

# Using Babel Street for Continuous Vetting of Federal Employees and Contractors

In 2018, the United States government's personnel vetting system had reached a record backlog of more than 725,000 cases.<sup>1</sup> Each case represented an individual or contractor waiting for the background check that, once passed, would lead to the issuance of a security clearance. The backlog stymied the hiring of federal employees needed to keep the government running effectively. It also fueled the launch of Trusted Workforce 2.0.<sup>2</sup>

Trusted Workforce 2.0 — a whole-government initiative of the Director of National Intelligence and the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency — seeks to address fragmented and slow background-investigation processes across federal agencies. It calls for the implementation of a unified vetting process across civilian and military roles that require clearance. It also seeks to reduce investigative time and replace periodic investigations with continuous vetting of employees and contractors.

Babel Street technology makes continuous vetting possible.

## The problem with traditional vetting

For decades, people seeking the security clearance needed for certain federal jobs and contracts underwent both initial background checks and “periodic reinvestigations” every five or ten years.<sup>3</sup> Between investigations, the government required clearance holders to report any situation that could impact their job performance. If an employee filed for bankruptcy, the government wanted to know since financial problems may make employees more vulnerable to foreign control or influence. If an employee visited family outside the United States, the government had to determine any counterintelligence risks presented by the trip. Ditto for divorces or other upheavals that can unsettle an employee emotionally and lead to errors in judgement.

But this method of periodic reinvestigations coupled with self-reporting proved both ineffective and unwieldy. Initial background checks and periodic reinvestigations took an enormous amount of effort and money but only captured their subjects during a snapshot in time. Federal employee Bob Smith was financially and emotionally stable upon hire and again upon reinvestigation. No one knew that during a six-month period in-between, his mother died, his spouse divorced him, and, forced to get by on a single income, he had to sell his house. A second issue: Government agencies found that, whether through deliberate obfuscation or simple forgetfulness, employees often failed to report major life events.

## How Babel Street can help

Babel Street Insights is an AI-powered data analytics platform that provides continuous vetting at scale. It offers multilingual, persistent search of thousands of sources of publicly available and commercially available information (PAI/CAI) worldwide. These sources include national and international criminal and court records, business incorporation information, and vehicle information. Through Insights, an employee's criminal activities — committed virtually anywhere worldwide — quickly surface as do civil issues that may make an employee vulnerable to recruitment by an adversarial government.

Insights' social media monitoring capabilities further improve vetting. Posts indicating that a government employee's spending far exceeds his salary, or that she has taken unauthorized foreign trips, will interest counterintelligence analysts. In addition, Insights can search hard-to-reach forums and marketplaces on the dark web, where nefarious employees may attempt to sell sensitive or secret information.

## Continuous vetting with Babel Street Insights

To continuously vet employees, contractors, and candidates, an investigator using Babel Street can follow these steps:

### Search known identifiers for the individual

Investigators can begin an Insights People Search using any known identifiers for an individual, including name, date of birth, email, username, phone number, or address. Only one identifier is needed to run a search, however, more identifiers yield more accurate results. Results can include a full profile, including aliases, additional phone numbers, emails, social media accounts, addresses, employment history, relationships, and education. Full profiles can be exported in finished product format that is streamlined for case management.

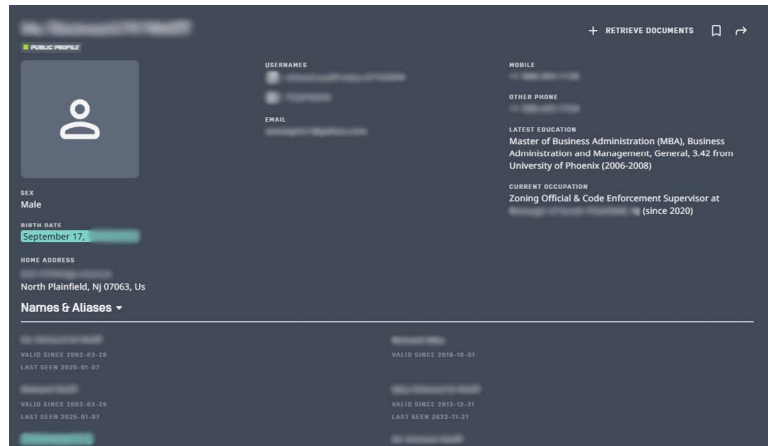


Figure 1: An example profile from a People Search

### Dive into social media posts

Once social media handles are identified, investigators can use them as keywords for an Insights Document Search to uncover posts the user authored. Expanding the search, investigators can also see if the user was tagged or mentioned in other users' posts.

