



# THE NATIONAL SECURITY BRANCH

*of the Federal Bureau of Investigation*

## *Protecting Our Country*

*The FBI has always answered the call to combat threats to our national security. Today, we count on our national security personnel working hand-in-hand with colleagues around the country and the world to collectively gather intelligence and develop a comprehensive understanding of our threats to protect our nation.*



*The FBI's National Security Branch carries out its mission while preserving the Constitutional and statutory rights of Americans. The FBI's long history of protecting civil rights and uncovering public corruption gives us a unique perspective that helps us maintain a proper balance between protection and privacy.*



## NATIONAL SECURITY BRANCH

The National Security Branch (NSB) was established September 12, 2005, in response to a presidential directive and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Commission recommendation to establish a "National Security Service" that combines the missions, capabilities, and resources of the FBI's counterterrorism, counterintelligence, and intelligence elements under the leadership of a senior FBI official. In July 2006, the NSB created the WMD Directorate to integrate components previously distributed throughout the FBI. The NSB also includes the Terrorist Screening Center, which provides crucial, actionable intelligence to state and local law enforcement, and the High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group, an interagency body that collects intelligence from key terror suspects to prevent attacks against the United States and its allies.

Combining our national security workforce and mission under one leadership umbrella enhances our contribution to the national intelligence effort and allows us to leverage resources from our Intelligence Community (IC), federal, state, local, tribal, private, and foreign partners.

## MISSION

The FBI's national security mission is to operate as an intelligence-led organization to deter, detect, and disrupt national security threats to the United States and its interests. Our goal is to develop a comprehensive understanding of—and defeat—the national security threats directed against the United States while preserving civil liberties. Such threats include those from terrorist organizations, foreign intelligence services, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and criminal enterprises.

To be successful, we must understand the threat, continue to integrate our intelligence and law enforcement capabilities in every FBI operational program, and lead and empower federal, state, local, tribal, private, and foreign partners by sharing our knowledge, experience, and capabilities to collectively defeat our adversaries.

This includes collaborating with our intelligence community partners by sharing information, producing joint products, and conducting joint operations.

As the lead intelligence and law enforcement agency in the United States, the FBI has enhanced its intelligence capacity to improve its ability to detect and disrupt those with the intent and capability to conduct attacks against our nation and its allies.

Rather than collecting information to solve a particular case, the FBI has become more proactive in identifying emerging threats. The Bureau prioritizes the collection and utilization of intelligence to develop a comprehensive threat picture, enabling strategic disruptions of terrorist networks and other national security threats. We continue to refine our intelligence capabilities to position ourselves to stay ahead of the ever-changing threats our nation faces.

Under this model, intelligence directs how we understand threats, how we prioritize and investigate these threats, and how we target our resources to address these threats.

## NSB COMPONENTS

The NSB is composed of the Counterterrorism Division, Counterintelligence Division, Directorate of Intelligence, Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate, Terrorist Screening Center, and High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group.

**The Counterterrorism Division (CTD)** provides a centralized, comprehensive, and intelligence-driven approach to address international and domestic terrorism-related matters. CTD works with its trusted partners from the intelligence and law enforcement communities, and oversees the more than 100 Joint Terrorism Task Forces, which are multi-agency task forces around the country serving as the coordinated "action arm" for federal, state, and local government response to terrorist threats.

**The Counterintelligence Division (CD)** is charged with preventing and investigating foreign intelligence activities within the United States. CD targets both traditional and emerging nontraditional threats and investigates espionage activities, using both intelligence and law enforcement techniques.

**The Directorate of Intelligence (DI)** is the FBI's dedicated national intelligence workforce responsible for all FBI intelligence functions. The DI carries out its functions through embedded intelligence elements at FBI headquarters and in each field division through the Field Intelligence Groups (FIGs). Regional Intelligence Groups (RIGs) support field offices in their efforts to identify cross programmatic threats and enhance collection opportunities within specific geographic locations, and develop an understanding of how these threats impact a region.

