

# Improving Intelligence and Counterterrorism Capabilities

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Since September 11, 2001, the NYPD has built a set of counterterrorism and intelligence capabilities unequaled by municipal law enforcement agencies anywhere in the world. The successful and safe completion of the events around the 2014 Super Bowl with New York as the key venue was a blueprint for collaboration for a complex, drawn-out, two-state, multi-agency counterterrorism mission. The 2014 United Nations General Assembly, attended by the largest number of high-threat foreign dignitaries in the organization’s history, stands as another testament to the NYPD’s counterterrorism capabilities and the Department’s ability to work closely with its federal partners. The next General Assembly will pose an even greater challenge in September 2015 because, in addition to numerous world leaders, Pope Francis will be attendance and addressing the General Assembly.

As the threats change and terrorists adapt their tactics to the hardened targets in New York City, the NYPD cannot rest. It is essential that raw information be gathered faster and analyzed more rigorously. Intelligence, in turn, must be shared readily, and acted upon diligently. To foster fuller cooperation and information sharing between the Counterterrorism and Intelligence Bureaus, both bureaus have both been placed under a single deputy commissioner, John Miller—former Bureau Chief of the LAPD’s Counterterrorism and Criminal Intelligence Bureau, terrorism expert, and former Associate Deputy Director at the Directorate of National Intelligence.

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Deputy Commissioner Miller’s first objective has been to solidify the recent gains that have resulted from what the Department calls its “collaborative reset” with local, state, federal, and international partners. Closely partnering with other agencies that share the NYPD’s responsibility in the fields of intelligence and counterterrorism is the most powerful force multiplier the NYPD can bring to bear in keeping New York safe.

**“The Intelligence and Counterterrorism Bureaus are working closely with the Community Affairs Bureau and the Deputy Commissioner for Collaborative Policing to engage with community leaders in a transparent and constructive discussion about the NYPD’s counterterrorism mission and how that mission will be accomplished.”**

The “collaborative reset,” also requires adjustments in the field of community relations. Success in protecting New York should not be achieved at the cost of alienating communities of law abiding New Yorkers. The Intelligence Bureau is working closely with the Community Affairs Bureau and the Deputy Commissioner for Collaborative Policing to engage with community leaders in a transparent and constructive discussion about the NYPD’s counterterrorism mission and how that mission will be accomplished.

## THE CRITICAL RESPONSE COMMAND

In light of emerging threat patterns, and particularly the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris in January 2015, the NYPD is establishing a Critical Response Command within the Counterterrorism Bureau. This new command represents a major shift in the NYPD’s counterterrorism profile.



For the past ten years, NYPD has staffed what were called critical response vehicles (CRVs) with personnel and cars drawn each day from the precinct commands, with most precincts providing one car and two officers to CRV. These vehicles were available to respond to any terrorist or active shooter crisis in the city and to deter terrorist attacks with high visibility patrols and inspections. The CRV model brought with it two significant challenges: the daily drain on precinct resources which left many precincts one car short on the morning and evening shifts and the fact the officers assigned to CRV did not come specially trained nor specially equipped for their counterterrorism role.

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The attackers in Charlie Hebdo incident were armed with assault rifles and made no immediate attempt to escape after the attack on the magazine, instead bringing the attack to the responding police officers. The incident made clear, as did the synchronized attacks in Mumbai in 2008, that ordinary police patrols are not equipped or trained to counter a well-organized and well-armed terrorist attack. Given that New York City, and especially Manhattan, remains a primary terrorist target, the NYPD is establishing a Critical Response Command of specially trained and equipped officers who will provide an immediate and effective response to active shooter and other terrorist attacks in the city.

The NYPD Counterterrorism Bureau is currently engaged in an intensive interview process to select the officers, supervisors and command staff for the Critical Response Command. The new officers will be trained in the full range of counterterrorist expertise, including:

- Hostile Surveillance, Behavioral Observation and Counterterrorist Awareness – the ability to detect the signs of an impending attack and to read the faces and body language of possible attackers
- Homemade Explosives and Advanced Explosive Trace Detection

- Portable Radiological Detection and Radiological and Nuclear Awareness
- Biological and Chemical Weapons Awareness
- Vehicle and Subway Checkpoints
- Special Weapons and Long Guns
- Port Awareness – an understanding of how weapons might be disguised and smuggled through the New York City region ports and of vulnerabilities of port facilities to terrorist attack

The Critical Response Command will give the city a cadre of hand-selected, well-trained and well-equipped police personnel poised to respond swiftly and with sufficient expertise and force to counter the most highly organized and heavily armed attack.

