

The Homeland Security & Defense Business Council
20/20 Project on the Homeland Security Enterprise

November 2015



THE MISSION IMPERATIVE:

SECURING THE HOMELAND THROUGH IMPROVED COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACROSS THE ENTERPRISE



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ABOUT THE OVERALL 20/20 PROJECT

The **20/20 Project on the Homeland Security Enterprise** is a five-year initiative of the Homeland Security & Defense Business Council (the Council). The Project embraces the concept of 20/20 ‘clarity of vision’ and a desire to provide – through a set of surveys, National Conversations, and other programs – in-depth insights and perspectives from both government officials and industry executives. This Project serves as a foundation of information, education, best practices and suggested action for the homeland security enterprise to continue to mature and provide the highest level of security and safety leading up to the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

During the span of the **20/20 Project**, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will celebrate its 15th anniversary and experience the third change of administration since the agency’s inception. DHS, as a central actor in homeland security, provides a useful focal point to examine overall progress of the enterprise. However, the homeland security enterprise is so much more – encompassing numerous federal, state, local, tribal, and global governments. The private sector is also a key piece of the enterprise, providing the technologies, products and services to government entities involved in the homeland security mission. Groups like the Homeland Security & Defense Business Council represent the private sector. The Project’s programs and surveys will assess the progress made and examine the continuing challenges facing the entire homeland security enterprise.

Surveys and related symposia will identify and discuss lessons learned, challenges and threats, and best practices. These are designed to provide both government officials responsible for the homeland security enterprise, and their industry counterparts who comprise the homeland security industrial base, with actionable insights to the processes and policies that impact the delivery of the technology, products, and services solutions to our nation. It is the Council’s hope that this type of information sharing and analysis goes beyond anecdotes, allowing DHS, the entire homeland security enterprise, and industry to continue working together to sustain effective programs. Further, this will serve to offer suggested enhancements, information, and analysis that support the organizational maturity necessary to achieve the vital homeland security mission.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

This inaugural survey, sponsored and led by the Homeland Security & Defense Business Council and Council member company, Grant Thornton LLP, initiates a five-year **20/20 Project on the Homeland Security Enterprise**. Grant Thornton has surveyed federal leaders for 25 years across numerous business functions and agencies. This effort is focused on gaining the perspectives of DHS leaders and industry executives on critical challenges and future opportunities facing DHS and the overall homeland security enterprise. The Council and Grant Thornton have received outstanding support from the DHS community in conducting this survey.

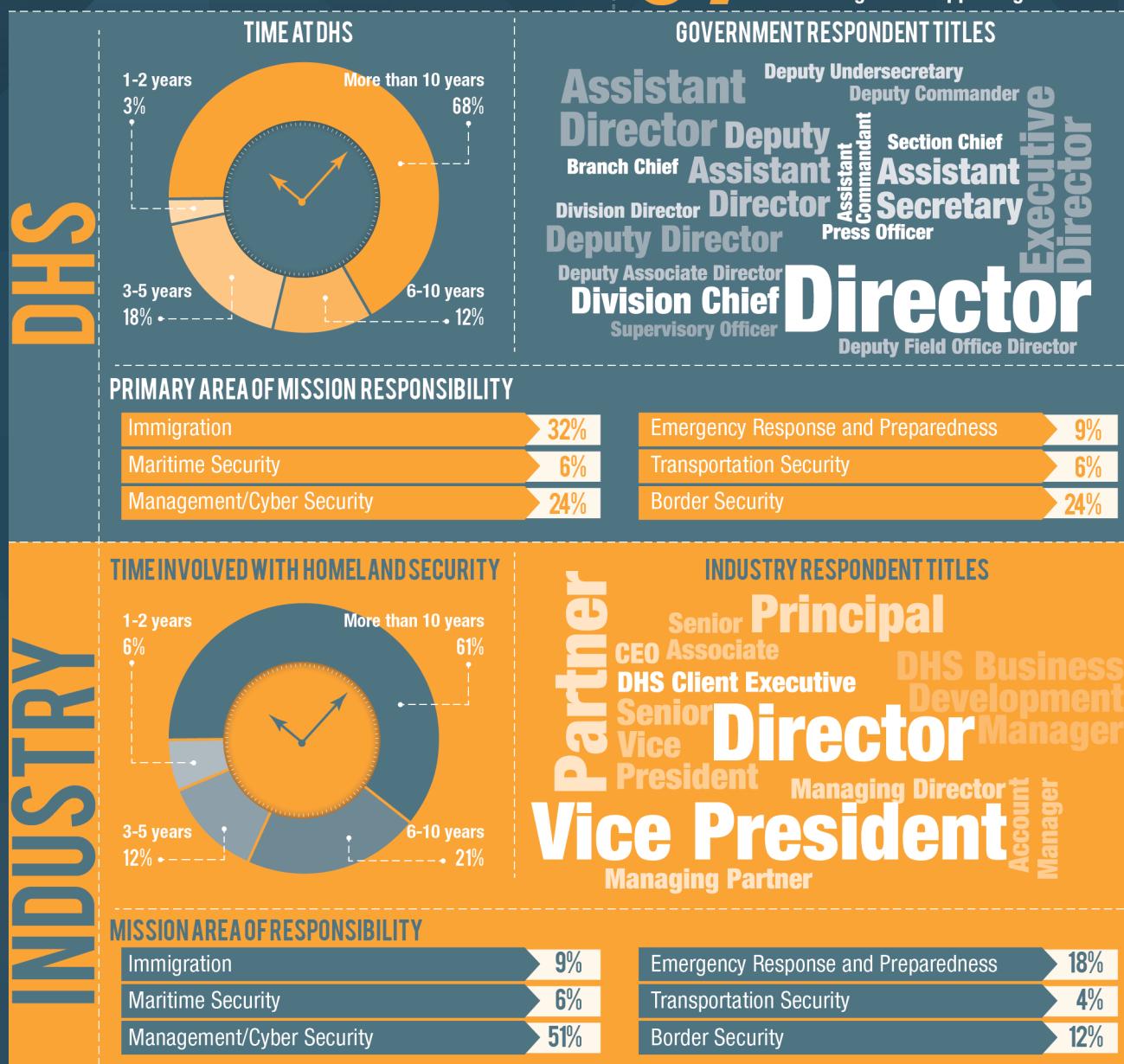
To preserve anonymity, we do not attribute responses to specific individuals or provide a list of participants. A summary profile of survey participants is provided below.

