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~~FBI INTERNAL ONLY~~



COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION  
NATIONAL JOINT TERRORISM TASK FORCE



*FBI Strategic Plan to Curb Violent Extremism  
Countering Violent Extremism Office*

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI's primary threat priority is to protect the United States from terrorist attacks and mitigate the threat as expeditiously as possible using available investigative means. In the past several years, American communities were targeted by numerous international and domestic terrorist organizations, lone wolf offenders, active shooters, or homegrown violent extremists. This increasingly violent threat landscape resulted in the development of a strategic plan to counter this trend and address the catalysts to these emerging issues.

(U//~~FOUO~~) This strategic plan is in direct response to the August 2011 White House mandate entitled *Empowering Local Partners To Prevent Violent Extremism In The United States*, which outlines the Federal Government's role in empowering American communities and their local partners to prevent violent extremism. This mandate enhances information sharing, facilitates a greater understanding of the threat from radicalization, strengthens law enforcement cooperation and expertise, and assists communities in building resilience against extremist propaganda.

(U//~~FOUO~~) In December 2011, the White House issued the *Strategic Implementation Plan For Empowering Local Partners To Prevent Violent Extremism In The United States (SIP)*, which identified the FBI as a leader for conducting outreach, raising community awareness, challenging justifications for violence, while upholding civil rights and liberties. The SIP provides a blueprint to build resiliency against violent extremism and terrorism that is inspired by al-Qa'ida (AQ) and its affiliates, and intended to be applied to other terrorist organizations or extremist groups.

(U//~~FOUO~~) The CVEO strategic plan facilitates an understanding of violent extremism in America, its behavioral components, radicalization factors, and identifies possible inhibitors to these phenomena.

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CVEO will also [Redacted]

[Redacted] to assist formulation and implementation of this strategic plan. This strategy will enhance the FBI's response to emerging threats, refine future operational and strategic activities, and facilitate development of an effective communication strategy to enhance our engagement and outreach efforts. The CVEO strategic plan will address myriad forms of violent extremism and its catalysts and will not be limited to AQ-inspired activity.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) Concept of Targeted Violence

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI defines violent extremism as *encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent criminal act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social or economic goals.*<sup>1</sup> There is neither one path or personality type, which is prone to adopting extremist views or exhibiting violent tendencies, nor is there a singular path or personality that leaves an individual vulnerable to others who may seek to impress these views or tendencies upon them. There are no individually unique behavioral changes for those who mobilize to violent extremism.

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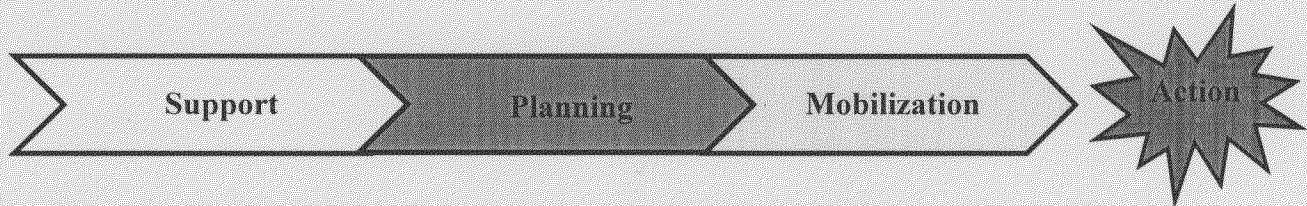
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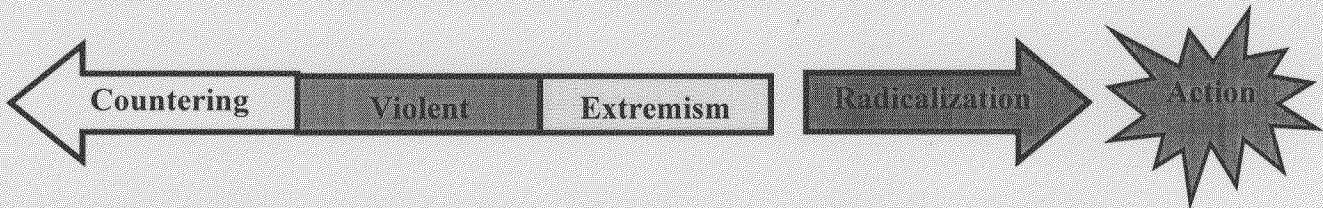


(U//~~FOUO~~) Understanding Behavioral Dynamics

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI, the IC, academia, and other countries, have conducted social science research to understand the catalysts driving violent behavior. The dilemma in this evaluation process is to identify when an individual passes from thought to action, which involves an escalation of behavior towards radicalization. Once radicalized, some individuals act upon their thoughts and become mobilized.



