

The Secret Service Did Not Identify Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2011 White House Shooting Incident





DHS OIG HIGHLIGHTS

The Secret Service Did Not Identify Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2011 White House Shooting Incident

December 17, 2015

Why We Did This Inspection

This review is part of an overall review of the Secret Service's presidential protective function to determine whether in three incidents the Secret Service followed its own protective policies, what actions were taken to correct identified deficiencies, and whether these corrections are adequate.

What We Recommend

We make no recommendations in this report.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202) 254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov

What We Found

The Secret Service responded immediately to a November 2011 incident in which shots fired from an assault rifle hit the White House and participated in the ensuing investigation. However, the Secret Service did not conduct a formal after action review or a detailed analysis of its protective operations or investigative response, so it is not clear whether protective policies were followed.

After the incident, the Secret Service spent at least \$17 million to improve infrastructure around the White House and increase patrols; however, without a formal after action review and detailed analysis, the Secret Service cannot be certain these changes were necessary, would have minimized the potential threat, or improved the response to the incident.

Although the Secret Service has conducted after action reviews, defining what should be included in such reviews and completing a detailed analysis would help the Secret Service determine causes, necessary corrective actions, and future requirements. It would also help ensure informed decisions about necessary changes and effective use of budget and resources. Our review of this incident also identified concerns about potential vulnerabilities related to chain-of-command communication, training, and radios. We are continuing to review the other two incidents and the Secret Service's actions, so we make no recommendations in this report; we will include our recommendations in our final report.

Secret Service Response

The Secret Service responded with general comments, which we included in an appendix to this report, as well as technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20528 / www.oig.dhs.gov

December 17, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Joseph P. Clancy
Director
United States Secret Service

FROM:

John Roth 
Inspector General

SUBJECT: *The Secret Service Did Not Identify Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2011 White House Shooting Incident*

Attached for your information is our final report, *The Secret Service Did Not Identify Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2011 White House Shooting Incident*. The Secret Service responded with general comments, which we included in an appendix to this report, as well as technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.

Consistent with our responsibility under the *Inspector General Act*, we will provide copies of our report to congressional committees with oversight and appropriation responsibility over the Department of Homeland Security. We will post the report on our website for public dissemination.

Please call me with any questions, or your staff may contact Anne L. Richards, Assistant Inspector General, Office of Inspections and Evaluations, at (202) 254-4100.



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Background

At 8:52 p.m. on November 11, 2011, Oscar Ortega-Hernandez shot an assault rifle at the White House from Constitution Avenue, hitting the structure at least eight times and breaking a historical window, although not penetrating the ballistic glass. He fled the scene, crashed his car less than a mile away, and fled on foot, abandoning his assault rifle. He was apprehended in Pennsylvania on November 16, 2011.

Initial Response to Shots: November 11, 2011

Most Secret Service Uniformed Division (UD) Officers who heard the gunshots that night responded immediately. They notified the Secret Service Joint Operations Center (JOC), secured the area on Constitution Avenue where the weapon was fired, secured the area of the crashed vehicle, and canvassed for witnesses. The JOC notified the Park Police, Secret Service Foreign Mission Branch, the Washington Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), and the Arlington County Police Department (Arlington Police). They also identified Mr. Ortega-Hernandez as one of the owners of the crashed vehicle. Security at the White House escalated from condition green to condition yellow.

Initial eyewitness accounts from a jogger and a construction worker on Constitution Avenue described the shooting as related to two vehicles racing to merge into a single open westbound lane. Based on this initial information, the Secret Service turned the crash scene and investigative lead over to the Park Police at 9:52 p.m. The Park Police may lead investigations of incidents that occur on Federal parkland, including the Constitution Avenue site.¹ At 9:53 p.m., based on the information available at the time, the Secret Service directed Foreign Mission Branch REACT teams, which had joined the search for the shooter, to return to normal duties. According to radio transmissions from that night, the Secret Service searched the Ellipse, asked that the Organization of American States building be searched, and searched vehicles parked in the south lots for evidence.

