

THE HSIN ADVOCATE

MAY 2015

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A Message from John Blood

Senior Operation Planner, Minnesota Department of Public Safety Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division

Keeping Communities Informed about Hazardous Materials Transport

In July 2013, a 74-car freight train carrying hazardous materials derailed in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. The fatal accident took lives and destroyed half the downtown area. Six months later, another railway disaster occurred closer to home, 25 miles from the Minnesota border in Casselton, North Dakota. This time, luckily, no lives were lost, but the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management took notice. How would we assist local communities if something like this happened in our state?

Part of the solution required a sophisticated communications network that relies on strong public-private partnerships to keep our communities informed. HSIN is the tool that helps us meet the specific requirements while keeping the information both secure and available.

Sharing Information

A Minnesota law, passed in July 2014, requires railroad companies transporting hazardous materials through our state to: submit disaster prevention plans to the state; increase the number of railway inspectors; provide emergency response training to Minnesota firefighters along freight train routes; and deploy enough equipment to be able to clean up any spills or leaks that may occur within a specified time period. In November 2014 the U.S. Department of Transportation issued an emergency order requiring

railroad companies transporting Bakken-originated crude oil, to provide states with information on the quantity of oil shipped and the routes taken. To comply with these new regulations, rail carriers submit status reports about their scheduled shipments of hazardous materials and other activities within Minnesota. Our role at DPS is to make sure this information gets to the necessary State, Local and Tribal officials in a timely manner.

Making Information Accessible

Working with our HSIN Mission Advocate, DPS developed a secure site to store the notifications and make them available to public safety officials across the state. To make the information both easy to understand and accessible, we created an interactive map of the primary railway corridors throughout Minnesota and added all the U.S. rail data we had available, including ownership information for each section of rail line and the rail carriers. Along each corridor, we identified the location of hospitals, fire departments, emergency medical services and local law enforcement agencies, as well as schools, prisons and other critical infrastructure that could be affected by a derailment. Each item on the map is clickable, so officials can quickly access timetables for scheduled train movements in their area in addition to contact information for their counterparts along the entire route. The result is a one-stop-shop for local responders.



Beyond the map and the wealth of information it provides, we also use HSIN to store historical data and other resources. An alert function lets local officials know when new information is available and we included an announcements function that can send out notifications of an emergency situation in the event a disaster occurs anywhere in the state. Fortunately, we have not had to use this function yet.

Building on Our Success

Since we set up our initial HSIN community, we have continued to look for ways to add capabilities and increase the efficiency of our information sharing. The success we've had so far with HSIN can, I believe, be a model for other states concerned about the movement of hazardous materials through their local communities. Our HSIN Mission Advocate has been a great resource throughout the process and I encourage all of my counterparts in other states to **reach out to the HSIN Team** to see how to replicate these capabilities in your area.




Best Practices CoE: Managing Your HSIN Communities

The June Best Practices Community of Excellence (CoE) session will be held on Tuesday, June 23, and will provide insight into a best practice approach to managing your HSIN communities. Topics will include renewing your HSIN Charters; how to build simple, functional communities; and how to take best advantage of HSIN training offerings.

Contact HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov for more information or to take part!


Spread the Word about HSIN!

To help you share the real-world benefits of everyday HSIN use with other homeland security partners, we've created a new **HSIN Basics fact sheet**. You can access this and other fact sheets and case studies on the **public HSIN website** and on **HSIN Central**.



If you have ideas or suggestions for future fact sheets or case studies, contact HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov. We're always on the lookout for great information to share with our homeland security partners.

Join Us



From June 9–11, members of the HSIN Program will be in San Antonio, Texas, taking part in the **National Homeland Security Association Conference**. We'll be on the exhibit floor in booth 226 and Donna Roy with the Information Sharing Environment Office will be speaking about how HSIN helps deliver mission success as part of the Prevention Track presentations on June 9 from 2:45–3:45 p.m.

To schedule a time to talk with members of the HSIN Program or to find out more about this event, contact us at HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov.

Staying Informed at the Derby

The Greatest Two Minutes in Sports happens the first Saturday in May at Churchill Downs and is the culmination of the 2-week-long Kentucky Derby Festival. More than 700,000 fans turned out for this year's events, and attendance records for the Derby itself were broken. To make sure fans were able to enjoy the many events during the festival, public safety officials at Churchill Downs, throughout the greater Louisville metro region and even across the bridges into Indiana worked together to coordinate their efforts and keep everyone informed. This year, HSIN was on hand to support their efforts from start to finish.

