Statement for the Record
Of

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Introduction

Thank you Chairman Bilirakis, Ranking Member Richardson, and distinguished members of the Committee. It is a pleasure to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts to improve communications for emergency response providers and government officials.

DHS remains focused on improving and providing the communications capabilities for those who are the first to arrive at the scene of a disaster site—the Nation's emergency responders and our Federal, State, and local partners. Our national leaders and public safety personnel must have access to reliable and instantaneous communications to effectively coordinate response and recovery operations. DHS recognizes critical communications tools as more than a technology problem that can be solved with the "right" equipment or the "right" communications system. All of the critical factors for a successful communications solution—governance, standards, standard operating procedures, training and exercises, and integration of systems into daily operations, *as well as* technology—are being addressed through the collective work of our programs.

Further, DHS believes that providing effective communications solutions requires fostering and nurturing relationships with those who own and operate the communications infrastructure, international standards bodies, members of the emergency responder community, and Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial partners. These cooperative relationships are crucial to providing interoperable communications capabilities, planning for and developing priority services for voice, data and video communications as networks evolve, and developing and implementing the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.

Fulfilling the DHS Communications Mission

The Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network will affect all aspects of emergency communications for our first responders. As the network is planned and deployed, it is essential that DHS is prepared to adapt to these changes and support advancements in technology. To this end, DHS is conducting a full review of the functions and programs within CS&C to identify any improvements that could be made to its communications programs. This review was initiated in response to Executive Order (EO) 13618, the "Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Communications," signed by the President on July 6, 2012. EO 13618 replaces EO 12472 and eliminates the National Communications System (NCS). The EO updates and clarifies the NS/EP communications responsibilities of the Federal Government to address the challenges of a dynamic technological environment.

EO 13618 requires DHS to develop a management and organizational plan to implement its NS/EP communications functions. CS&C is conducting a comprehensive review to develop the plan, which included an analysis of the functions and services of the OEC, the NCS, the National Cyber Security Division, and the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center (NCCIC).

The EO further establishes the following two entities:

- **National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Communications Executive Committee.** The EO created a NS/EP Communications Executive Committee, an eight-Department and Agency interagency committee, co-chaired by DHS and the Department of Defense (DOD) to make recommendations to the President of the United States on NS/EP communications-related matters.

- **Executive Committee Joint Program Office (JPO).** The EO directed the Secretary of DHS to establish a Joint Program Office to support the Executive Committee. DHS is establishing the JPO within CS&C, which complements DHS's existing interagency fora and partnerships led by CS&C.

Through these new entities, as well as existing partnerships, DHS will continue its responsibility of shaping national policy and working with other DHS Components, Federal Departments and Agencies, State and local governments, the private sector and international partners to improve communications capabilities and achieve mission requirements.

Current Initiatives and Ongoing Challenges

Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network

On February 22, 2012, with the help and leadership of the United States Congress, the President signed the *Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012,* which establishes the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN) for emergency responders at all levels of government. The signing of the Act was the culmination of over a decade of effort to see the reallocation of the "D Block" of spectrum to public safety and to fulfill one of the 9/11 Commission recommendations: the development of a nationwide interoperable communications network. The Act establishes a new entity within the National Telecommunications and

Information Administration of the Department of Commerce to oversee planning, construction and operation of the network, known as the First Responder Network Authority, or FirstNet. The Secretary of Homeland Security is one of the three Federal representatives to the FirstNet Board, in addition to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Attorney General. On August 20, 2012, the Secretary of Commerce also appointed twelve additional Board members from the fields of public safety, technology, network operations, and finance. , Prior to the enactment of the law, DHS, through the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) within the Office of Cybersecurity and Communications (CS&C) was already working with our Federal partners in the Departments of Commerce and Justice to represent DHS in the Administration's efforts to help set the broad policy framework for the NPSBN and to ensure that the voices of our State and local stakeholder partners were heard. Over the past few months, DHS has increased its efforts to support the implementation of the Network and to carry out our statutory requirement to support the Secretary through her role as a member of the FirstNet Board. More specific examples include the following broadband-focused programs and activities:

- **Planning and Assessments**: DHS is preparing an update to the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP), which is the first nationwide strategy designed to advance emergency communications across all levels of government. The updated NECP will identify key broadband challenges and recommend near-term actions to foster the integration of broadband technologies and data capabilities, as well as propose measures to maintain existing Land Mobile Radio communications capabilities until broadband technologies can support mission-critical communications. Simultaneously, CS&C is working with individual States to update the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (Statewide Plan) criteria to ensure that Statewide Plans are reflective of broadband technologies and data capabilities.

