



United States
Department of Justice



FUSION CENTER SPOTLIGHT

Tennessee Fusion Center: Critical Infrastructure Protection Efforts

Tennessee Fusion Center

The Tennessee Fusion Center (TFC) utilizes an all-crimes model and operates under a leadership partnership of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and the Tennessee Department of Safety/Office of Homeland Security (TDOS/OHS). The TFC enjoys a broad representation of law enforcement, criminal justice, homeland security, and Critical Infrastructure and Key Resource (CIKR) security professionals who are actively involved in fusion center information sharing and analysis activities. A TFC Governance Board comprised of executive level representation from key Federal, State, and local law enforcement partners and stakeholder agencies guides the overall mission and objectives of the TFC.

Critical Infrastructure Background

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines CIKR as assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, national economic security, public health or safety, or any combination of those matters. CIKR is organized into 18 sectors that together provide essential functions and services to the U.S. Government, economy, and society. DHS developed the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) to coordinate Federal, State, and local identification, prioritization, and protection efforts within and across each sector. Fusion centers are uniquely positioned to integrate and share CIKR-related information.

Critical Infrastructure Integration

Background

The TFC has established a CIKR protection analytic and information sharing capability that supports the State's CIKR Protection Program. The TFC CIKR-related capabilities center on the development of analytical products to support comprehensive understanding of CIKR threats and vulnerabilities, as well as potential consequences of local, national, and international attacks. The TFC solicits multi-disciplinary input from Tennessee's private and public sector owners and operators, subject matter experts, and Federal, State, and local partners via awareness campaigning and a robust Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) program.

Suspicious Activity Reports Threat Assessment

Tennessee operates a SAR initiative that includes unique CIKR data collection nodes, allowing the TFC to capture specific CIKR data for inclusion in the state-specific threat assessment. The information is collected through secure

mail, Homeland Security Information Network , fax, or a dedicated call-in number, and is evaluated and further codified for threat, location, sector, and time. This approach allows for the development of a threat footprint of Tennessee from an all-threat approach over a period of time. This data is further analyzed to identify trends, patterns, and potential terrorist linkage or activity. The full SARs threat assessment is completed on a semi-annual basis in collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Critical Infrastructure Analyst

To support and integrate the risk reduction goals of the State, the TFC implemented the CIKR analyst position. The CIKR analyst is tasked with working with the private and public sectors to identify concerns and establish a state-specific awareness picture to enhance and sustain TFC CIKR capabilities. The analyst focuses on risk and trend analysis, and disseminates the following TFC products:

Weekly SAR Information Bulletin

The Weekly SAR Information Bulletin contains a snapshot of suspicious activities reported by local law enforcement and first responder agencies, as well as private citizens during the previous week. This document is distributed via a secure portal to public and private sectors partners as an awareness tool.

Sector-Specific Awareness Bulletins and Assessments

The TFC issues awareness bulletins as the need arises and as is requested by a specific sector. The TFC compiles local, national, and international incident reports, SARs, open source research, and other intelligence reporting to provide comprehensive analyses of the threat, consequences, and/or vulnerabilities of the CIKR sectors.

Trend and Risk Analysis

On a daily basis, the TFC evaluates available threat related information/intelligence received from SARs, Federal reporting, other fusion centers, Patriot Reports, open source research, and InfraGard contacts as it relates to Tennessee CIKR. An official risk assessment, focused on emerging trends, is created from this threat information and the analysis of potential consequences and known vulnerabilities.

CIKR Analytical Collaboration Group

To further promote the effectiveness of its CIKR capabilities, the TFC established the “CIKR Analytical Collaboration Group.” This group provides a platform for networking between fusion center CIKR analysts across the country. The purpose is to exchange best practices and lessons learned with other CIKR analysts via a secure environment. The group members also participate in a monthly conference call in which they identify needs, capabilities, and activities of regional and state fusion centers, as well as recent trends, to further guide and support the development of operational awareness and strategic planning.

Future Steps

The TFC is currently developing geospatial analysis capabilities. The CIKR analytical focus is on patterns/clusters of suspicious activities and subsequent risk to CIKR assets in the affected area. This will allow a multi-dimensional approach to risk analysis and CIKR related products.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you require information regarding the Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program or assistance with the request process, please contact Kevin Saupp at kevin.saupp@dhs.gov or Patrick McCreary at james.p.mccreary@usdoj.gov.