



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

OIG-24-42

July 31, 2024

## FINAL REPORT

# The Secret Service's Preparation for, and Response to, the Events of January 6, 2021





## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20528 | [www.oig.dhs.gov](http://www.oig.dhs.gov)

July 31, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ronald L. Rowe, Jr.  
Acting Director  
United States Secret Service

FROM: Joseph V. Cuffari, Ph.D.  
Inspector General

SUBJECT: *The Secret Service's Preparation for, and Response to, the Events of January 6, 2021* – Law Enforcement Sensitive

**JOSEPH V  
CUFFARI**

Digitally signed by  
JOSEPH V CUFFARI  
Date: 2024.07.31 15:42:25  
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Attached for your action is our final report, *The Secret Service's Preparation for, and Response to, the Events of January 6, 2021*. We incorporated the formal comments provided by your office.

The report contains six recommendations aimed at improving the Secret Service's policies and processes for planning and responding to similar events. Your office concurred with four recommendations and did not concur with two recommendations. Based on information provided in your response to the draft report, we consider recommendations 1, 3, 5, and 6 open and resolved. We consider recommendations 2 and 4 open and unresolved. Once your office has fully implemented the recommendations, please submit a formal closeout letter to us within 30 days so that we may close the recommendations. The memorandum should be accompanied by evidence of completion of agreed-upon corrective actions and of the disposition of any monetary amounts.

Please send your response or closure request to [OIGInspectionsFollowup@oig.dhs.gov](mailto:OIGInspectionsFollowup@oig.dhs.gov).

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 a redacted version of the report on our website.

Please contact me with any questions, or your staff may contact Thomas Kait, Deputy Inspector General, at (202) 981-6000.

Attachment



# DHS OIG HIGHLIGHTS

## The Secret Service's Preparation for, and Response to, the Events of January 6, 2021

July 31, 2024

### Why We Did This Review

We conducted this review to evaluate the Secret Service's preparation for, and response to, the events of January 6, 2021.

### What We Recommend

We made six recommendations to improve the Secret Service's policies and processes for planning and responding to similar events.

**For Further Information:**  
Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202) 981-6000, or email us at: [DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov](mailto:DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov).

### What We Found

The United States Secret Service (Secret Service) planned and conducted protective operations at several sites on January 6, 2021, including the Capitol, and took actions to assist the United States Capitol Police (USCP). We initiated this review to evaluate the Secret Service's preparation for, and response to, the events of January 6, 2021. Our review focused on three sites where the Secret Service conducted protective operations or assisted the USCP:

- **The Ellipse.** The Secret Service coordinated all security for President Trump's speech at the "Save America" rally on the Ellipse.
- **The Capitol.** The Secret Service provided security for Vice President Michael Pence's visit to the Capitol, where he was to preside over the certification of the electoral college vote before a joint session of Congress at 1 p.m. The Secret Service also assisted USCP after protesters violently overwhelmed USCP officers and forced their way into the Capitol at 2:13 p.m.
- **The Democratic National Committee building.** The Secret Service provided security for Vice President-elect Kamala Harris' visit to the Democratic National Committee building. During her visit, USCP discovered a pipe bomb at 1:05 p.m. while conducting a search following the discovery of a similar device at the Republican National Committee building. The Vice President-elect was subsequently evacuated at [REDACTED]

### Secret Service Response

Secret Service officials concurred with four of six recommendations. Recommendations 2 and 4 are considered unresolved and open, and recommendations 1, 3, 5, and 6 are considered resolved and open.



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### Abbreviations

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| CAT | Counter Assault Team                          |
| CDU | Civil Disturbance Unit                        |
| DNC | Democratic National Committee                 |
| EOD | Explosive Ordnance Disposal                   |
| FBI | Federal Bureau of Investigation               |
| I&A | Office of Intelligence and Analysis           |
| MPD | Washington, DC Metropolitan Police Department |
| OPO | Office of Protective Operations               |



~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~

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|      |   |
|------|---|
| PID  | Protective Intelligence and Assessment Division |
| TSD  | Technical Security Division                     |
| UPE  | Unusual Protective Event                        |
| USCP | U.S. Capitol Police                             |
| USSS | U.S. Secret Service                             |

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**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL***U.S. Department of Homeland Security***Background**

On January 6, 2021, thousands of individuals gathered in Washington, DC, to protest a joint session of Congress to certify the results of the 2020 electoral college vote. Approximately 28,000 people attended the “Save America” rally on the White House Ellipse, where President Donald Trump and others spoke. Crowds from the Ellipse then marched to the U.S. Capitol, where they joined other demonstrators. There, rioters attacked law enforcement, breached barricades, and broke into the Capitol building. During the attack, several thousand people breached the Capitol, threatening the security of Members of Congress and the Vice President.

Over the course of several hours, the attack on the Capitol resulted in assaults on approximately 140 police officers and nearly \$3 million in damage. In addition, one rioter was fatally shot by a U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) officer and three USCP officers died following the attack.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, a few blocks from the Capitol, the USCP discovered viable pipe bombs placed near the exterior of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Republican National Committee buildings.<sup>2</sup>

The United States Secret Service (Secret Service/USSS) planned and conducted protective operations at several sites on January 6, 2021, including the Capitol, and took actions to assist USCP. We initiated this review to evaluate the Secret Service’s preparation for, and response to, the events of January 6, 2021.<sup>3</sup> Our review focused on three sites where the Secret Service conducted protective operations or assisted the USCP.<sup>4</sup>

- **The Ellipse.** The Secret Service coordinated all security for President Trump’s speech at the “Save America” rally on the Ellipse.
- **The Capitol.** The Secret Service provided security for Vice President Michael Pence’s visit to the Capitol, where he was to preside over the certification of the electoral college vote before a joint session of Congress at 1 p.m. The Secret Service also assisted USCP after protesters violently overwhelmed USCP officers and forced their way into the Capitol at 2:13 p.m.

<sup>1</sup> One USCP officer died on the day after the attack and two USCP officers died by suicide in subsequent days.

<sup>2</sup> Our review addressed the device at the DNC building because of the Secret Service’s role protecting the Vice President-elect during her visit to the DNC.

<sup>3</sup> This review is one of three initiated by the DHS OIG related to January 6 events. The two other reviews pertain to (1) Office of Intelligence and Analysis activities to gather and share intelligence (see *I&A Identified Threats prior to January 6, 2021, but Did Not Issue Any Intelligence Products before the U.S. Capitol Breach*, [OIG-22-29, Mar. 4, 2022](#)); and (2) DHS law enforcement agencies’ planning and response efforts, which is not completed. OIGs for the Departments of Defense, Interior, and Justice also have initiated reviews of their respective agencies’ activities relating to January 6 events. In addition, the USCP OIG initiated its own reviews of the USCP’s activities related to the events of January 6 and issued several internal reports.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to the three sites included in the scope of this report, Secret Service is responsible for planning and carrying out daily protective operations at numerous locations in the National Capitol Region such as the White House and the Vice President’s Residence, as well as at sites across the country and abroad.



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- **The DNC building.** The Secret Service provided security for Vice President-elect Kamala Harris' visit to the DNC building. During her visit, USCP discovered a pipe bomb at 1:05 p.m. while conducting a search following the discovery of a similar device at the Republican National Committee building. The Vice President-elect was subsequently evacuated at [REDACTED]

Figure 1 shows the locations of these three sites, where the Secret Service was responsible for protective operations for the President, Vice President, and Vice President-elect on January 6.

**Figure 1. Locations of Three Sites Where the Secret Service Conducted Protective Operations on January 6**



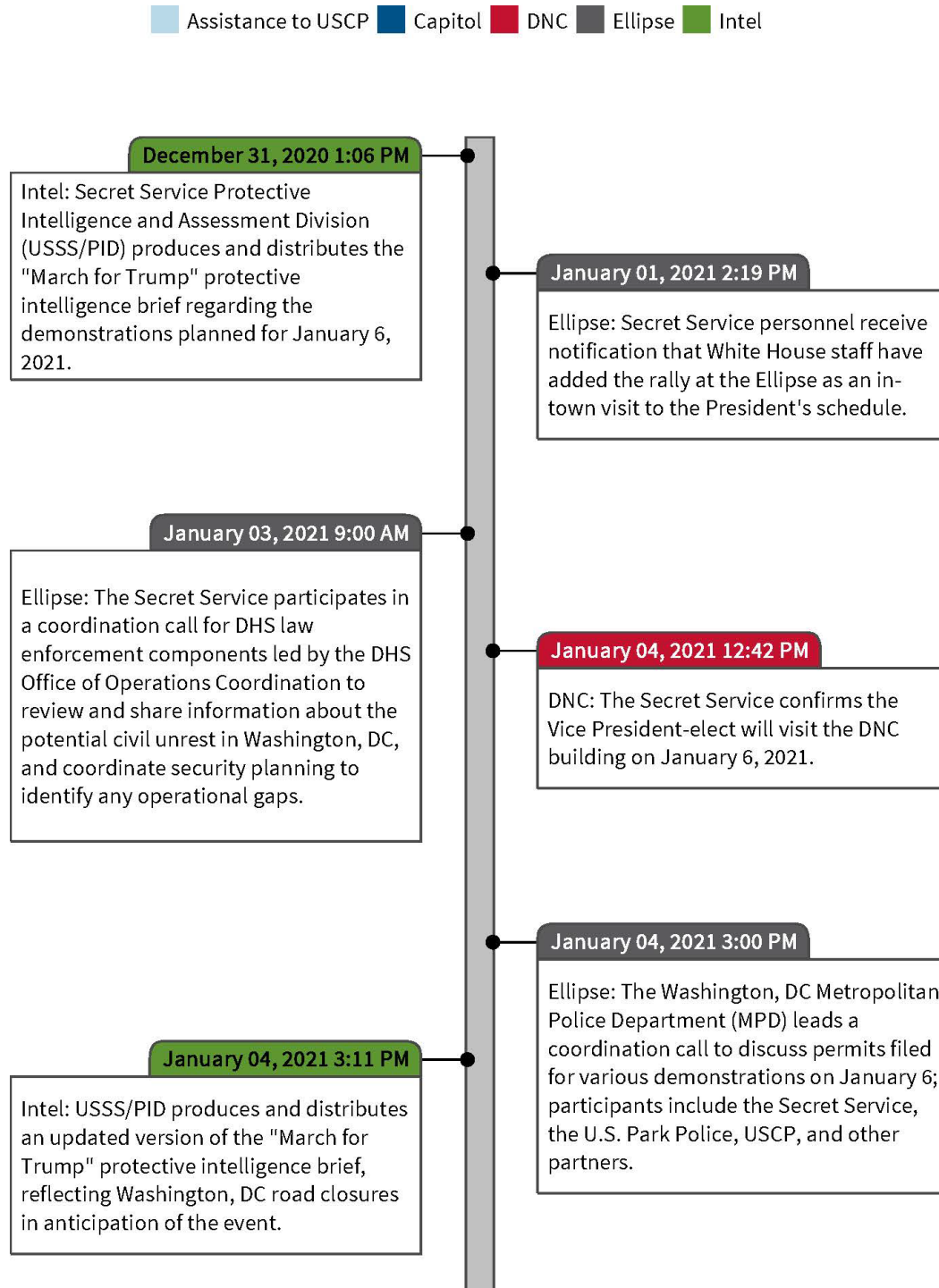
Source: Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General generated: map data © 2023 Google

As part of this review, we developed a detailed timeline (see Figure 2) of major events and actions related to Secret Service's protective operations on January 6. The timeline includes information relevant to five areas covered in this report: Secret Service intelligence leading up to January 6, the rally at the Ellipse, protecting the Vice President at the Capitol, assisting USCP, and protecting the Vice President-elect at the DNC.



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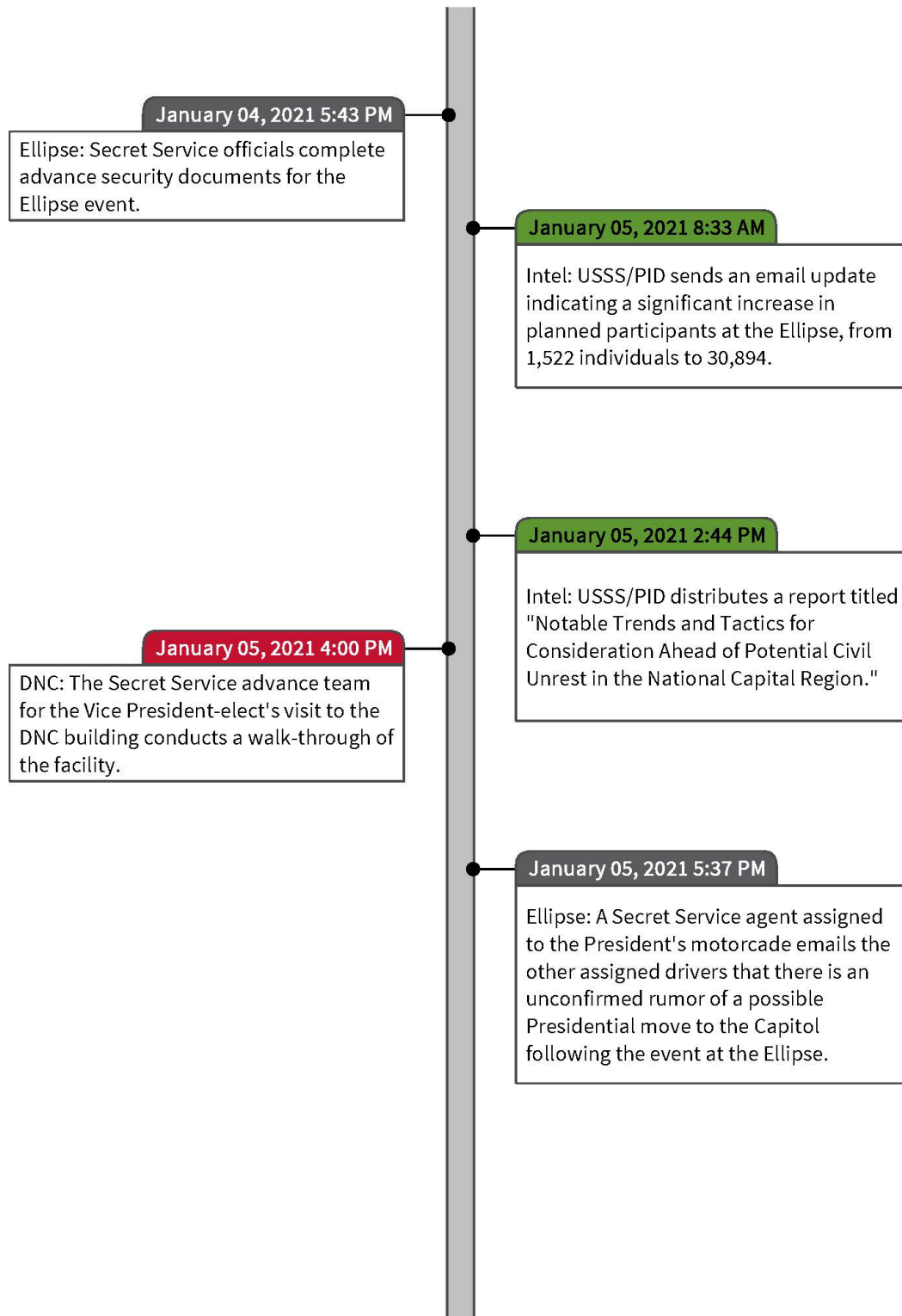
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**Figure 2. Timeline of Events Related to Secret Service's Protective Operations on January 6, 2021**



