

# THE HSIN ADVOCATE

**MARCH 2015**

Secure Collaboration on a  
Shared Platform

Strengthening Cybersecurity  
Operations

AMBER Alert™ Response in Iowa

HSIN Supports  
Humanitarian Exercise

Federal 100 Awards

## **A Message from Mary Cope Halmhuber**

*Director, Kentucky Intelligence Fusion Center*

*Office of the Governor, Kentucky Office of Homeland Security*

## **Secure Collaboration on a Shared Platform**

As members of the Kentucky Intelligence Fusion Center, it is our mission to help connect public safety and public service agencies across our Commonwealth. HSIN is central to this effort.

We rely on HSIN every day as a common platform to share information between levels of law enforcement and other public safety agencies, including fire, health, transportation and the private sector. Our users know that no matter where they are, they can securely access the information they need when they need it.

### **Maximizing Manpower**

As in other states, budgets have tightened and we've had to do more with less. When we realized that manpower shortages would limit the number of in-person training sessions we could provide, our HSIN Mission Advocate showed us how HSIN could be used to develop computer-based training options. Now our partners can easily access required training from their office rather than traveling to a training center. The cost savings for this program have been significant for us as well as our local partners!

### **Event Management**

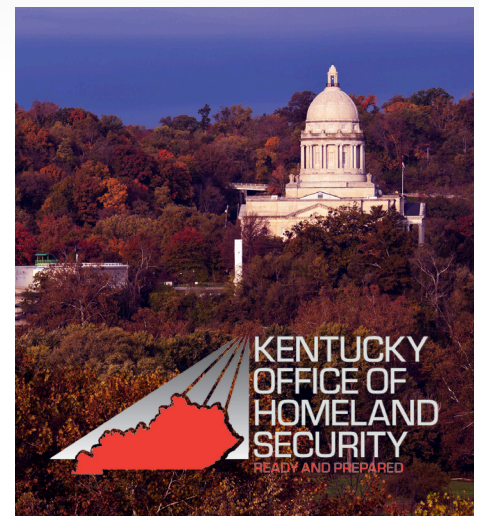
Beyond our daily, steady-state reliance on HSIN for information sharing and

collaboration, we have also established a permanent situational awareness room that we can use for any major event in our state. One of the biggest events we support is the Kentucky Derby and HSIN has been part of that effort for the past three years.

It is said that the Derby is the "fastest two minutes in sports," but it takes months of preparation and coordination to pull it off. Each year, hundreds of thousands of people take part in the Kentucky Derby Festival, which kicks off two weeks before the big race with the Thunder Over Louisville and includes more than 70 individual events. HSIN makes it possible for every agency involved—Federal, State, Local and Private—to share information in real time to support our public safety and situational awareness efforts. This year, Louisville and their partner agencies, including the fusion center, will be using HSIN to track incident information and live stream security video footage. We've also invited our counterparts at the Indiana fusion centers to access HSIN to expand our overall situational awareness.

### **Ongoing Support**

The more we use HSIN, the more ways we find that it can help. Sometimes it's as simple as expanding access, like inviting our Indiana counterparts to join our situational awareness room for the



Derby. Other times, as with our training programs, it takes a little creative thinking and a conversation with our HSIN Mission Advocate to see how HSIN can meet our evolving needs. In every instance, HSIN has helped our operations run better and more efficiently.

The best advice I can give to Homeland Security Advisors and fusion centers is to use HSIN consistently and take advantage of your Mission Advocate! They are an invaluable resource and can help you find new ways to work with your mission partners. When everyone has access to needed information at the same time, operations run more efficiently.

## Best Practices COE



## The Cyber Intelligence Network and CINAware

Each month the Best Practices Community of Excellence (CoE) shares fresh and innovative ideas and guiding principles from HSIN users. On **Tuesday, April 21 at 1 p.m. Eastern Time**, cyber security experts from California, Kansas and Louisiana will discuss the new capabilities made possible by the CIN community and the CINAware room and how they have impacted event and incident response operations.

For more information or to take part in this Best Practices CoE session, contact HSIN Outreach at [HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov).

## New Operational Case Study



In Louisiana, the State Analytical and Fusion Exchange (LA-SAFE) works with law enforcement agencies across the state to share detailed information on gangs and gang members. Their centralized gang repository on HSIN helps law enforcement agencies catalog and track gang activity across jurisdictional boundaries.

Check out the new operational case study, **Setting Up a Gang Repository in HSIN**, to learn more about how to structure such a tool and other tips for success.

## How Does HSIN Help You?



For this edition of the Advocate, we spoke to a lot of people that use HSIN in many innovative ways to help achieve their mission objectives. How does HSIN help you deliver mission success?

Information sharing is more than sharing data; it's about sharing ideas and learning how to make the best use of the tools available. Tell us your story by sending an email to [HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov)!

## Strengthening Cybersecurity Operations

Cyber threats are not bound by geographic location. When one organization is attacked, many different agencies may need to take part in mitigation and response efforts. To address this need, the National Fusion Center Association established a Cyber Threat Intelligence Subcommittee in August 2014, which relies on HSIN to support effective information sharing and collaboration across jurisdictions.



The new Cyber Intelligence Network (CIN) community on HSIN brings together over 50 agencies from more than 40 states to share tools, training and best practices. Cyber analysts use HSIN to share standardized information and resources including intelligence product templates and standard operating procedures. When a cyber threat is identified, detailed information is posted to HSIN to leverage the resources of every fusion center and coordinate an effective response. Cyber intelligence analysts from across the country regularly post information to HSIN concerning current threats and discuss incidents that may impact organizations across the country.

"The CIN community helps strengthen all fusion centers by supporting the rapid exchange of cyber intelligence," said Cyber Intelligence Analyst Dana Kilian. "The more quickly we can share information, the easier it is to coordinate our efforts and even stop an attack before it can spread."

Membership in the CIN community provides access to the CINAware situational awareness room using HSIN Connect. Since it was introduced during the 2014 World Series, CINAware has been used as part of event and incident response operations so that cyber analysts can share raw data and communicate in real time. The effectiveness of the tool was proven over a 2-week period in November 2014 when a state of emergency was declared in the St. Louis area. During that time, more than 315 cyber analysts used CINAware to actively collaborate and support response efforts for 215 individual cyber attacks.

For more information on the CIN community on HSIN, or if you are a member of a fusion center and would like to request access, contact [CINregistration@nfcausa](mailto:CINregistration@nfcausa).

## Now Available: 2014 HSIN Annual Report

Since HSIN transitioned to the current platform, the Program has grown significantly thanks in large part to you, our users! However, there is still more that can be accomplished. This first **HSIN Annual Report** is intended to help homeland security leaders better understand how HSIN supports mission operations and for our users to see what is in store for the future.

The report provides a detailed analysis of how the Program has matured and lays the groundwork for establishing ongoing strategic objectives. You can access the full report on **HSIN Central** or on the **HSIN public website**.



## Women's History Month

The HSIN Program Management Office would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the many women leaders within our Program and across the Homeland Security Enterprise. Thank you for your service!

### Quotable Quotes

*"HSIN improves our ability to support how law enforcement, emergency managers and first responders work together to make our nation safer and more resilient."*

**Donna Roy**  
Executive Director, DHS Information  
Sharing Environment Office

*"HSIN gives us the reach and scope to collaborate with multiple different agencies and levels of government."*

**Amy Herchek**  
Texas Department of Public Safety

*"Georgia is safer with us using HSIN!"*

**Jen Wade**  
HSIN Coordinator, Georgia  
Information Sharing Analysis Center

## HSIN in Action: AMBER Alert™ Response in Iowa

On March 7, an AMBER Alert™ was issued for a 10-year-old girl in Solon, Iowa. As part of their standard response procedures, the Iowa Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center opened a HSIN Connect session to help law enforcement agencies across the state share information and coordinate operations. By the time the child was successfully recovered and the suspect taken into custody the next day, eight separate agencies and multiple divisions of the Iowa Department of Public Safety, including the Public Information Bureau, had accessed HSIN to share leads and provide live updates.

"We used HSIN as a virtual operations center to share photos, track information, leads and provide real-time updates," said C. J. Noelck, special

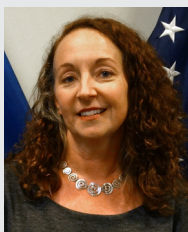


agent with the Division of Intelligence and state coordinator for the Iowa Law Enforcement Intelligence Network. "HSIN was vital to the operation."

