

SPECIAL EDITION

THE HSIN ADVOCATE

Empowering Public Servants to Support COVID-19 Response

Government employees throughout the country are making important contributions to the COVID-19 response, and the month of May is a special time to thank them for their service. Public Service Recognition Week (May 3–9), National Police Week (May 10–16), National EMS Week (May 17–23) and Memorial Day (May 25) are some of the times set aside to honor our nation's public servants. HSIN empowers public servants to achieve mission success in COVID-19 response by providing the ability to securely collaborate across jurisdictional and geographic boundaries. Whether the task at hand is responding to emergencies, performing daily operations, or supporting safety and security during planned events, HSIN extends its appreciation to all who serve in federal, state, local, tribal and territorial government organizations.

In this Issue:

Celebrating EMS Professionals During the COVID-19 Response and National EMS Week

HSIN Helps Law Enforcement Work at 'Full Force' During COVID-19 Pandemic Response

Mission Advocates Are Invaluable During COVID-19 Pandemic Response

Emergency Operation Centers Share Real-Time COVID-19 Updates Using HSIN

HSIN Helps Keep Military Bases Safe During the COVID-19 Pandemic

For Now and for the Future: Using HSIN for COVID-19 Response and Beyond

EMS STRONG

READY TODAY, PREPARING FOR TOMORROW.

Celebrating EMS Professionals During the COVID-19 Response and National EMS Week

May 17 marks the beginning of National EMS Week, a celebration of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers. EMS Week brings together local communities and emergency medical personnel, honoring those individuals who provide day-to-day lifesaving services on the medical front lines.

This year's EMS Week theme is "Ready Today. Preparing for Tomorrow," and the theme is particularly resonant with the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic at the forefront of everyone's minds. Perhaps now more than ever, we recognize the importance of EMS professionals as they rally today to support the COVID-19 response while still preparing for, and responding to, all of the other everyday emergencies.

A major goal of HSIN is to support the missions of federal, state and local EMS professionals across the country by providing a secure and collaborative information sharing environment where they can communicate during critical situations. HSIN provides tools that EMS professionals use to prevent, protect from, respond to and recover from medical emergencies. During these situations, HSIN users communicate with each other about where emergencies are occurring and how to respond in the most effective manner possible.

Currently, more than 200 federal, state, local, tribal and private sector

partners are using HSIN and Geospatial Management Office (GMO) resources to support COVID-19 operations, including 123 state and local partners, 64 DHS organizations and 20 other federal government agencies. These partners include 41 emergency management agencies, 36 U.S. Coast Guard organizations and 33 National Guard units.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response, HSIN is providing EMS and other public safety partners a trusted platform to share information, track incidents and coordinate responses. The ability to share information between jurisdictions is also critical during emergencies, allowing departments to plan for resource allocation, including the availability of personnel, lifesaving equipment and supplies. To learn more about how HSIN helps EMS and other partners achieve their missions, contact HSIN@hq.dhs.gov, and to learn more about National EMS week, visit the **National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians website**

HSIN Helps Law Enforcement Work at 'Full Force' During COVID-19 Pandemic Response



Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies are facing COVID-19 related challenges every day, and they still need to work at full force to carry out non-COVID-19 public safety operations. In today's difficult environment, HSIN is providing law enforcement enhanced capabilities to complete their jobs while maintaining social distancing practices.

HSIN is being used to share documents necessary to complete search and arrest warrants and aid in the capture of wanted persons. The HSIN Chat function allows teams to communicate and contribute to an incident response remotely. Tools provided by HSIN have proven invaluable in completing daily tasks and are welcomed by local law enforcement agencies for their ease of use.

Crime Scene Investigations: Instead of sending an entire investigation team out to visit a crime scene during the COVID-19 response, HSIN tools allow one or two investigators to accomplish the same task. Through the use of HSIN Connect on a mobile device, law enforcement officers are able to share video with their entire investigative team offsite.

Cyber Crime: With cyber criminals exploiting the COVID-19 crisis, and misinformation and fraudulent activity running rampant, law enforcement and other public safety partners at fusion centers across the country are using HSIN as a trusted solution for information sharing. Fusion centers are using HSIN to provide their regions access to

timely, vetted and accurate COVID-19 related information.