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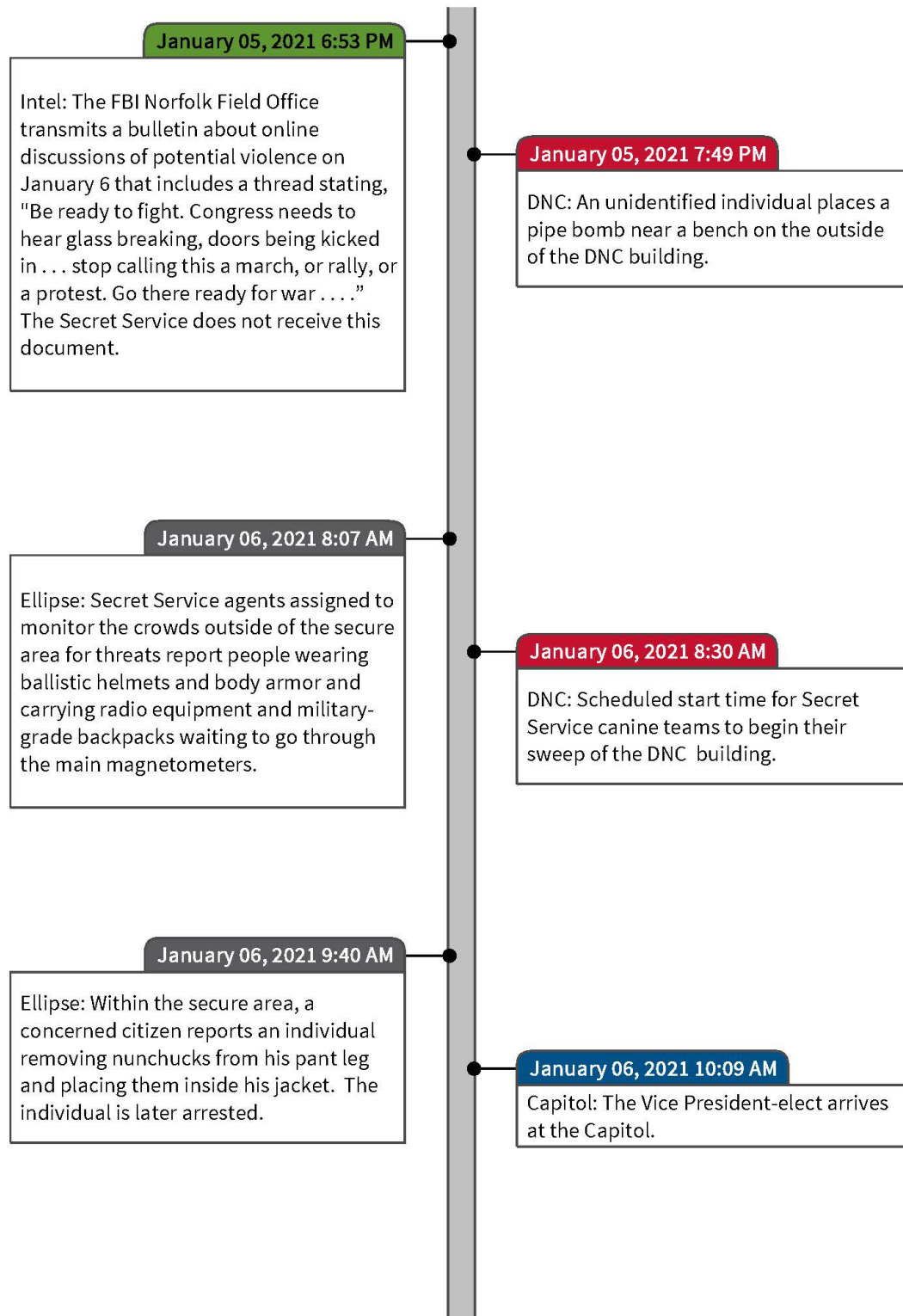
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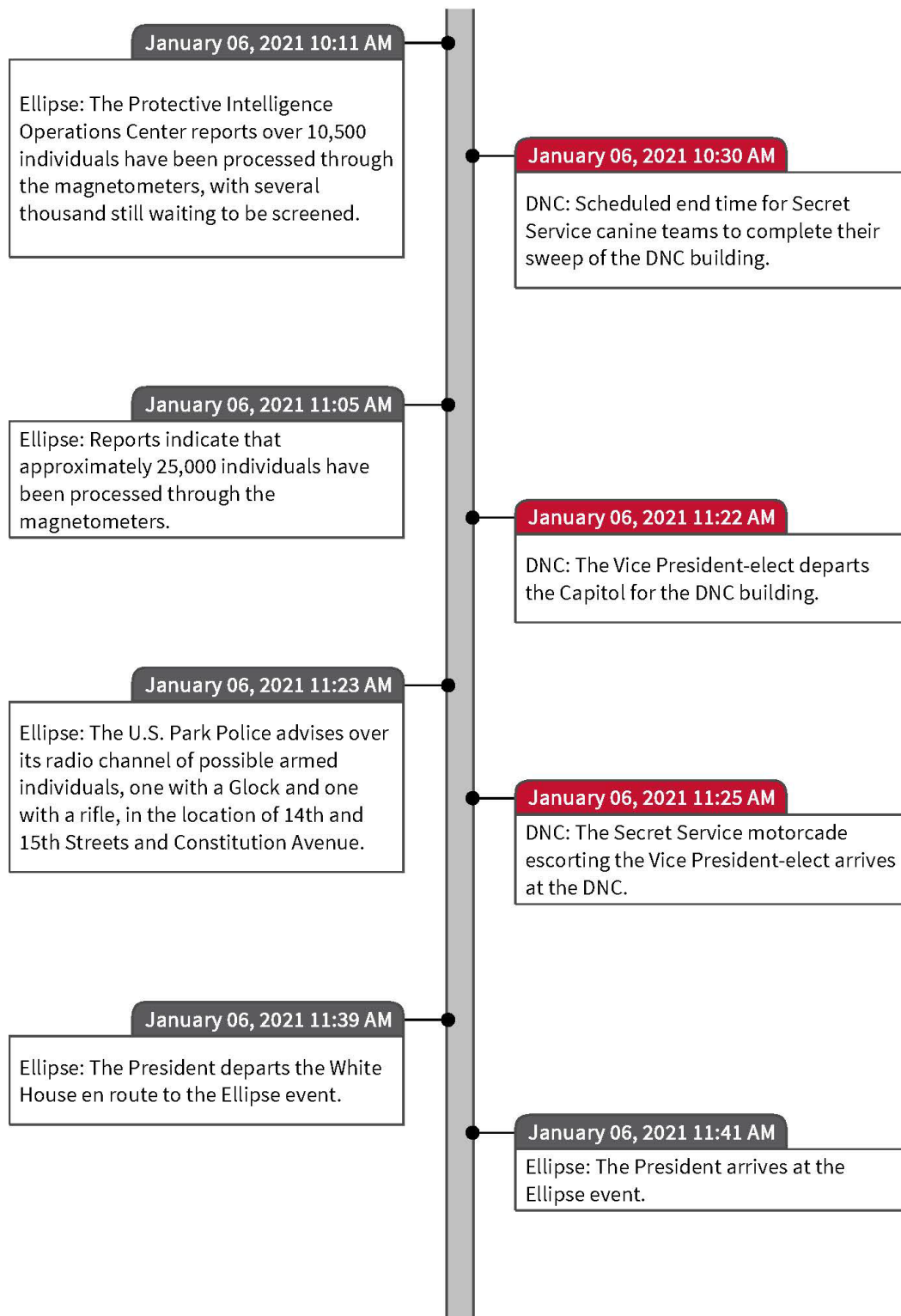
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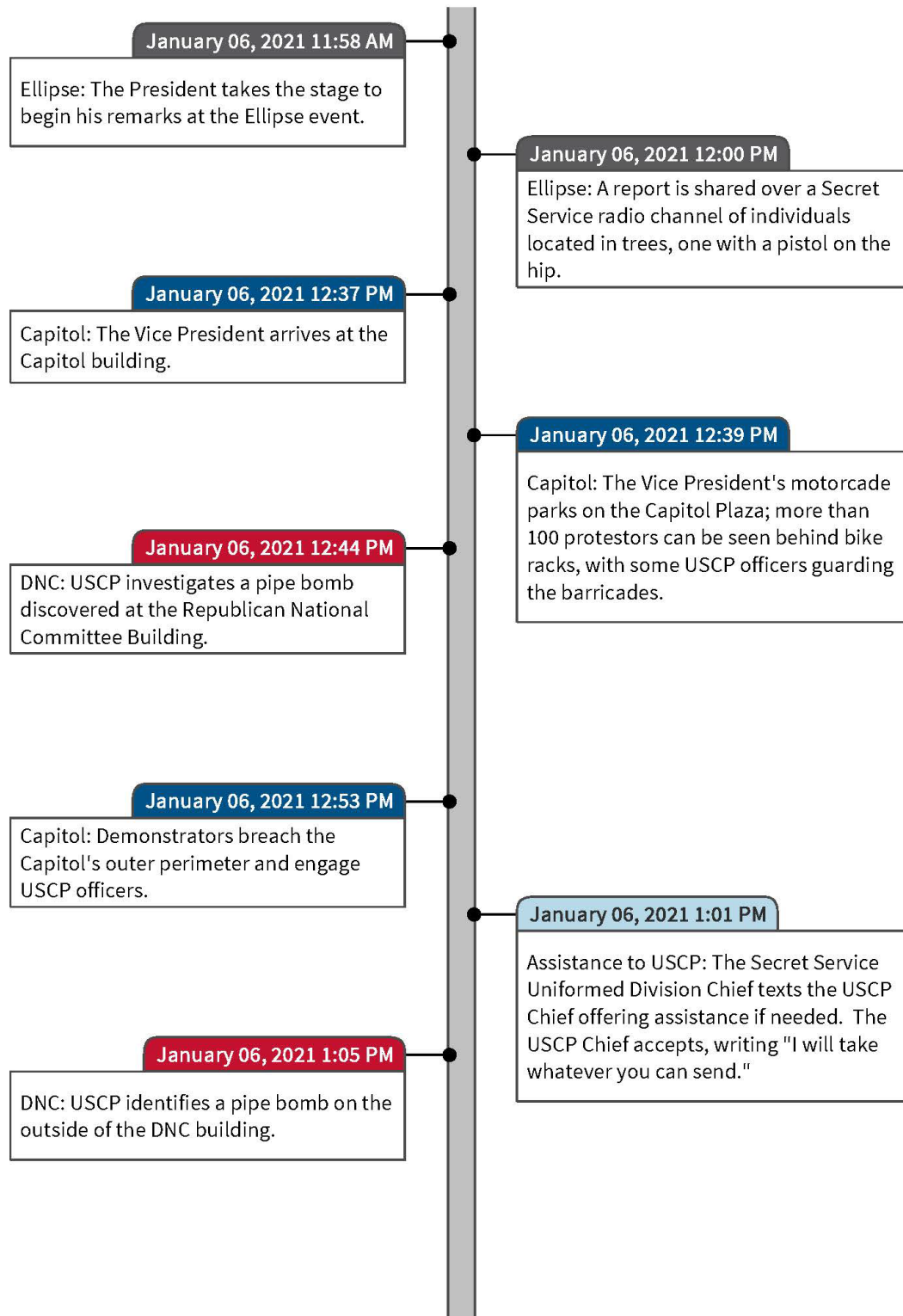
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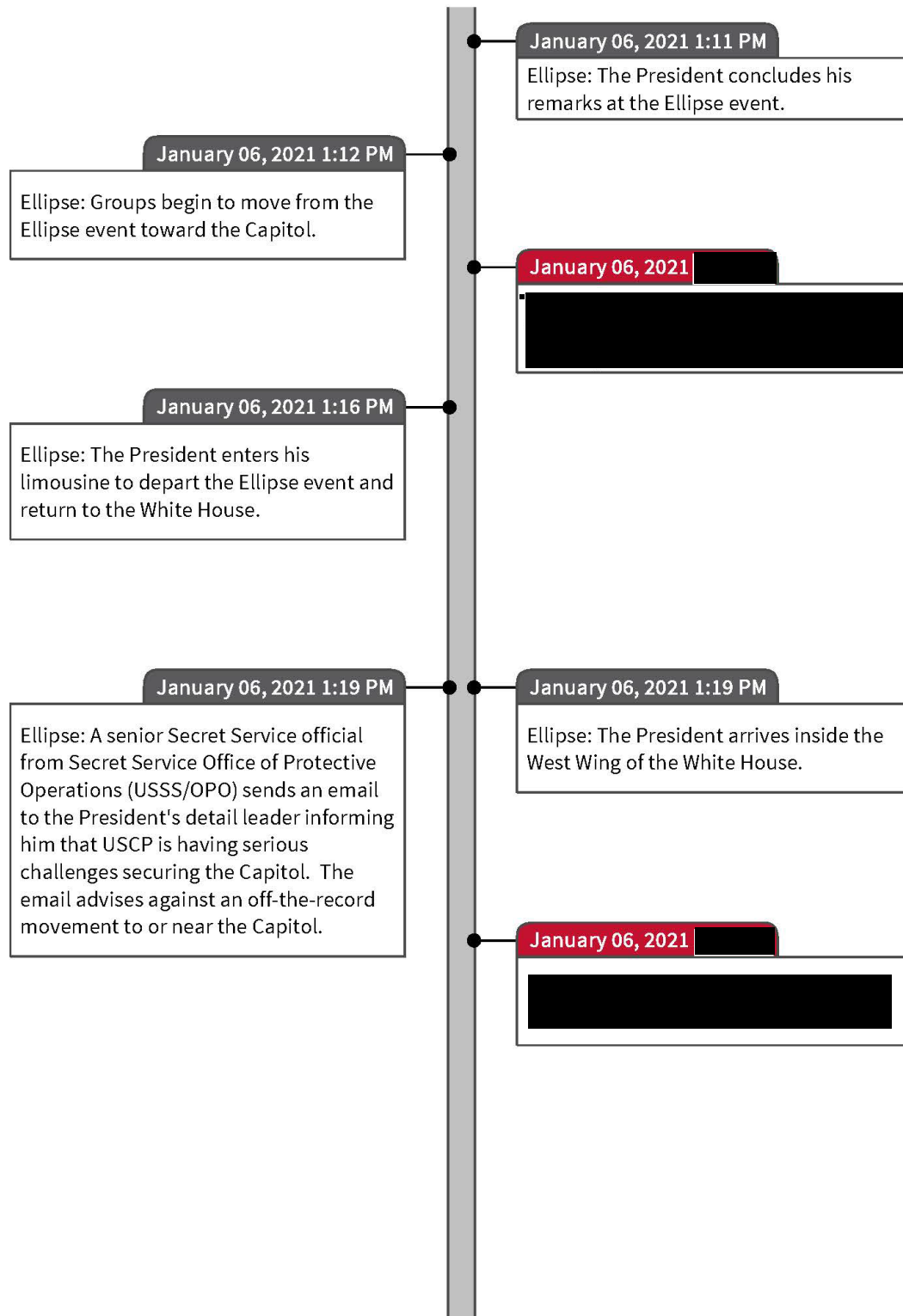
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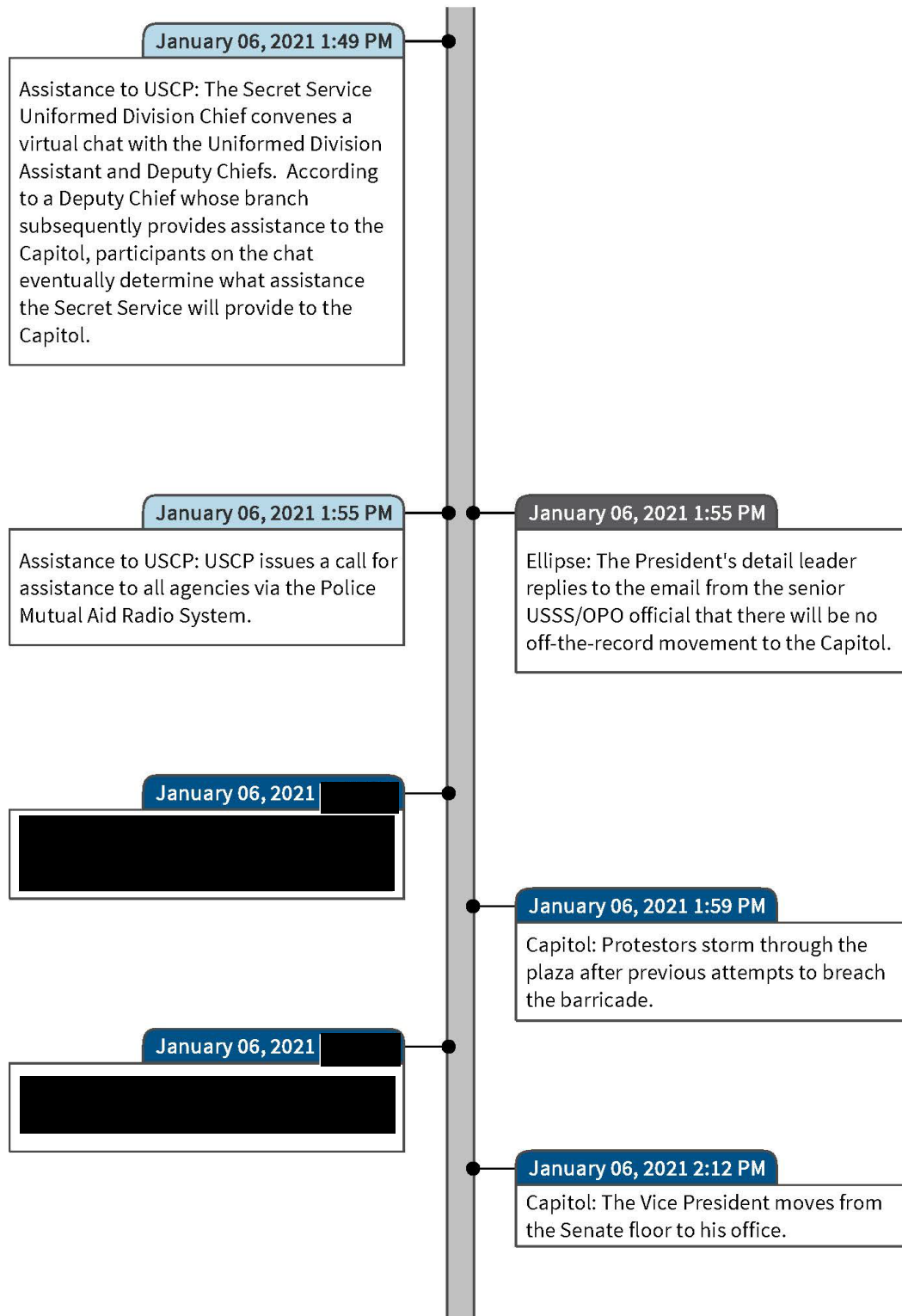
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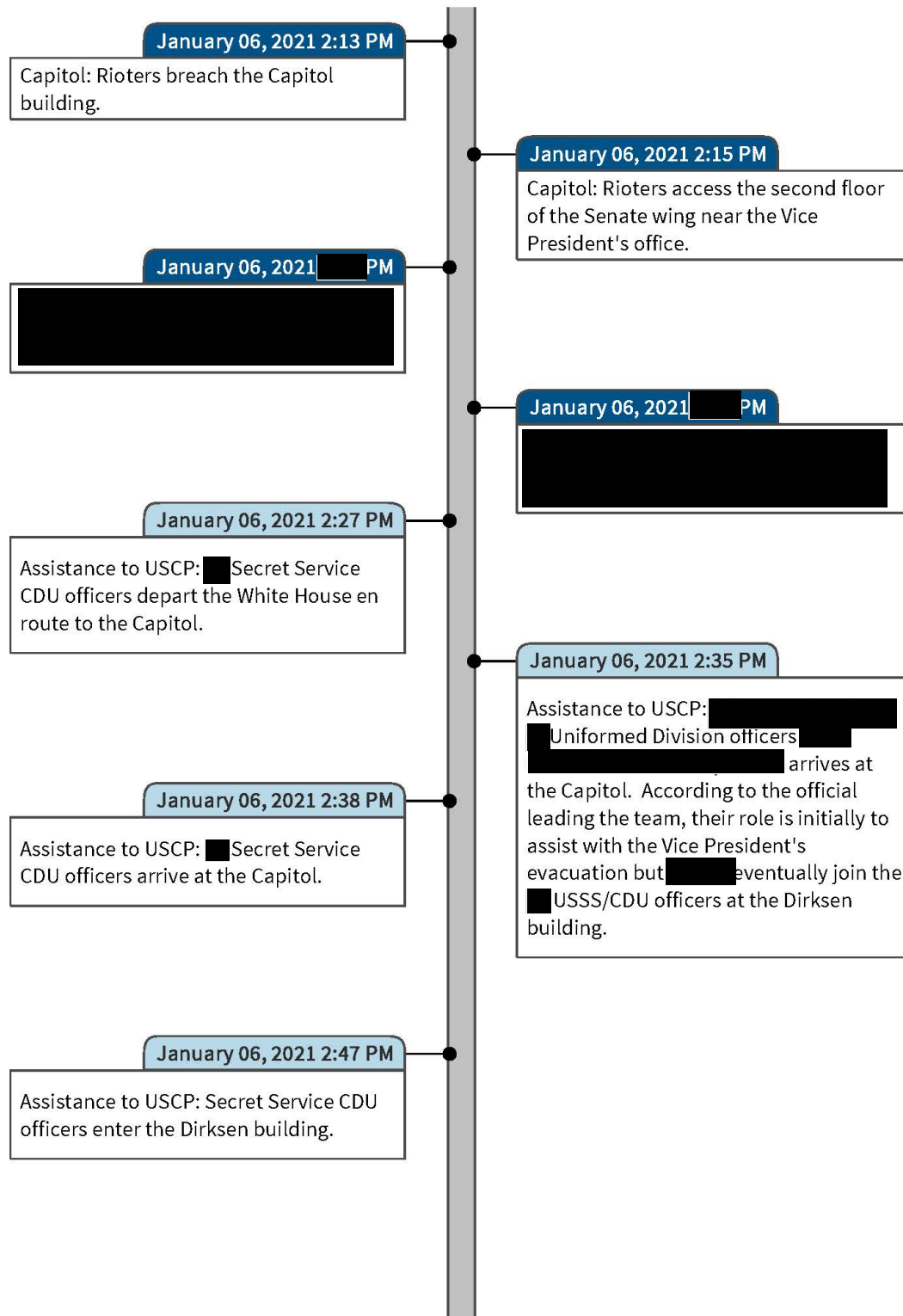
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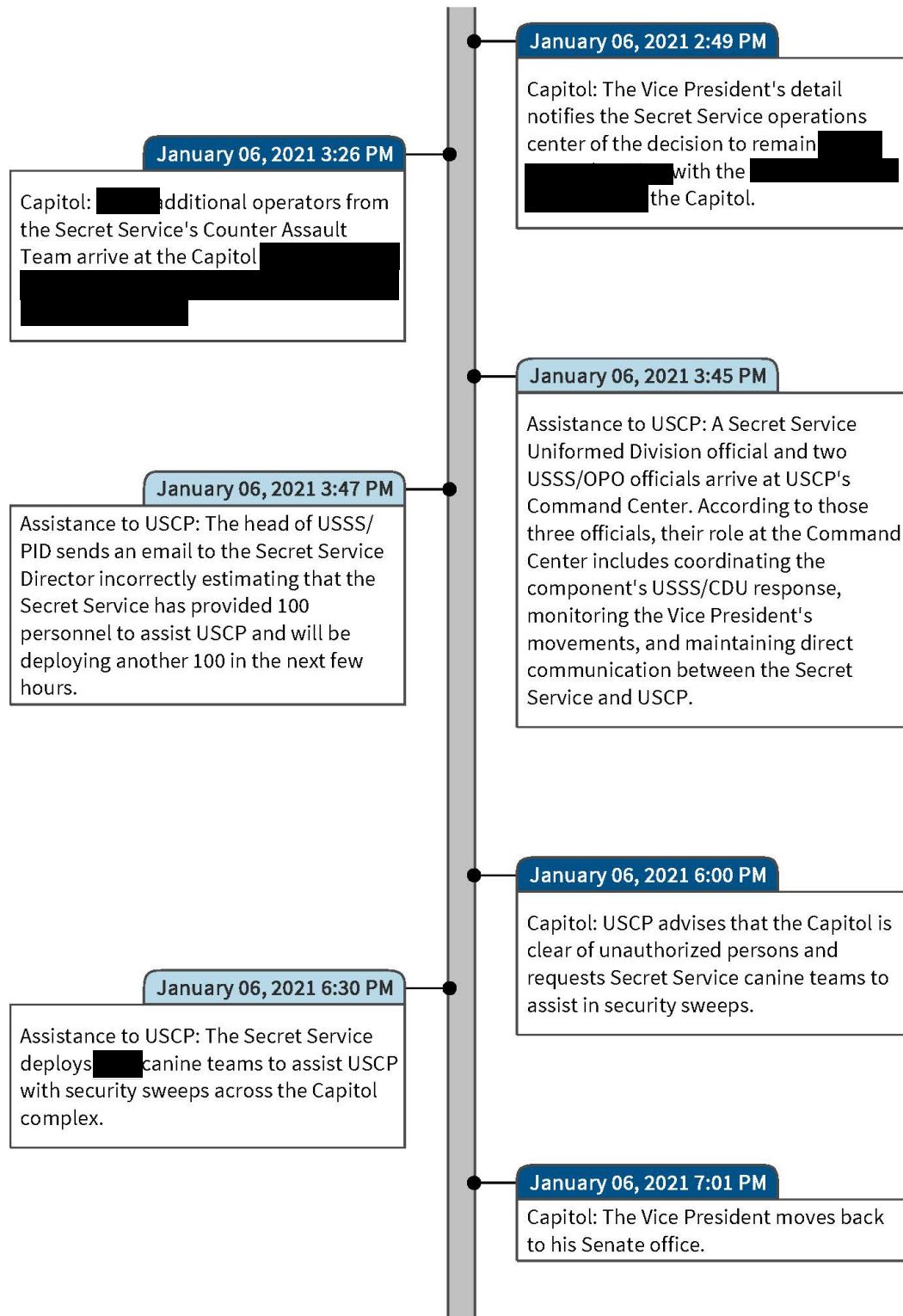
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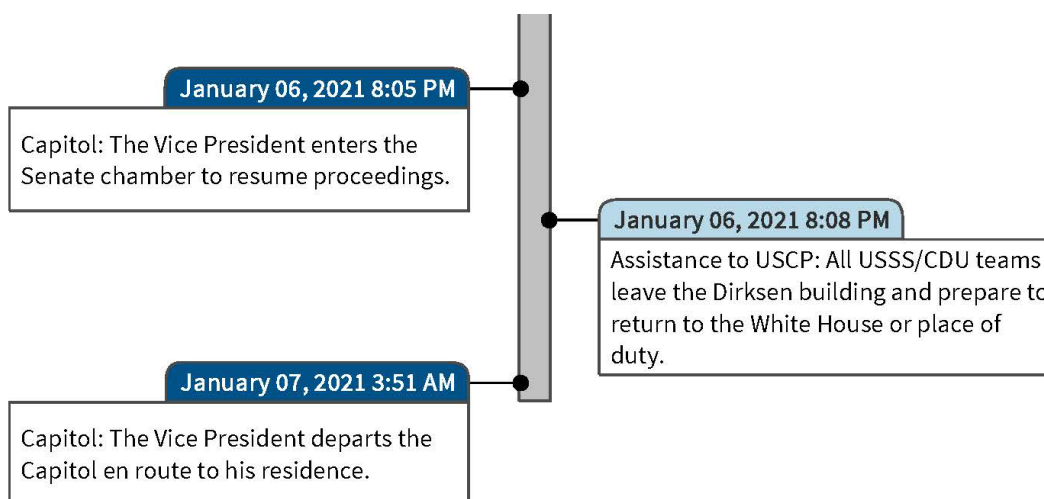




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Created with Timeline Maker Pro v4. Produced on Jul 30 2024.

