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# NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SECURITY PROFESSIONALS

July 2007

## *INTRODUCTION*

Pursuant to Executive Order 13434 of May 17, 2007 (“National Security Professional Development”), this National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals (Strategy) sets forth a framework that will enhance the ability of national security professionals to safeguard the Nation. This Strategy initiates a formal national effort to attain a robust and integrated national security professional development program through access to education, training, and professional opportunities that enhance national security professionals’ mission-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience. The successful performance of missions within each phase or function of defense, prevention, protection, response, and recovery – both military and civilian – are inextricably linked, and depends upon heightened collaboration and a mutual understanding of authorities, mission requirements, capabilities, and operations across the Federal Government.

## *ADVANCING THE NATIONAL SECURITY MISSION*

The Nation cannot view the missions of national security and homeland security as separate and distinct. In today’s complex national security environment, risks have expanded far beyond the immediate site of a threat or incident. Commensurately, the scope and relationships of national security missions must mature to address those expanded risks. As such, the term “national security” should be considered to include both traditional national security and homeland security missions.

Further, the effective performance of national security missions requires an integrated effort with common purpose across the Federal Government. The integration of Federal operations cannot be improvised in the face of imminent threats or during a response; unity of effort – coordination and cooperation toward common objectives among individuals that are not necessarily part of the same command structure or organization – must be institutionalized.

As the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Hurricane Katrina, and other incidents have illustrated, the Nation’s security transcends not only geographic and political boundaries but also traditional conceptions of incident management. In part, that security depends on the existence of a coordinated interagency capability for promoting stabilization and recovery, addressing radicalization within the United States as well as at-risk countries or regions, and for responding quickly and effectively around the world to promote peace, security, democratic practices, market economies, and the rule of law. Safeguarding America, therefore, requires a 21<sup>st</sup> Century approach to national security that integrates the professional development of our national security communities with common defense, prevention, protection, response, and recovery missions, both within the United States and abroad. This integration includes a transformation of national security education in order to produce an interagency cadre of able senior professionals with a multitude of skill sets. This approach must also expand upon the knowledge base, skills,

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abilities, and experiences acceptable for individuals in the past in order to create a new generation of professional capabilities for the future.

The need for this new approach was recognized in the February 2006 report titled *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned*. That report included seven recommendations for establishing and enhancing professional development programs. The 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR) also acknowledged the need for strengthened interagency operations. In addition, the President's Commission on Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction recommended the creation of a new human resources capability through the recruitment and retention of individuals with skill sets that are critically important to maintaining an effective intelligence capability through "joint" assignments between intelligence agencies, improved job training at all stages of an intelligence professional's career, and building a better personnel incentive structure.

The President recognizes these needs and has called for an overarching strategy to bring together various programs and initiatives currently underway or under consideration across the Federal Government. This Strategy establishes a vision and priorities for synchronizing these efforts, while maintaining the understanding that the superiority of U.S. national security derives from the superior quality of its people – a quality that is dependent on the maintenance of a culture of preparedness and a culture of recruitment, development, and retention of highly talented professionals who are charged with carrying out national security missions.

## ***THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SECURITY PROFESSIONALS***

Executive Order 13434 provides: “In order to enhance the national security of the United States, including preventing, protecting against, responding to, and recovering from natural and manmade disasters, it is the policy of the United States to promote the education, training, and experience of current and future professionals in national security positions (security professionals) in executive departments and agencies.”

National security positions include those within the United States and abroad, including assisting nations and regions at risk of, in, or transitioning from conflict.<sup>1</sup> The national security professional will need access to education, training, and opportunities to work in coordination with other Federal departments and agencies, State, local, territorial and tribal governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, foreign governments, and international organizations, in order to accomplish the following goals:

- Better understand partner organization objectives and mission requirements, interdependencies and synergies between the public and private sectors, and different organizational cultures;

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<sup>1</sup> National security missions include those necessary for the implementation of, among others, the National Defense Strategy, the National Drug Control Strategy, the National Intelligence Strategy, the National Military Strategy, the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, the National Strategy for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction, the National Strategy for Homeland Security, the National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets, the National Security Strategy, the National Response Plan, the National Cyber Security Strategy, and the War on Terrorism National Implementation Plan.

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- Enable professional development to transcend organizations, levels of government, missions, and specific national security disciplines; and
  - Improve the overall capability to safeguard national security in a dynamic risk environment.

