Meeting Minutes: Homeland Security Information Network Advisory Committee Meeting
April 10 – 11, 2014

April 2014
Summary of the Homeland Security Information Network Advisory Committee Meeting

The Homeland Security Information Network Advisory Committee (HSINAC) held its quarterly in-person meeting on April 10-11, 2014. The meeting was also supported virtually, through HSIN Connect, the Program’s web-conferencing feature, for members that were unable to attend. The HSINAC provides advice to the Secretary regarding DHS’s ongoing efforts to improve the effectiveness of information sharing initiatives, and in particular, the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN). The principal goals of this meeting were to update the committee on the program’s accomplishments against the committee’s recommendations since their last virtual meeting in December 2013.

HSINAC members in attendance included:

- Daniel Cooney
- Dan Crawford
- Robert Dorsey
- Monte Fronk
- Ronald Leavell
- Michael Milstead
- Erin Mullen
- Mark Perez
- Rolando Rivero
- Thomas Sands
- Charles Werner
- Steven Westermann

HSINAC members in virtual attendance included:

- James Rosenbluth

Day One Events (April 10, 2014)

Mr. Michael Brody, HSIN Program’s Designated Federal Officer for the Homeland Security Information Network Advisory Committee (HSINAC), opened the meeting with general housekeeping guidance, a review of the two-day agenda, and then turned the meeting over to the HSINAC Chair, Mr. Rolando Rivero. Mr. Rivero welcomed the group and requested that all attendees introduce themselves, and their role within the homeland security mission area enterprise.

Mr. James Lanoue, HSIN Deputy Program Manager, conducted the first presentation of the day focusing on the HSIN Program improvements since the HSINAC last met. He emphasized the program’s progress discussing the recent successful transitions of the new implementation team, the new Service Operations support model, and the new Outreach and Communication teams. Mr. Lanoue continued to emphasize the program’s progress by highlighting real-time statistics surrounding the platform’s increased user base and profiles, network availability, help desk efficiencies, and lastly HSIN Connect and Notify feature metrics. The HSINAC focused discussions around the use and advancement of the popular feature, HSIN Connect. The committee agreed that support for the continued growth of this HSIN Feature is vital to the growth of the HSIN platform.
Mr. Lanoue continued to brief the committee on the program’s strategic goals, including Strategic Growth, Program Maturity, and Innovation. In the area of Strategic Growth, he highlighted the program’s areas for Federation/Interoperability, Single Sign-On, and New Sites. He then reviewed the program management office’s processes for ensuring Program Maturity. Lastly, Mr. Lanoue emphasized the tools and technologies that are being instituted to ensure that HSIN is staying ahead of the technology curve.

In closing, Mr. Lanoue emphasized the challenges that HSIN faces and requests the committee’s feedback in the areas of (1) network optimization, (2) interoperability and federation prioritization, (3) strategic messaging guidance, and (4) organization of HSINAC sub-committees around activities to best support the program.

Ms. Katie Mullins, HSIN Mission Advocate Manager, moderated the first of two panel discussions for the HSINAC members. The first panel, titled Operational Success with HSIN since Summer 2013, was held virtually and focused on providing the committee real world, operational application of HSIN, with emphasis on HSIN’s ability to allow the panelists to share information and collaborate with operators from outside their immediate jurisdiction. The panelists included:

- Mr. Jimmy Gianato: Homeland Security Advisor, State of West Virginia
- Mr. Kurt Schmid: Executive Director of the Chicago high Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program; Chair of the HIDTA Domestic Highway Enforcement Regional Coordinating Committee
- Mr. Max Lassiter: HSIN Intelligence Program Manager, US Department of Homeland Security Office of Intelligence and Analysis
- Mr. Aaron Kustermann: Chief of Intelligence, Illinois State Police
- Mr. Matthew Wunder: Supervisory National Operation Center Desk Officer

Each panelist provided a five minute overview of their HSIN usage and the panel concluded with a question and answer session that allowed the committee members to ask pointed questions of the panelists. After the closing of the panel, the HSINAC discussed the importance of the Mission Advocate (MA) team and that their involvement in incidents, events, and steady state operations is critical to the success of each Community of Interest (COI).

Mr. Damon Bragg’s, HSIN Operations and Maintenance Manager, presentation focused on the optimization of the HSIN platform. He introduced the new Service Operations framework based upon the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) methodology. ITIL provides a collection of best practice methodologies for the deliverance of IT services. Mr. Bragg continued the discussion with a review of HSIN metrics and described the positive progress being made in each reported area through the implementation of ITIL. The HSINAC members applauded Mr. Bragg for his efforts in turning around the HSIN Service Operations department, especially in the Help Desk and Problem Management areas.