Source: DHS OIG generated based on Secret Service documents and other information sources

## Relevant Secret Service Divisions for January 6 Events

The Secret Service protects the President, Vice President, and other protectees and ensures the safety and security of key locations and events of national significance.<sup>5</sup> Several divisions within the Secret Service were integral in planning for and conducting protective operations on January 6 and responding to the day's events—namely, the Office of Protective Operations (USSS/OPO), the Protective Intelligence and Assessment Division (USSS/PID), and the Technical Security Division (USSS/TSD).

### Office of Protective Operations

USSS/OPO has more than 1,000 special agents and more than 1,500 Uniformed Division officers to carry out its mission. Within USSS/OPO, protective activities are organized into several divisions:

- Presidential Protective Division—Protects the President and members of the First Family.
- Vice Presidential Protective Division—Protects the Vice President and members of the Second Family.<sup>6</sup>
- Dignitary Protection Division—Protects foreign heads of state visiting the United States and protects major Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, as well as the President-elect and Vice President-elect and their families.

<sup>5</sup> In addition to its protective mission, the Secret Service also safeguards the Nation's financial infrastructure and payment systems. See generally, 18 U.S.C. § 3056.

<sup>6</sup> This division also protects the Secretary of Treasury and the Secretary of Homeland Security.



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- Uniformed Division—Performs day-to-day security operations at the White House, Treasury Building, Vice President’s residence, foreign diplomatic missions in the Washington, DC region, and other protected sites.

### Protective Intelligence and Assessment Division

USSS/PID supports protective operations by analyzing information, investigating threats, assessing risk, and disseminating protective intelligence information. USSS/PID guides and coordinates protective intelligence investigations when the Secret Service is alerted to individuals who may pose a threat to protectees or protective sites. The division analyzes, evaluates, disseminates, and maintains incoming information about individuals, groups, and activities, both foreign and domestic, that pose a potential threat to protectees or key locations, such as the White House. USSS/PID also develops briefings, assessments, and trainings about vulnerabilities, trends, and tactics seen at events that may inform future protective operations.

USSS/PID has collaborative relationships with partners like the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to support protective operations. According to senior officials, USSS/PID will share intelligence and information with law enforcement partners as needed. USSS/PID also runs a 24-hour Protective Intelligence Operations Center to continuously monitor incoming threats.

### Technical Security Division

USSS/TSD is responsible for all aspects of technical security in advance of travel by the President and Vice President and for other protectees when authorized. Technical security includes, for example, chemical, biological, radiological, and explosive countermeasures. This division supports canine explosive detection operations by directing the location of canine sweeps and facilitating other support for canine teams.

## Results of Review

The Secret Service planned for routine protective operations at the White House Ellipse, the U.S. Capitol, and the DNC building on January 6, 2021. Although Secret Service did not anticipate or plan for the level of violence that ultimately occurred that day, the Secret Service took actions to respond to and mitigate the threats it encountered, avoid any harm to its protectees, and assist USCP.

Leading up to January 6, the Secret Service prepared two threat assessments that did not convey a high potential for violence on January 6. The Secret Service anticipated that the planned Ellipse rally would be like previous pro-Trump rallies that took place in November and December 2020. At those events there was some violence, but those events mainly involved opposing demonstration groups and did not have a high potential to impact protective operations.

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However, at the White House Ellipse rally, Secret Service personnel observed indicators of potential for violence outside of the secure area. This included numerous individuals wearing body armor, communicating via radios, climbing trees, and avoiding entry to the secure area, where they would have had to pass through magnetometers. When the President requested to go to the Capitol following his speech at the rally, the President's detail leader said that going to the Capitol was infeasible and the motorcade had to return to the White House.

At the Capitol, the Secret Service treated the Vice President's visit as a standard visit, which included [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Even so, the Secret Service secured the Vice President during the breach of the Capitol, but there were some near encounters with rioters. The Secret Service considered evacuating the Vice President to his residence, but he did not want to leave, and the protective detail eventually considered their location on the Capitol grounds secure.

After violence erupted at the Capitol, the Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief offered to assist USCP and sent [REDACTED] officers to assist. The process of identifying White House personnel available for deployment, while maintaining security at the White House, resulted in an 80-minute delay before personnel were deployed. These officers provided security for Members of Congress and staffers sheltering in the Dirksen Senate Office building.

Meanwhile, at the DNC building, the Secret Service evacuated the Vice President-elect after the USCP discovered a pipe bomb. The pipe bomb had been placed near the building the night before, but Secret Service personnel did not identify it during their security sweep on the morning of January 6. The Vice President-elect, traveling in an armored vehicle with her motorcade, entered the building via a ramp within 20 feet of the pipe bomb, and was in the building for approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes before the pipe bomb was discovered and she was subsequently evacuated. The Secret Service did not discover the pipe-bomb; instead, a pair of USCP officers discovered it while conducting a patrol after a similar pipe bomb was found at the Republican National Committee building a few blocks away. The Secret Service had not employed all its explosive detection tactics and measures for the security sweep, instead providing only canine teams at the DNC building that day. Afterward, the Secret Service did not report the building's evacuation as an unusual protective event, as required by its policies.<sup>7</sup> More than a year later, the Secret Service initiated and completed an update to its policy to address gaps identified in its processes that may have contributed to the failure to discover the pipe bomb.<sup>8</sup>

During our review, we interviewed more than 100 Secret Service personnel involved in the preparation for and response to the events of January 6. In addition, we obtained more than

<sup>7</sup> Secret Service, *Unusual Protective Events and Incident Reporting Protocols*, OPO-19, Nov. 25, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Secret Service, *Protective Operations Manual*, OPO-06, Apr. 7, 2022.

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183,000 emails and attachments from select Secret Service personnel and conducted analytical searches of those emails. We also reviewed Secret Service video from the Ellipse and USCP video from the Capitol complex and cameras located near the DNC building.

**USSS/PID's Assessments About January 6 Did Not Convey a High Potential for Violence**

The Secret Service's protective mission relies heavily on maintaining awareness of intelligence and information. In advance of January 6, USSS/PID prepared two reports that contained assessments about the likelihood of violence occurring on January 6, but neither identified a high potential for the level of violence that occurred ultimately. These assessments did not include some information available to USSS/PID related to potential threats of violence, in part because the information [REDACTED]. Finally, leading up to January 6, [REDACTED] shared some information about [REDACTED] the U.S. Capitol, but the Secret Service [REDACTED].

**USSS/PID Produced Two Documents in Preparation for January 6 that Did Not Anticipate the Level of Violence that Occurred that Day**

Prior to January 6, USSS/PID staff developed two relevant documents about organized protests scheduled to occur between January 4 and 7, 2021, against the certification of the 2020 election results.<sup>9</sup> Neither of the products conveyed a high potential for violence that would impact the Secret Service's protective mission on January 6.

Research specialists and special agents in USSS/PID produce threat assessment or briefing documents to inform protective operations. Staff responsible for monitoring [REDACTED] review and analyze [REDACTED].

Per departmental rules of behavior, intelligence staff [REDACTED]

<sup>9</sup> As discussed later in this section, the two documents are: 1) the *March for Trump* protective intelligence brief issued on December 31, 2020, and reissued on January 4, 2021, with additional information regarding road closures; and 2) the *Notable Trends and Tactics for Consideration Ahead of Potential Civil Unrest in the National Capital Region*, issued on January 5, 2021. Aside from these two products, USSS/PID also develops protective intelligence briefs focused on threats toward its protectees. According to a USSS/PID official, protective intelligence briefs for the President and Vice President [REDACTED].



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[REDACTED].<sup>10</sup> USSS/PID staff share information with Secret Service leadership and protective operations personnel for planning and situational awareness and incorporate information into USSS/PID's briefings or assessments when the information [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].<sup>11</sup>

On December 31, 2020,<sup>12</sup> USSS/PID published the *March for Trump* protective intelligence brief. According to USSS/PID officials, the brief was developed to assist Uniformed Division and protective detail personnel with their planning operations related to January 6 protective events and protectee movements.<sup>13</sup> The brief focused on information [REDACTED] along with [REDACTED] related to upcoming January 6 demonstrations at the Ellipse and Capitol. [REDACTED]

For each of the almost 60 demonstrations identified in the brief, intelligence staff reported the event showed "no indication of civil disobedience." USSS/PID personnel told us intelligence staff [REDACTED]

Rather, according to USSS/PID personnel, [REDACTED]

USSS/PID personnel included information about [REDACTED] in the *March for Trump* protective intelligence brief. The briefing document [REDACTED]. Rather, the USSS/PID briefing document conveyed statements [REDACTED]

<sup>10</sup> For departmental guidance regarding monitoring and collecting information on social media, see *DHS Management Directive No. 110-01, Privacy Policy for Operational Use of Social Media*, June 8, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> While USSS/PID guidance does not constrain it from activities related to other types of threats, guidance indicates that USSS/PID's mission focuses on [REDACTED] PID-01, *Protective Intelligence and Assessment Division Functions*, May 08, 2015, states: "[USSS/PID] analyzes, evaluates, disseminates, and maintains information about [REDACTED]"

<sup>12</sup> USSS PID issued an updated version of the *March for Trump* brief on January 4, 2021, with additional information regarding road closures [REDACTED].

<sup>13</sup> USSS/PID's Open-Source Intelligence Branch primarily authored the *March for Trump* brief, with input and subsequent review by PID staff from other sub-offices. The Open-Source Intelligence Branch monitors [REDACTED], and disseminates intelligence and information related to the security [REDACTED].

<sup>14</sup> Being of record with the Secret Service refers to individuals or groups with a case and/or record (such as arrests) documented in the Secret Service's Protective Threat Management System.

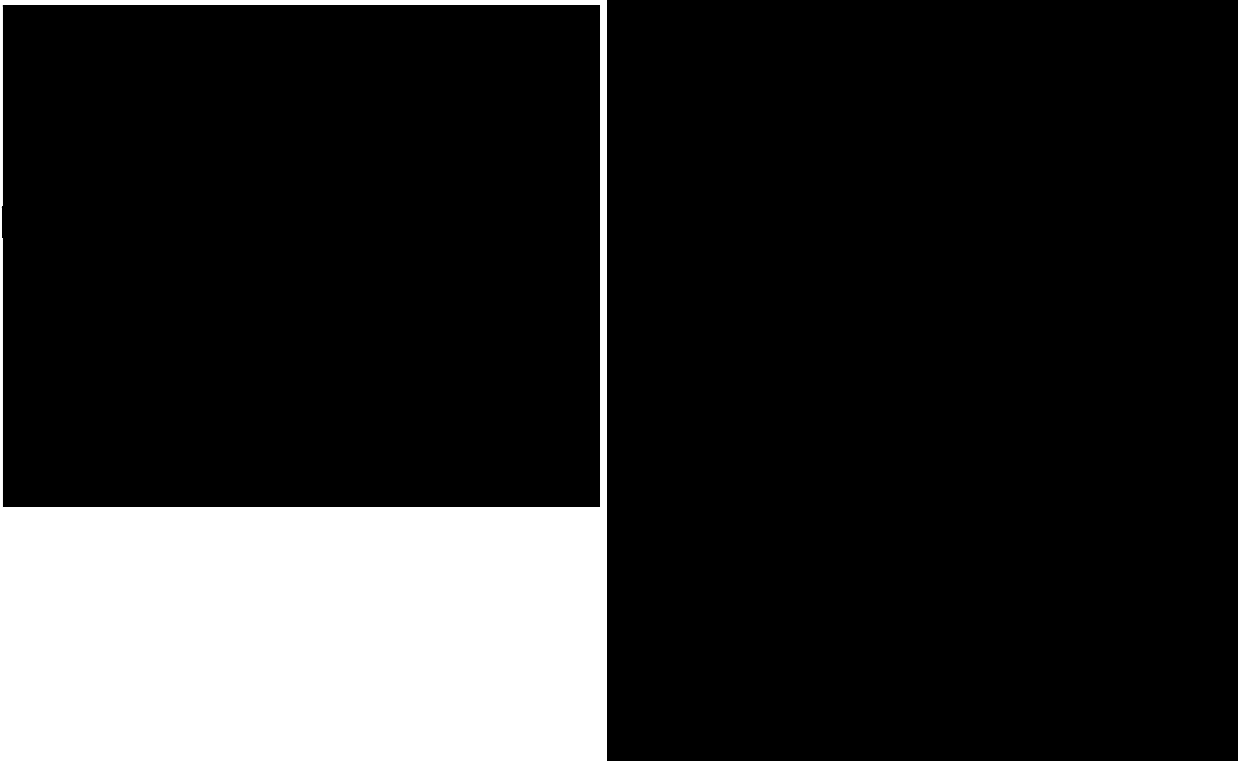


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Figure 3 shows an excerpt from the *March for Trump* protective intelligence brief.

Figure 3. Excerpt from the *March for Trump* Protective Intelligence Brief



Source: The *March for Trump* protective intelligence brief

The *March for Trump* protective intelligence brief concludes with an assessment that the risk of violence would be like prior demonstrations in November and December 2020:

Many of the groups planning to engage in demonstration activities on January 6, 2021, [REDACTED]. Verbal and physical altercations ensued between pro-Trump and anti-Trump supporters during both events. As a result of the [REDACTED], PID assesses [REDACTED].



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On January 5, 2021, USSS/PID issued another document, titled *Notable Trends and Tactics for Consideration Ahead of Potential Civil Unrest in the National Capital Region*.<sup>15</sup> USSS/PID personnel authored the document to describe potential activity that might take place around and on January 6 with an estimated 28,000 demonstrators attending various events. Analysts based the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. According to the report, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The report concludes with this assessment of the threat of violence:

[USSS/] PID assesses there is a continued threat of low to mid-level violence instigated by [REDACTED]. It is also assessed that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Further demonstration activity related to the 2020 presidential election and upcoming January 20 inauguration ceremony is anticipated with the possibility of individuals or groups engaging in civil disorder.

The group within USSS/PID that developed this report is responsible for [REDACTED]. According to the official responsible for developing this report, personnel based the low-to-mid-level violence [REDACTED]

### **USSS/PID Received Some Information Indicating a High Potential for Violence Leading Up to January 6, but USSS/PID Did Not Incorporate Such Information in the Final USSS/PID Assessments**

Although the USSS/PID staff received additional information about threats of violence to law enforcement and other Government officials, in the days preceding January 6, this information was not included in the final USSS/PID assessments. For example, USSS/PID staff received a tip from the [REDACTED] USSS/PID staff conducted [REDACTED] and determined there was [REDACTED]. Further, USSS/PID was [REDACTED]. In another example,

<sup>15</sup> PID's Critical Protective Analysis Group developed this report. The Critical Protective Analysis Group [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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USSS/PID received an anonymous tip initially obtained by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]<sup>17</sup>. The individual who provided the information in the tip warned [REDACTED]. Although this tip was alarming, [REDACTED].

Some USSS/PID staff also received alerts from a system that [REDACTED]. Leading up to January 6, there were alerts mentioning various threats such as [REDACTED]. A USSS/PID supervisor responsible for the branch that reviews open-source information said the branch struggled to review the large amount of [REDACTED].

Some USSS/PID staff received reports from a DHS component and another partner conveying a high level of concern about potential violence and civil unrest to occur that day. On December 23, 2020, the [REDACTED] shared its threat assessment, titled [REDACTED] with USSS/PID staff and the Protective Intelligence Operations Center.<sup>19</sup> The [REDACTED] generated this report in anticipation of the [REDACTED] taking place on January 6. The report included information regarding [REDACTED].

On January 5, [REDACTED] shared its report about events scheduled on January 6 with USSS/PID staff. The report described [REDACTED].

<sup>17</sup> [REDACTED] is a right-wing group founded in [REDACTED] group was involved in two prior instances of violence [REDACTED].

<sup>19</sup> Make America Great Again (MAGA) was a political slogan of the Trump Presidential campaign.



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**The Secret Service Relies on [REDACTED] for Information but Did Not Receive Intelligence Products about Potential Threats for January 6**

Because the Secret Service is not a member of the U.S. Intelligence Community, the component primarily relies on collaboration with partners such as [REDACTED] for obtaining verified intelligence and information. Leading up to January 6, the Secret Service did not receive any issued intelligence products from [REDACTED]<sup>20</sup>. On January 5, 2021, [REDACTED] released the situational information report [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This report contained some information indicating a potential threat against the Capitol. Our review of emails and interviews with staff confirmed the Secret Service did not receive the report.

The Secret Service can receive intelligence and information from the [REDACTED]. Secret Service representatives serve as Task Force officers assigned to track and share information related to the Secret Service's protective mission. Two Task Force officers from the Secret Service said that prior to January 6, there was general information about various protest groups but nothing out of the ordinary or uncommon. However, the two Secret Service representatives we spoke to on the Task Force learned after January 6 that they had not been included on an email distribution list set up to share information about potential threats in the National Capital Region leading up to the inauguration.<sup>21</sup> According to the two Task Force officers, information may have been shared through that distribution list, [REDACTED], that the Secret Service did not receive via other avenues.<sup>22</sup>

**The Secret Service Coordinated Typical Security Planning at the Ellipse but Quickly Encountered Indicators of Potential for Violence Outside of the Secure Area**

Secret Service personnel had limited advance notice from White House staff about the President's January 6 speech at the Ellipse and the anticipated crowd size, which affected site security planning. Coordination meetings and intelligence prior to the event at the Ellipse did not raise alarms about a high potential for violence, and Secret Service personnel anticipated nothing extraordinary. During the rally, some Secret Service personnel observed indicators of

<sup>20</sup> I&A did not publish any intelligence products regarding threats leading up to January 6, 2021; see *I&A Identified Threats prior to January 6, 2021, but Did Not Issue Any Intelligence Products before the U.S. Capitol Breach*, [OIG-22-29, Mar. 4, 2022](#).

<sup>21</sup> The two Task Force officers we spoke to were unsure why they were left off the email distribution list but thought it may have been an administrative oversight on the part of [REDACTED].

<sup>22</sup> We obtained documentation from the [REDACTED] that confirmed [REDACTED] had been shared on this email distribution list.



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potential for violence outside the secure area. The Secret Service arrested one individual inside the secure area [REDACTED] with concealed wooden nunchucks. Over the course of the event, officers at the magnetometer checkpoints seized hundreds of prohibited items, including knives, tasers, and gas masks.

Secret Service personnel also reported seeing numerous individuals wearing body armor, communicating via radios, climbing trees outside of the secure area, and avoiding entry to the secure area, where they would have had to pass through magnetometers. Local law enforcement partners shared reports of possible firearms within the crowd outside of the Secret Service's protected area. Because these individuals were observed outside of the protected area, the Secret Service's law enforcement partners, including the U.S. Park Police and the MPD had jurisdiction over these individuals.<sup>23</sup>

### **The Secret Service Had an Abbreviated Timeline to Prepare for the Ellipse Event**

The Secret Service has procedures for security preparations prior to a protectee site visit. The process begins when a protectee's staff notifies the protective detail of a scheduled trip or movement. The relevant protective division then notifies an advance team to conduct site security planning. [REDACTED]:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

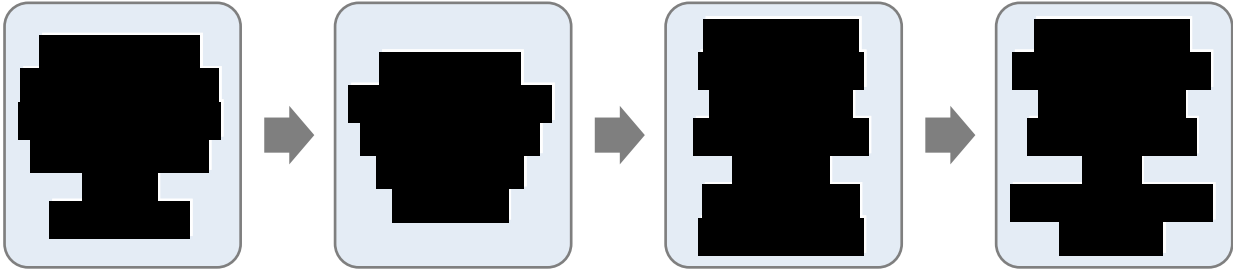
<sup>23</sup> The MPD has primary law enforcement jurisdiction over the 61 square miles of land in the District of Columbia. In Washington, DC, the U.S. Park Police primarily provide law enforcement services on the National Mall and the Ellipse.