For the past five years, public safety officials have relied on HSIN to support situational awareness during the Kentucky Derby and Oaks. This year, HSIN use was expanded to cover the entire festival beginning with the Thunder Over Louisville on April 18 and continuing through other events leading up to the Derby. Using HSIN, officials tracked more than 300 separate incidents that required action.

"We used HSIN to share video feeds at every event venue, to map incidents and the location of our officers and first responders and to document the schedules of various VIPs in attendance," said Lt. Donald George with the Special Operations Division of the Louisville Metro Police Department (PD). "If it



happened, it went into HSIN. It was very useful to see at a glance what was going on and determine how best to respond."

Whether they were in a command center, on the ground at an event or in their mobile trailer, Louisville officials used HSIN to share information from preliminary safety guidance plans to road and bridge closures as well as real-time incident information. "We never had to call anyone for information and they didn't have to call me; it was all on HSIN!" said Lt. George.

The Louisville Metro PD is already planning for next year. Using the data available to them through HSIN from this year's events, they are identifying how best to adjust staffing schedules to make things run more efficiently. Even before the next Derby, Louisville officials are planning to use HSIN for the Ironman competition in October. To learn more about how HSIN was used, contact HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov.

Public Service Recognition Week

A message from HSIN Program Director Jim Lanoue



Service to our nation is not a 9–5 job. As members of the HSIN community, we understand this level of dedication is required—no matter where we work—at the Federal, State, Local, Tribal or Territorial level. The first week of May has been set aside for the past 30 years to honor those, like you, who recognize the responsibility inherent to public service and have made it their career.

As HSIN users, you are out there on the front lines of homeland security. Whether as emergency managers, first responders or public safety officials, you work day in and day out to make our country a safe place to live. I want to take a moment and say thank you for your efforts, for your determination and for your commitment.

[Read Jim's full message from Public Service Recognition Week on HSIN Central.](#)

Super Bowl 50: Preparing for Kick Off



Planning for a Super Bowl is a massive undertaking. Planning for the 50th anniversary of the Super Bowl means an even bigger,

more spectacular event. To prepare for Super Bowl 50, public safety officials from Santa Clara, California headed to Phoenix, Arizona in late January to experience first-hand all that goes in to supporting, and securing, such a large event.

The Super Bowl is more than just a single football game. It is the culmination of a week-long series of events, including the NFL Experience, the Super Bowl Fan Village and a host of smaller events hosted by private businesses and organizations throughout the region. Law enforcement, emergency medical service providers and other first responders from throughout the area along with other public and private sector partners need to coordinate their efforts to ensure they know where and when people are gathering in order to provide a safe and secure environment for the teams, their fans and thousands of other revelers wanting to take part in the event.

“After seeing how successfully HSIN was used to support the planning and execution of the events in Phoenix, we decided to start with their model and build from there,” said Captain Phil Cooke of the Santa Clara Police Department. “For Super Bowl 50, we are already looking at ways to make things even more efficient.”

Federal Coordinator Tatum King went on to say, “HSIN is doing a remarkable job connecting officials at all levels of government in an effective manner and has helped us make great strides in streamlining coordination and communication necessary to prepare for this major event.”

With a little more than 36 weeks left to go before kick-off, officials in Santa Clara are already working with their State and Federal counterparts to ensure seamless information sharing and comprehensive situational awareness for every aspect of the event planning process. To learn more about what goes in to planning for a Super Bowl, read the [February HSIN Advocate](#) or contact HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov for more information.

Using HSIN to Draft Success

In preparation for the 2015 football season, all eyes were on Chicago from April 30 to May 2 as the NFL Draft returned to the city for the first time since 1964. Along with the draft, came 200,000 fans ready to take part in the many activities spread out across Grant Park, Congress Plaza and the Auditorium Theater in downtown Chicago. To help coordinate public safety activities for this massive event, city officials turned to HSIN.

The Chicago Police Department’s Crime Prevention and Information Center (CPIC) used HSIN as a web-based command center to link together three command posts to support the event—the CPIC Operations Center, the Joint Operations Command and a mobile command center. HSIN was used to easily share camera feeds and operations briefs throughout the event. In addition, HSIN made it possible to conduct daily briefs between



supporting agencies and to support live chats to securely keep everyone up to speed no matter their location.

Almost 200 public safety officials accessed HSIN during the NFL Draft. With no arrests and no major incidents, the event and the collaboration made possible through HSIN was considered a success! For more information about how HSIN can support events in your area, contact HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov.

New HSIN Video!