The Park Police, MPD, and Arlington Police continued to search for the owner of the abandoned vehicle. Park Police Special Agents interviewed witnesses on Constitution Avenue, including UD Officers. They also spoke to Idaho Falls, Idaho, police and determined that Mr. Ortega-Hernandez had left home a month ago. At 11:15 p.m., the Secret Service Protective Intelligence Operations Center instructed a Secret Service Special Agent to interview a witness who

¹ 16 U.S.C. § 1a-6 and *Cooperative Agreement: Federal Bureau of Investigation Police and MPDC*, William Welby, Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Charles H. Ramsey, Chief of Police, Metropolitan Police Department, March 22, 2011.



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initially “tweeted” from a vehicle on Constitution Avenue that a shooter fired at the White House; later, the witness tweeted that shots were fired in front of the Ellipse, not directly at the White House.

Motive Established: November 12–13, 2011

The following morning, Saturday, November 12, 2011, Secret Service Special Agents interviewed the witness who had tweeted observations the previous night; the witness said the gunshots were not directed at another vehicle. The Special Agents forwarded the information to the Park Police Special Agents, who interviewed the witness that night. During the day, Park Police Special Agents spoke by telephone to Mr. Ortega-Hernandez’s relatives in Idaho, and the Idaho Falls Police Department. They also obtained a photograph of Mr. Ortega-Hernandez from the Arlington Police, who had encountered Mr. Ortega-Hernandez on Friday, November 11, 2011, before the shooting. By 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, the Park Police had issued a Be On The Lookout (BOLO) for Mr. Ortega-Hernandez. After seeing the BOLO, Arlington Police reported that they had encountered Mr. Ortega-Hernandez a second time, earlier that day (November 12th).

After working most of November 12th with the United States Attorney’s Office (USAO), the Park Police obtained an arrest warrant against Mr. Ortega-Hernandez at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 13th, from the Washington, DC, Superior Court, for carrying a deadly weapon.² Later in the day, the Park Police spoke again to Mr. Ortega-Hernandez’s sister and his former girlfriend, who described Mr. Ortega-Hernandez as paranoid about the Government. They also spoke to a family friend in Pennsylvania with whom Mr. Ortega-Hernandez had been staying at a hotel after leaving Idaho. At 7:46 p.m., the mother of Mr. Ortega-Hernandez’s former girlfriend called the Park Police to say that Mr. Ortega-Hernandez had previously threatened to kill President Obama. The Park Police called the Secret Service to inform them of the possible threat. Following this call, the Secret Service’s Lead Special Agent spoke to Mr. Ortega-Hernandez’s former girlfriend, who confirmed that Mr. Ortega-Hernandez had previously indicated he wanted to hurt President Obama. The Secret Service then issued a national BOLO in addition to the Park Police’s BOLO, describing Mr. Ortega-Hernandez as armed and dangerous.

Investigation Intensifies: November 14–16, 2011

Based on information that Mr. Ortega-Hernandez had indicated he wanted to hurt one of the Secret Service’s designated protectees, on Monday, November

² DC Code 4504(a-1)



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14, 2011, the Secret Service took the investigative lead. The Park Police continued to process evidence and interview witnesses in Washington, DC. The Secret Service deployed nine teams to canvass northern Virginia and Washington, DC. Special Agents traveled to Idaho Falls to obtain testimony and evidence from Mr. Ortega-Hernandez's friends and family. Special Agents in Pennsylvania visited the hotel where Mr. Ortega-Hernandez had been staying with family friends. They interviewed the family friends and distributed Mr. Ortega-Hernandez's photograph to the hotel staff. They also alerted law enforcement officers on routes Mr. Ortega-Hernandez might travel to flee the Washington, DC, area.

The Park Police, Secret Service, and the USAO began preparing for prosecution of Mr. Ortega-Hernandez, based on his threats against the President. They discussed whether to call the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in to lead the investigation because the FBI has primary investigative responsibility for attempted assassinations against the President and other protectees.³ Although President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama were traveling and away from the White House, one of their daughters was at the White House at the time of the shooting.

On Tuesday, November 15, 2011, while the Park Police, Secret Service, and the USAO were discussing the charges, the White House Executive Residence Usher identified a hole in the historic window of the Yellow Oval Room and found a bullet that had not penetrated the ballistic glass. Shortly after noon that same day, the Secret Service Director's staff met to discuss the discovery and called in the FBI to lead the investigation, as required.

