

# HOMELAND SECURITY STANDARDS SUBJECT AREA WORKING GROUPS (SSAWGs)

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## I. Purpose

This directive provides guidance and instructions for establishing and operating sectoral and crosscutting Homeland Security Standards Subject Area Working Groups (SSAWGs). The work of the SSAWGs will assist Federal, state, and local government procurement and regulatory officials and manufacturers in making procurement decisions and in developing regulatory and procedural requirements.

## II. Scope

This directive applies to all DHS Organizational Elements. It also affects other Federal, state, and local government agencies.

## III. Authorities

- A. The Homeland Security Act of 2002, codified in Title 6, US Code, as amended.
- B. The National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA), P.L. 104-113.
- C. Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C., App., and 41 CFR 102-3.
- D. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular No. A-119, Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and in Conformity Assessment Activities (February 19, 1998) (63 FR 8545) <<http://www.ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/nttaa/pubs/fr-omba119.pdf>>.

## IV. Definitions

- A. **AS-S&T**: Assistant Secretary for Planning, Programs, and Budget (PPB), Science and Technology Directorate (S&T).

- B. **Consensus Standards:** Standards developed or adopted by voluntary consensus standards bodies. Such standards will be considered and adopted in a manner consistent with DHS' obligations under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement and under the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA), P.L. 104-113.
- C. **DHS National Standard:** A standard adopted by DHS to assist Federal, state, and local government officials and manufacturers in making procurement and regulatory decisions regarding equipment and processes related to homeland security, especially regarding equipment for the nation's First Responders.
- D. **Organizational Element (OE):** Entities comprising the Dept of Homeland Security as defined in Management Directive 0010.1, "Management Directives System and DHS Announcements."
- E. **Science and Technology (S&T) Standards Portfolio Manager (SPM):** A representative of the S&T Directorate with responsibility for conducting S&T standards-related activities and for chairing the DHS Standards Council.
- F. **Secretary:** The Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.
- G. **Standards Subject Area Working Group (SSAWG):** A team of experts and stakeholders that assist in reviewing standards in a specified technical field, which were submitted for adoption or revision under the DHS National Standards program.
- H. **Under Secretary:** Under Secretary for Science and Technology (S&T) within DHS.

## V. Responsibilities

- A. **S&T Standards Portfolio Manager (SPM):** A representative of the S&T Directorate who shall be responsible for the following tasks:
1. Establishing sectoral and crosscutting working groups, as needed, to ensure effective coordination on standards-related issues within DHS and among DHS and other Federal, state, and local government agencies.
  2. Defining the scope of activities to be undertaken by each SSAWG.
  3. Selecting DHS staff members to chair each SSAWG Group.
  4. Ensuring adequate representation on SSAWGs from stakeholders within DHS OEs and from other Federal, state, and local government agencies.

5. Overseeing the work and budgets of the SSAWGs.
6. Ensuring that appropriate security measures are followed when handling classified materials.

B. **Standards Subject Area Working Groups (SSAWGs)**: A team of experts and stakeholders who are responsible for the following tasks:

1. Gathering, analyzing, and maintaining current information about standards and conformity assessment activities within a specified scope of activity.
2. Exchanging information on activities or other relevant issues among member agencies.
3. Advising the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and other Federal agencies on all homeland security standards matters that affect DHS, as well as those that affect other Federal, state, and local government agencies.
4. Ensuring coordination within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and among DHS and other Federal, state, and local government agencies in adopting and using DHS National Standards.
5. Making recommendations with respect to developing, adopting, and using DHS National Standards within DHS and by other Federal, state, and local government agencies.
6. Identifying needs and taking appropriate steps to strengthen coordination of homeland security standards-related policies and activities among DHS, Federal, state, and local government agencies.
7. Identifying needs and taking appropriate steps to strengthen coordination of homeland security standards-related policies and activities between the public and private sectors.
8. Developing strategic plans and resource requirements to meet identified needs. Ensuring that consensus is achieved within DHS and the SSWAG on identified needs and plans to the extent possible.
9. Ensuring that appropriate security measures are followed for handling classified materials.

