



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

November 8, 2012

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I. BACKGROUND

The Office of Operations Coordination and Planning (OPS), National Operations Center (NOC), has statutory responsibility to (1) 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) 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 reports, the NOC can provide a more comprehensive picture of breaking or evolving events.

In January 2010, to help fulfill its statutory responsibility to provide situational awareness and to access the potential value of public information within the social media realm, 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 2010 Deepwater Horizon BP oil spill. Prior to implementation of each social media pilot, the DHS Privacy Office and OPS developed detailed standards and procedures for reviewing information on social media web sites. A series of pilot-specific Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA) document these standards and procedures. In June 2010, the Department released its Publicly Available Social Media Monitoring and Situational Awareness Initiative PIA, which incorporated these protections.² OPS/NOC and PRIV subsequently updated the PIA in January 2011, and published a Privacy Act System of Records Act Notice (SORN) on February 1, 2011,³ to allow for the collection and dissemination of personally identifiable information (PII) in a very limited number of situations in order to respond to the evolving operational needs of OPS/NOC.

As of January 2011, the NOC may include PII on seven categories of individuals in an Item of Interest (hereinafter MMC Reports or Reports) when doing so lends credibility to the report or facilitates coordination with interagency or international partners. The seven categories as identified in the SORN 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 statements or provide public updates; (4) U.S. and foreign

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>

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 (PCR) are a key aspect of the layered privacy protections built into this initiative to ensure protections described in the PIAs are followed. Since the June 2010 PIA publication, PCRs have been conducted bi-annually. The DHS Privacy Office conducted this fifth PCR to assess compliance with the January 2011 PIA Update and February 2011 SORN. To address this objective, 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 standard operating procedures (SOP), and reviewed selected MMC Reports for compliance with the 2011 PIA Update.

II. SUMMARY

The DHS Privacy Office found that OPS/NOC continues 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. Further, in response to our May 2012 PCR recommendation, OPS/NOC updated its SOPs and Analyst’s Desktop Binder to address appropriate use of the official profile on Twitter.

From March 1, 2012, to August 31, 2012, OPS/NOC distributed 9,338 MMC Reports of which 770 (eight percent) contained authorized PII within the seven permitted categories of individuals identified in the February 2011 SORN. OPS/NOC decreased its inclusion of PII in MMC Reports within the seven permitted categories of individuals by 13 percent since the last PCR. This decrease demonstrates judicious

use of PII within the seven permitted categories of individuals and greater experience by OPS/NOC in producing operationally relevant MMC Reports without using PII. In addition, no MMC Reports containing unauthorized PII were identified during this review period.

- *Use of Information* - The OPS/NOC has established 13 reporting event categories that are consistent with its statutory mandate to provide situational awareness, a more complete common operating picture, and more timely information for decision-makers.⁴ Our review of six randomly-selected days' worth of MMC Reports (311 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 of individuals. In response to our recommendation from the previous PCR, OPS/NOC implemented an automated logging mechanism to capture the search terms used when analysts query the MMC database. We reviewed the search log produced by this mechanism and found that PII was not used as a search term.
- *Technical Access and Security* - The OPS/NOC audit capability for all outbound http(s) traffic, designed to ensure appropriate use of the Internet by MMC analysts, became fully operational in May 2011. Since March 2012, OPS/NOC has conducted 14 random audits (two per month) that covered all MMC analysts and documented the results in self-audit compliance reports. These audits did not identify any inappropriate uses of the Internet by MMC analysts.
- *Privacy Training* - An MMC-specific PII refresher course was given and a Certification exam administered in September 2012. All MMC Analysts successfully passed the examination. Supplemental guidance issued to the analysts since March 2012 continues to direct them to focus on events, incidents, and crises that have operational relevance and impact.

OPS/NOC addressed all of our prior PCR recommendations to: (1) update SOPs and the Analyst's Desktop Binder to emphasize that reporting must be operationally relevant to DHS, (2) incorporate guidance on appropriate use of the official OPS/NOC Twitter profile, and (3) implement a logging mechanism to capture information about analysts' searches of the MMC database.

III. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The DHS Privacy Office conducted its fifth PCR of the OPS/NOC MMC in coordination

⁴ The thirteen categories are: 1) Terrorism, 2) 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.

with OPS/NOC leadership from September 2012 through October 2012. The DHS Privacy Office carried out the following activities:

- developed and administered a questionnaire to OPS/NOC that included questions on reporting statistics for the review period;
- reviewed six randomly-selected days' worth of MMC Reports distributed during the review period (311 Reports) 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 newly-implemented logging mechanism designed to capture information about MMC Analyst's searches of the MMC database (established in response to the previous PCR recommendation) and reviewed the search log;
- reviewed the results of 14 monthly self-audit compliance reports conducted by OPS/NOC to ensure appropriate use of the Internet by MMC analysts;
- reviewed and discussed questionnaire responses with OPS/NOC officials; and
- reviewed current SOPs and the Analyst's Desktop Binder to ascertain the status of recommendations from the prior PCR.

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.

OPS/NOC is permitted to collect PII for the seven specific categories of individuals listed in Table 1 when doing so lends credibility to a MMC 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.

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

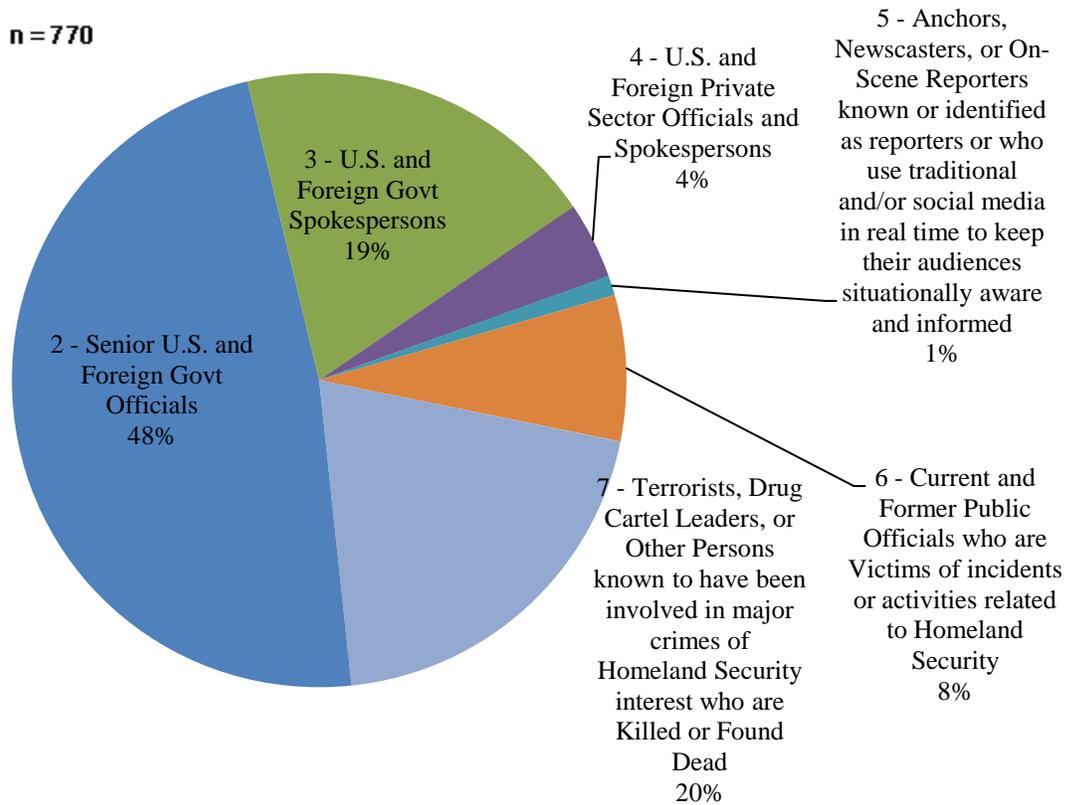
Table 1: Seven Categories of Individuals Whose PII can be included in MMC Reports

