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**FBI DIRECTOR TO HONOR NEW ORLEANS AND BATON ROUGE TASK FORCES
WITH AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO
THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY**

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New Orleans – In a ceremony to be held tomorrow afternoon in Washington, D.C., Director James B. Comey will recognize members of the FBI Safe Streets and Violent Gang Task Forces in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, presenting them the 2014 Director’s Award for Distinguished Service to the Law Enforcement Community.

The task forces are being honored for their efforts in identifying violent gang and violent incident crime threats within the State of Louisiana, resulting in an increase of criminal enterprise cases ready to be presented for prosecution. Their work has resulted in murder convictions, overdose death indictments and multiple subject state conspiracy indictments in both New Orleans and Baton Rouge.

Recipients of the 2014 Director’s Award for Distinguished Service to the Law Enforcement Community include:

- Leon A. Cannizzaro Jr., District Attorney, Orleans Parish
- Hillar C. Moore III, District Attorney, East Baton Rouge Parish
- Graymond F. Martin, First Assistant District Attorney, Orleans Parish
- Prem Burns, First Assistant District Attorney, East Baton Rouge Parish
- John P. Selleck, FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge, New Orleans
- Charles J. DeLaughter, FBI Supervisory Special Agent, Baton Rouge
- R. D. Hardgrave Jr., FBI Supervisory Special Agent, New Orleans
- David R. Riker, FBI Supervisory Special Agent, New Orleans

“The FBI’s partnership with the District Attorney’s offices in New Orleans and Baton Rouge has been critical in increasing the violent crime and gang prosecutorial bandwidth in both cities,” said Michael J. Anderson, Special Agent in Charge, FBI New Orleans.

Both New Orleans and Baton Rouge have implemented the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS), an evidence based model grounded in Project Cease Fire theory. According to LSU

researchers, there is a link between a reduction in crime to the implementation of GVRS by the law enforcement community. GVRS requires the coordination of all law enforcement efforts in targeting the areas with the highest violent crime rates. Additionally, this approach calls for working with high crime neighborhoods to garner resident support and participation in the fight against violence.

“Close prosecutorial and investigative collaboration and integration, community involvement, and state of the art law enforcement methods can turn the most violent neighborhood into a place where people feel safe and secure,” said Anderson, adding, “The work of the Safe Streets and Violent Gang Task Forces in combating violent crime remains a top priority for the New Orleans Division.”

These task forces include the Jefferson Parish Sheriff’s Office, New Orleans Police Department, Kenner Police Department, Slidell Police Department, Louisiana State Police, St. Tammany Parish Sheriff’s Office, East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office, Baton Rouge Police Department, Border Patrol, and the Louisiana Department of Justice. The Drug Enforcement Administration and Homeland Security Investigation will be joining in the near future.

“I want to thank the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their recognition of our hard work,” said District Attorney Leon Cannizzaro. “From my first day in office, I’ve worked to end the isolation between different branches of law enforcement, forging interagency cooperation that had been heretofore non-existent. We are honored that Director Comey recognizes our pioneering use of the Louisiana racketeering statute, a law that sat unused for over thirty years, but now forms the backbone of my administration’s fight against gang violence. I look forward to working in harmony with our Federal partners in the years to come, in our continued effort to make New Orleans a better place.”

“The role of our federal partners assisting Baton Rouge in reducing violent crime and murders cannot be overstated,” District Attorney Hillar Moore stated. “From the very first formation of the multi-agency Violent Crime Unit through to the successful implementation of Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination initiative (BRAVE) group violence reduction strategies, our federal agencies have been at the forefront: investigating, collecting evidence, enforcing and prosecuting those who chose to harm the citizens of Baton Rouge. As District Attorney, I could not be more grateful for their whole hearted cooperation and assistance.”