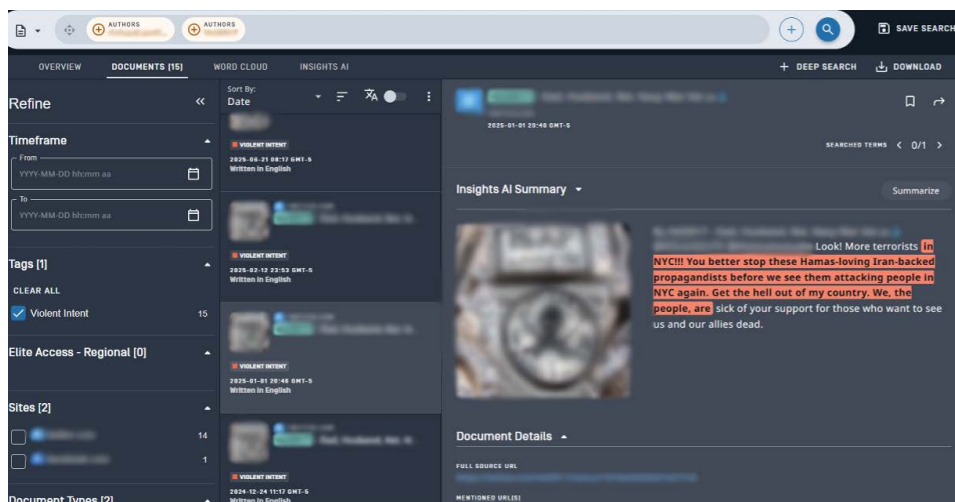


Figure 2: Social media posts uncovered from the individual's identifiers

## Conduct a dark web search for the employee

Investigators can conduct a different document search using email addresses from the public profile to determine if they have been compromised or otherwise appear on the dark web. Email addresses associated with social media accounts, telecommunication accounts, and online retail accounts may have been hacked and hosted on the dark web.

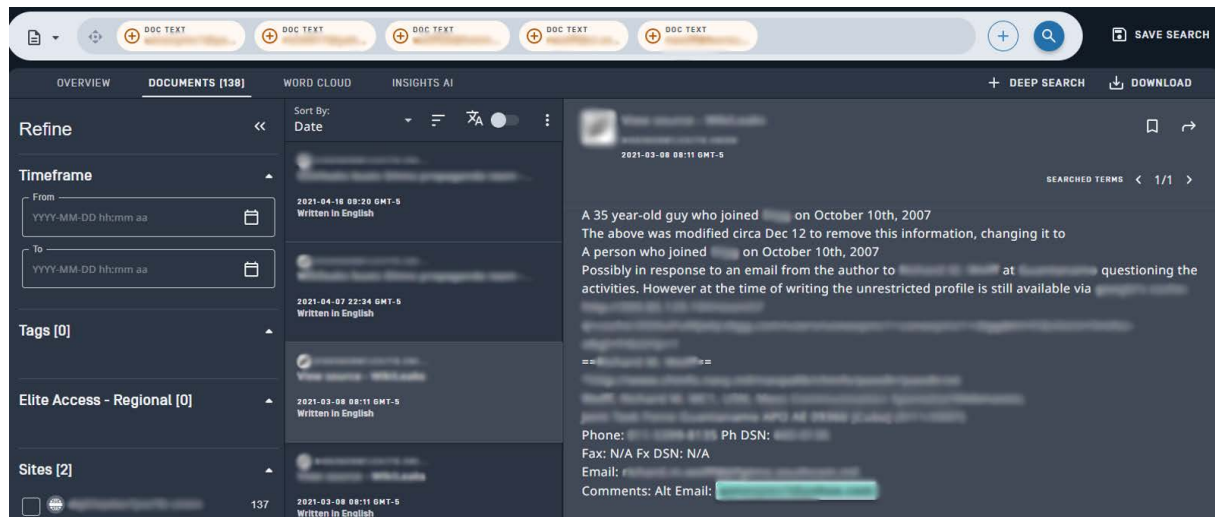


Figure 3: Dark web search results based on the individual's email addresses

## Endnotes

1. Doubleday, Justin, "Trusted Workforce 2.0' ushers in new era of personnel vetting, but big challenges remain," Federal News Network, April 2025, <https://federalnewsnetwork.com/management/2025/04/trusted-workforce-2-0-ushers-in-new-era-of-personnel-vetting-but-big-challenges-remain/>
2. Ibid
3. Ibid

Babel Street is the trusted technology partner for the world's most advanced identity intelligence and risk operations. The Babel Street Insights platform delivers advanced AI and data analytics solutions to close the Risk-Confidence Gap.

Babel Street provides unmatched, analysis-ready data regardless of language, proactive risk identification, 360-degree insights, high-speed automation, and seamless integration into existing systems. We empower government and commercial organizations to transform high-stakes identity and risk operations into a strategic advantage.

Learn more at [babelstreet.com](https://babelstreet.com).