
NATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

STATEMENT OF NATIONAL POLICY

This document reaffirms our Nation's longstanding policy regarding critical infrastructure and key asset protection. It also delineates a set of guiding principles that underpins our strategy for action to protect our Nation's critical infrastructures and key assets from terrorist attack.

As a Nation, we are committed to protecting our critical infrastructures and key assets from acts of terrorism that would:

- Impair the federal government's ability to perform essential national security missions and ensure the general public's health and safety;
- Undermine state and local government capacities to maintain order and to deliver minimum essential public services;
- Damage the private sector's capability to ensure the orderly functioning of the economy and the delivery of essential services; and
- Undermine the public's morale and confidence in our national economic and political institutions.

As a Nation, we must utilize every tool at our disposal and work collaboratively to develop and implement the protective measures that this policy entails. The strategic objectives discussed in the *Introduction* will focus and drive this effort.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our domestic protection efforts are grounded in core strengths and values that we have traditionally relied upon during major periods of crisis in our Nation's history. Using these core strengths and values as a guide, eight principles underpin this *Strategy* and its associated enabling initiatives:

1. Assure public safety, public confidence, and services

Anticipating that widespread or large-scale disruptions will undermine public confidence in our political and economic institutions, terrorists will continue to use horrific violence against people and property to impact the efficient functioning of our



society and economy. By making strategic improvements in security and reducing the vulnerability of our Nation's critical infrastructures and key assets to such physical attack—particularly those involving the most catastrophic potential consequences—this strategy seeks to reassure the public and reinforce its confidence in our institutions and systems.

By making our infrastructures and key assets more robust through such measures as deliberate redundancies, hardening, and dispersal, we increase their capacity to withstand attack without sustaining significant damage. Through effective protection and response planning, we make them more resilient to allow for the quick restoration of critical services to minimize the detrimental effects to our economy and public welfare. Implementing and exercising well-developed plans assures their effectiveness in times of crisis and is key to shaping public expectations and instilling confidence in our Nation's ability to manage the aftermath of terrorist attacks.

2. Establish responsibility and accountability

This *Strategy* recognizes the crucial role of government, industry, and the public at large in protecting our critical infrastructures and key assets from terrorist attack. Our valued heritage of federalism and limited government decentralizes our governance and affords private citizens and institutions with certain rights and freedoms to conduct their lives and businesses. In this context, organizations and individuals outside of the federal government must take the lead in many aspects of critical infrastructure and key asset protection.

Consequently, a key component of this *Strategy* is the delineation of roles, responsibilities, and accountability among the various public- and private-sector entities that have an important part to play in domestic protection. This necessarily encompasses the mechanisms required to coordinate and integrated protection policies, planning, resource management, performance measurement, and enabling initiatives across federal, state, and local governments and the private sector.

3. Encourage and facilitate partnering among all levels of government and between government and industry

Critical infrastructure and key asset protection concerns span all levels of government as well as the private sector. Protection over the long term is necessarily a shared responsibility that involves mustering resources and expertise nationwide. The *National Strategy for Homeland Security* recognizes the need to mobilize our entire society in a collective effort to defend our homeland. Accordingly, it places great emphasis on “the crucial role of state and local governments, private institutions, and the American people.” This principle is central to our critical infrastructure and key asset protection effort.

Every disruption or attack is initially a local problem. Because of the immediate effects experienced by local communities, state and local governments, and private-sector infrastructure owners and operators invariably form the vanguard of response when terrorists strike. Consequently, public confidence depends heavily on how well the community implements protective measures and plans in advance of a crisis. Accordingly, the federal government will provide overall support, coordination, and focused leadership to foster an environment in which all stakeholders can better carry out their individual protection responsibilities.

4. Encourage market solutions whenever possible; compensate for market failure with focused government intervention

Protecting our Nation's critical infrastructures and key assets requires a broad spectrum of possible government actions, including: improving understanding and awareness of the current threat environment; providing threat indications and warnings; investing in research and development; transferring pilot technology; exploring various forms of financial incentives; and taking targeted regulatory action, where appropriate.

Through this *Strategy*, the federal government strives to encourage proactive, market-based protective solutions. Many of the critical infrastructure sectors are currently highly regulated, and additional regulatory directives or mandates should only be necessary in instances where market forces are insufficient to prompt the investments necessary to assure critical infrastructure and key asset protection. They may also be used when a uniform national standard or coordinated response is required to address a particularly challenging threat, especially in the context of cross-sector interdependencies.

In many cases, incentives can reinforce knowledge and experience within the private sector and state and local governments, including the development of new tools and innovative processes that are appropriate for their particular systems, operations, and security challenges. Incentives can also help to offset certain negative aspects of market dynamics, such as the natural tendency of market pressures to eliminate redundancies, and, hence, create single points of failure.

5. Facilitate meaningful information sharing

Information sharing underpins any true partnership and is necessary to mitigate the threat posed by a cunning, adaptive, and determined enemy. To

formulate comprehensive security plans and make informed security investment and action decisions, individuals and institutions alike require timely, accurate, and relevant information. Accordingly, we must adopt measures to identify and evaluate potential impediments or disincentives to security-related information sharing and formulate appropriate measures to overcome these barriers. We must also develop and facilitate reliable, secure, and efficient communications and information systems to support meaningful information sharing among various public- and private-sector entities.

6. Foster international security cooperation

Following the events of September 11, the United States moved quickly to engage friends and allies around the world in the war on terrorism. We also took prompt action with Canada and Mexico to initiate programs designed to improve the security of our shared borders and trans-border infrastructures. Further global engagement is needed to protect our critical infrastructures and key assets from terrorists. In a world characterized by complex interdependencies, international cooperation is a key component of our protective scheme.

7. Develop technologies and expertise to combat terrorist threats

The *National Strategy for Homeland Security* underscores the importance of science and technology as key elements of homeland security. Our efforts to secure critical infrastructures and key assets must fully leverage our technological advantages to make protection more effective,

more efficient, and less costly. Pooling our national resources and fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors will enable us to capitalize on emerging technologies and enhance our protection against the most lethal threats.

Similarly, through advances in modeling, simulation, and analysis we can improve our understanding of the complex, interdependent nature of the infrastructures and assets we must protect. Emergent capabilities in this area will facilitate protection planning, decision making, and resource allocation.

8. Safeguard privacy and constitutional freedoms

Our society is a tapestry of diverse races, ethnicities, cultures, religions, and political viewpoints. This pluralism and our ability as a society to accommodate diversity significantly contribute to America's strength. However, as the *National Strategy for Homeland Security* observes, our free society is also inherently vulnerable. Nevertheless, achieving security at the expense of the civil rights and liberties that form an integral part of our national character would hand a victory to terrorism.

Consequently, we must accept some level of terrorist risk as a persisting condition in our daily lives. The challenge is finding the path that enables us to mitigate risk and defend our country while preserving the freedoms and liberties that shape our way of life. In providing for our collective protection, we will respect privacy, the freedom of expression, the freedom of movement, the freedom from unlawful discrimination, and other cherished liberties that define us as a Nation.

