

Major Challenges Facing ATF

Physical and Security Challenges in Preparing for and Mitigating Potential Terrorist Acts

ATF faces additional physical and security challenges as a result of the increased terrorist threat now facing our nation. To meet those challenges, ATF has identified specific requirements to prepare for and mitigate the effects of a future terrorist attack. Funds have been requested to provide operating capability for the Headquarters Emergency Center and Emergency Management Program Planning; a medical monitoring program to evaluate the physical and psychological impacts of terrorist events on our employees (including exposure to hazardous materials); and headquarters and field security enhancements.

As evidenced by recent terrorism acts, planning for mitigation of effects and prevention of losses are necessary for the government to continue. The recent terrorist assault highlighted the need for an employee medical monitoring program. It created a serious risk of ATF law enforcement and other personnel being exposed to hazardous products during the New York City World Trade Center incident and in subsequent investigations and related activities in New York and Washington, DC.

The importance of continually enhancing physical security cannot be overemphasized.

Continuity of Operations (COOP)

For two years prior to September 11, ATF had been working with Treasury's emergency preparedness staff to ensure continuity of ATF key operations during crises and identifying alternative COOP locations and necessary data systems enhancements. The September 11 terrorist attack and subsequent anthrax threat emphasized that these efforts need more work, particularly in the area of information recovery and backup systems that ensure continuity of operations without loss of data.

ATF faces the challenge of keeping employees safe and secure and in a constant state of readiness to react, through frequent drills and practical exercises. ATF has made emergency preparedness and continuity of operations a high priority in FY 2002 and will focus the necessary attention and resources to accomplishing these effectively and efficiently. ATF is using "lessons learned" from the events of September 11 to work toward a level of preparedness for any type of crisis situation.

e-Government Initiative

In FY 2002, ATF will begin using the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) program. In the past, a vendor wanting to do business with more than one Agency of the Federal government was required to submit information to each Agency. This redundancy of paperwork created administrative burdens for both the contractor and the government. The goal of the CCR is to become the single repository of vendor data for the entire Federal government and avoid administrative duplication, while allowing contractors to take responsibility for the accuracy of their business information by supplying it directly to the government through a single registration.



Photo Caption: Aerial view of the new National Laboratory Center site.