

Open Government Plan

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Executive Summary

President Barack Obama's January 21, 2009 Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government reflects two important objectives for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). First, DHS shares the goal to improve the way government and the public interacts, fostering a renewed partnership and public trust. Second, the Department views information sharing as a critical factor for DHS to meet its mission including: protecting against and preventing terrorism, responding to emergencies of all kinds, and investing in response and recovery capabilities.

“My Administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government. We will work together to ensure the public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation, and collaboration. Openness will strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in Government.”
President Barack Obama

A common theme throughout the Department is the critical need to share accurate and relevant information in a timely manner to the widest appropriate audience. In many cases, sensitive information held by the Department is inappropriate for public release; however, it may be shared with other government entities entrusted with protecting public safety. Other types of information provide the public with valuable insights into how the Department carries out its missions and promote a public dialogue on departmental operations.

On December 8, 2009, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released the Open Government Directive (OGD) to guide agencies in their implementation of President Obama's transparency agenda. The challenge of implementing the OGD and a sustainable culture of open government at DHS is striking a just balance between the release of appropriate and timely information while ensuring the protection of national security, privacy and civil rights. To achieve these goals and improve the process for providing a full spectrum of end-users with the information they seek, the Department must expand partnerships at all levels and improve methods of communication.

The following Open Government Plan is the first step in creating, maintaining and institutionalizing a plan for transparency, participation, and collaboration for DHS operations. This document describes current resources that support open government, shares insights received from public feedback, and identifies best practices to redefine

relationships between the Department, other government agencies, private sector organizations, and citizens.

1 Introduction

1.1 Executive Vision and Objectives

DHS was founded, in part, to facilitate the exchange of information between and among Federal agencies, State, local, and Tribal governments, and the private sector. DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano’s holistic approach for homeland security includes information sharing across diverse disciplines – law enforcement, public health, emergency management and critical infrastructure – in support of five mission areas:

- Preventing Terrorism and Enhancing Security
- Securing and Managing Our Borders
- Enforcing and Administering Our Immigration Laws
- Safeguarding and Securing Cyberspace
- Ensuring Resilience to Disasters

“Ensuring the security of the homeland requires the interaction of multiple Federal departments and agencies, as well as operational collaboration across Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. This collaboration and cooperation undergirds our security posture at our borders and ports, our preparedness in our communities, and our ability to effectively react to crises.”

DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano

This Open Government Plan encapsulates Secretary Napolitano’s vision for making the Department stronger and shrinking the separation between government and citizens through modern technologies, traditional communication channels, and long-term and developing innovations. Long-standing and recently renewed efforts in information sharing, strengthened partnerships across all levels of government, and relationships between DHS and private institutions reflect the Department’s dedication to transparency, openness and collaboration.

1.2 Audience

The responsibilities of DHS span all hazards and threats, all phases of emergency management, preparedness, response and recovery. A wide range of citizens will benefit from increased access, transparency and collaboration with the Department. Open Government initiatives at the Department will increase the availability of information for those seeking information about the immigration process, disaster survivors seeking aide for recovery efforts, and travelers. DHS collaborates with and provides information to

Federal organizations including the Department of Justice and Department of State. The Department also collaborates with state and local governments in emergency management and infrastructure protection. Private sector and academic organizations can benefit from the Department's raw geospatial data and other statistical data.

1.3 Challenges

Open Government efforts present many challenges, including protecting sensitive information as well as technological barriers. The Department is committed to addressing these issues in order to establish a culture of transparency, collaboration and participation.

2 Open Government at DHS

DHS Deputy Secretary Jane Holl Lute convened a meeting of the chiefs of staff from each DHS component to serve as the senior executive leadership team for open government efforts. That group met throughout the initial implementation of the OGD to consider all aspects of open government including security concerns, policy developments, and technology limitations.

“Information sharing is central to the Department’s efforts with State, local, Tribal and private sector partners to work towards a common goal. It is incumbent upon us to both maximize transparency and ensure that the right information is shared with appropriate audiences in a timely manner.”
DHS Deputy Secretary Jane Holl Lute

2.1 Leadership Team

To ensure the Open Government Plan and the long-term open government initiatives identified by the Department receive sustainable support from leadership, Deputy Secretary Lute designated, Deputy Under Secretary for the [Management Directorate](#), Chris Cummiskey as the executive leader for Open Government at DHS. Additional supporting offices and strategic working groups identified below represent a cross-section of existing oversight at DHS. Each entity provided significant support in the development of the Open Government Plan.

Open Government Plan Working Group

The Management Directorate convened a cross-component working group to address the deliverables required in the OGD and ensure that the Open Government Plan reflects the operations of the Department. This group will continue working after the publication of the Open Government Plan to make adjustments that further the purpose of the OGD and prepare the 2011 plan.

Data Management Working Group

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) utilized its cross-component Data Management Working Group (DMWG) to identify three datasets required by the OGD for posting by the deadline prescribed. OCIO will leverage the DMWG to identify, prioritize and post new datasets moving forward.

Privacy Office

The [Privacy Office](#) works to preserve and enhance privacy protections for all individuals, promote transparency of operations, and serve as a leader in the privacy community. The Privacy Office is responsible for implementing the Freedom of

Information Act (FOIA), reducing backlogs of FOIA requests, and increasing transparency through accessibility. Successes in open government for the Privacy Office include additional electronic reading rooms within DHS operational components, and a significant reduction in overdue FOIA requests.

Office of Public Affairs

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) coordinates the public affairs activities for the entire Department, serving as the Federal government's lead public information office during a national emergency or disaster. OPA includes the Press Office, Incident and Strategic Communications, Speechwriting, Web Management, and Employee Communications. All of these offices work in tandem to support comprehensive information flow to the public, media and employees. The Office of Public Affairs maintains the [Open Government](#) web page on DHS.gov.

Office of the Chief Financial Officer

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) serves as the Senior Accountable Official for the DHS Data Quality Plan for Federal Spending Information in support of the OGD. Currently the CFO is evaluating existing financial working groups, and possible modifications of those working groups, to form a well-rounded governance body and framework to ensure the quality of federal spending information. The CFO will provide oversight and guidance to ensure internal controls support the integrity of grant, loan and contract information posted publicly on USASpending.gov and that adequate internal controls are in place for that information.

Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

The [Office of Intergovernmental Affairs](#) (IGA) promotes an integrated national approach to homeland security by coordinating and advancing Federal interaction with State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments. IGA is responsible for opening the homeland security dialogue with executive-level partners at the State, local, Tribal, and territorial levels, along with the national associations that represent them.

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

The [Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties](#) (CRCL) works to foster ongoing communications and build lasting relationships between the Department and the public. CRCL engages with the public through a number of collaborative engagement efforts with communities to improve channels of communication and inform the Department about the concerns of affected communities.

Office of Legislative Affairs

The Department values communications with Congress as central tenant of its open government efforts. The [Office of Legislative Affairs](#) (OLA) provides briefings, testimony, background information, staff discussions and field visits for Congressional members for a better understanding of DHS operations. OLA communicates accurate and detailed information to congressional interests, while following appropriate protocols to safeguard classified or otherwise sensitive information.

Information Sharing Council

DHS plays a central role in augmenting the Nation's ability to gather, analyze, and disseminate information and intelligence. In February 2007, the Department released a policy for internal information exchange and sharing, referred to as the "One DHS" Memorandum, which mandated open information exchange within DHS and established the Information Sharing Governance Board (ISGB) as the governing body for information sharing policy and dispute resolution. The Information Sharing Coordinating Council supports the ISGB. These bodies also serve as the coordination bodies for the Department's participation in the Federal information-sharing environment.

Private Sector Office

DHS created the [Private Sector Office](#) to build relationships with the private sector and interface with other relevant Federal agencies on issues related to industry. The Private Sector Office engages businesses, trade associations and other non-governmental organizations to foster dialogue with the Department. A key component to outreach efforts is managing stakeholder groups and keeping them informed on DHS policies that could impact them to promote public-private partnerships and best practices.

