

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND
VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

March 26, 2002
3:28 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Mike Chenault, Chair
Representative Beverly Masek
Representative Lisa Murkowski
Representative Joe Green
Representative Pete Kott
Representative Joe Hayes

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Sharon Cissna

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 324

"An Act making supplemental and other appropriations for homeland security; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD AND HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 371

"An Act establishing the Alaska veterans' memorial endowment fund and providing for credits against certain taxes for contributions to that fund; relating to other tax credits for certain contributions; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

PREVIOUS ACTION

BILL: HB 324

SHORT TITLE:HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS

SPONSOR(S): RLS BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

Jrn-Date	Jrn-Page		Action
01/16/02	1972	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/16/02	1972	(H)	MLV, STA, FIN
01/16/02	1972	(H)	GOVERNOR'S TRANSMITTAL LETTER
01/16/02	1972	(H)	SPREADSHEET BY DEPT. COST

02/12/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/12/02	(H)	Heard & Held
02/12/02	(H)	MINUTE(MLV)
02/19/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/19/02	(H)	Heard & Held
02/19/02	(H)	MINUTE(MLV)
02/21/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/21/02	(H)	Heard & Held
02/21/02	(H)	MINUTE(MLV)
02/26/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/26/02	(H)	Heard & Held
02/26/02	(H)	MINUTE(MLV)
02/28/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/28/02	(H)	-- Meeting Canceled --
03/05/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
03/05/02	(H)	Heard & Held
03/05/02	(H)	MINUTE(MLV)
03/14/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
03/14/02	(H)	Heard & Held
03/14/02	(H)	MINUTE(MLV)
03/21/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124
03/21/02	(H)	-- Meeting Canceled --
03/26/02	(H)	MLV AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 124

WITNESS REGISTER

WAYNE RUSH, Homeland Security Coordinator
 Division of Emergency Services
 Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA)
 P.O. Box 5750
 Fort Richardson, Alaska 99505-5750
 POSITION STATEMENT: During hearing on HB 324, explained
 Items 59-71 of DMVA's proposed appropriations and answered
 questions.

MAJOR GENERAL PHILLIP OATES, Adjutant General/Commissioner
 Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs
 P.O. Box 5800
 Fort Richardson, Alaska 99505-0800
 POSITION STATEMENT: During hearing on HB 324, answered
 questions about some of DMVA's proposed appropriations and
 explained the department's priorities.

GEORGE WUERCH, Mayor
 Municipality of Anchorage
 P.O. Box 196650
 Anchorage, Alaska 99519

POSITION STATEMENT: During hearing on HB 324, suggested considering first responders and the perspective of citizens who dial 911 and expect help.

MIKE SCOTT, Chairman
Legislative Committee
Alaska Municipal League (AML);
Municipality of Anchorage
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

POSITION STATEMENT: During hearing on HB 324, expressed concern that local needs have largely been left unaddressed and asked that AML be brought into the equation; on behalf of the Municipality of Anchorage, answered question about why Anchorage chose to go it alone for some items.

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 02-17, SIDE A
Number 0001

CHAIR MIKE CHENAULT called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 3:28 p.m. Representatives Chenault, Masek, Murkowski, Green, and Hayes were present at the call to order. Representative Kott arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 324-HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS

Number 0082

CHAIR CHENAULT announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 324, "An Act making supplemental and other appropriations for homeland security; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR noted that the committee would consider items relating to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA). [Pages 4-14 of the 2/27/02 version of the document, "Terrorism Disaster Policy Cabinet Cost Estimates for Highest Priority Recommendations," had just been provided to members; all items cited are from that document, with a few punctuation and spelling changes.]

Number 0358

WAYNE RUSH, Homeland Security Coordinator, Division of Emergency Services, Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, began by addressing Item 59 ["24-hour State Emergency Coordination Center additional support"]. Mr. Rush explained that this would keep the State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. He emphasized how essential the SECC is to be able to respond rapidly to any type or magnitude of disaster at the state level. Noting that the first couple of hours of an event are critical, he said the 24-hour-a-day SECC would give the state the capability to begin to coordinate interagency support for local officials immediately, when there is the greatest potential to save lives, property, and the environment.

