

History of homeland security essay example

[Law](#), [Security](#)



Abbreviated as DHS, the Department of Homeland Security was specifically created with the goal of responding to terrorist threats within the borders of the United States of America. The development rather the establishment of the DHS followed the terrorist attack that took place on September 11, 2001. Hence, the mandate of the DHS is primarily to protect the territories of the United States including its Ambassadors' residences abroad. However, the mandate of the DHS extends beyond just terrorism to accommodate instances of natural disasters and man-made accidents (DHS, 2015). The annual budget of the DHS is estimated at between \$ 60 billion and \$100 billion. Statistics collected from its 2011 budget indicates that the DHS was allocated \$98 billion of which \$66. 4 billion was spent (U. S. Department of Homeland Security Annual Financial Report Fiscal Year 2010).

The DHS employs a little over 200, 000 employees making it the third largest government institution or department in terms of size only falling behind the Department of Defense which follows the Veterans Affairs Department. The distinction between the mandates of the DHS in comparison to the Department of Defense (DOS) owes to the fact that the DOS is mandated with external aggression. For that reason, the DOS is particularly tailored to react to external threats that the United States comes across. On the other hand, the mandate of the DHS is particularly hinged on intelligence gathering to prepare for, prevent and react to all threats to security within the borders of the United States. To that end, the obligation of the DHS to the people of United States of America is sustaining peaceful coexistence within the borders from internal and external threats that have a direct bearing on the safety of the citizenry. Essentially, the mandate also stretches

to include the collection of intelligence in regards to threats posed to American citizens' safety whether from weather conditions and natural disasters or initiated threats. To that end, the mandate of the DHS serves to address all manner of threats to the internal security of the American populous (DHS, 2015).

Organizational Design

The DHS hosts several government agencies that were prior to the formation of the DHS independent agencies of government. Among the agencies absorbed by the DHS is the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). The absorption of the Immigration and Naturalization Service gave rise to two subdivisions that include the Citizen and Immigration Service (CIS) and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). However, the two subdivisions namely ICE and CIS were designed to be served by a single investigative unit that is dubbed as the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) (DHS, 2015). There was a need to further consolidate other security forces that particularly dealt with border control and patrol as about inspections at the borders of the United States. Such institutes include The United States Customs Service, The United States Border Patrol, as well as The United States Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The consolidation led to the department dubbed Customs and Border Protection that is the other wing of the DHS (DHS, 2015). The figure below is an illustration or diagram of the organizational structure.

Consequently, the bureaucratic nature of the design of the organization at DHS serves to make it quite cumbersome to pass legislations or implement policies in the institution. In that regard, the DHS has featured in various

newscasts as wasteful of resources due to its complicated organizational design. To that extent allegations of fraud and lack of transparency in the execution of operations at the organization have stifled the execution of DHS mandate. Equally, members of civil societies, as well as members of the public, have aired concerns with respect to the brutality that the DHS unleashes on the American citizenry. Further, allegations of potential threats to national security by the DHS targeting innocent Americans as perpetrators is cited as one means through which the DHS undermines liberties. In essence, the bureaucracy that the design or structure of the management of the organization presents serves to make the execution of its mandate difficult. Consequently, the improper utilization of resources coupled with instances of mismanagement, abuse of office, and lack of coordination among units makes achievement of common goals a hard nut to crack at the DHS (Lyon & Russell, 2014).

The DHS's organizational design needs a revamp to the extent that it reflects the contributions of individual input of various subsections of the department. In that regard, a more definitive approach to that management and execution of the services of each unit is essential. Therefore, to develop a more functional unity three levels of authority should suffice so as to ensure transparency and accountability at the DHS. The proposed organizational structure should include two fundamental extensions of the DHS namely the Immigration and Border Control Department, and the Homeland Security Investigations Department. In that regard, the Immigration and Border Control section of the DHS would be tasked with all issues regarding the management of the borders of the United States. On

the other hand, the Homeland Investigations would be tasked with the responsibility of following up on credible tips for potential risk factors to the security of the United States. Hence, the two organizations would work together to report to the DHS on the state of affairs as pertains to safety and security of the American citizenry.

The figure below indicates the proposed organizational structure for Homeland Security that is lean and efficient where coordination throughout the major departments leads to the cohesion of functions of the DHS.

Evaluation of Planning and Implementation

One of the milestones that the DHS has achieved in the recent past is providing crucial tips on instances of insecurity and threat to the peace and stability of the American populous. From fair warnings regarding possible terror attacks and addressing issues of public unrest, the DHS has been at the fore front in establishing a presence in the security sector. For instance, the recent up row in the nation regarding the ' Black Lives Matters' march has hit the media as well as civil societies across the globe. In that regard, the DHS has proven that close surveillance of potential instances of violent up rows is essential in maintaining law and order in the United States (Joseph, 2015). Moreover, the close surveillance of the ' Black Lives Matters' march serves to ensure that the demonstrations are conducted in a peaceful means or manner and that they do not result in insecurity.

However, a great impediment to the operations of the DHS, as pertains to the execution of its mandate, lies in the development of negative attitudes by civil societies and interest groups on the invasion. In that regard, the DHS is cited to have carried out unorthodox spying activities on its citizenry in the

guise of collecting intelligence on insecurity concerns (Joseph, 2015).

Further, the constant instances where the DHS is faced with allegations of fraud and the lack of transparency places its reputation in disrepute since the allegations paint the agency in a bad light. Besides, the negative publicity that the DHS is accorded serves counterproductive in its efforts towards ensuring public safety and inspiring confidence in the members of the public on the execution of the same (U. S. Department of Homeland Security Annual Financial Report Fiscal Year 2010). Fundamentally, the DHS serves a crucial role in the development of stability, prosperity, and most importantly the safety of the American people; hence, its organizational structure should serve to meet its specific objectives.

Recommendations for Planning and implementation

Foremost, the Department of Homeland Security needs to win the confidence of the public as well as the support of the public in securing the borders of the United States. In that regard, the DHS must welcome the public to participate actively in evaluating the risks to security that are imminent in their environment. Further, the DHS must be willing to share information with members of the public on the potential risks that they may face. Hence, the DHS can create an environment of information exchange between itself and members of the public to enhance successful outcomes in its operations.

The Indiana department of safety and personnel portal is an example of a platform for communication that the DHS at the national level can adopt to facilitate intelligence gathering through information exchange with members of the public (IDHS, 2015). Secondly, the department of homeland security

and the national level must make its operations leaner and more efficient. By reducing the number of subunits or departments of the organization specific functions can be carried out more efficiently. To that end, a proposal of three levels of authority two of which report to the DHS top management should be established. Hence, the organization can enhance its transparency and accountability. The diagram below presents a cause and effect mechanism of the above recommendations.

References

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Appendix: Interview Questions

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Do you believe the DHS has an appropriately efficient and effective organizational structure? Please elaborate on your reply.

Do you have any concerns about the DHS in regards to the following;

Corruption

Transparency

Over handedness

Fraud

Other (please specify)

What do you believe is the greatest impediment to the achievement of the goals of the DHS?

What solutions do you recommend for the problems mentioned in question 4 above?

Do you have any piece of advice for the top management at DHS? Please feel free to share your thoughts.