2.2 Creating a Sustainable Program

Creating an open government is a collaborative and iterative process. To ensure the sustainability of open government at DHS, the Management Directorate will develop a governing charter to codify roles and responsibilities of components, working groups, and individual employees.

In addition, the Office of Public Affairs will develop a resource page on the Department-wide intranet site to inform employees on important issues related to open government and accessibility, including:

- The Freedom of Information Act
- Federal Advisory Committee Act

- Paperwork Reduction Act
- 508 Compliance
- Using Plain Language to describe departmental business

Also, the Department will open a public dialogue to accept comments on this plan to inform the forthcoming 2011 Open Government Plan and subsequent plans developed at least every two years.

2.3 Fostering a Culture of Openness

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) directs the data management efforts at the Department to further provide the public with information to understand the Department's activities. The OCIO Data Management Working Group (DMWG) analyzes DHS programs for additional high-value datasets to determine which may be appropriate for public release and included in Data.gov. The identification of datasets appropriate for public release is a collaborative effort between technologists, mission owners, privacy experts and others. To institutionalize a culture of transparency in identifying datasets for posting, the DMWG established a robust workflow process to institutionalize a process for submitting datasets to Data.gov.

The Department identifies and prioritizes datasets for inclusion in Data.gov from internal and external sources. The Department routinely reviews public input from Data.gov as well as other Web sites such as the web application used to solicit input for this Open Government Plan. Within DHS, data owners, Web masters, business owners, and other stakeholders working directly with DHS datasets support the DMWG by identifying high-value datasets. In addition, intra-governmental tools for openness and information sharing provide DHS employees a channel to communicate their ideas to the DMWG. The OCIO reviews and coordinates all proposed datasets prior to release.

DHS applies OMB guidance criteria to identify high-value datasets:

- Information that can be used to increase agency accountability and responsiveness
- Information that can improve public knowledge of the agency and its operations
- Information that can further the core mission of the agency
- Information that can create economic opportunity
- Information that can respond to need and demand as identified through public consultation

The business owner conducts an initial assessment of the value of the dataset and security implications for release. For the identified datasets, OCIO facilitates a collaborative review process including the following offices:

“By asking the public what information would be useful, we’re able to prioritize the posting of datasets to maximize public value.”
DHS Chief Information Officer Richard Spires

- Chief Financial Officer: Information Quality Review
- Office of the Chief Information Officer: Security Review
- Privacy Office: Privacy Review
- Office of General Counsel: Legal Review
- Office of the Chief Information Officer: Technical Capability Review

Following approval, the OCIO manages the process for release of the datasets to Data.gov and monitors the dataset performance. Monitoring how the data is used includes tracking public comments and suggestions, as well as working with the business owners to perform corrective actions for any data quality issues.

2.4 Making Initial High-Value Datasets Available

Datasets related to some aspects of grant awards, emergency management activities, immigration statistics, and similar data that do not contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII), law enforcement sensitive or intelligence data are likely appropriate for public release. As of April 7, 2010, DHS, through United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), had registered over 40 datasets related to immigration statistics and trends on Data.gov. One dataset compares form processing volume and trend data for specific form types. This information gives the public insight into the volume of forms USCIS processes at different offices, the status of those forms, and comparison to national processing rates.

- [Immigrant Orphans Adopted by U.S. Citizens by Gender, Age, and Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Immigrant-Orphans Adopted by U.S. Citizens by State or Territory of Residence, Gender, and Age: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Region and Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 1998 to 2008](#)
- [Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Relationship to Principal Applicant and Gender, Age and Marital Status: Fiscal Year 2008](#)

- [Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively or Defensively: Fiscal Years 1990 to 2008](#)
- [Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by Region and Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years: 1998 to 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Class of Admission and Country of Citizenship: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Class of Admission and Country of Residence: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Class of Admission and State or Territory of Destination: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Region and Country of Citizenship: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Region and Country of Residence: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Selected Category of Admission and Region and Country of Citizenship: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Selected Category of Admission, Age and Gender: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Selected Category of Admission and State or Territory of Destination: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Selected Category of Admission and Month of Arrival: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Admissions by Class of Admission: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Nonimmigrant Temporary Worker Admissions \(I-94 Only\) by Region and Country of Citizenship: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Naturalized by Core Based Statistical Area \(CBSA\) of Residence: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Persons Naturalized by Gender, Age, Marital Status, and Occupation: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Naturalized by Leading Core Based Statistical Areas \(CBSAs\) of Residence and Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Naturalized by Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Persons Naturalized by Region of Birth and Core Based Statistical Area \(CBSA\) of Residence: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Naturalized by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Persons Naturalized by State or Territory of Residence and Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Broad Class of Admission and Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Broad Class of Admission and Region and Country of Last Residence: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Broad Class of Admission and Selected Demographic Characteristics: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Core Based Statistical Area \(CBSA\) of Residence: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)

- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Gender, Age, Marital Status, and Occupation: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Leading Core Based Statistical Areas \(CBSAs\) of Residence and Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Region and Selected Country of Last Residence: Fiscal Years 1820 to 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Region of Birth and Core Based Statistical Area \(CBSA\) of Residence: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by State or Territory of Residence and Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Type and Detailed Class of Admission: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Type and Major Class of Admission: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status: Fiscal Years 1820 to 2008](#)
- [Petitions for Naturalizations filed, Persons Naturalized, and Petitions for Naturalization denied: Fiscal Years 1907 to 2008](#)
- [Refugee Arrivals by Region and Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 1999 to 2008](#)
- [Refugee Arrivals by Relationship to Principal Applicant and Gender, Age, and Marital Status: Fiscal Year 2008](#)
- [Refugee Arrivals: Fiscal Years 1980 to 2008](#)

In addition, the Department released three high-value datasets from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to meet the OGD guidelines:

- [FEMA Disaster Declarations Summary](#)
- [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Programs Summary](#)
- [FEMA Public Assistance Funded Projects Summary](#)

These datasets are of high-value because they include information about DHS operations, promote accountability, and offer insights into the FEMA mission. The FEMA Hazard Mitigation Programs Summary and the FEMA Public Assistance Funded Projects Summary provide transparency into use of public funds for post-disaster repair of public structures and mitigation for future disasters. The Disaster Declarations

Summary also promotes transparency by providing insight into the breadth of the Department's operations.

The DMWG completed its initial assessment of new datasets and identified candidates for release throughout 2010. In addition, DHS solicited public comments and suggestions for additional datasets under consideration and will prioritize accordingly by the end of 2010.

Before DHS can release any specific dataset, a collaborative review must occur to ensure that the information released does not violate any laws or present a threat to national security. Based on these limitations, the following datasets have a high likelihood of being approved after a preliminary review:

- USCIS FOIA Requests – This dataset provides FOIA requests received by USCIS in a raw data format. This dataset is the result of a suggestion from the public directed at all Agencies.
- FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) – The National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) data incorporates all Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) databases published by FEMA. The DFIRM Database is the digital, geospatial version of the flood hazard information shown on the published paper Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). This dataset is the result of a suggestion from the public.
- FEMA Public Assistance Funded Projects Detail – Through the Public Assistance (PA) Program, FEMA provides supplemental Federal disaster grant assistance for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and the facilities of certain Private Non-Profit (PNP) organizations. This data can be useful to citizens concerned with tracking grants.
- NBIC Health Security Index - This report consists of select health security terms and their corresponding trend activity as measured by the Biosurveillance Common Operating Network system (BCON). The BCON system measures keyword usage by analyzing information from publicly available internet sources such as news sites, public health organizations, social media, and other sources. The Health Security Index will identify the most active trends that are relevant to the health security community by using analytic approaches commonly used in stock markets and statistical analyses to depict short, intermediate, and long-term trends, current observations, and the difference between the trend and current measurements using indicators such as moving averages, standard deviation, and daily volume observations.

