



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
April 11, 2002

Strengthening Homeland Security Since 9/11

Immediately following the tragic events of September 11, departments and agencies from across the federal government took steps to strengthen the safety and security of the American people. At the Federal level, a total of \$10.6 billion from the Fiscal Year 2002 Emergency Budget Supplemental was dedicated to homeland security. The challenge is large, and much more remains to be done, but the foundation for a stronger, more secure America has been put in place:

Law Enforcement Activities - Established the Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS), which is designed to be the foundation for building a comprehensive and effective communications structure for the dissemination of information regarding the risk of attacks to all levels of government and the American people.

- Deployed more than 4,000 FBI special agents and 3,000 support staff to the international investigation of the September 11 terrorist attacks - the largest criminal investigation in history.
- Responded to more than 8,000 cases of anthrax attacks or hoaxes.
- Implemented the USA PATRIOT Act which, among other things: 1. updated Federal laws to reflect the rapid and dramatic changes that have taken place in recent years in communications technology; 2. required the Department of the Treasury to require financial institutions to verify the identities of persons opening accounts, granted immunity to financial institutions that voluntarily disclosed suspicious transactions, and increased the penalties for money-laundering; 3. broadened the terrorism-related definitions in the Immigration and Nationality Act, expanded the grounds of inadmissibility to include aliens who publicly endorse terrorist activity, and required the Attorney General to detain aliens whom he certifies as threats to national security; 4. authorized grants that will enhance state and local governments' ability to respond to and prevent terrorism, and expanded information-sharing among law enforcement authorities at different levels of government.
- Established 56 Joint Terrorism Task Forces and nearly 100 Anti-Terrorism Task Forces to coordinate the investigations and improve communications among federal, state, and local law enforcement.
- Launched Operation Green Quest to dry up sources of terrorist funding. To date, the assets of 192 individuals and organizations connected with the al-Taqua, al-Barakaat, and Hamas organizations have been frozen.
- Established a web site and toll-free hotline for citizens to report suspected terrorist activity.
- Adopted new, stronger encryption standards to safeguard sensitive, non-classified electronic information such as financial transactions, and ensure the privacy of digital information ranging from medical records and tax information, to PIN numbers for millions of Americans.

Border and Port Security - Proposed INS regulations to eliminate the current minimum six months admission period for B-2 visitors for pleasure, replacing it with "a period of time that is fair and reasonable for the completion of the purpose of the visit."

- Immediately required individuals planning to attend school in the United States to obtain the proper INS student visa prior to their admission to the country.
- Proposed INS regulations to reduce the maximum visa extension from one year to six months. Additionally, the

visitor must prove there are adequate financial resources to continue to stay in the United States and that he or she is maintaining a residency abroad.

- Placed the nation's air, land, and seaports of entry on Alert Level 1 following September 11, ensuring a more thorough examination of people and cargo.
- Created the new Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (Customs-TPAT) initiative to enhance security throughout the entire import-export process.
- Launched the Container Security Initiative, which establishes a tough new international security standard for cargo containers.
- Deployed approximately 1,600 National Guardsmen to assist in securing the nation's borders.
- Increased National Park Service personnel and upgraded security equipment and the procedures at highly visible national monuments, such as the Statue of Liberty in New York, the National Mall in Washington, the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall in Philadelphia, the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, and other sites in the 384-unit National Park System.

Transportation Security - Recruited thousands of federal security personnel to perform screening duties and other functions at commercial airports.

- Significantly expanded the Federal Air Marshal program.
- Announced the first group of Federal Security Directors. These experienced law enforcement officers will be directly responsible for security at airports and provide a clear and direct line of authority.
- Developed new passenger boarding procedures and trained pilots and flight crews for hijacking scenarios.
- Required all airport personnel to undergo background checks.
- Limited airport access points and implemented secondary screening procedures.
- Deployed more than 9,000 National Guardsmen to help secure the nation's airports.

Health and Food Security - Aided thousands of rescue workers involved in the September 11 recovery activities through Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs).

- Identified more than 750 victims of the World Trade Center attacks through Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams (DMORTs).
- Dispensed antibiotics to thousands of persons potentially exposed to anthrax mail attacks.
- Acquired more than a billion doses of antibiotics and signed agreements for the procurement of the small pox vaccine.
- Distributed \$1.1 billion to help states prepare for bioterrorism attacks.
- Strengthened systems to prevent, detect and eliminate threats to agriculture and the food supply, including \$328 million for pest and animal disease prevention, food safety, research, laboratory upgrades and stepped up security at key facilities.

- Distributed \$2 million in grants to 32 states to bolster emergency animal disease prevention, preparedness, response and recovery systems.
- Improved inspection and testing of products destined for consumer markets in the United States.
- Provided millions of dollars through the Food Stamp and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programs to families of victims and displaced workers of the September 11 attacks.

Environmental and Energy Security - Provided security training to drinking water and wastewater utility companies.

- Provided security guidance and support to private sector chemical and pesticide manufacturers.
- Conducted vulnerability assessments of energy infrastructure throughout the country.
- Created a 24-hour network to ensure energy producers have up to date information from law enforcement information.
- Provided 24 hour-per-day, 7 day-a-week security at 348 dams and reservoirs and 58 hydroelectric power plants, including Hoover, Grand Coulee, Glen Canyon, and Shasta Dams.
- Constructed biological, radiological, and nuclear mobile detection capability to conduct threat-based searches.
- Placed nuclear power plants across the nation on the highest level of security.
- Developed pocket radiation detector for first responders.
- Engaged in a top-to-bottom security review of nuclear facilities, including plant vulnerability to aircraft.

Citizen Engagement - Established Citizen Corps to enable Americans to participate directly in homeland security efforts in their own communities. These components include:

- Medical Reserve Corps: Enables retired healthcare professionals to effectively augment local health officials' capacity to respond to an emergency.
- Operation TIPS (Terrorist Information and Prevention System): Allows millions of American transportation workers, postal workers, and public utility employees to identify and report suspicious activities linked to terrorism and crime.
- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT): Enables individual Americans to participate in emergency management planning in their communities and prepare to respond to disasters and other emergencies.
- Neighborhood Watch Programs: Enhances the program by incorporating terrorism prevention into its mission.
- Developed the "Patriot Readiness Center" to help federal retirees return to active service - more than 15,000 people have responded.

###

Return to this article at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020411-8.html>

 [CLICK HERE TO PRINT](#)