

A CALL TO ACTION:

A UNIFIED MESSAGE REGARDING THE NEED TO SUPPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING AND TRAINING

Efforts to address crime and threats in our communities are most effective when they involve strong collaboration between law enforcement and the communities and citizens they serve. As a law enforcement or homeland security professional, you understand that *Homeland Security Is Hometown Security*.¹ Local, state, tribal, territorial, campus, and federal representatives are united in efforts to make our country safer.

One of these efforts relates to Suspicious Activity Reporting. To address this issue, in 2011, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) hosted a meeting of representatives from numerous local, state, and federal agencies and law enforcement organizations to create a unified approach to reporting and sharing suspicious activity.

As a result, these leaders have partnered to support a strategy that will unify the efforts of all agencies and organizations involved in the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI). The overall effort focuses on (1) increasing public awareness of reporting suspicious activity to law enforcement, (2) generating Suspicious Activity Reports by law enforcement, (3) analysis conducted by fusion centers and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Field Intelligence Groups (FIGs), and (4) investigation by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs).

As a law enforcement or homeland security professional, you are responsible to ensure that the public you serve understands how to report suspicious activity and that your agency/organizational members support the collection, analysis, and submission of Suspicious Activity Reports to your fusion center or FBI/JTTFs.

Fusion centers, FIGs, and JTTFs will share Suspicious Activity Reports seamlessly. The NSI Program Management Office (NSI PMO) and the FBI made technical adjustments in 2011 to ensure interoperability between the eGuardian and Shared Space systems. Suspicious Activity Reports entered into either system will be expeditiously pushed into the other automatically for sharing with other partners within the NSI as appropriate.

Detailed below are key points and action items that all law enforcement and homeland security personnel should be aware of, support, and institutionalize within their area of responsibility:

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES

- ◀ Agencies at all levels of government should utilize the "If You See Something, Say Something™" program to raise public awareness of indicators of terrorism and to emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the proper law enforcement authorities, while protecting privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties. (See "Outreach Activities" below for more details.)
- ◀ The public should contact law enforcement via 9-1-1 when an immediate response is needed regarding suspicious activity for any type of crime, including terrorism.
- ◀ Personnel from your agency should prepare Suspicious Activity Reports and forward them to fusion centers or FBI/JTTFs for follow-up and mutual coordination/deconfliction.
- ◀ Other potentially terrorism-related tips or leads reported directly to FBI/JTTFs will be evaluated for investigation, coordination, and entry into the NSI as appropriate.

¹ From *Hometown Security to Homeland Security*, IACP's Principles for a Locally Designed and Nationally Coordinated Homeland Security Strategy, International Association of Chiefs of Police, <http://www.theiacp.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=78X8uKjLa0U%3D&tabid=392>.



NATIONWIDE SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING (SAR) INITIATIVE (NSI)

- ◀ The NSI establishes standardized processes and policies that provide the capability for local, state, tribal, territorial, campus, and federal law enforcement to share timely, relevant Suspicious Activity Reports while working to ensure that privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties are protected.
- ◀ There are multiple options for entry of Suspicious Activity Reports.

SAR TRAINING

- ◀ It is important to ensure that your agency's personnel have received the frontline officer training on identifying and reporting those behaviors that are potentially indicative of terrorist or other criminal activity while emphasizing the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties. This training is coordinated by the NSI, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the FBI, the IACP, and others for nationwide implementation and is available online via these sites:
 - NSI Web site: <http://nsi.ncirc.gov/sarlot/>
 - LEAPS.TV: http://www.leaps.tv/programdetail.php?program_code=201008031500
 - MIPT: <http://www.mipt.org/SARTraining.aspx>

It is vitally important that law enforcement agencies conduct SAR training with all law enforcement personnel, including supervisors, and document completion. Officers, chiefs, sheriffs, training officials, and other executives should integrate SAR training into initial and recurring training curricula.

FUSION CENTERS, FIGS, AND JTTFS

- ◀ Fusion centers serve as focal points within the state and local environment for the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information among local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal partners. They produce actionable intelligence for dissemination, which can aid other law enforcement organizations, including the JTTFs, in their investigative operations.
- ◀ JTTFs are multiagency task forces designed to combine the resources, talents, skills, and knowledge of local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal law enforcement, as well as the Intelligence Community, into a single team that investigates and/or responds to terrorist threats. JTTFs investigate Suspicious Activity Reports and other terrorism tips and leads.
- ◀ FIGs, the hub of the FBI's intelligence program in the field, are the primary mechanism through which field offices identify, evaluate, and prioritize threats within their territories. Using dissemination protocols, FIGs contribute to regional and local perspectives on threats and serve as an important link between fusion centers, the FBI/JTTFs, and the Intelligence Community.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- ◀ The "If You See Something, Say Something™" public awareness campaign is a simple and effective program to raise public awareness of indicators of terrorism and violent crime.
- ◀ DHS uses "If You See Something, Say Something™" with permission from the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Agencies, companies, or groups interested in partnering with DHS on this campaign should contact the DHS Office of Public Affairs at (202) 282-8010.

