



**Homeland  
Security**

Science and Technology

# Highlight

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**



System Assessment and Validation for Emergency Responders

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established the System Assessment and Validation for Emergency Responders (SAVER) Program to assist emergency responders making procurement decisions.

Located within the Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) of DHS, the SAVER Program conducts objective assessments and validations on commercial equipment and systems, and provides those results along with other relevant equipment information to the emergency response community in an operationally useful form. SAVER provides information on equipment that falls within the categories listed in the DHS Authorized Equipment List (AEL). The SAVER Program mission includes:

- Conducting impartial, practitioner-relevant, operationally oriented assessments and validations of emergency responder equipment;
- Providing information that enables decision makers and responders to better select, procure, use, and maintain emergency responder equipment.

Information provided by the SAVER Program will be shared nationally with the responder community, providing a life- and cost-saving asset to DHS, as well as to federal, state, and local responders.

The SAVER Program is supported by a network of technical agents who perform assessment and validation activities. Further, SAVER focuses primarily on two main questions for the emergency responder community: "What equipment is available?" and "How does it perform?"

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## Guide for the Selection of Biological Agent Detection Equipment for Emergency First Responders

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, coupled with the havoc caused by the intentional dispersal of anthrax spores directed at highly visible targets, has attracted renewed attention regarding the potential for Biological Agents (BA) to be used as weapons of terror. Significant advances in the areas of molecular biology and biotechnology over the past quarter-century have made the tasks of detection and treatment of BA exposure all the more difficult.

The Office of Law Enforcement Standards at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, supported by the Department of Homeland Security, the Technical Support Working Group, the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical and Biological Center, and the Interagency Board for Equipment Standardization and Interoperability has developed a biological defense equipment selection guide.

*The Guide for the Selection of Biological Agent Detection Equipment for Emergency First Responders, 2nd Edition* focuses on areas of detection, personal protection, decontamination, and communication and was developed to assist the emergency responder community in the evaluation and purchase of BA detection equipment.

The guide may be found on the SAVER Web site at: <https://www.rkb.us/SAVER>. Visit the Web site for more information on the SAVER Program or to view additional reports on other technologies.