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MAKING HOMELAND SECURITY INTELLIGENCE WORK FOR STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL PARTNERS: AN INTERAGENCY THREAT ASSESSMENT COORDINATION GROUP (ITACG) PROGRESS REPORT

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, INFORMATION SHARING, AND TERRORISM RISK ASSESSMENT

OF THE

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MAKING HOMELAND SECURITY INTELLIGENCE WORK FOR STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL PARTNERS: AN INTERAGENCY THREAT ASSESSMENT COORDINATION GROUP (ITACG) PROGRESS REPORT

Thursday, March 13, 2008

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, INFORMATION SHARING,
AND TERRORISM RISK ASSESSMENT,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:08 a.m., in Room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Jane Harman [chair of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Harman and Reichert.

Ms. HARMAN [presiding]. The subcommittee will come to order.

The subcommittee is meeting today to receive testimony on "Making Homeland Security Intelligence Work for State, Local and Tribal Partners: an Interagency Threat Assessment Coordination Group, ITACG, Progress Report".

Good morning. Back at the start of the 110th Congress, this subcommittee made it a priority to represent the views of State and local law enforcement partners. We wanted to peer through the looking glass from the bottom up.

Nothing frustrates me more than the stovepipe culture and battles over turf that plague our Government. I think no one has missed this grandmother's rant on that subject. The inability of our national security agencies to share intelligence information was one of the root causes of our failure to stop the 9/11 attacks.

Knocking down stovepipes was the goal of much of the post-9/11 legislation, including the Intelligence Reform Act, in which I played a fairly significant role, and the Homeland Security Act. When it became clear that we face these problems in DHS, and still face these problems in DHS, Congress passed legislation last summer that embraced the recommendations of the 9/11 commission.

The 9/11 Act was the earthquake needed to change the ingrained culture of our intelligence bureaucracy. Since I come from California, I know how powerful earthquakes can be, and I hope we don't need any more earthquakes to keep us moving forward. Changing cultures is hard. It has been a very slow process, but I see a break in the clouds, especially through section 521 of the 9/11 Act, which established the ITACG at the National Counterterrorism Center.

The ITACG gives State and local partners a voice and an opportunity to help create intelligence products that make sense to their communities. Over the course of the next few months, the small staff of the ITACG will continue to work hard to improve information sharing.

I think, and I think our witnesses will confirm today, that the chances for success are increasing. I have changed my mind about this. I have spoken to our witnesses over the course of the last few months, and I see real signs of progress. But now that we are beginning to make progress, we have to continue to make progress, and we have to continue to define carefully what are the roles and responsibilities of the organizations that our witnesses head.

ITACG is tasked with providing America alerts, warnings, and notifications of terrorist threats. It will also provide strategic assessments of these threats. Big deal, strategic assessments. We don't just want to have a number of false alarms. We want to have true understanding in the State, local and tribal communities about what the information they are receiving means, what they should look for, and what they should do.

Law enforcement, as everybody knows, stands on America's front lines. They know how threats may affect their individual towns and cities. We need to help them understand how the ITACG can lend a hand. The ITACG has to be marketed more aggressively. Its products must be effectively and efficiently disseminated. A "tagline" note on ITACG products will help, and I understand from Ambassador McNamara that there is such a thing now, but maybe it needs to be put in a form that is very easy to notice.

State and local partners must also understand how to access the information ITACG produces. It might be, as my staff has pointed out, that there are just too many ways to distribute information and people don't know what the best way is. Once it overcomes the struggle just to push intelligence reports out the door, ITACG staff and the advisory council can improve communication and feedback with our partners on the front lines. Part of the problem, too, is that the classification process is incredibly difficult to navigate. As the ITACG evolves, State and local input will improve. Virtual networks show promise for uniting State and local intelligence communities and law enforcement.

Attracting the next group of police and sheriffs' officers to the ITACG detail has also proven extremely difficult. It is true that it is a hardship for many to move to Washington. I would observe as a Member of Congress that sometimes it is a hardship to serve in Washington. But nonetheless, I think that if awareness is raised, there will be a number of hardy souls out there who think that it will be an important experience and who can accommodate moving here for a year or 2 with their own families.

Next week, I will be speaking, and maybe some of you will be too, at the National Fusion Center Conference in San Francisco. NCTC is evolving into its own sort of national fusion center of which the ITACG is becoming a crucial function. I just want to salute Mike Leiter for the work that he has done to move that agency forward.

I look forward to the testimony this morning, and now yield to the Ranking Member for opening comments.

Mr. REICHERT. Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning.

Thank you, distinguished panel, for being here this morning and giving us some of your time.

Director Leiter, welcome.

Ambassador McNamara, Under Secretary Allen and Assistant Director Murphy, welcome back. We appreciate your taking the time to be here this morning.

We meet today to look at the stand-up of the Interagency Threat Assessment Coordination Group, or ITACG for short. The ITACG was created by the president in 2006 and codified by Congress in order to improve the sharing of information with State, local, tribal and private sector officials. Most importantly, it was created to help satisfy the needs of State, local, tribal and private sector entities.

I believe all of us want to hear how ITACG is satisfying these needs and how all of you are working to improve the products being sent to State and local officials. As you all know, I served in law enforcement for 33 years prior to coming here. I am not sure I would consider joining your team, though, and spending my entire life here in Washington, DC after this job. But I strongly believe that there are people out there willing to serve, qualified people that we should be reaching out to join your team to help bring State and local officials together in your efforts.

We really need the cop's perspective on terrorism. It is essential to our State and our local and tribal police department to prevent terrorist attacks. It is essential for them to feel like they are part of the effort. They sometimes don't feel a part of the effort. We must incorporate cops in the production of terrorism products. The ITACG work is to be commended for helping to move this effort forward, but we also like to note that there is a lot that we can do to make this work better.

Additionally, the highly classified nature of terrorism information can cause problems with sharing with uncleared State and local personnel so that ITACG also helps rapidly declassify and release information to the State, local, tribal and private sector officials. This is an essential role that will help speed information to the front lines and the hands of our first-preventers.

We have all heard concerns about how long it took to get the ITACG up and running. But what I am really interested in is how we move forward to make sure that we have a robust ITACG that fully incorporates the perspectives and expertise of our local cops and other counterterrorism officials.

You have two members here this morning with differing experiences that I think really provide a great marriage of experience in the Chair's experience here in Congress and her experience in the intel world, and then mine coming from the local perspective. I just have to say, again from a cop's perspective, and I have felt, and I know they still do feel, outside. There is a great deal of work to do for all of you to reach out.

The Federal system seems so overwhelming and cumbersome and overly bureaucratic and very secretive to the local sheriff, the local police chief and the local cop or deputy on the beat. It is going to take a lot of hard work, dedication and really being sincere about what your mission is in order to overcome that, and finally

and eventually and hopefully create a system that really is designed to keep our country safe.

I yield back. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. HARMAN. I thank you, Dave, for those comments. I do think our experience meshes well and everyone should know that this subcommittee proceeds on a bipartisan basis. Our legislation is bipartisan. Our view of these issues is bipartisan, and we are trying to take a bottom-up view of this issue of information-sharing. Your perspective is invaluable as we discuss these issues.

Other members of the subcommittee will be arriving later. If they have opening statements, they will be inserted in the record, and they will be recognized for questions in the order that they arrive.

I welcome our witnesses this morning. Our first witness, Ambassador Ted McNamara, is the program manager of the information-sharing environment called ISE, a position established by the Intelligence Reform and Intelligence Prevention Act of 2004. Ambassador McNamara is a career diplomat who originally retired—originally retired—from government service in 1998, after which he spent 3 years as president and CEO of the America Society and the Council of the Americas in New York. Following the September 11 attacks, he was asked to return to government service as senior advisor for counterterrorism and homeland security at the Department of State.

Our second witness, Mike Leiter, is the acting director of the National Counterterrorism Center, NCTC. Prior to joining the NCTC, Mr. Leiter served as the deputy chief of staff for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. In this role, he assisted in the establishment of the ODNI and coordinated all internal and external operations for the ODNI.

Mr. Leiter was also involved in the development of national intelligence centers, including the NCTC and the National Counterproliferation Center, and their integration into the larger intelligence community. Again, I commend you for that. I think these are crucial organizations, as we try to make certain that we connect the dots next time. Mr. Leiter served as the deputy general counsel and assistant director of the president's Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Our third witness, who seems to be living at that witness table, is Under Secretary Charlie Allen. He is the Department of Homeland Security's chief intelligence officer. Under Secretary Allen leads the Department's intelligence work through the Office of Intelligence and Analysis, I&A, and focuses on improving the analysis and sharing of terrorist threat information.

He is responsible for ensuring that information is gathered from Department component intelligence units, as well as Federal, State, local, tribal and private sector partners. It is also his job to ensure that this information is fused with intelligence from other parts of the intelligence community to produce analytic products and services for the Department's customers.

Our fourth witness, Wayne Murphy, is an assistant director at the FBI. He joined the bureau with more than 22 years of service at the NSA, the National Security Agency, in a variety of analytic,

staff and leadership positions. The bulk of his career assignments have involved direct responsibility for SIGINT analysis, signals intelligence analysis and reporting, encompassing a broad range of targets.

I am done with all of my acronyms for the morning, and from now on I will speak in some other language.

Without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be inserted in the record. We will now begin 5 minutes each of summarizing your statements.

Ambassador McNamara, you are first.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS E. "TED" MCNAMARA, PROGRAM MANAGER, INFORMATION SHARING ENVIRONMENT (PM–ISE), OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. MCNAMARA. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and Ranking Member Reichert. I am pleased to be here today, and I welcome the opportunity to provide the subcommittee with the information that it needs with respect to the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group, the ITACG—a rather clumsy name, but nonetheless we work with it.

I am pleased to be here with Misters Allen, Leiter and Murphy, who are charged, as you know, with the overall responsibility for managing this new organization. As required by law, I recently submitted to the Congress a report regarding the efforts to establish the ITACG and I would like to request that that report be included as part of the record.

Ms. HARMAN. Without objection.* By the way, thank you for briefing us just a few days ago on the contents of that report.

Mr. MCNAMARA. You are very welcome.

Each of my colleagues will be providing you with the details of the progress we have made as they are charged with managing this effort. What I would like to do, accordingly, is to look at it from the perspective that I have as the program manager, whose job it is to coordinate and oversee the creation of the ITACG and to monitor and assess and report to you annually on the progress of that group.

What I would like to do is first talk about where we are now. What began 2 years ago as a concept sketched on a piece of graph paper is now institutionalized by statute and presidential directive. For the past year, the four of us seated at this table have worked even more intensively, particularly since the August passage of the 9/11 Act, to make the ITACG a reality. It is a reality today.

I think all of us agree that it hasn't been easy, but it is never easy, as you mentioned, Madam Chairwoman, to bring about major change. The ITACG, though modest in size, represents a major change in how we share information with State, local and tribal authorities. The information-sharing environment requires Federal officials to become knowledgeable about the intelligence and information needs of State and local and tribal officials, and in establishing the ITACG, I think we have accelerated the process that makes us smart about the needs of those officials.

*The information is included in the witness statement which follows.

I think it also requires that we have a greater understanding of how State and local and tribal governments operate, because in protecting our communities from terrorism, the responsibilities of these authorities differ from those of the Federal Government, and therefore their information needs are different.

The current ITACG is another step forward in realizing the goal of full information partnership at all levels of government. For the first time, State and local representatives with direct access to national intelligence will help shape the intelligence products that go out to protect our Nation's communities large and small.

I am pleased, but not yet satisfied, with the progress we have achieved. We have more to do and the four of us are committed to doing what is necessary to achieve the goal of a full partnership as laid out in the 9/11 Act and in the president's national security strategy for information sharing. What needs to be completed is to integrate the ITACG detail. You will be hearing more about that from my colleagues.

Let me make three points in closing. There has been some confusion about the activities of the ITACG. The first point I would make is the ITACG is an integral part of the Federal Government's effort to develop, draft and package terrorism-related intelligence products intended for State and local authorities.

The second point is that the ITACG detail is an active participant in the production process and the ITACG advisory council exists to advise with respect to that production process and other aspects that are a responsibility of the ITACG.

Third, I want to note here the importance of the Congress in getting the ITACG up and running, and in particular we can see that in the structure of the ITACG, which reflects quite accurately, I think, the intent of the 9/11 Act of last August.

In conclusion, I have a couple of other points, but I am running out of time. Well, I do have 30 seconds, so I will put the third point in, and that is that we have had problems——

Ms. HARMAN. You can keep complimenting the role of the subcommittee if you would like. We will give you extra time for that.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MCNAMARA. Okay.

The next point I would make is that there are problems in recruiting, as you mentioned, Madam Chair. The challenge is to overcome that, and I think with the help of the local officials themselves, particularly those on the advisory council, we are going to overcome that problem.

In conclusion, let me note that I have spent half of my career devoted to our Nation's efforts to fight terrorism. Including State and local partners in those efforts has dramatically enhanced the safety of Americans. As we move forward in this area, as we include them more, make them true full partners in this, I expect that our security will be enhanced even more.

