



March 5, 2009

Secretary Janet Napolitano

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Napolitano,

I hereby tender my resignation as the Director of the National Cybersecurity Center (NCSC) effective Friday, March 13, 2009. In my place I recommend you appoint our capable Deputy Director, Ms. Mary Ellen Seale as Acting Director.

As the Secretary of DHS, you have the direct responsibility for the nation's cybersecurity. The NCSC is your only national body created to fulfill your responsibility to protect networks across the civilian, military and intelligence communities. It is the group responsible for pulling together the composite operating picture and situational awareness across government, and has the only national coordination authority on cybersecurity issues.

The NCSC is now prepared to build out this capability for you, but the NCSC did not receive appropriate support inside DHS during the last administration to fully realize this vital role. During the past year the NCSC received only five weeks of funding, due to various roadblocks engineered within the department and by the Office of Management and Budget.

NSA effectively controls DHS cyber efforts through detailees, technology insertions, and the proposed move of NPPD and the NCSC to a Fort Meade NSA facility. NSA currently dominates most national cyber efforts. While acknowledging the critical importance of NSA to our intelligence efforts, I believe this is a bad strategy on multiple grounds. The intelligence culture is very different than a network operations or security culture. In addition, the threats to our democratic processes are significant if all top level government network security and monitoring are handled by any one organization (either directly or indirectly). During my term as

Director we have been unwilling to subjugate the NCSC underneath the NSA. Instead, we advocated a model where there is a credible civilian government cybersecurity capability which interfaces with, but is not controlled by, the NSA.

As one commander said “You know you’re over the target when you’re taking flack,” and we have been taking our share. We viewed this as a sign that we were on the right path. As such, with a tight team of three staff and two detailees, we have thrived. We are proud of the progress the NCSC team has made:

- We succeeded in completing our Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and Implementation Plan with both Cabinet Level and Presidential approval.
- We developed a healthy working group of the seven directors of the national cybersecurity centers who form the NCSC Coordination Council.
- We developed a new economic model for valuing networks and cybersecurity, which can support the development of more effective cyber policies for years to come. The model describes the incentive structure for various participants in the system, including hackers. It can be used to develop better policies for deterrence, supply chain management, as well as provide an overarching framework for ranking the benefit of all major cyber projects.
- We supported the Department of Defense (DoD) in their quest to develop a world class Web 2.0 cyber operations platform. We helped DoD find the best software developers in the world for this ambitious project and DoD successfully engaged them. The resulting collaboration platform can be used by cyber centers as well as network operators and security groups across government.
- We helped the DHS Privacy Group tap one of the world’s foremost experts in advanced privacy and anonymity technology. He has a unique ability to build bridges between privacy groups on the one hand and law enforcement on the other, and could help turn those bridges into new national standards. Despite my departure, I sincerely hope this important effort will move forward.
- We introduced concepts of game theory to cyber diplomacy.
- We created a vision for a new National Cyber Center which could function as a fusion center for state, local and tribal governments as well as the private sector and other Federal parties. We found an ideal potential location - the world’s largest internet operations center, located in the Dulles Technology Corridor. It is now available to be leased.
- We contributed to the national thinking on cybersecurity.
- We presented new cyber concepts to more than 10,000 people at 40 events.

I believe the accomplishments listed above are significant, but imagine how much more the NCSC can do moving forward with appropriate resources.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude. The DoD, through the Joint Chiefs of Staff, DISA, OSD and the JTF-GNO, has been extremely supportive of the creation of the NCSC. Their support was critical to each of the items above. I am also grateful to those in DHS and across the interagency community who did lend their support for our effort, and to the cybersecurity center directors who supported us.

I wish you the best of luck in your extremely important new job. It has been an honor to serve our Federal government and I look forward to returning some day.

Warmly,



Rod Beckstrom

Director

National Cybersecurity Center (NCSC)

Cc: Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense

Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General

James L. Jones, National Security Advisor

Dennis C. Blair, Director of National Intelligence

James E. Cartwright, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff