



# Intergovernmental Challenges of Combating Terrorism

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# The Potential for Terrorism



The threat of terrorism, whether by international or homegrown terrorists, is likely to be a continuing fact of modern life – exacerbated by the danger of weapons of mass destruction.

# Presentation Overview



- Challenges of preparedness
- Post 9/11 progress
- The unfinished agenda
- An unfavorable climate for further change
- Sharper targeting needed
- National leadership and incentives

# The Challenges of Preparedness

- **Preparedness for terrorism is perhaps the most difficult public management challenge of our generation.**
- Reasons?
  - Institutions
  - Technical complexity
  - Politics



## Challenges

# Institutions “Vertical” Federalism



Mayor Giuliani,  
President Bush,  
Governor Pataki

- Responsibility for preparedness is shared at multiple levels of the intergovernmental system:
  - Independent authority
  - Differing accountability relationships
  - Widely varying operational capabilities

# *Institutions* “Horizontal” Federalism

- **Metropolitan coordination:**
  - Effectively developing regional emergency capabilities requires organizing across the many independent local governments which co-exist in metropolitan areas.
- **Geographic “patchiness”:**
  - There are great disparities of operational capacity and expertise from one community to another.

## Challenges

# Institutions Public-Private Collaboration

- Major private institutions – e.g., corporations and universities – have both resources and responsibilities that should make them key players.



- It is essential to engage and integrate these institutions in overall planning and capacity development.

## Challenges

# Technical Complexity Coordinating Multiple Functions

### Before an Incident

Intelligence

Threat Assessment

Site Hardening

Response Planning

Program Mgmt

Training & Exercises

Border Control

Disease Surveillance

R&D

### During...

Fire Control

Rescue

Emergency Medical

Incident Command

Law Enforcement

Evidence Preservation

HAZMAT

Victim Transport

Public Affairs

### After...

Emergency Mgmt

Investigation

Fire Suppression

Mass Medical Treatment

Logistics

Public Affairs

Decontamination

Site Restoration

Reconstructive

## Challenges

# Technical Complexity Integration of Agencies & Professions

*Including:*

- Law enforcement
- Fire service/hazardous materials
- Paramedics
- Emergency medicine
- Public health
- Emergency management
- National Guard
- Transportation
- And others....



# *Politics* Issue-Attention Cycles

- **Domestic preparedness is subject to swings of public and governmental attention:**
  - Very high in the wake of an attack – e.g., 1993 World Trade Center bombing, Oklahoma City federal building bombing, U.S. embassies in Africa, WTC and Pentagon, anthrax mailings.
  - Attention wanes as other issues and crises arise.

# Politics Resources

- How will we pay for the range of new and expanded preparedness functions?
  - **Investment** in equipment and security infrastructure.
  - **Sustainment** of personnel, training, and equipment.

# Politics Tradeoffs

- **How much security can we afford?**
- **At what expense to other functions of government?**
  - **E.g., funds transferred from other transportation and public health programs?**

# Major Strides Since September 11

- Integration of terrorism planning into all-hazard emergency preparedness.
- Vulnerability and risk assessments to diagnose weaknesses.
- Awareness training for public safety responders and non-traditional first responders – e.g., public health personnel.
- Equipment acquisition.



## Major Strides (2)



- Increased exercising, with more emphasis on terrorism scenarios.
- More cross-*agency* dialogue and planning.
- Some cross-*jurisdictional* dialogue and planning.
- Efforts to prepare and involve citizens.

# The Unfinished Agenda, However, Is Even More Challenging

- Further steps require *deeper* forms of preparedness that more comprehensively penetrate the public agencies involved – e.g.,
  - More training in *specialist* fields that goes beyond awareness orientations.
  - More *personnel depth*, particularly for specialized activities.
  - Capacity to manage emergencies that extend out *geographically* and over *longer* time periods.

## Unfinished Agenda (2)

- ***More integrated*** capacity is also required:
  - Across professions.
  - Among agencies with different missions.
  - Across the boundaries of the public-private sectors.
  - Across levels of government – national, state/provincial, local.
- True ***interoperability*** is needed – not merely plans and communications systems, but also the capability of effectively meshing field operations.

# Difficult Management Tasks

- These tasks are highly challenging because they involve ***systems development***.
  - Time intensive – hence costly in personnel terms and tradeoffs.
  - Involve basic operations by rank-and-file personnel, drilling down into the bureaucracy – not just isolated new programs or high-level policy change.
  - Require coordination of networks of organizations, from different governmental systems, many of which are not hierarchically linked.

