

Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT)



The Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT) newsletter is a summary of the activities of JCAT. This monthly publication contains items of interest to Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial first responders to promote awareness. Inclusion of an item in this newsletter does not imply NCTC's official view or endorsement. JCAT can be reached at 571-280-1307 or via email at: jcat@nctc.gov. We welcome your feedback and comments on this newsletter.

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Director's Notes

I recently had the opportunity to provide NCTC Director Olsen with a JCAT "In Progress Review." He was very impressed with the progress our joint NCTC, DHS, and FBI team has made in such a very short period of time and was particularly interested in our intelligence production efforts and initiatives, engagement on JCTAWS, and outreach to the NCTC Domestic Reps. I emphasized to Director Olsen that we could not have achieved as much as we have if it weren't for the hard work and dedication of all JCAT members. JCAT is, without a doubt, a significant point of pride with Director Olsen and the entire center.

As everyone knows, we continue to operate under funding constraints brought on by sequestration, and we are working hard to preserve JCAT's capabilities, which means as much as possible minimizing any impact on our workforce. With the help of FBI and DHS, we have been very fortunate in being able to protect JCAT from furlough.

We are working with the Director of NCTC and ODNI

staff to establish an enduring ITACG Advisory Council-like entity. Our vision is to have a panel of senior federal, state, local, tribal, and private-sector (FSLTP) officials who represent the diverse interests of public safety and private-sector security organizations and who would provide the Director of NCTC with FSLTP perspectives on CT information-sharing efforts and relevant information requirements. We still need to work through a lot of "red tape" on this initiative, but Director Olsen is committed to creating and maintaining some type of JCAT advisory body.

The ODNI staff is helping JCAT develop a more comprehensive performance framework that incorporates SLTT information requirements and leverages existing Intelligence Community (IC) performance tools, such as NCTC's annual customer satisfaction survey. To do this, ODNI will assess how well JCAT members understand the full extent of their customer information requirements by collecting performance metrics. The ODNI will then determine if and how well these needs are integrated

into JCAT's workflow, including intelligence review and collaborative production, partner liaison and outreach, and IC education. ODNI will also assess JCAT efforts to produce intelligence jointly, with federal partners, against these needs. Avenues to gather this information include self-assessments and CT intel consumer surveys.

Finally, to demonstrate the importance of what we do here at NCTC, on 23 May the President gave a landmark speech at the National Defense University about the future of our fight against terrorism. His remarks outline the US approach to counterterrorism and the significance of our mission. The Center was well represented at his speech, including by one of our own JCAT members. Several NCTC officers seated in the front row even had the chance to shake hands with the President.

I'd like to close by personally thanking everyone on the JCAT team for all that's been done to help advance the JCAT mission, as well as our FBI and DHS counterparts for their unwavering support.



"The views expressed in this article are not those of NCTC, but rather those of our state and local partners and are intended to provide insight into the important role that state and local partners like the fire service play in supporting the mission of homeland security."

By Battalion Chief Tom Currao and Captain Sean Newman, Fire Department City of New York (FDNY) Center for Terrorism and Disaster Preparedness (CTDP)

Fire Service Intelligence is designed primarily to provide customized information to a particular consumer—in this case, firefighters and other emergency responders. Fire service intel, as a whole, serves no single department but supports the unique life safety mission of firefighting and pre-hospital care with the delivery of tailored intelligence on the latest threats, trends, events, and innovations that affect these groups. As the acknowledged first line of defense when terrorist attacks occur, emergency responders require the best intelligence to carry out their duties across all mission areas—including prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery—a need that drives training initiatives, general awareness, safety protocols, operating procedures, and risk management.

Requirements, or the needs of firefighters, are carefully weighed. Emergency responders should be informed on probable targets (or even if they are themselves being

targeted), attack methods, threat periods, probable timing of attacks, or any other information that makes their jobs safer.

With needs clearly established, value can then be assigned. In the collection and processing phases, fire service analysts weigh hundreds, if not thousands, of data points to create clarity from the chaos of a seemingly infinite amount of information. In analysis, production, and delivery phases, fire service intel officers strive to present concise, relevant intelligence products to consumers who face very intense time pressures. In response to ongoing incidents, real-time or current intelligence is expeditiously synthesized and delivered through a variety of means.

The fire service does more than consume intelligence but can be an integral producer as well. As non-traditional intelligence partners, firefighters and emergency medical personnel offer unique perspectives to more established intel partners and law enforcement, adding richness and insights about consequences and vulnerabilities related to the current threats. In addition to giving guidance on the effects of certain attack scenarios—such as chemical, biological, radiological,

nuclear, and explosive attacks—members of the fire service can be essential subject experts on weaponized fire to the benefit of the entire homeland security community.

Another way that the fire service contributes to overall threat awareness and preparedness is through suspicious activity reporting, when appropriate. Consistent with the federal government's "see something say something" messaging, fire protection and emergency medical responders are encouraged to report behavior or materials that they observe in the context of an emergency response which may be consistent with an emerging terror plot or other terrorism related exigency.

It is this two-way flow of intelligence and information, described as "push" and "pull," that makes emergency responders trusted and integral partners within the homeland security intelligence community.



Information-Sharing Environment: Law Enforcement Online (LEO)

JCAT stood up the NCTC-JCAT special interest group on Law Enforcement Online (LEO). LEO is the FBI's approved and accredited information-sharing system for sensitive but unclassified information. LEO provides all levels of law enforcement, criminal justice, and public safety communities virtual private network access to its "anytime and

anywhere" system for secure information sharing, operational support, online training, and electronic communications. LEO is available to persons duly employed by a law enforcement, criminal justice, public safety, military, or intelligence agency. For questions about becoming a LEO member, send an email to membership@leo.gov.



