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Report to Congressional Requesters

November 2000

COMBATING TERRORISM

Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination

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Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PPD	Presidential Decision Directive

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United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

November 30, 2000

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Ranking Democratic Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

The Honorable Christopher Shays
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans
Affairs, and International Relations
Committee on Government Reform
House of Representatives

A terrorist act involving a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear agent or weapon presents an array of complex issues to state and local responders. The responders, who may include firefighters, emergency medical service personnel, and hazardous materials technicians, must identify the agent used to rapidly decontaminate victims and apply appropriate medical treatments. They must determine whether the agent has spread beyond the incident site and what actions should be taken to protect other people. They must also be concerned about damage to the physical infrastructure and about coordinating efforts with law enforcement personnel as they conduct their investigation. If the incident overwhelms the capabilities of state and local responders, they may turn to the federal government for assistance. Federal agencies may provide assistance by deploying various response teams.

In response to your request, we reviewed federal agency teams that can respond to and help manage the consequences of a domestic terrorist incident involving chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear agents or weapons. This report discusses (1) the characteristics of federal response teams, (2) whether duplication among teams belonging to different agencies exists, (3) the budget requirements process for teams and how the budgets are linked to a national strategy, and (4) initiatives to improve the operational coordination of federal response teams across agency lines.

In our review, we defined response teams as groups of personnel and equipment that could deploy to or near an incident site to provide assistance. We focused on teams that assist with consequence management in a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear incident. Consequence management includes efforts to provide medical treatment and emergency

services, evacuate people from dangerous areas, and restore government services. To identify the capabilities and characteristics of federal response teams, we reviewed our prior reports, conducted interviews with agency officials, and met with the teams at various locations nationwide. We also observed a national-level combating terrorism exercise, which allowed us to see the capabilities of several response teams in mock terrorist incidents. We also attended several conferences that addressed response teams and terrorism issues.

Results in Brief

Eight agencies have 24 types of teams that can respond to a terrorist incident involving chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear agents or weapons to assist state and local governments.[1] The characteristics of these teams vary. Specifically, teams vary in their size, composition of personnel, equipment, geographical coverage, transportation needs, and response time. Moreover, most federal teams are long-standing and have purposes other than combating terrorism, such as responding to natural disasters, hazardous material spills, and military crises. For example, Department of Defense teams can provide a wide variety of consequence management capabilities in response to a domestic terrorist incident. However, these teams have a primary military role and mission. Even in the absence of a terrorist threat, federal agencies would still need most of their response teams to carry out other missions.

Federal response teams do not duplicate one another. Each team has a unique combination of capabilities and functions when it is deployed to a terrorist incident. Moreover, several federal teams have expertise concerning certain types of agents and weapons that could be used in an attack. For example, Department of Energy teams specialize in responding to incidents involving radiological agents or weapons. Because of the differences in the capabilities and expertise of the teams, the type of incident would determine which individual team would be most appropriate to respond.

Federal agencies lack a coherent framework to develop and evaluate budget requirements for their response teams. We have noted previously that the federal government lacks a national strategy to guide resource

[1] The eight agencies are the Departments of Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs; the Federal Emergency Management Agency; the Environmental Protection Agency; and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

investments for combating terrorism. The Attorney General's interagency plan on counterterrorism and technology crime, in our view, is the current document that most closely resembles a national strategy. However, the plan does not establish or define clearly desired outcomes that the federal government is trying to achieve. Because most federal response teams have multiple missions, federal agencies do not track the resources for their teams based on their roles in combating terrorism. In 1999, the National Security Council and the Office of Management and Budget began a new interagency process for evaluating federal agencies' programs for combating terrorism. The results of this evaluation provided a basis for new combating terrorism budget requests in the President's Budget for fiscal year 2001. This effort gives decisionmakers in the administration and Congress a better picture of the resources federal agencies are devoting to their response capabilities. However, it does not serve as an effective mechanism for allocating funding to the highest priority areas because these areas have not been clearly defined.

Two recent interagency activities could improve the operational coordination among federal response teams. First, the Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group, led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is identifying the federal consequence management teams that could be called upon to respond to different terrorist scenarios. Prior to this group's efforts, federal agencies did not engage in this type of planning for a terrorist incident. However, the steering group has not consulted with scientific experts or the intelligence community to assess the realism of the scenarios. According to a Federal Emergency Management Agency official, the scenarios were intended to be worst-case events that would stress the federal response system, and therefore assessing their realism was not a concern. As a result, it is uncertain whether the scenarios can provide a sound analytical basis for developing appropriate federal consequence management responses. Second, response teams continue to participate in various combating terrorism interagency exercises that provide agencies an opportunity to improve the operational coordination of their teams. In May 2000, the federal government sponsored a congressionally mandated national-level combating terrorism field exercise that tested the response and coordination of teams from federal, state, and local government agencies. The exercise represented considerable progress from past interagency exercises because it coordinated consequence as well as crisis management teams in a no-notice realistic field setting. However, no additional exercises of this nature are currently planned.

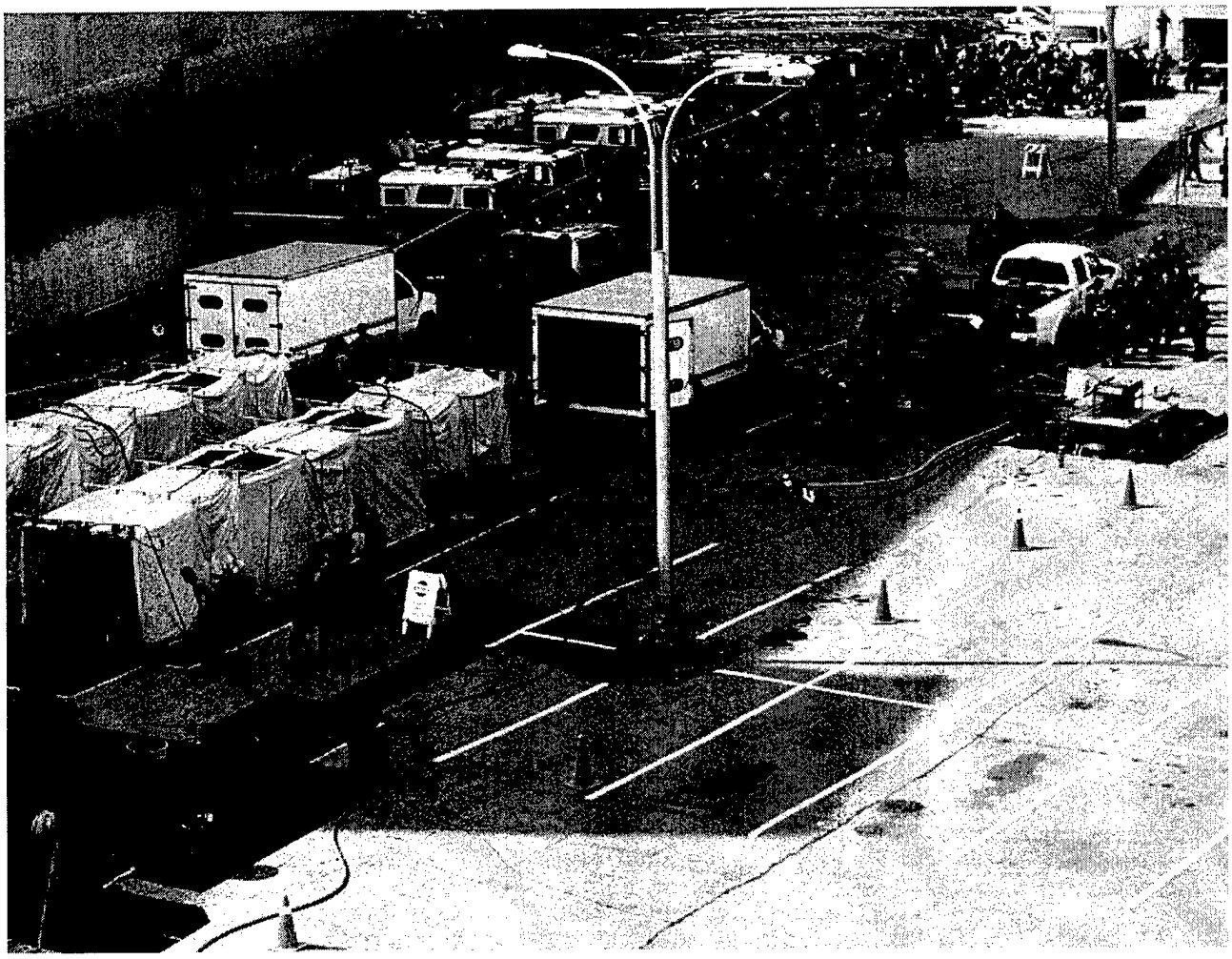
We are recommending that the Attorney General modify the interagency plan on counterterrorism and technology crime to cite desired outcomes that could be used to develop and evaluate budget requirements for agencies and their respective response teams. Additionally, we are recommending that the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency, take steps to require that the Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group develop realistic scenarios involving chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents and weapons with experts in the scientific and intelligence communities. Lastly, we are recommending that the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency, sponsor periodic national-level consequence management field exercises involving federal, state, and local governments.

The Departments of Defense, Energy, Justice, Health and Human Services, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs; the Federal Emergency Management Agency; the Environmental Protection Agency; the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; and the Office of Management and Budget provided comments on a draft of this report. Their comments are presented and evaluated at the end of this letter following our recommendations.

Background

In a domestic terrorist incident, states and local affected governments have the primary responsibility for consequence management. The federal government can help state and local authorities if they lack the capability to respond adequately. Figure 1 shows a federal response team supporting a local government in a training exercise.

Figure 1: Federal and Local Responders Participate in a Joint Training Exercise in New York City



Source: U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force.

Shortly after the April 1995 bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the President issued Presidential Decision Directive 39, which enumerated responsibilities for federal agencies in combating terrorism, including domestic incidents. In May 1998, the President issued Presidential Decision Directive 62 that further articulated responsibilities for specific agencies. Both directives call for robust, tailored, and rapidly deployable interagency teams to conduct well-coordinated and highly integrated operations.

If a national emergency has been declared, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for managing the consequence management support provided by other federal agencies and coordinating response activities with state and local authorities. Federal agencies provide this support through their response teams or other assets. FEMA coordinates the federal response through a generic disaster contingency plan known as the Federal Response Plan. The plan, organized around 12 emergency support functions, is used to respond to incidents or situations requiring federal emergency disaster assistance and to facilitate the delivery of that assistance.[2] In 1997, FEMA issued a terrorism incident annex to the Federal Response Plan to implement Presidential Decision Directive 39. The annex was revised in April 1999. Other federal authorities and contingency plans, such as the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan, may be activated in lieu of, prior to, or in conjunction with the Federal Response Plan.

Appendix I summarizes selected federal plans and authorities that may apply for consequence management response to a domestic terrorist incident.

