V. Incident Management Actions

Actions

This section describes incident management actions ranging from initial threat notification to early coordination efforts to assess and disrupt the threat, to preparatory activation of the ESF structure, to deployment of Federal resources in support of incident response and recovery operations. These actions do not necessarily occur in sequential order; many may be undertaken concurrently in response to single or multiple threats or incidents.

Figure 10 depicts initial incident management actions. In situations where it is apparent that an Incident of National Significance may be imminent or has already occurred, assessment and pre-incident interagency coordination typically are compressed. In these instances, DHS moves quickly to coordinate multiple Federal activities to include the following: information-sharing, interagency course of action development, alert and deployment of resources, operational coordination, and other assistance as required, in consultation and coordination with other Federal departments and agencies and the affected jurisdiction(s).

Notification and Assessment

Federal, State, local, tribal, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations report threats, incidents, and potential incidents using established communications and reporting channels. The HSOC receives threat and operational information regarding incidents or potential incidents and makes an initial determination to initiate the coordination of Federal information-sharing and incident management activities.

Reporting Requirements

Federal, State, tribal, private-sector, and NGO EOCs are either required or encouraged, as noted below, to report incident information to the HSOC. In most situations, incident information is reported using existing mechanisms to State or Federal operations centers, which will in turn report the information to the HSOC. Suspicious activity, terrorist threats, and actual incidents with a potential or actual terrorist nexus are reported immediately to a local or regional JTTF (or the NJTTF, in the case of Federal departments/agencies). Subsequently, the FBI SIOC immediately reports the terrorist threat, if the FBI deems the threat to be credible, or the actual incident to the HSOC and the NCTC. Additionally, actual incidents, regardless of whether or not there is a terrorist nexus, are reported immediately to the HSOC by appropriate governmental and nongovernmental entities.

- **Federal Departments and Agencies:** Federal departments and agencies are required to report information relating to actual or potential Incidents of National Significance to the HSOC. This information may include:
  - Implementation of a Federal department or agency emergency response plan;
  - Actions to prevent, respond to, or recover from an Incident of National Significance for which a Federal department or agency has responsibility under law or directive;
  - Submission of requests for assistance to, or receipt of a request from, another Federal department or agency in the context of an Incident of National Significance;
  - Receipt of requests for assistance from State, local, or tribal governments; NGOs; or the private sector in the context of an Incident of National Significance; and
  - Suspicious activities or threats with a potential terrorist nexus (normally through the FBI SIOC to the HSOC and the NCTC).

- **State/Tribal Governments:** State and tribal governments and emergency management agencies use established reporting mechanisms and are encouraged to report information relating to actual or potential Incidents of National Significance to the HSOC, using procedures established by DHS. (Information regarding potential terrorist threats should be reported through the local or regional JTTF.) This information may include:
  - Implementation of an incident management or emergency response plan or action to prevent, respond to, or recover from an Incident of National Significance;
  - Announcement of emergency proclamations or declarations made under State, local, or tribal authority; and
  - Activation of State or tribal mutual-aid agreements or compacts in response to incidents resulting in emergency proclamations or declarations, or requiring Federal assistance.

