



National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) Program Overview

January 2021

Slide 1 Notes

Opening 

Slide 2 Notes

Opening

Domestic and international terrorism plots did not end with 9/11—in fact, they continue to grow and threaten the United States, its citizens, and its critical infrastructure.

- El Paso

why we are here and what we hope to accomplish.

Recent incidents – such as those in Dayton, Ohio, and El Paso, Texas - demonstrate the growing need for a unified approach to help homeland security partners combat targeted violence and mass casualty attacks. Bringing in a group of experts such as yourself, we hope to gain unique perspective and insight in a collaborative effort that will help to build curriculum so that federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial officials are ultimately able to identify, evaluate, and report tips and leads in response to threats facing our nation.

The United States Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have recently published several comprehensive studies that provide detailed research related to targeted violence, mass casualty, and active shooter incidents.

- The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) recently published its second analysis of mass attacks carried out in public spaces. The report identified that “between January and December 2018, 27 incidents of mass attacks – in which three or more persons were harmed – were carried out in public spaces within the United States.
- In total, 91 people were killed and 107 more were injured in locations where people should feel safe, including workplaces, schools, and other public areas.”^[1]
- Additionally, in April 2019 the FBI published *Active Shooter Incidents in 2018*. Identified in this report, the FBI designated 27 shootings in 2018 as active shooter incidents. Eighty-five people were killed and 128 people were wounded, excluding the shooters.

Threats to the Homeland continue to evolve. Targeted violence, whether motivated by hate, ideology, or personal grievance continues to threaten the United States.

In the course of their daily duties and responsibilities, individuals may observe suspicious activity that could be an indicator of a terrorist attack or other criminal activity.

- Force multipliers to recognize and report suspicious activity
- First Observers

The SAR process is critical to sharing information about suspicious activity with a potential nexus to terrorism, which can help prevent terrorist attacks and other related criminal activity from occurring.

Today I’d like to:

- Increase awareness of NSI
- Enhance your knowledge of the SAR vetting and reporting process
- Discuss the future of the program, it’s evolution and training enhancements – where we are going

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MOVING FORWARD

The NTER Program will continue to work on its core mission to keep communities and infrastructures safe from potential terrorist threats while adapting to evolving threat landscapes.

The NTER Program has been created to adapt to the changing threat landscapes. It adapts the scope of the program to address the current threat of mass attacks, which may not have a nexus to terrorism, to ensure continued safety and security of communities and infrastructures.

We will partner with law enforcement, analysts, and fusion centers, as well as federal partners to share their best practices, insights, and expertise.

The NTER Program continues to solicit feedback and input from you, the state and local partners, during the phases of the refresh to ensure the goals of the refresh are achieved.

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NTER TERC/MTP (b)(6)/(b)(7)(C) – support from (b)(6)/(b)(7)(C))

Slide 5 Notes

(b)(6)(b)(7)(c)

- The events of 9/11 demonstrated the need for a nationwide capacity to share information that could detect, prevent, or deter a terrorist attack.
- The findings in The 9/11 Commission Report demonstrated the need for a nationwide capacity to share information that could detect, prevent, or deter a terrorist attack.
 - Prevent terrorist attacks before they occur
 - Connect the dots to combat crime and terrorism.
- The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (IRTPA) of 2004 and the 2007 National Strategy for Information Sharing indicates the need to establish locally controlled information systems wherein potential terrorism-related information could be reported and shared by law enforcement agencies for analysis to determine whether there are emerging patterns or trends.
 - Following this guidance, the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI) was developed.
- The Nationwide coordination of SAR is managed through the NSI
 - The FBI is lead for the technology of NSI (eGuardian)
 - DHS is lead for program management and training
- Allows for agencies to share SAR on a nationwide level while appropriately protecting privacy/civil rights/civil liberties
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- The protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties (P/CRCL) is paramount to the success of the NSI.
- Given this importance, the NSI has worked with various advocacy groups and other stakeholders to develop protections that make up a comprehensive NSI Privacy Protection Framework.
- The elements of the framework include:
 - Privacy Policy
 - ISE-SAR Functional Standard
 - Not to focus on “who” but “observed behaviors”
 - Reinforces constitutional standards, including the protections guaranteed by the First Amendment and limitations on the use of certain factors—such as race, ethnicity, national origin, or religious affiliation—in the gathering, storing, use, and sharing of personally identifiable information about individuals.
 - SAR Vetting Process
 - Before a SAR can move from agency systems to the NSI SAR Data Repository (SDR), two forms of vetting must occur:
 - (1) supervisors at LE agencies, who receive the SAR must initially review each SAR to determine whether it is appropriate for consideration as a SAR, and
 - (2) trained analysts or investigators at the fusion center or other authorized agency must then analyze the SAR as part of a two-part process against the 16 terrorism preoperational behaviors and make a determination, based on all available information (context, facts, and circumstances), whether there is a potential nexus to terrorism.

