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ARE WE READY FOR PRIME TIME? ASSESSING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY READINESS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held on April 10, 2003	1
Statement of:	
Harp, Van, Director, Washington Field Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Teresa Chambers, Chief, U.S. Park Police; and Charles Ramsey, chief, Metropolitan Police Department	82
White, Richard, general manager, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; David Robertson, interim executive director, accompanied by Mary K. Hill, chair, Board of Directors, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; and Bob Peck, president, Washington Board of Trade	121
Williams, Anthony A., Mayor, District of Columbia; Mark Warner, Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia; Bruce Tuxill, Adjutant General, accompanied by Edward T. Norris, secretary of State police, State of Maryland; and Michael Byrne, Director, Office of National Capitol Region Coordination, U.S. Department of Homeland Security	13
Letters, statements, etc., submitted for the record by:	
Byrne, Michael, Director, Office of National Capitol Region Coordination, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, prepared statement of	65
Chambers, Teresa, Chief, U.S. Park Police, prepared statement of	92
Clay, Hon. Wm. Lacy, a Representative in Congress from the State of Missouri, prepared statement of	198
Davis, Chairman Tom, a Representative in Congress from the State of Virginia, prepared statement of	4
Harp, Van, Director, Washington Field Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, prepared statement of	85
Peck, Bob, president, Washington Board of Trade, prepared statement of	184
Ramsey, Charles, chief, Metropolitan Police Department, prepared statement of	103
Robertson, David, interim executive director, and Mary K. Hill, chair, Board of Directors, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, prepared statement of	154
Tuxill, Bruce, Adjutant General, prepared statement of	55
Warner, Mark, Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia, prepared statement of	32
Waxman, Hon. Henry A., a Representative in Congress from the State of California, prepared statement of	7
White, Richard, general manager, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, prepared statement of	124
Williams, Anthony A., Mayor, District of Columbia, prepared statement of	17

ARE WE READY FOR PRIME TIME? ASSESSING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY READINESS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2003

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:35 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Tom Davis of Virginia (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Tom Davis, Shays, Jo Ann Davis of Virginia, Waxman, Cummings, Kucinich, Clay, Van Hollen, Ruppersberger, Cooper and Bell.

Also present: Representatives Wolf, Hoyer, Moran and Wynn.

Staff present: Peter Sirh, staff director; Melissa Wojciak, deputy staff director; Keith Ausbrook, chief counsel; Ellen Brown, legislative director and senior policy counsel; David Young, counsel; David Marin, director of communications; Scott Kopple, deputy director of communications; Victoria Proctor, professional staff member; Teresa Austin, chief clerk; Joshua E. Gillespie, deputy clerk; Allyson Blandford, office manager; Shalley Kim, legislative assistant; Brien Beattie, staff assistant; Phil Schiliro, minority staff director; Phil Barnett, minority chief counsel; Kristin Amerling, minority deputy chief counsel; David Rapallo, minority counsel; Karen Lightfoot, minority communications director/senior policy advisor; Earley Green, minority chief clerk; Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk; and Cecelia Morton, minority office manager.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Good morning. A quorum being present, the Committee on Government Reform will come to order, and I want to welcome everybody to today's hearing on emergency readiness in the national capital region.

The national capital region faces some unique challenges in its emergency preparation and response planning. It is an area governed by two States, the District of Columbia and the Federal Government, each with its own police forces and emergency plans, but all closely connected by roads, bridges and mass transit.

The District of Columbia is also the seat of government that employs close to 370,000 Federal employees, many of whom live in nearby Maryland and Virginia, and because of its unique status as the Nation's Capital, a multitude of government agencies must coordinate their efforts to respond effectively to emergencies.

The Federal, local and State governments have taken a number of actions to improve coordination in emergency situations, but in

recent weeks several incidents in the Capital Region have shown that there is much to be done in the way of planning, coordination, communication and informing the public.

For example this past month a disgruntled tobacco farmer drove a tractor onto the Mall with a permit and threatened to detonate explosives and effectively held the area hostage for 47 hours. This incident seriously disrupted life and work in this region when traffic in the Capital's vital areas came to a standstill.

Law enforcement agencies attempted to negotiate with the disgruntled farmer, but even as the Nation approached the eve of war, and the homeland security risk condition had been upgraded to code orange, control strategies were not escalated. Law enforcement agencies reported that their priority was to preserve the rights of a single man. Meanwhile the Nation's Capital was effectively shut down during three morning rush hours.

Thousands of employees found their normal commute times exponentially increased. Federal and private sector employees were in traffic instead of doing their jobs. Federal and private sector employees could not make it home in time to pick up children or attend after-work obligations. Even Congress was impaired by the incident. Caucuses called off meetings, and hearings could not occur because Members who were stuck in traffic were not present. This lack of productivity represents a significant economic impact, and it is unacceptable.

If local and Federal officials were not able to handle congestion problems created by one man, how will they handle an evacuation necessitated by a terrorist attack? When protesters, packages or acts of nature cause regional officials to close roads, the effects extend far beyond a mild inconvenience to commuters.

Road closures also raise serious concerns about first responders' ability to react to other incidents. How can an ambulance best respond to calls and transport the sick and injured to hospitals when the roads are closed? How can the fire department arrive at the scene of a fire in a timely manner?

For all the planning to prepare for emergencies, it seems that the numerous agencies and jurisdictions couldn't resolve the situation with a disgruntled farmer in a timely manner. We plan to examine whether they acted according to the book, and if so, whether it is time to revisit and rewrite the book.

It cannot be said that there is a shortage of plans. The problem is making sure that the plans are workable and will meet the needs of all those involved. The plans need to be tested and coordinated.

After the events of September 11th, the Federal Government invested over $432 million to assist regional jurisdictions to prepare to combat terrorism and respond to emergencies in the national capital region. I've asked the GAO to examine the budget and spending plans for Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. This report will help Congress identify whether this region is sufficiently funded and is using the funds to its fullest capacity.

We've assembled an impressive group of witnesses to help us understand the progress of the national capital region for planning and emergency preparedness response. We have three panels with us. The first will focus on government planning in the Federal,

State and District level. The second will focus on law enforcement, and the final panel will focus on some of the private entities involved with emergency planning in the national capital region.

We look forward to the testimony, and I would now yield to the ranking member, Mr. Waxman, for his opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Tom Davis follows:]

Opening Statement
Chairman Tom Davis
Committee on Government Reform
"Are We Ready for Prime Time? Assessing the State of Emergency Readiness in the Nation's Capital"

April 10, 2003

Good morning. A quorum being present, the Committee on Government Reform will come to order. I would like to welcome everyone to today's hearing on emergency readiness in the National Capital Region.

The National Capital Region faces some unique challenges in its emergency preparation and response planning. It is an area governed by two states, the District of Columbia, and the Federal government, each with its own police forces and emergency plans but all closely connected by roads, bridges, and mass transit systems. The District of Columbia also is the seat of government and employs close to 370,000 Federal employees, many of whom live in Maryland and Virginia. And because of its unique status as the Nation's Capital, a multitude of government agencies must coordinate their efforts to respond effectively to emergencies.

The Federal, local, and state governments *have* taken a number of actions to improve coordination in emergency situations. But in recent weeks, several incidents in the capital region have shown that there is much to be done in the way of planning, coordination, communication, and informing the public.

For example, this past month a disgruntled tobacco farmer drove a tractor onto the Mall, threatened to detonate explosives, and effectively held the area hostage for 47 hours. The incident seriously disrupted life and work in this region when traffic in the capital's vital areas came to a standstill. Law enforcement agencies attempted to negotiate with the disgruntled farmer. But even as the nation approached the eve of war and the homeland security risk condition had been upgraded to Code Orange, control strategies were not escalated.

Law enforcement agencies reported that their priority was to preserve the rights of a single man. Meanwhile, the nation's capital was effectively shut down during three morning rush hours. Thousands of employees found their normal commute times exponentially increased. Federal and private sector employees were in traffic instead of doing their jobs. Federal and private sector employees could not make it home in time to pick up children or attend after-work obligations. Even Congress was impaired by the incident. Caucuses called off meetings and hearings could not occur because members who were stuck in traffic were not present. This lack of productivity represents a significant economic impact.

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Road closures also raise serious concerns about first responders' ability to react to other incidents. How can an ambulance best respond to calls and transport the sick and injured to hospitals when the roads are closed? How can the fire department arrive at the scene of a fire in a timely manner?

For all the planning to prepare for emergencies, it seems that the numerous agencies and jurisdictions could not resolve the situation with the disgruntled farmer in a timely manner. We plan to examine whether they acted according to "the book" and if so whether it is time to revisit and rewrite "the book."

It cannot be said that there is a shortage of plans. The problem is making sure the plans are workable and will meet the needs of all those involved. The plans need to be tested and coordinated.

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We have assembled an impressive group of witnesses to help us understand the progress of the National Capital Region planning for emergency preparedness and response. We have three panels here with us. The first will focus on government planning on the Federal, state, and district level. The second will focus on law enforcement. And the final panel will focus on some of the private entities involved with emergency planning for the National Capital Region. I look forward to the testimony.

###

Mr. WAXMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased that the committee is holding today's hearing on emergency readiness in the national capital region. Ensuring preparedness in this region is particularly challenging given the severity of threats facing the area and the range of Federal, State and local entities involved in responding to the threats across jurisdictional lines. This committee should do everything it can to promote optimal coordination of these efforts.

I want to welcome the distinguished witnesses, who I know have devoted a lot of time and energy to regional preparedness. Your work may help prevent serious harm to many citizens of the national capital region—indeed it may already have done so and I know I speak for many others in telling all of you how much I appreciate your commitment to this effort.

Our side will be anchored today by Representative Chris Van Hollen, a new member of the committee from suburban Maryland. Mr. Van Hollen represents this area and has devoted a lot of attention to ensuring that we have the best possible security plans. He will bring an invaluable perspective to this hearing and the tough security challenges we face.

I also want to note that Congresswoman Norton of our committee has been tireless in her work to advance national capital region emergency preparedness. Ms. Norton's efforts include authorizing the original amendment that laid the foundation for the Office of National Capital Region Coordination, now directed by Mr. Michael Byrne, one of our witnesses today. Unfortunately, Congresswoman Norton was called out of town unexpectedly and could not attend today's hearing.

This is a great disappointment to her, because she is actually the person who first suggested this hearing. Ms. Norton wanted this hearing for several reasons: One, to ask Mr. Byrne to describe his vision of what his job will entail; two, to obtain a status report on preparedness plans in this region to date; and three, to seek reassurance from witnesses about planning in the region, particularly in light of the recent increase in the alert level.

I know that Ms. Norton had a positive recent meeting with Mr. Byrne and will be following up with him after the hearing.

And finally, I want to commend Chairman Davis for having this hearing and for his great interest in homeland security issues.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Henry A. Waxman follows:]

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BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT,
INDEPENDENT

Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Government Reform
Hearing on the State of Emergency Readiness in the Nation's Capital

April 10, 2003

I am pleased that the Committee is holding today's hearing on emergency readiness in the National Capital Region. Ensuring preparedness in this region is particularly challenging given the severity of threats facing the area and the range of federal, state, and local entities involved in responding to the threats across jurisdictional lines. This Committee should do everything it can to promote optimal coordination of these efforts.

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And finally, I want to commend Chairman Davis for having this hearing and for his great interest in homeland security issues.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Shays.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no formal statement other than to thank you for holding this hearing and to thank our distinguished panelists. They are all very distinguished in their fields of work. We appreciate what the Mayor is doing, what the Governor is doing, and what is happening in Maryland as well. And thank our officials, too.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for holding this hearing.

I want to thank our ranking member, Congressman Waxman, for asking me to participate today along with him since I represent suburban Montgomery County here and Prince George's County.

I also want to thank Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for her leadership on this issue, and my other colleagues here, it is great to have my other colleague from Maryland as well. Congressman Cummings and Congressman Ruppersberger obviously have a keen interest in this.

Depending on how you define the national region, you can—you know, and this is an issue that I know we're going to want to talk about exactly what constitutes the region that we want to plan for. We can enlarge it beyond what is actually in the statute itself, the homeland security statute, but I look forward to the discussion today about how we can improve security in our region.

I would like to say at the outset that obviously the Washington region is not an island within the country. So although we're going to be focusing on this region today, it is important to understand that the resources that we dedicate to homeland security on a national basis have an impact on our security here. I mean, if a container ship was to come into a California port containing a nuclear weapon and was to come across the country to Washington, DC, that it obviously deals with our national domestic security readiness. And I was disappointed that efforts in the House recently to increase the appropriations and funding for domestic security have not so far been included in the supplemental appropriations bill. I hope that will be increased, because how we deal with this nationally, of course, has an impact on our region in addition to our specific efforts to get this region ready.

So I want to thank the chairman for holding this hearing and thank my colleagues.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to say thanks to you for taking the time to discuss the security concerns of the Nation's Capital region. As a target of the terrorist attack of September 11th, it is imperative that our region be prepared to meet the challenges of this new world.

Mr. Chairman, you've gathered a distinguished panel of policymakers, leaders and experts, and I'd like to thank you all for joining us today, and especially to you, Governor Mark Warner. I appreciate you taking the time to be here today representing our great Commonwealth on this very serious matter.

I realize that the focus of this hearing is the Nation's Capital region; however, I'm very interested how this area is going to be de-

fined. I certainly understand regional boundaries, but it's my hope that during this discussion today and in the future, that critical infrastructure for this area is not simply seen as inside the Beltway. After all, God forbid if we must endure a future attack, it is imperative that outlying areas, including the Interstate 95 corridor through the Fredericksburg region, which is Virginia's fastest growing region over the past decade, and maybe even down into the Richmond area, that they are equipped and properly funded to supply a mass exodus from Washington.

I thank you again, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to today's testimony.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

The gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to extend a particularly warm welcome to my friend and former classmate, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Mark Warner.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

The gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to express my appreciation for you holding this hearing today.

Mr. Chairman, in the audience we have our superintendent of the Maryland State Police, Ed Norris, and when I see him there, I cannot help but think about when he was serving as the head of the Baltimore City Police, he and our mayor, I mean, many, many months ago, they were the first folks that I ever heard really talk about homeland security. I don't know whether you used that term, but the fact is, is that he stood up when so many other people were silent. And now this issue has become a major issue, and I'm so glad I want to take a moment to thank him and our mayor, Mayor O'Malley, for standing up on this issue.

I'm sure that we will hear quite a bit of testimony, but one of the things that we need to be very clear on is that it takes money to do these things. You know, we can go, we can sit here and talk from now until ever more about how we want things to be, but the fact is, Mr. Chairman, our State governments are suffering. I know what you've gone through, Governor Warner, and it's been very tough, and we're going through the same things in Maryland. And so I'm hoping that not only will we learn about the preparedness, but we need to know what this Federal Government needs to be doing to help the city of Washington, the State of Maryland and Virginia, because that's the real deal.

I don't want us to be in a position where we have motion, commotion and emotion and no results, and the only way we're going to have results is to do what Ed Norris said many, many months ago. First, put our money where our mouths are; and No. 2, maximum cooperation between the Federal Government and our State and local officials.

And so I'm excited about this hearing. I'm glad that all the witnesses are here, and let me be one of the many here to thank all of you for what you are doing to protect the citizens of this great country. We're going through some very difficult times, and you have a tremendous amount of responsibility on your shoulders. And it is up to us in this Congress and certainly the executive branch to help you help our citizens and protect them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Chairman, first, I'm happy that we have such a great panel here today. I think this issue is one of the most important issues that we have to deal with. There's been a lot of focus on the war, but we have to focus on our homeland security. I like to call it hometown security, because I think we need to focus on the hometown, not only Washington, DC, but the entire region and the region as represented here today.

I was a county executive in Baltimore County on September 11th, and along with other county executives and the mayor of Baltimore, we worked very closely to try to address the issues that we hadn't addressed for a long time. I've always believed that you can turn a negative into a positive, and I think as a result of what happened on September 11th, that there's been a lot of refuges on what we need to do to protect ourselves from terrorism. And I think it's very important, and that's why I really like seeing this panel here today, that it be done in a regional basis, teamwork basis, issues such as mass transit and how do we deal with it. We need to make sure that we continue to get our intelligence. We need to make sure that we have the teamwork, both Federal, State and local.

You know, a lot of leads come from local government, but just because you get information and you get the information, you also have to do something with that information.

And the final thing is the resources. I think it's extremely important that we refuges some of our moneys in the Federal Government into the issue of homeland security, hometown security, and that a lot of that should go to the States and the local government, because the first responders will be our police officers, our firefighters and our health officers, and if we don't protect them and their lives and give them the equipment and the resources, they will not be able to protect us.

Also, General Tuxill, I acknowledge that you're here today. We've had a good relationship in my former job and now, and good luck.

I see Superintendent Norris. Thank you for being here. I know you bring a lot of knowledge from New York and the State of Maryland, and we're looking forward to all you do to protect us and the State and the entire region. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

I ask unanimous consent that Representatives Hoyer, Wolf, Moran and Wynn, who are not members of the committee, be permitted to participate in today's hearing.

Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. Moran, would you like to say anything?

Mr. MORAN. Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just came from a hearing of the legislative branch on security. I suspect that—in fact, I'm confident anything that needed to be said has been said, but sometimes we find another way of saying it.

Just last week we had tens of thousands of people delayed for at least an hour because we had an accident on the 14th Street bridge, and I know the reason is because they were going through the mechanics of insurance processing. Those vehicles need to be

moved out of the way. It is much too costly economically, socially, every other way to cripple the Nation's Capital for an automobile accident. And this tractor man business where we have one guy in a tractor able to bring the Nation's Capital to a grinding halt can't happen again. Imagine if we had had some kind of attack when everything was ground to a halt? It should serve as a warning to us. It should serve as an opportunity to figure out a way to move things along.

You know, I don't want to be too harsh about this, but I think sometimes we deal with these things with kid gloves. You know, our first concern is that we show the political sensitivity that we feel we need to one individual and make sure that we don't harm them or upset them. Same thing happened on the Wilson Bridge. We got a guy that crippled Washington for an entire day—I think it was more than a full day—because he was threatening to jump. He finally jumped. He jumped into the water. No harm done. And now—I know it wasn't well received when I suggested we should have just pushed him, but I think we can come up with some more practical approaches than we're implementing right now.

And I appreciate the fact that the chairman gave me an opportunity to listen in on this hearing, because there are few things that are more important to people than when you disrupt their lives. You don't give them an opportunity to get back to their child's day care center in time. When the kids are stuck at school, when they've got important things at work and everything grinds to a halt because of one, two or three individuals, it is wrong. We've got to figure out a way to stop it. If not for the economic reasons, now for the national security reasons.

So that is all I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman. I suspect others have said it, and I thank you for giving me an opportunity to say it as well.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

We have a very distinguished panel here today. We have the Mayor of the city of Washington, Tony Williams. We have my Governor, Mark Warner, who has been a leader, by the way, in transportation and traffic. And, Mark, I appreciate everything that you're doing. We have Major General Tuxill from Maryland State Police, and Mr. Byrne is the new coordinator for homeland security for the Washington metropolitan region.

It is the policy of the committee we swear our witnesses. So you just rise with me and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Why don't we start with the Mayor, move to the Governor and move right down.

Tony, thank you for being with us today, and we appreciate the job you're doing as well.

STATEMENTS OF ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS, MAYOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; MARK WARNER, GOVERNOR, COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA; BRUCE TUXILL, ADJUTANT GENERAL, ACCOMPANIED BY EDWARD T. NORRIS, SECRETARY OF STATE POLICE, STATE OF MARYLAND; AND MICHAEL BYRNE, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NATIONAL CAPITOL REGION COORDINATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mayor WILLIAMS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a long history of working with the District of Columbia Subcommittee, and I look forward to working with the main committee with you as Chair and Congressman Waxman as the ranking member; certainly look forward to working with Congressman Norton in this capacity. I'm sorry she's not here. She has called for an examination and review of this issue.

We look forward to working with my good friend of longstanding, Congressman Van Hollen, and all of the members of the committee. Thank you for your interest and your oversight and your support.

I'm going to try to abbreviate my remarks, because of the time constraints of the committee and also because we do have a distinguished panel with many, many things to do.

The chairman has spoken of the gravity and the need for this kind of review and the complexity and demands of the national capital region. So I will quickly report on two major elements of our planning effort and leave it to the rest of the panel to touch on other areas.

In fact, the leadership of the District, the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia have established an unprecedented level of cooperation among our jurisdictions in the national capital region. Each jurisdiction has designated our respective homeland security directors and the directors of our emergency management agencies to form something called the Senior Policy Group. The Senior Policy Group is charged with defining and implementing strategic objectives for achieving security across the jurisdictions. This group and work groups created by it have strengthened relationships with one another, local jurisdictions, Federal agencies, and public and private organizations in the national capital region.

In August 2002, a national capital region summit was convened. The summit produced an agreement among former Maryland Governor Glendening, Governor Warner and myself. We are committed to work together to fulfill the following eight commitments to action: One, terrorism prevention; two, citizen involvement in preparedness; three, decisionmaking and coordination; four, emergency protective measures; five, infrastructure protection; six, media relations and communication; seven, mutual aid; and eight, training and exercises.

Now, as Governor Warner, Major General Tuxill and Michael Byrne continue with their remarks, we will collectively cover all of these eight commitments, and I'm going to provide some information on two of the commitments to action: One, citizen involvement in preparedness; and, two, media relations and communications.

I understand that you've requested information specifically on regional cooperation; appropriate roles and responsibilities; transportation, evacuation and street closure planning. Also you've requested information on medical assistance and response prepared-

ness, telecommunication and communication implementation and coordination.

As we review the eight commitments to action, we will cover each of these topics as they fit into and within the interjurisdictional planning context that we've developed in these commitments to action.

So without further ado, to talk about citizen involvement and preparedness, the goal of this commitment to action, it is to utilize mechanisms for regional cooperation in endorsing and implementing citizen core programs within the national capital region. To date, partners in the region have succeeded in integrating the operations and planning of our citizen core programs, including regular regional meetings and exchanging program information and outreach activities.

The offices are also developing action plans for coordinating Neighborhood Watch programs, Volunteers in Police Service, and Medical Reserve Corps. In times of emergency, our citizenry is one of our most valuable resources. Effective management of this resource is critical to ensuring an efficient response. Programs such as Citizen Corps, Volunteers in Police Service and Medical Reserve Corps provide a mechanism to engage citizens, identify specific skills, and provide community members with training opportunities. These programs are beneficial by increasing awareness, by establishing response plans, and developing a better-educated citizenry.

I myself have had four or five town hall meetings in our city. Citizens want to be involved. Hundreds of citizens are showing up at these meetings, and these citizens recognize that often the first response will be citizens, and God forbid we were to have a major event and—or major technological tools are no longer at our disposal, we may be relying on more classic means of notification and citizens themselves for notifications within their community.

So this is very important, and the President's emphasis on Citizen Corps could not be coming too soon.

One of the most important ways citizens can help mitigate the efforts of an emergency is to learn how to prepare their household in an emergency. The American Red Cross, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland and the District have all released preparedness guides specifically targeted to help households plan for emergencies.

Here in the District we've distributed more than 1 million copies of our Family Preparedness Guide. We've translated it into seven languages and Braille, and we've distributed it in public schools, libraries, clinics, public meetings, community forums, as well as through the Washington Post.

Now, one of the issue areas you've inquired about in preparation for this hearing is transportation and evacuation, particularly as the issue has been accentuated by the incidents and the episodes that the Chair and Congressman Moran have alluded to, the tractor man, for example. This is an area that intersects with a strategic policy group goal of citizen preparedness. Clearly an area of major concern for those who work, visit and live in the District is being prepared for any incident that would require knowledge of how to safely exit the city in the event of an emergency. To address

this concern, the District and Maryland and the Virginia Departments of Transportation entered into a memorandum of understanding to develop a regional transportation strategy. As a result of this partnership, event evacuation routes were established and clearly marked with signage. During a public incident, 70 critical intersections in the District will be staffed with uniformed police officers to assist in the evacuation process.

Now, I may say parenthetically that in talking to Mr. Byrne and in talking with Governor Warner and Governor Ehrlich, we have all asked for an after-action report for lessons learned from the tractor man incident, and I don't mean to minimize the lessons that can be learned from that and the need to take action quickly as a result of that, but I do want to stress before the committee one important point, as I do at every public forum, and that is most often the right thing to do during an emergency is to stay exactly where you are. Evacuation of the city or even a large portion of it would be a very rare and extraordinary occurrence, and I think it's important for citizens to know that.

Let me briefly touch on another key point and priority area in our planning, and that is media relations and communication. The goal of this commitment to action is to develop processes and protocols for use of a virtual joint information center for the region during response to a major emergency, bringing together a coordinated voice to our public and to the media. We're all one regional community. We need to speak with one voice.

In addition to increasing public awareness within the District of Columbia, the region has made great strides and coordination since September 11, 2001. On that day communication between levels of government, between local government and the Federal Government left much to be desired. We all know that.

While local authorities have a variety of resources to verify incidents, the general public and even governments in the region across the country must sometimes rely on media reports for information. Interjurisdictional coordination with the media is imperative to ensure that the message put forth by the Federal Government and the jurisdictions is consistent. Developing a joint information system to serve as an ongoing operational concept will allow each organization to maintain its unique identity while being viewed as part of a whole.

Now, interjurisdictional communication is also essential. The District, Virginia and Maryland each have emergency operation centers that function 24 hours a day and can contact key emergency response personnel throughout the region. Our emergency operations centers are equipped, excuse me, to secure video telecommunications so that we're able to communicate and coordinate face to face during emergency situations. Through our own emergency management agency, we're also able to access local leadership, the local county executives, for example, via a regional incident communication and coordination system.

So the long and short of it, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, is that in the area of these eight policy goals, progress is being made. Yes, there is a need to make sure that in terms of policy, plans and principles, that action is being taken, but I believe that we're well on our way, and I believe that as a result of Sep-

tember 11th, we are achieving an unprecedented level of cooperation and coordination between and among our region, and I'm proud of it.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Mayor, thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mayor Williams follows:]

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Committee on Government Reform
United States House of Representatives

Congressman Thomas M. Davis, Chairman
Congressman Henry A. Waxman, Ranking Member
Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, District of Columbia

"Emergency Preparedness in the Nation's Capital"

Statement of
Anthony A. Williams
Mayor
District of Columbia

Thursday, April 10, 2003
2154 Rayburn House Office Building
11:30 A.M.

Good morning Chairman Davis, Congresswoman Norton, committee members, and other distinguished guests. I want to begin by thanking you for calling this important hearing to discuss the Washington Metropolitan Area region's emergency preparedness. I am pleased to testify before you today on the state of emergency preparedness in the Nation's Capital. Joining me this morning are executives from Maryland, Governor Mark Warner from the Commonwealth of Virginia, as well Michael Byrne, Administrator of the newly created Office of the National Capital Region Coordination within the Department of Homeland Security. Together we will discuss how we are working both jointly and individually to address critical emergency preparedness needs in the National Capital Region.

As you know, the District of Columbia is a unique city – home of the federal government, the capital city of this great nation, and most importantly to me a thriving municipality of diverse residents, beautiful neighborhoods, small and large businesses, and millions of tourists. The District plays the part of a city, a county, and a state in many respects, balancing the variable responsibilities that accompany its distinction. And we the heart of the National Capital Region.

The interdependencies among the jurisdictions in the National Capital Region are evidenced daily by the influx of citizens across these state borders, who work in the District while living in Virginia or Maryland, and vice versa. The District plays host to many special events, parades, marches, protests, tour groups, and sporting events that impact us, but also our neighbors throughout the region. In addition, the District and the region are subject to many hazards, both natural and manmade, from the President's Day blizzard to the recent protests against the war in Iraq. Because the District is home to the Federal government, we are susceptible to events unlikely to occur elsewhere, such as the recent tractor incident on the National Mall. Because of this, we have a powerful and acute need to be aware, be vigilant, and be prepared to respond to any incident.

The readiness of the District of Columbia government must be measured by its ability to coordinate and communicate on a regular basis with federal agencies and surrounding

jurisdictions that support emergency preparedness, response, and recovery functions within the city and region. Last year, I created for the first time a District of Columbia Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC), co-chaired by the City Administrator and Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, which meets on a bi-monthly basis to oversee coordination of preparedness activities across key District agencies. The EPC provides a consistent network of District agency expertise, and exemplifies why the District of Columbia government as a national leader in comprehensive emergency management.

At several hearings following the events of September 11, 2001, you may have heard other representatives from the District discussing our new response plan. The District Response Plan (DRP), constructed to parallel the Federal Response Plan, outlines primary and support responsibilities for each specific Emergency Support Function (ESF), and identifies those agencies charged with carrying out each ESF. The EPC, in addition to coordinating the city's overall preparedness, also coordinates ongoing refinements to the District Response Plan, and ensures training and exercising of the DRP to continually examine and improve the District's readiness and response capabilities.

Background on the Senior Policy Group

The leadership of the District of Columbia, State of Maryland, and Commonwealth of Virginia has established an unprecedented level of cooperation among the jurisdictions in the National Capital Region. Each jurisdiction has designated senior executive representatives, including our respective homeland security directors and the directors of our emergency management agencies, to form a Senior Policy Group (SPG) charged with defining and implementing strategic objectives for achieving security across our jurisdictions. The SPG and the work groups created by it have strengthened relationships with one another, local jurisdictions, Federal agencies, and public and private organizations in the NCR. In August 2002, an NCR Summit was convened, which produced agreement among former Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening, Virginia Governor Mark R. Warner and myself on committing our jurisdictions to work together to fulfill the following Eight Commitments to Action:

1. **Terrorism Prevention**—Identifying and perfecting methods of promptly sharing information related to combating terrorism requires strong and effective coordination of intelligence within the National Capital Region.

2. **Citizen Involvement in Preparedness**—Through involvement in preparedness efforts before an incident occurs, citizens are empowered to care for themselves and are educated on actions they should take when an emergency occurs.

3. **Decision-Making and Coordination**—Local, state and federal agencies in the National Capital Region will coordinate and communicate decisions in a clear, consistent, and authoritative manner, involving communities and the private sector in their decision-making processes.

4. **Emergency Protective Measures**—Clearly defining and communicating effective and well-coordinated emergency protective measures will help to prevent and minimize potential health and safety impacts.

5. **Infrastructure Protection**—Fundamental to the security of the region are the identification and protection of government and privately owned critical infrastructure assets.

6. **Media Relations and Communication**—To ensure that the message provided by the Federal government and the jurisdictions of the National Capital Region is consistent, a Joint Information System is under development for response to major emergencies in the region.

7. **Mutual Aid**—To facilitate multi-state cooperation in disaster response, mutual aid agreements are being developed and utilized throughout the National Capital Region.

8. **Training and Exercises**—Through coordination of valuable exercises and training courses being undertaken in the region, agencies across jurisdictions will be linked to the opportunities for testing and improving their emergency response assets and processes.

As Governor Warner, Major General Bruce Tuxill from Maryland, and Michael Byrne continue with their remarks, we will collectively cover all eight Commitments to Action. I will provide information on two of the Commitments to Action: (1) citizen involvement in preparedness and (2) media relations and communications.

I understand that you have requested information specifically on regional cooperation; appropriate roles and responsibilities; transportation, evacuation, and street closure planning; medical assistance and response preparedness; and telecommunication and communication implementation and coordination. As we review the eight commitments to action, we will cover each of these topics, as they fit within the interjurisdictional planning context we have developed, specifically the Commitments to Action.

Citizen Involvement in Preparedness

The goal of this Commitment to Action is to utilize mechanisms for regional cooperation in endorsing and implementing Citizen Corps programs within the National Capital Region. To date, partners in the National Capital Region have accomplished the following:

- Citizen Corps leadership from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia have incorporated regular regional meetings into their work plans and exchanged program information and outreach materials.

- There are presently two localities with Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) trained and located in the NCR:
  - Arlington, VA
  - Baltimore, MD

- Seven CERTs are currently trained and located in other parts of Maryland and Virginia:
  - Hampton, VA
  - Chesapeake, VA
  - Suffolk, VA
  - Charlottsville/Albermarle County, VA
  - Henrico County, VA
  - Cecil County, MD
  - Hartford County, MD
  - The District is undertaking the development of CERT teams and has already implemented certain aspects of training in our community training program.

- NCR Citizen Corps offices are developing action plans for coordination of volunteer initiatives and citizen preparedness activities including CERTs, Neighborhood Watch Programs, Volunteers in Police Service, and Medical Reserve Corps. Points of coordination include:
  - Marketing and Recruitment

  - Registration
  - Training

- NCR Citizen Corps offices provided input to the *Citizen Corps 2002 Annual Report on State and Local Citizen Corps Council Activities.*

- All three NCR Citizen Corps offices successfully joined together to distribute citizen preparedness information and recruit community volunteers at the *18-19 January 2003 NBC 4 Health and Fitness Expo.*

The response from community members in the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was truly remarkable. Volunteers came in droves to lend a hand and assist local emergency response workers, posing a unique management challenge for on-site officials. These management issues included the complexity of effectively utilizing these resources in combination with performing life-saving services, preservation of evidence, and securing the scene.

In times of emergency, our citizenry is one of our most valuable resources. Effective management of this resource is critical to ensure efficient response efforts. Programs such as Citizen Corps, Volunteers in Police Service and the Medical Reserve Corps provide a mechanism to engage citizens, identify specific skills and provide community members with training opportunities. These programs benefit communities by increasing awareness, establishing response plans and developing a better-educated citizenry.

One of the most important ways citizens can help mitigate the effects of an emergency is to learn how to prepare their household before an emergency. Realizing that prepared citizens can lessen the burden on the response community, the American Red Cross, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia have released preparedness guides specifically targeted to help households preplan for emergencies. These guides educate citizens on how to:

- Create a family emergency plan;
- Prepare an emergency supplies kit;
- Respond to specific types of incidents; and
- Locate the best sources of information immediately after an event.

In the District of Columbia, we have distributed more than one million copies of the Family Preparedness Guide, translated into seven languages and Braille, and distributed it in public schools, libraries, clinics, public meetings and community forums, as well as through the Washington Post. In order to meet the needs of all of citizens citywide, the District has also developed emergency preparedness plans for all 39 community "clusters" within the District, and is currently undertaking efforts to review, revise, and solicit public comment on the plans by holding community meetings in each of these clusters.

Citizen Corps Councils are responsible for coordinating public education and awareness, outreach, and training of volunteers. Using and expanding existing networks of responders and volunteer groups, the councils unite representatives from local government, emergency management, medical services, law enforcement, the first responder community, volunteers, neighborhood commissions, water and utility providers, major industries, educational institutions, and transportation authorities. Working with state and federal agencies, these councils will coordinate community activities.

One of the issue areas you have inquired about in preparation for this hearing is transportation and evacuation. This is clearly an area that intersects with the SPG goal of citizen preparedness. Clearly, an area of major concern for those who work, visit and live in the District of Columbia is being prepared for any incident that would require knowledge of how to safely exit the city in the event of a public emergency. To address this specific concern, the District, Maryland and Virginia Departments of Transportation entered an MOU to develop a regional transportation strategy. As a result of this partnership, event evacuation routes were established. Twenty-five corridors radiating from downtown DC have been identified as evacuation routes. Egress/ingress signs have been installed along these routes to notify the public that they are traveling in the right direction. During a public incident, 70 critical intersections in the District will be staffed with a uniformed police officer to assist in the evacuation process. But I must stress one point here, as I do in every public forum I can – the vast majority of time, the right thing

to do in an emergency is stay where you are. Evacuation of the city or even a large portion of it would be a very rare and extraordinary occurrence. That is why it is so critically important that individuals and families heed the guidance we have provided and ensure they are prepared to stay where they are in the event of a major emergency.

Media Relations and Communications

The goal of this commitment to action is to develop processes and protocols for the use of a virtual Joint Information Center for the NCR during response to a major emergency, bringing together a coordinated voice for the public and the media.

In addition to increasing public awareness within the District of Columbia, the region has made great strides in coordination since September 11th, when communication between local authorities and the Federal government was disjointed. Realizing the shortfalls of that response, I have endorsed efforts to increase cooperation and coordination with the Federal government, as well as neighboring jurisdictions.

As previously mentioned, the District of Columbia, the State of Maryland, and the Commonwealth of Virginia cosponsored the Regional Summit on Homeland Security, and we've continued bridging our geographic boundaries by participating in each other's exercises and workshops, jointly participating on Homeland Security panels under the leadership of the Department of Homeland Security, and implementing Citizen Corps programs to strengthen relationships with local, state and Federal leadership in the National Capital Region. Regional leadership has incorporated regular regional meetings into work plans and exchanged program information and outreach materials. To date, partners in the National Capital Region have accomplished the following:

- Achieved current agreement among both Governors and the Mayor to coordinate their release of public information during emergencies and disasters to minimize the potential for conflicting messages to the public
- Reviewed Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia Joint Information Center protocols, identified opportunities for immediate enhancements and better coordination

- Established NCR Public Information Officer Work Group, including participation from Federal and intergovernmental partners to coordinate efforts to achieve a Virtual Joint Information Center (VJIC)
- Assessed the viability of current information management and communication systems as the technological basis for NCR VJIC
- Monitors the development of a VJIC Protocol for adoption by NCR jurisdictions; and
- Identified "key" information elements (such as: event details; emergency food and shelter locations; hospital, school, and utility service status; and time of future updates) for incorporation into public information messages by all NCR jurisdictions.

Immediately following the events of September 11th, a number of reports were made by the media regarding incidents that did not occur, such as claims of explosions at the U.S. State Department. While local authorities had a variety of resources to verify such incidents, the general public and even governments in the National Capital Region and across the country relied on media reports for information. Erroneous reports such as these contributed to confusion and anxiety and can paralyze planning efforts.

Inter-jurisdictional coordination with the media is imperative to ensure that the message put forth by the Federal government and the jurisdictions of the National Capital Region is consistent. Developing a Joint Information System for the NCR to serve as an ongoing operational concept will allow each organization to maintain its unique identity, while being viewed as part of the whole.

The Senior Planning Group is currently researching and sharing information on different communication methods and protocols. The District, Virginia and Maryland each have Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) that function 24 hours a day. Each of our respective EOCs are able to contact key emergency response personnel such as the State/District Homeland Security Advisor, Emergency Management Director, as well as myself, Governor Ehrlich and Governor Warner in the event of a public incident. Our EOCs are also equipped with secure video telecommunications so that we are able to coordinate "face to face" during emergencies.

We are also able to access local leadership via the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS) funded by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and currently hosted by the District's Emergency Management Agency. RICCS is most effectively used to notify subscribers of host regional conference calls among regional organizations regarding incident specific issues.

The District, Maryland, Virginia and the Office of National Capital Region Coordination are working in partnership to use a coordinated process for decision-making for significant incidents and emergency situations in the NCR. This includes methods to coordinate among operational entities as well as senior decision-makers in local and state governments, the Federal government, and the private sector. The Senior Policy Group is coordinating enhancements to communications transparency among regional leaders to facilitate decision-making.

In addition to communication among responders, it is also a priority to set a common message to be relayed to the public. The events September 11th and the anthrax incidents highlighted the importance of regional coordination in distributing a common message to the public. As was demonstrated in the sniper attacks, new levels of regional agreement have been achieved, with regional leaders pledging that the release of public information will be coordinated to minimize potential for conflicting messages during emergencies affecting the NCR. Within the District of Columbia, designated officials will coordinate with other jurisdictions to create and communicate a common message.

The anthrax incident, and a subsequent bioterrorism exercise hosted by EMA, recognized that the media can provide a valuable tool for educating and informing the public about specific health concerns, and communicate guidance in the event of a public health emergency, provided they have an accurate source of information. The timeframe for dissemination of information, as well as identifying a credible medical source of information is critical, and DC has encouraged building bridges between the medical community and the media, in order to ensure that media optimize their information-

sharing capabilities with accurate information.

I trust that I have given you at least the broad outline of integration and cooperation that has become a normal part of how we do business here in the National Capital Region. Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the District of Columbia regarding emergency preparedness in the National Capitol Region. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Governor Warner, thank you for being with us today.

Governor WARNER. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend you as well on your foresight in holding this hearing at this point. I think it is absolutely critical.

I'd like to extend greetings as well to my friends from the Virginia delegation, Mrs. Davis and Congressman Moran, it was great to see you, and respond as well to my former law school classmate Mr. Cooper from Tennessee. It's good to see you back in Congress.

I want to touch briefly in my remarks as well as echo what the Mayor has already said in terms of the very close working relationship that has developed between the Commonwealth of Virginia, Mayor Williams, and Governor Ehrlich and his team, and Michael Byrne. You have my written statement. I'll just make a few brief comments.

Obviously with our Nation focused so much on the war in Iraq at this point, Mr. Chairman, I think it is also very appropriate that you hold this hearing for us to refocus our efforts as well on our mission here at home. We must ensure the preparedness of Virginia, the national capital region and the Nation for all sorts of emergencies and disasters, including terrorism.

Obviously this mission involves the citizens, the news media, the private sector, State, local and Federal agencies, and it is, frankly, a mission that requires us to put aside the traditional jurisdictional battles.

My comments today are built around two fundamental principles. If we're going to be fully prepared to address emergencies in the national capital region, we must coordinate at all levels, and we must have the resources to get the job done.

I'm pleased to report that we have established clear procedures and lines of communication between all the jurisdictions in the region, the Federal, State and local level. The level of cooperation, as the Mayor said, is unprecedented, and I believe that it can serve as a model for the rest of the country. If the neighboring jurisdictions can cooperate effectively in the national capital region, they can do it anywhere.

In addition, it is clear that Federal support remains a critical component of this region's preparedness efforts. On behalf of the three jurisdictions, I want to thank you and your colleagues for the recent funding for high-threat urban areas. This down payment is an important step in the right direction, but it is only a first step. We are aware of your ongoing work on the supplemental appropriations bill for this year, and we are grateful for the additional sums that it will contain for our homeland security efforts.

Clearly we are better prepared for emergencies and disasters than we were before September 11th. We are all giving much greater attention at all levels of our respective governments, but much more has to be accomplished. Our work in Virginia and with our partners in the national capital region is designed to achieve solutions to the unique challenges of this region. Like all State governments and local governments, we have to do this during a period of unprecedented fiscal crisis at the State and local level. We

have done so mindful, though, of the region's unique needs and responsibilities to the Nation.

My Secure Virginia Panel is providing important leadership in the homeland security area. I've selected former Lieutenant Governor John Hager, who is with me here today, to serve as my Assistant for Commonwealth Preparedness, a new cabinet-level position we created to coordinate Virginia's homeland security efforts, and I appreciate all the good work that that panel has done.

Cooperation is key to our ability to deter and prevent attacks, reduce vulnerability and, if necessary, respond and recover. We also must continue to educate and inform, as the Mayor has outlined in some of his comments.

Obviously, the safety and preparedness of this region is critical to the national and economic security of America. As the Mayor indicated, the Mayor, former Governor Glendening, Secretary Ridge and I met in August and prepared a plan for the region. Out of that effort came the eight points that the Mayor outlined and the ongoing efforts of senior policy leaders in each of our respective jurisdictions to work together.

Now, this need for closer coordination is not to suggest that any single effort alone can accomplish this goal. We're all working together, but as well, we have a series of other ongoing partnerships and relationships. The Washington, DC, Metropolitan Council of Governments, the Potomac Conference of Greater Washington Board of Trade and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission are among the many organizations that are continuing to pursue goals in this area as well.

We remain steadfast in maintaining strategic focus across the national capital region and in moving forward on all eight areas of commitment. Now, the responsibility for achieving the needed coordination is a role for State, local and regional leadership.

The Senior Policy Group that the Mayor has mentioned continues to meet, and I continue to be updated on those meetings. And I want to echo what others have already said, that the Commonwealth applauds the selection of Mike Byrne to serve as the Director of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination. Mr. Byrne has already proven that he will be a strong asset in achieving solutions. He is personally leading a continuing effort to maintain the effort we started.

As the Mayor addressed two of the eight issues, I'd like to address three other priority areas that we outlined and that we continue to work on.

First, terrorism prevention: While much of our focus continues to be on how to best respond when attacks occur, it is also clear that steps to deter and prevent attacks are equally important. Consequently, we cannot overstate the importance of continuing to aggressively share information between the Regional Joint Terrorism Task Forces and the Antiterrorism Task Forces with our local, State and Federal members.

Now, progress has been made in developing templates for regional law enforcement intelligence reports, establishing better reporting communication, and integrating information technologies to support these efforts. We cannot afford any weak links, and this information-sharing effort is designed to guard against critical infor-

mation slipping through the cracks. Anything Congress can do to encourage and promote better information will be crucial to this effort. I think we've seen the increased level of cooperation when we all had to live through those 3 very challenging weeks last fall with the snipers, but the law enforcement cooperation in that effort was unprecedented.

Second, infrastructure protection: In the national capital region, we recognize that government alone cannot do it all. That is why we are committed to work with the private sector to identify and set protection priorities for infrastructure assets and services, such as computer systems or communication networks, and as we all know, Mr. Chairman, with over half the Internet traffic in the world passing through northern Virginia, this is terribly important for the Commonwealth.

Specifically, we have partnered with the Greater Washington Board of Trade to identify private sector core groups to help manage this complex but critical public-private effort. The three jurisdictions have agreed to leverage the resources that Congress has provided in joint cooperation efforts, working across each sector in the region.

I'm pleased to report, Mr. Chairman, that the Virginia General Assembly has recently enacted legislation to promote information-sharing relative to threats to critical infrastructure. This new law was modeled on the legislation that you sponsored at the Federal level.

Third, training and exercises: Our commitment in this area is to coordinate plans for terrorism and security-related training across the national capital region. Clearly the best way to do this is for first responders, managers and leaders to train and conduct preparedness exercises together. To that end, we have shared training courses being offered throughout the region, and we are encouraging cross-jurisdictional and private sector participation.

Next month we will participate in the TOPOFF II national exercise to test command and control, information-sharing and joint information dissemination capabilities. This fall we will conduct a joint regional full-scale field exercise with first responders. Again, this cooperation and sharing of information allows us to stretch our resources further.

In conclusion, let me mention that the national capital region's security depends on Federal partnership and support. As a matter of philosophy, no Federal responsibility is more fundamental than defense of the homeland, and nowhere is this more true than the Capital region. And as a practical matter, State and local governments simply do not have the resources to pay for this all on its own.

Second, we would ask that you give existing homeland security funding procedures a chance to work. I understand there's growing pressure for Congress to fund homeland security efforts directly to local governments, bypassing States. I would say that such efforts should be approached with caution. In some cases, they could weaken efforts to promote cooperation between neighboring jurisdictions, or they can simply be funds not well spent.

As I said at the outset, if we can cooperate, then we can accomplish a great deal. Since we've moved to code orange, in Virginia,

for example, the State is disproportionately bearing the additional burdens brought about by code orange by increased State police presence at our critical infrastructure sites, increased presence at our health department, increased staffing at emergency control centers. So, please, before we move away from the existing funding formula, please give us a chance to work this through, because the State participation is absolutely essential.

Finally, as I know you know, Mr. Chairman, and the members of your committee, there is only one National Capital, and we have a special responsibility to protect this region. Obviously we recognize that any emergency here would affect not only the jurisdictions bordering the District of Columbia, but their neighbors as well.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to join you. I'm proud of the work that we're doing here in the national capital region, and on behalf of the Commonwealth, let me recommit to continuing to work with our colleagues in Maryland, the District, and, Mr. Byrne, to ensure this important priority is maintained.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Governor Warner follows:]

Statement of Mark R. Warner

Governor

Commonwealth of Virginia

Committee on Government Reform

U.S. House of Representatives

April 10, 2003

TESTIMONY OF
THE HONORABLE MARK R. WARNER
GOVERNNOR OF VIRGINIA
BEFORE
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
APRIL 10, 2003

I. INTRODUCTION:

Mr. Davis, Mr. Waxman and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear today to provide you with an update of our efforts in the Commonwealth of Virginia and within the National Capital Region in partnership with Governor Ehrlich, Mayor Williams, Mr. Byrne and of course with the multitude of local elected officials.

I appear before you with the clear recognition that men and women of our nation's military continue to pursue a mission to free oppressed people in Iraq. Many of the troops on the front lines are Virginian's. We remain humbled by their sacrifices in lands far from Virginia and the National Capital Region. Their service is no less than heroic.

At the same time we remain resolute in our knowledge that we continue with an equally important mission here at home. It is a mission that involves our citizens, local, state and federal agencies, private-sector partners, press and media and demands our utmost attention. The mission is clear. The mission is to ensure the preparedness of Virginia, the National Capital Region and the nation for emergencies and disasters of all kinds, including terrorism.

The events of September 11, 2001, are part of a larger continuum of crisis that we have faced individually in communities, across the region and in the whole of Virginia. However, it was the galvanizing images of a Pentagon, World Trade Center and crash site in Pennsylvania all ablaze that remain as tragic reminders that our World is different and that we must continually seek to strengthen our ability to protect our citizens. Keeping citizens safe and secure remains the most fundamental responsibility of government and is the essence of good governance.

Are we better prepared for emergencies and disasters today than we were on September 11th? Simply put yes. We are better prepared if for no other reason than the level of attention being paid to protecting our citizens has increased in all areas of our society. Much has been done but at the same time there is more that must be done. The responsibility does not rest with a single agency, level of

government, corporate officer or citizen. It is a shared responsibility between all segments of society and it depends heavily on coordinated intergovernmental actions.

Paramount in government's responsibility is the need to serve as a catalyst to energize and synchronize efforts across society. In the absence of synchronization we run the real risk of committing substantial resources to an effort that will only marginally improve our capabilities to prepare for the cunning of terrorists, the will of mother nature or the failures of technology that lead to emergencies and disasters.

This is our premise in Virginia and with our partners in the National Capital Region. It is an effort designed to empower solutions to the challenging issues of preparedness. We must prioritize efforts within the context of limited human and financial resources available and ensure that we focus parallel and complimentary efforts towards common outcomes. To do otherwise risks the safety and security of the Commonwealth and the National Capital Region.

At the state level, my predecessor established the Virginia Preparedness and Security Panel immediately after the attacks and I continued the effort when I took office in the form of the Secure Virginia Panel. I selected Virginia's former Lieutenant Governor John Hager to head that Panel and to serve as my Assistant for Commonwealth Preparedness. Since its inception both the office and the Secure Virginia Panel have been focused on the wide range of issues related to preparedness. No issue has received any more attention than how to ensure the best level of interaction and coordination among government agencies, the private sector, our citizens and very importantly the media and press. Cooperation is key to our ability to deter and prevent attacks, reduce vulnerability and if necessary to respond and recover and we must continue to educate and inform. Nowhere in Virginia is cooperation more vital than right here in the NCR.

I applaud this Committee and the members of the Virginia, Maryland and District of Columbia Congressional Delegations for the attention that has been paid to the unique characteristics of the National Capital Region. It is the seat of our national government spread across two states and the District of Columbia. The interdependencies of the transportation, utility and commercial sectors alone create common bonds that transcend jurisdictional lines and are integral to the national and economic security of America. When one thinks of Washington they think of a sprawling center of life that stretches for many miles from the front doors of the domed Capital or the White House. Consequently it is essential that we view our readiness not from the perspective of a single jurisdiction but as the united effort of all, especially our citizens.

Last August at the urging of many in the Congress, I met with my counterparts from the District of Columbia and Maryland and Secretary Ridge in his previous role, to further efforts to bring clarity to the multitude of preparedness activities across the NCR. This was not because any one effort was not making improvements. Each was doing well within its individual context. The Washington D.C. Metropolitan Council of Governments, Potomac Conference of the Washington Board of Trade and Northern Virginia Regional Commission are among many that were pursuing meaningful agendas. Because there were so many independent efforts it was recognized that our ability to make meaningful improvements depended on better coordination and unity of effort. We cannot afford any weak links if we are to ensure the safety and security of our citizens and communities. Consequently, we remain steadfast in maintaining strategic focus across the NCR move forward primarily in eight commitment areas. These represent umbrella efforts within the NCR.

The responsibility for achieving the needed coordination is a role for state and local elected leadership in partnership with federal officials. To that end the NCR Senior Policy Group (SPG) which worked on the Summit last August works on many fronts, with many groups and with a sense of urgency to make sure that at the end of the day we are meeting the basic obligation to our citizens to keep them safe and secure. The Commonwealth applauds the selection of Mike Byrne to serve as the Director of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination in the Department of Homeland Security. Mr. Byrne has already proven that he will be a strong asset in facilitating solutions between the federal family and local, state and private sector officials within the context of existing government structure and relationships. He is personally leading a continuing effort to maintain our momentum already underway.

II. STATUS OF NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION COORDINATION EFFORTS

I would like to briefly address three areas relating to the National Capital Region Leaders Summit. The Eight Commitments to Action from our Summit represented broad goals designed to transcend multiple work efforts across the NCR. These are cornerstones of our efforts to galvanize regional activities towards a united level of preparedness. While we are united on all of these activities our Senior Policy Group members have agreed to personally oversee efforts in particular areas. I would like to report on three.

Terrorism Prevention – While much of our focus continues to be on how we can better respond to events when they occur we also believe that equally important are the steps to deter and prevent attacks. There is a rich history of crime prevention and crime fighting activities across the NCR that serves as a solid

foundation for this important focus. Our commitment underscore the importance of continuing the focus of regional Joint Terrorism Task Forces and Anti-Terrorism Task Forces and their local, state and federal members continuing to aggressively share information. Progress has been made in developing templates for regional law enforcement intelligence reports and establishing better reporting and communication. Critical to this effort is the integration of information technologies that support these efforts within each jurisdiction to form the capability for regional sharing of data. Work groups are addressing these issues.

Infrastructure Protection – We committed to work with our partners in the private sector to jointly identify and set protection priorities for infrastructure assets and services in the NCR. We have partnered with the Washington Board of Trade in identifying private sector core groups to assist us with developing the right approach to managing this complex but critical important public/private collaboration. The three jurisdictions have agreed to leverage the resources provided to us individually in these areas in a joint cooperative effort working with each sector across the region. Critical Infrastructure crosses the region without respect to geographic and political boundaries. Communication lines are critical to this effort. Effectively coordinating the process across governments and with the private sector has significant economic and public safety implications and this is an area that demands strong strategic direction.

Training and Exercises – Our commitment in this area is to coordinate plans for terrorism and security related training across the NCR. A fundamental preparation step in better coordination when events occur is for responders, managers and leaders to train and exercise together. We have jointly developed and shared lists of training courses being offered throughout the region and are encouraging cross jurisdictional and private sector participation in these activities and ensuring recognition of certifications. We will participate in the TOPOFF II national exercise to test command and control, information sharing and joint information dissemination capabilities next month. We believe it essential that we exercise our ability to conduct strategic decision making especially among policy level officials given recent developments on issues such as coordination of closing of federal offices. We will be working closely with our local, federal and private sector partners to plan and execute a joint regional full-scale field exercise in the fall to further expand on the ability for departments and agencies to operate in unison across the NCR.

I have highlighted three of the commitment areas on-going in Virginia and across the NCR. It should be clear that there is a significant level of effort and participation. The fundamental challenge remains to ensure synchronization and unity of all the disparate efforts. We must fully integrate the policy and

operational levels of activity in a coordinated fashion. Independent activities both prior to and subsequent to the attacks of September 11th indicate a high level of interest towards improving capabilities to make this region safer and more secure. However, these independent activities must be synchronized to ensure real improvement in preparedness. To that end, I will continue to work with Governor Ehrlich, Mayor Williams and Mr. Byrne through Virginia's representation on the Senior Policy Group. Virginia's agencies will continue their work with their counterparts in the region. These mutual efforts will continue to bring clarity and focus to our mutual goals and achievement.

III. DETAILED RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE QUESTIONS:

You asked that we address several specific areas of interest to this Committee.

ASSESSMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN VARIOUS AGENCIES AND GOVERNMENTS

In the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, after action reports have outlined the individual and collective performances throughout the National Capital Region. Most notable from our perspective is the report commissioned by Arlington County in Virginia, which was the site of the Pentagon attack. Arlington County officials undertook a comprehensive analysis of how they responded. They are to be commended as they sought to identify the good and the bad and have shared their lessons throughout Virginia, the region and across the nation and the report underscores the importance of cooperation and coordination.

This cooperation must transcend geographical and organizational boundaries while at the same time respecting the established relationships between local, state and federal government. Critical to our work is balancing the inherent separations between branches and levels of government and the private sector envisioned in our democratic form of government. Furthermore, we must utilize existing proven systems and processes to coordinate and manage our actions during emergencies and disasters. Our focus today is on terrorism but we recognize that the Anthrax attacks, SARS outbreak, recent sniper attacks, snowstorms and a host of other situations underscore the need to consistently prepare with an "all hazards" approach. We must effectively manage any emergency or disaster and not allow ourselves to become focused on any one hazard or scenario at the expense of an emergency management capability that supports comprehensive readiness.

Our law enforcement agencies, as you will hear in the next Panel, continue to strengthen their ability to coordinate activities. I mentioned the recent sniper

attacks. That event was complex in terms of the number of local, state and federal agencies involved, as well as in the geographical separation of crime scenes and investigative activities. The lessons from that event and the number of lower profile crimes that transcend regional boundaries on an almost daily basis indicate that cooperation exists within our law enforcement communities. This is one of many examples of how our communities, in concert with their state counterparts, are working through the practical issues of coordination and addressing the essential need for cooperation.

In Virginia we utilize a unified command approach within the context of incident command and management systems. This was one of our early recommendations of the Secure Virginia Panel and codified what many agencies were already doing. It allows us to organize, take charge of a critical incident, and coordinate resources to resolve the incident. This management structure facilitates cooperation by all sectors with jurisdictional or functional responsibility for resolving the incident and involves all agencies working together to bring their expertise to the incident. Using the unified command approach, state, local, and federal law enforcement, fire, emergency management, health and a host of other agencies work together to develop a common set of objectives and strategies, share information, maximize utilization of resources, and enhance efficiency of the individual response organizations. This approach is shared by and coordinated with District of Columbia and Maryland organizations throughout the NCR.

To further facilitate inter-agency coordination for instance, regular conference calls are conducted with command staff from all state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies in Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia to discuss topics of mutual concern. In addition, monthly meetings with the Police Chiefs are conducted, including activities with the Washington D.C. Council of Governments. The Virginia Department of State Police is in partnership with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in the exchange of intelligence information through the Joint Terrorism Task Forces and the Anti-Terrorism Task Forces.

The level of coordination within the law enforcement community is also being replicated throughout the emergency management community.

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management works through many of the regional committees such as the Transportation Committee, Disaster Committee, RESF 5group, Biotech/Health-planning group, Interoperability and Communications in an effort to facilitate coordination with and between key disciplines. This coordination effort and information sharing activity is focused on ensuring both tactical and strategic "all hazards" inter-discipline coordination

capabilities. This addresses both pre-event planning, operations relating to special events and actual emergencies and disasters. This "connectivity" between state emergency management entities in the District of Columbia and Maryland provides the nucleus of regional organization and structure and supports and enhances the daily community-to-community coordination that defines many of the working relationships across the NCR.

Working with the FEMA National Capital Region team, the Commonwealth participates regularly in exercises and coordination of planning efforts that provide operational level connectivity between local and state activities and federal agencies. There are on-going cooperative efforts to identify staging and distribution sites for a variety of state and federal assets such as the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile, mutual aid, and a host of others that will support local and state response actions. Our active participation in the recent test of FEMA's standing Initial Operating Facility assisted our federal partners in determining the suitability of proposed staffing plans and SOP development. Virginia's critique, like that of the District of Columbia and Maryland, has been useful in establishing reasonable expectations between all players.

Within Virginia's fire community the level of cooperation between local departments varies widely. Many jurisdictions have standing mutual-aid or automatic mutual-aid agreements; others have minimal procedures for coordination at major incidents. In Northern Virginia (NOVA), daily cooperation in training, planning and response activities are routine among local fire-rescue departments. NOVA fire-rescue departments (Fairfax County/City, Arlington County, City of Alexandria, Metro Washington Airports Authority) as an example use an interoperable 800mhz radio network allowing direct communications between response units from different jurisdictions—as well as common procedures for incident management, personnel accountability, and high-rise firefighting operations. Cooperation across the Potomac River into Maryland and the District of Columbia is continuing to improve (particularly along the approaches to the Woodrow Wilson and American Legion bridges) and departments continue to seek ways to improve communications across jurisdictional boundaries.

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) has an open line of communication with the Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI) in College Park. The statewide training delivered by both agencies is accredited by the same national organization. VDFP and MFRI participate in the North American Fire Training Directors association and the National Fire Academy's Training Resources and Data Exchange—they have also recently collaborated in the federal arena on justifying a continuation of the minimal federal grant funding

provided to state fire training agencies for programs related to terrorism preparedness.

Northern Virginia Health Districts have been engaged in readiness initiatives in the National Capital Region (NCR) predating 9/11. The Commonwealth has built on the staffing support of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) in support of local governments. For instance, the Bio-terrorism Task Force is chaired by the Director of the D.C. Hospital Association and has been co-chaired by the Prince William Health District Director. The task force is yet another tool that has been leveraged and synchronized with broader efforts to facilitate hospital, EMS and Public Health emergency preparedness and response efforts in the NCR. The Health Officer Committee, also staffed by COG, has been chaired until recently by the Alexandria District Director. This committee also addresses Bio-terrorism related issues in the NCR and has spawned Epidemiology and Planning subcommittees.

Within the context of transportation, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) conducts close coordination with local jurisdiction transportation and public works departments, as well as with emergency managers with respect to emergency transportation planning. VDOT has and will continue to provide assistance as required to local agencies in times of emergency upon request or in accordance with existing plans. I will expand on transportation issues later in my testimony.

DEFINITION OF APPROPRIATE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS

Our success in meeting better preparedness within the NCR is not solely a responsibility of government. Corporate and business leaders have inherent responsibilities to their employees, customers and shareholders to manage risk. In order to do this effectively they must have access to information and intelligence and must partner with governmental entities and other private sector organizations to ensure their efforts are compatible and coordinated within the larger context of the communities where they operate. It is governments' role to define the level of preparedness being sought from a community, state or national perspective and to work with the private sector to help them achieve their part within this broader context.

Many efforts in the post September 11th environment have centered on improving governmental capabilities, especially the ability to deliver immediate response. This is appropriate. As we begin bringing clarity to these immediate issues, we also recognize the need for additional attention to empowering the

private sector to be better prepared. We continue to seek private sector counsel both at the state level and within the NCR so that we can better tailor our governmental efforts. We must support and encourage private sector preparedness initiatives. Communication remains vital and government must be accessible.

There are a host of tangential issues that complicate the effective sharing of information. Fundamental to this issue is ensuring that appropriate legal provisions exist that foster public-private information sharing while maintaining the appropriate balance between the two. Just this year, at my request, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation designed to improve our capabilities in this area. It allows the private sector to share information with state agencies without fear of its inappropriate disclosure, while at the same time ensuring citizens and the press have the ability to monitor the types and nature of information being shared.

In the context of the private sector I also would mention the role of the press and media. The ability of government to inform and educate its citizens and private sector depends upon the media. Our founding fathers did not envision a partnership between the press and government. However, they clearly understood the necessity for the press to be a conduit of accurate information to citizens. This is an area where we need to place additional emphasis across the NCR. The press will be a key element towards improving citizen readiness through education, coupled with our Virginia Corps initiative. Virginia Corps builds on the national concept of Citizen Corps to capture citizen and business interest in volunteering time and energy to make our communities safer, more secure and stronger.

TRANSPORTATION, EVACUATION AND STREET CLOSURE PLANNING

A viable transportation capability remains at the cornerstone of ensuring NOVA and NCR's ability to respond to emergencies and sustain the region's vast and complex economic capability. This requires extraordinary cooperation between agencies in terms of addressing isolated traffic crashes as well as the larger management of the system to support emergency response actions throughout the NCR.

The Virginia Department of Transportations (VDOT) Northern Virginia (NOVA) District has for years identified routes for special events such as the July 4th celebration and has developed, preplanned and implemented signal timing plans to accommodate the traffic surge. Plans are in-place, for instance, to use HOV lanes on I-395 and I-95 to accommodate traffic surge. In NOVA and in coordination with our NCR partners special event signal timing plans & HOV

lanes reversal strategies can be implemented remotely from the Northern Virginia Smart Traffic Center in Arlington. It is critical to note that traffic problems occurring on September 11, 2001 resulted in part from inconsistent decision-making and lack of coordination on closure of federal offices. The situation was further exacerbated by failures to communicate effectively with citizens. We continue to work in partnership with all involved to reduce the potential of this happening in the future.

VDOT's NOVA District staff supported DC DOT and participated in the development of the Greater Washington Event Preparedness Plan. This plan identifies major commuter routes radiating from the District of Columbia out toward the Capital Beltway. VDOT installed signs along these routes where they did not exist before to guide motorists toward the I-495 Capital Beltway. VDOT actively participates in the regional Emergency Transportation Work Group staffed by COG and we remain committed to the development of a regional transportation plan that fuses regional transportation activities to support emergency preparedness. Key to this from the Commonwealth's perspective will be the Northern Virginia Smart Traffic Center (STC) in Arlington. The facility has good communications connectivity with key operations centers in Richmond as well as with local governments and partners in Maryland and the District of Columbia. Close working relationships between STC staff are on-going and is sustained daily thru the Northern Virginia Incident Management Team as they coordinate management of traffic and incidents, inclement weather conditions and special events.

The STC has been a focal coordination point in Virginia for events such as 9-11-01, Y2K, IMF/World Bank Meetings, and most recently the sniper shootings. The STC is suitable for hosting this mission due to its proximity and capabilities to view & manage traffic centrally through CCTV cameras, Variable Message Signs, local, regional and statewide communication links and the ability to disseminate information to the media. Most importantly is its ability to link with local communities, the District and Maryland agencies. We are reviewing options to expand this facility to serve as the core of a state level regional emergency operations center for Northern Virginia with enhanced linkages to the Virginia Emergency Operations Center as well as to operations centers in the District of Columbia, Maryland and our local jurisdictions.

It is critical to note that the transportation system within the NCR does not allow, from a capacity or alternative route adjustments standpoint, many options when major events affect portions of the network. In these situations, even a momentary stoppage in traffic flow will result in unavoidable back-ups and delays. Our goal remains to minimize the occurrence and duration of stoppages in close coordination with all relevant stakeholders and thus minimize the

corresponding effect on the regions transportation system. During the recent sniper incident, the Northern Virginia Freeway Incident Management Plan was utilized to close portions of Interstate 95 to facilitate the search for the suspect vehicle. While this resulted in delays, it evidences our ability to coordinate as a region on traffic issues. I should also note that the Commonwealth participates in the Seaboard Incident Management Group and the Interstate 95 Corridor Coalition and when events beyond the region have affected I-95, appropriate adjustments and notifications within NCR have reduced their impact on the network.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND RESPONSE PREPAREDNESS

We continue to see major enhancements in our ability to deliver both emergency medical and acute medical care in the aftermath of a bio-terrorism or other major disaster. While improvements have been made there remains more work to be done.

The Virginia Department of Health - Office of Emergency Medical Services contracts with Regional EMS Councils throughout the Commonwealth for planning, training and coordination of emergency operations with local EMS agencies. Prototype Regional Mass Casualty Incident, Regional Trauma Triage, Regional Reroute/Diversion and Regional Restocking and Re-supply plans and agreements have been developed. The Northern Virginia EMS Council participates in the Greater Metropolitan Washington Area Mutual Aid Operation Plan (MAOP), which has adopted the Incident Command System (ICS). This effort is focused on mutual aid operations, communications procedures, command, operations, logistics, planning, finance, resources, EMS, Hazmat and hospital Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's). Virginia also participates in a consortium of Mid Atlantic states (+D.C.) coordinating interstate EMS activities, including emergency preparedness and response.

Public Health planning continues to move forward regionally. The Virginia, District of Columbia, and Maryland health officers have met with the leaders of the Virginia, DC, and Maryland hospital associations to share and coordinate terrorism preparedness plans. Recent funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has allowed the Virginia Department of Health to hire an emergency planner for each of the 35 health districts statewide. VDH District Emergency Planners in the Northern Virginia region have been meeting regularly to coordinate Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans under the broader umbrella of state and local emergency planning throughout the region. As of January this year, these meetings have evolved into the more formal *National Capitol Region (NCR) Bio-terrorism Emergency Planner Committee*, which

meets monthly, is chaired by Arlington Health District's Emergency Planner and is staffed through COG. Among the issues addressed thus far are:

Mutual Support, Surge Capacity (synergistic and synchronized)
Inter-jurisdictional Communications (including use of RICCS).
NCR Incident Command System / Structure
Data, Information Sharing Processes
Plan Coordination
Individual and agency 24/7 Contact Information

Under the auspices of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the NCR Strategic National Pharmaceutical Stockpile (SNS, formerly NPS) Logistics Task Force meets regularly with representatives from state and District of Columbia public health and emergency management agencies. The Task Force has developed a NCR SNS Plan, which is being coordinated with existing state and district SNS plans.

District health departments are coordinating planning and training activities with hospitals in their districts. The VDH Northern Regional Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R) Team coordinates the hospital response with the Regional Coordinating Hospital. The Northern Virginia Hospital Region planning group is working to establish an emergency communication system, which interfaces directly with all Maryland and D.C. hospitals.

The Northern Virginia district health officers coordinate disease surveillance and response activities with Maryland and the District of Columbia tangentially with COG's staffing support. Northern Virginia health departments gather data daily from hospital emergency rooms. This data is tabulated and the tallies shared with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, where disease occurrence is assessed for the entire National Capital Region. This system has been in place since September 2001 and aids in the detection of increased disease activity in the NCR. Epidemiologists from the Virginia Department of Health are actively working with their counterparts in the District of Columbia and Maryland to explore automated methods of tracking diseases in the NCR.

A good example of one area that has not received a great deal of attention is in food safety. A cooperative approach to securing meat and poultry operations involving government and private industry is currently in place. This effort hinges upon the security plans and procedures implemented by private sector meat and poultry processors and verified by government inspection personnel. This initiative is currently underway within USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and Virginia's Office of Meat and Poultry Services. This is being coordinated with the District of Columbia and Maryland. Inspection personnel

are scheduled to perform procedures designed to verify security systems in place at their respective plant. Both food security and food safety issues identified by government personnel are discussed with plant management. Significant breaches of food security are reported through supervisory channels and feedback is provided to inspectors and plant management throughout the industry. Recent examples are the numerous reports of telephone requests for plant operational information by anonymous or unauthorized personnel.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION

Effective coordination within Virginia and across the entirety of the NCR is dependent on a solid communication capability that allows for both tactical communication at an incident site and strategic sharing of intelligence and information between departments and levels of government as well as with the private sector.

Communications are possible between the Virginia State Police and other state and local agencies through various means. Communications between traffic management centers for coordinated responses is possible via the public switched telephone network, "ring-down" circuits, private microwave telephone network, through use of the Police Mutual Aid Radio System (PMARS) radio, or through the use of specially assigned radios. Selected troopers and VDOT personnel are issued portable radios that are programmed to operate on open, nationally designated mutual aid channels. The VSP command post assigned to NOVA is outfitted with radios that allow direct communication with several localities and also has limited capability to patch together other radio systems.

For task force operations requiring close coordination, radio equipment is typically shared (swapped), as agencies have differing systems. This is not an optimal arrangement but represents a bridge solution while we collectively seek a more comprehensive solution across the NCR. Virginia's Department of State Police operates at frequencies in the 150 MHz range, while police departments in the metropolitan area operate in the 406, 450, 490, or 800 MHz range and many federal agencies have yet differing radio systems.

Communications between dispatch centers in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area are possible using the Police Mutual Aid Radio System (PMARS) or other connections via console operated control stations on local systems. This is an 800 MHz system, and provides the capability to connect dispatch centers together. The (incompatible, 150 MHz) State Police channels can be patched in to this network, if desired. Again this is not an optimal solution; rather it represents a

bridge while we seek a region wide resolution to communication that assures officer safety is not compromised.

There are a series of systems that support non-law enforcement communication between the Virginia Emergency Operations Center and Virginia's local governments (VCIN, Internet, WAWAS, Telephone Conference Call, RACES etc.).

The primary method of receiving and passing information and requests between the state, localities and neighboring jurisdictions is the commercial telephone system. The Commonwealth remains concerned about the vulnerabilities of the commercial telephone system and continues to expand on development of redundant capabilities. Other methods of moving information and requests are through a secure portion of the Agency's website. Local Emergency Management Coordinators, on behalf of their entire community, have access to On-line reporting (Situation Reports, Initial Damage Assessment, Monthly Warning test). Use of mass facsimile has been undertaken successfully since the mid-1990's to share situation reports and other critical information. Warning circuits first developed during the Cold War continue to provide limited dedicated communication. VAWAS (Virginia Warning System) includes approximately 25 localities, all State Police Divisions, and two Army installations; WAWAS (Washington Area Warning System) includes several Northern Virginia localities, VSP Fairfax Division, and the Virginia EOC, while NAWAS (National Warning System) includes all states and several federal agencies. Collectively this forms a variety of capabilities.

The Virginia EOC also regularly utilizes Conference Bridge and this capability has been in use since 1994. A standard Conference Bridge consists of up to 60 ports, but can be expanded if requested. The Virginia EOC also has an internal conference call system that can accommodate a smaller number of callers. An HF-SSB radio system that provides a means for direction and coordination of emergency and disaster operations includes a limited number of localities in Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, the State EOC, and VDEM Regional Coordinators, and is compatible with similar systems in Maryland and DC. Localities can send and receive information in a text-only format via the Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN). Volunteer amateur radio communications (RACES) provide both voice and data transmissions and serves as a redundant capability between the Virginia Emergency Operations Center and most local governments in Northern Virginia. The Virginia EOC is equipped with a satellite radio/telephone unit in the Communications Center. The system was installed by FEMA and has a "group" configured for federal-state operations including Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Virginia continues to seek to enhance the Emergency Alert System (EAS). Television and radio broadcast media, including dissemination of weather warnings and watches, serve as an expeditious means of communicating with the general public during an imminent or actual disaster or emergency.

It should be noted that work continues in the NCR on CAPWIN, the Capital Area Wireless Integrated Network, which is managed through the University of Maryland Center for Advanced Transportation Research. CAPWIN can best be described as a network of networks that will allow law enforcement, fire, emergency medical and transportation agencies to access and share data, when responding as a team to an incident. It will consolidate the information found in state and local law enforcement information networks. One of the goals to be provided by the CAPWIN system is the participation of responders in an instant messaging system. This will allow them to establish, or join an existing conference of responding units. The CAPWIN system is primarily a data communications system and will not currently address the voice communications interoperability that is needed, though this is a possibility.

Virginia is also working on the STARS project. This is the State Agencies Radio System, a project of the Commonwealth of Virginia, which is intended to replace, upgrade, or provide radio communications to virtually all state agencies within the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is primarily expected to operate on VHF high band frequencies because of the wide geographic area to be covered, but it will also contain elements operating in other frequency bands. Through local gateways, it is also expected to provide interoperability between state and local agencies, regardless of the frequency band or type of communications system that they purchase.

We should also note Project Agile. This is a program to improve interoperability, funded by the National Institute of Justice. In Virginia, Project Agile has worked with the City of Alexandria to provide connections between otherwise disparate voice communications systems by way of an ACU-1000 "audio switch" manufactured by JPS Communications of Raleigh, N.C. This system provides basic communications capabilities, but has limited expansion and requires close monitoring, control, and coordination to ensure that critical communications systems are not blocked or subjected to interference. The solution is most appropriately aimed at quick, interim, tactical connections between agencies not normally expected to communicate with each other.

Processes for communication among local fire-rescue departments vary widely across Virginia. Many of the existing systems are not interoperable. NOVA fire-rescue departments (Fairfax County/City, Arlington County, City of Alexandria, Metro Washington Airports Authority) use an interoperable 800mhz radio

network allowing direct communications between response units from different jurisdictions. Other jurisdictions' compatible systems (including Prince William County, Loudon County, and Montgomery County, MD) are in the planning/implementation stages. Processes for communications with departments having different systems vary from "radio patches" implemented through emergency communications centers, to the provision of additional radio equipment for commonly shared frequencies.

This Committee is also aware of the RICCS activity through the Council of Governments. The RICCS is currently being used to alert and notify key state personnel (primarily in VDEM, VDOT, and VSP) and local personnel within the NCR of incidents that have the potential to have an impact across the NCR. The RICCS utilizes the "ROAM SECURE" commercial product for these notifications. ROAM SECURE will activate various devices (i.e. pagers, cell phones, email service) for staff to be contacted. It works with whatever service the staff member utilizes if the staff member is within the coverage area provided by their individual communication device.

The incident-tracking portion of RICCS, which uses a commercial product (E-Team) in a pilot-testing mode, is currently under development. Additional work will be needed in order to provide a reliable and real-time method to track events. Training for users and configuration changes has proven to be difficult.

CLOSING

I have highlighted a few of the activities on-going in Virginia and across the NCR. It should be clear that there is a significant level of effort and our fundamental challenge remains to ensure synchronization and unity of disparate efforts. Our challenge remains to fully integrate the policy and operational levels of activity in a coordinated fashion. Independent activities both prior to and subsequent to the attacks of September 11th indicate the level of interest towards improving capabilities to make our communities safer and more secure. However, these independent activities ultimately must be synchronized if we are going to ensure a real improvement in our readiness. To that end, I continue to work with Governor Ehrlich and Mayor Williams to ensure we bring additional clarity and focus to our mutual efforts across the NCR.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today and I will be pleased to answer your questions.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. The bells that went off are just three votes over on the House floor.

What I would like to do—Mr. Byrne, I don't know what you and General Tuxill's schedule is, but if we could do questions really quickly to the Mayor and the Governor, we could dismiss them, and then you could have a half-hour break, and we could come back, and you could give your statements and ask questions. Would that be acceptable to you? I really appreciate both of you being here. I think you're both doing a great job under difficult circumstances, and you've always been cooperative with us on these issues.

Let me ask—Mr. Shays, any questions?

Mrs. Davis, any questions?

Let me ask over here, Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to both of you. It is good to see you, the Mayor, and my classmate from graduate school. And, Governor Warner, welcome to you as well.

And we don't have much time, so my question gets to a point raised by Congressman Cummings early on, which is to translate these plans and ideas into reality, we obviously need resources. There is the resources we need at the Federal level, nationally, then, of course, the resources we need locally in terms of first responders.

I'd like you both to assess the adequacy of the resources that you've been receiving from the Federal Government. There was, as you know, an expectation at one point of many higher resources, and Lieutenant Governor Hager described recently the amount of resources that Virginia got as a real let-down, because you've been expecting $80 million, and you got $12.7, and he described it as peanuts. And it was definitely compared to what the expectations were.

So my question to both—and I know the District has been bearing a lot of the burden of going to code orange, as you are in Virginia. My question is, are you receiving an adequate level of resources for first responders and other requirements? If not, what do you think an adequate level of resources would be? And where are the shortfalls right now? Where would you be spending those additional resources, and what's the risk if we don't provide those adequate funding?

Governor WARNER. Well, the short answer to the first question is, no, I don't believe we are receiving the adequate resources. We have the expectation last fall, as Lieutenant Governor Hager has indicated, of substantially more dollars. What that does is it raises the expectations amongst the first responders. When they don't see their dollars, their ability to plan, to move forward is seriously impaired. That ratchets up the pressure for some of the first responders to say, well, let's just bypass the State and bring these dollars straight to the local community. Whereas, when we moved right now up into code orange, well, local governments are having increased costs—a really disproportionate share is being borne by the State in increased State police presence, in increased presence, for example, in terms of the higher levels of the health department, higher levels at our emergency control center, and consequently

we're getting squeezed both ways. Those are dollars that we haven't planned for, allocated for, and the cost is not a line cost, a linear cost, because depending on how long we're at code orange, you can only build in so much overtime. You're then going to need additional personnel. And so that cost rises exponentially.

Mayor WILLIAMS. Mr. Chairman, I would look at two things, Congressman. One is operation, and the other is capital. As many people know on the capital front, the District has been—how can I be diplomatic—uniquely treated, and so we have been given the dollars we need, both in terms of categorical grants with health and bioterrorism, as well as a grant of around $156 million for general preparedness funding in the capital. And that is, as the chairman is saying—and I welcome a review by the GAO, and it ought to be.

On the operational front, thanks to the leadership of many of you, we've received $50 million reimbursement beginning in 2003, and so if you would ask me what is the real need at some increment that we're experiencing above that $50 million per year where we're going beyond that to meet responsibilities like protests, you know, terrorism threats, threat levels and the like, so it's really largely a personnel cost.

I would also add, I think—just as I think our regional cooperation can, I think, set a model for the rest of the country, I think the review of this committee can set a model for the rest of the country, and I would urge the committee in your conversation with Mr. Byrne to look at the State and local advisory component of the President's Homeland Security Advisory Council. We recommended to the President a package of criteria for funding State and local, regional response plans. I, actually serving as vice chair for that panel, think it is a good set of criteria.

My point is that I think it's important that we get the funding, and also important that we have a consistent set of criteria that are flexible at the local level across the country to use the funding.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Van Hollen.

We're going to have to leave in just a minute. I know Mrs. Davis has a question.

Let me make just one comment. First of all, I appreciate everything you're doing, and for Governor Warner, I don't think anyone has been more proactive in trying to get transportation dollars and moving traffic than you have in a generation, and I mean that, and I appreciate what you've been working on.

One of our concerns, and Mr. Moran expressed it earlier, is we're going to have to look at routine traffic incidents and others with the idea of moving the flow, and if you'd work with us maybe on writing a new book or whatever, and Governor Warner mentioned it as well. This is a huge concern to commuters coming in, and we are going to have to find the right balance. If you'd just work with us on that, if nothing else comes out of this hearing, but understanding that is very important to the operations of government as well as to our constituents, I think that it will be successful.

Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just real quickly, Governor, I've been married to a retired first responder for 28 years, and he served in the fire department for almost 30 years and just recently retired, and so consequently I've met with a lot of the first responders, and their complaint to me is that the money goes to the State, and they never see it. How do I respond to that? And they tell me there's plenty out there. They just can't get it.

