

Partnering for Innovation & Operational Needs through Embedding for Effective Relationships (PIONEER)

Increasing Component and Industry Engagement

PIONEER combines a variety of programs that enhance the interaction between Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T), the operational components and innovative industry partners. Collectively, these programs help S&T personnel understand the unique operational needs of the DHS components, help S&T program managers and staff leverage S&T resources, and forge strong and enduring relationships between S&T and component personnel. Finally, the Industry Engagement programs help build these same bonds between S&T and cutting-edge industry partners, while sharing best practices and unique capabilities. PIONEER comprises four individual programs, described below.



S&T Embed Program

The Embed Program inserts S&T program staff into component operational environments. This program will target selected areas of research and development that revolve around the expertise of an individual, or the requirements of the S&T program/project. Staff members work in an operational environment to gain first-hand knowledge of a component's current capabilities. Embedding S&T staff serves to establish a better understanding of the component's operational needs, enabling them to refine technologies in development, and create new avenues of communication that will drive the research, development and test and evaluation processes that did not previously exist.

The Sprint Program

Quarterly, the Sprint Program sends small groups of S&T and HQ employees on one-week tours of S&T organic labs. The program allows support/administrative personnel to appreciate and share in the accomplishments of the S&T product, thereby broadening the understanding of the diverse work and research that takes place across S&T. The Sprint Program seeks to build relationships and esprit-de-corps among S&T and HQ personnel.

PIONEER-based Industry Engagement

The goal behind the PIONEER concept results in a push/pull effect that creates unity between two interrelated groups. Based on that concept, an industry engagement element was added to the program. Utilizing approved DHS programs, PIONEER looks to bring in industry partners from the private sector (as special government employees through the Loaned Executive Program) to advise on particular thrust area topics.



Conversely, the Exemplar program (career development) sends S&T employees to corporate entities to capture best practices through training aimed at pre-determined learning objectives. Both industry and DHS benefit from understanding their unique business processes and management models by working together within each other's environment.