The afternoon of November 15, 2011, Secret Service Special Agents interviewed one of the UD Officers who had reported gunshots to the JOC on the night of the shooting. The Officer mentioned overhearing other Officers state that a UD Officer at the White House took cover after hearing "something" hit the White House following gunshots. The Secret Service Special Agents then interviewed this Officer, who confirmed hearing debris falling and reporting the information to another Officer at approximately 9:00 p.m. on the night of the shooting.

On Wednesday, November 16, 2011, an FBI forensic team gathered evidence at the White House. They located eight bullet impacts on the south side of the White House, one bullet from the White House window frame on the Truman balcony, and a bullet jacket from the windowsill of the Truman balcony. FBI Special Agents, with Secret Service Special Agents present, began interviewing

³ 18 U.S.C. § 1751



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Secret Service staff as witnesses to the shooting, eventually interviewing 31 Secret Service Officers and technicians, and a Special Agent.

At noon on Wednesday, November 16, 2011, hotel staff in Pennsylvania called the Lead Secret Service Special Agent in Pennsylvania to report that Mr. Ortega-Hernandez had returned. At the Lead Special Agent's advice, the hotel staff called the Pennsylvania State Police, who arrested Mr. Ortega-Hernandez without incident. An FBI Special Agent interviewed Mr. Ortega-Hernandez with the Secret Service Lead Special Agent present.

On Thursday, November 17, 2011, Mr. Ortega-Hernandez appeared in Federal court on the charge of Attempted Assassination of the President.⁴ He pleaded guilty in September 2013 to two charges: Injury to a Dwelling and Placing Lives in Jeopardy;⁵ and Using, Carrying, and Discharging a Firearm During a Crime of Violence.⁶ Mr. Ortega-Hernandez was sentenced to 300 months' incarceration and 60 months' supervised probation on March 31, 2014. Mr. Ortega-Hernandez has appealed this sentence.

Results of Review

Although the Secret Service responded immediately to the 2011 shooting and contributed to the ensuing investigation, the Secret Service did not conduct a formal after action review or analyze its protective operations or investigative response. A formal after action review and detailed analysis of the shooting incident would have helped determine whether protective policies were followed; the Secret Service could also have used such a review to identify vulnerabilities, best practices, and lessons learned to improve its future operations and response to similar incidents. Completing an after action review and detailed analysis would also have helped ensure informed decisions about necessary changes and effective use of budget and resources. The Secret Service spent funds to improve infrastructure around the White House and increase patrols without a full formal analysis of where expenditures would be most effective. We also have concerns about potential vulnerabilities related to chain-of-command communication, training, and radios.

The Secret Service's Immediate Response and Its Contribution to the Ensuing Investigation

⁴ 18 USC § 1751

⁵ 18 USC § 1363

⁶ 18 USC § 924(c)(1)(A)



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Although the Secret Service responded immediately to the shooting incident and contributed to the ensuing investigation, a documented after action review would have provided more substantial evidence to determine whether protective policies were followed. After action reviews allow law enforcement officials to determine whether staff followed security protocols and plans, which actions worked, what failed, and which protocols should be retained and changed for future incidents. Officials can also identify best practices and lessons learned that are hard to replicate with training and exercises.⁷

In the absence of a documented review, we had to rely on radio transmission recordings, incident reports, and evidence gathered during the criminal investigation. Most of the evidence from the investigation did not assess the Secret Service's response. Also, because some employees involved in the immediate response left the Secret Service, we had to rely on interviews with the employees who remained, many of whom did not recall details.

The available evidence indicates that, overall, UD Officers responded immediately to the incident. For example, UD Officers promptly notified other law enforcement entities, arrived at Mr. Ortega-Hernandez's crashed vehicle within 5 minutes of the shooting, and within 30 minutes, identified him as an owner of the vehicle. UD Officers also checked on Constitution Avenue for injuries and damaged property. They preserved the scene of the shooting and the wrecked vehicle for the Park Police's investigation.

In the ensuing investigation, available evidence indicates the Secret Service contributed to locating and prosecuting Mr. Ortega-Hernandez. For example, Secret Service Special Agents prepared family friends and hotel staff for the possibility Mr. Ortega-Hernandez would return to Pennsylvania. Also, Special Agents in Idaho Falls interviewed witnesses to establish Mr. Ortega-Hernandez's motive and ownership of the weapon found in the wrecked vehicle.

