

Mark I. Thompson
Deputy Coordinator for Operations
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Mark Thompson has served in the Department of State since 1996, first as a Marine Officer, and now as the Deputy Coordinator for Operations (deputy assistant secretary equivalent). In 2008 he entered the senior executive service (SES).

In his current capacity, he leads a 35-member team of civil servants, Foreign Service, active duty and reserve military as well as contractors in addressing some of the nation's most complex counterterrorism challenges. He ensures sensitive CT proposals are fully vetted with senior Department of State leaders prior to President approval. He leads the development and implementation of hostage policy, and works closely with foreign governments to develop options that support a no-concessions strategy. His team also represents the Department in the Technical Support Working Group, which fuses the resources of all agencies of government as well as foreign partners to develop technical solutions to emerging terrorist threats. He led in the establishment of the Hostage Working Group in the US Embassy in Baghdad in 2004 to develop innovative methods to safely recover U.S. and allied hostages. Mark has also led Department of State efforts in returning indicted terrorists to stand trial in the United States.

Additionally, he is responsible for leading and deploying the NSC-directed Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST) in support of U.S. Chiefs of Mission in anticipation of, or in response to, terrorist events impacting U.S. government interests overseas. The FEST is comprised of interagency CT expertise from throughout government. In this capacity he has deployed in response to the 1998 East Africa Embassy bombings, 2000 bombing of the USS Cole, Hostage recovery efforts in Latin America, SE Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Prior to retiring from the Marine Corps, Mark was an infantry officer serving in deployed units from all four Marine Corps Divisions, as well as service with special operations organizations in Colombia and the Western Pacific.