



NATIONWIDE SAR INITIATIVE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE

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WASHINGTON, DC 20531

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Dear Fusion Center Director:

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI). The gathering, collection, and vetting of suspicious activity reports (SARs) and the sharing of terrorism-related SAR information (ISE-SARs) is critical now more than ever. To help simplify the process for getting started in connecting your ISE-SAR information to that of other agencies, the NSI Site Process Checklist has been developed. The checklist is intended to provide direction on the sequence of actions that must be completed to meet the responsibilities required for participation in the NSI. The checklist should not create additional obligations for your agency but rather should serve as a simple tool to assist an NSI candidate site in tracking and ensuring that all steps have been completed. A critical part of this process is the completion of the **Fusion Center Site Plan**, the template for which has been included with this checklist.

Your site can "go live" in the NSI once the following items have been completed:

- Privacy policy submitted and approved.
 - Orientation call/site visit conducted.
 - Site Plan and Participation Agreement completed.
 - Kickoff Meeting for external stakeholders held.
 - Training of site/fusion center analysts concluded.
 - Technology solution implemented.
- ☒ **Assessment:** The first step is the completion of an online questionnaire, which a majority of sites have done. Each site seeking to participate in the NSI must complete an online questionnaire that will provide an overview of the current agency process regarding gathering, analyzing, training, storage, and dissemination of terrorism-related suspicious activity reports. This snapshot of your agency's current SAR process helps to guide the subsequent implementation phases of the NSI. If your agency has not completed this questionnaire (available at <http://www.iir.com/nsi/assessment.cfm>) or if you have questions regarding this issue, please contact Ms. Jennifer "Cookie" Pritt at (850) 385-0600, extension 483, or cpritt@iir.com. Once you complete the questionnaire, you should review the NSI Implementation Guide and the Site Plan template.
- ☒ **Privacy Policy:** All fusion centers and other sites participating in the NSI are required to have an approved NSI-specific or comprehensive privacy policy that is "at least as comprehensive" as the ISE Privacy Guidelines (<http://www.ise.gov/docs/privacy/PrivacyGuidelines20061204.pdf>) and the *National Strategy for Information Sharing* (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/infosharing/index.html>) and specifically addresses the SAR process. The appointment of a dedicated privacy officer who can assist with both the drafting and implementation of the policy's provisions is recommended to assist in the completion of the policy.

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- If you have not drafted your privacy policy yet, the best place to start is with the *Fusion Center Privacy Policy Development: Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Policy Template* (<http://www.it.oip.gov/docdownloader.aspx?ddld=1269>). For further information, contact Mr. John Wilson at (202) 429-2712 or johnwilson@iir.com.
 - Once you have drafted your privacy policy, it should be submitted to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)-sponsored Privacy Policy Review Team for review, c/o Ms. Christina Abernathy at cabernathy@iir.com.
- ☒ **Webinar/Orientation Call/Site Visit:** After your agency's privacy policy has been submitted for review, you will receive a call from the "mentor" assigned to your agency. The mentor, one of the Deputy Directors in the NSI Program Management Office (PMO), will provide you with an overview of the next steps for integration into the NSI. This may happen over more than one call and may include an on-site visit to your center. Documents and resources to be discussed during the call include the Site Plan template, the NSI Implementation Guide, and the Participation Agreement. These documents will walk you through the next steps in the implementation process. You should utilize the Site Plan template and sample questions as the model for the development of your Site Plan. The Site Plan memorializes the strategy by which your agency/jurisdiction will implement the workflow associated with the SAR process. Your site mentor will assist you in crafting these responses through a Webinar and/or phone calls or a site visit. This is the critical period during which the subject-matter experts from your site have the opportunity to work through any concerns they might have and to pose questions regarding NSI implementation.
- ☒ **Technology Assessment:** A portion of this assessment may occur during the site visit or through a Webinar. It is critical that the NSI PMO technologists meet with the appropriate representatives from your site earlier on to assess any current systems that support the sharing of SAR information in your state or region. The technologists will work with your agency to implement the best NSI technology solution for your center. Details of the potential technical solutions can be found in the NSI Implementation Guide.
- ☒ **Participation Agreement:** The participation agreement is in the form of a letter, which is sent to the fusion center director and requires a response to Mr. Tom O'Reilly, Director of the NSI PMO. It will be provided to you by your mentor during a site visit or sent to you electronically. The agreement succinctly delineates the roles and responsibilities for the NSI PMO in support of your agency, as well as the specific obligations and responsibilities of the agency participating in NSI.
- ☒ **State/Site Plan Draft:** This should be finalized within 60 to 90 days after your site visit and the determination of your technology solution. It must be submitted to your agency's mentor electronically. If you need any assistance in completing this plan, please contact your site mentor.
- ☒ **Kickoff Meeting:** Your mentor will then ask you to arrange a meeting with key officials to brief them on your draft Site Plan. The focus of the kickoff meeting will be to get a consensus on your Site Plan with key agency officials (fusion governance board). Your mentor can provide an overview of the NSI at this meeting and can supply materials to help facilitate this meeting. This meeting serves as an opportunity to answer questions and engage in discussion regarding the impact SAR implementation will have on agencies in your jurisdiction. Participants in this meeting should include chief executives from those local, state, tribal, and federal agencies that are critical to the success of SAR within your state or region.
- ☒ **Training:** The delivery of frontline officer training and analyst/investigator training for the NSI is vital to the success of your site/center's implementation of SAR. These training components help to ensure that the protection of privacy and civil liberties are at the core of your SAR process. Once your draft Site Plan has been submitted, you may schedule the analyst/investigator training for your agency personnel who will be reviewing and vetting SARs. Please contact Mr. Phil Ramer at (850) 385-0666, extension 237, or pramer@iir.com for assistance with SAR training. To access additional information regarding

analyst/investigator training, line officer training, or other NSI training opportunities, please go to <http://nsi.ncirc.gov/training.aspx>.

The members of the NSI PMO are ready to assist you in any way to make sure this process is as streamlined as possible. We look forward to the homeland security and crime prevention contributions your agency can make by becoming part of this important initiative. We know from the experiences of other participating agencies that your involvement in this program will lend value to your investigative and intelligence efforts.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. O'Reilly
Director
NSI Program Management Office

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NSI Site Process Checklist/Site Plan