INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to section 21.800 of the Missouri Revised Statutes, the Joint Committee on Terrorism, Bioterrorism, and Homeland Security met throughout 2005 to discuss security issues facing Missouri. The Joint Committee took testimony from several state agencies as they discussed their current security status and upcoming plans. Everyone who requested to speak before the Joint Committee was given the opportunity. The members of the Joint Committee are:

Rep. Jack Jackson, Chair	Sen. Bill Alter
Rep. Mark Bruns	Sen. Rita Heard Days
Rep. Wayne Cooper	Sen. Chuck Gross
Rep. Gary Dusenberg	Sen. Harry Kennedy
Rep. Jeff Roorda	Sen. Chris Koster
Rep. Regina Walsh	Sen. Robert Mayer
Rep. Ed Wildberger	Sen. Charles Wheeler

Since September 11, 2001, Missouri has worked to improve its overall security, just as the entire United States. Throughout the public hearings held by the Joint Committee, state agencies discussed the importance of working with one another to bolster our state's security as a whole and the need for every state agency to recognize its role in keeping Missourians safe from harm. In order to provide the most comprehensive security, everyone must participate. Based on the information provided by these witnesses, the Joint Committee was able to evaluate security strategies currently in use and prioritize security needs that still exist.

Fortunately, the odds of a terrorist attack happening in Missouri are slim. Regardless, we must remain vigilant and prepared for such an event, as well as certain natural disasters which are almost a certainty. Tornados occur each year in Missouri; an earthquake on the New Madrid Fault in southeastern Missouri will occur, although there is no way of predicting when. The damage from any natural disaster can be just as far reaching as that of a terrorist attack: destroying our infrastructure, overwhelming our public servants, hampering our public services, and devastating our economy.

SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Joint Committee gathered a tremendous amount of information about the many issues facing Missouri with regard to homeland security during its public hearings. What follows is a summary of the major issues heard by the Joint Committee and the testimony of witnesses regarding those issues.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN & SEMA REGIONALIZATION

