



Privacy Compliance Review
of the
NOC Publicly Available Social Media Monitoring and
Situational Awareness Initiative

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I. BACKGROUND

The Office of Operations Coordination and Planning (OPS), National Operations Center (NOC), has a statutory responsibility 1) to provide situational awareness and establish a common operating picture for the federal government, and for state, local, and tribal governments as appropriate, in the event of a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster, and 2) to ensure that critical terrorism and disaster-related information reaches government decision-makers.¹ Traditional media sources, and more recently social media sources, such as Twitter, Facebook, and a vast number of blogs provide public reports on breaking events with a potential nexus to homeland security. By examining open source traditional and social media information, comparing it with many other sources of information, and including it where appropriate into NOC reports, the NOC can provide a more comprehensive picture of breaking or evolving events.

To fulfill its statutory responsibility to provide situational awareness and to access the potential value of the public information within the social media realm, in January 2010, the NOC launched the first of three Media Monitoring Capability (MMC) pilots using social media monitoring related to specific incidents and international events. The NOC pilots occurred during the 2010 Haiti earthquake response, the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia; and the response to the April 2010 Deep Water Horizon Gulf Coast oil spill. Prior to implementing each social media pilot, the DHS Privacy Office and OPS developed detailed standards and procedures associated with reviewing information on social media web sites. These standards and procedures are documented through a series of pilot-specific PIAs. In June 2010, the Department released its Publicly Available Social Media Monitoring and Situational Awareness Initiative PIA, incorporating these protections.² OPS and PRIV subsequently updated the PIA in January 2011 and published a System of Records Act Notice (SORN) on February 1, 2011³ to allow for the collection and dissemination of PII in a very limited number of situations in order to respond to the evolving operational needs of OPS/NOC.

After January 2011, the NOC may include PII on seven categories of individuals in an Item of Interest (hereinafter “MMC Reports”) when doing so lends credibility to the report or facilitates coordination with interagency or international partners. The seven categories are: 1) U.S. and foreign individuals in extremis, *i.e.*, in situations involving potential life or death circumstances; 2) senior U.S. and foreign government officials who make public statements or provide public updates; 3) U.S. and foreign government spokespersons who make public

¹ Section 515 of the Homeland Security Act (6 U.S.C. § 321d(b)(1)).

² PIAs for the MMC Initiative can be found at <http://www.dhs.gov/privacy>.

³ <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2011/2011-2198.htm>

statements or provide public updates; 4) U.S. and foreign private sector officials and spokespersons who make public statements or provide public updates; 5) names of anchors, newscasters, or on-scene reporters who are known or identified as reporters in their posts or articles, or who use traditional and/or social media in real time to provide their audience situational awareness and information; 6) current and former public officials who are victims of incidents or activities related to homeland security; and 7) terrorists, drug cartel leaders, or other persons known to have been involved in major crimes of homeland security interest, who are killed or found dead.

As documented in the January 2011 PIA Update, the NOC does not: 1) actively seek PII; 2) post any information on social media sites; 3) actively seek to connect with individuals, whether internal or external to DHS; 4) accept invitations to connect from individual social media users whether internal or external to DHS; or 5) interact with individuals on social media sites.

Privacy Compliance Reviews (PCRs) are a key aspect of the layered privacy protections built into this initiative to ensure protections described in the PIAs are followed. PCRs were conducted on the three social media monitoring pilots; and following the June 2010 PIA publication, PCRs are conducted bi-annually.⁴ Accordingly, the DHS Privacy Office conducted this bi-annual PCR to: 1) assess compliance with the January 2011 PIA Update and February 2011 SORN; and 2) review and update, as appropriate, the 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure they accurately reflect the scope of the initiative. To address these objectives, the DHS Privacy Office developed a questionnaire, interviewed OPS/NOC officials and analysts on issues raised by the NOC's responses to the questionnaire, analyzed OPS/NOC guidance and SOPs, and reviewed selected MMC Reports for compliance with the 2011 PIA Update.

II. SUMMARY

The DHS Privacy Office found OPS/NOC to be in compliance with the privacy requirements identified in the January 2011 PIA Update and the February 2011 SORN. The requirements are discussed in detail below. Our specific findings are as follows:

- *Collection of Information* - OPS/NOC is complying with requirements not to actively seek PII in its reporting and has established an official profile on Twitter that complies with PIA requirements. From August 22, 2011 to February 29, 2012 OPS/NOC distributed 8,989 MMC Reports of which 1,901 (20 percent) contained

⁴ Reports on the results of PCRs can be found at <http://www.dhs.gov/privacy> under Compliance Reviews and Investigations.

authorized PII within the seven permitted categories of individuals identified in the February 2011 SORN. Of the 8,989 MMC Reports, only five Reports containing unauthorized PII were identified during this review period and redaction notices were appropriately issued to Report recipients.

- *Use of Information* - The OPS/NOC has established 13 reporting categories of events that are consistent with its statutory mandate to provide situational awareness, a more complete common operating picture, and more timely information for decision makers. Our review of randomly selected MMC Reports found that they reflect a variety of topics within the 13 event categories and any PII included was within one of the seven permissible categories.
- *Retention of Information* - In accordance with retention requirements, OPS/NOC maintains a database of all of the MMC Reports distributed. Unauthorized PII was redacted from MMC Reports within the MMC database when after five Reports containing unauthorized PII were identified.
- *Internal and External Sharing and Disclosure* - OPS/NOC continues to comply with sharing requirements. A process is in place to determine the need-to-know for MMC Reports and the distribution list is monitored on a periodic basis.
- *Technical Access and Security* - OPS/NOC has implemented an audit capability that became fully operational in May 2011. Since August 2011, OPS/NOC has conducted 14 random audits (two per month) that covered all MMC analysts and documented the results in self-audit compliance reports.
- *Privacy Training* - An annual PII refresher course was given and a Certification exam administered in February 2012. All MMC Analysts successfully passed the examination. In addition, supplemental guidance issued by OPS/NOC during this reporting period emphasizes to analysts the need to focus reporting on the operational impact on the Department.

The DHS Privacy Office also reviewed the NOC's 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder and SOPs and found that although these documents largely reflected the purpose and scope of the NOC MMC, some language could have been interpreted by those outside the NOC MMC Initiative who have not undergone its extensive training to mean that the NOC MMC scope included monitoring First Amendment-protected activities and public dissent. Accordingly, we recommended changes to these documents to reconfirm that monitoring of these activities is outside the scope and purpose of the NOC MMC.

The DHS Privacy Office is making three recommendations to improve the OPS/NOC's ability to demonstrate its continued compliance with privacy requirements as outlined in the

2011 PIA Update and February 2011 SORN. OPS/NOC has already taken steps to address all of our recommendations.

III. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The DHS Privacy Office conducted its fourth PCR of the OPS/NOC MMC in coordination with OPS/NOC leadership from February 21, 2012 through April 7, 2012. The DHS Privacy Office carried out the following activities:

- developed and administered a questionnaire to OPS/NOC which included questions on reporting statistics for the review period;
- reviewed randomly-selected MMC Reports distributed during the review period for compliance with the January 2011 PIA Update and February 2011 SORN;
- reviewed the OPS/NOC profile on Twitter for adherence to PIA requirements;
- conducted a site visit to observe the MMC analysts on the watch desks⁵ as they monitored public websites, social networks, and blogs. The MMC analysts provided an overview and demonstration of their media monitoring responsibilities.
- observed a demonstration of the Automated Syslog Audit System⁶ and reviewed Self-Audit Compliance SOPs and the results of 14 monthly self-audit compliance reports;
- reviewed and discussed questionnaire responses and analyst training documentation with OPS/NOC officials; and
- reviewed the 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder and SOPs for content and clarity and discussed recommendations with OPS/NOC leadership for implementation in 2012 versions.

IV. FINDINGS

Collection of Information

Requirement: Under this initiative OPS cannot: 1) actively seek PII; 2) post any information on social media sites; 3) actively seek to connect with individual social media users, whether internal or external to DHS; 4) accept invitations to connect from individual social media users whether internal or external to DHS; or 5) interact with individuals on social media sites.

⁵ The MMC analyst watch is composed of two watch analysts, one assigned to monitor social media and the other to monitor traditional media activity.

⁶ The Automated Syslog Audit System is a tool developed by OPS/NOC to apply industry standard blacklists and analysis to ensure appropriate use of the Internet by MMC analysts.

OPS/NOC is permitted to collect PII for seven specific categories of individuals listed in Table 1 when doing so lends credibility to the report or facilitates coordination with interagency or international partners. PII on these individuals may include full name, affiliation, position or title, and publicly-available user ID. PII inadvertently or incidentally collected outside the scope of this discrete set of categories of individuals must be redacted immediately before further use and sharing.

