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COMBATING TERRORISM

Observations on Growth in Federal Programs

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Madam Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here to discuss our prior work and observations on federal efforts to combat terrorism, especially those to prepare for and respond to terrorist attacks involving chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) weapons or devices.[1] As you know, the President's fiscal year 2000 budget requested about $10 billion to combat terrorism. According to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), about $1.4 billion of that amount was for dealing with "weapons of mass destruction." Over the past 3 years we have evaluated and reported on a number of issues concerning federal programs and activities to combat terrorism. A list of related GAO reports and testimonies is attached to this statement.

My testimony will focus on three issues. First, I will briefly describe the foreign- and domestic-origin terrorism threats, as we understand them from intelligence analyses, and discuss some issues surrounding the emerging threat of CBRN terrorism. Second, I will provide our observations on the growth in federal programs to provide training and equipment to local "first responders"—police, fire, and emergency medical services—and the expansion of federal response elements and teams to deal with a possible CBRN terrorist attack. Finally, I will discuss some steps the executive branch has taken to better manage federal efforts to combat terrorism and some opportunities we see for additional focus and direction.

Summary

U.S. intelligence agencies continuously assess both the foreign and domestic terrorist threat to the United States and note that conventional explosives and firearms continue to be the weapons of choice for terrorists. Terrorists are less likely to use chemical and biological weapons than conventional explosives, although the possibility that they may use chemical and biological materials may increase over the next decade, according to intelligence agencies. Agency officials have noted that terrorist use of nuclear weapons is the least likely scenario, although the consequences could be disastrous. Although the intelligence agencies

[1] For purposes of this testimony, I will use the term CBRN instead of the more common but less precise term weapons of mass destruction. While some agencies define weapons of mass destruction as chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological weapons, others define it to include large conventional explosives.

agree on these matters, we have observed many conflicting statements and views in public documents and testimony about the CBRN terrorism threat. In addition, there is an apparent disconnect between the intelligence agencies' judgments and the focus of certain programs.

Since 1996, the number of federal programs and initiatives to combat terrorism have grown significantly. According to OMB, funding has also increased from about $6.5 billion in fiscal year 1998 to about $10 billion requested for fiscal year 2000. At the same time that the federal government has created several potentially overlapping programs to train and equip local first responders to prepare for possible CBRN terrorist attacks, federal agencies have also expanded the number of federal response teams, capabilities, and assets.

The executive branch has taken some important steps toward improving the way it manages and coordinates the growing, complex array of agencies, offices, programs, activities, and capabilities. For example, OMB has issued two governmentwide reports—one in 1998 and one in 1999—on funding levels and programs to combat terrorism. In addition, in December 1998, the Attorney General issued a classified 5-year interagency plan on counterterrorism and technology. The Attorney General is also establishing a National Domestic Preparedness Office at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to try to reduce state and local confusion over the many federal training and equipment programs to help them prepare for terrorist incidents involving CBRN weapons. While these are important positive steps, we see opportunities to improve the focus and direction of federal programs and activities to combat terrorism. For example, a governmentwide strategy that includes a defined end state and priorities is needed, along with soundly established program requirements based on assessments of the threat and risk of terrorist attack. In addition, a comprehensive inventory of existing federal, state, and local capabilities that could be leveraged or built upon is warranted before adding or expanding federal response assets. Without these fundamental program elements, there can be little or no assurance that the nation is focusing its investments in the right programs and in the right amounts and that programs are efficiently and effectively designed and implemented.

Background

Under Presidential Decision Directive 39 (June 1995) federal efforts to combat terrorism are organized along a lead agency concept. The Department of Justice, through the FBI, is the lead federal agency for crisis management of domestic terrorist incidents and for pursuing, arresting,

and prosecuting the terrorists. For managing the consequences of domestic terrorist incidents, state and local authorities are primarily responsible. If federal assistance is requested, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the lead federal agency for consequence management. FEMA coordinates this federal support through the Federal Response Plan, which outlines the roles, responsibilities, and emergency support functions of various federal agencies for consequence management. The National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counterterrorism at the National Security Council is charged with coordinating the broad variety of relevant policies and programs, including such areas as counterterrorism, preparedness, and consequence management for CBRN terrorist incidents.

