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Introduction to Homeland Security Principles of All-Hazards Response

Third Edition

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Introduction

Since the events of September 11 and the subsequent anthrax mailings to the U.S. Congress, governments, organizations, and individuals have engaged in programs and activities to improve the security and safety of our nation. The most comprehensive reorganization of the federal government yet undertaken resulted in the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. Congress has continued to pass new laws to address all aspects of national security, including the Patriot Act, which provides the Attorney General of the United States with significant new authorities relative to civil liberties to fight the war on terrorism. Thousands of citizens have volunteered to participate in making our communities more secure.

Public safety officials, particularly emergency managers, are on the forefront of preparing for and responding to the potential threat of terrorism. The intent of this book is to provide a primer on homeland security for emergency managers and related disciplines.



New York, September 16, 2001 — Military and rescue workers stand amid the wreckage of the World Trade Center. (Photo by Andrea Booher/FEMA News Photo)

The federal government defines homeland security as follows:

Homeland security is a concerted national effort to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.

Starting with this definition, the early chapters provide a historical perspective on the threat of terrorism, before and after September 11, with detailed descriptions of the extraordinary legislative

and organizational actions that were taken in reaction to September 11 and in support of preventing future attacks. The book continues with complete descriptions and fact sheets on the types of hazards and risks that make up the potential vulnerabilities in any future terrorist events. This section is followed by chapters that describe the programs and actions being undertaken by government agencies, organizations, and the private sector to reduce or minimize the threat. We have focused on the areas of security (intelligence, border and transportation, infrastructure and information/cyberspace); preparedness and mitigation (planning, initiatives, community and volunteers, private sector, best practices); communications (threat advisory system, public health strategies, public education); and new technologies (communications, information management, protective equipment).



Arlington, Virginia, September 17, 2001 — Work continues through the night at the site of the Pentagon terrorist attack. (Photo by Jocelyn Augustino/FEMA News Photo)

A significant section is devoted to response and recovery, as these responsibilities are a primary focus of emergency managers. In this chapter we describe the current state of the art in first responder applications and discuss the major changes that are under way within the national response system network. Case studies are included to demonstrate practical application to the materials being presented. In addition, we have included full texts of critical guidance documents for use and reference. Wherever possible, budget and resource charts show past allocations and future projections through 2009. The volume concludes with a chapter that examines future issues that public safety, emergency management, and other types of professionals may confront as we meet the challenges of establishing a secure homeland.

Homeland security is a relatively new, still-evolving discipline. This book was written at a particular point in time, and changes to programs, activities, and even organizations occur regularly. For that reason we have included online references wherever possible so the reader will have access to websites that can provide up-to-date information on program or organization changes, new initiatives, or simply more detail on specific issues.

Out of the tragic events of September 11 has arisen an enormous opportunity for improving the social and economic sustainability of our communities from all threats and disasters, not just terrorism. Public safety officials and emergency managers champion the concept of an all-hazards

approach, and despite some unique characteristics, terrorism can be incorporated into that approach as well. With the increased funding being provided, we should have better-trained and better-equipped first responders; a stronger, less vulnerable national infrastructure; and an enhanced delivery system for public health and new technologies to improve and safeguard our information and communications networks.

These improvements will enhance our protection from everything from hurricanes, to energy and power outages, to tsunamis and earthquakes, to wildfires and mudslides. A new focus on research and development should lead to significant advances in the diverse fields included in the homeland security umbrella.

Since the second edition of this text was published, the United States experienced one of its most devastating disasters, in terms of both human and financial impacts. The consequences of Hurricane Katrina continue to affect residents of the Gulf Coast region. The problems experienced by emergency managers and responders, at all levels of government and in the private and nonprofit sectors, have served as the driving force behind an ongoing reassessment of homeland security's role in all-hazards disaster response in the United States. Katrina-related actions together represent the single greatest category of change included in this current third edition.

The authors' goal in writing this book was to provide as complete a source of practical information, programs, references, and best practices so that any emergency manager, public safety official, community leader, or individual could engage in actions to help make their communities safer and more secure. The homeland security function clearly has a ways to go before reaching any kind of stable footing. In the end, achieving homeland security will not be accomplished by the federal government but by each individual, each organization, each business, and each community working together to make a difference.