



“Final” Report Card From 9/11 Commission

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Incident Command System	C
Risk-based homeland security funds	F/A*
Critical infrastructure assessment	D
Private sector preparedness	C
National Strategy for Transportation Security	C-
Airline passenger pre-screening	F
Airline passenger explosive screening	C
Checked bag and cargo screening	D
Terrorist travel strategy	I
Comprehensive screening system	
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International collaboration on borders and document security	
Standardize secure identification	

“We are safer... but we are not as safe as we need to be...There is so much more to be done. ...

... Current efforts fall far short of what we need to do... We call upon our political leaders... to take the steps to make our country safer and more secure.”
9/11 Commission Chairman Thomas Kean
5 December 2005.

FOREIGN POLICY AND NONPROLIFERATION	
Maximum effort to prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD	D
Afghanistan	B
Pakistan	C+
Saudi Arabia	D
Terrorist sanctuaries	B
Coalition strategy against Islamist terrorism	C
Coalition detention standards	F
Economic policies	B+

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PUBLISHER'S MESSAGE

By Martin (Marty) Masiuk, Publisher



As the cover of this issue of *DomPrep Journal* suggests, the effort to make the U.S. homeland more secure in the future will be a very long uphill journey – and so far we as a nation have taken only a few faltering first steps forward along a difficult and dangerous path. Much more remains to be done, as former 9/11 Commission Chairman Thomas H. Kean and Vice Chairman Lee H. Hamilton made clear in a major press conference last week at the Ronald Reagan Building in downtown Washington, D.C.

What happened was this: Ten members of the Commission, five Democrats and five Republicans – heroes all, I would suggest – realized that the release of the Commission's own Final Report some seventeen months ago was not the last step in the task they had willingly taken on but, rather, simply the end of the first phase of that task. The development, fine-tuning, and public release of 41 well-considered and meticulously researched and substantiated recommendations for action would mean nothing if the recommendations were not quickly acted upon and then fully implemented by the executive and legislative branches of government.

To ensure this was done, these worthy citizens formed their own private organization – which they named the Public Discourse Project (PDP) – to further publicize the recommendations and, frankly, create an invincible groundswell of public opinion that would force the president, vice president, and other executive-branch officials, and the members of both the House and the Senate, to do what the Constitution specifically requires them to do: Provide for the Common Defense.

To accomplish this difficult but absolutely necessary second task, the nine men and one woman who served on both the Commission and the PDP traveled extensively throughout the country, participating in more than 500 speaking events in 36 states. They met with high-school and college students. They were guests on the Sunday talk shows and on radio talk shows too numerous to mention. Their press conference last week, Governor Kean said, would probably be “the last time we will appear together as a group.”

We should all hope he is wrong, and that these illustrious citizens will, in fact, appear together many more times as a group, not only to continue their patriotic acts of salesmanship but also to receive the appreciation of their fellow citizens. They deserve a standing ovation from their 300 million or so fellow citizens, and a place of honor in American history. We are proud to salute them here in a most public manner: Thomas H. Kean, Chair; Lee H. Hamilton, Vice Chair; and Project Members Richard Ben-Veniste, Fred F. Fielding, Jamie S. Gorelick, Slade Gorton, Bob Kerrey, John F. Lehman, Timothy J. Roemer, and James R. Thompson.

Editor in Chief James D. Hessman comments on the Project's Final Report to lead off this issue of *DomPrep Journal*. Also included in the issue are an interview (by John Morton) with former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dennis Reimer, a helpful “how to” article by Laurie Thomas on an important Coast Guard website, a mysterious (and somewhat whimsical) letter from the past “discovered” by Rob Schnepf, and the latest in Adam McLaughlin's continuing series of State Homeland News reports.

Happy holidays to all of you from all of us at *DomPrep Journal*.
Marty

A Score Card - And an Agenda!

