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THESIS

**STATE AND URBAN AREA HOMELAND SECURITY
STRATEGY v3.0: EVOLVING STRATEGIC PLANNING**

by

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March 2006

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**STATE AND URBAN AREA HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGY v3.0:
EVOLVING STRATEGIC PLANNING**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis proposes to overhaul the state and urban area homeland security strategy program by improving the strategic planning process, guidance and assistance, and strategy review in collaboration with state and local stakeholders. Federal, state, and local reviewers regard the current state and urban homeland security strategies as generally inadequate and indicative of limited strategic planning processes. Comprehensive, enterprise-wide homeland security strategies are essential in coordinating preparedness efforts and limited resources. A collaborative effort between the federal government and state and local stakeholders would promote a value innovation in strategic planning that will transform state and urban area homeland security strategies.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBRNE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FY	Fiscal Year
G&T	Office of Grants and Training
GRT	Grant Reporting Tool
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration
HSAP	Homeland Security Assistance Plan
HSGP	Homeland Security Grant Program
HSPD	Homeland Security Presidential Directive
NLD	Nunn-Lugar-Domenici
ODP	Office for Domestic Preparedness
OSLDPS	Office of State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support
SHSAS	State Homeland Security Assessment and Strategy
SHSP	State Homeland Security Program
TCL	Target Capabilities List
UASI	Urban Areas Security Initiative
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indeed one's faith in one's plans and methods is truly tested when the horizon before one is the blackest.

Mohandas Gandhi

A. RESEARCH QUESTION

According to federal, state, and local strategy reviewers, the current state and urban area homeland security strategies are generally inadequate and do not reflect enterprise-wide¹ strategic planning. These strategies vary in quality and utility and result in an ineffective patchwork of objectives and resource requests across the nation. The purpose of this thesis is to review the process through which these inadequate plans develop and make recommendations to dramatically improve the coordination and cooperation among various levels of government that will be needed to produce integrated and effective homeland security strategies.

This thesis proposes that a revamped homeland security strategic planning program must be developed in collaboration with state and local stakeholders if the federal government is to significantly improve the quality of state and urban area homeland security strategies. The thesis proposes a sequence of steps that focuses on improving the planning processes for state and urban area homeland security strategies for 2007, 2008, and 2009.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Although the Department of Homeland's (DHS) Office of Grants and

¹ The term "enterprise-wide" is defined in this thesis as across the entire sector of emergency responder disciplines, agencies, and stakeholders within a given state or urban area.

Training (G&T), formerly the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP),² program that helps develop state and urban area homeland security strategies has become more robust since its inception in 1999, the varied quality and utility of the strategies produced indicates that there certainly remain areas for improvement. Given the continued risk of terrorism, natural disasters, and other emergencies as well as the need to align the nation's preparedness efforts to the National Preparedness Goal and National Priorities, comprehensive strategies are necessary to guide the application of limited resources for national preparedness.

According to federal, state, and local strategy reviewers, there are several major problems with the current state and urban area homeland security strategies. First, the plans do not adequately address the risks underlying both terrorism and natural disasters and have become much too focused on terrorism to the detriment of all hazards preparedness. The strategies also typically target local needs rather than broader, multi-jurisdictional risks. In addition, the planning process is only now becoming more focused on aligning state and local preparedness efforts to the seven National Priorities, as defined in the National Preparedness Goal. Finally, the strategy requirements and criteria guiding the strategic planning process are not clear and concise.

This thesis will examine the development of these strategies from 1999, before the tragic events of 9/11 and the concentrated focus on terrorism, through current discussions in 2006 that redirect attention toward National Priorities. First, the thesis provides a summary of state homeland security strategic planning efforts in 1999, when the federal government initiated the national

² Throughout this thesis, the office's actual name at the time of the specific strategy process discussed will be used. The Office of State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support (OSLDPS) was established in April 1998 at the Department of Justice (DOJ). This office was renamed the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP) and then transferred to DHS in March 2003 with the passage of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296). In 2003, ODP was consolidated with the Office of State and Local Government Coordination (SLGC) into the Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness (SLGCP). In December 2005, ODP was incorporated under the Preparedness Directorate as the Office of Grants and Training (G&T).

process. Second, it examines changes that occurred in 2003, especially in terms of responding to new targets and objectives. Third, the thesis focuses on the strategy realignment that began in 2005 in response to the National Preparedness Goal and the National Priorities and is intended to guide security planning processes through the next triennial sequence. In each period, the analytical focus will be on the framework of the strategic development process, how the content of the strategy documents meet the goals and objectives of that framework, and how the federal government conveyed the required content for the plans, provided guidance and assistance to state and local authorities to help them meet the desired targets, and how the federal government reviewed and evaluated the submitted plans.

Research for this thesis includes an examination of numerous G&T documents, including strategy development guidance, grant guidance and application kits, strategy planning assistance documents and presentations, strategy review criteria, and the results and questionnaires of strategy review boards. The research also involves interviews and discussions with G&T leadership and staff, as well as briefings to governors on implementing the National Preparedness Goal from the state and local perspective. The author had special access to the DHS state and urban area homeland security strategy program team, which is involved in each step of the strategic planning and review process. Finally, the author is also able to draw upon personal observations and experiences as a G&T employee.³

C. THESIS ORGANIZATION

As a study of the development of the planning process under different national priorities, the thesis is organized chronologically to reflect both historical contexts of security planning and organizational frameworks. The next chapter

³ Although the author is an employee of G&T, the perspectives, opinions, and evaluations expressed here do not necessarily reflect the official views of DHS or G&T. The author is solely responsible for the content and analysis.

outlines the various iterations of the state and urban area homeland security strategy process in 1999, 2003, and 2005. The major subsections focus on the federal guidance and assistance provided and strategy review process.

The third chapter describes the common, significant issues identified with each of the homeland security strategies within the context of process, guidance and assistance, and strategy review. Lessons learned, trend analysis, and common findings documents from each iteration help to frame these issues.

The fourth chapter proposes a tiered homeland security strategic planning program that would address the identified issues and improve both the overall strategic planning process as well as the strategies themselves. Recognizing that states and local strategic planners have varying degrees of expertise and experience, a tiered approach will facilitate the most appropriate application of strategic planning assistance resources.

The last chapter presents an implementation plan based on these key recommendations for a new state and local homeland security strategic planning program to achieve a desired end state where this strategic planning occurs regardless of the presence of federal requirements. The thesis will discuss opportunities for future research into the strategic planning process to facilitate continuous learning and improvement. These final reflections will also consider just how useful a revamped planning process will be for state and local jurisdictions. The value to these non-federal jurisdictions is the ultimate test of the usefulness of the recommendations.

The appendix provides several documents used during the homeland security strategy review process. These provide context on content requirements, guidance, and review process guidelines.

II. HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGIC PLANNING

A. INTRODUCTION

Coordinated homeland security preparedness efforts are guided by comprehensive strategic plans that are developed through enterprise-wide strategic planning. G&T has required a homeland security strategy for each state since 1999 and each urban area since 2003. This triennial process has evolved significantly since it began in terms of process, guidance and assistance provided, content and focus of the strategy, review process, and DHS support for strategy development.

Prior to the attacks of 9/11 and the subsequent formation of DHS, the nation was engaged in domestic preparedness efforts focused on weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The primary concerns at the time were the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway system on March 20, 1995 and the truck bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. In response to these attacks, the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 1996, or Nunn-Lugar-Domenici amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 1997, initiated the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici (NLD) Domestic Preparedness Program to enhance the capacity and preparedness of state and local jurisdictions to respond to WMD incidents of domestic terrorism.⁴ This program provided training for emergency responders in the nation's 120 largest cities to deal with WMD terrorist incidents as well as personal protection, decontamination, and detection equipment. The NLD program was originally administered by the Department of Defense, but was transitioned in FY 2001 to the Department of Justice's Office of State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support. Since 1999, this office's mission has been to prepare the nation to prevent, deter, and respond to attacks of terrorism.⁵

⁴ Center for Nonproliferation Studies, <http://cns.miis.edu/research/cbw/120city.htm> (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

⁵ Office of Grants and Training, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/welcome.html> (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

Currently, G&T administers several homeland security grant programs, the largest of which is the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), which includes the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI).⁶ In FY 2005, HSGP funding was approximately \$2.5 billion, with approximately \$1.1 billion for SHSP and \$855 million for UASI.⁷ In addition, G&T administers programs focused on supporting emergency management, firefighters, transit and port security, infrastructure protection, interoperable communications, and technical assistance. All of these preparedness programs have either been initiated or considerably augmented since the attacks of 9/11. Since the attacks of 9/11, G&T has provided approximately \$10.5 billion of funding to state and local emergency responders from FY 2002 through 2005, as outlined in Table 1, with SHSP and UASI funding representing nearly 70% of all G&T preparedness funding support provided to state and local emergency responders.⁸

Table 1: ODP Grant Program Funding for Fiscal Years 2002 through 2005

Dollars in thousands						
Grant program	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total	Percent of total funding
State Homeland Security Grant Program	\$315,700	\$2,066,295	\$1,675,058	\$1,062,285	\$5,119,338	48.9
Urban Areas Security Initiative	^a	596,351	671,017	854,657	2,122,025	20.3
Subtotal	315,700	2,662,646	2,346,075	1,916,942	7,241,363	69.2
Other Grants	119,979 ^b	388,081 ^c	1,349,491 ^d	1,361,637 ^e	3,219,188	30.8
Total	\$435,679	\$3,050,727	\$3,695,566	\$3,278,579	\$10,460,551	100.0

Source: ODP.

