

Los Angeles Police Department's Counter-Terrorism and Criminal Intelligence Bureau "Counter-Terrorism and Crime Fighting in Los Angeles"

The Approach

The 21st Century has brought complex, global threats to the doorsteps of American police departments. These include converging threats such as terrorism, gang activity, narcotics trafficking and organized crime – age-old problems that require new approaches in the era of globalization and sophisticated, transnational criminal networks.

The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) is at the forefront of a nationwide effort to evolve local police counter-terrorism strategies and capabilities. We recognize that policing is not what it used to be. The police of today must be capable of both strategic and operational thinking and they need to have the tools – intellectual, technological and organizational – to quickly adapt to the myriad of threats they face.

As threats converge, so must police strategies. The LAPD is converging community policing and counter-terrorism strategies and implementing them under the guiding philosophy of Intelligence-Led Policing. This focuses our efforts and better equips us to partner with communities in the pursuit of a safer America.

The Initiatives

The LAPD created its Counter-Terrorism and Criminal Intelligence Bureau in 2003. It now has close to 300 officers dedicated to counter-terrorism, criminal intelligence gathering, and community mobilization efforts. It is the LAPD's goal to institutionalize the idea of counter-terrorism throughout the Department and the communities it serves – not to make it the priority, but a priority.

The CTCIB's mission is: to Prevent terrorism by effectively sharing information aimed at disrupting terrorist's operational capability and addressing the underlying causes associated with the motivational component; to Protect the public and critical infrastructure by leveraging private sector resources and hardening targets; to Pursue terrorists and those criminal enterprises that support them; and to Prepare the citizenry and the city government for consequences associated with terrorists operations against the city.

The following programs and capabilities demonstrate just some of the areas in which we have concentrated our efforts.

1. **Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC):** Partnered with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) to lead this multi-agency, multi-disciplined counter-terrorism intelligence center. National, best practices model. Prepares products to provide a richer terrorism threat picture to all law enforcement agencies, fire agencies, health agencies, and critical infrastructure partners in the seven county region. Serves 166 police agencies and 18 million people.

2. SAR: The LAPD developed and implemented the Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) process for reporting suspected terror-related incidents and tying them firmly into information collection procedures, tracking systems and intelligence analysis. This is considered the first program in the U.S. to create a national standard for terrorism-related modus operandi codes. The SAR program is an example of the convergence of skills that police have used for decades to observe traditional criminal behavior with the new behavioral indices of those associated with terrorist recruitment and the planning and execution of operations. This initiative, which fits nicely with the federal government's National Strategy for Information Sharing, is in the process of being rolled out nationally. Once SAR is institutionalized throughout the nation, local, state, and federal agencies will have a common standard for collecting, measuring, and sharing information about suspected terror-related incidents. This process has the potential to become the bread and butter of U.S. fusion centers and it can inspire the so-called boots on the ground and the community to get involved in the counter-terrorism effort.
3. Operation Archangel: In partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, the LAPD implemented Operation Archangel, which has become a national model for critical infrastructure protection. This program was recently documented in the award-winning film, "Archangel: Protecting our Freedom," which was circulated to the country's 64 major cities and Congress. More than 85 percent of the critical infrastructure in the U. S. is privately owned. This program converged that private sector niche with the police system.
4. NCTA: The LAPD piloted the National Counter Terrorism Academy (NCTA) – the first such academy created by local law enforcement for local law enforcement. During a five-month pilot program, which ended in July 2008, nearly 60 police, fire, and private security personnel from 25 agencies received a comprehensive overview of international and domestic terrorist threats and were aided in the development of Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP) strategies to counter those threats in their jurisdictions. This multi-agency, multi-disciplinary student body served as a prime example of the convergence of various disciplines in the counter-terrorism effort. The NCTA will train many more during the coming year with NCTA programs in Los Angeles and elsewhere in California. The LAPD has also formally proposed the creation of a National Consortium on Intelligence-Led Policing (NCILP) that would serve as an ILP training and education resource for state and local police departments nationwide. The NCILP would design five separate curricula to teach state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies how to apply ILP strategies and fuse intelligence to counter terrorism, narcotics trafficking, gangs, organized crime and human trafficking.
5. Hydra: The LAPD facilitated the acquisition of a training system that tests and improves personnel's decision-making skills during critical incidents in a simulated environment. This will be the first Hydra system in the U.S. and will grant the LAPD access to the training scenarios of 32 other installations throughout the world. The