How quickly a year comes and goes. In just a few short weeks I'll return home after completing my assignment at JCAT. What did I learn? Perhaps the more appropriate questions would be what didn't I learn? Who didn't I meet? Where didn't I go?

To start, I had direct access to senior leaders, real-time policy discussions, and interagency counterterrorism information. I was able to advise and recommend actions to decision-makers who are charged with implementing plans for the betterment of public safety and counterterrorism efforts throughout the nation at all levels of government.

Through these processes I enhanced my skills to organize and lead interagency initiatives and build consensus in problem solving with different viewpoints and participants. I also fulfilled one of the primary missions of JCAT in liaising with a host of federal partners to educate them on state and local capabilities and intelligence needs.

I witnessed the inner workings of the Intelligence Community and Federal Government, including how leaders think and act, as well as use their physical and emotional intelligence to make decisions.

Through my observations and hands-on training I honed my creative and critical thinking skills, leadership capabilities, and analytic techniques. I can also more accurately read complex situations and anticipate and plan for a range of potential situations, scenarios, and crises—both predictable and unpredictable.

My tour at NCTC, along with a few other legacy members from ITACG, was probably more tumultuous than for past participants. The half-year transition from ITACG to JCAT was intense and stressful. This aggressive change instilled in me a stronger sense of resilience, confidence, and flexibility in the face of adversity and uncertainty. Sometimes the hardest trials we face are the most important and leave upon us the deepest impressions.

I am happy to report that JCAT is off to an excellent start with new energy and plenty of promise. I am proud to have been part of this rejuvenated effort to enhance information sharing and help state and local partners prevent and protect against acts of terrorism.

I am confident that this forward-thinking organization will further cultivate and build interagency cooperation, whole-of-government

collaboration, and communities of trust that will serve state and local needs for years to come. I am committed to its mission and will support it however I can from the field.

Looking back, in my small role I was part of larger current events and history in the making. I was at NCTC during the Boston Marathon bombings as well as the terrorist attack on the US mission in Benghazi, Libya. These incidents and many others will forever serve me as stark reminders of the importance of our common mission in preserving the preciousness of life.

With that, I sign off from JCAT with a bittersweet goodbye to my second home in DC. For a brief moment I was at the center of history and will cherish the knowledge, experiences, and invaluable life lessons I gained during my tenure at NCTC. To my colleagues at DHS, FBI, NCTC, and elsewhere, thank you for a great assignment and friendships that will last a lifetime.



Fellowship Opportunities

JCAT offers federal fellowship opportunities to public safety professionals—law enforcement, emergency medical services, fire service, intelligence, homeland security, and public health officials—from state, local, tribal, and territorial agencies. This highly competitive program is sponsored

by NCTC, DHS, and FBI and requires a one-year commitment in Washington, DC.

Applicants must be current employees of a state, local, tribal, or territorial agency and possess a working knowledge of the terrorism and homeland security information needs of SLTT partners.





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Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team Mission

The mission of the Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team is to improve information sharing and enhance public safety. In coordination with FBI and DHS, JCAT will collaborate with other members of the Intelligence Community to research, produce, and disseminate counterterrorism intelligence products for federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government agencies and the private sector and advocate for the counterterrorism intelligence requirements and needs of these partners throughout the Intelligence Community.



Lines of Effort

Intelligence Review and Collaborative Production

- Roll Call Release
- Fire Line
- Terrorism Summary
- Tear Line Advocacy
- NCTC Current Dissemination
- Guides, Handbooks, Recruiting Aids

Partner Liaison and Outreach

- DNI Domestic Representatives
- NCTC Domestic Representatives
- DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A)
- FBI Directorate of Intelligence
- I&A State and Local Program Office (SLPO)
- I&A SLPO Regional Directors and Intelligence Officers
- FBI Joint Regional Intelligence Groups (Planned)
- Joint Counterterrorism Awareness Workshops (JCTAWS)

IC Education

- Analyst Liaison and Collaborative Production
- Formal Course Participation
- Guest Speaker Engagement



JCAT Plans to Participate in the Following Conferences and JCTAWS

National Homeland Security Conference, Los Angeles, CA, June 4-7

JCTAWS, Seattle, WA, June 18-19

NCTC Domestic Representative Quarterly Meeting, VA, June 18-20

National Sheriffs Association (NSA) Conference, Charlotte, NC, June 22-26

Firehouse Expo, Baltimore, MD, July 25-27

Major City Chiefs Association Conference (Summer Meeting)

International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Conference, Chicago, IL, August 13-17

JCTAWS, Minneapolis, MN, August 27-28

International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Conference, Philadelphia, PA, October 19-23



Alumni and Current SLTTs

- Abington Police Department, PA
- Albuquerque Police Department, NM
- Aurora Police Department, CO
- Arlington Police Department, TX
- Boston Police Department, MA
- City of Phoenix Fire Dept, AZ
- **Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, VA***
- **Fire Department City of New York***
- Florida Department of Health, FL
- Florida Highway Patrol, FL
- Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, MN
- Houston Fire Department, TX
- Illinois State Police, IL
- Indiana State Police, IN
- Las Vegas Metro Police Department, NV
- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, MI
- **Maricopa County Department of Public Health, AZ***
- Nebraska Health and Human Services, NE
- New Jersey State Police, NJ
- Oakland County Sheriff's Office, MI
- **Ohio Strategic Analysis and Information Center, OH***
- Oneida Indian Nation Police, NY
- Orange County Sheriff's Office, CA
- **Philadelphia Police Department, PA***
- Phoenix Police Department, AZ
- Seattle Fire Department, WA
- Washington State Police, WA
- Washington DC Fire and EMS Department
- Washington DC Metropolitan Police Department

* Current JCAT Participating Agencies

