# III.  Communication and Information

## *Strategic Objectives, Tactical Action Initiatives, and Benchmarks*

To be most effective when making decisions related to homeland security, the Agency must have clearly defined and understood approaches to sharing and communicating necessary information, including classified material, with internal and external users.  EPA will work to improve communications with Agency employees and managers; ensure that information is effectively shared within the Agency; and work with the Department of Homeland Security to improve and extend data-sharing partnerships with federal, state, and local governments. EPA will also work to ensure that clear structures are in place to exchange relevant information with the national security, law enforcement, and intelligence communities.  EPA realizes that there may be times during emergencies when decisions must be made quickly and decisively without having knowledge of the full breadth and depth of the situation.  At these times, the Agency will leverage and optimize its resources to make an informed decision.

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**OBJECTIVE 1 $\Rightarrow$ EPA will use best available environmental information from internal and external sources to ensure informed decision-making and appropriate response.**

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EPA plays an important part in the collaborative effort to prevent, detect, and respond to environmental security threats by ensuring that decision-makers have access to the data they need. EPA will continue to broaden its efforts in this area to include enhancing the consistency of monitoring data collection and facilitating data sharing among federal agencies and state and local governments.

Over time, EPA will work to ensure resource, public health, and environmental protection data will be linked together to monitor the state of the nation's environment and to perform environmental risk management and resolution.  Data on pollutant releases/emissions, ambient conditions, and environmental effects will be more complete, of higher quality, and displayed in an easy to understand format.

TACTICS

1.1    **EPA will enhance consistency in the collection of environmental data.**

RESULTS
*EPA will have the ability to collect and analyze environmental information from all necessary sources to respond to incidents and threats.*

1.1.1    Develop an emergency response database and presentation tools. Completed.

**1.1.2** Develop Staged Electronic Data Deliverables (i.e., SEDD) for chemical and radiological agents in a standard format. (Initial work for Rad is complete as of FY2003, working on further modifications).

**1.1.3** Develop an analytical data management tool for emergency response data. (FY2005)

**1.2** **EPA will build partnerships with key health and environmental organizations to facilitate the sharing of homeland security related information.**

<u>RESULTS</u>
*Linkages between health and environmental data sources and EPA access portals will support flows, analysis, and tools necessary to monitor and respond to incidents and threats.*

**1.2.1** Sign MOU with HHS and CDC/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to support data sharing. (FY2002)
**1.2.2** Develop EPA-wide geospatial data sharing program with partners. (FY2003)
**1.2.3** Develop capacity for federal, state, and local health agencies to use standard reporting formats. (FY2003)

**1.3** **EPA will develop a situation management capability to inform appropriate action by federal, state, local, and private entities.** Completed.

<u>RESULTS</u>
*The situation capability will support confident decision-making by linking science and policy through data and technology.*

**1.3.1** Review records management procedure and information holdings to ensure conformance to the March 19, 2002, memorandum from White House Chief of Staff Card entitled "Action to Safeguard Information Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction and Other Sensitive Documents Related to Homeland Security," and the October 12, 2001, memorandum from Attorney General Ashcroft regarding disclosure decisions under the Freedom of Information Act. Completed.
**1.3.2** Develop draft EPA criteria and guidance on protection of sensitive information. Completed.

**OBJECTIVE 2** ⇒ **EPA will effectively disseminate timely, quality environmental information to all levels of government, industry, and the public, allowing them to make informed decisions about human health and the environment.**

EPA will improve its ability to communicate effectively with the public regarding terrorist incidents and environmental threats. The Agency will challenge environmental and public health agencies to develop better approaches to sharing information about environmental consequences in ways that the public can easily understand. EPA will also work with the new Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies to develop a process that will allow timely release of environmental data that are critical to effective decision-making at all levels. In addition, EPA will create appropriate tools and environmental outreach materials that address health impacts and exposure guidelines for relevant contaminants, and will develop understandable materials describing common emergency response activities (sampling and monitoring, debris hauling, washing activities, etc.).

Finally, the Agency will establish a clearly defined approach to policymaking, on-scene coordination, and external communications in a critical response context to ensure clarity and consistency of messages and enhanced coordination within government.

### TACTICS

**2.1    EPA will use a structured approach within the Agency for information releases that clearly defines roles for public communication during incidents and emergencies.** Completed.

### RESULTS
*Lines of authority and roles/responsibilities for communication will be understood and relied upon by staff and management during and after an incident.*

**2.1.1**    Create a cross-Agency workgroup to address internal threat, incident, or emergency communication barriers and make recommendations for change—coordinate with the National Incident Coordination Team (NICT). Completed.

**2.1.2**    Integrate information dissemination processes into emergency response planning. Completed.

**2.1.3**    Develop a protocol for internal communications in support of incident/emergency response.   Completed.

**2.1.4**    Develop training and educational material to inform managers and staff of communication processes and structure used during incidents/emergencies. Completed.