The Foreign- and Domestic-Origin Terrorism Threat in the United States

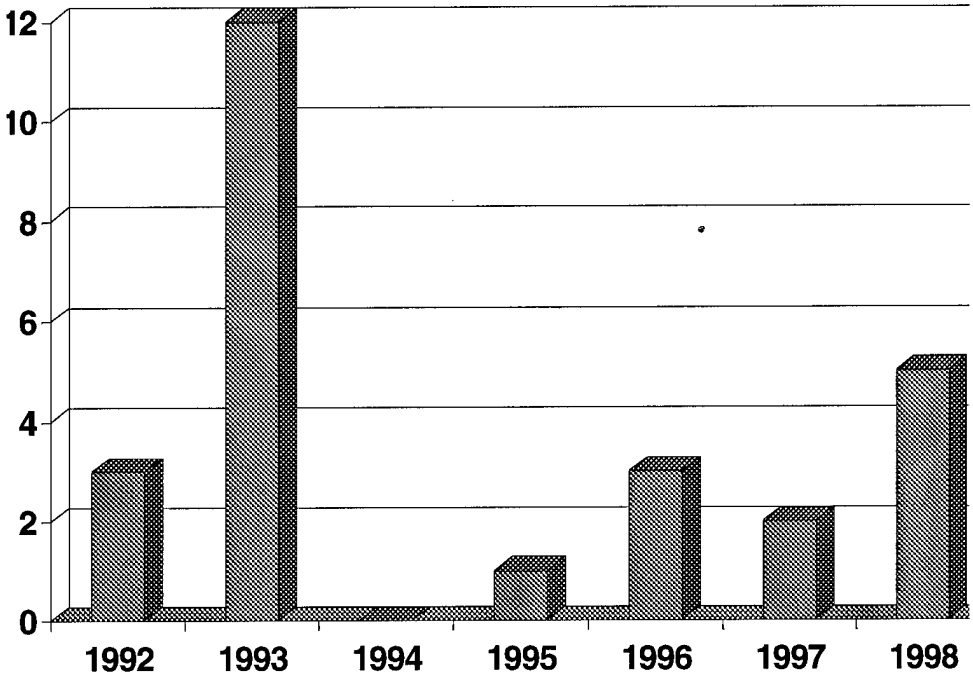
Terrorist bombings of the World Trade Center in New York City in 1993 and the federal building in Oklahoma City in 1995 have elevated concerns about terrorism in the United States. Previously, the focus of U.S. policy and legislation had been on international terrorism abroad and airline hijacking. Intelligence agencies continuously assess the foreign and domestic terrorist threats to the United States. The U.S. foreign intelligence community, which includes the Central Intelligence Agency and others, monitors the foreign-origin terrorist threat to the United States.[2] In addition, the FBI gathers intelligence and assesses the threat posed by domestic sources of terrorism.

What is important about these assessments is the very critical distinction between what is conceivable or possible and what is likely in terms of the threat of terrorist attack. While concerns about terrorist use of CBRN weapons were heightened by an apocalyptic sect's use of a nerve agent in the Tokyo subway in 1995, terrorists are still reportedly more likely to use conventional weapons. According to the U.S. intelligence community, conventional explosives and firearms continue to be the weapons of choice for terrorists, at least partly because chemical and biological agents are more difficult to weaponize and the results are unpredictable.

[2] The intelligence community includes the Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the National Imagery and Mapping Agency, the National Reconnaissance Office, the Defense Intelligence Agency and other offices within the Department of Defense and the military services, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Energy, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State, and such other elements of any department or agency as may be designated by the President or jointly by the Director of Central Intelligence and the head of the department or agency concerned.

