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DHS Coordinates National Level Exercise to Prevent Terrorist Attacks with Federal, State, Local Tribal, Private Sector, and International Partners

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The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will launch on Monday the five-day National Level Exercise 2009 (NLE 09)—the first national level exercise to focus on terrorism prevention—in conjunction with federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and international partners.

“Coordinating with our partners across the United States and around the world is critical to protecting the nation from terrorist attacks,” said Secretary Janet Napolitano. “The National Level Exercise allows us to test our capabilities in real-time to refine and strengthen our strategies for preventing terrorist attacks.”

The Congressionally mandated exercise—directed by the White House and coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)—promotes intelligence and information sharing between and among federal, state, tribal, local, private sector and international participants. The NLE 09 scenario focuses on preventing a terrorist from entering the United States to carry out additional attacks in the aftermath of a terrorist event outside of the country, prioritizing intelligence and law enforcement activities that detect, disrupt and deter preventable terrorist incidents.

“FEMA’s focus is to make sure that our entire response team, from the general public up to the highest level of government, is taking steps now to increase preparedness – regardless of what the next emergency or disaster is,” said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. “This exercise is an important step in our ongoing preparedness efforts, and allows FEMA and its federal partners to better serve and protect our citizens.”

The Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, Justice, and State, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and a broad spectrum of component agencies, offices and commands will all participate in the exercise. NLE 09 activities will take place at command posts, emergency operation centers, intelligence centers and field locations throughout the country, including federal headquarters facilities in the Washington, D.C. area as well as federal, regional, state, tribal, local and private sector facilities in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and California. International partner nations will include Australia, Canada, Mexico and the United Kingdom. The Navajo Nation will also participate.

Following the exercise, a comprehensive evaluation process will assess counterterrorism and law enforcement prevention capabilities regionally, nationally and internationally.

To learn more about NLE 09, visit http://www.fema.gov/media/fact_sheets/nle09.shtm.

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