By James D. Hessman, Editor-in-Chief



On 7 December 1941 the Japanese Navy launched a surprise attack against the U.S. naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, killing more than 2,400 Americans and destroying much of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, including most of the Navy's frontline battleships. The next day, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan. It took less than seven minutes for Congress to comply with the president's request. Three days later, Germany and Italy – Japan's partners in the so-called Tripartite Pact – declared war on the United States and Roosevelt asked Congress to officially recognize that a state of war also existed between the United States and those two nations as well.

Although still very poorly prepared to join the free nations of Europe in a conflict

it had been avoiding for more than two years, a fully united America quickly mobilized and led the Allied forces to victory first over Italy, then Nazi Germany, and finally Japan – which officially surrendered to Allied representatives aboard the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. The date was 2 September 1945. It had taken the United States three years, eight months, and 25 days to win victory in the most difficult, costliest (in both lives and money), and most violent conflict in all human history.

On 11 September 2001, not quite 50 years after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States was once again taken by surprise when Al Qaeda terrorists seized control of four passenger aircraft and used them to destroy the World Trade Center towers in New York City and tear out a major chunk of the Pentagon, killing

approximately 3,000 Americans, most of them civilians. Almost immediately, President George W. Bush announced that the United States was again at war – this time, though, with an insidious and almost invisible non-state enemy: the forces of international terrorism. Congress concurred, largely by giving the president unusually broad wartime powers and appropriating huge sums not only for the fighting war being waged overseas – in Afghanistan and Iraq, primarily – but also to improve homeland defenses.

Today, 14 December 2005 – four years, three months, and three days after the 9/11 attacks – Afghanistan is a free nation and Iraq not only has been liberated from the despotic rule of Saddam Hussein but also, despite the continued battle against Iraqi and imported insurgents, seems to be stumbling forward toward a relatively democratic future, adjusted somewhat, perhaps, to accommodate local customs and traditions.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE		INTELLIGENCE AND CONGRESSIONAL REFORM		FOREIGN POLICY AND NONPROLIFERATION	
Radio spectrum for first responders	F/C*	Director of National Intelligence	B	Maximum effort to prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD	D
Incident Command System	C	National Counterterrorism Center	B	Afghanistan	B
Risk-based homeland security funds	F/A*	FBI national security workforce	C	Pakistan	C+
Critical infrastructure assessment	D	New missions for CIA Director	I	Saudi Arabia	D
Private sector preparedness	C	Incentives for information sharing	D	Terrorist sanctuaries	B
National Strategy for Transportation Security	C-	Government-wide information sharing	D	Coalition strategy against Islamist terrorism	C
Airline passenger pre-screening	F	Northern Command planning for homeland defense	B-	Coalition detention standards	F
Airline passenger explosive screening	C	Full debate on PATRIOT Act	B	Economic policies	B+
Checked bag and cargo screening	D	Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board	D	Terrorist financing	A-
Terrorist travel strategy	I	Guidelines for government sharing of personal information	D	Clear U.S. message abroad	C
Comprehensive screening system	C	Intelligence oversight reform	D	International broadcasting	B
Biometric entry-exit screening system	B	Homeland Security Committees	B	Scholarship, exchange, and library programs	D
International collaboration on borders and document security	D	Unclassified top-line intelligence budget	F	Secular education in Muslim countries	D
Standardize secure identifications	B-	Security clearance reform	B		

* If pending legislation passes

Interview: General Dennis J. Reimer USA (Ret.) President Government Services, DFI International



The former Army chief of staff, who also served as the first director of the Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) addresses information and intelligence sharing and the Pentagon's military support strategy as it has been revised and refined in light of the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina.

For the complete audio of the interview, visit www.DomesticPreparedness.com

A Public Scolding from A Private Group

Meanwhile, despite the creation of a new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the expenditure of tens of billions of additional dollars not previously budgeted, the effort to improve U.S. homeland defenses is not going well at all. Last Monday (5 December), Chairman Thomas H. Kean and Vice Chair Lee H. Hamilton released the Final Report of the 9/11 Public Discourse Project (PDP) – a nonprofit organization created by ten members (five Republicans and five Democrats) of the former 9/11 Commission who decided, after release of the Commission's own Final Report, to continue their work under another name.

Kean, a Republican and a former governor of New Jersey, and Hamilton, a Democrat and a former member of Congress, chaired the Commission as well as the PDP. Their purpose in forming the second organization, they said at last week's press conference (in the Ronald Reagan Building in downtown Washington, D.C.), was to work "as private citizens" to build the groundswell of public opinion needed to force the legislative and executive branches of government to fully and faithfully implement the 41 major recommendations touching all aspects of homeland defense that the Commission had included in its Final Report.

The principal tool the PDP members selected to carry out their new self-appointed mission was a "Score Card" similar to a high school or college report card – complete with grades ranging from "F" (failure) to "A" (outstanding), with an "I" reserved for "incomplete" – that would tell the American people how well their elected leaders have been carrying out their primary duty of providing for the common defense.

Much to the chagrin of the Bush administration – and, to a lesser extent, the Republican-controlled Congress, the Score Card issued last Monday shows only one tentative A, three Fs, two tentative Fs, 12 Ds (in danger of failing), and two incompletes. Most of the other grades range from poor to mediocre – and, in Navy parlance, must therefore also be considered "Unsat," particularly considering that the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans, and the future of the nation, are the stakes on the table.

A Few Positives – Outnumbered by Shocking Failures

There have been "a few positive changes" since 9/11, Kean and Hamilton said in a statement issued at the press conference. And the nation is now somewhat safer than it was before 9/11 – but "not as safe as we need to be."

Offsetting the modest gains that have been achieved, the PDP pointed out, have been a number of "shocking" failures, including at least three that the Project members described as "scandalous." It is "scandalous," the former 9/11 commissioners said, "that police and firefighters in large cities *still* cannot communicate reliably in a major crisis"; "... that airline passengers are still not screened against all names on the terrorist watchlist"; and that "we [the United States] still allocate scarce homeland-security dollars on the basis of pork-barrel spending, not risk."

The risk-based allocation of homeland-security funding was, in fact, the focus of some extremely harsh wording in the otherwise relatively dispassionate PDP press release. The current formula used to allocate federal first-responder grants to states (via the DHS budget) is not based, as it should be, on the needs of first responders, the PDP said, but on political considerations in which "impartial assessments" of risk and vulnerability are scarcely considered. "One city used its homeland security money for air-conditioned garbage trucks," the Project members noted. "[Another] used it to buy Kevlar body armor for dogs. These are not the priorities of a nation under threat."

A Mandate for the American People

What do the former Commissioners, and now former PDP members, do next? Nothing, Kean and Hamilton said. "Congress and the President gave ... us [the Commission] a mandate," they said. "We carried it out to the best of our ability. We made our recommendations. As private citizens [and members of the PDP], we have worked on behalf of those recommendations. ... Now it is time to take the responsibility we were given and give it back."

The new keepers of the flame, the Project members said, will be, and must be, the "elected leaders" of government,

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the media, and – perhaps most of all – “the American people.” The changes and reforms needed to fully, and quickly, implement the 41 Commission recommendations simply will not happen, the PDP said, “unless the American people demand it. ... There is no substitute for an engaged and attentive public watching what its elected leaders do.”

Whether or not the American people do, in fact, carry out their individual and collective responsibilities as private citizens, it seems certain that the issuance of the PDP Score Card will precipitate much greater efforts: (a) by the administration, to remedy current in-house deficiencies as soon as is humanly possible; and (b) by both houses of Congress not only to enact remedial legislation now stalled in committee but also to provide additional funds for DHS and other agencies with homeland-defense responsibilities.

Because 2006 is a congressional election year, it also can be safely assumed that both parties will try to use the Score Card to further their respective political agendas. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) seized the opportunity given her last week, for example, to describe the PDP Score Card as “an indictment of the continued failure by the Bush Administration and the Republican Congress to meet the security needs of our nation and make Americans safer.”

How many of her fellow citizens will concur with that partisan assessment has yet to be determined, but as of now it seems that homeland defense will be a major issue, for the American people as well as for Congress, on the 2006 political agenda, and that will be a very positive gain for all U.S. citizens.

Additional information on the PDP, the Score Card, and the 5 December press release is available on the PDP website (www.9-11pdp.org) ▼

The Homeport Site New Internet Port for Coast Guard, Maritime Stakeholders

By Laurie Thomas, Maritime Security



The many and complex components of the U.S. maritime transportation system (MTS) form a huge interrelated network. In 2003, Captain William Schubert, administrator of the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD), provided the Pennsylvania House of Representatives a number of impressive statistics about the size of the MTS – which, he said, includes 25,000 miles of inland, inter-coastal, and coastal waterways, 361 ports, and 1,914 cargo terminals. The MTS moves 120 million ferry passengers annually, he also pointed out, creates recreational opportunities for literally tens of millions of boaters, and carries half of the worldwide cruise-fleet passengers.

Schubert also testified on the economic importance of the MTS – which at that time, he noted, employed 13 million people and was contributing approximately \$750 billion each year to the U.S. gross national product. The economic and employment figures have increased somewhat since and are projected to escalate significantly for many years to come.

The economic and political importance of the MTS make it an immensely attractive target to terrorists, though – and its size as well as its complexity make it extremely difficult to defend. The U.S. Coast Guard, the lead federal agency for maritime homeland security, has been assigned the almost impossible responsibility of protecting and regulating this massive system – which members of the 9/11 Commission and experts in the fields of terrorism and counterterrorism agree is particularly vulnerable to future terrorist attacks.

A Versatile New Resource

Even before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, fortunately, the Coast Guard was planning to link all of its employees in a centralized online resource called Homeport – which over a span of several years has evolved into one of the service’s most versatile tools for providing online information and service to its many stakeholders.

***Homeport:
According to the
Coast Guard – a
publicly accessible
Internet portal that
provides users with
current maritime-
security information.***

The Coast Guard describes Homeport as a publicly accessible Internet portal that provides users with current maritime-security information. The system also serves, though, as the Coast Guard’s primary tool to collect and communicate sensitive but unclassified information from and to certain groups of registered users within the port community. In that context, it serves as the one place, in many respects, that vessel, company, and facility security officers, as well as other port-security stakeholders, can turn to when the timely interactive communication required by maritime regulations is most needed.

When the maritime security (MARSEC) level changes in the port community, for example, certain stakeholders must report compliance (or noncompliance) with rules requiring the implementation of additional security measures. This reporting can now be done via Homeport – which, not incidentally, provides a helpful forum for dissemination of threat information to and throughout the same port community.

Members of the general public can access the system (www.homeport.uscg.mil) to browse through Homeport's public areas, where they will find, among other things, a wealth of maritime-security information now available from www.uscg.mil. Eventually, all of the maritime-security content on the main site will be migrated to Homeport. Anyone researching or writing about maritime security, or who simply wants to stay current in the field, will find much of the unclassified information now available resident in one place – i.e., within the Homeport system.

A quick examination of the site's Library provides some relevant examples. In the Library, under "Forms," there is a fillable document – i.e., one that can be filled out and then printed – called a non-disclosure agreement (NDA). The NDA form is a tool that the maritime community uses to register compliance with the requirements of sensitive security regulations. Under "Laws and Regulations," Homeport provides links to the main pages with the search functions of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), the U.S. Code (USC), and the Federal Register.

The nation's Incident Command System has its own channel in the Library, and here the user can retrieve the latest news from or about the NIMS (National Incident Management System) and/or various Incident Center Alerts. Coast Guard policy documents, directives, and marine safety regulations are available here as well

Links, Highlights, And "Need to Know"

A new public-access visitor to Homeport finds that the site's homepage highlights a number of central news blocks featuring articles about the Coast Guard and various maritime-related subjects, as well as links to numerous maritime-security policy documents. The top tabs include a link to a Port Directory on which the visitor can find the name of his or her own local Captain of the Port. The Port Directory page also includes a number of links to Coast Guard units, plans, and programs.

The "private" face of Homeport is a secure one, reserved for persons with a need to know (as determined by the Coast Guard), that lists the Homeport functions available only to registered users. Although the complete description of these functions is also secure, the public documents on the site provide certain helpful indications – but without giving specific details. The secure site, which allows registered users to exchange sensitive but unclassified information, hosts a function called a Community.

The latter is described as a secure collaboration space in which a group of people with a common interest can conduct online discussion forums, create and maintain checklists, manage tasks, and conduct secured document sharing. The Community function would be particularly beneficial for a group – e.g., facility or vessel security officers – who share a common interest but are widely scattered geographically.

The secure face of Homeport also serves as a platform for communication within an Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC), the membership of which includes representatives of all of the principal stakeholders – local government officials, shippers and ship operators, the business community, and other "stakeholders."

The AMSCs, which are regulated under 33 CFR 103 and come under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard's local Captains of the Port, have been established in all major U.S. ports in recent years. The AMSC is in theory the one place in space in which all members of a specific port-security community can quickly come together

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– and stay in contact with one another for as long as is needed. One of the AMSC's principal purposes is to assess security risks to the port community and determine mitigation strategies, which are spelled out in an Area Maritime Security Plan. Because the Homeport site provides mechanisms for information distribution, collaboration, and email notifications to and throughout the AMSC, its availability may eliminate the need for each Captain of the Port Zone to host its own secure AMSC site.

Navigating the Homeport

The Homeport tutorial (found in the center of the homepage, under "Missions"), although directed to registered users, also is interesting to the general public because it demonstrates so many aspects of the site's flexibility. The tutorial addresses such matters as basic terminology, how to obtain a password, how to log in, how to view and/or change one's personal profile, and how both to customize the site's appearance and personalize the available content. A tutorial on the function, which is easily viewed by dial-up modems, can be navigated via a function bar on the bottom of the screen.

The site's designers also have included a "bread-crumbs" function, explained in the terminology section. Anyone who has ever stared at a computer screen and could not remember how he or she had maneuvered (or, perhaps, aimlessly wandered) to that point probably has wished, without knowing the meaning of the term, for a breadcrumb function – which, basically, provides a roadmap back to the starting point used by the viewer/operator. The Homeport's breadcrumb function is in the upper-left hand portion of the site, underneath the tabs.

Lost or forgotten passwords are an issue, and a frequent problem, for any site. The Homeport tutorial provides the solution

by walking the user through a retrieval procedure in a manner that is both visually retentive and easy to understand.

Another helpful feature is that the registered user can personally control the appearance of his or her own version of Homeport. "Portlets" (on the right navigation bar, providing access to information or resources or providing services or tools) and "Channels" (on the left navigation bar, containing organized groups of sub-channels such as "Domestic Vessels" and "Facilities") can be moved around in the site, and the volume of information being displayed also can be controlled.

Areas of particular interest to the registered user can be grouped into an alert function. When new material becomes available on the topic or topics selected, an ALERT tab will flash red. In a nod to human nature, registered users who have re-designed the site past all functionality can return to the original layout with a click of the RESET TO DEFAULT tab.

In keeping with the Coast Guard's traditional responsiveness, particularly since 9/11, to the needs of all team members in the port-security community, Homeport also provides a mechanism, described under the "Enhancements" section, through which users can suggest remedies and improvements.