Ms. Tracy Hollis, HSIN Development Manager, focused on the HSIN Development Roadmap for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 and beyond. The development team successfully completed migration and is now fully focused on pure, value add development for the platform. The HSIN Roadmap is paved with efforts
throughout 2014 and 2015 that will give users streamlined access to more information with heightened security standards. These efforts are focused in the following areas: (1) Optimization - continuing to ensure that the system is available to users through stabilization and software upgrades, (2) Federation/PIV Authentication – ensuring the system is easily available to users through a new Federated user workflow, (3) Single Sign-on and Portal Consolidation – making HSIN a one-stop-shop for users to access and share information, (4) Streamlined User On-Boarding, and (5) New Tools and Site Enhancements. For 2015 and beyond, Ms. Hollis asked for the continued support of the committee to provide guidance in identifying key initiatives to dedicate resources to ensure that future development priorities are in alignment with user needs.

Mr. Melvin Brown’s, Director of Portal Consolidation and Training, presentation focused on the highlights of the ten portal consolidation efforts that have been accomplished by the HSIN program. He discussed, in detail, the most recent consolidation efforts with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC). The FLETC Law Enforcement Training (LET) Community of Interest (COI), is an information sharing environment that will support all elements of the law enforcement audience, by providing, a centralized portal, a collaboration environment, instant messaging, internal email options, and will also include a main site with twenty nine functional areas that are targeted to the law enforcement community. FLETC will also include a Learning Management System (LMS) Virtual Campus that will provide LET COI members with access to on-demand training at no cost if credentialed through FLETC. Mr. Brown closed out his presentation with discussion around the core services offered by the HSIN Training team. These services include monthly instructor-led courses, monthly site owner workshops, and computer based training (CBT) courses.

Mr. Michael Brody, HSIN Policy, Outreach, Communications manager, moderated the second panel for the HSINAC members. The in-person panel, titled Creating the Information Sharing Environment – Interoperability and Federation with HSIN, was focused on provided the HSINAC members with key points on the information sharing environment’s strategic goals for interoperability, how HSIN fits into that strategy, and the significant gains that HSIN has made on the interoperability agenda and where HSIN will be going in the near future. The panelists included:

- Mr. Mike Howell – Deputy Program Manager, Office of the Program Manager, Information Sharing Environment
- Ms. Tracy Hollis – HSIN Development Manager
- Mr. Don Kennedy – Executive Director, New England State Police Information Network

Mr. Michael Brody opened the discussion with an overview of HSIN’s role in the larger, strategic agenda for interoperability within the Homeland Security Information Sharing Environment. Mr. Mike Howell provided an overview of the Information Sharing Environment, the National Strategy for Information Sharing and Safeguarding Goals, and HSIN’s role in providing the tools to deliver interoperability alignment. Mr. Donald Kennedy provided an overview of the Regional Information Sharing System (RISS) and the federation development work that has taken place between HSIN and RISS. In closing, Ms. Tracy Hollis described HSIN’s interoperability development goals for the next eighteen months and stressed
that the HSINAC can assist with advancement of those goals through the identification and support of federation and interoperability partners.

Mr. Michael Brody led the Stakeholder Management presentation, focusing on the HSIN Program’s Outreach and Communications. He provided an overview of the Outreach Mission Advocate’s Areas of Responsibility (AORs) and introduced the local MAs in attendance of the meeting. Mr. Brody explained the MA team is structured with a primary MA for each HSIN community supported by a matrixed team of veteran MAs working with new IT focused, savvy MAs. The Mission Advocate focus is increasing the active HSIN user base and usage while focusing on DHS High Priority Areas. Mr. Brody discussed that methods in which Mission Advocate awareness is taking place and stressed that the HSINAC members can assist in increasing this awareness by encouraging stakeholders to invite MAs to speak at workshops, conferences, etc. and also to share new point of contact information with the HSIN Mission Advocate Manager, Ms. Mullins, for dissemination across the program.

Mr. Michael Brody continued his presentation with a focus on Communication efforts across the HSIN program. He began with an introduction of the new HSIN Communications Manager, Linda McBrearty, to the HSINAC members. Mr. Brody discussed the evolution of the Communications products and the success that the program is experiencing from the readership associated with each product. HSIN is utilizing key metrics on open rates and readership to help drive the creation of reader focused messaging and delivery mechanisms. The next step in the progression of HSIN Communications lies in defining HSIN’s strategy message.

