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EXAMINING THE TRAINING OF FIRST RESPONDERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

FIELD HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT, INVESTIGATIONS, AND OVERSIGHT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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EXAMINING THE TRAINING OF FIRST RESPONDERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Tuesday, July 22, 2008

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT, INVESTIGATIONS, AND OVERSIGHT,
McClellan, AL.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 9:00 a.m., in the Auditorium, Auburn University CDTC Building, 265 Rucker Street, McClellan, Alabama, Hon. Christopher P. Carney [Chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Carney and Rogers.

Mr. CARNEY. The subcommittee will come to order.

The subcommittee is meeting today to receive testimony on "Examining the Training of First Responders in Rural Communities."

First, I would like to take a moment to thank Representative Rogers for suggesting this venue and the subject of today's hearing. Last summer, Mike was kind enough to travel up to Pennsylvania for a field hearing our subcommittee held to investigate our Nation's preparedness for a large-scale event involving agriculture, be it accidentally contaminated food or something more malicious. We started talking about how similar our districts were while we were at lunch that day and I think that is when the wheels started to turn to get this hearing set up. Not only are both our districts predominantly rural and apparently really hot in July——

[Laughter.]

Mr. CARNEY [continuing]. But the majority of the United States looks very similar in terms of urban versus rural.

Unfortunately, pre-9/11 training for responders in rural areas was lacking compared to what we have today. I am not knocking the efforts pre-9/11. Those programs were and are invaluable. But when our responders are preparing for a terrorist attack or a natural disaster, it is nice to know they have the training similar to that of their urban counterparts, which is exactly why Congress sought to establish Federal training programs for first responders in rural areas.

Representative Rogers has the unique opportunity to represent a district that includes the Department of Homeland Security's Center for Domestic Preparedness, which provides first responders in rural areas with unparalleled Federal training for emergency events, and offers its expertise to all States as well as local or tribal agencies.

In advance of our visit to the CDP yesterday, I received a list of all the Pennsylvania first responders who have trained at the Center. Frankly, I was very pleasantly surprised to see that over 1,800 responders from Pennsylvania, including a number from my district, have had the incredible opportunity to train and graduate here at the Center. Frankly, I wish I had had the same opportunity back in the days when I was an EMT—when we had horse-drawn ambulances.

[Laughter.]

Mr. CARNEY. All of our time today will not be spent discussing training centers for first responders in the rural areas. Long before I arrived in Washington, Mike began advocating for improvements in the myriad of Federal canine detection programs. Now I know why. Another incredible facility here in Alabama is Auburn University's Canine Detection Training Center.

After visiting yesterday, I came to understand the desire to change the way the current system operates. Right now, there are a number of separate training programs for various Federal law enforcement canine detection teams spread throughout the Federal Government, not to mention the procurement arrangements with foreign entities. Yesterday, at the Auburn canine facility, we saw what can actually be done when it comes to training canines.

I was glad to join Mr. Rogers and the Chairman of the full Homeland Security Committee, Bennie Thompson, as an original co-sponsor of H.R. 659, the Canine Detection Team Improvement Act. H.R. 659 seeks to unify the training and streamline the procurement of canines for the various components of the Department of Homeland Security currently deploying canine teams. What the bill proposes to do is evidently do-able, but as we have seen too many times with DHS, there are bound to be inter-agency battles at the mere discussion of proposals like H.R. 659.

That said, our committee has made some significant headway encouraging improvement at DHS. I think reforms outlined in the Canine Detection Team Improvement Act are well-suited for inclusion in the next DHS authorization bill. I, of course, am continuing to work with Representative Rogers to help it move forward.

Thanks again, Mike, and both majority and minority staffs for helping to arrange this trip.

Just a quick housekeeping note. This is still an official Congressional hearing, so we have to abide by certain rules of the Committee and the House of Representatives. So we ask that we have no applause of any kind, no demonstrations with regard to testimony. Once again, I thank you all for being here. This turnout is quite a testimony to the importance of this topic.

Now I will turn to Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to welcome you again to Alabama, and I thank you for traveling from northeast Pennsylvania to be here with us today.

I also want to thank our witnesses for taking the time out of their busy schedules to be with us as well. It is very important. As Chris said, this is an official hearing and the whole purpose is to get your testimony in the Congressional Record about this very important topic.

I want to make special recognition of Dr. Jay Gogue from Auburn, President of Auburn University, who is with us here today. I welcome you here, and one of your trustees and my friend Earlon McWhorter, thanks for being here.

Today's hearing will examine the training of first responders in rural communities and the role of detection canines in homeland security. Yesterday, we had a chance to tour the CDP, Center for Domestic Preparedness, its Noble Training Center and its Live Agent Chemical Agent Training Facility called COBRATF.

Today, there are 250 responder students training at the CDP representing 32 States, including Alabama and Pennsylvania. We saw first-hand how hard these folks are training and how important this kind of training is to prepare for major emergencies.

We also toured the Auburn Canine Detection Training Center that provides a valuable resource to homeland security missions across the country. We were briefed at the Alabama Emergency Management Agency in Calhoun County, which is a state-of-the-art facility and a model for other communities across the country.

The training of first responders in rural communities is a critical element in the effort to secure our homeland. Those folks who are on the front line of our Nation's security are the first line of defense against terrorist attacks or natural disasters.

To further these efforts, in 2007, I created a provision in the 9/11 Act which President Bush signed into law, to authorize the establishment of the Rural Policing Institute at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, or FLETC. My dad, as many of you know, is a fireman, retired fireman. So I grew up with the challenges of rural firefighters. I have seen how many of our loved ones leave their jobs and their families for long periods of time to receive training outside of their communities. Down the road, I hope the Institute could be an important step in that direction to helping train these important individuals across our country.

This hearing also builds on the subcommittee's work in 2005 on the use of detection canines in homeland security. We heard about how these dogs have helped save lives both here and overseas. Since then, Congress has passed a number of bills that helped expand the use of canines throughout the Department of Homeland Security, a fact that I am very proud of.

We look forward to hearing about these and other issues today from our panel of witnesses that includes the Honorable Dennis Schrader, Deputy Secretary of National Preparedness at FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency; we have Mr. Jim Walker, Director of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security; Dr. William Meehan, President of Jacksonville State University and Mr. John Pearce, Associate Director of Auburn University Canine Detection Training and Matthew Knight, Vice President of Alabama Association of Rescue Squads from just south of here in Randolph County. Welcome.

Thank you all for being here and I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNEY. I would like to welcome our panel of witnesses. Our first witness is the Honorable Mr. Dennis Schrader, who was confirmed by the Senate in August 2007 to serve as the Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness within FEMA.

Prior to his current position, Mr. Schrader served as the first director of the Maryland Governor's Office of Homeland Security. In addition, he spent 16 years at the University of Maryland, where he worked extensively on medical preparedness plans. Mr. Schrader also served in the Navy until 1987 and in Reserve status until 2006. I thank you for your service, and thank you for being here today, Mr. Schrader.

Our second witness is Mr. Jim Walker, the Director of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security. Director Walker served in the Army for 20 years before retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. He has served in his current position since January 2003 when he became the first Director of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security.

Director Walker has testified before our committee several times, we are pleased to have him back again.

Our third witness is Dr. William Meehan, the President of Jacksonville State University. Dr. Meehan has served at the University since 1977 and assumed the role of President in 1999.

We are very pleased to have Dr. Meehan here today to discuss the University's Institute for Emergency Preparedness and its undergraduate and graduate programs in emergency management. I appreciate you being here with us.

Dr. MEEHAN. You are welcome, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNEY. Our fourth witness is Mr. John Pearce, the Associate Director for Auburn University's Canine Detection Training Center.

Mr. Pearce had a distinguished career in the Air Force where he became an expert in canine detection. In addition to his numerous military assignments, Mr. Pearce successfully trained over 200 explosive detection dog teams that have been used in 36 major airports across the country.

He has served in his current position since 2002 where he developed and now leads Auburn's Canine Detection Training Center. We had the pleasure of visiting the center and came away thoroughly impressed. We'd like to thank you for the tour and for joining us today, Mr. Pearce.

Our final witness is Mr. Matthew Knight, who serves as the Vice President of Alabama Association of Rescue Squads.

He has been an emergency management service provider since 1995. He holds numerous licenses and certifications and has served as an instructor for several EMS training classes.

Mr. Knight, it is good to have you with us. I am a first responder myself. Welcome, brother, it is good to have you here.

Mr. KNIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNEY. Without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be inserted into the record. I will now ask each witness to summarize his statement for 5 minutes, beginning with Mr. Schrader.

STATEMENT OF DENNIS R. SCHRADER, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. SCHRADER. Good morning, Chairman Carney and Ranking Member Rogers, I am Dennis Schrader, Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness at FEMA in the Department of Homeland Security. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the training of our Nation's response community, and how the Center for Domestic Preparedness is currently working toward meetings those needs, including those of the rural first responder.

Today, the Center for Domestic Preparedness, or CDP for short, is an impressive facility that employs nearly 1,000 personnel, including 50 authorized Federal positions. The facility offers 38 courses, on-site billeting and dining capacity for 465 students, and a fully certified multi-disciplinary instructional staff with an average of 19 years of experience in their chosen field.

Citizens from every State in America come to Anniston to be trained each year in learning and using real-world scenarios that feature live nerve agents, also known as chemical weapons of mass destruction.

Methods of CDP training include resident training, which is delivered on-campus; non-resident training, which we deliver through mobile regional training delivery; and indirect training, also known as train the trainer. While all these courses are available on the CDP campus, select courses are available through non-resident programs and mobile training teams.

At FEMA, we know that CDP's non-resident training delivery is highly valued for rural responders, eliminating the need for the responder to travel in order to benefit from in-person instruction. This capability is particularly beneficial not only to rural response agencies that are often limited in staff, but also to the thousands of volunteers that serve as response officials in their home jurisdictions.

Training for rural first responders poses unique challenges as compared to those in urban areas. For instance, an often-quoted study suggests that 90 percent of law enforcement agencies across the Nation consist of 50 officers or less.

The CDP, to include the COBRATF and Noble Training Facilities, delivers high-quality training that addresses aspects of every target capability, including the 20 that are associated with threats to rural America.

In Washington, my staff and the National Integration Center work closely with CDP staff to ensure that the curriculum taught at the CDP aligns with the target capabilities which address the mandates established in the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 and the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act.

The CDP is also a member of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium that along with the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium works collaboratively to address the needs for response training. The CDP enjoys a close working relationship with Alabama's Department of Homeland Security and Public Safety and collaborative partnerships with Auburn University, Tuskegee Uni-

versity, the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Jacksonville State University.

In conclusion, the CDP's training program has grown and adapted to the needs of our Nation's first responders. FEMA is proud of the capability that CDP offers America's response community and is working to ensure that the needs of these first responders are met.

Chairman Carney, Ranking Member Rogers, I appreciate the opportunity to be here with you today and look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Schrader follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DENNIS R. SCHRADER

JULY 22, 2008

Good morning, Chairman Carney, Ranking Member Rogers and Members of the committee. I am Dennis R. Schrader, Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness in the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I am pleased to appear before you today. I welcome this opportunity to discuss our Nation's current training capabilities and needs for first responder training, and how the Center for Domestic Preparedness fits into the National Training Program.

INTRODUCTION

The Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) is the only congressionally chartered Federal training center for advanced hands-on training for incidents involving live chemical/nerve agents. Over the years, the curriculum has expanded to include all-hazards incident management as well as specialized training for hospital and health care workers. The CDP offers training to State, local, and tribal emergency response providers from all 50 States and 6 territories in 10 emergency disciplines, which include, Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Service, Governmental Administrative, Hazardous Materials, Health Care, Law Enforcement, Public Health, Public Safety Communications, and Public Works.

In addition, the CDP received one-time statutory authority to train Federal, private sector, and international students this year—which has proved to be extremely valuable in creating a learning environment that mirrors real-world operations. The fiscal year 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Pub. L. 110–161) included this specific authority for the CDP:

"Provided further, That (a) the Center for Domestic Preparedness may provide training to emergency response providers from the Federal Government, foreign governments, or private entities, if the Center for Domestic Preparedness is reimbursed for the cost of such training, and any reimbursement under this subsection shall be credited to the account from which the expenditure being reimbursed was made and shall be available, without fiscal year limitation, for the purposes for which amounts in the account may be expended, (b) the head of the Center for Domestic Preparedness shall ensure that any training provided under (a) does not interfere with the primary mission of the Center to train State and local emergency response providers."

The Center's mission is to train emergency response providers. The CDP brings together students from across the Nation to learn standard concepts and procedures, and exchange experiences and best practices.

HISTORY

The impetus for the CDP can be traced back to the 1995 Sarin nerve agent attacks on the Tokyo subway system. As the event unfolded, public safety officials in New York City and elsewhere began to seek ways in which a similar event could be prevented in their back yard. These officials asked the Department of Defense (DoD) for permission to allow civilian responders to train at Ft. McClellan's Chemical Defense Training Facility (CDTF). DoD officials granted them access to toxic agent training at the CDTF in 1995 and civilians continued to train at the DoD facility until 1998.

Coincidentally, Ft. McClellan was identified for closure by the 1995 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission. Elected officials from across Alabama and local community leaders continued to seek ways to utilize the soon-to-be-decommissioned Army facility. A concept was developed and presented to Members of Congress, who recognized the national benefit of having a facility dedicated to training civilian emergency responders under Federal Government management. Thus, in 1998, a plan to establish a permanent federally operated site to train civilian emergency responders was put into motion using facilities already in place at Ft. McClellan. This training facility would be called the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP). Ft. McClellan officially closed in September 1999.

CURRENT CAPABILITIES

Today, the CDP employs nearly 1,000 personnel, including 50 authorized Federal positions, and manages an annual operating budget of over $60 million. In its current capacity, the CDP offers 38 courses, on-site billeting and dining capacity for 465 students, and a fully certified, multi-disciplinary instructional staff with an average of 19 years of experience in their chosen field.

Methods of CDP training delivery include resident training (training delivered on campus), nonresident training (regional and mobile training delivery), and indirect training (train-the-trainer). All courses are available as resident training. Select courses are available through non-resident programs to include mobile training teams.

Non-resident training delivery is ideal for rural responders, eliminating the need for the responder to travel away from home in order to benefit from in-person instruction. This is especially beneficial, in that many rural agencies are limited in staff and many responders are volunteers who have a primary occupation other than their volunteer discipline.

CDP training programs address critical topics such as Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives (CBRNE) awareness and response, hazardous materials, emergency response, law enforcement protective measures, incident command, crime scene management, protest events, evidence collection, personal protective equipment, agricultural emergency response, instructor training, medical preparedness, health care leadership, and pandemic planning and preparedness.

While every training program is relevant to rural jurisdictions, the Agricultural Emergency Response Training (AgERT) course is specifically tailored for the rural sector. This course provides an overview of agricultural terrorism and CBRNE hazards impacting the agricultural and traditional emergency responder. The course includes a hands-on exercise that places the responder in an agricultural environment where responders can perform tasks to improve response skills in realistic surroundings. CDP training uses a scenario-based approach that requires responders to train to standard, not time. By visually altering the hands-on training lanes to replicate scenarios that responders may encounter in their everyday work, the CDP presents realistic training based upon current and emerging threats. More than 60 percent of the CDP courses provide hands-on training and practical exercises. This training method provides the rural responder with the opportunity to perform response-related tasks that increase individual readiness. Hands-on training provides rural responders with the experience needed to fulfill their duties in life-and-death situations.

The CDP also uses mockups of clandestine laboratories in both resident and mobile training, to ensure responders recognize equipment and paraphernalia that can indicate a terrorism threat. The CDP's clandestine labs include Sarin, Anthrax, Ricin, infectious diseases, and methamphetamine laboratories.

Some of CDP's programs include the use of human patient simulators that represent the latest in state-of-the-art simulation technology for training responders and health care professionals. Sophisticated mathematical models of human physiology and pharmacology automatically determine the "patient's" response to user actions and interventions. The simulators provide real-time feedback to responders as though they were working with a human being. With dynamic coupling of cardiovascular, pulmonary, and pharmacological models along with the ability to replicate physical damage, the simulators are a powerful tool the CDP uses to provide realistic training to responders.

Studies conducted by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in 1989 and the Army Research Laboratory in 1994 strongly endorsed the use of toxic chemicals as the only method of providing high levels of confidence in equipment, procedures, and most importantly, individual readiness. Some courses at the CDP thus include training at the Chemical, Ordnance, Biological, and Radiological Training Facility (COBRATF) where live nerve agents are used in the conduct of training. Toxic

chemical training reduces fear of the unknown, solidifies personal and operational skills, verifies operational procedures, and creates training "veterans," who then share their knowledge and experience with other emergency responders. The training at the COBRATF may be the only experience with toxic agents a responder may receive prior to being faced with a real event.

In 2007, the Noble Training Facility (NTF) integrated with the CDP. The former Noble Army Hospital was converted into a training site for health and medical education in disasters that include both acts of terrorism and natural disasters. The diverse curriculum includes application of public information skills in a major emergency or disaster situation, leadership, mass casualty exercises, emergency management training, and CBRNE incident management. The facility includes traditional classrooms as well as exercise and simulation areas, resource centers, and two prototype mass casualty decontamination training lanes. It is the only hospital facility in the Nation dedicated to training hospital and health care professionals in disaster preparedness and response.

The CDP's training for State and local emergency response providers is fully funded by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency, through congressional appropriation. Transportation, lodging, and meals are provided at no cost to responders, their agency or jurisdiction.

Because the CDP stores and actively uses two forms of nerve agent, the COBRATF facility is managed and controlled as a chemical surety site. The Surety program is a system of special reliability, safety, and security control measures designed to protect the staff, local population, and the environment. This program ensures that only personnel who meet the highest standards of reliability conduct chemical agent operations, that chemical agent operations are conducted safely, and that chemical agents are secure at all times.

