

Excerpt: 2011 National Network of Fusion Centers Final Report²⁸

Executive Summary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in collaboration with Fusion Center Directors and federal interagency partners, instituted a repeatable annual assessment process to monitor the maturity of the National Network of Fusion Centers (National Network) and provide objective data to inform federal investments in fusion centers.

The *2011 National Network of Fusion Centers Final Report* (Final Report) describes the overall capabilities of the National Network based on the 2011 Fusion Center Assessment (2011 Assessment) data. This report includes (1) a detailed analysis of the collective capability of fusion centers, (2) an analysis of the effectiveness of federal support to fusion centers, and (3) recommendations for Federal Government action to support the National Network in further building its capabilities.

Background

Building an integrated and sustainable National Network requires an understanding of fusion center contributions to the homeland security architecture as well as the steps necessary to realize these benefits. Fusion centers are state- and locally owned and operated assets that play a vital role in improving the Nation's ability to safeguard the Homeland. They are focal points within the state and local environment for the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information among federal, state, local, tribal, territorial (SLTT), and private sector partners. As analytic hubs, fusion centers are uniquely situated to empower frontline personnel to understand the local implications of national intelligence by providing tailored, local context to national threat information. They support partners at all levels of government through a variety of activities, ranging from improving analytic collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries to supporting planning for special events to helping frontline personnel understand terrorist and criminal threats. Fusion centers pool resources from federal, state, and local sources to develop timely, relevant information to inform decision making. To successfully perform these functions, fusion centers must continue to implement and mature capabilities that enable efficient and effective information sharing and analysis within their jurisdictions and across the National Network and the broader HSE.

Process

The 2011 Assessment measured fusion center capabilities in the following areas from October 1, 2010, through August 1, 2011: