



## **Testimony of Senior Supervisory Intelligence Analyst Gerald M. McMahon and Supervisory Special Agent Gregory T. Hughes**

Good morning distinguished members of the joint standing committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. We speak today in support of the Maine Information and Analysis Center.

My name is Gerald McMahon and I have the privilege to lead the FBI Boston Division's Intelligence Program as their Senior Supervisory Intelligence Analyst. Here with me is Supervisory Special Agent (SSA) Greg Hughes, who leads our national security program in Maine.

The mission of the FBI is to *"Protect the American People and Uphold the Constitution of the United States."* To further that mission, we work with partners throughout the region to share intelligence to get ahead of threats and investigate federal crimes. Among our most important partners are the Fusion Centers, to include the Maine State Police's Maine Information and Analysis Center (MIAC).

The FBI Boston Division's territory includes all of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Maine. While our largest office in the region based in Chelsea, Massachusetts, we have three offices in Maine located in Portland, Augusta and Bangor. SSA Greg Hughes is one of two supervisors based in Maine and he leads our national security program for the state.

Part of our jobs is to work with partners throughout the region to share intelligence. Among our most important partners are the Fusion Centers. The Boston Division has the distinction to collaborate with five fusion centers to include the Maine State Police's MIAC.

The last twenty years have given us many examples of why sharing information and intelligence among federal, state and local law enforcement is so crucial. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, Fusion Centers have played a key part in the improved information sharing among law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

These improvements have given all of us a more complete picture of the threats we face — one that helps all of us do a better job of preventing terrorism and crime.

Nationally, the FBI relies on close cooperation with federal, state, local and tribal partners to protect our country. Fusion Centers are a key component of our engagement. For the approximately 80 Fusion Centers around the country, the FBI has invested in a partnership with these centers. This includes:

- Assignment of approximately 90 FBI personnel, in some capacity, to collaborate with fusion centers;
- Installation of the FBI's classified network in almost 60 centers; and
- Processing security clearances for fusion center personnel

Each of these steps enhances our ability to share information and intelligence in a timely manner.



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In practice the FBI collaborates with Fusion Centers on an array of initiatives to ensure decision makers have access to the right information, that there is close cooperation during routine and crisis environments and that we continue to improve our ability to work together.

Examples of these initiatives include:

- *eGuardian* – Guardian is the FBI’s primary intake system for threat information. The FBI created the eGuardian system after 9/11 to address information sharing gaps between the FBI and its state, local and tribal partners on the terrorism threat. Since 9/11, thousands of Suspicious Activity Reports, or SARs, have been submitted into eGuardian by partners, many of which have enhanced or directly resulted in FBI investigations. Since 9/11, the eGuardian system has expanded to allow for the reporting and sharing (as appropriate) of SARs beyond terrorism, to include Criminal, Cyber, Counterintelligence and Weapons of Mass Destruction issues. State and local fusion centers are key users, submitting information they gather from the work they do, and from the law enforcement agencies within their areas of responsibility.
- *Critical incident calls* – During significant events, such as the January 6, 2021 violence at the US Capitol and in advance of the recent inauguration, the FBI and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) hosted calls to convey available information and intelligence on critical matters that could affect state and local communities.
  - As an example of local and regional critical incident calls, after the attacks of January 6<sup>th</sup>, FBI Boston, in partnership with each state police and US attorneys’ office in the region, held a series of calls to convey what we knew, any local information of importance and the plan to address these matters.
- *Intelligence and Information Dissemination* – The FBI produces and disseminates numerous intelligence products and information reports to its partners. Fusion Centers are among the primary customers of these reports and they, in turn, share them with their network.
- *Training* – The FBI offers training for Fusion Center partners, to include on analytic tradecraft and writing.

Based on our relationships with the Maine State Police and the MIAC, we have formed a number of strong partnerships.

Examples of these partnerships include:

- **Joint Terrorism Task Force:** MIAC leadership, along with additional members of the Maine State Police, are members of Maine’s Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). The JTTF is the lead entity for investigations covering all international and domestic terrorism matters.
- **Intelligence Analysis:** FBI Intelligence Analysts embed with the MIAC on a part-time basis. This enables exchanges of information, briefings on threat issues and cooperation on investigations, as appropriate.



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- **MIAC Advisory Board:** SSA Hughes is a member of the MIAC Advisory Board. In that capacity, SSA Hughes collaborates with the rest of the Advisory Board to fulfill the mandate of the Maine Governor's Executive Order.

The MIAC plays an important role in our decision making process regarding the proper allocation of resources in response to a potential threat. Identifying when something is not a threat is just as important as determining a potential danger. Often, by providing crucial local knowledge, the MIAC's input helps avoid duplication of effort and shifting resources unnecessarily.

There are multiple examples where collaboration with the FBI, the MIAC and other federal, state and local partners, have worked to help ensure public safety. Two recent examples highlight the value of the MIAC:

- In late October 2020, we received information that an individual was urging people to bring weapons to the polling places on Election Day to ensure "people voted the right way." The implied intimidation could have a detrimental effect on the voting process. The FBI contacted the MIAC who was able to coordinate efforts among the pertinent law enforcement agencies, including the Secret Service, who had also received similar reporting. By using the MIAC as an information clearinghouse, we, along with the Secret Service, were able to make a determination if this was a credible threat and develop an action plan to effectively mitigate the threat.
- Likewise, after the January 6<sup>th</sup> event in Washington, DC, the FBI became aware of a number of threats of violence targeting public officials. One such threat discussed an attack on the Maine State Legislature. Through the MIAC, the FBI was able to quickly disseminate important details regarding the credibility of the threat, ensure relevant personnel were informed, and develop an appropriate action plan to deal with the problem. The MIAC's involvement helped speed communications amongst stakeholders and resolve the matter more efficiently.

In summary, our experience has been that Fusion Centers, to include the MIAC, have been key partners in sharing information and intelligence that allows law enforcement to do its job. We hope to continue to grow our partnership with the MIAC and the Maine State Police for the betterment of Maine and the country.

We thank you for your time and attention.