

# Anti-Terrorism

**DATE:** June 20, 1999

**TO:** Western North Carolina Local Governance and State Leaders and Participants in the Conference on "Domestic Terrorism: Technological, Chemical, Biological and Conventional Weapons" (Planning, Prevention, and Education) held at Western Carolina University on March 31, 1999

**FROM:** Dr. Gordon Mercer, Professor and Director, Western Carolina University Public Policy Institute and Chief Will Annarino, Chief of Police, Asheville, North Carolina

Thanks for attending the recent conference! We wanted to update you with the policy report based on the policy panel's suggestions and share with you an editorial from the *Asheville Citizen Times* that gives a synopsis of the report. Our next conference could be on *The Restoration of Citizenship in America*. As you know community policing, safe schools, and civil communities are ultimately based on responsibilities of citizenship. Unfortunately, the concept of citizenship and the responsibilities of citizenship have been neglected in America. In addition to excellent speakers to educate first line responders, citizens and leaders in the State of North Carolina one of the purposes of the anti-terrorism conference held March 31st at Western Carolina University was to prepare policy responses to deal with the threat of Chemical, Biological and Conventional Weapons Terrorism. After listening to Neil Gallagher, Assistant Director of the FBI, Carrye Brown and Mike Delorenzo from FEMA, David Martinez and Robert Clifford from the FBI, Bill Nettles from the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Academy, Bill Hyatt from the Western Carolina University Criminal Justice Faculty and Joe Auten from the North Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, participants divided into policy panels formed in a session led by Will Annarino, Chief of Police in Asheville and co-sponsor of the conference. Many of the participants in the panels were leaders in the fields of law enforcement, medical emergency, public health, hospitals and other areas critically involved in dealing with future terrorist acts in the State of North Carolina. The most significant policy recommendation coming from all the panels was agreement on the need for public agencies and elected officials to start thinking more pro-actively about the threat of NBC (nuclear, chemical and biological) terrorism in the region and nation. Universities, elected officials and administrative leaders must more actively engage in helping regions develop policy as well as preparing regions to cope with possible future terrorist situations. In being more pro-active new legislation is needed at the national and local level to protect citizens against terrorism threats. Such legislation needs to deal with dangers posed by chemical and biological weapons but protect civil liberties and scientific research according to one policy group. In the event of crisis, ways need to be found to protect hospitals from biological contaminants and at the same time enable them to treat patients. Better

preparation of team leaders to respond to terrorism events must be engaged in according to panels and special equipment and protective clothing will be required as needed equipment in the region is currently not adequately available. Moving toward the 20th century all policy panels advocated a more pro-active policy response in meeting the threat of NBC (nuclear, chemical and biological) terrorism threats but policy responses should protect civil liberties. The public needs to be informed as policies develop in the region according to one policy panel. School drills and public policy announcements may be necessary depending on the direction terrorist activities take according to one policy panel. The Federal government needs to be more active in providing local law enforcement agencies with information on threats to the region. The Western Carolina University conference sponsored with the Asheville Police Department was very helpful in this regard. A final pro-active recommendation was for the region to develop more in-house training capabilities within local government agencies. The development of in-house training capabilities may require more positions in relevant areas. It will be important for the medical and public health community to diagnose and treat for chemical and biological contaminants. Intergovernmental cooperation in the region will be important. The policy panels also thought more educational programs in crisis management need to be provided to regional first line responders and leaders. While the policy report recommendations deal primarily with Western North Carolina, the recommendations would have applicability to other regions. One of the major recommendations coming from the policy panels was that a regional task force be appointed to coordinate and implement policy recommendations. This was considered by some panels as the most critical as well as the most difficult undertaking as local governments and agencies will need to work together. Such a newly established antiterrorism task force would not only deal with coordination but also with the implementation of policy recommendations and risk assessment. For example, Bill Hyatt, a speaker and professor of Criminal Justice at Western Carolina University thought community water systems and major electric grids are not well protected. The need for better coordination in the area of anti-terrorism activities was a major theme of the policy panels. Such a regional task force should have representatives from the medical community, law enforcement agencies, political leaders, emergency medical coordinators, and public health officials as well as the academic community and all first line responders such as fire, police, sheriffs departments, emergency medical, and hospital staff. The most important role of such a task force would be to ensure additional first line responder education and training as well as citizen educational programs takes place. The task force should be empowered to be able to identify issues as well as training needs for the region of Western North Carolina. It would also play a role in identifying educational and training courses currently available to first line responders. Such materials are currently available in 30 minute to 16 hour video courses provided by the Department of Defense, Department of Justice and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Also self study courses are available on the Web by FEMA. Some of the recommended duties of the regional task force will be to:

1. Establish regional mock field exercises to prepare for dealing with chemical, biological, and bomb threats. The panels thought such exercises should cut across county lines and governmental agencies and involve public health agencies and hospitals. FEMA currently has programs of field preparedness involving preparedness for NBC terrorism threats. Western North Carolina needs to link in with these exercises.

2. The policy panels thought equipment identifying chemical and biological agents as well as protective clothing and respirators should be made more readily available to first line responders. It will be important for the anti-terrorism task force to provide information on Federal and State money available for equipment as well as gaining necessary financial support at the local level.

3. An important role of the newly appointed task force will be to help those in the medical and public health community gain education and training for the risks and prevention of chemical and biological terrorism, areas in which these communities become particularly relevant. One panel estimated that area hospitals lack adequate supplies of antitoxins, respirators and other supplies needed in time of crisis, however, this would be the case throughout North Carolina.

4. The task force should continually review preparedness in the region, proposing and organizing regional educational and training activities will be an important role of such a task force and one the policy panels thought to be necessary. Western Carolina University will seek funding to assist in this area. Another important recommendation coming from the policy panels was the need to develop rapid regional response teams. Such response--team would be able to respond across local governance lines, when requested by local authorities. Such response teams would play an important role in developing standardized policy procedures that would facilitate determining responsibilities of first line responders including Police, Sheriffs Departments, Emergency Medical, Fire and Medical groups. Policy panels thought such procedures need to be developed in view of new chemical and biological threats to the population. Such regional response teams should develop tactical plans including assessment and communication networks. In conclusion, the policy panels at the anti-terrorism conference held at Western Carolina University on March 31st prioritized the need for intergovernmental cooperation, regional coordination, equipment and resources and most importantly continued education and training.

Thanks to Policy Panel Chairs and Facilitators:

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