- NBIC Health Security Scoring - Health Security Scoring consists of links to select web-based sources that have been analyzed and scored by the BCON system using its natural language processing capabilities. The scores consist of a numerical value that depicts the link's relevance to human, animal, plant, water, air, food, and environment domains. Domains are an organizing principle within the NBIC that help focus and direct health security efforts.
- USCG Port State Information Exchange - The submission is a dataset describing vessels that have had interactions with the U.S. Coast Guard and the nature of those interactions. Interactions include boardings, inspections, investigations and enforcement actions. Vessel descriptions include vessel name, identification numbers, descriptive information such as length and tonnage, and information on vessel documents.
- USCG Marine Casualty - The Marine Casualty and Pollution Database provides details about marine casualty and pollution incidents investigated by the U.S. Coast Guard in accordance with 46 U.S.C. Part D. The database is an invaluable source of information to understand particulars and circumstances of marine accidents and pollution incidents. This dataset was received
- USCG Merchant and Recreational Vessels - Merchant Vessels of the United States is a data file of merchant and recreational vessels documented under the laws of the United States by the U.S. Coast Guard.

DHS will continue to investigate additional datasets as candidates for release through Data.gov

Appendix A [Timeline for Posting of New Datasets](#)

2.5 **Improving the Quality of Government Information**

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), Financial Assistance Policy and Oversight Division (FAPO) is working with each component to standardize reporting processes for financial assistance activities, grants, cooperative agreements, payments, and loan programs reported on USASpending.gov.

To improve the consistency and accuracy of financial data, FAPO efforts will center on communicating the best reporting and control practices, developing a DHS-wide training program, and creating standard operating procedures and controls. In addition to increasing the quality and accuracy of data submitted to USASpending.gov, the Department will assess the risk of data quality and integrity problems by examining the complexity or magnitude of the programs and the extent to which manual processes are

used in reporting. Improvement plans with stronger controls will be targeted at those programs evaluated with the highest risk.

“Our Department embraces the principles of the Open Government Directive – transparency, participation, and collaboration – and will work to ensure the American public has timely and reliable information about how and where their tax dollars are being spent.”
Acting CFO Peggy Sherry

2.6 Educational Materials

[Ready.gov](#), managed by FEMA, provides a wealth of resources to educate and empower the public about preparing for and respond to emergencies. Ready.gov stresses the importance of three key things: an emergency supply kit, a family emergency plan, and awareness about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses as critical steps for preparing for emergencies of all kinds.

Ready.gov includes two new online tools: (1) an interactive widget that provides users with updates on emergency situations, local emergency contact information, an instructional video, emergency kit checklists, and guidelines on how to better prepare for an emergency; (2) the Ready Classroom through a partnership with Discovery Education that provides elementary and middle school teachers with resources to integrate natural disaster preparedness information into their curriculum.

In addition to Ready.gov, the Department provides educational materials on National Preparedness Month (NPM) exercises, encouraging schools, businesses and communities to get involved in promoting emergency preparedness mindful that protecting ones community is a shared responsibility. The Ready Campaign will actively promote the September National awareness month through its web site, listserv, Twitter account, FEMA Facebook page, and various internal offices. The Ready.gov site also includes a toolkit with resources and templates to assist organizations in promoting emergency preparedness.

FEMA provides more educational requirements through its [Plan Ahead](#) website.

3 Pillars of Open Government: Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration

The Department seeks to empower individuals, communities and the private sector with increased transparency, direct participation, and thoughtful collaboration. Resources, access, and information about the Department will strengthen partnerships essential to the shared goals of homeland security.

The Department embraces new technologies to improve transparency, participation and collaboration with the public as well as traditional communication methods. The Department is committed to disclosing information as appropriate, with a steadfast dedication to privacy, security and civil liberties that may prevent the immediate release of information.

3.1 Tools to Improve Transparency

The Department embraces evolving technologies, harnessing the power of social media to improve and enhance transparency of operations. Current and developing communication channels utilized by the Department empower citizens, educate communities, and foster unity of effort. One specific evolving communication channel is the web casting of DHS meetings. While there are significant technological barriers to full implementation, the Department has begun making some Homeland Security Advisory Committee meetings available online (see section 3.2.3).

3.1.1 Transparency on the Official Department Website

Managed by the Office of Public Affairs, Dhs.gov includes information about Department activities to promote openness and transparency and to foster public engagement. Materials provided to the media are available on the '[press room](#)' page of Dhs.gov, making information released to the media accessible for all citizens. This page includes an archive of previously posted press materials from [2001-2009](#).

Currently, visitors can link to press offices across the Department from the Dhs.gov press room, providing a single-stop for viewers seeking time-sensitive information about operations or news from the Department and its components. Additional examples of information that found on Dhs.gov include [multi-media](#) galleries and a catalogue of the Department's utilization of [social media platforms](#).

[Scheduled events](#) for the week ahead are posted each Monday on Dhs.gov, and though the events are subject to change, the availability of this information provides a look into what the Secretary and other Department principals do in the public sphere.

[Congressional](#) appearances by Department leadership before the 111th Congress are also accessible through Dhs.gov.

By the beginning of July, DHS Headquarters will survey the component websites to ensure that all public information is easily accessible – i.e. in the Press Room or Media areas on their website. If it is not, DHS Headquarters will work with the components to ensure the information is current and easily located on their websites. By October 1, 2010, the Dhs.gov/open webpage will include direct links to component offices to ensure information is easily navigable for citizens seeking information about the Department.

Appendix B [Web Menu](#)

3.1.2 Transparency Using Social Media

The Department uses "Web 2.0" social media technologies and Web sites to provide robust information through many channels. In the coming months, the Department will utilize an online public engagement tool to conduct focused discussions, coordinate the use of new media tools among Federal agencies during incidents, and host blogger roundtables to better engage the blogosphere and emerging online journalists. Also to come, the Department will utilize DHS blogs to better respond to current events, increasing public engagement through blog posts.

3.1.3 Leveraging Federal Transparency Websites

As a member of the greater Federal community, DHS recognizes the importance of government-wide tools to promote transparency. These tools provide the Department with an easy outlet to make data available to the public and promote valuable cross-agency comparisons.

Appendix C [Federal Transparency Websites](#)

3.1.4 Records Management as a Transparency Tool

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) outlines the transparency requirements government agencies must follow. Subsection (a) (2) requires each agency to make four distinct categories of records affirmatively available for “public inspection and copying.”

The Chief Privacy Officer serves as the Chief FOIA Officer for DHS and has Department-wide policy responsibility for efficient and appropriate compliance with FOIA. On August 26, 2009, DHS Chief Privacy Officer Mary Ellen Callahan issued the [Proactive Disclosure Memorandum](#) to inform the proactive disclosure process. In that memo, Ms. Callahan directed the Department to include the following categories of records on their agency websites and link them to their respective electronic reading rooms:

- Historical daily schedules of the most senior agency officials (notated to reflect that officials may have deviated from the posted schedule and abridged as appropriate for security and privacy concerns)
- Executed contracts and grants
- Management Directives and instructions
- Congressional correspondence under DHS control
- FOIA logs
- Any records released pursuant to a FOIA request that have been, or are likely to become, the subject of three or more requests

“The Proactive Disclosure Initiative undertaken by the Privacy Office is an important step in institutionalizing transparency in business operations across the Department.”
DHS Chief Privacy Officer Mary Ellen Callahan

The Department hosts public records in electronic reading rooms on the Internet. Available electronic reading rooms for DHS are:

- [Headquarters](#)
- [Citizenship and Immigration Services](#)
- [Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties](#)
- [United States Coast Guard](#)
- [Customs and Border Protection](#)
- [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [Federal Law Enforcement Training Center](#)
- [Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#)
- [Office of the Inspector General](#)
- [United States Secret Service](#)
- [Transportation Security Administration](#)

3.1.5 Records Management

The Department's headquarters Records Management staff engaged in a comprehensive inventory of records held by every office and identified each record's placement in the file plan. The file plan is a document containing the identifying number, title or description, and disposition authority of files held in an office. Each system schedule was also cross-referenced with the system inventory list required by the Federal Information Security Management Act. The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (OCAO) has implemented a scorecard system that grades all operational components on their respective systems scheduling efforts, in tandem with other items. All operational components have been graded by CAO. Both of these processes at the headquarters and operational components ensure timely transfer of permanent records to NARA when appropriate.

