

Fact Sheet

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Department of Homeland Security 2009 Accomplishments & Reforms

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) mission is to secure the United States and the American people from all threats, ranging from acts of terrorism to natural disasters.

In 2009, our 230,000 employees strengthened existing efforts and launched new initiatives to meet our five key responsibilities: guarding against terrorism; securing our borders; engaging in smart, effective enforcement of immigration laws; preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters of all kinds; and building a mature and unified Department.

Secretary Napolitano has emphasized three cross-cutting approaches to achieve these aims – increasing cooperation with federal, state, tribal, local, private sector, and international partners; deploying the latest science and technology to support our mission; and maximizing efficiency and streamlining operations across the Department.

As a result, we have made major advances in addressing new and emerging threats to keep our homeland safe, fostering lawful trade and travel, and continuing to build a ready and resilient nation able to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Guarding Against Terrorism and Threats to Cyber Networks and Critical Infrastructure

Protecting the American people from terrorist threats is the founding purpose of the Department and a top priority. Over the past year, DHS has continued to guard against terrorism by enhancing explosives detection and other protective measures in public spaces and transportation networks, working with the private sector to protect critical infrastructure and cyber networks from attack, improving detection of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials, and building information-sharing partnerships with state and local law enforcement that enable law enforcement to better mitigate threats.

- DHS launched a new Joint Fusion Center Program Management Office to lead the Department's unified efforts to make fusion centers a key priority and to better coordinate DHS resources to enhance budget planning, operational coordination, and state and local support. ([link](#))
- Fulfilling a key 9/11 Commission recommendation, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) began implementing Secure Flight, which prescreens passenger name, date of birth, and gender against government watch lists for domestic and international flights. ([link](#))

- TSA achieved the 9/11 Act requirement of screening 50 percent of air cargo transported on domestic passenger aircrafts by February 3, 2009. 100 percent of cargo is screened on more than 95 percent of flights originating in the United States and 100 percent of all baggage is screened for explosives. [\(link\)](#)
- Secretary Napolitano and Attorney General Eric Holder announced the creation of dual Program Management Offices to coordinate support for state and local Fusion Centers and the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative, housed within DHS and the Department of Justice, respectively, to work in partnership to enhance information sharing between federal, state, local and tribal agencies and the private sector.
- The DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and the Privacy Office launched a national privacy and civil liberties training program for state, local, and tribal fusion centers. [\(link\)](#)
- The Domestic Nuclear Detection Office directly trained more than 3,600 federal, state and local officers and first responders in radiological and nuclear detection, and began demonstrating the first-of-its-kind Cargo Advanced Automated Radiography System, which aims to detect special nuclear materials and shielding material in cargo at ports of entry. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS opened the new National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center—a 24-hour, DHS-led coordinated watch and warning center that will improve national efforts to address threats and incidents affecting the nation's critical information technology and cyber infrastructure. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS worked with the Office of Personnel Management to attain new authority to recruit and hire up to 1,000 cybersecurity professionals across the Department over the next three years to help fulfill DHS' broad mission to protect the nation's cyber infrastructure, systems and networks. [\(link\)](#)
- The U.S. Coast Guard deployed six patrol boats and 400 personnel to train Iraqi naval forces, protect Iraqi critical maritime oil infrastructure, and enforce United Nations sanctions in the Arabian Gulf, leading to increased security and cooperation. [\(link\)](#)
- Secretary Napolitano and Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm launched a first-of-its-kind federal-state cybersecurity partnership, deploying the federally-developed cybersecurity technology EINSTEIN 1 to Michigan's cyber networks. [\(link\)](#)
- The DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) partnered with the U.S. Secret Service, industry and academia to digitize more than 9,000 ink samples to expedite the investigation of criminal and terrorist activities by reducing matching times from days to minutes. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS held the five-day National Level Exercise 2009—the first national level exercise to focus on terrorism prevention—in conjunction with federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and international partners. [\(link\)](#)
- Secretary Napolitano and Deputy Secretary Lute signed agreements to prevent and combat crime with Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain. These agreements allow for the exchange of biometric and

biographic data to bolster counterterrorism and law enforcement efforts while emphasizing privacy protections. ([link 1](#), [2](#), [3](#))

