



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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Fact Sheet: National Strategy for Homeland Security

A Comprehensive Guide For Securing the Homeland

[National Strategy For Homeland Security](#)

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Today, the President issued an updated **National Strategy for Homeland Security**, which will serve to guide, organize, and unify our Nation's homeland security efforts. This *Strategy* is a national strategy – not a Federal strategy – and articulates our approach to secure the Homeland over the next several years. It builds on the first *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, issued in July 2002, and complements both the *National Security Strategy* issued in March 2006 and the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* issued in September 2006. It reflects our increased understanding of the threats confronting the United States, incorporates lessons learned from exercises and real-world catastrophes, and articulates how we should ensure our long-term success by strengthening the homeland security foundation we have built. This includes calling on Congress to make the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) reforms in the Protect America Act of 2007 permanent.

- **Since September 11, 2001, our concept of securing the homeland has evolved, adapting to new realities and threats.** The *Strategy* issued today incorporates this increased understanding by:
 - Acknowledging that while we must continue to focus on the persistent and evolving terrorist threat, we also must recognize that certain non-terrorist events that reach catastrophic levels can have significant implications for homeland security.
 - Emphasizing that as we secure the Homeland we cannot simply rely on defensive approaches and well-planned response and recovery measures. We recognize that our efforts also must involve offense at home and abroad.

Our National Efforts to Secure the Homeland

The *Strategy* provides a common framework through which our entire Nation – Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments, the private and non-profit sectors, communities, and individual citizens – should focus its homeland security efforts on the following four goals:

- 1. Prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks.** To prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks in the United States, we are working to deny terrorists and terrorist-related weapons and materials entry into our country and across all international borders, disrupt terrorists' ability to operate within our borders, and prevent the emergence of violent Islamic radicalization in order to deny terrorists future recruits and to defeat homegrown extremism.
- 2. Protect the American people, our critical infrastructure, and key resources.** To protect the lives and livelihoods of the American people, we must undertake measures to deter the threat of terrorism, mitigate the Nation's vulnerability to acts of terror and the full range of man-made and natural catastrophes, and minimize the consequences of an attack or disaster should it occur.
- 3. Respond to and recover from incidents that do occur.** To save lives, mitigate suffering, and protect property in future catastrophes, we must strengthen the foundation of an effective, coordinated response. This includes clarifying roles and responsibilities across all levels of government and the private and non-profit sectors. We must also focus on ensuring we have the operational capabilities and flexibility necessary to facilitate both short-term recovery and an effective transition to long-term rebuilding and revitalization efforts.
- 4. Continue to strengthen the foundation to ensure our long-term success.** To fulfill these responsibilities over the long term, we will continue to strengthen the principles, systems, structures, and institutions that cut

across the homeland security enterprise and support our activities to secure the Homeland. Ultimately, this will help ensure the success of our *Strategy* to secure the Nation. This includes:

- **Applying a comprehensive approach to risk management.** We must apply a risk-based framework across all homeland security efforts in order to identify and assess potential hazards (including their downstream effects), determine what levels of relative risk are acceptable, and prioritize and allocate resources among all homeland security partners, both public and private, to prevent, protect against, and respond to and recover from all manner of incidents.
- **Building a Culture of Preparedness.** Our entire Nation shares common responsibilities in homeland security. In order to help prepare the Nation to carry out these responsibilities, we will continue to foster a Culture of Preparedness that permeates all levels of society – from individual citizens, businesses, and non-profit organizations to Federal, State, local, and Tribal government officials and authorities.
- **Developing a comprehensive Homeland Security Management System.** In order to continue strengthening the foundations of a prepared Nation, we will establish and institutionalize a comprehensive Homeland Security Management System that incorporates all stakeholders. This system involves a continuous, mutually reinforcing cycle of activity across four phases – guidance; planning; execution; and assessment and evaluation.
 - **Relevant departments and agencies of the Federal government must take the lead in implementing this system, and State, local, and Tribal governments are highly encouraged to ultimately adopt fully compatible and complementary processes and practices as part of a full-scale national effort.**
 - **In order to ensure the success of this system, our Nation must further develop a community of homeland security professionals by establishing multidisciplinary education opportunities.** In addition to covering homeland and relevant national security issues, this education should include an understanding and appreciation of appropriate regions, religions, cultures, legal systems, and languages. We also must continue to develop interagency and intergovernmental assignments and fellowship opportunities, tying them to promotions and professional advancement
- **Improving incident management.** We must develop a comprehensive approach to incident management that will help Federal, State, local, and Tribal authorities manage incidents across our goals of prevention, protection, and response and recovery. Our approach will build upon the existing National Incident Management System (NIMS) and help decision-making during crisis and periods of heightened concern.
- **Better utilizing science and technology.** The United States derives much of its strength from its advantage in science and technology, and we must continue to use this advantage and encourage innovative research and development to assist in protecting and defending against the range of natural and man-made threats confronting the Homeland.
- **Using all instruments of national power and influence.** The United States is using its instruments of national power and influence – diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement – to prevent terrorism, protect the lives and livelihoods of the American people, and respond to and recover from incidents. We must build on these efforts, by continuing to enhance our processes for sharing all relevant and appropriate information throughout all levels of government and with our partners, and by prioritizing the continued transformation of our law enforcement and military.

Working With Congress To Make FISA Reform Permanent, And Other Legislative Action

The U.S. Congress should take bold steps to fulfill its responsibilities in the national effort to secure the Homeland and protect the American people.

- **Congress should help ensure that we have the necessary tools to address changing technologies and homeland security threats while protecting privacy and civil liberties.** We must make additional reforms to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and ensure that the statute is permanently amended so that our intelligence professionals continue to have the legal tools they need to gather information about

the intentions of our enemies while protecting the civil liberties of Americans.

- **Both houses of the Congress should take action to further streamline the organization and structure of those committees that authorize and appropriate homeland security-related funds and otherwise oversee homeland security missions.**
- **The Congress should fully embrace a risk-based funding approach so that we best prioritize our limited resources to meet the most critical homeland security goals and objectives first.**

Progress Made Securing The Homeland

Since September 11, we have made extraordinary progress in securing our Homeland and fighting the War on Terror. We have:

- **Disrupted multiple potentially deadly plots against the United States.** We have greatly increased worldwide counterterrorism efforts since 9/11, which has constrained the ability of al-Qaeda to attack the Homeland and led terrorist groups to find that the United States is a harder target to strike.
- **Strengthened our ability to protect the American people by creating the Department of Homeland Security.** We have also enhanced our homeland security and counterterrorism architecture through the creation of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Homeland Security Council, the National Counterterrorism Center, and U.S. Northern Command, a Department of Defense combatant command focused on homeland defense and civil support.
- **Made our borders more secure.** We are implementing an effective system of layered defense by strengthening the screening of people and goods overseas and by tracking and disrupting the international travel of terrorists.
- **Instituted an active, multi-layered approach to that integrates the capabilities of Tribal, local, State and Federal governments, as well as those of the private and non-profit sectors.** In addition, Federal grant funding and technical assistance has also enhanced State, local and Tribal homeland security training and equipment, emergency management capabilities, and the interoperability of communications.
- **Worked with Congress to create, implement, and renew key legal reforms.** The USA PATRIOT Act, the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, and the Protect America Act of 2007 promote security and help to implement 9/11 Commission and WMD Commission recommendations, while protecting our fundamental liberties.

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