CONDUCTED INTERVIEWS

JULY 2015 – OCTOBER 2015

67 INTERVIEWED

67 Senior executives from every DHS component, DHS Headquarters, and leading firms supporting DHS



Survey participation profile that describes tenure in homeland security, mission area of responsibility, and survey participant title by sector.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the inaugural survey of the five-year 20/20 Project on the Homeland Security Enterprise, sponsored and led by the Homeland Security and Defense Business Council (the Council) and Grant Thornton LLP.

This inaugural survey presents a snapshot of the current state of the homeland security enterprise and establishes a baseline for use in assessing Department of Homeland Security (DHS) operations, from front-line activities to mission support functions. This initial survey does not answer broad or deep organizational process questions, but rather is a conversation starter. The survey's value is to gain insights from DHS and industry participants that provide more than anecdotal observations. The survey and the analysis in the report capture progress made since DHS's establishment and assess the Department's ability to confront challenges in the future.

Over the course of the summer and early fall of 2015, 67 DHS leaders and industry executives participated via in-person interviews and web-based surveys.

Respondents include **senior leaders** of every DHS component, DHS headquarters, and executives from leading firms that support the homeland security enterprise.

As we assessed the many interviews and responses, some trends became apparent:

- Threats and challenges to DHS mission accomplishment are complex and changing at a rapid pace. There is general consensus between industry and government that risks related to cyber attacks and lone-wolf, homegrown terrorism present significant threats.
- Broad support exists for unity of effort as a concept, but fewer see direct application to their immediate organizational units. Work remains to clarify and operationalize broader application of this initiative.
- Management and operations have vastly improved since the Department's establishment. The challenges have shifted from an uncertainty of mission to those of a maturing organization focused on breaking down barriers, increasing efficiencies, and improving coordination.
- While progress has been made, the vast majority of respondents think management challenges are inhibiting the mission.

Unity of Effort: "Unity of Effort" refers to an initiative of the Department's current Secretary, Jeh Johnson, "to begin to set the conditions for the Department to act in



a more unified fashion.” Questions regarding Secretary Johnson’s Unity of Effort initiative revealed support from government and industry, for expanding both the initiative specifically and cross-component unity of effort generally. However, questions remain about how best to achieve sustainable process changes that support greater progress. The challenge for DHS leadership is to move Unity of Effort from aspiration to implementation. More than ninety percent of DHS responses indicate this will require a clear Secretary-level strategy for DHS, reinforced by investments, defined operational objectives, and support from the components.

Internal Operations: Ninety-seven percent of the DHS respondents indicated mission support and management challenges do impact mission performance. Respondents cited a number of obstacles, but most frequently referred to the need for component leadership buy-in, increased communication, and improved technology. These themes reinforce the fundamental need to develop an effective governance model that integrates strategic planning and execution.

Workforce: The most critical driver of DHS’ ability to achieve its mission is its people, and survey respondents report the DHS workforce will continue to encounter significant challenges through 2020. A rapidly aging workforce will cause a wave of

retirements, resulting in a loss of institutional knowledge amplified by inadequate succession planning, particularly in leadership positions. Additionally, DHS encounters consistent challenges in recruiting, training, and retaining highly qualified employees, intensifying obstacles associated with retirement attrition. Generational attributes of professionals entering DHS also present both opportunities and challenges. Therefore, absent overarching hiring reform, DHS must focus on succession planning, employee development, and retention strategies to enable workforce success.