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[REDACTED]



Source: DHS OIG generated based on Secret Service documents

In addition to the advance team of agents assigned to do the advance site security preparations, a protective detail travels with the protectee during movements and site visits. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Security preparations for the President's January 6 speech at the Ellipse were abbreviated because the Secret Service had limited advance notice from White House staff. Agents said advance teams would typically have more time to complete site advance work for an event the size of the Ellipse event, with [REDACTED]. On January 1, Secret Service personnel received notification that White House staff had added the rally at the Ellipse as an in-town visit to the President's schedule. Secret Service advance personnel began planning the next day and scheduled the initial walk-through of the site for January 3. Secret Service personnel assigned to protective operations at the rally at the Ellipse said the late notice of the President's planned attendance left them with an abbreviated amount of time to complete advance work at the site.

The Secret Service also encountered challenges obtaining timely information on the anticipated crowd size for the rally at the Ellipse. On January 1, White House staff informed Secret Service advance personnel that they were expecting 30,000 people to attend the rally. At the time of the first walk-through to begin site security planning on January 3, the permit issued by the U.S. Park

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Service was for only 5,000 people.<sup>24</sup> The Department of Interior OIG found that on January 4, event organizers requested an increase in the number of event participant to 30,000.<sup>25</sup> In a January 5 email, PID shared open-source information indicating an increase in planned participants at the Ellipse event to more than 30,000 people.

**Coordination Meetings and Intelligence prior to the Ellipse Event Did Not Raise Alarms about High Potential for Violence**

The Secret Service participated in coordination meetings with law enforcement partners and DHS law enforcement components leading up to January 6. The MPD led a series of coordination calls to discuss permits filed for various demonstrations on January 6; participants included the Secret Service, the U.S. Park Police, USCP, and other partners.<sup>26</sup> These calls were intended to allow the various entities involved to share information on pre-event intelligence, timelines, locations involved for the various groups, and coordination of efforts, among other topics. On January 3, 2021, the Secret Service also participated in a coordination call for DHS law enforcement components led by the DHS Office of Operations Coordination to review and share information about the posture for potential civil unrest in Washington, DC, and coordinate security planning to identify any operational gaps. Meeting participants that we interviewed did not convey that these meetings raised alarms about any extraordinary potential for violence on the scale of what ultimately occurred on January 6.

Secret Service personnel involved in planning for the Ellipse event did not consider the intelligence information leading up to the event unusual or alarming. As discussed earlier in this report, PID's briefings anticipated the event would be like previous related demonstrations in November and December 2020 and did not convey a high potential for violence that would impact the Secret Service's protective mission. Agents assigned to the advance planning team for the Ellipse event, including the advance intelligence agent, did not recall receiving negative intelligence. In addition, a senior agent on the President's detail characterized the intelligence leading up to the event as "generic" because civil disobedience is always a possibility at political events.

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<sup>24</sup> Within the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service, in cooperation with partners, may issue permits for lawful demonstrations on national park lands. National Park Service officials and the U.S. Park Police share information with local law enforcement partners on permitted events, such as the number of attendees and the location of the events.

<sup>25</sup> *Review of the U.S. Department of the Interior's Actions Related to January 6, 2021*, Department of the Interior Office of Inspector General, December 18, 2023.

<sup>26</sup> Coordination calls were scheduled on December 22, 2020, December 29, 2020, and January 4, 2021.



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### **On January 6, the Secret Service Immediately Encountered Indicators of Potential for Violence at the Ellipse**

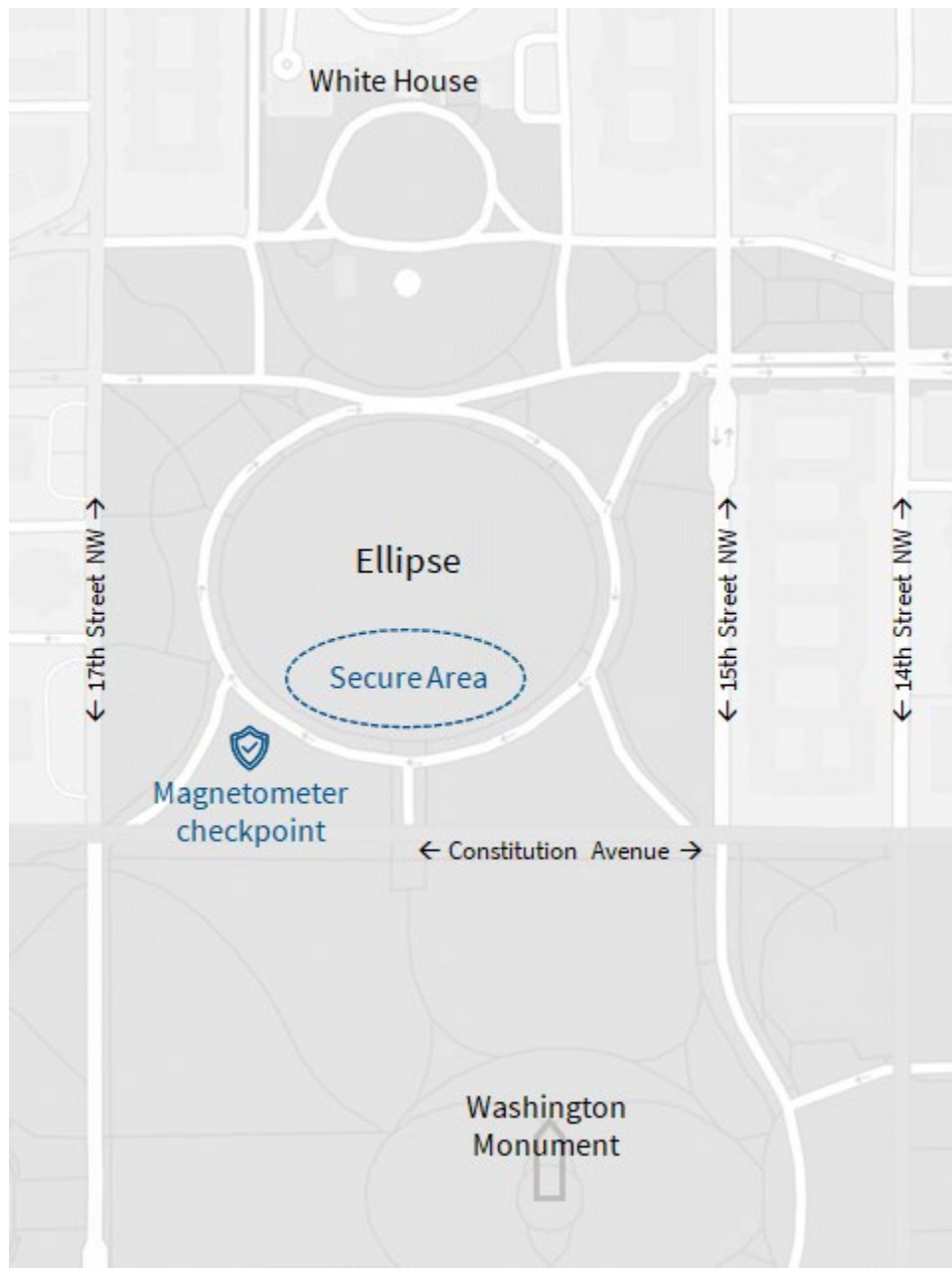
On January 6, the Secret Service encountered indicators of potential for violence within the crowd at the Ellipse event. As shown in Figure 5, the Secret Service established a secure area with magnetometer checkpoints to screen anyone wishing to enter the event. Yet Secret Service officers and law enforcement partners observed weapons and prohibited items among the crowds outside the boundaries of the protected area, as described below. For the individuals observed outside of the secure area, the Secret Service's law enforcement partners, including the U.S. Park Police and the MPD, had appropriate jurisdiction.



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Figure 5. Map of the Ellipse Showing the Secure Area and Magnetometer Checkpoint



Source: DHS OIG generated based on Secret Service information



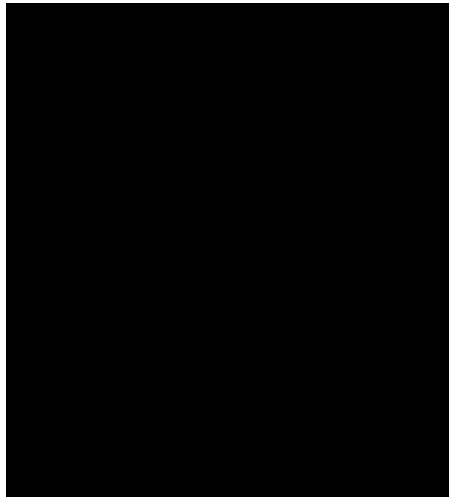
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On the morning of January 6, the Secret Service tweeted a list of prohibited items for the Ellipse event, which included body armor, firearms, and weapons of any kind. At 8:07 a.m., agents assigned to monitor the crowds outside the secure area for threats started reporting seeing people wearing ballistic helmets and body armor and carrying radio equipment and military-grade backpacks waiting to go through the main magnetometers.

The Secret Service arrested one individual who brought a weapon through the magnetometer into the secure area. At 9:40 a.m., a concerned citizen reported an individual removing nunchucks from his pant leg and placing them inside his jacket. The Secret Service official who interviewed the individual informed us that by bringing the weapon into the secure area, the individual could have harmed the protectee or other event attendees. Figure 6 shows the nunchucks, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].



Later that morning, local law enforcement partners shared reports of possible firearms within the crowd outside of the Secret Service's protected area. For example, at 11:23 a.m., the U.S. Park Police advised over its [REDACTED] of possible armed individuals, one with a Glock and one with a rifle, in the location of 14th and 15th Streets and Constitution Avenue. At 12 p.m., a separate report was shared over a Secret Service radio channel of individuals located in trees,



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one with a pistol on the hip. Secret Service personnel coordinated with partners in the U.S. Park Police and the MPD regarding these threats.<sup>27</sup>

Large crowds remained outside the secure area and did not seek entry through the magnetometer checkpoints. A Secret Service officer assigned to the magnetometers at the Ellipse said that people attempted to enter with motorcycle suits, ballistic vests, and gas masks, which the Secret Service seized. The officer also told us that a lot of people chose not to enter the secure area. Once they realized there were checkpoints with magnetometers, they would turn away to watch the speech from the street. Another Secret Service officer who worked at the magnetometer checkpoint said there were large crowds covering the hill by the Washington Monument, but no one was trying to forcefully enter the event.

During the rally at the Ellipse, the Secret Service seized numerous items at the magnetometer checkpoints from individuals wishing to enter the secure area that were on the prohibited items list, such as motorcycle suits and ballistic vests, as shown in Figures 7 through 11. A Secret Service officer told us it was the first time in his 12-year career that he had confiscated a motorcycle suit.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> According to a senior Secret Service official, whenever there are major events affecting the White House, the Secret Service [REDACTED] such as the U.S. Park Police and the MPD. [REDACTED]

<sup>28</sup> The officer explained that motorcycle suits are like Secret Service riot gear and wearing a motorcycle suit would provide protection from the tools officers use to diffuse a riot.



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### Figures 7–11. Prohibited Items Confiscated by Secret Service Officials at the Magnetometer Checkpoint at the Ellipse

**Motorcycle Suit**



**Ballistic Vest**



**Gas Masks**



**Taser**



**Concealed Belt Knife**



Source: Secret Service photos from a report on magnetometer operations at the Ellipse event

By the conclusion of the Ellipse event, the Secret Service officers working the magnetometers had processed 28,000 individuals and seized a total of 605 prohibited items. Table 1 shows the number of seizures of various types of prohibited items. A Secret Service official told us he had never seen the number of ballistic vests and gas masks that he saw on January 6.



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**Table 1. Prohibited Items Confiscated at Magnetometer Checkpoints at the Ellipse Rally on January 6**

| Prohibited Item | Number Confiscated |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Knives/blades   | 269                |
| Pepper spray    | 242                |
| Miscellaneous   | 94                 |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>605</b>         |

Source: Secret Service report on magnetometer operations at the Ellipse event

## The Secret Service Denied the President's Request to Go to the Capitol

As discussed above, whenever a protectee has a scheduled trip or movement, his or her staff notifies the protective detail so that Secret Service can plan accordingly. Sometimes a protectee may request an off-the-record movement, [REDACTED].

According to the President's detail leader, during a meeting several days prior to the rally at the Ellipse, a White House staff member mentioned the idea of the President going to the U.S. Capitol after the rally on January 6, 2021. The President's detail leader said he advised against this movement, saying it was not a good idea, [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] especially because of the ongoing transition. Following that discussion, White House staff did not make a formal request and the Secret Service did not plan for a movement to the Capitol on January 6.

On January 5, 2021, at 5:37 p.m., a Secret Service agent assigned to the President's motorcade emailed the other assigned drivers that there was an unconfirmed rumor of a possible Presidential move to the Capitol following the event at the Ellipse. The email indicated that the visit to the Capitol would be an off-the-record movement if it happened. The Secret Service official who sent the email informed us that he did not think an off-the-record movement to the Capitol was likely on January 6, because a [REDACTED].

On January 6, 2021, at 11:58 a.m., President Trump arrived on stage at the Ellipse event. During his speech, he announced that he would go with protestors to the Capitol. A Secret Service official who was backstage said that a military aide told him the President had announced he would go with the protestors to the Capitol and asked whether the Secret Service had a way to get the President to the Capitol. The Secret Service official informed the military aide that the



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typical motorcade route was not possible because of the attendees marching to the Capitol. Exercising due diligence, the Secret Service agent then contacted an MPD point of contact to plan potential logistics in case the movement did happen. According to the Secret Service agent, the MPD point of contact began to determine a potential route to the Capitol for that scenario.

At 1:16 p.m., after concluding his speech, the President entered his limousine. There were [REDACTED] Secret Service agents in the limousine with the President—[REDACTED] — and no one else. According to the [REDACTED] agents, once the motorcade was en route to the White House, the President requested to go to the Capitol. The detail leader informed the President that going to the Capitol was infeasible and the motorcade had to return to the White House.<sup>29</sup>

By 1:19 p.m., the President had reached the White House and was inside the West Wing. The detail leader asked the limousine driver to hold while he received clarity on whether a movement to the Capitol was still being considered. At about the same time—1:19 p.m.—a senior Secret Service official from OPO sent an email to the President’s detail leader informing him that USCP was having serious challenges securing the Capitol. The email advised against an off-the-record movement to or near the Capitol. After 15 to 20 minutes, the detail leader released the motorcade after he determined that the President would not be going to the Capitol. Specifically, the detail leader said there was no further discussion about going to the Capitol once they returned to the White House because of the ongoing violence at the Capitol. At 1:55 p.m., the detail lead replied to the email from the senior OPO official that there would be no off-the-record movement to the Capitol.

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<sup>29</sup> During the June 28, 2022, hearing of the U.S. House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol, a witness testified that the White House Deputy Chief of Staff told her that the President attempted to grab the steering wheel of the limousine and lunged toward the Secret Service detail lead when his request to go to the Capitol was denied. The OIG did not interview this witness—who was not a DHS employee—because transcripts of her Committee testimony and Committee staff interview are publicly available at [www.govinfo.gov](https://www.govinfo.gov). We attempted to interview the Deputy Chief of Staff; however, after encountering 4 months of delays in response to our efforts to schedule and conduct the interview, we provided questions for written response. In response to our question about this incident, we received the following message: “I do not recall being made aware of any details about the President’s return trip to the White House and, as such, I do not recall speaking with anyone about it.” We also interviewed [REDACTED] Secret Service agents in the limousine with the President. The limousine driver said that the President was angry when his request to go to the Capitol was denied, whereas the President’s detail lead, who was seated in front of the President, said he did not recall if the President was angry. We asked [REDACTED] agents whether the President reached for the steering wheel of the limousine or lunged toward the detail lead when his request to go to the Capitol was denied, and [REDACTED] witnesses said those actions did not occur.

**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL***U.S. Department of Homeland Security***The Secret Service Secured the Vice President after the Capitol Breach but Narrowly Avoided Encounters with Rioters**

Because the U.S. Capitol is considered a secure site and is managed by USCP, [REDACTED] The Secret Service treated the Vice President's January 6 visit to the Capitol as a standard visit without any special precautions or heightened security. This included following USCP's practice that [REDACTED]. Despite limited contingency planning and communication challenges, the Secret Service secured the Vice President during the breach of the Capitol, but there were some near encounters with rioters. The Secret Service considered evacuating the Vice President to his residence, but he did not want to leave, and the protective detail eventually considered their location secure. After the Capitol was cleared of protestors, the Secret Service escorted the Vice President back to chambers to resume election certification proceedings.

**The Secret Service Followed its Standard Process for Routine Visits to the Capitol, including**

On January 6, 2021, the Vice President was expected to serve as the President of the Senate. The Secret Service planned for the visit to the Capitol to be a standard visit without any special precautions or heightened security. This included [REDACTED]

30

Secret Service protective detail members regularly visit the Capitol due to protectees' roles in Congress. The Capitol is a unique site, with its own police presence and security measures in place. Specifically, the complex has cameras and guarded entry gates, as well as magnetometers inside the buildings. Secret Service personnel told us that for these reasons, they [REDACTED]

As a routine matter, USCP [REDACTED] Secret Service staff told us, and our policy review confirmed, that there are no known documented procedures or agreements noting this limitation, but it is a general understanding.

<sup>30</sup> According to Secret Service, [REDACTED]

<sup>31</sup> Protective surveys, typically generated in conjunction with an "advance," identify vulnerabilities and document site logistics and emergency plans.



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To facilitate coordination for protectee visits to the Capitol, the Secret Service's Liaison Division has [REDACTED] assistants permanently assigned to the complex. According to Liaison Division staff, they coordinate between the Secret Service, the Sergeant-at-Arms Office for the Senate and House of Representatives, and USCP. Liaison Division staff said they also conduct [REDACTED] by Secret Service protective staff. According to Liaison Division staff, they also manage the sharing of logistical information between USCP and the Secret Service and serve as escorts for protectees while onsite.

On December 30, 2020, Secret Service protective staff received confirmation that the Vice President would attend the electoral college certification at the Capitol on January 6, 2021. The Secret Service assigned a lead agent to begin planning for the site visit. The Secret Service also confirmed the Vice President's visit and his itinerary with USCP on January 5.

On January 6, the site agent arrived at the Capitol several hours before the Vice President for a walk-through. The site agent, the Vice President's staff members, and the assigned Liaison Division staff conducted the walk-through of [REDACTED] expected [REDACTED] movements around 10:45 a.m. After the walk-through concluded, the site agent contacted the Vice President's supervisory detail members to brief them about the security and emergency action plan. The site agent also contacted the transportation agent to provide an update that protestors were beginning to gather around the complex, but ultimately gave clearance for the Vice President's arrival.

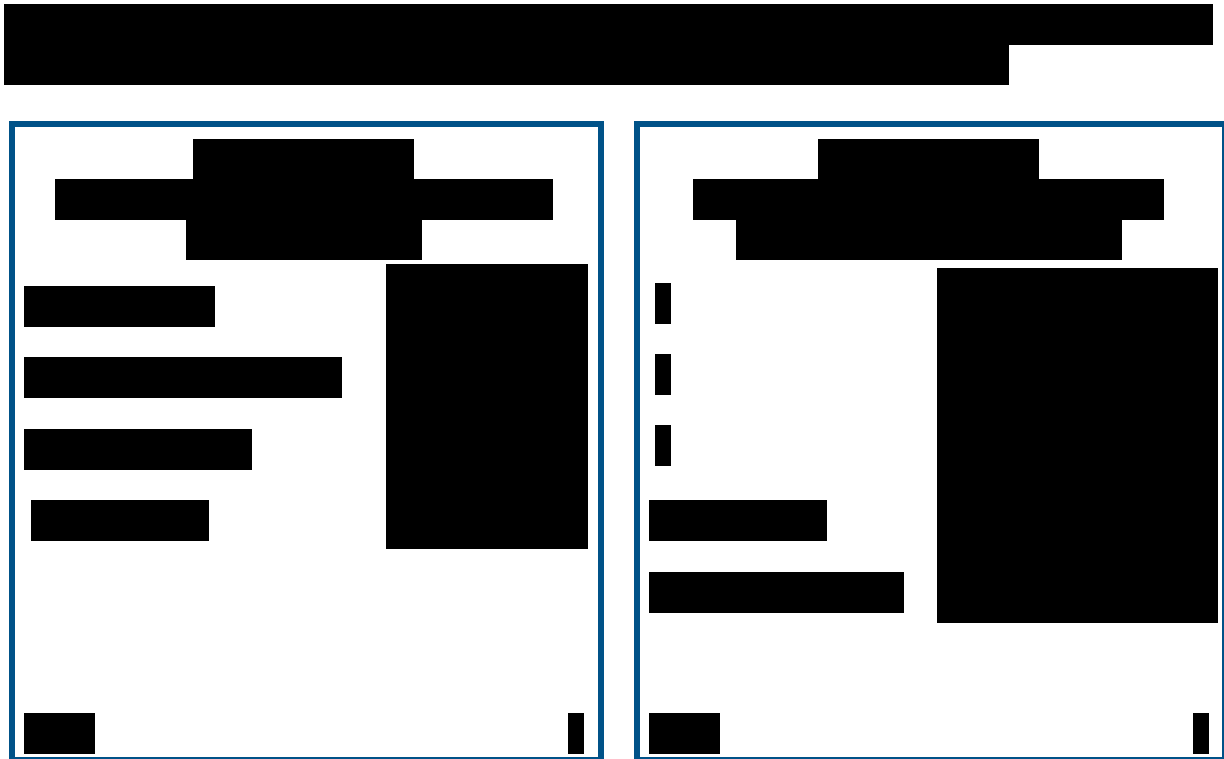
The Vice President, the Second Lady, and their daughter, along with their protective details, arrived on the Senate side of the Capitol around 12:37 p.m. The Vice President was first escorted to his office, then eventually to the Senate and House chambers for the certification, while his family was escorted by their detail staff and a Liaison Division supervisor to another floor.