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 March 1, 2012, to August 30, 2012, including the number of MMC Reports produced overall and those containing PII about the seven permissible categories of individuals. We viewed demonstrations on how the inclusion of PII added credibility to these MMC Reports. We also reviewed the OPS/NOC Twitter profile and related OPS/NOC guidance regarding use of the profile.

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 March 1, 2012 to August 31, 2012, the NOC distributed 9,338 MMC Reports of which 770 (eight percent) contained PII within the seven permitted categories of individuals identified in the February 2011 SORN. Ninety-two percent of Reports during this period did not contain PII and the majority of Reports that did contain PII (87 percent) fell into Categories 2, 3, and 7 listed above. Figure 1 depicts the distribution of MMC Reports by category of permissible information.

**Figure 1: Reports Containing PII by Category of Individual
March 2012 to August 2012**



Note: None of the MMC Reports distributed during the review period included PII for individuals in Category 1 (U.S. and foreign individuals *in extremis*).

The distribution of MMC Reports across categories of permissible PII was largely consistent with our findings in the last PCR. Of particular note, OPS/NOC reduced the number of MMC Reports containing authorized PII by 13 percent over the prior PCR (21 percent of MMC Reports for the prior PCR contained authorized PII). This significant reduction demonstrates judicious use of authorized PII and increased experience in providing operationally relevant Reports that do not contain PII. In addition, no MMC Reports containing unauthorized PII were identified for this review period.

In order to make use of Twitter search tools such as “Tweet Deck,” OPS/NOC established a single profile on Twitter. We verified that the profile complies with PIA requirements. 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 OPS/NOC Twitter profile is permitted to follow only other federal agencies, media outlets, and other non-governmental organizations that are potential sources for the OPS/NOC MMC Initiative in providing situational awareness. Per our recommendation from the prior PCR, SOPs and the Analyst’s Desktop Binder describe a review process that requires MMC analysts to seek approval from the Watch Lead and the NOC Senior Watch Officer before “following” another Twitter profile.

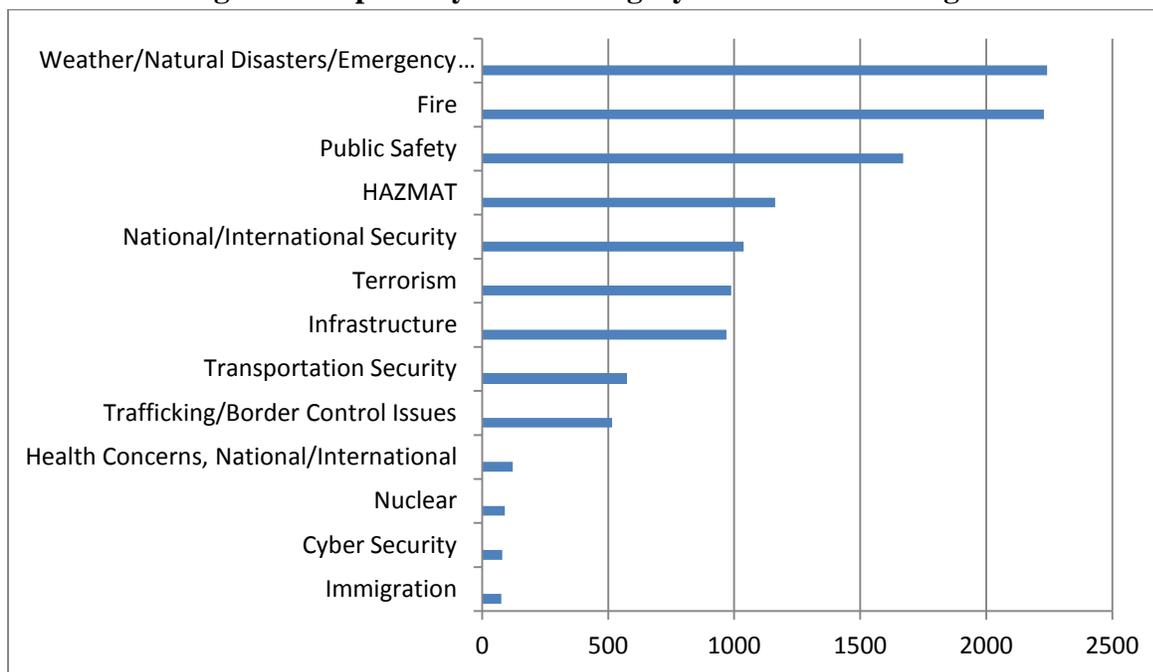
Use of Information

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 NOC/MMC reporting data from March 1, 2012, to August 31, 2012, including the number of MMC Reports identified in each of the defined 13 reporting event categories. We reviewed six randomly-selected days’ worth of MMC Reports (311 Reports) to identify adherence to the 13 event categories and to determine whether PII contained in the MMC Reports was within one of the seven permissible categories of individuals. We also viewed a demonstration of a newly-implemented logging mechanism established in response to a recommendation from our previous PCR designed to capture search terms of MMC analysts’ searches of the MMC database.

Findings: OPS/NOC has established 13 event categories that are consistent with their statutory mandate to provide situational awareness, a more complete common operating picture, and more timely information for decision makers. 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. Figure 2 depicts the distribution of MMC Reports distributed for the period by category of event.

Figure 2: Reports by Event Category March 2012 to August 2012



Note: The number of Reports depicted in this figure is greater than the number of Reports (9,338) distributed because an MMC Report may fall into more than one event category (e.g., both the Weather/Natural Disasters/Emergency and Infrastructure categories could be assigned to a Report of a tornado that led to the closing of a stretch of interstate highway).

To provide further perspective on the content and scope of Reports produced by the NOC MMC, Appendix A includes randomly-selected Reports reviewed by the DHS Privacy Office dated March 21, 2012; April 14, 2012; May 31, 2012; June 11, 2012; July 3, 2012; and August 20, 2012. The Reports reviewed 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.

