

Department of Defense Fact Sheet: Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction

On 30 June 2014, the Department of Defense released its Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD). This strategy rescinds and replaces the 2006 National Military Strategy for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The new strategy seeks to ensure that the United States and its allies and partners are neither attacked nor coerced by hostile actors with weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

It outlines three *end states*:

- No WMD possession
- No WMD use
- Minimization of WMD effects

Four priority *objectives* define a comprehensive response to the WMD challenge and focus on shaping the environment, cooperating with partners, and prioritizing early action:

- Reduce incentives to pursue, possess, and employ WMD
- Increase barriers to the acquisition, proliferation, and use of WMD
- Manage WMD risks emanating from hostile, fragile, or failed states and safe havens
- Deny the effects of current and emerging WMD threats through layered, integrated defenses

These objectives are achieved through three *lines of effort*:

- Prevent acquisition - to ensure that those not possessing WMD do not obtain them
- Contain and reduce threats - to address the risks posed by existing WMD
- Respond to crises - to manage and resolve complex WMD crisis through activities and operations

To ensure the success of the strategy, the department must execute three sets of *activities to*:

- Synchronize CWMD efforts, incorporating them into broader plans and activities and leverage enabling capabilities
- Engage in foundational activities to maintain and expand technical expertise, and cooperate with partners
- Support specialized tasks and capabilities to identify and counter WMD threats as well as manage consequences of WMD use

Recognizing that fiscal constraints require DOD to make strategic choices, the strategy emphasizes the importance of cooperating with partners—including other U.S. departments and agencies, allies, and international bodies—to achieve CWMD goals. The department will also accept risk in areas where WMD use is implausible, infeasible, or would have limited effects so that resources can be focused on enhancing flexible response capabilities tailored to the most likely and operationally significant threats.

Click [here](#) for the Defense of Defense Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction.