



**Homeland  
Security**

*Office of Public Affairs*

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

## **Homeland Security Starts with Hometown Security**

As Secretary Napolitano said in the inaugural “State of America’s Homeland Security” address in January, our nation is more secure than it was two years ago, and more secure than when DHS was founded eight years ago. All of our efforts are guided by a simple but powerful, idea -- homeland security begins with hometown security. We are all safer when local law enforcement works together with the communities and citizens they serve, and their partners in the Federal government and the private sector, to protect against the threats we face.

Since it was formed in 2003, DHS has achieved significant progress across its key mission areas: preventing terrorism, securing our borders; enforcing our immigration laws; securing cyberspace; and ensuring resilience to disasters:

**Preventing terrorism and enhancing security.** Protecting the United States from terrorism is the cornerstone of homeland security. Most recently, in January 2011, Secretary Napolitano announced the new National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS), which will more effectively communicate information about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the public, government agencies, first responders, airports and other transportation hubs, and the private sector.

DHS has also led a global initiative to strengthen the international aviation system through partnerships with governments and industry, investments in new technology, and enhanced international standards and targeting measures. In November 2010, the Department fulfilled a key 9/11 Commission recommendation by fully implementing Secure Flight, under which the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checks 100 percent of passengers on flights within or bound for the United States against government watchlists. Additionally, DHS and the air cargo industry have successfully met the 100 percent cargo screening mandate on domestic and international outbound passenger aircraft.

The Department also launched a nationwide expansion of the “If You See Something, Say Something” campaign—to raise public awareness of indicators of terrorism, crime and other threats and emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activity to law enforcement. The campaign is being implemented in conjunction with the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative- an Administration effort to train state and local law enforcement to recognize behaviors and indicators related to terrorism, crime and other threats; standardize how those observations are documented and analyzed; and expand and enhance the sharing of those reports with the Department of Justice and DHS.

**Securing and managing our borders.** DHS has deployed historic levels of personnel, technology, and resources to the Southwest border. Today, the Border Patrol is better staffed than at any time in its 86-year history, having more than doubled the number of agents from approximately 10,000 in 2004 to more than 20,700 today. Under the Southwest Border Initiative, DHS has doubled the number of personnel assigned to Border Enforcement Security Task Forces; increased the number of intelligence analysts focused on cartel violence; quintupled deployments of Border Liaison Officers to work with their Mexican counterparts; begun screening 100 percent of southbound rail shipments for illegal weapons, drugs, and cash; and expanded unmanned aircraft system coverage to the entire Southwest border.

Every key metric shows that these border security efforts are producing significant results. Border Patrol apprehensions – a key indicator of illegal immigration – have decreased 36 percent in the past two years, and are less than one third of what they were at their peak, and seizures of drugs, weapons and currency have increased across the board. DHS has engaged in a historic level of cooperation with the governments of Canada and Mexico.

**Enforcing and administering our immigration laws.** DHS has fundamentally reformed immigration enforcement, prioritizing the identification and removal of criminal aliens who pose a threat to public safety and targeting employers who knowingly and repeatedly break the law. In fiscal year 2010, Immigration and Customs Enforcement set a record for overall removals of illegal aliens, with more than 392,000 removals nationwide. Half of those removed—more than 195,000—were convicted criminals.

DHS has expanded the Secure Communities initiative—which runs the fingerprints of criminals against federal immigration databases to identify and remove criminal aliens in state prisons and local jails—from 14 jurisdictions in 2008 to more than 1,200 today, including all jurisdictions along the Southwest border. Additionally, since January 2009, DHS has audited more than 4,600 employers suspected of hiring illegal labor, debarred more than 315 companies and individuals, and imposed approximately \$61 million in financial sanctions—more than the total amount of audits and debarments than during the entire previous administration.

The Department has also strengthened the efficiency and accuracy of the E-Verify system, a Web-based employment verification tool that is adding more than 1,300 businesses a week; formalized a longstanding Departmental policy to expedite and streamline the citizenship process for men and women serving in the U.S. armed forces; launched the Blue Campaign to Combat Human Trafficking; continued major reforms of the immigration detention system; expanded immigrant integration efforts; and continued the multi-year effort to transform U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services from a predominately paper-based system to one that is fully electronic, incorporating new technology to improve efficiency and enhance national security.

**Safeguarding and securing cyberspace.** DHS is committed to working closely with our partners across government and in the private sector to make cyberspace safer and more resilient. Over the past two years, DHS has increased its capacity to fight cyber crimes and cyber terrorism by opening a new 24/7 watch and warning center; hosting Cyber Storm III, an exercise that brought together participants from 13 countries, 11 states and seven Cabinet-level federal agencies to simulate a large-scale cyber attack on critical infrastructure to test the federal government's full suite of cybersecurity response capabilities, including our country's first national-level cyber incident response plan; and increasing cyber experts by approximately 500 percent.

Additionally, last October, Secretary Napolitano signed a landmark agreement with the Department of Defense to enhance America's capabilities to protect against threats to critical civilian and military computer systems and networks. DHS has also launched the "Stop. Think. Connect." national public cybersecurity awareness campaign to promote simple steps the public can take to increase their safety and security online and deployed the second phase of the EINSTEIN system, designed to provide the U.S. Government with an early warning system for intrusions to Federal Executive Branch civilian networks, at 15 Departments and agencies to date.

**Ensuring resilience to disasters.** DHS provides the coordinated, comprehensive Federal response in the event of a terrorist attack, natural disaster or other large-scale emergency while working with Federal, state, local, and private sector partners to ensure a swift and effective recovery effort. The Department's efforts to build a ready and resilient Nation include bolstering information sharing; providing grants, plans and training to our homeland security and law enforcement partners; and facilitating rebuilding and recovery along the Gulf Coast.

DHS played a key role in the Obama administration's response to the BP oil spill, the largest spill in our nation's history, leading the federal government's efforts to leverage resources from across the country and around the world to mitigate the impact of the oil on the environment, the economy and public health. Additionally, over the past two years, DHS has mobilized the Department's extensive operational capabilities in response to the earthquake in Haiti; announced nearly \$3.8 billion in fiscal year 2010 grants to assist state, local and tribal governments and the private sector in strengthening preparedness for acts of terrorism, major disasters and other emergencies; signed bilateral international agreements to strengthen emergency management cooperation; and supported 79 major disaster declarations, 18 fire management assistance declarations and nine emergency declarations, including historic flooding in Tennessee and Rhode Island and severe weather related to Hurricanes Alex and Earl, and Tropical Storms Nicole, Otto and Tomas.

**Maturing and strengthening the homeland security enterprise.** DHS is committed to maturing and strengthening the homeland security enterprise - the collective efforts and shared responsibilities of federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, nongovernmental, and private-sector partners, as well as individuals, families, and communities - by enhancing information sharing, building resilient communities, and developing innovative solutions through cutting-edge science and technology, while fostering a culture of efficiency, sustainability and fiscal responsibility across the Department.

Over the past two years, DHS has unveiled a Department-wide plan for increased consultation and coordination with tribes; launched the Department's Open Government Plan to enhance transparency, public participation and collaboration; completed the first ever Quadrennial Homeland Security Review, a unified, strategic framework for homeland security missions and goals, and the first ever Bottom-Up Review (BUR), which aligned DHS' programmatic activities and organizational structure to better serve those missions and goals – strengthening DHS efforts to ensure a safe, secure, and resilient homeland; and instituted an ambitious series of management integration reforms to ensure the Department has the proper management structures and acquisition strategies necessary to succeed and attract and retain top talent.

Additionally, in March 2009, Secretary Napolitano launched the Department-wide Efficiency Review to make the Department a leaner, smarter agency better equipped to protect the nation. Through the Department's FY 2012 budget request, Component-specific efforts and the 33 Department-wide Efficiency Review initiatives launched to date to streamline operations and promote greater accountability, transparency and customer satisfaction, the Department has identified over \$1 billion in cost avoidances.

To view a comprehensive list of DHS' 2010 accomplishments, [click here](#). (PDF, 17 pages, 124 KB)