This Strategy provides an overarching framework to prepare Federal Government professionals charged with securing the Nation to accomplish the following: (1) reduce or eliminate risks; (2) prevent, protect against, and respond to known threats; and (3) mitigate against and recover from attacks, major disasters, international crises, and other emergencies. Recognizing that core competencies, professional requirements, and staffing needs differ for every level of government and within Federal departments and agencies, this Strategy does not call for a single human resource or career development standard. Instead, this Strategy promotes an integration of national security professional development resources and opportunities among common mission areas in order to attain unity of effort through awareness, relationships, and experience, and to break down cultural barriers and obstacles to coordination across jurisdictional and organizational boundaries.

### **ASSUMPTIONS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY**

This Strategy applies to personnel with direct or indirect roles in support of national security. Aside from certain basic attributes that must be possessed by all national security professionals, this Strategy is based on the reality that the core competencies needed for each mission area and institution will vary, and therefore professional experience, education, and training programs must be customized in each mission area and institution. It also assumes that the development of national security professionals will not require a reclassification of such personnel from current job classification status.

### **FUNDAMENTALS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY**

A national security professional development framework must utilize existing and new opportunities to develop Federal Government professionals with the breadth and depth of knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences necessary for them to carry out their national security responsibilities effectively. Such professional development is a product of education, training, and professional experiences.

- **Education:** Opportunities to enhance a person's capacity for critical and innovative thinking, and level of understanding of authorities, risks, responsibilities, and tools to perform a current or future national security mission successfully.
- **Training:** Opportunities to enhance, exercise, or refine a person's ability to apply knowledge, skills, and abilities in performing national security missions.
- **Professional Experience:** Opportunities to enhance a person's capabilities to perform national security missions through career and personal development and expanded professional experiences.

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## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation of this Strategy, including specific department and agency responsibilities, will be described in an implementation plan developed by the Security Professional Development Executive Steering Committee (Steering Committee), established pursuant to Executive Order 13434. This Strategy provides an overarching framework of general principles that will guide the development of the implementation plan.

In order to ensure a consistent and sufficient quality of personnel engaged in national security missions, department and agency professional development programs shall (1) adopt compatible professional development strategies consistent with the core missions of the department or agency, (2) adopt common terminologies, as appropriate, and (3) promote participation in educational, training, and professional experience opportunities outlined in this Strategy. Each department's and agency's national security professional development programs shall be shared with and made available to, to the extent practicable and appropriate, other institutions with similar or related mission areas.

It is the responsibility of each Federal department and agency with a role in national security to reform and enhance its professional development programs in conformity with Executive Order 13434 and this Strategy. Existing programs and newly established programs can be based on the individual needs and mission requirements of each Federal department or agency. Each department and agency should re-examine existing resources and work within the budget process when identifying additional requirements to execute the Strategy and Implementation Plan to the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee shall draw upon the expertise of existing Federal executive advisory organizations, where appropriate, to perform the following tasks: (1) evaluate the extent to which national security professional development programs and related policies are satisfying statutory mission requirements and implementing the Executive Order and this Strategy; (2) review best practices and lessons learned; (3) assess the feasibility and advisability of national security professional development rules, guidance, and certification requirements; and (4) provide subject matter expertise and perspectives to assist in the improvement, coordination, integration, and synchronization of national security professional development programs.

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## **EDUCATION**

A rigorous and effective network of educational opportunities for national security professionals must include several critical educational components, which are outlined below.

### ***Interagency Education System***

The Federal Government must establish a broad interagency education system that expands upon the relevant recommendations set forth within *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned*, the 2006 QDR, and the report of the President's Commission on Intelligence

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Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction. Such a broad interagency education system will provide the opportunity for national security professionals to enhance their knowledge of their respective capabilities and organizations.

In order to ensure that national security professionals are able to broaden their knowledge through a variety of educational opportunities, the Steering Committee will coordinate the following activities, to be performed by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHS/CT) and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA):

- Establish a national security education board of directors comprised of senior officials of those Federal departments and agencies represented on the Steering Committee;
- Identify the availability of existing education programs, facilities and institutions within the Federal Government and State, local, territorial and tribal government, academic, non-governmental, and private sector institutions relating to national security mission areas. This effort should first focus on the identification of federal programs, facilities, and institutions, followed thereafter by the identification of such programs at the State, local, territorial, tribal, academic, non-governmental, and private sector levels;
- Create through a phased approach - commencing with the coordination of academic systems related to core mission areas inherent in exercising the elements of national power - a National Security Education Consortium of qualified academic, military, and civil government education centers and other institutions that address the broad scope of national security missions;
- Through the national security board of directors, provide national security curriculum and other resources to implement objectives for the National Security Education Consortium, assess the admission and integration of new and existing institutions, coordinate short-term and long-term national security education goals within the Federal Government, and coordinate activities with relevant training consortia;
- Synchronize academic curricula for common national security mission areas;
- Coordinate the enrollment in academic programs among Federal department and agency professional development programs within a common national security mission area;
- Utilize advances in technology to enable connectivity of multiple education systems and institutions in a virtual environment; and
- Incorporate full-time and part-time programs, short-term and long-term programs, and distance learning programs, or a combination of those programs, as appropriate.

