Statement of

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and the

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery and Intergovernmental Affairs

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"From Earthquakes to Terrorist Attacks: Is the National Capital Region Prepared for the Next Disaster?

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Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 342 Good afternoon Chairman Akaka and Ranking Member Johnson, Chairman Pryor and Ranking Member Paul and members of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs' Subcommittees on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia and Disaster Recovery and Intergovernmental Affairs. My name is Paul A. Quander, Jr. and I serve the District of Columbia as the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice. In that role, it is my responsibility to provide direction, guidance, support and coordination to the District's public safety agencies to develop and lead interagency public safety initiatives that improve the quality of life in the District of Columbia.

The District of Columbia recognizes its unique nature and status. As the Nation's Capital, we share our borders with the Commonwealth of Virginia and the State of Maryland and the Potomac River to the east. The District is situated in the Potomac River basin, 60 miles east of the Blue Ridge/Appalachian Mountain ranges and approximately 100 miles west of the Atlantic Ocean. In the 68.3 square miles that we call home, there are 40 bridges and numerous tunnels and overpasses. There are 1500 miles of public roads in the city. All three branches of the federal government are located within the boundaries of the City, including the White House, the U.S. Capitol and the Supreme Court. Additionally, the District hosts 45,300 businesses, 17 colleges and universities and four military installations. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the District of Columbia has over 601,000 residents and our population increases each day. New construction projects continue and signs of growth and vitality show themselves everyday. The District of Columbia is an exciting place to live and, as a Native Washingtonian, I am pleased that so many others would like to call it home as well.

Each day we welcome between 600,000 to 1,000,000 people - commuters, visitors, and students - into the city on roads and rail. These commuters come into the City from Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Delaware each day. Further, the City hosts more than 15 million visitors annually according to information gathered from Destination DC and the National Park Service. Additionally, over 120 major special events are held within the City each year many of which require multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary coordination (done through the Mayor's Special Events Task Group). It is because of this that we in the District of Columbia take the management of that population very seriously. We recognize that, to effectively address the challenges that we could potentially face, we must work together Several considerations come into play: Traffic Management, Emergency regionally. Management. Communications, Interoperability, Equipment Compatibility, Training Standardization, Preparedness Messaging, and Information Sharing.

One of the many agencies that I provide oversight to is the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, HSEMA, whose mission is to support and coordinate homeland security and emergency management efforts, ensuring that the District of Columbia's all-hazards emergency operations are prepared to protect against, plan for, respond to and recover from natural and man-made hazards. This is accomplished by:

- Developing plans and procedures to ensure emergency response and recovery capabilities for all emergencies and disasters;
- Coordinating emergency resource allocation for emergencies and disaster incidents;
- Providing training for all emergency responders, city employees and the public; and
- Coordinating all major special events and street closings in the District of Columbia.

In addition, and in furtherance of its mission, HSEMA also provides public awareness and outreach programs as well as 24-hour emergency operations center capabilities and serves as one of the central points of communication during regional emergencies. One of the agency's unique capabilities is that it serves as the Regional State Administrative Agency (SAA) for the Homeland Security Grant Program for the National Capital Region (NCR). HSEMA has served in this role since 2007. From 2007 through 2011, HSEMA has been responsible for administering \$471,486,975 to jurisdictions within the NCR. From 2003 through 2006, the SAA was the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice and \$313,293,463 were administered throughout the region.

Historically, most of the funding has been Urban Areas Security Initiative funding (UASI) which, as you know, provides funding to address the unique planning, organization, equipment, training and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas. This funding has provided the NCR with the opportunity to provide meaningful support to jurisdictions allowing us to ensure that, as a region, we are addressing our challenges and preparing and equipping the "boots on the ground."

