



SECURE & PREPARED

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Special points of interest:

- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is conducting a comprehensive review of the current National Response Plan and National Incident Management System and wants your feedback. See page 3.
- HSEMD will conduct a workshop for local government public information officers on March 27. See page 4.
- HSEMD will host a Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program Train-the-Trainer course March 6-9 See page 5.

Save the dates July 16-18 for this year's Fourth Annual Governor's Homeland Security Conference!

HSEMD to Conduct Assessment of Interoperable Communications

The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency management Division (HSEMD) is finalizing a contract with CTA Communications of Lynchburg, Virginia to conduct a statewide feasibility assessment for interoperable communications. This project will ascertain the current state of public safety communications within Iowa and provide a plan on how the entire state public safety community can move towards a statewide interoperable communication system.

Interoperability is viewed as the ability for public safety and public services to talk, share data, and share video in real time, on demand, when needed, and when authorized. While there are local and regional projects that have been developed and are operational, this is the first step in a statewide effort to quantify the problem and seek a solution. The feasibility study and plan are scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2007.

The study is expected to provide the needed information to move forward with technology to support interoperability as well as the required funding initiatives. A second component is the creation of a governance structure to support a statewide system. Presently, the General Assembly is working on House File 33 which looks to address the need for a formal governance structure.

In the next few weeks, HSEMD will conduct a series of kickoff meetings to provide greater detail on how the feasibility process will move forward and how the local communications managers can participate and assist in the process.

Iowa's Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan Approved

FEMA recent approval of Iowa's Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan under Section 322 of the Stafford Act ensures that Iowa is eligible to receive an additional 25 percent in Federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding in the event of a federally declared disaster in Iowa. In Iowa, more than 93 percent of HMGP funding historically is passed through to support projects in communities and counties, so the primary impact of additional funding will be more funding to support local hazard mitigation projects in Iowa.

The additional benefit of the enhanced plan is achieved by developing a plan that demonstrates Iowa's overall capability to develop and sustain integrated mitigation planning at the local and state level. Iowa's local hazard mitigation planning initiative, beginning in 1996 and continuing under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 standards, has engaged the participation of more than 600 communities and counties and this effort played a large role in Iowa's ability to meet the enhanced standards. *(Continued on page 2)*

Iowa's Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan Approved

Continued from page 1

In addition to aggressive mitigation planning, the Enhanced Plan criteria requires integration of the plan with other types of state planning requirements, increased capacity and demonstrated capability for effectively managing federal grant funding and the ability to track and measure performance outcomes of completed mitigation projects.

Hazard mitigation planning is a constant cycle of evaluating hazards and associated risks and development of measures to reduce those risks. As such, Iowa is in the process of updating this plan with an anticipated completion date of June 1, 2007. The current plan can be found by going to the Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) Web site at http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/asp/programs/hazard_mitig.asp.

Listening

By HSEMD Administrator, David L. Miller



There is an old Mark Twain adage that goes something like this -- If God had intended us to talk more than listen, he would have given us two mouths and one ear. Well, as you might imagine, I've been listening intently for the past several weeks for a phone call from the office of Governor Culver affirming my reappointment to this job I love so much.

I was lucky enough to get that call and I want to thank all who have helped me grow professionally and personally in this position over the past few years. I started to make a list of the people and organizations that have helped me during my tenure here with the intent of publishing it in this newsletter, but it quickly became apparent that it is too long for this publication. Let me just offer a sincere thanks to all who are part of this great homeland security and emergency management community.

The call came only because of the work that you've performed and the call is an affirmation of the direction we've established together, which brings me back to listening.

In the push and pull of our professional lives, with the pressures and deadlines we face, it is too easy to forget to listen. I pledge to you that I will put listening at the top of my list. It is only by opening our ears that we can have a chance of understanding each other and continuing to move forward, together.

Thanks again for your help. I look forward to working with all of you.

2007 NIMS Requirements for Coordinators

HSEMD will be sending out a document concerning the conference call that was held the week of January 8. There was much concern about who needs to take the ICS 300 and 400 level courses. After conferring with the NIMS Information Center about emergency management coordinators needing to take these courses to maintain NIMS compliancy, (which is needed to be eligible for EMPG funds) the answer we received was that emergency management coordinators will need to take these courses.

Review and Revision of the NRP and NIMS

Provided by FEMA Region VII

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is conducting a comprehensive review of the current National Response Plan (NRP) and National Incident Management System (NIMS) to assess their effectiveness, identify improvements, and reissue the documents. FEMA and the DHS Preparedness Directorate are co-chairing this effort. The process is being conducted in four phases to include a prioritization of key issues, rewrite process, promulgation and roll-out of the revised documents, and a continuous cycle of training, exercising, and periodic review.

DHS is seeking participation from all levels of stakeholders to include internal DHS components and other federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, non-governmental and private sector partners. Some inputs on key issues have already been gathered from after action reports, Hurricane Katrina reports, exercise hot washes, meetings, and various other resources; however, input is still being sought by working groups assigned to review key issues being used as the basis for NIMS and NRP review. Inputs will be forwarded to the national work groups being formed to begin the rewrite process.

To view the key NRP and NIMS issues and other information go to www.dhs.gov/nrp. Click the link in the right hand column labeled "In the Spotlight." On the right side under "stakeholder meetings" click either the October 25 or the November 9 link. You can make an input directly to the national level at nrp.nims@dhs.gov. Inputs will be considered on key issues throughout the rewrite process.

When completed, the drafts of the NIMS and NRP will be posted for comment at the same DHS Web site above. There will be two comment periods for both documents. The first comment period for the NIMS document is February 1-19. The first comment period for the NRP is March 12-30. Comments can be made directly to the national level at the e-mail address above.

Alternately, you may forward any comments through FEMA Region VII at R7-NRP-Review@dhs.gov.

FSTB to Host Winter Fire School

As some of you know, the Fire Service Training Bureau will be hosting a Winter Fire School February 10-11 at the Scheman Building in Ames.

County emergency management coordinators, Rich Mahaney, Linn County and Dave Morlan, Boone County will be presenting workshops. There are other workshops and classes during the two-day school that would be of interest to first responders, hazmat personnel and LEPC members.

For more information and to download the brochure, go to www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb/conferences.shtml.

Need a Speaker for Your Next Meeting?

If you are part of an organization that brings in speakers, HLSEM would like to come and deliver a message about the steps that have been taken since the 9-11 attacks and the role the public has to play to prepare for all types of disasters. Whether it's civic groups or church organizations, we'll be happy to come and tell our story to any organization, anywhere in the state.

To find out more, or to call and make a request, contact Lucinda Robertson at 515-725-3239 or e-mail Lucinda at Lucinda.Robertson@iowa.gov.

HSEMD Offers Local PIO Workshop

In recognition of the need to ensure better and more-timely communication between agency public information staffs, HSEMD will conduct a workshop for local government public information officers (PIOs) on March 27 in Des Moines.

Chris Kramer from Argonne National Laboratory's Risk Communication Program will lead the workshop. Chris has presented on PIO issues at the annual homeland security conference the past couple of years. Chris will focus on the Joint Information System (JIS) and Joint Information Center (JIC) for this workshop, giving participants a picture of how they work, and how we all work together within the JIS. As important as those items are, just getting to know each other and building those important relationships will be a significant result of the workshop as well.

HSEMD is inviting one PIO from each county to attend the workshop. County emergency management coordinators are being asked to submit the name and contact information for their primary PIO by Jan. 26. If space permits, invitations to the workshop will be extended to additional local public information staff, so contact information for alternate PIOs will be welcomed.

PIO contact information, along with questions, maybe submitted to Lucinda Robertson at Lucinda.Robertson@iowa.gov. Please include the name, organization, phone number, and e-mail address of your PIO contact(s).

Severe Weather Awareness Planning Underway



Once again, HSEMD is joining the National Weather Service to promote Severe Weather Awareness Week, April 2-6. A tornado drill will be held from 10-10:30 on April 4. In case of bad weather, the drill will be moved to April 5.

