

Statement
of
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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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Field Hearing
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Good afternoon, Chairman Shays and Congresswoman Maloney. My name is Ted Macklin and I serve as the Director of the Office for Domestic Preparedness' Exercise and Evaluation Division. As you know, ODP is a component of the Department of Homeland Security. It is a pleasure and privilege to be here today to talk about the Office for Domestic Preparedness' efforts to provide support to our nation's emergency responders.

I am pleased to be here in Stamford, Connecticut, as the city participates in an important exercise to practice its response capabilities to a mock terrorist incident. On behalf of Secretary Tom Ridge, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Office for Domestic Preparedness, I would like to express my appreciation for your support and your interest in federal programs to combat terrorism.

Assisting states and localities is critical to DHS' mission of protecting the homeland. As Secretary Ridge has often stated, the homeland is secure only when the hometowns are secure. And the way to ensure that the hometowns are secure is to ensure that state and local officials, state and local emergency response agencies, and state and local

emergency response personnel have the resources, the information, and the tools they need to do their jobs.

Four days ago, we marked the second anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The lessons of September 11, 2001, are as true today as they were then: that state and local personnel are the first on the scene of any emergency, including acts of terrorism.

As you are aware Mr. Chairman, DHS was established to better enable the nation to defend its borders, enhance its security, and respond to external and internal threats and attacks.

In the eight months since DHS was established, significant progress has been made towards making America safer. To this end, since its creation, the Department has provided a significant amount of funds to states, cities, and localities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to acts of terrorism. DHS has provided more than \$4 billion to state and local governments to assist first responders and offset the costs of improving overall preparedness and enhanced security. A large majority of this assistance, including today's exercise, is provided through the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP).

Before the creation of DHS in March 2003, ODP was a component of the Department of Justice. With the passage of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, ODP was transferred to DHS and designated the principal federal agency for assisting states and local jurisdictions prepare for, prevent, and respond to incidents of terrorism.

Since its establishment in 1998, ODP has provided more than \$4.3 billion to our nation's emergency response community for equipment acquisition, exercise support, and training and technical assistance efforts. ODP has delivered weapons of mass destruction awareness, operations, technician, and incident command level training to more than 304,000 emergency responders from approximately 5,000 jurisdictions nationwide.

Additionally, ODP has conducted more than 160 preparedness exercises, including the congressionally-mandated Top Officials (or TOPOFF) I and II exercises.

The State of Connecticut has benefited from this funding and support. From Fiscal Year 1998 through Fiscal Year 2002, ODP provided more than \$7 million in equipment acquisition, planning, and exercise support funds. During Fiscal Year 2003, the state received an additional \$30,158,000 under the State Homeland Security Grant Program for equipment acquisition, exercise support, training, and management and planning. ODP has also trained more than 1,200 emergency responders. Some of these responders were trained on site at one of ODP's training facilities, including those of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium, or right here in Connecticut through one of ODP's mobile training programs.

But let us make no mistake, despite ODP's successes, much more work needs to be done. Every day 170,000 DHS employees are focused on one primary goal – ensuring America is safe and secure. More significant, however, is that every day we share that vital mission with many times our number in states and local jurisdictions across the nation. These men and women, these first responders, are not just our partners, but they are essential to our success as a nation in securing our homeland.

It is a priority of this Administration and the Department to effectively and efficiently meet our responsibility to support first responders in fulfilling their critical role in our nation's counter-terrorism efforts. We at DHS take very seriously the need to ensure that federal support is focused and well-organized.

The Department recognizes the financial constraints placed on state governments, which require difficult decisions to be made about limited resources. Nevertheless, it is the Department's view that the federal, state, and local governments have a shared responsibility with respect to homeland security efforts. As such, state and local governments should take responsibility to directly fund a portion of the costs associated with domestic preparedness, including personnel costs. The federal government's role,

on the other hand, should largely be geared to capacity building at the state and local level. One of the most important federal roles is also to provide guidance, subject matter expertise, and technical assistance. There is also an important shared responsibility at all levels of government to maintain accountability – to be able to provide assurance that needed capability has been developed, or that any shortfalls are identified and being addressed.

To this end, ODP provides extensive support for local communities to conduct domestic preparedness exercises. Today's exercise is an excellent example. Experience and data show that exercises are a practical and efficient way to prepare for crises. They test critical resistance, identify procedural difficulties, and provide a plan for correction actions to improve response capabilities without the penalties that might be incurred in a real crisis. Exercises also provide a unique learning opportunity to synchronize and integrate cross-functional and intergovernmental incident response activities.

There are a number of different types of exercises. Today in Stamford, local officials are participating in a tabletop exercise. A domestic preparedness tabletop exercise is a six- to eight-hour facilitated discussion centered on a simulated incident scenario. The scenario unfolds in discrete time periods. For example, the scenario may focus on the first two hours after a mass casualty incident is declared or on the 24 hours after a hazardous materials incident occurs. The basic outline of events and the response underway during each time period is portrayed in short multimedia briefings. At the end of each briefing, exercise participants are given the opportunity to discuss the issues associated with responding to the scenario presented. Exercises usually employ a professional facilitator to keep discussions moving and provide situational updates. They also provide additional information or resolve questions, but do not evaluate or direct participants' responses.

The purpose of today's tabletop exercise is to provide participants with an opportunity to evaluate current response concepts, plans, and capabilities for responding to a simulated terrorist event. Exercises focus on key local emergency responder coordination, critical decisions, and the integration of state and federal assets necessary to save lives and

protect the public following a terrorist event. The key to any exercise, including today's exercise, is coordination between different responder agencies, integration of the agencies' capabilities, problem identification, and resolution.

