



CITY OF ORLANDO

POLICE DEPARTMENT



Statement of John W. Mina

Chief of Police

Orlando Police Department

Before the

U.S. House of Representatives

House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Concerning

“Oversight of the Urban Area Security Initiative”

Friday, July 15, 2016

2154 Rayburn House Office Building

Chairman Mica, Chairman DeSantis, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for inviting me to testify and allowing me to provide an overview of the immense security challenges that we face on a daily basis in the Central Florida Region, and the Orlando Police Department's use of the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding.

As the Committee is aware, on June 12, 2016, Orlando fell victim to the second largest terrorist attack in history on U.S. soil. Omar Mateen, a self-radicalized extremist, entered the Pulse nightclub at 2:02 a.m. and began shooting at the more than 300 patrons that were inside the club. Fortunately, an Orlando Police Officer, working in an extra-duty assignment at the nightclub, immediately engaged the suspect. Within minutes, more arriving officers broke a large window and entered the nightclub to search for the suspect. Once they found him, officers drove him back into the bathroom where he was isolated and holding hostages. The suspect re-emerged into the hallway, where officer exchanged gunfire with him, forcing him to retreat back into the bathroom. Immediately after the suspect was contained, officers on the dance floor began to evacuate victims out of the club. That night, we were faced with many challenges as the suspect claimed to have explosives that were strategically placed throughout the nightclub, including suicide vests that he was going to place on victims. Although faced with almost certain death if the suspect detonated any explosives, officers remained in the nightclub, and instead pulled many of the critically injured victims out to safety, transporting them to the hospital in the back of police vehicles. For the next three hours, the suspect held hostages and talked on the phone with crisis negotiators where he pledged his allegiance to the Islamic State. After negotiations broke down, we were forced to breach the concrete wall using explosives and our Bearcat Armored vehicle to save the remaining hostages and victims and make contact with the suspect. As rescue efforts were underway, the suspect emerged from one of the holes created by our armored vehicle and engaged our SWAT officers in gunfire. The suspect's rampage was ended at that time. Forty-nine (49) innocent victims tragically lost their lives. This was the darkest day I have ever had to endure in my 25 years in law enforcement. The Orlando Police Department and our regional partners have prepared for these types of incidents since the Columbine massacre. Although I believe we demonstrated great courage and resolve to mitigate this horrible tragedy, we can always learn from our actions and work to make them even better.

I would like to share with you the unique characteristics that make the Central Florida region an ideal target for terrorism:

- We have a combined resident population of 3.7 million people. In

2015, Orlando had an increase in tourist population from 62 million to **66.1 million in one year, making it the No. 1 tourist destination.**

- Orlando is ranked at **#4 in Top U.S. Destinations for Foreign Travelers** as reported by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, and the International Trade Administration.
- 6 of the top 50 attractions in the world are in the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL UASI region.
- Although our resident population was 3.7 million, that number grows exponentially every day as millions of visitors call Orlando “home” while they live in our hundreds of area hotels and visit all of our region’s venues.

The Central Florida Region seeks funding under the UASI grant program on an annual basis. The purpose of the UASI is to enhance our capabilities to prevent, protect, respond to, and recover from not only terrorism, but also a broad range of other threats and hazards affecting our entire region. The intent of this funding allows us to establish measurable readiness priorities and balance threats and consequences.

Since 2002, when the Homeland Security Act of 2002 was signed into law by President George W. Bush, the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) received UASI grant funds annually from 2004 until 2012, except for fiscal year 2005. However, the funding stream drastically changed in the past four (4) years. Starting in 2013, continuing up to 2016, the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL MSA has not ranked high enough in relative risk score to receive UASI funding even though we are ranked number one (1) on the MSA for domestic visitor population in the Consequence section of the formula. From 2012 to 2016, the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL MSA has appealed the relative risk score and asked the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA to reassess the data. It should be noted that in 2014, our region did receive \$1 million dollars from Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson in the way of discretionary funds, but it was not based on our MSA ranking. In May, members from our region traveled here to Washington D.C. and met with representatives from the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA regarding the concerning threats to our region and the lack of UASI funding our region has received. These critically-needed funds are used to strengthen our region’s preparedness and competency in prevention, protection, response, and recovery and are used to implement our National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP), strengthen Interoperable Communications, and expand Regional Collaboration.

The UASI funding we have received in the past has assisted us in accomplishing

many goals. Training has occurred across all five disciplines (Law Enforcement, Fire, Medical/Health, Interoperability, and Emergency Management). Hazmat training has been provided for individuals to participate in various recognized and approved technician and specialist-level courses specific to identified required competencies. Other trainings include Intelligence training, FDLE Bomb training, FBI HazMat training, NIMS/ICS Position Specific training, Fusion Center training, USAR training, Radiological/Nuclear Detection training, and operable and Interoperable communications training. Through these training exercises, we have strengthened our core capabilities within our UASI region.

The majority of UASI funds that we receive are allocated and used to purchase and sustain protective equipment within the region. This includes the continuation and build-out of a camera and video surveillance system which supports our Protection Plan. When complete, this program will give us access to approximately 500 cameras, which can be viewed remotely from fixed and mobile command centers. This ability will aid us in the protection, prevention, as well as in the response and recovery from an act of terrorism or natural disaster that would directly affect the area's critical infrastructure and identified venues that are key resources to sustaining the economic viability of our region.