MR. RUSH highlighted the increased possibility of attacks by terrorists with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and noted that recently [when anthrax was sent through the mails in the Lower 48, resulting in several deaths], the SECC was a focal point for coordinating local, state, and federal response operations and tracking each event. He explained that originally [DMVA] believed it would receive funding from other departments to help defray the costs of the SECC; however, that wasn't feasible because of adverse impacts on other departments' functions. In addition, personnel costs are greater than anticipated.

Number 0630

CHAIR CHENAULT recalled that the 24-hour-a-day emergency coordination center was fully funded last year.

Number 0662

MAJOR GENERAL PHILLIP OATES, Adjutant General/Commissioner, Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs, affirmed that the funding was established last year, and said [DMVA] had tried to reduce the level of the request as much as possible. This year in operating it, however, it was discovered that some charges were higher. In addition, there was an inability to get some Department of Public Safety (DPS) funding that goes into its center, because it would have eliminated a [position] that serves other public safety purposes. Furthermore, some federal money was unavailable. The good news is that \$1 million will be given to each state, assuming the federal funding comes through, for "design money" for 24-hour-a-day facilities. Right now, though, due to the funding shortfall, [DMVA] is canceling some major activities because of having seen the absolute importance

of the 24-hour-a-day capability, as shown during the anthrax situation.

Number 0782

MAJOR GENERAL OATES, in response to a question from Chair Chenault, clarified that the request isn't for additional staff, but is to have sufficient money for staff and costs of operations. He went on to say that one position was funded from federal "disaster funding"; although it is good that Alaska hasn't had as many disasters this year that generate that funding, the money traditionally obtainable from that source isn't available. He again stressed how critical this 24-hour-a-day center is, and specified that [the SECC] is operating within the same parameters established last year during the initial testimony.

Number 0910

MR. RUSH added that [DMVA] is "reprogramming" about \$191,000 in the state's fiscal year 2003 (FY 03) to support the SECC. That, in addition to the \$100,000 [requested in HB 324], is what is needed to keep it operating at its current staffing level.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES indicated currently eight people provide the 24-hour-a-day staffing; that hasn't changed, but the money [provided previously] was found to be insufficient.

Number 1023

CHAIR CHENAULT turned attention to Item 60 ["Acquire the Mobile Analytical Laboratory and Unified Command Suite for 103d CST(WMD) -- federally funded; awaiting delivery"].

MR. RUSH characterized Item 60 as a "bookmark" so readers can get the total picture of what is needed with regard to homeland security and WMD. It pertains to the 103d Civil Support Team (CST), a 22-person full-time national guard team that received its certification - certifying the ability to perform its mission of providing WMD support to local incident commanders - about two weeks ago from the U.S. Secretary of Defense. Noting that the capabilities primarily relate to chemical [or] biological events, Mr. Rush said this can provide significant assistance to local authorities in terms of identification, detection, assessment, and advice, and also offers a tremendous communications capability. The laboratory gives the capability to identify primarily chemical substances, as well as certain

biological ones, and then to give on-scene advice to the local incident commander. Mr. Rush added, "They're totally deployable, either by road, by ship, or by aircraft."

Number 1205

MR. RUSH discussed Item 61 ["Add three emergency management specialists in the Division of Emergency Services to focus entirely on WMD planning, training and exercises"]. He explained that prior to [the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on the East Coast], the Division of Emergency Services tried to manage the WMD/homeland security function with one part-time position. Since then, this position - his own, he intimated - has been devoted full-time to homeland security. Recently, [the division] reassigned another position to work full-time in the homeland security arena. Still, this level of staffing is insufficient to manage the vastly increased emphasis on homeland security, he told members. Hence funding would support three additional emergency management specialists: one specifically for WMD exercise-and-training development, one for WMD planning, and one for WMD grant application and management.

MR. RUSH, in response to a question from Representative Murkowski, said this element probably would only be necessary if there were no funding for an office of homeland security, since such an office would be the most effective way to manage homeland security.

