



Homeland Security



The Department of Homeland Security Fusion Center Engagement and Information Sharing Strategy for 2022–2026

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I am pleased to present the DHS Fusion Center Engagement and Information Sharing Strategy for 2022–2026. This document outlines a multi-year commitment to supporting our law enforcement and homeland security partners in states and cities nationwide, and describes how DHS enables information sharing vital to fusion centers' missions and our national security.

Threats may take the form of international terrorism, transnational organized crime, domestic violent extremism, cyber intrusions, and many other dangers to Americans. All such threats to our homeland will be answered with the most informed responses by DHS and our partners.

Under Secretary Mayorkas's leadership, the Department is committed to supporting our partners across every level of government, including by sharing timely and actionable information and intelligence. In line with this commitment, this strategy will help ensure the Homeland Security Enterprise is equipped with the tools to keep our communities safe and resilient.

The National Network of Fusion Centers (National Network) provides an essential capability enabling the receipt, analysis, gathering and sharing of threat-related information among State, Local, Tribal and Territorial (SLTT), federal, and private sector partners. This strategy describes a sustainable approach to information sharing that cannot be accomplished by DHS or the federal government alone. By reaffirming and enhancing DHS's commitment to supporting the National Network, we will strengthen partnerships, build resilience, and encourage the robust cooperation and sharing of information needed to realize our full potential as partners in securing the homeland.

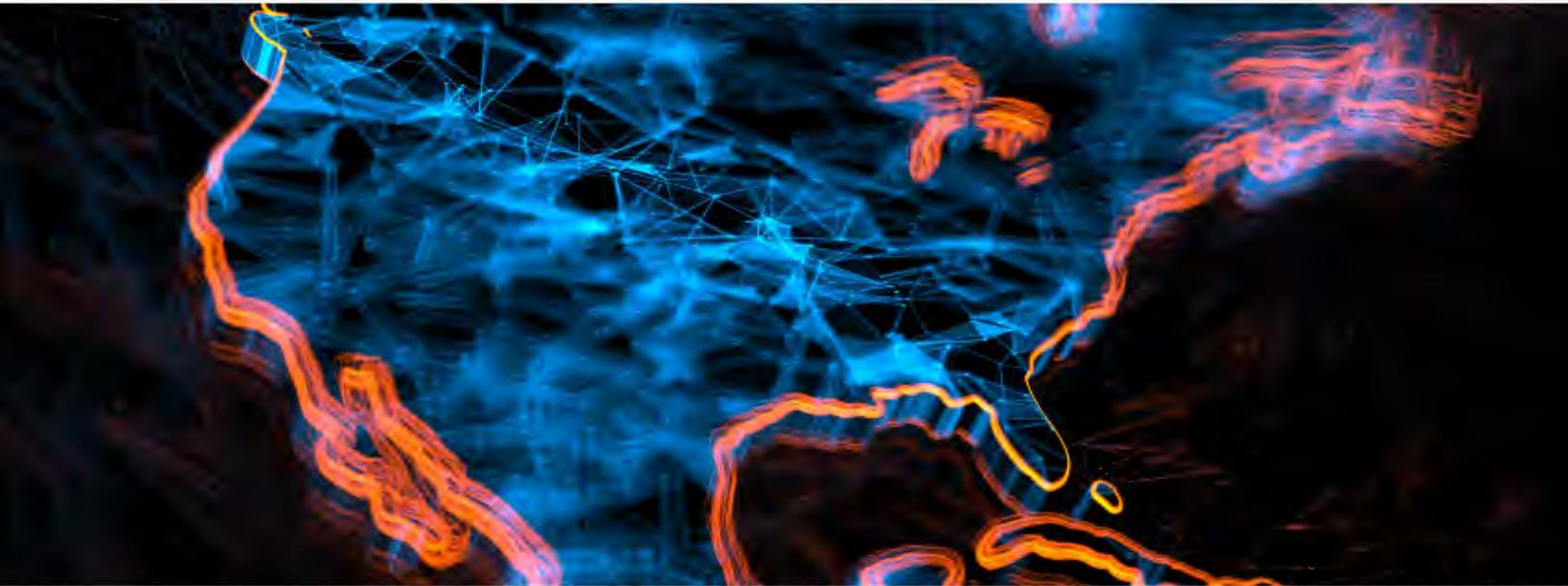
Thank you to the patriotic Americans working at our Nation's fusion centers and to our DHS personnel for your outstanding efforts to preserve the integrity of our homeland. It is through our unified actions that we will provide the strongest protection for the American people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Melissa Smislova".

