

# Not Missing A Beat

## Karen Evans

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Department of Homeland Security



**W**ithout missing a beat, DHS personnel have had the ability to perform their jobs during the pandemic due to the efforts of the CIO and CIO staff, according to Karen Evans.

“All of the initiatives such as network modernization, moving to cloud first, data center consolidations and making those apps available have continued on without missing a beat – and without impacting mission success.”

“But if I had to zero in on one particular initiative that is essential in this new environment, it is the Network Operations Security center (NOS).

It’s gives us the ability to look across the board within the components, while ensuring that we can continue to run 24x7x365.”

Ms. Evans explained that DHS combined their Network Operations Center and our Security Operations Center.

That has really evolved the services that the Department is providing

because we have a changed the threat landscape of what the Department has to deal with.

“And with zero trust networks, we really need to keep ourselves operational. The traditional model of when an incident happens and you shut down the service, the Department can’t do that. So we are running more and more utilities because you have to keep the all the services running while you are analyzing what are the threats, what is that security incident, what is happening.”

This effort had started before we shifted to a total virtual environment but we haven’t stopped the implementation, Ms. Evans noted. And now that the Security

Operations Centers assessments have been completed, DHS is offering cybersecurity service provider services.

“You can either get it from us or one of the other service providers we are authorizing within the Department. That is how we are optimizing our security capabilities and our network capabilities. So I think that is really the next evolution of what the Department has to do and we have accelerated that implementation.”

### Pandemic Priorities

The top priority for DHS (and any

agency) is returning to on-premise work safely And whether on-premise or off, DHS can’t miss a beat on any of initiatives underway like EIS transformation and the DECO procurement, according to Ms. Evans.

“The second priority for the CIO here at DHS (and I’m sure that is at other Departments), is that as being CIO is also being the Chief Risk Officer. So

that means really looking at risk management and what is the best, strategic use of information,” Ms. Evans said.

“We have many information holdings throughout the Department and must make sure they are available for mission space. We manage \$7.4 billion of IT investment, so how do you that with an ever changing risk landscape?”

The answer is with Supply Chain Risk Management because that does involve all of our industry partners.

“That is something we are very focused on with our major acquisitions going forward”, she said. “We must be sure of how we going to manage that supply chain risk

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found in advanced manufacturing. For example, we need to know that the equipment that CBP is installing is not opening up a threat vector for our nation state adversaries. So, Supply Chain Risk Management integration with FedRAMP is one great way we can take advantage of what our industry partners are doing while we are managing the risk for the Department.” ■