



The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties supports the Department of Homeland Security as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.

Farewell Message from CRCL Officer Margo Schlanger



For two years, it has been my very great privilege to lead the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL), an office nearly unique in the federal government, because its chief mission is to look at our own Department's activities, and ensure that they are appropriately protective of civil

rights and civil liberties. In January, I end my tenure with DHS to return to law teaching. I leave the Office in excellent hands; Deputy Officers Tamara Kessler and Veronica Venture are experienced civil rights leaders; Tamara will serve as the Acting Officer, and Ronnie will continue to be DHS's Equal Employment Opportunity Director. Office personnel include some of the most gifted, dedicated, and determined public servants I know.

DHS has an extraordinarily important set of missions, from preventing terrorism, to enforcing our immigration laws and ensuring resilience to disasters. Over 230,000 DHS employees serve our country each day striving to keep the United States safe and secure while protecting our freedoms, including the core civil rights values of liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.

Over the past two years, CRCL has expanded our community engagement programs to include diverse ethnic, religious, and community-based organizations in cities across the country. We improved our policies and procedures for reviewing and processing civil rights complaints filed by the public to ensure a more timely, effective, and transparent process. We entirely eliminated the longstanding backlog of Equal Employment Opportunity complaints awaiting adjudication. And we took on increased and crucial roles in safeguarding civil rights and civil liberties in immigration enforcement, cyber-security, and work to counter violent extremism. These and many more accomplishments were made possible by the hard work, dedication, and innovation of CRCL's employees. It has been an honor to serve with them.

For those of you reading this newsletter whom I have met and worked with, I thank you, as well, for your collaboration and partnership over the past two years, and know that you will continue to be valued stakeholders at CRCL going forward.

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- - Margo Schlanger

DHS Issues Draft Environmental Justice Survey for Public Comment

DHS is pleased to announce the release for public comment of our [draft Environmental Justice Strategy](#). This draft strategy outlines DHS's approach to incorporating environmental justice into the homeland security missions most applicable to environmental justice considerations.

DHS is committed to meeting the goals of [Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"](#) and the interagency [Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice and Executive Order 12898](#)—which state that participating federal agencies should take into account environmental justice considerations as part of their policies, programs, and activities.

We invite you to comment on the draft strategy. Please send your comments via e-mail to Environmental.Justice@hq.dhs.gov by Friday, January 13, 2012. DHS will then review those comments and finalize the strategy, while continuing our ongoing dialogue with stakeholders.

The draft Strategy is being released in coordination with several other federal agencies who, along with DHS, participate in an [Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice](#). Within DHS, offices and Components throughout the Department have actively participated in the creation of the strategy and in the Department's ongoing work on environmental justice.

As we work every day to help keep our nation safe, we are mindful of the impact of our activities on individuals and communities. We look forward to continuing this dialogue with stakeholders and the public on incorporating environmental justice practices into our homeland security efforts.

[Read the draft DHS Environmental Justice Strategy.](#)

CRCL Participates in Civil Rights Listening Session

CRCL Officer Margo Schlanger recently participated in a listening session that brought together senior civil rights officials from Federal agencies and a host of national civil rights advocacy groups. The session was convened by the Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, and included officials from the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Labor.

The session began with an open panel discussion where government officials addressed a number of cross-sectional civil rights matters, including housing and labor issues as they relate to immigration enforcement. Following the panel, each Federal representative led a smaller break-out session to address concerns specific to their respective agencies. During the DHS break-out, Officer Schlanger heard from stakeholders about topics including automated systems and the importance of ensuring those systems are accessible for individuals with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency.



Overall, the session provided insightful and valuable information regarding ways in which the Federal government can continue to ensure civil rights protections throughout its activities and programs.

CRCL Launches a Facebook Page

CRCL is pleased to announce the launch of our [Facebook page](#)! Our new page will allow CRCL to instantly connect with the public and share information about our work supporting the Department to secure the Nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



Through our Facebook page, we aim to deepen and broaden our regular contact with diverse national and community-based organizations. Our page will highlight up-to-date information about CRCL's community engagement efforts; we'll also share information and resources you can use including our civil rights and civil liberties training materials and easy online access to file a civil rights complaint.