We have accomplished much, and much, much more needs to be done. I thank you for the time.

[The statement of Mr. McNamara follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS E. "TED" MCNAMARA

Chairwomen Harman, Ranking Member Reichert, and Members of the subcommittee, let me begin by taking this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of our efforts to build an information-sharing environment, and more specifically for your commitment to making the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group (ITACG) a reality. The President has issued Guidelines and his National Strategy for Information Sharing, Congress has provided both oversight and statutory authority, and our State and Local partners are committed. The Federal partners in this effort, the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Counterterrorism Center, and the PM–ISE, must meet the President's and Congress's intent. Much progress has been made to this end, but more can be done.

In Section 521 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, Congress directed me to provide an update on the progress made in implementing the ITACG. The attached report contains our current assessment of the ITACG function and its contribution to the terrorism-related products being disseminated, as well as the challenges that we must address in the near term to make it fully functional and relevant to the way we share information with our State, local and tribal partners. Our key findings can be summarized as follows:

1. The ITACG Detail has achieved an Initial Operating Capability.
2. Efforts are ongoing to incorporate ITACG Detail participation into the product coordination processes of NCTC, DHS, FBI and other Federal producers of terrorism-related information intended for dissemination to State, local, tribal governments and the private sector.
3. Recruitment and selection of State, local and tribal (SLT) personnel for the ITACG detail continues.
4. The ITACG Advisory Council has been established and has held two meetings as of the date of this report.
5. Measuring the impact and effectiveness of the ITACG Detail and Advisory Council at this early stage of development is not an easy task.

ATTACHMENT.—ESTABLISHING THE INTERAGENCY THREAT ASSESSMENT AND COORDINATION GROUP

REPORT FOR THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES, MARCH 2008, PREPARED BY THE PROGRAM MANAGER, INFORMATION SHARING ENVIRONMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. 9/11 Act Requirements

Pursuant to Section 521 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (the act), the Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment (PM–ISE), in consultation with the Information Sharing Council (ISC), is responsible for monitoring and assessing the efficacy of the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group (ITACG). Specifically, the Act requires the PM–ISE to issue an annual report on the progress of the ITACG to the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, the Director of National Intelligence, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the U.S. Senate, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the U.S. House of Representatives.

1.2. Key Findings

1. The ITACG Detail has achieved an Initial Operating Capability.

Federal, State, and local personnel, along with contractor support, are working in dedicated workspace with full connectivity to systems available within National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) workspaces. ITACG personnel regularly attend all relevant meetings at the NCTC and are becoming engaged in its daily activities and production processes.

2. Efforts are ongoing to incorporate ITACG Detail participation into the product coordination processes of NCTC, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and other Federal producers of terrorism-related information intended for dissemination to State, local, and tribal governments and the private sector.

a. DHS, FBI, and NCTC are working to develop a process to ensure that the Federal Intelligence Community speaks with "one-voice" when communicating with State, local, and tribal (SLT) governments and the private sector regarding terrorism-related threats. In developing this process, all parties involved recognize there are circumstances in which the rapid issuance of time-sensitive threat advisories is necessary. While extensive interagency coordination in the drafting and production of such advisories is preferred, it is not always possible.

b. There are already several examples of the ITACG Detail providing valuable input to products intended for State, local, tribal, and private sector (SLTP) entities. In addition to the ITACG working primarily to assist NCTC production as required by the act, the ITACG Detail is becoming more involved in the product coordination processes of individual agencies, in particular the DHS and FBI. The ITACG Detail is actively working with the DHS and FBI production teams to determine the appropriate level of coordination required.

3. Recruitment and Selection of State, Local, and Tribal Personnel for the ITACG Detail Continues.

a. SLT representation on the ITACG Detail currently consists of four State and local law enforcement officers. The Advisory Council has identified the need for broader State, local, and tribal representation. This includes a representative from a tribal government; the fire service; and individuals with background and experience in homeland security planning and operations at the State and local level.

b. Lessons learned during initial efforts to recruit SLT assignees for the ITACG Detail have informed the methods and administrative processes used to raise SLT awareness of the ITACG, and to identify SLT personnel for future assignment to the ITACG Detail.

c. Recruiting efforts continue to address the need for broader SLT representation and to ensure adequate overlap when there is turnover of SLT assignees within the ITACG Detail.

4. The ITACG Advisory Council has been established and has held two meetings as of the date of this report.

The Advisory Council has determined that for this first year, there is a need to meet every 60 days. In addition, the Council will meet in "special session" via teleconference as required to address selected topics that require immediate attention.

5. Measuring the impact and effectiveness of the ITACG Detail and Advisory Council at this early stage of development is not an easy task.

a. The ITACG Detail has developed an outreach plan to broaden awareness of the Detail's mission. The outreach plan is intended to expand awareness within the Federal Government and among SLT governments of the mission and capabilities of the ITACG Detail.

b. Appropriate performance measurements for the ITACG Detail regarding impact and effectiveness are currently under discussion by the Advisory Council. We expect such measures to be approved by 3rd quarter fiscal year 2008.

1.3. Background

The President and Congress directed establishment of the ITACG to improve the sharing of information with SLTP officials within the scope of the Information Sharing Environment (ISE).[1] As stated in the administration's *National Strategy for Information Sharing: Successes and Challenges In Improving Terrorism-Related Information Sharing*, the "ITACG supports the efforts of the National Counterterrorism Center to produce 'federally coordinated' terrorism-related information products intended for dissemination to SLTP partners through existing channels established by Federal departments and agencies by:

1. Enabling the development of intelligence reports on terrorist threats and related issues that represent a 'federally coordinated' perspective regarding those threats and issues and that satisfy the needs of State, local, tribal, and private sector entities until such time as the ISE matures organizationally and culturally to satisfy those needs as a normal part of doing business;
2. Providing advice, counsel, and subject matter expertise to the Intelligence Community regarding the operations of State, local, and tribal officials, including how such entities use terrorism-related information to fulfill their counterterrorism responsibilities as part of the core mission of protecting their communities;
3. Enabling the production of clear, relevant, official, 'federally coordinated' threat information in a timely and consistent manner;
4. Facilitating the production of 'federally-coordinated' situation awareness reporting for State, local, tribal, and private sector entities on significant domestic and international terrorism or terrorism-related events that have the potential to have an impact on local or regional security conditions in the United States;
5. Ensuring that terrorism-related information intended for State, local, tribal, and private sector entities is rendered in a usable format that is, to the extent possible, unclassified, to facilitate further dissemination;
6. Informing and helping to shape Intelligence Community products for State, local, tribal, and private sector entities by providing advice, counsel, and subject matter expertise; and
7. Facilitating the production and posting by NCTC of 'federally coordinated' terrorism-related information intended for augmentation, as appropriate, and subsequent dissemination to State, local, tribal, and private sector entities by other Federal departments and agencies. Accordingly, the ITACG will advise the Intelligence Community on how to tailor its products to satisfy the needs of DHS, FBI, and other Federal entities so that they in turn can better serve their consumers."

1.3.1. Components of the ITACG

The Act requires the ITACG be comprised of a Detail and an Advisory Council, both of which are in place.

A. ITACG Detail.—The Act established "an ITACG Detail comprised of State, local, and tribal homeland security and law enforcement officers and intelligence analysts detailed to work in the NCTC with Federal intelligence analysts for the purpose of integrating, analyzing, and assisting in the dissemination of federally-coordinated information within the scope of the information sharing environment, including homeland security information, terrorism information, and weapons of mass destruction information."

[1] The ISE was established under section 1016 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (6 U.S.C. 485).

The ITACG Detail (Detail) provides advice, counsel, and subject matter expertise to the Intelligence Community regarding the operations of SLT government entities, including how such entities use terrorism-related information to fulfill their counterterrorism responsibilities as part of their core mission of protecting their communities. The efforts of the Detail complement and supplement Federal analytic, production, and dissemination efforts. The desired goal of the Detail is to further enable the production of clear, tailored, relevant, official federally-coordinated threat information in a timely, consistent, and usable manner.
B. ITACG Advisory Council.—The ITACG Advisory Council (Council) sets policies and develops processes for the Detail to facilitate the integration, analysis, and dissemination of federally coordinated information within the scope of the ISE, including homeland security information, terrorism information, and weapons of mass destruction information. The act requires at least 50 percent of the Council's membership be executive level law enforcement and intelligence officials from SLT governments. The Council membership shall also include representatives from DHS, FBI, NCTC, Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Department of State, and the PM–ISE; and meet not less than quarterly at the NCTC.

1.3.2. Operational Framework of the ITACG

A. ITACG Detail.—The daily operations of the Detail include identifying, reviewing, and assessing relevant material of interest to SLTP entities, and supporting the appropriate dissemination of such material through existing channels of the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security and other agencies, as appropriate. Additionally, the Detail recommends which products should be posted concurrently on appropriate NCTC websites to establish common situational awareness and enhance coordination across all elements of the Federal Government. Specifically, the Detail focuses on three types of reporting:

1. *Alerts, Warnings, and Notifications*.—ITACG identifies time-sensitive terrorism threats to locations within the United States.
2. *Situational Awareness Reporting*.—ITACG reviews significant events and activities occurring at the international, national, State, and local levels to determine if these events and activities have the potential to raise concern among SLTP partners regarding a possible domestic terrorist attack.
3. *Terrorism-Related Strategic and Foundational Assessments*.—ITACG reviews analytical intelligence products to identify suitable strategic and foundational assessments as candidates for downgrading or tailoring for dissemination to SLTP consumers.

B. ITACG Advisory Council.—The Council develops policies, processes, procedures, standards, and guidelines for the Detail. The Council supports efforts of the Secretary of Homeland Security to carry out his responsibilities as defined in the Act by supporting the development of policies and processes pertaining to the operation of the Detail. Section 521 of the Act (6 USC 121) requires the Secretary, in coordination with the Council and NCTC to: (1) create policies and standards for the creation of products; (2) evaluate and develop processes for timely dissemination of these products to SLTP; (3) establish criteria and methodology for indicating reliability of information being disseminated to SLTP; (4) educate the intelligence community about the requirements of SLTP homeland security, law enforcement, and other emergency response providers; (5) establish and maintain the ITACG Detail; (6) detail a senior intelligence official from DHS to NCTC to manage the daily operations of the Detail; and (7) develop a mechanism to select SLT officials for the Detail. As part of this final responsibility, the Secretary shall use criteria developed by the Council for the selection of a broadly representative group of homeland security and law enforcement officers and intelligence analysts for placement in the ITACG Detail.

2. CURRENT STATUS OF THE ITACG

2.1. The ITACG Detail

The ITACG Detail has achieved an initial operating capability. Federal, State, and local personnel, along with contractor support, are working in dedicated workspace with full system connectivity onsite at the NCTC. Members of the Detail regularly attend key meetings at the NCTC and are becoming engaged in NCTC's daily activities and production processes.

2.1.1. Staffing

A. Federal Staff.—As of 29 October 2007, all Federal representatives had reported for duty. This includes two DHS representatives (Detail Director and a

senior intelligence analyst) and two FBI representatives (Deputy Director and a senior intelligence analyst).

B. State, Local and Tribal Staff.—As of 4 February 2008 four State and local law enforcement officials have reported for duty on the ITACG Detail. The number of State and local assignees is not limited to four individuals, nor is participation limited to only law enforcement personnel. The State and local assignees currently working on the Detail represent the totality of individuals who applied for assignment to the Detail. All four applicants were vetted, nominated, and forwarded to DHS and FBI. DHS and FBI approved all four after certifying their security clearances. The number of applicants and State and local assignees reflects the difficulty of finding individuals who possess the requisite experience, have an active TS/SCI clearance, and who would be willing and able to relocate to Washington, DC for a 12-month tour.[2] Names and report dates of the current State and local assignees can be found in Appendix Two to this report. While the ITACG supports efforts to produce "federally coordinated" terrorism-related information products intended for dissemination to SLTP partners, private sector participation on the Detail is not considered at this time.

C. Contract Support.—Two NCTC contractors with law enforcement and intelligence community experience were assigned to the Detail in advance of the arrival of the SLT assignees and continue to provide support.

2.1.2. Facilities & Logistics

The Detail currently occupies ten work stations in a dedicated area at the NCTC.

2.1.3. Information Technology Support

All Detail members have access to NCTC UNCLASSIFIED, SECRET, and TOP SECRET/Special Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) systems, as well as relevant Law Enforcement databases and homeland security information systems. FBI networks and systems are fully available to the Detail, while work continues to provide full DHS connectivity.

Prior to the establishment of the Detail, there was no existing connectivity to DHS information systems within NCTC workspaces. DHS and NCTC, in coordination with appropriate network security offices, are engineering and accrediting support solutions at the DHS UNCLASSIFIED and TS/SCI levels. As of the date of this report, UNCLASSIFIED services are in place, and work continues to establish access to the DHS TS/SCI system.