## REBUILDING COUNTERTERRORISM

In 1980, the NYPD worked with the FBI to develop the nation’s first Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). In the early 1980s this unit, as well as other FBI sponsored JTTFs around the country focused primarily on domestic terrorist activity. This model was largely successful at countering terrorist groups involved in bombings like the FALN, United Freedom Front and Black Liberation Army. By the start of the 1990s, as violent street crime soared, preventing terrorist activity was neither the federal government’s nor the NYPD’s primary concern. The long-successful JTTF model faced serious challenges disrupting terrorist plots from a growing number of groups overseas, including Al Qaeda.

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The attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001 shocked New York and the world. The terrorist attacks committed by 19 Al Qaeda operatives killed 2,753 New Yorkers. Among the lost were 343 New York firefighters, 23 New York police officers and 37 of



fficers from the Port Authority Police. It was the deadliest incident for firefighters and law enforcement officers in United States history.

The attack on the Twin Towers shook New York City and the NYPD to its core. It became clear that national intelligence agencies had not shared – and acted on – vital information that might have kept New York and the Pentagon out of harm’s way. After September 11th, under the leadership of Commissioner Raymond Kelly, the NYPD stood up a local counter terrorist and intelligence capacity to both identify and counteract the threats to New York City.

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The Intelligence Division has been re-designated the Intelligence Bureau in recognition of the new Bureau’s expanded responsibilities and resources. The intelligence gathering and analysis capabilities housed within this bureau are unequaled in any municipal law enforcement agency in the world.

**“The robust infrastructure the NYPD created to keep New Yorkers safe from acts of terrorism deters and interdicts terrorist operations directed at New York City. Despite multiple attempts, between the joint efforts of the FBI and the NYPD, there has been no successful major terrorist operation in New York since September 11, 2001”.**

While the Intelligence Bureau collects, analyzes and acts on intelligence at the operational level, the Counterterrorism Bureau translates intelligence into training programs, target hardening programs, and anti-terrorism best practices. The Counterterrorism Bureau oversaw the development of the Lower Manhattan Security Initiative (LMSI)—now one of the most extensive networks of security cameras, radiological detectors, and license plate readers in the world. To increase LMSI’s effectiveness, the Counterterrorism Bureau concentrated all the data generated by this extensive network, as well as information from NYPD’s other databases, into one dashboard called the Domain Awareness System. The robust infrastructure the NYPD created to keep New

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## THE CURRENT THREAT PICTURE

The threats facing New York City today are becoming increasingly complex. While the NYPD’s federal partners have kept Al Qaeda Central off balance since 2001, growing regional instability in the Middle East and Central Asia has created a new set of threats that must be mitigated. Commissioner Bratton recognizes that New York remains the primary target of globally focused terrorist networks. The NYPD will continue to draw on its own capabilities and the capabilities of its federal partners to maintain a current and detailed assessment of the threats facing New York. Currently, the NYPD has identified four classes of threats.

- The first set of threats are posed by Al Qaeda Central. The same network that attacked New York on 9/11 is still active, dangerous and focused on attacking the American homeland. Al Qaeda’s Senior Leadership (AQSL) continues to hide and plot in the ungoverned regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. New York City was already attacked by the Al Qaeda network that had trained, planned and managed its operatives from this region.
- The second set of threats derive from Al Qaeda’s affiliates and breakaway groups, particularly Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (or AQAP), the Khorasan Group in Syria, and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). AQAP was specifically designated by Ayman Zawahiri, the leader of Al Qaeda, as the Al Qaeda branch assigned to attack the U.S. homeland. The recent instability in Yemen has allowed AQAP to establish secure bases of operation in the south and east of the country.



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- The third class of threat comes from the so-called “Lone Wolf” who may follow the doctrine or narrative of Al Qaeda, and decide to act alone on U.S. soil. Many of these offenders, such as Army Major Nidal Hassan, who carried out the Fort Hood attack, have been inspired by Al Qaeda videos and the preaching of spokesman like Anwar al-Aulaqi.

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- Syrian Civil War has also caused greater instability in Iraq. A former Al Qaeda affiliate, ISIL, took advantage of this instability and used armed detachments to take and hold large swaths or territory in Syria and Iraq. While ISIL lacks Al Qaeda’s built-in external operations planning or “cells” of trained attackers, it has developed a complex network of tools that use online platforms for radicalization, recruitment and calls for attacks in the United States.

## “COLLABORATIVE RESET”: STRENGTHENING LAWFUL AND RESPECTFUL INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS

Just as terrorists rely on networks, public safety professions must maintain a cooperative network among all the agencies – local, state, and federal – charged with countering the terrorist threat. To ensure a relevant and thorough understanding of the shifting threat picture, the NYPD must work with its state and federal partners to coordinate resources, share intelligence and exchange analyses. The Intelligence and Counterterrorism Bureaus’ staffing, structure and analytics provide the NYPD with a unique capability to quickly gather raw information and translate analysis into action.