City emergency planners must consider natural, technological and national security hazards; the residual impacts from the federal enclave; the proximity of risks to critical infrastructure and key assets; and external impacts from contiguous jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia when analyzing risk and vulnerability. In September 28, 2007, HSEMA conducted a Multi-Hazard Preparedness Assessment. After considering and analyzing all the natural and human-caused hazards that face the District, including (but not limited to):

- Explosive Attack (Bombing Using Improvised Explosive Devise (IEDs) and Dirty Bomb);
- Attack on Multiple Metro Stations;
- Communicable Disease; and
- Severe Weather (Three-foot Snow Storm)

The following critical infrastructure sectors were identified as vulnerable to plausible chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) threats:

- Chemical and Hazardous Materials Industry;
- Government Facilities;
- National Monuments and Icons;
- Postal and Shipping Services; and
- Transportation

When planning for an all-hazard emergency in the District, it is imperative to be aware of the frequency of high priority hazards the City faces and their impacts on the critical infrastructure sectors. A new Threat and Capability Assessment will be completed in 2012.

To provide greater context as it relates to the Emergency Management preparedness cycle, an element of the broader National Preparedness System which includes planning/mitigation, response, recovery and preparedness, I offer the following information about the District of Columbia's engagement model.

PLANNING - General

As the emergency management community works to address challenges that the District of Columbia faces on a daily basis we take the following planning assumptions into consideration:

- Emergencies may occur with no advance warning. Incident demands may require District agencies to respond on short notice and provide timely and effective assistance through the DRP structure. Advance planning for these efforts will be based on pre-identification of operational and resource shortfalls and contingencies.
- Emergency conditions may rapidly escalate, deplete critical resources and exceed agency response capabilities. Each District agency and volunteer organization will document and seek reimbursement, as appropriate, for expenses incurred during emergency operations.
- Agencies shall possess and maintain a level of capability to address steady-state operations, small-scale emergencies and disasters.
- The HSEMA Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will activate and utilize Emergency Liaison Officers (ELO's) to manage emergency operations and critical resources.
- Each partnering agency will prepare plans and protocols to ensure a heightened state of readiness.
- The District will utilize established communications systems and assure redundant communications capability.
- District officials will coordinate and communicate with regional and federal partners during emergencies and disasters to ensure cooperation, partnership, and mutual consideration of neighboring governments.
- District, Federal and private sector partners collaborate in advance of the event to identify planning contingencies and facilitate effective response.
- Officials will enlist regional and Federal assistance in event of emergency, diminished resources or response capabilities through mutual aid agreements with jurisdictions in the National Capital Region (NCR), through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and through requests to FEMA.
- Emergencies involving mass casualties (100 or more) could pose logistical challenges and tax medical assets in the District and the NCR.
- Emergency responders and hospitals may have limited capability to isolate and treat casualties contaminated with chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and/or explosive material.
- Emergencies may cause injury, fatalities, property loss, and disruption of normal support systems. A large number of casualties, heavy damage to buildings and basic infrastructure, and disruption of essential public services may overwhelm District capabilities.
- Achieving and maintaining effective citizen and community preparedness reduces the immediate demands on response organizations. Public awareness and education programs are

- required to ensure that residents will take appropriate advance actions to reduce their vulnerability, especially during the first 72-96 hours after an emergency or disaster.
- The District will maintain a cadre of well-trained personnel to fulfill FEMA mandates. District agencies will participate in the development of supporting plans and procedures, training opportunities, and exercises in order to achieve and maintain optimal readiness capabilities.
- The emergency planning process engages the "whole community". The private, private non-profit and volunteer and other non-government organizations are vital to the homeland security and emergency management infrastructure. Also, the process is transparent and synchronizes coordination, collaboration and communication among multi-disciplinary stakeholders within the policy, coordination and tactical levels.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS/RESPONSE - General