(U//~~FOUO~~) The community and its partners must either recognize when an individual exhibits “*radicalized*” behavior or take preemptive action during mobilization and subsequent execution of their intended plans. The IC refers to intervention along this behavioral continuum as “*Left of Boom*”, illustrating that countering extremist views can take place at any time during the behavioral progression leading up to a violent act. Intervention may take many forms, including risk mitigation and conflict resolution, disengagement, de-radicalization, or arrest.



(U//~~FOUO~~) Numerous behavioral models outline the dynamics and factors leading to violent extremism. Most notably, violent extremism is not a linear progression, but an evolving, dynamic situation involving numerous factors, catalysts, inhibitors, and mobilization variables. The Pyramid Model on activism and radicalization contends that once an individual experiences changes in feelings, beliefs, or actions, the need for activism becomes the primary motivator — manifesting in increased levels of radicalization.<sup>3</sup> Behavioral experts hypothesize that violent extremism possesses similarities to other modes of social behavior and developmental models, specifically:

- Social Identity Theory – an individual’s self-image and status is directly connected to the group which they belong, resulting in social categorization. A sense of belonging becomes an important factor in pride and self-esteem. The central theme is that group members seek to find negative aspects of other groups, which enhances their self-image, but also may result in prejudice, hatred, and violence toward other groups.
- Gang Model of Criminal Behavior – a gang member feels de-individualized and willing to commit violent acts consistent with the gang’s behavior and feels less personal

<sup>3</sup> National Consortium for Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START): Models and mechanisms of Group Radicalization; Clark McCauley.



responsibility. This separation from one's self results in less accountability, reduced self-awareness, and manifests in instances of deviant behavior.

- Causation Model of Juvenile Delinquency – a child is vulnerable to detrimental influences from familial, socioeconomic, educational experiences, or ideological factors, resulting in criminal deviant behavior. The child is subjected to dysfunctional behavioral norms rather than supportive or nurturing norms, resulting in delinquent behavior. Once exposed to dysfunctional norms, the child begins to exhibit behavior that is contrary to social expectations.
- Risk Model – an individual becomes “at risk”, when three elements are present: threat, vulnerability and consequence. These three elements are not independent of each other, but rather all must be present to result in an “at-risk” individual. The sum of these three elements equate to an individual’s risk, which considers their motivation, intent, capability, opportunity, and psychological gain from acting on their intentions.

(U//~~FOUO~~) An act of violent extremism is oftentimes met with a reflexive response involving investigation, increased security measures, or possibly military action. The FBI is well positioned as a premier law enforcement agency to address a reflexive response. An act of violent extremism must also include a reflective response, which assesses the underlying causes and motivations behind the violent act.<sup>4</sup>

(U//~~FOUO~~) To understand and counter the behavioral components to violent extremism, CVEO

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<sup>4</sup> DOD White Paper on Countering Violent Extremism - Scientific Methods and Strategies; 2011.



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- Academia/Public Sector – CVEO regularly participates in outreach with academic, grass-roots and public sector organizations, who study violent extremism and its catalysts. Our outreach efforts aid in a greater understanding of this issue and the efforts undertaken to understand the behavioral components to radicalization and mobilization.

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<sup>5</sup> The Domestic Radicalization/Countering Violent Extremism Working Group consists of the “Group of Four” {DOJ, DHS, NCTC, FBI} and representatives from the White House, National Security Staff (NSS).

~~(U//FOUO)~~ Leverage Existing FBI/Community Resources

(U//~~FOUO~~) This strategy utilizes existing resources, initiatives, and adopting best practices to craft an effective tool to combat violent extremism. The CVEO will [REDACTED]

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(U//~~FOUO~~) The CVEO will [REDACTED] Currently, the CVEO participates in extensive engagement activities, including outreach, tabletop exercises, and provides briefings to community leaders, faith-based organizations, and business leaders on this emerging issue and the FBI efforts to counter violent extremism.

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- (U//~~FOUO~~) The following table illustrates the entity, subject matter expertise, and significance to this CVEO Strategic Plan:

FBI/COMMUNITY ENTITY	PROGRAM/SME	CVE SIGNIFICANCE
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(U//~~FOUO~~) Community Outreach/Engagement/Counter Messaging

(U//~~FOUO~~) In June 2013, an article entitled “Partnerships, Public Input key to Boston Bombing Investigation” cited how effective partnerships aided the Boston Marathon Bombing investigation. Law enforcement and communities can build effective partnerships based on mutual trust, transparency, and cooperation, which helps solve local problems. The August 2011 mandate provides a framework to empower local communities to resist violent extremism through enhanced community policing. The community policing model allows for a mutual and open flow of information between law enforcement and the public, community leaders, and local organizations.