Melissa Smislova

Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis
Chief Intelligence Officer
Counterterrorism Coordinator
Executive Agent for the DHS State, Local, and Regional Fusion Center Initiative

Fusion Centers and Homeland Security



The National Network of Fusion Centers brings critical context and value to homeland security and law enforcement that no other federal or local organization can replicate. Fusion centers are focal points for gathering, analyzing, and disseminating threat-related information between SLTT governments and the private sector, and serve as an essential element of our decentralized and distributed homeland security and counterterrorism architecture. They accomplish this through sharing information, providing partners with a unique perspective and expertise on threats to their state or locality, and being the primary conduit between frontline personnel, state and local leadership, and the rest of the Homeland Security Enterprise, including DHS, the Intelligence Community (IC), and the federal government. With personnel whose backgrounds cover law enforcement, firefighting, emergency management, and homeland security, fusion centers protect their communities from a wide variety of threats and hazards, while also striving to safeguard individuals' privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

As DHS engages, supports, and shares information with fusion centers in collaboration with other federal partners, we enhance and bolster opportunities to strengthen partnerships, build and maintain trust, and ensure solid foundations for our common mission to protect the Homeland.

1. Advancing Information Sharing



One of the core principles of DHS is the understanding that SLTT officials are full and trusted partners of the federal government in our Nation's efforts to identify and mitigate threats. Therefore, these partners must be a part of an information sharing framework that supports an effective and efficient two-way flow of information, enabling officials at all levels of government to counter and respond to these threats.

As the focal point for operationalizing this principle, fusion centers create a national capacity to gather, process, analyze, and share information. Through the National Network, homeland security and law enforcement partners across all levels of government provide value to each other's individual missions and to the national mission to ensure a safe and secure homeland.

DHS will ensure the most expansive level of sharing possible between fusion centers, the Department, and other federal and SLTT partners. DHS will also enhance programs and processes, and expand our coordination with and support to fusion centers, enabling each other's increased performance.

Goal 1.1: Expand multi-directional information sharing and direct engagement between and among DHS and fusion centers, as well as other federal and SLTT partners, to enable the homeland security mission.

Objectives

- 1.1.1 Increase speed and ease of sharing threat information between DHS and fusion centers to amplify situational awareness and inform safety and security planning efforts.

- 1.1.2 Routinely solicit feedback and recommendations from fusion centers to incorporate information needs into DHS information sharing strategies and priorities.
- 1.1.3 Under the auspices of the Homeland Security Intelligence Council (HSIC), enable DHS Intelligence Enterprise (IE) collaboration with fusion centers, including common processes for routinely sharing information, accessing products and reports, conveying priorities, and facilitating DHS Component engagement with fusion centers.
- 1.1.4 In collaboration with other federal agencies, codify unified protocols for communicating threat information with fusion centers and SLTT partners to inform operational responses during critical incidents.
- 1.1.5 Lead federal interagency efforts to facilitate collaboration and enable a domestic information sharing architecture, composed of state and major urban area fusion centers, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Investigative Support Centers (ISC), Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) Centers, major city/county intelligence units, and other intelligence, analytic, investigative, and information sharing entities, as well as with federal interagency coordinating bodies, such as the State and Local Intelligence Council (SLIC) and Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council (CICC).

Goal 1.2: Ensure fusion center access to critical homeland security information.

Objectives

- 1.2.1 Evaluate and identify improvement opportunities for classified and unclassified networks to increase DHS's information sharing with fusion center and SLTT partners.
- 1.2.2 Review Homeland Security Information Network-Intelligence (HSIN-Intel) policies, protocols, and requirements to improve user experiences and enhance system functionality, while enhancing security and safeguarding privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.
- 1.2.3 Review, update, and conduct Homeland Secure Data Network (HSDN) training for fusion center personnel, and explore assigning Mission Advocates to promote widespread and routine use of HSDN.
- 1.2.4 Evaluate fusion center access and clearance level requirements for classified homeland security data and systems.
- 1.2.5 Advocate for expanded access to DHS Component and federal interagency data for fusion center and SLTT partners to increase information sharing and understanding of local and regional threats.
- 1.2.6 Strengthen cybersecurity support to fusion centers to more effectively protect and prevent compromise of data and networks.

Goal 1.3: Update and advance dissemination methods and production lines of unclassified DHS analyses and information to fusion centers and SLTT partners, leveraging new technology and infrastructures to enhance the existing information sharing frameworks.

Objectives

- 1.3.1 Enhance capabilities and functionality within existing HSIN-Intel dissemination platforms to enable fusion centers and SLTT partners access and use of unclassified threat information, including enhanced search functionality, alert and notification capabilities, and access to DHS and federal interagency products, reports, and information.
- 1.3.2 Provide federated access and search capabilities across unclassified information sharing systems, including HSIN-Intel, the Regional Information Sharing System (RISS), and the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP), to enhance unclassified information sharing.
- 1.3.3 Develop a HSIN-Intel mobile platform to enable ready access to unclassified DHS products and threat information.
- 1.3.4 Identify and deploy a range of communication methods to facilitate two-way engagement between fusion center and SLTT partners to diversify the way DHS information, analysis, and threat perspectives are disseminated.
- 1.3.5 Collaboratively review DHS IE analytic production lines and dissemination methods with fusion centers and SLTT partners, and recommend common processes for enhancing the dissemination of DHS IE products and reports as well as unified approaches for tracking metrics and providing feedback.

