



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D.C. 20530

November 13, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO ALL UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS

FROM: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "John Ashcroft", is written over the printed name "THE ATTORNEY GENERAL".

SUBJECT: Cooperation with State and Local Officials in the Fight Against Terrorism

The September 11 attacks demonstrate that the war on terrorism must be fought and won at home as well as abroad. To meet this new threat and to prevent future attacks, law enforcement officials at all levels of government -- federal, state, and local -- must work together, sharing information and resources needed both to arrest and prosecute the individuals responsible and to detect and destroy terrorist cells before they can strike again.

On October 26, 2001, the President signed into law the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001. A key feature of this anti-terrorism legislation is its provisions requiring increased sharing of information among law enforcement and national security personnel at all levels of government. These measures, proposed by the President, are critical to the common effort to prevent and disrupt terrorist acts. To win the war on terrorism, federal prosecutors and law enforcement personnel must develop and implement effective procedures for information-sharing and cooperation with their state and local counterparts. I therefore direct you to take prompt action in three major areas:

1. Designation of Chief Information Officer. To centralize the process by which information relevant to the investigation and prosecution of terrorists can be shared with state and local officials, I hereby direct you to designate a Chief Information Officer (CIO) to participate on the Anti-Terrorism Task Force (ATTF) in your district. The CIO shall coordinate with the relevant Law Enforcement Coordination Committee (LECC) to ensure that the LECC acts as a formal conduit of information with state and local officials, including elected officials and local law enforcement representatives. The CIO need not be a new employee and may be your LECC coordinator if he or she already has strong ties to state and local officials in your district. Where information is provided by state and local officials to federal officials, the CIO should make every effort to apprise the state and local individual or agency of any follow-up action prompted by the information provided. I further direct the CIO to assist in making state and local officials aware of the various counter-terrorism training resources available through the Department of Justice.

2. Information Sharing Structures. To streamline the procedures for information sharing between federal, state, and local officials in a manner tailored to the needs of each district, I hereby direct the CIO in your district to solicit from state and local officials suggestions on the best way to

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disseminate information in your district. After considering those suggestions, the CIO, through the LECC, will establish, by December 1, 2001, communications protocols for sharing information with state and local officials on the ATTF, as well as with chiefs of police and elected officials who may not be members of the ATTF in their district. At a minimum the protocol in each district must include a system to communicate information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I also urge you to consider including in your protocols daily or weekly conference calls with members of the LECC, the ATTF, and with chiefs of police and elected officials who may not be members of these committees.

The protocols established pursuant to this directive will not only provide a mechanism for federal officials to share information with their state and local counterparts, but also must include procedures by which state and local officials can forward information to federal officials.

In fulfilling this directive, I further direct you to use, where practicable, technologies already available and currently in use by the Department to facilitate information-sharing, such as the Regional Information Sharing System (RISS). The RISS system comprises six regional intelligence centers operating in various geographic regions, including all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The RISS system has created riss.net, the only secure internet-based national network for sharing of criminal intelligence among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. RISS also operates secure WATS/patch and telephone communications for one-on-one contact with RISS. RISS databases can provide criminal intelligence information and referral contacts for information exchange with other member agencies.

The Executive Office of United States Attorneys is undertaking a review of all law enforcement and intelligence databases in order to identify those that should be made available to each of the districts.

Information must be appropriately analyzed before it can be used to its full potential. The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2003 already requests funding for 93 analysts. I hereby direct you to ensure that these analysts have access to the most recent and reliable information available through coordination with the designated CIO and your LECC. All analysts must use the communications structures established pursuant to this Directive to facilitate their efforts in investigating and preventing terrorist acts. The analysts will act as a conduit of information from federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies to local law enforcement. For example, the information gathered through the interviews regarding international terrorism would be processed and then disseminated by the analyst.

By working closely with state and local officials to strengthen and streamline our procedures for information sharing and analysis, we will make great strides towards preventing future terrorist acts and punishing those responsible for the September 11 attacks. I thank you for your efforts in this ongoing fight to protect freedom through law and to deliver to the American people freedom from fear.