October 15, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The United States Secret Service aspires to be the best protective service of high-ranking government officials in the world. This is a zero-fail mission, for any failure endangers not only the life of the protectee, but also the fundamentals of our government itself. Today, however, the Secret Service does not perform at the elite levels needed to discharge its critical mission. The Secret Service has become bureaucratic, complacent, and static even though risks have multiplied and technology has evolved. The work of the Independent Review Panel uncovered not only numerous mistakes that led to the events of July 13 in Butler, Pennsylvania, but also deeper, systemic issues that must be addressed with urgency. Thousands of men and women have dedicated their lives to the Secret Service, and we remain grateful to them for their bravery, selflessness, and willingness to serve in a vital role. But the Secret Service as an agency requires fundamental reform to carry out its mission. Without that reform, the Independent Review Panel believes another Butler can and will happen again.

Our attached report details the Panel's findings regarding Butler and the reforms the Panel believes are necessary. We urge you in your role as Secretary, the White House, and Congress to ensure their implementation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Independent Review Panel
Mark Filip
David Mitchell
Janet Napolitano
Frances Fragos Townsend

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Report of the Independent Review Panel

on the July 13, 2024 Assassination Attempt in Butler, Pennsylvania

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The Independent Review Panel would like to acknowledge the following individuals, without whom the work of the Panel would not have been successful:

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And the many members of the Panel's junior staff

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The many outside experts who were willing to meet with us, for their time, expertise, and insights;

The members of state and local law enforcement and government, including from the Pennsylvania State Police and Butler and Beaver counties, for their cooperation and support of the Panel's work;

The current and former Secret Service agents who offered their time, perspectives, and experience.

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The Panel dedicates its work to Corey Comperatore, James Copenhaver, David Dutch, and their families in the hope that no one again suffers the tragedies you have endured.

The Panel also dedicates its work to the thousands of hardworking, dedicated United States Secret Service agents, past and present, as well as the many state and local law enforcement partners who support them. By your bravery and commitment, you help to protect our political leaders and therefore our democracy.

I. Introduction

On a hot summer evening on July 13, 2024, in Butler, Pennsylvania, a small town north of Pittsburgh, former president and presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump spoke on a stage at the Butler Farm Show grounds to a crowd of some 15,000 people. Less than 150 yards away from the stage at the AGR building,[1] a twenty-year-old man who had lingered in its vicinity for hours and was, by that time, the subject of an intensive search, climbed onto the building's roof and managed to fire eight rounds from a semi-automatic rifle before counterfire from a United States Secret Service countersniper ended the assault. The former president was nearly killed, evading fatal injury by inches. One rallygoer, Corey Comperatore, tragically was killed, and another ten individuals[2] were injured in addition to former President Trump.

The July 13 assassination attempt was not the work of a trained foreign adversary prepared to conduct a multi-dimensional attack and willing to sacrifice themselves in the process. Rather, a young, local Pennsylvania man who had seemingly conceived of and executed his assassination plot within days after the former president's rally was publicly announced had managed, with striking ease, to circumvent the Secret Service's "no fail" protective mission.

In the aftermath of the assassination attempt, President Biden directed Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas to form an independent, bipartisan panel "to facilitate an effective review of the security provided by the U.S. Secret Service to Former President Donald J. Trump on July 13, 2024."[3] The mission of the Independent Review Panel was to "examine what happened and provide actionable recommendations to ensure [the Secret Service] carr[ies] out their no-fail mission most effectively and to prevent something like this from ever happening again."[4]

In fulfillment of this mission, the Independent Review Panel (or "Panel") has considered both the direct and deeper failures and breakdowns enabling the July 13 assassination attempt against former President Trump, and it has developed recommendations to assist the Secret Service in achieving the stated goal of ensuring that an event like July 13 never happens again.[5] The following report (the "Report") constitutes the findings and recommendations of the Panel.

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[1] The phrase "AGR building" as used through this Report refers to the large, connected complex of buildings to the immediate north of the Farm Show grounds.

[2] This figure includes two rallygoers, seven local law enforcement personnel who were injured either from the shooting or their actions during the initial response, and a Secret Service agent who was impacted by shrapnel.

[3] Establishment of Independent Panel To Review Actions Relating to the Attempted Assassination of Former President Donald J. Trump, 89 Fed. Reg. 59922 (July 24, 2024).

[4] U.S. DEP'T OF HOMELAND SEC., *Secretary Mayorkas Names Bipartisan Independent Law Enforcement Experts For 45-Day Independent Review of July 13, 2024* (July 21, 2024), https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/07/21/secretary-mayorkas-names-bipartisan-independent-law-enforcement-experts-45-day (internal quotation marks omitted).

[5] During the pendency of the Panel's work, a second assassination attempt occurred against former President Trump on September 15, 2024, at the Trump International Golf Club in West Palm Beach, Florida. The Independent Review Panel has been briefed by the Secret Service on the second assassination attempt. While an assessment of the second attempt is not within the scope of the Independent Review Panel's mission, the Independent Review Panel is of the view that the facts of the second attempt are such that they do not affect the findings and recommendations presented within this report, other than to the extent that they may reinforce them.

a) *Panel Membership in Alphabetical Order*

The Independent Review Panel consists of the following four members:[6]

- **Mark Filip**, who served as Deputy Attorney General of the United States under President George W. Bush, and, before that, served as a United States District Judge in the Northern District of Illinois. He was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate to both positions. Prior to his judgeship, Filip served as an Assistant United States Attorney in Chicago. He is currently a partner at Kirkland & Ellis LLP in Chicago and Washington, D.C., where he practices law and serves on the Firm's worldwide management committee. In 2014, Filip was a member of a bipartisan commission charged with reviewing the Secret Service's protection of the First Family and White House and offering ideas for improvement and reform.
- **David Mitchell**, who has served in law enforcement for over fifty years, including twenty-four years of service with the Prince George's County (Maryland) Police Department, where he was appointed Chief of Police in 1990. In 1995, Governor Parris Glendening appointed Mitchell to his Cabinet as the Superintendent, Maryland State Police. During his tenure, Mitchell led the seventh largest state police department in the nation including during the September 11th, 2001 attacks and the D.C. Sniper case in 2002. In 2004, he was appointed as the Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security for the State of Delaware by Governor Ruth Ann Minner. Since 2010, Mitchell has served as the Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety at the University of Maryland, College Park Campus.
- **Janet Napolitano**, who served as the third Secretary of Homeland Security from 2009-2013, two-term governor of Arizona, Attorney General of Arizona, and the United States Attorney for the District of Arizona. She recently served as the President of the University of California and is currently a professor of public policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy and the founder of the Center for Security in Politics at the University of California, Berkeley. She also serves as a member of the United States President's Intelligence Advisory Board.
- **Frances Fragos Townsend**, who served as Assistant to President George W. Bush for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism and Deputy National Security Advisor for Combatting Terrorism. Townsend also chaired the Homeland Security Council. Prior to those roles, she served as both a local and federal prosecutor. Townsend has also served on the DNI's Senior Advisory Group, the CIA External Advisory Board, and the United States President's Intelligence Advisory Board. She currently runs her own consulting firm advising international corporate clients.

b) *Work Performed*

The Panel's work was conducted from approximately early August 2024 through early October 2024. During this time, the Panel conducted fifty-eight multi-hour interviews of individuals from the Secret Service, federal, state, and local law enforcement, as well as relevant

[6] The Panel was also assisted by a number of staff, including members with deep experience in law enforcement, government, and the conduct of independent investigations. The Panel expresses its thanks and appreciation for their hard work and dedication to the Panel's critical mission.

third-party entities and institutions.[7] In addition to these interviews, the Panel received multiple briefings from the Secret Service, the Department of Homeland Security, and the FBI. The Panel traveled to Butler, Pennsylvania, where it conducted detailed surveys of the site of the attempted assassination. The Panel has also routinely met for internal proceedings both virtually and in-person. Over the course of its work, the Panel has collected and assessed over 7,000 documents.

c) *Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations*

The Panel's work has identified a number of specific failures and breakdowns enabling the assassination attempt on July 13. The Panel has also identified various deeper concerns. Taken together, these issues reveal deep flaws in the Secret Service, including some that appear to be systemic or cultural.

In more detail, the Panel has identified the following specific failures and breakdowns related to the July 13 assassination attempt: (1) the absence of personnel to secure the AGR building; (2) the failure to mitigate the line of sight threat posed by the AGR building; (3) numerous communications issues including but not limited to the split structure of communications on July 13 which physically and electronically separated the Secret Service's "Security Room" from the communications post used by local law enforcement; (4) the failure of anyone from the Secret Service or law enforcement to encounter Crooks, despite his being first spotted at approximately 4:26 p.m., more than ninety minutes before he began shooting at former President Trump and the assembled crowd; (5) the failure of anyone to inform former President Trump's detail leadership about Crooks either before the former president took the stage or, even more crucially, in the last couple minutes when Crooks had taken to the roof of the AGR building; and (6) the failure of the detection component of the Secret Service's Counter Unmanned Aerial System during a critical period of time when it could have detected Crooks operating a drone.[8]

These specific failures and breakdowns tie to the various deeper concerns the Panel has identified: (1) a lack of clarity, in practice, regarding who has overall security ownership of a protectee's site on the day of an event; (2) corrosive cultural attitudes regarding resourcing and "doing more with less"; (3) a troubling lack of critical thinking by Secret Service personnel both before, on, and after July 13, including regarding assessing the level of risk posed to certain protectees; (4) the failure by experienced, senior-level Secret Service personnel to take necessary ownership regarding the security planning and execution at Butler; (5) the lack of cohesion between Secret Service, state, and local security planning; (6) an insufficiently experienced-based approach by the former president's detail regarding its selection of agents to perform certain security critical tasks; (7) a lack of sufficient continuous improvement and auditing mechanisms to enable details and field offices to actively learn and incorporate lessons to improve their protective mission capabilities; (8) the lack of training facilities and commitment of time to training on the Secret Service's core protection mission, particularly when compared to other elite

[7] With only limited exceptions, individuals the Panel contacted, either directly or through counsel, were willing and able to meet and speak with the Panel and, in those meetings, engaged with the Panel in a productive and professional manner. Although, as in any time-limited exercise, there is necessarily a point at which the Panel had to terminate its work, the Panel is satisfied that it has explored the facts and topics relevant to its mission extensively and intensively and is able to reach findings and recommendations with confidence based thereon.

[8] This specific failure and breakdown connects with a deeper concern regarding a general lack of technology to support the Secret Service's protective mission.

"no fail" government units such as exist in federal law enforcement and the United States military; and (9) an ineffective "Speak Up" practice, connected with culture, which did not sufficiently prompt numerous agents who were aware of Crooks as a suspicious person prior to his commencing shooting to ensure that information was being passed on to former president Trump's detail leadership. The Panel has also made findings regarding certain budget and personnel considerations.

The Panel has deliberated extensively regarding how to correct these issues, and this Report offers numerous remediation recommendations directed at both the specific failures and breakdowns as well as the deeper concerns identified. Two of the most important recommendations involve the necessity of new leadership at the Secret Service and the criticality of re-focusing the Secret Service on its core protective mission. But there are many others regarding a wide range of topics including overhead surveillance, communications setup, integration with state and local partners, effective auditing and continuous improvement mechanisms, line of sight mitigation, extraction training, and numerous others. The Panel urges the Secret Service and the Department of Homeland Security to faithfully and expeditiously pursue these remediation recommendations.

In more detail, the Panel addresses the following remediations toward the specific failures and breakdowns it has identified: (1) a requirement that the Secret Service follow a physically integrated communications setup at all large events going forward, with the integration of a real-time incident command management system; (2) a new policy requiring a face-to-face situation report from the lead site agent to the leadership of the protectee's detail at the time of the protectee's arrival at a site; (3) a mandate that all outdoor events are observed by overhead technology;[9] (4) revisions to the site security planning process to require the identification of specific mitigations for all line-of-sight threats; (5) significant training regarding risk-based threat identification, "Speaking Up," and ownership values by senior-level personnel; (6) policy revisions to clarify responsibility and chain of command for site security preparation and execution; (7) numerous initiatives to better integrate state and local elements into the Secret Service's security process; (8) changes to how details and field offices select agents to perform advance and day-of site work to ensure that agents' experience is commensurate with the security tasks they are being asked to undertake; and (9) re-training on appropriate protectee extraction methods.

Regarding the deeper concerns the Panel has identified, it has offered a set of significant remediations intended to address them, which include: (1) a re-focus on the Secret Service's protective mission, to include an organizational restructuring placing the Office of Investigations and other operational support elements beneath the Office of Protective Operations; (2) a new leadership team with significant experience outside the Service; (3) the rollout of systematic training initiatives, including the development of a Leadership Training Institute and comprehensive training between the Secret Service and its state and local partners; (4) the evaluation of new communications technologies and processes to ensure that communications interoperability issues—an acknowledged problem in law enforcement communities for decades, going back to September 11—never again affect a site's security; (5) the development of a Continuous Improvement and Auditing Center to roll out initiatives and policies enabling the Secret Service to critically assess its protective operations readiness and then implement lasting

[9] This connects with a broader remediation recommendation about the need for the Secret Service to upgrade and modernize the technologies used to facilitate the Secret Service's protective mission.

enhancements in response; and (6) an evaluation of the Secret Service's method for how it resources protectees to ensure that it is risk-based, and not overly formulaic or reliant on a protectee's title for making resource determinations. The Panel also offers commentary concerning appropriate steps to take regarding budget and personnel.

Although the analysis that follows is necessarily probing and critical to assist the Secret Service with reforms so that an event like July 13 never again occurs, the Panel wishes to acknowledge at the outset the thousands of agents and officers within the Secret Service who are often tasked with performing essential, no-fail protective duties ceaselessly and on short notice across the country and abroad, particularly during an election year. They are the foundation of the Secret Service's future success. The Panel recognizes them for the crucial tasks they perform day-in and day-out and the Panel expresses its sincere desire that the findings and recommendations herein assist them in advancing the Secret Service's critical protective mission. The Panel also recognizes the bravery and selflessness exhibited by Secret Service agents and officers who put themselves in harm's way to protect their protectees, including in Butler after Crooks fired at former President Trump and others. However, bravery and selflessness alone, no matter how honorable, are insufficient to discharge the Secret Service's no-fail protective mission. Therefore, this Report is plainspoken in describing the improvements that simply must be effected within the Secret Service.

II. The July 13, 2024 Assassination Attempt Against Former President Trump

a) *Background to Secret Service Advance Planning and Site Security Activities*

The Secret Service (the "Service") uses a model of site security preparation known as the "advance," which entails various elements of the Service visiting a site in the days before a planned event to assess the site for security risks and develop a plan to mitigate those risks (the "site security plan"), working in conjunction with federal, state, and local partners.[10] The overall site security plan is typically overseen by an individual designated as the "site agent,"[11] often though not always drawn from the local field office in the area where the event is occurring.[12] The site agent typically works in conjunction with other agents such as personnel from the local field office and also, sometimes, agents from the protectee's personal Secret Service detail. These agents will have various tasks and responsibilities for preparing the site, including through advance work (often overseen by a "lead advance agent," who is typically appointed from the local field office and receives supervisory assistance from that field office's Special Agent in Charge (SAIC[13])).[14]

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[10] Although general site advance work is the responsibility of the lead advance agent, assisted by other agents composing the site team, other personnel will be tasked with specific advance work for specialized topics. These specific specialized advances will vary depending on the assets assigned to a site but will typically include a Protective Intelligence advance and a Technical Security Division advance. Another advance that will sometimes occur (and did occur for Butler) is a Countersniper advance.

[11] Sometimes referred to as a "lead site agent." This convention is used in certain places in this Report.

[12] *See generally* OPO-06, USSS Directives System, Protective Operations Manual, Site Security (May 10, 2022). For the July 13 Butler rally, the site agent was from the Trump detail.

[13] Also sometimes rendered as SAC. For purposes of this report, the convention SAIC is used.

[14] Or a designated other agent. *See generally* OPO-03, USSS Directives System, Protective Operations Manual, Protective Advance – Overview (Mar. 11, 2024). The process being described here is the general

Throughout this process, state and local partners will be involved, beginning with a kickoff meeting, sometimes referred to as a police meeting, where the Secret Service meets with them to provide an overview of the event and assess their available level of resources to contribute to the event's security. The process continues in the days leading up to the event with various site "walk-throughs" with the Secret Service and state and local elements where security preparations are assessed and on-the-ground observations made, with the expectation that those observations and related mitigations are then integrated as updates into the developing site security plan. On certain walk-throughs, more senior-level personnel from either or both the local field office or the protectee's detail may attend to exercise supervisory oversight on the planning. Any Service resource requests related to the planning process will be shared with Service headquarters for their approval.[15]

At the end of the planning process, the Secret Service will generate a final site security plan, which is reviewed by the detail's operations section, and the head of the protectee's detail will be briefed on it as well.[16] State and local elements will also often develop their own operational plans which they may or may not share with the Secret Service.

b) *Preparation for July 13 Butler Rally*[17]

The Secret Service advance site security planning process for the July 13 Butler rally formally began on July 8, with a kickoff meeting for state and local personnel, hosted by the Service. The Service's site team consisted of agents from the Pittsburgh field office along with an agent from the Trump detail. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an overview of the rally,

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template for site advance work and security preparation in the instance of an event by former President Trump in 2024. In practice and as discussed below, Report at 14, there are often a number of agents involved in the advance and site preparation work. Protectee details may sometimes appoint their own advance agent to work in coordination with the lead advance agent. Finally, there are certain differences between the process described here and, for example, a presidential visit that are not relevant for the purposes of this Report.

[15] Including the so-called "manpower request" for Service personnel and equipment to support the event. The lead advance agent and the local field office SAIC are intended to have a supervisory role in determining appropriate equipment and support requests. Official resource requests then go to respective protective operations sections within the Office of Protective Operations and, for the overall manpower request, to a location in Secret Service headquarters known informally as the "War Room," or more formally as the Office of Protective Operations Staffing and Logistics Office. *See generally* OPO-03, USSS Directives System, Protective Operations Manual, Protective Advance – Overview (Mar. 11, 2024).

[16] At least in the case of the Trump detail, when a member of the protectee's detail has been assigned to the site preparation team, it is typical for the detail to also send a second, more senior agent (known as a "Second Supervisor") to perform a physical walk-through of the site, assess that the planning is satisfactory in the run-up to the event, and serve as a resource for the other agent. Again, this represents the typical process for the Trump detail in 2024, which the Panel understands was informed by the process used by the Presidential Protection Division and Vice-Presidential Protection Division.

[17] The facts presented here and in the following sub-sections are intended to provide an overview of the sequence of events in the run-up to and then on the day of the July 13 rally. For a more detailed chronology, *see* **Appendix A**. This Report is not intended to provide a definitive record of the precise chronology leading up to and during the July 13 Butler rally, and the Report does not supplant the work of any local, state, or federal law enforcement agency in that regard. It is the Panel's understanding that investigations are ongoing.

initiate the planning process with state and local partners, and begin to assess the availability of their resources.

Throughout the week, several site walk-throughs occurred involving both Secret Service[18] and state and local elements. During these walk-throughs, aspects of site security were discussed and features of the draft site security plan were refined. Additional, *ad hoc* advance work was also performed during this period, including, for example, a Countersniper advance,[19] a Technical Security Division advance, and a Protective Intelligence advance. As these activities occurred, Trump Campaign staff oversaw aspects of the site setup, for example, erecting risers, and also interacted with Secret Service agents and others regarding various aspects of site preparation, including during walk-throughs. The Service agents also refined and finalized the site's "manpower" request during this period.

On Friday, July 12, additional, supervisory personnel from the Trump detail (a Second Supervisor and an Inspector[20]) went to the site to assess the site plan and site security preparations. Finally, with the site plan finalized, leadership of the Trump detail was briefed virtually on the final site status on the evening of July 12 in preparation for their arrival the next day.

c) *July 13*

Secret Service and partner federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel began arriving at the Butler Farm Show grounds starting before 9 a.m. The Butler County Emergency Services Unit (Butler ESU) conducted a briefing for its personnel on site, with counterparts from the Beaver and Washington County tactical units also in attendance, at 9 a.m.[21] The Secret Service conducted its own briefing at 10 a.m.[22] Final site preparation activities occurred throughout the morning, including bomb sweeps, and the event was "soft opened" at 12:30 p.m. in advance of its formal opening at 1:00 p.m.—rallygoers were already lined up at the time of opening, with some of them having camped out overnight to secure prime spots when the event opened.

Both in the morning and then in the early afternoon, various personnel from the Secret Service and partner federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies began to take their posts, including the local countersniper team positioned inside the AGR building, which was fully within the building by around 10:30 a.m.[23] The Secret Service countersnipers took their position on the rooftops behind the stage at approximately 4:30 p.m. Personnel also were activated in the two communications areas for the rally—the Secret Service "Security Room," near the northwestern

[18] Including by the SAIC of the Pittsburgh Field Office.

[19] Members of the site team first learned that they would receive countersniper assets on or around July 9 and the countersniper advance was performed on July 10; the senior agent on the site team out of the Pittsburgh field office and the agent from the Trump detail on the site team were told that this was in response to intelligence related to a long range threat against former President Trump by a foreign state actor (not specific to the Butler rally). Both the leader and assistant leader of former President Trump's personal detail had been read in on this intelligence.

[20] The Second Supervisor was accompanied by an agent from the Service's Inspection Division (an Inspector), who was shadowing the Second Supervisor as training for performing similar duties in connection with future campaign-related advance and site-protection work.

[21] Secret Service personnel did not attend this briefing.

[22] State and local law enforcement personnel did not attend this briefing.

[23] This team consisted of one Butler ESU countersniper joined by two Beaver ESU countersnipers who were present based on a mutual aid request from Butler County to Beaver County.

border of the Butler Farm Show grounds, located within an office, and a mobile command trailer, staffed with local law enforcement personnel and located to the south of the rally stage, approximately 270 yards from the Security Room, near a pond that was on site.[24] The Secret Service's Security Room did not have a direct view of the rally stage and did not have an operating Incident Command System for the centralized reporting and tracking of events and issues that arose during the event.[25]

It is believed that the would-be assassin, Thomas Crooks ("Crooks"), arrived at the rally site at approximately 3:49 p.m. after purchasing ammunition en route to the Farm Show grounds and parked in the vicinity of the AGR building. At around 3:51 p.m., Crooks operated a drone for approximately eleven minutes at and around the rally site, which was not detected because the detection component of the Secret Service's Counter Unmanned Aerial System ("CUAS") was inoperable at the time, as discussed below.[26]

Crooks was first identified as a suspicious person by a local countersniper going off duty[27] no later than approximately 4:26 p.m.[28] through a text shared between that local countersniper and the other local countersnipers in the AGR building. Over the ensuing approximately ninety minutes before Crooks began shooting, he was variously identified by additional state and local law enforcement personnel as engaging in suspicious conduct, including using a range finder to view the rally stage area, and disappearing from and then re-appearing in view. Secret Service personnel were first made aware of Crooks as a suspicious person in the vicinity of the AGR building who had been ranging the stage by approximately 5:44 p.m., and Pennsylvania State Police ("PSP") personnel received similar information at approximately that time. Local law enforcement, Secret Service, and PSP personnel all began to attempt to find and confront Crooks shortly thereafter.[29]

In more detail, a PSP sergeant stationed in the Secret Service Security Room had received information about Crooks from a Butler County ESU commander. The PSP sergeant in turn conveyed the information to the Secret Service personnel in the Security Room: a Secret Service field office SAIC assigned to command the room and manage communications for the Service and an agent from the Trump detail with CUAS responsibilities. At approximately the same time, a member of the Butler County ESU countersniper team texted a member of the Service

[24] *See* **Appendix B** for a site map.

[25] Although a paper copy of the site map from the final site security plan was printed and displayed in the Secret Service's Security Room, this proved to be inadequate for its intended use. It did not, for example, enable individuals in the room to understand where the "AGR building" was located as they received information regarding Crooks, and it was an inferior setup versus, for example, an interactive digital mapping display.

[26] *See* Report at 14 (Failure of the Counter Unmanned Aerial System).

[27] The local countersniper had been posted in the AGR building. He observed Crooks while departing the building to go off shift. The local countersniper described, in his text, how Crooks had "snuck" into the parking lot of the AGR building, an area that was intended to be off-limits as signaled by the placement of a physical barrier at the lot's entrance.

[28] This is the approximate time the local countersniper's text was sent; he may have observed Crooks several minutes earlier.

[29] This includes plainclothes PSP officers from the "Vice" unit stationed at a nearby Sheetz gas station to the northeast of the AGR building (approximately 500 yards away) who were dispatched on foot to search for Crooks in the vicinity of the AGR building at approximately 5:55 p.m. and arrived a few minutes later.

countersniper team (by this time, located up on the roof of one of the barns behind the rally stage) with information and images regarding Crooks as a suspicious person who had been observed with a rangefinder looking toward the stage and whom local law enforcement had lost sight of. In addition, the Service CUAS agent in the Security Room contacted the Service Countersniper Response agent[30] and provided him with similar information regarding Crooks. The Secret Service Protective Intelligence agent separately learned about Crooks around this time from a PSP trooper paired with the Protective Intelligence agent. The Protective Intelligence agent and the Countersniper Response agent both searched for Crooks, independently at first and then in coordination.

As this was happening, former President Trump arrived on site at the Farm Show grounds at approximately 5:30 p.m. After posing for photographs and meeting rallygoers behind the stage, the former president took to the stage at approximately 6:03 p.m. and began speaking by approximately 6:05 p.m. At 6:09 p.m., the PSP Trooper stationed in the Secret Service Security Room and standing adjacent to the Secret Service agent charged with running communications received a report, which he conveyed verbally and in real-time to the personnel in the room, that Crooks as the suspicious individual who had been ranging the stage was now on the roof of the AGR building. Shortly thereafter, the agent from the Trump detail with CUAS responsibilities passed that information on by phone to the Countersniper Response agent who had been searching for Crooks and was now near the stage. The Protective Intelligence agent in the vicinity of the third Service agent also received this information.

By this time, numerous local and state personnel were rushing toward the AGR building. An officer from the Butler Township police department was hoisted up to the roof of the AGR building at approximately 6:10 p.m. and observed Crooks, who in turn spotted the officer and directed his rifle toward him, causing the officer to fall to the ground. By 6:11 p.m., Crooks took his prone shooting position on the roof of the AGR building and fired eight shots in the direction of former President Trump. Approximately sixteen seconds into the shooting, one of the Secret Service countersnipers positioned on a barn roof behind former President Trump shot and killed Crooks.[31]

Within seconds of Crooks' first shots, Secret Service detail agents rushed to form a "body bunker" around former President Trump, who was on the ground of the stage near the podium. Approximately one minute after Crooks began shooting, and having received word that Crooks was "down," the detail agents began to move former President Trump from the stage toward his armored vehicle. This movement took approximately one minute.[32] The motorcade departed the rally area for the hospital at approximately 6:14 p.m.

[30] The Countersniper Response agent is intended to engage with issues that Service countersnipers identify.
[31] A local law enforcement Quick Reaction Force tactical officer also fired a shot at Crooks from the grounds near the AGR building.
[32] During the movement, portions of the former President's body were visibly exposed. This is discussed in more detail at 29 (Extraction Re-Training (Training III)).

III. Assessment of the July 13, 2024 Assassination Attempt Against Former President Trump

a) *Specific Failures and Breakdowns Enabling the Attempted Assassination*

The Panel has identified a number of specific breakdowns and failures that directly enabled the assassination attempt against former President Trump at Butler on July 13.

(1) **Lack of Personnel Securing the AGR Building**: There were insufficient, and, in fact, no personnel from the Secret Service or other federal, state, or local law enforcement specifically tasked with securing the AGR building, the AGR roof, or its environs. The failure to secure a complex of buildings, portions of which were within approximately 130 yards of the protectee and containing numerous positions carrying high-angle line of sight risk, represents a critical security failure.

There has been significant discussion in the aftermath of the assassination attempt regarding whether it was appropriate for the Secret Service to define the AGR building as being in the outer site security perimeter (as in fact it was on July 13), which is traditionally delegated to state and local law enforcement at protective events (operating under the overall direction of the Secret Service), or within the inner perimeter (which it was not on July 13), in which case responsibility for security staffing of the area would have fallen on the Secret Service. In retrospect, it is hard to understand how the building was placed outside the inner perimeter that is under the principal responsibility and control of the Secret Service. But in some ways, the discussion about inner versus outer perimeter misses an essential point: under either option, the means existed to secure the AGR building using available personnel. In this regard, it is important to note that the three-man local law enforcement countersniper team positioned within a portion of the AGR building was never tasked by the Secret Service with securing the AGR building or its rooftop. The mission of this team as they understood it was to provide overwatch of and countersniper response toward the rally crowd, not to secure the AGR building. And regardless, the Service has overall responsibility for ensuring a site is secured, irrespective of whether a particular element of the site falls within the inner or outer perimeter.[33]

In several discussions between the Panel and Secret Service, state, and local law enforcement personnel, individuals noted the presence of two chain link fences separating the AGR building from the interior rally perimeter and suggested that the presence of those fences served as a sort of natural barrier and means of crowd containment and therefore supported drawing the site inner-outer perimeter boundary with the AGR building on the outside. But chain link fences in and of themselves do not justify the placement of a security perimeter, particularly when considering the risk of vehicle-borne IED threats. Barrier-based crowd control, though a component of site security, should not determine how the perimeter is defined absent consideration of the risk of other threats, including line of sight risks and vehicle-borne IED intrusion.

It is also important to contextualize this security failure in terms of threat intelligence known to various Secret Service key stakeholders, including individuals with direct or supervisory responsibility for site security planning at the rally. In the lead-up to the rally, various Secret

[33] There are many, diverse factors that might influence how an event security perimeter is drawn, some of them less obvious than others, for example whether the jurisdiction in which the event is taking place permits open or concealed carry of firearms.

Service personnel were read into intelligence regarding a long range threat by a foreign state actor against former President Trump. While this intelligence was not specific to the Butler rally, the risk of the threat manifesting there was apparent—hence the provision of two Secret Service countersniper teams to staff the rally, for example. Ironically, Crooks' method of attempted assassination embodied the very sort of threat which the intelligence warned against. In light of all of this, the failure by the Secret Service to secure, directly or indirectly, the AGR building is particularly glaring and demonstrates a disconnect between intelligence and planning: the rally site security plan orchestrated by the Secret Service was insufficiently responsive to a threat potential that had been briefed.

(2) **Failure to Directly Mitigate Line-of-Sight Issues from the AGR Building**: It is a basic principle of long-range protection that lines of sight to the protectee, particularly from high angles, must be mitigated. The mitigation can occur indirectly, for example in the form of securing access to the area where the line of sight is available, or it can be mitigated directly, for example through physical barriers impeding the line of sight.[34] In outdoor rallies, common direct mitigations for line-of-sight issues can include large equipment, screens, flags, and vehicles. Such mitigations were not sufficiently present at the "3 o'clock"[35] on July 13.

In this regard, it bears emphasizing that countersniper coverage of a potential high angle line of sight threat is not a sufficient mitigation, particularly in settings where there are a relatively limited number of high angle line of sight risks, as distinct from heavily urbanized settings. The use of countersnipers to eliminate threats should be considered a last line of defense, not a primary mitigation.[36]

(3) **Communications Issues**: The Butler rally was plagued by various communications issues which: (a) inhibited the effective, timely dissemination of information about Crooks, and (b) limited the ability of the communications system to effectively handle the rate of information coming in, particularly in the minutes before the shooting.[37] Many of these communications issues relate to basic principles of how, or how not to, effectively communicate in large venue mixed law enforcement settings. Moreover, these communications concerns are not new to the law enforcement or first responder communities and are commonly mitigated through very practical measures, not done on July 13, including exchange of radios and/or exchange of personnel.

