



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

Secretary Napolitano Issues Statement on the Death of Osama Bin Laden

On Sunday, May 1, 2011, President Obama announced that the United States conducted an operation that resulted in the death of Osama Bin Laden, leader of al Qaeda, who was responsible for the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States and other acts of terror abroad.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano issued a statement on the event:

“The death of Osama bin Laden is an important success not only for the United States, but the entire world. Our efforts to combat terrorism, however, do not fixate on one individual, and we remain completely focused on protecting our nation against violent extremism of all kinds.

We remain at a heightened state of vigilance, but the Department of Homeland Security does not intend to issue an NTAS alert at this time. I have been clear since announcing NTAS in January that we will only issue alerts when we have specific or credible information to convey to the American public. However, our security posture, which always includes a number of measures both seen and unseen, will continue to respond appropriately to protect the American people from an evolving threat picture both in the coming days and beyond.

I commend the President and offer my gratitude to the men and women who defend and protect our nation at home and abroad, whether they wear a military or law enforcement uniform or serve as one of thousands of unsung heroes in the intelligence and homeland security community. It is true that we are stronger and safer than we were on 9/11 – not only because Osama bin Laden is dead, but because of the unflinching dedication and hard work of so many people throughout the world committed to freedom and security.”

CRCL has engaged our community partners regarding this announcement, by sharing the Secretary’s statement and current information, and by providing a forum to address any concerns they might have.

DHS Removes Designated Countries from NSEERS Registration

As part of CRCL’s outreach efforts, we have translated the following announcement into Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, French, Pashto and Urdu. The Arabic and Urdu translations are attached; to receive a copy of a translation in any of the other listed languages, please email your request to crcloutreach@dhs.gov.

Last week, DHS announced the removal of the list of countries whose nationals have been subject to registration under the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS)—effectively ending the NSEERS registration process through [the publication of a notice in the Federal Register](#).

DHS and the U.S. government have conducted roundtables, meetings, and town halls with our community partners around the nation, regarding the NSEERS process.

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[DHS Removes Designated Countries from NSEERS Registration, continued]

NSEERS was first implemented in 2002 as a temporary measure in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and was designed to record the arrival, stay, and departure of certain individuals from countries chosen based on an analysis of possible national security threats. The NSEERS registration required approximately 30 minutes in secondary inspection, per person, per arrival; and NSEERS registrants were also required to register upon departure at one of the 118 designated ports of departure, limiting travel flexibility.

Since NSEERS was created, DHS has implemented several automated systems that capture arrival and/or exit information, making the manual entry of this data via the NSEERS registration process redundant, inefficient and unnecessary. The improved and expanded DHS and Department of State systems capture the same information for visitors, regardless of nationality.

As a result of these advances and input from community groups and advocacy organizations, we are pleased to announce that the Department is officially ending the NSEERS registration process. This step will streamline the collection of data for individuals entering or exiting the United States, regardless of nationality.

Because the Secretary of Homeland Security's authority under the NSEERS regulations is broader than the manual information flow based on country designation that has now ended, the underlying NSEERS regulation will remain in place in the event a special registration program is again needed.

Of course, all persons, baggage, and their conveyances arriving in or leaving the United States are subject to inspection and any traveler and his or her belongings may be subject to secondary screening for a variety of reasons, but referrals to secondary screening are not done automatically based on nationality. Rather, under DHS policy, screening is based on many criteria, which are carefully designed to reflect current intelligence and respect civil rights requirements.

2010 DHS NO FEAR Act Report

CRCL's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Division recently posted the [Fiscal Year 2010 No FEAR Act Report](#) on the Department's website. The report highlights the Department's most significant FY 2010 accomplishments related to EEO and diversity, which include: the implementation of enterprise-wide data systems to track EEO complaint activity; a 41% reduction in the number of cases awaiting agency merits adjudication; a five-year high for the timely completion of more than 80% of EEO counseling; and the shortest recorded annual average completion time for EEO investigations (213 days) over the past five years. Click [here](#) to read the full report and for additional information on the Department's No FEAR Act reporting efforts.

The Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act) was established to reduce the incidence of workplace discrimination within the Federal government by making agencies and departments more accountable. CRCL leads the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs and efforts to promote workforce diversity, including complaint adjudication and reporting requirements.