Slide 5 Notes (Continued)

Slide 6 Notes

(b)(6)(b)(7)(c)

Focuses on behaviors: 16 behavioral indicators indicative of pre-operational planning associated with terrorism Enables identification of potential terrorist threats

The sixteen behaviors are divided into two categories: Defined Criminal Activity and Non-Criminal Activity needing additional facts.

- **Breach or Attempted Intrusion** – accessing restricted area
- **Misrepresentation** – false security or first responder identification
- **Theft/Loss/Diversion** – theft/loss of explosive precursor materials or security materials/ID
- **Sabotage/tampering/vandalism** – security systems (videos)
- **Cyber Attacks** – IT infrastructure
- **Expressed/Implied Threats** – written/verbal – social media
- **Aviation Activity** – UAS – entering restricted areas

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(b)(6)(b)(7)(c)

The sixteen behaviors are divided into two categories: **Defined Criminal Activity** and **Non-Criminal Activity** needing additional facts based on the totality of the circumstances/aka context.

- **Eliciting Information** – shipments of materials/unknown use of materials
- **Testing or Probing of Security** – testing security features/camera blind spots
- **Recruiting/financing** – of terrorism
- **Surveillance** – also includes photography – suspicious in nature – unusual or covert
- **Materials acquisition/storage** – explosive precursor/unusual quantities
- **Acquisition of expertise** – knowledge or skills – Attack – TTPs/capabilities
- **Weapons collection/discovery** – unusual types or amounts – detonations/injuries
- **Sector-specific incident** – you are the best SME in your area to know if something is suspicious.

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(b)(6)(b)(7)(c)

Slide 9 Notes

SAR POC Program 

Slide 10 Notes

SAR POC Program (b) (7)(F))

- The SAR POC program is a programmatic engagement strategy intended to provide technical support, guidance, and resources to the national network of fusion centers in developing and enhancing their Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) capabilities
- The goal of the SAR POC program will be to provide NTER representatives with programmatic resources that will enable optimal execution of SAR-related law enforcement, intelligence, and outreach efforts
- Primarily, this program is intended to be a partnership. We want to work with you to identify your information needs, the tools that would make you the most successful, and the continuing education that would most benefit you as you operate your respective SAR programs.
- The SAR POC program will be managed by the National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) Program as part of revitalizing the legacy Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative (NSI) functions, which NTER is presently tasked with overseeing
- NTER is utilizing a tiered approach to establish and provide a full suite of technical assistance requirements for the National Network of Fusion Centers
- **Currently, we plan for this suite of services to include several core functions, including:**

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SAR POC Program 

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ORINCE/AC

Slide 13 Notes

NTER TERC/MTP ██████████ – support from ██████████ (██████████)

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The SAR Process (flow chart)

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Every day, law enforcement and homeland security partners at all levels of government observe suspicious incidents and behaviors, or receive reports of suspicious activity, either from concerned citizens or businesses or through the normal course of their duties

Reasonably indicative of pre-operational planning for terrorism

Gap: Unknown Potential Threats: ----remember this is tip/lead information--- may not have a clear nexus to a threat

- Not enough information to open a criminal investigation
- No clear nexus to terrorism due to the nature of the tip/lead
- Concerning behaviors may not elevate to a level prompting action

– how can we better train to ensure that this information is properly evaluated? – behavioral threat assessment model

Nationwide SAR Initiative (NSI) has focused on reporting terrorism indicators.

We want to ensure that we continue to keep pace with the diverse threats impacting our country

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Speak to the 4 step model of BTA.

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Conclusion and Conversation [REDACTED] – support from [REDACTED]

Questions?

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