



Current Challenges in Homeland Security Intelligence

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Overview

- The puzzle: are we making progress in counter-terrorism intelligence?
- What's the problem?
- What are we doing about it?
- The good news: advantages of state and local approaches
- The way ahead

The puzzle

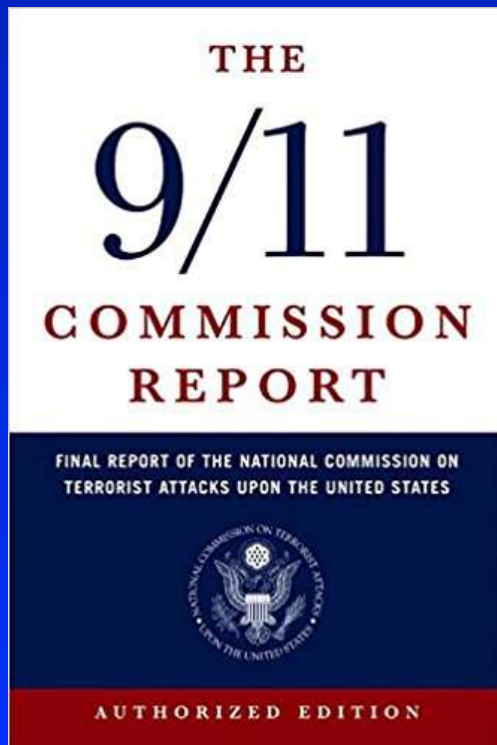
- More than 16 years after the 9/11 attacks, the terrorist threat appears as high as ever
- Boston, San Bernardino, Orlando, others
- Acting DHS Secretary, November 2017:
 - Terror threat equals, and in many ways exceeds, the 9/11 period

Boston Marathon bombing
(Washington Post)



How can this be?

- Haven't our intelligence and counterterrorism reforms been effective?





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Greater challenges today

- Former DNI Clapper:
 - “I’ve not experienced a time when we’ve been beset by more crises and threats around the globe” (2014)
 - “Our nation is facing the most diverse array of threats that I’ve seen” (2016)



- Former CJCS Martin Dempsey:
 - The world is more dangerous than it has ever been



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National Security

NSA's top talent is leaving because of low pay, slumping morale and unpopular reorganization



6 things you may not have known about the NSA

The National Security Agency is losing skilled personnel at a high rate. Here are six things to learn about the agency. (© Bob Schenck/The Washington Post)

By Ellen Nakashima and Aaron Gregg January 21 at 10:03 PM

July 21, 2017 · 9:54 PM ET

Or is it a Golden Age?

- Michael Morell, former CIA Deputy Director:
- “Today is the golden age of intelligence”
- If intelligence were a business, investors would be putting money into it—business is that good



THE GREAT WAR OF OUR TIME

THE CIA'S FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM
FROM AL QA'IDA TO ISIS

FORMER CIA DEPUTY DIRECTOR

MICHAEL MORELL

with Bill Harlow



Terror threat in historical context

- 1920 Wall Street bombing
 - Wagon filled with dynamite killed 38 and injured 143
 - Shrapnel as high as 34th floor
- Hundreds of bombings and hijackings in 70s
- Is the terror threat worse today?
 - How to measure?



Paradox of domestic intelligence

- Americans are nervous about intelligence
 - Condoleezza Rice: we are “allergic to domestic intelligence”
- But we need it!
- How do we balance security and liberty?





Homeland security intel weakest

- Legal regime completely different
- Relations with consumers more difficult
 - Not just national and military leaders
 - State, local, law enforcement, even the public
 - The dots we collect and connect may be you and me
- Problem with counter-terrorism tool box
 - Two key tools managed at very different levels
 - Intelligence capabilities usually managed nationally
 - Law enforcement largely a local function



Additional challenges

- Cyber, encryption, and “going dark”
 - Is this the worst of times for intelligence, or the best of times?
- A data glut, but information deficit?
 - How can Amazon know what we want to buy, but we don’t know who the next mass shooter will be?
 - Social media, other open sources
- First law of intelligence failure
 - Warnings were there, but missed



Example of C-T limits in Orlando

- Tip from local sheriff's office May 2013
 - Concerns about a Omar Mateen, private security guard
- FBI agent and sheriff's deputy on JTTF investigated
 - Phone records, surveillance
 - 2 confidential informants, ten months
 - Placed on Selectee List
 - Interviewed him three times
 - Extended investigation to gather more data

Orlando Shooter

- Investigation closed March 2014
 - Mateen attacked Orlando night club June 2016
- “We went right up to the edge of what we could do legally, and there was just nothing there”
 - FBI official
- Could have done more with social media
 - But little help in this case