SitRoom: As several fusion centers have noted, their ability to "spin up" a HSIN Connect room at a moment's notice has been vital to accomplishing intelligence sharing and other missions. In several cases, fusion centers are using HSIN Connect to create state and local Situational Awareness Rooms (SitRooms), where rapidly changing information can be exchanged freely among vetted partners. Using HSIN Connect, these fusion centers have the ability to quickly set up separate "information pods" and rooms to share specific types of information such as intelligence bulletins, maps and data about evolving trends.

Intelligence: Since February 11, 2020, more than 1,000 COVID-19 intelligence products—which contain analytic summaries and assessments produced by state fusion centers and federal partners—have been shared using HSIN. The information shared ranges from "big picture," such as the statewide availability of personal protective equipment (PPE), or as granular as the types of criminal activities occurring at local retailers. During operations, chat and file sharing tools have been some of the most used capabilities within HSIN Connect. Feedback from the field has been very positive, with local, state and federal users expressing their enthusiasm about having the ability to collaborate with each other in real time during COVID-19 operations.

Expanding the Operational Impact of HSIN

For Organizations:

<u>Using HSIN to Support Real Time</u> <u>Information Sharing in the Field</u>

HSIN allows critical information—data traditionally only available in command posts or operations centers—to be readily accessible via mobile field units, emergency response vehicles and unmanned aerial vehicles. With HSIN's real-time collaboration capabilities, partners can make decisions based on improved situational awareness and achieve greater operational efficiencies. As a result, public safety officials can more effectively share information and coordinate support for operations.

For Community Managers: Fact Sheet: HSIN and Emergency Services

HSIN supports emergency services personnel including medical services, search and rescue, fire prevention and response, law enforcement and other public safety officials. Partners across federal, state, local, tribal, territorial and private sector organizations know they can depend on HSIN to share information and make decisions that save lives. By providing a trusted network for planning, preparedness and real-time collaboration, HSIN allows interagency personnel to work as a unified team.

HSIN in Action

To learn more about the innovative ways HSIN empowers public servants, check out these additional resources:

- HSIN Supports Partners Mission Critical Operations
- Homeland Defense Civil Support
 Office Uses HSIN to Expand the
 Reach of Incident Response Training
- HSIN Exchange Supports Mission Success in High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas



HSIN Across the Country

The Atlantic hurricane season begins on June 1, and many public safety partners are already making plans for hurricane preparedness and response in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The examples below demonstrate HSIN's value in supporting severe weather operations and how partners can apply HSIN tools to mitigate risks and optimize response.

Alabama Severe Storms (Apr. 12)

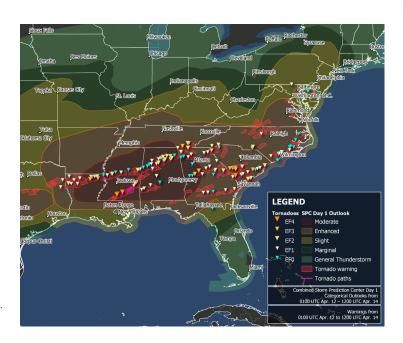
The Montgomery City-County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and Elmore County EMA used HSIN for real-time information sharing to track response and recovery efforts related to severe storms.

Mississippi Severe Storms (Apr. 12)

The Mississippi and Adams County Emergency Management Agencies used HSIN for real-time information sharing to track response and recovery efforts related to severe weather in the region.

Virginia Severe Storms (Apr. 13)

The Norfolk Emergency Management (EM), Portsmouth EM, Naval Air Station (NAS) Norfolk and NAS Oceana used HSIN for real-time information sharing to track response and recovery efforts related to severe storms that affected the Hampton Roads region.



Mission Advocates Are Invaluable During COVID-19 Pandemic Response

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many federal, state and local agencies are having their first experiences using HSIN to support emergency operations. For others who are more familiar with HSIN, COVID-19 operations have presented new challenges that necessitate the use of new HSIN tools. In either case, many of HSIN's users are reaching out to HSIN Mission Advocates for their expertise.

