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Homeland Security Starts at Home: How the Citizens of PA Perceive Core Missions and the Whole-Community Approach to Fostering a Resilient Nation

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Homeland Security Starts at Home

How the Citizens of PA Perceive Core Missions and the Whole-Community Approach to Fostering a Resilient Nation

Alexander Siedschlag, Penn State, June 8, 2017



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Rationale

- Homeland Security Enterprise as defined in QHSR 2010 transcends DHS HQ as well as DHS as such.
- Recent Homeland Security Executive Orders and Implementation Directives have emphasised collaboration and synergy across tiers of government, as well as measurable service to the people.
- While homeland security, in addition to government agencies, and the private sector counts on each single citizen, little is known about how it actually resonates with citizens.
- Providing information for effectiveness assessment of the whole-community approach.
- Contribution to study of/education on civil security culture.



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Method: PA omnibus poll instrument

- Open question: “How would you define ‘homeland security?’ Specifically, think about what homeland security protects you from and how it affects your daily life.”
- 660 randomly selected adult Pennsylvania residents, interviewed between August 18 and October 15, 2016.
- Dual-frame design consisting of both landline (cooperation rate 73%) and cell phone samples (cooperation rate 60%).
- Responses were weighted by demographic criteria to enhance representativeness.
- Margin of error is +/- 4.0 percentage points with 95 percent degree of confidence.
- Responses further coded by content analysis.



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How citizens value homeland security

- A clear majority of Pennsylvanians (65%) define homeland security as something of positive value that provides needed protection to U.S. citizens.
- Matches citizens' approval rating of DHS according to Pew Research Center national survey (64%, 09/2015).
- 28% are neutral or made no clear related statement.
- Only a minority (7%) see homeland security negatively, citing surveillance and infringement of liberty, huge bureaucracy, or waste of taxpayers' money as reasons.
- Few Pennsylvanians are aware that homeland security actually transcends the federal level of government.
- Very few (2%) believe it relates to military action abroad.



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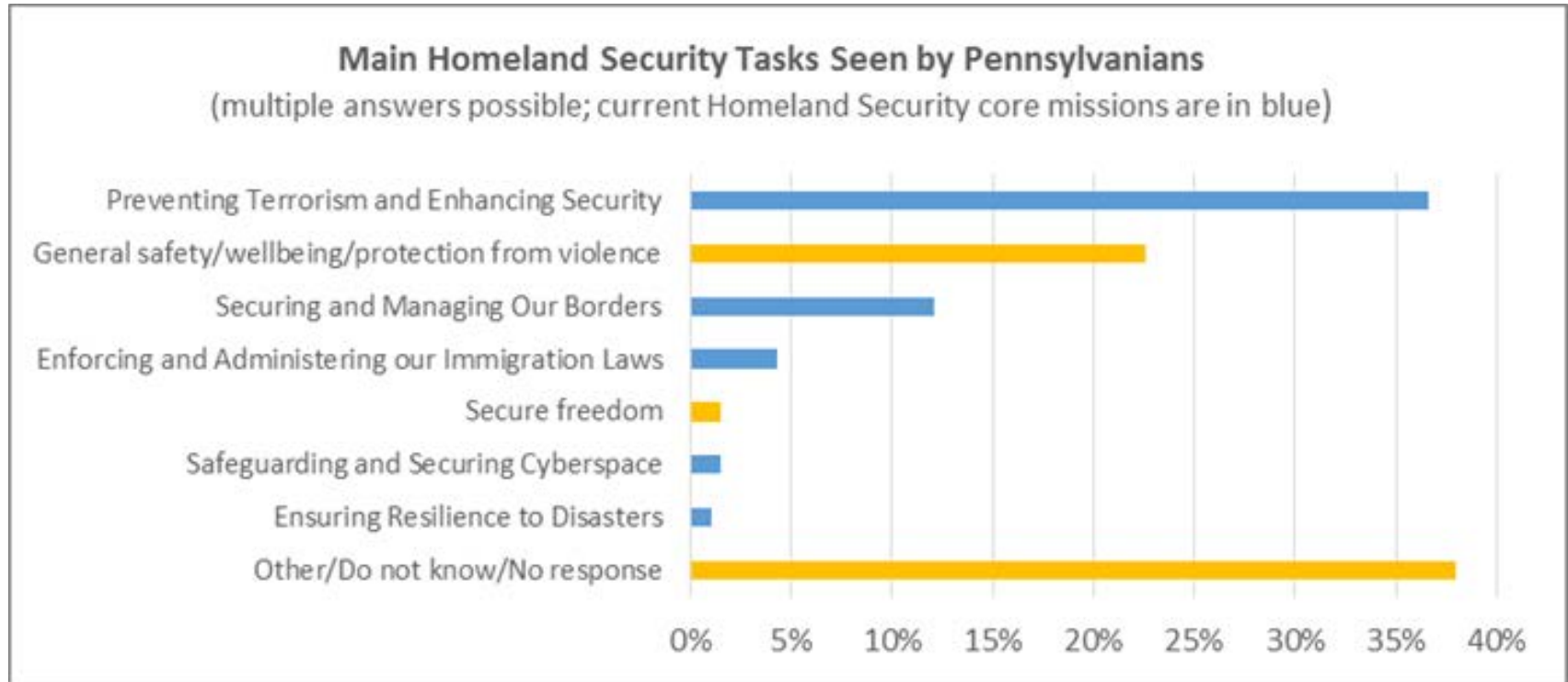
What homeland security protects from

- Few Pennsylvanians (17% of respondents) are aware of the all-hazards approach to homeland security.
- The founding core mission of “Preventing Terrorism and Enhancing Security” is cited by more than a third (37%).
- Not as much recognition exists for the other core missions:
 - 12% cite “Securing and Managing Our Borders.”
 - Only 4% refer to “Enforcing Our Immigration Laws.”
 - **“Safeguarding and Securing Cyberspace” and “Ensuring Resilience to Disasters” are largely unknown as homeland security core missions.**



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PA citizens on homeland security

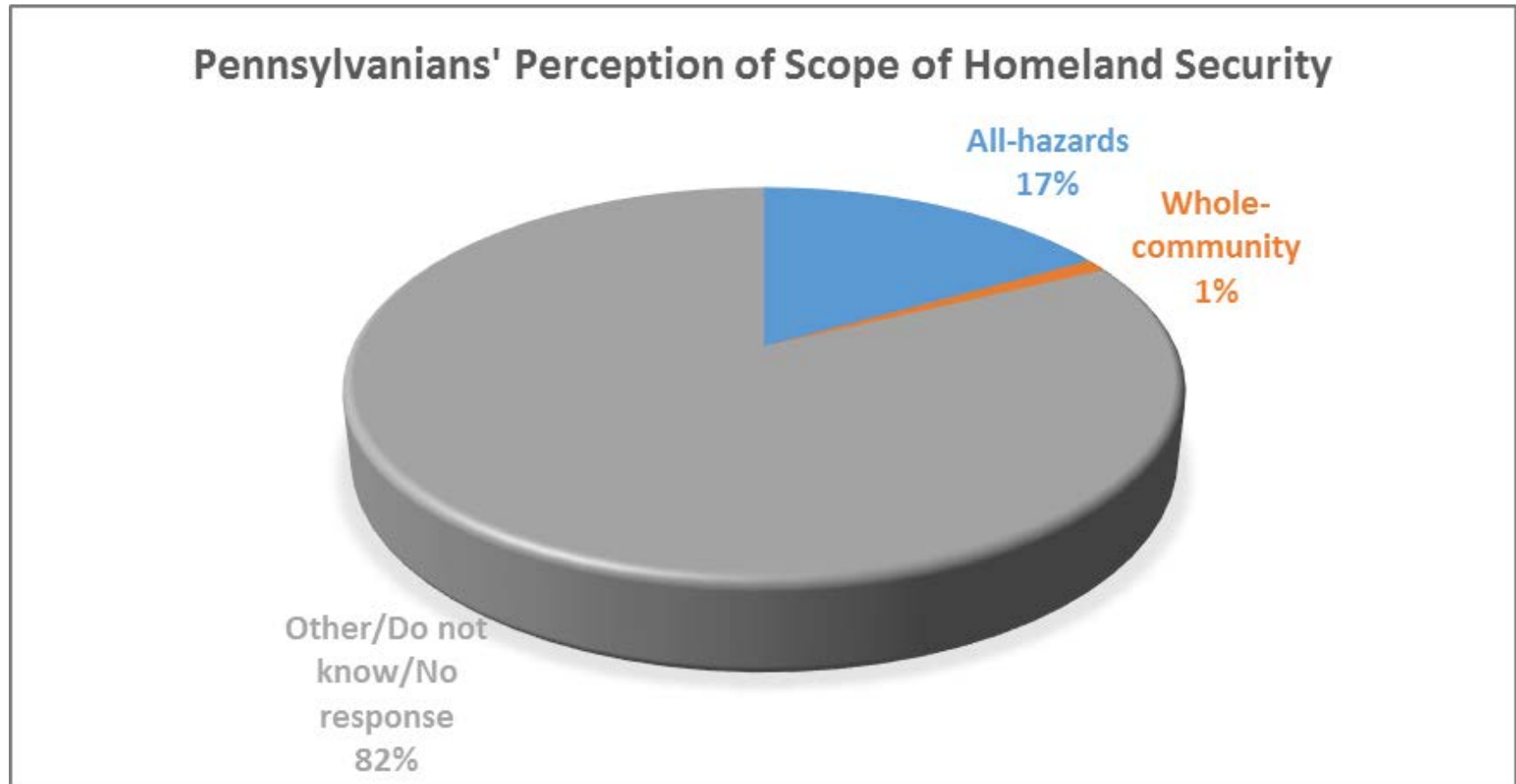


- Note: Since respondents were able to mention more than one mission, percentages do not add up to 100.
- Homeland security core missions are in blue. Other missions mentioned by respondents are in yellow.



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Perceived scope of homeland security



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Who provides homeland security

- 63% regard the federal government as the main provider of homeland security.
- 17% recognize that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is involved in providing homeland security to its citizens.
- 15% see homeland security as a DoD domain within national defense (while DSCA is not mentioned).
- The whole-community approach only resonates with a few:
 - Just 1% refer to collaboration among actors beyond government authorities.
 - Police most often cited as an example, followed by airlines.



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Homeland security and daily life

- As a “networked community” (QHSR 2014), homeland security potentially affects and involves citizens on a daily basis.
- Examples include suspicious activity reporting (e.g., the “If You See Something, Say Something” campaign), cyber security awareness, or active shooter preparedness.
- Can this “networked community” be measured at state level?
 - Most Pennsylvanians (70%) are not sure about the impact of homeland security on their daily lives.
 - A quarter (23%) feel some daily life impact (TSA, SAR)
 - Only 7% explicitly say homeland security has nothing to do with their daily lives at all.



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Conclusions