The communications structure at Butler on July 13 was physically split: (a) various local law enforcement communications personnel were operating from a mobile command post trailer, which was physically separate from (b) the Secret Service's Security Room, which was also

[34] Such barriers may also provide physical protection.

[35] Clock positions are provided from a tactical clock perspective with the 12 o'clock representing former President Trump's straight-on perspective facing outward from the podium. From this perspective, Crooks was located at approximately the 3 o'clock in his shooting position on the roof of the AGR building.

[36] The Panel has encountered some evidence that Trump Campaign staff expressed resistance regarding the placement of certain heavy equipment and/or vehicles at the site. Back-and-forth interactions between Service and campaign personnel (for any candidate) regarding site setup are commonplace and it is ultimately the responsibility of the Secret Service to: (a) ensure that appropriate line of sight and other necessary site mitigations are in place, and (b) escalate areas of difference between campaign staff and the Service to ensure their proper resolution.

[37] It is a separate issue that, even when information was received, the responses to it were insufficient. This issue is discussed in another section below, *see* Report at 17, 23.

running certain communications, and staffed with a Secret Service field office SAIC, a member of the PSP, and a member of the Butler County EMS. This created, at the highest level, a structural divide in the flow of communications. And even accepting that there would be this physical separation, how it was implemented was flawed: the intended flow of communications on the day of the rally was insufficiently briefed by the Secret Service to their partners; the communications flow was never diagrammatically depicted for reference or consideration; and there was no consideration given to the idea of, for example, placing a physical PSP counterpart or a Secret Service agent within the local mobile command post to better facilitate the flow of information.[38] The structural inadequacy of the communications setup on July 13 is particularly glaring given the heavy presence of local law enforcement personnel staffing the event, none of whom had a direct line of radio communication with the Secret Service, especially given the perceived reliance on those personnel to secure areas outside the narrowly drawn inner perimeter of the rally site.

Beyond this foundational structural problem in the communications setup, the Panel encountered evidence of additional communications problems which, taken together, reflect an insufficiently robust approach to communications on the day of the rally. These include: (a) Secret Service communications from a nearby FLOTUS event in Pittsburgh crossing over onto Secret Service radios at Butler, requiring day-of alterations to the Butler communications channel plan (switching radio channels); (b) insufficient appreciation by certain Secret Service personnel of the value of local law enforcement personnel's offer to share radios with the Secret Service, which provides an easy way to enhance interoperability, particularly in sites with less technologically sophisticated communications interoperability approaches, as was true at Butler; (c) communications failures between state elements in former President Trump's motorcade and the local mobile command post, which necessitated resorting to cell phones for positional updates on the motorcade's approach to the rally site; (d) widely inconsistent and varying approaches to communications modes between and among Secret Service, federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel, with a chaotic mixture of radio, cell phone, text, and e-mail being employed by different personnel at different points in the chronology; and (e) at times poor communications hygiene by Secret Service personnel—for example, requests for medical or state or local assistance without clear identification of who was making the request and where the resources were needed.

(4) **Failure to Encounter Crooks**: In spite of the communications issues documented above, many law enforcement personnel at the rally site did become aware of Crooks over time. Elements of local law enforcement personnel first identified Crooks as a suspicious person in the vicinity of the AGR building no later than approximately 4:26 p.m., more than ninety minutes before Crooks began shooting at 6:11 p.m. By approximately 5:30 p.m., local law enforcement personnel had spotted Crooks using a range finder[39] in the vicinity of the AGR building to measure distance to

[38] The PSP sergeant in the Secret Service's Security Room surmised, but was never specifically informed, that the local mobile command post had access to a PSP radio; at key moments in the chronology of events, communications between the local mobile command post and the PSP sergeant in the Secret Service's Security Room actually were occurring by cell phone rather than radio, and even this was fortuitously facilitated by a personal friendship the PSP sergeant had with the Butler ESU commander in the local mobile command post.

[39] Of course, at large events there may be multiple "suspicious" people identified during the event, but, in particular, Crooks' use of a range finder to range the stage materially elevated his level of suspicion given the context; law enforcement's subsequent loss of sight of Crooks further elevated the level of suspicion.

the rally stage and continuing to act suspiciously. PSP personnel were made aware of Crooks as a suspicious person in the vicinity of the AGR building who had been ranging the rally stage by no later than 5:44 p.m. By 5:44 p.m., Secret Service personnel were also first made aware of Crooks as a suspicious person in the vicinity of the AGR building who had been ranging the stage, approximately twenty minutes before former President Trump took to the rally stage. At approximately this same time, the local countersnipers in the AGR building made a report about a suspicious person (Crooks) over their radio to the local mobile command post and were told that law enforcement personnel would be sent to find and confront him. A member of the local countersniper team also separately texted a member of the Secret Service countersniper team, transmitting the same information about Crooks viewing the stage with a range finder. And both the Secret Service Countersniper Response agent and the Protective Intelligence agent were made aware of Crooks and given similar information about his conduct. Based on the evidence gathered by the Panel, no fewer than nine Secret Service personnel were given information specifically regarding Crooks, including that he had been seen with a range finder viewing the stage, prior to his commencing shooting at 6:11 p.m.[40]

Despite all of this, no one from law enforcement in the more than ninety minutes from Crooks' first sighting to his commencing shooting managed to question Crooks.[41] Nor did anyone manage to do so in the approximately twenty minutes between when Secret Service and PSP personnel first learned Crooks was observed viewing the stage with a range finder and when the former president took the stage. The particular combination of repetitive suspicious behavior in a close-in location, the possession of a range finder and its use to range the stage, and only intermittent visual contact with him (in other words, Crooks was not being continuously monitored and surveilled) represents information that should have triggered a police or other law enforcement encounter, and such an encounter likely would have averted the subsequent sequence of events.

(5) **Failure to Inform Detail Leadership**: As described above, various Secret Service, state, and local personnel were made aware of Crooks well before he commenced shooting at 6:11 p.m. Significantly, this includes three Secret Service personnel who were made aware that Crooks (as the suspicious person who had earlier been ranging the rally stage) was now <u>on the roof</u> of the AGR building in the critical approximately two minutes before Crooks began shooting, along with a fourth Service agent who was told in that same time period about Crooks on the roof although

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Although range finders are legal, they are typically used, for example, by golfers estimating distances on golf courses, in construction settings, and, tragically given the course of events, by hunters sighting their targets. *See also* Report at 17.

[40] *See generally* **Appendix A**.

[41] Part of this failure to successfully orchestrate an encounter with Crooks may be due to inadequate site planning and resourcing, which resulted in an insufficient number of roving personnel available to perform timely ordinary police encounter work, particularly in the outer perimeter of the rally site. This issue may have been exacerbated by the number of medical incidents, particularly heat related, which occurred at the rally site on July 13, although proper site planning must take into consideration crowd size and likely weather conditions. In addition, Secret Service Countersurveillance assets were not provided for the rally. Service Countersurveillance units are specifically tasked with encountering individuals who are engaging in suspicious behavior at or around a protected event; the availability of the asset on July 13 would have increased the likelihood of Crooks being located and confronted. Various recommendations in the Report are addressed to these issues.

the agent did not connect that information to the prior report of a suspicious person with a range finder.

Yet no one from the Secret Service informed the leadership of the Trump detail who were controlling the former president's movements about Crooks. More specifically, the leadership of the Trump detail—those who were in closest proximity to him and tasked with managing his personal movements—were never informed that a suspicious person in the vicinity of the AGR building had been ranging the rally stage, and that this person had not been located and at times could not be observed. No such communication occurred before former President Trump took the stage, which would have provided an opportune moment to hold him until Crooks had been located. And no such communication occurred in the critical approximately two minutes when former President Trump was on the stage when the additional, significant information that Crooks was now on the roof of the AGR building was known.

(6) **Failure of the Counter Unmanned Aerial System**: A critical component of site security, particularly for large, outdoor events, should be the Secret Service's Counter Unmanned Aerial System (CUAS) technology. The former President's detail had two different technologies available to it, both described under the umbrella term "CUAS," at the Butler rally site on July 13: (a) technology to detect drones operating in the area above and around the rally site, including to pinpoint the location of the drone operator(s), and (b) technology to mitigate those drones.

However, the former technology (drone detection) suffered from a technical problem which the detail operator only identified on the day of the rally and struggled for many hours to diagnose and remediate. This resulted in the detection system only going into operation at approximately 4:30 p.m. on July 13, rather than the intended start time of approximately 11:00 a.m.[42]

In the afternoon of July 13, during the period when the detection system was down, Crooks flew a drone in the vicinity of the Farm Show grounds, presumably for purposes of site surveillance and probing.[43] Had the detection system been operating as intended, it is likely that Crooks' drone operation would have been detected and pinpointed, which would have triggered a law enforcement encounter with him.

b) *Deeper Concerns Enabling the Attempted Assassination*

In addition to the breakdowns and failures enumerated above, the Panel has identified a number of deeper concerns that also contributed to the failures enabling the assassination attempt against former President Trump at Butler on July 13.

(1) **Lack of Clarity in Practice Regarding Who Was in Charge of the Site on July 13**: Despite Secret Service written policies providing certain guidance regarding responsibilities for site security,[44] the Panel encountered substantial evidence demonstrating that, in practice at Butler on July 13, there was ambiguity among personnel at the site regarding who had overall command of the site's security. Varying perspectives on this included that the site was overall commanded by: a senior level Service agent from the Pittsburgh field office (the "Lead Advance"); a senior level supervisory Service agent from the Pittsburgh field office (the "Site Supervisor"); a senior level

[42] The system operated briefly from approximately 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. on July 13 before going down.
[43] Crooks ran his drone for approximately eleven minutes, beginning at 3:51 p.m., and the drone approached within approximately 200 yards of the Butler Farm Show grounds.
[44] *See, e.g.*, OPO-06, USSS Directives System, Protective Operations Manual, Site Security (May 10, 2022).

Service agent from the Buffalo field office in the Security Room (regarding command of site communications); an agent from the Trump detail assigned to site advance work and site security (the "Site Agent"); a counterpart agent to that Trump detail agent, from the Pittsburgh field office, also assigned to site advance work and site security (the "Site Counterpart"); and a senior level supervisory agent from the Trump detail (the "Second Supervisor").[45]

The Panel also often encountered the perspective that there was no single individual with overall command of site security on July 13, but rather that a team of individuals had this responsibility, with interviewees conceiving of that team as composed of various combinations of the above individuals, as well as other Secret Service agents with specific duties (for example, the "Countersniper Advance"). This issue may have been exacerbated by the fact that the Pittsburgh field office SAIC and an Assistant to the Special Agent in Charge (ATSAIC[46]) were both at the rally. These individuals would have had, under regular circumstances, direct supervisory authority over the Pittsburgh agents at the rally, though on the day of the rally they do not appear, in practice, to have been engaged in significant supervisory responsibilities with respect to site security.

The ambiguity described above regarding responsibility and site ownership manifested along various dimensions, including lack of clarity regarding overall responsibility for site security communications, lack of clarity regarding responsibility for designing responses to potential security threats in the event's outer perimeter, and lack of clarity regarding responsibility and protocol for escalating matters at the site to the Trump detail.

In practice, then, the Secret Service personnel at Butler on July 13 failed to execute an Incident Command System / Unified Command approach to site security in contravention of long-standing and basic principles of law enforcement and site security, particularly for large sites with mixed jurisdiction law enforcement personnel. It is particularly disturbing that so many senior Secret Service agents were involved in the operation, and none of them were aware of the ambiguity at play regarding who the specific leader(s) with final authority were; the lack of such definition in practice should have been concerning to all of them.[47]

Part of the ambiguity the Panel has observed may stem from a well-intentioned effort by the Trump detail to integrate its own detail personnel into the site advance planning and site security process, which it did for the July 13 rally. This integration included a specific special agent (referenced above) designated as the "site agent" and tasked with collaborating with personnel from the Pittsburgh field office regarding advance planning and site security setup. The integration also included a Second Supervisor (shadowed by a Secret Service Inspector) from the Trump detail (also referenced above) tasked with evaluating and assessing the site security planning work prior to the July 13 rally. The use of detail personnel to engage in site advance planning work is typical with, for example, the President's detail, but atypical with most former presidential details or campaign/nominee details, which tend to rely more heavily on local field offices. While, again, this process enhancement by the Trump detail appears to have been well-intentioned and sensible

[45] Some of this ambiguity may be attributable to after-the-fact attempts, intended or unintended, by personnel to avoid or shift responsibility in the aftermath of a major security lapse, but even accounting for that, there appears to have been genuine ambiguity among personnel who were at the rally.

[46] Also sometimes rendered as ATSAC. For purposes of this report, the convention ATSAIC is used.

[47] Issues regarding lack of ownership by experienced, senior-level personnel are discussed further below. Report at 19.

to improve the quality of site planning, it may have inadvertently also contributed to the ambiguity regarding overall site security ownership and leadership responsibilities on July 13.

(2) **Cultural Attitudes Regarding Resourcing**: The Panel has encountered repeated evidence that Secret Service personnel, including those associated with the protection of former President Trump, viewed themselves as operating under an informal mantra of, effectively, "do more with less," which is inconsistent with achieving excellence or "no fail" in the Service's protective mission. This perspective permeated discussions with the Panel regarding security resourcing, staffing, personnel availability, travel, training, outsourcing to state and local partners, and other dimensions of the Service.[48]

The detrimental effects of such thinking, particularly when personnel are exposed to it over sustained periods of time, can be subtle but significant. By way of example, the manpower request for Secret Service personnel for the July 13 rally, made by the group responsible for site advance planning, was granted essentially in full by the Secret Service's Office of Protective Operations Staffing and Logistics Office.[49] But that request was transmitted on a form which contained template language describing how "[a]ll requested posts and assets were scrutinized by the Advance Team and [the relevant field office Special Agent in Charge] in an effort to minimize required manpower."[50] Although a small example, that phraseology, which the Panel understands has since been changed in the aftermath of July 13, and the tension in requesting resources in an environment where the request is conveyed on a form emphasizing the need to minimize required manpower, is emblematic of the Service's emphasis on a "do more with less" mantra with its inevitable corrosive effects on protective decision-making over time, including at the advance planning stage.[51]

(3) **Lack of Critical Thinking**: The Panel has encountered repeated evidence of a lack of critical thinking among Secret Service personnel, which manifested both in the planning and execution of security on July 13 and in the aftermath of the assassination attempt.

Before and on July 13

The ability to think critically—to intake information, analyze and evaluate it, including a consideration of probabilities and consequences, and generate and then execute upon reasonable decisions in response—is a hallmark of good security planning. But the Panel has encountered repeated instances of Secret Service personnel associated with the July 13 rally failing to demonstrate this critical thinking skill. As described earlier, a prominent instance of this is the fact

[48] The Panel was focused on understanding these perspectives as they were present up to and through July 13; it has not inquired into whether post-July-13 measures have affected these perspectives.

[49] With the minor exception of a decrease in the number of magnetometers allocated to the event from a requested thirteen to an approved ten. This office is known informally within the Service as the "War Room."

[50] Emphasis added.

[51] The effects can be particularly corrosive when coupled with an overly formulaic approach to how protective resourcing decisions are provided. The risks of an overly formulaic approach to protective resourcing are discussed in more detail in the Report at 33. To be clear, the findings in this sub-section should not be taken as a criticism of the Secret Service agents working hard every day to do as much as they are able under the current resourcing paradigm. Rather, it is an observation regarding the paradigm under which they find themselves operating. The Panel's considerations of personnel and budget issues are discussed further at 24 and 34. The criticality of the Service's protective mission is discussed further at 29.

that personnel had been read into significant intelligence regarding a long range threat by a foreign state actor against former President Trump, but failed to ensure that the AGR building was secured despite its proximity to the rally stage and the obvious high angle line of sight issues it presented.[52]

This critical thinking failure by Service personnel goes to a broader critical thinking flaw observed by the Panel. Interviewees revealed a surprising lack of rigor in considering the specific risks posed to particular individual protectees. For example, although former President Trump was not yet formally a nominee for president at the time of the Butler shooting, he had effectively secured the Republican nomination, in what would likely prove to be a close election. He also is fairly described as a figure who generates strong emotions in many people, including supporters and detractors. Under those circumstances, the Secret Service should have recognized that the sort of enhanced assets and measures employed since the Butler shooting should have been adopted before the incident, which could have mitigated the resultant loss of life, injuries, and near-fatal shooting of former President Trump.[53] To be clear, the Panel did not identify any nefarious or malicious intent behind this phenomenon, but rather an overreliance on assigning personnel based on categories (former, candidate, nominee) instead of an individualized assessment of risk.[54]

Other examples of the lack of critical thinking include the failure of any personnel to act on the day of the rally when they observed the lack of line of sight mitigations at the 3 o'clock of the rally stage, the failure of the SAIC running the communications in the Secret Service Security Room to raise any concerns regarding the split communications structure or to attempt to gain site familiarity (for example, through a walk-through before embedding in the Security Room), the failure of a Service agent with site planning responsibility to meaningfully consider an offer by local personnel, made in the days before July 13, to colocate all communications in the local mobile command post, and the failure of a Service agent with countersniper responsibilities to act upon an offer from local law enforcement for radio sharing.

A particular subtype of this lack of critical thinking involves the failure by Secret Service (and state and local law enforcement) personnel to properly gauge and respond to the potential threat posed by Crooks on July 13. As described above, local law enforcement personnel were aware of Crooks as a suspicious person more than ninety minutes before he commenced shooting, and PSP and Secret Service personnel were aware of Crooks (as a suspicious individual with a range finder who had been viewing the stage) nearly 30 minutes before. This knowledge was not static but escalatory in nature: Crooks went from being a suspicious person in the vicinity of the AGR building, to an ongoingly suspicious person with a range finder ranging the stage in the vicinity of the AGR building, to an ongoingly suspicious person in the vicinity of the AGR building who had ranged the stage and was going in and out of observation,[55] to finally in the critical approximately two minutes before the shooting commenced, an ongoingly suspicious person who had ranged the stage, had gone in and out of observation, and was now <u>on the roof</u> of the AGR building.

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[52] To be clear, even in the absence of such intelligence, the failure to secure the AGR building given its proximity to the rally stage and the high angle line of sight issues it presented is inexcusable.

[53] *See* Report at 33. The Panel understands that, more generally regarding categories of protectees and attendant levels of protective resources, the Service is seeking legislative clarification. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3056.

[54] *See also* footnote 69.

[55] There were also reports potentially connecting Crooks to an unattended backpack and bicycle, which were seen as posing possible IED risk.

Such information should have initiated a police encounter with Crooks and been shared in some form with the decisionmakers responsible for former President Trump's physical positioning (his Secret Service detail) so that they could consider and react to the risk. The failure to effect either mitigation step represents an inadequate gauge of and response to risk by numerous personnel on July 13 and, again, underscores a lack of critical thinking.[56]

After July 13

In another manifestation of lack of critical thinking, the Panel has observed that many of the Secret Service personnel involved in the events of July 13 appear to have done little in the way of self-reflection in terms of identifying areas of missteps, omissions, or opportunities for improvement.[57] July 13 represents a historic security failure by the Secret Service which almost led to the death of a former president and current nominee and did lead to the death of a rally attendee.[58] For personnel involved, given the multi-factor nature of the security failure, even a superficial level of reflection should yield insights regarding lapses and potential remediations. But many personnel struggled to identify meaningful examples of either type of observation—what went wrong and what could be done better in the future to prevent a similar tragedy from reoccurring.[59]

The Panel has spent time considering and deliberating regarding the origins of this repeatedly observed phenomenon of lack of critical thinking. Lack of critical thinking can stem from many issues and there may be a multicausal explanation: burnout, complacency, inadequate training, incompetence, resource pressure, and lack of effective leadership are all potential contributing causes. The Panel has observed various of these, and this Report provides recommendations directed toward them.

Regarding complacency in particular, the Panel is concerned by its observation of this apparent issue in many of the Service personnel who were interviewed. Complacency is a difficult problem for organizations to manage; organizations can become victims of their own success—or

[56] Related to this, the Panel also observed the repeated phenomenon of Service personnel assuming that an issue would be addressed or was being addressed through the ordinary course of expected operations, without necessarily confirming that this had occurred.

[57] Some of this may be a resistance, whether intended or unintended, to identifying fault out of a concern that it would create undue exposure for the individual, but even accounting for that, the Panel has observed a notable lack of critical thinking in this regard.

[58] This is the first instance of a non-protectee individual dying within the perimeter of a Secret Service event due to and in the immediate aftermath of an intentional act of violence directed toward a protectee in the Service's history.

[59] This lack of critical inquiry is not limited to individual personnel but appears to affect the Service at an organizational level as well, *see* below at 22 (Lack of Sufficient Continuous Improvement and Auditing Mechanisms). That said, the Panel notes that, at an organizational level, the Secret Service has made certain efforts to respond to the events of July 13, including its initiation of a Mission Assurance review process, U.S. SECRET SERV., *U.S. Secret Service Releases Summary of Mission Assurance Investigation into the Attempted Assassination of Former President Donald Trump* (Sept. 20, 2024), https://www.secretservice.gov/newsroom/releases/2024/09/us-secret-service-releases-summary-mission-assurance-investigation, and the implementation of certain immediate reforms, *see generally* U.S. SECRET SERV., *Testimony of Acting Director Ronald L. Rowe, Jr., Before the Senate Judiciary Committee and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee* (July 30, 2024), https://www.secretservice.gov/newsroom/releases/2024/07/testimony-acting-director-ronald-l-rowe-jr-senate-judiciary-committee-and. *See also* footnote 76.

appearance of success—and the phenomenon can be worsened by a high operational tempo and consistent resource pressure (evidenced, for example, by the mantra that agents need to "do more with less"). It is imperative that Service leadership is attuned to this issue and implements measures to fully gauge and then remediate it.

Regardless of the cause, it is unacceptable for Secret Service personnel to be unable, or unwilling, to think critically given the "no fail" nature of the Service's protective mission. Critical thinking is vital for effective security planning and implementation as well as appropriate threat response.

One of the most fundamental challenges facing the Secret Service is that new leadership will need to inspire agents, regardless of fatigue or claimed burnout, to aspire to be elite and flawless. Although perfection in human affairs is not possible, again, there is a fundamental difference between "do more with less" and "failure is not an option." There needs to be a burning desire within the Secret Service to be elite, and a stronger sense of mission, created in an environment in which leaders and agents hold themselves and their colleagues to an uncompromising standard of excellence consistent with the no-fail nature of the Secret Service's protective function.

(4) **Lack of Ownership by Experienced, Senior-Level Personnel**: The Panel encountered repeated instances of experienced, senior-level Secret Service personnel who were involved either or both in the planning of the July 13 rally or its day-of execution and who demonstrated a lack of ownership regarding site security issues. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- A senior agent (a field office SAIC) in the Security Room tasked with coordinating communications for the site who had arrived the evening before, did not have familiarity with the site layout (for example, not knowing where the "AGR building" was physically located when it began to be referenced regarding Crooks), did not walk the site before entering the Security Room, did not provide his PSP counterpart with a briefing regarding the intended process for managing communications, and took no steps to mitigate the fragmented communications structure vis-à-vis local law enforcement communications operating from a separate command trailer;
- A senior agent (an ATSAIC from a different field office) who, during the event, engaged in relatively junior tasks such as hand magnetometer ("wanding") work and escorting individuals backstage to be in place for photo opportunities with former President Trump, despite holding supervisory and site oversight duties consistent with his listing as the "site supervisor";[60]
- A senior agent (the SAIC from the same field office as the ATSAIC) who was involved at a leadership level in various aspects of planning for the rally's site security, including manpower and site security setup, with its deficiencies as discussed above;
- A senior agent from the Trump detail, tasked with reviewing in-person the site security setup in the run-up to the rally, who was told by another, more junior detail member generic information regarding how the AGR building would supposedly be secured that was not

[60] Some personnel interviewed described how Secret Service personnel at senior levels in the organization and/or with significant experience will at times be called upon to perform ordinary, "line" type activities depending on available resources; these personnel characterized this as a positive feature of the Service's culture. While it can be beneficial under appropriate circumstances for senior level personnel to perform duties more typically reserved for more junior personnel, such an approach does not relieve senior level personnel of their duty to act on the weight of their training and experience or to help assure that fundamental protective imperatives are successfully and properly completed.

consistent with the diagrammatic depiction of security resources in the site layout diagram. That senior-level individual did not compare the generic assurance to the protection planning documents to identify and further inquire regarding the obvious inconsistency or otherwise inquire regarding details of the supposed plan;

- Multiple experienced, senior personnel (but below the SAIC/ASAIC[61] level) from the local field office tasked with site advance work and security planning who, as discussed in detail above, failed to properly develop the site security plan in a way that was responsive to basic security planning principles, including effective mitigation of high-angle line of sight risks, ensuring effective flow of communications, and achieving an integrated understanding of the roles of state and local partners at the site as part of a comprehensive site security vision.

The Panel was struck by these and other instances of lack of ownership by senior-level, experienced personnel, both for their direct implications related to the effectiveness of those personnel at Butler on July 13 and their broader implications regarding the Service's leadership culture.[62] Experienced, senior-level personnel cannot abandon their supervisory responsibilities or their more general responsibility to lead, regardless of the circumstance, and the failure by such personnel to conduct themselves in accordance with these precepts contributed to the failures of July 13.

(5) **Lack of Cohesion Regarding Secret Service, State, and Local Security Planning**: There was a lack of cohesion and integration between the security planning by the Secret Service and the security planning by state and local law enforcement in the run-up to the July 13 rally. To begin with the good, the Secret Service does an able job from a process perspective of integrating its state and local partners in the planning process through large and small group meetings, combined group site walk-throughs, small group *ad hoc* coordination efforts, and day-of counterpart pairing. The framework for effective, unified site planning coordination is already present.

But in terms of the actual, substantive development of the site security plan, the Secret Service personnel tasked with generating the site security plan for the Butler rally did not appear to be working from a shared, cohesive security vision across Service, state, and local personnel regarding the risks the site posed and how those risks would best be mitigated through a combination of Service, state, and local assets. Rather than beginning with a view of what security ought to be and then marshalling resources to effect that vision, the Service appears to have employed a more bottom-up approach with state and local partners—beginning by inquiring about what resources various state and local entities could provide (rather than what resources were needed) and adjusting the site security plan as the week proceeded based on *ad hoc* interactions with those parties, including during site walk-throughs.

Moreover, as the week in the run-up to the rally progressed and various state and local constituencies developed their own security plans, ostensibly in response to *ad hoc* Secret Service feedback they were receiving (for example, during site walk-throughs), there does not appear to have been a cohesive effort by the Secret Service personnel to meaningfully evaluate and integrate the plans that were being developed back into the Service's own plan to maintain an up-to-date

[61] Assistant Special Agent in Charge. Sometimes rendered as "ASAC" but this Report uses the "ASAIC" convention.

[62] The leadership quality of senior-level personnel in the field is also influenced by the leadership in the Service's headquarters.

vision of the overall approach to site security, especially beyond the inner perimeter. Tellingly, many Secret Service personnel interviewed by the Panel with site security responsibility never obtained or reviewed final operating plans from various state and local agencies, despite their availability.

Specifically regarding the AGR building, it is the Panel's impression, based on the facts available to it, that no one from the Secret Service sufficiently probed for details about which specific law enforcement resources, if any—for example, which departments, how many officers—would be used to secure the area around the AGR building or address any concerns that might arise in that location. And no one in the Secret Service holistically analyzed those responses to determine whether the specific resources in that area (which in fact were local countersnipers) were appropriate for overall site security goals. Given the AGR building's close proximity to the stage and attendant line of sight issues, and given that the Service had assigned its state and local partners with responsibility for coverage of that area, the Service should have conducted a robust analysis of exactly how the risks associated with that location were being mitigated, and the failure to do so falls not only on the agents developing the plan but on their supervisors. Relying on a general understanding that "the locals have that area covered" is simply not good enough and, in fact, at Butler this attitude contributed to the security failure.

(6) **Insufficient Emphasis on an Experience-Based Approach by Trump Detail Regarding Certain Personnel**: The site agent assigned by the Trump detail to coordinate with the Pittsburgh field office to conduct site advance work and site security planning for the Butler rally only graduated from the Service's academy in 2020, had only been on the Trump detail since 2023, and had engaged in minimal previous site advance work or site security planning and certainly nothing to the level of the July 13 Butler rally. This inexperience may have been exacerbated by the timing of the agent's arrival in the Service, which coincided with the peak years of COVID with attendant restrictions and reduced operational tempo in the Service.[63]

The decision within the Trump detail to assign this agent to the Butler rally appears to have been driven, at least in part, by the simple factor of availability,[64] and without adequate consideration by supervisory personnel within the detail regarding the agent's level of experience and associated aptitude and training, or lack thereof, for contributing to the planning of a major outdoor rally event like Butler. Although the detail made use of supervisory mechanisms (including inspection and physical walk through of the site security plan with the junior agent in the run-up to July 13, performed by a Second Supervisor shadowed by a separate Inspector), these mechanisms do not appear to have sufficiently incorporated the fact of the agent's inexperience in the type of supervisory oversight that was being exercised—for example, insufficiently scrutinizing the site's communications plan or certain key statements made by the junior agent regarding how line of sight risks would be mitigated.[65]

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[63] The Panel was told that the COVID years, and the associated reduced operational tempo, have affected the level of experience many more junior personnel in the Service were able to obtain. This is an issue affecting many organizations in the country presently, both public and private.

[64] This ties into the effects of a "do more with less" mantra, which will tend to emphasize the value of availability.

[65] In addition, a more experienced agent from the local field office serving as the site counterpart deferred to the more junior site agent and failed to intervene on issues, apparently because that junior agent was part

As another example, the Trump detail agent assigned to operate the CUAS system at Butler had only formally deployed CUAS technology at two prior events, had only been a CUAS operator since March 2024, and had received CUAS training through an informal, hands-on approach by another member of the Trump detail who had operated CUAS previously. As explained earlier, this agent required approximately five hours to remedy an issue with the CUAS system, including time spent on the telephone with the system's customer service office, during which time Crooks was able to operate a drone without detection. The agent's lack of sufficient training and technical competence (which can be acquired through such training) contributed to this prolonged period of attempted remediation.

Both examples demonstrate the potential role that inexperience by Trump detail personnel may have played in certain aspects of the planning for and execution of the July 13 rally.[66] Of course, all personnel at one time are inexperienced and must gain experience through real-world applications. But it is incumbent upon leadership personnel within the detail to match personnel experience to the potential threat level and complexity of the sites to which the personnel are being assigned and, as effective leaders, to ensure that experience is gained incrementally and progressively to not create undue operational risk. It is also incumbent upon leadership to ensure that when more junior agents are gaining experience through real-world applications, those agents operate under an enhanced level of supervision.

(7) **Lack of Sufficient Continuous Improvement and Auditing Mechanisms**: There is a lack of resources and time devoted by field offices and the details of former presidents, candidates, and nominees to activities that can broadly be described as self-reflective, auditing, and intended to ensure continuous improvement and learning from observed real-world experience. The Panel did not encounter evidence that these groups engage in any of the following in a meaningful way: (a) formalized after-action assessments following planned events;[67] (b) randomized periodic auditing of historical site security plans for retroactive assessment and development of lessons learned, or equivalent tabletop or full-scale exercises; (c) regularized day-of-event auditing by dedicated personnel solely tasked with ensuring that standards and specifications are being met; (d) periodic "red teaming" exercises by external personnel; (e) quality assurance processes to confirm integration and retention of lessons learned over time; or (f) external benchmarking or pacing against organizations and institutions with demonstrated capability for protective excellence.[68]

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of the protectee's detail. Regardless of whether that deference was appropriate as a matter of protocol or consistent with the leadership expected of an experienced agent, it certainly illustrates the need for robust supervision and oversight of a more junior agent from the detail when placed in the important role of site agent.