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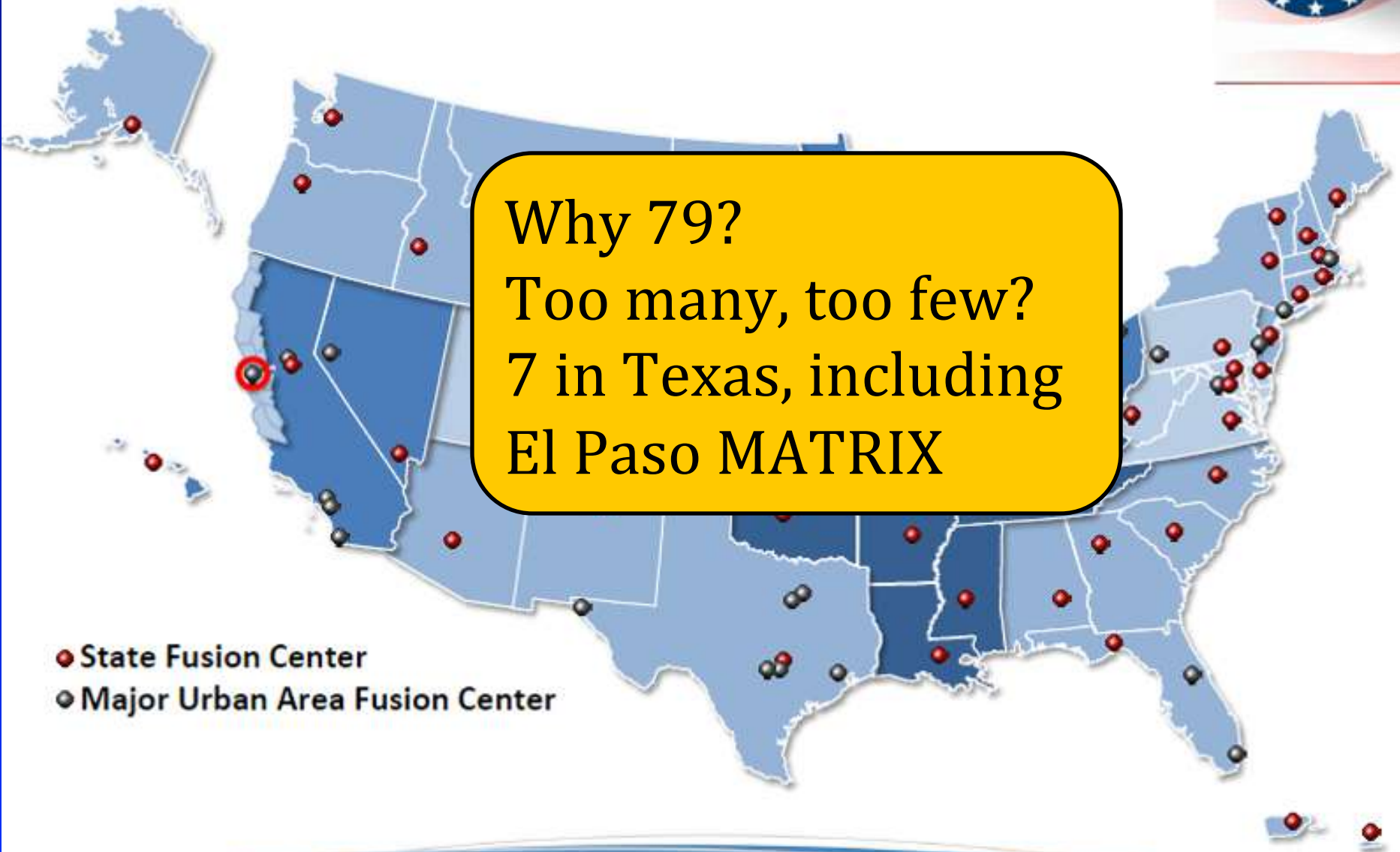


National Counterterrorism
Center



New Jersey Regional
Operations Intelligence Center

The National Fusion Center Network



- State Fusion Center
- Major Urban Area Fusion Center

Domain Awareness programs

- New York City model best known
- Camden, NJ, “surveillance city”
- Oakland scaled back Domain Awareness plans after public criticism

President Obama visiting the New York Police Department Real Time Crime Center, May 2010

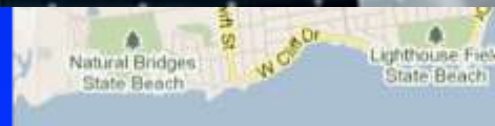


“Predictive policing”

- Predict future problems by analyzing past patterns
- Time Machine
- Santa Clara County using it
- 5 years ago and the
- Hot spots



“Minority Report”





SUMMARY OF TERRORISM THREAT TO THE U.S. HOMELAND

Since 2015, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has used this Bulletin to highlight the continuing terror threat to the U.S. Homeland. The United States is engaged in a generational fight against terrorists who seek to attack the American people, our country, and our way of life. An informed, vigilant and engaged public remains one of our greatest assets to identify potential terrorists and prevent attacks.

DURATION

This Bulletin will expire on **May 9, 2018** at 1:00PM EDT

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- We continue to face one of the most challenging threat environments since 9/11, as foreign terrorist organizations exploit the Internet to recruit, train, and inspire individuals to commit terrorist acts. Homegrown terrorists use social media applications, to avoid detection.
- Terrorist groups have included the use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, poisons or toxins, and explosives. Specific attack tactics include the use of improvised explosive devices, and
- Some terrorist groups use unmanned aircraft systems and tactics, such as drones. Additionally, terrorists continue to use social media to recruit and inspire individuals.
- Violent extremists, including those who are homegrown, and partner with others to carry out attacks in retaliation for apparent losses.
- Additionally, foreign terrorist fighters who have acquired training and battle-tested terrorism experience may flee from terrorist-controlled territories with a desire to conduct attacks elsewhere, including the United States.

Should DHS issue such a warning about domestic extremists?

TYPES OF ADVISORIES

Bulletin
Describes current developments or general trends regarding threats of terrorism.

Elevated Alert
Warns of a credible terrorism threat against the United States.

Imminent Alert
Warns of a credible, specific, and impending terrorism threat

U.S. GOVERNMENT COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS

- DHS and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) continue to provide guidance to state, local, tribal and territorial partners related to the current threat environment. DHS also partners closely with the private sector to provide risk assessments and coordinate security measures with business owners and operators. The public may continue to observe law enforcement and security activity in and around public places and events.
- DHS protects the homeland from terrorism by working closely with the FBI and other intelligence partners to



Technology and big data

- Wisdom of the crowd and prediction markets
 - DARPA's Red Balloon experiment
 - Good Judgment Project and other academic studies
- IARPA's forecasting experiments
 - Office for Anticipating Surprise
- Social media intelligence
 - IT companies limiting data available
- Cities considering large-scale CCTV systems
 - How much surveillance is too much?

Increased information sharing

- The old way:
 - “There are things that my government does that I would rather not know about” (Leverett Saltonstall)
- The new way: Information Sharing Environment
- Are we sharing too much today?

Edward Snowden speaking to a group from Moscow (US News and World Report)





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Preventing domestic terrorism

- 159 domestic attacks foiled since 9/11
 - 119 jihadist, 40 (25%) domestic rightwing or other
- Most effective counterterrorism methods often simplest, closest to home
 - Aggressive local law enforcement
 - Informants, undercover officers, tips from public
 - Tools already in the state and local toolbox
- State and local authorities have a comparative advantage over national level

It's not big data we need

- It's *little data* that stops terrorist attacks
- Local efforts are especially well suited to gather that intelligence
- Seen as more legitimate, can be calibrated to fit local norms



NSA HQ



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Strengthen democracy, hug a spy

By [John Lloyd](#)
Reuters, August 5, 2016

New House coalition fights rise in government surveillance

[Erin Kelly](http://www.usatoday.com/staff/27069/erin-kelly/) (<http://www.usatoday.com/staff/27069/erin-kelly/>), USA Today 3:44 p.m. EDT July 13, 2016

Clearly, there is no obvious pain to ensure security for European or North American states, currently the targets of choice for jihadists. But what we're seeing now is a shift in attitudes toward intelligence-gathering services.

The Wall Street Journal July 15, 2016 6:44 p.m. ET



Preventing future attacks

- Do we need more public surveillance?
 - Modeled on NYPD Domain Awareness System
 - After all: if you're not doing anything wrong, why do you mind if someone is watching?
- More active community engagement?
 - Follows *National Prevention Framework*
 - Tension between working closely with community leaders, and greater use of confidential informants and undercover officers



Focus on domestic extremism

- Former DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff on lessons from Charlottesville, VA, violence:
- Need better advance intelligence on armed groups planning to attend
- Just as serious a threat as from jihadists
- A new approach to domestic intelligence?



What to do?

- Need a better-informed national debate about intelligence
 - Find right balance between security and liberty
- Increase efforts to share intelligence with state and local levels
- Bring more programs down to local level
 - Local intelligence can be more effective, and seen as more legitimate, than national level programs
- Get over our allergy to domestic intelligence



Thank you!
Questions? Comments?

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