

TESTIMONY BY
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TO THE
NATIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
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Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the National Combating Terrorism Research and Development Program which is carried out by the interagency Technical Support Working Group (TSWG). I am accompanied today by Mr. Edward McCallum from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (OASD/SOLIC), and by Mr. David Bolka from the Department of Homeland Security.

With your permission, I would like to submit this statement along with some attachments for the record.

The Terrorist Threat

These hearings come at a time of daily reminders of the terrorist threat. Just a few weeks ago, the U.S. Intelligence Community issued a threat advisory warning of continued terrorist planning to strike at U.S. interests both at home and abroad. Virtually every evening newscast contains stories describing terrorist violence against U.S. targets and our allies in the Global War on Terrorism. Statistics compiled by the U.S. Government reflect the spreading international nature of the threat. For example, through June 30, 2003, we have recorded 105 international terrorist attacks resulting in 108 persons killed and 1022 wounded around the world so far this year. While the primary focus of these attacks occurs in the Middle East and South Asia, no geographic area is immune as demonstrated by last October's horrendous attack in Bali and the more recent attacks in Mombassa, Jakarta, Casablanca and even the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad.

Just as the geographic areas for international terrorism are expanding, so too is the nature of the technical capabilities that terrorists are employing. Terrorists have demonstrated that they can acquire rather sophisticated weapons systems like the SA-7 surface-to-air missile used last November in Kenya. What they cannot acquire either through state sponsor support or via the black market, they seek to develop themselves.

The terrorist cookbooks and computer files seized in Afghanistan, many of which have been shared by Al-Qaida with other terrorist organizations, demonstrate a growing proficiency in developing improvised explosive mixtures and detonating systems, and a

growing preoccupation with developing “low tech” methods to use radiological, chemical and biological materials, including toxic industrial chemicals.

The U.S. Response

Mr. Chairman, the U.S. and its allies have been working hard to prevent terrorist attacks, through a variety of means including enhanced intelligence and law enforcement information exchanges, joint CT operations with our allies, steps to curb terrorism funding and movement of terrorists, and wide-ranging bilateral and multilateral diplomatic efforts to pressure and isolate terrorists and those nations that support them.

In addition, we also have developed an expanded program to enhance the capabilities of the U.S. and its allies in the Global War on Terrorism by rapidly developing and applying technology to meet the challenges posed by terrorists. To further this national goal, the TSWG continues to focus its program development efforts to balance investments across the four pillars of combating terrorism: antiterrorism (protective); counterterrorism (proactive); intelligence and law enforcement capability support; and consequence management.

Our challenge is to provide a coherent and consistent context for technology development based on the threat, technical innovation, real operator needs, and proven procedures and tactics. Simply put, the TSWG philosophy is to try to “get ahead of the curve” – to anticipate future weapons and tactics used by terrorists – and to develop security-based countermeasures to defeat terrorist capabilities and enhance the CT capabilities of the U.S. and its allies.

History of the TSWG Program

To fully understand the TSWG program, it might be useful to describe how the Program originated. In 1982, a National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) assigned to the Interdepartmental Group on Terrorism, chaired by the State Department, responsibility for developing overall U.S. policy on countering terrorism. Several subgroups were established, including a Technical Working Group to share information about counterterrorism research and development issues. Counterterrorism R&D was one of the key issues addressed in 1986 by the Vice President’s Task Force on Combating Terrorism, chaired by then Vice President George Bush. The Task Force found that the U.S. Government’s counterterrorism R&D efforts were uncoordinated and unfocused. The Task Force recommended the formation of an interdepartmental mechanism to coordinate a national-level R&D program aimed at filling the gaps in existing R&D and to prevent duplication of efforts. The State Department, as the lead agency for combating international terrorism (and within State, the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism) was assigned responsibility for developing and coordinating this effort. To accomplish the task, we formed the TSWG.

Funding

Funding for the TSWG Program initially was centered in the State Department's budget. However, by the early 1990's, it was recognized by our office in the State Department, the Congress, the National Security Council and in other Departments that increased interdepartmental funding for the Program was required if the TSWG was going to grow and prosper. The then Deputy for National Security Affairs (Mr. Robert Gates) formally requested other relevant Departments and agencies to consider increasing funding for the National Program. In response, DOD acknowledged the importance of the Program and formally established a dedicated funding line beginning in FY 1992 to support the TSWG and the National Program.

From 1992 until today, both State and Defense annually contribute the core funding for the Program with DOD providing the "lion's share" of the resources. Other Departments and agencies also contribute funds based on their interests, needs, and the degree to which the National Program is addressing their specific requirements. In our FY 2004 Program, we are expecting funding contributions from other agencies and departments to assist in accomplishing the National Program. If we receive all of the funds appropriated and promised, we will execute a \$200M Program in FY 2004 with 92% of our funds directed toward projects and a relatively low 8% used for Program administration.

