

Testimony of
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Testimony by
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Senate Judiciary Committee
September 17, 2003

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee. On behalf of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, I would like to express my gratitude for affording us the opportunity to speak with you concerning the importance of continued support for the Safe Streets Task Forces (SSTFs).

HISTORY:

On January 9, 1992, the FBI announced the Safe Streets Violent Crimes Initiative. This initiative was designed to allow the Special Agent in Charge of each FBI field division to establish FBI-sponsored, long-term, proactive task forces. These task forces would be focused on violent gangs, crimes of violence, and the apprehension of violent fugitives. Since 1992, the FBI's Safe Streets Violent Crime Initiative has successfully aligned FBI Agents, local law enforcement investigators, and federal and state prosecutors onto SSTFs to reduce violent crime. This combination brings not only resources together in a "force multiplier concept," but it also utilizes the expertise of each agency such as the FBI's enterprise theory of investigation and the local departments' uniform enforcement actions to effect gang

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suppression. This approach also yields information sharing among the agencies involved. SSTFs are an effective, efficient, and economical initiative by which the FBI achieves its goals of successfully investigating violent crimes while committing limited resources.

To focus SSTFs' efforts, the FBI developed a National Violent Crime Strategy, a National Strategy for Organized Crime/Drug Enterprises, and a National Gang Strategy. These strategies still serve as the framework for combating violence in America. Each of these strategies uses the SSTFs in a comprehensive plan to address investigations and prosecutions.

SSTF MISSIONS:

SSTFs focus primarily upon street gang and drug-related violence, address specific violent crime problems through the teaming of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers and prosecutors to conduct long-term, proactive investigations. In addition, the SSTFs addresses the most significant violent fugitives investigations.

VIOLENT GANG TASK FORCES target violent street gangs and their associates

responsible for gang-related criminal activity. Additionally, they place a specific emphasis on the identification of the major violent street gangs/drug enterprises which pose significant threats to the integrity of our society. The FBI is identifying and targeting violent street gangs as a priority matter by utilizing SSTFs.

MAJOR THEFT/TRANSPORTATION CRIMES TASK FORCES target violent, major theft groups to include armed truck hijackings, armed automobile hijackings, and major jewelry robbery rings.

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VIOLENT CRIME TASK FORCES address specific crime problems, including bank robbery, armed robbery, kidnaping, extortion, murder for hire, firearms violations, RICO violations, and the Interstate Transportation in Aid of Racketeering statute and Hobbs Act.

FUGITIVE TASK FORCES are responsible for locating and apprehending the most violent federal and state fugitives. As part of the Safe Streets Violent Crime Initiative to reduce violent crime by arresting fleeing felons, the FBI created SSTFs with state and local agencies to specifically apprehend violent fugitives. These task forces utilize the federal Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution/Confinement Statute to apprehend those violent fugitives who have traveled interstate and beyond the reach of local law enforcement and justice agencies.

SSTFs' OPERATIONS:

SSTF's focused on gangs are applying investigative techniques and strategies which the FBI has successfully used to target traditional organized crime, including the development of a solid intelligence base, undercover operations, and the application of various electronic surveillance techniques. SSTFs pursue these gangs through sustained, proactive, multi-

divisional, coordinated investigations under RICO and Continuing Criminal Enterprise Statutes. In numerous cities, SSTFs are targeting individuals or groups associated with the Bloods, Crips, Black Gangster Disciples Nation, Mara Salvatrucha 13, Almighty Latin Kings Nation, Jamaican Posses, and other violent street gangs, along with outlaw motorcycle gangs and prison gangs. By applying the same methods used in the successful war on traditional organized crime, SSTFs are

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developing racketeering and continuing criminal enterprise cases to remove the leadership and the most dangerous members of violent street gangs and to seize gang members' assets.

Along with gang investigations, the investigation of other specific violent crimes of kidnaping, bank robberies, and drug related murders, as well as an intensified focus on the apprehension of dangerous fugitives, continues to be a primary purpose for the SSTFs.

There are approximately 75 FBI led SSTFs focused primarily upon gangs, another 50 FBI-led SSTFs focused primarily on specific violent crimes and fugitives, and another 15 FBI-led SSTFs directed at major theft and transportation crime matters. These SSTFs employed 566 FBI Agents, 63 other federal agents, and 899 local and state law enforcement agencies in fiscal year 2003.

BENEFITS TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT:

The task force concept increases the effectiveness and productivity of limited personnel and logistical resources, avoids duplication of investigations and consequent wasteful expenditure of resources in matters of concurrent jurisdiction, and expands the cooperation and communication among federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

SSTFs allow the application of sophisticated investigative techniques normally associated with complex organized crime and racketeering investigations. Such techniques are

frequently not available to local police agencies.

