Delivering Mission Success

The HSIN **ADVOCATE**

Advancing Information Sharing

HSIN provides a trusted network that enables officials to confidently share sensitive data in support of diverse missions. With HSIN's information sharing capabilities, partners achieve increased operational efficiencies in areas such as law enforcement, emergency management, intelligence, infrastructure protection, and cybersecurity. In this edition of the HSIN Advocate, we highlight examples of how HSIN is making a key difference in partners' mission success, including supporting school safety initiatives, confronting human trafficking, and protecting critical infrastructure. We also provide information about helpful resources you can use to advance your use of HSIN; see the Training Corner for details.

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HSIN Supports School Safety Initiatives

Federal, state and local law enforcement, emergency management, and fusion center personnel trust HSIN to share sensitive information about school safety, including Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) and Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs). School officials across the U.S. use HSIN to securely exchange information, learn best practices, and improve their safety plans through valuable knowledge sharing opportunities. The following examples represent some of the ways HSIN is contributing to improved safety at schools across the nation.

Norfolk Public Schools District

In Virginia, the Norfolk Department of Emergency Preparedness and Response uses HSIN to maintain EAPs for schools and auxiliary educational facilities in the Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) District. With HSIN, the NPS has a key resource for storing and sharing sensitive information. School security personnel, administrators and others can easily access school safety requirements and security manuals provided by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS). The VCSCS, located within the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, is a resource and training center for valuable information and research about national and statewide safety initiatives in K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

In the vicinity of Norfolk, 17 other agencies and organizations also use HSIN, which creates a wider network for interagency coordination during incidents, events, training exercises, and other activities. It's a model for emergency preparedness and response that other jurisdictions across the country can emulate.

State of Louisiana

To provide a secure location to track and share information related to school safety throughout the state, the Louisiana State Police established a HSIN community that is used by law enforcement, intelligence analysts, school principals, and other authorized officials. Access to the Louisiana School Safety community is managed by personnel at the state's fusion center, the Louisiana State Analytical and Fusion Exchange (LA-SAFE).

Types of information that may be accessed by members of the Louisiana School Safety community on HSIN include threat reporting and analysis, school blueprints and assessments, emergency operations plans, and safety bulletins. All information is approved for sharing in accordance with the appropriate laws and regulations for each local, state, or school component. HSIN Connect is used for real-time information sharing related to school safety threats, reporting, and other live briefings.

HSIN Annual Assessment Opens in September

Enhancements to HSIN are driven by users who support homeland security in many different areas such as law enforcement, emergency management, intelligence, infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, and public health. By putting users' needs first, HSIN continues to develop new tools to support partners' evolving operational requirements.

The HSIN Annual Assessment is an important initiative that captures your feedback so HSIN can better meet your needs. The assessment is designed to be easy to use and quick to complete. By participating, you can provide suggestions for new features and tools that you would like to see added to the HSIN platform. This data collected from this annual initiative is analyzed to help prioritize improvements that provide the biggest impact to partners' mission success.

Whether you use HSIN daily, weekly, monthly or only a few times each year, we want to hear from you! We appreciate the time you take to complete the questionnaire. Be on the lookout for an email in September that will include a link to the assessment.

You're Invited to Upcoming HSIN User Group (HUG) Sessions

The HSIN Mission Integration and Outreach (MIO) team invites you to upcoming HSIN User Group (HUG) sessions. Be on the lookout for emails with more information about these topics as well as all the information you need to dial-in to the sessions and/or join via Microsoft Teams:

- **September 22:** Geospatial Information Infrastructure (GII) Tools and Learning Resources
- **October 20:** Winter Weather Hazards and Response
- **November 17:** Disrupting Human Trafficking with HSIN

We hope you can join us for these special knowledge-sharing sessions!

