

NATIONWIDE SAR INITIATIVE ACTIVITY SUMMARY



February 2009

Program Overview

Federal state, local, and tribal 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, including the efforts of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Information Sharing Environment (ISE)-SAR Evaluation Environment (EE). This second edition provides a summary of the NSI activities over the course of February 2009.

Accomplishments

National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) Adopts a Resolution on SAR

The NSA Board of Directors adopted the *Findings and Recommendations of the Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) Support and Implementation Project* at their Winter Conference in Washington, DC, on January 31. This unprecedented effort brings together the four major law enforcement organizations—Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), Major County Sheriffs' Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and NSA—and their support of the NSI. This is a monumental building block for the initiative and a testament to the efforts from state, local, tribal, and federal partners working together collaboratively in the sharing of criminal and terrorism-related information.

National Fusion Center Technology Workshop

The National Fusion Center Technology Workshop was held January 21–22, 2009, in Kansas City, Missouri. The purpose of this workshop was to bring together technologists from each state and major urban area fusion center to discuss how technology can be used to achieve the



Accomplishments (continued)

capabilities identified in the *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers*. This was the first workshop of its kind and provided a level-setting opportunity to ensure that the technologists who work within the fusion center understand their role in the development of a national integrated network of fusion centers. More than 50 state and local technologists attended the workshop, and presentations from the workshop included an overview of the NSI and the current technology related to the initiative.

ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Protection Policy

The *Information Sharing Environment-Suspicious Activity Report (ISE-SAR) Evaluation Environment Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Protection Policy Template*, along with the *ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment (EE) Initiative Sample Participation Agreement—Source Agencies* and the *ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment Initiative Sites Privacy and Civil Liberties Policy Approval Process*, was released this month. The policy template is designed to facilitate putting into place privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties protection policies for the fusion centers participating in the EE of the NSI. The sample agreement is a technical assistance tool to assist source agencies in clearly identifying their responsibilities when submitting ISE-SAR documentation and to obtain their express agreement to meet those responsibilities. The approval process document illustrates the steps involved in the privacy policy approval process for ISE-SAR EE participants. All three documents are currently available on the NSI Web page located on the National Criminal Intelligence Resource Center Web site (www.ncirc.gov). NCIRC.gov and related efforts are accessible through the Regional Information Sharing Systems secure intranet, Law Enforcement Online, or the Homeland Security Information Network.

ISE-SAR Training and Related Activities

Beginning in July 2008, Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) initiated a significant benchmark in establishing SAR programs in America's largest communities. MCCA launched a "SAR Needs Assessment," collecting "As Is" information from 48 agencies. The responding agencies represented every region of the continental United

States, Hawaii, and three agencies from Canada. This effort was led with information and guidance from Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) Chief William Bratton, as well as representatives from the Miami-Dade, Chicago, and Boston Police Departments. The information collected established a baseline understanding of the existing practices, policies, training, operational protocols, specific staffing issues, relationships, information sharing, and other policy and administrative considerations in responding departments. The MCCA "SAR Needs Assessment" information base continues to expand, with information being added subsequent to the Chief Executive Officer Briefings (CEOB) currently under way. The information gained from the "SAR Needs Assessment" and the CEOB events is providing significant operational protocol guidance. It also provides the ability to deliver dynamic SAR Implementation Workshops following the CEOB series to fully implement and institutionalize the NSI. Establishment of a base of information from the MCCA "SAR Needs Assessment" allows for future evaluation of implementation progress and impact evaluation. The findings of the needs assessment were presented at the MCCA meeting in San Diego, California, in November 2008 and again in January 2009 by the Executive Director of MCCA.

MCCA launched the SAR program for chief executive officers at the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Police Department in December 2008. The CEOB is designed to provide timely and accurate information to chief executives of law enforcement agencies considering the implementation of a SAR program or participating with a local or state fusion center. The CEOB is a capacity-building strategy to increase the understanding of what is required to participate in and implement a SAR program and to specifically respond to questions concerning the critical components of a SAR program implementation. As of February 23, approximately **140** participants from nearly **70** law enforcement agencies have participated in the three CEOBs delivered in Washington, DC; Boston; and Miami-Dade. Six additional CEOBs are scheduled for delivery for March and April. February 26 represented a milestone for the CEOB when the delivery was made at the LAPD. Highlighting the CEOB was Chief William Bratton, as well as key SAR component deliveries by Commander Joan McNamara and Mary Grady of the LAPD. The

Accomplishments (continued)

participant evaluations of the three CEOB deliveries to date clearly indicate the success of the briefings. Participants overwhelmingly indicated the following:

- Nearly 100 percent of the participants indicated that the CEOB provided a complete understanding of the SAR program requirements.
- Ninety-eight percent of the participants indicated that the CEOB provided new and useful information.
- Nearly 100 percent of the participants indicated that the information obtained will be utilized in their policing strategies.
- Over two-thirds of the participants will request technical assistance for implementation of a SAR program in their respective agencies.

