

Delivering Mission Success

The HSIN ADVOCATE

Enhancing Public-Private Partnerships

Collaboration between government agencies and private sector partners helps ensure key resources are available during emergency response operations. Resiliency depends on planning for incidents, which includes establishing secure and dependable methods for communications. HSIN provides the resources that allow public-private partnerships to effectively plan and quickly respond whenever and wherever the need arises, such as during the current coronavirus (COVID-19) response. Volunteers make up an important part of the private sector response to emergencies, and HSIN supports their valuable contributions through initiatives such as the FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison program and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs), which are using HSIN for COVID-19 operations.

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Partners Leverage HSIN for Coronavirus Operations

HSIN is currently helping 197 organizations—112 state and local, 60 DHS, 19 other federal government, three private sector and two non-governmental agencies and one tribal community—coordinate operations related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. More than 60 fusion centers and 29 U.S. Coast Guard organizations, 32 National Guard units and 26 emergency management agencies are among the partners using HSIN.

Across the nation and across the entire chain of command at federal, state and local levels, HSIN is helping partners and making critical contributions by enabling:

- Virtual Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)
- Continuity Of Operations
- Tracking Critical Assets and Requests for Assets

Virtual Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)

—HSIN is supporting federal, state and local partners by providing trusted virtual EOCs via HSIN Connect, allowing personnel to coordinate emergency response regardless of their location. For example, at a time when many U.S. Coast Guard personnel are working remotely to maintain social distancing, USCG Sectors across the nation are using HSIN to share vital information and maintain situational awareness. Teams of hundreds of personnel spread across multiple states are using HSIN to maximize the effectiveness of teleworking requirements—personnel can immediately update mission progress, adjust operations and successfully plan for the next day's activities.

Continuity Of Operations—Whether the mission is intelligence analysis, critical infrastructure protection or law



To learn more about how HSIN can help support your COVID-19 response operations please visit [HSIN Central](#).

enforcement investigations, personnel engaged in the COVID-19 response are continuing to perform mission-critical operations using HSIN. For example, at least one state-level homeland security office is using HSIN Connect in support of activating their Continuity of Operations Plan. The team is using HSIN for interagency collaboration at a time when 85 percent of their staff are working in a remote capacity. Personnel are using HSIN for real-time collaboration to support COVID-19 response, daily health checks and normal daily operations. HSIN Connect "breakout rooms" are being used by law enforcement and other public safety personnel for situational awareness and to support operations such as the availability of equipment.

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Tracking Critical Assets and Requests for Assets—HSIN is being used to track the locations and amounts of critical supplies for COVID-19 response and to track requests from hospitals and other facilities for additional supplies. For example, members of the U.S. Navy have been using HSIN 24/7 to track resources, share different types of data sets, organize reference documents and immediately collaborate on rapidly changing information. Multiple Navy personnel have commented that HSIN is their “one-stop shop” for critical COVID-19 information. Navy watchstanders, who provide situational awareness to emergency response teams and all levels of the command structure, are using HSIN for real-time communications during COVID-19 operations.

HSIN is helping DHS organizations including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) and the U.S. Coast Guard. Other federal government users include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Defense.

A typical day since the COVID-19 outbreak began sees approximately 5,800 analysts, planners and responders using HSIN Connect to share information, which is a 330 percent increase compared to January and February usage. HSIN Connect sessions recently peaked at 6,877 individual participants in a single day. HSIN Exchange, the HSIN National Situational Awareness Room (SitRoom) and Geospatial Information Infrastructure (GII) resources from GMO are being used by partners across the country.

HSIN Exchange is being used to communicate requests for information (RFIs) about operations such as COVID-19 testing as well as plans for setting up temporary hospitals and mid-level treatment centers. The HSIN National SitRoom is allowing fusion centers and other public safety organizations to access up-to-the-minute situational awareness that is assisting partners with public safety planning, preparedness and response. GII is being used for collaboration and situational awareness through web maps, geospatial datasets and web applications. Other activities include:

- DHS National Operations Center (NOC) is using HSIN to share information and track active COVID-19 incidents, which is supporting situational awareness and a common operating picture for the entire federal government and for state, local and tribal governments.
- The HSIN Emergency Management (EM) nationwide community is sharing information, tracking incidents and coordinating responses to support EM professionals in their COVID-19 activities such as operations involving the use and availability of lifesaving equipment and supplies.
- The HSIN Critical Infrastructure (CI) nationwide community is sharing COVID-19 information related to CI sectors across the country including healthcare, critical manufacturing, government facilities and transportation systems.
- The HSIN Intelligence (Intel) nationwide community is sharing criminal and intelligence data, products and analysis with fusion centers and law enforcement officials at all levels of government, providing enhanced situational awareness.

Additionally, HSIN Mission Advocates have been in contact with stakeholders nationwide to offer support in information sharing, planning and coordination of public safety operations related to the COVID-19 response. To request HSIN support for your mission, contact HSIN@hq.dhs.gov.

