



# MAINE INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS CENTER



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

## Introduction

Following the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001, a need for threat information sharing amongst private and public sectors was widely recognized. In response, fusion centers were formed across the United States to address threats against the nation's citizens and infrastructure. Today, there are 80 fusion centers recognized by the Department of Homeland Security, with at least one fusion center in each of the 49 continental U.S. states.

On 8 December 2006, Maine's fusion center, the Maine Information and Analysis Center (MIAC), was created by executive order. The MIAC is tasked with protecting Maine's population and infrastructure by enabling effective communication sharing between local, state, federal, tribal, and private sector partners. Since its creation, the MIAC has supported terrorism investigations, supported large scale criminal investigations, and continues to use a proactive approach towards disseminating threat information on a need-to-know, right-to-know basis. The Center's mission is to collect, process, analyze, and appropriately share intelligence between the federal government and the State of Maine, which is accomplished through the combination of resources from principal agencies, and the establishment of relationships from all levels of government and the private sector.

The MIAC operates for criminal justice purposes and observes all applicable personal liberty protections outlined by federal statutes, state statutes, and MIAC privacy policy guidelines. 25 M.S.R.A Chapter 201§ 1801 Act to Require Annual Information Reporting by the Maine Information and Analysis Center was passed in 2021. The Act requires the MIAC to generate an annual report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters. The following report is a general narrative about the types of cases, crimes, incidents, and reports the MIAC has reviewed and processed in a manner that protected personal privacy from 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.

## Annual Information

In 2022, the MIAC made 1,916 total entries in its activity reporting systems and assisted over 500 different federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector partners for criminal justice, national security, and public safety purposes. The MIAC updated its software database in 2022 to allow for increased organizational ability and stricter protocols for conducting requests for information searches. As a result, the MIAC's total number of entries across almost all categories (requests for information, receiving and disseminating information, HSIN requests, etc.) decreased in 2022.

The most frequently performed service provided by the MIAC in 2022 was receiving and disseminating information, which occurred 985 times within the year. One notable

example of information received by the MIAC in 2022 included requests from Interpol for welfare checks and next-of-kin death notifications. An example of information disseminated by the MIAC in 2022 are felony arrest notifications in accordance with Maine's Overdose Response Strategy, an unprecedented public health and public safety partnership to reduce overdoses and save lives. It should be noted the MIAC will only disseminate information if there is a valid investigative request, and if the requesting party has a valid and legitimate need to know and right to know. Upon meeting both criteria, the MIAC evaluates and processes all information received to determine its origin, how the information was obtained, and the classification of the information before disseminating. Any information shared by the MIAC must be disseminated in a manner consistent with the mission, internal directives and procedures, and applicable provisions of the MIAC's privacy policy.

In 2022, the MIAC received 280 requests for information from our partners, constituting an almost 31% decrease from 405 requests received in 2021. Requests for information involved, but were not limited to, the following: arson, assault, assisting other agencies, bomb threats, child abuse, child pornography, criminal and death investigations, cyber security, domestic assault, drugs, escapees/fugitives, firearms investigations, financial crimes, fraud, gang activity, homicide, missing persons, motor vehicle, officer safety, sexual assault, domestic violence extremists<sup>1</sup>, racially motivated extremists, school threats, stalking, suspicious activity, terrorism, theft, threatening, and wanted persons. An example of a request for information received by the MIAC in 2022 was a request received from a partnering fusion center for assistance with a national drug ring investigation. Additionally, the MIAC provided financial crime analytical assistance on multiple financial fraud investigations with several having elderly victims.

The MIAC received 177 requests for information through the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), a 34% decrease from 269 requests received in 2021. HSIN is the Department of Homeland Security's official system for nationwide information sharing between agencies. HSIN allows agencies access to homeland security information and provides a secure platform to send requests, plan events, respond to incidents, and share information. In 2022, HSIN requests for information included multiple occurrences of swatting calls made to schools, department stores, and healthcare facilities. Additional requests included, but were not limited to, the following: arson, assault, assisting other agencies, bomb threats, child abuse, criminal mischief, cyber security, drugs, escapee/fugitives, fraud, gang activity, human trafficking, missing persons, motor vehicle, school threats, sexual assault, domestic violence extremists<sup>1</sup>, racially motivated extremists, suspicious activity, theft, threatening, and wanted persons. Through this platform, the MIAC obtained real time relevant information to share with partners as well as to assist other Fusion Centers with criminal investigations.

In 2022, the MIAC received 65 requests for Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) information. All ALPR requests were submitted for criminal investigations or missing or

endangered persons. Drug trafficking investigations were the primary catalyst among the Automated License Plate Reader information requests received, but other requests for ALPR involved, but were not limited to, the following: assault, homicide, motor vehicle theft, missing persons, robbery, burglary, criminal restraint, human trafficking, criminal threatening, illegal possession of firearms, child pornography, sexual assault on a minor, armed assault, and probation violation cases. A notable 2022 ALPR request included an ALPR for a subject involved in a hit-and-run homicide in Acadia National Park. The subject was later apprehended.

In 2022, the MIAC received 3 requests for facial recognition to assist with missing persons cold case and criminal fraud investigations. All requests were from out-of-state agencies and were forwarded to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

In addition to requests for information, the MIAC also received 71 tips and leads in 2022 in support of the MIAC's mission to protect Maine's citizens and infrastructure from the threat of terrorism and other criminal and public safety threats. Law enforcement agencies and fusion centers routinely receive tips and leads from numerous sources including the public, private sector, law enforcement agencies, field interview reports, and anonymous or confidential sources. Tips and leads information generally contains uncorroborated reports or information that alleges or indicates some form of possible criminal activity. All tips and leads must be processed, evaluated, and analyzed to determine whether the information is accurate and/or useful. The information by itself may not be indicative of a potential crime and may be based on mere suspicion or on a level of suspicion that is less than "reasonable suspicion". However, when tips and leads are collated and analyzed with correlating pieces of data from other sources, they act as essential tools towards preventing criminal or terrorist acts. An example of some of the tips and leads the MIAC received in 2022 include a notification from an educational institution regarding a suspicious letter their facility received via U.S. mail. Additional tips and leads in 2022 included a report of a subject acting suspiciously at a military installation.

The MIAC made 20 entries in 2022 into the FBI's eGuardian software, a system that allows federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions to share terrorism-related information. eGuardian acts as the repository for validated Suspicious Activity Reports (SAR's) and is an unclassified system that only approved, vetted, law enforcement and public safety officials can access. Some examples of entries in eGuardian in 2022 included an individual found in possession of a handmade pipe bomb, a school threat which resulted in criminal prosecution, and a threat to a political figure in Maine.

Another service frequently performed by the MIAC is bulletin dissemination. In 2022, there were 110 bulletins created by the MIAC to be disseminated, and the MIAC disseminated 370 bulletins that were created by other agencies. Just some examples of the bulletins regularly created and disseminated by the MIAC include the weekly firearms violence bulletin, bi-weekly cyber awareness bulletin, and bulletins

surrounding domestic violence extremism and drug information. In 2022, the MIAC also created bulletins that included topics such as bomb threats received by Maine schools and credit card fraud. Examples of bulletins disseminated from other agencies in 2022 included a statewide notification of a missing person and a notification to inform the public of a fraud scheme involving the impersonation of government officials and law enforcement. Dissemination of other agencies bulletins and MIAC-created bulletins has decreased slightly from 2021 by 11% and 7%, respectively. All bulletins created and disseminated by the MIAC are reviewed and must adhere to the MIAC's dissemination criteria. As previously noted, information is only disseminated by the MIAC if there is a valid investigative request, and the requesting party has a valid and legitimate need to know and right to know.

In 2022, the MIAC created 50 Situational Awareness bulletins (comparable to a law enforcement teletype, to include pictures) to bring attention and awareness to criminal and suspicious activity that is occurring both in Maine and nationwide. Examples of Situational Awareness bulletin topics included, but were not limited to:

- Wanted fugitives or subjects in which probable cause existed for arrest for crimes such as homicide or robbery.
- Fraud activity, to include fraudulent check-cashing attempts by fraud actors.
- Potential risks to officer safety, including threats made by individuals to engage in violent encounters with law enforcement.
- Illegal drug-related activity and information such as recent concealment methods. In 2022, over two pounds of fentanyl were found in sealed cans of beans during a search warrant.
- School threats, including hoax active shooter threats. There were 35 school threat related entries in 2022 alone.
- Information related to cyber vulnerabilities and cyber-attacks.

To provide additional awareness and security for large scale events and criminal investigations, the MIAC conducted 12 Threat Assessments. One example is the threat assessment the MIAC generated to assist in operational security during the 2022 National Governors' Association. All threat assessments promote the safety and protection of Maine's citizens, law enforcement, and event participants by assisting security planners, other federal, state, and local government authorities, and private sector partners in identifying priorities for prospective support measures against terrorism and other existing and emerging threats involving planned events.

Upon request and in support of public safety agencies, the MIAC can assist in the pre-planning and organization for special and/or significant events to ensure the safety of



participants, regardless of potential social or political significance behind the events. This support may include the completion of an applicable assessment and the utilization of publicly available material (such as open-source tools and resources) to determine whether criminal activity and/or public safety risk has occurred or may occur at such incidents by participants or counter demonstration groups. If the Special Event Threat Assessment does not identify any risk or threat based on specific articulable facts, then the assessment is not disseminated beyond those who are serving in a public safety role for the event.

The Constitutions of the United States of America and State of Maine guarantee, among other rights, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of the Press, and Freedom of Peaceable Assembly. Occasionally the MIAC will report on First Amendment-protected activities to raise general situational awareness and protect the safety and security of persons participating in and observing such activities, the public, and law enforcement personnel. Political or social motivations of a group do not negate the constitutional rights of the group itself or its law-abiding participants to exercise their individual liberties under the First Amendment. The MIAC recognizes that Americans have constitutionally protected rights to assemble, speak, and petition the government for a redress of their grievances. The MIAC safeguards these First Amendment rights and only reports on event activities for operational planning in the interest of assuring the safety and security of any demonstrators, counter demonstrators, and the public and to raise situational awareness for public safety officials.

Another service provided by the MIAC in 2022 related to the utilization of software, such as RISS Officer Safety Event Deconfliction System (RISSafe) to aid in disseminating threat information. In 2022, the MIAC made 33 entries into RISSafe, a nationwide system developed to enable law enforcement deconfliction surrounding investigations. The system prevents officers or citizens from being unintentionally hurt or killed by preventing interference with other agency's officers or investigations.

## **2022 Privacy Audits**

The MIAC conducted 2 Privacy Audits in 2022. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Privacy Audits are attached.

## Citations

1. Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2022, October). <https://www.dhs.gov>. Retrieved from Federal Bureau of Investigation: [Strategic Intelligence Assessment and Data on Domestic Terrorism](#)