

2011

9/11/01- Northern Nevada 10 Years Later



Submitted by Washoe County Sheriff's Office Community Relations on behalf of the Northern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center, Nevada Threat Analysis Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Attorney's Office, Reno Police Department, Sparks Police Department, Washoe County Emergency Management, and Washoe County Sheriff's Office

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Introduction – 9/11 Story Idea's for Media

On 8-15-11 executives from the Northern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center, Nevada Threat Analysis Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Attorney's Office, Reno Police Department, Sparks Police Department, and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office met to discuss and review the collective impact Sept. 11, 2001 has had on our northern Nevada Communities.

In the wake of the attacks, it became apparent that lack of communication between local, state and federal agencies hampered the nation's ability to prevent these attacks, raising public concern.

Much has changed in the last 10 years. With the advent of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; local, state and federal partnerships between many different emergency management, law enforcement, private and non-profit organizations, and State and Federal agencies were formed and federal funds provided to better prepare, protect and most importantly prevent further attacks within our local communities.

Northern Nevada agencies created a structured approach to communicate and understand risk, share information and analysis and conduct assessments and training that guide policy and operations. There is now a systematic collection, dissemination and coordination of risk information and planning. As a result, today Northern Nevada benefits from an "all hazards" approach where federal, state and local agencies communicate and facilitate effective responses to not only risk of terrorism, but also man-made or natural disasters and other emergency crisis scenarios.

The most important benefit of this unique relationship between northern Nevada's local, state and federal partnerships is how well they communicate and their focus and planning on **prevention**. There have been examples nationally and locally where planned attacks or attempts at funding a planned attack were almost carried out but thwarted.

In preparation of the 10th anniversary of 9-11; the above mentioned agencies are offering special access and submit to you the following story ideas for your review.

7 Signs of Terrorism

Citizens often ask what they can do to assist in Homeland Security efforts. In 2008, the UNLV Institute for Security Studies in support of the Nevada Governor's Commission on Homeland Security, launched a fifteen minute DVD called the "7 Signs of Terrorism," to engage the public in the war on terrorism. The DVD, available in both English and Spanish is distributed to groups and individuals in Nevada that would be in a position to observe the signs of a potential terrorism plot. Primarily designed for the public, the focus was also on groups to include workers in the fields of general security, public school security, airport security, transit and hospitality. Communication between public safety agencies and the community is vital to our future success in mitigating a terrorist event. Now reaching out to the general public, it is more important than ever for citizens to be aware of the seven signs of terrorism:

- Surveillance
- Information Gathering
- Testing Security
- Planning
- Suspicious Behavior
- Rehearsal
- Getting Into Position

Ordinary citizens reporting suspicious activities they have witnessed are an important tool for law enforcement working to stop terrorist acts.

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FBI – Connecting with the Community

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS – COMMUNITIES AGAINST TERRORISM

“Preventing terrorism is a community effort.”

The approaching tenth Anniversary of 911 is focusing public attention on some of the steps made by law enforcement agencies over the last ten years to help prevent terrorist/extremist activity on U.S. soil. “Communities against Terrorism,” is a national grant funded program supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance currently in use by the Reno Resident Agency of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to strengthen the partnership between law enforcement and the business community through one-on-one contact with specific local businesses, such as gun shops, farm suppliers, recycling businesses, beauty and drug supplies, pool supplies, and others that may be patronized by an extremist in search of supplies.

Reno area agents are contacting these businesses either in person or over the phone to provide them with a point of contact should they have information or concerns to report, and to background them on how to spot potentially suspicious people and activities.

Businesses are reminded that “some of these activities, taken individually, could be innocent and must be examined by law enforcement in a larger context to determine whether there is a basis to investigate. The partnership between the community and law enforcement is essential to the success of anti terrorism efforts.”

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How the Private Sector Protects Northern Nevada

Shortly after 9/11, law enforcement and private security organizations in northern Nevada formed a partnership to address a range of critical needs: averting future terrorist events, combining resources to address security related crimes, and improve security for critical infrastructures (buildings, networks, community assets). Since the private sector operates approximately 85% of the nations' critical infrastructures, public/private partnership is essential.

Here in northern Nevada, security organizations such as ASIS and the Northern Nevada Security Directors Association partner with local & state law enforcement to work together outside of their traditionally established relationships. Together they form a strong, integrated network of information sharing and capitalization of local resources.

Security organizations are “force multipliers” that assist law enforcement with:

- Assessing vulnerabilities, implementing protective programs, and improving security protocols
- Enhancing preparedness through training and exercises
- Assisting with contingency planning, response, and recovery
- Implementing real-time information sharing
- Implementing cybersecurity measures
- Assisting with infrastructure data collection and management
- Implementing regulations for high-risk chemical facilities
- Developing standards for building security

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Northern Nevada Counter Terrorism and Nevada Threat Analysis Centers

In 2003, President George W. Bush announced the creation of the National Counter Terrorism Center (formerly known as Terrorist Threat Integration Center) established to provide terrorism information to the intelligence community; to include lists of terrorists, terrorist groups, and worldwide terrorist incidents; support the response to terrorist incidents in the U.S. and worldwide; and write assessments and briefings for policymakers.

Following the creation of the NCTC, state and major urban area governments established fusion centers to enhance intelligence and information sharing within their jurisdictions and with departments and agencies at the federal level. Recognizing the critical importance of information sharing, nearly all 50 states have created fusion centers with various federal, state, and local funds.

Federal stakeholders, like the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice, view fusion centers as important tools in domestic counterterrorism efforts and have provided both financial and personnel support to these state and local offices. Northern Nevada has two fusion centers; the Northern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center and the Nevada Threat Analysis Center.

Today, Fusion Centers:

- Send out federal alerts, warnings, and notifications regarding time-sensitive threats, situational awareness reports, and analytical products.
- Produce or interpret intelligence products important to stakeholders.
- Help protect critical community infrastructures such as those related to food, agriculture, public health, telecommunications, energy, transportation, and banking, all now considered potential terrorist targets.
- Contribute information to ongoing federal and national-level terrorist risk assessments. They also complete statewide, regional, or site-specific and topical risk assessments.
- Gather, process, analyze, and disseminate locally generated information, such as Suspicious Activity Reports.
- Protect civil liberties and privacy interests of American citizens throughout the intelligence process.

The Northern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center (NNCTC) commonly referred to as a “Fusion Center,” for Washoe County is located within the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office. The Center was established to collaborate in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of “meaningful actionable, strategic, and tactical intelligence.” The Center provides the tools and expertise for participating agencies to maximize their ability to anticipate, identify, monitor, prevent and respond to terrorism and criminal acts occurring in Washoe County.

The NNCTC is funded jointly between the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security grants awarded by the State of Nevada.

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The Nevada Threat Analysis Center (NTAC) The Nevada Threat Analysis Center (NTAC) was established in April 2008 and is an entity within the Nevada Department of Public Safety (DPS) – Investigation Division. Nevada DPS encompasses a variety of sworn divisions including Investigations, Highway Patrol, Parole and Probation, Fire Marshal, and Capitol Police. In partnership with the people of Nevada, the Department of Public Safety provides services in support of protecting our citizens and visitors by promoting safer communities through prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, education, and enforcement, through an all-threats, all crimes strategy.

NTAC is recognized by the Department of Homeland Security as the fusion center in Nevada with primary responsibility for 15 of the state's 17 counties (excluding Washoe and Clark Counties), all state agencies and tribal areas within those areas. Clark and Washoe Counties have their own fusion centers, with responsibilities lying within their respective jurisdictions. NTAC embraces a team effort of local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement, fire, health, and private sector stakeholders, in cooperation with the citizens of Nevada, for the timely receipt, analysis, and dissemination of terrorism and criminal information while ensuring the safety and privacy rights of our citizens and critical infrastructure.

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Intelligence Led Policing - Information Sharing

The need to share information became an imperative to protect our Nation in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. The Intelligence Community's "need-to-know" culture, a necessity during the Cold War, became a handicap that threatened our ability to uncover, respond, and protect against terrorism and other similar threats. Insights into the importance of timeline and actionable intelligence in preventing a terrorist event supported the adoption of intelligence-led policing, a robust system of data collection from a wide range of sources to produce the best possible intelligence shared by all involved. In northern Nevada, public safety agencies recognized that exchanging intelligence information must be accessible, available, and discoverable at the earliest point possible. Almost immediately, regional law enforcement adopted an intelligence led policing model.