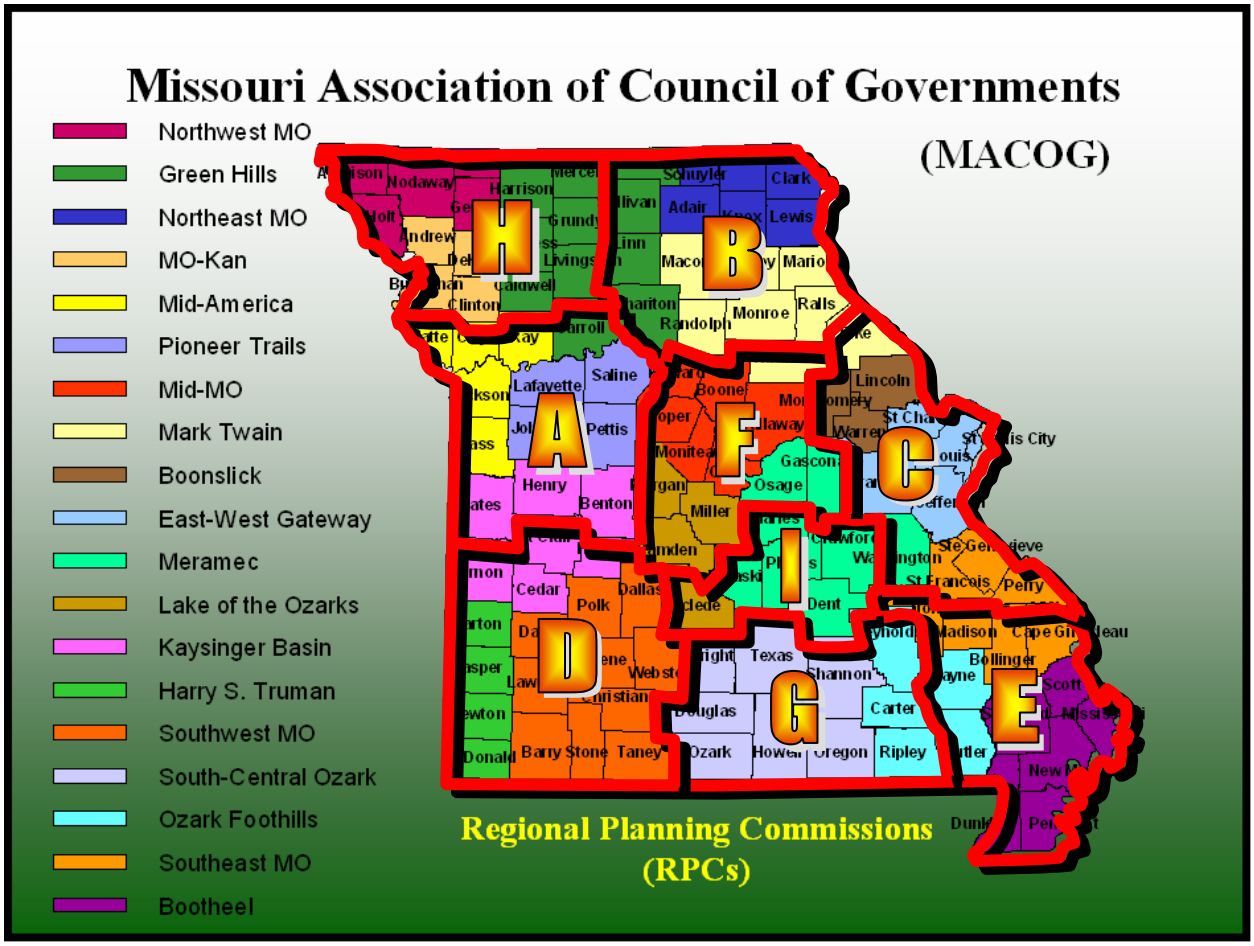
Executive Order 05-20, which became effective on July 21, 2005, required all executive departments to prepare a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) by November 21, 2005. The COOP is an emergency response plan or update to existing plans that addresses the continuity of each department's operations and services, as well as the security of their constituents and employees in the event of a natural or man-made disaster or emergency, including a terrorist attack.

The State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) testified that the first drafts of all COOP plans were completed by November 15, 2005 and that the final plans would be delivered to each agency by December 30, 2005. SEMA works with state agencies on their plans and conducts an annual review. SEMA also assists local governments developing their own Local Emergency Operations Plans (LEOP). Currently, there are more than 170 LEOPs. SEMA also helps local governments conduct annual reviews. In addition to agency-specific plans and local plans, there are emergency operation plans in place for an earthquake-related disaster as well as a nuclear accident at either the Cooper or Callaway County nuclear power plants.

Currently, SEMA and the Office of Homeland Security are working on a regionalization strategy. This concept requires a partnership between SEMA and the Missouri Association of Councils of Government (MACOG). The MACOG is comprised of 19 Regional Planning Committees (RPC) and encompasses the entire state. Each RPC is part of a larger region, which has the same boundaries as the nine existing Highway Patrol troop regions (letters A to I on the map). As part of the Urban Area Security Initiative two additional regions were added to accommodate Kansas City and St. Louis. Kansas City will be in Region A1 and St. Louis will be in Region C1. Each larger region will establish a Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee. Each RPC within the region will establish a Homeland Security Working Group.

SEMA and the MACOG will work together to develop an implementation plan for the regionalization of Missouri homeland security. SEMA will have a contractual agreement with the MACOGs and RPCs to ensure that all parties fulfill their responsibilities. The chair of each Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee will participate on a state-level subcommittee to represent regional and local concerns, which will be forwarded to the State Homeland Security Advisory Committee for consideration.

Fig. 1: A map of the 19 Regional Planning Commissions, which composes the MACOG, and the 9 larger regions (letters A to I).