Industry Engagement: To supplement the DHS workforce, a majority of survey participants agree the agency will require industry support, particularly in the areas of innovation and information technology. Opportunities exist to improve the relationship between DHS and industry, beginning with open, honest, and continuous dialogue backed by an acquisition process that is responsive and agile to meet DHS needs.

Additional Insights: Finally, survey respondents confirmed what we already know to be true: DHS and industry leaders care deeply about the homeland security mission. They are pragmatic and focused on making measurable improvements to operations to make the United States safer and more secure. Frustrations exist linked to entrenched bureaucracy and stove-piped operations, but optimism persists for achieving broad success in homeland security.

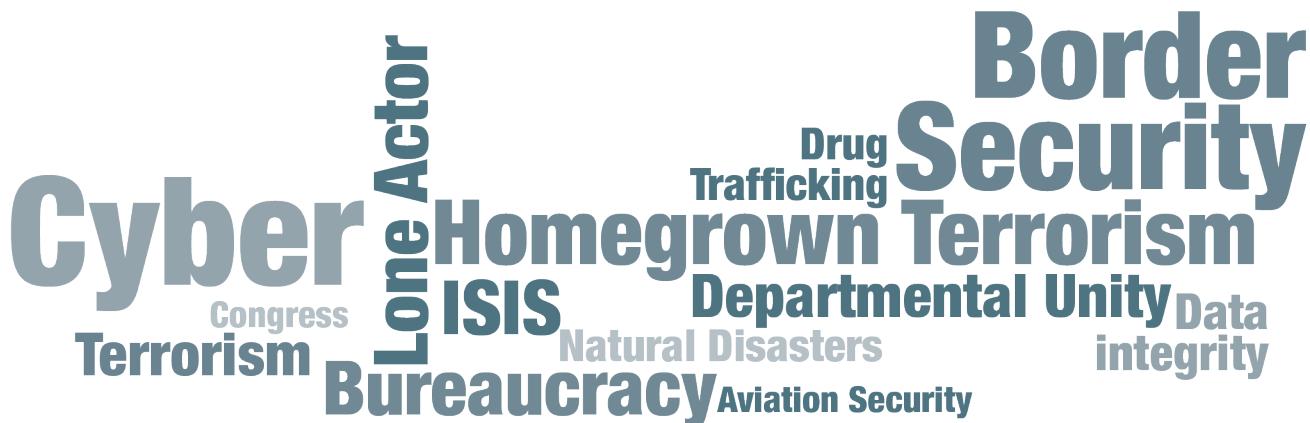
HOMELAND SECURITY ENTERPRISE AND UNITY OF EFFORT

DHS operates in a threat-driven, often reactive environment, with both operational and mission support professionals focused on preparing for and mitigating security risks. Exploring DHS' internal and external challenges to securing the nation from the many threats we face is crucial to discovering how DHS must further evolve by the year 2020.

Creating DHS required consolidation of 22 disparate agencies and their varied responsibilities and associated mission activities. The Unity of Effort initiative is in large part consistent with the reason the Department was created in the first place. With such consolidation/coordination challenges in mind, we asked our survey respondents about the state of DHS efforts to respond to these challenges, how they are evolving, and how the Unity of Effort initiative

can advance the mission. It is important to note when discussing Secretary Johnson's Unity of Effort initiative that "unification" is not necessarily the goal, but that it provides a foundation of complimentary contributions to a unified, sustainable achievement of the department's missions.

We asked DHS and industry respondents to identify the most significant mission challenges facing the homeland security enterprise. DHS respondents indicated heightened security threats present the greatest challenges. Top threats include acts of terror, including lone-wolf and homegrown threats (59%); cyber threats (41%); and border security and immigration (24%). Industry survey respondents had similar answers to their DHS counterparts, placing greatest emphasis on cyber risks (64%).



