
Michael Vatis



Michael Vatis is a partner in the New York office of Steptoe. His practice focuses on Internet, e-commerce, and technology matters, providing legal advice and strategic counsel on matters involving privacy, security, encryption, intelligence, law enforcement, Internet gambling, and international regulation of Internet content. He also is an experienced appellate litigator, representing clients before the US Supreme Court and federal courts of appeals.

Mr. Vatis has spent most of his career addressing cutting edge issues at the intersection of law, policy, and technology. He was the founding director of the National Infrastructure Protection Center at the FBI, the first government organization responsible for detecting, warning of, and responding to cyber attacks, including computer crimes, cyber terrorism, cyber espionage, and information warfare. Before that, Mr. Vatis served as Associate Deputy Attorney General and Deputy Director of the Executive Office for National Security in the Department of Justice, where he advised the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General and coordinated the Department's activities involving counterterrorism, intelligence, encryption, and cyber crime. In that capacity, he also helped lead the development of the nation's first policies regarding critical infrastructure protection. Mr. Vatis served as Special Counsel at the Department of Defense, where he handled sensitive legal and policy issues for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the General Counsel, receiving the Secretary of Defense Award for Excellence.

After leaving the government in 2001, Mr. Vatis served as the first Director of the Institute for Security Technology Studies at Dartmouth, a federally funded counterterrorism and cyber security research institute. He was simultaneously the founding Chairman of the Institute for Information Infrastructure Protection (I3P). I3P, a consortium of leading cyber security research organizations, worked with industry, government, and academia to develop a comprehensive research and development agenda to improve the security of the nation's computer and communications networks. Mr. Vatis also served as the Executive Director of the Markle Task Force on National Security in the Information Age, a highly influential group of technology company executives, former government officials, and civil libertarians that recommended ways the government could more effectively use information and technology to combat terrorism while preserving civil liberties. Mr. Vatis was the principal author of the group's second report, whose recommendations were adopted by the 9/11 Commission and included in the 2004 Intelligence Reform Act.

Mr. Vatis has been a Senior Fellow at New York University Law School's Center on Law and Security and a member of numerous expert working groups on counterterrorism, intelligence, and technology issues. He is currently a member of the National Academy of Science/National Research Council Committee on the Policy Consequences and Legal/Ethical Implications of Offensive Information Warfare and served on the Commission on

Cyber Security for the 44th Presidency, an independent group of cyber security experts who examined existing and potential cyber security threats and developed recommendations for the US government and private businesses. Mr. Vatis has also regularly testified before congressional committees on counterterrorism, intelligence, and cyber security issues. He is also interviewed frequently on television, radio, and in print media, and has been a guest lecturer at many prestigious law schools and universities and a speaker at industry conferences worldwide.