The CDP owns or leases 30 buildings on 123.95 acres with 898,244 square feet of space. The center manages and executes all infrastructure support operations for the extended campus, to include facilities and grounds maintenance, engineering, and site security. Six active dormitories can house 465 responders; an additional 240 rooms are pending renovation. A full-service dining facility provides all student meals and an on-site lounge provides a place for after-class relaxation and networking.

Numerous Federal and non-Federal training partnerships enable the CDP to take advantage of shared knowledge, to ensure the students receive the most up-to-date training.

METRICS FOR SUCCESS

According to an April 2002 report entitled "Rural Communities and Emergency Preparedness" conducted by the Office of Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 65 million Americans live in rural areas. A follow-on report entitled "Rural Emergency—the Safety and Health Safety Net" by Dr. Gary Erisman, Department of Health Sciences, Illinois State University, indicated that 29 States have at least one-third of their population classified as "rural".

While "rural" is not typically a student population that we track at the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP), for the purposes of this testimony, rural refers to "other than Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions." This category is sometimes referenced to as balance of State or in the aggregate as balance of Nation. Over the past 8 years, nearly half—48 percent—of the CDP's responders have been from rural jurisdictions. In the CDP's first decade, more than 161,000 rural responders have benefited from the CDP's training opportunities.

Total rural responders trained through CDP training programs are as follows.

Rural Responders	Total	Percent of Total
Fiscal year 2007: 25,342	65,832	38.5
Fiscal year 2006: 27,112	61,680	43.95
Fiscal year 2005: 30,124	60,296	49.96
Fiscal year 2004: 23,453	55,262	42.43
Fiscal year 2003: 13,096	25,294	51.77
Fiscal year 2002: 9,521	14,862	64.06
Fiscal year 2001: 1,586	2,522	62.88
Fiscal year 2000: 1,412	N/A	N/A
Fiscal year 1999: 642	N/A	N/A
Fiscal year 1998: 350	N/A	N/A

In fiscal year 2008 thus far, more than 28,000 rural responders—nearly 32 percent—of the total responder population that exceeds 79,000, participated in CDP training programs. At the current rate, we anticipate that the total number of rural responders benefiting from CDP training in 2008 is expected to exceed 31,000. We anticipate that the total population reached through CDP training programs in this fiscal year will exceed 100,000.

TRAINING AMERICA'S RURAL FIRST RESPONDERS

Training for rural first responders poses unique challenges as compared to those in urban areas. For instance, 90 percent of law enforcement agencies across the Nation consist of departments of 50 officers or less. In a survey of rural law enforcement officers conducted by the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), the two most-cited hindrances were freeing up the officer to attend training and the cost of training itself. Additionally, in a 2003 Nation-wide survey of rural law enforcement, officers listed terrorism training as the fifth-most imminent training need in their jurisdictions, ranking it after drug offenses, computer/internet crime, physical assaults, and property offenses. In order to address these challenges as well as the significant numbers of volunteers in various emergency response disciplines, FEMA's National Preparedness Directorate (NPD), with funds provided by Congress fiscal year 2005, established the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC). In conjunction with the Emergency Management Institute (EMI), the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP), and the network of over 50 national training partners, the RDPC began providing effective training and technical assistance to rural jurisdictions, which are delivered regionally in a variety of formats.

The RDPC is comprised of academic partners with extensive experience and unique capabilities in serving the rural emergency response community.

- East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee
- Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky
- Iowa Central Community College, Ft. Dodge, Iowa
- NorthWest Arkansas Community College, Bentonville, Arkansas
- The University of Findlay, Findlay, Ohio

STRATEGIC APPROACH

On December 17, 2003, the President issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 "National Preparedness" (HSPD–8). The purpose of HSPD–8 is to "establish policies to strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent and respond to threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies by requiring a national domestic all-hazards preparedness goal, establishing mechanisms for improved delivery of Federal preparedness assistance to State and local governments, and outlining actions to strengthen preparedness capabilities of Federal, State, and local entities." The National Preparedness Goal (now National Preparedness Guidelines) just mentioned helps to guide Federal departments and agencies, State, territorial, local and tribal officials, the private sector, non-government organizations and the public in determining how to most effectively and efficiently strengthen preparedness for terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

A unique aspect of the RDPC is that it addresses preparedness activities for a broad scope of stakeholders within rural jurisdictions. Though the traditional emergency response disciplines play a pivotal role in HSPD–8, RDPC will also address equally important activities performed by stakeholders across the emergency support functions, as specified in the National Response Framework. This will include local elected officials, critical infrastructure owners/operators and others.

The program is organized to enable both internal networking among RDPC partners in coordination with national training partners and, through the advisory board, and extensive external outreach mechanism to capture inputs from the entire stakeholder community on rural domestic preparedness training and relevant information-sharing activities. The Advisory Board consists of members from the following groups and associations: Adjutants General Association of the United States, Fraternal Order of Police, International Association of Chiefs of Police, International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standard and Training, International Association of Emergency Managers, International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Association of Counties, National Association of EMS Physicians, National Emergency Management Association, National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, National Association of Sate EMS Officials, National Governors Association, National Rural Health Association, National Volunteer Fire Council, and the North American Fire Training Directors.

In the summer of 2006, the Department of Homeland Security released the latest version of the Target Capabilities List (TCL), which is comprised of 37 core capabilities. The TCL describes and sets targets for the capabilities required to achieve the four homeland security mission areas: Prevent, Protect, Respond, and Recover. It defines and provides the basis for assessing preparedness for all-hazards events. Capabilities are delivered by appropriate combinations of properly planned, organized, equipped, trained, and exercised personnel. In 2006, the RDPC conducted its first comprehensive training requirements survey that was modeled to ensure alignment with TCL to support the National Preparedness Guidelines. The survey, published as "Assessing the Needs of Rural Emergency Responders: National Training Needs Assessment 2006," was circulated across a wide array of community profiles in rural America to capture input from the appropriate stakeholders. Additional focus groups were conducted to ensure the training initiatives are appropriately aligned with the overarching goals of the States' homeland security strategies and cognizant of the evolving needs of particular regions of the Nation. The focus groups served to augment the results of the survey. The RDPC analyzed the data for trends and gaps and prioritized the results in a report of findings. RDPC used this report to develop an annual training agenda of balanced investments to meet critical training needs with limited resources.

Important findings from the report are:

- Every discipline has significant unmet training needs—for no target capabilities has the training need been completely satisfied.
- Substantial numbers of target capabilities were selected by a majority of rural respondents in each discipline as areas of training need in the next 2 years:
  - Law enforcement—25 target capabilities;
  - Fire service—27 target capabilities;
  - Emergency medical service—23 target capabilities;
  - Health care—24 target capabilities;
  - General government—28 target capabilities.
- "Planning" (for terrorism events) was the target capability that the greatest proportion of all rural respondents indicated as a training need for their agencies within the next 2 years.
  - Each discipline had a different target capability rated as its greatest training need from the standpoint of the number of personnel needing the training:
    - Law enforcement—responder safety & health;
    - Fire service—citizen preparedness & participation;
    - Emergency medical care—CBRNE detection;
    - Health care—planning for terrorism events;
    - General government—WMD/hazardous materials response & decontamination.

The RDPC is currently planning its next assessment due out in 2009.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING PROVIDERS

In order to avoid duplication of effort, the RDPC has forged partnerships with academic institutions which have developed FEMA-certified training products and services in niche areas which directly align with the emergency preparedness training needs of rural communities. Agreements are in place with the University of California-Davis to provide training in food safety and agro terrorism issues, Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Inc, training for working with Special Needs Populations, and with West Virginia University to deliver certified training on homeland security issues for campus and university executives.

LEVERAGING THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC PREPAREDNESS CONSORTIUM

The RDPC currently participates in the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium's (NDPC) quarterly meetings. This collaboration helps facilitate the sharing of ideas and experiences of both consortium groups, which adds value for each on a regular basis. The NDPC is comprised of seven organizations: (1) the Center for Domestic Preparedness; (2) the National Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology; (3) the National Center for Biomedical Research and Training, Louisiana State University; (4) the National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center, Texas A&M University; (5) the National Exercise, Test, and Training Center, Nevada Test Site; (6) the Transportation Technology Center, Incorporated, in Pueblo, Colorado; and (7) the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center, University of Hawaii. The mission of the NDPC is to identify, develop, test, and deliver training to State, local, and tribal emergency response providers, provide on-site and mobile training at the perform-

ance and management and planning levels, and facilitate the delivery of training by the training partners of the Department.

In January 2008, a strategy document entitled "The National Preparedness Directorate's Strategic Plan for the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC)" was submitted to Congress. This strategy describes how the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC) supports the tenets of national preparedness doctrine and effectively addresses States' evolving training needs. The strategy also provides direction for coordinating NDPC's programs with similar training programs throughout the Nation, including those provided by other Federal agencies.

The RDPC and NDPC are working together to leverage activities being conducted by both entities (i.e., State and local outreach, training needs assessments, and data analysis) to meet the goals of the strategy. Goals such as: design and deliver courses to meet training priorities as defined in State Homeland Security Strategies and other forecasts of training needs; ensure training is consistent with homeland security doctrine; and adapt capacity to meet training demand.

The RDPC has received the following funding:

- Fiscal year 2005, $5,000,000;
- Fiscal year 2006, $6,103,000;
- Fiscal year 2007, $11,640,000;
- Fiscal year 2008, $8,549,000.

FEMA/NPD's Training Operations Branch currently offers 134 courses through 54 training partners Nation-wide. These courses are offered to all State and local jurisdictions including those located in rural areas.

FUTURE/INTEGRATION—NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the devastation experienced during Hurricane Katrina in September 2005, reemphasized the critical importance of training Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, and non-governmental responders in integrated planning, decisionmaking, and coordination processes. Training is necessary to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, to reduce the loss of life, property, and harm to the environment.

Public Law 109–295, the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) of 2006, Section 648, tasks the administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to " . . . carry out a national training program to implement the National Preparedness Goal, National Incident Management System, National Response Plan (now National Response Framework), and other related plans and strategies." The National Training Program (NTP) is a major component of the National Preparedness System. Public Law 110–53, Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, also calls for measures to improve the Nation's preparedness through increased emphasis on training programs. Additionally, the Hurricane Katrina lessons learned and after-action report offer numerous recommendations to improve various aspects of training for the Nation's responders.

Collectively, these documents mandate strengthening the all-hazards preparedness of the United States and establish the need for more focused coordination, planning, and progressive development of capabilities-based training designed to ensure that the Nation's responders can effectively execute their responsibilities under any combination of emergencies that might occur.

The National Preparedness Directorate is currently drafting an NTP which, as a part of the national preparedness system, will create a premier national homeland security training enterprise by providing an integrated, capabilities-based method of aligning training with the National Preparedness Guidelines, the National Incident Management System, the National Response Framework, as well as other related plans and strategies. Additionally, this dynamic enterprise will be designed to achieve the greatest value of limited resources for all key stakeholder groups, of which one is most certainly rural responders. This approach enables the clear identification of training needs and provides opportunities to realize the greatest return on investment for rural responders, urban area responders, and other key stakeholders to the greatest degree possible.

The resultant NTP will provide the architecture to improve the coordination and synchronization of training of the Nation's responders to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life, property, and harm to the environment.

The NTP's vision and mission statements are linked to Department of Homeland Security and Federal Emergency Management Agency mission and vision statements, and emphasize an all-hazards approach to training which is consistent with

the intent of Pub. L. 109–295, Pub. L. 110–53, Vision for New FEMA, several Homeland Security Presidential Directives, and Executive branch guidance.

The vision of the National Training Program is: A Nation trained to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life, property, and harm to the environment.

The mission of the Homeland Security National Training Program is to: Develop, implement, and maintain a Homeland Security National Training Program that creates a premier national preparedness training enterprise providing an integrated, capabilities-based method of aligning training with National Preparedness Guidelines (NPG) and National Exercise Program (NEP), as well as capturing and incorporating lessons learned from exercises and real-world events. On January 26, 2007, the Homeland Security Council's Deputies Committee unanimously reached agreement on the NEP Charter and on April 11, 2007, the President approved the NEP Implementation Plan. This plan establishes the NEP under the leadership of the Secretary of Homeland Security.

The NEP provides a framework for prioritizing and coordinating Federal, regional and State exercise activities, without replacing any individual department or agency exercises. The NEP enables Federal, State and local departments and agencies to align their exercise programs.

The NTP also lays out specific strategic goals and objectives which must be accomplished if we are to achieve our stated mission. The five major strategic goals of the NTP are:

Goal 1: Partner with Federal, State, tribal, and local governments and with private sector and non-governmental organizations to build training capabilities Nation-wide to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life, property, and harm to the environment. The NTP will accomplish this goal through a series of major objectives designed to improve relationships and foster cooperation within the responder community.

Goal 2: Align emergency responder training with the National Preparedness Guidelines (NPG). This goal will be accomplished by ensuring that responder training at all levels of government is consistent with the NPG. A critical part of aligning training to the NPG is ensuring that training is aligned with the Target Capabilities List (TCL).

Goal 3: Coordinate the integration of all hazards training and exercise programs. A key component of integrating training and exercise programs will be management and upkeep of the National Incident Management System and the National Response Framework.

Goal 4: Optimize management practices. The NTP establish meaningful performance metrics, measures, and outcomes and also be measured in accordance with the President's Management Agenda and Program Assessment Rating Tool.

Goal 5: Develop a closer link between training and exercises. Experience has shown that exercises are the best method of evaluating training effectiveness. Because the TCL includes specific, measurable preparedness and performance measures of the 37 capabilities needed to address a broad range of man-made and natural disasters, it becomes the primary tool to link training and exercises.

The NTP will also address several key training policy issues. Addressing these policy issues is vital to establishing the framework which will allow the Nation's response community to work in an integrated and coordinated process to achieve the NTP strategic goals.

Some of these key policy issues include:

- Who needs to be trained?
- What specific skills do responders need and what tasks should they be trained to perform?
- How can the Nation best increase training capabilities?
- Standardize training. Section 647, Pub. L. 109–295, PKEMRA 2006, requires FEMA to "Support the development, promulgation, and regular updating, as necessary, of national voluntary consensus standards for training."
- How can we best establish an all-hazards core curriculum, standardize instructor qualification and certification, and streamline course development and approval?
- How do we utilize the TCL in establishing a closer linkage between training and exercises?
- What resources are required and available to accomplish NTP? Which authorities are required for Federal training centers and organizations to train private sector, non-governmental organizations, private citizens, and international responders?

As the National Preparedness Directorate begins to implement the NTP, senior officials at all levels will want to know what progress is being made. While the number of responders trained provides an indication of progress toward meeting established objectives, data on the quality and effectiveness of the training is also important. The TCL provides specific, measurable preparedness and performance measures for evaluating and improving capabilities as part of the National Preparedness Cycle. The effectiveness of training delivering will be evaluated using the Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation to effectively measure success of the program.

My staff is currently drafting a charter for the NTP. Once the charter has been staffed and approved with input from the training partners and key stakeholder groups, we will develop an implementation plan.

CONCLUSION

The 2007 integration of the Noble Training Facility and the CDP suggests a need to review the health care curriculum in order to ensure the needs of healthcare response providers and receivers are served across the Nation. The threats within the medical community—to include events such as pandemic flu, health care facility decontamination following an incident, serving the special needs population, mass prophylaxis, and mass casualty events—are on-going threats that must be addressed in the CDP's health care curriculum.

As you've heard here today, the CDP's training programs have continued to grow, expand, and adapt to the needs of the Nation's responder population. As we have grown, we have not lost sight of the responders' needs—both rural and urban.

I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Thank you.

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you for your testimony.

I now recognize Director Walker to summarize his testimony for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF JAMES M. WALKER, JR., DIRECTOR, ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. WALKER. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Rogers. Thank you for coming to Alabama. I know you have been here before, trained in Pensacola and I have invited you to spend your summer vacation in Gulf Shores on the beach if you will bring your family down——

Mr. CARNEY. I will take it up with Jennifer right now.

[Laughter.]

Mr. WALKER. I have a request, I know that you all can move mountains in the Congress, if you would take some of this humidity back to Washington with you.

Mr. Rogers, it is always good to see you. Folks at home, we do not get the opportunity to thank you enough for the great work you do for us on this committee but also on Armed Services and on the Agriculture Committee. I wanted to tell you, as I was driving up through Talladega County yesterday, I passed about a 30-year-old pickup truck with a bumper sticker on the back that said "If you eat, then you are involved with agriculture."

[Laughter.]

Mr. WALKER. We are here today really at the Nation's best facility. I am pleased to be joined by my friend Dennis Schrader, who was my colleague in Maryland for years, and so we are actually glad to have him in FEMA, he understands some of the problems that we face. Also the presence of the two universities. I would like you to know that on my small staff in Montgomery, I have two of my employees that are continuing their education right now at Auburn University, Mr. President; and I have two of my employees that are going to Jacksonville State University working on a mas-

ters degree in homeland security studies. If we had more money, we would certain purchase more of the dogs that are trained here, they do a terrific job. Then my friend from Randolph County, I think you can see all the uniformed folks here today, they really do represent the best first-responder community in the Nation, and they absolutely love this country.

It is interesting that when we talk about rural America, you know, they are faced with a lot of challenges. The fact that we have got this first-class facility here in Alabama, we take advantage of it, but one of the challenges that rural America faces is when you get to some of these local municipalities, police departments, sheriffs' departments, fire departments, they are really only about one deep in many positions. It is very, very difficult to free people up for training. Even though the training is free, that is just a challenge that rural America faces and I would ask the Chairman that at some point down the line, if the committee would look at what I see as an impending manpower shortage among first responders in this country.

