

Atlanta Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)



OVERVIEW

UASI, the Atlanta Urban Area Security Initiative, aims to provide a secure, prepared, and resilient Atlanta region by continuing to develop all-hazard planning and response capabilities that enable a safe and secure urban area for all residents and visitors.



About UASI

UASI was created in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks as one of the anti-terrorism programs authorized by the Homeland Security Act.

UASI is designed to provide enhanced federal preparedness funding to specific cities that were identified as vital to the Nation's economy and national security, and to encourage regional cooperation in emergency preparedness and response.

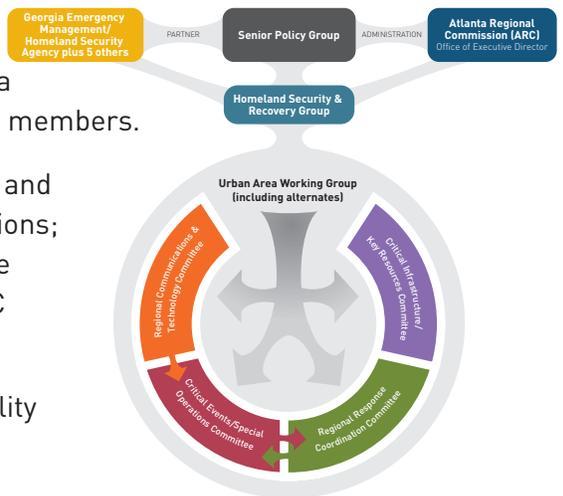
The City of Atlanta and its surrounding metro area is considered highly vulnerable, with the potential for major impact on the economy and nation should it be attacked and its infrastructure significantly damaged.

Governance & Operations

The **Senior Policy Group** serves as the overall governing body for the Atlanta UASI. It is comprised of the chief elected officials of the six jurisdictional members.

The **Urban Area Working Group** is represented by the police and fire chiefs, and the emergency management agency directors from each of the six jurisdictions; MARTA; the Centers for Disease Control; Grady Hospital; a senior K-12 state educational official; a senior State Public Health official; the director of ARC Aging and Independent Services; and a private sector member.

The **Atlanta Regional Commission** has operational management responsibility for the Atlanta UASI program.



WHAT WE DO

- » **Training and Exercises** – Provide enhanced preparedness training for law enforcement specialty teams (SWAT, EOD, Aviation, Tactical Field Officers, HazMat) and fire response specialty teams (CBRNE, WMD, EMS, E-911 dispatch, Search & Rescue) and others, including public health and cybersecurity professionals.
- » **Equipping First Responders** – Make targeted investments designed to strengthen existing capabilities and respond to new and emerging threats.
- » **Regional Planning Projects** – Conduct planning efforts that span UASI's five core mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery) and the associated 32 Core Capabilities often including creating response protocols and mutual aid operational plans.
- » **Interoperability Communications and Plans** – Ensure the deployment of an efficient, routinely tested, and cost-effective command and control radio communication system among members; and enhance crisis information communications to enable first responders to communicate securely and seamlessly during crisis situations.
- » **Community Preparedness** – Revitalize the Citizen Corps program, allowing member jurisdictions to train and equip residents to lead their communities through emergencies and disasters by preparedness and resilience through programs that include Neighborhood Watch, Fire Corps, Volunteers in Policing, Community Emergency Response Teams, and Medical Reserve Corps.

Providing a Safer, More Secure Atlanta Region

Providing first responders with state-of-the-art equipment

Atlanta UASI has equipped local agencies with the tools they need to respond to emergency situations. This includes:

- » Modernized and standardized video downlink systems and digital cameras for helicopters. This provides key aerial views to increase “situational awareness” during dynamic and potentially dangerous events.
- » State-of-the-art bomb robots and protective suits to better equip regional bomb technicians.
- » Other key equipment such as specialty vehicles for mobile command posts, active shooter ballistic vests and helmets for tactical rescue field medics, and ballistic anti-vehicle barriers.



Leading training sessions to prepare local agencies for major emergencies

Since 2016, Atlanta UASI has conducted 23 training sessions involving over 1,200 participants from the six UASI jurisdictional members as well as state and other local partners.

UASI has also held specialized training in advance of major events, such as the Super Bowl and Final Four. This includes area command operations, structural collapse and certification, joint hazard response teams, stop the bleed train-the-trainer training, multi-assault counterterrorism training for SWAT teams, and rapid response training for regional tactical field officers.

Conducting immersion sessions to strengthen community partnership and understanding

Atlanta UASI in 2019 coordinated an innovative public safety immersion session, an innovative community engagement partnership of Atlanta UASI, the Interfaith Community Initiatives, and the Atlanta Masjid of Al-Islam.

This enabled leaders to spend two days giving public safety officials exposure to ethnic communities, religions, customs, and traditions that are now a vital part of the metro Atlanta landscape. This proactive approach of establishing greater familiarity among community leaders and public safety officials builds mutual support for preventing bias motivated confrontations.

Immersion can build trust by:

- » Establishing networks among diverse communities
- » Encouraging self-awareness and decreasing anxiety
- » Aiding in closing public safety’s recruitment gap
- » Creating a safe space for open and honest dialogue
- » Preventing the targeting or labeling of communities
- » Advancing the whole of communities.

