



**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 unbiased operational tests 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, and 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-saving 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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Radiation Pagers and Survey Meters

Radiation pagers and survey meters (Figure 1) provide the first line of defense when responding to a weapons of mass destruction incident. Radiation pagers are small alarming personal radiation detectors worn by personnel that provide visual, auditory, or vibrational alarm warning in the presence of elevated radiation. Radiation survey meters are portable, hand-held radiation detectors that can be used by emergency responders: law enforcement, fire fighters, hazmat team members, and healthcare professionals during interdiction or response to radiological incidents.

As a SAVER Technical Agent, the Nevada Test Site (NTS), operated by National Security Technologies (NST) was tasked by the DHS to conduct an assessment of radiation pagers and survey meters to provide impartial, practitioner-relevant, and operationally oriented assessments of detectors used by emergency responders to serve as a resource when purchasing this equipment. The *Radiation Pagers and Survey Meters—Performance Assessment Report* presents the findings of that assessment, which also includes focus group and market assessment information.

Other reports regarding radiation pagers and survey meters, including the *Radiation Pagers TechNote* and *Radiation Survey Meters TechNote*, are located on the SAVER program Web site at <https://www.rkb.us/saver>. Reports on other technologies may also be found on the Web site.



Figure 1. Radiation Pagers and Survey Meters