CRCL Engages with Somali Communities

Over the past year, CRCL has increased its engagement efforts with Somali-American communities in cities with large ethnic Somali populations, which include Minneapolis; Columbus; Ohio; Seattle; San Diego; and Portland and Lewiston, Maine. In these cities, CRCL's work includes informing communities about civil rights and how to address grievances through DHS. CRCL also supports community initiatives designed to counter violent extremism. Through roundtables and town halls, CRCL helps to foster close collaboration between community groups and federal, state, and local partners, including law enforcement at all levels. *[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]*



*Somali Youth Conference,
Columbus, Ohio*

[CRCL Engages with Somali Communities, continued]

Recently, CRCL staff have coordinated and participated in two Somali youth summits in Minneapolis and Columbus, Ohio. These efforts resulted in the creation of local Somali youth advisory councils that will convene their own meetings for youth to discuss their issues and experiences.

CRCL Meets with Immigration NGOs on the East and West Coasts



*Immigration Advocacy Groups Meeting
Los Angeles, CA*

CRCL Officer Margo Schlanger recently convened Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Civil Rights/Civil Liberties Committee meetings in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles. The NGO-organized committees include organizations that are concerned with civil and human rights, with a particular focus on immigration-related issues.

Topics discussed at the quarterly Washington, D.C. meeting included updates on CRCL's complaints process and some pending investigations, border issues, and our work with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on detention, detainers, and the 287(g) program, as well as our continued human rights work. The Los Angeles meeting was the first of its kind to be held outside the Beltway, giving organizations on the West Coast the important opportunity to engage with CRCL on topics ranging from detention standards and border issues, to ICE's Secure Communities initiative.

New CRCL Leadership

Veronica Venture recently joined CRCL as the new Deputy CRCL Officer and DHS EEO Director, bringing significant expertise and experience with the federal EEO process and diversity management—particularly as it relates to law enforcement. Ms. Venture comes to DHS from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, where she served as the EEO Officer for nine years. Prior to her work with the FBI, she served for 12 years at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)—beginning as a law clerk, and subsequently holding positions as a trial attorney, administrative judge, Acting Area Director of the San Diego Field Office, Special Assistant to the Chair, and finally, EEO Director for the EEOC's own EEO office.



CRCL Deputy Veronica Venture

CRCL on the Road, May 2011

May 4 – Detroit, Michigan

CRCL Officer Margo Schlanger will co-chair a BRIDGES community meeting with Arab American, Middle Eastern, and Muslim American community leaders.

May 10 – Sterling, Virginia

CRCL will convene its quarterly roundtable in the DC metro area.

May 12 – Columbus, Ohio

A CRCL representative will attend a Somali Law Enforcement Advisory Group roundtable sponsored by the FBI.

May 18 – Portland, Maine

CRCL will convene its quarterly roundtable and conduct a community engagement town hall meeting.

May 19 – Los Angeles, California

CRCL will convene its quarterly roundtable.

May 23-26 – Columbus, Ohio

A CRCL representative will attend the East African Area Studies Group conference.

May 26 – Boston, Massachusetts

CRCL will join the US Attorney's Office in convening the monthly BRIDGES roundtable.

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. 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.

CRCL Phone: 202-401-1474 • Toll Free: 866-644-8360 • TTY: 202-401-0470 • Toll Free TTY: 866-644-8361

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Prior newsletters:

Issue 1 (Sept. 2010) About this Newsletter • Civil Rights Complaints • Anti-Discrimination Obligations for Recipients of DHS Financial Support • Expanded Community Engagement

Issue 2 (Oct. 2010) CRCL Leads Presentation on Children • Guidance to Travelers Carrying Religious Articles • New Environmental Justice Group • DHS and Hispanic Heritage Month • ITACG Impact Assessment Completed

Issue 3 (Nov. 2010) New Website Launched • CRCL Submits Annual Report to Congress • ICC Submits Annual Report to the President • Complaints Process Improved • Universal Periodic Review, Before the UN Human Rights Council • Human Rights Day, December 10 • CRCL Expands Community Outreach Roundtables • CRCL Leadership

Issue 4 (Jan. 2011) Message from the Officer • If You See Something, Say Something Listening Session • E-Verify Rights and Responsibilities Videos • Training of Trainers • EEO Complaints Backlog Reduced • Expanded Los Angeles Roundtable Kickoff

Issue 5 (March 2011) Message from the Officer • CRCL Convenes Somali Youth Summit • State and Major Urban Area Fusion Center Program Stakeholder Meeting • DHS and Wounded Warriors

Issue 6 (April 2011) DHS Announces New Guidance on Limited English Proficiency • DHS Secure Communities • CRCL Expands Community Outreach with Denver Roundtable • 2011 National Fusion Center Conference • CRCL Hosts Renowned Diversity and Immigration Scholars • DHS Honors Women's History Month