



(S) NSA Provides Un-'conventional' Support

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(S) There are a handful of NSA employees who, if asked what they did on their summer vacation, could include the exotic destinations of Boston and New York City on their itineraries. While they may have wanted to enjoy "chowdah," baseball, Broadway, and shopping, they instead were focusing on their role as NSAers providing SIGINT support to the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security and other national agencies at the Democratic and Republican National Conventions.

(S) I know, I know....given NSA's FOREIGN intelligence mission, one wouldn't traditionally think of NSA supporting domestic events such as these conventions. While we're striking down stereotypes, the FBI -- which many view as a "law enforcement customer" -- is also considered a member of the Intelligence Community (IC), which is why we answer their call for help in cases like this.

(U//FOUO) As a bit of background, both national party conventions were declared by the Secretary for Homeland Security Thomas Ridge and Attorney General John Ashcroft to be "National Special Security Events" (NSSEs) on May 27, 2004. Being designated an NSSE means federal resources are deployed to maintain the level of security needed for the event and area, with the goal of preventing terrorist attacks and criminal acts. The United States Secret Service (USSS) assumes the role of Lead Federal Agency (LFA) for the design and implementation of the operational security plan for the event; the FBI is the LFA for intelligence and counterterrorism (CT) support.

(S) Combine this with the fact that since Spring 2004, practically every agency, bureau, and committee has concluded that there are serious potential threats to the U.S. homeland during the national election and holiday periods and you can understand the need for domestic and foreign support for such large scale activities-or some might say, targets-as the DNC and RNC.

(C) While there are no SIGINT indications or domestic intelligence from law enforcement sources that corroborate this threat, it was the job of the six SID personnel deployed for this duty to be alert to any SIGINT that might be of interest to the other IC members present in the Intelligence Operations Center (IOC), at each convention. If needed, this information could be sanitized out of COMINT channels to be shared with non-COMINT-cleared personnel on site, or, in the instance of a threat, could be declassified -- working through the Senior Operations Officer (SOO) in the National Security Operations Center (NSOC) -- for sharing with uncleared federal, state, and local officials in the USSS-led Multi-Agency Center.

(S) NSA's presence at the DNC and RNC was duly noted and appreciated. While the "face" of this effort was the individuals sitting the NSA positions at both locations, NSA's success was definitely a team effort. Communications back to the Fort were a key concern. In Boston, the job was made possible by the outstanding technical support provided by six people deployed from ITIS' Systems Installation Services Division (AS23) and Telecommunications & Network Support to Deployed Operations Division (AS24). They provided the necessary secure communications back to NSA HQ and NSANet.

(S) In New York, we were fortunate enough to be able to use existing communications paths to access current and historical reporting and collateral. Also, while the members of the forward deployed teams were all SID personnel, they worked closely and seamlessly with counterparts in the Information Assurance Directorate, S2 Product Lines, NSOC, and NSA/CSS' Homeland Security Support Office (D08).

(U//FOUO) Now that everyone's back safely and the "lessons learned" process is underway, we

applaud all who worked to make this a success. This type of support is just one of many ways SID helps FBI and Homeland Security in support of their primary missions: Protect the United States from terrorist attacks. If you'd like additional information about SID support to FBI or other Law Enforcement Agencies, contact the Law Enforcement & Homeland Security Pillar Lead and Account Managers in Customer Gateway (S11) on [REDACTED]

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