



**Homeland Security**

Science and Technology

## National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)

A Department of Homeland Security **Emeritus Center of Excellence\***

*START advances science-based knowledge about the causes and consequences of terrorism, and the effectiveness and impacts of responses to terrorism.*

**LAUNCH** ▶ 2005

**PARTNERS** ▶ More than 75 university, private industry, and national laboratory partners

**EXPERTISE** ▶ Counterterrorism, human geography, emerging technology threats, political instability and gray zone conflict, risk communication and community resilience, transnational criminality and illicit transit

**DHS ALIGNMENT** ▶ Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, Transportation Security Administration, DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis, Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office

### Research and Education Capabilities

- Violent extremism data collection and coding to inform policy decisions
- Terrorism and counterterrorism scientific studies
- Education and training for the current and future homeland security workforce



A nationwide consortium led by:

**University of Maryland**

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*\*DHS Emeritus Centers of Excellence no longer receive base grant funding. DHS and its operational components can access Emeritus Centers through DHS Basic Ordering Agreements (BOAs).*

### Feedback from Our Partners

*"START has given the U.S. Government a strategic advantage in the counterterrorism fight, due in large part to [its] exhaustive terrorism datasets, innovative studies, and network of researchers worldwide."*

**Michael Nagata**, Director  
Strategic Operational Planning, The National Counterterrorism Center, 2017

*"START's experts have proven invaluable...directly supporting Combatant Commanders worldwide. [They] provide information available nowhere else in academia."*

**Hriar Cabayan**, Branch Chief  
Office of Strategic Multilayer Assessment, 2017



## University Partners

American University, D.C.  
Bryn Mawr College, PA  
Dartmouth College, NH  
Georgetown University, D.C.  
George Mason University, VA  
Howard University, D.C.\*  
Marquette University, WI  
Michigan State University, MI  
Morehouse College, GA\*  
North Carolina Central University, NC\*  
Purdue University, IN  
Rutgers University, NJ  
San Diego State University, CA  
Stanford University, CA  
Temple University, PA  
Texas A&M University, TX  
The Ohio State University, OH  
Tufts University, MA  
University of California, Los Angeles, CA  
University of Southern California, CA  
University of Texas, TX  
University of the District of Columbia, D.C.\*  
West Virginia University, WV

\*Minority Serving Institution (MSI)

## Enterprise Partners

Battelle Memorial Institute  
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP)  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
DECO Inc.  
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)  
Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)  
Helios Global, Inc.  
Institute for Intergovernmental Research  
L-3 Titan Group  
Lockheed Martin  
Meridian International Center  
National Geospatial Intelligence Agency  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
National Security Innovations  
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory  
Sandia National Laboratories  
Union of Concerned Scientists



For a complete list of partners and more information, please visit [www.start.umd.edu](http://www.start.umd.edu)

For more information on DHS Centers of Excellence, please visit [www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/centers-excellence](http://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/centers-excellence)



## Impacts



### Providing actionable information for security operations

START researchers developed the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) to help intelligence analysts, law enforcement, and policymakers understand terrorist groups' tactics, and activity level. The GTD identifies trends to inform counterterrorism strategies, and is the world's most comprehensive and used, open-source terrorism database.



### Improving the efficacy of wireless alerts

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) updated its regulatory policies to increase the effectiveness of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) based on START study findings. The updates made by the FCC as a result of START's work include increasing the length of WEAs to 360 characters, embedding uniform resource locators (URLs) in WEAs, and improving the geo-targeting of WEAs so that they reach only those at risk.



### Enabling targeted detection of radiological and nuclear threats

START researchers worked with the DHS Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office to develop a tool that allows officials to identify the susceptibility of their localities as either potential targets or pathways for radiological and nuclear materials/weapons to transit through. This information allows for building appropriate levels of preventative threat detection capability.



### Challenging extremism in the digital world

START students developed a social media campaign and video game to empower bystanders to take action by helping them recognize signs of radicalization and learn how to intervene appropriately (e.g., confront individual, tell parent/family, call the police). Emphasizing the dangers of inaction and the bystander effect, the "It Takes Just One" campaign and "Operation Genovese" video game received first place at the DHS-led and Facebook supported Peer to Peer (P2P): Challenging Extremism national competition, which is aimed at finding new ways to counter recruiting efforts of terrorist groups.