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FUSION 2.0: THE NEXT GENERATION OF FUSION IN CALIFORNIA: ALIGNING STATE AND REGIONAL FUSION CENTERS

by

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FUSION 2.0: THE NEXT GENERATION OF FUSION IN CALIFORNIA: ALIGNING STATE AND REGIONAL FUSION CENTERS

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ABSTRACT

A growing number of states have created multiple fusion centers, including California. In addition to having a state fusion center, California has four regional centers statewide. Each center is separately governed, but intended to work together as a unified, statewide system. Given their recognized autonomy, the relationship between California's fusion centers is voluntary and "horizontal" versus "hierarchical," with no single entity in charge. Consequently, the attainment and sustainment of a robust and synchronized partnership between California's fusion centers is dependent upon each center's commitment to collaborate. Current research has focused largely on building collaboration *within* fusion centers, as opposed to *between* fusion centers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AORs	Areas of Responsibility
Cal EMA	California Emergency Management Agency
CAL JRIES	California's Joint Regional Information Exchange System
CATIC	California Anti-Terrorism Information Center
CCIC	Central California Intelligence Center
CDCR	California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
CHP	California Highway Patrol
CI/KR	Critical Infrastructure and Key Resource
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
CPCA	California Police Chiefs Association
CSSA	California State Sheriffs Association
CTAC	Counter-Terrorist Analysis Centre
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
DSTF	Domestic Security Task Force
EBTEWG	East Bay Terrorism Early Warning Group
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation's
FDLE	Florida Department of Law Enforcement
FFC	Florida Fusion Center
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GTAZ	Gemeinsames Terrorismusabwehrzentrum
I&A	Intelligence and Analysis
IACP	International Association of Chiefs of Police
JRIC	Joint Regional Intelligence Center
JTAC	Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre
LA JRIC	Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Center
LAWG	Lead Analysts Working Group
NCRIC	Northern California Regional Intelligence Center
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NFCCG	National Fusion Center Coordination Group
NOC	National Operations Center
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School

OHS	Office of Homeland Security
RTTACs	Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers
SAIC	Strategic Analysis and Information Center
SAR	Suspicious Activity Reporting
SIRs	Situational Intelligence Reports
STTAC	State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center
STTAS	State Terrorism Threat Assessment System
TEWGs	Terrorism Early Warning Groups
TLO	Terrorism Liaison Officer

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> With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in….
>
> Abraham Lincoln

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Finally, to the men and women on the front lines in California's fusion centers and the federal, state, and local partners who work hard each day to keep California and our country safe; thank you for the amazing work you do. I am proud to serve beside you.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Shortly before midnight on a pleasant April evening near Charleston, a 40-year-old businessman borrowed a horse and began riding towards Lexington to deliver an important message. The businessman did not have access to a car, telephone, cell phone, or the Internet, so driving, phoning, texting, or "tweeting" the message was simply not an option. Fortunately, that urgent communication was delivered in time and has since been credited with helping change the course of American history. The April night in question was April 18, 1775, and that 40-year-old businessman was none other than silversmith and patriot, Paul Revere. His infamous midnight ride to warn patriots of an impending attack would prove vital to their success just hours later at the Battle of Lexington.

More than 226 years later, millions of Americans and people throughout the world would watch in horror and disbelief as commercial aircraft, laden with fuel and unsuspecting passengers, were suddenly transformed into weapons and propelled into the World Trade Center and Pentagon, killing thousands in the aftermath. Regrettably, there would be no modern day Paul Revere to warn of these attacks in advance or prevent them from occurring. Much like the surprise attack against Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the terrorist attacks on 9/11 revealed a nation caught off-guard by a strike against our homeland. While Paul Revere and his fellow patriots were successful in alerting others to the impending assault centuries earlier using "one if by land" or "two if by sea," some would question where the corresponding "three if by air" warning was on 9/11? Moreover, what "four if" scenarios it is necessary to protect against in the future?

As an outgrowth to these and similar questions, the formation of multiagency and multidisciplinary fusion centers has become an integral part of this country's efforts to prevent future terrorist attacks and, in some ways, serve as a twenty-first century equivalent to Paul Revere. In fact, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano has described fusion centers as being "the centerpiece of state, local, and federal intelligence sharing

for the future" (Napolitano, 2009), and establishing a network of fusion centers across the United States (U.S.) remains one of the primary goals of DHS and the federal government (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 7). While considerable steps have been taken over the past several years to enhance the "baseline capabilities" of state and local fusion centers across the nation, including those in California, to be truly successful, fusion centers must also be capable of coordinating and collaborating effectively with other centers to avoid "information silos" or "stovepipes" from occurring within individual centers or states (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 14). Accordingly, as fusion centers in California work to achieve recommended baseline capabilities throughout their respective operations (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008), collectively, the state must also strive to achieve the next generation of fusion in California by aligning state and regional fusion centers into a more collaborative and synchronized statewide network.

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since 9/11, a proliferation of state and local intelligence "fusion centers" has occurred throughout the nation in an effort to improve intelligence sharing and prevent terrorist attacks. The same is true in California. In fact, California currently has more DHS recognized fusion centers than any other state in the nation and is one of 10 states possessing multiple fusion centers (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009).

Shadowing the nation's explosive growth of fusion centers has been an increasing number of federally sponsored publications intended to provide recommended fusion center "guidelines" and "baseline capabilities" for all centers to strive to attain (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008). Much of this effort has been intended to establish core competencies among all centers in hopes of laying the foundation for creating a national network of state and local fusion centers, as called for in the National

Strategy for Information Sharing (President of the United States, 2007, p. 11). Similar to this national effort, California too has sought to construct a robust and integrated network among its state and regional fusion centers (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008).

In March 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger designated the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) as California's primary state fusion center. The STTAC was created in 2005 as a cooperative effort between the Governor's Office of Homeland Security (OHS), California Highway Patrol (CHP), and California Department of Justice (DOJ) (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, p. 47) and replaced the former California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC). In addition to the STTAC, California has four Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers (RTTACs)—located in Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego—whose operational boundaries coincide with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) four California field offices (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 13). The STTAC and RTTACs are independently managed and operated and each is comprised of a varied assortment of multijurisdictional and multiagency participants from various federal, state, and/or local agencies. Under California's present construct, the STTAC and RTTACs are intended to serve as the framework of California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment System (STTAS) (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 13).

As articulated in the 2008 California State Homeland Security Strategy, hereafter referred to as the State Strategy, the STTAS is intended to be a unified system and collaborative approach for gathering, analyzing, and sharing homeland security information (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 13). While the State Strategy describes the STTAS as having "defined roles" and utilizing a "team approach" (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 13), the Strategic Business Plan and Concept of Operations (CONOPS) developed for the STTAS in 2008 may not adequately provide the strategic vision necessary for integrating California's state and regional fusion centers into a

highly efficient and collaborative statewide system. That deficiency is evidenced in part by all four RTTAC commanders requesting that the STTAS CONOPS be revisited, clarified, and updated with input from the RTTACs, STTAC, and other homeland security stakeholders to create a more efficient and well-defined statewide model (RTTAC commanders, personal communication, 2009).

The lack of a current, comprehensive, and fully integrated STTAS CONOPS to assist California in more effectively synchronizing state and regional fusion center operations has been further complicated by management and personnel challenges in the STTAC that left it void of full-time law enforcement or multiagency participation for more than a year. While some of the associated personnel changes may have benefited individual RTTACs that received staff previously assigned to the STTAC, the absence of daily law enforcement management and multiagency participation within the STTAC negatively impacted its ability to collaborate with federal, state, and local stakeholders, including the RTTACs (Federal, state, and local homeland security professionals personal communication, 2008). In short, the lack of a fully implemented statewide plan, coupled with diminished collaboration between the STTAC and RTTACs, weakened the linkage between state and regional operations.

In late 2008, meetings were held between senior management at CHP and OHS, now the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA), in which CHP was asked to consider taking over management of the STTAC (Senior executives at CHP and Cal EMA, personal communication, 2008). On October 1, 2009, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between CHP, Cal EMA, and California DOJ paving the way for CHP to assume command of the STTAC and have a full-time CHP and California DOJ presence in the center. As the CHP embarks upon this new leadership position, it is appropriate that the mission and role of the STTAC in creating a more synchronized network of state and regional fusion centers in California be thoughtfully analyzed to

determine what changes, if any, may be appropriate. As the CHP sets out to rebuild participation and collaboration within the STTAC, the state must also heighten collaboration and integration among the STTAC and RTTACs.

Although the current State Strategy commits to utilizing an “all hazards” approach towards protecting California, its citizens, and infrastructure (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 1), the STTAC’s primary focus to date has been limited to antiterrorism only (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 24). While the majority of fusion centers throughout the nation have since adopted an “all crimes” or “all hazards” mission (Rollins, 2008, pp. 21–22), including some of California’s RTTACs, the STTAC has not followed suit. The STTAC’s failure to do so may signal a possible misalignment with the evolving mission of the RTTACs and appears to run counter to federal guidance calling for fusion centers to consider adopting an all crimes or all hazards approach or justify their reasons for not doing so (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008). Additionally, given the current threats facing California, the STTAC’s current “terrorism only” format may be insufficient and outdated.

Although California has not experienced a significant terrorist attack on the scale of 9/11, the state has seen a rise in gang-related violence and other threats to public safety in its communities. The mounting drug-related bloodshed along the southern border with Mexico, for example, has highlighted the potential for “spillover” into California and other southwest border states. As California faces a projected $20 billion budget deficit for 2010, many public safety organizations throughout the state are facing layoffs, while at the same time, struggling to maintain essential services. Given the current public safety challenges facing California, the STTAC’s present mission, and potentially that of the STTAS, appears inadequate to handle the full range of threats currently facing public safety agencies and communities in the state. Accordingly, it is appropriate that

the current mission be reevaluated to determine the best strategy to support today's physical, political, and financial challenges, while promoting effective interdisciplinary cooperation and providing enhanced value to the end-user.

In analyzing appropriate models and methods for use in California, this thesis evaluates to what extent stakeholder relationships and collaboration must be developed to support the role of the STTAC and what steps must be taken to synchronize the collective efforts of the STTAC and RTTACs better as part of a sustainable and integrated statewide network. In doing so, this research examines how other states with multiple fusion centers are structured and evaluates the intelligence and information needs of law enforcement stakeholders throughout California in hopes of more effectively aligning fusion center capabilities with the needs of the end-users. Finally, this investigative inquiry explores intelligence centers abroad for possible lessons learned and carefully considers both scholarly and "real world" methods for strengthening trust and collaboration between California's distributed network of fusion centers and establishing greater synergy throughout their collective efforts, while enhancing efficiency and sustainability for the future.

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis hypothesizes that to create an effective statewide network of fusion centers, the roles and responsibilities of each center, as critical nodes in a network, must clearly be articulated and accepted by every participant, in addition to promoting an environment where collaboration can readily occur. Accordingly, in seeking to establish a more robust and integrated network of state and regional fusion centers in California, known as the STTAS, the primary research questions are:

- What is the appropriate role of the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center within California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment System?
- What is the appropriate mission for the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center as it relates to strengthening stakeholder relationships?

- How do you maintain fusion center support and promote sustainability in an ever-changing political and economic environment?
- How can horizontal “center-to-center” collaboration be strengthened between the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center and the Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers?

C. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

This research contributes to literature that presently lacks an informed examination of states having multiple fusion centers and the interrelationships between those centers. Specifically, this research supplies the following contributions of significance.

- It highlights the current fusion center process in California and identifies suggested strategic modifications for California and potentially other states to consider in implementing an appropriate strategy and mission.
- It identifies the intelligence needs of sheriffs and police chiefs from throughout California and, in doing so, offer guidance on how the services provided by fusion centers can be better aligned with the needs of the end user and other stakeholders as a means for increasing value, stakeholder support, and sustainability.
- It underscores the expectations regional fusion centers have of the state center in terms of its role, mission, and services rendered and provide guidance on how states with multiple fusion centers can structure various roles, responsibilities, and stakeholder relationships to enable greater interagency cooperation, enhanced information sharing, and more effective synchronization of statewide fusion center operations.
- It explores the role interagency cooperation and leadership has on collaboration and sustainability.

D. ARGUMENT: MAIN CLAIMS, WARRANTS, EVIDENCE, AND CHALLENGES

To ensure California’s system of state and regional fusion centers is capable of supporting the current and future intelligence needs of the state, an evaluation of the appropriate fusion center mission, strategy, and stakeholder relationships must be undertaken. This assessment must review the intelligence requirements of public safety organizations in California in addressing current

and future threats, while articulating a sustainable vision for the STTAC to collaborate with other fusion centers effectively in California (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23).

Since the STTAC's creation in 2005, several federal publications including Fusion Center Guidelines and Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Fusion Centers have been produced in an effort to implement core competencies among present and future intelligence fusion centers across the United States (U.S). While the majority of fusion centers started with a counterterrorism focus, most have expanded their mission over the past two years to include "all crimes" or "all hazards" (Rollins, 2008, pp. 21–22). The STTAC, however, has continued to address "terrorism only," even though escalating bloodshed along the southwest border with Mexico and increasing gang violence among many of California's communities suggest that a broader range of threats could be considered as part of the STTAC's strategic vision and mission to address. By formally evaluating the pros/cons of adopting an "all crimes" or "all hazards" center, this research helps identify the most effective model for California. Since the Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Fusion Centers report calls for fusion centers electing not to adopt an "all crimes" or "all hazards" mission to justify their reasons as part of an annual evaluation (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 7), incorporating that assessment into a formal evaluation of state strategies would also help fulfill that requirement.

For the STTAC to meet the intelligence needs of its clients successfully, which includes the RTTACs, the STTAC must first understand the needs of its clients (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23). Only then can the STTAC and the STTAS be thoughtfully structured in a manner to comprehend and support those intelligence needs fully. Absent such an assessment, the likelihood for gaps to exist between the needs of the consumer and the deliverables provided by the STTAC is increased, given the potential for unclear expectations or misunderstandings surrounding their

intelligence requirements. To be viable and successful in their mission, fusion centers must provide services and deliverables considered by various stakeholders to provide added value to their operations. Pragmatically, the determination of value ultimately rests in the hands of the end-user, who evaluates how meaningful the services provided by the STTAC are to their operations and decides whether to participate in the STTAC or act upon the information provided. The mere fact that a fusion center believes it is providing a valuable service to its clients is of little consolation if the clients themselves disagree with that assessment. To remain relevant, the STTAC must capture and sustain the support of its stakeholders or run the risk of losing its efficacy or sustainability either politically, financially, or through diminished staffing and resources. Ultimately, sustainability is tied to value. If stakeholders do not derive an increased value from the STTAC, they are less likely to participate with the STTAC or collectively align their operations.

Finally, California must develop and implement effective procedures and plans to facilitate intrastate coordination among state and local fusion centers, including their roles and responsibilities as part of the state's overall system (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12). In doing so, current federal guidance strongly encourages that centers adopt a formal governance structure capable of promoting and maintaining a healthy and collaborative environment, while permitting stakeholders to have a voice in the development of the system (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 23).

With the recent transfer of the STTAC's management functions to the CHP, California must evaluate the appropriate role and mission of STTAC in facilitating and supporting a more synchronized network of state and regional fusion centers. To achieve the "fusion of fusion centers" successfully, the interrelationships between the STTAC and RTTACs must be cultivated and enhanced to help maximize center-to-center collaboration (Rollins, 2008, pp. 75–76).

E. METHODOLOGY

The research methodologies employed in this thesis include a comprehensive review of relevant literature and the following.

1. Qualitative Analysis

In preparation of taking over management of the STTAC, the CHP conducted surveys of local law enforcement agencies and the RTTACs. Using a qualitative analysis, this research methodology codes and analyzes data collected and made available by the CHP, as it relates to the following three areas.

a. Survey of California Sheriffs and Police Chiefs

Qualitative analysis of data obtained by the CHP from independent surveys of California sheriffs and police chiefs is performed in an effort to evaluate the intelligence needs of local law enforcement agencies, assess whether or not those needs are presently being met under the state's current fusion center construct, and determine what modifications, if any, may be necessary for California's fusion centers to provide a higher level of service to one of their primary end-users—public safety/law enforcement.

b. Survey of California's RTTACs

Qualitative analysis of data acquired by the CHP from a survey of the four RTTAC commanders is done in an attempt to evaluate, among other things, their expectations of the STTAC as California's designated state center, their current needs from the STTAC, and what modifications, if any, may be necessary to enhance collaboration between the RTTACs and the STTAC, increase the value of services provided by the STTAC to the RTTAC, and better align California's state and regional fusion center operations.

2. Comparative Analysis

a. State Fusion Centers in Other States Having Multiple State Fusion Centers

A comparative analysis of data collected by the CHP from surveys of other state fusion centers in states having multiple centers is conducted to determine the most pervasive mission and structure, role of designated state fusion centers, and methods used to foster collaborative center-to-center operations.

b. Joint Intelligence Centers in the United Kingdom and Germany

A comparative analysis of intelligence centers in the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany is conducted in an effort to identify alternative methods to consider when evaluating the mission of the STTAC and to explore how California might integrate the experiences and/or best practices of other nations into a more efficient, collaborative, and successful statewide structure.

F. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Although the research methodology employed in this thesis examines the current intelligence requirements of California's local law enforcement agencies and regional fusion centers as primary customers of the STTAC, it does not evaluate or take into consideration the needs of other federal, state, local, and private sector stakeholders such as fire, public health, other first responders, or local businesses.

G. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

As highlighted in this introductory chapter, the primary focus of this thesis is to determine the appropriate role of the STTAC within California's STTAS and to examine methods to build a more synchronized and collaborative network of fusion centers in California.

Chapter II summarizes the current literature on fusion centers, including their definition, history, varied missions, capabilities, funding, and sustainability. While this literature highlights the federal government's desire to create a national network of fusion centers, it underscores the current lack of information surrounding states possessing multiple fusion centers, the interrelationships between state and local fusion centers, or methods for strengthening horizontal center-to-center collaboration among a distributed network of intrastate or interstate fusion centers.

Chapter III provides an overview of California's STTAS, which is comprised of the STTAC and RTTACs. This chapter offers a brief look at the intended purpose, structure, and governance of the STTAS. Additionally, it supplies an overview of the general roles and responsibilities of the STTAC and RTTACs.

Chapter IV summarizes surveys of California sheriffs and police chiefs as primary customers of intelligence and other information provided by California's fusion centers. In doing so, it examines their current interaction with fusion centers, threats impacting their communities, their stated intelligence requirements, and whether their current needs are being met by the types of intelligence and information they are currently receiving.

Chapter V contains the author's qualitative analysis of survey data captured from California's RTTACs, as members of the STTAS. This chapter examines the current mission of each RTTAC, who they consider to be their primary customers, what role they believe the STTAC should play within the STTAS, and how the STTAC's services could potentially afford greater value to the STTAS and their own operations.

Chapter VI examines state fusion centers in other states having multiple fusion centers and provides a comparison of the specific roles, missions, customers, and services of the state fusion centers in Florida and Ohio, in comparison with the STTAC. This chapter also reviews the structure of the

statewide fusion center systems in Florida and Ohio, including the relationships and operational dynamics between the state and regional fusion centers in each of those states.

Chapter VII includes the authors' comparative analysis of joint intelligence centers in the United Kingdom and Germany and explores how each center's mission, composition, governance, collaboration, information sharing, and funding might assist the STTAC and California's STTAS in developing a more efficient, collaborative, and synchronized statewide network.

Chapter VIII summarizes the author's research surrounding the role of collaboration in fusion center operations. In doing so, it highlights the importance of interpersonal relationships and trust in building effective fusion center partnerships and summarizes this research into building and strengthening collaboration among dispersed organizational networks, such as the STTAS. Finally, Chapter IX contains the author's summary and conclusions.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Shortly after 9/11, there was a call for greater collaboration and intelligence sharing among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to help prevent future terrorist attacks against this nation (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004, p. 328). This early literature recognized the potential value of state and local law enforcement agencies as a force multiplier to strengthen federal efforts to safeguard our communities. In searching for a means to enhance collaboration and more effectively "connect the dots," publications began discussing the possible benefits of creating multijurisdictional intelligence fusion centers as a new information-sharing paradigm between federal, state, and local agencies.

While the early post-9/11 literature centered largely on fusion centers for the expressed purpose of counterterrorism, natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005, broadened the literary discussion of fusion center roles and missions to include other criminal threats and hazards facing this nation. This post-Katrina period of literature also examined the benefits of incorporating other non-law enforcement stakeholders, such as public health and private sector organizations into the fusion center process.

As the number of state and local fusion centers has grown, so too has the amount of literature offering suggested guidelines, recommendations, and best practices for fusion centers to consider. These publications have highlighted the need for establishing baseline capabilities among state and local fusion centers. They have also called for the creation of a national network of interconnected fusion centers across the country; however, very little research exists on existing "center-to-center" relationships among multiple fusion centers operating in the same state or methods for enhancing intra- or inter-state collaboration to help create the desired end state—an integrated system.

In addition to the themes already discussed, a growing volume of literature highlights public concerns over of the protection of civil liberties and the need for fusion centers to establish well-defined privacy policies that ensure full compliance with the U.S. Constitution and other federal and state regulations surrounding the lawful collection, use, and safekeeping of criminal intelligence. As federal, state, and local jurisdictions also face unprecedented economic shortfalls, some of the most recent literature on fusion centers questions the long-term implications a declining economy may pose to future funding and sustainability. While the nation's economic future is still unclear, additional research into viable funding and sustainability options for fusion centers appears warranted.

This literature review highlights a broad range of sources that have delved into various aspects of fusion centers since 9/11, including federal publications, investigative reports, congressional research and testimony, professional associations, policy institutes, journals, and periodicals. In doing so, the following topical areas are explored: (1) material regarding the development and definition of state and local intelligence fusion centers; (2) national strategies and guidance documents discussing the strategic role fusion centers can play in mitigating threats by employing a counterterrorism, "all crimes," or "all hazards" mission; (3) national and academic journals discussing future funding and sustainability factors impacting a large percentage of fusion centers across the nation; and (4) literature underscoring the role of collaboration in fusion center operations and among fusion center participants.

B. FUSION CENTERS—DEFINITION AND HISTORY

Fusion centers are defined as a "collaborative effort of two or more agencies that provide resources, expertise, and information…with the goal of maximizing their ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity" (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 47). This definition appears widely accepted, as it is cited by

numerous federal publications (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, p. 1) and is contained in the *Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007* (Public Law 110-53, § 511, 121 Stat. 266, 322, 2007).

The impetus for developing state and local fusion centers began shortly after 9/11. This effort kicked-off slowly in a handful of states, resulting in the creation of nine fusion centers within the first two years after 9/11 (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, p. 6), one of which was the former California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC). As publications began discussing the development of state fusion centers and the possible benefits this new counterterrorism tool may offer, other states quickly sought to establish fusion centers of their own. In fact, annual surveys of state homeland security directors ranked the establishment of a state fusion center among each state's top five priorities for several years straight (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2007) and that trend has continued in the most recent survey conducted in 2008 (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2009). The explosive growth of fusion centers over the subsequent two-and-a-half year period—January 2004 through mid-2007—is chronicled in a federal report highlighting the additional 34 fusion centers established during that time period (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, p. 6). While the total number of state and major urban area fusion centers nationwide grew to 58 in 2007 (President of the United States, 2007, p. 8) and remained unchanged through April 2008 (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 5), by April 2009 the total number of centers rose sharply to 70 (Riegle, 2009). Of those 70 centers, 50 are designated state fusion centers and 20 are regional or local centers located in major urban areas across the nation (U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009). Recently, two more local fusion centers were added to those previously recognized by DHS, bringing the actual total to 72 (Department of Homeland Security, 2009). Remarkably, almost half of the fusion centers in existence today have been created since 2006 (Riegle, 2009).

C. FUSION CENTER GUIDELINES AND BASELINE CAPABILITIES

As states began "standing up" fusions center in the aftermath of 9/11, they initially did so without the benefit of having recommended standards or guidelines from which to draw upon (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 1). This gap in fusion center guidance existed in large part through the end of 2005, and the lack of common standards resulted in many first generation fusion centers becoming information "silos," as they experienced significant communication and interoperability hurdles that made information sharing inefficient (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 1). As these early centers attempted to navigate their way through unchartered territory, DOJ and DHS formed a series of focus groups in hopes of developing recommended guidelines and procedures to assist current and prospective fusion centers in their ability to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence information more effectively (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 2). The result of their combined efforts was the creation of *Fusion Center Guidelines* in 2006, which encouraged leaders to adopt 18 recommended "guidelines" intended to promote the seamless integration and management of state and local fusion centers (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, pp. iii–7). Among other things, these guidelines recommended that fusion centers collaboratively develop their mission and goals, establish a governance structure and MOUs, create a collaborative sharing environment, adopt formal privacy and security agreements, establish common information sharing and communication protocols, and develop a process by which to measure their performance (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, pp. 5–7).

In September 2008, a supplement to the *Fusion Center Guidelines*, entitled *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers*, hereafter referred to as *Baseline Capabilities*, was produced in hopes of advancing minimum "baseline" performance standards for all fusion centers to attain (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008,

pp. 1–3). In a survey of state homeland security directors conducted in 2008, almost 80 percent of those surveyed claimed their fusion centers complied with the recommended baseline capabilities (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2009, pp. 6–7). While self-reported, that seemingly high level of compliance has not been independently verified. DHS has estimated it could take up to five years for every fusion center to attain all of the baseline capabilities either directly or by leveraging the capabilities of another center or organization in their jurisdiction (Riegle, 2009).

In addition to addressing process-related capabilities, *Baseline Capabilities* also promotes baseline administrative capabilities designed to ensure the proper management and oversight of state and local fusion centers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 9). In terms of process-related competencies, the report provides recommended standards in the areas of planning, information collection, information processing, analysis, dissemination, and reevaluation—all parts of the intelligence process (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 9). The very first capability discussed under the category of planning involves the need for states to establish effective intrastate coordination among state and local fusion centers and to identify each center's roles and responsibilities as part of a statewide effort (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12). Additionally, these planning guidelines recommend centers identify and prioritize local risks and information requirements, on both a statewide and regional basis, to align fusion center efforts properly (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 12–13). To help maintain that alignment, centers are encouraged to solicit recurring stakeholder feedback as part of the reevaluation process and to incorporate that feedback into their operations, while also reevaluating risks, needs, and strategies on a routine basis (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 21).

In deference to administrative functions, *Baseline Capabilities* offers guidance regarding fusion center management and governance, privacy protection, information security, personnel and training, technology, and funding (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 9). In doing so, these tenets advocate that centers adopt a governance structure inclusive of disciplines and jurisdictions from within the centers' areas of responsibility, including state and local law enforcement and other public safety entities (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 23). Additionally, this doctrine recommends the governance body include representation from other fusion centers in the state to foster greater collaboration and further clarify the roles of each center as part of a statewide system (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 24). Governance bodies are also encouraged to consider adopting an all crimes and/or all hazards mission and to establish stakeholder inclusive processes to help achieve a collaborative environment—both of which are discussed in further detail later in this literature review (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 23–25).

Since its release in 2008, *Baseline Capabilities* has, in essence, become the pseudo "bible" for fusion center management, as evidenced by the theme of the 2009 National Fusion Center Conference; appropriately called "Achieving Baseline Capabilities" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2009). For FY2010, federal homeland security grant funding awarded to state and local fusion centers must support the "development of a statewide fusion process" and comply with *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2009, p. 90). To help ensure compliance, some organizations have called for the creation of a formal certification process to verify fusion center attainment of *Baseline Capabilities* (CNA Analysis & Solutions, undated).

D. MISSION–COUNTERTERRORISM, ALL CRIMES, OR ALL HAZARDS?

Since the risks and challenges facing states and communities nationwide are often unique, so too are the 72 fusion centers currently operating in the United States. Each center has a specific mission and design tailored to the specific needs of the jurisdictions it serves (Allen, 2006, pp. 3–4). While some fusion centers subscribe to a purely counterterrorism focus, others have elected to broaden their scope of operations to what is commonly referred to as an "all crimes" or "all hazards" mission. Practically speaking, the term "all crimes" generally refers to terrorism and other high-risk criminal offenses, including potential precursor crimes with a plausible nexus to terrorism or some other criminal enterprise. It is not an indication that the center is to attend to every conceivable criminal act, including minor offenses (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 43). The term "all hazards," on the other hand, most often refers to fusion centers that have prioritized certain disasters or emergencies likely to occur within their respective jurisdiction, beyond that of terrorism or serious crime, and includes the analysis and distribution of information relative to such incidents as a part of their overall mission (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 43). Once again, the term "all hazards" is not an indication that the center supports every type of disaster, especially if such risks are of low probability for the involved jurisdiction (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008).