[Records control schedules](#) for the Department are available online

Appendix D [FOIA Staffing Levels and Statistics](#)

3.1.6 FOIA Structure, Process for FOIA, and Plans To Reduce Backlogs

The Director of Disclosure and FOIA reports directly to the Chief Privacy Officer and leads the headquarters FOIA team. The Director ensures FOIA policies are in place throughout the Department and manages FOIA and Privacy Act (PA) requests for records maintained by DHS senior management offices.

Timely publication of information is vital, and the Department does not view delays as an inevitable and insurmountable consequence of high demand. The Department recently shifted its focus from by-request FOIA services to a more proactive approach for sharing information. The [FOIA Web site](#) hosts detailed information on how DHS processes requests, details how to submit a FOIA request, and links to the [FOIA Electronic Reading Room](#).

FOIA processing occurs at each of the Department's components in a decentralized manner. Contact information for DHS FOIA Officers is available on the Privacy & FOIA website. FOIA requires a response to requests within 20 business days after the responsive component receives the request, and these responses are generally processed on a first in, first out basis.

Following the creation of the Department, the newness and the complex mission of the agency prompted many inquiries and FOIA requests. These requests were received in addition to the considerable FOIA backlog inherited from the existing agencies that merged into DHS.

As of September 15, 2006, the DHS-wide backlog was 98,103. Over the past four years, DHS decreased its FOIA backlog by 81% and the FY 2009 [DHS Annual FOIA Report](#) documents 18,918 backlogged requests Department-wide. In order to reduce the FOIA request backlog at DHS by a minimum of 10% each year, each component receives a monthly goal, setting the number of requests that must be processed in that month. The goals, individually tailored to each component, use the average number of requests received per month and the upper limits of the component's processing capacity. Meeting these goals keeps the Department on track to reduce the FOIA backlog in accordance with the Directive.

Appendix E [FOIA backlog reduction goals for FY 2008-2010](#)

3.1.7 Declassification Program to Enhance Transparency

Pursuant to Executive Order 13526 – Classified National Security Information, the Department routinely reviews information to affirm classification and to declassify when possible.

Most information currently declassified by the Department resides in Presidential Libraries and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), subject to external publication schedules. However, under Executive Order 13526, DHS participates in the newly created "[National Declassification Center](#)" (NDC) to streamline declassification processes, facilitate quality assurance measures, and implement standardized training across the Federal executive branch relative to the declassification of records with permanent historical value. The NDC is tasked to coordinate "*the linkage and effective utilization of existing agency databases and the use of technologies to document and make public declassification review decisions and support declassification activities under the purview of the Center;*" As an early proponent of the NDC, DHS is participating and will continue to participate in the development and implementation of its processes and procedures with the end result of improved access to declassified records. In addition, the Department, and the entire executive branch, will enhance transparency relative to the identification and safeguarding of sensitive unclassified information through the development of and transition to a "Controlled Unclassified Information" (CUI) Framework. The CUI Framework is an executive branch initiative for a uniform system to identify and manage sensitive, unclassified information within the Federal executive branch and non-Federal information-sharing partners. Although the CUI Framework is an information protection regimen, it will also enhance transparency by defining the types of information that qualify for protections under the framework. These definitions, as well as the policies and processes associated with the program, will be publicly accessible. Under the direction of the President,

policies for development and implementation of the CUI Framework are underway, and the Department is an enthusiastic advocate and active participant in these proceedings.

3.2 Avenues to Participation

The mission of the Department to secure the nation against threats and disasters of all kinds requires diverse expertise and analysis in a wide range of operational responsibilities. To better understand the impact of DHS policies on the nation's communities and citizens, the Department utilizes a varied spectrum of communication channels to encourage thoughtful discourse and public participation.

3.2.1 Public Dialogue

The Department engaged the American public throughout the congressionally mandated Quadrennial Homeland Security Review (QHSR) process in 2009. The QHSR team conducted online National Security Dialogues, open to the public and subject matter experts across the country, to outline the strategic framework of homeland security toward a common end. Public dialogue about the QHSR recognized the roles and responsibilities of DHS, but also the relationships, roles, and responsibilities of homeland security partners.

The Department conducted another dialogue to hear from the public about their expectations for open government in an effort to understand what the public expects, and how the Department can best protect the nation and serve the public. Using a tool developed by the General Services Administration (GSA), the Department received over 100 ideas from the public and Federal employees on ways to make DHS more transparent, participatory, collaborative, and innovative.

The Department plans to solicit comments on the 2010 Open Government Plan using the same collaboration tool from April 30, 2010 through May 10, 2010. This process will ensure the 2011 Plan considers the unique and invaluable insights of the public.

Moving forward, the Department will utilize public dialogues to garner insight on topics of interest to a broad cross-section of the American Public.

3.2.2 Public Outreach and Communicating with Stakeholder Groups

The Department balances efforts to address evolving threats with complex responsibilities of prevention, response and recovery. By recognizing the shared goals of Federal, State, local, Tribal, nongovernmental, and private-sector partners, the Department engages with a wide array of external stakeholders to promote homeland security.

Best Practice! The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Office of Outreach and Public Engagement is a DHS best-practice for hosting public meetings and promoting them through its Web site. The USCIS Web site—available in both English and Spanish—also provides a one-stop location for immigration services and information, including real-time alerts on the status of immigration applications via text message and email, meeting announcements and RSVP instructions, background materials, as well as meeting notes and questions and answers from previous events.

3.2.3 Advisory Committees- FACA

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (5 U.S.C. Annotated, Appendix 2), was enacted by Congress in 1972 to illuminate how agencies make decisions based upon the advice and recommendations from individuals outside of Government, while also making sure that the costs to support advisory committees are commensurate with the benefits received. FACA committees provide many opportunities for public engagement including personally attending a meeting, mailing or emailing the Committee directly with thoughts and concerns, learning about the committee in the press, or watching a meeting broadcast online.

The Committee Management Office provides Department-wide guidance on compliance with the provisions of the FACA. As required by section 8(b) of FACA, the Committee Management Officer (CMO) develops policies and provides guidance on the interpretation and implementation of FACA; provides oversight of DHS advisory committees; establishes internal operating procedures; and ensures compliance with FACA, DHS policies, regulations issued by the Committee Management Secretariat in the GSA, and any other applicable statutes or regulations.

The Department of Homeland Security has 27 Federal Advisory Committees, comprised of more than 700 DHS stakeholders that are established and operate under the provisions of the FACA. DHS advisory committees have issued roughly 2,448 recommendations; approximately 56 percent of which have been implemented and about 33 percent partially implemented.

DHS advisory committees advise agency officials on issues such as the safe marine transportation of hazardous materials; aviation safety and security; navigation safety in the nation's waterways; emergency response and preparedness; the programs of the U.S. Fire Administration; recreational boating safety; maritime security; the safety of the offshore oil drilling industry; oil spill prevention and mitigation; State and local law

enforcement training; technology issues that affect personal privacy; the security of the nation's critical infrastructure in the key sectors of the economy; telecommunications affecting national security and emergency preparedness; the operations and fees of USCBP; and the security of the American homeland.

FACA meetings are usually open to the public, and any member of the public may file a written statement with the advisory committee. Members of the public may speak to an advisory committee and meetings are often made available to the public via video conference, over the Internet, or by other electronic medium.

