

Congressional Testimony - House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on
Intelligence Sharing and Terrorism Risk Assessment
"Building A Partnership Strategy"

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to showcase the Washington Joint Analytical Center (WAJAC) and our state's efforts in sharing critical criminal intelligence information.

In 2002, local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in Washington joined together to develop a new system of intelligence sharing. The key components of this system are the WAJAC, a centralized fusion center serving as a single point of intelligence collection, and regional intelligence groups located throughout the state providing a link to line level personnel and homeland security partners. The goal: investigating crime to prevent acts of terrorism.

The true success of the fusion center can be measured by the long-term partnerships developed since the inception of the Statewide Integrated Intelligence Plan. Situated on the same floor and in the same work area as the FBI's Field Intelligence Group, WAJAC employees share information real-time without the hindrance of communications barriers that have existed for decades and have only recently been breached. For this, we can thank the tremendous efforts of the Seattle Field Office of the FBI, the United States Attorney's Office and many other federal and local law enforcement leaders. Within our fusion center, King County Sheriff, Bellevue Police and WSP detectives work hand-in-hand with numerous federal agencies in the collection, analysis and dissemination of intelligence information

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A prime example of the trust developed between our agencies is demonstrated by the authority of the WAJAC supervisor (a WSP Sergeant) to assign tasks to any of the FIG personnel and the FIG supervisor having the same tasking authority over WAJAC.

In 2006, WAJAC reviewed and disseminated over 2,000 Intelligence Information Reports, developed 323 leads to support criminal or terrorism case investigations and provided assistance to homeland security partners on 500 separate occasions. These numbers alone don't tell the story of the exceptional work being done through this partnership. Every day investigators and analysts from many different jurisdictions throughout the state are communicating with each other at a frequency never realized before and are sharing critical intelligence information with the WAJAC.

One of the primary information collection programs that has substantially served our intelligence sharing efforts is the Navy's Law Enforcement Information Exchange or LINX system. WAJAC and RIG analysts use this tool on a regular basis to assist them in locating persons of interest, in establishing identities and connecting the dots on criminal investigations. This tool has been invaluable throughout the state and has been instrumental in solving a number of criminal cases. It is imperative to our information sharing environment that support for LINX continues well into the future.

Because LINX contains information only on closed criminal investigations, there still exists a need for a true intelligence database. At present, this state

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does not have a method to store and electronically share critical intelligence with multiple agencies. We continue to relay on e-mails, fax and telephone conversations. Currently, WAJAC and other stakeholders are evaluating a statewide intelligence database to supplement our current programs. In the near future, we will be requesting Department of Homeland Security grant funding to purchase and maintain a viable database for information sharing purposes.

Even though we have had great successes in establishing partnerships and sharing information, we still face a significant hurdle in our ability to sustain this program. Dedicate funding for WAJAC and the RIGs is of the greatest concern to all stakeholders. The three local law enforcement agencies and National Guard who have assigned investigators to the WAJAC have done so out of their own operational budgets and have received no monetary compensation to backfill these talented specialists. Additionally, all nineteen contracted analysts both in the WAJAC and in the RIGs are funded through the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program Grant; funding we expect to diminish over time. Over the last three years, a significant portion of LETPP money granted to Washington State has been dedicated to funding the work completed by these contractors.

Successful programs designed to counter criminal activity and terrorism require a human element. Software programs, databases and computers alone do not fight terrorism, people do, and without the talented investigators and analysts of the WAJAC, it would be near impossible to

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prevent or disrupt any act of terrorism. We must have an established funding source to sustain the WAJAC into the future.

Another significant challenge we must overcome is our difficulty in staffing regional intelligence groups in all nine emergency management regions of the state. Within the rural areas of Washington, many law enforcement agencies do not have the resources available to provide full-time or in many cases even part-time investigative support for the intelligence process. Even though we have assigned grant-funded analysts to each region, without investigative support we are only meeting half of our commitment to this program. The solution to the problem may not be a simple one and with hope we will be able to further develop our RIGs to a point where they have the ability to deliver a viable service their region and the state.

When the WASPC Intelligence Subcommittee began laying the foundation for WAJAC and the Statewide Integrated Intelligence Plan they came to the same realization that no one of is as strong as all of us and no single entity can make this program work alone. We have combined our limited resources, worked collaboratively and have made a strong partnership against the terror groups who threaten the citizens of this state.

Thank you.