C. **Assistant Secretary for Planning, Programs, and Budget (PPB), Science and Technology Directorate (S&T)**: A senior DHS official, who is

responsible for the following tasks:

1. Approving the strategic plans and budgets of the SSAWGs.
2. Reporting to the Under Secretary on homeland security standards issues that affect DHS and other Federal, state, and local government agencies.

## VI. Policy & Procedures

### A. Policy.

1. Since its inception, DHS has recognized the need to identify appropriate and effective standards for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) equipment; other standards required to ensure the security of U.S. borders and infrastructures; and standards related to equipment and procedures for the nation's First Responders. The lack of uniform, effective standards has led to inferior equipment being purchased; incompatibility among equipment, processes, and procedures of First Responder units; and a lack of effectiveness and efficiency in activities designed to ensure the security of U.S borders and infrastructures.
2. The DHS SSAWGs are designed to assist in identifying and adopting DHS National Standards necessary for the proper execution of Department of Homeland Security activities, and to promote effective and coordinated use of all DHS National Standards by DHS and by other Federal, state, and local government agencies in furtherance of U.S. national security goals. These standards will be used to assist Federal, state, and local government procurement and regulatory officials and manufacturers in making procurement decisions and developing regulatory requirements.
3. Standards of various kinds (e.g., equipment, components, or systems) can be accepted under the auspices of this program.
4. Appropriate security policies and procedures will be in place and effectively implemented for handling classified materials.

### B. Procedures.

1. Reporting: The SSAWGs will report to the Science and Technology Standards Portfolio Manager (SPM) within the Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate.
2. Membership:

- a. Each SSAWG will be chaired by a DHS staff member selected by the Standards Portfolio Manager. DHS OEs will be asked to nominate staff members to serve as chairpersons of SSAWGs.
- b. An Executive Secretary for each SSAWG will be selected by the Chair of the SSAWG in consultation with the Standards Portfolio Manager. The Executive Secretary will assist the chair with the administrative tasks associated with the SSAWG, such as preparing and issuing agendas, minutes, discussion material, and reports.
- c. DHS staff members serving on the SSAWGs will include representation from the S&T Directorate as well as technical and subject matter experts nominated by other OEs within DHS. DHS membership will vary by SSAWG depending on the scope of activities assigned to the SSAWG and the interests of particular DHS OEs in those activities.
- d. Representatives from other Federal agencies will be invited to participate on all SSAWGs in which the Federal agency is a stakeholder in the activities under consideration by the SSAWG.
- e. Representatives of state and local government agencies will also be invited to participate on SSAWGs in all areas where state and local government agencies have a stake in the activities under consideration by the SSAWG.
- f. Government agency representatives may designate other government employees as alternates to serve in their absence provided those alternates have the necessary expertise and security clearances to participate effectively in the activities of the SSAWG.
- g. Private sector technical experts and other stakeholders may be invited to participate in specific meetings by the Chair of a SSAWG based on their expertise in the areas of activity being discussed. Private sector participants will not be voting members of a SSAWG.

3. SSAWG Operation and Meetings:

- a. The SSAWGs will meet at least three (3) times a year. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair of the SSAWG or at the written request of two (2) members of the

SSAWG. After obtaining a consensus of 50% of the membership of the SSAWG, the Chair may request that the SPM waive the meeting requirement if the activity within the group does not warrant a meeting.

b. The SSAWG may establish task groups as appropriate. Task groups will meet as needed to conduct assigned activities. Task group members will be selected based on their technical and subject matter expertise and do not have to be members of the SSAWG.

c. Attendance at SSAWG meetings by at least one-half of the designated members of the SSAWG, or their alternates, shall constitute a quorum.

d. Decisions internal to the SSAWG's operations, such as formation of a task group, shall be made by a majority of those present and voting.

e. Voting on SSAWG business and proposals shall be limited to government (Federal, state, local, and tribal) agency voting members of the SSAWG.

f. The Chair shall not vote except in the case of a tie vote.

g. The need for and scope of activity assigned to each SSAWG shall be re-examined within three (3) years of the date the working group is established. This review shall be conducted by the Standards Portfolio Manager in consultation with the Chair of the SSAWG to determine the need for the SSAWG's continuation.

h. New SSAWGs may be established, as needed, at the discretion of the Standards Portfolio Manager.

## **VII. Questions**

Questions or concerns regarding this Directive should be addressed to the DHS Office of Science and Technology.