COMMUNICATIONS

Communication is critical in a crisis. Unfortunately, how communication infrastructure will fare during a disaster is impossible to predict. A terrorist attack, a natural disaster or industrial accident can destroy communication infrastructure like telephone poles and cell phone towers in an instant. The Highway Patrol testified that no existing radio or cell phone tower system can survive a major earthquake or other catastrophic disaster. The solution is to over build towers and deploy mobile assets after the disaster has happened. In a major catastrophe, communications will be lost temporarily until mobile assets can be put in place to bridge the gap.

SEMA testified about TERT, the Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce. This group, from the Missouri chapter of the National Emergency Number Association, provides a team of knowledgeable, skilled, professional telecommunicators who can assist with communications in a disaster. This is one tool Missouri can use to restore communications at least temporarily, until a permanent solution is available.

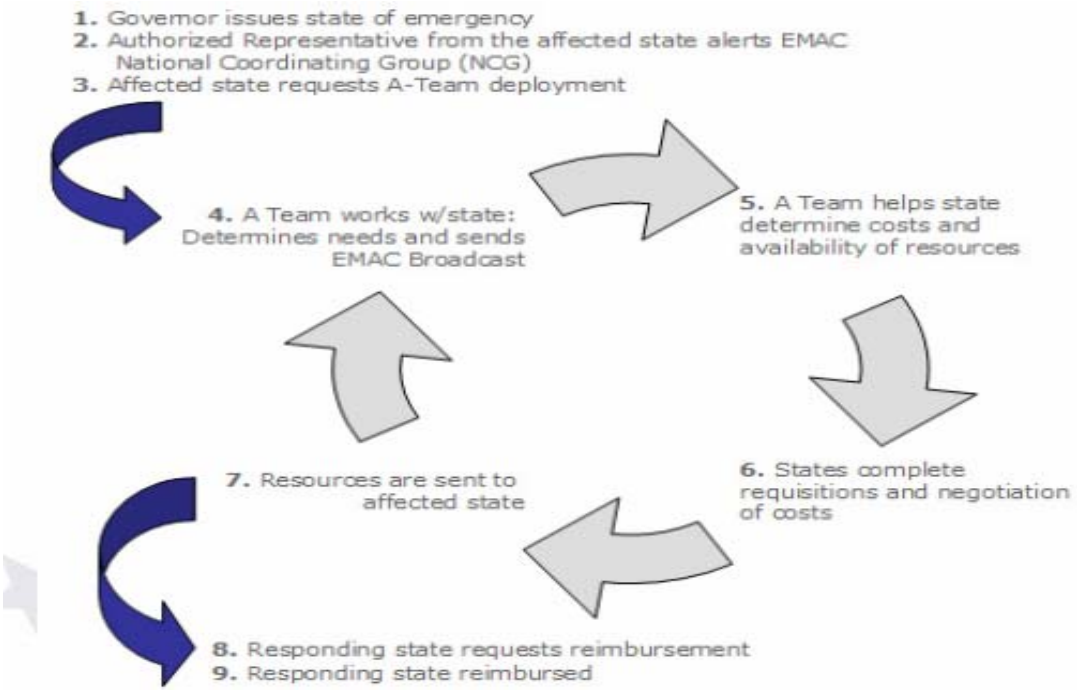
Aside from the risk of losing vital communications infrastructure, it is crucial that whatever remains be interoperable. Interoperability allows all emergency responders to communicate with any other responder or agency, regardless of equipment type, in real-time, any time. Although the Highway Patrol is able to communicate with other law enforcement agencies, in a large-scale disaster, they may also need to communicate with other state and federal agencies, which may not be possible now. Sprint/Nextel testified that, after the earthquake in Los Angeles, all cell phone towers and land lines were destroyed, leaving radios as the only means for communicating. Radios must be available in an instant to all first-responders. Sprint/Nextel emphasized that it is better to have a communications back-up plan in place before a catastrophe, rather than scrambling to put one in place after the fact.

The Department of Public Safety testified that 85% of public sector safety agencies use VHF frequencies to communicate, but the Missouri State Highway Patrol uses a low frequency band which isn't connected to VHF. Missouri needs an interconnected system that will allow all agencies to use their current system while simultaneously allowing them to be connected to all other agencies so they can talk with each other. The Highway Patrol has established and maintains communications with all local police and sheriff departments, but not necessarily all state agencies or federal agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Sprint/Nextel, a telecommunications provider, presented their solution for interoperability for the Joint Committee's consideration.

PREPARATION & TRAINING

Of course, Missouri is not unique in its vulnerability to a natural or man-made disaster. Other states have found themselves in crisis after floods or fires. As a result of Florida's vulnerability to hurricanes, in particular, former Governor Lawton Chiles began work on the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), which provides mutual state-to-state aid. In 1996, EMAC was ratified by the 104th Congress and has since been endorsed by the National Governor's Association, National Guard Bureau, FEMA, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Figure 2: The EMAC Process



This is a tool that Missouri could utilize with relative ease should the worst happen. Essentially, EMAC allows a state affected by a disaster to request help from another state, the federal government, or both. States that send assistance in response to a request are reimbursed for their expenses by FEMA. EMAC is an established, efficient system that reduces bureaucracy by using a straightforward, uniform process and by honoring the credentials of emergency responders across state lines.

The Department of Public Safety testified that it is extremely well prepared to assist after a severe tornado strikes, but added that if an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.6 or higher occurred, the Department would be challenged.

The Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) testified about its public health initiatives, which are funded by both the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The situation room for the Center for Emergency Response and Terrorism is staffed at all times by a duty officer who monitors DHSS's hotlines, state agency message traffic, and breaking news. When activated, the Situation Room monitors and supports state public health and hospital response. DHSS has access to the CDC's Strategic National Stockpile, which provides life-saving medications and supplies in the event of a large health catastrophe.

DHSS also participated in the CDC's Cities Readiness Initiative. This initiative is designed to help cities prepare for a mass-casualty event requiring the distribution of drugs and supplies to millions of people. St. Louis participated in the initial exercise which included 21 cities in 19 states. The scenario the CDC chose was a case in which aerosolized anthrax is released in a highly populated city. The CDC chose this scenario because it is considered to be among the worst possible disasters. If a state can successfully protect its citizens from death or harm under these circumstances, then it's likely that the state could do the same in a less dire situation. The CDC's goal is for states to provide prophylaxis for the entire affected population within 48 hours of a catastrophic event.

Once the exercise was complete, the CDC issued a color-coded grade to each city. Cities that received a red code are the least prepared to handle this scenario when compared to other cities. Cities that received a yellow code are moderately prepared, and cities that received a green code are well prepared compared to other cities. St. Louis received a grade of "Green – " which indicates that, compared to the other cities that participated in the exercise, it was very well prepared to handle such an emergency. However, DHSS was quick to point out that this does not mean it can provide medication and protection for the entire population of St. Louis within 48 hours of a catastrophic event. In fact, there is no city in the nation that can do this. This exercise only indicates that Missouri is better prepared than most other states, but not fully prepared in a practical sense.

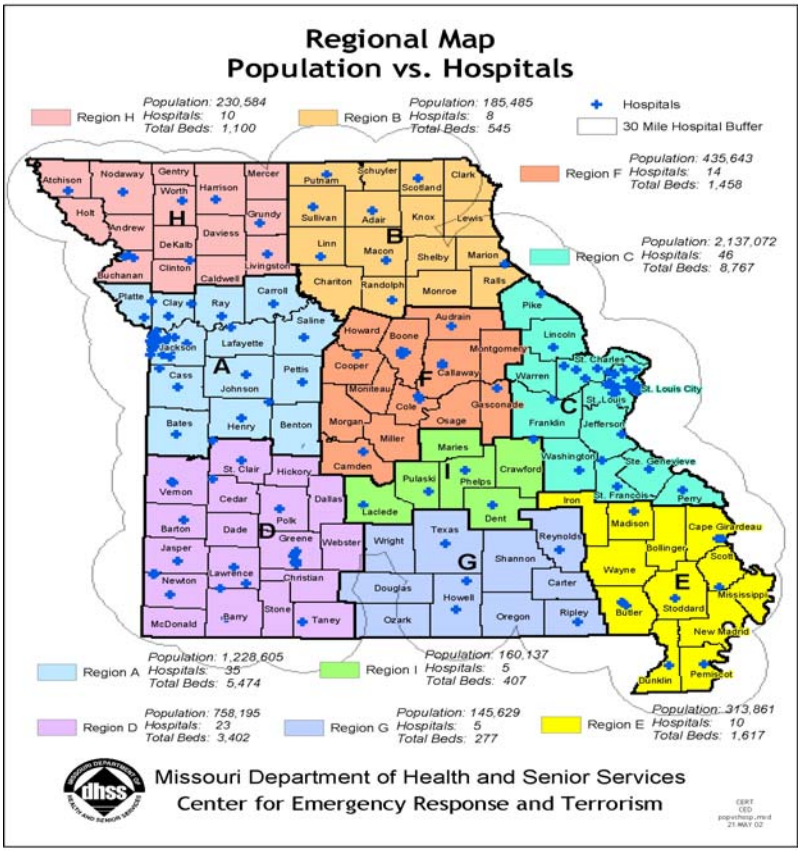
The CDC has begun preparations for an exercise with a second group of 15 cities, one of which is Kansas City. Kansas City is currently in the planning stages. It is expected that these cities will conduct their exercise sometime in 2007.

DHSS also testified about hospital preparedness in Missouri. There are nine regions in Missouri, all of which meet or exceed their surge bed capacity benchmarks (which are determined by HRSA). This means that throughout Missouri, additional hospital beds are available should the need arise during a mass casualty event. Surge capacity includes both fixed resources and mobile resources. Fixed resources remain in the region; mobile resources can travel anywhere in the state as needed. Current mobile assets are divided as follows:

SERVICE AREA	ASSETS	MAXIMUM PATIENT CAPACITY
Kansas City, MO	9 Trailers	930 Patients
St. Louis, MO	5 Trailers*	700 Patients
Rural Missouri	14 Trailers*	1,050 Patients
* St. Louis and Rural trailers will be operational in the spring of 2006.		