Mission Advocates are providing around-the-clock service and support to HSIN users with remote training and guidance. Several agencies have noted in their feedback that their Mission Advocate's depth of knowledge and incredible responsiveness has greatly enhanced their understanding and usage of HSIN. To request HSIN support for your mission, contact HSIN@hq.dhs.gov.

Training Tip: Using HSIN Connect as a Virtual Emergency Operations Center

HSIN Connect is a versatile tool that allows users to set up a virtual emergency operations center, host a meeting and share information with participants in real time. If you aren't fully familiar with all of the capabilities available with HSIN Connect—such as how to share files or how to set up and organize a virtual meeting room—you can download two quick reference guides (QRGs) from HSIN Learn to see how you can maximize your information sharing capabilities: HSIN Connect for Hosts and Presenters and HSIN Connect for Participants.

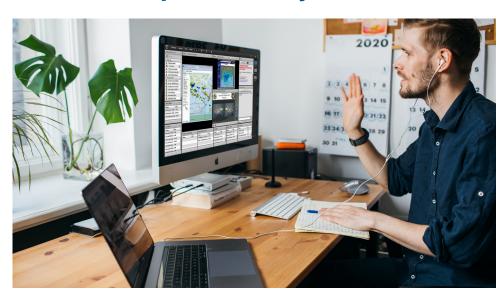
Emergency Operation Centers Share Real-Time COVID-19 Updates Using HSIN

State and local Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs) across the country are using HSIN tools to set up Virtual EOCs to provide personnel with real-time updates in support of the COVID-19 pandemic response. Hospitals, community partners, elected officials, department heads of local and county governments, and non-governmental organizations such as volunteer programs are benefiting from the common operating picture provided by HSIN. For example, hospitals are sharing data about COVID-19 testing, including numbers for confirmed cases and negative test results.

HSIN Helps Keep Military Bases Safe During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Each day, hundreds of military personnel are logging into their bases' HSIN Connect rooms or other areas within their HSIN communities to discuss pressing COVID-19 response matters. With HSIN, military personnel report they are able to maintain full mission capabilities, even being able to run global missions with no degradation. HSIN's support has helped keep tens of thousands of personnel—both on and off military bases—safe by enabling social distancing practices and eliminating the need to expose service members to the coronavirus.

For Now and for the Future: Using HSIN for COVID-19 Response and Beyond



Use of HSIN to support COVID-19 operations is not only expanding across the nation but is also leading partners to think about new ways they can apply HSIN for incident response and daily operations. In late March, when federal, state and local agencies were required to begin performing duties remotely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, simple everyday tasks and responsibilities presented new challenges. For some agencies, formerly utilized web conferencing solutions proved incapable of handling the large influx of new users, while other organizations simply did not have the capabilities necessary for online collaboration.

In a very short time, HSIN has seen its user numbers surge with more than 200 organizations using HSIN tools regularly for COVID-19 operations. For many agencies, HSIN has become essential to their mission. It enables them to continue operating as a fully functional unit, despite working remotely.

Agencies are using HSIN as a virtual office space through which they can

collaborate, send messages and share files. They are using it to host conference calls, through which they can brief each other on COVID-19 related information. Other agencies are using HSIN to process Requests For Information (RFIs) and share intelligence products.

However, what more and more agencies are recognizing, is that long after the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us, HSIN can be used to enhance the effectiveness of their ongoing operations. Several agencies have noted that they are already beginning to use HSIN for every new incident or assessment that requires a response.

Even though agencies today are focused on the COVID-19 response, they must still address other mission requirements at the same time. Feedback received from the field includes comments from emergency operations centers that they see great value in using HSIN in areas such as responding to flash floods, tornadoes and hurricanes. To learn more about how HSIN can fit into your workspace and to request support for your mission, contact **HSIN@hq.dhs.gov**.

ABOUT HSIN | HSIN is DHS' designated system for trusted sharing of Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information among federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, international and private sector partners. Mission operators use HSIN to access homeland security data, send requests securely between agencies, manage operations, coordinate planned event safety and security, respond to incidents, and share the information they need to fulfill their missions and help keep their communities safe. HSIN users are making key contributions to homeland security in areas such as preventing terrorism, bolstering cybersecurity, securing the borders, intercepting illegal drugs, keeping schools safe and combating criminal gangs.

