
**Governments of the District of Columbia,
Commonwealth of Virginia,
State of Maryland, and the
Office of National Capital Region Coordination**



National Capital Region's Homeland Security Senior Policy Group

Joint Testimony of
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Readiness in the National Capital Region

Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal
Workforce, and the District of Columbia
Senator George V. Voinovich, Chair
Senator Daniel K. Akaka, Ranking Member

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Room 562
Dirken Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
9:30 A.M.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member and members of the Committee thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss the important topic of preparedness in the National Capital Region (NCR)¹. It is an important discussion and a topic of added significance in light of the tragic attacks in London one week ago.

We have submitted our joint written testimony for the record. It is in the continuing spirit of cooperation between Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia that we opted for joint written testimony. We share goals, ideals and most importantly an intense commitment to the safety and security of the NCR that transcend the political boundaries that define the geography of the NCR.

We have four goals today. First we want to place our collective work in the NCR into a broader perspective impacted by recent history, current progress and future plans. Secondly, we want to help this Committee better understand the real and tangible actions we have taken to achieve higher levels of regional coordination to prevent attacks and if necessary, to respond. Third, is a desire to articulate progress by pointing to measurable steps taken and currently underway to improve the readiness of public and private sector and our residents across the region. Finally, is to reassure this Committee that we remain focused for the longer term efforts as we recognize that the threats will not diminish in the near term.

Overview

There has been significant activity across America since the tragic attacks of September 11, 2001. This effort has resulted in better-prepared communities, states and the nation as a whole – in both the public and private sectors. Most notably the awareness of the threat of terrorism permeates policy discussions at all levels of government, in the private sector, and with our residents. This awareness is maturing and is in itself a strong antidote for countering the number one technique of our enemies – fear.

There is one principle and one caveat that we must raise with the Committee. The phenomenal coordination challenge we face in the NCR is driven by our strict adherence to the principles set forth in the formation of our nation. There is no single person, office, level or branch of government vested with the ability to direct the full range of preparedness activities across all others in the region. So we adhere to the principle that, while challenging, collaboration and coordination must be followed lest we undermine the very values of governance America is seeking to preserve.

¹ Title 10, United States Code, Section 2674 (f)(2) provides the following definition:

The term "National Capital Region" means the geographic area located within the boundaries of (A) the District of Columbia, (B) Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties in the State of Maryland, (C) Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and (D) all cities and other units of government within the geographic areas of such District, Counties, and City.



The NCR presents a unique coordination challenge for those who protect its residents and institutions, especially from the threat of terrorism. Recognizing the evolving character of the threat and the need for new types of collaboration in planning among local, State, Federal, and private sector communities, the leadership of the District of Columbia, the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Department of Homeland Security's Office for National Capital Region Coordination are working in partnership to reduce the vulnerability of the NCR from terrorist attacks. Because of the need to adhere to and support America's decentralized structure of government, the NCR must operate as a collaborative enterprise to achieve increased levels of readiness that correspond to the priorities of all of its stakeholders.

There is much activity occurring in many domains. Efforts to improve Health and Medical Readiness are being supported by the Department of Health and Human Services. Actions to improve the military's readiness to support civil authorities at home, is being led by the Department of Defense. The Department of Homeland Security is of course focused in many areas ranging from intelligence sharing to border security. All of these activities impact our work in the NCR. States and communities are jointly responsible for creating synchronization among these sometimes disparate federal efforts.

Our testimony today will discuss the regional governance structure and processes that we have developed to provide for coordinated homeland security efforts within the NCR both prevention and response and recovery; the development of our improved comprehensive strategy for the NCR to establish performance goals, needs, and priorities and to assess the benefits of expenditures to enhance our capabilities; and particularly the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) homeland security grant funds which have been administered, monitored, and used since 9/11 to enhance the safety and security of the NCR.

You will hear from our discussion how our regional coordination developed and how it represents a complex structure. While we fully embrace the philosophy associated with

regionalism, we recommend caution in trying to apply our version of it to other regions in the country. A regional system needs to be developed organically from within; a cookie-cutter approach will likely fail. That said there may be elements of our system and lessons from our experience that could help other regions and we are happy to share.

Governance Structure

Since September 11, 2001, the NCR, comprised of 12 local jurisdictions, two States, the District of Columbia, all three branches of the Federal Government, non-profit organizations, private sector interests, and over four million Americans² has been recognized as a potential target of terrorism. In order to meet the evolving threats, the White House and Congress partnered to provide resources and focus for enhancing cooperation in the NCR. The White House Office of Homeland Security (now the Homeland Security Council) and congressional representatives from the NCR recognized the need of state and local entities to enhance coordination efforts across the region and provided tangible resources to achieve this.

