



Committee on  
**HOMELAND SECURITY**  
Chairman Michael McCaul

*Opening Statement*

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**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Patrick Meehan (R-PA)  
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies  
Committee on Homeland Security**

**“Protecting the Homeland from Nuclear and Radiological Threats”**

**Remarks as Prepared**

The Subcommittee meets today to examine a vitally important issue: protecting the homeland from nuclear and radiological attack. Given the alarming expansion of terrorist safe havens across the Middle East and Northern Africa, along with the increasing sophistication of these groups in organizing and planning attacks, it is imperative that the Department of Homeland Security is properly prepared to detect and deter nuclear threats.

The Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) is the entity within the Department of Homeland Security responsible for preventing a nuclear attack, and is the lead agency within the U.S government for coordinating efforts to detect and intercept radiological and nuclear devices coming into the United States. DNDO coordinates these efforts through an interagency systems and collaborative framework known as the Global Nuclear Detection Architecture (GNDA), and DNDO is responsible for implementing the GNDA domestically.

DNDO works with other DHS components, including Customs and Border Protection, as well as state and local law enforcement, to provide these entities with the equipment and training needed to interdict radiological or nuclear material before it can enter the U.S. DNDO works closely with these components to install radiation portal monitors at ports of entry and supply officers with portable radiation monitors. Currently 100% of all containerized cargo coming is scanned at land and sea ports of entry in the U.S.

DNDO also works with State and local law enforcement and first responders to strengthen nuclear detection capabilities in the interior. Through the “Securing the Cities” program, DNDO helps state, local and tribal governments design and implement detection and interdiction capabilities in high-density urban areas. These efforts in New York City region have resulted in a robust detection architecture, and last year, DHS announced the STC program will be expanded to the Los Angeles/Long Beach area and will select a third city in fiscal year 2014.

While these achievements are significant, there is still work to be done to address gaps in the nuclear detection architecture. The purpose of this hearing is to address those gaps and find how we can best assist DNDO and the Department to prevent a catastrophic nuclear event.

DNDO has had its share of struggles in the past. Among them, failed acquisition plans, and less than optimal working relationships with some of its inter agency counterparts. In its report from 2013, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted these deficiencies and recommended approaches toward curing them. Since then, DNDO has successfully worked to implement GAO’s recommendations, and I look forward to learning more about how the Office has improved as a result of those efforts.

I am pleased to welcome to this hearing our distinguished panel of witnesses: Dr. Huban Gowadia Director of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, Dr. David Trimble, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Government Accountability Office. DNDO plays a vital and specific role within homeland security and it is our responsibility to ensure that it has what it needs to prevent a radiological or nuclear terrorist attack. I look forward to hearing from Dr. Gowadia how she envisions the future of DNDO, and what Congress can and should do to help the office achieve its mission.

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