

Issue Date: 1/24/2003

# CONGRESSIONAL HEARING PREPARATION FOR DHS OFFICIALS

---

## I. Purpose

This directive establishes Department of Homeland Security (DHS) interim policy regarding hearing preparation for DHS officials and bureaus.

## II. Scope

This directive applies to all DHS Headquarters elements.

## III. Authorities

The Homeland Security Act of 2002, codified in Title 6, U.S. Code

## IV. Definitions

A. **Briefing Book**: A book consisting of DHS staff-generated materials that answer policy and subject-focused questions that are expected to be addressed during specific Congressional hearings.

B. **Murder Board**: A panel discussion of senior DHS officials that addresses all briefing book material. It is specifically designed to prepare witnesses for Congressional hearings and testimony.

## V. Responsibilities

A. The Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA) shall be responsible for:

1. All coordination, staffing, and material development for congressional hearings to include creating briefing books and drafting written testimony

2. Assisting witnesses with preparation of oral testimony, to include coordinating and scheduling policy and subject-focused "murder boards" at least a week ahead of the hearing date

3. Coordinating and managing a legislative briefing 24-48 hours in advance of the hearing. This briefing will provide the political landscape, possible "Questions and Answers," information on other witnesses, and other last minute insights.
  4. Coordinating concurrent clearance of written testimony with the General Counsel's Office and relevant DHS senior officials.
  5. Coordinating DHS and OMB clearance of testimony
  6. Providing escorts for witnesses and managing logistical details associated with hearings
  7. Noting, coordinating, and tracking all deliverables which result from hearings
- B. All Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and senior DHS officials shall:
1. Provide direct input to OLA on the content included in all briefing books in the format and timeframe prescribed by OLA.
  2. Ensure that all briefing book materials are consistent with prior Congressional testimony, Questions for the Record and DHS policy statements prior to submitting to OLA.
- C. The General Counsel shall:
- Review and approve all written testimony and statements prior to release.

## **VI. Policy & Procedures**

- A. All correspondence requesting DHS officials to testify before Congress will be directed to OLA. Upon receipt of a hearing request, the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, in consultation with other senior DHS officials, will determine which DHS official would be the most appropriate to testify, if any. Upon the Assistant Secretary's determination, DHS legislative staff will notify the appropriate Congressional staff and the DHS Office of Public Affairs.
- B. The Office of Legislative Affairs will be responsible for all internal witness preparation as described in the Responsibilities section above.
- C. Once cleared testimony has been return by OMB, the Office of Legislative Affairs will provide testimony and supporting documents to relevant Committee staff.

D. **Questions or Concerns Regarding the Process**: Any questions or concerns regarding this directive should be addressed to the Office of Legislative Affairs.