

Written testimony of Deputy Chief Readiness Support Officer Thomas Chaleki before the House Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency

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Thank you Chairman Perry, Ranking Member Watson-Coleman, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to provide an update on the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) motor vehicle fleet program and the progress we've made towards improving the management and oversight of this important program.

I have been the Deputy Chief Readiness Support Officer for almost four years and assumed control of the vehicle program almost a year ago when we established the Office of Assets and Logistics. Prior to my time at DHS headquarters, I served in various mission support roles with the Coast Guard Headquarters, and recently retired as a civil engineer in the U.S. Air Force Reserve. Today, I will discuss the Department's efforts to improve the management of our motor vehicle fleet, and provide an overview of the DHS motor vehicle inventory and initiatives to right-size the fleet. I will also address the progress to date in improving our management and oversight of the motor vehicle program and show how we are responding to the DHS Inspector General's findings and recommendations from three separate reports related to the DHS vehicle fleet. DHS concurred with each of the recommendations in these reports and is actively working towards their resolution.

DHS was established as a cabinet level agency over 13 years ago and motor vehicles are an important tool in supporting the Department's missions. Whether it's a Border Patrol agent protecting the southwest border, an ICE agent conducting an investigation or an FPS agent responding to an incident at a Federal facility, they each rely on a properly equipped motor vehicle to successfully carry out their responsibilities. In 2005, DHS Components were operating approximately 38,000 motor vehicles. As the DHS mission and related responsibilities expanded, the motor vehicle fleet also experienced significant growth of over 45 percent, peaking at just over 56,000 motor vehicles in 2011.

The Chief Readiness Support Officer is delegated the authority to oversee and manage the DHS motor vehicle program. In 2012, GSA issued guidance requiring Federal agencies to develop and implement a Vehicle Allocation Methodology (VAM). The VAM is a tool used to help agencies determine their optimal fleet size. The Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer (OCRSO) successfully completed its first VAM in 2012 which allowed the Department to establish an overall vehicle fleet baseline. The Department then started the process of right-sizing the motor vehicle fleet either through

the elimination of unnecessary vehicles or ensuring that new vehicle acquisitions were of the proper type for the required mission.

The DHS motor vehicle fleet is the second largest civilian motor vehicle fleet in the Federal Government but has been reduced nearly 8 percent since the fleet inventory numbers peaked in 2011. The current DHS fleet consists of Government-owned and leased vehicles. Of the Department's vehicles, 84 percent are Government owned and 16 percent are leased. In addition to decreasing the number of motor vehicles by eight percent, DHS has increased the percentage of alternative fueled vehicles from 25 percent in 2010 to 39 percent in 2014.

DHS has a decentralized approach to fleet management. OCRSO develops and distributes fleet policy through the "DHS Motor Vehicle Fleet Program Manual" to Components, who all have delegated authority to administer their motor vehicle fleet programs subject to the direction, oversight and policies issued by the Department. OCRSO issued motor vehicle program policy to Components in 2011. To further clarify and improve the DHS Fleet Manager's authority and ability to ensure compliance with Departmental guidance, as well as meet a recommendation of the Inspector General, OCRSO recently rewrote both the *DHS Fleet Instruction* and the *Home-to-Work Instruction*. These instructions are currently in the Department's review and clearance process. These revised documents help strengthen the Department's oversight responsibilities and increase Components' requirements to collaborate and gain departmental approval for all vehicle acquisitions. Additionally, the draft instructions include requirements that will ensure compliance with the latest executive orders, the most recent being Executive Order 13693, "Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade," issued in March 2015.

Since 2012, OCRSO has developed and fielded a Department-wide fleet management data system to ensure visibility of each components motor vehicle data. This data system consolidates component motor vehicle inventory, cost, and usage data into a single database which is then incorporated into the Consolidated Asset Portfolio and Sustainment Information System (CAPSIS). Each Component provides monthly data updates. The availability of this data provides the DHS fleet management team greater visibility into each Component's fleet and makes right-sizing more transparent. Further, the system also facilitates collection of vehicle inventory, cost, and usage data.

This fiscal year the Department plans to implement policy that requires mandatory OCRSO review of all Component motor vehicle acquisitions prior to order submission. Currently, OCRSO does review and approve all Component GSA lease submissions but does not have visibility of Component direct vehicle purchases. Additionally, beginning in FY 2017 OCRSO will develop and administer a standardized Vehicle Allocation Methodology (VAM) for all Components annually.

Home-to-Work transportation is a flexible and powerful tool for meeting mission requirements and enhancing the overall responsiveness to emergency situations and is an area where the Department has acted on the Inspector General's recommendations-for example, in FY 2015 OCRSO conducted a review of all Component Home-to-Work authorizations resulting in Secretary approval, CRSO established a system that now collects quarterly component Home-to-Work data and the Home-to-Work Manual was revised and strengthened. 31 U.S.C § 1344 allows government passenger carrier usage for transportation between residence and place of employment for senior officials such as the President, Vice President, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, and other officials designated by the President, which includes the Secretary of Homeland Security. The statute also allows the heads of certain agencies listed in 5 U.S.C. 5312, which includes the Secretary of Homeland Security, to authorize Home-to-Work transportation for a principal deputy. Home-to-Work transportation may also be authorized by the Secretary when transportation between the residence of an employee and various locations is essential for the safe and efficient performance of intelligence, counterintelligence, protective services, or criminal law enforcement duties, and when it is required for the performance of field work and which will substantially increase the efficiency and economy of the Government, or when there exists a clear and present danger, an emergency, or a compelling operational consideration.

The Under Secretary for Management directed all Components to conduct a thorough review of their Home-to-Work programs from a risk-based methodology standpoint and following that analysis, submit a request for Secretarial approval of their Home-to-Work requirements. Each Component submission was then subsequently reviewed by the DHS Home-to-Work Program Manager, OCRSO and Management senior staff, and the Office of the General Counsel. The result is that each Home-to-Work authorization was justified and approved for only one year instead of the normal two years to allow the Department to analyze a full year of vehicle data

In addition to this enterprise wide review and analysis of the Department's use of Home-to-Work, OCRSO developed and fielded a centralized Home-to-Work database that is now used to collect Component Home-to-Work data, which is submitted to OCRSO on a quarterly basis. This requirement was implemented on October 1, 2014.

After thorough analysis of each Component's Home-to-Work submission and analysis of one year's worth of quarterly Home-to-Work data provided by each Component, the Department now has, for the first time, specific knowledge of Home-to-Work use within DHS. This data enables DHS to better implement, monitor, and improve the fair and efficient use of Home-to-Work throughout the enterprise. For example, of our approximate 220,000 employees, a total of 17,118 individuals at DHS are authorized to use Home-to-Work transportation. Component data indicates that on average, only 88 percent of these authorized individuals are regularly utilizing Home-to-Work

transportation, indicating that Components are evaluating usage to ensure that Home-to-Work transportation is utilized when it is essential to our mission.

Having recently visited the Brownfield Border Station on the Southwest Border, our stations in the Northwest Region, and Component operations in the Boston area, I've learned that Components execute a diverse set of missions in an all threats- all hazards environment. There isn't a single standard motor vehicle solution that fits every Component in every region. DHS will continue to be strategic about reductions in the fleet size to ensure that we are not hampering our ability to operate, but preserving safe and efficient use of these vehicles in order to complete our mission. Our data is, and will continue to be, a critical element for fleet decisions.

As a result, the Department's motor vehicle fleet size has steadily decreased each year since its peak in 2011, and the Department will continue to improve how Components procure the right vehicle for the right job based on mission requirements. Finally, the revised instructions for both motor vehicles and Home-to-Work transportation provide the framework for better oversight and compliance. While there is still work to do, DHS has made significant progress in improving its vehicle fleet management, and remains committed to sustaining this momentum.

Thank you for the opportunity and privilege to appear before you.