We have also utilized UASI programs to fund regional exercises with their subsequent After Action Reports and Improvement Plans. The last full scale exercise in 2013 funded by the UASI was the Medical Surge exercise at the Orlando International Airport, which involved multiple hospitals in the surrounding six counties and the City of Orlando. These vital tools have assisted us in measuring and gauging the progress of regional collaboration and communication capabilities within the Orlando Metro Area. In addition to training, organization funds from the UASI grant went towards our Central Florida Intelligence Exchange (CFIX) Fusion Center analysts and operations. Since 2006, CFIX, which is nationally recognized, has been online and fully operational. The Central Florida Intelligence Exchange Fusion Center is able to share information throughout various agencies in Florida. Capabilities strengthened through this process include:

- Intelligence / Information Sharing and Dissemination
- Intelligence Analysis and Production

It is absolutely critical that we, as a region, monitor and keep up with emerging trends, improvements in technology, and updates to equipment. Due to the lack of funding in the past four (4) years, this has caused serious response and mitigation constraints as a whole. From a law enforcement perspective, this affects the much needed training and equipment for our bomb teams in Central Florida, including the City of Orlando, to have the opportunity to train or purchase equipment needed

for adequate bomb response. This was a critical component to the Orlando Pulse nightclub incident.

In 2015, we identified through gap analysis, a need to purchase a tactical robot for our SWAT teams and refurbish one of our aging regional bomb robots. Due to the lack of funding, these projects were not funded. Interoperable communication funding, which was a UASI proposed project in fiscal years 2013-2016 in order to ensure seamless interoperable radio communication between agencies within our region, was not funded and, therefore, we are not able to build out and strengthen communications with our multiple local, state, and federal partners.

Finally, for the last two (2) years, we have sought funding through the UASI grant program to conduct Swift Assisted Victim Extraction (S.A.V.E.) training for the region. This critical training teaches law enforcement and the fire service the tactics and skills necessary to save lives. In a typical response to an active shooter/mass casualty incident, fire personnel will "stage" a safe distance from the scene until law enforcement declares the scene as "clear" even though law enforcement is confident that they have captured, contained, or killed the suspect(s). This course is designed to teach law enforcement officers and the fire department the tactics necessary to enter a "semi-secure" area, which will reduce time to render aid to victims and save their lives. Without continued training, these perishable skills would surely deteriorate.

In closing, I would like to bring to the attention of the Committee that the paradigms of traditional terror attacks are changing. In the past, our identified critical infrastructures were, and obviously still are, targets of terror attacks. Based on the horrific event we experienced at the Orlando Pulse nightclub, and that of the brave Dallas Police Officers, who gave their lives while protecting innocent civilians last week, I urge the committee to consider that these attacks are becoming more frequent at venues identified as "soft targets." The Central Florida region survives on tourism, and is, thereby, filled with world-reknowned venues that are "soft targets." I ask that the Committee review the relative risk formula to better address the risk profile unique to the Central Florida region, also known as the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL MSA.

I would personally like to thank Congressman Mica for his continued and unwavering support, from the Pulse incident, to his assistance with the UASI grant funding. I would also like to thank the Committee for allowing me the opportunity to give my opening statement today. I look forward to answering your questions.



CITY OF ORLANDO

John W. Mina
Chief of Police
Orlando Police Department



Chief John Mina was born in New York, NY to Michael and Patricia Mina and has two brothers. After moving to New Jersey, he attended St. Michael's Catholic School and is a graduate of Lenape Valley High School. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice Administration from Columbia College. Chief Mina has also completed the Southern Police Institute Command Officers Development Course and is a graduate of the 254th Session of the FBI National Academy.

After serving in the United States Army for three years in the 82nd Airborne Division as a Military Police Officer, Chief Mina moved to Orlando, FL in 1990 to attend the Police Academy. He has worked many assignments throughout his career at the Orlando Police Department, including the West Patrol Division, Criminal Investigations Division (Sex Crimes Unit, Crimes Against Children Unit), Community Policing Division, Training Unit, Drug Enforcement Division, and served as the Staff Director for the Chief of Police. He has also served as the Division Commander of the North Patrol Division and Criminal Investigations Division.

In addition to his regular assignments, Chief Mina served as a member of the SWAT Team for seventeen years and was the Team Commander. Chief Mina has been recognized with numerous awards and accolades during his career including the Award of Valor, the Chief's Special Award, numerous Awards of Commendation, Community Service Awards, Unit Citations and was recognized by the Florida Police Chiefs Association for exceptional achievement and commitment to the public he serves. Chief Mina also served as the Bureau Commander for the Patrol Services Bureau.

Effective April 1, 2014, Chief Mina was appointed by Mayor Dyer as Chief of Police for the City of Orlando.

Chief Mina is a member of the Central Florida Criminal Justice Association, the Florida Police Chief's Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Florida SWAT Association, the FBI National Academy Associates, and the Law Enforcement Immigration Task Force. Chief Mina also serves on the Board of Directors for Heart of Florida United Way, Crimeline, the United Negro College Fund, the Camaraderie Foundation, Operation American Dream, the Ana G. Mendez University Advisory Board, and the Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Advisory Council.

Chief Mina is married to Tracie Mina. They have two sons, Chase (21) and Nicholas (19).