

# **SAN LUIS VALLEY**

## **REGIONAL HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGY (RHSS)**

### **Section 1 > Introduction**

#### **Purpose**

In the wake of September 11, 2001 and Hurricane Katrina all levels of government awoke to the need to reevaluate our preparedness to protect citizens from another terrorist attack or natural disaster. Although terrorism remains the focus for our homeland security efforts, governments also realized that preparedness includes our ability to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from a terrorist attack or other major disaster.

This Strategy furnishes the San Luis Valley officials with the means to develop interlocking and mutually supporting emergency preparedness programs. It is a guide to the ongoing efforts on the part of the SLV governmental entities as well as the private sector to ensure the safety of the citizens from the existing threats of today as well as the unknown threats of the future through the strategic allocation of resources to build the capacity of public safety and emergency response professionals and reduce vulnerabilities to terrorism and other disasters across the region.

The implementation of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8), National Preparedness Goal & guidance (NPG), defines the direction and emphasis for homeland security efforts. HSPD-8 describes a pathway for the nation to close the gap between where we are today and where we need to be using a prioritized, capabilities-based approach which will allow us to improve substantially our ability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from a terrorist attack or natural disaster. The SLV Regional Homeland Security Strategy (RHSS) aligns itself to the State strategy and the national priorities articulated in HSPD-8 in its focus, goals and objectives.

#### **Vision**

The San Luis Valley will strive to attain to the best of their abilities both a responder community with an optimal level of preparedness to prevent, protect, respond and recover from terrorist attacks and other disasters and a citizenry that is confident in these abilities and empowered to assist in these efforts.

#### **Focus**

San Luis Valley's Regional Homeland Security Strategy includes four key preparedness focus areas: prevention, protection, response, and recovery. SLV will prioritize efforts within these focus areas to be inline with the National priorities articulated in Homeland Security Presidential Directive Eight (HSPD-8) which include three overarching priorities and four capability-specific priorities:

Overarching Priorities:

1. Implementation of NIMS & NRP
2. Expanded regional collaboration
3. NIPP Implementation

Capability specific priorities

4. Strengthen information sharing and collaboration capabilities
5. Strengthen interoperable communication capabilities
6. Strengthen CBRNE detection, response & decontamination capabilities
7. Strengthen medical surge and mass prophylaxis capabilities

The Strategy's prevention focus consists of identifying and protecting critical infrastructure (priority #3) and improving the ability of regional and local agencies to gather, share, and analyze terrorism and disaster related information (priority # 4). Critical Infrastructure Protection in this region also includes a significant agricultural component.

The Strategy's protection focus is to enhance SLV's first responder agencies ability to protect its citizenry and critical infrastructure from both terrorist attacks and the effects of natural disasters. Inherent in this effort is our ability to harden critical infrastructure (priority #3) which includes, but is not limited to, multiple sectors such as agriculture, large public venues, transportation, cyberspace and public water supplies. Protection also requires the ability to share information (priority # 4) and to provide mass prophylaxis (priority # 7) to protect the health of our citizenry during a bioterrorism or pandemic event.

The Strategy response focus includes ensuring effective coordination of emergency response across disciplines and jurisdictions and identifying and closing gaps in basic emergency response capabilities. Critical to this effort are current CBRNE response plans, strong interoperable communications capabilities (priority #5), adequate equipment, training & exercises (priority #6) as well as stronger medical surge and mass prophylaxis capabilities (priority #7). The response focus also incorporate NIMS and NRP implementation (priority #1). Critical to response is also citizen involvement as active participants in volunteer responder roles as well as neighbor-helping-neighbor. (NHN)

The Strategy's recovery focus will enable recovery from an emergency for both private and public entities. Recovery requires regional collaboration (priority # 2), COOP and COG planning/execution (priority #1) and information sharing between public & private entities (priority #1).

## **Coordination**

### *Original FY 03 Strategy Development and Approval Process*

In 2002, legislation was enacted to create the Office of Preparedness, Security, and Fire Safety within the Colorado Department of Public Safety to coordinate Colorado's response to the threat of terrorism. House Bill 02-1315 includes a number of specific duties for the office, including the creation and implementation of terrorism preparedness plans.

