
Appendix: September 11 and America's Response

The American people responded to the attacks of September 11 with compassion and resolve. Virtually every American participated in one way or another in helping our Nation recover and grow stronger. Some rushed into burning buildings to save the lives of colleagues, friends, and strangers. Others demonstrated their solidarity by wearing an American flag on their lapel. Members of our military flew combat air patrols over our cities; some fought overseas. Many people ministered to the injured and comforted the grieving, while others worked in their official capacities—as legislators, policymakers, investigators, prosecutors, first responders, health officials, environmental experts, counselors, and economists—to help America recover from the attacks and confront the terrorist threat.

People in every state, every city, and every government agency have contributed to the effort to make America safer. Our efforts so far have created the solid foundation on which we continue to build our defenses. While the work to protect Americans and our way of life will continue indefinitely, we as a country can be comforted by our knowledge that the work is well underway.

Highlighted below are a few of the many actions taken by our Nation since September 11.

The Immediate Response to the Attacks

Rescue, recovery, and victim support. The response to the September 11 terrorist attacks began onboard the hijacked planes as passengers did all they could to thwart the terrorists, and continued in the streets of New York City, in the rubble of the Pentagon, and in the burning Pennsylvania countryside. Colleagues assisted each other in escaping from the collapsing buildings. Firefighters, police officers, emergency medical professionals, and public works employees responded immediately to the crime scenes, while hospitals treated the many victims. The recovery and clean-up efforts involved significant contributions from all sectors of our society—federal, state, and local agencies and entities, the private sector, volunteer organizations, as well as individual citizens.

The work to help the recovery effort and to assist the victims of September 11 did not stop at Ground Zero. It continued as Congress and the President worked to

appropriate \$40 billion in emergency funds to compensate victims, aid the reconstruction efforts in New York and Virginia, and strengthen our fight against terrorism. In addition, the American response persisted in the board rooms of private companies and charitable organizations as various sectors worked to raise money and donate supplies to aid the victims.

The investigation. In response to September 11, the U.S. government initiated the largest criminal investigation in our Nation's history, committing more than 4,000 FBI agents and 3,000 support staff to the effort. The investigation has been supported by numerous federal agencies, as well as state and local law enforcement.

While the investigation has been led by law enforcement, significant contributions have come from many sectors. For example, Congress and the President, by passing and signing into law the USA PATRIOT Act, provided law enforcement with the tools necessary to bring the guilty to justice. In addition, the international community joined us in the global war on terrorism, enabling law enforcement to investigate groups and terrorist cells throughout the world. The American population helped as well, by providing law enforcement with important investigatory leads, calling the Justice Department's hotline to report suspected terrorist activity, and logging onto the web site created so that people could share information.

After September 11, the federal government committed not only to rooting out terrorists wherever they are, but also to cutting off their sources of financial support. To support this effort, and to identify and eliminate funding sources of suspected terrorists, the Treasury Department launched Operation Green Quest at the U.S. Customs Service and the FBI established the Financial Review Group. Within weeks of September 11, the President issued an Executive Order to starve terrorists of their support funds. To date, the United States has blocked \$34.3 million in assets of suspected terrorist organizations and terrorist supporters/financiers. The global effort of more than 160 countries has resulted in the freezing of over \$112 million in assets.

The Response to the Terrorist Threat

Federal, state, and local governments and the private sector must coordinate on issues affecting homeland security in order to succeed in the fight against terrorism.

Officials across all levels of government have been working together on homeland security related task forces to meet this goal. In addition, each state now has a designated individual, charged by the respective Governor, to perform homeland security responsibilities.

The private sector has also worked closely with the government and with one another to better secure the homeland. For example, the Business Roundtable, an organization of Fortune 100 companies, established CEO COM Link, the Critical Emergency Operations Communication Link, to quickly alert and mobilize America's business leaders in times of national crisis or a natural disaster. Working closely with government officials, the Grocery Manufacturers of America launched Project Vigilance—a program that encompasses a task force on food security, “twenty-four, seven” databases, and other food industry actions to help assure the security of food and consumer products.

