April 13, 2004

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Carl Levin
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Collins and Senator Levin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the division of responsibility among certain counterterrorism elements of the United States Government (USG). We have provided you and your staff with information describing the mission, responsibilities, and relationships of the Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC), the Department of Homeland Security's Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Directorate (IAIP), and other government elements with terrorism analysis responsibilities. Based on your questions, this letter focuses on counterterrorism analysis within the Federal government.

Primary Responsibility for Terrorism Information Analysis

TTIC has the primary responsibility in the USG for terrorism analysis (except information relating solely to purely domestic terrorism) and is responsible for the day-to-day terrorism analysis provided to the President and other senior policymakers. We presume that all terrorism information has a link to international terrorism unless determined otherwise. Where information has been determined to have no such link to international terrorism, the FBI has primary responsibility with regard to the analysis of such information. This FBI responsibility, like TTIC's, is independent of where the information was collected.

IAIP has the primary responsibility for matching the assessment of the risk posed by identified threats and terrorist capabilities to our Nation's vulnerabilities. IAIP is also responsible for providing the full-range of intelligence support -- briefings, analytic products, including competitive analysis, "red teaming," and tailored analysis responding to specific inquiries -- to the DHS Secretary, other DHS leadership, and the rest of DHS. DHS also has significant responsibilities with regard to "purely domestic" terrorism threats, particularly in support of its critical infrastructure protection, Customs, immigration, and other statutory responsibilities.

USG counterterrorism elements retain such terrorism analytic responsibility and capability as necessary to support their own counterterrorism mission, and to carry out specific functions assigned to them by statute or Presidential directive.

Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC)

TTIC has no operational authority. However, TTIC has the authority to task collection and analysis from Intelligence Community agencies, the FBI, and DHS through tasking mechanisms we will create. The analytic work conducted at TTIC creates products that inform each of TTIC's partner elements, as well as other Federal departments and agencies as appropriate. These products are produced collaboratively by all of these elements, principally through their assignees physically located at the TTIC facility, but also working closely with their headquarters elements.

The DCI Counterterrorism Center (CTC)

The Director of Central Intelligence Counterterrorism Center (CTC) conducts worldwide operations and collection activities to detect, disrupt, and preempt actions of al-Qa'ida and other terrorist groups. CTC continues to conduct analysis to support its mission. CTC may conduct other analysis at the direction of the DCI or at the request of the Director of TTIC. The DCI, in consultation with the other leaders of the Intelligence Community and no later than June 1, 2004, will determine what additional analytic resources will be transferred to TTIC.

DHS Directorate of Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection (IAIP)

Whereas TTIC's terrorism analytic mission is global in nature, IAIP's mission is singularly focused on the protection of the American homeland against terrorist attack. This is unique among all intelligence, law enforcement, and military entities whose missions both extend worldwide and to subject-matter areas and purposes well beyond counterterrorism. This focus allows IAIP to concentrate its energy on protecting against threats to homeland targets, while working closely with other USG components that have overseas-focused, or both overseas- and domestic-focused, missions, to ensure unity of purpose and effort against terrorism worldwide. IAIP brings several unique capabilities to the US Government. The Directorate maps terrorist threats to the homeland against our assessed vulnerabilities in order to drive our efforts to protect against terrorist attacks. Furthermore, through its combination of intelligence analysis and infrastructure assessment, IAIP is able to independently analyze information from multiple Intelligence Community sources, as well as from its fellow DHS entities. Lastly, IAIP is able to provide key information to the American citizenry, accompanied by suggested protective measures.

IAIP's singular focus on the homeland allows it to carry out all missions assigned to it by the Homeland Security Act, including the following:

- Facilitating the creation of requirements, on behalf of the Secretary of Homeland Security and DHS leadership, to other DHS components, and to the larger intelligence, law enforcement, and homeland security communities, in order to integrate homeland security information from all sources with vulnerability and risk assessments for critical infrastructure prepared by IAIP;

- Providing the full-range of intelligence support -- briefings, analytic products, including competitive analysis, "red teaming," and tailored analysis responding to specific inquiries, and other support -- to the DHS leadership and the rest of DHS;

- Working with the FBI and others to ensure that homeland security-related intelligence information is shared with others who need it, in the Federal, state, and local governments, as well as in the private sector;

- Serving as the manager for collection, processing, integration, analysis, and dissemination for DHS' information collection and operational components (Coast Guard, Secret Service, Transportation Security Administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection), turning the voluminous potentially threat-related information collected every day at our borders, ports, and airports, into usable and, in many cases, actionable intelligence; and

- Supporting the DHS Secretary's responsibility to administer the Homeland Security Advisory System, including independently analyzing information supporting decisions to raise or lower the national warning level.

FBI

The FBI's Counterterrorism Division (CTD) has three core responsibilities: 1) managing counterterrorism operations on the territory of the United States to detect, disrupt, and preempt terrorist activities; 2) conducting analysis to support its own operations; and 3) producing and disseminating to all Federal counterterrorism elements and, as appropriate, State and local law enforcement officials, intelligence reports resulting from these operations.

FBI analysts within CTD exploit all available intelligence and information to drive FBI terrorism operations that will lead to the identification and disruption of terrorist activities. FBI also has the responsibility for analyzing law enforcement and investigative information that has been determined to have no connection to international terrorism.

It is important to identify the role of the new FBI's Office of Intelligence as it relates to the division of responsibility among certain USG counterterrorism elements. The FBI Office of Intelligence, which provides CTD's imbedded analytic capability, also performs the analytic work necessary to inform the FBI's collection tasking. This analytic product is designed purely to guide the work of the FBI in responding to collection requirements. In addition, the Office of Intelligence provides the full range of intelligence support to FBI components.

Finally, working with IAIP, TTIC, and other USG counterterrorism elements, CTD and the FBI Office of Intelligence ensure that all terrorism information collected by FBI, both abroad and within the United States, is shared with, and integrated into the work of, other USG counterterrorism elements in accordance with law, Presidential policy and direction, and written agreements such as those referenced herein.

Conclusion

Regardless of the particular analytic roles of any USG counterterrorism element under our control, we have committed all such elements, consistent with the President's policies, to share terrorism information (as defined by the Memorandum of Understanding on Information Sharing, dated March 4, 2003) with one another to ensure a seamless integration of such

information. Nothing in this explanatory letter is intended to modify the definitions or obligations of this MOU or other relevant directives or agreements.

The President and Congress have not directed, and, as a matter of effective government and common sense, should not direct, that all USG functions related to terrorism, including defense, intelligence, domestic law enforcement, diplomatic, economic, and a host of others be carried out by a single department or agency. In order both to ensure that no vital piece of intelligence is missed and to ensure that all departments and agencies, as well as our national leadership, receive the best possible analytic support, it is necessary to treat the analysis of terrorism-related information as a shared responsibility.

We look forward to continuing to work with your Committee as we strive to enhance our ability to protect our Nation from terrorists seeking to harm us. If you have any questions about this matter, then please have your staff contact Phil Lago with the Director of Central Intelligence at 703-482-6590, or Eleni Kalisch with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation at 202-324-5051, or Ken Hill with the Secretary of Homeland Security at 202-282-8222, or Cynthia Bower with the Director of the Terrorist Threat Integration Center at 703-482-3354.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Ridge
Secretary,
Department of Homeland Security

Robert S. Mueller III
Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation

George J. Tenet
Director of Central Intelligence

John O. Brennan
Director,
Terrorist Threat Integration Center