Through CRCL's Facebook page, we will share important information about DHS programs and policies and engage with our "friends" to receive feedback, and learn about civil rights and civil liberties issues occurring in communities throughout the country. We invite you to ["like" our Facebook page](#), and start a conversation with us.

ICE Announces New Hotline and Detainer Form for Immigrant Detainees

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) recently announced new measures to ensure that individuals being held by local law enforcement on immigrant detainers are properly notified about their potential removal from the country and are made aware of their rights.

These measures include a new detainer form and the launch of a toll-free hotline that detained individuals can call if they are U.S. citizens or victims of crime. The hotline, 1-885-448-6903, will be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by ICE personnel at the Law Enforcement Support Center. Information collected through the hotline will be referred to the relevant ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Field Office for immediate action. Translation services will also be available in several languages.

The [new detainer form](#) includes several features and provisions, such as: a notice advising the subject that ICE intends to assume custody, translated in several languages; directions for individuals who may have a civil rights or civil liberties complaint regarding ICE activities; and further emphasis that law enforcement agencies may only hold an individual for a period not to exceed 48 hours. Visit [ICE's website](#) for more information.

ICC Distributes Interagency Survey on the 2011 Earthquake Response

The 5.8-magnitude earthquake that shook the Mid-Atlantic region this past August resulted in the evacuation of Federal agencies, and opened a discussion regarding how to improve the safety and security of Federal employees with disabilities during a disaster or emergency. Accordingly, the [Interagency Coordinating Council on Individuals with Disabilities and Emergency Preparedness \(ICC\)](#) developed and disseminated a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of evacuation procedures during the earthquake for employees with disabilities throughout the federal government.

The survey was drafted by the ICC's Workplace subcommittee, which focuses on strategies to ensure that the development, implementation, and maintenance of workplace emergency preparedness plans fully incorporate the perspectives and needs of individuals with disabilities. The subcommittee will analyze the survey results to determine best practices and identify areas for necessary improvements to disaster protocols, including disability-inclusive preparedness and evacuation procedures.

For more information on the ICC and disaster preparedness for individuals with disabilities, visit its [website](#), or email to disability.preparedness@dhs.gov.

White House Releases Strategic Implementation Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism

This month, the White House released the *Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*. The Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) details how the Federal government is implementing the National strategy on [Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States](#), which was released in August 2011. The SIP provides a blueprint for how the United States will build community resilience against violent extremism focused on three core areas of activity: (1) enhancing engagement with and support to local communities that may be targeted by violent extremists; (2) building government and law enforcement expertise for preventing violent extremism; and (3) countering violent extremist propaganda while promoting our ideals.

Read the [Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States](#).



CRCL Engages with Somali-American Communities in the Twin Cities

Over the past year, CRCL has made a significant effort to increase engagement with Somali-American communities. Experts estimate that there are nearly 100,000 people of Somali ancestry living in the U.S., with the largest concentration the Twin Cities area of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. At the beginning of 2011, CRCL initiated its first quarterly roundtable in Minneapolis, focused on engaging this largest Somali-American community. To build on the new roundtable, CRCL recently led a joint strategic planning session with Somali community leaders and law enforcement agencies in the Twin Cities area in order to develop a strategy for combating violent extremism and a community policing model that works for both law enforcement and community members.



The day-long session included an awareness briefing led by CRCL and the National Counterterrorism Center, and presentations from DHS, the FBI Minneapolis Field Office, the local U.S. Attorney's Office, the University of Minnesota, the Minneapolis and St. Paul police departments, and several local county sheriffs' offices.

The session has already led to formation of a working group to address future law enforcement issues. Moving forward, community leaders and law enforcement agencies will work together to develop a de-radicalization curriculum and a communications vehicle (similar to [CRCL's Incident Communication Coordination Team](#)) that will be hosted by the local U.S. Attorney's Office. CRCL will continue to assist the community with these efforts.

CRCL Submits Quarterly Report to Congress

CRCL recently submitted its *FY 2011 Third Quarter Report to Congress*. The Report details activities of the Office during the third quarter, including information on impact assessments and data analysis of investigations involving civil rights and civil liberties, as required by section 803 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1(f).