***Building and Maintaining a New Generation of National Security Professionals***

To ensure that the United States cultivates and maintains a robust cadre of professionals that are fully prepared and capable of safeguarding our Nation, the Steering Committee shall coordinate

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the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

- Promote the development of quality national security educational opportunities and programs within undergraduate and post-graduate academia;
- Encourage America's youth and young professionals to learn about the many types of national security services through education, internships, and other activities;
- Encourage the development of foreign language skills and comprehension of the politics, culture, and history of foreign countries; and
- Recruit highly talented individuals to choose careers in national security-related professional positions.

### ***Ensuring Long-Term Success***

In order to ensure that a consistent and sufficient quality of education is available for national security professionals, the Steering Committee shall coordinate the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

- Establish accreditation standards for academic, government, or other institutions who provide national security education services in a common mission area through courses, instructional materials, seminars, or other medium;
- Facilitate the sharing of best practices, innovative solutions, research, and course material among academic, government, and other institutions, as appropriate;
- Recommend long-term education goals, as appropriate, for national security professionals who perform common national security missions; and
- Implement strategies to achieve these goals, assess achievement of those goals, and use the results of those assessments to improve programs and inform planning and resource allocation decisions.

## **TRAINING**

The enhancement of a national security professional's expertise in new or existing national security missions requires ample training opportunities to refine skills through instruction, drills, and exercises. Further, trained professionals with a wide breadth of skills are crucial for the effective coordination of national security missions that span the full spectrum of threats and hazards that comprise America's 21<sup>st</sup> Century risk environment.

### ***Skill Augmentation***

A national security professional must continuously adapt to the ever-changing threat environment through the refinement of existing skills and the acquisition of new skills. In order to maintain a ready and able national security capability, the Steering Committee shall coordinate

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the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

- Identify the availability of existing training programs, facilities and institutions within the Federal Government and State, local, territorial and tribal government, academic, non-governmental, and private sector institutions relating to national security mission areas. This effort should first focus on the identification of federal programs, facilities, and institutions, followed thereafter by the identification of such programs at the state, local, territorial, tribal, academic, non-governmental, and private sector level;
- Promote Federal Government training institution consortia for national security missions in order to promote a sharing of best practices, achieve a consistent level of high-quality training, and improve the availability of training for professionals;
- Update and adapt training tools to overcome the challenges presented by our Nation's ever-changing risk environment; and
- Recommend long-term training goals for national security professionals who perform common missions.

#### ***Development Through Exercises***

The planning and preparation required to develop an exercise are as important as the actual performance of the exercise and the identification of lessons learned to enhance a professional's understanding of national security missions and risks. Further, exercises serve as a crucial means of familiarizing national security professionals with one another across political and jurisdictional boundaries. In order to enhance the role of exercises for improving professional development, the Steering Committee shall coordinate the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

- Promote the integration of the National Exercise Program, approved by the President on April 11, 2007, as well as existing national, Federal, State, regional and local exercises, into professional development programs;
- Encourage participation in the planning, performance, and analysis of exercises as a means of enhancing the national level of understanding of the procedures, requirements, and goals of different national security missions and partners, as well as to forge inter-office, interagency, and inter-governmental personal relationships;
- Utilize advances in technology to simulate the threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences of an incident, including the anticipated actions of Federal, State, local, and tribal government entities, foreign governments, international organizations, the domestic public safety community, private sector organizations, and the American people; and
- Incorporate exercise lessons learned to identify corrective actions relating to the development of professional skills and knowledge.

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### ***Ensuring Long-Term Success***

A successful training program must ensure that Federal, State, local, and tribal government leaders are cognizant of their preparedness roles and responsibilities, trained in carrying out their assigned functions, and prepared to be immediately effective in interagency, inter-governmental, and international emergency operations. In order to accomplish those objectives, the Steering Committee, in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA, shall coordinate with relevant departments and agencies to make available training and exercise opportunities for national security professionals. Additionally, the Steering Committee shall ensure that professional development opportunities for interagency and inter-governmental entities correspond to common risks, missions, and geographic considerations.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

It is critical to the success of this initiative that national security professionals achieve a well-rounded understanding of the many complex and multi-faceted national security issues facing our Nation. While education and training opportunities are essential components in this effort, enhancing one's core capabilities through a variety of challenging and engaging professional experiences is key to professional's ability to understand more broadly the goals, policies, and priorities for national security missions. A proven and effective way to accomplish this is through interdisciplinary assignments throughout the national security community.