On average, from 1992 through 1998, there were fewer than four terrorist incidents in the United States each year, according to FBI statistics. Figure 1 provides FBI data on the number of terrorist incidents in the United States during the 1992-98 period, none of which were CBRN attacks.[3]

Figure 1: Terrorist Incidents in the United States, 1992-98



Source: FBI.

The intelligence community reports that some foreign-origin groups and individuals of concern are showing an increasing interest in using chemical and biological materials. The FBI also reports an increasing number of domestic cases involving U.S. persons attempting or threatening to use such materials. Agency officials have noted that, although the

[3] FBI defines a terrorist incident as a violent act or an act dangerous to human life, in violation of the criminal laws of the United States, or of any state, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof.

consequences could be disastrous, the terrorist use of nuclear weapons is the least likely scenario.

Issues Surrounding the Emerging CBRN Terrorism Threat

Statements made in testimony before the Congress and in the press by various officials on the issue of making and delivering a terrorist chemical or biological weapon sometimes contrast sharply. On the one hand, some statements suggest that developing a chemical or biological weapon can be relatively easy. For example, in 1996, the Central Intelligence Agency Director testified that chemical and biological weapons can be produced with relative ease in simple laboratories, and in 1997, the Central Intelligence Agency Director said that "delivery and dispersal techniques also are effective and relatively easy to develop." Similarly, an article by former senior intelligence and defense officials noted that chemical and biological agents can be produced by graduate students or laboratory technicians and that general recipes are readily available on the internet.

On the other hand, some statements suggest that there are considerable difficulties associated with successfully developing and delivering a chemical or biological weapon. For example, the former Deputy Commander of the Army's Medical Research and Materiel Command testified in 1998 that "an effective, mass-casualty producing attack on our citizens would require either a fairly large, very technically competent, well-funded terrorist program or state sponsorship." More recently, in March 1999, the Special Assistant to the Director of Central Intelligence for Nonproliferation testified that "the preparation and effective use of biological weapons by both potentially hostile states and by non-state actors, including terrorists, is harder than some popular literature seems to suggest."

We are reviewing the scientific and practical feasibility of the terrorist chemical and biological threat for the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs; the Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee; and the House Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans Affairs, and International Relations. Specifically, we are examining the ease or difficulty for a non-state actor to successfully obtain chemical and biological agents, process the materials, and make and

deliver chemical and biological weapons that can cause mass casualties.[4] We plan to issue our report later this summer.

We have also observed a disconnect between intelligence agencies' judgments about the more likely terrorist threats—particularly the chemical and biological terrorist threat—and certain domestic preparedness program initiatives. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) fiscal year 1999 budget amendment proposal for its bioterrorism initiative included building—for the first time—a civilian stockpile of antidotes and vaccines to respond to a large-scale biological or chemical attack and expanding the National Institutes of Health's research into related vaccines and therapies. Specifically, the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 105-277) included $51 million for the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention to begin developing a pharmaceutical and vaccine stockpile for civilian populations.

HHS' legislatively required operating plan discusses several chemical and biological agents selected for its stockpiling initiatives. These agents were selected because of their ability to affect large numbers of people (create mass casualties) and tax the medical system. We observed that several of the items in HHS' plan did not match individual intelligence agencies' judgments, as explained to us, on the more likely chemical or biological agents a terrorist group or individual might use.[5] HHS had not documented its decision making process for selecting the specific vaccines, antidotes, and other medicines cited in its plan. Thus, it was unclear to us whether and to what extent intelligence agencies' official, written threat analyses were used in the process to develop the list of chemical and biological terrorist threat agents against which the nation should stockpile. Further, we have not seen any evidence that HHS' process incorporated the many disciplines of knowledge and expertise or divergent thinking that is warranted to establish sound requirements to prepare for such a threat and focus on appropriate medical preparedness countermeasures.

[4] We recognize that some biological agents are communicable and would not necessarily need to be weaponized to cause mass casualties.

[5] Combating Terrorism: Observations on Biological Terrorism and Public Health Initiatives (GAO/T-NSIAD-99-112, Mar. 16, 1999).

Growth in Federal Funding, Programs, and Initiatives

Federal funding of efforts to combat terrorism has increased rapidly. According to OMB, funding to combat terrorism has increased from about $6.5 billion in fiscal year 1998 to about $10 billion requested for fiscal year 2000. Overall, the number of agencies, offices, and initiatives to combat terrorism has also grown substantially.[6] Specifically, since 1996, we have observed growth in federal funding and programs to provide training and equipment to local first responders and, concurrently, growth and potential overlap in federal response elements and teams to deal with a possible CBRN terrorist attack. The federal response elements and assets have been established to support state or local incident commanders to manage the consequences of a possible CBRN terrorist attack.

Proliferation of Federal Programs to Train and Equip First Responders

We have observed a proliferation of programs and initiatives across several agencies to provide training and/or equipment to local first responders for dealing with the consequences of a CBRN terrorist attack. On the surface, it appears to us that there is potential for duplication and overlap among these programs. The fiscal year 2000 budget request proposed $611 million for training, equipping, and exercising cities' first responders in preparation for a potential terrorist attack and for strengthening public health infrastructure.[7] Table 1 summarizes some aspects of selected federal training and/or equipment programs available to state and local agencies to build or enhance their CBRN response capabilities.

[6] See Combating Terrorism: Observations on Crosscutting Issues (GAO/T-NSIAD-98-164, Apr. 23, 1998).

[7] HHS requested $230 million for fiscal year 2000 for its bioterrorism initiative, which included strengthening the public health infrastructure.

Table 1: Selected Federal CBRN Consequence Management Training and/or Equipment Programs

Agency	What program provides	Target audience
Department of Defense (DOD)	Training: CBRN response with focus on chemical, biological, and nuclear. Equipment: Provides each city up to $300,000 in equipment on 5-year loan.	Police, fire, hazardous materials technicians, and medical and emergency management responders in the 120 most populous cities.
Department of Justice	Training: Explosives, incendiary, chemical, and biological (not radiological or nuclear) response. Equipment: Provides equipment grants.	Police, fire, hazardous materials, and medical and emergency management responders in the 120 largest urban jurisdictions.
FEMA	Training: Emergency management and hazardous materials response, including those related to terrorist incidents.	Fire, medical, hazardous materials technicians, and other emergency responders.
Department of Energy	Training: Nuclear and radiological response in emergencies.	Responders in communities close to nuclear facilities.
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Training: Chemical, biological, and radiological hazardous materials response, with new focus on terrorist "weapons of mass destruction" incidents.	Federal, state, and local hazardous materials technicians.
HHS	Equipment: Contract grants include funds for equipment and items for medical response to CBRN incident.	Emergency medical responders in 27 cities that also participate in DOD's Domestic Preparedness Program.
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	Training: CBRN incident, with focus on medical response. Training to be provided under contract with HHS.	1,100 nonfederal National Disaster Medical System hospital staffs.

Source: GAO.

Further information on these federal programs and activities is in appendix I.

Some local officials we spoke with during our examination of DOD's Domestic Preparedness Program viewed the growing number of CBRN consequence management training programs as an indication of a fragmented and possibly wasteful federal approach toward combating terrorism. Similarly, multiple equipment programs were causing frustration and confusion at the local level and were resulting in further complaints that the federal government is unfocused and has no coordinated plan or defined end-state for domestic preparedness. For example, in the Domestic Preparedness Program, the separation of the DOD and HHS equipment packages required local officials to deal with two federal agencies' differing requirements and procedures. Since the HHS equipment program is offered through a contract with unmatched federal funds, the cities had to meet certain requirements, including developing a concept of operations plan for Metropolitan Medical

Response Systems that fits into a local area's overall medical response system. The DOD equipment loan program required a different process. Other equipment initiatives, such as the Department of Justice equipment grant program, could add to the local government officials' perception of an unfocused federal strategy. [8]

Growth in Federal CBRN Response Elements

At the same time federal training and equipment programs for first responders has grown, the number of federal response elements that can deal with various aspects of managing the consequences of a CBRN terrorist attack has also expanded and increased. Individual agencies' initiatives include adding teams or capabilities that can identify and analyze various chemical and biological materials or agents; contain or handle the weapon, device, or area of an incident; and provide medical support or response for dealing with potential casualties of an incident. We have pointed out that the growth in these capabilities and assets has not been based on soundly established requirements or a comprehensive inventory of existing federal, state, and local assets that could be leveraged. State and local officials have raised concerns about the increasing number of federal response elements being formed. In our view, the emergence of more federal response elements and capabilities will increase the challenge for the federal government to provide a well-coordinated response in support of a state or local incident commander.[9]

DOD has established several new response elements in addition to those that have been or would have been called upon in the past to respond to potentially dangerous chemical or biological threats or incidents. Among the pre-existing response assets are the Army's Technical Escort Unit, which has four teams in two U.S. locations and the Army's 52nd Explosives Ordnance Disposal Group, which includes many units located throughout the country and has personnel specially trained to respond to CBRN incidents. In 1996, the Marine Corps created the Chemical Biological Incident Response Force located at Camp LeJeune, N.C., to provide a medical and decontamination response to CBRN incidents. In addition, the

[8] We have work underway for congressional requesters to examine various issues associated with the multiple federal programs and facilities to train and equip first responders to manage the consequences of a CBRN terrorist attack.

[9] We have completed a governmentwide review of the preparedness of the many federal response assets to work together and with state and local officials, and our report will be available before the end of this month.

Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Act required DOD to establish a Chemical-Biological Rapid Response Team for domestic incidents.

More recently, DOD has created National Guard Rapid Assessment and Initial Detection (RAID) teams in 10 states to respond to CBRN incidents. Potentially, up to 54 RAID teams are planned. The RAID teams' mission is to provide assistance to local and state authorities in the event of an incident involving chemical, biological, nuclear, or radiological weapons. They are to (1) help assess the situation, (2) advise civilian responders as to appropriate actions, and (3) facilitate the identification and movement of federal military assets to the incident scene. We reviewed the roles and missions of the RAID teams and expect to release a report this month.

As mentioned earlier, HHS has established Metropolitan Medical Response Systems with trained and equipped local emergency teams in 27 cities that also participate in the DOD-led Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness Program. HHS requested fiscal year 2000 funding to include 25 more cities in its program. In addition to the 27 locally-based medical response teams (with more to be established), HHS has established four specialized National Medical Response Teams, three of which are deployable in the event of a terrorist attack involving a chemical or biological weapon. These 27 Metropolitan Medical Response Systems and 4 National Medical Response Teams are in addition to HHS' 24 Disaster Medical Assistance Teams that deploy to provide medical support for any type of disaster, including terrorism. HHS is further expanding its response capabilities by creating a national stockpile of millions of doses of vaccines, antidotes for chemical agents, antibiotics for other diseases, and respirators.

Another federal response element that appears to be growing is federal laboratories with capability to analyze chemical and biological agents. The Army, the Navy, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have had laboratory capabilities to analyze chemical and biological agents. In addition, HHS has plans to establish regional laboratories, and the FBI is establishing a mobile laboratory capability. Both the FBI and EPA have forensic laboratories, although there are some differences in capabilities, and the FBI is looking into using existing facilities rather than creating a specialized laboratory for CBRN cases.