[REDACTED]



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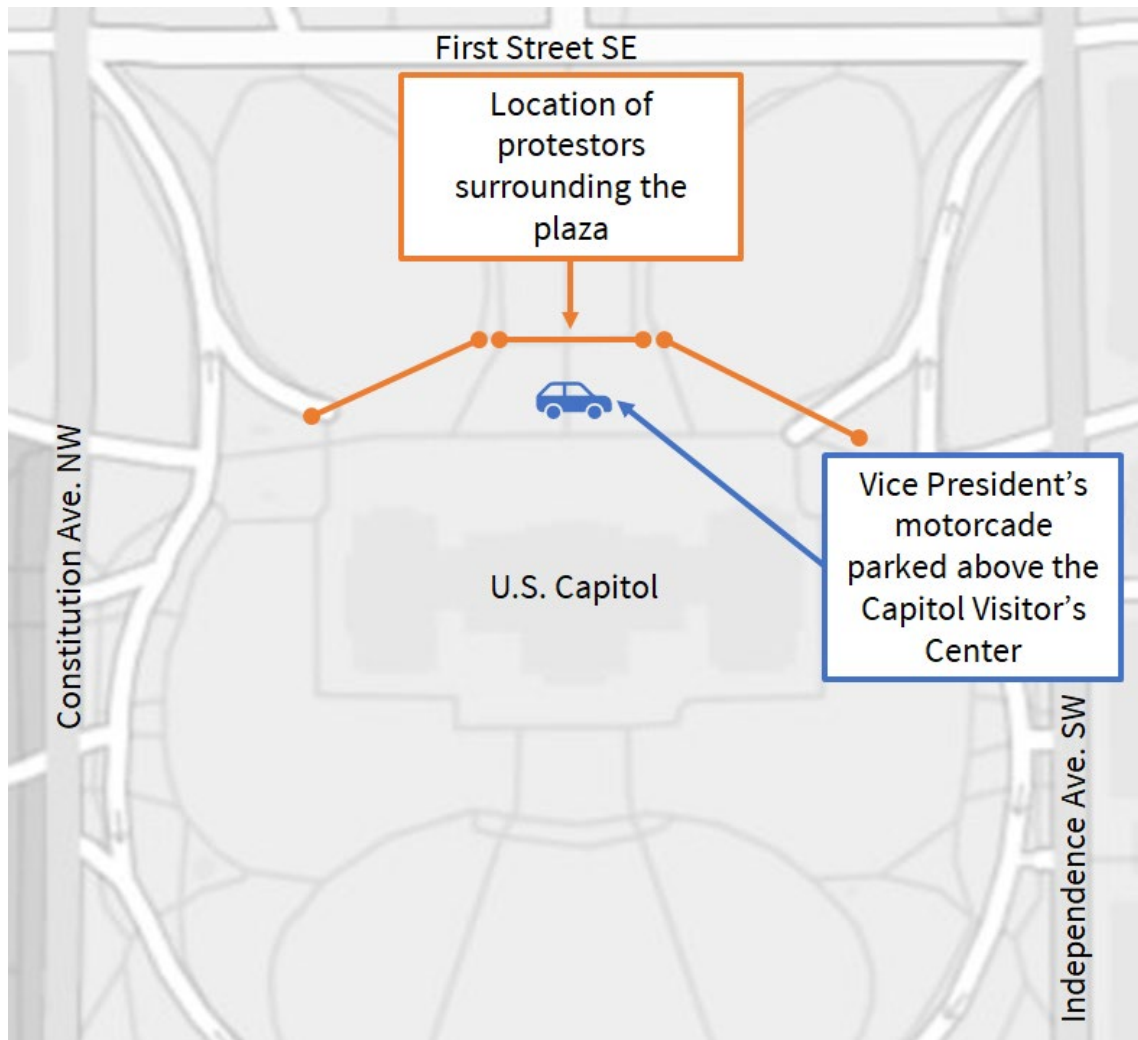


Source: DHS OIG generated based on Secret Service information

### Due to Communication Challenges and Limited Contingency Planning, the Secret Service Protective Detail Only Narrowly Avoided Rioters

According to the transportation agent, after the Vice President and his family entered the Capitol, the motorcade was directed to move to the plaza above the Capitol Visitor Center. Video footage reflects that about 100 protestors had surrounded the plaza. USCP officers guarded bike racks set up as a barricade to keep protestors back [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Figure 13 shows the location where the Vice President's motorcade was parked and the surrounding protestors. After being parked for about 30 minutes, the transportation agent started noticing the protestors getting closer and fighting with USCP to move the bike rack barricade. At the same time, the motorcade's MPD counterpart heard through the radio that things were "getting crazy" on another side of the Capitol grounds, with USCP officers clashing with protestors.

**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL***U.S. Department of Homeland Security***Figure 13. Location of the Vice President's Motorcade and Surrounding Protestors**

Source: DHS OIG generated based on Secret Service information

At 1:43 p.m., about an hour after the motorcade parked, the protestors who were initially barricaded behind the bike racks began attempting to remove the bike racks, while USCP officers tried to keep them in place. Initially, USCP officers were able to control the situation and keep protestors from breaching the barricade. In response to the escalation of events, the transportation agent said he told anyone who had exited their motorcade vehicles to get back in them. The agent told us he was concerned that protestors would overtake the area and vehicles, block any exit routes, and cause injuries.

The transportation agent told us that once all staff were back inside the vehicles, he had to come up with a plan to relocate in case the area became unsecured. [REDACTED]



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED], protestors stormed through the plaza, breaching the barricades at 1:59 p.m. The transportation agent said some protestors moved toward the motorcade and attempted to block some of the vehicles. Those vehicles were ultimately able to get around the protestors and rejoin the rest of the motorcade. [REDACTED]. The transportation agent said making that quick decision to move the motorcade was the “hardest call I’ve had to make.”

[REDACTED]

Just as the Capitol was breached at 2:13 p.m., the site agent returned to the chamber area [REDACTED] and heard glass breaking and a rush of people entering the Capitol lobby on the floor below. The site agent said that she immediately ran from the chamber area down the stairwell to monitor the situation. The site agent informed the detail supervisor, who was coming down the stairs, of the situation so he could relay the information to staff still located upstairs and determine a plan of action. Due to security concerns, the Secret Service had moved the Vice President from the Senate Chambers to the Vice President’s office just prior to the breach, at 2:12 p.m. According to the site agent, the protestors had two paths out of the area they had entered, one of which was directly toward the site agent and the Vice President’s office. USCP officers directed protestors away from the direction of the stairwell leading to the Vice President’s office toward the other path. The rioters reached the second floor at 2:15 p.m.,



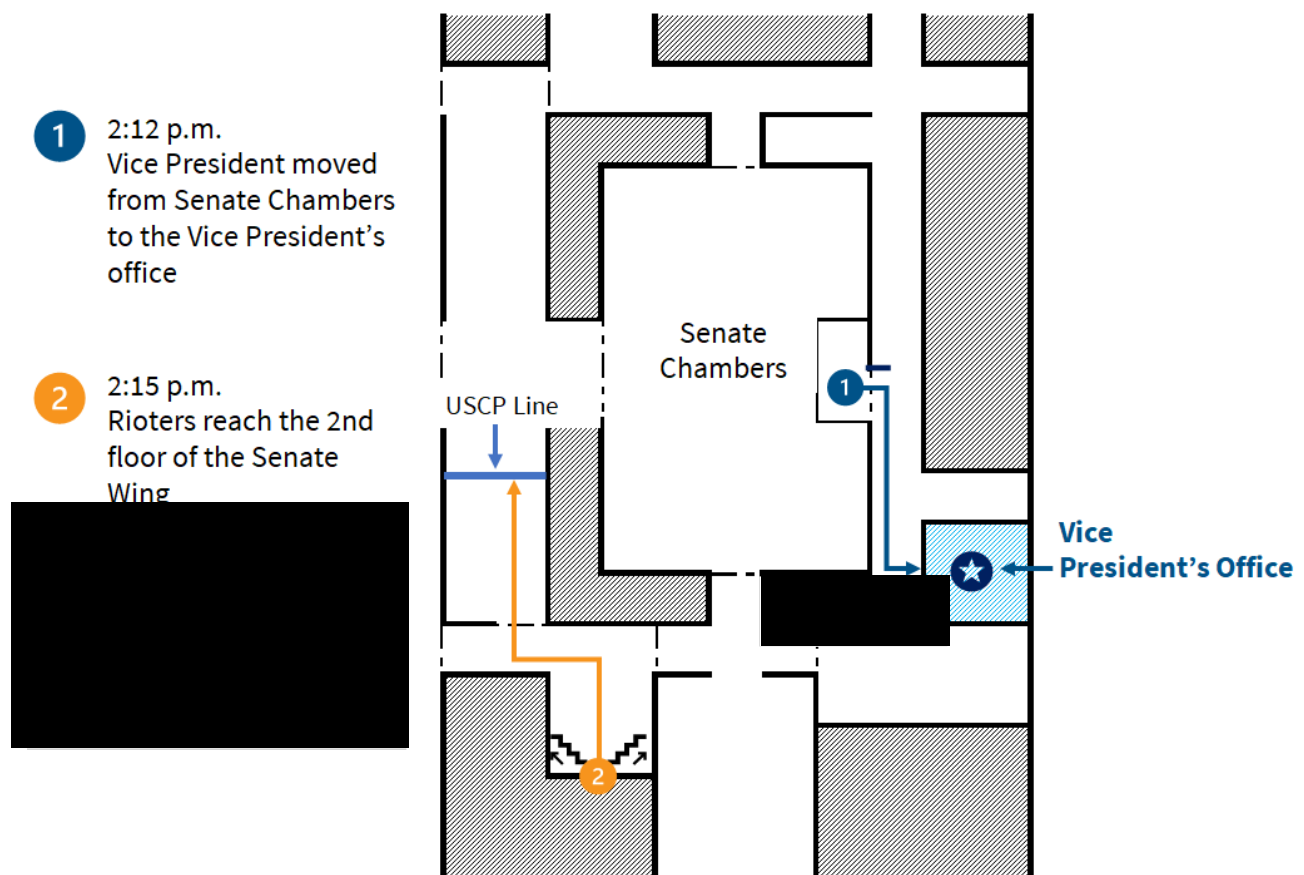
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where a USCP officer led them away from the direction of the Vice President's office toward a line of USCP officers.

If USCP had been unsuccessful in directing the protestors, they could have moved into the office and chamber area while the Vice President and his family were still there. The site agent told us the situation kept quickly changing—the evacuation path was clear of protestors one moment, then not clear the next. At 2:25 p.m., the detail used a moment when the path was clear to relocate the Vice President from his office [REDACTED]. Figure 14 shows the proximity of the Vice President to rioters on January 6, 2021.

**Figure 14. Proximity of Vice President Pence to Rioters in the Capitol's Senate Wing on January 6, 2021**



Source: DHS OIG generated based on Secret Service documents and public information

The site agent told us that the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] created manpower challenges that day.



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The site agent also told us that additional personnel would have been helpful while moving the Vice President, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### The Secret Service Decided Not to Evacuate the Capitol Grounds

At [REDACTED], the Vice President's detail safely moved the Vice President from his office [REDACTED] without incident. During this time, the detail leader said that he and the Vice President discussed relocating from the Capitol. According to notifications from the Secret Service's operations center, there were initial plans to evacuate the Capitol and go to the Vice President's residence. The Vice President did not want to leave the Capitol grounds. Detail staff said they were not aware of the developments outside the building, including protestors erecting a gallows and noose and yelling, "Hang Mike Pence."

Once the Vice President was moved [REDACTED], the detail leader worked to determine a plan of action and whether to leave the Capitol grounds. The detail leader said he was monitoring motorcade routes in case an evacuation was needed. The detail leader also told us he took the Vice President's desire not to leave Capitol grounds into consideration. Ultimately, the detail leader determined there was no reason to leave the secure location. At 2:49 p.m., the detail notified the Secret Service operations center of the decision to remain holding [REDACTED]. After deciding to hold, the detail leader directed staff to gauge the threat level [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]<sup>32</sup> According to some agents, they were not receiving communications from various entities such as the Protective Intelligence Operations Center. According to Secret Service agents, the USCP and MPD officers in the area could use their radios to maintain necessary communications with their counterparts [REDACTED]. Ultimately, [REDACTED] everyone remained safe for the duration of the hold.

## The Vice President Returned to Chambers from the Secure Location

USCP declared the Capitol clear of protestors at 6 p.m. Following the declaration, Secret Service canine teams began assisting USCP with sweeps inside the Capitol. Between 6:30 p.m. and 6:45 p.m., the site agent, Liaison Division staff assistant, and USSS/CAT agents started conducting walk-throughs to ensure the walking paths from [REDACTED] to the chambers were clear. At around 7:00 p.m., the site agent, detail supervisors, Liaison Division staff assistant, and USSS/CAT agents escorted the Vice President back inside the Capitol. Various staff members were relieved of duty and replaced by other staff at different times throughout the evening. At 7:30 p.m., Senators began returning to the chambers and the Vice President-elect arrived at the Capitol.

By 8:05 p.m., the Vice President returned to the chambers to resume proceedings. Prior to proceedings ending in the early morning hours of January 7, 2021, the transportation agent ran the motorcade route with the MPD from the Capitol to the Vice President's residence to ensure a clear path. Once the route was deemed clear, minutes before 4 a.m., the Vice President, his family, and any remaining Secret Service staff onsite finally departed the Capitol without incident.

## The Secret Service Sent Civil Disturbance Units to the Capitol After Violence Erupted

After violence erupted at the Capitol, the Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief offered to assist the USCP, and Secret Service sent Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU) teams to the Capitol. The process of identifying White House personnel available for deployment, while maintaining security at the White House, resulted in an 80-minute delay before personnel were deployed. Ultimately, the number of personnel deployed were fewer than Secret Service leadership anticipated. The [REDACTED] CDU officers who responded provided security for Members of Congress and staffers sheltering in the Dirksen Senate Office building. The Secret Service did not conduct any formal after-action review of support provided to USCP.

<sup>32</sup> Although we requested text messages from select Secret Service personnel to ensure our reconstruction of events and evaluation of Secret Service's response was comprehensive, Secret Service notified OIG that it did not maintain text messages when it implemented a system update despite our ongoing review and other investigations. Appendix A includes additional information about our request for Secret Service text messages.



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### **The Secret Service Offered Assistance to USCP but Struggled to Identify Available Officers**

Secret Service had authority to assist USCP at the Capitol on January 6. First, its statutory law enforcement authority under 18 U.S.C. § 3056A provides the Secret Service Uniformed Division with powers equivalent to those of the MPD. Second, Secret Service officials asserted that a protective nexus existed at the Capitol because of the Vice President's presence on the complex and the Vice President-elect's planned appearance later that evening. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief offered to assist the USCP Chief via text message at 1:01 p.m.<sup>33</sup> The Uniformed Division Chief estimated that the USCP Chief responded within 5 minutes, indicating that he would take whatever assistance the Secret Service could provide. This text exchange is shown in Figure 15. The Uniformed Division Chief then reached out to the Secret Service Assistant Director and Deputy Director for approval to assist. The Uniformed Division Chief estimated the process of consulting with his superiors took about 10 to 15 minutes. The Secret Service Director said that he also independently reached out to the USCP Chief via phone and left a voicemail before learning that the Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief had already established contact and had begun to act.

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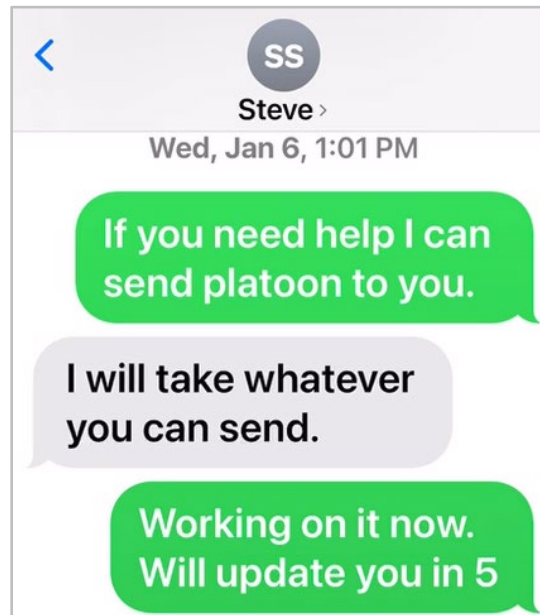
<sup>33</sup> During field work, this text message exchange was the only material Secret Service provided in response to our request for text messages.



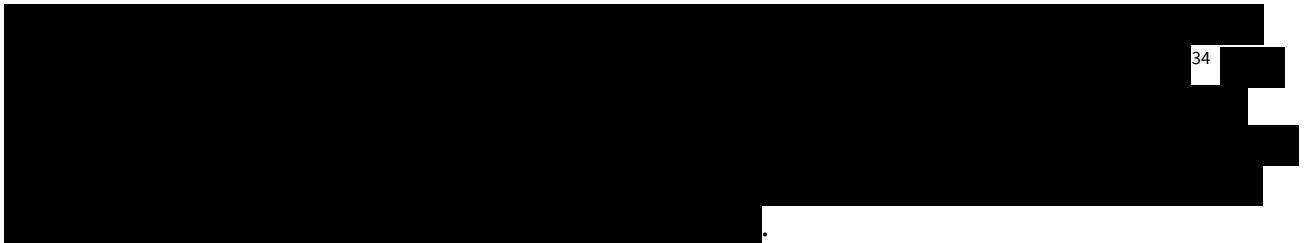
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Figure 15. Excerpt of Text Exchange between the Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief and the USCP Chief



Source: Secret Service image of text message exchange



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<sup>34</sup> According to a USSS official responsible for CDU training, USSS/CDU officers are trained and equipped for crowd control. The mission of the USSS/CDU officers was to protect the White House from any form of civil disturbance and to assist with the event on the Ellipse, if needed. A senior USSS White House Branch official said that, as a result of protests during the summer of 2020, the Secret Service decided to have USSS/CDU presence for any large rallies or protests near the White House.



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

According to the Uniformed Division Chief, he delegated further responsibility for arranging assistance to the Capitol to the Assistant Chief and proceeded to meet with other high-level officials in the Director's Crisis Center. The Uniformed Division Chief said he was not involved in further coordination while in the Director's Crisis Center because it was a secure facility where he did not have his cell phone. The Assistant Chief recalled the Chief at first telling him to assist with sending support to the USCP, but then redirected him to go to the White House instead to oversee the security posture. The Assistant Chief said he thought the Chief requested another USSS official to assist with sending support to the USCP but did not know who. Through our interviews of other Uniformed Division officials, we could not determine what official, if any, took

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any further action at that time to facilitate the Uniformed Division Chief's initial plan to assist. The plan to have Washington Field Office agents provide backfill at the White House before providing assistance had still not occurred hours after the initial 1:01 pm text regarding assistance. In an email from 3:10 p.m., a White House Branch official wrote: "[Washington Field Office] is sending an additional [REDACTED] agents to [White House Branch] to relieve [REDACTED] of our Officers to respond to the Capitol."

Meanwhile, the USSS/CDU personnel assigned to the Ellipse event had returned to the White House, where they were on standby to provide civil disturbance response, if needed. Multiple USSS/CDU officers assigned to the Ellipse explained that once the event concluded, they returned to the south lawn of the White House to assume a standby status.