#### ***New Experiences through Interdisciplinary Assignments, Fellowships, and Exchanges***

Inter-office, interagency, and inter-governmental assignments, fellowships, and exchanges, including those with appropriate non-governmental organizations, provide personnel with a wealth of information about the capabilities, missions, procedures, and requirements of their national security partners. Further, they foster an improved awareness of the missions and personnel in other offices, which helps to break down cultural barriers and promote professional relationships that have valuable practical applications during national security missions. As personnel increasingly learn to work together and synchronize common missions, we will achieve unity of effort to improve the Nation's overall national security-related capabilities.

In order to achieve a more cohesive national security system, the Federal Government will provide opportunities for inter-governmental, interagency, and inter-office assignments, fellowships, and exchanges, including non-governmental organizations where appropriate, in order to accomplish the following objectives: (1) enable national security professionals to understand the roles, responsibilities, and cultures of other organizations and disciplines; (2) promote the exchange of ideas and practices; (3) build trust and familiarity among national security professionals with differing perspectives; and (4) minimize obstacles to coordination. This framework is similar to that used by interagency teams at U.S. Embassies and consulates.

In order to institutionalize interagency, inter-office, and inter-governmental assignments, relationships, and mutual understanding, the Steering Committee shall coordinate the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

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- Develop an inventory of capabilities and core competencies within common national security missions across different jurisdictions and organizations and update such inventory as necessary to reflect the evolving national security challenges faced by the Nation;
  - Where appropriate, develop a formal mechanism among Federal departments and agencies with common mission areas for national security professionals to participate in rotational or temporary detail assignments, on a reciprocal basis whenever possible;
  - Designate certain activities as interagency duty assignments, which may include interdisciplinary staff and field assignment opportunities, for fulfilling national security professional development needs;
  - Link career advancement or other incentives for national security professionals to participation in available rotational or temporary detail assignments, which shall include interdisciplinary staff and field assignment opportunities, as appropriate;
  - Identify and institute rotational assignments as part of continuity of operations and succession planning;
  - Reform employment practices to encourage the hiring of personnel with a variety of experiences from within and outside the Federal Government;
  - Make available Federal national security assignments to personnel from State, local, and tribal governments, the public safety community, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, as appropriate, and encourage State, local, and tribal governments to create similar opportunities for Federal employees;
  - Ensure compliance with Executive Order 13434 and this Strategy without undermining the ability of departments and agencies to retain personnel necessary to perform their missions; and
  - Ensure that interdisciplinary assignments available for national security professionals have a significant relationship with the professional's original functions.

### ***Personal Development***

Because national security missions and professions exist at all levels of government as well as the private sector and non-governmental organizations, professional development opportunities should not be limited to programs within the Federal Government. In order to encourage the pursuit of Federal Government personnel self-development activities that will aid the performance of national security missions, the Steering Committee shall coordinate the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

- Recognize and promote participation in relevant professional development activities pursued outside the official course of business;

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- Make available information on relevant self-development opportunities outside the official course of business; and
  - Encourage Federal departments and agencies to identify their relevant national security mission areas requiring improvements in personal development.

### ***Ensuring Long-Term Success***

In order to ensure the success of a career development program, interdisciplinary assignments must be linked to hiring and advancement opportunities. Further, participation in professional development activities should be desirable for personnel with goals for advancement and expanded responsibilities. In order to integrate professional development with expanded opportunities, the Steering Committee shall coordinate the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

- Identify national security qualifications for hiring and advancement opportunities, as needed, in accordance with Executive Order 13434 and this Strategy;
- Establish policy and requirements that identify a threshold of experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities to obtain a “national security certification” as a national security professional;
- Identify job performance criteria including participation and performance in education, training, and assignment opportunities;
- Advertise education, training, and assignment opportunities to existing and prospective national security personnel;
- Identify opportunities to aid the placement of professionals within a national security mission area that best suits individual strengths and talent; and
- Promote the retention of experienced professionals to maintain operations at a high level of competency and preserve the Federal Government’s investment in professional development.

### **Ensuring Successful Implementation**

In order to ensure the successful implementation of Executive Order 13434 and this Strategy, the Steering Committee shall coordinate the completion of the following tasks by relevant departments and agencies in consultation with the APHS/CT and the APNSA:

- Develop data requirements for tracking national security education, training, and certifications;
- Frequently assess the cadre of competent national security talent available to the Federal Government in relation to mission needs; and
- Assess the achievement of professional development goals and how education, training, and professional experiences are addressing emergent needs.