Protective Security Advisor Program Overview

Program Overview

In 2004, the Risk Management Division (RMD) Field Operations Branch (FOB), established the Protective Security Advisor (PSA) Program, deploying a cadre of 68 critical infrastructure security specialists, with an average of 20 years of law enforcement, military, and anti-terrorism experience, permanently assigned to 60 metropolitan areas designated as PSA districts across the United States. In order to represent the Department of Homeland Security at the Federal, State, territorial, local, and tribal levels, PSAs were deployed to provide a local perspective to the national risk picture and serve as the Department of Homeland Security's on-site critical infrastructure and vulnerability assessment specialists, and as a vital channel of communication for officials and private sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure and key resources (CI/KR) assets seeking to communicate with the Department of Homeland Security.

Given the initial success of the PSA Program and levels of support required for 68 field personnel, FOB and PSA Program management identified the immediate need for a more robust PSA leadership structure. In order to optimize efficient management of the PSA Program, and to meet the intent of the Congress in directing the placement of positions in the field, one additional PSA position (located at PSA Program headquarters) and nine Supervisory PSAs (eight of which are located in the field and one at PSA Program headquarters) were added, bringing the total strength of the Program to 78.

A PSA's primary responsibilities are:

- To assist in the identification of CI/KR assets, be knowledgeable of all high-priority assets and corresponding interdependencies in their State or district, and assist in collecting and verifying information related to these assets.
- To maintain a close working relationship with Federal, State, territorial, local, and tribal public safety officials, especially law enforcement, and owners and operators of CI/KR.
- To serve as a communications conduit between the Department of Homeland Security and the State, territorial, local, and tribal protective security community, to include providing information related to possible threats, protective security best practices, and other issues.
- To coordinate risk reduction efforts and protective security initiatives requiring Federal involvement.
- To coordinate requests from CI/KR assets for services and resources to include training, scheduling of Site Assistance Visits (SAVs), Buffer Zone Plans (BZPs), Comprehensive Reviews (CRs), and verification and technical assistance visits.
- To function, when needed, as the "on-scene" Office of Infrastructure Protection (IP) representative within State and local emergency operations centers (EOCs), as well as at sites of potential or suspected terrorist or other incidents.
- To perform duties as the Infrastructure Liaison at the Joint Field Office (JFO) in support of the Principal Federal Official (PFO).
- To support the officials responsible for special events planning and exercises in their district.