Expanding the Operational Impact of HSIN

For Organizations:
Disaster Recovery Operations Strengthened by Public-Private Sector Coordination
When disasters strike, many community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other private sector groups seek to provide assistance during these times of need. Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) play key roles in maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of volunteer efforts. Download this example of "HSIN in Action" to learn how HSIN supports response and recovery efforts, including helping partners identify immediate needs and effectively coordinate operations.

For Community Managers:
Delivering Mission Success
HSIN provides a trusted network that allows officials to confidently share sensitive data in support of diverse missions, which increases operational efficiencies. Federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, private sector and international homeland security professionals use HSIN's unique capabilities to support daily operations, incident response, and security at planned events. Download this "HSIN Impact Story" to see examples of how HSIN supports mission success and learn how you can use HSIN in your operations.

> *We use HSIN on our mobile devices for tactical level, on-scene emergency response, which allows the entire team to relay objectives, track status of forces, ensure the right equipment is taken into hazardous areas, and monitor life-safety issues.*

Tyler Brown
28th Civil Engineer Squadron, Readiness and Emergency Management, Air/Army National Guard Civil Support Team

HSIN in Action

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

- **Homeland Defense Civil Support Office Uses HSIN to Expand the Reach of Incident Response Training**
- **U.S. Coast Guard Sector Mobile Streamlines Operations With HSIN**
- **HSIN Supports Partners' Mission Critical Operations**

HSIN Played Integral Role in Confronting Human Trafficking at 2022 Super Bowl

Large events often increase the risk of criminal activities and the annual Super Bowl is among the largest, highest-profile events in the world. More than 100,000 people typically travel to the host city, which presents unique challenges for law enforcement, including efforts to confront human trafficking and child exploitation.

DHS and other federal, state and local agencies work together during each Super Bowl to mitigate risks and help prevent all types of crimes from occurring. During this year's event held in Los Angeles County, the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center (OCIAC) used HSIN to support Operation Red Zone, an extensive multi-jurisdictional human trafficking enforcement operation conducted February 9 through February 12 in Orange County. The operation resulted in the arrests of 56 suspects and the recovery of two victims under the age of 16.

"Our job includes disrupting criminal activities, and for Operation Red Zone the OCIAC teamed with numerous local law enforcement agencies, the Orange County District Attorney's Office, and DHS to address human trafficking," said OCIAC

Intelligence Analyst Corrine St. Thomas-Stowers. "We collaboratively used HSIN Connect to help identify victims, monitor arrest data, and provide information to local law enforcement agencies, all of which allowed rapid response."

During the operation, personnel used HSIN to compile real-time data on arrests, obtain information such as license plate numbers, and quickly determine appropriate points of contact for assistance on matters such as obtaining search warrants. The team also used HSIN Exchange to submit requests for information (RFIs) to fusion centers to determine if suspects were known outside of the area of operation.

"If local law enforcement identified a suspect, we used HSIN Exchange to reach out to fusion centers in the Western U.S. to ask if anyone had information on a suspect, especially with regard to human trafficking," explained St. Thomas-Stowers. "After the Super Bowl, we continued to use HSIN to share information with partners such as DHS's Office of Intelligence & Analysis, which helped support ongoing investigations and prosecutions."

St. Thomas-Stowers works with multiple human trafficking teams throughout the country. She also produces a quarterly report on transnational organized crime and shares it on HSIN-Intel, which is a community of intelligence professionals who use HSIN to seamlessly share information across federal, state and local agencies.

"Smaller local police departments may not have the resources of larger agencies, and HSIN helps all partners effectively work together on major initiatives such as Operation Red Zone," said St. Thomas-Stowers. "With HSIN we were able to cohesively coordinate a wide range of activities, including identifying victim-support resources offered by private sector partners, faith-based groups, and medical facilities."

Operation Red Zone offers a best practice methodology for other operations, and multiple jurisdictions have reached out to St. Thomas-Stowers for guidance on how to plan and implement similar initiatives. To learn how HSIN can support your mission contact **HSIN@hq.dhs.gov**.