Table 1. Office of Grants and Training Grant Programs⁹

⁶ Office of Grants and Training Programs, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/grants_programs.htm (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

⁷ ODP, "FY 2005 HSGP Guidance and Application Kit," (Washington D.C., 2005). Available online at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/grants_programs.htm#fy05hsgp (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

⁸ General Accounting Office Report 05-530 T, "Homeland Security: Management of First Responder Grant Programs and Efforts to Improve Accountability Continue to Evolve," April 12, 2005. Available online at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05530t.pdf> (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

⁹ Ibid.

Considering the extensive amount of funding provided, the continued risk of terrorism and other emergencies, and the significant preparedness needs across the nation, it is essential that preparedness funding and resources be guided by a comprehensive preparedness strategy. G&T first began requiring state homeland security strategies in 1999 to guide allocation of preparedness resources. These strategies have been updated on a triennial process that has evolved and matured since its inception.

The current purpose of the state and urban area homeland security strategy is to provide a blueprint for comprehensive, enterprise-wide planning for homeland security efforts and to provide a strategic plan for the use of related federal, state, local, and private resources within the state and/or urban area before, during, and after threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.¹⁰

B. V1.0: 1999 STATE DOMESTIC PREPAREDNESS STRATEGY

Recognizing that preparedness funding being provided to states needed to be guided based on state and local assessments and needs, ODP initiated the state domestic preparedness strategy process in 1999. Contingent upon receiving funds through the \$51.8 million FY 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program, states were required to develop two separate but related documents: a state-based needs assessment and a Three-Year Statewide Domestic Preparedness Strategy.¹¹ These efforts were specifically terrorism-focused.

The needs assessment required each state to assess its requirements for equipment, first responder training, and other resources involved in a WMD response. States were asked to work with local emergency responder agencies

¹⁰ ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy Guidance on Aligning Strategies with the National Preparedness Goal." (Washington D.C., July 22, 2005).

¹¹ Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support, "FY 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program Application Kit." (Washington, D.C., 1999). Available online at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/99kit.pdf> . (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

and public health personnel to collect the required data and use this information. As part of this process, states were provided grant funding to conduct assessments of threats, vulnerabilities, capabilities, and needs.¹² The data from this needs assessment would form the basis for developing the state domestic preparedness strategy.

The strategy would provide a “roadmap” of where each state would target grant funds received under the grant program and provide ODP a guide on how to target ODP emergency responder training and other resources. Although these strategies were intended to guide state and local preparedness efforts for the three year period of 1999, 2000, and 2001,¹³ only four states had submitted strategies to ODP prior to the attacks of 9/11.¹⁴

Although the official reasons behind this low initial strategy submission rate were not documented by ODP, possible explanations include the difficulty state and local strategic planners encountered with the new paradigm of preparedness, the relatively low priority afforded to preparedness strategic planning, difficulty in coordination across agencies and emergency response disciplines, or perhaps a lacking sense of urgency prior to the attacks of 9/11. Regardless of the underlying reasons, the sense of urgency provoked by 9/11 resulted in every state and territory except nine to submit a domestic preparedness strategy within six months of the attacks.¹⁵

1. Strategic Planning Guidance and Assistance

The federal requirement to develop a preparedness strategy was outlined in the FY 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program grant application kit. Beyond the guidance outlined in the grant application kit and the

¹² ODP, “SHSAS Urban Area Jurisdiction Handbook.” Available online at <http://www.shsasresources.com/>. (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

¹³ Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support, “FY 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program Guidance and Application Kit.” (Washington, D.C., 1999). Available online at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/grants_programs.htm#fy1999 (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

¹⁴ ODP, “State Strategy Status Report” (Washington, D.C., 2002).

¹⁵ Ibid.

ability to leverage these grants funds to conduct the needs assessment and strategic planning, there was no additional formal federal assistance provided to states. Although the ODP program managers assigned to each state were available to assist as requested, they were not required to actively engage states on this matter until after the attacks of 9/11 nor were they specifically trained in strategic planning development. Table 2 summarizes the required content of the 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Strategy as outlined in the grant guidance.

Section	Content
Identification of Jurisdictions	States must include the capabilities and roles of the various jurisdictions throughout their state.
Coordination	State efforts to coordinate program activities among emergency response services should be described.
Problem Statement	The state should first define the nature and extent of the potential terrorism problem within its borders and analyze how efficiently and effectively jurisdictional emergency response resources can respond to WMD terrorism incidents.
Current Efforts	State should identify its current activities and level of effort directed toward domestic preparedness.
Resource Needs	State should identify gaps in services and areas where additional resources are needed to develop a system-wide capability to respond to WMD terrorism incidents.
Areas of Greatest Need	States should establish criteria for determining priority areas of greatest need.
Statewide Strategy Impact on the Response to WMD Terrorism	States should assess the impact and effectiveness of the current strategy on the problem.
Goals and Objectives	A comprehensive strategy should contain broad-based goals in the areas of training, exercises, equipment, technical assistance, and planning. For each goal, the State should establish objectives and an implementation plan.

Table 2. 1999 Domestic Preparedness Strategy Requirements¹⁶

¹⁶ ODP, "FY 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program Guidance and Application Kit." (Washington, D.C., 1999). Available online at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/grants_programs.htm#fy1999 (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

2. Strategic Plan Review

The responsibility for evaluating each strategy was delegated to the State Administrative Agency (SAA), which is a Governor-appointed entity responsible for administering ODP preparedness funding. The strategy review criteria were left to the discretion of each individual state and no additional federal guidance was provided beyond the initial guidance included in the grant application kit. Although ODP reviewed the strategies after they were submitted to determine potential areas for future federal assistance, a review of the strategies revealed that they were of widely varying quality and content, and that an analysis of the strategies for trends of national capabilities and needs could not produce meaningful results.¹⁷ ODP had intended to analyze the strategies to develop a state assistance plan for guiding the application of federal resources customized for each state,¹⁸ but was unable to implement the plan due to lack of resources.

C. V2.0: 2003 STATE AND URBAN AREA HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGY

The next iteration of the homeland security strategic planning process was initiated in 2003 with ODP's State Homeland Security Assessment and Strategy (SHSAS) program to develop terrorism-focused homeland security strategies that would guide preparedness efforts in 2004, 2005, and 2006. After the attacks of 9/11, homeland security funding had been significantly increased and ODP's FY 2003 preparedness funding totaled approximately \$3.1 billion.¹⁹ Given this significant increase in funding, it became even more critical to ensure that funding was being utilized in a coordinated manner.

The SHSAS program included updated assessments to reflect the post-9/11 threat and vulnerability environment. In addition, the creation of the UASI program geared towards the highest risk urban areas in FY 2003 resulted in a

¹⁷ Conversation with David Kaufman, Deputy Director, Preparedness Programs, G&T (Washington, D.C., November 9, 2005).

¹⁸ ODP, "Strategy Review Process Memo" (Washington, D.C., December 31, 2001).

¹⁹ As outlined in Table 1.

requirement for urban areas also to develop a homeland security strategy.²⁰ Like the 1999 strategic planning process, states and now urban areas were allowed to utilize grant funding to support all assessment and strategy activities.

The SHSAS process was intended to foster a strategic planning process by facilitating a risk, needs, and capability assessment for states and urban areas. These comprehensive assessments could subsequently be utilized to guide the development of broad-based goals that address areas of response enhancement as well as objectives for each goal. Plans, organizations, equipment, training, and exercises were areas for consideration in reducing shortfalls in response capabilities.

This strategy document was the end product of a process guiding states and urban areas through evaluating information about potential threat elements; conducting vulnerability assessments for potential targets; developing planning scenarios; identifying current equipment, training, exercise, planning, and organizational capabilities; and determining equipment, training, exercise, planning, organizational, and technical assistance needs.²¹ From a federal perspective, this assessment and strategy process would ideally assist the equitable allocation of federal resources and support achieving a fair return on funding allocation.

