Thanks. Margo, are you a lawyer? The reporter refers to you as one, so wanted to make sure that is correct.

Thanks,


Sorry for the delay—had to track this down. Sending this to you as we need to protect PII, so it's not for public release. If this is going to be shared more broadly, it should be a redacted version that wipes out the names. We don't generally proactively release these, though of course they are foiable.

Thanks,
Ok, thanks. Sooner the better. It's the only thing keeping me here.


That bullet is no longer correct. We have received the individual allegations.
I'll send the letter over shortly.

Sent from my BlackBerry wireless communicator

Below is what we used last month. Is the first background bullet still correct? Adding Patrice and Phil to confirm text of the letter. One suggested change to the statement in blue.

ON THE RECORD

"On March 24, 2011, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) received a complaint from the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) Michigan regarding 'Discrimination by U.S. Customs and Border Protection against Muslim Americans based on religion, race, national origin, ethnic background, and gender.'

DHS does not tolerate religious discrimination or abusive questioning – period. CRCL has notified CAIR that it will investigate this allegation and, if appropriate, take corrective action.
Every day, CBP processes a million travelers attempting to enter the U.S. through one of 327 ports of entry. CBP prides itself on professionalism and expects its officers to treat returning U.S. citizens and visitors in a professional and courteous manner. CBP employees and officers take an Oath of Office, a solemn pledge that conveys great responsibility and one that should be carried out at all times with the utmost professionalism. CBP employees who disregard that oath and instead choose to violate the trust of the citizens they swore to protect will be held accountable.

ON BACKGROUND

- To date, CRCL has not received complaints from the individuals alleging discrimination. Upon receipt, CRCL will investigate those complaints as well.
- Under 6 U.S.C. § 345 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1, CRCL reviews and assesses information concerning abuses of civil rights, civil liberties, and profiling on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion, by DHS employees and officials.
- Complaints may be filed by email, letter, over the phone, or via CRCL’s online complaint form on our website: www.dhs.gov/crcl.
- CRCL leads efforts to improve the cultural competency of DHS personnel. CRCL has developed training resources on Sikh, Arab, and Muslim cultures, including the use of religious garments and articles. CRCL also leads a training program for federal, state, and local law enforcement, which aims to improve communication, build trust, and encourage collaboration between officers and the communities they serve and protect. Training topics include effective policing without the use of ethnic or racial profiling, and best practices in community outreach.
- CBP is a law enforcement organization made up of a diverse workforce with more than 58,000 highly trained enforcement officers and 2,400 agriculture specialists who value, understand and incorporate cultural differences.
- Every day, CBP processes a million travelers attempting to enter the U.S. through one of 327 ports of entry. All applicants for admission to the United States bear the burden of proof to establish identity, citizenship, and admissibility. CBP utilizes passenger analysis and specific facts and circumstances to determine admissibility or if a violation of law has occurred.
- While the vast majority of visitors require minimal processing when entering the United States, there are many reasons for passengers to be sent to secondary for additional processing, which may include additional questions to determine the admission of an individual or the searching of items an individual is bringing into the United States. Most individuals are sent to secondary for further questioning and it is a very quick process.

From: Chandler, Matthew [mailto (b) (6)]
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 5:25 PM
To: Inquiry, Media; Kudwa, Amy; ROE, MELANIE N.; EASTERING, LLOYD M; FRIEL, MICHAEL J; BURKE, (b) (6) L; Sandweg, John
Subject: RE: Request for confirmation and comment
+ CBP, we have a statement on this yes?

From: (b) (6) On Behalf Of Goodman, David
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 5:24 PM
To: Inquiry, Media

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PRIV 11-0252 - 000273

BQ_000275
Hello DHS Public Affairs,

I just got this email from CAIR. I'd like to confirm the quotes from the DHS lawyer are accurate and also to afford the department the chance to add any comment it might have on this matter.

Please call me at (b) (6) or email me, using the “reply all” option.

Thanks for your help.

David Goodman
Associated Press, Detroit

From: Ibrahim Hooper (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 4:48 PM
To: Recipient list suppressed
Subject: DHS to Probe CAIR-MI Complaints on Border Questioning of Muslims

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DHS to Probe CAIR-MI Complaints on Border Questioning of Muslims


On March 24, CAIR-MI filed complaints with both DHS and the Department of Justice (DOJ) seeking civil and potentially criminal investigations into dozens of reports from constituents who reported that CBP agents pointed firearms at them, detained and handcuffed them without predication of crimes or charges, and questioned them about their worship habits.

Questions reportedly asked of Michigan Muslims by CBP agents have included:

* How many times a day do you pray?
* Do you pray your morning prayer in the mosque?
* Who else prays in your mosque?

Those detained by CBP agents report that the same questions are asked every time they crossed the border.

Video: Muslims Say They’ve Been Harassed at Border (CAIR)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mpy58peP_8

In a letter to CAIR-MI Staff Attorney Lena Masri, DHS Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Margo Schlanger wrote in part:

“The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties received information from you on March 24, 2011, concerning repeated handcuffing, brandishing of weapons, prolonged detentions, invasive and humiliating body searches at the border, and inappropriate questioning that pertains to religion and religious practices by U.S. Customs and
Border Protection (CBP) personnel.

"Under 6 U.S.C. § 345 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1, the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties has the responsibility to review and assess complaints against Department of Homeland Security employees and officials concerning violations of civil rights, civil liberties, and profiling on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion. CRCL has received a number of complaints like yours, alleging that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers have engaged in inappropriate questioning about religious affiliation and practices during border screening. We will add these complaints to the investigation we are opening on this subject. .

“This Office takes allegations of violations of civil rights and civil liberties very seriously. The purpose of our review is to assess if your complaint implicates issues that should be addressed by Department of Homeland Security management.”

"We welcome the Department of Homeland Security’s decision to launch an investigation into these disturbing allegations of civil rights violations and ethnic and religious profiling," said CAIR-MI Staff Attorney Lena Masri.

CAIR is America’s largest Muslim civil liberties and advocacy organization. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

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- END -

CONTACT® (6)

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