

NATIONWIDE SAR INITIATIVE ACTIVITY SUMMARY



September 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 illustrates the accomplishments and upcoming activities and events associated with the NSI. This ninth edition provides a summary of the NSI activities over the course of September 2009.

Accomplishments

ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment “Users Group” Meeting

A meeting with participating sites and the federal partners of the Information Sharing Environment (ISE)-SAR Evaluation Environment was held on September 17, 2009, in Washington, DC. During the one-day meeting, attendees were able to discuss the current status, success stories, and lessons learned of the sites during the ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment. Attendees received updates on the federal agency connectivity, next steps of the NSI, and the proposal for a Program Manager's Office for the NSI. In addition, there was a demonstration of the State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT) Terrorism Database and a roundtable discussion on possible challenges and future activities. Positive feedback was received regarding the meeting, and several takeaways were identified for future enhancements of the NSI.



Accomplishments (continued)

New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC) Terrorism-Related Efforts

Operation Safeguard—The New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC) instituted Operation Safeguard throughout the state of New York. Operation Safeguard is a public outreach program generating public awareness to private industry and sectors by providing descriptions of potential terrorist indicators and suspicious activities. Field Intelligence Officers (FIOs) are deployed to the 16 counterterrorism zones in the state, and ongoing community outreach is being conducted by the FIOs. The FIOs reach out to public and private entities and provide indicators, warnings, and suspicious activities alerts regarding terrorism. Operation Safeguard utilizes the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) Communities Against Terrorism Program in its implementation efforts. The initiative also matches up well with the *Safeguarding America* DVD through the practical application of the concepts identified in the DVD.

More information regarding Operation Safeguard is available at <http://www.homelandsecuritynys.org/events/2009/fresenius-presentation.pdf>.

NYSIC Success Story—Newburg/Bronx Arrests—In May 2009, four individuals were arrested in connection with a plot to bomb two synagogues in the Bronx and shoot down military planes at an Air National Guard base in Newburgh, New York. This investigation began in June 2008 when a source informed the FBI of the men's intent to attack American targets. The individuals were planning to use surface-to-air guided missiles and improvised explosive devices ("IEDs") containing C-4 plastic explosive material to carry out these attacks. One notable aspect of the case was the reporting of suspicious activity by a storage manager to the NYSIC. The facility manager, who had received training as part of "Operation Safeguard," observed cars frequenting a storage garage and reported the unusual activity to the NYSIC. The suspicious activity report (SAR) was then put into the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces and the FBI's eGuardian system. The activity at the storage facility was part of the ongoing case and demonstrates the importance of

community and business involvement in reporting suspicious activity.

Miami-Dade, Florida, Police Department Conducts SAR Roll Call Training

Representatives from Miami-Dade Police Department's Homeland Security Bureau (HSB) recently conducted SAR roll-call training to approximately 1,100 officers within the department. In addition to police officers, HSB personnel provided SAR training to several hundred individuals in the private and public sector, including schools, universities, security, critical infrastructures, fire personnel, and community-based groups. During the training, attendees were briefed on the gathering of SARs through behavior-based policing and the reporting and processing of SARs within the department. For more information on the training, contact Major Michael Ronczkowski at mrr@mdpd.com.

ISE-SAR Training

Chief Executive Officer Briefing—Mr. Tom Frazier, Executive Director of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), reported that two additional Chief Executive Officers Briefings (CEOBs) took place during September. The briefings, with emphasis on executive leadership and commitment to support the NSI, were delivered to two state fusion centers. The first center to receive the training was the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's (FDLE) Florida Fusion Center on September 15 in Tallahassee, Florida. More than a dozen law enforcement officials attended the half-day briefing. The second CEOB delivery occurred in Albany, New York, on September 24. The hosting agency—the New York State Police—provided an excellent venue for more than 70 law enforcement officials. Mr. Tom O'Reilly, Senior Policy Advisor from BJA, accompanied the training team and provided the attendees with an informative overview of how the "shared space" technology is supporting the NSI. Mr. Frazier reported that the sessions were enthusiastically embraced by the law enforcement official attending each of the sessions. Each of the 11 CEOBs delivered to date has been consistently rated as

Accomplishments (continued)

being well-organized and providing a straightforward and easy-to-understand format. Mr. Frazier advised that “the training, level of participation, and evaluations all point to the success of the NSI, and the experiences to date will provide the foundation for future expansion of the NSI.” The Virginia Fusion Center will receive the CEOB training in late October, completing the initial 12 ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment sites. Following the October delivery, the MCCA team will produce an evaluation report detailing the feedback and input by more than 400 participants.