The Coast Guard's new Homeport Internet portal also has the potential to increase security awareness in the general public, primarily by providing a one-stop shop that can be used by any or all Internet subscribers to obtain the latest information available on a broad spectrum of maritime-security topics. Homeport already has increased the volume and frequency of communications within the various members of local port-security communities, and has fascinating collaborative possibilities in the Community function as well.

The new security measures mandated by the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 (MTSA) placed a burden, and responsibility, on the users of the maritime transportation system that has been acknowledged both by the framers of the law and by the authors of the accompanying regulations, which were finalized in 2003. The Homeport system seems destined to be an increasingly useful tool that will help all stakeholders in the implementation of the new security measures that have been mandated. ▼

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The Return of Silence Dogood!

By Rob Schnepf, Fire/HAZMAT



Author's Note: On 2 April 1722, *The New England Courant*, one of three established Boston newspapers, published a letter from a minister's widow - Mrs. Silence Dogood. Every fortnight or so thereafter, or so the story goes, another letter from Mrs. Dogood appeared.

These short Epistles, filled with sharp observations and comments, addressed such universal topics as romance and love, but also delved into politics, Harvard University (a favorite target of Mrs. Dogood), and discussed the general state of affairs throughout Colonial America.

After six months, *Silence Dogood* fell inexplicably silent. James Franklin, publisher of the *Courant*, could offer no explanation as to why she stopped writing. When her identity was finally revealed, the citizens of Boston were amused (most if not all of them) to learn that *Silence Dogood* was not really a middle-aged widow. She was, in fact, James Franklin's 16-year-old brother Benjamin, writing under the first of his many pseudonyms.

The brothers parted ways over the stunt, and not too long after that Benjamin Franklin left his native city of Boston for Philadelphia, which now claims him as its own.

Oddly enough, *Silence Dogood* seems to have resurfaced, and is still writing letters – but in a more modern spirit, and on more modern topics. Following is one found posted on an all-hands bulletin board at a local fire station.

Dearest Firefighter:

I have been without a tempting muse for quite some time. For many nights, I lay

languishing by my hearth, watching your noble profession struggle with weighty issues like terrorism and domestic preparedness, and pondering my return to the quill. (Actually, my quill is now an iMac and I don't really have a hearth – those comments were just to get your attention. For the record, I also am not the widow of a minister.)

Having said that, let me offer some ladylike (I hope) observations about terrorism and a few ways it has been impacting the fire service. First, the entire nation was rudely awakened on September 11th 2001, which pretty much changed the way we all think and live.

Will any fire department, in the world, ever reach the point where its people will say, and honestly believe, they are truly ready to handle a nasty terrorist attack?

It was a horrible day and I don't think the wound has even yet started to heal – the fire service particularly. Overnight, from the largest metropolitan fire department to the smallest rural fire district, people were starting to talk about things like weapons of mass destruction, terrorism – which has always been with us, but not on such a large scale – and what is now called domestic preparedness. The Minutemen, of course, knew a lot about that particular subject.

Vendors – we used to call them cobblers or candlestick makers – are bringing

antiterrorism types of products to market at a head-spinning rate, and it's hard to keep up with all of the latest and greatest gadgets. We are starting to have so many choices, in fact, it becomes difficult to choose *anything* for fear it will be wrong or antiquated.

Also, down at the market or on the city commons there are always discussions going on about how a particular federal regulation is changing the way we live or work, or a new technology is “emerging” (whatever that means), and people don't want to invest in the wrong piece of equipment.

The only thing worse than having no gear at all, it seems, is having the wrong gear and trying to make it do something it wasn't designed to do. So the real challenge – another word used (quite too frequently, methinks) by writers and politicians – lies not in finding the best piece of equipment but in deciding which particular piece is the best fit for our own fire service, and making the right decision is no small feat.