The HSIN team has launched a new video series highlighting the operational advantages of HSIN from the perspective of you, our users! In the latest video, **Tony Frangipane, southwest regional director for DHS who is assigned to the Arizona Counterterrorism Information Center** talks about how HSIN helped break down communication barriers between first responder agencies during major event management operations in Arizona, including Super Bowl XLIX.

[Watch this and other videos on HSIN Central](#), then share it with your community!

New Case Study: Operation Strong Safety

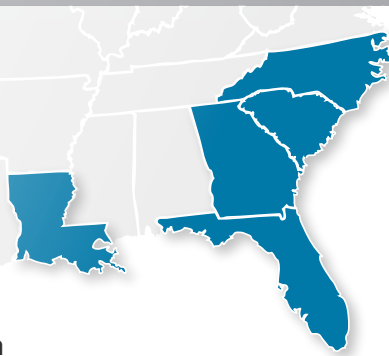
Texas is home to more than half of the United States’ border with Mexico. Along this 1,254 mile span, human and drug smuggling operations and related criminal activity are a constant concern. To combat these issues, the Texas Department of Public Safety is using HSIN to help lead a multi-agency effort known as Operation Strong Safety (OSS) to increase the patrol presence in areas with the greatest need.



A new **HSIN case study** provides details about the success of this operation and how more than 45 different Federal, State and Local agencies are working together to support border security operations. [Read this and other HSIN case studies on HSIN Central!](#)

HSIN Highlights: Southeast

Whether it's at the state or local level, HSIN use in the southeast has been incorporated into many steady-state activities to support regular, secure communications between partner agencies. Check it out!



Florida

- Fusion centers in Florida are relying on HSIN to increase communication with regional partners in support of all law enforcement activities.
- This month, the Florida Emergency Operations Center used HSIN to coordinate activities with partner agencies and support continuity of operations planning during a statewide, full-scale hurricane exercise.

South Carolina

- Public safety officials use HSIN as part of their standard operating procedures to share law enforcement bulletins and announcements between partner agencies.

North Carolina

- The Information Sharing and Analysis Center relies on HSIN to securely share their daily and weekly briefings with their law enforcement partners.
- During severe weather, public safety agencies across the state use HSIN to support real-time collaboration and situational awareness.

Georgia

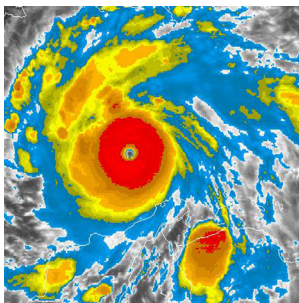
- A new Internet Crimes Against Children community on HSIN will help more than 300 partners across the state collaborate and stay informed.
- Preparation is underway in Atlanta for the largest 10k in the world, the Peachtree Road Race, scheduled for July.
- HSIN is regularly used across the state to support **lead tracking and investigations**.

Louisiana

- The Louisiana Human Trafficking and Crimes Against Children community was revamped to enhance information sharing and help educate law enforcement.
- Ongoing support of the **BRAVE Project** to tackle gang concerns in the state.
- HSIN supports steady-state operations related to infrastructure protection, insurance fraud, auto thefts, narcotics, domestic extremists and cyber threats.

For additional information about any of these activities, contact HSIN Outreach at HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov.

National Hurricane Preparedness Week



Each year, the last week of May kicks off the beginning of hurricane season. Since Hurricane Katrina, HSIN has been used to provide situational awareness and continuity of operations (COOP) support during severe weather planning and response efforts.

As you prepare for severe weather, your HSIN Mission Advocates are there to support your hurricane preparedness efforts. **Learn more on HSIN Central** about their ideas for a best practice approach to hurricane preparedness and response or contact them at HSIN.Outreach@hq.dhs.gov.



Mark Your Calendar!

Each month brings new opportunities to learn more about HSIN. We look forward to you joining us!

HSIN Events

National Homeland Security Association Conference

June 9-11 | San Antonio, TX
Presentation: *HSIN Delivering Mission Success: Operation Strong Safety*
 June 9, 2:45-3:45 p.m.

National Sheriffs Association Annual Conference

June 26-July 1 | Baltimore, MD
Presentation: *Texas and Louisiana Use HSIN for Crime Prevention*
 June 27, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Training Calendar

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

Nomination and Validation Training

June 3, 1-2:30 p.m. Eastern Time

Site Owner Training

June 10, Noon-4:30 p.m. Eastern Time
Registrants must complete the required computer-based training prior to the instructor-led course.

Site Owner Workshop: Workflows

June 24, Noon-1:30 p.m. Eastern Time