**The Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate (WMDD)** leads efforts to deny state and non-state sponsored adversaries access to WMD materials and technologies, to detect and disrupt the use of WMD, and to respond to WMD threats and incidents. The WMD Directorate integrates and links all the necessary counterterrorism, intelligence, counterintelligence, and scientific and technical components to accomplish the FBI's overall WMD mission.

**The Terrorist Screening Center (TSC)** consolidates the government's approach to terrorist screening and creates a single comprehensive watchlist of known or suspected terrorists. The TSC ensures that local, state, and federal authorities have ready access to information and expertise.

**The High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group (HIG)** is an interagency body, housed within the NSB, and staffed with members from various IC agencies. Its mission is to gather and apply the nation's best resources to collect intelligence from key terror suspects in order to prevent terrorist attacks against the United States and its allies.



#### Times Square Plotter Identified

In May 2010, Faisal Shahzad, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Pakistan, attempted to detonate a car bomb in Times Square. The failed attack was linked to support from the Tehrik-e-Taliban in Pakistan, and was the first time the United States had seen the Pakistani militant group expand its operational focus from within its immediate region to the U.S. Homeland. The FBI forensics, technical, and investigative experts—including those from FBI Headquarters, FBI New York Field Office, and the TSC—developed crucial evidence in this fast-moving terrorism investigation and quickly shared it with domestic and foreign partners, including the New York Police Department and Customs and Border Protection agents, who arrested Shahzad as he attempted to flee the country onboard an international flight.

## SUCCESSES



#### Mumbai Operator Identified and Denmark Plot Foiled

The FBI's Chicago Joint Terrorism Task Force arrested U.S. citizen David Headley in October 2009 in Chicago for planning terrorist attacks against a Danish newspaper and two of its employees. During the course of this investigation, the FBI collected intelligence that uncovered Headley's operational role in the 2008 attacks in Mumbai, India, and connected him to a separate plot to kill an individual in Denmark. On January 14, 2010, a superceding indictment was filed against Headley relating to his conspiring with others to plan and execute attacks in both Denmark and India, and in March 2010, he pleaded guilty on all counts.



#### New York Subway Attack Thwarted

In September 2009, FBI agents in Colorado arrested Najibullah Zazi in connection with his plot to attack the New York City subway system. During this investigation, the FBI used its intelligence and law enforcement tools to collect valuable intelligence on Zazi's network. Zazi admitted he brought triacetone triperoxide explosives to New York City on September 10, 2009, as part of a plan to attack the subway system. Zazi and others initially intended to fight on behalf of the Taliban, but instead received al-Qa'ida training in weapons and explosives shortly after arriving in Pakistan. During the training, al-Qa'ida leaders asked Zazi and others to return to the United States and conduct suicide operations, to which they agreed. In February 2010, Zazi pleaded guilty to conspiring to use weapons of mass destruction, conspiring to commit murder in a foreign country, and providing material support to a terrorist organization.



#### Covert Network of Russian "Illegals" Disrupted

In June 2010, the FBI executed the coordinated arrests of 11 individuals, including 10 Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) "illegals" — Russian citizens who use false identities to manufacture ordinary American lives and blend into society. These arrests were the culmination of a multi-year, complex, compartmented investigation into a network of illegals dispatched to the United States from SVR Headquarters. One of the "illegals," who was dispatched to conduct overseas operations and pay "illegal" residencies abroad, was detained in Cyprus, but was eventually released on bail and was believed to have fled the country. Ten people pleaded guilty in the Southern District of New York and were immediately transported via charter flight to Vienna, Austria, where they were exchanged for prisoners being held in Russia.