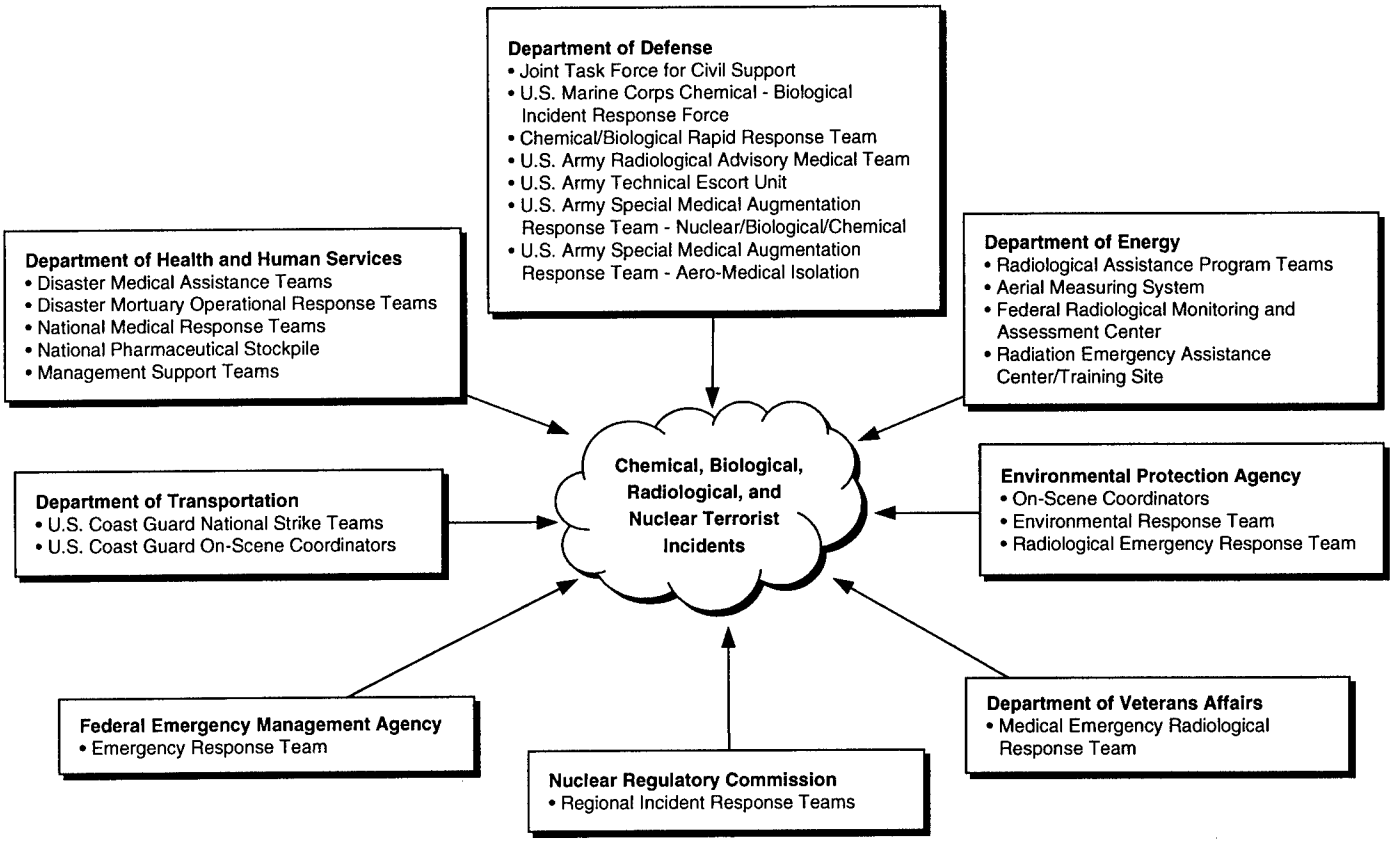
Proposed spending to combat terrorism, as requested in the President's fiscal year 2001 budget, is about $11.3 billion. The $11.3 billion is divided into two broad categories: combating terrorism ($9.3 billion, which includes $1.6 billion directly related to weapons of mass destruction) and critical infrastructure protection ($2 billion). The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) tracks federal funding to combat terrorism and provides this information to Congress in an annual report.

Numerous Response Teams Can Provide Assistance

Eight federal agencies have response teams that can deploy to or near the site of a terrorist incident involving a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear agent or weapon (see fig. 2). The capabilities and characteristics of federal response teams vary in a number of ways.

[2] The 12 emergency support functions are transportation, communications, public works and engineering, firefighting, information and planning, mass care, resource support, health and medical services, urban search and rescue, hazardous materials, food, and energy.

Figure 2: Federal Consequence Management Response Teams



Source: GAO's analysis.

Appendix II provides information on the mission, cited authority, size, location, transportation mode, and expected response times for the 24 types of federal teams discussed in this report.

Teams Vary in Size, Composition, and Equipment

Teams vary in size, with some teams having fewer than 10 personnel and others having almost 400 members. For example, a Department of Energy Radiological Assistance Program team has 7 members, a Department of Health and Human Services National Medical Response Team has 36 members, and the U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force has 373 personnel. Large teams such as the Department of Energy-led Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center, which

may have several hundred members detailed from numerous federal agencies for a major incident, may send out a relatively small advance team and then tailor the follow-on team based on the requirements of the specific incident.

Teams may be comprised of federal civilian employees, military personnel, contractor personnel, or federalized local personnel.[3] The U.S. Coast Guard's National Strike Teams and many Department of Defense (DOD) teams are comprised of military personnel. The Department of Veterans Affairs' Medical Emergency Radiological Response Team is comprised of federal civilian employees. Contractor personnel augment the Environmental Protection Agency's and the Department of Energy's teams. Medical response teams from the Department of Health and Human Services consist of medical personnel living in local communities who become federalized when the teams are activated and deployed to an incident.

Team members may be dedicated full-time or may serve on a team as a collateral duty. DOD's teams such as the Joint Task Force for Civil Support and the U.S. Army Technical Escort Unit have dedicated full-time personnel, even when the teams are not deployed. The Department of Energy's teams, on the other hand, rely heavily on volunteers who have other jobs within the agency. Some teams, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs' Medical Emergency Radiological Response Team, are inactive until they are activated for training, exercises, or an actual incident. Moreover, some teams have members who assemble from disparate locations nationwide. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency's Radiological Emergency Response Team may draw staff from the agency's radiation laboratories in Las Vegas, Nevada, and Montgomery, Alabama.

Teams have various amounts of equipment to perform their mission. The Department of Energy-led Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center brings an extensive array of communications and computer equipment as well as logistics support items such as generators. The U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force may

[3] Federalized local personnel are not full-time, permanent federal employees but do become temporary federal employees and serve under government orders when their team is activated. For example, under the authority of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, P.L. 93-288, 42 U.S.C. 243, as amended, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services may federalize personnel.

deploy with communications equipment, medical equipment and supplies, forklifts, generators, decontamination equipment, water purification equipment, and other supplies. In contrast, FEMA's Emergency Response Team, which coordinates response activities, arrives with cellular phones, pagers, and laptop computers.

Teams' Geographic Coverage and Transportation Needs Differ

Many teams are geared toward response in a specific geographic region, whereas others are intended for nationwide response. The Environmental Protection Agency's On-Scene Coordinators are located in each of the agency's 10 geographic regions and are responsible for response functions within their region. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's four Regional Incident Response Teams are also oriented toward a regional response. The Department of Energy-led Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center, the U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force, and the Department of Veterans Affairs' Medical Emergency Radiological Response Team are examples of teams that are intended for nationwide response.

Expected response time varies by team, as does the mode of transportation. The Environmental Protection Agency's Radiological Emergency Response Team prefers to deploy its mobile laboratories by ground transportation and is expected to arrive within 2 to 3 days after notification. The Department of Health and Human Services' Disaster Medical Assistance Teams use commercial or military aircraft or ground transportation and are expected to arrive on site within 12 to 24 hours. Traveling by either air or ground transportation, a Department of Energy Radiological Assistance Program Team is expected to arrive within 2 to 6 hours of being notified. The U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force can deploy by ground transportation or on large military aircraft that can easily accommodate the large quantity and weight of equipment belonging to the team. An initial group can be ready to deploy in 6 hours, and the remainder of the team is expected to be ready to deploy within 24 hours.

Most Teams Are Long-Standing and Have Other Missions

Most federal response teams are long-standing and were created for purposes other than combating terrorism such as responding to natural disasters, hazardous material spills, and military crises. Even in the absence of the threat of terrorism, the federal government would still need most of these response teams. The Department of Health and Human Services' Disaster Medical Assistance Teams were created under the

National Disaster Medical System in the early 1980s to provide emergency medical care to victims of earthquakes, hurricanes, and other disasters. Since 1989, the Disaster Medical Assistance Teams have been activated on more than 19 occasions. Several examples include Hurricane Hugo in 1989, the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and numerous floods in 1997 and 1998.

The U.S. Coast Guard's and the Environmental Protection Agency's teams were created originally to respond to incidents where pollutants or contaminants have been released and pose a threat to public health or the environment. The U.S. Coast Guard created its three National Strike Teams under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 to respond to oil spills in waterways. The Environmental Protection Agency created its Environmental Response Team in 1978 under the Clean Water Act to provide scientific and technical expertise in response to the release of hazardous chemicals into the air, land, and water. Under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan,[4] these teams were given the authority to respond to hazardous materials incidents, which include deliberate acts of releasing hazardous materials. The U.S. Coast Guard has the lead for incidents in the coastal zone, including major waterways, and the Environmental Protection Agency takes the leading role when incidents occur in the inland zone.[5]

DOD, compared to the other federal agencies, has the greatest breadth and depth of capabilities in its collective response teams. DOD and its response teams have capabilities relevant to all 12 of the emergency support functions in the Federal Response Plan. Nevertheless, the teams generally have missions in responding to military crises and may not be available to assist in a domestic terrorist incident involving chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents or weapons. For example, the U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force would support deployed U.S. military forces when facing the threat of attack from chemical or biological weapons. The U.S. Army Technical Escort Unit renders items safe such as a device, packages the items, and escorts and transports the items. In 1991 during Operation Desert Storm, the unit packaged and escorted captured samples of potential chemical and biological weapons for examination. The U.S. Army Radiological Advisory

[4] This plan is described in appendix I.

[5] These jurisdictional responsibilities are specifically defined in regional and area contingency plans.

Medical Team provides guidance on the potential health hazards from radiological contamination and radiation exposure. However, this Army team also has a military mission of responding to a radiological accident and may not be available to respond to a terrorist incident.

Agency Laboratories Augment Response by Federal Teams

A few agencies have fixed assets such as laboratories that may augment teams and the overall federal response in a chemical or biological terrorist incident. In some incidents, these laboratories may perform functions that enable deployed federal response teams to perform their role. For example, when a diagnosis is confirmed by one of the laboratories at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, the National Medical Response Teams and the Disaster Medical Assistance Teams can begin to treat victims appropriately. The laboratories at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can rapidly analyze and test samples of chemical and biological agents. The U.S. Army's laboratory serves as a reference center for identification of biological agents and its primary mission is to protect military personnel against biological attack or endemic infectious diseases. According to officials at both agencies, their laboratories may be called upon to corroborate a diagnosis of an unusual biological agent.

Federal Teams Do Not Duplicate Each Other

Federal response teams do not duplicate one another for a number of reasons. Each team has a unique combination of capabilities and functions when deployed to or near the site of a terrorist incident. No single team or agency has all the capabilities and functions that might be required to respond to a terrorist incident. Some federal response teams have capabilities and functions that are clearly unique, such as the ability of the Department of Health and Human Services' Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams to process, prepare, and dispose of contaminated fatalities. Several federal teams would be more likely to respond to certain types of incidents because they have expertise concerning the type of agent used in the attacks. For example, Department of Energy teams specialize in responding to incidents involving radiological agents or weapons. Other teams have similar capabilities and functions, but there are also distinctions among these teams that differentiate them. One distinction is that they perform a wide variety of functions. In general, these functions fall into one of three categories—performing hands-on response functions, providing technical advice to federal, state, and local authorities, or coordinating the response efforts and activities of other federal teams. Because of the differences in the capabilities and expertise of the teams,

the type of incident would determine which individual teams would be most appropriate to deploy.

Hands-On Functions

Hands-on functions include detecting and evaluating the agent used in the incident; dismantling, transferring, disposing of, and/or decontaminating property; extracting and/or decontaminating victims; performing triage on victims; and providing medical treatment. Some teams perform hands-on functions that are unique from any other federal team. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services' Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams are the only federal teams whose primary function is to recover, identify, and process fatalities. These teams can respond to any type of chemical, biological, or radiological/nuclear incident. The Department of Energy's Aerial Measuring System is the only team that can fly aircraft over an incident site to rapidly survey large areas for radiological contamination (see fig. 3).

Figure 3: Aerial Measuring System Aircraft With Detection Equipment

Source: Department of Energy.