Number 1345

MR. RUSH turned attention to Item 62 ["Build a state-of-the-art facility for the 103d CST(WMD) -- federally funded but not yet under construction"]. He noted that the 103d CST has temporary quarters in the National Guard Armory at Fort Richardson, but doesn't have the type of facility it needs to support its requirements for either training or equipment storage and maintenance. Thus Item 62 shows federal funds for a facility separate from the armory, but on the Fort Richardson base.

Number 1396

MR. RUSH briefly addressed Item 63 ["Develop a comprehensive emergency communications annex to the state Emergency Operations Procedures (EOP)"]. He said this is in development, requires no additional funding, and is needed to support the all-hazard plan as well as homeland security and WMD.

Number 1421

MR. RUSH discussed Item 64 ["Develop a robust WMD exercise program for all levels of government and the private and volunteer sectors"]. He explained the cycle of "plans, training, and exercise" required: threat analysis and risk assessment, followed by development of a plan from which it can be determined what resources and training are needed to implement the plan, followed by exercises. First the assessment and then the plan are tweaked, and the cycle begins again. Item 64 will fund development of a multi-year exercise program and will include travel, materials, a professional-services contract, and the costs of doing the exercises.

MR. RUSH pointed out the importance of exercises, because plans aren't maximized without them. Exercises often are the most neglected part of the cycle, however, because full-scale exercises can be costly and resource-intensive. The desire is for a robust exercise program over several years, which is necessary for effectiveness. Characterizing this element as essential, he noted that it appears there may be federal funding available in federal FY 03 or FY 04; if so, [DMVA] would withdraw this increment.

Number 1599

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked about the differences between Items 61 and 64.

MR. RUSH answered that Item 61 is for personnel, one who would specifically manage this exercise program. Item 64 is for planning and conducting the exercises themselves, including the costs of coming up with the exercise program and assembling people. He said it can be done a variety of ways through contracts or partially in-house. He pointed out that it is most effective to begin with simple, tabletop exercises and work up to full-scale ones.

Number 1703

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN expressed concern about duplication. He asked whether Item 64 will be eliminated if an office of homeland security is created.

MR. RUSH answered no. He posed an example of an exercise in a community. Somebody would need to plan the exercise scenario; although it might be the planner [in Item 61], he said, [DMVA]

instead sees that planner as managing the overall exercise plan for the entire state for this four years. At the local level, he noted, people involved in the exercise may be taken away from other jobs or may require overtime. People who are the exercise controllers and evaluators must be paid; there may be costs for any equipment involved, and there will be costs for printed materials for the exercise and so forth. He voiced the goal of working up to several statewide exercises, including several communities at once and the involvement of the SECC and other state agencies, which would be fairly costly.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked whether the planning is in Item 61 and the execution is in Item 64.

MR. RUSH answered that basically, yes.

Number 1875

GEORGE WUERCH, Mayor, Municipality of Anchorage, addressing all items relating to homeland security, asked the committee to think in terms of a citizen who dials 911 on the telephone, expecting the first responder to help. He pointed out that many Alaskan cities and boroughs can provide first responders, but expressed concern that funding requests in HB 324 have little that assists local first responders. Reporting that Anchorage has adopted the concept of shifting priorities and incorporating homeland security into the day-to-day operations, he explained:

If something happens, we don't have time to mobilize a secondary office or secondary group of responders. We need our frontline police officers, firefighter, and EMTs [emergency medical technicians], our health and human service providers, and our medical staff to be able to respond ... in the course of the day's work. So we would ask that you look in terms of what this program brings to first responders across the state.

I will also add that ... the Alaska Municipal League and The National League of Cities have both weighed in with the same perspective, that first responders need to be helped to strengthen homeland security, that we shouldn't create instead a whole secondary tier of responders, but strengthen what we have, provide the training, the equipment, the specialized capabilities that would strengthen that day to day.

