



CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



ANNEX 3-27 HOMELAND OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION TO HOMELAND OPERATIONS

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The greatest responsibility of the federal government is protecting the American people.¹ As such, great emphasis is placed on [homeland security](#)—“a concerted national effort to prevent terrorist attacks within the US; reduce America’s vulnerability to terrorism, major disasters, and other emergencies; and minimize the damage and recover from attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies that do occur.”² The Department of Defense contributes to this aspect of national security by conducting [homeland defense](#) (HD) and [defense support of civil authorities](#) (DSCA), both supported by [emergency preparedness](#) (EP).

Operating within the homeland is not the same as homeland operations. Though operating within the same geographic area of responsibility, Service Department activities undertaken to accomplish the Title 10, U.S. Code (U.S.C.), and responsibilities to organize, train and equip forces are not considered within the purview of the homeland operations construct.

For the Air Force, homeland operations is the umbrella construct through which it supports HD and DSCA. It incorporates all operations planning and execution designed to detect, preempt, respond to, mitigate, and recover from the full spectrum of incidents and threats to the homeland, whether man-made or natural. The geographic homeland boundaries include the 50 states, four territories, and numerous island possessions.³ The US also enjoys exclusive sovereignty 12 nautical miles out to sea and exercises responsibilities extending 200 nautical miles from the coast.⁴

In summary, homeland security is a national objective to protect people and territories.⁵ The Air Force supports this objective via homeland operations: HD and DSCA.

¹ [National Security Strategy](#)

² [National Strategy for Homeland Security](#), October 2007

³ The territories and insular possessions of the United States are enumerated in Title 48, U.S. Code (U.S.C).

⁴ The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to which the United States is a signatory, establishes the 12 nautical mile limit for territorial waters and the 200 nautical mile limit for an exclusive economic zone.

⁵ [National Security Strategy and the National Health Security Strategy and Implementation Plan](#)