

## **Homeland Security Advisory Council Summary of Public Teleconference Held on September 11, 2008**

The Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) held a public conference call on September 11, 2008, convening at 3:00 p.m. EST.

The HSAC convened via teleconference for the purpose of the Council reviewing and reporting to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security the ten most pressing strategic-level challenges that will confront the next Secretary of Homeland Security.

In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the public conference call was open to the public from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **Council Members Attendance:**

Judge William Webster, Chair  
Norman Augustine  
Kathleen Bader  
Ruth David  
Glenda Hood  
Don Knabe  
John Magaw  
Lydia Thomas

### **U.S. Department of Homeland Security Staff Attendance:**

Jeffrey Stern, Homeland Security Advisory Council, Executive Director  
Michael Miron, Homeland Security Advisory Council, Acting Deputy Director  
Candace Stoltz, Homeland Security Advisory Council staff, Director  
Jennifer Myers, Homeland Security Advisory Council staff  
Amanda Rittenhouse, Homeland Security Advisory Council staff  
Al Martinez-Fonts, Assistant Secretary, Office of the Private Sector

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#### **Reference Materials:**

A draft copy of the "Top Ten Challenges Facing the Next Secretary of Homeland Security" was made available to the public via email. Once additional edits were made, they were also sent a final draft copy. The final report was also made available to the public via the Homeland Security Advisory Council's (HSAC) web page at [www.dhs.gov/hsac](http://www.dhs.gov/hsac).

#### **CHAIR JUDGE WEBSTER;**

I am William Webster, Chairman of the Homeland Advisory Council and I hereby convene this meeting. I would like to introduce HSAC Executive Director Jeffrey Stern to cover a few administrative items.

#### **JEFFREY STERN:**

Good afternoon, this is Jeff Stern, Executive Director with the Homeland Security Advisory Council and I

am honored to be downtown here next to Judge William Webster, our Chairman. I have just a couple of administrative items quickly and we have many members of the public who are on the line, and I did want to let them know that we will not be taking questions at the end of the discussion, however, we will take all written public comments and HSAC Chair Judge Webster at the conclusion of today's call, will inform you how to do that. I also want to let everyone know that we did additional minor edits from the HSAC members. I didn't want to go through and read the pages of the minor edits here today. If anyone has called in and has not already pre-registered with the Homeland Security Advisory Council and would like to receive a copy of the final version that is adopted, it will probably take a few days to a week to get it up on our website, but if you send an email to [hsac@DHS.gov](mailto:hsac@DHS.gov) our staff will try by the end of tomorrow to push the final copy out to you pending any changes from today. I now want to turn over the line to our Chair, Judge William Webster of the Secretary's Homeland Security Advisory Council.

### **CHAIR JUDGE WEBSTER:**

Thank you Jeff. Ladies and gentlemen, we are here today to be briefed and discuss the report of our HSAC workgroup that has been developing a list of the top ten challenges that will face the next Secretary of Homeland Security and his or her leadership team. Now this is a Public Meeting of the Council and we appreciate those members of the public, the government and the media who have joined us today. I also would like to welcome the members of the Homeland Security Advisory Council and our Subcommittees, consisting of the Private Sector Senior Advisory Committee, the State and Local Officials Senior Advisory Committee, the Emergency Response Senior Advisory Committee, the Academic Policy and Research Senior Advisory Committee and the Secure Border Open Doors Senior Advisory Committee.

When we met this past June in Washington, D. C. twelve weeks ago, we were asked by Secretary Chertoff to develop this report. At that meeting, we heard from Secretary Chertoff, Deputy Secretary Paul Schneider and Senior DHS officials from all its various components. We also heard from academic and thought leaders in the Homeland Security field from both ends of the political spectrum. In the past six months, members of the Council have also visited with Homeland Security partners from Health and Human Services at the Centers for Disease Control. We have visited with FEMA's Regional Headquarters in Atlanta, which is busy coordinating the response to Hurricane Gustav and Ike as we speak and we have visited the Department of Defense's Northern Command where we were briefed on their role in homeland defense. I had feedback from the Commander of Northern Command who was very complimentary of our participation and attendance. We have visited with state, local and private sector partners to hear their perspectives. We have also visited with The United States Coast Guard in Portsmouth, Virginia and would like to extend our condolences to Commandant Allen and the entire Coast Guard family on the tragic death of four Coast Guardsmen in a helicopter crash last week in Hawaii. It is a reminder to all of us that The Department of Homeland Security is made up of men and women who are willing to make the highest sacrifice to secure our nation.

