

Department of Homeland Security **Office of Inspector General**

Relationships Between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers





Homeland Security

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Preface

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107-296) by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*. This is one of a series of audit, inspection, and special reports prepared as part of our oversight responsibilities to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within the Department.

This report addresses the strengths and weaknesses of Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers relationships, interactions, and capacity to share information with one another. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observations, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations herein have been developed to the best knowledge available to our office, and have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. We trust this report will result in more effective, efficient, and economical operations. We express our appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Michael Beard".

D. Michael Beard
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Abbreviations

CPG-502	Comprehensive Preparedness Guide-502, <i>Considerations for Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center Coordination</i>
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FY	fiscal year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
I&A	Office of Intelligence and Analysis
OIG	Office of Inspector General

OIG

*Department of Homeland Security
Office of Inspector General*

Executive Summary

Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers play a critical role in linking state and local on-the-ground information with the strategies and response of the federal government. It is imperative that they foster relationships to work together effectively and establish policies and protocols to coordinate and share relevant information and intelligence during daily operations and emergencies to enhance the safety of the public.

Fusion Centers and Emergency Management efforts are enhanced with better interaction and information sharing. Some Fusion Centers are all-crimes oriented and do not consider Emergency Operations Centers as partners in their operations. Many Emergency Operations Center officials view Fusion Centers as solely law enforcement entities and either do not see a need or do not know how to effectively coordinate with them. These officials would benefit from building stronger mutual relationships.

Officials at Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers we visited were not always aware of each other's roles, capabilities, and information needs. In some areas, these officials had limited or no interaction, which could hinder response to natural or man-made disasters. Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center officials also were not always aware of and did not always utilize federal guidance developed to address coordination and information sharing efforts. More than 83% of the locations visited were either unaware of or did not utilize federal guidance for Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center interaction provided in Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 502.

Finally, the classification of information impedes effective information sharing between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers officials. Classification challenges exist at the federal level and with state law enforcement agency practices.

We are making eight recommendations that, when implemented, should improve Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers interaction and information sharing efforts.

Background

According to *The 9/11 Commission Report*, a breakdown in information sharing contributed to the collective failure to prevent the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. To promote greater collaboration and information sharing among federal, state, and local intelligence and law enforcement entities, states and some major urban areas have established a network of Fusion Centers throughout the country. (Appendix C includes a map and list of all 72 federally recognized state and major urban area Fusion Centers.) A Fusion Center is a collaborative effort of two or more agencies that provide resources, expertise, and information to the center with the goal of maximizing the ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorism activity. (Figure 1 illustrates the fusion process.)

Figure 1. Fusion Process



Source: Department of Homeland Security.

Fusion Centers are a valuable information sharing resource for state and major urban areas, serving as the focal but not exclusive point within the state and local environment for receiving and sharing terrorism, homeland security, and law enforcement information related to terrorism. Fusion Centers provide their core and ad hoc customers¹ with an array of products and messages,

¹ Core (involved in Fusion Center activities on a regular basis) and ad hoc (one-time or limited participation in fusion activities) partners include entities from the following areas: agriculture; food, water, and the environment; chemical industry and hazardous materials; criminal justice; emergency services; information and telecommunications; military facilities and defense industrial base; private security; public works; and transportation. Each Fusion Center may define its core or ad hoc partner sectors.

including Alerts, Warnings, and Notifications; Law Enforcement Briefs; and Regional Crime Patterns and Trends. Table 1 lists some of the products that Fusion Centers provide to stakeholders.

Table 1. Examples of Fusion Center Products

Alerts, Warnings, and Notifications	Risk Assessments for Local Major Events
Law Enforcement Briefs	Fusion Center Quick Notes
Regional Crime Patterns/Trends	State Critical Infrastructure Threat Assessments
Critical Infrastructure/Key Resource Threat Reports	Monthly Fusion Center Bulletins
Fusion Liaison Officer Communication emails, calls, and conferences	Common Operating Picture

Over time, Fusion Centers have become an integral part of the federal government’s approach to information sharing with state and local partners. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) have worked with Fusion Centers since their inception. In August 2006, DHS and DOJ, in collaboration with state and local partners, published the *Fusion Center Guidelines*. These guidelines provide assistance for developing Fusion Centers and were intended to improve consistency among the state and major urban area Fusion Centers, enhance coordination, strengthen regional and national partnerships, and improve Fusion Center capabilities. Further, in October 2007, the first *National Strategy for Information Sharing*, which designated Fusion Centers as the primary state and local entities for sharing terrorism-related information, was released.

Since 2004, when states began creating Fusion Centers, DHS has taken steps to partner with these centers to accomplish DHS’ information sharing goals. Congress formally mandated that DHS support Fusion Centers in the *Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007* (P.L. 110-53). This law also requires DHS to implement systems to support information sharing within the Department and among federal, state, and local partners. DHS’ Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) is the Department’s lead component for coordination with Fusion Centers, and the *DHS Support Implementation Plan for State and Local Fusion Centers*, released in June 2006, designated I&A as the executive agent for managing the DHS role in the nationwide fusion center initiative.

Figure 2. New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center



Source: DHS.

DHS I&A's mission is to equip the homeland security enterprise with the intelligence and information it needs to keep the Nation safe, secure, and resilient. DHS I&A's strategic plan contains goals that include strengthening the Nation's network of Fusion Centers and building support for and integrating a robust information sharing capability among state, local, territorial, and tribal authorities and the private sector.

Within DHS I&A, the State and Local Program Office unifies and coordinates federal and departmental support to the national network of Fusion Centers and serves as an advocate for the Fusion Centers within the federal government activities. Among its activities to support Fusion Centers, the State and Local Program Office led the initiative to deploy intelligence officers² to Fusion Centers to facilitate and coordinate information sharing between the centers and DHS. Its goal was to deploy intelligence officers at all 72 Fusion Centers and establish 10 regional representatives by the end of fiscal year (FY) 2010. As of June 2011, there were 64 intelligence officers and 9 regional representatives at the Fusion Centers. The State and Local Program Office also coordinated the installation of classified and unclassified information technology systems at Fusion Centers to support information sharing.

² DHS intelligence officers serve two roles: (1) partner with Fusion Centers to better achieve the *Baseline Capabilities* and (2) manage the intelligence cycle in their area of responsibility to include the sharing of threat-related information between state, local, tribal, and territorial partners and the federal government.

An Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the physical location where information and resources are coordinated to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities.³ An EOC may be a temporary facility to meet short-term goals or may be permanent. EOCs may be organized in different ways, including by function (e.g., fire, law enforcement, or medical services), jurisdiction (e.g., federal, state, regional, tribal, city, or county), or some combination of the two. The core responsibilities of an EOC include coordination, communication, resource allocation and tracking, and information collection, analysis, and dissemination related to a specific incident. EOCs help coordination of on-scene command by forming a common operating picture, and secure additional resources during an incident. EOCs also aid in the sharing of all-hazards operational information and provide subject matter expertise to support incident management and response activities.

Figure 3. Oklahoma City, OK, Emergency Operations Center



Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Fusion Centers and EOCs serve distinct but complementary roles in supporting the country's homeland security efforts. Fusion Centers share information across all levels of government to support homeland security partners in preventing, protecting against, and responding to crime and terrorism, while EOCs primarily provide information and support to incident management and response and recovery coordination activities. Collaboration between Fusion Centers and EOCs enables both to carry out their individual missions more efficiently.

³ Emergency Operations Centers are part of the emergency management structure. During our review, we interviewed emergency management officials to obtain an understanding of their interactions with Fusion Center officials. In this report, when we discuss interactions with EOCs, we refer to interactions with emergency management officials, both on a day-to-day basis and when an EOC is operational.

In many situations, Fusion Centers and EOCs may have information that others may be able to use. For example, if a Fusion Center receives information regarding a threat to an event that could cause mass casualties, the EOC and other emergency responders could use that information to be better prepared to respond. Conversely, information received at an EOC that seems inconsequential could be part of a larger pattern, which may be recognized only if that information is sent to the Fusion Center for analysis.