  DHS is also conducting a cyber risk assessment of the NPSBN to help the Department and our partners gain a better understanding of risks related to its deployment. Relying on the Department's expertise in cybersecurity, DHS will provide FirstNet with this assessment and recommended implementation steps. We have held several stakeholder meetings with public safety and industry representatives to discuss cyber risk issues, with a focus on network security and interoperability.

- **Outreach and Coordination:** DHS is working with all of its stakeholder groups to ensure the views and requirements of the public safety community are fully represented in broadband planning and implementation efforts.

  - To increase coordination of Federal efforts for broadband implementation, the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC) is working to identify Federal broadband requirements by preparing a consolidated view of emergency communications assets, addressing associated legal and regulatory barriers, reviewing and analyzing Departmental positions on pending broadband regulatory matters and rulemakings, and establishing standardized grant guidance and processes. The ECPC has identified the development of broadband standards and research and development as one of its strategic priorities.

- Concurrently, the OneDHS Emergency Communications Committee is providing consolidated Departmental input into Federal interagency efforts, as well as developing strategies for broadband technology migration from current land mobile radio technology to next generation wireless network technology.

- DHS supports outreach efforts related to the development and deployment of a nationwide public safety broadband network by working with representatives from the SAFECOM Executive Committee and Emergency Response Council to develop educational materials on public safety broadband. Educational materials include information on funding and governance, and are targeted to multiple audiences.

- DHS continues to coordinate with the emergency response community, preparing wireless broadband guidance documents for Statewide Interoperability Coordinators, urban area and regional interoperability coordinators, public officials and executives, and emergency responders to support current NECP and Statewide Plan initiatives on interoperability planning. The Department also continues to provide emergency response stakeholders up-to-date and comprehensive information about wireless broadband in the emergency response environment. In addition, DHS is working with States and jurisdictions to incorporate broadband initiatives into the Statewide Plans.

- Under the strategy and policy direction of the OneDHS Emergency Communications Committee, DHS has initiated a joint program management office to capture and implement Department-wide broadband requirements to develop a next generation tactical communications mobile platform for voice, data and video.

- **Grants:** DHS has been coordinating with Federal Agencies to ensure consistency in grant policies and requirements affecting broadband investments. DHS has worked with its Federal Agency partners to limit investment in high-risk projects that may not comply with FirstNet requirements or support the development of a nationwide network for public safety users. Further, DHS has aligned key grant guidance with Federal broadband goals. The 2013 SAFECOM grant guidance, which provides guidance to State and local stakeholders applying for grants, will emphasize the need to plan before purchasing—a strategy in full alignment with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) State and Local Implementation Grant Program. The *ECPC Recommendations for Federal Agencies: Financial Assistance for Emergency Communication* provides guidance to Federal program managers administering emergency communication grants, and stresses the need for technical compliance to ensure Federally-funded investments are compatible and interoperable. The *ECPC Recommendations Document* will be updated to reflect new programs, policies and requirements related to the deployment of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.

- **Technical Assistance:** DHS has developed a wireless broadband technical assistance offering to assist State, local, territorial, tribal and regional users to develop and improve their use of broadband technology in line with the vision of a nationally interoperable network. The offering is tailored for each jurisdiction and provides informational briefings, governance models, standard operating procedures, project planning and engineering support.

- **Research and Development:** The Science and Technology Directorate's (S&T) Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) is supporting the deployment of the nationwide public safety broadband network through requirements gathering and standards acceleration activities. This includes supporting the Department of Commerce's 700 MHz demonstration network, which provides public safety with a unique testing environment for broadband systems and devices before operational use. Additionally, OIC is working with the Department of Commerce on a modeling and simulation project to provide public safety with the ability to evaluate broadband network deployment scenarios and investigate how well new technologies support public safety requirements. Further, OIC is evaluating how to define a transition path for current Land Mobile Radio technology to the future broadband network.

National and Statewide Planning:

Over the last five years, OEC has worked to fill many gaps in public safety communications and DHS is seeing progress in several key areas that enable emergency responders to interoperate in an all-hazards environment. As part of its mission, the office led a comprehensive nationwide planning effort with more than 150 stakeholders from the emergency response community to develop the NECP. This included significant feedback and coordination with the SAFECOM Executive Committee, the SAFECOM Emergency Response Council, and the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council. These stakeholder groups represent the interests of millions of emergency responders, as well as the State and local governments that public safety communications serve. Involving these groups in the early phases ensured that the plan took stakeholders' input into account and would be widely accepted in the public safety community.