[66] The Panel notes that certain of the agents from the Trump detail who were in physical proximity to former President Trump at the Butler rally on July 13 did have significant experience.

[67] Other than in the event of a significant protective failure in which case a formal report is commissioned—the leadership for the Trump detail stated that such events had only occurred rarely prior to July 13. *See* OPO-19, USSS Directives System, Protective Operations Manual, Unusual Protective Events (Aug. 16, 2023). Certain interviewees described an *ad hoc*, informal approach to conducting so-called "hotwash debriefings" after events at least some of the time, but none described a structured, formal review and improvement process.

[68] The Panel understands that certain of these activities, such as the red teaming, may occur with respect to the Presidential Protection Division ("PPD"), and the Panel's inquiry has not extended to those PPD

The absence of such activities ties into the Panel's earlier observations of an absence of critical thinking by Service personnel and an absence of ownership-oriented thinking by experienced, senior-level Service personnel. It is also consistent with the Panel's impression that the Service tends to take an insular attitude toward the development and execution of its protective methodologies, despite widespread benchmarking and pacing opportunities, including in both the public and private sectors. But for organizations to excel, they must be capable of and resourced for insightful and candid self-reflection, continuous self-inquiry, and improvement in response to such activities.

(8) **Ineffective "Speak Up" Practice**: The Panel believes that the Service may have a deeper issue related to culture and practice regarding individual agents' willingness to "Speak Up" concerning potential threats.[69] This is based on the sheer number of Secret Service personnel from: (a) different areas of the Service, and with (b) different responsibilities, all of whom knew information about Crooks before he began shooting, but none of whom brought that information to the attention of relevant personnel in former President Trump's detail.[70] While some of this inaction may be explained by communications issues, the complacency described above,[71] or a general apprehension to disrupt activities without more certainty regarding a potential threat, the apparent pervasiveness of the information holding suggests a deeper problem concerning agents' knowing when to communicate about ambiguous but potential risks at a site to detail leadership or others for whom receiving information is important to ensure effective protective operations.

(9) **Lack of Certain Training Facilities and Commitment of Time to Training on the Secret Service's Core Protective Mission:** Ten years ago, a different bipartisan panel recommended that the Secret Service receive funding, and then build, a full-scale mock-up of the White House so that agents could train concerning a location manifestly relevant to their core protective mission.[72] For whatever reason(s), including lack of sufficient budgetary support, that has not happened, although this Panel was told that the Secret Service has come close to being able to undertake that project in recent years. Although the Butler event did not occur at the White House, the need for such a facility for training purposes remains compelling.

More broadly, that data point is part of a pattern of undertraining with respect to the Secret Service's core protection mission. The Panel received briefings reflecting that Secret Service agents spend a modest, or perhaps even minimal, amount of time training, particularly in the quadrennial presidential election years. Even in the remaining three years of the election cycle,

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program(s). Regardless, this basic step for improving performance should not be limited only to the president's detail. The Panel also acknowledges that the observed absence of certain of these activities may be attributable in part to insufficient resources at the Service, or at least insufficient resources at the Service dedicated to such tasks.

[69] Importantly, however, the Panel encountered no evidence in any of its work of any malicious intent by any personnel involved in the Butler rally in terms of a desire for there to be a security failure in any way.

[70] The Panel emphasizes that it has not conducted a wide-ranging cultural assessment of the Service; its observations regarding practice and culture here are derived from its focus on the July 13 assassination attempt. However, the Panel has spoken with many Service personnel, and the issue has been consistent.

[71] Report at 18.

[72] *See* J. Hagin *et al.*, "Report from the United States Secret Service Protective Mission Panel to the Secretary of Homeland Security" (Dec. 15, 2014).

training is inadequate. Other elite no-fail units—for example, the Delta Force or Navy SEALs—spend substantial amounts of time training as part of their regular mission cadence.

(10) **Budget & Personnel Considerations:** The Panel is aware that there is an ongoing discussion occurring regarding the appropriate level of budgeting for the Secret Service.[73] Additional resources would be helpful, but if the remediation and reform dialogue around the failures of July 13 devolves into a discussion about how much additional money the Service should receive, critical lessons from July 13 will have been lost. The failure of July 13 likely would have occurred regardless of budget levels at the current Secret Service. Put otherwise, even an unlimited budget would not, by itself, remediate many of the causes of the failures on July 13.

This is not to suggest that additional budgetary funding would not be beneficial to the Service—it could, particularly if it is targeted to address the deficiencies identified in this Panel's Report and is deployed thoughtfully. Additional funds could also mitigate a "do more with less" mentality and the attendant effects it can have on agents, including burnout. But an influx of funds, without more, will not address the problems July 13 revealed.

Likewise, although the Service's protective operations capacity would be increased by net additions of new personnel, the failures of July 13 are not primarily attributable to the quantity of Secret Service personnel. And even if the Service increases its protective personnel staffing levels,[74] it should do so thoughtfully, including through better allocation and rationalization of existing personnel and consideration of the use of adjacent personnel within the Department of Homeland Security.[75] Finally, fundamentally, the Service (and Congress and the Executive Branch) must evaluate any budgetary and personnel requests from the perspective of increasing the Service's protective capacity and results.

IV. Recommendations of the Panel[76]

a) *Targeted Remediations*

The Panel recommends that the Service implement the following remediations to directly address the issues raised by the July 13 events at Butler. Unless otherwise specifically stated, it is the Panel's recommendation that each of these remediations be implemented as soon as possible but, in any event, no later than March 31, 2025.

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[73] K. Demirjian, *Congress Unveils Short-Term Spending Deal*, N.Y. TIMES, Sept. 22, 2024, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/22/us/congress-spending-deal-johnson.html; L. Broadwater, *After Trump Assassination Attempts, Congress Debates Secret Service Funding*, N.Y. TIMES, Sept. 19, 2024, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/19/us/politics/secret-service-funding-congress.html; K. Kelly, *With a No-Fail Mission, the Secret Service Strains to Make Do*, N.Y. TIMES, July 26, 2024, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/26/us/politics/with-long-hours-and-a-no-fail-mission-the-secret-service-tries-to-make-do.html.

[74] It is the Panel's impression that such efforts are already underway within the Service and will increase if the Service's budget is increased.

[75] *See* Report at 34.

[76] Certain of these remediations may overlap with remediations already implemented or being implemented by the Service at its own direction in response to the events of July 13. To the extent there is such overlap, the Panel endorses the Service's remedial measure(s), although it has not verified their adoption or execution.

(1) **Physically Integrated Communications and Incident Tracking Setup**: For all large[77] events, the Secret Service shall ensure that one or more representatives from the Secret Service, each state law enforcement agency operating at the event, and each local law enforcement agency operating at the event[78] are physically colocated with one another in the space which is serving as the central communications hub for the event, for the purpose of facilitating centralized communications. Any exception to this policy shall require the approval of a Deputy Assistant Director or person of higher rank within the Office of Protective Operations or of the Director of the Service.

In addition, for all large events, the Secret Service shall ensure that the space which is serving as the central communications hub for the event is making use of a unified electronic incident command system (a real-time incident command management system) for the centralized reporting and tracking of events and issues that arise at the site.[79]

(2) **Mandatory Situation Report at the Time of the Protectee's Arrival**: The Secret Service shall implement a required policy whereby, upon the protectee's arrival at a site, the lead site agent shall provide the head of the protectee's detail (or whichever other agent is serving in that role for purposes of the site visit and traveling with the protectee) with a concise, face-to-face, verbal situation report for the site, to include any outstanding suspicious persons issues and other relevant site security details. It is expected that, in anticipation of the protectee's arrival, to fulfill this policy, the lead site agent shall gather up-to-date site security situational information in coordination with the agent assigned to lead communications in the Security Room to ensure that the report provided is thorough, timely, and accurate.

(3) **Overhead Surveillance for Outdoor Events**: For all outdoor events involving candidates, nominees, and former presidents, the Secret Service shall operate some form of technology-based overhead surveillance, including but not limited to drone-based surveillance or overhead video-based surveillance, to provide the Service with improved site overwatch.

The technology-based overhead surveillance system shall be operated by Secret Service agents or other personnel who have received formal training in the operation of the system and have been assessed, and then periodically reassessed, for demonstrated competency in the maintenance and operation of the given system.

The feed(s) from the technology-based overhead surveillance shall be directed into the space which is serving as the central communications hub for the event.

Additional Commentary: This remediation begins with basic, general technologies to provide the Service with flexibility in its implementation, including overhead drone surveillance (tethered or untethered) and overhead video surveillance. The Service should assess and consider other, more sophisticated options as well, including implementations of those two basic technologies that integrate AI-assisted (including machine learning) threat detection. Which level of technology is deployed should ultimately be based on the perceived potential threat level at the site.

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[77] The Service should ultimately determine what the threshold is for a "large" event, but one potential definition would be an event with 100 or more anticipated attendees.

[78] As well as any federal agency operating at the event and not directly supervised by the Service.

[79] As discussed below at 25, it is a separate recommendation of the Panel that the Service shall have technology-based overhead surveillance for all outdoor events, with the surveillance feed(s) going into the space which is serving as the central communications hub.

The Panel has heard some personnel describe the historic perspective in the Service that operating both CUAS and UAS simultaneously is overly technologically challenging and therefore the Service favors CUAS. The Panel believes this is likely an outdated view—even currently, much less in the future, as these technologies evolve—and that it is technologically feasible to intermix both systems. However, in the event of an intransigent interoperability conflict between CUAS and UAS at a site, the Service will have the option to rely on video-based overhead surveillance instead of UAS.

Agents must receive sufficient CUAS / UAS training, and the requisite equipment needs to be tested regularly, including in the day(s) before an outdoor event.[80] CUAS and UAS technology is important and helpful, and Secret Service agents can—and can fairly be expected to—become experts in its use. To the extent sufficient hardware is unavailable, this is a suitable budget priority and the technology can be sourced from vetted American manufacturers. None of this needs to be invented anew by the Secret Service; rather, focused training and deployment will complete the reform.

More generally, the Panel emphasizes the criticality of the Service intelligently integrating available technologies, including off-the-shelf options, into its protective methodologies. The Panel believes strongly that the Service must increase its efforts in this regard to achieve its protective objectives.

(4) **Explicit Description of Line of Sight Risk Mitigations**: The Service shall require that all Service site security plans include a specific description of the method(s) of mitigation for each location at the site within 1,000 yards[81] of the intended primary position of the protectee presenting line of sight risk, regardless of whether the given risk is within a particular perimeter; the method(s) of mitigation shall be specified on a location-by-location basis within the site security plan.

(5) **Training on Threat Identification, Speak Up, Information Transparency, Communications, and Ownership (Training I)**: Training shall be provided to all agents across the Service regarding risk-based threat identification and the criticality of "Speak Up," information transparency, and appropriate communications protocols, to be completed by end of year 2025. The training can be conducted through local field offices and detail locations as appropriate, and a train the trainer approach can be employed if desired, but the baseline materials and content of the course shall be standardized for all agents. Scenario-based training can be used. The training shall also be integrated into the Service's standard training curriculum going forward. Reinforcement training on these same issues shall be provided to all agents across the Service by end of year 2027.

In addition, a separate submodule of the training shall be provided to all personnel at or above the GS-13 payscale, all ATSAICs, all ASAICs, all SAICs, and equivalent senior-level personnel, emphasizing the importance of ownership of site preparation and security responsibilities by such

[80] Again, non-agent personnel could also be used for operations and support provided they receive an equivalent level of training.

[81] This of course does not remove the need for the Service to consider line of sight risks beyond 1,000 yards as appropriate during the advance phase and on the day-of the event.

personnel.[82] The training shall be completed by end of year 2025. The training shall also be integrated into the Service's standard training curriculum going forward. And reinforcement training shall be provided to all applicable personnel across the Service by end of year 2027.

(6) **Revisions to Written Policies Concerning Advance and Site Responsibility and Training Related Thereto (Training II)**: Applicable Secret Service written policies concerning: (a) site advance planning, and (b) site security on the day-of events shall be revised to further stress overall responsibility for site advance planning and site security consistent with an Incident Command System / Unified Command approach, including in more complex scenarios such as those involving detail agents (not from the Presidential Protection Division) interacting with agents from a local field office. Regarding site advance planning, the revised policy should clearly identify the single individual with overall command authority for the site advance planning, identify individuals with subsidiary command authority regarding specific components of site advance planning as appropriate, and include a detailed chain of command and process for interactions between field office, detail, and other Service personnel concerning site advance planning. The revisions shall also describe how this chain of command should interact with other federal, state, and local elements on the day of the event.

Regarding site security on the day-of events, the revised policies should identify the single individual with overall command authority for an event, identify individuals with subsidiary command authority regarding specific components of site security as appropriate, and include a detailed chain of command and processes for interactions between field office, detail, and other Service personnel present at the event. The revisions shall also describe how this chain of command should interact with other federal, state, and local elements on the day of the event.

Upon completion of the policy revisions, a formal communication shall be broadcast to all Service personnel highlighting the revisions. Finally, by June 30, 2025 all Service personnel shall receive training regarding the revised policies.

(7) **Changes to Better Integrate State and Local Elements**: The following remediations are directed toward better integrating state and local elements in the development and execution of site security plans and toward achieving a more systematic approach for Service/State-Local interactions at the field office level.[83]

(a) The advance planning process shall be revised so that the lead site agent must receive an operational plan or plans from involved state and local enforcement agencies setting out the roles and posts for all state and local law enforcement elements involved in the event, regardless of their location within or outside the event inner perimeter. The lead site agent

[82] The sub-module shall also include training regarding the importance of appropriate intelligence sharing. Site security preparation and execution encompasses ensuring that relevant personnel are read into applicable threat intelligence. Leadership personnel within the Service, including on details and in field offices, must strive to ensure that this occurs.

[83] Field offices are the primary connection point between the Service and area state and local personnel, and they provide the Service with a useful organizational mechanism to encourage and deepen partnerships between the Service and those personnel. The remediations in this section are intended to make further use of that existing organizational mechanism. Further, these remediations are in addition to the remediation directly above which includes revisions to policy to better describe the chain of command for interactions between state and local personnel and Service personnel both for site advance planning and site security day-of.

also must hold a coordination meeting encompassing representatives from all state and local assets intended to be present[84] at the event to address any questions and resolve any open issues.[85] Finally, the lead site agent must integrate the state and local operational plans into the final site security plan, which shall then be reviewed and approved consistent with Service procedure.

Additional Commentary: It is not enough that state and local entities generally participate in the advance planning work in the run-up to an event. Rather, the Service must specifically understand each entity's operational plan in light of the Service's own plan so that a cohesive security vision is achieved and then vetted and approved. This is critically important given the vital role that state and local assets play in maintaining the integrity of event sites, particularly for large events like Butler.

(b) The field offices shall achieve a working understanding of the resources and capabilities of the state and local enforcement agencies they may rely on to support protective missions. This understanding should not be developed just in the days prior to a protective event but rather should be a point of continuous knowledge within the field office, periodically refreshed, to facilitate better planning. To achieve this end, it is appropriate to employ a checklist, survey, or similar, standardized method of information gathering, with information to be provided by state and local partners and then periodically refreshed.

(c) The Service shall develop a State and Local Field Handbook, to be distributed by the field offices to all state and local partners, which provides information[86] regarding protective operations and sets out Service expectations in terms of capabilities of state and local partners.[87] This Field Handbook shall be periodically refreshed.

(8) **Implementation of Experience-Based Policies for the Selection of Site and Advance Agents Within Details and Field Offices**: The Service shall require all former, candidate, and nominee details, along with all field offices, to adopt a policy requiring the use of experience-based selection methods for the selection of site and advance agents. The policy shall also require the agent(s) selected for any given event to be approved by the SAIC of the detail or field office or their functional equivalent.

