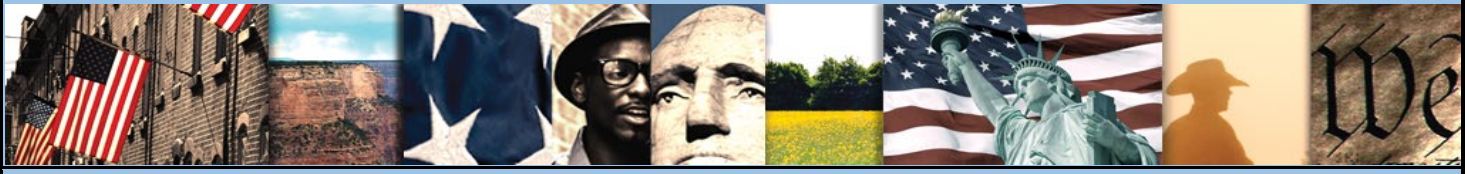




The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



Framework for the Safe and Secure Deployment of AI in Critical Infrastructure

In November, DHS released a set of recommendations for the safe and secure development and deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in critical infrastructure, the "Roles and Responsibilities Framework for Artificial Intelligence in Critical Infrastructure." This first-of-its kind resource was developed by and for entities at each layer of the AI supply chain: cloud and compute providers, AI developers, and critical infrastructure owners and operators – as well as the civil society and public sector entities that protect and advocate for consumers. The Artificial Intelligence Safety and Security Board, a public-private advisory committee established by DHS Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas, identified the need for clear guidance on how each layer of the AI supply chain can do their part to ensure that AI is deployed safely and securely in U.S. critical infrastructure. This product is the culmination of considerable dialogue and debate among the Board, composed of AI leaders representing industry, academia, civil society, and the public sector. The report complements other work carried out by the Administration on AI safety, such as the guidance from the AI Safety Institute, on managing a wide range of misuse and accident risks.

America’s critical infrastructure – the systems that power our homes and businesses, deliver clean water, allow us to travel safely, facilitate the digital networks that connect us, and much more – is vital to domestic and global safety and stability. These sectors are increasingly deploying AI to improve the services they provide, build resilience, and counter threats. AI is, for example, helping to quickly detect earthquakes and predict aftershocks, prevent blackouts and other electric-service interruptions, and sort and distribute mail to American households. These uses do not come without risk, and vulnerabilities introduced by the implementation of this technology may expose critical systems to failures or manipulation by nefarious actors. Given the increasingly interconnected nature of these systems, their disruption can have devastating consequences for homeland security.

“AI offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve the strength and resilience of U.S. critical infrastructure, and we must seize it while minimizing its potential harms. The Framework, if widely adopted, will go a long way to better ensure the safety and security of critical services that deliver clean water, consistent power, internet access, and more,” said Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas. “The choices organizations and individuals involved in creating AI make today will determine the impact this technology will have in our critical infrastructure tomorrow. I am grateful for the diverse expertise of the Artificial Intelligence Safety and Security Board and its members, each of whom informed these guidelines with their own real-world experiences developing, deploying, and promoting the responsible use of this extraordinary technology. I urge every executive, developer, and elected official to adopt and use this Framework to help build a safer future for all.”

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If adopted and implemented by the stakeholders involved in the development, use, and deployment of AI in U.S. critical infrastructure, this voluntary Framework will enhance the harmonization of and help operationalize safety and security practices, improve the delivery of critical services, enhance trust and transparency among entities, protect civil rights and civil liberties, and advance AI safety and security research that will further enable critical infrastructure to deploy emerging technology responsibly. Despite the growing importance of this technology to critical infrastructure, no comprehensive regulation currently exists. ***Read more here:*** [Groundbreaking Framework for the Safe and Secure Deployment of AI in Critical Infrastructure Unveiled by Department of Homeland Security.](#)

SOPDO Peter Mina Joins DOJ Meetings with MASSAH and Jewish Communities

This month, Senior Official Performing the Duties of the CRCL Officer (SOPDO) Peter Mina joined two quarterly meetings hosted by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) with Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian and Hindu (MASSAH) and Jewish community stakeholders. DOJ hosts these meetings to bring together federal civil rights leaders and members of these communities. Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Kristen Clarke gave remarks at both meetings, and representatives from other federal agencies also shared updates.

SOPDO Mina spoke to attendees and addressed questions on key DHS issues, including immigration policies and law enforcement practices. He shared how CRCL engages in policy work to ensure fair and equitable treatment of individuals and guard against discrimination in DHS programs and activities in accordance with federal civil rights laws, standards, regulations, and Executive Orders. He further highlighted CRCL's role in overseeing the Department's authority under Title VI to ensure that organizations that receive DHS financial assistance do not engage in discrimination based on race, color, or national origin, as such CRCL continues to examine and investigate civil rights complaints on U.S. colleges and university campuses related to student protests and encourages community members to submit civil rights complaints related to any DHS policy, program, or activity.

SOPDO Mina reaffirmed these meetings as a long-standing cornerstone of CRCL's engagement with these communities; and which enhance continued efforts to support the DHS mission to secure the country while safeguarding our core values of liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.

CRCL Hosts Session at FEMA's Fifth Annual Civil Rights Summit

This month, CRCL participated in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s fifth annual Civil Rights Summit, hosted by their Office of Civil Rights. The two-day, virtual event provided information and resources to about 1,000 participants that included FEMA employees, members of the public, advocates, community allies, and civil rights organizations, as well as FEMA's state, local, Tribal, and territorial partners.

This year's summit featured presentations that addressed the intersection of gender-based violence (GBV) with other forms of discrimination, the prevalence of GBV after disasters, and the unique needs and vulnerabilities of individuals who are victims of GBV during disasters.

CRCL hosted a session entitled, "Aligning Gender-Based Violence Concerns in Disasters-U.S. Strategy and National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security," which was delivered by Dr. Carolyn Washington, DHS Women, Peace, and Security Manager. Nearly 300 participants attended the session, which highlighted FEMA's Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) equities and how to operationalize WPS and GBV concerns in disasters. She further spoke on the integration of a gender perspective in disaster response and management that takes into consideration the various security needs of not only women and girls, but also males and other genders.

CRCL Releases Semiannual Report to Congress

CRCL has published its [FY 2023 First and Second Quarter Semiannual Report](#) as required by section 803 of the *Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007*, 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1(f). The Report highlights information on CRCL's investigative work during this time period.

DHS Legal Authorities that Prohibit Discrimination Against Faith-Based Communities

Members of the public now can access a fact sheet with information about the DHS legal authorities that protect against discrimination involving members of faith-based communities in DHS and DHS funded programs. The fact sheet provides an overview of these legal authorities and what a person can do if they believe they have experienced discrimination as a member of a faith-based community in a DHS or DHS funded program. **Read the fact sheet here:** [DHS Legal Authorities that Prohibit Discrimination Against Faith-Based Communities](#).

Joint DHS/FBI Statement on Reports of Drones in New Jersey

The FBI and DHS jointly issued a statement on reported drone sightings in New Jersey:

“We have no evidence at this time that the reported drone sightings pose a national security or public safety threat or have a foreign nexus. The FBI, DHS and our federal partners, in close coordination with the New Jersey State Police, continue to deploy personnel and technology to investigate this situation and confirm whether the reported drone flights are actually drones or are instead manned aircraft or otherwise inaccurate sightings.

“Historically, we have experienced cases of mistaken identity, where reported drones are, in fact, manned aircraft or facilities. We are supporting local law enforcement in New Jersey with numerous detection methods but have not corroborated any of the reported visual sightings with electronic detection. To the contrary, upon review of available imagery, it appears that many of the reported sightings are actually manned aircraft, operating lawfully. There are no reported or confirmed drone sightings in any restricted air space.

“We take seriously the threat that can be posed by unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), which is why law enforcement and other agencies continue to support New Jersey and investigate the reports. To be clear, they have uncovered no such malicious activity or intent at this stage. While there is no known malicious activity occurring in New Jersey, the reported sightings there do, however, highlight the insufficiency of current authorities.”

CRCL on the Road, December

December 17 – Washington, DC

SOPDO Peter Mina spoke at the U.S. Department of Justice's interagency quarterly meeting with MASSAH communities.

December 18 – Washington, DC

SOPDO Peter Mina spoke at the U.S. Department of Justice's interagency quarterly meeting with Jewish communities.

Additional information, and contacting us:

The goal of this periodic newsletter is to inform members of the public about the activities of the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, including: how to file complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via our stakeholder email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. Issues of the newsletter can be accessed online at: www.dhs.gov/crcl-newsletter.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, want to request back issues, or have other comments or questions, please let us know by emailing crcloutreach@dhs.gov. For more information, including how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, visit: www.dhs.gov/crcl.

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