Some Steps Taken, but Opportunities Remain to Improve Management of Crosscutting Programs

The executive branch has taken a number of important steps to improve management and coordination of programs to combat terrorism. Nevertheless, we have pointed out several areas in which fundamental program elements are missing while program growth continues.

Steps Taken Toward Improved Management and Coordination

I will highlight four executive branch efforts that represent important steps toward improved management and coordination of the growing programs and activities to combat terrorism. First, OMB has started to track spending by federal agencies to combat terrorism. In December 1997, we reported that key federal agencies with responsibilities to combat terrorism spent about $6.7 billion in fiscal year 1997 for unclassified terrorism-related activities and programs and noted that precise funding information was unavailable for various reasons.[10] That report led to legislation (National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1998) requiring OMB to establish a system for collecting and reporting information on executive agencies' spending and budgets for combating terrorism. We believe that the OMB reports on governmentwide spending and budgeting to combat terrorism are a significant step toward improved management and coordination of the complex and rapidly growing programs and activities. For the first time, the executive branch and the Congress have strategic oversight of the magnitude and direction of federal funding for this priority national security and law enforcement concern. The 1999 report provided additional analysis and more detailed information than the 1998 report on budgeting for programs to deal with CBRN weapons. For example, the 1999 OMB report identified the funding (budget authority) for the CBRN portion of combating terrorism to be about $1.23 billion in fiscal year 1999 and $1.39 billion in the fiscal year 2000 budget request.

Nevertheless, OMB officials told us, as we noted in our December 1997 report, that a critical piece of the budget and spending picture is missing—threat and risk assessments that would suggest priorities and appropriate countermeasures. These officials noted—and we agree—that risk

[10] Combating Terrorism: Spending on Governmentwide Programs Requires Better Management and Coordination (GAO/NSIAD-98-39, Dec. 1, 1997).

assessment is key to (1) knowing whether enough or too much is being spent, (2) judging whether the right programs are being funded, and (3) determining whether apparent duplication is good or bad. We have not fully evaluated the processes or methodologies the executive branch agencies used to derive the information in the 1998 and 1999 OMB reports. As a result, we cannot comment on whether or to what extent the reports reflect the best possible estimate of costs associated with programs and activities to combat terrorism. The reports, however, do not clearly or explicitly describe any established priorities or duplication of efforts as called for in the legislation.

A second step toward improved interagency management and coordination was the Attorney General's December 1998, classified 5-year interagency plan on counterterrorism and technology crime. The Conference Committee Report accompanying the 1998 Appropriations Act for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies required the Attorney General to develop the plan in coordination with several agencies. The plan includes goals, objectives, and performance indicators and recommends that specific actions be taken to resolve interagency problems and issues it identified and assigns relative priorities to the actions. The classified plan represents a substantial interagency effort and was developed and coordinated with 15 federal agencies with counterterrorism roles. The plan, however, generally does not link its recommended actions and priorities to budget resources, although it states that the agencies hope to improve the link between the plan and resources in subsequent updates. The plan also does not have a clearly defined end state that would be useful to establish requirements and priorities.

A third step was the Attorney General's proposed establishment of a National Domestic Preparedness Office to coordinate the programs and other federal support for state and local governments. The purpose of the office is to coordinate Justice programs with those of other federal agencies to enable state and local first responders to establish and maintain a crisis and consequence management infrastructure capable of responding to a conventional and unconventional terrorist attack. The office, under the leadership of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, would address planning, training, equipment, exercises, research and development, intelligence and information sharing, and health and medical service needs at the federal, state, and local levels. The office has commissioned a local, state, and federal interagency board to establish, maintain, and update a standardized equipment list for use by the interagency community in

preparing state and local jurisdictions to respond to a terrorist incident involving a weapon of mass destruction. The office is intended to reduce state and local confusion over the multitude of federal training and equipment programs and response capabilities by providing "one stop shopping" for state and local agencies. We understand that this office has not been formally approved.