1. Strategic Planning Guidance and Assistance

Like the 1999 strategies, the 2003 strategies were still terrorism-focused and an all hazards approach was not required. Contrary to the 1999 process, the SHSAS program provided extensive guidance and assistance to state and local jurisdictions. Not only were several guides disseminated, but a multitude of technical assistance workshops were also provided at no cost to the state or

²⁰ There were 30 urban areas identified in FY 2003 UASI and the list was expanded to 50 in FY 2004 UASI. These new urban areas in FY 2004 were also required to develop a homeland security strategy through a similar process with similar requirements as the FY 2003 process. Therefore, the FY 2004 process is not addressed separately in this thesis.

²¹ ODP, "SHSAS Urban Area Jurisdiction Handbook." Available online at <http://www.shsasresources.com/> (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

local jurisdictions.²² Table 3 summarizes the required strategy content and definitions as outlined by SHSAS documents.

Section	Content
Purpose, Vision, Focus, and Coordination	▪ Purpose describes the desired outcome. ▪ Vision describes the guiding image or statement that should orient the state or urban area's energies, serve as a guide to action, and challenge and inspire the state, urban area, and jurisdictions to want to achieve the state and/or urban area's goals and the National Preparedness Goal. ▪ Focus describes how the state or urban area intends to achieve its vision and pursue specific actions items supporting the homeland security strategy. ▪ Coordination describes what agencies will participate in the planning process and how they will be coordinated. ▪ In addition, the strategy was encouraged to outline the effort, description of jurisdictions involved, and regionalization and mutual aid.
Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Steps	▪ A goal is a statement of aim or purpose included in the strategic plan. ▪ An objective sets a target level of performance over time expressed as a tangible, measureable objective, against which actual achievement can be compared, including a goal expressed as a quantitative standard, value, or rate. ▪ Implementation steps provide the road map to accomplish the goals and objectives
Evaluation Plan	▪ An evaluation plan must be included for monitoring progress, compiling key management information, tracking trends, and keeping the strategy on track.

Table 3. 2003 Homeland Security Strategy Requirements²³

Compared to the 1999 strategy guidance, ODP provided more focused guidance to outline the strategy requirements, including requiring goals and

²² Most of these resources, including guidance documents and workshop presentations are still available online at <http://shsasresources.com/>.

²³ ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy: Guidance on Aligning Strategies with the National Preparedness Goal" (Washington, D.C., July 22, 2005).

objectives that were measurable and achievable. The new requirement for an evaluation plan reinforced the need for strategic planners to monitor progress.

The 2003 program also had more robust assistance that provided several workshop options, including assessment and strategic planning, at no cost to each state and local jurisdiction. Table 4 outlines these assistance options.

Option	Topic	Purpose	Workshop length	Deliveries per state
1	State Orientation: Understanding and Implementing SHSAS	To introduce key state and local personnel to the overall SHSAS process	1 day	1 per state
2	Jurisdiction Assessment (Train-the-Trainer)	To train state and local personnel who would assist local jurisdictions in completing the assessment	2 days	5 per state, any mixture of option #2 and #3
3	Direct Jurisdiction Assistance	To provide direct assistance to any local jurisdiction on any aspect of the assessment process	2 days	
4	State Strategy Workshop	To assist states to synthesize local jurisdictional data to formulate/update the strategy	2 days	1 per state

Table 4. 2003 SHSAS Technical Assistance Workshops²⁴

Compared to the 1999 process, the 2003 SHSAS program had a more intensive assessment phase focusing on risk, needs, and capabilities. As Table 4 illustrates, only two in seven assistance workshops were focused on strategy development even after including the orientation workshop while the rest were focused on conducting the assessment. In addition, all of the SHSAS resource

²⁴ ODP, "ODP Fact Sheet. State Homeland Security Assessment and Strategy Technical Assistance" (Washington, D.C., 2003)

handbooks²⁵ were focused on conducting the assessments while none specifically focused on strategic planning. The presentation provided at the strategy workshop was available as a reference tool for strategic planners.²⁶ ODP also provided a strategy template that was widely utilized by state and local planners in drafting their strategies, which is evident from many state and urban area strategies resembling the ODP strategy template.²⁷

2. Strategic Plan Review

In FY 2003, ODP established a formal review process by founding a DHS Strategy Review Board, which consisted of two dozen representatives from various DHS components and agencies, such as Customs and Border Protection, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Office of Intelligence and Analysis, Office of Infrastructure Protection, Science and Technology Directorate, the Transportation Security Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. Secret Service.²⁸

Submitted strategies were initially reviewed by the state's ODP Preparedness Officer²⁹ for completeness prior to the review board. Reviewers then examined each strategy prior to the review board meeting. At the meeting, an overview and assessment of the strategy was provided to the review board by the Preparedness Officer. After a board discussion, each strategy was voted approved, conditionally approved, or not approved. The review criteria were not further defined beyond the initial strategy content requirements outlined in the SHSAS planning documents.

²⁵ The three SHSAS resource handbooks provided to state and local strategic planners included the State Assessment Handbook, Jurisdiction Assessment Handbook, and Reference Handbook. All three are available online at <http://www.shsasresources.com/>.

²⁶ The UASI Technical Assistance Workshop Presentation and UASI Program 2003 Assessment and Strategy Overview Presentation are all available online at <http://www.shsasresources.com/>.

²⁷ Conversation with Deana Byard, Analyst, G&T (Washington, DC. February 27, 2006).

²⁸ ODP, "Strategy Review Board Presentation" (Washington, D.C., January 14, 2004).

²⁹ Each state and corresponding urban area has an assigned ODP Preparedness Officer who is responsible for managing preparedness programs awarded to that state as well as functioning as a liaison with other G&T and federal programs.

After the strategy was approved, the goals, objectives, and implementation steps became critical inputs into ODP's Grant Reporting Tool (GRT) and Homeland Security Assistance Program (HSAP). The GRT tracked grant fund expenditures against the stated goals, objectives, and implementation steps of the strategy and provided DHS with the ability to track trends in fund expenditures to guide future policy and program development. The HSAP, as the successor to the 1999 state assistance plan, was intended to match available federal resources to meet the needs outlined in the state or urban area strategy. Essentially, an effort was made to provide states and urban areas with an awareness of existing federal assistance programs and resources that could be leveraged to address identified needs.

D. HSPD-8: DEFINING NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

When the President signed Homeland Security Preparedness Directive (HSPD)-8 on December 17, 2003, the nationwide preparedness effort would be redefined through the National Preparedness Goal and its supporting documents.³⁰ In addition, HSPD-8 required that all federal preparedness³¹ assistance be predicated on the adoption of statewide comprehensive all hazards preparedness strategies to the extent permitted by law.

The National Preparedness Goal outlined seven National Priorities³² that would guide and focus national preparedness efforts. HSPD-8 also required DHS

³⁰ National Preparedness Goal-supporting documents include the National Planning Scenarios, Target Capabilities List, and Universal Task List, and are available online at <http://www.ilis.gov> or <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/assessments/hspd8.htm>.

³¹ HSPD-8 defines preparedness as "the existence of plans, procedures, policies, training, and equipment necessary at the Federal, State, and local level to maximize the ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from major events." p. 2.

³² As outlined in the Interim National Preparedness Goal, issued March 31, 2005, the seven National Priorities are 1) Implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and National Response Plan (NRP), 2) Expanded regional collaboration, 3) Implement the Interim National Infrastructure Protection Plan, 4) Strengthen information sharing and collaboration capabilities, 5) Strengthen interoperable communications capabilities, 6) Strengthen chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) detection, response, and decontamination capabilities, and 7) Strengthen medical surge and mass prophylaxis capabilities. p. 10.

to review state strategies to ensure they were consistent with the National Preparedness Goal. In addition, the strategies should assess the most effective ways to enhance preparedness, address areas facing higher risk, especially to terrorism, and should also address local government concerns and Citizen Corps efforts.³³ Figure 1 illustrates the role of the state and urban area homeland security strategy in the overall National Preparedness System.