Number 1996

MAYOR WUERCH said some things in this plan are really fine. Noting that security at the international airport is a state function, he pointed out that Anchorage does provide police, fire, and medical response there. He complimented the SECC and Major General Oates for participation with Anchorage before, during, and after the events of September 11, 2001; for helping with training; and for assistance as recently as the preceding week, when there was a huge snowfall. He also expressed appreciation for the SECC's presence 24 hours a day. Mayor Wuerch closed by again asking the committee to look at funding from the eyes of the citizen with regard to what strengthens the response when someone dials 911.

[There was no discussion of Item 65, "Develop a small community Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Annex to the Community Model Disaster Response Plan"; it carried the notation, "do within existing budget."]

Number 2119

MR. RUSH turned attention to Item 66 ["Weapons of Mass Destruction Plans: Develop a state plan for detection of and response to biological terrorism; Establish WMD plans and procedures annexes for jurisdictions without them"]. He explained that this completes WMD response plans for 19 of the largest jurisdictions in the state. It also provides a state plan for detection of and response to biological attacks. He emphasized how essential plans are, since they are the starting point that drives training and exercises and they identify needs for resources. This money would go directly to communities to develop WMD response plans.

Number 2188

MR. RUSH addressed Item 67 ["Develop specific emergency contact procedures for key individuals in every executive branch agency"]. Noting that it is ongoing [and requires no additional funds], he described this is as an emergency contact list in order to be able to contact key decision makers. In response to Chair Chenault, he said this hasn't been formalized before, although various departments may have had it to some degree. The 24-hour-a-day SECC can have this contact capability if the input is received from the various agencies, he pointed out.

Number 2273

MR. RUSH turned attention to Item 68 ["Establish and Homeland Security Office within the department to implement the recommendations"]. Noting that the homeland security office is the top priority of the Terrorism Disaster Policy Cabinet, Mr. Rush said DMVA envisions that this office would be staffed with representatives from DMVA, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), the Department of Public Safety (DPS), the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, and the Department of Administration. An administrative staff person would be assigned, and the office would be led by a deputy commissioner.

MR. RUSH explained that the core duties would be to assist intelligence analysis and dissemination; maintain an Alaska-specific threat assessment; develop protocols to respond to WMD events; work with all the various national and Alaskan entities involved, as well as other states, provinces, and territories; provide the governor with expert homeland security advice; develop program budgets and manage related grants; provide a single homeland security communications conduit; develop and review legislative actions and proposals; establish and disseminate threat-level criteria and procedures; and assist utilities and other infrastructure with security assessments.

MR. RUSH reported that the Terrorism Disaster Policy Cabinet never envisioned this as a permanent fixture in state government, but expected the core duties to be completed within 18 months. By the end of June 2003, the office as a stand-alone entity would be disbanded, and the continuing functions of the office would be absorbed by the Division of Emergency Services; the temporary positions would be deleted. Mr. Rush emphasized how critical this office is to coordinate "the ever-increasing tempo of homeland security requirements."

Number 2445

MR. RUSH, in response to a question from Representative Green, said federal funding will be used in every instance possible. Thus far, however, no U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) funding can be used for personnel, and much is targeted at first-responder equipment only. He mentioned speculative funding in the President's proposed budget and a supplemental budget from DOJ, but emphasized that it is not firm, although it seems the purposes for which such funding can be used may expand beyond first-responder equipment.

Number 2628

REPRESENTATIVE MURKOWSKI returned attention to Item 64 and asked whether municipal governments will help to fund exercises.

MR. RUSH replied that it is possible and is something the person who coordinates the exercise program would have to work out. He indicated he didn't foresee that most communities and boroughs would have a lot of money for exercises, though.

