GOVERNOR BUSH AND EXECUTIVE COMMAND STAFF PARTICIPATE IN ANNUAL HOMELAND SECURITY EXERCISE

~Leaders Outline 2005-06 Domestic Security Priorities for Florida~

TALLAHASSEE -- Governor Jeb Bush today joined Florida’s agency heads and law enforcement officials to conduct the third annual homeland security “tabletop” exercise at the State Emergency Operations Center. The exercise is an annual drill where the Governor and top state officials respond to mock terrorism and homeland security threats. The Governor also noted that lessons learned during the 2004 hurricane season further strengthened Florida’s ability to prepare for and respond to potential acts of terrorism.

"Florida is better prepared today to fight terrorism, thanks to the phenomenal teamwork developed during the past hurricane season," said Governor Bush. "Our strength comes from the ongoing commitment to train and learn better ways to protect our residents and visitors against terrorist activity and the impacts of natural disasters.”

The scenario of this training exercise is a terrorist attack, involving multiple locations, coupled with a cold weather event. The primary objective of the exercise is to give an opportunity for the Governor and executive-level staff to experience the flow of events during a terrorist attack, and learn the best way to coordinate their roles with federal, state, and local response agencies with an emphasis on response, investigation and recovery.

Representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Defense, U.S. Coast Guard, National Guard, and Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency also participated in the half-day simulated terrorism drill.

“Exercises such as these allow us to determine what works and what doesn’t during a crisis situation. Each year we work to enhance our domestic security strategy and implement new measures designed to protect our state,” Florida Department of Law Enforcement Commissioner Guy Tunnell said. “Our citizens and visitors can be proud of the fact that Florida has put together a sound strategy that is second to none.”

By 2005, each of Florida's seven Regional Domestic Security Task Forces will have completed tabletop and field exercises. These drills provide vital training to members of all disciplines, including law enforcement, fire, health, education and the private sector.

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, more than $740 million in federal and state funding has been dedicated to ensure Florida's domestic security.
Florida's statewide domestic security strategy is organized around five key goals and objectives:

- Prevent, preempt and deter acts of terrorism;
- Prepare for terrorism response missions;
- Protect Florida's citizens, visitors and critical infrastructure;
- Respond in an immediate, effective and coordinated manner; and
- Recover quickly and restore.

"The State Emergency Response Team is designed to function as an all-hazards coordination entity," said Florida Division of Emergency Management (DEM) Director Craig Fugate. "Every time we come together, whether by real world events or training exercises, the knowledge we gain helps us better serve the state's residents and visitors during times of disaster."

In addition to domestic security efforts by FDLE and DEM, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) serves as the state's lead health agency, working closely with health and response partners at the local, regional and state levels. Trust for America's Health recently reported that no other state is more prepared for a public health response than Florida. At the forefront of public health preparedness, DOH's response to the 2004 hurricanes included a volunteer network of public and private health professionals to serve the public's health needs before, during and after the storms.

"Governor Bush has encouraged and supported the Department of Health in its journey to excellence in preparedness, bio-terrorism surveillance and rapid response," said DOH Secretary John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A., M.P.H. "Supporting local efforts is key to our success in both response and recovery phases."

Florida is expected to receive more than $101 Million in federal funding for the 2005-06 fiscal year. The appropriation will fund the following grant programs:

- The State Homeland Security Program will provide $44,728,450 for regional and local exercises, emergency management planning, HAZMAT training, seaport security and an upgrade of the Statewide Interoperable Communications Network and other initiatives.

- The Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program will use $16,624,891 to improve law enforcement prevention in each region through the Regional Task Forces. The funding will also be used to increase protection of schools, access control enhancement and training for the interdiction of weapons of mass destruction. Under the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, regional specialty law enforcement teams will also receive equipment and training related to bomb and forensics security.

- The Urban Area Strategic Initiative provides $30,885,716 in direct federal grants to the metropolitan areas of Miami, Tampa and Jacksonville to meet on specific prevention needs such as training, equipment and planning in each urban area. Under the Urban Area Strategic Initiative, funding will also be
used to improve critical infrastructure, mass transit, seaport security and access control enhancement and first responder training.

- The **Emergency Management Performance Grants** will provide $7,244,714 to support comprehensive emergency management at the state and local levels and improve mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities for all hazards. Funds may also be used to support activities that improve a jurisdiction’s ability to manage consequences from acts of terrorism.

