



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



### **DHS Reissues the NTAS Bulletin**

Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen reissued the National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) Bulletin pertaining to the terror threat to the U.S. homeland. After carefully considering the current threat environment, as well as input from the Department’s intelligence and law enforcement partners, Secretary Nielsen determined it is necessary to extend the NTAS Bulletin at this time.

This marks the seventh iteration of the Bulletin on the homegrown terrorism threat since the first Bulletin was released in December 2015. The [NTAS Bulletin](#) is available in [Spanish and multiple other languages](#).

### **Message from Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen on National Preparedness Month**

“Disasters Happen. Prepare Now. Learn How.” That is the theme this September for National Preparedness Month, an opportunity for us to remind our families, friends, and communities to get ready for disasters and emergencies before they strike. Thinking ahead can save lives. So we are working to create a “culture of preparedness” nationwide, which requires all Americans to prioritize preparedness efforts in their daily lives. I urge all of you to take the time to evaluate your preparedness and learn how to protect your family, so that if disaster strikes you are ready. National Preparedness Month is divided into four weeks. Each week we will publish recommended steps you can take to ensure you are prepared:

- Week 1 (September 1 – 8): Make and Practice Your Plan
- Week 2 (September 9 – 15): Learn Life Saving Skills
- Week 3 (September 16 – 22): Check Your Coverage
- Week 4 (September 23 – 29): Save For an Emergency

There are a number of [resources](#) available to help you implement the steps recommended for each week of National Preparedness Month. You can begin to boost your level of preparedness by taking small steps, such as discussing an emergency communications plan with your family over dinner, installing carbon monoxide detectors, reviewing your insurance coverage, or starting an emergency savings fund.

Please visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for more information and resources. And if you have the ability to help others, please consider joining a [Community Emergency Response Team](#) (CERT). *Read the Secretary’s [full message](#).*

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## **Commemorating the 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks**

Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen delivered remarks at the Transportation Security Administration on September 11 to honor those we lost, thank those that serve, and remind us of the progress we've made in ensuring a safe homeland. Watch [full video of the event](#).

### **The Whole Community: Individuals with Disabilities in Disaster Response and Recovery**

In 2017, our nation experienced a historic and unprecedented disaster season where communities were severely impacted by hurricanes in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and wildfires in California. In recognition of the one-year anniversary of these disasters, we remember and honor the resilience of individuals and communities in their recovery, particular those with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

We want to encourage everyone, moving forward, to be prepared—work with family, neighbors and friends to build a community support network, and have a plan to check on each other after a disaster occurs. Individuals in the community are always the true first responders in disasters; you may be the help to those who may need it until help arrives.

The DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) has a role to safeguard and enforce civil rights laws across the Department. As such, among other priorities, CRCL works to fully integrate these laws into disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

Prior to, during, and following a disaster, CRCL engages with impacted communities and provides information to the public and stakeholders to protect individuals with disabilities and the whole community. To accomplish this, CRCL works in close collaboration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other federal partner agencies to support state and local frontline efforts and ensure nondiscrimination.

Earlier this year CRCL, in partnership with FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Office of Equal Rights, embarked on a multi-city tour to dialogue directly with disability stakeholders in areas impacted by the 2017 disasters. Over several months, we held listening sessions in Texas, Florida, California, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

At these listening sessions individuals with disabilities, representatives from local advocacy groups, and other stakeholders were able to provide feedback to DHS officials on their experiences, including both challenges and things that worked well, with disaster response and recovery. The discussion at these sessions covered a range of cross-cutting issues noted during the sessions, including:

- improving communication access for people with disabilities
- integrating individuals with disabilities into planning and preparedness efforts at all levels of government
- ensuring emergency shelters are accessible and are resourced and prepared for the whole community
- and strengthening access to FEMA resources and programs before, during, and after disaster strikes

CRCL will use feedback from these listening sessions to share more widely local best practices, and improve assistance and training, and will continue to coordinate with federal, state, territorial, and local partners to address recent challenges of those with access and functional needs in future disaster response and recovery.

CRCL also offers technical assistance to states and territories on meeting their civil rights obligations, and provides information and resources for communities on its [Civil Rights in Emergencies and Disasters](#) webpage. This new webpage features [summaries of each listening session](#), training materials and webinars, and other information from DHS and federal partners.

We encourage you to prepare! A true culture of preparedness begins with you—create a disaster plan for your family, and consider how you can assist your neighbors and loved ones that have access and functional needs. FEMA and [Ready.gov](#) provide several resources to create a plan, and preparedness tips for diverse communities and [individuals with disabilities](#).

*[Read the blog en Espanol.](#)*

## **CRCL Launches Course: Law Enforcement Awareness Briefing on Terrorism Prevention**

CRCL is pleased to announce a major new course for state, local, and tribal law enforcement: “The Law Enforcement Awareness Briefing (LAB) on Terrorism Prevention.” The LAB was developed in partnership with CRCL, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) and the DHS Office of Terrorism Prevention Partnerships (OTPP), and is designed to complement and leverage the Department’s existing “Community Awareness Briefing” on Terrorism Prevention.

