

OPENING STATEMENT

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Subcommittee on Research & Technology
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

Joint Committee Hearing
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Subcommittee on Research & Technology
Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection,
and Security Technologies
"Strategy and Mission of the DHS Science and Technology"
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Thank you to Chairman Meehan and Chairman Bucshon for calling this hearing today. I welcome the opportunity to join with my colleagues on the Homeland Security Committee to discuss the important work being done at the Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate.

I also want to thank our witnesses for being here. Under Secretary Brothers, I look forward to hearing about your plans and progress so far with the S&T Directorate. Mr. Maurer, it is good to see you again.

It is no secret that the creation of DHS as a single agency constructed from several existing agencies with diverse missions generated a number of management challenges. The S&T Directorate's task of providing high-quality scientific and technical support for all of the agency's missions is undoubtedly a daunting one. Having said that, I am disappointed that the success of the S&T Directorate continues to be limited by the lack of an effective strategy and a lack of coordination, resulting in some costly and likely preventable failures. This must change.

Under Secretary Brothers, I am interested to hear from you about the policy and management changes you are putting in place to shift the S&T Directorate toward a more focused and strategic operation. As you put together a strategic plan for S&T, I hope you will look critically at customer needs, your relationship with the operational components, the balance between short and long-term research, and lessons learned from past failures. Visionary goals and detailed objectives can be helpful, but those need to be coupled with effective policies and practices to ensure success.

The end-users of S&T Directorate research are varied and have a wide range of technical and operational needs. The end-users span from first responders and private industry to border patrol agents and TSA screeners. I would like to hear how the Directorate seeks to prioritize these end-users and fit their needs into the broader R&D strategy as indicated by DHS risk analyses.

Successful technology development also requires researchers and end-users to be communicating and collaborating at each stage of the R&D process. I think it is fair to say that the relationship

between S&T and the operational components has not always been productive. I look forward to hearing what S&T is doing to improve these relationships and how they define their role within each phase of the technology development process.

In addition, operational mission needs often demand tangible outcomes and deliverables. However, I am very concerned that DHS is not striking the right balance between critical basic research and applied technology development. Without long-term investments, the Department and the nation will not have the scientific foundation for new homeland security technologies in the future.

Finally, as Science Committee members heard at our July hearing, social sciences play an important role in the technology development, testing, and evaluation processes. We have seen how the most advanced technologies can end as failures because the developers do not consider how the operators in the field will use the technology. I am interested to hear what methods are in place now to ensure that human factors are considered during technology development and acquisition.

Once again, Dr. Brothers, you have quite the task before you. I look forward to working with you and hopefully providing you with some of the tools you need to improve the R&D efforts at DHS, and most importantly keep the American homeland safe.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.