# Unfavorable Climate for Change ...

- Although the next phase of the agenda is compelling, the prospects of further progress are clouded by inhospitable political and fiscal conditions.

# ... both for States and Localities and the Federal Government



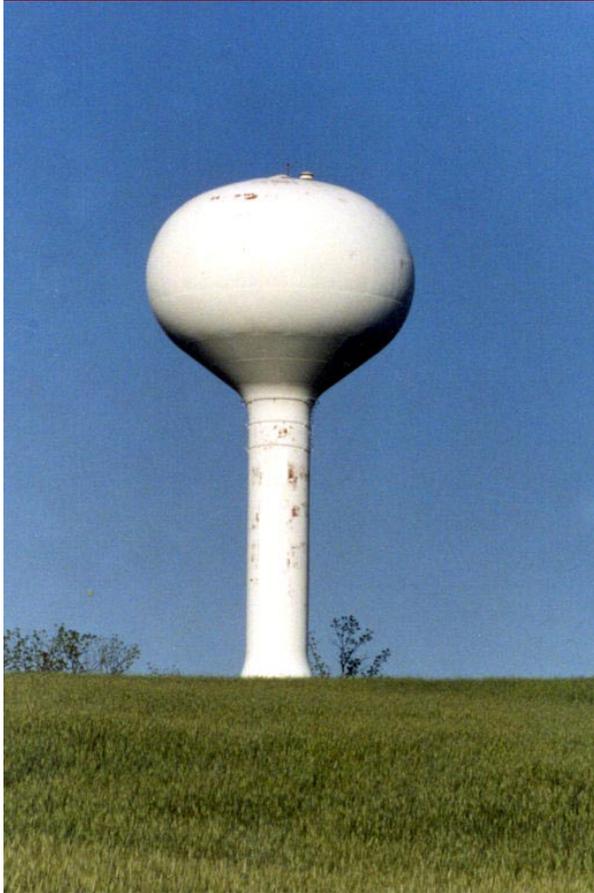
- States and local governments:
  - Severe fiscal crises as result of poor revenue conditions and tax shortfalls.

# Claims on Operating Budgets ...

- Preparedness makes significant claims on state and local operating budgets: personnel costs, equipment, training, and exercises



## ... and on Capital Budgets



- Many measures for *protection, deterrence, and prevention* are capital intensive – hence expensive.
- Improved security does not generate a revenue stream.
- Infrastructure agencies have capital and operating budget constraints for their normal operations – let alone security.

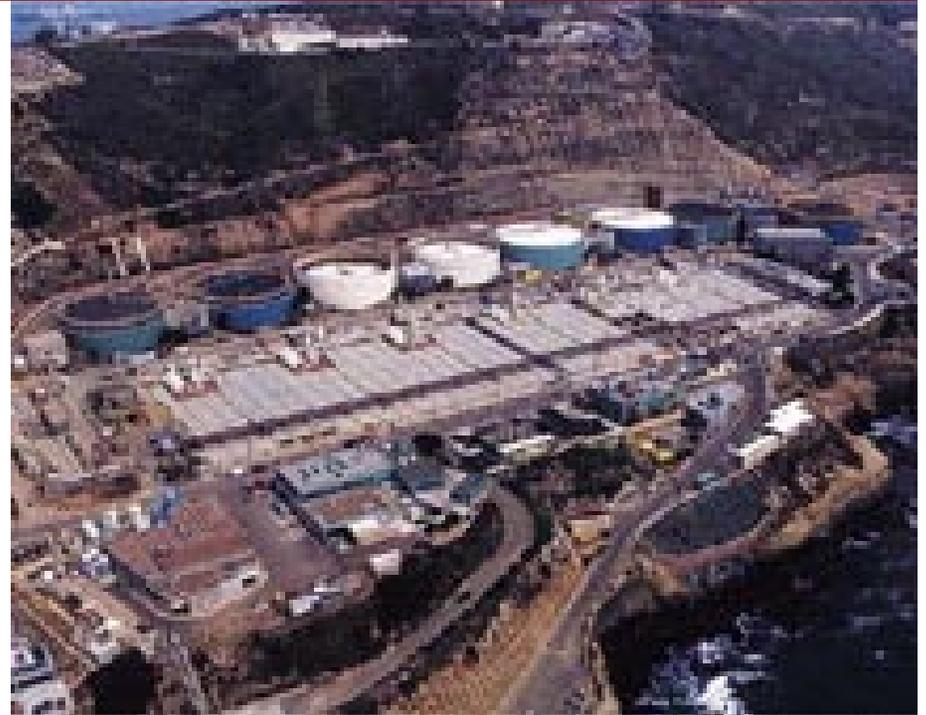
# Competing Priorities

- Numerous competing stakeholder claims for public resources – e.g., for education, health care, and *routine* public safety and law enforcement tasks.
- Sub-national constituencies for preparedness are relatively weak.
  - Powerful but diffuse public anxiety, not organized constituencies.
  - Internal government stakeholders – e.g., agency heads.