Top Mission Challenges Identified by DHS and Industry Respondents

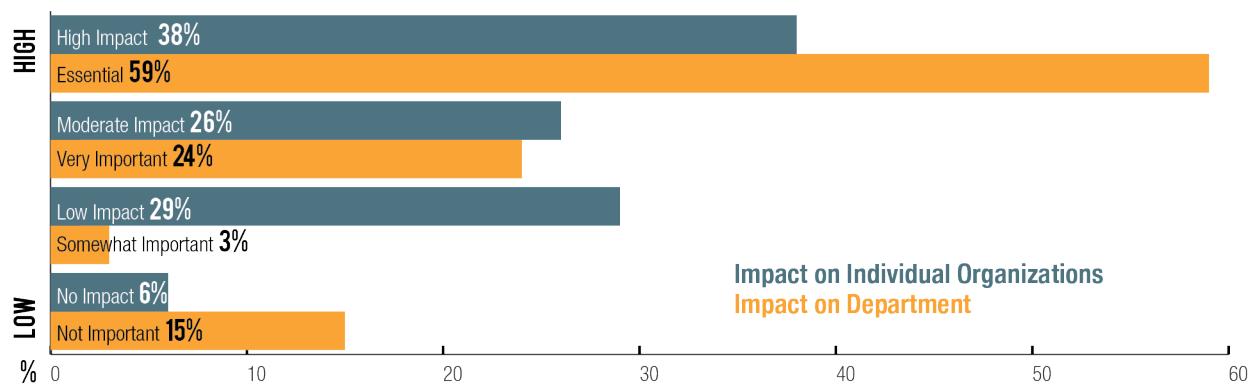


When asked how critical it is to increase unity of effort for departmental mission achievement, 83% of DHS respondents indicated that it is “Very Important” or “Essential”. In fact, when asked later in the survey what most frustrated DHS respondents in their jobs, the primary responses (inefficient management policies and procedures, and lack of unity among components) underline support for greater unity of effort.

However, when asked the extent to which the Unity of Effort initiative would impact their individual organization, the number falls to 64%. While still a majority, this drop-off has significance. The difference indicates greater support for coordination among components and missions broadly than for adapting component-specific operations to meet Unity of Effort objectives.

A central theme emerges from the split — unifying capabilities and perspectives across components is seen as essential to advancing the mission. But, respondents suggest that Unity of Effort will have limited impact on their immediate organization. This may indicate a lack of communication or inadequate cascading of the vision throughout the enterprise regarding the goals of Unity of Effort. Some federal respondents question the initiative’s sustainability having experienced similar initiatives in the past (e.g., One DHS, DHS 2.0).

DHS and industry survey respondents did make recommendations for more successful implementation and adoption of the Unity of Effort initiative. They indicate its success will ultimately hinge on (1) enterprise-level strategy (38%), (2) cross-component collaboration and buy-in (33%), and (3) consistent and informed component leadership (27%). The



Survey respondent assessments of the Unity of Effort initiative impact on their individual organization and Department.

HOMELAND SECURITY ENTERPRISE AND UNITY OF EFFORT (CONTINUED)

enterprise-level strategy respondents refer to would be a Secretary-led initiative that DHS can implement to improve its own activities as well as how it works with its partners. Most of the proposed solutions also involved improved communications, both on the strategy for implementing Unity of Effort, and in operational and managerial decisions.



Recommendations for Implementing Unity of Effort

Survey respondents expressed that Unity of Effort must move from a general policy objective to specific, actionable goals. Focusing on initiatives that advance unity of effort in management and support functions will facilitate DHS' ability to meet the mission demands. Further recommendations to enhance the initiative are provided below.



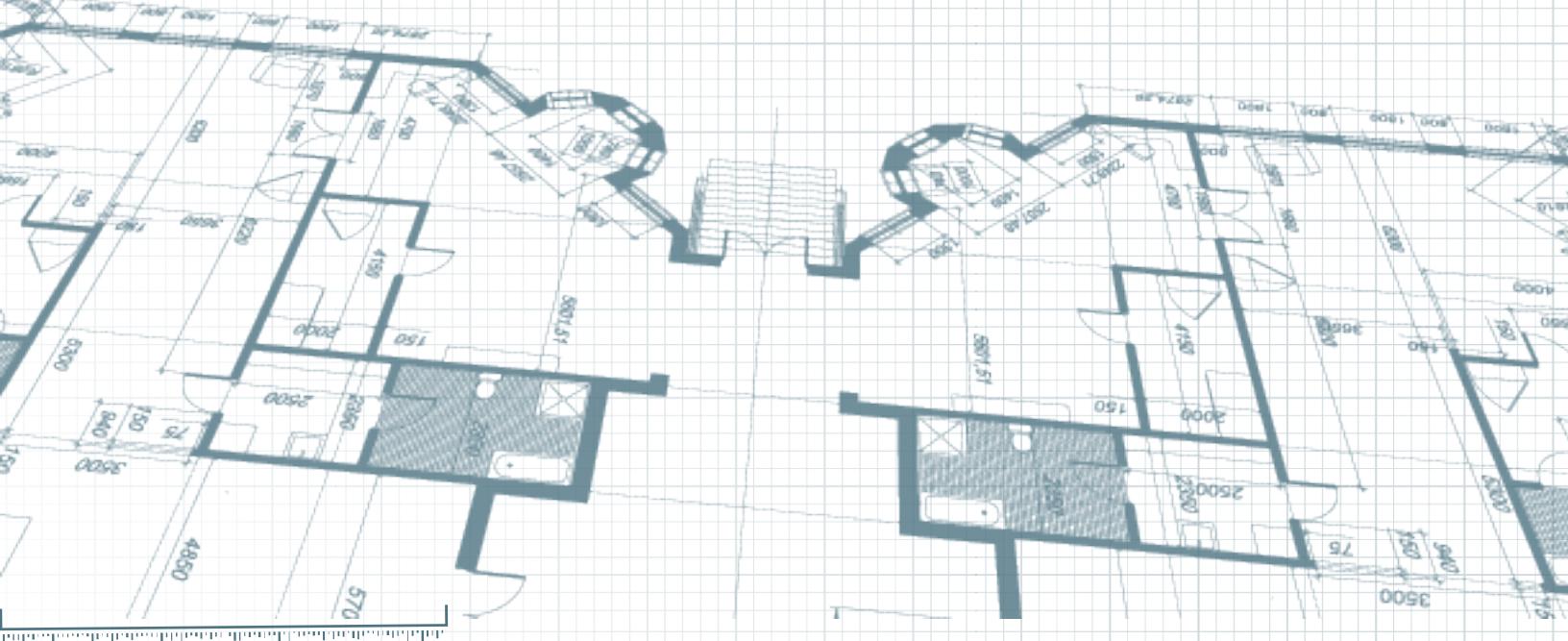
On Unity of Effort: “We need to spread the word and we need to establish the buy-in. People talk about working together, but then personalities clash. We need to identify clear roles and responsibilities when groups need to work together. We need to break down the perceived ownership of turf and silos.”



KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- There is general consensus among government and industry that top threats to security are homegrown, lone-wolf terrorist actors, and cyber security attacks.
- Unity of effort among DHS components is seen as crucial to advancing the overall DHS mission, but fewer believe the Unity of Effort initiative will impact their immediate organization.





MANAGEMENT AND MISSION SUPPORT

Upon DHS' establishment in 2003, its leaders were tasked with integrating management and mission-support operations for 22 agencies under a single governance structure. In this section, we asked survey respondents about the state of DHS' efforts to improve management coordination and the impact on mission performance. We also asked respondents to reflect on the magnitude of DHS' management challenges as well as best practices within management and mission support operations.

When asked about the biggest obstacles to management coordination, DHS survey respondents cited multiple obstacles: (1) a lack of component-level leadership buy-in (29%), (2) a need for better communication (22%), and (3) centralized operations processes (21%). While the top three responses reflect different areas of management, they all underline the need to develop an effective governance model that integrates strategic planning and execution. Survey responses showed support for integration, centralized operations processes, improved communication, and centralized information technology.



What are the top 2-3 obstacles to better operational & management coordination across the Department?

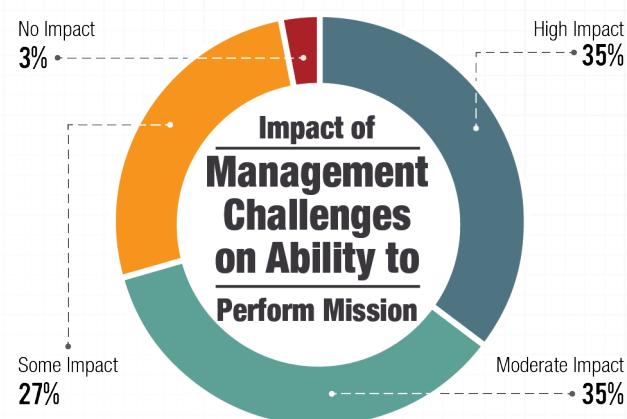
MANAGEMENT AND MISSION SUPPORT (CONTINUED)

Survey respondents cited additional concerns, including bureaucracy, inadequate funding, and dispersed geographical locations, as challenges to efficient management and mission support operations. Many of them noted that increasing awareness of component challenges, defining both potential synergies and operational differences, as well as standardizing policies would increase management effectiveness.

When asked to rate the impact of management challenges on DHS' ability to achieve its mission, 97% of government respondents stated that there was some level of impact on mission performance. Those who noted a high level of impact cited the decentralization of components from headquarters and the lack of buy-in by component leadership for department-level initiatives as key drivers.

On a very positive note, while DHS still encounters significant management challenges, the Department has also enacted significant improvements in the years since its inception. To highlight this, we asked DHS survey respondents to define the “top 2 or 3 most effective operational changes” implemented by their organization’s leadership.

Based on respondents’ identification of effective operational changes, we can see a general trend – the majority of survey respondents specifically called out initiatives that facilitate cohesiveness and a unity of effort across components. Several respondents cited



DHS survey responses on management challenges impact to mission

improvements that “[create] cross-cutting integrated project teams,” “[embed] senior leadership into the components” and “use information sharing” to drive results.

Overall, DHS survey respondents are looking for an effective Department-wide governance model that integrates strategic planning; manages risks within current and expected resources; and establishes open communication across all agencies and components. Respondents believe these changes will allow operational support and management processes to deliver optimal services across components by 2020.