I think that young people are being pulled in many different directions on what to do with their lives, whether to become military, whether to become doctors or surgeons. At some point, we are going to hit critical mass where we are going to have a difficult time keeping our streets safe because we cannot keep enough police officers in uniform and firefighters, et cetera. One of the statistics that I like to use is that the Alabama Fire College 10 years ago had over 2,000 applicants to come in and receive their basic firefighter training. Last year, they had just over 300. So young people are not making the decisions that they used to make and that is going to be a challenge for rural America. Kind of like finding that hometown doctor to live in rural America to treat folks, it is going to become the same with first responders.

That is why in rural America, there is a real reliance on volunteers. You know, here in Alabama, about 80 percent of our firefighter community are volunteers. God love them, I mean these folks are incredibly patriotic. They take time away from their families, from the things that they enjoy doing to stand on the street corner on Saturday morning with a big rubber boot and have you throw your change in there so that they can go buy a piece of equipment to help you if your house catches on fire. I mean these are terrific people. We have guide teams in the State of Alabama that will come and help look for folks that have gotten lost. They are all volunteers, they do all of this. So we have got an obligation to train them as well.

So that really is the challenge. The Congress has been so kind, rightfully so, to rural America, in the homeland security grant dollars that you have pushed our way. Now we have seen a decline in the last few years, but we have got to be careful not to do that, I would ask. Because we had a big surge post-9/11 and we were able, in every State, Alabama, Pennsylvania, to buy incredible capabilities. You know, we have outfitted 54 mutual aid response teams around the State of Alabama. We have got heavy rescue, medium rescue, urban search and rescue, swift water rescue, light rescue. We have got mortuary teams, we have all of this capability that under mutual aid we can now push in and around the State.

In fact, post-Katrina, we sent thousands of Alabamians, even though we were an affected State, thousands of Alabamians to Louisiana and Mississippi with a lot of our homeland security equipment to help our neighbors.

So that is what rural America does, they provide the surge capacity in a large disaster. By getting capability into rural America, in the past, I think that you would see a rural community be devastated by an event and they would have to wait. They would miss the golden hour because urban capabilities would have to come over and help them. With these homeland security dollars, we have been able to start building basic capabilities in rural America, so that they can help themselves, which is incredibly important.

I wanted just to mention that during my Governor's tenure as Governor, since Bob Riley has been Governor of Alabama, we have at the State—just at the State level—we have responded to three major hurricanes, a tropical storm, 371 tornadoes, 607 floods, 1,464 hazardous material spills, 116 bomb threats, 22 ice storms, 91 incidents that involved air or rail modes of transportation, 17 terrorist threats or hoaxes, eight reported earthquakes, two virus outbreaks and a dam failure. That is just those that have required State assistance. Can you imagine all of the hundreds of events that rural communities, who usually do not call government as their first line of action? They try to take care of themselves. So your volunteer first responders, one deep, we give them capabilities, we train them and then we have to have the money to take trained people with their equipment and bring them together in a multi-disciplinary and jurisdictional faction so that they can handle disasters in and of themselves.

That is really the system that I think FEMA is looking for and that is what we want in our State. We want self-sufficiency and I think we are moving in that direction.

I think my statement captures some other factors, Mr. Chairman, so that is a brief summary and I will look forward to any questions that you might have for me later.

[The statement of Mr. Walker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES M. WALKER, JR.

JULY 22, 2008

Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today representing State and local interests during this important field hearing.

As Director of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security, it is my responsibility to manage the homeland security preparedness programs and initiatives Governor Bob Riley wants in place to serve Alabama's citizens and communities. During these past 5½ years of the Riley administration in Alabama, our State has seen exponential improvements in first responder capabilities, citizen preparedness, and situational awareness.

Today, in my third appearance before the subcommittee, you have asked me to address homeland security in rural America, and specifically training of first responders in rural America. Let me begin by stating there are three major components to homeland security training: proper equipment, individual and collective training, and exercises. Following a logical sequence, first responders should be properly equipped, trained to standard on individual, team, and organizational skills, and exercised with their equipment and training as part of a multi-agency or jurisdictional exercise. This model is commonly referred to as the crawl, walk, and run methodology to training.

In rural America, many of our first responders are volunteers. In fact, volunteer firefighters represent approximately 80 percent of the total fire service organizations in Alabama. As volunteer organizations, they are routinely in need of new equipment and funds to help them train and conduct exercises.

In rural areas, local governments do not have the ability to generate the tax revenue capable of outfitting and training all the first responder organizations serving their population. The homeland security grants the Congress has made available to rural America are making a sea change of difference in how rural areas can prepare for and manage disasters.

On behalf of the rural first responders in Alabama, and for my colleagues around the country, please allow me to thank the Congress for the homeland security grants you appropriate every year and make available to rural America. Your continued support is much appreciated and much needed.

It is interesting to note that annually more homeland security grant dollars go to the 50 largest cities in America than they do all of rural America and the rest of the country combined. Yet, the metropolitan areas have a much greater ability to generate revenue to outfit, train, and sustain first responders. I highlight this fact because if we are truly serious about protecting our country, we must also recognize America will only be as strong as her weakest link. We must develop and sustain capabilities everywhere, even in rural America, so we are able to safeguard lives and protect property.

A problem rural America faces is that it is not the proverbial squeaky wheel. People in rural America are self-reliant. They understand that hardship and disaster are a part of life and the fabric of history. They know how to cope with difficult circumstances and by their very nature are resilient and tough.

Calls to Government for assistance are not the first calls made by rural Americans. They will always try to solve their own problems first with the help of neighbors, friends, and volunteers before they willingly invite the Government into their lives. This philosophy conflicts with Americans who believe the Government is responsible for their livelihood and for solving all of their problems.

Rural Americans are disaster-experienced problem-solvers and do not sit back and wait for someone to solve their problems for them. As a result, they will remain the silent majority, and, in some cases, become forgotten because they don't write talking points and clamor for face time in front of news cameras and microphones. They simply do what needs to be done to restore routine in their communities and lives after disaster strikes.

I congratulate my fellow citizens in Iowa and the Midwest for their quiet resolve and fierce determination to nobly and proudly recover from one of the worst natural disasters in their history. Iowans today are showing us the strength and silent steely resolve of the American spirit in rural America.

Rural Americans are criticized in some circles for clinging to religion, but I thank God they do. The beliefs and shared values of rural America are the moral anchors of this country, and represent the ideals and principles most of us associate with the America of our hopes and dreams. We can never risk losing the faith rural Americans have in their government. We will be in serious trouble as a Nation if we do. One way we keep this faith is by responding with all the assistance our Government has to offer in the wake of a disaster that overwhelms a rural area.

I am reminded of the soldier who was once asked if he'd ever seen heavy combat. The soldier's response was, "If you are in combat, it's heavy!" The same can be said of living through a disaster. You can ask if a hurricane, tornado, flood, or fire was severe and devastating and the answer will be, "If it destroys your home and injures you or a loved one, it is severe and devastating." This maxim holds true whether the disaster rolls through downtown Atlanta or rural Lawrence County, Alabama. The difference is downtown Atlanta is more likely to qualify for Federal Individual Assistance than Lawrence County.

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act sets forth the guidelines for requesting Federal assistance. This Act is designed to work for disaster victims and not against them. Unfortunately, it was used against rural victims during a recent tornado outbreak in Alabama.

The truth is there is no thermometer that establishes a scalable threshold for who qualifies for Individual Assistance in the wake of a disaster. Earlier this year parts of Tennessee and Alabama were hit by the same outbreak of tornadoes, causing death and destruction in both States. However, as if a disaster recognizes State boundaries, the damaged parts of Tennessee qualified for Individual Assistance, but the damaged parts of Alabama did not. I can tell you it was very difficult for Governor Riley to explain this denial of Individual Assistance to the rural Alabamians who lost loved ones and everything they owned in that disaster.

Rural areas need homeland security capabilities, training, and assistance just like their urban counterparts. They have the same responsibilities to safeguard lives and protect property. In many cases, rural areas have a limited ability to respond until a needed capability arrives from a better equipped urban area to assist. A self-sufficient rural area is often the first line of defense to immediately containing an event or disaster before it escalates into something much larger and more destructive.

Additionally, homeland security capabilities in rural areas represent the surge capacity and increased capability we rely upon to assist in large-scale disasters. Under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact thousands of Alabamians and pieces of homeland security equipment deployed from Alabama to both Louisiana and Mississippi to assist our neighbors in their response to Hurricane Katrina. As we meet here today, trained and properly equipped Alabamians are deployed to both Iowa and California to assist our fellow Americans with disasters in their States.

During Bob Riley's tenure as Governor of Alabama, which began in January 2003, State assets were requested to assist our local communities with the following events: 3 major hurricanes, 1 tropical storm, 371 tornadoes, 607 flood warnings, 1,464 hazardous material spills, 116 bomb threats, 22 ice storms and winter storm advisories, 91 incidents involving air and rail modes of transportation, 17 terrorist threats and/or hoaxes, 8 reported earthquakes, 2 virus outbreaks, and 1 dam failure. This list is far from exhaustive, and does not reflect the hundreds of events local governments and rural areas did not seek State assistance. This is an enormous workload for predominantly rural first responders, considering it does not reflect the routine police, fire, and other first responder duties performed on a daily basis.

As a final point, history teaches us that suspected terrorists are prone to planning, living, and training in rural areas. It is imperative rural law enforcement have the investigative tools and technology needed to combat terrorism in the 21st century. Please consider the following:

- The D.C. snipers murdered in Alabama before terrorizing and spreading panic in the National Capitol Region.
- Two of the 9/11 hijackers were detained for traffic violations in rural Marion County, Alabama before they participated in the deadly attacks that killed over 3,000 of our fellow citizens.
- Hundreds of weapons, improvised explosive devices, and rounds of ammunition were confiscated and destroyed recently in parts of rural counties in northeast Alabama. These instruments of death were being stockpiled by domestic hate groups that still regrettably proliferate in rural America.

To ignore the need for a level playing field between urban and rural law enforcement officials and other first responders would be a grave mistake for the future safety and security of our country.

I close by stating we continue to make enormous progress in securing our country, but a great deal of work remains. Federal, State, and local authorities are collaborating better now than at any time in our Nation's history. It is important to remember security for our citizens is not a sprint, but a marathon. Local, State, and Federal efforts must be sustained for the long haul, and I worry many of our citizens do not have the same long view of history as our adversaries. The same holds true for natural disasters. They have always been a part of the human experience, and will remain.

Thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Mr. CARNEY. Thanks for your testimony.

I now recognize Dr. Meehan for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM MEEHAN, PRESIDENT, JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Chairman Carney, Congressman Rogers; thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I speak as President of Jacksonville State University, to talk about our role in emergency management.

I know Congressman Rogers is very familiar with Jacksonville State, having been our graduate twice over. We appreciate that. If we had a law school, maybe he would have gone to law school with us.

But for those of you who do not know, Jacksonville State celebrated its 125th year this year in 2008.

Mr. CARNEY. Congratulations.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, sir.

In 1883, we started as a State normal school, but we have now grown to over 9,000 students offering 45 undergraduate degree programs, 24 graduate programs and we occupy a 459-acre campus just 7 miles north of us here.

We have had a number of accomplishments that are in my testimony for homeland security. I am very proud of our role in helping to establish the Center for Domestic Preparedness here at McClellan.

Shortly after the announcement that Fort McClellan would be closed, it became obvious that there was no planned use for the Army's Live Agent Training Facility and it would remain an eyesore unless it was dismantled, but doing so would cost tremendously. Congress had just passed the Nunn-Luger-Domenici Act, which started the domestic preparedness initiative in 1996. JSU took a leading role, along with others, to develop a concept of a first responder training facility. The establishment of the CDP became a reality through the efforts of Jacksonville State University and strong local commitment through the Chamber of Commerce along with the help of Senator Shelby, Senator Sessions and then-Congressman Bob Riley, now Governor of our great State.

But through those efforts with CDP, we at JSU became acutely aware of the need for emergency management education programs to address both terrorism threats as well as natural disasters. JSU has been providing online academic programs for emergency management and first responders since 1998. So even prior to the events of September 11, 2001, JSU had academic programs in place to address planning considerations for both terrorism and natural disaster events. Recognizing that terrorist attacks, while devastating, cannot match the destructive potential of Mother Nature, our degree programs continue to be designed to strike a balance between natural disasters and terrorist or man-made events.

We currently offer bachelors and masters degrees in emergency management. We know there is a critical need for individuals with doctoral degrees to teach emergency management and homeland security courses in other colleges and universities. Therefore, we are now in the process of establishing a doctoral program in emergency management. With the Association of Public-Safety Communication Officials International, APCO, and through a partnership with Gadsden State Community College, we developed the APCO Virtual College where many 911 operators, who are sometimes referred to as the Nation's true first responders, are able to pursue academic programs in public safety, emergency management and homeland security.

In order to rapidly get seasoned professionals into the field and make the greatest impact on national security, our programs are targeted toward mid-career professionals in the public safety arena. Recognizing that these individuals must continue working while earning a degree, the courses are completely on-line. The success of these courses and programs has been greatly rewarding and ultimately benefit the United States and other nations with the work of our students. We have had students from 49 States, several territories and many foreign countries, and we have had students rep-

resented on all seven continents. To date, we have graduated 173 masters, 85 baccalaureate emergency management degrees. Our greatest impact, however, is through the accomplishment of our graduates, as Mr. Walker mentioned, as many currently hold positions with public, private and non-profit sectors. For example, our graduates work for local and State emergency agencies, the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, Red Cross, Centers for Disease Control. Furthermore, our graduates can also be found on Capitol Hill, the Pentagon and overseas in both civilian and military-oriented positions. To illustrate our program's popularity, enrollment in last fall, 2007, included 232 students in the baccalaureate program, 48 in certificate programs, and 80 pursuing masters degrees.

JSU has actively supported local, State and national emergency management and homeland security initiatives through the provision of contractual assistance in a number of areas. We have assisted with CSEPP, Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program, and have included development of emergency operation plans for municipalities and other entities, design and support for annual exercises, drills and plans for special needs population, and service as a medical coordinator.

Another academic program with a strong connection to the Center for Domestic Preparedness is the Lurleen B. Wallace College of Nursing and Health Sciences at JSU. Created by the legislature in 1967 to meet the educational needs of the State, JSU's nursing program educates and graduates exemplary health care professionals known for expertise in critical thinking and decision-making. That college has had an extraordinary increase in its population, as you are aware. That has grown with a 120 percent increase since 2001. Just last year, the program graduated 11 Master of Science in Nursing, 157 Bachelor of Science in Nursing students and enrollment for fall 2007, last year, was 50 in the MSN program and 423 in the baccalaureate program in nursing.

Both our undergraduate and graduate nursing students have experiences at the Center for Domestic Preparedness, which makes it a unique experience for those students. Recognizing the importance of preparing a health care workforce with knowledge and skill in disaster response, emergency and domestic preparedness, the concepts are integrated through a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses in the nursing curriculum. Our students have the unique opportunity to participate in courses offered through the Center for Domestic Preparedness.

We have indeed had a big impact in a short period of time, and our work will continue in these efforts. I believe that the initiative of our doctoral program will have an even greater contribution to the safety and security of our Nation. JSU will also continue to be a significant contributor to helping our emergency planning and response professionals prepare for terrorist and natural disaster management.

I appreciate the opportunity to summarize my testimony and thank you for your leadership in Congress.

[The statement of Dr. Meehan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM MEEHAN

JULY 22, 2008

Chairman Carney and Congressman Rogers, thank you for this opportunity to testify before the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Management, Investigations and Oversight. I am President of Jacksonville State University (JSU), and it is my pleasure to be here as a witness because this is an opportunity to highlight the contributions and achievements of JSU in the area of preparing our Nation's first responders.

Jacksonville State University (JSU) celebrated 125 years on February 22 of this year. Founded in 1883 as a State normal school, JSU currently enrolls over 9,000 students, offers 45 undergraduate programs and 24 graduate majors and has grown into a 459-acre main campus with 59 major buildings and other locations here at McClellan, Gadsden and Fort Payne. We have earned more accredited programs than any other regional university in our State, including discipline specific accreditations that are unique to only JSU in the State of Alabama. It is also noteworthy that we have as many Fulbright scholars as any other institution in Alabama, an indication of our university's exemplary faculty and our commitment to scholarship and global education.

JSU plays an integral role in the economic development of Northeast Alabama. Our graduates contribute significantly to the growth of the region and the State, and it is a goal of the University to further promote the health and wealth of Northeast Alabama. JSU is focused on outreach opportunities that will better the lives and economic well-being of the citizens of Alabama. To that end, JSU has a long history and strong commitment to preparing emergency response professionals for any situation: terrorist attack, natural disaster or other large-scale emergency. In fact, in May 2008 the National Weather Service designated JSU as the first "Storm Ready" university in Alabama.

Now I would like to briefly tell you about some of our accomplishments in Emergency Management and Homeland Security. JSU became involved in this arena while working with the redevelopment of Fort McClellan many years ago. We at JSU are indeed proud of our role in helping to establish the Center for Domestic Preparedness. Shortly after the announcement that Fort McClellan would close, it became obvious that there was no planned use for the Army's live agent training facility, and it would remain as an eyesore since the cost of dismantling the structure would be prohibitive. Congress had just passed the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness Initiative in 1996 and JSU took the initiative to develop a proposal to utilize the live agent facility, along with other facilities at Fort McClellan, in order to prepare civilian first responders for a terrorist attack involving chemical weapons. As many of you may remember, JSU then took the lead role in marketing the concept of a first responder training facility. The establishment of the CDP became a reality both through the efforts of JSU and the strong support of the local community, Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce and Senator Shelby, Senator Sessions and then-Congressman Bob Riley, now Governor of the great State of Alabama.

