

TERRORIST IDENTITIES DATAMART ENVIRONMENT (TIDE)

What is TIDE?

The Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) is the U.S. Government's (USG) central repository of information on international terrorist identities. The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (IRTPA) of 2004 established NCTC in law, and mandated the Center serve as the "central and shared knowledge bank on known and suspected terrorists and international terror groups." TIDE is that knowledge bank and supports the USG's various terrorist screening systems or "watchlists" and the US Intelligence Community's overall counterterrorism mission.

The TIDE database includes, to the extent permitted by law, all information the USG possesses related to the identities of individuals known or appropriately suspected to be or to have been involved in activities constituting, in preparation for, in aid of, or related to terrorism (with the exception of purely domestic terrorism information). This information is available to counterterrorism professionals throughout the Intelligence Community, including the Department of Defense, via the web-based, read-only "TIDE Online."

What types of conduct warrant inclusion in TIDE?

All activities at NCTC are guided by our strong commitment to protect privacy and civil liberties. For example, a person cannot be watchlisted based solely upon First Amendment protected activity. Federal agencies nominate individuals for inclusion in TIDE based on evaluations of intelligence and law enforcement terrorism information. A non-exclusive list of types of conduct that will warrant both entry into TIDE and terrorist screening nomination includes persons who:

- Commit international terrorist activity;
- Prepare or plan international terrorist activity;
- Gather information on potential targets for international terrorist activity;
- Solicit funds or other things of value for international terrorist activity or a terrorist organization;
- Solicit membership in an international terrorist organization;
- Provide material support, e.g., safe house, transportation, communications, funds, transfer of funds or other material financial benefit, false documentation or identification, weapons, explosives, or training;

- Are members of or represent a foreign terrorist organization.

How is information from TIDE used for watchlists?

Each day analysts create and enhance TIDE records based on their review of nominations received. NCTC exports a sensitive but unclassified subset of the data containing the terrorist identifiers to the Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) in near real time for use in the USG's consolidated watchlist. This consolidated watchlist, which is a critical tool for homeland security, supports screening processes to detect and interdict known and suspected terrorists at home and abroad – for example, the Transportation Security Administration's "No Fly" list and the Department of State's visa database, among others. For more information visit: www.fbi.gov/about-us/nsb/tsc/tsc_faqs.

How many names are in TIDE?

As of December 2013, TIDE contained about 1.1 million persons, most containing multiple minor spelling variations of their names. U.S. Persons (including both citizens and legal permanent residents) account for about 25, 000 of that total.

Why are people without terrorist ties sometimes delayed when traveling?

Currently, both TIDE and many of the end user screening systems are name based, which means that people with names similar to those in the database may be stopped for additional screening by TSA or at a port of entry. The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Traveler Redress Inquiry Program (DHS Trip) was launched in February 2007. Travelers can use this program to request resolution of possible watchlist misidentification issues with any of the department's component agencies at: <http://www.dhs.gov/trip>.

Are names ever removed from TIDE?

Yes. In the last three years DTI has deleted over 50,000 records from TIDE, an average of over 16,500 per year, after they were determined to no longer meet the criteria for inclusion.