The primary mission of District government agencies and key stakeholders having a role in disaster management is to reduce loss of life and property, protect residents and institutions from all hazards by administering a comprehensive community-based emergency management program. The District successfully accomplishes its mission through collaborative partnerships with District, federal, regional, non-governmental and private sector agencies. HSEMA manages emergency operations to prevent, respond and recover from natural and manmade emergencies which occur in the District of Columbia. District agencies mobilize by activating and deploying resources based on escalating incident conditions. Traditionally, emergencies are addressed using established internal departmental policies, plans, and protocols that complement and support the District Response Plan (DRP); and support the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The District utilizes five operation levels to classify the estimated impact of an emergency event on District government operations. HSEMA provides situational awareness regarding emergency incidents; and their actual or anticipated impacts, based on the data available. HSEMA will provide guidance regarding preparedness, mitigation and protective measures, based on incident conditions. As incident conditions develop and more information becomes available, and the situation is better understood, the level may be elevated or downgraded, as conditions warrant. The operation levels will dictate the protective actions and measures taken by District agencies and other stakeholders.

- Operation Level 1—Normal—refers to the routine posture of District agencies as they carry out routine activities, in the absence of an emergency situation. During the course of normal operations, agencies are engaged in preparedness, training, exercise activities, maintaining resource inventories and other actions to ensure continual readiness. Operations plans are reviewed and equipment is tested to ensure that everything is ready, should the need arise.
- Operation Level 2—Guarded—is triggered by a potential or actual emergency requiring the coordinated response of select District agencies. HSEMA alerts those District agencies

and Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) that need to mobilize if the potential event escalates. Throughout this level, HSEMA provides regular status alerts and updates on the threat. A Level 2 event consists almost entirely of field operations and an onsite command structure. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is staffed with HSEMA personnel without additional ESF augmentation.

- Operation Level 3—Elevated—is typically triggered by an emergency or threat that requires most or all District agencies to respond or prepare to respond for a localized event that threatens life or property. A Level 3 emergency or threat consists almost entirely of field operations and onsite command structure. HSEMA alerts the District agencies and ESFs that need to take action if the emergency or threat escalates. Throughout this level, HSEMA provides regular status alerts. The EOC is staffed with HSEMA personnel and partial ESF augmentation based on resource requirements from incident commander.
- Operation Level 4—High Risk—requires activation of agencies necessary to support the Consequence Management Team (CMT) a central operational organization led by HSEMA, composed of liaison officers and/or agency administrators representing all District ESFs as well as liaisons from other organizations that are engaged in or have potential roles in coordinating the response to an emergency. It is triggered by highly probable hazardous conditions and a strong potential for property damage or loss of life. A Level 4 emergency or threat may have regional implications and may strain District resources. Notifications are issued to all ESF primary agencies. HSEMA activates EOC HSEMA personnel and the necessary ESF representatives.
- Operation Level 5—Severe Risk—requires full activation of the CMT. It is triggered by
 extremely hazardous conditions that are imminent or in progress. Notifications are issued to
 all primary and support agencies. A Level 5 emergency may have regional implications and
 may require a request for regional or federal resources to support the response, as incident
 demands may strain District resources. The EOC is fully activated with 24-hour staffing by
 HSEMA personnel and all necessary ELOs.
 - The HSEMA Director in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice will assemble and activate the District Consequence Management Team (CMT, as warranted by the level of emergency (see Emergency Operation Levels above). The CMT provides guidance and overall management of District coordination and response operations;
 - Command of departments or agencies involved in emergency management is not altered by an event unless the Mayor declares otherwise;
 - Each department or agency director remains in command of the overall operation of his or her organization;
 - The District will activate inter-departmental and jurisdictional mutual aid agreements for cooperative response; and will maintain partnership with adjoining

political subdivisions for the purpose of reciprocal assistance during emergencies. HSEMA will maintain these mutual aid agreements;

- Normal communications and reporting channels will be used to the maximum
 practical extent possible. Emergency communications systems will be fully
 operational and will be used in the event that commercial communications
 systems are disrupted, saturated, or otherwise unavailable for security purposes;
- District agencies will employ their standard business continuity and business resumption planning principles to ensure the continuity of essential services; and
- Day-to-day functions that do not contribute directly to the operation may be suspended for the duration of the emergency. Efforts that would normally be required of those functions will be redirected to accomplish the emergency task.