TSWG Organization and Accomplishments

Our current organization is relatively simple and straightforward. It demonstrates both the TSWG's interdepartmental approach and our focus on developing technology in those critical functional areas necessary to have a well-rounded counterterrorism program. I have attached an organization chart of the TSWG which displays our organization and its component elements (Attachment 1).

The TSWG is a jointly administered effort with DOD. My office (Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism) provides policy oversight and overall program direction through our chairmanship of the TSWG Executive Committee. The Department also contributes toward "core funding" of the TSWG Program. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (OASD/SOLIC) provides technical oversight, executes and administers the Program on a daily basis through the Combating Terrorism Technology Support Office, and contributes the lion's share of core funding for the Program.

Ten Federal Departments and a number of Federal Agencies (e.g. CIA, EPA et al) representing over 80 elements of the Federal Government participate in the functional sub-working groups of the TSWG where requirements are generated and proposals are evaluated. In addition to federal elements, the TSWG has extended membership invitations to selected state and local organizations and to Congressional elements as

well. (The Capitol Police, the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms and the Office of the Architect of the Capitol participate on several of the TSWG sub-working groups).

Most recently, we reached agreement with the new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to join the TSWG. As a result, the TSWG will implement (with the support of DHS) those rapid prototyping and development technology requirements of interest to that Department – many of which are also of interest to other Departments and agencies as well. DHS has also agreed to contribute funding to the TSWG to assist the Program.

The TSWG Program focuses on advanced technology development activities to meet the near term counterterrorism and antiterrorism technology and equipment needs of the federal community. Specifically, our Program focuses on supporting the immediate counterterrorism technology needs of U.S. diplomatic, intelligence, security, law enforcement, the military, and first responder communities.

As the Washington Post reported on February 21, 2003, the successfully transitioned TSWG projects include escape masks issued to Members of Congress and their staff. The State Department has purchased over 30,000 of these Quick 2000™ masks for use by our personnel at embassies abroad in high threat areas. DOD is purchasing over 80,000 of these masks for distribution to DOD civilian and military personnel stationed in the Washington D.C. area.

A Wall Street Journal article on March 3, 2003 described a low-cost dosimeter badge designed to give the wearer an immediate indication of exposure to a radiological source. These dosimeter badges are now being purchased by the Departments of State and Defense, and others are being purchased by local and state police and first responder groups. That dosimeter badge, as well as the masks, resulted from TSWG projects.

These are just two examples describing how the TSWG Program is contributing to the Global War on Terrorism. There are many others which, because of time and in some cases classification, I cannot discuss in an open forum. You should be aware however that some of the equipment being used today by our military forces and intelligence elements in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as equipment being utilized right now to provide anti-terrorism force protection for our embassies and our military bases at home and abroad were developed by the TSWG Program.

International Facet of the Program

Another interesting aspect to the TSWG Program is that under the state Department's leadership, we have developed cooperative R&D agreements with three selected NATO and major non-NATO allies to assist in accomplishing its objectives. These are not foreign aid agreements. Each participant contributes funds and expertise, thus we leverage our own funding. These working arrangements with Canada, Israel and the U.K. have been very valuable to us and to our partners. We can leverage our funding

and share the work. Successfully completed projects result in equipment that both we and our partners have jointly developed and employed.

For example, we have developed with one of our foreign partners a long range surveillance system which is being used by the U.S. and our foreign powers. With another partner, we have developed a chemical – biological protective suit that also protects the wearer from fragmentation that might result from the detonation of an improvised explosive device. This piece of gear, the only one of its kind in the world, is available for purchase by the military communities in both nations as well as by state and local police and HAZMAT elements. With our third partner, we have jointly developed a variety of tagging, tracking and locating systems currently being utilized by the law enforcement and intelligence communities in both of our nations. Again these are just a few examples.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, we believe the TSWG Program is a valuable arrow in the national quiver for countering the evolving terrorism threat. In the future, we would like to expand the program by adding a few new foreign partners who have demonstrated R&D capabilities in counterterrorism technologies, share our views on the terrorist threat, have an appropriate interagency focus in their technical development activities, and are willing to pay their fair share in joint technology development. When combined with other programs for combating terrorism in the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, the Intelligence Community and other agencies, we believe that we are making real progress on addressing the technical aspects of the terrorist threat.

If funding permits, expanding the Program into new technology areas to support our U.S. consumers, as well as expanding our work with existing foreign partners and possibly adding new partners, will strengthen our efforts to employ modern technology to help counter terrorist threats.

Those of us who work in the TSWG Program are very proud of its accomplishments. Our guiding goal is to put enhanced and useable technical capability into the hands of those involved on a daily basis in conducting the Global War on Terrorism – and we are achieving that goal.

We believe that our ability to be successful is derived from our current business practices which are based on a requirements-driven process featuring extensive information exchange with the user community. We are also mindful and thankful for the dedication and hard work of all the men and women who are part of the TSWG family.

To describe for you in some detail those business practices and comment on some of the specific results obtained, I would like to turn this over to Mr. McCallum who oversees the day to day operations of the TSWG Program. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have following his presentation.