Community outreach is another portion of the Safe Streets Violent Crime Initiative which seeks to develop a partnership between law enforcement and community leaders

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to coordinate community resources and community action against violent crimes. State and local agencies are well established with community outreach programs to deter violent crimes. The FBI-led SSTFs foster a liaison between the FBI and these state and local agencies' community outreach programs to further support the activities of the FBI's other investigative programs.

FUNDING:

Beginning in fiscal year 1996, the Congress provided a recurring \$5 million to the FBI for SSTF and Safe Trails Task Forces--that address violent criminal activities on Native American lands--through the Violent Crimes Reduction Program (VCRP). The VCRP allowed the FBI to carry forward any unobligated funds to the next fiscal years. With the dissolution of the VCRP in 1999, the \$5 million for SSTFs was included within the FBI's yearly, direct appropriation.

Thus far, the FBI has been able to fund its SSTF obligations, such as overtime, through a combination of the \$5 million base level funding and the VCRP carry-over funds. These carry-over funds, however, will be exhausted by the end of fiscal year 2003.

SUMMARY:

In summary, it is noted that SSTFs are extremely successful in fighting violent crime. They "force multiply" federal resources, benefit local law enforcement efforts, eliminate duplicitous investigative efforts, reduce concurrent jurisdictional issues, encourage information sharing and intelligence development, and reduce or impede violent crime rates.

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The continued funding of the FBI's SSTFs is necessary to effect safe streets in America and provide security for America's citizens.

Thank you.

SAFE STREETS TASK FORCE HEARING

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2003

SAFE STREETS TASK FORCES

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GANG FUGITIVE VIOLENT CRIME
MAJOR THEFT
FY 2003
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! On January 9, 1992, the FBI announced the Safe Streets Violent Crimes Initiative (SSVCI). The SSVCI is an initiative designed to allow the Special Agent in Charge of each FBI field division to address street gang and drug-related violence through the establishment of FBI-sponsored, long-term, proactive task forces focusing on violent gangs, crimes of violence, and the apprehension of violent fugitives.

? The FBI has developed a model methodology to identify a community's crime problem and develop a strategy to address that problem.

SAFE STREETS TASK FORCE CONCEPT

? Safe Streets Task Forces (SSTFs) attack street gang and drug-related violence,

as well as seek the most significant fugitives wanted for crimes of violence through the establishment of long-term, proactive and coordinated teams of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers and prosecutors.

? The FBI has developed a National Violent Crime Strategy, National Strategy for Organized Crime/Drug Enterprises, and National Gang Strategy which serve as the frameworks for combating violence in America. Each of these strategies incorporates the task force concept with a comprehensive investigative and prosecutive focus.

? Through the Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution/Confinement Statute, the FBI has traditionally been tasked with seeking the Nation's most sought after state and local violent fugitives. As part of the SSVCI, the FBI has joined forces with state and local agencies to apprehend violent fugitives that are wanted in association with violent criminal activity.

SAFE STREETS TASK FORCE MISSIONS

! VIOLENT GANG TASK FORCES (VGTF)

VGTFs target violent street gangs and their associates responsible for gang-related criminal activity. Additionally, VGTFs place a specific emphasis on the identification of the major domestic violent street gangs/drug enterprises which pose significant threats to the integrity of our society. VGTFs pursue these gangs through sustained, proactive, multi-divisional, coordinated investigations under Federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization; and Continuing Criminal Enterprise Statutes.

! MAJOR THEFT TASK FORCES (MTTF)

MTTFs target violent, major theft groups to include armed truck hijackings, armed automobile hijackings, and major jewelry robbery rings.

! VIOLENT CRIME TASK FORCES (VCTF)

VCTFs address crimes of violence including bank robbery, armed robbery, kidnapping, extortion, murder for hire, firearms violations, RICO violations, and other violent offenses that fall within the Interstate Transportation in Aid of Racketeering statute and Hobbs Act violations.

! FUGITIVE TASK FORCES (FTF)

FTFs are responsible for locating and apprehending the most sought after federal and state violent fugitives.

BENEFITS TO STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES

? The task force concept increases the effectiveness and productivity of limited personnel and logistical resources, avoids duplication of investigation and consequent wasteful expenditure of resources in matters of concurrent jurisdiction, and expands the cooperation and communication among federal and state law enforcement agencies.

? SSTFs allow the application of sophisticated investigative techniques normally associated with complex organized crime and racketeering investigations. Such techniques are frequently not available to local police agencies.

? For Fiscal Year 2003 the FBI was authorized to reimburse state and local agencies for the overtime worked by full-time members of SSTFs at a rate of \$893.29 per month or \$10,719.50 annually (based upon GS-10 step 1 of the general schedule for federal pay).

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

? Community Outreach is the portion of the SSVCI which seeks to develop a partnership between law enforcement and community leaders to coordinate community resources and community action against violent crimes. The FBI led SSTFs enhances the liaison the FBI has with state and local agencies to include community outreach matters.

INITIATIVES SUPPORTED BY THE SSTFS

! Violent Cities Initiative

! Bank Robbery Initiative

! Child Prostitution Initiative

! Violent Fugitives Initiative

SAFE STREETS TASK FORCE

PERSONNEL RESOURCE ALLOCATION

FY 1998 - FY 2003

(10/01/1998 -10/01/2003)

FY 98

54 FIELD OFFICES PARTICIPATING

TASK FORCE COMPOSITION:

FUGITIVE - 23

VIOLENT CRIME - 50

VIOLENT CRIME/FUGITIVE - 33

VIOLENT CRIME/GANG - 41

INTERSTATE THEFT/MAJOR OFFENDERS - 15

TOTAL TASK FORCES - 162

PERSONNEL:

FBI AGENTS - 781

OTHER FEDERAL - 182

LOCAL - 1,207

TOTAL PERSONNEL - 2,170

FY 99

54 FIELD OFFICES PARTICIPATING

TASK FORCES:

FUGITIVE - 26

VIOLENT CRIME - 69

VIOLENT CRIME/FUGITIVE - 31

VIOLENT CRIME/GANG - 23

MAJOR THEFT/MAJOR OFFENDERS - 16

TOTAL TASK FORCES - 165

PERSONNEL:

FBI AGENTS - 750

OTHER FEDERAL - 332

LOCAL - 1,014

TOTAL PERSONNEL - 2,096

FY 2000

53 FIELD OFFICES PARTICIPATING

TASK FORCE COMPOSITION:

FUGITIVE TASK FORCES - 22
VIOLENT CRIME TASK FORCES - 49
VIOLENT CRIME/FUGITIVE TASK FORCES - 38
VIOLENT GANG TASK FORCES - 49
MAJOR THEFT/TRANSPORTATION CRIMES - 17
TOTAL TASK FORCES - 175
PERSONNEL:
FBI AGENTS - 823
OTHER FEDERAL - 259
LOCAL - 1,133
TOTAL PERSONNEL - 2,215
FY 2001
51 FIELD OFFICES PARTICIPATING
TASK FORCE COMPOSITION:
FUGITIVE TASK FORCES - 22
VIOLENT CRIME TASK FORCES - 49
VIOLENT CRIME/FUGITIVE TASK FORCES - 36
VIOLENT GANG TASK FORCES - 47
MAJOR THEFT/TRANSPORTATION CRIMES - 19
TOTAL TASK FORCES - 173
PERSONNEL:
FBI AGENTS - 618
OTHER FEDERAL - 133
LOCAL - 1,170
TOTAL PERSONNEL - 1,921
FY 2002
49 FIELD OFFICES PARTICIPATING
TASK FORCE COMPOSITION:
FUGITIVE TASK FORCES - 3
VIOLENT CRIME TASK FORCES - 51
VIOLENT GANG TASK FORCES - 73
MAJOR THEFT/TRANSPORTATION CRIMES - 15
TOTAL TASK FORCES - 142
PERSONNEL:
FBI AGENTS - 626
OTHER FEDERAL - 89
LOCAL - 960
TOTAL PERSONNEL - 1,675
FY 2003
48 FIELD OFFICES PARTICIPATING
TASK FORCE COMPOSITION:
FUGITIVE TASK FORCES - 4
VIOLENT CRIME TASK FORCES - 52
VIOLENT GANG TASK FORCES - 69
MAJOR THEFT/TRANSPORTATION CRIMES - 14
TOTAL TASK FORCES - 139

PERSONNEL:

FBI AGENTS - 566

OTHER FEDERAL - 63

LOCAL - 899

TOTAL PERSONNEL - 1,528

SAFE STREETS TASK FORCE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(FY 1996 - FY 2003*)

0

2000

4000

6000

8000

10000

12000

14000

16000

18000

1996 1998 2000 2002

Indictments/Informations Arrests Convictions

THOUSANDS

*FY 1996 is the first fiscal year that reflected official reporting requirements. FY 2003 is based on third quarter reporting, 10/01/2002 - 06/30/2003.

The Safe Streets and Gang Unit has stressed the importance of the enterprise theory of investigation in the Safe Streets Task Force investigations.

The number of Fugitive Task Forces has been reduced. This reduction has resulted in the decline in the number of arrests. Indictments and convictions have remained relatively steady until post September 11, 2001.

FISCAL YEAR

2003