



FROM HOMETOWN SECURITY TO HOMELAND SECURITY

*IACP's Principles
for a Locally Designed
and Nationally Coordinated
Homeland Security Strategy*

Law enforcement's efforts to combat terrorism did not begin on September 11, 2001. For decades prior to that fateful day, law enforcement agencies throughout Europe, Asia, Central and South America, and the Middle East were engaged in daily battles to apprehend terrorists and keep their communities safe from harm.

Nor was September 11 the first terrorist attack in the United States. The Unabomber, the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, Oklahoma City, and the Atlanta Olympics demonstrated that the United States was not immune from terrorist strikes. Yet, despite these incidents, the United States did not fundamentally alter its security strategy, and law enforcement agencies throughout nation, while certainly learning from these incidents, did not dramatically adjust their policing philosophies.

However, the spectacular and horrific nature of the September 11 terrorist attacks and the massive devastation and loss of life that they wrought have ushered in a new era of policing in the United States.

In the aftermath of these attacks, as the nation struggled to comprehend the new menace confronting our society, our nation's law enforcement agencies realized that they now had a new and critically important mission. No longer could they focus their energies solely on traditional crime fighting efforts. Now they would be asked to confront a new threat to their communities, perpetrated by individuals and organizations that had vastly different motivations and means of attack from that of traditional criminals. Accepting this challenge required law enforcement agencies to reassess their operations and reevaluate their priorities. At the same time, realizing that confronting international and domestic terrorism required a national effort, these agencies also looked to the federal government for both leadership and resources.

The September 11, 2001 attacks also required the federal government to fundamentally alter its traditional role. Over the last three years, Congress and the Bush administration have taken a number of dramatic steps to confront the menace of terrorism, including the passage of the Patriot Act, the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security, and the creation of a variety of programs designed to assist states and local governments in their efforts.

Unfortunately, despite these efforts and the billions of dollars appropriated by Congress for homeland security initiatives, state, tribal, and local law enforcement executives have grown increasingly concerned over a homeland security strategy that has not significantly improved their ability to prevent, respond to or recover from a terrorist attack in their community. A strategy that, while improving the security and safety of a few communities, has left many others increasingly vulnerable.

TAKING COMMAND

To respond to these concerns, and with the intent of providing the law enforcement community and policy makers with guidance on these critical issues, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), under the leadership of President Joseph Estey, launched an aggressive project to assess the current state of homeland security efforts in the United States and to develop and implement the actions necessary to protect our communities from the specter of both crime and terrorism.

Launched in November of 2004, this project, entitled the *Taking Command Initiative*, brought together a broad spectrum of law enforcement leaders from throughout the United States for a series of intensive and interactive deliberations on the state of homeland security in the United States, the effectiveness of federal efforts since 2001, and what steps should be taken to improve our collective security.

During these discussions, participants were asked to identify those areas of the current homeland security effort that are working well, which areas are not, and what roadblocks to success exist. IACP hoped that in this fashion, participants could identify those specific homeland security programs and initiatives that are most in need of correction and that suggestions for improvement could be made.

However, as discussions progressed, a strong consensus quickly emerged around the premise that federally led efforts, while well intentioned, have not led to the development of a cohesive strategy that will allow state, tribal and local public safety officials to protect their communities successfully.

These law enforcement executives came to the conclusion that our nation's current homeland security strategy is handicapped by a fundamental flaw: **It was developed without sufficiently seeking or incorporating the advice, expertise or consent of public safety organizations at the state, tribal, or local level.**

Further consensus developed over the belief that there was a critical need to develop a new homeland security strategy, one that fully embraces the valuable and central role that must be played by the state, tribal, and local public safety community.

Working from that premise, and based on the discussions and determinations made during these deliberations, the IACP has identified five key principles that must form the basis for, and be incorporated into, the development and implementation of a national homeland security strategy if it is to be successful in protecting our communities from the menace of terrorism.

I: ALL TERRORISM IS LOCAL

A fundamental element of a successful homeland security strategy is the realization that terrorist acts that occur within the United States, while they may have national or even international repercussions, are inherently local crimes that require the immediate response of state, local, or tribal authorities. Even large-scale and coordinated attacks that simultaneously impact multiple jurisdictions, such as the ones that occurred on September 11, 2001, require that state, tribal and local law enforcement agencies handle the initial response and recovery efforts.

Even more critical is the realization that while planning their attacks, terrorists often live in our communities, travel on our highways and shop in our stores. As we have discovered in the aftermath of September 11th, 2001, several of the terrorists involved in those attacks had routine encounters with state and local law enforcement officials in the weeks and months prior to the attack. If state, tribal, and local law enforcement officers are adequately equipped and trained, they can be an invaluable assets in efforts to identify and apprehend suspected terrorists before they strike.

Therefore, IACP believes that it is imperative that as homeland security proposals are designed, they must be developed in an environment that fully acknowledges and accepts the reality that local authorities, not federal, have the primary responsibility for preventing, responding to and recovering from terrorist attacks. It is the IACP's conviction that adherence to this fundamental philosophical viewpoint will greatly enhance the value and effectiveness of all future homeland security efforts.

II. PREVENTION IS PARAMOUNT

The IACP believes that the prevention of terrorist attacks must be viewed as the paramount priority in any national, state, tribal, or local homeland security strategy.

To date, the vast majority of federal homeland security efforts have focused on increasing our national capabilities to respond to and recover from a terrorist attack. This has been accomplished through the development of a number of federal policy documents, such as the National Response Plan, and the implementations of various response protocols, such as the National Incident Management System. There is no question that these are important endeavors, and the IACP certainly does not quarrel with the need to improve the response and recovery capabilities of the state, tribal, and local public safety communities.

However, law enforcement officials, unlike other members of the public safety community (who by training and experience are primarily focused on response and recovery efforts) understand that they have a dual responsibility. Law enforcement officials understand and accept that it is the responsibility of their

agencies to be the first to arrive at the scene of a crime, an accident, or a terrorist attack. However, they also know that it is their primary responsibility to prevent these events from happening in the first place. As a result, law enforcement officials view the need to build response and recovery capabilities as secondary to the need to build our capacity to prevent terrorist attacks from happening in the first place.

It is the IACP's belief that in our national efforts to develop the capacity to respond to and recover from a terrorists attack we have failed to focus on the importance of building our capacity to prevent a terrorist attack from occurring in the first place. For although the association agrees that there is a need to enhance response and recovery capabilities, such preparations must not be done at the expense of efforts to improve the ability of law enforcement and other security agencies to identify, investigate, and apprehend suspected terrorists before they can strike.

III. HOMETOWN SECURITY IS HOMELAND SECURITY

In the United States, there are more than 700,000 officers who daily patrol our state highways and the streets of our communities. During the past 15 years, these officers and the law enforcement agencies they serve have made tremendous strides in reducing the level of crime and violence in our communities. This has been accomplished in part because these officers have an intimate knowledge of their communities and because they have developed close relationships with the citizens they serve. It is the IACP's belief that as a result of their daily efforts to combat crime and violence, state, tribal, and local law enforcement officers are uniquely situated to identify, investigate and apprehend suspected terrorists.

This central truth has been demonstrated on numerous occasions. Incidents such as the pre-attack traffic stops of September 11 hijackers Muhammad Atta, Ziad Samir Jarrah, and Hani Hanjour demonstrate that local law enforcement officers may encounter suspected terrorists in the course of their routine duties, while the arrests of individuals such as Timothy McVeigh and Eric Rudolph highlight the often critical role that local law enforcement officers play in the apprehension of terrorists.

As a result of this reality, a central element of our national homeland security strategy must be to ensure that state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies continue to have the ability to place their officers out working in their communities, interacting with their citizens, and investigating reports of strange or suspicious behavior. These activities are the cornerstone of any successful crime or terrorism prevention effort. A successful locally designed homeland security strategy will embrace the reality that Hometown Security is Homeland Security.

Unfortunately, in the years since 2001, the very programs that make such efforts possible, such as the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant Program, the Edward Byrne Memorial Grant Program, and the Community Oriented Policing Services Program have suffered significant budget reductions. This is both unfortunate and shortsighted, for these programs have consistently demonstrated that they are valuable and critical resources to the state, tribal, and local law enforcement community. By reducing, and in some cases eliminating, funding for these successful programs, Congress and the Bush administration have significantly reduced the ability of law enforcement agencies to combat both crime and terrorism.

As a result of these reductions, already tight state, county, municipal, and tribal budgets were forced to absorb the costs associated with increased training needs, overtime, and equipment purchases. Add to this the additional expenses incurred each time the national alert status is elevated, and it is little wonder that local resources have been stretched to the breaking point.

For three and half years, law enforcement agencies and officers have willingly made the sacrifices necessary to meet the challenges of fighting both crime and terrorism. They have done so because they understand the importance of what they have been asked to do, and they remain committed to fulfilling their mission of protecting the public. But the expenditure of resources necessary to maintain this effort have left many police departments in a financial situation so dire that their ability to provide the services their citizens expect, and deserve, has been threatened.

This must not continue. If our homeland security efforts are to have any chance of succeeding, it is absolutely vital for Congress and the administration to make the necessary resources available that will allow law enforcement agencies to mount effective anticrime programs, which will also serve as effective antiterrorism programs.

