

**TESTIMONY to the U.S. SENATE, regarding HOMELAND  
SECURITY  
By Deputy Chief C. C. Cook**

Good morning to the members of the U.S. Senate, witnesses and others present. I want to give special thanks to Senator Fred Thompson, and in particular his staff, Hannah Sistare, Jason Roehl and Morgan Munchik for inviting me to speak today on behalf of the people of Memphis. I am Deputy Chief Charles S. Cook from the Memphis Police Department here today to talk about the City of Memphis, our preparations for possible terrorist attack, how we have responded to the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, and the needs of Memphis in the area of Homeland Security. I am sure our situation is much like those of other cities our size.

Memphis and Shelby County hired an Emergency Management staff, which began to implement and upgrade emergency communication networks and warning devices, such as sirens and the 800 Mhz radio system for interagency communication. The Emergency Management Director began regular meetings and introduced the concept of Emergency Services and designated the various agencies into the 15 service functions. Each agency was given a lead role in at least one function, such as transportation, communications, infrastructure, fire fighting, etc.

The Local Emergency Planning Committee provided its support with numerous resources such as equipment, the expertise of its chemists and technicians and training exercises. The Public Health Department and Hospitals began making their contingency plans and sought grants for various needs. A Tennessee Department of Health grant resulted in the building of a Biological Level "B" Bio-terrorism lab facility under the Health Department Environmental Services Division which will be capable of testing for Anthrax, Plague, Tularemia and Brucella and provided for the purchase of pharmaceutical stocks, medical supplies and equipment and the development of a medical response plan. This plan includes a biological training program for local health care providers responding to a bio-terrorist incident. This was purchased with funds from a \$200,000 Weapons of Mass Destruction grant.

Prior to September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Memphis Police Department, the local F.B.I., the Memphis/Shelby County Emergency Management Agency, the Memphis and the Shelby County Fire Departments, The City of Bartlett and the City of Germantown Police and Fire Departments began training with Incident Command tabletop exercises. Our focus was on natural disasters, the threat of terrorist attack, school shootings and plane crashes. This multi-agency training developed a team concept in responding to large scale, long duration events. Our departments began seeking further training for various contingencies. In all of the exercises, role players simulated their responses, and as a result of the critiques and follow-ups, determined that additional training, equipment and manpower resources were needed.

Training in Responder Awareness, Operations Awareness, and Incident Command was incorporated into the In-service training programs of the Memphis Police Department. All Memphis officers, and police service technicians are exposed to the training. The Memphis Beale Street Entertainment district began to thrive under downtown renewal projects. Downtown Precinct and Special Operations officers from Tact, Metro Gang, Mounted and Traffic received additional training in crowd control. The use of these officers, in crowd control, became routine and were often associated with Special Events, such as New Years Eve and other crowd drawing events.

Because of extreme delays on the Memphis to Arkansas bridges across the Mississippi river at I-55 and I-40, caused by relatively simple accidents, a multi-agency " Bridge Mitigation " team was formed in the year 2000. Members of this group came from the police departments of Memphis, Tennessee; and West Memphis, Arkansas; the Sheriffs Departments from Shelby County Tennessee and Crittenden County, Arkansas; the Tennessee Highway Patrol and the Arkansas State Police; the Railroad Police; the Tennessee and the Mississippi Departments of Transportation. Various casualties including marine accidents, terrorist attacks and any subject threatening bridge security became topics of discussion. Decisions regarding multi-agency jurisdiction in removing hazards from the roadway were

made. The agencies took joint responsibility for patrolling the bridges.

September 11th

Most police, fire and emergency management agencies, during the first few hours of September 11<sup>th</sup>, reacted by encircling the government buildings in the downtown area. We deployed our resources to include other targets of opportunity including bridges, water supplies, power and utilities and similar government related services. We received numerous phone calls from businesses, manufacturers, trucking firms, refineries, and other facilities. Each caller was interested in information and what to expect in the way of local terrorist attack. Their questions were addressed through the media in a press conference with public officials including the Memphis Mayor, Shelby county Mayor, the Police Director, the Shelby County Sheriff's Chief Deputy, Fire Director and other emergency service personnel. These officials made an evaluation of the immediate threat to the city based on information from the F.B.I., and national and local television news. This resulted in an agreement that our response could be reduced. At that time, jointly, in an organized setting, this team of city officials released information to the public. It was timely, informative and reassuring.