To develop this report, the HSAC Working Group and all the HSAC Subcommittees held conference calls over the past nine weeks to develop this draft report, over nine meetings in all. Our goal was to develop a report that provides a strategic level of guidance to the next Secretary of Homeland Security and his or her leadership team; and to give them a set of guidelines that will help them succeed. This report was not intended to set the compass for their direction. There are many of these kinds of reports out there, each with its own relevance. Instead, this report identifies big areas that the new Secretary will find the most challenging as he or she assumes the leadership of the Department. His or her success will depend in part on how well these challenges are managed. Today we are going to hear from several members of the Work Group who will provide an overview to these ten challenges. It is important to note these are independent and equal issues, which should not be viewed, in rank order. I now want to turn the meeting over to Jeff Stern, our Executive Director, who will coordinate the HSAC Working Group presentation of this report.

**JEFFREY STERN:**

Thank you Judge Webster. We will first hear from Dr. Ruth David.

**RUTH DAVID:**

This is Ruth David and I will address several of the recommendations that we identified aimed toward the incoming administration and the next Secretary of the Department. The first area of challenge that we identified was the need to build a cadre of Homeland Security leadership through a unified national system of training and education. The backdrop of this I think is of critical importance. Homeland Security remains in many regards an immature mission. It was certainly stimulated by the events of seven years ago, ironically the tragic events of 9/11, 2001, but its course was shaped also in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which had a very different kind of impact on our nation. So the definition, the concept of what is the Homeland Security mission is continuing to evolve. It requires engagement of a variety of academic disciplines as well as a variety of different experiences in various mission areas. All of this is not yet jelled as many other federal missions have come to be over the years and it requires an ongoing and systemic system of training and education in order to continue that evolution and maturation. This needs to occur we believe at a number of different levels. First, is the leadership training, here again, there are very mature models but the importance is that leadership within the Homeland Security mission space does have some unique characteristics. For example, leadership of a mission that extends to different levels of government, as well as public and private sector partnerships, has different requirements on the people. So while there are models from which to learn and choose, we see the need to develop a leadership-training model that is fine-tuned for this particular mission space.

Similarly, we see the need for a considered effort at professional development, allowing individuals, professionals within the Homeland Security mission to gain experience in other parts of the mission so that they have a better appreciation for the scope, the context and the complexity of the various part of this very complicated Homeland Security mission. And we see that as absolutely essential to advancing the cohesion and coherence of mission execution.

Another critical element, we would observe that already more than 200 colleges and universities are providing degrees in Homeland Security and other closely related fields. This is wonderful and in many regards, this is a very good news story! On the other hand, these programs have evolved over the last few years with very little in the way of core standards, driving the curriculum and we think that this is very, very important as these programs continue to evolve and mature so that we understand what are the basic elements that must be central, must be taught in each of these various programs so that we do develop some common understanding. Similarly though, we think it is important that the university programs continue to evolve and build the intellectual underpinnings that must be the foundation of a solid Homeland Security educational curriculum over time just as the National Securities studies program have evolved over many, many decades. With that in mind, we think it is important to recognize that there is a difference although National Security and Homeland Security are related and have some degree of overlap, the sum of the requirements and attributes of the Homeland Security mission are quite distinct and do require a separate and sharply targeted educational curriculum.

Finally, the Department has in its five-year history, initiated and fostered the development of a variety of training programs that are offered to stake out stakeholders throughout the extended Homeland Security community. Many of these are funded through grants and other mechanisms and this is all good and appropriate, but one of the things that we have observed is here again there is a need for some periodic review mechanism to understand that these training programs are based on a consistent set of standards, are

reviewed for relevance and are well aligned with the rest of the overall Homeland Security training and education system.