## Competing Priorities (2)

- Infrastructure protection, for example, has a difficult time competing in local budgetary politics – e.g., with first response or public health agencies – for commitment of very limited general-purpose federal homeland security funds.



## Competing Priorities (3)



- On the other hand, dedicated intergovernmental funds for a particular type of infrastructure – e.g., transportation, water, wastewater – have many competing uses by the agencies that receive them.

# National Perspective

- The US federal government is not oriented toward and unable to pay appropriate attention to building state/local preparedness capacity.
  - The federal budget is highly constrained by the sudden end of the era of surplus and by a competing agenda of large tax cuts.
  - Federal officials are inwardly focused on Department of Homeland Security reorganization – which will take years to make fully operational – and on improvement of federal security responsibilities.
  - Aftermath of war in Iraq and Middle East dominate senior decision makers' agenda.

# Setting Priorities – Difficult, but Essential

- Given the vast array of potentially desirable security measures and the severely limited fiscal resources available to provide them, we must find ways of making hard decisions to set meaningful priorities.



# Why Is It Difficult to Set Clear National Priorities?

- Tendency to concentrate on those functions that are the unambiguous responsibility of one's own level or unit of government – e.g., US national government priority for federal agencies over state and local functions.
- Desire by each independent unit of government and its elected officials to say that it has independent ability to protect its citizens

## Obstacles to Priority Setting (2)

- Higher levels of government tend to spread aid relatively evenly across subordinate jurisdictions notwithstanding claims to greater need by some.
  - Large population vs. smaller states/provinces.
  - Central cities vs. suburbs.
  - Metropolitan areas vs. non-urban areas.



# Consequences of Failure to Target Effectively

- Ad hoc allotment of funds.
- Wasteful duplication of capacity, **or**
- Patchiness of capacity leaving some areas inadequately protected.
- Failure to develop complex systems requiring collaboration – e.g.,
  - Disease monitoring and surveillance systems.
  - Incident management systems.
  - Interoperable communications capacity.



Sharper Targeting Needed

# Mechanisms to Promote Collaboration and Priority Setting

- Regional consultation and policy making structures.
- Stronger, cross-functional mutual aid arrangements.
- Fiscal incentives for systematic development of regional capacity.



# Stronger National Leadership Needed

- To make progress more quickly and more evenly across jurisdictions, stronger national leadership and more extensive fiscal incentives are critical.



# Federal Aid as an Agenda-Setter

- Federal grants have been highly important in setting homeland security agendas for states and local governments.
- Much post 9/11 progress has come in program areas where federal assistance has been most substantial – e.g., public health infrastructure and first response capabilities.

# Supporting, Not Supplanting, State and Local Governments

- A larger national role would not *replace* the operational responsibilities of sub-national governments.
  - These remain essential for building a *robust capacity* that cannot be replicated by national action alone.
  - Should not evolve into a nationally dominated system.
  - Sub-national governments are a frequent source of innovation.

# Integrated Action in a Tight Time Frame?

- But relying on sub-national government to develop and implement policy is ***least effective*** when:
  - Change needs to come quickly.
  - There has to be a high degree of compatibility, even standardization, across jurisdictions.
  - Sub-national efforts have to fit together into an integrated national system.

# Key Roles for National Government

- Agenda setting.
- Providing financial support and incentives.
- Taking the lead in developing standards and guidelines for the public and private sectors.
- Research and development of technology.
- Technical and management assistance.

**This logic also makes sense for state governments in their own spheres of action.**

# Conclusions

- Government has made tangible progress since September 11 in building greater emergency preparedness capabilities, but has much more – and harder -- work to do.
- Political and fiscal conditions at both the state/local and national levels make further progress difficult.

# Conclusions

- Given these conditions, we must find ways of making tough decisions to set meaningful priorities.
- Stronger national and state leadership and fiscal incentives are critical to advancing these objectives.