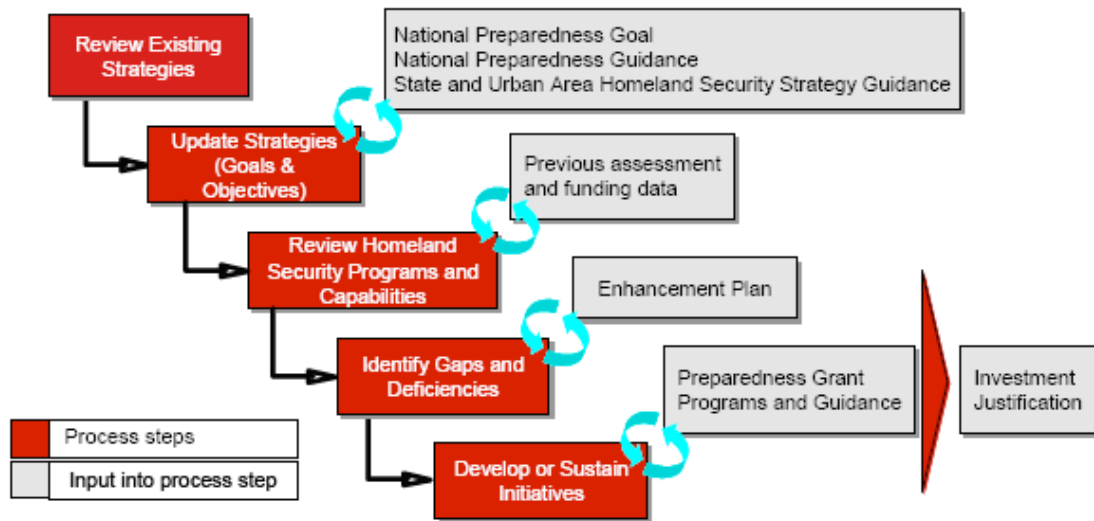


Figure 1. National Preparedness System³⁴

E. V2.1: 2005 STRATEGY UPDATE

In FY 2005 with the release of the interim National Preparedness Goal, states and urban areas were required to update their 2003 strategies to align with the National Priorities³⁵ outlined in the National Preparedness Goal. While the

³³ "Homeland Security Presidential Directive-8." (December 17, 2003). Available online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/12/20031217-6.html>. (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

³⁴ ODP, "FY 2006 Homeland Security Grant Program Guidance and Application Kit." (Washington, D.C. December 2005). Available online at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/grants_programs.htm#fy2006hsgp (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy Review Process Update and Results Presentation." Office for Domestic Preparedness. Washington, DC. December 2, 2005.

requirement was merely to align existing goals, objectives, and implementation steps with the National Priorities, some states and urban areas also took this opportunity to update the entire strategy. The update guidance was provided during July 2005 and strategy revisions were originally due by September 30, 2005. However, a one month extension was provided due to the nationwide response and recovery efforts to Hurricane Katrina. The strategy review board evaluated the updated strategies in November 2005.

1. Strategic Planning Guidance and Assistance

On July 22, 2005, ODP issued the State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy Guidance on Aligning Strategies with the National Preparedness Goal. This guidance document provided instructions for states and urban areas to place their preparedness efforts within the context of the new HSPD-8 doctrine and update their existing homeland security strategies to ensure they support the Goal and reflect the seven National Priorities. This update guidance was followed shortly by a second document, the User's Manual, which outlined the specific mechanics of updating the state or urban area strategy that was resident on G&T's online portal.

The guidance reaffirms that the purpose of the homeland security strategies is to 1) provide a blueprint of comprehensive, enterprise-wide planning for homeland security efforts, and 2) provide a strategic plan for the use of related federal, state, local, and private resources within the state and/or urban area before, during, and after threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.³⁶ An accompanying user manual provided step-by-step instructions for updating the strategy in ODP's online system.

Since the only requirement for updating the strategies was to align the existing goals, objectives, and implementation steps with the National Priorities, the content was not required to be different from the FY 2003 strategies.

³⁶ ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy: Guidance on Aligning Strategies with the National Preparedness Goal" (Washington, D.C., July 22, 2005).

However, several states and urban areas did take the opportunity to completely revamp their strategies. In these instances, there was no additional guidance from ODP regarding the specific content of the strategies.

For the 2005 strategy update process, no additional strategic planning assistance, like the 2003 workshops, was provided to state and local planners beyond the two update documents. Although ODP Preparedness Officers were available to provide assistance as needed, they still did not have any specific strategic planning background or training beyond the strategy requirements criteria.

2. Strategic Plan Review

With the FY 2005 strategy update, ODP expanded the strategy review board to include reviewers from DHS, other federal partners, as well as state and local peers. This Homeland Security Strategy Review Board was comprised of thirteen peer reviewers and sixty-two federal reviewers. Meeting throughout the month of November 2005, this review board evaluated the state and urban area strategies based on previously established review criteria. Except for the changed review board composition, the 2005 review process was similar to the 2003 review process.

The 2005 strategy review process objectives were to provide effective review of each strategy to assess its quality, ensure that the strategies met ODP guidelines and requirements, develop a consensus on the outcome recommendation, and provide constructive communication on the review outcome and the reviewers' recommendations to the states and urban areas.³⁷

At the strategy review board, the Preparedness Officer presented the strategy, addressed any questions from the review board, and proposed an outcome determination. The review board deliberated and produced a recommendation. While these recommendations had to receive final approval from G&T, the board's recommendations were unanimously accepted without

³⁷ ODP, "Preparedness Officer Strategy Review In-service Brief" (Washington, D.C., October 27, 2005).

modification. The strategy review board could make one of three recommendations for each strategy reviewed. Table 5 provides the criteria for each recommendation as well as the results of the 2005 strategy review board.

Review Board Recommendation	Recommendation Criteria	Number of Strategies
Approved	▪ Meets all requirements in the strategy guidance ▪ Constructively supports the Goal and the seven National Priorities ▪ Comprehensively addresses the state's or urban area's unique issues, needs, and capabilities	30
Conditionally Approved	▪ Strategy may not adequately describe the efforts that the state or urban area plans to undertake in support of the Goal or one or more of the seven National Priorities ▪ Strategy may not be comprehensive in scope	49
Not Approved	▪ Does not address the requirements outlined in the strategy guidance	19

Table 5. 2005 Strategy Review Board Outcome Definition³⁸

Figure 2 depicts the relative distribution of the strategy review outcome. In the next chapter, reasons nearly one fifth of the 2005 state and urban homeland security strategies were not approved will be discussed.

³⁸ ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Review Process Update and Results Presentation." (Washington, D.C., December 2, 2005).

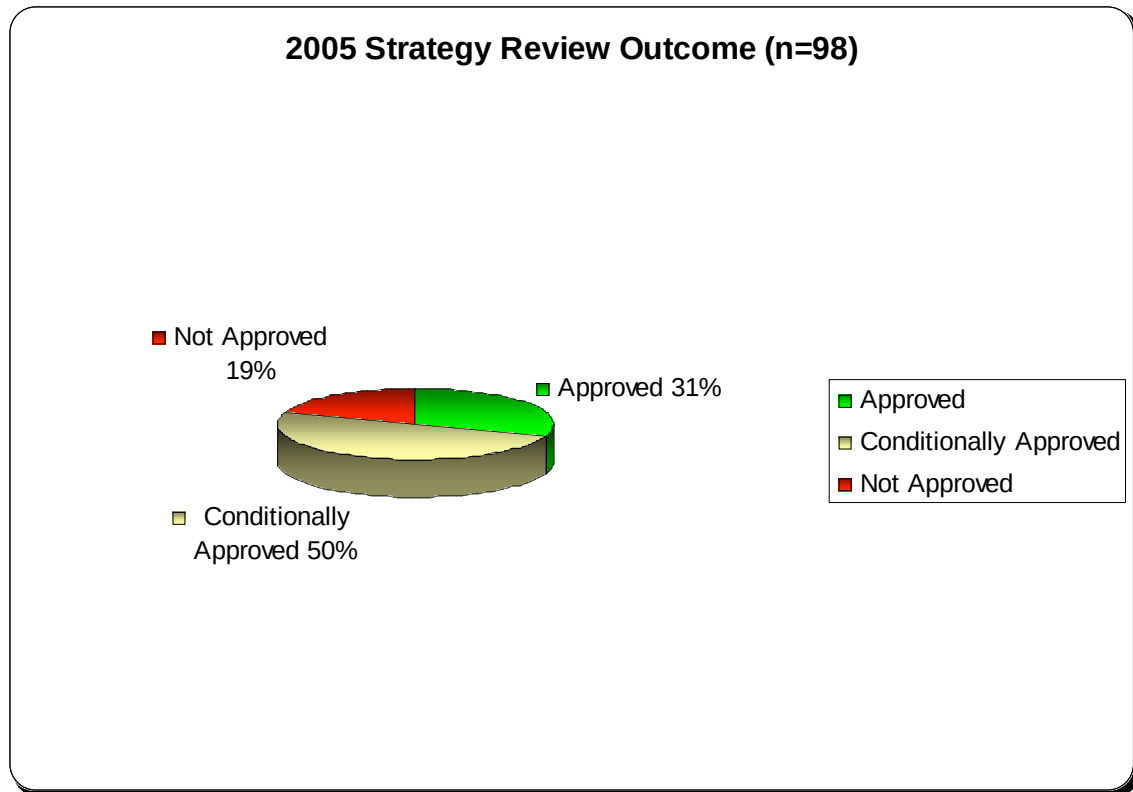


Figure 2. 2005 Strategy Review Outcome

If a strategy was approved, no further action was required by the state or urban and the strategy process was complete. If the review board's recommendation was for conditional approval of the strategy, the state or urban area had to complete specific corrective action to address the review board's findings but the awarding of funding was not affected. If the strategy was not approved, specific corrective action had to be completed to ensure the strategy was in compliance before funding would be awarded. Regardless of the recommendation, the review board's feedback was provided to every strategy's state and local planners to ensure that advice and comments were provided.

III. ISSUE AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Men often oppose a thing merely because they have had no agency in planning it, or because it may have been planned by those whom they dislike.

Alexander Hamilton

However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.

Winston Churchill

As the State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy program has evolved since 1999, more strategic planning guidance and assistance has been provided to state and local planners and the strategy review process has become more structured. Despite this maturation, several significant issues and areas for improvement have been identified by state and local strategic planners, the strategy review boards, and G&T staff.

Since the 2005 strategies were an update to the 2003 strategies and the 2005 review board had broader representation and utilized better review criteria than the 2003 review board, the feedback of the 2005 review board will be mainly utilized to illustrate issues and area for improvement in the strategic planning guidance and assistance as well as the strategy review.

A. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

There were several significant issues identified with the state and local strategic planning process, including the lack of an enterprise-wide strategy, weak linkages between state and urban area strategies, and inadequate strategic planning education and training for state and local planners.

1. Enterprise-Limited Strategy

Several strategies evaluated by the 2005 review board failed to demonstrate an enterprise-wide planning process³⁹ and either neglected to include a broad representation of emergency responder disciplines and agencies or the state or urban area's comprehensive preparedness efforts or programs. For example, significant non-G&T federal preparedness programs, like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Strategic National Stockpile and Public Health Emergency Preparedness programs or the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) National Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness Program (NBHPP),^{40,41} were often not mentioned in the strategy.

In addition, there is an apparent wide spectrum in strategy development with some encompassing many partners while others include only a limited partnership.⁴² The lack of an enterprise-wide strategy may result in uncoordinated preparedness efforts, disorganized application of resources and personnel, lack of stakeholder buy-in, or competing initiatives.

Discussions with the G&T strategy review team also indicated that the strategy submitted to DHS is sometimes not the actual strategy being utilized by the state or urban area.⁴³ In some instances, a strategy was submitted for the purpose of meeting ODP's requirements, but was not the actual strategy in use by the state or urban area.⁴⁴ In addition, some states have competing strategies

³⁹ ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy Review Process Update and Results." (Washington, D.C.,

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ According to GAO report 04-458T CDC provided \$862.8 million in FY 2005, \$849.6 million in FY 2004, \$870 million in FY 2003, and \$918 million in FY 2002 for bioterrorism and public health preparedness. According to HRSA's website, HRSA provided \$471 million in FY 2005, \$498 million in FY 2004, \$498 million in FY 2003, and \$125 million in FY 2002 for hospital preparedness. See (<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04458t.pdf>) and (<http://www.hrsa.gov/bioterrorism/>). (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Conversation with Deana Byard, Analyst, Preparedness Programs, G&T (Washington, D.C., February 27, 2005).

⁴⁴ Conversation with David Kaufman, Deputy Director, Preparedness Programs, G&T (Washington, D.C., November 9, 2005).

produced by different agencies. This is not uncommon where the efforts of the homeland security advisor, state public safety agency, and/or state emergency management agency are not necessarily collaborative but instead competitive.⁴⁵ Finally, some strategies submitted were merely replications of the strategy template and assistance workshop and did not seem to reflect any true strategic planning conducted by the state or urban area.

If the strategies being submitted to DHS do not truly reflect either the state or urban area's strategy or its strategic planning, then the effort is a waste for all involved. The strategy requirement is not meant to be an unwarranted DHS mandate with no purpose. If states and urban areas are not finding value in the DHS strategy program, then DHS' challenge is to develop a strategy program that provides unparalleled value to states and urban areas so the latter will want to pursue the strategic planning desired by DHS regardless of federal requirements.

2. Weak Linkage Between State and Urban Area Strategies

Another common finding of the 2005 strategy review board focused on the inadequate coordination between a given state strategy and one of its urban areas' strategy(ies) with weak or non-existent linkages.⁴⁶ This finding would seemingly indicate a lack of coordination between state and local strategic planners that may result in duplicative, conflicting, or non-complementary preparedness programs and efforts that are not the most effective application of limited preparedness resources. For example, a jurisdiction might be planning to implement one type of communications system that was not interoperable with the state's planned communications system. This uncoordinated and conflicting effort would undermine that region's preparedness efforts.

⁴⁵ Conversation with David Kaufman, Deputy Director, Preparedness Programs, G&T (Washington, D.C., November 9, 2005).

⁴⁶ ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy Review Process Update and Results Presentation." (Washington, D.C., December 2, 2005).

3. Inadequate Strategic Planning Education and Training

One of the common issues identified by governors in several states is the challenge of conducting homeland security strategic planning in the face of uncertainty, particularly the unpredictable nature of federal homeland security funding, timelines, and requirements. If preparedness funding is provided on a year-to-year basis, state and local planners are uncertain of the long-term viability of the state homeland security strategy program.⁴⁷

This funding-centric perspective represents a fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose of the strategy, which should be focused on broader goals and objectives and should not be focused on specific sources of program funds. This misunderstanding may also reflect a shortage of state and local strategic planning expertise. State and local leaders and planners should have access to more strategic planning education and training to increase awareness and proficiency while optimizing the strategic planning process.

B. STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSISTANCE AND GUIDANCE

There were several significant issues identified with the strategic planning assistance and guidance provided to state and local planners, including a strategic terrorism focus, strategy requirements that were not clearly articulated, and Preparedness Officers who were required to perform as strategic consultants without adequate training.

1. Lack of All Hazards Focus

One of the common findings from the 2005 strategy review board is that the strategies were predominantly terrorism-focused.⁴⁸ This finding should not be surprising nor is it a fault of the state and urban area strategic planners since the federal strategic planning guidance prior to HSPD-8 was focused on terrorism. However, with the release of the National Preparedness Goal and the

⁴⁷ ODP, "Mobile Implementation Training Team HSPD-8 Interim National Preparedness Goal State Briefing Update and Progress Report, Volume 2" (Washington, D.C. October 5, 2005).

⁴⁸ ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy Review Process Update and Results Presentation." (Washington, D.C., December 2, 2005).

National Priorities, all future strategic planning must be conducted through the filter of all hazards to ensure a comprehensive preparedness strategy as directed by HSPD-8.⁴⁹ Since the prevention, protection, response, and recovery processes utilized for terrorism, man-made, and natural disaster incidents are complementary, an all hazards approach ensures a comprehensive preparedness strategy.

2. Strategy Requirements Not Clearly Articulated

An analysis of the questionnaire to the 2005 strategy review board reveals that one of the least agreed upon elements of the 2005 process was how clearly the guidance articulated the strategy update and approval requirements.⁵⁰ Not only was the guidance considered vague, some states were unsure what DHS expected from the strategies. Figure 3 outlines the distribution of responses from the review board regarding how clearly the strategy update and approval requirements were articulated in the update guidance.

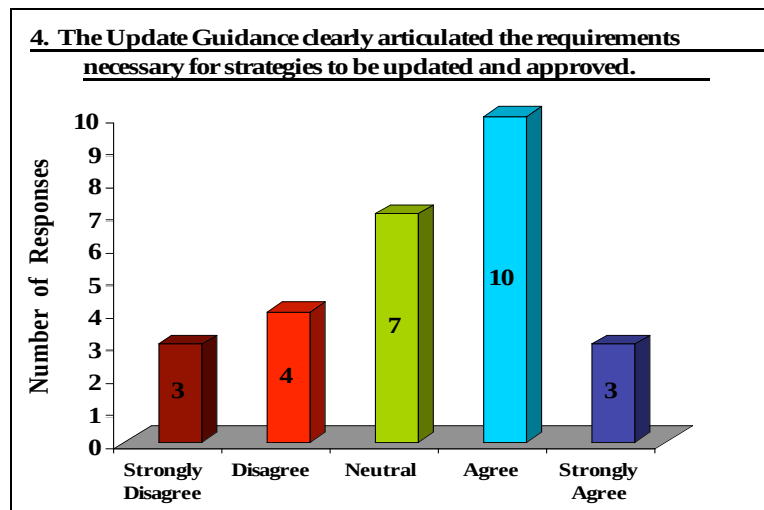


Figure 3. Review Board Survey: Articulated Requirements in Guidance⁵¹

⁴⁹ "Homeland Security Presidential Directive-8." (December 17, 2003). Available online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/12/20031217-6.html>. (Last accessed March 1, 2006).