Because effective intelligence operations can be applied equally well to terrorist threats and crimes in the community, homeland security and local crime prevention are not mutually exclusive. Law enforcement "on the street" is an excellent resource for gathering information on all kinds of potential threats and vulnerabilities.

After 9/11, Northern Nevada law enforcement agencies began to immediately create a cooperative, fluid structure for collecting and sharing intelligence information. Information shared by these agencies help to identify and analyze trends or developing problems or risks. Law enforcement agencies manage risk in terms of threat, vulnerability and consequence; making the information shared between agencies less reactive and more proactive, focusing on prevention.

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Citizen Corps of Northern Nevada

Citizen Corps is a United States national service program under the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security that seeks to mobilize the population of the country against threats to national security as well as to assist in the recovery after a disaster or terrorist attack. Citizen Corps also works in conjunction with the Corporation for National and Community Service in promoting national service opportunities for promoting homeland security needs.

Created in 2003 through federal funding, the Washoe County Citizen Corps program has won three national awards; the most recent was the National Achievement Award for Most Outstanding Citizen Corps Council for populations fewer than 750,000, presented by FEMA Director Craig Fugate last September.

The largest program within the Citizen Corps program is the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) whose volunteers range in age from 18 to 84 and come in all skill levels and all walks of life. Over 800 northern Nevada residents have completed the CERT academy which educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in emergency preparedness, disaster medical operations, fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, terrorism, the incident command system and documentation. The program has even established teams to assist in observing and reporting suspicious events involving airports and railroads. Many of these citizens work in the downtown area. Additionally, another 200 citizens have been trained in the Citizen's Homeland Security Council (CHSC), and a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC); bringing the total to about 1,000 citizens.

Since its inception, Citizen corps have participated in over 40 disaster exercises and drills, responded to 23 emergency callouts (snow, flood, fire, H1N1) whenever first responders request them.

Photo opportunity: On September 10th Citizen Corps will conduct their annual CERT Disaster Exercise called "Operation All of Us." The exercise will be a shelter set up in response to a terrorist attack in Reno. The exercise will be conducted by CERT and Red Cross personnel.

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Transportation Security Administration

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) was created in the wake of 9/11 to strengthen the security of the nation's transportation systems while ensuring the freedom of movement for people and commerce. Within a year, TSA assumed responsibility for security at the nation's airports and deployed a federal workforce to screen all commercial airline passengers and baggage. In March 2003, TSA transitioned from the Department of Transportation to the Department of Homeland Security.

Today, TSA uses multiple layers of security to keep the traveling public safe, including intelligence, innovative technologies, canine teams and a highly trained workforce.

- Since 9/11, TSA has screened nearly 5 billion passengers, detected approximately 50 million prohibited items, including 4,600 firearms during airport checkpoint screening.
- Since the agency's inception, TSA has screened approximately 4 billion checked bags. Every checked bag is screened for explosives.
- To date, TSA has conducted more than 15,000 Visible Intermodal Prevent and Response (VIPR) operations— VIPR teams who work in collaboration with local law enforcement and other security officials to supplement existing security resources, provide deterrent presence and detection capabilities, and introduce an element of unpredictability to disrupt potential terrorist planning activities.

TSA works side by side with all local fusion centers and local and regional public safety organizations. TSA partners with transportation sectors such as - Aviation, Mass Transit, Highway, Freight Rail, and Pipeline understanding this is a vast, open, interdependent networked system that moves millions of passengers and millions of tons of goods. TSA's spirit of cooperation with other public safety agencies throughout Nevada have made them a valuable partner in the fight against terrorism.

For more information on TSA in Nevada contact

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Joint Terrorism Task Force

The Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) in northern Nevada is part of our nation's front line on terrorism. JTTF is a small group of highly trained, locally based, passionately committed investigators, analysts, linguists, SWAT experts, and other specialists. Their primary focus is to head off terrorist attacks by identifying and disrupting the plots of international and domestic terrorist operatives and cells. They accomplish this by cutting off terrorist financing and undercutting other forms of support provided by terrorist sympathizers. This multi-agency effort led by the Justice Department and FBI combines intelligence resources of federal, state, and local law enforcement who share information and intelligence including strategic and operational threat analysis to the national intelligence community. JTTF engages in surveillance, electronic monitoring, source development and interviews. JTTF defines and mitigates emerging events in cooperation with the regional fusion centers.