FBI sponsored Detail members and personnel currently have access and print capability to FBI UNCLASSIFIED, SECRET, and TS/SCI systems.

Access to IT systems follows standard procedure at the NCTC, where all employees have access to NCTC managed systems and individual employees additionally have specific access to their home or "sponsoring" agency systems.

2.1.4. Activities to Date

A. Review of Current Intelligence and Threat Reporting.—The Detail searches all available systems and databases daily for finished intelligence of potential interest to SLTP. From 29 October 2007 through 6 February 2008, members of the Detail reviewed over 34,000 published intelligence products at all levels of security classification (many of these products were available to State and local officials who have access to NCTC Online at the SECRET classification level, NOL–S). From that review, the Detail identified and posted directly to NOL–S for SLT officials an additional 23 intelligence products at the SECRET classification level, and requested that the security classification be downgraded for 26 more Intelligence Community products classified above the SECRET level. Currently, 16 of those 26 have been disseminated to SLT authorities; nine are in the process of being downgraded; and one product was determined to not be appropriate for downgrading. In addition, NCTC has put a process in place and is now routinely downgrading classified products to the SECRET or unclassified level to ease their dissemination to non-Federal entities. This includes not only Situational Reports and Threat Matrix reports, but also a new NCTC Directorate of Intelligence product, Terrorist Intelligence Production Sharing (TIPS).

[2] The ITACG Detail Implementation Team determined staffing requirements for the ITACG Detail. The implementation team was comprised of Federal representatives from DHS, FBI, NCTC, DoD, and PM–ISE, and State, local and tribal representatives from Major Cities Police Chiefs Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Sheriffs Association, Homeland Security Advisors Council of the National Governors Association, National Native American Law Enforcement Association, and the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative.

B. Threat Reporting.—From 29 October 2007 through 6 February 2008, the Detail reviewed 1,864 separate worldwide threat reports concerning U.S. interests, identifying 77 of these as possible threats to the Homeland. The Detail conducted further review of these potential threats and identified five threat reports of questionable credibility, two of which required better characterization of the threat or the source. As a direct impact of the Detail's involvement in those two cases, DHS and FBI tailored the characterization of the threat and issued a joint bulletin that addressed the needs of State and local authorities.

C. Dissemination of Products Influenced or Enabled by the Detail.—The Detail is becoming increasingly involved in the review and editing of informational and intelligence products developed by DHS, FBI, and NCTC.[3] UNCLASSIFIED products are primarily disseminated to SLT officials via email, the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), and Law Enforcement Online (LEO). All products up to the classification of SECRET that are identified or influenced by the Detail are also posted on NOL–S. Currently, 35 State and major urban area fusion centers can access NOL–S through the DHS Homeland Security Data Network (HSDN) and FBI's FBINet, and therefore benefit from the ITACG's ability to post products to NOL–S. Efforts are underway to provide designated[4] State and major urban area fusion centers access to NOL–S. Accordingly, the NCTC, in coordination with DHS and FBI, has begun providing instruction to SLT officials regarding the use of NOL–S and the safeguarding of information provided through access to it, including privacy guidelines.

D. Additional Activities.—The Detail has been involved in several administrative and collaborative efforts with SLTP and Federal partners to further the establishment of the ITACG. Highlights of these activities include:

i. November 2007.—Participated in Congressional briefing regarding ITACG status.

ii. December 2007.—

1. Briefed the ITACG Advisory Council during its inaugural meeting.
2. Provided an awareness briefing to the Chiefs of Staff of all NCTC components;
3. Met with NCTC's Office of Strategic Communications to discuss public relations associated issues and to provide information for an article about the ITACG, subsequently published in the ODNI "Spotlight" newsletter for the IC;
4. Delivered a status report to the ODNI Civil Liberties and Privacy Office;
5. Met with NCTC Chief of Budget and Plans to develop a budget;
6. Met with NCTC Information Sharing and Knowledge Development (ISKD) to improve the handling of Virtual Threat Information and Virtual Walk-Ins.

iii. January 2008.—

1. Met with DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties to assist with the ITACG Privacy Impact Assessment;
2. Briefed ITACG's mission and function and how it relates to SLTP information-sharing activities to NCTC's Directorate of Intelligence and the DNI Analysis 101 course;
3. Met with NCTC Mission Systems to develop a video which will provide SLT an overview of NOL–S and its capabilities;
4. Met with FBI National Security Reports and Requirements Section about source description used in Intelligence Information Reports as well as the priority of downgrading SECRET reporting to UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (U//FOUO) for SLT;
5. Met with DHS (Intelligence Watch and Warning) and the FBI (Directorate of Intelligence) to streamline the dissemination of DHS Chief Intelligence Notes (CINT Note) and FBI Terrorist Alert and Advisory Messages via the Strategic Information and Operations Center Law Enforcement Alert Messaging System (SLAM).

• *iv. Ongoing*.—

1. Finalizing the Detail's Operating Framework;

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[3] An inventory of products influenced and/or developed through the efforts of the ITACG Detail is contained in Appendix Three to this report.

[4] In a letter dated Nov 28, 2007, the Attorney General and Secretary of Homeland Security requested that each Governor designate a primary fusion center "to serve as the State-wide or regional hub to interface with the Federal Government to coordinate the gathering, processing, analysis, and dissemination of terrorism, law enforcement, and homeland security information in an all-crimes approach".

2. Developed an awareness brochure on the ITACG that is currently being reviewed by the Advisory Council and others prior to distribution to SLTP and Federal partners;

3. Participating in the NCTC Outreach Advisory Group, specifically ITACG's involvement in the calendar year 2008 NCTC outreach plan. The Detail continues to work with NCTC's National Partnership Branch, Information Sharing Knowledge Development (ISKD), and the PM–ISE regarding SLTP outreach and to develop a coordinated communications plan for the ITACG;

4. Working with NCTC to enhance NOL–S Web portal for SLT use, including content and cosmetic changes;

5. Reviewing and posting intelligence documents directly to NOL–S, specifically for SLT use.

2.2. Advisory Council

2.2.1. Membership

The Secretary of Homeland Security has designated the Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Intelligence and Analysis as chair of the Advisory Council. In accordance with the Act, at least 50 percent of the members of the Council are executive level SLT officials.

Because the Council will set policies, develop processes, and review intelligence, members are required to have a SECRET clearance. SLT members of the Council are nominated by the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative/Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council (CICC) and the National Governors Association/Governors Homeland Security Advisors Council and hold a leadership position in a nationally-recognized professional association representing State, local, or tribal interests in homeland security, counterterrorism, or emergency response. As a member of the Council, these SLT representatives are expected to represent their peers from across the Nation.

The Council has held two meetings. The inaugural meeting was held at NCTC on 6 December 2007. The second meeting of the Advisory Council was held on 15 February 2008, during which it reviewed current efforts of the Detail, the ITACG budget for fiscal year 2008 through fiscal year 2013, and recruiting and outreach efforts.

The Council currently consists of representatives from the following organizations:

A. State, Local and Tribal Members.—Includes one representative from each of the following organizations:

1. Global Justice Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council (CICC);
2. International Association Chiefs of Police (IACP);
3. International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC);
4. International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts (IALEIA);
5. Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit (LEIU);
6. Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCC);
7. Major County Sheriff's Association (MCSA);
8. National Governors Association (NGA);
9. National Native American Law Enforcement Association (NNALEA);
10. National Sheriff's Association (NSA).

B. Federal Members.—Includes one representative from each of the following organizations:

1. Department of Homeland Security—Chair;
2. Department of Energy, Office of Intelligence;
3. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Intelligence and Analysis;
4. Department of Defense, Joint Intelligence Task Force—Combating Terrorism;
5. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence & Research;
6. Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Security Branch;
7. Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment;
8. National Counterterrorism Center;
9. Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Office of Homeland Security and Law Enforcement.

The Council membership list is attached as Appendix One to this report.

2.2.2. Funding

A. ITACG Detail Start-up.—Approximately $1 million in startup costs associated with facilities (renovations, rent, equipment, etc.), information system connectivity and contract support have been funded by the PM–ISE. Personnel costs (Federal, State, and local), information system design, accreditation, and deployments costs, and ITACG Detail travel expenses have been funded by DHS and FBI.

B. ITACG Advisory Council Start-up.—Travel costs to date for SLT members of the Advisory Council have been funded by the PM–ISE. DHS provides administrative support to the Council.

Detailed budget-related information will be addressed under separate cover.

3. NEXT STEPS

Ensuring the effective operations of the ITACG Detail and Advisory Council remains a priority. DHS, FBI, NCTC, and the PM–ISE are mindful that continued joint effort is required to achieve full ITACG functionality and sustainment.

3.1. Recruitment and Selection Challenges: The recruitment and selection of State, local and tribal personnel for the ITACG Detail presents several challenges.

The Act states that the ITACG Detail shall consist of SLT homeland security and law enforcement officers and intelligence analysts. The four current assignees were nominated either by the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative or by the Homeland Security Advisors Council of the National Governors Association. Three of the four are law enforcement personnel from large city police departments and the fourth is from a State police agency. The Detail position announcements were advertised by both of these organizations through established channels and nominations were forwarded to either DHS or the FBI, who formally selected the Detail assignees. The administrative process currently used for those nominees selected by the FBI is to bring them into the Federal Government via the FBI's Law Enforcement Fellowship Program. Those nominees selected by DHS are given Federal status via the Interagency Personnel Agreement (IPA) process.

Lessons learned during initial efforts to recruit and administratively process SLT assignees have led to a reevaluation of the methods and administrative processes used to both raise awareness about this opportunity, as well as to identify and nominate SLT personnel for the Detail. The entire process proved to be more complex and time-consuming than originally anticipated. For example, all parties to the effort initially agreed that SLT personnel assigned to the Detail should be of "senior rank" (lieutenant or above), serve a 12-month tour of duty, and possess an active TS/SCI clearance. In addition, working at NCTC also requires that personnel successfully complete a Counter Intelligence Polygraph. For Detail personnel, that polygraph is administered subsequent to an individual being selected for the assignment and prior to reporting for duty.

As the search process began, it became clear that there were a limited number of SLT officials of senior rank with the requisite experience and an active TS/SCI clearance who would be willing and able to relocate to Washington, DC for a 12-month tour. The criteria were broadened to ensure that eligible candidates with appropriate experience but less-senior rank could apply. The CICC and NGA Advisory Group then readvertised the position and four law enforcement personnel applied. Those four professionals were vetted, nominated, and forwarded to DHS and FBI, who approved all four after certifying their security clearances.

The ITACG Advisory Council, working with the ITACG Detail, is actively evaluating the recruitment process in order to ensure greater diversification and representation among assignees from various geographic regions and disciplines (e.g., tribal, law enforcement, homeland security, fire service, public safety, emergency management, etc.). The Advisory Council has endorsed additional recruiting efforts to identify suitable candidates representing these areas. DHS, FBI, and NCTC are working with the ITACG Advisory Council to modify the recruitment process and identify incentives that would encourage a greater level of interest by SLT personnel. The Advisory Council is also reviewing how best to ensure adequate overlap during turnover between current Detail members and their successors.

3.2. Appropriate Number of Assignees to the Detail: How best to determine the appropriate number of State, local, and tribal assignees to the ITACG Detail.

Four law enforcement professionals volunteered for the ITACG Detail and were accepted. The original plan was to have five (5) in the initial set of personnel and to reevaluate the number needed as the Detail developed. While finding qualified SLT participants will likely remain a challenge, efforts are underway to expand State and local participation to include a representative from a tribal government, a representative from the fire service and an individual with experience in State or local homeland security operations.

The methods by which DHS and FBI sponsor the assignees differ and have presented some inequities in reimbursement for salary and travel. As a result, the Advisory Council and the Detail recognize the need to streamline and standardize the Fellowship Program(s) supporting State and local assignees. The Council, the Detail,

DHS, FBI, and NCTC are working closely to ensure that the current set of State and local assignees are properly supported, and that future candidates will be encouraged and assured that a tour at the ITACG will not adversely affect them financially or professionally. It should be noted that expansion of the Detail from its current size of ten personnel will require additional facility space, computer support, and salary funding.

3.3. Establishing Formal Feedback Mechanisms: Existing feedback mechanisms for SLTP officials to inform the ITACG Detail of their information needs are ineffective and need improvement.

While there are established feedback mechanisms supporting terrorism-related information products disseminated by the Federal Government to SLTP audiences, there is some question as to their current effectiveness. DHS, FBI, NCTC, and the Detail rely primarily upon informal feedback to determine customer satisfaction, including seeking Advisory Council guidance. The Council can also provide guidance regarding how best to establish a feedback mechanism. The Council endorsed the Detail's proposed Outreach Plan, designed to educate SLT organizations as to the functions of the Detail and solicit specific information requirements for which the ITACG should advocate within the Federal community. The DHS, FBI, and ITACG Detail are also developing a survey mechanism to identify SLT needs and desires for information.

3.4. Broaden the Detail's Participation in the Product Coordination Process: There are already several examples of the ITACG Detail providing valuable input to intelligence products, and efforts to broaden the ITACG Detail's participation in NCTC, DHS and FBI product coordination processes continue.

DHS, FBI, and NCTC in consultation with the Council, continue efforts to define how the mission and role of the Detail will be carried out. Efforts to fully incorporate the Detail into the product coordination processes of DHS and FBI, particularly for time-sensitive issues, are ongoing; senior officials from DHS, FBI, and NCTC are working to develop processes for this. In addition, to ensure visibility of ITACG involvement in such processes, the ITACG Detail and Advisory Council are drafting appropriate language to reflect the Detail's involvement in the coordination of Federal homeland security, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction information.

3.5. How Progress Will Be Measured

At this early stage of development, measuring the impact of either the ITACG Detail or Advisory Council is not an easy task. As the Detail begins operations, the Council is actively assessing the Detail's performance to influence the Federal counterterrorism community's production of terrorism-related information intended for SLT customers. To date, progress has been measured based on the achievement of milestones related to staffing the Detail and ensuring that mission activity, facilities, and logistical requirements are met. As part of its mandate to "monitor and assess the efficacy of the ITACG," the PM–ISE, in consultation with DHS, FBI, NCTC, and the Council, is working to define those performance measures that will best reflect the value-added provided by the Detail, i.e. both output and outcome measures that effectively allow for evaluation of its impact and any adjustments that need to be made.

APPENDIX ONE: ITACG ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Chair, Dept of Homeland Security; National Native American Law Enforcement Association (NNALEA); Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCC); GLOBAL Justice Information Sharing Initiative, Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council (CICC); National Sheriffs' Association (NSA); International Association Chiefs of Police (IACP); International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts (IALEIA); Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit (LEIU); International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC); National Governors Association (NGA); Major County Sheriffs' Association (MCSA); Department of Homeland Security; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Department of Defense; Department of Energy; National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC); Department of State; Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment (PM–ISE); Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

APPENDIX TWO: STATE AND LOCAL ASSIGNEES TO THE ITACG DETAIL

1. Representative, Phoenix Police Department, reported to NCTC on 6 November 2007.

2. Representative, Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia reported to NCTC on 16 January 2008.
3. Representative, Boston Police Department, reported to NCTC on 4 February 2008.
4. Representative, New Jersey State Police, reported to NCTC on 29 January 2008.

Note: All State and Local assignees are deputized as Federal employees and do not represent any single State or Local agency.

APPENDIX THREE: ITACG INPUT ON SPECIFIC INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS

I. Products Coordinated by ITACG Prior to Dissemination.—ITACG currently receives advance drafts of DHS and FBI homeland counterterrorism products (Bulletins, Intelligence Assessments, CINT Notes, SLAMs) for coordination.

A. ITACG coordinated and provided substantive input on one UNCLASSIFIED/FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (U//FOUO) FBI threat assessment prior to dissemination.

B. ITACG coordinated on seven U//FOUO joint DHS/FBI products prior to dissemination, but provided no substantive input and concurred with the products as written.

II. Threat Reporting.—ITACG is reviewing all Intelligence Community threat reporting, to ensure those threats pertinent to the homeland have been properly characterized for S&L. From 23 October 2007 to 6 February 2008, 1,864 threat reports were reviewed, of those 77 had homeland implications; however, in most cases no further action was required. ITACG coordinated and provided substantive input on one U//FOUO joint DHS/FBI threat report prior to dissemination.

III. Products Reviewed by ITACG Post Dissemination.—ITACG reviews already disseminated reporting to identify products suitable for S&L.

A. Since 23 October 2007, reviewed over 34,000 intelligence products. Many of those products were either: already disseminated to S&L via established SECRET and U//FOUO systems, not terrorism-related, had no homeland relevance, or were too highly classified to downgrade. Twenty-five terrorism-related products of potential benefit to S&L were identified, of those:

1. Sixteen terrorism-related products have been downgraded with no additional substantive input; and
2. Nine are in the downgrade process.

B. Since 31 January 2008, ITACG has posted 24 intelligence community products directly into NOL–S.

A complete list of product titles for all documents listed above is available through U//FOUO channels upon request.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you for coming back into government service.

Mr. Leiter.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL E. LEITER, ACTING DIRECTOR, NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER (NCTC)

Mr. LEITER. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and Mr. Reichert. Thanks for having us here today.

In your very kind introduction, you forgot what might be my most relevant experience, which is for 7 years I served in fire services and emergency medical services. So I think I do at least have some appreciation, certainly what you have, Mr. Reichert, of what first responders have to go through.

I would like to cover two areas in my opening statement today, the first being how ITACG is actually operating, and the second, some of the challenges that I think we still see.

The first component of the operations is making sure that the ITACG detail has full access to information. We have done that. Today, the ITACG detail, whether or not they are Federal or State and local representatives, has full access to all levels of classification for national intelligence, regardless of whether or not that information comes from the FBI, DHS, DOD, CIA or elsewhere. They have that access.

In addition to the computer access that they have, they are fully integrated into the situational awareness procedures that we have for the entire Federal Government. So for example, the ITACG detail sits just a few feet from me every day as I chair a daily secure video teleconference which convenes all of the agencies involved in the counterterrorism efforts.

They also participate in programs such as the National JTTF meetings, the turnover of the FBI Counterterrorism Division watches—all the things that the Federal Government does to maintain situational awareness, the ITACG is there.

Now, the second part of the ITACG operations which I think are key is their participation in the production of situational awareness products. That is when something breaks, that they are there. In fact, they are. They participate very early in the collaboration process between FBI and DHS and NCTC to make sure that their perspective is included in these products.

Now, finally, Madam Chair, you mentioned the foundational intelligence. This is a key piece because this isn't just about the immediate alert when something happens. It is about giving State and local officers an idea of what is going on in the world of counterterrorism from the Federal Government's perspective. ITACG already participates fully in the production of products at NCTC, advises NCTC analysts on which products should be downgraded first and how those products can be written for the State and local customers, and works with the FBI and DHS to do the same.

Equally important, they are spearheading our efforts to streamline and improve our delivery of those products to the State and local governments through NCTC online.

Now, that is a lot of theory. I want to give you a quick example of how this has already worked. I am sure you remember from a couple of weeks ago reports of a ricin incident in Las Vegas. DHS and FBI came up with an outstanding product very quickly to address what had happened in Las Vegas. The ITACG, though, brought a bit of expertise which I think improved that product.

First, the initial product talked about 240 to 400 micrograms of ricin, which to us people in the Federal Government might mean something, but to the sheriff in King County means very little. So the ITACG told them, well, let's tell them what 240 to 400 micrograms actually looks like, so an officer could visualize that. That was included in the report.

Second, it talked about ricin in cake, powder and liquid forms, and the ITACG suggested they also say what it typically looks like and what it smells like, again for the State and local officers.

Finally, the product talked about wearing personal protective equipment, and the ITACG suggested that they should provide slightly more detail on that, so a State and local officer would have a better sense of if they saw something, whether or not they could do it with gloves or whether or not they would have to call in a hazardous material group. From my perspective, this is exactly what the ITACG should be doing and it is what they are already doing.

Now, I do want to note some areas which I think are challenges because it is important to remember that this is an early process

and it should change because we are learning by doing. I want this to change. If we are static now where we are, we probably will not be addressing the needs in the future.

So to begin, the question is, how stand-alone an entity should the ITACG be? From my perspective, it should be fully integrated into the NCTC and it should not write products itself. Rather, it should inform all the products that the Federal Government writes to support State and local officials.

Second, the question is, what does it mean to have a fully coordinated product? This means a lot of things for a lot of people. My bottom line, though is, although we want to coordinate things, we don't want to delay them in a way that they are no longer useful. We have to coordinate, but we have to get things out quickly because otherwise the products won't meet the needs.

Third, the size of the ITACG. It is modest now, with four State and local representatives and two contractors who also represent State and local interests. We already plan now on growing that by about five people to include fire, health and the like, as a recommendation from the advisory council. I think that that is probably a good start, and we will see where we go as the mission actually evolves.

Finally, I want to note—and I am sorry I am over time, I will be just a moment—I want to note that this isn't just about the ITACG telling the Federal Government what to do. This is also about using the ITACG as a body of experts to help us understand what States and locals can do so we make sure the State and local information is getting up and being used effectively by the Federal Government.

I think all of these are challenges, but certainly not insurmountable. They are simply challenges inherent to operationalizing a new entity, and I look forward to your counsel on how we can best to that.

[The statement of Mr. Leiter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL E. LEITER

MARCH 13, 2008

Chair Harman, Ranking Member Reichert, Members of the committee, thank you for the invitation to offer my assessment of the Interagency Threat Assessment Coordination Group (ITACG).

I am pleased to be accompanied today by the Program Manager for Information Sharing Environment (PM–ISE), Ambassador Thomas E. McNamara, Mr. Wayne M. Murphy, Assistant Director of the FBI's Directorate of Intelligence, and Mr. Charlie Allen, DHS Under Secretary Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

The Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group (ITACG) brings Federal, State, local and tribal intelligence and law enforcement personnel together to enhance information sharing between the Intelligence Community, State, local, tribal, and private (SLTP) partners. NCTC is focused on meeting the ITACG statutory purpose of "integrating, analyzing, and assisting in the dissemination of federally-coordinated information within the scope of the information-sharing environment, including homeland security information, terrorism information and weapons of mass destruction information, through appropriate channels identified by the ITACG Advisory Council."[1] The ultimate goal, of course, is to better protect the homeland against terrorism through increased information sharing. In our vision, the ITACG will complement, but not supplant, the intelligence production and information-sharing efforts of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal

[1] Public Law 110–53—Aug. 3, 2007 Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007.

Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and other executive departments and agencies. Today, I would like to address three principal areas: ITACG operations, improving information flow to SLTP partners, and some of the challenges we expect to face in this area in the coming months and years.

ITACG OPERATIONS

The ITACG, established both by presidential order in December 2006 and by statute in August 2007, reached initial operating capability at the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) in October 2007. ITACG advocates for Federal and non-Federal partners, without duplicating, impeding, or otherwise interfering with existing and established counterterrorism roles, and responsibilities.[2] In its role of providing support to non-Federal partners, the group identifies reporting of potential interest to SLTP partners, ensures that the message is cast appropriately, and that the information is disseminated. In its role of providing support to Federal partners, the ITACG provides the State, local, and tribal perspectives to the Intelligence Community, and brings non-Federal information to Federal analysts. These actions are intended to increase the probability of appropriate responses to genuine terrorism threats, while diminishing the possibility of disproportionate reactions to terrorism incidents of low or questionable credibility.

A "learn by doing" strategy has been implemented whereby ITACG members interact with elements throughout NCTC and across the community on behalf of non-Federal partners. And although we continue to learn, ITACG is already fully participating in appropriate interagency fora, reviewing analytical products, ensuring appropriate context, adding comment, facilitating dissemination and, in general, serving as the eyes and ears for State, local and tribal constituents. Our approach to ITACG operations has three core components: (1) ITACG access to a broad range of Federal counterterrorism information; (2) ITACG participation in production of alerts, warnings, and situational awareness reporting for SLTP partners; and (3) ITACG participation in production of finished, "foundational" intelligence for SLTP partners. I address each of these three areas in greater detail below.

1. ITACG Access to a Broad Range of Federal Counterterrorism Information

A key aspect of the ITACG role is to identify and promote effective dissemination of intelligence products at the lowest possible classification. A foundational aspect of this responsibility is that the ITACG representatives have access to a broad range of Federal counterterrorism information. This has been fully accomplished.

The group—regardless of whether the individual is from a Federal, State, or local agency—has broad access to top secret, special compartmented, collateral, and unclassified Intelligence Community and Federal Law Enforcement systems, databases, reporting, and analysis. This includes access to native DHS, FBI, and NCTC systems. This inclusive access enables the ITACG to review terrorism information, and thereby facilitate its release to SLTP partners.

This access to information systems and sensitive databases is further enhanced by the ITACG's attendance at daily Intelligence Community and Law Enforcement briefings. Of note, I would point out that an ITACG representative sits just a few feet from me as I chair the daily, 8 a.m. U.S. Government-wide secure video teleconference that includes 18 different offices—to include the FBI, DHS, CIA, Terrorist Screening Center, Department of Defense, National and Homeland Security Councils, and many others. In addition, the ITACG participates in the FBI Counterterrorism Watch shift change, the National Joint Terrorism Task Force brief, as well as other similar events.

This high level of access permits ITACG to monitor the assessments made, and actions taken, by the National Intelligence Community and Federal Law Enforcement in response to terrorism-related activities. In addition, and perhaps more important, ITACG can subsequently—as in fact it already has—propose adjustments or additional actions on behalf of SLTP partners, understanding that those decisions regarding what DHS, FBI, or other Executive Departments and Agencies communicate and how to do so, remain exclusively with those organizations. Of note, ITACG recently identified a threat item which may have caused undue concern at the State and local level, given the source and content of the reporting. ITACG reached out to Federal partners and recommended further scrutiny of the threat and source. The product was redrafted, taking ITACG's recommendations into consideration, and delivered to State and local officials.

