

# EPA's Counter-Terrorism Response Capabilities

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# Presentation Overview

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- Why is EPA involved in Counter-Terrorism (CT)?
- What is the NRS and how does it work?
- What types of CT incidents might EPA be involved in?
- What are some EPA Lessons Learned from the World Trade Center/Pentagon and Anthrax Responses
- What is the Criminal Investigations and Environmental Response MOU?

# Why is EPA Involved in CT?



**Federal Mandates**

**Existing Programs**

**Hazmat Expertise**

**State & Local  
Partnerships**

# EPA's Role as a Key Federal Partner

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- Included in strategy endorsed by Congress and the White House
- Anticipated confirmation by Vice President's Task Force
- Mandated by the NCP and FRP Emergency Support Function #10 (Hazardous Materials)
- Augmented by Presidential Decision Directives



# EPA General CT Responsibilities

- Provide technical personnel and supporting equipment to the lead Federal agency during a WMD terrorist incident
- Monitor and assess public health and environmental impacts
- Develop/provide protective action guidance
- Assist the lead Federal agency in recovery, clean-up, and mitigation



# EPA New/Additional Mandates

- Assist FBI in threat assessments and determining hazards associated with releases in a terrorist incident
- Assist FEMA with environmental monitoring, decontamination, and long-term site cleanup
  - EPA is the lead agency for Hazmat response under ESF #10 of the FRP
- Lead agency for the Water Supply Sector



# What is the National Response System?

- EPA participates in federal-wide CT activities via the NRS
- The Federal mechanism to prepare for and respond to hazardous materials releases
- In existence for 30 years
- Multi-agency/multi-level system
- Designed to support state and local responses



# What Assets Are Available Through the NRS?

- Federal On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs)
- Other OSCs (including USCG Captains of the Port)
- Regional Response Teams
- EPA Removal Managers
- Response contractor support
- Special Forces



# What is the Role of the FOSC?

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- Ensure proper notification and evaluation
- Direct/coordinate, and/or provide technical assistance to all response efforts at site
- Maintain final decision-making authority for protecting health and safety
- Ensure access to information by other interested, relevant parties

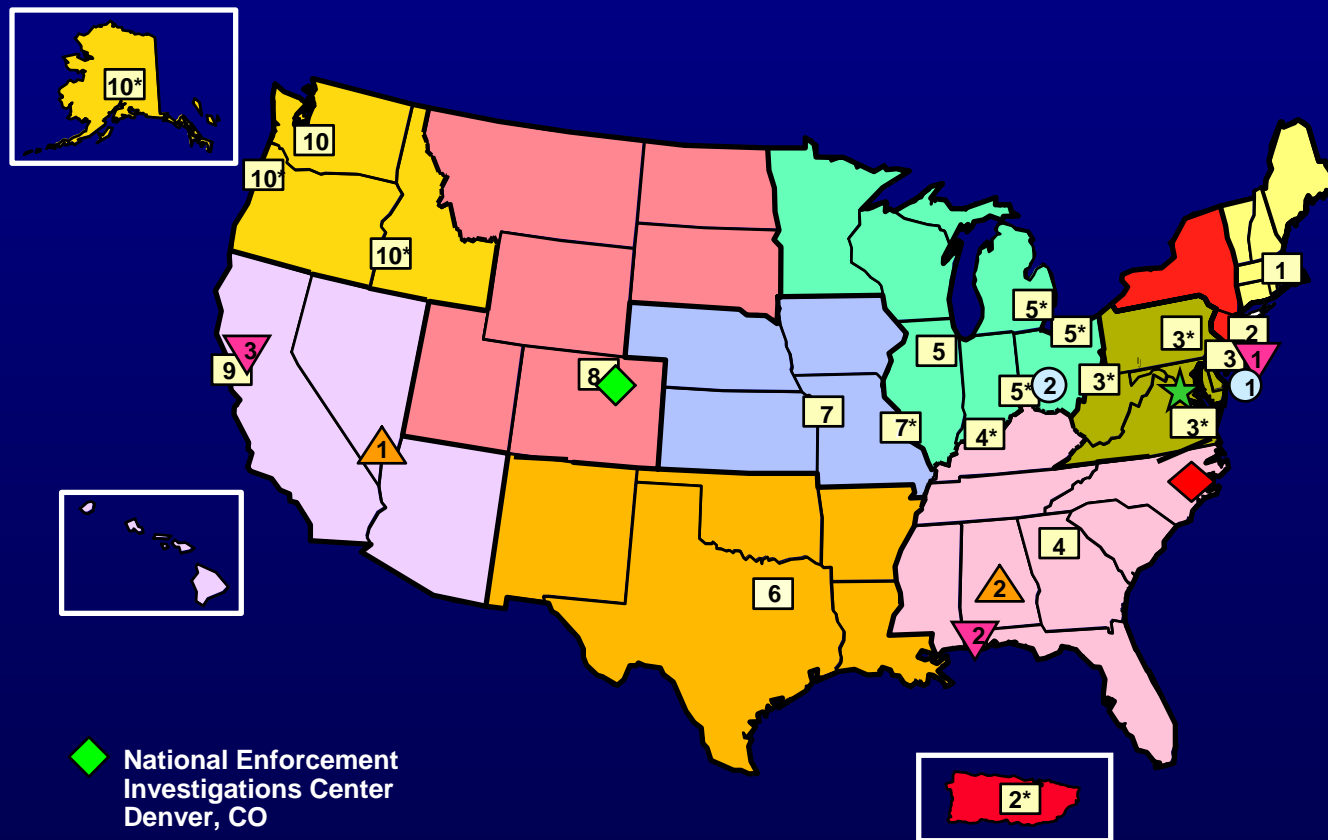


# What Special Teams are Available Through the NRS?

- EPA's Environmental Response Team (ERT)
- EPA's Radiological Environmental Response Team (RERT)
- NOAA and EPA Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC)
- USCG National Strike Force (NSF)
- USCG District Response Groups (DRG)
- USCG Public Information Assist Team (PIAT)
- Navy Supervisor of Salvage (SUPSALV)
- Radiological Assistance Teams (RATs)



# NRS Response Assets



## Regional Offices and Field Offices

- 1 Boston, MA
- 2 New York, NY
- 2\* Puerto Rico
- 3\* Allentown, PA
- 3 Philadelphia, PA
- 3\* Wheeling, WV
- 3\* Richmond, VA
- 4 Atlanta, GA
- 4\* Louisville, KY
- 5 Chicago, IL
- 5\* Charlesville, IL
- 5\* Cincinnati, OH
- 5\* Cleveland, OH
- 5\* Grosse Ile, MI
- 6 Dallas, TX
- 7 Kansas City, MO
- 7\* St. Louis, MO
- 8 Denver, CO
- 9 San Francisco, CA
- 10 Seattle, WA
- 10\* Portland, OR
- 10\* Boise, ID
- 10\* Anchorage, AK
- \* denotes field office

**◆ National Enforcement Investigations Center**  
Denver, CO

**◆ USCG National Strike Force Coordination Center**  
Elizabeth, NC

**▽ National Strike Force Teams**  
1 Atlantic, Fort Dix, NJ  
2 Gulf, Mobile, AL  
3 Pacific, Novato, CA

**★ EPA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC

**● Environmental Response Teams**

- 1 Edison, NJ
- 2 Cincinnati, OH

**▲ Radiation Labs**  
1 Las Vegas, NV  
2 Montgomery, AL

# What Types of Involvement Might EPA Have in a CT Incident?

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- **Major WMD incidents**
  - Follow CONPLAN process
  - State/local response capabilities overwhelmed
  - Mass casualties
  - Potential for multiple events
- **Non-FRP incidents**
  - Threats/hoaxes
  - CONPLAN process not fully implemented
- **NRS initiated incidents with WMD implications**
  - Initially appears to be routine hazmat incident
  - NCP process followed through NRS
  - Potentially terrorist motivated

# What is EPA's Involvement in Response to a Major WMD Incident?

- Support **FBI** in crisis management
  - Law enforcement activities
- Support **FEMA** in consequence management
  - Activities to mitigate or respond to the incident effects
  - Under the FRP and Terrorism Incident Annex



# Major WMD Incident Response: EPA's Role During Crisis Management

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- Coordinate through FBI with others
- Participate in FBI-led Domestic Emergency Support Team (DEST), HQ Strategic Information Operations Center (SIOC), and, if appropriate, Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST)
- Provide incident-specific technical support
  - Chemical hazards evaluation
  - Modeling
  - Coordination/notification
- Provide evidence collection support
- Resources available to support FBI-led response teams
  - OSCs, Special Forces deployment (ERT, USCG, NEIC)

# Major WMD Incident Response: EPA's Role During Consequence Management

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- Initially may respond under own authorities
- Conduct response action through FRP/ESF #10:
  - Threat assessment, site evaluation and removal actions, agent identification, hazard detection and reduction, environmental monitoring, decontamination, and long-term site restoration
  - Integration with and assistance to ICS/UC
- Support state and local responders as key focus of response
- Coordinate with local, state, and key federal partners such as FEMA, FBI, DOD, PHS, CDC, DOE, USCG, and others

# What is EPA's Involvement in Response to a Non-FRP Incident?

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- Examples: anthrax and chemical agent hoaxes
  - CONPLAN process unlikely
  - EPA OSCs respond in conjunction with an FBI Special Agent to support local responders
  - Work with other members of the ICS/UC to identify a strategy and response plan
  - Coordinate and/or direct response actions per the NCP in support of the FBI/FEMA
  - Health and safety issues must remain a concern

# What is EPA's Involvement in an NRS Initiated Response with WMD Implications?

- EPA responds through the NRS until the incident is discovered to be terrorist in nature
- EPA can notify the other federal agencies
- Transitioning from an NCP/NRS incident to a terrorist threat or incident
  - Ensure that the evidence is not affected by the response
  - Notify the FBI SAC for the district affected
  - Transition to FBI as LFA upon arrival
- EPA can continue to support the response after transition to an FBI lead



# Pre-deploying for National Security Special Events

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- EPA's OSCs are active in planning and pre-deploying EPA assets for National Security Special Events
  - 2000 Democratic and Republican National Conventions
  - North Atlantic Treaty Organization 50th Anniversary Summit
  - 1996 and 2002 Olympics
  - World Bank/IMF Meetings in Washington, DC
- EPA's planning experience is a unique asset in preparing for the potential for terrorism at these significant events

# Training and Exercises

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- EPA provides hazmat training to its OSCs and other responders to ensure their health and safety
- EPA has been an integral part of the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness Program
- EPA has been an active participant in several terrorism exercises
  - Exercise TOPOFF in May 2000
  - Wasatch Rings Exercise in April 2001 (in preparation for the 2002 Olympics)
  - Currently preparing for TOPOFF 2

# WTC/Pentagon Lessons Learned

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- Contingency plans and guidelines need to be revised and expanded to address terrorist/intentional events
- EPA and USCG have different perceptions of how the NCP and FRP should be concurrently implemented
- The NRT works well because its components interact on a regular basis
- There was confusion and inconsistency regarding the roles and responsibilities of various federal agencies

# WTC/Pentagon Lessons Learned (continued)

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- Greater coordination among entities involved in CT planning and response is needed
- The expectations of FBI as lead agency need to be clarified
- The NRS needs to be integrated with OHS
- ICS/UC is effective and should be promoted and utilized



# WTC/Pentagon Lessons Learned

## (continued)

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- EPA's emergency response program is better prepared than other federal programs because it responds everyday
  - Health and safety of EPA employees, as well as all first responders at a hazmat response, is EPA's responsibility
  - Biological agent response is EPA's number one vulnerability in terrorism response readiness
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# Anthrax Lessons Learned (continued)

- Pre-incident sharing should be improved
- Existing information and technology should be adapted for biological responses
- The NRT should examine its planning and response roles to ensure that the needs of RRTs and OSCs are met



# Anthrax Lessons Learned (continued)

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- Existing environmental cleanup approaches should be adapted for deliberate releases of bio contaminants
  - The response to biological agents presents health and safety risks/challenges that differ from hazmat responses
  - A mechanism is needed to ensure adequate and consistent training for all NRS responses to bio incidents
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# Criminal Investigation & Emergency Response Memorandum of Understanding (CI/ER MOU)

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- Drafted by an *ad hoc* committee of the NRT to address potential conflicts during the interface of criminal investigations and environmental response actions
- Status of the MOU and supporting documents
  - MOU, Background Document, Signatory Pages, and Transmittal Letter are nearly final
  - MOU will be signed by top-level officials representing more than 15 Federal agencies

# Purpose of the MOU

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- Establishes on-scene priorities, does **not** determine or affect selection of lead response agency
- Explicitly states that protection of human life is the highest priority during a response
- Ensures coordination, cooperation, and communication between investigative/enforcement personnel and environmental responders
  - Requires reciprocal notice upon arrival
  - Requires agencies to incorporate appropriate points of the MOU into training and guidance documents
  - Does not change or supercede any existing legal requirements, plans, or agreements

# Conclusion

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- WMD incidents are also hazmat incidents and require a very similar response
- EPA brings the existing system for hazmat response, and coordination experience with state and local responders, to the federal response to a terrorism event

For More Information. . .

# VISIT

*EPA's CT Website:*

[www.epa.gov/swercepp/cntr-ter.html](http://www.epa.gov/swercepp/cntr-ter.html)

*National Response Team Website:*

[www.nrt.org](http://www.nrt.org)