

NATIONWIDE SAR INITIATIVE ACTIVITY SUMMARY



March 2009

Program Overview

State, local, tribal, and federal partners, along with several national law enforcement organizations, have collaborated to develop the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI). Although the initiative began as an operational study project, it is currently an evaluation environment involving multiple pilot projects throughout the United States. The effort will be evolving into a national program to share terrorism-related SAR data at all levels of government. The NSI incorporates agencies' individual SAR processes (the gathering, documenting, processing, analyzing, and sharing of suspicious information) into a nationwide capability to share terrorism-related SAR data on a national level. The SAR process focuses on what law enforcement has been doing for years—gathering information regarding behaviors and incidents associated with crime and establishing a process to share information to detect and prevent criminal activity, including crime associated with domestic and international terrorism. This document is a monthly summary that will illustrate the accomplishments and upcoming activities and events associated with the NSI. This third edition provides a summary of the NSI activities over the course of March 2009.

Accomplishments

NSI Team Met With Privacy and Civil Liberties Advocates

In an effort to promote transparency regarding the NSI, the program sponsors provided privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties advocates with copies of the SAR line officer training curriculum and the ISE-SAR Functional Standard. The advocates reviewed the documents and provided suggestions and concerns regarding the training and functional standard. The constructive feedback was well received by the project sponsors.

National Fusion Center Conference

The third annual National Fusion Center Conference was held on March 10–12. More than 900 law enforcement and fusion center professionals gathered in Kansas City, Missouri, to discuss topics regarding fusion centers and law enforcement information sharing. There were several sessions and events that highlighted the NSI. The sessions included briefs on the NSI, implementing a successful SAR process in a fusion center, information needs, identifying behavioral indicators as a precursor to terrorist activities, and several discussions on privacy and civil liberties issues. Also at the conference and located in the Center for Excellence were tables with materials regarding the NSI and eGuardian. New this year to the conference were the



Accomplishments (continued)

Hands-On Learning Labs; these labs provided attendees with an opportunity to sit down one-on-one with representatives from eGuardian and the NSI to receive demonstrations and discuss any questions or concerns regarding the Information Sharing Environment (ISE)-SAR Shared Spaces.

Public NSI Web Page on the National Criminal Intelligence Resource Center (www.ncirc.gov) Web Site Is Now Online

The public NSI Web page is now available at www.ncirc.gov/sar. On the Web page, individuals will find a brief overview of the initiative and NSI documents regarding privacy, technology, and the ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment.

ISE-SAR Shared Space Federated Search Site

The Bureau of Justice Assistance SAR Team has coordinated with the Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to establish access to the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces Federated Search Site for Law Enforcement Online (LEO) users utilizing Trusted Broker credentials. This coordination uses the Federated Identity Management (FIDM) pilot, now in its second year, and is a Sensitive But Unclassified initiative. The FIDM objective is to provide and test multiagency information sharing using an agreed-upon standard for authenticating users between systems utilizing a credential issued by a user's originating agency. The end goal is the removal of impediments for authorized users accessing mission-critical data. Benefits include a simpler, more reliable authentication process, thereby providing users with quicker access to data. The FIDM pilot is also interoperable with the Global Federal Identity and Privilege Management (GFIPM) pilot.

Access to the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces Federated Search Site was recently obtained through the Trusted Broker and the RISSNET Portal using the GFIPM formatted Security Assertion Markup Language assertion after authenticating to LEO. The goal of the NSI is to have RISSNET, LEO, and the Homeland Security Information Network using the Trusted Broker and authenticating users to the secure SAR Web page. For more information on the FIDM or GFIPM pilots,

please visit DOJ's Law Enforcement Information Sharing Program Web site: <http://www.usdoj.gov/jmd/ocio/leisp/initiatives.htm> or DOJ's Office of Justice Programs Web site: <http://www.it.ojp.gov/default.aspx?area=nationalInitiatives&page=1179>.

ISE-SAR Shared Spaces System Deployment

Computer hardware and software systems were installed at three new ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment sites, including the Miami-Dade Police Department, the Chicago Police Department, and the Boston Police Department. With the installations at these three sites, seven fusion centers have received ISE-SAR Shared Spaces hardware, network, and software applications and are "technically ready" to begin sharing ISE-SAR information.

