

NATIONWIDE SAR INITIATIVE



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NATIONWIDE SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING (SAR) INITIATIVE (NSI)

Every day, in the course of their duties, law enforcement officers observe suspicious behaviors and receive such reports from concerned civilians, private security, and other government agencies. Until recently, this information was generally stored at the local agency and shared only within the agency as part of an incident reporting system. The NSI has taken the processes that law enforcement agencies have used for years and established a unified, standards-based approach for all levels of government to gather, document, process, analyze, and share information about behavior-based suspicious activities that potentially have a nexus to terrorism, while rigorously protecting the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of all Americans.

NSI TECHNOLOGY

To support the operational mission, the NSI Federated Search facilitates information sharing using the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). NIEM enables information sharing, focusing on information exchanged among organizations as part of their current or intended business practices. The NIEM exchange development methodology results in a common semantic understanding among participating organizations and data formatted in a semantically consistent manner. NIEM will standardize content (actual data exchange standards), provide tools, and manage processes.

By utilizing NIEM, the NSI has made it possible for agencies to search and share terrorism-related SARs across a federated environment.

HOW SARs BECOME ACCESSIBLE THROUGH THE NSI FEDERATED SEARCH

There are two ways in which NSI participants can make their SARs available to the NSI Federated Search: by installing an NSI Shared Space Server or by creating an eGuardian account. NSI participants can access the NSI Federated Search through the Regional Information Sharing Systems® Secure Intranet (RISSNET™) or Law Enforcement Online (LEO). Participants will be able access the search through Homeland Security Information Network Law Enforcement (HSIN LE) sometime in the future.

NSI SHARED SPACE SERVER

The NSI Shared Space Server is a server designed to map the data elements of the local fusion center from their existing legacy system utilizing the SAR Functional Standard (1.5) as the national SAR data standard. This process serves multiple

purposes: (1) normalizes local data so that it can be searched not only by specific data elements but also by key word searches in the narratives, (2) eliminates the need for officers and fusion center staff to enter information a second time since it was already entered in their resident legacy system, (3) prevents local agencies and/or fusion centers from changing the way they currently collect SARs, and (4) allows the fusion center to maintain local control of the SAR information while still sharing on a national level. The shared space server is a key element of the NSI Federated Search capability and is used not only by the fusion centers but also by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) eGuardian and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to allow for seamless searches of SAR data nationwide and across federal, state, local, and tribal agencies.

EGUARDIAN

eGuardian provides participating partners—state, local, and tribal (SLT) law enforcement—with access to an unclassified reporting system in which SARs can be input and shared directly with the FBI and, after initial approval, will be accessible to specially vetted representatives of other federal and SLT law enforcement partners. These SARs should help facilitate situational awareness with respect to potential terrorism threats. Sharing these reports will eliminate the jurisdictional and bureaucratic impediments that otherwise delay communication of this important information that is necessary to enhance our national security posture. The eGuardian system can be accessed through LEO.

QUESTIONS?

For more on the NSI, please visit nsi.ncirc.gov or contact the NSI Program Management Office at NSIPMO@usdoj.gov; (202) 514-0617.

SAR IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

- Recognize the importance of implementing a SAR process.
- Identify existing SAR processes and determine what SAR processes need to be developed.
- Incorporate national guidelines into standard operating procedures.
- Implement an agency privacy policy.
- Train all agency personnel on the SAR process.
- Institutionalize the SAR process within the agency.
- Educate the community on the SAR process.
- Partner with others and connect to information sharing networks.

