



Ever Local & Evergreen: A tour of the Washington State Fusion Center

Posted by Kshemendra Paul, ISE Program Manager on Friday, March 30, 2012

As I mentioned [in my previous post](#) ^[1], I recently visited Washington State to speak at the Worldwide Public Safety Symposium. While I was there, I also had the opportunity to tour the Washington State Fusion Center.

The Washington State Fusion Center places a significant emphasis on their robust privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties policy as well as providing the right local context and analysis in their reporting. They tailor their reporting for local officials, from the fire chief to state police agencies and the federal government.

The Fusion Center has established a program called Fusion Liaison Officers. They train public and private sector representatives who are positioned to help them identify and report suspicious activities. For example, Washington State has the [largest ferry system in the world](#) ^[2] and unique maritime intelligence requirements. The Fusion Center has developed relationships, for example, not only with the Department of Transportation and the Coast Guard, but also the local police port authority and the Longshoremen's unions to receive, share, and vet information and reports.



In addition, shortly after my [Senior Tribal Liaison Joe Laporte](#) ^[3] met with Chief John Batiste of the Washington State Patrol at a meeting of the International Association of the Chiefs of Police several months ago and requested better representation for Indian Country, the Fusion Center added eight tribal

fusion liaison officers. Four are from the Colville tribe, three from Lummi, and one from Snoqualmie.

In addition to their local programs, the Fusion Center is collocated with the [Joint Terrorism Task Force](#) [4] (JTTF) and the FBI. Several FBI agents are embedded in the Fusion Center and several Fusion Center employees are assigned to the JTTF.

While I was there, the analysts were excited about recent advances to the [Homeland Security Information Network](#) [5] (HSIN), which we have [highlighted](#) [6] [in this blog](#) [7] before. They use HSIN for secure communication, to send their reports and bulletins, and collaborate with outside offices via video conference. The analysts also provided some helpful feedback regarding opportunities for possible improvements in the national SAR Shared Space and eGuardian.

I encourage you to visit the Washington State Fusion Center - anyone is welcome to take a tour of their facilities - to learn more about responsible information sharing in action.

Photo courtesy of Washington State Parks.

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[IACP Blog: Improving Information Sharing by Chief John Batiste](#) [10]

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[2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_State_Ferries

[3] <http://ise.gov/users/joe-laporte>

[4] <http://www.justice.gov/jttf/>

[5] http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/gc_1156888108137.shtm

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