



The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties supports the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.

CRCL Supports DHS Participation in UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

On January 16, DHS senior leadership was part of a U.S. delegation that presented the U.S. Government's (USG) most recent periodic reports on implementation of the two Optional Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Geneva, Switzerland. These are the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. DHS Senior Counselor Alice Hill led the DHS representation, with support from other Department leadership.

DHS' contributions to implementation of the Protocols are primarily in the areas of combating child prostitution, child pornography, child trafficking, and other forms of child exploitation; responding to the needs of unaccompanied alien children; facilitating international adoption; and responding to the immigration benefits applications of former child soldiers and those who have recruited/used child soldiers. CRCL coordinated support for the delegation here in DC and also advised the Department on procedure before the UN Committee and likely questions.

While in Geneva, the U.S. delegation also met with concerned non-governmental organizations. Currently, CRCL is coordinating the Department's final comments and contributions to the USG's forthcoming reports on implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the UN Convention Against Torture.

Civil Rights/Civil Liberties Assessment on Border Searches of Electronic Devices

A critical component of DHS' mission is to secure U.S. borders from illegal activities. To accomplish this, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have the authority to search travelers, baggage, and containers, including electronic devices. In 2009, the Department published two relevant directives that govern the policies and procedures for searches of electronic devices. CRCL subsequently conducted a [Civil Rights/Civil Liberties Impact Assessment on Border Searches of Electronic Devices](#), which reviews and examines the Department's policies guiding these searches.

CRCL conducts impact assessments in accordance with its statutory role to advise DHS leadership on constitutional, statutory, regulatory, policy, and other requirements relating to the civil rights and civil liberties of individuals affected by the Department's programs and activities. In addition to the impact

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assessment, Secretary Napolitano further instructed CBP, CRCL and the DHS Privacy Office to review training provided to CBP officers on searching electronic devices.

Read the [Executive Summary of the Impact Assessment on Border Searches of Electronic Devices](#) and the [Assessment and Recommendations on CBP Training](#).

CRCL Hosts Denmark Delegation

Denmark is recognized for their international countering violent extremism (CVE) programs and initiatives, which have focused on education of government staff and cooperation with local authorities to prevent hate crimes and build resilience among youth, especially Somali youth. CRCL recently had the pleasure of hosting Danish Minister for Social Affairs and Integration Karen Hækkerup and her staff, as part of a study tour coordinated by the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen.



Danish delegation with CRCL staff.

The Danish delegation received a briefing on CRCL's role in the Department's CVE and integration efforts, which was led by DHS Deputy Administrator David Heymann and CRCL leadership and staff. Following that, the delegation traveled with CRCL to Columbus, Ohio, where CRCL has made strides in building relationships with the large Somali American community. In Columbus, CRCL and the delegation participated in roundtables with several government agencies, including the local U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and DHS Components, Ohio Homeland Security, the City of Columbus and the mayor's office, and state and local law enforcement. In addition, the delegation met with Somali community leaders and with Somali youth, which included a site visit to a local high school where racial tensions have significantly subsided as a result of continued engagement.

While in the U.S., the delegation also visited DHS Headquarters, the National Center for Counterterrorism, and the ADAMS Islamic Center in northern Virginia. Denmark aims to use the best practices and lessons learned during the study tour to further bolster their efforts to integrate diverse ethnic communities and encourage active civic participation.

CRCL Provides Language Access Technical Assistance to Law Enforcement

CRCL leads language access initiatives for DHS Components and Offices. As part of this work, CRCL provides technical assistance and guidance for all levels of law enforcement on meeting requirements under Executive Order 13166 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). Recently, CRCL conducted two language access technical assistance sessions with local law enforcement agencies and Border Patrol in Washington state. The sessions were developed in light of a recent CBP policy that provides direction to CBP officers on procedures for handling language interpretation requests from local law



enforcement.

A linguist who regularly works with the FBI was on-hand during the sessions to provide expert advice on how to work with language interpreters. CRCL also provided a number of language access resource materials for law enforcement, including the [I Speak pocket guides, posters, and job aides](#), and the newly released [LEP Guide for Law Enforcement](#).

In addition to the technical assistance sessions, CRCL held its quarterly Seattle community engagement roundtable and conducted two Northern border community listening sessions to hear concerns regarding language access provisions by law enforcement. CRCL will continue to engage with communities along the Northern border as part of its community engagement mission.

FPS Releases Policy on Prohibited Items in Federal Buildings

The Federal Protective Service (FPS) recently issued the “[Prohibited Items Program](#)” Directive that, in part, documents FPS policies and procedures for possibly allowing otherwise prohibited items into a federal facility under an approved exception (temporary in nature and granted for specific occurrences or a defined time period) or exemption (permanent until rescinded) to accommodate religious exercise, disabilities or other civil rights and civil liberties. Under this Directive, FPS will not enforce a prohibition of any item that by its nature and use would be allowed in a federal facility under federal law, such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. FPS will work with federal facilities to establish a system for individuals to request exceptions or exemptions from a building’s prohibited item list (provided the item itself is legal to possess).



If you have any questions please contact FPS Public Affairs at (202) 732-8041.

CRCL on the Road, February

February 5 – Houston, Texas

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

February 6 – Seattle, Washington

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

February 19 – Minneapolis, Minnesota

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

February 21 – Atlanta, Georgia

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

February 22 – Los Angeles, California

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

February 28 – Tampa, Florida

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

Additional information, and contacting us

The goal of this periodic newsletter is to inform members of the public about the activities of the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, including: how to make complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via an email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. We also post information pulled from the newsletter on a webpage, [CRCL at Work](#). If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, want to request back issues, or have other comments or questions, please let us know by emailing crcloutreach@dhs.gov.

If you are on this list, but no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send an email to the same address asking us to unsubscribe you. For more information, including on how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, see www.dhs.gov/crcl.

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