Although the majority of post-9/11 fusion centers began with a counterterrorism mission, most have expanded that mission within the past two years to include all crimes or all hazards (Rollins, 2008, p. 21). The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) supports this migration towards an all crimes approach, given the fact that since 9/11, over eight million Americans have been victims of violent crime and more than 99,000 have been murdered

(International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2008, pp. 3, 5). These dramatic statistics underscore the seriousness of violent crime and the impact it has on the safety of U.S. communities.

In recent years, a growing number of federal guidance documents have also encouraged fusion centers to adopt an all crimes or all hazards mission (U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 4). In addition to addressing a broader range of threats—including terrorism—research suggests that adopting an all crimes format may also increase support from law enforcement agencies and the public (Rollins, 2008, p. 87). That assertion is supported by a report written by the Major Cities Police Chiefs Association encouraging the development of all crimes fusion centers (Major Cities Chiefs Association, Homeland Security Committee, 2008, p. 4), as well as comments made by former Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton while addressing the National Fusion Center Conference in 2008, supporting an all crimes approach (Bratton, 2008). Finally, recommendations stemming from the 2007 National Intelligence Sharing Summit also advocate all crimes fusion centers as the most appropriate model (U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 4).

As mentioned previously, an all hazards mission includes active preparation for certain potential disasters in addition to terrorism and crime (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 24–25) and enables agencies to share intelligence regarding natural and manmade disasters (Harris, 2008). Fusion centers adopting an all hazards format are often more likely to include additional non-law enforcement personnel, such as fire, public health, and other first responders (Rollins, 2008, p. 32). Over 40 percent of fusion centers nationwide commonly refer to themselves as all hazards centers and a similar percentage consider themselves all crimes (Rollins, 2008, p. 22).

As discussed earlier in this literature review, *Baseline Capabilities* calls for each fusion center to decide whether to adopt an all crimes and/or all hazards format (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 7). Fusion centers electing not to implement an all crimes or all hazards

model must provide their written justification for doing so as part of an annual assessment (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 7). While the majority of fusion centers nationwide call themselves all crimes or all hazards centers, which a mounting volume of literature has encouraged as a more sustainable model (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, p. 3), almost 15 percent of the centers in existence today continue to focus on counterterrorism alone (Rollins, 2008, p. 21).

E. THE MIGRATION TOWARD MULTIPLE FUSION CENTERS

Over the past few years, numerous states have established multiple fusion centers, including California (Rollins, 2008, p. 20). California is currently one of 10 states to operate multiple fusion centers, and it currently has more DHS recognized centers than any other state (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009). In 2008, governors were asked to designate one fusion center in each state to serve as the primary federal point of contact due to the growing number of states with more than one center (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 45). In California, that designated center is the STTAC.

Although the number of states with multiple fusion centers has increased, very little has been written regarding the roles, missions, working relationships, or operational structures that currently exist between state and regional centers. Some have argued this lack of research stems from the short tenure of multiple fusion centers, and the fact these relationships have not been thoroughly assessed (Rollins, 2008, p. 21). The limited literature regarding this topic has highlighted that while some state and regional fusion centers work well together, others at times, appear to compete with one another (Rollins, 2008, pp. 20–21).

As articulated earlier in this review, *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities* do highlight the importance for states to identify and structure the intrastate coordination of state and local fusion centers and to determine their roles and responsibilities (U.S. Department of Homeland

Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12). They also call for adopting a governance structure inclusive of representatives from other centers to help further clarify state and regional tasks (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 24). While these publications offer theoretical guidance of the importance of defining state and local missions, very little research has been done on the practical application of these tenets between multiple centers whose missions, participants, and self interests may be entirely different or whose operations are not in close proximity to one another.

In a survey conducted by the National Governors Association in 2008, state homeland security directors from across the nation listed "coordinating state and local efforts," including the advancement of interagency synchronization, as the number one homeland security-related priority for their states (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2009, p. 4). While not directly mentioned in the context of that finding, enhancing state and local fusion center operations appears consistent with that stated priority.

More research is needed in this area, as the principles for building effective working relationships between state and local fusion centers are essential for effective information sharing and may also extend to the establishment of a nationwide network of fusion centers to enhance information sharing; a stated objective of the *National Strategy for Information Sharing* (President of the United States, 2007, p. 11). Such research may help states with multiple fusion centers—such as California—identify smart practices for enhancing stakeholder relationships, fostering effective multi-layered integration, and instilling greater synergy.

F. FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Given this country's unprecedented economic downturn, it is not surprising to find that a growing segment of recent literature surrounding fusion centers has discussed funding and sustainability concerns. In its examination of 58 fusion centers, the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that 54 of the 58

centers reported experiencing funding challenges and concerns (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, p. 2). The DHS Office of Inspector General notes that funding gaps remain a major concern as state and local officials examine ways to sustain fusion center operations (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 27). In fact, nearly two-thirds of state homeland security directors surveyed in 2007 indicated that their state would be unable to continue fusion center operations without ongoing federal funding (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2007, p. 1). In addition, only one-quarter of those surveyed in 2008 believed they could supplant fusion center funding were federal support reduced or eliminated (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2009, p. 6). The potential implications of insufficient funding are perhaps no more clearly illustrated than by the Web site of the East Bay Terrorism Early Warning Group (EBTEWG), located within the San Francisco Bay Area, which states, “due to funding cuts, effective December 31, 2008, the East Bay Terrorism Early Warning Group has ceased to exist” (East Bay Terrorism Early Warning Group, 2008).

Former DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff indicated in 2007 that grant funding for fusion centers was intended to increase baseline capabilities and not to fund their sustainment (Rollins, 2008, p. 44). With that said, the Homeland Security Advisory Council has recommended that DHS continue to provide funding and personnel support to fusion centers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Advisory Council, 2008, p. 8). The current level of federal funding support to state and local fusion centers ranges between zero and 100 percent, with the average center deriving approximately 31 percent of its current funding from federal grant funds (Rollins, 2008, p. 34). Between fiscal years (FY) 2004 and 2007, DHS provided more than $254 million to support state and local fusion centers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 7), and that number has reached in excess of $327

million from FY2004 through FY2008 (Bain, 2009). While many centers are dependent on this funding, others fear that continued federal support will result in federal mandates; thereby, restricting local control (Rollins, 2008, p. 32).

The literature highlighted thus far has focused on funding and sustainability as it relates to sufficient financial support. Publications have also outlined DHS's efforts to sustain fusion centers through the addition of DHS funded intelligence personnel, and a segment of research has also explored sustainability from the context of ongoing political, professional, and community support in the form of staffing, facilities, and other essential resources. In regards to DHS personnel support, Congress has allocated $10 million annually through 2012 for the expressed purpose of funding DHS intelligence officer positions to help support fusion center operations (Public Law 110-53, § 511, 121 Stat. 266, 322, 2007). DHS currently has 36 intelligence specialists working in fusion centers throughout the U.S. (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2009) and hopes to have a representative assigned to all 72 designated centers by the end of FY2010 (Information Sharing Environment, 2009, p. 21).

As previously discussed in the context of each fusion center's mission, research suggests that "all crimes" fusion centers are more inclined to receive greater support from law enforcement agencies. Additionally, those centers electing to adopt an "all hazards" model may be more successful in obtaining staff participation and support from other non-law enforcement agencies, such as public health and fire departments. Although this may imply that such efforts by their very design may help to provide these centers greater support, very little direct research appears to address what proactive steps fusion centers can take to strengthen their sustainability and make themselves more valuable to the federal, state, and local agencies they support and the communities they serve.

The majority of literature couches the sustainability of fusion centers largely from the standpoint of physical, "co-located" facilities. Co-located fusion centers may be more desirable, as they provide direct physical access to participating agencies, fosters greater communication, and can increase the

efficiency of intelligence and information sharing (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 47). Very little research, however, appears to have been done on the feasibility of "virtual" fusion centers in which staff may physically reside within their respective agencies, but still have connectivity between each other to facilitate information sharing. One recent report does highlight the possible benefits of establishing "virtual fusion centers" that can be accessed by law enforcement officers via the Web (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 19). While this research is offered as a technological improvement to help expand law enforcement's access to information rather than supplant existing fusion centers, further research in this area may provide valuable alternatives for centers facing staffing shortages, inadequate facilities, or possible elimination due to funding and/or staffing constraints.

G. FUSION CENTER COLLABORATION

Fusion Center Guidelines asserts that collaboration is a vital tool in establishing trusted partnerships and maximizing efficiencies within and among state and local fusion centers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 12). To be truly effective, fusion centers must "pull together" collectively toward a common purpose (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 12). In fact, *Fusion Center Guidelines* maintains, "fusion centers embody the core of collaboration" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 12).

One of the principles of successful fusion center collaboration is to provide added value to the customer, participants, and other community stakeholders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 30). To do so, fusion centers must first develop an environment among participants in which trust is present in large measure (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29). Building trust often

begins with the development of effective interpersonal relationships (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29) that stem from individuals or agencies having the opportunity to work together side-by-side in a collocated facility towards a common goal or mission (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2005, p. 9).

In an environment of increasing demand and diminishing resources, fusion centers are intended to serve as the center of collaboration through the sharing of resources and the creation of trusted interpersonal relationships (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 4). Some research suggests that collaboration, relationships, and linkages between fusion centers are stronger among centers that are closely located or have similar capabilities, as these centers tend to communicate with each other more often (Rollins, 2008, p. 76). The challenge becomes how to build similar trust and interpersonal relationships among centers and their respective staffs that are not co-located and, in actuality, may be hundreds of miles apart. The current body of knowledge on fusion centers fails to offer pragmatic solutions for creating trust, interpersonal relationships, and collaboration among separated fusion center personnel and facilities.

The benefits of diverse multidisciplinary and multiagency participation in promoting stronger interpersonal relationships and collaboration within fusion centers are illustrated by the findings of a 2008 report by the DHS Office of Inspector General, which examined the impact of placing DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) officers within state and local fusion centers. The independent review found the majority of centers with DHS I&A officers assigned reported experiencing major improvements in their interaction, relationship, and collaboration with DHS (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 37). Conversely, centers that did not have an assigned I&A officer reported having greater difficulties in their relationship and interaction with DHS (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, pp. 37–38). Furthermore, the physical presence of I&A

staff in state and local fusion centers was credited with helping to synchronize the flow of information and more effectively coordinate efforts between DHS and those fusion centers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 37). These findings are supported by independent research that also concluded a collocation of agencies tends to improve the relationship and collaboration between agencies (Rollins, 2008, p. 36).

In the context of creating collaborative partnerships, one report offering recommendations to Congress acknowledges that in some instances the relationships between federal, state, and regional partnerships are not as robust as they are publicly portrayed (Rollins, 2008, p. 82). Also, a tendency still exists for some centers and agencies to view others as “customers,” as opposed to fully integrated and collaborative “partners” (Rollins, 2008, p. 82). Recently, DHS Secretary Napolitano announced the creation of a Joint Fusion Center Program Management Office within DHS intended to strengthen fusion center capabilities, foster a greater sense of common purpose, and increase peer-to-peer relationships, which she describes as “the cornerstones of active and vibrant thinking, analysis, and information exchange” (Napolitano, 2009).

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III. CALIFORNIA'S STATE TERRORISM THREAT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A. INTRODUCTION

While briefly introduced to California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment System (STTAS) in Chapter I of this thesis, this chapter provides a more detailed look at the overall purpose, structure, governance of the STTAS, in addition to a general overview of the individual roles and responsibilities of its participants. Having an informed understanding of the current STTAS structure offers a foundation for future chapters when reviewing what the appropriate mission for the California's state fusion center should be and exploring methods for strengthening stakeholder relationships and collaboration within the STTAS to improve California's network of state and regional fusion centers.

B. OVERVIEW

California's STTAS is intended to safeguard the state from terrorist and other criminal threats by collaboratively analyzing and sharing information among various partners, through a unified system (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 13). As mentioned earlier, the STTAS is comprised of the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC), California's designated state fusion center, and four Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers (RTTACs) located in Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. While the four regional centers are generically referred to as RTTACs within the STTAS, at least three of the four centers have adopted alternative names within their respective regions. For example, the Sacramento RTTAC is referred to as the Central California Intelligence Center (CCIC), the San Francisco RTTAC operates as the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC), and the Los Angeles RTTAC is more commonly known as the Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Center (LA JRIC).

The STTAC and four RTTACs are independently operated, each having its own governance and management structure. The four RTTACs' respective areas of responsibility are geographically aligned with the boundaries of the four current FBI regions within California, (see Figure 1). Collectively, the STTAC and RTTACs are intended to serve as part of a "unified" system with "defined roles" and a "team approach," according to the *State of California Homeland Security Strategy* (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 13)

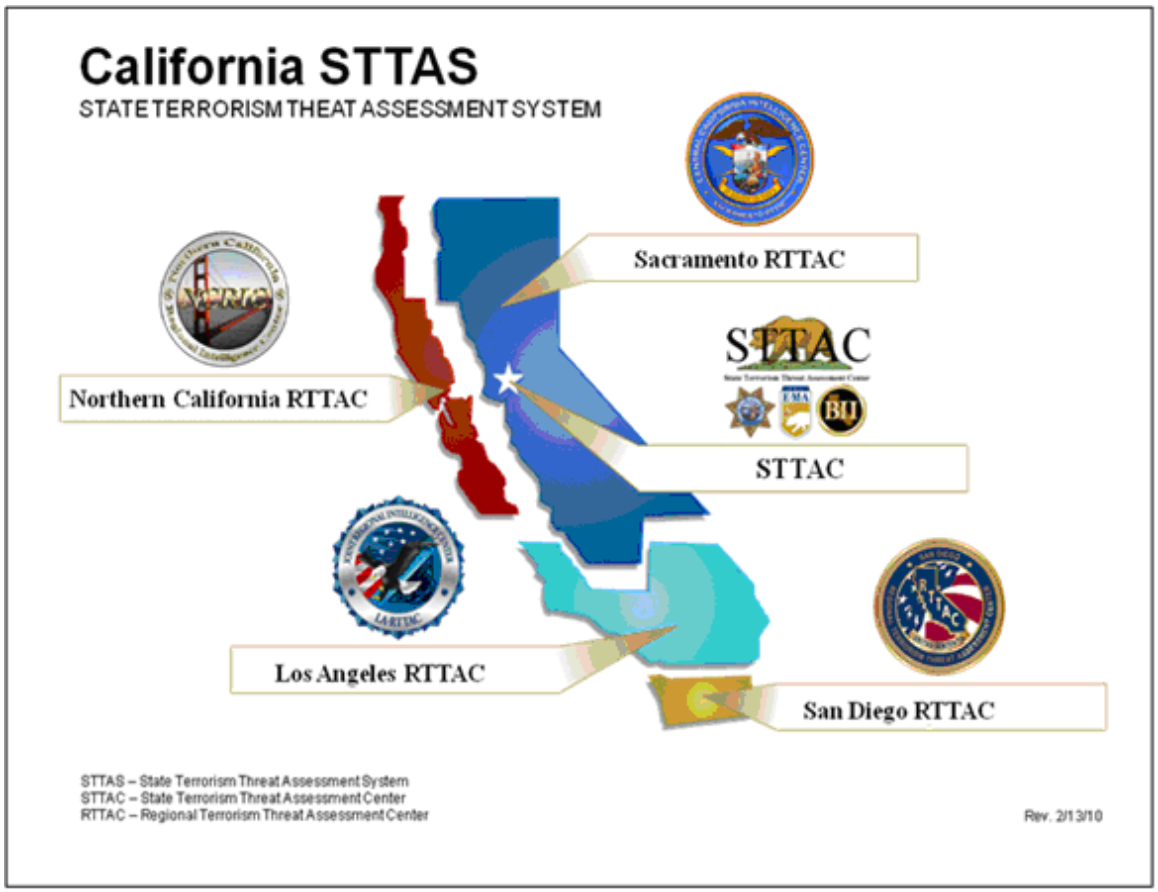


Figure 1. Map of California's RTTACs (From: Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Center)

Presently, the STTAS lacks any legislative charter or legal mandate and, as such, can perhaps best be described as a voluntary relationship in which all five centers have entered into a mutual agreement to work jointly together as part

of a statewide effort or system. In doing so, each center is an equal and "horizontal" partner within the STTAS, as there is no hierarchical structure or empowered authority in charge of the overall system.

C. STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN/CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The current *Strategy Business Plan or Concept of Operations* (CONOPS) for the STTAS serves as the principal document for outlining the mutually agreed upon roles and responsibilities of the STTAS and its members. The CONOPS, as stated in its preface, is intended to be a "living" document reviewed annually by each of the participants to determine if any changes or modifications are warranted (Unknown, 2008). While calling for an annual review, the STTAS CONOPS does not specify a formal process by which such a review is to take place, identify how participants can petition for a requested modification, or outline the process on how requested changes are to be evaluated or decided. With the most recent version of the CONOPS being adopted in 2008, the commanders of the STTAC and RTTACs have each requested that the STTAS CONOPS be revisited, modified, and updated (STTAC and RTTAC commanders, personal communication, 2009). In fact, recent efforts have been made to schedule a meeting between the STTAC, RTTACs, Cal EMA, DHS, FBI, and other critical stakeholders for that precise purpose (STTAS executives, personal communication, 2010).

D. GOVERNANCE

As articulate in the STTAS CONOPS, no governing board or command structure currently oversees the STTAS. In fact, the CONOPS acknowledges that the effectiveness and cohesiveness of the STTAS alliance is "wholly dependent on" the cooperation and collaboration demonstrated by its participants (Unknown, 2008). Were collaboration and cooperation to remain universally high among all participants, some might argue that the current structure is sufficient. However, should collaboration or cooperation diminish or vary, agency by agency, or

should disputes arise among one or more of the participants, the lack of a formal governance process may make resolution of those differences difficult, if not impossible, absent some formal method of redress.

Fusion Center Guidelines and *Baseline Capabilities* advocate that fusion centers establish a formal governance structure that includes appropriate representation by each of the participants; representatives from other fusion centers operating within the state (if applicable); and representatives of federal agencies in at least an advisory capacity (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 23–24). Additionally, establishing bylaws, feedback mechanisms, and formal procedures are also recommended (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 24). While the STTAC and RTTACs have formally established governance structures on an individual basis for their respective fusion center operations, the STTAS as a consortium of centers, presently lacks such a formal governance structure.

E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The *State of California Homeland Security Strategy* and the STTAS CONOPS provide a brief description of the various roles and responsibilities of the STTAC and RTTAC as part of the STTAS. The author's intent in this section is to provide the reader with a general understanding of the common roles and responsibilities of members within the STTAS as articulated in various state plans. It is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of individual tasks, nor an assessment of whether or not all of the stated functions are being currently or adequately performed. They are merely offered as a "snapshot" of what current planning documents indicate regarding the STTAS, some of which may be dated. Any observed inconsistencies between the stated and actual functions of the STTAC and/or RTTACs related to this thesis is discussed in subsequent chapters, as appropriate.

1. STTAC

As enumerated in California's *Homeland Security Strategy*, the STTAC is intended to perform, among other things, the following roles and responsibilities (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 15).

- Serve as California's primary point of contact with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the National Operations Center (NOC), and the DHS Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) Unit
- Provide "statewide analysis products, pattern-analysis products, geographic report linkages, state intelligence products, and regional investigative support throughout California"
- Offer "comprehensive and dynamic statewide threat assessment capabilities;" to assist the governor and others with needed information to set appropriate policies and/or allocate necessary resources
- Monitor global and national events with a potential nexus to California and provide situation awareness for California's leadership
- Provide support to the RTTACs and other partners

Additionally, the STTAC is intended to provide senior state leaders with situational awareness on identified threats and help coordinate with various critical infrastructures throughout California (Bettenhausen, 2008).

2. RTTACs

A general description of the RTTACs' general roles and responsibilities is also outlined in California's *Homeland Security Strategy*. That *Strategy* was authored by the governor's former Office of Homeland Security (OHS), which was recently reorganized within California's Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA). For purposes of this general overview, it is important to note that the general RTTAC duties outlined below are as stated in California's *Homeland Security Strategy* and, as such, they may or may not reflect each RTTAC's own understanding of its respective roles and responsibilities. As reflected in the *Strategy* prepared by OHS in 2008, the RTTACs perform the following functions and responsibilities (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 15).

- Develop regional threat assessments
- Provide analytical capabilities/functions
- Serve as the regional terrorism liaison officer (TLO) coordinators
- Interact with other stakeholders to "share information, reports, and other threat and warning products"
- Provide support to regional critical infrastructure and key resource (CI/KR) programs

F. CHAPTER SUMMARY

As highlighted in this chapter, California's STTAS is a voluntary versus a statutorily mandated system intended to create and maintain a collaborative network of state and regional fusion centers, in addition to other partners, to help protect California and its citizens from acts of terrorism and other threats. By its own admission, the current CONOPS and the entire STTAS structure is dependent upon the cooperation and collaboration of its participants, as the STTAC and four RTTACs are each autonomous and are equal partners in this endeavor. Unlike a hierarchical structure in which a specific individual or entity is in charge, the horizontal and independent nature of the business relationships among the STTAS participants appear fundamentally dependent upon a sustained willingness by each of the involved parties to collaborate effectively towards a common objective. Absent a desire and willingness to do so, it would appear that the STTAS would be little more than an acknowledgement of California having five independent fusion centers, each serving its own constituency. The apparent lack of a formal governance structure or mechanism through which operational differences, suggestions, or requested modifications can be formally considered, places an even greater burden on the individual participants to somehow "work out" their challenges informally amongst themselves. Given the important role collaboration plays in sustaining this system, future chapters explore the impact of collaboration in greater detail, as well as methods to increase horizontal collaboration and stakeholder relationships among the participants within the STTAS.

IV. ANALYSIS OF SURVEY DATA FROM FUSION CENTER CUSTOMERS: CALIFORNIA SHERIFFS AND POLICE CHIEFS

***Quality** in a service or product is not what you put into it.*
It is what the client or customer gets out of it.

Peter Drucker

Fusion Center Guidelines and *Baseline Capabilities* both emphasize the importance of fusion centers identifying the needs of their customers and developing intelligence services and products to address those needs (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 5, 7). As the CHP prepared to assume management of the STTAC in late 2009, the department conducted a survey of California's sheriffs and police chiefs—two of the primary customers of state and regional fusion centers. The survey was intended to evaluate the intelligence requirements of local law enforcement agencies in California, whether those needs were presently being supported by the STTAC and, in the end, improve STTAC services and operations. This chapter analyzes the results of the CHP's survey, and the author wants to acknowledge the CHP for making their survey data available for the expressed purpose of conducting this qualitative analysis.

The CHP disseminated the survey to all 58 county sheriffs and to 336 police chiefs across California with the assistance of the California State Sheriffs Association (CSSA) and California Police Chiefs Association (CPCA). In examining the data acquired by the CHP, a total of 29 survey responses were received from sheriffs and 88 from police chiefs, representing a 50 percent and 26 percent participation rate, respectively. The CHP captured no discerning information regarding the identities of the respondents or their respective agencies, in an effort to avoid attribution. Only a generic quantifier was utilized, which identified respondents as either sheriffs or police chiefs.

In coding and analyzing the raw data, the author identified several themes regarding the general categories of the information being assessed through the CHP's survey questions. The following themes or categories identified in the questions and responses, which are used for purposes of this qualitative analysis, are summarized as follows: (a) baseline assessment of fusion center access and value; (b) assessing contemporary threats and intelligence needs; (c) evaluating needs versus deliverables; (d) preferred mission for the STTAC and preferred frequency of products to support local law enforcement; and (e) future support and sustainability. Appendix A contains a complete record of the survey questions.

A. BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF FUSION CENTER ACCESS AND VALUE

- *Question: Does your agency receive terrorism related information or intelligence from your regional or local intelligence fusion center on an ongoing basis?*

More than three-quarters of the sheriffs and police chiefs who responded to the CHP's survey revealed that their agencies do receive terrorism-related threat information and intelligence from their local RTTACs on a recurring basis (see Figure 2). The data suggests the RTTACs have been effective in establishing a large customer base among local law enforcement agencies and that access to fusion center products by those agencies appears fairly widespread.

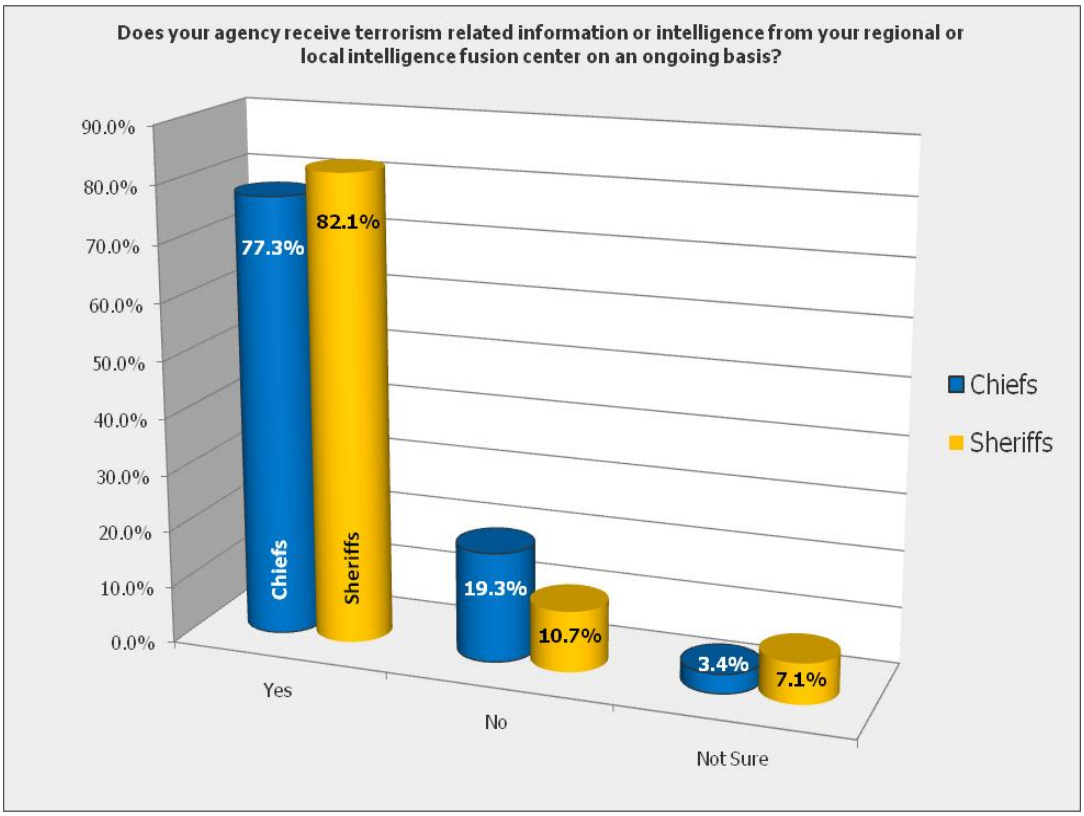


Figure 2. Percentage of Agencies Receiving Intelligence

- *Question: To the best of your knowledge has your agency ever interacted with or received intelligence information from California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC)?*

When questioned by the CHP regarding their relationship with the STTAC, a lower percentage of sheriffs and police chiefs reported having agency interaction with or receiving intelligence information from the STTAC (see Figure 3). This finding was not entirely unexpected given the current fusion center construct in California, in which primary contact with sheriffs and police departments is largely a function of the RTTACs. While slightly more than 50 percent of police chiefs and almost three-quarters of the sheriffs reported having had at least some interaction with the STTAC, the data suggests that more outreach by the STTAC may be warranted.

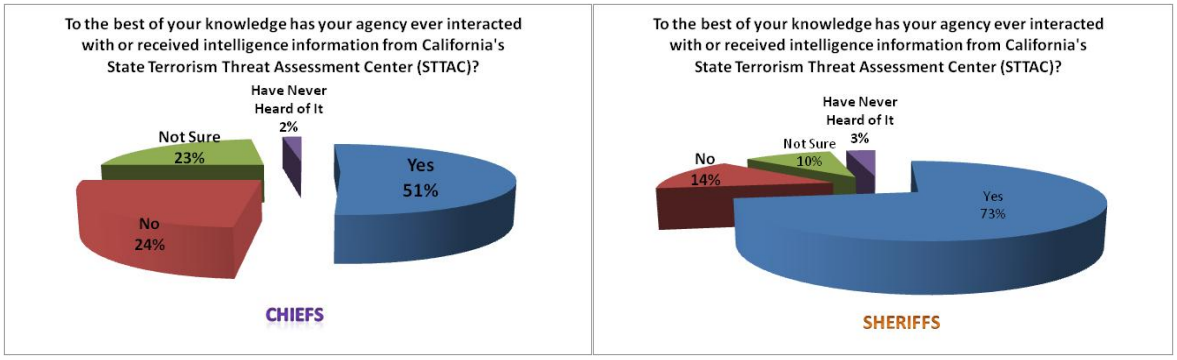


Figure 3. Percentage of Agencies Interacting with the STTAC

- *Question: If your agency currently receives terrorism information or intelligence from your fusion center, generally speaking, how useful has that information been to your department?*

In assessing the value of intelligence and information currently being provided by fusion centers to local law enforcement agencies, over 90 percent of sheriffs and almost 85 percent of police chiefs rated the information as being "somewhat useful" or "useful" to their respective agencies (see Figure 4). The data from the CHP survey suggests that the RTTACs are routinely providing their law enforcement customer base with information that the sheriffs and police departments consider valuable or useful to their operations. The fact that roughly half of the respondents categorized the information as "somewhat useful" suggests that local law enforcement agencies may be desirous of additional information, intelligence, or other factors to increase the usefulness of products they receive. Independent surveys by the RTTACs and STTAC as part of an ongoing reevaluation process may offer further insight into what additional information, modifications, or features can enhance the value of their deliverables and result in a larger segment of their customers increasing their responses from "somewhat useful" to "useful" or "very useful" (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2005, p. 21). Soliciting comments and input from fusion center consumers is consistent with federal guidance suggesting that fusion centers implement an ongoing feedback process to assess the value of information being offered and to seek recommendations for improving center

deliverables (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 16). The author noted from the CHP's survey data that none of the sheriffs and only eight percent of the police chiefs categorized the information currently received from fusion centers as being "not useful." This low percentage is a strong indication that most law enforcement agencies are in fact benefiting from the information they receive.

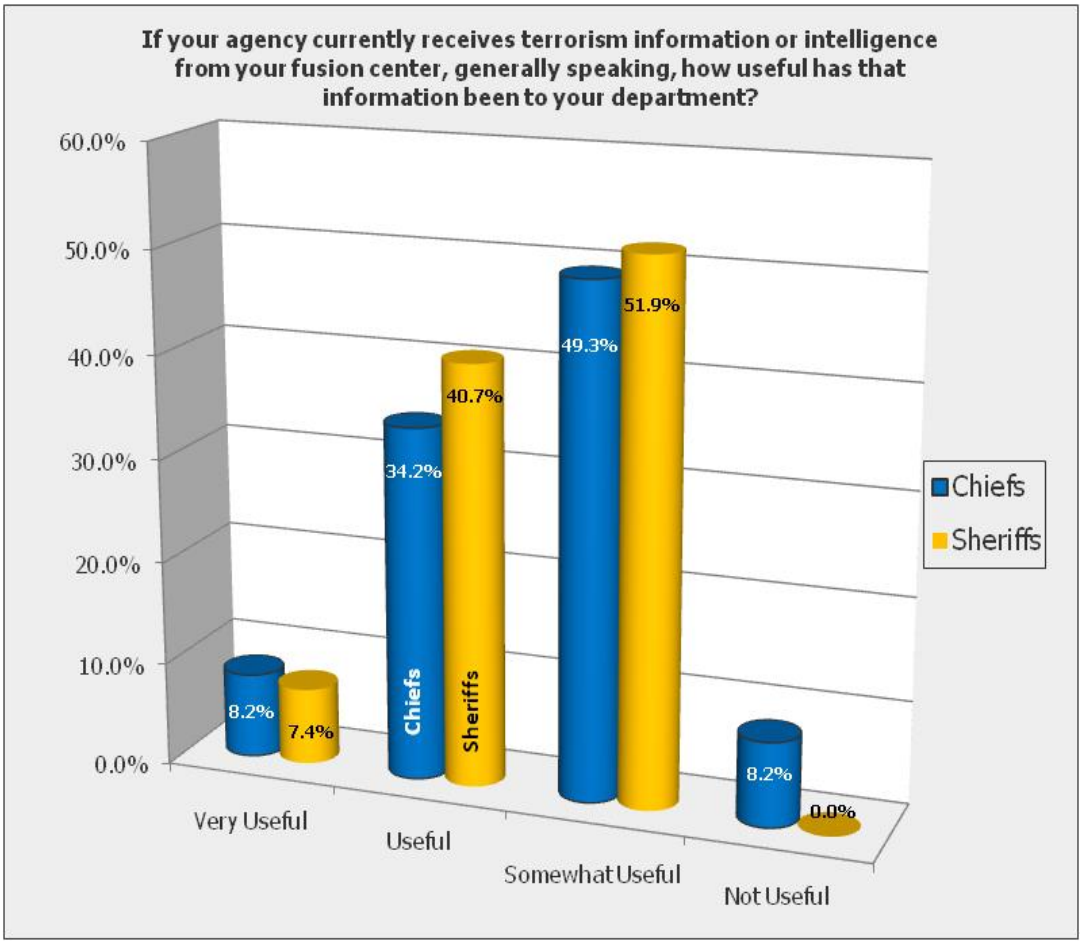


Figure 4. Usefulness of Intelligence and Information

When specifically asked by the CHP how fusion center information could be made more useful to their agencies, most referenced the need for more specific, detailed, and timely information instead of information that has already been reported on "CNN." The author noted several comments asserting that

information provided was often too general or readily available through the mainstream media and newspapers. Some of the respondents requested more regionally specific, direct, and actionable intelligence regarding threats with which local law enforcement should be concerned. While these comments offer insights into how the value of intelligence products can be further enhanced, full implementation of a reevaluation process for customers could glean additional insights.

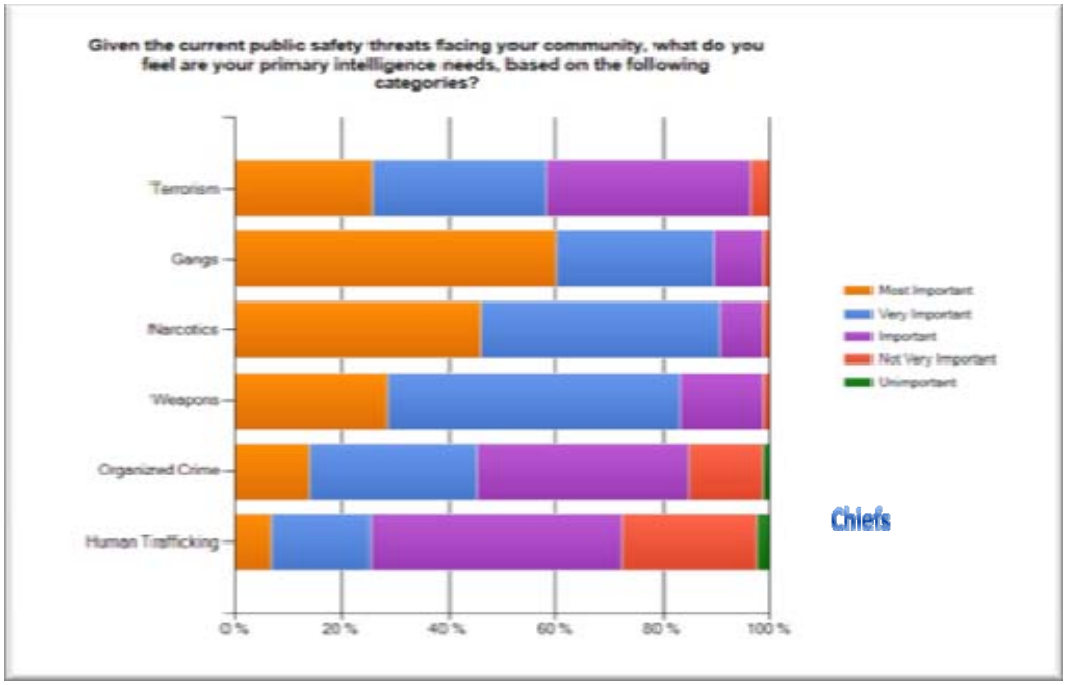
B. ASSESSING CONTEMPORARY THREATS AND INTELLIGENCE NEEDS

- *Question: Given the current public safety threats facing your community, what do you feel are your primary intelligence needs, based on the following categories? (See Appendix A for categories.)*

When surveyed by the CHP regarding the categories of crimes posing the most significant safety risks to their respective communities, and when questioned regarding their primary intelligence needs in relation to those threats, sheriffs and police chiefs both rated terrorism as "important," but revealed the "most important" threats facing their communities and their greatest intelligence needs involve gangs, narcotics, and weapons, in descending order (see Figure 5).

In analyzing the survey data obtained by the CHP, it appears the prioritized community threats and intelligence needs, as rated independently by sheriffs and police chiefs, support the need for the STTAC and RTTACs to evaluate whether an all crimes mission can provide added value to local law enforcement agencies in addressing their current threat picture.

With almost 50 percent of sheriffs and 60 percent of police chiefs identifying gangs as their single highest threat and intelligence need, the current "counterterrorism only" mission of the STTAC appears incapable of supporting, or at least it is not consistent with, local law enforcement's stated primary, secondary, or tertiary intelligence requirements—gangs, narcotics, and weapons.



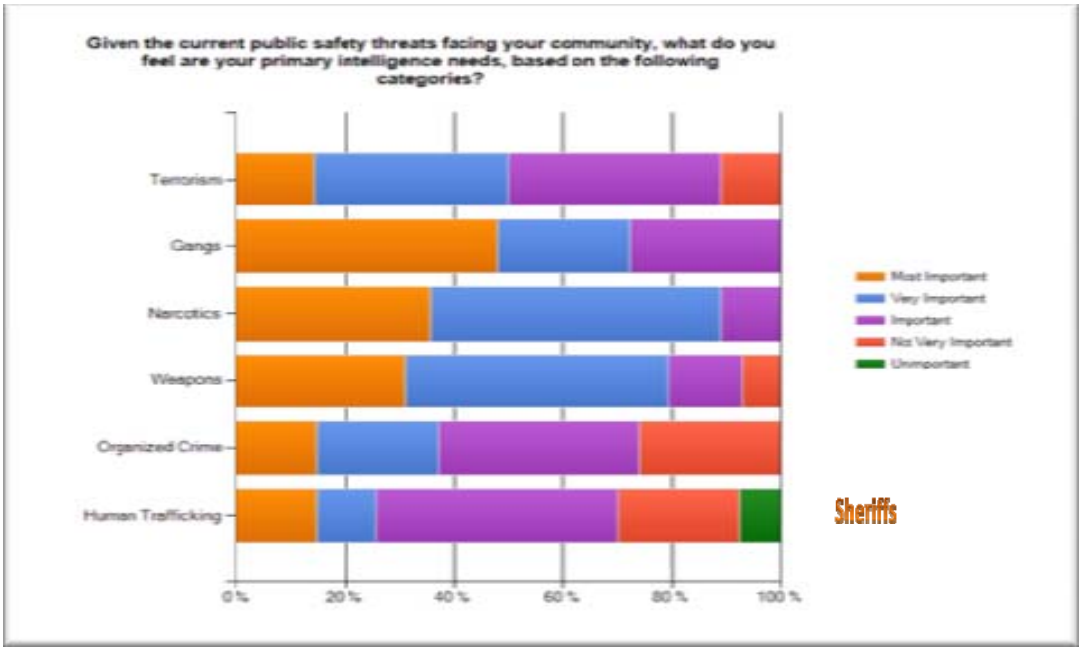


Figure 5. Primary Intelligence Needs of Chiefs and Sheriffs

In regards to gangs, federal guidelines for establishing gang intelligence units and task forces recommend developing collaborative relationships between state and local fusion centers to enhance intelligence sharing and support (U.S.

Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2008, p. 8). Additionally, in their review of fusion centers across the country, the General Accountability Office (GAO) noted several other state fusion centers are currently supporting gang-related intelligence needs, including North Carolina, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Texas (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, pp. 49, 74, 99, 100). *Baseline Capabilities* also suggests centers establish a reevaluation process that helps to identify new threats and incorporates feedback into their operations (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 21).

As a result of local law enforcement's prioritized threats and stated intelligence needs, current federal guidance surrounding the relationships between gang intelligence units and fusion centers, and the existence of other state fusion centers presently supporting gang-related intelligence, further evaluation of the STTAC's current mission appears warranted. This observation is discussed in greater detail later in this analysis under the category of Preferred Mission, Methods, and Frequency to Support Law Enforcement.

C. EVALUATING NEEDS VERSUS DELIVERABLES

- *Question: Based on your responses to [the previous question], are you satisfied that your current intelligence needs are being met to assist you in addressing the primary criminal threats facing your community?*

In evaluating whether or not the current intelligence needs of local law enforcement agencies are being met to help address the primary threats facing their communities, almost 40 percent of police chiefs and 55 percent of sheriffs reported to the CHP that fusion centers are satisfying their current intelligence needs (see Figure 6). Interestingly, almost 15 percent of police chiefs and 24 percent of sheriffs were reportedly "not sure" whether their current intelligence needs are being fulfilled, suggesting that an updated assessment of their intelligence requirements may be desirable.

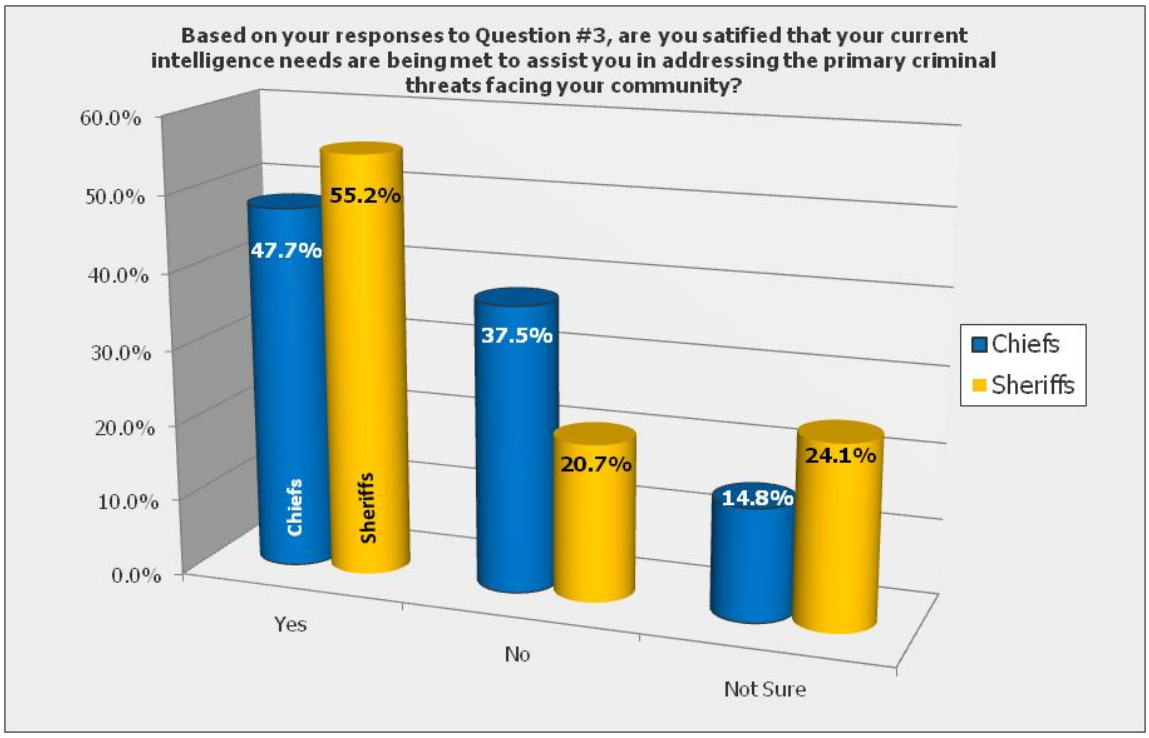


Figure 6. Percentage of Agencies with Intelligence Needs Met

Almost 38 percent of police chiefs and 21 percent of sheriffs suggested that their current intelligence needs are not being met in regards to principal criminal threats impacting their jurisdictions. When asked as part of the CHP's survey what additional support they would like to see from the STTAC and RTTACs to address those concerns, the top three responses were determined to be as follows (based on my qualitative analysis of the CHP's data): (a) the desire for more information and enhanced information sharing, (b) the need for greater communication, and (c) the request for additional intelligence support regarding gangs and to a lesser extent other criminal enterprises. At least two of the respondents acknowledged that their own agencies needed to show more initiative and be more engaged with their local fusion center. One chief expressed a desire to see more of a "tactical, operational, and strategic scope" for the types of information being provided by fusion centers and another chief called for the "ability to analyze and develop actionable intelligence" to assist them in becoming an intelligence led police organization.

Since fusion centers must offer a variety of products and services to meet their customers' specific needs (Carter, 2009, p. 108) and establish processes to evaluate the value of products and services they offer (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 7), further evaluation of center services and deliverables should be performed on an ongoing basis to ensure proper alignment with the customer needs, whenever possible.

D. PREFERRED MISSION FOR THE STTAC AND PREFERRED FREQUENCY OF PRODUCTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

- *Question: The state fusion center (STTAC) and four regional fusion centers throughout California are intended to work collaboratively together to help safeguard the state. In your opinion, what mission should the state fusion center (STTAC) undertake to help support your department and the regional center servicing your community?*

The STTAC and RTTACs are intended to work collaboratively together to help safeguard California. In an effort to determine the appropriate mission for the STTAC to perform in support of the RTTACs and local law enforcement agencies, the CHP sought the input of sheriffs and police chiefs (see Figure 7). In analyzing the CHP's survey data, the majority of respondents related that an all crimes mission was most appropriate, with 62 percent of sheriffs and 58 percent of chiefs so indicating. Upon closer scrutiny of the CHP's data, it appears that some of the respondents surveyed may have selected more than one response, such as "all crimes" and "all hazards." This phenomenon appears limited to the responses received by the police chiefs, as the survey data collected from sheriffs contains one selection for each respondent. In analyzing the survey results of other possible formats, an "all hazards" mission is the second most popular format among sheriffs and chiefs, with "terrorism only" being a distant third.

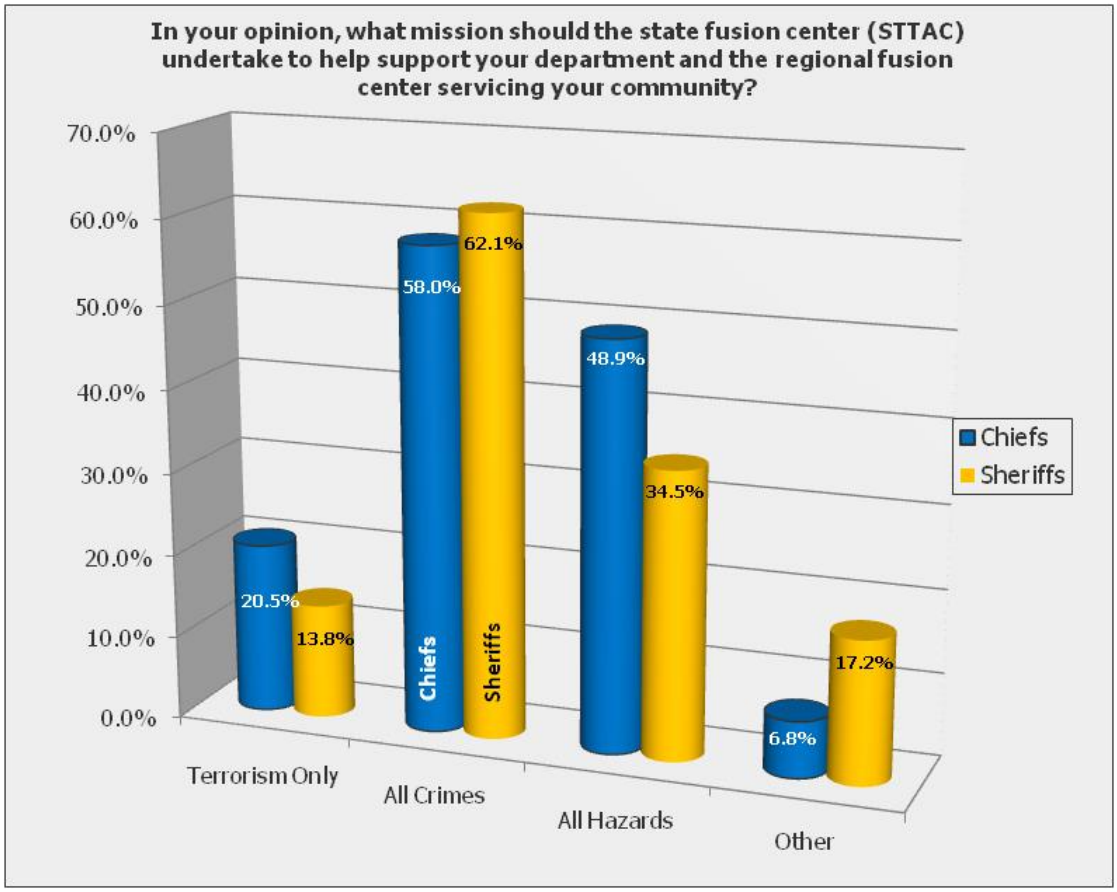


Figure 7. Recommended Mission for the STTAC

These findings are consistent with independent research indicating that all crimes fusion centers help to establish greater buy-in among law enforcement agencies that are predominantly interested in criminal enterprises adversely impacting their communities, such as gangs, narcotics, and organized crime (Rollins, 2008, p. 21). As documented in the Literature Review (Chapter II), independent research derived from law enforcement agencies and professional law enforcement associations across the U.S. suggests widespread law enforcement support for all crimes fusion centers, which is consistent with the findings derived from the CHP's survey. Even federal publications acknowledge that all crimes missions take into consideration the possible nexus between

terrorism and other criminal activity, such as gangs, narcotics trafficking, etc. (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 43).

- *Question: How would you rate the frequency of intelligence information you receive from your regional or local fusion center via the following methods? (See Appendix A for choices.)*

When questioned by the CHP regarding the manner and frequency in which local law enforcement agencies receive intelligence information from their fusion centers, 63 percent of sheriffs and almost 60 percent of police chiefs found the frequency of written bulletins and products were appropriate, while approximately 22 percent of the respondents claimed to not receive any. When asked about information received electronically via e-mail or texting almost 61 percent of sheriffs and 50 percent of chiefs were satisfied with the frequency of information being disseminated electronically by their respective fusion centers. Roughly 21 percent of sheriffs and 35 percent of police chiefs claimed they were not receiving electronic messages on an ongoing basis. This appears to be an area in which CSSA and CPCA can potentially assist the fusion centers in identifying which of their members want to be added to various fusion center product distribution lists. Data captured in the final category of responses revealed that telephonic notifications are the least common distribution method of the three mentioned.

- *Question: Ideally, how frequently would you like to receive intelligence updates on potential threats to your community or California?*

In an effort to determine how frequently sheriffs and police chiefs prefer to receive intelligence updates from fusion centers regarding possible threats within their jurisdictions or the state, the top two responses by both survey groups (sheriffs and chiefs) indicated “weekly” products and “incident driven” threat specific intelligence with no set timeframe (see Figure 8). Roughly 15 to 17 percent of respondents wanted information on a daily basis, with almost 10

percent preferring to receive it twice a month and 10 percent on a monthly basis. The majority of comments offered by respondents under the category of "other" appeared consistent with incident or threat specific updates, when appropriate.

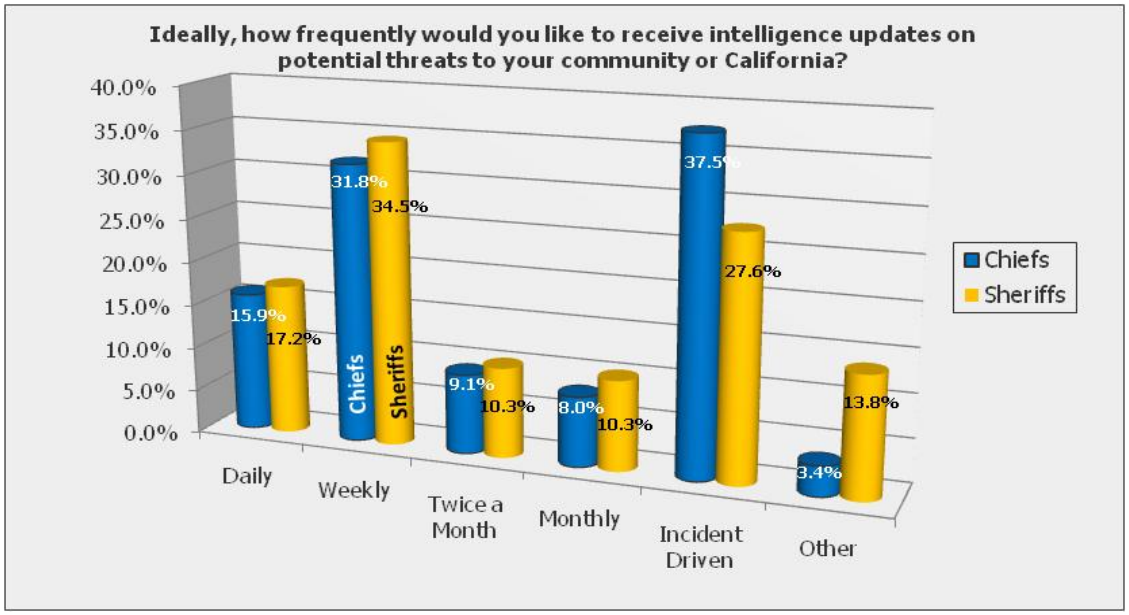


Figure 8. Preferred Frequency of Intelligence Dissemination

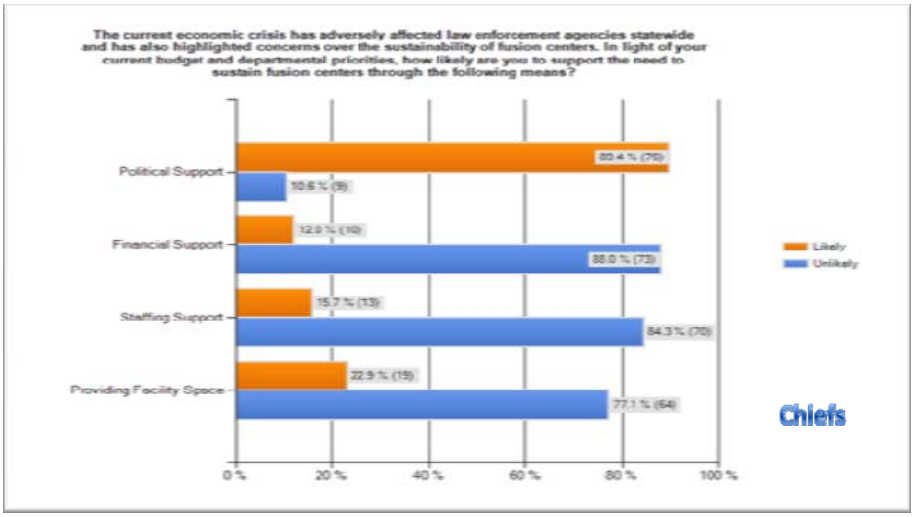
Developing a fusion center production plan that identifies the types of products offered, their frequency, and methods for dissemination is advocated under the Baseline Capabilities (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 18). Implementing a reevaluation process could capture the specific methods and frequency most desirable within each fusion center's area of responsibility.

E. FUTURE SUPPORT AND SUSTAINABILITY

- *Question: The current economic crisis has adversely affected law enforcement agencies statewide and has highlighted concerns over the sustainability of fusion centers. In light of your current budget and departmental priorities, how likely are you to support the need to sustain fusion centers through the following means? (See Appendix A for choices.)*

Given the current fiscal crisis impacting California, including county and city governments, sheriffs and police chiefs were surveyed by the CHP regarding how likely they would be to support the sustainability of fusion centers through political support, financial support, and personnel resources (staffing).

While an extraordinarily high number of sheriffs and police chiefs expressed a willingness to offer their political support to sustain fusion centers, 93 percent and 90 percent, respectively, an almost equal percentage indicated they were unlikely to provide financial support (see Figure 9).



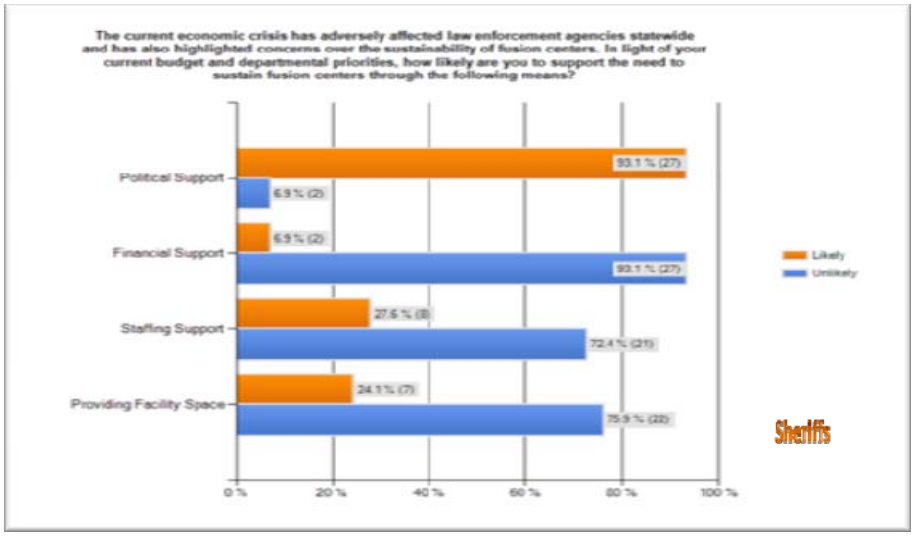


Figure 9. Support for Future Sustainability

Similarly, a sizable majority, 84 percent and 72 percent, respectively, indicated an inability to provide staffing support to fusion centers and a similar percentage stated they could not support fusion center operations, if necessary, using loaned office space within their own departments. These findings support previous independent research outlined in the Literature Review (Chapter II), indicating that many jurisdictions would be unable to support fusion centers operations without continued federal funding and support (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2007, p. 1).

Of those sheriffs and chiefs who expressed an inability to provide staffing in support of fusion center operations, a significant number indicated they would consider doing so if their staff could be remotely connected to the fusion center from their own agency using some form of "virtual" fusion center environment.

The development of virtual fusion center methodologies is supported by the *Findings and Recommendations of the Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) Support and Implementation Project*, which recommends agencies explore the concept of virtual fusion centers to allow regional agencies to share information and enable law enforcement personnel to access information electronically (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2008, pp. 19–20). *Fusion Center Guidelines* also highlight the importance of identifying the necessary resources and maintaining center sustainability (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, 2006, p. 7), and given the financial challenges facing California and the uncertainty of long-term federal funding support, the STTAC and RTTACs must continue to explore alternative funding sources and methods to maintain their sustainability.

F. ANALYSIS

The author's analysis of the raw data collected by the CHP from its survey of sheriffs and police chiefs across California provides insight into the intelligence requirements of local law enforcement agencies and feedback for the STTAC and other fusion centers to consider when attempting to align services and

deliverables with the needs of their customers. It is interesting to note that while sheriffs and police chiefs were surveyed separately by the CHP, their responses were most often similar in nature, suggesting comparable intelligence needs among local law enforcement agencies as a whole.

In this section, the author intends to summarize some of the principal analytical findings articulated throughout this chapter and how those findings offer useful “takeaways” for the STTAC and RTTACs to consider as part of a recurring reevaluation process.

In carefully examining the CHP’s survey data, the author’s analysis revealed that the majority of local law enforcement agencies in California are receiving information and intelligence from their local fusion centers on an ongoing basis. Local agency interaction with the STTAC is far less frequent than with the RTTACs and may be attributable, in large part, to the current construct in California in which the RTTACs serve as the primary points of contact for agencies within their respective regions or areas of responsibility.

Generally speaking, the information and intelligence provided by fusion centers is considered “somewhat useful” to “useful” by most law enforcement agencies receiving it. A large percentage of responses described the information as somewhat useful, and suggested additional modifications could be made to heighten the value of products and deliverables for fusion center consumers. In evaluating what steps or modifications could be taken to increase the value of the intelligence and information provided by fusion centers, the author’s analysis revealed that local law enforcement leaders were in large part desirous of greater information sharing, heightened communication, and an increased level of intelligence support for threats impacting their local communities; primarily gangs. Additionally, sheriffs and police chiefs stressed the need for timely, specific, and actionable intelligence on threats impacting their communities and discouraged vague, ambiguous, or dated information already widely reported in the mainstream media.

California sheriffs and police chiefs disclosed that their primary community threats and intelligence needs involved gangs, narcotics, and weapons, in descending order, with terrorism placing fourth in their list of intelligence priorities. More than half of the sheriffs and police chiefs identified gangs as their single highest threat and listed fusion center support in the form of gang related intelligence as one of their top three recommendations for increasing the value of fusion center services, which strongly suggested it was an area the STTAC and RTTACs should evaluate further.

According to the GAO, several other states' fusion centers are presently supporting gang related intelligence as part of their overall mission (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, pp. 49, 74, 99, 100) and federal guidance on establishing and operating gang task forces and gang intelligence units strongly encourages collaboration with fusion centers to promote greater information sharing (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2008, pp. 8-9). This appears to be an area in which customer needs and fusion center services can be more closely aligned. This notion of identifying customer needs as part of the overall process to define fusion center priorities and objectives, in this case, in terms of recognizing the desire for gang related intelligence, is consistent with recommendations made in *Fusion Center Guidelines* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23) and *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 13).

When comparing the stated intelligence needs of local law enforcement agencies with products and deliverables currently provided by California fusion centers, less than half of the police chiefs and slightly more than half of the sheriffs indicated their primary intelligence needs are being fulfilled, mostly as it relates to counterterrorism. An almost equal percentage collectively stated their primary intelligence needs were either not being met or were unsure if their needs were being met, which suggested customer expectations versus the intelligence products currently received were often inconsistent and that some

agencies might need to conduct an updated intelligence assessment to identify their intelligence needs and the extent to which intelligence gaps might exist more clearly.

As mentioned previously, of those who indicated their needs were not being met, more information sharing, greater communication, and additional gang related intelligence were the top three recommendations from local law enforcement agencies to help bolster the value of information being provided.

These findings suggest a two-pronged approach to increasing the value of intelligence information: one prong relating to the timeliness, specificity, and value of intelligence, and the second prong pertaining to the availability of a broader swath of intelligence, such as intelligence related to gangs, as opposed to counterterrorism products solely. The use of a formal reevaluation process, as advocated by *Fusion Center Guidelines* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006) and *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008), may help the STTAC and RTTACs further clarify current and future gaps between needs and deliverables on an ongoing basis.

The majority of sheriffs and police chiefs believe an all crimes mission is the most appropriate format for the STTAC, with the second largest recommendation being an all hazards approach. This finding is consistent with similar positions taken by the IACP (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2008, pp. 3, 5), the Major Cities Police Chiefs Association (Major Cities Chiefs Association, Homeland Security Committee, 2008, p. 4), and other independent studies highlighting the propensity for law enforcement agencies generally to support all crimes fusion centers (Rollins, 2008, p. 87). Had the CHP's survey also asked fire chiefs, emergency medical services (EMS) managers, and public health officials for their recommendations regarding the appropriate mission for the STTAC, The author cannot help but wonder what the results would be in comparison to the CHP's survey of strictly law enforcement leaders. While some research exists to suggest that fusion centers with an all hazards mission are

generally more attractive to non-law enforcement personnel, such as fire and public health (Rollins, 2008, pp. 36, 88), the survey conducted by the CHP lacks the data necessary to determine the opinions or recommendations of other disciplines regarding the STTAC. Accordingly, it appears prudent that the STTAC seek similar feedback from other fusion center customers prior to determining the appropriate mission that best meets the needs of the collective community of federal, state, and local government and private sector stakeholders, as opposed to one segment or discipline alone. Doing so is consistent with the *Fusion Center Guidelines* recommendation that centers collaboratively develop their mission statements and identify customer needs (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 5).

On the topic of delivery methods and frequency, the majority of sheriffs and police chiefs appear generally satisfied with the frequency of information they receive in the form of written bulletins and electronic distributions by e-mail or text. Telephonic notification is the least utilized method among those mentioned in the CHP's survey. The percentage of respondents who reported not receiving written bulletins and/or e-mailed products from their fusion center appears consistent with the percentage who previously indicated they did not receive information from their center on an ongoing basis. Based on the author's analysis and findings, it appears the STTAC can work closely with CSSA and CPCA to determine which of their members are presently not receiving fusion center products and compile a list of those to be added to each center's respective distribution list. Once compiled, the STTAC can share the lists with the appropriate RTTAC servicing the affected jurisdictions to help increase the flow of information to their customers. Although this analysis focuses on local law enforcement customers exclusively, it highlights the need to canvas other professional associations, such as the California State Fire Chiefs Association, to help identify other customers seeking similar information and products. This is consistent with *Baseline Capabilities* recommendations that fusion centers

develop a dissemination plan to assist in the timely sharing of information with its customers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 20).

On the subject of sustainability, an extraordinarily high percentage of law enforcement professionals expressed a willingness to support fusion centers politically. Conversely, a similar percentage, 87 percent of chiefs and 93 percent of sheriffs, mentioned their inability to support fusion centers financially, and more than three-quarters indicated they could not provide staffing to sustain fusion center operations. These findings are consistent with other literature highlighting concerns regarding the sustainability of fusion centers without continued federal funding (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2007). Interestingly, the author's analysis of the CHP's data revealed a potential willingness by some law enforcement leaders to consider providing staffing to support fusion centers if their representative could be connected remotely through some form of "virtual" fusion center operating platform or connection from within their own department. While consistent with recent federal guidance calling for the exploration of virtual fusion center capabilities (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2008), this finding is discussed later in this thesis as an area for possible future research.

Finally, while political support for California's fusion centers remains extremely high among local law enforcement leaders who view fusion centers as providing value, it stands to reason that fusion centers must continue to provide value to garner continued support. To do so, fusion centers must continue to provide value to their customers and, to provide continued value, should assess the needs of their customers on an ongoing basis. Given the fact that law enforcement leaders who widely support fusion centers are by their own admission unable of providing funding or personnel resources to help sustain their operations, it makes sense that leaders who did not see a value in fusion centers are even less inclined to do so. While not specifically captured in the CHP's survey, based on their responses to related questions, an inference can

be drawn that in today's fiscal environment, were the perceived value of fusion center services to diminish in the minds of law enforcement leaders, those leaders would not only be less likely to offer staffing support, but may be more likely to redirect any current resources to other priorities within their respective agencies. To maintain sustainability, fusion centers must remain relevant, offering a valued service to their customers and being responsive to their needs. The author's analysis reveals that similar to the business world, the customers ultimately decide the value of the products they receive and not the company providing them. The fact that a fusion center believes it is providing a valuable service is of little consequence should their clients view their services differently. Thankfully, the data analyzed suggests that California fusion centers are providing "added value" and highlights areas in which that value can be further increased. By implementing a formal and ongoing reevaluation process inclusive of its clients, including the RTTACs, the STTAC can solicit meaningful customer feedback to help strengthen stakeholder relationships and realign its mission and deliverables to provide a higher level of service.

G. POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS TO STTAS

Looking at the preceding analysis, the CHP's data highlights the general belief by local law enforcement agencies that the RTTACs serve as their primary points of contact for fusion center intelligence and information, as opposed to the STTAC. The current STTAS suggests a similar understanding by acknowledging each RTTAC's independent jurisdiction within its own designated region or area of responsibility. If local law enforcement agencies are one of the primary customers of the RTTACs and are looking to them for timely, accurate, and actionable intelligence to assist in addressing current threats within their communities, as the data suggests, what role, if any, should the STTAC play in attempting to support the RTTACs in fulfilling that responsibility?

As demonstrated through the author's analysis and corroborated by recommendations contained in *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities*, to be successful in supporting the intelligence needs of local law enforcement agencies, the RTTACs must have a clear understanding of their customers' needs and of local threats within their jurisdictions. Since one of the stated functions of the STTAC is to provide analytical support to the RTTACs, a similar argument can be made that to do so, the STTAC must have an understanding of the intelligence needs of the RTTACs and their customers if it hopes to provide them with meaningful and timely information of value for their region and customer base.

An argument can be made if the RTTACs are to meet the needs of local law enforcement successfully, the STTAC must also be capable of supporting the needs of the RTTACs. By understanding the intelligence needs of local law enforcement agencies and by identifying potential gaps between needs and current deliverables, the RTTACs are in a better position to align their deliverables properly to meet the current and future needs of their clients and, similarly, the STTAC can better align its own services to support the RTTACs in performing that mission. While an ongoing reevaluation process is an important part of the RTTACs staying properly aligned with local law enforcement agencies, this analysis strongly suggests that a similar reevaluation process is necessary for the STTAC to remain in alignment with the RTTACs. Utilizing a similar reevaluation process, the STTAC can solicit recurring feedback from the RTTACs to help identify their intelligence needs and those of their customers, and look for gaps in the services offered by the STTAC in contrast to those needs. Doing so helps to ensure the proper alignment and efficiency of the entire statewide fusion center system, STTAS.

V. ANALYSIS OF SURVEY DATA FROM CALIFORNIA'S REGIONAL TERRORISM THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTERS

Fusion centers should take into account the needs and requirements of their respective jurisdictions when producing products and services"

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 57)

A. INTRODUCTION

Baseline Capabilities highlights the need for every fusion center to have a clearly defined mission statement that communicates its role, priorities, and purpose (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 24). In defining their mission statement, fusion centers are encouraged to establish goals and objectives collaboratively in an effort to create "ownership" among participants and stakeholders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23). To collaboratively identify the appropriate mission for the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC), increase collaboration between the STTAC and Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers (RTTACs), and evaluate methods for enhancing the STTAC's value to California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment System (STTAS) and the RTTACs, the newly appointed STTAC management team conducted a survey of the RTTAC commanders as part of a comprehensive reevaluation process (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 21). This chapter provides a qualitative analysis of the survey data garnered by the STTAC from each RTTAC.

"When establishing performance measures and evaluating effectiveness, consider surveying customers."

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 61)

In February 2010, during a STTAS commanders meeting in Sacramento, the STTAC distributed surveys to each of the RTTAC commanders in an effort to solicit their candid feedback, identify RTTAC support needs, and help shape potential modifications to the STTAC's mission and services. In conducting the survey, no discerning information regarding the identity of the RTTAC commanders or their respective centers was captured by the STTAC, in an effort to avoid attribution. For purposes of this qualitative analysis, the anonymous survey data provided by the STTAC is generically categorized as originating from RTTAC A, RTTAC B, RTTAC C, or RTTAC D.

In examining the survey questions distributed by the STTAC, the author noted several themes in the categories of information being sought. The first four questions, for example, appeared intended to derive insights into the internal operations of the RTTACs, the following three questions solicited feedback regarding how the STTAC could provide greater value to the RTTACs, and the final three questions sought to identify methods to increase collaboration and information sharing between the STTAC and RTTACs, as part of California's STTAS. For purposes of this qualitative analysis, the data captured by the STTAC is categorized as follows: (1) questions regarding RTTAC processes; (2) questions regarding STTAC processes; and (3) questions regarding STTAS processes. Appendix B contains a complete record of the survey questions.

B. QUESTIONS REGARDING RTTAC PROCESSES

1. What Best Describes the Current Mission of Your Fusion Center?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Other; Focused on Terrorism. Many of the recognized terrorist groups, whether international or domestic, are all involved with criminal behavior to finance and support their respective goals. Hence, we are dealing with all crimes related to these groups.
- RTTAC B. All Crimes.
- RTTAC C. All Crimes.

- RTTAC D. Currently Counterterrorism only. However, we are in the process of integrating the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) into the center for an all crimes approach.

b. Analysis

The majority of RTTACs classify themselves as being "all crimes" fusion centers or are in the process of adopting an all crimes format. Even the one RTTAC that classified its mission as "other" and stated its principal focus was on terrorism clarified that it does utilize an "all crimes" approach for offenses with a possible nexus to terrorism. The adoption of an all crimes format is consistent with recommendations outlined in *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 24) and the growing national trend of fusion centers expanding their missions to include all crimes and/or all hazards (Rollins, 2008, p. 21). As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the standing mission for the STTAC, as documented in *Fusion Center Guidelines*, has been largely directed towards antiterrorism only (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 24). Therefore, examining the survey data obtained by the STTAC, it appears that the STTAC's mission statement is potentially misaligned with those of the RTTACs and contrary to recommended guidance in *Baseline Capabilities* suggesting that fusion centers consider adopting all crimes and/or all hazards missions (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 7). In light of the fact that the STTAC and RTTACs are intended to work collaboratively as part of a unified STTAS network (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 13), it appears that a revision of the STTAC mission statement is warranted. In addition to providing insight into the current mission of each RTTAC, the data captured through this question offers the STTAC useful information regarding the types of intelligence

> ***"When creating a mission statement and goals, consider identifying [fusion] center customers and their needs and defining center priorities…."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 23)*

support the RTTACs may require from the STTAC, since one of the stated purposes of the STTAC is to provide analytical support to the RTTACs (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 15). To be able to support the RTTACs in their collective fulfillment of an all crimes mission, it appears that the STTAC also must be capable of accessing and disseminating intelligence and other information to support that capacity. By obtaining a better understanding of the intelligence needs of its customers, the STTAC is in a better position to define its mission collaboratively, which is also consistent with recommendations outlined in *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 5, 23; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 24).

2. Who Do You Consider to Be the Primary Customers of Your Fusion Center (RTTAC)?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Law enforcement, with situational awareness provided to fire and emergency services.
- RTTAC B. Primary is first responders/investigators. Close second is chief executives.
- RTTAC C. Public Safety, Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources.
- RTTAC D. Locals (i.e., police department, sheriff); however, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) utilizes the center for Requests for Information (RFIs) and outreach efforts.

b. Analysis

The overwhelming majority of RTTACs view their primary customers as being local law enforcement agencies, first responders, and/or public safety personnel within their areas of responsibility (AORs). Since each RTTAC's jurisdiction and mission is primarily concentrated on activities having a nexus or potential impact to their respective AORs, perhaps it should not be surprising to find that each RTTAC overwhelmingly identified stakeholders within their local jurisdiction as being their primary customers—with the exception of RTTAC D, which also listed the FBI. It is interesting to note, that none of the

RTTACs listed the STTAC or state as being a primary customer and only one center, RTTAC D, mentioned a federal agency. While the list of primary customers provided by each RTTAC is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of every principal customer or benefactor of each RTTAC's services, the fact that neither the STTAC, state, nor other federal agencies were readily identified as primary customers may be an indication that they are perceived as being secondary users of RTTAC services or that the principal focus of each respondent when answering this question was directed predominantly within their AOR. It can also signal a possible perception among the RTTAC commanders that state agencies, in general, are a primary customer of the STTAC. In either case, the data offers the STTAC a firsthand assessment regarding who the RTTACs view as their primary customers and, in doing so, affords the STTAC an opportunity to clarify its own primary customer base, in consultation with the RTTACs. Ultimately, the STTAC needs to know who its customers are, both current and prospective, to more effectively define its mission and establish reliable methods for delivering services to its clients (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12).

> ***"…Consider identifying center customers and their needs and defining center priorities prior to drafting the mission statement and goals."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 23)*

3. What Method(s), if Any, Does Your Center Currently Use to Build Collaboration Among Participants Within Your Center and Stakeholders?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Primary outreach is achieved through the development of the Terrorism Liaison Officer (TLO) program and related training. Other members of the first responder community are reached via the development of Terrorism Early Warning Groups (TEWGs),

which are designed to bring partners together from the first responder community to prepare ways to fill gaps identified by intelligence and threat.

- RTTAC B. Question skipped. No response provided.
- RTTAC C. Training, liaison officer outreach, exercise development and participation, web distribution of material, conference calls.
- RTTAC D. Outreach (i.e., TLO working groups) and sharing/dissemination of analytical products.

b. Analysis

All three answers were primarily focused on external agency and customer outreach within their respective AORs, as opposed to internal efforts to build or enhance collaboration among agencies or staff working within their respective centers. This emphasis towards external partnerships and outreach may be an indication that each RTTAC commander perceives the greatest need for collaboration or relationship building as being outside the walls of their respective centers and may also signal that the RTTAC commanders do not presently see significant challenges with collaboration among agencies or individuals working within their facilities. The RTTACs' external focus on outreach and dissemination appears to present a viable opportunity for the STTAC to work closely with each RTTAC to align their respective operations more effectively and enhance collaboration. A similar approach must also be exercised by the STTAC, as it attempts to build collaborative relationships both internally and externally among various homeland security stakeholders, including the RTTACs.

> ***"Collaboration is vital to the success of fusion centers."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 17)*

4. What Method(s), if Any, Does Your Center Utilize to Determine the Intelligence Requirements of Your Customers and to Determine Whether Those Needs Are Being Met?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Gaps are identified by using the intelligence cycle. The cycle includes domain assessment of threat and constant reevaluation using threat stream data overlaid against Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR). This information is then confirmed and vetted against identified gaps. Situational awareness is then provided via Situational Intelligence Reports (SIRs) and briefings.
- RTTAC B. Historically, this has not been done effectively. We are in the process of developing surveys to help determine needs/effectiveness. Additionally, we engage in law enforcement briefing outreach.
- RTTAC C. Working with the FBI field intelligence group (FIG) and regional intelligence groups.
- RTTAC D. State/local collection plan. The center has created state/local intelligence requirements.

b. Analysis

In analyzing the response data, the information offers general insights into the overall development of intelligence priorities and recurring planning, but to a large extent, fails to provide detailed information regarding how each RTTAC derives the stated intelligence requirements of their primary customers, as specified in Question B.2. within this section, or how they solicit feedback from those customers to ascertain whether or not their intelligence needs are being met. RTTAC B is reportedly in the process of developing customer surveys to help identify customer needs and determine the effectiveness of products and also utilizes agency briefings to obtain feedback and assess their performance. Knowing the stated intelligence needs of its customers can assist the RTTACs in developing

> ***"It is important to know who the program's customers are and what types of services and products they need."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 57)*

programs and services geared towards fulfilling those identified intelligence and information requirements and potentially enhance customer satisfaction. Additionally, by understanding the intelligence needs of the RTTACs and their subsidiary customers, the STTAC can derive a more informed understanding of the products and services necessary to support their needs and, in doing so, more effectively tailor its mission and multiagency composition to meet those requirements. *Fusion Center Guidelines* acknowledges that to be successful, collaborative fusion center partnerships must continually provide value to their customers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 30). That message is steadfastly reinforced by a recent International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) publication entitled *Razing Expectation: Erecting a Strategic Vision for Fusion Centers*, which argues that customer needs must be the motivating force for fusion center operations (International Association of Chiefs of Police, Homeland Security Committee, 2010, p. 6).

C. QUESTIONS REGARDING STTAC PROCESSES

1. What Do You Believe the Role of the State Fusion Center Should Be Within the STTAS?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. One of the major gaps is a statewide situational awareness unit (SAU). We do not have the resources or time to focus on this issue. A statewide SAU that can monitor and produce quick and accurate situational awareness products that apply the "what does this mean to me" value added specific to California. We also have a major gap on providing a threat picture specific to critical infrastructure and providing critical infrastructure/key resources (CI/KR) support.
- RTTAC B. Provide strategic products to the decision makers in state government. This can be done by working with the regional fusion centers and by compiling products from the regional fusion centers into a statewide product for political consumption. Provide intelligence briefings to political decision makers (face-to-face) to improve awareness of STTAC efforts. Provide analytical support to regional fusion centers, when requested. They should not be in the business of assessing, researching, analyzing, or writing strategic

products on any issue that is region specific, without cooperatively working with the regional fusion center. Maintain an SAU within the STTAC.

- RTTAC C. Strategic analysis, situational awareness, statewide information dissemination
- RTTAC D. Collection point/intake and to provide relevant information to Governor and Secretary of California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) for situational awareness.

b. Analysis

> ***In developing and implementing all fusion process-related plans and procedures, the center shall coordinate with other fusion centers within its state to identify the roles and responsibilities of each center….”***
>
> *(Baseline Capabilities, p. 12)*

In conducting a qualitative analysis of the data captured from the RTTACs in response to this question, several common factors were identified. All four RTTACs discussed the need for situational awareness, with three of the four respondents calling for the creation of a situational awareness capability or statewide SAU within the STTAC. In fact, during a recent STTAS commanders meeting in February 2010, at least one of the RTTAC commanders requested that the STTAC and Cal EMA consider creating a statewide SAU within the state center, as opposed to having a separate SAU at Cal EMA (RTTAC and STTAC commanders, personal communication, 2010). The desire for the state to produce strategic versus tactical products, assist with CI/KR and analytical support, when requested, and to brief the governor and other state decision makers on issues of significance appear consistent with several of the STTAC-related functions previously outlined in Chapter III and contained within the *California State Homeland Security Strategy* and STTAS *Strategic Business Plan Concept of Operations* (CONOPS). As part of the STTAC’s ongoing effort to reevaluate its current

> ***"Fusion Centers shall have a defined mission statement that is clear and concise and conveys the purpose, priority, and roles of the center."***
>
> *(Baseline Capabilities, p. 24)*

mission, services, and multiagency composition, the STTAC should develop a collaboratively defined mission statement that considers the needs of the RTTACs, as well as other federal, state, and local stakeholders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12).

2. What Services Could the STTAC Perform or Provide That Would Benefit Your RTTAC and the STTAS Overall?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. SAU statewide. Topical trained briefers that can provide not only situational briefings for state level executives, but also be able to provide those same types of briefings in the RTTAC AORs. Produce CI/KR threat stream products related to the 18 nodes of CI/KR (domain). Create strategic products such as a statewide summation of Guardian[1] reports prepared by the RTTACs.
- RTTAC B. Same response as the previous question. Provide strategic products to the decision makers in state government. This can be done by working with the regional fusion centers and by compiling products from the regional fusion centers into a statewide product for political consumption. Provide intelligence briefings to political decision makers (face-to-face) to improve awareness of STTAC efforts. Provide analytical support to regional fusion centers, when requested. They should not be in the business of assessing, researching, analyzing, or writing strategic products on any issue that is region specific, without cooperatively working with the regional fusion center. Maintain an SAU within the STTAC.
- RTTAC C. Situational awareness, strategic analytical support, information dissemination.
- RTTAC D. Better coordination with the RTTACs. Send out RFIs in regards to what the needs are of Cal EMA, etc.

[1] Guardian reports refer to output from the FBI's unclassified *e*-Guardian system, which is designed to assist law enforcement agencies in sharing unclassified information (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009).

b. Analysis

Analysis of the survey data suggests a strong desire by the RTTACs for the STTAC to provide statewide situational awareness, strategic analytical products, and general analytical support. At least two of the RTTACs focused on the need for the STTAC to increase its capacity to provide situational intelligence briefings to senior officials and, in some instances, to the RTTACs or their subsidiaries. These recommendations offer meaningful insights into the types of products and services that can help increase the STTAC's value to the RTTACs and may ultimately contribute to defining or clarifying the STTAC's mission; both of which are stated objectives of *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 12–13, 16). The comments from RTTAC B express a desire that the STTAC not be directly involved in local constituency issues without working in unison with the affected RTTAC. Lastly, survey data from RTTAC D suggests that some may view the STTAC as the vertical connection to state government, political entities, etc.

3. What Three Improvements or Changes Would You Like to See the STTAC Make over the Course of the Year?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Clearly define a mission, create an SAU, and produce domain reports on CI/KR.
- RTTAC B. Establish a mission statement in conjunction with the RTTACs. Because form follows function, reassess staffing and resourcing after mission is established.
- RTTAC C. Combining California Highway Patrol (CHP) information sharing and Cal EMA information sharing resources; develop statewide information dissemination protocols, develop standard strategic products.
- RTTAC D. Communication and a clear mission.

b. Analysis

At least three of the four RTTACs have expressed a need for the STTAC to define its mission. *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities* both call upon fusion center commanders to define their mission collaboratively and identify the roles and responsibilities centers within the state as one of core foundational requirements (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 5, 23; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 12, 24). Given the STTAC's involvement in the STTAS and its designation as the primary state fusion center for California, it is imperative that the STTAC collaboratively develop a clear and concise mission that is clearly understood and accepted by the RTTACs and other homeland security stakeholders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 24). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the previously held mission of the STTAC was based predominantly on antiterrorism only (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 24) and appears misaligned with the largely all crimes missions being supported by the RTTACs—as evidenced by the responses to Question B.1. in this chapter. Since the potential stakeholders having a vested interest in defining the mission of the STTAC are arguably broader than the current agencies participating within STTAC and the RTTACs combined, it appears prudent that efforts to redefine the STTAC's mission also take into consideration the perspectives of other federal state, and local stakeholders to

> ***"It is important to have a mission statement because it focuses efforts and is the foundation of all decisions that follow."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 23)*

> ***"A good mission statement will provide strategic vision and direction for the [fusion] center."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 23)*

help create “buy in” and ensure the mission takes into consideration the intelligence and information needs of a state as large and diverse as California. As previously mentioned in Chapter IV, California sheriffs and police chiefs have also recommended that the STTAC’s mission be expanded to include an all crimes approach. That feedback must also be considered in defining the STTAC’s mission. Doing so helps define a collaborative and sustainable mission more apt to receive widespread support from its intended customers, as opposed to creating a mission that is potentially uninformed, misaligned, or fails to provide continued value to its customers, participants, and stakeholders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 30).