The NECP has been instrumental in defining communication priorities for public safety personnel at all levels of government. CS&C has been driving implementation of the NECP in coordination with its Federal, State, and local partners, and we are seeing measurable improvements in building capabilities and closing gaps identified in the plan for governance, training, operating procedures, and others, including:

- **Enhanced Statewide Coordination:** The creation of Statewide Communication Interoperability Plans, Statewide Interoperability Coordinators, and Statewide Interoperability Governing Bodies has improved coordination of emergency communications activities and investments throughout all 56 states and territories. Through the Statewide Plan development and updating process, the Statewide Interoperability Coordinators, in collaboration with their governing bodies, have been

effective in helping States define their communications needs and future investments and ensuring that Federal funding is directed where it is most needed. In addition, CS&C has conducted over 160 workshops during the past four years to assist States as they implement and update their Statewide Plans.

- **Common Plans, Protocols, and Procedures:** The use of standardized plans and procedures is driving improved command, control and communications among emergency responder agencies in the field. CS&C and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have worked with more than 140 jurisdictions, including Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) regions, to develop Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans that document formalized interoperability governance groups, standardized policies and procedures, and emergency communications equipment inventories. States continue to develop these communications plans to cover additional regions.

NECP Goal Assessments

Implementation of the NECP has been a key driver behind much of our progress in improving interoperability. More than 85 percent of the NECP milestones were achieved, and progress is evident in all of the NECP priority areas, including governance, training and coordination.

Through the NECP, OEC also established the first set of national performance goals for evaluating emergency communications during local emergencies and complex events, as well as a process for measuring these goals in every State and territory. These goals include:

- Goal 1: *By 2010, 90 percent of all high-risk urban areas designated within the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) can demonstrate response-level emergency communications within one hour for routine events involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies.*
- Goal 2: *By 2011, 75 percent of non-UASI jurisdictions can demonstrate response-level emergency communications within one hour for routine events involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies.*
- Goal 3: *By 2013, 75 percent of all jurisdictions can demonstrate response-level emergency communications within three hours, in the event of a significant event, as outlined in national planning scenarios.*

To implement Goal 1, OEC assessed UASI regions' abilities to establish and demonstrate response-level emergency communications during large-scale, planned events. Every urban area was able to achieve the Goal, and the results showed progress in key emergency communications capabilities beyond the development of Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICP) in 2007. For Goal 2, OEC worked with all states and territories to assess emergency communications at the county level, including county-equivalents such as parishes, municipalities, and townships. The process has generated unparalleled data on interoperability emergency communications capabilities and gaps and is helping DHS and States focus future resources and improvement activities.

As of today, more than 2,800 counties and county equivalents have participated in the Goal 2 process, including about 30,000 individual public safety agencies. Among the participating jurisdictions, about 90 percent were able to achieve response-level communications and demonstrate NECP Goal 2. The assessment also showed progress in key areas of emergency communications, including the establishment of more inclusive governance structures and formal standard operating procedures, as well as the frequency and ease in which jurisdictions use interoperable communications solutions.

CS&C is encouraged with the outcome of the NECP Goals. Both the high level of participation and the demonstration of NECP Goal 1 and 2 are major accomplishments in the Department's ongoing efforts to assess progress nationwide and better target its emergency communications resources, such as grants, technical assistance, training and other planning efforts. OEC is currently updating the NECP and will be revising Goal 3 accordingly to take into consideration events that have transpired since the NECP was first released in 2008. This includes key findings from Goals 1 and 2, as well as lessons learned/best practices from real world disasters and events, such as floods, hurricanes, earthquake, and tornadoes of 2011.

Collaboration with Federal Partners

In addition to the extensive progress made to improve emergency communications at the State, local, and tribal level noted above through the work of the NECP, the Department, through OEC, is coordinating efforts to improve emergency communications among DHS Components and other Federal agencies.

As mentioned above, CS&C operates the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center to coordinate policy, planning, and administration of emergency communications across 14 Federal Departments and Agencies. The ECPC provides an inter-departmental mechanism to coordinate common solutions, streamline development of policy and plans and jointly engage State, local, territorial, and tribal partners. The ECPC has achieved early successes through defining a strategic agenda that reflects shared member priorities and establishes issue-specific focus groups to drive immediate action.