Governor WARNER. Mrs. Davis, I only wish that were the case. We actually are very proud of the fact that as the Federal Government moves dollars into programs, we've had—I know there was an issue raised, for example, yesterday with Arlington. On average we've been able to get those dollars from the time we receive it, out into the field in about a 60-day timeframe. As a matter of fact, there's a new series of dollars up right now that—in terms of additional planning dollars that are—requests were due March 31st—the dollars will be out by the end of May.

I think what has happened, and I think Lieutenant Governor Hager touched on this yesterday, is there's a lot of information out there from first responders thinking that these are kind of untapped pots of dollars. But as you know, we had an expectation at the State level of receiving $85 million. We received $12 million. I'm not sure of the fact that what we ultimately received ever trickled down to the first responders, and they had hopes and expectations of much larger dollar amounts.

What we are going to continue to do is make sure the first responders know what kind of ultimate dollar amount we end up with, but we feel very pleased that we're working on about that 60-day turnaround from the time we get the dollars to getting those dollars out the door.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Do they have to request the dollars?

Governor WARNER. Yes. I think the chairman touched on this earlier. Looking at how all these dollars are spent, the value of having the State be part of the intermediary of this process is to ensure that there is coordination between all of the efforts of the local first responders. If not, you could end up with a hodgepodge of equipment and training going on out there and not allow us to go then into the coordinated fashion, not only within the State, but also as we look at interjurisdictional requirements. It is absolutely essential that we have that accountability with these Federal dollars flowing down to the first responders.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you, Governor, and I'd love to work with you on that if I could.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

I'll give Mr. Moran the last word here.

Mr. MORAN. I'm not going to ask a question, because I know, Governor, that you're doing a great job, with former Lieutenant Governor Hager, for the State. But I just have some comments I want to make, and I first want to make a comment to Tony Williams to think about.

Federal transportation officials tell us that they are not aware of any citation being issued in 20 years for hazardous materials trucks going through populace areas, even though there is a law that says that you're supposed to use any alternative routes unless there's no practicable alternative available. They're still using

major highways, Southeast Expressway, etc., right through the city. A couple tickets, and the word might spread with some of the HAZMAT trucks.

And with regard to the State, I hope we're making progress in getting the hotels and the hospitals available if we did have some kind of spread of a serious infectious disease, that we move people out and make those beds available.

And last, we get thousands of our trash trucks going through the Washington area, going to these major trash disposal places in California. California and Pennsylvania have more than any other State, as you know, Governor. I know you're concerned about that. We never check what is in those trash trucks coming particularly from New York or New Jersey. Once in a while a little—I don't know how the heck you do it, but I know that's an area of vulnerability we ought to think about.

And thanks for being here at the hearing and for what you're doing.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you both for your leadership. We look forward to working with you, and I'll recess. We'll get back about 5 minutes of 1. Thank you.

[Recess.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. General Tuxill, we will let you go next and Mr. Byrne. The hearing will be resumed.

General TUXILL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Davis and distinguished members of the committee, I am Major General Bruce Tuxill, the Adjutant General for the State of Maryland. And while it may seem strange to have someone in uniform here, I have Maryland Emergency Management under me.

I am here representing Governor Ehrlich. He wished he could have been here today, but truly appreciates your focus on homeland security in the national capital region.

I would like to extend my thanks and the Governor's thanks to Representatives Elijah Cummings, Dutch Ruppersberger and Chris Van Hollen for their service on this committee and especially their interest in homeland security.

Maryland has been working with the District, with Virginia and the Department of Homeland Security, now, and since September 11, 2001 on our mutually supportive preparedness efforts for the national capital region.

At the strategic and policy level, Maryland's homeland security Advisor, Tom Lockwood and Emergency Management Director, Mr. Don Keldsen, have worked closely with their counterparts within the NCR Senior Policy Group. I and other members of this panel testifying today will elaborate on the eight commitments as the Mayor briefed.

And for us—for me it's the Emergency Protective Measures and Mutual Aid. And interwoven in my talk, I will address though, as mentioned by the Governor and the Mayor, we have been working together with our partners represented on this panel.

We are very pleased that Mike Byrne was selected as the Director of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination. He truly is a catalyst for the effective Federal integration agency coordination within the region.

Two, he understands our State and local perspectives. In the State of Maryland, we have collaborated through the Maryland Terrorism Forum. Action groups operating within the Forum use cross-discipline representation to include emergency management, law enforcement, health, fire, emergency, medical, transportation and the National Guard. Action groups exist for equipment, training, emergency public information, advanced technology and communication, and health and medical.

We have incorporated new partners such as the U.S. Attorney's Office, and we are active participants in the Antiterrorism Task Force for Maryland. Cooperation with the local governments within the NCR is enhanced by Regional Planning and Coordination Forums on at least a quarterly basis.

The private sector is the owner of most of the critical infrastructure in the Nation and the region. Thus a partnership between Government and the private sector is essential. We have collectively embarked on a Critical Infrastructure Protection Planning Session in the region and across the State of Maryland. You will hear more about that from one of our partners, the Greater Washington Board of Trade.

Because the private sector is also comprised of the general citizenry, our joint government and private sector responsibility is to inform them of what they need to do to prepare for an incident and what to do when an incident occurs.

Additionally, while not having an operational role or authority from either the State or local perspective, the Committee of Government has served a very useful role in the coordination and spreading of the word to the various publics.

Maryland has been a dedicated partner with Virginia and the District on transportation issues on a daily basis, and also in the planning to overcome the repeat of the September 11th traffic situation. Much progress, as the Governor and the Mayor have mentioned, much progress has been made in transportation planning for an incident in the region, including clearly marked routes, the capability to synchronize signals across jurisdictional lines and alternate route planning.

The pier transportation planning and coordination aspect is just part of the solution. Street closures in the District are complicated by security issues and a large number of independent authorities beyond the three branches of Government.

Mike Byrne has been instrumental in the creation of a Joint Federal Committee, a standing committee to address the multitude of coordination issues within the Federal family in the region. We have committed to develop a common set of protective measures to protect the health and safety of the public in the event of a major emergency in the region.

OPM, FEMA and GSA have coordinated plans for the staged release of Federal employees which would avoid putting everyone in the "Exit D.C." mode at the same time. These protocols have been coordinated with the District of Columbia, the States and also the private sector.

Another aspect of this issue is the commitment to mutual aid. Fortunately, Maryland, Virginia and the District are all signatories to the National Emergency Management Assistance Compact

[EMAC], which provides a quick and effective mechanism to provide all types of assistance when an emergency is declared by one of the jurisdictions.

Maryland has a statewide Hospital Emergency Department Communications Network, which optimizes effective emergency medical services dispatch and can coordinate responses within the District and Virginia as necessary.

In the health arena, we partner with the District of Columbia and Virginia on syndrome surveillance and other disease indicators to enable us to rapidly identify trends.

In terms of emergency protective measures, we collectively learned from the anthrax attacks, from the smallpox vaccination planning and recently the severe acute respiratory syndrome [SARS] infections. Protocols are shared among health officials in terms of mutual aid. Coordinating of credentialing medical personnel across State lines is ongoing.

Maryland, Virginia and the regional local jurisdictions are connected for telecommunications to the Washington warning and alert system, a dedicated circuit. The States and D.C. are connected through FEMA, regional dedicated circuits, radio nets and satellite capabilities.

On a daily basis, we are alerted to incidents having a regional impact through the Regional Incident Coordination Communication Center System [RICCS], via e-mail, pager and/or cell phone. Mutual aid communication resources may be available through Emergency Management Assistance Compact, depending upon the necessity for interoperability.

In closing, let me say that the level of cooperation and collaboration among the partners of the national capital region, regardless of one geographical definition, continues to be remarkable. I applaud all involved for making this a cooperative effort and making it work so well.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of General Tuxill follows:]

Statement of Major General Bruce F. Tuxill

Adjutant General

State of Maryland

Committee on Government Reform

U.S. House of Representatives

April 10, 2003

Good morning/afternoon Chairman Davis, Mr. Waxman, and distinguished members of the committee. I am Major General Bruce Tuxill, the Adjutant General for the State of Maryland, representing Governor Robert Ehrlich who could not be with you today, but appreciates your focus on Homeland Security and the National Capital Region. I would like to extend a special thanks to Representative Elijah Cummings, Representative Dutch Ruppersberger, and Representative Chris Van Hollen, for their service on this Committee and their interest in Homeland Security issues.

I am the co-chair of the Maryland Terrorism Forum with Colonel Edward Norris, Superintendent of the Maryland State Police. The Terrorism Forum administered by the Maryland Emergency Management Agency has been the core terrorism policy group for the state since January 1998. I will expand on the Forum shortly.

Maryland has been working very effectively with our Virginia, District of Columbia and Department (formerly Office) of Homeland Security partners since September 11, 2001 on our mutually supportive preparedness efforts for the National Capital Region (NCR). Let me say here that the NCR designation should not be exclusive to an old definition. The old definition of the Region consisted of the District of Columbia; Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William, plus the City of Alexandria in Virginia. In this age of mobility, we have not only Marylanders, but

also people transiting Maryland from Pennsylvania and Delaware to get to jobs in the District. In our war on terrorism, artificial boundaries based on cold war thinking cannot limit our actions. Response will come from outside the traditional NCR limits and must have the same readiness. You may recall the National Capital Region Summit from August 5, 2002 and our joint Eight Commitments to Action. At the strategic, policy level, Maryland's Homeland Security Advisor and Emergency Management Director have worked closely with their counterparts as part of the Senior Policy Group. I and other members of this panel testifying today will elaborate on the Eight Commitments and subsequent actions as they relate to the issues the Committee asked us to address.

1. Assessment of cooperation between various agencies and governments.

As mentioned by the Mayor and the Governor, we have been working together with our partners represented on this panel. We are pleased that Michael Byrne was selected as the Director of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination as he has been a catalyst for effective Federal interagency coordination in the Region, understands the state and local perspective and is an integrative thinker.

In the State of Maryland, we have collaborated within and across disciplines and local jurisdictions through the Maryland Terrorism Forum as I mentioned at the beginning of my statement. Action Groups operating within the Forum include cross discipline representation to include emergency management, law enforcement, health, fire, emergency medical services, transportation and the

National Guard; with representation from the State, Local and Federal levels. Action groups exist for equipment, training, emergency public information, advanced technology and communication and health/medical. We have incorporated new partners, such as the U.S. Attorney's Office, by integrating ourselves through state and local involvement in the Anti-Terrorism Task Force for Maryland in our Terrorism Prevention effort. Cooperation with the local governments is enhanced by regional planning and coordination Forums on at least a quarterly basis.

2. Definition of appropriate roles and responsibility between government and the private sectors.

The private sector has three major roles to play in Homeland Security. A key role of the private sector is as owner of most of the critical infrastructure of the nation and the region. As such, a partnership between government and the private sector is essential. We have collectively embarked on critical infrastructure protection planning sessions in the region and also across the State of Maryland. You will hear more about that from one of our partners including the Greater Washington Board of Trade. Additionally, because the private sector is also comprised of the general citizenry, our joint government/private sector responsibility is to inform them of what they need to do to prepare for an incident and what to do when an incident occurs. Collaboration continues as this area will always need to be reinforced and sustained. A third area of private sector responsibility and joint collaboration is the allocation of resources that may be vital in the event of an incident that results in loss of

communications capabilities. I must also mention the key role of regional groups such as the Washington Council of Governments (COG). While not having an operational role or authority from either a state or local perspective, COG has served a very useful role in coordination and spreading the word to various publics. You will hear more about that from their representative.

3. Transportation, evacuation and street closure planning

Maryland is and has been a dedicated partner with Virginia and the District on transportation issues on a daily basis, but also in planning to overcome a repeat of the September 11th traffic situation. Much progress has been made in transportation planning for an incident in the Region, including clearly marked routes, the capability to synchronize signals across jurisdiction lines and alternate route planning. The pure transportation planning and coordination aspect is only part of the solution. Street closures in the District are immensely complicated by security issues and the large number of independent authorities beyond the three branches of government. Michael Byrne was instrumental in creation of the Joint Federal Committee, a standing committee, to address the multitude of coordination issues within the Federal family in the Region. We applaud his efforts and consider him the right person for this unique position.

Another key aspect of this issue relates to one of the Eight Commitments, that of Emergency Protective Measures. We have committed to develop a common set of emergency protective measures to protect the health and safety of the public in the event of a major emergency in the Region. In the context of the transportation arena,

this means recognizing that an event probably will not require a total evacuation of the District. On September 11th, for example, a more appropriate protective measure for the area as a whole would probably have been an expedited commute. OPM, FEMA and GSA have coordinated plans for a staged release of Federal employees which would avoid putting everyone in the "exit DC" mode at the same time. These protocols have been coordinated with the District of Columbia, the States and private sector employees. You may ask, "Aren't we putting citizens in jeopardy that way"? Emergency protective measures are always dependent on the situation. Key to the decision making process is the area impacted and the risks of various courses of action. In a hazardous materials incident (which could be chemical, biological or radiological) the appropriate protective action for those in the immediate area might be to evacuate the building or designated zones, while others nearby may be more appropriately advised to shelter in place. A related behavioral aspect is parents concerned about their children and wanting to go get them to keep them safe. Going to get the children may place both children and parents at greater risk. The consensus is that keeping children in school is best unless a specific school is threatened by the incident. Another protective measure may be distribution of certain pharmaceuticals. The capability to obtain and distribute these items has been coordinated throughout the Region.

Another aspect of this issue relates to the commitment to Mutual Aid. While immediate response mutual aid between jurisdictions for police, fire, EMS and HAZMAT is a daily routine, transportation and public works do not necessarily provide mutual aid routinely. Fortunately, Maryland, Virginia and the District are all

signatories to the National Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) which provides a quick and effective mechanism to provide all types of assistance when an emergency is declared by one jurisdiction. There are some liability and indemnification issues that need to be resolved for day-to-day or special event mutual aid. A legislative proposal is being prepared to allow responders to bring their home jurisdiction protection with them.

4. Medical assistance and response preparedness

Maryland has a statewide, hospital emergency department communications network which optimizes effective emergency medical services response dispatch and can coordinate responses with the District of Columbia and Virginia as necessary. We also have a Facilities Resource Emergency Data (FRED) system which can provide vital resource information through the State Emergency Operations Center to our partners. In the health arena, we partner with the District of Columbia and Virginia on syndromic surveillance and other disease indicators to enable us to identify suspicious indicators and analyze them as quickly as possible. This is an area where we partnered with the private sector, in this case the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, to effectively use defense technology for civil use. In terms of emergency protective measures in this area, we collectively learned a lot from the anthrax attacks, the smallpox vaccination planning and the recent Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS infections. Protocols are shared among health officials. As mentioned previously, pharmaceutical distribution is planned and personnel have been trained to distribute medications appropriately. In terms of

Mutual Aid, coordination of credentialing of medical personnel across state lines is ongoing.

5. Telecommunications and communication implementation coordination

Maryland, Virginia, DC and regional local jurisdictions are connected for telecommunications through the Washington Area Warning and Alert System (WAWAS) dedicated circuit. The states and DC are connected through FEMA regional dedicated circuits, radio nets and satellite capabilities. On a daily basis, we are alerted to incidents having a regional impact through the Regional Incident Coordination and Communications System (RICCS) via email, pager and/or cell phone. This information can be sent not only to regional operational centers, but also to key personnel in functional areas such as transportation or public health. These are means of not only communicating alerts and warnings, but also play a key role in coordination and dissemination of emergency protective measures. Mutual Aid communication resources may be available through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact depending on the necessity for interoperability.

In closing, let me say that the level of cooperation and collaboration among the partners in the National Capital Region, regardless of one's geographical definitions, has been remarkable. This entire region needs to be the best prepared in the nation and by overcoming its challenges can enhance the rest of the nation's preparedness.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Byrne, thanks for being with us, and thanks for staying here.

Mr. BYRNE. Good afternoon, Chairman Davis, Congressman Waxman, distinguished members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss emergency preparedness in the Nation's Capital. I am honored to sit with the distinguished members of this panel. The clear, focused leadership demonstrated by Governors Warner and Ehrlich, Mayor Williams, and my boss, Secretary Ridge, has allowed us to accomplish much in a short time to make the Nation's Capital safer and stronger.

The Office of National Capital Region Coordination was in Section 882 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, with the mission to oversee and coordinate Federal programs for and the relationships with State, local and regional authorities in the region.

Congress established this office in recognition of the importance of our region as the symbol of the Nation, the seat of our Government and home to millions of people. The complexity of relationships, roles and responsibilities that exist within the national capital region also requires special consideration.

Unfortunately, a commensurate threat exists for which we all must prepare. Success in preparing and securing the national capital region is not simply a Federal or even a public matter. All of us within the region must work together to ensure our collective security, including the Federal Government, State and city governments, private-sector, nonprofit organizations, as well as individual citizens. Each brings to the table their own responsibilities and authorities, and it is the job of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination to see the capabilities that each group brings are coordinated and integrated into a widely known and well-practiced system that ensures our preparedness and security.

As I had mentioned, the complexity of relationships, jurisdictions, roles and responsibilities is staggering. Many separate local jurisdictions must work in concert with each other, with their State counterparts, the Federal Government, all three branches of the Federal Government and the private and nonprofit sectors in order to achieve preparedness. We are off to an outstanding start. The leadership of the District of Columbia, Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia have established an unprecedented level of cooperation among the jurisdictions.

As mentioned earlier by previous speakers, the Senior Policy Group and the work groups it creates strengthens these relationships. Additionally, coordination and cooperation is greatly improved among Federal departments and agencies.

We have created a Standing Joint Federal Committee drawn from all three branches of Government to coordinate Federal work force protection with other regional efforts. The Joint Federal Committee developed the protocol addressing the Federal Workforce Emergency Release Process, expanding protective options and integrating State and local government into the process. Protocols defining each decisionmaking process were briefed to the legislative, executive and judicial branch Chiefs of Staff in February 2003.

Another recent success that demonstrates the improved Federal cooperation and coordination is the release of the Office of Person-

nel Management's Guide for Federal Employees and Managers. OPM developed the guides in concert with a wide range of expertise from across the Federal Government. Our office was instrumental in bringing together the right experts to work with OPM and participate in the development of the guides. In the few weeks that these guides have been available, they have been downloaded by more than a quarter of a million people to use.

Additionally, on March 25th, I joined the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to discuss emergency readiness with 24 unions representing Federal employees. Much progress has been made, yet much work needs to be done.

We will continue to develop and improve relationships and cooperation at all levels of government and with the private sector. The high-threat, urban-area funding, that has been targeted for the national capital region, provides a unique and exciting opportunity to strategically utilize the funds available to improve capability across all jurisdictions that compose the national capital region. These funds will be used to build capacity and support the region by developing joint planning, training and exercises.

One of the primary response concerns in the national capital region is quick and efficient transportation out of the area during an incident. We must coordinate egress routes that allow for a safe and fast exit from harm's way without eliminating all ingress routes that will allow our emergency responders to do their jobs effectively. This is a significant challenge that will require both creativity and flexibilities.

Currently our office is working with the District, Maryland and Virginia and all the local jurisdictions on a plan that will address our protective measure options which include as one of them, evacuation.

Additionally, the Joint Federal Committee is working with State and local law enforcement, Emergency Management and Transportation Agencies to develop practical protocols for security-related street closures.

In closing, the Nation's Capital presents a unique challenge for those who protect its citizens and institutions, especially from the threat of terrorism. The Office of National Capital Region Coordination serves a key role in the support of the Senior Policy Group to continue to enhance the broad regional, strategic perspective and coordination.

These efforts have begun to achieve this aim, but continuing dialog is critical to its ultimate success. More importantly, the effort represents the collective decision that preparedness is not the responsibility of a few, but rather the united efforts of the many.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Byrne follows:]

Statement of Michael F. Byrne

Director, Office of National Capital Region Coordination

Department of Homeland Security

Committee on Government Reform

U.S. House of Representatives

April 10, 2003

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon. Chairman Davis, Mr. Waxman, distinguished members of the committee. I am Michael Byrne, director of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of National Capital Region Coordination (ONCRC). It is a pleasure to be with you today to discuss emergency preparedness in the Nation's Capital.

The Office of National Capital Region Coordination was established by Section 882 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to oversee and coordinate Federal programs for and relationships with State, local, and regional authorities in the National Capital Region (NCR). For purposes of the work of our office, the Act defined the National Capital Region to consist of the following geographic area: the entire District of Columbia; Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William, plus the City of Alexandria, in Virginia. The Office came into being on March 1, 2003 when the major components of the Department came together. The establishment of an office solely dedicated to the NCR recognizes the importance of our region as a symbol of our nation and the seat of our government and the complexity of relationships, roles, and responsibilities that exist within the NCR. Unfortunately, a commensurate threat exists for which we must all prepare.

The ONCRC is only weeks old. It is not starting from scratch, however, but building on a year of strong relationship-building and progress begun by the District of Columbia, the States of Maryland and Virginia, and the White House Homeland Security Council.

These relationships provide a strong foundation for cooperation, coordination, and ultimately operations, and I, with my NCR partners, am committed to fostering and continuing this progress.

Cooperation

As I have mentioned, the complexity of relationships, jurisdictions, roles, and responsibilities within the NCR is staggering. Eighteen separate local jurisdictions must work in concert with each other, their State counterparts, the Federal government – all three branches – and the private sector in order to achieve the type of cohesive planning, preparedness, and response that is necessary to secure the NCR. I am pleased to say that we are off to an outstanding start. The leadership of the District of Columbia, State of Maryland, and Commonwealth of Virginia has established an unprecedented level of cooperation among the jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction has designated senior representatives to form a Senior Policy Group (SPG) to define and implement strategic objectives for achieving security for the National Capital Region. The SPG and the work groups it created have been working to strengthen relationships with one another, local jurisdictions, Federal agencies, and both public and private organizations in the NCR. Significant progress has been made as evidenced by the NCR Summit in August 2002. The Summit produced agreement among District of Columbia Mayor Anthony A. Williams, Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening, and Virginia Governor Mark R. Warner on committing their jurisdictions to work together to fulfill the following *Eight Commitments to Action*:

1. Terrorism Prevention
2. Citizen Involvement in Preparedness
3. Decision-Making and Coordination
4. Emergency Protective Measures
5. Infrastructure Protection
6. Media Relations and Communication
7. Mutual Aid
8. Training and Exercises

Additionally, coordination and cooperation has greatly improved among the Federal departments and agencies. The SPG created a standing Joint Federal Committee (JFC), drawn from all three branches of government, to coordinate Federal workforce protection with other regional efforts.

The JFC developed a protocol addressing the Federal workforce emergency release process, expanding protection options, and integrating State and local government into the process.

Protocols defining each decision making process were briefed to the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branch Chiefs of Staff in February of 2003.

Another recent success that demonstrates the improved Federal cooperation and coordination is the release of the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) guides for Federal employees and managers. OPM developed the guides in concert with a wide range of expertise from across the Federal government. The ONCRC was instrumental in bringing together the right experts to work with OPM and participate in the development of the guides. In the few weeks that these guides have been available, they have been downloaded more than a quarter of a million times.

The ONCRC also continues to integrate and communicate with not only state and local, but with the private sector, think tanks, and academia in addressing the issues and concerns of the ONCRC as they are important and valued partners to this effort. These groups will continue to be a great resource as we work to address the challenges of the region.

Much progress has been made, yet much work remains to be done. We will continue to develop and improve relationships and cooperation at all levels of government and with the private sector.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Office of National Capital Region Coordination has broad responsibilities in the Homeland Security Act of 2002. These responsibilities include:

- Coordinating the activities of DHS relating to the NCR;

- Assessing, and advocating for, the resources needed by State, local, and regional authorities in the NCR to implement efforts to secure the homeland;

- Providing State, local, and regional authorities in the NCR with regular information, research, and technical support to assist the efforts of State, local, and regional authorities in the NCR in securing the homeland;

- Developing a process for receiving meaningful input from State, local and regional authorities and the private sector in the NCR to assist in the development of the homeland security plans and activities of the Federal Government;

- Coordinating with Federal agencies in the NCR on terrorism preparedness, to ensure adequate planning, information sharing, training, and execution of the Federal role in domestic preparedness activities;

- Coordinating with Federal, State, local, and regional agencies, and the private sector in the NCR on terrorism preparedness to ensure adequate planning, information sharing, training, and execution of domestic preparedness activities among these agencies and entities; and

- Serving as a liaison between the Federal Government and State, local and regional authorities, and private sector entities in the NCR to facilitate access to Federal grants and other programs.

Transportation, evacuation and street closure

One of the primary terrorism response concerns in the NCR is quick and efficient transportation out of the area during an incident. We must coordinate egress routes that allow for a fast and safe exit from harm's way without eliminating all ingress routes that will allow our emergency responders to do their jobs effectively. This is a significant challenge that will require both creativity and flexibility to solve. Currently our office is

working with the District (with input from Maryland and Virginia) on an evacuation plan. Additionally, the JFC is working with NCR State and local law enforcement, emergency management, and transportation agencies to develop practical protocols for security-related street closures. It is clear that to address our transportation and evacuation challenges successfully, all of the NCR jurisdictions and levels of government must make a strong commitment to work together.

Medical assistance and response preparedness

The NCR has done much in the past year to increase our medical assistance and response preparedness. The District, Maryland and Virginia are sharing daily important syndromic surveillance information that could provide the early warning necessary to respond to a biological incident or public health emergency. Each jurisdiction has been involved in the creation and signing of the pharmaceutical stockpile distribution plan for the National Capital Region.

Communication implementation and coordination

The District, Maryland and Virginia and the ONCRC are working in partnership to use a coordinated process for decision-making for significant incidents and emergency situations in the NCR. This includes methods to coordinate among operational entities as well as senior decision-makers in local and state governments, the Federal government, and the private sector. The Senior Policy Group is coordinating enhancements to communications transparency among regional leaders to facilitate decision-making.

Close

The National Capital Region presents a unique challenge for those who protect its citizens and institutions, especially from the threat of terrorism. The Office of National Capital Region Coordination serves a key leadership role along with the NCR Senior Policy Group to continue to enhance the broad regional strategic perspective and coordination among the States, the District, and the local governments. These efforts have begun to achieve this aim, but continuing dialogue and coordination by localities, state and federal agencies, and the private sector are critical to its ultimate success. Most importantly, the effort represents the collective vision that preparedness is not the responsibility of a few, but rather the united efforts of the many.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you both. Mr. Byrne let me just start with you.

I know you were brought in for the homeland security aspect of this, but really when you talk about the Federal, city and the Nation's Capital, it came to bear after an incident in 1783 when a group of pensioners from the Revolutionary War marched on the Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia. The local militia was sympathetic to the pensioners, allowed the pensioners to march and chased the Continental Congress across the river into New Jersey, and that is what inspired Madison and others to say we need a Federal zone because there is a Federal responsibility here, and we need to control our own areas.

We have had a number of incidents over the past few months, some of them tangentially homeland-security related, some of them traffic accidents and others, where traffic is held up 2, 3 hours sometimes. We can't get quorums and start hearings on time here. Agencies coming to a standstill. And although local police and Federal police—it is a whole—each incident has it's own little matrix. But it seems that moving people around in the Capital City is not the priority. And gives us some thought that maybe we ought to federalize those aspects because, frankly, moving people in and out of the Nation's Capital so they can do the Nation's business is a Federal responsibility and something we in the Congress are accountable for. And if we can't get the recognition and the prioritization at the local level, it may be something we have to take over.

What are your thoughts on this?

Mr. BYRNE. In the time I have been meeting with local officials on these issues, I would have to say, Mr. Chairman, that there is no one that doesn't agree with you about the priority in this and everybody is willing to work it better.

I think the challenge is to provide vehicles for coordination, and I see that as an opportunity for my office to play a role in terms of making sure that the right people are communicating together quickly and early when things happen and to, you know, facilitate that.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Let me give you another example.

It is not just the local delegation and a bunch of angry constituents. My friend and colleague from northern Virginia just walked in. Frank, I wonder if you could share with them a comment you had from a member yesterday about the traffic jam on the 14th Street Bridge. And we are hearing from members about their ability and inability to get here on time.

Mr. WOLF. First of all, let me say I don't think VDOT, the State, the region are doing the appropriate job to enable people to get back and forth. Yesterday, because of what took place on the 14th Street Bridge—which may very well not be in Virginia territory but it is a Virginia obligation, because there are Virginia people that are backed up—this member, I won't give the name, passed me a note showing that he left his House at 5:32 a.m., yesterday and got in at 8:52 a.m., yesterday. We have asked VDOT, and we have asked the region to come together to deal with this. Several months ago on the George Washington Parkway, a bus stayed on the Park-

way from 4:15 a.m., to 7:15 a.m. Nobody moved it. Every other week there is a major accident or fender bender on the other side.

So if you are talking about evacuating this region—we can't even deal with just a fender bender on the 14th Street Bridge, the Memorial Bridge, the T.R. Bridge, Woodrow Wilson Bridge or the Key Bridge—and it took that individual over 3 hours and some minutes.

For some reason, VDOT and the region just can't get together. You need tow trucks on all these bridges to move vehicles quickly, pull them off and deal with the traffic problem later on. But getting in and out is becoming very, very grim every morning, and I don't know if that is the subject, what people are talking about. It is out of control.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. In trying to preserve the scene of the accident, so they can get the pictures and have an officer come and see where everybody is, it is important to that case.

Ordinarily, I would think you would want to do that from a police perspective. But when you are holding up tens and thousands of commuters, stopping the workings of Government, not allowing congressional hearings to get a quorum, we couldn't get a quorum yesterday. We couldn't get a quorum in our caucus yesterday morning. It is usually about a half hour to 45 minutes for me to drive in. It was almost 2 hours yesterday morning. And I know there are accidents, and it is complicated, and there are going to be delays, but the priority ought to be to get everybody off, safely, but off the road as quickly as we can so we can clear the arteries and then commerce and Government can function.

And I guess the concern here is, as Mr. Wolf says, if a fender bender stops this or a guy with a tractor with a bad day can bring us to a stop, imagine what a terrorist can do. That is the concern. And I wanted to deliver that. It is not just the regional delegation. There are members that are pinning on us wondering as well. And if we have to federalize it, we will federalize it. This is serious business, and if we can't coordinate locally over who is to do it, then we will have to take it over. And you are the guy.

Mr. BYRNE. Yes, sir. Those are my comments.

Chairman DAVIS. Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, gentleman. General Tuxill good to see you again. Mr. Byrne, welcome.

I asked the members of the earlier panel about the resource question because I hear from my county executives in Montgomery and Prince George and my colleague, Mr. Ruppersberger, hears from his local officials that they are not getting the funds at the local level, the resources they need to meet the security needs for first responders.

There are two possibilities. One is adequate funds are flowing to the States but they are not flowing down to local officials. My sense is that adequate funds are not flowing to the States.

You may recall we had an Omnibus Appropriations Bill pass out of here a little while ago. $3.5 billion additional funding for domestic. The way it came out of here, to the regret of many of us, people actually took money from other areas for first responders to count toward the $3.5 billion. So you didn't have anything on the order of a $3.5 billion increase, and the results of that—and I am hearing from the States there are inadequate resources at the State level.

So I would ask both of you gentleman if you could respond to whether or not the States are receiving adequate resources to meet the jobs and needs in this Capital region. If not, what additional resources are necessary, and what are the risks that we are taking now by not providing those resources.

Mr. BYRNE. First and foremost, in the supplemental request, there is a request for additional funding, so we agree we need to get more funding to State and local levels.

You know, we think that the important thing about that, consistent with the President's strategy for homeland security, is that it be part of a comprehensive plan, which is why we see the need to work with the States and have the States work with their local communities to have the same kind of system, the same identification or types of resources and things like that.

In the supplemental request, there is $1.5 billion for additional—additional $1.5 billion, and we think that will help along and provide the kind of resources that they need.

I think another important step, that is actually in the proposals for the 2004 budget, is that, you know, we sort of need to update and spend the money effectively and prudently, that we do an update of the assessment that was done.

In fact, most of the assessment work was done pre-September 11th and to look at the State and local capabilities and to identify, which is something I am going to be working with the local jurisdictions here in the region to do, to clearly identify what the right requirements are, so we can intelligently and effectively answer your question.

General TUXILL. One of the things—as far as money getting down to the local level, we have had a lot of press out that says, OK, look how much money is coming to the State. One of the interesting things is we have obligated all of our funds for fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 designated for the local jurisdictions. And the State obligation for Maryland is almost complete for 2002. The current cycle, 2003, which we are in, is just being received, and we are starting to process it.

So as you can see we are almost 9 months into the State fiscal year and a little over 3 months into the Federal or, excuse me or even more than that, 6 months into the Federal fiscal year. So there is a big delay in receiving those funds.

While we hear the press release when it happens and when Congress says we have got the funds, it takes it a good while to appear in the State. So I think that is one of the problems that we have. I can tell you in Maryland, sir, what we do is get all of the players around the table to include all of the local jurisdictions and some of the State agencies, and we sit down and say, here is how much money we have and we start a collective consensus to get the things that people need, so that we have that interoperability.

I think Governor Warner was right on the mark when he said that the State should get the money, so that we ensure interoperability. We had a terrible problem with that in the military and Goldwater Nickels came out and said, you will talk to each other. So we get the Navy talking to the Marine Corps, talking to the Army, talking to the Air Force. We have to make sure we don't have something like that happening in the national capital region.

Communicative powers and that we are able to collectively address situations and that is part of that equipment.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Same issue, quick followup for Mr. Byrne.

You mentioned the additional funds coming to the region from the Urban Area Security Initiative. It is about $18.2 million. How are you going to allocate those funds, and have you made any decisions in that regard?

Mr. BYRNE. We are going to look at this as a region, and it got cooperation from the two Governors' offices and the Mayor's office to work together to do the kind of things that are strategically the right fit for the regional area. And that is to look at the kinds of joint training, where not just individual jurisdictions are sitting in the classroom on a very simple basic level, but they are all getting the same training on a planning level, to do some of the better planning we need to do, especially in the area that has been brought up many times, you know, about movement of people and things like that. I think that is an opportunity for that. I also think it is an opportunity for us to identify assets and resources and capabilities that could have strategic regional capability. And we are going to sit down and plan that out. There are some things that seem obvious already that would be high on the priority list to include interoperable communication, data sharing across the jurisdictions so that the USCs are all seeing the same information simultaneously and also in the area of health and medical, like surveillance and things like that.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Before I yield to Mr. Wolf, we are putting money into some of these areas, but to move a bus, to move cars on time, to do some of these things doesn't take a lot of money, it just takes strategic thinking. But while we are waiting for the big one to happen, and getting ready for the huge attack, we have these mini-attacks everyday, some of them intentional, some of them unintentional. But one guy with a tractor holding up the rush hours is, in my opinion, something for the money we are spending. If the current leadership can't do it, we have to find somebody who can.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thanks for having the hearing.

Three points: we are closing too many roads in the District of Columbia. You cannot keep closing the roads. We're becoming vulcanized. You can't get in front of the White House or back of the White House. You are having problems all over this town. Somebody has to meet with the White House, and you are now the Area Coordinator—and say, we can't keep closing these roads because everytime you close a road, you make it harder and harder for people to come in and then leave the city.

Second, coordination. I have a request from a group of hospitals in northern Virginia asking for communications systems, but they don't include Sibley. They don't include the hospitals in Maryland. If something were to happen, the likelihood of somebody being taken to a Maryland hospital or a D.C. hospital is just as great as coming out to Loudoun or Fairfax. On communications, the George Washington, Hospital Center, Sibley, they all have to be tied in. So if you could comment on that. And do all these requests for the re-

gion come in through you simultaneously when people are asking? Somebody has to coordinate, so we don't buy a system for Fairfax hospital and they can't speak with Sibley.

Last, working with Mr. Davis, we put money in to create the Emergency Response Center at the George Washington University Loudoun campus to train emergency response people. Are you involved in that? Are you making sure that the regions from Warren county to Frederick county up in Maryland, that our law enforcement people, police, rescue and fire will all be in the first class that will be trained in that center? So on closing of the roads, on the coordination and are you involved in making sure who goes through that center first?

Mr. BYRNE. On the road closure issue yes, we formed this Joint Federal Committee that pretty much the security people are from. And the law enforcement aspects, you know, Secret Service, Park Police, Federal Protective Service, Capital Police, Supreme Court Police, we have representatives on that committee, and we look at the issue of road closing more clearly and come up with a better protocol for it.

We have to look at this strategically and in the levels that are appropriate. I think there are sections of it. So if there was an incident where a building had a fire and everybody needed to get out of the building. You know, having to close the street in front of that building is like an immediate thing, where all we want to do is have notification. Then there are things that we can talk about more. We can sit down, and we have time to evaluate, to discuss and say look, what are we really trying to accomplish and what is the most effective protective action we can take for that building or that facility. And there is a dialog, and we are going to look to improve the way that process happens.

On the issue of hospital communication and coordination, I think that is critical. In fact, I have been in touch with HHS and with some of the Hospital Association people to look at that. I think there is a communication system in place. As to whether or not it is doing the job it needs to do, is something I look forward to looking into more closely.

Mr. WOLF. Do all of the grant applications for secuirty—I just used as an example—do they all go through you, so you know what everyone else in the region is doing so there is not an overlap. Do all the grant applications at least have to be—do you have to check off on them or do they say we are sending something in but here's what we're sending, so you see everything in the region?

Mr. BYRNE. I think—one of the best parts of creating the Department of Homeland Security was the effort to consolidate the way all grants are administered within one department. I work closely with that office. I think it makes sense from a strategic point of view that the overarching policy body takes a look at those things, so we don't do as you suggest, buy something that works for that one community but can't work across the whole region.

Mr. WOLF. But there is no process now to send everything through you before they come to Washington for the region?

Mr. BYRNE. There is no fixed process at this point in time, but we are developing one. The office is only a couple weeks old.

Mr. WOLF. The last question is the GW Training Camp.

Mr. BYRNE. I met with them. I was over at GW about 2 weeks ago. This area is so rich in each kinds of functional area in terms of fire training, law enforcement training and hospital training and emergency medical training. We are looking to establish and work with especially with GW in the area of the emergency medical capabilities.

Mr. WOLF. And you will have all of our people trained there first?

Mr. BYRNE. The idea is that everybody in the region would get the same kind of training. It is really important to be on the same page when you are working a disaster, so that when you say, this is this kind of asset, that everybody right away understands that. So we are looking not only to have everybody get trained in the same area, but to get the same training, the same curriculum that is consistent across the whole region.

Mr. WOLF. And knowing where I think you live, how long did it take you to get in to work yesterday?

Mr. BYRNE. Sir, I left pretty early, it only took me about 45 minutes. I left——

Mr. WOLF. What time did you leave?

Mr. BYRNE. Quarter of 5.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That is a nonstarter from here.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. I know neither one of you have a lot to do with the traffic issue. But on the Maryland side, I live north of Baltimore City and yesterday—usually it takes me the most an hour and 30 minutes. I left at 6:30 a.m. and got here at 9:45, so it was only 3½ hours.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that if this is a continuing problem, and it is not being solved, maybe we should look at it from a Federal perspective because it is going to take a regional approach from both Federal and State to deal with that issue.

First thing my background comes—I have been in local government for 18 years. I was a county executive for 8 years. I was a county executive during September 11th. And during that period of time, we took a lot of resources and transferred resources into the homeland security area. We were learning as we went along, as all of us were. I am a rookie so the bells bother me a little bit. So the issue there was transferring a lot of resources and trying to make sure we could take care of the problem because it was a very active issue at the time.

Now, yesterday we had a hearing which kind of concerned me. It was a hearing involving narcotics and drugs. And we had individuals from Federal, State and local government that really were stating yesterday that there are a lot of resources that are being transferred from the Drug Enforcement into Homeland Security and that to me is very dangerous because we still can't take the eye off the narcotics ball.

If you look at the statistics, narcotics and drugs are—probably at least 80 percent of all violent crime is drug related. Now, if we are going to take our resources from that one end to another, that is really going to create even more problems. What the issue is, the issue is we need more resources. It has been said over and over, we equipped our troops as we should. We give them the resources, but we haven't done the job here to give the resources that are

needed. If we don't face that issue now, it is going to start to affect a lot of things that are happening because we are going to keep moving in the area.

Now, let us talk about implementation. No. 1, again referring to my job as county executive, I thought one of the most effective programs when we dealt with the Federal Government was the COPS program. And that was a program that really if you could justify why you needed the money, you had to be held accountable for what you did, we get money directly from the Federal Government to the local government, and we would get police on the streets right away. I am sure the National Association of Governors might not like that. I know our Governor, Bob Ehrlich, who I know very well and have a good relationship with, has no problem with that. He wants the money to go where it's needed.

And what happens when you get money from the—when the local money gets money from the Federal Government, the Feds press down on the State, the State presses down on the locals, and the locals don't have any place to press. What happens when you have that and you get that money, I would say sometimes half that money goes to bureaucracy, and it doesn't go to where the needs are. And I want to ask you the question more of you, Mr. Byrne, then Major Tuxill, I would like you somehow, if you would consider taking back to the administration the formula that we used in the COPS program because it worked and it worked well.

I know there is politics there with the Governors, but if the other Governors would take the position of our Governor in Maryland that he doesn't care who administrates it, let's just get money to the first responders so we can make a difference.

And let me say this, and I will let you answer the question. In the Second Congressional District that I represent, I have NSA, Fort Mead, BWI, the port of Baltimore, Abderdeen and I have—80 percent of all the chemical companies in the State of Maryland are located in my District.

So there are a lot of issues involving homeland security other than just those institutions I talked about. And why I say that, it's my understanding that a lot of the money is being given out on the issue of population, and it seems to me we need a lot more flexibility. The population is where the risks are. It's like saying if D.C. doesn't have the population that South Dakota has, give more to South Dakota. That doesn't make any sense. I raised those issues, and I would like you to respond, especially to the COPS program, because I want to find a way as quickly as we can to get money to first responders, because I think you know if September 11th occurred a week ago, and we were asking for money right now, we would get it. And how soon we forget, and we can never forget. So let us make sure we get what we need for our homeland security.

Mr. BYRNE. We certainly support getting money for first responders. I spent most of my career as a first responder. I was a New York City fireman for 20 years and I know—I just want to do my job, and I wanted the resources to do it.

So we definitely want to see the money get where it needs to go and to build the capability, because again, the single best chance we have of impacting an incident, no matter what kind of incident,

in a way that saves lives and protects the people, is to have our first responders get there, have what they need to get it done.

Looking at the COPS program, I am not as familiar with that program as I am with some of the other programs, but we certainly will take a look at that, based on your recommendation, and see if maybe that is a better way to do it. But the important thing is for us—is that—is that public safety in our country is a bit disjointed. Different jurisdictions do things and respond in different ways. I think our sort of luxury of being able to operate that way is no longer the case, and we need to line up in a way that doesn't take away the individual autonomy of each of the components, but have them at least have common ways of doing things. And the best way for us to do that is to have some kind of centralized leadership, so that when they do spend this money and spend it effectively, it builds the Nation's capability, in our case, the region's capability and not just an individual jurisdiction, so that their capability stops at the border. September 11th, as a New York City fireman, I never thought in all my career I would ever see the need—we had 16,000 firemen and EMS personnel in the New York City Fire Department. I never thought I would see the need to have people come in from the outside to help us. September 11th proved me wrong big time and I recognize that we need to be one united team.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. I feel very strongly, and I would like you to look at that program. Your president of International Fire Fighters was pretty strong. I am not saying his quotes, because I don't think I should criticize the president at this time. His quotes were very strong that we're not getting what we need. And you know we can talk about team work, but we're not getting anything accomplished. And I think it is extremely important that we try to get to the basics and get to some implementation. I am going to do everything I can to encourage the president to do that. And I would hope that you at least consider it. It could be controversial because it's money that goes directly to the locals, but that's what we're calling out for.

And getting back to traffic, the entire issue with traffic has got to be a regional situation. And you know, the day of imagery and taking pictures, you know, someone is on an accident scene for 3 hours. Mr. Chairman you make a lot of things happen here, I would like to work with you on that issue.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you Mr. Chairman, I will make this quick because we have to go vote.

First, Mr. Byrne, thank you for your service as a firefighter for 20 years. That is near and dear to my heart.

According to Virginia's Rappahannock Planning District Commission, over 27,000 people commute from my district back and forth to Washington, DC, everyday. And if you have been on 95 going south, you know what that congestion is like. If we are faced with a mass exodus from Washington, the traffic in my opinion, the HOV merge lane at Prince William/Stafford border would probably back up all the way to Springfield, and I think we would have a major problem.

My question is, has your office had conversations with the local authorities south of Prince William County. No. 2, is there cur-

rently any coordination with the first responders who may be needed in an area-wide emergency and are Prince William County, Stafford County and Fredericksburg expected to be ready to support the Beltway efforts.

Mr. BYRNE. At this point in time, I haven't had the opportunity to talk to any of the jurisdictions outside of what has been defined as the national capital region and the legislature. But I do think it is important they know what we are doing. You are absolutely right; at some point, the people may be headed their way. So I think it is important for us to—you know, not plan in vacuum but to share those plans. As to what role they would play in a response, I am not at the point, now, where I can make a definitive statement as to what their support and what kind of requirements we would be asking them to come into.

But going back to that bigger issue, I think we are looking to create within the Department a sort of standard system for public safety, you know, that would facilitate that kind of cooperation and response.

Mr. DAVIES. I certainly would hope that you would keep that part of the District in mind, because like I said, 27,000 folks is a lot of people, and I would like to say Mr. Chairman, I welcome the sheriff of Stafford County, who is here today.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. General Tuxill, thank you for staying with us. It was very helpful, your testimony. Mr. Byrne, I understand this is your first time before a congressional committee, you did a great job. I look forward to having you back. You have a very tough job, and you have nothing but our respect and admiration as we work through some difficult problems. And we learn from our experiences. We have traffic—some of it because of the laws we have passed. We haven't done the right things and everything else and we get frustrated, but we can do a better job working together, and that is only one aspect of your many responsibilities, but you did a great job here, and we appreciate having you here.

We are again voting, but this is just ordering the previous question, and perhaps after—this is just a vote on a rule, so we should be back here in 15 minutes to start our next panel. Meeting is in recess.

[Recess.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We're ready to start the next panel. If you'll remain standing.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much, and thank you for being patient with us. We're not expecting another vote for an hour and half. I hope I can get through both panels in that period of time and get everybody home.

Mr. Harp, why don't we start with you, and then Ms. Chambers and then to Chief Ramsey. And we have your whole statement in the record. You can highlight what you'd like to, and we'll go right on to questions. It won't be too bad.

STATEMENTS OF VAN HARP, DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION; TERESA CHAMBERS, CHIEF, U.S. PARK POLICE; AND CHARLES RAMSEY, CHIEF, METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. HARP. Good afternoon, Chairman Davis, and members of the committee. I welcome the opportunity to appear before you to discuss our role and capabilities regarding emergency preparedness and response in the national capital region.

As you know, in recent months, the FBI has undergone extraordinary positive changes to better address the most important priorities set by Director Mueller. The top priority at the FBI is preventing future terrorist attacks. In addition, the FBI is actively pursuing threats posed by foreign intelligence services and transnational criminal enterprises. In meeting these priorities, the FBI, as an organization, and WFO, in particular, thoroughly understand that these priorities can only be effectively met by focusing on the outstanding relationships that we have established over the years with our law enforcement and first responder partners.

Located in the Nation's Capital, WFO has a strong standing tradition of cooperation with State, local and Federal agencies. That tradition is steeped in the history of diverse, joint investigations, numerous joint responses and regularly scheduled joint training initiatives. WFO is unique, in that it is the elite investigative agency in the Federal Government's response to terrorism incidents that directly affect the national capital region.

These close relationships were established long before the terrorist attack on September 11th. They cover the full spectrum of criminal counterintelligence, counterterrorism and cyber crimes, and are best exemplified by our Joint Terrorism Task Force which was established a decade ago.

Coordination begins at the executive management level, and there isn't a day that passes where I'm not in direct contact with area police chiefs, sheriffs and Federal agency heads to include representatives from our military intelligence agencies.

There are daily conference calls and in-person briefings. I have provided the various chiefs and sheriffs with networked instant paging to further enhance our ability to share information in intelligence in a real time format, and in fact, just this morning, we completed and in-depth intelligence brief with approximately 30 to 35 of the departments in the national capital region represented.

WFO has one of the oldest JTTF task forces in the United States, and it was established in 1993, and also has the largest number of participating agencies currently consisting of 23 State, local and Federal agencies, all collocated as one investigative counterterrorism unit. This is mirrored by our other joint task force operations across the gamut of our operations.

Training is provided directly to outside agencies by WFO, FBI personnel, and is accomplished through tabletop exercises, joint practical exercises, joint SWAT team scenarios and various in-services. Real-life scenarios are utilized, recreating the events Washington, DC, law enforcement has faced through the years.

Participants in these exercises cover the area, State, local, Federal agencies and emergency response, fire and rescue service, military and intelligence agencies. My assessment is that the level of

cooperation between myself and our partners is outstanding and unparalleled in law enforcement in the United States.

This spirit of cooperation has been passed down to the case agents and representatives assigned to the various task forces within the Washington field office.

This has been exemplified during past several years and in such cases as the CIA murders, the murder of the agents in the Metropolitan Police Department officer at MPD headquarters, the recent sniper investigation and the murder of the two Capitol Police officers in the Capitol in 1998.

In addition, our cooperative efforts were put to the test during the Pentagon attack and the anthrax attacks affecting you and your colleagues, and I believe we in law enforcement passed exceptionally well with respect to the level of cooperation.

The spirit of cooperation was so great, in fact, that a review of the Pentagon response was funded by the Department of Justice for Arlington County, VA for dissemination across the United States. The independent report, which is available upon request, finds that the level of cooperation exhibited in the National Capitol Region was so extensive, that it should be duplicated for the entire United States.

I'd like to also describe the Joint Terrorism Task Force and our National Capitol Response Squad, if I may, which are just two of WFO's squads and operations that conduct counterterrorism operations in conjunction with local authorities.

The WFO, JTTF was established in 1993, as I said, and it is one of the oldest and currently the largest JTTF in the United States with the 23 outside agencies and 15 agent—FBI agents assigned to it. It's located in our office base and trained, funded and supplied totally by the FBI, WFO.

All 23 detailees work full-time for the JTTF and have the same clearances and access as FBI agents. A list of all the agencies represented in the JTTF is too extensive, but I have it available with me.

Each detailee has a top security clearance and has direct access to all FBI data bases, communications and intelligence. Each detailee has a WFO-provided computer on his desk along—his or her desk along with a computer link to his or her home agency. In this way, the JTTF can almost instantly access 24 separate data bases from one investigative squad.

It is literally a one-stop shopping for counterterrorism information and intelligence, and it is the most effective platform prevention since it includes the assets and the best each agency has to offer.

Collocated with the JTTF is the National Capitol Response Squad. The NCRS is a rapid response highly specialized counterterrorism unit designed specifically for the National Capitol Region. The unit was formed out of the original JTTF in 1999 to give the region a quick response capability for terrorism incidents.

The unit is designed to be part of the first responder community in daily works within that arena. The NCRS responds to the various incidents which occur in this area each day and meshes with the other local first responders to jointly resolve whatever situation they encounter.

It was designed specifically to respond to identify, isolate, mitigate and control incidents of an explosive chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or armed assault-type of incident. It is also designed to work in isolated environments where outside support may be prevented from reaching the unit quickly.

The unit was designed literally to hold until relieved by the various national assets that could be called upon to assist from the FBI critical incident response group, the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense or others.

The National Capitol Response Squad consists of our SWAT team, the hazardous materials response team, the special agent bomb technicians, evidence response team, tactical medical program, weapons of mass destruction program, our rapid deployment team and the joint FBI/Department of Energy special search team.

The NCRS is collocated with the JTTF to directly support their investigations and operations and to provide a direct link between these specialized teams and the 23 agencies assigned to the JTTF.

The Washington field office is a full partner with all of the other responsible agencies in the National Capitol Region in the fight against terrorism in the herculean efforts to prepare for the unthinkable. Daily we work with all of the other agencies and are mutually supportive of each other. The efforts and the progress of this area serve as a shining example to the rest of the United States as to how this process should work.

Due to the unique location within the Capitol of this great country, the Washington field office long ago became the leader in the fight in the war on terrorism and the cooperative efforts necessary to ensure the safety of the American people.

Let me conclude by saying that the nature of the threat facing the National Capitol Region is unique in all of America. The FBI Washington field office takes its responsibility as a law enforcement agency, intelligence service and partner of first responders with the utmost sense of gravity and urgency. We value the partnerships with the professionals in the law enforcement and intelligence community that we have established over the years and continue to seek out ways to enhance those relationships.

Let me again express my gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, and the committee for your invitation, and I look forward to responding to any questions.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Harp follows:]

Statement of
Van A. Harp
Assistant Director in Charge,
Washington Field Office,
Federal Bureau of Investigation
before the
House Committee on Government Reform

April 10, 2003

INTRODUCTION

Good morning Chairman Davis, Representative Waxman and members of the Committee. I welcome the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the FBI's role and capabilities regarding emergency preparedness and response in the National Capital Region. As you know, in recent months the FBI has undergone extraordinary, positive changes to better address the most important priorities set by Director Mueller. The top priority of the FBI is preventing future terrorist attacks. In addition, the FBI is actively pursuing threats posed by foreign intelligence services, and transnational criminal enterprises. In meeting these priorities, the FBI as an organization and WFO in particular, understand that these priorities can only be effectively met by focusing on the outstanding relationships we have established over the years with our law enforcement and first responder partners.

Located in our Nation's Capital, the FBI Washington Field Office has a long-standing tradition of cooperation with state, local and federal agencies. This tradition is steeped in a history of diverse joint investigations, numerous joint responses and regularly scheduled joint training initiatives. WFO is unique in that it is the lead investigative agency in the federal government's response to terrorism incidents that directly affect Washington, DC and the Northern Virginia counties of Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon, Fauquier and the Quantico Marine Corps Base located in Stafford County. WFO is also the lead agency in the investigation of numerous federal criminal violations and counterintelligence matters in this same geographic area.

These close relationships were established long before the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, but notably predate it. They cover the full spectrum of Criminal, Counterintelligence, Counterterrorism and Cyber Crimes, exemplified by our Joint Terrorism Task Force established a decade ago and Safe Streets Task Force which has existed since August 1992.

Coordination begins at the Executive Management level. There isn't a day that passes where I am not in direct contact with area Police Chiefs, Sheriffs and federal agency heads, to include representatives from our military and intelligence agencies. There are

daily conference calls and in-person briefings. I have provided the various Chiefs and Sheriffs with networked instant paging and communication systems to further enhance our ability to share information and intelligence in a real-time format.

WFO has one of the oldest Joint Terrorism Task Forces in the United States, established in 1993. It has the largest numbers of participating agencies, currently consisting of 23 state, local and federal agencies, all co-located as one investigative counterterrorism unit. This is mirrored by other joint task force operations all across the gamut of FBI operations, to include Fugitive Task Forces, Safe Street Task Forces, Environmental Crimes Task Forces, Cyber-Crimes and others.

Training is provided directly to outside agencies by WFO FBI personnel and is accomplished through table-top exercises, joint practical exercises, joint SWAT team scenarios and various in-services. Real-life scenarios are utilized, recreating the events Washington, DC law enforcement has faced through the years. Participants in these exercises cover the area of state, local, federal agencies, emergency response, fire and rescue service, military and intelligence agencies. In addition, WFO personnel have traveled across the country and worldwide as instructors to provide this information.

My assessment is that the level of cooperation between myself and my partners is outstanding and unparalleled in law enforcement in the United States. This spirit of cooperation has been passed down to the case agents and representatives assigned to the various task forces within WFO. This has been exemplified during the past several years in cases such as the CIA Murders in January 1993, the murders of agents and Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Officers in MPD Police Headquarters on November 22, 1994, the recent Sniper Investigation in the fall of 2002 and the murder of two Capitol Police Officers in the Capitol on July 14, 1998. In addition, our cooperative efforts were put to test during the Pentagon Attack and the Anthrax attack affecting you and your colleagues, and we in law enforcement passed with flying colors with respect to the level of cooperation. The spirit of cooperation was so great, in fact, that a review of the Pentagon response was funded by the Department of Justice for Arlington County, Va. for dissemination across the United States. The report finds that the level of cooperation exhibited in the National Capitol Region was so extensive that it should be duplicated for the entire United States. The FBI-WFO relationship with the local authorities stands as a model for the entire country and predates the Sept. 11th attack on the United States.

Now, I would like to describe for you the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and the National Capital Response Squad (NCRS), just two of the many WFO squads and operations that conduct counter-terrorism operations in conjunction with local authorities. The WFO JTTF was established in its current form in 1993. It is one of the oldest and currently the largest JTTF in the United States with 23 outside agencies and 15 FBI agents assigned to it. It is located in WFO, and trained, funded and supplied totally by the FBI WFO and all 23 detailee's work full-time for the JTTF and have the same clearance/access as FBI agents. A list of all of the agencies represented in WFO's JTTF is too extensive to list in this report but the list incorporates the full

spectrum of state, local and federal agencies. Each detailee has a Top Secret security clearance and has direct access to all FBI databases, communications and intelligence. Each detailee has a WFO provided FBI computer on his desk, along with a computer link to his home agency. In this way, the JTTF can almost instantly access 24 separate databases from one investigative squad. It literally is "one-stop-shopping" for counter-terrorism information.

Co-located with the JTTF is the National Capital Response Squad (NCRS). The NCRS is a rapid response, highly specialized counter-terrorism unit designed specifically for the National Capital Region. The unit was formed out of the original JTTF in 1999 to give the region a quick-response capability for terrorism incidents. The unit is designed to be a part of the "first-responder" community and daily works within that arena. The NCRS responds to the various incidents which occur in this area each day and then meshes with the other local first responders to jointly resolve whatever situation they encounter. It was designed to respond to, identify, isolate, mitigate and control incidents of an explosive, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or armed assault nature. It is also designed to work in isolated environments wherein outside support may be prevented from reaching the unit quickly. The unit was designed literally to "hold until relieved" by the various National Assets that could be called upon to assist from the FBI-Critical Incident Response Group, Department of Energy, Department of Defense or others.

The NCRS consists of the WFO SWAT team, Hazardous Materials Response Team, Special Agent Bomb Technicians, Evidence Response Team, Tactical-Medical Program, Weapons of Mass Destruction Program, Rapid Deployment Team, and the Joint FBI-DOE Special Search Program. The NCRS is co-located with the JTTF to directly support their investigations and operations and to provide a direct link between these specialized FBI teams and the agencies assigned to the JTTF.

Also, the WFO participates with MPD in the staffing of MPD's Synchronized Operations Command Center. The SOCC is activated during specific events or incidents that may adversely impact the National Capitol region. Also, the WFO activates its command post in conjunction with MPD or the District of Columbia' s Emergency Management Agency. These command posts are activated in order to ensure that all partner agencies can efficiently and effectively perform their missions. This includes the response, containment, mitigation, investigation and resolution to any event affecting the citizens of the National Capitol Region. Specifically, our goal is to rescue the injured, protect the citizens and prosecute those responsible for the incident. Redundant systems are in place to link these various command and control centers so that they can not only communicate seamlessly, but be mutually supportive of each other's operations. In addition, WFO has identified and prepared several "fall-back" command and control centers to be utilized if access to the downtown centers is disrupted.

The Washington Field Office of the FBI is a full-partner with all of the other responsible agencies in the National Capitol Region in the fight against terrorism and the herculean

efforts to prepare for the unthinkable. Daily we work with all of the other agencies and are mutually supportive of each other. The efforts and the progress of this area serve as a shining example to the rest of the United States as to how this process should work. Due to its unique location within the capitol of this great county-the Washington Field Office long ago became a leader in this fight, in the war on terrorism and the cooperative efforts necessary to ensure the safety of the American people.

Let me conclude by saying that the nature of the threat facing the National Capital Region is unique in all of America. The FBI Washington Field Office takes its responsibility as a law enforcement agency, intelligence service and partner of first responders with the utmost sense of gravity and urgency. We value the partnerships we have established over the years and continue to seek out ways to enhance those relationships. Let me again express my gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, and the Committee for your invitation and I look forward to responding to any questions.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Chief Chambers.

Chief CHAMBERS. I will abbreviate my oral testimony, sir. Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on emergency preparedness in the Nation's Capital. Although I've been the chief of the U.S. Park Police for just 14 months, I retired from a police agency just inside the State of Maryland and am familiar with both the challenges and the many positive aspects of policing in this region.

The U.S. Park Police's primary areas of responsibility are the National Park areas of Washington, DC, New York City and San Francisco, and we have arrest authority in any unit of the National Park's system. We also have provided law enforcement expertise in many different venues, including the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, GA, the Republican National Convention, at Independence National Historic Site and the Cuban Boat Flotilla.

In the President's National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets, the Department of the Interior is the lead Federal Department with primary jurisdiction over national icons and monuments. To enhance our efforts, Secretary Norton recently requested that the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice conduct an independent assessment of the National Mall and those areas around the White House where the U.S. Park Police patrol.

This assessment is already underway, with the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice providing important feedback to the U.S. Park Police.

When large events occur in our area, operations are often seamless between the myriad of local, State and Federal agencies involved. One of the best examples occurred in Washington, DC, last year on the Fourth of July.

Nearly 1,200 officers from numerous agencies helped ensure a safe environment for the thousands of people who came downtown to celebrate America's independence.

The Police Chief's subcommittee of the Washington, DC, Area Council of Governments meets monthly. Also on at least a weekly basis, area chiefs and other law enforcement leaders engage in conference calls to share the latest intelligence and operational information.

Our officers sit side by side in a number of assignments including Joint Terrorism Task Forces, Department of Homeland Security details and the Metropolitan Police Department's Joint Operations Center.

In the recent case involving a disgruntled farmer who drove his large farm tractor into Constitution Gardens, we were joined by a number of governmental and private organizations. Most closely involved with us was the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms which played a key role in assessing the potential threat posed by this individual, the three vehicles he drove into the pond, and the explosives he claimed to possess.

We also conferred with experts via conference call to receive their input on the explosive potential and related scenarios.

Also closely involved was the U.S. Secret Service, whose members were on the scene to assist us within minutes of the event un-

folding. The Metropolitan Police Department of Washington, DC, the Federal Protective Service and the U.S. Capitol Police also provided assistance.

We appreciate the generous support of the District of Columbia's Emergency Management Agency, the Washington, DC, Fire Department, the American Red Cross and the D.C. National Guard, who also assisted us.

The U.S. Park Police kept in constant communication with members of the press to provide valuable information in order to protect the public from potential harm. The Department of Homeland Security was in close communication with us, and Mr. Byrne, who you heard testify, conducted several telephone briefings every day with people involved or affected by this matter.

Please allow me to take this opportunity to thank all these agencies for the support and expertise they provided to the U.S. Park Police during the tractor incident. They played an integral part in achieving a successful outcome that avoided the loss of property and more importantly avoided the loss of life.

In the case of a major crisis resulting in a mass exodus from the city of Washington, it is useful to look at our role on September 11, 2001. Within minutes of the plane striking the Pentagon, members of our aviation unit flying the U.S. Park Police helicopter Eagle 1 were in the area over the crash site. Because of the heavy smoke, Reagan National Airport traffic controllers asked the Eagle crew to take control of the airspace over Washington while the situation was assessed. A second Park Police aviation team treated injured persons on the scene of the Pentagon and transported those who needed additional care to nearby hospitals.

At the same time, our officers rerouted traffic to allow the greatest number of motorists to safely leave the city in the least amount of time, and we deployed our officers at national icons and around the White House.

The U.S. Park Police is responsible for one bridge and five of the major routes into and out of the city. Officers assigned to those areas are directed to maintain their focus in those locations should a disaster occur so they can readily facilitate the rapid evacuation of motorists out of the city. The U.S. Park Police has three helicopters available for medical emergencies. These helicopters are staffed with certified pilots and paramedics. All three aircraft are capable of search and rescue missions, such as those we accomplished during the Air Florida crash and the many river rescues we perform each year.

The U.S. Park Police is beginning its migration to digital narrow band radio systems in Washington, DC, New York and San Francisco. We're developing partnerships with other units of the National Park Service, as well as other Federal agencies to implement interoperable trunked radio systems that will allow for secure encrypted voice transmissions and cross-talk capabilities.

We're also participating in the Federal Wireless Interoperability Project, which will allow for the exchange of data messages between mobile units of the U.S. Park Police, the Capitol Police, the Secret Service Uniformed Division, and the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, DC.

We're also participating in the Capital Wireless Integrated Network [CapWIN], that will allow for the exchange of data messaging between local, State and Federal public safety agencies within the Washington, DC, area.

The United States Park Police is the oldest Federal uniformed law enforcement agency in the Nation. We date back to 1791, when Congress created us at the request of President George Washington. We're very proud of the role the men and women of the U.S. Park Police have traditionally played and will continue to play in the protection of important icons and symbols of America's freedom and the lives of the hundreds of thousands of people who visit them, as well as in assisting in the protection of our President, Vice President, and other dignitaries.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I'll be happy to answer any questions you or other members of the committee may have, sir.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Teresa Chambers follows:]

STATEMENT OF TERESA C. CHAMBERS, CHIEF, UNITED STATES PARK POLICE, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE, REGARDING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL.

April 10, 2003

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on emergency preparedness in the Nation's Capital. Although I have been the Chief of the United States Park Police for just 14 months, I retired from a police agency just inside the State of Maryland and am familiar with both the challenges and the many positive aspects of policing in this region.

While the United States Park Police's primary areas of responsibility are the National Park areas of Washington, D.C., New York City, and San Francisco, we have arrest authority in any unit of the National Park System. At the request of the National Park Service and other agencies, the United States Park Police also has provided law enforcement expertise at many different venues, including the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, the Republican National Convention at Independence National Historic Site, and the Cuban boat flotilla at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas.

In implementing the President's *National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets*, the Department of the Interior (Department) is the lead federal department with primary jurisdiction over national icons and monuments. The protection of the National Mall in Washington, D.C. is a key component of our responsibilities, and the Department has developed security measures to protect life and property. To enhance our

efforts, Secretary Norton sent a letter on March 21, 2003, requesting that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) conduct an independent assessment of the National Mall and those areas around the White House where the United States Park Police patrol.

The Department asked that the review assess security measures described in our Departmental *Homeland Security Advisory System* and *Liberty Shield* plans, assess implementation of security measures, review potential scenarios and evaluation of response capabilities in light of the current threat environment and proximity to the White House and U.S. Capitol, analyze existing equipment and training, evaluate surveillance and other technological measures, assess interaction of vehicle and Metrorail traffic, including tunnels, with our National Mall security responsibilities, review current screening protocols for persons and vehicles, including visitors, employees and concessionaires, and review the National Park Service permitting and planning systems for special events on the National Mall.

This assessment is already underway, with DHS and DOJ providing important feedback to the United States Park Police. It is our goal to provide protection that maintains an appropriate balance between security and the open accessibility of the National Parks. We look forward to continuing our work with DHS and DOJ, along with others in the Administration, to enhance the protection of national icons and monuments and the safety of the people who visit and work on the National Mall. In addition, the Administration will seek to identify cost-effective options that avoid unnecessary duplication between respective agency responsibilities and promote

coordination with law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions and entities directly responsible for intelligence gathering and homeland security.

Very few regions can boast of the rich resources available to law enforcement in this area. When large events occur, operations are often seamless between the myriad of local, state, and Federal agencies involved. One of the best examples occurred in Washington, D.C. last year on the 4th of July. Nearly 1,200 officers from numerous agencies assisted in both plain clothes and uniformed assignments to do their part in ensuring a safe environment for the thousands of people who came downtown to celebrate America's independence. While the United States Park Police coordinated this activity, each organization played a vital role in ensuring a safe and successful event.

The Council of Governments in Washington, D.C. also provides worthwhile services to the many governmental entities that impact the city and surrounding region. The Police Chiefs Subcommittee of the Council of Governments meets monthly to review current and upcoming events, to talk about issues of equipment and technology, and to learn from each other's experiences. On at least a weekly basis, area chiefs and other law enforcement leaders engage in conference calls to share the latest intelligence and operational information. Our officers sit side by side in a number of assignments, including Joint Terrorism Task Forces, Department of Homeland Security details, and the Metropolitan Police Department's Joint Operations Center. Area agencies take pride in our willingness and ability to form successful partnerships that maximize our efficiency and the level of protection we provide to the public.

In the recent case involving Dwight Watson, a disgruntled farmer who drove his large farm tractor into Constitution Gardens, we were joined at the command post and the surrounding area by a number of governmental and private organizations. Most closely involved with us at the command post was the Federal Bureau of Investigation, represented by Assistant Director Van Harp of the Washington Field Office. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms also played a key role in assessing the potential threat posed by Mr. Watson, the three vehicles he drove into the pond, and the explosives he claimed to possess.

At one point, agency representatives at the command post also conferred with experts via a conference call to receive their input on the explosive potential and related scenarios. Also closely involved was the United States Secret Service, including both protection agents and the Uniformed Division, whose members were on the scene to assist us within minutes of the event unfolding. A number of other law enforcement agencies provided a supporting role, including the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, the Federal Protective Service, and the U.S. Capitol Police.

Our job was made easier through the generous support of the District of Columbia's Emergency Management Agency, whose command bus we used throughout the ordeal. A component of the Washington, D.C. Fire Department provided snacks and drinks and stayed on site with us during our entire time there, and the American Red Cross provided meals throughout each day and night. D.C. City Government and the National Park Service also provided several large dump trucks to assist us with one of many operational options we had in place. Lighting was provided by the National Park Service, the National Guard, and by a private film company.

Certainly, the media played a significant and important role in the Constitution Gardens matter as it does in other events in Washington, D.C. Through the United States Park Police Press Officer, we kept in constant communication with members of the press, who provided to the public not only updates on this story but also valuable information to commuters regarding alternate traffic patterns associated with those road closures that were necessary in order to protect the public from potential harm.

Staff members from the Department of Homeland Security were in close communication with us, and they conducted several telephone briefings every day with key people involved in or affected by this matter. Please allow me to take this opportunity to thank all of these agencies for the support and expertise they provided to the United States Park Police during the tractor incident – they played an integral part in achieving a successful outcome that avoided the loss of property and, more importantly, the loss of life.

In the case of a major crisis resulting in a mass exodus from the City of Washington, it is useful to look at our role on September 11, 2001. Within minutes of the plane striking the Pentagon, members of our Aviation Unit flying the United States Park Police helicopter, Eagle One, were in the air over the crash site. Because of the heavy smoke, Reagan National Airport traffic controllers asked the Eagle crew to provide air support for the Washington, D.C. area while the situation was assessed. In addition to providing this support, a second United States Park Police aviation team treated injured persons on the scene of the Pentagon and transported those who needed additional care to nearby hospitals.

At the same time the Aviation Unit was assisting with patrol, rescue, and evacuation, our Motorcycle Officers rerouted traffic, closing down lanes as necessary to allow the greatest number of motorists to leave the city in the least amount of time. Other patrol officers were deployed at our national icons and around the White House to provide a safe landing zone for the emergency evacuation of key Federal officials.

The United States Park Police is responsible for one bridge, the Memorial Bridge, and five of the major routes into and out of the City of Washington including: the George Washington Parkway, the Rock Creek Parkway, the Baltimore Washington Parkway, the Suitland Parkway, and the Clara Barton Parkway. Officers assigned to those areas are directed to maintain their focus in those locations should a disaster occur so that they can readily facilitate the rapid evacuation of motorists out of the city. Any evacuation would, of course, be coordinated directly with the Metropolitan Police Department's Joint Operations Center. Our Aviation Unit would assist with the rerouting of traffic around closures or congestion.

With regard to medical assistance to injured persons, the United States Park Police has three helicopters available for emergency air medical operations. These helicopters are staffed with certified pilots and paramedics. All three aircraft are capable of search and rescue missions, such as those accomplished during the Air Florida crash and the many river rescues we perform each year. Additionally and in concert with the Department of Defense Casualty Care Research Facility, we have immediate decontamination abilities along with tactically trained medical doctors and paramedics who can respond to disasters in both warm and hot zone environments.

The United States Park Police is beginning its migration to digital narrow band radio systems in Washington, D.C., New York, and San Francisco. We are developing partnerships with other units of the National Park Service as well as other Federal agencies to implement interoperable trunked radio systems that will allow for secure, encrypted voice transmissions and cross-talk capabilities. The United States Park Police is currently enabled for interoperable voice communications to local, state, and Federal law enforcement agencies in Washington, D.C. through the use of the ACU-1000 system resident in Alexandria, Virginia.

The United States Park Police is participating in the Congressionally funded Federal Wireless Interoperability Project. Twenty-four mobile computers are being deployed that will allow for the exchange of data messages between mobile units of the United States Park Police, United States Capitol Police, United States Secret Service Uniformed Division, and the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C. In the case of a critical failure of the radio infrastructure or the inaccessibility of the voice cellular system during a significant incident, the messaging capabilities of these mobile units will allow for the free flow of command information necessary to respond effectively to the incident.

We are also participating in the Capitol Wireless Integrated Network (CapWIN) that will allow for the exchange of data messaging between local, state, and Federal public safety agencies within the Washington, D.C. area. Currently, two mobile computers are deployed in this program with two more computers being added within the next 30 to 60 days.

The United States Park Police is the oldest federal, uniformed law enforcement agency in the nation. We date back to 1791 when Congress created us at the request of President George Washington. We are very proud of the role the men and women of the United States Park Police have traditionally played and will continue to play in the protection of important icons and symbols of America's freedom and the lives of the hundreds of thousands of people who visit them as well as in assisting in the protection of our President, Vice President, and other dignitaries.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions you or other members of the committee may have.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Chief Ramsey, thanks for being with us.

Chief RAMSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, other members of the committee, staff and guests. Thank you for the opportunity to update you on the state of emergency preparedness in the District of Columbia from the perspective of local law enforcement. Through the leadership and efforts of many people, including the President, the Congress, members of this committee, Mayor Williams and his administration, and especially our police officers, I feel very confident today in stating that law enforcement in our region is better prepared than ever before for a large scale emergency, whether that emergency be a terrorist attack, a natural disaster or something else.

Law enforcement in our region recognizes that the stakes are very high. We understand and appreciate the need for cooperation, coordination and information sharing, and most of all, we have pulled together as never before around a common goal and mission, securing the homeland by protecting our Nation's Capital.

That is not to suggest that we have completed our work in this area. We have not. This whole arena continues to change very rapidly, and we in law enforcement need to remain vigilant and flexible in our response. But I am confident that we have built a solid foundation among the law enforcement community in the D.C. area, a foundation of trust, cooperation and partnership that will serve us well for years to come.

My testimony today covers law enforcement developments in five critical areas. My written statement provides more details. I'll just cover the highlights here.

The first area is cooperation among agencies. I know that police chiefs in other parts of the country have, at times, expressed frustration with their local FBI field offices and other Federal agencies, but thanks to the leadership of Assistant Director Harp and other Federal officials in our region, our experience here in D.C. has been just the opposite. In our region, communication and cooperation are taking place at the executive level, at the senior management level and at the operational level. Our department is actively involved in both the Joint Terrorism Task Force and the Antiterrorism Task Force.

The MPD's Joint Operations Command Center continues to serve as a critical communications and operational hub for law enforcement during periods of heightened alert or for major events such as the antiwar and antiglobalization protests expected this weekend.

And I'm in regular contact with Assistant Director Harp and receive timely information and support from the Washington field office.

In addition to the Federal and local cooperation, our region continues to benefit from strong local coordination, including regular conference calls among the region's police chiefs on intelligence and preparedness issues. In addition, the MPD now holds weekly conference calls among intelligence coordinators in six other major cities, and I have detailed one of our detectives to the New York City's Police Department antiterrorism intelligence unit for a 90-day pilot project.

Finally, all of the chiefs in our region are working with the Council of Governments, and now the new homeland security coordinator for the Washington region, to ensure our individual plans are coordinated regionally.

A second and related area involves the coordination between government and private sector. The District's emergency response plan is our overall road map for preparing for and responding to any emergency. Part of the plan's strength is that it defines specific roles and responsibilities, and it recognizes the importance of the private sector in emergency preparedness. The MPD has actively participated in a series of neighborhood-based community meetings, organized by D.C.'s Emergency Management Agency.

Our department has also reached out to the business community to provide them with specialized information on crisis planning for their facilities, and working with the local news media on how to get accurate and timely information out to the community during an emergency.

A third critical area involves our level of response preparedness. Over the past 18 months the Metropolitan Police Department has made tremendous strides in our overall level of preparedness, thanks in large part to the $16.8 million provided by Congress. These funds have allowed us to provide basic warm zone personal protection equipment to every sworn member of the Department, something that very few, if any, major city police departments have been able to do.

In addition, we have equipped and trained 141 officers who can operate in actual hot zones as part of our new Special Threat Action Teams [STAT].

In terms of training, all of our sworn members have received the basic 8-hour course in weapons of mass destruction. Our staff members have received more specialized training in hazardous materials, radiological operations and self-contained breathing apparatus, and members of the MPD command staff including myself have been through a variety of WMD courses so that we can be more effective and informed leaders during an emergency.

Another area of major concern for people throughout the region is transportation and traffic management. While the District Department of Transportation is the lead agency, the MPD continues to assist on a variety of implementation issues. For example, we have identified approximately 70 key locations that the Metropolitan Police Department is prepared to staff for traffic control purposes during an emergency. Most of these intersections are along the evacuation routes that DDOT has identified and marked. While our ability to move traffic safely through an emergency is better today than it was on September 11th, I think that all of us need to be realistic about traffic.

As the recent incident in Constitution Gardens illustrated, if major arteries need to be closed when large numbers of motorists are trying to enter or exit the city at the same time, traffic is going to be backed up.

I understand that during an emergency, most people's instincts will tell them to get in their vehicles and try to leave the city, but depending on the situation, traveling by car could actually put peo-

ple at greater risk, especially if they leave a safe area and drive toward a hot or warm zone.

There are very few scenarios in which the entire city would have to be evacuated at the same time. A more likely scenario would be the need to evacuate people within a defined geographic area while having the majority shelter in place. The bottom line from a public safety perspective is that we don't want to program people to automatically get into their vehicles at the first indication of an emergency. It's important that our evacuation routes be posted and staffed during an emergency, but it's even more important for individuals to be informed and to remain calm and flexible in their response.

The fifth and final area I want to touch on is especially important here in the D.C. region. With so many Federal, regional and local agencies that may be involved in an emergency response, and that is telecommunications and information sharing. September 11th illustrated the challenges for different agencies in communicating with one another via radios. Over the last several months, a number of steps have been taken to address the interoperability issue here in D.C., but we haven't yet solved the problem.

Recent congressional funding has allowed the MPD to launch a major upgrade of our radio communications system, including the conversion of our radio system from analog to digital to enhance interoperability with other agencies. In the meantime, our Department has procured a small number of 800 megahertz radios that we could use in an emergency to communicate with fire, EMS and other agencies.

In addition, our Department has begun a pilot project with the U.S. Secret Service Uniformed Division, the U.S. Capitol Police, and the U.S. Park Police to share information more easily and more securely over our agencies in-car computers, and the MPD continues to participate in the regional CapWIN Project, a Federal effort that is designed to boost cross-agency communications and information sharing in emergency situations.

I thank you again for the opportunity to present this testimony. I'm very proud of our police officers and civilian employees for their hard work and professionalism in enhancing our level of preparedness, but we have only built the foundation for the future. We've not completed the entire structure. Maintaining what we have in place now and building for the future, particularly in the critical area of voice and data communications, will be critical and potentially costly. We will need additional resources to protect the investments we've already made while continuing to update and expand our equipment, training and technology.

Our Department is very appreciative of the tremendous support we've received from Congress in helping us get to where we are today, and we welcome and look forward to working with the committee in ensuring that we remain prepared for what the future may bring. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Charles Ramsey follows:]

Hearing on Emergency Preparedness
In the Nation's Capital

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform

The Honorable Tom Davis
Chairman

Testimony of
Charles H. Ramsey
Chief of Police
Metropolitan Police Department

April 10, 2003

Mister Chairman, Congresswoman Norton, other members of the Committee, staff, and guests – thank you for the opportunity to update you on the state of emergency preparedness in the District of Columbia from the perspective of local law enforcement.

Through the leadership and efforts of many people – including the President, the Congress, members of this Committee, Mayor Williams and his Administration, and, especially, our police officers – I feel very confident today in stating that law enforcement in our region is better prepared than ever before, for a large-scale emergency – whether that emergency be a terrorist attack, a natural disaster or something else. I base that assertion not on wishful thinking or over-optimistic reports from other people; I base it on my own personal involvement with the emergency preparedness process over the past 19 months. Law enforcement in our region recognizes that the stakes are very high. We understand and appreciate the need for cooperation, coordination and information-sharing. And most of all, we have pulled together as never before around a common goal and mission – securing the homeland by protecting our nation's capital.

That is not to suggest that we have somehow completed our work in this area. We have not. The emergency preparedness and law enforcement arena continues to change very rapidly, and we in law enforcement need to remain vigilant and flexible in our response. But I am pleased that, even as conditions continue to change, we have built a solid foundation among the law enforcement community in the DC area – a foundation of trust, cooperation and partnership that will serve us well for years to come.

My testimony today will discuss law enforcement developments in five critical areas related to emergency preparedness in our region.

- First is cooperation among various agencies and governments.

  As I said, I am very pleased with the depth of cooperation that exists among law enforcement in this region. I know that major city police chiefs in other parts of the country have, at times, expressed frustration with their relationships with their local FBI field offices and other federal agencies. But thanks to the leadership of Assistant Director in Charge Van Harp of the FBI Washington Field Office, as well as other federal officials in our region, our experience here in DC has been just the opposite. Here in our region, communication and cooperation are taking place at the executive level, at the senior manager level and at the operational level.

  The MPD is actively involved in both the Joint Terrorism Task Force and the Anti-Terrorism Task Force. Our Department's Joint Operations Command Center continues to serve as a critical communications and operational hub connecting various federal and local agencies during periods of heightened alert or for major events such as the anti-war and anti-globalization protests expected this upcoming weekend. And I am in regular contact with Assistant Director Harp, and receive timely information and support from the WFO.

