

Privacy Policy Review Team Process

Recognizing the March 2011 deadline for completion of fusion center privacy policies that are “at least as comprehensive” as the ISE Privacy Guidelines, we have been working closely with our mission and business partners to improve and streamline the technical assistance review process currently provided under the joint U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/U.S. Department of Justice Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program.

The current approach is that fusion centers submit versions of their comprehensive privacy policies to be reviewed by the Privacy Policy Review Team (PPRT), which results in a checklist of key policy issues being returned to the center. This process can repeat itself multiple times. In April 2010, in cooperation with the Global Advisory Committee’s (GAC) Global Privacy and Information Quality Working Group, a revised version of the *Fusion Center Privacy Policy Development: Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Policy Template* (Template) was released to the fusion centers. This revised version reflects numerous updates and enhancements based on lessons learned from the review process and discussions with the DHS Chief Privacy Officer regarding the standards that need to be met in order for a policy to be determined to be “at least as comprehensive” as the ISE Privacy Guidelines.

Due to many centers’ policies being in the review process when the revised Template was issued and for a variety of other reasons, centers have submitted modified versions of their policies four or more times. In an effort to streamline this review process, a new practice has been implemented that will limit centers’ policy submissions to a maximum of three or fewer.

Under the new process, after the second submission and review cycle, if the policy still requires revision, the PPRT will not only return the review checklist but will also include a red-lined version of the policy suggesting language changes and highlighting outstanding issues. At that time, either a conference call or Webinar will be initiated with the center to address any unresolved items or issues. Participants in this process will be PPRT members, the fusion center director, the center’s privacy officer, and the center’s legal advisor, as appropriate. The purpose of this interaction will be to reach agreement on language additions/changes that will be incorporated into a final draft that the PPRT will then submit to the DHS Privacy Office for the requisite ISE Privacy Guidelines determination.

The revised process was recently tested, and it proved successful in reducing both the time and level of effort necessary to bring the development of the fusion center’s privacy policy to conclusion.