

Department and Agency Implementation Plans for The U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security



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Acting Secretary's Forward

In 2017, President Donald J. Trump signed a first of its kind law recognizing the essential role of women around the world in promoting peace, maintaining security, and preventing conflict and abuse. The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (WPS Act) advances opportunities for women to participate in these efforts—both at home and in our partner nations.

As Acting Secretary of DHS, it was my honor to sign the Department's first Implementation Plan to support the WPS Act and the 2019 U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).

Women at the Department play an invaluable role in safeguarding the American people, our homeland, and our values. As we continue to benefit from the contributions of women in meeting our many missions, it is also essential that we support the role of women globally.

There are critical links between women's empowerment and global peace and security — and by contrast, disastrous consequences as a result of marginalization and exclusion. Simply, the incorporation of women in peace-building and disaster recovery in fragile states increases the likelihood that the process or recovery will improve.

Terrorists, transnational criminal organizations and other bad actors congregate in areas of conflict and spur population displacement and migration, including to the United States. In this sense, protecting our homeland means globally protecting women's equality, opportunity, and empowerment. This includes remaining vigilant in the fight against gender-based violence, including human trafficking and female genital mutilation.

While the WPS Act is primarily focused on increasing globally the participation of women in preventing and resolving conflict, countering terrorism and violent extremism, and building post conflict peace and stability, DHS must also continue to look inward at our own practices.

The Department will continue to look for opportunities to advance women in law enforcement and share these same opportunities with partner countries, where permissible by law. DHS will also promote the need for partner countries to develop training and opportunities for women in the security sector, where appropriate.

I am pleased to designate the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Cameron P. Quinn, as the DHS senior official for Women, Peace and Security. Both through its Equal Employment Opportunity functions, and CRCL's proactive role to advise and support DHS leadership to ensure civil rights and civil liberties protections are incorporated in all departmental policy and programs, CRCL already engages across DHS on related issues.

I look forward to reviewing the first-year baseline metrics, and subsequent annual improvements, of DHS' Components and Offices, as we work together to fulfill the requirements and aspirations of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017.

Chad F. Wolf
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security

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Introduction

The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (“Act”) was signed into law on October 6, 2017 by President Donald J. Trump. The Act recognizes the benefits derived from creating opportunities for women and girls to serve as agents of peace via political, economic, and social empowerment. In June of 2019, in response to the requirements of the Act, the United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security (“WPS”) was published by the White House. Both the Act and the WPS aim to promote the meaningful inclusion of women in processes to prevent, mitigate, resolve, and recover from deadly conflict or disaster.

Efforts related to WPS have been ongoing across the US government for more than a decade. Overall goals of the Act and the WPS include:

- Women are more prepared and increasingly able to participate in efforts that promote stable and lasting peace;
- Women and girls are safer, better protected, and have equal access to government and private assistance programs, including from the United States, international partners, and host nations; and
- The United States and partner governments have improved institutionalization and capacity to ensure WPS efforts are sustainable and long-lasting.

Legislative Requirement:

Section 5 (a) and (b) of the “Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017” (Pub. L. No 115-68) requires the following:

(a) Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and again four years thereafter, the President, in consultation with the heads of the relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and make publicly available a single government-wide strategy, to be known as the Women, Peace, and Security Strategy, that provides a detailed description of how the United States intends to fulfill the policy objectives in section 4 [of Pub. L. No 115-68]. The strategy shall—

- (1) support and be aligned with plans developed by other countries to improve the meaningful participation of women in peace and security processes, conflict prevention, peace building, transitional processes, and decision making institutions; and
- (2) include specific and measurable goals, benchmarks, performance metrics, timetables, and monitoring and evaluation plans to ensure the accountability and effectiveness of all policies and initiatives carried out under the strategy.

(b) Specific Plans for Departments and Agencies.--Each strategy under subsection (a) shall include a specific implementation plan from each of the relevant Federal departments and agencies that describes—

- (1) the anticipated contributions of the department or agency, including technical, financial, and in-kind contributions, to implement the strategy; and
- (2) the efforts of the department or agency to ensure that the policies and initiatives carried out pursuant to the strategy are designed to achieve maximum impact and long-term sustainability.

Department/Agency Approach

This important strategy—the first of its kind—will have far-reaching effects on the success and empowerment of women as it not only prioritizes women’s participation in conflict recovery, but in civilian and economic life as well. The DHS approach to implementation will be divided into two segments. First, the WPS implementation plan of the United States Coast Guard (“USCG”) will be created and executed in close coordination with the Department of Defense. Second, this document sets forth the implementation plan of the remaining Components and Offices of DHS, which is the first step in a graduated approach to measuring interagency and DHS success. In part because the WPS, which implements the Act, is the first of its type in the world, this implementation plan will rely heavily on lessons learned and ongoing innovations within the field to further refine metrics and effectuate change. In the year following the approval of this implementation plan, DHS, in cooperation with the interagency effort, will begin data collection after 01 June 2020. Collection methodologies for the metrics discussed below will then be adjusted and strengthened based upon feedback, as well as the feedback of DHS Components, Offices, and relevant stakeholders. Additional Component and Office specific performance metrics may be required as part of this process in subsequent years.

Because WPS is an internationally focused strategy, DHS will act in a supporting role to the U.S. Department of State (“DoS”) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (“USAID”). In close coordination with DoS and USAID, DHS will examine the relevant existing operational strategies and priorities of the Department to determine if gender analysis-based performance metrics can be incorporated into those strategies and priorities to produce measurable advances in WPS related opportunities for women and girls.

As a participant in the negotiation of international agreements regarding border security, drug interdiction, and the facilitation of lawful trade, DHS is positioned to offer, as part of those agreements, opportunities for women serving in the law enforcement and security sectors the opportunity to pursue specialized law enforcement training, when permitted by existing U.S. law, that may be unavailable in partner countries. Because such opportunities are subject to security considerations and resource availability, DHS will also promote the need for partner countries to develop training and development opportunities for women in the security sector, where appropriate. DHS key leader engagements with partner nations, such as the Northern Triangle countries of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, will include requests for formal partnerships on WPS issues or incorporate strategic communications designed to incentivize partner governments to pursue WPS policies.

When permitted by U.S. law, DHS will assist partner governments to increase the opportunities for women to serve in security sector forces by bolstering the development of women’s technical and professional competencies through promoting awareness of training opportunities for female foreign law enforcement officers and border security professionals at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (“FLETC”) and other DHS law enforcement training facilities. Individual Components of DHS, such as U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”), also offer advanced training available to foreign nationals that will be included in this effort. DHS Components with overseas operations will be tasked to examine whether Component conducted training within partner countries can include female personnel from that partner country when operational considerations and security requirements permit their participation. Through educational opportunities at DHS, foreign female law enforcement officers will be afforded the opportunity to discover informal career counseling, networking, and mentoring opportunities through interaction with their peers that would otherwise be unavailable.

Components and Offices that currently administer DHS domestic based awareness programs which relate to gender issues, such as human trafficking, labor trafficking, and female genital mutilation (“FGM”) will be examined to determine if WPS priorities and metrics can be incorporated into those existing programs with Component and Office heads reporting to the Secretary, through the CRCL Officer, the results of this examination.

Lines of Effort (“LOE”)

The LOE and Metrics listed below were previously drafted through an interagency effort. The Office for CRCL will serve as the DHS lead in compiling information regarding DHS compliance with the WPS Strategy Lines of Efforts and report those findings to the interagency working group for dissemination.

LOE 1: Participation

- *Number of engagements by key USG leaders focused on increasing women’s meaningful participation and leadership.*

The Officer for CRCL has been designated as the DHS senior official to lead the DHS WPS Strategy and represent DHS at official engagements regarding WPS. The CRCL Officer will identify key partnerships and engagements to demonstrate the DHS commitment to the WPS Strategy and work closely with the leadership of the Components and Offices to promote their support and attendance at these engagements.

