

DHS Reaches Third Efficiency Milestone, Launches New Cost-Savings Initiatives



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Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano today unveiled six new efficiency initiatives, marking the third milestone in the Department-wide Efficiency Review launched in March.

“Efficiency Review is changing the way DHS does business—eliminating waste, improving customer service, and making the most of taxpayer dollars,” said Secretary Napolitano. “Every dollar saved and every efficiency realized helps us better fulfill our critical mission—to secure the country and protect the American people.”

Throughout the Department, efforts have commenced to enhance coordination and eliminate redundancies in both internal and external DHS communications products; convert printers, fax machines, copiers, and scanners into all-in-one machines when replacements are needed; and obtain preliminary background data early in the job application process to avoid costly background checks for unsuitable candidates.

In addition, DHS is working to improve timeliness when responding to external correspondence, utilize DHS-wide blanket purchase agreements for office supplies, and develop cross-Component training opportunities for employees.

Efficiency Review initiatives already in progress continue to bring about substantial cost savings across the Department.

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) estimates a cost-avoidance of \$2 million annually by restructuring its maintenance and support schedules for 1,800 boats and \$1.7 million by consolidating ten support contracts into three. In addition, USCG expects to avoid spending \$450,000 over the next four years by converting lights for navigation buoys from incandescent signals to LED lanterns, simplifying installation, reducing maintenance and decreasing power consumption.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement expects to save more than \$61,000 by utilizing government vehicles instead of private rentals at one of its training facilities and more than \$40,000 annually by eliminating subscriptions to publications available on-line.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has identified \$130,000 in savings by replacing a management training that previously used private facilities with teleconferences. USCIS also saved approximately \$165,550 by utilizing filing systems and computer equipment from DHS' excess property inventory rather than purchasing new products.

The Transportation Security Administration has avoided more than \$433,000 in new software purchases by recycling underutilized software applications and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol expects to achieve a 25 percent reduction in energy costs at their new Border Patrol Sector Station in El Paso that has emphasized “green” energy design and construction.

Efficiency Review initiatives are broken down into 30-, 60-, 90- and 120-day groups based on when the initiatives are launched. Over the next 30 days, DHS will begin additional cost-saving programs, including standardizing new-employee orientations, enhancing workforce management, implementing energy efficiencies in facilities and utilizing hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles when replacements are needed.

On Feb. 17, Secretary Napolitano directed the entire Department to identify current and past efforts to improve efficiency, which resulted in an inventory of more than 700 initiatives implemented over the past five years. An Efficiency Review Steering Committee with representatives from across DHS components was then established, along with a full-time Efficiency Review Team composed of department veterans that shaped these initiatives.

In addition to the Department-wide initiatives currently planned, Secretary Napolitano continues to encourage employees and offices to develop additional ways to save money, streamline operations and increase transparency.

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