DHS and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants help fund both Fusion Centers and EOCs. Five different grant programs comprise the Homeland Security Grant Program,⁴ and according to a FEMA official, each can be used to support Fusion Center activities. However, it is unknown how much Homeland Security Grant Program funding went to Fusion Centers in the last fiscal year, or any years prior, because FEMA did not track this information. According to FY 2011 grant guidance, states for the first time must include whether grant funding will be used to support Fusion Center activities. There is also a separate EOC Grant program designed to fund construction of and improvements to state and local EOCs. In FY 2010, the EOC grant program was funded at \$57.6 million, of which just over \$10 million was awarded through a competitive process.

Results of Audit

Relationships Between Fusion Centers and Emergency Management

Some Fusion Centers consider themselves all-crimes or counterterrorism⁵ focused; others have adopted an all-hazards approach.⁶ Where there is an

⁴ State Homeland Security Program, Urban Areas Security Initiative, Operation Stone Garden, Metropolitan Medical Response System, and Citizen Corps Program.

⁵ All-crimes and counterterrorism typically refer to an approach that incorporates terrorism and other high-risk threats into the existing crime-fighting framework, to ensure that possible precursor crimes are screened and analyzed for linkages to larger-scale terrorist or other crimes. This approach recognizes the nexus between types of criminal activity (e.g., illegal drug operations, gangs, money laundering, fraud, identity theft) and terrorism.

⁶ All-hazards typically refers to an approach that prepares for terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. Although the application of this approach varies, it generally means that the Fusion Center has identified and prioritized types of major disasters and emergencies, beyond terrorism and crime, that could occur within its jurisdiction and gathers, analyzes, and disseminates information that would assist the relevant agencies (e.g., law enforcement, fire, public health, emergency management, critical infrastructure) with prevention, protection, response, or recovery efforts.

all-crimes or a counterterrorism focus, emergency management is not always considered a partner in fulfilling Fusion Center responsibilities. Designations such as all-crimes and counterterrorism may omit the emergency management perspective. Where Fusion Centers adopt such designations, information sharing with EOCs is significantly limited or nonexistent. Additionally, many EOC officials view Fusion Centers as solely “law enforcement entities” and do not see the benefits of coordinating with Fusion Centers. These perceptions limit the effectiveness and efficiency of both Fusion Centers and EOCs.

The Emergency Management Role in the Fusion Process

Congress has stressed the importance of emergency management as being part of the fusion process. The conference report accompanying the *Implementing the Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Report Act of 2007* states that “[e]mergency response providers are able to provide valuable information to the overall intelligence picture.” It further states that “the fusion center governing boards and the fusion process should be structured so as to enable the consideration of nontraditional information from emergency response providers in a collaborative environment.” Additionally, the *Implementing the Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Report Act of 2007* states that the DHS Secretary, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall establish guidelines that “create a collaborate environment for the sharing of intelligence and information among Federal, State, local, and tribal government agencies (including law enforcement officers and other emergency response providers), the private sector, and the public.”

According to the *Quadrennial Homeland Security Review* released in February 2010, the vision of homeland security is to ensure a country “that is safe, secure and resilient against terrorism and other hazards where American interests, aspirations, and way of life can thrive.” The *Quadrennial Homeland Security Review* further notes that “Homeland security will only be optimized when we fully leverage the distributed and decentralized nature of the entire enterprise in the pursuit of our common goals.” Both Fusion Centers and emergency management are critical components of the decentralized homeland security apparatus.

Benefits of an All-Hazards Approach

An all-hazards approach to securing the homeland includes preparing for terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. This approach does not mean being prepared for every possible hazard that could occur. Rather, it means that a jurisdiction should identify and plan for the types of emergencies and major disasters, whether they are terrorism or crime-related, natural or manmade, which could occur within its coverage area. This suggests that a jurisdiction can enhance its preparedness and response abilities when the spectrum of intelligence, law enforcement, and emergency management disciplines share information and coordinate their efforts.

The purpose of DHS is to link prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery into a single operational department, and an all-hazards approach is necessary for a robust homeland security apparatus. As critical partners in our Nation's homeland security efforts, Fusion Centers can better support the common goals of homeland security laid out by DHS by incorporating an all-hazards approach and building effective relationships with EOCs.

Fusion Center and emergency management officials explained how adopting an all-hazards approach and partnering with one another enhances both Fusion Center and EOC operations. For example, one Fusion Center director stated that his staff was able to provide valuable information to the State Office of Emergency Management about flooding in the state using the Fusion Center's geospatial mapping capabilities. Another Fusion Center was able to support a county EOC during a natural disaster by disseminating information through its various partner organizations, widening the reach of the EOC. As a result of this collaboration, the Fusion Center was incorporated into the county's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Emergency management officials in another county worked with their Department of Public Works partners to provide the "eyes and ears" of park employees to watch for signs of terrorist activity in the county's parks, which could be reported to the Fusion Center. When officials on both the Fusion Center and emergency management sides viewed each other as partners in an all-hazards approach, they described how this enhanced both of their operations.

Approach Incorporated by the Fusion Center Affects Relationships With Emergency Management

The *Fusion Center Guidelines (Guidelines)* released jointly by DHS and DOJ in August 2006 emphasize the importance of emergency management as a Fusion Center partner. The *Guidelines* state that “If an incident occurs, all [of these] resources will be needed to successfully minimize loss and apprehend suspects. The Fusion Center provides intelligence to the EOC regarding the disaster or related events (regardless of whether the Fusion Center is all-crimes or all-hazards). Because of the investment, expertise, and capability integrated within a Fusion Center, plans and procedures should include how each Fusion Center will support the jurisdiction’s emergency management structure during a crisis.”

The *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers (Baseline Capabilities)*⁷ expands upon this by denoting one of the baseline capabilities for all Fusion Centers as the ability to coordinate with response and recovery officials.

Nevertheless, Fusion Centers are owned and operated by state and local entities. Therefore, DHS does not have the authority to compel them to take either an all-crimes or all-hazards approach. Under the *Baseline Capabilities*, recognizing the sovereignty of the state, local, and tribal governments that own and operate the Fusion Centers, the decision on whether to take an all-crimes or all-hazards approach is left up to the individual Fusion Center. The missions of Fusion Centers vary based on the environment in which each center operates.

Although a Fusion Center can adopt either approach for its operations, the all-crimes approach may sever part of the link between preparedness and response, a link that is critical to protecting American lives. During our fieldwork, Fusion Centers that considered themselves all-crimes oriented typically did not develop relationships with emergency management officials. Some Fusion Center officials said that the primary reason they opted to take an all-crimes approach was that an all-hazards approach might result in duplication of functions with EOCs. However, technical assistance provided by DHS and DOJ outlines how to mitigate this concern by clearly defining roles and responsibilities.

⁷ The *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers* document was released jointly by DHS and DOJ in September 2008.

As of June 2011, DHS did not formally track whether Fusion Centers have taken an all-crimes or all-hazards approach in their operations. DHS also does not know the amount of funding it provides to Fusion Centers; however, this information will be captured for the first time as part of the FY 2011 homeland security grant application and reporting processes. In accordance with the FY 2011 Homeland Security Grant Program guidance, DHS is also requiring grantees to coordinate with the Fusion Center when developing fusion center investment prior to submission. Fusion Centers leveraging Homeland Security Grant Program funds must prioritize the allocation of these grant funds to address any capability gaps identified as a result of the 2010 Baseline Capabilities Assessment. A more direct tie between funding and achievement of baseline capabilities should provide DHS an opportunity to have greater influence on the development of partnerships between Fusion Centers and the emergency management community. DHS officials also stated that they are working with FEMA to expand how grant funds can be used to further facilitate information sharing and coordination efforts between Fusion Centers and emergency management officials.

Some Fusion Centers are just standing up and do not yet have the personnel and other resources to be all-hazards centers. Over time, however, it would be beneficial for Fusion Centers to evolve to encompass all hazards. DHS has invested substantially in the Fusion Center network and should promote the benefits of using an all-hazards approach to leverage emergency management resources. Emergency Operations Center officials can provide Fusion Centers with situational awareness of ongoing events and serve as a warning point during activation.

Conclusion

Adopting an all-hazards approach to Fusion Center operations fosters building effective relationships with emergency management. Fusion Center officials who did not view their operations as having all-hazards responsibilities generally saw little or no value in coordinating and sharing information with EOCs. As a result, the information that the emergency management structure could provide to Fusion Centers may not be gathered. Additionally, information that could allow emergency managers to prepare for a response may not be received from the Fusion Center in a timely manner, if at all. DHS Intelligence and Analysis needs to encourage Fusion Centers to adopt an all-

hazards approach in accordance with the national homeland security strategy.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office and Assistant Administrator, National Preparedness Directorate:

Recommendation #1: Develop and distribute materials for Fusion Center and Emergency Management officials that outline the benefits of partnering in an all-hazards approach to homeland security, and gather and publish best practices from jurisdictions that have adopted an all-hazards approach.

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office and Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate:

Recommendation #2: Report annually on the amount of homeland security grant funds awarded for Fusion Center use, as well as the number of Fusion Centers that have adopted an all-hazards approach or can demonstrate communication and coordination with Emergency Operations Center officials.

Management Comments and OIG Analysis

Recommendation #1: DHS I&A and FEMA concurred with this recommendation. DHS I&A said that it has worked with federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners to develop and publish guidance in support of implementing all-hazards approaches. DHS I&A also said that, working with its departmental and interagency partners, it will continue to support the identification, documentation, and sharing of best practices and lessons learned from Fusion Centers as they work with their partners to implement all-hazards approaches. DHS I&A suggests that a full-time FEMA Protection and National Preparedness detailee be assigned to the State and Local Program Office to support efforts to integrate and coordinate emergency management participation in the Fusion Centers.

FEMA said that the Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program completes best practice summaries on Fusion Center-EOC partnerships and makes write-ups available on the Lessons Learned Information Sharing System. FEMA also said that examples of best practices were included in CPG-502.

Although DHS I&A and FEMA have taken steps to encourage Fusion Center-EOC partnerships, more needs to be done. During our fieldwork many Fusion Centers and EOCs that we visited had limited or no coordination and information sharing between each other. Additionally, emphasis needs to be placed on promoting an all-hazards approach in these partnerships.

We consider this recommendation resolved because steps are being taken to implement it; however, it will remain open until DHS I&A and FEMA demonstrate more progress in promoting Fusion Center-EOC partnerships and adoption of an all-hazards approach.

Recommendation #2: DHS I&A and FEMA concurred with this recommendation. DHS I&A said that the State and Local Program Office is documenting the number of Fusion Centers that have adopted an all-hazards approach or can demonstrate communication and coordination with emergency management partners. DHS I&A also said that FEMA's Protection and National Preparedness Grant Programs Directorate is responsible for reporting the amount of homeland security grant funds leveraged for Fusion Centers, and it will support FEMA in its efforts to determine the most effective manner to capture this information. DHS I&A will continue to work with FEMA's Protection and National Preparedness Grant Programs Directorate to recommend revisions to the EOC grant guidance as well as the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program guidance to support all-hazards approaches.

FEMA said that it has the ability to track Fusion Center spending and it is capable of reporting annually on the amount of Homeland Security grant funds awarded for Fusion Center use.

We consider this recommendation resolved because steps are being taken to implement it; however, it will remain open until evidence is provided that DHS I&A is documenting the number of Fusion Centers that have adopted an all-hazards approach and FEMA is tracking and reporting the amount of homeland security grant funds awarded for Fusion Center use.

Roles, Capabilities, and Information Needs

Fusion Centers and EOCs are not always aware of each other's roles, capabilities, and information needs. Fusion Center officials rarely had memorandums of understanding with EOCs and did not always solicit feedback. Some Fusion Centers we visited had reached out to EOCs, but others had made no attempts to establish relationships or communications. Fusion Centers and EOCs would be well served if they coordinate to better prepare for response and recovery operations. Specifically, Fusion Centers and EOCs need to understand each other's information requirements. Additionally, Fusion Centers should disseminate appropriate products to share information with, and solicit feedback from EOCs. Similarly, EOCs should reach out to Fusion Centers and facilitate two-way communications before and during events.

Understanding Roles and Responsibilities

Not all Fusion Centers and EOCs identify and coordinate with one another to implement and maintain plans and procedures to ensure a common understanding of roles and responsibilities. The *Baseline Capabilities* states that Fusion Center plans should identify roles, responsibilities, and protocols to govern the timely reporting of significant events occurring within state or local jurisdictions to federal authorities and, when appropriate, other states, localities, or regional entities.

In a Baseline Capabilities Assessment completed in 2010, most Fusion Centers identified their own intelligence and analytical roles and responsibilities in support of response and recovery activities. However, coordination with EOCs in developing response and recovery coordination plans is lagging. For example, one Fusion Center director said they do not have a plan to coordinate with response and recovery officials; "they just do it." On the other hand, some Fusion Centers have policies, but admit they still must do a better job of implementing them.

Figure 4. Additional Best Practices for Fusion Center and EOC Coordination

- **Emergency Management Analyst**—Performs detailed research and analysis on all-hazards information for the production of intelligence for all homeland security stakeholders.
 - **Fusion Center and EOC Detailees**—Staff serve in facilities to improve information sharing during events or full-time.
 - **Fusion Center Liaison Officer Program**—Network of law enforcement, emergency services, and private sector officials who are responsible for reporting and disseminating information from the Fusion Center to local agencies.
 - **Open Houses**—Brings EOC personnel into the Fusion Center to demonstrate capabilities and responsibilities.
 - **Exercises**—To become familiar with staff, test capabilities, and identify issues.
-

Fusion Centers that are colocated with EOCs and share reporting authorities coordinate response and recovery efforts more effectively. In one location, the Fusion Center and the state EOC were not only colocated but were also under the same chain of command. Colocation fosters faster information flow, and the two operations are almost completely integrated.

Colocation not only permits direct access to partners, but also allows centers to use the colocated agency's resources (e.g., systems and personnel) for expedited information flow or to share responsibilities (e.g., shared security officer) to achieve baseline capabilities. DHS has also identified this best practice. Figure 4 outlines additional best practices identified during our review.

Not all jurisdictions have the resources to colocate. The FEMA-administered EOC grant program's guidance clearly prohibits money from being used to "fund the construction or renovation of State, local, or tribal Fusion Centers." Officials told us that this language discourages states and urban areas from colocating Fusion Centers and EOCs for fear that they might not be eligible for the EOC grant program.

Information Requirements

The *Baseline Capabilities* states that information requirements for the Fusion Center shall be defined, documented, updated regularly, and consistent with the center's goals and objectives. It is imperative that Fusion Centers coordinate information requirements with their partners, including EOCs. It is also important that EOC officials specify exactly what information or intelligence they need, why they need it, and when they need it. One municipal EOC director said that they shared the purpose and mission of their EOC with the area Fusion Center; however, confusion remains regarding the Fusion Center's interaction with lower-level EOCs. This confusion exists because the Fusion

Center communicates only with the county EOC and not the municipal EOCs. Another EOC director in the area said that the Fusion Center is aware and has an understanding of what the EOC needs, including having all comprehensive emergency operations plans from the region. However, the official expressed concern over the interaction between the Fusion Center and local EOCs during a disaster because there have been no major disasters in their region, so the process has not been tested.

Without dialogue between Fusion Center and EOC personnel, shared information may not be useful. Providing timely, accurate, and relevant information is the key to successful interaction. In one case, unnecessary information was being passed along to an EOC. The EOC quickly responded and informed the Fusion Center that it was sending information that was easily available through other sources. A relationship nurtured through dialogue enabled this problem to be rectified quickly. Conversely, states with one Fusion Center can have difficulty building individual relationships with each of the EOCs. In some cases, the Fusion Center will send information to the state EOC, and further dissemination to local EOCs is dependent on the state. However, as discussed below, if this information flow is not documented, information sharing with local EOCs may be inconsistent.

Product Dissemination Plans

According to the *Baseline Capabilities*, each Fusion Center shall develop a high-level dissemination plan that documents the procedures and communications mechanisms for timely dissemination of Fusion Center products to core and ad hoc customers, which include EOCs. Fusion Centers should develop these dissemination plans with their partners to ensure that information needs are being met.

Our discussions with Fusion Center officials showed that some did have dissemination plans; however, they did not always include the end user in drafting these documents. Some Fusion Center officials said they did not have the resources and personnel to develop written dissemination plans. Other Fusion Center leaders were fairly new to their positions and had not yet begun developing written policies and procedures.