**2.2    EPA will improve the ability to communicate effectively with the public regarding incidents and threats.**

### RESULTS
*EPA will be able to effectively and reliably communicate information about incidents and environmental risks in ways the public can understand.*

**2.2.1**    Develop a network of tools to facilitate public communication.

**2.2.2** Work with public health agencies to create specific environmental outreach materials that address health impacts and exposure risks.

**2.2.3** Enhance the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) to include repository of exposure data used to communicate with the public.

**2.2.4** Define approach to ensure access to Agency Web-based information 24x7. Completed.

**2.2.5** Define critical data applications and categories with time sensitive parameters.

**2.2.6** Identify hot site(s) for critical data hosting and build out, test and operate. Completed.

**2.2.7** Ensure backup power and telecommunications redundancy to the National Computing Center (NCC) and hot sites(s). Completed.

**2.2.8** Create a mirror site for the Agency's public access Web site. Completed.

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**OBJECTIVE 3 ⇒ EPA will classify, declassify, safeguard, manage, and destroy all national security information in accordance with Executive Order 12958, as amended by Executive Order 13292; and exchange information with other federal, state, and local assets to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorist threats or attacks; and improve and streamline personnel security services to ensure employees are granted and maintain active security clearances in a timely manner.**

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EPA will work with the Department of Homeland Security to create a clearly defined structure for coordination with the national security, law enforcement, response, and intelligence communities. As outlined in Section II, the Agency will develop appropriate response coordination plans to ensure an EPA and government-wide understanding of roles, responsibilities and capabilities.

### TACTICS

**3.1** **EPA will create clearly defined mechanisms for appropriate communication and coordination with national security and law enforcement communities.**

#### RESULTS

*EPA will demonstrate effective management and use of sensitive and classified information through the use of the appropriate facilities and protocols.*

**3.1.1** Design a Sensitive, Compartmented, Information Facility (SCIF) or redesign EPA's existing SCIF. Completed.

**3.1.2** Certify the SCIF meets appropriate standards. Completed.

**3.1.3** Issue design criteria for the construction of a Sensitive, Compartmented, Information Facility (SCIF). (FY2005)

**3.1.4** Develop policies and procedures for managing and operating a SCIF. (FY2005)

**3.2**     **EPA will improve its National Security Information program through establishing comprehensive policies and procedures for classifying, declassifying, safeguarding, and managing classified information**.

UNDERLINE_RESULTS

*EPA will have a model National Security Information program that will allow the Agency to participate as a full partner in sharing of appropriate classified material with the law enforcement and national security communities.*

**3.2.1**   Develop policies and procedures to classify, declassify, and safeguard national security information. (FY2004)

**3.2.2**   Develop and implement an education and training program on National Security Information. (FY2004)

**3.2.3**   Develop and implement a self-audit and inspection program. (FY2004)

**3.2.4**   Issue an EPA Order on National Security Information. Completed.

**3.2.5**   Perform computer intrusion investigations relating to Homeland Security matters effecting EPA computer networks, programs, and operations.

**3.3**     **EPA will continue to improve its Personnel Security Program through providing timely processing of investigation applications, reviewing and adjudicating investigations, and granting security clearances.**

RESULTS

*EPA will have the security clearances necessary for full participation and support of Agency and inter-Agency activities and emergency response functions.*

**3.3.1**   Work with OPM to ensure security clearances are being processed in a timely manner.

**3.3.2**   Maintain an up-to-date list of employees with security clearances.

**3.3.3**   Track and monitor the status of all security clearances and investigations.

**3.3.4**   Pass security clearances to other federal agencies in a timely manner on an as-needed basis.

**3.3.5**   Initiate periodic re-investigations in a timely manner to maintain active clearances on personnel.

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**OBJECTIVE 4 ⇒ EPA will continuously and reliably communicate with employees and managers.**

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EPA is committed to supporting its employees and staff, whether they are directly responsible for homeland security activities or engaged in day-to-day environmental protection responsibilities. A critical step in fulfilling this commitment is ensuring that the capacity exists for continuous

communication (including voice and data connectivity) with employees, responders, and decision-makers throughout the life of an incident.

<u>**TACTICS**</u>

**4.1    EPA will deploy new technology applications for communication during national emergency situations.**

<u>RESULTS</u>

*Continuous communication with employees, responders, and decision-makers will occur throughout the life of an incident through the use of current technology.*

**4.1.1**    Deploy a Virtual Private Network (VPN) in full production for EPA. Completed.

**4.1.2**    Coordinate with other agencies on development and deployment of a federal extranet.

**4.1.3**    Develop specifications for mobile command posts. (FY2004)

**4.2    EPA employees will be provided with appropriate information, training, and support to respond to emergencies and incidents.**

<u>RESULTS</u>

*EPA employees will be prepared, informed, and trained to effectively manage and respond to terrorist threats and incidents.*

**4.2.1**    Develop health and safety training/guidance for emergency responders. (FY2005)

**4.2.2**    Develop and communicate employee safety and health information in conjunction with Occupant Emergency Plan communication training.

**4.2.3**    Offer stress management training and individualized counseling for employees.

**4.2.4**    Provide Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) education and training Agency-wide.

**4.2.5**    Refine message process for reaching employees at work, home, and at emergency sites.