⁵⁰ ODP, "Analysis of Responses to the 2005 Strategy Review Process Questionnaire." (Washington, D.C., January 2006).

⁵¹ ODP, "Analysis of Responses to the 2005 Strategy Review Process Questionnaire" (Washington D.C., January 2006).

The distribution of the responses could be mapped back to whether the reviewer was either a federal or state and local representative. Federal reviewers predominantly agreed that the guidance was clear while state and local reviewers mostly disagreed and felt that the guidance was not clear. If the guidance was not clearly articulated to state and local planners, then DHS bears some blame for the quality or content of the strategies and certainly needs to provide clear, concise, and well-articulated strategic planning guidance.

3. Preparedness Officers

A critical resource to state and local planners is G&T's Preparedness Officers. While Preparedness Officers do not specifically have a strategic planning background or training, they are called upon to facilitate the strategic planning process, provide initial review of strategies submitted to DHS, and present the strategy to the strategy review board. The likelihood of a strategy to be approved, conditionally approved, or not approved by the strategy review board is therefore indirectly associated to the Preparedness Officer's strategic planning skills and capabilities.

Without formal training, Preparedness Officers are relegated to learning through on-the-job training and other non-optimal measures. The provision of formal strategic planning training and professional development will engender Preparedness Officers with the ability to become strategic consultants to state and local planners.

C. STRATEGY REVIEW

There were several significant issues identified regarding the strategy review process, including the review board representation, the review criteria, and the quality of the strategies.

1. Unbalanced Review Board Representation

In 2003, the strategy review board was composed entirely of federal reviewers. In 2005, state and local peer reviewers were added to it, constituting

17% of the review board.⁵² In a follow-up questionnaire to the members of the 2005 strategy review board, one of the least agreed upon elements identified by the review board was whether the board members accounted for a balanced and relevant representation of federal and state agencies.⁵³ Figure 4 outlines the distribution of responses from the strategy review board regarding the balance of representation on the review board.

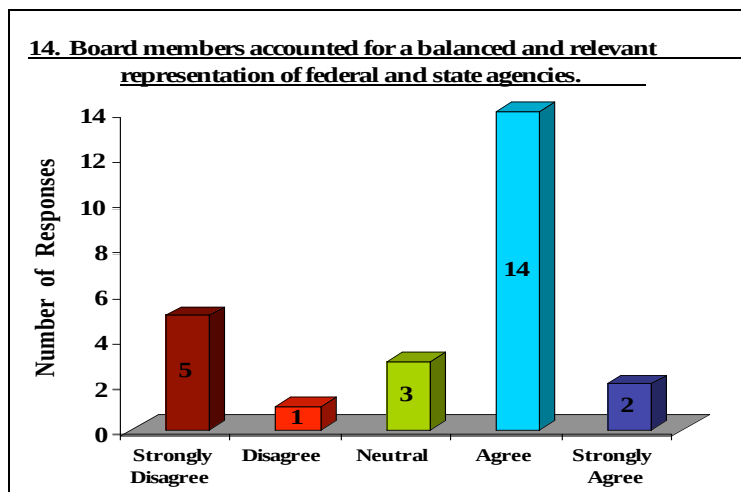


Figure 4. Review Board Survey: Review Board Representation⁵⁴

Similar to the issue identified with articulating guidance, the responses concerning the review board representation was polarized based on whether a reviewer was federal or state and local. While the federal reviewers believed that the review board representation was balanced, all the respondents who strongly disagreed with this assertion were state and local reviewers. One response

⁵² ODP, "State and Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy Review Process Update and Results Presentation." (Washington, D.C., December 2, 2005).

⁵³ ODP, "Analysis of Responses to the 2005 Strategy Review Process Questionnaire." (Washington D.C., January 2006).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

stated that “the review process was filled with federal bureaucrats with unrealistic expectations for a strategic plan.”⁵⁵ Several comments expressed the need for greater state representation.⁵⁶

While the reviewers were tasked with determining the strategy’s compliance with the National Priorities, inadequate state and local representation places a heavy onus on federal reviewers who may not have the experience and perspective to gauge state and local issues. The lack of a balanced state and local perspective may distort the review. In the future, the strategy review should consider a more balanced representation of federal, state, and local reviewers.

2. Inadequate Review Criteria

The 2005 strategy review board indicated that one of the least agreed upon elements of the strategy process was whether strategies were evaluated fairly and according to the same standards throughout the review process.⁵⁷ One reviewer commented that there “seemed to be a lack of quality standards for approving strategies... the quality of the majority of these would have led to resounding disapprovals nearly across the board.” In addition, one reviewer had “the impression that either jurisdictions didn’t take this seriously, jurisdictions were confused about criteria, or it wasn’t stressed to the jurisdictions that this was an important thing to do.” Figure 5 outlines the distribution of responses from the review board regarding the review criteria.

⁵⁵ ODP, “Analysis of Responses to the 2005 Strategy Review Process Questionnaire.” (Washington D.C., January 2006).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ ODP, “Analysis of Responses to the 2005 Strategy Review Process Questionnaire.” (Washington, D.C., January 2006).

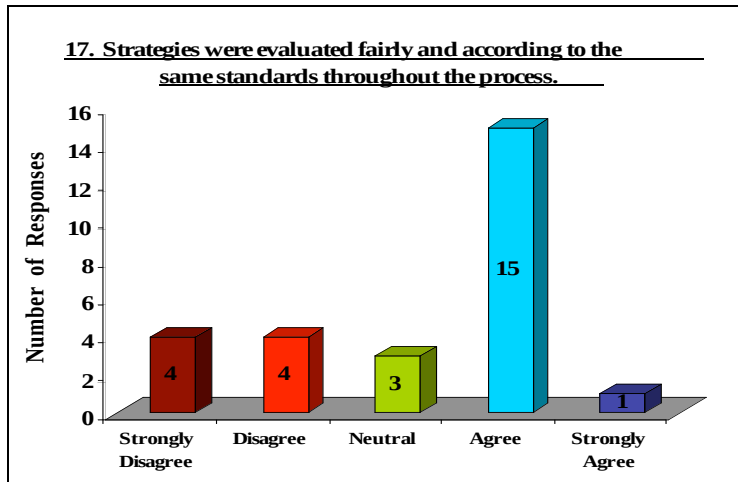


Figure 5. Review Board Survey: Review Criteria⁵⁸

In some instances, reviewer decisions were based on individual expectations inconsistent with the level of detail provided in the update guidance.

Several reviewers noted that the approval for a strategy was heavily influenced by the advocacy of the Preparedness Officer. In the presence of unclear review criteria and lack of familiarity with the specific state or urban area's perspectives and issues, the decision of the review board could be swayed by the Preparedness Officer. Therefore, there is a need to balance Preparedness Officer advocacy with standardized review criteria.

⁵⁸ ODP, "Analysis of Responses to the 2005 Strategy Review Process Questionnaire." (Washington, D.C., January 2006).

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IV. STATE AND URBAN AREA HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGY V3.0

In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless,
but planning is indispensable.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Although state and urban area homeland security strategies have evolved and improved considerably since they were introduced in 1999, there are many improvements to the guidance, assistance, and review process that can provide significant enhancement both to the quality and utility of these strategies, and more importantly to the entire planning process. Recognizing that there is a wide spectrum of strategic planning capabilities and expertise across states, it is important to provide scalable or tiered strategic planning assistance based on a state's capabilities and needs. This will ensure the most effective use of limited federal resources to optimally assist less experienced and capable state planners while not hindering the planning processes in states that have been able to develop highly competent staff.

In 2006, states and urban areas will be required to develop enterprise-wide homeland security strategies to guide preparedness efforts in 2007, 2008 and 2009 that reflect the necessary integration and collaboration across all emergency responders and support the National Preparedness Goal. The following recommendations address the issues and areas for improvement identified in the previous chapter in the strategic planning process, guidance and assistance, and strategy review. While one method of improvement would be to provide more articulate and stringent guidelines throughout the process, this thesis proposes a different perspective that will redefine the strategic planning perspective.

A. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Before the guidance, assistance, and strategy review can be addressed, the underlying process for developing the strategy program and its requirements must be improved to produce an environment conducive to strategic planning.

