

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On December 17, 2003, the President issued HSPD-8. HSPD-8 established national policies to strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies within the United States. HSPD-8 directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a national domestic all-hazards preparedness goal in coordination with the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies and in consultation with State, local, tribal, and territorial governments. The *National Preparedness Guidelines (Guidelines)* finalize development of the national preparedness goal and its related preparedness tools.

The purposes of the *Guidelines* are to:

- Organize and synchronize national (including Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial) efforts to strengthen national preparedness;
- Guide national investments in national preparedness;
- Incorporate lessons learned from past disasters into national preparedness priorities;
- Facilitate a capability-based and risk-based investment planning process; and
- Establish readiness metrics to measure progress and a system for assessing the Nation's overall preparedness capability to respond to major events, especially those involving acts of terrorism.

The *Guidelines* include a vision, capabilities, and priorities for national preparedness. In order to support a consistent nationwide approach to implementation, the *Guidelines* establish three capabilities-based preparedness tools and a National Preparedness System – all of which are discussed in the sections that follow.

2.0 VISION

The vision for the *National Preparedness Guidelines* is:

A NATION PREPARED with coordinated capabilities to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from all hazards in a way that balances risk with resources and need.

This vision is far-reaching. It recognizes that preparedness requires a coordinated national effort involving every level of government, as well as the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and individual citizens. It addresses capabilities-based preparedness for the full range of homeland security missions, from prevention through recovery. States, communities, and the Federal Government have worked together for decades to manage natural disasters and technological emergencies, particularly with regard to response and recovery. However, they have far less experience with terrorist attacks, particularly with regard to prevention and protection. The *Guidelines* address all hazards and place heavy emphasis on events at the catastrophic end of the risk continuum, especially terrorist attacks, which would require rapid

and coordinated national action. The vision acknowledges that the Nation cannot achieve total preparedness for every possible contingency and that no two jurisdictions possess identical capability needs. We must weigh the relative risk of catastrophic events when determining the resources available to address each contingency and the unique needs of each community, determine how to best address needs in light of the risks, and thereby achieve optimal and reasonable levels of preparedness.

2.1 The *Guidelines* Are the Umbrella for a Range of Readiness Initiatives

HSPD-8 is one of several presidential directives that address how the Nation should prepare to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from major incidents. Other presidential directives address the evolving threats posed by terrorist attacks and natural disasters.

The *Guidelines* are umbrella documents that collate many plans, strategies, and systems into an overarching framework, the National Preparedness System. Plans and systems will be implemented and requirements will be matched with resources, consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

Figure 1: The *Guidelines* in Context



2.2 The *Guidelines* Are All-Hazards

As directed by the President in HSPD-8, the *Guidelines* adopt an all-hazards approach to preparedness. An all-hazards approach addresses capabilities-based preparedness to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

2.3 The *Guidelines* Are Risk-Based

The *Guidelines* establish a risk-based approach to preparedness. Risk is a function of three variables: threat, vulnerability, and consequence. Both threat and vulnerability are influenced by the probabilities of events that are highly uncertain. In order to compensate for that uncertainty, the *Guidelines* provide a set of National Planning Scenarios that represent a range of threats that warrant national attention. The National Planning Scenarios establish common assumptions to guide planning nationwide regarding potential vulnerabilities and consequences (or impacts) of major incidents. Analysis of the range of potential impacts is essential for defining capabilities in terms of both capacity (i.e., how many are needed) and proficiency (i.e., how well must they be able to perform). These capabilities must be reflected in emergency operations plans (for the near-term) and in preparedness strategies (for the long-term). Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial officials supplement this approach with risk assessments that provide additional data on their specific threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences. As a result, officials can tailor their approach according to differences in risk across the Nation.

2.4 The *Guidelines* Are a Call to Action

Preparedness is the foundation of successful National Incident Management System (NIMS) implementation. The NIMS places responsibility on individual Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial governments and agencies for establishing a preparedness cycle in advance of an incident and for including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and individual citizens, as appropriate. The cycle of preparedness for prevention, protection, response, and recovery missions may be summarized as follows:

- Plan
- Organize and Staff
- Equip
- Train
- Exercise, Evaluate, and Improve

Preparedness is the responsibility of every level of government, every department, and every agency consistent with its authorities. This includes coordinating preparedness activities among partners operating within their jurisdictional borders, as well as across jurisdictional and geographic borders when dictated by identified threats and risk assessments. Preparedness

should be coordinated across the same multi-agency coordination entities as described in the NIMS. This is the basis for implementing the *Guidelines*, particularly the national priority to Expand Regional Collaboration (see Section 4.1).

Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial governments, in cooperation with the private and non-profit sectors, each have a unique role in supporting the preparedness framework established by the *Guidelines*. All levels of government should integrate into their preparedness and response plans the capacity of community, faith-based, and other nongovernmental organizations. This integration includes engaging such organizations in the planning process, providing necessary training and credentialing of their personnel, providing necessary resource support for involvement in a joint response, and incorporating the organizations in training and exercises. Of highest importance is the development of mechanisms for coordination of the volunteers, goods, and services available through these organizations.

The *Guidelines* provide a national framework for a capabilities-based preparedness system and are designed to be measurable so that progress can be determined and specific improvements can be made. Specific metrics and standards are under development for jurisdictions to use when conducting preparedness assessments. Additionally, a process is being established to measure the Nation’s overall preparedness. (Guidance on institutionalizing the *Guidelines* is provided within the Secretary’s Letter of Instruction in Appendix A.)

3.0 CAPABILITIES

The *Guidelines* establish a capabilities-based approach to preparedness. Simply put, a capability provides the means to accomplish a mission. The *Guidelines* address preparedness for all homeland security mission areas: prevention, protection, response, and recovery. Capabilities are presented alphabetically below by mission area for ease of reference (see Figure 2). Some capabilities cut across all mission areas and are therefore placed in a Common Mission Area.

Figure 2: Capabilities

| Common Mission Area | Respond Mission Area |
|--|--|
| Communications | Animal Health Emergency Support |
| Community Preparedness and Participation | Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place |
| Planning | Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution |
| Risk Management | Emergency Operations Center Management |
| Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination | Emergency Public Information and Warning |
| Prevent Mission Area | Environmental Health |
| CBRNE Detection | Explosive Device Response Operations |
| Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings | Fatality Management |
| Intelligence Analysis and Production | Fire Incident Response Support |
| Counter-Terror Investigations and Law Enforcement | Isolation and Quarantine |

| Protect Mission Area | Respond Mission Area (continued) |
|--|---|
| Critical Infrastructure Protection | Mass Care (Sheltering, Feeding, and Related Services) |
| Epidemiological Surveillance and Investigation | Mass Prophylaxis |
| Food and Agriculture Safety and Defense | Medical Supplies Management and Distribution |
| Laboratory Testing | Medical Surge |
| | Onsite Incident Management |
| | Emergency Public Safety and Security Response |
| | Responder Safety and Health |
| | Emergency Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment |
| | Search and Rescue (Land-Based) |
| | Volunteer Management and Donations |
| | WMD/Hazardous Materials Response and Decontamination |
| | Recover Mission Area |
| | Economic and Community Recovery |
| | Restoration of Lifelines |
| | Structural Damage Assessment |

Source: Target Capabilities List, as of September 2007

A capability consists of the combination of elements required to deliver the desired outcome. Capability elements are consistent with the NIMS (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Elements of Capability

| | |
|---|--|
| Planning | Collection and analysis of intelligence and information, and development of policies, plans, procedures, mutual aid agreements, strategies, and other publications that comply with relevant laws, regulations, and guidance necessary to perform assigned missions and tasks. |
| Organization and Leadership | Individual teams, an overall organizational structure, and leadership at each level in the structure that comply with relevant laws, regulations, and guidance necessary to perform assigned missions and tasks. |
| Personnel | Paid and volunteer staff who meet relevant qualification and certification standards necessary to perform assigned missions and tasks. |
| Equipment and Systems | Major items of equipment, supplies, facilities, and systems that comply with relevant standards necessary to perform assigned missions and tasks. |
| Training | Content and methods of delivery that comply with relevant training standards necessary to perform assigned missions and tasks. |
| Exercises, Evaluations, and Corrective Actions | Exercises, self-assessments, peer-assessments, outside reviews, compliance monitoring, and actual major events that provide opportunities to demonstrate, evaluate, and improve the combined capability and interoperability of the other elements to perform assigned missions and tasks to standards necessary to achieve successful outcomes. |