Fire agencies across the country are struggling with so many issues related to terrorism. Planning, training, funding, and response – to name just four – while at the same time trying to continue day-to-day operations. Some departments have taken the easy way out by sticking their heads in the sand and following an “it can't happen here” attitude.

Others have faced up to reality, put terrorism issues on the front burner, and are going full speed ahead with preparations. There are, of course, many levels in between. Only one thing is certain: these are tough times for the fire service. The general public expects us to be all knowing, ever vigilant, and ready to handle anything that happens – even when money is short and there aren't enough people around to do all the work expected of us.

All in all, though, I think we really are a bit better prepared today than we were

just a few years ago. What does that really mean, though: being “prepared?” Will any fire department, anywhere in the world, ever reach the point where its people will say, and honestly believe, they are truly ready to handle a nasty terrorist attack? Or, for that matter, an attack by Mother Nature – who can be rather nasty at times.

Will there ever be a time when the Fire Chief sits down with his deputies, pours another cup of coffee, and says, “Yep, that’s it. We are now prepared?” Part of the problem is that it is just not possible to plan for everything that is likely to happen, much less everything that *might* happen.

Really, who – in any profession, any walk of life – knows what will happen next? Even if we somehow do know what to expect in terms of a terrorist event, it will still be chaotic when it does happen, people are likely to be killed or injured, and the onlookers and reporters will second-guess everything we do. It’s really a no-win situation for firefighters today and for everyone else in the same general line of work – fighting terrorism, in other words.

In the long run, I think preparations are going to boil down to this: We will respond to whatever happens, use whatever tools and equipment we have, and do our very best to handle what will certainly be a terrible situation.

Part of the challenge (there’s that word again) of getting prepared, and one that we bring upon ourselves in many cases, is that we don’t talk to one another as often as we should. The whole idea of working together – actually being interoperable (another fine word – is just not accepted everywhere.

You personally may be working in an area where the policemen and firemen and hospitals and everyone else is on the same page, but I guarantee that is not the case in all parts of the country. If you do have that luxury, though, where the kingdoms have

been dissolved, and the response borders are not as impenetrable as the Great Wall of China, you should consider it an anomaly.

Even so, this much is certain: If you don’t interact *now* with everyone around you who is working in the same general field, don’t expect wonderful open-armed cooperation when the situation is going to h___ in a hand basket. Believe it or not, there still are many places in this country where a house just a few blocks from a firehouse will burn to the ground because one jurisdiction won’t call in the neighboring one for assistance. If that kind of mentality still exists, how in the world will we ever work together in a big-time disaster? (Actually, we undoubtedly *will* work together – there is no choice; we simply have to – but our combined efforts won’t be nearly as effective as they should be, and can be.)

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to genuine interoperability is communications. It always is. I personally cannot think of any large-scale incident or drill, whether or not multiple agencies were involved, that did not have “communications” at the top of the list of the problems encountered. Again, there are still many areas of the country where one fire department cannot, or simply will not, talk on the same radio frequency as the department in the next town away.

The real problem, though, is not just the hardware, it’s the people using the hardware. Or not using it, or not using it correctly. Unfortunately, people still have attitudes and biases.

Another thing to remember is that there are good leaders and bad ones. Some people are relatively comfortable managing the chaos that comes along with any type of emergency, and will handle a multi-casualty terrorism incident with the same calmness and confidence they show at a simple two-alarm fire.

Unfortunately, the human element- what is called the “software” part of communications- will always be intangible. The trick is to get

everyone talking together to figure out what “being prepared” really means. If you haven’t done so already, start the outreach process now– send a few emails, invite all of the key players in the region to a big meeting, and be sure to have some hot coffee available, and maybe a few goodies to eat.

Even if nothing substantial gets done at that first meeting, each guy there has at least seen the other guy’s face, and probably talked to him a little. That alone could help get things rolling. When it comes to domestic preparedness, in other words, silence is not golden!