In the event the District resources and capabilities are exceeded, the officials may contact neighboring jurisdictions to provide mutual aid in accordance with standing agreements. Also, the District may communicate with the federal government to provide supplemental financial or physical resources necessary to address the overall impacts of an emergency. The combined resources of the District, its partners, and the federal government represent a standardized emergency response system capable of responding to any emergency.

The District utilizes a pro-active approach to disaster management. During planned events or incidents that provide advance warning (special event or hurricanes) or nonotice events, Federal coordination will always occur. This coordination is necessary and becomes increasingly important during incidents, which lead to a presidential declaration under the Stafford Act.

HSEMA maintains constant contact with FEMA Region III before during and after emergencies and disasters. This coordination provides an opportunity for District and federal partners to collaborate regarding effective implementation, validation and testing of networks, programs, plans and processes. These actions ensure timely implementation of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Also, this collaborative partnership becomes increasingly essential in facilitating efforts leading to issuance of a disaster declaration.

The HSEMA Director or other authorized representative of the Mayor serves as the District Coordinating Officer (DCO, not to be confused with the Defense Coordinating Officer designated by the U.S. Department of Defense) who coordinates requests for federal assistance. The DCO is the District's senior representative for purposes of requesting federal assistance from the USDHS under the provisions of the Stafford Act. This individual is designated in the Federal-District Agreement as the key agent for processing official requests for assistance under USDHS direction. The DCO is normally located in the Joint Field Office during the early phases of an operation and works closely with the Federal Coordinating Officer, the senior federal representative.

In addition to the groups mentioned above, two additional teams provide emergency operations support:

- 1. **Rapid Response Teams**—When an incident occurs, District rapid response teams are deployed in order to assess damages and determine the immediate needs from the impacted area. The teams are generally composed of HSEMA, Department of Public Works, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and other elements with field operating capability and technical expertise, as incident conditions warrant.
- 2. **Joint Field Office Liaison Team**—The Joint Field Office Liaison Team is composed of District representatives from HSEMA and District ESFs that deploy to the USDHS Joint Field Office in order to establish liaison between the District operations and the federal agency operations when there has been a disaster declaration by the president.

The District government structure includes support agencies and organizations, such as other District agencies and government bodies, regional organizations, and private-sector organizations that have important roles to play in preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation due to capabilities and resources they have that may be required to support the city's emergency operations. These entities may be requested to participate in city planning and operations activities and/or provide support to the field.

• *Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC)*. The Mayor's Emergency Preparedness Council monitors, evaluates, and implements the District's preparedness actions. The EPC meets quarterly and is comprised of representatives from all Emergency Support Function (ESF) primary and support agencies, as well as regional organizations, such as the DC Hospital Association, DC Water (formerly known as the DC Water and Sewer Authority), the Metropolitan Washington Area Transit Authority, and the American Red Cross.

The EPC is co-chaired by the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice and the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) Director and staffed by HSEMA. Specifically, the EPC is charged with:

- Continually reexamining the overall state of emergency and disaster readiness of the District of Columbia;
- Making recommendations on improving District homeland security and emergency management infrastructure, including coordinating planning, response, and recovery from emergency and disaster events as well as emerging threats.
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). COG is a regional organization of Washington area local governments composed of 19 local

governments, including the District of Columbia. In general, COG provides a forum for consensus-building and policy-making and is critical to implementing intergovernmental policies, plans, and programs. In the area of emergency planning for the region, COG has worked with the District and surrounding jurisdictions to develop regional emergency plans and agreements in a range of areas, including fire, rescue, the Metro transit system, transportation, water and power supply, and snow emergencies. Ensuring consistency in the DRP and regional agreements is vital to working effectively to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies in the region.

