



Department of Justice

STATEMENT OF

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

FOR HEARING ENTITLED

**“FROM BOSTON TO AUSTIN: LESSONS LEARNED ON HOMELAND
THREAT INFORMATION SHARING”**

PRESENTED

APRIL 18, 2018

**Statement of
Kerry L. Sleeper
Assistant Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice**

**Before
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives**

**For a Hearing Entitled
“From Boston to Austin: Lessons Learned on Homeland Threat Information Sharing”**

**Presented
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It is my privilege to appear before you today as the Assistant Director of the FBI for the Office of Partner Engagement. We welcome this opportunity to meet regarding the status of the FBI’s information sharing initiatives within the FBI and with our law enforcement partners.

The OPE implements initiatives and strategies which support engagement, communication, coordination, and cooperation efforts with law enforcement, intelligence, public and private agencies and partners in a continuous effort to enhance the FBI's capabilities in the Domestic Information-Sharing Architecture. The OPE accomplishes this mission by establishing and maintaining methods and practices to enhance engagement, coordination, and information sharing with the U.S. Intelligence Community; intelligence commander groups; Federal, State, local, and Tribal law enforcement; and public and private organizations and working groups.

Boston and Post-Boston

I would like to begin my prepared remarks by affirming the FBI’s continued commitment to ensuring threat information is shared accurately and timely among our valued Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial law enforcement partners. As we are all aware, the devastating attacks at the 2013 Boston Marathon highlighted challenges and deficiencies in information sharing. In response, the FBI — working with this and several of our Oversight Committees as well as national level law enforcement associations — took several steps to enhance information sharing with our State and local partners, to include regular FBI executive meetings with key partners; improvements to Joint Terrorism Task Forces (“JTTF”) processes and procedures for sharing information; and enhancements to the eGuardian program, which today facilitates the reporting and sharing of terrorism, criminal, and cyber events and suspicious activities by our law enforcement partners. Additionally, the FBI continues to strengthen its partnership with the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (“OCDETF”) in order to identify and link counterterrorism investigations through law enforcement investigation records that reside at the

Department of Justice's multi-agency OCDETF Fusion Center, which regularly supports several investigations, including the Boston Bombing investigation.

Shortly after the attacks in Boston, the FBI witnessed a significant increase in the threat from ISIS and its affiliates, from Al-Qaeda, and from other terrorist organizations. The threat from international terrorism has become more diversified and individualized, as lone actors continue to self-radicalize in the Homeland. This shift requires the FBI to evaluate more closely the effectiveness of terrorism information sharing with our law enforcement partners. In doing this, the FBI has undertaken several initiatives to improve engagement and collaboration.

In coordination with the National Fusion Center Association ("NFCA") and other Federal partners, the FBI developed the Enhanced Engagement Initiative, or "EEI." The EEI is a resource designed to provide FBI field offices and fusion centers with a common set of recommendations to ensure greater continuity and standardization of terrorism information sharing efforts. By focusing on key areas of engagement (such as JTTF participation and coordination, suspicious activity reporting, and intelligence analysis, production, and dissemination), the EEI supports the FBI and its efforts to ensure that State and local fusion centers have a complete understanding of the terrorism threat and are appropriately leveraged with other field-based information sharing partners to address the ever changing threat landscape.

In support of the EEI, the FBI has developed and delivers a two-week Analytic Writing for Fusion Center Analysts course, which provides training on the intelligence process and writing to Intelligence Community standards. This course has enabled fusion centers to identify greater opportunities to write intelligence products that benefit both their local area of responsibility and the Federal Government. It is anticipated that more than 130 fusion center analysts will successfully complete this training by the end of the fiscal year. At the request of the NFCA, the FBI also has provided greater guidance to its fusion center partners, using additional resources. We recently developed and disseminated a document entitled, "Dissemination of FBI Threat Information to State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers," which provides a list of the FBI's most commonly shared products and guidance on how they should be further disseminated. Last year, in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI developed and broadly disseminated the "Emerging Threat and Incident Notifications" document to provide State and local partners with an overview of actions they may expect from the FBI and DHS in response to specific and credible threats or incidents.

