

**Testimony of Carl S. Pavetto, Deputy Associate Administrator
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Before the House Committee on Homeland Security

Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies

Unclassified Hearing On: *The Last Line of Defense: Federal, State, and Local Efforts to Detect and Prevent Nuclear and Radiological Terrorism within the United States*

July 26, 2011

Good morning Chairman Lungren, Ranking Member Clarke, and Members of this subcommittee. My name is Carl Pavetto, and I am the Deputy Associate Administrator for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration's Office of Emergency Operations. First, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to speak to you today regarding the contribution DOE makes in preventing domestic radiological and nuclear terrorist attacks through the conduct of detection and search operations.

As you may know, the National Nuclear Security Administration, or NNSA, was established by Congress in 2000 as a semi-autonomous entity within DOE. The NNSA maintains the safety, security, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile, accelerates efforts to reduce the global threat posed by nuclear proliferation and terrorism, and provides safe and effective nuclear propulsion systems for the U.S. Navy. We also possess robust technical capabilities and support the world's top professional scientists, engineers, and other leading nuclear experts resident in our National Laboratories. Within NNSA, the Office of Emergency Operations draws upon these experts to execute its mission to maintain the U.S. government's federal response capabilities for radiological consequence management, render-safe, and the purpose of today's hearing, radiological and nuclear detection and search.

The U.S. government's strategy for interdicting radiological or nuclear materials or devices involves a multi-faceted and multi-agency cooperative approach. To maintain our Nation's capability to respond to specific nuclear and radiological threats, staff from my office – the Office of Emergency Operations – works cooperatively with the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Department of Defense to develop the *Interagency Domestic Radiological Nuclear Search Operations Plan (RNSOP)*. This plan was a product of the Countering Nuclear Terrorism Interagency Planning Committee, and was approved by the National Security Staff on May 27, 2011. Radiological and nuclear search is a law enforcement function of the global nuclear detection architecture (GNDA) led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). RNSOP defines a targeted response that increases the probability for interdicting a credible radiological or nuclear threat to prevent an attack within the United States.

DOE/NNSA is the technical lead for RNSOP in support of the FBI as the lead agency. Personnel from the Office of Emergency Operations support the Bureau by providing the advanced technical capabilities needed to support evaluation of the credibility of the threat and for planning and conducting search operations in support of investigative or tactical objectives. Specifically, our teams are ready to respond and provide technical expertise by:

- assessing the technical and operational characteristics of a radiological or nuclear threat;
- integrating technical analysis into situational planning efforts, such as calculating detection ranges and speed of passage, identifying the appropriate detection equipment for the assumed source, and issuing guidance on search techniques for specific environments;

- providing specialized assets capable of conducting and tracking aerial, maritime, and land-based search operations to locate and identify the threat;
- interpreting the results of search operations while in progress and conducting post-operational analysis that result in data products that represent completed operations; and
- performing rapid scientific evaluation of radiation spectral data and final adjudication of special nuclear material through DOE's Triage Program. (Triage, is DOE's system of reachback capabilities to advanced scientific support for hazards and risks assessments.)

In addition, DOE/NNSA provides support to the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) as DNDO carries out its responsibilities for the domestic implementation of the Global Nuclear Detection Architecture (GNDA) in two aspects: 1) steady-state Preventive Radiological Nuclear Detection, or PRND and 2) enhanced steady-state PRND.

During steady-state PRND, we provide technical experts to our partner departments and lead agencies, including the DNDO, to develop and provide training to state and local first responders. Moreover, we work with DNDO in providing radiological and nuclear detection and search training to National Guard Civil Support Teams across the U.S. and specialized federal assets, such as the Transportation Security Administration's Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response Teams. Another example of these efforts can be seen in our assistance through DNDO to state and local planning for steady-state PRND in the National Capital Region, and the cities of New York and Chicago.

For enhanced steady-state PRND, we support planning efforts and detection operations associated with mass public gatherings, such as National Special Security Events. Additionally, our regionally based Radiological Assistance Program, or RAP teams, support the maintenance

and deployment of DNDO's Mobile Detection Deployment Units. These units are used during planned mass public gatherings to provide training delivered by RAP personnel to state and local responders. It should be noted that steady state or enhanced steady state PRND can be executed concurrently with targeted RNSOP operations.

I am pleased to report that the roles and responsibilities of DOE/NNSA in the GNDA are now more clearly defined and articulated. We continue to make progress and are working to further clarify Agency roles and responsibilities, in close coordination with our federal partners, during both steady-state and enhanced steady- state operations. It is our goal to continue to bring our unique technical capabilities to bear to address radiological and nuclear threats and increased risk.

Once again, thank you Chairman Lungren, Ranking Member Clarke and Members of the subcommittee for affording me the opportunity to speak with you today regarding the DOE/NNSA's capability to enhance our national security by providing advanced technical support during detection and search operations. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.