The CMO is improving its intranet page to provide more guidance to employees on when interactions with non-Federal individuals or entities covered under FACA.

Appendix F [FACA Committees](#)

3.3 Collaboration Channels

Homeland security encompasses a wide range of responsibilities and challenges at every level of government and the private sector—from classroom emergency preparedness to securing the national cyber networks. Collaboration is essential to the Department's effort to collect and disseminate timely and accurate information about any number of threats. Conduits for collaboration include community outreach, inter- and intra-governmental outreach, innovations in technology, and incentives used to encourage the valuable relationships and collaborations championed by the Department.

3.3.1 Pro-Active Community Outreach to Improve Collaboration

[Private Sector Office](#)

The Private Sector Office is the door for partnerships that cultivate public interactions and collaborations with diverse stakeholders and stakeholder groups. As primary advisor to the Secretary on issues related to the private sector, including academia, non-profits, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses, the Private Sector Office coordinates engagement between DHS and the private sector to build strong partnerships, shape policy, and enhance internal and external dialogue.

“The Private Sector Office creates collaborative relationships to ensure that the private sector, nonprofits, and academia are involved from the beginning.”

Assistant Secretary Douglas Smith

May 2010—The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has released a “Private Sector Resources Catalog” collecting training, publications, guidance, alerts, newsletters, programs, and services available to the private sector. This is the first such effort to encompass all of DHS and represents a commitment to facilitate public access and increase transparency.

The DHS Private Sector Resources Catalog allows our private sector partners to access to the resources the Department needs to help keep our country secure. Targeted specifically towards our private sector partners, this document collects the training, publications, guidance, alerts, newsletters, programs, and services available to the private sector across the department. Recognizing the diversity of the available resources as well as the continually evolving work of the department, this catalog will be updated regularly to publicize new resources and to increase private sector awareness.

DHS will regularly update the catalog in order to publicize new resources and increase awareness. To download the catalog, [click here](#).

[Citizen Corps](#)

Citizen Corps is FEMA's grassroots effort to bring together government and community leaders to involve citizens in emergency preparedness and resilience. Citizen Corps challenges volunteers to embrace the personal responsibility to be prepared; to get training in first aid and emergency skills; and to volunteer to support local emergency response, disaster relief, and community safety.

There are currently 2,435 Citizen Corps Councils, which serve 227,692,084 people or 80% of the total U.S. population.

[Center for Faith-Based & Community Initiatives](#)

The DHS Center for Faith-Based & Community Initiatives partners with nonprofits across the nation to create opportunities for inter-faith engagement, dialogue and cooperation. Certain that all homeland security activities are built upon a foundation of involved citizens engaged in their daily activities of society, the Center for Faith-Based & Community Initiatives serves as an access point for the networks within communities of faith seeking guidance and support for the shared responsibility of security and resilience.

[Office of Civil Right and Civil Liberties](#)

The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) conducts regular outreach and engagement efforts with stakeholders across the nation and coordinates an intradepartmental Community Outreach and Relations Working Group. CRCL's Engagement Team holds regularly scheduled roundtables in eight cities across the country with American Arab, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian, Middle Eastern and Somali

communities. CRCL's engagement is part of a broad effort to ensure that communities receive reliable information about policies and procedures at DHS and have the opportunity to serve as active participants in the homeland security effort.

3.3.2 Intergovernmental Outreach

[Office of Intergovernmental Affairs](#)

Upon taking office on January 23, 2009, Secretary Janet Napolitano tasked the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) with revitalizing the relationship with State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) governments. One of the central issues identified by IGA was the need for strong coordination of the myriad of intergovernmental interactions across the Department to ensure efficiency and consistency of communication with SLTT partners. IGA also identified the need to serve as a strong advocate for SLTT interests within the Department, improve "two-way" communication to stakeholders, and better integrate SLTT partners into the policy development process. As reported by the National Governors' Association's (NGA) 2009 Homeland Security Advisor's survey, DHS has made tremendous progress over the past year in building this partnership, in large part due to efforts to improve timely and coordinated communication.

Throughout 2010, IGA will continue striving to improve coordination of intergovernmental outreach, as well as strengthen IGA's outreach capacity through the development and augmentation of State, Local, Tribal, and Public Engagement "Desks." These desks will assume increased responsibility for seeking proactive partnerships and solutions to issues that have impeded the ability of DHS to work with stakeholders across the Homeland Security Enterprise. Below are a number of initiatives being implemented by each desk to improve coordination and input into the DHS's policies and initiatives:

- IGA has established a 24/7 state and local desk at the National Operations Center to enhance the IGA relationships, provide a general awareness of state and local resources, requirements, and homeland security efforts, as well as receive, track, and respond to requests.
- IGA is working to develop a 2010 "Gubernatorial transition plan" for timely and coordinated outreach to new governors and their staffs to ensure that they will receive the necessary clearances, briefings, and access to DHS resources.

[Office of Intelligence & Analysis](#)

To create a collaborative environment where information is effectively, efficiently, and responsibly shared by the DHS enterprise, the Information Sharing and Collaboration (IS&C) Branch of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) facilitates effective and efficient information sharing between DHS components; other government agencies; State, local, and Tribal stakeholders; private sector partners; and international entities.

The IS&C Branch is the catalyst for information sharing activities for DHS and its stakeholders by collaboratively cultivating relationships and partnerships; identifying opportunities; facilitating activities that are based on the opportunities; and managing the information sharing governance structure.

[Fusion centers](#) represent another successful collaborative effort between DHS and its partners. Fusion centers are run by the states and cities in which they reside as an integral part of local and regional efforts to prevent crime and terrorist acts in their communities.

“Fusion centers are a proven and invaluable tool for the department to work closely with our State, local, and tribal partners on some of the nation’s most pressing homeland security issues, such as terrorism and border security.”

DHS Under Secretary Caryn Wagner

I&A provides personnel with operational and intelligence skills to fusion centers. These people help fusion centers manage and protect the flow of classified and unclassified information, coordinate with local law enforcement and other agencies, and provide local awareness and access to necessary information. These I&A analyst are trained in privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties issues by the DHS Privacy Office and Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. To develop and further its role departmentally, I&A has begun a study—at the direction of the Secretary—to determine the requirements for enhancing the Department’s State and Local Fusion Center program to enable all the Department’s support to fusion centers nationwide to be managed through a centralized Executive Agent.

[DHS University Centers Of Excellence \(COEs\)](#)

The Department’s Centers of Excellence are a collaborative partnership existing in 12 universities across the country conducting research in DHS mission areas to help improve the understanding of the causes, elements, and consequences of a range of homeland security threats. The Centers also support countermeasure, mitigation, prevention, and resilience approaches based on technologies and human behavior.

Virtual USA

Virtual USA is the Department’s flagship initiative (See section 3.4). Virtual USA creates a cost-effective nationwide capability that significantly improves information sharing and decision making during emergencies to save lives and protect property. Based on current and emerging technologies, Virtual USA integrates existing

information sharing frameworks and investments to provide real-time access to operational information—such as weather conditions; traffic; the location and operational status of critical infrastructure; fuel supplies; availability of emergency shelters and medical facilities; and other critical information—that allows users to improve situational awareness and to respond quickly in emergencies.

3.3.3 FEMA Federal Preparedness Task Force

FEMA's [National Preparedness Directorate](#) is working to establish the State, local, Tribal, and Federal Preparedness Task Force. The 2010 Appropriations legislation directs FEMA, in cooperation with the IGA, to establish a preparedness task force that is “charged with making recommendations for all levels of government regarding: disaster and emergency guidance and policy; Federal grants; and Federal requirements, including measuring efforts. The task force shall evaluate: which policies and guidance need updating, and the most appropriate process by which to update them; which grant programs work the most efficiently and where programs can be improved; and the most appropriate way to collectively assess our capabilities and our capability gaps.”

