

FACT SHEET: Working to Counter Online Radicalization to Violence in the United States

A Starting Point: This is a starting point to tackle the threat of violent extremist use of the Internet. Adopting an Internet safety approach and related tools is key, but the Interagency Working Group to Counter Online Radicalization to Violence will be charged with considering additional efforts, as appropriate.

Protecting Freedom of Speech: It is important that we continue to protect civil liberties and privacy as we implement an Internet safety approach and that we do not restrict speech. Our focus is on providing communities with information for staying safe online from individuals who are trying to encourage others to commit acts of violence. Our concern with protecting civil liberties and privacy informed the development of our policy and will guide the efforts of the Working Group.

Addressing the Threat: Violent extremists use the Internet to recruit and radicalize Americans to commit acts of violence. We have seen attacks over the last several years in which consumption of propaganda over, and communication through, the Internet played a role in the radicalization of the attacker. The Federal Government will work to make communities more resilient to these messages of hate by raising awareness and providing tools. Informed and resilient communities are our Nation's first and best line of defense against terrorism.

Resources and Implementation: The resources necessary for implementing this policy will be determined by the Working Group. However, the goal is to integrate these efforts into ongoing Federal, state, and local Internet safety programs. For example, the OnGuard Online website hosted by the Federal Trade Commission will begin including information about violent extremist use of the Internet in their existing Internet safety materials. Implementation will be coordinated by the Working Group, which will be chaired by the White House National Security Staff. Relevant departments and agencies will participate in the Working Group and collaborate to implement this policy.

Collaborating with Industry: The Federal Government will collaborate with industry to explore how we might counter online violent extremism while protecting lawful Internet use and the civil liberties and privacy of individual users. Many companies have developed voluntary measures to promote Internet safety (such as fraud warnings, identity protection, and Internet safety tips), and we look forward to hearing their views about how we might apply similar measures to counter online radicalization to violence.