Through our efforts in developing the CDP, we at JSU became acutely aware of the need for emergency management education programs to address both the terrorism threat as well as natural disasters. JSU has been providing on-line academic programs for emergency managers and first responders since 1998. So, even prior to the events of September 11, 2001, JSU had academic programs in place that addressed planning considerations for both terrorism and natural disaster events. Recognizing that terrorist attacks, while devastating, cannot match the destructive potential of Mother Nature, our degrees continue to be designed to strike a balance between both natural disasters and terrorist (man-made) events.

We currently offer bachelors and masters degrees in emergency management. We know there is a critical need for individuals with doctoral degrees to teach emergency management and homeland security courses in other colleges and universities; therefore, JSU is now in the process of establishing a doctoral program in emergency management. JSU is also a member of the Department of Homeland Security Center for the Study of Preparedness and Catastrophic Event Response and the Homeland Security Defense Education Consortium. Also, with the Association of Public-Safety Communication Officials International (APCO), and through partnership with Gadsden State Community College, we developed the APCO Virtual College whereby many 9–1–1 operators, who sometimes are referred to as the Nation's true first responders, are able to pursue academic programs in public safety, emergency management and homeland security.

In order to rapidly get seasoned professionals in the field, and make the greatest impact on national security, our programs are targeted toward mid-career professionals in the public safety arena. Recognizing that these individuals must continue working while earning a degree, the courses are completely on-line. The success of these programs has been greatly rewarding—and ultimately beneficial to the United States and other nations through the work of our students and graduates. We have had students from 49 States, several territories and many foreign countries, and we have had students represented on all 7 continents. To date, we have graduated 173 with masters and 85 with baccalaureate emergency management degrees. Our greatest impact, however, is through the accomplishments of our graduates, as many currently hold key positions with the public, private, or non-profit sectors. For example, our graduates work for local and State emergency management agencies, the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, the Red Cross, and the Center for Disease Control. Indeed, many of these graduates and currently enrolled students' preferred career path is to serve rural communities. Furthermore, our graduates can also be found on Capitol Hill, at the Pentagon and overseas in both civilian and military-oriented positions. To illustrate our program's popularity, enrollment in fall 2007 included 232 students in the baccalaureate program, 48 in the certificate program, and 80 pursuing the master's degree.

Finally, JSU has actively supported local, State and national emergency management and homeland security initiatives through the provision of contractual assistance in a number of areas. Several were related to the Alabama Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) and included development of Emergency Operations Plans for municipalities and other entities; design and/or support for annual exercises/drills; plans for special needs population, and service as medical coordinator.

I am very proud of our accomplishments, and I believe that JSU has already helped to make our country a safer place in which to live. We have indeed made a big impact in a short period of time, and our work will continue in these efforts. Along with the significant contributions our bachelors and masters degree recipients are making globally, I believe that the initiation of our doctorate program will have an even greater contribution to the safety and security of our Nation. Furthermore, through our contractual and community services, JSU will also continue to be a significant contributor in helping our emergency planning and response professionals to be prepared for terrorist or natural disaster events.

Another academic program with a strong connection to the Center for Domestic Preparedness is the Lurleen B. Wallace College of Nursing and Health Science (CNHS) at Jacksonville State University. Created by the Legislature of the State of Alabama in 1967 to meet the educational needs of the State, JSU's nursing program educates and graduates exemplary health care professionals known for expertise in critical thinking and decisionmaking. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS) continues to experience extraordinary growth with a 120 percent increase in enrollment since 2001. Just last year the program graduated 11 Master of Science in Nursing students and 157 Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students. Enrollment for fall 2007 was 50 in the MSN program and 423 in the BSN program, numbers indicative of the growth in this discipline so vital to the region, indeed the Nation.

However, a Nation-wide nursing shortage threatens our rural communities. Since fall 2004, 310 qualified nursing applicants have been denied admission at Jacksonville State University's (JSU) College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS) due to lack of nursing faculty, classrooms, and clinical sites. In 2006 the Alabama Board of Nursing reported that 4046 qualified applicants were denied admission to nursing programs in Alabama; while at the national level more than 46,000 qualified applicants were denied. Rural communities need these qualified nurses who are prepared to respond to disasters, natural or man-made.

Both undergraduate and graduate nursing students have clinical experiences at the Center for Domestic Preparedness. Recognizing the importance of preparing a health care work force with knowledge and skill in disaster response, emergency/domestic preparedness, concepts are integrated throughout various undergraduate and graduate courses in the curriculum. Our students have the unique opportunity to participate in courses offered through The Center for Domestic Preparedness, which is viewed by faculty and students as an extremely valuable learning experience.

Just last week, two of our Master of Science in Nursing students attended the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Courses here at the CDP. Their week concluded with the opportunity to participate in live nerve agent training, a rather unique experience for a health care provider. While the likelihood of an actual nerve agent event is slim, the lessons learned about the importance of personal protective equip-

ment and decontamination can be applied to many emergency and disaster situations. As a result of such training, one of our recent graduates led the development of a Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for a large school system in Alabama. Our MSN graduates are employed in diverse roles, including school health, health care administration, education, and clinical services. Knowledge of emergency preparedness, coupled with the nationally renowned training offered through the CDP, provides our graduates with a foundation to positively influence planning and response efforts in their respective institutions and communities.

Jacksonville State University clearly plays an important role in preparing first responders; a role that is in keeping with our University's mission and critical to our community at large. We continue to capitalize on these disciplines and reach out to potential community, State and Federal partners. We at JSU strongly encourage the Federal Government's contribution and support of training and preparing our Nation's rural first responders. I thank you for your leadership on this issue, and I am delighted to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you.

I now call on Mr. Pearce to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF JOHN C. PEARCE, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CANINE DETECTION TRAINING CENTER, AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Mr. PEARCE. Good morning, Chairman Carney and Congressman Rogers. On behalf of Auburn University's President Jay Gogue, welcome to our Fort McClellan facility. Thank you for the opportunity to talk about our detector dog research and training program and the benefits of detector dog teams for law enforcement and first responders.

The Auburn University program is focused on enhancing the use of dogs for search and rescue and detecting hazardous, unsafe or illegal substances and materials through basic research, development and instruction. Along with our College of Veterinary Medicine, we have a 17-year track record of helping local, State and Federal agencies fulfill their public safety and national security missions.

For example, Auburn-trained detector dog teams are screening for explosives on the mass transit system in Atlanta. Here in Alabama, our dog teams are helping keep firearms from entering Lee County schools and interdicting illicit drugs along part of Interstate I–20. They are also protecting Federal buildings and detecting explosives for the United States forces in Iraq. We are proud of the service that they provide to our State and Nation.

Detector dog teams are ideal for protection of rural communities and serve as a very visible deterrence to crime and terrorism. A well-trained team is the most capable, readily available and least expensive detection tool for local law enforcement and public safety officials. They are also an important force multiplier for agencies in rural areas where resources are stretched thin. These agencies do not have the luxury of multiple overlapping jurisdictions, but they often face the same threats as metro areas, including illegal drug reduction, school violence and the challenges of special events. A detector dog team is a solution for these scenarios.

Congressman Rogers has been a proponent of detector dog teams for domestic and military uses for many years. Your support of research, development, standards and innovation in canine detection has resulted in safer communities and enhanced our national security. Thank you for your efforts.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

Mr. PEARCE. In order for the benefits of detector dog teams to be realized, they must have good equipment, be well-trained and equipment and training must be well-maintained just like any other facet of law enforcement or emergency preparedness.

The most important piece of equipment is the dog. We recommend it be bred through selective breeding for a long service life and to successfully capture the most important traits. Just as important, proper preparation of the puppy is needed so it can express the genetics given to it through breeding. This is prior to entering a strong training program that is equally focused on educating the handler through a comprehensive education process. Finally, upkeep of the dog's health and ongoing training of the team are necessary to maintain its performance over time.

We believe the Federal Government is essential to increasing detector dog resources for local, rural jurisdictions in at least four ways:

First, we recommend that the Government encourage development of standards that follow the best practices such as those developed by the scientific working group on dog and orthogonal detector guidelines.

Second, we recommend the Federal role in developing funding mechanisms to assist local, rural jurisdictions to obtain detector dog resources.

Third, we believe the Government should encourage the development of domestic sources of high quality detector dogs.

Finally, we recommend that the Government encourage programmatic research and development efforts to enhance the performance and utility of the use of dogs for detection of hazardous materials.

Congressman Carney and Congressman Rogers, this is a brief summary of suggestions and concerns that my years of experience tells me should be brought before the committee for consideration. In my written testimony, I have expounded on these issues and covered additional areas that I believe are a good example of what a focus on detector dog breeding and training can mean for America and the first responders that put themselves in harm's way each day.

The Center and the University truly appreciate the committee choosing our facility as a venue to explore the needs of our Nation's first responders and I am grateful for the privilege to testify. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The statement of Mr. Pearce follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN C. PEARCE

JULY 22, 2008

Mr. Chairman and Congressman Rogers, my name is John Pearce and I am the Director of Training and Operations for Auburn University's Canine Detection Training Center. On behalf of Auburn University President Jay Gogue and Acting Vice President for Research, Ralph Zee, welcome to our Fort McClellan facility. Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you about Auburn's canine detection research and training program, the benefits of detector dog teams for local law enforcement and first responders, and the Nation's canine detection capabilities.

The Center that we are in now is part of a comprehensive Auburn University program focused on enhancing the use of dogs for the detection of hazardous, unsafe or illegal substances and materials through basic research, development, and instruction. Along with researchers at our College of Veterinary Medicine, we have a

17-year successful track record of helping local, State and Federal agencies fulfill their public safety and national security missions. These agencies include, for example, the Orange County, California, Sheriff's Office, the Clayton, GA Police Department, the Federal Protective Service, and the U.S. Marine Corps.

For example, Auburn trained detector dog teams are screening passengers for explosives on the mass transit system in Atlanta and Amtrak inter-State commuter rail lines. Here in Alabama, Auburn-trained dog teams are helping keep explosives and firearms from entering Lee County schools and interdicting illicit drugs along the I–20 corridor from Leeds to Heflin. They are also protecting Federal buildings and detecting improvised explosive devices for U.S. forces in Iraq. We are proud of the service they provide to our State and Nation.

As the most capable, readily available and least expensive tool for the detection of explosives and illicit drugs, a well trained detector dog team is ideal for the protection of rural communities and serves as an important force-multiplier for them to deal with an often large service area with only a few first responders. The detector dog team is a complement to and extends the capabilities of first responders as well as providing a very visible deterrence to crime and terrorism. From an emergency management perspective, rural communities do not have the luxury of close-by mutual aid in terms of either detector dog or bomb squad resources but they increasingly do have significant threats of illicit drug production, potentially catastrophic school violence events, special event venues in the form of regional sporting and festivals, and an under-appreciated level of important national infrastructure in the form of, necessarily less-well monitored, pipelines, water resources, and power generation/transmission that could be a target of terrorism. A well-trained and -maintained detector dog team resource in such a community can serve as an important regional first responder asset and potentially important homeland security asset.

In order for the benefits of detector dog teams to be realized, those teams must have good equipment, be well-trained, and the equipment and training must be well-maintained just like any other facet of law enforcement or emergency preparedness. The most important piece of equipment is the dog itself; it must be bred to have the propensity to successfully perform and have a long service life as a detector dog. The quality of the training of the dog and its human handler are critical to the team's performance. Finally, upkeep of the dog's health and fitness and on-going training of the team are necessary to maintain its performance over time.

Providing competent canine detection resources for public service—first responder organizations in smaller and rural areas is often overlooked in discussions regarding the status of the detector dog industry. I appreciate the opportunity this hearing provides to discuss our programs mission and activities, the status of the canine detection industry, and especially the canine detection resources for smaller and rural communities.

We believe the Federal Government will be essential to increasing detector dog resources for local, rural jurisdictions in at least four ways. First, the Government should encourage the development and promulgation of minimum standards for the provision of detector dog services. Second, and most obviously, the Government should develop funding mechanisms to assist local, rural jurisdictions in obtaining detector dog resources. Third, the Government should encourage the development of domestic sources of high-quality candidate detector dogs. Finally, we believe that the Government should encourage programmatic research & development efforts to enhance the performance and utility of the use of dogs for detection of hazardous materials.

Eight years ago, Auburn created the Canine Detection Training Center to transfer technology and provide formal instruction on the lessons learned through our research. The center's mission is to provide instruction of these principles in all facets of canine detection to include program management. Another goal of the Training Center was to provide a resource for the quality of dogs and level of instruction afforded to larger Federal Government and the U.S. Military canine programs to State and local law enforcement agencies. We also believe the approach must include selective breeding to ensure detector dogs have the proper genetics to excel in performance of their duties and identified bloodlines to ensure an adequate and readily available source of such dogs. Importantly, breeding alone is not sufficient to realize the potential of such dogs and we are engaged in efforts to engineer the early experiences of puppies such that we maximize such potential.

The industry as a whole is still primarily procuring dogs from European vendors. This tradition stems from a culture of breeding and raising dogs for working dog tasks as being an enthusiast or sporting-type hobby in central European countries. Some of these enthusiasts turned their hobby into a business by becoming vendors of such dogs for sale to military, government, law enforcement, and private security

entities in the United States and elsewhere. It is clearly the case that since the events of 9/11, the worldwide market for these dogs has increased resulting in a diminution of the average quality of dogs imported into the United States. The dogs must meet certain medical criteria and performance standards but this does not ensure the dogs have had critical environmental exposures and proper preparation.

There are always the exceptional dogs out there, but we need to have consistent, reliable source of good dogs. Vendors typically know the procurement/selection test on which the dogs will be assessed and train the dog to meet this standard. Upon entering training a good portion of these dogs exhibit behavioral issues causing the dog to fail initial training and/or complete training with substandard results. Often overlooked, but very critical to this process is the proper raising of the puppy so it may express the genetics it received through selective breeding. This is overlooked because of the costly time and money involved in preparation of the puppy to become a good detector dog.

Auburn, in collaboration with Corrections Corporation of America, has significantly reduced the cost of this process through preparation of the puppies within prisons. The key to the success of this program has been educating inmates in development of these puppies: The commitment of the prison administration to the education of the inmates and professional management of such programs are essential to its success. Auburn's original plan was to use local volunteers by placing a puppy in their home for 1 year. The training plan was structured to ensure various environmental exposures and enhance performance. Although the volunteers' contributions were admirable, they just didn't have the necessary time from day-to-day to fully implement the training plan. This resulted in only 25 percent of the puppies being successfully trained as detector dogs. However, the initial results of our prison program are that 85 percent of puppies have successfully entered and completed training. We strongly recommend that the development of domestic programs for selectively breeding and the engineered raising of detector dogs be supported to prepare detector dogs for Federal, State and local law enforcement as well as our military.

The United States has the potential for self-sufficiency with regard to detection and other needed working dogs. We have an often overlooked existing source of very sound breeding stock, the American field and hunt trial sporting-dog enthusiast industry, and we now have a proven mechanism for raising dogs to be detector dogs, the well-trained inmate volunteer. It should be noted that our prison program can be scaled up to practically any level of production and replicated across the Nation at a very favorable cost-to-production ratio: We could double the production of the current Auburn program with addition of only one employee due to the support provided by the prison. With seed funding to initiate growth of such detector dog production efforts and an emphasis on Federal Agencies and our military procuring dogs from such programs, a reliable self-sufficient resource of dogs well-prepared to enter and succeed in training could be created. The attendant benefit of such a system would be a more readily available source of high-quality dogs for first-responder organizations in smaller and rural communities.

Although, the quality and preparedness of the dog is critical, there is a tendency for discussions regarding canine detection to focus only on the dog whereas the actual detection capability is as much or more a consequence of the preparedness of the handlers of those dogs. Perhaps the most overarching goal of Auburn's Canine program is to advance the practice of canine detection from the level of a craft to a more mature technology. Albeit there will always be a strong element of craftsmanship involved in training and handling detector dogs, the fact that the detector dog is the most capable tool available for the important job of hazardous substance detection demands that we aspire for a more sophisticated technological approach.

There are two fundamental reasons for moving toward a more technological approach to the training and handling of detector dogs, reliability and accountability. The most significant problems in relation to homeland security presented by the current state of the canine detection industry is variability in the reliability with which it is practiced and absence of a mechanism for homeland security officials to assess, or account for, such variability. Put in the perspective of the "First Responder" focus of the committee's current field hearings: The most likely first detector dog team resource attending to a potential threat is from local law enforcement or security service provider and there is no current mechanism in place for homeland security officials to know very much if anything about the reliability of that team meet the challenges presented by different levels and types of threats. Taken one step further back in the process, there is also no current formal way that a funding agency supporting the costs of handler training or purchaser of detector dog team services can account for the quality of such training or services.

The working dog industry has not fully evolved from a craft. This includes educating handlers in the basic science principles that informs their training and use of their dog and providing them with a strong foundation in operational best practices. Handler instruction is where the industry is cutting corners in competition with one another to reduce cost because it is least amenable to accountability; a handler trainee can exit a training a program having been provided a very capable dog that provides the appearance of initial competence, but without adequate handler instruction, the actual reliability of that team 3 months later is highly suspect. This is particularly relevant to public service agencies in smaller, rural communities which presently do not have the same access to higher-quality detector dog team training services.

The need to move the use of dogs for detection from a craft to more of a mature technology has been recently recognized in three important ways. Perhaps the most important contribution to this movement has been the House Homeland Security Committees' emphasis, led by Congressman Rogers, on the importance of canine detection and thus need for standards and innovation in its practice and domestic resources for quality detector dogs. The industry has taken notice of the committees' attention to canine detection, which has buttressed efforts within the industry for self-assessment and the promotion of *Best Practice Guidelines*.