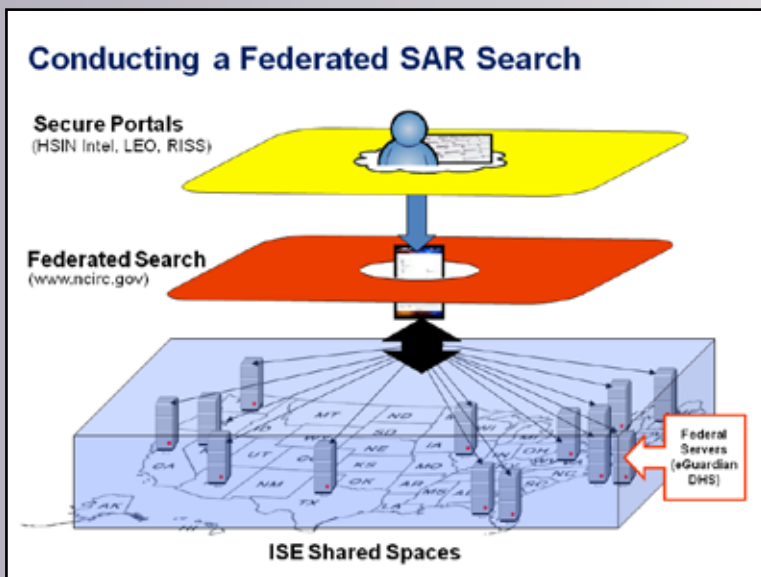
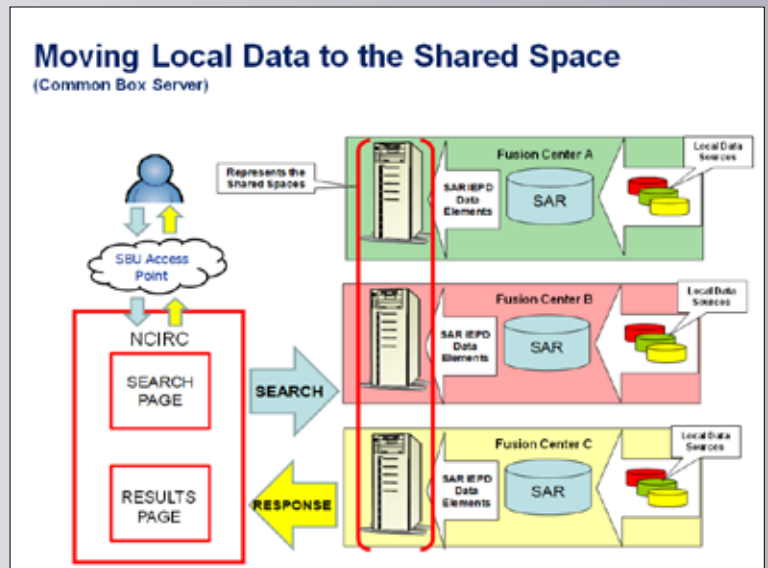
FOR MORE INFORMATION: **NSI.NCIRC.GOV**

TECHNICAL DIAGRAMS FOR THE ISE-SAR SHARED SPACE

The right side of the graphic shows on the right local information being gathered from sources such as RMSs, CADs, tip lines, etc., and then moved into a local SAR database. A vetting process must be completed by the fusion center, which will then decide which SARs are moved to the shared space server.

The shared space server has the same data structure at all locations based on the SAR IEPD.

The left side of the graphic shows the secure user access of the NSI Search Tool limiting user access to only the data stored in the common box server.



This three-dimensional graphic shows the current locations of the shared spaces common boxes, the connectivity through existing secure portals, and the single access point through the NCIRC.gov Web page.

- The yellow layer is the secure access.
- The red layer is the NSI Search Tool access point through the NCIRC.gov secure location.
- The blue box appears over all locations—this depicts what the shared spaces concept actually means: it is not one location but all working together.

Slide shows the 3 options for getting SARs to the JTTF, since the JTTF has the primary responsibility for investigating terrorism SARs.

- Option 1 – A direct call from an agency to the JTTF for incidents requiring immediate attention.
- Option 2 – Submitting a SAR utilizing eGuardian, in which a user completes the eGuardian Web form, the entry is vetted, and once all approvals are in place, the SAR becomes viewable by all users. This approved SAR is also moved to the eGuardian shared space, where it is searchable through the NSI Federated Search.
- Option 3 – This is the process, as depicted in graphic 1 above, in which local data is moved to the local database, vetted, and then moved to the shared spaces server to be accessed by the other partners. This option also provides for an electronic push of a selected SAR to the JTTF.

All these options are what constitute the Nationwide SAR Initiative (NSI). All options work together as a unified program.