- Pennsylvanians appreciate homeland security as something that the country does as a whole to protect their “right to be an American” and to feel safe against external and internal threats in exercising the American Way of Life.
- Pennsylvanians have strong expectations in the federal government as their homeland security provider.
- Pennsylvanians see homeland security mainly as a comprehensive effort of the federal government to fight terrorism at home and abroad.
- The all-hazards mission space of homeland security is widely unknown, as is the whole-community approach.
- No more than a few are aware that they themselves, as citizens, are part of the national effort of homeland security.



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General recommendations

- Implementation of homeland security basic missions at State, local, and community levels should explore new models.
- Gaps and progress should be addressed in the National Preparedness Reports.
 - Including in the section on State Perspectives on Preparedness.
- Citizen-involving campaigns are needed, placed within a common framework to increase department and agency recognition consistent with the whole-community approach.
- National campaigns such as “See Something, Say Something,” State campaigns such as “Ready.xx,” and sector-specific campaigns should be visibly co-branded and promoted with DHS and FEMA.



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Educational mission considerations

- The SLTT approach should be revisited:
 - to include actionable empirical information to improve consistent strategic meeting of citizens' expectations; and
 - to optimize educational opportunities to create and integrate knowledge to let the whole community approach more effectively resonate with everyday civil security cultures.
- Communicating all homeland security missions effectively to the public should be an integral part of homeland security and emergency management higher education programs.
- Mission supporting action research and education is needed.
 - Consider involving student leaders and more community partners in OAE and FEMA National Seminar and Tabletop Exercise for Institutions of Higher Education Program



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