- *Number of women who participate in U.S.-funded training to foreign nationals.*

Many women face multiple barriers when trying to enter, remain, or advance in the workforce. CRCL will assess whether women have access to the same capacity-building and career-strengthening opportunities DHS provides to their male colleagues by measuring women’s participation in U.S.-funded training and initiatives. This will help the USG and DHS identify gaps in U.S. efforts to guide future WPS programs and outreach. Consistent with the President’s National Security Strategy, which recognizes the critical link between women’s empowerment and more peaceful, prosperous societies, DHS will act, where appropriate, to strengthen efforts to advance women’s leadership in countering violent extremism and in the security sector. DHS will support international WPS efforts by setting an example for our global partners to join with us in supporting the advancement of women in these critical areas.

The Components and Offices that offer educational opportunities to female international law enforcement officers (“FILEO”) and female foreign security professionals will collect and transmit to CRCL, once yearly and no later than the conclusion of each fiscal year, attendance data indicating the number of FILEO and/or female foreign security professionals that have attended each course of study or training program sponsored or taught by that Component or Office. In addition, the relevant Components and Offices will review their educational programming to determine ways to incentivize the inclusion of female foreign students in their training programs, where existing U.S. law permits foreign law enforcement participation in such training.

LOE 2: Protection & Access

- *The USG will review, revise, and adopt safeguarding standards that guide the conduct of implementers of USG funded programs.*

DHS is committed to protecting beneficiaries of U.S. assistance and advancing human dignity by preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. Establishing effective safeguarding standards, in consultation with implementing partners, beneficiaries, and program participants, will strengthen accountability and lay the groundwork for necessary and appropriate action.

However, DHS's activities in this area are limited. As such, DHS will take a supporting role to the efforts of DOS and USAID to develop these safeguards, provide consultation and advice, and implement those safeguards where appropriate within DHS once these safeguards have been developed. The CRCL Officer will serve as DHS lead in this effort and periodically report progress in the development of these standards to the Secretary and the heads of each Component and Office.

- *Number of key U.S. leader engagements focused on women's safety and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) in conflict, crisis, and disaster contexts.*

Senior-level engagement raises awareness of the importance of women's and girls' protection, including from GBV, and helps mobilize political will and action from other governments, international organizations, and non-governmental actors. Tracking this metric will measure the commitment of key and influential leaders across the interagency and bolster USG commitment to advancing accountability for abuses.

Once yearly and no later than the conclusion of each fiscal year, the Components and Offices will report to the Secretary, through the CRCL Officer, the number of engagements focused on women's safety/gender-based violence where the Component or Office head appeared on behalf of DHS. In turn, CRCL will compile this information for transmission to the interagency effort.

LOE 3: Internal U.S. Capabilities

- *Departments and agencies designate one or more senior official to be the lead for Women, Peace, and Security.*

As stated above, the CRCL Officer will serve as the senior official to lead the WPS Strategy implementation for DHS

- *Number of USG trainings that integrate WPS principles.*

To be successful, U.S. personnel must be equipped and supported to implement the WPS Strategy. Given that WPS is a cross-cutting effort that can be applied across a wide array of issue areas, departments and agencies recognize the importance of integrating WPS themes into existing training in addition to stand-alone efforts. Components and Offices will review existing training programs to determine which training programs include WPS themes and report their findings to CRCL at least once yearly and no later than the end of each fiscal year. Components and Offices will also work cooperatively with CRCL to identify possible future training opportunities and stand-alone efforts to promote WPS principles.

Where DHS provides counterterrorism-related security sector assistance (SSA) to foreign nations in cooperation with DoS to ensure that those foreign partners have adequate capacity to detect, target, and interdict terrorists, DHS will target these SSA efforts strategically, ensuring that assistance to partner nations is based on threat assessments, U.S. strategic objectives, and resource constraints, while also encouraging partner nations to identify additional opportunities for women security professionals from those partner nations to pursue leadership roles in these efforts.

- *Departments and agencies establish internal WPS coordination structures and mechanisms.*

Establishing internal mechanisms to track, coordinate, and implement WPS Strategy initiatives within DHS will advance its integration across strategies, policies, and programs and amplify its impact. Components and Offices will each establish internal coordination structures and mechanisms to fully incorporate WPS strategies where appropriate. The internal coordination structures and mechanisms of each Component and Office will work cooperatively with CRCL, the DHS lead for WPS, to mutually verify that WPS goals are being achieved and appropriate reporting responsibilities are timely fulfilled.