- Secretary Napolitano and Spanish Interior Minister Perez Rubalcaba signed a Declaration of Principles formalizing the Immigration Advisory Program—which identifies high-risk travelers at foreign airports before they board aircraft bound for the United States. ([link](#))
- Secretary Napolitano forged partnerships with Germany and Spain to facilitate scientific research and collaboration to combat transnational threats. ([link](#))
- The U.S. Secret Service launched the first ever international Electronic Crimes Task Force in Italy, designed to prevent, detect, and investigate electronic crimes, including potential terrorist attacks against critical infrastructure and financial payment systems. ([link](#))
- Secretary Napolitano and Canadian Public Safety Minister Peter Van Loan announced a series of cooperative initiatives between the United States and Canada to address terrorism and organized crime while expediting the lawful flow of travel and trade—including a biometric data sharing initiative also involving Australia, the United Kingdom and, eventually, New Zealand. ([link](#))

Securing our Borders while Facilitating Lawful Travel and Trade

In 2009, DHS continued to strengthen security on the Southwest border through additional manpower and new technology to disrupt the flow of illegal drug, cash and weapon smuggling that fuels cartel violence in Mexico. The Department also reinforced security on the northern border while facilitating lawful travel and trade.

- The Obama administration announced the Southwest Border Security Initiative, a joint effort of the Departments of Homeland Security, Justice and State to crack down on Mexican drug cartels by enhancing border security through additional personnel, increased intelligence capability and better coordination with state, local, and Mexican law enforcement authorities. As of Dec. 8, 2009, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has seized more than \$38.3 million in southbound currency—an increase of more than 29.3 million compared to the same period in 2008. In total thus far in 2009, CBP and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have seized more than \$101.7 million and nearly 1.59 million kilograms of drugs—an increase of more than \$48.2 million and more than 423,167 kilograms of drugs compared to the same period in 2008. ([link](#))
- DHS implemented the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative for land and sea travel to the United States, increasing border security while facilitating lawful travel and trade by requiring U.S. and Canadian citizens to present a passport or other approved secure document that denotes identity and citizenship when crossing the border. ([link](#))
- DHS and the Department of Justice joined with the Office of National Drug Control Policy to release the *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy*, the Obama administration’s strategy to stem the flow of illegal drugs and their illicit proceeds across the Southwest border and reduce associated crime and violence. ([link](#))

- The Department announced the expansion of Global Entry—a CBP pilot program that streamlines the screening process at airports for trusted travelers through biometric identification—as a permanent voluntary program at airports across the United States. Global Entry reduces average wait times by more than 70 percent and more than 75 percent of travelers using Global Entry are admitted in less than five minutes. ([link](#))
- Through Global Entry, DHS launched a first-of-its-kind initiative with the Netherlands to open membership in U.S. and Dutch expedited air travel programs to citizens of both countries in an effort to streamline entry processes for pre-screened fliers. ([link](#))
- CBP signed agreements to produce Enhanced Tribal Cards (ETC) with the Tohono O’Odham Tribe of Arizona, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Pascua Yaqui of Arizona, and the Seneca Nation of New York, and is currently working with 25 additional tribes across the country on the ETC initiative. ([link](#))
- ICE and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) signed a first-of-its-kind Drug Trafficking Enforcement Agreement, giving ICE agents the authority to investigate drug trafficking cases; enhancing information sharing capabilities; and strengthening efforts to combat international narcotics smuggling, streamline operations and bring better intelligence to frontline personnel. ([link](#))
- ICE and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) signed a first-of-its-kind agreement to enhance coordination and cooperation to combat arms trafficking. ([link](#))
- Secretary Napolitano announced new directives to enhance and clarify oversight of searches of computers and other electronic media at U.S. ports of entry—a critical step designed to bolster efforts to combat transnational crime and terrorism while protecting privacy and civil liberties. ([link](#))
- DHS launched a joint Coast Guard-Customs and Border Protection effort to use Predator Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) to provide improved surveillance of the United States’ maritime borders—the first time DHS will conduct UAS operations along maritime borders. ([link](#))
- Secretary Napolitano and Mexican Finance Minister Agustín Carstens signed a Letter of Intent and an updated and enhanced Declaration of Principles, creating a joint framework to improve security along the Southwest border and facilitate the flow of legitimate travel and trade. ([link 1](#), [2](#))
- DHS, the Department of Justice and the Government of Mexico signed a Letter of Intent to develop a coordinated and intelligence-driven response to the threat of cross border smuggling and trafficking of weapons and ammunition. This first-of-its-kind arrangement leverages the combined investigative capabilities of ICE, ATF and the Attorney General of Mexico to combat violence and criminal activity along the U.S.-Mexico border. ([link](#))
- The United States and Mexico signed a bilateral telecommunications agreement to support a new cross-border communications network for federal, state, local and tribal public safety and law enforcement organizations focused on strengthening border security to coordinate incident response. ([link](#))