This team gathers information that is used by other responders and decisionmakers to conduct an initial response until further assessments are made. Unlike any other federal teams, the Department of Energy's Radiological Assistance Program teams can respond quickly to a radiological incident, put on protective gear, enter a contaminated area, and take initial measurements of radioactivity. Another federal team with unique capabilities in a radiological incident is the Environmental Protection Agency's Radiological Emergency Response Team. This team, through its two mobile laboratories, can prepare air, soil, and water samples and perform a field analysis on them to detect low levels of radioactivity. According to Environmental Protection Agency officials, these capabilities are unique among federal response teams.

Several teams perform hands-on medical functions. While some of their capabilities and functions are similar, some are different. For example, while the Department of Veterans Affairs' Medical Emergency Radiological Response Team can decontaminate victims and provide medical care, its sole purpose is to respond to a radiological incident. The U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force and the Department of Health and Human Services' National Medical Response Teams are intended to respond and treat victims in a chemical or biological incident. The U.S. Marine Corps' team, however, can also search for and extract victims from a contaminated area. In contrast, the primary function of the National Medical Response Teams is to decontaminate and treat victims after they have been extracted. Each of the four National Medical Response Teams has a supply of antidotes to treat up to 5,000 people who have been exposed to chemical agents. The U.S. Marine Corps' team also has a supply of antidotes, but the supply is smaller than a National Medical Response Team's supply. Moreover, the U.S. Marine Corps' supply is intended to treat team members and a limited number of victims. The Department of Health and Human Services also has numerous Disaster Medical Assistance Teams that can provide general medical treatment in various emergencies to augment the specialized care provided by other medical teams.

Technical Advice Functions

Several teams offer specialized technical advice to federal, state, and local responders. These teams do not significantly duplicate one another because they have different areas of expertise. In some cases, the type of incident determines which teams are appropriate to provide technical advice. For example, four to six technical advisors from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention accompany the Department of Health and Human Services' National Pharmaceutical Stockpile when it is deployed in

response to a biological incident. The stockpile contains antibiotics and other medical supplies. The advisors assist state and local officials in organizing the bulk stockpile medications into individual doses and implementing plans to distribute and dispense the medications. The U.S. Army Chemical/Biological Rapid Response Team offers technical assistance and advice to DOD's Joint Task Force for Civil Support during a terrorist incident. The team offers links to Army experts in a variety of technical disciplines, such as detection, neutralization, containment, dismantlement, and disposal of chemical and biological agents or weapons. The Department of Energy's Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/Training Site provides expert advice concerning the medical care of victims that have been exposed to radiation. The team has expertise in, among other things, triage, decontamination procedures, and radiation dose estimates. Two DOD teams—the U.S. Army Special Augmentation Response Team-Nuclear/Biological/Chemical and the U.S. Army Radiological Advisory Medical Team—can provide similar types of technical advice as the Department of Energy's team. However, each team has fewer than 10 members. Furthermore, the DOD teams may not be available if they are deployed to a military crisis.

Coordinating Functions

Many federal teams coordinate activities at an incident site. However, the scope of their coordination responsibilities varies widely, from the response activities of federal teams overall to activities performed by a single agency. FEMA's Emergency Response Team coordinates overall federal response and recovery activities with a state government in the event of a disaster or an emergency declared by the President. DOD's Joint Task Force for Civil Support deploys to an incident and commands and coordinates the activities of federal military forces. It would not be responsible for coordinating the activities of federal civilian teams. The Department of Health and Human Services' Management Support Teams coordinate federal civilian medical teams. The Environmental Protection Agency's On-Scene Coordinators focus their work on coordinating the containment, removal, and disposal of hazardous substances. They may direct the efforts of regionally based contractors to evaluate the size and nature of the released substance and its potential hazard and to decontaminate and clean up the incident site. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Regional Incident Response Teams may be activated when an incident occurs at licensed facilities such as nuclear power plants. The teams are responsible for coordinating the technical response activities of federal entities, including hands-on response teams from the Department of Energy. The Department of Energy-led Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center acts as the control point for all federal assets involved in monitoring and assessing levels of radioactivity outside the immediate incident site.[6]

Appendixes III, IV, and V provide more details on the federal teams' primary functions in response to a chemical, biological, and radiological/nuclear incident.

[6] The Department of Energy has the lead responsibility for coordinating the early phases of the Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center. During later stages, the Environmental Protection Agency assumes control and other federal agencies participate.

Team Budgets Are Not Guided by a National Strategy

Federal agencies lack a coherent framework to develop and evaluate budget requirements for their response teams. We have noted previously that the federal government lacks a national strategy to guide resource investments for combating terrorism.[7] We have stated that there needs to be a federal or national strategy on combating terrorism that has a clear desired outcome. Such an outcome would provide a goal and allow measurement of progress toward that goal. In December 1998, the Department of Justice issued the Attorney General's Five-Year Interagency Counterterrorism and Technology Crime Plan. The plan was intended to serve as a baseline strategy for coordination of a national strategy and operational capabilities to combat terrorism. As part of its ongoing efforts, the Department of Justice updated the plan in March 2000. According to a Department of Justice official, both the original plan and its update were developed through an interagency process that included, among others, participants from the Department of Defense and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The 5-year plan, which is classified, lists specific combating terrorism tasks agencies are to perform.

In our view, the Attorney General's 5-year plan is the current document that most resembles a national strategy. It represents an interagency effort that identifies which federal agencies will perform specific tasks. However, the plan is not useful for guiding resource investments in response teams because it does not link recommended actions to budget resources. The original plan indicated that updated versions would link recommended actions to budget resources. The March 2000 update, however, does not identify this linkage. A Department of Justice official who is responsible for the plan stated that the Attorney General does not believe that the Department of Justice should direct the budget resources of other agencies. Furthermore, the updated plan identifies needed actions without citing clear desired outcomes that the federal government is trying to achieve.

As stated earlier, most federal consequence management teams are long-standing and fulfill roles other than combating terrorism. While agencies may be able to identify how much they invest in their teams, they cannot easily estimate what proportion of that investment is for combating

[7] *Combating Terrorism: Issues in Managing Counterterrorist Programs* (GAO/T-NSIAD-00-145, Apr. 6, 2000) and *Combating Terrorism: Linking Threats to Strategies and Resources* (GAO/T-NSIAD-00-218, July 29, 2000).

terrorism functions. For example, the Department of Energy tracks the operating, technical integration, and exercise costs for the Aerial Measuring System and other response teams. The Department, however, does not track combating terrorism costs separately. Other missions of the Aerial Measuring System aircraft are to respond to an accidental, as well as intentional, release of radioactive materials, and to conduct work for other agencies by providing baseline surveys of radiation levels.

In 1999, the National Security Council and OMB began a new interagency process for evaluating combating terrorism programs governmentwide to help identify duplication and shortfalls as well as prioritize programs. As part of this process, federal agencies were asked to identify new combating terrorism funding specifically for weapons of mass destruction preparedness activities, including their response teams. Interagency working groups reviewed the agencies' proposals and developed recommendations on whether they should be funded. The agencies were expected to integrate the working groups' funding recommendations into their fiscal year 2001 President's Budget submissions. Prior to this jointly sponsored process, agencies would make combating terrorism budget recommendations through the annual OMB budget submission. Decisions were made on an agency-by-agency basis rather than in a governmentwide context.

According to OMB officials, Presidential Decision Directives 62 and 63 and the Attorney General's 5-year plan serve as criteria for the program evaluations in the new interagency process.[8] On the basis of our discussion with OMB officials, it is unclear to us whether and to what extent the Presidential Decision Directives and the 5-year plan were used in the process. In the absence of a national strategy, it was also unclear to us how the National Security Council, OMB, and the agencies were developing and evaluating combating terrorism budget requirements for agency response teams. While the interagency process gives decisionmakers a better picture of the resources federal agencies are devoting to their response capabilities, it does not serve as an effective mechanism for allocating funding to the highest priority areas because these areas have not been clearly defined.

[8] In May 1998, the President issued Presidential Decision Directive 63 to address protection of the Nation's critical infrastructure.

We found an instance where the new interagency process was circumvented. FEMA's fiscal year 2001 budget submission to OMB requested $3.8 million to upgrade the capabilities of 6 of its 28 Urban Search and Rescue Task Force teams so that they can operate in a contaminated environment. OMB reviewed FEMA's budget and, as a result, did not include the Urban Search and Rescue request. Nevertheless, FEMA requested that the National Security Council include this proposal as part of the fiscal year 2001 President's Budget request.[9] Furthermore, according to a FEMA official, this budget proposal was not based on a national strategy, but rather was precipitated by congressional perception that the search and rescue teams already had this capability. A national strategy could provide the framework and criteria for determining whether such an enhanced capability—and others that federal agencies might propose—represent progress toward meeting desired outcomes.

Interagency Activities Offer Opportunities for Better Coordination

Federal agencies participate in exercises and other interagency activities to coordinate how their individual response teams will operate together in a terrorist scenario. Two recent interagency activities have identified opportunities for improving the operational coordination of federal response teams. First, FEMA is leading an interagency steering group that is identifying groups of federal teams that could respond to different terrorist scenarios. Such planning can be useful; however, the steering group has not consulted with scientific experts and the intelligence community to assess the realism of its scenarios. Second, federal, state, and local agencies participated in a major field exercise in May 2000 that involved mock terrorist events in three U.S. metropolitan areas. The lessons learned from this exercise—the first of its kind—could improve operational coordination of response teams from all levels of government. However, no additional exercises of this nature are currently planned.

[9] This funding for the Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces was part of FEMA's fiscal year 2001 President Budget's submission.

Interagency Group Plans Team Responses, but Realism of Scenarios Has Not Been Assessed

In 1998, FEMA formed the Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group to identify which consequence management teams could respond to specific terrorist scenarios.[10] The steering group is identifying the functions of individual federal response teams and developing a database to include the size and composition of each team, its equipment, response time, and other data. The response teams that can respond together to a given scenario are referred to as a force package. As a basis for developing the force packages, the interagency steering group has created various terrorist scenarios, which include (1) release of a chemical agent, (2) release of a biological agent, (3) release of radiological material, and (4) detonation of a nuclear device. According to a FEMA official, if an incident occurs, a force package can be pared and tailored based on the specific requirements. The steering group has long-term plans to improve the database, develop further scenarios, refine its force packages, and incorporate observations from terrorism exercises. One long-term plan, for example, is to create smaller force packages of teams that would respond during the first 24 hours of different types of incidents. Prior to the group's efforts, federal agencies did not engage in this type of interagency planning for a terrorist incident.

[10] The federal agencies listed in figure 2 are members of the interagency steering group.

The FEMA-led interagency steering group's efforts have been based upon worst-case scenarios rather than analysis of credible threats. Specifically, when developing the scenarios for the force packages, the group did not consult with scientific experts from the disciplines of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear warfare to assess the scenarios' realism. For example, the group's biological scenario involved the dissemination of plague. According to various biological warfare and scientific experts we consulted for our prior work,[11] it is difficult to obtain, produce, and disseminate plague, especially in sufficient quantities to produce mass casualties. The steering group also did not incorporate information about the threat of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear terrorism from the intelligence community. According to a Federal Emergency Management Agency official who is leading the steering group's efforts, the scenarios were intended to be worst-case events that would stress the federal response system, and therefore assessing the realism of the scenarios was not a concern. Because the realism of the scenarios was not assessed, it is uncertain whether they can provide a sound analytical basis for developing appropriate federal consequence management responses. We believe that consultation with experts in the scientific and intelligence communities is important for realistic consequence management planning. Moreover, we have previously reported that valid, current, and documented threat information is crucial to ensuring that countermeasures or programs are not based solely on worst-case scenarios and are therefore out of balance with the threat.[12]

Exercise Shows Progress in Response Team Coordination

Presidential Decision Directive 39 requires key federal agencies to maintain well-exercised combating terrorism capabilities. Exercises test and validate policies and procedures, test the effectiveness of response capabilities, increase the confidence and skill levels of personnel, and identify strengths and weaknesses in response before they arise in actual incidents. Furthermore, federal efforts to combat terrorism are inherently interagency matters, and exercises allow agency personnel to become familiar with each other's missions and procedures and learn to coordinate and operate together.

[11] *Combating Terrorism: Need for Comprehensive Threat and Risk Assessments of Chemical and Biological Attacks* (GAO/NSIAD-99-163, Sept. 7, 1999).

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

In 1999, a congressional mandate required that a national combating terrorism field exercise be conducted "without notice" and include "the participation of all key personnel."[13] The Department of Justice and FEMA sponsored such an exercise, TOPOFF 2000, in May 2000. The exercise included concurrent responses to a radiological terrorist incident in the Washington, D.C., area; a biological terrorist incident in the Denver, Colorado, area; and a chemical terrorist incident in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.[14] Eighteen federal agencies participated in addition to state and local government agencies.[15] The overall stated goals of the exercise were to

- test federal, state, and local response to a challenging series of no-notice, integrated, geographically dispersed terrorist acts;
- assess the Nation's crisis and consequence management capacity under stressful conditions; and
- develop lessons learned to enhance domestic preparedness.

TOPOFF 2000 represented progress over previous combating terrorism exercises. We reported in 1999 that federal agencies had conducted 201 combating terrorism exercises in the previous 3 years. We noted several shortcomings in these exercises that limited their effectiveness in preparing federal, state, and local agencies for response to a terrorist incident.[16] For example, FEMA had not conducted consequence management field exercises. Of the 201 exercises, only 4 were considered no-notice exercises in which participants were not given advance notification. None of the four exercises included consequence management activities. TOPOFF 2000, which included participation by many of the response teams discussed in this report, addressed many earlier shortcomings.

[13] This requirement is in House Report 105-825 (Oct. 19, 1998), Making Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1999.

[14] The related concurrent exercise in the Washington, D.C., area, was referred to as National Capital Region 2000. For purposes of the report, we refer to all three venues as TOPOFF 2000.

[15] Private voluntary organizations such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army also participated in TOPOFF 2000.

[16] *Combating Terrorism: Issues to Be Resolved to Improve Counterterrorism Operations* (GAO/NSIAD-99-135, May 13, 1999) and *Combating Terrorism: Analysis of Federal Counterterrorist Exercises* (GAO/NSIAD-99-157BR, June 25, 1999).

- TOPOFF 2000 included scenarios where crisis and consequence management activities occurred simultaneously. In a terrorist incident, crisis and consequence management activities would overlap, so it is important that federal teams exercise these activities together.
- TOPOFF 2000 included transfers of authority among government agencies. For example, a local fire chief transferred authority over the incident site to Federal Bureau of Investigation officials to enable processing of the crime scene. Such transfers are important to practice because the response to a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear terrorist incident would likely require a response from multiple agencies at the federal, state, and local levels.
- TOPOFF 2000 was conducted as a field exercise rather than a tabletop exercise. Field exercises are more challenging because agency command and response teams actually deploy to practice their skills and coordination in a realistic field setting. Tabletop exercises, on the other hand, do not include the deployment of actual response teams and their equipment.
- TOPOFF 2000 was designed and executed as a no-notice exercise.[17] No-notice exercises provide the highest degree of realism to federal response teams and can lead to improvements in deployment procedures to an incident site so that state and local first responders receive federal assistance as soon as possible.

Final after-action reports for TOPOFF 2000 have not yet been completed. After-action reports typically identify both successful interagency actions and procedures and areas that need improvements and highlight shortcomings in the overall structure and management of the exercise. Based on our observations of TOPOFF 2000, we believe that it largely met the overall goals. We believe that large, periodic exercises like TOPOFF 2000 provide valuable insight to the complex relationships necessary for a coordinated response to a domestic terrorist incident. For example, a simulated National Pharmaceutical Stockpile was delivered and distributed for the first time in TOPOFF 2000 to treat victims exposed to aerosolized plague. The delivery of the stockpile during an exercise provided an opportunity for federal, state, and local governments to coordinate their respective responses. Figure 4 shows the simulated National

[17] We consider TOPOFF 2000 to be a no-notice exercise because it was planned by a group of "trusted agents" who were not to disclose details of the exercise scenarios and timing to response teams and other participants. We recognize that response teams and participants were probably aware of the general timing of the exercise, and some may have inadvertently learned about some exercise details.

Pharmaceutical Stockpile after it has been delivered and unloaded at the Buckley Air National Guard Base, Denver, Colorado. The items in the simulated stockpile were subsequently distributed to hospitals and other points of distribution, such as makeshift medical treatment centers, so that victims could be appropriately treated.

Figure 4: Arrival of a Simulated National Pharmaceutical Stockpile During the TOPOFF 2000 Exercise

Source: GAO.

According to FEMA and Department of Justice officials, there are no agency plans or a congressional mandate to conduct another national-level combating terrorism exercise similar to TOPOFF 2000. In the past, the federal government sporadically held national-level exercises. In addition, the federal government did not conduct exercises that combined "participation by all key personnel" and the concurrence of crisis and consequence management in an interagency and intergovernmental field setting. Future exercises of this nature would allow the intergovernmental response teams to practice coordination in realistic settings. Also,

national-level exercises could allow federal consequence management teams to demonstrate their hands-on, technical, and coordinating response functions when assisting state and local governments. Lastly, periodic national-level exercises would allow federal agencies to maintain proficiency when "key personnel" change.

Conclusions

Federal agencies lack a coherent framework to develop and evaluate budget requirements for their response teams because there is no national strategy with clearly defined outcomes. In our view, the Attorney General's 5-year plan is the current document that most resembles a national strategy. The plan represents an interagency effort that identifies which federal agencies will perform specific tasks. However, the plan does not link its recommended actions to budget resources. Further, the plan does not cite desired outcomes that the federal government is trying to achieve. Without a sound framework, agencies may not target programs and spending appropriately for their response teams.

The FEMA-led Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group has identified consequence management teams that could respond to specific terrorist scenarios. Prior to this effort, federal agencies did not engage in this type of interagency planning for a terrorist incident. However, the interagency steering group did not consult with scientific experts or the intelligence community to assess the realism of its scenarios. Thus, it is uncertain whether they can provide a sound analytical basis for developing appropriate federal consequence management responses.

In May 2000, the federal government sponsored a national-level combating terrorism field exercise that represented considerable progress from past interagency exercises, particularly for consequence management response teams. In the past, the federal government sporadically held national-level exercises. In addition, the federal government did not conduct exercises that combined "participation by all key personnel" and the concurrence of crisis and consequence management in an interagency and intergovernmental field setting. However, plans to continue national-level no-notice exercises similar to TOPOFF 2000 do not exist. The objectives of these types of exercises are to engage applicable responders and to identify strengths and shortfalls so that the needs of states and localities as well as future potential challenges can be met effectively. Exercises such as TOPOFF 2000 help ensure the seamless integration of federal, state, and local teams and related assets, which is critical to rapid and effective response. Without conducting exercises similar in nature to TOPOFF 2000,

federal, state, and local government agencies will not be able to realistically practice coordination of their response teams and therefore may not be well prepared to respond to terrorist incidents that may occur.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To guide resource investments for combating terrorism, we recommend that the Attorney General modify the Attorney General's Five-Year Interagency Counterterrorism and Technology Crime Plan to cite desired outcomes that could be used to develop budget requirements for agencies and their respective response teams. This process should be coordinated as an interagency effort.

To provide a sound analytical basis for developing appropriate federal consequence management responses, we recommend that the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency, take steps to require that the Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group develop realistic scenarios involving chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents and weapons with experts in the scientific and intelligence communities.

To build upon the experience and lessons learned by the federal response teams from the TOPOFF 2000 exercise, we recommend that the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency, sponsor periodic national-level consequence management field exercises involving federal, state, and local governments. Such exercises should be conducted together with national-level crisis management field exercises.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We obtained written comments on a draft of this report from the Departments of Defense, Energy, Justice, Health and Human Services, and Veterans Affairs; FEMA; the Environmental Protection Agency; the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; and OMB. Comments from these agencies appear in appendixes VII to XV. The Department of Transportation provided oral comments. The agencies, with the exception of Justice and OMB, agreed with the report's summary and its description of federal teams that can respond to terrorist incidents involving the use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents or weapons. Many of the agencies also provided technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.

The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs concurred with our recommendation to modify the Attorney General's Five-Year Interagency Counterterrorism and Technology Crime Plan to cite desired outcomes that

could be used to evaluate budget requirements for agencies and their respective response teams. In contrast, Justice and OMB, while not directly addressing our recommendation, disagreed with our conclusion that the federal government lacks a national strategy to guide resource investments for combating terrorism. According to Justice, the 5-year plan articulates high-level goals and contains specific objectives, priorities, and recommended actions that, if accomplished, would lead to the fulfillment of these goals. OMB believes that a number of documents taken together, including Justice's 5-year plan, articulate the Nation's strategy for combating terrorism and the resources needed for its successful implementation. While not in its official comments, the Environmental Protection Agency disagreed with our recommendation to modify the 5-year plan. The Environmental Protection Agency stated that the major thrust of Justice's 5-year plan was to develop a strategy for law enforcement agencies. The agency does not believe that Justice can be held accountable for developing budget requirements for response teams from all federal agencies. The agency stated that there should be two separate 5-year plans, one developed by Justice for law enforcement agencies and one developed by FEMA for consequence management agencies.

We disagree with Justice and OMB that the 5-year plan, either alone or taken together with other documents, constitutes a fully developed national strategy. The 5-year plan does not cite desired outcomes the federal government is trying to achieve. For example, the plan includes a goal to improve state and local capabilities as well as actions to be taken related to federal and state response teams. However, it does not cite an outcome in terms of the level of preparedness to be achieved, nor does it cite specific capabilities that response teams should achieve. Moreover, the March 2000 update does not link its recommended actions to budget resources, and does not include prioritization of actions, performance indicators, or time frames that were included in the original December 1998 plan. Further, we believe that using more than one document to articulate a national strategy, as OMB suggests, obscures the direction and priorities of federal programs to combat terrorism. We are concerned that the Environmental Protection Agency's suggestion to have two agencies prepare separate national strategies would further fragment the federal government's combating terrorism activities. Development of any national strategy should be coordinated as an interagency effort incorporating crisis and consequent management. For these reasons, we continue to believe our conclusions and recommendations have merit.

FEMA and the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs concurred with our recommendation that the Director, FEMA, take steps to require that the Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group develop realistic scenarios involving chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents and weapons with experts in the scientific and intelligence communities.

FEMA and the Departments of Defense and Veteran Affairs concurred with our recommendation that the Director, FEMA, sponsor periodic national-level consequence management field exercises. FEMA noted that its fiscal year 2001 budget request included funding to sponsor a consequence management exercise. Justice and Transportation officials stated that our recommendation does not adequately acknowledge the close linkage between crisis and consequence management in a terrorist incident. We have modified our recommendation to suggest that future national-level consequence management exercises be held together with national-level crisis management field exercises.

Scope and Methodology

To identify the capabilities and characteristics of federal consequence management response teams, we reviewed our prior reports and conducted in-depth interviews with officials from the Departments of Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs, as well as FEMA, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. We also reviewed Presidential Decision Directives, the Federal Response Plan and the Terrorism Incident Annex, the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, and the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan. We attended several conferences that addressed consequence management response teams and issues related to combating terrorism. One conference demonstrated how health emergency response teams prepare for deployment and set up their equipment at an incident site.

To determine if duplication among teams belonging to different agencies existed, we analyzed information from documents provided by government officials concerning the scope, nature, and functions of the teams. Moreover, we interviewed various team members at locations nationwide to determine their teams' specific functions and capabilities in a terrorist incident. When possible, during our visits we examined the teams' equipment. We developed the report's team-related appendixes as a tool to help determine whether duplication existed. We discussed federal response

teams with state and local officials in Colorado. Appendix VI provides a detailed list of the organizations and locations we visited.

To assess the budget requirements process for these teams and how their budgets are linked to a national strategy, we reviewed our prior work, met with OMB officials, and discussed the budget process with participating agency officials. We also reviewed OMB's annual budget reports on combating terrorism to Congress and the Attorney General's Five-Year Interagency Counterterrorism and Technology Crime Plan (the December 1998 and the March 2000 updated versions).

To ascertain initiatives to improve the operational coordination of federal response teams across agency lines, we reviewed our prior work on counterrorism exercises and discussed current interagency coordinating efforts with FEMA, the lead federal agency for consequence management. We also discussed the scientific feasibility of the terrorist scenarios used by the FEMA-led Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group with a technical expert from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict and a biological warfare consultant. Officials from individual intelligence agencies briefed us on the threat of chemical and biological terrorism. In addition, we reviewed pertinent intelligence analyses related to terrorism and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's assessment of the domestic-origin terrorist threat. We attended the three TOPOFF 2000 exercise venues in Washington, D.C.; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; and Denver, Colorado, to assess federal teams' consequence management capabilities in mock terrorist incidents. We obtained information about two additional exercises that involved federal teams and were conducted during our review.

As agreed with your offices, because of the number of response teams involved, we limited our review to federal teams that assist with consequence management in a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear terrorist incident and excluded crisis management teams. Crisis management includes measures to anticipate, prevent, or resolve a threat or act of terrorism. It is predominantly a law enforcement response, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation being assigned the lead federal role for domestic crisis response. Consequence management may follow crisis management, but these two activities usually occur simultaneously or overlap, depending on the nature of the terrorist incident. To understand the difference between crisis and consequence management, we reviewed our prior reports and other documents and discussed the Bureau's crisis management teams with Bureau officials in Virginia. We recognize that teams other than those identified in this review could play a consequence management role because of their emergency response capabilities. However, the teams that we selected for our review were based on participating agency officials' views about the teams' roles as well as our analysis. Additionally, we recognize that a few teams have both crisis and consequence management functions, such as the Department of Defense's U.S. Army Technical Escort Unit. However, information received from DOD suggests that this team could play a key role in a consequence management response. In contrast, elements that are part of the Department of Energy's Nuclear Emergency Search Team have some consequence management-related functions. However, based on our analysis, in general, this team has functions related primarily to crisis management. In addition, we excluded the National Guard's Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams—formerly known as Rapid Assessment and Initial Detection teams—from our review. These teams are federally funded but are considered state assets. Moreover, based on our observations from TOPOFF 2000, these teams would remain as state assets when activated in response to a terrorist incident. We evaluated these teams' roles and response in a prior report.[18]

In discussing our draft report, the Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency stated that more emphasis should be placed on preparing federal responders to integrate into the incident command system established at the incident site. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the incident command system is the

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

standard on-scene response management system used in metropolitan areas around the United States by state, local, and many federal responders to manage emergency response. Both agencies emphasized the need for more federal responders to receive incident command system training to ensure interoperability and safe coordination. The agencies believe that the incident command system should be the common command system for use by all responders. We agree that all responders from federal, state, and local governments should coordinate their activities at the incident site as seamlessly as possible. Although we observed efforts to integrate federal, state, and local response activities at the TOPOFF 2000 exercise, our primary focus on this assignment was to examine how federal teams improve operational coordination across federal agencies. Accordingly, a detailed examination of the on-site integration of federal teams with state and local responders was outside the scope of our review.

We did not independently verify agencies' data about the teams; for example, the number of personnel on a team or the expected arrival time at a terrorist incident. However, we sent our analysis of the teams' data to the participating agencies for their review and validation.

Our review was conducted from January through September 2000 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from its issue date. At that time, we will send copies of this report to other appropriate congressional committees and the federal agencies discussed in this report. We will also make copies available to other interested parties upon request.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (202) 512-6020. Key contributors to this assignment are listed in appendix XVI.

Raymond J. Decker
Director, Defense
Capabilities and Management

Compendium of Selected Federal Response Plans and Authorities

Presidential Decision Directive 39

This Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) sets forth U.S. general policy to use all appropriate means to deter, defeat, and respond to all terrorist attacks against U.S. interests. More specifically, PDD-39 directs all federal departments and agencies to take various measures to (1) reduce vulnerabilities to terrorism (e.g., to assess the vulnerabilities of government facilities and critical national infrastructure); (2) deter and respond to terrorism (e.g., to pursue, arrest, and prosecute terrorists and to minimize damage and loss of life and provide emergency assistance); and (3) develop effective capabilities to prevent and manage the consequences of terrorist use of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

Presidential Decision Directive 62

This directive set up an integrated program to increase the federal government's effectiveness in countering terrorism threats against U.S. targets. PDD-62 organizes and clarifies the roles and activities of many agencies responsible for combating a wide range of terrorism, including preventing terrorist acts, apprehending and prosecuting terrorists, increasing transportation security as well as protecting critical computer-based systems. The directive also provides for consequence management of terrorist incidents.

To carry out the integrated program, PDD-62 established the Office of the National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection and Counter-Terrorism. Working within the National Security Council, the National Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the wide range of policies and programs covered by PDD-62 and is to take the lead in developing guidelines that might be needed for crisis management.

Federal Response Plan With Terrorism Incident Annex

This plan lays out the manner in which the federal government, with the Federal Emergency Management Agency coordinating the support/assistance efforts of other agencies, responds to domestic incidents or situations in which the President has declared an emergency requiring federal emergency disaster assistance. More specifically, the plan outlines the planning assumptions, policies, concept of operations, organizational structures, and specific assignment of responsibilities to lead departments and agencies in providing federal assistance. The plan also categorizes the types of federal assistance into specific emergency support functions such as transportation, communications, firefighting, and health and medical services.

The Terrorism Incident Annex establishes a general concept of operations for the federal response to a terrorist incident, including the concurrent operation under other plans such as the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan.

Authority

The Federal Response Plan is authorized under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121 et. seq., as amended, and 44 Code of Federal Regulations Subchapters D (Disaster Assistance) and E (Preparedness).

National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan

This plan provides the organizational structure and procedures for preparing for and responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants. The plan lists the general responsibilities of federal agencies regarding such incidents, identifies the fundamental kinds of activities that are performed pursuant to the plan, and describes the specific responsibilities of the National Response Team, the Regional Response Teams, the National Response Center, and the U.S. Coast Guard's National Strike Force Teams for planning and responding to such incidents.

Federal agencies may conduct consequence management activities under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan because it provides authority and funding sources to respond to hazardous materials incidents regardless of the suspected cause. For example, a terrorist act may at first appear to be a routine hazardous materials incident, leading to the activation of a federal response under this plan. If the Federal Response Plan is activated, the response actions of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan are conducted as one of the Federal Response Plan's emergency support functions.

Authority

The National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan is authorized under section 105 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, 42 U.S.C. 9605, as amended; section 311(d) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1321(d), as amended; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 300.

Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan

This plan establishes an organizational and operational structure for coordinated responses by federal agencies to peacetime radiological emergencies, taking into consideration the specific statutory authorities and responsibilities of each agency. The plan provides guidance as to which agency will lead and coordinate the federal response to a radiological emergency (i.e., the lead federal agency), which depends on the type of emergency involved. For example, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is the lead agency for an emergency that occurs at a nuclear facility or any activity licensed by the Commission. The plan also identifies the specific role and responsibility of a lead federal agency, such as responding to requests from state and local governments for technical information and assistance.

The plan may be used whenever any of the signatory agencies responds to a radiological emergency, which includes deliberate acts to spread radioactivity in the environment. The Federal Response Plan may be implemented concurrently with the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan. The functions and responsibilities of the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan do not change, except for the coordination that occurs between the lead federal agency and the Federal Coordinating Officer (usually a Federal Emergency Management Agency official).

Authority

The Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan is authorized under section 304 of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1980 (P.L. 96-295) and Executive Order 12241, September 29, 1980.

Selected Information About Federal Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Consequence Management Response Teams

Response team	Mission	Cited authority	Number of team (dedicated/collateral) members and team's primary location	Transportation mode and response time
Department of Defense				
Joint Task Force for Civil Support	Supports lead federal agency, establishes command and control of designated Department of Defense (DOD) forces, and provides military assistance to civil authorities to save lives, prevent human suffering, and provide temporary critical life support.	Established Oct. 1, 1999 by Secretary of Defense directive.	Sixty dedicated personnel located at Fort Monroe, Va.	Travels by military aircraft or ground transportation. Initial team deploys within 4 hours.
Chemical/Biological Rapid Response Team	Coordinates and integrates DOD's technical assistance for the neutralization, containment, dismantlement, and disposal of chemical or biological materials, and assists first responders in dealing with consequence management.	Secretary of Defense directive based on the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 1996 and Fiscal Year 1997 National Defense Authorization Act.	Fourteen dedicated personnel located at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md.	Travels by commercial or military aircraft or ground transportation. Initial team deploys within 4 hours, and remainder of team deploys in 10 to 12 hours.
U.S. Army Technical Escort Unit	Provides chemical/biological advice, assessment, sampling, detection, field verification, packaging, escort, and render safe for chemical/biological devices or hazards.	Chemical Warfare Service directive dated Jan. 20, 1943.	One hundred ninety-three dedicated personnel located at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md.; Fort Belvoir, Va; Pine Bluff, Ark.; and Dugway, Ut.	Travels by military aircraft or ground transportation. Team deploys in 4 hours.
U.S. Army Special Medical Augmentation Response Team—Nuclear/Biological/Chemical	Provides technical advice in the detection, neutralization, and containment of chemical, biological, or radiological hazardous materials in a terrorist event.	Established in 1998 by U.S. Army Surgeon General directive.	Six teams located at various sites with six collateral duty members per team.	Travels by military aircraft or ground transportation in 12 hours.

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Response team	Mission	Cited authority	Number of team (dedicated/collateral) members and team's primary location	Transportation mode and response time
U.S. Army Special Medical Augmentation Response Team—Aero-Medical Isolation	Provides a rapid response evacuation unit to any area of the world to transport and provide patient care under conditions of biological containment to service members or U. S. civilians exposed to certain contagious and highly dangerous diseases.	Established in 1977 by U.S. Army Surgeon General directive.	Approximately 20 collateral duty personnel at Fort Detrick, Md.	Travels by military aircraft.
U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force	Provides force protection or mitigation in the event of a terrorist incident, domestically or overseas.	Established in Apr. 1996 by the U.S. Marine Corps Commandant's planning guidance.	Three hundred seventy-three dedicated personnel at Indian Head, Md.	Travels by military aircraft or ground transportation. Initial team deploys in 6 hours, and remainder of team deploys in 24 hours.
U.S. Army Radiological Advisory Medical Team	Assists and furnishes radiological health hazard guidance to the on-scene commander or other responsible officials at an incident site and the installation medical authority.	Army Regulation 40-13, Feb. 1, 1985.	Eight to 10 collateral duty personnel located at Walter Reed Army Hospital, Washington, D.C.	Travels by military transportation, commercial aircraft, or personal vehicles within 8 hours.
Department of Health and Human Services				
Management Support Teams	Manage federal medical teams and assets that are deployed in response to an incident.	National Security Decision Directive 47, 1982; Federal Response Plan; Presidential Decision Directives 39 and 62.	Six to eight dedicated personnel located at Rockville, Md., supplemented by 18 to 20 collateral duty Department of Veterans Affairs personnel.	Travels by commercial or military aircraft. Initial team (2 to 5 members) expected to be ready to deploy within 2 hours and arrive within 12 hours. Full team expected to arrive within 12 to 24 hours.
National Medical Response Teams	Decontaminate casualties resulting from a hazardous materials incident, provide medical care, and deploy with pharmaceutical cache of antidotes and medical equipment.	Federal Response Plan; Presidential Decision Directives 39 and 62.	Four teams located at Washington, D.C. (non-deployable); Winston-Salem, N.C.; Denver, Colo.; and Los Angeles, Calif., with 36 collateral duty members per team.	Travels by commercial or military aircraft or ground transportation. Expected to be ready to deploy within 3 hours and arrive within 12 hours.

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Response team	Mission	Cited authority	Number of team (dedicated/collateral) members and team's primary location	Transportation mode and response time
Disaster Medical Assistance Teams	Provide emergency medical care during a disaster or other event.	National Security Decision Directive 47; Public Health Service memorandum of understanding with each team and team sponsor; Federal Response Plan; Presidential Decision Directives 39 and 62.	Forty-four teams at various locations nationwide with 34 collateral duty members per team.	Travels by commercial or military aircraft or ground transportation. Expected to be ready to deploy within 3 to 4 hours and arrive within 12 to 24 hours.
Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams	Provide identification and mortuary services to state and local health officials upon request in the event of major disasters and emergencies.	Federal Response Plan; Presidential Decision Directives 39 and 62; Public Health Service/National Association for Search and Rescue memorandum of understanding.	Ten teams at various locations nationwide with 25 to 31 collateral duty members per team.	Travels by commercial aircraft or ground transportation. Expected to be ready to deploy within 4 hours and at the site within 6 to 12 hours.
National Pharmaceutical Stockpile	Resupplies state and local public health agencies with pharmaceuticals and other medical treatments in the event of a terrorist incident.	P.L. 105-277: Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Appropriations Act of 1999.	Four to six dedicated personnel located at Atlanta, Ga.	Travels by commercial, charter, or military aircraft. Expected to arrive within 12 hours.
Department of Energy				
Radiological Assistance Program Teams	Assist federal agencies, state and local governments, private business, or individuals in incidents involving radiological materials.	Established in the late 1950s under the Atomic Energy Commission.	Twenty-six teams at various locations nationwide with seven collateral duty members per team.	Normally travels by ground transportation but can deploy by commercial aircraft. Expected to arrive within 2 to 6 hours.

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Response team	Mission	Cited authority	Number of team (dedicated/collateral) members and team's primary location	Transportation mode and response time
Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center[a]	Collects, evaluates, interprets, and distributes off-site radiological data in support of the lead federal agency, state and local governments. Coordinates federal resources in responding to the off-site monitoring and assessment needs at the scene of a radiological emergency.	Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan.	Team members deploy in phases. Phases I (15 members) and II (45 members) consist of collateral duty Department of Energy personnel from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., and other locations. Phase III (known as Full Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center) involves multiple federal agencies and may have 150 or more personnel from various federal agencies.	Travels by military, commercial, or Department of Energy-owned aircraft. Expected to arrive within 4 to 8 hours (phase I), 11 hours (phase II), and 24 to 36 hours (phase III).
Aerial Measuring System	Detects, measures, and tracks ground and airborne radioactivity over large areas using fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft.	Established in the early 1950s as a U.S. Geological Survey program to support the Atomic Energy Commission.	Five to 10 dedicated and collateral duty personnel located at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., and Andrews Air Force Base, Md.	Initial team travels in fixed-wing aircraft and is expected to arrive within 4 to 8 hours.
Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/Training Site	Provides medical advice and on-site assistance in triage, diagnosis, and treatment of all types of radiation exposure events.	Established in 1976 under an agreement between the Energy Research and Development Administration and a local hospital.	Four to eight dedicated personnel located in Oak Ridge, Tenn.	Travels by commercial or charter aircraft. Expected to be ready to deploy within 4 hours.
Department of Transportation				
U.S. Coast Guard National Strike Teams	Respond to oil and hazardous substance pollution incidents in and around waterways to protect public health and the environment. Area of responsibility includes all Coast Guard Districts and Federal Response Regions. Support Environmental Protection Agency's On-Scene Coordinators for inland area incidents.	Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972; National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 C.F. R. 300); Oil Pollution Act of 1990.	Three teams located in Fort Dix, N.J.; Mobile, Ala.; and Novato, Calif., with 35 to 39 dedicated members per team.	Travels by military aircraft or ground transportation. Expected to deploy within 1 to 6 hours and arrive within 12 hours.

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Mission	Cited authority	Number of team (dedicated/collateral) members and team's primary location	Transportation mode and response time
U.S. Coast Guard On-Scene Coordinators	Coordinate all containment, removal and disposal efforts during a hazardous release incident in coastal or major navigational waterways.	National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 C.F.R. 300).	Approximately 50 dedicated personnel in pre-designated Coast Guard regional zones at various locations nationwide.	Travels by ground transportation. On-call 24 hours. Response time depends on location of incident site.
Department of Veterans Affairs				
Medical Emergency Radiological Response Team	Provides technical advice, radiological monitoring, decontamination expertise, and medical care as a supplement to an institutional health care provider.	Executive Order 12657: Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance In Emergency Preparedness Planning at Commercial Nuclear Power Plants; Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan.	Twenty-one to 23 collateral duty personnel are located at various sites nationwide.	Travels by commercial aircraft. Expected to be ready to deploy within 6 hours and arrive within 12 to 24 hours.
Environmental Protection Agency				
On-Scene Coordinators	Direct response efforts and coordinate all other efforts at the scene of a hazardous materials discharge or release.	National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 C.F.R. 300).	Approximately 200 dedicated personnel, plus contractor support, at various locations nationwide.	Travels by commercial aircraft or ground transportation. Coordinators and contractors are on-call 24 hours. Response time depends on location of incident site.
Environmental Response Team	Provides technical support for assessing, managing, and disposing of hazardous waste.	National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 C.F.R. 300).	Twenty-two dedicated personnel, plus contractor support, located in Edison, N.J., and Cincinnati, Ohio.	Travels by commercial aircraft. Advance team expected to deploy within 4 hours. Full team expected to arrive within 24 to 48 hours.
Radiological Emergency Response Team	Provides mobile laboratories for field analysis of samples and technical expertise in radiation monitoring, radiation health physics, and risk assessment.	National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 C.F.R. 300)	As many as 60 collateral duty personnel located in Las Vegas, Nev., and Montgomery, Ala.	Travels by ground transportation or military air. Expected to arrive within 2 to 3 days.

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Mission	Cited authority	Number of team (dedicated/collateral) members and team's primary location	Transportation mode and response time
Federal Emergency Management Agency				
Emergency Response Team	Coordinates federal response and recovery activities within a state.	Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121 et. seq.	Size is dependent on the severity and magnitude of the incident. Collateral duty team members are geographically dispersed at Federal Emergency Management Agency headquarters and 10 regional offices.	Travels by commercial, charter, or military aircraft, or ground transportation. Expected to arrive within 24 hours.
Nuclear Regulatory Commission				
Regional Incident Response Teams	Carry out the responsibilities and functions of the lead federal agency during incidents at licensed facilities such as nuclear power plants.	Public Law 96-295, dated June 30, 1980; Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan.	Four teams located in Atlanta, Ga.; Lisle, Ill.; Arlington, Tex.; and King of Prussia, Penn., with 25 to 30 collateral duty members per team.	Travels by commercial or charter aircraft or ground transportation. Initial team expected to arrive within 6 to 12 hours.

[a]The Department of Energy has the lead responsibility for coordinating the Federal Radiological Monitoring Assessment Center during the early phase of an emergency. The Environmental Protection Agency assumes control during later phases.

Note: Agency officials define deployment time as the number of hours in which team members receive notification to leave for an incident and their arrival at their place of departure. They define arrival time as the number of hours in which the team is expected to reach the incident site after receiving notification. Department of Defense officials provided only deployment times for their teams.

Source: Our analysis and discussions with agency officials.

Selected Functions of Federal Consequence Management Response Teams in a Chemical Terrorist Incident

The primary functions federal response teams may perform in a terrorist incident involving a chemical agent or weapon vary (see table 1). Different types of chemical agents exist, and they can be dispersed as a gas, vapor, liquid, or aerosol. A chemical agent could be disseminated by explosive or mechanical delivery. Some chemicals disperse rapidly and others remain toxic for days or weeks and require decontamination and clean up. Rapid exposure to a highly concentrated agent would increase the number of casualties. Federal, state, and local officials generally agree that a chemical terrorist incident would look like a major hazardous material emergency. According to the International Association of Fire Chiefs, over 600 local and state hazardous material teams will be the first to respond to an incident, whether it is a chemical agent, industrial chemical, or other material. If local responders are unable to manage the situation or are overwhelmed, the incident commander has access to state and federal assets.

Table 1: Primary Functions Performed by Federal Consequence Management Response Teams in a Chemical Terrorist Incident

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Department of Defense							
Joint Task Force for Civil Support	Commands all federal military forces on site for consequence management and coordinates these activities with the lead federal agency.						

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Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Chemical/ Biological Rapid Response Team							Provides specialized technical advice to the Joint Task Force for Civil Support. Offers links to U.S. Army experts in a variety of disciplines, such as agent detection and disposal and assistance from medical laboratories.
U.S. Army Technical Escort Unit[a]		Samples, detects, and identifies chemical agents.	Renders safe, packages, and escorts chemical munitions or devices.				
U.S. Army Special Medical Augmentation Response Team-Nuclear/ Biological/ Chemical[a]							Provides advice to (1) medical treatment facilities on handling contaminated patients and (2) authorities on determining follow-on medical resources, supplies, and equipment to resolve the incident.

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force[a]		Samples, detects, and identifies chemical agents.		Performs casualty search, extraction, and decontamination.	Performs triage and emergency medical treatment in a contaminated zone.	Performs first aid, advanced cardiac life support, and trauma support initially for 250 patients. Administers 1,500 nerve agent antidotes.	
Department of Health and Human Services							
Management Support Teams	Coordinate the activities of federal civilian medical teams.						
National Medical Response Teams			Collect and secure contaminated material, e.g. victims' clothing and any items that are circumspect after initial search for transition to crisis management responders.	Provide extensive decontamination capability.	Perform casualty triage.	Provide extensive medical care; stabilize patients; and administer antidotes and other medications. The teams each have a supply of pharmaceuticals to treat 5,000 people.	

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Disaster Medical Assistance Teams					Perform casualty triage.	Provide emergency medical care and patient stabilization. Can administer medical treatments. Assist in the transport of victims from incident site to medical facilities such as hospitals.	
Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams				Perform recovery, identification, and processing of fatalities. Provide advice on the effects of decomposing fatalities. Decontaminate fatalities.			
Department of Transportation							
U.S. Coast Guard National Strike Teams		Identify environmental contamination of waterways.	Decontaminate, collect, and secure contaminated material in waterways.				
U.S. Coast Guard On-Scene Coordinators	Coordinate federal containment, removal, and disposal efforts in and around coastal waterways.	Conduct initial site assessment, to include evaluating the size and nature of the released substance and its potential hazards.	Direct efforts to decontaminate and clean up the incident site. Activities can include control and stabilization of the agent, on-site treatment, and off-site disposal.				

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Environmental Protection Agency							
On-Scene Coordinators	Coordinate federal containment, removal, and disposal efforts.	Conduct initial site assessment, to include evaluating the size and nature of the released substance and its potential hazards.	Direct efforts to decontaminate and clean up the incident site. Activities can include control and stabilization of the agent, on-site treatment, and off-site disposal.				
Environmental Response Team		Offers specialized technical assistance in areas such as air sampling and ecological risk assessment.	Offers specialized technical assistance in areas such as incineration and groundwater treatment.				
Federal Emergency Management Agency							
Emergency Response Team	Establishes field office if required. Provides disaster assessment coordination and expertise to states and the Federal Emergency Management Agency regions.						

[a]These DOD teams have a military wartime mission and may be unavailable for a domestic terrorist incident.

Note: We identified the primary functions performed by a team when it responds to a chemical terrorist incident, even though the team has other capabilities.

Source: Our analysis and discussions with agency officials.