- *Total funding of activities aligned with WPS Strategy objectives.*

The internal coordination structures of each Component and Office assigned to implement WPS principles will be responsible for identifying any additional funding required to implement WPS principles, and where appropriate, working cooperatively with DHS Headquarters, including CRCL, to secure additional funding when required. However, the CRCL Officer will lead DHS WPS compliance efforts as the single point of contact for the Department. The CRCL Officer will work closely with the senior leadership of each Component to fully implement WPS strategy principles at the Component, while providing subject matter expertise. CRCL will provide expert technical guidance in implementation, monitoring of performance, along with data collection, analysis, and reporting. CRCL will meet this challenge through the expansion of existing CRCL expert resources on gender roles, equal employment opportunity, and civil rights related law enforcement education.

- *Number of key USG strategies that explicitly integrate WPS principles.*

Prioritizing integration of WPS across key U.S. department and agency strategies will ensure USG foreign policy and processes will be more informed and successful in endeavors relating to preventing, mitigating and responding to conflict. CRCL and Office of Strategy, Policy and Plans will work cooperatively to review existing strategies to determine which DHS strategies incorporate WPS principles and identify opportunities to weave WPS principles into future strategy documents.

DHS Policy will examine the advisability of an internal directive and instruction requiring a signed statement by the Assistant Secretary for Policy to be executed each time a DHS strategic document is published that WPS Strategy Principles were considered and were included/not included.

LOE 4: Partner Support

- *Number of engagements by key U.S. leaders that lead to formal partnerships on WPS with partner nations.*

USG senior-level engagement raises awareness of the importance of WPS and helps mobilize political will and action from other governments, international organizations, and non-governmental actors. As stated above, DHS is a participant in the negotiation of international agreements regarding border security, drug interdiction, and the facilitation of lawful trade. When appropriate, DHS will engage partner nations on WPS issues. The Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans will compile the relevant data regarding the number of formal partnerships on WPS and transmit the results to CRCL no later than the end of each fiscal year.

Process/Cross Cutting

A directive and instruction issued by the Secretary of Homeland Security will codify the aspirational goals of DHS regarding WPS and raise awareness of WPS priorities across the various Components and offices of DHS, while emphasizing the need to consider, when and where appropriate, gender-based metrics being incorporated into broader DHS strategies across the operational functions of the Department.

Component cooperation will be necessary during the public announcement of DHS participation in the implementation of the WPS strategy, particularly public facing social media and round table discussions with the members of the various communities affected by the strategy. Internally, a once yearly agency wide awareness briefing by the DHS Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties will restate the importance of the WPS. The awareness briefing will remind leadership and supervisors of the performance metrics referenced above, while asking them to incorporate, when appropriate, the aspirational goals of the WPS into their other areas of responsibility.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

The WPS Strategy is the first comprehensive strategy of its kind globally. And DHS is just being added as a key partner in an on-going international effort by the US government. As such, the implementation methods contemplated in this plan, which are not currently in process, are unproven and must evolve year to year as program effectiveness is reviewed. However, DHS and CRCL will draw upon substantially similar data collection and reporting projects implemented previously at DHS to construct an initial architecture for the business rules used to implement the WPS strategy. As DHS lead, CRCL will make an initial baseline study of DHS Component operations that are affected by WPS principles and establish ongoing dialog with specific points of contact within each Component, while identifying subject matter experts in WPS principles or related civil rights subjects, to begin the process of building DHS capacity to meet WPS goals at the Component level.

At the outset, senior leadership of all the Components and relevant Offices will designate these points of contact, establish business rules for the flow of information and collection of data within the department, as well as work cooperatively with CRCL to establish initial parameters for the reporting of performance data compiled under the metrics above. CRCL will be responsible for compiling and reporting DHS performance. Senior leadership of each Component will establish and begin using these business rules for the collection of the data to be reported to CRCL under the metrics above no later than the end of FY 2020. Evaluation methods will be developed by CRCL subject matter experts, in close consultation with the Components.

Once yearly, CRCL will convene a shared learning exchange with senior leadership of the Components to report on overall DHS performance, review lessons learned, exchange best practices, and implement needed changes to enhance performance and improve efficiency. This shared learning exchange will be in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other internal or external reporting requirements under the WPS.



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