Notification

- The HSEMA EOC will notify relevant agencies in accordance with its Emergency Response Notification Matrix. The matrix identifies key personnel and agencies that are notified during a confirmed or unconfirmed emergency that has affected or could affect the District.
- HSEMA contacts FEMA Region III and other select regional and federal response partners based on the severity of the emergency and the potential for the incident to create an impact outside District boundaries.
- In a major disaster, the HSEMA Director notifies the USDHS/FEMA Region III and USDHS/FEMA Office of National Capital Region Coordination through the NRCC.
- Following an alert relating to an emergency deemed significant by the HSEMA director, HSEMA convenes a conference call with the Mayor and key advisory personnel to discuss the situation, evaluate the City's operation level; and provide direction regarding future courses of action.
- CMT members may be notified to convene at HSEMA for an initial meeting, depending on the nature of the emergency. CMT members or alternates remain on call to meet at any time during the response.

Activation

- With an increase to Operation Level 4 or 5 HSEMA informs ESF primary agencies of the CMT activation and provides a time for each activated ESF to report to HSEMA as a member of the CMT.
- Primary agencies are responsible for activation of their support agencies, if required.
- The CMT assembles at HSEMA to assist in assessing the impact of the situation, collecting damage information, and determining requirements.
- The CMT briefs the Mayor or the Mayor's designated liaison officer at the EOC on the situation assessment. This information is evaluated to determine the need for the declaration of a State of Emergency.

- As set forth in the Stafford Act, the Mayor must seek a presidential declaration by submitting a written request to the president through the FEMA regional office. Both District and federal officials conduct a Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) to estimate the extent of the disaster and its impact. This may, but not always, be included in the declaration request. In this request, the Mayor certifies that the combined District resources are insufficient and that the situation is beyond their recovery capabilities. Following a FEMA regional and national office review of the request and the findings of the preliminary damage assessment, FEMA provides the president an analysis of the situation and a recommended course of action.
- The CMT Logistics Section supports the establishment of a Joint Field Office and mobilization center(s).
- The JIC is established, as required, to provide a central point for coordinating emergency public/crisis information activities.
- The CMT coordinates damage assessment and selection of locations for field facilities. Also, it coordinates mission assignments for direct assistance and procurement of goods and services.
- ESFs, under the direction of an incident commander, act quickly to determine the impact of an emergency on their own capabilities and to identify, mobilize, and deploy resources to support response activities in the affected area.

Continuing Actions

- The EOC augments the CMT to full operations with the addition of staff, including ELOs.
- The CMT is located at HSEMA and assumes command responsibility for coordinating emergency assistance by identifying needs and priorities.
- The ELOs in the EOC coordinate District assistance under their respective ESF missions. To the extent necessary and possible, they maintain contact with their regional and federal counterparts.
- The CMT Policy Group convenes as needed to address policy issues such as allocation of scarce District resources.
- The JIC conducts briefings for media, Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services/Office of Neighborhood Engagement, District Council Members, and Members of Congress and staff as appropriate.
- Working with environmental agencies, the District Environmental Officer identifies environmental and historic assets that might require consideration under the law as response and recovery efforts are implemented.
- Once immediate response missions and lifesaving activities conclude, emergency teams are demobilized and the emphasis shifts from response to recovery operations. During response operations, the CMT Information and Planning Section develop a demobilization plan for the CMT.

Operational Cycle

The decision-making process of the CMT is enhanced through an operational cycle of planning and execution, which ensures that incident action plans are developed and executed to achieve incident goals and objectives. The operational cycle may begin with the scheduling of a planned event, the identification of a credible threat, or with the initial response to an actual or impending event.

Information Collection, Analysis and Dissemination

Situational Awareness is the ability to identify, process, and comprehend the critical elements of information about what is happening as an event unfolds. From the CMT perspective, this means knowing: where emergency needs are greatest; what assets are needed; how to get assets into areas where they are needed; and what the status is of assets as they move on-scene and perform actions.

The ability to maintain situational awareness occurs through effective communication of event information from and to Mayor, Command Staff, and General Staff; ESF Primary and Support Agencies; and on-scene personnel. Situational awareness may be maintained and/or improved by:

- Following and completing actions specified in the IAP;
- Recognizing and making others aware when actions deviate from standard procedures;
- Monitoring the performance of immediate team members;
- Providing information in advance when possible;
- Identifying potential or existing problems;
- Continually assessing and reassessing action plan progress as it relates to Policy Group objectives;
- Updating information on WebEOC (a Web-enabled crisis information management system) and on Regional Boards; and
- Clarifying expectations and outcomes with other team members.

