

**§ 195a. Emergency communications interoperability research and development**

**(a) In general**

The Under Secretary for Science and Technology, acting through the Director of the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility, shall establish a comprehensive research and development program to support and promote—

(1) the ability of emergency response providers and relevant government officials to continue to communicate in the event of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters; and

(2) interoperable emergency communications capabilities among emergency response providers and relevant government officials, including by—

(A) supporting research on a competitive basis, including through the Directorate of Science and Technology and Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency; and

(B) considering the establishment of a Center of Excellence under the Department of Homeland Security Centers of Excellence Program focused on improving emergency response providers' communication capabilities.

**(b) Purposes**

The purposes of the program established under subsection (a) include—

(1) supporting research, development, testing, and evaluation on emergency communication capabilities;

(2) understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the public safety communications systems in use;

(3) examining how current and emerging technology can make emergency response providers more effective, and how Federal, State, local, and tribal government agencies can use this technology in a coherent and cost-effective manner;

(4) investigating technologies that could lead to long-term advancements in emergency communications capabilities and supporting research on advanced technologies and potential systemic changes to dramatically improve emergency communications; and

(5) evaluating and validating advanced technology concepts, and facilitating the development and deployment of interoperable emergency communication capabilities.

**(c) Definitions**

For purposes of this section, the term “interoperable”, with respect to emergency communications, has the meaning given the term in section 578 of this title.

(Pub. L. 107–296, title III, § 315, as added Pub. L. 109–295, title VI, § 673(a), Oct. 4, 2006, 120 Stat. 1443.)

**§ 195b. National Biosurveillance Integration Center**

**(a) Establishment**

The Secretary, acting through the Assistant Secretary for the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office, shall establish, operate, and

maintain a National Biosurveillance Integration Center (referred to in this section as the “NBIC”), which shall be headed by a Directing Officer, under an office or directorate of the Department that is in existence as of August 3, 2007.

**(b) Primary mission**

The primary mission of the NBIC is to—

(1) enhance the capability of the Federal Government to—

(A) rapidly identify, characterize, localize, and track a biological event of national concern by integrating and analyzing data relating to human health, animal, plant, food, and environmental monitoring systems (both national and international); and

(B) disseminate alerts and other information to Member Agencies and, in coordination with (and where possible through) Member Agencies, to agencies of State, local, and tribal governments, as appropriate, to enhance the ability of such agencies to respond to a biological event of national concern; and

(2) oversee development and operation of the National Biosurveillance Integration System.

**(c) Requirements**

The NBIC shall detect, as early as possible, a biological event of national concern that presents a risk to the United States or the infrastructure or key assets of the United States, including by—

(1) consolidating data from all relevant surveillance systems maintained by Member Agencies to detect biological events of national concern across human, animal, and plant species;

(2) seeking private sources of surveillance, both foreign and domestic, when such sources would enhance coverage of critical surveillance gaps;

(3) using an information technology system that uses the best available statistical and other analytical tools to identify and characterize biological events of national concern in as close to real-time as is practicable;

(4) providing the infrastructure for such integration, including information technology systems and space, and support for personnel from Member Agencies with sufficient expertise to enable analysis and interpretation of data;

(5) working with Member Agencies to create information technology systems that use the minimum amount of patient data necessary and consider patient confidentiality and privacy issues at all stages of development and apprise the Privacy Officer of such efforts; and

(6) alerting Member Agencies and, in coordination with (and where possible through) Member Agencies, public health agencies of State, local, and tribal governments regarding any incident that could develop into a biological event of national concern.

**(d) Responsibilities of the Directing Officer of the NBIC**

**(1) In general**

The Directing Officer of the NBIC shall—