To learn more about how HSIN was used during this operation as well as for homicide, narcotics and other investigations in Iowa, [read the full story on HSIN Central](#).

## Spotlight on a Mission Advocate: Gretchen von Iderstein Bramson

### Working across Geographic Boundaries



Discussions about information sharing often begin with the idea that technology can help break down barriers between state and federal partners.

Though this is true, in my experience working with public safety officials in geographically challenging areas, the value of using technology to support information sharing is how it helps build relationships and increase collaboration at the local level.

In states like Colorado, where the Rocky Mountains split the state in half, it is impossible for local authorities to quickly or easily meet in person. Even so, information sharing is incredibly important to combatting

organized criminal activity across the state. Small, rural communities in the southwest corner of the state are often the first stop for drug traffickers on their way to larger cities in the eastern half of the state. Using HSIN, officials in these communities are able to connect, form relationships and really work together in a way that just isn't possible with email alone.

As I've helped communities expand their use of HSIN, this has been a common theme. Counterparts from far distant regions of large western states may never actually meet in person, but they use HSIN to identify patterns and find solutions for mitigating and inhibiting criminal activity! I invite you to reach out to your Mission Advocate to see how we can help you overcome the obstacles to communication in your state.



## HSIN Supports Humanitarian Exercise



Homeland Security Task Force Southeast concludes Integrated Advance 2015.

Every other year, DHS takes part in a massive interagency exercise focused on coordinating efforts in response to a major humanitarian crisis and mass migration in the Caribbean. This year's exercise, Integrated Advance 2015, was led by the U.S. Southern Command in coordination with DHS. Numerous DHS agencies took part, including FEMA, the U.S. Coast Guard, Customs and Border Patrol and more, as well as every branch of the military, the Departments of State and Health and Human Services, state of Florida agencies, and private sector, non-governmental organizations.

The exercise assumed that a series of hurricanes had devastated Caribbean

island nations, leading to hundreds of thousands of migrants trying to find their way into the U.S. More than 900 participants relied on HSIN throughout the week-long exercise to improve interoperability between their command and control structures.

In the event of a humanitarian crisis and mass migration, no single agency would have the capability or resources to respond effectively. **Read the full story on HSIN Central** to find out how HSIN helps agencies structure appropriate organizational plans and collaborate effectively during exercises like Integrated Advance.

## Federal 100 Awards

Every year with their Federal 100 awards, FCW magazine takes the time to spotlight and celebrate many of the impressive individuals in the world of federal information technology. During a gala celebration on March 26, two of HSIN's partners were present to accept their award.



**Amy Herchek** plays a critical role for the Texas Department of Public Safety's (DPS) Operation Strong Safety program—a multi-agency, data-driven effort to prevent human and drug trafficking operations along the Texas/Mexico border. Amy works with HSIN to support cross-jurisdictional information sharing requirements and get the right information, to the right people, at the right time.



Another winner, **Thomas McCarty**, helped make it possible for HSIN users within DHS to use their Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card to log in to HSIN. Tom is the director of the DHS Identity, Credential and Access Management (ICAM) Program Management Office and is working to establish a single sign-on capability throughout DHS.

Thank you both for your efforts and your well-deserved awards! You can read more about all of the Federal 100 winners on the **FCW website!**



## Mark Your Calendar!

Each month brings new opportunities to learn more about the tools and resources available to you on HSIN. We look forward to you joining us!

### HSIN Events

#### Missouri Emergency Management Conference

March 31–April 3  
Branson, MO

#### Texas Emergency Management Conference

May 12–15  
San Antonio, TX

#### National Sheriffs Association Annual Conference

June 26–July 1  
Baltimore, MD

### Training Calendar

Check the **Training Section** on HSIN Central for the latest updates!

#### Site Owner Training

April 15  
Noon–4:30 p.m. Eastern Time  
*Registrants must complete the required computer-based training prior to the instructor-led course.*

#### Site Owner Workshop: Customizing Lists & Libraries

April 29  
Noon–1:30 p.m. Eastern Time



#### Nomination and Validation Training Computer-based

Take any time!



#### End User Training Computer-based

Take any time!