Other Fusion Centers used undocumented processes to disseminate products and information to EOCs. For example, some Fusion

Center officials rely on personal contacts and their functional experience to disseminate information. Changing personnel, rotations, and reassignments can greatly hamper the flow of information, especially when processes are not documented. Results from a 2010 DHS survey indicate that 66% of Fusion Centers have documented dissemination plans and procedures. However, when DHS validated the results of this survey, it determined that nearly half of the Fusion Centers actually relied on ad hoc processes to distribute their products to customers, and only 47% had plans in place for disseminating Alerts, Warnings, and Notifications.

Fusion Centers have made progress since this study was conducted. DHS resurveyed Fusion Center directors on their progress and released a report on its findings in April 2011. The report highlights the improvement Fusion Centers have made in developing written dissemination plans for their customers. Specifically, 64% of Fusion Center directors indicate that their centers had implemented their plan, policy, or standard operating procedure to distribute products.

Soliciting Feedback

According to the *Baseline Capabilities*, Fusion Centers shall define and implement a feedback mechanism that allows recipients of information or products to make suggestions to improve products. Soliciting feedback from customers for the products and information they provide allows those customers the opportunity to evaluate their performance. However, half of the Fusion Center directors we asked said they do not solicit feedback. In fact, according to the 2010 Baseline Capability Assessment, 60% of all Fusion Centers have not developed and implemented a feedback mechanism. Fusion Center officials indicated the need for more guidance and training to develop an effective feedback mechanism.

Progress has been made since the 2010 baseline capabilities assessment. Based on a survey conducted by DHS in April 2011, there has been significant improvement. More than 76% of Fusion Center directors reported having developed and implemented a feedback mechanism; however, only 55% evaluated whether their feedback mechanism was effective.

Some Fusion Center officials said that they do include feedback forms in their regularly disseminated products. However, this

method may not provide effective results. Of the Fusion Centers we visited that provided feedback forms, none actually received responses that would be useful to improve their product. Numerous Fusion Centers are adamant about the ineffectiveness of the more passive approaches, such as the feedback forms in their regularly disseminated products. Another reason Fusion Centers said they did not have written procedures for soliciting feedback is that they do not have a strong relationship with the EOCs. Likewise, many EOCs said they do not have an opportunity to provide feedback because they do not receive information from the Fusion Center on which to comment.

An important part of the feedback process is updating the center's information requirements, collection plan, and analytic production strategy based on customer feedback. However, the Baseline Capabilities Assessment completed in 2010 found that fewer than 50% of Fusion Centers have established this process. In addition, only 38% of Fusion Centers indicated that they have mechanisms in place to receive stakeholder feedback on all parts of the intelligence cycle.

Conclusion

Coordination with response and recovery officials in developing policies and procedures for disseminating products to EOCs is essential to Fusion Centers' ability to fulfill their responsibilities. Fusion Centers need to ensure that customers are receiving consistent, timely, and relevant information to help them perform their duties during the steady state or in an emergency. Without soliciting useful feedback, Fusion Centers cannot adequately assess the usefulness and quality of information provided to EOCs. This could adversely affect the Fusion Centers' efforts to enhance their interaction and relationship with EOCs and improve their information sharing capabilities. Furthermore, EOC officials should avail themselves of opportunities to interact with Fusion Centers, including participating in Fusion Center open houses and inviting Fusion Centers to participate in exercises.

Many best practices have been identified to increase coordination and communication between Fusion Centers and EOCs, particularly collocating the Fusion Center and the jurisdiction's EOC; however, this requires both resources and a desire to do so.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office:

Recommendation #3: As a part of the Baseline Capabilities Assessment, assess the effectiveness of marketing activities and outreach efforts of Fusion Centers to promote the products, services, and information they can provide to Emergency Operations Center officials and other partners.

Recommendation #4: Provide Fusion Centers with guidance and technical assistance to ensure that they adhere to the *Baseline Capabilities* to have written procedures for the products and information they disseminate to core and ad hoc customers, including Emergency Operations Center officials.

Recommendation #5: Provide technical assistance to Fusion Center officials to conduct stand-alone periodic surveys to assess the usefulness and quality of the products and information provided to their partners, including Emergency Operations Center officials.

Management Comments and OIG Analysis

Recommendation #3: DHS I&A concurred with this recommendation and said that as a component of the annual Fusion Center Assessment Program, it is documenting Fusion Centers' communication and outreach efforts to promote awareness of the products, services, and information they can provide to their customers, including non-law enforcement partners.

We consider this recommendation resolved because steps are being taken to implement it; however, it will remain open until evidence is provided that DHS I&A is not only documenting but is also assessing the effectiveness of Fusion Centers' marketing activities and outreach efforts to promote the products, services, and information they can provide to their customers, including EOC officials.

Recommendation #4: DHS I&A concurred with this recommendation and said it will continue to assist Fusion Centers with developing final, approved plans, policies, and/or standard operating procedures for their business processes. This includes supporting Fusion Centers' ability to further disseminate threat information to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and private sector entities, including law enforcement and non-law enforcement partners.

We consider this recommendation resolved because steps are being taken to implement it; however, it will remain open until DHS I&A provides evidence that all Fusion Centers have written procedures for the products and information they disseminate to core and ad hoc customers, including EOC officials.

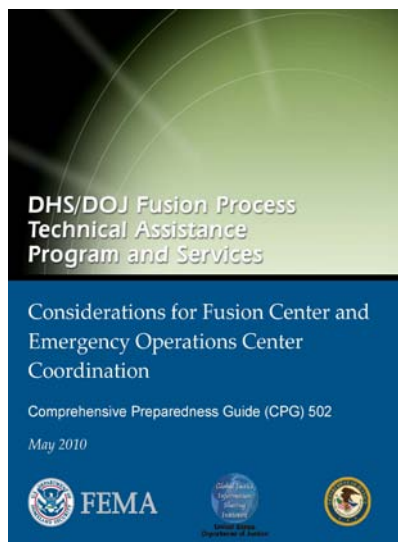
Recommendation #5: DHS I&A concurred with this recommendation and said it will continue to assist Fusion Centers by sharing best practices and emphasizing the importance of collecting feedback on the usefulness and quality of the products that Fusion Centers provide to law enforcement and homeland security partners.

We consider this recommendation resolved because steps are being taken to implement it; however, it will remain open until DHS I&A provides evidence that it has a plan to provide technical assistance to Fusion Centers to conduct stand-alone surveys for assessing the usefulness and quality of products and information provided to their partners, including EOC officials.

Federal Coordination and Information Sharing Guidance

Fusion Centers and EOCs are not always aware of and do not always use federal guidance intended to assist them in their efforts to coordinate and share information. Although Fusion Centers and EOCs are not required to follow federal guidance, it is a good business practice to use any resource that can enhance their working relationships and assist with achieving desired results. Because Fusion Centers and EOCs may not be aware of or using the guidance issued specifically to address coordination and information sharing efforts, they may not be applying best practices or practical steps designed to help coordinate and integrate their operations.

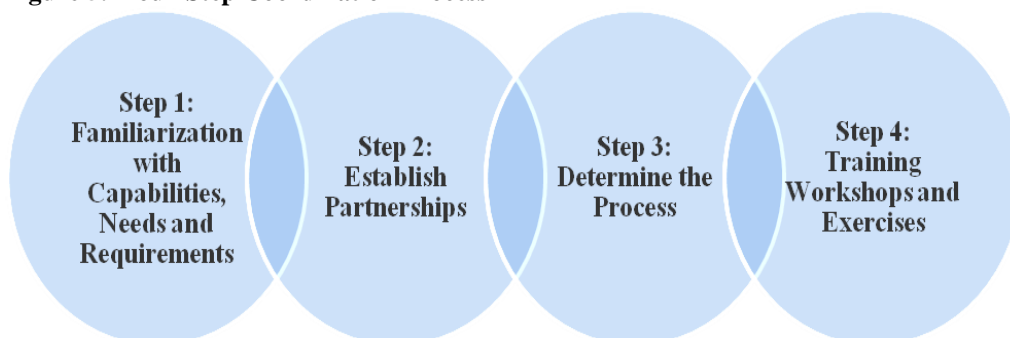
Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 502



FEMA, in conjunction with the joint DHS/DOJ Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program,⁸ developed Comprehensive Preparedness Guide-502: *Considerations for Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center Coordination* (CPG-502). CPG-502 provides guidance for coordination between Fusion Centers and EOCs. It outlines the roles of Fusion Centers and EOCs within the fusion process and provides steps by which these entities can work together to share information and intelligence on an ongoing basis.

CPG-502 recommends a four-step process to help Fusion Centers and EOCs coordinate and integrate operations (see figure 5).

Figure 5. Four-Step Coordination Process



Source: DHS.

Step 1: Fusion Center and EOC personnel should familiarize themselves with each other's capabilities, needs, and requirements.

Step 2: Once the Fusion Center and EOC are aware of each other's capabilities, needs, and requirements, partnerships should be created.

⁸ The DHS/DOJ Technical Assistance Program, which began in 2007, is a collaborative effort to develop and enhance the national Fusion Center network by offering classes and workshops delivered by subject matter experts.

Step 3: Agreements should be in place describing what information will be shared and how it will be shared (taking security clearances into account), particularly during steady-state and active-state operations.

Step 4: Numerous training courses are applicable to EOC/emergency management and Fusion Center personnel. One of the best ways for Fusion Center and EOC staff to familiarize themselves with each other's staff and operations is to jointly attend training, workshops, and exercises.

Fusion Centers and EOCs can use CPG-502 as a catalyst to further develop their relationships, allowing for a better understanding of each other's capabilities, information needs, and requirements while also leveraging all available resources during a disaster or an emergency. Although almost all Fusion Center officials and many of the EOC officials had seen CPG-502, the document was not effectively disseminated to all EOC officials, nor was the importance of its implementation promoted.

During our visits to the 17 Fusion Centers, 1 told us that it had never seen the CPG-502 document and 11 said that they were aware of it but were not using it. Of the 31 EOCs visited, 3 were using the CPG-502 document, 12 had never seen it, and 16 had received it but are not using it to improve the coordination and integration of Fusion Center and EOC operations. One Fusion Center director told us that he does not see the connection between Fusion Centers and EOCs; therefore, he has not used CPG-502. Another Fusion Center director said that products like CPG-502 are released all the time, but there is not enough time to read them to identify how they can be useful. The director also said that CPG-502 is just another document unless resources are available to implement it. Finally, a local EOC manager felt that CPG-502 applied only to state Fusion Centers and EOCs because of the structure of the organizations outlined in the document and the structure of the guidance.

One Fusion Center director we visited believes that creating partnerships is the most important aspect of CPG-502; however, throughout our visits, we encountered Fusion Centers and EOCs that were not partnering with each other. This director said that the biggest benefit to the document was the emphasis on personal relationships between the Fusion Centers and EOCs. Many of the EOCs, though, have little or no interaction with their Fusion

Center. For example, an EOC director said that if he needed actionable information, he would go to the city police instead of the Fusion Center. Some police personnel said that they would contact other state Fusion Centers before contacting their own Fusion Center. A personal relationship with all partners fosters an appreciation of the roles, responsibilities, and endeavors undertaken by each center. Written procedures can be developed from these interactions.

Conclusion

More than 83% of the locations visited during our fieldwork either did not receive or were not using CPG-502. Coordination between Fusion Centers and EOCs is vital to enhancing our Nation's security. Fusion Centers and EOCs need to develop positive relationships to share information and intelligence on a daily basis as well as when responding to disasters. CPG-502 has information that can help Fusion Centers and EOCs enhance their relationships by providing guidance on how to gain a better understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. CPG-502 can also support Fusion Centers in their implementation of the *Baseline Capabilities*, and help EOCs fulfill their emergency management responsibilities.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office and the Assistant Administrator, National Preparedness Directorate:

Recommendation #6:

- Ensure that the Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG)-502 and other federal guidance regarding coordination and information sharing efforts between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers is disseminated to all state, local, and tribal Emergency Operations Centers;
- Promote the benefits of using CPG-502 and explain how it is designed to enhance Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Centers coordination and information sharing activities; and
- Ensure that CPG-502 is applicable to local Emergency Operations Centers.

Management Comments and OIG Analysis

Recommendation #6: DHS I&A did not concur with this recommendation. DHS I&A said that emergency management partners, including EOCs, are FEMA's primary stakeholders, and ensuring the dissemination and applicability of CPG-502 to both state and local EOCs is a recommendation best directed to FEMA. However, DHS I&A said that it has and will continue to disseminate CPG-502 to Fusion Centers and explain its purpose and support FEMA with disseminating this guidance to emergency management partners.

FEMA concurred with this recommendation and said that it has assisted with the dissemination of CPG-502 to Fusion Centers and the 10 FEMA Regions. FEMA has also put the document and a factsheet on its website. FEMA also stated that a new Fusion Process Technical Assistance offering has been developed to implement the concepts of CPG-502. Finally, FEMA believes that CPG-502 is already designed to be applicable to all jurisdictions.

We consider this recommendation unresolved and open since we believe DHS I&A should further promote the benefits of CPG-502 with both Fusion Centers and EOCs. When engaging EOC officials, DHS can refer to CPG-502 as a tool to enhance and develop their relationships. CPG-502 outlines the roles of Fusion Centers and EOCs within the fusion process and provides steps by which these entities can work together to share information and intelligence on an ongoing basis. Opportunities exist to promote this guidance through best practices identified for Fusion Center and EOC coordination such as the Fusion Center Liaison Officer Program and conducting open houses.

While CPG-502 is not written exclusively for state use, some local EOC officials we interviewed expressed concerns that the functions and positions outlined in CPG-502 do not translate to their operations. FEMA needs to document either that local EOCs were sufficiently consulted in the drafting of CPG-502 or that they have taken steps to modify CPG-502 to ensure its applicability to local EOCs. FEMA also needs to provide us with their plans to further disseminate and promote the benefits of CPG-502 to local and tribal EOCs.

Classification of Information

Information classification significantly affects how that information can be shared. Many emergency managers do not have clearances, and EOCs often do not have the secure information technology systems necessary to transmit or receive classified information. As a result, the federal government and Fusion Centers need to find other ways to share information with emergency management personnel and to minimize the amount of information that requires a security clearance.

Overclassification of information can prevent information from being shared with those who may be able to benefit from it, such as emergency managers who may need to pre-position goods or lean forward in anticipation of an incident. Both federal and local levels face challenges with overclassification, as well as the use of the “law enforcement sensitive” designation. The federal government is taking steps to reduce overclassification; however, guidance to accomplish this is still being finalized and has not been implemented.

Federal Requirements Governing Classified Information

A number of federal laws and Executive orders govern the classification of information, which aims to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of information that could be damaging to national security. However, information that is not shared because of classification can also decrease security. The 9/11 Commission, mandated by Congress to provide recommendations on preventing future terrorist attacks, recommended that intelligence reports be written in their most shareable but still meaningful form to ensure that the largest number of people can access and use the information.

Congress has moved to improve information sharing not only within the federal government, but also with state and local partners in the national and homeland security structure. Congress passed the *Reducing Over-Classification Act* (P.L.111-258) in the belief that decisions on classification need to consider the potential benefits to national security by sharing information rather than withholding it. The law requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a strategy to prevent the overclassification of homeland security and other information and to promote the sharing of unclassified information. President Obama released Executive Order 13549, Classified National Security Information Program for State, Local, Tribal, and Private Sector Entities, in

August 2010 to ensure the proper safeguarding of classified information shared with state, local, tribal, and private sector entities.

Distributing Intelligence Reports With “Tear Lines”

The *Reducing Over-Classification Act* assigns the Secretary of Homeland Security the responsibility to “prepare finished intelligence and information products in both classified and unclassified formats, as appropriate, whenever reasonably expected to be of benefit to a State, local, or tribal government (including a state, local, or tribal law enforcement agency) or a private sector entity.” It requires the Director of National Intelligence to create guidance on “portion marking” to address situations in which intelligence reports that contain both classified and unclassified information can be shared more easily by removing the classified information. Some Fusion Center officials said that information coming from DHS and other federal partners could be more clearly marked as to which portions can be shared. They also said that it would be helpful to receive training on how to handle these marked documents.

DHS I&A officials said that they send out as many products as possible with “tear lines.”⁹ They said they are impeded, however, when they go back to the originating agency asking for portion markings and the request is denied, or when they prepare an unclassified version of the product but the originating agency denies permission to release the unclassified version. DHS I&A has responded to 15 requests by state and local officials for downgrading classification levels or providing tear lines for the information provided by the department. However, the DHS official responsible for officially challenging the classification of information from other federal agencies said that DHS I&A has not launched any official challenges in more than a year.