LAPD will firmly converge its training efforts with those of major police departments in countries including Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

6. TLO Program: Terrorism Liaison Officers, or TLOs, are casting an ever-wider net to train more people in the city as public data collectors. They are trained on what and how to report suspicious behavior/activity that has a nexus to terrorism. This is one prong of an effort to institutionalize counter-terrorism awareness in the area commands and throughout the LAPD. The ultimate goal is to seamlessly blend crime-fighting and counter-terrorism efforts.
7. Muslim Forum: The LAPD recently held its first-ever Chief's Muslim Community Forum, hosted by LAPD Chief William J. Bratton. This meeting brought police and Muslim leaders from throughout the Southland together to enable the LAPD to better understand how it can protect and serve their communities. The LAPD is in the process of developing a documentary film that will highlight the diverse Muslim communities in Los Angeles, their relationships with local law enforcement, the challenges faced by both American Muslims and law enforcement, and the way forward. Community mobilization, an essential part of the crime-fighting model, is particularly important when applied to populations that may feel targeted by society or the police. One goal with the Muslim communities has been to converge their community-building efforts with the LAPD's by opening channels of communication and responding to their requests for police service.

The Capabilities

1. Information Sharing: Working in concert with regional and federal partners in the seven counties served by the Joint Regional Intelligence Center, the LAPD continues to build its capacity to collect, fuse, analyze, and disseminate both strategic and operational intelligence. The LAPD is aligning the information collection and dissemination process with an eye toward accountability to ensure that the "first preventers" have the needed information in a timely manner. The "all crimes, all hazards" approach to this center ensures the analysts' ability to bring to light relevant trends to generate actionable intelligence. This fusion center epitomizes the model of convergence.
2. RPPICS: The LAPD developed a technological tool – the Regional Public Private Infrastructure Collaboration System, or RPPICS – that enhances communication both within the LAPD and with the private sector. This program converged technology with the goals of hardening targets and including the private sector in counter-terrorism efforts.
3. Human Intelligence: The LAPD created a human source development unit to increase its capacity to develop actionable intelligence in specific areas. That was done with an eye toward understanding the domain and what to target in that domain.

4. Intelligence Investigators: The pioneering of the Anti-Terrorism Intelligence Section demonstrated the success of a hybrid model of cross training that equipped intelligence officers with traditional analysts' tools. The new model required that each investigative team was responsible for producing link charts, timelines, financial analysis, etc. This caused the investigators to see the criticality of analysis by identifying their own knowledge gaps and adjusting their investigations accordingly. This approach has resulted in the decreased cycle time of problem identification (terrorist indicator) to problem representation (analyzed intelligence) and the realization of investigative goals.
5. Cyber Investigations: The LAPD has developed the capability to hunt for signs of radicalization and terrorism activities on the Internet, which provides a plain-view means of identifying and gathering information on potential threats. Information gleaned from this open source, fed into the radicalization template, and combined with a thorough understanding of operational indicators, is critical to articulating suspicion and justifying the increased application of enforcement measures.

In the terrorism arena, local law enforcement's main strength is its experience investigating individuals and enterprises. Investigating individuals has created a robust capacity to understand culpability and relationships and how these are linked to broader networks, or enterprises. The crime-fighting model used to investigate organized crime, gang and narcotics trafficking enterprises – their structures, the players and their strategies – is being applied regularly to the investigation of terrorist networks.