[2] Guideline 2—Develop a Common Framework for the Sharing of Information Between and Among Executive Departments and Agencies and State, Local, and Tribal Governments, Law Enforcement Agencies, and the Private Sector.

2. ITACG Participation in Production of Alert, Warning and Situational Awareness Reporting for SLTP Partners

The ITACG works with DHS, FBI, and NCTC during the drafting phase of counterterrorism "alert, warning and situational awareness" reporting. This early collaboration ensures that terrorism-related products are relevant to SLTP partners, account for the non-Federal perspective, provide suitably characterized source descriptions, and assess the reliability of the information. The intent is to properly qualify reporting which should assist our State, local, and tribal partners in taking the most informed course of action possible in response to threats to their jurisdictions.

More specifically, a proposal is in front of the ITACG Advisory Council for ITACG to participate in the drafting of a "just the facts" timely product—wherein DHS, FBI, and NCTC alert our non-Federal partners of a significant event, within hours of its occurrence. These "just the facts" reports are planned to be produced at the lowest possible level of classification—"UNCLASSIFIED and FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY." If these events have an international terrorism nexus, then these products would be the first of many NCTC products being produced and provided to our non-Federal partners.

Also I would like to note that the ITACG members will be co-authoring NCTC's daily SECRET-level situational reports (NCTC Secret SITREPs) which will highlight, every 24 hours, significant terrorism-related reporting for our State, local and tribal partners. In disseminating these products, SLTP partners will—albeit at a lower level of classification—be provided with the same situational awareness reporting that is currently relied upon by Federal officials.

3. ITACG Participation in Production of Finished, "Foundational" Intelligence Reporting for SLTP Partners

ITACG reviews counterterrorism, homeland security, and weapons of mass destruction finished intelligence—that which might be considered key "foundational" intelligence that is not related to a particular breaking event—to ensure that such intelligence speaks to, and can be accessed by, SLTP partners. More specifically, the ITACG helps to identify reporting of potential interest not already available to SLTP partners, proposes language for the benefit of SLTP consumers of intelligence, and facilitates the "classification downgrade" and broadest possible dissemination of such products. In many cases, this may include disseminating reports which have terrorist tactics, techniques, and procedures that are beneficial to law enforcement, infrastructure security, and first responders. Of note, ITACG serves this function for both NCTC-specific products, as well as products from other parts of the intelligence community.

In addition to their involvement with disseminated intelligence products, the ITACG coordinates with intelligence directorates at DHS, FBI, and NCTC, during the initial production phase, enabling the ITACG to provide the State and local perspective to Federal intelligence products prior to dissemination.

With respect to the broad range of finished intelligence produced by NCTC, ITACG reviews all NCTC products and identifies their suitability for broader dissemination. To assist ITACG, our analysts in the Directorate of Intelligence identify and downgrade highly classified assessments to a more manageable secret level via the NCTC Terrorism Information Product Sharing (TIPS) product line. These TIPS are subsequently disseminated at the SECRET, CONFIDENTIAL, and UNCLASSIFIED/FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY levels, depending on the nature of the material and the utility of lesser classification.

With respect to finished intelligence produced by intelligence community components other than NCTC, ITACG works on my behalf in my role as the DNI's Counterterrorism Mission Manager. In this regard, the ITACG reviews and comments on DHS and FBI terrorism and homeland security-related products to offer their perspective on how those products might best serve SLTP partners. In addition, and on a daily basis, ITACG reviews in excess of 400 intelligence reports from throughout the intelligence community—to include CIA, DOD, and others. Finally, the group also works with the intelligence community's primary analytic coordination team that NCTC manages, the Interagency Intelligence Committee on Terrorism (the IICT), to identify new topics of interest or re-visit previous topics of particular interest to State, local and tribal partners.

IMPROVING SLTP PARTNER ACCESS TO COUNTERTERRORISM INFORMATION

Having information access and participating in the production of situational awareness reporting and finished intelligence is only a part of the ITACG's challenge. For regardless of how much intelligence is "pushed" by the ITACG and our

interagency partners at FBI and DHS, it is only helpful if it can be accessed by SLTP partners. In this regard, UNCLASSIFIED/FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY products are vital. But these products, by their very definition, cannot delve into sensitive information. And for these sensitive products—generally classified at the SECRET and CONFIDENTIAL levels—we must continue to improve delivery to SLTP partners.

In this regard I cannot overstate the importance of NCTC Online Secret (NOL(S)). From my perspective, NOL(S)—a secure, classified Web site designed to mirror the Top Secret version that is used broadly by Federal officials—is a, if not the, key access point to counterterrorism information for SLT. I believe this because we have been told repeatedly by senior SLT officials that the information already contained on NOL(S) meets the vast majority of their counterterrorism needs. Thus, from my perspective, we must increase the utility of NOL(S) as well as increase SLT awareness of NOL(S). I believe that ITACG must play a key role in both endeavors.

With respect to increasing the utility of NOL(S), ITACG is spearheading an effort to overhaul the look, feel and content of NOL(S) to be more directly relevant to non-Federal actors. Moreover, we are working with our Federal partners to post far more products to NOL(S) to ensure an even richer data set. This will include reporting related to breaking events, daily terrorism related situational reports, as well as an array of foundational reports produced by the Federal Community. The ITACG is working with the FBI to spread the word of NOL(S) to its field and headquarters personnel. As a result, FBI Field Office products can now be found on NOL(S), and the FBI Headquarters will shortly begin posting its own products to NOL(S).

ITACG has also identified the need for posting NCTC TIPS and other "For Official Use Only" reporting on systems with greater access by State, local, and tribal partners. ITACG has brokered an agreement between production managers at DHS, FBI, and NCTC to post these NCTC products to Law Enforcement Online (LEO) and the recently revamped Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN).

To address the overall issue of ITACG awareness, the ITACG is preparing an outreach plan in conjunction with Federal partners, to alert Federal, State, local, tribal and private sector intelligence, law enforcement, and homeland security professionals of the importance of disseminating terrorism-related information as widely as possible. Part of this effort will be focused on demonstrating the value of NOL(S), as well as providing instructions on how to access the intelligence. As part of the outreach effort, ITACG representatives will deliver presentations, provide informational brochures, and solicit feedback on how ITACG can be of even greater value to our non-Federal partners.

Finally, I must note that like all Web sites, NOL(S) is only accessible if one has the right "pipes"—in this case, DHS, DoD, or FBI SECRET-level networks that connect to our State, local and tribal partners. Although I cannot speak directly to such issues, it is my understanding that such systems are being rapidly deployed.

COMPLEXITIES AND CHALLENGES

As I hope is readily apparent, NCTC is taking the ITACG effort very seriously and I applaud the FBI and DHS on their collective efforts to support the ITACG. We continue to devote a tremendous amount of time, both that of my senior staff as well as my own, to getting this right. I am personally convinced that the ITACG will "learn by doing." I'm also convinced that the entire Government agrees with the general proposition that the ITACG needs to address issues like consistency and clarity of message, as well as accurate content—and that it must do so while ensuring that reporting is provided to our non-Federal partners in a timely matter.

On the good side, we already have concrete examples of ITACG facilitating the flow of information and enhancing information sharing between Federal and State, local and tribal entities. Much, however, remains to be done. As is the case with any standup effort, we are collectively working through the procedures to accomplish the goals set forth quite clearly in the relevant legislation. But we must recognize that we will continue to work through several challenges discussed more fully below.

First, we continue to see that there are competing visions for the ITACG. We have been told by some that the ITACG needs to be much bigger and that it needs to serve as a stand-alone production and analysis shop. While I believe that the size of the element is about right for now, as it evolves so too may its size and therefore I reserve judgment as to the long-term size of the group. On the latter point, however, I am more adamant. ITACG should not—and in fact cannot—be a stand-alone production and analytic entity. Rather, the ITACG's strength flows from its access to information and its involvement in the production of intelligence by existing ana-

lytic entities within NCTC and elsewhere. Again, my view as noted above focuses on the need for the group to bring the State, local and tribal perspective to bear to build on the existing Federal talent and expertise and ensure that the Federal Government is leveraged to meet the needs of SLTP partners.

Second, the ITACG must help clarify differing views of the phrase "Federally coordinated" that finds the correct balance between multiple agency participation and timeliness of dissemination. The last thing we want would be "National Intelligence Estimate, NIE-like" timelines associated with pushing time-sensitive, situational awareness products.

Third, although ITACG is relatively new, we are already looking at future staffing. As of early March, the ITACG is staffed with four State and local representatives, six Federal intelligence professionals and contractors, and a part-time tribal representative. As I have already noted, future growth will be dictated by mission needs. Beyond addressing current staffing, funding, space and IT issues, we have also begun planning the succession process for our State and local participants to ensure long-term continuity of ITACG operations. Working across Departmental and Agency boundaries, however, invariably brings to the surface a host of administrative issues. The selection process for getting people to NCTC, the differences in the FBI and DHS fellowship programs, and the adequate level of support external to NCTC are all issues that we are addressing in order to ensure the long-term viability of the program.

Finally, I believe the ITACG should not only play an important role in providing advice and counsel to the Federal community as to what information flows to SLTP partners, but also advice and counsel on how information can best flow from SLTP partners. Currently, mechanisms to ensure that Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) or analytic products emanating from State Fusion Centers are made available to the Federal Intelligence Community are, in my view, less than systematic. Collectively we have a great deal of work to do in this regard and we should, in the future, use the ITACG's expertise as we seek to implement better approaches.

None of these are insurmountable challenges, and some of them simply stem from a new program. They are, however, real issues with which we are addressing as we attempt to "operationalize" statutory language. I would caution against attempts to be excessively prescriptive about what the ITACG should do or how it will accomplish its mission. I cannot stress enough that we are in absolute agreement on the need to improve the quality of support to our non-Federal partners and we are working extremely hard to achieve this critical goal. And in that respect, I very much look forward to continuing to work closely with the committee as we move forward.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Leiter. I hope that your oral testimony will be reproduced here and sent on every network we can think of. I thought it was excellent, but it also will tell people how far we have come just in the last few months. Congratulations.

Under Secretary Allen, you are recognized.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES E. ALLEN, UNDER SECRETARY FOR INTELLIGENCE AND ANALYSIS, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Chair Harman, Ranking Member Reichert, thank you for the opportunity to appear here with my colleagues, with Mr. Leiter, Mr. Murphy, as well as Ambassador McNamara, because we work each day to ensure actionable and intelligible terrorism-related information is provided to State, local and tribal authorities.

The ITACG plays a vital role in this whole process. It helps shape products to make them more useful for State and local levels. The ITACG is truly, in my view, a value-added. When I came to the Department 2 years ago, the Department had little analytic capability and produced little for our domestic partners at the State and local levels. I think today it has changed.

We have a whole line of products that we produce within the Department for our State and local partners. We have developed a close and productive relationship, as demonstrated here, with the National Counterterrorism Center, and with the FBI. Ted McNamara and his staff and my staff meet regularly to ensure that we are working concurrently to ensure fuller information sharing at State and local.

As you know, I have embedded officers in 25 fusion centers across the country to facilitate the flow of information, as you indicated, down to State and local, and also to harvest information at that level and bring it back to the Federal Government that is vital. I will also, like some of my colleagues here, be at the National Fusion Conference in San Francisco next week, just to reinforce that.

The ITACG's role, however, is at the apex of this information-sharing effort, whether it is we or whether it is our colleagues. Although it has only begun operations, and reached its initial operating capability in late January, I think it promises not only to improve the quality of our messaging to our domestic audiences, but to make the Federal contribution security posture more sustainable over time.

The ITACG, as my written statement enumerates, is supporting many actions that we are pursuing. I would just like to talk about what we are pursuing with the ITACG, as well as with the advisory council. First, the ITACG advisory council is quickly becoming a major player as it should be. It is a key enabler to the success of the ITACG. We have a very ambitious agenda.

We meet face-to-face either by telephone or in person every month. We are required under the legislation to meet quarterly, but we are meeting monthly, and we are putting a significant amount of the effort is going to be carried by the advisory council. They really do want to participate, and we can talk about that in the question-and-answer period.

We are also continuing to engage, as I think Mr. Leiter said, with the advisory council until we have some additional officers there at the State and local who will represent not only the tribal, but who will also represent other areas and other disciplines such as homeland security management, fire and safety, public health service, law enforcement, intelligence analysis, and even others if appropriate. We see at least five additional individuals coming to work at the State and local.

We are also working very hard to ensure that we develop standard operating procedures and policies to sustain the ITACG's contributions over time. We are rapidly unifying the way we disseminate information down to State and local at both the classified and unclassified levels. In this case, the work that we are doing with NCTC, with NCTC online, and of course working very jointly in joint advisories with the FBI I think is remarkable.

In closing, I want to convey my personal sense of the importance of providing actionable intelligence to State, local and tribal officials to address threats to the homeland at the State and local level. I share your commitment to the ITACG's role in that process. We have made significant investments in the operations and success of both the ITACG and its advisory council.