Any combination of elements that delivers the desired outcome is acceptable (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Capabilities and Outcomes
(Listed in Alphabetical Order)

| Common |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>▪ Communications Outcome: A continuous flow of critical information is maintained as needed among multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary emergency responders, command posts, agencies, and governmental officials for the duration of the emergency response operation in compliance with the NIMS. In order to accomplish that, the jurisdiction has a continuity of operations plan for public safety communications including the consideration of critical components, networks, support systems, personnel, and an appropriate level of redundant communications systems in the event of an emergency.</p> <p>▪ Community Preparedness and Participation Outcome: There is a structure and a process for ongoing collaboration between government and nongovernmental organizations at all levels; volunteers and nongovernmental resources are incorporated in plans and exercises; the public is educated, trained, and aware; citizens participate in volunteer programs and provide surge capacity support; nongovernmental resources are managed effectively in disasters; and there is a process to evaluate progress.</p> <p>▪ Planning Outcome: Plans incorporate an accurate threat analysis and risk assessment and ensure that capabilities required to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from all-hazards events are available when and where they are needed. Plans are vertically and horizontally integrated with appropriate departments, agencies, and jurisdictions. Where appropriate, emergency plans incorporate a mechanism for requesting State and Federal assistance and include a clearly delineated process for seeking and requesting assistance from appropriate agency(ies).</p> <p>▪ Risk Management Outcome: Federal, State, local, tribal, territorial, and private-sector entities identify and assess risks, prioritize and select appropriate protection, prevention, and mitigation solutions based on reduction of risk, monitor the outcomes of allocation decisions, and undertake corrective actions. Additionally, Risk Management is integrated as a planning construct for effective prioritization and oversight of all homeland security investments.</p> <p>▪ Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination Outcome: Effective and timely sharing of information and intelligence occurs across Federal, State, local, tribal, territorial, regional, and private sector entities to achieve coordinated awareness of, prevention of, protection against, and response to a threatened or actual domestic terrorist attack, major disaster, or other emergency.</p> |
| Prevent Mission Area |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>▪ CBRNE Detection Outcome: Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and/or explosive (CBRNE) materials are rapidly detected and characterized at borders and ports of entry, critical locations, events, and incidents.</p> <p>▪ Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings Outcome: Locally generated threat and other criminal and/or terrorism-related information is identified, gathered, entered into an appropriate data/retrieval system, and provided to appropriate analysis centers.</p> |

- **Intelligence Analysis and Production**
Outcome: Timely, accurate, and actionable intelligence/information products are produced in support of prevention, awareness, deterrence, response, and continuity planning operations.
- **Counter-Terror Investigations and Law Enforcement**
Outcome: Suspects involved in criminal activities related to homeland security are successfully deterred, detected, disrupted, investigated, and apprehended. All counterterrorism-related cases are aggressively prosecuted.

Protect Mission Area

- **Critical Infrastructure Protection**
Outcome: The risk to, vulnerability of, and consequence of an attack on critical infrastructure are reduced through the identification of critical infrastructure; conduct, documentation, and standardization of risk assessments; prioritization of assets; decisions regarding protective and preventative programs; and implementation of protective and preventative plans.
- **Epidemiological Surveillance and Investigation**
Outcome: Potential exposure to disease is identified rapidly by determining exposure and mode of transmission and agent; interrupting transmission to contain the spread of the event; and reducing number of cases. Confirmed cases are reported immediately to all relevant public health, food regulatory, environmental regulatory, and law enforcement agencies. Suspected cases are investigated promptly, reported to relevant public health authorities, and accurately confirmed to ensure appropriate preventive or curative countermeasures are implemented. An outbreak is defined and characterized; new suspect cases are identified and characterized based on case definitions on an ongoing basis; relevant clinical specimens are obtained and transported for confirmatory laboratory testing; the source of exposure is tracked; methods of transmission identified; and effective mitigation measures are communicated to the public, providers, and relevant agencies, as appropriate.
- **Food and Agriculture Safety and Defense**
Outcome: Threats to food and agricultural safety are prevented, mitigated, and eradicated; affected products are disposed of; affected facilities are decontaminated; public and plant health are protected; notification of the event and instructions of appropriate actions are effectively communicated with all stakeholders; trade in agricultural products is restored safely; and confidence in the U.S. food supply is maintained.
- **Public Health Laboratory Testing**
Outcome: Chemical, radiological, and biological agents causing, or having the potential to cause, widespread illness or death are rapidly detected and accurately identified by the public health laboratory within the jurisdiction or through network collaboration with other appropriate Federal, State, and local laboratories. The public health laboratory, working in close partnership with public health epidemiology, environmental health, law enforcement, agriculture and veterinary officials, hospitals, and other appropriate agencies, produces timely and accurate data to support ongoing public health investigations and the implementation of appropriate preventative or curative countermeasures.

Respond Mission Area

- **Animal Disease Emergency Support**
Outcome: Foreign animal disease is prevented from entering the United States by protecting the related critical infrastructure and key assets. In the event of an incident, animal disease is detected

as early as possible, exposure of livestock to foreign diseases is reduced, immediate and humane actions to eradicate the outbreak are implemented, public and animal health and the environment are protected, continuity of agriculture and related business is safely maintained and/or restored, and economic damage is minimized. Trade in agricultural products and domestic and international confidence in the U.S. food supply are safely maintained or restored.

- **Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-In-Place**

Outcome: Affected and at-risk populations (and companion animals to the extent necessary to save human lives) are safely sheltered-in-place or evacuated to safe refuge areas.

- **Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution**

Outcome: Critical resources are available to incident managers and emergency responders upon request for proper distribution and to aid disaster victims in a cost-effective and timely manner.

- **Emergency Operations Center Management**

Outcome: The event is effectively managed through multi-agency coordination for a pre-planned or no-notice event.

- **Emergency Public Information and Warning**

Outcome: Government agencies and public and private sector entities receive and transmit coordinated, prompt, useful, and reliable information regarding threats to their health, safety, and property, through clear, consistent information-delivery systems. This information is updated regularly and outlines protective measures that can be taken by individuals and their communities.

- **Environmental Health**

Outcome: After the primary event, disease and injury are prevented through the quick identification of associated environmental hazards, including exposure to infectious diseases that are secondary to the primary event as well as secondary transmission modes. The at-risk population (i.e., exposed or potentially exposed) receives the appropriate countermeasures, including treatment or protection, in a timely manner. The rebuilding of the public health infrastructure, removal of environmental hazards, and appropriate decontamination of the environment enable the safe re-entry and re-occupancy of the impacted area. Continued monitoring occurs throughout the recovery process in order to identify hazards and reduce exposure.

- **Explosive Device Response Operations**

Outcome: Threat assessments are conducted, the explosive and/or hazardous devices are rendered safe, and the area is cleared of hazards. Measures are implemented in the following priority order: ensure public safety; safeguard the officers on the scene (including the bomb technician); collect and preserve evidence; protect and preserve public and private property; and restore public services.

- **Fatality Management**

Outcome: Complete documentation and recovery of human remains and items of evidence (except in cases where the health risks posed to personnel outweigh the benefits of recovery of remains). Remains receive surface decontamination (if indicated) and, unless catastrophic circumstances dictate otherwise, are examined, identified, and released to the next-of-kin's funeral home with a complete certified death certificate. Reports of missing persons and ante mortem data are efficiently collected. Victims' family members receive updated information prior to the media release. All hazardous material regulations are reviewed and any restrictions on the transportation and disposition of remains are made clear by those with the authority and responsibility to establish the standards. Law enforcement agencies are given all information needed to investigate and prosecute the case successfully. Families are provided incident-specific support services.

- **Fire Incident Response Support**

Outcome: Dispatch and safe arrival of the initial fire suppression resources occur within jurisdictional

response time objectives. The first unit to arrive initiates the Incident Command System (ICS), assesses the incident scene, communicates the situation, and requests appropriate resources including any necessary mutual aid or cross-discipline support. Firefighting activities are conducted safely and fire hazards are contained, controlled, extinguished, and investigated, and the incident is managed in accordance with emergency response plans and procedures.

- **Isolation and Quarantine**

Outcome: Individuals who are ill, exposed, or likely to be exposed are separated, movement is restricted, basic necessities of life are available, and their health is monitored in order to limit the spread of a newly introduced contagious disease (e.g., pandemic influenza). Legal authority for those measures is clearly defined and communicated to all responding agencies and the public. Logistical support is provided to maintain measures until danger of contagion has elapsed.

- **Mass Care (Sheltering, Feeding, and Related Services)**

Outcome: Mass care services, including sheltering, feeding, and bulk distribution, are rapidly provided for the population and companion animals within the affected area.

- **Mass Prophylaxis**

Outcome: Appropriate drug prophylaxis and vaccination strategies are implemented in a timely manner upon the onset of an event to prevent the development of disease in exposed individuals. Public information strategies include recommendations on specific actions individuals can take to protect their family, friends, and themselves.

- **Medical Supplies Management and Distribution**

Outcome: Critical medical supplies and equipment are appropriately secured, managed, distributed, and restocked in a timeframe appropriate to the incident.

- **Medical Surge**

Outcome: Injured or ill from the event are rapidly and appropriately cared for. Continuity of care is maintained for non-incident related illness or injury.

- **Onsite Incident Management**

Outcome: The event is managed safely, effectively, and efficiently through the common framework of the ICS.