IV. HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGIES MUST BE COORDINATED NATIONALLY, NOT FEDERALLY

During the past three years, many federal agencies, most notably the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Homeland Security, have made efforts to secure input and comments from the state, tribal, and local public safety community. Unfortunately, these efforts are too often limited to participation in advisory panels and working groups that have little impact on policy development and instead are relegated to the role of providing post-development comments on completed, or nearly completed, policy

proposals. Consequently, the ability of state, tribal, and local law enforcement to truly influence policy has been minimized.

As a result, many of the policies promulgated by federal agencies are often viewed by state, tribal, or local law enforcement as overly prescriptive, burdensome, and sometimes impractical. This is clearly unacceptable and must be remedied.

The solution lies in adopting a national, rather than a federal, approach to homeland security planning and strategy development. Unlike traditional federal efforts, a truly national effort will ensure that all levels of government, local, tribal, state, and federal, are participating in the policy design and development process as full and equal partners. This collaborative partnership will allow for a freer flow of critical information between all levels of government and help ensure that the experience and capabilities, as well as the needs, of all parties are fully realized and addressed in the development of homeland security strategy and policy documents.

It is the IACP's belief that operating in this collaborative fashion will help to ensure that public safety and homeland security agencies at all levels will embrace the policies so developed and consequently provide for greater national coordination of our homeland security efforts.

V. THE IMPORTANCE OF BOTTOM-UP ENGINEERING, THE DIVERSITY OF THE STATE, TRIBAL AND LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNITY & NONCOMPETITIVE COLLABORATION

A key element of a locally designed homeland security strategy is the necessity to maintain a broad-based effort that will build our nation's prevention and response capabilities from the ground up. It is essential that a baseline capability be established in all communities, not just urban areas. Once these basic capabilities are established nationwide, they can be used as the foundation upon which more advanced homeland security capabilities can be built.

A truly successful national strategy must recognize, embrace, and value the vast diversity that exists among state, tribal, and local law enforcement and public safety agencies. These agencies serve communities that have vastly different needs and expectations, and as a result, their public safety agencies have developed capabilities that are tailored to their unique needs. As a result of this vibrant diversity, it is clear that a one-size-fits-all approach to homeland security planning is neither appropriate, nor will it be successful.

It is also vital, as we strive to establish the necessary infrastructure, that all public safety agencies, at all levels of government, work together in a noncompetitive, collaborative fashion. Public safety agencies must work together to determine

what is the most effective and efficient means to meet their shared responsibilities of protecting the public.

Only by remaining unified and speaking with one voice can first responders hope to ensure that limited resources are allocated in a fashion that will ensure maximum benefit for the communities they serve.

Regrettably, the current homeland security strategy and funding formulas appear to have the opposite goal. The last three years have witnessed a pronounced shift away from a broad-based homeland security programs toward a program that targets primarily urban areas for assistance. While the IACP agrees that there is a need to provide urban areas with the resources they need to protect their communities from terrorist attack, this must not be done at the expense of programs that provide assistance to public safety agencies throughout the rest of the country.

Unfortunately, this is exactly what is happening. As funds have shifted toward major metropolitan areas, the vast majority of our nation's communities have been forced to compete over an ever-dwindling pool of resources. As a result, their ability to upgrade their capabilities and improve their readiness has already been severely hindered.

It is the IACP's opinion that failure to adequately fund a broad-based effort that will improve the security of all communities weakens our overall approach to securing the homeland. For as larger metropolitan areas become more secure, terrorists may seek out other, less protected targets to attack.

For these reasons, the IACP believes that our national homeland security strategy must be designed around a broad-based, locally designed, and nationally coordinated framework that allows the public safety agencies in each community to adapt the resources available to the specific and unique needs of their communities.

NEXT STEPS

These five principles will serve as the IACP's guideposts for the next steps in our Taking Command Initiative. In the coming weeks and months, the IACP, through its various divisions, sections and committees, will undertake a series of projects designed to transform the concept of a locally designed, nationally coordinated homeland security strategy into a reality.

The IACP will begin work to develop a national strategy blueprint that will address critical areas of need, such as the development of prevention and response plans, hiring and training needs, and resource and funding strategies. The association will also work to redefine the mission of police agencies in the 21st

century and to clarify the roles of federal, state, tribal, and local law enforcement in our post-September 11 reality. As this effort progresses, the IACP will also work to identify, collect, and disseminate best practices and innovations in areas such as intelligence gathering and information sharing, threat assessment, deployment strategies, equipment needs and standards, and public-private partnerships.

The IACP will also reach out to our counterparts in the law enforcement, fire, EMS, and emergency management communities, as well as our federal partners, to join with us to further discuss and identify, as well as develop solutions for, the critical issues confronting the public safety community in the post 9/11 era.