None of us, whether Federal, State or local, can unilaterally help in this process. We cannot do this alone on threat and threat assessment. We have to work in unison with our State and local partners to mitigate the risks to this country, which are very serious. We also, in my view, are working very hard to ensure that the privacy and civil rights of the public whom we are sworn to protect are still considered in all of our work.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to your questions.

[The statement of Mr. Allen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHARLES E. ALLEN

MARCH 13, 2008

INTRODUCTION

Chair Harman, Ranking Member Reichert, Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group (ITACG), which was stood up in October 2007 and has been operational under the management of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) since January 2008.

I want to speak to you on the progress that we have made in implementing the vision set forth in the President's National Strategy for Information Sharing and the 9/11 Act of 2007. The information-sharing framework described therein placed an advocate for State, local, and tribal interests at the hub of the counterterrorism community to ensure federally coordinated information and intelligence is robustly made available to our domestic law enforcement and homeland security partners.

I am also pleased to appear alongside my partners here from NCTC, FBI, and the PMISE. I know they share my commitment to the ITACG's success. Every day we work together to ensure actionable and intelligible, terrorism-related information is provided to State, local, and tribal authorities. The ITACG, moreover, is playing an increasingly important role in shaping those products and making them more useful at the State, local, and tribal levels.

DHS' COMMITMENT TO THE ITACG

I know this subcommittee has concerns about the level of DHS support to building a robust presence of State, local, and tribal representatives in the group. As I have stated previously, I remain fully committed to making the ITACG a vital element in information sharing to our State, local, and tribal partners. Secretary Chertoff shares this commitment, and there are no barriers, stovepipes, or other impediments to hinder DHS efforts to ensure the ITACG's success. DHS sees the ITACG as a vital complement to our Department's protective mission and information sharing initiatives across a range of departmental efforts.

Moreover, our actions demonstrate this commitment. We are working with our Federal partners to build an effective ITACG as rapidly and as broadly as possible. We have experienced bureaucratic delays along the way, but we moved swiftly to overcome these delays as they were identified. In one case, I personally intervened with the Acting Deputy Secretary to ensure that State and local officials could be fully funded by the Department while posted to the ITACG.

Further, I am holding regular sessions with the ITACG Advisory Council—monthly for now rather than quarterly as required by its charter. The Advisory Council, half of whose membership is comprised of State, local, and tribal members and half Federal members is central to the ITACG's success. I will speak more specifically to the Council's actions later in this testimony, but let me address two efforts currently underway. We are working to:

- Harmonize DHS and FBI sponsorship programs so that State and local organizations do not have to pay a financial price for sending their officials to serve in the ITACG, and
- Expand the ITACG's State, local, and tribal representation to include a broader set of homeland security disciplines than are presently represented, to include tribal, fire & safety, health, law enforcement intelligence analysis, and State-level homeland security management.

It remains challenging to find sufficient numbers of officials willing to go through the required security clearance processing and then uproot their families for a year or more to move to Washington. We rely heavily on the State, local, and tribal pro-

fessional associations represented on the Advisory Council to identify highly qualified candidates for the ITACG.

STANDING UP THE ITACG ELEMENT AT NCTC

I sent, in close partnership with the FBI, several senior intelligence officials over to NCTC to co-lead (with the FBI) an Implementation Team to lay the foundations for the ITACG—well before policies to govern the ITACG were agreed upon. My staff explored potential ITACG configurations, roles, and responsibilities with their NCTC hosts as the ITACG concept was submitted to interagency, administration and congressional reviews. The Implementation Team's hard work resulted in the ITACG reaching initial operating capability in the first of this year when four State and local law enforcement representatives arrived to begin their tour of duty within NCTC.

Today the ITACG consists of 10 staff officers: the DHS Director, an FBI Deputy, four State and local law enforcement officials, two counterterrorism analysts from DHS and the FBI, and two support contractors with significant experience in State and local law enforcement and counterterrorism intelligence. I have provided two of my most capable intelligence officers to the ITACG, one a former deputy division manager, and the other a highly qualified senior intelligence analyst. Together, they bring valuable experience in the analysis and coordination of terrorism-related products intended for release to State, local, and tribal customers. They are working seamlessly under NCTC management with their FBI and State and local partners.

ITACG IMPACT

In my budget presentation last month, I noted the ITACG's evolving practice of scanning incoming current reporting, terrorism-related events, and finished assessments for items of potential value to domestic homeland security officials. I am pleased to report that these efforts are bearing real fruit—not only by identifying items with homeland interest—but also by helping DHS, FBI, and NCTC tailor our respective and joint products to meet State, local and tribal officials' needs, fulfilling its mandate in the National Strategy for Information Sharing, pp. 18–19.

From October 2007 through February 2008 the ITACG did an initial familiarization review of more than 34,000 intelligence reports and products at all classification levels—most with no bearing on the homeland. The ITACG worked to get a number of highly classified products relating to the Homeland downgraded for release to domestic customers at the SECRET and UNCLASSIFIED levels, developing a production "packaging" process at NCTC for routine downgrading and publication of such products to the NCTC ONLINE-SECRET (NOL–S) web repository, and whenever possible, to the UNCLASSIFIED level to facilitate the widest possible distribution. Please note that the bulk of those 34,000 reports and products are routinely available to State and local officials over HSDN and NOL–S. The ITACG assisted with identifying those with homeland impacts that could be further downgraded for wider release. I cannot overemphasize the importance of this process—moving information as far down the classification chain as possible is of paramount utility to our State, local, and tribal customers.

Over that same period, the ITACG also familiarized itself with nearly 2,000 worldwide threat reports concerning U.S. interests, identifying 77 of these as possible threats to the homeland. Conducting further reviews of these potential threats, it worked with NCTC, DHS, and FBI to tailor threat characterizations in terms State, local, or tribal officials could easily interpret, as opposed to the sometimes arcane language used by the Federal Intelligence Community. These reviews provided marked improvements to joint DHS/FBI advisories and assessments on behalf of State, local, and tribal users.

Finally, the ITACG has drafted a "tagline" to indicate to State, local, and tribal audiences those Federal terrorism products that have received ITACG review and coordination with respect to their concerns. The ITACG Advisory Council is currently reviewing the proposed language for inclusion on affected Federal products.

INTEGRATING THE ITACG INTO COMMUNITY PRODUCTION PROCESSES

Today the ITACG reviews all homeland threat reporting and terrorism-related assessments produced by NCTC, DHS, and FBI. We are actively working together on how best to interact with the ITACG to factor in its perspectives for joint DHS/FBI or single-agency (but still coordinated) time-sensitive threat notifications and assessments, as well as a range of other terrorism-related products we routinely provide to State, local, tribal, and critical infrastructure security officials.

We are guided in this effort by the seven requirements for ITACG operations set forth in the National Strategy for Information Sharing:

1. enabling a "federally coordinated" perspective,
2. providing advice, counsel, and subject matter expertise,
3. enabling production of clear, relevant "federally coordinated" information in a timely manner,
4. facilitating "situation awareness" reporting on events with potential terrorism aspects,
5. ensuring all such information is rendered in a usable format,
6. informing and shaping Intelligence Community products, and
7. facilitating the production and posting by NCTC of "federally coordinated" terrorism-related information.

THE ITACG ADVISORY COUNCIL IS KEY TO ITACG SUCCESS

On behalf of the Secretary, I am pleased to chair the ITACG Advisory Council, which has nine Federal members of the counterterrorism community, and 10 State, local, and tribal members representing a wide array of security or law enforcement professional associations. I have assembled the Council at NCTC twice in the last 3 months, and hosted a teleconference this past week to discuss widening its efforts to recruit additional State, local, and tribal disciplines into the ITACG. In addition, I have already scheduled three more Council meetings at NCTC for this fiscal year. We will meet as often as necessary during this first year of the ITACG's startup.

I have set an ambitious agenda for the Council, centering on our discussion of a number of priority challenges that the ITACG faces—from recruitment and support of State, local, and tribal personnel—to establishing a formal mechanism and feedback process for State, local, and tribal customers, who are key to strengthening the ITACG's value and evaluating its success.

DISSEMINATION

While DHS and FBI continue to have extensive department-specific dissemination practices for sharing law-enforcement or regulatory information with their respective constituencies, DHS, FBI and NCTC, in consultation with our partners in the ISE, are rapidly converging to unify information-sharing for general purpose terrorism-related products at both the classified and unclassified levels. We are also equipping our domestic partners at record levels to join in this new way of doing business.

CLASSIFIED PRODUCTS

While working through the ITACG implementation, it became imperative that we provide a central online repository for classified products that State, local, and tribal officials—once properly accredited—could access in a timely and reliable fashion. Rather than create a competing online repository on the DHS network, I have partnered with NCTC, in coordination with the FBI, to endorse the use of NCTC Online-SECRET (NOL–S) as the principal venue for hosting classified intelligence materials intended to reach our State, local, and tribal partners. Today all SECRET level terrorism-related products written by NCTC, DHS, or FBI and issued as single-agency, joint, or fully-vetted community products are posted to the NOL–S repository. Please note that regardless of whether a product is issued singly, jointly, or by the full community—all products destined for State, local and tribal audiences are increasingly coordinated among all principal agencies—with ITACG assistance.

Furthermore, NOL–S is increasingly accessible by State, local, and tribal homeland security professionals over the DHS-provided Homeland Secure Data Network (HSDN) and the FBI's FBINET. DHS is on track to deploy HSDN to 41 State and local fusion centers (SLFCs) by the end of fiscal year 2008. HSDN provides SLFCs with a critical capability not only to access federally supplied threat information, but also as a means to communicate with each other in a classified setting—thus contributing to the vision of establishing a national network of fusion centers called for in the President's National Strategy for Information Sharing.

UNCLASSIFIED PRODUCTS

The ITACG also continues to drive community producers to prepare appropriate terrorism-related materials at the UNCLASSIFIED level whenever possible. That way they can be posted not only to NOL–S, but also to the DHS-hosted Homeland Security State and Local Intelligence Community of Interest (HS SLIC) Web repository—an unclassified intelligence component of the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN)—as well as transmitted over other channels to State, local, and tribal officials. As you are also aware, terrorism-related materials at the UNCLAS-

SIFIED level are also accessible on the FBI's Law Enforcement Online (LEO) information-sharing data repository.

This year, the HS SLIC has experienced remarkable growth with large numbers of State and local fusion centers joining in the community. As of February 2008, 41 States have signed up and are actively using this community to share law enforcement intelligence, terrorism, emergency response, and other security information between and among themselves, DHS and other Federal partners—including the Department of Interior, Drug Enforcement Administration, FBI, U.S. Northern Command, and the ITACG.

All DHS and FBI unclassified intelligence reports are posted to the HS SLIC community of interest repository—providing a unified location where registered security officials can reliably access UNCLASSIFIED Federal products relating to terrorism threats to the homeland.

CONCLUSION

In closing, I want to convey to you my personal sense of urgency and commitment to the mission we all share, that of ensuring that the Federal Government vigorously provides actionable intelligence to State, local, and tribal officials who must address threats to the homeland at the local level. I share your commitment to the ITACG—and place a high priority on rallying support for this new element—for which I have opened every door at DHS. I have also made a significant investment in the operations and success of the Advisory Council—where I meet regularly with State, local, and tribal officials to further more seamless information-sharing practices. I take that relationship and their trust very seriously.

None of us—whether in Federal, State, local or tribal service—can unilaterally predict the threat, warn our stakeholders, and take action to mitigate the risks. Our success depends on our ability to work together, while never losing sight of the privacy and civil liberties of the public that we are sworn to protect. Besieged by constant threat from foreign and domestic actors, we require vigilance and shared awareness to secure our Nation. Our success will depend on how relentlessly we collaborate, a calling to which I remain singularly dedicated.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you, Mr. Allen.

We now recognize Mr. Murphy to summarize his testimony for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF WAYNE M. MURPHY, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam Chair Harman and Ranking Member Reichert, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today and provide a report on our shared progress toward strengthening the security of our Nation by increasingly seamless integration between Federal, State, local and tribal partners, most recently in the stand-up of the ITACG.

It is a privilege for me to carry this responsibility on behalf of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, but having been part of this effort since it was first conceived, I know that any progress we have made to date has been the result of a professional working partnership with my colleagues on this panel and the agencies that they represent.

I believe the ITACG is well postured to meet both the letter and the spirit of the direction we have received from the president and from this Congress. The ITACG is already demonstrating a potential beyond that purposeful intent. In my view, it is an effective and complementary adjunct to other positive developments in the information-sharing environment.

The path to where we are today has included its share of debates and disagreements, but I believe that dialog was a necessary element of building the way forward, and a way forward that would

take hold. In the end, the path forward was illuminated by the clear direction from the president and from this Congress, in particular, through the work of this subcommittee and the 9/11 Act of 2007.

Backed by your continued support and persistent attention to this important issue, I am confident that we are on a path to empower the ITACG in a way that will make it relevant to the fight, in a way that will add value and not just volume, in a way that will extend full and necessary access without compromising the independence of State, local and tribal members of the group, and in a way that preserves the responsibility that all of us share to protect the rights and civil liberties of the American people.

That dialog and the stand-up of the ITACG has created an opportunity for all of us to move past anecdotes and preconceived notions, into a live, operationally relevant laboratory where the State, local and tribal point of view intersects directly with the corpus of counterterrorism information held by the U.S. Government.

Although the National Counterterrorism Center only recently shifted from the role of host to owner of the ITACG, I want to commend the leadership and proactive spirit with which the ITACG has been embraced. Acting Director Leiter has taken affirmative steps to extend access and set expectations from the very top of his organization that resulted in an extraordinarily rapid assimilation of the team.

He has given ITACG a seat in one of the intelligence community's most important forums, the Daily Counterterrorism Conference. Within this forum, they can gain an awareness and context on threats at the same time those perspectives are being shared with him for the first time. This same forum sets much of the community's daily agenda for the counterterrorism issue, and now by extension through the ITACG, we have the potential to better synchronize the respective focus between national and local response.

In my view, the ITACG advisory council chaired by Under Secretary Allen is an effective and open forum for the exchange of ideas, the timely approval of decisions, and the necessary pressure to impart urgency for participating members to deliver on expectations. One need only look at the diversity of membership, and in particular the names of the individuals representing State and local interests, to see that there are no shrinking violets on the advisory group.

Although the work of the ITACG is only a few months underway, the council is already taking up lessons learned from the stand-up as they relate to recruiting and identifying State and local and tribal members, obtaining their security clearances in a timely manner, addressing administrative requirements for their assignment, and the best way in which to receive feedback on the work of this important group.

Similarly, the Office of the Program Manager for the information-sharing environment, and in particular Ambassador McNamara, has been an objective and appropriately forceful voice in moving this important step toward real results. I am proud of the role and contribution of the FBI since this idea first surfaced, but I am in no way complacent. Much remains to be done, but I believe

there is a will and a spirit that will sustain the current momentum.

While measures of access, numbers of reports, and the impact of those reports will be a necessary and early dimension in demonstrating the value for this investment, I believe in the end the most important measure of success for the ITACG will be the extent to which their work has an impact in shifting mindsets and culture throughout the information-sharing environment.

When the practices enabled through the ITACG become systemic, when we no longer have to ask the question "did the ITACG see this," because we know the dialog and exchange is full and pervasive, then we will have achieved the level of success matched to the challenge that we face. This will take time, but it is a goal I believe we should continue to aspire toward.

In closing, let me again thank this committee for your leadership, creativity and persistence in setting high standards and accountability for this unprecedented undertaking. Let me also thank my colleagues here for working to reflect the spirit that is expected of all of us by the citizens we are sworn to serve and protect. The FBI stands ready to continue to do its part to honor by our actions the memory of those who have sacrificed so much since September 11, 2001.

Thank you, and I look forward to continuing our engagement.

[The statement of Mr. Murphy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WAYNE M. MURPHY

MARCH 13, 2008

Chair Harman, Ranking Member Reichert, and Members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you to provide a report on our shared progress to strengthen the security of our Nation by increasingly seamless integration between the Federal Government and our State, local and tribal partners, most recently in the stand up of the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group or "ITACG".

It is a privilege for me to carry this responsibility on behalf of the FBI, but having been part of this effort since it was first conceived, I know that any progress we have made has been the result of a professional working partnership with my colleagues on this panel: the Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment, Ambassador Thomas E. McNamara, Acting Director for the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), Mr. Michael Leiter and Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security, Mr. Charlie Allen.

I believe the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group (ITACG) is well-postured to meet the letter and spirit of the direction we have received from the President and this Congress. The ITACG is already demonstrating a potential beyond that purposeful intent, and in my view is an effective and complimentary adjunct to other positive developments in the information-sharing environment.

The path to where we are today has included its share of debates and disagreements, but in my view that dialog was a necessary element of building a way forward that would take hold. That dialog helped clarify and strengthen our shared resolve to empower the ITACG in a way that would make it relevant to the fight; in a way that would add value and not just volume; in a way that extended full and necessary access without compromising the independence of the State, local and tribal members of the group, and in a way that preserves the responsibility we all share to protect the rights and civil liberties of the American people. That dialog and the stand-up of the ITACG has created an opportunity to move past anecdotes and preconceived notions into a live, operationally relevant laboratory where the State, local and tribal point of view intersects directly with the corpus of counterterrorism information held by the U.S. Government.

Most importantly, I believe the stand-up of the ITACG and the structuring of its roles and responsibilities requires striking the right balance between enabling information sharing without building bureaucracy or layers that would only cloud an al-

ready complex and dynamic environment. While measures of access, numbers of reports, and the impact of those reports will be a necessary and early dimension of demonstrating value for investment, I believe the most important measure of success for the ITACG will be the extent to which their work has an impact in shifting mindsets and culture throughout the information-sharing environment. When the practices enabled through the ITACG become systemic, when we no longer have to ask "did the ITACG chop on this" because we know the dialog and exchange is full and pervasive, then we will have achieved the level of success that is matched to the challenges we face. This will take time, but it is a goal I believe we should continually aspire toward.

As you have heard from my colleagues, the access of ITACG personnel is well-matched to their mission. They have the ability, through that access, to discover and surface items of interest; to impact priorities; to shape the course of a developing narrative; and to revisit previously-published information—including information produced by intelligence agencies independent of NCTC involvement.

NCTC leadership has given ITACG a seat in one of the Intelligence Community's most important forums—the daily counterterrorism video conference. Within this forum ITACG can gain awareness and context on threats and trends at the same time those perspectives are being shared with the Director of NCTC. This same forum sets much of the community's daily agenda for counterterrorism matters and now—by extension through the ITACG—we have the potential to better synchronize the respective focus between the national and local response.

The ITACG has also impacted and informed more effective means to make information available to the constituents they represent. Acting Director Leiter highlights in his statement a number of actions that will continue to enhance the availability of information that has been highlighted or shaped by the ITACG. This extends to providing information that is releasable and actionable for law enforcement and public safety officials on the street.

In my view the ITACG Advisory Council, chaired by Under Secretary Allen, is an effective and open forum for the exchange of ideas, the timely approval of decisions and the necessary pressure to impart urgency for participating members to deliver on expectations. Although the work of the ITACG is only a few months underway, the Council is already taking up lessons learned from the stand-up as they relate to recruiting and identifying State, local and tribal members, obtaining their security clearances in a timely manner; addressing the administrative requirements of their assignment to the ITACG and how best to receive feedback. There are a number of other issues that need to be addressed, many of them captured well in the statements by Acting Director Leiter and Under Secretary Allen. I believe we have the forum and mindset to address them expeditiously and in keeping with the goals of the ITACG. The FBI is committed to working in the established forum to resolve these issues in a manner that provides clarity, but does not inhibit the need for flexibility.

A secondary benefit of the activities related to the stand-up and sustenance of the ITACG has been the forcing function and forums this has created to work through issues that are relevant in other information-sharing domains. The ITACG is clarifying the way forward in other areas, like our goal for a common approach to integration with Fusion Centers.

In closing, let me again thank this committee for your leadership, creativity and persistence in setting high standards of accountability for this unprecedented undertaking. Let me also thank my colleagues here for working to reflect the spirit that is expected of all of us by the citizens we are sworn to serve and protect. The FBI stands ready to continue to do its part to honor, by our actions, the memory of those who have sacrificed so much since September 11, 2001.

I look forward to our continued engagement.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you all for what was excellent testimony.

I surely agree with you, Mr. Murphy, that we should keep our eye on two things: No. 1, those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to keep us safe; and No. 2, the American people who could be in harm's way if we don't get this right. So I thank you for that.

I also thank you for your ability to compliment everybody else. It is rare to see that these days in this toxic town, and I am sure they appreciate it, and I appreciate it.

Listening to the four of you, I couldn't help recall the movie "Meet the Parents." Here you are. You are the parents of a new information-sharing culture. You are a lot less dysfunctional than

the other parents in the movie, but I want to be sure you have met the grandparents. Here we are. Grandpa over here has six grandchildren and grandma has three, hopefully more to come. But at any rate, we are all in this together. We are one family, and the consequences of failure are absolutely huge. Let me just say that again. The consequences of failure are absolutely huge.

There are folks out there—we all know about this—plotting day and night to cause grievous harm to America. We are not sure what community it will be in next, but it could be in almost any community. If we don't share information—accurate, actionable and timely information—in real time with the folks who are in those communities, they won't know what to look for or what to do. I cannot stress that more than I have, and I have stressed it to each of you over and over and over again. I know you agree with me. So please keep this going and make certain that anything more that can be done is done.

Mr. LEITER. I really appreciated your testimony about the contribution of some of these States and locals to the ITACG products, especially the one on ricin. It makes a lot of sense hearing about that. You know, a view from 30,000 feet is not going to be very helpful, so you do need people who walk the beat telling you exactly what the product should say so that they know, if they are in some hotel room in their communities, what ricin looks like, and can make the appropriate calls, and can protect themselves against it, so that was a useful piece of information.

My question to all of you is, you have talked about sharing down, vertical sharing down of products that you are producing. Give us some examples of sharing up, and how you can incorporate that meaningfully in the products you produce. Let me just give you one example of sharing up. It didn't come directly to you, but the Torrance Police Department a few years back—you all know about this—connected the dots about a string of gas station robberies and figured out that something must be going on, some folks must be trying to fund something.

They got the appropriate warrants and checked out the apartment of some of these guys, and guess what? They found a terror cell in a community in my congressional district. That terrorist cell wasn't fully operational, but certainly had casing drawings and plans to cause harm to military recruiting centers and synagogues. A string of arrests was made and it goes forward.

But at any rate, that is an example to me of sharing up. I think we should have more on the record about the importance of this vertical sharing starting at the State and local level and going up.

Mr. Allen.

Mr. ALLEN. Yes, let me just give one example, which I think was remarkable. It was last August and September where the Washington Joint Assessment Center out in Seattle—Ranking Member Reichert knows it well—citizens reported seeing what they thought were surveillance activity on ferries in the Puget Sound. The center there wrote an extraordinarily good assessment which they sent to the Federal level which we then used in finished intelligence which Secretary Chertoff used at the highest levels of government.

In response, both Federal officials and the FBI were engaged in that, along with other teams from the operating components of

DHS. State and local law enforcement for a period of days surged into the Puget Sound. The Coast Guard in particular was very active. It was an example where I think pre-surveillance was occurring on the ferries out in the Puget Sound, and I think that is where a State fusion center did a remarkable job of assessing what was going on, and then the Federal Government became aware of it and responded. The secretary used it again at the highest levels of government. It is a stunning example of the way things ought to be.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you.

Other comments? Mr. Leiter.

Mr. LEITER. Chairwoman Harman, I would simply note that we do think that the ITACG is quite important for this because their perspective on what could be there will help influence our analysts to think about it and turn to DHS and FBI or the JTTF's fusion centers to try to get that information.

The two are interrelated in that what goes up, goes down, and then what comes back up. State and local officers need to be informed about threats and the procedures and the tactics that we see out there, so they know what to look for. I know I have had this conversation with you. I use the anecdote of the early days of the fight against methamphetamines. Before officers knew what to look for, they might well walk into a methamphetamine lab, see something, and not know what it was.

Over time, as that fight against methamphetamine has progressed, they have been informed, and now if they walk in the house, they know like that, and they can talk to their narcotics people and the DEA and stop that. In the same way, we have to get that information down, so when the officer walks in or the fire official walks in, they know what should get reported back up.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you.

Any other comments? Mr. Murphy.

Mr. MURPHY. My colleagues have done an excellent job covering the areas that I think represent that sharing up. Certainly, a fundamental foundational component of our relationships in the JTTFs and in the fusion centers is about taking advantage of the access that we have to information and perspectives from the State and local environment, and the national data exchange system, which the FBI is standing up will enhance that even further to provide from department to department the opportunity for the kind of discovery you talked about.

I think one of the key areas that we need to focus on is communicating back the value and the results of the information that is provided by State and locals so that they have a message they can reinforce to their leadership at the local government level about the important contribution they are making to the larger fight.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you. Excellent comments.

Ambassador McNamara.

Mr. MCNAMARA. Let me not necessarily move up to the 30,000-feet level, but maybe 500 feet up. Instead of talking about specific examples, I want to talk about a tool that is now in the toolbox of the local police to enable them to share information up much better. It is known generally as SAR, which is suspicious activity reporting.

Until recently, every police agency around the country reported their SARs in their own fashion. What we have just done, and I issued the document just a few weeks back, is to issue a set of standards that were arrived at by consultation with Federal, State and local law enforcement authorities, mostly police, but also including prosecutors and others, to establish a single standard for doing those reports.

So what were thousands of snowflakes can now be turned into a snowball and maybe even a snowman. That is not necessarily a specific example of moving the information up, but what it is is a tool that now allows us to bring that information all the way up, for example, to the people that are working in the ITACG. That is something that the information-sharing environment is designed to do, and I think it is a good example of how we are going about doing it.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you very much.

