

Secretary


U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528



Homeland Security

March 14, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ambassador John D. Negroponte
Director of National Intelligence

FROM: Michael Chertoff 

SUBJECT: CAC Blue Ribbon Study Group Recommendations --
DHS Executive Agency of the Domestic Applications Office (DAO)

I received the Civil Applications Committee (CAC) Blue Ribbon Study Group's final report recommendations from Keith Hall, the Chairman of the study group, Thursday, December 22, 2005.

I fully agree with the panel's report recommendation to "establish a Domestic Applications Office within DHS and appoint DHS as Executive Agent."

Our Homeland Security mission requires increased "Homeland Vigilance" and close cooperation and information sharing within the Intelligence Community (IC). As you know, DHS seeks to play an enhanced active role in the Intelligence Community. By having DHS serve as the Executive Agency of the Domestic Applications Office (DAO) this will encourage the flow of intelligence from the IC to DHS components and enhance information sharing with federal, state, local, and tribal entities responding to a demanding and shifting landscape.

The next step in the establishment of the DAO will be for the ODNI and DHS to work together to implement the CAC Blue Ribbon Study Group's recommendations. I propose that we jointly initiate the following measures:

- The immediate establishment of a DNI-DHS implementation team.
- Direct that the implementation team should, within 60 days, ensure the transition of all operations from the CAC to the new DAO.
- Direct that sources for funding the start-up costs and operations for FY 2007 be found. Initial costing estimates, depending on the final DAO staffing plan, range from \$5.0M to \$15.0M per year.

I look forward to meeting with you in the near future to discuss plans to accomplish this significant undertaking.