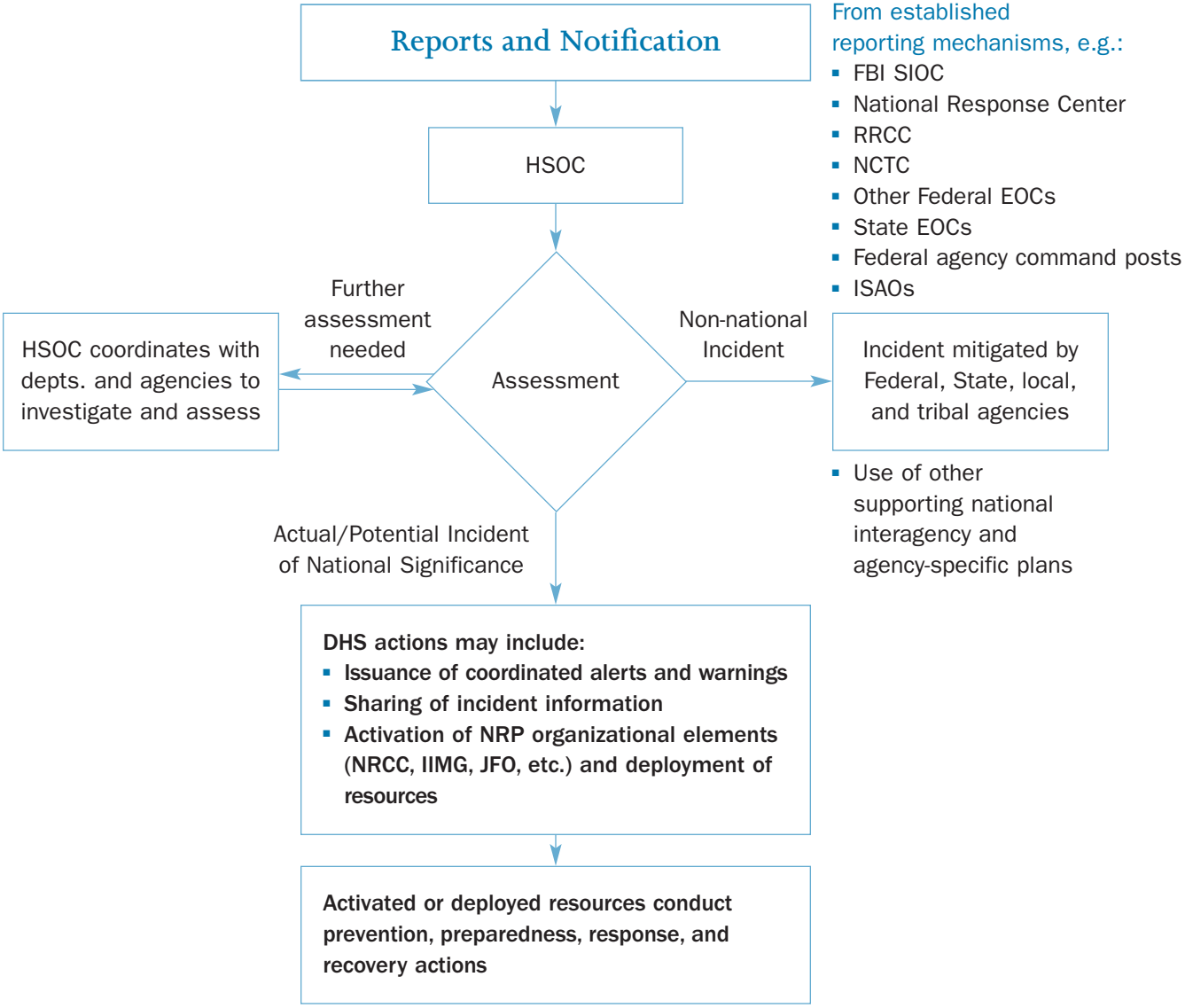
- **Local Governments:** Local governments communicate information regarding actual or potential Incidents of National Significance to the HSOC through established reporting mechanisms in coordination with State government officials and EOCs.

- **Private-Sector/Nongovernmental Organizations:** Private-sector and nongovernmental organizations are encouraged to communicate information regarding actual or potential Incidents of National Significance to the HSOC through existing jurisdictional reporting mechanisms, as well as established information-sharing and analysis organizations (ISAOs).

Situational Awareness and Initial Incident Assessment

The HSOC maintains daily situational awareness to identify and monitor threats or potential threats inside, on, or approaching the borders of the United States. Upon receipt, the HSOC passes such information to appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal intelligence and law enforcement agencies as expeditiously as possible, according to established security protocols and in coordination with the FBI and NCTC.

FIGURE 10. Flow of initial national-level incident management actions



The **HSOC** maintains daily situational awareness to identify and monitor threats or potential threats inside, on, or approaching the borders of the United States.

The HSOC also monitors nonterrorist hazards and accidents, and receives reports from various operations centers, such as the FOC regarding natural hazards (severe storms, floods, etc.) and the National Response Center regarding oil spills and hazardous materials releases. When notified of a hazard or an incident with possible national-level implications, the HSOC assesses the situation and notifies the Secretary of Homeland Security accordingly. Based on the information, the Secretary of Homeland Security determines the need for activation of NRP elements. The HSOC coordinates with other departments and agencies regarding further field investigation, as required.

The FBI, NCTC, and DHS/IAIP evaluate intelligence relating to terrorist threats and other potential incidents. All Federal, State, local, and tribal departments and agencies must notify their local or regional FBI JTTF regarding information associated with a threat of terrorism or an actual terrorist incident. Additionally, the HSOC is notified immediately in the case of an actual incident, regardless of whether or not there is a terrorist nexus. In the case of a threat, the local FBI JTTF notifies the NJTTF. Federal department and agency headquarters should notify the NJTTF or FBI SIOC with similar information. Upon receipt of a threat of terrorism, the FBI conducts a formal threat credibility assessment, which may include assistance from select interagency experts. If a threat is deemed credible, the FBI SIOC notifies the HSOC immediately to enable subsequent NRP actions.

Dissemination of Warnings and Bulletins

Watches, warnings, and other emergency bulletins are issued by various agencies based on their statutory missions and authorities. For example, the National Weather Service issues weather-related notices to warn the public of impending storms and severe weather.

Watches, warnings, and other emergency bulletins are issued by various agencies based on their statutory missions and authorities.

The HSOC coordinates with the NCTC, TSC, FBI, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and similar programs for terrorism-related threat analysis and warning, and disseminates homeland security threat warnings and advisory bulletins. The HSOC performs this task consistent with normal steady-state threat monitoring, assessment, research, and reporting functions. The HSOC follows Executive orders, directives, MOUs/MOAs, and procedures in place between the NCTC, TSC, and DHS/IAIP.

The FBI disseminates terrorism law enforcement bulletins and warnings to ensure that vital information regarding terrorism reaches appropriate officials within the U.S. counterterrorism and law enforcement communities. This information is transmitted via secure teletype. Each message transmitted under this system is an alert, an advisory, or an assessment—an alert if the terrorist threat is credible and specific, an advisory if the threat is credible but general in both timing and target, or an assessment to impart facts and/or threat analysis concerning terrorism. These products are fully coordinated with DHS prior to release.

The FOC, in coordination with the HSOC, facilitates distribution of warnings, alerts, and bulletins to the emergency management community using a variety of communications systems such as:

- **National Warning System (NAWAS):** NAWAS is the primary system for emergency communications from the Federal Government to both State and county warning points.
- **Washington Area Warning System (WAWAS):** Although not directly tied to the NAWAS circuits, WAWAS is a mechanism for providing emergency communications to Washington, DC, area officials in the event of an emergency.
- **National Emergency Alert System (National EAS):** Formerly known as the Emergency Broadcast System, the National EAS is a nationwide network of broadcast stations and cable systems that provide a readily available and reliable means to communicate emergency information to the American people.
- **State and local EAS:** State and local authorities have their own EAS which may be used to broadcast information on major disasters or emergencies.

Evolving Threats Identified at the National Level

The ongoing fusion of intelligence at the national level may result in the detection of a potential terrorist threat of a specific and credible nature. Unlike incidents reported from the field, this process results in the initiation of initial incident management actions at the headquarters level and generates a "top-down" response to deter, prevent, and otherwise respond to the terrorist threat.

The HSOC, NCTC, and FBI SIOC coordinate information regarding terrorist threats. When the FBI or DHS/IAIP determines that a credible threat exists, it notifies and coordinates with the HSOC, which immediately notifies the FBI SIOC, if it has not been already informed. The HSOC then notifies the Secretary of Homeland Security, who may elect to activate any or all of the NRP organizational elements, as well as initiate the coordination of interagency policy issues and operational courses of action through the White House, as appropriate. The Secretary may also elect to activate and prepare to deploy various special teams to conduct prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

Activation

This section discusses the early-stage efforts to activate and deploy NRP organizational elements and Federal resources, including special teams, emergency facilities, and other response resources.

For actual or potential Incidents of National Significance, the HSOC reports the situation to the Secretary of Homeland Security and/or senior staff as delegated by the Secretary, who then determines the need to activate components of the NRP to conduct further assessment of the situation, initiate interagency coordination, share information with affected jurisdictions and the private sector, and/or initiate deployment of resources. Concurrently, the Secretary also makes a determination of whether an event meets the criteria established for a potential or actual Incident of National Significance as defined in this plan.

When the Secretary declares an Incident of National Significance, Federal departments and agencies are notified by the HSOC (as operational security considerations permit), and may be called upon to staff the IIMG and NRCC. The affected State(s) and tribes also are notified by the HSOC using appropriate operational security protocols. In the pre-incident mode, such notification may be conducted discreetly, on a need-to-know basis, so as to preserve the operational security and confidentiality of certain law enforcement and investigative operations.

When the Secretary declares an Incident of National Significance, Federal departments and agencies are notified by the HSOC, and may be called upon to staff the IIMG and NRCC.