In addition to federal-local cooperation, our region continues to benefit from strong local-to-local coordination. For example, most of the region's police chiefs and I hold regular conference calls – weekly, at a minimum; more often, if needed – to share intelligence and other information from our respective jurisdictions. Just recently, we expanded this concept to include other large-city police departments across the country. The MPD now hosts weekly conference calls among intelligence coordinators in six other cities, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit and Boston. I recently detailed one of our detectives to the New York Police Department's anti-terrorism intelligence unit for a 90-day pilot project, to test the effectiveness of establishing this type of direct link with our law enforcement partners in New York. Finally, all of the chiefs in our region continue to work with the Greater Washington Council of Governments to ensure our individual plans are coordinated regionally, which is vitally important. The new homeland security coordinator for the Washington region will play a key role in the ongoing efforts to enhance law enforcement coordination in our region.

- A second, and related, area involves the coordination between government and the private sector.

  With the war in Iraq and the resulting Orange Alert, the issue of private sector coordination has taken on added importance. For just as the private sector plays a major role in neighborhood crime prevention, the business community and others play an equally critical role in homeland security and emergency preparedness. The District's Emergency Response Plan is our overall roadmap for preparing for and responding to any emergency. Part of the Plan's strength, from a law enforcement perspective, is that it defines specific roles and responsibilities, and it recognizes the importance of the private sector in such vital areas as media and community outreach, transportation, and volunteer and donation management.

  The District's Emergency Management Agency has been conducting a series of neighborhood-based community meetings on emergency preparedness. The MPD has actively participated in these meetings. In addition, our Department has reached out to the business community as a whole, as well as the hotel industry and higher education communities in particular, to provide them with specialized information on crisis planning for their facilities. And the Mayor's Office, as well as the MPD and other agencies, are working with the local news media on how to get accurate and timely information out to the community during an emergency.

- A third critical area involves our level of response preparedness.

  Over the past year-and-a-half, the MPD has made tremendous strides in our overall level of preparedness. This has been possible in large part because of the $16.8 million dollars in emergency preparedness funds awarded to our Department by Congress and the President. These funds have allowed us to provide basic (Level C) personal protection equipment to every sworn

member of the Department – something that very few, if any, major city police departments have been able to provide. This equipment – including suit, gloves, boots and masks – permits our officers to operate in a "warm zone" for a period of time. In addition, our Department has equipped and trained 141 officers who are now part of our Special Threat Action Teams (STAT). These officers have been given the advanced equipment, training and vehicles for operating in an actual "hot zone." And 26 of our specially trained Emergency Response Team officers are equipped to perform tactical operations within that "hot zone." Our STAT officers also have the capability to set up and perform (or assist in) field decontamination efforts – a new responsibility for law enforcement and one for which the MPD is on the cutting edge.

In terms of training, all sworn members of the Department have received a basic, eight-hour course in weapons of mass destruction, to help familiarize themselves with the possible scenarios they may face. Our STAT members have received more specialized training and have been certified in hazardous materials, radiological operations, and self-contained breathing apparatus. Later this year, these members will receive in-depth emergency medical technician training, as well as live agent training. In addition, all members of the MPD Command Staff – including myself – have been through not only the basic WMD course, but also an abbreviated hazardous materials course and we will soon participate in an abbreviated radiological hazard course as well. Training our executives and senior managers is critical if they are to be effective leaders in case of an emergency. And our members at all levels have participated, along with other agencies in the region, in various table-top exercises designed to test, in life-like scenarios, what we have trained in.

In addition to preparing our own members, the MPD is assisting with other critical aspects of the District's Emergency Response Plan. For example, our Department continues to work closely with the DC Department of Health in two key areas: developing protocols for the distribution of "push packs" to emergency response and health workers in the case of a chemical incident, and providing operational support for the activation of the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile plan. These are just two examples of the vital role that law enforcement plays in our overall emergency response plan.

- Another area of major concern for people throughout the region is transportation and traffic management.

  While the District Department of Transportation is the lead agency on transportation planning in the District, the MPD continues to assist on a variety of implementation issues. For example, we have identified approximately 70 key intersections that the MPD is prepared to staff for traffic control purposes during an emergency. Most of these intersections are along the evacuation routes that DDOT has identified and marked.

While our ability to move traffic safely during an emergency is better today than it was on September 11th, 2001, I think that all of us need to be realistic about what might happen in future events. As the recent incident in Constitution Gardens illustrated, if major arteries need to be closed when large numbers of motorists are trying to enter or exit the city at the same time, traffic is going to be backed up. That is why it is so important for people in our region to know not just what the evacuation routes are, but also how they should respond in case of an emergency. Our residents need to understand that the first thing to do in an emergency is to get more information, which is why our partnerships with the news media are so important.

I understand that, should an event occur, most people's instincts will tell them to get in their vehicles and try to leave the city. But depending upon the situation, traveling by car could actually put people at greater risk, especially if they leave a safe area and drive toward a "hot" or "warm" zone. In reality, there are very few scenarios in which the entire city would have to be evacuated at the same time. A more likely scenario would be the need to evacuate people within a defined geographic area, while having the majority "shelter in place." The bottom line, from a public safety perspective, is that we don't want to program people into automatically getting into their vehicles at the first indication of an emergency. It is important that our evacuation routes be posted and staffed during an emergency. But it is even more important for individuals to be informed and to remain calm and flexible in their response.

I do want to clarify one issue with respect to the man with the tractor in Constitution Gardens. Many people have pointed to this incident and questioned whether the District is prepared to handle a terrorist attack or other large-scale emergency. This type of comparison is unfair and not all that instructive as we move forward. As the lead agency in the Constitution Gardens incident, the US Park Police assessed the threat and made decisions based on that assessment, including the decision to close traffic on Constitution Avenue, NW. This, obviously, had a ripple effect on traffic across downtown DC and northern Virginia. Had a major incident occurred during that stand-off – one that would have required the opening of Constitution Avenue for public safety purposes – the necessary steps for opening the street would have been taken, and taken quickly. But in this instance, the Park Police determined that the safety of the public was best served by not taking any chances and closing the street. It was inconvenient at the time, but it was also prudent given the unique circumstances confronting the Park Police.

- The fifth and final area I want to touch on is especially important: telecommunications and other forms of information-sharing.

September 11th illustrated how difficult it was for different agencies – especially police and fire departments – to communicate with one another via radios. Here in the District, with so many federal, regional and local agencies that may be involved in an emergency response, this issue takes on added importance – and added complexity.

Over the last several months, a number of steps have been taken to address the interoperability issue here in DC, but we have not yet solved the problem. Interoperability of radio and mobile data computer systems remains a concern – and a priority – for law enforcement. Recent Congressional funding has allowed the MPD to launch a major upgrade of our radio communications system, including the conversion of our radio system from analog to digital. Once completed, this upgrade will significantly enhance our interoperability with other agencies. In the meantime, our Department has procured a small number of 800 MHz radios that we could use in an emergency to communicate with Fire/EMS and other agencies. But this is only a stop-gap measure.

In the area of mobile computer interoperability, our Department has begun a pilot project with the US Secret Service Uniformed Division, the US Capitol Police and the US Park Police. This project will allow us to share information more easily and securely over our respective agencies' in-car computers. If successful, this pilot could be expanded to other agencies in our region. And finally, the MPD continues to participate in the regional CAP-WIN project, a federal effort that is designed to boost cross-agency communications and information-sharing in emergency situations.

I thank you again for the opportunity to present this testimony. As I mentioned at the beginning of my statement, I have no doubt that, from a law enforcement perspective, our Department and our region are better prepared than ever before for a terrorist attack or other major emergency. I am very proud of our police officers and civilian employees for their hard work and professionalism. In many instances, the MPD has taken a leadership role in training and equipping our officers, and fostering coordination and cooperation with other agencies.

But, again, we have only built the foundation for the future. We have not completed the entire structure. Maintaining what we have in place now – and building for the future, particularly in the critical area of voice and data communications – will be critical, and potentially costly. We will need to find the resources to protect the investments we have already made, while continuing to update and expand our equipment, training and technology. There is a tremendous amount of research and development work being done in the field of counterterrorism and emergency preparedness. As the lead local law enforcement agency in our nation's capital, the Metropolitan Police Department must be able to stay current with this evolving body of knowledge and experience.

Our Department is very appreciative of the tremendous support we have received from Congress in helping us get to where we are today. And we look forward to working with the Committee in ensuring that we remain prepared for what the future may bring. Thank you very much.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I thank all of you, and we appreciate the job you're doing, and the troops under you are doing every day to bring safety to our region.

Let me go back to where we were with the first panel, though, and that is the situations like we had on March 17th, 18th, 19th timeframe, where you have an emergency situation, dealing with it and all the factors that are taken into account as we walk through.

I think in retrospect, we go back and we are redoing that incident with Mr.—well, we call him "tractor man" would you have handled it differently?

Ms. Chambers, would you have handed it differently? You were the group in charge.

Chief CHAMBERS. I was, sir, and we worked in collaboration with Mr. Harp sitting next to me, who was the lead man at the command post with us——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. If we had to do it over again, any lessons learned?

Chief CHAMBERS. The first thing that is happening now that will help me in the future is an afteraction critique, first within my own agency and then with the other agencies who were involved. We do that after every major event. And, sir, I'm sure that there will be lessons learned. There will be things that we did correctly and we will make certain occur in the future, and there will be things that we could do differently. I don't know at this point, Mr. Chairman, what those will be. The first critique happens later this week, and then others will happen over the subsequent weeks.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Would you be good enough to share that with the committee once you get it, or is that privileged?

Chief CHAMBERS. Sir, the actual report we prepare is privileged, but I will be able to give you a condensed version. I'd be glad to do that, sir.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I'm looking at National Park Service director's Order No. 9, the law enforcement program. This directive permits the use of intermediate weapons approved by the Park Service such as electronic restraint devices, tear gas, grenades and beanbag grounds to restrain or control violent, threatening or restive behavior.

On the evening of Monday, March 17th, the President addressed the Nation and gave 48 hours notice before declaring war on Iraq. Simultaneously, the Nation's threat alert was raised to orange. Why wasn't alternatives followed with perhaps tear gas or whatever? As it turns out, and I just say in retrospect, the only dangerous item this guy had was tobacco at the end of the day. Why weren't these other items—or the other alternatives, were they looked at, were they reviewed? Why wouldn't tear gas have been appropriate in this case?

Chief CHAMBERS. Sir, a number of options were looked at, including some of those that you mentioned, and at one point tear gas was deployed. It had no effect other than to cause the gentleman to go to the far end of the pond where he retreated and held on for several more hours toward the end.

For each option that we looked at, there were inherent risks, and we had to weigh that against the benefit. We had a gentleman who threatened from the very moment that this began to detonate an

explosive. He had a large enclosed trailer that caused great concern to ATF, the experts to whom we looked for advice on what the potential blast factor was and what the impact would be to the lives of people that were in that inner perimeter. We knew that anything that would check and we had to consider the real possibility that he could hit a trigger switch or that he would have a switch go off should he be incapacitated, and early in the stages, the risk was far too great to take that type of action. As he changed toward the end, we did deploy the tear gas. Of course, as I mentioned, it had no positive effect, sir.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Chief Ramsey, the Raleigh News and Observer published their online version March 18th, and you're quoted as saying, "right now, this is the only game in town, and you can afford to wait. If there were multiple events going on, we'd move him."

What would you have done if there were other events in town to have brought this to closure?

Chief RAMSEY. It would depend, sir, on the nature of the events that were taking place. If his risk to the public at large had gotten to the point where consideration for lethal force became an issue, then certainly that would be considered. Fortunately, we didn't run across that particular scenario, although if it had, we had people in position that could have taken that kind of action.

You have to deal with these events as they unfold. If we can contain it, which in this case they were able to contain it. He was in an area where he was isolated from the public at large in the middle of a pond in a mall. So there was no direct threat to others other than some of the law enforcement people around, the decision was made to contain, and I don't disagree with that decision. But had the situation changed, I'm certain that other actions would have been brought on the table and may have had to have been actually implemented.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. There were three rush hours that were held up. I can understand one going through at two. I gather from your statement it could have been 20 as long as it was brought to a peaceful conclusion, that there is really no limit in terms of how long the public at large would be inconvenienced, as long as it was brought to a successful conclusion. Is that basically as I read you?

Chief CHAMBERS. Sir, I don't have the crystal ball to know how many rush hours it could have been. I did consider that. I was very concerned about the inconvenience to motorists and to residents of the city. I was more concerned about their safety. Certainly I didn't want any injury or death to any passers-by. It is important, though, to know that from the very——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. You cordoned, what—a 6- to 8-block area was cordoned off. Right?

Chief CHAMBERS. Sir, I don't know the exact dimensions. I would have to get back to the operational plans and look at that. I know that as the days went on, we actually opened up intersections to help with the flow of traffic. We were never at a standstill, Mr. Chairman.

We were moving forward. We knew that we were getting closer to resolution, and those were the things that I couldn't share with the public at that time, because we knew that the gentleman was

also listening carefully to the reports in the media. And so never did I give up hope that we weren't moving closer and closer. In fact, when I spoke to Mr. Moran at an Appropriations Committee hearing on the final day, I was confident enough to tell him that I knew that we were much closer than we had ever been, and certainly within an hour or two of that time, the situation had been resolved. And so it was not going to go on forever, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. During this period, the Metropolitan Police Department had 14,057 calls, 4,993 police dispatchers during that time, and during the rush hours, ambulances couldn't get through. Police couldn't. I mean, it was absolute gridlock in places from Georgetown, downtown Capitol Hill, anywhere around here. So innocent people who were obeying the law were put in jeopardy during this time period, too. How is that factored into the decision-making?

Chief RAMSEY. Well, again, first of all, let me say that——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Where their rights again and their convenience and their safety, how are they weighed against the other?

Chief RAMSEY. I mean, you take everything into consideration. One of the positive things around this, we did have a traffic plan and had traffic rerouted around the area. As this thing unfolded, people were more aware, and——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Chief, let me just say. You reroute the traffic around the area, but it clogs everything else up, and I think that's what you need to understand. You couldn't get down the GW Parkway. You couldn't get through Georgetown. And ambulances, I saw an ambulance trying to get through in Georgetown, and it couldn't—literally there was no way to get through. It was blocked up.

Chief RAMSEY. Yes, sir. That is a consequence of that. I would say that what we're about to have this weekend with the IMF and World Bank will probably do far more damage to our traffic situation than tractor man did, and yet we have those kinds of meetings and protests and things of that nature that cause us problems on a fairly consistent and regular basis, and we have to work around them the best we can. We didn't create the situation. We just tried to resolve it the best we could, taking into consideration——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. This is one guy, three rush hours.

Chief RAMSEY. Well, sir, maybe I'm at a loss here, because I don't believe in killing people to move traffic.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Neither do I.

Chief RAMSEY. Lethal force is always an option, but it is a last resort.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Nobody is mentioning lethal force.

Chief RAMSEY. When you're at the scene and you see what options are available to you and a lot of the lethal technology is only good in a certain range——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Were there certain technologies that were available that we might give you the resources to deploy in——

Chief RAMSEY. I'd be glad to look at that, sir, and have people that are experts in weaponry find out——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. After you have looked at it, have you gone out and said, gee, what else can we do, what are other places doing around the world in this? Remember, this was an orange alert.

Chief RAMSEY. I do realize it was an orange alert, sir. I'm very sensitive to the fact that it was an orange alert. But we also have a deranged man and a situation where he's claiming to have explosives. He could very well have access to firearms. There's all kind of things going on at the time. We're trying to resolve it the best we can, and in looking back at situations, one can always say that, well, it was really no threat, we could have stormed the tractor. But we're not going to put our officers' lives at risk unnecessarily either. So it's a very difficult situation. Fortunately, there was no loss of life, and we were able to move on from it.

Mr. HARP. Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. May I respond to that?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Sure.

Mr. HARP. I spent probably more time personally actually on the scene than Chief Chambers or Chief Ramsey, and at the outset, he did threaten with a bomb, and according to ATF and our people, the blast radius would have been somewhere between 500 to 1,500 feet.

Now, I think that dictated somewhat the closure of Constitution and some of those related problems. But focused on the interperimeter and what was going on, as long as the gentleman was isolated on the tractor in the middle of the pond, he was only a threat to himself. Our primary concern is the private citizen's safety, the safety of our officers, as well as the safety of Mr. Watson, I believe his name was.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, I mean, I'm glad you're concerned about Mr. Watson's safety, but—let me—you'll get a chance. This is just the police department's emergency calls. We haven't yet—we're still tallying the number of emergency calls that came in on September 11th for fire and the rest, and this backed out into the Virginia suburbs. And in Maryland. I mean, this was everywhere, and all I'm saying is, we want to learn a lesson from this. We don't want to harp on it. I understand everything that went into this decision, and you and I have had this discussion, and I appreciate it. You were going by the book as it was written at the time, but we need a new book.

Mr. HARP. Well, I understand that, and I agree there should be some type of intermediate step. But during—starting—right after the immediate response, we developed an investigative strategy during the first day and a half, from Monday afternoon, Monday night, Tuesday morning, Tuesday afternoon. We obtained and executed, I believe, four search warrants down in North Carolina. We're trying to develop the information and assess, first of all, does the fellow have the capability to do what he's threatening to do? Does he have all that—all of those issues?

We even located the girlfriend down in jail in Miami, FL to interview her. We contacted the fertilizer distributors in the southern county area contiguous to D.C. We went to the licensing and regulating entity down in the State of North Carolina to see what his purchases were. There was an issue about the possibility of a 45 caliber side arm, and as long as he was out in that pond, we were not going to—he was, like I said, the only threat was to himself. If he approached the lip of the pond, we were going to employ the gas, and if that was not successful, then we were going to escalate it to what was necessary.

Simultaneous to that, we developed a wiretap, and on an emergency basis—this all takes time to do this. So we were monitoring his calls. After the first day and a half, we were starting to get telephone calls that he was intending to surrender.

Now, if we would have taken proactive steps in the middle of this investigation in the standoff, that would have precipitated a reaction by him that would have caused him to react in a way we did not expect and then to have to employ deadly force after we already have those conversations, I can guarantee the issue in this hearing would be different. I dug up the newspaper articles following the 1982 standoff at the memorial, I think with a Mr. Buyers or Meyers, whatever his name was, and once he started down that hill, they shot at him to disable his truck, I believe. The ricochet killed the gentleman.

There was a 6-week grand jury investigation following that, and I will just tell you right now, my experience, I am familiar with both Ruby Ridge, and I am familiar with Waco, and I have experienced a couple of these incidents in my career, and the alternative very difficult. We have an agent still paying the price as a result of a legal shooting employing deadly force after——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. You're afraid of getting sued. Is that——

Mr. HARP. Not in the least. That gentleman would have driven that tractor off—out of that pond and approached the lip, we were going to use the gas, and if it went further, I was prepared and we were prepared to exercise deadly force if that was required.

We could not even sneak up to him, because the tractor in and of itself was a deadly weapon. That water, 3 to 5 feet of water, was no impediment to that tractor.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. He had a permit. Is that—at one point. Am I right, Chief?

Chief CHAMBERS. He had a permit but not for the Constitution Gardens area. It was for a static display, being his tractor, up at the Washington Monument. He had been there in prior years as well.

Mr. HARP. May I add one comment?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Yes.

Mr. HARP. Shortly after Director Mueller called me over and got some of the senior executives at headquarters and asked the very same question about intermediate steps, we've already begun looking at less than lethal to be able to use in those type of situations, and we will employ additional tactical expertise on scene, but——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I think we have to. I mean, or we see the next one and the next one and the next one, and we have people say, well, we're going to protect this guy, we're afraid of the repercussions on agents, and we want to protect the citizens, and one person ties up the town.

Mr. HARP. I agree, but when you look at the nature of the threat on the front end——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I understand how you react to that. Look, I understand that.

Mr. HARP. In 47 hours—and I understand the traffic issue and——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I just don't want it to happen. I mean, we can't afford to have these kind of things recurring and recurring

and recurring. I remember the Woodrow Wilson Bridge incident where they didn't even prosecute the guy, and it happened again after that. And Chief Ramsey, the great frustration you heard from Mr. Wolf earlier, and we're hearing from Members and staff is I know you have some very tough situations, bomb threats in tunnels. We've talked about that. You know, but we have to have a strategy to try to minimize the impact on traffic as well and make that a consideration and a factor, if nothing else, when there's an accident, get an officer out on the scene to move people around as quickly as you can there and at other key assets.

Three hours getting in town for one of our—that's—you know, it basically holds up the mechanisms of government, and I know you get some really tough situations, but we just want to work with you to try to—as Mr. Wolf had suggested, having tow trucks available quickly. Yes, you want to get all the facts about an accident, but frankly, in my opinion, the facts of that accident in terms of future proceedings in court are minimal compared to holding up, you know, 100,000 people trying to get into the city, holding up the workings of government and the like. And if we can just work to try to improve on this, every incident is more difficult.

Chief RAMSEY. Yes, sir. I don't disagree. I don't know if you're referring to yesterday's accident on the 14th Street Bridge. And I don't know if that was a reference to that or not. I think it was mentioned earlier. But just as a point of information, that accident occurred at 7 a.m. It was a five-car accident. Three cars had to be towed. One pregnant woman had to be taken by ambulance to a hospital. As a result of that, it did shut down one lane. Three lanes we left open, but it did cause a tremendous traffic jam, and unfortunately when those kinds of accidents occur, there's going to be a traffic tie-up. Whenever it's a property damage accident, then obviously getting those vehicles off the roadway as quickly as possible so that traffic can flow and even in personal injuries, that's something that's always the goal.

I know that based on what we heard earlier, our deputy mayor is already looking at a proposal to perhaps take a look at requesting some funding for additional cranes and other types of resources to perhaps be able to position them in a way where they're right by the bridges and be able to snatch it off the bridge very, very quickly.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I understand yesterday that——

Chief RAMSEY. And that's the sort of thing that I think you're looking for.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. It was an hour and 15 minutes before the trucks came to tow yesterday, and during that time, it's—it makes a——

Chief RAMSEY. It was a total of an hour and 15, of what I have. 7 to 8:15 a.m. But we also had an ambulance run because one woman was injured, and we had three cars that needed to be towed. So it was cleared at 8:15 a.m. But, again, it did tie up traffic. It doesn't take much to tie it up around here.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Again, I'm hearing increasing frustration, and not just from commuters, but holding up government at a time with orange alerts and everything else, that we need to rewrite the book. So, that's why, Chief Chambers, as you look at what we

might have done different, we want to work with you and hear from you so that when it happens again, we're not tied up three or four or five rush hours, and no one knows how many it might have been, as we're waiting for this guy. We have to have additional strategies, and if it takes additional equipment, that's pretty cheap, the price, whatever it is.

Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure you'll hear from all Members who are here right now all from the Washington region about traffic frustration in various degrees. God knows one thing that did not change between the time I moved from the State legislature in Annapolis where I was for the last 12 years to Washington, is even though that's five times as far, it takes me just as long if I'm driving into town. So there are lots of issues and lots of issues we have to deal with in the Transportation Committee, obviously to resolve our traffic problems as a region.

But that is one component, obviously, of the bigger issue that we're here about, which is readiness with respect to a terrorist attack, and it's difficult with the bells going off, and all the votes to really dig into these issues. So I hope, Mr. Chairman, we'll have a further opportunity as we go to discuss the medical preparedness in the region, issues of the real preparedness of first responders. There are a whole host of questions you don't have an opportunity to get into in this limited time.

But there is one issue that is sort of at the intersection, of course, of traffic issues and a terrorist attack, for example, like a chemical attack or some other kind of attack, and that is the question of evacuation. And Chief Ramsey, you raised a very good point that others have made as well in earlier panels, which is in the event of an attack like a chemical attack, we don't necessarily want everybody getting on the roads and getting on the Metros.

It may be that people are much safer staying in place or going underground, and my question is what kind of information system do you have for gathering the data, assessing the threat and letting the public know—I mean, the natural instinct of people is going to be to want to get out of town, if not to get away from an attack, to go see their families in the suburbs.

What kind of information systems do you have for identifying the location of the attack, if it's a chemical attack, what the direction of the plume, for example, is, and how quickly can you do that, and how then do you communicate to the public whether they should be getting out of town, because they may be in the direction of a plume in the case of a chemical attack, or whether they should stay put. Have you addressed those kind of issues?

Chief RAMSEY. Yes, sir. Should there be a situation where we suspect a chemical attack of some kind, the Joint Terrorism Task Force responds to these scenes automatically. So does our Fire, EMS and HAZMAT unit that will do a quick assessment to find out what it is that we are up against.

There is software that will give you information relative to any plumes that would develop as a result of that depending on the substance, wind direction, temperature, all those kinds of things to

let you know what the area is that perhaps you need to evacuate if that was the situation.

The media is the quickest way of getting information out, both radio and television, the Internet. I mean, every means available to us to get information out to the public would be used, but the quickest way is obviously through the media, and passing along that information to get people not to go toward an area that could be contaminated, but also to get them out of an area that we may need to seal off, whatever the size of that area might be.

So we do have the technology in terms of software that can give us the radius that would be needed to clear, and we also have people that respond very quickly to these scenes to try to quickly assess their—there is other technology that I shouldn't talk about in an open forum that is available in the city as well to quickly detect those kinds of releases.

So I hope I answered your——

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Yeah. Who's responsible in this effort between local and State and Federal officials? Who's responsible for getting that information out across the media outlets? I mean, is that dependent on the situation, or do you have a plan where there's an evaluation made, for example, at the Federal level, and that information is then communicated to the—I mean, I assume the National Weather Service, for example, has input with respect to the direction of any plume in the event of a chemical—how does that information get coordinated, and who is responsible for disseminating that information to the public as quickly as possible?

Chief RAMSEY. Well, actually, at the local level, our department of Emergency Management, EMA, coordinates all those kinds of things for us. Peter La Porte is here with us now. The software that I'm talking about that we use for the direction of the wind and all that, that's plugged in directly to the National Weather Service, so you get real-time information about wind speed, direction, temperature, all those kinds of things that would impact the affected area.

So that is done fairly quickly, but it is the local government that would be primarily responsible for getting that information out. But to determine what that information is that needs to get out, of course we rely on Federal assistance as well as our own fire, EMS and other specialists that are there to tell us what it is we're up against.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. What is your assessment of the level of—this is just a general—what is your assessment of the level of preparedness in the Washington region to a chemical attack, a low-level—or a nuclear explosion that took place? I mean, are we ready? If we're not ready, what additional measures do we need to take?

Chief RAMSEY. Well, I think we're ready, but, again, that's all relative. If you have a nuclear device explode, you're going to have loss of life. If you have a release of a chemical agent, depending on what that agent is, you can have some loss of life. But do we have the equipment we need to be able to respond and work in that environment? Yes. Do we have the ability to be able to detect as quickly as possible what that is so we can save as many people as possible? Yes. But being prepared doesn't mean you have zero loss of life. I mean, there is a price that is paid if we have a situation

like this, and we can only hope to minimize any injury to the public at large. But we have been given the resources. We have the training. We have the communication and the coordination in place that I think makes us as prepared as any region, if not more prepared than any other region in the country.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Now, clearly, clearly there would be terrible loss of life if any of those, especially a nuclear attack happened. My question related to our ability to respond. And with respect to the deterrence and prevention aspect, what has been the level of cooperation between—to the regional governments and the Federal Government with respect to them providing you with information about the nature of the threat? Have you felt that information has been communicated quickly and accurately to you with—the full amount of information that you need that they're getting, whether it's getting down to you?

Chief RAMSEY. Yes, sir. I'm very, very pleased. I have a clearance, and I'm privy to information that comes in as it affects Washington, DC. Mr. Harp mentioned earlier that we have regular conference calls. We have a standard weekly conference call that we have, and we have it daily when we need to if there's a specific threat to Washington, and that's all the regional law enforcement agencies. We have regular meetings there at the Washington field office. In fact, there is one today that took place that covered some intelligence information. I've had other briefings as well. I couldn't be happier with the amount of information that comes to me as it relates to threats against Washington, DC, and I know that there's been some, you know, discussion on the part of some chiefs that weren't in the same position that I'm in, unfortunately, but as far as Washington goes, the cooperation and coordination of not only the FBI, but I feel that way about the Secret Service as well and the other Federal agencies that we have regular contact with.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Director Harp, Quantico Marine Corps base is located in Prince Williams County, part of it in Stafford. As you know, on that facility is the FBI Academy and the DEA Academy, and we have a lot of folks there. It's dissected by Interstate 95, and my question is have adequate measures been taken, in your opinion, to make sure that facility is protected and that the people there know what to do in case of a terrorist attack?

Mr. HARP. I believe so. The continuity of operations plan has been developed for Quantico. In an attempt to shorten my statement, I did skip over the specific mention of the Quantico academy and the Quantico Marine Base, but they are included as well in our deliberations and practice and training and all those considerations.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. You know, I travel that corridor every Monday and Friday going back and forth to home, and I will tell you that the bottleneck, when you get off of where the HOV lanes are, you get right into that Quantico/Triangle area, and that is my concern that I keep talking about today. If we had to have a mass exodus out of D.C. because of something like we had on September 11th, even getting out of D.C. on September 11th was next to im-

possible for most of us, but I just have got a real concern about what would happen down in that corridor, and I certainly hope everyone is going to keep that in mind——

Mr. HARP. Yes.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA [continuing]. When you think of our evacuation plans, that you keep that in mind that it really bottlenecks there now without a terrorist attack.

Mr. HARP. We are cognizant of those threats, and we've attempted to address them in our planning.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ruppersberger.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Yeah. Let's get back a little bit to the issue that happened in the park. You know, I really think that you as law enforcement are there to respond, and you do a good job, and you have the techniques, but you just don't have the resources. And I understand the next panel is going to be more about transportation. But I think whenever you affect someone's everyday pattern of life, especially at a place like Washington, DC, where we all come to work, it causes a lot of frustration, and as elected officials you get a lot of complaints and phone calls. But if we're really going to take this seriously, first we have to come up with a plan that will work and second, we have to find a way to fund it.

And I think a lot of what we're talking about is maybe a flexible transportation plan that is going to cost billions of dollars, but really studies some of the best transportation systems in the world. And if we're going to really make our Nation's Capital a place where we have incidents—and we always will—and we're going to be able to move traffic in situations like this or just an automobile accident, we're going to have to have a plan, we're going to have to have somebody in leadership at the top who can make decisions to divert roads and close roads to make sure we get traffic patterns moving, including cameras almost as a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week situation, but it's going to cost a lot of money.

Now, the possible good news if we're willing to undertake that, is that every elected official who works in the Capital somehow lives near this area, one way or another, and understand that this is the Nation's Capital. And if you look at this Washington, DC, from at least my perspective, it may not be your opinion, I think we have a deteriorating infrastructure that has to be dealt with. And if you don't take care of the basics first, things start to deteriorate. Roads, potholes and situations. And it's not Mayor Williams. He's doing the best he can, but he needs more resources. He needs people to live in the district who can pay the taxes to help pay for these things.

So I'm looking forward to the next panel, because I think really the issue, you responded, you tried to do the best you could. You created your perimeter because you want to save lives and you want to save the life also of your police officers, plus your citizens. But there needs to be some flexibility and technology. It is there, but we have to be willing to pay for it. And thank goodness you have Chairman Davis here who lives in the area, and what I un-

derstand, likes to get things done. Maybe we can really take this to another level.

Getting back to some of the issues on homeland security, I think WMATA is something that we have to deal with, with terrorism. Terrorism is a lot different than other crimes, so to speak, and the terrorists want to create a situation that will have impact in the news media. I don't know who can answer the question; but do we have the resources, the sensors, the radiation sensors, the chemical sensors that we can help to discover if something occurs or try to stop things before it occurs? Where are we with respect to that, or are we underfunded and we don't have those resources? And, by the way, the things I am talking are chemical sensors, biological sensors. If you have a biological or chemical, you can have a decontamination right there or close by like you would have a fire hydrant. Anything of that nature?

Mr. HARP. I think some of that could be answered by the next panel. With respect to our preparations, our National Capital Response Squad does have those assets. We are working very closely with DOE on the anthrax investigation. We have employed all of the national labs. We have had eight specific conferences in my office deliberating on the anthrax threat and the investigation. We have done, I think the best we can within our ability, our Hazardous Materials Response Unit and our Weapons of Mass Destruction Unit at headquarters. Both are a national asset and they address those concerns.

We did employ them during the tractor incident. We could always use more. I understand that—and, you know, we had never been attacked prior to September 11th, but since then we have had not only the Pentagon and the Trade Center, but we have had anthrax, we have had a host of hoax letters and our personnel from the JTTF and the Capital Response Squad deploy to what are possible hot scenes. So, yes, we could use more resources.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Chief Ramsey, how many people in your organization really do you assign to work narcotics?

Chief RAMSEY. That I assign to work on narcotics?

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Drug enforcement.

Chief RAMSEY. I can get you exact numbers as to how large NSID is. Close to 100.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. We had testimony yesterday that because of the homeland security and the terrorist threat, that there are a lot of resources that are being taken out of the narcotics enforcement, which is still our biggest problem in the United States from a crime point of view. Do you agree with that?

Chief RAMSEY. It is a large problem, yes, sir.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Are you having problems because of resources you are getting and putting into homeland security, taking away from areas, especially narcotics.

Chief RAMSEY. Not necessarily narcotics, but neighborhood patrols and the narcotic enforcement at the District level suffers as a result of that; not necessarily just the narcotics section, but the officers in the districts that work on local narcotic problems. Now, as a good example, with the IMF World Bank coming up and code orange, and those kinds of things, when we have to take resources to start dealing with some of those threats, we pull out of the

neighborhoods to an extent, although we do everything we can to make sure our numbers stay up in the neighborhoods, but it strains us tremendously.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. May I make one more comment? Since September 11th, we know that things have changed. But I think there is no question that from a terrorist point of view that Washington, DC, and probably the Nation's Capital would be a target. And I think because of the cooperation between Federal, State and local, I think each one of your organizations has done a tremendous job in the intelligence end, working together as a team, more than I ever seen, and I think that is one of the reasons we have done well.

Now, of course, the arrest or capture of Mohammed, that had a real significant impact. But if you look at what has happened in the presence of law enforcement—I was driving in another spot in Washington last night where I hadn't been. I saw police cars with lights on. I think you all should be commended so far—I said so far; you want to keep it up—but I think there has been tremendous cooperation and I think everyone who is working in law enforcement wants to make a difference and they want to make sure that they protect their citizens. Now it is our job to get you the resources.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you all very much. It has been a long day for you. We appreciate the job you are doing and we need to look ahead at new strategies as the situation continues to evolve here in the Nation's Capital.

Anybody want to add anything? If not, if you want to answer anything supplementary, feel free to send it in and we thank you very much. We will take a 2-minute break and then go to the next panel.

[Recess.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. We are on our final panel now. We have Richard White, the general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; David Robertson, the interim executive director of Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, accompanied by Mary Hill, one of the supervisors from Prince William County and very good friend who is Chair of the Board of Directors. And to round out the panel we have Bob Peck, the president of the Greater Washington Board of Trade. Thank you all for your patience. And if you just stand with me, I will swear you in and we can get right to it.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Let the record show that the answer is in the affirmative. And, Mr. White, why don't we go with you and go right down? And, again, I apologize. The congressional schedule is something we can't always control.

STATEMENTS OF RICHARD WHITE, GENERAL MANAGER, WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY; DAVID ROBERTSON, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ACCOMPANIED BY MARY K. HILL, CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS; AND BOB PECK, PRESIDENT, WASHINGTON BOARD OF TRADE

Mr. WHITE. Chairman Davis and members of the committee, good afternoon and thank you for asking me to testify. My name is Richard White. I am the general manager and chief executive officer of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Mr. Chairman, my written statement, which I am submitting for the record, explains in detail WMATA's emergency preparedness in coordination with the region. So in the interest of time, I will offer a summary of those remarks.

As the largest transit provider for the national capital region, Metro takes its responsibility in homeland security with the seriousness it demands. Metro holds a unique position in the region in making the transformation required for operating in a post-September 11th environment. In making the necessary adjustments, WMATA must focus on two eventualities: the prospect of being both a target of an emergency event and a critical component of regional response and recovery. In doing so, we must consult, coordinate, and plan our activities across numerous Federal, State, and local jurisdictions.

As it pertains to working with the region, one of the questions of this hearing, WMATA'S emergency preparations and security upgrades will provide limited benefits for the national capital region without considerable coordination and planning among all the region's Federal, State and local government players as well as the private sector. It is quite fitting for me to share this table with David Robertson from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and Bob Peck of the Washington Board of Trade. Thanks to the efforts of COG, the region has made significant progress on the issue of regional emergency response planning and coordination.

In September of last year, COG adopted a Regional Emergency Coordination Plan that was the culmination of a year-long effort involving numerous agencies and entities. And I'm sure Mr. Robertson will be referring to the RECP and the Regional Instant Communication and Coordination System [RICCS]. So I will pass on that.

Complementing COG's emergency preparedness outreach efforts is the greater Washington Board of Trade, a critical link to the region's business community. The Board of Trade has been an active partner in working with others in the region toward development of the RECP, participating in the Emergency Preparedness Council of the COG, and also partnering with the Office of National Capital Region Coordination. They also are an extremely important partner in ongoing coordination and consultation efforts.

I would like to speak specifically to the appointment of Michael Byrne to lead the Office of National Capital Region Coordination [ONCRC]. ONCRC provides a tremendous asset for helping the region to move forward with its emergency preparedness, particularly

as it pertains to coordinating activities between the region and the Federal Government and to acting as a clearinghouse in coordinating activities amongst various elements of the Federal family.

The Office of National Capital Region Coordination has recently initiated a process with private and public sector infrastructure providers in this region, including WMATA, to assess vulnerabilities and interdependencies and to make recommendations for critical infrastructure measures.

Transportation spanning the public and private sectors is one of the four sectors that ONCRC will be evaluating in this effort along with telecommunications, energy, and public health. The results of this analysis will become an important component of the ONCRC's baseline assessment to the Congress on the emergency preparedness of this region as well as making recommendations on needed resources.

So I would put an emphasis on that, Mr. Chairman, in that this new Office of the National Capital Region Coordination is in the process of preparing a baseline assessment and the importance of that assessment to the Congress. And I do believe the assessment will provide real direction for the region as to where we need to go to improve our capabilities as a region.

Of course, this infrastructure protection is just one component of the emergency preparedness equation. All employers in the region, both private and public sector, need to take responsibility for having emergency plans in place and for actively communicating and rehearsing these plans with employees. In turn, they are dependent upon receiving accurate, timely, and substantive information from various responsible parties and assisting them with their emergency planning and response activities.

The ongoing efforts of the Office of Personnel Management in coordinating activities for the executive branch of the Federal Government and the Board of Trade in acting as a catalyst for coordinating activities with private sector employees and employers are extremely important in this regard.

As it pertains to another question of yours, transportation evacuation planning, we do have a framework in place for action in the transportation arena, but we are still in the process of learning how to make the plan operational, and much more work is required in this area.

There is an annex to COG's regional plan that provides specific guidance on evacuation planning for the region, including a number of potentially promising strategies to facilitate management of mobility and usage of the transportation network, and there is an extensive listing in those strategies both in the plan and attached to my testimony.

What needs to be done now is to get the necessary resources and commitment and efforts in place to take what we have already accomplished to the next level so that an actual operational evacuation plan can be put into place, something that we do not have today. The region's key players, in turn, must commit to resolving in advance key decisions on specific actions in order to obtain a consensus on a preapproved set of operational response strategies in anticipation of any number of potential scenarios.

As it pertains to WMATA's specific issues, we do a big job today. The amount of people we carry and the percent of the work force, including the Federal work force, that we deliver is in our testimony. One important message from me to you is that we do not have an unlimited capacity to carry people. We are at the upper limits of our current availability to accommodate riders during the rush hour, so in the event of an emergency we could have a situation where our transit system is burdened beyond its existing capacity limits. And in my testimony is reference to a considerable analysis WMATA has done at the urging of this committee and in response to a report from the General Accounting Office that lays out the detailed road map we need to follow to give us the additional capacity capabilities that we do not have today.

Unfortunately, these needs are over and above what we are receiving from Federal, State, and local sources and what we expect to receive from the upcoming reauthorization of the TEA 21 surface transportation bill. The set of needs under critical infrastructure and addressing redundancy is a very important consideration of WMATA and is now our No. 1 homeland security priority. We are actively coordinating this issue with Michael Byrne in the Office of National Capital Region Coordination and asking the Congress and the administration to assist us in our effort to make operational in a timely manner a comprehensive backup operations control center to ensure WMATA's continuity of operations under a variety of threat conditions.

Our transit police and safety specialists are currently facing challenges in ensuring that they receive in a timely manner the tools they need to respond to emergencies from Federal agencies offering assistance, such as FEMA and the Office of Domestic Preparedness within the Department of Homeland Security. Given the unique jurisdictional boundaries that define WMATA's service area, we don't fall neatly into any single State in terms of applying for first responder assistance that flows from the Department of Homeland Security to the States. In a sense, we are an institutional orphan. We frequently slip through cracks and spend a considerable amount of time working through the application processes with three State-level emergency management agencies.

In order to expedite this process, WMATA and other regional agencies should be able to apply directly to the Federal agencies offering first response and other emergency assistance. Any assistance the Congress can provide in this manner will be greatly appreciated.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the rest of the members of the committee for the opportunity to present these remarks and for the support you have provided to Metro over the years. We look forward to continued discussions with the region, the administration, and the Congress on ways to enhance the emergency preparedness response and recovery capabilities of WMATA in the national capital region, and of course I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. White follows:]

STATEMENT OF RICHARD A. WHITE
GENERAL MANAGER
AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 10, 2003

Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee, good afternoon and thank you for asking me to testify on emergency preparedness and regional coordination issues. I am Richard White, General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

As the largest transit provider for the National Capital Region, Metro takes its responsibility in homeland security with the seriousness it demands. Metro holds a unique position in the region in terms of making the transformation required for operating in a post-September 11th environment. In making the necessary adjustments, WMATA must focus on two eventualities: the prospect of being both a target of an emergency event and a critical component of regional response and recovery. In doing so, we must consult, coordinate and plan our activities across numerous federal, state and local jurisdictions. I have attached to my testimony a table identifying all the public agencies with which we coordinate our homeland security actions.

WMATA has been hailed by some as a "national security asset" both for its efficient performance on that fateful day of September 11, 2001, and for its potential future role in serving the National Capital Region during a major regional incident or emergency situation. Since September 11th, we have taken numerous steps to reduce the vulnerability of our Metrorail and Metrobus system and to coordinate emergency response planning and capabilities in the region. While much has been accomplished, both Metro and the region still have plenty of work to do.

Background

By way of background, WMATA was created in 1967 as an Interstate Compact agency through enactment of legislation by the U.S. Congress, and by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia. I would note that the original authorizing legislation creating WMATA was crafted by the former House Committee on the District of Columbia, the predecessor of this Committee. The Metro System was designed to serve the constituencies of the National Capital Region, including employees of the federal government, the residents of the region, the citizens of our nation who come to Washington to do business with the federal government, and the millions of people who visit from throughout the world.

Since the mid 1960's, there has been dramatic growth and change in the National Capital Region. As population and employment in this region has skyrocketed, the demands on and expectations of WMATA have also grown exponentially. Each day we provide 1.1 million trips on our rail and bus systems and more than 40 percent of the daily work trips to the core of the National Capitol region are delivered by mass transit service. Nearly half of all Metrorail stations serve federal facilities, and federal workers constitute 47 percent of our daily customers who use the Metro system regularly to commute to their jobs.

My testimony is organized in accordance with the subject matter described in your invitation letter.

1. Public Sector Cooperation/Coordination

WMATA's emergency preparations and security upgrades will provide limited benefits for the National Capital Region without considerable coordination and planning among all the

region's federal, state and local government players, as well as the private sector. It's quite fitting for me to share this table with David Robertson from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). Thanks to the efforts of COG, the region has made significant progress on the issue of regional emergency response planning and coordination. In September of last year, COG adopted a Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP) that was the culmination of a year-long effort involving numerous agencies and entities. The RECP was developed to provide a framework for assisting the local, state, federal, and private sector partners in coordinating their preparations for and response to a regional emergency. To facilitate the sharing of information and coordination, the plan identifies 15 regional emergency support functional areas, including transportation, that may called into action during a regional emergency.

The region also has in place the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS). The RICCS provides a system for COG members, the states, the federal government, other public agencies, the private sector, schools and volunteer organizations to collaborate in planning, communication, information sharing and coordination of activities before, during and after a regional incident or emergency. The RICCS can be activated upon request by any partner within 30 minutes after a request is made.

COG has recently created an Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC) consisting of regional officials representing the key elements that manage essential services for citizens of the metropolitan area. The EPC will be responsible for monitoring the regional plan and recommending any necessary modifications to the COG Board of Directors.

The appointment of Michael Byrne to lead the newly created Office of National Capital

Region Coordination in the Department of Homeland Security provides a tremendous asset for helping the region to move forward on this issue, particularly as it pertains to coordinating activities between the region and the federal government, and to acting as a clearinghouse in coordinating activities amongst various elements of the federal family. We have been very impressed with Mr. Byrne's commitment to coordinating closely with both public and private sector interests in the region.

The region has already benefitted from the leadership of Michael's boss, Department of Homeland Secretary Tom Ridge, and his call for action on regional coordination issues. Last August, at a homeland security summit convened by Secretary Ridge, District of Columbia Mayor Anthony Williams, Virginia Governor Mark Warner and former Maryland Governor Parris Glendening signed an eight-point agreement committing their governments to improve coordination actions and preparation for regional emergencies. The regional agreement pledges the governments to work together on coordinating decisions, public statements, and other emergency measures, including the protection of critical infrastructure.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and various other federal agencies also play a significant role in regional emergency preparedness planning. The critical role OPM plays in working with all the federal agencies to ensure agency preparedness and coordination cannot be over emphasized. OPM has been an active partner with the region, and it has demonstrated a willingness to provide leadership for the executive branch federal workforce. The region would benefit from comparable efforts by the legislative and judicial branches of the federal government.

On the transit side, much has already been

vulnerability assessments, developed a continuity of operations plan, conducted drills for our employees and other relevant regional stakeholders, and coordinated activities with the Federal Transit Administration, the Transportation Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security. Our transit police force are partners with the Departments of Homeland Security, Transportation, Energy and Justice on the development and deployment of chemical, biological and radiation detection technology. WMATA's transit police also participate in the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, as well as coordinate counter-terrorism efforts with the numerous regional police forces such as the Capitol Police, Metropolitan Police Department, the Secret Service, the U.S. Park Police and the other state and local law enforcement agencies and departments.

Another critical piece of the emergency planning puzzle in terms of coordination is the public schools. The region needs to continue its efforts at integrating and coordinating the emergency plans of our schools with the overall regional plan and the decision making process for the release of workers from their jobs during emergency situations.

2. Roles and Responsibilities Between Government and the Private Sector

Complementing COG's emergency preparedness outreach efforts is the Greater Washington Board of Trade, a critical link to the region's business community. The Board of Trade has been an active partner in working with others in the region towards the development of the RECP and is partnering with the new Office of National Capital Region Coordination (ONCRC). The ONCRC has recently initiated a process with private and public sector infrastructure providers in this region, including WMATA, to assess vulnerabilities and

interdependencies, and to make recommendations for critical infrastructure measures. Transportation, spanning the public and private sectors, is one of the initial four sectors that the ONCRC will be evaluating in this effort, along with telecommunications, energy and public health. The results of this analysis will become an important component of the ONCRC's baseline assessment to the Congress on the emergency preparedness of this region, as well as the basis for making recommendations on needed resources.

Critical infrastructure protection is just one component of the emergency preparedness equation. All employers in the region, both private and public sector, need to take responsibility for having emergency plans in place and for actively communicating and rehearsing these plans with their employees. The region could benefit from additional planning, coordination, training and drilling of plans between public and private sector employers and their integration into the RECP and the RICCS.

3. Transportation/Evacuation Planning

This winter's blizzard and the recent incident on the National Mall illustrate some of the challenges the transportation sector will face in the event of broad scale regional incidents. We have a fragile transportation network on a good day. Whenever a kink is thrown in the system, the situation can quickly spin out of control. This has significant implications for putting in place effective evacuation procedures.

As I alluded to earlier in my statement, the region last year released a Regional Emergency Coordination Plan. One of the Emergency Support Functions (ESF) of the plan specifically pertains to transportation (ESF-1 of the RECP). I have attached to my testimony a

chart from ESF-1 that identifies the region's key transportation players that need to be in communication with each other in the event of an emergency. The chart designates close to 20 agencies, organizations and service providers that would be called upon to coordinate emergency response efforts for the region. Getting a group as large as this working in sync is no easy task. The core group, identified as "Level A" responders on the chart, must devote more time towards ensuring that the management of response activities to major regional events can function effectively.

While we have a framework in place for action in the transportation area, the region is still in the process of learning how to make the plan operational and more work is required in this area.

An annex to the RECP provides specific guidance on evacuation planning for the region. The annex describes a number of potentially promising strategies to facilitate management of mobility and usage of the transportation network that focuses on demand management strategies for usage of the roadway/network general transportation system and the transit system, regional warning systems and communications methodologies, and cross-cutting issues such as chain of command authority, raising or lowering the level of action and sheltering in place considerations. A complete description of these strategies is attached to my testimony.

Since the release of the evacuation annex of the RECP last year, the COG has been working on refining some of these strategies. A modest amount of funds have been allocated towards performing a technical analysis of potential evacuation scenarios, and assessing in more detail sheltering in place options and other non-transportation aspects of evacuation. The region needs additional resources to take what we have already accomplished to the next level so that an

actual operational evacuation plan can be put into place. The region's key players in turn must commit to resolving, in advance, key decisions on specific actions in order to obtain a consensus on a pre-approved plan (or plans) in anticipation of any number of potential scenarios.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my testimony, WMATA is preparing for the possibility of both being a target as well as an essential service provider to the region during an emergency incident. The key to protecting against threats is access to timely intelligence. Our police department is extremely active in making sure that we are as aware as we can be of actual or potential threats that are unfolding. In addition, aside from our primary role of transporting the general public in a safe and reliable manner, Metrorail might have to be available in an emergency to move items such as the national pharmaceutical stockpile, military troops and emergency responders. WMATA does not have unlimited capacity to carry people. We are at the upper limit of our ability to accommodate riders during the rush hour. In the event of an emergency, we could have a situation where the subway is burdened beyond its capacity limits.

As the General Accounting Office (GAO) touched upon in a July 2001 report titled "*Mass Transit: Many Management Successes at WMATA, But Capital Planning Could Be Enhanced*," WMATA has become a victim of its own success and is now challenged by both "aging pains" and "growing pains." I would note that this report was done at the request of Chairman Davis, former Representative Morella and other members of this Committee. A year ago, in response to meeting our growing capacity demands, WMATA developed a 10-Year Capital Improvement Program, totaling $12 billion. The plan was based on recommendations of the GAO report, and from numerous WMATA studies including a core capacity analysis, a regional bus study, a system expansion plan and a strategic plan. Earlier this year, given the

fiscal pinch that all levels of government are currently operating under, WMATA's Board of Directors identified $1.1 billion "must-do" urgent priority capital investment projects. Included in the $1.1 billion is $675 million to purchase an additional 120 new rail cars. An investment in additional rail cars and associated facilities will give us the ability to provide additional capacity to relieve system overcrowding and to support future ridership growth, as well as to provide additional capacity during a regional emergency. The "must-do" list also includes $171 million for 185 Clean Fleet Buses and related facilities, and $275 million for replacement and rehabilitation of aging facilities and equipment across the system. These needs are over and above what we currently receive from federal, state and local sources and what we expect to receive from the upcoming reauthorization of the TEA-21 surface transportation bill.

Earlier last year, FTA completed a security readiness assessment of WMATA. The assessment identified WMATA's need for redundancy of our control system as a critical priority. It specifically recommended the creation of redundancy for WMATA's computerized operating and business systems to ensure that Metro can operate trains and buses in the event of a regional emergency. Follow-up work with the FTA focusing on continuity of operations planning has also highlighted the need for redundancy in many areas, particularly in our communications infrastructure.

This set of needs fall under the rubric of critical infrastructure, and addressing these redundancy issues is now WMATA's number one homeland security priority. We are asking the Congress and the Administration to assist us in our effort to make operational in a timely manner a comprehensive back-up Operations Control Center to ensure WMATA's continuity of operations under a variety of thereat conditions.

If our existing Operation Control Center (OCC) became non-operational as a result of a disabling event in the metropolitan area, WMATA's ability to provide essential transportation services would be severely compromised. The OCC functions as the nerve center for the entire rail operations system, ensuring the safe operation and reliability of service throughout the Washington Metropolitan area. Without the use of some part or all of the Metrorail system, gridlock would ensue on the region's roadways to a degree that would make all emergency evacuation plans inoperable.

Many transportation modes, including the traffic control system and many transit systems, especially the new ones, have redundant controls in place. Our back-up control center is intended to serve as a prototype for the nation. Along with providing the necessary computer, communications and fiber optic back-up to run the trains, buses and assist our transit police, the back-up center will provide redundant monitoring capability for WMATA's chemical sensor detection program and link into the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland's traffic monitoring systems in order to enhance emergency evacuation procedures and coordination.

Along with the need for a back-up OCC, WMATA is pursuing additional resources for several other security upgrades and emergency preparedness activities such as expanding the chemical sensor detection program, advancing a biological sensor/sampler program, and partnering with private industry and federal agencies on a decontamination pilot program. Our transit police are seeking additional equipment, such as radiation pagers and portable chemical and bomb detection devices in order to enhance their counter-terrorism capabilities.

Our transit police and safety specialists are currently facing challenges in ensuring that it receives in a timely manner the tools they need to respond to emergencies from federal agencies

offering assistance, such as FEMA and the Office of Domestic Preparedness within the Department of Homeland Security. Given the unique jurisdictional boundaries that define WMATA's service areas, we don't fall neatly into any single state in terms of applying for first responder assistance that flows from the Department of Homeland Security to the states. In a sense, we are an institutional orphan. No single mayor or governor claims ownership of our system. We frequently slip through cracks and spend a considerable amount of time trying to work through the application process with three state level emergency management agencies. In order to expedite this process, WMATA should be able to apply directly to the federal agencies offering first response and other emergency assistance. Any assistance the Congress can provide on this matter would be much appreciated.

4. Medical Assistance and Response Preparedness

While Metro does not play a primary role with respect to medical assistance, our operating personnel do become first responders in the event of an attack on our near WMATA facilities. With this in mind, we have significantly increased the level of emergency response training for our transit police and operating personnel, as well outfitting them with protective clothing and the Quick Mask.

One of the tools we are using is our new Emergency Training Center where we train police and firefighters from across the region in an environment that replicates a Metrorail tunnel with disabled Metro rail cars. This training center allows us to train first responders throughout the region on a regular basis, rather than having to wait until the Metrorail system shuts down at night to do our training. Police and fire fighting teams from throughout the region and even

across the country have used our facility for training purposes.

One of our concerns in the public health area is whether Metro may be called upon to transport the pharmaceutical stockpile in case of an emergency. We will be working with the public health sector as part of the ONCRC's critical infrastructure protection effort to determine our role in this important area.

5. Telecommunication and Communication Implementation and Coordination

Clearly, communications coordination is a critical piece of any emergency preparedness plan. The region's telecommunications network was chosen as one of the initial four critical sectors to be evaluated by Michael Byrne's critical infrastructure assessment team at the Department of Homeland Security. The Regional Emergency Coordination Plan includes a section that outlines procedures for ensuring the capacity for the interoperability of the region's communications infrastructure. As noted earlier in the testimony, thanks largely to the efforts of the Council of Governments, the region now has in place the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS).

WMATA is currently in the process of updating it's own communication capabilities. Our new digital radio system will significantly improve WMATA's ability to communicate with other local police agencies and first responders. The new system will make more channels available for use, enhancing the interoperability of communications both within WMATA and externally.

WMATA also puts an emphasis on establishing clear channels of communications with the public. WMATA has waged a sustained public information campaign aimed at

communicating to our customers what actions the Authority is taking to keep them safe, secure and informed, and how they can play a vital role in assisting us in this common goal. The campaign, **"Safety. In Numbers"** urges customers to be informed and vigilant while in the system and to report suspicious activity, behavior or abandoned items to our Metro Transit Police Department or the many WMATA employees who work in and ride the system daily.

Within the rail and bus systems, the **"Safety. In Numbers"** message is communicated through posters, announcements, and **"Dear Fellow Rider"** brochures, which are handed out by employees. The **"Safety. In Numbers"** is also featured prominently on our website, with a regular feature on the homepage, a "frequently asked questions" section and links to other safety and security websites. We regularly disseminate news releases which inform the public of our efforts to keep them safe, and we have a broad internal information program to ensure that our employees are equipped with the knowledge they need to keep our customers safe.

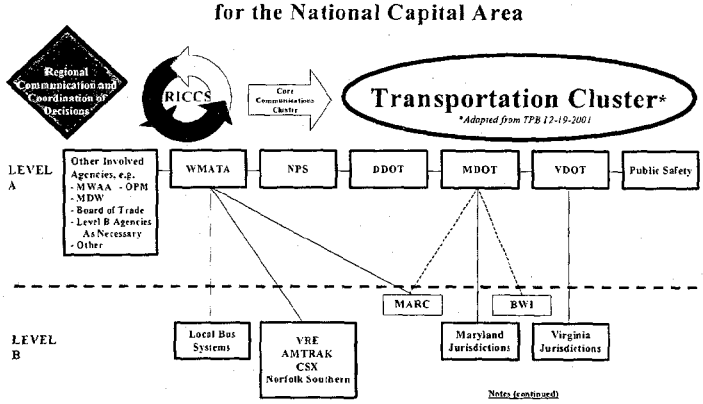
Next Monday, WMATA, the American Red Cross of the National Capital Area, the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Transit Administration will be co-sponsoring an event to launch a new national program designed to provide vital emergency preparedness information to the millions of American citizens who ride the subways, commuter trains and buses each day. The program, a partnership that also includes the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), will feature the distribution of **"Together We Prepare"** brochures to customers of our system. Next week's event will serve as a model for the nation, with similar events taking place in major transit systems throughout the country over the next few weeks and months.

I want to thank you Mr Chairman and the rest of the members of the Committee for the opportunity to present these remarks and for the support you have provided to Metro over the years. We look forward to continued discussions with the region, the Administration and the Congress on ways to enhance our emergency preparedness response and recovery capabilities. I would be happy to answer your questions.

WMATA REGIONAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COORDINATION
(Public Sector)

Level of Government	Contact
Federal	*FTA*: vulnerability assessments, COOP drills, capital construction safety/security certifications *TSA:* assist in the setting of national standards for transit security *OPM*: coordination on the release of federal employees *DOE/DOJ/DHS*: PROTECT chemical sensor detection program *FEMA*: coordination on recovery/consequence management issues *FBI:* MTPD participates in the Joint Terrorism Task Force *DOJ/BJA:* MTPD seeking security training assistance *DHS/ODP:* MTPD/SARP seeking equipment assistance *DOD/EPA/TSA*: potential partners for a decontamination pilot *DHS/ONCRC/TSA:* critical infrastructure analysis/plans *U.S. Congress*: security coordination with Capitol Police, Architect of the Capitol, quarterly reports on expenditures *DOD:* provided additional early service to Pentagon post 9/11, coordination with Military District of Washington (MOW)
State: WMATA has limited direct interaction with state offices on security and emergency response/planning issues	MD (EMA, DOT) VA (EM, DOT)
Local: coordination on police, fire, transportation, communications and emergency planning and coordination matters	DC Mayor DC DOT DC EMA Montgomery County Prince George's County Arlington County Fairfax County City of Alexandria City of Fairfax City of Falls Church Loudoun County Prince William County COG: RICCS, evacuation planning and coordination
Regional Transportation Providers	Montgomery County Ride-on Fairfax Connector Alexandria DASH Prince Georges The Bus Arlington ART City of Falls Church George Amtrak MARC Virginia Railway Express (VRE) City of Fairfax CUE Bus Washington Airports Authority CSX

Interim Incident Communications Process for the National Capital Area



Participants

1. Level A will include representatives from the following agencies:

   USDOT will perform national level administrative and funding roles in regional emergency preparedness.
   MDOT will manage transportation infrastructure in Maryland during an emergency.
   VDOT will manage transportation infrastructure in Virginia during an emergency.
   DDOT will manage transportation infrastructure in the District of Columbia during an emergency.
   The U.S. Park Police and the National Capital Region Director's Office of the NPS will manage the NPS's transportation infrastructure during an emergency.
   WMATA will manage the Metrorail, Metrobus, and other transit services during an emergency.
   OPM, GSA, and FEMA have developed a Federal Emergency Decision and Notification Protocol and will coordinate and communicate the early release of federal employees with regional partners as necessary.
   GWBOT will coordinate communication with and between private-sector organizations on an as needed basis, particularly regarding the early release of private employees.

MDW will communicate changes in transportation facilities because of military action as necessary.
Public safety organizations will coordinate with the region especially in terms of road use for rescue vehicles, closures due to rescue operations, and any other disruptions in transportation facilities due to public safety activity.
Other involved agencies will be contacted as needed for information sharing purposes.

2. Level B agencies will include the local jurisdictions of the metropolitan area, local transit agencies, MARC rail service, Virginia Railway Express, AMTRAK, freight railroads, and perhaps private tour and inter-city bus operators.

3. Any agency in Level A can initiate a conference call among Level A agencies. The initiator most likely would be the agency or jurisdiction most directly impacted by the incident or emergency.

4. Secondary communications will occur between Level A and Level B agencies in their sector: MDOT with local Maryland agencies/jurisdictions, VDOT with local Virginia agencies/jurisdictions, and WMATA with local and other transit providers.

5. In each situation, one of the Level A agencies will be designated as the central point of communication with the media and other real-time public information resources. This process will be coordinated and reconciled with protocols developed in R-ESF#14 and with the RICCS PIO concept.

6. All Level A agencies will have a representative designated 24 hours a day, seven days a week to be available for such collaboration. Each agency's 24-hour, seven-day operations centers will be the primary point of contact.

C. Notification

RICCS protocols can be followed to notify appropriate R-ESF#1 partners of a regional incident or a regional emergency requiring transportation support. R-ESF#1 supporting agencies can participate in conference calls with the affected jurisdictions and with federal agencies if necessary. If R-ESF#1 Partners become aware of a regional incident or a regional emergency from any source, involving transportation infrastructure they can utilize the RICCS. In addition to the RICCS protocols, R-ESF #1 can also use the following methods to share information during a regional incident or a regional emergency.

D. Overview of Regional Strategies to Facilitate Regional Evacuation

Most current jurisdictional emergency response plans are geared to local rather than regional-scale incidents. The following items represent a suggested tool-box of strategies to address demand management and coordination and highway and transit supply management and coordination. Strategies range from simple extensions and expansions of current policy to more extreme measures that will require extensive advance regional planning and cooperation to develop and deploy. There is overlap between the demand and highway and transit supply strategies, as they are all aspects of an integral intermodal system. The categorization here is intended for guidance only. The strategies listed should be considered a menu of possibilities, and additional strategies may also be developed through further development efforts. The listing of a strategy does not imply endorsement of or requirement for a strategy. Particular strategies may or may not be advisable in specific situations.

1. Demand Management Strategies

a. Communications for Demand Management: There may be times when people are safer in their buildings than on the streets, at least until streets are navigable. RICCS and prompt public communications can help manage or avert panic by clearly defining the at-risk area, defining shelter in place recommendations, and providing roadway advisories to let people know in advance what they will be getting into on highways and transit. This should include communication of all demand and supply strategies that have been agreed upon through the conference calls, such as staggered employee release, emergency HOV, restricted highway access outside the critical perimeter, location of transit assembly areas, and other measures.

b. Staggered/ timed release: In order to ensure that transportation network capacity is not overwhelmed in gridlock, which may endanger great numbers of people, it may be advisable for government and private sector employers to stagger the release of employees, beginning with those in the most at-risk areas. This may be accomplished through announcements, e-mails or other mechanisms, and will be far more effective if education and drills have taken place prior to the incident.

c. HOV management: In most cases, existing HOV restrictions should remain in place. There may also be cases where HOV restrictions on existing HOV roadways are imposed during non-peak hours in the event of an emergency to facilitate the flow of people. For example, revised VDOT procedures emphasize movement of people over vehicles.

d. Emergency HOV Restrictions/ "Super-slugging": A major emergency might require mandatory HOV restrictions on roadways that are not normally designated HOV; or at times when HOV restrictions are not normally in place. Restrictions can be put in place in the long-term aftermath of a regional incident or emergency, as done for Manhattan in the wake of Sept. 11, 2001. Mandatory HOV restrictions would apply to severely impacted areas. For example, restrictions could extend to allowing one car per family (as in a night-time evacuation situation), or mandating that only vehicles with four or more persons per vehicle are allowed access to major evacuation routes.

Public information and advisory outreach prior to an event could set up "emergency car pool" contingency plans in offices throughout the area, such that employees would know in advance who in their building typically headed home in approximately their direction, if there is time for such organization. If there is no time available, people may simply be advised to fill every private vehicle as it leaves each building or parking facility, regardless of ultimate destination, in order to clear the area as quickly as possible. Assembly areas may also be set up for those unable to secure a ride from a particular building for whatever reason. This could be termed "super-slugging", and would obviously require planning and policy decision-making and coordination well in advance of an event.

e. Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategies: Many incidents will require persons in the affected area to walk (or bicycle) to an assembly area, for longer-range transport to a safer area. (See Transit Strategies: Metrorail Primary and Metrobus and Local Buses in Special Evacuation Service). This can be facilitated by clear media and other public communications, clear direction from emergency responders and law enforcement on the scene, and dedication of entire roads, if necessary, to pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Bicycles may also be of service in outlying assembly areas to reduce demand for other forms of transport (such as shuttle buses).

2. Roadway Network/ General Transportation System Strategies

a. Traffic signals and traffic control: The District of Columbia and other jurisdictions have plans in place to change signal timing to facilitate outward movements on key routes, and also to deploy law enforcement personnel at key intersections to prevent blocking of intersections and potential gridlock. Establishment and maintenance of a regionally agreed interjurisdictional "emergency" signal timing plan to facilitate evacuation is envisioned. Such a plan may maximize traffic flow on major evacuation routes.

b. Closed circuit television, improved communications, and roadway signs: These techniques are increasingly being deployed in many jurisdictions, such as by DDOT and Arlington County, both to monitor events and to inform the public as to roadway status and detours or alternatives. Regional coordination in the event of a major emergency is required to ensure that consistent instruction and direction is provided.

c. Dynamic Rerouting: It may be advisable to develop tools to determine strategies in an emergency situation, that can be used for "dynamic rerouting". These could be used to dealing with the loss of facilities. Such plans must identify what is not available, and optimize what is left.

d. Roadway clearance: Ensure that plans are in place to shut down/ remove construction equipment as necessary on major roadways. Tow trucks should be deployed to clear parked vehicles, have trucks on standby in critical areas to clear stalled/ other incident vehicles.

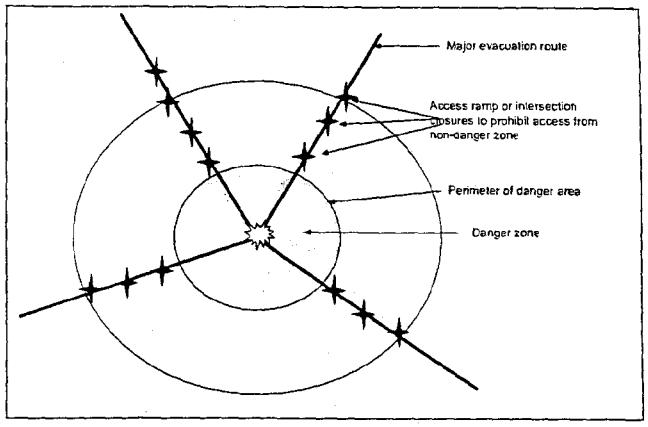
e. Emergency Set-Aside Routes for Buses and Emergency Vehicles: There may be merit in evaluating and designating certain routes parallel to the major evacuation routes that would be limited to transit vehicles for outgoing movements, with appropriate signalization. Still other routes may be reserved for incoming and/or emergency vehicles. This will require coordination with R-ESF #13, Law Enforcement (possibly auxiliaries), and R-ESF #3, Public Works and Engineering. Communications among transit providers and highway control personnel are critical (R-ESF #5). Communicating transit reroutings to the public is also critical, through every means possible- media, websites, phone recordings and information, etc. via R-ESF #14, Media Relations and Community Outreach.

f. Access Restrictions: Restricting access to major facilities outside the perimeter of the incident in order to ensure available capacity for access/ evacuation from the area at risk is both an access management and a demand strategy. This could entail ramp closures to major routes in the areas on the perimeter of the incident, for example, such as deploying maintenance vehicles or other barriers to impede access to the roads from outside the danger zone. Exhibit 3 provides a schematic overview of the access restriction strategy. In common with many other strategies identified in this report, preparing the policy protocols and decision-framework for such seemingly radical but potentially life-saving actions will require regional cooperation and decision-making well in advance of an emergency that might require such actions.

Another facet of access control is perimeter control. This is needed to secure facilities and create perimeter control to stop people from coming into the evacuation area. This is primarily the responsibility of Law

Enforcement, with critical support required from the Credentialing Annex. These must both be coordinated with government and business Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs), which may require that certain personnel have special access to restricted areas.

Exhibit 3.
Incident Where Ramp Closures Outside Danger Zone Facilitates Evacuation



g. Reversing Lanes/ Roadway Directions: Reversing major interstates or other roadways to have all lanes running in one direction is something that requires analysis and time. Reversing lanes/directions within city and on freeway to help traffic move out can be accomplished with planning and coordination. There would need to be alternate routes for those emergency workers needing to drive into the area. Limited access highways would need on and off-ramps closed in the counter-flow direction in the affected area.

An example of how and where such a technique might be deployed would be at a location where outbound lanes currently drop from four lanes to two lanes. Assuming the outbound traffic from the emergency is filling the four lanes, the counterflow lanes could be made available using a highway crossover, with law enforcement personnel to direct traffic to the crossover and trucks and/or other barriers to prevent entry to the inbound lanes. This will require identification of crossover and median breaks on major roadways and testing of strategies for tight control of access points. It has been stated that DC roads are not engineered to reverse directions,

and would require more study and planning to develop analogous strategies.

h. Active Management- Critical Intersections: For the purposes of this annex, regional critical intersections are defined as intersections that are located on evacuation routes, in particular those that represent an at-grade crossing of two evacuation routes, or high volume at-grade intersections for accessing evacuation routes. Such intersections may require higher level/ more active management, from traffic control monitoring and signal timing, up to and including active law enforcement to ensure that traffic continues to move through the intersections. Draft designations of regional critical intersections are identified on the enclosed maps, Exhibits 1.1 through 1.9.

3. Transit System Strategies

a. Metrorail Primary: The rail system, comprising Metrorail, VRE, and MARC will be utilized to the maximum extent possible to move people from the "core area" to outlying stations. WMATA will provide Metrorail, (or substitute bus service, if feasible), to key Metrorail stations, especially terminal stations.

b. Assembly Points: Rail stations, especially terminal Metrorail stations, will be used as assembly points for passengers. (Note: shelters are under the purview of R-ESF #6, Mass Care). It is likely that most scenarios would include a higher volume of, and less "transit-familiar", passengers than usual. Additional staging areas should be designated within walking distance of major Metrorail stations.

c. Metrobus and Local Buses Maintain Regular Routes: Metrobus and local jurisdictional bus systems will transport passengers from Metrorail, VRE, and MARC stations along their regular routes to the maximum extent possible.

d. Metrobus and Local Buses on Priority Routes: Metrobus and local jurisdictional bus systems will transport passengers from key available Metrorail, VRE, and MARC stations, relying primarily on normal service configurations, with reductions of service in some branches and special route variations. Such a strategy may be necessary if buses must also provide special evacuation services and/or substitute for Metrorail or commuter rail services.

e. Metrobus and Local Buses in Special Evacuation Service: If time is available, buses may be deployed to designated points near the incident to transport people to a safer area. It is anticipated that most people would

walk to these staging areas. The bus pick-up areas must be in a safe location (for the drivers and passengers) and easily distinguishable. Buses may also serve as shuttles from key Metro stations to safe areas.

f. Charter/ School Buses, Taxis, Other Providers Deployed: Taxi companies, school buses, charter bus companies, and other transportation providers may be integrated into the service annex, as determined appropriate, to supplement the rail and bus systems. This may require conditional contracts, MOUs, or emergency powers legislation to permit cooperation/ lifting of operating restrictions, or other issues.

g. Bus Shuttles between Key Metrorail Stations: In the event of a major outage, as in one line or a major portion of a line being out of service, it is intended that Metrorail service would transport passengers that would normally use the out-of-service line to the closest Metrorail station on an unaffected line. For example, if service to one terminal station were affected, passengers could be transported to the nearest adjacent, working station, which might be a terminal station on another line. A shuttle would be set up between the two stations, using available resources such as Metrobus, local buses, school buses, charter buses, or other transportation providers, depending on availability. In this manner, local services such as Ride-on, DASH, etc., would maintain their current routes. R-ESF #5 procedures will be used to inform emergency personnel as to status and operations; R-ESF #10 will inform the public.

h. Regional Buses Divert to Metrorail Stations: If downtown roadways are blocked with traffic, regional buses such as OmniRide and MTA suburban services may be better off serving outlying Metrorail stations, rather than losing time trying to navigate downtown. This must be communicated to patrons in time for them to alter their plans and get to the designated station. There may be a need to inform some riders of unfamiliar transportation alternatives in some locations.

i. Traffic Control at Key Stations, and Auto Traffic to Alternate Pick-Up Sites: In a major incident, key Metrorail stations may be used as staging areas for buses to take people to safer sites, or on to homes or other locations. Such an incident is also likely to initiate a much higher than normal demand for auto access. In such an event, it may be necessary to prohibit auto traffic (as in the kiss-and-ride lots) in order to handle the additional bus traffic, and to avoid overwhelming the system. This is likely to require official or auxiliary law enforcement personnel. Key stations should have a designated auto-overflow facility, where patrons and auto pick-up persons can meet. This should either be within easy walking distance, such as a nearby mall, or clearly-marked shuttle buses should be available to transport patrons. This may require advance

agreements with malls and other sites, to ensure cooperation in the event of an emergency.

j. **Complete Closure of Metrorail.** This may be considered more a scenario than a strategy. If the entire Metrorail network is affected, either through contamination, massive, multiple power failures, or other incident, the full range of supply and demand strategies must be considered. Emergency bus response procedures will come into play to essentially operate buses parallel to the rail line, but could not approach the capacity of Metrorail. Other strategies such as emergency HOV, bringing in charter buses, school buses, and possibly employing taxis (with prearrangement) may be necessary in immediate aftermath to deal with displaced crowds. Certain roads may need to be designated as bus routes to ensure traffic flow. See Example Scenario 5 for a description of such an event.

4. **Warning Systems and Communications**

Communications are substantially addressed in R-ESFs #2, #5, and #14. Some additional critical communication issues regarding evacuation in a regional incident or emergency include the following:

a. **Internal Communications Strategies (R-ESF #2 and #5)**

Federal Engagement-Demand: Communication and coordination with federal agencies is imperative for improving emergency annex and implementation efforts in the region. Federal executive branch employee release directives often have a ripple effect far beyond federal employees, extending to policies for release of other branches of government and private sector employees. Federal participation (in particular the OPM/GSA/FEMA release coordination group) in the RICCS and RES-F #5 conference calls for coordination would provide crucial support for regional demand management coordination. (See also Staggered/Timed Release under Demand Strategies.)

Federal Engagement-Supply: In many areas, roadway closures mandated by various branches of the federal government create significant blockages, such as in Arlington County where the federal government leases a number of buildings, or in the District of Columbia, where access to and from major government buildings may be preempted by federal government entities. Similarly, National Park Service and U.S. Park Police actions on major roadways such as the Baltimore-Washington Parkway or the George Washington Memorial Bridge can greatly impact emergency response efforts. Federal participation (in particular the

GSA, National Park Service, U.S. Park Police, U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Military District of Washington, and possibly other DoD agencies, depending on location) in the RICCS and RES-F #5 conference calls for coordination would provide crucial support for regional supply management and coordination.

Transit Communications: Communication among transit providers/agencies is an important factor for establishing a Regional Evacuation Transportation Coordination Annex (See R-ESF #1). The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is the first contact, they then contact other transit providers/agencies. Many agencies contact their drivers via phone calls or contact the contractors to mobilize drivers in the event of an emergency.

Standard Protocols: Communications for an evacuation should follow the RICCS protocols for emergency incidents, using RICCS and initiating conference calls with the incident manager. Additional parties beyond local jurisdictions may need to be involved, e.g., state governors or other authorities that can declare the state of emergency and authorize evacuation.

b. Public Communications Strategies (R-ESF #14)

Consistent and Accurate Information: The information dissemination strategy in the RECP includes Police, Fire, Emergency Management, Military, and others. It is critical to ensure the publication/ availability of accurate emergency plans.

Tourist, Visitor Information: Communication must address the needs of tourists, especially since they may be unfamiliar with evacuation routes and transit options.

Roadway Status: Clear, timely information must be provided on the status of roadways given damage, closures, congestion, and other issues. If strategies such as road reversals, access restrictions, roads dedicated to transit or emergency vehicles, or HOV restrictions have been implemented, these must also be clearly communicated, along with recommendations for alternative routes, staying in place, etc.

Transit Status: Metrorail status, transit bus reroutings, locations for emergency pick-ups, and other actions must be clearly communicated using available media, as discussed above.

Staging, meeting sites, recommendations. If school children have been evacuated, parents must know where to find them, and/or who to call to find out. Families and other groups will need to know likely sources for information, if they have not previously arranged for a meeting site. And, as noted above, Metrorail kiss-and-ride lots may be closed to autos, and the alternate pick-up sites must be made known.

5. **Key Common Issues**

Authority: Multiple jurisdictions and authorities will be involved in all major evacuation situations, and will coordinate through the R-ESFs and the RICCS. A lead agency may be designated for an evacuation incident that clearly establishes a chain of command, but that may vary depending on the jurisdiction where the incident occurs.

Initiating the More Extreme/ Higher Level Response Actions: Agencies contemplating the use of the "more extreme" transportation supply or demand management strategies will coordinate regionally through the RICCS.

Sheltering in Place: Notwithstanding that this annex primarily addresses movement of people and vehicles, as noted throughout the document, it must be considered that sheltering in place of the population or segments thereof may be the most feasible strategy, and thus must be clearly communicated to the public if applicable.

Planning considerations may include the necessity to convince the general population of the need to shelter in place where they are, rather than trying to join their family. This may require reassuring parents that their children are safer in school than in transit, making sure special needs populations are cared for, and providing scenario specific instructions and up to date information on the location and probable duration of the hazard, identifying shelter locations for people who are already in transit, and, perhaps, even shutting down transportation.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Robertson, thank you—Mary.

Ms. HILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my first time as well, so I am excited. Be kind. First and foremost, I am a local elected official, and I say that in appreciation of Congressman Ruppersberger's comments earlier about the hometown responsibility that local elected officials have in providing effective emergency response. But this year, I am honored to be the chairman of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. As you know, Mr. Chairman, having served as its president in the past, the Council of Governments is an organization of our 18 local jurisdictions within the Metropolitan Washington Region. At this time, I also serve as the first Chair of the national capital region's Emergency Preparedness Council, and I am pleased to be here today to begin COG's presentation on its role in emergency preparedness.

I am accompanied, or I was accompanied earlier, by the two vice chairs of our Emergency Preparedness Council, Carol Schwartz, who is a member at large of the Council of the District of Columbia, and Bruce Williams is also vice chair of the Emergency Preparedness Council. He is mayor pro tempore of Takoma Park; and vice chair of the Board of Directors, Mayor Judith Davis of Greenbelt, who was also with us earlier. Still with me is David Snyder, a member of the Transportation Planning Board at COG and also a key member of the team that is working on emergency preparedness, particularly the transportation evacuation annex.

Let me acknowledge at the outset some of COG's most important partners in addressing emergency preparedness who are here today: Richard White, general manager of WMATA, and Bob Peck, president of the Greater Washington Board of Trade. Collaboration with the region's major transportation authority and the principal organization representing the private sector was key to making the regional process both comprehensive and effective.

COG and its partners want to express our gratitude and appreciation to Members of Congress because they recognized quickly the need for a regional role in emergency planning. Without your interest and support, we could not have mounted the planning process or achieved the level of coordination we will describe here today. And we are proud to say that by funding the regional planning progress, Congress demonstrated vision and leadership even as our Nation was recovering from the shock of a terrorist attack.

The tragedies of September 11, 2001 alerted all levels of government and the citizenry at large to the need for improved response to natural or human-caused emergencies in the national capital region. This need has been addressed at three levels: at the Federal level through the creation of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination within the Department of Homeland Security; at the State level through the national capital regional Summit, sponsored by the Office of Homeland Security, the Governors of Maryland and Virginia, and the Mayor of the District of Columbia; and at the regional level through COG and the governmental, private, and nonprofit first responders in the national capital region.

Our testimony will cover discussion of COG and its role in the region that was produced as a result of the COG-led emergency planning process and the goals that will buildupon current accomplishments.

Finally COG's testimony includes a status report on specific issues of interest to the committee. And I would like to acknowledge that two outcomes of that committee—of the task force—was the creation of the RECP, which is the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan which was approved last September 11, 2002 on the 1-year anniversary of the terrorist attack, but it now just demonstrates the level of coordination and cooperation within the region. It has now been adopted formally by 16 members of the COG and there are two jurisdictions yet to adopt it, but it is on their docket for adoption, and also the risks which you heard mentioned, which after September 11th where it took 8 hours for a lot of that conferencing to occur. Now, as a result of the RICCS, within 30 minutes of a terrorist incident or threat of an incident, the RICCS goes into operation.

Mr. Chairman, the national capital region's emergency planning process has created a vital partnership among the groups here today to report to you, and we are very proud of what has been accomplished so far. And, more importantly, we are committed to maintaining a State of readiness to help assure the security of the citizens of this great region.

I would like to thank you personally, Congressman Davis, for your support in cosponsoring legislation which unfortunately did not make it out of committee last year, but legislation by Congressman Kingston of Georgia, which would have allowed for regional funding for homeland security efforts. And I still believe that is necessary to the success of our region and other regions throughout the country.