Table 1: Seven Categories of Individuals PII can be included

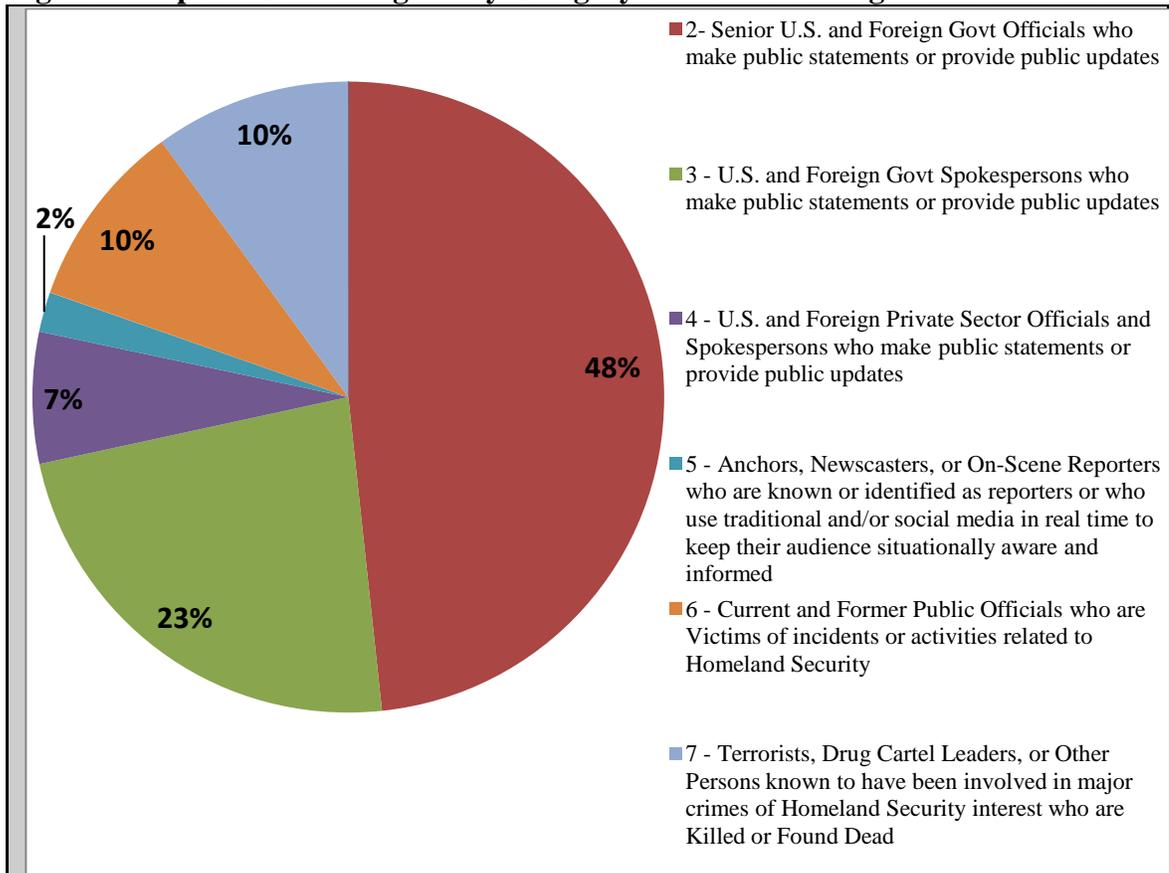
Category #	Description
1	U.S. and foreign individuals in extremis, <i>i.e.</i> , in situations involving potential life or death circumstances;
2	Senior U.S. and foreign government officials who make public statements or provide public updates;
3	U.S. and foreign government spokespersons who make public statements or provide public updates;
4	U.S. and foreign private sector officials and spokespersons who make public statements or provide public updates;
5	Names of anchors, newscasters, or on-scene reporters who are known or identified as reporters in their posts or articles, or who use traditional and/or social media in real time to provide their audience situational awareness and information;
6	Current and former public officials who are victims of incidents or activities related to homeland security; and
7	Terrorists, drug cartel leaders, or other persons known to have been involved in major crimes of homeland security interest, who are killed or found dead.

Review: We reviewed NOC/MMC reporting data from August 22, 2011 (the date of the last PCR) to February 29, 2012 including the number of MMC Reports produced overall and those containing PII about the seven permissible categories of individuals. We also reviewed demonstrations on how the inclusion of PII added credibility these MMC Reports. We discussed the five instances where MMC Reports included PII outside the seven permissible categories with OPS/NOC officials and reviewed associated redaction notices, as well as the OPS/NOC DHS Twitter profile (the only account established by the initiative) to ensure its use was within the parameters set out in the PIA.

Findings: OPS/NOC is complying with the requirements not to actively seek PII in its reporting. It has established one official profile on Twitter and that profile complies with PIA requirements. From August 22, 2011 to February 29, 2012 the NOC distributed 8,989 reports of which 1,901 (20 percent) contained PII within the seven permitted

categories of individuals. Eighty percent of reports during this period did not contain PII and the majority of reports that did contain authorized PII (71 percent) fell into Categories 2 and 3 (senior U.S. and foreign government officials and U.S. and foreign government spokespersons who make public statements or provide public updates). Figure 1 depicts the distribution of MMC Reports including PII from the seven permissible categories.

Figure 1: Reports Containing PII by Category of Individual Aug. 2011 to Feb. 2012



Note: There were no MMC Reports distributed during the review period in Category 1 (U.S. and foreign individuals *in extremis*).

OPS/NOC officials noted that including PII from these categories has added value to MMC Reports, particularly when senior government officials and spokespersons are involved. In this example, the ability to refer to who made the statement enhanced the credibility of the information in a report. OPS/NOC officials also noted, in another example, that the ability to state which Senators’ offices received white powder envelopes was very important information during an anthrax scare (Category 6 - current and former public officials who are victims of incidents or activities related to homeland

security). The inclusion of PII in Category 5 (names of anchors, newscasters, or on-scene reporters who are known or identified as reporters in their posts or articles, or who use traditional and/or social media in real time to provide their audience situational awareness and information), occurred less often, representing only two percent of all the reports containing PII. OPS/NOC officials stated that including a media person's name added credibility to the MMC Report but also noted that the PII included was generally limited to information contained within the URL link to the Report source (e.g., [http://twitter.com/#!/\[authoruserid\]](http://twitter.com/#!/[authoruserid])).⁷

Consistent with retention requirements, the OPS/NOC maintains a database containing MMC reports distributed for a period of five years. The OPS/NOC conducts queries of this database to generate reporting statistics including those discussed above. OPS/NOC does not use its database to create profiles of individuals nor does it use PII as a search term in its queries. The MMC database currently does not have the functionality to log queries made. Implementation of such functionality could provide further assurance that OPS/NOC is not using its database to create profiles of individuals or using PII as a search term in its queries.

OPS/NOC employs a layered approach to ensuring unauthorized PII is not included in MMC Reports prior to distribution. Specifically, MMC Reports are reviewed by the analysts who drafted the report and by the Watch Lead prior to being distributed. There are also several post-distribution checks in place. Only five MMC Reports containing unauthorized PII were identified for this review period.⁸ One of these Reports was identified through a weekly quality control process and a redaction notice was issued. The remaining four Reports were identified through preparation for the PCR and redaction notices were issued to Report recipients.

In order to make use of Twitter search tools such as "Tweet Deck," OPS/NOC established a single profile on Twitter and that profile complies with PIA requirements. Specifically, this profile does not engage with other users by posting "tweets" nor does it have "followers." The DHS profile does not "follow" other Twitter users who are individuals. OPS/NOC SOPs reinforce these practices and also include guidance on use of the Twitter account with specific provisions for the periodic review of "following" to ensure that individuals are not followed. The list of Twitter profiles "followed" by the OPS/NOC includes other federal agencies, media outlets, and other non-governmental

⁷ MMC reports may contain PII in the text of the report itself or within the links to the source of the information. SNMC Analysts are trained to look for unauthorized PII in both places.

⁸ This represents less than 6/100th of one percent of all reports.

organizations used by as potential sources for the NOC MMC Initiative to provide situational awareness. Although we did not find any of these profiles to be outside the scope of the PIA requirements, SOPs could be improved by incorporating guidance on appropriate “following” and a review process that would require an NOC MMC analyst to seek approval before “following” another Twitter profile.

Recommendations: To provide further assurance that the OPS/NOC is not creating profiles of individuals or searching its reports database using PII, the DHS Privacy Office recommends that OPS/NOC develop and implement a logging mechanism to account for searches conducted in the MMC database. The log should contain the name of the analyst who conducted a search, the query parameters, date and time of the search, and the purpose of the search (*e.g.*, “privacy compliance review” or “categorization metrics”). OPS/NOC officials agreed with this recommendation and have taken steps to begin development of a logging mechanism.

To provide further assurance that OPS/NOC “following” activities on Twitter are appropriately mission-related, the DHS Privacy Office recommends incorporating additional guidance into SOPs. Specifically, the SOPs should incorporate a review process that would require the MMC analyst to seek approval from the Watch Lead and the NOC Senior Watch Officer before “following” another Twitter profile.

Use of Information

Requirement: The OPS/NOC must monitor only publicly available online forums, blogs, public websites, and message boards to collect information used in providing situational awareness and a common operating picture.

Review: We reviewed the 13 reporting categories of events and discussed reporting processes with OPS/NOC officials and MMC analysts. As an authorized recipient of NOC MMC Reports, the DHS Privacy Office also reviews randomly-selected reports for adherence to PIA and SORN requirements. In addition, we reviewed the 2011 Analyst’s Desktop Binder, and SOPs, and discussed OPS/NOC’s recommended changes to the PIA Appendices’ representative lists of sites searched and search terms, and the process for adding search terms, with OPS/NOC officials.

Findings: OPS/NOC has established 13 categories of events that are consistent with their statutory mandate to provide situational awareness, a more complete common operating

picture, and more timely information for decision makers.⁹ Analysts are required to tag reports using the MMC application to one or more of these categories to enable reporting and trend analysis. Requiring analysts to identify the particular mission-related category also helps ensure that reporting remains within scope. To provide further perspective on the content and scope of reports produced by the NOC MMC, Appendix A includes randomly selected reports from four days (November 16, 2011, December 6, 2011, January 17, 2012, and February 21, 2012) and reviewed by the DHS Privacy Office. These reports reflect a variety of topics within the 13 categories and any inclusion of PII was found to be within one of the seven permissible categories of PII.¹⁰

OPS/NOC recommended changes to Appendix A of the PIA Update (Social Media Web Sites Monitored by the NOC) are publicly available sites that are used by the MMC initiative to provide situational awareness to authorized recipients. OPS/NOC also recommended changes to Appendix B (Terms Used by the NOC When Monitoring Social Media Sites). These search terms do not include PII and are added only with approval by the Watch Lead and subsequent approval by the MMC Program Manager. The DHS Privacy Office will update the PIA Update Appendices for representative search terms and sites searched.

Retention of Information

Requirement: In accordance with the retention schedule and disposal policy that was established and approved by the OPS/NOC records officer and National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) (NARA #: N1-563-08-23), the NOC retains information for no more than five years.

Review: We discussed MMC retention practices including those cases when unauthorized PII is inadvertently disseminated, with OPS/NOC officials. Since the MMC has not yet been operating for five years, the retention schedule limitation of no more than five years has not yet passed.

⁹ The thirteen categories are: 1) Terrorism, 3) Weather/Natural Disasters/Emergency Management, 3) Fire, 4) Trafficking /Border Control Issues, 5) Immigration, 6) HAZMAT, 7) Nuclear, 8) Transportation Security, 9) Infrastructure, 10) National/International Security, 11) Health Concerns, National/International, 12) Public Safety, and 13) Cyber Security. There were originally 14 categories. Category 14 (“Reports on DHS, Components, and other Federal agencies”) was eliminated after a review of the 2011 Analyst’s Desktop Binder and SOPs conducted as part of this PCR.

¹⁰ The Chief Privacy Officer provided this same set of randomly selected reports to attendees at the March 17, 2012 *Quarterly Privacy Information for Advocates* meeting.

Findings: In accordance with retention requirements, OPS/NOC maintains a database of all of the reports distributed. Unauthorized PII was redacted from reports within the MMC database when the five reports containing unauthorized PII were identified. The DHS Privacy Office will continue to monitor compliance with retention requirements.

Internal and External Sharing and Disclosure

Requirement: OPS/NOC will share MMC Reports with Departmental and component leadership, and appropriate federal government, state, local, tribal, and territorial agencies as appropriate, to ensure that critical information reaches government decision makers. Information may also be shared with private sector and international partners where necessary, appropriate, and authorized by law.

Review: We reviewed the MMC Report distribution list and discussed OPS/NOC practices for keeping the list up-to-date.

