

Air Force Office of Special Investigations CI Program

AFOSI is chartered under Air Force instruction to operate a confidential informant (or source) program consisting of people who volunteer to provide vital information used to initiate or resolve criminal investigations, espionage matters, and counterintelligence issues. AFOSI's confidential informant program is very similar to programs utilized by other military investigative agencies, as well as U.S. law enforcement entities. The use of human informants is merely one tool in a wide array of investigative methods available to assist law enforcement in combating criminal activity, fraud, espionage, and terrorism.

Confidential informants are recruited and handled in confidence as their relationship with AFOSI must be protected to ensure their safety, as well as that of law enforcement personnel. These individuals are generally asked to focus on specific targets, such as a drug dealer, a contractor defrauding the government, or suspicious activities around an Air Force installation indicative of a potential terrorist threat. Frequently, informants provide AFOSI with the most likely and secure avenue for the detection and resolution of ongoing criminal activities, and are therefore of great value to Air Force commanders at all levels. Air Force installation commanders are briefed on AFOSI's use of human informants as a recognized, legitimate, and sanctioned technique used by all law enforcement agencies. While specifics of the informants' activities may not always be shared for reasons of operational security, AFOSI routinely briefs Air Force commanders on the assistance provided by informants. However, all decisions on any administrative or judicial proceedings involving informants rest with the Air Force commander.

AFOSI is committed to the safety and security of confidential informants. They are also prohibited from using unlawful techniques to obtain information, as well as initiating or committing a criminal act. These individuals are provided training to assist them in recognizing indicators of threats to national security, persons, property, and criminal activity. Informants are instructed to provide this time-sensitive information to AFOSI in order for the Air Force and other law enforcement partners to mitigate such threats.

The AFOSI confidential informant program is an important and time-proven investigative tool successfully used to detect ongoing criminal activity, resolve criminal allegations, and ultimately maintain a high level of good order and discipline in the Air Force.