Another issue that is important to me is the need to provide for our first responders. And one of the things that you may not be aware of, one of the needs of our first responders that has gone unmet for many many years, is the liability and indemnification issue that has a federalism aspect to it that has been very difficult to provide a solution for because of the disparate State laws and different laws in the District of Columbia so that our responders will have the indemnification and our local governments will not have that liability issue, and we will need your support in that. And Secretary Ridge and Mike Byrne have agreed to help us with that as well. But it is an important issue for our public safety folks as well as others.

And let me take the opportunity to introduce our former interim executive director, but as of yesterday he is our new executive director at COG, David J. Robertson, who will continue our statement. And thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. This means he is permanent now?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. As was referenced——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I am a former president of Council on Governments and Metro rider—I have got you all.

Mr. ROBERTSON. I am very pleased to present the balance of COG's testimony concerning the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan. We are tremendously proud of that. We believe it is the first regional coordination plan in the Nation's Capital, certainly, but also in the Nation as whole. We modeled that plan after the State

and Federal emergency plans, so there is a full consistency between these local Federal and State plans.

We have worked very hard to develop the regional incident communication and coordination system. Several of the speakers have referenced that as part of their comments and it was extensively used by the Council of Governments not only in the sniper incidents several months ago, but has been regularly tested by our local first responders and they have found it to be a very worthy tool to improve coordination and cooperation in the national capital region. It is also important to note that just about all of the stakeholders that have been present for this testimony today have been part of the creation of the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan.

COG sees its role as a convener in forum to bring together sometimes disparate interests to find a common ground and common solutions that we believe are necessary in the Nation's Capital region.

I will now focus and respond quickly to the points that were asked by the committee. Our expanded written testimony was provided to the committee along with the summary of the Emergency Coordination Plan. We share the assessment that there has been a great deal of communication and a great deal of cooperation but more needs to be done. The stakeholders at the State level and the Federal level are active partners in our national capital region Emergency Preparedness Council and have been part of the deliberations and actions by COG. We recognize that COG's role is not operational but we also find value in the coordination of those agencies that have operating or response capability.

On the matter of transportation, evacuation, and street closures, our Regional Emergency Plan also includes a transportation and coordination annex that is the foundation for further work by Metro, the Board of Trade, State Department of Transportation, State emergency management agencies and others.

Additionally, the medical assistance and response preparedness, we have been working very closely with Federal agencies and State health departments and local health departments to build on the disease surveillance systems that are currently being pursued by the Federal Government.

And last but not least, of course, communications and technology. We believe that the RICCS system provides an unprecedented access to decisionmakers to provide them real-time information so that decisionmakers need not get all of their information from the media, but from responsible emergency management officials and can make decisions accordingly.

In the interest of time, that concludes my presentation and I will be available for questions.

[NOTE.—The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments publication entitled, "The Regional Emergency Coordination Plan." may be found in committee files.]

[The prepared statement of Mr. Robertson and Ms. Hill follows:]

Hearing on Emergency Preparedness
Committee on Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Hon. Tom Davis, Chairman

Hon. Mary K. Hill, Chairman of the Board of Directors
David J. Robertson, Interim Executive Director
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

April 10, 2003

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is pleased to submit this summary of the state of emergency preparedness in the National Capital Region and what COG has done and continues to do to ensure that communication and coordination during major regional emergency incidents is effective and complete.

The tragedies of September 11, 2001 alerted all levels of government and the country at large to the need for improved response to natural or human-caused emergencies in the National Capital Region. This need has been addressed at three levels: at the federal level through the creation of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination within the Department of Homeland Security; at the state level through the National Capital Region Summit sponsored by the Office of Homeland Security and the Governors of Maryland and Virginia and the Mayor of the District of Columbia; and at the regional level through COG and the governmental, private, and non-profit first responders in the National Capital Region.

Testimony will cover a discussion of COG and its role in the region, what was produced as a result of the COG-led regional emergency planning process, and the goals and work plan that

will build upon current accomplishments. Finally, COG's testimony includes a status report on specific issues of interest by the Committee.

COG REGIONAL COORDINATION RESPONSIBILITIES

COG is the association of 18 major cities and counties in the National Capital Region. COG provides a forum for regional cooperation. At COG, elected officials, supplemented by professional staff experts, work together to find solutions to our shared challenges, and then continue to work together to implement those solutions. COG also serves its members by acting as a think tank for local governments and a regional information source on the environment, growth, transportation, affordable housing, foster care and emergency preparedness. COG is a partnership that provides solid research, planning and leadership, and can ensure that this region works together effectively.

In the aftermath of the tragedy of September 11, 2001, COG's contribution to improving the region's state of emergency preparedness was comprehensive in scope and inclusive of all levels of government as well as the private and non-profit sectors and community groups. COG's work in developing the nation's first regional emergency coordination plan since the September 11 terrorist attack benefited citizens of the region and has served a model for other metropolitan regions. COG's planning efforts and products have highlighted its value to the region and underscored the necessity of a regional approach to planning perhaps more than any other effort in COG's 45-year history.

COG's Role Before September 11

COG's role in emergency preparedness was established many years before the September 11 terrorist attacks. COG provides a forum where the region's police, fire, health, transportation, disaster and emergency agencies all come together to address common needs and plan a regional

response. COG's committee support structure has long been the mechanism through which public safety and other officials dealt with issues that affected the entire region.

COG developed, administers and regularly updates and tests a wide-range of public safety plans and agreements to give local governments the tools they needed to manage certain emergencies. The agreements include police and fire department mutual aid agreements, as well as water emergency, snow and energy agreements. These plans have been tested and found worthy at key junctures in our history.

For example, in January of 1982, a severe snowstorm coincided with a Metro rail derailment and the crash of an Air Florida flight shortly after take off over the Potomac River. COG's mutual aid agreements were used during that emergency and the system was improved in its aftermath with the adoption of a strengthened incident command system.

During a contaminated water incident – the Cryptosporidium scare in December 1993 – COG convened regional health and water officials to assess the situation and develop a plan to advise the public. Within two hours of the incident, COG established an 800-telephone number and call-center to provide timely information in response to calls from the public.

Over the years, COG has learned that communication between key stakeholders and the public is critical. As a result, COG has partnered with federal, state and local officials and the private sector to examine and strengthen emergency communication systems. Those systems include the Mutual Aid Radio System, which is used with some regularity by the District of Columbia's

hospitals and police and fire officials; the Washington Area Warning System (WAWAS), a landline phone system used primarily by the National Weather Service, and the Emergency Alert System, formerly known as the Emergency Broadcast System, designed to allow public officials to communicate with the public.

COG's Role on and Following September 11

Because of COG's role in coordinating emergency response, the region had a significant amount of experience, resources and assets as it confronted September 11. As a result, the first responders' actions met and exceeded expectations. Police and fire officials in Arlington County and from around the region used COG's system of mutual aid agreements to respond rapidly and professionally to the attack on the Pentagon.

However, regional communication and coordination, especially involving communication with federal government and the public, was lacking. Many of the responding police and fire officials had difficulty communicating because they were using different kinds of radios at the scene of the attack. The National Capital Region also experienced a lack of coordination in releasing federal office workers led to gridlock on many area roads. Although COG is not responsible for operational duties, it is responsible for improving coordination among first responders. This responsibility commended the COG Board of Directors to take a leadership role in improving coordination of the region's emergency response.

The Regional Emergency Coordination Plan

Shortly after the attacks of September 11, the COG Board established its Homeland Security Task Force in October 2001 and brought together federal, state and local officials and the private sector to develop a Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP). The Task Force endorsed a process to address four main elements, including emergency planning, communications, infrastructure and vulnerability assessment, and training and outreach. The FY 2002 Supplemental Appropriations Act provided $5 million in funding for the COG work program, which included significant in-kind support from COG members and stakeholders across the region. The FY 2003 Appropriations Act provided another $1 million in funding for continued planning and development of the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS).

The RECP covers the roles and relationships of the member organizations as they relate to regional communication, coordination, and information sharing. The plan identifies 15 specific Regional Emergency Support Functions (R-ESFs) based on the functional structure of FEMA's Federal Response Plan and the state emergency response plans:

1. Transportation
2. Communication Infrastructure (hardware and capacity)
3. Public Works and Engineering (water, wastewater, solid waste, debris management)
4. Fire, Technical Rescue, and Hazardous Material Operations
5. Information and Planning
6. Mass Care
7. Resource Support (Meeting needs for required resources)

8. Health, Mental Health and Medical Services
9. Technical Rescue
10. Hazardous Materials
11. Food
12. Energy (electricity, natural gas, fuels)
13. Law Enforcement
14. Media Relations and Community Outreach
15. Donations and Volunteer Management

For each regional emergency support function, the RECP identifies the entities that might be involved in an emergency response. It also details the plans and procedures for information sharing and response coordination. A regional emergency may require the involvement of one or more support functions. The RECP, therefore, takes into account a number of support function, or annexes for specific subject areas such as disease surveillance and water supply. The plan will be implemented in the event of a regional incident or emergency.

A regional *incident* is any situation with the potential to disrupt essential services or mobility, or jeopardize public health and safety on a regional basis.

A regional *emergency* is any situation that has disrupted essential services or mobility, or jeopardized public health and safety. This situation has high regional impacts and consequences. If an incident takes place in a member jurisdiction, the responding entity will assess the situation

to determine the impact and request regional notification through the RICCS. In a regional emergency, information will be shared with all affected parties.

Of additional concern to the region's ability to effectively coordinate response to emergencies are questions of liability, indemnification, and reimbursement under the varied and often contradictory laws governing Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. COG and attorneys representing is member local governments are working with state attorneys general and counsel to the Office of National Capital Region Coordination to forge legislative solutions which will permit local government's mutual aid agreements, the EMAC Interstate Compact, and federal FEMA procedures to be effectively integrated and, if necessary, amended. Should federal legislation be necessary, following the completion of this evaluation and planning effort, COG will seek support from the U.S. Congress.

The RECP And Communications: The RICCS

On a 24/7 basis through RICCS, officials participating in emergency support functions and key decision-makers will be notified of incidents and will have the ability to share information. They will bring together experts as necessary to assess the situation and to coordinate decision-making. They will be able to create common messages for the public. The primary focus of the communication and coordination through RICCS will be on regional impacts away from the incident site related to mobility, public health, and public safety.

The RICCS will reach appropriate officials by using telephones, cellular phones, two-way radios, pagers, e-mail, or other means as necessary. RICCS conference calls can be convened based on

the request of local, state or federal emergency management officials, the Chief Administrative Officer of a regional jurisdiction, affected members of a regional emergency support function, or COG's executive director or his designees.

Typically, the notified parties will be asked to join a conference call on a pre-arranged, permanently established call-to number at a specified time shortly after the notification. The capacity now exists to convene such a call within 30 minutes of an incident.

Emergencies and incidents will be tracked through the RICCS, and status reports will be issued, including continuing assessment reports. The RICCS enables participants to coordinate their response and to help create common messages. As the emergency diminishes, communication and coordination through the RICCS may scale back and eventually a decision will be made to stand down. COG will facilitate an after-action critique among the participants in the regional incident/emergency.

The District of Columbia's Emergency Management Agency Emergency Communications Center is the primary RICCS center host facility. A redundant RICCS center has been established in Montgomery County. Additional RICCS centers will be shortly established in the emergency management agencies in Maryland and Virginia, as well as Fairfax County. The system has been in use since Spring 2002. It has been used effectively on several occasions, including the sniper attacks in Fall 2002 and the massive snowstorms in the region in February 2003.

The RECP and Infrastructure and Vulnerability Assessment

COG initiated a survey of the region's critical infrastructure in several areas, including telecommunications, energy, transportation, water and wastewater. COG is sharing the results of this study with representatives of the Office of National Capital Region and the senior policy group supporting the Maryland and Virginia Governors and the Mayor of the District of Columbia in an effort to help address the infrastructure elements of the National Capital Region Summit's eight commitments to action. The study is one of several steps recently taken toward making the National Capital Region more disaster resistant. It builds upon the infrastructure-related aspect of the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan by focusing on local, state and federal programs designed to protect and ensure rapid recovery of the infrastructure itself, including: improving detection of assaults or other extreme events, and quick dissemination of the information to the facility's clients and dependents; reducing the initial impact and downstream effects of an event; and improving the ability of the facility of service to recover quickly.

The RECP and Training and Outreach

During the development of the RECP, COG sponsored two major training sessions for regional leaders and emergency managers. The Familiarization Workshop in June 2002 was designed to ensure that emergency managers across the region understood their various roles, as well as how they fit into the RECP. The Regional Leaders Seminar, held in October 2002, was a tabletop exercise during which the region's elected officials and emergency managers had to react to several scenarios of terrorist attacks.

COG also has held a series of training sessions for participants in the emergency support function groups to help them learn how to use the RICCS system. The region's police and fire officials and its public information officers have participated in several meetings and training sessions. These training sessions were successful in bringing together otherwise disparate groups of first responders and have helped to highlight both successful areas of cooperation and those needing additional planning and technical support by COG.

The RECP and its training components are not end products of a long process. The COG Board and the senior staff understand that COG has taken on a continuing, active role in the maintenance and development of the RECP. To guide that work, the COG Board has established the National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GOALS AND WORK PLAN

The adoption of the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP) and the Regional Emergency Communication and Coordination System (RICCS) represent major advances in homeland security for the National Capital Region. To insure that the RECP and RICCS are always vital and current, the COG Board of Directors created a permanent "National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council" or NCR-EPC.

The mission of the NCR-EPC is oversight of the implementation of the RECP, including its regular testing, updating, and should regional emergencies occur, after-action assessment and review. The key to the success of the NCR-EPC is that its membership includes representatives from all the stakeholders in the National Capital Region responsible for homeland security and public safety:

- Elected official representatives of COG's local governments;
- Representatives from the key technical and professional intergovernmental committees of COG: police chiefs, fire chiefs, public health officers, emergency management administrators, and chief administrative officers;
- Emergency Management Directors from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia;
- Chairs/designees of the Homeland Security Councils of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia;
- The Director of the Department of Homeland Security's Office of National Capital Region Coordination;

- Representatives from the Departments of Transportation of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia and the Washington Area Transit Authority;
- Federal agency representatives from The Federal Emergency Management Agency, Office of Personnel Management, General Services Administration
- Private sector and non-profit agency representatives including the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the Non-profit Roundtable of Greater Washington, the Consortium of Universities, and the American Red Cross.

All participants view the NCR-EPC as the forum where homeland security emergency coordination and communication issues affecting the National Capital Region may be discussed and resolved in a coordinated manner.

COG and its staff provide the primary support to the NCR-EPC to carry out its ongoing planning, communication, training and exercise program for the National Capital Region. The RECP is a living document and requires regular, ongoing testing, practice, review and updating to reflect our collective experience and the involvement of new players. The RICCS is a critical regional communication capacity that also must be regularly tested and enhanced. The ongoing public and public-private partnerships critical to the success of any emergency response must be reinforced and drilled regularly. And in several crucial areas, notably evacuation/shelter-in-place, disease surveillance, and water security, new special initiatives are required.

COG'S FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR CRITICAL REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Recently, COG identified a number of critical projects for which it seeks funding through the FY 2003 Supplemental Appropriations Act and through the FY 2004 Appropriation process. The funding will support ongoing regional planning work, training and exercises, and several strategic enhancements to the RECP. COG seeks federal support for these initiatives, and will be pleased to meet with Members of Congress or their staffs to discuss the details of each of the proposals. COG also intends to work closely with the Department of Homeland Security's Office of National Capital Region Coordination to examine federal funding opportunities available through the Department and other federal agencies.

Planning, Exercises, and Communications: Ongoing annual funding has been requested to support COG's primary missions in planning, coordination, and regular regional exercises, including an Annual Regional Leaders Exercise and individual drills for those in public safety, health, emergency management and other functional areas, and testing and enhancement of the RICCS to insure its can always facilitate coordination of decision making during regional emergencies. COG will work directly with the Office of National Capital Region Coordination of the Department of Homeland Security in developing and carrying out these programs, as well as George Mason and George Washington Universities on implementation of Regional emergency preparedness and response training programs.

Evacuation and Shelter in Place Coordination Plan: Completion of a regional evacuation/shelter-in-place regional coordination plan and a clear and coordinated public communication system for regional emergencies requiring evacuation or protective action

measures are underway. Additional federal support has been sought to complete these critical efforts.

Design and Implementation of a Regional Disease Surveillance Program: The Regional Disease Surveillance program will allow the region to detect the early signs of a chemical or biological attack. In cooperation with Johns Hopkins University, three connected surveillance systems (in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia) would be built to automate the existing manual emergency department data collection system.

Regional Water System Security: Enhancements to the region's water supply system would be carried out through drinking water monitoring, modeling, and conducting a redundancy assessment for water suppliers in the National Capital Region. COG has been actively coordinating with area water utilities responsible for providing safe drinking water for the region's citizens, thereby working to help insure our health and safety. The three priorities of monitoring, modeling and redundancy reflect the highest priority initiatives on for regional coordinated action.

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC COMMITTEE ISSUES

Role of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination

The creation of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination within the Department of Homeland Security offers significant assurance that federal planning and response to terrorist attacks or other emergencies in the National Capital Region will understand, accommodate, and best utilize the capabilities and efforts of those local, state and regional first responders and other emergency support stakeholders.

Just as COG, its Homeland Security Task Force and the National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council have been and will be the focal point for regional planning and sub-federal collaborative efforts, so the Office of National Capital Region Coordination will be the focal point for all federal activity concerned with the preparedness and response for protection of the seat of government, the uninterrupted continuation of government activities, and the nearly five million people who live and work in the National Capital region.

Constant interface, in planning and in coordinating these federal and regional issues is the logical requirement of both the Office of National Capital Region Coordination and COG and its extended functions.

Assessment of Cooperation Between Various Agencies and Governments

The cooperation between federal, state and local agencies has been very good. During and subsequent to the events of September 11, COG has worked closely with our member jurisdictions as we completed the RECP. COG continues to be the organization that fosters

communication and collaboration in order to assist the local jurisdictions in carrying out their operational roles.

COG's success at coordinating emergency planning help encourage and support the creation of the National Capital Region Emergency Planning Council. The NCR-EPC is working well with the Office of National Capital Region Coordination in the Department of Homeland Security, which along with several key federal agencies serves on COG's NCR-EPC.

Cooperation has been essential because the RECP is designed to coordinate the emergency response from agencies and officials at each level of government working in accordance with the emergency support functions. The participation of the region's officials and emergency managers has been excellent as COG worked to test and improve the plan through the RICCS, and was evidenced by their participation in training exercises like the Familiarization Workshop and the Regional Leaders Seminar.

After completing the RECP, the COG Board drafted a Memorandum of Understanding to bind its member jurisdictions and the region's stakeholders to the plan. As of today, COG member jurisdictions have executed the MOU and are bound by it; it is currently begin circulated to appropriate federal, state and private sector entities for similar endorsement.

COG, its member governments, and area water utilities have an exceptional record of cooperation on regional emergency issues dating back nearly 25 years. In 1979, the first regional water supply emergency plan was adopted, focused primarily on drought issues but also well

before its time, anticipating potential water supply outages due to accidents and other causes. More recent achievements include the coordinated regional response to a Cryptosporidium threat to the water supply in 1993 and the adoption of a regional water supply and drought plan in 2000.

In the transportation sector, the highway and transit agencies of the Washington region since 9/11 have emphasized a management and operations orientation to the way they do business. The focus on operations also has transcended jurisdictional and functional area boundaries: across the region, cities, counties, and states, highway agencies and transit agencies all see themselves as partners with common or similar operational goals. Those goals include safety, response, timeliness, and efficiency.

Conference calls have been convened to coordinate and strategize transportation management responses to events such as the World Bank protests, the October 2002 sniper incidents, and the raising of the Homeland Security risk level to Code Orange. Large agencies, such as the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and the state transportation departments, have agreed to shoulder much of the information exchange burdens of smaller jurisdictions and agencies.

COG, its members and area water utilities, in cooperation with the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, continue to actively coordinate regarding water supply security issues. They are connected together through the RICCS, and hold regular meetings at COG to address

concerns and cooperate on solutions. Their current focus is on enhanced regional monitoring, water quality modeling, and improvements to water supply redundancy.

Definition of Roles for Governments and the Private Sector

COG's role is to coordinate the development of the RECP to ensure that its member governments are communicating about their individual and mutual needs as the operational entities and working collaboratively. COG also works to provide a forum through which local governments and other stakeholders can develop common messages to be released to the public. Through COG, local officials and agencies can achieve a "common message" that is delivered by "many voices."

Local governments in the region are the first responders to emergencies, while the federal government has both a coordination role, through the Department of Homeland Security, Office of National Capital Region Coordination, and a role as the region's major employer. The private sector is largely responsible for the management of the region's critical infrastructure: energy resources, transportation and communications and health. The non-profit sector has a critical role to play, particularly through the work of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs) such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army.

Transportation, Evacuation, and Street Closure

This issue focuses on the transportations aspects of moving people out of the region as well as moving required resources into the area following a regional incident or emergency that requires

large-scale evacuation. The RECP's emergency transportation evacuation annex recognizes that several local jurisdictions have or are developing evacuation plans, and addresses the need for information sharing and coordinated decision-making in the event of a regional emergency, by engaging the RICCS. It will also help ensure that the region has the tools, resources and strategies that must be employed in a range of evacuation scenarios.

The current emergency transportation evacuation annex covers issues such as coordination with the federal government, regional evacuation maps, identifying the complete public and private transit inventory, and developing strategies and tactics (such as mandating four or more persons to a vehicle, arranging public transit relay systems, lane reversals, and set-aside routes) to manage evacuations. It also provides for developing and testing various evacuation scenarios on an ongoing basis.

Because the variety of incidents that can occur is virtually infinite, the evacuation annex is a flexible framework that builds on local jurisdiction plans and engages the critically important communications and coordination capabilities established in the RECP.

The emergency transportation evacuation annex was only the first phase of a greater evacuation planning effort, which will be addressed in close coordination with federal and state emergency management and transportation agencies. More detail and a broader range of topics need to be addressed. COG now has begun to develop an expanded version of the annex, broadened to emphasize not only emergency transportation, but also its vital counterparts in sheltering-in-

place and protective actions for the population. Phase 2 will be accomplished by September 2003.

Phase 3 of the plan includes development of an enhanced, comprehensive emergency transportation evacuation and protective actions regional coordination plan, as well as a clear and coordinated public communication system. COG has requested additional federal funding to support the planning process for Phase 3.

Medical Assistance and Response Preparedness

COG was fortunate to have achieved a very important element of its emergency plan just days before the terrorist attack. COG's Health Officers Committee developed a planning guide on how to deal with either bioterrorism or what was then called simply a "bio-event." The region's health officers used the plan to communicate with each other and share critical information during the anthrax attacks in the Washington region.

Under the plan, the initial case in a bio-event is reported by the hospital to the local health department, which then notifies the COG Health Officers Committee. Subject matter and the type of incident would drive the participation in the RICCS conference call.

Soon after September 11, 2001, the region began manual syndromic surveillance of emergency room presenting complaints. Subject to funding, the transition will be from a manual system of coding emergency room symptoms to an automated coding system combined with data collected by the ESSENCE II software developed as a research project by Johns Hopkins University

Applied Physics Lab (funded and promoted by the Department of Defense for the National Capital Region), with appropriate epidemiological follow up investigation. ESSENCE II was selected because it is being developed using data sources from the National Capital Region. It is operational now, which will allow for faster implementation.

Disease surveillance provides more than just early warning and tracking of a terrorist event. The system will monitor the daily health of the region and will provide information that will allow more efficient and cost effective use of resources.

Early on an identified need was to improve communication between local public health and federal health officials, especially federal health care providers (medical officers in federal agencies). Over many months, with assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services, tremendous progress has been seen. For example, RICCS alerts and conference calls have enhanced the development of consensus in messages to the public and aided planning of appropriate and regionally consistent actions in response to the current Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak.

The region has created a plan for deploying the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile (now the Strategic National Stockpile.) This effort has required planning for unified/coordinated regional incident command to share one stockpile. It also has involved beyond the health sector, including law enforcement, volunteer organizations, transportation, and emergency management in the planning.

Telecommunications and Communications Implementation and Coordination

In accordance with the federal, state and local emergency response plan, the RECP and COG address three kinds of communications issues: the use of compatible communications equipment by first responders; the ability of elected and appointed officials to communicate with each other as they make critical decisions during emergencies, and public communication through the news media.

In the National Capital Region, more than one hundred fire, transportation, police and emergency medical services agencies are available to respond to emergency and life threatening incidents that impact public safety. These emergency service agencies utilize individual, proprietary communications systems that limit the user's ability to quickly share vital information with other responding agencies.

COG has identified interoperability as a focus for the Metropolitan region's transportation and public safety systems. Effective incident management in the Washington Metropolitan area requires coordination and information sharing among multiple first and second level responders including: law enforcement, fire and rescue, emergency medical services, transportation agencies, motorist assistance services, information service providers, emergency management authorities, and the media. While this coordination continues to improve, incident response and scene management is hampered by the inability of agencies to communicate, particularly in a mobile environment

At the time of the September 11 attacks, COG public safety committees were in the process of completing the regional Metropolitan Interoperability Radio System or MIRS. During the months after the tragic event, police chiefs and their affiliated subcommittees, with cooperation from federal and state agencies focused on the development of the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan Participation in MIRS is available to all local, state, and federal public safety agencies in the National Capital Region. COG now exercises administrative services over system operations and participation

Metropolitan Interoperability Radio System (MIRS) comprises an interface/interconnect system that was developed through a Department of Justice Program called the Public Safety Interoperable Wireless Network or PSWIN. This system acts as a radio frequency switch that inputs on one frequency and outputs to another.

Consistent with the action on the RECP, the COG goal is to get all responders; state, local and federal, on the 800 MHz system and to only use switches as a back up. At present, all state, federal and local first responders have moved or are moving to the 800 MHz frequency, which will improve interoperability.

The Capital Wireless Integrated Network (CapWIN) Project is a partnership between the State of Maryland, State of Virginia and the District of Columbia to develop an integrated transportation and criminal justice information wireless network. This unique project will integrate transportation and public safety data and voice communication systems in two states and the District of Columbia and will be the first multi-state transportation and public safety integrated

wireless network in the United States. The project will have national implications in technology transfer including image/video transmission and the inclusion of transportation and public safety applications in an integrated system. National observers will be able to monitor the progress and development of the system during the evolution of the project. This project can potentially build a foundation for networks throughout the United States and other countries.

Continued efforts are needed to complete the CapWIN project. This includes increasing the number of participating agencies and expanding the system infrastructure to allow access by additional agencies in adjacent geographical and jurisdictional areas. This can be accomplished as additional resources are identified and secured and partnership agreements are negotiated.

The RICCS and its component parts provide the mechanism for assuring clear, consistent and appropriate communication between and among elected officials and emergency managers. RICCS provides COG's 18 member governments, Maryland, Virginia the federal government, public agencies, the private sector, volunteer organizations, schools and universities to collaborate in planning, communication, information sharing, and the coordination of activities before, during or after a regional emergency.

The RECP provides for coordinated communication with the public during emergencies as a result of coordination with local jurisdictions and elected officials use of the RICCS. Those officials would provide information to the public through the news media as well as through employers, schools, universities and community organizations, with a philosophy of "common message-many voices".

Under the regional emergency support function for media relations and community outreach, a RICCS public information officer will proactively interact with public officials to assist in delivering appropriate messages to the news media.

SUMMARY

In conclusion, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments has a long and successful record that has demonstrated its ability to quickly meet new challenges. COG proved that ability in January 1982 after the Air Florida disaster and again with its response to the September 11 attacks, the sniper situation, a major snowstorm and a drought.

While COG is not a first responder or operating agency, its role in critical planning, communication and training enables first responders to do their jobs better and in a regional context that ensures there are maximum opportunities for communication. As a result, the region's citizens enjoy a greater measure of security.

COG's work is not done, even though we have made tremendous progress by establishing the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan and the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System and forging new relationships between and among RECP and RICCS participants.

COG will continue to work closely with the Office of National Capital Region Coordination and the many federal, state and local government, and community and private sector partners that have contributed to the region's enhanced collaboration since September 11, 2001 and pledges that COG will continue to do all it can to make the National Capital Region the best prepared community in the nation.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Peck, thank you very much for being here and waiting. Last but not least.

Mr. PECK. I used to work on the other side so I know how long these things can go. Thank you for allowing us to be here.

The Board of Trade now has 18 months' experience working on emergency preparedness in this region. I want to recognize, over my left shoulder, Caroline Cunningham and George Radenberg who chairs our committee, who is with AOL Time Warner. I want to thank the Council of Governments because they have, as the phrase now goes, embedded our members in just about every subcommittee they have working on emergency preparedness.

I want to say that there is—a lot is better than it was on September 11, 2001, obviously, in terms of emergency preparedness. I also want to say I think there is lot left to be done. And I also want to say, as the only person here who doesn't get a government paycheck and is maybe a little freer to talk, I don't believe that the region as a whole has been working at a pace in the 18 months since September 11th that reflects the urgency of this situation. We may be saying, what war on terrorism? I don't think we are moving at a wartime pace.

Second, I am speaking here today, if I can presume to do so, for the 80 percent of employees in this region who are not employed by either State, Federal, or local governments. There are a lot of us. We are better prepared today. Communication is better among all of the regional law enforcement authorities, transportation authorities, and regional leaders. The COG communication system, RICCS, has done a tremendous job on that. We have private utilities beginning to work with the Department of Homeland Security on critical infrastructure protection. The public health sectors now have a syndrome reporting system which should prepare us or let us know as soon as possible if we face a biological threat. Our hotels are better prepared. And schools, we note, are beginning to send home notices to parents about what is going to happen in the schools.

But overall, what we are concerned about is the lack of consistent and available public information, particularly to employers and their employees, and still critical infrastructure report.

We think that the Congress and you particularly, Congressman Davis, did a great job in setting up the Office of National Capital Region Coordination, and we could not be happier that Mike Byrne has been appointed to head it. Every time Mike Byrne speaks to one of our groups, and he has done it several times, he speaks with authority. He is plain talking, clear thinking, action oriented, and is eager and even willing to collaborate. Every time he does address a group, participants walk away calmer, better informed, and knowing what courses of action they might be required to take, and just as importantly, what courses of action they are probably not going to be required to be taken.

And I have to say the same about Chief Ramsey who has given some terrific briefings to business. And you heard an excerpt from it today, when he told you, among other things, that it is most unlikely we would ever need a mass evacuation of the city, and we need to repeat that more to our employers. The likely scenarios are those that don't require mass evacuations. They do require some-

thing that's even more difficult to impress upon people in the public, which is they probably got to stay put. That requires people be prepared. You can't expect when something starts to happen and the flee response kicks in, that everyone is going to stay put unless we have been prepared for it.

There is urgent action required in bridging the gap between what is government planning which is realistic and hard-nosed and the public information we are getting. We think the public is prepared for and able to assimilate tough unpleasant information and we don't think the public's been getting it. We can't be prepared if the public isn't clued in and prepared in advance. It is not enough to say, have a kit and when something happens we will tell you what to do. By the time we try to tell people what to do in the midst of an emergency, people will have already taken their own separate actions and things won't work well. So we need some better information flowing from public officials overall.

I also have to tell you that our employers feel both the moral responsibility and a legal responsibility to take care of their employees. And I want to call one issue to your attention which our members have been apprising us of more and more in recent weeks, and that is their concern over the liability, legal liability as well as moral obligation that they face in making decisions about emergency preparedness.

A lot of employers are concerned about what actions they might be held liable for taking or not taking if something should happen, or even in the case of just practice drills. And I believe at some point that we may want to come back to you and suggest legislation to deal with this issue. In the absence of clear and unequivocal government advice, employers are really at risk when they try to take their own actions on emergency preparedness.

I want to talk a little bit about the incident, the tractor man incident. There is nothing that has happened in the 18 months since September 11th that has more degraded the public's confidence in our ability as a region to handle an emergency. We thought, before that incident, people were beginning to believe that we had things well in hand; and I think we do have things much better in hand. You would be hard-pressed to know it from having looked at the tractor man incident.

I want to make a couple of points. One, I heard the Park Police director on television say that the real problem is that there had been some minor damage to Park Service property. You correctly identified there was a much larger issue at stake, and I'm not sure it was immediately apparent to some of the Federal officials.

Second, the metropolitan police department was very active in helping close down the streets and man the barricades around the incident. Our office at 17th and I street, I was able to watch several rush hours go by, and it was only the very last morning that I saw any traffic control officers appear on the streets, on I or K streets. Used to be when I was a kid growing up here, we had traffic control officers at major intersections every rush hour. This time we didn't even have it during a major incident causing gridlock. I think that ought to change. And I think as a daily instance, we ought to consider some different way of controlling traffic in the city.

On critical infrastructure, 82 percent of the critical infrastructure in this region is owned and operated by the private sector. Mike Byrne has set up a group to work on this and the critical infrastructure companies in our region, gas and electric, communications, are currently paying for increased security and surveillance already. However, many of the federally recommended infrastructure improvements are not currently included in their capital plans because the resources aren't available. Metro is prohibited, I believe, from using customer-generated revenue on capital expenditures.

And I would add that the Federal budget doesn't consider critical infrastructure protection eligible for the funding which is otherwise eligible for first responders and emergency planners. So I hope we will be able in subsequent appropriations to develop some funding for the critical infrastructure people in the region.

Just two other comments about transportation and emergency transportation. Mr. Chairman, there is, as you have noted and as Congressman Wolf noted, a need for a regional response to transportation. I will note again the Board of Trade for years has suggested that there be a regional transportation authority. Finally I will note that every day—we held a conference last year called Unlock Gridlock. Estimates are that every day in this region, 40 percent of the traffic congestion is caused either by an accident or construction projects on the roads. Some of that congestion could be reduced by better management, whether it is stationing tow trucks and cranes in strategic locations, doing a better job managing construction, better signage. There are ways to deal with this issue which is one we face every day and not just in emergencies.

Thank you for inviting me and I will be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Peck follows:]

GREATER WASHINGTON
Board of Trade

Growing Business. Building Community.

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HEARING ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2003

STATEMENT OF ROBERT A. PECK
PRESIDENT
GREATER WASHINGTON BOARD OF TRADE

Good morning, Chairman Davis and members of the Committee. I am Robert A. Peck, President of the Greater Washington Board of Trade. The Board of Trade is the largest regional network of business and non-profit leaders and the only group representing all industry sectors. The Board of Trade's 1,350 member companies employ approximately 40 percent of Greater Washington's private-sector workforce.

Through the Board of Trade's Potomac Conference Emergency Preparedness and Recovery Task Force we now have almost 18 months experience integrating business into the emergency planning process and to advocating coordination and communication between the private sector and the federal government.

Thank you for the invitation to represent the private sector before your committee. While much has been accomplished in the 18 months following September 11, we are concerned about the lack of consistent and available public information, effective regional coordination and critical infrastructure support.

I do want to emphasize that we are better prepared today than we were just a year ago. Local emergency managers are working more closely, as evidenced by the sniper incident last fall – where daily conference call with regional leaders, law-enforcement and departments of transportation were coordinated. Private utilities are working with the Department of Homeland Security to develop communications, protection priorities and benchmarks for better coordination and preparedness. The public health sectors are connected to a symptom-tracking system throughout the region. The non-profit sector is working on a response plan that will be better integrated into regional efforts. And, parents are starting to receive information from their children's schools about school-based emergency preparedness plans.

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We are glad that members of this Committee and those in the Senate recognize the significant and particular logistical challenges that our region faces when it comes to coordinating Homeland Security. The legislation you passed creating the Office of National Capital Region Coordination (ONCRC) provides an excellent opportunity to help integrate plans from our many jurisdictions, the federal government and the private sector to make our region the most prepared in the nation.

We applaud Secretary of Homeland Security Ridge for appointing Michael Byrne Director of the ONCRC. Michael Byrne is plain-talking, clear thinking, action-oriented and he is willing – even eager – to collaborate across governmental, public, and private lines. Byrne consistently speaks with authority, and each time we have seen him address a group, participants walk away calmer, better informed and knowing what course of action to take.

When our country recently returned to Code Orange, Director Byrne hosted a conference call with leaders from the public and private sector to share information about Operation Liberty Shield. He used the new Regional Incident Communications Coordination System (RICCS) to facilitate the call. To many in the region the call was a reassuring start to the Office of National Capital Region Coordination. We look forward to working with Director Byrne as he takes on this very challenging job.

We are here today to re-iterate the need for urgent action in bridging the gap between planning and public information. It is our opinion that they have not been adequately briefed to inform their employees about what to do in response to specific scenarios. We ask your committee to take a leadership role in bridging this communications gap between the planning this is ongoing and the private sector and public.

Tomorrow, 18 months after the terrorist attacks on our country, the government has not provided basic information to employers and their employees about the types of threats that emergency planners are gaming. Instead of regular consistent messages about appropriate responses to various scenarios commentators speculate about what might happen, often incorrectly – frightening the public instead of empowering us. The American Red Cross and other agencies have conducted focus groups and polling to understand how best to communicate about disasters and they have consistently found that people want clear straight-forward information so they can make personal decisions. The only person we have encountered in this region who is willing to talk candidly about what scenarios are likely and what is unlikely is Michael Byrne.

The ready.gov site, while a good start, assumes that people will go to websites or call to have information sent to them at some later date. It assumes they will read the guidance that is filled with detail. The site does not reference the color coded alert system nor does it provide guidance for employers or individuals about what to do at each code level. We can do better, and educating the public will require a much more coordinated and repetitive approach to change behavior. We offer our assistance in distributing better information to the region.

The Board of Trade and its member companies feel a moral responsibility to take care of and provide guidance to their employees on emergency preparedness issues – information for which their employees are hungry. Our members know that in times of emergency employees will not turn to the Federal government or to state or local officials to determine whether they should evacuate or shelter-in-place. They will turn to their employer. Currently, we cannot offer concrete advice except to build a kit and tune in. Our member companies are also very concerned about liability that might arise if they were to take preventive actions – or not take them – without being advised to do so by the government.

The time to educate employers specifically and the public in general about possible scenarios is now. The public has the capacity to absorb this information and to plan accordingly. Simply telling people to tune to the radio or television does not suggest the level of coordination needed, particularly if there is a need to move large blocks of employees or emergency vehicles in and around the region. On any given day, our transportation system is already overwhelmed. If we do not provide better guidance on various scenarios focusing on why it may be more important to stay put or shelter-in-place, people may put themselves in more danger when their instinct to flee kicks in. In order to change people's behavior we must provide information prior to the next event and answer questions such as "Will my children be safe at school?"

The world we now live in requires leaders, including members of this Committee, to address issues we never dreamed of before. You should not underestimate your constituents and the public desire for guidance – providing guidance before an event will determine the response to any future attack. Our ability to mitigate the impact and recover quickly are critical.

The disgruntled tobacco farmer on the Mall who grid-locked the nation's capital, demonstrated how just a single isolated incident can still disrupt the District of Columbia and surrounding communities. The incident eroded this community's confidence and people from across country questioned this city's ability to manage any future crisis. For all the talk of coordination, the incident demonstrated how the federal government and the local jurisdictions are still not working together well enough. The Metropolitan Police and federal agencies need to recognize that while an event may take place on federal property, the inevitable impact of street closures may endanger residents, employees and visitors to the District. Coordinating their efforts will reduce panic and demonstrate to the community and the country that we are professional and prepared.

If an event were to happen tomorrow that affected an area bridge it is likely that we would face similar jurisdictional coordination challenges as ownership and oversight of each bridge is different. Without better coordination now, we will see a replay of what happened on September 11, when bridges out of the city were almost shut down without coordinating traffic with the Metropolitan Police Department further impacting evacuation of the District.
The tractor incident also points out serious capacity issues that need to be addressed in the region. In the District, without sufficient enforcement capacity grid-lock will impede

first-responders capabilities and hamper continuity of government plans. Similarly, we need to evaluate whether public transportation has sufficient back-up capacity. The reauthorization of surface federal surface transportation programs currently funded under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century should provide the necessary funding to improve the capacity of the region's transportation system to help move people to safety.

I also urge this Committee and Congress to pay attention to the hardening and back-up communications capacity of critical infrastructure – in this region 82 percent is owned and operated by the private sector. It is essential that the National Capital Region's critical infrastructure not only be protected, but that sufficient redundancy and capacity exist so that an interruption in any component of the infrastructure network does not result in a more widespread failure.

If critical infrastructure were compromised, emergency evacuation capabilities would be affected in much of the District of Columbia including most Federal government facilities. Such a breach of the availability of essential services would compromise the ability of the government to function and adequately respond to other concurrent events.

Critical infrastructure companies in are area are currently paying for increased security and surveillance. However, many of the federally recommended infrastructure improvements are not currently included in their capital plans largely because resources are not available. Metro is prohibited from using customer generated revenue for capital expenditures and some utilities in the region are prohibited from raising rates or fares. Similarly, state and local jurisdictions that are facing significant fiscal constraints are unable to assist in financing these required improvements – I would add the federal budget does not consider critical infrastructure protection eligible for first-responder or emergency planning funding. As you develop 2004 appropriations, I ask you to seriously consider including hardening and back-up communications requests of critical infrastructure companies.

I will conclude by asking that while you focus emergency planning that you immediately begin to educate your constituents, this region and the country about appropriate responses to possible scenarios telling us to build a kit is not sufficient information. The time to educate the public is now, not after another incident.

