

National Capital Region Summit

On Homeland Security

Joint Statement

August 5, 2002

Since September 11th, renewed emphasis has been placed on cooperating to develop homeland security strategies in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The White House Office of Homeland Security has been working with our federal partners and representatives from state and local agencies encompassing the NCR to improve coordination in preparing for and responding to a terrorist incident.

To accomplish this, the states of Virginia and Maryland, the District of Columbia and the Office of Homeland Security issue this joint statement as follows:

1. We will work in partnership to develop a coordinated process for decision-making for significant incidents or emergency situations in the NCR. This includes methods for coordinating between operational entities and senior decision-makers in local and state governments, the federal government, and the private sector.
2. The United States Attorneys for the judicial districts within the NCR will work with the FBI to enhance coordination and information sharing through their respective Anti-Terrorism Task Forces and Joint Terrorism Task Forces.
3. We will work in partnership with the private sector to jointly identify and set protection priorities and guidelines for infrastructure assets and services in the NCR.
4. We will work in partnership to define and develop a common set of emergency protective measures to protect the health and safety of the public in the event of a major emergency in the NCR. Such measures will include standardized emergency protection guides, protocols, and procedures; public education on when to implement these measures; and coordinated pharmaceutical distribution plans across jurisdictions.
5. We will utilize the Emergency Management Assistance Compact and pursue resolution of existing responsibility, reimbursement, and liability issues related to implementing mutual aid agreements in the NCR; explore a mechanism to analyze existing agreements and the need for additional agreements; explore agreements to support mutual aid response between local governments across state boundaries; utilize consistent and statutory authorization to facilitate participation of mutual aid response between local governments across state boundaries; examine the development of mutual aid agreements between federal agencies or institutions and communities; and explore methodologies for enhancing private sector mutual aid support.
6. We will work in partnership to develop a virtual Joint Information System for the NCR during response to a major emergency or disaster event. Although co-location may not be possible, creating a process and protocols for operating as a "virtual" joint information center will achieve the goal of a coordinated voice for the public and the media. In turn, an NCR policy about communicating risk and emergency protective measures to the public in the event of an attack will be jointly developed.
7. We will utilize mechanisms for regional cooperation in endorsing and implementing Citizen Corps programs within the NCR.
8. We will work in partnership to coordinate plans for terrorism and security-related training and exercises across the NCR that is inclusive of all levels of government, as well as schools and universities, health care institutions, and other private and non-profit partners as appropriate; set a calendar of exercises for the NCR to include one full-scale and one functional exercise per year including multi-jurisdictional exercises of all forms; and utilize a consistent methodology to document and implement lessons learned from actual emergency events and exercises. Where feasible, member jurisdictions shall provide the opportunity for other regional partner agency employees and representatives to attend their training and participate in workshops. Standards and approaches for training and exercise should be consistent across the NCR and reflect national training and exercise strategy requirements.