TSA Relies on HSIN to Help Protect Critical Infrastructure

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee (STSAC) was established in early 2019 with the purpose of making recommendations for the development and implementation of policies, programs and security directives pertaining to surface transportation. The STSAC uses HSIN's Critical Infrastructure (HSIN-CI) community to facilitate the flow of information so the committee can actively collaborate on deliverables and make timely recommendations.

The STSAC is composed of up to 40 voting members, including representatives from six federal departments and agencies with regulatory authority over one or more modes of surface transportation, and 14 non-voting members designated to the committee serving in an advisory capacity. Participating agencies include the Departments of Defense, Energy, Homeland Security, and Transportation, the National Transportation Safety Board, and Federal Bureau of Investigation. In addition to these members, the STSAC also has numerous subject matter experts.

Surface transportation security requires complex coordination across various transportation modes including freight rail, highway, mass transit, pipelines,

trucking, over-the-road bus, and the school bus industry, all of which span regions, states, and local jurisdictions. As such, it is imperative that federal and private transportation partners work collaboratively to achieve mission success. Without HSIN, the committee would not be able to share sensitive information securely among federal agencies or with the private sector.

As an example of the value that HSIN brings to the mission, the STSAC has used HSIN to coordinate guidance on protecting essential critical infrastructure workers and communities during phased COVID-19 re-openings and ensuring the continuity of functions critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security. Members have leveraged advanced HSIN capabilities, including integration with Microsoft Outlook for streamlined alerting and document management, specialized restricted areas for subcommittees, and a dedicated area for a Surface Intelligence Information Sharing Cell (SISC) to communicate intelligence to partners.

The SISC leverages HSIN as a two-way channel for intelligence integration, information sharing and coordinated efforts to inform vigilance and preparedness measures and actions. For analytical support, the SISC uses HSIN to reach into TSA

Intelligence and Analysis, the Intelligence Community, and industry partners across all surface modes.

SISC partners previously had to wait much longer to access sensitive security information (SSI) and for-official-use-only (FOUO) Joint Intelligence Bulletins (JIBS), Transportation Intelligence Notes (TIN) and Modal Threat Assessments through other channels, which led to delayed decision making. HSIN now enables quicker, secure delivery of information so the intelligence can be used to make real-time operational decisions for surface transportation security.

The STSAC also uses HSIN to leverage a unique and robust member biography tool designed specifically for the community, which enables members to search other members' biographies for key skills and industry experience. The tool helps promote interagency collaboration as well as the identification of needed subject matter experts.

All of these factors have steadily increased the value that the STSAC derives from HSIN, and the use of HSIN has increased information sharing maturity across the STSAC and other organizations. To learn how HSIN can support your mission, contact **HSIN@hq.dhs.gov**.

HSIN Training Corner

What's New:

New HSIN 101 Basics Course

Have basic questions about HSIN? The **HSIN 101 Basics Course** has been redesigned to answer the following questions: What is HSIN's purpose? How does HSIN support you? How does HSIN learn from you? How does HSIN work? And what is HSIN's project process? Learn the basics of HSIN in under 30 minutes and leave with useful quick reference guides to use within your community.

What's Changed:

HSIN Connect 11.4.5 Upgrade

HSIN is now on Adobe Connect 11.4.5 as its web conferencing and learning management system services provider. In this upgrade you will have the ability to play MP4 files placed on slides and utilize the new Compliance and Control settings for greater security. To learn more about this upgrade, view the **HSIN Connect 101 course** for the "What's New in Adobe Connect 11.4.5 for HSIN Users" quick reference guide and release notes.

HSIN Access Management (HSIN 201) Curriculum Updates

Say hello to the User Management Tool as the end-to-end HSIN Access Management for the Inviter, Requester, Approver (IRA) process. In this valuable course, you'll be able to download helpful quick reference guides on topics such as how to invite single or multiple users to join HSIN (for the Inviter role), how to request HSIN community access (for the Requestor role), and how to approve HSIN community access requests (for the Approver role). You'll also be able to download the HSIN Access Management Fact Sheet, which provides an overview of all roles, tools, and training materials that are pertinent to each role. You can access the course here: **HSIN Access Management Training (HSIN 201)**.

Community Cross-Collaboration Best Practices & Training Opportunities

Does your community have training opportunities you'd like to share with other HSIN users? If so, please contact the HSIN Training team at **HSIN.Training@hq.dhs.gov** to have your next training opportunity posted here!

Does your community have operational best practices that could be valuable for other HSIN users? If so, please contact the **HSIN@hq.dhs.gov** to share your best practices here!

HSIN Learn Service Announcement

If you experience any issues accessing HSIN training materials, first log into HSIN using https://hsin.dhs.gov and authenticate, then click the desired HSIN Learn training link. If you continue to experience any access issues, please contact the **HSIN.Helpdesk@hq.dhs.gov** to be added to the Learners group.

Upcoming Live Training

In support of planned updates to the HSIN User Management Tool, the HSIN Training team will be providing live training options. A sneak peek will be scheduled approximately one week prior to the launch of the capability enhancements. A follow-on review of the system updates will be provided after the release.

Notifications will be sent to all users regarding these training opportunities once they get scheduled. In the meantime, please keep an eye on **HSIN Training Central** to access existing training materials and learn about new training opportunities.

Stay Safe Online with These Cybersecurity Tips

Don't Be a Victim of Vishing

Vishing—short for voice phishing—is a social engineering tactic that uses the phone to trick victims into disclosing personal and sensitive information. Scammers want to steal your identity or money, and common vishing themes include:

- Being told there's an issue with your credit card or banking account, or that your credentials have been exposed
- Presenting offers that are too good to be true
- Promoting healthcare scams
- Making "robo" calls
- Being told there is a warrant for your arrest or the arrest of a family member
- Making threats to cancel your Social Security Number

Best of HSIN Annual Awards

Homeland Security

Best of HSIN Nomination Period Opens in September

The nomination period for this year's Best of HSIN Annual Awards opens in September. This is your opportunity to tell us how you—or others—have used HSIN to support operational goals. As a member of HSIN, you can nominate any HSIN engagement for an award.

The Best of HSIN Annual Awards help impart best practices across all HSIN communities. The awards recognize information sharing that improves decision making, promotes partnerships and collaboration, and furthers the homeland security mission. Your nomination should include specific examples of excellence based on the awards criteria. You can submit a nomination in one or more of the following five categories:

■ **Daily Operations/Mission Integration:** Demonstrate the integrated use of HSIN as part of standard daily operations to support successful mission outcomes.

■ **Event Support:** Demonstrate the successful use of HSIN as part of event support operations, such as planning, event management, incident tracking, or information sharing.

■ **Incident Support:** Demonstrate operational use of HSIN for incident response such as COVID-19, civil unrest, active shooters, hurricanes, floods, or wildfires.

■ **Interagency Collaboration:** Demonstrate community growth and collaboration among federal, state, local, territorial, tribal, international, and/or private sector partners.

■ **Greatest Impact to the Information Sharing Environment:** Demonstrate exemplary performance using HSIN to leverage information sharing that contributes to safety and the homeland security mission.

The Best of HSIN Annual Awards will be presented to engagements that best exemplify a combination of integrated operational use, innovative incident and event support, interagency collaboration, and impact on the information sharing environment. Be on the lookout for an email in September, which will provide a link to the nomination form as well as instructions. If you have any questions regarding the awards, please contact HSIN at **HSIN@hq.dhs.gov**.

ABOUT HSIN | HSIN is DHS's 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.

For more information, contact the HSIN Outreach Team at **HSIN@hq.dhs.gov** or visit our website at **www.dhs.gov/hsin**.

HSIN | Homeland Security Information Network