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U.S. Attorney's Office – Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council

“How prosecuting marriage fraud can mitigate a terrorist event”

In October 2001 the U.S. Attorney General directed the district offices to form Anti-Terrorism Task Forces, now known as Anti-Terrorism Advisory Councils or ATACs. In addition to the Executive Office of the President and the federal court system, the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) is the primary outlet for federal agencies to combine efforts to prosecute criminal cases and assist in federal civil cases. ATACs ensure that an official appointed by the President, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate, directly oversees day-to-day counterterrorism efforts in each judicial district throughout the United States and its territories. Each federal judicial district is staffed with an Intelligence Specialist who works closely with Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs), led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

ATACs have become a major component in the information sharing effort, specifically reaching out to the broader first responder community for a more holistic approach to prevention. ATACs, together with JTTFs and the DHS, work each day to foster better cooperation and coordination between traditional law enforcement and other members of the first responder community.

The U.S. Attorney's Office is tasked with identifying potential terrorist-related incidents such as identity or marriage fraud, or drug trafficking. An apparently straightforward marriage fraud or drug case may contain an overlooked nexus with a conspiracy to fund or provide resources to a terrorist or terrorist organization. The U.S. Attorney's Office provides a unique and critical role in northern Nevada's effort to prevent terrorist activity.

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Funding Homeland Security

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funded a total of \$6.5M to Washoe County over the first 5 years after 9/11. This funding was provided from the federal government, through the state, directly to the County LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee). The LEPC is comprised of about 50 different agencies- Washoe, Reno, Sparks, fire, law enforcement, safety, public health, hospitals, ambulance company, public works, emergency communications, businesses, and other regional partners. This committee reviews all Homeland Security Grant requests and prioritizes which agencies in our region receive the funds based on merit and DHS guidelines. They meet at least six times per year.

Beginning in 2006, the federal government revised how homeland security grant funding is distributed, and began encouraging statewide initiatives. Washoe County remained very involved in the process and led several projects to continue closing identified capability gaps. Since 2006, a total of about \$14M was received.

The funding is for specific "target capabilities" identified by federal, state, and local officials. The bulk of the funding, about \$9M, has been invested in information sharing, countering improvised explosive devices, infrastructure protection, and interoperable communications. Over the past 5 years, these funds have helped the Washoe County Sheriff to establish a Northern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center (NNCTC). The Center was established to collaborate in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of "meaningful actionable, strategic, and tactical intelligence." The Center provides the tools and expertise for participating agencies to maximize their ability to anticipate, identify, monitor, prevent and respond to terrorism and criminal acts occurring in the Northern Nevada region and beyond. Specialized equipment and training were also funded for the region's consolidated bomb squad to ensure first responders can react to improvised explosive devices (IEDs). An outreach is ongoing to the region's critical infrastructure to develop plans and strengthen security for business that provide utilities and other services vital to our regional economy. Communications switching equipment was also procured and installed to allow the region's radio systems to operate seamlessly not only for all agencies within our region; but also with rural Nevada, state agencies, and southern Nevada to ensure that vital public safety information can be shared quickly.

Perhaps the most important benefit of the DHS funding is that it has allowed time cross-training among jurisdictions and agencies. The last 10 years has provided many good examples of regional partners working closely with sister Counties as well as State and Federal agencies. First responders have practiced their new skills with the DHS-funded equipment and validated that all agencies could communicate and work together in a high stress environment. DHS has sponsored numerous training sessions and exercises. This work is coordinated closely with the Security Chiefs association in downtown Reno, as well as numerous business and volunteer groups.

Public safety officials generally agree that they have procured the key equipment necessary for our region's first responders. Public safety organizations are now shifting their focus to sustainment projects to maintain increased levels of public safety. Major projects for this year continue to focus on refining the Northern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center (NNCTC), pursuing a "state watch" program that ties-in all statewide law enforcement to quickly share information, and completing an initiative for business and government continuity of operations.

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