The documentation of actions is paramount to effective communications. Individuals with emergency event information can use this information to adjust their actions. When individuals input emergency event information into an information system (such as WebEOC), in an accurate and timely fashion, that information is available to every agency connected to the system. Accurate and timely documentation of event actions into information systems and situation reports provide all agencies involved in the event with the effective communication they need to maintain situational awareness.

Communication

As described above in the Incident Life Cycle section, the HSEMA EOC will take the lead in communications during an emergency <u>for the District of Columbia</u>. During activation, HSEMA will notify relevant agencies in accordance with the current Emergency Response Notification Matrix. HSEMA will contact select regional and federal response partners based on the severity of the emergency and the potential for the incident to create an impact outside District boundaries.

In a major disaster, the HSEMA Director will notify the USDHS/FEMA Office of National Capital Region Coordination. CMT members may be notified to convene at HSEMA for an initial meeting, depending on the nature of the emergency. CMT members or alternates remain on call to meet at any time during the response.

Integration of Response and Recovery

Following an emergency, immediate response operations for saving lives, protecting property, and meeting basic human needs have precedence over longer-term objectives of recovery. However, initial recovery planning should commence at once and in tandem with response operations. Actual recovery operations will be initiated commensurate with District priorities and based on availability of resources immediately required for response operations. In recognition that certain response and recovery activities may be conducted concurrently, coordination at all levels is essential to ensure consistent District and federal actions throughout the emergency.

RECOVERY – General

Recovery Operations

The CMT Operations Section is the central coordination point among District, regional and federal agencies, and voluntary organizations for delivering recovery assistance programs. The Community Services and Infrastructure Support Branches of the Operations Staff Section assess District recovery needs at the outset of the emergency and the relevant time frames for program delivery. The branches ensure that District agencies with appropriate recovery assistance programs are notified of the emergency event and share relevant applicant and damage information with all involved agencies.

Stand Down/Demobilization

Once incident goals and objectives have been achieved and/or a centralized District coordination presence is no longer required, the CMT implements the demobilization plan to transfer responsibilities to recovery assistance program oversight and monitoring. Following complete demobilization, responsibilities transition back to normal District agency functions.

After-action Reporting

Following an emergency, the DCCO submits an after-action report through the CMT Information and Planning Section to HSEMA, detailing problems encountered and key issues affecting District performance. Data from these issues and targeted reviews are analyzed and provided, as appropriate, to HSEMA management and to the EPC for consideration. After a major disaster or unique emergency operation, HSEMA may convene an interagency forum to identify lessons learned from the incident. Each District agency involved in the emergency is encouraged to keep records of departmental activities to assist in preparing its internal afteraction report.

Mitigation Actions

Mitigation opportunities should be actively considered throughout emergency operations. Decisions made during response and recovery operations can either enhance or hinder subsequent mitigation activities. The urgency to rebuild as soon as possible must be weighed against the longer-term goal of reducing future risk and lessening possible impacts should another emergency occur.

As we transition to discuss regional issues, we are not able to do so without speaking to the collaboration that the National Capital Region enjoys because of the work of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG). The MWCOG provides an opportunity for partners from across the region to discuss and strategize around regional issues.

The District of Columbia's MWCOG involvement includes (but is not limited to):

- MWCOG Board level representation
- City-County Administrative Officer/Homeland Security Executive Committee
- Emergency Preparedness Council
- National Capital Region Senior Policy Group
- Emergency Support Function (ESF 1-16) Regional Working Groups
- Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee
- Transportation Committee
- NCR Exercise and Training Oversight Panel
- NCR Critical Infrastructure Protection Working Group
- NCR Executive Interoperability Committee
- Steering Committee on Incident Management and Response (IMR)

As a practical matter, the District of Columbia could not do what it does each day in serving its constituents and stakeholders if it did not have a strong relationship with partners within our borders to include our Federal partners. Each day, we work with any number of entities from the National Park Service and the Park Police to the FBI and Secret Service to the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of the National Capital Region Coordination of FEMA and the Office of Personnel Management. Effective coordination and relationship building cannot wait for a crisis, it must be developed and nurtured on an on-going basis.

