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Colorado - Terrorism Liaison Officer and the Community Awareness Programs

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SUMMARY

The Colorado Information Analysis Center (CIAC) is the state's fusion center, which serves as the analytic hub for all-hazards disasters. In addition to collecting, analyzing, and distributing all-hazards information to stakeholders throughout the county, the CIAC develops innovative programs to enhance statewide antiterrorism initiatives. Through the Terrorism Liaison Officer (TLO) program and Community Awareness Program (CAP), the CIAC trains local law enforcement officers, private sector partners, and the general public to recognize and report terrorism-related information.

DESCRIPTION

The CIAC serves the state of Colorado, with a population of approximately 5.2 million residents, half of which live in the Denver metropolitan area. Denver is the largest city in a state of 104,100 square miles (8th largest) and a state-wide population density of approximately 50.3 persons per square mile.

Launched in 2007, the TLO Program has certified over 840 professionals statewide in recognizing activity that could lead to potential acts of terrorism. TLOs contributed to the 2011 arrests of a potential bomber and a multi-state criminal group. Local police received reports that an individual had placed two Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in a store. The CIAC circulated investigatory information nationally and to state TLOs. After seeing the notification, a State Trooper sent the CIAC information that the suspect crashed his vehicle and was taken into custody; another TLO linked the suspect to a third IED that partially detonated near a hotel.

TLOs volunteer their time to teach for the CAP, which was developed in partnership with the Counterterrorism Education Learning Lab (CELL). CAP training was developed in line with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security If You See Something, Say Something™ campaign. The CAP equips citizens to recognize suspicious behaviors outlined in the Information

Sharing Functional Standard for Suspicious Activity Reporting, which is the foundation of the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative. After the Boston Marathon bombings, the CIAC began focusing the CAP outreach training in those communities hosting events in advance

Figure 1: CIAC analysts work in the field to monitor real-time threats

Figure 2: CAP lanyards from special events

of special events, such as the X Games, to broaden the base of “eyes on the street” during the event. The CIAC receives about an extra 100 tips per day during events held in communities that participated in the CAP.

INVESTMENT INFORMATION

Since 2006, Colorado has invested more than \$3.5 million in Federal preparedness grants to support the CIAC. This funding has supported a range of CIAC programs and initiatives, including the CIAC’s TLO Program, risk assessment program, and ongoing CIAC activities to share information with private sector, local, state, tribal and Federal partners, as well as the whole community. Through these efforts, the CIAC assists with terrorism and criminal investigations, natural disaster responses, criminal manhunts, and a variety of other incidents. Colorado’s successful development of the TLO Program and community outreach with CAP has prompted other states to develop similar efforts based on the CIAC’s model.

ABOUT THE LESSONS LEARNED INFORMATION SHARING PROGRAM

The LLIS program develops and disseminates lessons learned, trend analyses, case studies, and innovative ideas to improve preparedness for the emergency management and homeland security communities. These documents, produced through research and analysis by the LLIS team, support whole community learning and continuous improvement.

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