This model casts a wide and deep law enforcement net that attempts to catch the individuals *and* target the larger enterprise. Resources are focused on detecting more traditional crimes such as fraud, smuggling, and tax evasion in order to assemble the puzzle pieces to understand the networks of terrorist operatives on their soil. This approach has helped law enforcement develop a richer picture of the operational environment and likely has played a significant role in preventing another attack in the U.S.

American law enforcement is pushing into the intelligence-led (predictive) era of policing which leverages their existing strengths to include:

- ? Powers of search, seizure of evidence and arrest;
- ? Community policing infrastructure;
- ? Growing ability to manage, share, and analyze information;
- ? Proven ability to identify and interpret suspect behaviors; and
- ? Established relationships that can carry an investigation from inception to completion.

The convergence of these tried and true policing strategies applied to the terrorism problem is yielding successes. Local police, particularly those from the larger anti-terrorism units like the LAPD's, are contributing to the knowledge base of their state and federal colleagues – particularly when it comes to understanding the dynamics of networks and decentralized groups.

Here is a cross section of the types of cases that have come across the LAPD's counter-terrorism investigative radar.

1. **Hizbollah Funding Case:** The arrest of a major Hizbollah funding group by a task force comprised of the Drug Enforcement Agency and the LAPD working alongside the Federal Bureau of Investigation illustrated the interrelation of criminal acts and the funding of terrorism, and the increasing global reach of local cases. This group raised money for Hizbollah by selling narcotics. It then laundered a portion of the funds by selling counterfeit products such as clothing and cigarettes in the United States and Latin America.
2. **Black Rider Case:** The Black Rider Liberation Party, a spinoff of the Black Panther party, threatened to take over four police stations in Los Angeles and shoot and kill as many police officers as possible in furtherance of their black separatist and anti-government agenda. Traditional policing tactics, including surveillance (using both technical and non-technical methods), source development, search warrants, and the introduction of an informant resulted in the arrest and prosecution of this domestic terror group. Property recovered during the investigation included: numerous large caliber automatic and semi-automatic weapons; a military handbook on intelligence and interrogation; night vision goggles; bullet proof vests; knives; a cross bow; a police scanner; and manuals on police field operations, sniper procedures and bioterrorism.
3. **JIS Case:** This case was an excellent example of the prison radicalization process, the nexus between street-level crimes and terrorism and how homegrown terrorists are often inspired by ideology and events overseas but have no affiliation with a larger terrorist organization. It also illustrated how local police are key to identifying terrorism suspects who would not be on the federal law enforcement radar otherwise. Kevin Lamar James, the leader of this cell, was a former Hoover Street Crip gang member who founded a group while in prison called Jam'yyat Al-Islam Al-Saheeh, or JIS. While serving a 10-year sentence for robbery and possession of a weapon in prison, James converted a fellow inmate who, once released in 2004, was instructed to recruit others for terrorist operations against the U.S. and Israel. This convert did and, in 2005, the four-person cell actively started researching targets such as military installations, Israeli offices and synagogues and funding their operations through a series of gas station robberies – all orchestrated by James from behind prison walls. It was one of these robberies that led to the cell's discovery and capture by local police in the summer of 2005. The search warrant that resulted from the robbery of a Torrance, California, gas station led to the discovery of jihadi propaganda and the overarching conspiracy to wage war against the United States. The four men involved were indicted on October 2006. Three of the four, including James, have pled guilty. The fourth was found mentally unfit to stand trial and is in a federal prison facility under psychiatric care. One of the four – the man whom James sent out to recruit others – was the first to be sentenced and received a 22-year federal prison term in June 2008. During his sentencing hearing, Levar Haney Washington told the judge that the members of JIS waged war against their own country because they opposed U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and stated that "calamities affecting the Muslim world had influenced his outlook. The cell had robbed gas stations because oil is a political symbol, he said.

