National Domestic Communications Assistance Center (NDCAC)

Program Update

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NDCAC’s Fiscal Year Budgets

- 2018: $10,987,055
- 2017: $11,441,998
- 2016: $11,701,998
- 2015: $12,201,918
- 2014: $12,201,918 (Sequestration Cut)
- 2013: $13,147,740 (Annualization)
- 2012: $8,244,000

The NDCAC’s expenditures include:

- Services
  - Technology Sharing / Tool Development
  - Technical Analysis
  - Solution Verification
  - Technical Resource / Helpdesk
- Training / Student Expenses and Conferences
- Outreach
- Equipment, Facility, Network, and Website
Technical Resource Group

- Provide assistance and technical referrals to law enforcement clients – currently more than 14,600

- Six month trend in number of clients: increase of 1,340

- Types of calls handled by the TRG
  - Access requests for NDCAC services and website
  - Interpretation of provider call detail records / cell tower information
  - Assisting in correlating service provider information
  - Assistance with legal demand (templates)

- Number of requests over the last six months: 3,497
Website

- The NDCAC’s Internet presence is composed of two parts
  - Public facing website: general information about the NDCAC and its role
  - Secure portal: restricted access information repository and focal point for law enforcement and industry collaboration

- Challenges with access are being addressed by a multi-factor authentication process
  - New users are being added using the new process
  - To date, 340 users have been added

- Existing users can switch to the new process or continue accessing through LEEP
Communications Applications

- NDCAC has collected information about popular communications applications
  - Type of legal process required
  - Information collected during sign-up
  - Information that may be available from service providers
  - Go-bys

- NDCAC’s secure website is a consolidated resource to access information about a growing number of applications

- NDCAC provides training to expand law enforcement understanding of communications applications, to know what applications subjects may be using, and information available from providers
If The Application Is Social Media…

- Social media app providers may have a significant amount of information about subscribers that could prove useful to an investigation
  - Information collected during sign-up
  - Personal profiles
  - Content generated by users (e.g., messages)

- However, providers’ records are not necessarily conducive to easy interpretation by law enforcement
  - HTML formatted files consisting of complex folder structure with no way to filter or search a specific time period
  - PDF formatted files
  - Thousands or tens of thousands of pages
  - Single returns for overlapping preservation orders result in duplicate data
How the NDCAC Can Help

• The NDCAC has developed a tool to assist law enforcement in interpreting returns from Social Network providers

• The tool ingests multiple files and parses content and media out of the return, organizes, and makes it searchable

• Exports Social Media returns to Excel compatible files

• Future development will be based on law enforcement input

• NDCAC also provides “Best Practices” training to expand understanding of social media platforms and information available from providers
Open Source Information

• What is it? Information collected from publicly available sources

• How to get it
  – Investigators begin with a general search
  – Different tools often produce different results

• Why is it important?
  – The Internet has become integral to all our lives... and we leave a trail of information with our online activities
  – However, it is critical to streamline, standardize, organize, and maintain records of open source research
How the NDCAC Can Help

• The NDCAC has a tool to search (e.g., names, email addresses, usernames) third party websites, extract relevant data, and organize the information

• Save screenshots and log website information such as page title, URL, and date/time of the information capture for evidentiary purposes

• Simple and intuitive interface and runs in a common browser
Open Source – Training

- NDCAC offers courses for Open Source techniques
  - Learn about tools and methodologies for researching and collecting open source and social media information
  - Become familiar with methods to manage information and authenticate evidence
  - Explore conventional and non-conventional search engines, how they operate, and engines’ limitations
  - Identify unique and changing populations of common social networks and find uncommon social networks
  - Learn about operational security - how to mitigate the risk inherent in online investigations
  - Understand the need to institute agency policies and practices designed to balance law enforcement needs with measures to protect privacy
Training

• Since its inception, the NDCAC has provided training to approximately 7,500 law enforcement representatives
  – Onsite classes have hosted more than 1,200 students from 400+ State and local agencies
  – Regional classes have hosted nearly 6,300 students from 1,200+ State and local agencies

• This Fiscal Year, the NDCAC has hosted 1,835 law enforcement representatives
  – 180 onsite students
  – 1,655 students in regional classes
Outreach – Law Enforcement

• The NDCAC continues to proactively reach out and educate the law enforcement community about its support, tools, and training… in the last six months: nearly 1,700 participants from over 400 agencies

• Proactive Outreach – introduction of the NDCAC and overview of Gathering Evidence from Today's Communication Technologies
  – New York NY  San Antonio TX
  – Austin TX  Stafford County VA
  – Charlotte NC  Myrtle Beach SC

• Participation in established forums
  – Tennessee Gang Investigators Association (TNGIA)
  – International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts (IALEIA)
  – Montana Department of Justice
  – Florida Gang Investigators Association (FLGIA)
  – South Carolina Gang Investigators Association (SCGIA)
  – Virginia Crime Analysis Network (VCAN)
Outreach – Law Enforcement

How law enforcement learns about the NDCAC

- Law Enforcement Colleague: 41%
- NDCAC Regional Training: 17%
- Law Enforcement Conference or Meeting: 12%
- NDCAC Icon on LEEP: 7%
- Service Provider Referral: 5%
- None Selected: 1%
- Other: 17%
Outreach - Industry

• The NDCAC also interacts with industry to gain a better understanding of future services and technologies, how they are implemented, and how they may impact law enforcement.

• Attend or monitor industry conferences / meetings that
  – Present new products and features
  – Showcase service-based capabilities
  – Sponsor special interest groups (e.g., abusive messaging and malware)
  – Identify digital forensics and data recovery techniques

• Work with service providers to understand current capabilities, requirements, and future plans for services and deployment of new technologies.

• Interact with providers to demonstrate benefits to industry - lessening the burden of addressing similar concerns from multiple agencies
  – NDCAC tools can be used to more easily interpret provider returns.