Finding: OPS/NOC continues to comply with sharing requirements. A process is in place to determine the need-to-know for NOC MMC Reports and the distribution list is monitored on a periodic basis.

Technical Access and Security

Requirement: OPS/NOC must maintain a log of social media monitoring Internet-based platforms and information technology infrastructure that MMC analysts visit under this initiative. Additionally, OPS/NOC must implement auditing at the router level for all outbound http(s) traffic and generate audit reports that will be available to the DHS Privacy Office for each PCR.

Review: We observed a live demonstration of the Automated Syslog Audit System, reviewed Self-Audit Compliance SOPs and 14 monthly self-audit compliance reports covering August 2011 through February 2012.

Findings: OPS/NOC has implemented an audit capability for all outbound http(s) traffic that became fully operational in May 2011. The current Self-Audit capability dynamically collects and logs all NOC MMC traffic and audits of this traffic are conducted randomly. Since August 2011, OPS/NOC has conducted 14 random audits (2 per month) that covered all NOC MMC analysts and documented the results in self-audit compliance reports. The reports identified eight potential incidents of suspicious network traffic that, upon further analysis, were all determined to be false positives. OPS/NOC is currently testing a new more dynamic self-audit capability that will enable both collection

and auditing of network traffic in real-time, with plans to implement by the next scheduled PCR. The DHS Privacy Office will follow-up on implementation status of the dynamic audit.

Privacy Training

Requirement: NOC MMC Analysts are required to take annual privacy training and specific PII training.

Review: The DHS Privacy Office reviewed OPS/NOC's training materials, the certification examination, and training log for the initiative.

Finding: The NOC/MMC remains in compliance with training requirements. An annual PII refresher course was given in February 2012 along with a certification exam which all NOC MMC analysts passed. The certification exams test individual understanding of the PIA rules.

Review of 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder

Requirement: Review the 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder and 2011 SOPs to ensure they accurately reflect the scope and purpose of the MMC.

Review: The DHS Privacy Office in conjunction with OPS/NOC, reviewed the 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder and 2011 SOPs for clarity and content. We also requested and reviewed examples of reports produced by the MMC for specific categories of events that could have been interpreted by those outside the MMC Initiative who have not undergone its extensive training to mean reporting was taking place outside of operationally relevant activities (*e.g.*, "reports on DHS and its Components both positive and negative"). We met with OPS officials to discuss the examples provided and to provide recommended changes to more accurately reflect the scope and purpose of the MMC.

Findings: Although the 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder and SOPs largely reflected the purpose and scope of the NOC MMC, some language could have been interpreted by those outside the MMC Initiative who have not undergone its extensive training to mean that the NOC MMC scope included monitoring First Amendment-protected activities and monitoring for public dissent. For example, a reference from the 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder states that "reports that pertain to DHS and subagencies - especially those that have a negative spin on DHS/Component preparation, planning, and response activities should be reported to management before being sent to the distribution list." Through our discussions with OPS/NOC officials and review of reports that were provided as

examples of the intent of such reports, we determined that this language was intended to encompass only activities that are operationally relevant to DHS. For example, the phrase “reports on DHS and its Components both positive and negative” was intended to encompass reports focusing on the potential impact to DHS operations such as long wait times at the Transportation Security Administration or U.S. Customs and Border Protection checkpoints, or focusing on protests that shut down major thoroughfares. In all of these examples, it is the impact to operations that is of concern to OPS/NOC rather than the identities of those involved or the subject matter of a protest – the “what” versus the “who.”

References to “negative spin” on the Department included in the 2011 documents were not intended to reflect permission to monitor individual’s First-Amendment-protected activities or conduct sentiment analysis. In fact, reporting on such activities is not now nor ever has been within the scope of the NOC MMC’s activities. As previously noted in this report, the NOC MMC remains focused on reporting within categories of events that are related to situational awareness. In February 2012, the Director of OPS issued a guidance memorandum to the NOC reminding analysts that no First Amendment-protected speech relating to dissent or disagreement with the Department or its activities should be reviewed, used, collected, or disseminated (See Appendix B).

Recommendation: To clarify the scope and purpose of the NOC MMC, the DHS Privacy Office recommends that the Analyst’s Desktop Binder and SOPs be revised to emphasize that reporting must be operationally relevant to DHS. Any language suggesting that OPS/NOC engages in monitoring of First Amendment-protected activities or monitoring for public dissent must be removed. As of the signing of this report, OPS/NOC has implemented these clarifications.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The DHS Privacy Office has worked collaboratively with the OPS/NOC to ensure implementation of the NOC MMC in a privacy-sensitive manner. At the front end, the DHS Privacy Office established protections to build in privacy through the conduct of PIAs and we have confirmed compliance through the conduct of several PCRs. OPS/NOC has demonstrated continued compliance with the requirements contained in the January 2011 PIA Update and February 2011 SORN. The DHS Privacy Office plans to republish the February 2011 SORN to clarify certain language and will also update the January 2011 PIA Appendices that identify representative lists of sites searched and search terms used as part of the MMC. In addition, to improve its ability to demonstrate compliance with privacy requirements, the DHS Privacy Office recommends that OPS/NOC:

1. Develop and implement a logging mechanism to account for the searches conducted in the MMC database. The log should contain the name of the analyst who conducted the search, the query parameters, and the purpose of the search (*e.g.*, privacy compliance review report, or categorization metrics);
2. Incorporate additional guidance into SOPs concerning appropriate use of the OPS/NOC Twitter profile. The SOPs should incorporate a review process that would require the MMC analyst to seek approval from the Watch Lead and the Senior Watch Officer before “following” another Twitter profile; and
3. Clarify language in the Analyst’s Desktop Binder and SOPs to emphasize that in all cases information in MMC Reports must be operationally relevant to DHS. Any language suggesting that OPS/NOC engages in monitoring of First Amendment protected activities or monitoring for public dissent should be removed. As of the signing of this report, OPS/NOC has implemented these clarifications.

We discussed these recommendations with OPS/NOC officials who, as noted above, are taking steps to implement them. The DHS Privacy Office will commence its next PCR of this initiative in September 2012.

V. PRIVACY COMPLIANCE REVIEW APPROVAL

Responsible Official

Donald Triner
Director, Operations Coordination Division
Office of Operations Coordination and Planning

Approval Signature

Original signed copy on file with the DHS Privacy Office

Mary Ellen Callahan
Chief Privacy Officer
Department of Homeland Security

**APPENDIX A – RANDOMLY-SELECTED MEDIA MONITORING REPORTS
DISSEMINATED BY THE MMC.**

FEMA Quake Assessment Continues In Oklahoma; 310 Damage Reports So Far

MMC IOI#6369 Update#0

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 5:10 AM

On Tuesday, crews from FEMA and the American Red Cross joined county and state officials to assess the 310 reports of damage in Lincoln County after a spate of earthquakes rattled the area more than a week ago. According to a county emergency management official, damage in Lincoln County was widespread, although it was concentrated "in the area of the fault." Reported property damage blamed on the earthquakes ranges from cracked walls to collapsed chimneys to windows and doors that no longer open or shut. According to experts, earthquake damage comes in many varieties because it depends on many different factors. The U.S. Small Business Administration and the state Emergency Management Department also will have staff in the area this week to help with early assessment efforts. A state emergency management official said the agencies will be performing "an assessment only," and that it's too early to provide any preliminary estimates for earthquake damage in terms of dollars. In addition to Lincoln County, damage assessments will be ongoing in Pottawatomie County, which is just to the south and was the epicenter of several quakes.

Media Sources

KJRH-TV

http://www.kjrh.com/dpp/news/local_news/fema-crews-survey-earthquake-damage-in-lincoln-county

The Oklahoman

http://newsok.com/oklahoma-quakes-damage-more-than-300-properties-officials-said/article/3623262?custom_click=pod_headline_europe

200 Officers From 15 States Training This Week For Terrorism, Mass Shooter Response - San Marcos, TX

MMC IOI#6370 Update#0

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 5:42 AM

- This week, close to 200 officers from 15 states are taking part in Texas State University's Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Program (ALERRT)
 - The program trains law enforcement and first responders to effectively respond to, address, and stop terroristic acts and active shooter situations
 - Over the last decade, ALERRT has trained more than 32,000 officers
 - The program helps train officers for violent situations in urban and rural settings, especially along the Mexican border
 - In addition to field training, officers hear first-hand from professionals who have experienced mass shooting events
 - "These officers come and share their first-hand knowledge of how the events unfold in real life," a man with ALERRT said
 - Their background is in military, law enforcement, special operations, as well as academia

Media Sources

Twitter

Police from 15 states are in San Marcos for active shooter training <http://t.co/0K0rtJVP> - 15 Nov., 2255 EST

Twitter [YNN Austin]

<http://twitter.com/#!/YNNAustin/statuses/136653358747492352>

ALERRT

<http://alerrt.org/>

Cyber Security Experts Warn About False Wi-Fi Networks At Airports

MMC IOI#6371 Update#0

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 6:00 AM

Cyber security experts say hackers at airports nationwide set up fake Wi-Fi hotspots to steal personal information from unsuspecting victims. Experts say hackers have been able to use laptops to set up fake networks with names like "LAX Free Wi-Fi." Once users connect to these unsecured networks, hackers can grab all their traffic, gaining access to everything from banking data to Facebook or Twitter account information. To protect against this, experts advise finding out what the real Wi-Fi provider is, and only using that. Further, passwords should be changed regularly, and different passwords should be used for different accounts.