Strategy development & approval for the FY 03 assessment and strategy began with the assessment process which was done at the county level for the local portion. This effort was coordinated by the University of Colorado Research Team who oversaw the training, data collection and data input. The state portion of the assessment was coordinated through the Office of Preparedness, Security and Fire Safety (OPSFS) in cooperation with the Division of Emergency Management (DEM).

The development of the strategy was also coordinated through OPSFS utilizing input from a broad group of responders and state working group members. The 2003 strategy was then approved by the State Administrative Agency (SAA). In 2003, the SAA was OPSFS and the Point of Contact and State Homeland Security Advisor was the Executive Director of the Department of Public Safety and OPSFS.

### *Strategy Revision Process Following the State Reorganization*

Since the initial publication in FY 03, the strategy has been updated in April of 05 to reflect changes that have occurred internally to the state organization and to reflect revisions required to

the goals and objectives based on changing dynamics at the local level since the roll-out of the nine All-Hazards Regions and Regional Coordinators.

The changing dynamics and reorganization at the state level are described as follows:

- In June of 2004, Governor Owens named the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) as the State Administrative Agency (SAA) for all Department of Homeland Security grants and resources and appointed, the Executive Director of DOLA as the Point of Contact with DHS. The Director of Colorado Department of Public Safety, remains the State Homeland Security Advisor.
- In September 2004, the Governor appointed a Special Assistant, Homeland Security and All-Hazards Coordinator for the State. This position is responsible for planning and oversight of all Homeland Security and All-Hazards functions, as well as ensuring a coordinated state effort.
- In May, 2004, Nine All-Hazard Planning Regions were approved by Governor Owens. These regions grouped the counties together to facilitate collaboration and planning for prevention, protection, response, and recovery purposes. The regions each hired a coordinator (Jeff Babcock for San Luis Valley) to manage both programmatic and financial aspects of their efforts. For guidance purposes, SLV created the SLV All Hazards Committee and the San Luis Valley Policy Committee, made up of one county commissioner from each county, as its multidisciplinary advisory boards. The SLV region will develop a regional strategy that will dovetail into the state strategy.
- The reorganization at the state level with leadership provided by the Executive Director of the Department of Local Affairs (SAA), the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Public Safety (SHA), and the Special Assistant to the Governor is a balanced partnership with a unified command. This leadership provides the framework for the strategy using a collaborative process. The All-Hazard Regions emphasize the regional, bottoms-up approach that allows first responders across all disciplines to drive the development of homeland security capabilities within their regions.
- On January 31, 2005, Governor Owens created the Homeland Security and All-Hazards Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) formalizing the homeland security and all-hazards coordination process within state government and complying with the ODP guidelines requiring states to establish a senior advisory committee for the oversight and coordination of homeland security assistance programs. The purpose of the SAC is to enhance the integration of all disciplines involved in homeland security. The SAC will advise the Governor on an ongoing basis regarding issues related to homeland security, specifically to include the State of Colorado Homeland Security Strategy and prioritization of its goals. The committee will also make recommendations regarding homeland security grant allocations within Colorado. The committee includes cabinet level members from 17 departments including the Division of Emergency Management, Colorado Department of Health and the Environment, OPSFS, Department of Agriculture, etc. The committee also established an advisory group (SME Committee) consisting of subject matter experts from all disciplines to advise the committee on issues related to its mission. This diverse group will assist in ensuring the coordination of strategy development among the various disciplines required to fulfill capabilities within the National Preparedness Goal (NPG). Additionally, regional trainings are being conducted within the state by the Special Assistant to the Governor and the CU Team to ensure that local governments and agencies also understand the requirements of the National Preparedness Goal.

Following the above state level changes, a revision of the State Strategy was lead by the Governor's Special Assistant to Homeland Security & All Hazards Coordinator along with the CU Research Team and was approved by ODP in February of 2005.