Mr. Brody turned the presentation over to Ms. Linda McBrearty to conduct a facilitated feedback session with the HSINAC members focusing on the future of HSIN’s strategic messaging. Ms. McBrearty opened the floor for a question and answer session that included the following:

1. What benefits does HSIN provide that no other information sharing system can?
   a. Allows management and sharing capabilities for large amounts of content (e.g., files, products, etc.) in a secure place with a diverse group of professionals
2. What HSIN improvement would make the most positive impact to HSIN?
   a. More and/or better tools/features to support your mission (e.g., analytics, GIS, mobile)
3. If HSIN shut down tomorrow, whose mission area do you think would be most impacted?
   a. Major event and incident responders
4. Which current HSIN features and services are most important to you?
   a. Identity verification and two-factor authentication
5. Which features and/or services would you most like to see added to HSIN to improve your homeland security mission work?
   a. Consolidated, Federated and/or Interoperable access between HSIN and other networks and other agencies
6. What phrase would you like to be most closely associated with HSIN in the future?
   a. HSIN is a secure network that lets me connect with a wide variety of homeland security operators from across the nation.
b. HSIN gives me all the collaboration tools I need to work with other operators and achieve my mission.

c. HSIN is a well-run, reliable system that lets me accomplish my mission during a major investigation, event, or incident.

7. What feature or service do you think should become most closely associated with HSIN in the future (i.e., the thing that most people think about when they think of HSIN)?

   a. Content Management (SharePoint document management and sharing features)
   b. Collaboration Tools (HSIN Connect, instant messaging, GIS, analytics tools, secure messaging)

The HSINAC Chair closed the session and reminded members of the next day’s start time of 0830.

Day Two Events (April 11, 2014)

Mr. Michael Waters, Deputy Attorney from the DHS Office of General Counsel, presented a high-level overview of the code of conduct between private and public service members. He emphasized that as a HSINAC member, each volunteer must ensure that they put the public’s interest before their own when it comes to assisting the HSIN Program.

The next discussion was a constructive collaboration session where the HSINAC members began to brainstorm their HSIN Program Recommendations. The following outcomes were captured:

1. Outreach

   a. A comprehensive HSIN Outreach team is critical to ensuring the success of the HSIN program.
   b. To ensure the success of the program, the Mission Advocate (MA) budget should be increased to enhance program effectiveness;
   c. Specifically, the HSIN Outreach team will:
      i. Continue to travel, in the field, educating and promoting HSIN;
      ii. Promote the successes of HSIN through case studies and success stories;
      iii. Provide a Tribal focused Mission Advocate and Community of Interest (COI) to increase awareness and use of HSIN within the Tribal Mission Area;

2. Federation / Portal Consolidation

   a. The HSIN Program should continue to focus on federation with other agencies and continue the consolidation of portals within the Department of Homeland Security.
   b. The HSIN Program should focus its efforts on the interoperability and consolidation with Emergency Management Software Applications.

3. Tools/Features

   a. HSIN should focus development efforts on the improvement of HSIN functionality for mobile and tablet devices, as well as, research the capability of the development of a HSIN specific mobile application.
b. The HSIN Program should focus on the strategy to increase capacity of HSIN Connect. The tool is mission critical and its failure during a major incident is catastrophic to the user’s mission and trust in the HSIN R3 platform.

c. HSIN should institute a Federated (Global) Search Capability across not only HSIN R3 but also all partner systems.

4. Strategic Positioning and Messaging Strategy

   a. The HSIN Program should develop a distributable video that provides an executive level overview of HSIN and provides the justification and reasoning to viewers of the value of the HSIN platform.

Mr. Rolando Rivero - HSINAC Chair, discussed the future formation of additional sub-committees comprised of leading representatives from various large COIs (e.g. I&A, CS, Fusion Centers, etc.) that would work with the HSINAC to bring recommendations on behalf of HSIN’s user community. By leveraging the role of the HSINAC, being a Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) governance body, recommendations have the opportunity to filter up to the DHS S1. HSINAC has, by law and Charter, a direct channel to senior Departmental policy makers; consequently the committee has a great opportunity to shape the HSIN program’s future impact and growth within the Department. The HSIN PMO wants to ensure its users’ voice is the front line leader in that movement.

The HSIN Program should develop a set of sub-committees that include a broad member constituency that will leverage the expertise, experience and connections of its real-work, homeland security mission operator user community to provide advice and recommendation directly to the HSINAC on the following specific programmatic issues. The following subcommittees were approved by the committee and will be chaired by members of the HSINAC as noted below:

1. Outreach (Thomas Sands) – Will identify opportunities for HSIN speaking engagements and develops strategies for the HSIN Program’s strategic messaging strategy.
2. Tools & Features (Charles Werner) – Will focus discussion on the development of tools and features for the HSIN platform, specifically Mobile Application development and Federated Search functionality.
3. Federation/Portal Consolidation (Michael Milstead) – Will provide stakeholder knowledge in the areas of identification of partners that the HSIN program can federate and/or consolidate.

The HSINAC members continued with recommendation on discussions – see notes above.

The meeting was open for public comment.

Meeting Adjourns

The sessions ended with a commitment of the HSINAC members to provide a substantive, recommendation list to the HSIN Program for final submission to the DHS Secretary.