4. ALF Cases: The Animal Liberation Front is an extremist group whose members have committed arson, vandalism and other crimes that often do not rise to the level of a federal violation – placing it directly in the wheelhouse of local law enforcement. The leaders of this underground movement often cloak themselves in the protections of the First Amendment right to free speech. Meantime, they lead a criminal lifestyle, committing crimes such as petty theft and robbery to sustain both themselves as individuals and the larger criminal enterprise. This rejection of authority enables local law enforcement to track and ultimately catch the leadership ? dirty for more pedestrian crimes such as burglaries. ALF's ultimate objective is to eliminate animal euthanasia and the use of all animals in laboratory testing in universities and science centers. In the pursuit of these objectives, elements of the group have become more violent.
5. DMV Case: This case provides an example of a crevice criminal market – in this case, embedded in a trusted government institution – that provides the logistical support for lower level crimes all the way to potential terrorism-related cases. Workers at the California Department of Motor Vehicles provided a significant number of suspects with false documents. The documents in question appeared legal in every way other than the assumed name. This enterprise is in the process of being disrupted and dismantled through traditional policing methods such as extensive investigation and utilizing sources against the targets.

The National Landscape

The LAPD's efforts are part of a broader effort on the part of local American law enforcement agencies to improve information sharing and cooperation with federal partners while bolstering their own counter-terrorism capabilities.

The United States boasts more than 17 federal intelligence agencies and 17,500 local law enforcement agencies that employ more than 750,000 local law enforcement officers. This decentralization of law enforcement presents either an opportunity or a challenge. The outcome will be decided by how effectively U.S. law enforcement agencies are able to collaborate with each other, with the private sector, with academia and with their communities.

In the past seven years, information sharing has improved vertically, between the FBI and the nation's 17,500 state and local police departments. It has also improved horizontally, among the state and local departments themselves.

This shift is critical because turf battles and the need for jurisdictional supremacy at all levels of law enforcement have led to key intelligence failures in the past. While the information flow has improved greatly, there is still much work to be done in this area.

As Washington and federal law enforcement agencies have embraced police as true partners, the local law enforcers themselves have rallied. For the first time in American law enforcement history, senior officers from every major city police intelligence unit in the nation have come together to form an Intelligence Commanders Group (ICG), part of the Major City Chiefs

Association. Major city police departments are those that employ more than 1,000 law enforcement officers and serve a population of 500,000 or more. These 64 top-level intelligence commanders work in concert to share intelligence and ensure inter-agency cooperation.

The Way Forward

The National SAR initiative which is not only vital to the information sharing environment, but institutionalizes the idea of counter terrorism efforts into our first line of defense; state and local law enforcement and the communities they serve. However, there is more work to be done. We have not taken full advantage of the type of structure we have in the United States and the level of homeland intelligence.

As a representative and member of the Major Cities Chiefs Intelligence Commander's Group, an organization that represents the 56 largest cities in the United States, I would offer that we have not taken full advantage of state and local law enforcement with regard to fully understanding the threat, capability, and intent of the adversary. The understanding of the threat domain is incomplete, and the efforts of state and local law enforcement relative to collecting SAR activity are not focused nor are they aligned with intelligence requirements based on the current threats or global trends. No agency knows their landscape better than local law enforcement; we were designed and built to be the eyes and ears of communities – the First Preventers of terrorism. How we exploit this infrastructure and leverage this resource could compliment and strengthen our Country's homeland intelligence capability while at the same time safeguard the values protected by the Constitution.

Background

The FBI (Bureau) has primary responsibility in the federal government for the collection of domestic intelligence pertaining to terrorism, but the Bureau is not as well positioned to collect information and intelligence from our communities as state, local and tribal police.

