

Sen. John J. Walsh, Chair
Sen. Brian G. Pettyjohn
Sen. Bryant L. Richardson
Sen. David P. Sokola
Sen. Bryan J. Townsend



Rep. Stephanie T. Bolden, Vice-Chair
Rep. Andria L. Bennett
Rep. Gerald L. Brady
Rep. Timothy D. Dukes
Rep. Jeffrey N. Spiegelman

STATE OF DELAWARE

JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT AND SUNSET COMMITTEE

Delaware Information and Analysis Center 2.22.2017

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 5:34pm. Members present included Vice Chair Bolden; Senators Richardson, Sokola, and Townsend; and Representatives Brady, Bennett, and Spiegelman. Julie Fedele, JLOSC Analyst, and Holly Vaughn Wagner, Legislative Attorney, were also present. Chair Walsh recognized the Delaware Secretary of Homeland Security, Robert Coupe. The Delaware Information and Analysis Center (“DIAC”) was represented by Major Dan Meadows, Captain William Crotty, and Lieutenant James Hulings.

Chair Walsh welcomed the members of the committee to the fifth meeting of the Joint Legislative Oversight and Sunset Committee (“the Committee”) in the 149th General Assembly and called for introductions of members present. Chair Walsh read a brief explanation of the role of the joint committee. Representative Spiegelman motioned to approve the February 15, 2017 minutes, and was seconded by Senator Sokola. The motion carried 8 (Senators Walsh, Richardson, Sokola, and Townsend; Representatives Bolden, Bennett, Brady, and Spiegelman)-0, 2 absent (Senator Pettyjohn and Representative Dukes. Chair Walsh then invited Major Meadows to present to the Committee on behalf of DIAC.

Lieutenant Hulings began the presentation by outlining the history and objective of DIAC and highlighting its management structure under the Delaware State Police. Lieutenant Hulings explained that DIAC was formed in 2005, and is staffed by eleven civilian employees and twelve full time Delaware State Troopers. Lieutenant Hulings identified the network of state and federal partners, to include partners that do not directly supply staff to DIAC, and provided examples of interagency collaboration for limited and specific purposes.

Captain Crotty outlined the technological capabilities and products provided by DIAC to all levels of government and law enforcement, especially DIAC’s statewide crime mapping program, geo-spatial maps and crime trend tracking, and community crime mapping. Captain Crotty detailed the website products produced by DIAC for use by law enforcement agencies and other actors across the state. These products included a Delaware drug monitoring initiative, monthly shooting report, and outreach and training products. Captain Crotty explained that Delaware uses the same reporting systems across all law enforcement entities, allowing for immediate access to data on wanted persons and sex offender registries. Captain Crotty identified information silos and missed opportunities for partnerships as issues for DIAC. Major Meadows explained the great deal of concern and care surrounding the collection and use of this data in terms of civil rights and privacy rights concerns.

Senator Sokola asked if DIAC was involved in monitoring potential financial support for terrorist actors that have business ties in Delaware. Major Meadows indicated that investigation and collaboration is ongoing with other agencies involved more directly with these issues, but that a mechanism is in place to coordinate that information. Senator Sokola asked if DIAC is aware of security threats that could involve targeting of the Port of Wilmington. Major Meadows replied that it is. Senator Sokola asked if DIAC has any partnerships for security concerns involving non-commuter train transport; Major Meadows replied that these concerns fell outside the purview of DIAC. Senator Sokola asked if college campus police agencies are involved in the information-sharing network. Major Meadows answered that yes they are, and that data automatically populates their systems. Additionally, they are encouraged to further populate those systems with their own data.

Senator Richardson asked for details about DIAC's monitoring of gang violence in Wilmington. It was explained that DIAC monitors about two hundred groups in Delaware which could be classified as dangerous. Each of these groups poses a security risk, and that monitoring of those groups is ongoing. Senator Richardson asked how DIAC is involved in monitoring the heroin epidemic in Delaware and what can be done to mitigate its impact. Major Meadows replied that early response and treatment are crucial, and that communication of observable drug trends can help to prevent further damage.

