

## **Case Study for the State of Maine (facilitated the creation of a homeland security strategy for the state soon after 9/11)**

### ***Profile***

The responsibility for homeland security in Maine fell to Major General John Tinkham, head of both the Maine State National Guard and the Maine Emergency Management Agency.

[http://www.maine.gov/mema/homeland/home\\_vision.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/mema/homeland/home_vision.shtml)

### ***External Situation***

AT the time the new federal Department of Homeland Security was established in response to the terror attacks of 9/11, neither Maine, where two 9/11 terrorists entered the airline system, nor any other state had a strategy for homeland security. The whole issue of terrorism internal to Maine had not been given any more than perfunctory attention since World War II, when Mainers apprehended German spies landed on the coast via U Boat.

### ***Organizational Situation***

Maine was not prepared to deal with terrorism.

### ***Solution***

Recognizing the situation in Maine, we submitted an unsolicited proposal to create a strategic plan for homeland security for the state to then Governor Angus King via General Tinkham. The Governor accepted our approach.

We proposed to use a unique process that conformed to the requirements for wise decision-making as applied to politically sensitive initiatives. To meet the requirement for inclusiveness, the consultants worked with the General to recruit credible representatives for every constituency likely to be touched by homeland security. The group that was ultimately convened ranged from small town fire chiefs, local and state police, business owners, public health bureaucrats and health workers, the State's Attorney General, a deputy secretary of the federal Department of Homeland Security, newspaper editors, the Coast Guard, MEMA, to State legislators. In all, 81 people convened to represent roughly 100 constituencies.

Over four days, using software developed by the consultants, the participants created a vision, strategic objectives, strategic priorities, identified strategic and tactical constraints to achieving the vision and set out an agenda for action complete with defined measures of success.

### ***Benefit***

Governor King adopted the plan that emerged at the end of the four day meeting without modification. The plan was highly regarded throughout the state and nationally. The Maine Emergency Management Agency immediately began implementing it.

Maine's plan antedated by almost a year a remarkably similar one produced by the Department of Homeland Security for the nation as a whole. The Governor's plan came together quickly—concept to start of implementation took about five months. The actual planning took four days. The proposed approach was so transparent that it successfully surmounted initial partisan attacks that included the threat of a legislative boycott. It was so powerful that it led to a revelation that contradicted a critical pre-conception shared by most of the participants. Almost everyone attending thought that the primary bottleneck to achieving security was a lack of funding for "first responders." Through the synthesis of the many different perspectives of the participants, it was discovered that the real bottleneck was a lack of knowledge about the nature of potential threats. Finally, the plan was so compelling that even when the money promised by the federal government to fund it's execution was delayed for over a year, a new governor from a different political orientation took office, and FEMA funding in the State was reduced, it was still aggressively implemented.

This effort was so successful because our process fulfilled the requirements for wise decision-making: inclusiveness, independence of participants, diversity and synthesis. At the end of the four day process, every participant backed the conclusion of the whole. There was no minority opinion to undermine the effort. The press shifted from being aggressively hostile to the effort to highly laudatory.