CS&C also administers the OneDHS Emergency Communications Committee, which aims to improve internal coordination of policy and planning across DHS Components with emergency communications missions. This committee provides a vital mechanism for maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's emergency communications investments and activities. The OneDHS Committee reached a significant milestone in June 2011 with the creation of the unified OneDHS Emergency Communications Strategy. The Strategy establishes a common vision "to ensure access to and exchange of mission-critical information across the Homeland Security Enterprise anywhere, anytime, through unified capabilities." It also sets goals for coordinating and improving emergency communications architecture, investment, governance, and operations.

Improved Governance and Coordination. DHS is working with Federal, regional, State, and local agencies to increase coordination, information sharing and oversight of interoperability through formal governance structures and partnerships. CS&C instituted a Regional Coordination Program to strengthen collaboration and knowledge sharing with our stakeholders. CS&C has established a Regional Coordinator in each of the 10 FEMA Regions, and they

regularly participate in the Statewide Interoperability Governing Bodies, urban area interoperability meetings and their respective FEMA Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups.

The CS&C Regional Coordination program has worked closely with FEMA through the Disaster Emergency Communications Division to ensure State and local agencies have the capability to communicate during disaster response. Because the Regional Coordinators interact with stakeholders every day, they have an in-depth understanding of the needs of different communities across their Regions.

Targeted Technical Assistance. CS&C has implemented a technical assistance strategy to ensure that all States and territories can request and receive its targeted, on-site emergency communications assistance, while also focusing support on the States and urban areas with the highest risk and lowest capability. These 40-plus offerings are tailored to support the priorities in each State or territory Statewide Plan and the objectives of the NECP, including the implementation of the nationwide public safety broadband network discussed above. Since 2008, the 56 States and territories have combined to request more than 750 individual technical assistance services from CS&C for support with the development of governance structures, tactical and strategic planning, and a variety of engineering services. To better address the interoperability needs at the national and local level, CS&C has developed several online offerings and tools that can be accessed via the Internet.

Increased Training Opportunities. As mentioned above, CS&C has developed Communications Unit Leader (COML) and Communications Technician (COMT) courses to improve emergency responders' proficiency with communications equipment and to assist them with coordinating roles and responsibilities during an incident or event. The COML program has been embraced by emergency responders nationwide, and CS&C has trained more than 3,500 responders, technicians and planners to lead communications at incidents across the nation, including local floods, blizzards and wildfires. Trained COMLs have also contributed to recovery efforts throughout the United States, including the recent outbreak of tornados and massive flooding in the Midwest and Southeast. To assist States in leveraging these trained responders, CS&C has developed a portal for Statewide Coordinators to locate contact information for every trained COML, COMT and Auxiliary Communicator.

Future Enhancements

Future advancements in technology will provide emergency responders and government officials with new means to communicate during routine events as well as disasters. However these advancements will also create new challenges that will require enhancements to current DHS programs. In order to ensure DHS is prepared to support stakeholder efforts to address these new challenges, the Department is reviewing existing communications programs to identify where future enhancements are necessary.

Critical Infrastructure Protection. As we guide the transition of emergency and NS/EP communications, CS&C will continue building and nurturing those relationships that are critical to protecting the Communications and Information Technology Infrastructures. Since 2003, the Department has led the identification, prioritization and protection of the nation's 18 critical

infrastructure sectors under Homeland Security President Directive-7 (HSPD-7). Since its inception, CS&C led these critical efforts for the Communications and IT system of systems, which is interdependent with other critical infrastructure. CS&C will continue planning and reporting on the progress of these sectors as outlined in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan. We will continue our partnership with all stakeholders to jointly publish Sector Specific Plans and National Risk Assessments, which help to mitigate vulnerabilities to infrastructure.

Priority Services Program Management. CS&C develops and maintains NS/EP communications priority services programs, which has supported the communication needs of over one million users across all levels of government and the private sector. The GETS program is a White House-directed emergency telecommunications service. GETS supports over 274,000 Federal, State, local, and tribal government, industry, and non-governmental organization personnel in performing their NS/EP communications missions by providing a robust mechanism to complete calls during network congestion from anywhere in the United States. Specifically, GETS provides 90 percent or more call completion rates when network call volume is up to eight times greater than normal capacity.

