

*Delivering Mission Success*

# The HSIN ADVOCATE

## Advancing Information Sharing

HSIN provides a secure, trusted network that allows officials to confidently share sensitive data in support of diverse missions. Public safety partners who are otherwise separated by incompatible communications systems can seamlessly share information in areas such as law enforcement, emergency management, intelligence, infrastructure protection and cybersecurity. In this month's issue of the HSIN Advocate, we provide examples of how HSIN is making an impact by supporting partners in areas such as narcotics interdiction, hurricane response and school safety. With HSIN's extensive experience, expertise and information sharing capabilities, partners achieve increased operational efficiencies that make important contributions to the safety and security of the nation.

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## HSIN Exchange Supports Mission Success in High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas

The severity and scope of the opioid crisis in the U.S. is revealed by statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Twenty years ago, 1,000 people died from opioid overdoses every year, but today that number is 1,800 every two weeks. The High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program provides assistance to federal, state and local law enforcement agencies operating in areas determined to be critical drug-trafficking regions in the U.S.



After a successful pilot with HIDTA partners across the country earlier this year, a wider rollout of HSIN Exchange to all HIDTAs begins in August. HSIN Exchange transforms the way Requests for Information (RFIs) are processed by public safety officials. By providing a single point-of-service for all RFIs, HSIN Exchange allows partners to more efficiently share sensitive information across state lines and other jurisdictions. There are currently 29 HIDTAs, which include approximately 20 percent of all counties in the nation and 67 percent of the U.S. population.

HSIN Exchange allows originators to limit visibility of the RFI or allow a wider scope of users to search for and read the contents of a request. If users determine they have information relevant to the RFI, their group can opt-in to respond. The ability to discover and opt-in to an RFI gives users the added ability to determine what other information is needed to contribute to the larger common operating picture. With HSIN Exchange, HIDTA operations will benefit from greater collaboration and knowledge sharing among law enforcement, intelligence

officers and other subject matter experts who can provide support in analysis and response operations.

The HIDTA program uses a Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE) strategy to disrupt the movement of illegal drugs along U.S. transportation corridors. State and local law enforcement agencies have historically provided resources to help ensure the nation's highways are safe and not used for illegal activities such as drug trafficking. The DHE strategy brings together law enforcement officers to help contribute to data collection, reporting and analysis.

"Over the last five years, HSIN has completely changed how the Domestic Highway Enforcement initiative has operated," said Mike Snyders, DHE Coordinator at the National HIDTA Assistance Center. "In a single year we'll use HSIN Connect to conduct over eighty 'Corridor Calls' with local law enforcement to discuss their findings, including designated 'Science Calls' where law enforcement scientific professionals share their trends and analysis."

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HSIN's support of interagency and cross-jurisdictional collaboration allows partners to more efficiently share information pertaining to organizations and individuals involved in drug trafficking. HSIN Exchange will further enhance investigations and operations so that federal, state and local law enforcement agencies can more effectively work together on narcotics interdiction and drug trafficking activities.

### **GMO and GII Support HIDTAs Tracking and Sharing of Overdose Information**

The Geospatial Management Office (GMO) is collaborating with the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program to increase geospatial information sharing across the Homeland Security Enterprise. The initiative allows DHS and other public safety partners to seamlessly access a summary of quarterly data regarding fatal and non-fatal overdose cases, and Naloxone—commonly known as Narcan—deployments for all 29 designated HIDTAs.

The HIDTA Overdose Map also leverages geospatial data and tool services from the DHS Geospatial Information Infrastructure (GII). The capabilities provided by GMO allow partners to perform asset management and correlative analysis related to spikes in the number of overdoses.

### **New Jersey Drug Monitoring Initiative Uses Innovative Interdisciplinary Model**

Public safety officials launched the New Jersey Drug Monitoring Initiative (DMI) after observing a significant increase in drug-related deaths and other community drug harms. The goal was to establish a multi-jurisdictional, multi-state drug-incident information sharing environment through the robust collection and analysis of data related to drug seizures, overdoses, related criminal behavior and associated healthcare services.

To address the need for a secure information sharing platform for diverse community drug-harm stakeholders, the New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center (NJ ROIC) established the DMI community on HSIN in 2017. By bringing together a versatile set of stakeholders and non-traditional partners, such as those from criminal forensic labs, healthcare facilities and treatment centers, the DMI community offers an innovative, data-driven drug intelligence model that other states can emulate.

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## **Expanding the Operational Impact of HSIN**

### **For Organizations:**

#### **[Fact Sheet: HSIN Support for any Mission](#)**

HSIN's real-time information sharing capabilities provide improved situational awareness regardless of the mission. Partners benefit by receiving more actionable intelligence via seamless interagency and public-private sector collaboration. With HSIN, law enforcement, emergency management, intelligence analysts and others can easily share resources across jurisdictional boundaries, mitigate risks and more effectively deploy operational resources.

### **For Community Managers:**

#### **[Fact Sheet: Using HSIN to Support Real Time Information Sharing in the Field](#)**

Within HSIN's secure environment, public safety officials can share sensitive information and coordinate support for planned events, exercises, incident response and daily operations. HSIN capabilities allow information—traditionally only available in command posts or operations centers—to be readily accessible via mobile field units, emergency vehicles and unmanned aerial vehicles. As a result, partners can make decisions based on improved situational awareness.

*“Real-time information sharing is very important for us, and HSIN enables everybody to get that up-to-the-minute information, make decisions and deploy resources.”*

**Ron LaFond**

Deputy Director, Vermont Intelligence Center

### **HSIN in Action**

To learn more about the innovative ways HSIN advances information sharing, check out these additional resources:

- **[Changing the Way Information is Shared](#)**
- **[Benefits Multiply When Using HSIN Becomes “Second Nature”](#)**
- **[Making Information Sharing User-Friendly](#)**



# HSIN Across the Country

HSIN assists in planning and monitoring for many high-visibility events and operations nationally, including sovereign Native American tribal lands and U.S. territories. Below are just a few of the events HSIN recently supported.



## Independence Day Events in Washington, DC (July 4)

Numerous public safety partners used HSIN to support real-time communications during multiple Independence Day events in the nation's capital, including A Salute to America, A Capitol Fourth, and fireworks over the National Mall.



## Peachtree Road Race (July 4)

The Atlanta Police Department, Georgia Bureau of Investigation and Georgia Emergency Management Agency used HSIN to support public safety operations during the race throughout downtown Atlanta, which drew more than 60,000 runners to the SEAR III event.



## Major League Baseball All-Star Game (July 5–9)

The Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center used HSIN to provide real-time briefings to over 50 partners representing local, state and federal law enforcement and private sector organizations to support safety and security during the MLB All-Star Game and festivities prior to the game.

## HSIN Supports Preparedness and Response Operations for Hurricane Barry

As the National Hurricane Center began issuing warnings associated with Hurricane Barry in July, HSIN Mission Advocates reached out to federal, state and local law enforcement, public safety and emergency management agencies to offer support. Partners across Louisiana and Mississippi used HSIN for monitoring, preparedness and response activities.

When a disaster strikes, maintaining situational awareness is critical to protecting lives, preventing injuries and avoiding catastrophic losses to property. HSIN provides partners with key collaboration capabilities via a secure, trusted network to help ensure continuity of operations, even when local telecommunications infrastructure is unavailable. HSIN's Hurricane Response Room Template (HRRT) is a key resource that partners use to quickly setup pre-defined HSIN Connect room layouts, which are proven to streamline operations through improved communications.



# HSIN Community Corner

## The HSIN User Group Wants Your Opinions!

As a user-driven program, HSIN encourages user participation in the design of and upgrades to HSIN through the HSIN User Group (HUG). As a HSIN user, you have valuable firsthand knowledge of how HSIN enables information sharing for your mission that could help shape the future of HSIN. In the coming months we want to hear from you!



If you've ever thought of ways HSIN could improve to better support your mission, the HUG is the place to have your voice heard. Recommendations from each HUG group will be provided to HSIN's Senior Leadership Team and Executive Steering Committee.

Upcoming HUG sessions offer you the opportunity to provide input on HSIN enhancements and upgrades, which will help ensure we continue to meet the information sharing needs of all users. Details for upcoming sessions are:

### **Topic: SharePoint Web Parts**

Thursday, August 8  
1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. EST

### **Topic: Federated Access**

Wednesday, August 21  
12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m. EST

If you would like to participate, please contact [HSIN@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:HSIN@hq.dhs.gov).

## HSIN Supports Georgia School and Campus Safety Community



Now in its second year of operation, the Georgia School and Campus Safety (GSCS) community on HSIN facilitates public safety communication among all universities, colleges, K-12 institutions, local law enforcement, state agencies and federal partners. The community provides a single source of information that is used to share school safety information such as "be on the lookout" (BOLO) reports, information about active shooter incidents, threat assessments and school safety plans.