At 1:55 p.m., USCP issued a call for assistance to all agencies via the Police Mutual Aid Radio System.<sup>35</sup> The Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief had convened a virtual chat with the Uniformed Division Assistant and Deputy Chiefs at 1:49 p.m. According to a Deputy Chief whose branch subsequently provided assistance to the Capitol, shortly after the USCP transmission, the Uniformed Division leadership on the chat determined the support Secret Service would deploy to the Capitol. Secret Service deployed [REDACTED] USSS/CDU teams totaling [REDACTED] personnel [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They were supplemental to the White House Branch personnel and considered not essential to the complex security. Before USSS/CDU teams could deploy they needed instruction for an arrival location, which the Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief requested and received from the USCP Chief via text message. At 2:12 p.m. the Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief emailed the arrival location information to the Uniformed Division Chiefs.

At 2:27 p.m. the [REDACTED] USSS/CDU officers departed the White House and arrived at the Capitol at 2:38 p.m. Ultimately, it took 86 minutes from the initial text sent by the Uniformed Division Chief offering assistance at 1:01 p.m. until the deployment of USSS/CDU teams to assist at 2:27 p.m. Upon their arrival, USCP directed the USSS/CDU officers to secure the Dirksen Senate Office Building, where Members of Congress and were sheltering in place according to USSS/CDU personnel.

Independent of this initial deployment, a [REDACTED] of Uniformed Division officers [REDACTED] arrived at the Capitol at 2:35 p.m. The official who led this team said the team had been initially mobilized and staged [REDACTED] for the day as the "mass arrest team," intended for potential disturbances at the Ellipse event. According to this official, the team was sent to assist with the Vice President's evacuation, but the Vice President

<sup>35</sup> The Metropolitan Washington Area Police Mutual Aid Radio System is a regional law enforcement system designed to give law enforcement communications/emergency operations centers, including that of the Secret Service, the ability to communicate with one or more other participating agencies.



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did not evacuate the complex, and the team proceeded to join the [REDACTED] officers at the Dirksen building. Figure 16 shows USSS/CDU personnel moving within the Dirksen building.

**Figure 16. USSS/CDU Personnel in the Dirksen Senate Office Building**



Source: Photo by Rod Lamkey/Consolidated News Photos, used with permission

The Secret Service's provision of [REDACTED] personnel to assist USCP may not have been the magnitude of assistance leadership anticipated. An email from the head of PID to the Secret Service Director at 3:47 p.m. indicated that, "the Secret Service has already deployed approximately 100 [law enforcement] Officers to the Capitol and [will deploy] approximately ANOTHER 100 within the next hour." When we asked Secret Service leadership about this email, they provided inconsistent recollections on where these estimated numbers originated and whether they reflected the Secret Service's intended response. During an operations meeting with other DHS components on the afternoon of January 6, the head of PID informed them that Secret Service had provided approximately 100 law enforcement officers to support USCP, significantly over-reporting the Secret Service's true magnitude of response.

The Secret Service also sent a Uniformed Division Official and [REDACTED] USSS/OPO officials to USCP's Command Center. According to those [REDACTED] officials their role at the Command Center included coordinating the agency's CDU response, monitoring the Vice President's movements, and maintaining direct communication between the Secret Service and USCP. These officials arrived at the USCP Command Center at approximately 3:45 p.m.



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At the Dirksen building, the USSS/CDU teams assumed defensive positions at stairwells and internal doorways surrounding the large room occupied by Members of Congress and staff. These teams served as the last line of defense for the building and, according to one Uniformed Division Chief, freed up USCP officers to clear the main Capitol building. At approximately 3:35 p.m. the [REDACTED] USSS/CDU officers defending the Dirksen building were joined by several FBI agents. USSS/CDU officers held the Dirksen building without incident or engagement from the rioters until the main Capitol building had been cleared and declared safe for the Members of Congress' return. At around 7 p.m., some USSS/CDU officers assisted with escorting the Members back to the main Capitol building. Those USSS/CDU officers ultimately regrouped with the remaining CDU officers at the Dirksen building and then departed for the White House or their place of duty at around 8 p.m.

At around 6:30 p.m., the Secret Service deployed [REDACTED] canine teams to assist USCP with sweeps across the Capitol complex until discontinuing at 9:47 p.m. After the situation at the Capitol had subsided, the Secret Service assisted with arranging installation of anti-scale fencing around the Capitol complex. Table 3 provides a breakdown of the assistance the Secret Service provided to the Capitol.



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### **Secret Service Did Not Conduct a Formal After-Action Review of Assistance Provided to the Capitol**

Some of the Secret Service personnel who participated in the component's response to the Capitol said they participated in after-action discussions but not in any formal documented reviews. While some personnel said that Secret Service's assistance to USCP did not encounter challenges, others identified potential lessons learned. For example, two responding officers felt that given their training level and equipment, they could have been better used to directly engage rioters rather than secure the static position of the Dirksen building. Specifically, according to the leader of the team, the USSS/CDU officers from the Rowley Training Center were trained at a high level, and they had a [REDACTED] that they

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were trained to use or could have provided to USCP. Additionally, three officers expressed concerns with the lack of coordination with USCP.

During our review, we encountered inconsistent information about some aspects of Secret Service's assistance to the Capitol across documents we reviewed and interviews with officials. For example, the number of officers provided in the email from the head of PID to the Secret Service Director (discussed previously indicating that Secret Service had deployed 100 officers to the Capitol) far exceeded the actual number of [REDACTED] officers that we could verify as present on the scene. Further, Secret Service leadership provided inconsistent recollections of where these estimated numbers originated and whether they reflected the Secret Service's intended response. In addition, some Secret Service officials stated that the component provided additional personnel to support USCP with security through the night of January 6 and into the following week. In response to our request for confirmation of these activities, the Uniformed Division Chief provided information about Secret Service Officers assisting USCP with security at the Capitol on January 14, 2021, but not on any other day following January 6. A formal after-action review by the Secret Service would have been invaluable not only for the component's own institutional knowledge but also to help external reviewers determine the true happenings of the day.

### **The Secret Service Did Not Locate the Pipe Bomb at the DNC Building but Promptly Evacuated the Vice President-Elect After the Pipe Bomb was Detected by the US Capitol Police**

Secret Service canine teams conducting sweeps of the DNC building in preparation for the Vice President-elect's visit on January 6 did not discover a pipe bomb that had been placed outside the building the night before. The Vice President-elect, traveling in an armored vehicle with her motorcade, entered the DNC building via a ramp within 20 feet of the pipe bomb. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Secret Service personnel provided differing interpretations of canine search requirements and procedures. In addition, the Secret Service had not employed all its explosive detection tactics and measures for the security sweep, in part because it did not have adequate policies and procedures for requesting these capabilities for "elect" protectees. Two USCP plainclothes agents who were searching the DNC building after a similar device was discovered at the Republican National Committee building ultimately discovered the pipe bomb 1 hour and 40 minutes after the Vice President-elect's arrival. The two USCP agents notified the Secret Service, who then evacuated the Vice President-elect from the DNC building. The Secret Service did not report the DNC building's evacuation as an Unusual Protective Event (UPE), as required by its policies. More than a year later, the Secret Service initiated and finalized an update to its explosive detection coordination policy to include explosive coordination efforts for "elect" protectee visits.



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### **The Secret Service Canine Teams Did Not Sweep the Bushes Where the Pipe Bomb Was Located**

Advance security sweeps by the Secret Service at the DNC building did not include the outside area where a pipe bomb had been placed. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] personnel gave us differing interpretations of whether the pipe bomb's location should have been included in a sweep.

On the evening of January 5, an unidentified individual placed a pipe bomb in bushes near a bench in front of the DNC building. The pipe bomb was approximately 9 feet from the building's exterior wall and 20 feet from the center of the driveway to the garage entrance where the Vice President-elect, traveling in an armored vehicle with her motorcade, entered the building on January 6. Figure 17 shows the location of the pipe bomb. According to the FBI, the pipe bomb was "viable" and "could have detonated, causing innocent bystanders to be seriously injured or killed."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Statement of the Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI Washington Field Office accompanying the release of video and additional information regarding the pipe bomb investigation on September 8, 2021. During a June 7, 2023, transcribed interview with members of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, the same FBI official (retired prior to the June interview) indicated that he did not think the timer on the device could have detonated the pipe bomb because its 1-hour duration had elapsed.

**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL***U.S. Department of Homeland Security***Figure 17. Location of the Pipe Bomb at the DNC Building**

Source: DHS OIG photo

Note: The pipe bomb was placed in the bushes near a bench (as shown in Figure 19). Both the bushes and bench have since been removed and do not appear in this photo.

On the morning of January 6, between 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., two Secret Service canine teams<sup>37</sup> conducted a sweep of the DNC building in preparation for the Vice President-elect's arrival at 11:25 a.m. After completing a walk-through of the site, the site agent for the DNC visit instructed the canine teams to sweep the Vice President-elect's walking path within the building. The site agent did not instruct the canine teams to sweep any part of the exterior of the building. Nevertheless, the two canine teams divided the search areas, with one team sweeping the interior of the building and the other team taking responsibility for sweeping certain exterior areas. The officer responsible for sweeping exterior areas said that the exterior sweep included the garage entrance ramp and some other areas near the garage entrance, including a storm drain, but did not include the bushes where the pipe bomb was located.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> A canine team consists of one dog and one handler.

<sup>38</sup> We reviewed security camera footage of the garage entrance ramp. The video footage did not cover the area adjacent to the entrance ramp that included the bushes where the pipe bomb was located.



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Other Secret Service officials, including a canine team supervisor and a subject matter expert in TSD, said that the area where the pipe bomb was located should have been swept given its proximity to the garage driveway ramp. [REDACTED]

### The Vice President-Elect's Motorcade Passed Near the Still Undiscovered Pipe Bomb

The Vice President-elect, along with members of her staff, arrived at the DNC building at 11:25 a.m. The motorcade entered the DNC building via the garage driveway ramp, passing near the still undiscovered pipe bomb, as shown in Figure 18.

<sup>39</sup> The Technical Security Division's *Protective Advance Procedures Manual* (undated) states, "In order to protect sweep methodology and minimize risk to personnel in case of an explosive functioning during the sweep, the areas to be checked must be vacated of non-essential personnel and secured (posted) prior to the start of the EOD/K9 sweeps at each site."

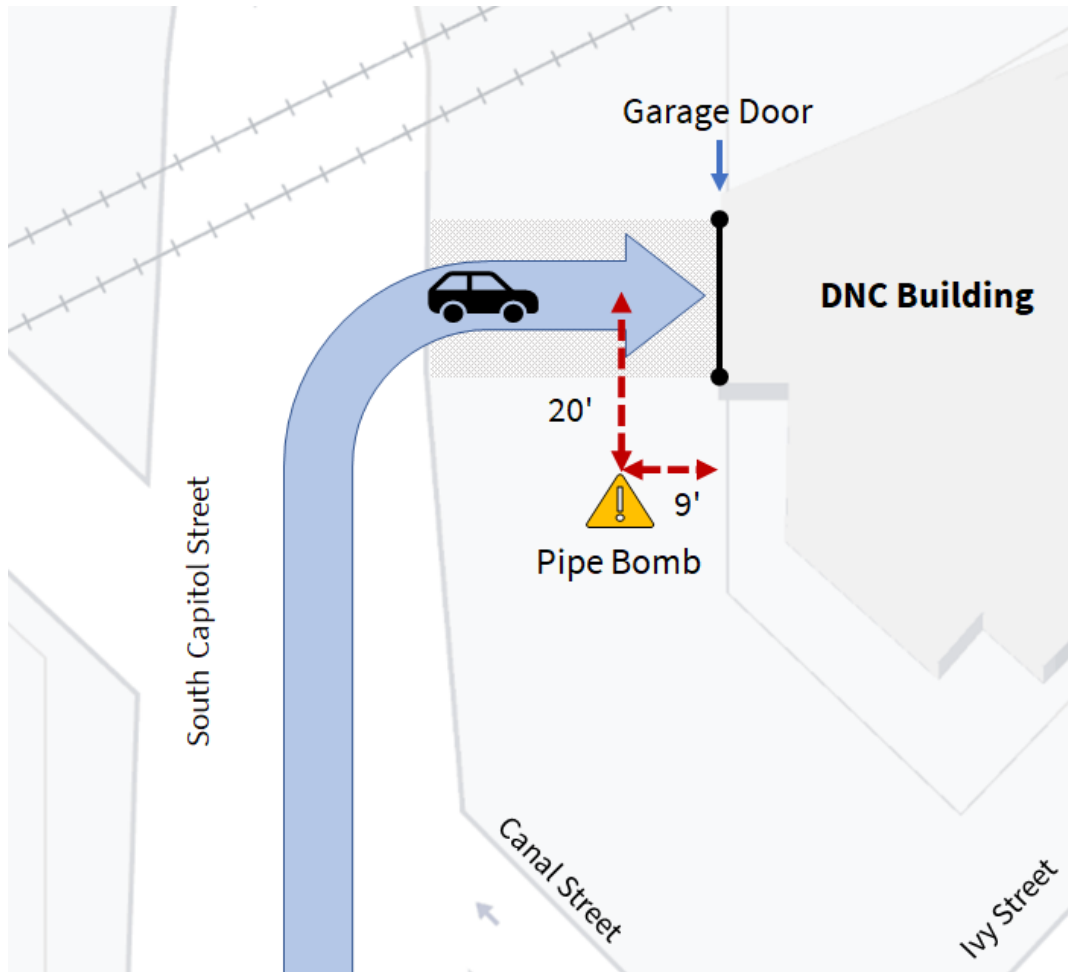
[REDACTED]



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Figure 18. Proximity of Vice President-elect's Motorcade to Still Undiscovered Pipe Bomb



Source: DHS OIG generated: map data ©2023 Google

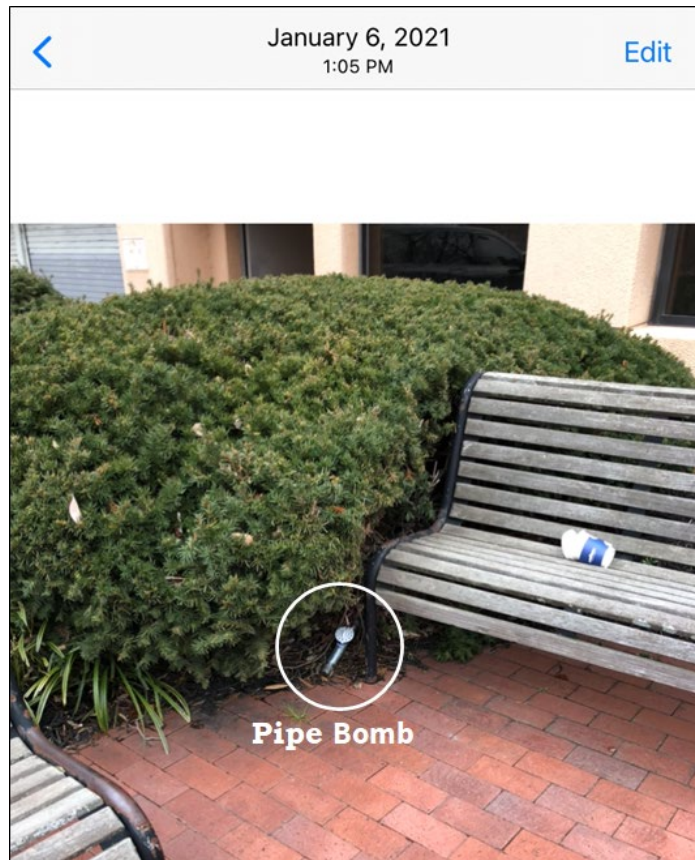
Two USCP plainclothes agents discovered the pipe bomb at 1:05 p.m. The two USCP agents were conducting a patrol of the area in response to the discovery of a pipe bomb at 12:44 p.m. at the Republican National Committee building. Figure 19 is a picture of the pipe bomb outside the DNC building taken by the USCP plainclothes agents when they discovered it.



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**Figure 19. Photo of Pipe Bomb Taken  
by USCP Agent**



Source: USCP plainclothes agent

Immediately after identifying the pipe bomb, the USCP agents notified Secret Service agents who were assigned to wait in the MPD vehicle that served as the lead car in the motorcade outside the DNC building, close to where the device was discovered. The Secret Service agents exited their car to visually confirm the pipe bomb and then notified the rest of the Vice President-elect's protective detail within the building. The detail leader decided to evacuate the building immediately. At [REDACTED] p.m., Vice President-elect Harris exited the DNC building [REDACTED].

Before the discovery of the pipe bomb, the Vice President-elect had initially planned to return to the U.S. Capitol at 3:30 p.m. According to Secret Service officials, the plan was still to return to the Capitol after evacuating the DNC building. However, the MPD officer assigned to drive the lead car for the motorcade began to hear radio traffic about the escalation of violence at the Capitol. Ultimately, the Vice President-elect's detail decided to take the Vice President-elect to her residence, where she arrived at [REDACTED].



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The Vice President-elect was ultimately evacuated safely. The motorcade including the Vice President-elect came within less than 20 feet of the pipe bomb, and the Vice President-elect spent approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes at the DNC building before evacuating. Further, a Secret Service agent assigned to the garage entrance spent a total of 5 hours at his post, which was in proximity to the pipe bomb.

**The Secret Service Did Not Employ Key Explosive Detection Capabilities for the Security Sweep**

We found that Secret Service did not use two key explosive detection capabilities for the security sweep. First, a specialized site coordinator from USSS/TSD, who is responsible for planning and managing the installation of technical assets and countermeasures to ensure a safe environment, was not present at the DNC building for the Vice President-elect's visit. Without a USSS/TSD site coordinator, the canine team did not receive guidance on where to sweep on the exterior of the building. Second, there was no Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team present to support the canine teams during the advance work.<sup>41</sup>

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

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According to the same guidance, USSS/TSD is routinely included in advance security planning for sites visited by the President and Vice President and is available upon request and authorization for all other protectees. USSS/TSD guidance does not state a specific timeframe for requesting support, nor is there any guidance specifically about requests for an "elect" protectee, such as the Vice President-elect on January 6. Secret Service advance security personnel did not request a USSS/TSD site coordinator for the Vice President-elect's visit to the DNC building on January 6. Secret Service personnel said that it was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] To verify this claim, we requested all USSS/TSD assignments to site visits for the Vice President-elect between August 12, 2020, when she was selected as the Vice-Presidential candidate, and January 20, 2021, the day of the Presidential Inauguration. Based on our review of 29 site visits, which included visits in and outside of the National Capital Region, [REDACTED]. The locations for these visits were [REDACTED]. In addition, USSS/TSD did not [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

<sup>42</sup> Technical Security Division, *Protective Advance Procedures Manual*.



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have records of any [REDACTED], indicating [REDACTED].

In the absence of a USSS/TSD site coordinator, a USSS/TSD senior official and a canine supervisor said the site agent was responsible for providing sweep instructions to the canine teams. The site agent provided guidance on [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]. A USSS/TSD senior official said that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In an email for another visit to the DNC building a few days prior to January 6, a Secret Service official told the site agent, “[n]o [USSS/] TSD support because it’s short notice but show K9 the path and they’ll know what to do.” This email shows that in at least one other instance a Secret Service official responsible for site logistics provided guidance to a site agent to relying on canine teams to determine the sweep for themselves, rather than following the practice the USSS/TSD senior official said should be followed. The USSS/TSD senior told us he was unaware of any training or guidance for site agents to help determine what areas should be swept or not swept at a site.

We also found that there was no EOD team present to support the canine team. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] For the DNC visit on January 6, the Vice-Presidential Protective Division’s Operations Section—a unit that provides logistical support to protective operations within the division—submitted the canine support request. The canine support request that the Operations Unit submitted did not include a request for any EOD teams to support the canine teams.

[REDACTED] According to USSS/TSD personnel, its policy is not a requirement that other agents must follow when conducting sweeps without USSS/TSD present.

On the morning of January 6, the two Secret Service canine teams assigned to sweep the DNC building were surprised to learn that an EOD team was not onsite to assist them with the sweep of the building. The site agent was also surprised. He said that he called the Operations Unit to confirm whether an EOD team would be present, and the Operations Unit informed him that an EOD team would not be present for the sweep of the DNC building.

[REDACTED]

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The Operations Unit agent said that the reason for requesting canine support but not an EOD team was that the Department of Defense requires 72-hour advance notice to provide an EOD team. The Operations Unit agent submitted the canine request form on January 4, less than 72 hours before the site visit on January 6.<sup>44</sup> However, the 72-hour advance notice requirement was not documented in any guidance or on the request form. A TSD senior official was unaware of a 72-hour timeframe for submitting an EOD request.

Our review of additional canine and EOD requests also did not show evidence of a 72-hour advance notice requirement. We reviewed 36 approved canine and EOD request forms for the Vice President-elect between August 12, 2020, when she was a Vice-Presidential candidate, and January 20, 2021, the day of the Presidential Inauguration. Based on our review of 36 approved request forms, we determined that on seven occasions EOD support was requested and approved for visits within the National Capital Region when the request was submitted less than 72 hours prior to the protectee's visit.

The locations in which EOD support was requested and approved varied, [REDACTED] to the Vice President-elect's residence in Washington, DC. Additionally, all seven requests for EOD support within the National Capital Region were submitted by the Secret Service Washington, DC, Field Office, not the Operations Unit within the Vice-Presidential Protection Division. We identified one instance of an EOD request being denied for a visit to the DNC building on December 14, 2020, when the request was submitted at 10:50 a.m. for a site visit at 5 p.m. the same day. During our interview, a canine supervisor said at least 24 hours' advance notice for an EOD request would be needed because EOD teams typically come from local military bases.

