

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**TESTIMONY OF
LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
September 12, 2006**

CALIFORNIA IS A FORMAL MUTUAL AID STATE (Circa 1950)

While our nation's efforts to deal with terrorism are beginning to shift to prevention as a primary goal, over the past five years, our focus has been on our ability to respond to an attack. Because of our frequent experience with disasters, the State of California has a very structured organization for emergency and disaster management. The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) is required by California Government Code §8607(a) for managing response to multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction emergencies in the State. SEMS incorporates the use of the Incident Command System (ICS), the Master Mutual Aid Agreement, existing discipline specific mutual aid, the operational area concept, and multi-agency or inter-agency coordination. SEMS helps unify all elements of California's emergency management organization into a single integrated system. This is the framework on which the National Incident Management System (NIMS) is based.

CALIFORNIA SHERIFFS ARE MUTUAL AID COORDINATORS

Mutual aid response within California is based on four governmental levels of increasingly justifiable mutual aid support. These levels delineate cities (or other similar local jurisdictions), operational areas (counties), mutual aid regions, and the State. To facilitate coordination of mutual aid, the State is geographically divided into seven law enforcement mutual aid regions, comprised of multiple operational areas. The operational area is a composite of its political subdivisions, i.e., municipalities, contract cities, special districts, and county agencies. Each region has a county sheriff designated as the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid (LEMA) coordinator. I act as that coordinator for Region I, which is comprised of Los Angeles and Orange Counties (13 million people). In addition, during a declared emergency, I am designated as the Director of Emergency Operations for the Los Angeles Operational Area, which includes 88 cities and unincorporated areas spread over more than 4,000 square miles.

TERRORISM EARLY WARNING (TEW) GROUP SYSTEM PRIOR TO 9/11

Although more than five years have elapsed since the tragedy of 9/11, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department remains committed to institutionalizing the lessons learned that day. Together with our federal, state and local partners,

we are aggressively pursuing new ways to integrate our disparate agencies into a seamless network of information sharing cooperatives. To understand where the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is headed, there must be an understanding of where we have been.

In 1996, the Terrorism Early Warning (TEW) Group was developed by the Sheriff's Department in order to analyze trends and potentials for a terror attack within Los Angeles County. The TEW now employs subject matter experts from law enforcement, the fire service, public health, academia and the military all working together to ensure the safety of Los Angeles County residents. Representatives from the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security also work within the TEW to produce high-quality, analytical products that are provided to decision makers covering a variety of subjects related to terrorism.

JOINT REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Recognizing the value of cooperation between federal, state and local agencies, leaders from the FBI, United States Attorney General's Office, State Office of Homeland Security, Los Angeles Police Department, and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department decided more than two years ago to join together and create a model for intelligence fusion centers. The vision became reality in July of this year with the grand opening of the Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC). Using analytical processes developed by the TEW, analysts from a variety of agencies and disciplines create an expansive view of trends and potentials that could indicate a pending terrorist attack. The United States Department of Homeland Security is also present in the JRIC, and components of that department such as Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Transportation Security Agency, and the Coast Guard have been encouraged to contribute personnel to the JRIC. These agencies possess critical information that must be synthesized with local products to provide the clearest possible forecast of potential threats. I continue to strongly encourage the participation of any public agency involved in issues of Homeland Security with its local TEW or other fusion center. The collaboration between local and federal partners for making critical decisions pertaining to homeland security helps to overcome the traditional bureaucratic inertia in the field of intelligence sharing.

TERRORISM LIAISON OFFICERS

The State of California realized the value of such intelligence cooperatives and funded four Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers (RTTAC). The Los Angeles JRIC is the model for RTTAC development in California and is being replicated in the other areas.

One of the successful initiatives operating out of the JRIC is the Terrorism Liaison Officer (TLO) program. Originated shortly after 9/11, this program seeks

to create a network of trusted agents within each law enforcement, fire and health agency in Los Angeles County that provides the vehicle to exchange valuable information to and from the JRIC. As a result, local police officers, firefighters and health professionals have generated numerous leads of “investigative interest.” This level of intelligence-based connectivity between field personnel is unprecedented and has enhanced the level of situational awareness in the region. Information provided by the TLO network contributes to the development of intelligence that is disseminated weekly to the executive staff of participating agencies, field operators, and line personnel.

FORMAL PRIVATE SECTOR OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIP

Outreach from the JRIC is not limited to public safety personnel. Shortly after 9/11, I developed the Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) in an effort to network corporate leaders with the work of the TEW/JRIC. HSAC is comprised of senior corporate leaders from Los Angeles and Orange Counties, and is chaired by Mr. Marc Nathanson, Founder of Falcon Cable Corp. Members of the HSAC provide technical, political and financial support to our counter-terrorism mission. Through their large sphere of influence, they also provide connectivity to corporate security departments who have shared information of investigative interest to the TEW and JRIC. In order to expand this capability nationally, the HSAC has also affiliated with the Business Executives for National Security (BENS). Integrating the private sector into our intelligence process led to the creation of Infrastructure Liaison Officers (ILO). The ILO program further expands the network of trusted agents to include people dedicated to critical infrastructure protection (CIP). This addition to our intelligence process creates a comprehensive network that provides a better opportunity for the prevention, disruption or mitigation of a terrorist attack.

FORMAL MUSLIM AMERICAN OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIP

Another key component to our overall strategy is our connection to the Muslim community through the creation of the Muslim American Homeland Security Congress (MAHSC). Consisting of respected leaders from Muslim organizations within Southern California, their mission is to foster communication, education and mutual respect between law enforcement and the Muslim community. Programs such as the HSAC and MAHSC are reflective of our belief that Homeland Security is not an issue that can be resolved through traditional police practices.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The challenges of the next five years are many and varied. Essential above all is to continue to build the relationships among all entities (local, national and international) involved in the Homeland Security mission. Knowing that homeland security is truly a global enterprise, with the help of local consul

generals, members of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department have traveled to Russia, Pakistan, Jordan, Israel, France, Germany and Great Britain to educate themselves on "best practices" in prevention, disruption and response to terrorist activity.

For the next five years, we need to fine tune my aforementioned accomplishments and do the following:

1. Communications
 - The interoperability gaps for police, fire and medical responders must be closed.
 - Intelligence must be shared vertically and horizontally across jurisdictions for analysis, investigative and operational purposes.

2. Technology
 - Surveillance technology needs additional development and standards.
 - Detection technology for chemical, biological and radiological applications need additional development.
 - National technology resources need further logistical development for regional/national application (shared classified technology), i.e., the Department of Defense and the National Intelligence Community has equipment local police do not have.
 - Research and development of new technology should be jointly managed to avoid wasteful duplication. This should be managed by a national board of volunteer federal, state and local intelligence and first responder experts.

3. Joint Forces Terrorist Training Center
 - Develop three or more training centers on terrorism for federal, state and local first responders and intelligence first preventers of terrorist acts. The California National Guard and California Mutual Aid Region I (Los Angeles and Orange Counties) are currently developing this proposal.

4. International cooperation, training, best practices, and personnel exchanges should be expanded. Current plans are underway to have training occur in Paris, France at the Interpol Headquarters led by cities and countries that have experienced a terrorist attack.

5. Continue to fund and develop the National Terrorism Early Warning Resource Center that partners with local and state law enforcement. There are currently 26 local TEW operations in the nation. The long-range vision and effort is to link more than 50 TEWs across the country with other local and state fusion centers such as JRIC (Joint Regional Intelligence Center).
6. The Department of Homeland Security's major policies should be developed in partnership with selected experienced local, state and federal law enforcement leaders in deciding financial, operational, and training policies. The UASI grant program is one example.

As the elected Chief Law Enforcement Officer of America's largest county of 10 million people, I thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony to you.