3.3.4 Homeland Security Information Network

The Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) is a comprehensive, nationally secure web-based platform able to facilitate information sharing and collaboration between Federal, State, local, Tribal, private sector, and international partners. The HSIN platform exists to interface with existing information sharing networks to support the diverse Communities of Interest (COI) engaged in preventing, protecting from, responding to, and recovering from all threats, hazards and incidents under the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security. HSIN, which is available to all State and local fusion centers and emergency operations centers, focuses on enhancing collaboration rather than duplicating the capabilities. As a result of its unique perspective, HSIN facilitates collaboration between mission areas such as law enforcement, emergency management, and critical sectors.

The DHS intelligence enterprise information management team has installed more than 30 SECRET-level Homeland Secure Data Network (HSDN) terminals and will install HSDN terminals in all fusion centers pending security requirements.

In addition, the Department has recently created a HSIN Outreach Team to promote the understanding of HSIN and facilitate its wide adoption. Its major goals are to:

- Improve national awareness of HSIN's mission, capabilities, roles, and accomplishments
- Establish HSIN as a core component of DHS's missions with its partners
- Increase collaboration and communication within and among DHS components

To achieve these goals, the HSIN Outreach Team:

- Markets HSIN to DHS components and partners to create new communities of interest
- Supports its partners to achieve success in training events and exercises in real time
- Promotes HSIN at a wide variety of mission-oriented conferences to identify new partners and encourage information sharing across both mission areas and geographic regions
- Conducts training on HSIN functionality to improve the skills of new and established members

3.3.5 Intradepartmental Collaboration Tools

IdeaFactory

IdeaFactory is a participatory, collaborative and transparent website that allows TSA employees to develop, promote, and improve innovations and ideas for programs, processes, and technologies and share them directly, without filter, to the entire TSA community. Employees post ideas, and rate and comment on those that interest them. They participate in two-way communication with agency leadership, TSA program offices, and each other. The IdeaFactory team reads every idea and evaluates those that are popular or that fit especially well with specific strategic agency goals. Senior leadership and program managers communicate by debunking myths and responding to ideas with specific explanations and details. They also implement ideas as new programs or initiatives within TSA.

DHS plans to expand the IdeaFactory department-wide to foster collaboration among DHS employees in 2010. This will afford all employees the opportunity to suggest and vote on submitted ideas to improve operational efficiencies.

Customer Management Tool

The Office of the White House Liaison and the Office of Policy, in coordination with the IGA, have developed and are currently deploying a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool. The CRM has an approved Privacy Impact Assessment and is a data management tool employed to manage stakeholder engagement with the Department. The tool functions as a database, managing information on external stakeholders and tracking interactions to increase opportunities for collaboration.

DHS Connect

The Department-wide utilization DHSConnect, a Web-based collaboration tool, boasts a uniform Internet landing page for all DHS employees. This provides unprecedented collaboration and an element of focus not permitted by multiple standalone sites with varying services and accessibility. This ‘single intranet’ will also include a forum for collaboration that allows employees to set up team sites for functional areas where coordination and information sharing is essential. Improving Department-wide communication, workflow and coordinating processes, document management, content search and group collaboration to support the development of a culture will help unify the Department and strengthen the resolve of the workforce.

3.3.6 Prizes, Challenges, and Incentives to Increase Collaboration

The Department will follow the OMB guidance on prizes, challenges, and incentives to increase collaboration. To that end, Secretary Napolitano recently announced the National Cyber-security Awareness Campaign Challenge competition to solicit ideas from industry and individuals alike on how best the Department can clearly and comprehensively discuss cyber-security with the American public.

Best Practice! During the final week of 2009, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) solicited public input for a ‘Video of the Year’ competition. Each day, the USCG blog highlighted one video. The videos included audio from various USCG units, highlighting the missions and stories of America’s Guardians. The public was invited to vote for the top video and the contest was publicized throughout the USCG communication channels.

In addition, the Department will increase utilization of the DHS Outstanding Partnership Award. This award may be presented by the Secretary of Homeland Security for outstanding contributions in partnership with DHS to strengthen homeland security. This award recognizes State, local or Tribal organizations, private sector businesses or non-governmental organizations, and public-private partnerships that demonstrate exemplary support of DHS and its common missions.

3.3.7 Paperwork Reduction Act

Congress passed the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) to improve the quality and practical utility of information required by the Federal Government. The goal of the PRA is to reduce the information collection burdens on the public, increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the PRA and to improve the integrity, quality, and utility of information to all users within and outside the Federal Government. The Office of the

Chief Information Officer provides a full range of services to program offices and program managers related to the PRA.

Appendix G [Paperwork Reduction Act](#)

3.4 **Flagship Initiative**

On December 8, 2009, Secretary Janet Napolitano publicly launched Virtual USA (vUSA), an innovative information-sharing initiative that draws on practitioner input to help Federal, State, local and Tribal first responders collaborate to make fast, well-informed decisions. vUSA integrates existing frameworks and investments to provide real-time access to operational information—such as weather conditions; traffic; the location and operational status of critical infrastructure; fuel supplies; availability of emergency shelters and medical facilities; and other critical information—that allows users to improve situational awareness and to respond quickly in emergencies.

vUSA conforms to Incident Command System (ICS) principles, the foundation doctrine for emergency management and the basis for the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF). ICS provides a scalable incident response that is applicable to the smallest local event or the largest national catastrophe. In all incident response, rapid information sharing is a key requirement for emergency response to save lives, limit property damage, and improve efficiencies of recovery operations.

In addition to supporting State and local homeland security partners, vUSA provides users with access to key emergency management information to support DHS's strategic goals for strengthening preparedness and emergency response capabilities.

vUSA currently operates as two pilots – one in eight southeastern states: Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Virginia and Tennessee; and the other in five states in the northwest: Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. In Virginia alone, vUSA reduced response times to incidents involving hazardous materials by 70 percent.

Open Government Flagship Initiative

DHS chose the expansion of vUSA as its Flagship Initiative because it impacts each pillar of the Open Government Directive— Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration.

Transparency: The vUSA framework enables real time information sharing on the status of key data for emergency responders who can customize exactly what they need to see, utilizing information available at all levels of government. The vUSA framework

allows each agency to maintain control of its information and to determine with whom it will be shared and for how long. Shareable data is easily located through the vUSA framework. This provides transparency to State and local emergency management on incident response and recovery operations at all levels of government. As the system matures, information such as the location of resources shipped to disaster areas, shelter capacities, and status of road closings will become increasingly transparent to emergency management personnel.

While not all data within vUSA will be releasable to the public, vUSA examines ways to provide citizens with access to data on disaster declarations, public spending on disaster assistance, and other information. The end result is geographically searchable data, viewable through an intuitive mapping application.

Collaboration: vUSA provides an innovative approach to sharing information that allows for collaboration between governmental units responding to emergencies. For example, access to local incident reports, digital road maps, and locations of fire, rescue, and law enforcement units allows multiple jurisdictions to collaborate and rapidly plan and implement the most effective response. In the past, the segregation of such types of data prevented accessibility and collaboration. This initiative provides a technology framework through which each jurisdiction's datasets are easily discoverable.

Cross-agency benefits include the sharing of data to optimize limited first responder and emergency management resources to support incident response and recovery. Enhancing optimization of the resources used in the emergency management community contributes to saving lives, reducing property damages and decreasing the costs of recovery.

Participation: vUSA efforts include many members of the State and local emergency management community. Comprised of national and regional working groups the vUSA team welcomes additional input and feedback from stakeholders at all levels of government, the private sector and the public. Developing capabilities include: stakeholder outreach, additional citizen services, and mechanisms for dialogue, innovation and feedback. Exploration of geospatial Web 2.0 tools continues to allow for feedback on issues ranging from post-disaster damage reports to requests for corrections to flood insurance rate maps.