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Under Commissioner Bratton, the Intelligence and Counterterrorism Bureaus have continued to improve intelligence gathering, analysis dissemination and quick response capabilities. In addition, the Department is reviewing and restructuring its existing criminal intelligence collection and dissemination programs to make them more effective.

As terrorist tactics strive to adapt to the NYPD’s countermeasures and to its federal partner’s capabilities, a continued and expanded collaboration between NYPD and its federal partners will keep the Department one step ahead of terrorist operations.

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The NYPD is taking the opportunity to reset its collaborative relationships with local, state, and federal partners. The Intelligence and Counterterrorism Bureaus recognize that expanding the amount of intelligence and analysis shared between the NYPD and its partners will greatly increase both the Department’s and its partners’ understanding of the threats we face together. To affirm and solidify this reset, the Intelligence and Counterterrorism Bureaus will facilitate a greater and more diverse group of national and international relationships by hosting informative, educational and professional development trainings with the NYPD’s state, federal and international partners. The NYPD and its partners will share their expertise, test their best practices and evaluate their lawful uses of technology through these expanded training opportunities and exercises.

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**York feel equally protected and respected by the intelligence gathering methods and counterterrorism public safety initiatives of the NYPD.”**

The Counterterrorism and Intelligence Bureaus will work with the Community Affairs Bureau and the Deputy Commissioner for Collaborative Policing to reach out and engage with the many communities that make up New York. We will be working with community leaders to ensure that those who live in, work in and visit New York feel equally protected and respected by the intelligence gathering methods and counterterrorism public safety initiatives of the NYPD.

To further centralize the analysis conducted by the Counterterrorism and Intelligence Bureaus, Deputy Commissioner Miller instituted the Police Commissioner’s Daily Briefing (PCDB). The PCDB’s structure and purpose is modeled after the United States President’s Daily Briefing. The PCDB summarizes Field Intelligence Officer activity, city events, dignitary visits, major counterterrorism events outside of New York City and insightful analyses relevant to New York City and events of interest. Just as the President’s Daily Briefing is not restricted to the Commander-in-Chief only, the PCDB is provided to the highest levels of the NYPD command staff, ensuring that the executives leading possible first responders are equipped with the latest intelligence and have the highest degree of situational awareness.

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To further expand the Intelligence Bureau’s criminal intelligence capabilities, Deputy Commissioner Miller is expanding the successful elements of the Department’s Field Intelligence Officer (FIO) program. Reporting to the Intelligence Bureau, 105 FIOs are assigned to precincts and other commands across New York City. They manage numerous confidential sources of information and conducted over 1,500 controlled buys for guns, narcotics and stolen property in 2014. The Intelligence Bureau intends to create a methodology of intelligence gathering and analysis for FIOs that helps them quickly identify pertinent intelligence gaps and fill them.

**“First, FIOs will identify the local drivers of violence and crime; second, FIOs, in coordination with precinct commanding officers and other units, will develop strategies that mitigate or eliminate these drivers; and third, FIOs will have to ask and answer questions about the crime trends they discern in their respective commands.”**

- The Intelligence Bureau will design a clear set of priorities and tasks for FIOs. These priorities and tasks will fall into three categories: first, FIOs will identify the local drivers of violence and crime; second, FIOs, in coordination with precinct commanding officers and other units, will develop strategies that mitigate or eliminate these drivers; and third, FIOs will have to ask and answer questions about the crime trends they discern in their respective commands. Exemplary FIOs currently perform all of these tasks, but such a system of expectations for the FIOs had yet to be institutionalized.
- The Intelligence Bureau will develop an internally transparent process that highlights enforcement-related queries from all levels of the Department and sets clear intelligence requirements for the FIOs. When the criminal intelligence elements of the Intelligence Bureau and patrol commands work closely to develop these queries for the FIOs, the answers will help the NYPD explain borough-wide or citywide crime trends and conditions that may have seemed mysterious previously. The results of this analysis will be shared with patrol commanders and the highest levels of city government and allow for certain types of criminal activity to be accurately categorized and managed as part of wider crime trends.

**TRANSPARENT AND COMPREHENSIVE COUNTERTERRORISM INITIATIVES**

With the goal of improving both the efficacy and the transparency of the NYPD’s intelligence gathering and counterterrorism operations, Deputy Commissioner Miller is reassessing and resourcing numerous programs with the purpose of securing New York for the long term.