Representative Bolden asked why the provision of information to law enforcement entities about gun violence in Wilmington does not seem to be preventing more shootings. Major Meadows replied that DIAC has cross-sectional concerns when it comes to violent crimes, and that DIAC's role in mitigating that violence lies in providing tools and deploying troops when appropriate. Representative Bolden asked if DIAC has come across or utilized information about racial profiling. It was explained that DIAC constantly trains on those methods and actively participates in education and reevaluation of racial profiling. It was emphasized that DIAC and its network has a great deal of respect and responsibility for those concerns and keeps those considerations in mind when providing guidance to jurisdictions.

Representative Bennett asked if DIAC would be involved in situations like the Russian surveillance ship off the coast of Delaware. It was explained that DIAC would certainly be involved in tracking those situations and would be proactive in communicating risks to the appropriate decision-makers. Representative Bennett asked if international threats like the one in Brussels, Belgium are monitored for potential risks to the United States. It was explained that spreading awareness of those threats is the primary concern, and those efforts frequently take significant time. Representative Bennett asked if DIAC was involved in tracking the at-large sexual assault perpetrator in Delaware. It was communicated that every police chief in Delaware obtained pictures and details not disclosed to the public, but that the appropriate actors are fully informed.

Representative Spiegelman commended DIAC for its help in monitoring recent security threats in his district and across the state. Representative Spiegelman asked if any of the recent anti-Semitic threats have been validated. It was explained that DIAC has conducted several site security assessments at locations important to the Delaware Jewish community. Additionally, Federal Bureau of Investigation officials were brought to the Delaware Jewish Community Center, and DIAC is facilitating relationships with the community.

Senator Townsend asked if any other state agencies or offices disseminate the same information in real time that DIAC does. It was clarified that DIAC works with public information officers in various law enforcement departments. Difficulty in those collaborations arises in the need to constantly recognize all incoming information, analyze it, and disseminate it through the proper channels while respecting active law enforcement investigations.

Representative Spiegelman highlighted the lack of budgetary requests included in the review materials, and asked which additional resources DIAC needs to do its job. Major Meadows answered that any monetary request would have to be consistent with Department of Homeland Security needs. Major Meadows explained that DIAC manages off-hours operations through an on-call rotation, which could benefit from additional resources to appropriately staff the center on a constant basis. Major Meadows also expressed that help with analyst wages would be helpful, and that any resources devoted to eliminating information silos would be helpful. Representative Spiegelman asked if suggestions to eliminate those silos could be provided to the JLOSC analyst for review and possible incorporation into recommendations. Major Meadows indicated that those suggestions would be provided.

Senator Sokola asked if methods existed to filter information to prevent stakeholder overload. It was clarified that the role of the DIAC analysts is to sort through received information to make it more concise and digestible. Chair Walsh asked if a monetary figure for providing additional support could be supplied to the JLOSC analyst. Senator Walsh asked if codifying DIAC would benefit or detract from DIAC's goals. Major Meadows indicated that DIAC would need time to process that impact. Representative Bennett asked for clarification on the analyst vacancy. It was clarified that DIAC is requesting an additional analyst in addition to the current vacancy.

Chair Walsh shifted discussion towards scheduling the DIAC's recommendation hearing. Representative Spiegelman motioned to schedule a meeting for April 4, 2017, at 1:00 p.m., which was seconded by Senator Sokola. The motion carried 8 (Senators Walsh, Richardson, Sokola and Townsend; Representatives Bolden, Bennett, Brady, and Spiegelman)-0 with 2 absent (Senator Pettyjohn and Representative Dukes).

Representative Spiegelman motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm. The motion carried 8 (Senators Walsh, Richardson, Sokola and Townsend; Representatives Bolden, Bennett, Brady, and Spiegelman)-0 with 2 absent (Senator Pettyjohn and Representative Dukes).

Respectfully prepared by:

Julie Fedele, Research Analyst-Joint Legislative Oversight and Sunset Committee

Access to the audio recording of this proceeding is available upon request.