



Homeland Security

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Newsletter Vol. 8, #7 | March 2018

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



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DHS Marks 15 Years of Protecting the Homeland

On March 1, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) celebrated its 15 year anniversary with an event at the Ronald Reagan Building. Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen was joined by Vice President Mike Pence and former Secretaries Tom Ridge, Michael Chertoff, and John Kelly, as well as past and present DHS employees and leadership.

The event was an opportunity to celebrate the momentous anniversary and recommit to DHS's mission to safeguard the American people. Secretary Nielsen delivered remarks regarding what the Department is doing to combat the persistent and evolving threats facing our country. She also participated in a panel discussion with the former secretaries in attendance regarding how DHS has evolved since 2003. Additionally, she recognized employees from all of the DHS components.

“Today, DHS is on a strong and steady course,” **Secretary Nielsen said during her keynote address.** “Our workforce is empowered, committed, and proud to serve.”

Several DHS employees who have been with the Department since its creation also had the opportunity to speak, including former CRCL Officer Dan Sutherland (now Associate General Counsel), who said “DHS is unique because of the remarkable mission being carried out by remarkable people.”

Read excerpts from other employees' remarks [here](#). Watch video of the [full event here](#).

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Statement by Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen on Aviation Security

On March 1, Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen participated in a roundtable discussion with United Kingdom Home Secretary Amber Rudd and top CEOs and industry leaders regarding aviation security. Secretary Nielsen released the following statement:

“I am grateful for the close collaboration with our UK partners, air cargo, airline and airport leaders in raising the global bar for aviation security. Our enemies continue to target the transportation sector, and we must work together—both government and the private sector—to keep passengers safe. Efforts by the United States and United Kingdom to secure air travel will continue to protect travelers and flights around the globe. Our roundtable was productive, and it laid the foundations for future engagement to counter emerging threats. I look forward to continuing these conversations with industry leaders and advancing new ideas to protect the traveling public.”

As part of DHS’s efforts to raise security standards across the board, the Department is working to raise the baseline for aviation security by implementing enhanced security measures, both seen and unseen. This includes enhanced security at all last-point-of-departure airports in 105 countries around the world. These measures are being implemented in phases, in coordination with our international partners.

Additionally, the Department has worked to improve screening procedures for persons seeking to enter the United States. The Administration recently established a National Vetting Center, which is intended to improve national security and better protect Americans by more efficiently coordinating the current vetting processes across the federal government. The Presidential directive does not change any authority on vetting, which is set by law, but is intended to improve departments’ and agencies’ use of already existing intelligence and other information, while also enhancing the civil rights and civil liberties of individuals impacted in the vetting process. It will help fulfill President Donald J. Trump’s requirement that departments and agencies improve their coordination and use of intelligence and other information to identify potential threats to national security, border security, homeland security, and public safety.

CRCL Leadership Participates in Community Engagements in Atlanta and Birmingham

This month, CRCL leadership traveled to Atlanta, and Birmingham, Alabama to participate in a series of community engagement stakeholder meetings.

In Atlanta, Deputy Officer Veronica Venture convened the quarterly roundtable meeting with government partners and diverse ethnic community leaders, immigration advocacy organizations, and faith-based groups. Representatives from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Atlanta, the Gwinnett County Police Department, and Congressman Hank Johnson’s office also attended.



During the meeting, Ms. Venture gave a presentation on diversity and inclusion efforts currently in place in the federal work environment, and tools and resources available to employers and employees. Other presentations included an overview of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community and their work partnering with other community groups and government agencies, and EEOC efforts to combat employment discrimination and advancing civil rights in the work place. During the open discussion, participants raised a number of issues regarding: questions regarding workforce discrimination, ICE enforcement activities in the Atlanta area, CBP screening, credible fear processes, and hate crimes and threats of violence against Muslim communities. Ms. Venture also attended a community conference on immigration rights and responsibilities in Clarkston, Georgia where she talked about CRCL’s mission and responsibilities, and the community engagement program.

CRCL Officer Cameron Quinn traveled to Birmingham to participate in a series of meetings with diverse stakeholders. She first met with the local U.S. Attorney and discussed outreach efforts to local communities regarding hate crime reporting and prevention. She went on to meet with a group of refugee advocates in the Birmingham area, who raised questions about delays in asylum applications and concerns with Temporary Protected Status for certain countries.

Officer Quinn met with local immigration advocates who raised concerns regarding local immigration enforcement activities. Finally, she met with the Birmingham Police Department and discussed various community outreach and relationship building initiatives, as well as local efforts to diversify recruits to the force. Ms. Quinn also discussed DHS resources and trainings available to local law enforcement entities, including CRCL's Law Enforcement Awareness Briefing on Terrorism Prevention.

Active Shooter Resources Available in Multiple Languages

DHS has developed a series of materials to assist businesses, government offices, and schools in preparing for and responding to an active shooter. These resources include a detailed booklet, a desk reference guide, a reference poster, and a pocket-size reference card translated into [nine languages](#): Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Urdu.

Issues covered in the active shooter resources include:

- Profile of an active shooter
- Responding to an active shooter or other workplace violence situation
- Training for an active shooter situation and creating an emergency action plan
- Tips for recognizing signs of potential workplace violence

DHS Releases 2017 Executive Order 13636 Privacy and Civil Liberties Assessment Report

Senior agency officials for privacy and civil liberties are required to assess related impacts of the activities their respective departments and agencies have undertaken to implement [Executive Order 13636, Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity](#), and to publish their assessments annually in a report compiled by the DHS Privacy Office and Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. The Executive Order further directs Privacy Office and CRCL to consult with the [Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board](#) in producing the annual report. This [fourth annual report](#) details activities that occurred in fiscal year 2016, with a focus on programs or activities that are new or have substantially changed within the last fiscal year.

CRCL Participates in Colorado Emergency Management Conference

CRCL's Antidiscrimination Group participated in the 2018 Colorado Emergency Management Conference in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The conference, themed "*Coming Together; Come Fire, Hail or High Water*," brought together members of the public, private, volunteer, and non-government (NGO) emergency management communities to share lessons learned, discuss tools to enhance effectiveness, and find new ways to apply knowledge across the spectrum of homeland security and emergency management.

CRCL collaborated with FEMA Region VIII to conduct a session entitled, "*Accessibility Required: Understanding Your Civil Rights Obligations*." The session outlined laws and regulations, organizations' obligations and reporting requirements, and tips for finding resources and partnering with stakeholder organizations to ensure access for persons with limited English proficiency and persons with disabilities.

CRCL also distributed a number of resources at their exhibit booth, which included the [I Speak](#) booklets, the [Guide to Interacting with People who have Disabilities](#), and translated [active shooter materials](#). For more information about the Antidiscrimination Group, visit: <https://www.dhs.gov/antidiscrimination-group>.

CRCL on the Road, March

March 8 – Atlanta, Georgia

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

March 22 – Los Angeles, California

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

March 21 – Denver, Colorado

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

March 23 – Houston, Texas

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

CRCL on the Road Ahead, April

Detroit, Michigan: Quarterly roundtable

San Diego, California: Quarterly roundtable

For more information on engagement events, email: communityengagement@hq.dhs.gov.

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 file complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via our stakeholder email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. Issues of the newsletter can be accessed online at: www.dhs.gov/crcl-newsletter.

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. For more information, including how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, visit: www.dhs.gov/crcl.

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