Number 2712

MAJOR GENERAL OATES agreed with Mayor Wuerch about the importance of reinforcement for first responders. He noted that major federal agencies to provide funding would be the DOJ, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He suggested much of the FEMA funding would be available at the state and local levels for an exercise program. He also said some money is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the hospital-preparedness program, to improve capabilities, planning, preparedness, and response at all levels for a bioterrorism event. He said it is believed most federal money will flow down to the first-responder level. Calling this a work in progress, he pointed out that federal programs are evolving as well, and reiterated the intention of reducing [DMVA's] request wherever possible.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES highlighted DMVA's priorities. He told members that just for this next fiscal year, DMVA's top priority is the office of homeland security, to allow the department to leverage federal programs and get its procedures and plans in place; then that office would "go away." The second priority is the 24-hour-a-day State Emergency Coordination Center. He expressed the need to invest more in overall emergency management funding. Third is WMD training that DMVA will sponsor to all first responders statewide, to allow better preparedness for a WMD event and to use HAZMAT [hazardous materials] capabilities that will be in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Valdez, and the recently certified 103d CST(WMD) team. Fourth is grants to the LEPCs [local emergency planning committees] under Item 76. He added that some items such as the HAZMAT response teams are no longer on the list.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES voiced the need to have this discussion continue through the legislative process, especially to look at areas where the department has already spent money by taking it

from existing programs; at areas in which not spending money will have a direct negative impact related to either federal money or federal mandates; and at what he called "the major impact areas of funding." He said DMVA will be able to provide priorities after federal funding becomes better known.

TAPE 02-17, SIDE B
Number 2927

MR. RUSH discussed Item 69 ["State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC): Establish a mobile SECC that can be moved out of harm's way and used as an alternate local Emergency Operations Center for communities on the road system; Reconfigure and expand available workstations at the SECC for increased operational efficiency"]. He explained that currently the only alternate facility is an unsatisfactory wooden, 20-by-16-foot building adjacent to the armory at Fort Richardson. Although several alternatives have been considered in the past, none have proven feasible.

MR. RUSH offered the belief that a mobile SECC is feasible, however. He said this item is for a self-contained, state-of-the-art facility including a complete communications package; it could be used as an alternate SECC, could be used anywhere along a road system to provide a satellite SECC, could be used as an emergency operations center for a local jurisdiction that doesn't have one or that has one that has been destroyed or damaged, or could provide a command post for an incident-management team in support of a local jurisdiction.

MR. RUSH explained that this project also upgrades the primary SECC by raising the number of workstations from 24 to 44, to include computers. Although important, this component doesn't have the same priority as the office of homeland security or continuing the 24-hour-a-day [primary] SECC. He reported hearing of possible money through DOJ in federal FY 03 or FY 04 that might have portions earmarked for what are normally called "emergency operations centers"; he indicated if that is available, this item no longer would be requested from the state. In response to Chair Chenault, he said it's basically \$1.2 million for the alternate SECC and \$215,000 to upgrade the main facility.

Number 2760

MR. RUSH turned attention to Item 71 ["National Guard coordination in rural areas"]. He explained that the national

guard provides the basic foundation to respond to terrorist attacks or other disasters, especially in areas with little or no public-safety presence available immediately. Mentioning search capability, he cited as an example the rapid deployment of trained national guard personnel to fulfill the ongoing airport security role [instituted after September 11, 2001]. He said the goal is to strengthen recruitment-and-retention efforts in rural Alaska. Item 71 is to provide funding for a team to travel to these rural areas to reinforce positive attitudes toward the guard by emphasizing family safety, drug-demand reduction, programs for veterans, the military youth academy, national guard benefits, and opportunities for service.

Number 2710

MR. RUSH addressed Item 72 ["Weapons of Mass Destruction Training: Provide WMD training for the following: Incident management training to local emergency managers, first responders and DEC primary responders; Response training for 60-100 initial survey assessing personnel and to 25 response staff in DEC and DHSS"]. He said this would provide a wide variety of WMD training statewide; it includes training for local law enforcement personnel and state troopers, as well as response training for DEC and DHSS staff who are expected to go out immediately upon notification of an incident. It also would provide WMD-awareness training for local officials who normally aren't in the business of emergency management, including officials from hospitals, public schools, and public works agencies, as well as city administrators and elected officials. He noted that if future federal DOJ funding offsets this item, it will be withdrawn.

Number 2629

MR. RUSH discussed Item 73 ["Hazardous Materials Response Teams: Provide training, trucks and equipment for 2 new Level A HAZMAT teams in Valdez and in Juneau to service Southeast; provide Alaska specific detection, identification and safety equipment for 103d CST(WMD); and provide WMD advanced-level training for the Fairbanks HAZMAT team"]. He said one of the policy cabinet's most urgent recommendations was to create two new Level A teams, raising the total to four and providing a truly regional capability by positioning one team in Juneau and one in the Prince William Sound area. Currently, support for Southeast Alaska would have to come from Anchorage or Fairbanks.

MR. RUSH noted that if there is a need elsewhere in the state, DEC can call upon the team from Anchorage or Fairbanks, which are under contract with DEC, to be deployed, and then will reimburse that team. He pointed out that distance and weather somewhat limit the capability to respond in Southeast Alaska, however. Having four teams would provide a credible regional capability statewide. Mr. Rush specified that this item provides training and equipment for the teams; WMD-specific training for the Fairbanks team, which hasn't yet received that training; and arctic-specific equipment for the 103d [CST(WMD)] that just received federal certification.

Number 2493

CHAIR CHENAULT asked what the difference is between Level A training for the HAZMAT teams and the WMD advanced training.

MR. RUSH explained that the normal training received by the Level A hazardous materials teams is primarily for entering and performing operations in an environment contaminated by industrial chemicals of various types. The next level, the WMD level, is to provide training to be able to operate in an environment that might be contaminated by other kinds of chemical agents or biological agents.

Number 2440

MAJOR GENERAL OATES requested that Mr. Rush clarify how [DOJ] funding may affect Item 73. He mentioned a comprehensive statewide survey with regard to equipment for the two teams and for first responders; he requested confirmation that if this is coupled with the money from FEMA, [the department] may be able to carry a large portion of Items 72 and 73.

MR. RUSH concurred, noting two elements in Item 73: general funds and federal funds. He said the intent is to use DOJ funds - now restricted to first-responder equipment only - to outfit these two [new] teams. The remaining element is for training, and funds may be available in the federal FY 02 supplemental or FY 03 budget with which the state could offset the training component as well.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES pointed out that the federal government also is going through its [budget] process.

Number 2330

MR. RUSH briefly turned attention to Item 74 ["Secure trauma equipment and medical formulary for the 103d Civilian Support Team for Weapons of Mass Destruction (CST-WMD) -- federally funded; awaiting delivery"]. He noted that the equipment has already been received, and that this item was included to provide the whole picture and emphasize that other funding is available.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES added that the 103d [CST(WMD)], of all the teams in the nation, received the highest marks on its certification. It has full Level A HAZMAT capability. In addition to operating in a contaminated area, it can advise first responders about what actions should be taken, and can provide worldwide communication.

Number 2267

MR. RUSH discussed Item 75 ["Blood delivery, State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) staff assistance at New York, Disaster Policy Cabinet telecommunication and legal costs, and temporary SECC coordination position"]. He noted that this is for actual costs incurred as a direct result of the [the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001]. These resulted from the following: activation of the SECC; additional temporary Terrorism Disaster Policy Cabinet support staff; additional staff needed to complete the U.S. Department of Justice-mandated three-year domestic-preparedness strategy; and costs associated with blood-supply testing, since blood from the local blood bank in Anchorage needed to be tested in Seattle, Washington, within a short timeframe or it would have become unusable. The only aircraft permitted to fly immediately after the events of September 11, 2001, were military aircraft, he reminded members; the only viable option was national guard aircraft, and that is the lion's share of the cost.

Number 2201

MR. RUSH addressed Item 76 ["Grants to Local Emergency Planning Committees to develop all-hazards emergency plans"]. He said these apply to core all-hazard emergency-preparedness activities, including plans and training exercises, for 20 LEPCs. These committees will use the funds to complete, revise and update hazard analyses, capability assessments, emergency operations plans, and standard operating procedures; will be used for administrative support and travel for local meetings and quarterly statewide workshops; and can be - and are - used to support exercises. Many LEPCs have some level of all-hazard

exercise on a yearly basis, he reported. Noting that this is to provide funding for a level that is truly effective, so that communities served by these LEPCs are better prepared to respond to a WMD event or other disaster, he called LEPCs "the bedrock of our ability to accomplish local emergency preparedness throughout the state."

Number 2124

MR. RUSH turned attention to Item 77 ["U.S. Dept. of Justice community grant program for specialized equipment for first responders to terrorist events"]. He emphasized that the federal government is in a state of reaction at this point, too, and said different information is received almost daily about possible [federal] grants, primarily from CDC, DOJ, and FEMA, although the [U.S.] Department of Transportation also has a program for port-and-harbor security through a competitive grant process. Hence more is probably unknown than unknown about possible grants at the moment, although DHSS is in the process of applying for a CDC grant right now.

MR. RUSH said the \$769,000 - the total DOJ funding for federal FY 00 and FY 01 - is earmarked for first-responder equipment only; the [disaster policy cabinet] has directed it to "personal protective equipment" for law enforcement personnel statewide and to equipment for the Level A HAZMAT response teams in Valdez and Juneau. He raised the possibility of as much as \$2.6 million from DOJ through FEMA in FY 02; although it may be only for first-responder equipment, there may be some money for exercises. He also mentioned \$3.5 billion in the President's budget for federal FY 03 that possibly could be used for plans, training, and exercises, as well as equipment; possibly in federal FY 04 there would be a like amount for communications, emergency operations centers, and warning systems.

MR. RUSH went on to say that the amount of federal money coming into Alaska emphasizes the need for an office of homeland security to manage these grants, to make sure the state uses the opportunity, to make sure there is no duplication, and to ensure that no elements of the state's "homeland security posture" go uncovered.

Number 1939

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked how DMVA's plans dovetail or avoid conflicting with those of the private sector in Valdez, for

example. He said he didn't envision biological terrorism there, for example, because of the limited population.

MR. RUSH answered that this would be a Valdez team, the Level A hazardous materials team, composed of people from Valdez. He suggested the Fairbanks North Star Borough team as a good model; it includes personnel from the private sector, from volunteer fire departments, from the paid fire departments, and so forth - a wide variety of people for which the level of training required and the maintenance of training are very intense. He emphasized the need for a "committed base" of people, noting that smaller communities, in particular, cannot depend on one source of personnel for these teams. He said such a team certainly would have a plan for responding to an event in Valdez, but also would be included in the statewide plan for possible deployment to other locations.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES added that the private sector has no Level A HAZMAT capability for Valdez; it has limited capability to operate around hazardous materials, but not biological or chemical agents. He agreed with Representative Green that because of Valdez's low population density, possibly there would be no biological attack, but pointed out that a chemical attack perhaps could render the site unusable if there weren't the proper capability. He reiterated that deployable teams exist in Anchorage and Fairbanks and through [the 103d CST(WMD)], which is designed to operate in a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-explosive environment. However, regional capability would be highly valuable, he told members.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES concluded by thanking Mr. Rush for his hard work on behalf of Alaska, asking to talk to the committee at some point about some national initiatives, offering to provide any further information, and encouraging quick action to move HB 324 forward.

Number 1616

MIKE SCOTT, Chairman, Legislative Committee, Alaska Municipal League (AML); Municipality of Anchorage, speaking on behalf of the AML, told members the local level is where the action is. Mentioning some dialogue with Major General Oates the previous year, he nonetheless echoed concern expressed by Mayor Wuerch that people will pick up the phone and dial 911 [expecting assistance], and yet the state plan has little relative to that need. He mentioned \$18 million in "gaps" found [in Anchorage] after September 11, 2001. He requested the ability to sit down

with Major General Oates and then come back to the committee with recommendations that [affect and involve] the communities.

MR. SCOTT concurred that local communities are the bedrock of disaster planning, but said many local governments have far more gaps in response [capabilities] than the state does currently. Those needs have largely been left unaddressed, he told members. He said federal funding likely will meet only a portion of those needs, and suggested the need for an integrated approach through the legislature that moves this forward and allows communities to be effective partners. Mr. Scott said the list is long and that he could show members where a local counterpart should be considered, for example. He indicated the AML could prioritize, given the relative risks it sees, and has done initial risk assessments and has some idea of where the emphasis ought to be. He requested that the committee bring AML into the equation before the bill leaves this committee and goes to the House Finance Committee.