Selected Functions of Federal Consequence Management Response Teams in a Biological Terrorist Incident

The primary functions federal response teams may perform in a terrorist incident involving a biological agent or weapon vary (see table 2). Based on our prior work, according to a wide range of experts in science, health, intelligence, and biological warfare and a technical report we reviewed, the most effective way to disseminate a biological agent is by aerosol. This method allows the simultaneous respiratory infection of a large number of people. A few biological agents (e.g., plague and smallpox) are communicable and can be spread beyond those directly affected by the weapon or dissemination device. Every biological agent, even those that are highly communicable, must be disseminated by some means that infects enough individuals to initiate a disease epidemic. The release of a biological agent or weapon may not be known for several days until victims present themselves to medical personnel in doctors' offices, clinics, and emergency rooms where the symptoms might be easily confused with influenza or other less virulent illnesses. Accordingly, the critical detection of the biological agent begins with the public health infrastructure that detects outbreaks of illness, identifies the sources and modes of transmission, and performs rapid agent laboratory identification. Once diagnosis of a biological agent is confirmed, treating victims may require the use of federal consequence management teams and the need for items from the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile.

Table 2: Primary Functions Performed by Federal Consequence Management Response Teams in a Biological Terrorist Incident

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Department of Defense							
Joint Task Force for Civil Support	Commands all federal military forces on site for consequence management and coordinates these activities with the lead federal agency.						

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Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Chemical/ Biological Rapid Response Team							Provides specialized technical advice to the Joint Task Force for Civil Support. Offers links to U.S. Army experts in a variety of disciplines, such as agent detection and disposal and assistance from medical laboratories.
U.S. Army Special Medical Augmentation Response Team-Nuclear/ Biological/ Chemical[a]							Provides advice to (1) medical treatment facilities on handling contaminated patients and (2) authorities on determining follow-on medical resources, supplies, and equipment to resolve the incident.
U.S. Army Special Medical Augmentation Response Team-Aero-Medical Isolation[a]				Provides highly specialized patient care during evacuation to medical facilities.		Provides limited patient care in isolation units.	

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
U.S. Marine Corps Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force[a]		Has capability to detect four biological agents.					
Department of Health and Human Services							
Management Support Teams	Coordinate the activities of federal civilian medical teams.						
National Medical Response Teams					Perform casualty triage.	Provide extensive medical care, stabilize patients, and administer antibiotics and other medications.	
Disaster Medical Assistance Teams					Perform casualty triage.	Provide emergency medical care and patient stabilization. Assist in the transport of victims from medical points of distribution to medical facilities such as area hospitals.	

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams				Perform recovery, identification, and processing of fatalities. Provide advice on the effects of decomposing fatalities. Decontaminate fatalities.			
National Pharmaceutical Stockpile							Personnel who accompany the stockpile advise and assist in the organization of bulk stockpile medications into individual doses. They also advise and assist in the implementation of plans to distribute and dispense stockpile medications.
Federal Emergency Management Agency							
Emergency Response Team	Establishes field office if required. Provides disaster assessment coordination and expertise to states and the Federal Emergency Management Agency regions.						

[a]These DOD teams have a military wartime mission and may be unavailable for a domestic incident.

Note: We identified the primary functions performed by a team when it responds to a biological terrorist incident, even though the team has other capabilities.

Source: Our analysis and discussions with agency officials.

Selected Functions of Federal Consequence Management Response Teams in a Radiological/Nuclear Terrorist Incident

The primary functions federal response teams may perform in a terrorist incident involving a radiological agent or weapon vary (see table 3). A radiological terrorist incident could expose people at the incident site to dangerous levels of radioactive material and contaminate a geographic area. One possible delivery mechanism is an explosive device containing radioactive material such as cesium-137, iridium-192, and cobalt-60. The radioactive material could be removed from a stolen source, crushed into powder, and placed in the explosive device. In addition to the damage caused by the explosion itself, the disbursed radioactive material could irradiate people who come into contact with it, ingest it, or inhale it. If the exposure level is high enough, these people could become sick or die. The radioactive material could also contaminate the incident site and be disbursed in the smoke resulting from the blast.[1] Such an incident would warrant a quick response from local fire and rescue and law enforcement personnel. If these local responders are unable to manage the situation or are overwhelmed, the incident commander has access to federal assets.

[1] This delivery mechanism is described in the December 15, 1999, report of the Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction. Mock terrorists in the Washington, D.C., area also used explosive devices to disburse radioactive material during the May 2000 exercise that is discussed elsewhere in this report. Terrorists could also use a more passive system, such as aerosol, to deliver radiological agents.

Table 3: Primary Functions Performed by Federal Consequence Management Response Teams in a Radiological/Nuclear Terrorist Incident

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Department of Defense							
Joint Task Force for Civil Support	Commands all federal military forces on site for consequence management and coordinates these activities with the lead federal agency.						
U. S. Army Special Medical Augmentation Response Team-Nuclear/ Biological/ Chemical[a]							Provides advice to (1) medical treatment facilities on handling contaminated patients and (2) authorities on determining follow-on medical resources, supplies, and equipment to resolve the incident.
U.S. Army Radiological Advisory Medical Team[a]		Monitors contaminated medical facilities and equipment.					Provides guidance about health hazards from radiological contamination. Provides advice for appropriate medical treatment. Can treat victims.

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Department of Energy							
Radiological Assistance Program Teams		Conduct initial site assessments. Small, regionally based teams provide quick response capability to calls for radiological assistance.					Advise decision-makers on steps that can be taken to evaluate and minimize the hazards of a radiological emergency.
Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center	Acts as the control point for all federal assets that are monitoring and assessing off-site radiological conditions.	Gathers and assesses radiological data from multiple sources, including Radiological Assistance Program teams and the Aerial Measuring System. Also provides assessments to the state and the lead federal agency.					

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Aerial Measuring System		Detects and surveys the location of radioactive material deposited on the ground or the path of a radioactive plume. Fixed-wing aircraft provide quick surveys over a large area to determine the severity of the incident. Rotary-wing aircraft provide more detailed measure-ments.					
Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/ Training Site							Provides medical consultation and on-site assistance for the treatment of all types of radiation exposure incidents.
Department of Health and Human Services							
Management Support Teams	Coordinate the activities of federal civilian medical teams.						
National Medical Response Teams[b]				Extract and decontaminate victims from contaminated area.	Perform casualty triage.	Provide limited medical care.	

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Disaster Medical Assistance Teams					Perform casualty triage.	Provide emergency medical care and patient stabilization. Can administer medical treatments. Assist in the transport of victims from incident site to medical facilities such as hospitals.	
Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams				Perform recovery, identification, and processing of fatalities. Provide advice on the effects of potential contamination resulting from fatalities. Decontaminate fatalities.			
Department of Veterans Affairs							
Medical Emergency Radiological Response Team		Monitors for radioactivity beyond the contaminated site.		Provides capability to decontaminate victims.		Provides specialized medical care for radiation trauma.	
Environmental Protection Agency							
On-Scene Coordinators	Coordinate federal containment, removal, and disposal efforts.	Conduct initial site assessment, to include evaluating the size and nature of the released substance and its potential hazards.	Direct efforts to clean up the incident site. Activities can include control and stabilization of the agent, on-site treatment, and off-site disposal.				

(Continued From Previous Page)

Response team	Coordinate activities at incident site	Detect and evaluate agent	Dismantle, transfer, dispose of, and/or decontaminate property	Extract and/or decontaminate victims from the incident site	Triage victims	Provide medical treatment	Provide technical advice
Radiological Emergency Response Team		Conducts sample preparation and analysis in mobile laboratories.					
Federal Emergency Management Agency							
Emergency Response Team	Establishes field office if required. Provides disaster assessment coordination and expertise to states and the Federal Emergency Management Agency regions.						
Nuclear Regulatory Commission							
Regional Incident Response Teams	Lead and coordinate federal actions related to the radiological technical response at incident site. Review actions the regulated entity is taking to correct problems. Provide analysis and consultation for actions taken to protect public health and safety.						

[a]These DOD teams have a military wartime mission and may be unavailable for a domestic terrorist incident.

[b]These functions are performed by a special unit within one of the National Medical Response Teams.

Note: We identified the primary functions performed by a team when it responds to a radiological or nuclear terrorist incident, even though the team has other capabilities. The magnitude of devastation caused by a nuclear weapon would overwhelm state and local assets quickly. The Federal Bureau of Investigation ranks use of nuclear weapons by domestic-origin terrorists on the low-end of the threat spectrum.

Source: Our analysis and discussions with agency officials.

Organizations and Locations Visited

During the course of our review, we met with officials from the following organizations:

Department of Defense

- Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Civil Support, Arlington, Va.
- Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Arlington, Va.
- Joint Task Force-Civil Support, Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, Va.
- U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, Frederick, Md.
- U.S. Army Technical Escort Unit, Aberdeen, Md.
- U.S. Army Chemical/Biological Rapid Response Team, Aberdeen, Md.

Department of Health and Human Services

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Office of Emergency Preparedness, Rockville, Md.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Ga.
  - National Center for Infectious Diseases
  - National Center for Environmental Health
- National Medical Response Team, Arlington, Va.

Department of Energy

- Office of Emergency Response, Germantown, Md.
- Albuquerque Operations Office, Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.
- Sandia National Laboratory, Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.
- Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, N.M.
- Remote Sensing Laboratory, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

Department of Transportation

- U.S. Coast Guard, Headquarters, Washington, D.C.

Environmental Protection Agency

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Region VIII, Denver, Colo.
- Environmental Response Team, Edison, N.J.
- Radiation and Indoor Environments National Laboratory, Las Vegas, Nev.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Region VIII, Denver, Colo.

Department of Veterans Affairs

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Office of Emergency Preparedness/Emergency Management Strategic Healthcare Group, Martinsburg, W.Va.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

- Headquarters, Rockville, Md.

Office of Management and Budget

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.

Comments From the Department of Defense

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

OCT 27 2000

Mr. Raymond J. Decker
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management
National Security and International Affairs Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear ~~Mr. Decker~~ Ray

This is the Department of Defense (DOD) response to the GAO Draft Report, "Combating Terrorism: Federal Response Teams provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination," dated October 3, 2000 (GAO Code 702031/OSD Case 2094).

DoD has reviewed the subject draft report and concurs with the recommendations with no further comment.

Please contact me at (703) 692-7116 if you have any further questions.

Pamela B. Berkowsky
Assistant to the Secretary of Defense
for Civil Support

Comments From the Department of Energy

Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

NOV 08 2000

Mr. Raymond J. Decker
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management
United States General Accounting Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

The Department of Energy appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the General Accounting (GAO) draft report entitled, "Combating Terrorism: Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination, GAO/NSIAD-01-13."

In general, the report provides a good summary of Federal response teams that can respond to a terrorist incident involving a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents/devices. The draft report contains no recommendations to the Department of Energy. However, we are providing minor editorial changes as an enclosure. The Department hopes that the comments will be helpful in the preparation of the final report. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Tom Black on (301) 903-7314.

Sincerely,

Eugene E. Habiger, General USAF (Retired)
Director, Office of Security and
Emergency Operations

Enclosure

Printed with soy ink on recycled paper

Comments From the Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice

Criminal Division

Washington, D.C. 20530

NOV - 7 2000

Mr. Raymond J. Decker, Director
Defense Capabilities and Management
U.S. General Accounting Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

I am writing in response to your October 3, 2000, request to the Department of Justice (DOJ) for comments on the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report entitled "Combating Terrorism: Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination." One of the conclusions of the draft report is that "[t]he federal government lacks a national strategy to guide resource investments for combating terrorism" and "[a]s a result, federal agencies lack a coherent framework to develop and evaluate budget requirements for their response teams." The DOJ takes exception to this conclusion.