Your Humble Servant,
Silence Dogood



Georgia, Nevada, and South Carolina

By Adam McLaughlin, State Homeland News



Georgia County Officials Train in Agroterrorism Prevention

Representatives from Lowndes County agencies and businesses attended a workshop on 30 November that highlighted agrosecurity awareness and methods to prevent agroterrorism – i.e., the intentional use of any weapon (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive) against a nation’s agricultural or food industries with intent to destroy resources and/or cause serious economic harm.

Mickey Fourakers, coordinator with the Lowndes County Extension, said the training, which was carried out in coordination with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, was designed to meet the needs of traditional first responders – e.g., firefighters and law-enforcement personnel – as well as farmers and food processors. Officials from the South Georgia Medical Center, the Valdosta Police and Fire Departments, the Lowndes County Fire Department, and Moody Air Force Base were among the participants.

The topics covered during the workshop included agriculture, food pathogens, and emergency management. Maria Luke, the Georgia Department of Agriculture’s assistant state veterinarian, commented that one of the principal purposes of the workshop was to show all of the first responders participating how to work effectively together in an agricultural emergency situation.

Nicholas Lacey, director of the Lowndes County’s 911 emergency and management services, said that agricultural emergencies are taken very seriously in that area, and that local residents have an important role to play in helping respond to agroterrorism events or incidents. Next year, he said,

the county plans to incorporate hands-on drills and exercises into its agroterrorism-response training.

Nevada Emergency Responders Are Tested by Mock Terrorist Attack

The Outlet Mall in Sparks, Nev., was the location selected for a large-scale counterterrorism exercise at the end of November involving over 400 emergency responders from a broad spectrum of local, state, and federal agencies. The exercise, named Noble Responder, was a one-day event funded by a \$400,000 federal homeland security grant that covered the costs not only of the unusually large number of participants but also the replacement personnel brought in to carry out the day-to-day work required at various local police and fire stations.

The exercise scenario, which presented a number of complex problems for the responders, simulated a terrorist release of a nerve agent inside the mall, causing one “shopper” to exit the mall in a panic and drive into a truck, releasing diesel fuel into the storm drain and then the river. Another part of the drill called for members of a SWAT team to enter the mall in full chemical protection gear--needed because of the nerve agent – to carry out a search for the terrorists believed to be still inside the mall.

“This is new ground for us,” said Sparks Police Sgt. Franz John. “We never had an opportunity to work in this environment before. We had not practiced putting on the chemical protective suits before, and now have to factor in the amount of time it takes to don the gear.”

The Nevada National Guard also participated in the exercise by flying in a communications van and mobile lab – operated by the 92nd Civil Support Team. Members of the Civil Support Team, which

was flown in on a C-130 transport aircraft, used the \$1.5 million portable lab to analyze the agent that had been released in the mall.

South Carolina Establishes New State Guard Unit to Assist During Disasters

With lessons from the Hurricane Katrina response fresh in their minds, the South Carolina all-volunteer State Guard has formed a new liaison unit to help communities work with government decision makers and law-enforcement agencies in the event of a natural disaster or security crisis. “This new unit will help improve emergency response by forging good working relationships before a disaster even occurs,” said Maj. Gen. Eli Wishart, commander of the State Guard.

Wishart, who introduced the three-member Liaison Unit at the Guard’s headquarters, said they would begin work immediately and focus initially on informing local officials in communities large and small across the state what the 1,500 volunteer members of the State Guard are capable of providing. “We need to find out what the communities need in the event of a crisis, and inform them of what the State Guard could offer during these emergencies or disasters,” Wishart said. The State Guard does not intend to replace or duplicate the roles that law-enforcement agencies or South Carolina National Guard units would assume during emergencies, he added.

“The experiences of cities that had to deal with catastrophes like Katrina have shown that there is a great need to be proactive with local, county, and state governments,” said Scott Malyerck, a member of the State Guard. “We all feel the need to give back to the community,” he said, “and we hope to create an awareness of what our team can do.”