



Department of Justice

STATEMENT OF

**WILLIAM F. SWEENEY, JR.
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR IN CHARGE
NEW YORK FIELD OFFICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

BEFORE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, AND
COMMUNICATIONS
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

CONCERNING

**SECURING OUR COMMUNITIES:
FEDERAL SUPPORT TO HIGH-RISK URBAN AREAS**

PRESENTED

APRIL 23, 2018

STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

**Statement of
William F. Sweeney Jr.
Assistant Director in Charge
New York Field Office
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice**

**Before the
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives**

**Concerning
Securing Our Communities: Federal Support to High-Risk Urban Areas**

**Presented
April 23, 2018
Staten Island, New York**

Good morning. Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss the FBI's efforts to secure our communities.

The FBI's mission is to protect and defend the United States against terrorist and foreign intelligence threats, to uphold and enforce the criminal laws of the United States, and to provide leadership and criminal justice services to Federal, State, Tribal, municipal, and international agencies and partners.

There are 56 field offices in cities across the United States and Puerto Rico; about 380 smaller offices, called resident agencies, in cities and towns across the nation; and more than 60 international offices, called Legal Attachés, in U.S. embassies worldwide.

The area of responsibility for the FBI's New York Field Office covers nearly 5,000 square miles with a population of more than 13 million people. We have over 2,000 employees here in New York, with an almost equal percentage of special agents and professional staff.

After the 9/11 attacks, the FBI, overall, had to improve the way we analyzed and shared intelligence, and we had to use intelligence to drive our investigations, not the other way around.

We hired hundreds of new translators and surveillance specialists, and we nearly tripled the number of new intelligence analysts.

We integrated our intelligence program with other agencies in the Intelligence Community, under the Director of National Intelligence. We stood up the FBI's National

Security Branch, the Directorate of Intelligence, and the Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate. In short, we improved the Bureau's national security capabilities across the board.

Before the September 11 attacks, we collected intelligence principally for the purpose of prosecution. Today, we are collecting intelligence to better understand all threats — those we know about, and those that have not yet become evident. Our mission is not merely to disrupt an isolated plot, but to dismantle the potential network behind it.

Director Wray has recently stated that the FBI currently has approximately 1,000 open ISIS-related investigations, approximately 1,000 open investigations of suspected homegrown violent extremists inspired by various global jihadist movements, and approximately 1,000 open investigations into domestic terrorism.

In order to address these threats, and others, we know one of the most significant factors that will drive our success is the emphasis we have placed on developing relationships and information-sharing abilities. In a city as large as New York, we could not expect to thrive without the support of our local, State, and Federal agencies. No one agency, working alone, can defeat terrorism or any other of today's threats.

We continue to strengthen relationships with our international law enforcement partners as well. Today, we have 64 legal attaché offices — commonly known as legats — and more than a dozen smaller sub-offices in key cities around the globe, providing coverage for more than 200 countries, territories, and islands.

Each office is established through mutual agreement with the host country and is situated in the U.S. embassy or consulate in that nation.

We work with a host of Intelligence Community agencies at the National Counterterrorism Center and other fusion centers around the country.

We have also expanded our Joint Terrorism Task Forces, or JTTFs, which were first established here in New York City in 1980. Prior to 9/11, there were about 1,000 members of JTTFs nationwide; today there are over 4,000. The total number of JTTFs nationwide has also increased since 9/11 to 184.

The mission of the New York JTTF is to enhance communications, coordination, and cooperation between Federal, State, and local government agencies representing the law enforcement, intelligence, defense, diplomatic, public safety, and homeland security communities by providing point of fusion for terrorism investigations and national security matters and efforts.

Currently, the New York JTTF is composed of over 450 personnel, to include law enforcement, analysts, and professional staff, representing over 40 member agencies, and 16 non-member liaison agencies. The NY JTTF area of responsibility encompasses metropolitan

New York and extends internationally to Africa, Western Europe, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Thanks to our extensive list of partner agencies and the relationships we share, the JTTF in New York is uniquely situated to respond to critical incidents without immediate assistance from other field offices. As the terrorism threat continues to evolve, it's crucial that we maintain this level of capability.

Additionally, as part of the JTTF, New York has a dedicated Weapons of Mass Destruction ("WMD") investigative squad, which is composed of special agent subject matter experts in WMD, special agent bomb technicians, and a special agent Hazardous Evidence Response Team leader. The squad is supplemented by several task force officers with WMD expertise, and they're tasked with emergency response, investigation, and WMD preparedness to include training, exercises, liaison outreach, and tripwire development and implementation. All components of the squad actively train and respond with subject matter experts from our local partner agencies.

It is through partnerships like this that we continue to explore a comprehensive approach to fighting crime. By collaborating on joint investigations and sharing resources and information, we are seeing successes in spite of the threat that remains a top priority for all of us.

Crisis Response

Should a critical incident occur within our area of responsibility, the assistant director in charge, or equivalent designee, is responsible for initiating an appropriate crisis response plan. In most cases, including the recent truck attack carried out by Sayfullo Saipov along Manhattan's West Side Highway in October 2017, executive management can be on scene within minutes. We will begin communicating almost immediately with first responders, in most cases the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), to determine our next steps. In addition to our 24/7 operations command center, our Joint Operations Center ("JOC") will become operational almost immediately. Here we will pool together our resources and partnership abilities made possible through our JTTF, as described in detail above, as we remain in constant communication with FBI Headquarters by way of secure video teleconferencing capabilities. Components of the FBI's specialized crisis response team will surge resources where necessary to mitigate any immediate threat to the public as we work together with our law enforcement partners to determine what information is necessary to disseminate to the community in the interest of public safety.

In summary, the FBI continues to effectively engage with our local, State, Federal, Tribal, and international law enforcement partners to confront the threats we face and protect the communities we serve. Combatting terrorism, in all its forms, remains our top priority. For this reason, we will continue to draw upon the relationships we've established with our partners, both at home and abroad, to understand the threats we face, disrupt plots to harm our homeland, and dismantle the potential networks behind them.

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and members of the Committee, thank you again for this opportunity to discuss the FBI's efforts to secure our communities. Mr. Chairman, we are grateful for the leadership that you and this Committee have provided to the FBI, and we thank you for your continuing support. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.