Classified National Security Information Program

The *Reducing Over-Classification Act* created a Classified Information Advisory Officer position within DHS to develop and administer training programs to assist state, local, and tribal

⁹ A “tear line” is a portion of a classified intelligence report or document that contains a sanitized version of the information in that report. By using tear lines, important information in a highly classified intelligence report can be shared more widely with those who need it but do not have the necessary clearances to read the full report.

entities to develop plans and policies regarding the use of classified information, including ways to communicate with noncleared personnel, and the appropriate procedures for challenging classification determinations. The Secretary of Homeland Security appointed this officer in December 2010 by adding this responsibility to the Chief of the Administrative Security Division at DHS, and tasked the Classified Information Advisory Officer to implement Executive Order 13549.

The Implementation Directive for Executive Order 13549 is in the final draft stages, needing only one more federal agency's concurrence and the Secretary of DHS' signature to become effective. This directive will standardize the process by which sensitive information is shared with state and local partners, establish a standard process for challenging the classification of information, and establish training requirements for those who handle classified information at the state, local, tribal, and private sector levels. The dissemination and implementation of this guidance should alleviate many of the classification issues identified by Fusion Center and EOC staff during our review.

“Law Enforcement Sensitive” Designation

Designation of information as “law enforcement sensitive”¹⁰ presents an equal challenge to information sharing. Just as the federal government has struggled in the past with overclassifying information, state and local jurisdictions have a similar tendency to overclassify information as law enforcement sensitive, preventing it from being shared with non-law enforcement officials such as EOC personnel. However, by removing personally identifiable information or criminal information from law enforcement sensitive products, Fusion Center staff can share overall threat information with non-law enforcement partners.

Many Fusion Center officials, particularly in all-crimes Fusion Centers, do not feel that information in law enforcement sensitive documents needs to be shared outside those with arrest authority. In some cases, state laws prohibit the sharing of information outside the law enforcement community. However, a better understanding of the information needs of emergency management might encourage Fusion Centers officials to remove the law

¹⁰ The definition of “law enforcement sensitive” varies from state to state; however, it tends to describe detailed information about potential subjects of criminal investigations that could hinder prosecution if released.

enforcement sensitive portions of products so that emergency managers (and other partners) can use the remainder.

Conclusion

DHS needs to create intelligence products that are clearly portion marked or have tear lines, whenever possible. It also needs to train Fusion Center officials on how to handle and disseminate these products on a much broader scale to the emergency management community, as well as other partners. The finalization, dissemination, and implementation of DHS's Implementing Directive for Executive Order 13549 will help accomplish this.

To improve information sharing, Fusion Centers need to be able to remove the law enforcement sensitive information from the intelligence products they create, just as the federal government needs to create unclassified versions of its intelligence products. Although Fusion Centers have to comply with state laws governing the sharing of law enforcement sensitive information, DHS I&A can provide training and technical assistance to help the centers work within existing state laws to better share information.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office:

Recommendation #7: Effectively disseminate the Implementing Directive for Executive Order 13549, once it is finalized by the DHS Administrative Security Division, to all applicable stakeholders, and adhere to the policies regarding portion marking, training, and classification challenges.

We recommend that the Assistant Administrator, National Preparedness Directorate:

Recommendation #8: Provide training for Fusion Center staff on how to handle portion-marked products and redact law enforcement sensitive information from products generated at the state and local levels.

Management Comments and OIG Analysis

Recommendation #7: DHS I&A concurred with this recommendation and said it will assist in the dissemination of the Implementing Directive for Executive Order 13549 to Fusion Center stakeholders. DHS I&A also said that it will continue to adhere to all policies regarding portion marking, training, and classification challenges issued by the DHS Administrative Security Division.

We consider this recommendation resolved because steps are being taken to implement it; however, it will remain open until evidence is provided that DHS I&A is disseminating the Implementing Directive for Executive Order 13549 to all applicable stakeholders.

Recommendation #8: FEMA concurred with this recommendation and said that the Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program offers a Security Technical Assistance workshop designed to assist Fusion Centers on handling, collecting, storing and sharing classified and controlled-unclassified information. DHS I&A said that in coordination with the Office of Security, it will support FEMA with this recommendation and lead outreach on training opportunities to Fusion Center stakeholders.

We consider this recommendation resolved because steps are being taken to implement it; however, it will remain open until FEMA provides documentation on the course materials used for training Fusion Center staff on how to handle portion-marked products and redact law enforcement sensitive information.

Appendix A

Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

The objective of our audit was to determine to what extent Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers interact and share information. To accomplish our objective, we reviewed and analyzed the President's National Strategy for Information Sharing, Baseline Capabilities, the *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 502: Considerations for Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center Coordination*, prior OIG and Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports relevant to our review, grant guidance, Fusion Center baseline capability assessments, and other applicable documents.

We interviewed officials from the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis and the FEMA Grant Programs Directorate in order to determine national-level policy and procedures. We conducted these interviews at DHS and FEMA headquarters in Washington, DC. We also attended the National Fusion Center Conference in Denver, Colorado.

Additionally, we interviewed officials at 17 Fusion Centers and 31 Emergency Operations Centers in 9 of the 10 FEMA Regions. We selected a judgmental sample of sites of various sizes and locations. For example, the Fusion Centers included both state and urban area centers, and the Emergency Operations Centers included state, local, and tribal locations. The centers were located in Maynard and Roxbury, Massachusetts; Trenton, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Orlando and Miami, Florida; Chicago, Illinois, and Madison, Wisconsin; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Santa Fe, New Mexico; Kansas City and Jefferson City, Missouri; Las Vegas and Carson City, Nevada; Salem, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington; and Charleston, West Virginia. At the site visits, we asked interviewees a standardized list of questions and requested that they provide specific documents relative to their interaction and information sharing activities.

We conducted this performance audit between October 2010 and June 2011 pursuant to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, and according to generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based upon our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based upon our audit objectives.

Appendix B Management Comments to the Draft Report

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

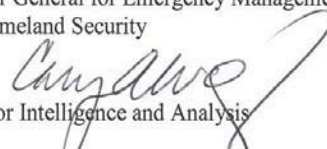


**Homeland
Security**

SEP 13 2011

RECORD

MEMORANDUM FOR: Matt Jadacki
Assistant Inspector General for Emergency Management Oversight
Department of Homeland Security

FROM: Caryn A. Wagner 
Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis

SUBJECT: Corrective Action Plans for Recommendations Contained in OIG-11-007-EMO-FEMA, *Relationships Between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers*

The Department of Homeland Security (Department/DHS) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Office of Inspector General (OIG) draft report for OIG-11-007-EMO-FEMA, *Relationships Between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers*. The Department, particularly the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A), is addressing any pertinent and relevant issues identified in the report.

Our responses to each of the recommendations from the draft report can be found below:

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office and Assistant Administrator, National Preparedness Directorate:

Recommendation #1: Develop and distribute materials for fusion center and Emergency Management officials that outline the benefits of partnering in an all-hazards approach to homeland security, and gather and publish best practices from jurisdictions that have adopted an all-hazards approach.

I&A Response: Concur. As stated in both the *National Strategy for Information Sharing* and the *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers* (Baseline Capabilities), state and major urban area fusion centers are owned and managed by state and local governments. The Baseline Capabilities specifically recognizes that a fusion center's mission (whether it be "all-crimes" and/or "all-hazards") should be defined based on jurisdictional needs. Furthermore, DHS has worked with federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) partners to develop and publish guidance in support of implementing all-hazards approaches, including the following appendices to the Baseline Capabilities: *Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources (CIKR): Protection Capabilities for Fusion Centers*, *Fire Service Integration for Fusion Centers*, and *Health Security: Public Health and Medical Integration for Fusion Centers*.

DHS supports this guidance and also supports fusion centers in the form of deployed personnel, training, technical assistance, exercise support, security clearances, connectivity to federal systems, technology, and grant funding. As a component of the joint DHS/Department of Justice Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program, I&A's State and Local Program Office (SLPO), working with its Departmental and interagency partners, will continue to support the identification, documentation, and sharing of best practices and lessons learned from fusion centers as they work with their partners to implement all-hazards approaches.

Additionally, I&A fully supports the assignment of a full time Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Protection and National Preparedness detailee to SLPO to support efforts to integrate and coordinate emergency management participation in fusion centers and associated national level guidance and policy.