Media Sources

WNDU-TV

http://www.wndu.com/nationworldnews/headlines/Cyber_security_warning_people_about_false_Wi-Fi_networks_133916538.html

KGO-TV

http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/local/san_francisco&id=8433506

Tornado Damages Reported In Mississippi And Louisiana

MMC IOI#6372 Update#0

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

6:39 AM

- Social media sources are reporting damage caused by possible tornadoes in Louisiana and Mississippi this morning
 - The Weather Channel reports via Twitter that windows have been blown out at a high school in Houma, LA, while a two-story home has reportedly moved 10 feet from its foundation near Tangipahoa, LA
 - Tornado damage is also being reported at the Houma-Terrebonne Airport by a confirmed tornado; homes in the area are also damaged
 - Gusty winds and heavy rain over metro New Orleans are creating travel issues, according to WWLTV Weather's Twitter page
- Meanwhile, in Mississippi, meteorologists were tracking a tornado near Moss, moving NE at 40 mph
 - The Marion County Sheriff's Office reports that trees and power lines are down in Bunker Hill due to a tornado

Media Sources

Twitter [The Weather Channel Breaking]

<http://twitter.com/#!/TWCBreaking/status/136764180605837314>

Twitter [The Weather Channel Breaking]

<http://twitter.com/#!/TWCBreaking/status/136759932379860992>

Twitter [CNN Live]

<http://twitter.com/#!/CNNLive/status/136764148825604097>

Twitter [WWL-TV]

<http://twitter.com/#!/WWLTV/status/136765953705906176>

Twitter [WWLTV Weather]

<http://twitter.com/#!/wwltvweather/status/136766869364408320>

Twitter

NWS meteorologists were tracking a tornado near Moss, Mississippi, moving NE at 40 mph (522 am CST) - 16 Nov., 0630 EST

Twitter

Tornado damage reported to Houma-Terrebonne, LA airport by confirmed tornado; homes also damaged (335 am CST) - 16 Nov., 0615 EST

Twitter

Marion County Sheriff's Office reports trees & power lines down in Bunker Hill, MS. Residents say that it is a tornado touchdown. - 16 Nov., 0600 ES

Nationwide Airport Security Changes Will See First Major Test This Weekend

MMC IOI#6373 Update#0

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

7:00 AM

This weekend marks the beginning of the Thanksgiving holiday travel surge throughout the U.S. More than 23 million passengers are expected at the nation's airports, and to make travel a little less hectic, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is implementing some major changes to airline security. In one key change, children 12 and younger will not need to take off their shoes at the screening check points. Although that change has been in place for a couple of months, the Thanksgiving rush is its first major test. The TSA chief told Fox News that the new approach is driven by new intelligence gathered on potential threats. "Children themselves, of course, are not terrorists. But we also know that they can be used by terrorists to do bad things, which we've seen overseas," he said. "Fortunately we haven't seen that here." The chief also said that the TSA's decision to make changes comes down to measuring risk, because the agency cannot protect every passenger and every airplane all the time. "This is all about risk mitigation and risk management. It's not risk elimination," he emphasized, adding that children are low-risk compared to the shoe bomber who tried to bring down a jet over the Atlantic 10 years ago." In the same vein, TSA officials say that they are moving towards an intelligence-driven approach with the goal of identifying high-risk passengers even before they reach the airport. Additionally, in response to privacy concerns, about half of the nation's full body scanners are now using new software that replaces the detailed outline of the body with a generic image. An anomaly shows up as a brightly colored shape, and that area typically requires a pat-down. **Analyst Note:** The MMC previously reported on the TSA's changes to screening for children under IOI #5758-11.

Media Sources

Fox News

<http://www.foxnews.com/travel/2011/11/15/tsa-makes-major-changes-to-airline-security-ahead-busy-travel-season/>

Six Suspected Tornadoes Cause 1 Fatality, Multiple Damages Across Carolinas

NOC 0014-11-135[Severe Weather - Southeast U.S.]

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

8:30 PM

- Damages and at least one fatality have been reported across North and South Carolina following an outbreak of severe weather
 - Social media users report six suspected tornadoes touched down across the two states
- The fatality was reported in York County, South Carolina, where a storm moved southwest of Rock Hill and caused severe damage to an area on Williamson Road near Highway 324
- In Davidson County, North Carolina, multiple homes were destroyed or damaged when a reported tornado touched down along Highway 64 and Hendricks Mill Road and on Allred Road in Lexington
 - No fatalities were reported; however, WIS TV News reports multiple injuries at the scene
- Severe weather continues to occur across South Carolina
 - Multiple intense thunderstorms currently are moving throughout Lee, Sumter, and Clarendon counties

Additional Information: Image 1: Photo of storm damage to a vehicle in Chester County, South Carolina

Media Sources

Twitter [WIS News 10]

<http://twitter.com/#!/wis10/status/136965709694644224>

Twitter [WIS News 10]

<http://twitter.com/#!/wis10/status/136967403715313664>

Twitter [South Carolina Emergency Management Division]

<http://twitter.com/#!/EMDSC/status/136965122232025088>

Twitter

New tornado count: 3 in NC and 3 in SC. Sadly, one fatality in SC. - 16 Nov., 2011 EST

Morocco, France Recall Ambassadors Following Embassy Attacks - Damascus, Syria

MMC IOI#5323 Update#41

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

8:37 PM

Protesters pelted the Moroccan Embassy in Damascus with eggs and stones on Wednesday, while Morocco hosted an Arab League meeting aimed at ending the unrest in Syria. The Moroccan ambassador told AFP that more than 100 demonstrators had attacked the building and stripped it of its flag. "Between 100 and 150 people protested in front of the Embassy and attacked the chancellery with stones and eggs and acted irresponsibly by also attacking the Moroccan flag," the official said. Morocco immediately condemned the attack and recalled its ambassador to Syria. The Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Syria was also reportedly attacked. Hours earlier, France also said it was withdrawing its ambassador. The French Foreign Minister stated, "There has been renewed violence in Syria, which has led me to close our consular offices in Aleppo and in Latakia, as well as our cultural institutes, and to recall our ambassador to Paris."

Media Sources

Straits Times via AFP

http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/World/Story/STIStory_734848.html

BBC News

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15762260>

Alaska Officials, FEMA Personnel Conducting Damage Assessments Following Severe Weather

MMC IOI#6281 Update#2

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

9:27 PM

- Alaskan officials and FEMA personnel are deploying joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) teams this week to communities in coastal Alaska to gather information in support of state and federal disaster declaration decisions
 - Three PDA teams are establishing bases of operations in Nome, Bethel and Kotzebue
 - The PDA teams will conduct damage assessments from those hub communities
- The State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) has received reports of residential, infrastructure, and road damage in communities along the Alaskan western coast
 - Communities along the coast continue to survey for damage; currently the only Local Disaster Declaration is from the Kivalina City Council
 - The SEOC continues to be staffed over extended hours to support the PDA team deployments and to receive requests for assistance and local emergency declarations

Media Sources

Facebook [Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management]

http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=191763980906038

Authorities Arrest Ten Tanzanians With Links To Al-Shabaab - Mogadishu, Somalia

MMC IOI#5348 Update#77

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

9:32 PM

Ten Tanzanians have been arrested in Mogadishu for fighting alongside al-Shabaab militants, Tanzanian authorities reported Tuesday. This is the first official public confirmation linking Tanzanian nationals to the terror group. Security agencies are investigating reports that a number of businessmen in the country, including some of Somali origin, have been recruiting Tanzanian youths on behalf of al-Shabaab. Officials also linked the development to the massive illegal immigration of people from the Horn of Africa travelling southward, saying some of the illegal immigrants might have connections with the terror group. A team of security experts had reportedly been dispatched to Mogadishu to question the Tanzanians who were detained while allegedly fighting alongside al-Shabaab. In its global ranking index of countries most at risk from terrorist attacks, Maplecroft of the UK warns that Tanzania was among countries facing an imminent danger from terrorist attacks.

Media Sources

The Citizen

<http://thecitizen.co.tz/component/content/article/37-tanzania-top-news-story/17135-tanzanian-al-shabaab-under-arrest-in-somalia.html>

Damages, Fatality Count Rises Across Carolinas Following Severe Weather

NOC 0014-11-135[Severe Weather - Southeast U.S.]

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

10:34 PM

- Multiple fatalities, injuries and damages continue to be reported across the Carolinas following an outbreak of severe weather
- At least three deaths occurred in Rock Hill, South Carolina
 - Injuries and other storm-related hazards also are being reported across the state
 - Five people reportedly are missing across South Carolina
 - Social media users report at least six homes in York County sustained damages
- Storm-related damage continues to be reported across North Carolina
 - At least one death has been reported in Davidson County
 - WFMY News reports 35 buildings in Davidson and surrounding counties have sustained damages
 - Emergency officials currently are "treating several injured people" in the area, according to WFMY News
 - Multiple homes were damaged and destroyed on Young Road and Burkhardt roads in the Person County community of Gordontown; emergency crews responded to reports of people trapped inside homes
 - Damages also have been reported in Randolph County; however, no injuries have been reported in that area

Additional Information: Image 1: A social media user's photo of a funnel cloud in York County, South Carolina Image 2: Media photo of the York County, South Carolina, funnel cloud

Media Sources

Twitter [WECT Weather]

<http://twitter.com/#!/WECTWeather/status/136998682959687680>

Twitter [WCNC News]

<http://twitter.com/#!/wcnc/status/136999286931079170>

Twitter [WITN News]

<http://twitter.com/#!/WITN/status/136992882597953539>

Twitter [WFMY News 2]

<http://twitter.com/#!/digtriad/status/137001824195579904>

Twitter

DEVELOPING: Tornado wake leaves 3 dead, 5 missing <http://bit.ly/s7jpXq> - 16 Nov., 2219 EST

Twitter

York County area of South Carolina affected by this tornado <http://pic.twitter.com/1SYneRVx> - 16 Nov., 2209 EST

Twitter

JUST IN: Rock Hill Herald: 3 confirmed dead near Rock Hill because of storms, 6-7 homes damaged in York County. - 16 Nov., 2202 EST

Twitter

Possible tornado leaves 3 dead in Rock Hill <http://fb.me/1oboss32Z> - 16 Nov., 2202 EST

Floodwaters Rise Across Central Ohio; Road Closures Reported

MMC IOI#6733 Update#12

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 11:36 AM

High water is closing roadways around Central Ohio Tuesday. The National Weather Service issued a flood warning for Big Darby Creek in Madison, Franklin and Pickaway counties. The creek was near flood stage this morning, with minor flooding expected to swamp low areas. The Scioto River at Circleville was slightly above flood stage this morning and was expected to rise a few more feet, sending water spilling onto riverside roads. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) closed part of Rt. 762 near South Bloomfield and Ashville between state Route 104 and U.S. Route 23. An ODOT spokeswoman said it could be a while before the road is reopened because of the additional rain expected Tuesday. Westbound Rt. 62 in Madison County is closed between Rt. 56 and Schadel Road due to high water. The route is expected to remain closed until later Tuesday, Dec. 6. In Marion County, state Route 203 is closed between state Route 4 and state Route 47. In Franklin County, the highway patrol put a high-water sign on the ramp from Interstate 270 westbound to U.S. Route 23 northbound on the city's South Side. ODOT has not closed the ramp. A high-water sign was also in place near the intersection of Groveport and Rager roads in Franklin County.