In summary, we think it is vital to the mission maceration that we take the right steps to build a very mature system of training and education for the people not only within the Department of Homeland Security, but also to build the competencies that will be needed in the private sector who owns and operates critical infrastructures as well as in local communities who are in very many ways on the frontlines of this mission.

Another challenge that was identified by the working group was the need to build a very strong research and development, procurement and acquisition process that is necessary to support the Department's various missions. This actually stems from an earlier report by a Task Force of the Homeland Security Advisory Council called, "The Essential Technology Task Force Report" that was published earlier this year and it emphasizes a number of issues that currently exist. The first is the need to have a clear set of priorities established, goals and from those to identify capability gaps that then could be turned in to clear requirements. We do see the need for a Department-wide requirements management process that does not appear to exist today. Similarly, we believe that that should drive an acquisition strategy that is Department-wide for those crosscutting capabilities that touch the various components of the Department. We also need though for this acquisition strategy and the acquisition process to be fine-tuned and aligned with the degree of risk that is being undertaken in a particular acquisition. It is not simply a one-size fits all because there are a variety of different items that are being acquired. We also see through this acquisition process the need to build much stronger relationships with the private sector so that we reduce some of the programmatic failures that we have experienced over the last few years. A critical element of this, of course, is we need to have a very capable acquisition certified staff internal to the Department to oversee and implement this acquisition process.

On the R&D side, we also see the need for stimulating and managing innovation through a variety of approaches, some of which are already underway by the Department and others, we would recommend that they look at models in use by other parts of the government as well as by industry to motivate and incentivize innovative approaches to challenging problems. And then finally, we recognize that the Homeland Security mission is actually implemented or executed by a very broad and extended community. We see an opportunity to use the regulatory and standard setting role of the Department to generate economies of scale as well as to motivate better interoperability and so forth throughout the nation. So in sum, we recognize that the Department is a mere five-years old, which is actually quite young and the processes and procedures are continuing to mature, but we do believe that there is a critical need to accelerate the maceration of the R&D as well as the procurement and acquisition processes.

Another of the challenges we identified was an opportunity, as opposed to a challenge perhaps, and that opportunity is to lead the building of a resilient America. We see this as the desired outcome for the Homeland Security mission: the building of a nation that is robust, agile, flexible and resilient in every dimension, focusing on continuity of the American way of life. The phraseology actually stems from many, many years ago, the continuity of government programs which focused originally on maintaining continuity of the Constitutional form of government, leading to specific approaches to ensure that critical infrastructures that were required to support our way of government would maintain their operations through any form of attack. We believe this also builds on what is happening in the business community where very complex private sector businesses focus on maintaining continuity of business through enterprise risk management programs. There are many dimensions to resilience that we see as absolutely crucial and an appropriate goal for the Homeland Security mission. We would also argue that unlike strategies built on protection which can be brittle since it is very difficult to determine how much protection is enough, resilience has a fairly natural performance measure associated with it in that we can assess how much time would be required to restore the services and infrastructures that we rely upon in our daily lives.

We believe that resilience as a desired outcome have both the support of the private sector because it is aligned with their own business objectives and also is a more rationale approach to defining an outcome for the Homeland Security mission. So we see lots of opportunity here to advance both the understanding and strategies in building a resilient America.

The final challenge that I want to spend just a moment on is improving risk management and risk communications for Homeland Security. Secretary Chertoff, from virtually day one of his tenure, identified the need to take a risk management approach to the Homeland Security mission. We recognize the complexity of this. We recognize that the low probability but potentially high impact events associated with terrorist attacks don't fit cleanly into many of the mature risk assessment methodologies. We also acknowledge that the Department has held to this and has evolved and matured its own understanding of what risk informed decision-making is all about. Nonetheless, we see the need for additional emphasis, additional work in this area recognizing the difficulty and complexity both on the risk informed decision-making side and also on the risk communication side, which is the vital role of informing and educating and making aware both the American public and also the private sector owners and operators of infrastructure what threats we face must be made clear and communicated so that the appropriate stakeholders can take the necessary action. We also think it important though to acknowledge there is no such thing as a risk free world, that we will not prevent all threats, nor will we eliminate all vulnerabilities. We have to be very candid and pragmatic about our approach to risk communications, but again I will link this back to building a more resilient America requires good communication of risk because America's resilience has always stemmed from its people and the psychological resilience is an important part of building a resilient America.