Finally, in Presidential Decision Directive 62, issued in May 1998, the President designated a National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counterterrorism. While this coordinator is not to direct agencies' activities, he is responsible for integrating the government's policies and programs on unconventional threats to the homeland and Americans abroad, including terrorism. He is also to provide advice in the context of the annual process regarding the budgets for counterterrorism. We understand he has established a number of interagency working groups, but we have been unable to obtain any further information on these groups' responsibilities and accomplishments.

Opportunities to Enhance Program Focus and Direction

Notwithstanding these important steps taken by the executive branch, we continue to see opportunities to better focus the nation's investments and efforts to combat terrorism. In November1998, we concluded that the many federal CBRN consequence management training, equipment, and response initiatives could benefit from a coordinated, integrated approach with a defined end-state.[11] We also recommended that the National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counterterrorism actively review and guide the growing number of consequence management training and equipment programs and response elements to ensure that individual agencies' efforts (1) leverage existing state and local emergency management systems and (2) are coordinated, unduplicated, and focused toward achieving a clearly defined end state. More recently, we have noted that rapid program growth, particularly in domestic preparedness programs and public health initiatives, has occurred in the absence of soundly established requirements based on assessments of the threat and risk of terrorist attack involving CBRN. A critical piece of the equation in decisions about establishing and expanding programs to combat terrorism is an analytically sound threat and risk assessment using valid inputs from the intelligence community and other disciplines. Threat

[11] Combating Terrorism: Opportunities to Improve Domestic Preparedness Program Focus and Efficiency (GAO/NSIAD-99-3, Nov. 12, 1998).

and risk assessments could help the government make decisions about how to target investments in combating terrorism and set priorities on the basis of risk; identify unnecessary program duplication, overlap, and gaps; and correctly size individual agencies' levels of effort. Without adequate assessment based on sound input, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to have confidence that the government has properly shaped programs and focused resources to combat and prepare for this complex, emerging threat.

Conclusions

The executive branch has taken a number of steps toward improving the overall management and coordination of the complex, growing array of agencies' and offices' efforts to combat terrorism. Nevertheless, we see opportunities to improve the overall focus of the nation's efforts to combat and prepare for terrorist incidents. There is a need to reconcile conflicting statements about the CBRN terrorism threat and the lack of connectivity between intelligence judgments and program initiatives. There is also a need for a governmentwide strategy with a defined end state and priorities, soundly defined requirements based on valid assessments of the threat and risk of terrorist attack, and a comprehensive inventory of existing capabilities and assets. In the absence of these fundamental program elements, there has been significant growth in federally funded consequence management training and equipment programs for first responders and in federal teams, assets, and capabilities to deal with possible CBRN terrorist incidents. Without these program elements, there is little assurance that the nation is investing in the right programs and in the right amounts.

Major contributors to this testimony are Stephen L. Caldwell, Davi M. D'Agostino, and Robert L. Pelletier.

Madam Chairman, that concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Information on Selected Federal Training and Equipment Programs for First Responders

The following summarizes some aspects of selected federal consequence management training and equipment programs designed for state and local first responders to deal with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) terrorist incidents.

