



# United States Secret Service Mission Assurance

**U.S. Secret Service Inquiry  
into the Events of July 13, 2024**

## Mission Assurance Inquiry and Synopsis

On July 13, 2024, Thomas Crooks attempted to assassinate former President (FPOTUS) Donald J. Trump at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania. During the attack, FPOTUS Trump was injured, Corey Comperatore was killed, and several others at the event were injured. While the U.S. Secret Service (Secret Service) ultimately neutralized the threat posed by Crooks, the operational failures leading up to the attack cannot be ignored.

In response to the July 13 incident, the Secret Service's Office of Professional Responsibility, Inspection Division conducted a Mission Assurance Inquiry into the factors that contributed to the assassination attempt. This internal review, which is being shared with Congress and other oversight entities, is documented in a classified report that provides a comprehensive evaluation of the agency's operational failures surrounding the event. The inquiry was completed independently of other entities investigating Secret Service deficiencies during the security planning for the Butler Farm Show site on July 13, 2024. These inquiries are being conducted by several external entities (Congressional committees, the Department of Homeland Security's [DHS] Independent Review Panel, the DHS Office of the Inspector General, and the U.S. Government Accountability Office).

The below provides an unclassified synopsis of the Secret Service's mission assurance inquiry and identifies the critical deficiencies that arose in connection with the agency's protection of the Butler rally. The inquiry identified deficiencies in the following areas: communications; protective advance processes, including the appropriate mitigation of line-of-sight concerns; command and control processes; coordination with outside entities; and other specific areas identified below.



## Communications Deficiencies

Effective communication is critical to law enforcement operations. Accordingly, the Secret Service employs radios and other communications technologies to ensure that all law enforcement entities supporting a protective visit can share information quickly and consistently. On July 13, multiple communication failures occurred, hampering successful law enforcement coordination. These failures included the following:

- Consistent with existing protocols at the time, the Secret Service designated a Butler Farm Show Site Security Room (Security Room) and planned for it to be staffed by representatives from multiple public safety agencies supporting the event. Specifically, participating state and local law enforcement, fire department personnel, and medical staff would be co-located in this security room alongside Secret Service personnel. Those representatives would be responsible for monitoring their agency's radio transmissions and serve as a conduit to relay any vital information to the Secret Service supervisor staffing the Security Room. Secret Service personnel, however, failed to ensure the Security Room was staffed as planned. Only one partner agency, the Pennsylvania State Police, provided a counterpart assigned to the Security Room.
- The Secret Service was aware that a separate, local emergency services command post would be established near the agency's Security Room. Advance personnel were not informed that the local agencies would conduct law enforcement communications from the command post in lieu of staffing the Security Room. The advance team failed to follow up and ensure the Security Room was staffed according to Secret Service methodology.
- Information pertaining to a suspicious individual, later identified as Thomas Crooks, was shared between a limited number of law enforcement personnel via direct cell phone communications, rather than broadcast widely over a secure radio network.
- The Secret Service counter sniper team did not collect a radio offered to them by their local law enforcement sniper counterparts, which inhibited direct radio communication between the teams.

These breakdowns in communication contributed significantly to the mission failure, leaving much of the law enforcement personnel performing protective operations, including former President Trump's protective detail, unaware of key information leading up to the attempted assassination.





## Line-of-Sight Concerns

The Secret Service failed to adequately address line-of-sight issues contributing to the former President's exposure to the shooter. Namely, agency personnel did not adequately address security risks posed by certain unobstructed views between the former President's podium and areas where an attack could be launched. Multiple Secret Service personnel mistakenly assessed these line-of-sight risks to the former President as acceptable, leading to inadequate elimination.

- Agency supervisors reported that some equipment they had expected would be in place for the event to eliminate line-of-sight issues were not present at the time the former President arrived.
- Supervisors later learned that the line-of-sight mitigation assets they were anticipating (e.g., large pieces of farm equipment) were not utilized. Site advance personnel failed to recognize gaps in the site's construction and failed to notify their chain of command that potential line-of-sight concerns were not fully mitigated.

## Command and Control

The Secret Service is responsible for securing venues visited by agency protectees, a mission accomplished in close coordination with state and local law enforcement partners. A critical breakdown in coordination, however, led to the failure to secure the roof of the American Glass Research (AGR) building where Crooks initiated his attack.

- As previously noted, the Secret Service did not have adequate command and control over the radio communications for the rally. Secret Service personnel in the agency's Security Room failed to adequately relay certain pieces of critical information via radio. They instead relayed critical pieces of information conveyed by law enforcement partners via telephone and text message to some, but not all, Secret Service personnel at the site.
- The Secret Service did not command the appropriate dispatch of personnel, either Secret Service or state/local law enforcement partners, to the area of the AGR building after learning about a suspicious individual with a range finder.
- Two state and local agencies supporting the Butler rally with prior experience working with the Secret Service observed that agency planning for the Butler rally lacked detail, cohesion, and clear understanding of who was in charge, all of which contributed to the overall lack of coordination.