Media Sources

WCMH-TV

<http://www2.nbc4i.com/news/2011/dec/06/2/high-water-closes-state-routes-restricts-motorists-ar-853573/>

The Columbus Dispatch

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2011/12/06/floodwaters-on-rise-across-central-ohio.html>

Police Say Independent Cartel Of Acapulco Has Practically Disappeared - Guerrero, Mexico

MMC IOI#6774 Update#1

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 12:01 PM

- The head of a regional security division of the Mexican Federal Police says that the Independent Cartel of Acapulco has practically disappeared
 - "Acapulco is the only place where we see them operating. [...] We see them desperately trying to generate revenue and lacking drugs to distribute," he said
- At least part of the group's demise is attributed to interrupted drug distribution channels and the Federal Police's "Safe Guerrero" campaign
 - Authorities say the operation has reduced violent homicide rates in the city by 78%, and levels of general violence by 56%
 - 145 suspected criminals have been arrested in the tourist destination since the campaign began October 8
- Authorities arrested six alleged members of the cartel Monday, including a cell leader

Media Sources

Twitter [InSight Crime]

<http://twitter.com/#!/InSightCrime/statuses/144045514772594688>

Milenio [Translated By Google]

<http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/impreso/9074442>

Jackknifed Trailer Closes Verrazano Bridge Upper Deck, Fuel Spill Reported - New York, NY

MMC IOI#6779 Update#0

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 12:44 PM

- A jackknifed tractor trailer with a ruptured fuel tank on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in New York has closed all eastbound lanes on the bridges upper deck
 - Several hundred gallons of fuel have spilled on the span as a result, and social media users report an all-hands fire department response is in progress
 - The eastbound lanes flow from Staten Island to Brooklyn
- Extensive delays are being seen back to Richmond Avenue on I-278, according to a state Department of Transportation website
 - Staten Island Live reports traffic is also spilling onto service roads and streets as motorists attempt to detour off the Staten Island Expressway
- No injuries were immediately reported

Media Sources

Twitter

All Hands fire on Verrazano Bridge Upper level for a jackknifed tractor-trailer with a ruptured fuel tank. - 06 Dec., 1211 EST

Twitter

Verrazano Bridge *TRAFFIC ALERT / JACK-KNIFED TRACTOR TRAILER* The entire upper level in both directions has been closed - 06 Dec., 11

511 New York [NYDOT]

<http://www.511ny.org/traffic.aspx>

Staten Island Live

http://www.silive.com/news/index.ssf/2011/12/jackknifed_tractor_trailer_blo.html

Suicide Bomber Strikes Near Turkish Embassy In Mogadishu; Dozens Killed Fighting In Somalia's South

MMC IOI#5348 Update#112

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 1:03 PM

Tuesday's car bomb in Mogadishu exploded 50 meters from the recently reopened Turkish embassy. A health official said at least two policemen were among those killed in the blast. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. Suspicion is likely to fall on al Shabaab rebels. The al Qaeda-linked militants have intensified the frequency of suicide attacks in Mogadishu since withdrawing from most of their bases in the capital in August. A Turkish government official said the target of the attack was unknown. None of Turkey's embassy staff were hurt. Turkey was the first state from outside the immediate region to open an embassy in Mogadishu. Meanwhile in Somalia's south, more than 40 militants and 11 Somali government troops were killed in weekend fighting in the town of Hayo, between the Kenyan border and the al Shabaab stronghold of Afmadow in southern Somalia, a Kenyan military spokesman said on Tuesday.

Media Sources

Reuters

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/12/06/uk-somalia-idUKTRE7B51P520111206>

I-10 Open Through NM. Caution Urged

MMC IOI#6773 Update#4

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 1:23 PM

Interstate 10 has reopened in New Mexico after being closed overnight. Alerts have been posted urging motorists to reduce speed and to exercise caution because of continuing slick and icy conditions. Traffic began moving again late Tuesday morning local time at the U.S. 191 junction in southeastern Arizona.

Media Sources

Las Cruces Sun-News

http://www.lcsun-news.com/las_cruces-news/ci_19480884

Tucson Sentinel

http://www.tucsonsentinel.com/local/report/120611_i10_closed/i-10-reopens-new-mexico-after-icy-night/

LAPD Evacuate Downtown Headquarters Due To Unspecified Threat - CA

MMC IOI#6780 Update#0

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 2:04 PM

- Los Angeles police have evacuated their downtown headquarters due to an unspecified threat, multiple media outlets are reporting
 - The L.A. Times reported the lobby of the headquarters was evacuated due to a suspicious manila envelope that was left there
- No further information was immediately available

Media Sources

Twitter

Breaking: LAPD is evacuating its downtown HQ, @CBSLA and City News Service are reporting <http://t.co/hDurwhTW> More soon - 06 Dec., 1350 ES

Twitter [My Fox L.A.]

<http://twitter.com/#!/myfoxla/statuses/144127590964264960>

Twitter [ABC-7]

<http://twitter.com/#!/abc7/statuses/144128576244027394>

LAPD Headquarters Reopened After Suspicious Package Scare - CA

MMC IOI#6780 Update#1

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 2:22 PM

Los Angeles police said a suspicious package mailed to their downtown headquarters briefly closed the lobby and sent some officers into the street. An LAPD spokesman said an X-ray discovered some wiring in the package that came into the lobby around 10:30 a.m. local time Tuesday. As a precaution, the lobby and front courtyard were closed and about 15 people were evacuated. The bomb squad was called in and they determined the package contained some kind of electronic device but no explosives. The spokesman said the device was rendered safe and the building was reopened after about 20 minutes.

Media Sources

San Jose Mercury News (Associated Press)

http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_19481456

USCG Assisting Cargo Ship Adrift Near Aleutian Islands - Alaska

MMC IOI#6784 Update#0

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 7:05 PM

- The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation reports that a steering malfunction has caused the M/V Morning Cedar to drift 30 miles northwest of Tanaga Island in the southwest Aleutian Islands
 - The 650-foot, Singapore-flagged cargo ship is carrying 227,000 gallons of Bunker C oil and 60,000 gallons of diesel on board
- The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Sherman is headed to the ship's location, and the Coast Guard is preparing to transport the Emergency Towing System from Adak to the ship's location
- The Department of Environmental Conservation calls it a "potential spill"
 - The ship is drifting northwest and is projected to drift north for the next 24 hours
- Thus far, no spillage has occurred

Media Sources

Twitter [KTVA CBS 11 News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/KTVA/status/144153357412610049>

Twitter [Maritime Executive]

https://twitter.com/#!/Mar_Ex/status/144064150304333824

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers Shutting Down Repair Work On Birds Point Levee - MO

MMC IOI#6769 Update#1

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 7:07 PM

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is shutting down its work rebuilding a Mississippi River levee that was damaged during heavy flooding along the river in southeast Missouri earlier this year. The corps said Tuesday that it will begin closing down its repair work on the Birds Point project area because forecasts call for sustained high river levels and more rain. The corps says before shutting down the repair work, crews will bring the levee system up to 55 feet using temporary repair tools, such as sandbags.

Media Sources

The Republic (AP)

<http://www.therepublic.com/view/story/b1237b10ce0649b9872758748af28f7a/MO--Birds-Point-Weather/>

Crews Responding To Brush Fire, Trolley Lines To Be Shut Down - San Diego, CA

MMC IOI#6785 Update#0

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 8:01 PM

Crews have responded to a brush fire that is burning in an area near San Diego State University. According to fire dispatchers, the fire broke out shortly after 4 p.m. local time near Alvarado Road and College Avenue. The San Diego Fire-Rescue Department's Copter 1 is being summoned to the scene as crews continue to battle the blaze. No structures are being threatened. Trolley officials say they are shutting down service until further notice due to the smoke.

Media Sources

ABC 10-TV

<http://www.10news.com/news/29937679/detail.html>

State Department Issues Travel Alert Following D.R. Congo Election Results

MMC IOI#6786 Update#0

Tuesday, December 06, 2011 8:14 PM

- The U.S. Department of State has issued an updated travel alert for American citizens in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, following the announcement of preliminary presidential election results
 - The State Department warns of the potential for civil unrest and violence
- U.S. Embassy employees are not permitted to travel outside the Gombe residential area of Kinshasa until further notice
 - With restrictions on Embassy employee travel, the ability to assist U.S. citizens in an emergency is limited and may be further constrained by the fluid security situation
 - This restriction on travel will be reviewed on December 8, 2011
- Several international airlines have cancelled flights in and out of Kinshasa
- More than 18 people have been killed in election-related violence so far, according to Human Rights Watch

Media Sources

Twitter [State Department]

<https://twitter.com/#!/TravelGov/status/144125321975824384>

Twitter

Congo's delayed election results raise fears of a return to war <http://bit.ly/ut1X1m> - 6 Dec., 1646 EST

USCG Oversees Recovery Of Sunken Barge As Salvage Efforts Near Completion - Newport, RI

MMC IOI#6787 Update#0

Tuesday, December 06, 2011

9:20 PM

- The U.S. Coast Guard oversaw the surfacing of a barge Monday that sank on October 31, directly under the Newport/Pell Bridge in Newport, RI
 - After several weeks of coordination with port and industry partners, salvage crews hoisted the sunken barge to make it easily accessible for hazmat recovery
 - Crews then rigged fuel removal lines and have recovered approximately 1,900 gallons of diesel fuel
 - "The fuel recovery is going well," said a Coast Guard official helping with the removal. "Efforts have been largely successful, even with unfavorable weather conditions"
 - The construction barge sank in Narragansett Bay during the late-October snowstorm
 - Approximately 2,400 gallons of diesel fuel were aboard originally
 - The unified command is planning to remove the barge this week pending weather and tidal conditions
- Analyst's Note:** MMC previously reported on the sunken RI barge on November 11 under MMC IOI #6259-11

Media Sources

Twitter [Coast Guard News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/CoastGuardNews/status/144210091829231616>

Pakistan-Based Extremist Group Claims Responsibility For Afghanistan Bombings

MMC IOI#6775 Update#2

Tuesday, December 06, 2011

9:38 PM

A Pakistan-based extremist group claimed responsibility for a series of coordinated bombings aimed at Afghan Shiites on Tuesday. The attacks struck three Afghan cities - Kabul, Kandahar and Mazar-i-Sharif - almost simultaneously and killed at least 63 Shiite worshipers on Ashura, which marks the death of Shiite Islam's holiest martyr. A spokesman for an obscure Pakistani extremist group, called Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al Almi, claimed responsibility in a phone call to a Pashto language radio station. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al Almi is a small faction based in Pakistan's tribal area and is considered an even more radical offshoot of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. Both groups act as surrogates for al-Qaeda. The group had not previously claimed or carried out attacks in Afghanistan. "Never in our history have there been such cruel attacks on religious observances," said the Afghan president.

Media Sources

The New York Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/07/world/asia/suicide-bombers-attack-shiite-worshipers-in-afghanistan.html>

The Guardian

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/dec/06/al-qaida-kabul-attack-shia-pilgrims>

San Diego Brush Fire Contained, Rail Service Restored - California

MMC IOI#6785 Update#1

Tuesday, December 06, 2011

10:01 PM

A brush fire alongside Interstate 8 slowed rush-hour traffic on the busy freeway late Tuesday afternoon and temporarily shut down a nearby stretch of trolley tracks. Patches of foliage and several palm trees began burning near Alvarado Road at about 4:30 p.m. local time, according to the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. Ground crews and personnel aboard a water-dropping helicopter had the flames under control within about a half-hour. No structural damage or injuries were reported. The blaze forced the brief suspension of light-rail service between San Diego State University and Alvarado Transit Station, according to the Metropolitan Transit System, which provided bus service for the affected commuters. Trolley service was restored shortly after 5 p.m. The cause of the fire was under investigation.

Media Sources

ABC 10-TV

http://www.10news.com/news/29937679/detail.html?treets=sand&tmi=sand_break&ts=T&tmi=sand_break_1_06390112062011

Tuolumne-Calaveras Complex Fire Fully Contained At 781 Acres - CA

MMC IOI#6777 Update#2

Tuesday, December 06, 2011

10:16 PM

- Firefighters fully contained all five fires that make up the Tuolumne-Calaveras complex in the foothills east of Modesto, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire)
 - 781 acres burned since the fires started December 1
- Total fire personnel assigned to the blaze numbered 205, including local fire departments and Cal Fire crews
- Three injuries were reported as a result of the fires

Media Sources

Twitter [Cal Fire]

https://twitter.com/?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=dvr.it#/CAL_FIRE/statuses/144227780924669952

Potentially Historic Winter Storm Expected In The Pacific Northwest; Seattle Activates Its Emergency Operations Center

MMC IOI#275 Update#0

Monday, January 16, 2012 1:14 PM

- More snow and a potentially historic winter storm will target the Pacific Northwest this week, with heavy accumulations expected
 - In the Cascades of Washington and Oregon, snow will be measured in feet, and it could take multiple yard sticks to total up the powder along some western-facing slopes
 - In the greater Seattle area, more than a foot of snow is a strong possibility
- The snow will continue to come in phases, as the first round delivered more than 2 inches of snow to Seattle on Sunday
 - Another round will take shape later today, with much of western Washington and Oregon poised to experience some rain and accumulating snow
 - By the end of Tuesday, another 3 to 6 inches of snow is expected to be on the ground in parts of the region
- Characteristically, snow totals will threaten travel through major passes in the Cascades, especially Snoqualmie and Sherman passes, which are at a high risk of being closed
 - Back along the I-5 corridor from Portland (OR) to Bellingham (WA), travel is expected to be treacherous this week
- With temperatures below freezing and more winter weather in the forecast, the Mayor of Seattle activated the city's Emergency Operations Center this morning
 - It will remain open as needed to monitor weather conditions and provide support and coordination with city departments
 - The Seattle Department of Transportation has 18 trucks out to keep major arterial streets clear

Media Sources

Twitter [Accu Weather]

<https://twitter.com/#!/breakingweather/status/158879130220380160>

Twitter [West Seattle Herald]

<https://twitter.com/#!/westseattleher/status/158947396628389888>

State Of Emergency To Be Declared As Ship Begins To Leak

NOC 0014-12-012[Italian C/S Grounding Near Tuscany]

Monday, January 16, 2012 1:54 PM

The Italian Environment Minister said on Monday he would declare a state of emergency over the cruise liner that capsized off Italy's west coast, which would free up state funds to help prevent an environmental disaster. Some liquid material has started to leak from the ship, but it is unclear if it is fuel. Protective barriers were being put in place. There are over 2,300 tons of fuel on the half-submerged cruise ship. The ship's fuel tanks were full, having just left the port of Civitavecchia, north of Rome, for a week-long Mediterranean cruise, when it ran aground on Friday. Rescue workers have recovered six bodies from the vessel, and officials say 16 of the 4,200 passengers and crew are missing. The plan to salvage the ship is to remove the fuel, then raise the ship with balloons and tow it away from shore. If that fails, the ship may have to be cut into pieces.

Media Sources

Reuters

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/16/uk-italy-ship-emergency-idUSTRE80F1AB20120116>

Reuters

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/16/us-italy-ship-environment-idUSTRE80F14Y20120116>

Night-Time Rescue Operations To Be Suspended; Hopes Of Finding Survivors Fading

NOC 0014-12-012[Italian C/S Grounding Near Tuscany]

Monday, January 16, 2012 2:14 PM

- Rescuers resumed a search of the hulk of a giant cruise liner off the west coast of Italy on Monday after bad weather forced them to halt operations, but hopes were fading of finding more survivors
 - Worsening weather and heavy seas earlier made the vessel slip on the rocky underwater slope where it is lodged off the island of Giglio, and rescue teams were momentarily evacuated
 - A firefighters' spokesman said there were still small movements, but they were not considered dangerous; however, authorities said night-time searches would be suspended from now on
 - A member of the fire brigade said that the rescuers could hear no noises from possible survivors inside the half-submerged ship
 - Another senior firefighter told Reuters that all the areas of the liner that are above water had now been searched, indicating faint hopes of finding more survivors
- The US Embassy in Italy said via Twitter that it continues to work closely with Italian authorities to locate the two American passengers from the Costa Concordia who remain unaccounted for
- Earlier, search teams recovered a sixth body from the liner, which was holed by a rock late on Friday
 - The ship had about 4,200 passengers and crew on board, though there is some uncertainty about the numbers

Media Sources

Twitter [Reuters Top News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/Reuters/status/158954630234120193>

Twitter [U.S. Embassy to Italy]

<https://twitter.com/#!/AmbasciataUSA/status/158911306643148800>

Gas Leak Causes Explosion, Prompts Evacuations - West Haverstraw, NY

MMC IOI#276 Update#0

Monday, January 16, 2012 2:27 PM

Leaking gas from a ruptured line blew up a townhouse today, causing a large gas-fed blaze that turned the building into a pile of rubble and led emergency responders to evacuate more than 100 homes. Firefighters were at the door of the townhouse on Zariello Lane off Route 9 West when the explosion occurred at 12:37 p.m. "They knocked on the door right before the explosion," an Orange and Rockland Utilities (O&R) spokesman said. "No one answered, so we assume no one was home." Officials had to call for a medical helicopter to transport at least two injured West Haverstraw firefighters to the Westchester County Medical Center. A Rockland Emergency Services Coordinator said a routine gas leak response by West Haverstraw firefighters turned into a catastrophe when the house exploded. He said a gas main ruptured, and the gas went into the sewerage system and seeped into the houses. Dozens of other responders were kept far away from the scene, for fear of additional explosions. Emergency personnel said they did not know how much gas had leaked from the sewers into other clusters of townhouses in the development after a road construction crew ruptured a gas line. Emergency personnel set up headquarters at the nearby bowling alley and prepared a landing strip for the medical helicopter at West Haverstraw Elementary School. The explosion left much of West Haverstraw without electricity as utility crews turned off power to avoid the possibility of sparks setting off more gas explosions.

Media Sources

Lower Hudson Valley News

<http://www.lohud.com/article/20120116/NEWS03/301160096/Gas-leak-blows-up-townhouse-West-Haverstraw>

Rapidly Growing Brush Fire Prompts Evacuations, Affects Traffic In Orange County, Florida

MMC IOI#277 Update#0

Monday, January 16, 2012 3:18 PM

- A rapidly growing brush fire is burning in Orange County, Florida, forcing authorities to issue some evacuation orders
 - The brush fire broke out Monday in Wedgefield near State Road (SR) 50 and SR 520
 - Aerial footage of the blaze showed it burning dangerously close to SR 520
 - One eastbound lane of the roadway is being blocked by authorities
 - Smoke is affecting traffic in the area
- There are structures in the area, and firefighters say they had to tell campers nearby to evacuate the area
- A Twitter user says the fire is burning very close to cell phone towers
- At last report, the fire had burned 10 acres

Media Sources

Twitter

Watch this brush fire in Orange County spread by the minute on our livestream- getting very close to cell towers! <http://bit.ly/zzwiFL> - 16 Jan., 1500 E

Twitter [Central Florida News 13]

<https://twitter.com/#!/cfnews13/status/159003299641692160>

WKMG Local 6

<http://www.clickorlando.com/news/Brush-fire-forces-Orange-County-evacuations/-/1637132/8167754/-/2jlvn2z/-/index.html>

Four Injured: Authorities Checking Area To Allow Residents To Return

NOC 0014-12-013|Gas Line Explosion - West Haverstraw, N

Monday, January 16, 2012 3:39 PM

Leaking gas from a ruptured gas line blew up a townhouse into a pile of rubble today, leading emergency responders to evacuate more than 100 homes. The explosion seriously injured two firefighters, while two Orange and Rockland Utilities (O&R) workers experienced minor injuries. The gas has been shut off to about 100 customers in the immediate area. Power has been shut off to about 5,000 O&R customers. Gas fumes were still strong in the area as of this afternoon. A construction crew from Verizon hit a gas main around noon. Emergency personnel said they did not know how much gas had leaked from the sewers into other clusters of townhouses in the Village Fairgrounds II development. "A technical rescue team has been called in to search the demolished home to check and make sure no one was in the house," the West Haverstraw Fire Chief said. Residents in the area cooperated with the evacuation and are being taken by school buses to Haverstraw Town Hall, he said. When the area is deemed safe, they will be allowed back home.

Media Sources

Lower Hudson Valley News

<http://www.lohud.com/article/20120116/NEWS03/301160096/Gas-leak-blows-up-West-Haverstraw-townhouse-least-4-hurt-100-homes-evacuated>

Nanuet Patch

<http://nanuet.patch.com/articles/firefighters-battle-apparent-gas-explosion-in-west-haverstraw>

Crews Contain 681-Acre Wildfire Burning Near Lubbock, Texas

MMC IOI#278 Update#1

Monday, January 16, 2012 7:45 PM

High winds contributed to a wildfire that affected 681 acres west of Levelland on Monday afternoon, according to Hockley County authorities. The fire stretched nearly 2 miles in length. A county fire official said the area north of State Highway 114 between Santa Fe Street and Olympia Road was put out shortly after 4 p.m. local time by responding fire crews. He said he did not know the extent of the damage, although only grass burned. Multiple fire departments responded, including Sundown, Smyer, Whiteface and Levelland. The National Weather Service in Lubbock issued a wind advisory until 6 p.m. Monday, which can greatly affect wild fires in the area, said a meteorologist with the National Weather Service. He said winds between 31 and 39 mph were expected, blowing dust across the region. Wind gusts as high as 56 mph were observed at the Lubbock Preston Smith International Airport on Monday, resulting in the delay of both departing and arriving flights according to the airport's website.

Media Sources

Lubbock Avalanche-Journal

<http://lubbockonline.com/filed-online/2012-01-16/wildfire-stretches-across-681-acres-west-levelland-monday-afternoon#.TxS-ooGpOSo>

KCBD news 11

<http://www.kcbd.com/story/16529949/four-departments-responding-to-hockley-county-grass-fire>

My FOX Lubbock

<http://www.myfoxlubbock.com/content/weather/blogs/story/Cooler-Tuesday-but-we-quickly-warm-back-up/6YswbLDOD06BKWh1JDXgEg.csp>

Authorities Report Explosions Outside State Tax Office - Naples, Italy

MMC IOI#284 Update#0

Monday, January 16, 2012 7:56 PM

Three explosive devices blew up outside the Naples offices of Equitalia, a state agency that collects overdue taxes and fines, on Monday night, breaking windows but injuring no one, a police official told Reuters. "At the moment there are no written notes or details of anyone claiming responsibility," said one of the police officers on duty at the scene. Equitalia's Naples offices were hit by a similar explosion in December.

Media Sources

MSNBC

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/46017591#.TxTFOYGpOSo>

Reuters

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/17/us-italy-bombs-idUSTRE80G01520120117>

Both Directions Of Interstate 25 Shut Down Due To Multiple Accidents, Severe Weather - CO WY

MMC IOI#285 Update#0

Monday, January 16, 2012 8:13 PM

- Interstate 25 between Wellington, Colorado, and the Wyoming border has been closed in both directions due to multiple accidents and adverse weather conditions, according to the Colorado Department of Transportation
- Snow is falling along the I-25 corridor in parts of the Colorado counties of Weld and Larimer, reducing visibility
 - High winds are also being reported in the area
 - The National Weather Service has issued a high wind watch for Weld County and elsewhere along the Front Range
- The closure extends roughly 21 miles, from mile marker 277 to mile marker 298

Media Sources

Twitter [Colorado Department of Transportation]

<https://twitter.com/#!/ColoradoDOT/statuses/159069299783372800>

Twitter [9 NEWS KUSA]

<https://twitter.com/#!/9NewsKUSA/statuses/159070263198220288>

Twitter [Greeley Tribune]

<https://twitter.com/#!/GreeleyTribune/status/159044880109285376>

Greeley Tribune

<http://www.greeleytribune.com/article/20120116/NEWS/120119997/1002&parentprofile=1001>

COTRIP [Colorado Traveler Information Page]

<http://www.cotrip.org/home.htm?jsessionid=A1A89654A6333B6A4ED469242F28DE3E.node1>

Some Displaced Residents Allowed To Return Home Following Evacuations

NOC 0014-12-013|Gas Line Explosion - West Haverstraw, N

Monday, January 16, 2012 9:07 PM

As of 8 p.m. local time on Monday, some displaced families were being allowed to return to their homes following an earlier explosion. Two volunteer firefighters that were caught in the explosion remained hospitalized tonight with serious burns after leaking gas caused the blast that destroyed a townhouse. About 100 homes were evacuated during the incident. Monday's explosion also injured two Orange and Rockland (O&R) Utilities employees, although they were not as seriously hurt. The gas leak was caused by a work crew from the Verizon contractor, FGC Communications of Courtland Manor. The workers ruptured a gas main just before 12:13 p.m., authorities said. O&R cut off power to 5,000 customers in Haverstraw and West Haverstraw at approximately 1:15 p.m. to make sure an appliance didn't spark another explosion, an official said. Gas fumes were still strong in the area for most of the day.

Media Sources

New York's Lower Hudson Valley Journal News

<http://www.lohud.com/article/20120116/NEWS03/301160096/After-blast-100-plus-West-Haverstraw-evacuees-now-returning-home>

Suspected Torture House Discovered Near U.S. Border - Nogales, Mexico

MMC IOI#286 Update#0

Monday, January 16, 2012 9:22 PM

- The Mexican Army discovered evidence of a torture house in Nogales, Sonora, this weekend
- According to the newspaper El Imparcial, during a Sunday morning raid of the house, the Army found an electric cattle prod and a bloody wooden stick with nails sticking out, presumably used to torture subjects
 - The residence is located in the Del Rosario neighborhood, a few miles from the Arizona border
- Mexican officials also discovered several rifles, hundreds of ammunition cartridges, more than 20 magazines, two trucks and seven police-style uniforms during the raid, the newspaper reported

Media Sources

Twitter [KOLD News 13]

https://twitter.com/#!/KOLD_news13/status/159077168729694208

Twitter [Noticias Sonora -Translated by Google]

https://twitter.com/#!/Noti_SONORA/status/158923258681499648

Twitter

Suspected torture house found across the border from Nogales <http://bit.ly/ArYTYZ> - 16 Jan., 1958 EST

Crews Pressure Testing Fuel Transfer Hose

NOC 1261-11|Fuel Delivery - Nome, AK]

Monday, January 16, 2012 9:43 PM

Crews in Nome, Alaska, were hoping by Monday's end to begin pumping the first of 1.4 million gallons of fuel through an offshore hose, the final step in an arduous effort to deliver winter fuel supplies to the ice-locked town on Alaska's western coast. More than 700 yards of hose were carefully laid across the ice from the Russian tanker that pulled outside Nome's harbor over the weekend. By early Monday, the hose was latched onto the onshore pipeline connected to the town's fuel storage tanks. "This morning, they were making sure the hose was as straight as could be, without any kinks of any kind," said the spokeswoman for Vitus Marine LLC, which is in charge of the transport. By Monday afternoon, crews were conducting air pressure tests to make sure the hose was secure and free of leaks. Pumping could commence by the end of Monday, according to the spokeswoman, though she said workers might have to wait until Tuesday morning if final testing isn't completed on time. Officials estimate that it will take about 36 hours to offload the entire shipment, a process that, once completed, will mark the first successful winter delivery of fuel to a northern Alaskan town. A spokesman for the Coast Guard in Nome told the Los Angeles Times that the Coast Guard cutter Healy will remain on site until the delivery is complete, then escort the Renda, based in Vladivostok, back to open water.

Media Sources

LA Times

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/nationnow/2012/01/nome-fuel-delivery-ice-tanker-renda.html>

The Hour Online

<http://www.thehour.com/story/518029/hose-laid-for-fuel-transfer-at-iced-in-alaska-town>

Honolulu Waterways Affected By 15,000-Gallon Sewage Spill - HI

MMC IOI#908 Update#0

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 12:00 AM

The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) is warning the public to stay out of the waters near Sand Island after thousands of gallons of sewage spilled into the water. U.S. Army officials say about 15,000 gallons of wastewater went into the water from a main under the Sand Island bridge, adjacent to the Marine Education and Training Center. The DOH has posted signs warning people to stay out of the water near the Marine Education and Training Center, the University of Hawaii Marine Center, Snug Harbor, Kapalama Basin, Mokauea Island, and the Kalihi Channel of Keehi Lagoon. The cause of the spill is under investigation.

Media Sources

KPUA News (AP)

<http://www.kpua.net/news.php?id=24739>

KITV News

<http://www.kitv.com/news/30496063/detail.html>

Bridge Cable Failure Prompts Closure Of Busy Minneapolis Highway, Metro Transit Service - Minnesota

MMC IOI#909 Update#0

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 12:12 AM

- A busy stretch of Highway 55/Hiawatha Avenue in Minneapolis has been closed in order for crews to repair a popular bicycle/pedestrian bridge after a cable support broke and caused a separate pair of cables to fail
 - The Martin Olav Sabo Bridge, which spans the highway, closed late Sunday night
 - The Minneapolis Public Works Superintendent said on Monday that repairs to the bridge were taking longer than first expected, and that traffic on Hiawatha could be impacted through Tuesday morning's rush hour
 - The roadway is closed between East 26th Street and Lake Street
- For safety reasons, officials also suspended Metro Transit light rail service between 38th Street and Franklin Avenue
 - Metro Transit said service to Lake Street is suspended until further notice, including for Tuesday's morning rush hour
- There was no immediate word on when rail, road and bike traffic will return to normal

Additional Information: Image 1: One of the cables supporting the Martin Olav Sabo Bridge in Minneapolis was broken and more weakened, closing down vehicle and metro traffic traveling beneath the bridge

Media Sources

Twitter [The Daily Reporter]

<https://twitter.com/#!/DailyReporter/status/171709880963567616>

Twitter [KARE 11]

<https://twitter.com/#!/kare11/status/171589139039395841>

Finance & Commerce

<http://finance-commerce.com/2012/02/recent-exam-failed-to-detect-weak-sabo-bridge-cable/>

Minor Damage Reported From Storms; One Dead - OK

MMC IOI#906 Update#1

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 12:42 AM

Oklahomans are dealing with damage after a line of severe storms rolled through the state Monday. A woman died when strong winds overturned a mobile home in Ada in Pontotoc County. "It could have been a microburst or a small tornado," a Pontotoc County emergency manager said. Four other homes in Pontotoc County also received minor damage. The American Red Cross says their teams have been dispatched to assist. Meanwhile, the storm caused damage to homes and businesses throughout Oklahoma City and its suburbs. The storms produced hail, rain and 70 mile-per-hour winds. In south Edmond, debris from the storm could be found along Broadway Extension late Monday. Eight vehicles were damaged at Edmond Hyundai when a storm toppled light poles onto vehicles. Strong winds caused some damage at the new Devon Tower as well.

Media Sources

News On 6

<http://www.newson6.com/story/16977608/oklahoma-storms-turn-deadly-cause-damage>

NewsOK

<http://newsok.com/woman-killed-as-thunderstorms-move-through-oklahoma/article/3650661/?page=1>

KXII News

http://www.kxii.com/home/headlines/1_dead_damage_reported_from_Pontotoc_Co_storms_139773033.html

Thai Police Looking For Sixth Suspect Linked To Bangkok Bomb Plot

MMC IOI#793 Update#19

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 1:16 AM

- A court in Thailand has issued an arrest warrant for a sixth suspect over an alleged Iranian bomb plot to attack Israeli diplomats in Bangkok
 - The 57-year-old man is wanted on charges of possessing and making explosives
 - The Thai deputy national police chief said the man had been filmed by a CCTV camera leaving a house rented by other suspects behind the attempted attack
 - He is thought to have fled to Iran, the police official was quoted as saying by the AFP news agency
- Three men are in custody in Thailand and Malaysia, and two other people, a man and a woman, are also being sought after last week's blasts in Bangkok
 - One of the suspects on the loose is a man of unknown nationality, who was named by police on Friday
 - The other suspect is an Iranian woman, who is also believed to be back in Iran
- Security analysts have linked the Bangkok blasts to two attacks targeting Israeli diplomats in India and Georgia last Monday

Media Sources

Twitter [DTN Thailand]

<https://twitter.com/#!/DTNThailand/status/171647307396284416>

Philippine Anti-Terrorism Forces Capture Abu Sayyaf Militant Responsible For Beheadings, Other Attacks

MMC IOI#910 Update#0

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 1:47 AM

Philippine police commandos captured an alleged Abu Sayyaf militant Tuesday who has been implicated in several atrocities, including the beheadings of marines, a major jailbreak and deadly attacks. Police found the suspect in the city of Isabela on southern Basilan island, birthplace of the Abu Sayyaf extremist group, said the head of the Philippine Anti-Terrorism Council. The militant was involved in the 2007 beheadings of 10 marines in Basilan's Al-Barka township and a 2009 attack that allowed 31 mostly Muslim insurgents to escape from the provincial jail. Police have also accused the suspect of buying police commando fatigues that were worn by Abu Sayyaf militants who fired on civilians and detonated bombs in an attack that killed 14 people in Isabela two years ago. Abu Sayyaf is the smaller but more brutal of at least four Muslim groups that have been fighting for decades for a separate homeland in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation's south. It is estimated to have less than 400 fighters but is still considered a major security menace despite many battle losses and the loss of several leaders.