As opposed to 63% of DHS respondents, 94% of industry respondents believe that the magnitude of challenges will be slightly higher in the next 5 years—with 42% believing those challenges to be much higher than the last 5 years.



Data management/integration improvement	CIO IT revamp	HR/HCM investments
Integrated systems/processes	Improved buy-in from senior leadership	Internal collaboration
Risk-based security	Enhanced information management systems	Identifying efficiencies within components and with other stakeholders
Rewarding innovation	Customer service investments	Focus on filling leadership roles
Matrix management chain	Adapting to generational divide	Emergency threat coordination
Regular senior leadership meetings	Empowering leadership	Shared policies and procedures across components
Strategic sourcing programs	Collaboration with state/local government	Physical infrastructure improvements
Access to joint DHS coordinating entities	Regional coordinating mechanisms	Field driven operations

What are the top 2-3 most effective management changes that have been implemented by your organization's leadership?



"We are reactive, do not coordinate well across silos, and do not share ideas often. Turfs/silos are problematic [and] shouldn't be ignored. There is a lack of familiarity from DHS leadership about the components and their work. How can DHS leadership become more familiar with real life in the components?"

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- DHS respondents see a need for more open collaboration and interoperability with other DHS components and organizations to enhance management and mission support activities.
- Respondents overwhelmingly believe that current management and mission support challenges are

inhibiting their ability to achieve their mission, with a significant number of respondents saying that those challenges could get worse.

- Management success stories from DHS respondents focus on strategy, collaboration, integration, and enhanced information sharing.

DHS WORKFORCE

Achieving DHS' diverse mission is made possible by the talents and capabilities of its more than 240,000 federal employees. Understanding workforce-related challenges and opportunities will help leaders best apply this workforce to achieve mission results.

Maintaining an effective and inspired workforce weighs heavily on the minds of many DHS leaders. We asked DHS survey respondents to discuss the two or three most significant challenges they currently face in managing their workforce and the extent to which their workforce receives adequate training to meet those challenges. The agency strives to achieve mission success in the face of uncertainty, evolving threats and funding constraints. In alignment with this constantly evolving environment we asked survey respondents how they expect the DHS workforce to change over the next five years.

According to survey respondents, the most pressing concern for the DHS workforce is easily summarized: hiring and retaining talent. Eighty-five percent of DHS respondents cited significant challenges related to: recruitment, the hiring process, retention and promotion of talented employees, and fears that a retirement wave would cause a significant loss of institutional knowledge and expertise. These concerns were pervasive regardless of the value survey respondents placed on current training programs, their perception of how today's challenges compare with those of previous years, or the extent to which they rely on support from industry.



Most Significant DHS Workforce Challenges



"Public service is not attractive to the younger generation but the Department needs their energy and inspiration... [They] are changing the way we do our work. They are smart and fast. We need flextime, work at home, and we are not going to attract millennials with outdated, clunky technology. We need to get with the program and be an agency that works for people in this century."

"[DHS needs] a seasoned workforce that has the flexibility to organize around mission process, rather than organizational hierarchy."



Resource constraints and budget uncertainty presented major concerns for 39% of survey respondents. Surprisingly, resource constraints may not necessarily impact employee morale; respondents who cited resource/budget concerns were actually less likely to have concerns about low morale.

When asked what they expect to be different about the DHS workforce in 2020, many survey respondents framed their answers in terms of hiring and retention. Twenty-one percent of respondents predicted that by 2020, DHS would lose institutional knowledge and expertise. Others answered with an eye on solutions they will implement to address this issue: 31% of respondents envisioned a more flexible and mobile workforce, defined by more mobility (telework), when they work (flextime and part-time options), and how they work (rotation through different organizations or job duties). Survey respondents said that flexibility was vital to the workforce of the future that they predict will be younger, more diverse, and more technically skilled.

More Skilled Workforce

More Agile Loss of Institutional Knowledge and Expertise Increased Diversity
Younger Workforce More Contractors Smaller Workforce
Flexible Workforce Model

Characteristics of the 2020 DHS Workforce

The DHS workforce faces critical challenges that could impact mission achievement. If the Department is unable to recruit, retain, and train skilled human capital, the impending wave of Baby-Boomer retirements will result in a loss of institutional knowledge and leadership. If DHS employees lack the resources necessary to do their jobs, they will be less effective.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- There are significant challenges to addressing the “triple threat” to the DHS workforce: difficulties in recruitment of new employees, a lack of resources for retaining and developing talented employees, and the potential impact of a retirement wave on the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise.
- The future of the DHS workforce is more flexible, more skilled and skill-oriented, younger, and more diverse. Several survey respondents acknowledged these characteristics will help keep pace with the threats that are also more agile, diverse and technically complex.