Consistent with data retention requirements, the OPS/NOC maintains a database containing MMC Reports distributed for a period of five years. OPS/NOC does not use its database to create profiles of individuals nor does it use PII as a search term in its queries. We were able to further verify this during this PCR by reviewing the log of searches produced by the newly-implemented logging mechanism developed in response to a recommendation from the previous PCR. The logging mechanism captures searches conducted in the MMC database, including the time, user-id, and character search term(s). As documented in SOPs and the Analyst's Desktop Binder, analysts may search the MMC database for the purpose of determining whether a news item was previously addressed and for locating the distributed Report(s). Additional enhancements are planned for the next version of the logging software that will enable the log, which currently captures character search terms, to capture numeric search terms.

Retention of Information

Requirement: In accordance with the retention schedule and disposal policy 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 the procedure for when PII outside the seven permissible categories of individuals is included in an MMC Report and disseminated with OPS/NOC officials. As the MMC has not yet operated for five years, the retention schedule limitation period has not yet expired for the oldest MMC Reports.

Findings: In accordance with retention requirements, OPS/NOC maintains a database of all of the Reports distributed. There were no instances of unauthorized collection or dissemination of PII during the review period. Nonetheless, we verified that OPS/NOC has a process in place to redact unauthorized PII from Reports within the MMC.

Internal and External Sharing and Disclosure

Requirement: OPS/NOC will share MMC Reports with Departmental and component leadership, and other 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: OPS/NOC disseminates its MMC Reports via email. We reviewed the MMC Report e-mail distribution list and discussed OPS/NOC practices for keeping this list current.

Finding: 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 updated internally as the MMC Initiative receives approval from OPS/NOC leadership to add or remove specific recipients. The distribution list is submitted for review weekly to NOC senior staff for review and approval.

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. OPS/NOC must also 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 reviewed the results of fourteen monthly self-audit compliance reports covering March 2012 through August 2012.

Findings: The OPS/NOC audit capability for all outbound http(s) traffic designed to ensure appropriate use of the Internet by MMC analysts became fully operational in May 2011. The current Self-Audit capability dynamically collects and logs all OPS/NOC MMC traffic, and audits of this traffic are conducted randomly. Since March 2012, OPS/NOC has conducted fourteen random audits (two per month) that covered all NOC MMC analysts and documented the results in audit reports. The reports did not identify any inappropriate uses of the Internet by MMC analysts.

Privacy Training

Requirement: NOC MMC Analysts are required to take the annual privacy training required of all DHS employees and contractors, as well as job-specific PII training.

Review: The DHS Privacy Office reviewed OPS/NOC's training log for the initiative and supplemental guidance issued since March 2012.

Finding: The NOC/MMC remains in compliance with training requirements. An MMC-specific PII refresher course was given in September 2012, along with a certification exam which all NOC MMC analysts passed. The certification exams test individual understanding of the PIA rules. Supplemental guidance issued to the analysts since March 2012 continues to direct analysts to focus on events, incidents, and crises that have operational relevance and impact.

III. CONCLUSION

OPS/NOC has once again demonstrated its compliance with the January 2011 PIA Update and February 2011 SORN. In addition, OPS/NOC has addressed all of our prior PCR recommendations. The DHS Privacy Office makes no further recommendations at this time. Based on the results of this PCR and OPS/NOC's history of strong performance in the previous four PCRs, the DHS Privacy Office plans to move from a bi-annual to an annual PCR schedule for this initiative. The DHS Privacy Office will continue to monitor the initiative and will require the NOC to self-certify to a set of questions administered by our office in approximately six months. The DHS Privacy Office will begin the next formal PCR in September 2013.

IV. 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

Jonathan R. Cantor
Acting Chief Privacy Officer
Department of Homeland Security

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

French School Shooting Suspect Says He Will Surrender Soon - Toulouse

MMC IOI#1395 Update#11

Wednesday, March 21, 2012 5:12 AM

A gunman, suspected of killing three children and a rabbi at a Jewish school in the name of al-Qaeda, said on Wednesday he would hand himself over to police after an hours-long siege in which he wounded three officers. About 300 police, some in bullet-proof body armor, cordoned off an area surrounding an apartment in a Toulouse neighborhood in southwestern France. Shots were heard in the early hours of the morning, and police said three officers had been slightly wounded. The man, a Frenchman of Algerian origin, has said he belongs to al-Qaeda and acted to "avenge Palestinian children." Police are negotiating with the man, who is still said to be armed but says he may give himself up this afternoon. "He said ... he will turn himself in this afternoon," the French Interior Minister told BFM television, adding the man had thrown a Colt .45 pistol from the house in exchange for a "communication device." He still has an Uzi machine gun, a Kalashnikov assault rifle and other weapons, the minister said.

Media Sources

BBC

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17446999>

Reuters

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/21/us-france-crime-idUSBRE82I07N20120321>

At Least 11 Injured; Damage Assessments Continue

NOC 0393-12[Earthquake - Oaxaca, Mexico]

Wednesday, March 21, 2012 5:45 AM

Mexican officials were assessing damage Wednesday, a day after a strong earthquake left homes in ruins and rattled residents hundreds of miles away. At least 11 people were injured in the 7.4-magnitude quake, which hit mid-day Tuesday in southern Mexico. At least 500 homes in the southern coastal state of Guerrero were damaged, the governor told reporters. Nine of the 11 injuries occurred in Oaxaca state, which borders Guerrero and also suffered damage from the quake, said the Mexican Interior Minister. Two people were injured in Mexico City, about 200 miles from the quake's epicenter. Reports differed about the earthquake's impact. Officials reported that at least 800 houses had collapsed in the town of Igualapa, the Guerrero state government said in a statement. Later Tuesday, the head of Guerrero's civil protection department said officials had confirmed 200 damaged homes in the town. That number could increase when assessments of the area continue Wednesday, he said. **Additional Information:** Image 1: Experts inspect a Mexico City building damaged by Tuesday's quake.

Media Sources

CNN

http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/21/world/americas/mexico-earthquake/index.html?hpt=hp_t3

Storm System Closes Louisiana Floodgates, Roads Flooded

NOC 0394-12[Significant Weather - South Central US]

Wednesday, March 21, 2012 5:59 AM

- Strong winds pushing tides north from the Gulf of Mexico forced local officials to close floodgates in Louisiana on Tuesday
 - Some roads were flooded in the western parishes, including part of U.S. Highway 171
 - Trees toppled by high winds fell across some roads as well
- The Terrebonne Levee District closed the Humble Canal, Placid Canal, Bush Canal and Bayou Terrebonne floodgates
 - The Leon Theriot Lock in Golden Meadow is locking in vessels as they arrive
 - Personnel will be monitoring the water levels over the next few days and will reopen any structures once conditions become favorable
- The National Weather Service issued a flash flood watch for central Louisiana from Wednesday morning through noon local time Thursday, as 6 to 10 inches of rain are possible in some areas

Media Sources

Twitter

Central Louisiana facing flash flood watches, tornado watches: <http://townta.lk/GCPLnL> - 21 March, 0429 EDT

Twitter

Storm system closes floodgates; flooding possible: <http://bit.ly/GFU8yU> - 21 March, 0200 EDT

Lake Bryant Fire Burning 266 Acres; Some Homes At Risk - Florida

MMC IOI#1422 Update#0

Wednesday, March 21, 2012 12:38 PM

- Firefighters were battling fire with fire in the Ocala National Forest in the area of Lake Bryant on Wednesday morning
 - The fire, officially called the Lake Bryant 14 fire, involved an estimated 266 acres, a Florida Forest Service spokeswoman said
 - Firefighters planned to survey it from the air Wednesday to get a more exact estimate of its size
 - County, state and U.S. Forest Service firefighters were involved in the effort to contain the blaze
 - Firefighters were conducting a 250- to 300-acre back-burn to help combat the wildfire
- Authorities said the fire could threaten 15 homes in the Silver Springs Village area
- Officials said Tuesday night that smoke was affecting visibility on parts of East State Road 40 in the areas of County Road 314 and County Road 314A, as well as east of Forest Corners
 - Officials warned that smoke and fog could create hazardous driving conditions in the Ocala National Forest Wednesday night
- The cause of the fire, which erupted on Tuesday, was still unknown

Media Sources

Twitter [US Fish and Wildlife Service Fire SE Division]

<https://twitter.com/#!/USFWSFireSE/status/182430151114620930>

Twitter [Ocala Star-Banner]

<https://twitter.com/#!/OcalaStarBanner/status/182485744596684800>

Arkansas Authorities Investigating Storm Damage In Morrilton; EF1 Tornado Confirmed In Uniontown

NOC 0394-12[Significant Weather - South Central US]

Wednesday, March 21, 2012 1:00 PM

Tuesday afternoon storms in Arkansas have left damage to at least 50 buildings in Morrilton, Conway County. Emergency management officials say that damage affected buildings at the Conway County fairgrounds, some of which were destroyed, and homes in the North Hills subdivision. Most of the damage was shingles being torn off roofs, but officials said there were several homes that had trees sliced into them. The storm moved through the city around 3:30 p.m. local time and caused one injury. It also left at least 4,000 people without power. The damage stretches over an area six to eight blocks long. The National Weather Service (NWS) said that storm surveyors planned to survey the damage in Morrilton on Wednesday morning. Initial indications are that a downburst may be to blame for the damage. It appears damage fell south to north, which is a common indicator of a severe thunderstorm and not tornado, officials say. Meanwhile, the NWS confirmed that an EF1 tornado moved through northwestern Arkansas on Monday. The tornado reportedly touched down about 9:50 p.m. and left damage, as it moved from southwest of Uniontown to northeast of Cedarville. No injuries were reported.

Media Sources

KARK 4 News

http://arkansasmatters.com/fulltext?nxd_id=521172

KARK 4 News

http://arkansasmatters.com/fulltext?nxd_id=521432

KAIT 8

<http://www.kait8.com/story/17208010/nws-confirms-tornado-in-western-arkansas>

Tornado Causes Damage To Homes In Ascension Parish, Louisiana

NOC 0394-12[Significant Weather - South Central US]

Wednesday, March 21, 2012 1:02 PM

- The Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office has confirmed damage to homes and trees from a tornado that touched down in at least three spots in the Prairieville area Wednesday morning
 - Damage is reported at La. 930 and Balmoral Street; La. 930 and Henry Street; and La. 930 and Daigle Road, a government official said
 - Some homes in the Southwood Village and Silverstone subdivisions were also damaged
- Prairieville Middle School will dismiss at noon local time today, since it is in the affected area, an Ascension Schools spokesman said
 - "From initial reports, we don't think there was any damage to the school itself, but the power is out at the school, and there is a lot of debris in roadways," he said
- No injuries have been reported
- The National Weather Service has issued a tornado watch until noon Wednesday for southeast Louisiana
 - A flood watch is in effect until 7 a.m. Thursday

Media Sources

Twitter [The Advocate]

<https://twitter.com/#!/theadvocatcbr/status/182489965312225281>

Interstate 5 Over Grapevine Reopened Following Snow Closure - CA

MMC IOI#1783 Update#1

Saturday, April 14, 2012 10:21 AM

- The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has reopened Interstate 5 through the Grapevine in both directions after it was closed last night due to heavy snow and low visibility
- The interstate was closed at Parker Road near Castaic at 10:35 p.m. local time and at Highway 138 near Gorman, according to CHP
- The Grapevine connects the California Central Valley to the Los Angeles area

Media Sources

LA Times Blog

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2012/04/snow-forces-closure-of-i-5-over-grapevine.html>

Twitter [Total Traffic LA]

The North and South Through The Grapevine Has Been Reopened in Both Directions - 14 April, 0653 EDT

Airport Checkpoint Reopens

NOC 0637-12[Suspicious Image - New Orleans, LA]

Saturday, April 14, 2012 10:41 AM

An investigation into a suspicious package shut down a security checkpoint and grounded flights at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport for about an hour Saturday morning. A spokeswoman with the Transportation Security Administration said the incident was triggered at the Concourse B checkpoint. During a screening, security workers noticed an item inside a passenger's carry-on bag, which they considered suspicious. All flights were grounded at the airport at that time. Explosive experts were called in to investigate and determined that the item was not a threat.

Media Sources

WWL-TV

<http://www.wwltv.com/news/Armstrong-airport-investigation-prompts-checkpoint-closure-Saturday-morning-147431115.html>

At Least 3 Possible Tornadoes Reported In Central Oklahoma

NOC 0636-12[Severe Weather - Central Plains, US]

Saturday, April 14, 2012 11:19 AM

At least three possible tornadoes are being reported in central Oklahoma hours ahead of what forecasters are cautioning could be a day of "life-threatening" storms. No injuries were immediately reported after the suspected tornadoes hit early Saturday morning. A Department of Emergency Management official says the possible tornadoes were reported west and north of Oklahoma City. One was spotted near Piedmont, a small town where a twister last May killed several people. The National Weather Service is working to confirm the reports.

Media Sources

The Associated Press

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_SEVERE_WEATHER?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2012-04-14-09-

Containment Of Easter Complex Fires Increases

NOC 0597-12[Wildfires - Central Virginia]

Saturday, April 14, 2012 12:03 PM

- Forest service officials reported Saturday that containment of a group of five wildfires burning across Virginia has risen, while acreage has increased to over 22,000
 - The Shipwreck Fire in Page County is burning approximately 4,000 acres; it is 80 percent contained
 - The Alleghany Tunnels Fire, about 10 miles west of Covington, is burning 9,302 acres and is 70 percent contained
 - The Barbours Creek Fire, north of New Castle, is burning 3,047 acres and is 20 percent contained.
 - The Rich Hole Fire, about 17 miles east of Covington, is burning 5,358 acres and is 25 percent contained.
 - The Wolf Gap Fire, located in Shenandoah County, is burning 600 acres and is 60 percent contained
- "With the winds dying down, we expect to make some more progress today," said a public information officer with the U.S. Forest Service
 - Total personnel assigned to the Easter Complex number 407

Media Sources

InciWeb

<http://www.inciweb.org/incident/2826/>

InciWeb

<http://www.inciweb.org/incident/2812/>

Twitter [Roanoke News]

<https://twitter.com/#!/RoanokeForMe/status/191189257212272640>

- There are additional reports of damage and power outages throughout Iowa as a result of severe weather Saturday
 - The Iowa State Patrol has confirmed storm damage at the Greater Regional Medical Center and at Southwestern Community College in Creston
 - The medical center is being evacuated because of the storm damage; patients are being taken to nearby medical centers
 - "A lot of windows have been broken out and some cars have flipped over. We can't see a lot right now because the power is out," a hospital official said
 - Additional damage has been reported throughout the Fremont County community of Thurman; no serious injuries or fatalities were reported in the town
 - According to local officials, 90 percent of the town has been damaged
 - Approximately 100 people throughout the community have been displaced
 - The American Red Cross has opened a shelter at the Fremont-Mills High School in Tabor
 - Several areas across the state are without power
 - MidAmerican Energy reports 22,620 customers have lost service
 - The total includes 15,799 Polk County residents
 - Alliant Energy is reporting approximately 5,000 customers in Iowa are without power
 - The total includes 2,098 residents in Union County
 - Interstate 29 southbound lanes from Glenwood to Hamburg are closed as crews respond to multiple overturned semi-trucks
- Additional Information:** Image 1: Photo of an overturned semi-truck on Interstate 29 in Iowa

Media Sources**Twitter [Des Moines Register]**

<http://twitter.com/#!/DMRegister/status/191355539949752320>

Twitter [Des Moines Register]

<http://twitter.com/#!/DMRegister/status/191360498170732544>

Twitter [KETV News 7]

<https://twitter.com/#!/KETV/status/191356794369617922>

MidAmerican Energy [Outage Information]

<http://www.midamericanenergy.com/storm/OutageWatch/County.aspx>

Alliant Energy [Outage Information]

http://www.alliantenergy.com/Customerservice/StormandOutageCenter/OutageDetails/index.htm?region_id=2

Alliant Energy [Outage Information]

http://www.alliantenergy.com/Customerservice/StormandOutageCenter/OutageDetails/index.htm?region_id=4

KETV News

<http://www.ketv.com/weather/30892432/detail.html>

Cartel Drops Leaflets From Plane Against Sinaloa Government - Culiacan, Mexico

MMC IOI#2676 Update#0

Thursday, May 31, 2012 3:47 AM

Drug traffickers took the unusual step of using an airplane to drop thousands of leaflets on the northern city of Culiacan accusing the governor of Sinaloa state of taking orders from a Sinaloa drug lord, authorities said Wednesday.

The incident in the Sinaloa state capital on Tuesday is the first time in recent memory that traffickers have resorted to aerial leafleting. It may mark a further escalation in what has become a nationwide, military-scale battle between the Sinaloa cartel and the hyper-violent Zetas gang.

The single-page, computer-printed leaflets were unsigned, but expressed anger at the in-custody killing of a suspect who was recently arrested and sent to a prison allegedly dominated by the Sinaloa cartel.

The suspect, identified as a member of the Beltran Leyva gang, whose remnants have allied with the Zetas, was killed by another inmate three days ago.

The leaflet read in part, "The governor, on orders from [a Sinaloa cartel leader], told the federal prosecutor's representative to send [the Beltran Leyva gang suspect] to be tortured and murdered in the state penitentiary."

The wording of the letter suggests it may have been written by the Zetas, who have launched tit-for-tat attacks on Sinaloa strongholds after Sinaloa cartel gunmen and their allies moved into Zetas turf in the Gulf coast states of Veracruz and Tamaulipas.

Media Sources

Associated Press

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jC0h5NbrAzNa9sdB78Crr-MSV1lw?docId=2b759f3beb5f4295a80e2dc3f130d046>

Alert Level Raised As Increased Seismic Activity Prompts Evacuations, Affects Flight Operations - Colombia

MMC IOI#2677 Update#0

Thursday, May 31, 2012 4:14 AM

• Renewed rumblings in the Nevado del Ruiz volcano prompted Colombian authorities to evacuate 500 people from beneath its flanks and briefly suspend flights at four airports

• The Colombian volcano has let off a series of blasts this week, showering population centers with ash, including the western city of Manizales

• The volcano's seismic activity is more intense than episodes in April and early May when it emitted columns of steam, said the government geological agency Ingeominas

• The heightened seismic activity has prompted the agency to raise the volcano's alert level to orange, meaning an eruption is probable in days or weeks

• Airports in the cities of Armenia, Cartago, Manizales and Pereira had been suspended, but, with the exception of the airport in Manizales, all had resumed normal operations as of Wednesday, a Colombian civil aviation agency official stated

Media Sources

Twitter [Novisio]

https://twitter.com/Novisio_com/status/208005227939508224

Independent Online

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/world/colombian-volcano-spouts-ash-1.1307796>

Border Patrol Apprehends 12 Illegal Immigrants In Trailer - Falfurrias, TX

MMC IOI#2678 Update#0

Thursday, May 31, 2012 4:46 AM

U.S. Border Patrol agents discovered 12 undocumented immigrants Tuesday in a tractor-trailer.

The driver tried to pass the 18-wheeler through a checkpoint on U.S. Highway 281 near Falfurrias. A police dog alerted officials to the trailer and inside, agents found the undocumented immigrants.

A Mexican national was also discovered early Wednesday on a ranch located near Armstrong. He became disoriented and distressed and activated a rescue beacon on the ranch, one of eight around the Rio Grande Valley.

All undocumented immigrants will be medically cleared and returned to their country of origin.

Media Sources

Corpus Christi Caller-Times

<http://www.caller.com/news/2012/may/30/us-border-patrol-13-undocumented-immigrants-in/>

Outages Increase Amid Severe Weather; Flights Cancelled - North Texas

MMC IOI#2684 Update#1

Thursday, May 31, 2012 10:17 AM

- A utility says more than 27,000 homes and businesses in North Texas have lost electricity during a second straight day of storms
 - Crews with Dallas-based Oncor Electric are working to restore power as rain and lightning continues in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, a day after hail the size of quarters was recorded
- According to Flightstats.com, almost 20 flights out of the Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport have been cancelled
 - Delays are also being reported there, as well as at Dallas Love Field
- Some flooding was reported on Interstate 30 eastbound, according to a Twitter user early this morning
- The National Weather Service says thunderstorms in the Dallas area should move on later Thursday, while the central part of Texas can expect more rain

Media Sources

Twitter [KFDA NewsChannel10]

<https://twitter.com/NewsChannel10/status/208154419861258241>

Twitter

#Dallas two left lanes closed due to flooding on I 30 E R L THORNTON FWY WB between FERGUSON RD and LAWNVIEW AVE as reported by txd

Flightstats.com

<http://goo.gl/297J7>

Flightstats.com

<http://goo.gl/qqEXk>

Rutherford County Courthouse Evacuated Due To Bomb Threat - TN

MMC IOI#2689 Update#0

Thursday, May 31, 2012 10:28 AM

The Rutherford County Courthouse has been evacuated after receiving a bomb threat. The threat came in around 8:45 a.m. local time Thursday, the Rutherford County Sheriff's office said. Deputies assigned to the courthouse began evacuating the building. No other details were known.

Media Sources

WTVF-TV

<http://www.newschannel5.com/story/18665728/rutherford-co-courthouse-evacuated-after-bomb-threat>

University Officials Warn Students To Stay Indoors Amid Reports Of Man With Gun - Baltimore, MD

MMC IOI#2690 Update#0

Thursday, May 31, 2012 10:33 AM

- The University of Maryland (Baltimore County) is warning students and visitors to stay inside or delay coming to the campus as police search for a reported man with a gun nearby
 - Police are searching for an armed suspect near the West Hill Apartments, on-campus housing near Hilltop Circle and Walker Avenue, according to emergency text messages sent to students, faculty and staff
 - A campus police spokesman said the suspect was last seen in a residence hall

Media Sources

Twitter [The Baltimore Sun]

<https://twitter.com/baltimoresun/status/208196300624244738>

Threat Likely A Hoax, Police Say

NOC 1082-12[Bomb Threat - Astoria, OR]

Monday, June 11, 2012 11:04 PM

Astoria Police continue to advise caution, just in case, but are considering that this afternoon's bomb threat to the community was a hoax. The incident started when a man with an accent called the Astoria 911 dispatch center to say 40 bombs had been planted and would detonate at 6:30 p.m. local time Monday evening. Two other calls followed -- apparently made by the same man. No details were available as to whether investigators had a suspect. According to The Daily Astorian, police have checked target locations mentioned in the phone calls, including the Astoria-Warrenton Regional Airport, where police said they found nothing.

Media Sources

The Daily Astorian

http://www.dailyastorian.com/frec/update-threat-calls-in-astoria-likely-a-hoax-police-say/article_aa9d57a0-b419-11e1-aa75-001a4bcf887a.html

Utility Reports All Oakland Outages Restored - CA

MMC IOI#2885 Update#1

Monday, June 11, 2012 11:32 PM

- All 21,000 customers that had been without power in south Oakland had been restored by 6:30 p.m. local time Monday, according to Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E) Twitter account
 - KTVU reported that outages affected areas around San Leandro Street, Bancroft Avenue and North Foothill Parkway
- There was still no explanation given for the outages

Media Sources

Twitter [Pacific Gas & Electric]

<https://twitter.com/PGE4Me/statuses/212360514922221570>

Twitter [KTVU]

<https://twitter.com/KTVU/statuses/212361070164197377>

Pacific Gas & Electric [Outage Map]

<http://www.pge.com/myhome/customerservice/outages/>

129,000 Without Power After Storms Hit Alabama

MMC IOI#2882 Update#2

Monday, June 11, 2012 11:48 PM

Powerful storms with winds blowing more than 60 mph sent trees and limbs crashing onto power lines, leaving about 129,000 homes and businesses without electricity. Alabama Power Co. said it was working to restore service after the storms moved through central Alabama Monday night. The worst outages were in the Birmingham area, where about 79,000 homes and businesses lacked power. Another 14,600 were out in Tuscaloosa and about 5,600 customers went dark in Jasper.

Media Sources

WBRC-TV (Associated Press)

<http://www.myfoxal.com/story/18761411/storms-leave-thousands-without-power-in-ala>

Officials Determine Chemical Burns Caused By Elevated Chlorine Levels - Johnson City, NY

MMC IOI#2866 Update#1

Monday, June 11, 2012 12:00 AM

Emergency crews responded to 200 Floral Avenue in Johnson City Sunday afternoon after reports of up to 30 victims suffering from chemical burns at the Floral Park pool.

The chemical turned out to be chlorine, and according to a park supervisor, the levels simply got too high.

Chlorine levels were checked earlier Sunday morning, and it was discovered that more was needed to be added to stay within regulation. It is unclear why the levels then went higher than planned.

"Right now with all the equipment that we have, we as a village and health department are investigating the source of how that happened," said the park supervisor.

The park reported that three children were affected by the burns. Symptoms were a red rash and burning eyes. Anyone who experienced symptoms was treated on site, or taken to Wilson Hospital for treatment.

The Johnson City Police Department, hazmat teams, the Broome County Health Department, and ambulance crews all responded.

Media Sources

WBNG News

<http://www.wbng.com/news/local/Floral-Park-Chemical-Burns-158370285.html>

Crews Make Progress Cleaning Up Spilled Fuel

NOC 1068-12[Vessel Taking on Water - Kodiak Island, AK]

Monday, June 11, 2012 12:53 AM

• Some 20 cleanup workers were on the scene Sunday, working to limit the impact of a spill of some 15,000 gallons of diesel after an Army vessel Monterrey hit a rock, rupturing one of its fuel tanks on Friday

• A spokesman for the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) said the 15,291-gallon estimate of fuel spilled was not expected to rise

• Some absorbent booms were changed out Sunday, but there was no estimate yet as to how much diesel was recovered

• "A lot of fuel has been picked up from those [booms]," said a Coast Guard official, adding that the absorbent pads have been "effective"

• The DEC spokesman said, "We're not seeing diesel out there like [we] did yesterday"

• There wasn't enough fuel in the water to consider using dispersant, according to officials

• In addition to the cleanup workers on the scene, another two dozen are monitoring the operations at a command center

• A salvage plan for the Monterrey is being developed and may involve towing the ship to a Kodiak dock and then to a shipyard for repairs

Media Sources

Twitter

Diesel hits beaches near Kodiak as some 20 workers try to limit impact <http://bit.ly/N0GjV1> - 10 June, 2011 EDT

Dallas Overpass "Unstable" Following Semi Crash; Officials Unsure When WB I-30 Will Reopen - TX

MMC IOI#2867 Update#1

Monday, June 11, 2012 1:24 AM

The westbound lanes of Interstate 30 were shut down at Dolphin Road in East Dallas late Sunday afternoon after a truck struck an overpass. Traffic is being diverted onto service roads in the area, and it is not clear when regular traffic will resume on the busy freeway leading to downtown Dallas. The Dolphin Road overpass is also closed to traffic in both directions.

The driver died on impact, and Dallas Fire Rescue crews are unable to reach him until the extent of damage to the bridge can be determined.

Late Sunday night, a Texas Department of Transportation spokesman said the crash fractured the easternmost column of the overpass. "That has caused the structure to become unstable," he said. "The semi is basically holding the structure up until we can get emergency crews in there to shore it up."

"The driver hit [the bridge piling] full force without ever hitting the brakes, anywhere from 50 to 70 miles an hour probably," he added.

The truck's cargo was non-hazardous, as it was reportedly carrying a full load of plastics and electronics, but diesel fuel from the tanks had to be cleaned up by a hazmat team.

The spokesman said that the "best-case scenario" would be to make temporary repairs before the Monday morning rush hour. However, "That really depends on the extent of the damage once they get the semi out of there," he added.

Additional Information:

Image 1: A semi-truck fractured a bridge piling, closing WB I-30 for hours

Media Sources

WFAA

<http://www.wfaa.com/news/local/Truck-hits-overpass-on-I-30-in-Dallas-158372365.html>

KDFW

<http://www.myfoxdfw.com/story/18750970/deadly-18-wheeler-crash-shuts-down-i-3>

Chicago Outages Drop Below 50,000 - IL

MMC IOI#3180 Update#3

Tuesday, July 03, 2012

7:37 AM

- According to ComEd's online outage map, fewer than 50,000 customers were without power as of about 6:30 a.m. local time
 - This is down from a peak of more than 350,000 after severe weather Sunday
 - The vast majority remain in Du Page and Cook counties, with approximately 40,000 and 9,200 outages, respectively
- ComEd reports via Twitter that they expect to restore the majority of customers by late Wednesday
 - Those in the more severely damaged areas will be restored by late Thursday

Media Sources

Twitter [ComEd]

<https://twitter.com/ComEd/statuses/220091306381287424>

Twitter [ComEd]

<https://twitter.com/ComEd/statuses/220092944454135808>

ComEd [Outage Map]

https://www.comed.com/_layouts/comcdsp/OutageMap.aspx

Senior Al-Qaida Leader Killed In Afghanistan Airstrike

MMC IOI#3201 Update#0

Tuesday, July 03, 2012

7:51 AM

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) on Tuesday confirmed the death of an al-Qaida leader known as Hanzallah. He was one of several al-Qaida terrorists killed during a joint operation by Afghan and coalition security forces in Watahpur District, Kunar Province, on Sunday, ISAF said in a press release.

Hanzallah was a Saudi national who acted as a military adviser to insurgents in the northeastern Afghan provinces of Kunar, Nuristan and Laghman, and provided them with improvised explosive device training.

Media Sources

RTT News

http://www.rttnews.com/1916288/al-qaida-leader-hanzallah-killed-in-afghanistan-airstrike.aspx?type=gn&utm_source=google&utm_campaign=sitemap

6.2 Magnitude Earthquake Strikes Off New Zealand's North Island

MMC IOI#3202 Update#0

Tuesday, July 03, 2012

7:56 AM

- A large earthquake has rocked New Zealand's North Island but no damage has been reported
 - The long, rumbling 6.2 magnitude quake struck around 10:35 p.m. local time, 35 miles south-southwest of Opunake at a depth of about 146 miles
 - The quake was felt hundreds of miles away in Christchurch
- A Fire Service central communications spokesman said there were a number of calls to emergency services, but no reports of damage

Media Sources

Twitter [Breaking News]

<https://twitter.com/BreakingNews/status/220109447295533057>

Twitter [Breaking News]

<https://twitter.com/BreakingNews/status/220115268838506496>

US Geological Survey

<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eventpage/usb000awz5#summary>

70,000 Still Without Power In Southern New Jersey

NOC 1216-12[Severe Weather - Mid Atlantic]

Tuesday, July 03, 2012

8:32 AM

- Atlantic City Electric managed to restore power to some 10,000 southern New Jersey customers overnight, bringing the total number without electricity to about 70,000
 - More than 37,000 of the outages are in Atlantic County
- The majority of customers should have power Wednesday, but some might have to wait until Friday
 - The utility has restored power to about 130,000 customers since the storm last Friday with help from other companies from as far away as Florida
- Several cooling stations have been set up, according to Atlantic County officials

Media Sources

Twitter [The Current]

<https://twitter.com/TheCurrentPaper/statuses/220113059170099201>

Twitter [CBS Philly]

<https://twitter.com/CBSPhilly/status/220116304609280001>

Atlantic City Electric [Outage Map]

<http://www.atlanticcityelectric.com/home/emergency/maps/stormcenter/default.aspx>

Wildfire Forces Evacuation Of 150 Homes - Pope County, Arkansas

MMC IOI#3208 Update#0

Tuesday, July 03, 2012 6:15 PM

A wildfire in Pope County has forced the evacuation of nearly 150 homes. The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management said Tuesday that about 100 of the evacuated homes are in the St. Joe area. Homes affected by the order are near St. Joe's Road, Murdoch Road, Hartwick Lane, and Kenny's Cove.

Authorities say the wildfire is around 40 acres. The agency says the fire is not contained.

In addition, authorities say the water supply is running low, but trucks are bringing in more water.

No structures have been destroyed.

The Arkansas Forestry Commission says fires continue to be a problem in numerous areas. Forestry Commission crews are working to contain 15 wildfires in the state. Another 17 fires that consumed 49 acres have been suppressed.

All of Arkansas is listed as being at extreme risk of wildfires due to dry conditions and high temperatures. Burn bans are in place for 70 of the state's 75 counties.

Media Sources

KAIT 8 News

<http://www.kait8.com/story/18945684/wildfire-forces-evacuations-in-pope-county>

Today's THV

<http://www.todaysthv.com/news/article/216913/2/Crews-working-Pope-Co-wildfire>

One Detained In Agent's Shooting; More Arrests Expected

NOC 0002-12-052[HSI Agent Shot - McAllen, TX]

Tuesday, July 03, 2012 6:29 PM

- Law enforcement officials have detained a man in connection with the shooting of a federal agent in northern Hidalgo County on Tuesday
 - The man is one of several persons of interest, officers said
 - Officials said additional arrests are expected
 - He was detained at a home less than a mile away from where the chase and shooting began
- Hidalgo County officials and federal agents raided a third property in the area, but authorities did not release details on that search

Media Sources

Twitter [KRGV Channel 5 News]

<https://twitter.com/krvg/status/220276224088485888>

National Guard Ordered To Fight Fire Threatening Homes - Alpine, UT

MMC IOI#3209 Update#0

Tuesday, July 03, 2012 6:47 PM

The Utah National Guard has been ordered to help fight the fire in Alpine, which is threatening homes. The National Guard was ordered to assist in fighting the fire because the blaze has grown so big, so fast.

The Guard tweeted that they were preparing to send two Blackhawk helicopters to the scene.

One resident indicated that at least one large home was in flames at Mountaintop.

The wildfire erupted in Alpine's Lambert Park just after 2 p.m. local time on Tuesday. Fire crews were en route to the scene. Lambert Park is a 255-acre wildland park with biking and hiking trails, known for its wild poppies. The park is also home to some original pioneer structures, including a tower. There are homes around the park.

The extent of the fire was not immediately clear.

Scanner reports indicated that State Road 92 is being closed at the mouth of American Fork Canyon and campgrounds are being evacuated. Lone Peak Police tweeted that the Box Elder subdivision was being evacuated.