- **Emergency Public Safety and Security Response**

Outcome: The incident scene is assessed and secured; access is controlled; security support is provided to other response operations (and related critical locations, facilities, and resources); emergency public information is provided while protecting first responders and mitigating any further public risks; and any crime/incident scene preservation issues are addressed.

- **Responder Safety and Health**

Outcome: No illnesses or injury to any first responder, first receiver, medical facility staff member, or other skilled support personnel as a result of preventable exposure to secondary trauma, chemical/radiological release, infectious disease, or physical and emotional stress after the initial incident or during decontamination and incident follow-up.

- **Emergency Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment**

Outcome: Emergency Medical Services (EMS) resources are effectively and appropriately dispatched and provide pre-hospital triage, treatment, transport, tracking of patients, and documentation of care appropriate for the incident, while maintaining the capabilities of the EMS system for continued operations.

- **Search and Rescue (Land-Based)**
Outcome: The greatest numbers of victims (human and, to the extent that no humans remain endangered, animal) are rescued and transferred to medical or mass care capabilities, in the shortest amount of time, while maintaining rescuer safety.
- **Volunteer Management and Donations**
Outcome: The positive effect of using unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited donations is maximized and does not hinder response and recovery activities.
- **WMD/Hazardous Materials Response and Decontamination**
Outcome: Any hazardous materials release is rapidly identified and mitigated; victims exposed to the hazard are rescued, decontaminated, and treated; the impact of the release is limited; and responders and at-risk populations are effectively protected.

Recover Mission Area

- **Economic and Community Recovery**
Outcome: Economic impact is estimated; priorities are set for recovery activities; business disruption is minimized; and individuals and families are provided with appropriate levels and types of relief with minimal delay.
- **Restoration of Lifelines**
Outcome: Lifelines to undertake sustainable emergency response and recovery activities are established.
- **Structural Damage Assessment**
Outcome: Accurate situation needs and damage assessments occur. The full range of engineering, building inspection, and enforcement services are implemented, managed, and coordinated in a way that maximizes the use of resources, aids emergency response, and implements recovery operations. Mitigation projects to lessen the impact of similar future events are identified and prioritized.

Source: Target Capabilities List, as of September 2007

The challenge for government officials, working with the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and individual citizens, is to determine the best way to build capabilities for bolstering preparedness and achieving the *Guidelines*. The “best way” will vary across the Nation. In order to assist officials in that effort, the *Guidelines* establish a Capabilities-Based Preparedness process and three planning tools: the *National Planning Scenarios*; the *Target Capabilities List* (TCL); and the *Universal Task List* (UTL), which are discussed in detail in Appendix B. The *National Planning Scenarios* are designed to identify the broad spectrum of tasks and capabilities needed for all-hazards preparedness. The TCL is a comprehensive catalog of capabilities to perform homeland security missions, including performance measures and metrics for common tasks. The UTL is a library and hierarchy of tasks by homeland security mission area. Capabilities-Based Preparedness encourages flexibility and requires collaboration. More importantly, it helps to ensure that operations planners and program managers across the Nation can use common tools and processes when making planning, training, equipment, and other investments, and can produce measurable results. For more information on how the *Guidelines* contribute to the development of specific homeland security capabilities, please refer to Appendix B.

4.0 PRIORITIES

HSPD-8 directs that the *Guidelines* establish measurable readiness priorities and targets. The *Guidelines* include a series of national priorities to guide preparedness efforts that meet the Nation’s most urgent needs (see Figure 5). The priorities reflect major themes and recurring issues identified in national strategies, presidential directives, State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategies, the Hurricane Katrina Reports, and other lessons-learned reports. The priorities will be updated or refined over time as we implement the *Guidelines* or encounter changes in the homeland security strategic environment.

Figure 5: National Priorities and Associated Capabilities

| National Priority | Associated Capabilities |
|--|--|
| Expand Regional Collaboration | Multiple capabilities |
| Implement the National Incident Management System and National Response Plan | Multiple capabilities |
| Implement the National Infrastructure Protection Plan | Multiple capabilities |
| Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities | Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination Counter-Terror Investigations and Law Enforcement |
| Strengthen Interoperable and Operable Communications Capabilities | Communications Emergency Public Information and Warning |
| Strengthen CBRNE Detection, Response, and Decontamination Capabilities | CBRNE Detection Explosive Device Response Operations WMD/Hazardous Materials Response and Decontamination |
| Strengthen Medical Surge and Mass Prophylaxis Capabilities | Medical Surge Mass Prophylaxis |
| Strengthen Planning and Citizen Preparedness Capabilities | Planning Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Mass Care (Sheltering, Feeding, and Related Services) Community Preparedness and Participation |