**The Secret Service Did Not Take Required Steps to Designate the Evacuation as an Unusual Protective Event**

The Secret Service defines an Unusual Protective Event as "any occurrence, episode, or incident that interrupts the normal protective activities of the Secret Service."<sup>45</sup> These events have unusual significance, such as failed or mitigated security incidents or an attempted or successful assassination, kidnapping, or assault.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The Secret Service uses a single form that allows the requester to indicate how many canine and EOD teams are needed.

<sup>45</sup> Secret Service, *Unusual Protective Events and Incident Reporting Protocols*, OPO-19, Nov. 25, 2015. Secret Service updated OPO-19 on Aug. 16, 2021. The update to OPO-19 did not change the information referenced in this section of our report.

<sup>46</sup> Reporting requirements instruct staff to characterize a UPE as fitting one of five categories: nominal incidents, mitigated incidents, security failure incidents, attempted assassination/kidnapping/assault, and successful assassination/kidnapping/assault.

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Once a UPE is declared, the appropriate Secret Service staff are required to report the incident to their chain of command who would then brief protective operations leadership. Staff are also required to complete a UPE Preliminary Information Form (SSF 4386).<sup>47</sup> Following these initial reporting requirements, staff must complete an after-action memorandum documenting any additional details surrounding the event, including any threats or changes related to the protectee. Once they have completed all the information, the documentation is retained in a case file in the Protective Threat Management System.<sup>48</sup>

Following the events of January 6, the Secret Service neither designated nor reported the Vice President-elect's evacuation at the DNC as a UPE. However, according to Secret Service policy, the Vice President-elect's evacuation due to the discovery of a pipe bomb and relocation to her residence qualifies as a "security failure." The Secret Service policy OPO-19 defines security failure incidents as:

Those protective occurrences where existing security measures, and/or technical or physical security devices, failed to detect and/or prevent an unauthorized action or undesirable circumstance that could have been otherwise avoided **and** did not result in harm to a protectee. Security failures may also include situations where there was a substantial disruption of the protected site/event/facility, substantial change in the protectee's itinerary, or an increased risk of harm to a protectee due to a security matter. Generally, such occurrences resulted in formal evaluations/investigations of what transpired, and substantive changes to numerous operational policies/procedures were implemented. Security Failure incidents also typically received significant media attention and extensive oversight activities by multiple outside entities.

The Vice President-elect's protective detail did note in its final survey<sup>49</sup> that an explosive device was discovered "within close proximity to the primary Arrival/Departure exit route for [Vice President-Nominee] Kamala Harris." The Secret Service did not complete an SSF 4386, as required by Secret Service policy.<sup>50</sup> The Secret Service Director at the time told us the Vice President-elect's evacuation was "without question" a UPE and that if it was not documented, "it was not compliant with their policy."

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<sup>47</sup> The SSF 4386 is the initial mechanism used to briefly detail the circumstances surrounding the applicable incident.

<sup>48</sup> The Protective Threat Management System is a PID-managed case management system to track information about individuals or incidents that may impact the Secret Service's protective mission.

<sup>49</sup> The final survey contains a summary of events and pertinent documents related to a protectee's movement. The final survey is completed by the protective detail's lead advance agent and approved by the detail's special agent in charge.

<sup>50</sup> The Secret Service designated and reported the Vice President's evacuation at the Capitol as a UPE security failure incident.

**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL***U.S. Department of Homeland Security***The Secret Service Initiated a Policy Update 1 Year Later**

In early February 2022, more than a year after the pipe bomb incident, USSS/OPO and other specialized offices within the Secret Service began discussions to revise their explosives detection coordination.

The revisions to the *Protective Operations Manual* (OPO-06), published on April 7, 2022, includes a new section titled, “Office of Technical Development and Mission Support, Technical Security Division Explosive Threat Coordination.”<sup>51</sup> The new section states that:



A Secret Service official told us that updates were made to OPO-06 to ensure that what happened on January 6 at the DNC building does not reoccur. Another Secret Service official told us that policy changes were made to OPO-06 to

**Conclusion**

On January 6, the Secret Service planned and conducted protective operations for several sites affected by the day’s events, including the rally at the Ellipse, the U.S. Capitol, and the DNC building. Although it did not anticipate or plan for the level of violence that ultimately occurred that day, the Secret Service took actions to respond to and mitigate the threats it encountered and avoid any harm to its protectees and to assist USCP. The events of January 6 were unprecedented, and the issues we identified during our review present an opportunity for the Secret Service to be better prepared in the future.

<sup>51</sup> The Secret Service initiated an earlier revision to this policy in May 2021, which it completed in January 2022. This revision did not address guidance on explosives detection coordination.



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### Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** We recommend the Director of the Secret Service reassess the agreement with the U.S. Capitol Police [REDACTED] to ensure there is adequate flexibility depending on conditions to determine the appropriate size of the protective detail and document any updates to the agreement with the U.S. Capitol Police.

**Recommendation 2:** We recommend the Director of the Secret Service develop and implement protocols for providing Civil Disturbance Unit support to law enforcement partners in the event of an emergency such as occurred on January 6 to ensure appropriate and timely response.

**Recommendation 3:** We recommend the Director of the Secret Service develop and implement policy and guidance that ensures a consistent approach for requesting Technical Security Division personnel.

**Recommendation 4:** We recommend the Director of the Secret Service develop and implement training for site agents on directing canine sweeps if a specialized Technical Security Division agent is not assigned to a site.

**Recommendation 5:** We recommend the Director of the Secret Service implement policy and guidance on requesting explosive ordnance disposal personnel, including specifying the protective events for which they are available, specifying any required timeframes for requests, and identifying site personnel responsible for submitting explosive ordnance disposal requests.

**Recommendation 6:** We recommend the Director of the Secret Service ensure that adequate procedures are in place and are followed for conducting internal after-action reviews, including completing required documentation and evaluations for incidents that qualify as unusual protective events.

### Management Comments and OIG Analysis

We have included a copy of Secret Service's management comments in their entirety in Appendix B. We also received technical comments from Secret Service on the draft report and made revisions as appropriate. In response to our draft report, Secret Service expressed concern regarding how the report characterized Secret Service's responses to OIG's requests for information. Secret Service stated that several OIG requests were wide-ranging in scope and included requests for access to highly sensitive information that was unrelated to the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. The Secret Service asserted that while fully committed to cooperating with the OIG, it is appropriate for it to make inquiries to ensure the appropriate disclosure and safeguarding of sensitive information.



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As an example, Secret Service cited the OIG's June 11, 2021, request for emails, text messages, and phone communications, stating that because the request was all encompassing and included senior level Secret Service leadership, there was no doubt these communications included highly sensitive information unrelated to the OIG's review. Therefore, the Secret Service requested the OIG reduce the scope of the request and allow the Secret Service to review communications before providing them to the OIG.

As stated in our report, consistent with the IG Act, we disagreed with Secret Service's approach, and through extensive discussions, including with Department leadership, we ultimately received emails without the restrictions sought by Secret Service. Our approach to requesting emails from the Secret Service was consistent with our typical process, which allows us to conduct analytical searches of all potentially relevant emails to ensure our review is thorough and independent. We also have a process that allows components to identify sensitive information in the draft report that the component does not believe should be shared publicly. Ultimately, Secret Service's dispute over access resulted in a 7-month delay from our first request for electronic communications in February 2021 until we obtained requested emails in October 2021.

The Secret Service also expressed concern that the report omits important context regarding Secret Service's deletion of text messages. Secret Service stated it had planned the cell phone migration that resulted in the deletion of text messages months prior to January 6, 2021, and it provided Secret Service employees guidance on how to create and save screen recordings of text message records. The Secret Service states that it advised the OIG on multiple occasions that any text messages would be unavailable because they were deleted during the cell phone migration.

As we state in our report, it was not until February 23, 2022, that Secret Service provided needed clarity to the OIG that it had wiped all phones when it updated software in the January – April 2021 timeframe, did not have backup files, and could not provide the information, not merely that it was unavailable. We acknowledged in this report that when the dispute over access to emails began, we subsequently limited the original June 11 request to focus on emails, removing the requirement for immediate production of text messages on July 27, 2021. On December 3, 2021, we renewed the request for text messages from select Secret Service employees relevant to our review. This report does not address when Secret Service began planning for the cell phone migration or what guidance was provided to Secret Service personnel to preserve text messages because it was not within the scope of this review. However, we note in our report that in addition to our initial request for information in February 2021, multiple committees of Congress issued three separate notifications to DHS requesting all electronic communications related to the events of January 6.

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In addition, the Secret Service expressed concern about how the report characterized Secret Service's process for providing documents to the OIG. The Secret Service said that to ensure proper internal coordination and timely responses to inquiries, it has routinely coordinated most, if not all, OIG and Government Accountability Office requests for information through its Office of Professional Responsibility, which tracks the requests to ensure timely responses, and facilitates any clarification needed between auditors and agency personnel, as appropriate. The Secret Service said in response to two instances when the OIG raised concern about not receiving documents directly without internal review, it notified its personnel that no such review was required.

As stated in our report, throughout our review Secret Service personnel indicated they would not provide documents directly to us without the document first going through an internal review. While it is typical for components to provide responses to certain types of OIG requests for information via an audit liaison—as Secret Service described the role of its Office of Professional Responsibility—we must also be able to receive information directly from agency personnel to ensure the independence and objectivity of OIG work, as well as to ensure that an employee is able to exercise his or her statutory right to provide information to OIG on a confidential basis.<sup>52</sup> Secret Service's practice left unclear when documents were undergoing review, and whether we ultimately received a complete and accurate response. Secret Service's review also led to unnecessary redactions in some instances and delays caused by follow-up to receive documents without redaction.

In Secret Service's technical comments on the draft report, it appeared to request that the entire report be marked law enforcement sensitive, which would preclude us from issuing a public report.

Secret Service officials concurred with four of six recommendations. Recommendations 2 and 4 are considered unresolved and open, and recommendations 1, 3, 5, and 6 are considered resolved and open. A summary of Secret Service's response to each recommendation and our analysis follows.

**Secret Service Response to Recommendation 1:** Concur. The Secret Service indicated that its Office of Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs and OPO will work with the USCP to reassess the agreement [REDACTED]. Secret Service estimated this action to be completed by October 31, 2024.

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<sup>52</sup> See 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(13)(B) (an agency may not implement or enforce a policy that prohibits or restricts an employee from making a whistleblowing disclosure to an OIG); 5 U.S.C. § 407(b) (an OIG may not disclose the identity of an employee who provides information to an OIG without the employee's consent).

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**OIG Analysis:** We consider these actions responsive to the recommendation, which we consider resolved and open. We will close this recommendation when Secret Service provides evidence of its coordination with the USCP and documentation of any update to the agreement.

**Secret Service Response to Recommendation 2:** Non-concur. The Secret Service stated its primary mission limits its ability to provide emergency support to other law enforcement partners. It stated that obligations to mutual aid agreements could result in compromising its foremost responsibility to protect the White House and the President, as well as its other protected sites and persons in the National Capital Region. Secret Service stated that it is opposed to developing and implementing protocols for providing CDU assistance to support law enforcement partners in the National Capital Region, even in the event of emergencies such as those that occurred during January 6, 2021. The Secret Service requested that the OIG close this recommendation.

**OIG Analysis:** We consider this recommendation unresolved and open. We recognize that Secret Service is not a party to, and its primary mission limits its ability to join, mutual aid agreements with other law enforcement entities in the National Capital Region. The recommendation does not assert that Secret Service should enter into an agreement with other law enforcement partners to provide mutual aid. However, our review found that Secret Service offered and provided assistance to the USCP on January 6 but did not have protocols in place for this type of rare emergency. Without such protocols, Secret Service could not identify available officers in a timely manner. This recommendation will remain open until Secret Service provides evidence that it has implemented the recommended protocols.

**Secret Service Response to Recommendation 3:** Concur. Secret Service stated its April 7, 2022, update to OPO-06 addresses this recommendation in the new section titled, "Office of Technical Development and Mission Support, Technical Security Division Explosive Threat Coordination." Secret Service provided a copy of the revised policy to the OIG on November 22, 2022. The Secret Service requested that the OIG close this recommendation.

**OIG Analysis:** OIG recognizes the update to OPO-06, completed in April 2022, as partially responsive to this recommendation, which we consider resolved and open. The revised OPO-06 appears to indicate that a specialized USSS/TSD advance team member would always be assigned to sites for certain protectees, including "elect" protectees. However, it does not explicitly clarify whether TSD personnel must be requested or if there is any limitation on the timeframe for making such requests, which we identified as issues during our review. The OIG had not yet shared its findings and recommendations with the Secret Service when the Secret Service completed its revision of OPO-06. Consequently, Secret Service could not consider whether the changes it implemented in OPO-06 completely addressed the issues the OIG identified. We will close this recommendation when Secret Service provides additional

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documentation clarifying whether TSD assistance must be requested or if there is any limitation on the timeframe for making such requests.

**Secret Service Response to Recommendation 4:** Non-concur. Secret Service stated that the April 7, 2022, update to OPO-06 addresses the intent of this recommendation. Specifically, OPO-06 provides direction to agents on how to proceed when specialized personnel are not available to assist, thus ensuring the continuity of operations and the protection of Secret Service protectees negating the need for site agents to be trained on directing canine sweeps. The Secret Service requested the OIG close this recommendation.

**OIG Analysis:** We consider this recommendation unresolved and open. OIG recognizes the update to OPO-06, completed in April 2022, as partially responsive to this recommendation. Contrary to Secret Service's statement in its response to recommendation 4 that "OPO-06 provides direction to agents on how to proceed when specialized personnel are not available," the guidance appears to indicate that a specialized TSD personnel would always be assigned to sites for "elect" protectees. During our review, we found that prior to the revision of OPO-06 the site agent was responsible for providing sweep instructions to the canine teams when a USSS/TSD coordinator was present, which was the basis for our recommendation to provide training for site agents. We agree with Secret Service's assessment that training for site agents on directing canine sweeps is unnecessary if it has fully implemented its process change to require TSD personnel to direct the sweep for all relevant sites. We will close this recommendation when Secret Service provides evidence that it has implemented its revised process for ensuring that TSD personnel are always assigned to sites for certain protectees, including "elect" protectee sites.

**Secret Service Response to Recommendation 5:** Concur. The Secret Service stated the April 7, 2022, update to OPO-06 addresses the intent of this recommendation. Specifically, the Secret Service indicated that this policy clarifies the guidelines and requirements for explosive threat coordination. Secret Service stated that TSD site personnel would be responsible for submitting a request for EOD support through OPO for approval. The Secret Service requested the OIG close this recommendation.

**OIG Analysis:** We recognize the update to OPO-06, completed in April 2022, as partially responsive to this recommendation, which we consider resolved and open. The revised OPO-06 appears to indicate that a specialized USSS/TSD advance team member would always be assigned to sites for certain protectees, including "elect" protectees. In its response to recommendation 5, Secret Service states the USSS/TSD advance team member would be responsible for submitting a request for EOD support through OPO for approval. The revised OPO-06, however, does not include this specific information. In addition, the revised policy does not clarify if there is any required timeframe for requesting EOD, which was an area of uncertainty identified in our report. We had not shared our findings and recommendations with



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the Secret Service when it completed its revision of OPO-06. Consequently, Secret Service could not consider whether the changes it implemented in OPO-06 completely addressed the issues we identified in our report. We will close this recommendation when Secret Service provides evidence that it has implemented its revised process for ensuring that TSD personnel are assigned for all “elect” protectee sites and implements guidance on any required timeframe for EOD requests.

**Secret Service Response to Recommendation 6:** Concur. The Secret Service stated that it has adequate procedures in place for conducting internal after-action reviews. The Secret Service acknowledged that it did not complete a UPE for the evacuation of the Vice President-elect and stated it is committed to the UPE process. Secret Service indicated that the incident was documented in the Protective Threat Management System, which is where UPE information is typically stored. The Secret Service requested that the OIG close this recommendation.

**OIG Analysis:** We consider this recommendation resolved and open. During our review we requested and reviewed the relevant information stored in the Protective Threat Management System. This information was about the events of January 6, 2021, generally, not specifically the evacuation of the Vice President-Elect from the DNC. We will close this recommendation when Secret Service provides evidence that it has implemented controls to ensure that it completes required documentation and evaluations for incidents that qualify as a UPE.

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Objective, Scope, and Methodology**

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Pub. L. No. 107–296) by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*.

We initiated this review in response to events that transpired on January 6, 2021, including but not limited to the breach of the U.S. Capitol and multiple site evacuations involving Vice President Michael Pence and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris. Our objective was to evaluate the Secret Service’s preparation for and response to the events of January 6, 2021.

To meet our objectives, we interviewed more than 100 Secret Service personnel involved in the preparation for and response to the events of January 6. We obtained and reviewed policies and procedures relating to protective operations, as well as intelligence and information developed relating to the January 6, 2021, events. We also requested emails from select Secret Service personnel and received more than 183,000 emails and attachments that we reviewed by conducting analytical searches. We requested Secret Service radio communications and received more than 4,800 files that we reviewed for relevant information. We also reviewed Secret Service video from the Ellipse as well as USCP video from the Capitol complex and cameras located near the DNC building and reviewed available video from the DNC building.

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

**DHS OIG’s Access to DHS Information**

The Secret Service significantly delayed OIG’s access to information, impeding the progress of our review. For example, we experienced a 7-month delay receiving emails from Secret Service. Our initial information request to Secret Service in February 2021 included a request for all electronic communications.<sup>53</sup> In response to our request for emails, Secret Service asked that we

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<sup>53</sup> In the months following the assault on the Capitol, multiple committees of Congress issued three separate notifications to DHS requesting all electronic communications related to the events of January 6: 1) On March 25, 2021, Chairwoman Maloney, Chairman Thompson, Chairman Schiff, Chairman Nadler, and three other members requested documents and communications received, prepared, or sent by DHS employees related to the events of January 6; 2) On August 11, 2021, a notice issued by Chairman Thompson of the January 6 Select Committee joined in the March 25, 2021, Congressional request and a January 16, 2021, notice issued by Chairs Adam Schiff, Bennie Thompson, Carolyn Maloney, and Jerrold Nadler, on behalf of their respective committees, to senior officials of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Counterterrorism Center, DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis, and the

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reduce the scope of the email inquiry and provide search terms. Secret Service also sought to conduct an internal review of the data prior to submission. Consistent with the IG Act, we disagreed with this approach and through extensive discussions, including with Department leadership, we ultimately received emails in October 2021.

Although we requested text messages from select Secret Service personnel, Secret Service did not provide these records while we conducted our fieldwork. On March 31, 2021, the Secret Service provided a screenshot of only one text message exchange in response to our February 2021 initial information request—an excerpt this text message exchange is shown in Figure 15 of this report. In response to our follow-up request for additional content for the text message exchange provided, the Secret Service indicated on May 4, 2021, that the additional information requested was unavailable because of a planned Secret Service-wide cell phone migration. On June 11, 2021, we requested all emails and text messages for 25 Secret Service employees or distribution accounts relevant for our review. When the dispute over access to emails began, as discussed above, OIG subsequently limited the original June 11 request to focus on emails, removing the requirement for immediate production of text messages on July 27, 2021. On December 3, 2021, the OIG renewed the request for text messages from select Secret Service employees relevant to our review. On February 23, 2022, the Secret Service informed us that it had wiped all phones when it updated software in the January to April 2021 timeframe, they did not have backup files, and they could not provide the information, not merely that it was unavailable. After our fieldwork was complete, in December 2022, Secret Service provided 13 images of text messages that it identified in response to a Freedom of Information Act Request.

Throughout our inspection, Secret Service personnel indicated they would not provide documents directly to OIG without the documents first going through an internal review. Secret Service did not provide the authority supporting the additional level of internal review. This practice also left unclear whether OIG ultimately received a complete and accurate response. On three occasions, when documents were finally produced, they contained redactions. Secret Service did not indicate who approved or applied the redactions or why such redactions were originally made, thereby requiring OIG to spend time making inquiries to obtain the unredacted documents, which is required by law.<sup>54</sup> Although OIG's follow-up eventually yielded unredacted documents, together these hurdles resulted in significant delay.

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Directorate of National Intelligence, that mandated the production of "[a]ll documents or materials that refer or relate to events that could or ultimately did transpire on January 6, or refer or relate to threats in connection with the US presidential inauguration;" 3) On August 25, 2021, a letter issued by Chairman Thompson for the January 6 Select Committee requested all documents and communications received or shared relating to events that occurred on January 6. This notice directed DHS to provide the January 6 Select Committee with all documents DHS produced to other investigatory bodies, to include the OIG, relating to the January 6 attack.

<sup>54</sup> *Inspector General Act of 1978*, § 6(a).



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DHS OIG reported these delays in our *Semiannual Report to Congress* for the period ending September 30, 2021, and again in our report for the period ending March 31, 2022. In addition, on July 13, 2022, the Inspector General sent a letter to members of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs and the House Committee on Homeland Security to notify them of DHS's delays and denials of access to information, including Secret Service's deletion of text messages. On July 15, 2022, the Inspector General, senior staff, and DHS OIG inspectors briefed the House January 6 Select Committee about Secret Service delays and denials of access to DHS information.