1. Federal, State, and Local Partnership

The first and absolutely most critical step to improve homeland security strategic planning is for the federal government to promote more effective partnerships with state and local stakeholders. State and local collaboration must be included in the development of the guidance and program process rather than merely coordinated with after the program has been developed. State and local governments have clamored for more realistic participation in homeland security processes from development to implementation.⁵⁹ In addition, state and local governments believe they do not get adequate feedback on input provided.⁶⁰ If this issue is not addressed, future efforts to coordinate strategic planning are doomed to failure because only incremental improvements will be possible with status quo efforts. No intensity of federal requirements will persuade state and local stakeholders that preparedness strategic planning is critical unless they themselves have buy-in and see the value in such.

At a fundamental level, the homeland security strategies are a shared responsibility between the federal government and states and local planners. The strategies need to balance national priorities with state and local priorities. A federal requirement that states develop a strategy without their own engagement does not facilitate their valuing the process or product and risks leaving the entire initiative without the states' backing and buy-in. Compliance becomes perfunctory and the quality of the strategies becomes suspect. On the other hand, if states and local planners own the process, the nation risks an inconsistent patchwork of strategies that do not foster national preparedness.

⁵⁹ ODP, "Mobile Implementation Training Team HSPD-8 Interim National Preparedness Goal State Briefing Update and Progress Report Volume 2."

⁶⁰ Ibid.

A shared responsibility between federal, state, and local strategic planners to develop strategic planning guidelines could support both national priorities and state and local priorities. The most critical aspect in developing the strategic planning process is to ensure that the stakeholders are engaged in developing the process. If this partnership can discover the common value⁶¹ for strategic planning that is so compelling that states and urban areas will engage in strategic planning even in the absence of federal requirements or programs, then it will have truly succeeded. A series of stakeholder workshops should be convened to develop and implement the strategic planning program by collaboratively determining requirements, needs, and processes.

Other federal partners including, but not limited to, the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human Services (including CDC and HRSA), Justice, Transportation, and the intelligence community should also be brought into the strategy requirements and development process to ensure a coordinated effort across the federal government. If preparedness is truly a national effort, then federal efforts should be coordinated as well.

2. Incorporate Lessons Learned

Lessons from the implementation of the National Response Plan and HSPD-8 have indicated that these initiatives are often perceived as being created at the federal level and then communicated to state and local stakeholders rather than being developed collaboratively.⁶² The result is considerable skepticism and confusion among state and local stakeholders that have reduced the effectiveness of the original intent of developing national standards and guidelines. The lack of buy-in hampers the national preparedness effort, whereas including state and local partners will promote acceptance, understanding, and innovation. Incorporating the lessons learned from the

⁶¹ Value innovation is Kim, W. Chan and Mauborgne, Renee. "Blue Ocean Strategy." Harvard Business School Press. 2005. Value innovation could create a leap in value for state and local strategic planners and the federal government.

⁶² Sharon L. Caudle, "Homeland Security Capabilities-Based Planning: Lessons from the Defense Community" *Homeland Security Affairs* I, no.1 (2005).

implementation of these federal preparedness programs as well as the past strategic planning processes will prevent repeating the same mistakes in developing the new state and urban area homeland security strategy program.

B. TIERED GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE

Once the strategy process and requirements are developed collaboratively with federal, state, and local planners, the strategy guidance and assistance can be developed and implemented. Tiered assistance will permit less proficient state and local planners to receive more robust assistance without hindering more experienced strategic planners.

1. Clear, Concise Guidance

Clearly articulating the strategy process and requirements developed by the stakeholder workshops in a clear, concise manner is the next important step in facilitating a comprehensive homeland security strategy process. Guidance documents should plainly outline the process, strategy requirements, and review criteria so state and local planners have an unambiguous working framework. Once the guidance is released, additional changes should be minimized to reduce the chance for confusion among state and local planners regarding the strategy requirements and criteria.

As demonstrated by the 2005 strategy review board questionnaire, state and local reviewers found the guidance unclear and confusing even though federal reviewers deemed it articulate. Therefore, collaboration with state and local planners to develop the guidance should ensure providing the appropriate state and local perspective and understanding. In addition, this participation has the added benefit of increasing the number of state and local planners familiar with the guidance and able to assist their peers.

2. Tiered Technical Assistance

Tiered technical assistance will permit less capable state and local planners to receive more robust assistance without hindering more experienced

strategic planners. All of these assistance options would be made available to state and local planners at no cost through G&T's homeland security strategy program.

The base level of assistance should consist of the guidance document and strategy template. G&T should provide illustrative elements of a good strategy, perhaps drawn upon past strategies identified by the strategy review board as best practices or identified and vetted by the collaborative stakeholder workshops. The template should not provide a strategy that can be simply copied, but should instead facilitate the strategic planning process. This base level of assistance is predicated on a state or local planners with significant enterprise-wide strategic planning experience that merely require the general guidance to frame strategic planning efforts.

A moderate level of assistance would entail a series of training workshops in addition to the guidance and template. Similar to the 2003 workshops, this level of assistance is predicated on supporting state or local planners with some working knowledge of strategic planning, but not necessarily an enterprise-wide understanding. Facilitated orientations and planning workshops would support the state and local strategic planning process.

At the most intensive level of assistance, states and local planners would have access not only to the guidance, templates, and workshops, but also strategic planning experts. DHS should identify and designate a cadre of strategic planning experts in collaboration with state and local stakeholders. These experts would be assigned to each state or region of states to provide homeland security strategic planning expertise throughout their strategic planning process to ensure equitable strategic planning capabilities to all states and local planners. This level of assistance is predicated on state or local planners with an inadequate working knowledge of strategic planning. Since this type of assistance is resource intensive, it could be piloted to a few states and urban areas in the 2006 strategy process and its efficacy could be compared to other assistance methods based upon the strategy approval rate.

3. Strategic Consultants

Since Preparedness Officers, who function as a liaison between G&T and state and local stakeholders, are expected to be familiar with state and local programs and issues, facilitate the strategy development process, provide initial review of strategies, and present the strategies to the strategy review board, G&T should institute a Preparedness Officer professional development program that provides strategic consulting training and education. This professional development program would provide the basic competencies in strategic planning and allow G&T to leverage existing staff to provide strategic consulting assistance to state and local planners.

In addition, DHS should develop a cadre of federal, state, and local strategic planning experts who could provide guidance and assistance to state and local planners. For example, DHS' Mobile Education Teams conduct seminars with nationally-recognized experts in various homeland security fields for senior state and urban area leaders. This cadre of strategic planning experts would not only be available for ad hoc assistance to state and local planners, but would be assigned to each state or region of states to provide homeland security strategic planning expertise throughout the strategic planning process to ensure equitable strategic planning capabilities to all states and local planners.

C. STRATEGY REVIEW

1. Balance Review Board

The trend toward greater state and local representation on the strategy review board is a positive development that facilitates an appropriate level of peer evaluation to the review process. Although the 17% state and local representation on the 2005 review board was a significant change from the 2003 review board that was composed entirely of federal representatives, the percentage of peer reviewers should to be further increased. For example, the FY 2006 Homeland Security Grant Program peer review panels will be

composed of approximately 85% state and local peer reviewers.⁶³ If the homeland security strategy is a shared responsibility and an equal partnership between the federal government and state and local stakeholders, then the review board should be balanced with half federal representation and half state and local representation.

A significant benefit to including peer reviewers on the strategy review board is providing state and local planners and leaders the opportunity to learn the strategic planning landscape in other states and urban areas. This occasion to cross-pollinate experiences, lessons, and skills can only improve the overall national preparedness effort.

2. Improve Review Criteria

As identified by the strategy review boards, the review criteria must be explicit. Some of the improvement can be accomplished by clarifying the review criteria used in 2003 and 2005, including ensuring that goals and objectives are measurable and achievable. Other improvements to the review criteria will need to be determined collaboratively by federal, state, and local stakeholders. Clear, objective criteria must be developed and disseminated in conjunction with the strategy development guidance to ensure a clear understanding of the strategy requirements and criteria throughout the planning process. Standardized review criteria also facilitate consistent evaluation of the strategies.

For example, the strategies must be comprehensive and demonstrate enterprise-wide planning. The planning process should have included all emergency responder disciplines, agencies, and stakeholders. The level of detail provided the strategies should appropriately match the guidance provided. In addition, it is important that strategies not only address national priorities, but also state and local priorities. Goals and objectives should be measurable and achievable. Implementation steps should be included. The strategies should not

⁶³ ODP, "FY 2006 Homeland Security Grant Program Peer Reviewer Spreadsheet" (Washington, D.C., March 14, 2006).

be focused on G&T preparedness programs, but should be centered on broader preparedness efforts irrespective of funding source.

In addition, while Preparedness Officers are critical in the initial review of the strategies and presentation to the review board, the ability of the Preparedness Officer to influence the outcome of the review board should be limited. While Preparedness Officers should remain an advocate for their states, the strategies need to be afforded an impartial, objective review predicated on the review criteria and free of subjective influence. A strong review board facilitator and clear roles and responsibilities would help ensure this impartiality.

D. RISK AND NEED

Despite the infusion of approximately \$10.5 billion to support state and local preparedness efforts since the attacks of 9/11 through FY 2005, the risk from terrorism and natural disasters remains unabated and considerable state and local capability needs remain. The fact that limited federal resources could not continue to be allocated on a formula basis without regard to risk and need influenced the transition of awarding homeland security funding in FY 2006 to a risk and need basis as opposed to the former formula or risk-only basis.

The FY 2006 HSGP application process required each state and urban area to develop an enhancement plan, which served as an implementation plan outlining individual preparedness initiatives (e.g., implement a statewide interoperable communication systems). These initiatives formed the basis for the HSGP investment justification. G&T designed the enhancement plan as a comprehensive statewide management plan for enhancing state homeland security programs.⁶⁴ However, there is overlap between the enhancement plan and the implementation steps required in previous state and urban area strategies. As mentioned earlier, there has also been confusion among state and

⁶⁴ "State Homeland Security Program and Capability Review Guidebook Volume 2: Enhancement Plan."

local planners on whether a strategy should include implementation steps or if a separate implementation plan was appropriate.

Ideally, the triennial homeland security strategy provides the overarching, enterprise-wide strategy irrespective of funding sources. The strategy should guide the annual development of a strategy implementation plan, which translates strategic goals and objectives into preparedness programs and initiatives. State and local planners could then map individual preparedness programs and initiatives to each federal funding source using investment justifications to frame the grant application.

Using this model, implementation steps would no longer be required in the state and urban area homeland security, but would instead form the new strategy implementation plan. In this manner, strategy and strategy implementation would be developed in complementary, but separate processes. Figure 6 illustrates the proposed relationship and timelines between the strategy, the strategy implementation plan, and the investment justifications.

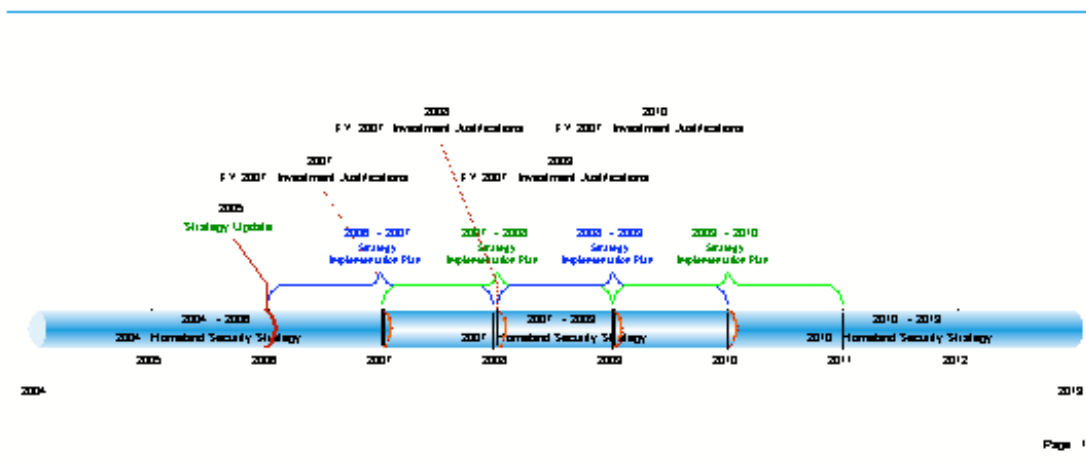


Figure 6. Role of Strategy, Enhancement Plan, and Investment Justification

An enterprise-wide strategic planning process and comprehensive homeland security strategy are undoubtedly important. The creation of the

strategy implementation plan and investment justification to facilitate the risk and need basis for preparedness efforts lends even greater significance to the strategy process to frame these efforts.

E. IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP AND PROPOSED TIMELINE

Incorporating these recommendations into the strategy program, an implementation roadmap coalesces for the 2006 state and urban area homeland security program. Figure 7 outlines the proposed strategy program for the 2006 strategy.

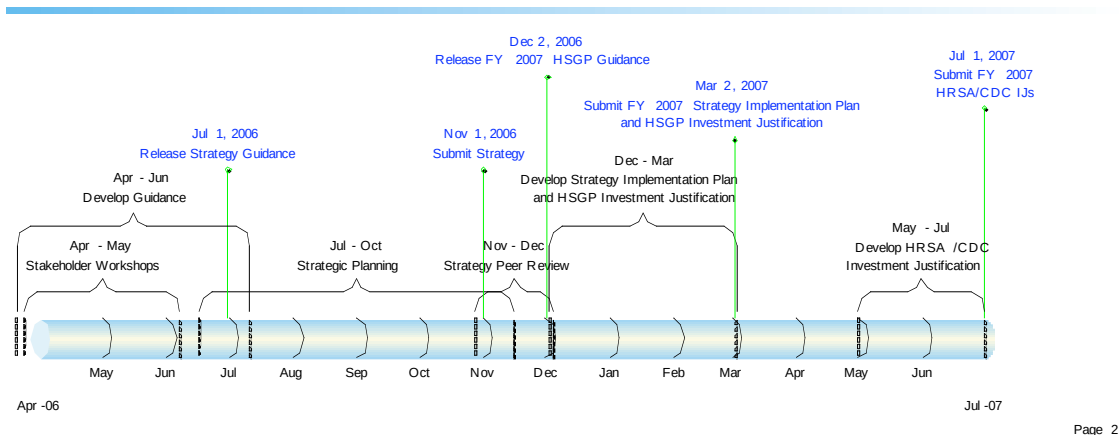


Figure 7. Proposed Strategy Process Implementation Timeline

The strategy process begins with a series of stakeholder workshops in April 2006 to determine the value innovation of homeland security strategies for state and local stakeholders. Concurrently, the guidance, criteria, and assistance will be developed and vetted. If officially unveiled July 1, 2006, states will have four months to develop strategies for a November deadline to ensure that strategies are in place when state and local planners begin applying for FY 2007 preparedness funding. At least another four months would be available for state and local planners to develop the strategy implementation plan for subsequent investment justifications.

The submission dates in Figure 7 for the G&T, CDC, and HRSA programs are merely projections based on previous years. However, these dates are for illustrative purposes only and are certainly subject to change based on Congressional appropriations language and programmatic requirements. In 2008 and 2009, state and local planners wouldn't have to develop a new strategy and would have more time to develop strategy implementation plans.

Thus, the state and urban area homeland security strategy would form the basis for an annual strategy implementation plan that provides the framework for each state and urban area investment justification to each federal preparedness program, including G&T's preparedness programs as well as CDC, HRSA, and other federal preparedness programs.

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V. CONCLUSIONS

Let our advance worrying become advance thinking and planning.

Winston Churchill

Given the continued risk of terrorism and other emergencies, the needs of state and local jurisdictions across the nation, and limited federal resources, comprehensive enterprise-wide state and urban area homeland security preparedness planning is absolutely critical to the nation's preparedness efforts.

The issues and areas for improvement identified throughout this thesis should be addressed by the recommendations outlined in the previous chapter to facilitate the desired end state: comprehensive, multi-disciplinary, non-funding-based preparedness strategies with clearly defined and measurable goals and objectives. A strategy program developed in collaboration with state and local jurisdictions to produce a strategic planning process that is so compelling to state and local planners that they will choose to pursue the process even in the absence of a federal requirement would be a decisive success in promoting preparedness strategic planning.

Clear, concise guidance will focus state and local strategic planning. Tiered strategic planning assistance from DHS will ensure that needy states receive assistance while not hindering more capable states with unnecessary requirements. Training Preparedness Officers as strategic consultants will provide a valuable resource to state and local planners as well as greater value to the strategy review process. Balancing the strategy review board representation with more state and local reviewers will facilitate a peer review process with an added benefit of expanding nationwide understanding of the national preparedness landscape. Improved review criteria and methodology will ensure standardized, objective evaluation of the strategies.

These changes can be made for the next iteration of the homeland security strategy process in 2006 to guide national preparedness efforts in 2007,

2008, and 2009. Integration of these overarching strategies with annual strategy implementation plans and investment justifications will ensure that preparedness efforts are aligned at the implementation level and funding allocation is coordinated across funding sources. National preparedness is a national challenge that can only be accomplished with federal, state, and local collaboration.

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