#### Iran Nuclear Procurement Network Disrupted

In 2010, the FBI initiated its first successful Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) extradition for WMD counterproliferation crimes. Jirair Avanesian, a naturalized Iranian-born U.S. citizen and the owner and operator of a California company, allegedly e-mailed known Government of Iran procurement agents during a two-year period to export specialized vacuum pumps and related equipment to Iran through the United Arab Emirates (UAE). U.S. persons are prohibited from exporting such technology to Iran without a license and without authorization from the Department of Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control. Avanesian purchased the goods and arranged to ship them to the UAE, making it appear that the UAE was the final destination when in fact the same goods were re-shipped to Iran. Two Iranian residents, one a business owner in the UAE, were also charged. On January 11, 2010, FBI Los Angeles arrested Avanesian in Glendale, California, and worked with German law enforcement to arrest an Iranian conspirator in Frankfurt, Germany. An Interpol Red Notice has been issued for additional conspirators. The conspirator was extradited from Germany to the United States on September 24, 2010. This is the first known instance of a successful extradition from Western Europe using the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.



*The FBI has a rich history of using intelligence to solve cases. From gangsters in the 1930s, to intelligence threats during the Cold War era, to organized crime in the 1970s, to drug trafficking in the 1980s, to terrorism in the past decade, we have accepted the nation's most pressing challenges and risen to the occasion. In our role as both an intelligence agency and a law enforcement agency, we are uniquely positioned to respond to the changing world with its new adversaries and threats.*

## *The Federal Bureau of Investigation and its Intelligence History*

**1908** Attorney General Charles Bonaparte ordered the creation of a Special Agent force in the Department of Justice (DOJ). His order reassigned a group of DOJ investigators and permanently hired some agents from the Treasury Department. This force later became the FBI.

**1914** World War I began in Europe, placing additional responsibilities on the Bureau of Investigations (BOI), which was the forerunner of the FBI.

**1917** Congress passed the Espionage Act of 1917—prohibiting espionage, interference with the draft, or attempts to discourage loyalty—which greatly increased the BOI's ability to deal with espionage and subversion in the war. In April 1917, Congress declared war on Germany and President Woodrow Wilson authorized the BOI to detain enemy aliens.

**1935** In the 1935 DOJ appropriation, Congress officially recognized the Division of Investigation, formerly the BOI, as the FBI.

**1936** At the request of President Roosevelt, the FBI gathered intelligence on subversive activity in the United States, specifically related to the foreign influence on domestic Nazi and communist groups.

**1939** President Roosevelt issued a directive designating the FBI as the agency responsible for coordinating and disseminating intelligence and national security information to other federal agencies. By doing so, he authorized the FBI "to take charge of investigative work in matters relating to espionage, sabotage, and violations of neutrality regulations" outside of military facilities.

**1940** FBI established the Special Intelligence Service, which gathered intelligence information by dispatching Special Agents to countries throughout the Western Hemisphere. These agents gathered intelligence and prevented Axis espionage, sabotage, and propaganda aimed against the United States and its allies.

**1945** Defections by a Soviet code clerk in Canada and an espionage courier in the United States led the FBI to greatly increase its investigations of Soviet espionage to identify communist penetrations in the U.S. government.

**1946** The FBI launched the General Investigative Intelligence Program, its first national effort to gather intelligence on the criminal landscape of the country.

**1947** The National Security Act of 1947 designated the FBI as a member of the U.S. Intelligence Community (USIC) and authorized the FBI to collect, produce, and disseminate foreign intelligence. This act also established the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

**1948** The FBI began a close liaison with the U.S. Army Signals Intelligence Service—the National Security Agency's predecessor—to exploit Soviet messages that were being decrypted and decoded by military intelligence personnel, identifying hundreds of people connected with Soviet intelligence work against the United States and its allies.

**1950** British security agents arrested Klaus Fuchs, a German-born British atomic scientist who sold information about the atomic bomb to the Russians, after an investigation based on an FBI tip was derived from Soviet telegrams decrypted and decoded by the Army Signals Agency with FBI investigative assistance.

**1951** Having identified and neutralized hundreds of Soviet intelligence assets in the United States, the FBI began a more intensive, proactive counterintelligence program aimed at penetrating and controlling Soviet intelligence in the United States.