This was a unique experience in reality. Elected and appointed public officials guided these many agencies into a team of the various Emergency Services Functions who took the challenge of the day and made joint decisions. The hiring of an Emergency Operations Director and Staff, whose goal was to organize, train and encourage teamwork among Memphis and Shelby Counties Emergency Services, served as a multiplier of the services previously available.

We have experienced a severe blow to our budget as a result of September 11 and our anthrax responses. Sustained actions resulting from hoaxes, threats and actual attacks are devastating to local budgets as you know, draining dollars by eating overtime. There is little that can be held in the hand following unbudgeted responses. Since the events and continuous warnings of future threats, many cities are looking at budget shortfalls.

Following the New York attack, we have experienced the uncertainty and fear of bio-terror. There have been several warnings of additional attacks. As we further assess our ability to deal with attacks of this type, it is necessary to evaluate what is needed in order to defend ourselves against attack, to respond to and reduce the damage and loss of life and to fully recover.

In reviewing the needs of the city, I must mention the Port of Memphis, an integral part of the Memphis economy. Memphis is known as the America's Distribution Center. I think this notoriety, comes from it's association with Fed-Ex, United Parcel Service and other air carriers. However, the marine port facilities of Memphis metropolitan area is one in only three cities served by 5 class one railroad carriers serving 48 contiguous states, 2 barge fleeting services and a multitude of barge and truck transport services. International shipments come through the Port of New Orleans and are filtered to the other states through Memphis, the worlds' largest cargo airport hub. There are 15 other airlines including U.P.S. conducting operations through this airport. Memphis has a large oil refinery operated by William's Energy with access to McKellar Lake. Memphis has several chemical plants each producing potentially hazardous chemicals. The Tennessee Valley Authority steam plant also has access to McKellar Lake.

The Port of Memphis is the fourth busiest inland port in the country. The port facility has immediate access to interstate 40 and 55 and is located less than 15 minutes from the Memphis International Airport. The Port of Memphis also provides a unique industrial area for the convergence of transportation services located near the Memphis downtown business district.

This transportation hub has been of interest to organized crime due to the large quantity of manufactured goods. The Memphis Police, the Shelby County Sheriff's Office, the local F.B.I., the United States Customs Service, and the

National Insurance Crime Bureau was organized through a memorandum of understanding, updated yearly, into the Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi Auto Cargo Theft Task Force. This is a multi-agency investigative law enforcement unit targeting organized vehicle theft, including heavy equipment and farm and construction machinery, and associated criminal activity and thefts from interstate cargo shipments.

These are the reasons Memphis is a potential terrorist target.

The following are suggested measures, which should be considered in the interest of preventing terrorist attacks. Attacks which would severely interrupt interstate commerce for years if successful, seriously crippling the nation.

Use a multi-agency approach to the investigation of suspected terrorists, and develop the availability of an electronic clearing house for all information gathered nationally and internationally on suspected terrorists.

Assign fully armed U.S. Coast Guard personnel to 24 hour operations providing visible patrols on the Mississippi River, Wolf River, McKellar Lake, Tennessee Chute and Frank Pidgeon Industrial Park.

Support a national or international truck driver licensing program for drivers entering and exiting the U.S. from Canada and Mexico, and for crossing major infrastructures, bridges, tunnels. Also, support technology capable of identifying drivers and driver history by fingerprint, photos and newer iris scan technology.

Support smart card technology for trucks and loads, capable of immediately identifying driver, cargo, origination point, destinations and route plans.

Organize a U.S. Coast Guard Inspection Boarding Team to meet and board vessels above and below the Mississippi River bridges to identify operators and crew and to monitor approaches to sensitive infrastructure such as bridges, industrial complexes and production facilities with river access.

Assign U.S. Army or Army Reserve troops to provide 24 hour security/surveillance to the more critical targets, where attacks would cause severe repercussions for America.

Provide security gates and barricades limiting access to Presidents Island, refineries and chemical plants from vehicles without the proper identification and authorization.

Establish privately owned police agencies like the railroad police and Fed-Ex security police for the protection of businesses which produce or manage critical materials.

Establish a Homeland Security Block grant to meet such needs as police and fire overtime, training, communication and rescue equipment and for security measures to protect airports, waterways, utilities, public transit and other public infrastructure.

Thank you once again for inviting me to testify today. I will be happy to work with the committee in the future and at the appropriate time, I will be happy to answer any questions.