

Written Testimony of Captain William Harris
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Before the United States House of Representatives
Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security
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Chairman Price, Congressman Rogers and members of the Subcommittee:

Let me begin by saying that I appreciate the opportunity to appear today to discuss our nation's security, as it pertains to federal, state, and local government efforts, specifically fusion centers. I am Captain William Harris, with the Delaware State Police. I am a 29-year veteran of the Delaware State Police and since 2001, have commanded our Criminal Intelligence Section and Delaware's state designated fusion center, the Delaware Information and Analysis Center. I also chair the newly formed National Fusion Center Associations' (or NFCA), Communications and Outreach Committee. The NFCA is focused on continuing to develop a positive and sustainable relationship with DHS and DOJ based on collaboration and information sharing. I am honored to testify with Under Secretary Caryn Wagner, of the Department of Homeland Security's, Office of Intelligence and Analysis. The Office of Intelligence and Analysis has been an integral partner in the successful effort in assisting our jurisdictions in establishing a national network of fusion centers.

The events of September 11, 2001 were a defining moment for law enforcement agencies nationwide. These attacks highlighted the critical need for the flow and exchange of information and intelligence to the state and local law enforcement community. The continued effort by terrorists both inside and outside the United States, that are determined to attack our homeland, destroy our infrastructure, and kill our citizens, add a new sense of urgency to interagency cooperation. Fusion centers embody the core of collaboration and are an extremely effective tool to maximize available resources, especially in this time of strained budgets. This concept serves as a force multiplier to local and rural agencies that would not normally have the resources to receive and analyze intelligence information relative to their geographic area.

State and local fusion centers have only been in existence over the last five years and have many success stories to share, such as in 2007, when a rural police officer stopped two people with precursor explosive materials in Goose Creek, South Carolina. The interaction between the police officer, South Carolina and Florida fusion centers, as well as the FBI, resulted in the disruption of a planned terrorist attack. In September of last year, the Colorado fusion center provided local data sources and analytical support to the FBI in the arrest of Najibullah Zazi.

The concept of a fusion center is predicated on collaboration. Fusion centers could not have enjoyed any success without the support and collaboration of the Department of Homeland Security. The relationship between fusion centers and the Department of Homeland Security is one of partnership and consensus. That relationship has very much improved since the concept of fusion centers began. The future success of a national network of fusion centers is a shared responsibility and is dependent upon the combined efforts of federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners.

I would also like to take a moment to thank Principal Deputy Undersecretary Bart Johnson for his leadership over the past year. Colonel Johnson and his staff are a great asset to the fusion center network and are responsible for implementing many of the improvements fusion center directors have seen over the last year.

Some of these improvements fusion centers are receiving from the Department of Homeland Security are support to enhance our operational capacity and support our sustainment. Some examples of this are:

- In December of 2009 Secretary Napolitano and Attorney General Holder announced the creation of a Joint Program Management Office to coordinate support to fusion centers.
- In addition to this, the creation of the National Suspicious Activity Reporting, Program Management Office, headed up by Mr. Tom O'Reilly, that resides in the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and coordinates closely with the Fusion Center Joint Program Management Office.

- Enhancing our management capabilities by collaboratively coordinating a “Fusion Center Commander’s Course” with the ODNI and input from the fusion center directors.
- In the area of Privacy and Civil Liberty protections later this year, regional workshops of fusion centers will concentrate on privacy and civil liberty training as well as site-specific enhanced training, with added provisions to the HSGP guidance.
- In the area of security, DHS has facilitated more than 700 state and local security clearances to enable enhanced classified information sharing with fusion centers and will be conducting a national workshop for the security officers from each fusion center, to enhance security measures within the center.
- Training and Technical Assistance provides 15 services to enhance the fusion center operational capacity. Last year 49 of these assistance services were provided to fusion centers for a total of 184 Training and Technical Assistance provisions to date. Some of these services include, establishing a common core of competencies for fusion center analysts, the fusion center liaison program, and other relevant developmental services.
- Direct field support to fusion centers by assigning 57 Intelligence Officers to fusion centers, and committed support to the other fusion centers.
- Commitment to sustainment, by prioritizing fusion centers in the 2010 HSGP grant guidance.
- Commitment to technology enhancement to fusion centers by deploying 33 Homeland Security Data Network (HSDN) systems with SIPRNet, to fusion centers for an exchange of classified information. In addition to this, the development of the Homeland Security State and Local Intelligence Community (HSIN SLIC), a non-classified information technology system, designed for the unclassified exchange of

Although the state of our relationship with the Department of Homeland Security is very good, it can get better. In speaking with my colleagues, the overwhelming concern to their fusion center operations is sustainment. In the current fiscal condition of state and local governments, most fusion centers depend on federal support for continued operations. The Department of Homeland Security had listened to the fusion center directors in the past, and for example, provided ongoing grant assistance to the hiring and training of fusion center analysts. Many states cannot hire or train these analysts because their state or local government has a “zero government growth”, or “no travel” policy.

In relationship to the fusion center sustainment problem, the current language within the SHSGP UASI grant guidance, in which 25% of funding to the jurisdiction must be, designated to law enforcement terrorism prevention “activities.” The wording of this language has been found universally detrimental to the sustainment of fusion centers. After meeting with my peers last week at our semi-annual fusion center director’s meeting, along with representatives from the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Major City Chief’s Association, we unanimously agreed to support the re-establishment of the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP) as a funded grant program rather than an allowable activity under the SHSGP and UASI programs. This would ensure that monies designated by the Department of Homeland Security for the sustainment of fusion centers, go directly to the fusion centers and not other areas considered “related” to law enforcement activity. Law enforcement and the mission of prevention and protection continue to be the only public safety and homeland security mission area to not receive dedicated funding from the Department of Homeland Security. As a nation we continue to spend billions, billions on response and recovery mission areas while funding for dedicated law enforcement prevention and protection at the State, Local, and Tribal level continues to be under funded.

Thank you for your time this morning and the opportunity to discuss our Nation’s national network of fusion centers. On behalf of the National Fusion Center Association, we look

forward to continuing to work with you and your staff to enhance and sustain this critical prevention and protection mission area for safety and security of our Country.