While the GAO report recognizes the Attorney General's interagency plan on counter-terrorism and technology crime as the current document that "most closely resembles a national strategy," it opines that "the plan does not establish or define clearly desired outcomes that the Nation is trying to achieve." The Five-Year Interagency Counter-terrorism and Technology Crime Plan coordinated by the Attorney General in 1998 articulates six major categories of high-level goals, incorporating a number of specific objectives to achieve in order to reach those goals, and establishes priority criteria and a time frame for each particularly identified action recommended to fulfill the specific objectives. Among the six categories of high-level goals are the goals of improving domestic crisis and consequence planning and management and safeguarding public safety by improving state and local capabilities. In the Plan's discussion of these goals, almost half of the specified action items relate to the capabilities and preparedness of federal and state response teams. Each of the pertinent action items was developed as a result of substantial interagency discussion and coordination as the Five-Year Plan was being created. Each of those action items was assigned a priority level and a schedule for accomplishment over the life of the Five Year Plan and

beyond. Therefore, we believe it is inaccurate to state in the GAO draft report that the Plan "does not establish or define clearly desired outcomes that the Nation is trying to achieve." The objectives and action items identified in the Five-Year Plan are quite specific and, if accomplished, would lead to the outcomes described in the broader statement of goals included in the Five Year Plan.

The priority determinations and time frames attached to each action item in the Five-Year Plan are the catalysts for budgetary decisions to be made not only within the individual agencies affected, but more broadly, throughout the federal government. The GAO report appears to acknowledge as much when it states that Office of Management and Budget officials have advised that the Five-Year Plan, together with Presidential Decision Directives (PDDs) 62 and 63 "serve as criteria for the program evaluations in the new interagency process" as terrorism program priorities are identified.

We hope these comments will be beneficial in completing the final report. If you have any questions concerning any of the DOJ's comments, you may contact Vickie L. Sloan, Director, Audit Liaison Office, Justice Management Division.

Sincerely,

James S. Reynolds, Chief
Terrorism and Violent Crime Section

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Comments From the Department of Health and Human Services

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES Office of Inspector General

Washington, D.C. 20201

NOV 6 2000

Mr. Raymond J. Decker
Director, Defense Capabilities
and Management
United States General
Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

The Department has carefully reviewed the General Accounting Office's (GAO) draft report entitled, "Combating Terrorism: Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination" and believes that overall GAO's report is a fair description of the capabilities of Federal response teams.

This comment represents the tentative position of the Department and is subject to reevaluation when the final version of this report is received.

The Department also provided some technical comments directly to your staff.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on this draft report before its publication.

Sincerely,

Michael Mangano
for June Gibbs Brown
Inspector General

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is transmitting the Department's response to this draft report in our capacity as the Department's designated focal point and coordinator for General Accounting Office reports. The OIG has not conducted an independent assessment of these comments and therefore expresses no opinion on them.

Comments From the Department of Veterans Affairs

THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

NOV 3 2000

Mr. Raymond J. Decker
Director, Defense Capabilities
and Management
U. S. General Accounting Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

The Department of Veterans Affairs has reviewed your draft report, ***COMBATING TERRORISM: Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination*** (GAO/NSIAD-01-13). GAO has accurately portrayed VA's responsibilities and participation in our nation's chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear counterterrorist exercises. I agree with your findings and conclusions and support your recommendations. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your report.

Sincerely,

Hershel W. Gober
Acting

Comments From the Federal Emergency Management Agency

Federal Emergency Management Agency
Washington, D.C. 20472

NOV 2 2000

Mr. Raymond J. Decker
Director
Defense Capabilities and Management
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

On behalf of Director James Lee Witt, I am responding to your letter of October 3, 2000, requesting FEMA comments on the draft GAO Report entitled *Combating Terrorism: Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination.*

Several offices provided detailed comments on the report, including the Response and Recovery Directorate, the Preparedness, Training and Exercises Directorate, and the United States Fire Administration. These comments are provided in the enclosure to this letter.

FEMA concurs with the recommendations for executive action. Specifically, the FEMA Director will take steps to ensure that the Weapons of Mass Destruction Interagency Steering Group works with the relevant scientific and intelligence communities in developing NBC-related scenarios. Additionally, the FEMA Director will work to support and sponsor periodic national consequence management field exercises to ensure better coordination among Federal teams and other teams comprised of local and State first responders and other emergency management personnel.

I trust this information is responsive to your request. If you need further assistance, please contact Thomas Antush in the Office of the Director on 202-646-3617.

Sincerely,

John W. Magaw

John W. Magaw
Senior Advisor to the Director
for Terrorism Preparedness

Enclosure

Comments From the Environmental Protection Agency

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

NOV - 2

OFFICE OF
SOLID WASTE AND EMERGENCY
RESPONSE

Mr. Raymond J. Decker,
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the U. S. General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report "Combating Terrorism: Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination." In general, we believe that the report provides an accurate picture of the current state of terrorism response planning and the problems associated with developing an integrated Federal approach to budgeting, priority setting, and establishing common goals and objectives. We have identified an area which we believe needs more attention: field coordination among Federal and other responders at the site. We believe that more awareness and training for Federal responders in the Incident Command System (ICS) would improve Federal response to terrorist incidents. Our specific comments are addressed in an attachment to this letter.

We noted that the TOPOFF 2000 exercise was addressed in your report. For your information, we have enclosed the National Response Team's and EPA's observations on the TOPOFF 2000 exercise.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft report. Please direct any questions to Ken Stroech of the Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office on (202) 260-3434.

Sincerely,

Timothy Fields, Jr.
Assistant Administrator

Enclosures

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Comments From the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

November 1, 2000

Mr. Raymond J. Decker
Director, Defense Capabilities
and Management
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on your draft report titled "Combating Terrorism: Federal Response Teams Provide Varied Capabilities; Opportunities Remain to Improve Coordination" (GAO/NSIAD-01-13) that you sent to the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on October 3, 2000. The NRC staff has thoroughly reviewed the report. Our review focused on the manner in which the draft report portrays the role that the NRC plays in responding to a terrorist incident that would affect NRC licensed facilities, including those in the Agreement States. Your report represents our role accurately. However, we offer the enclosed specific comments to enhance the completeness of the report.

Dr. Charles L. Miller, the NRC point of contact for this review has enjoyed the professional interaction with Thomas Gosslick of your staff during the conduct of the study to produce the report. If you have any questions pertaining to our comments on the report, please contact Dr. Miller at 301-415-7482.

Sincerely,

Carl J. Paperiello for

William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

Enclosure: As stated

Comments From the Office of Management and Budget

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

November 3, 2000

Raymond J. Decker, Director
Defense Capabilities and Management
441 G Street, N.W. Room 4930
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Decker:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on your draft report on combating terrorism. These are issues we consider extremely important to our Nation's security and on which many people in many Federal agencies are working diligently. For this reason, we appreciate the draft report's suggestions for improving the coordination between Federal government and state and local government employees who will, in many cases, be first on the scene.

Nonetheless, when it addresses the larger issues involved in developing a program that imposes responsibilities on many agencies at all levels of government, we were disappointed. The report does not present the full range of Federal activities and in some respects is simply inaccurate. For the past three years, since the development and signing by the President of Presidential Decision Directives 62 and 63, Federal agencies have reviewed existing programs, developed new ones, proposed budgets to fund them and begun implementation. To mention only a few, we began:

- training and equipping local police and other emergency personnel, who will likely be the first to respond when a domestic Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) terrorist event occurs;
- stockpiling of vaccines and medicines and are now developing improved vaccines;
- building the capacity of our public health surveillance system at all levels of government to detect and respond to biological terrorist attacks, as well as expanding epidemiologic and laboratory capabilities and enhancing communications among components of the public health system;
- expanding dramatically those research and development efforts in the Departments of Defense, Energy, Agriculture, Health and Human Services and others for WMD detection, individual and collective protection, decontamination, and therapeutics that will improve tomorrow's response capabilities;

- improving our ability to prevent and respond to a WMD incident overseas involving Americans, including measures to protect embassies and military forces.

These initiatives are the result of concentrated efforts at consultation and coordination among the agencies, led by the National Security Council with the help of OMB. The overall process, program, and strategy have been codified in several ways:

- Presidential Decision Directives (PDDs) 62 and 63 clarify the missions of agencies charged with defeating terrorism, create a new and more systematic approach to fighting the emerging threat of weapons of mass destruction, and call for a national effort to assure the security of critical infrastructure;
- The Administration's "Five-Year Interagency Counter-Terrorism and Technology Crime Plan" provides annual updates to the baseline strategy for coordination of national policy and operational capabilities to combat terrorism;
- The "National Plan for Information Systems Protection" articulates the first stages of the nation's efforts to defend cyberspace; and
- OMB's "Annual Report to Congress on Combating Terrorism" describes the integrated, interagency approach we are now taking for determining terrorism-related resource needs and identifies the funding contained in the President's Budget for implementing the strategy. In this new process, interagency working groups review all programs to counter unconventional threats across the government, identify gaps and duplication, and propose initiatives to correct them. The program and budget review is designed to mesh with the standard budget process, allowing decisions for unconventional threats to be considered in the context of other agency priorities, while retaining their visibility as Presidential priorities.

Taken together, these documents articulate the Administration's strategy for combating terrorism and the resources needed for its successful implementation. These documents also provide considerable discussion of the outcomes the Administration hopes to achieve.

While we intend to continue to build upon our existing efforts, we find the statements in your draft that the Federal Government "lacks a national strategy to guide resource investments for combating terrorism" both disappointing and inaccurate. We hope you will correct them in the final report and have, in our attachment, suggested ways to do so.

We of course will continue to discuss with GAO and the Congress ways to improve the Federal terrorism response and to obtain appropriate funding for those efforts.

We appreciate the ability to review and provide comments on your draft report, and consider it part of this larger process. We hope and expect to continue our work, to enhance our Nation's security in an ever-changing world.

Sincerely,

Joshua Gotbaum
Executive Associate Director
and Controller

Enclosure

GAO Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Stephen L. Caldwell (202) 512-9610

Acknowledgments

Deborah Colantonio, James A. Driggins, Thomas W. Gosling, Harry L. Purdy, and Raymond J. Wyrsch made key contributions to this report.

Related GAO Products

West Nile Virus Outbreak: Lessons for Public Health Preparedness (GAO/HEHS-00-180, Sept. 11, 2000).

Critical Infrastructure Protection: Challenges to Building a Comprehensive Strategy for Information Sharing and Coordination (GAO/T-AIMD-00-268, July 26, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: Linking Threats to Strategies and Resources (GAO/T-NSIAD-00-218, July 26, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: Action Taken but Considerable Risks Remain for Forces Overseas (GAO/NSIAD-00-181, July 19, 2000).

Weapons of Mass Destruction: DOD's Actions to Combat Weapons Use Should Be More Integrated and Focused (GAO/NSIAD-00-97, May 26, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: Comments on Bill H.R. 4210 to Manage Selected Counterterrorist Programs (GAO/T-NSIAD-00-172, May 4, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: How Five Foreign Countries Are Organized to Combat Terrorism (GAO/NSIAD-00-85, Apr. 7, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: Issues in Managing Counterterrorist Programs (GAO/T-NSIAD-00-145, Apr. 6, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: Need to Eliminate Duplicate Federal Weapons of Mass Destruction Training (GAO/NSIAD-00-64, Mar. 21, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: Chemical and Biological Medical Supplies Are Poorly Managed (GAO/T-HEHS/AIMD-00-59, Mar. 8, 2000).

Combating Terrorism: Chemical and Biological Medical Supplies are Poorly Managed (GAO/HEHS/AIMD-00-36, Oct. 29, 1999).

Food Safety: Agencies Should Further Test Plans for Responding to Deliberate Contamination (GAO/RCED-00-3, Oct. 27, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Observations on the Threat of Chemical and Biological Terrorism (GAO/T-NSIAD-00-50, Oct. 20, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Need for Comprehensive Threat and Risk Assessments of Chemical and Biological Attack (GAO/NSIAD-99-163, Sept. 7, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Analysis of Federal Counterterrorist Exercises (GAO/NSIAD-99-157BR, June 25, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Use of National Guard Response Teams is Unclear (GAO/T-NSIAD-99-184, June 23, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Observations on Growth in Federal Programs (GAO/T-NSIAD-99-181, June 9, 1999).

Combating Terrorism: Analysis of Potential Emergency Response Equipment and Sustainment Costs (GAO/NSIAD-99-151, June 9, 1999).

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).

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

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