Measures of Improved Transparency

vUSA will provide for improved transparency metrics including numbers and diversity of datasets; number of data downloads and Web page views; and variety of site users. As vUSA matures, outcome-based measures, including improvement in disaster

response and recovery activities and accuracy of damage estimates, will reveal progress in the program.

DHS recognizes that in order for vUSA to have the greatest impact on each of the pillars of the Open Government Directive, the initiative must also be sustainable. In an effort to ensure sustainability and allow for continued evolution, DHS works with the emergency response community at the local, tribal, state, and Federal levels on an on-going basis in an effort to continue to expand and enhance state and regional information-sharing capabilities based on real-world operational requirements. Over time, vUSA will better enable agencies to access critical and actionable information using their own systems, when needed, and as authorized. DHS is also developing a strategy for the transition of this research and development initiative into a sustainable operational and institutionalized capability that will continue to serve the needs of the emergency response community while incorporating future technological developments.

Appendix A

Timeline for Posting of New Datasets

DHS expects to meet the following milestones for release of additional datasets to Data.gov. DHS will be continuously evaluating this schedule and will provide updates on its transparency website as changes occur.

January 21, 2010	Registered three high-value datasets to Data.gov: FEMA Disaster Declarations Summary FEMA Hazard Mitigation Programs Summary FEMA Public Assistance Funded Projects Summary
April 15, 2010	Complete review of initial datasets identified for release by the DHS DMWG through the collaborative review process
April 20, 2010	Publish pipeline of release dates for DHS datasets to Data.gov on the DHS transparency website
April 30, 2010	Complete review of public suggestions for datasets to be included in Data.gov through the collaborative review process and update pipeline of release dates on DHS transparency website
May 15, 2010	Register one additional DHS dataset to Data.gov USCIS FOIA Requests
June 15, 2010	Register one additional DHS dataset to Data.gov FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL)
July 15, 2010	Register one additional DHS dataset to Data.gov FEMA Public Assistance Funded Projects Detail
July 30, 2010	Complete second round review of DHS datasets based on public comments, DHS IdeaFactory, and additional business owner assessments of datasets; update pipe line for dataset release at DHS transparency website.
August 15, 2010	Register one additional DHS dataset to Data.gov NBIC Health Security Index
September 15, 2010	Register one additional DHS dataset to Data.gov NBIC Health Security Scoring
September 30, 2010	Publish DHS Data.gov plan for FY2011 on DHS transparency website
September 30, 2010	Register one additional DHS dataset to Data.gov USCG Port State Information Exchange

Appendix B

Web Menu

Online Subscription Services

- [RSS and Atom feeds at the Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [E-mail updates from the Department of Homeland Security](#)

Media Galleries

- [Department and Component links to multimedia](#)

Blogs

- [Leadership Journal](#), Department of Homeland Security
- [The Blog @ Homeland Security](#), Department of Homeland Security
- [TSA Blog](#), Transportation Security Administration
- [Coast Guard Compass](#), U.S. Coast Guard
- [iCommandant](#), U.S. Coast Guard
- [Chief's Corner](#), U.S. Fire Administration
- The Beacon, U.S. Citizenship Immigration Services

Note: The U.S. Coast Guard maintains additional blogs that are not on Department sites. See [all U.S. Coast Guard blogs](#).

Podcasts

- [U.S. Coast Guard](#)

Widgets

- [Federal Hurricane Response Widget](#), Department of Homeland Security
- [Wait Time Calculator](#), Transportation Security Administration

Web 2.0 and Communications on Non-Government Sites

Blogspot

- [Coast Guard All Hands](#), U.S. Coast Guard

Note: The U.S. Coast Guard maintains additional blogs on Blogspot and on Department sites. See [all U.S. Coast Guard blogs](#).

Facebook

- [FEMA](#)
- [U.S. Coast Guard | All USCG Facebook Pages](#)
- [U.S. Coast Guard Admiral Thad Allen](#)

Flickr

- [U.S. Coast Guard](#), U.S. Coast Guard | [All USCG Flickr Photostreams](#)

iTunes

- [Transportation Security Administration](#)

Ning

- [Our Border](#), Department of Homeland Security

Twitter

- [DHSJournal](#), Department of Homeland Security
- [Citizen Corps](#), Citizen Corps, FEMA
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- [dhsscitech](#), Science and Technology Directorate
- [TSABlogTeam](#), Transportation Security Administration
- [USCIS](#), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
- [uscoastguard](#), U.S. Coast Guard
- [cgcompass](#), U.S. Coast Guard
- [iCommandantUSCG](#), U.S. Coast Guard | [All USCG Twitter Feeds](#)
- [customsborder](#), U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- [usfire](#), U.S. Fire Administration, FEMA
- [wwwICEgov](#), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

YouTube

- [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [FEMA](#)
- [Transportation Security Administration](#)
- [U.S. Coast Guard | All USCG YouTube Channels](#)
- [U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#)
- [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#)

For more information about social media within government see [webcontent.gov](#).

Appendix C

Government Transparency Web sites

Data.gov and IT Dashboard

The OCIO uses its cross-Component Data Management Working Group (DMWG) to identify and post datasets on Data.gov. OCIO also follows IT Dashboard guidance through the DHS Enterprise Business Management Office (EBMO). The EBMO coordinates with DHS information technology and business leads to compile information needed for the IT Dashboard. In areas where DHS efforts are not conforming to the highest levels set by the IT Dashboard, the EBMO works with technologists and mission owners to develop, implement and execute remediation plans.

Recovery.gov

DHS posts information all available information about the Recovery Act to ensure transparency.. Every week the DHS CFO collects the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) financial activities from each component that utilizes ARRA funds. The senior accountable official approves these numbers for the component, and once the CFO compiles the component reports into a single DHS report, the ARRA leadership team reviews the information for final approval before sending the report to the Recovery Implementation Office to for posting on Recovery.gov.

In addition to the weekly reports, upon awarding contracts or grants, the Department provides funding notification reports. This allows the public an opportunity to see where money is going, and to learn about projects in their State, county, and congressional district. Outside of these regular reports, DHS responds promptly to all requests for information from the Recovery Implementation Office (RIO) and the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

A Web functionality to map DHS Recovery Act awards, currently in development, will enable users to see the impact of funds in a particular community. This tool promotes accountability and transparency for DHS actions specific to the Recovery Act.

USASpending.gov

DHS satisfies USASpending.gov requirements for posting contract information. This may be attributed in part to government-wide standardization of the acquisition line of business; the centralized and modernized Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) to which all contract awards are directly posted, the direct feed from FPDS to USASpending.gov; and a set of effective internal controls to support meeting these requirements implemented across DHS. The FY09 DHS FPDS Certification required by OMB's Office of Procurement Policy, indicates a data accuracy rate of 90% for those

elements reviewed. Progress on submission requirements to USASpending.gov data and anticipated increases in efficiency and effectiveness through the development of additional strategies and processes to meet Federal Accountability and Transparency Act requirements continues. A developing process for posting grants and loan information to USASpending.gov under review by OCFO, using a risk assessment matrix and corrective action plans will address any high risk areas.

eRulemaking and Regulations.gov

The *Regulations.gov* Web site is a Federal regulatory clearinghouse. It is a one-stop, online location where members of the public can view, read, and comment on Federal agency regulations. DHS is one of 300 Federal agencies that actively uses *regulations.gov*. *Regulations.gov* serves as the public access point to the Federal-wide Docket Management System (FDMS). Through November 1, the *Regulations.gov* Web site received 109 million hits, as well as 372,088 public submissions for 2009.

Best Practice for Interagency Collaboration! FEMA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission recently solicited public comment on two unified FEMA guidance documents on regulations.gov. The Program anticipates the use of public comment on future guidance documents.