#### *Process for this Current Revision of the Strategy*

This current update to the state strategy will also be lead and coordinated by the Governor's Special Assistant with assistance from the CU Team and in concert with the Division of Emergency Management (DEM). The strategy will be reviewed by the SAC, including the SME Committee. The recommendations from the SAC will be forwarded to the Governor for final approval.

#### *Process for the Regional Strategies*

The nine All Hazards Regions will also develop Regional Strategies that are complimentary to the State strategy. These Regional Strategies are developed by the Working Groups & Boards for each region and will be reviewed by the State All Hazards Advisory Committee (SAHAC) which consists of the Regional Coordinators, DOLA, DEM, Colorado Department of Health and the Environment, other State agencies involved with homeland security, the Governor's Office, Fire Chiefs, Police Chiefs, Sheriffs and other subject matter experts. Following SAHAC review, the regional strategies will be submitted to the SAC for review and recommendations and then on to the Governor for final approval.

#### *Coordination of Local Government Concerns & Citizen Corps*

Coordination of local government concerns is addressed through our regional approach. The construct of the regions is described below in the Description of the Jurisdictions section. Each Region is led by a Regional Coordinator responsible for programmatic, financial & strategic management. Citizen Corps efforts are coordinated through the Lt Governor's Office which has established a robust network of Citizen Corps councils and activities throughout the state. Additionally, Citizen Corps coordination is also done at the local level by Region. (Address local citizen corps efforts)

#### **Effort**

The effort in 2003 to coordinate strategy development and assessment activity, as described above, was jointly accomplished through a collaborative effort with OPSFS and the University of Colorado Research Team. The effort included regional trainings on the assessment methodology so that the locals were properly prepared to do the data collection for the assessment. The synthesis and data input followed the collection. The strategy development included a large technical Assistance provided by ODP that included the participation stakeholders from of a wide variety of state and local responders and disciplines. OPSFS synthesized the input from the stakeholders and submitted for approval to the SAA.

As described above, that process has changed with the inception of the SAC. Future assessments will involve multidisciplinary input from the regions. The final document will be approved through the SAC.

#### **Description of the Jurisdiction**

Colorado is organized into nine All-Hazards Regions. These regions are made up of Colorado's 64 Counties and two Indian tribes.

The San Luis Valley Region includes Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties.

The regions were established May 1<sup>st</sup> 2004. The regions were determined through consideration of existing regions used for planning, emergency management & medical/public health response. Each Region then hired a Regional Coordinator to provide oversight for grants and programmatic guidance. Within these regions, there are additional regional response efforts such as regional hazmat teams and EOD Teams which create efficient and effective capabilities.

## **Regionalization and Mutual Aid**

### *Regionalization*

Colorado regionalized many of its efforts in order to enhance capabilities and maximize resources. For overall homeland security programmatic efforts, the Nine All-Hazard Regions are the guiding framework. As described above, these regions are used for homeland security planning, emergency management and medical/public health response.

Colorado has regionalized EMS plans through the Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Councils (RETACs). Each of the 11 RETACs is comprised of at least four counties or two counties with a combined population of at least 750,000. The RETACs act in an advisory role and are integrated into the All-Hazard Regions. The San Luis Valley RETAC is a close partner to the San Luis Valley All Hazards Advisory Committee.

Public Health and Hospitals previously had their own planning regions which have now been incorporated into the All-Hazard regions. Mr. Dave Pote is currently the regions Public Health Planner.

SLV has a regional 911 dispatch capability, GPS/GIS network, EPN, and the SLV regional public health preparedness effort.

### *Mutual Aid*

Intrastate mutual aid agreements amongst the counties and jurisdictions are currently being processed. To date, 6 of the 6 counties in the SLV have signed these agreements and a total of 18 municipalities (add Fire Protection districts/ambulances/school districts/search&research/hazmat/law enforcement) have signed MOUs.

Interstate mutual began in the 1950's with the signing of the Interstate Civil Defense Compact. All 50 states were signatories of this compact. In the early 90's, Colorado joined five other states: Arizona, Utah, Arizona, Nevada and California in the Southwestern States Compact, which was a subcompact to the Civil Defense Compact. In 2001, Colorado signed the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) to provide emergency assistance for all types of disasters.

## **Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Steps**

**The following is a list of goals. The goals are not listed in order of priority. All goals are of equal importance. Implementation steps and objectives are considered confidential.**

### **GOAL 1: Planning**

Develop a comprehensive homeland security planning process which mirrors the State Strategy and National Response Plan (NRP), provides for prevention of disaster emergencies, and will effectively integrate all disciplines in response and recovery operations.

**GOAL 2: Training and Exercises**

Through training and exercises, improve the San Luis Valley regions ability to deal with terrorist/natural or man-made disasters events.

**GOAL 3: Information Sharing**

Facilitate the prevention of terrorism and mitigate natural hazards by enhancing the abilities of local agencies to gather, analyze, and share information between themselves and the state.

**GOAL 4: Communications Interoperability?**

Develop a Region wide standards based comprehensive interoperable communication system that provides instant and disruption-resistant communications capabilities for all public safety and first responder agencies.

**GOAL 5: Critical Infrastructure Protection**

Identify and prioritize critical infrastructure, key assets, and high-population density venues pursuant to the principles of the National Strategy for Homeland Security (NSHS).

**GOAL 6: Cyber Security**

Prevent and deter widespread disruption and damage caused by cyber attacks on Colorado's critical infrastructure.

**GOAL 7: Food and Agriculture Protection domestic animals CART**

Provide the San Luis Valley food and agriculture sectors with the means to prepare, prevent, respond, and recover from agro terrorist attacks.

**GOAL 8: Public Health Protection**

Provide an effective response and coordinated patient care that protects the health of citizens within the region in the event of a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

**GOAL 9: Citizen Participation**

Strive to include every citizen within homeland security activities through public education and outreach, training, and volunteer service opportunities at the community level.

**GOAL 10: Continuity of Government**

Develop a comprehensive plan for continuity of government that focuses on constitutional governance, ensures command and control of response and recovery operations, and facilitates the restoration of critical and essential services expected by Colorado citizens. The Continuity of Government (COG) plan will ensure, to the maximum extent possible, continuity of leadership and direction to provide for citizen safety, reduce disruption of critical and essential government functions, and minimize property loss and damage.

**GOAL 11: Emergency Responder Capabilities**

The San Luis Valley region will build capacity to equip, train, and effectively manage first responder resources for terrorism events and natural disasters.

## **Evaluation Plan**

The Evaluation Plan will be guided by the Homeland Security Project Coordinator and the San Luis Valley All-Hazards Advisory Committee. The SLV All-Hazards Advisory Committee will appoint members to a Subject Matter Expert Group (SME Group). The SME Group will advise the Committee on issues related to its mission, and will be guided by the Regional Homeland Security Strategy. The SME Group will review the status of each goal, its objectives and implementation steps and make formal recommendations to the Regional Homeland Security Project Coordinator and the SLV All-Hazards Policy and Advisory Committees. Each SME will be responsible to report on the progress made toward the implementation of the goals that are related to his/her expertise in the San Luis Valley Homeland Security Strategic Plan.

Evaluation of progress will be tracked through our Exercise program and planning review process. Through the use of HSEEP, exercises will be tracked at the Regional level by the Regional Coordinator and the Regional Exercise Planning Group.

The San Luis Valley RHSS will be updated and reviewed annually by the San Luis Valley Strategic Planning Committee to ensure consistency with the State of Colorado Strategic Plan and to correct any shortcomings that were identified by the SME members.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. HSEEP: Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program.
2. RHSS: San Luis Valley's Regional Homeland Security Strategy.
3. RETAC: Regional Emergency Trauma Advisory Council
4. NIPP: National Infrastructure Protection Plan
5. NIMS: National Incident Management System
6. CBRNE: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive
7. CIAC: Colorado Information and Analysis Center
8. MACC: Multi Agency Coordination Center (state EOC)