

Testimony of
Matt Bettenhausen

Director
California Office of Homeland Security
October 26, 2005

STATEMENT OF DIRECTOR MATTHEW R. BETTENHAUSEN
CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY
BEFORE
THE SENATE JUDICAIY SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,
TECHNOLOGY AND HOMELAND SECURITY

October 26, 2005

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, California, along with the rest of the nation moved quickly to respond to the threat of international terrorism. Al Qaeda was quickly identified as the perpetrator of the attacks and remains a primary focus of the ongoing terrorist threat to America. Their goal is to cause mass casualties and inflict damage upon America's economy and national icons. California continues to be a high risk state with a wide variety of potential targets.

The nature of this threat demands that measures be taken with a sense of urgency to address a broad variety of needs. Systems for a wide variety of homeland security needs have been put in place, such as information sharing and threat assessment, grants management, critical infrastructure protection, and training and exercises.

California, in partnership with federal and local governments and the private sector, has prioritized its efforts across the homeland security spectrum of: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. In achieving these homeland security goals, California believes that it is vital to develop these capabilities across disciplines and on a regional basis. California's Homeland Security Strategy promotes information sharing as detailed in the National Homeland Security Strategy and the report issued by the 9/11 Commission and ensures that money invested in homeland security is done so in a planned and coordinated manner.

National Strategy for Homeland Security

In July 2002, the White House Office of Homeland Security issued the National Strategy for Homeland Security. The purpose of the Strategy is to mobilize and organize our Nation to secure the U.S. homeland from terrorist attacks. It identifies six Critical Mission Areas, including intelligence and warning, border and transportation security, domestic counterterrorism, protecting critical infrastructure, defending against catastrophic threats, and emergency preparedness and response.

The Strategy's objectives are to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States; reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism; minimize the damage and to quickly recover from attacks that do occur.

Establishment of OHS

The California Office of Homeland Security was established in the Office of the Governor by Executive Order. The Office is charged with developing and coordinating a comprehensive state strategy that includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. It is responsible for coordinating homeland security activities throughout California. Under this Executive Order, all state agencies and departments are directed to cooperate with the OHS. Some of the key state partners include the Office of Emergency Services, the State Military Department, the California Department of Justice, the California Highway Patrol, Department of Health Services, the Department of Food and Agriculture, and the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA).

Overview of OHS and its Core Functions

Under the Executive Order, the Office of Homeland Security is responsible for developing and implementing the State's strategy to combat terrorism. The fundamental components of the strategy are: preventing acts of terror by enhancing awareness and information sharing; strengthening preparedness by building upon California's robust training and exercise program; deterring attacks by protecting critical assets and reducing their vulnerability; and bolstering the capabilities of first responders with federal homeland security grants. Prevention is our highest priority. We must have an information and warning system that can detect terrorist activity before it manifests itself in an attack so that proper preemptive, preventive, and protective action can be taken. California must work in cooperation with federal agencies to complement their information and warning efforts to ensure that there is an integrated system at the federal, State and local levels.

The first core function of OHS is threat assessment and information analysis and sharing. The OHS promotes information sharing between all levels of law enforcement and, where appropriate, other first responders and the private sector. The 9/11 Commission Report identified several instances where such information sharing may have been helpful in preventing the 9/11 attacks. California has led the nation by establishing four regional centers and one statewide center where all agencies can work collaboratively to ensure that relevant information and threat assessments are gathered and shared with all appropriate agencies.

The California Office of Homeland Security, in cooperation with the California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Justice has established the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) and is using the Law Enforcement and Terrorism Prevention Program funds to establish and operate four Regional Terrorist Threat Assessment Centers, aligned with the four FBI Field offices and Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) in California. The STTAC coordinates the ongoing information sharing and prevention efforts of State agencies, including the Office of Homeland Security, California Department of Justice, California Highway Patrol, Office of Emergency Services, Emergency Medical Services Authority, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and other State agencies.

The four Regional Terrorist Threat Assessment Centers provide crucial links and processes to assess emerging threats and effectively disseminate and share timely information. The state system links federal, state and local law enforcement and public safety agencies and ensures that critical information is better shared between law enforcement, fire and emergency services, public health, agriculture commissioners, private security companies and industries. Our state information sharing system will improve the level of critical information provided to our public safety agencies statewide, making them better informed and more successful to deter, detect and prevent terrorism and better prepared to effectively respond to an event if one does occur. The State has also created a network of trained Terrorism Liaison Officers (TLOs) consisting of over 400 public safety officers to better identify the precursors to terrorist attacks.

The second core function is critical infrastructure protection. In December of 2003, the President issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7 (HSPD-7) on Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization, and Protection. As HSPD-7 acknowledges; terrorists seek to destroy, incapacitate, or exploit critical infrastructure and key resources across the United States to threaten national security, cause mass casualties, weaken our economy and damage public morale and confidence. OHS recognizes that California is not exempt from this threat and therefore, critical infrastructure protection remains a top priority.

OHS is coordinating with the Federal Department of Homeland Security in conducting site assessments across California's critical infrastructure/key resource sectors within California. OHS coordinated the FY05 Buffer Zone Protection Grant Program (BZPP), which provides funding for equipment and protective measures to better protect, secure, and reduce the vulnerabilities of federally identified critical infrastructure and key resource sites. The critical infrastructure sectors identified by the federal government include: Agriculture and Food; Banking and Finance, Chemical and Hazardous Materials Industry; Defense Industry Base; Energy; Emergency Services; Information Technology; Telecommunications; Postal and Shipping; Public Health; Transportation; Water; and National Monuments and Icons. Key resources include: Commercial Assets; Government Facilities; Dams; Nuclear Power Plants.

The Buffer Zone Protection Program is designed to reduce vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure and key resource sites by extending and hardening the protected area around a site into the surrounding community and supporting the prevention, preparedness, and response efforts of local first responders. Local law enforcement develops and implements buffer zone protection plans to increase the level of protection and act as a deterrent and prevention mechanism for possible terrorist's threats or incidents. The total funding allocation for the FY05 BZPP grants is \$91.3 million nationwide. California's allocation is \$12.9 million.

A critical component of California's strategy to secure infrastructure is protecting the State's maritime assets. The Office of Homeland Security is a member of the three Area Maritime Security Committees in California. These bodies, chaired by US Coast Guard Captains of the Port, conduct regional threat and vulnerability assessments, develop specific scenarios based upon these assessments, and conduct training and exercises to prevent and respond to a wide variety of incidents. In addition to the \$33 million in grants California received under the Port Security Grant Program, the State awarded an additional \$5 million to 11 ports from the State's own share of the Homeland Security Grant Program. These grants will be used to prevent terrorists from using improvised explosive devices, as well as investing in training port security

personnel, communications equipment, physical security improvements such as cameras, lighting, fencing, underwater surveillance, and personal protective equipment for port first responders.

The third core function is the statewide Homeland Security Training and Exercise Program. This multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team that ensures training and exercises for California's emergency responders are systematically developed and coordinated to respond and recover from terrorist attacks using weapons of mass destruction. The Exercise Program focuses on a robust annual statewide exercise, Golden Guardian, which will take place in less than a month. The Golden Guardian exercise will involve more than 2500 participants representing more than 120 federal state and local agencies. The Golden Guardian 2005 scenario involves simultaneous attacks on critical infrastructure at sites in the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Area and State Capitol regions.

The Golden Guardian Exercise Series was first introduced in California in 2004, and has become an annual exercise conducted to coordinate response mechanisms of city, county and state governmental entities, private sector and volunteer organizations in response to potential man-made events and natural disasters. The goal of the Golden Guardian Exercise Series is to build upon the lessons learned from this and subsequent exercises conducted throughout the nation, as well as real-world events.

The training program also coordinates the States emergency responder training; developing training, ensuring training is properly certified, and tracking those who have been trained. Both programs ensure that the lessons learned from previous exercises are folded back into the next year's exercise objectives and are used to identify new training needs. Additionally, the training and exercise program receives recommendations and guidance on training curriculum development from the Emergency Response and Advisory Training Committee (ERTAC), which was established by legislation in 2003.

Another core function is grant distribution and management. California has been awarded over \$1 billion in federal funding since 9/11, in a variety of grant programs. California has designed a grant management system that promotes regional planning and multi-discipline coordination. This is true for grants managed by the Office of Homeland Security, the Department of Health Services and the Office of Emergency Services. The oversight bodies for each of these grants at the State level contains representatives from all the disciplines, including: fire, law enforcement, public health, emergency medical and emergency management. This has ensured that all the grants are receiving input and coordination to promote multi-discipline planning and coordination.

I am confident that California is more prepared today than ever. Working in concert with our federal, State, local and private sector partners we have markedly enhanced capabilities across our core functions of threat assessment and information analysis, critical infrastructure protection, training and exercise, and grant distribution and management. While much has been accomplished, we recognize that improvements can still be made. I appreciate this opportunity to share with the Committee the accomplishments we have achieved and invite suggestions for further development.

Thank you for your attention this morning.