Recommendation #2: Report annually on the amount of homeland security grant funds awarded for fusion center use, as well as the number of fusion centers that have adopted an all-hazards approach or can demonstrate communication and coordination with emergency management partners.

I&A Response: Concur. As a component of the annual Fusion Center Assessment Program, SLPO is documenting the number of fusion centers that have adopted an all-hazards approach or can demonstrate communication and coordination with emergency management partners. Additionally, responsibility for reporting on the amount of homeland security grant funds leveraged for fusion centers is under the purview of the FEMA Protection and National Preparedness' Grant Programs Directorate (GPD), as this data is self-reported by the respective State Administrative Agency biannually via GPD's grant reporting tool. SLPO will support FEMA determine the most effective manner to capture this information.

In order to leverage homeland security grant funds to support fusion center all-hazard approaches, I&A will work with the GPD to recommend revisions to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) grant guidance to support all-hazards approaches and to allow the use of funds for fusion center purposes provided that the fusion center is co-located or virtually linked with the EOC. I&A will also work with FEMA GPD to recommend revisions to the Emergency Management Performance Grant program guidance to support all-hazards approaches and to allow the use of funds for hiring emergency management analysts placed in fusion centers.

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office:

Recommendation #3: As a part of the Baseline Capabilities Assessment, assess the effectiveness of marketing activities and outreach efforts of fusion centers to promote the products, services, and information they can provide to EOCs and other partners.

I&A Response: Concur. As a component of the annual Fusion Center Assessment Program, SLPO is documenting fusion centers' communication and outreach efforts to promote awareness of the products, services, and information they can provide to core and ad hoc customers, including non-law enforcement partners.

Recommendation #4: Provide fusion centers with guidance and technical assistance to ensure they adhere to the *Baseline Capabilities* to have written procedures for the products and information they disseminate to core and ad hoc customers, including EOCs.

I&A Response: Concur. SLPO is leading Departmental and interagency efforts to assist fusion centers in building their capabilities, and specifically in mitigating capability gaps identified by the 2010 Baseline Capabilities Assessment. A key focus of these mitigation efforts was to assist fusion centers in defining their business processes through the development of final, approved plans, policies, and/or standard operating procedures. As of December 31, 2010, fusion centers had made progress in meeting this objective. SLPO will continue to assist fusion centers in this regard with a specific focus on supporting their efforts to implement Critical Operational Capability (COC) #3: Disseminate. This COC is focused on supporting fusion centers' ability to further disseminate threat information to SLTT and private sector entities within their jurisdiction, including law enforcement and non-law enforcement partners.

Recommendation #5: Provide technical assistance to fusion center officials to conduct stand-alone periodic surveys to more effectively assess the usefulness and quality of the products and information that is provided to their partners, including emergency management partners.

I&A Response: Concur. The *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers* identifies the development of mechanisms to receive stakeholder feedback and update the fusion centers' plans and procedures based on this feedback as a capability necessary to execute the fusion process. SLPO will continue to assist fusion centers in building this capability by sharing best practices and emphasize the importance of collecting feedback on the usefulness and quality of its products from law enforcement and homeland security partners.

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office and the Assistant Administrator, National Preparedness Directorate:

Recommendation #6:

- Ensure that the Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG)-502 and other federal guidance regarding coordination and information sharing efforts between fusion centers and EOCs is disseminated to all state, local, and tribal EOCs;
- Promote the benefits of using CPG-502 and explain how it is designed to enhance fusion center and EOC coordination and information sharing activities; and
- Ensure that CPG-502 is applicable to local EOCs.

I&A Response: Non-Concur. As emergency management partners, including EOCs, are FEMA's primary stakeholders, ensuring the dissemination and applicability of CPG-502 to both state and local EOCs is a recommendation best directed to FEMA. SLPO has and will continue to disseminate CPG-502 to fusion centers and explain its purpose, and will support FEMA disseminate this guidance to emergency management partners, as appropriate.

Additionally, I&A will support FEMA as it leads efforts to engage with State level EOCs and emergency management to ensure a statewide coordination/facilitation point for the distribution of information shared by the fusion centers to local emergency management partners. By providing fusion centers with a primary emergency management point of contact (POC), this POC can ensure information is appropriately disseminated to local/county emergency managers and EOCs. At the same time, this primary emergency management POC can ensure pertinent information from these partners is also shared with the fusion center.

We recommend that the Director, State and Local Program Office:

Recommendation #7: Effectively disseminate the Implementing Directive for Executive Order 13549, once it is finalized by the DHS Administrative Security Division, to all applicable stakeholders, and adhere to the policies regarding portion marking, training, and classification challenges.

I&A Response: Concur. Recognizing that the DHS Administrative Security Division is leading the development of the Implementing Directive for Executive Order 13549, I&A will assist in the dissemination of the directive to fusion center stakeholders. Additionally, I&A adheres, and will continue to adhere, to all policies regarding portion marking, training, and classification challenges issued by the DHS Administrative Security Division.

We recommend that the Assistant Administrator, National Preparedness Directorate:

Recommendation #8: Provide training for fusion center staff on how to handle portion-marked products and redact law enforcement sensitive information from products generated at the state and local levels.

I&A Response: Concur. In coordination with the Office of Security, I&A will support FEMA with this recommendation and lead outreach on training opportunities to fusion center stakeholders.

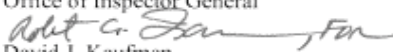
We appreciate this opportunity to review and comment on the draft report. In addition to this response, technical comments and a sensitivity review were provided under separate cover.



FEMA

OCT 27 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: Matt Jadacki
Assistant Inspector General
Office of Inspector General

FROM: 
David J. Kaufman
Director
Office of Policy and Program Analysis

SUBJECT: FEMA Response to OIG Draft Report, *Relationships Between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operation Centers*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject draft report. The findings in the report will be used to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of how we execute and measure our programs. We recognize the need to continue to improve our processes, including addressing the recommendations raised in this report. Our responses to the recommendations that apply to FEMA are as follows (DHS I&A, which has the lead regarding this engagement, has addressed the remaining recommendations separately):

Recommendation #1: Develop and distribute materials for Fusion Center and Emergency Management officials that outline the benefits of partnering in an all-hazards approach to homeland security, and gather and publish best practices from jurisdictions that have adopted an all-hazards approach.

FEMA Response: FEMA concurs with this recommendation. Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 502 (CPG-502) was developed specifically to encourage partnerships between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs). The Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program completes best practice summaries on Fusion Center/EOC partnerships and makes the write-ups available to all Fusion Centers via the Fusion Process Technical Assistance Resource Center on LLIS.gov. Examples of best practices were included as appendices to CPG 502.

FEMA believes this satisfies the intent of the recommendation and requests that this recommendation be resolved and closed.

Recommendation #2: Report annually on the amount of homeland security grant funds awarded for Fusion Center use, as well as the number of Fusion Centers that have adopted an all-hazards approach or can demonstrate communication and coordination with Emergency Operations Center officials.

www.fema.gov

FEMA Response: FEMA concurs with this recommendation. That recommendation is correct, we do have the ability to track Fusion Center Spending the in GRT, but not down to the very specific level, as it says. The Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) has the capability, through its Reporting and Information Management Branch, to report annually on the amount of Homeland Security grant funds awarded for Fusion Center use. GPD does not have the information to be able to report on the Fusion Centers that have adopted all-hazards approaches or demonstrate coordination with Emergency Operations Center officials.

FEMA believes this satisfies the intent of the recommendation and requests that this recommendation be resolved and closed.

Recommendation #6:

- Ensure that the Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG)-502 and other federal guidance regarding coordination and information sharing efforts between Fusion Centers and Emergency Operations Centers is disseminated to all state, local, and tribal Emergency Operations Centers;

FEMA Response: FEMA concurs with this recommendation. CPG-502 has been disseminated to fusion centers and all 10 FEMA Regions to disseminate to their respective states. The full document and factsheet is also available on the FEMA website at: <http://www.fema.gov/about/divisions/cpg502.shtm>

- Promote the benefits of using CPG-502 and explain how it is designed to enhance Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Centers coordination and information sharing activities; and

FEMA Response: A new Fusion Process Technical Assistance offering which helps Fusion Centers implement the concepts of CPG-502 has been developed. The Fusion Process Technical Assistance programs are actively shared with the deployed DHS I&A staff at fusion centers throughout the country and are marketed at the annual National Fusion Center Conference.

- Ensure that CPG-502 is applicable to local Emergency Operations Centers.

FEMA Response: While CPG-502 mentions State EOCs, it is designed to be applicable to all levels of jurisdiction.

FEMA believes this satisfies the intent of the recommendation and requests that this recommendation be resolved and closed.

Recommendation #8: Provide training for Fusion Center staff on how to handle portion-marked products and redact law enforcement sensitive information from products generated at the state and local levels.

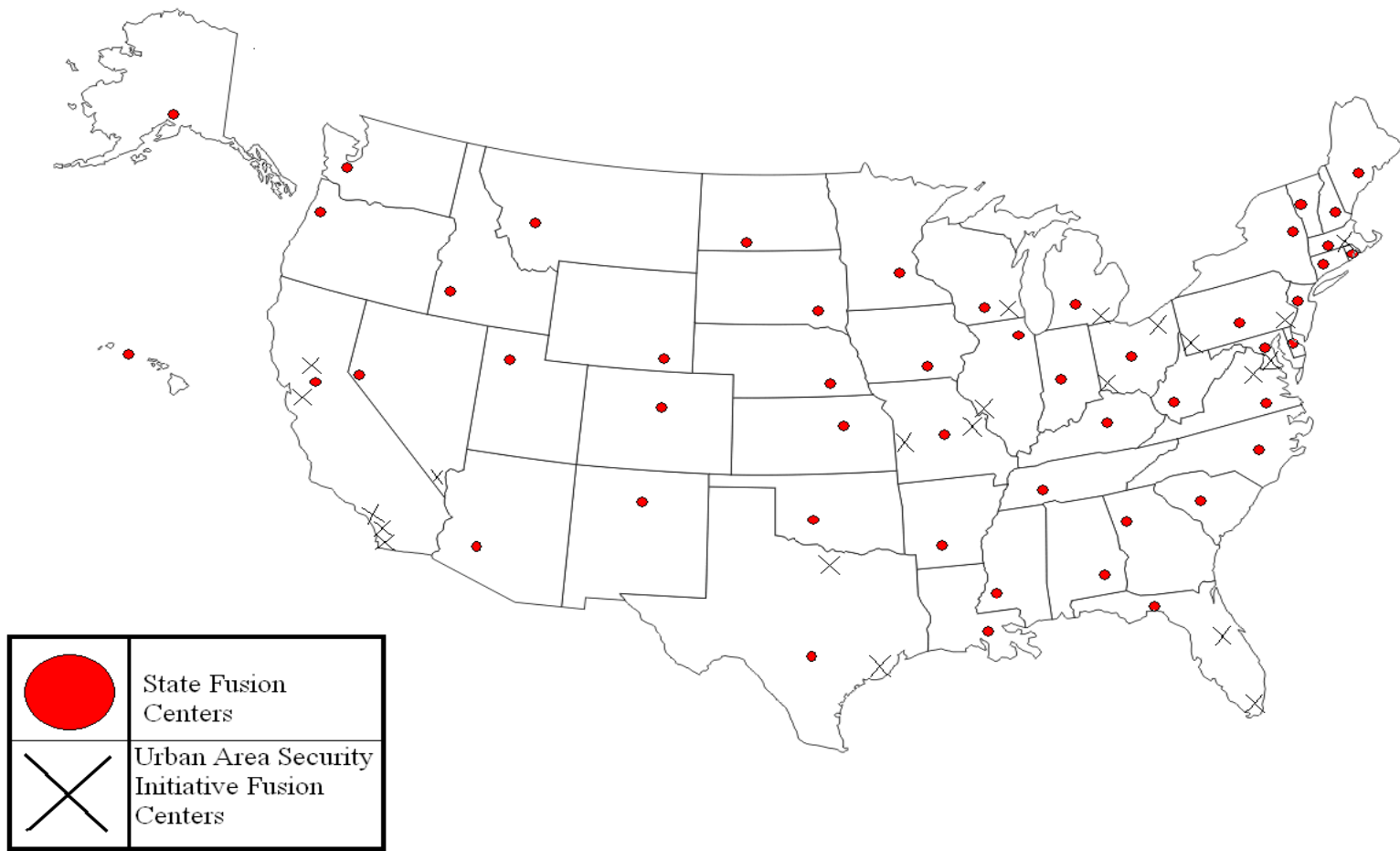
FEMA Response: The Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program offers a Security technical assistance workshop designed to assist Fusion Centers on handling, collecting, storing and

sharing classified and controlled-unclassified information. This and other technical assistance opportunities are routinely marketed to the fusion centers, as well as the jurisdictions in which they are located, through the Technical Assistance Program. Additionally, the availability of these services is highlighted in the grant program guidance. These services are made available at no cost to the recipient.

FEMA believes this satisfies the intent of the recommendation and requests that this recommendation be resolved and closed.

Again, we thank you, again, for the opportunity to review and update our comments to your recommendations contained in your draft report. Should you have further questions regarding our response, please do not hesitate to call FEMA's Chief Audit Liaison, Brad Shefka, at 202-646-1308.

Appendix C
Fusion Center Map and List of State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers



Source: DHS

Appendix C
Fusion Center Map and List of State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers

State Fusion Centers		Urban Area Fusion Centers
Alabama Fusion Center	Nebraska Information Analysis Center	Boston Regional Intelligence Center
Alaska Information and Analysis Center	New Hampshire Information and Analysis Center	Central California Intelligence Center
Arkansas State Fusion Center	New Mexico All Source Intelligence Center	Central Florida Information Exchange
Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center	New York State Intelligence Center	Chicago Crime Prevention and Information Center
California State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center	Nevada Threat Analysis Center	Cincinnati/Hamilton County Regional Terrorism Early Warning Group
Colorado Information Analysis Center	North Carolina Information Sharing and Analysis Center	Delaware Valley Regional Fusion Center (Philadelphia)
Commonwealth Fusion Center (Massachusetts)	North Dakota State and Local Intelligence Center	Detroit and Southeast Michigan Information and Intelligence Center
Connecticut Intelligence Center	Oklahoma Information Fusion Center	Houston Regional Information Sharing Center
Delaware Information Analysis Center	Pennsylvania Criminal Intelligence Center	Joint Regional Intelligence Center (Los Angeles)
Florida Fusion Center	Regional Operations Intelligence Center (New Jersey)	Kansas City Regional TEW Interagency Analysis Center
Georgia Information Sharing and Analysis Center	Rhode Island Fusion Center	Miami-Dade Fusion Center
Hawaii Pacific Regional Information Clearinghouse	South Carolina Intelligence and Information Center	North Central Texas Fusion Center

**Appendix C
Fusion Center Map and List of State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers**

State Fusion Centers		Urban Area Fusion Centers
Idaho Criminal Intelligence Center	South Dakota Fusion Center	Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center
Indiana Intelligence Fusion Center	Statewide Terrorism & Intelligence Center (Illinois)	Northern California Regional Intelligence Center
Iowa Intelligence Fusion Center	Strategic Analysis and Information Center (Ohio)	Northern Virginia Regional Intelligence Center
Kansas Intelligence Fusion Center	Tennessee Fusion Center	Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center (California)
Kentucky Intelligence Fusion Center	Terrorism Information Threat Assessment Network Fusion Center (Oregon)	San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center
Louisiana State Analytic Fusion Exchange	Texas Fusion Center	Southern Nevada Counterterrorism Center
Maine Information and Analysis Center	Utah Statewide Information and Analysis Center	Southeastern Wisconsin Threat Analysis Center
Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center	Vermont Fusion Center	Southwestern Pennsylvania Region 13 Fusion Center
Michigan Intelligence Operations Center	Virginia Fusion Center	St. Louis Terrorism Early Warning Group
Minnesota Joint Analytical Center	Washington State Fusion Center	Washington Regional Threat and Analysis Center
Mississippi Analysis and Information Center	West Virginia Intelligence Fusion Center	
Missouri Information Analysis Center	Wisconsin Statewide Information Center	
Montana All-Threat Intelligence Center	Wyoming Fusion Center	

*The map and list of state and major urban area Fusion Centers do not include the Puerto Rico National Security State Information Center.

Appendix D
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Appendix E

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