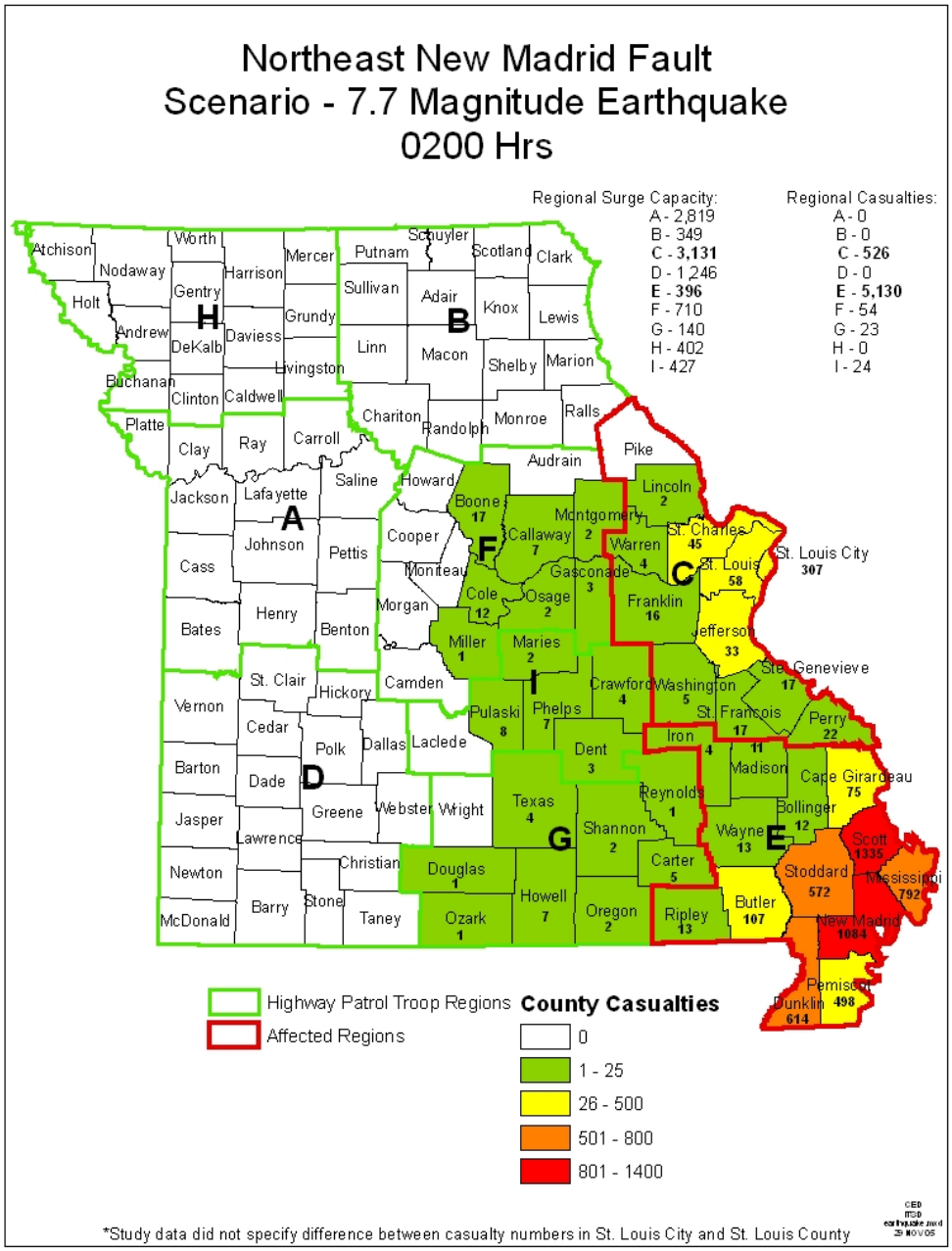
Currently, 91% of all Missouri hospitals have at least one negative pressure isolation room or equipment. The goal is to have this capability at all hospitals by June, 2006. By the end of August, 2006, each of the nine regions will have at least one hospital with the ability to support the initial treatment of ten patients in negative pressure isolation. Hospitals, ambulance services, and community health centers have personal protective equipment and have been given the opportunity to attend a "hands on" training session. There are 155 hospitals in Missouri and all have surge capacity for decontamination.

Figure 3: Regional Map of Population and Hospitals



While surge capacity would be critical in the case of an aerosolized anthrax attack, it would also be critical if a powerful earthquake occurred in southeast Missouri. Of course, we cannot predict when a terrorist attack or an earthquake will occur. While a terrorist may never strike in Missouri, it is a certainty that someday an earthquake will occur on the New Madrid Fault. DHSS provided this map with estimates as to where casualties are likely to occur. This map illustrates very effectively the importance of mobile surge capacity beds and underscores the concept that a natural disaster of this magnitude will affect the entire state, not just a single region.

Figure 4: Catastrophic Earthquake Scenario



SEMA is the staff chair for the State Exercise Coordination Group, whose purpose is to enhance the preparedness and response of state and local agencies through a state exercise program which will coordinate resources through a comprehensive, effective, cost efficient exercise program designed to meet their goals and requirements. The Group is developing an integrated five-year exercise schedule, which will published in January, 2006.

The Highway Patrol testified that it provides all officers with weapons of mass destruction training and gives additional terrorism training to sergeants and staff officers. They have also established and maintain communications with all local police and sheriff departments. One terrorism officer is assigned to each of the 109 zones across the state. There are four Special Emergency Response Teams (SERT) strategically located throughout the state that are available at all times. SERT members train two or three times annually with the National Guard's 7th Civil Support Team at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. They also train with self contained breathing apparatus equipment, which they may be required to use in certain types of disasters or terrorist attacks.