- Secretary Napolitano signed the Shiprider Agreement with Canada to make joint law enforcement teams along the international maritime border permanent. Shiprider enables the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and U.S. Coast Guard to cross-train, share resources and personnel, and utilize each others' vessels in the waters of both countries. [\(link\)](#)
- The Coast Guard signed the first permanent bilateral maritime law enforcement agreement with Sierra Leone, which allows coordinated interdiction operations on the high seas and within Sierra Leone's territorial waters. [\(link\)](#)

Engaging in Smart, Effective Immigration Law Enforcement

Over the past year, DHS has strengthened its immigration enforcement activities, targeting criminal aliens and employers who violate the nation's immigration laws, while making improvements to the legal immigration system.

- DHS implemented a new, comprehensive strategy to reduce the demand for illegal employment and protect employment opportunities for the nation's lawful workforce by targeting employers who knowingly hire illegal workers through investigations, prosecution and civil and criminal penalties. Since January 2009, DHS' new worksite enforcement policies have led to 1,897 cases and 2,069 Form I-9 inspections targeting employers, 58 companies and 62 individuals debarred, and 142 Notices of Intent to Fine totaling \$15,865,181 issued. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS is reforming the immigration detention system, enhancing security and efficiency nationwide while prioritizing the health and safety of detainees. New initiatives include creating an Office of Detention Policy and Planning to ensure uniform conditions of confinement, medical care and design; implementing a medical classification system; centralizing all detention facility contracts under ICE headquarters' supervision; developing a plan for alternatives to detention; more than doubling the number of federal personnel providing onsite oversight at the facilities where the majority of detainees are housed; creating two advisory boards comprised of community and immigration advocacy groups; and establishing an independent Office of Detention Oversight reporting directly to the ICE Assistant Secretary. [\(link\)](#)
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) launched a redesigned website—available in English and Spanish—which provides a one-stop location for immigration services and information, including real-time alerts on the status of immigration applications via text message and e-mail. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS expanded the Secure Communities initiative—which uses biometric information to target criminal aliens in U.S. correctional facilities—from 14 to 107 locations in 2009, reflecting an increased emphasis on identifying and removing criminal aliens who pose the greatest threat to public safety. In 2009 to date, the program has identified more than 111,000 aliens in jails and prisons who have been charged with or convicted of criminal offenses. [\(link\)](#)
- USCIS and the FBI cleared the backlog of a year or more for background checks on people seeking to work and live in the U.S. or become citizens—reflecting DHS' commitment to quick, thorough and fair adjudication of immigration applications. The vast majority of these checks are now answered within 30 days. At the end of fiscal year 2009, USCIS also reduced the backlog of pending

immigration applications and petitions by more than 90 percent and reduced average processing times for naturalization applicants by nearly five months as compared to fiscal year 2008. [\(link\)](#)

- DHS standardized its 287(g) agreements with 67 state and local law enforcement agencies—improving public safety by prioritizing criminal aliens who are a threat to local communities, ensuring consistent and uniform policies and providing a force multiplier for ICE’s immigration enforcement efforts across the country. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS began accepting petitions for qualified widows of U.S. citizens and their minor, unmarried children to seek permanent legal status. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS signed a new agreement with Mexico formalizing arrangements for the expedited and humane repatriation of Mexican nationals. [\(link\)](#)
- USCIS increased employer participation in E-Verify, the nation’s preeminent employment eligibility verification system, from 88,000 companies at the end of fiscal year 2008 to more than 177,000 employers today. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS launched the new “I E-Verify” campaign, which highlights employers’ commitment to working with DHS to maintain a legal workforce and reduce the use of fraudulent identity documents through enrollment in the modern and effective E-Verify system—letting consumers know which businesses are working hard to follow the law and are committed to protecting employment opportunities. [\(link\)](#)

Preparing for, Responding to and Recovering from Disasters

In the event of a terrorist attack, natural disaster or other large-scale emergency, the Department provides a coordinated, comprehensive federal response and works with federal, state, local, and private sector partners to ensure a swift and effective recovery effort. This year, DHS increased efforts to build a ready and resilient nation by providing grants and training to our homeland security and law enforcement partners, coordinating the federal government’s response to H1N1, and streamlining rebuilding and recovery along the Gulf Coast.