From the above, it is clear that the FBI is more integrated with its law enforcement partners than ever before on the terrorism threat. Nearly 90 FBI personnel are assigned to 64 of the 79 fusion centers, and the FBI's classified network, FBINET, is installed in 58 centers. Ten fusion centers are co-located with the FBI, and we continue to process security clearances for fusion center personnel, while engaging in joint initiatives that are yielding positive results. In addition, we have witnessed growth within our JTTFs, with a total of 184 JTTFs and over 4,300 JTTF members across the country. Simply stated, FBI JTTF investigations, disruptions, arrests, and convictions cannot occur without the tremendous support and dedication of our law enforcement partners in the field.

Moreover, coordination with our Federal partners is much stronger and more collaborative. The FBI and DHS regularly hold joint conference calls with our law enforcement partners as terrorism and other critical incidents unfold. These calls generally are at the unclassified level, but may be classified depending on the nature of the event. The calls enable the FBI and DHS to provide timely but, more importantly, accurate information to our partners, who seek a consistent message from the Federal Government. For example, following the recent bomb attacks in Austin, Texas, the Austin Chief of Police, with support from the Special Agents in Charge of the local FBI and ATF offices, hosted a conference call to provide in-depth details regarding the investigation and ongoing efforts. Thousands of law enforcement personnel on over 300 lines participated in the call to gain insight into the attacker's methods and tactics, and to discuss how resources can be deployed in support of these types of events.

Five years after the tragic attacks in Boston, we are witnessing a shift in the threat landscape. While we all remain intently focused on counterterrorism efforts, law enforcement departments and agencies across the country are facing an unprecedented increase in a multitude of threats. Violent crime, mass casualties, and school violence remain formidable threats, while nation state adversaries are becoming bolder in their efforts to sow discord within our communities. The volume and variety of these threats require that State, local, and Federal law enforcement and homeland security personnel understand the threats, openly discuss and share information on the threats, and identify means to collectively mitigate the threats.

Violent Crime Trends

To better understand violent crime trends, the FBI is working closely with several national level law enforcement associations on programs and initiatives aimed at providing greater awareness and collaboration on priority threats. The FBI is collecting homicide and shooting data for inclusion in monthly and annual reports that are disseminated to participating departments and agencies. These reports provide real-time awareness of relevant data, which inform FBI and national level strategies to combat violent crime. We also have created the Law Enforcement Watch, which is an FBI product that captures relevant news articles pertaining to executive level law enforcement issues, school violence, police killed or injured in action, and use of force. This product is produced daily and is distributed broadly to our law enforcement partners for their situational awareness.

In coordination with the Major Cities Chiefs Association ("MCCA"), the FBI is developing a process to aid police departments in identifying and prioritizing criminal threats within their areas of responsibility, with the ability to then compare their findings with those of departments across other jurisdictions. In response to a request from the MCCA, the FBI developed and delivers the Introduction to Intelligence Theory & Application for Law Enforcement Supervisors course, which is designed to assist law enforcement supervisors who oversee intelligence units to implement and manage intelligence-led policing. The FBI and Major Cities Chiefs also have engaged in an in-depth study to identify national level best

practices to reduce the rise in violent crime across some of America's most violent cities. Additionally, the FBI is in its second consecutive year of conducting studies identifying commonalities among assailants who killed or attacked law enforcement officers. We believe that this research will provide law enforcement partners with information on assailants' mindset, which may help in identifying additional officer-safety measures.

Mass Casualty Events

Perhaps one of the most troubling threats currently facing law enforcement is mass casualty events, including attacks within and violent threats against our schools. The FBI is leading several initiatives aimed at providing awareness and education to better equip our law enforcement partners to respond to ongoing threats, but more importantly, to identify and mitigate threats before they occur.

The FBI continues to provide basic active shooter response training, known as ALERRT, to sworn law enforcement officers within the United States and to foreign partners abroad. This 16 hour course provides law enforcement officers with standard tactical training on how best to isolate, distract, and neutralize an active shooter. In response to threats against schools, the FBI is prioritizing ALERRT training for School Resource Officers. The FBI also continues to collect active shooter data, and will soon publish a biennial report of active shooter incidents that will cover the 2016-2017 timeframe.

In response to tragic events like the October 2017 mass shooting in Las Vegas, the FBI is developing the Escape Public Awareness Campaign, which will focus on public awareness messages emphasizing the importance of quick action to escape the scene of an active, violent attack. It is the FBI's hope that these messages will inspire quick action by potential victims that will reduce casualties.