- The **Metropolitan Medical Response System Program** provides $1,593,144 to support local jurisdictions to maintain and enhance their ability to respond to mass casualty events during the first hours of an event. The program provides the planning, organizing, training, and equipping concepts, principles and techniques to prepare for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive events as well as epidemic outbreaks, natural disasters and large-scale hazardous materials incidents.

- The **Citizen Corps** will continue to provide public outreach and education to implement local Citizen Corps programs across the state. The Citizen Corps program is a volunteer driven, and its members support first responders, disaster-relief groups during a disaster.

Florida also received federal funding from the Centers for Disease Control, $39.6 million, and the Health Resource Services Administration, $26.9 million in fiscal year 2004-05. The appropriation is being used to enhance public health preparedness, surveillance and monitoring.

For more information on Florida’s domestic security efforts, visit [www.fdle.state.fl.us](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us). For more information regarding family preparedness plans and the State Emergency Response Team see [www.FloridaDisaster.org](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org) or [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com).

# # #
RDSTF’s Field Exercises and Domestic Security
February 11, 2005

The State of Florida’s domestic security structure is based on the concept of unified command, response and recovery to an act of terrorism. To that end, the state has developed seven regional domestic security task forces (Pensacola, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando, Ft Myers and Miami). Within the structure of these task forces are the unifying disciplines, whether it be law enforcement, fire, EMS, emergency management, health, hospitals or education, that come together to develop plans, procedures and protocols to prepare for, respond to and recovery from any act of terrorism. The State of Florida’s exercise program works to accomplish a number of things including:

- The State of Florida recognizes the heightened threat to the public posed by terrorist organizations.
- As a result, Governor Bush requested that each of our seven established regional domestic security task forces conduct tabletop, functional and/or full-scale exercises to test the preparation of local, state, and federal response to a domestic terrorist event.
- The goal of Florida’s Domestic Security Exercise Program is to move field performance closer to achieve the highest possible result as might be possible through regular, structured exercises that test all facets of Florida’s Domestic Security Strategy.
- These exercises are important and enhance our ability to protect the public from, and mitigate the consequences of, a large-scale Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) terrorist attack. These exercises also provide an opportunity for agencies and organizations to operationally demonstrate the activation, implementation, and execution of their emergency plans and unified procedures in response to scenario events.
- The exercises focus on interdisciplinary and interagency coordination and require a multi-discipline, multi-jurisdictional Local, Regional, State and Federal response.
- Exercises may consist of a full-scale field exercise that involves all elements of a response to include actual activation. A tabletop exercise takes the form of facilitated, round-table discussions. The participants follow general policies, plans, and procedures to discuss and address their response to the multiple challenges presented by the WMD incidents without requiring actual activation or deployment of any response assets. A functional exercise brings together the primary participants to test their plans notification systems and capabilities to respond to deployment. All these various types of exercises give participants a greater understanding of issues faced by other agencies and assist in interagency coordination and collaboration to reach the best possible solution to all major issues.
- Florida’s Domestic Security Funding Strategy establishes the goal of preparing for terrorism response missions. Objective 2.10 outlines the need to conduct exercises designed to orient personnel, and to validate and improve plans, guidelines and response capabilities.
The Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) provides funding through the Division of Emergency Management (DEM) to conduct tabletop and full-scale functional exercises, which enables Florida to meet this goal.

**EXECUTIVE LEVEL TABLETOP**

- This is Florida’s 3rd Executive Level Tabletop exercise.
- An Executive Level Tabletop Exercise is conducted annually to identify and discuss executive-level plans, policies, procedures, and decisions undertaken in support of the local jurisdictions response to terrorist events, and to explore the State of Florida’s recovery and mitigation process. This tabletop exercise aims to evaluate the roles and responsibilities of the Governor, Cabinet members, State Agencies, Regional Domestic Security Task Forces, and Federal agencies in response to a state emergency, and in supporting local jurisdictions and regions impacted by a terrorist event.
- The exercise also explores the long-range effects and issues of a terrorist event on the continuity of, and return to normal operations for: government, schools, public health, tourism, agriculture, public and private industries.
- Enhances Florida’s readiness capabilities to response in the event of an actual emergency involving a large-scale terrorist threat or action.
- Enhances the level of sharing and measures the quality of intelligence and information flow between the various response agency stakeholders.
- The objectives of these Regional Exercises are to validate the Regional Response Plans and the Recommended Guidelines for RDSTF Law Enforcement Response Teams, which were developed by the Committees of the State Working Group on Domestic Security and approved by the Domestic Security Oversight Board.