- Department of Defense (DOD): In the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act, (Title XIV, P.L. 104-201, Sept. 23, 1996)—commonly known as the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Act—the Congress authorized DOD to develop and conduct first responder training focusing on terrorist incidents involving CBRN weapons. In designing the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness Program, DOD targeted the 120 most populated U.S. cities to receive this training. Courses are to be delivered to experienced city trainers so they can train rank-and-file first responders. The 5-year loan agreement governing the provision of CBRN items and equipment associated with the program requires the cities to repair, maintain, and replace the equipment. DOD plans to transfer responsibility for its domestic preparedness training and equipment program to the Department of Justice by the end of fiscal year 2000.
- Department of Justice: Through the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, the Congress authorized a second terrorism-related consequence management training program for firefighters and emergency medical personnel. This program, developed in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is administered by the Office of Justice Programs. The target audience for this program overlaps with but is not identical to the target audience for DOD's Domestic Preparedness Program. In fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the Congress appropriated $103.5 million to make chemical/biological equipment permanently available to first responders through the Office of Justice Programs. The Department of Justice also is establishing a Center for Domestic Preparedness at Fort McClellan, Alabama. Other Justice-funded centers and training venues related to combating terrorism are at universities, such as Texas A&M and Louisiana State University, and at Department of Energy's (DOE) Nevada Test Site.
- FEMA: Through its National Fire Academy and Emergency Management Institute, FEMA offers training and issues basic course materials. FEMA and its National Fire Academy have long-standing resident and nonresident training programs in emergency management and hazardous materials. FEMA requested about $31 million for fiscal year 2000—a $13-million increase over fiscal year 1999 funding. Of the $31 million, $29 million is to provide grants and assistance related to training, planning, and exercises for state and local responders.

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): EPA's Environmental Response Team provides training to federal, state, and local hazardous materials technicians that addresses radiological, biological, and chemical hazards. EPA is adding training to its course that deals with CBRN weapons.
- DOE: DOE sponsors training in how to respond to incidents involving the release of nuclear or radiological substances. The training is made available primarily to communities in which nuclear facilities are located.
- Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): The Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act authorized funds for DOD to assist the Secretary of HHS in establishing Metropolitan Medical Response Systems to help improve local jurisdictions' medical response capabilities for a CBRN incident. HHS' Office of Emergency Preparedness has been establishing Systems with trained and equipped local emergency teams in 27cities that also participate in the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici domestic preparedness training and equipment program. VA is involved in training through a contract from HHS. Specifically, HHS is contracting with VA to train 1,100 non-federal National Disaster Medical System hospital staffs to deal with CBRN situations, according to VA officials.

Related GAO Products

Combating Terrorism: Use of National Guard Response Teams Is Unclear (GAO/NSIAD-99-110, May 21, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Issues to Be Resolved to Improve Counterterrorist Operations (GAO/NSIAD-99-135, May 13, 1999).

Weapons of Mass Destruction: DOD Efforts to Reduce Russian Arsenals May Cost More and Accomplish Less Than Expected (GAO/NSIAD-99-76, Apr. 13, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Observations on Biological Terrorism and Public Health Initiatives (GAO/T-NSIAD-99-112, Mar. 16, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Observations on Federal Spending to Combat Terrorism (GAO/T-NSIAD/GGD-99-107, Mar. 11, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: FBI's Use of Federal Funds for Counterterrorism-Related Activities (Fiscal Years 1995-98) (GAO/GGD-99-7, Nov. 20, 1998).

Combating Terrorism: Opportunities to Improve Domestic Preparedness Program Focus and Efficiency (GAO/NSIAD-99-3, Nov. 12, 1998).

Combating Terrorism: Observations on the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness Program (GAO/T-NSIAD-99-16, Oct. 2, 1998).

Combating Terrorism: Observations on Crosscutting Issues (GAO/T-NSIAD-98-164, Apr. 23, 1998).

Combating Terrorism: Threat and Risk Assessments Can Help Prioritize and Target Program Investments (GAO/NSIAD-98-74, Apr. 9, 1998).

Combating Terrorism: Spending on Governmentwide Programs Requires Better Management and Coordination (GAO/NSIAD-98-39, Dec. 1, 1997).

Combating Terrorism: Efforts to Protect U.S. Forces in Turkey and the Middle East (GAO/T-NSIAD-98-44, Oct. 28, 1997).

Combating Terrorism: Federal Agencies' Efforts to Implement National Policy and Strategy (GAO/NSIAD-97-254, Sept. 26, 1997).

Combating Terrorism: Status of DOD Efforts to Protect Its Forces Overseas (GAO/NSIAD-97-207, July 21, 1997).