One Dead in Chicago Workplace Violence Incident
Thursday, July 31, 2014
Prepared by MSA’s Research and Intelligence Analysis Team
Information Cut-off: 4:30pm

Overview
Today, the chief technology officer at the Chicago-based business ArrowStream opened fire on the company’s CEO before taking his own life. The incident occurred on the 17th floor of 231 South LaSalle Street in Chicago’s financial district. The gunman, 59-year-old Anthony DeFrances, had been demoted last Friday and requested a one-on-one meeting with the company’s CEO, 54-year-old Steven LaVoie. During the meeting, DeFrances allegedly took out a firearm, and the two men began to struggle for control of the weapon. DeFrances shot LaVoie in the stomach and head before turning the gun on himself. The entire building was then placed on lockdown, with employees told to remain on their respective floors. According to police, DeFrances was apparently angered over the fact that he was demoted and targeted LaVoie for personal reasons. LaVoie is listed in critical condition at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

Key Points
• DeFrances allegedly concealed the firearm in a backpack and was not screened prior to the meeting.
• Police stated there is a full security apparatus at the facility. However, since the gunman was still a long-time employee of the company, he was not considered to pose an extraordinary threat.
• Authorities described the incident as an attempted murder-suicide and workplace violence issue.

Implications
As a long-time employee and executive at ArrowStream, DeFrances was not screened by security prior to meeting LaVoie. The incident highlights a legitimate gap in security for the company’s key personnel. Companies should exercise an abundance of caution when dealing with fired or demoted employees, as the threat of violence exists from disgruntled individuals. Losing one’s job is considered a traumatic experience that could result in threats or acts of violence. Additionally, a clear line of communication between a company’s Human Resources department, current employees and fired employees should remain open and active.