In the wake of the February 14th school shooting in Parkland, Florida, the FBI is engaging more proactively with its law enforcement partners on school threats. We are compiling and sharing data related to threats of violent attacks against schools, while discussing how best to accurately collect this data in a standard way across the country. Our Behavioral Analysis specialists at Headquarters and in each field office are actively engaged with field office personnel and local law enforcement who are working school threats, as well as with community members who require greater education on the threat. Recently, our Behavioral Threat Assessment Center ("BTAC") provided FBI field coordinators with numerous resources to utilize in outreach efforts, including "The School Shooter – A Quick Reference Guide." In addition to providing key questions and descriptive statistics and motives, this one-page guide along with a corresponding training presentation for use in outreach efforts, identifies concerning behaviors and potential warning signs of a shooter that should prompt further inquiry by appropriate community members or law enforcement. Furthermore, the FBI's BTAC has embarked on an aggressive field-wide threat assessment

enhancement effort that will include the provision of advanced training for field office personnel on threat assessment and threat management.

The FBI also intends to address school shootings through the development of a documentary video that explores the details of past shooting events. This video will examine factors that led to the perpetrator's attack, behaviors and indicators of a potential shooter, and preventive measures that should be considered by schools and law enforcement. This video will be the third in a series created by the FBI to build community awareness of the pathways to violent behavior. In addition, in the coming months, the FBI intends to host a school violence seminar with key law enforcement partners to discuss several aspects of this increasing threat (including what we have learned from Parkland), crisis intervention and response plans, and information sharing.

Counterintelligence Threat

I would now like to shift my comments to the counterintelligence threat, which typically has not been a topic of information sharing with our law enforcement partners, but must be central to discussions moving forward. The FBI conducts targeted outreach within the Intelligence Community and with entities possessing information and assets sought by our enemies. However, the tactics of our adversaries have broadened beyond more traditional methods, requiring greater awareness and engagement with our local law enforcement partners. In response, the FBI is developing a Counterintelligence Awareness and Information Sharing program designed to increase awareness, information sharing, and reporting on counterintelligence matters that could affect our law enforcement partners. The FBI currently is providing counterintelligence threat briefings at national level law enforcement meetings and other appropriate venues, and is disseminating a monthly Counterintelligence Bulletin that contains an overview of relevant hearings, press releases, and reporting on counterintelligence matters. Moving forward, the FBI would like to work more closely with its law enforcement partners to identify incidents of state-sponsored influence campaigns intended to fuel discord within local communities.

Conclusion and Challenges

The FBI today is sharing more information with its law enforcement partners than ever before. Our partnerships are strong, and will continue to grow. This occurs through daily interactions and direct support to interagency initiatives, such as the FBI hosting the upcoming 2018 Intelligence Summit, which is intended to further improve information sharing practices with our law enforcement partners.

We are assessing where the FBI can do better and we are making changes. One significant example is the ongoing Guardian Expansion Project, which will enable the FBI to manage tips and complaints across all program areas, with a single intake system for suspicious

activity reporting, tips, leads, and other information received by the FBI, including information received through the FBI's Public Access Line.

Despite this, the FBI and its law enforcement partners still face challenges that are difficult to overcome and therefore limit our ability to fully identify, collect, and share information. The "Going Dark" problem is inhibiting law enforcement's ability, even with legal authority, from obtaining critical evidence in support of criminal and national security investigations. The Dark Web is enabling illicit and criminal activities that are more difficult to dismantle. The FBI is providing Dark Web Familiarization training to law enforcement partners to provide familiarity on the methods and tools used to conduct investigations and to assist Federal agencies investigating actors who use the Dark Web, but more is needed. Finally, appropriately addressing potentially violent persons who also have underlying mental disorders or mental illness remains a concern for public safety. The FBI currently is developing training for FBI Investigative personnel to recognize the signs of mental illness, and to identify techniques and resources available to all law enforcement when interacting with persons exhibiting signs of a potential mental disorder or illness. More resources and commitments are also required at the Federal, State, local, and community level to effectively understand and address this issue.

This concludes my prepared remarks, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to respond to any questions.