(9) **Extraction Re-Training (Training III)**: The Service shall provide scenario-based extraction re-training to all protective operations personnel by end of year 2025, emphasizing the necessity of appropriate urgency in extractions and the criticality of ensuring that the protectee is not exposed during the extraction, consistent with long-standing protective principles. The Service shall also

[84] To include state or local elements intended to be brought into the event through mutual aid requests by one or more state or local jurisdictions.
[85] This meeting is separate from the initial kickoff meeting (police meeting) that the Service already holds with state and local elements and must occur at a point in the planning process when all involved elements, including the Service, can discuss in detail their intended operational plans.
[86] At an appropriate level of disclosure to facilitate Service/state-local coordination without jeopardizing operational security.
[87] Part of this process should involve the Service obtaining feedback from state and local partners regarding what information in the Field Handbook would be most valuable to ensure effective Service/state-local interoperation.

ensure that all protectees receive extraction and related protection training, to be conducted by their detail, and that this training is periodically refreshed for protectees.

Additional Commentary: The detail agents who responded to former President Trump within seconds of shots being fired to form the "body bunker" performed bravely and, regarding that initial response, in a manner consistent with Service training and policy. However, during the extraction of former President Trump from the stage to his armored vehicle, upper portions of the former president's body were visibly exposed for critical seconds during a time when no one knew definitively whether there were additional shooters in his vicinity.[88]

b) *Broader Remediations*

The Service must not merely implement remediations that are directly responsive to the events in Butler (set out in the prior sub-section), but also remediations which address the deeper, more systemic issues exposed by the security failures on July 13. The following remediations are designed to address that latter set of issues. Unless otherwise specifically stated, it is the Panel's recommendation that each of these remediations is implemented as soon as practicable but, in any event, no later than December 31, 2025.[89]

(1) **Re-Focus on the Service's Protective Mission**: The Secret Service must be the world's leading governmental protective organization. The events at Butler on July 13 demonstrate that, currently, it is not. To achieve this mission, the Service must ensure that its operations, training, budgeting, personnel, and all other critical organizational inputs are hyperfocused on its protective mission, and the Secret Service shall conduct a comprehensive assessment to identify any factors that currently detract from that focus. As part of this assessment, the Service shall specifically consider what current responsibilities the Service needs to shed or discharge so that it can provide its protective mission with all resources required to fulfill that responsibility. In this regard, the Panel expresses extreme skepticism that many of the Service's non-protective (investigative) missions meaningfully contribute to the Service's protective capability and is concerned that they may materially distract from it. To the extent that any investigative priorities remain within the Secret Service's portfolio of responsibilities, they must be directly supportive of and subordinate to the overriding protective mission.[90]

The Panel notes that the Secret Service has a budget of $3.1 billion and approximately 3,200 special agents. Whatever else the Secret Service may do, its core, essential, and unique mission is to protect its protectees, including the president, vice president, and nominees for president in an election. No other federal law enforcement agency can discharge this duty. And the duty is a zero-failure mission. All assets should be allocated to that mission before any other tasks—including law enforcement responsibility for financial frauds, for example, or perhaps law enforcement duties entirely—are undertaken. There is simply no excuse to need to "do more with less" concerning protection of national leaders; unless and until those responsibilities are fulfilled, no

[88] The detail had received word that the shooter was down prior to initiating the extraction.

[89] This deadline is intended to provide the Service with flexibility in implementing these deeper remediations, though it is the Panel's sincere desire that they are implemented with greater urgency than the maximum deadline would allow given their criticality to the Service's protective mission.

[90] The Panel notes that there are at least some aspects of the Service's investigative work that do directly support the Service's protective operations and this work should continue.

resources (funds or time) should be allocated to other missions that are not centrally related to the protective function.

As an additional means to increase the Service's prioritization of its protective mission above all else, the Service shall implement a reorganization so that certain of its Offices shall report directly to the Office of Protective Operations, which shall be elevated above them in the Service's organizational structure. In particular, the Panel recommends that the Office of Investigations, the Office of Strategic Intelligence and Information, the Office of Technical Development and Mission Support, and the Office of Training all report into the Office of Protective Operations, along with any additional major operational support units in the Service's organizational structure, with appropriate sub-level restructuring as needed to facilitate this reorganization.

The Panel does not make these recommendations or related observations lightly, but rather offers them in view of the crucial nature of the Secret Service's protective mission for the ongoing continuity of American government and democratic functioning and the extent to which the events of July 13 at Butler have revealed critical deficits in the Service's ability to operate that mission. In that context, in the Panel's opinion, it is simply unacceptable for the Service to have anything less than a paramount focus on its protective mission, particularly while that protective mission function is presently suboptimal.

In addition to ensuring focus on the protective mission, the Panel believes this re-focus will assist the Service in concentrating resources to further support protective operations and, in the longer term, will beneficially drive cultural change to emphasize the cardinal role of protective operations and better empower agents to conduct their "no fail" mission.

(2) **Fresh Leadership Perspectives**: The first steps of leadership change at the Service have already begun with the former Director having stepped down in July 2024 and the Service currently being led by an acting rather than permanent Director. The Panel agrees that a failure of the magnitude that occurred at Butler on July 13 necessitates such change at the Service as soon as practicable, including at the top of the Service and various areas throughout. Many of the issues that the Panel has identified throughout this report, particularly regarding the Panel's "deeper concerns," are ultimately attributable, directly or indirectly, to the Service's culture. A refreshment of leadership, with new perspectives, will contribute to the Service's resolution of those issues.

Moreover, the Panel strongly believes it is important that: (a) the new leadership of the Service come from outside the Service rather than internal promotion, and (b) the newly selected Director be allowed to bring in the leadership team he or she thinks most fit. Of course, that leadership must have relevant prior experience regarding protection and security. But, although experience within the Service is laudable and important, and some members of a future leadership team will likely be Secret Service veterans, the events of Butler suggest that there is an urgent need for fresh thinking informed by external experience and perspective; the new, external leadership will still undoubtedly draw on subordinates with deep experience within the Service to aid them in their acclimation, but ultimately, the non-Service perspective will benefit the protective mission during this critical juncture. The Panel reiterates its belief that a leadership change will assist the Service in addressing many of the issues identified in this Report, including the present sense of

complacency within the Service—observed by this Panel and others[91]—as well as the need for Service leaders to exhibit extreme ownership to ensure success in carrying out their "no fail" mission.

(3) **Leadership Training, Training with State and Local Partners, and Prioritization of Training for the Success of the Protective Mission (Training IV)**: The training recommendations in the prior section[92] respond to certain of the specific failures and breakdowns at Butler, but the Panel also perceives the opportunity for training to address certain of the deeper issues it has identified.

> (a) The Service shall institute a Leadership Training Institute, modeled after other senior government level leadership training programs, to better develop the necessary leadership skills in its senior personnel corps, including senior leaders of field offices and details. Leadership training shall be available to—and in appropriate instances, required of—personnel from an early-stage of their career where it can make the most impact in terms of fostering leadership skills, rather than delaying such training until personnel are already in positions of leadership, at which point the personnel will be deprived of the full benefit of such training (though ongoing leadership training for senior-level personnel is also important and should be implemented). The Panel believes this will be an important step in rectifying the observed lack of ownership by senior level personnel regarding Butler.[93]
>
> (b) The Service shall institute a nationwide program pairing Secret Service field office personnel with their state and local law enforcement partners in a manner designed to provide training to state and local partners on principles in protective operations as well as how state and local assets will interoperate with the Secret Service for protective events. This training should include a component of practiced interoperation between Service and state and local personnel, and the training should reoccur at least every two years with advanced course options also available for state and local participants who have already completed the foundational course. This effort admittedly will take time, which, again, may require shedding certain peripheral responsibilities like financial fraud and counterfeiting investigations, and perhaps all criminal investigative work that is not directly tethered to the protective mission.[94]

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[91] *See* E. Sullivan & K. Kelly, *Communication Failures Plagued Deadly Trump Rally, Secret Service Finds,* Sept. 20,2024, N.Y. TIMES, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/20/us/politics/trump-assassination-attempt-secret-service.html (describing remarks by Acting Director Rowe regarding complacency by members of the Secret Service Butler advance team leading to a breach of security protocols).

[92] Training I, Training II, and Training III.

[93] The Panel understands that the Service already engages in certain limited leadership training. This remediation is intended to subsume any such existing training to ensure that the leadership training provided going forward is comprehensive, systematic, and robust and to provide sufficient organizational initiative to sustain and institutionalize such training for the long-term.

[94] The Panel understands that the Service already engages in certain limited interoperability training with state and local law enforcement partners. This remediation is intended to subsume any such existing training to ensure that the interoperability training provided going forward is comprehensive, systematic, and robust and to provide sufficient organizational initiative to sustain and institutionalize such training for the long-term.

(c) The Secret Service must realign its expenditure of time, resources, and responsibilities so that training on the core protective mission is a top-tier priority. The Service shall ensure that all agents receive regular, required training throughout their careers. Scheduling must account for this training commitment so that agents are not routinely taken out of scheduled training to, for example, staff trips or events. If the objection to such a realignment is that "there isn't enough time for training on the protective mission," then the responsibilities and activities that prevent such training—including law enforcement efforts on matters such as financial fraud or counterfeiting—should be reallocated to other federal law enforcement agencies.[95]

Additional Commentary: Training is certainly one area where additional resources are needed. As described above, the Panel received briefings reflecting that Service agents spend a modest, or perhaps even minimal, amount of time training, particularly during election years, but also more generally. The Panel also understands that only approximately two percent of the Service's current non-pay budget is allocated to training, which is woefully inadequate. Finally, the Panel understands that the Service's training facilities are generally in need of significant physical upgrades. The essential point is that it is unfair—to protectees, the Secret Service itself, and to the American public—for the Service to have inadequate time or focus to train to elite levels on all aspects of the core protective mission.

(4) **Longer-term Communications Solutions**: The communications remediations in the prior sub-section address the most immediate, direct communications issues which affected personnel at Butler on July 13. But the Service must also evaluate longer term, more sweeping remediations to communications interoperability, including using revised communications technologies to facilitate interoperability with the Service's state and local partners in complex protection settings.[96]

Additional Commentary: The topic of communications interoperability has been a subject of discussion within the law enforcement community for decades, and its criticality has been repeatedly highlighted for many years, including within the Department of Homeland Security. This should not be an impossible task—law enforcement has been discussing these issues for decades, and similar coordination is required at professional and collegiate sports events, the Olympics, and so forth. Highly reputable and vetted American companies have already developed this sort of technology; this reform should not require inventing new paradigms or equipment that do not presently exist. Again, failure on this front is not an option.

While not a formal recommendation of the Panel, the Service may be benefited by the formation of a working group to fill in the technical particulars of this longer-term approach to interoperability. If this is pursued, the working group should be composed of personnel from both

[95] The Service shall also consider focusing on having their agents acquire special skillsets through advanced training—for example, as a communications specialist, or a drone/counter-drone operator, or a site security design specialist. The Panel does not think it appropriate to specifically define the exact specialties that could be pursued, and needed specialist positions will change over time—for example, there would have been no need for drone expertise even fifteen or twenty years ago.

[96] This recommendation in concert with the Panel's recommendations (1) and (3) in the prior sub-section, Report at 25, will assist the Service in ensuring that sites are overseen by a comprehensive Incident Command capability with integrated communications, incident tracking, and visual technology surveillance.

within the Service and outside it, with expertise in communications technology, protective operations, law enforcement, and related regulatory and policy matters. The first step of any such group would be to draw on the large body of existing work and analysis that has been generated on this topic, including by the Department of Homeland Security. The availability of this pre-existing body of work suggests that an appropriate timeline for the group to deliver a report and recommendations to the Service and/or Secretary is within three to six months of its formation.[97]

(5) **Development of a Continuous Improvement and Auditing Center**: The Secret Service shall develop, fund, and staff a continuous improvement and auditing center, designed to both engage in continuous improvement and auditing activities directed toward the field offices and details and assist the field offices and details in developing their own slates of continuous improvement and auditing activities, including through written policy requiring the implementation of such activities.[98] Examples of the types of conduct to be considered include: (a) formalized after-action assessments following planned events; (b) randomized periodic auditing of historical site security plans for retroactive assessment and development of lessons learned, or equivalent tabletop or full-scale exercises; (c) regularized day-of event auditing by dedicated personnel solely tasked with ensuring that standards and specifications are being met; (d) periodic "red teaming" exercises by external personnel; (e) quality assurance processes to confirm integration and retention of lessons learned over time; and (f) external benchmarking or pacing against organizations and institutions with demonstrated capability for protective excellence.[99]

(6) **Evaluation of Methodology for Protectee Resourcing**: The Service shall evaluate its methodology for protectee resourcing, including regarding detail staffing and allocation of protective resources to details and for protectee events, with a focus on assessing whether the current method of protectee resourcing is overly formulaic (for example, placing undue weight on whether a protectee is a "former" versus "candidate" versus "nominee") as compared with a more flexible method which places greater emphasis on the threat environment facing the protectee over the protectee's title.

Additional Commentary: Certain individuals attract more attention and emotion—from the public, from the media, on social media and the internet, and so forth. Allocation of resources must be risk-based, with dynamic assessments, in practice. There are, to be sure, certain responsibilities attendant to the president (for example, commander in chief duties) and vice president that are unique. However, the threat to a presidential candidate, and the attendant loss of public confidence in the federal government if something preventable happened to a candidate, are profound. There were various enhanced measures put in place to protect former President Trump and others in the wake of the Butler shooting, but those measures fairly should have been expected and deployed before the tragic events that occurred there.

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[97] Either through this group or on its own initiative, the Service should coordinate with the White House Communications Agency to draw on its experience and expertise regarding communications interoperability.

[98] The Panel acknowledges that the remediations described in this sub-section may require meaningfully enhanced budgetary and personnel resources, but it re-emphasizes the importance of these remediations, particularly to effect longer-term, sustained improvements at the Service.

[99] The Panel also recommends that the Service enact a 360-degree review process for its leadership, including SAICs of field offices and details and leadership-level personnel within the headquarters.

To reiterate, the Panel appreciates that determining the appropriate level of protectee resourcing involves a complicated balancing act and must necessarily include considerations of the role of the protectee—a sitting president, who is responsible, for example for carrying the nation's nuclear codes, is different from a candidate or a former office holder. Nonetheless, the Panel's perception is that the Service's resourcing model may have struggled with the unique, hybrid nature of former President Trump as both a former president but also, from almost immediately upon his exit from office, a prospective candidate for the presidency—a situation not encountered in the country since at least 1940 with Herbert Hoover, who was not even a nominee that election. This struggle appears to have affected, for example, the resourcing and staffing of the former president's detail,[100] with back-and-forth between the detail and Secret Service headquarters regarding appropriate personnel levels and whether former President Trump's status as a "former" in the Service's resourcing model adequately captured the unique security threats he might engender as not just a former president but a former president with significant and unique associated risk who also appeared to be conducting himself in the manner of a prospective candidate. The Panel also again emphasizes that achieving the proper level of resourcing for formers, candidates, and nominees is a vital component of the Service's protective mission, as the loss of a protectee would have profound ramifications on the democratic process.

(7) **Budget & Personnel Considerations**: The Panel reiterates and emphasizes its view that, while additional resources to the Service would be helpful, if the remediation and reform dialogue around the failures of July 13 devolves into a discussion about how much additional money the Service should receive, critical lessons from July 13 will have been lost. The failures of July 13, as embodied in the specific breakdowns and deeper concerns canvassed above, are not primarily tied to budgetary deficiencies at the Service. Put otherwise, even an unlimited budget would not, by itself, remediate many of the failures of July 13. This is not to suggest that additional budgetary funding could not be beneficial to the Service—it could, particularly if it is targeted to address the deficiencies identified in this Panel's report and is used judiciously and thoughtfully.

Additional funds would also mitigate a "do more with less" mentality and the attendant effects it can have on agents (including burnout). Secret Service agents work incredibly hard and, during election years in particular, are sent across the nation and abroad on a moment's notice to protect the country's former, current, and potential future leaders and their families. Additional agent resources, coupled with a paramount focus on the protective mission, will advance the critically important goal of ensuring that all agents are continually trained and retrained and that they will be appropriately rested and ready when called upon to perform their protective mission. That said, an influx of funds, without more, will not address the problems July 13 revealed.

The Panel also recommends that any effort to increase protective personnel staffing levels within the Service be accompanied by two initiatives: (a) an evaluation of the allocation of existing protective personnel to ensure that staffing is being rationally allocated—for example, are there opportunities to re-allocate 1811s[101] to task types for which they are specifically needed and off task types that can be conducted by non-1811s, and (b) an assessment to identify potential opportunities to increase the use of Department of Homeland Security resources specifically for protective operations, including but not limited to Homeland Security Investigations and TSA

[100] Both in its inception and its ability to increase resources and personnel over time.
[101] OPM Criminal Investigation Classification Series 1811.

agents, in ways that would increase the Service's protective capacity without compromising the quality of those protective operations.[102]

c) *Other*

As a final recommendation, the Panel requests that an evaluation of the status of its recommendations be commenced by an independent party or parties engaged by the Department of Homeland Security by or before October 1, 2025, with a fulsome report to the Panel by or before December 31, 2025 and then subsequent reporting to the Department of Homeland Security.

V. **Conclusion**

The Panel thanks the many individuals from the Secret Service, federal, state, and local law enforcement, and relevant third parties who gave their time, energy, and effort to facilitate the Panel's work. The Panel also recognizes the selflessness, honor, and bravery of the women and men of the Secret Service, who are literally prepared to "take a bullet" to discharge their duties. However, bravery and selflessness in the wake of a near-miss shooting of a former President and now nominee is, respectfully, not enough. The solemn and unique protective mission of the Secret Service requires zero-failure performance, so that protectees, civilians, and law enforcement personnel are not in a position to "take a bullet" in the first place.

The assassination attempt on former President Trump on July 13 at Butler was a tragic and historical event. It is the Panel's sincere hope that its work, as embodied in the Report's findings and recommendations, will empower the Secret Service to ensure that such an event never again occurs.

[102] The Panel understands that the Service currently does meaningfully make use of such personnel and that these personnel are also responsible for DHS functions. The assessment should take these factors into consideration and also include a consideration of whether any additional budgetary support is required to facilitate this opportunity.

APPENDIX A

INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL – JULY 13, 2024 BUTLER RALLY CHRONOLOGY

This chronology is intended to assist the reader by providing additional detail concerning the sequence of events in Butler, Pennsylvania prior to and on the day of July 13, but it is not a formal or official record and it does not supplant any chronological work of any official local, state, or federal investigation. This chronology primarily focuses on the movements and activities of Secret Service and related partner law enforcement agency personnel, consistent with the Panel's remit. All times provided in this chronology are estimated and approximate only. While some times are provided based on independent documentary evidence, many are based on witness recollection, which can be imperfect.

– Lead-Up –

June 21: An Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAIC) in the Donald Trump Detail ("DTD") provides unofficial notice to an agent in the Pittsburgh Field Office (Pittsburgh FO) that the Trump Campaign is intending to hold a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania on or around July 13—the agent in the Pittsburgh FO would eventually serve as the Secret Service Lead Advance ("Lead Advance Agent") for the site planning process.

July 3: Butler rally is publicly announced by the Trump Campaign. The Special Agent in Charge (SAIC) of the Pittsburgh FO, along with an Assistant to the Special Agent in Charge (ATSAIC) from that office, begin assigning agents to specific tasks for the rally, including Lead Advance Agent and Protective Intelligence Advance Agent. DTD leadership informs DTD Site Agent of assignment to rally.

July 4: Specific site of the rally at Butler Farm Show is announced to Secret Service agents involved in the planning process.

July 5: Pittsburgh FO SAIC ("Pittsburgh SAIC") calls Butler County Emergency Services Unit ("ESU") Commander ("Butler ESU Commander") to request assistance for the Butler rally. Pittsburgh SAIC also calls Pennsylvania State Police ("PSP") contact to request assistance for the Butler rally. Secret Service sends email to state and local partners announcing the July 13 rally and inviting them to a July 8 kickoff meeting ("Police Meeting").

July 6: Crooks registers to attend Butler rally. Lead Advance Agent informs Secret Service Site Counterpart Agent (Pittsburgh FO) ("Site Counterpart Agent") of her assignment to the site team.

July 7: Lead Advance Agent distributes various paperwork to the site team. DTD Site Agent arrives in Pennsylvania.

– Monday, July 8 –

Secret Service begins advance for rally at the Butler Farm Show grounds.

Secret Service hosts Police Meeting with state and local law enforcement at the Allegheny County Emergency Services building. Secret Service provides a briefing on upcoming visits in western

Pennsylvania by First Lady Jill Biden and former President Trump. Various Secret Service agents from site team attend this meeting.

– Tuesday, July 9 –

Lead Advance Agent calls Butler ESU Commander to request two local sniper teams for the rally. Butler ESU Commander coordinates with other local law enforcement and sends a text message to Lead Advance Agent confirming that two local sniper teams would be available.

Initial Secret Service visit to Butler rally site with state and local representatives present; preliminary determination of inner perimeter line for rally site.

– Wednesday, July 10 –

Pittsburgh SAIC, Lead Advance Agent, DTD Site Agent, and Site Counterpart Agent participate in a "manpower walk-through" of Butler Farm Show. Secret Service Technical Security Division ("TSD") Advance Agent conducts one of several site assessments throughout the week. Secret Service Countersniper Team ("Hercules") Advance Officer-Technician ("Hercules Advance Officer-Technician") arrives at site, conducts site assessment, and coordinates with DTD Site Agent.

Lead Advance Agent and Site Counterpart Agent exchange several emails regarding "Manpower justifications."[1]

– Thursday, July 11 –

10:00 AM: Butler ESU Commander and other state and local officers participate in a walk-through at the Butler Farm Show with Secret Service, including Lead Advance Agent, DTD Site Agent, and Hercules Advance Officer-Technician.

PM: A DTD ASAIC from DTD Operations, assigned as a "Second Supervisor" for the rally site preparation ("DTD Second Supervisor"), arrives in Pittsburgh. He meets with a Secret Service Inspection Division Agent ("Inspection Division Agent") who is shadowing him.

– Friday, July 12 –

AM: DTD Second Supervisor receives email from Lead Advance Agent stating that she is sick and had been in the emergency room the night before.

12:00 PM: DTD Site Agent leads site walk-through with Site Counterpart Agent, DTD Second Supervisor, and Inspection Division Agent. Lead Advance Agent arrives late due to illness the night before.

PM: Virtual Secret Service briefing on planning for next day's rally conducted with various participants including SAIC of DTD, DTD Second Supervisor, Inspection Division Agent, DTD Site Agent, Lead Advance Agent, and Site Counterpart Agent.

[1] From data associated with Site Counterpart Agent.

– Saturday, July 13 –

9:00 AM: Butler County ESU provides a briefing to local law enforcement personnel, including providing the details of the day and assignments. Secret Service not present.

10:00 AM: Secret Service agents and Homeland Security Investigations ("HSI") personnel, including post-standers, attend a 45-minute briefing by the Secret Service.

10:30 AM: Lead Advance Agent arrives at Pittsburgh airport.

Last of three local countersnipers from Beaver and Butler Counties—all working with the Butler ESU team—enters AGR building; the local countersnipers are positioned behind second floor windows within the building, overwatching the risers, stage, and field where the rally crowd and eventually former President Trump will gather.

11:00 AM: The Counter Unmanned Aerial System (CUAS) detection tool is temporarily operational and being run on-site by a Secret Service agent from the Trump Detail ("DTD CUAS Agent").

Secret Service activates its "Security Room" in a location separate from the local law enforcement mobile command post trailer ("Local Mobile Command Post")—both are intended to manage respective security communications for the event. A Secret Service SAIC from a field office ("Security Room SAIC"), who arrived the evening of July 12, has been assigned to lead the Security Room; the room is also manned by the DTD CUAS Agent, a Sergeant from the Pennsylvania State Police ("PSP Security Room Representative"), and a local medical / emergency services operator, with other personnel coming in and out throughout the day. The Security Room SAIC does not walk the rally site before going to the Security Room.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel are conducting bomb sweeps throughout this time to ensure the inner perimeter is sterile.

11:30 AM: The CUAS detection tool becomes inoperable and DTD CUAS Agent begins to troubleshoot.

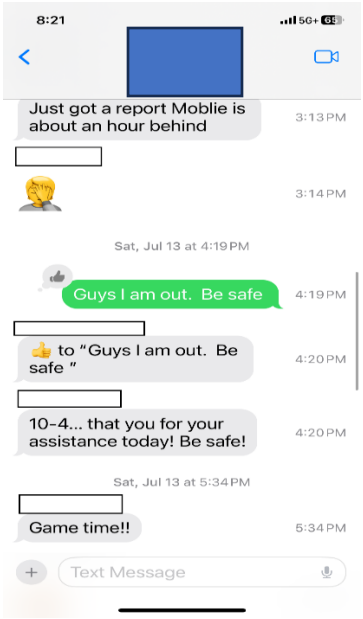
12:30 PM: Magnetometer "soft opening."

1:00 PM: Magnetometer official opening for rally crowd.

3:49 PM: Crooks arrives in the vicinity of the Butler Farm Show grounds.

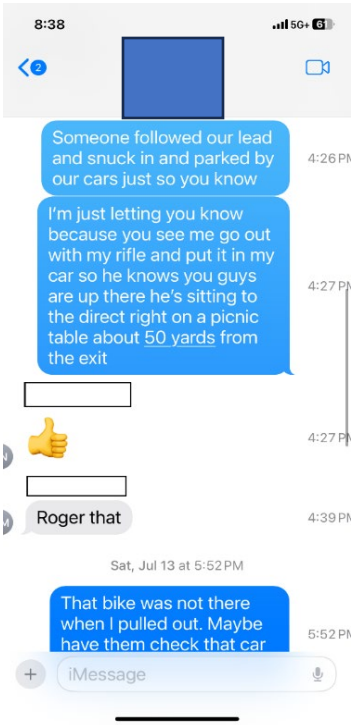
3:51 PM: Crooks launches a drone and flies it for approximately eleven minutes; the drone approaches within 200 yards of the Butler Farm Show grounds.

4:19 PM: One of three local countersnipers in the AGR building ("Local CS 3") from Beaver County ESU goes off shift and exits the AGR building.



4:25 PM: Former President Trump lands in Pittsburgh.

4:26 PM: Local CS 3 texts the other two countersnipers in the AGR building to inform them that he had observed an individual, now believed to have potentially been Crooks, in the parking lot. The 4:26 p.m. text describes the individual as having "snuck" into the AGR parking lot and indicates that the individual had seen Local CS 3 carrying his weapon to his vehicle.



At approximately this same time, video footage depicts Crooks in a vendor area of the rally, which is near the magnetometers but outside the perimeter.[2]

4:30 PM: At approximately this time, a Butler ESU Quick Reaction Force officer ("Butler QRF Officer") located near the stage and facing toward the AGR building separately notices Crooks sitting on a short concrete wall outside the AGR building.

Around this same time, the two two-man Secret Service countersniper (Hercules) teams take their positions on the two barn roofs behind the rally stage in anticipation of former president Trump's arrival.

4:33 PM: DTD CUAS Agent notifies DTD Second Supervisor and DTD Site Agent that the CUAS detection tool is operational after hours of troubleshooting and communication with the vendor's tech support.

4:50 PM: At approximately this time, one of two local countersnipers remaining in the AGR building ("Local CS 1") observes Crooks around the AGR building looking up at their sniper position.

5:10 PM - 5:15 PM: The second of the two local countersnipers remaining in the AGR building ("Local CS 2") observes Crooks again in the vicinity of the AGR building. Local CS 2 photographs Crooks. Local CS 1 and Local CS 2 discuss. Local CS 1 texts Butler QRF Officer regarding Crooks. Crooks soon moves out of visual sight of the two local CS team members.

5:25 PM: Local CS 2 observes an unattended backpack and bicycle in the vicinity of the AGR building and takes a photo.

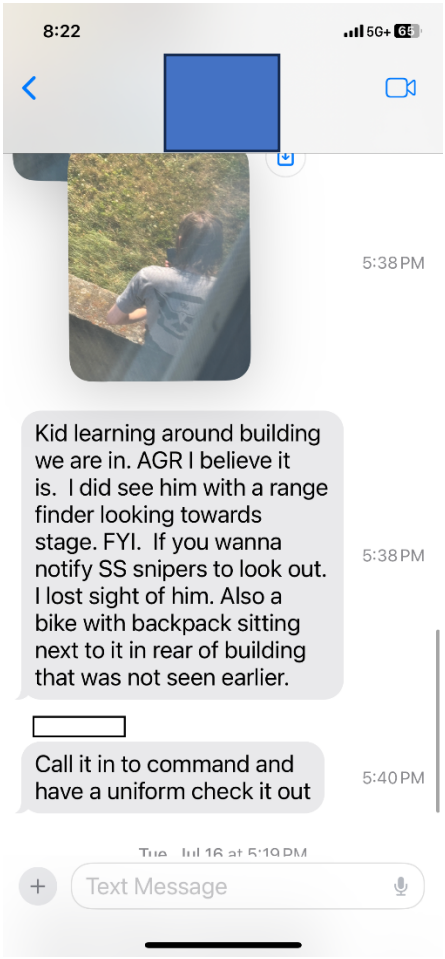


5:25 PM - 5:30 PM: Local CS 2 observes Crooks near the AGR building ranging the stage with a range finder.

[2] CNN, *Newly surfaced video shows earliest known footage of would-be Trump assassin at rally*, Aug. 20, 2024, https://www.cnn.com/2024/08/20/politics/new-video-trump-shooter-at-rally/index.html.

5:33 PM: Trump motorcade arrives at Butler Farm Show; Former President Trump proceeds to the hold tent.

5:38 PM: Local CS 2 texts photos of Crooks, along with a synopsis of his observations of Crooks over the prior several minutes. The text describes Crooks lurking around the AGR building and using a range finder to look toward the stage. It is sent to a text group that includes the local countersnipers working that day ("local countersniper group text"). The text group includes the Butler County Sniper Team Leader (not present in the AGR building) (the "Local CS Team Leader"), who tells Local CS 2 to alert the Local Mobile Command Post.



5:40 PM: Butler QRF Officer responds by phone to Local CS 1 (who had texted him at approximately 5:15 p.m. regarding Crooks). Butler QFR Officer confirms to Local CS 1 that he has previously seen Crooks and that he appeared to be acting oddly, and indicates that he saw Crooks moving in the direction of a Sheetz gas station (north).

5:42:58 PM: Local CS 2 sends out radio message over a local channel (Ops-4): "Just an FYI we had a younger white male long hair lurking around the AGR building; he was viewed with a range finder sighting the stage." The message is acknowledged by the Butler ESU Commander in the Local Mobile Command Post who also states that they will send someone to check it out.

5:44 PM: Butler ESU Commander calls PSP Security Room Representative to describe Crooks, including his proximity to the AGR building and his use of a range finder while looking at the stage, and to report on the unattended backpack and bicycle. The PSP Security Room Representative provides this information verbally to the Security Room SAIC. The Security Room SAIC inquires whether Crooks is within the inner or outer security perimeter and is told he is in the outer perimeter. The Butler ESU Commander also gives information about Crooks to an officer from the Butler Sheriff's Office in the Local Mobile Command Post.

5:45 PM: The Local CS Team Leader passes the information he received from Local CS 2, including photos, through two texts to a member of the four-man Secret Service Hercules team ("Hercules 1"[3]) now on the barn roof. A few minutes later (5:48 p.m.), the Local CS Team Leader radios over the local radio channel to confirm that this has been done.

The Butler ESU Commander radios the Local CS team (Local CS 1 / Local CS 2) to tell them that "PSP and Sheriffs should be en route . . . ."

