

## PRESS RELEASES

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### I. Purpose

This directive establishes Department of Homeland Security (DHS) policy regarding press releases.

### II. Scope

This directive applies to all DHS organizational elements.

### III. Authorities

This directive is governed by other DHS Office of Public Affairs directives:

- A. M.D. 2230, Public Affairs Management Structure
- B. M.D. 2010, Public Affairs Guidance and Designated Spokespeople

### IV. Definitions

**Press Release** – A document produced specifically for the purpose of releasing to the media announcements regarding policy, personnel, upcoming events, or current events.

### V. Responsibilities

The **Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and the Public Affairs staff at the Department of Homeland Security** are responsible for making a coordinated effort to distribute press releases with the various **Public Affairs Officers in DHS' organizational elements**.

## VI. Policy & Procedures

A. The DHS Office of Public Affairs, the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, and his/her staff shall be the clearinghouse for ALL press releases/statements regarding Homeland Security and its national mission. Any release to be produced regarding any national Homeland Security policy, plan, mission, Department of Homeland Security personnel, or the Secretary of Homeland Security's agenda or schedule shall be cleared and approved by the DHS Office of Public Affairs. The Department shall handle the final formatting of the release and the actual distribution of said release. However, there may be exceptions to this rule when it pertains to issues specific to a DHS organizational element or an organizational element's routine functions, and when it does not directly impact the national mission of the Department of Homeland Security. The DHS Office of Public Affairs should – prior to release - receive a copy of each press release that is distributed by DHS organizational elements, even if said press release does not require specific approval from the Department Public Affairs Office for distribution.

1. Routine releases specific to an organizational element: If an organizational element has typically issued press releases regarding routine procedures and actions that do not directly apply to a national Homeland Security issue or mission, but specifically apply to the organizational element and its routine operations, then the organizational element may issue the press releases, using the Department's letterhead, and notifying the DHS Office of Public Affairs before releasing. Public Affairs officers should use caution and exercise judgment before making a decision whether or not to release something from the organizational element directly. The PAO should decide whether or not the content of the release affects the Department of Homeland Security and/or multiple organizational elements as a whole, versus whether or not the content is specific to one organizational element. Also, the PAO should apply the standard that if he/she believes that the release might potentially make national news, that the Department headquarters should release the document on their behalf.
2. Specific vs. National Issues: If a press release contains issues that are organizational element or policy-specific and have no national impact and in no way are applicable to the Department of Homeland Security's national mission, then they may be released directly from the agency to their specified list without direct approval from the Department of Homeland Security.
3. Organizational Element Head advisories and schedules: If an organizational element wishes to release a press release or media advisory regarding the schedule of the organizational element head, they may do so without notifying or obtaining the approval of the Department.

4. Press Release Letterhead: All press releases disseminating from the Department of Homeland Security and its organizational elements shall use a template designated by the DHS Office of Public Affairs to release public information.

B. **Any questions or concerns** regarding this directive should be addressed to the DHS Office of Public Affairs. If there is any doubt as to whether a press release is appropriate to be issued directly from an organizational element, the organizational element should contact the DHS Office of Public Affairs.