



Committee on
HOMELAND SECURITY
Chairman Michael McCaul

Opening Statement

February 12, 2015

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**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman John Ratcliffe (R-TX)
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies**

“Emerging Threats and Technologies to Protect the Homeland”

Remarks as Prepared

“The Subcommittee meets today to examine critically important components within the Department of Homeland Security and to give each of them an opportunity to give members an update on the current state of affairs and direction moving forward, which will help to inform this subcommittee’s future oversight and legislative efforts.

Given the recent alarming terrorist attacks in Paris, the increase in radical and violent extremist activity across Europe and the increase in cyber attacks from nation state and organized criminal actors, it’s important that each of these components rise to the challenge and meet these threats. Yesterday, the full committee heard from the law enforcement and the intelligence communities about the rising threat of foreign fighters, and the risks from individuals who have traveled and trained with ISIS or other extremist groups in Syria and Iraq.

The National Protection and Programs Directorate is charged with the protection of our nation’s critical infrastructure in both the cyber and physical security realms. Cyber attacks and breaches against our government agencies and critical infrastructure have grown exponentially, and the capabilities of our adversaries are becoming more advanced. As we have seen over the past few months with the hack of Sony Pictures, and last week’s breach of health insurance giant Anthem, these attacks are becoming the norm and they’re increasing in sophistication. The National Cybersecurity Communications and Integration Center within NPPD is leading the effort to prevent, detect and mitigate cyber attacks against critical infrastructure, federal agencies and the private sector. The NCCIC’s mission is a critical civilian component in the sharing of threat information between the government and the private sector.

The United States Secret Service plays an important role in sharing of cyber threat information through the NCCIC and back out to the private sector to help prevent and mitigate future attacks. The Secret Service’s Criminal Investigative Division investigates cybercrime cases involving financial breaches,

such as the Target and Home Depot intrusions. The Secret Service also trains hundreds of state and local law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges in the field of computer forensics and digital evidence handling techniques through its National Computer Forensics Institute.

The Domestic Nuclear Detection Office within DHS is responsible for detecting and deterring illicit nuclear and radiological material from entering the United States. While DNDO is the lead agency within the United States Government for coordinating these efforts, it works hand in hand with other DHS components including TSA, Customs and Border Protection, state and local law enforcement and the intelligence community. DNDO works with these partners to provide them with the technology, training and best practices to ensure the interdiction of radiological or nuclear material before it can enter the U.S. While DNDO had previously experienced some stumbles along the way, under the current leadership of Dr. Gowadia, it has become one of the best functioning components within the Department.

DNDO also works closely with the Science and Technology Directorate to further its mission. S&T is the primary research and development arm of DHS, and it manages science and technology research, development and acquisition for the department's operational components and first responders. S&T has also experienced difficulties since its creation, some of which it is still grappling with today. These have included poor outreach efforts, inconsistent coordination with other DHS components, and a lack of clear research and development definitions. I know that S&T's director, Dr. Reggie Brothers, has been working to correct some of these issues over the past year but it does concern me that some of these more basic issues have yet to be corrected. I am very much looking forward to working with him and his staff to move the directorate forward.

I look forward to hearing from each of you on the current state of affairs and the anticipated future direction of each of your vital components. I'm certain that Ranking Member Richmond and the other members of the subcommittee also look forward to working with you and providing oversight and legislative solutions where appropriate."

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