.5 (Lack of Candor – No Oath) prohibits "[k]nowingly providing false information when making a verbal or written statement, not under oath, to a supervisor, another Bureau employee in an authoritative position,

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or another governmental agency, when the employee is questioned about his conduct or the conduct of another person." Offense Code 2.6 (Lack of Candor - Under Oath) prohibits "[k]nowingly providing false information in a verbal or written statement made under oath." Under both offense codes, lack of candor is defined to include "false statements, misrepresentations, the failure to be fully forthright, or the concealment or omission of a material fact/information."

When the OIG asked (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) whether he notified anyone at the FBI's Office of Public Affairs of his contacts with the media (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he often did. He claimed that those he spoke to included (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). Although he "possibly" sent them something in writing, the contact more likely occurred if he "ran into them in the hall," meaning that he did not proactively initiate the contact and notification. When asked by the OIG who at the FBI/OPA he would have notified about his contacts with the media during the year prior to his OIG interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). When asked by the OIG how he would have notified (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) responded, "Either by phone or an email or something. I would've let her know."

The OIG review of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) FBI emails revealed no evidence that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) formally requested permission from OPA prior to meeting with his media contacts, or that he notified OPA in writing after the fact, in order to summarize what was discussed.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was aware that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) knew the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter, and that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sometimes got together socially with the reporter for meals or drinks. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) also developed a personal relationship with the same (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter when (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had, in the past, invited (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) to join him and the reporter for meals, but due to scheduling conflicts (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) never actually did so. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) did not know whether (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) had a personal relationship with any other member of the media. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that he had no reason to believe that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) discussed any non-public FBI information with any member of the media, including the (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) reporter.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that the one time she was in direct contact with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) was during a single telephone call in approximately (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) when he called her and expressed interest in (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that she was personally unaware of any meetings that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) may have had with journalists. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) never contacted her either before or after any such meetings if they occurred.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that during the last year of his employment, when he had contact with members of the media he would have notified (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) either by telephone or email or "something."

During a voluntary interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) told the OIG that she had no specific recollection of (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) notifying her of any meetings or lunches he had with journalists or other media officials, or of any information he may have provided to journalists through other means. Subsequent to the interview, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) sent the OIG an email stating, "I have gone through my emails with (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) during the time period you suggested -- (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) I did not find emails in which he notified me of contact he had/was planning to have with the media. I also do not recall ever receiving a call or voicemail from him about contact either."

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he realized that he had an obligation to report contacts with the media. He also stated, "and I'm sure that I've failed that test."

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Finally, the OIG investigation concluded that when [REDACTED] allowed journalists to pay for meals at restaurants, he violated the CFR prohibitions on the acceptance of gifts (Title 5 CFR § 2635.201-204) and that these gifts had an aggregate market value of more than \$20 each and more than \$50 in a single calendar year.

[REDACTED]

On [REDACTED] the FBI issued a letter suspending [REDACTED] security clearance.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

retired from the FBI on [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 2019, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

the FBI issued a letter revoking [REDACTED] security clearance.

The OIG has completed its investigation and all criminal and administrative actions are complete. The OIG is providing this report to the FBI for its information.

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