



Structuring Preparedness and Response Efforts to Hazards in the United States

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ABSTRACT :

The structure for emergency preparedness and response towards biological, chemical, and radiological attacks has been subject to discussion and change since the inception of these threats on a civilian population. There are several programs in place within the United States government at the local, state and federal level that work towards achieving the best life safety measures in an incident as well as reducing the likelihood of attacks. This paper details the guidelines followed by emergency management agencies at all levels of government in the United States with an emphasis on the state of Florida. The way in which the government handles the challenges of coordinating education, training, and response to these events is multi-faceted and diverse between first responders. The differences between local, state, and federal spheres of influence will be explained relating to the scale of the incident's response effort. The overlap of these differences will also be analyzed with concepts on how to possibly make it more efficient and cost friendly. Many programs and different levels of government have adopted the all-hazards approach to incident response. This paper will attempt to rein this theory into also incorporating biological, chemical, and radiological concerns into the response measures already in place. Incident management of these attacks will also involve other key players of emergency response that are not from a government background. The current ways in which these groups perform alongside government will be discussed and questioned while possible improvements will be brought forth. The structural changes and questions regarding emergency response included in this paper seek to improve and streamline response for hazards that can cause mass casualties or drive fear in a population. The goal is to improve response and stimulate cost effective measures in emergency management relating to incidents caused by biological, chemical, and nuclear attacks.

KEYWORDS:

All-Hazards, Preparedness, Biological, Chemical, Radiological, Weapons