D. QUESTIONS REGARDING STTAS PROCESSES

1. What Methods Would You Recommend Be Utilized to Strengthen Collaboration Between Your Fusion Center and the STTAC?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Defining and understanding the STTAC’s mission. Ensuring trust on how information will be used. Show value by producing viable and useful information in support of the STTAS.
- RTTAC B. Question skipped. No response provided.
- RTTAC C. Participation in the STTAS commanders’ group meetings and conference calls, exchange of state and regional fusion center personnel for familiarization with each other’s operations.
- RTTAC D. Regular conference calls, meetings, and e-mails.

b. Analysis

The need for enhanced communication and collaboration between the STTAC and RTTAC commanders appears widely supported. As mentioned previously in Chapter I, the STTAC had recently been void of any fulltime law enforcement or multiagency participation for more than a year, which weakened its acceptance by the other RTTACs and its effectiveness in establishing collaborative relationships with other federal, state, and local homeland security stakeholders (RTTAC commanders and homeland security executives, personal communication with 2009). With the recent insertion of fulltime CHP and California Department of Justice (DOJ) personnel within the STTAC and the transfer of daily management responsibilities to the CHP, efforts have been underway to reestablish interpersonal relationships, trust, and collaboration between the STTAC and other STTAS partners. Building effective interpersonal relationships and trust are critical to enabling and maintaining meaningful collaboration between the STTAC and RTTACs (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 29–30; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 25).

> ***"The purpose of collaboration is to increase capacity, communication, and continuity of service while decreasing duplication."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 29)*

2. Would There Be Value in Establishing a Policy Council or Advisory Group Among STTAS Participants to Examine Statewide STTAS Related Issues on an Ongoing Basis? Why or Why Not?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Yes, the development of a STTAS advisory group to include California State Sheriffs and California Police Chiefs Association representatives would help educate and define the STTAS and STTAC missions.

- RTTAC B. Policy council no; advisory group yes. A better title might be “Advocacy Council.” They should be command level staff from agencies (below the highest ranking chief executive), but important enough to wield influence on their department in terms of access to seeking executive support, when needed. They could also provide ideas, suggestions in terms of future efforts. I do not think they should have policy powers, lest the STTAS have programs/decisions forced upon us.
- RTTAC C. Yes, you know it.
- RTTAC D. Yes, to ensure we speak the same language, understanding privacy policy matters, etc.

b. Analysis

Analysis of the data suggests widespread support among the RTTAC commanders for the creation of a STTAS advisory group to help provide input and offer recommendations on STTAS-related issues on a recurring basis. In fact, during the STTAS commanders meeting, held on February 10–12, 2010, the STTAC and four RTTAC commanders agreed in principle to the idea of developing a STTAS advisory or advocacy counsel as a means of capturing input and recommendations from a diverse group of homeland security stakeholders (STTAC and RTTAC commanders, personal communication, 2010). As proposed in that meeting, the advisory group would potentially consist of an executive level representative on behalf of the STTAC and each of the RTTACs (as appointed by their respective governance boards); a sheriff from a urban county and a sheriff from a rural county (as appointed by the California State Sheriffs Association); a police chief from a urban city and a police chief from a rural city (as appointed by the California Police Chiefs Association); and representatives from CHP; California DOJ; California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR); Cal EMA; DHS; and the FBI (STTAC and RTTAC commanders, personal communication, 2010). The creation of such an advisory group appears consistent with the

> ***“It is important to have a process that systematically reviews performance.”***
>
> *Fusion Center Guidelines (Page 61)*

recommendation in *Fusion Center Guidelines* that centers establish an "advisory committee" as part of its governance structure that includes participation from various disciplines and levels of government (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, 2006, pp. D-3). It also supports the recommendation that centers solicit ongoing customer feedback and measure performance (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 61–62; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 21).

3. Do You Think There Would Be Value in Having a Common Information Sharing Platform or Method for Sharing Information Among STTAS Participants? If Yes, What System or Method Do You Recommend?

a. RTTAC Responses

- RTTAC A. Not sure. There are many technologies and platforms both existing and new that would need to be evaluated to ensure the correct system is identified and used.
- RTTAC B. Good luck with this one. Inherent problems exist because of our individual agency information technology infrastructures. This is an issue that may best be solved by all STTAS components working together to develop and fund web-based solutions statewide.
- RTTAC C. Yes
- RTTAC D. Yes (which we have already, though usually through e-mail). There are too many alternatives to list.

b. Analysis

Based on the data collected from the STTAC's survey of the RTTACs and subsequent discussions at the STTAS commanders meeting held in February 2010, there appears to be widespread support for the need to identify a common information sharing platform or system to facilitate the exchange of information and products among STTAS participants more effectively. While e-mail currently serves as the primary method for sharing products and unclassified information between the STTAC and RTTACs, there does not appear to be

consensus among the STTAC and RTTAC commanders as to what system or method provides the best solution. For now, there appears to be agreement among the commanders that having a common information sharing platform, in addition to e-mail, is beneficial to the STTAS and a willingness to examine possible solutions collectively, including the use of a web-based platform or unique domain that all STTAC and RTTAC products can be posted to, instead of being e-mailed multiple times (STTAC and RTTAC commanders, personal communication, 2010).

> ***"…If the mission statement becomes inappropriate, irrelevant, or outdated or if the center's direction changes, the mission statement should be revised accordingly."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 23)*

E. PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Through qualitative analysis of the survey data collected by the STTAC from all four RTTAC commanders, a clearer understanding of the current missions, services, and primary customers of the RTTACs can be realized. Additionally, this data provides the STTAC with useful information in assessing the current intelligence and customer service requirements of the RTTACs in performing their respective missions and offers a better understanding of the types of services and capabilities the RTTACs would like to see from the STTAC. Ultimately, this feedback provides useful customer-based information that can be utilized as part of a broader effort to solicit feedback from federal, state, and local stakeholders and to define the mission of the STTAC more clearly. In analyzing the data points collected through the STTAC's survey, the following principal findings or "takeaways" are noted:

1. The Current STTAC Mission Appears to Be out of Alignment with the Current Missions of the RTTACs

The survey data suggests the RTTACs have each essentially adopted an all crimes mission, while the historical mission of the STTAC has been directed

exclusively towards antiterrorism alone (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 24). Since the STTAC and RTTACs are intended to work together as part of unified approach within California's STTAS, and the STTAC is intended to provide analytical support to the RTTACs, when requested, having a collaboratively established mission for the STTAC that addresses the current threat environment and customer requirements is warranted (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 5, 23; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12).

2. The STTAC Must Work with the RTTACs and Other Stakeholders to Clearly Identify Its Primary Customers and to Conduct Recurring Outreach

The survey data suggests that the RTTACs view local law enforcement and other public safety organizations within their respective AORs as being their primary customers. It is unclear from the data whether the RTTACs view state agencies and other federal entities as being in large part a primary customer of the STTAC or as a secondary user of their own operations. Accordingly, the STTAC should clearly identify its principal customers in concert with the RTTACs to avoid duplication of effort, potential confusion among prospective customers as to which center they should coordinate with, and reduce the likelihood of some segment of federal, state, local, or private sector stakeholders being inadvertently left out of the process. Identifying the primary customers of the STTAC and RTTACs is an integral part of defining each center's roles and responsibilities (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12).

3. The STTAC Must Assess the Intelligence and Information Needs of Its Primary Customers on an Ongoing Basis

While the STTAC's survey represents a good faith effort to obtain candid and constructive feedback from one of its primary customers and STTAS partners—the RTTACs—feedback should also be obtained from other federal, state, and local homeland security stakeholders in an effort to develop a broad range of intelligence products and services necessary to meet the present and future needs of current and prospective STTAC customers. To be successful, collaborative fusion center partnerships, such as the STTAC and RTTACs, must understand the needs of their customers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 30).

> ***"A successful collaboration must continually provide value to its participants, customers, and constituency."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 30)*

4. The STTAC Must Clearly Identify Its Mission Utilizing a Collaborative Process and Develop a Clear and Concise Mission Statement Commensurate with the Current Threat Environment and Customer Needs

The reviewed survey data strongly suggests that the RTTACs are unclear regarding the precise mission of the STTAC and, as stated previously, the STTAC's historic mission appears outdated and improperly aligned with the current all crimes missions currently being performed or implemented by each RTTAC. Considering an all crimes and/or all hazards format is also consistent with recommendations outlined in *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland

> ***Developing the [fusion] center mission statement and goals collaboratively with participating entities…will create ownership and assist in identifying the primary role(s) of the organization."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 23)*

Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 7) and may assist the STTAC in providing enhanced support to the RTTACs. Further, *Fusion Center Guidelines* recommends that each center develop its mission statement and goals collaboratively to help create "ownership" and "buy-in" from participants and stakeholders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 23). Prior to adopting a new mission statement, the STTAC should consider the recommendations of the RTTACs and other federal, state, and local stakeholders to help develop and implement a collaboratively constructed mission capable of fulfilling the needs of all its potential customers.

5. The STTAC Must Develop Services, Products, and Capabilities That Offer Added Value to the RTTACs and Other Consumers of Its Services

The survey data identifies gaps in the current intelligence and service needs experienced by the RTTACs and documents the essential services and support each RTTAC wants to receive from the STTAC. This data suggest a need for the STTAC to reevaluate its services, products, and capabilities to help support the intelligence and information needs of its customers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 57; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 12–13). To remain relevant, the STTAC must provide added value to its customers, stakeholders, and participants (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 30).

> ***"Fusion centers should take into account the needs and requirements of their respective jurisdictions when producing products and services."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 57)*

6. The STTAC Must Work to Increase Collaboration Internally and Externally Among the RTTACs and Other Homeland Security Stakeholders

The survey data support the need for the STTAC to increase collaboration with its RTTAC partners and other stakeholders, as it simultaneously attempts to rebuild collaboration internally within the STTAC to obtain greater multiagency and multidisciplinary participation. The respondents have recommended increased participation by the STTAC in commanders' meetings, conference calls, and e-mails as possible methods to enhance the level of collaboration between the STTAC and RTTACs, in addition to personnel exchanges. Given the STTAC's current need to foster greater collaboration both internally and externally and to develop a collaborative mission statement, the STTAC's ability to identify viable methods for increasing collaboration appears vital to its success. Accordingly, the subject of collaboration and its importance to multiagency and dispersed organizations, such as the STTAS, is discussed in greater detail in Chapter VIII.

> ***"Fusion centers embody the core of collaboration."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 12)*

7. The STTAS Should Develop a Standing Advisory Group Comprised of a Broad Range of Disciplines to Help Provide Input Regarding the Overall Statewide System

Analysis of the STTAC's survey data indicates widespread support among the RTTACs to establish a diverse STTAS advisory group to help provide input and offer recommendations on STTAS-related issues and services on a recurring basis. Doing so can help provide valuable input from federal, state, and local stakeholders to help ensure that the STTAS is properly aligned and capable of supporting the current and future needs of the state. As discussed previously in Chapter III, the STTAS is described as a voluntary alliance "wholly dependent on" the cooperation and collaboration demonstrated by its participants (Unknown, 2008). By forming a standing advisory committee that consists of federal, state,

and local representation, in addition to representatives for each of the participating STTAS centers, the STTAS can draw upon the needs and recommendations of a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure the STTAS remains relevant and sustainable.

8. The STTAC and RTTAC Commanders Should Explore Methods to Enhance Sharing of Unclassified Information and Products

Through the author's analysis of the survey data, there appears to be widespread support regarding the need to identify a common operating platform or system to assist the STTAC and RTTACs in exchanging information and unclassified intelligence products. While a consensus among the RTTAC commanders as to what system(s) may offer a viable solution does not currently exist, the involved parties are willing to explore possible alternatives collaboratively; including the possible use of a web-based platform or unique internet domain through which all STTAC and RTTAC products can be uploaded, posted, and accessed.

VI. SCANNING OTHER STATES WITH MULTIPLE FUSION CENTERS

If there is more than one fusion center operating within the state, the centers should jointly determine how to communicate the value, roles, and responsibilities of each of the centers….

(Baseline Capabilities, p. 26)

A. INTRODUCTION

As mentioned previously in Chapters I and II, a growing number of states across the nation have multiple fusion centers (Rollins, 2008, p. 20). In addition to California, nine states have two or more fusion centers, as recognized by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the National Fusion Center Coordination Group (NFCCG) (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009). These states include Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009).

In attempting to determine the appropriate role for the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) within California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment System (STTAS), Chapters IV and V examined the needs and perspectives of sheriffs and police chiefs throughout California, as well as California's Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers (RTTACs). This chapter briefly scans other states with multiple fusion centers to explore the roles and responsibilities of other designated state fusion centers and what strategies, if any, they use to help strengthen collaboration with their regional and/or local counterparts. In conducting this "scan," the author examined available literature on state fusion centers and integrated his own personal observations and discussions with other state fusion center directors, while serving as the designated state representative for the STTAC during the recent 2010 National

Fusion Center Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana on February 22–25, 2010. By examining other state centers, the author hopes to identify possible "takeaways" or "best practices" from other state fusion centers that can prove useful to the STTAC.

B. THE ROLE OF STATE FUSION CENTERS IN OTHER STATES

One of the first planning recommendations mentioned in *Baseline Capabilities* is the need for fusion centers to establish intrastate coordination requirements and procedures among state and local fusion centers and to help identify each center's role and responsibilities as part of a statewide effort (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12). While *Baseline Capabilities* and *Fusion Center Guidelines* offer general guidance and recommendations on a host of procedural and administrative functions that each fusion center should consider and strive to attain, the precise mechanics of how multiple centers in a given state ultimately works with one another and their various roles and responsibilities are ultimately left for those states and local jurisdictions to decide. Not surprisingly, therefore, the roles of designated state fusion centers vary from state-to-state. Some perform more of a "strategic" function, while others are more "tactical" or "operational" in nature. For example, in states like Massachusetts and Illinois, where one or two additional fusion centers exist within major urban cities, such as Boston or Chicago, the state fusion center often fulfills a greater operational role for the remainder of the state by serving as the primary fusion center for communities lacking their own local center (State fusion center commanders, personal communication, 2010). In Nevada, in addition to being designated as the state fusion center, the Southern Nevada Counterterrorism Center, as its name suggests, also serves as the primary regional fusion center for the southern portion of the state (State fusion center commanders, personal communication, 2010). Each of the aforementioned models differs from California's current STTAS paradigm, in that California is fundamentally divided into regions independently serviced by one of four RTTACs. As currently designed, the STTAC essentially serves as a

statewide overlay for California and is intended to perform a more strategic versus tactical function (Unknown, 2008, pp. 2–3). For this reason, the author's analysis of other state models focuses primarily on states having several regional and/or local fusion centers—similar to California—and whose state centers may also perform a similar strategic function. Given those specified parameters, the author chose to examine Florida and Ohio. His exclusion of other states, having only one or two additional centers or whose state centers perform a significant operational or tactical function, is not intended to be criticism of those jurisdictions or their effectiveness in performing their assigned tasks or missions, but merely an acknowledgment that their model may be incompatible for use in California under its current construct.

1. Florida

The Florida Fusion Center (FFC) serves as Florida's primary state fusion center (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009) and is managed by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007, p. 64). The FFC's designation as the state fusion center is the result of a letter sent by Florida's governor to DHS in 2008 (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). The FFC operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and has adopted an all crimes and all hazards mission (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007; Florida Fusion Center, 2008). In addition to the FFC, two regional fusion centers are located in Miami and Orlando that are currently recognized by DHS and NFCCG (National Fusion Center Coordination Group) (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009). A third regional center is now situated in Jacksonville and four more regional centers are being developed in Fort Myers, Pensacola, Tallahassee, and Tampa Bay—each expected to be fully operational in late 2010 (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). Once completed, Florida's seven multidisciplinary Domestic Security Task Force (DSTF) regions will each have their own corresponding regional fusion center (State fusion center official,

personal communication, 2010). The FFC and each of Florida's regional fusion centers, both current and prospective, are independently managed and operated.

While the FFC and Florida's regional centers are designed to be all crimes and all hazards fusion centers, the FFC performs more of a "strategic" role, while the regional centers are principally "tactical" in nature (State fusion center official personal communication, 2010). Among its list of primary responsibilities, the FFC prepares strategic assessments with regional input from the other centers and disseminates strategic products statewide, as well as situational awareness, alerts, warnings, and notices (Florida Fusion Center, 2008). Additionally, the FFC serves as the primary communication conduit with federal entities, such as the National Operations Center (NOC), distributes daily threat briefings, provides legislative briefings, and has overarching responsibilities regarding critical infrastructure and the management of statewide intelligence data and associated technologies (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). Some of the FFC's primary customers include Florida's regional fusion centers, other state agencies, professional statewide law enforcement and fire associations, and federal departments, while the regional fusion centers are largely responsible for servicing their own local and regional customer base, in addition to sharing information with the FFC (Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2008).

While the FDLE has primary statewide authority for domestic security matters, the FDLE works collaboratively and in partnership with each of Florida's regional fusion centers to enhance statewide information sharing (Florida Statute 943.03101, 2002). The FFC and each of Florida's regional centers have their own respective governance boards; however, no single governance structure or board oversees the entire statewide system (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). Instead, a fusion center leadership team comprised of the directors from each center meets on a regular basis to discuss operational issues or concerns (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010), similar to California's STTAS commanders' workgroup. To help strengthen collaboration,

working relationships, and information sharing with regional fusion centers in Florida, the FFC provides briefings on an ongoing basis and routinely hosts meetings throughout each of Florida's regions to solicit input proactively and maintain two-way communication (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). Additionally, Florida's fusion center leadership team has begun drafting a communication plan or concept of operations (CONOPS) document, which is intended to outline the various roles, responsibilities, and statewide processes for each center as part of a statewide system (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010).

2. Ohio

Ohio's Strategic Analysis and Information Center (SAIC) serves as Ohio's primary designated state fusion center (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009) and is operated by Ohio Homeland Security—a division within the Ohio Department of Public Safety (Ohio Strategic Analysis and Information Center, 2009). The Ohio State Highway Patrol, as a sister agency, provides the operational leadership within the SAIC. The SAIC's primary mission is focused on counterterrorism, using an all crimes approach (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). Similar to Florida's FFC, the SAIC's designation as Ohio's primary state fusion center was established by means of a letter sent from the governor to DHS in 2008 (State homeland security official, personal communication 2010). Unlike the FFC, the SAIC's core business hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., with callout procedures in place, as needed (State homeland security official, personal communication, 2010). In addition to the SAIC, two DHS and NFCCG recognized regional fusion centers are in Cleveland and Cincinnati (National Fusion Center Coordination Group, 2009) and a third regional fusion center is located in Columbus (State fusion center official personal communication, 2010). The SAIC and Ohio's regional fusion centers are each independently managed and operated. Some, but not all, of the centers have their own governance boards (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010).

Besides performing its strategic mission, the SAIC provides operational support to some of the most rural communities in Ohio considered outside the primary service area of an adjacent regional center (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). The SAIC's principal statewide strategic functions include preparing and disseminating statewide assessments, providing statewide situational awareness, distributing officer safety information and unclassified statewide products, conducting monthly classified briefings, maintaining management oversight of the state's terrorism liaison officer program (TLO), providing analytical support upon request, and administering the state's information sharing system (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). The SAIC also assists Ohio Homeland Security with critical infrastructure and key resource (CI/KR) assessments for state properties by providing analytical research and support (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010).

While the SAIC has its own standing state executive board that includes state and local public safety representatives, no formal governance board or written CONOPS agreement between the SAIC and its regional fusion center partners currently exists (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). The various roles and responsibilities for each center have instead been informally established and agreed upon collectively by the SAIC and regional centers commanders through existing interpersonal relationships and using a collaborative approach (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). To help increase collaboration and strengthen the working relationships between each center, the SAIC hosts monthly classified briefings, provides training, conducts conference calls, and periodically assigns regional coordinators from the SAIC to work in the various regional centers on a part-time basis (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). The SAIC also employees a full-time strategic planner who assists in the development of the Ohio Homeland Security Plan, which is integral in helping to set the SAIC's strategic vision for the future (State fusion center official, personal

communication, 2010). In late 2009, the SAIC was recognized by DHS and the NFCCG for its excellence in promoting a Statewide Information Sharing Environment (Ohio Homeland Security, 2009).

C. ANALYSIS

In examining other states with multiple fusion centers, the author found that no "one size fits all" model existed for state fusion centers, in terms of their individual roles and responsibilities. While *Baseline Capabilities* and *Fusion Center Guidelines* offer a general blueprint for states and fusion centers to follow, ultimately, each state and its respective local jurisdictions as the general contractors must build the necessary framework and decide how each of the pieces fits together. For that reason, the precise role, mission, customers, and services that each state fusion center supports are often quite different depending on the number of additional fusion centers a state may have, how regions or areas of responsibility are defined, and how the involved jurisdictions—state, regional, and/or local—elect to construct their statewide system.

Although many similarities were noted between Florida and Ohio and California's STTAS, numerous differences were also found. In an effort to present the analysis of the FFC and SAIC in a clear, structured, and perhaps easily digestible form, the following general categories or headings are used: (1) mission, role, and services; (2) governance; (3) collaboration; and (4) information sharing.

1. Mission, Role, and Primary Services

a. Mission

The primary mission of the FFC, SAIC, and STTAC are each different (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). The FFC is an all crimes and all hazards fusion center; the SAIC is primarily focused on terrorism using an all crimes approach; and the STTAC has historically

performed an antiterrorism mission (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). As mentioned previously in Chapter II, *Baseline Capabilities* recommends that fusion centers consider adopting an all crimes and/or all hazards fusion center (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 7, 24), as implemented by Florida and Ohio. California should, therefore, reassess the mission of the STTAC with input from a wide range of stakeholders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 5, 23). In looking at each center's core hours of operation, the FFC operates on a 24/7 basis, the SAIC has adopted an 8 to 5 format with a process in place for after hours callouts, and the STTAC currently is staffed from 8 to 5 with no callout process specified. While the hours of service for each center are unique, this seems to be an area in which the appropriateness of a fusion center's core business hours should be reevaluated on an ongoing basis to determine whether or not the current hours of operation are adequately servicing the needs of its customers. Establishing hours of operation based upon customer needs and input, an assessment as to the number incidents or requests occurring after hours, and the availability of current staffing appears to be a balanced and reasonable method for determining the appropriate core business hours for the STTAC, in its effort to provide meaningful support to the RTTACs and other stakeholders.

b. Role

As stated earlier in this chapter, part of the author's selection criteria for analyzing Florida and Ohio was based, in part, on the strategic role that both centers appeared to perform within their respective states. That principal role was confirmed in large part through his closer examination of both states. However, he discovered that Ohio's SAIC also performed a more operational role in servicing the needs of the more rural communities within Ohio that fell outside of the regional centers' primary service areas (State fusion center

officials, personal communication, 2010). Examples of specific strategic outputs from the FFC and SAIC are discussed in greater detail under the subheading of Primary Services.

California's current STTAS CONOPS and survey data from the RTTACs, discussed in Chapter V, both suggest a desire for the STTAC to perform a strategic function within California's statewide system, similar to the FFC. One interesting point regarding the roles of the FFC and SAIC that appears largely unwritten and/or unspoken, but discernible through its actions, is that each center plays a role as a facilitator or organizer in attempting to pull together state and regional efforts. They do so through such actions as hosting monthly briefings in Ohio, conducting statewide meetings within every region of Florida, and working to develop a statewide communication plan and CONOPs among Florida's centers, to name just a few.

One additional observation worthy of highlighting is the fact that the FFC, SAIC, and STTAC were all designated as the primary state fusion centers for their respective states by means of a letter sent by each governor to DHS (State fusion center officials, personal communications, 2010). As pointed out in Chapter II, those letters were sent to DHS in response to a request by DHS and the United States Attorney General calling upon each governor to designate one center to serve as a primary point of contact with the federal government on issues of homeland security (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 45).

The informal manner in which each fusion center was designated as the primary state center gives rise to the observation that if a letter is all that is required to establish the designation, a letter is likely all that is required to deselect a center, should the present or future administration elect to do so. While some might argue that because a state law enforcement agency under the purview of the governor manages the FFC, SAIC, and STTAC, current and future governors are less inclined to select another center to fulfill that role, nothing prohibits them from doing so. In fact, most fusion centers nationwide are not

empowered by legislation or governor's executive order (Rollins, 2008, p. 20). While not the principal focus of this research, this informal and ostensibly non-binding method for designating a state center also calls into question whether some local jurisdictions may ultimately question the legitimacy of such a designation and view its role as being nothing more than a counterpart or even a competitor.

c. Primary Services

In assessing the primary strategic services provided by the FFC and SAIC, both provide daily threat briefs and/or statewide situational awareness, often with regional input (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010).). As highlighted in Chapter V, providing statewide situational awareness is a capability or service the RTTACs have recently requested from the STTAC and appears consistent with services currently provided by the FFC and SAIC. In addition to the aforementioned services, the FFC and SAIC prepare and disseminate strategic assessments, are involved in the states' CI/KR efforts, brief state and/or legislative officials, and provide analytical support to regional centers, as requested (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). The SAIC also oversees Ohio's terrorism liaison program (TLO) on a statewide basis, which is a different approach than currently utilized in California.

Under California's system, each of the RTTAC's manages its own regional TLO program using a standardized and state-certified training curriculum (DHS/DOJ Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program and Services, 2010). Since the RTTACs serve as the principal points of contact for local agencies and the regional TLOs within the areas of responsibility (AORs), managing the TLO program locally allows each of the trained TLOs to establish a two-way relationship with their respective RTTAC for their region (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). The use of a standardized training curriculum statewide and the creation of a TLO managers working group among

the STTAS participants helps to maintain statewide consistency across the regional TLO training programs (DHS/DOJ Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program and Services, 2010). The one area that appears to be in need of clarification is what role, if any, the STTAC should play in California's TLO program and whether or not trained TLOs from state agencies should work primarily with the RTTAC that "covers" their respective work location, the STTAC, since it is the "state center," or both. This area might best be clarified using a collaborative process among the STTAS commanders and TLO managers working groups.

Finally, the SAIC's use of a certified strategic planner within their center to assist in the development of the state strategic plan, as well as the establishment of strategic goals and objectives for the SAIC, appears to be a worthwhile and somewhat innovative approach in that it lends credence to the center's strategic role and function both internally and externally.

2. Governance

In comparing Florida's and Ohio's fusion center model to the current construct in California, it is important to note that all of the state and regional centers are independently managed and operated. Some of the centers have their own independent governance processes in place to help provide input and/or guide center activities and others do not (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). Although some of Ohio's fusion centers and all of Florida's and California's fusion centers have separate governance structures among state and regional centers as "individual parts" of a conceptualized statewide system, none of the three states—Ohio, Florida, or California—presently have a formal governance body or policy group to help ensure that collective statewide efforts among all centers are properly aligned and/or fully synchronized (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). Similar to California, Florida has instead established a commanders group among state and regional fusion center commanders to meet and discuss issues

on an ongoing basis and hopefully come to agreement on matters of integration and performance (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). Additionally, Florida is currently in the process of developing a communication plan and written CONOPS to help formally define those agreements in writing (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010). While Ohio's SAIC holds monthly briefings among fusion center commanders, agreements among the state and regional centers are in large part accomplished through interpersonal relationships, collaboration, and verbal agreements among participants (State fusion center official, personal communication, 2010).

3. Collaboration

In an effort to foster greater collaboration among state and regional fusion centers, both the FFC and SAIC employ a number of methods intended to increase contact and participation between each center (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). Some of those methods include hosting meetings among center commanders, conducting briefings, utilizing conference calls, and assigning personnel or analysts to various regional fusion centers on a fulltime or interim basis (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). Even though the assignment of CHP personnel within each of the RTTACs predates the CHP's recent assignment to manage the STTAC, the presence of CHP personnel within California's state and regional centers offers a similar connection among each of California's STTAS centers. Ohio also includes the assignment of regional representatives within the SAIC (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010), but similar regional assignments to the STTAC may be logistically difficult and/or cost prohibitive due to the size of California, when compared to Ohio.

As pointed out earlier in the chapter, the FFC's and SAIC's designation as the state fusion center, much like the STTAC's, was established through a letter by each governor and not through some formal legislative process or executive order (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General,

2008, p. 45). The FFC is perhaps closest to being formally recognized in that the FDLE statutorily serves as the principal state investigative authority for domestic security issues in Florida (Florida Statute 943.03101, 2002). However, given the largely informal nature by which most state fusion centers are designated, the designation itself in large part appears to be more of a "nominal" title, as opposed to bestowing any formal authority upon state fusion centers in their working relationship with regional and local centers. What is clear from the author's research in this chapter is that the relationships between state, regional, and local fusion centers, including their respective roles, responsibilities, and services, are largely established and maintained through voluntary collaboration and not by any single fusion center's designation as the primary state center. While the FFC and SAIC each perform tasks that can earn them the title of "facilitators," such as hosting meetings and briefings among participants, the true authority or power appears to lie within the will of the collective group. For that reason, the importance of collaboration is discussed in much greater detail in Chapter VIII.

4. Information Sharing

Unlike the STTAC, the FFC and SAIC both oversee their respective state information sharing systems and statewide data repositories (State fusion center officials, personal communication, 2010). While California's Department of Justice (DOJ) manages California's Joint Regional Information Exchange System (CAL JRIES) and host of other statewide criminal justice systems, a widely accepted and common information sharing platform between the STTAC and RTTACs has not yet been identified or agreed upon (State and local homeland security officials, personal communication, 2010) . As mentioned in Chapter V, during a recent meeting among the STTAS commanders and subsequent survey by the CHP, the STTAC and RTTAC commanders agreed in principle to the notion of identifying a common operating system or information sharing platform through which unclassified products and information can be shared (State and local homeland security officials, personal communication, 2010). The current

models utilized by the FFC and SAIC, coupled with California DOJ's present role in managing Cal JRIES and other criminal justice systems, suggest that a statewide information management system might be one option. Other options include a joint decision among the STTAC and four RTTACs to utilize a current or prospective federal or private sector solution.

VII. "EURO FUSION": COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTELLIGENCE CENTERS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND GERMANY

While federal publications, such as the *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities*, offer meaningful recommendations for states and local jurisdictions to consider when establishing fusion centers or evaluating the capabilities of existing centers, they fail to include lessons that can be learned from other countries having joint intelligence or fusion centers. Examining intelligence centers in other countries offers alternative methods to consider when evaluating the role and mission of the STTAC and, in doing so, provides examples of how California might integrate the experiences and/or best practices of the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany into a more efficient, collaborative, and synchronized statewide system. The UK and Germany were both selected for comparative analysis because of their similar democratic principles, close relationship as U.S. allies, and history in addressing analogous acts of terrorism; including the London Underground bombing in 2005 and the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich.

A. UNITED KINGDOM: FUSION "ACROSS THE POND"

It is important that those engaged in terrorism realize that our determination to defend our values and our way of life is greater than their determination to cause death and destruction to innocent people in a desire to impose extremism on the world.

Tony Blair, Prime Minister
In response to attack on London Underground, July 7, 2005

Not unlike the U.S., stopping terrorist attacks is a top priority of the UK, and the collection and analysis of intelligence are important factors in the UK's efforts to detect and prevent terrorist acts (Home Office, 2009, p. 13). In the wake of perceived intelligence deficiencies surrounding the Bali Bombings in 2002, the

UK established the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) in June 2003 (Intelligence and Security Committee, 2003). The genesis for establishing the JTAC bears remarkable similarities to the birth of fusion centers here in the U.S. immediately following 9/11, as both countries appeared committed to addressing perceived intelligence deficiencies associated with significant acts of terrorism.

The JTAC serves as the UK's operations center responsible for the analysis and assessment of international terrorism-related intelligence (Security Service MI5, 2009). As the word "Joint" in its title suggests, the JTAC is a multi-agency operation, consisting of representatives from 16 different governmental agencies (Security Service MI5, 2009). Prior to the JTAC's creation in 2003, the responsibility for analyzing classified and open source intelligence information and preparing threat assessment reports fell upon the Counter-Terrorist Analysis Centre (CTAC) (Intelligence and Security Committee, 2002), which was developed by the Security Service immediately following 9/11 (Cabinet Office, 2003, p. 5). Due to the growing number of intelligence leads received by the CTAC, and in an effort to enhance the effectiveness of the UK's overall counterterrorism abilities, the JTAC was created to replace it (Cabinet Office, 2003, pp. 3, 5). Under its present command structure, the JTAC reports directly to the UK Security Service's Director General (Security Service MI5, 2009).

In addition to having a formal command structure under the leadership of the Director General of the Security Services, the JTAC also has an established governance system managed by the Cabinet Office (Security Service MI5, 2009). The Cabinet Office is tasked with overseeing the JTAC governance board, which evaluates the center's effectiveness and helps ensure the needs of its customers are fulfilled (Security Service MI5, 2009).

On the subject of collaboration and information sharing, the JTAC is credited with assisting the UK in building more effective working relationships between intelligence, law enforcement and security organizations (Home Office, 2009, p. 64). The positive alliances and teamwork developed among agencies working in the JTAC have extended beyond the facility itself, as the JTAC has

also created an effective partnership with approximately 400 law enforcement officers assigned to the West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit—a segment of the Police Counter-Terrorism Network (Home Office, 2009, p. 136). In fact, a former ranking officer with the Metropolitan Police Counter-Terrorism Command has argued that the collaborative working relationships established between intelligence and law enforcement agencies are perhaps the most important change to have occurred in improving counterterrorism efforts in the UK (Home Office, 2009, p. 64).

In terms of funding and sustainability, evidence exists to suggest that investments in counterterrorism capabilities, including those intended to increase their resiliency, are a top priority in the UK (HM Government, 2006, p. 27). In fact, funding for counterterrorism efforts, including intelligence and resiliency, has doubled since 9/11 (HM Government, 2006, p. 27). While the JTAC's workload has reportedly increased by 60 percent since being established in 2003, its staffing has also grown by more than 70 percent over the same time period (Home Office, 2009, p. 64). Not surprisingly, a commensurate increase in federal funding to help support homeland security efforts in the U.S. has also occurred since 9/11, including funding to support state and local fusion centers. Since 9/11, DHS estimates it has spent more than $300 million dollars to support state and local fusion centers in the United States (Rollins, 2008, p. 44).

B. GERMANY: ÜBER FUSION (SUPER FUSION)

We drew lessons from the terrible events at Munich, when everything went as wrong as it could go. That terrible attack marked a turning point in the country's history. We were naive then. Today we're prepared.

Wolfgang Schaeuble, German Interior Minister, June 9, 2006
Recalling terrorist attacks at the 1972 Munich Olympics

Immediately following 9/11, Germany passed legislation to consolidate counterterrorism efforts among the federal police agencies and improve their

prevention capabilities (Hellmuth, 2009, pp. 1–2). The 2001 Anti-Terror Package was intended to provide a more centralized approach to counterterrorism efforts by fusing together police intelligence and analysis capabilities and enhancing the sharing of information among various departments (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 2). To that end, the Joint Counter-Terrorism Centre, called "Gemeinsames Terrorismusabwehrzentrum" or GTAZ for short, was created in 2004 to assist in collecting, analyzing, and sharing intelligence among 40 separate agencies, including federal and state (known as "Länder") representatives (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 2). Similar to the UK's JTAC, the GTAZ consists of law enforcement, intelligence, and security services (Neve, Vervoorn, Leeuw, & Bogaerts, 2006, pp. 45–46). In fact, all 32 Länder security agencies are GTAZ participants, in addition to federal, judicial, and even foreign law enforcement personnel (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 4). The GTAZ is based in Berlin and consists of roughly 200 personnel from federal and national police agencies and the Federal Intelligence Service (Mauer, 2007, p. 68). As a result of this widespread participation, German Chancellor Merkel has commented on the "spirit of cooperation" that has been fostered among agencies participating in the GTAZ in their efforts to share information and prevent terrorist acts (The Federal Chancellor, Press and Information Office, 2007).

It is interesting to note, while all Länder within Germany are represented within the GTAZ, very few state agencies in the U.S. participate in the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) in Washington D.C. (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 3). This difference in strategy and/or structure can be based in part on the disparate size of both nations. Having representatives from all 50 states assigned year-round to the NCTC can undoubtedly present logistical challenges for many states given their distance from Washington D.C. Instead of hosting representatives from each state at the NCTC, federal agencies, such as DHS and FBI, have elected to embed analysts in many of the 72 state, regional, and/or local fusion centers currently operating within the U.S. (Strohm, 2009).

Similar to the JTAC in the UK, the GTAZ and other Länder operated intelligence centers in Germany are intended to fill the information gap among law enforcement and intelligence services and do not contain representatives from other disciplines, such as fire, health, or emergency medical services (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 4). While the majority of fusion centers in the U.S. have been moving towards the adoption of an “all crimes” or “all hazards” mission, the intelligence centers in Germany and the UK have remained focused exclusively on counterterrorism. By doing so, Germany’s GTAZ, much like their JTAC counterpart in the UK, appears to have greater consistency in terms of participating agencies, as they are primarily law enforcement and intelligence based (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 4).

Unlike the UK’s JTAC, the GTAZ does not have an appointed director (Jackson & Warnes, 2009, p. 109) and operates in large part from separate facilities within the GTAZ facility, as opposed to a centralized command center (Hellmuth, 2009, pp. 4–5). Participating law enforcement agencies, for example, are physically housed in one portion of the GTAZ, while the intelligence agencies are located in a separate part of the campus (Wieck, 2006, p. 5). This unique structure represents a conscious effort by the German government to avoid legal challenges that would likely occur if intelligence and law enforcement functions were consolidated into a new agency (Glaessner, 2009, p. 15). Accordingly, both entities—law enforcement and intelligence—remain under their own respective command structures, but meet daily at the GTAZ to share intelligence information (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 5). In addition to conducting daily briefings among participating agencies, the GTAZ routinely prepares threat assessments (in the form of daily reports), shares resources, gathers intelligence, and strives to enhance information sharing to assist with active terrorism investigations (Federal Ministry of the Interior, Undated). Since participating federal and Länder agencies can continue to work from their own respective commands, a greater number of law enforcement and intelligence agencies have elected to participate in GTAZ (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 4).

In addition to participating in the GTAZ, several Länder within Germany have elected to create their own intelligence centers to help safeguard their own respective operational areas (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 2). This is not unlike the presence of state, regional, and locally managed fusion centers here in the United States. Under Germany's current political structure, the Länder wield tremendous power when it comes to shaping counterterrorism procedures throughout Germany, as they possess the authority to veto many counterterrorism policies enacted by Parliament (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 2). In fact, the Länder have historically blocked attempts by the German Parliament to give federal authorities oversight surrounding all law enforcement intelligence (Hellmuth, 2009, pp. 2–3). Not only have the Länder been successful in preventing Parliament's efforts essentially to federalize intelligence, they have prevailed in acquiring access to intelligence information contained in the national anti-terrorism database (Hellmuth, 2009, pp. 2-3). The political power of the Länder is further illustrated by the fact they have been active participants in designing federal database standards and are not merely users of the system (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 3). While Germany has pursued information sharing with other countries in the European Union, and encouraged interoperability among their various criminal databases, almost 80 percent of the terrorist information contained in the antiterrorism database originates from Germany (Mauer, 2007, p. 72). The overwhelming percentage of German-based intelligence in the antiterrorism database suggests a robust system of collection and information sharing among German law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

C. ANALYSIS

By analyzing both the UK's and Germany's joint intelligence center models, it is feasible that specific recommendations or "lessons learned" can be identified, which, if implemented, can benefit the STTAC and California's overall fusion center system. In conducting this assessment, the following categories are explored: mission, composition, governance, collaboration, information sharing, and funding and sustainability.

1. Mission

The common “counterterrorism” focus among intelligence centers in the UK and Germany provides a standardized mission for seeking to prevent terrorist acts, through enhanced collaboration and information sharing. Having this common goal appears to have assisted both nations in attaining widespread participation by law enforcement and intelligence agencies at various levels of government. Although adopting a standardized mission towards terrorism only has been effective in both the UK and Germany, this approach is inconsistent with federal guidance here in the United States and the current trend of fusion centers nationwide. According to the report entitled *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Centers*, centers electing not to adopt an all crimes or all hazards structure must annually justify their reasons for not doing so (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 7). Additionally, while most fusion centers in the United States started with a similar counterterrorism design, the majority have broadened their scope over the past few years to include an “all crimes” or “all hazards” emphasis (Rollins, 2008, p. 21). Since the success attributed to the common mission shared by joint intelligence centers in the UK and Germany is based on a counterterrorism model, an inference can be made that a consistent all crimes or all hazards mission might also promote positive results. Currently, the STTAC has employed a terrorism only mission, while most of the RTTACs have adopted an all crimes approach or are in the process of doing so. Since California’s STTAS is based on the collective efforts of the STTAC and four RTTACs, a consistent mission, as demonstrated by the UK and German intelligence systems, may offer the STTAC and California’s STTAS a more standardized approach towards safeguarding the state.

2. Composition

In addition to having a common mission, the UK and German intelligence center models employ a similar structure regarding agency participation. Both

countries have focused on building a successful information-sharing environment between law enforcement and the intelligence community. U.S. fusion center guidelines, on the other hand, have historically recommended that centers be comprised of multiple disciplines from various levels of government and the private sector, such as law enforcement, emergency services, public health, etc. (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 3). Unlike the UK and Germany, most fusion centers in the United States tend to have a less standardized and more diverse range of fusion center participants, which can differ largely from fusion center to fusion center. California is no exception. In addition to the STTAC and RTTACs pursuing independent missions for their respective centers—counterterrorism, all crimes, or all hazards—each have elected to include different agencies/disciplines as part of their operations. As such, the composition of the STTAC and RTTACs are currently very different.

Since the standard composition of participating agencies in the UK and Germany has been credited with enhancing collaboration and information sharing within their respective centers, developing a mutually agreed upon set of core disciplines for the STTAC and RTTACs may offer similar benefits for California. For example, if the commanders agree that fire service participation is desirable in all of California's fusion centers, the likelihood of fire departments wanting to participate may be increased given their potential to collaborate and share information with similar agencies statewide. Moreover, since local fire departments are already familiar and work closely with their state and local counterparts during mutual aid events, bringing those pre-established working relationships into the fusion centers may ultimately serve as a bridge to improve collaboration between centers. A similar argument can be made for other state and local disciplines that participate as a core element, provided positive working relationships are established and information is shared.

3. Governance

The UK and Germany have addressed the management and governance of their respective centers in an entirely different manner. Under the UK system, a clearly defined chain of command exists as to who manages the JTAC and a formal governance system is in place to help ensure its overall efficiency. The German system, conversely, is more loosely constructed without a designated leader or prescribed governance process. While these two approaches to governance are dissimilar, comparisons to both the UK and German models can be found in California's current fusion center system.

Similar to the UK, the four RTTACs each have an assigned fusion center director and a locally established governance board, which provides direction to their respective center. The STTAC, on the other hand, was originally created as an equal partnership between OHS, CHP, and DOJ, with no formal leader or designated governance board—similar to the German system. The STTAC's "management by consensus" approach has at times led to operational differences among the participating agencies without providing a clearly defined mechanism—director or governance board—to help resolve disputes (State homeland security professional, personal conversation, 2009). The recent decision to have CHP take command of the STTAC appears more in-line with the UK model and that of the RTTACs. While each of the four RTTACs in California has established its own separate governance board, as recommended by *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, pp. 23–24), the STTAC only recently followed suit. With the transfer of management oversight to the CHP, the STTAC recently implemented a governance structure that consists of the three primary participating agencies—CHP, California DOJ, and Cal EMA. While the STTAC's governance process is still in its infancy, presently no equivalent governance structure overseeing the STTAS exists.

4. Collaboration

Germany's GTAZ ostensibly places emphasis on "joint intelligence" as a product resulting from greater collaboration, as opposed to being the derivative of a physical structure or "center." Under Germany's loosely constructed system, building relationships, communication, and a common information-sharing platform are seen as more important than building a single operations center to house participating organizations jointly. In contrast, the term "fusion center" in the United States, including California, may tend to overemphasize the importance of the physical "center" itself, as opposed to the "fusion" or collaborative process it is intended to promote. The U.S. model appears focused on creating the center first and collaboration second, while the German model seemingly sees collaboration first and the center as perhaps unimportant. This observation may offer some insight into why some fusion centers in the United States tend to view themselves as being in competition with other centers (Rollins, 2008, p. 8).

5. Information Sharing

Unlike the UK, Germany's information sharing model was the result of legislation and a national effort to construct a common communications platform through which federal and Länder-based law enforcement and intelligence organizations can input and share information. Länder were afforded the opportunity to provide input into the design of the national database (Hellmuth, 2009, p. 3), and all 16 Interior Ministers from the Länder agreed on the database and the parameters for its use (Riecker, 2006). Having a voice in the construction and development of the database may ultimately help to build "buy-in" among stakeholders and end users, as they are participants in the overall design. The end result has been the creation of a single system consistently utilized by agencies throughout Germany.

While the United States has developed multiple information-sharing systems in an effort to provide fusion centers with the tools necessary to collect, analyze, and share intelligence information, many of those systems were developed without direct input from the fusion centers themselves and have subsequently received varying degrees of support (Deffer, 2006, p. 4). The widespread availability of multiple federal, state, local, and commercially developed platforms provides individual centers with many options—perhaps too many. Under the current system in California, for example, the STTAC and RTTACs have the ability individually to pursue whatever system(s) they believe to be most beneficial to their respective center. While a selected system may provide enhanced information sharing capabilities among agencies represented within a particular center, it may offer little to no benefit in providing greater connectivity and information sharing between the other RTTACs and/or STTAC. Drawing from the experiences of the German system, efforts can be taken to create buy-in among the STTAC and RTTACs as to the best method(s) for attaining enhanced information sharing between all of California's centers and potentially others across the nation.

6. Funding and Sustainability

Similar to the United States, both the UK and German efforts towards enhanced intelligence sharing have been financially supported by their respective governments. Unlike the UK and U.S. models, Germany appears to have placed less emphasis on the need for a co-located command center. Instead, it has focused its attention and resources towards daily meetings and the development of a standardized national system for collecting, analyzing, and sharing information across agencies. Since the lease costs associated with California's co-located fusion centers collectively represent several million dollars annually (State homeland security official, personal conversation, 2009), efforts to consolidate or reduce the need for on-site participation through greater connectivity may offer cost effective solutions.

On the subject of sustainability, lessons can be learned from the UK and German models to assist fusion centers in the United States, including those in California. The UK and German systems, for example, have had considerable success in fostering effective partnerships and collaboration among participating agencies, including personnel working in the field. Given the fact that staffing represents one of the critical factors in fusion center sustainability, efforts to build effective partnerships must continue to be a high priority. Additionally, given the current economic crisis in the United States and California, future sustainability is also predicated in large part on the ability for centers to remain fully funded. Currently, funding for the STTAC is derived entirely through federal grants; making it susceptible to collapse, should federal funding be reduced or eliminated entirely. In the face of this potential vulnerability, Germany's GTAZ structure offers a viable solution. Space limitations at the current facility severely restrict the number of agencies physically assigned to the STTAC. As the GTAZ model suggests, participation in the STTAC should not be based on whether or not adequate space for an agency inside the STTAC facility exists. Instead, participation should be based on whether inclusion of an agency is deemed critical towards safeguarding California. In the current fiscal environment, it may make more sense to have adjunct agencies participating from their own workplace—similar to the GTAZ—and either reporting to the facility on an as-needed basis or through remote connectivity. This method appears to offer a feasible solution to centers faced with the unpopular decision of physically closing due to funding limitations or who lack sufficient space to include additional partners. The potential use of virtual fusion centers as a connectivity option is also supported by the *Findings and Recommendations of the Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) Support and Implementation Project*, which encourages the development virtual platforms to enable information sharing among regional partners and to permit remote access by law enforcement officers in the field (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2008, pp. 19–20).

VIII. IN SEARCH OF GREATER COLLABORATION BETWEEN CALIFORNIA'S STATE AND REGIONAL FUSION CENTERS

Fusion Centers embody the core of collaboration and as demands increase and resources decrease, fusion centers will become an effective tool to maximize available resources and build trusted relationships.

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 4)

A. BACKGROUND

The widely held definition of fusion centers starts with the premise that "a fusion center is a *collaborative* effort of two or more agencies…." (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 12). The words "collaborative," "collaboration," and other variations of the root word "collaborate" are mentioned 74 times in *Fusion Center Guidelines* and are discussed an additional 11 times in *Baseline Capabilities*. In fact, *Fusion Center Guidelines* contends, "fusion centers embody the core of collaboration" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 4, 12).

This chapter examines the role and importance collaboration plays in fusion center operations. In doing so, the significance of collaboration not only *within* fusion centers, but *between* fusion centers is studied, and possible methods for strengthening collaboration within the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) and among California's statewide network of fusion centers, the State Terrorism Threat Assessment System explored (STTAS).

B. COLLABORATION AND RELATED TERMS DEFINED

Webster's dictionary defines the word "collaboration" as "work[ing] jointly with others or together, especially in an intellectual endeavor" (Merriam-Webster, 2010) While collaboration is often associated with "cooperation" and

"coordination," it is important to understand the distinctions between these three terms, as they are arguably not synonymous, nor completely interchangeable.

The word "coordination," for example, can apply to situations where no direct relationship exists between individuals or groups and in which each entity merely considers the activities of another person or group to avoid potential conflicts (Huxham & Macdonald, 1992, p. 53). "Cooperation," on the other hand, can describe circumstances where individuals or groups do interact with each other, but simply do so as a means of allowing each other to achieve their own goals or objectives, but not necessarily those of the collective group (Huxham & Macdonald, 1992, p. 53). Finally, the term "collaboration," as the author intends to use it throughout this chapter and the remainder of this thesis, refers to situations in which individuals or groups work together to achieve some common mission or purpose, while also continuing to meet their own individual or group objectives (Huxham & Macdonald, 1992, p. 53). This is an important distinction, as cooperation and coordination alone cannot ensure that individuals, groups, organizations, agencies, or fusion centers work jointly together to achieve a common objective. Collaboration, as defined above, is the fundamental adhesive necessary to "fuse" the combined efforts of California's fusion centers together towards a common purpose or objective.

"The development and exchange of intelligence…requires the commitment, dedication, and trust of a diverse group of men and women who believe in the power of collaboration."

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 1)

C. THE CALL FOR COLLABORATION IN AND BETWEEN FUSION CENTERS

As articulated in *Fusion Center Guidelines*, fusion centers are intended to amass a diverse group of agencies and disciplines representing various levels of government and other sectors within a "collaborative environment" intended to support the collective goal of "maximizing the ability to detect, prevent,

investigate, apprehend, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, pp. 12–13). The underlying question is how to create a "collaborative environment" not only within the confines of individual fusion centers, like the STTAC, but also across a network of fusion centers, such as California's STTAS.

Fusion Center Guidelines offers some insights into this theoretical question by providing recommended "guidelines" intended to promote a more collaborative environment within fusion centers. These guidelines include the need to develop joint mission statements, goals, and objectives that fusion (center participants collectively support (Guideline 2); the importance of establishing a collaborative working environment through diverse participation and frequent interaction to create greater opportunities for information sharing (Guideline 4); and the value of establishing an MOU among fusion center participants (Guideline 5), which *Fusion Center Guidelines* argues is the "foundation of a collaborative initiative founded on trust…." (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 5). By striving to build and maintain greater collaboration among fusion center participants, *Fusion Center Guidelines* states a more consistent and unified approach towards achieving common goals can be realized (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 10). In addition, establishing a collaborative environment is also an important part of sharing ownership and decisions among fusion center partners (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, 2006, p. 29), as successful inter-agency collaboration requires effective and committed leadership from each of the participating agencies (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2009, p. 3)

"Collaboration is vital to the success of fusion centers."

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 17)

While *Fusion Center Guidelines* focuses in large part on building collaboration *within* the context of individual fusion centers, it offers little guidance on precisely how to attain meaningful collaboration *between* multiple centers, especially over great distances, where face-to-face contact and direct interpersonal exchanges are by their very nature limited—like California's STTAS. In fact, most of the current literature on fusion centers, as highlighted in the Literature Review (Chapter II), focuses predominantly on what the author refers to as "intra-fusion center" collaboration, where participants are largely assembled within a collocated facility or in close proximity to one another.

Although the recommendations and competencies outlined in *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities* are not exclusively intended for intra-fusion center operations and are equally desirable and necessary for "inter-fusion center" or "center-to-center" relationships, the challenge becomes how best to enable or strengthen collaboration *between* centers physically separated, independently managed, and already engaged in other collaborative relationships among participants *within* their respective jurisdictions. As the STTAC and Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers (RTTACs) each work independently to build collaboration and pursue mutually identified goals within their individual areas of responsibility, they are also called upon to work collectively as part of a separate statewide collaborative enterprise that requires the development of mutually negotiated statewide objectives, which may or may not match those previously negotiated at the local level. In many ways, the collaborative relationship being collectively sought among all five STTAS participants—the STTAC and four RTTACs—can more accurately be described a "collaboration of collaborations," with California's STTAS serving as an overarching collaborative structure or "overlay" comprised of five fusion centers, each having their own preexisting collaborative associations. Figure 10 shows a conceptual model depicting the desired end state for collaboration among the STTAS participants, which displays the STTAC, Sacramento RTTAC, Northern

California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC), Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC), and San Diego (SD) RTTAC seamlessly connected as part of a collaborative statewide system.

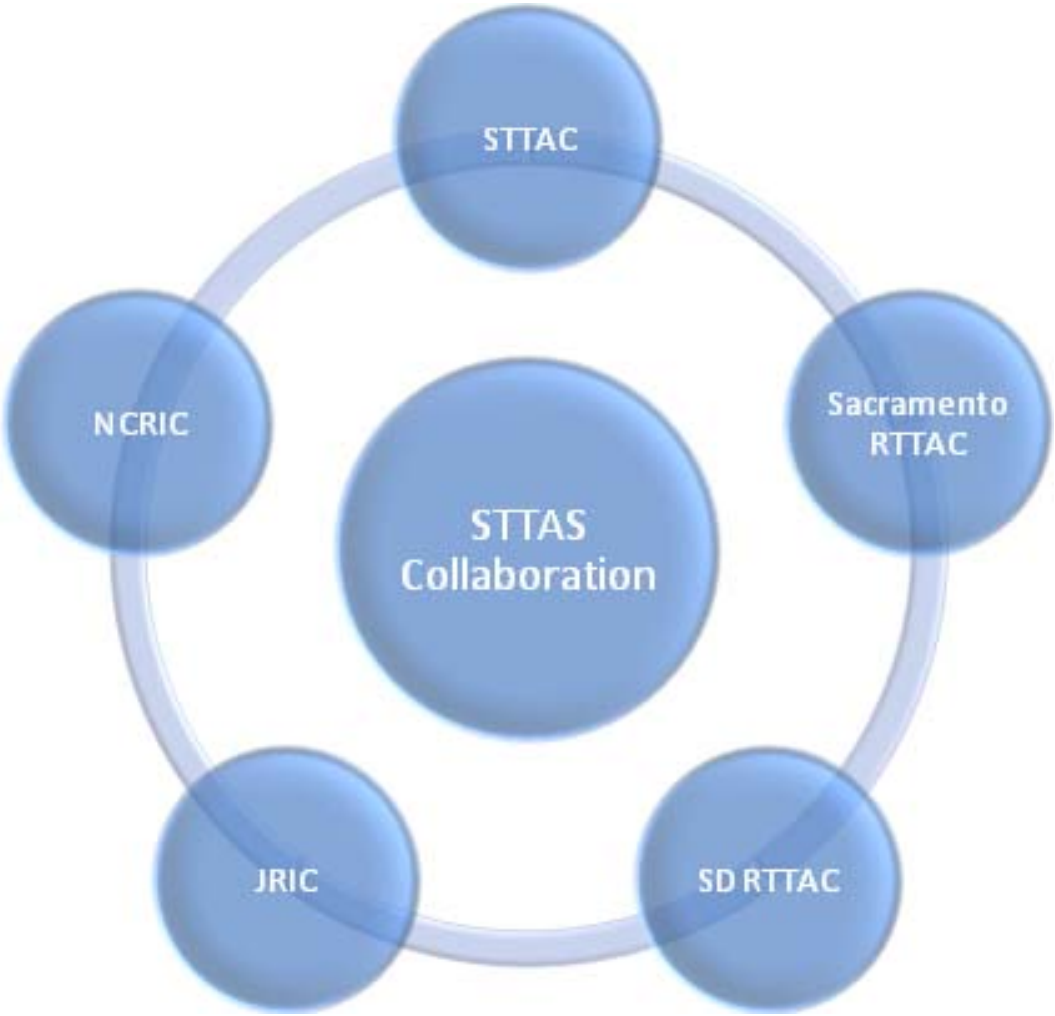


Figure 10. Conceptual STTAS Collaboration Model

While *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities* provides sound counsel on the strategic and technical skills and capabilities required of state and local fusion centers through interagency collaboration, the roadmap for empowering horizontal inter-fusion center collaboration among multiple centers is a chapter yet unwritten. Therefore, the balance of this chapter and, largely, the remainder of this thesis, explores ways to strengthen center-to-center

collaboration among California's distributed network of state and regional fusion centers operating within the STTAS.

> ***"Collaboration begins with interpersonal relationships, and fusion centers should institutionalize these relationships through ongoing dialogue and information sharing."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 29)*

D. DEVELOPING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AS A PRECURSOR TO COLLABORATION

More often than not, collaboration starts with the formation of sound interpersonal relationships (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29) that often stem from individuals or agencies working together in a collocated environment towards some common goal or objective (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2005, p. 9). In fact, the majority of federal guidance related to fusion centers touts the benefits of having agencies working together in a common or shared work location, so that interpersonal relationships and improved communication can develop through daily, face-to-face contact (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 47).

To help illustrate the benefits of agency collocation, studies have shown that fusion centers having dedicated Department of Homeland Security (DHS) personnel assigned to them customarily report having stronger working relationships and greater collaboration with DHS than centers that do not have a full-time DHS representative (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, 2008, p. 37). For similar reasons, other publications recommend conducting regular fusion center meetings among staff in

> ***"To ensure the effectiveness of collaboration with the fusion center, lines of communication should be established…."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 30)*

an effort to foster greater personal contact, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and help promote interagency collaboration (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, 2006, p. 30).

While agencies working together within an common business location are afforded the opportunity to interact with and develop interpersonal relationships among the people and agencies they work side-by-side with on a daily basis, the challenge becomes how to build interpersonal relationships between separate fusion centers not collocated, which may not interact with each other on a daily basis, and whose general staff may not have met or been afforded the opportunity to establish a personal relationship with personnel in the other center(s). Research on distant interagency collaborations concedes that collaboration is not easily attained in situations where participants are physically separated and do not have the opportunity to frequently meet and work directly with each other (Santoro, Borges, & Rezende, 2006, p. 717). Due to the inherent difficulties physical separation can cause in regards to interpersonal contact, finding alternative solutions to increase interpersonal relationships, center-to-center interaction, and to promote greater collaboration among the center participants is highly desirable (Santoro, Borges, & Rezende, 2006, p. 717). One of the recommended ways of enhancing collaboration within a distributed network, such as the STTAS, is through the formation of work groups with a specific purpose or goal in mind (Santoro, Borges, & Rezende, 2006, p. 718).

To their credit, the RTTAC and STTAC commanders have implemented a number of alternative solutions designed to increase interpersonal relationships and/or coordination through the establishment of various work groups and standing inter-fusion center committees (RTTAC and STTAC commanders, personal communication, 2010). One such method has been the implementation of quarterly STTAS commanders meetings, in which the STTAC and RTTAC commanders meet jointly to discuss operational issues among each other and with other STTAS stakeholders, such as DHS, California Highway Patrol (CHP), California Department of Justice (DOJ), and California Emergency Management

Agency (Cal EMA). These meetings provide commanders the ability to meet face-to-face on a recurring basis, where they can get to know one another and potentially strengthen interpersonal relationships, trust, and the willingness to collaborate among themselves and their respective centers.

> ***"Inherent in a collaborative environment is two-way communication."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 29)*

In January 2009, a Lead Analysts Working Group (LAWG) was also created to provide senior analysts from the STTAC and RTTACs the ability to interact more frequently through weekly phone calls and monthly meetings (RTTAC and STTAC commanders, personal communication, 2010). These forums provide lead analysts from the STTAC and RTTACs the ability to discuss analytical products and other collaborative endeavors on an ongoing basis, while also affording the opportunity to establish and/or strengthen interpersonal relationships that might otherwise be physically prohibitive due to their separate geographical locations and lack of a common work area. Similarly, the managers of each center's Terrorism Liaison Officer (TLO) Program have created a standing work group that enables ongoing contact with their respective counterparts in an effort to increase the effectiveness of their collective efforts through heightened interpersonal relationships (RTTAC and STTAC commanders, personal communication, 2010).

In addition to the methods outlined above, one prospective technique for increasing interpersonal contact and potentially enhancing interpersonal relationships between the STTAC and RTTACs, not currently being utilized, involves the use of existing video conferencing capabilities, which each of California's fusion centers currently possess. By utilizing this technological bridge between centers on a recurring basis, "virtual" face-to-face contact between STTAC and RTTACs can be increased and personnel who have not had the

opportunity to meet with their respective counterparts can be afforded the opportunity to experience direct contact with each other through a common virtual work environment.

E. THE IMPACT OF TRUST ON COLLABORATION

In his book, *The Speed of Trust*, Stephen M. R. Covey defines "trust" as "confidence" and "mistrust" as "suspicion" (Covey, 2006, p. 5). To promote collaboration within fusion centers, one must first develop an environment among participants in which trust is present (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29). In fact, *Fusion Center Guidelines* argues that "successful collaboration is contingent upon a trusting environment" (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 29). The *National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan* also acknowledges the critical relationship between trust and information sharing by pointing out that information and intelligence sharing are predicated upon foundational trust between parties and that trust can weaken or vanish in situations where real or perceived concerns are held by either party in a interagency relationship (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2005, p. 9). Since collaboration and information sharing are arguably voluntary actions in which each party can ultimately decide whether to engage in the collaboration or to what extent or with whom they share information, trust seemingly has the ability to make or break the collaborative and information sharing process. This assertion is further supported by literature that finds in situations where trust and interpersonal relationships are strained, collaboration is also adversely impacted (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29). The lack of trusted partnerships is also cited as one of the principal obstacles to collaboration (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 9).

"Successful collaboration is contingent upon a trusting environment."

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 29)

> ***"Fostering a collaborative environment builds trust among participating entities, strengthens partnerships, and provides individual as well as a collective ownership in the mission and goals of the center"***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 29)*

As mentioned previously in Chapter I, the absence of full time law enforcement or multiagency participation within the STTAC for an extended period of time negatively impacted its ability to collaborate with the RTTACs and other federal, state, and local stakeholders (Federal, state, and local homeland security professionals, personal communication, 2008). As the STTAC seeks to rebuild multiagency participation, trust, and collaboration within its internal operations, it must also focus on building trust and collaboration externally with the RTTACs and other homeland security stakeholders.

With the recent installation of a new management team within the STTAC and a newly signed MOU in place between CHP, California DOJ, and Cal EMA, efforts have been underway collaboratively to redefine the STTAC's mission, develop a formal mission statement, create a strategic plan, adopt a comprehensive security agreement, and implement an appropriate governance system (State homeland security professionals, personal communication, 2009), in part, to instill greater "confidence" or "trust" both internally and externally and foster enhanced collaboration. While initial changes in the STTAC's management structure have been viewed favorably by various internal and external stakeholders (Homeland security professionals, personal communication, 2009), long-term impressions are largely dependent on the STTAC's ability to follow through on its promises and commitments (Covey, 2006, pp. 45–46). In fact, Covey argues that keeping commitments is one of the fastest ways to build or restore trust (Covey, 2006, p. 13). Since building trust is largely a function of both character and competency (Covey, 2006, p. 30), the STTAC must not only demonstrate integrity as an organization, it must also show its competency to produce positive results to increase trust and collaboration among internal and

external stakeholders (Covey, 2006, pp. 44–54). A significant part of these character-related functions is dependent upon the STTAC following through on its promises and commitments. As highlighted in *The Speed of Trust*, one method for doing so is to develop a mission statement with input from critical stakeholders and subsequently abiding by it (Covey, 2006, p. 78). More importantly, the STTAC must produce results, or what Covey refers to as "fruit," to help build credibility, as consistent accomplishments are likely to have a far greater impact on trust and credibility than the mission statement itself (Covey, 2006, p. 128). In fact, producing results is perhaps one of the most effective means of converting skeptics or naysayers into "believers" by increasing trust (Covey, 2006, p. 174).

As the STTAC attempts to enhance trust and credibility through positive results and sustained performance, one model worthy of consideration advocates utilizing a cyclical process that begins in pursuit of small milestones and eventually increases to more complicated goals as trust is propagated. Through this proposed methodology: (1) parties start out in pursuit of attainable goals that can reasonably be achieved; (2) through repeated successful performance, participants build greater trust; and (3) as trust builds, participants seek more ambitious goals and collaboration (Vangen & Huxham, 2003, pp. 10–14).

F. COLLABORATION AT A DISTANCE: BUILDING COLLABORATION AMONG DISPERSED ORGANIZATIONAL NETWORKS

Given the dispersed geographical and organizational nature of state and local fusion centers, the relationship among centers is often referred to as a "network." In fact, an advanced search through Google on the words "fusion AND center AND network" revealed 13,600,000 possible references containing all three terms (Google, 2010). The *National Strategy for Information Sharing* calls for the creation of a national network of fusion centers (President of the United States, 2007, p. 11), and California's *Homeland Security Strategy* also refers to the STTAC and RTTACs as being information networks on at least one occasion (Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 76). This segment, discusses

research conducted on interagency collaboration among "networks" of organizations in hopes of identifying key principles and methods for strengthening collaboration among California's state and regional fusion centers. For purposes of this discussion, it may be helpful to define the term "network," as used in this chapter.

A network is "an organizational system capable of congregating individuals and institutions…around common themes and/or objectives" (Santoro, Borges, & Rezende, 2006, p. 716). It is established through interconnected horizontal relationships—much like state and local fusion centers—brought together for collaborative goals and objectives (Chisholm, 1998). Using network organizations, people or organizations geographically separated can be brought together as part of a multidisciplinary effort to address a common problem (Santoro, Borges, & Rezende, 2006, p. 716). The challenge becomes how to manage these distant relationships using conventional methods when they are individually self-governed and sometimes separated by great distances, similar to the fusion centers within STTAS (Santoro, Borges, & Rezende, 2006, p. 716). Unlike a hierarchical structure with an identified leader, collaborative relationships involving different organizations require a new type of leadership in which groups can be influenced in a particular direction through diplomacy, persuasion, and other interpersonal skills (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p. 1160).

"The fusion center concept embraces collaboration of numerous resources…while moving jointly toward a common goal."

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 12)

Since collaborative inter-organizational relationships are horizontal, as opposed to hierarchical, and generally lack a centralized authority that controls the efforts of all participants, similar to the STTAS, they are governed in large part through compromise and negotiation by participating organizations (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000, pp. 26, 33). This begs the question, when using

negotiation and compromise, how is it possible to entice participants within the STTAS to want to strengthen and increase horizontal collaboration with each other as part of a statewide network? One possible answer worthy of exploration can be found in the theory of "collaborative advantage."

G. COLLABORATIVE ADVANTAGE THEORY: SEEKING TO CREATE ADDED VALUE AND COLLABORATIVE SYNERGY AMONG CALIFORNIA'S FUSION CENTERS

1. Collaborative Advantage and Collaborative Inertia Defined

The term "collaborative advantage" refers to the achievement of a specific goal, objective, or capacity through interagency collaboration that none of the participating organizations or entities can achieve on their own and from which everyone who participates in the collaboration ultimately benefits (Huxham, 1993, p. 603). Collaborative advantage strives to create a synergistic relationship among organizations participating in the collaboration (Huxham, 1993, p. 603), while acknowledging the fact that for participants to derive an "advantage" from participating in the collaboration, they must gain some benefit from doing so (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 11). Ultimately, collaborative advantage provides an incentive for individual organizations to participate and collaborate with one another because they each derive value from the end product or objective. (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p. 772).

The concept of "collaborative inertia," conversely, refers to instances where the effectiveness of a collaborative process seemingly degrades or stalls and, subsequently, the desired results are significantly less than anticipated (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 11). Factors that can lead to collaborative inertia include disagreements over goals, different organizational cultures or structures, as well as issues related to trust and accountability (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, pp. 798–799). In many cases, identifying the appropriate stakeholders to be included in the collaboration can be an important factor in determining whether the relationship leads to collaborative advantage or is destined for collaborative inertia (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p. 773).

In certain instances, collaborative advantage can also result in the fulfillment of higher-level outcomes that benefit not only the participants, but the general public as well (Huxham, 1993, p. 603). Given the primary public safety related objectives of fusion centers, should collaborative advantage be successfully attained among California's fusion centers, the potential for higher level benefits to the public also appears promising.

2. Applying Collaborative Advantage to the STTAC and RTTACs

As defined in the preceding section, collaborative advantage theory appears consistent with one of the primary collaboration principles outlined in *Fusion Center Guidelines,* which argues that successful fusion center collaborations must provide added value to the customers, participants, and other community stakeholders (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 30).

> ***"A successful collaboration must continually provide value to its participants, customers, and constituency."***
>
> *(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 30)*

One of the first steps in pursuing collaborative advantage is for participating organizations to agree on collaborative goals (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 12) and to define their relationship collaboratively (Huxham & Macdonald, 1992, p. 53), which can sometimes be hindered by competing self-interests. For California's STTAS, this means developing collective goals and objectives among the STTAC and RTTACs that each center subscribes to, and which, clearly defines each center's role and responsibility in the collaboration. While the current STTAS Business Plan and Concept of Operations (CONOPS) acknowledges the intent for California's state and regional fusion centers to have a collaborative relationship, the present version falls short of providing the collaborative strategic vision, objectives, roles and responsibilities of the overarching collaborative relationship or its individual parties (California homeland security professionals, personal

communication, 2009). This first step of clearly establishing collaborative goals and defining the collaborative relationship is consistent with recommendations outlined in *Fusion Center Guidelines* and *Baseline Capabilities*, which calls upon fusion centers to identify the roles, responsibilities, and mission of each center through a collaborative process (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 5). Doing so is supported by a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report that found that clearly defining roles and responsibilities and coordinating efforts can improve interagency collaboration (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2009, p. 4).

The act of defining interagency collaboration often involves balancing the individual interests of those directly involved in the negotiation, the interests of their respective organizations and, ultimately, the desired outcome or intended purpose of the collaborative relationship itself (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 12). Significant differences among these three perspectives (individual, organization, and collaboration) can result in possible conflicts of interest that adversely impact collaboration either directly or indirectly (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 12). Subsequently, it is imperative that the STTAC and RTTACs define and establish collaborative goals, objectives, roles, and responsibilities not only mutually acceptable to all of the participants, but that also do not conflict with the mission, goals, and objectives of their individual centers and their independent governance systems.

Research also suggests that to achieve collaborative advantage, participating organizations should consider developing a shared "meta-strategy" or overarching strategic-level statement for the collaboration that clearly defines their mission and objectives (Huxham & Macdonald, 1992, p. 53). One method for doing so is to utilize a "group decision support" process to permit participants to define the collaboration collectively (Huxham, 1991, p. 1040). Several of the touted benefits, include (Huxham & Macdonald, 1992, pp. 53–55): (1) helping to make the goals and objectives explicit to all stakeholders; (2) allowing participants to determine whether individual roles and responsibilities are being fulfilled; (3) helping to instill a collaborative versus competitive atmosphere between stakeholders; and (4) providing a decisive and articulable plan that can be marketed to stakeholders, customers, or other persons of interest. Since the STTAC and RTTAC commanders have each requested that the current STTAS Business Plan and Concept of Operations be reexamined and amended (STTAC and RTTAC commanders, personal communication, 2009), the opportunity to create a new STTAS meta-strategy that collaboratively defines the strategic objectives for the STTAS, along with its mission, roles and responsibilities, appears both feasible and warranted. In fact, a recent GAO report examining interagency collaboration found that developing "overarching strategies can help agencies overcome differences in missions, cultures, and ways of doing business by providing strategic direction for activities" (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2009, p. 12).

"Developing the center mission statement and goals collaboratively with participating entities…will create ownership and assist in identifying the primary role(s) of the organization."

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 23)

Finally, it is important to recognize that collaborations, including those between the STTAC and RTTACs, are often in a state of constant change from internal and external factors, such as personnel changes, political pressure, new

leadership, new participants, loss of agency participation, etc. (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, pp. 789–795). Changes often lead to the need to renegotiate, as new participants often bring new ideas and agendas (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p. 799). Therefore, maintaining collaborative advantage requires perpetual trust building, nurturing of current and new relationships, and managing risks associated with instabilities inherent with change (Beech & Huxham, 2003).

H. LEADING HORIZONTALLY AND ACHIEVING COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS AS A "MEGACOMMUNITY"

The authors of the book *Megacommunities* describe a "megacommunity" as being an intentional effort to bring "communities of organizations" together to attain goals and objectives not accomplishable alone (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 28). That generic and perhaps oversimplified definition appears consistent with the concept of "collaborative advantage," as discussed in the previous section, and the basic objectives of the STTAS, in that it too seeks to create a higher collective achievement—safeguarding California—than the STTAC or RTTACs can individually provide.

While the book highlights the benefits of multi-organizational and collaborative solutions, it acknowledges that participating organizations must also be free to pursue their own self-interests and priorities at times (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 54). That insight is an important distinction, as it is unlikely that the RTTACs or any other governmental, public, or private sector stakeholders, currently or prospectively supporting the STTAS, are willing to abandon their individual efforts or identity completely in exchange for creating a megacommunity. The authors describe this process as "dynamic tension," in which participants "push and pull" against each other in an effort to influence the direction of the group's collective efforts in the absence of a formal leader (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 55). Since there is no central decision maker in charge (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 74), similar to the STTAS, the megacommunity is more appropriately based on what the book calls "permanent negotiation" instead of "collaboration" (Gerencser, Van

Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 100). Both of these concepts—dynamic tension and permanent negotiation—offer value to the STTAS since the independent commanders and governance boards of the STTAC and RTTACs, as well as other public, private, and governmental stakeholders, may at times have competing interests or a different opinion regarding the appropriate direction for the STTAS. By committing to the notion of "optimizing" the entire STTAS community instead of "maximizing" the benefits to any single self-interest (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 82), the STTAS participants are more likely to participate actively in a negotiated decision-making process, in which their perspectives and recommendations are equally weighed against others in the STTAS community. In doing so, the STTAC and RTTACs can each have some influence in directing the state's combined efforts through the STTAS, as opposed to viewing themselves as a stakeholder without an active voice in the process. This appears consistent with a principle highlighted in *Fusion Center Guidelines*, which argues that fusion center collaborations must share ownership and decision making among their participants (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29).

As pointed out by the authors of *Megacommunities*, creating and sustaining a megacommunity is as much about the "mindset" as it is about formal "mechanisms" (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 80), in that participants must be willing to attempt to solve problems through their collective abilities rather than constantly pursuing their own ideas and interests (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 81). That characteristic or "mindset" can be fostered within the STTAS, provided the STTAC and RTTACs are willing to participate in a process of permanent negotiation actively and are prepared to

"A collaborative environment will result in a consistent, unified approach to prevention and response."

(Fusion Center Guidelines, p. 10)

look for and adopt inclusive versus exclusive strategies—what the authors refer to as “us and them” instead of “us versus them” solutions (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 193).

To help transition the STTAS into a megacommunity, strategies must be identified to create an environment in which all five fusion centers (the STTAC and RTTACs) and other government, public, and private sector stakeholders collectively view the STTAS as providing an enhanced value to the state, as well as their individual operations (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 116). The CHP has recently attempted to become an “initiator” in that effort (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 120) by agreeing to assume a leadership role in the STTAC and by attempting to implement increased efficiencies within the STTAS. The following strategies, as outlined in *Megacommunities*, offer potential solutions for organizing the STTAS into an effective megacommunity:

1. Conduct “Future Search” Meeting(s)

To help define the needs and direction of the STTAS, a series of open discussion meetings should be considered among all stakeholders using a model referred to as “future search” (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 166). Future search meetings are intended to last two to three days, include both plenary and working group sessions, and help to define the community’s aspirations, its current capabilities, and how best to accomplish its goals (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 166).

2. Define, Monitor, and Measure Performance

In addition to clarifying its general direction and aspirations of the STTAS community through future search meetings, the members should clearly define their goals and identify mutually agreeable methods for verifying, monitoring, and measuring performance (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, pp.

180–181). Through the aforementioned efforts, megacommunities can determine what constitutes success and whether certain milestones are indicative of sustained progress or identify the need for recalibration or adjustment.

3. Negotiate "Floor Measures," Feedback Mechanisms, and Make Adjustments, As Necessary

Since stakeholders can interpret success from different vantage points, *Megacommunities* recommends that community metrics be defined in the context of baseline standards or "floor measures," as opposed to focusing on the upper performance levels (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, pp. 182–183). Additionally, it is essential that mechanisms be established to obtain and evaluate community feedback from megacommunity members on an ongoing basis so that adjustments can be negotiated as part of an evolving versus a fixed system (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 184). A system that can be adjusted through continued negotiations may ultimately serve as an enabler for enhanced sustainability (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 184).

I. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Fusion Center Guidelines maintains that "collaboration is vital to the success of fusion centers" (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 17), and calls upon leaders to adopt various guidelines intended to encourage collaboration among fusion center participants (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 5). While current federal guidance on fusion center collaboration focuses predominantly on methods to build collaboration among interagency personnel working *within* collocated centers, for intrastate fusion centers like the STTAC and RTTACs to coordinate successfully with each on a statewide basis, as called for in *Baseline Capabilities* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008, p. 12), collaboration *between* fusion centers is equally important.

In examining methods to strengthen collaboration both internally *within* the STTAC and externally *between* the STTAC and RTTACs, research outlined in this chapter supports the assertion that collaboration starts with interpersonal relationships (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29), and requires trust between prospective fusion center participants (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 29). Figure 11 depicts collaboration as a vertical equation in which interpersonal relationships and trust are shown as sequential steps towards achieving collaboration.

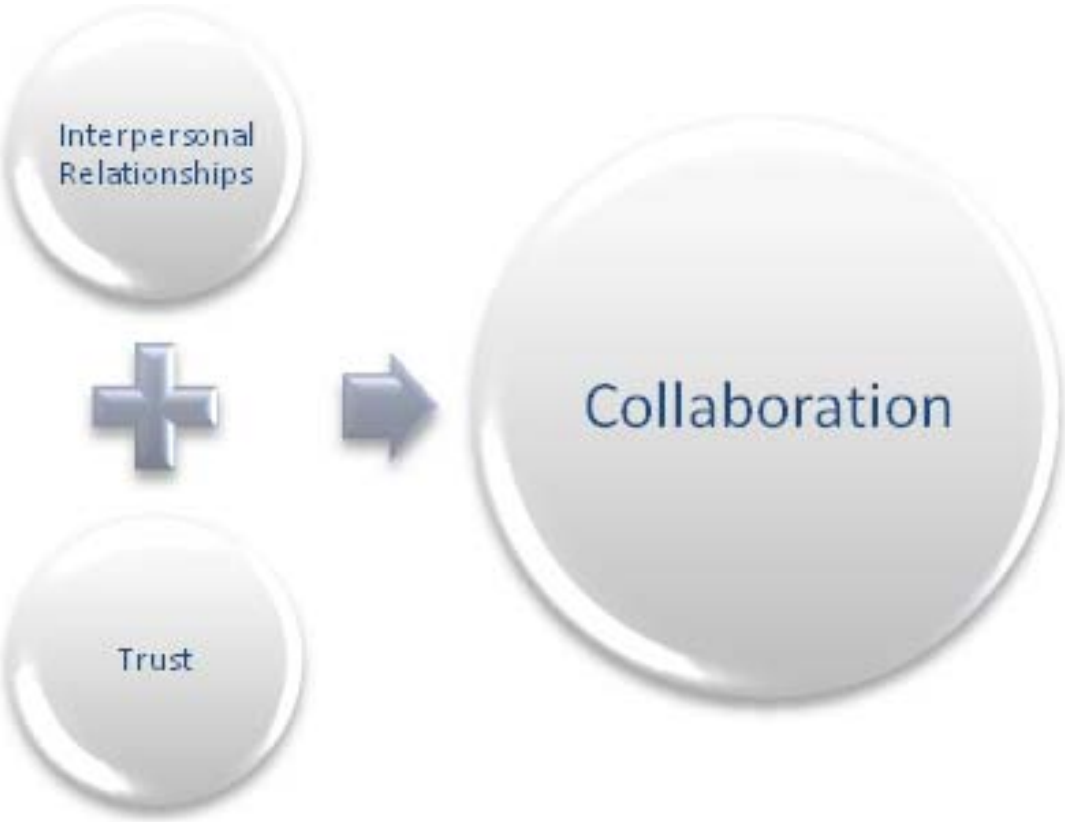


Figure 11. Collaboration Equation

One of the principal challenges examined in this chapter is how to build interpersonal relationships, trust and, ultimately, collaboration among dispersed organizational fusion center networks physically separated, independently

governed, and whose interagency relationships are horizontal in nature and lack a centralized authority—like California's STTAS. Research on the subject of distant collaborative relationships showcased the need for greater center-to-center interaction (Santoro, Borges, & Rezende, 2006, p. 717) and the importance of governing through compromise and negotiation (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000), through the use of diplomacy, persuasion, and interpersonal skills (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p. 1160). This research of collaboration, as highlighted in this chapter, suggests that as interpersonal relationships and trust increase, so too does the potential progression for collaboration, which Figure 12 illustrates conceptually.

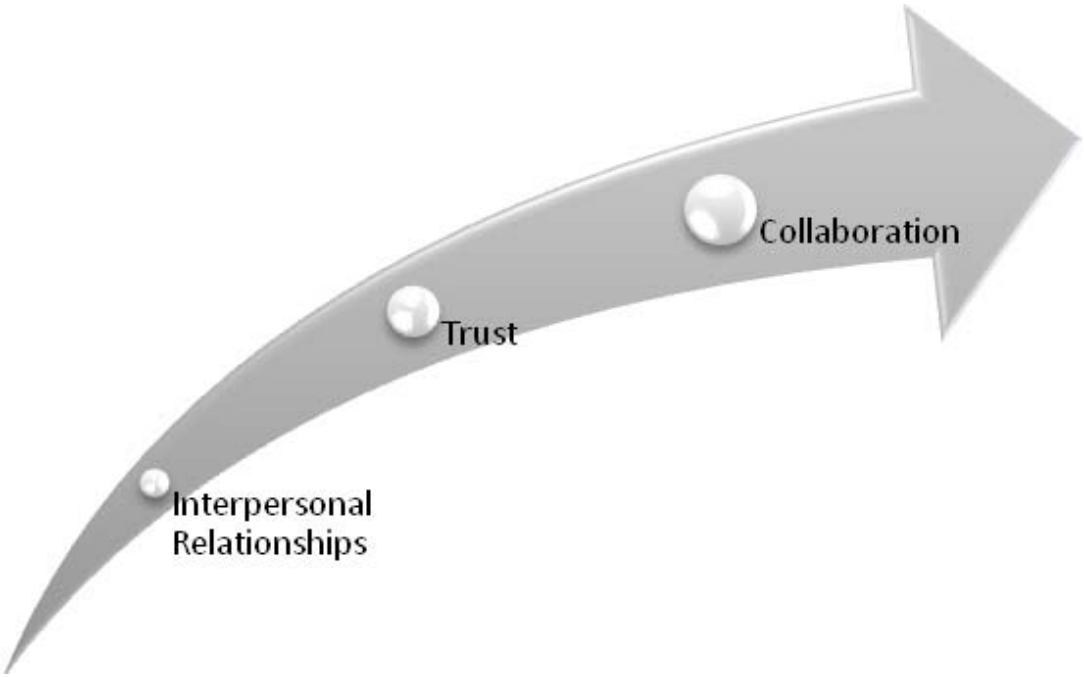


Figure 12. Collaboration Progression

For collaborations to be successful, they must also provide value to their participants, customers, and other stakeholders (U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006, p. 30). As discussed in this chapter, the theory of collaborative advantage posits that dispersed organizations, such as California's fusion centers, are provided with a greater

incentive to collaborate if the result of that collaboration offers a synergistic outcome or achievement from which each of the participants benefit and without which none of the participants can attain (Huxham, 1993, p. 603). Collaborative advantage offers a strong conceptual incentive for independently operated fusion centers to collaborate with one another if the benefits for doing so yield additional information, intelligence, capacities, or products that the individual centers cannot obtain or produce on their own. The underlying question for the STTAC and, ultimately, the STTAS, is to explore what services, deliverables, or capacities it can offer to the RTTACs that can increase the likelihood of attaining collaborative advantage system wide and, thereby, strengthen the horizontal collaborative relationships among California's STTAS.

Successful inter-agency collaboration requires effective and committed leadership from each of the participating agencies (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2009, p. 3). To build effective collaborative relationships, fusion center networks must establish trust among participants, set common agreed upon objectives, work collectively towards a common understanding, and manage relationships to share authority (Vangen & Huxham, 2006, p. 4). The notion of striving to create a "megacommunity" among California's STTAS participants offers possible insights into optimizing the statewide network, leading horizontally, and producing enhanced value for California (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, p. 116). Doing so can be achieved by (Gerencser, Van Lee, Napolitano, & Kelly, 2008, pp. 166, 180–183): (1) conducting a "future search" meeting among the STTAS participants to more clearly system-wide needs and aspirations; (2) defining, monitoring, and measuring performance; and (3) negotiating "floor measures" or metrics, obtaining feedback from which necessary modifications can be made.

