

# Department Of Homeland Security Releases Interim National Preparedness Goal

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The U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced today the publication of the Interim National Preparedness Goal ("Goal"). The Goal will guide federal departments and agencies, state, territorial, local and tribal officials, the private sector, non-government organizations and the public in determining how to most effectively and efficiently strengthen preparedness for terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

"In our complex free society, there is no perfect solution to address every security concern," said Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff. "But by working together collectively to analyze threats, understand our capabilities, and apply resources intelligently, we can manage risk. The National Preparedness Goal will help us meet this objective."

The Goal establishes readiness priorities, targets, and metrics. It will enable the Nation to answer three key questions: "How prepared are we?"; "How prepared do we need to be?" and "How do we prioritize efforts to close the gap?" The emphasis is on developing appropriate levels of capabilities to address a wide range of terrorist attacks and disaster scenarios.

"The Goal is an overarching statement of strategic intent. It demonstrates our national will to work toward establishing overall readiness against current and future threats," said Matt Mayer, Acting Executive Director of the Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness. "With unlimited resources, full preparedness would be less of a challenge, but we don't have unlimited resources. We have to make tough choices, they have to be the right choices, and we have to be ready to come together as a single, integrated system when the need arises."

The Goal includes seven priorities for national preparedness. The priorities fall into two categories: overarching priorities and priorities to build specific capabilities.

The overarching priorities are to:

- Implement the National Incident Management System and National Response Plan
- Expand regional collaboration and
- Implement the Interim National Infrastructure Protection Plan.

The priorities for specific capabilities are to:

- Strengthen information sharing and collaboration capabilities;
- Strengthen interoperable communications capabilities;
- Strengthen chemical, biological, radiation, nuclear, and explosive weapons (CBRNE); detection, response, and decontamination capabilities; and
- Strengthen medical surge and mass prophylaxis capabilities.

The Goal addresses a requirement of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8, *National Preparedness*, to define "standards for preparedness assessments and strategies, and a system for assessing the Nation's overall preparedness to respond to major events, especially those involving acts of terrorism." The directive requires submission of the first annual status report on preparedness to the President by March 31, 2006.

Visit [HSPD-8 and the National Preparedness Goal](#) for more information.