*“It’s the relationships you build up front that make or break these types of events. If you don’t have the trust built up beforehand, it’s incredibly difficult. The more work you can do to build relationships and interoperability, the more you can take those golden hours and make the best of them.”*

*– Atlanta Division SAC Mark Giuliano*

(U//~~FOUO~~) A cornerstone of the CVEO Strategic Plan is the development of a robust engagement and outreach program, including both strategic and tactical communication plans. The tenets of CVEO’s outreach will take many forms, including:

- (U//~~FOUO~~) In August 2013, the NSB ESS Communications Unit crafted a CVEO Communications Strategy, which is comprised of three distinct levels: Strategic Community Engagement, Target Specific Engagement, and Direct Community Intervention.
  - Strategic Community Engagement – FBI leverages existing state, local, and tribal law enforcement community outreach programs to recognize gaps and vulnerabilities.
  - Target Specific Engagement – FBI builds a customized targeted and case-specific strategy to understand behavioral patterns, social networking, and catalysts on specific targets.
  - Direct Community Intervention – FBI leverages relationships with community partners to empower state, local, and tribal law enforcement to engage those advocating or supporting violent extremism.

- (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO [redacted]

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[redacted] CVEO determined that “one message is not an option” as our current threat environment is diverse with many different actors. [redacted]

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- (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will continue participation in the Group of Four and National Security Staff (NSS) working groups on outreach, engagement, radicalization, and safe online surfing/internet initiatives.
- (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will continue engagement with our international, federal, state, local, tribal, academia, and civic partners on CVE activities, programs, and radicalization models. Many countries have begun to socialize their CVE programs to garner international support. CVEO will monitor these programs and ascertain those elements which were effective in curbing violent extremism within international communities and ways foreign governments addressed this issue. These international programs will aid the development of best practices and refine our Strategic Plan.
- (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO developed a Special Interest Group (SIG) on the Law Enforcement Online (LEO) portal, [Redacted]

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The SIG establishes direct connectivity to the law enforcement community and enhances our outreach efforts.

- (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO is redesigning their FBI intranet presence site to become a robust resource portal. This portal will [Redacted]

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~~(U//FOUO)~~ Threat Review and Prioritization - TRP

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~~(U//FOUO)~~ Uphold Civil Rights and Liberties

(U//~~FOUO~~) Numerous supporters of international and domestic terrorist organizations or extremist groups oppose paying taxes, espouse anti-government or -US views, oppose legalized abortion, perceive injustices, or fear persecution of select faith-based groups or gun rights advocates. The First Amendment to the Constitution protects the right of these groups and their supporters to voice their opinions; their views alone are not a basis for opening an investigation. The FBI is governed by the Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG) and must conduct our reviews in accordance with U.S. laws and regulations. This CVEO Strategy will uphold civil rights and protected liberties and will be coordinated through the Office of General Counsel and the National Security Law Branch (NSLB) to ensure our activities are in accordance with the Constitution, FBI policy/DIOG, mandates, or Executive Orders.

~~(U//FOUO)~~ CVEO Deliverables/Progress – Short Term

1. (U//~~FOUO~~) The CVEO enhanced the presence site on FBINET to collect CVE-related materials, reference documents, CVEO presentations, and links to other CVE activities. It will also serve as a repository to aid investigators in the field in addressing CVE activities. Also, a radio button will be placed on the CTD homepage to provide a direct link to the CVEO presence site.

Progress: Presence site has been updated; radio button added; new content added weekly.

2. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO established a CVEO Special Interest Group (SIG) on the LEO portal. The establishment of this SIG will allow for greater dissemination of CVE-related activities, products, academic studies, community messaging, and identify advances in addressing this issue. The SIG will contain links to other CVE programs or initiatives to allow for greater dissemination of resource materials. It will also enhance our engagement and outreach programs by acting as a conduit to our international, federal, state, local, and tribal partners in addressing the CVE issue within their respective communities.

Progress: [Redacted]

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3. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will [Redacted]

Progress: CVEO is [Redacted]

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4. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will [Redacted]

Progress: [Redacted]

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5. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will [Redacted]

Progress: [Redacted]

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Progress: [Redacted]

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7. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will [Redacted]  
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Progress: [Redacted]

8. (U//~~FOUO~~) A CVE component [Redacted]  
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Progress: CVEO met with representatives from FBI training division and has completed an initial presentation on CVE matters. CVEO [Redacted]  
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9. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will [Redacted]  
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Progress: CVEO is currently [Redacted]  
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Progress: CVEO will [Redacted]  
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11. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will [redacted]  
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Progress: [redacted]

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12. (U//~~FOUO~~) CVEO will [redacted]  
[redacted]

Progress: [redacted]