**JEFFREY STERN:**

Thank you very much Dr. David and now we will turn it over to Supervisor, Don Knabe of Los Angeles County.

**DON KNABE:**

This is Don Knabe, Chair of the State and Local Officials Senior Advisory Committee that is a subcommittee of the HSAC. I am also a member of HSAC under the great leadership of Judge Webster. I have several items I am going to cover. First of all, one of the most significant points is the fact that Homeland Security is more than just a single Cabinet department. It is a very robust, vertical integration in the federal, state, local and tribal governments; the private and non-private sector is what you heard about earlier and the American citizens as well to build a secure, safe and resilient nation. As we say, the Homeland cannot be secure until every hometown is secure. Several of the issues under this particular area is gaining credibility with partners outside of the Department and that is going to be the foundation of success we think for the next Secretary. The key to gaining that credibility is to ensure that a bottom-up approach is applied virtually to all Homeland Security endeavors and that has been sort of a strain of thought from the very beginning in this whole process. A wide variety of Homeland Security partners make this a very difficult and tremendous challenge but one that needs to be dealt with. Also, we need to continue to build upon improving existing systems for engagement with the private sector which is extremely important and the next Secretary we feel must continue to aggressively engage the broader private sector to strengthen that working relationship on the various proposed Homeland Security strategies, policies, procedures, particularly during their formulation prior to publication or implementation. This collaboration is particularly important with respect we think to the private sector's role in our nation's response and resiliency endeavors and most importantly, with respect to the Department's regulatory rule making authority. The incoming leadership of DHS is going to be challenged to continually ensure that the Homeland Security partners are provided the various collaborative mechanisms that they need to provide

the essential outside the beltway perspective that work towards securing our homeland.

Another area is a need to continue to improve intelligence and information sharing. The Department and its partners have spent the last five-years building the basic systems and mechanisms to share and exchange information as well as intelligence and the next Secretary must continue, we feel very strongly, to expand this system. There are several opportunities that exist to accomplish this goal, including implementing objectively measurable processes for intelligence and information sharing with the private sector as well as state, local and tribal governments. Also the incoming DHS leadership must institute standards to continuously improve the quality, timeliness and operational utility of intelligence and information sharing system with ALL of the Homeland Security partners and several initiatives should be considered we think and supported and several of those might be in this one area - requirements based intelligence and information sharing. This is consistent with the intelligence cycle that DHS should implement a formal requirements process based on intelligence and information sharing processes with all of its state, local, tribal and private sector partners that is going to allow each partner to define, identify and voice its intelligence and information sharing needs. The performance metrics is in the feedback loop as each partner will tell the Department how it is doing in responding to their specific intelligence and information needs it submitted to them. That is very, very important.

Also, we need to expand and sustain our fusion centers. These intelligence fusion centers at the state level are becoming an essential and important part of our intelligence and information sharing. We need to expand that and we need to sustain the existing fusion centers by completing the assignments of DHS Intelligence Officers in every fusion center. I think currently the Department has deployed about 25 to the field and I understand there are plans to have 35 by the end of the year. We also need to continue to build common standards and common platforms for our information sharing in the fusion centers and we also need to see mechanisms to provide the sustained funding for fusion centers' efforts, especially those efforts that include technology and people. Also, we need to obviously involve the private sector in our fusion centers, our emergency operation centers and our joint field offices. These centers probably offer the best opportunity for the private sector to integrate with government activities by sharing their information on a day-to-day basis in integrating their response efforts during times of our national security emergencies.

Also, one other important part of this is to fix the security and classification process. Currently, we discover that the federal security clearance process and classification system is broken and is a barrier and often an excuse for not sharing pertinent information with Homeland Security partners. The next Secretary we feel should direct a concerted effort to resolve these clearance and classification issues.