While it works better than it used to, and despite the Bureau's successes in uncovering some homeland plots, the Bureau's intelligence efforts are still limited by its mission and case oriented approach. Although intelligence about foreign terrorist threats has greatly improved, homeland intelligence collection remains inadequate. We do not have the needed homeland intelligence collection plan or capability.

Federal, state and local agencies should seize this opportunity to develop an integrated national intelligence capability to counter terrorism and protect our communities from crime.

A Call for Action

This calls for a revision of the national intelligence strategy based upon a comprehensive understanding of globalization, its impact on local communities and the "information age" threats, i.e., state-sponsored or self-organized terrorist groups, organized crime enterprises, transnational gangs, drug trafficking organizations, internet hackers, and cyber crime syndicates.

There are three dimensions to resolving this deficiency:

- ? Expand the Department of Homeland Security's National Intelligence Enterprise involving the 22 legacy agencies by leveraging state and local law enforcement and creating a force multiplier. The fusion center infrastructure should be the hub for developing and marketing intelligence requirements/predicates based on global influence and the local landscape, and collecting on those requirements.
- ? Developing and marketing national intelligence requirements/predicates with enough flexibility to allow specific fusion centers to modify these requirements based on regional intelligence issues and through the existing fusion center infrastructure. This should not be misinterpreted as meaning that the Intelligence Community would be tasking intelligence collection requirements to state, local and tribal law enforcement. Understanding the information needs of the Intelligence Community is notably different than receiving tasking.
- ? Developing intelligence tradecraft amongst state and locals and collect on the specific intelligence requirements/predicates. Since there is no integrated national collection plan, and no one to define what essential information is needed or no one to guide the implementation of such a plan, capabilities are lacking and collection is haphazard. This Integrated National Intelligence Enterprise should be wholly "owned and operated" by state, local and tribal law enforcement, to ensure insulation from direct tasking by the Intelligence Community. The effort needs focus and state and local law enforcement resources. Once the threat domain is understood, concerted, and coordinated efforts can be made to collect off of the domain and national intelligence requirements.

Major Cities Chiefs' Intelligence Commanders Group

The purpose of the group is to strengthen and coordinate the intelligence capabilities and operations of law enforcement agencies in major metropolitan areas. This can be a viable organization to support the effort of an integrated national intelligence enterprise. In the spirit of building a network to beat a network, the functions of the Major Cities Chiefs' Intelligence Commanders Group would be as follows:

- ? Serve as a national forum for the discussion and analysis of intelligence issues faced by the major cities of the United States, including traditional criminal and homeland security-related intelligence activities.
- ? Interface with federal and International agencies to convey common intelligence policies and procedures.
- ? Consider proposed policies and legislation to be recommended to the Major Cities Chiefs Association.

- ? Develop a **homeland intelligence joint-operating doctrine** by which all parties, federal, state, and local will agree to abide by the policies and procedure therein. This joint-operating doctrine would do the following:
- Identify and examine common information sharing issues and propose common solutions for intelligence collection, analysis, and investigations.
 - Identify intelligence training needs and coordinate intelligence training opportunities for major cities which can be replicated by smaller cities and towns as they are able.

Legitimacy and Constitutionality

Legitimacy and intelligence are equally important tools for U.S. law enforcement to use in counter-terrorism efforts. Legitimacy starts with an organizational knowledge and pride in operating constitutionally and within the law. The need for transparency – being perceived to be and authentically honoring this principle – in intelligence and counter- terrorism activities cannot be understated. Taking great care to ensure that intelligence and enforcement operations are narrowly targeted against terrorist cells determined to go operational is critical.

Homeland Intelligence is a least intrusive and most effective method of reducing the threat of both foreign and domestic terrorist acts against homeland targets.

Decentralized homeland intelligence gathering – performed by local and state authorities – not only is a most effective means of monitoring the growth of radicalism or extremism, and curbing a potential terror threat, it is far more compatible with the freedoms and privacies Americans are accustomed to. The hardware of surveillance – CCTV Cameras, License Plate Readers, “Rings of Steel” – which has become widespread¹ despite a demonstrable lack of effectiveness in crime prevention or solution is less compatible with the freedoms and privacies Americans expect.