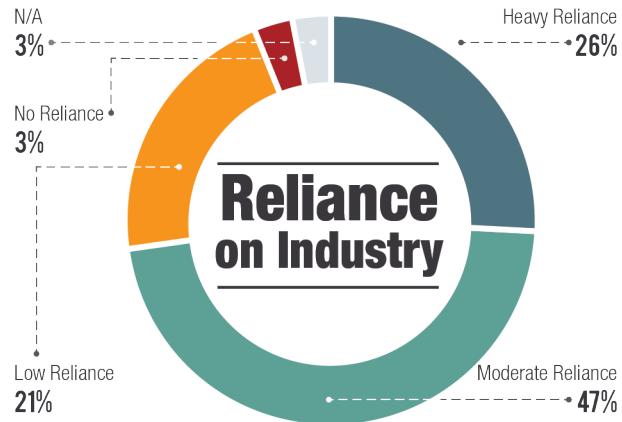
INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Last year, DHS spent more than \$12 billion on contract support – one-fifth of the agency’s enacted budget of \$60 billion.¹ We asked DHS leaders to discuss current level of engagement, future outlook, and areas for improvement in their relationships with industry.

We asked respondents to assess the extent to which their organization’s ability to meet mission objectives requires capability enhancement from industry. As a follow up, we also asked them about the types of private sector services, technologies and products they will require over the next five years. And, finally, we asked for recommendations to improve engagement between DHS and industry.

Three-fourths of survey respondents described a moderate to high level of need for industry capabilities. Respondents concerned about low morale reported slightly higher reliance on contractors, but respondents concerned about recruiting and retaining talent were neither less nor more likely to turn to industry.

In the next five years, three-fourths of survey respondents expect to use contractors to provide at least one technology-related good or service. Most plan to engage with industry for information technology and/or data management, and to a lesser extent for equipment acquisition, research and development, and



DHS respondents indicate their organization's reliance on industry

biometric technology. In addition to technology, 70% of survey respondents expect they will seek management and performance support, while 15% will seek financial management support.

When asked how government and industry can better work together, DHS respondents most often cited the need to develop more collaborative partnerships (43%) and a better understanding of their needs and operations (27%). When survey respondents in industry were asked the same question, top priorities included streamlining functions and integrating systems (33%), and establishing an enterprise-wide strategy (23%).

¹ Annual Review of Government Contracting: 2015 Edition, Bloomberg Government and National Contract Management Association, 8.



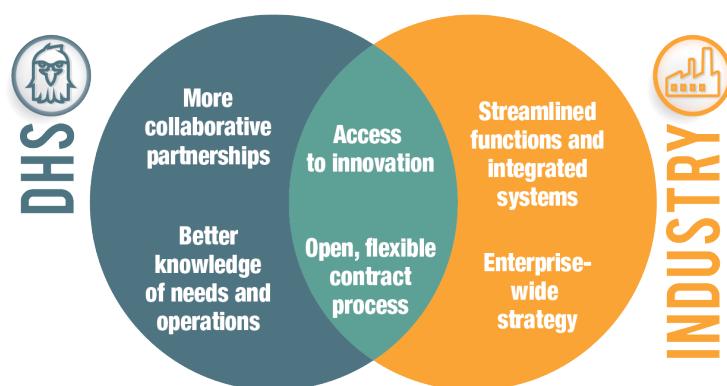
“Always understand the needs of your customers. The government can be slow, and industry is cutting-edge, so by the time the government acquisitions process is complete, the government’s needs have become a big deal. Focus on building a relationship and don’t focus so much on the bottom line [or] short-term gain. You want to have a lasting impact on the organization.”



Encouraging innovation and improving the acquisitions/contracting process were suggested by multiple respondents in both survey groups.

The need for greater and ongoing industry engagement was important to most survey respondents from both government and industry. DHS respondents indicated that cybersecurity and mission-technology integration are mission threats and cited systems modernizations and alignment of component IT investments as

central to the success of Unity of Effort. Information technology-related services represent a clear priority for DHS. According to survey respondents, DHS-industry engagement reflects this priority. DHS survey respondents would like industry to be more collaborative and understanding of its needs, while industry respondents would like DHS to be more strategic and efficient.



Recommendations for Improved Relations Between DHS and Industry

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Federal respondents focused on how industry can partner and better understand government's needs, while industry respondents indicated that a more strategic, intentional and streamlined organizational structure in DHS would bolster the value of solutions

- Both government and industry saw a need for more flexible, agile contracting processes, and better access to innovations from the private sector.

