OFFICER SAFETY EVENT DECONFLICTION

Frequently Asked Questions

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Table of Contents

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1. What is event deconfliction?

Often investigative efforts, such as undercover operations, create a situation in which agency personnel work in close proximity to each other. In other situations, agencies or officers may interfere with each other's investigations, causing investigative efforts to be disrupted or, worse, officers to be unintentionally hurt or killed.

Event deconfliction is the process of determining when law enforcement personnel are conducting an event in close proximity to one another at the same time. Events include law enforcement actions, such as undercover operations, surveillance, and executing search warrants. When certain elements (e.g., time, date, location) are matched between two or more events, a conflict results. Immediate notification is made to the affected agencies or personnel regarding the identified conflict.

Event deconfliction systems store and maintain data on planned law enforcement operations with the goal of identifying and alerting affected agencies or officers of potential conflicts between officers who are conducting law enforcement operations at the same time and in close proximity.

2. Why is event deconfliction important to me and my agency?

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, over **20,000** law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty since the first recorded police death in 1791. A total of **1,501** law enforcement officers died in the line of duty during the past 10 years, an average of one death every **58** hours. The memorial also reports that over the last decade, on average, there have been **58,930** assaults against law enforcement each year, resulting in **15,404** injuries.

Event deconfliction helps support and protect law enforcement officers in a variety of ways. Officers partaking in high-risk operations are able to enhance their personal safety and the safety of those around them. The use of an event deconfliction system also helps to reduce risk and liability, improve the wellness of officers, and safeguard citizens.

Using an event deconfliction system enables officers to identify operational conflicts and collaborate with other law enforcement agencies and officers. Officers are able to leverage each other's information and successfully apprehend criminals. Often, after entering an event into an event deconfliction system, officers discover that they are investigating the same subject as another law enforcement agency or officer.

Without event deconfliction, officers may unintentionally interfere with another law enforcement operation or action, potentially resulting in injury or death to officers or a negative impact on investigations.

3.   What is target deconfliction?

Target deconfliction applies to subjects, gangs, locations, telephone numbers, vehicles, and other information about criminal activity. As a part of the total deconfliction process, this information should be deconflicted using appropriate local, state, tribal, regional, and/or federal target deconfliction systems to determine whether there is conflicting activity by other agencies involving the same information. If a conflict is discovered in either target or investigative activity, contact shall be made with the other agency to resolve and coordinate issues and information. Target deconfliction helps increase the ability to link investigations, helps connect suspects and cases, maintains the integrity of investigations, and strengthens information sharing.

4.   What is the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council (CICC), and what is the CICC's *A Call to Action: Enhancing Officer Safety Through the Use of Event Deconfliction Systems*?

The CICC was established in May 2004 and is composed of members representing law enforcement and homeland security agencies from all levels of government. The CICC serves as an advocate for state, local, and tribal law enforcement and their efforts to develop and share criminal intelligence for the purpose of promoting public safety and securing the nation. The CICC operates at the policy level—setting priorities, directing research, and preparing advisory recommendations.

In 2013, the CICC issued *A Call to Action* regarding event deconfliction, which focused on two primary areas. It stressed that in order to ensure officer safety, it is vital for all law enforcement agencies and personnel to participate in event deconfliction. It also supported the interconnectivity of the three nationally recognized event deconfliction systems. To read *A Call to Action*, visit https://www.ncirc.gov/Documents/event_deconfliction_call_to_action.pdf.

5.   What are the nationally recognized event deconfliction systems?

There are three nationally recognized event deconfliction systems:

- **Case Explorer** (used by some High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas [HIDTAs] throughout the country)
- **SAFETNet** (also used by some HIDTAs and law enforcement agencies throughout the country)
- **RISSafe** (used by Regional Information Sharing Systems [RISS] members, some HIDTAs, fusion centers, and other entities)

Each of these systems has different users and stakeholders. The systems are not duplicative but rather work together to help ensure nationwide event deconfliction coverage.

6.   What is an event?

An event is any planned law enforcement investigative operation submitted for inclusion into an event deconfliction system that requires a uniformed or plainclothes officer's personal appearance at a predetermined location for purposes such as the serving of a search warrant, an arrest warrant, or a protective order; warrant sweeps; surveillance; money pickups; stings; funeral details; parades; or dignitary protection activities.

7.   What is a conflict?

A conflict refers to two or more operations that meet the match criteria and are deemed to be in conflict with each other. A separate Conflict ID number is generated as a result.

8.   What is a watch center, and what are its responsibilities?

Operations occur 24/7/365 across the country. Watch centers ensure that operations are monitored, conflicts are identified, and officers are notified—no matter what hour. Watch centers help to ensure that conflicts are properly addressed and notifications are made to affected agencies and officers.

9.   Do all systems utilize watch centers?

Case Explorer and SAFETNet HIDTAs generate e-mails to notify affected officers of potential conflicts. In some cases, watch centers also are used to verify notification has been received.

RISS maintains staffed RISSafe Watch Centers in each of its six RISS Centers and partners with other entities, such as HIDTAs, fusion centers, and state law enforcement agencies, to serve as RISSafe Watch Centers.

10.   Are all instances of the systems participating in this effort?

Case Explorer and RISSafe are centralized systems and therefore all are participating.

SAFETNet is a decentralized system, with individual instances housed at the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) and at individual HIDTAs. Participating SAFETNet HIDTAs include Gulf Coast, Chicago/ Lake County, New England, South Texas, Atlanta, and Midwest. **Work is under way to include New York.**

11.   How does the connectivity among the three systems function?

The three systems are connected using the interface solution known as the Partner Deconfliction Interface (PDI), which was developed in coordination with each system owner's technical staff. The PDI serves as a pointer (or system-to-system) solution. When a submission is made into one of the event deconfliction systems, the PDI enables a query against the two other systems. If a conflict is identified, information regarding that conflict is returned to the submitter. Notifications are made to the affected officers.

12.   If my submission results in an identified conflict, what information do I receive?

When a conflict occurs between two or more events submitted by users utilizing different event deconfliction systems, event owners will be contacted immediately by the appropriate system to notify them that they are in conflict. The notification will include the following:

a) Event owners' names and agency
b) Phone number
c) Unique identifying number

Event owners will contact each other prior to engaging in operational activities. System owners will not release operational details. Event owners are responsible for sharing appropriate operational data.

13.   Who owns the data once it is submitted? Will my data be stored?

Participating agencies own their data. Limited data will be stored for conflict/auditing purposes only. Users are encouraged to store investigative data in available databases for target deconfliction.

14.   Does event deconfliction pertain only to narcotics or to all crimes?

Event deconfliction pertains to all crimes.

15.   Is there a Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA®), standard that pertains to the use of event deconfliction?

Yes. 46.2.8 Event Deconfliction Systems

If the agency participates in a formal Event Deconfliction system(s), a written directive provides direction regarding its use and accountability measures, to include:
>   *a.   qualifying events and contact resources;*
>   *b.   authorized users and administrators;*
>   *c.   information authorized for release to system provider; and*
>   *d.   system contacts and internal distribution of information requirements.*

Visit http://www.calea.org for more information.

A model policy is available for agencies to use in the implementation of this policy.

16.   Is there a governing body that oversees event deconfliction?

The RISS Program developed and operates RISSafe. The Washington/Baltimore HIDTA developed and operates Case Explorer. SAFETNet was developed based on direction from the HIDTA Directors using SAFETNet. EPIC houses the different instances of SAFETNet and provides access to the SAFETNet instances via the EPIC Data Broker.

The Policy Event Deconfliction Group is composed of system owners, who act in collaboration with the Office of the Program Manager, Information Sharing Environment (PM-ISE); the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA); the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); and the National Virtual Pointer System Coordinating Committee (which is transitioning into the Nationwide Deconfliction System Coordinating Committee).

The Policy Event Deconfliction Group works together to make policy decisions, identify and develop appropriate outreach, provide direction to system technology staff, liaise with partners, and provide other support and direction.

A Technical Event Deconfliction Group has also been established and is composed of technology staff members from RISSafe, Case Explorer, and SAFETNet, as well as representatives from BJA, PM-ISE, EPIC, and DEA.

17.   What is the cost of using an event deconfliction system?

There is no cost to use an event deconfliction system. Every law enforcement officer involved in a high-risk operation should participate.

18.   How can my agency participate in event deconfliction?

Upon identification of the appropriate event deconfliction system, agency personnel should contact their in-region RISS Center or appropriate HIDTA Center for more information and to obtain access.

Agency leadership are encouraged to support training for agency personnel on how to use event deconfliction. Agency leadership are also encouraged to incorporate the use of the event deconfliction into its agency policies and procedures (a sample policy is available).

However, event deconfliction should not replace professional protocols when deconflicting events with agencies in other jurisdictions.

19.   What resources, such as policy templates, are available to my agency, and how do I access those materials?

Resources, training, and materials are available for agencies. A sample agency template and other educational materials are available at https://www.ncirc.gov/Deconfliction/.