One last priority area is the sustainability of our nation's Homeland Security efforts and there are two underlying issues that challenge the long-term sustainability of our Homeland Security efforts. Obviously, one is finance and the other one is focus. As far as financial sustainability, obviously we know in this period of economic struggle, it is going to be very easy for the federal government, the state and local governments and partners in the private sector to shirk responsibility for financing long-term Homeland Security efforts. Selling the need for continued and long-term investments to finance our Homeland Security enterprise for those over the horizon threats is going to be a very significant challenge to the next administration and particularly, the next Secretary. Finally, perhaps the toughest challenge for the next Secretary will be to keep the American public engaged and focused on efforts to prepare for any potential domestic or international threat. Maintaining the political will and public support to move forward with all necessary long-term efforts to secure our Homeland is a challenge for all Americans.

And finally, the new leaders of DHS must continue to work to inspire a sense of urgency in our Department of Homeland Security workforce, the public, and among our policy makers that our efforts are necessary and valuable to assure the resiliency and protection of our great nation.

With that, I just want to personally thank Secretary Chertoff, Judge Webster and others to be able to serve in this process and part of this report and also to the staff for a great job in a very short period of time of bringing this altogether. Thank you.

**JEFFREY STERN:**

Thank you Supervisor Knabe. Now we will conclude with Glenda Hood's report to the HSAC.

**GLENDA HOOD:**

Thank you very much. As the other speakers have stated, we worked very quickly and very hard and we do owe so much to the staff for being able to assist us in this hour. So the first challenge that I want to cover is we feel it is very important that the new Secretary certainly get an inventory of the Department's commitments and deadlines and that they are able to work with Congress to achieve a rationale system of oversight. The Department is very involved in a variety of controversial issues, but very important initiatives and many, of course, have Congressional mandated deadlines, so the ability to competently manage these deadlines is going to test the credibility of that new Secretary as well as the new leadership team that is put in place at the Department. Let me give you a few examples. First of all, the 9/11 Act requires that the Department scan 100% of U.S. bound maritime containers by 2012 and that they screen 100% of air cargo by 2010 with the requirement also stating that 50% of air cargo be screened by February of 2009. So those are congressionally mandated deadlines that the new Secretary and the leadership team need to be aware of and need to make sure that there is that system of oversight in place. Other examples are Real ID, Secure Border Initiatives Network (the SBI Net), U.S. Visit, Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, the Transportation Worker Identification Credential Program and many, many more. We also believe that the new Secretary must be very aggressive in working with Congressional leadership and with the White House in developing that rationale system of oversight, so that it can provide the proper balance between the Executive and Legislative roles in governance and that it doesn't choke that ability of the new leadership to manage the Department. This has been talked about a great deal and we know how important it is for the new Secretary. Certainly reporting to 86 different Congressional Committees directly can negatively affect the Department's ability to manage and address the many Homeland Security missions. And I want to note here that two recent Homeland Security Advisory Council reports, the Administration Transition Task Force as well as the Essential Technology Task Force reports emphatically support the 9/11 Commission recommendations for Congress to reduce its Homeland Security oversight processes. Eighty-six different Congressional Committees as far as oversight is just too many in everyone's opinion, so that needs to be looked at very closely.

The work of strengthening our nation's disaster response capability is not complete and this certainly is going to be a challenge for the new Secretary and he or she needs to understand the evolving roles and responsibilities and authorities that will go along with their position as the nation's leader for domestic crisis response. And certainly despite good efforts to improve our national response capabilities, including the new National Response Framework, the next Secretary must be very aware of the many response issues that require their additional attention. There is the gap in medical surge capacity. There is the national planning system and target capabilities list, the testing of response capacity, implementing the National Incident Management System and the National Response Framework across federal agencies. He or she must also gain a picture of national level resources, maintain the all hazard approach, understand disaster communications and thinking about recovery before the catastrophe. These are all things we went into more detail in the report and know how important it is again for the strengthening of that disaster response capability to be continually focused on and knowing again that it is not complete at this point in time.