Evidence from the investigative case files raises concerns about chain-of-command communications, training, and radios. Specifically:

- Chain-of-Command Communication: Although one UD Officer stationed at the White House mentioned to another UD Officer having heard what might have been debris falling, neither reported this information to a supervisor. Similarly, at least one additional Officer was aware of the Officer's claim to hear falling debris and did not inform a supervisor.
- Training on Emergency Response: Most UD Officers who heard the shots responded immediately. However, a few who heard the shots halted their

⁷ Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, *Planning And Managing Security For Major Special Events*, March 2007, pages 82–83.



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response until they heard confirmation on the radio that shots had been fired. According to Secret Service officials, in certain instances and depending on their assigned positions, UD Officers are trained to hold these positions; therefore, this may have been an appropriate response.

- Training on Post Procedures: One recently hired UD Officer reported a lack of familiarity with post procedures. The Officer requested assistance from another Officer on duty, which in a continued attack could have affected both Officers' response.
- Radios: One UD Officer reported not hearing everything called over the radio due to radio static. In March 2015, staff at the JOC told us that the radio transmissions at this Officer's post were still problematic.

The Secret Service also did not assess its investigative response to identify weaknesses that might have delayed evidence collection and the shooter's capture. For example:

- BOLO Notifications: The Secret Service ran the registration of the crashed vehicle on the night of the shooting, and the Park Police verified that one of the owners, Mr. Ortega-Hernandez, had left Idaho a month ago. However, neither issued a preliminary lookout, and as a possible result, the Arlington Police did not detain Mr. Ortega-Hernandez when they encountered him the afternoon of November 12th (before the BOLO was issued).
- Searching for Suspects: Although the Park Police, MPD, and Arlington Police continued to search for the shooter, the Secret Service's decision to discontinue the REACT teams' search may have been premature because the suspect was still believed to be in the area and on foot.
- Theory of the Crime: Given the accounts of eyewitnesses interviewed on Constitution Avenue immediately after the shooting, the most logical theory of the crime was that there were two shooters and the location of the shooting was coincidental. However, the Secret Service did not reassess its level of involvement in the investigation after interviewing an eyewitness the following morning who described a single shooter aiming in the direction of the Ellipse. Given the Secret Service's mission and the relatively rare instances of shootings south of the White House, more active Secret Service assistance to the Park Police in the initial stages of the investigation may have been appropriate.
- Interviewing Witnesses: On the night of the shooting, both the Secret Service and Park Police interviewed UD Officers and other witnesses on Constitution Avenue. However, neither interviewed UD Officers stationed at the White House who heard and responded to the shooting. Had the Secret Service interviewed all UD Officer witnesses on the night of the



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incident, it might have determined sooner that shots hit the White House.

According to Secret Service officials, during this phase of the investigation, the Park Police had jurisdiction, and had the Park Police requested additional assistance, the Secret Service would have responded with any requested resources.

The Secret Service Made Substantive Funding and Resource Decisions Without Formal Analysis to Determine Requirements

Following the 2011 shooting, the Secret Service did not conduct a formal after action review or detailed analysis, yet it funded changes to infrastructure and staffing. The Secret Service reprogrammed \$17.4 million in fiscal year 2012 and requested an additional \$14.3 million in its fiscal year 2014 budget. It used some of these funds to improve infrastructure, for example by planting trees, installing additional ballistic glass, and adding security cameras. Additional funds paid overtime for increased patrols, some permanent and some temporary. The Secret Service also changed some procedures for protecting the first family. There is limited documentation explaining why the Secret Service chose the enhancements it did, and most documentation refers in general terms to improving the Secret Service's visibility or decreasing lines of sight to the White House.

Because it did not formally identify security risks and evaluate options for addressing them, the Secret Service cannot ensure it invested resources where they were most needed. Even if resource allocation decisions were correct and sustainable, without conducting and documenting its review and analysis, the Secret Service did not take steps to retain lessons learned from the incident. Effective future decisions rely on lessons learned, as well as gaining institutional knowledge.

As part of our overall review of the Secret Service, we are continuing to review areas of concern related to protective operations, as well as after action reviews and analysis. We anticipate making recommendations in our final report, so we are not making any recommendations in this report.