I now yield to Mr. Reichert for questions. We will have a second round of questions following his questions.

Mr. REICHERT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you again for your testimony.

I do like the analogy of the four of you as parents of this effort. I have actually taken some notes here kind of wondering along those lines. The four of you are really the leaders of this effort. I know, as the sheriff, when I was the sheriff with 1,100 employees and you are trying to make a change within an organization even that small, and you give directives to your lieutenants, your chiefs, your majors, et cetera down the chain of command, that sometimes there is resistance within the organization that you represent.

I am just curious, as you are trying to manage this change, because I do agree with Mr. Murphy, it is a cultural change that is sometimes overwhelming to even think about. I am wondering what, if any, resistance you are experiencing within a specific organization, especially, Mr. Murphy, in the FBI. I do know that—well, why don't we answer that question first?

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you for that question. It made me think about really the issue for me, and I am sure for my colleagues on the panel, it goes beyond mere leadership. We can be persistent in our message. We can be persistent in our expectations, but given the size and scope of our organizations and really the transcendent nature of what we are asking them to change toward in terms of way of thinking, I think it is incumbent upon us, particularly in this early period, to follow our direction all the way down to the point of delivery, and to ensure that our expectations are actually being met on the frontlines.

You can communicate a message, but to actually follow up on a persistent basis, much like this subcommittee has done with us, is a reinforcing message that ingrains into the groove of any bureaucracy, this is real, this is going to stick around for a long time, and the boss is paying attention to it at a level of detail that has us all jumping around when they show up in the office. So I think that is a very important point, to go beyond mere leadership on an issue of this importance and to make sure we ingrain it in.

I would say that the biggest challenges that we face are really about overcoming the anecdotes and urban legends that crop up

when you do something new like this, that the idea of sharing information will compromise our ability to operate effectively; that sharing information could affect future investigations; that there are "legal" impediments to certain sharings of information.

The early engagement in this process of people who understand privacy issues, people who understand authorities that relate to information-sharing has given us really a list by which, or a set of guidelines by which we can very quickly put those anecdotes to rest. But you can't assume that if you have cleared the message once it is going to stick every time, and that is where that reinforcement comes through.

I have not found any institutional impediments. In many ways, this is a reinforcement of a relationship that we have always valued with State, local and tribal partners. It has not always been a perfect relationship, and that is why we can't be complacent about the nature of the exchange that we have.

Mr. REICHERT. Thank you.

Anyone else.

Mr. LEITER. Yes, sir, if I could speak to that? I would agree. I believe the institutional impediments within the Department have lessened significantly. I view my role as, first, of course supporting the secretary and the Department, but of equal level I think is supporting State and local. Under the Homeland Security Act, we are directed to do that, so that is very important.

Third, we are certainly part of the intelligence community, but we really are working now in my role as the under secretary with the operating components to ensure that they understand the criticality, because they have a lot of data to help support us and State and local information sharing. Many of them are very law enforcement-oriented, and have not classically done this necessarily except on a case-by-case basis.

So I believe that a whole new transformation is occurring in the Department on how we share at State and local levels, and we are going to continue to pursue that. As Wayne points out, it is not overnight, but it is occurring and I see it, as I said, over the last 1½ years, I think there has been a real change in the Department.

Mr. REICHERT. Let me just say that, coming from the sheriffs' organization, they can be difficult sometimes. There are 3,100 sheriffs across the country, and then add the police chiefs to that, and they certainly have their views on how things should work. So I know there is some work there that they have to do, too. It is a two-sided effort here.

The other important piece, if I could just mention it very quickly, are the personalities involved. I remember working a task force years ago, a major case, and the agents that came in from all over had a great relationship with the current staff of ATF—Calvin Crenshaw and other agents in Federal agencies, especially in the Northwest area. In working the case, there were agents that came in from all over the United States, and you connected with certain people who were there as ambassadors, really, and others were not. They were just there.

I think that as you look at how you use people and personnel, it really is key on the people that you choose to send out to interact

with locals. On the other side, it is key, from the sheriff's point of view and the police chiefs as to who they put in those positions.

One more point, from my view of this effort over the years, it is hard to make progress when the Federal Government transfers their employees so much because they don't become integrated into the community effort and they don't become a part of the community, and therefore trust is very hard to build. So when SACs come in and they move every 2 years, they can't build the relationship with the police chiefs and the sheriffs.

When agents come in and they begin to build a relationship with investigators in the fusion centers or in their efforts to help in other white-collar crime efforts, et cetera, in gathering intelligence. In working with our sheriff's office intel when I was the sheriff, there were people moving in and out. It makes it very difficult. So just something for you to know from my point of view, and I am sure it is not the first time that you have heard it.

I will yield, and get back to you on some other questions I have in the second round.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you, Mr. Reichert.

My questions now are mostly directed to Mr. Leiter. I am interested in how you get more good people from State, local and tribal agencies into the NCTC, into the ITACG. You mentioned that your plan is to get five more in. I think I heard you say five more contractors. We are looking for five more officers. You are shaking your head, so good. I am glad to hear that.

But how can you do the broadest possible outreach and make certain that this program achieves its potential? I mean, let's just think about this. You could generate in a short period of time hundreds of ambassadors around the countryside who both talk about the quality of this Federal effort—that wouldn't hurt—but also bring back skills that they didn't have from this effort, and contribute to products that reflect their perspectives, that are much better than the products you would send out otherwise.

So what I want to know is the mechanics of this. How are you going to get as many good people in there as possible? How are you going to maximize outreach? If you have a problem with desks and pencils, please come here. We will provide some.

Mr. LEITER. Well, Madam Chair, first, my apologies if I misspoke. We currently have four State and local, and then we have two contractors augmenting them who have State and local experience. We are adding five. We would like to add five State and locals. We are not adding contractors to this. We think this has to be actual State and local people.

In terms of how we are going to get them, it has been a challenge so far. The good news is that we have worked out some of the bureaucratic administrative challenges on the Federal end, so now it is simply doing that outreach. I think the advisory council is absolutely key. We need the advisory council to be the advocates, to go out and help us recruit.

Frankly, this committee also we need you to be advocates to go out and help us recruit them. We need to make sure that the people who come are rewarded in their careers when they go back to their departments and agencies, just like we need to require people

who do joint duty within the Federal system. So this needs to be an attractive opportunity both financially, but also in terms of career.

In terms of outreach, I think you have a copy as of this morning of the trifold that we are sending out to several hundred State, local agencies exactly, with a cover letter signed by members at this table, explaining what the ITACG does. We have representatives from NCTC. My chief deputy who works on this is going out to address the fusion center. As you know, I am going out to address the Los Angeles Regional Intelligence Conference.

I am also going out 2 days before, and this is just coincidence, I am spending the day in Seattle with the executive committee of the JTTF there, with the State homeland security advisor. NCTC has initiated in conjunction with FBI and DHS, working as a tripartite effort, an extensive outreach——

Ms. HARMAN. We want to commend you for your brilliant choice of cities.

Mr. LEITER. Yes. I am also heading to Las Vegas. We don't have any representation there—but to do an effort for all three components—DHS, NCTC and FBI—to key locations throughout the United States, to sit down with the JTTFs, to sit down with the fusion centers, the homeland security advisors, explain what we do, and also explain how their principal contacts remain DHS and FBI.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you.

Does anyone else want to comment on this?

Mr. Allen.

Mr. ALLEN. I would just like to say in the teleconference we held last week with the ITACG advisory council, it was remarkable how all of the 10 people representing the State and local officials, people like Russ Porter who represents the Global Justice Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council, people like Sheriff Richard Stanek, who represents major county sheriffs' associations—all agreed that they would work through their associations to help find and recruit and bring in highly qualified people with these other disciplines like public health. We already are identifying someone who will represent the tribals.

So I think in many respects—and Jim McMahon, who is with the International Association of Chiefs of Police—extraordinarily active in this advisory council. So I think we are on the right track. We have just now got to make it happen.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you.

Let me just ask another follow-up question, and then I will yield to Mr. Reichert. I am looking at this handout. On the back it says intelligence products, and lists a number of networks. It says, products up to the secret classification can be accessed via NOLS, DHS, FBINet, et cetera. Then there is a list of sensitive, but unclassified networks. My question is, how do you navigate this if you are a cop on the beat and you don't have a security clearance?

Mr. LEITER. Well, if you have no security clearance, you are fundamentally going to rely on LEO and HSIN, and defer to my colleagues. But the important thing on the secret network is, as long as they go to NCTC online, we have worked with FBI, DHS, and the Department of Defense, that they just have to have the connec-

tion, and that is their Google site for intelligence. It will have all of the intelligence.

So all they need to do is get to that site, and we are improving that site because frankly it needs improvement. But they get there, they do their searches, they can tailor searches, and that is where their information will be at the secret level.

Mr. ALLEN. As far as homeland security, for the unclassified areas, that is where we are putting our major efforts—right to release, getting it so that we can get the kind of in-depth assessments at times from our Critical Infrastructure Threat Assessment Division. We write most of those at the official use level, so that first responders can have those and look at them.

It goes into depth on issues like chemicals, poisons, other kinds of data that would be very helpful at the local levels. That is under homeland security information network intelligence. We have an intelligence portal on HSIN, which I think is starting to work very well. As I said earlier, we have weekly conferences at the analytic level just to exchange threat information. That is handled at the official use/unclassified level.

Ms. HARMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Reichert.

Mr. REICHERT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

One of the questions we have is what other efforts are you making outside of ITACG to communicate with the locals? I think, Mr. Leiter, you touched on some of those. But the 26 people that we have assigned across the country to various cities, what is their role in working with ITACG and the locals? I know they are assigned to fusion centers and joint analytical centers, and they have different requests from different cities as to what their qualifications might be or their use might be, but can you kind of generally describe how these 26 people are being integrated into the system?

Mr. ALLEN. Those are the 26 officers that I have sent out, and by the end of September, we will have them in 35 fusion centers. They are very well aware of the ITACG and they are well-oriented and -trained on just its role and mission. As information and joint advisories flow between Wayne and myself, working in coordination, and developing coordinated information to flow down there, they know because it is referenced on those advisories that this has also been reviewed and commented on as necessary and value-added by the ITACG.

So our officers flow the information out. They handle requests for information coming from State and local. When you have a remarkable individual like Joel Cullen, my embedded officer in Los Angeles, the JRIC there, the Joint Regional Intelligence Center, it works very well. He is very much in touch with the ITACG on a very frequent basis.

Mr. MURPHY. Similar to DHS, we have an extensive investment in the fusion center environment, with personnel in 48 of the 60 established fusion centers here in the country. It is 195 FBI personnel who are invested. Again, they are a conduit. They are a resource of communicating information about the relationship with the ITACG and how we can better service their needs as a representative of the Federal Government.

In many cases in partnership with the DHS, we share our presence there. As you know, part of the direction we have received in national strategy and in some of the legislation is to enhance that environment of the Federal presence within the fusion centers. There is a whole separate infrastructure in terms of the relationship Charlie and I have, and Ambassador McNamara, to developing and building that out.

This is in addition to the extensive presence that we have commingled with State and locals on the joint terrorism task forces environment.

Mr. REICHERT. We have been a part of that effort for many years, the Joint Terrorism Task Force and the violent criminal apprehension team, and some of those other Federal task force efforts.

I really want to compliment all of you on the marriage of these DHS personnel, the FBI. The fusion center in Seattle I think is a great example of some success there where we have not quite reached the Los Angeles level, but I visited there——

Ms. HARMAN. Keep on dreaming.

[Laughter.]

Mr. REICHERT. They are truly the model to follow. Seattle, I think, is making a great effort. It really is due, I really believe, to your efforts in placing people there who are committed. So I just wanted to thank you for that. I do see some great changes there and some success. There have been some little bumps here and there, as we are all going to experience, but a great job on that. Thank you.

Ms. HARMAN. I, too, want to thank the parents for some valuable collaboration and testimony. I think our hearing record is quite specific now on some of these issues, where it was not in the past. I think there has been real progress. Keep it up.

I also would mention to you that obviously other members were not able to come. If they have written questions, I would ask you to answer them expeditiously.

Let me just close on a couple of notes that I think need more work. One is our classification system. I know Ambassador McNamara shares this. I know our subcommittee shares this. We are working on some legislation in this regard, but it is difficult for people to get cleared, a reason why we hope that these officers you recruit—officers, not contractors—will come with clearances, but a reason why we need to make the system work better as well. That is one thing.

The second thing, at least the way I hear it, we have too many different ways to communicate information, too many networks. We may need them for some specific applications, but it should be easier for busy people to log onto one thing—at least it seems to me this is true, and this is something we heard in many fusion centers, including Los Angeles—to log onto one thing and get the data dump they need quickly, to know what to look for and know what to do. I think that will still take some work as well.

With that, I want to thank you all for your testimony.

Hearing no further business, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:12 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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