Read the [FY 2011 Third Quarter Report to Congress](#).

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Pursuant to Executive Order 13107, Implementation of Human Rights Treaties, the CRCL Officer is designated to serve as the single contact officer for DHS and is responsible for the overall coordination DHS implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other human rights treaties. On December 29, 2011, the United States filed its Fourth Periodic Report to the United Nations Committee on Human Rights Concerning the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The fourth periodic report, a routine update of the United States' Initial Report filed in 1994, and its last combined second and third reports submitted in 2005, describes recent legislation, case law, policies, programs, and other relevant information to update prior filings. The comprehensive report also covers a wide range of subjects, including the U.S. government's efforts to protect freedoms of speech, religion, association, peaceful assembly, and privacy.

Read the [*Fourth Periodic Report Concerning ICCPR*](#).

TSA Cares

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) recently launched [*TSA Cares*](#), a new toll-free helpline designed to assist travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. Travelers may call TSA Cares at 1-855-787-2227 prior to traveling, to speak with a representative about screening policies and procedures for their specific disability or medical condition, and what to expect at the security checkpoint. If necessary, the representative may also refer the traveler to a disability expert at TSA who can further assist them.

TSA recommends that travelers call the helpline approximately 72 hours before arriving at the airport, so that TSA Cares can coordinate checkpoint support with a TSA Customer Service Manager located at the airport when necessary. TSA Cares will operate Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. EST, excluding federal holidays. After hours, travelers can find information about traveling with disabilities and medical needs on [*TSA's website*](#).

In addition to the TSA Cares helpline, all travelers can also receive information through [*Talk to TSA*](#), a web-based tool that allows passengers to reach out to a TSA Customer Service Manager directly, and the TSA Contact Center, 1-866-289-9673 and [*TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov*](mailto:TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov).

CRCL on the Road, November – January

November 10 – Atlanta, Georgia

CRCL convened its regular community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

November 18 – Atlanta, Georgia

Officer Margo Schlanger spoke on a plenary panel at the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association's Annual Convention.

December 9 – Detroit, Michigan

A CRCL representative attended an ALPACT (Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust) meeting.

December 15 – Chicago, Illinois

CRCL convened its regular community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

November 16 – Washington, D.C.

CRCL convened its regular community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

December 8 – Boston, Massachusetts

A CRCL representative attended a BRIDGES meeting.

December 12-14 – Washington, D.C.

CRCL participated in a two-day conference on the U.N. Human Right Council's Resolution 16/18.

January 17 – Columbus, Ohio

A CRCL representative will attend a meeting of the Somali Advisory Group.

January 19 – Washington, DC

CRCL will convene a meeting with NGOs.

January 26 – Boston, Massachusetts

A CRCL representative attended a BRIDGES meeting.

January 26 – Seattle, Washington

CRCL will convene its regular community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

January 26 – Clearwater, Florida

CRCL will convene its regular community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

Additional information, and contacting us

The goal of this periodic newsletter is to inform members of the public about the activities of the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, including: how to make complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via an email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. We also post information pulled from the newsletter on a webpage, [CRCL at Work](#). If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, want to request back issues, or have other comments or questions, please let us know by emailing crcloutreach@dhs.gov. If you are on this list, but no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send an email to the same address asking us to unsubscribe you. For more information, including on how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, see www.dhs.gov/crcl.

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This is the third issue in volume 2 of this newsletter; please visit our [website](#) for information from prior newsletters.

Prior newsletters:

Vol. 2 Issue 1 (Sept. 2011) Message from the Officer on the 10th Anniversary of Sept. 11, 2001 • DHS Remembers 9/11 • September is National Preparedness Month • CRCL Attends Iftar Dinners During Ramadan • Detroit Community Celebrates 10 Years of Building BRIDGES

Vol. 2 Issue 2 (Oct. 2011) Guest Message from Alice Hill • New Training Guidance on CVE • CRCL Expands Community Engagement in 2011 • CRCL Submits Annual and Quarterly Reports to Congress • Disability Employment Awareness Month • Hispanic Heritage Month