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## Tools to Help Educate State and Local Officials

*Gerald Galloway, Chief of Police, Southern Pines Police Department, North Carolina, and Chair, IACP Patrol and Tactical Operations Committee*

How do law enforcement agencies secure additional funding to prevent or respond to a terrorist attack? The answer to this question is twofold. First, law enforcement agencies and government officials need to understand and communicate to key officials what resources are critical to being prepared. Second, federal funding must be available to law enforcement agencies so that they can tackle their increased and new responsibilities.

Of course, that is easier said than done. Many state leaders are not fully aware of the most critical gaps in their state's law enforcement agencies' homeland security efforts. Although the federal government has allocated millions of dollars for states to spend on counterterrorism training and equipment, most agencies do not yet have access to these funds. Changing this picture requires hard data and a grassroots communications effort on the part of law enforcement agencies nationwide.

In an attempt to bridge the gap between the available funds and law enforcement's counterterrorism needs, the IACP continues to develop tools and resources to help prepare law enforcement agencies to communicate funding requirements. This year the IACP commissioned and ITT Industries Night Vision underwrote a comprehensive homeland security preparedness survey the results of which helped create a priority list of needs. Based on the survey's findings, the IACP Patrol and Tactical Operations (PTO) Committee developed a toolkit to help law enforcement executives communicate with state and local leaders responsible for allocating homeland security funds.

The hope is that law enforcement agencies will customize the tools for their individual needs and take them to key officials to help secure the funds they need to be more prepared to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks.

### Homeland Security Preparedness Survey Findings

The homeland security preparedness survey findings, presented during the 110th Annual IACP Conference in Philadelphia, not surprisingly demonstrated that although the expectations and responsibilities of law enforcement agencies have increased dramatically since September 11, 2001, the amount of funding for critical resources, such as equipment and training, has not increased accordingly.

The nation's top police executives, through this survey, outlined a priority list of needs—such as better communication, funding, training, and equipment—to prepare them more adequately to prevent or respond to terrorist attacks against the United States. Without the help law enforcement executives say they need, an overwhelming number do not feel their front-line agencies are ready to protect the country against an attack similar to

that of September 11, 2001.

These significant survey findings provide a blueprint for improving law enforcement's preparedness. In order to make the blueprint effective, it is necessary for law enforcement agencies to communicate the needs assessment to key state and local government officials.

### **Homeland Security Needs Assessment Electronic Toolkit**

To help agencies demonstrate their distinct needs for increased resources to prepare for and prevent possible acts of terrorism on American soil, the PTO committee created the Homeland Security Needs Assessment Electronic Toolkit. The kit includes the following:

- **Sample Letter to Local or State Leadership:** The letter will help law enforcement agencies engage local and state leaders in this important discussion, introduce the survey findings, communicate agencies' distinct needs, and request a meeting with local officials, the letter serves that function.
- **Press Release:** The press release issued by IACP identifies the most critical findings of the survey and informs local leaders and media representatives about the critical need for funding and other resources.
- **Executive Summary:** The executive summary touches on the key findings of the survey and includes the graphs and charts summarizing the survey's data.
- **PowerPoint Presentation:** For those law enforcement agencies who request a face-to-face meeting with a government official, the IACP created a five-minute PowerPoint presentation of the most important findings. This presentation also can be customized to include any local data an agency has to demonstrate funding needs.

With so many interests lobbying for the funding available for first responders, it is critical that law enforcement agencies speak with a united and authoritative voice about resources necessary to protecting the nation's communities.

The toolkit materials make a strong case for the need for funding across the nation; but individual agencies can understand and express the situation in their own states most accurately. The materials provide a context in which to demonstrate the specific funding and resource needs of individual law enforcement agencies.

*To request a copy of the Homeland Security Preparedness Survey or the Homeland Security Needs Assessment Electronic Toolkit, please send an e-mail message to [mwalsh@crtpr.com](mailto:mwalsh@crtpr.com), or visit [www.nightvision.com](http://www.nightvision.com).*

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