

Office of the Director of National Intelligence



Rebecca Richards

Chief, Civil Liberties, Privacy & Transparency (CLPT)

Rebecca “Becky” Richards is Chief, ODNI Civil Liberties, Privacy, and Transparency Office. In this role, she serves as an independent, primary advisor to the Director of National Intelligence and other senior DNI officials to ensure that the Intelligence Community’s missions, programs, activities, policies, and technologies protect privacy and civil liberties. She serves as ODNI’s primary liaison with the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (PCLOB), the designated ODNI Senior Agency Official for Privacy, and ODNI’s Information Sharing Environment Privacy Official. She also leads the effort to implement the Principles of Intelligence Transparency for the Intelligence Community.

Ms. Richards has served as the first Director of Civil Liberties and Privacy at the National Security Agency (NSA) since February 2014. As an advisor to the Director of NSA, she enhances decision making to ensure that civil liberties and privacy protections are incorporated into the Agency’s operations, technologies, and policies. In addition, Ms. Richards is NSA’s first Transparency Officer, a dual role that reflects a commitment to meet national security challenges while also inspiring the trust of the American people. She finds effective ways to communicate with the public about the value of signals intelligence and the tools NSA needs to conduct its mission.

Previously, Ms. Richards served for almost 10 years in a variety of privacy-related leadership positions at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), including Senior Director for Privacy Compliance. She advanced DHS privacy initiatives by creating the Privacy Threshold Analysis, establishing extensive guidance on conducting Privacy Impact Assessments, developing educational programs for the workforce, and conducting audits of privacy compliance to meet the nation’s international agreements and commitments. For these efforts, she was honored in 2008 with the Secretary of DHS Silver Medal.

Ms. Richards’ long career in the privacy field also includes positions at TRUSTe, the independent non-profit privacy seal program, and at the U.S. Department of Commerce, where she began her federal service as an international trade specialist, providing input to the landmark U.S.-EU Safe Harbor Accord. Ms. Richards received the rank of Meritorious Executive in the Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service in 2017 for her work at NSA in civil liberties, privacy, and transparency.

Ms. Richards earned a Master’s degree in international trade and Investment policy and a Master’s degree in business administration from George Washington University. She received her B.A. from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she graduated magna cum laude. She holds certifications from the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP), the world’s largest information privacy organization. Ms. Richards was a contributing author to the book “Building a Privacy Program: A Practitioner’s Guide.”