Likewise, we work on a daily basis with our colleagues from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland and the cities and counties from each that make up the National Capital Region. Aside from the regularly scheduled calls that the Senior Policy Group has to discuss regional issues, the District's representatives, the Director and Deputy Director of HSEMA, attend monthly meetings during which time regional strategies are discussed.

Perhaps the greatest example of regional coordination as it relates to emergency management is the development of the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination Program (MATOC). The goals for the MATOC Program include:

- Strengthening multi-agency coordination among transportation response agencies during incidents;
- Improving the technological systems by which transportation agencies can share data with each other to aid incident management;
- Improving the quality and timeliness of the information available through current sources on transportation systems conditions especially during incidents;
- Coordinating with existing systems;
- Coordinating with emergency management and public safety agencies.

Much of the information shared through MATOC and through our individual Departments of Transportation occurs seamlessly and links with our Emergency Management Agencies. In the District of Columbia, we have a 24-hour/365-day Joint All-Hazards Operations Center at HSEMA and the Traffic Management Center function of the District Department of Transportation is co-located within HSEMA. This allows for the continuous flow of data and information to our Emergency Operations Specialists who are responsible for communicating to stakeholders and to the public about traffic management challenges. The decision to centralize personnel and equipment stemmed directly from challenges related to information management over a series of events including the January 26, 2011 snowstorm. The Joint All-Hazards Operations Center at HSEMA also serves as the central point of communication for MWCOG "RICCS" alerts. The Regional Incident Communication Coordination System (RICCS) allows users to communicate with regional partners or critical issues that impact the entire region. Messages can be sent using this system at any time to groups of users designated. The system is tested daily to ensure its reliability.

The District of Columbia is involved in training and exercise activities from planning through execution. We have several members who have a seat at the regional Exercise and Training Oversight Panel table. Additionally, as we develop exercises and training opportunities for District stakeholders, we make space available for regional partners to participate. Investments have been made dating back to 2003 on systems and equipment. We value those investments and recognize that, without proper training and exercise, skills could soften. We will continue to ensure that our teams are fully prepared – no matter their mission. Further to ensure our ongoing readiness, the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency has developed an entire division dedicated to the goal of community outreach and engagement and has a calendar with over 300 outreach events scheduled each year. We work with the region to share a common message recognizing that the community engagement needs of the District vary from the needs of our regional partners.

As we look at the challenge of living in a multi-jurisdictional region, the challenges are obvious – we are multi-jurisdictional. While many believe that a central decision-making body will provide an answer, perhaps the best solution is to continue to address our systemic issues by improving existing systems and enhancing relationships. A solution that the NCR Steering Committee on Incident Management and Response has developed as a start is the Regional Information Center (RIC) that, in its initial phase, will be housed at the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency. Until now, we as a region have not had a person or team of people specifically focused on/dedicated to regional issues that took many factors into consideration – not just transportation. That is what the NCR Steering Committee on Incident Management and Response is proposing. The Regional Information Center will help to inform decision makers so that they will be able to better serve their constituencies – something that we have not had before.

In all of our efforts, both local and regional, the goal is to continuously improve. Aggressive outreach efforts are underway to ensure that every resident, business and government agency understands their role in preparedness. Our success as a region and as a city depends on everyone working together. The authority of one State cannot usurp the authority of a Commonwealth. Neither can the Commonwealth override that of the District. With such being the case, it is in all of our best interests to look to ways to work within our systems to develop solutions. The panel before you today works in cooperation with one another. I look forward to answering any questions that you may have.