Supporting first responders. The members of the Nation's emergency services community are our first responders to terrorist attacks. Americans have done a great deal since September 11 to support our firefighters, police officers, emergency personnel, and other responders. In the wake of the attacks, many cities reviewed and made changes to their emergency plans. Congress appropriated \$650 million for federal grant assistance to states and localities for improving first responder terrorism preparedness. With this vital federal assistance, first responders have received and will continue to receive extensive training (including in weapons of mass destruction response) and necessary equipment.

Americans in their private capacities have joined in supporting our emergency personnel as well. The President created USA Freedom Corps to strengthen and expand opportunities to protect our homeland, as well as to support our communities and to extend American compassion around the world. As part of this initiative, Citizen Corps offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities to support first responders through its five national level programs. To name just one example, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Emergency Response Team program—part of Citizen Corps—trains volunteers to help support first responders during an incident. (See

Organizing for a Secure Homeland chapter for additional discussion and description of Citizen Corps programs.)

Critical infrastructure and key asset protection. Our Nation's efforts to protect against the terrorist threat have included increased security of our country's critical infrastructure and key assets. This increased security has taken many forms—heightened patrols, threat assessments, access restrictions—and has been undertaken by many agencies at all levels of government. For example, the Department of Defense has flown more than 22,000 combat air patrol missions within the United States since September 11 to protect our critical infrastructure from air attacks. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) placed nuclear power plants across the Nation on the highest level of security after the attacks, while the U.S. Customs Service placed the Nation's air, land, and sea ports of entry on Alert 1 Level, ensuring more thorough examinations of people and cargo. In addition, the NRC initiated a top-to-bottom security review of nuclear power plants, including an assessment of plant vulnerability to aircraft.

Yet the federal government has not acted alone in protecting our physical infrastructure. States and cities have also increased security at critical sites. In Jonesboro, Arkansas, the police department has concentrated security into areas that traditionally did not receive much attention, directing patrols for communication towers, water storage and treatment facilities. Local law enforcement coordinated with the Coast Guard to create a safety zone around Indian Point Energy Center, located 50 miles from New York City. Utah, with federal assistance, instituted flight and satellite surveillance over reservoirs. In Fresno, California, the police department staffed an anti-terrorism unit that conducted a survey of city buildings and security readiness. In Tampa, Florida, marine, air, and uniform patrols have been instituted at an important port, while in Wellington, Florida, new security measures have been installed in a water treatment plant.

The private sector, which owns the majority of our infrastructure, has also increased its security of its facilities. For example, the National Food Processors Association formed the Alliance for Food Security almost immediately after September 11 to better protect the food supply from intentional contamination. The American Chemistry Council's emergency communication center joined with the FBI's Hazardous Materials Response Team shortly after September 11, augmenting and improving their information-sharing and coordination activities.

In addition to our physical infrastructure, all levels of government, as well as private entities, have taken

measures to increase the security of our critical computer and information infrastructure. The President's Critical Infrastructure Protection Board has spurred research into potential methods to protect vital communications networks. The U.S. government established stronger encryption standards to safeguard sensitive, non-classified electronic information. The state legislatures of Louisiana, Michigan, and the Commonwealth of Virginia have passed cyber-terrorism laws.

The attacks on the World Trade Center and on the Pentagon starkly illustrated the need to protect our transportation systems, among other critical infrastructures, from acts of terrorism. Accordingly, more than 7,000 members of the National Guard, and later thousands of state and local law enforcement personnel, were deployed to help secure the Nation's airports. Congress passed the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which established a series of challenging milestones to achieve a secure air travel system. The Federal Air Marshals program was substantially expanded and new security procedures have been implemented at the Nation's 429 commercial airports.

Cities and states have also committed energy and resources to protecting our means of transportation, and across the country, local law enforcement and state governments have dedicated more hours, money, and personnel to securing modes of transportation. For example, in West Virginia state employees patrolled the state's highways, bridges, and waterways, while the City of Chicago increased security at its bridges and airports. States, including New Jersey, North Carolina, and Virginia, have also taken measures to increase security relating to driver's licenses by changing the requirements and identifying information necessary to obtain a license.