- DHS led the federal response to the H1N1 outbreak, creating regional coordination teams comprised of representatives from DHS and the Departments of Defense and Health and Human Services, to oversee, coordinate and execute national incident management responsibilities. DHS also coordinated outreach efforts to Congressional, state, local, tribal, private sector and international officials regarding the H1N1 outbreak. [\(link\)](#)
- Since Jan. 20, Louisiana and Mississippi have received more than \$2.1 billion in public assistance from DHS, including \$125 million for debris removal and emergency protective measures, \$935.5 million in public works and infrastructure projects, \$258 million for mitigation activities to increase resilience, and over \$542 million for K-12 education. In addition, over 6,000 displaced households in Louisiana and Mississippi have been transitioned to permanent housing. [\(link\)](#)
- To cut through red tape and streamline and expedite the decision-making process for public assistance for recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast, Secretary Napolitano established two joint public

assistance teams and a new arbitration process to resolve long-standing issues over public assistance funding. Over the past ten months, the Joint Expediting Team and the Unified Public Assistance Project Decision Team have resolved 156 projects, distributing more than \$100 million dollars to support the repair and replacement of fire and police stations, schools like the Southern University of New Orleans and Holy Cross School, libraries and other infrastructure critical to the recovery of Gulf Coast communities. [\(link\)](#)

- FEMA partnered with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide long-term housing to more than 11,000 families displaced by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. [\(link\)](#)
- FEMA has responded to 47 declared disasters since Jan. 21, including the Red River flooding in North Dakota and Minnesota, the September flooding in Georgia, and the earthquake and tsunami that struck American Samoa. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS provided families remaining in temporary Katrina housing as of June 2009 the option to buy their mobile homes at heavily discounted rates and continues to work with HUD to provide additional rental assistance. [\(link\)](#)
- DHS created the FEMA “Children’s Working Group” to ensure that the unique needs of children are fully integrated into response and recovery efforts during a disaster. [\(link\)](#)
- In partnership with the Ad Council, the *Ready Campaign* launched a series of television, radio and online public service announcements focused on family preparedness. [\(link\)](#)
- In February 2009, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center established the Rural Policing Institute, which trains and shares information with law enforcement agencies and emergency response providers in rural areas. [\(link\)](#)

Unifying and Maturing DHS

Six years since the Department's creation, DHS' goal remains the same: one enterprise dedicated to a shared vision for homeland security. Over the past year, DHS implemented a series of wide-ranging efficiency initiatives that leverage the economies of scale in DHS in order to recover millions of dollars and create a culture of responsibility and fiscal discipline. At the same time, the Department leveraged new technology to improve DHS operations, coordination and outreach.

- DHS broke ground on its new headquarters at the St. Elizabeths Campus. While DHS currently operates in more than 35 offices around the National Capitol Region, the consolidated headquarters will unify DHS’ many components into one cohesive department and is expected to save taxpayers \$163 million over the next 30 years. [\(link\)](#)
- Secretary Napolitano launched the Efficiency Review Initiative to improve efficiency, streamline operations and promote greater accountability, transparency and customer satisfaction through a series of initiatives—including eliminating non-mission critical travel, renegotiating contracts, utilizing government facilities in lieu of private rentals, reducing printing and postal mail and maximizing the use of web-based communication, trainings and meetings, implementing energy efficiencies in DHS facilities, and maximizing DHS’ buying power to receive the lowest price

possible when acquiring office supplies and software licenses—collectively expected to lead to hundreds of millions of dollars in cost avoidances. ([link](#))

- Secretary Napolitano announced the first-ever DHS policy to engage the direct and interactive involvement of Native American Tribes in developing regulatory policies, recommending grant procedures for tribes, and advising on key issues. ([link](#))
- DHS launched the first DHS YouTube Channel and blog, as well as a redesigned website to enhance the Department’s web presence, increase transparency and provide accurate, up-to-date information to the public. ([link](#))
- The DHS Science and Technology Directorate launched the Virtual USA initiative, an innovative information-sharing initiative that helps federal, state, local and tribal first responders communicate during emergencies by linking disparate tools and technologies in order to share the location and status of critical assets and information—such as power and water lines, flood detectors, helicopter-capable landing sites, emergency vehicle and ambulance locations, weather and traffic conditions, evacuation routes, and school and government building floor plans—across federal, state, local and tribal governments. ([link](#))

For more information, visit www.dhs.gov.

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