



**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 Detectors—Radiation Pagers

Radiation pagers are small alarming personal radiation detectors worn by personnel that provide visual, auditory, or vibrational alarm warnings in the presence of elevated radiation. Emergency responders, under certain conditions, may be in need of personal radiation detectors to warn of the presence of radioactive sources that may be illegally transported, deliberately placed, or dispersed to cause harm.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), through its Science and Technology Directorate, has adopted a series of standards for radiation and nuclear detection equipment. These standards were developed in partnership with DHS, the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST); the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Laboratories; the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Each standard describes and establishes design and performance criteria along with testing methods for various radiation and nuclear detection equipment.

Using these standards, testing of commercially available radiation pager equipment was performed by NIST to provide critical information regarding performance of such instruments which supports decision-making in procurement and implementation. The full report is available in the *Results of Test and Evaluation of Commercially Available Personal Alarming Radiation Detectors and Pagers for the Department of Homeland Security*.

Reports on radiation detectors and on other technologies are located on the SAVER program Web site at <https://www.rkb.us/saver>.