Summary

Major events that are considered to be nationally significant may be designated by the President — or his representative, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) — as National Special Security Events (NSSE). Beginning in September 1998 through February 2008, there have been 28 events designated as NSSEs. Some of these events have included presidential inaugurations, presidential nominating conventions, major sports events, and major international meetings. The U.S. Secret Service (USSS) is the lead federal agency responsible for coordinating, planning, exercising, and implementing security for NSSEs, and was designated as the lead agency in P.L. 106-544. This report provides information on USSS legislative authority for NSSEs, NSSE designation funding and training, and NSSE funding. This report will be updated when congressional or executive branch actions warrant.

Legislative Authority. On May 22, 1998, President William J. Clinton issued Presidential Decision Directive 62 (PDD 62) — Protection Against Unconventional Threats to the Homeland and Americans Overseas. PDD 62 established a framework for federal department and agency counter-terrorism programs, which addressed terrorist apprehension and prosecution, increased transportation security, enhanced emergency response, and enhanced cyber security. PDD 62 also designated specific federal departments and agencies as the lead agencies in the event of terrorist attacks. The U.S. Secret Service (USSS) was designated as the lead agency with the leadership role in the planning, implementation, and coordination of operational security for events of national significance — as designated by the President. Other lead agencies for counter terrorism

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On December 19, 2000, Congress enacted P.L. 106-544, the Presidential Threat Protection Act of 2000, and authorized USSS — when directed by the President — to plan, coordinate, and implement security operations at special events of national significance. The special events were entitled National Special Security Events (NSSEs). Some events categorized as NSSE include presidential inaugurations, major international summits held in the United States, major sporting events, and presidential nominating conventions.

**NSSE Designation.** Prior to the establishment of DHS in January 2003, the President determined what events of national significance were designated as NSSEs. Since the establishment of the department, the DHS Secretary — as the President’s representative — has had the responsibility to designate NSSEs. NSSE designation factors include:

- anticipated attendance by U.S. officials and foreign dignitaries;
- size of the event; and
- significance of the event.

**NSSE Security.** When an event is designated an NSSE, USSS becomes the lead federal agency in developing, exercising, and implementing security operations. The goal of these security operations is to “develop and implement a seamless security plan that will create a safe and secure environment for the general public, event participants, Secret Service protectees, and other dignitaries.”

The USSS’s Major Events Division (MED) is responsible for NSSE planning and coordinates with other USSS headquarters and field offices. Some of the coordination includes advance planning and liaison for venue and air space security, training, communications, and security credentialing. Additionally, MED coordinates and...
conducts liaisons with other federal, state, and local agencies — primarily law enforcement entities.

NSSE security is planned, exercised, and implemented through a unified command model that is comprised of representatives of participating federal, state, and local agencies with NSSE responsibilities. During the NSSE’s planning phase, each participating agency is tasked according to their expertise or jurisdictional responsibility. USSS states that, “with the support of hundreds of federal, state, and local law enforcement and public safety organizations, each of these events has successfully concluded without any major incidents.”

NSSE operational plans include the use of physical infrastructure security fencing, barricades, special access accreditation badges, K-9 teams, and other security technologies. To ensure consequence management, DHS prepositions Domestic Emergency Support Teams, Urban Search and Rescue Teams, national Emergency Response Teams, Nuclear Incident Response Teams, and the Strategic National Stockpile and Mobile Emergency Response System. Specific teams and groupings of teams are designed for each event based on coordination with other federal entities, state and local jurisdictions, available local resources, and mutual aid agreements. Additionally, USSS sponsors training seminars for command-level federal, state, and local law enforcement and public safety officials to provide principles for managing security at major events and strategies for reducing vulnerabilities related to terrorism. The seminars also discuss key strategies and lessons learned from past NSSEs.

The following table (Table 1) lists the NSSEs that have occurred, their location, and date:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Energy Council Meeting</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>Sep. 13-17, 1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO 50th Anniversary Celebration</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Apr. 23-25, 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Trade Organization Meeting</td>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td>Nov. 29-Dec. 3, 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>State of the Union Address</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Jan. 27, 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Monetary Fund Spring Meeting</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Apr. 14-17, 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presidential Inauguration</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Jan. 20, 2001</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9 Ibid.