The Secret Service Has Taken Steps to Capture Lessons Learned

According to Secret Service officials, should a comparable incident occur now, there would be a formal after action review. Since the 2011 incident, the Secret Service has initiated several such reviews, including reviews for incidents in which its response appeared adequate.



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The Secret Service Director and Deputy Director and certain senior officials with operational responsibility for guarding the President and other protectees can initiate a formal after action review of White House incidents. Although this was true at the time of the shooting incident, officials who had this authority in 2011 no longer work at the Secret Service, so we could not interview them. Most of the staff we interviewed believed the circumstances of the 2011 shooting merited a formal after action review; some either did not know why a review had not been initiated or thought there had been a review.

We also conclude that the Secret Service is more likely to identify a White House connection to a shooting incident because it now canvasses the White House grounds when there is gunfire in the vicinity of the White House. One official noted as an example a sweep for damage to nearby buildings following a shooting incident outside a neighborhood coffee shop.

In addition, in January 2014, the Secret Service implemented Mission Assurance Inquiries, which review a particular program or incident event to assess whether policies were followed and whether protective policies or investigative operations can be improved. The Secret Service Director and Deputy Director may also authorize Mission Assurance Inquiries, which are conducted by the Secret Service's Office of Professional Responsibility. The Secret Service has conducted 19 Mission Assurance Inquiries covering various operations and incidents. For example, it conducted a Mission Assurance Inquiry in response to the January 17, 2015, shooting at Vice President Biden's residence.

Because only the Director and Deputy Director can authorize Mission Assurance Inquiries, their effectiveness depends on senior leadership's awareness of incidents. In March 2015, the Secret Service issued a directive requiring reporting of incidents that negatively impact its protective or investigative mission, which should improve management's awareness of incidents.

Management Comments and OIG Analysis

The Secret Service's overall comments are included in appendix A; we incorporated the Secret Service's technical comments into the report as appropriate.

According to Secret Service officials, this incident occurred more than 4 years ago and since that time, the Secret Service has instituted changes to its



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operations, protocols, and procedures. Officials dismissed the report as offering no new insights or constructive conclusions.

The Secret Service also commented that the report is critical of the response to the incident, but does not recognize the active urban environment, operational requirements, and multi-jurisdictional responsibilities surrounding the White House Complex. The Secret Service noted that the Park Police and MPD had primary jurisdiction in responding to and investigating this incident. Given the facts known at the time of the incident, the Secret Service maintained its personnel responded appropriately.

As our report makes clear, we understand the multi-jurisdictional responsibilities surrounding this incident. However, this does not relieve the Secret Service of its own responsibility to examine its role and build institutional knowledge by identifying and documenting both best practices and areas for improvement.

In many of its technical comments, the Secret Service indicated we did not have enough evidence to validate our conclusion that the Secret Service could not be sure it took the best actions and invested additional funds in the most effective manner in response to the incident. Throughout this review, the Secret Service was unable to provide any detailed analysis of decisions made or actions taken after the immediate response to this incident. The Secret Service could not produce detailed documentation on how it prioritized the additional investment. This assertion, in light of the paucity of available documentation, highlights exactly the issue we raise in our report—the Secret Service did not analyze its response or thoroughly document the results of that analysis. Therefore, officials did not have enough detailed, documented information for anyone to verify whether the Secret Service made the most efficient and effective spending decisions. The Secret Service also commented that it continues to examine its security protocols, procedures, and practices to identify areas for enhancement. According to officials, the Secret Service is finalizing a more formal after action process for “Unusual Protective Events,” which it expects to be in place before the end of the year.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107–296) by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*.

OIG is conducting a review of the Secret Service’s presidential protective function. In addition to this review, we are reviewing and will issue separate



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reports on a September 2014 incident in which an armed guard came into close proximity to the President and the September 2014 White House fence jumping incident. In this review, our objectives were to determine whether the Secret Service followed its own protective policies, what actions were taken to correct identified deficiencies, and whether these corrections are adequate.

We conducted 10 interviews with Secret Service staff and conducted a site visit to the JOC. We reviewed investigative case files comprising reports written by, and documents obtained by, the Park Police, Secret Service, FBI, USAO, and state and local law enforcement officers. We reviewed relevant Secret Service policies and procedures, documents the Secret Service provided to Congress on security enhancements after the 2011 shooting, and media reports on the shooting. We also reviewed radio transmissions recorded on the night of the shooting, but some of the original radio transmissions were not captured on the recorded audio tracks and we were unable to determine why.