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IX. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

"Coming together is a beginning.

Keeping together is progress.

Working together is success."

Henry Ford

A. INTRODUCTION

As the author began this thesis, he initially sought to determine what the appropriate role is for a state fusion center in states having multiple fusion centers. In doing so, he theorized that there might be a single preferable model or "best practice" that could be applied in California, and possibly to other states, to align California's state and regional fusion centers more effectively, and, in doing so, potentially lay the groundwork to enhance current efforts to build a nationwide network of fusion centers. This research leads to the conclusion that the author began asking the wrong question, primarily because his hypothesis that there might be a single, "one size fits all" pattern or template for state fusion centers to consider proved to be invalid. Through this research, he discovered that the appropriate role of a state fusion center was largely dependent on what state that center was located in, its intended mission, how many other fusion centers the state might have, the wants and needs of its customers, political deliberations among state and local jurisdictions, and, ultimately, what role was collaboratively negotiated and supported by the centers and their participants. Subsequently, what might be an appropriate model for California's state fusion center could be completely inappropriate for a state not possessing the same needs, structure, political environment, or so forth. Armed with this newly informed awareness, the author refined his original primary thesis question to

define more explicitly what the appropriate role of the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) is within California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment System (STTAS).

Throughout this thesis, the author provided detailed analysis and recommendations, as appropriate, regarding the data presented in each chapter. This final chapter intends to highlight the main points or principal "takeaways" from the previous chapters of this thesis as they directly refer to the four main thesis research questions. In addition, this chapter presents specific recommendations in light of the derived answers to the thesis questions and offers recommendations for future research to build upon this body of research.

B. QUESTIONS

1. What Is the Appropriate Role of the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center Within California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment System?

In determining the appropriate "role" of the STTAC, it was important to first establish what a designated state fusion center is and, equally important, what it is not. While the term "state fusion center" can narrowly refer to the STTAC in the context of it being a center managed by a state agency, the broader use of the term also takes into consideration the STTAC's designation as California's primary fusion center among other fusion centers in the state. It is this broader definition that this thesis, in large part, seeks to answer.

The STTAC's designation as California's state fusion center, like many other state fusion centers across the nation, is not derived from legislation, a Governor's Executive Order, or some other statutory process, but by a governor's letter to DHS and the United States Attorney General. While the STTAC's designation in that letter as the primary state fusion center provides DHS with direction as to which center the governor wants information destined for the state to pass through, the title itself is arguably nominal in other contexts in that it does not signify the existence of any hierarchical structure or authority

possessed by the STTAC over the STTAS or its members. Since the STTAC and RTTACs are each autonomous and enjoy what is essentially a voluntary "horizontal" versus "hierarchical" working relationship within the STTAS, defining the appropriate role of the STTAC within the STTAS in the broader sense requires a collaborative agreement among STTAS members, especially if that role requires another center to relinquish some aspect of its sovereignty or acquiesce to another center's role in performing some collective function.

a. Provide Strategic Analysis and Support

Based on the data points collected, which includes an examination of the historical and publicly stated role of the STTAC, the declared needs and recommendations of fundamental customers, a scanning of other state models, a comparison to methods abroad, and an assimilation of the widely accepted roles of the RTTACs, the appropriate role of the STTAC within California's STTAS, succinctly defined, is to provide added value to the state's STTAS network through comprehensive and reliable strategic analysis and support. This oversimplified acknowledgment of the STTAC's necessary strategic role within the STTAS is supported by the current STTAS *Strategic* Business *Plan Concept of Operations* (CONOPS) and *State of California Homeland Security Strategy*, both of which take note of the STTAC's intended strategic functions. Survey data from the RTTACs also calls for strategic support from the STTAC, including strategic threat assessments and statewide situational awareness, which is consistent with the types of strategic products and services provided by other state fusion centers to their regional and/or local partners, as noted in the author's scan of other states. In executing that role, the STTAC must be capable of strategically analyzing intelligence and information obtained from each of the RTTACs, as well as other sources, and to synthesize that intelligence information strategically into a broader understanding of its possible statewide implications, while simultaneously ensuring that each of the other RTTACs and other stakeholders are afforded situational awareness and any related strategic analyses.

b. Serve As California's Primary Federal Point of Contact

Inherent in the governor's designation of the STTAC as California's designated state fusion center is the acknowledgement that the STTAC is intended to serve as California's primary point of contact for immediate homeland security related information from the federal government. This intended role is supported by literature calling upon states to make such a designation, the governor's response letter to DHS, and other state fusion centers performing the same role or function. To fulfill this role, the STTAC must inherently be capable of doing more than just "receive" information from the federal government and must also have the capacity to "doing something" with that information once it is received. Accordingly, the role of the STTAC must include not only the ability to receive priority information from the federal government, day or night, but the strategic and logistical capabilities of determining to whom and where that information needs to go and how to get it there in the most efficient and timely manner.

c. Keep Key State Officials and State Agencies Informed

In accordance with the *State of California's Homeland Security Strategy* and the STTAS CONOPS, the STTAC must be capable of providing key state officials, including the governor, state homeland security advisor, legislature, and other constitutional officers, with strategic information they may require in making timely statewide decisions in the best interests of the safety of California and its citizens. The STTAC's performance of this role is readily acknowledged and supported by the RTTACs and is consistent with the role performed by other state fusion centers. Further, this comparative analysis of joint intelligence centers in the United Kingdom and Germany highlighted the importance of keeping key leaders informed.

As the only fusion center in California managed by a state agency and principally staffed by personnel from state agencies, the STTAC's role must also include ensuring that state departments and agencies are provided with

situation awareness on strategic intelligence and information germane to their mission or the safety of their employees. This role is consistent with the responsibilities executed by other state fusion centers and is supported by survey data collected by the RTTACs that failed to identify state agencies as a primary customer of the RTTACs. Given that state agencies and employees are inherently located in each of the RTTACs' operational regions and some state departments are also represented within the RTTACs themselves, it is appropriate for the STTAC to clarify this role in consultation with the RTTACs collaboratively to ensure that state agencies throughout California are provided with adequate situational awareness regarding statewide or regionally specific threats.

d. Serve As an Active Participant, Facilitator, and/or Organizer Within the STTAS

As highlighted in the opening comments to this question, one of the essential and perhaps undocumented roles of the STTAC is to be an active participant and collaborator within California's STTAS. As previously mentioned, the STTAC's designation as the primary state fusion center in the context of its relationship with other STTAS participants is largely a nominal or honorary title versus authoritative. While the importance of collaboration is highlighted in greater detail in the author's response to subsequent research questions, one of the important roles the STTAC must play is to be an active participant, equal partner, and at times, a facilitator and/or organizer in seeking to strengthen the collaborative working relationship between the STTAC, RTTACs, and other stakeholders. Ultimately, collaboration is the fundamental adhesive that bonds together the combined efforts of the STTAC and RTTACs as part of a unified STTAS. With that understanding in mind, the role of the STTAC must be centered on strengthening the overall STTAS collaboration by supporting the RTTACs' strategic intelligence needs and respecting their operational role within their respective regions. This informal facilitative role is similar to one exercised

by state fusion centers in Florida and Ohio in their efforts to bring all of the parties together as part of a more unified and synchronized statewide system.

2. What Is the Appropriate Mission for the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center As It Relates to Strengthening Stakeholder Relationships?

The appropriate mission for the STTAC is one that is collaboratively developed with input from its customers and stakeholders. Doing so ensures that the mission is capable of supporting the needs of its customers and more effective in addressing current and future threats to California. Including customers and stakeholders as participants in the process can help create “buy in” and strengthen stakeholder relationships, as it affords them the opportunity to be an active part of the STTAC’s design and a benefactor of the future services it provides.

Survey data from California's sheriffs and police chiefs shows that their primary community threats and greatest intelligence needs involve gangs, narcotics, weapons, and terrorism, in descending order. These combined intelligence requirements most appropriately fall within the realm of an all crimes fusion center. Based on this research, most of the RTTACs have adopted an all crimes mission. Doing so is consistent with the demonstrated all crimes intelligence needs of their customers, and therefore, appears appropriately aligned.

One of the primary roles of the STTAC is to provide strategic support to the RTTACs in carrying out their missions. To do so successfully, the STTAC must be capable of supporting the strategic intelligence needs of the RTTACs and those of the RTTACs’ customers. When surveyed regarding their current intelligence requirements, the RTTACs expressed a desire for the STTAC to provide statewide situational awareness, strategic analytical products, and analytical support to assist them in performing their mission. Each of those requests is consistent with strategic services currently provided by other state fusion centers. For the STTAC to provide added value to the RTTACs and

strengthen stakeholder relationships with the RTTACs and their customers, the STTAC must provide services capable of addressing the current threats and intelligence needs of the RTTACs' jurisdictions and local customers—specifically, all crimes intelligence.

As highlighted in this thesis, the STTAC's mission has historically been focused on anti-terrorism only. As such, its mission conflicts with current federal guidance suggesting that fusion centers adopt an all crimes and/or all hazards format, is inconsistent with the mission of other state fusion centers examined in this research, and most importantly, is incapable of providing the broad range of strategic services necessary to address the current threats facing California and the needs of the RTTACs and their customers. Simply put, the STTAC's mission is out of alignment. That conclusion is further supported by data captured from California's sheriffs and police chiefs recommending that the STTAC adopt an all crimes mission and by surveys of the RTTACs strongly suggesting that the STTAC's mission be clarified. Based on these findings, the STTAC should adopt an all crimes mission more properly aligned with the RTTACs and, ultimately, help in ensuring that the entire STTAS is properly aligned. Failing to do so would, in essence, signify that any strategic support provided by the STTAC would be incapable of supporting current intelligence functions of the RTTACs and their customers; thereby diminishing the STTAC's value and potentially weakening its stakeholder relationships.

Since the STTAS is intended to be a unified system, comprised of the STTAC and RTTACs, working collaboratively together to protect California and its citizens from current threats impacting this state, the STTAC's adoption of an all crimes model appropriately helps to align the entire STTAS network in safeguarding California. The state of Florida has similarly adopted a common mission among all of its state and regional fusion centers, and this research of joint intelligence fusion centers in the United Kingdom and Germany also supports the notion that adopting a common mission among participants is advantageous.

Finally, since the potential stakeholders having a vested interest in defining the mission of the STTAC is arguably broader than the RTTACs and local law enforcement agencies, it is important that the STTAC also take into consideration the needs of other prospective customers when developing products and that it collaboratively reevaluate its mission on a recurring basis in conjunction with the RTTACs and other stakeholders so that its mission remains capable of supporting the STTAS, RTTACs, and their customers, and does not again become outdated, irrelevant, and misaligned.

3. How Do You Maintain Fusion Center Support and Promote Sustainability in an Ever-changing Political and Economic Environment?

The term "sustainability" in the context of fusion centers has many possible meanings. A growing volume of literature exists that discusses fusion center sustainability primarily as a function of economic costs and highlights mounting concerns by state homeland security advisors and other officials over the need for continued and sustainable funding. Those concerns are echoed in California, as the future sustainability of the STTAC and RTTACs are undeniably dependent upon continued federal funding since, as indicated in Chapter IV, California's sheriffs and police chiefs resoundingly indicate they are incapable of providing financial support in today's economic environment.

Fusion center sustainability is also dependent upon the availability of adequate personnel resources. Once again, the majority of California's local law enforcement leaders indicate they cannot provide direct personnel support to fusion centers in light of fiscal constraints and the need to direct resources towards other community priorities. Interestingly, a number of law enforcement leaders surveyed indicated they would consider providing personnel if those resources could be connected remotely from their own agency through some form of "virtual" connectivity.

Accordingly, this may be a viable area for future research. While the DHS is “rolling out” personnel to each of the nation’s fusion centers as part of its commitment to support fusion center staffing, it is important that fusion centers work to maintain the personnel resources they have by demonstrating to their contributing agencies that they are an important investment and critical to their own operations. This leads to a third context of sustainability that this research suggests may, in fact, be the most critical factor in ensuring the sustainability of fusion centers—continued relevancy in the eyes of their customers; in other words, value.

To be sustainable and garner continued support, fusion centers must remain relevant by offering added value to their customers on a recurring basis. While political support for California's fusion centers remains high based on surveys of local law enforcement agencies, they must continue to provide added value if they hope to maintain that level of support. To do so, fusion centers must assess the needs of their customers on an ongoing basis through surveys, briefings, and other methods to identify potential gaps in intelligence needs and deliverables to ensure the centers’ services are properly aligned. Including customer input in the development of fusion center services helps to create “buy in” and affords the customer an opportunity to be an active participant. For example, since gangs, narcotics, and weapons are the top three intelligence concerns of local law enforcement leaders in California today, California fusion centers must evaluate their current capabilities in those areas and explore methods, such as collaborative partnerships with gang task forces, to increase their level of service to their customers. Understanding that sheriffs and police chiefs are in search of increased information sharing, greater communication, and additional gang related intelligence, as reflected in survey data discussed in Chapter IV, offers fusion centers an insight in how to transition high levels of customer support and satisfaction to even greater heights; thereby, increasing their relevancy, support, and likelihood of future sustainability.

Succinctly put, the way fusion centers can maintain support and sustainability in today's political and economic environment is to ensure that fusion centers remain relevant, offer a valued service to their customers, and are responsive to their needs. This research reveals that similar to the business world, the customers ultimately decide the value of fusion centers and not the fusion centers themselves. The fact that fusion centers believe they are providing a valuable service is of little consequence if their customers and stakeholders view those services differently.

> ***"Do what you do so well they will want to see it again and bring their friends."***
>
> *(Walt Disney)*

4. How Can Horizontal "Center-to-Center" Collaboration Be Strengthened Between the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center and the Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers?

The importance of collaboration to fusion center operations is well established. Realistically, the strength of collaboration between fusion centers, such as the STTAC and RTTACs, is largely dependent upon the strength of each participant's willingness and desire to collaborate. As supported by this thesis, the collaborative working relationship between the STTAC and RTTACs is "horizontal" versus "hierarchical" in nature, where neither the STTAC nor the RTTACs are ultimately in charge of the collaboration. This horizontal relationship was also witnessed in the scan of other state fusion centers, as well as the research surrounding Germany's joint intelligence center.

Current literature highlights the importance of developing meaningful interpersonal relationships and trust among fusion center participants when attempting to build or strengthen collaboration. While the current body of knowledge on collaboration in the context of fusion centers offers insights into building collaboration *within* the context of individual centers, it offers little

guidance on how to attain or strengthen collaboration *between* multiple centers, like the STTAC and RTTACs, where they are physically separated by great distances and face-to-face and interpersonal contact is thereby limited.

This research into distant interagency collaborations suggests that entities like the STTAC and RTTACs find alternative solutions to help increase their interaction and contact. To their credit, the STTAC and RTTACs have already established a number of standing work groups to increase the relationships between the centers and their personnel. For example, the STTAS commanders group, lead analyst working group (LAWG), and TLO managers working group each afford the opportunity for personnel from STTAC and RTTACs to work jointly together, both in person and remotely, in an effort to improve collaboration and strengthen interpersonal relationships and trust. Similarly, the scan of other states revealed that state fusion centers in Florida and Ohio also use meetings, briefings, conference calls, and other methods in an attempt to increase contact. To further strengthen collaboration between the STTAC and RTTACs and increase interagency participation, additional opportunities to enhance interpersonal relationships and trust must be explored, as supported by literature and data from the RTTACs. One prospective option highlighted in this thesis involves the use of each center's existing video conferencing capabilities to increase face-to-face contact "virtually" on a frequent basis. Doing so is consistent with recommendations from the RTTAC commanders, as mentioned in Chapter V, calling for enhanced collaboration between the STTAC and RTTAC commanders. Other RTTAC recommendations for strengthening collaboration between the STTAC and RTTACs include a desire for the STTAC to define its mission clearly and demonstrate its ability to generate useful strategic products capable of adding value to the STTAS and its members. This insightful recommendation speaks to the heart of many of the author's findings in his previous research questions and brings him to what he believes is perhaps the

most significant realization through the body of this thesis and conceptually offers the greatest opportunity for strengthening collaboration between the STTAC and RTTACs—developing “collaborative advantage.”

As discussed in Chapter VIII, collaborative advantage strives to create synergy among organizations participating in collaboration—specifically, between the STTAC and RTTACs—by providing each member with a heightened incentive to collaborate more closely because they each derive a greater value collectively than they can achieve individually (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p. 772). In short, this means increasing the collective value possible through the STTAS to a point where it far surpasses what each center can possibly achieve on its own, or via a smaller subset, so that each of the centers want to work closer together given the value and advantages of doing so. In many ways, this ties in directly with some of the principles and findings highlighted in the prior thesis questions related to the STTAC’s role, mission, and sustainability, in that it again focuses on the notion of providing added value and relevancy; in this case, to the STTAS and its members.

As supported by this thesis, to attain collaborative advantage and strengthen collaboration, the STTAC and RTTACs must collaboratively define, with input from their customers and stakeholders, the collective goals and objectives for the STTAS, to include each participant’s role and responsibility as part of that collaboration. Furthermore, the agreement must remain current, relevant, and reflective of a relationship that each center supports. While a STTAS CONOPS currently exists, it is currently outdated. In an effort to clarify and strengthen the STTAS CONOPS, the STTAC and RTTACs need to revise the agreement collaboratively with input from federal, state, and local stakeholders. Doing so allows participants and stakeholders to provide input and, in turn, helps to create “buy in” and ensures that the STTAS remains viable and offers added value to its participants and their respective customers. The Florida

Fusion Center is currently undergoing a similar endeavor in its attempts to develop a statewide communication plan and CONOPS among its state and regional centers.

Finally, all of the recommendations highlighted in this chapter regarding collaboration mean nothing, if they are not sustainable. If the extent of the collaboration among STTAS participants rests solely in the hands of the centers' five individual commanders, then it is susceptible to weakening, or, in a worst case scenario, falling apart should one or more of those commanders leave their current assignment. As was demonstrated through this thesis, the installation of a new management team within the STTAC has understandably resulted in the new commander having to seek to develop interpersonal relationships and reestablish trust with the other STTAS commanders, the importance of which cannot be overstated. Therefore, efforts to strengthen collaboration among the STTAC and RTTACs must include efforts to refine it continually and, ultimately, institutionalize it to deposit that strength into a system wide account. A recommended means of doing so is to establish a statewide STTAS advisory or advocacy committee comprised of an executive level representative, selected by each of the STTAC and RTTACs' governance committees, and a diverse group of homeland security stakeholders, for the expressed purpose of capturing input and recommendations on an ongoing basis to assess the statewide alignment of the STTAS and determine how the system can continue to be effectively aligned and synchronized. This process would enable stakeholders to be more active participants in the collaboration, thereby strengthening and institutionalizing relationships over the entire system as a whole and not simply within the STTAC and RTTACs. By doing so, the collaboration is afforded the opportunity for system wide "buy in," through providing a standing forum for ideas to be considered and, when appropriate, modifications to be made. Ultimately, this formalized structure would assist in keeping the STTAS updated and relevant,

while also helping to ensure its sustainability. In light of the fact that all four of the RTTACs support this proposal, as highlighted in Chapter V, the STTAC and RTTACs should collectively move forward on this proposal.

C. AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

For state and regional fusion centers, like the STTAC and RTTACs, to collaborate with one another successfully, two factors must arguably be present. The first is the *willingness* of each center to enter into and commit to a collaborative relationship and the second, and equally important factor, is the *ability* for each of the centers to do so. Without *willingness* and *ability* combined, the intended collaboration may amount to little more than "hope" for future collaboration, at a time when willingness and ability are both attainable. While this thesis briefly examined methods for increasing the *ability* for multiple fusion centers to collaborate remotely, through meetings, work groups, and conference calls, the majority of this work focused on increasing the *willingness* to do so. In light of the ongoing efforts to build a nationwide network of fusion centers, future research into methods for strengthening the *ability* for multiple centers to collaborate over great distances and share information is warranted.

This thesis focused on methods to synchronize and ensure the proper alignment of California's state and regional fusion centers. An important area for future research surrounds how to synchronize state-to-state fusion center relationships and operations more collaboratively, and ultimately nationwide, and to determine whether the collaborative initiatives proposed in this thesis have possible applications to furthering state-to-state and state-to-federal fusion center alignment.

D. CLOSING

At the start of this thesis, the author introduced a 40-year-old businessman who set out on horseback to share information whose value was such that it helped to change the course of American history. It has been nearly 235 years since Paul Revere embarked on that late night journey to Lexington to

warn others of an impending threat that would soon arrive on their doorstep. Although the size of this nation and population has grown exponentially over that period of time, so too have this country's communications, transportation, and technological capabilities. Despite the dramatic differences between these two time periods, the goals of Paul Revere and today's fusion centers remain remarkably similar in that both seek to protect this nation and its citizens against unforeseen threats and, whenever possible, prevent future attacks from occurring. In 1775, Paul Revere and his fellow patriots were successful in providing critical information at the precise moment it was needed and, in doing so, helped to alter the course of American history. Regretfully, there would be no similar warning to help successfully avert the tragedies of 9/11. For that reason, 9/11 has also been a turning point in global history by highlighting the need for this country to remain alert and vigilant in the face of current and future threats. Today's fusion centers offer this nation a promising modern day version of Paul Revere and his co-patriots.

While much progress has been made over the past eight years, many winding roads still exist ahead. To be truly successful as a statewide or nationwide system, it is necessary to ensure that every fusion center rides together towards the same intended destination instead of drifting onto different paths and heading in opposing directions. The author's personal journey, as chronicled in this thesis, offers a proposed road map towards the next generation of fusion centers in California, where each center rides together and stays together regardless of what turns lie in the road ahead.

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APPENDIX A.

A. CHIEFS

1. Fusion Center Survey for Cal Chiefs

This survey is intended to help determine your agency's intelligence needs and to solicit your recommendations as to how the current mission and services performed by the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) might better serve the needs of your agency. The responses to this survey will not be directly attributed to you or your department by name and should be answered as candidly as possible. The survey is intended to capture the opinions and perspective of you as Chief of your agency and not necessarily the opinions of your staff or intelligence bureau commander. In respect for your time, the survey has been limited to 9 short questions and should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your participation and assistance!

1. Does your agency receive terrorism related information or intelligence from your regional or local intelligence fusion center on an ongoing basis?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

2. If your agency currently receives terrorism information or intelligence from your fusion center, generally speaking, how useful has that information been to your department?

○ Very Useful ○ Useful ○ Somewhat Useful ○ Not Useful

If not useful, what in your opinion could help to make it more useful?

3. Given the current public safety threats facing your community, what do you feel are your primary intelligence needs, based on the following categories?

	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Unimportant
Terrorism	○	○	○	○	○
Gangs	○	○	○	○	○
Narcotics	○	○	○	○	○
Weapons	○	○	○	○	○
Organized Crime	○	○	○	○	○
Human Trafficking	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

4. Based on your responses to Question #3, are you satified that your current intelligence needs are being met to assist you in addressing the primary criminal threats facing your community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

If no, what additional support would you like to see the state or regional fusion centers provide?

5. How would you rate the frequency of intelligence information you receive from your regional or local fusion center via the following methods?

	Too Often (Overload)	Just Right	Not Frequent Enough	Don't Receive Information
Written Bulletins	○	○	○	○
E-mail/Blackberry	○	○	○	○
Telephone Notifications	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

6. Ideally, how frequently would you like to receive intelligence updates on potential threats to your community or California?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Twice a Month
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ No Set Timeframe (Incident Driven)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

7. To the best of your knowledge has your agency ever interacted with or received intelligence information from California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Have Never Heard of It

8. The state fusion center (STTAC) and four regional fusion centers throughout California are intended to work collaboratively together to help safeguard the state. In your opinion, what mission should the state fusion center (STTAC) undertake to help support your department and the regional fusion center servicing your community?

- ☐ Terrorism Only
- ☐ All Crimes
- ☐ All Hazards (including manmade and natural disasters)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

9. The current economic crisis has adversely affected law enforcement agencies statewide and has also highlighted concerns over the sustainability of fusion centers. In light of your current budget and departmental priorities, how likely are you to support the need to sustain fusion centers through the following means?

	Likely	Unlikely
Political Support	○	○
Financial Support	○	○
Staffing Support	○	○
Providing Facility Space	○	○

If unlikely to dedicate staff, would your answer change if staff could be remotely connected to the fusion center from your agency using a virtual environment?

B. SHERIFFS

1. Fusion Center Survey for Cal Sheriffs

This survey is intended to help determine your agency's intelligence needs and to solicit your recommendations as to how the current mission and services performed by the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) might better serve the needs of your agency. The responses to this survey will not be directly attributed to you or your department by name and should be answered as candidly as possible. The survey is intended to capture the opinions and perspective of you as Sheriff and not necessarily the opinions of your staff or intelligence bureau commander. In respect for your time, the survey has been limited to 9 short questions and should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your participation and assistance!

1. Does your agency receive terrorism related information or intelligence from your regional or local intelligence fusion center on an ongoing basis?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

2. If your agency currently receives terrorism information or intelligence from your fusion center, generally speaking, how useful has that information been to your department?

○ Very Useful ○ Useful ○ Somewhat Useful ○ Not Useful

If not useful, what in your opinion could help to make it more useful?

3. Given the current public safety threats facing your community, what do you feel are your primary intelligence needs, based on the following categories?

	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Unimportant
Terrorism	○	○	○	○	○
Gangs	○	○	○	○	○
Narcotics	○	○	○	○	○
Weapons	○	○	○	○	○
Organized Crime	○	○	○	○	○
Human Trafficking	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

4. Based on your responses to Question #3, are you satified that your current intelligence needs are being met to assist you in addressing the primary criminal threats facing your community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

If no, what additional support would you like to see the state or regional fusion centers provide?

5. How would you rate the frequency of intelligence information you receive from your regional or local fusion center via the following methods?

	Too Often (Overload)	Just Right	Not Frequent Enough	Don't Receive Information
Written Bulletins	○	○	○	○
E-mail/Blackberry	○	○	○	○
Telephone Notifications	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

6. Ideally, how frequently would you like to receive intelligence updates on potential threats to your community or California?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Twice a Month
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ No Set Timeframe (Incident Driven)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

7. To the best of your knowledge has your agency ever interacted with or received intelligence information from California's State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Have Never Heard of It

8. The state fusion center (STTAC) and four regional fusion centers throughout California are intended to work collaboratively together to help safeguard the state. In your opinion, what mission should the state fusion center (STTAC) undertake to help support your department and the regional fusion center servicing your community?

- ☐ Terrorism Only
- ☐ All Crimes
- ☐ All Hazards (including manmade and natural disasters)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

9. The current economic crisis has adversely affected law enforcement agencies statewide and has also highlighted concerns over the sustainability of fusion centers. In light of your current budget and departmental priorities, how likely are you to support the need to sustain fusion centers through the following means?

	Likely	Unlikely
Political Support	○	○
Financial Support	○	○
Staffing Support	○	○
Providing Facility Space	○	○

If unlikely to dedicate staff, would your answer change if staff could be remotely connected to the fusion center from your agency using a virtual environment?

APPENDIX B.

1. Survey of RTTAC Commanders

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) was recently asked to assume command of the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC). In an effort to evaluate and improve the level of service provided by the STTAC, the CHP's State Security Division is interested in obtaining your feedback and needs as a valued partner in the State Terrorism Threat Assessment System (STTAS). In a conscious effort to avoid attribution, data collected through this survey will not identify the Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (RTTAC) from which it was received. Thank you in advance for your participation in this brief 10 question survey.

1. What best describes the current mission of your fusion center?

- ☐ Counterterrorism Only
- ☐ All Crimes
- ☐ All Hazards
- ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

2. Who do you consider to be the primary customers of your fusion center (RTTAC)?

3. What method(s), if any, does your center currently use to build collaboration among participants within your center and stakeholders?

4. What method(s), if any, does your center utilize to determine the intelligence requirements of your customers and to determine whether those needs are being met?

5. What do you believe the role of the state fusion center should be within the STTAS?

6. What services could the STTAC perform or provide that would benefit your RTTAC and the STTAS overall?

7. What three improvements or changes would you like to see the STTAC make over the course of the year?

1st

2nd

3rd

8. What methods would you recommend be utilized to strengthen collaboration between your fusion center and the STTAC?

9. Would there be value in establishing a policy counsel or advisory group among STTAS participants to examine statewide STTAS related issues on an ongoing basis?

10. Do you think there would be value in having a common information sharing platform or method for sharing information among STTAS participants?

Yes

No

If yes, what sytem or method do you recommend?

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