In addition to the establishment of an ISE-SAR Shared Space server at each location, the newly developed SAR Vetting Tool (SVT) was also installed. The SVT is designed to act as a bridge between existing SAR records management systems and the ISE-SAR Shared Space database. It allows agency personnel to augment existing SAR data as necessary with additional information to enhance privacy and civil liberties protection and to apply standard codes and field values to improve overall ISE-SAR Shared Space search capabilities through the National Criminal Intelligence Resource Center secure portal.

Los Angeles, California, Police Department (LAPD) SAR Updates

Commander Joan McNamara was asked to speak before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment on March 18, 2009. During her testimony, she discussed the efforts by LAPD to gather, document, review, analyze, and share terrorism-related SARs and described how those efforts relate to the NSI. She reported that although the program is relatively new, LAPD has gathered 1,374 SARs that have led to four arrests and 51 SARs were sent to the Joint Terrorism Task Force for follow-up. She stated, "While the number of investigations and arrests are important, they are almost secondary to our new-found ability to

Accomplishments (continued)

connect events that in the past would have appeared unrelated...this paints an amazing picture in real time over time.” Commander McNamara went on to discuss the importance of the NSI and specifically mentioned the training of frontline personnel regarding the behaviors associated with criminal activity. In closing, she stated that “the NSI has brought together federal, state, local, and tribal officials as well as representatives from the privacy and civil liberties communities in a way that I have not seen in my 27 years [in law enforcement].” For more information on the subcommittee hearing “Homeland Security Intelligence: Its Relevance and Limitations,” visit: <http://homeland.house.gov/Hearings/index.asp?ID=180>

ISE-SAR Training

Training continued during the month of March, with the Chief Executive Officer Briefing being conducted in Las Vegas, Nevada, on March 12 and Chicago, Illinois, on March 19. To date, a total of six sessions have been completed with more than 200 law enforcement executives or policymakers from more than 90 law enforcement agencies receiving the briefing. Delivery of the SAR analyst/investigator training also continued during the month of March, with training conducted on March 3 at the Chicago Police Department and March 5 at the Houston, Texas, Police Department.

Upcoming Planned Activities/ Events

ISE-SAR Shared Spaces Rollout Schedule

The remaining fusion centers are scheduled for installs in the spring of 2009:

April

Houston, Texas, Police Department

Seattle, Washington, Police Department

May

Los Angeles, California, Police Department

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

Phoenix, Arizona, Police Department (tentative)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s eGuardian and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s ISE-SAR Shared

Spaces are also tentatively planned to be technically operational in May.

ISE-SAR Training

Line Officer—In conjunction with the states of Florida, New York, and Virginia, the International Association of Chiefs of Police is developing SAR training for line officers. The training, to be piloted this summer in both classroom and distance-learning formats, will introduce key concepts/practices related to SAR and reinforce the vital role played by line officers.

Training is currently being scheduled into April. The Chief Executive Officer Briefing is scheduled for the following agencies:

- Houston Police Department (April 23)
- Seattle Police Department (tentatively April 30)

The analyst/investigator training is scheduled for the following agencies:

- Virginia Fusion Center (April 2)
- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (April 7)

An Explanation of ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment Operational Readiness

To date, several of the ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment sites have become “technically ready” to share SAR information; however, there are certain parameters in an agency’s business process that must be met in order for a site to be “operationally ready” to share SAR information. This process includes a comprehensive privacy policy that addresses SARs; the completion of training at the executive, analyst, and line officer levels; and the adoption of a general/special order on SAR. Once an agency is ready from a business and technological perspective, it will then be considered “operationally ready” to share SAR information.

ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment Performance Measurement Implementation Plan

The “kick off” for the collection of the ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment performance measures has begun. The goal is to ensure that each ISE-SAR evaluation site is able to report performance data to the

Upcoming Planned Activities/ Events (continued)

PM-ISE on a regular and ongoing basis. Designated measurement points of contact have been identified for each site, and a conference call was conducted to answer any questions regarding the Measures and Data Collection Template. The deadline for submission of the first round of measurements is April 30, 2009 (necessary to support the PM-ISE Annual Report), and hereafter reporting updates will occur quarterly. It is understood that many sites are still working on implementation or policy issues, and responses of “zero” or “NA” are acceptable answers. If there are any questions regarding the performance measures, please contact Mr. Toby Nishi at tnishi@ugov.gov or (703) 403-3297.

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