5:46 PM: The PSP Security Room Representative contacts a pair of PSP personnel in the vicinity of the AGR building, PSP Trooper 1 and PSP Trooper 2, by phone. The PSP Security Room Representative provides PSP Trooper 2 with information regarding Crooks and asks PSP Trooper 2 to look for Crooks.

5:47 PM: Butler ESU Commander receives a text and photos describing Crooks that were originally sent by Local CS 2 in the local countersniper group text. He passes this information to the PSP Security Room Representative by text in the next few minutes.

Butler QRF Officer receives photos of Crooks from Local Countersniper Team Lead, who had received them from Local CS 2 via the same local countersniper group text.

5:48 PM: PSP Trooper 3 (paired with the Secret Service Protective Intelligence Agent) arrives in the vicinity of PSP Trooper 1. PSP Trooper 1 informs PSP Trooper 3 about Crooks. PSP Trooper 3 and the Secret Service Protective Intelligence Agent ("Protective Intelligence Agent") set out to locate Crooks.

5:49 PM: Butler ESU Commander texts PSP Security Room Representative with an additional photo of Crooks, which he received from Local CS 2 (photo of Crooks sitting by AGR building looking at cellphone). In the next minute, PSP Security Room Representative describes the photo to the Security Room SAIC and sends the photo to DTD CUAS Agent (in the Security Room) and PSP Trooper 2. Butler ESU Commander texts PSP Security Room Representative an additional photo the following minute.

5:50 PM: Hercules 1 receives a call from Protective Intelligence Agent inquiring if he has seen Crooks and informing him of their attempt to locate Crooks.

5:52 PM: DTD CUAS Agent calls Secret Service Countersniper Response Agent ("Countersniper Response Agent") describing Crooks as a suspicious person with a range finder and asking the

[3] Hercules 1 also functioned as the Hercules Advance Officer-Technician during the site advance phase.

Countersniper Response Agent to locate him. Countersniper Response Agent shares information with his PSP counterpart, PSP Trooper 4.

Hercules 1 sends e-mail to the other three Hercules team members nearby him, conveying the text description and photos regarding Crooks (received at 5:45 p.m.) and noting the Protective Intelligence Agent or the Security Room SAIC as appropriate points of contact if they see Crooks.

[redacted]
Sent: Saturday, July 13, 2024 17:52
[redacted]
Subject: Local CS BOLO

From local police near the AGR Glass Building. If spotted please notify PI at [redacted] or go direct with security room.

"Kid learning around building we are in. AGR I believe it is. I did see him with a range finder looking towards stage. FYI. If you wanna notify SS snipers to look out. I lost sight of him. Also a bike with backpack sitting next to it in rear of building that was not seen earlier."



5:53 PM: Butler QRF Officer calls Local CS 1, asking if he has eyes on Crooks. Local CS 1 answers in the negative.

Countersniper Response Agent calls DTD CUAS Agent back, asking for more information to assist with locating Crooks.

5:54 PM: PSP Security Room Representative calls Butler ESU Commander in a call lasting approximately one minute to pass on a request from Countersniper Response Agent to connect him with the local countersniper team. Butler ESU Commander provides PSP Security Room Representative with Local CS Team Lead's (not present in AGR building) phone number.

Butler ESU Commander then sends out a general message to Butler Township police units, who are in nearby roadway assignments for the rally, providing Crooks' physical description, describing his location by the AGR building, and indicating he had been using a range finder.

The DTD CUAS Agent texts photo of Crooks (received at 5:49 p.m.) to Countersniper Response Agent. The Countersniper Response Agent texts the photo to his PSP Counterpart, PSP Trooper 4.

5:55 PM: PSP Trooper 1 instructs two PSP plainclothes vice officers who are located in the vicinity of the Sheetz gas station to proceed to the AGR building to attempt to locate Crooks.

5:57 PM: Countersniper Response Agent calls Local CS Team Lead to obtain additional details regarding Crooks.

5:59 PM: At approximately this time, the Countersniper Response Agent and Protective Intelligence Agent encounter one another as they are both independently searching for Crooks within the inner perimeter; they coordinate their areas of search and resume searching.

6:02 PM: Radio message from Local CS 2 sent over local radio channel (Ops-4): "Alright subject is in between the AGR buildings; he has a backpack now; he just went toward Sheetz."

6:03 PM: In response to 6:02 p.m. radio message, Butler ESU Commander calls PSP Security Room Representative by phone to relay this information. PSP Security Room Representative in turn informs PSP Trooper 1 to assist with his search.

Former President Trump takes the stage.

6:04 PM: Protective Intelligence Agent receives text from Countersniper Response Agent conveying Crooks' photo as a suspicious person with a range finder; Protective Intelligence Agent also hears at this time that Crooks is heading in the direction of the Sheetz gas station.

PSP Security Room Representative calls Butler ESU Commander regarding a separate matter (missing person); during the call, he is told by Butler ESU Commander that they do not presently know Crooks' location.

6:05 PM: At approximately this time, Butler Township police officers posted near rally site on motorcade route / traffic duty begin to move toward the AGR building to assist with locating Crooks.

6:06 PM: Crooks pulls himself onto the AGR building roof using an air conditioner enclosure in an interior courtyard of the building complex.[4]

6:07 PM: Protective Intelligence Agent sends two texts to Secret Service Protective Intelligence Advance Agent informing him about Crooks and providing a photo; the Protective Intelligence Advance Agent receives the texts and takes note of their contents.

6:08 PM: At approximately this time, PSP Trooper 1 calls PSP Security Room Representative to update him that they have still been unable to locate Crooks.

Report over local radio that "someone's on the roof." (6:08:20 p.m.) Seconds later, report over local radio indicates "I have someone on the roof with white shorts." Butler ESU Commander radios back that that is not a local law enforcement asset.

6:09 PM: Local radio message: "We got him," but followed by a message that they had lost sight of Crooks.

Butler ESU Commander calls PSP Security Room Representative to inform him that the suspicious individual with the range finder they had been attempting to locate was now on the roof of the

[4] As reported by the FBI.

AGR building, they cannot determine how he did this, and Butler law enforcement is present and attempting to encounter Crooks. The PSP Security Room Representative repeats the information he is receiving aloud in the Security Room to efficiently disseminate the information to his Security Room SAIC counterpart. The DTD CUAS Agent in the Security Room also hears this information.[5]

6:10 PM: Secret Service radio message to the effect that the "locals are working something to the 9 o'clock." A subsequent message corrects this, indicting the issue is at the "3 o'clock."

In response to "working something at the 3 o'clock" radio message, Security Room SAIC puts that information (the locals are working something at the 3 o'clock) out over the radio to all post standers.

The Hercules team members reorient their weapons toward the AGR building in response to hearing local law enforcement is working an issue at the 3 o'clock.

The SAIC of the Trump Detail, located near the stage, physically directs the DTD Site Agent, also nearby, to investigate what the issue at the 3 o'clock is. The DTD Site Agent calls her Site Counterpart Agent, who is in the Security Room. The SAIC of the Trump Detail also radios the Security Room for more information.

PSP Security Room Representative calls PSP Trooper 2 to provide an update that Crooks is now on the roof of the AGR building.

DTD CUAS Agent in the Security Room calls Countersniper Response Agent to tell him the suspicious person with the range finder is now on the roof of the AGR building; Countersniper Response Agent shares this information immediately with his counterpart, PSP Trooper 4.

Protective Intelligence Agent hears that someone is on the roof of the AGR building.

A Butler Township Police Officer ("Butler Township Officer 1") hoists his colleague, another Butler Township Police Officer ("Butler Township Officer 2"), up to the edge of the roof of the AGR building. Crooks sees Butler Township Officer 2 as he is lifting up and Crooks points his rifle toward him, causing Butler Township Officer 2 to drop down to the ground.

Local radio message: "State police and [Butler Township police] units have AGR surrounded they are looking for him."

6:11:03 PM: Local radio message (Ops-3) from Butler Township Officer 2: "He's armed; I saw him, he's laying down." (First local radio message indicating Crooks is armed.)

6:11:09 PM: Local radio message (Ops-3) from Butler Township Officer 2: "He's got a long gun."

6:11:25 PM: Local radio message (Ops-4) from Butler ESU Commander: "QRF from command, you need to deploy to the AGR building; [Butler Township police] has a male on the roof with a long gun."

[5] The Secret Service Site Counterpart Agent is also present in the Security Room at this time.

6:11:33 PM: Local radio message (Ops-3): "Shots fired; shots fired roof of AGR." (First local radio message indicating shots fired.) *Specific details regarding the activities on the rally stage once initial shots are fired are set forth in detail below.*

6:12:11 PM: Local radio message (Ops-4) from Local CS 2: "Shooter is down, 10 Sierra 3, shooter is down."

6:12:18 PM: Local radio message (Ops-4) from Butler ESU Commander: "Command copies, shooter down."

ON-STAGE ACTIVITY ONCE INITIAL SHOTS ARE FIRED

The following account is based on the video of the attempted assassination, which can be viewed online.[6]

- An initial series of shots is heard, and within a second or two, former President Trump puts his hand on his right ear and immediately goes to the ground behind the podium.

- Within approximately two or three seconds after the initial shots, members of the Secret Service Donald Trump Detail (DTD) rush on the stage to cover former President Trump. An additional series of shots is heard immediately after the first set of DTD agents rush the stage and cover former President Trump. Former President Trump remains behind the podium and covered by DTD agents for approximately the next 57 seconds.

    - Approximately 15-16 seconds after the initial shots, one additional shot is audible on the video. This shot is from a member of the Secret Service Hercules team, which kills Crooks.[7]

    - Approximately 14 seconds later (30 seconds after the initial shots), members of the Secret Service Counter Assault Team ("Hawkeye") are visible on the stage.

    - Approximately three seconds later (33 seconds after the initial shots), members of the DTD detail are heard saying "Hawkeye's here . . . Hawkeye's here." Over the next 20 seconds, members of the DTD are heard relaying information and shouting orders to each other, including "shooter's down" and "we're good" (approximately 45 seconds after the initial shots); "shooter's down" and "are we good to move" (approximately 47 seconds after the initial shots); and "we're clear" repeated multiple times (starting at approximately 52 seconds after the initial shots).

- Approximately one minute after the initial shots, former President Trump begins to rise with DTD members attempting to form a "body bunker" around him. Approximately 3 seconds later, former President Trump is on his feet; his head is visible from the camera angle directly facing the stage. Former President Trump can also be heard asking about his shoes.

    - For approximately the next 20 seconds, former President Trump is standing on the stage, with DTD agents attempting to form a body bunker around him and otherwise shield him. At times, former President Trump's head and upper body are visible from the camera angle directly facing the stage. At one point, former President Trump raises his fist and begins to yell "fight, fight!"

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[6] CNN, *Video captures shooting at Trump rally*, July 13, 2024, https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/13/politics/video/trump-secret-service-butler-pennsylvania-digvid.

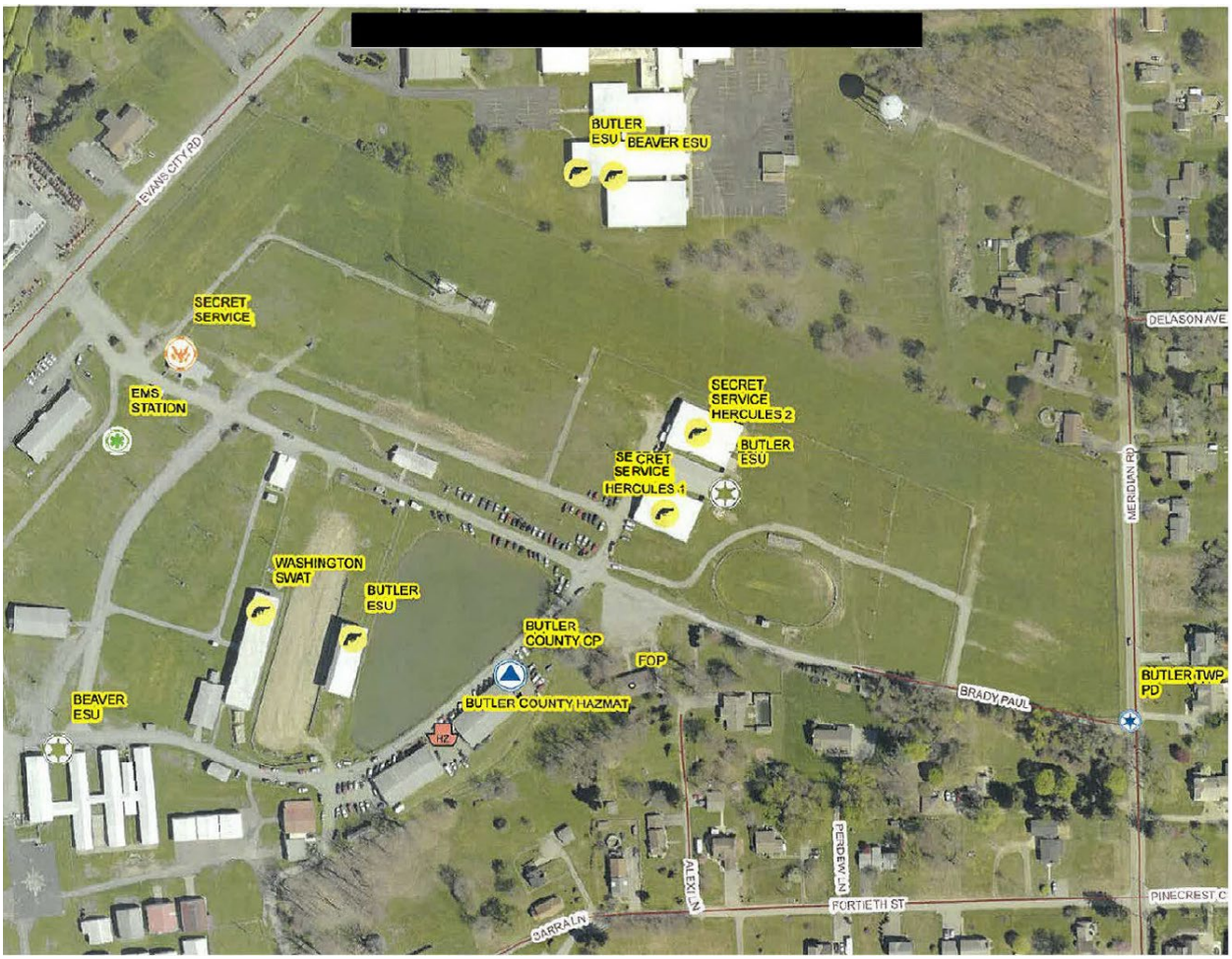
[7] A local law enforcement officer also fired a shot in the direction of Crooks from the grassy field area to the south of the AGR building.

- Approximately one minute and 24 seconds after the initial shots, DTD begins to walk former President Trump off the stage and to his armored SUV, forming a body bunker around him and attempting to use their arms to cover his head and upper body. The movement to the SUV takes approximately 34 seconds. At times, former President Trump's head and upper body are visible. When former President Trump arrives at the SUV and begins to enter using the running board step, he turns to face the crowd for approximately two seconds, again raising his fist in the air.

- Approximately two minutes and seven seconds after the initial shots, former President Trump is secured inside his SUV.

APPENDIX B

INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL – SITE MAP OF BUTLER FARM SHOW AND SURROUNDINGS[1]



[1] This site map is from the Butler County ESU briefing presentation for the July 13 rally. It is provided without alteration and cardinally oriented. The Secret Service's Security Room is indicated by the "Secret Service" label and symbol toward the western border of the map. The local mobile command post is indicated by the "Butler County CP" label. The AGR building is at the map's northern border with the labels "Butler ESU" and "Beaver ESU"—Crooks' shooting position was from the southernmost component of the building, right of center. The rally stage was set up directly to the northwest of the two barns with the "Hercules" labels, with risers and tents between the stage and the barns and a general crowd area extending outward to the northwest. This map is provided to assist readers with orienting to the site and is not intended to be a comprehensive representation of Secret Service or other federal, state, or local law enforcement assets present at the rally on July 13.