2. Strengthening Collaboration and Partnerships



Protecting the homeland and maintaining Americans' trust can only be achieved when we carry out the mission side-by-side. DHS personnel from all Components must develop and strengthen relationships with fusion center counterparts. Bold and innovative approaches to maximize our joint effectiveness are crucial to developing sustained partnerships.

We will increase coordination and advocate for placement of DHS personnel deployed across the country, while enhancing meaningful collaboration between DHS and fusion center personnel.

Goal 2.1: Reenergize strategic partnerships with both SLTT and federal partners to enhance capabilities and effectiveness of DHS support to fusion centers.

Objectives

- 2.2.1 Strengthen DHS personnel familiarization with the fusion centers to ensure a common understanding of relevant DHS, IC, and fusion center objectives and capabilities.
- 2.2.2 Ensure all DHS personnel assigned to fusion centers receive appropriate training and oversight to execute the mission in accordance with all legal and ethical responsibilities, and the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.
- 2.2.3 Coordinate through the HSIC to develop a framework allowing DHS to strategically manage the allocation, placement, and performance of field-deployed intelligence personnel and inform operational and resource decisions in accordance with the Federal Resource Allocation Criteria.
- 2.2.4 Increase analytic collaboration with fusion centers, including joint production opportunities with fusion centers and SLTT.

Goal 2.2: Enhance DHS training and professional development opportunities for fusion center and SLTT personnel to meet current and future requirements.

Objectives

- 2.2.1 Enhance training and technical assistance services concerning privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties to promote unified understanding and compliance with Constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and policy requirements and other best practices.
- 2.2.2 Expand opportunities for fusion center and SLTT personnel to participate in detail assignments at DHS to better synchronize and support the homeland security enterprise.
- 2.2.3 Integrate DHS communications on available training opportunities in existing outreach and engagement processes.
- 2.2.4 Solicit input on SLTT partners' training requirements through partner engagement efforts, such as the SLIC and external stakeholder engagements, to assist with enhancing existing or developing new training opportunities.
- 2.2.5 Enhance DHS Homeland Security Enterprise Learning Management System capabilities to support virtual and remote intelligence training opportunities for fusion center and SLTT personnel.
- 2.2.6 Conduct a review of indicators associated with the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI) and collaborate with fusion center and SLTT partners to initiate a refreshed roll-out of NSI indicator training targeted to front line law enforcement and emergency response personnel.
- 2.2.7 Review training curricula to ensure appropriate focus on analytic tradecraft and review processes in accordance with existing recommended standards, and provide job aids and reference materials to support fusion center and SLTT personnel.
- 2.2.8 Expand available services and opportunities for SLTT personnel to build and execute behavioral threat assessment capabilities and prevent targeted violence, including participation in the National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Program.

3. Providing Programmatic Support and Guidance to Fusion Centers



As the global and homeland environments rapidly change, DHS and its federal and SLTT partners must adapt to ever-evolving threats. Our information sharing programs, policies, and processes must be continually evaluated to enable DHS and our partners to anticipate and respond to these threats. By enhancing and updating our foundational business practices, we will ensure policymakers and operators in the field have the information they need to execute their missions to protect the American people.

Goal 3.1: In collaboration with federal and SLTT partners, assess foundational programs and processes, including training, exercises, communication platforms, product lines, and feedback mechanisms, to strengthen support to the National Network.

Objectives

- 3.1.1 Review the Fusion Center Performance Program to identify opportunities to more effectively evaluate the performance and capability of the National Network.
- 3.1.2 In collaboration with DOJ and other federal agencies and SLTT partners, review foundational CICC guidance, including Fusion Center Guidelines, Baseline Capabilities for Fusion Centers, and similar intelligence and analytic training guidance, to ensure they accurately address the current operating environment, promote the continued growth of the National Network, and adequately address the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

- 3.1.3 In coordination with FEMA, enhance effectiveness of grant allocation processes that support intelligence and information sharing through engagement with State Administrative Agencies (SAAs) on the roles and functions of fusion centers.
- 3.1.4 In coordination with FEMA, review allowable activities and associated National Priority Areas for Intelligence Analysis and Information Sharing, annual Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) requirements for fusion centers, and opportunities to clarify and streamline grant pre-approval processes in support of operational overtime activities associated with intelligence and fusion center activities.

Implementing the Fusion Center Engagement and Information Sharing Strategy



Implementation of the Fusion Center Engagement and Information Sharing Strategy will be executed under the leadership of I&A, in collaboration with the National Network and other federal and SLTT partners. Actions required to implement the goals and objectives set forth in this strategy, as well as associated timelines, responsible offices and entities, and performance metrics, will be developed through collaboration and feedback from these partners and published in the summer of 2022. Existing mechanisms within DHS and the federal interagency—including, but not limited to the HSIC, the SLIC, and the CICC—will be leveraged to solicit feedback in the development of the implementation plan, as well as efforts to track and measure execution of the actions identified in the implementation plan.

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