Those methods, designed to fill a gap in law enforcement capabilities, are the worst of all worlds when compared with proper intelligence gathering: they are intrusive-- despite the legalistic arguments that there should be limited expectations of privacy in public spaces; they are without question damaging to the freedoms of expression and speech that are constitutionally enshrined. Unless you are of the persuasion that authorities should be the uninvited guest at the party whenever they choose to join in; they fail the test of logic—can cameras and license plate readers effectively stop secret plans? They turn on its head the value systems we hold dear—because like it or not their placement speaks for itself—they enshrine property and capital above human life.

¹ Results of a study of London/Britain CCTV system (needs a proper cite)

Homeland intelligence gathering by local police is perhaps the most effective, economically efficient and most publicly accountable method of curbing the threats of extremism, and homegrown or foreign terror plots. Homeland intelligence gathering by local or regional law enforcement is based on a deep understanding of the community policed, is targeted in nature, is overseen by police administrators who are daily held accountable to the public, is subject to advance public debate on its general parameters, and post operational critique of its methods and results and for these among many other reasons, is far less broadly intrusive into our society than a hardware based approach.

All this is true, despite the misgivings about intelligence gathering becoming the basis of a police state. It is worth examining those genuine and well grounded misgivings. But when examined we discover that in fact those misgivings are misapplied when it comes to local law enforcement. They are most appropriate in our federalist system when applied to intelligence gathering by a centralized government, usually by a single agency and one that is almost never directly accountable to the public, nor equipped with the knowledge of the local communities to do an effective job.

Our failure to implement a decentralized homeland intelligence network has not had disastrous consequences purely by dumb luck. And the successes of the FBI in the agencies case-based operations only prove exception and make no case for a rule that would call for centralized intelligence gathering. In any case, the public would not stand for it.

Conclusion

Local law enforcement in America has come a long way in terms of adapting to the increasingly complex threats of today's world. However, as terrorist groups embracing asymmetric warfare tactics attempt to create a larger footprint on U.S. soil, police must not grow complacent – as a law enforcement community or as a nation.

We are often asked the question, “Are we safer since 9/11?” and the answer, from a law enforcement standpoint, is undoubtedly “yes.” The main reason for this positive appraisal is the fact that since 9/11 the law enforcement community has begun working together better than ever before. This work however, must be more integrated and coordinated with the federal government in order to increase the effectiveness and make our country even safer.

Policing must be a convergent strategy that fights crime and disorder while creating hostile environments for terrorists and more traditional crime. Police have the ability and the placement to recognize ordinary crime that terrorists have been known to commit in preparation for their operational attack – traffic violations, obtaining fake identification papers, smuggling, human trafficking, counterfeiting, piracy, drug trafficking, and any other criminal enterprise that intersects with the needs of terrorists.

It is the LAPD's position that police, working in cooperation with federal partners, hold the key to mitigating and ultimately defeating terrorism in the United States for the following reasons:

- ? Local law enforcement agencies throughout the country have the ideas and the technology to create counter-networks and to mount effective defenses and offenses.

- ? Police can leverage multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency efforts, to cast a redundant network of trip wires to determine whether individuals or enterprises represent an active threat that warrants investigation or enforcement action.
- ? Local police are designed to serve as the eyes and ears of communities – they are the best positioned to observe behaviors that have a nexus to terrorism.

This key will only work if local police continue to forge ahead in the development of innovative approaches to combat terrorism and other crimes. This “forging ahead” can only be made possible through cooperation – on a local, national and global scale. The LAPD stands firm in its commitment to cooperate with the communities it serves and the partners it has in the United States and around the world. Only in the face of a unified front will these threats that affect all of our lands be minimized.