The feedback from participants and the baseline information from the MCCA “SAR Needs Assessment” will provide critical information for the upcoming SAR Implementation Workshops. Practical and fact-based information received from all sources will continue to complement the CEOB deliveries and improve the overall implementation of the NSI. MCCA is being assisted by FirstPic, Inc., throughout this project.

Delivery of the SAR analyst/investigator training continued during the month of February at the Boston Police Department and was provided over a two-day period on February 3–4. The line officer training was developed by IACP with the assistance of LAPD and piloted in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Police Department. IACP is currently working with several of the participating sites to refine the training for the rollout.

Federal ISE-SAR Shared Spaces

The FBI’s eGuardian system will function as another ISE-SAR Shared Space and will be the primary method by which investigative leads are sent to the Joint Terrorism Task Force. Federated queries by officers or analysts will return eGuardian results along with results from the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces at state or major urban area fusion centers. Work continues in the development of this interface, and information has been exchanged and is currently being tested through the secure file transfer protocol (ftp) connection.

DHS has developed a technological methodology to join the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces. DHS has 14 components that operate Suspicious Activity Reporting Databases, and each component will have the capability to contribute ISE-SAR data to a DHS ISE-SAR Shared Space Server. By utilizing the newly launched Web-based SAR Vetting Tool, DHS will be able to participate in the NSI as a unified department instead of 14 different nodes. The ability for DHS to participate as a member of the NSI, thus contributing data and being able to view the data, is an important step towards the goal of DHS adding value to the NSI by producing regional and national SAR analysis.

“Safeguarding America—It All Starts With You” Education Program

Released in October 2008, the “Safeguarding America—It All Starts With You” education program has become a valuable training resource for law enforcement, public safety, and private sector partners. The program includes a 30-minute DVD that takes viewers step-by-step through a suspicious activity scenario, an informative booklet, and resource CD. The complete package provides agencies with an easy and entertaining means of training personnel on suspicious activity reporting and intelligence-led policing.

Since its release, the “Safeguarding America—It All Starts With You” education program has distributed over 3,000 copies to 106 agencies, with many recipients requesting additional copies. Agencies are utilizing the program in their liaison officer training, roll call training, and their outreach efforts to their communities.

SAR Outreach Activity

ISE-SAR EE participating agencies are encouraged to begin outreach to further inform their departments, other government agencies, and the public and private sector on SAR and the NSI. Director Jennifer “Cookie” Pritt, Florida Fusion Center, has made SAR and NSI outreach a priority of the Florida Fusion Center. She recently provided a presentation on SAR at the DHS and Transportation Security Administration multimodal meeting, where she utilized SAR PowerPoint slides as well as clips from the “Safeguarding America—It All Starts With You” DVD. This event included approximately 100 federal, state, and local law

Accomplishments (continued)

enforcement personnel, as well as private sector transportation entities. Director Pritt also coordinated the viewing of the "Safeguarding America" DVD at a recent conference for the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association.

NSI and SAR materials are available if your agency is interested in conducting outreach efforts in your area. If you have a SAR or NSI outreach success story or are interested in receiving SAR materials, please e-mail nsiinformation@iir.com.

SAR "As-Is" Process Site Visits

Site visits were conducted at the Miami-Dade Police Department, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Seattle, Washington, Police Department in February to establish the operating level of their current SAR business and technology process. The information from these visits is being collected by the project sponsors to review and develop the support required for each participating city.

Upcoming Planned Activities/ Events

ISE-SAR Training

Training is currently being scheduled into March and April. The executive-level training is scheduled for the following agencies:

- Las Vegas, Nevada, Metropolitan Police Department (March 12)
- Chicago, Illinois, Police Department (March 19)

The analyst training is scheduled for the following agencies:

- Chicago, Illinois, Police Department (March 3)
- Houston, Texas, Police Department (March 5)
- New York State Intelligence Center (March 18)
- Virginia Fusion Center (April 2)
- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (April 7)

National Fusion Center Conference

Preparations are under way for several SAR presentations at the third annual National Fusion Center Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, on March 10–12, 2009. The presentations will focus on implementing a SAR process within an agency, an overview of the NSI, training currently available, technology solutions, privacy protections, and the federal agencies' roles within the NSI.

For more information on the National Fusion Center Conference, please visit <http://www.iir.com/registration/fusioncenter/default.html>.

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