Advanced Topics in Hazard Prediction

The Biodefense Policy Landscape Tool (B-PLAT): A Resource to Inform Decision Makers on Interagency Roles and Responsibilites Related to BW Attacks

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Following the events of 9-11, the USG have enacted multiple biodefense polices, practices, and programs, where a wide variety of agencies have both single and joint roles and responsibilities across the spectrum from threat assessment to recovery, making it challenging to assess the actor responsible for a given requirement, especially in response to a biological attack. Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, in an effort to increase understanding of requirements, roles, and responsibilities along the biodefense policy continuum, undertook an internally funded effort to map these activities to one or more USG agency. The resulting tool, the Biodefense Policy Landscape Analysis Tool (https://bplat.pnnl.gov/), captures over 400 responsibilities in US Code and Presidential Directives , identifying the specific requirement and role of a given agency to respond to an intentional biological attack. Furthermore, to enhance warfighter preparedness and response to decision making following an intention biological release, the B-PLAT can be utilizing during biological weapons table top exercises to assist decision makers in identifying key Department of Defense requirements, the specific agencies, and their roles. While this tool is specific to biological agents, the tool's platform can be utilized for other threat agents, including chemical and radiological/nuclear, to provide clear situational awareness, foster improved understanding to requirements, and enable enhanced overall hazard protection, prediction, and response.