Number 1338

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN offered his understanding that "C-Plans" [contingency plans] approved by DEC bring in local individuals as well as state-trained or military personnel. He asked whether that has been looked at.

MR. SCOTT reported that one extremely effective thing the state used to do in working with local governments was to put together, through an annual grant program, emergency response plans; typically, there would be a requirement for at least one annual exercise, either a field or tabletop exercise. There also used to be a small component by which communities could obtain equipment when a gap was identified. "We have enough paper to choke a horse on ... how to respond to plans," he remarked, indicating there are sufficient people as well. However, the gap is in [what communities] put in their hands and actually do, he said.

MR. SCOTT noted that the state's plan in this document mentions utilities and airports as critical infrastructure to be protected. However, he challenged members to show him where utilities - other than in some "perimeter-type activity" - are receiving any hard security dollars. Pointing out that Anchorage alone has several million dollars' worth of identified needs and gaps, Mr. Scott suggested that such types of information haven't been brought to bear in this process. He said it would be a critical mistake to move forward a homeland

security package for the state without that piece, and offered to work with the committee toward that end.

Number 1109

CHAIR CHENAULT asked whether anyone else wished to testify; there was no response. He then asked whether Major General Oates had closing comments.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES explained that the basic thrust at both the national level and the state level is to reinforce first responders in training, exercises, and equipment; this has been coordinated not only through the SERC [State Emergency Response Commission] process, but also through weekly teleconferences in which mayors statewide were invited to join in. He said there were two items for which Anchorage chose to submit its own request, rather than participating in this one, but that it doesn't mean [DMVA isn't totally supportive of Anchorage]. He said one challenge, however, is to decide how to spread capabilities across the entire state.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES mentioned a workshop in Anchorage for assessing WMD risk and public health [needs], as well as a WMD status report to U.S. Senator Ted Stevens; he said the latter is an area in which Anchorage decided to go on its own, in addition to a report to the governor. In addition, he said he'd offered to sit down with the AML or any of the mayors to ensure that their needs are "captured." He reiterated his understanding that the majority of federal funding will go to first responders. One reason for the need for proper staff is to ensure that the department can work across the state to figure out where best to put that money, he added.

MAJOR GENERAL OATES, calling this a work in progress, emphasized urgency in moving this package forward and offered to show what has been spent and its impact; areas in which if money isn't spent, there will be a direct impact in loss of federal dollars or loss of the possible use of some facilities; and what the department perceives as its "major impact areas." Furthermore, he suggested the need to follow the steps of New York after September 11, 2001, in adopting an emergency management assistance compact. He mentioned that there are other related pieces of legislation, and said [DMVA] is working aggressively on the national level as well. Suggesting that nationwide funding shouldn't be linked to a population threshold, he also mentioned that a competitive grant process isn't fair to all cities. He suggested that everything should reinforce the

federal response plan, which reinforces the capability of first responders, and pointed out that Alaska's homeland security funding hasn't increased when compared with the huge increase at the national level.

Number 0707

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked why Anchorage decided to go it alone [on some items].

MAJOR GENERAL OATES replied that [Anchorage] has been effective doing that, and that he applauded Mayor Wuerch and the municipality for Anchorage's terrific emergency management program. He observed that everything which strengthens Anchorage strengthens the state's biggest city and the state's ability to respond to weapons of mass destruction.

Number 0551

MR. SCOTT, speaking on behalf of the Municipality of Anchorage, pointed out that committee packets contain at least two letters from Mayor Wuerch, one addressing the governor regarding "the state package." He said the municipal package put forth [by the state] to the congressional delegation was done not because the municipality didn't want to participate in the state plan; rather, it was because the dialogue was not thorough. In looking out for the community's best interest, therefore, the mayor had initiated this. He reiterated the request for the opportunity to sit down and see how the legislature's plan incorporates local and state needs in the same package.

Number 0388

MAJOR GENERAL OATES asked when he could expect some guidance on Chair Chenault's intentions.

CHAIR CHENAULT said he would talk to him before the coming Thursday. [HB 324 was held over.]

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.