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

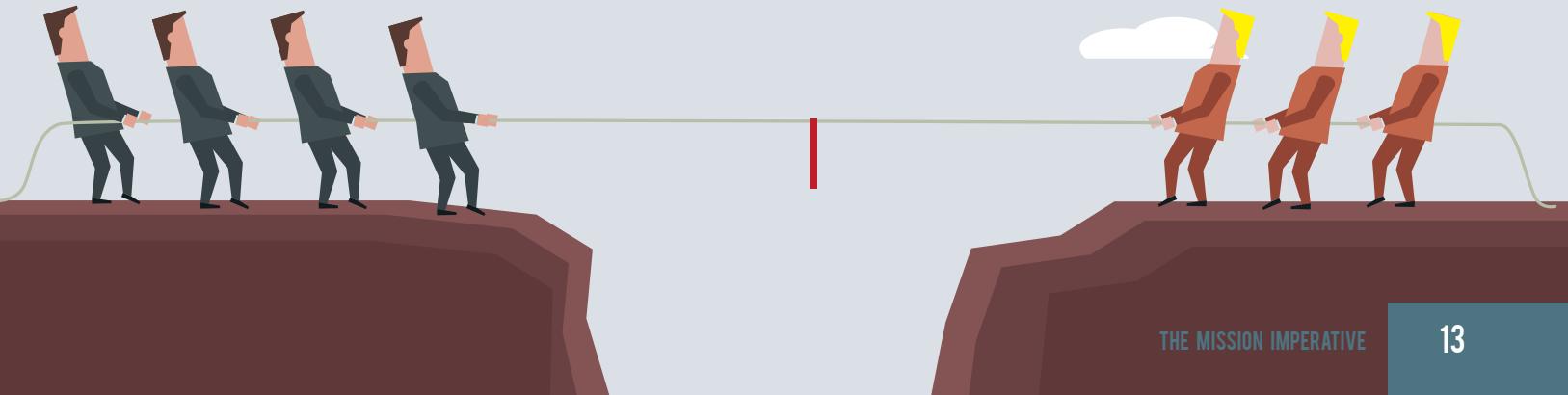
The inaugural **20/20 Project** survey establishes a baseline for assessing the state of DHS as the homeland security enterprise enters a critical period in its maturity. Throughout the survey, respondents identified both success stories and challenges confronting the enterprise in achieving its critical mission.

To close the survey, we polled federal leaders on their top challenges, frustrations, and sources of satisfaction. DHS respondents, when asked what they enjoy most about their jobs, state making a difference focusing on mission, and the people they work with are

most inspiring. As one leader indicated, “It’s endlessly complex. You learn that there are always more layers and you are constantly learning.” Frustrations are reported in the hiring process, budget instability, and politics/bureaucracy.

Survey respondents understand the gravity of consequences associated with the homeland security enterprise, making DHS at once both a challenging and fulfilling workplace. Despite DHS’s continued growing pains, our survey responses reflect that employees are, according to one respondent, “providing an important service: protecting the nation.”

*Representative responses from DHS executives on what they find **most rewarding** and **most frustrating** about working within the Department.*



CONCLUSION

What we gather from the survey responses is that leaders throughout DHS and industry cite both substantial progress made over the 12+ years since DHS' establishment, as well as awareness that gaps and challenges still exist. Current government officials and industry executives all feel that these challenges are not insurmountable.

Management obstacles remain and pose a threat to mission achievement. Significant steps are being taken at headquarters, directorates, and components to address these obstacles, including Unity of Effort. Cultural shifts within the organization require an enterprise-level strategy with clear objectives that receive broad support from every part of DHS. The workforce that will drive this change faces its own threats. A generation of leaders on the verge of retirement coupled with challenges in hiring and retaining new employees, and poor succession planning, present fundamental threats that must be addressed.

This survey was meant to serve as a catalyst to support reflection and conversation, rather than as a definitive means of providing recommendations to address these outstanding issues. The ultimate goal is to jointly identify key issues that lead to recommendations for

DHS and industry. Key trends and findings from our inaugural survey include the following:

- Threats and challenges to DHS mission accomplishment are complex and changing at a rapid pace. There is general consensus between industry and government that risks related to cyber attacks and lone-wolf, homegrown terrorism present significant threats.
- Broad support exists for unity of effort as a concept, but fewer see direct application to their immediate organizational units. Work remains to clarify and operationalize broader application of this initiative.
- Management and operations have vastly improved since the Department's establishment. The challenges have shifted from an uncertainty of mission to those of a maturing organization focused on breaking down barriers, increasing efficiencies, and improving coordination.
- While progress has been made, the vast majority of respondents think management challenges are inhibiting the mission.

Questions regarding furthering Unity of Effort, improving industry-government engagement, and how to define a responsive, effective, and efficient homeland security enterprise necessitate further dialogue and continued positive steps. Through the Council's five-year 20/20 Project, we hope to examine these issues in collaboration with leaders throughout the homeland security enterprise.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PARTICIPATING DHS COMPONENTS AND DIRECTORATES

Federal Emergency Management Agency	Transportation Security Administration
Federal Law Enforcement Training Center	U.S. Coast Guard
Headquarters	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
National Protection and Programs Directorate	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Intelligence and Analysis	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Science and Technology Directorate	U.S. Secret Service

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ABOUT THE SPONSORS

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