We conducted this review between January 2015 and June 2015 under the authority of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, and according to the *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation* issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

The Office of Inspections major contributors to this report are Deborah L. Outten-Mills, Chief Inspector; John D. Shiffer, Chief Inspector; Paul Bergstrand, Lead Inspector; Lorraine Eide, Lead Inspector; Brendan Bacon, Inspector; and Kelly Herberger, Communications Analyst



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Appendix A
Secret Service Comments to the Draft Report



DIRECTOR

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20223

MEMORANDUM FOR: John Roth
Inspector General
Office of Inspector General
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

FROM: Joseph P. Clancy *JPC*
Director
U.S. Secret Service

SUBJECT: Response to Draft Report Dated October 21, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft report titled, "The Secret Service Did Not Identify Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2011 White House Shooting Incident," dated October 21, 2015. In accordance with DHS Instruction #77-01, this memorandum comments on the draft report your office has issued.

The technical comments we have submitted to you are substantive, significant, and must have a direct impact on the conclusions of the draft report. We are highly concerned that the draft report, neither in title nor in substance, accurately reflects the immediate and long-term responses to this incident. The title of the draft report by itself appears a non-sequitur in relation to the rest of the report. The incident that is the subject of this review occurred over four years ago. Since that time, the Secret Service has instituted a number of changes to our operations, protocols and procedures. The findings of this report are not only flawed, but merely report on old information, and offer no new insight or constructive conclusions; thereby, greatly limiting the overall value of this draft report.

While this draft report is critical of the Secret Service in terms of its response to this incident, it fails to recognize the active urban environment, operational requirements, and multi-jurisdictional responsibilities surrounding the White House Complex. Given the facts known at the time of the incident, our personnel responded appropriately. Our personnel immediately became engaged and promptly coordinated actions with those agencies that had jurisdiction. If our personnel had responded in force to this incident without such indication, they would have been operating outside of their authority and created critical security gaps at the White House Complex.

The United States Park Police (USPP) and D.C. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) had primary jurisdiction to respond to and investigate this incident. When the full set of facts later became clear, including that bullets had struck the White House and that the individual involved had made threatening statements toward our protectees, we promptly expanded our engagement in the investigation, consistent with our statutory authority, and notified the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) per both statutory and policy requirements. Based on the work of our



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employees, and those of our law enforcement partners, the individual in question was apprehended within two days.

While the draft report does not make recommendations, it mentions that the Secret Service would benefit from a robust after action review process. Decisions concerning the breadth and scope of after-action reviews are made more complicated when a criminal prosecution is underway. While criminal proceedings are pending, the possibility of an internal investigation interfering with or otherwise negatively impacting the prosecution efforts of the United States Attorney's Office is often a factor that must be considered in regard to an agency's ability to conduct such a review. Additionally, since 2014 our Office of Professional Responsibility (RES) has conducted 19 Mission Assurance Inquiries since 2014, which well predates your review of this incident. Our Mission Assurance Inquiry Process is specifically designed to ensure that lessons learned after significant events or incidents are captured and shared throughout the agency. This process has proven to be an invaluable resource which has contributed to the improvement and efficiency of operations at the Secret Service.

The draft report also makes reference to reprogrammed money in fiscal year 2012, however, it makes no mention of the Secret Service's comprehensive security review conducted 2009-2011 that focused on our protective methodologies, manpower, and infrastructure in and around the White House Complex. In fact, the Secret Service continuously conducts internal reviews to strengthen its operational effectiveness and proactively detect vulnerabilities, consistent with the importance of the mission entrusted to it.

In closing, while we strongly agree that our organization, like all others, can benefit from robust after action reviews and analyses, we must point out that the security protocols and procedures in place on November 11, 2011, functioned effectively, and that there are many factors which might impact upon the decision to conduct such reviews and the manner in which they are conducted. In any case, however, the Secret Service has examined, and will continue to examine, its security protocols, procedures and practices to identify areas for enhancement.

Once again, we thank you for the opportunity to review the draft report, and urge you to consider how the information presented in our technical comments substantially impacts your conclusions.



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Appendix B
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