

# How the terrorists watch list is identifying the local and international terroris...

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The terrorist watch list is a common repository containing the identities and information of local and international terrorists. The watch list provides a platform on which different screening agencies States. The watch list brings together three major federal agencies tasked with preventing terror in the country (Chesney, 2008). First, the watch list returns to the pool the National Counterterrorism Center. The agency manages information on international terrorist identities. The Terrorist Screening Center also shares the mission and vision of the watch list. The agency manages the federal consolidated watch list. The body helps ease the identification of possible terrorist trying to obtain visas, board aircraft, enter the country, or engage in other activities in the United States (Chesney, 2008). Lastly, the watch list also brings Transportation Security Administration agency into play. The body enhances the security of international and domestic air travel using improved watch list matching (Chesney, 2008).

Enabling easier identification of terrorists by facilitating sharing of terror information between security agencies in the United States was the chief reason for the creation of the database. Following the September 11 attack on the United States, it emerged that non-cooperation between intelligence agencies aided the terror attack. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and National Intelligence Agency were investigating the terrorist activities of the culprits since they left an Al Qaeda cell in Yemen and migrated to the United States (Kerwin, 2005). However, the refused to share the information with the FBI whose mandate is to avert domestic terrorism. Consequently, the terrorists were able to prepare for the attack while they had no one watching over them. Learning from the past mistakes, the federal government deiced

to create a shared repository on identities of suspected terrorist making it easier for all relevant authorities (Chesney, 2008).

Using a single database to catalog terrorist information, the government accrues numerous advantages. First, it makes it easier to organize and classify information. While working in a common repository, making programs to manipulate and organize the information within is much easier (Kerwin, 2005). Secondly, a single database facilitates easier updating of the information. As opposed to when the information is in different places, a centralized repository enables the relevant intelligence agencies. Lastly, using a single database facilitates proper distribution of information to the appropriate agencies (Chesney, 2008). With centralized data, it is easier to balance the access to the servers. Consequently, all the agencies requiring information from the repository could be restored to ensure information distribution is even. Moreover, makes use of central repository allows helps to avoid data redundancy across interrelated agencies.

Non-standardized policies for removal and retention of data is a primary weakness plaguing the terror watch list. Resultantly, numerous individuals in the list are not terrorists. As such, many critics argue that the weakness has the potential to support racial profiling and inequity. Secondly, organizing the data within the database has not been as effective (Kerwin, 2005). As a result, criteria for addition to the list are too minimum leading to erroneous data. Lastly, using old technology in the management of the data leads to incorrect data. Moreover, the current technology offers little integration

between the central repository and data held by other bodies like the county government, individual airlines, and other localities (Chesney, 2008).

As an information management analyst, one would advocate for yearly audits evaluate the authenticity and security of the data. Consequently, the data would become more reliable by reducing errors. Secondly, one would also advocate for the use of advanced software to make data profiling and classification. Lastly, one would propose for the use of standardized policies and procedures that determine removal and nomination into the watch list.