11 Ibid.
### Event Location Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Address to Congress</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Feb. 27, 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Nations General Assembly 56</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Nov. 10-16, 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>State of the Union Address</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Jan. 29, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Bowl XXXVI</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>Feb. 3, 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Olympic Games</td>
<td>Salt Lake City, UT</td>
<td>Feb. 8-24, 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Super Bowl XXXVII</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>Jan. 26, 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>State of the Union Address</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Jan. 20, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Bowl XXXVIII</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>Feb. 1, 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sea Island G8 Summit</td>
<td>Sea Island, GA</td>
<td>Jun. 8-10, 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>President Reagan State Funeral</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Jun. 11, 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic National Convention</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>Jul. 26-29, 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republican National Convention</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sep. 2, 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presidential Inauguration</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Jan. 20, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of the Union Address</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Feb. 2, 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Super Bowl XXXIX</td>
<td>Jacksonville, FL</td>
<td>Feb. 6, 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Super Bowl XL</td>
<td>Detroit, MI</td>
<td>Feb. 5, 2006</td>
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<td>Super Bowl XLI</td>
<td>Miami Gardens, FL</td>
<td>Feb. 4, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>State of the Union Address</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Jan. 28, 2008</td>
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**Source:** U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, Office of Legislative Affairs

**NSSE Funding.** Even though NSSEs have been conducted since 1998, Congress has only appropriated funding specifically for a general NSSE fund since FY2006. Congress has, however, appropriated funding for four specific NSSEs. The first two were the 2004 Democratic and Republican presidential nominating conventions in Boston, MA, and New York City, NY, respectively. The final two will be the 2008 Democratic and Republican nominating conventions in Denver, CO, and Minneapolis - St. Paul, MN, respectively. The 108th Congress appropriated a total of $100 million for presidential nominating convention security at these two events. This $100 million was administered through the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Enforcement Assistance Programs (the Byrne programs). DOJ used the

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Federal funding for National Special Security Events (NSSE) costs incurred by federal, state, and local entities is one issue Congress may wish to address. In FY2008, Congress appropriated $1 million for NSSE costs within the Secret Service. In addition, the 110th Congress appropriated a total of $100 million for the 2008 presidential nominating conventions’ security. This $100 million is to be administered through Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs, and this appropriation is to be used for security and related costs incurred by state and local governments, including overtime, associated with these two NSSEs.

Some might argue that the $1 million Congress has appropriated for NSSEs in FY2008 may not be adequate to fund unexpected NSSE expenditures, such as the funeral of a former President. The amount appropriated could be additionally problematic considering that the Secret Service is not authorized to reimburse state and local law enforcement entities’ overtime costs associated with NSSEs. Any security costs incurred by the Secret Service could be funded with appropriations specifically designated for the agency, whereas federal reimbursement of any security costs incurred by state and local jurisdictions would have to be appropriated through other federal assistance programs — such as the $100 million appropriated for the 2008 presidential nominating conventions through DOJ’s Office of Justice Programs. Congress might consider establishing a program within Secret Service that not only provides the agency with additional funds for unexpected NSSE security costs, but also authorizes the Secret Service to reimburse state and local law enforcement entities for security costs.

Presently, state and local jurisdictions can use DHS grants, such as the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) for NSSE security activities. The grant approval process for these programs, however, is not flexible, so the programs have limited application to NSSEs. States and localities would need to plan SHSGP and UASI funding for NSSE security annually in their grant applications. For unexpected NSSEs — which may be the result of an unexpected death of a President or a change in location of a planned NSSE — states and localities are unable to plan use SHSGP or UASI funds to in advance for security costs. DHS does authorize states and localities to reprogram SHSGP and UASI funding with the DHS Secretary’s approval; however, that may result in states and localities not funding other planned homeland security activities.

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14 P.L. 110-161, Div. E.

15 P.L. 110-161, Div. B, Title II.