

**Statement of
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Good morning Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. I am privileged to appear before you today to discuss the current status of the progress being made by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to coordinate efforts to more effectively achieve common goals in national security and domestic law enforcement

Information Sharing is ubiquitous throughout the Federal, State, tribal, territorial, local and private sector environment in which DHS seeks to interact. The goal is to effectively, efficiently, and synergistically pass and receive information in all of its forms for the benefit of the United States Government (USG), our State, tribal, territorial, local, and private sector partners, and other DHS entities. In order to achieve this goal we must design a “system of systems” with systemic transparency and interoperability in mind wherever possible. However, the most significant impediments to information sharing are not technological, they are legal, cultural, psychological, and sociological. Hence, the need exists to start with the “business case” and work toward a common, integrated, and rational vision for the Department.

In response to these challenges, DHS has established an Information Sharing and Collaboration Program which will achieve improvements in Information Sharing and Collaboration. The program has four specific imperatives:

- Improve information sharing and collaboration within each of the Directorates of the Department,
- Improve information sharing and collaboration between DHS elements,
- Improve information sharing and collaboration across the cabinet level departments and agencies, and
- Improve information sharing and collaboration with our State, tribal, territorial, local, and private sector partners responsible for securing the people and infrastructure of this country.

These improvements will aid in developing a unified vision and defining where we are, where we want to go, and the roadmap to get there. To achieve success, we must simultaneously conceive, design, resource, build, and field a DHS Information Sharing Enterprise System (ES) that will ensure the achievement of our goal and that will be expandable to meet future technical and operational requirements.

This program will assess current systems in use within DHS to determine how we can best leverage existing technologies to meet mission requirements, review existing efforts to build more compatible and collaborative connectivity with all of our partners and stakeholders, and assure that we achieve the maximum feasible synergism with other cabinet departments and agencies in the effort to assure that information is shared openly, effectively, and rapidly with all concerned. It will be critical in this effort to gain the willing participation of all players, but it is particularly noteworthy that DHS is charged by law and executive order to lead this effort for the Federal Government.

Additionally, this program involves working with the Department of Justice (DOJ), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Department of Defense (DOD) to assure that current systems achieve higher levels of compatibility and that future systems are fully

compatible and interoperable. For instance, as part of this effort, the DOJ and DHS information sharing staffs are working hard to bring HSIN (which is based on groove technology), LEO, and RISS together with the goal of making the systems more compatible as quickly as possible, making the systems fully compatible in the short term, and developing a common system for the future.

Given the imperative to provide guidance and assistance to State, tribal, territorial, and local officials, it is no longer sufficient to have vertical and horizontal linkage with law enforcement. The nation must achieve a fully collaborative environment through which law enforcement, first responders, and decision makers can fully interact, across traditional boundaries, seamlessly and effectively to deal with issues of terrorism and response. This is the major advantage of Homeland Security Interactive Network (HSIN) over the technologies formerly used by the USG. While one technology allowed information sharing vertically and sometimes horizontally within a certain discipline, the systems did not provide for robust collaboration between and among various entities which must interact to achieve success in fighting terrorism and crime, and respond to major incidents and disasters.

If we have learned nothing else from the events of the past, we have learned that law enforcement does not just catch criminals. Law enforcement, in many communities, carries the significant responsibility of a first response force, as collectors of vital information, and as the manpower to manage crisis events which are visited upon cities and towns across the nation. As such, we must stop sharing information in a hierarchical fashion and begin sharing in a fully collaborative manner where the police in any community can communicate directly with whom they need to communicate, at any time, and receive an effective response. This effort will require automated addressing of copies of information exchanged to go to those who have traditional roles in the hierarchy, but not require that the hierarchical structure see all information “before” it can move forward to the intended receiver. In so doing, we will achieve a significant increase in the speed and effectiveness of information sharing across the entire enterprise.

At the same time, we must increase the ability of law enforcement and emergency management to communicate with private sector security personnel to assure that information related to the protection of critical infrastructure is fully coordinated and rapidly provided to those who have the responsibility to respond. The HSIN does just that. While each community of interest operates each day within HSIN with sequestration or sensitive information available to only those invited into the community of interest, because HSIN operates on a common technology base, it allows those with a need to do so to establish a cross-connected and fully collaborative space. This permits all to see the information necessary to achieve the desired outcome during periods when a natural or man made threat appears with potential to adversely affect the community.

Within DHS, information sharing has greatly improved over the first year of operation. As the various separate elements have merged and found more common operating methodologies, so their personal and technological cohesiveness has improved. But we are not home yet. We must continue aggressive efforts to improve information sharing

and collaboration across the Department. This is one of the four imperatives of our Information Sharing and Collaboration Program described previously. It is clear that we have much work ahead in this enterprise. And we are moving ahead. This fiscal year we have achieved an interim Homeland Security Operations Center which provides a significantly enhanced capability to fuse information from intelligence and operations into a coherent common operating picture, a clear set of information to provide to customers, and a focal point for collaboration between all Federal law enforcement, intelligence, and emergency response organizations.

In addition, our liaison and outreach activities are providing a greater level of cooperation and collaboration with and between the many partners who play a vital role in securing the homeland. The current development of a secret level infrastructure, formerly known as HSDN, will become HSIN-Secret as it stands up and the HSIN suite of communities of interest are able to share classified information on a routine basis...using the same software tools available on HSIN at the SBU level. This is another significant achievement for the DHS in leading information sharing and collaboration efforts into the future.

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.