

Inside the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement

At DHS, expansion of capabilities creates an unprecedented level of outreach to the law enforcement community.

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In the wake of 9/11, I was appointed by FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III to oversee the Bureau's newly-created Office of Law Enforcement Coordination (OLEC). The goal was to create an outward-facing office that provided coordination and partnership with state, local, and tribal law enforcement. I had the privilege to serve in that position until 2008 when I left government service after a wonderful 36 year career in law enforcement.

In July 2011, I had the honor of returning to Federal service in a new, but familiar role, as Assistant Secretary for the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office for State and Local Law Enforcement (OSLLE). Created in 2007 on the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission, Congress formed the OSLLE to lead the coordination of DHS-wide policies relating to state, local, and tribal law enforcement's role in preventing acts of terrorism and to serve as the primary liaison between non-Federal law enforcement agencies across the country and the Department.

To most effectively serve as the law enforcement community's liaison to DHS, my office works every day with other DHS Components to get information out of Washington, D.C. and into the hands of our non-Federal law enforcement partners. Through the OSLLE, our state, local, and tribal partners are kept informed about Department-wide initiatives such as "If You See Something, Say Something™", the Blue Campaign, the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI), and the Department's efforts in Countering Violent Extremism. Whether we are expanding the distribution of timely and actionable information related to operations and intelligence or educating state and local law enforcement on the programs and initiatives of DHS, we are tirelessly working on behalf of our partners to keep them updated and informed with the information they need to keep our homeland safe.

Within DHS, the OSLE also serves as the advocate and voice for the non-Federal law enforcement community. We are responsible for ensuring that DHS leadership is aware of and considers the issues, concerns, and requirements of state, local, and tribal law enforcement during budget, grant, and policy development processes. As I stated in my oral testimony to the Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence in February 2012, I believe this was the intention of Congress when it created and named my office, the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement.

In addition to sharing information, my office is committed to proactively identifying and responding to the challenges facing the law enforcement community. For example, we are working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure that our partners are informed about and prepared to participate in the National Preparedness Grant Program which takes effect in fiscal year 2013.

We are also working to find ways for our non-Federal law enforcement partners to manage the current economic environment. As a former Police Chief, I know firsthand that training is usually the first casualty of tighter budgets. To assist our partners in identifying options to meet their current and future training requirements, my office arranged for the leadership of the major law enforcement associations to visit and tour the DHS Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) in Glynco, Georgia this past May. This visit allowed Connie Patrick, the Director of FLETC, and her team to brief the attendees on the resources, capabilities, and training programs her state of the art training facilities have to offer.

As we continue to ask state, local, and tribal law enforcement to remain vigilant and to protect our communities from all threats, whether terrorism or other criminal activities, my office has reaffirmed our commitment to serving the needs of the non-Federal law enforcement community by expanding our office over the last few months; having added five new team members and creating four new divisions. We now offer state, local, and tribal law enforcement unprecedented access to DHS's programs and initiatives, homeland security information, and guidance on training and grant opportunities.

Collaboration with our law enforcement partners is important to DHS's efforts to improve information sharing and enhance our nation's ability to identify, mitigate, and respond to

emerging threats. I believe that we have made significant progress over the past year, and we are now in a better position than ever before to accomplish our mission.

As the OSLE grows and evolves, we will continue our proactive outreach efforts by attending important law enforcement gatherings, training conferences, and meetings to stay abreast of the issues and concerns of the law enforcement community.

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