The most significant of these efforts has been the *Scientific Working Group on Dogs and Orthogonal Detectors Guidelines* (SWGDOG). This has been a truly seminal event in canine detection which has for the first time in my 30-year career brought together a true cross-section of the industry (e.g., DHS, DoD, State and local law enforcement as well as other public service agencies, commercial training and security providers, SME's from other nations, and academia) to develop consensus-based best practice guidelines for detector dogs. Strong debate amongst different factions in SWGDOG is the norm but the process is working and is nearly on its original schedule. I feel that the emphasis your committee has demonstrated has kept a lot of the SWGDOG members motivated to complete the difficult tasks of arriving at scientifically valid best practice guidelines.

The guiding principles of SWGDOG are consistent with the defining qualities of a technology and include:

- A common technical language, which facilitates and improves accuracy of information transmitted across generations of instructors and handlers.
- Establishes basic best practices to guide the industry and provides consumers of detector dog services with basis for assessment of those services.
- Facilitates enhancement and new applications for working dogs.

The third and most recent effort in advancing canine detection as a technology has been the efforts of the DHS Office of Bombing Prevention (OBP) to develop a canine detection capabilities assessment tool, initiate a trial run at conducting such assessments across several metropolitan areas, and initiate the development of a model canine handler curriculum designed to meet DHS instructional guidelines. Oak-Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) has executed the first segment of work for the OBP for which Auburn has served as an SME sub-contractor. Conducting a national canine detection capabilities assessment will provide DHS with a resource-typed database critical to ensuring that the appropriate level of capabilities are deployed in response to particular threat situations. Such a tool will also provide a mechanism for determining the allocation of resources to improve canine detection capabilities in particular areas of the country. Finally, the development of a DHS standard handler curriculum will provide a replicable model that will promote greater consistency and quality control of handler instruction. ORNL is exploring the conversion of some of the didactic portions of such a curriculum to web-based instruction, which will serve to reduce the duration that a handler candidate must be away from his or her agency for training, which may be critical for smaller organizations to access such services.

We believe that the ideal utilization of Auburn's unique program is to conduct systematic R&D resulting in enhanced or new operational capabilities while providing a resource for exceptionally well-prepared potential detector dogs and filling a gap for advanced detector dog and handler team instruction for national, State and local public service organizations without an inherent training program.

We hope that we can work with your committee and DHS officials to overcome barriers to smaller and rural communities' access to high-quality detector dog resources. State and local law enforcement typically do not have the financial resources and/or the administrative support to attend our 6-week drug or 10-week explosive detector dog team course. There have been a few exceptions to this: I believe two smaller communities have found ways to use DHS-provided grant funding to attend our course and we have provided significantly subsidized services to law enforcement in our local area and, to a lesser extent other departments across Ala-

bama. I have been impressed with the efforts of some communities to obtain our services, such as Lee County, which split the cost between Sheriff Jay Jones Office and the School Board, Cullman County, which engaged in a fundraising campaign led by a distinguished veterinarian in the area, or Heflin, AL where the city traded us a vehicle, confiscated in a drug arrest executed with a dog we previously trained for them, for a new trained dog.

However, faced with the dilemma of either replacing an unreliable emergency vehicle with 200,000+ miles of service or obtaining a high-quality detector dog and team training, the choice for any police chief or sheriff is appropriately to take care of the most fundamental needs first (i.e., replacing the vehicle). This leaves the enterprising public service official seeking a working dog and training for the least possible cost and herein we find the dilemma of extreme variability in the reliability with which canine detection is practiced. The canine detection industry is replete with vendors of highly variable quality dogs and, as short as 1 week, training courses offering services in such circumstances. Some of these vendors are just uninformed but many are professionals who do know better but target this niche market. Many public service officials in the position of deciding on the acquisition of a canine are not well-informed because this is not something covered in most law enforcement academies (the information emanates mostly from prior military or Federal agency working dog service) and there is no accountability of DHS-promulgated standards, such as, for example that which exist through resource-typing of equipment with which most public services officials are now aware, for canine detection. The committee's attention to this issue and attendant efforts such that of SWGDOG hold promise for providing the needed framework for establishing minimum training and certification standards. Therefore, Auburn strongly recommends that the committee consider mechanisms for smaller and rural communities to obtain canine detection resources but in a way that helps ensure those resources are competent, which is particularly important in this market because there are often no readily available internal or external sources of such information or control regarding such competence.

Returning to the topic of Auburn canine detection R&D efforts, it seems we are continually scratching the surface on ways to enhance canine detection through sporadic, non-systematic development projects in which we produce a few dogs for a special application; examples include, off-lead remote detection of IEDs to increase the safety and security of the war fighter and first responder, Vapor-Wake Detection, which is the detection of hand-carried or body-worn explosives, wide-area autonomous screening for explosive caches (WAX), and canine physical conditioning programs to enhance overall performance. All of these projects were either examined by independent researchers or tested operationally and assessed as being very successful. Increasing the capabilities of the detector dog team through development of such technologies is particularly relevant to supporting first responders in rural and smaller communities because it serves to extend the versatility of applications and area one detector dog team can cover. However, longer-term programmatic support of such projects, analogous to the long-range programmatic efforts to develop detection instrumentation, is needed to fully advance these technologies.

Two examples illustrate well the potential of enhanced canine detection applications and how they could serve to extend or be a force-multiplier for first responders in rural and smaller communities. The vapor-wake detection (or person-screening) of hand-carried and body-worn explosives development project was actually suggested by the former Chief of the MARTA Police, who was concerned about the transit system being a vector for the entry of explosive devices into high-profile venues in Atlanta. We researched existing information on the plume of heat and air emanating from static and moving people from work related to the development of the electronic explosive detection sampling portals. We used this information to tailor a prototype training program for dogs to interrogate this vapor-wake emanating from persons. DHS S&T somehow learned of our work with MARTA and requested to examine its effectiveness as part of larger rapid transit security technology review. That review, conducted by Sandia National Labs, assessed the vapor-wake detector dog capability as being capable of very effectively screening over 1,000 rapid transit patrons an hour passing through a chokepoint with practically no affect of the screening on through-put in the transit system. We have had further interest from large metropolitan law enforcement agencies for obtaining vapor-wake detector dog team training and Amtrak is in the process of obtaining such training for several of their detector dog teams from us. There is certainly more to be learned that would support and advance the use of dogs for vapor-wake detection and such information would undoubtedly inform and support the use of electronic chemical detection systems for stand-off detection, but yet, we there has been no interest expressed in a systematic program of research and development of this topic.

In another program, Auburn teamed with the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies (PIPS) to develop an off-lead, remotely commanded, IED detection canine capability for the U.S. Marine Corps Infantry through the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory (MCWL). We assessed the necessary requirements and demands of such dog to support Marine Corps Infantry without presenting any but the most minimal additional operational burden and no reduction in the combat capability of the combat infantry squad. This actually did begin as very much a systematic development project, but based on the assessed capability of the prototype dog, the Marine Corps requested that Marine Infantrymen be trained ASAP to operate these dogs and for them to be deployed to Iraq. The development of this capability, designated as the *Improvised Device Detection (IDD) Dog*, utilized the full complement of Auburn University resources to include our College of Veterinary Medicine, Sports Medicine Center, which developed a nutrition and conditioning program that made the dogs capable of working in the extreme conditions hour-for-hour with the Marine Combat Squadrons with which they were deployed.

This program is an example, as is very often the case, of the development of a technology for military purposes that has direct and immediate application in homeland security: In this case, providing the first responder with a means for stand-off detection of explosives through use of a remotely controlled dog. First responders and the Marine Corps Infantry share the need of two critical characteristics of the IDD canine capability: Stand-off, remotely guided detection to increase the distance, and thus safety, between the first responder and public from a potential threat; and rapid screening of relatively large areas.

In closing, I would again like to commend the committee on the attention it has given canine detection. I can report that such attention has already had very positive effects in the canine detection field. I believe it is very worthy of the attention of Congress and support this contention with the fact that the numerous scientists and engineers involved in the development of detection technology I have encountered over the years, without exception, acknowledged that the well-trained dog and handler team is by far the "gold standard" of capability by which all other detection technology is judged. We are honored by you visiting our facility and I am very grateful for the privilege of testifying before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have of me.

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you, Mr. Pearce.

Now I will ask Mr. Knight to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF MATTHEW C. KNIGHT, VICE PRESIDENT, ALABAMA ASSOCIATION OF RESCUE SQUADS

Mr. KNIGHT. Chairman Carney, Congressman Rogers, thank you for this opportunity to represent the association today for first responder training.

As a current instructor and volunteer member, I have experienced many first responders receiving training from various agencies through the support that Homeland Security has provided. This continued support will only make more educational opportunities available to the first responders across Alabama as well as this great Nation.

To validate part of the training, the Alabama Association of Rescue Squads has partnered with the Alabama Fire College to offer certain courses that were not available previously to any of the volunteers in our association. These courses have objectives and outcomes that really hold the quality and the integrity of the courses to quality standards. With this partnership and availability of funding, this would allow our instructors to travel across the State to other regions and to other areas to provide this training to our members.

The funding from previous years has provided excellent opportunities for those who have received the training at this great facility. However, there are many more wanting and seeking that desire to

receive this training. I, being one of those. I have not had the opportunity, with a recent career change, to get this training available here.

Communications are so critical during any disaster. With Federal funding and/or grants that have been provided, it has allowed the bridge and the backbone foundation to be laid. With this continued funding now we can look at the interoperability among State, regional and local entities.

However, I must point out that unlike the fire departments, the rescue squads, in their mission of first responder duties, have missed out on much of the available grants provided. So I must ask to please consider allowing rescue squads to submit applications for grants to carry out their missions. These individuals go above and beyond their call to duty to aid in any endeavor only to be denied the proper equipment to function at times.

Once again, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to represent the association and I look forward to answering any questions that you might have.

[The statement of Mr. Knight follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MATTHEW C. KNIGHT

JULY 22, 2008

Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee, thank you for your time and the opportunity to appear before you to represent the Association for first responder training.

As a current instructor and volunteer member I have experienced many first responders receiving training from various agencies through the support that Homeland Security has provided. This continued support will only make more educational opportunities available to the various first responders across Alabama as well as the Nation.

To validate part of the training, the Alabama Assoc. of Rescue Squads has partnered with the Alabama Fire College to offer certain courses that were not available previously to many of the volunteers in our association. These courses have objectives and outcomes that really hold the quality and integrity of the course to quality standards. With this partnership and availability of funding this would allow instructors to travel to the various regions across the State and allow hundreds of our members receive the desired training.

The funding from previous years has provided excellent opportunities for those who have received training at this great facility. However there are many more wanting and seeking that desire to receive the training this facility provides. I being one of those, the most recent career change has not allowed me to participate in the various offerings.

Communications is so critical during any disaster. With Federal funding and/or grants that has been provided it has allowed for the bridge and backbone foundation to be laid. With the continued funding now we can look at interoperability among State, regional, and local entities.

However I must point out that unlike the fire departments, the rescue squads in their mission of first responder duties have missed out on much of the available grants provided. So I must ask to please consider allowing rescue squads to submit applications for grants to carry out their missions.

These individuals go above and beyond the call of duty to aid in any endeavor only to be denied the proper equipment to function at times.

Once again thank you for allowing me this opportunity to represent the Association on this important hearing. I will be glad to answer any questions you might have.

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you, Mr. Knight.

I thank all of you for your testimony. Mr. Rogers and I will now have 5 minutes each to question the panel. I imagine we will have several rounds back and forth here. One of the privileges of being Chairman, I get to go first.

[Laughter.]

Mr. CARNEY. So I recognize myself for 5 minutes.

I will start with Mr. Schrader. In your written testimony you point out that 90 percent of law enforcement agencies across the country have 50 officers or less—90 percent is a large number, obviously. I think that shows just how important it is to train responders from small communities, and despite that fact, from fiscal year 2001 to fiscal year 2007, the percentage of rural responders being trained by CDP has gradually decreased, from nearly 63 percent in 2001 to 38 percent in 2007.

What can be done by FEMA, by local communities and the Congress to make sure that trend is reversed?

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, actually we have a very aggressive program for pushing mobile training out into the field. Last year, for example, we had 37,000 course completions that were done throughout the country in the 20 different courses that we offered. As of July 19 of this year, those same 20 courses, we had 1,600 offerings in 38 States and 45,000 course completions. So the vast majority of the offerings that we have are being pushed out into the country. There is a lot of value to that because what it does is it not only reaches people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to be exposed to this kind of training, but it also makes them aware of what else is available back here at the CDP for future training opportunities.

Mr. CARNEY. Have you been able to discuss the efficacy of those programs you send out?

Mr. SCHRADER. We use—there is a technique called the Kirkpatrick Method and we do follow up with the actual employers and the technique there is to make sure that there is a perceived improvement in performance by the responder, by the actual supervisor. So we do that kind of follow-up assessment, yes.

Mr. CARNEY. This is for you, Mr. Schrader, but Mr. Walker, you may want to jump in.

The grants program directly provides funding for States to enhance the capabilities of the local first responders. I understand the directorate is currently trying to improve the ability to measure the effectiveness of those grants. What steps are being taken to address the directorate's ability?

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, I think in the wisdom of the Post-Katrina Act, one of the things that we have done inside FEMA is we have actually broken out the National Preparedness Directorate as a separate focused activity from the Grants Directorate so that the mechanics of putting the grants out and the grants guidance is run by Assistant Administrator Ross Ashley. I handle the preparedness cycle which is planning, training, exercising and assessing. That allows us on a continuous basis to be focused on that.

We have actually done two real important things that the law required. One is that we are putting more resources into the regions. We really believe that decentralization and putting more authority to the States in coordination with our regions is the best way to go over the long haul. Public safety and public health is fundamentally a State and local responsibility and they put tremendous resources into it. There was a recent CRS study that showed the vast

quantities, in the billions of dollars, that are invested by State and local governments.

So our role is to empower the States through the regions and put those resources out in the regions. We now have in every region a Federal preparedness coordinator. We have added additional resources for planning and assessment in the regions. So our focus at the headquarters is to, again, decentralize.

We have also organized a group that is focused on assessments. They are collecting data from the field as well as from the program areas to make sure that we are getting value with all the dollars.

So there is a lot more work that has got to be done in this assessment area, as far as I am concerned, and we have got a focus on it daily.

Mr. CARNEY. Director Walker, should States be involved with this process and the accountability structure?

Mr. WALKER. Yes, sir. I think if you ask any State director in the country how he feels about the administration of homeland security grants, he really wants two things. He wants predictability and he wants flexibility. You cannot run a business, you cannot run an organization unless you can have some level of predictability on what your resources are going to be for the next year or the year after. It is difficult to start a program, like interoperable communications, and try to build a State plan—if it is a 5-year plan, there has got to be some predictability you are going to be able to fund it at the end of the 5 years. We have got to also keep faith with our counties and our locals. When you consider that folks in Washington realize that you cannot secure this country from inside the beltway, you have got to have 50 State programs that are part and parcel working together. It is the same here in Alabama. I cannot sit in Montgomery and manage 67 counties, we have got to invest in each of our 67 counties and you have got to have predictability to do that.

Then the flexibility. The flexibility to take these dollars and put them where we, the State and local officials, feel like it is the most necessary. I mean with all due respect to my friend, he does not really know exactly what we need in Alabama as well as we do. So we think if we have the flexibility to spend the money the way that we see fit, build the capability that we want, conduct the training and the exercises, then it would be a much better use of the dollars.

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you. My time has expired for this first turn and I will now recognize Mr. Rogers for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to follow up, Mr. Schrader, on what you referred to as mobile training. My understanding is that the residents here in the departments, whether it is fire or police department or rescue department, can participate here for 2 weeks, cost-free, with room and board, in this excellent training. That is the feedback that I have gotten over the years is the people that come to this facility from across the world are very impressed with the training they receive.

In touring yesterday, I really was probing about the mobile training that you referenced. I understand that you have had some success with that. Yet my understanding in asking questions about

the mobile training is that it is also a 3-day training program, even though it is sent out to the community. It is generally participated in by departments that just cannot turn loose folks to come up here for 2 weeks.

I am still trying to figure out how we can reach these kind of folks that are working, as the Chairman referenced, in 90 percent of the first responder positions in the country, they are volunteers, they work during the day and could not participate in a 3-day program if it was during the day time. I know that there was some reference made—I think your phrase was indirect training, train the trainer.

I would like to discuss—and I am not being critical when I say this—when I asked yesterday during our tour of CDP about this train the trainer, I was told that the trainer received 12 hours of training. They then went out and delivered 6 hours of training to the first responders. I really would like to find a way that we could get a professional, of the quality that we saw in the facility, who is going out to do the training. So that if one of my friends from Clay County started asking some probing questions beyond the scope of that person's 12 hours of training that the trainer had received, that they would find it of benefit.

How difficult would it be, or manageable, for you to put together a program of outreach that went out in these communities that had the kind of professional that we are talking about?

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, let me start by addressing the mobile training program, because I obviously have the same interest as you do and the questions are spot on. If you examine the mobile training program, for example, we have about 260 folks here at the CDP to support all the training efforts. Of those 260, about 58 are the instructors on this site and then the balance provide all the support for all the training efforts.

The way we deliver the mobile training is that there is a national contract outreach through the contract that we have here at CDP and they go around the country and find professionals. There are probably around 360, plus or minus, professionals who deliver the mobile training around the country. Of those folks, 50 percent of them are still active in their communities. They make some of the best trainers because they are in the business. The other 50 percent are within 3 to 5 years of having retired from the field and, therefore, they are still reasonably current in their profession. So when you think about these 360 people that are deployed all over the country, that is the way to do it. By using the contract vehicle, they are able to recruit nationally and they go into these local jurisdictions. We are finding with some of our other training partners, they use the same strategy. Nothing substitutes for having a first responder, from a credibility perspective, a first responder delivering training to another first responder.

Now what I want to make sure we do with the indirect train the trainer program is to make sure that the people that we are training are in a position to make a commitment to do the follow-up training. That is always an issue. We ask for a commitment for folks who take that training to be willing to follow up, and we actually collect data on how many training hours they have delivered to various individuals.

Mr. ROGERS. Have you ever entered into a relationship with a university or community college so that the people that are trainers, that go out, these professionals who do it on a regular basis? Again, I am concerned about somebody who just received 12 hours of training going out and being the only source of information. It would be great if it was a professional, who has that as their job to go out and regularly deliver that training.

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, let me give you one other point of view. The folks that we train, for example, if you are getting a haz-mat course here, the people who are being trained are haz-mat technicians. So they are not folks who are not familiar with the business. We are not taking people off the street who have no background. So the expectation is that we are raising their level, just like in the military, where you train—that is a pretty typical, you know, you train the trainer and it is the squad leader's job to train the rest of the squad.

So we believe that that approach has value. I would not want to move away too far from that approach. But working with universities is also very valuable. We have these various consortia, but even a consortia, one of our consortium partners, for example, trains many people out in the western part of the country and they use the same strategy of bringing in—almost all of their trainers are first responders from around the country that they bring out on a regular basis.

Mr. ROGERS. I see my time is up. I will pick this back up in the next round of questions.

Mr. SCHRADER. Sure.

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you, Mr. Rogers.

Director Walker, once again, as you know, the Department of Homeland Security determines how security dollars are going to be distributed. What do you think they ought to take into account?

Mr. WALKER. In my written statement, Mr. Chairman, I—you know, the fact is, and it is risk-based, but the 50 largest cities in this country receive more Homeland Security grant dollars than all the rural areas and the rest of the country combined. I understand the risk component, but the practical component is that the larger cities and urban areas have got a greater ability to raise revenue to outfit and sustain and train their first responders. Rural communities do not necessarily have that advantage. It is difficult in some rural communities to get county commissions and local government just to fund the match on emergency management performance grants required to keep a full time EMA person in a local county.

When we started about 5½ years ago, we still had some counties in Alabama where the emergency management function was a part-time duty and somebody worked out of their kitchen. Now in a post-9/11 world, we can obviously do better than that, whether it is in Alabama or anywhere else in the country.

So we set out to try to improve communications. We used Homeland Security grant money, for example, to create a cache of capabilities that we believe every county in the 21st century ought to have. We set about funding that. But the issue is that it is very, very difficult for local communities who have got to stretch revenue dollars a long way to make the kind of investments, not just to pay their police force, or if they have a paid fire or emergency manage-

ment director, that is just to keep them on the staff. I mean we have got to continue to invest to get them the kind of capabilities because if you look at terrorism, for example. We have already talked about some of the natural disasters that routinely plague rural America, but the terrorism aspect. I mean here in Alabama, the D.C. snipers murdered before they went and wreaked havoc in the national capitol region. Two of the 9/11 hijackers were stopped in rural Marion County, Alabama before they went and perpetrated their acts against the World Trade Center. Then finally, you know, hate groups in this country, domestic hate groups, continue to flourish. Here just recently, we destroyed hundreds of improvised explosive devices, thousands of rounds of ammunition and machine guns that were captured in rural counties in Alabama by hate groups that were set on doing damage. Those folks are in jail now, but that has all happened here recently.

So in a 21st century world, you have got to get the right kind of capabilities into the hands of law enforcement and first responders to deal with challenges in rural America. Rural America is relevant and so we have got to look and see if the formula, although risk-based, is practical based on the requirements of the country.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Schrader.

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, having sat in Mr. Walker's chair, I think he did not say anything that I would disagree with. I had many of the same experiences and actually had my own list. When you are in these jobs as State director sitting right next to the Governor, those are tough jobs and you need to have the entire State mobilized. I know we had money that we distributed through grants that created a skeletal network of operations around our State when I was in Maryland. We used the Homeland Security grant money and we were very careful to distribute it to not only just the urban areas, but to make sure that it was put out in every jurisdiction. Because you never quite know where people are going to show up. We used to get regular FBI briefings, we knew that folks would be, you know, trying to lay low somewhere else in the State, they did not want to be obvious. So I think Mr. Walker is right on target.

I think, again, the safety and security of this country really rests very heavily on folks like Mr. Walker and his peers around the country as well as the emergency directors. Some are one and the same and others are divided, depending how each State is organized. But I think those roles are critical.

Mr. CARNEY. Are you satisfied that FEMA is sensitive to that in terms of distributing the grant money?

Mr. SCHRADER. Yes, absolutely. I sat with Ross Ashley, who has had quite a bit of experience in this area. Obviously the focus, you know, is very clear, that risk is where we need to put the emphasis and Secretary Chertoff, over the last couple of years, has been very focused on making sure that you can explain the formulas. I do not want to get too far afield here, but the bottom line is that we are focused on risk but there is a balance there. We have got to make sure that we have capabilities across the board.

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you.

Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

I want to pick back up on the rural training. One of the primary reasons why I sought this position on Homeland Security and am so involved in it is that my district is rural and poor, and I want to make sure that we get the same quality of attention and education as other cities. There has been a tug of war on the committee trying to allocate resources. My colleagues from the more urban areas, like New York, Chicago, San Francisco, they obviously think they are bigger risks. But we have already talked about the fact that 90 percent of the first responders in this country are rural and they come from small departments most of which in my view are volunteers. So I want to make sure that they are not given second-class status.

That goes for training, so I want to come back to this training issue. I understand you came back and revisited the mobile training, but I want to talk more about the indirect training, which seems to be the viable option for rural departments.

Mr. SCHRADER. Uh-huh.

Mr. ROGERS. In talking with your staff yesterday, or CDP staff yesterday when we toured, I was told that there is not a lot of participation in indirect training and primarily because it is not being requested by the State Department of Homeland Security. That under our new structure, and I was on the committee when we put it together, it has to go through the State homeland security office to get resources.

I would like to ask Mr. Walker, are we doing enough to raise awareness for these volunteer departments to ask you or do we need to ask? How do we need to make sure emphasis is put on that training resource that the folks at CDP will ramp up their resources to provide professionals to go out and deliver this training in the rural areas?

Mr. WALKER. I think the mobile team concept is incredibly valuable.

Mr. ROGERS. As opposed to indirect? It's 3 days training and a lot of these volunteers will never be able to do that.

Mr. WALKER. What I am thinking about, Mr. Rogers, as you know, volunteers are incredibly important and valuable. There is training that they obviously receive outside of the CDP channel. You know, there is another grant that you all administer called Citizen Corps grant that kind of gets cut one year and not cut the next year. But we take those small dollars, for example, and we invest. We have State trainers. It is not high level training, but for me, it is a low-cost, high-yield program. You take these handful of dollars, we have trainers at the State level that receive training, they go into every county with the Citizen Corps Council, and we train our locals who then go out in the community. Because what you find in rural America, as you know, is that there is a lot of pride and self-sufficiency, self-reliance in rural America. They will not call Government.

But that does not take away our obligation to try to get equipment out there, to try to train volunteers. Because oftentimes, it is neighbors and volunteers and others that will come and help you in a disaster as opposed to somebody paid. As you know, in some of your districts, there is not a single paid fire department in the

entire county. There will be 16, 17, 18 volunteer fire departments and there is an obligation to train them.

My friend on the end, who talked about rescue squads not receiving some of the grant money. I talked to Dennis about this. You know, you cannot give Homeland Security grant money to an entity that is for-profit. In other words, if they make money off of their rescue service, you cannot issue them Federal grant money, which poses a problem for them trying to service a rural community.

Training comes at you a lot of different ways. The opportunities are there. I think a lot of our rural folks just do not have the ability to take advantage of it because, as you know, they cannot leave their day jobs to go to training for something that they are a volunteer for or if they are in a paid position, they are only one deep and the city cannot do without a police chief or a deputy.

Mr. ROGERS. Dr. Meehan, you are the President of a University that is primarily first-generation students.

Mr. MEEHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. A lot of the challenges we are talking about here: You and I talked last night about what I am trying to achieve with this push in the rural communities. How do you think we can achieve this goal to meet the needs of these volunteers?

Mr. MEEHAN. I think what Deputy Schrader and what Director Walker talked about, we have to do it in a variety of ways. You need to do it in a train the trainer model, the mobile unit and we need to do it with universities that can train the new career professionals. That is where our expertise is, training new career professionals on site. That is where we found our niche and have done very well with that. All those can be expanded into the rural area. I see that as a terrorist threat. You mentioned last night the possibility of a terrorist who could target a variety of rural areas through WalMarts, for example. That would be devastating to this Nation's economy.

Mr. ROGERS. That is the thing I share with our audience, my concern that the country is not just vulnerable in New York City. You know, if terrorists really want to show how vulnerable we are, you go into small town America and on the same day have several attacks that occur simultaneously. We have got to be prepared to deal with that.

Mr. Knight, my time is almost up but I wanted to ask you, to get at the subject of training. Your members who participate, what is the most viable way for them to receive training? What kind of increments of time could they allocate?

Mr. KNIGHT. You know, they work 40, 60, 80 hours a week in general, a lot of weekends, which is out of the norm.

Mr. ROGERS. So if CDP were going to come out and provide training to your volunteers, how much time in a block of time could they provide—could they meet a 3-hour block of time or a 6-hour?

Mr. KNIGHT. Three hours, 3 or 4 hours.

Mr. ROGERS. Okay. I want to go back to the mobile unit. Is there any way that you can imagine that we could structure the mobile training so that we could cluster counties, like, for example, take Clay, Randolph, and Cleburne Counties, which are contiguous geographically, and have those units be available for this training and have the mobile unit come out since it is a 3-day training period,

and do it twice a week in 3-hour increments for about 6 weeks to get it done?

Mr. SCHRADER. Right, Congressman. I would agree that that is an option. We are actually looking for innovative methods. We are working in Iowa now, for example, right now, a multi-county regional approach to mobile training. So those are the kind of innovations that I think we are going to have to use. Because if you get multiple counties working together, they can back each other up. So those are the kind of techniques I think that are possible. We are testing some of those innovative ideas as we speak.

Mr. ROGERS. What will Mr. Walker have to request, for us to be in a position to give him what he needs?

Mr. SCHRADER. For that kind of——

Mr. ROGERS. That kind of training out in the rural communities.

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, what we are pushing is the FEMA regions, we have a Federal preparedness coordinator in each region now. Mr. Vaughan is the Region IV FPC and he has a staff. We have annual training and exercise workshops in every region and what we are trying to do is gather information. You know, because each region is most familiar with its States. Once that request is made, we can begin working on it and we are looking for those kind of pilots. So if Mr. Walker had that interest, we would jump on it.

Mr. WALKER. I was just thinking, Mr. Rogers, that perhaps what we may want to do in Alabama is form like a team of folks like Mr. Knight and others to try to develop a module that would serve rural communities. Because the CDP is here in Alabama, we will be glad to sit down and try to iron something out that perhaps would work in rural America and we would be glad to test it here in Alabama.

Mr. ROGERS. I yield back.

Mr. CARNEY. Dr. Meehan, can you be specific on some of the program offerings that you do that really have an application to the rural responder?

Mr. MEEHAN. They are in homeland security and public safety. Dr. Barry Cox is our director of that program and initiated that for us and he can speak directly to it more so than I could in that regard possibly, on curriculum. But what we have done with the online programs, training those 911 operators, has allowed them to move up in their careers in those areas of homeland security, public safety and emergency management. They are able now to move up to different positions that Mr. Walker has, and others. We have enabled them to have those career ladders where they would not have had that previously.

Mr. CARNEY. Do you see the JSU model as something that could be transferred across the academic community?

Mr. MEEHAN. I do, I do. It is not that difficult to implement. The biggest problem we have right now is finding professionals to serve as faculty members. Our faculty members are the strength of the program. They have had expertise as practitioners as well as academicians. They have the theory and practical knowledge. That is why we want to pursue a doctoral program, because we need more of those and the Nation's universities need more of those as well.

Mr. CARNEY. Okay, let us shift gears just slightly and talk about some of JSU's involvement in developing plans for special needs

populations. As Director Walker will attest, we have to strike a delicate balance between helping those who need the most and able bodied citizens who are prepared to help themselves. What has JSU done in that regard?

Mr. MEEHAN. We helped to coordinate the CSEPP program with emergency kits. We are still doing that primarily through the awareness program at the incinerator here locally. We have worked with both county agencies in Talladega and Calhoun Counties, Randolph County, Cherokee County and others to make sure the word is out to the public that if an accident happened, a plume came up, what they would do, preparing the public, getting the information out is the primary way that we have done that.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Walker.

Mr. WALKER. We have partnered with JSU on a couple of missions. They have helped build the Government structure that we have used to implement our interoperable communications system in Alabama by which we can tie all of our first responders together. We are still working with JSU and with Auburn University in Montgomery now to try to take a look at some of the societal models that help us reach a percentage of the Alabama population that will more than likely, based on some of the models that we've seen, more than likely need the Government's assistance. As you know, Mr. Chairman, about 1 percent of our population make up the first responders and about another percentage or percentage and a half makes up the volunteer community that comes together and assists in a disaster. That leaves really 97 percent of our folks that you have either got to be self-sufficient, self-reliant, try to take care of yourself and your family for 72 hours, so that that 2 or 3 percent can be helping the portion of our population which in some estimates could be as many as one in five of us that will have a special need where you will need to be assisted in a disaster. But we are working with Jacksonville State on some of our modeling in helping us determine where our most at-risk population is.

Mr. CARNEY. Citizen preparedness generally. Not first responders generally, but citizen preparedness, generally: Is there something in the works there that you are working on?

Mr. MEEHAN. There is. For example, identifying, as Mr. Walker said, that special needs population. Just this week, I received information in my own personal mail if I had special needs in my family or if I knew of neighbors that had special needs, identifying those. So it is trying to energize and inform everyone in the community to be active partners in protecting not only themselves but each other as well.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Pearce, we have not forgotten you. We are going to get to you in just a minute.

Mr. PEARCE. That is fine.

[Laughter.]

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Knight, you spoke about how rescue squads are missing out on some grant opportunities. Can you be more specific?

Mr. KNIGHT. You know, a lot of the FEMA grants and everything is specifically geared toward fire departments and all, and we do have some members of our organization at fire departments within their district, you know, and have received some of the funding. But as a general rule, rescue squads in their goal and mission, the

grants fail to recognize them. Like Mr. Walker had stated earlier, you know, to a certain degree we do charge in some areas for our services that we provide. So we are a for-profit business, if you look at that distinction. So we miss out on a lot of that. Other agencies get that money and we need it.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Schrader, as long as you are here, any suggestion about how we can fix that or alleviate that or modify the program so we can help the rescue squads?

Mr. SCHRADER. It is not a simple problem and I would not want to speculate from the chair here. It is an area of a gap. It has been there for awhile and we had it when I was in Maryland.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Walker.

Mr. WALKER. One thing that is interesting about the homeland security grants, Mr. Chairman, is that the first couple of years, I guess maybe 2003, 2004, 2005, when we pushed the money out to our local communities, the emphasis in local communities was clearly on equipment, on capabilities. They really wanted to get new equipment. We did a reasonable job. After about 2 or 3 years into it, we thought, you know, we have got a lot of stuff out here, but that stuff does not do you a lot of good if we do not have people trained to use that equipment. Then as we start to put more of an emphasis on training, then we get our folks trained and you said well, it is really not going to be that good, you have got the equipment and you have got people trained, but in a disaster are they able to work with first responders from other jurisdictions and engage the local community. So that is really the process. You have got to get the right equipment, you have got to get individual and collective training so the individuals are trained and then your organizations, whether it is fire or police training, and then you have got to be able to exercise yourself as a fire crew in a broader community in order to really do well in a disaster. So it is that model. I have seen—a lot of our communities still want equipment, because what we find—and when you talked a moment ago about striking that balance between funding urban areas and funding rural areas, is that equipment will—for lack of a better term, it expires or it loses its shelf life, like Level A suits or protective masks or whatever, they are only good for—and if you do not have the resources to replace the filters or replace the suits, then you have lost the capability.

So that is why we have really seen a push between funding States to funding 50 large cities. You have really got to manage that closely or a lot of capability that we built in Alabama and around the country is going to degrade because they do not have the ability to continue to train or to upgrade or sustain their equipment.

Mr. CARNEY. I might offer one thought. This is an area that I have had an active interest in for quite awhile. You were trying to build this relationship in your program, but the community college network around the country is where—they do a tremendous amount of public safety staff training. Just recently—I think Mr. Walker mentioned a community preparedness program—we just brought the community college association into our network of community preparedness. There are many counties that share community colleges, but that is a platform for both adult learning but also

follow up education, certificate kind of training that would be a possibility. I think that may be an untapped opportunity nationally, is the community colleges.

Mr. WALKER. In Alabama, Mr. Chairman, Governor Riley has been incredibly innovative in the use of the community colleges in that we use our community colleges in disasters, like a major hurricane, as shelters. He just committed to housing 10,000 evacuees from neighboring States should they be hit, with the community colleges, because if you look at a community college, they have clinics, dormitories, classrooms, cafeterias. So we have, working with FEMA, put huge generators at like 19 of our community colleges around the State and we are using those to assist us in disasters. We thought that was a pretty innovative use of space as opposed to FEMA trailers.

[Laughter.]

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

I know I am going to use the wrong phraseology, but talking with Mr. Walker yesterday in discussing the needs and the risk assessments, the acting director of CDP informed me that there is no city in Alabama that meets the risk definition of a city, that the nearest one is Atlanta. That was surprising to me, to find out that we do not have that urban threat. Do you find that affects your ability to get resources to the State?

Mr. WALKER. In the Urban Area Security, 50 largest cities in the country, we do not have one in Alabama. What that means, Mr. Rogers, is that States will receive Homeland Security grants. If you are a State that also has a UASE city, then that city also competes for a separate pot of money. The problem——

Mr. ROGERS. Over and above what they would get otherwise.

Mr. WALKER. Over and above what the State would get. The problem, just for Alabama's purposes is that we have the population density in the Birmingham-Jefferson County multiplex, but we do not have the critical infrastructure per se. In Mobile, we have the critical infrastructure per se, with ports, chemical industry, what-not, but we do not have the population base in proximity to a lot of critical infrastructure. So every year we get the opportunity to go back and fight for one of our cities, but we have not made that list of 50 yet.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, my question is: Does it disadvantage you in an unreasonable or unfair way, in your opinion?

Mr. WALKER. It does, sir, in that with the amount of funding that we get, we could very easily push it into Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery and Huntsville and it would be gobbled up. But as you know, and as we hold this hearing today, you have got to look at all 67 counties. All 67 counties have to be relevant. Every community has a stake, particularly in the 21st century. The example that I cited earlier is that they have to have the investigative ability, the ability to solve crimes, the ability to manage disasters, to be able to surge and be self-sufficient. The money is not there to do it all.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Schrader, do you have any thoughts on that?

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, the issue of the formula has been revisited every year. One of the things that the law does provide is an ap-

peal process which folks are able to use, as Mr. Walker mentioned. But the reality of the situation is that there has to be some objective process in place. I know that the folks who do those risk formulas spend an awful lot of detail time informed by intelligence and others, so you know, it would take a lot more time and we would have to have different people here to have that conversation today.

Mr. ROGERS. This will be my last question before I shift my thoughts to canine training. I would ask Mr. Walker and you if you have thought of this. What is the No. 1 take-away that you would like for me and the Chairman to leave here with, knowing that we can push for a policy change that would help you better reach these rural responders with training?

Mr. WALKER. Is that rural communities, sir, are relevant. They are relevant in the 21st century, and particularly as you look at the dollars. A rural county like yours, they may have an operating budget of the entire county of $10 million. A disaster can blow through here today, a tornado, and cause a million dollars worth of damage. They qualify for public assistance, but it is a 15 percent match, that is $150,000 out of a road fund or something. So you cannot discount that urban areas have the ability to raise revenue to outfit their first responders, to train and build capability that rural America does not.

Mr. ROGERS. So get rid of the match for local, rural communities. Is that in a nutshell what you are advocating?

Mr. WALKER. Well, now we are talking about assistance in a disaster and match funds. You know, in my testimony, we had a frustrating incident in Alabama a few months ago where we had a tornado, a lot of tornadoes that blew through Tennessee and Alabama, the same line of storms. Tennessee got declared for individual assistance, Alabama did not. Because there is really no scale or thermometer that determines who gets individual assistance or not. It is not in the law, it is kind of subjective. There is a guideline. But we did not qualify. You have to understand in a rural community, a tornado that travels a quarter of a mile wide for 17 miles and tears up 70, 80 houses is far more devastating to a rural county than it would be going through downtown Atlanta, when you just look at the scale and scope of the disaster.

So I think we have got to look at the thermometer for individual assistance and I think that we have to look at the formulas for spending more money on 50 big cities than we do the rest of the country, when you look at the big cities' ability to raise revenue and outfit themselves as opposed to what rural America can do.

Mr. ROGERS. Any thoughts, Mr. Schrader?

Mr. SCHRADER. Yes, I think the biggest take-away I have had from this whole process, and I appreciate the opportunity to have some of these conversations over the last 2 days, is that we need—we are already focused on the issue of how do we reach our rural first responders around the country, but it just redoubles my commitment and my team's commitment to stay focused on this and to continue digging in and making sure we have a better understanding of how to improve it.

So I appreciate the focus and it is something we have got to do. The one thing I will offer, the other thing is I want to make sure

we do not leave with a misperception, the Center for Domestic Preparedness provides advanced training. We are not competing with State training academies. That is always an issue around the country where every States has very fine institutions. It is not the intent of the Center for Domestic Preparedness or our other consortia partners to be competing with States' basic services. We are targeting folks who already have basic training and are looking for the advanced senior technician focus and reaching out and reaching those people is critical. So that is the major take-away I have had from this couple of days.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Pearce, it is your turn now. I know that scientists are trying to replicate the dog's ability to detect all kinds of things, and has fallen short, so far at least. In fact, TSA bought a bunch of these explosive trace portals, I guess they call them, for airports and different places and the machines cost a couple hundred grand each and they have encountered significant maintenance problems. Can you comment on that? How much does a dog cost when it is trained, how much does it cost to train them and how much maintenance problem do you have with a dog?

Mr. PEARCE. Well, a fully trained explosive detector dog, which would be comparable to—that would come from our facility, which would be comparable to a TSA explosive detection dog would cost around $14,000. Of course, there is a 20 percent subsidy that Auburn University provides to local law enforcement here in Alabama and a 10 percent subsidy to law enforcement as a whole. You are not going to find a better piece of technology that is mobile, that can discriminate against all the various odors in its environment, and a piece of technology that is constantly having to be calibrated.

One of the unique things in my travels working with the TSA program before was, what I noticed is you can get out of the vehicle—a police officer can get out of the vehicle with a piece of equipment and nobody would ever even notice them. But the moment the police officer stepped out of vehicle with a canine at his side, everybody took notice. So the deterrence level that the canine brings to a police department or an aviation security or any environment such as that, is intangible.

Mr. CARNEY. In terms of maintenance cost, upkeep on a team.

Mr. PEARCE. In terms of maintenance cost, in speaking of rural responders, it is going to be costly as far as the initial procurement of those teams, it is just a canine in training, a well-trained canine, more or less educating the handler on the proper techniques of maintaining the dog is going to be rather costly up front in the initial $14,000 that you are going to spend to get that team, but it is no more different than a seasoned police officer that basically get out into the law enforcement department and goes to training through the academy, learns how to do his job, gets out there and gets experience underneath his belt. There is initial cost, there is initial investment of time up front, but as the years go on and the experience of a well-trained team, there is less time involved, less cost involved.

Mr. CARNEY. I yield to my friend, Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to offer a little story to kind of bring up why this subject is important to me. A little over a year ago, I got an earmark—and I am one of those Congressmen that will tell you I am proud of earmarks, I do not ask for anything I am not proud of and I went on the front page of the paper when I asked for it, I think it is part of my job. But in any event, I asked for an earmark and got it for Auburn University for genome research in catfish, for the safety issue. Auburn has been very involved in this research. Well, as you know, there are critics to earmarks in the country and they like to ridicule things like studying catfish genomes and such. I had a guy from Fox News Channel come and interview me to say isn't it a waste of money to study catfish genomes and I said well that depends on whether or not you are eating a catfish. That is true. We sell millions of pounds of catfish in this country and it is a food safety issue, just as tomatoes were a food safety issue for us a couple, 3 weeks ago.

Well, all that is to say that is the same way people view canines historically. You know, you talk about the need to increase the emphasis on this asset for the security of America, from an American security perspective and people do not really take it seriously until you start to think about the world that we live in post-9/11, and how valuable this asset has become and how relatively inexpensive it is and how very efficient it is.

In my trips to Iraq, I found that when you are going in and out of the green zone, whether you are going into one of the embassies, one of the former palaces of Saddam Hussein, any of the ports of entry, when we go into a mess hall, you have got canines sweeping everybody, because you never know who is going to be carrying a bomb. We have seen with the canines that Auburn has trained that are working over there, they sweep roads and buildings for the Marines, who have not had a single death since those canines have been in the field.

I regularly go out to Walter Reed and visit wounded troops and I can tell you, any one of those troops who lost a limb or was seriously maimed because their vehicle was hit by IED, that that road could have been swept by a canine right in front of them, and they would have been thrilled to have this asset. They will tell you it has international security implications for them.

These are very valuable assets. We look at the London bombings, the Spain bombings, and we see what happened in our country. These assets are needed in our transportation hubs, whether it is airport, bus station, train station. We are grossly underutilizing this asset. The Secretary of Homeland Security Chertoff acknowledged that.

Now with that backdrop, I want to discuss what Auburn is doing. I have found that there is a real gross inadequacy of assets in the field, canine assets. But more importantly from my perspective, we are overly reliant on foreign sources for the dogs that we train for Secret Service, ATF, Customs. I know the Defense Department gets all their dogs from overseas, as does TSA who relies on the Defense Department to procure their dogs. Tell me, do you know what percentage of the dogs that are being used, or can you estimate what percentage in the Federal service are coming from overseas? Tell me about why they go overseas to get them, Mr. Pearce.

Mr. PEARCE. Yes, sir. You know, you will raise your eyebrows when I say probably close to 95 percent would be my guess. The reason why I say that is not only are they going overseas, but they are procuring dogs from State-side vendors also, but those State-side vendors are also going overseas and getting the dogs that we think that they are getting from the United States. The dogs that they are getting overseas are basically bred probably to pass the statement of work which included the health of the dog and possibly a procurement test on performance. The problem that you run into when you procure those dogs with a procurement test is once they get them back here, they go flat in training. Basically they have learned all they could to pass the procurement test and did not have the ability to learn any more.

Additionally, they were not prepared properly to work in the environments that we may have here, such as an aviation security environment, a transit system, what-have-you. When you put the dogs in there, they will basically collapse on you there and will not work as hard or are not comfortable in that condition and basically cannot work as competently as you want them to.

Mr. ROGERS. Why are we going overseas to get them?

Mr. PEARCE. Because the channels have already been established, a history of people going over there for many, many years. They have got breeding lines that they are using for Belgian Malinois and German shepherds that have been there for some time and they basically produced those over the years.

Mr. ROGERS. I see my time has expired. I yield.

Mr. CARNEY. I know you have trained personally a lot of teams and there are 478 teams out there now roughly? We have 450 major airports. How long can a dog team stay on the job during the day?

Mr. PEARCE. It varies and depends on how long—and we call it basically sniff time, how long the dogs are required to work such as what we watched out earlier this morning, the dog working around the vehicle. It probably took the dog probably about 15 seconds to clear that vehicle. If you take that dog and work several vehicles right in a row and just continue the dog over and over, over a period of time you would want to start the dog out slow and actually build up to a certain amount of search time, rather than just all of a sudden throw the dog in a situation like that and require the dog to work a long period of time.

A good example of that is if you were a track person and you could run a mile, you could not necessarily run a marathon tomorrow. You would have to actually gradually go into that and that is basically what you need to do with the dog.

Mr. CARNEY. Do the nasal perceptors of the dog, receptors, get fatigued?

Mr. PEARCE. It is not so much the nasal receptors as it is the dog becoming fatigued itself.

Mr. CARNEY. Okay. You know, I am pleased to be a co-sponsor along with Congressman Rogers on the Canine Detection Team Improvement Act. I agree with Congressman Rogers on the necessity of improving this program Nation-wide, I think it is essential that we do not rely on overseas sources for what is essentially a national security asset. I do not want to ever find ourselves in a posi-

tion where we cannot access things that are vital to our security. From what I have seen in the last 2 days, these dogs are absolutely essential to national security.

So can you tell me in your own words, Mr. Pearce, why it is so important that we establish a national standard, national detection standard?

Mr. PEARCE. That is a very important point and in all aspects of what we are doing, from breeding to training of dogs and to also training handlers, which often is overlooked as well. As you know, the Scientific Working Group for Dog and Orthogonal Detection Guidelines, that association is basically building best practices for dogs to be trained by, for handler training, for breeding, those things. In the absence of a national standard, we have had things like in 2003 where we had—we saw a case where we more or less fraudulently produced dog teams and had them providing security services in our Nation's capitol and that was more or less the awakening point and made us all aware of what could actually happen. Just the title as a detector dog team or an explosive detector dog team does not necessarily mean the detector dog team is capable of working at a standard, and we need to get away from more or less the title and have a guideline that provides evaluations and provides—to ensure that dog teams are working at a certain level.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Rogers, anything further?

Mr. ROGERS. Yes, to follow up on that, I was surprised on my most recent trip to Iraq to find that most of the canine teams over there were on contract. We do not have a national standard that we require be met when we spend Federal money to put a canine asset in place, whether it is the Defense Department or domestically.

I know you were with TSA at one time and I want to talk a little bit about that. You know, these canine assets are currently used some, but not nearly as much as they should be, to the level that they should be, of course in our Nation's capitol and in Federal buildings, some transportation hubs and of course our borders coming in from other countries, ports of entry where we have ships and such.

But one of the areas I think people would most be interested in is the airplanes, people want to know that their airplane is going to be safe. I have been surprised to find that only in major hub airports, like in Atlanta and Reagan Airport and Dulles and O'Hare, do they have the very sophisticated screening equipment for the baggage. Obviously all passengers are screened carefully but baggage in some of the smaller airports is not. How realistic is it, do you believe, based on your experience, for us to get these canine assets in the level they would need in the small regional airports, like for example, Montgomery or Huntsville, to sweep the baggage? I explain this for folks who are not familiar with it, at Lackland Air Force Base, TSA has a training facility, they have a warehouse set up and they have the carts that carry your luggage from the airport terminal out to the plane to load it into the belly of the plane, they have rows of them just like you'd find in an airport, lined up along this warehouse. They can take that dog, turn it loose and it will sweep within 30 seconds down one side, back up, two or three

dozen of these carts with relative ease, if there is any drugs or explosives in there, they will recognize it immediately. My point is that is a very cost-efficient, inexpensive asset, but we do not have them in the smaller airports.

How massive a program would we need to be able to meet just that need? I'm not talking about our borders, not talking about our train stations and such, just the airports to make sure regional airports have a screening by canines. How many dogs are we talking about?

Mr. PEARCE. I am unaware of how many dogs it would take, Congressman, but I can tell you that has been looked at by TSA before and part of the problem is putting one dog in an airport, more or less is not giving them the ability to train and assist each other. Some of the situations we are talking about today as far as first responders, rural first responders, kind of gets into that area there, it is kind of hard to set up and they may want to look at some type of regionalization of rural areas to include those that are at the airport.

Recently we traveled to Pennsylvania to support a DHS mission to conduct a survey. There they had Pima 13 and Pima 13 basically is a conglomerate or cluster of counties that—13 counties that came together to provide each other training and networking and things of that nature and that worked out fairly well for them, as long as you could keep the counties close together and they could travel, because the frequency of training that they are going to need is critical. But I believe that to include the airports and some of those rural communities, it might be a good idea to cluster them together.

Mr. ROGERS. Talking about clustered utilization, how difficult is it to cross-train these dogs to do multiple things? For example, explosive detection but also be a cadaver dog, so if there was a tornado set down in east Alabama, the rescue folks would have that Federal resource to draw on. Is that cross-training too difficult?

Mr. PEARCE. Yes, sir, and a lot of times it is confusing for the dog. We do not recommend it. We actually recommend that there be one discipline taught to the dog. It is a lot easier if you tell me—and a lot of times, patrol is the other discipline that is placed with detection, such as explosives or narcotics. In a lot of cases, it is very time-consuming to train on both of those disciplines and it is a lot harder for us as a producer of those dogs to find dogs that meet the high standards of both those disciplines.

Mr. ROGERS. Do cadaver dogs require a particular breed or special type of dog?

Mr. PEARCE. No, sir, very similar to the type of dog that we are breeding here or you can purchase for regular detector dog work.

Mr. ROGERS. We had one of these field hearings in New Orleans about 2 years ago talking about post-Katrina and the inadequacy of their assets in trying to find all the bodies after that disaster. I guess this is more for you, Mr. Walker, talking about the need for more assets. Would a program that provided Federal cadaver dogs that were trained—paid for by the Federal Government, trained and then provided at no charge to a local rescue squad to be drawn upon in the event of a disaster be of benefit and is there anything like that out there now?

Mr. WALKER. There is not, sir. I think that when you look at canines, when you look at rural America and a lot of Alabama, we have obviously a number of canine teams in the State but they are an asset that is nice to have, not necessarily a need-to-have. I agree with you, I think we need to transition from the canines being a nice-to-have asset to a need-to-have asset, because they can do so much, you are absolutely right, post-Katrina, trying to cover that area along the Gulf coast and New Orleans, and even in Mobile. If we had had more dogs, better dogs for the sweep of tornadoes, missing people, I mean dogs are an incredibly valuable asset and I think that your legislation, I hope, will take it from a nice-to-have asset to a need-to-have asset and it will not only be useful in cities like Huntsville that have regional airports, but then also dispersed around the country.

Mr. ROGERS. Two more questions, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. CARNEY. Absolutely.

Mr. ROGERS. We have just put in this year's appropriation bill, $1.7 million for Auburn to construct a canine training program for local communities. If you had Dr. Gogue's ear—because you do right now—to say we would like you to construct this program to meet a specific need, what would those be? Mr. Knight, would it be a cadaver dog, would it be something for local sheriffs to have? What would you want? This is going to be a program for the Nation and just for rural communities, small communities.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Rogers, I think you have to have a mix and you would have to look at geography of the State. I think if you look at Alabama, we would want cadaver dogs and those that are post-incident probably down along our coastal counties; in Birmingham, Huntsville, Montgomery, the focus would probably be more on drug and police work dogs. So, you know, the State obviously represents a mix of interests and I think that we could take advantage of dogs with any number of capabilities. It would probably be tied to geography and with the existing assets that we already have.

Mr. KNIGHT. I agree, totally agree.

Mr. ROGERS. I have had some local sheriffs and police departments talk about the need to have these on a shared basis, to sweep schools. So every school would know that periodically unannounced there is going to be a dog coming through and sweeping for drugs in the hallways, as a deterrent.

Anyway, I would be interested in you thinking about that more. This has got to be a work in progress. We have to remember also we have, as I talked about with you, these major events in Alabama like the Iron Bowl or for that matter any home ball game at Auburn or Alabama, Talladega 500, where we have large numbers of people—no offense taken.

Mr. CARNEY. Your time is up.

[Laughter.]

Mr. ROGERS. We are not going to let him come back to Alabama any more. That we have to prepare for, you know, making sure that we have got appropriate security measures for that. Do you have that now? If you have got a big event coming, let us say for example, the Iron Bowl. I know that you take precautions in advance of that, prepare for potential threats. Do you have canines now that work those events?

Mr. WALKER. They do work the events, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. Where do you get them?

Mr. WALKER. The locals get them. The State has not requested them. At Talladega, for example, they will contract dogs and pay for them. You know, at any given Talladega race, we will have over 650 sworn law enforcement officers around the State and bordering States with all sorts of capabilities. Which raises an interesting point. You talk about a rural community that 340 days out of the year will have basic needs that most rural communities do, but for about 2 weeks out of every year, they will become the fourth or fifth largest city in the State of Alabama, talking about Talladega specifically. So when you look at a rural community that then has to displace surge capability and incorporate all sorts of different assets, that is a perfect example.

But I would like to take that on, for the record, Mr. Rogers, and be able to come back to you and talk to you about the canine assets that we have around the State, how we use them to surge, but then work with your staff to explore how we could get more canines in for events like Talladega.

Mr. ROGERS. What I am specifically looking for, and this is simply talking the breeding program capacity, I would like to know how many assets we have now and where you ideally would like to see us be as far as canine assets in this State. I would appreciate that very much.

My last area I want to probe on is with Mr. Pearce. Yesterday, watching the video on off-leash canines that are working over in Iraq with the Marines, it is great, and you gave us a demonstration this morning out here how they can sweep a building off leash. What I was thinking about when I was watching the demo yesterday is our ports of entry on the southwest border, specifically the major ones like El Paso, San Diego, where you have 10, 12, 15 lanes of traffic waiting to come into this country daily, all day long, backed up 20 and 30 cars. What we have now is typically one or two dogs that are rotated, they work 2-hour shifts amongst the lanes. We currently have spotters, the drug dealers put spotters on the Mexican side of the border that are walking amongst the cars like they are selling things, but what they are really doing is watching to see which lanes the dogs are in, so they can shift their carriers over to different lanes to make sure they go through a lane without a dog. I was curious yesterday with the off-leash dogs that were sweeping for explosives in Iraq, would they be able to work off-leash and meander amongst those cars on the Mexican side of the border and signal to a spotter that that car has something, so when it gets up to the front you can pull it off? How long do they work and is that a practical use for those dogs?

Mr. PEARCE. The problem I see with that is the fact that you have a vehicle and the possibility of getting your dog injured, things of that nature. However, you know, if you were going to do some type of an off-leash application, they would need to be trained the way that we trained those dogs for the Marine Corps project, just as you said, rather than just——

Mr. ROGERS. How would they be injured? They are just basically sitting in traffic.

Mr. PEARCE. Well, if the traffic is still, it is very feasible that you could do that because the quantities of narcotics that they are bringing through there would not be that hard for a dog to detect. So in that aspect, if you could lock the vehicles down to where they cannot move and then they were still for a moment, it would be very feasible to do that.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that is all I have.

Mr. CARNEY. Does this panel have any final comments? Mr. Schrader, Mr. Walker?

Mr. WALKER. Sir, I would just like to say we have had 1,800 Pennsylvanians that have gone through the training, we have had 14,570 Alabamians, so we are awfully grateful to have——

Mr. CARNEY. We will deal with that.

[Laughter.]

Mr. WALKER [continuing]. That facility right here in Alabama. Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you for taking your time to come to our great State.

Mr. CARNEY. My pleasure. Dr. Meehan.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PEARCE. Thank you very much, appreciate you being here.

Mr. KNIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNEY. The panel is reminded that this is a congressional hearing and we may have questions for you later that people will ask and we would like an expeditious reply in writing. If there are things you would like us to know that were not addressed today, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the staff of the committee or myself or Mr. Rogers.

There being no further business before the subcommittee, we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:45 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM HONORABLE BENNIE G. THOMPSON OF MISSISSIPPI FOR DENNIS R. SCHRADER, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Question 1. The CDP is authorized to administer training to students from overseas on a fee basis, could you please elaborate on this program?

Answer. The Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2008 authorized the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) to train Federal, private, and international responders, on a reimbursable, space-available basis. The inclusion of response professionals from other countries to the CDP to train with our students benefits the CDP and our traditional student population by allowing us to hear and learn new ideas from others. These new ideas enrich our instructional programs and make them even more robust for our Nation's responders. International students are enrolled only after appropriate clearances from the State Department are received via FEMA's Office of International Affairs. International responders participating in CDP training must be fluent in speaking and reading English, and are responsible for funding their air travel, food, and lodging costs.

Accurate recovery of participation costs for international students has posed new challenges. CDP staff has established tuition costs for 25 courses based on historical course delivery data. The CDP does not currently have a system in place to collect tuition. The CDP business office is currently working with the appropriate FEMA offices to establish the required business process for invoicing and collecting tuition. The CDP is dependent of FEMA business processes where currently, there is not a system in place to collect tuition for CDP students who would be required to pay tuition.

Question 2. Has CDP trained students from overseas? If so, how many and from what countries?

Answer. Yes. The following is a collective list of international students that have trained tuition-free since inception. Each of these participants were approved by headquarters and participated when there were availability of seats that did not impede State and local participation.

Year	Amount	Country
Fiscal year 2004	1	Canada
Fiscal year 2004	15	Trinidad and Tobago
Fiscal year 2004	1	United Kingdom
Fiscal year 2004	4	Sweden
Fiscal year 2005	16	Mexico
Fiscal year 2005	1	Saint Martin
Fiscal year 2005	4	Qatar
Fiscal year 2005	2	Sweden
Fiscal year 2006	7	Canada
Fiscal year 2006	1	South Korea
Fiscal year 2006	1	Spain
Fiscal year 2007	2	Canada
Fiscal year 2007	1	Taiwan
Fiscal year 2008	3	Israel
Total	59	

Question 3. What are CDP's plans to grow this program in the future?

Answer. CDP's ability to adequately conduct outreach and provide a long-term projection of our plans is hampered by the fact that the program is only authorized on a year-by-year basis. Unequivocally, CDP's first priority remains training Amer-

ica's first responders, however, because of the multi-faceted benefits associated with including international students, CDP hopes that it will be able to continue regularly hosting training partners. This will allow CDP to continually seek out new investivee methods that will provide additional training for all of our students.

FEMA Leadership is cognizant of the benefits that international students bring to CDP and FEMA. At Administrator Paulison's encouragement, the first Israel Defense Force Home Front Command responders were trained at the CDP in June of this year. This opened the door to training in Israel for FEMA personnel. In August of this year, Israel provided training on Israeli Home Front Command Operations to a FEMA Region 2 Disaster Operations staff member. The best practices and course work lessons learned from this training opportunity will be shared throughout FEMA.

To build on this and other successes, FEMA's Office of International Affairs works closely with the CDP's public/external affairs office to ensure that the international community is aware of the center's capacity to train international students.

Question 4. Can you describe the current staffing levels at the CDP and also describe the capability available there?

Answer. The Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) has an authorized Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing level of 45 with additional Federal support provided on-site by 5 FEMA FTE's not formally attached to the CDP staffing roll. The 5 FEMA additional FTE's include the Attorney Advisor and 4 Contracting Officers/Specialist who work as liaisons between the CDP and their Headquarters. The current vacancy rate is 16 percent with a goal of 5 percent by November 2008 based on current Human Resource efforts. In addition to the FTEs, the work force at the CDP contains a large number of contractor personnel. The CDP's contractor rolls have gradually increased over the past 10 years and now equate to approximately 1,000 contractor support personnel. This is due in part to the fact that the CDP has evolved from what was originated as a resident training center to a current state including both a vibrant resident and an immensely successful Nation-wide mobile training program. For fiscal year 2008, as of September 6, the CDP has provided training to more than 105,000 emergency responders through our resident, non-resident, and train-the-trainer programs.

The CDP offers cutting-edge training in weapons of mass destruction protection and response as well as all-hazards curriculum through its use of traditional classrooms, the Nation's only live chemical agent training facility dedicated to civilian training, and a full scoped hospital used solely for training public health professionals affording them the opportunity to experience mass casualty training in the real environment.

Question 5. How is CDP and FEMA reaching out to rural America and providing them with the training and resources they require?

Answer. The CDP is continuing discussions with its partners through the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium to create a program of instruction that specifically addresses the needs of rural response professionals. While rural responders do come to the CDP and participate in our resident training courses, the need across the country to accomplish rural response training is immense. To date, in fiscal year 2008, approximately 33,740 of the total 105,437 responders trained this year can be classified as "rural" responders. A longer-term review of our files reveals that approximately 48 percent of the responders trained through CDP courses over the past 8 years are classified as "rural" responders.

The CDP's success to date in reaching this important response demographic only bolsters the need to for the CDP to do more. However; if the CDP is to deliver the volume of training to address the needs of the rural responders adequately, the CDP must work in partnership with consortium members and others who can assist us in the collaborative delivery of training. Only then will we be able to increase our capacity to put the curriculum and experiential learning in the hands of rural responders at the local level. Working collaboratively with our committed partners represents the best strategy to meet this important need.

ADDRESSING SPECIAL TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS OF RURAL RESPONDERS

The CDP is both cognizant and respectful of the staffing limitations that affect rural responders. In many cases, rural departments cannot release staff to attend resident training or non-resident training offered by the CDP, even when the training is offered in the home jurisdiction. The CDP met with the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC) representatives on September 11, 2008, to establish formal relationships designed to provide training for rural responders. The concept for this initiative is focused on delivering advanced training to rural communities designed in a modular format. This training will incorporate elements of existing

training offered through the members of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC), the RDPC, and the CDP. The training courses currently offered by FEMA providers typically require a minimum of 8 hours for training and can take up to 40 hours, when coupled with travel time for resident courses. The modular training labs would travel to rural locations, offer training during non-traditional times (nights/weekends), and focus on critical skills associated with Decontamination, Hazardous Materials, Incident Management, Mass Casualty, and other topics identified in surveys conducted by the RDPC.

The modules would be packaged in 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-hour increments, to allow responders to select training that meets their time constraints and specific training needs. The outcome of this modular approach will not necessarily provide a comprehensive learning model consistent with the completion of an existing course; however, the training will provide rural responders an opportunity, over a series of days, to capture as many modules as their time and resources permit. These modules can be catalogued and packaged in a manner that achieves a course-completion certificate if the responder accomplishes the pre-determined modules over a pre-established time. Rural responders can also participate in any of the Independent Study courses offered by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) or the U.S. Fire Academy (USFA).

Assessing rural responder needs:

- DHS/FEMA funded the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium—the RDPC—led by Eastern Kentucky University's Justice and Safety Center.
- Partners include East Tennessee State University, Iowa Central Community College, Northwest Arkansas Community College and the University of Findlay, Ohio.
- RDPC sought to identify gaps in training for homeland security.
- Each RDPC member hosted a regional forum and distributed more than 3,200 surveys focused on all-hazards homeland security training needs.
- National Rural Emergency Preparedness Summit convened in September 2007.
- CDP conducts weekly sessions with resident students focused on identifying training gaps and specific challenges faced with obtaining training.
- CDP hosts annual focus groups with the State Administrative Agency (SAA) Training Coordinators to identify solutions designed to meet State training strategies encompassing both urban and rural training needs.
- Specific outcomes instituted to assist the rural response community include:
  - Offering mobile training in their jurisdiction, allowing multiple jurisdictions to train in a regional approach;
  - Conducting mobile training at night and on weekends to meet the volunteer response communities' schedules;
  - Offering courses in Train-the-Trainer formats;
  - Funding resident training (tuition, lodging, meals and travel).

Question 6. Based on your experiences, how do you see the role of detection canines in supporting the homeland security mission?

Answer. FEMA's National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System is a framework for structuring local emergency services personnel into integrated disaster response Task Forces. The 28 national US&R Task Forces have the necessary tools, equipment, skills and techniques, including disaster search canines, that can be deployed by FEMA to assist tribal, State and local governments in rescuing victims of structural collapse incidents or to assist in other search and rescue missions. Disaster search canines, along with Canine Search Specialists, deploy with Task Forces to provide critical victim search, reconnaissance, and rescue capabilities, through their ability to detect and alert to live human scent. The deployment of search and rescue canines in coordination with the US&R Task Forces is dependent upon availability and need. Each Task Force has the capability to respond with four Disaster Search Canine Teams (handlers and canines), but this can vary depending on the event. There are approximately 200 FEMA advanced-certified teams (dog and handler) in the US&R Response System.

The canines are owned and trained by either the volunteers or the organizations that contribute to the Task Force (local fire departments, EMS, or other first responder organizations). Canine Search Specialists on each Task Force usually provide their own dogs. FEMA does not own any detection, search, or rescue canines.

In the aftermath of bombings and other explosives incidents, explosives detection canines that are trained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) within the Department of Justice, play a critical role in detecting explosives residues and thereby furthering criminal investigations. These canines, and those trained by DHS to secure special events, airports and other high-threat venues, play an important role in protecting against and preventing bombings.

QUESTIONS FROM HONORABLE BENNIE G. THOMPSON OF MISSISSIPPI FOR JOHN C. PEARCE, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CANINE DETECTION TRAINING CENTER, AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Question 1. How many dog teams would be needed to cover regional airports in the United States, and what would be required to provide them?

Answer. We estimate that, at minimum, three canine teams are needed for each of the approximately 80 regional airports in the United States, or 240 teams, which includes both the dog and the handler. Depending on the size and traffic load of each regional airport, more than three canine teams may be needed for some of the facilities, but 240 teams is a baseline estimate needed to provide canine detection.

Training, including lodging, food and travel expenses, for each team is approximately $30,000 per team. Auburn University is well-positioned to provide the needed training, either at its current facilities or through certification of regionally approved training centers.

Question 2. How long can a dog work?

Answer. Numerous factors impact how long a dog may work, including the capabilities of the handler, the physical environment in which the team is operating, the level of training and the dog's physical condition. Auburn University's program prepares dogs for optimal performance in the environment in which they will perform. In addition, our research and experience has provided information that allows us to enhance the dog's physical stamina, endurance and performance.

There are two measures of "work" duration to be considered. One is duty-cycle or "sniff-time", which is the duration of any individual active search episode. The other is duty-duration or "shift-duration", which is the total amount of time on-duty between periods of extended rest (i.e. work-day duration). We have found appropriately conditioned dogs capable of duty-cycles of at least 1 hour and duty-durations of 18 hours with only short (i.e., 15–30 minutes) breaks.

However, for daily operations, it is anticipated that a 9-hour shift is reasonable. Using airport screening as an example, a minimum of two dog teams will be required for each location, assuming a 6 a.m. to 12 midnight operation. A third team should be available for rotation. This scenario is consistent with the three-dog team requirement for each regional airport.

A separate issue of time is the duration of service a dog can provide before retraining is necessary or retiring. With proper breeding and training, a detector dog should be capable of maintaining her detection capability and fitness for an effective service life of, nominally, 10–12 years of age. In order to accomplish this, the handler will need to be supported by a program that provides adequate oversight to include at least annual evaluations of team performance, adequate veterinary support, training aids, and opportunities for continuing education related to detector dog operations. It would be normal for at some point, usually in the first 2 years, of the working life of any detector dog team for some problem in performance of either the handler or dog to occur that requires the intervention of a canine training professional to correct.

Question 3. Give an example or tell us why a lack of training and certification standards is detrimental?

Answer. The lack of standards and uniform certification is perhaps the biggest problem in the detector dog community from a homeland security perspective. In other words, the extreme variability of quality with which canine detection is practiced means first responders and Government agencies can have no confidence in the level of training or efficacy of the dog team.

For example, dog teams are working in critical areas that are not trained or tested to effectively work in such a high operational tempo. Without training or certification standards that ensure operational effectiveness, it is unknown just how effective the team is performing. Training and evaluating are a necessity in the operational environment to ensure operational effectiveness of the canine team in detection of explosives.

There are a number of organizations that promulgate their own standards and conduct certification events for detector dog teams. Although all are well intentioned, these organizations vary significantly in the rigor and operational validity of the testing they conduct for certification. Some of the most prolific existing organizations also suffer from significant regional variability.

The DHS Office of Bombing Prevention, which has conducted national capabilities assessment and maintains a resource-typing database for bomb technicians, initiated a pilot capabilities assessment survey for canine detection. We recommend that, along with supporting the development of best practice guidelines, Congress encourage DHS to continue with this canine detection capabilities activity.

Auburn University has proven its effectiveness in detector dog training to meet the needs of first responders and public safety officials. As such, we are eager to assist in development of best practice guidelines and certification standards.

Question 4. Is it feasible to use unleashed dogs with remote sensors to screen cars for illegal drugs on the Mexican side of the border?

Answer. Using technology to instrument dogs with command-and-control, guidance and remote-sensing capabilities could serve as an effective means to quickly screen cars for illegal substances at border crossings. The remote sensing capabilities enhance and extend the applications for detector dogs, making it possible to screen large numbers of vehicles with guidance from a handler who is physically removed from the area being searched. Such a procedure would require certain safety precautions for the dogs, such as ensuring that the vehicles are stationary as they are screened.

Question 5. Can Auburn University produce and train or certify as many as 500 dogs per year and what would it take to do so?

Answer. Yes, and we would welcome the opportunity. Auburn University has a unique combination of needed capacity for facilities, a proven and readily expandable system for raising puppies to be detector dogs, and the support of a nationally recognized College of Veterinary Medicine. These factors combine to make Auburn University the optimal institution to economically and successfully launch a national detector dog production and training program.

If needed, Auburn University can provide a detailed budget and action plan on expansion of our current facilities to fulfill such a need.

I hope this provides further insight; however, should you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me. Again, thank you for this opportunity.

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