The Georgia Emergency Management/Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) and Georgia Information Sharing and Analysis Center (GISAC) developed the GSCS community and worked with HSIN Mission Advocates to create an i-Track School Safety tool. The tool is an event and lead management system that standardizes

the data submission process and allows multiple agencies to work together on cases and incidents.

When a tip comes into i-Track, a watch desk analyst reviews the information to verify the intelligence. The analyst can send the information to local law enforcement and school resource officers as an alert via HSIN. The information is Law Enforcement Sensitive (LES), so distribution is limited. Personally identifiable information (PII) is restricted to law enforcement only, and there is For Official Use Only (FOUO) information that non-law enforcement personnel are able to receive from the GSCS community. To learn how HSIN can support school safety initiatives in your area, contact the HSIN Outreach team at [HSIN@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:HSIN@hq.dhs.gov).

(Feature story, cont. from page 2)

"We have hundreds of multifaceted users, spanning across numerous states, that represent domains such as forensic crime analysis, medical examination and toxicology, law enforcement and healthcare," said Lt. Jason Piotrowski, New Jersey State Police. "The DMI community on HSIN provides all of these individuals with greater situational awareness and insight into national drug trends, which ultimately allows them to better understand the state's and their local drug environments."

By leveraging data from multiple sectors, the DMI provides valuable insight into factors outside of traditional law enforcement consideration. For example, toxicology reports and criminal forensic lab data are scrutinized to help identify the presence, prevalence and trends of different drugs causing the biggest impacts on the state.

When combining law enforcement data with other non-traditional data sets, the DMI can provide a 360-degree view of the current drug environment. It allows law enforcement personnel and public health experts to better understand trends, anomalies, implications and threats associated with illicit drug activity that have an impact on jurisdictions statewide.

In addition to mitigating the detrimental effects illicit drug use afflicts on local communities, the DMI's interdisciplinary insight into the overall drug environment supports the development of enhanced policies and practices to prevent drug abuse and misuse. For more information, please contact the HSIN Outreach team at [HSIN@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:HSIN@hq.dhs.gov).

## Memphis BEST Combats the Opioid Crisis with HSIN

To identify and target shipments of opioids such as fentanyl, as well as other illicit drugs, federal partners are using HSIN to monitor data such as tracking information provided by courier companies that can be used for potential investigations. The DHS Memphis Border Enforcement Security Task Force (BEST) is a joint U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) initiative coordinated through the Special Operations Division.



Members of the Memphis BEST initiative use HSIN to share investigatory information pertaining to individuals who ship and receive fentanyl and other illegal drugs, including information on the shippers and receivers themselves, as well as transshipment points. HSIN also allows partners to upload seizure information into a central secure location. Agents then update the data to reflect the investigative actions taken on specific seizures, which helps deconflict and streamline operations among federal, state and local agencies.

Since January 2017, data on more than 8,000 seizures has been uploaded into HSIN and shared with CBP, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and state and local partners. By allowing up-to-the-minute information sharing between federal and local investigations, Memphis BEST and HSIN are increasing the effectiveness of operations designed to identify, investigate, disrupt and dismantle criminal activities related to the opioid crisis.

## Watch Now: HSIN Exchange



In this video you'll see how HSIN Exchange provides the secure solution for the National Network of Fusion Centers, the Terrorist Screening Center and other partners to seamlessly share requests for information across states and local jurisdictions. Featuring **Mike Sena**, President, National Fusion Center Association.

You can watch this and other videos on [DHS.gov](http://DHS.gov), [HSIN Central](http://HSIN Central) or [YouTube](http://YouTube).

## Training Tip: HSIN Site Owner Training

HSIN community sites are versatile information sharing platforms, and the HSIN Site Owner Training course provides a great overview of how you can get the most value from your site. Topics addressed in the course include how to change settings for site navigation, site permissions, libraries and levels of access for community members.

The course also offers best practices for organizing information, understanding workflows, planning for a new site or revising a current site. It's all at your fingertips in the [HSIN Site Owner Training](#) on HSIN Learn!



For more information, contact the HSIN Outreach Team at [HSIN@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:HSIN@hq.dhs.gov) or visit our website at [www.dhs.gov/hsin](http://www.dhs.gov/hsin).

Scan the QR code\* or visit our website to learn more about how HSIN can help support your mission.

\* You must have a QR code reader installed on your mobile device.