Over 60 federal, state, and local entities, including tribes and fusion centers, participated in the LAB development process. Center to the training is the idea that building and maintaining community trust is the foundation for effective state, local, and tribal law enforcement activities in the area of terrorism prevention, and that addressing civil rights and civil liberties protections is essential in building trust between law enforcement and communities.

The LAB is a 2-5 hour customizable course delivered by law enforcement for law enforcement. The training features case studies, exercises, and videos designed to provide a research-driven foundation for law enforcement agencies on multifaceted threats local jurisdictions face. The LAB includes resources available at the federal and local levels, and underscores the vital role that communities play as partners in preventing terrorism.

### **Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen: Rethinking Homeland Security in an Age of Disruption**

On September 5, the Center for Cyber and Homeland Security (CCH) hosted a discussion with Secretary Nielsen at the George Washington University. Secretary Nielsen reflected on how the Department’s mission has changed since 9/11, and laid out how DHS is evolving to address emerging threats to the homeland. After the Secretary’s remarks, the conversation was moderated by CCHS Director Frank J. Cilluffo. Watch [video of the full event](#), and read the [Secretary’s remarks](#).

## **DHS Acting Deputy Secretary and CRCL Officer Speak at Annual MELOA Conference**

DHS Acting Deputy Secretary Claire Grady and CRCL Officer Cameron Quinn recently traveled to Detroit, Michigan to speak at the [Middle Eastern Law Enforcement Officers Association \(MELOA\)](#) Third Annual Diversity Training Conference. Acting Deputy Secretary Grady provided welcoming remarks and spoke about the conference theme “Engaged Leaders Keep Communities Safe,” and how it relates to the Department’s year-long “Leadership Year” campaign. She thanked MELOA members and partners for leading in their unique roles to build relationships in our communities to improve safety and security across the country. She also spoke about the Department’s efforts to build and sustain a diverse workforce, recruit and retain women leaders at every level across DHS, and maintain a high-performing and committed workforce.



Officer Quinn provided closing remarks on the final day of the conference. She thanked MELOA and other law enforcement partners in the audience, and discussed the strong relationships CRCL and local law enforcement in Detroit have cultivated stating, “We are pleased to continue one of the Department’s priorities of engaging with diverse communities and partnering with local law enforcement right here in Detroit. It is through these relationships that we have built bridges between communities and the federal government for nearly a decade.”

MELOA is a DHS recognized employee association composed of agents and officers from the DHS. MELOA's goal is to create positive interactions between law enforcement and the Middle Eastern community through outreach and mentorships, as well as providing assistance to local law enforcement agencies with language, cultural, and training support.

## **CRCL Participates in Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Seminar Series**

This month, CRCL Officer Cameron Quinn traveled to Lincoln, Nebraska to provide the keynote address at the 2018 Specialized Analytic Seminar Series, hosted by the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A). The Specialized Analytic Seminar Series program brings together a diverse range of federal, state, and local subject matter experts and partner organizations to inform analytic capabilities of intelligence analysts.

The two-day series on Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties examined the issues and challenges related to the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties while protecting First Amendment rights; collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information and products; and best practices to protect privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties during intelligence and information sharing efforts.

Over the two days, other representatives from CRCL provided in-depth presentations on a number of civil rights and civil liberties topics, including: roles and responsibilities of privacy and civil rights/civil liberties officers; policies, audits, and compliance; emerging issues and technologies; transparency and oversight; and operationalizing privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties, among other topics.

### **CRCL on the Road, September**

#### ***September 20 – Minneapolis, Minnesota***

CRCL led an exercise on integrating engagement and civil rights protections and strategies in counterterrorism policies.

#### ***September 26-27 – Detroit, Michigan***

CRCL led an exercise on integrating engagement and civil rights protections and strategies in counterterrorism policies.

#### ***September 27-October 1 – Columbus, Ohio***

CRCL led an exercise on integrating engagement and civil rights protections and strategies in counterterrorism policies.

#### ***September 20 – Reedley, California***

CRCL Officer Quinn spoke at Reedley College as part of their Constitution Day observance.

#### ***September 25-27 – Atlanta, Georgia***

CRCL led an exercise on integrating engagement and civil rights protections and strategies in counterterrorism policies.

### **CRCL on the Road Ahead, October**

***Orlando, Florida:*** Quarterly roundtable

For more information on engagement events, email: [communityengagement@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:communityengagement@hq.dhs.gov).

## **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 file complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via our stakeholder email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. Issues of the newsletter can be accessed online at: [www.dhs.gov/crcl-newsletter](http://www.dhs.gov/crcl-newsletter).

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](mailto:crcloutreach@dhs.gov). For more information, including how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, visit: [www.dhs.gov/crcl](http://www.dhs.gov/crcl).

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