All of us recognize that as the seat of government for the United States, the National Capital Region has unique responsibilities and vulnerabilities in serving the federal workforce, national lawmakers, and millions of visitors each year. I ask that this committee take the lead on better coordination and insuring that critical infrastructure be included in your budget considerations.

The National Capital Region and its planning and preparation should serve as a model for the country and we appreciate your efforts in making this happen.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Peck, I didn't write your testimony, but I could have, particularly on the incident on the Mall, but I know of at least two cases where emergency vehicles were significantly late because they couldn't get through the traffic and fortunately there were no deaths. It is a big picture, the total picture. And we heard them talk about the life of one person and they wanted to protect that, and that is important. But over time, if you can't get through other emergencies and you shut down the town, there are huge ramifications.

We have to find a balance. I don't want to beat it to death. That is the point. It is not just everybody is inconvenienced and you lose productivity and Congress can't meet—and most people don't care about that. But the fact is when you can't get emergency vehicles through, then there is a huge impact.

Mr. PECK. I will just say again, in most other cities you do see police officers on the street during major rush hours. At almost every bridge and tunnel that you see, there are dedicated tow trucks. And I know in lots of tunnels, the strategy is if somebody gets stuck, you can't have a tunnel shut down. And you were talking before that you know they have to take the accident report, and a lot of tunnels, they push the vehicles out of the tunnel if they have to. They don't mess around, and I think that may be called for.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I think they are going to come back with some new strategies. Hopefully, this has been helpful and motivating to do that.

Mr. White, let me start with you. Let me talk about the blizzard, the snowstorm. I got the last train out of Union Station that night. I had flown in from Florida to New Jersey. Had to get my son back, who had an exam at Mr. Van Hollen's alma mater the next day since they weren't canceling school. And then I took the train the rest of the way down with my daughter and got the last train out to Vienna, but obviously it was tough. That place was packed. But I gather from running them during the evening of the snowfall, damage was incurred and the like, and I wonder if you could elaborate on that, because I know when government finally reopened, you had a number of cars that were out of commission.

Is there anything we can do to prevent that? I just don't understand it well enough to understand what happened, how we can prevent it, and maybe you shouldn't have put them out there the night everybody was stuck.

Mr. WHITE. It is a tough call. And in that particular instance when the snowfall began in earnest largely on Sunday, with Monday being a holiday, there were a number of events that were going on in the region. People were urged to take Metro to these events that were going on at the MCI Center, the Convention Center, other places. I don't know what everybody was doing in the system with that kind of snowfall going on, but there were a remarkable number of people in the system at that particular point in time.

And we needed to make a decision. When we would normally then move into a major protect-our-system and snow-removal mode, we had all these people in the system. And we were caught with that judgment to make, and we made the judgment that we really—and have lived by this creed for all of our history, that our

job really is if we bring you in, we bring you home. And we found that to be the need. That was the compelling need.

There is no doubt when our—this is not a major snowbelt area, unlike like the Northeast. We get a storm like this statistically once every 9½ years. And our equipment, unlike those in other weather-prone parts of the country and the world, can't handle snowfalls in excess of about 8 to 10 inches. When that happens, it just attacks and destroys our equipment in huge numbers.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We would be paying a lot of extra money for the equipment to get up to speed.

Mr. WHITE. That is the point, Mr. Chairman. The question is, do we fund ourselves at a level to prepare for an event every 10 years statistically, or do we grin and bear it and attempt to learn each time to make improvements each time that we can make to make the situation better and the response better? And that, quite frankly, is kind of the double-edged sword that we have lived by. The decision to take care of our customers during that first day led to consequences that were obviously impacted by our customers in the subsequent couple of days.

The other interesting comparison, Mr. Chairman, is the last major snow event we had of this magnitude was back in 1996. And during that event, the major employers shut down for 3 consecutive days, and 4 out of 5 working days after the snow event. In this case, the major employer shut down 1 day.

So there is an obvious relationship between the earnest desire that people return to normalcy and return to work as soon as possible. And it wasn't just the Metro system that was suffering from the effects of the snowfall. Our road system was basically in the same kind of shape with respect to limits on our capacity. And obviously, we as a region saw the effect of those sets of conditions.

So I think this issue is—and our board has agreed to relook at these things, and we are working with the COG and our partners. Do we continue to stick with what our creed has always been? Will we take care of the people we bring in? Do we need to modify that decision in some fashion? And secondarily, do we want to consider toughing up for an event that occurs every decade or not?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That was our first code orange that weekend. Nobody could get through anywhere. I understand that dilemma. I don't know what I would have done at Union Station. I didn't get to ride with the 76-ers. I was back at the cheap seats on the same train. But we got there. You couldn't get a cab.

Mr. WHITE. We were the only thing moving.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for waiting through a long hearing. I appreciate it.

Mr. White, while we've got you here, one comment with respect to proposed Metro fare raises. I just urge you to look very carefully before we increase Metro fares, because I think it will have an impact clearly on Metro ridership.

I know you have been a victim of your own success in many ways. I am very concerned that an increase in the fares will result in fewer people taking the Metro and putting them on the road. So I really hope that you will take a good look at that. That, of course, is related to the kind of resources that you received elsewhere. And

that leads to my question. Have you received any funds from any source for the specific purpose of responding to domestic security issues?

Mr. WHITE. Yes, we have. We are quite grateful to both the Congress and the administration in the first go-around in appropriations that took place a little over year ago where the region received a considerable sum of money. We were the beneficiaries of $49 million, $39 under the appropriation control of the Congress, and $10 that was released under the authorities of the executive branch. And in my testimony there is reference to a number of activities that we have used to increase our preparedness. It is money that has been very, very important to us.

We have spent most of the money. There is only very little of it that hasn't already been put in place and has done things running the gamut of making major improvements for our police departments, providing explosive-resistant trash receptacles in our stations, to target-hardening ourselves with a variety of cameras and alarms and putting in chemical sensors in our stations and a lot of things.

A lot of good things have come from this investment, but there are other things that we still have been making a request on for subsequent improvements as well.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. What is the nature of your——

Mr. WHITE. Our most significant liability at the moment, and that which has been identified by Federal vulnerability assessment conducted by the Federal Transit Administration, is the fact that we are an enormously centralized operation. And because of the centralization, both the control of our trains and buses, the communications, the process control, our business systems and lack of sufficient redundancy and supplemental capabilities is the single thing that we are most concerned about; overcoming that and building enough initial alternate and redundant capabilities so we can properly control the movement of our trains and buses, properly communicate any and all types of normal circumstances in the event that we need to be able to do it out of the location where it is currently conducted.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Are you eligible for the funds out of the Urban Area Security Initiative?

Mr. WHITE. That's an interesting question. And in my testimony, I draw a little bit of a reference to that. I'm not the expert on it, but my understanding is that there is the formula that drives the money out to the States, and then there is a process through which the States allocate the money back out to the local jurisdictions. We are not owned by anybody.

You perhaps were not in the room during part of my testimony. In essence, we are an institutional orphan and we don't have a chief elected official that owns us. We don't have a legislative body that owns us. Granted, we get a lot of help from a number of people. But when money gets driven in a State-driven process, we are not the first thought of a chief elected official from a State or a city.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Part of the purpose of coordinating things that we talked about earlier is to identify priorities within the region. And I would hope that if there are any legal obstacles to sharing in that part of the money, if it is identified as a priority in the re-

gion, that you let us know so we can address those issues. If it is identified by the group that providing additional funds for WMATA is necessary, I would hope that we——

Mr. WHITE. Yes. And there I think lies the critical importance and really the luck that we have that our region was designated really with special status with the creation of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination and, of course, Secretary Ridge's appointment of Michael Byrne to head that effort up. He has hit the ground running, and his task at hand, amongst all the things that the members have directed to him, is that he is obligated, or that office and the Department is obligated, to provide this Congress with the baseline assessment of our region and what that baseline assessment is, including the vulnerabilities and the interdependencies and in essence what are the priorities the region needs to attack.

He is also conducting a coordination of critical infrastructure review to determine again vulnerabilities and interdependencies of critical infrastructure review. He has reached out to all of us to participate in the process, and for that we are very, very grateful. And we are looking forward to the outcome of that process, because I am hopeful that it will provide a clearer road map to everybody who is looking for what are the most important things that the region needs to attend to that perhaps they are a little bit exposed to at the moment.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. And one other question to you which relates to you—and you are right, I have been running back and forth to the Education Committee where we are voting on a series of amendments, so I am sorry if you already addressed this. But with respect to sensors in the Metro system, can you elaborate on what you have done, because that is a critical issue? Some of these potential chemical weapons, you can't see them, you can't smell them. They could be in the system for a period of time before people know they are there. And obviously early sensors are critical. How comprehensive is our sensor system in the Metro?

Mr. WHITE. I heard your interest and other Members' interest in their line of questioning with some of the previous participants. Again, we are very, very grateful to the work that we have done with the Department of Energy, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Transportation. We are the single laboratory in the world right now for the testing of chemical sensors in a mass transit environment. There is no one else in the country, or the world for that matter, that is testing out a civilian application thing.

Part of the money that the Congress gave us and the President gave us is being used to begin building that capability up. We have sufficient funds to do some portion of our underground stations. We have some capabilities today. We are continuing to expand those capabilities as we finish the spending out of that money. That includes the sophisticated engineering modeling to determine as to how these various substances would work and the piston effect of trains moving through stations. It is coordinated with first responders so they have remote detection capabilities, before they might go into harm's way, to know what they are about to go into so that they can prepare themselves properly.

So this is a very sophisticated capability and it is giving us an enormous tool that others don't have to hopefully send a message of deterrence and, second, give us the capability to respond far faster than any other transit system might be able to do.

In addition, we have capabilities in the arena of biological and radiological detection and response as well.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Just in closing, I want to thank the other witnesses for being here.

Mr. Peck, I agree with you with respect to the need for greater urgency in transmitting information to the public, because the best plans will be totally confounded if the public—and it has to be done in a measured way. I think you know, clearly, we had the incident with the duct tape and plastic which scared people more than was necessary. What we need to do is address this in a measured way when we are not moving from one threat level to another and allow people to know things, like in the event of an attack you shouldn't be getting in your car and driving out necessarily. And if we don't communicate that effectively to people ahead of time so that people, just as they prepare for any other kinds of emergencies that might occur in their household, if we don't do that ahead of time, the best made plans will in fact come to nothing. And so I appreciate you speaking out as part of this forum and other forums you have been speaking out on that. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. Mr. Ruppersberger.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. It is great to see that we have a region that is trying to work together. I wish I had more knowledge of the Virginia and Washington area. I know more about the Maryland area.

One of the things I think with regional cooperation, it is important to pull together, because if you have come together you have more influence and power to get what you want. But you have to come to a conclusion on your priorities.

Are you having a problem as a region working together with the different counties involved, putting together the priorities that you think you need for homeland security, for transportation, for some of the issues we talked about today? That is one question.

The other thing, Mr. Peck, I am happy you are here today, because I think it is very important having a partnership between business and government. Government can't do it all. It won't do it all, and if you rely on them it isn't going to happen.

There is a lot that we talked about in homeland security. And one of the things we haven't talked about is the impact of security with respect to business; you know, coordinating our high-rise office buildings, getting our real estate people together, looking at the ventilation systems, finding out how you are going to evacuate your own building, finding out if you need sensors. I mean, there is a lot that we haven't talked about.

The people who are coming and being impacted by traffic are the people that are working in those buildings. And I think that is important. But I am going to ask you another question later on. The first question about the priorities, sir.

Ms. HILL. Yes, Congressman Ruppersberger, I acknowledged earlier when I made my remarks that I appreciated your remarks earlier about hometown responsibility. COG is an organization of local governments, 18 local governments in this region. We adopted our

Regional Emergency Coordination Plan. I believe you received a copy of the brief on September 11, 2002. At this point we have had 16 of our 18 jurisdictions sign the MOU and adopt this formally, and 2 have it left on their docket for adoption very shortly. The point being is that the local governments throughout the region, not just the elected officials, that we have committees of our police chiefs, our fire and rescue folks, public works, planning, transportation, everybody has been involved in this process. But also at the table we have been very inclusive. We decided, as local elected officials on the board of directors, very shortly after September 11th that, yes, being on the first line of responsibility for providing for our first responders and also being the folks that our constituents meet in the grocery stores—we hear a lot from our constituents and I am sure you do as well, but we hear from them all the time that we needed to do something. So the local elected officials are very committed to working at the regional level. Our group brought together the Board of Trade, the Red Cross, the State folks. And Secretary Ridge has been very, very supportive. And I'm very appreciative of Mike Byrne.

There was a point made earlier when you talked about how well we are working together. I think for the local elected officials it is working great. We have been working closely with the State. But we do have budget constraints. The States are in trouble and the localities are in trouble.

And then you get to money—you raised the issue of drug enforcement money earlier. I will give you an example in Virginia of why I think it is important not just to fund at the State, but also to provide funding at the regional level. In Virginia, I have been trying to get a drug court in Prince William County. We just funded a juvenile drug court through our budget process. We could have gotten money through the intensive Drug Enforcement Agency's moneys that are funneled through to the States, but those IDA moneys were put into the general fund in Virginia. I am sure they go for worthy causes, but the transparency just isn't there for me. I don't know where they go. But it would have been money that would have been available.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. With respect to your regional cooperation, have you set goals and priorities? Because I think it is very effective to do that. And a lot of times it is difficult to pull that together.

Mr. Peck, let me ask you a question. You made the comment that you feel that there hasn't been enough information that has been flowing. What information would you like to hear or see? What do you think where it would be better?

Mr. PECK. I will give you a specific example. At one of his briefings, Chief Ramsey was asked when everybody started talking about shelter in place or staying put, the concept which still most of the public hasn't heard of—and it is probably the most important thing we need to tell people. But he was asked, well, do we need to buy cots for our employees? And he had the guts to say, we are probably talking about being there more like 8 hours than 8 days. I don't think you need to be prepared to stay overnight.

That is important for people to hear because there are scenarios being bantered about on TV and the media in general that would

have people think they are going to be on their own for goodness knows for how long. And that is the specific kind of thing.

Here are the likely scenarios that you're going to face is really important because at least we can prepare people for those. No guarantees, but it would be good.

Can I make one other point about the local coordination? I think we have done a great job in this region of setting priorities.

I really think flowing funds through the States just like transportation funds get flowed through the States means that regions don't necessarily get the allocation that you might expect them to get.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. I agree with you—but I was in local government for 18 years, so I feel differently. It's more efficient that way, too.

And I will say about the Board of Trade, I served on the Olympic committee. Unfortunately, we didn't get that; and the Board of Trade had a lot to do with it. We really would have had some issues there with respect to traffic had we gotten that, but I also think that the Board of Trade, which would be a good business partner with any organization—because you do your research and get your facts and data. I think if you look at the intercounty connector just in Maryland, you had a lot to do with influencing and getting the information.

However, I would say this. I think a lot of businesses talk a lot, but they are not as involved as they could. Let me tell you why.

I think, right now, we need help. We talked about traffic engineering. We talked about that we might not have the expertise or the money or whatever, but there are a lot of engineers out there in the business community who could come together, do the same thing that you did with respect to the intercounty connecter and some other issues and help and give us the resources in the government arena; and that is extremely important, something I think we need to work on.

Also, I think the issues that you heard about here today—I know my time is up, so I'll move quickly. But you take more time than I do when you answer the questions.

You know, I think anything—management starts at the top, and you have to be held responsible if you're at the top. Now, I praised the police departments, and I think they are doing a good job, but right now—and I said that right now, but sometimes people are used to doing the same things over and over, and there is a lot that has changed since September 11th. And just the frustration of being involved in traffic and not having a live individual who can redirect something, I think, you know, we've got to learn from those mistakes, and I think that you and the public are putting the pressure on to make sure that we look at this and have the authority so that the person at the top who is making the decisions can make the right decisions and be held accountable for those decisions.

So there's a lot to do. I believe we can turn a negative into a positive with September 11th.

We've got a big problem here in Washington. We have the Nation's Capitol, but its infrastructure is really inadequate, and there

needs to be a lot of money, probably Federal money, but its got to be more of a teamwork approach.

This reminds me more of a transportation hearing today than it was a—and I'm glad we talked about that, because in the end whatever happens with the terrorism issue, we're going to have to decide, do we stay, do we go, what's going to be impacted, is it going to be our subways, is it going to be our traffic, is it going to be our airline, you know, all of those issues that need to be involved. So keep being involved.

And, again, I'm calling after you, Mr. Peck, because you have a good record. You're Board of Trade. We need a lot more help from the business community in a lot of the areas that I mentioned.

Mr. PECK. Thank you. I agree.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I guess I get to ask a few questions. I won't keep you much longer, but thank you very much.

Let me ask you—I don't know, Mr. Robertson or Ms. Hill, if you know, who leads the RICCS conference calls and how is it decided who the parties are?

Mr. ROBERTSON. The RICCS conference calls—the RICCS server, it's a computer-based server that is headquartered currently in the D.C. Emergency Management Agency, because it is a 24/7 emergency management center. We also have a new center that's been established in Montgomery County, and an additional one will be put in Fairfax County and also in the State emergency management agencies in Richmond and in Reisterstown, MD.

The RICCS data base is populated by information from the various stakeholders. For example, the emergency management directors at the State and local level, we have the contact information. We put that information in through the Council of Governments, and then it's——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Who leads the call, though?

Mr. ROBERTSON. The conference call is typically led by either the chief administrative officer, the city and county managers for the incident location, or it could well be a Federal agency or State agency, but it is——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Peck, do you think that the typical business owner knows what to do in the event of an emergency or what actions to take when a color code alert activity level changes?

Mr. PECK. No.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I don't either. I was at a Q and A and somebody said, we understand at code red the airports are closed. I said, oh, that can't be right; and I went back and checked it; and I think that may be right.

Mr. PECK. Well, there is an assumption, for example, that at code red all the museums on the Mall will close; and that's not a part of the SOP. So, you know, people don't know, and to the credit of the Homeland Security Department, they have defined code red now as something that only happens when there is an actual incident, and people don't know that either, but I can tell you every time we go to a code change and nobody sees any changes on the street, there's a loss of confidence. And maybe that's fine, because it may be that it only applies to the emergency responders, but people need to know that, too. They'd feel better just having—being clued in on what this testimony is all about.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. My experience is we have some really great people who work in the homeland security, like Mr. Byrne and stuff, but it's getting started late. I mean, they just got the duct tape off the doors, what, about a month ago, to open the thing. So it's just been very late to develop, but we're getting there, and, fortunately, we haven't had any—if the biggest incident we're complaining about is tractor man, we're OK. I mean, we could have done better, but we're lucky at this point.

Mr. White, I was just struck by something you said that I've known, and that is we don't really have any capacity to move more people at this point. I know at least on the Virginia side—I don't know if you do on the Maryland side or not—but we don't have the capacity without significant infrastructure improvement. Is that correct?

Mr. WHITE. Yeah. That's correct. And we've heard some members of this panel kind of come up with that observation. This region has a serious problem with its transportation infrastructure and with respect to its insufficiency, both on the transit side and the roadside.

The COG has done a tremendous amount of analysis with all of the States and local governments in this arena, and today the region as a region spends $3 billion every year in its surface transportation program. And based upon a reasonable assessment, not a wish list but a reasonable assessment of what the region needs to be spending to protect its infrastructure and have a modest expansion, we need another $1.7 billion a year.

So, as a region, of all the resource that has come in, Federal, State, local government, we're just not getting the job done, and it's going to—and, you know, on a good day the network is so fragile that the capacity is barely able to meet the demand. And with any hiccup, 40 percent comes from a nonrecurring event, as Mr. Peck said. Any event just spins out of control quickly.

It's kind of like water going down a faucet. The minute that piece of lettuce gets stuck in your drain, you know, it's—and that's what happens to our road system and even our transit system, for that matter.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I'll just make one other thought. I don't know if I'm off the wall or not. But I wonder if it's possible to get one set of cars that are more snow resistent so in emergency times you could run one out to Orange line, one out to Green line, one out to Yellow line. Do you know what I'm saying?

Mr. WHITE. Yes.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That way you wouldn't have to change the whole system, but you would have some capacity at that time.

Mr. WHITE. Through improvements that have occurred over the years since the original pieces of rolling stock that we bought, the industry has gotten smart and we have gotten smarter on how to weather protect the equipment; and although most of that equipment is in the undercarriage of the train, it is not sitting on the top of the train, it is down below, we figured out and the supply side of the industry has figured out to better weather protect and to seal this equipment. So our newer cars are performing far superior to our older cars.

As we rehabilitate those cars, we bring these improvements——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Do we still go to Italy to get the cars or where are they——

Mr. WHITE. The particular order we have coming now is coming—it's a Spanish company who's doing a domestic final assembly here in the States——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I was afraid you were going to say it's a French company.

Mr. WHITE. No. It's one of our friends and allies, without making a political comment on this. But——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I can see the amendment on the floor.

Mr. WHITE. And, Mr. Chairman, we have an option that we need to exercise in less than 2 years to buy more rail cars to bring this capacity in from this company and its other company that is supplying cars to us. It's an enormous opportunity, and it will pass us by if we're not able to generate the resources in the next couple of years.

Interestingly, we're only using 58 percent of the Metro rail design capacity, that which the builders built for us. We're using less than 6 out of 10 percent of that, and we can move ourselves toward greater capacity by implementing the steps that people said we should take over time.

Our system was designed to accommodate a maximum of eight cars in any train setting, and today we're running fours and sixes. So as we buy more cars, they're better designed, better weather protected, better able to deal with the inclement events; and it gives us that broader capacity to carry more people, particularly during surge moments when we have to have the ability to do that.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Any other questions?

Well, we thank the panel.

Mary, you did great your first time out here. Hope to see you again here.

Mr. Robertson, congratulations on your permanent appointment.

Bob Peck, always great to see you. We appreciate all the things that the Board of Trade is doing, and we thank you very much.

We would like to thank all of the witnesses for appearing today. I want to thank the staff who worked on the hearing. I want to thank particularly my two colleagues from Maryland who stayed here the whole time. I really appreciate it. It shows their interest in the regional interest in this.

I want to add that the record will be kept open for 2 week to allow witnesses to include other information in the record.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:19 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[The prepared statement of Hon. Wm. Lacy Clay and additional information submitted for the hearing record follow:]

Statement of the
Honorable William Lacy Clay
Before the
Government Reform Committee
Thursday, April 10, 2003

"Are We Ready for Prime Time? Assessing the State of Emergency Readiness in the Nation's Capitol"

Thank you for yielding, Mr. Chairman, I would like to congratulate you for holding this important hearing on Assessing the State of Emergency Readiness in the Nation's Capitol and for asking the tough question "Are We Ready for Prime Time?"

Simply ask the question and you get as many answers as the number of times you pose the question. Everyone here today will state that the National Capitol Region is much more prepared today to confront a state of emergency than it was a year ago.

Like most that work and live in this region, I am grateful for all the interaction of the region's leadership. I believe that it has made and is making a difference in people's lives and would suggest that in truth—we have really only just begun. Regional readiness is never a done deal, because it is never as complete as it could be. There is always room for improvement. Planning and coordination denotes a work in progress not a -- done deal.

The question is "Are We Ready for Prime Time." I believe the Nation's Capitol Region can, in general, say "yes". However, to stay ready and prepared, I would suggest exploring the possibility of developing a new and improved paradigm that would further encourage and include a broader and more aggressive planning and coordination effort followed by a

discussion on the merits of forming a public safety, and security regional tax authority to assist in defraying the high cost of a new regional coordination effort..

As our background memo appropriately states, "there are over 370,000 Federal employees and 2.4 million private sector employees, three branches of government, two states and the District of Columbia, each with separate police forces and emergency plans – all using the same roads and bridges."

Certainly with diverging interests, there will be disagreement on some issues. However, I would encourage all stakeholders to build and explore those areas of interests that are common to all. Prioritize the issues and re-evaluate often. The public's safety transcends geographical boarders.

Finally, in times of uncertainty we must be diligent in our efforts to work cooperatively together. I look forward to hearing your testimony. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to submit my statement into the record.

STATEMENT PREPARED FOR

HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Washington, DC

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* * * *
Bernard Sanders

On
Emergency Preparedness
{Scheduled 10 April 2003}

Submitted 7 April 2003

Prepared by

Robert Vinson Brannum
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Greetings and salutations Chairman Tom Davis, Congressman Henry Waxman, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and distinguished members of the Committee, I am Robert Vinson Brannum, a resident of the District of Columbia and the historic Bloomingdale community. As a member of my community, I believe in the spirit of volunteerism and community service. I have served three terms as President of the Bloomingdale Civic Association and a member of the initial District of Columbia Commission on National and Community Service. In addition, I am a board member of the North Capital Neighborhood Development Corporation.

I am a private citizen concerned and involved in DC emergency preparedness and a volunteer with community emergency preparedness. I have affiliated with the DC Volunteer Organizations involved in Disaster Relief. I have attended and completed several emergency management courses with the Emergency Management Institute at the Federal Emergency Management Agency. I have also assisted in the Metropolitan Council of Government regional emergency preparedness plans. In addition, I attended the Office of Homeland Security First Responder Briefing on emergency preparedness and the National Capital Region Summit on Homeland Security.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to submit this statement to assist the Committee in its work. However; I feel the Committee would have been better served had local residents of the District of Columbia or other communities had the opportunity to appear before the Committee. It maybe an imbalance to discuss the implications of emergency preparedness and its impact on cities like the District of Columbia residents solely among governmental officials and representatives of business groups. While these business groups have the right to express the views of their membership, it is clear they represent businesses and not people, particularly local District of Columbia residents. Oversight discussions about local emergency preparedness particularly in the District of Columbia would have been enhanced with perspectives from local residents just as the Committee

considers the views of business groups such as the Federal City Council, the Greater Washington Board of Trade or national trade organization.

One of the questions the Committee would want to have answered is what has been done to help residents of America's cities to be prepared in their individual, family, and neighborhood preparedness?

I feel the District of Columbia is the most prepared city in the United States. The District of Columbia has set the benchmark for involving and educating local residents, schools and businesses in enhancing their own emergency preparedness plans. Mayor Anthony Williams and Peter LaPorte, Director, District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency, have been "Pied Pipers" leading senior DC government officials in community and business meetings on emergency preparedness.

Since 11 August 2001 {date of the local flood} and 11 September 2001, District government officials have gone across the City addressing and informing local residents about individual and family emergency preparedness. The Family Preparedness Guide developed by the DC Emergency Management Agency is an extremely important brochure providing valuable information. At a recent seminar on emergency management and preparedness in New York City sponsored by the New York City Office of Emergency Management and Kroll, an international risk consulting firm, emergency management officials from New York and New Jersey applauded the emergency preparedness of the District of Columbia.

However, as a resident of the District of Columbia confident of the District government officials' emergency preparedness operations, I am concerned that in the event of a major terrorist event local decisions will be overtaken by federal officials. Are federal

emergency preparedness plans sensitive to the concerns of local District residents? Do federal officials consider the impact of their decisions to close local streets on the quality?

of life of local residents? Will military installations located in residential areas serve as evacuation points for local communities?

Federal agencies in the District of Columbia cannot have adequate emergency preparedness plans without the participation of citizens, especially those in the District if Columbia. Federal agency efforts on emergency preparedness and evacuation should center on protecting people in the City, rather than protecting government property and assets. In this current national security climate, I feel too much emphasis has been placed on measures to retard public access rather than to prepare local communities for emergencies. Limiting the public's access to institutions such as the White House and the Capitol will not help my neighbors or me in emergency preparedness, nor will the erection of barriers along Pennsylvania and Independence Avenues.

I have gone throughout District of Columbia neighborhoods communities to assist local residents to develop neighborhood emergency preparedness plans. I have shared information with many District residents who want to be involved in the security of their neighborhoods. They want accurate information and to be active participants in emergency preparedness and local and national homeland security.

The security of America's homeland and emergency management operations must not be entrusted to a select and privileged few. It is important that all District of Columbia residents and Americans are included and respected as vital participants and stakeholders. Emergency management preparedness and homeland security must not be viewed as partisan or insensitive to local communities. As a private citizen, I urge the Committee to

lead the national discussions on emergency management and preparedness to help reverse current images of those who support a strong District of Columbia and America.

Corporate leaders, federal and state executive officers, university presidents, emergency management planners, not for profit research institution leaders, and media consultants who speak on emergency preparedness and homeland security do not reflect the cross sections of America. Many refuse to or are unable to speak to the issue of how these security measures affects large segments of the American population and neighborhoods. Based on these images, it would appear that there are not any African American experts on emergency management or homeland security. This is false and the Committee knows it is false.

The Committee must lead the way and accept comments on America's emergency preparedness and homeland security from all segments of the Nation's population. Current emergency preparedness efforts must truly be open and inclusive. All American citizens and communities must be encouraged to participate in initiatives to protect America and to advance community emergency preparedness.

Homeland security initiatives, whether governmental or in the private arena cannot appear to ignore skilled and qualified African Americans in the District of Columbia or in other cities across America.

My recommendations to the Committee on emergency preparedness are

- The Committee should request information from the President's Homeland Security Advisory Council on its deliberations concerning recommendations on state and local emergency preparedness. The Committee should inquire as to how
-

- open the Council was to hearing from the general public on its draft templates for emergency preparedness and homeland security.

- The Committee must insist that the new Department of Homeland Security is permanently located in the District of Columbia.

- The Committee must insist that the Department of Homeland Security include skilled and qualified African Americans at all levels of its organization. The new Department of Homeland Security must be held accountable for following all federal equal opportunity laws on hiring and promotion. What are the department's efforts on diversity in its workplace?

- Support federal funding for community siren alert systems.

- The Department of Homeland Security Office of National Capitol Region Coordination should have a District of Columbia liaison office to respond to special local District of Columbia government and District of Columbia citizen concerns.

- The Committee must recommend that all federal law enforcement/security agencies, including the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. Capitol Police, and U.S. Federal Protective Service must respect the right of local District of Columbia residents to travel and to have access to all streets, avenues and other roadways in the District of Columbia.

- The Committee should pass legislation that federal law enforcement agencies, the District of Columbia government and suburban Washington, DC

- jurisdictions establish mutual agreements or compacts to coordinate emergency response activities in the event of an emergency in the Nation's Capital.

- The Committee should encourage federal, state and local emergency management agencies to form agreements with local neighborhood civic and community organizations.

- The Committee must state that the "first responders" in disaster emergencies are not police officers and fire fighters, but rather citizens at home and employees at work. It is critical that the people and communities be actively engaged in emergency management and preparedness.

- The Committee must recommend that Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) are established in neighborhoods and communities across America and are federally funded.

- The Committee must recommend that the federal CERT initiative and the states and District of Columbia CERTs programs be managed by federal and municipal emergency management offices because of their technical and managerial.

- The Committee must recommend that local, state emergency management agencies and federal law enforcement authorities conduct joint emergency preparedness and disaster exercises and include all segments of the American society.

- The Committee must recommend federal authorization for funding of equipment to enable joint interoperability and communication between agencies.

- The Committee must recommend that federal, state and local emergency management initiatives stress the importance of protecting people as well as protecting governmental assets.

- The Committee must emphasize the need to prepare for terrorist attacks within the homeland; however, emergency management planners must not ignore continuing preparations for natural disasters.

While the tragic events of 11 August/11 September 2001 have exposed certain vulnerabilities in America's homeland security, the Constitution stands as a reminder that there are and must always remain certain inalienable rights that must be respected, protected, and defended. We cannot fight terrorism and defend America if we uproot the very fabric of what it means to be an American. Yes, we must increase our emergency preparedness level. However; we cannot defeat terrorism around the world only to lose our freedoms and privacy rights at home.

America is a better nation than to succumb to fear. America must support the values of freedom, privacy, democracy, truth, justice, and fairness for everyone at all times.

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U.S. Department of Justice

ROSCOE C. HOWARD, JR.
United States Attorney for the District of Columbia

Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 8, 2002

For Information Contact Public Affairs
Channing Phillips (202) 514-6933

FEDERAL GRAND JURY INDICTS NORTH CAROLINA MAN ON
CHARGES ARISING OUT OF STANDOFF ON THE NATIONAL MALL

United States Attorney Roscoe C. Howard, Jr., Chief Teresa C. Chambers of the United States Park Police, and Van A. Harp, Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington Field Office, announced today that a federal grand jury sitting in the District of Columbia returned a two-count indictment today against Dwight Ware Watson, 50, of Whitakers, North Carolina. The first count of the indictment charges Mr. Watson with threatening and conveying false information concerning the use of an explosive in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(e). The second count of the indictment charges Mr. Watson with destruction of government property in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1361.

On March 17, 2003, at approximately 12:30 p.m., Mr. Watson drove a large John Deere tractor into the pond in Constitution Gardens on the National Mall. Attached to the tractor was a jeep, behind which was a trailer with a large yellow box sitting on its bed. Constitution Gardens is located in the vicinity of 17th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW.

When an officer from the United States Park Police made contact with Mr. Watson, he claimed to have explosives in the box on the trailer bed and threatened to detonate the explosives if anyone approached him or attempted to force him to leave the pond. Over the course of the next forty-seven hours, Mr. Watson repeated those threats numerous times. At one point, he stated that he wanted to bring Washington, D.C., to "its knees," and demanded that the city be evacuated, claiming that he planned to damage to the National Mall. Throughout the standoff, several buildings along Constitution Avenue were closed, and the street itself was closed to traffic between 23rd and 15th Streets, NW.

In the early morning hours of March 19, 2003, Mr. Watson drove the tractor to the edge of Signer's Island, which sits in the middle of the pond and is accessible to the public by a foot bridge. Mr. Watson then used the front end of the tractor to dig up a portion of the island and destroy a portion of the retaining wall that separates the island from the pond. In doing so, Mr. Watson caused approximately $27,000 of damage to Signer's Island.

Later in the morning on March 19, 2003, Mr. Watson informed the negotiators for the Park Police that he was going to end his standoff at noon that day. At approximately 11:41 a.m. on March 19, Mr. Watson left the tractor and surrendered to the authorities. Officers searched the tractor, the jeep, the trailer, and the box on the trailer, and they found no explosives.

In announcing today's indictment, United States Attorney Howard, Chief Chambers, and Assistant Director Harp praised the extraordinary efforts of the approximately two hundred members of law enforcement who worked around the clock to bring the standoff to a safe and successful conclusion. Aside from members of the Park Police and the FBI, representatives from the Metropolitan Police Department, the United States Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol,

Tobacco and Firearms, and the United States Capital Police assisted in this effort. United States Attorney Howard, Chief Chambers, and Assistant Director Harp also commended Detective Todd Reid of the United States Park Police and Special Agent Jerry Jobe of the FBI, who have served as the lead investigators in this case. Finally, they thanked Assistant United States Attorney Steven Pelak, who provided advice and assistance to the law enforcement officers during the standoff, and Assistant United States Attorney Jay Bratt, who conducted the grand jury investigation.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of criminal laws. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

COPY

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	:	**CRIMINAL NO.:**
	:	
v.	:	**Magistrate No.: 03-0125M**
	:	
DWIGHT WARE WATSON,	:	**VIOLATIONS:**
	:	
Defendant.	:	**18 U.S.C. § 844(e)**
	:	**(Threatening and Conveying False**
	:	**Information Concerning Use of an**
	:	**Explosive)**
	:	
	:	**18 U.S.C. § 1361**
	:	**(Destruction of Government Property)**

INDICTMENT

The Grand Jury Charges that:

COUNT ONE

Between on or about March 17, 2003, and on or about March 19, 2003, in the District of Columbia, the defendant, **DWIGHT WARE WATSON**, by means and use of an instrument of interstate commerce, that is, a cellular telephone, and in or affecting interstate commerce, willfully threatened, and maliciously conveyed false information concerning an attempt and alleged attempt, to unlawfully damage and destroy a building, vehicle, and real property by means of an explosive.

(**Threatening and Conveying False Information Concerning Use of an Explosive**, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(e))

COPY

COUNT TWO

On or about March 19, 2003, in the District of Columbia, the defendant, **DWIGHT WARE WATSON**, willfully and by means of a tractor did injure property of the United States, that is, a portion of Signer's Island located in an area of the National Mall known as Constitution Gardens, thereby causing damage to such property in excess of $1,000.

(**Destruction of Government Property**, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1361)

A TRUE BILL:

FOREPERSON

Attorney of the United States in
and for the District of Columbia

Michael F. Byrne

Department of Homeland Security

– Director of National Capital Region Coordination for Emergency Response –

On March 9, 2003, Michael Byrne, a former New York City firefighter who helped direct the Federal government's response at the World Trade Center in 2001, became the first Director of National Capital Region Coordination for Emergency Response for the Department of Homeland Security. Byrne will oversee and coordinate Federal programs for and relationships with State, local, and regional authorities in the National Capital Region.

Mr. Byrne joined the Office of Homeland Security as the Senior Director for Response and Recovery in October of 2001 where he was instrumental in shaping the national vision and policy for emergency preparedness and response. He contributed substantially to the development of the President's *First Responder Initiative,* and to the development of a formal process for National Security Special Event designation. In addition, Mr. Byrne contributed significantly in the development of the *National Strategy for Homeland Security* which provides the vision of a national incident management system and single national response plan that will lay the foundation for emergency preparedness and response in the United States.

Mr. Byrne began his career in public service in 1979 with the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) where he served as a firefighter and company officer for 20 years. During his time with FDNY, he led Ladder Company 12 in their response to the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing. He also served with the Office of the Fire Commissioner, working as the Director for Strategic Planning and the Chief Information Officer. As a part of the Commissioner's staff he was instrumental in implementing the integration of Emergency Medical Service operations with Fire operations, improvements to the Division of Training, and the development of the Fire Commissioner's Management Report.

Upon retiring from FDNY, Mr. Byrne joined the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 1999 as the Response and Recovery Division Director in FEMA Region II (covering New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands) where he led the federal response operations for Hurricanes Lenny and Floyd and Tropical Storm Allison. In 2001 he served as the Deputy Federal Coordinating Officer for Operations at Ground Zero in New York, where he was responsible for all federal response assets and recovery program administration in New York City.

A native of New York City, Mr. Byrne has received many awards for his service over the years including the prestigious *Federal Executive Board Award for Teamwork* in 2000 and 2002 for exceptional organizational achievement while in the service of the United States Government and the *International Association of Fire Chiefs President's Recognition Award* in 2002 for his leadership and representation of the interests of the fire service in homeland security.

Terrorists Plot Involving Metro?

Updated: Tuesday, Apr. 8, 2003 - 11:22 PM EST.

Law enforcement officials say al-Qaida's captured operations has told interrogators of plans to attack the Metrorail system in Washington, possibly by setting a fire.

The Washington Post reports that Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the self-described nine-eleven architect gave no details about the possible plot.

Authorities are trying to determine whether there is any credible threat.

They say Mohammed appears to be cooperating, but he may also be trying to mislead officials.

News of the plot was first reported Monday in the Washington Times.

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U.S. Awards $100 Mln to 7 Cities to Boost Defenses

Tue Apr 8, 4:18 PM ET Add Top Stories - Reuters to My Yahoo!

By Deborah Charles

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which has been criticized for not giving eno to local governments that have boosted anti-terror security efforts at Washington's request, said on Tuesday sever would receive a total of $100 million.

About one quarter of the grant, or just under $25 million, was earmarked for New York City, whose mayor has be asking for more money to pay for heightened security.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the city's $11 million share of the previous $566 million allocation was "ri

Earlier this year the Department of Homeland Security shared out the $566 million from the fiscal 2003 budget for s local governments to better equip them to respond to terrorism.

But the formula used to divide up the money was criticized, and Homeland Security officials vowed to find a way to funds based on threat analysis, risk and population.

Officials in New York and other big cities said they had incurred heavy costs and could not afford to comply with he security procedures implemented by the government.

"I understand their frustration," Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge said of governors and mayors angry with money has been allocated.

Ridge told reporters the department hoped to work with Congress to change the way money was distributed to ma goes to those who need it most.

He said the latest $100 million in funds -- set aside by Congress and earmarked for major cities' at the department' - was divided up using a formula that looked at the city's threat potential, its critical infrastructure, its population an of the population.

"If we're serious about building a national capacity to prevent terrorist attack or to prepare for a terrorist attack, it al distributed according to a state-wide plan developed from the mayors on up," he said.

The second-largest block of funds from the $100 million was earmarked for the Washington area, which along with was hit in the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks and is viewed as one of the most likely future targets. It is eligible to receive $

About $12.5 million is being made available to Los Angeles, $11.3 million to Seattle and just under $11 million for (Francisco will be eligible for $10.4 million and Houston can apply for about $8.7 million.

The cities must apply for the funds. Officials said the applications would be available in the next week or two and o received the department will distribute the money as soon as possible.

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ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE

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AVIATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

SUBCOMMITTEES

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CIVIL SERVICE AND
AGENCY ORGANIZATION

April 15, 2003

Honorable Tom Davis
Chair
Committee on Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Davis:

On Thursday, April 10, 2003, I was unable to attend the Full Committee hearing regarding "Are We Ready for Prime Time? Assessing the State of Emergency Readiness in the Nation's Capital" because I was required to be out of town.

I would appreciate your making this letter part of the official committee record.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Holmes Norton

cc: Honorable Henry Waxman, Ranking Member

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