## Use of Specialty Assets

While critical specialized units were present at the rally, they were not utilized effectively.

- Secret Service counter sniper assets were approved by the Office of Protective Operations on July 9, 2024. As such, Secret Service counter sniper personnel did not participate in the initial meeting with local counterparts. After arriving and conducting walk-throughs of the site, they deferred to local law enforcement in their selection of positioning, including the posting of local tactical personnel inside of the AGR building. This contrasted with the agency counter sniper unit's positioning on building rooftops, which afforded them an optimal vantage point to detect threats.
- Due to staffing limitations, Butler County Emergency Services Unit (BCESU) requested mutual aid from the Beaver County Emergency Services Unit for Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team support. At the time of BCESU's mutual aid request, the Secret Service had not yet deployed its own counter-sniper team. The Secret Service was unaware of its counterpart's request for additional specialized units because of insufficient coordination and communication with BCESU.

## Homeland Security Investigations Agent Concerns

It is common for Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) special agents to support the Secret Service during high-tempo presidential campaigns. HSI special agents typically serve as post standers with designated areas of responsibility rather than being utilized as close-protection agents. At the Butler rally, 16 HSI special agents assisted the Secret Service.

- While some HSI agents stated they had a clear understanding of their duties following the security briefing, others conveyed the belief that they were inadequately prepared due to insufficient instruction.



## Heat & Medical Challenges

Although the Secret Service's mission is to ensure the security of its protectees, the safety of all attendees at protected venues remains a key consideration. When on-site medical issues arise, however, they should not significantly impact the agency's overall security plan.

- At the Butler rally, which was expected to draw 15,000 attendees, temperatures soared to 90 degrees, as forecasted. Many attendees arrived well before security screening to access the event began. As a result of the long and hot day, the Butler County Director of Emergency Medical Services reported 251 requests for medical assistance.
- Secret Service advance team personnel identified a need for additional volunteer staff, more water and coolers, and improved access for public safety personnel to administer medical care. The lack of coordination with campaign staff on these issues caused a higher-than-expected proportion of security personnel to be diverted into assisting with medical responses.

## Accountability

The findings of the Mission Assurance Inquiry will be reviewed by the Secret Service's Office of Integrity. The Mission Assurance Inquiry identified several instances of behaviors and acts by multiple employees that warrant review for corrective counseling and, potentially, disciplinary action. All Secret Service employees are held to a high standard of conduct in the performance of their duties when providing protection to those that entrust us with their well-being and the safety of their families.

All individuals found in violation of policies will be held accountable. Any disciplinary measures will be imposed to promote the efficiency of the Secret Service and to encourage behaviors and principles that contribute to the success of the agency's integrated mission. Any employees who receive proposals of discipline will be provided due process under agency policy as well as any applicable laws and regulations.



## Conclusion

July 13, 2024, was a failure for the Secret Service. The protection of the President, Vice President, and major candidates for those offices is part of the vital mission of the Secret Service. The agency has made several operational, policy, and organizational changes, some because of the findings and recommendations of the Mission Assurance Inquiry, and others done proactively in the wake of the July 13 incident. Additionally, the Secret Service is examining the recommendations it has received from other entities investigating the failure of the agency in Butler, Pennsylvania.

Since the tragic events of July 13, 2024, the agency has implemented the following changes:

1. The agency is providing the highest levels of Secret Service protection to the Vice President and former President Trump, commensurate to the level of the President.
2. Increased the staffing levels of specials agents assigned to former President Trump's protective detail.
3. Expanded the use of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) for aerial observation at venues.
4. Expanded the use of counter unmanned aerial systems to mitigate the use of a UAS as a kinetic attack vector.
5. Addressed radio interoperability by requiring, and ensuring through appropriate supervision, the co-location of Secret Service personnel with state and local public safety counterparts at unified command posts.
6. Deployed Secret Service and Department of Defense personnel to assist in the development of radio communications networks, with redundancies, at Secret Service-protected campaign sites.
7. Implemented agreements with federal partners to secure additional federal law enforcement personnel and assets to support Secret Service protective operations when the agency's personnel and assets are temporarily committed to other protective visits.
8. Expanded Secret Service tactical coverage, augmented by other federal tactical units, to support protective operations for the Vice President, former President Trump, and others.
9. Expanded use of ballistic countermeasures at Secret Service-protected campaign sites.
10. Expanded use of technical countermeasures and technologies to enhance the security of former President Trump and his residence.
11. Effected multiple organizational changes to better align enabling technologies with the appropriate operational level in the agency and to leverage research and development of emerging technologies to give the Secret Service a technical advantage over its adversaries.

The Secret Service will continue to make further changes and implement viable recommendations that it receives from various entities. The agency is devoted to the mission entrusted to us and will work vigilantly to restore the trust bestowed upon us by the people we protect, the Congress, and the American people.