Media Sources

Washington Post (AP)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia-pacific/philippine-anti-terrorism-forces-capture-militant-blamed-for-beheadings-deadly-attacks/2012/02/2>

Algerian Security Forces Kill 4 Militants Reportedly Linked To Sunday Bomb Attack - Bourmedes District

MMC IOI#885 Update#1

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 2:32 AM

- An Algerian security official says authorities surrounded and killed four Islamist militants implicated in Sunday's roadside bomb attack
 - The militants were reportedly shot dead Monday in the Beni Khelifa forest in the Bourmedes district, some 30 miles from Algiers
 - One soldier died in the operation
 - The official said security forces were alerted to the militants by villagers
- On Sunday, a roadside bomb detonated near a military convoy in the area, killing four civilians and wounding 19 others
- Algeria is currently battling a local branch of al-Qaida, though it is unclear whether the militants were linked to the terror group

Media Sources

Twitter [Today's Zaman]

<https://twitter.com/#!/todayszamancom/status/171680072615460866>

Libyan Embassy Turns In Arms Cache To Greek Authorities - Athens

MMC IOI#920 Update#0

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 3:09 PM

Greek police say Libyan embassy officials in Athens have handed over a large cache of weapons and explosives apparently amassed during the Gaddafi era and stashed in the building's grounds. A police statement says the cache includes 30 handguns, two submachine guns, 15 kilograms of plastic explosives, two hand grenades and more than 1,200 rounds of ammunition for various types of firearms. Detonators, silencers and wiretapping equipment were also handed over. A police official said the weaponry had apparently been amassed by the previous Libyan regime, although it was not clear exactly when it was brought into Greece. "When the diplomats who replaced the old embassy staff located the weaponry, they notified the new Libyan government, which gave instructions for the arms to be handed over to the Greek police," the official explained. Greece's anti-terrorist squad removed the weaponry from the embassy and is investigating whether the firearms were involved in any illegal acts. A police officer said that some of the weapons were military grade and very dangerous and had most likely been smuggled into Greece illicitly.

Media Sources

The Associated Press

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/E/EU_GREECE_LIBYA?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2012-02-21-08-05

The Journal

<http://www.thejournal.ie/libyan-embassy-hands-over-cache-of-guns-and-explosives-362083-Feb2012/>

USCG Local Response Units On Scene Of Tugboat Accident - Portsmouth, NH

MMC IOI#921 Update#0

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 3:45 PM

The Portsmouth Fire Department and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) are on the scene of a tugboat that has taken on water after striking the base of the Memorial Bridge this afternoon. The Miss Stacy tugboat issued a distress call at around 2 p.m. local time when it wedged up against one of the bridge's piers. According to emergency radio communications, the boat began taking on water, but all of the crew members onboard were safely evacuated. The Eugenia Moran tugboat arrived on scene to pull the Miss Stacy away from the bridge. A second tugboat has also been called in to assist. The pier that the Miss Stacy struck is part of what remains of the Memorial Bridge, which connected Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to Kittery, Maine. The center span was recently removed. It is unclear whether the Miss Stacy was part of the ongoing Memorial Bridge replacement project. **Analyst Note:** The MMC previously reported on the Memorial Bridge replacement project under IOI #0680-12. **Additional Information:** Photo 1: The Miss Stacy takes on water after running into a Memorial Bridge pier

Media Sources

WHDH

<http://www1.wdhd.com/news/articles/local/north/12006754943692/officials-responding-to-portsmouth-nh-boat-accident/>

Seacoast Online

<http://www.seacoastonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120221/NEWS/120229953/-1/NEWSMAP>

Portsmouth Patch

<http://portsmouth-nh.patch.com/articles/breaking-tugboat-capsizes-near-memorial-bridge#c>

Recently Arrested Terror Suspects Targeted Israeli Embassy, Jewish Cultural Center In Azerbaijan

MMC IOI#918 Update#1

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 3:51 PM

- A group of recently arrested suspected terrorists with alleged ties to Iranian intelligence services and Hezbollah was plotting to attack Israeli targets, according to Azeri security officials
 - The terrorists were planning attacks against the Israeli Embassy and a Jewish cultural center in Baku
 - The operatives also collected intelligence for Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, also known as Sepah; the U.S. deems both Sepah and the Lebanon-based Hezbollah group as terrorist organizations
 - Multiple weapons were confiscated following the arrests of the suspected terrorists
 - The Times of Israel, a Jerusalem-based media source, reports the confiscated arms included "a sniper rifle with a silencer, sixteen pieces of plastic explosives and detonators"
 - The source also reports the operatives possessed "a dossier with photos, and names, exacting the details" of their Israeli targets
 - The incident may be linked to similar terror plots against Israeli targets in India, Thailand and Georgia
 - "The moves against Israel taken in other countries and thwarted in Baku are undoubtedly interconnected," a security expert notes
 - A similar plot was foiled in Azerbaijan in January, when terrorists attempted to target the Israeli ambassador

Media Sources

Twitter

Azerbaijan claims it has uncovered terrorists with #Iran, Lebanon ties: bloom.bg/AxH6P4 - 21 Feb., 1528 EST

Twitter [Israel News Now]

<https://twitter.com/#!/IsraelNewsNow/status/172029097260761089>

Suspicious Letter Addressed To Speaker Of House Deemed Harmless

NOC 0174-12[Suspicious Letter - West Chester, OH]

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 4:29 PM

- Hazardous materials crews were on the scene of a suspicious letter delivered to the office of the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in West Chester, Ohio
 - The letter's contents were harmless; WMOH News reports the letter contained corn starch
 - FOX 19 News reports the letter also contained a note that said, "This is corn starch"
- The letter initially was discovered at 3:30 p.m. local time Tuesday

Media Sources

Twitter [Dayton Daily News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/daytondailynews/status/172065068287131648>

Twitter [1450 WMOH News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/1450WMOHNEWS/status/172066228930756609>

Twitter [WLWT News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/wlwt/status/172066007370838016>

Twitter [FOX 19 News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/FOX19/status/172068890837397505>

Somali Pirates Hijack Cargo Ship Off Omani Coast

MMC IOI#922 Update#0

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 4:38 PM

The International Maritime Bureau reports that Somali pirates have hijacked the MV Leila off the coast of Oman in the Arabian Sea. The Panama-flagged cargo ship is owned by New Port Cargo and Shipping, which is based in the United Arab Emirates. It is believed to have anywhere from 15 to 24 crew members onboard. The hijacking was confirmed by local pirates in Somalia, who said that the hijackers had contacted their friends in the Ceel-Dhanaae area after seizing the vessel.

Media Sources

Horseed Media

<http://horseedmedia.net/2012/02/21/somalia-somali-pirates-hijack-ship-off-oman/>

Times of Oman

<http://www.timesofoman.com/innercat.asp?detail=195>

I-90 Reopens Along Snoqualmie Pass; Flooding Concerns Continue Throughout Washington

MMC IOI#873 Update#3

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 5:41 PM

- Interstate 90 lanes throughout Snoqualmie Pass have reopened following closures prompted by avalanche control work and adverse weather conditions
 - The roadway previously was closed Tuesday morning between North Bend and Ellensburg
 - The Washington State Department of Transportation says oversize vehicles remain prohibited
 - The roadway is bare and wet with slush and standing water in places, the department warns
- Heavy rainfall continues to prompt flooding concerns in other areas across the state
 - The Snohomish River is expected to crest at 28.44 feet in the Snohomish area on Wednesday afternoon; its flood stage is 25 feet
 - The river was at approximately 13 feet as of 11:00 a.m. local time Tuesday
 - Flood warnings also are in effect for the Tolt and Puyallup rivers through Wednesday

Media Sources

Twitter [Washington State Department of Transportation]

https://twitter.com/#!/wsdot_passes/status/172040430521815040

Twitter [KOMO News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/komonews/status/172050709729124352>

Twitter [KING 5 News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/KING5Seattle/status/172031599750299649>

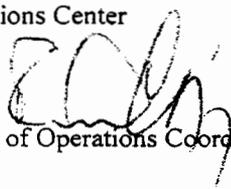
APPENDIX B: MEDIA MONITORING GUIDANCE REMINDER

Office of Operations Coordination
and Planning
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20393



Homeland Security

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Operations Center

FROM: Richard Chávez 
Director, Office of Operations Coordination and Planning

SUBJECT: Media Monitoring Guidance Reminder

As part of the fourth Privacy Compliance Review that is scheduled to occur in mid-March 2012, the National Operations Center (NOC), in coordination with the DHS Privacy Office, will review the 2011 Media Monitoring Analyst's Desktop Binder, any associated standard operating procedures, and the existing media monitoring support services contract to ensure conformity with all *Publicly Available Social Media Monitoring and Situational Awareness Initiative* Privacy Impact Assessments (PIAs) and to ensure the scope and purpose of the NOC Media Monitoring Capability (MMC) are accurately reflected and recommend clarifications and updates to the language if necessary.. In the interim, the NOC will continue to use the PIAs as the authoritative source to guide the program.

The NOC MMC should continue to limit the review, use, collection and dissemination of non-personally identifiable information and the seven narrow categories of personally identifiable information to information that affect the operations of the Department of Homeland Security (memorialized in the January 2011 PIA). No First Amendment-protected speech relating to dissent or disagreement with the Department and its activities should be reviewed, used, collected, or disseminated.

The MMC can review, use, collect, and disseminate information intended to provide guidance on DHS programs and initiatives that inform the general public. An example would be the Transportation Security Administration's PreCheck program. The MMC can also review, use, and collect information related to oversight reports about DHS components such as DHS Inspector General Reports or Government Accountability Office Reports.

The MMC cannot review, use, collect, or disseminate information related to individuals' positive or negative opinions or reports on the Department, *but for* the narrow circumstance where the MMC reviews and informs the relevant Component of an operational issue adversely impacting the Component. Examples of these issues include security violations at airports or ports of entry. In this narrow operational circumstance, no personally identifiable information can be collected, stored, or disseminated to the relevant Component.

cc: Mary Ellen Callahan, Chief Privacy Officer