Then, the final challenge that I am reporting to you today is finding that right balance between secure borders and open doors to travelers and students coming into our country as well as, of course, to commerce that crosses our borders. This issue really involves more than just The Department of Homeland Security. It includes partners such as The Department of State, The White House and, of course, the private sector; so the challenge of finding the proper balance between secure borders and open doors for travelers and foreign students and foreign workers and commerce has to remain a priority and this issue must be a focus at the highest levels of our government. We also need cabinet level leadership. It is really unreasonable to expect mission oriented agencies within the Department such as Customs and Border Protection or TSA that are charged with the very specific security mission to adjudicate the tradeoff and openness, but we can't win the long struggle against extremist ideology by closing our doors to people of the world that want to visit, to learn or work here. So we have to expand what works. The Department has made accomplishments by improving security by identifying those who would do us harm, but certainly additional work is needed especially with those interagency departments, such as The Department of State so that we can improve the processing of visitor and student and worker visas and we have to improve the metrics. I think we talked about to understand this problem we need to further develop and refine better metrics that measure the performance of our security systems around the processing of those people and those goods, in an effort to integrate the metrics used at The Department of State and in the private industry with those used at The Department of Homeland Security, but certainly help build a common picture of the movement of people and goods also would help measure the effectiveness in achieving the right balance.

And so again, in conclusion, the three challenges to add to those that Ruth and Don have presented is finding that right balance between securable borders and open doors to travelers, students and commerce. Knowing that the work of strengthening our nation's response capabilities is not complete and to certainly focus on that. The Secretary must very quickly receive the inventory of the Department's commitments and the deadlines and become aware of those and to work with Congress to achieve a rationale system of oversight for the Department.

**JEFFREY STERN:**

Thank you Glenda and also thank you Dr. David and Supervisor Knabe. I appreciate you reporting the findings and recommendations of the HSAC Working Group to the HSAC. I now turn the meeting back to you, Judge.

**CHAIR JUDGE WEBSTER:**

Thank you very much members for those wise and helpful reports of the Working Group. We have an opportunity to allow the other HSAC members who are in attendance to make any comments that they might wish. So I will open the floor for comment on this report from any of the other members. Please identify yourself and tell us what you think.

**NORMAN AUGUSTINE:**

In the absence of other speakers, this is Norm Augustine. I will make just a brief comment. I thought that the issues that were raised were very good and well presented. One thing that did not come up and that we have not talked a lot about recently that I think is important, as part of the overall planning effort is to revisit the health of our Red Teaming exercise's within DHS and that would be something that I would hope that the new administration would devote some effort to. I don't know whether that requires any change or anything at all, but I would offer that on the table.



**RUTH DAVID:**

I actually think that is a very good addition. Norm, this is Ruth David and I wonder if we couldn't incorporate that under the Homeland Leadership Section in terms of helping people think about this complex mission and the use of Red Teaming capabilities in doing so.

**JEFFREY STERN:**

We can certainly do that, Norm and we were, just among ourselves, trying to identify the place and I think she has identified the leadership section as an appropriate place and we'll take care of it.

**DON KNABE:**

Also, either that or both... This is Don Knabe under that challenge #6, work of strengthening our Nation's disaster response capabilities is not complete. That might be another place.

**RUTH DAVID:**

I'd be sure to add it to both because I think Red Teaming is broader than ... I think it fits in both, but it certainly... I wouldn't want to see it only in the disaster recovery.

**JEFFREY STERN:**

All right, we will add a bullet on Red Teaming. We will probably add it if it is okay with the Council, we'll put it under the testing of response capacity, a sentence related to Red Teaming and then put a bullet with it as a specific title under the education leadership piece. We'll incorporate those changes and they will be available in the final report.

**CHAIR JUDGE WEBSTER:**

We are getting ready to vote on the final report as amended. We will now move on to vote on the report.

**DON KNABE:**

Mr. Chairman, this is Don Knabe, I would move that we adopt and submit the final report to Secretary Chertoff as we have amended it.

**RUTH DAVID and GLENDA HOOD:** Second

**CHAIR JUDGE WEBSTER:**

The final report is moved and seconded. All members in favor of adopting the report to the top ten challenges facing the next Secretary of Homeland Security please say "aye". Any members oppose, please say "no". Very well, by voice vote it is unanimously adopted.

