

**Testimony of Dr. Cedric Alexander**  
**National President of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement**  
**Executives (NOBLE)**  
**Before the House Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on**  
**Counterterrorism and Intelligence**  
**Hearing on “Addressing Remaining Gaps in Federal, State, and Local**  
**Information Sharing”**  
**February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Chairman King, Ranking Members Thompson and Higgins, and members of the Subcommittee, I bring you greetings on behalf of the Executive Board and members of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives – NOBLE.

My name is Dr. Cedric Alexander, National President of NOBLE, and Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Public Safety, DeKalb County, GA. It is an honor to be here today to participate as a witness in the House’s hearing on “what progress has been made to improve the amount and quality of information shared between Federal, State and local law enforcement”. I want to acknowledge and thank Chairman King for holding this hearing and thank Ranking Member Higgins and Thompson for inviting me to participate.

I speak to you from the perspective of a person who has over 37 years of law enforcement experience and who has held positions at the highest levels both at the federal, county, and city levels. In addition, I hold a Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

Information sharing among law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local level has evolved in the years since 9/11. Today local agencies regularly meet with state and federal partners to facilitate the flow of information. In DeKalb County, our police department has liaison officers embedded in the ATF, FBI, DEA, ICE, U.S. Marshals, and the GA Information Sharing Analysis Center (GISAC). Our experiences with these relationships have been exemplary. However, these relationships are personality-driven and not based on established systems. One of the most beneficial factors in developing and maintaining these relationships is the networking of individuals through meetings, task forces, exercises, investigations, and training.

Even with the abundance of cooperation with local, state, and federal partners, there are areas for improvement. One of these areas is the lack of a centralized

source of information. Currently the sources of intelligence information available to law enforcement are decentralized in multiple websites and databases [1] managed by different federal and state agencies. Most of these sources are subject-specific repositories of information. Often this information does not cross pollinate to other sources of information. This means that an agency seeking information must know where to look for the information, possess the proper clearances to access the information, and hold accounts to the specific source of information.

Federal and state agencies have strived to ensure that most local agencies have access to these sources; however, to further compound this issue, often intelligence information is classified and most agencies do not have personnel that possess the required security clearance. The process to obtain security clearances for local agencies is costly and protracted.

Beyond simply accessing intelligence information, local law enforcement requires software [2], technology [3], and training [4] to standardize their capabilities with state of the art equipment that will increase their total effectiveness. In Georgia a project to address these requirements was established. The project is called the Georgia Terrorism Intelligence Project (GTIP). GTIP was originally funded by a DHS grant that budgeted \$2,500,000.00 in 2007 but was reduced to the current budget of \$90,000.00. These cuts reduced GTIP's budget to only 4% of its original budget. A continued commitment to fund GTIP could have avoided some of the other deficiencies that I am speaking about today.

Although the relationship between local, state, and federal agencies has vastly improved, there are still instances of restraint in the sharing of information. To a degree, this is most likely a result of how most agencies successes are measured. These instances are the exception and not the norm, but they do exist.

Another area that has significant deficiencies is the relationships with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and the private sector. With over 80% of our nation's critical infrastructure being owned and protected by the private sector, it stands to reason that these partnerships are paramount to our national preparedness and law enforcement mandate.

Lastly, as we have all seen in recent years there is an emerging threat from cyber terrorism. Local law enforcement must play a role in detecting, deterring, and mitigating these threats. The intelligence sharing and relationships with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies as well as relationships with NGOs and the private sector will be key in combating this threat. Local law enforcement will need tools, training, and above all the continued support of our nation to succeed.

## **Recommendations to Address the Gaps in Accessing Quality Intelligence Shared Among Local, State, and Federal Law Enforcement Agencies**

In prioritizing what is needed to move forward in the amount and quality of information shared between Federal, State and local law enforcement, I recommend a centralized source of intelligence information. This first step will save time, prevent duplication of work, and standardize the quality of intelligence information. The Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) is a move towards a centralized source of intelligence; however, it is not user friendly and still lacks information found within other sources managed by other agencies. Further, the compartmentalization of information within HSIN is counterproductive to the sharing of information.

To alleviate some of the compartmentalization of intelligence information and foster an environment of sharing of this information, the path for local agencies to acquire security clearances must be streamlined and supported by state and federal partners. The need for these clearances at the local level cannot be understated.

Next, training is necessary so that the value of the intelligence is realized and where to go with it. Information is power; however, the collection of information is useless if its value is not realized. Local, state, and federal law enforcement must be able to develop intelligence and then know with whom to share the intelligence. Too often it can be said that the flow of intelligence information is one way, the local agencies to the state and federal agencies. This must be addressed and as we have experienced in DeKalb County, can be lessened with the fostering of relationships with agencies at all levels.

Finally, a commitment to fund these initiatives and further their effectiveness is the only way to ensure local, state, and federal law enforcement will prevail in the current threat environment. Projects like GTIP are needed in every state. Every local law enforcement agency has a need to collect, analyze, and share intelligence information. They require the tools and funding to accomplish this mission.

As we have all witnessed in recent years, whether it was the Boston Marathon Bombings, the Washington Naval Yard Shootings, the Queens New York Hatchet Attack or the Terrorist attacks in Norway, Paris, Ottawa, and Copenhagen; today local law enforcement is essential in detecting, deterring, mitigating and responding to these threats. The need for quality intelligence information is greater now than at any time in our nation's history.

By implementing these recommendations on centralization, training, and funding, we believe that real progress can be made in improving not just the quantity but

also the quality of intelligence information shared between local, state, and federal law enforcement. This would greatly improve the nation's preparedness and overall security. I thank the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions.