

Example of homeland security article review

[Law](#), [Security](#)



The fourth chapter of the book: Introduction to Homeland security: Principles of All-Hazards Response, is interesting in that it deals with homeland security. Homeland security is a general term used to refer to the efforts by the U. S. to avert terrorist attacks within its borders, minimize its susceptibility to terrorism and reduce the damage resulting from the attacks which do occur. This concept emerged as a consequence of the reorganization of several US government institutions in 2003 to establish the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS). This reorganization was informed by the September 11, 2001 attacks; with the goal of protecting the sovereignty, US territory, US citizens and important infrastructure against both external and internal threats and aggression.

As discussed by Bullock, Haddow, Coppola and Yeletaysi (2008), the passage of the Homeland security act of 2002, various government agencies which managed components of the response framework of the nation were amalgamated into the DHS. Originally, these components were consolidated into DHS and merged to create the Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate (EP&R) which primarily composed the functions of the initial Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The chapter discusses a brief history of the DHS, stating that over years some of the components which were consolidated have been moved within the DHS structure; with a majority of them falling under the direction of a reformed FEMA, while others have been removed.

FEMA is tasked with responding to, planning for, recovering from and mitigating disasters. FEMA has a response division which provides the primary operational and logistical disaster response functionality of the

federal government. It saves and sustains the lives of victims, minimize their suffering and protect property in an effective and timely manner in communities which have been overwhelmed by natural disaster, terrorism and other instances of disasters. FEMA also synchronizes with state and local response teams to manage disasters; administer disaster relief grants, National flood insurance programs, mitigation grants and the Citizens Corps Program.

The newly reformed components of DHS directed by FEMA as set forth in the chapter include, integrated Hazard Information System (IHIS), National Domestic Preparedness Office (NDPO), Domestic Emergency Support Team (DEST), Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP), National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) and Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS). These agencies have been tasked with different mandates and responsibilities. Originally referred to as the Hazards Support System and developed by the department of defense, IHIS is used to detect disasters.

The NPDO was primarily designed to help local and states first responders with the training, planning, equipment and exercises required in responding to incidents of attacks by weapons of mass destruction(WMD). Various functions of NDPO were transferred and placed under FEMA's direction as part of the consolidation. The DEST, on the other hand was designed to be a team of experts drawn from various agencies, operating on a stand by and can be rapidly deployed. Although directed by FEMA, it is led by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) to offer guidance and advice to the On-scene commander in incidents involving WMD or other domestic threats.

The office of emergency preparedness was charged with overseeing,

coordinating and managing emergency preparedness, response and recovery initiatives in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Before being moved to the DHS and under the direction of FEMA, it served as the lead for emergency support function within the federal response plan. The NDMS was also originally within the DHHS under the direction of OEP, then transferred to the DHS, but still directed by the DHHS. It is charged with supporting federal institutions in the coordination and management of medical response to critical emergencies and national disasters. Lastly, the MMRS provides funding to cities which upgrade to enhance and upgrade the planning and preparedness in response to disasters.

In conclusion, chapter four gives an insight onto the formation of the FEMA division of the DHS after the passage of the Homeland Security Act of 2002. It discusses the mandate and responsibilities of FEMA, stating the role of each consolidated entity or agency.

Bullock, J., Haddow, G., Coppola, D. P., & Yeletaysi, S. (2008). *Introduction to Homeland Security: Principles of All-Hazards Response*. Burlington: Elsevier.