Prior to 9/11, efforts existed to prepare individual jurisdictions in the NCR to counter the terrorist threat. These efforts, while laudable, did not enjoy overarching regional focus, instead they relied on the traditional nationwide approach of a more jurisdictionally independent approach. To provide that needed coordination, on August 5, 2002, in cooperation with the Advisor to the President for Homeland Security, the three regional government executives—the Governor of the State of Maryland, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Mayor of the District of Columbia—signed a joint statement to pursue *Eight Commitments to Action* to improve coordination in preventing, preparing for and responding to a terrorist incident (referred to in Attachment A).

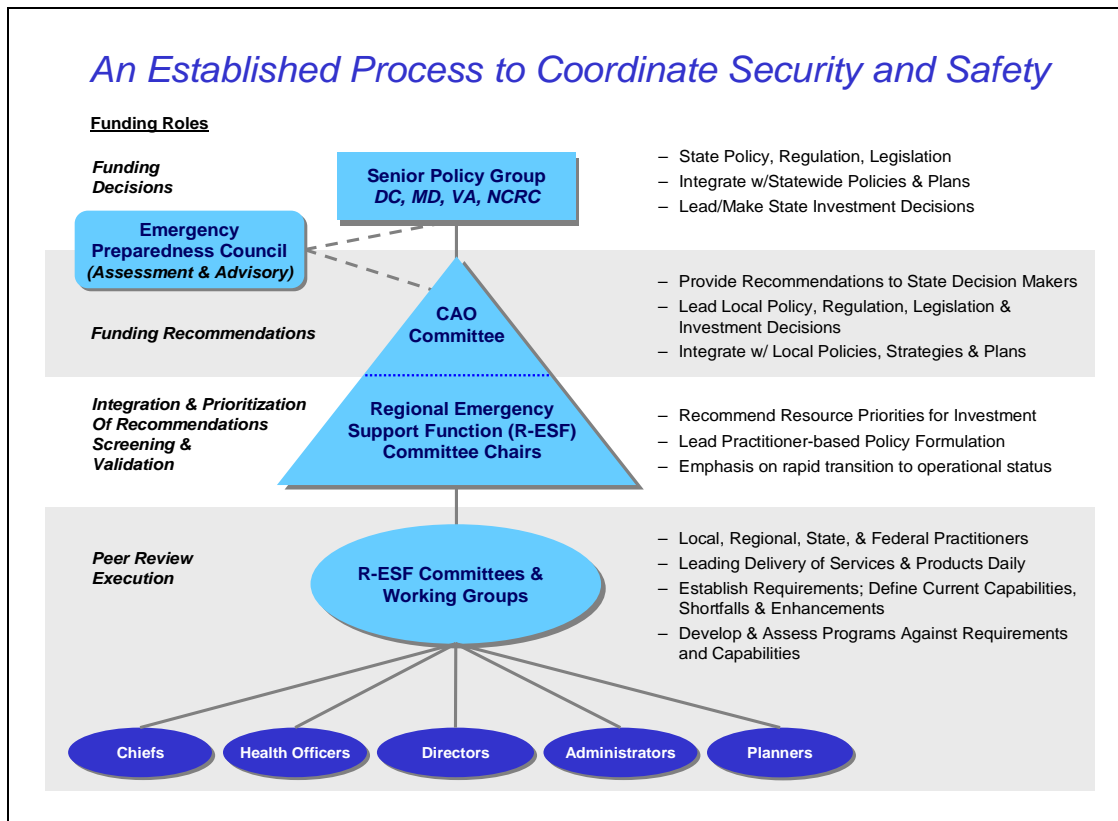
By endorsing the *Eight Commitments*, the Governors of Maryland and Virginia, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, and the Advisor to the President for Homeland Security established an NCR Senior Policy Group (SPG) to provide continuing policy and executive level focus to the region's homeland security concerns through fulfillment of the *Eight Commitments*. The SPG was also designed to ensure full integration of NCR activities with statewide efforts in Virginia and Maryland. Its membership was and is comprised of senior officials of the four entities, each with direct reporting to the principals. The SPG was given the collective mandate to determine priority actions for increasing regional preparedness and response capabilities and reducing vulnerability to terrorist attacks.