WPS is the wireless complement to GETS, created due to the overwhelming success of GETS during 9/11. The program enhances the ability of 108,000 NS/EP subscribers to complete cellular phone calls through a degraded public switched telephone network during a crisis or emergency situation. WPS calls receive the next available radio channel during times of wireless congestion,, which helps to ensure that key NS/EP personnel can complete critical calls by providing priority access for key leaders and supporting first responders. WPS service provides authorized cellular phone users with the ability to have priority within the public switched telephone network as well as priority access to cellular radio channels.

The Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) Program is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC)-sponsored program that authorizes and provides priority restoration, provisioning and reconstitution of NS/EP communications. The TSP Program provides service providers with an FCC mandate for prioritizing service requests by identifying those services critical to NS/EP. TSP can save days to weeks on the time required to return wireline voice/data services to normal, and there are more than 200,000 active TSP circuit assignments in support of NS/EP communications.

As the Nation's communications infrastructure migrates to an Internet Protocol (IP) operating platform, expediting the convergence between communications and cybersecurity activities remains a top priority for the Department. CS&C continues its plans for ensuring priority voice, data and voice communications over these IP networks through its Next Generation Networks Priority Service Program (NGN-PS).

Public-Private Partnerships. Our partnership with the private sector has been instrumental in developing critical NS/EP and emergency communications policies within the Department. One of the Department's most critical relationships exists with the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC). The NSTAC is a Federal Advisory Board comprising up to 30 Chief Executive Officers from the Nation's leading communications, banking, and information technology companies. Most notably, the NSTAC has been

instrumental in several government-led initiatives, such as the creation of the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center (NCCIC), Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS), Wireless Priority Service (WPS) and the National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications (NCC). Beyond its Federal Advisory role, CS&C actively nurtures critical relationships with NSTAC member companies to protect the overall Communications and IT infrastructures. CS&C will continue its support to and partnership with the NSTAC to create communications solutions for our stakeholders. Most recently, the NSTAC examined four scenarios designed to stress future 2015-level networks, and provided the President with recommendations for technology enhancements and government investments that would provide the best network resilience and recovery.

Modeling, Analysis and Technology Assessments. The CS&C Modeling, Analysis and Technology Assessments team provides expertise in modeling and analyzing current and future protocols, algorithms, network designs and capabilities that will impact priority service communications in legacy and Next Generation Networks (NGNs). The modeling team also maintains a suite of specialized infrastructure analysis tools to provide critical infrastructure risk assessments for the communications sector in the event of a man-made or natural disaster. These services will play a large role in analyzing future technology.

Standards Activities. The CS&C Standards Team is currently an active leader and contributor to various national and international standards development organizations, ensuring industry-wide adoption of non-proprietary solutions for NS/EP preparedness telecommunications requirements. The team provides leadership and representation in standards bodies to recommend standards that, when implemented in Internet Protocol-based networks, will provide capabilities to ensure national, State, and local leadership are able to communicate during times of crisis. These activities will continue as the Department works with partners to develop standards for both NS/EP communications and public safety broadband requirements.

National Response Planning

CS&C is working with Federal, regional, State, and local agencies to increase communications coordination, information sharing, and oversight of emergency preparedness activities to improve response to man-made and natural disasters. CS&C works with these entities to ensure a coordinated response through formal governance structures and partnerships.

Continuity of Operations and Government (COOP/COG). CS&C will continue leading the Department's responsibilities to ensure the U.S. Government has the means to perform Enduring Constitutional Government, National Essential Functions and Primary Mission Essential Functions as directed in National Security Presidential Directive-51 (NSPD-51)/Homeland Security Presidential Directive-20 (HSPD-20). Furthermore, the CS&C in its role as Co-chair of the EO 13618 Executive Committee will continue to assist the Federal Executive Branch in meeting its NS/EP communications needs.

Emergency Response and Operations. CS&C will also continue leading response, recovery and reconstitution efforts leveraging its Emergency Support Function (ESF) #2 responsibilities. Partnerships with our Federal, State, local, tribal and private sector partners will continue to be a critical enabler of the Department's broader Homeland Security mission.

We will also continue operating a joint government-industry capability through the NCC. The NCC will continue providing critical response, recovery and provisioning and reconstitution efforts for communications, leveraging the many DHS communications tools and capabilities. As it has since 2000, the NCC will be serving as the Communications Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ISAC), which brings together over 50 private sector partners.

In addition to the overlapping missions and initiatives noted above, this new organization will focus on supporting the responder community at the Federal, State, local, tribal and territorial levels and will enhance DHS's incident handling and response for cyber and communications-related incidents.

Conclusion

The Department appreciates the Committee's support for our communications activities. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.