Protecting large events. The September 11 attacks created public concern regarding the safety of large spectator events, to which law enforcement at every level has responded with careful planning and coordination of security arrangements. The February 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, Utah, were a major test of America's ability to protect a large public event. Security at Salt Lake City was more thorough, more visible, better planned, and better coordinated than at any Olympics in history. The designation of the Olympics as a National Special Security Event brought federal support to the Games in the areas of venue security, air space security, training, communications, and credentialing. Throughout the Games, federal, state, and local agencies shared intelligence to ensure a high level of readiness, and dozens of state and local law

enforcement agencies took part in security planning, contributing valuable resources and invaluable expertise.

National biodefense. On the heels of the tragedies of September 11, we found ourselves under attack once again – this time from the dissemination of anthrax through the mail. These attacks illustrated the need to make prevention of and protection against bioterrorist attacks a top priority. Our country has already taken several important steps, including the procurement of 200 million doses of smallpox vaccine, and the expansion of the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile. (See *Emergency Preparedness and Response* chapter for additional discussion.)

While the federal government plays a critical role in increasing our defenses against bioterrorist attacks, state and local governments are integral to prevention as well, and they have taken action. Michigan spent \$2.6 million for epidemiologists, microbiologists, and lab personnel to increase the state's ability to respond to bioterrorist attacks. The City of Baltimore created a web-based surveillance system to track the appearance of common symptoms in uncommon amounts that might indicate a biological attack.

Private industry has engaged as well. For example, four major pharmaceutical companies, using information from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, have begun to distribute reference guides to doctors and caregivers on how to detect and treat anthrax in patients.

Protecting our borders. Since September 11, we have taken important measures to protect our borders more effectively. The U.S. Coast Guard deployed additional personnel to protect our ports of entry immediately after the attacks, while the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the National Guard augmented their presence on our northern and southern borders. In addition, the Foreign Terrorist Tracking Task Force has been working to bar terrorists or terrorist-supporting aliens from the United States and to track down and deport any who have illegally entered the United States.

We need the help of our closest neighbors—Mexico and Canada—to fully protect our borders. In December 2001, the United States and Canada concluded a "Smart Border Declaration," which committed our governments to working together to build a secure border that operates efficiently and effectively under all circumstances. The U.S. and Canadian governments have already made great strides in realizing that vision, aggressively implementing a detailed 30-point action plan of specific measures to

securely facilitate the free flow of people and commerce.

In a similar fashion, the United States and Mexico signed the “U.S. – Mexico Border Partnership” declaration in March 2002. Currently, border management agencies from both the United States and Mexico are working together to implement a 22-point action plan of specific measures to ensure the secure flow of legal goods and people, and to build adequate border-management systems and infrastructure.

Protecting our borders involves not only knowing who enters our country, but also what comes across our borders. To protect the security of cargo entering the United States, the U.S. Customs Service launched Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism. This joint initiative of the government and the private sector requires importers to take steps that will ensure tighter security of cargo, and, in return, the government agrees to give the more secure, low risk cargo the “fast lane” through our ports of entry.

Communicating with and engaging the public. The attacks of September 11 filled America with apprehension. Government representatives have worked to alleviate the anxiety in the months that have followed through responsible communication with the public. The government faces a balancing act on this front: the public’s need and right to know about terrorist threats versus the risk of raising alarm unnecessarily or fruit-

lessly by relaying all information including ambiguous or non-specific threat information. In response to this pressing need for clear communication, and recognizing that an informed public is a key asset, the President created the Homeland Security Advisory System to provide the public with the necessary information and awareness regarding terrorist threats and protective action.

Our citizens also responded to September 11 with a dedication to overcome the terrorist threat at home. The President created the Citizen Corps initiative to offer Americans the opportunity to volunteer to protect their communities through emergency response and preparation. Public response has been impressive. More than 100 communities, ranging from major metropolitan areas to small suburban and rural communities, have formed Citizen Corps Councils to coordinate local volunteer activities to support first responders. More than 38,000 individuals from all 50 states have signed up online to participate in one or more of the federally supported Citizen Corps programs, including Volunteers in Police Service, Neighborhood Watch and Operation TIPS, sponsored by the Department of Justice; the Medical Reserve Corps, sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services; and the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Community Emergency Response Team training.