Figures 4 and 5: SERT Training

The Highway Patrol received funding from the Department of Homeland Security to purchase protective masks for each officer, communications interconnect switches, a weapons of mass destruction containment vehicle (which includes a bomb truck, a robot, and a containment vessel), and a capillary electrophoresis analyzer which identifies DNA. This analyzer, in particular, can analyze 30-35 samples at once whereas older equipment can only analyze one or two samples. Although this new analyzer would aid in identifying bodies in a mass casualty event, the Highway Patrol is able to use it every day. The Highway Patrol was also given federal funds to purchase additional video surveillance, an incident response vehicle (i.e., BearCat) capable of responding to a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive event, and advanced terrorist and criminal interdiction training.

Figure 6: Bomb Truck

Figure 7: Containment Vessel

Figure 8: Robot

Figure 9: BearCat CBRNE Vehicle

Of course, a large part of Missouri's preparedness relies on the National Guard. Brigadier General King Sidwell, the Adjutant General, testified that the allocation of critical equipment resources for Missouri's National Guard is strained but not broken. If a disaster occurred in Missouri that required more equipment, it could be obtained via the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). This compact allows governors to share resources in order to respond to terrorist or disaster missions. General Sidwell did caution, however, that without steps to address the shortage of equipment, the wear and tear over time could threaten the ability to respond down the road. The Department of Defense is taking steps to improve the National Guard's equipment while balancing the needs of domestic and overseas missions.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Citizens typically understand the phrase "homeland security" to mean protection from or response to a terrorist attack. Of course, this is part of it. But we must also be prepared to respond to a natural disaster, an industrial accident like the Taum Sauk Reservoir collapse, or a medical mass-casualty event such as an influenza epidemic. "Homeland security" must encompass all of these things. This is called an "all-hazards response".

This requires that citizens be prepared to take care of themselves for a few days until help can arrive. The Department of Health and Senior Services has information available to the public in a variety of formats that explains how they can do this. The program is called "Ready in Three," and the State should market this program aggressively so that citizens can be prepared.

The Highway Patrol pointed out that, while it's impossible to predict or protect all possible targets, it's also impossible for our enemies to attack all possible targets. To help predict targets and thereby mitigate risk, the Highway Patrol uses the Heartland Enforcement Against Terrorism (HEAT) database, which contains nearly every possible site in Missouri that could be affected by terrorism. There are currently more than 1,200 sites in the database. The Missouri Water Patrol testified that of the thousands of barges that travel on the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, only 2% of the cargo is inspected. This results in our bridges and ports being vulnerable. The ports of Kansas City and St. Louis are the Water Patrol's number one priority, followed by Bagnell Dam and Table Rock Dam.

Because it's impossible to protect each site in the HEAT database, part of our security must rely on citizens to report suspicious activity. This does not relate solely to possible terrorist attacks, but to any crime, such as murder or drug activity. The chances of a terrorist attack in Missouri are slim, but other crimes are a certainty. Citizens must help us protect them from all criminal activity, not just those which would be considered terrorism. Terrorism and narcotics, in particular, are linked because terrorists fund their activities, at least in part, with the sale of illegal drugs. Citizens should be aware of this link because it might encourage them to report possible drug-related activity. To this end, the Division of Drug and Crime Control has assigned officers to the Joint Terrorism Taskforces in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Jefferson City.

Mr. John Fink, a retired major with the St. Louis Police Department, testified that many citizens are complacent and don't believe another terrorist attack will happen. This is dangerous thinking, because the terrorists may simply be waiting for an opportunity. He is creating Civilian

Emergency Response Teams by training veterans in a 20-hour course. He plans to provide approximately 50 veterans with this training.

The Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations suggested that the state create a prioritized list of all assets that need to be protected in the event of an attack or a natural disaster. The state should create a companion list of all the organizations that could help should a catastrophic event occur and include the resources those organizations would be able to provide. This list would include organizations like The Red Cross and VFW posts around the state, as well as the state's universities and police.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After careful deliberation of the information received during its public hearings, the Joint Committee determined that the following recommendations should be made to the General Assembly.

