

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
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**BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT, INVESTIGATIONS AND MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**

**LESSONS FROM FORT HOOD: IMPROVING OUR ABILITY
TO CONNECT THE DOTS**

SEPTEMBER 14, 2012

INTRODUCTION

Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Keating, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, I am Kshemendra Paul, the Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment (ISE). We are the national office for responsible information sharing. The ISE provides analysts, operators and investigators with information needed to enhance national security. These analysts, operators and investigators come from a variety of communities - law enforcement, homeland security, intelligence, defense, and foreign affairs – and may work for federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial governments, or in the private sector or our international partners. The PM-ISE works with ISE mission partners to improve the management, discovery, fusing, sharing, delivery of, and collaboration around terrorism-related information. The primary focus is any mission process, anywhere in the United States, that is intended or is likely to have a material impact on detecting, preventing, disrupting, responding to, or mitigating terrorist activity. The PM-ISE facilitates the development of the ISE by bringing together mission partners and aligning business processes, standards and architecture, security and access controls, privacy protections, and best practices.

STATEMENT

As PM-ISE and our mission partners continue to implement responsible information sharing practices, we reflect on the tremendous progress made toward our goal, while recognizing that

significant work still needs to be done. In January, Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper spoke of the national responsibility to share information – “the right data, any time, any place, usable by any authorized recipient, preventable only by law or policy and not technology, and protected by a comprehensive regimen of accountability.”¹ As the office responsible for organizing and implementing responsible information sharing practices nationwide, we are proud of the progress we have made strengthening national security while also honoring and protecting privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

We have become much better at using our inherent strengths to make the American people safer. Our federated democracy means that we have committed law enforcement, public safety, and intelligence professionals working at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels; they are also working closely with partners in the private sector to protect our nation’s infrastructure. We have carved out a strong role for governance through our leadership role in the White House’s Information Sharing and Access Interagency Policy Committee. Our robust and innovative private sector contributes significantly to the work of the ISE. And we are championing a standards-based approach to defining government requirements for responsible information sharing that will enable greater interoperability across our government’s networks while offering a greater potential for cost savings.

This week we marked the eleventh anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The national security community has achieved numerous successes since 2001, including progress towards improving: interoperability of our sensitive but unclassified computer networks, capabilities of our fusion centers, and mission impact of our nationwide suspicious activity reporting practices. The PM-ISE has enhanced our national security by: advancing these initiatives, brokering solutions between organizations with different missions, convening partners from inside and outside the government, and leading improvements in responsible information sharing through policy, governance, and strategy.

The PM-ISE is committed to continuing to convene partners and lead efforts in innovation. We understand that this is a continuing journey. The evolution of the threats against us, the

¹ http://csis.org/files/attachments/120126_info_sharing_clapper_transcript.pdf

integration of our resources, and the efficient use of technology to move our responsible information sharing agendas forward requires constant vigilance and leadership.

Three core ideas are the drivers of PM-ISE's mission. We are:

- Grounded by an enduring purpose to **advance responsible information sharing to further the counterterrorism and homeland security missions**. We must stay focused on the fact that we are sharing information in order to keep the American people safe.
- Leading a **transformation from information ownership to information stewardship** in order to improve nationwide decision making. We must treat information held by the government as a national asset: this means it must be used, and reused, to benefit the American people. Information must be protected and cultivated to ensure that we get the maximum value from it. At the same time, strong protections for the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of the American people must be safeguarded.
- Promoting **partnerships across federal, state, local, and tribal governments, and the private sector, as well as internationally**. By building organizational capacity at every level, we will share information more securely and effectively. The threats to our safety do not stop at jurisdictional borders; our information must not either.

We have also strengthened privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties protections by developing privacy guidelines, on behalf of the President, and supporting federal, state, and local agencies as they develop privacy policies that are at least as comprehensive as the ISE privacy guidelines.² This means that when citizens see something and say something, and when police officers submit reports to their local fusion centers, they all know that the information will be handled appropriately. It means that when analysts conduct their evaluations, they will proceed in a manner based on agreed-upon definitions of behaviors that are indicative of terrorist activity, and that their investigations will not be based on race or religion. It means that the American people can know that their government is committed to protecting their privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties, as well as their security.

² *Guidelines to Ensure that the Information Privacy and Other Legal Rights of Americans are Protected in the Development and Use of the Information Sharing Environment* ("ISE Privacy Guidelines") (November 2006) available at http://ise.gov/sites/default/files/PrivacyGuidelines20061204_1.pdf

While we focus on the accomplishments and the progress to date on numerous fronts, we maintain a sense of urgency about tackling the work that remains to be done. The biggest challenges facing the ISE are the continuously evolving threat environment, the tsunami of new data, and a constrained fiscal environment. As the ISE grows and its work deepens and expands, we need to continue to assess and adjust for current realities—allowing us to be well positioned for dealing with future threats and exploiting opportunities.

These challenges and opportunities present a framework within which to rethink the ISE and our approach to responsible information sharing. We see great potential in leveraging our advances and building from the terrorism-related mission to more broadly support information-led public sector transformation. Recognition of the enduring value of the ISE lies in the ceaseless needs of the mission and the variety of continued successes that have been spawned by our work. The 2012 ISE Annual Report to the Congress showcases many of these accomplishments and lays out our way forward. While gaps, challenges, and opportunities for improvement are present and described, we have established traction, developed a clear and compelling value proposition, and identified a way forward.

We are fulfilling the mission set out before us, and we are enhancing our national security through responsible information sharing. We will continue to fulfill this mission and to identify and meet new challenges as they arise.

More information about the Information Sharing Environment and the office of the Program Manager is available at ISE.gov and I request that an abridged version of the ISE Annual Report to the Congress previously provided to the Committee be inserted into the record.

SUMMARY

I believe there is no higher priority for our national security than the issue of information sharing. Congress has provided us the mandate through legislation; the President has provided us the leadership and further guidelines; we continue the work of transforming our information sharing environment into one that works more effectively for all.

Thousands of men and women work tirelessly to protect this nation from terrorist threats. It is important for us to provide them and other decision makers with the best possible information to

do their job to protect the people and interests of the United States against another terrorist attack.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to provide this subcommittee with information on the activities of the Program Manager's Office and look forward to your questions. Thank you.