(Note: NRP resources, such as a PFO, may be designated and activated in the context of a general threat, prior to a formal Incident of National Significance determination by the Secretary of Homeland Security, to facilitate pre-incident interagency and multijurisdictional coordination and threat assessment activities.) For acts of terrorism, information-sharing, deployment of resources, and incident management actions during actual or potential terrorist incidents are coordinated with DOJ.

The NRCC and RRCC deploy, track, and provide incident-related information until the JFO is established.

The next section describes the NRP organizational elements that could be activated and their initial actions.

Headquarters Organizational Elements

The headquarters organizational elements include the following:

Element	Description
Interagency Incident Management Group	The IIMG may convene at DHS Headquarters when activated for an initial meeting. IIMG members or alternates remain on call to meet at any time during a heightened period of alert or during an incident or on a 24/7 basis as required by the situation at hand. The IIMG may assign liaison officers to the FBI SIOC and/or other EOCs, as required, and may establish communication with State Homeland Security Advisor(s) and/or State Emergency Management Director(s) through the DHS OSLGCP representatives to the IIMG.
National Response Coordination Center	The NRCC begins interagency operations by coordinating initial activation, the deployment of special teams, initiation and monitoring of mission assignments (Stafford Act only) or other interagency requirements (non-Stafford Act), and RRCC(s) activities as required and as permitted by operational security considerations. The NRCC, through the FOC, informs primary agencies of the activation and provides a time to report to the NRCC. Primary agencies may notify and activate support agencies if required. Primary agencies determine the impact of an incident on their own capabilities and identify, mobilize, and deploy resources under the mission assignment process or interagency agreements to support response activities in the affected jurisdiction(s). Formal alert and notification protocols and procedures for activation of ESFs are included as part of the NRCC standard operating procedures, to be published separately.
Federal Emergency Operations Centers	Agencies may activate their headquarters EOCs to provide coordination and direction to their headquarters and regional response elements. Federal EOCs maintain ongoing contact and coordination with the HSOC.
Strategic Information and Operations Center	Upon determination that a terrorist threat is credible or that an act of terrorism has occurred, FBI Headquarters initiates liaison with other Federal agencies to activate their operations centers and provide liaison officers to the SIOC. In addition, FBI Headquarters initiates communications with the SAC of the responsible Field Office, apprising him/her of possible courses of action and discussing possible deployment of the DEST. The FBI SAC establishes initial operational priorities based upon the specific circumstances of the threat or incident. This information is then forwarded to FBI Headquarters to coordinate identification and deployment of appropriate resources. The SIOC will notify the HSOC immediately upon confirmation of a credible threat or terrorist nexus.
Principal Federal Official	The Secretary provides formal notification of the appointment of a PFO to the Governor(s)/mayor(s) of affected State(s)/municipality(ies), Tribal Chief Executive Officers, and Federal departments and agencies. The HSOC notifies other Federal, State, and tribal EOCs of the PFO designation. State EOCs are expected to pass this designation to State and local agencies and EOCs as appropriate. PFOs may be designated on a pre-incident basis according to available threat information, or in response to an incident in progress. If the designation is made based upon a pre-incident threat assessment, formal notification of the PFO designation may be made on a discreet, need-to-know basis to preserve operational security.

Regional Elements

Regional resources may be activated to monitor and assess the need for Federal incident management support. The DHS/EPR/FEMA Regional Director deploys a liaison to the State EOC to provide technical assistance including advice on the Stafford Act declaration process and available Federal assistance, and also partially or fully activates the RRCC including, where appropriate, regional representatives of Federal departments and agencies.

The RRCC and NRCC Logistics Sections support the establishment of a JFO and mobilization center(s). The RRCC coordinates Federal support of State requirements until the FCO or FRC assumes those responsibilities. A JIC may be established, as required, to provide a central point for coordinating emergency public information activities.

Field Elements

The field elements include the following:

Element	Description
Emergency Response Team	The RRCC initially deploys a DHS/EPR/FEMA-led ERT-A, including rapid needs assessment personnel and appropriate ESF representatives, to State operating facilities and incident sites to assess the impact of the situation, collect damage information, gauge immediate Federal support requirements, and make preliminary arrangements to set up Federal field facilities. When regional resources are overextended, or an event poses potentially significant consequences, DHS Headquarters may deploy an ERT-N to coordinate the initial response. The FCO/FRC heads the interagency ERT. The ERT works with the affected State and coordinates Federal support from the JFO. The ERT may establish an IOF to serve as an interim facility until the JFO is established. In a terrorism event, this activity will be coordinated with the JOC. Federal agencies and other appropriate entities provide resources to assist incident management efforts under DHS-issued mission assignments or their own authorities. The ERT-A/ERT-N coordinates damage assessment and selection of locations for field facilities with the State. It also coordinates mission assignments for direct Federal assistance and procurement of goods and services with the Comptroller and RRCC. The ERT-A/ERT-N begins the transition to a tailored Emergency Response Team and initiates establishment of the JOC.
Federal Incident Response Support Team	Based upon the nature of the incident, the FIRST may deploy to the scene to support State operations. The FIRST provides technical assistance to assess the situation, identify critical and unmet needs, provide protective action recommendations, and establish incident support facilities. The FIRST coordinates with the ERT-A and integrates into the JFO when established.
Domestic Emergency Support Team	The DEST may be deployed to provide technical support for management of potential or actual terrorist incidents. Based upon a credible threat assessment, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, may request authorization through the White House to deploy the DEST. Upon arrival at the JFO or critical incident location, the DEST may act as a stand-alone advisory team to the FBI SAC providing required technical assistance or recommended operational courses of action.
Other Special Teams	Depending on the nature of the incident, other special teams may be deployed in coordination with other departments and agencies. The NRP annexes include discussion of special teams and resources.
Federal First Responders	Some Federal agencies have statutory authority and responsibility to deploy directly as first responders upon notification of an incident or potential incident (e.g., OSCs responding to oil or hazardous materials incidents). These responders may arrive on-scene before there is a determination as to whether the incident is an Incident of National Significance, but once declared, would operate under the protocols established in the NRP.

Requests for DHS Assistance

Requests for DHS assistance can come from State Governors requesting aid under the Stafford Act or from Federal agencies with a need for Federal-to-Federal support. Federal departments and agencies supporting the NRP are activated and engaged using either a mission assignment process for events supported by Stafford Act funding, or through interagency agreements or other direct funding sources when implemented using other authorities.

- **Federal Support to States:** DHS/EPR/FEMA processes a Governor's request for Presidential disaster or emergency declarations under the direction provided in the Stafford Act. Governors submit these requests to DHS/EPR/FEMA indicating the extent of damage and the types of Federal assistance required. DHS/EPR/FEMA then forwards the Governor's request to the White House, simultaneously notifying the Secretary of Homeland Security, along with a recommended course of action.

  Concurrent with a Presidential declaration of a major disaster or emergency and official appointment of an FCO, DHS/EPR/FEMA designates the types of assistance to be made available and the counties eligible to receive assistance. In large-scale or catastrophic events, the declaration process can be expedited. In certain emergencies involving Federal primary responsibility, the Stafford Act allows the President to provide emergency assistance without a Governor's request. Appendix 5 provides an overview of the request process under the Stafford Act.

  In a non-Stafford Act emergency, the President may direct Federal departments and agencies to conduct prevention, preparedness, emergency response, and incident management activities consistent with their authorities and responsibilities on a nonreimbursable basis. Appendix 6 provides an overview of Federal-to-Federal support in non-Stafford Act situations.

- **Federal-to-Federal Support:** For some incidents for which a Stafford Act declaration is not made and a Federal entity is responding to an incident under its own authorities, that entity may require additional assistance from other Federal departments or agencies that is not otherwise readily available to them. In such circumstances, the affected Federal department or agency may request DHS coordination to obtain that assistance.

  Federal agencies participating in the NRP will request and provide Federal-to-Federal support by executing interagency or intra-agency reimbursable agreements (RAs), in accordance with the Economy Act (31 U.S.C. § 1535) or other applicable authorities. Federal agencies providing mutual aid support may request reimbursement from the requesting agency for eligible expenditures. (See Financial Management Support Annex Attachment 3, Memorandum of Understanding: Mutual Aid for Incidents of National Significance (Non-Stafford Act), for additional information.)

  DHS will use the ESFs as the mechanism for coordinating required support from other agencies. When such DHS assistance is provided, the incident becomes an Incident of National Significance, and DHS coordinates Federal resources under the authority provided in HSPD-5. In these situations, DHS designates an FRC to perform the resource coordination function (rather than an FCO as occurs under a Stafford Act declaration).

  Requests for assistance are submitted to the DHS Executive Secretary for processing and Secretary consideration/approval. Upon approval of the request for assistance, the Secretary issues an operation order to the HSOC. The HSOC, through the NRCC, coordinates the activation of the appropriate ESFs. At this time, the Secretary of Homeland Security also may elect to activate the IIMG to begin monitoring the situation and developing appropriate recommendations and courses of action.