This exercise is one example of the Department's and ODP's commitment to the men and women on the front line of the domestic war on terrorism. It is not only important for the City of Stamford, but it's vitally important to the nation's ongoing domestic preparedness efforts. The tragic events of September 11, 2001, taught us many things. One of the overarching lessons learned was that emergency responders need to respond in a coordinated and collaborative manner. Exercises allow cities and localities to practice their response to simulated terrorist incidents.

Another critical component of ODP's mission is its ongoing Training and Technical Assistance Program, which provides an extensive array of training to federal, state, and local emergency response personnel through a variety of training sites and methods. Through this program, ODP provides more than 30 direct training and technical assistance courses and programs to state and local jurisdictions. This includes training delivered in residence at ODP training facilities, on-site in local communities through mobile training teams, and through such electronic means as the Internet, closed circuit broadcasts, and video-conferencing. ODP training is tailored for a wide range of emergency responders, including courses for fire and rescue personnel, law enforcement officers, public works and public safety communications officials, emergency medical personnel, and many other disciplines. It also addresses a range of emergency response levels available to state and local emergency responders -- awareness, performance, planning, and management.

The National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC) is the principal vehicle through which ODP identifies, develops, tests, and delivers training to state and local emergency responders. The NDPC membership includes ODP's Center for Domestic Preparedness, the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Louisiana State University's Academy of Counter-Terrorist Education, Texas A&M University, and the

Department of Energy's Nevada Test Site. Each consortium member brings a unique set of assets to the domestic preparedness program. ODP also utilizes the capabilities of a number of specialized institutions in the design and delivery of its training programs. These include private contractors, other federal and state agencies, the National Terrorism Preparedness Institute at St. Petersburg Junior College, the U.S. Army's Pine Bluff Arsenal, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the National Sheriff's Association. Additional training for first responders is delivered through other DHS training units, such as the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia, and the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

To ensure coordination of our training efforts with other federal agencies, ODP staff has established regular and recurring meetings with representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Public Health Service/Office of Emergency Preparedness, and the National Fire Academy to discuss and coordinate WMD training development and delivery of training courses. Additionally, ODP has on-site representation from the National Guard Bureau to coordinate program efforts and provide technical assistance and guidance.

To help provide America's emergency response community with a baseline understanding of the training necessary to effectively and safely respond to an act of terrorism involving the use of WMD, ODP developed the *Emergency Responder Guidelines*. These non-regulatory guidelines were developed by subject matter experts from both the private and public sectors, and are consistent with existing codes and standards of agencies such as the National Fire Prevention Association, and Federal Regulatory agencies, such as the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. These Guidelines are intended to be a tool for first responders seeking to improve their training and master their craft, reflecting a step-by-step progression from basic WMD awareness training through performance to planning and management training.

ODP also provides targeted technical assistance to state and local jurisdictions to enhance their ability to develop, plan, and implement a program for WMD preparedness.

Specifically, ODP provides assistance in areas such as the development of response plans; exercise scenario development and evaluation; conducting of risk, vulnerability, capability, and needs assessment; and development of the states' domestic preparedness strategies.

Perhaps the most notable means through which ODP provides support to states and localities is the State Homeland Security Grant Program. Through this program, ODP provides funds to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the territories for the acquisition of specialized equipment that could be used to prevent, deter, and respond to acts of terrorism. These funds could also be used to support training activities within the states, exercises, and strategic planning and administration. In the Fiscal Year 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Act, Congress appropriated \$566.3 million for this program. Of this amount, the State of Connecticut received \$8.3 million. In the Fiscal Year 2003 Emergency Wartime Supplemental Appropriations Act, Congress provided an additional \$1.5 billion for this program. The State of Connecticut received \$21.9 million.

While the Department is working hard to provide assistance and support to our nation's emergency responder community, it is continually looking to improve its own operations and how it does business. In order for state and local jurisdictions and first responders to be effective partners with the federal government in securing our homeland, they need quick and easy access to the terrorism and emergency preparedness grant programs designed to support their work. Prior to the formation of DHS, terrorism and emergency preparedness grant programs were scattered throughout various agencies and departments of the federal government. Many of these are now located within DHS, although several are divided among the Department's various components.

We at DHS are convinced that these programs must be more centralized and more accessible. While the FY 04 Budget took initial steps in this direction by requesting fire department assistance through ODP, in the near future Secretary Ridge will be sending a proposal to the Congress detailing DHS' plan to centralize its terrorism preparedness grants in one location to better serve our state and local partners. It is our goal to provide

state and local authorities a single point of contact for DHS terrorism and emergency preparedness efforts. We believe that such a reorganization will also allow DHS to provide more consistent grant guidance, coordination, and oversight. We will, Mr. Chairman, keep this Committee, and the Congress, informed as to our progress, and we look forward to working with this Committee, and the Congress, on the proposal once it is submitted. As part of this effort, Secretary Ridge recently announced that the Department's Website would soon include a page listing all available terrorism and emergency preparedness funding opportunities for state and local applicants in one place.

The above-mentioned steps represent important structural changes that would improve the way DHS administers first responder grant programs by substantially increasing the *efficiency* with which these programs operate.

Mr. Chairman and Congresswoman Maloney, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the critically important work that the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness is doing for our state and local emergency responders. Through the combined and collaborative efforts of federal, state and local agencies, we have greatly enhanced the safety and security of our nation. At this point, I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have about the programs of the Office for Domestic Preparedness.