

THE PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

Presidential Action

Today President Bush will unveil the **first-ever National Strategy for Homeland Security to organize and mobilize the nation's resources at every level to protect America from terrorist attack.** The President's strategy is an aggressive framework to meet the threats of today and prepare for the threats of tomorrow by:

- Helping prevent terrorist attacks within the United States;**
- Reducing America's vulnerability to terrorism; and**
- Minimizing the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.**

For the first time federal, state and local officials – and the private sector – will have a single roadmap to help guide them as they develop their individual security strategies. Every community in America is different, and every community has different security needs, the President's national strategy will help make communities make better decisions when allocating their precious homeland security resources. Moreover, with everyone working from the same national plan, redundant and duplicative efforts can be eliminated.

In addition, the National Strategy reinforces why the President has called for a major reorganization of the federal government both to deliver a better federal response and to provide stronger coordination with state and local governments and the private sector.

The President's strategy is built on six critical mission areas:

- Improving our intelligence and warning capabilities;
- Toughening our border and transportation security;
- Strengthening our efforts to prevent domestic terrorism;
- Protecting our critical infrastructure;
- Defending against weapons of mass destruction; and
- Improving our ability to respond to emergencies.

The strategy outlines several key areas for long-term improvement, including using new technologies to better protect our homeland and launching a new emphasis on research and development in the fields of bioterrorism and detection of weapons of mass destruction.

Current and future priorities for securing America will be encompassed within these critical mission areas. Every homeland security dollar in future federal budgets will correspond with one, and only one, critical mission area

The *National Strategy for Homeland Security* will help us become a safer nation – but also a stronger and better nation. The efforts sparked by this plan will yield significant spin-off benefits in the fields of science, health care, education and commerce. The release of this *Strategy* is just the beginning of what will be a many year struggle to protect our Nation from terrorism. The *Strategy* provides a foundation upon which to organize our efforts and provides

initial guidance to prioritize the work ahead. The *Strategy* will have to be adjusted and amended over time. America must be prepared to adapt our responses as our enemies in the war on terrorism adjust their means of attack.

Background:

Last October the President directed Governor Tom Ridge to design and implement a comprehensive, national strategy to protect America. In crafting the National Strategy, the Administration consulted with thousands of federal, state, local and private sector officials – including first responders, law enforcement officials and mayors and governors who serve on the front lines in the war of terrorism.

The President proposed the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security on June 6, roughly five weeks prior to the publication of the *Strategy*. The proposal to create the Department preceded the *Strategy* because we finished our work on the organizational issue first and because of our wish to deliver the proposal to create the new Department to the Congress in time for action during the current legislative session. As the President said in his June 6 address to the nation, “we face an urgent need, and we must move quickly, this year, before the end of the congressional session.”

Key components of the national strategy have already been unveiled:

- The President’s FY 2003 budget included critical funding increases for first responders, border and aviation security, and protections against bioterrorism.
- The Administration has taken aggressive steps to reform the way our intelligence agencies collect and share critical homeland security information.
- In June the President unveiled his proposal to make America safer by streamlining the government’s disparate homeland security functions into a single government department that has the primary mission of protecting America.