Federal Docket Management System

The Federal Document Management System (FDMS) is an electronic, government-wide, docket management system and records repository. FDMS provides Federal agencies with the ability to post documents that are part of the rulemaking process (e.g., notices, rules, guidance documents, supporting analyses, public comments, etc) on the Internet. FDMS is publicly accessible through *Regulations.gov*. FDMS includes features for agency staff such as full text search capabilities, e-mail notification, bulk data import and export, as well as reporting and tracking functions. Federal agencies that use FDMS create, maintain, and manage their own records within the system.

Grants.gov

Grants.gov is the Federal Government's single site for Federal grants with a mission to provide a common website for searching and applying for all Federal discretionary grants. It improves the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs throughout government.

It simplifies the Federal assistance application process and improves the delivery of services to the public. Over 1,000 opportunities and over 500 billion dollars went through Grants.gov in FY 09.

The Department of Health and Human Services is the managing partner for the Grants.gov Program Management Office, and DHS is one of the 26 agencies that makeup the Grants Executive Board that runs the initiative. All DHS discretionary grants are posted for the public on Grants.gov. In FY 09 DHS received 2,407 applications through Grants.gov.

Appendix - D

FOIA

FOIA Staffing and Backlog FY 2009

DHS Component	Number of "Full Time FOIA Employees"	Number of "Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Total Number of "Full-Time FOIA Staff"	Number of Backlogged Requests as of the End of Fiscal Year
USCIS	211	4.6	215.6	16,801
CBP	29	9.63	38.63	88
CRCL	0	0.3	0.3	11
USCG	14	21.25	35.25	385
FEMA	7	2.9	9.9	803
FLETC	0	0.75	0.75	36
I&A	1	0.75	1.75	8
ICE	26	4	30	10
MGMT	1	0	1	4
NPPD	1	0	1	11
US-VISIT	1	0.05	1.05	1
OIG	4	0.5	4.5	7
OGC	1	0.25	1.25	17
OPS	0	0.33	0.33	0
PLCY	0	0.05	0.05	30
PRIV	14	0.6	14.6	66
S&T	0	1.2	1.2	2
USSS	12	4.15	16.15	426
TSA	9	0	9	212
AGENCY OVERALL	331	51.31	382.31	18,918

Appendix E

FY 2009 Received, Processed, and Pending FOIA Requests

DHS Component	Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year '09	Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year '09	Number of Requests Processed in Fiscal Year '09	Number of Requests Pending as of End of Fiscal Year '09
USCIS	75,023	71,429	122,113	24,339
CBP	6,161	14,804	20,484	481
CRCL	5	13	7	11
USCG	1,050	5,600	6,265	385
FEMA	704	830	641	893
FLETC	14	157	135	36
I&A	0	49	41	8
ICE	68	6,746	6,736	78
MGMT	4	186	180	10
NPPD	19	58	63	14
US-VISIT	2	26	27	1
OIG	35	163	189	9
OGC	6	20	9	17
OPS	0	32	32	0
PLCY	9	46	16	39
PRIV	41	1,045	992	94
S&T	11	53	62	2
USSS	540	987	1,032	495
TSA	404	849	983	270
AGENCY OVERALL	84,096	103,093	160,007	27,182

Appendix F

FACA Committees

The Department currently has 27 advisory committees; of these 27:

- 2 established under Presidential Executive Order (non-discretionary) (P)
- 14 established by statute (non-discretionary) (S)
- 11 established under agency authority (discretionary) (D)

Policy (1)

- Homeland Security Advisory Council (D)

Office of Operations Coordination and Planning (1)

- Homeland Security Information Network Advisory Council (D)

Privacy Office (1)

- Data Privacy and Integrity Advisory Committee (D)

National Protection and Programs (2)

- National Infrastructure Advisory Council (P)
- President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (P)

Customs and Border Protection (3)

- Advisory Committee on Commercial Operations of the Customs and Border Protection (S)
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection Airport and Seaport Inspections User Fee Advisory Committee (S)
- U.S. Customs Service COBRA Fee Advisory Committee (inactive, pending legislation to terminate) (S)

Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (1)

- State and Local Training Advisory Committee (D)

United States Coast Guard (13)

- Chemical Transportation Advisory Committee (D)
- Commercial Fishing Industry Vessel Safety Advisory Committee (S)
- Delaware River and Bay Oil Spill Advisory Committee (S)

- Great Lakes Pilotage Advisory Committee (S)
- Houston-Galveston Navigation Safety Advisory Committee (S)
- Lower Mississippi River Waterway Safety Advisory Committee (S)
- Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (D)
- Merchant Mariner Medical Advisory Committee (D)
- National Boating Safety Advisory Council (S)
- National Maritime Security Advisory Committee (D)
- National Offshore Safety Advisory Committee (D)
- Navigation Safety Advisory Council (S)
- Towing Safety Advisory Committee (S)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (3)

- National Advisory Council (S)
- Expert Panel on Cost Estimating for the Public Assistance (S)
- Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy (S)

Transportation Security Agency (1)

- Aviation Security Advisory Committee (D)

Science and Technology (1)

- Homeland Security Science and Technology Advisory Committee (D)

Appendix G

Paperwork Reduction Act

The Enterprise Business Management Office within the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) provides a full range of services to Program Offices and Program Managers seeking to obtain OMB's approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act including:

OCIO provides one-on-one training for all Program Offices on the full life cycle and regulatory requirements under the PRA

OCIO provides OMB approved templates and samples of all required documents

OCIO serves as the liaison between OMB and the Department for all PRA activities

OCIO hosts quarterly meetings with all components to provide updated guidance documents and templates, lessons learned and copies of the active inventory of all approved Information Collection Requests.

OCIO works with other Federal Agencies to consolidate collection activities (in order to eliminate duplicate burden placed on the public).

OCIO works with Program Offices to obtain Section 508 and Privacy clearance on all proposed (and ongoing) collection activities

OCIO provides direct support to Program Managers when components are experiencing a void (as a result of turnover in Federal or Contracting Staff).

OCIO plans to conduct a Department-wide training session (specific to each component) on the PRA processes and procedures. This work is scheduled to be completed by FY 2011.

OCIO maintains a PRA page on DHSConnect (working to migrate it to DHS Connect) that provides up-to-date information to the PRA community OCIO works closely with the OMB Desk Officers to prioritize clearance of information collection requests to ensure mission essential functions are not discontinued.

The OCIO is developing an Internet and intranet site to make it easier for employees and the public to access information about PRA in the department. Additional information and training can be arranged by contacting the DHS PRA Program Management Office

DHS.PRA@HQ.DHS.GOV.

Appendix H

Public Comment Adjudication

DHS received over 100 topical suggestions and comments received through the National Dialogue on Open Government. Of those, the Department accepted and integrated 5 into the Open Government Plan and referred many others to relevant components for further adjudication.

TRANSPARENCY – DHS should live webcast all meetings: There are logistical challenges related to implementing this suggestion, but it represents a long-term desired state for the Department. See Section 3.1.

PARTICIPATION – Run more public dialogues like the Homeland Security Dialogue: Public Dialogues are a key part of the DHS strategy to increase participation. See Section 3.2.1

PARTICIPATION – Continue Engaging the Public: The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Outreach and Public Engagement is a DHS best practice for hosting public meetings and making them known in the community through their [Web site](#). This best practice will be shared with other components. See Section 3.2.2.

COLLABORATION – Agency Collaboration / Mashups: The Data Management Working Group is analyzing datasets to see what value they provide as a standalone and when combined with other data. See Section 2.3. In addition, the Flagship Initiative is one example of DHS fostering collaboration with other government organizations. See Section 3.4.

INNOVATION – Implement IdeaFactory for DHS Employees: While the Department has not yet set a release date for IdeaFactory beyond TSA, it is included in the plan and will improve collaboration within DHS. See Section 3.3.5.

The comments that were referred to components will be compiled and posted on the Open Government Page for transparency.