Pre-Incident Actions

At the national level, the HSOC facilitates interagency information-sharing activities to enable the assessment, prevention, or resolution of a potential incident. Based upon guidance from the HSC/NSC (Principals, Deputies, or PCC), DHS coordinates with appropriate agencies as required during developing situations to utilize agency resources and authorities to prevent an incident, as well as to initiate appropriate preparatory and mitigating measures to reduce vulnerabilities. If warranted, the IIMG may recommend the activation of additional NRP organizational elements to provide

appropriate resources to enable more robust prevention and/or preparedness activities.

Prevention

Actions taken to avoid an incident or to intervene to stop an incident from occurring. Prevention involves actions taken to protect lives and property.

Prevention actions related to terrorism threats and incidents include law enforcement activities and protective activities. All Federal law enforcement activities are coordinated by the Attorney General, generally acting through the FBI. Initial prevention efforts include, but are not limited to, actions to:

- Collect, analyze, and apply intelligence and other information;
- Conduct investigations to determine the full nature and source of the threat;
- Implement countermeasures such as surveillance and counterintelligence;
- Conduct security operations, including vulnerability assessments, site security, and infrastructure protection;
- Conduct tactical operations to prevent, interdict, preempt, or disrupt illegal activity;
- Conduct attribution investigations, including an assessment of the potential for future related incidents; and
- Conduct activities to prevent terrorists, terrorist weapons, and associated materials from entering or moving within the United States.

The majority of initial actions in the threat or hazard area are taken by first responders and local government authorities, and include efforts to protect the public and minimize damage to property and the environment, as follows:

- **Public Health and Safety:** Initial safety efforts focus on actions to detect, prevent, or reduce the impact to public health and safety. Such actions can include environmental analysis, plume modeling, evacuations, emergency sheltering, air monitoring, decontamination, emerging infectious disease tracking, emergency broadcasts, etc. These efforts may also include public health education; site and public health surveillance and testing procedures; and immunizations, prophylaxis, and isolation or quarantine for biological threats coordinated by HHS and State and local public health officials. (See the ESF #8 Annex for additional information.)

- **Responder Health and Safety:** The safety and health of responders is also a priority. Actions essential to limit their risks include full integration of deployed health and safety assets and expertise; risk assessments based upon timely and accurate data; and situational awareness that considers responder and recovery worker safety.

  A comprehensive location and/or operational response safety and health plan is key to mitigating the hazards faced by responders. These efforts include incident hazard identification and characterization; implementation and monitoring of personal protective equipment selection, use, and decontamination; exposure sampling and analysis; worker health and safety risk analysis; health and safety monitoring; and development/ongoing evolution of the site-specific safety and health plan. (See the Worker Safety and Health Support Annex for additional information.)

- **Property and the Environment:** Responders may also take incident mitigation actions to protect public and private property and the environment. Such actions may include sandbagging in anticipation of a flood, or booming of environmentally sensitive areas in response to a potential oil spill.

Response Actions

Once an incident occurs, the priorities shift from prevention, preparedness, and incident mitigation to immediate and short-term response activities to preserve life, property, the environment, and the social, economic, and political structure of the community. In the context of a terrorist threat, simultaneous activities are initiated to assess regional and national-level impacts, as well as to assess and take appropriate action to prevent and protect against other potential threats.

Response

Activities that address the short-term, direct effects of an incident. These activities include immediate actions to preserve life, property, and the environment; meet basic human needs; and maintain the social, economic, and political structure of the affected community.

Reinforcing the initial response to an incident, some Federal agencies may operate in the ICP as Federal first responders and participate in the Unified Command structure. Once the JFO is established, the JFO Coordination Group sets Federal operational priorities. The JFO provides resources in support of the Unified Command and incident management teams conducting on-scene operations through the State and local EOCs.

Depending upon the scope and magnitude of the incident, the NRCC and/or the RRCCs activate the appropriate ESFs, as needed, to mobilize assets and the deployment of resources to support the incident. The NRCC and/or the RRCCs facilitate the deployment and transportation of the ERT and other teams and specialized capabilities such as, but not limited to, teams under the NDMS, the HHS Secretary's Emergency Response Team, the Epidemic Intelligence Service, HHS behavioral health response teams, the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, and Urban Search and Rescue teams. Other response actions include the establishment of the JFO and other field facilities and providing a wide range of support for incident management, public health, and other community needs.

Response actions also include immediate law enforcement, fire, ambulance, and emergency medical service actions; emergency flood fighting; evacuations; transportation system detours; emergency public information; actions taken to minimize additional damage; urban search and rescue; the establishment of facilities for mass care; the provision of public health and medical services, food, ice, water, and other emergency essentials; debris clearance; the emergency restoration of critical infrastructure; control, containment, and removal of environmental contamination; and protection of responder health and safety.

During the response to a terrorist event, law enforcement actions to collect and preserve evidence and to apprehend perpetrators are critical. These actions take place simultaneously with response operations necessary to save lives and protect property, and are closely coordinated with the law enforcement effort to facilitate the collection of evidence without impacting ongoing life-saving operations.

In the context of a single incident, once immediate response missions and life-saving activities conclude, the emphasis shifts from response to recovery operations and, if applicable, hazard mitigation. The JFO Planning Section develops a demobilization plan for the release of appropriate components.

Recovery Actions

Recovery involves actions needed to help individuals and communities return to normal when feasible. The JFO is the central coordination point among Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies and voluntary organizations for delivering recovery assistance programs.

Recovery

The development, coordination, and execution of service- and site-restoration plans and the reconstitution of government operations and services through individual, private-sector, nongovernmental, and public assistance programs.

The JFO Operations Section includes the Human Services Branch, the Infrastructure Support Branch, and the Community Recovery and Mitigation Branch. The Human Services and Infrastructure Support Branches of the JFO Operations Section assess State and local recovery needs at the outset of an incident and develop relevant timeframes for program delivery. These branches ensure Federal agencies that have relevant recovery assistance programs are notified of an incident and share relevant applicant and damage information with all involved agencies as appropriate, ensuring that the privacy of individuals is protected.

A brief summary of these branches is presented next.

Branch	Description
Human Services Branch	The Human Services Branch coordinates assistance programs to help individuals, families, and businesses meet basic needs and return to self-sufficiency. This branch also coordinates with volunteer organizations and is involved in donations management, and coordinates the need for and location of DRCs with local and tribal governments. Federal, State, local, tribal, voluntary, and nongovernmental organizations staff the DRCs, as needed, with knowledgeable personnel to provide recovery and mitigation program information, advice, counseling, and related technical assistance.
Infrastructure Support Branch	The Infrastructure Support Branch of the JFO coordinates "public assistance programs" authorized by the Stafford Act to aid State and local governments and eligible private nonprofit organizations with the cost of emergency protective services and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged public facilities and associated environmental restoration.
Community Recovery and Mitigation Branch	The Community Recovery and Mitigation Branch works with the other Operations branches and State and local officials to assess the long-term impacts of an Incident of National Significance, define available resources, and facilitate the development of a course of action to most efficiently apply available resources to restore and revitalize the community as well as reduce the impacts from future disasters.

The above branches coordinate with one another to identify appropriate agency assistance programs to meet applicant needs, synchronizing assistance delivery and encouraging incorporation of hazard mitigation measures where possible. Hazard mitigation measures are identified in concert with congressionally mandated, locally developed plans. Hazard mitigation risk analysis; technical assistance to State, local, and tribal governments, citizens, and business; and grant assistance are included within the mitigation framework. Additionally, these branches work in tandem to track overall progress of the recovery effort, particularly noting potential program deficiencies and problem areas.

Long-term environmental recovery may include cleanup and restoration of public facilities, businesses, and residences; re-establishment of habitats and prevention of subsequent damage to natural resources; protection of cultural or archeological sites; and protection of natural, cultural, and historical resources from intentional damage during other recovery operations.

Mitigation Actions

Hazard mitigation involves reducing or eliminating long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their side effects. The JFO is the central coordination point among Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies and NGOs for beginning the process that leads to the delivery of mitigation assistance programs.

Mitigation

Activities designed to reduce or eliminate risks to persons or property or to lessen the actual or potential effects or consequences of an incident. Mitigation measures may be implemented prior to, during, or after an incident.

The JFO's Community Recovery and Mitigation Branch is responsible for coordinating the delivery of all mitigation programs within the affected area, including hazard mitigation for:

- Grant programs for loss reduction measures (if available);
- Delivery of loss reduction building-science expertise;
- Coordination of Federal flood insurance operations and integration of mitigation with other program efforts;
- Conducting flood recovery mapping to permit expedited and accurate implementation of both recovery and mitigation programs;
- Predictive modeling to protect critical assets;
- Early documentation of losses avoided due to previous hazard mitigation measures; and
- Community education and outreach necessary to foster loss reduction.

The Community Recovery and Mitigation Branch works with the Infrastructure and Human Services Branches and with State, local, and tribal officials to facilitate the development of a long-term recovery strategy for the impacted area(s).

Demobilization

When a centralized Federal coordination presence is no longer required in the affected area, the JFO Coordination Group implements the demobilization plan to transfer responsibilities and close out the JFO. After the closing of the JFO, long-term recovery program management and monitoring transitions to individual agencies' regional offices and/or headquarters, as appropriate.

Remedial Actions

DHS formally convenes interagency meetings called "hotwashes" to identify critical issues requiring headquarters-level attention, lessons learned, and best practices associated with the Federal response to Incidents of National Significance. Hotwashes typically are conducted at major transition points over the course of incident management operations, and include State, local, and tribal participation as appropriate.

Identified issues are validated and promptly assigned to appropriate organizations for remediation, in accordance with DHS/EPR/FEMA's Remedial Action Management Program (RAMP). DHS/EPR/FEMA manages the RAMP and coordinates, monitors, and reports the status of Federal remediation actions for issues arising from Incidents of National Significance.

After-Action Report

Following an incident, the JFO Coordination Group submits an after-action report to DHS Headquarters detailing operational successes, problems, and key issues affecting incident management. The report includes appropriate feedback from all Federal, State, local, tribal, nongovernmental, and private-sector partners participating in the incident. The Emergency Support Function Leaders Group (ESFLG) and the Regional Interagency Steering Committees (RISCs)—the headquarters-level and regional-level interagency NRP preparedness organizations (described in section VI on page 58)—use information from these reports to update plans and procedures as required.

Each Federal agency involved should keep records of its activity to assist in preparing its own after-action report. The DHS OSLGCP has established and maintains the Lessons Learned Information Sharing system (formerly Ready-Net) as the national repository for reports and lessons learned. The NIMS Integration Center supports and contributes to this national system.

NRP Operations Under HSAS Threat Conditions

General

The Homeland Security Advisory System, created by HSPD-3 and administered by DHS/IAIP, is a comprehensive and effective means for disseminating information regarding the risk of terrorist attacks and coordinating appropriate response measures across jurisdictions and with the private sector. The HSAS is composed of two separate elements: threat products and threat condition.

- **Threat products** include warning (advisories) and nonwarning (information bulletins) products designed to inform Federal, State, local, tribal, and nongovernmental entities and private citizens of threat or incident information.
- The **threat condition** provides a guide to assist government and private-sector entities in initiating a set of standardized actions as a result of increased terrorist threat levels within the United States, and to inform the public on updated homeland security requirements. The raising of the threat condition generally is reserved for threats that are credible, corroborated, and imminent. An elevated threat condition can be applied nationally or by region, by industry sector, or to a specific target.

During an increase in threat condition, DHS may notify, activate, and deploy NRP organizational elements in an effort to enhance the Nation's ability to prevent, prepare for, or respond to an attack. The decision to mobilize NRP organizational elements is based on the

nature and severity of the threat. In response to a heightened nationwide risk of attack, DHS may activate the national-level elements and place certain special teams on standby. For geographic-specific threats, DHS, in consultation with DOJ, may activate regional elements and deploy national coordinating elements and special teams to the affected area.

Procedures/Guidelines

Procedures/guidelines for threat conditions are described below.

Threat Conditions	Procedures/Guidelines
Green (low), Blue (guarded), Yellow (elevated)	Under Threat Conditions Green through Yellow, the HSOC maintains direct connectivity with the NCTC and the FBI SIOC regarding the terrorist threat and maintains situational awareness through the continued monitoring of reported incidents.
Orange (high)	When threat conditions warrant, DHS activates the IIMG to review the threat information, coordinate interagency activity, and recommend additional precautions needed to prevent, prepare for, or respond to an attack. If the threat is elevated regionally or locally, DHS considers designating a PFO and activating emergency response teams and appropriate RRCC(s) to coordinate with regional, State, and private-sector entities and notify (or activate) regional resources (such as the ERT) as appropriate.
Red (severe)	When threat conditions warrant, DHS fully activates the NRCC, activates the RRCCs in the designated threat locations, implements Continuity of Operations plans, and places other appropriate assets on the highest alert status. If the threat is elevated regionally or locally, the IIMG provides recommendations for the deployment of special teams to the area and establishment of a JFO. In the absence of a JFO, special teams deployed in response to a terrorist threat operate in coordination with the FBI JOC.