1. The Department of Public Safety must complete its preparations for large-scale natural disaster, accident, or terrorist attack. These preparations must include comprehensive emergency response plans for a variety of scenarios as well as adequate and on-going training for emergency responders. Missouri is adequately prepared for certain natural disasters (i.e., tornadoes) but, by the Department's own admission, it is not as adequately prepared for a large-scale, mass casualty event – be it a powerful earthquake or a terrorist attack – as it needs to be.

2. Most of Missouri's geography is comprised of farm land, from which our food supply is harvested. Missouri must protect its agricultural crops and livestock from bioterrorism.

3. Missouri must aggressively protect its waterways. According to the Water Patrol, "The major lakes of Missouri and the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers account for approximately 275,000 acres with over 8,000 miles of shoreline, not including the numerous tributaries and popular float streams across the state." Thousands of tons of cargo are transported annually on the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, only 2% of which is ever inspected. The State Water Patrol must draft a proposal outlining what resources would be needed to inspect 10%, 25%, 50%, 75%, or 100% of all cargo. The Water Patrol should increase its use of the U.S. Coast Guard to assist in cargo searches and patrols when possible. The Water Patrol should obtain a risk assessment from the U.S. Coast Guard regarding the security of ports, commercial vessels, bridges, and other infrastructure affecting Missouri's waterways. Based on this, the Water Patrol should draft a strategy for protecting Missouri's ports and bridges. The cargo inspection proposal and the ports and bridges protection strategy should be given to members of this Joint Committee for review and consideration.

4. The Water Patrol should apply for Homeland Defense Grants to purchase additional boats and police equipment to better facilitate operations.

5. All executive departments should apply for as many federal Homeland Defense Grants as possible and leverage all federal sources of funding in order to fully participate in increasing Missouri's security.

6. The General Assembly should appropriate funds to hire additional Water Patrol officers and to purchase additional equipment for St. Louis and Kansas City, which are the busiest port cities in the state.

7. The State should market the "Ready In Three" disaster preparedness program to citizens so that they can be prepared to take care of themselves and their families for a few days until help arrives.

8. Encourage citizens to be vigilant reporting suspicious or illegal activity, especially those relating to illegal drugs. The Department of Public Safety should study the possible merits of a monetary reward program in which a citizen who reports drug activity which leads to the arrest of a terrorist would receive a reward.

9. The Joint Committee should review the Sprint/Nextel solution for interoperable communications and should invite other telecommunications providers to present their products as well. Agencies interested in providing feedback to the companies about their specific needs should also be invited. All interested telecommunications providers should submit a proposal to the Joint Committee for review identifying the state departments and agencies that should be equipped with interoperable communications equipment for a large-scale emergency as well as an approximate cost for implementing and maintaining such equipment.

10. DHSS should continue providing "hands on" training sessions to hospital workers, ambulance services, and community health centers in the use of personal protective equipment and other mass casualty event training.

11. As a condition of licensure, all emergency responders should be required to receive mass casualty event training every two years. This should include doctors, nurses, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, physician assistants, police, fire fighters, and other personnel a community deems essential.

12. The Joint Committee urges the General Assembly to pass a resolution asking the Department of Defense to improve the Missouri National Guard's equipment readiness by addressing the shortage of equipment and providing funding to upgrade and maintain our current assets.

13. Encourage the Department of Public Safety and SEMA to study Mr. John Fink's Civilian Emergency Response Team training as well as the Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations' suggestion that the state create a list of organizations (such as the Red Cross) that could respond to an emergency, along with the resources those organizations could provide. SEMA's volunteer coordinator could facilitate this process.

WITNESSES

The following is a list of organizations who testified during the Joint Committee's hearings:

Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations;
Missouri Capitol Police;
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services;
Missouri Department of Homeland Security;
Missouri Department of Public Safety;
Missouri Division of Fire Safety;
Missouri National Guard;
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency;
Missouri State Highway Patrol;
Missouri State Water Patrol, and;
Sprint/Nextel Corporation.

Mr. John Fink also testified.