



U. S. Department of Homeland Security

Office for Domestic Preparedness

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TO: All State Administrative Agency Heads
All State Administrative Agency Points of Contact
All State Homeland Security Directors

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SUBJECT: Establishing a State Homeland Security Information Sharing Network

In recognition of the extensive and diverse experience states have in developing and implementing homeland security initiatives, ODP proposes the establishment of a State Homeland Security Information Sharing Network. The goal of this program is to connect states with well-developed programs tackling complex terrorism prevention, response, and recovery issues with states seeking additional guidance in specific program areas.

Participation in the State Homeland Security Information Sharing Network is purely voluntary. ODP hopes that the network will facilitate additional communication and coordination among states, many of which face similar challenges in addressing homeland security issues. The network will provide a formal means of information exchange among states which may not yet have had the opportunity or available resources to share ideas.

As a starting point, states are encouraged to consider their approaches to the following issues and determine whether they might be useful or applicable to other states:

- Regional planning and response mechanisms
- Training systems, including course development and institutionalization strategies
- Exercise programs
- Communications and equipment interoperability
- State Homeland Security Assessment and Strategy program data validation
- State Homeland Security Strategy development and implementation
- Prevention/deterrence
- Recovery operations
- Other

States with well-developed programs in any of these areas are encouraged to contact their assigned Program Manager within ODP. Similarly, states interested in obtaining additional information or guidance should also contact their Program Manager. ODP will then facilitate initial communication and coordination between the appropriate state parties. Once in contact, state participants will decide the best means of information sharing, such as teleconferences or on-site visits.

ODP's existing technical assistance (TA) program, which provides specialized assistance in critical homeland security areas, will remain in place and continue to fill TA needs. The network is not intended to replace or supplant TA delivery to state and local jurisdictions to enhance their capacity and preparedness to respond to domestic terrorism incidents. These new information sharing efforts simply provide another avenue toward improving overall capabilities.

ODP looks forward to the launch of this new initiative and continued coordination with state and local partners in assuring homeland security.