**“The deputy commissioner assigned Intelligence Bureau personnel to draft an Intelligence Bureau Policy Guidebook (IBPG) that contains more detailed policy guidance relating to Intelligence Bureau policies, and practices.”**



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- The NYPD is developing an IBPG that is as transparent about intelligence procedures as practically possible. The Department has solicited the opinions and thoughts of a number of New York's civil rights organizations and community leaders during the drafting of the IBPG.
- In order to facilitate a consistent bureau-wide understanding of the current rule sets, the IBPG will be designed as a stable, but adaptable, document. As the nature of criminal activity and terrorism alters, guidelines and procedures in the IBPG can be added, revised or removed. Any future changes to Intelligence Bureau policy and protocol will be made, after appropriate review, directly to the IBPG.

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To improve the efficiency of the NYPD’s international intelligence capacity, Deputy Commissioner Miller has undertaken an internal review of the Intelligence Bureau’s overseas offices. The review will determine if the Intelligence Bureau’s resources are in the ‘right’ places and asking the ‘right’ questions. The internal review will also analyze the degree to which the intelligence shared by the NYPD’s federal partners fully meets the Department’s needs. The conclusions of this review will lead to an appropriate resetting of the Intelligence Bureau’s resources.

**“The Counterterrorism Bureau has launched a Counterterrorism Officers Program to train patrol officers to function as counterterrorism officers or CTOs. The program is developing a cadre of police officers and detectives in each patrol command who can identify signs of possible terrorist activity. These trained officers will act as a force multiplier.”**

Just as New York police officers learn to identify the signs of criminal activity on the streets

of New York, NYPD officers must continue to develop and refine a similar skill set with respect to terrorism. To achieve this capability citywide, the Counterterrorism Bureau has launched a Counterterrorism Officers Program to train patrol officers to function as counterterrorism officers or CTOs. The program is developing a cadre of police officers and detectives in each patrol command who can identify signs of possible terrorist activity. These trained officers will act as a force multiplier and help the NYPD quickly identify events and behaviors that are indicative of more sinister activity.

- The training program rotates through each borough and trains roughly 20 to 30 officers across multiple commands in how to recognize warning signs of terrorist activity. The borough training sessions last two weeks.
- A select group of officers trained by the program was recently deployed to the Veterans Day parade, where they provided an enhanced level of security for the event’s participants and viewers. The CTO program is now expanded into the Housing and Transit Bureaus.

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- The expansion of the LMSI network of cameras to include sections of Brooklyn and Queens, and sensors outside of Lower Manhattan, will substantially increase the Department’s ability to conduct investigations on high-threat locations and provide enhanced situational awareness to first responders.
- Expanding the network of cameras and license plate readers will also provide crime-focused units and the NYPD Real Time Crime Center with an increasingly powerful investigative tool.



The Domain Awareness System (DAS) merges the various outputs of the LMSI network into one easily accessible dashboard. DAS is also equipped with other features that allow a user to query the NYPD Crime Data Warehouse. As the LMSI network is expanded, a primary objective of the Director of Planning and Policy in the Counterterrorism Bureau is to give every precinct commander the additional tools and capabilities provided by DAS.

- Currently, almost every NYPD commander has access to DAS Light, i.e., DAS with just the Crime Data Warehouse capability and without the ability to access cameras and sensors. The Counterterrorism Bureau has provided a fully operational version of DAS to the 1st Precinct as a pilot project.
- As the Department's broadband speed grows, the full DAS system will be offered to more commands. Access to the full DAS will be prioritized in the precinct commands deemed to contain the highest value terrorist targets.

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## SECURING THE CITY

**“The establishment of a Critical Response Command will greatly enhance the NYPD's ability to respond to any attack that might occur, but the key to protecting the city will always be the our ability to detect and derail terrorists before they strike.”**

The terrorism threat in New York City requires continuous vigilance and preparedness. The city remains a target of choice in the minds of terrorists worldwide. The continuing threat of Al Qaeda, the emerging threat of ISIL and the hard-to-detect threats from lone wolves all represent challenges to protecting New York from terrorism. The NYPD Counterterrorism and Intelligence Bureaus are working to counter these multiple threats. The establishment of a Critical Response Command will greatly enhance the NYPD's ability to respond to any attack that might occur, but the key to protecting the city will always be the our ability to detect and derail terrorists before they strike. In striving for this goal, the NYPD relies upon the experienced detectives and FBI agents of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the trained personnel of the Critical Response Command, and our field intelligence officers and CTOs stationed in precincts and commands across the city. We also rely upon our partnerships. The Department is redoubling its efforts to open channels of communication with the many New York communities so we can work together to protect the city we call home.

