

AROUND THE WORLD: UNITED STATES

InterAgency Board Helps Against Emerging Threats

By Standard Coordination SubGroup (SCSG) of the InterAgency Board (IAB)

Often, first responders in the United States hear the comment, "We are from the Federal Government, and we're here to help". Since the 9/11 terrorist attack in New York City, New York, that comment has been said many times and is absolutely true; the United States federal government wants to help.

Many federal agencies have the resources to help state and local emergency responders but unfortunately do not know the specific needs and intricacies of how to help these responders.

Fostering Exchange of Information

Since 1998, the InterAgency Board (IAB) has been working to solve that problem. The IAB is a partnership of approximately 150 emergency response professionals, including first responders, federal employees and subject matter experts representing a wide array of technical expertise.

For 18 years, the chief mission of the IAB has been to "Strengthen the nation's ability to prepare for and respond safely and effectively to emergencies, disasters, and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive, (CBRNE) incidents". The IAB accomplishes this by fostering the exchange of information, knowledge, ideas and assistance, which results in greater interoperability and compatibility among local, state and federal response communities. Today, with the IAB serving as a collaborative interchange, state and local responders and the federal government can ask each other, "How can we work better together to solve our emergency response needs?"

6 Working Groups

The IAB is divided into six working subgroups with the Standards Coordination SubGroup (SCSG) having some of the greatest impact on first responders. Like the other subgroups,

the SCSG is comprised of state/local first responders and federal personnel, but unlike the other subgroups, SCSG is heavily represented by standards development organizations (SDO's), certification bodies, and testing laboratory subject matter experts. These experts assist and guide the SCSG in the processes of advocating for and spearheading the development of new standards, test protocols, and training requirements for law enforcement equipment.

For the purposes of this discussion, law enforcement standards are quality or performance criteria for law enforcement materials, products, processes and services that consistently ensure they are "fit" for their stated purpose. The standards law enforcement usually deals with are performance standards, product standards, performance specifications, design specifications and test methods.

These standards are critical because they guide responders with equipment procurements and promote an understanding between buyers and sellers. A product's conformance to an accepted standard provides an efficient method of ensuring that a product meets the purchaser's minimum requirements.

Setting Standards

Currently, the SCSG is working with the federal government and Standards Development Organizations (SDO) to start the development of a number of standards that will have a positive effect on law enforcement officer safety and operations on a daily basis, including the following:

- Non-pneumatic limb tourniquets
- Bomb suits, addressing blast overpressure protection
- Explosive containment vessels
- Less lethal chemical agent devices
- Less lethal conducted energy devices
- Less lethal distraction devices
- Less lethal impact devices using a launching system to fire projectiles

- Standard guidance for illicit substance detection
- Standard practices, test methods, and procedures for monitoring effectiveness of protective clothing doffing for avoidance of contamination transfer

Last year the SCSG identified the following needed standards and is actively involved in their development for law enforcement:

- Robot operator use and evaluations.
- Tactical operation video cameras.
- Body worn video devices
- Protective gloves
- Protective helmets and shields
- Standard test method for female body armor

Proactive to National, International Trends

Overall the IAB seeks to be the trusted source for the emergency responders concerning standards, policies, practices, training, equipment, research and development. The goal of the IAB is to be the U.S. law enforcement's authoritative representative regarding operational knowledge and technical expertise when developing standards that will make an officer's job safer and more efficient.

The IAB is committed to being proactive in their approach to national and global trends that affect the law enforcement response community. As this collaboration between the IAB and law enforcement grows, the representatives of all the response disciplines in the IAB will continue to help law enforcement adapt to emerging trends so everyone is better prepared to address any new threats to law enforcement.

If you or your agency wants to discuss the above standards or have suggestions for additional standards contact info@interagencyboard.us.

To learn more about the United States of America IAB visit their website at <https://interagencyboard.org>. **WP**