The creation of the SPG was a function of necessity to further decision making and coordination between local and state governments, the federal government, and the private sector. Through the evolution of regional activities, we have made enhancements to strengthen coordination with and among stakeholders at the local/jurisdictional levels. To this end, the SPG and Regional Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) Committee, which represents local government leadership,

² The following local governments are participating components of the NCR although they are not explicitly named in Title 10, United States Code, Section 2674 (f)(2): the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church in the Commonwealth of Virginia; and the cities of Bowie, College Park, Gaithersburg, Greenbelt, Rockville and Takoma Park in the State of Maryland.

formalized an NCR governance structure in February, 2004 (see Figure 1). This governance structure provides a coordinated and institutionalized process for evaluating regional goals and priorities, and ensuring the involvement of federal, State, District, local, and first responder level stakeholders. Benefits include improved decision-making, clear points-of-responsibility for action, and the opportunity of streamlined execution. Most notable it ensures that direction and oversight originate from the highest levels of local and state government.

Figure 1: National Capital Region Governance Structure



The SPG works extensively with local governments through the CAO committee. This evolving partnership allows for mutual responsibility and a persistent commitment to enhance emergency preparedness and response capabilities in the NCR. The CAOs are, in turn, informed and supported by Regional Emergency Support Function (R-ESF)³ Committees that represent each of the regional emergency support functions, such as health, law enforcement, and communications. Finally, the Regional Emergency Preparedness Council brings the perspectives of elected officials, the private and nonprofit sectors, and other regional government agencies to the table to complete the complex but comprehensive governance structure of homeland security in the NCR.

³ Further details regarding the Regional Emergency Support Functions and the R-ESF Committees of the NCR can be found in the *Regional Emergency Coordination Plan*, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Task Force on Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness for the National Capital Region, September 11, 2002.

The R-ESF Committees represent the fifteen support functional areas that may be needed during a regional emergency, and provide specific input on the regional capability of their respective R-ESFs. Each support function describes all of the agencies and entities that are involved, and designates a communication and coordination protocol tailored to the participating agencies and their roles and responsibilities during emergencies. The combination of the SPG, the CAO Committee, the R-ESF Committees, and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Council results in an NCR coordination structure capable of assessing both the needs for improving homeland security and developing the strategies and actions to respond to those needs.

The SPG is the final adjudicator for decisions, relying on extensive input and advice from the CAO Committee and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Council and others. Our Regional success, currently, is defined by progress in implementing regionally agreed-upon objectives and enhancing regional preparedness through the acquisition of equipment, planning, training and exercises. An indicator of the level of cooperation in the decision process is evidenced by the fact that the SPG and CAO's have rarely been in other than complete agreement on direction of efforts in the NCR. In those rare instances of disagreement, intense effort is placed in reaching a decision that balances the concerns of all involved.

There are a multitude of areas where we have achieved tangible progress. These achievements range from equipment enhancements for first responders to improved information sharing and coordination among communities, state and federal entities and the private sector.

The NCR equipment purchases have and continue to capitalize on the regional nature of the UASI grant by acquiring, allocating, standardizing and managing equipment and systems "regionally" to enhance preparedness, response and recovery efforts of responders in the NCR.

Over \$35 million has been allotted for equipment needs, including:

- Purchase of 1,000 800 MHz radios, which can be deployed in an emergency when all other means of communications are inoperable. These radios can be deployed in two hours, can be reprogrammed while they are in use, and have a 24 hour battery life. They can be used in an emergency and will allow all NCR area Emergency Medical Services, Fire, and Law enforcement officials the ability to communicate throughout the NCR.
- Procurement and installation of hardware and software elements necessary to establish interoperable voice and data communications for emergency response officials within the NCR. This project will make emergency data available in real time to all jurisdictions in the NCR. It will lead to the implementation of diverse, robust physical networks over which shared data and messages reach their destinations via the implementation of interoperability hub for data sets and messaging functions exchanged by regional partners.
- Purchase of Level A/B gear for tactical NCR Law Enforcement groups (SWAT/ERT), which will allow law enforcement groups to function in the midst

of a Chemical, Biological Radioactive, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) attack. This gear is for mid level CBRNE attacks and will allow law enforcement to maintain a stable number of personnel on site during or after an emergency.

- Purchase of Level C gear for NCR law enforcement officers in the NCR based on gap analysis. NCR police departments identified the need for fitted mask for all sworn officers that can be used in the midst of a biological and chemical attack.
- Purchase of Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) for the health community within the NCR.
- Purchase of approximately 9,000 second sets of turnout gear for all NCR jurisdiction Fire and Emergency Medical Services responders. The second set of turnout gear will allow first responders who have been exposed to biological and chemical agents to be decontaminated and change into the second turnout suit, consequently, saving the responders time and allowing responders to maintain a stable number of personnel on site during or after an emergency.
- Purchase of 444 hospital surge beds to be added to the hospitals within the NCR. This has significantly increased the bed space available in the NCR to handle a significant increase of patients during a terrorist attack. The NCR is adding approximately 444 more beds in FY 05.

The region ensures preparedness planning efforts are fully coordinated and appropriately integrated so that preparedness and prevention planning efforts are consistent, non-duplicative, efficient and effective. Over \$25 million has been allotted to planning efforts and include the following activities:

- Development of a Citizen Education Campaign that will teach all citizens how to prepare for a major disaster, communicate emergency preparedness information, and outreach to the private sector regarding emergency information. The goal of the campaign is to have 50% of the residents within the NCR to be prepared for a disaster.
- Design disaster preparedness educational materials entitled “Masters of Disaster”, which will become part of NCR area schools’ curricula for grades K through 12. Currently, 4,341 full kits have been distributed to 459 schools, and kits for home-schooled children are available in public libraries in Alexandria City, Fairfax County, Loudon County, Prince William County, City of Falls Church, and Montgomery County.
- Enhancement of NCR emergency preparedness planning and training for first responders to meet the needs of people with physical disabilities and other special needs. First responders will be trained to assist mentally and physically challenged individuals in emergencies as well as senior citizens who have special needs.
- Development of protocols for nonprofit organizations that address service coordination, financial donation management, volunteer management, and in-kind

donations of goods and services within the nonprofit sector throughout the NCR. This project has created an NCR disaster case management cooperative defining how services will be coordinated on behalf of disaster victims. The cooperative has improved NCR non-profits' ability to mobilize and manage volunteer assistance by executing a Mutual Aid Memorandum of Understanding, which establishes the procedures to be used to by non-profit service providers during disaster response and recovery, "transparency" principles for handling cash donations, and a communications plan for public education about in-kind donations.

- Development of a standardized critical infrastructure assessment as well as the execution of an assessment of NCR emergency management capabilities. The goal of this project is to foster a more secure, resilient region by strengthening the infrastructure of emergency services, water, energy, health services, telecommunications, banking/finance, and transportation. This project will assist business owners/operators in strengthening critical infrastructures to achieve the highest level of cost effective security. Moreover, these assessments will assist regional decision makers identify and determine vulnerabilities and develop cost effective mitigation options.
- Development of a syndromic surveillance and notification system for public health emergencies. This project will help detect unusual disease patterns at their early stages by conducting an around the clock regional surveillance across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Development of a patient surge capacity system across the emergency medical services, public health, and hospital sectors in the NCR. This project includes development of an electronic bar-code/scanner patient tracking system and will allow area hospitals and emergency medical officials to identify victims, track casualties, maintain a patient triage, and assist with rapidly referring patients to alternate centers.
- Development of designated secure and safe locations, where residents can receive comprehensive assistance in their efforts to locate family members. The goal of this project is to consolidate the victim data, missing person data, and inquiries from various sources, which could include shelters, hospitals, medical examiners' offices, and other locations.
- Support to the National Organization on Disabilities in the development and coordination of the first national conference to focus on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery specific to the unique emergency needs of people with disabilities. Over 300 participants attended the conference and Secretary Tom Ridge, former Secretary of Homeland Security, spoke at the conference.

Nearly \$2 million has been designated for training and exercise needs with focus on a cross-jurisdictional program for first responders and has provided coordinated, consistent, standardized training to meet regional homeland security training requirements. The NCR also exercises our response capability to ensure continued improvement through a rigorous corrective action

program, measure current capability and provide realistic scenarios to area responders, government officials, business and nonprofit sectors and the public.

Through discussion and experience, the leadership of the NCR continues to discover additional issues requiring regional focus. The following paragraphs provide a preliminary outline of those project areas that have thus far been identified as requiring additional attention and resources. For these reasons, the NCR has created the following regional working groups that provide oversight:

Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) - Critical Infrastructure Protection is a high priority in the NCR. Specific industries, assets and systems are designated “critical infrastructures” because their functioning is essential to the lives, health, economic well-being, national security and morale of American citizens. Multiple national directives highlight CIP and call for public/private collaboration and a risk management approach in addressing CIP issues. The NCR has included CIP as a key objective in its Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy. The NCR’s *Eight Commitments to Action* identified CIP as a key issue area and the NCR Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy set as strategic objectives to “reduce the NCR’s vulnerability to terrorism” and “minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur” – both objectives of CIP.

The CIP mission for the NCR is complex. Activities and programs to address CIP must cross jurisdictional boundaries in order to adequately address both independent issues as well as interdependencies among sectors, and must engage public, private, and non-profit stakeholders. There are many national initiatives and policy directives that need to be addressed and incorporated as well as state and local priorities that must be integrated. The NCR CIP working group has been developed to coordinate CIP across the region. This working group is necessary to provide a resource for the region with regard to CIP issues as well as to provide direction for the NCR.

We have organized the NCR CIP working group with equal representation from Maryland, Virginia, District of Columbia, and the ONCRC. The Committee has taken responsibility for coordinating the development and execution of the regional CIP strategy that builds on the utilization of non-UASI funding awarded prior to the development of the current UASI program.

Interoperability & Communications – We created the NCR Interoperability working group to provide oversight in the development of a secure/private technology infrastructure required to facilitate interoperability for voice, data, and video across the NCR as well as interconnecting emergency operation centers, public safety communication centers (911 operations), other public safety/emergency management offices and first responder field/mobile operations. The project includes several components including interconnecting fiber “I-Nets” and other jurisdiction networks; providing a NCR wide interconnected broad-band wireless infrastructure facility; and developing a web based, neutral host data-exchange standards and tools.

Exercises and Training - Planning and resources are needed to regularly conduct full-scale exercises that engage the entire region including federal capabilities. Work is needed to

transform standards and approaches across the region to reflect national strategy requirements. The NCR must also create a consistent methodology to document lessons learned from actual emergency events and exercises in order to incorporate these lessons into training standards and protocols. For these reasons, the SPG and the CAOs jointly appointed an NCR Emergency Training and Exercise Oversight Panel whose responsibilities are to:

- Develop a remedial action program capturing and addressing issues identified during exercises, special events, and emergencies, than coordinating corrective actions to mitigate those issues;
- Develop a clearing-house for training that provides training courses listed and/or recommended by priority for all disciplines;
- Support a gap analysis that produces a priority-based NCR training plan across all ten Office for Domestic Preparedness disciplines;
- Develop plans that integrate state and local training and exercise programs, focus on drills and skill development, and identify major exercise series for annual continuity; and
- Coordinate development of regional exercises and keep a master calendar.

We are significantly enhancing regional management and planning by a regional strategic planning process currently underway. A revised regional strategic plan will integrate pre-existing federal, State, local, regional, and practitioner-level planning documents into one unique revised strategic plan for the NCR, while also infusing newly identified goals and priorities for regional preparedness. Such a plan would serve as a guiding framework, and will include measures of performance against which we can evaluate ourselves as a region.

Strategy

Historically, the NCR has led the nation in the development of regional homeland security planning and coordination. This leadership is driven by necessity—the NCR requires a coordinated regional strategic plan to guide a unified, long-term effort to ensure the NCR is safe and secure from all hazards.

NCR homeland security partners are currently working closely together to develop a regional strategic plan that establishes preparedness priorities and objectives for the entire region. The regional strategic plan will integrate pre-existing federal, State, local, regional, and practitioner-level planning documents into one unique strategic plan for the NCR, while also infusing newly identified goals and priorities for regional preparedness. A key building block for regional coordination was the UASI grant.

The 2003 UASI grant required a regional needs-assessment and an Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy. The *FY 2003 Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy* (Attachment A) for the NCR was developed based on the results of the needs assessment completed by member jurisdictions in July 2003—the first region in the nation to do so. The *2003 Strategy* included three objectives:

- Prevent terrorist attacks within the NCR;
- Reduce the NCR's vulnerability to terrorism; and
- Minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.

The *2003 Strategy* incorporated three separate influences: (1) the *National Strategy for Homeland Security* that identifies a perspective and direction for regional initiatives; (2) guidance from NCR executives represented in the *Eight Commitments to Action*; and (3) the *Statewide Template Initiative* with its checklist of planning guidance from State and local public safety emergency managers.⁴

The *2003 Strategy* focused on developing true regional capability—capability with benefits across the NCR, not simply for a particular jurisdiction. The *2003 Strategy* embraced the concept of a national incident management system that defines a common terminology for all parties, provides a unified command structure, standards and qualifications, and is scalable to meet incidents of all sizes. This integration was a program milestone toward regional leveraging of pre-existing State, District, and local initiatives to create, for the first time, a cohesive regional identity.

While the *2003 Strategy* was a major milestone for the NCR, as noted in GAO Report GAO-04-433, *Management of First Responder Grants in the National Capital Region*, the *2003 Strategy* was but a first step. Since summer 2004, regional homeland security and public safety officials and private sector leaders actively sought to create the nation's first integrated and comprehensive regional homeland security strategic plan. Dissimilar from past planning efforts, it utilizes a more collaborative, consensus-based approach to decision-making while also leveraging and strengthening the various public and private communities throughout the region that make up the NCR homeland security partnership.

In contrast to the *2003 Strategy*, these strategic efforts, now documented in draft form entitled *2005 National Capital Region Homeland Security Strategic Plan*, will be a comprehensive document that defines priorities and objectives for the entire region without regard to any specific jurisdiction, discipline, or funding mechanisms to:

- Establish coordinated regional goals and priorities for the enhancement of homeland security and first responder capabilities in the NCR
- Guide, integrate, and ensure the efficient spending of homeland security grant and budget dollars throughout the NCR
- Provide a means to measure the actual improvements made to NCR preparedness

This strategy is based on seven guiding principles which provide a framework for decision making. These include:

⁴ *Statewide Template Initiative*, President's Homeland Security Advisory Council, March 2003.

1. Strengthen regional coordination among all partners to gain synergy while sustaining jurisdictional authority and enhancing capabilities.
2. Implement homeland security policies and programs while maintaining our constitutionally-based society, particularly the civil rights and civil liberties of the NCR's diverse population, including persons with disabilities.
3. Prepare for "all-hazards", including man-made and naturally occurring emergencies and disasters.
4. Advance the safety and security of the NCR in ways that are enduring, relevant, and sustainable.
5. Foster a culture of collaboration, respect, communication, innovation, and mutual aid among all homeland security partners across the NCR.
6. Adopt best-practice, performance-based approaches to staffing, planning, equipping, training, and exercising for all homeland security partners.
7. Strive for an optimal balance of preparedness capabilities across the NCR that recognizes differing risks and circumstances, and leverages mutual aid agreements.

These efforts seek to integrate pre-existing federal, State, local, regional, and practitioner-level planning documents into one unique revised strategic plan for the NCR, while also infusing newly identified goals and priorities for regional preparedness. The *2005 National Capital Region Homeland Security Strategic Plan* will serve as a guiding framework. NCR priorities will be aligned against the five strategic goals: awareness, prevention, protection, response, and recovery.

Related to the strategic framework, is the creation of integrated, multi-jurisdictional performance measures to effectively monitor and assess execution of the regional strategic plan. In addition to integrating guidance from DHS national efforts such as *HSPD-7 Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization* and *HSPD-8 National Preparedness*, the region is also undertaking a more detailed assessment, entitled Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP).

The EMAP process combines a self assessment, documentation, and peer assessment to provide an independent evaluation of a jurisdiction's disaster management capabilities and a roadmap for continuous improvement. Standards found in EMAP are consistent with the NFPA 1600 Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs, 2004, which was recommended by the 9/11 Commission as the national preparedness standards. EMAP will measure the status of current capabilities in the NCR against the established EMAP standards, assist in identifying and prioritize future improvements activities, and enhance strategic framework measures for resource allocation.

Results from the EMAP assessment combined with the development of national preparedness standards will provide specific guidance in determining the region's homeland security needs and in allocating resources associated with FY 2006 homeland security grants and beyond.

UASI Grant Funding

In order to provide for effective and cohesive oversight of Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security activities, the Federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires that DHS grants be funneled through a single State Administrative Agent (SAA). When the program was initiated, the Governor's of Virginia and Maryland, and the Mayor of the District of Columbia jointly agreed that the District serve as the Administrative Agent for UASI grants awarded to the NCR. The reason was simple. To do otherwise would have risked simply allocating funds to portions of the region based on population or some other factor and not adhering to Congress's stated intent that these funds support regional preparedness.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of Homeland Security within the District (here in referred to as the NCR SAA) has been created to serve the regions needs. The purpose of the NCR SAA is to provide, by agreement with all participants, a comprehensive grant oversight at the regional level. The following represent the NCR SAA's specific priorities:

- Improve the region's administration of UASI grant funds for disaster response and recovery capabilities by developing and maintaining an understanding of integrated operational capability developed in coordination with our Federal and State partners, volunteer organizations, universities, and the private sector.
- Assist all levels of regional government, first responders, volunteer groups, universities, and the public in meeting the responsibilities of public emergencies and challenges, through program management and coordination activities.
- Use baseline program evaluation strategies (e.g., Emergency Management Accreditation Program standards) to identify emergency preparedness areas in need of improvement and to provide a methodology for strategic planning and resource allocation.
- Provide critical decision support and information to policymakers, the public, the media, and involved local and state agencies by maintaining strict spending and activity records and by building partnerships with and among regional entities, Federal agencies, other responder organizations, and the private sector.

We have made it the priority of the NCR SAA to make certain that all UASI grant funds are expended within the timeframes of the grants and currently issued extensions. This office is the reliable source of information on the amount of first responder federal grant funds available to each NCR jurisdiction, budget plans, and criteria used to determine spending priorities and actual expenditures. Such a readily available, reliable source of information was identified not to exist in the May, 2004 GAO report entitled, "Management of First Responder Grants in the National Capital Region Reflects the Need for Coordinated Planning and Performance Goals."

The region has obtained numerous benefits with the creation of the NCR SAA. For example, the region has:

- Been able to target opportunities that provide the ability to improve skills, build resources, and establish meaningful and effective partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions and Federal and private/public organizations;
- Demonstrated accountability related to grant funding and other legal, regulatory, and related obligations; as well as heighten the region’s ability to track expenditures, resources, and data, which will aid in reporting against grant (and other types of) requirements;
- Aided leadership and front-line managers in strategic, policy, and operational decision-making, through enhanced access to better, more reliable grant funding data;
- Been able to respond to inquiries from and be proactive in presenting information to policymakers, the media, grant providers, partner organizations, residents, and other involved and interested parties; and
- Most importantly, enhanced the overall readiness and capability to protect residents, institutions, and property against risks posed by terrorism, natural disasters and emergencies, and technological incidents that could disrupt, impede, or threaten the safety and well-being of the NCR.

As outlined in Table 1, the NCR SAA is currently managing 4 Department of Homeland Security grants totaling \$174.4 million dollars for the NCR for enhancing emergency preparedness and response associated with terrorism. In addition, the Regional Mass Transit Grant totaling \$13.6 million should be awarded within weeks and will be the responsibility of the NCR SAA.

Table 1⁵

Grant	Effective Award Date	Period of Performance	Grant Award
03 Urban Areas Security Initiative I	12/30/2003	6/1/03 - 5/31/05	\$ 18,081,000
03 Urban Areas Security Initiative II	12/30/2003	7/1/03 - 6/30/05	\$ 42,409,851
04 Urban Areas Security Initiative	3/29/2004	12/1/03 – 11/30/05	\$ 31,921,361
05 Homeland Security Grant Program*	3/1/2005	10/1/04 – 3/31/07	\$ 82,000,000
<i>*05 HSGP Subprograms:</i>			
	NCR (UASI)	\$77,500,000.00	
	NCR (Non-profit Allocation)	\$4,500,000.00	
Total Current Grant Programs administered by NCR SAA:			\$ 174,412,210

The UASI grant program provides direct financial assistance to address specific regional needs. In fiscal years 2003 and 2004, the NCR received and appropriated a total of \$92.4 million in UASI grants to support efforts for enhanced regional preparedness and security. The FY 2005 UASI funding increment, totaling \$82.0 million, will first be used to ensure uninterrupted

⁵ The 03 Urban Areas Security Initiative Parts I and II have been extended through November 30, 2005 and December 31, 2005, respectively.

progress for ongoing projects begun in 2003 and 2004, particularly in the areas of equipment and training. Further requirements, needs, and project proposals for FY 2005 have been finalized and sub grants issued. Of the total \$174.4 million UASI grant funds that have been allocated to the NCR since FY 03, approximately 94% of the funds have been either expended or obligated (refer to Table 2 below).

Table 2

Grant	Grant Award	Amount Expended	Amount Obligated*	Remaining Balance
03 Urban Areas Security Initiative I	\$ 18,100,000	\$ 11,503,301	\$ 5,597,268	\$ 999,431
03 Urban Areas Security Initiative II	\$ 42,400,000	\$ 18,904,149	\$ 23,285,414	\$ 210,437
04 Urban Areas Security Initiative	\$ 31,921,361	\$ 350,002	\$ 26,889,241	\$4,482,118
	\$ 92,400,000	\$ 30,757,452	\$ 55,771,923	\$5,691,986

Grant	Grant Award	Amount Expended	Amount Obligated*	Remaining Balance
05 Homeland Security Grant Program	\$ 82,000,000			
NCR	\$ 77,500,000	\$ -	\$ 77,500,000	\$ -
NCR Non Profit	\$ 4,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4.5
	\$ 82,000,000	\$ -	\$ 77,500,000	\$ 4,500,000

Currently, the NCR expenditure rates are approximately 17.6%, per the Federal Office of Management and Budget. Contrary to limited analyses, there are no significant dollars that have not been programmed. Following the receipt, management, and expenditure of the Congressional appropriation, the region was deliberate in its execution of the homeland security grant program. It is for that reason that the region compares unfavorably when measured solely by grant expenditures as reported by the Office of Management and Budget. Funds are only deemed expended when the goods or services have been received, invoices have been received and paid, accounting entries and completed within the financial system, and quarterly reports are sent to the federal government. Basing an evaluation of any region's homeland security spending purely on its rate of official expenditure is therefore not the best measure of its effectiveness. Analysis of funds allocation and progress on each project better provides an evaluation of how and whether the funds are being spent. Analysis of outcomes will better determine if they have been spent wisely.

Other enhancements associated with the administration of the homeland security grant funds through the NCR SAA include:

- A Request For Application (RFA) process has been strengthened in which NCR local government entities or nonprofit organizations located within and serving the needs of the NCR can submit applications for funding consideration within an identified time frame. The process allows for all entities' needs to be reviewed and prioritized for the District and the region and has decreased the time between grant award to a majority of sub grants being awarded within the required 30 day period.
- Over 80% of grant funds for FY 05 have been allocated to state and local needs within 60 days of the grant award as required by the DHS grant guidelines.
- 03 and 04 grant awards have been reviewed regarding the status of their spending and associated deliverables. Awards that cannot meet the grant timeframes are currently being reprogrammed to allow for all dollars to be expended within the grants' periods of performance.
- A review of procurement processes ensures that lengthy procurement delays are not encountered. This review was the result of an eight-month delay associated with the procurement of the Regional Citizen Education contract.

In the coming year, focus will include strengthening of the region's *overall* management and reporting mechanisms. We are currently taking several steps to develop these enhanced mechanisms, such as the building of program management capacity to assist with managing and monitoring the region's homeland security grant activities, and the development of a regional web portal to create a collaborative environment for NCR stakeholders.

The program managers will ensure effective and efficient implementation of projects and provide a mechanism for oversight and management from the program perspective. The project managers will work closely with local/jurisdictional personnel to perform the following duties:

- Facilitating decision-making and outcomes through interfacing with NCR Homeland Security Partners on an ongoing basis;
- Coordinating with state and local leaders to ensure that projects and tasks⁶ meet collective state and/or regional strategic goals and objectives; and ensuring smooth integration of diverse program projects and tasks;
- Coordinating with federal leaders through the Department of Homeland Security ONCRC to ensure that projects meet collective state and/or regional strategic goals and objectives;

⁶ NCR projects and tasks are defined as those that the SPG itself is responsible for (e.g., UASI) and other areas for which planning and subsequent funding is required. This will include having knowledge of supporting and separate initiatives at the state and federal levels, but responsibility is for the planning and supporting of initiatives and actions required by the NCR as a whole.

- Keeping all NCR partners informed of ongoing actions, progress, and issues and decisions of the SPG;
- Communicating changes in federal Homeland Security Grant Program guidance;
- Obtaining quick feedback on ideas, plans and actions;
- Monitoring the master database on an ongoing basis by:
 - Inputting and tracking progress;
 - Identifying projects in danger of not meeting milestones;
 - Engaging jurisdictional project managers and regional committees; and
 - Recommending alternate spending decisions.
- Providing meeting support to include, but not be limited to the development of monthly meeting materials, scheduling assistance, and coordination with other stakeholders

The portal will serve as an information management tool for accessing and sharing regionally-relevant data, to include comprehensive information on the availability and spending of federal grant funds in the NCR, and regional priorities for determining future spending of those funds.

The NCR as a Model for the Nation

Multi-state and multi-jurisdiction efforts, such as emergency operations plans and communications systems, combined with the accomplishments of individual committees, have placed the NCR at the forefront of emergency preparedness. The NCR's achievements, including unprecedented coordination across states, jurisdictions, and committees at all levels, allowed us to lead the Nation in our level of emergency preparedness. We build on a foundation of shared leadership and responsibility to secure our region by limiting the impact of disasters before they occur; we are prepared to respond quickly and effectively when disasters occur with well trained and equipped teams; and continue to address gaps in hazard preparedness within the NCR.

The NCR has not relied upon solely on homeland security grant funding to realize this unprecedented level of preparedness. We have also used state and local dollars and other grant funds. Many jurisdictional agencies – such as law enforcement, fire, emergency management, transportation, and health – have units dedicated to homeland security and many others support our efforts through their day-to-day work.

To date, our accomplishments are significant:

- We have developed a collaborative culture for planning, decision-making, and implementation across the NCR.
- We continue to inform and prepare the community of those who live, work, and visit within the region and engage them in the safety and security of the NCR.

- We are developing an enduring capability to protect the NCR by preventing or mitigating “all-hazards” threats or events.
- We are strengthening a sustained capacity to respond to and recover from “all-hazards” events across the NCR.

That said, the costs of simply maintaining this level of preparedness are significant, and the NCR requires continued funding for its efforts. With the proper financial support, management, and coordination, the NCR will be able to remain a national leader in emergency preparedness; allowing it to successfully protect the citizens, workers, and visitors in the National Capital Region from risks of all kinds.

We thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today on this important issue and are available for any questions that you may have.