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Appendix B:

Secret Service Comments on the Draft Report

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528



Homeland  
Security

June 25, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR: Joseph V. Cuffari, Ph.D.  
Inspector General

FROM: Kimberly A. Cheatle  
Director  
United States Secret Service

SUBJECT: (U) Management Response to Draft Report: "The Secret Service's Preparation for, and Response to, the Events of January 6, 2021" (Project No. 21-025-SRE-DHS)

(U) Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft report. The U.S. Secret Service (Secret Service) appreciates the work of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) in planning and conducting its review and issuing this report.

(U) Secret Service leadership is pleased to note OIG's recognition that the agency planned and conducted protective operations at several sites on January 6, 2021, including ensuring the safety and security of the President, Vice President, and Vice President-Elect. OIG also noted that the Secret Service took actions to respond to and mitigate the threats it encountered, to avoid any harm to its protectees, and to assist U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) as it pertains to the unprecedented events that unfolded that day. The Secret Service is proud of the actions its dedicated personnel took on January 6, 2021, to prevent any harm to our protectees, actions that we remain committed to performing each and every day under any and all circumstances.

(U) Secret Service leadership, however, strongly disagrees with the draft report's mischaracterization of the agency's responses to the OIG's requests for information, which in many respects is inaccurate and misleading. Throughout this review, the Secret Service made every effort to coordinate with the OIG and submit timely responses to OIG's vast number of concurrent, and, at times, duplicative requests for interviews, documentation, and

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other information. Moreover, several OIG requests were so wide-ranging in scope that they warranted discussion with both the OIG and the Department to clarify what was being asked for and how best to provide it. Specifically, OIG's requests included asking for access to highly sensitive information held by the Secret Service, the majority of which was unrelated to the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. While the Secret Service is fully committed to cooperating with OIG, the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended<sup>1</sup> does not prohibit the Secret Service from making inquiries to ensure the appropriate disclosure and safeguarding of sensitive information. In fact, it may be necessary for DHS to consider the relevance and scope of the information requested to determine whether it is advisable for the Secretary of Homeland Security to prohibit the OIG from "carrying out or completing" a review in order to prevent disclosure of certain sensitive information, to preserve national security, or to prevent a significant impairment to the interest of the United States, consistent with section 417 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.). In short, the Secret Service had a responsibility to undertake these inquiries given the nature of the information involved.

(U) On June 11, 2021, for example, the OIG requested *all* email, text message, and phone communications from several Secret Service personnel, as well as e-mail servers from December 7, 2020, through January 8, 2021. Given that the OIG's all-encompassing request included the most senior levels of Secret Service leadership (e.g., the Director, Deputy Director, Chief Operating Officer, etc.), there was no doubt those communications contained highly sensitive materials unrelated to the OIG's review. On June 22, 2021, the Secret Service therefore requested that the OIG reduce the scope of the inquiry to enable the Secret Service to provide materials specifically relevant to the OIG's review. The Secret Service further requested an opportunity to internally review the communications prior to providing them to the OIG due to the agency's obligations to protect certain information under the Presidential Records Act,<sup>2</sup> requirements related to sensitive information regarding techniques for safeguarding persons or property,<sup>3</sup> and need to know under the Privacy Act of 1974.<sup>4</sup>

(U) The Secret Service, with the support of others in the Department, raised concerns to the OIG about the breadth of its June 2021 request for information and requested that the OIG reduce the scope of the inquiry and allow the Secret Service to review communications before providing them to the OIG, as appropriate. However, after numerous discussions to reach an accommodation, the OIG maintained its position and the requested information

<sup>1</sup> On December 27, 2022, Congress restated and codified the statutory text that was the Inspector General Act of 1978 as chapter 4 of title 5, United States Code. Act of December 27, 2022, Pub. L. No. 117-286, § 3(b), 136 Stat. 4196, 4206. The citations shown herein are to the now-enacted provisions of law. The OIG report cites to "the Inspector General Act, as amended," which has been *repealed and restated, reorganized, and codified* in various sections of chapter 4 of title 5, United States Code.

<sup>2</sup> 44 U.S.C. § 2201, et seq.

<sup>3</sup> Authorized protection by 18 U.S.C. § 3056, § 3056A or the Presidential Protection Assistance Act of 1976 (18 U.S.C. § 3056 note)

<sup>4</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 552a

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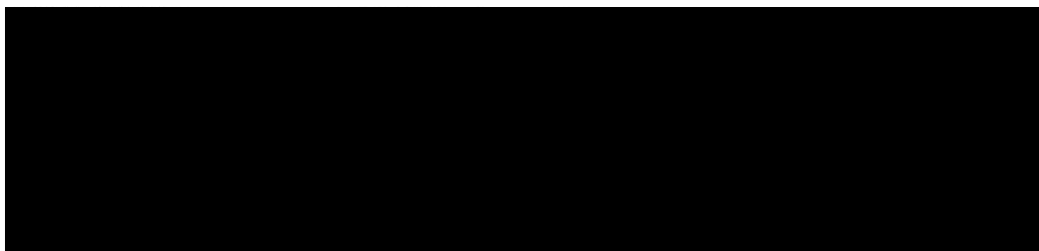
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was subsequently provided in October 2021. During this period and throughout the review the Secret Service continued to respond to the OIG's many varied information, data, and interview requests in as reasonably a timely manner as possible.

(U) It is reassuring that the OIG report does not state anywhere that any Secret Service text messages were inappropriately deleted. However, certain language in the report indicating the Secret Service "wiped all phones when it updated software in the January – April 2021 timeframe" and that it "did not have backup records" omits important context.

(U) This software update was part of a planned cell phone migration that was conducted from January 27, 2021, to April 1, 2021. Inexplicably, the OIG report does not note this migration had been planned and scheduled many months prior to January 6, 2021, nor that Secret Service employees had been provided "USSS Preserve Content Guide for iPhone & iPad" guidance as early as January 15, 2020, which instructed them on how to create and save screen recordings of text message records. The January 6, 2021, text message exchange between the former USCP Chief and the former Secret Service Uniformed Division Chief regarding assistance responding to violence at the U.S. Capitol, referred to in the OIG's report, was one such screen recording that was ultimately provided to the OIG on March 31, 2021.

(U) The Secret Service advised the OIG on multiple occasions (i.e., May 4, 2021, June 22, 2021, December 15, 2021, and February 23, 2022) that any text messages beyond those already provided to the OIG would be unavailable due to the previously scheduled agency-wide cell phone system migration. It is also important to note that on July 27, 2021, the OIG advised the Department that the OIG's review would only focus on emails and would not require access to text or phone records. However, more than four months later, on December 3, 2021, OIG submitted another request for text messages for approximately 60 Department employees in various Components, including the Secret Service. On December 17, 2021, the OIG received a timely and consolidated response to its December 3, 2021 request. The Department then followed up with the OIG on January 24, 2022, to ensure OIG had everything it needed after not having heard from the OIG. Then on February 4, 2022, OIG stated that it needed additional and clarifying information before it could complete its review, despite having already been told multiple times before that the Secret Service was unable to retrieve additional text messages. None of this context is included in the OIG's draft report.



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(U) With regard to the draft report's assertion that Secret Service would not provide documents directly to the OIG without the documents first going through an internal review, this is a further mischaracterization of agency efforts to be responsive to the OIG, which does a disservice to end users of OIG's report. For years, to ensure proper internal coordination and timely responses to inquiries, and as a courtesy to help auditors conduct their work, the Secret Service has routinely coordinated most, if not all OIG and U.S. Government Accountability Office requests for information through the Secret Service's Office of Professional Responsibility (RES), which tracks the requests to ensure timely responses, and facilitates any clarifications needed between auditors and agency personnel, as appropriate. On July 9, 2021, DHS OIG advised RES that Secret Service personnel were to provide follow-up documentation requested from any interviews directly to the OIG and not through RES, which the Secret Service promptly began honoring.

(U) Similarly, when DHS OIG informed the Secret Service on March 24, 2022 of its concern that Secret Service was delaying its response by requiring review of records prior to submitting to the OIG, the Secret Service took immediate action to not only clarify with OIG that this concern was unfounded as there was no such requirement, but also ensure that the OIG received any outstanding requests for information as quickly as possible. RES also sent reminders to personnel in offices involved that the Secret Service must continue to provide complete and timely responses directly to the OIG. Moreover, each time the OIG notified RES that there was a delayed response to the OIG's requests or any other concern, RES resolved the issues, as appropriate. However, because the OIG limited RES's awareness of all incoming inquiries, it prevented the Secret Service from adequately tracking responses and, in some instances, from being as timely as the OIG wanted.

(U) The draft report contains six recommendations, four with which the Secret Service concurs (Recommendations 1, 3, 5, and 6) and two with which the Secret Service non-concurs (Recommendations 2 and 4). Enclosed, find the agency's detailed response to each recommendation. The Secret Service previously submitted technical comments addressing several accuracy, contextual, sensitivity, and editorial issues under a separate cover for OIG's consideration, as appropriate.

(U) Again, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

(U) Enclosure

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#### (U) Enclosure: Management Response to Recommendations Contained in OIG 21-025-SRE-DHS

(U) OIG recommended that the Director of the Secret Service:

(U) **Recommendation 1:** Reassess the agreement with the U.S. Capitol Police [REDACTED] to ensure there is adequate flexibility depending on conditions to determine the appropriate size of the protective detail and document any updates to the agreement with the U.S. Capitol Police.

(U) **Response:** Concur. The Secret Service Office of Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs will work with the Secret Service Office of Protective Operations and the U.S. Capitol Police to reassess the agreement [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Estimated Completion Date (ECD): October 31, 2024.

(U) **Recommendation 2:** Develop and implement protocols for providing Civil Disturbance Unit [CDU] support to law enforcement partners in the event of an emergency such as occurred on January 6 to ensure appropriate and timely response.

(U) **Response:** Non-Concur. The Secret Service's primary mission and authority, including its pinnacle role in the continuity of the U.S. Government, ultimately limits its ability to provide emergency support to other law enforcement partners. The Secret Service must always be prepared to dedicate its resources—especially during emergencies—to ensure continuity of executive branch leadership and government operations. Obligations to mutual aid agreements could result in compromising the agency's foremost responsibility to protect the White House and the President, as well as its other protected sites and persons in the National Capital Region (NCR).



<sup>5</sup> Pub.L. 108-458, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 5196 note

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(U) The Secret Service requests that the OIG consider the recommendation closed.

(U) **Recommendation 3:** Develop and implement policy and guidance that ensures a consistent approach for requesting Technical Security Division [TSD] personnel.

(U) **Response:** Concur. The intent of this recommendation was addressed with an April 7, 2022 update to the Secret Service Office of Protective Operations (OPO) Policy OPO-06,<sup>6</sup> which includes a new section “Office of Technical Development and Mission Support, Technical Security Division Explosive Threat Coordination.” The Secret Service initiated a review of the relevant policy within four months of the events on January 6, 2021. Based on the additional context and recommendations that followed in response to the incident, several iterations of OPO-06 were considered before its final disposition.

(U) The updated policy was in effect for over two years before OIG issued this draft report, and in place more than two years before the next Vice President-elect would be in a position to receive this support. On November 22, 2022, the Secret Service provided a copy of OPO-06 to the OIG. Additional details regarding OPO-06 is provided in the response to recommendation 5.

(U) The Secret Service requests that the OIG consider the recommendation resolved and closed as implemented.

(U) **Recommendation 4:** Develop and implement training for site agents on directing canine sweeps if a specialized Technical Security Division agent is not assigned to a site.

(U) **Response:** Non-Concur. The April 7, 2022, update to OPO-06, previously noted in this memorandum, addresses the intent of this recommendation. Specifically, OPO-06 provides direction to agents on how to proceed when specialized personnel are not available

<sup>6</sup> Office of Protective Operations (OPO) “Protective Operations Manual, dated April 7, 2022.

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to assist, thus ensuring the continuity of operations and the protection of Secret Service protectees negating the need for site agents to be trained on directing canine sweeps.

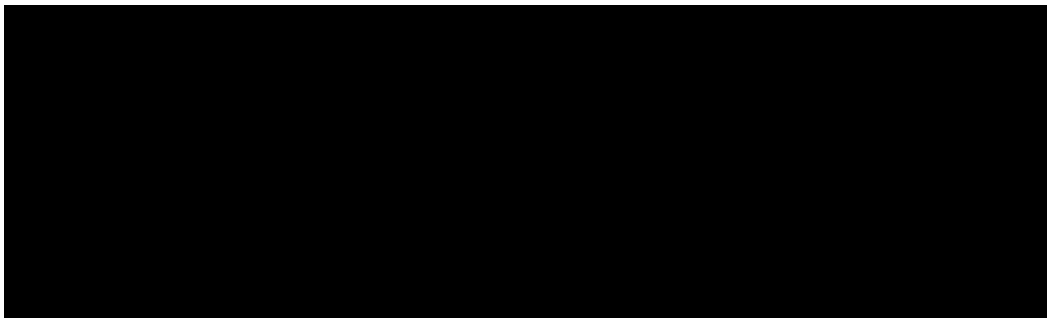
(U) Furthermore, the Secret Service maintains that a search for improvised explosive devices conducted by Military-trained explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) Technicians during a search of a protected site is a specialized area of technical expertise. EOD technicians rely on months of specialized training combined with real-world experience when searching for these hazardous devices. Accordingly, training a site agent to direct “sweeps” or searches represents an overly simplistic response to a complex issue. The level of expertise required to ensure the safety of the President, the Vice President, and the Vice President-Elect is a task that the Secret Service executes to the highest standards and will therefore continue to require high standards to coordinate, conduct or direct the search of a protected site for these devices.

(U) In addition, this recommendation does not account for the technical level of expertise required to properly conduct a search or “sweep” and is proposing an action that is equivalent to suggesting that site agents should receive training to conduct a Counter Sniper (CS) advance in the absence of a CS team. The Secret Service has multiple specialized units to provide the subject matter expertise required to protect all protectees, and a generalist approach to any aspect of conducting a protective advance is not a direction that the Secret Service intends to adopt.

(U) The Secret Service requests that the OIG consider the recommendation closed.

(U) **Recommendation 5:** Implement policy and guidance on requesting explosive ordnance disposal personnel, including specifying the protective events for which they are available, specifying any required timeframes for requests, and identifying site personnel responsible for submitting explosive ordnance disposal requests.

(U) **Response:** Concur. The Secret Service believes that the intent of this recommendation was addressed with an April 7, 2022, update to the Secret Service Office of Protective Operations (OPO) Policy OPO-06. The policy clarifies the guidelines and requirements for explosive threat coordination.



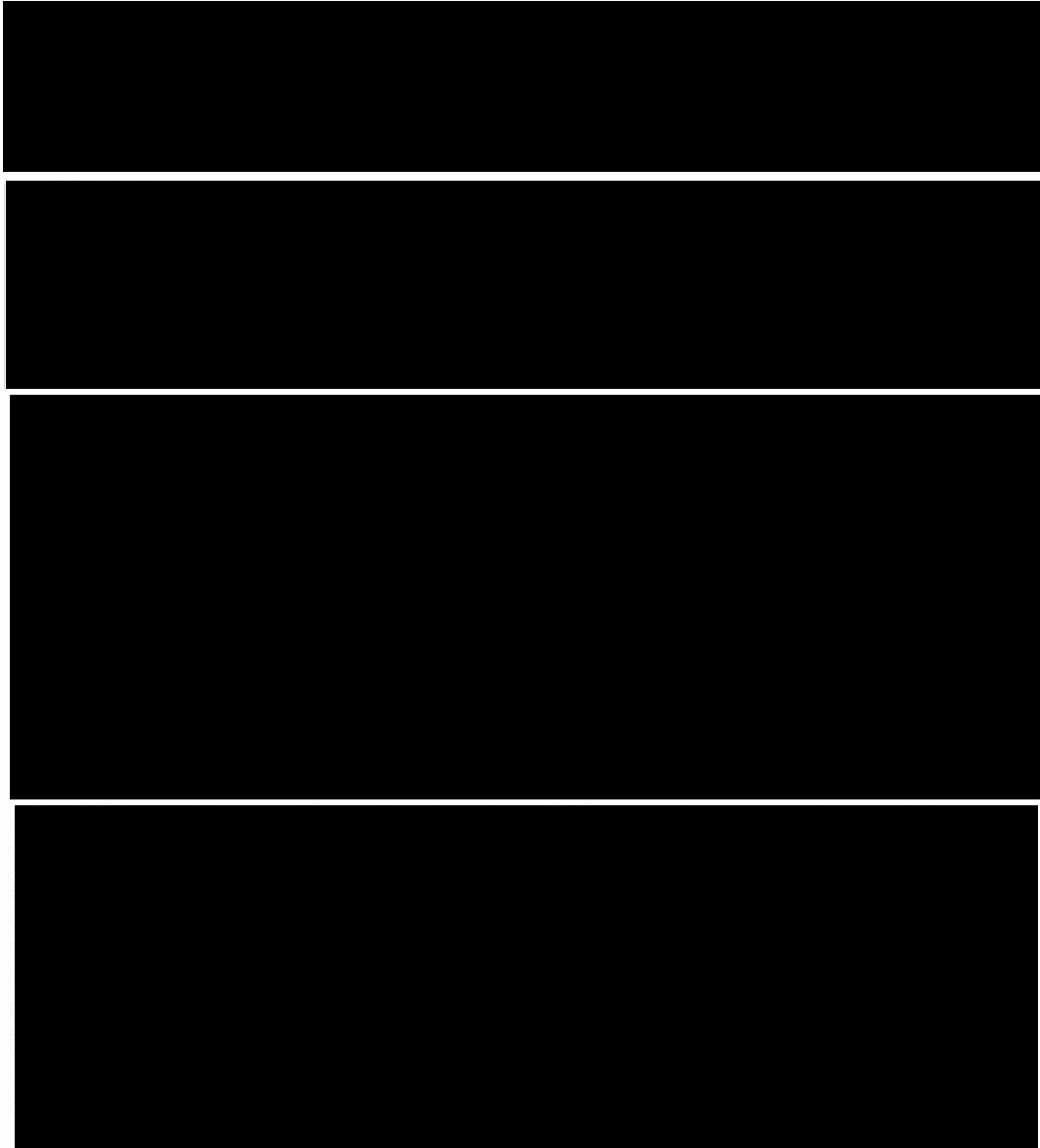
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(U) The Secret Service requests that the OIG consider the recommendation resolved and closed as implemented.

(U) **Recommendation 6:** Ensure that adequate procedures are in place and are followed for conducting internal after-action reviews, including completing required documentation and evaluations for incidents that qualify as unusual protective events [UPE].

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(U) **Response:** Concur. The Secret Service has adequate procedures in place for conducting internal after-action reviews. The events at the Democratic National Committee building on January 6, 2021, were documented in multiple locations including the agency's repository for intelligence, PTMS, and the Vice President-elect detail's shift report, for review and analysis by the intelligence apparatus of the agency and protective detail, respectively.

(U) The Secret Service acknowledges that there was not a UPE completed in this instance but is committed to the UPE process. The incident was documented in the Protective Threat Management System (PTMS), which is where UPE information is typically stored; as such, the PTMS documentation satisfies the intent of the Secret Service policy governing UPEs and incident reporting protocols. Per the Secret Service directive OPO-19,<sup>7</sup> the primary purpose of the UPE designation is to operationally categorize various types of occurrences for internal management, oversight, and recordkeeping practices, as well as to provide additional descriptive information to enhance the understanding of externally reported measures that are maintained and reported by the Secret Service. UPE documentation is intended to ensure relevant information is consistently and officially recorded and made accessible for later operational, administrative, and preservation purposes. An internal system of record to maintain UPE documentation, i.e., PTMS, was already in place on January 6, 2021, and it remains the most effective repository for storage of this information.

(U) Additionally, the Secret Service Director, Deputy Director, and Chief Operating Officer have the authority under policies, RES-01, "Office of Professional Responsibility Functions," dated December 9, 2020, and ISP-01, "Inspection Division Functions," dated October 5, 2020, to direct the RES Inspection Division to conduct a mission assurance inquiry into identified operational deficiencies to determine facts to allow for their correction or mitigation. The events on January 6, 2021, did not warrant the initiation of a mission assurance inquiry because the Secret Service did not incur a mission failure.

(U) The Secret Service requests that the OIG consider the recommendation closed.

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<sup>7</sup> OPO-19, "Unusual Protective Events and Incident Reporting Protocols" dated November 25, 2015.

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**Appendix C:**

**Office of Inspections and Evaluations Major Contributors to this Report**

Steve Staats, Chief Inspector  
Erik Gonzalez, Special Agent  
Brittany Scott, Senior Inspector  
Sean Peck, Senior Inspector  
Almas Khan, Inspector  
John Lanca, Inspector  
Shawn Cosman, Auditor  
Attorneys from the General Law Division  
Dorie Chang, Communications Analyst  
Ryan Nelson, Independent Referencer  
Christine Haynes, Independent Referencer



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### **Appendix D: Report Distribution**

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