Now I would like to ask the members if they have anything in addition they would like to add while we are still on the public record? So I will open it again for any such thoughts if any member would like to do so.

**GLENDA HOOD:**

This is Glenda Hood and I would again like to as I think we have over and over stated, we have been extremely fortunate as we have gone through all the different challenges of putting together different reports to have an exceptional staff that has worked hand in hand with us. So thank you to Jeffrey Stern, Chuck Adams, Candace Stoltz, Lori Krause, Jennifer Myers, Amanda Rittenhouse, and Mike Miron. They have given us the ability to state our views and to challenge them and to challenge each other and I just hope that we continue to sing their praises because they've done just a great job for us.

**DON KNABE:**

This is Don Knabe and I totally agree as I mentioned in my earlier comments. The turnaround has been unbelievable from edits to inputs and a lot of conversation putting it in the right words, so it is greatly appreciated, the efforts of the staff. They did a phenomenal job!

**JEFFREY STERN:**

On behalf of the HSAC staff, thank you both for those comments.

**CHAIR JUDGE WEBSTER:**

I think those points are very well taken and I'm glad that you brought them up. I had a note to myself to say something similar. Staff, in these circumstances can make us or un-make us. I think the important thing here is how well they have been responsive to our own thoughts and ideas and helped us to shape them and express them with clarity and do it in a timely way. I couldn't be more pleased with what Jeff and his team has been able to do and I want to echo what has already been said.

At this time then, if there is no one else who would like to comment, I would like to share just a few of my own personal thanks to each of you. It has been a great honor and privilege to serve you and with you. There are many challenges that remain ahead in our nation's security and I hope that in our work that we have helped lay the foundation for success for the 216,000 members of The Department of Homeland Security. Just think of that increase since 2001 and 2002 and with all of the Homeland Security partners that you represent.

I spent this morning as many of you may have done in person or by television, at the Pentagon where we held a solemn ceremony to remember the attacks from September 11, 2001 and to dedicate a memorial to the victims at the Pentagon. My wife, Linda was very involved in the Memorial effort and it means a great deal to me that on this day we remember those who were lost, including the friends we each lost and never forget the lessons of that day. I thought it was an exceptional meeting, a solemn service, the President, the Vice President, leaders of government and the Congress and the Courts were in attendance; something like 15,000 spectators and a beautifully presented tribute and recognition in honoring those for their sacrifice and those who worked so hard to memorialize their sacrifice at the Pentagon. We will be talking about that one but that is the first Memorial to be formally dedicated.

On behalf of the members of The Homeland Security Advisory Council, I would like to express our appreciation to the three leaders we've had the privilege of advising, President George W. Bush, Secretary Tom Ridge, and Secretary Michael Chertoff. This Council provides a unique avenue for exchanging important ideas and initiatives among all the partners who share the burden of securing America.

We offer the Top Ten Challenges report to the next Secretary with the hope that he or she will have a successful tenure in leading this young organization. This Council is ready to assist the new Secretary in our continued desire to be of service to The Department and the American people.

On behalf of the Council, I would also like to express to the staff of the Homeland Security Council who worked so diligently to facilitate the delivery of our advice and recommendations. Over 20 reports and 300 recommendations over the six years, our deepest appreciation!

Now we are going to bring this public session to a close. Members of the public who would like to provide comment and that includes the media, who would like to provide comment to the Homeland Security Council, may do so in writing, by writing to The Homeland Security Advisory Council, U. S. Department of Homeland Security, Mail Stop 8045 Murray Lane, S. W., Washington, D. C. 20528, or by way of email to [HSAC@DHS.GOV](mailto:HSAC@DHS.GOV). We have already received some public comments from our Federal Register notice. Those comments are appreciated and they will be reflected in the meeting minutes. And so as we face the uncertain future but with the knowledge that we have done our very best to help the Secretary and the Department and our country, I declare this September 11, 2008 meeting, of the Homeland Security Advisory Council adjourned. Thank you very much.

Note that public comments were submitted on September 5, 2008 by Katherine Hahn, Director, US Federal Policy, SAS Institute Inc.