**1957** Soviet illegal agent Rudolf Ivanovich Abel [William Fisher] was arrested in New York City following an intensive FBI investigation. He was convicted and sentenced to a 30-year term. In February 1962, Abel was traded to the Soviet Union for the return of U.S. pilot Francis Gary Powers, who was shot down in a U-2 plane while surveilling Soviet territory.

**1964** When Civil rights workers James E. Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner were murdered near Philadelphia, Mississippi, the FBI blanketed the region with agents to comprehensively gather intelligence about Klan activities in the area. Eighteen men were identified in the murders and seven were eventually convicted. FBI intelligence efforts successfully penetrated the Klan and effectively neutralized its ability to act in the area.

**1976** Attorney General Edward H. Levi, with input from the FBI, issued guidelines for FBI intelligence and domestic security activities.

**1978** Congress passes the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), which was the first legislation on using electronic surveillance in national security matters.

**1980** The Classified Information Procedures Act (CIPA) was passed providing the government the opportunity to protect classified information in criminal proceedings. The CIPA and FISA allowed for the successful prosecution of many more espionage cases.

**1982** President Reagan designated the FBI as the lead agency for countering terrorism in the United States.

**1985** The FBI conducted a series of high-profile arrests in the "Year of the Spy," including John Walker, who betrayed naval cryptographic systems for two decades, and William Pelton, a former National Security Agency employee who was arrested and charged with selling military secrets to the Soviets. Between 1975 and 1985, more than 80 spies were convicted based on FBI investigations.

**1986** In Operation Famish, the FBI identified 80 Soviet intelligence agents operating under diplomatic cover to the State Department, which declared them persona non grata. This operation was aimed at dealing with the unprecedented escalation of Soviet intelligence operations within the United States in the previous decade.

**1987** After analyzing intelligence on Fawaz Younis, who hijacked a Jordanian plane that carried two Americans among its passengers, the FBI arrested Younis, making him the first suspected foreign terrorist arrested for a crime perpetrated against Americans on foreign soil. The Bureau made the arrest under provisions of the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984, which assigned certain extraterritorial authority to the FBI.

**1998** An FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) gathered intelligence on the terrorist bombing attacks on U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, that killed hundreds of U.S., Kenyan, and Tanzanian citizens.

**1999** The FBI added Usama Bin Ladin to the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" list for his connection with the U.S. embassy bombings in East Africa.

**2000** An FBI JTTF gathered intelligence during the "Borderbom" investigation that helped indict Mokhtar Haouari and Abdel Ghani Meskini for conspiring with Ahmed Resdsam to bomb American sites during the January 1, 2000, millennium celebrations.

**2001** Following the massive terrorist attacks against New York and Washington, DC, the FBI worked with its intelligence and law enforcement partners to analyze intelligence and investigate these attacks.

**2003** The FBI established Field Intelligence Groups in every field office to coordinate, manage, and execute FBI intelligence functions in the field.

**2004** President Bush signed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, reforming the USIC and outlining directives to enhance the FBI's intelligence capabilities.

**2005** The FBI established the Directorate of Intelligence and the National Security Branch (NSB), strengthening the FBI's intelligence and investigative mission.

**2006** In June, all FBI field offices began dedicating Special Agent and Intelligence Analyst personnel to leading fusion centers within their territory.

**2008** In December, the Strategic Execution Team, created in 2007 to build on and accelerate efforts to enhance the FBI's intelligence capabilities, finished rolling out a standardized field intelligence structure to all FBI field offices.

**2009** In response to Task Force recommendations from Executive Order 13491, Ensuring Lawful Interrogations, the High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group was created to coordinate law enforcement, military, and intelligence efforts in interrogating key terror suspects. The HIG is housed in the FBI's NSB, and staffed with members from various IC agencies.

**2010** TSC released new terrorist watchlist guidelines to counter threats, such as the attempted airline bombing on Christmas Day 2009.

**2011** The FBI's CTD established a permanent, geographically aligned fusion cell structure to apply a strategic, threat-centric approach — consisting of collaborative analytical and operational teams — to identify emerging threats and enhance our intelligence-led approach to address these threats.



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