Those evacuated are being urged to go the LDS Church located at Heritage Hills & Main Street in Alpine. A disaster response team from the American Red Cross Utah Region is en route to assist evacuees.

Media Sources

The Herald Extra

http://www.heraldextra.com/news/local/fire/national-guard-called-to-alpine-fire/article_e1d9766e-0d9c-55f2-9656-cf4b6b1d2712.html

Salt Lake Tribune

<http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/news/54426492-78/alpine-reported-park-tweeted.html.csp>

County Courthouse Evacuated, Roads Closed Due To Bomb Threat - Manassas, VA

MMC IOI#3948 Update#0

Monday, August 20, 2012

1:48 PM

Church and Peabody streets in Old Town Manassas are closed for a bomb threat at the Prince William County Courthouse, police said. The courthouse was evacuated after authorities received the threat.

Bomb-sniffing dogs were called to the courthouse to check the outside for explosives. So far, police have not found anything suspicious. Southbound VA-28 is backed up due to the road closures.

Media Sources

Inside NoVa

<http://www2.insidenova.com/news/2012/aug/20/bomb-threat-closes-prince-william-county-courthous-ar-2143466/>

All WB Lanes Of I-94 Reopened Following Liquid Latex Spill - Paw Paw, MI

MMC IOI#3943 Update#1

Monday, August 20, 2012

2:46 PM

- All westbound lanes of Interstate 94 have been reopened between Mattawan and Paw Paw following an accident involving two tractor-trailers
 - A Michigan State Police official reported that a truck hauling containers of liquid latex experienced mechanical difficulty near mile marker 61, and the driver pulled over
 - The truck was almost immediately struck from behind by a second truck, which caught fire and careened into a ditch
 - The containers on the first truck were punctured, spilling the latex onto the roadway that required a hazmat response and cleanup
- Neither driver was injured in the crash, and no other vehicles were involved

Media Sources

Twitter [Kzoo Gazette]

https://twitter.com/Kzoo_Gazette/status/237611800441520128

Twitter [Michigan Department of Transportation - Southwest]

https://twitter.com/MDOT_Southwest/status/237584055913312258

Prince William County Courthouse Reopened Following Bomb Threat - Manassas, VA

MMC IOI#3948 Update#1

Monday, August 20, 2012

2:56 PM

The Prince William County Courthouse was closed and streets were shut down Monday due to a bomb threat.

The courthouse was evacuated around noon after authorities received the threat, but was back open within a couple of hours.

Bomb-sniffing dogs were utilized to check the area for explosives.

Media Sources

Inside NoVa

<http://www2.insidenova.com/news/2012/aug/20/2/bomb-threat-closes-prince-william-county-courthous-ar-2143466/>

Car Bomb Explosion Kills At Least 8, Wounds 50 - Gaziantap, Turkey

MMC IOI#3949 Update#0

Monday, August 20, 2012

3:46 PM

- A car bomb exploded near a police station in southeast Turkey on Monday, killing at least eight people and wounding 50, a city official reported
 - The blast occurred in Gaziantap, a main city that has so far been spared from violence wrought by the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK
 - Television footage showed firefighters attempting to douse a fierce blaze ignited by the explosion that gutted a number of vehicles
- There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast, and authorities are uncertain of the exact target or motive

Media Sources

Twitter [The Associated Press]

<https://twitter.com/AP/status/237628327450521600>

Twitter [Daiy Star Lebanon]

<https://twitter.com/DailyStarLeb/status/237624245881036800>

New Evacuation Warnings Issued

NOC 1533-12[Ponderosa Fire - Tehama County, CA]

Monday, August 20, 2012 8:34 PM

The California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection is alerting people of possible evacuations in the area of Hwy 36 at Oasis Springs Rd. to Lassen Lodge near the Ponderosa Fire. The alert covers both sides of the highway, and includes the Ponderosa Sky Ranch, the Canyon View Loop area and Lassen Lodge.

As of Monday morning, the fire, which crews have been able to keep south of Hwy 44, had burned 15,000 acres and was five percent contained. Late Sunday and early Monday, bulldozers were able to hold some lines and draw new lines around parts of the blaze. However, the fire crossed into the Battle Creek drainage, which officials believe could present new challenges.

Media Sources

KRCR-TV

<http://www.krcrtv.com/news/local/UPDATE-CAL-FIRE-Issues-New-Warnings-for-the-Ponderosa-Fire/-/14322302/16184252/-/okeg6n/-/index.html>

Minnesota Records First Case Of New Swine Flu Variant

MMC IOI#3689 Update#4

Monday, August 20, 2012 8:46 PM

- Minnesota has recorded its first confirmed case and a second probable case of a new swine flu strain, which is known as variant H3N2 (H3N2v)
 - The cases are in siblings who probably were exposed when their family visited a live animal market in Dakota County on Aug. 10
 - Neither child required hospitalization and both are recovering, the Department of Health said Monday in a news release
- Over 200 cases have been reported in eight other states, mostly in children who visited state or county fairs, where pigs were on exhibit

Media Sources

Twitter

Minn. records first cases of new swine flu strain: (AP) — Minnesota has recorded its first confirmed case and a ... <http://bit.ly/PPfdAQ> - 20 Aug., 1958 E

Al Qaeda-Linked Taliban Commander Killed In Kunar Province Drone Strike - Afghanistan

MMC IOI#3941 Update#1

Monday, August 20, 2012 9:39 PM

- The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) confirmed that an al Qaeda-linked Taliban commander was killed in an airstrike in Kunar province
 - The leader, who was identified by the name Yasir, was one of several insurgents killed in an airstrike in the Watahpur district, ISAF reported
 - On August 8, Yasir was involved in an Asadabad district suicide attack, which left three U.S. soldiers and an United States Agency for International Development foreign service officer dead
- The Watahpur district in Kunar has emerged as an important hub for al Qaeda and allied terror groups, such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba
 - Since the end of May, five senior al Qaeda leaders and two Lashkar-e-Taiba leaders have been killed in airstrikes in Watahpur

Media Sources

Long War Journal

http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/al_qaeda-linked_tali_2.php

Mustang Complex Fire Acreage Increases; Full Containment Expected Sept. 30 - ID

MMC IOI#3921 Update#2

Monday, August 20, 2012 9:54 PM

The Mustang Complex's five fires covered an estimated 89,859 acres and were six percent contained at last report Monday, according to fire management officials.

A total of 496 personnel were assigned to the blazes -- the Mustang, Broomtail, Roan, Cayuse and East Butte fires -- as of this afternoon. Earlier, officials were forced to suspend air operations due heavy smoke conditions in the fire zone.

As of Monday, the fires were reported to be burning west of Spring Creek, north of the Salmon River, east of Lucky Ridge, and south of Horse Creek, Gattin Ranch and Bronco Lake.

Fire officials expect full containment by September 30.

Media Sources

KMVT-TV

<http://www.kmvt.com/news/local/Mustang-Complex-Fire-Grows-To-89859-Acres-166797946.html>