Expanding the Operational Impact of HSIN

For Organizations:

[Fact Sheet: Using HSIN to Support Public-Private Partnerships](#)

Sharing information and collaborating across public-private sector partners presents a unique set of challenges to overcome. However, because HSIN provides a secure environment that operates outside of any one organization’s technology infrastructure, partners can set up dedicated information sharing communities across organizational and jurisdictional boundaries. As a result, homeland security operations are strengthened nationwide.

For Community Managers:

[Fact Sheet: HSIN Critical Infrastructure Community](#)

Successful critical infrastructure protection requires coordination and collaboration among infrastructure owners and operators, DHS, other federal agencies, and state and local government. The HSIN Critical Infrastructure (HSIN-CI) community serves as the primary, nationwide DHS collaboration system for sharing Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information among private sector critical infrastructure owners and operators and government agencies.

“By providing a centralized and secure location for real-time information sharing [HSIN], Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs) and federal partners are able to identify immediate needs, coordinate responses, and get support to help mitigate the impact of disasters.

Lesli Remaly-Netter

FEMA Region IV Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL)

HSIN in Action

To learn more about the innovative ways HSIN enhances public-private partnerships, check out these additional resources:

- [Enhancing Public-Private Partnerships](#)
- [Streamlining Emergency Management Communications](#)
- [HSIN is the “Go-To” Resource for Preparedness and Response](#)



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 most recent events supported by HSIN.



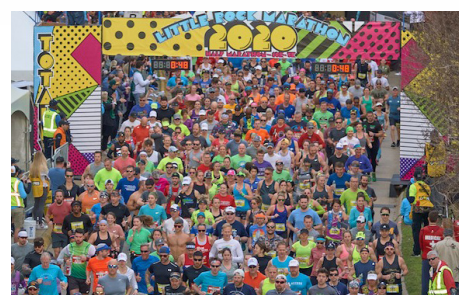
NBA All-Star Weekend (Feb. 12–16)

The Chicago Police Department and Chicago Crime Prevention and Information Center used HSIN to support real time information sharing among public safety partners for the NBA All-Star game and related events held throughout the city.



Mardi Gras New Orleans (Feb. 20–26)

The Louisiana State Analytical and Fusion Exchange (LA-SAFE), Louisiana State Police and the New Orleans Police Department used HSIN for public safety information sharing and incident tracking associated with Mardi Gras events.



Little Rock Marathon and Events (Feb. 28–Mar. 3)

The Arkansas State Fusion Center used HSIN to support public safety operations for the Little Rock Marathon and related entertainment events held at multiple venues in the River Market District area of the city.

Training Tip: Helpful Webinar for HSIN Training Managers Who Use Flash Video Content

As many HSIN Training Managers may already know, Adobe will end its support for Flash on December 31, 2020, and HTML5 is the recommended video file format going forward. If your training team is currently using Flash in your course material, an upcoming webinar can help you prepare to update your videos files within the HSIN Learning Management System (LMS):

- **Update Your Legacy Adobe Captivate Content: Part 2**
Thursday, May 14, 1:00 pm Eastern Time

The webinar will provide valuable tips you can use to update your training video content from flash files (.flv or .swf) to HTML5 files using Adobe Captivate. If you are unable to attend at the scheduled time, you can still [register for the Adobe Flash End-of-Life Webinar Series](#) and then request the webinar recording after the session.

We ask HSIN Training Managers to please stay tuned for more email communications from HSIN, as we will be reaching out to you throughout the year to help ensure your video content is converted before Adobe Flash End Of Life. December 2020 will be here before you know it!



HSIN Community Corner



SILVER "BEST OF HSIN" WINNER FOR INCIDENT SUPPORT

U.S. Coast Guard Sector Mobile Streamlines Operations With HSIN

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Sector Mobile, based in Mobile, Alabama, uses HSIN to streamline incident response operations related to hurricanes, tropical storms and other significant events. Collaboration among USCG and state and local authorities is a key aspect of incident management, and HSIN allows greater efficiencies and effectiveness in risk mitigation and the allocation of resources.

"Sector Mobile uses HSIN to track assets pre- and post-hurricane, for example, which allows the Incident Management team to coordinate movements with personnel who are conducting duties across three states," said Joshua Sharman, Command Center Supervisor. "This helps the entire team coordinate operations prior to the storm's arrival as well as during and after the storm when we conduct operations such as search and rescue."

With HSIN, USCG personnel deployed to states' Emergency Operations Centers and

or a local incident site have a single "virtual command center" to share information to and from USCG Sector Mobile. HSIN allows seamless communication across federal, state and local partners—including in situations when cell towers aren't functional due to storm damage—because HSIN is an internet-based system.

"USCG Sector Mobile Command Center's use of HSIN within a 24/7, 12-hour rotating shift environment has allowed for seamless watch pass down and support of ongoing operations" said Sharman. "The coordination and information sharing capabilities of HSIN have allowed for four USCG watch positions to share information from within the Command Center to USCG Sector Mobile leaders regardless of their location."

The ability to maintain an up-to-date online record to ensure proper asset tracking, operational planning and policy review throughout the turnover of personnel has benefited all USCG missions within USCG



Sector Mobile. During mission execution, training and exercises, the entire team can instantly coordinate activities without having to rely on notifications via radio, phone or other means such as email. To learn how HSIN can support operations in your area, contact HSIN@hq.dhs.gov.

HSIN 2019 Annual Report Highlights Partners' Mission Success

Cybersecurity, border security, combatting the opioid crisis and keeping schools safe are just some of the ways HSIN supported mission success throughout 2019. We invite you to [view the HSIN Annual Report](#) to see more details about the year's achievements, including:

Bolstering Cybersecurity—The National Fusion Center Association (NFCA) launched its 24/7 National Cyber Situational Awareness Room on HSIN. More than 80 government agencies participate in the NFCA Cyber Intelligence Network, which includes approximately 550 analysts and other users who exchange information on incidents and indicators of compromise.

Securing the Border—For Operation Stonegarden (OPSG), HSIN facilitates collaborative border security efforts among U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol and over 650 law enforcement agencies spanning approximately 20 states and two territories. OPSG facilitates the collaborative oversight, accountability, funding and operational support for over \$285 million of OPSG grant funding and more than 700 active individual border security operations.

Intercepting Illegal Drugs—HSIN Exchange rolled out to the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program, which aids federal, state and local law



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Fort Worth Fusion Center's Transition to HSIN Advances Information Sharing

The Fort Worth Intelligence Exchange (INTEX), the nation's 80th fusion center, began its transition to HSIN in November 2018. Previously, INTEX relied on an information sharing platform that was less secure and difficult to manage, and decided to move to HSIN during a period when the Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD) was implementing a HSIN community to support its operations.

"At the time, the FWPD was sponsoring a new HSIN community along with the support and cooperation of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the North Texas Fusion Center and the Dallas Fusion Center," said Jeff Keck, Lieutenant and Director of INTEX. "After discussions with our HSIN Mission Advocate and the participating agencies, we decided to use HSIN to support INTEX operations."

The INTEX HSIN community is a restricted area within the larger NCTCOG HSIN site, which serves the needs of a 16-county region surrounding Dallas and Fort Worth. The NCTCOG assists local governments in planning for common needs and cooperating for mutual benefit. The organization strengthens the individual and collective capabilities of local governments and helps them recognize regional opportunities and eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort.

"Law enforcement officers, investigators and analysts from local, state and federal partners use the INTEX HSIN site to share information related to ongoing regional incidents, criminal suspects and operations," said Keck. "Law enforcement officers use HSIN to communicate bulletins and initiate requests for information while other members respond with similar offenses in their own jurisdictions or any information that may assist in that investigation."

The INTEX HSIN community has areas dedicated to special event threat assessments, document libraries, and other resources and links. Additionally, the site includes a section available to non-law enforcement personnel such as those in the fields of emergency management, medical, fire and other government organizations. This section includes general announcements, regional incident tracking information, safety bulletins, special event assessments and an event calendar to increase information sharing across the region.

"Our HSIN site also has an area for the region's cybersecurity group where members can collaborate," explained Keck. "Today, the INTEX HSIN site has over 470 personnel representing approximately 105 local, state and federal agencies, including four fusion centers across the states of Texas and Oklahoma."



Within its first year of operation, the INTEX HSIN community had over 1,700 exchanges of information as well as several success stories and solved crimes attributable to information sharing on HSIN. To learn how HSIN can support operations in your area, contact HSIN@hq.dhs.gov.

Video: HSIN Facilitates Public-Private Sector Coordination in Critical Infrastructure Protection



In this video, **Captain J.P. Burt** of the Colorado State Patrol discusses the importance of protecting critical infrastructure, which is generally owned and operated by the private sector, and how fusion centers are helping to bring together public safety and commercial enterprise professionals to share best practices and other information through HSIN.

You can watch this and other videos on [DHS.gov](https://www.dhs.gov), [HSIN Central](https://www.hsincentral.com) or [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com).

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enforcement agencies operating in areas determined to be critical drug-trafficking regions in the U.S. The HIDTA program uses a Domestic Highway Enforcement strategy to disrupt the movement of illegal drugs along U.S. transportation corridors.

Keeping Schools Safe—Louisiana and Georgia are using HSIN to support statewide school safety initiatives. Types of information that may be accessed by members of the HSIN communities include Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs), Be On the Lookout (BOLO) reports, Requests for Information (RFIs), threat reporting and analysis, school blueprints and assessments, emergency operations plans and safety bulletins.

HSIN's support of partners is made possible through the dedication of the entire HSIN team and its technology. To request HSIN support for your mission, contact HSIN@hq.dhs.gov.