Line Officer Training—The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) held its first pilot Webinar for the line officer training on Friday, September 25, serving as a step towards an online training curriculum/train-the-trainer program. Thanks to the Boston, Massachusetts, Police Department and FDLE’s Assistant Special Agent in Charge Director, Ms. Jennifer Pritt, who served as a presenter. Eleven officers were able to participate in the piloted Webinar. In efforts to further improve the training, practical examples of observable behaviors will be infused. The development of success stories/cases will also be obtained from fusion centers and law enforcement agencies that are currently assisting with the NSI.

ISE-SAR Shared Spaces System Deployment

During September, Version 2.0 of the SAR Vetting Tool (SVT) was successfully deployed to the Miami-Dade, Florida; Boston, Massachusetts; Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles, California (LAPD); and Houston, Texas, Police Departments. In addition, LAPD legacy SAR data was loaded into the SVT for review and vetting by counterterrorism analysts. It is expected that in October, all five sites will begin to contribute terrorism-related SARs to the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces. Work continues to prepare the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Police Department, the Southern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center, the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center, and the Washington State Fusion Center for full participation in the ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment once their privacy policies are approved.

Federal ISE-SAR Shared Spaces

eGuardian—Joint technical testing between the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces team and the eGuardian team continued during September. More than 1,500 eGuardian SARs have been forwarded to the eGuardian Shared Space. While continued analysis is ongoing to ensure that the load was successful in all respects, it is anticipated that the eGuardian Shared Space will be opened up to ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment participants in October.

DHS—The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Shared Space server is “technically ready” to share SAR information in the ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment. DHS is reviewing an updated Privacy Impact Analysis for the ISE-SAR Shared Spaces and should be approved to begin sharing their ISE-SAR information shortly.

Law Enforcement Intelligence: A Guide for State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies

Through professional law enforcement associations and other forums, law enforcement executives informed the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) that they were looking for new guidance for their agencies’ intelligence functions in the post-September 11 world. In direct response to that request, COPS funded Michigan State University’s Dr. David Carter to write a guide on law enforcement intelligence that incorporates information from federal, state, local, and tribal experts and the *National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan*. Dr. Carter’s guide will assist law enforcement agencies to develop or enhance their intelligence capacity and enable them to be instrumental in fighting terrorism and other crimes while preserving hard-won community policing relationships.

For more information on the Law Enforcement Intelligence Guide, visit <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=1404>.

Upcoming Planned Activities/ Events

Los Angeles Police Department Set to Unveil “iWATCH”

The Los Angeles, California, Police Department is set to unveil iWATCH in October at the upcoming IACP Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado. iWATCH is the latest tool in the fight against terrorism and is being hailed as the twenty-first-century version of Neighborhood Watch. iWATCH is a community program to help neighborhoods stay safe from terrorist activity. iWATCH will educate community members about specific behaviors and activities they should report and is designed to be easily adopted by law enforcement agencies nationwide.



More information regarding iWATCH is available at www.iWATCHLA.org or www.lapdonline.org.

For More Information on the NSI, Contact:

Mr. Thomas J. O’Reilly
Senior Policy Advisor
Bureau of Justice Assistance
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice
(202) 353-8590
thomas.o’reilly2@usdoj.gov

Mr. David P. Lewis
Senior Policy Advisor
Information Technology Office, Policy Division
Bureau of Justice Assistance
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice
(202) 616-7829
david.p.lewis@usdoj.gov

or visit:

www.ncirc.gov/sar

www.ise.gov