Topics for the week include:
Mon: NOAA Weather Radios
Tue: Severe Thunderstorms
Wed: Tornadoes (Tornado Drill)
Thurs: Family Preparedness
Fri: Flooding

HSEMD plans to run public service announcements on radio statewide during Severe Weather Awareness Week to promote preparedness information on www.BeReadyIowa.org and to promote a drawing for 30 NOAA weather radios featured on this Web site.

County coordinators: Look for more information the end of February/beginning of March concerning posters, a press release and other information for your use.

Also, please note that National Flood Safety Week will be held March 19-23. More information can be found at www.floodsafety.noaa.gov.

Link Added for Listing of Vendors on State Contract

A new, helpful link when ordering equipments and services has been added to the Grants section of the HSEMD Web site under Miscellaneous, which gives a listing of vendors on state contract:

http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/asp/CoEM_FR/grant/index.asp

HSEEP Train-the-Trainer Course to Be Held in Ames

HSEMD will host a Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Train-the-Trainer course March 6-9 at Iowa State University's Scheman Center in Ames. The course will be taught by the Federal Office of Grants & Training.

We have reserved four seats for each Homeland Security region. In addition, regional staff from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Homeland Security Grant Program are invited to attend. State agencies are also invited to fill a limited number of slots. Multiple discipline participation is encouraged – this course is not only for emergency management, but all response disciplines.

There are a total of 50 seats for the course and HSEMD would like to fill this course – it is the only Train-the-Trainer that Iowa is scheduled to receive. Please contact HSEMD's Beth Gathercole at beth.gathercole@hsem.state.ia.us or 515-725-3204 if your region needs more seats or if your region will not need all four seats.

HSGP FFY05 and FFY06 funds may be used to pay for this training. This anticipated training was part of the NIMS/NRP Implementation Decision Package submissions. Registration for the course will be on HSEMD's Web site - hls.extension.iastate.edu/calendar/.

HSEMD and DPS to Hold Fusion System Training

HSEMD and the Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS) will be holding training conferences on the Iowa Fusion System: *Managing Information & Ensuring Security*. The training conferences are designed to facilitate information management among all levels of government and the private sector.

The recently released *Information Sharing Environment Implementation Plan*, which can be found at <http://www.ise.gov/docs/ISE-impplan-200611.pdf>, sets out a roadmap for facilitating timely and appropriate information sharing. Although the rule is that information should be shared widely, some information sharing is restricted because it is legally prohibited, procedurally restricted, or operationally unacceptable. This training conference addresses both the legal and the practical issues involved in effective information sharing.

The information will be of special interest to federal/state/local law enforcement, emergency managers, security managers, business executives, homeland security specialists, public administrators, and infrastructure specialists. Each session is regionally focused. Please register for the session assigned to your LEIN region:

LEIN map: <http://www.dps.state.ia.us/commis/intell/lein/structure.htm>

Session #1: LEIN Regions 1 & 4, Tuesday, March 13th, 2007

Location: Iowa Western Community College, Loof Hall, Council Bluffs

Session #2: LEIN Regions 2 & 5, Friday March 16th, 2007

Location: Joint Forces HQ, Enhanced Classroom, Johnston

Session #3: LEIN Regions 3 & 6, Monday March 19th, 2007

Location: Kirkwood Community College, Iowa Hall, Cedar Rapids

To register for this event, go to <http://hls.extension.iastate.edu/calendar>. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Participants are responsible for their own hotel and travel arrangements. For questions, contact Jeff McKinney at 515-323-4312, Roxann Ryan at 515-281-8109, or e-mail tipp@iowa.gov.

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HSEMD Mission

Lead, coordinate, and support homeland security and emergency management functions in order to establish sustainable communities and ensure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

We're on the Web!

www.iowahomelandsecurity.org

ICIU Offers Interpretation Services

The Iowa Council for International Understanding (ICIU) has been providing interpretation and translation services in Iowa for over 30 years. With over 150 interpreters and translators who speak more than 30 languages and dialects, ICIU has helped private companies, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and individuals overcome language barriers with their clients.

In addition to a professional fee-for-service program, ICIU offers emergency services for medical, social service, law enforcement, and emergency management personnel for life and death situations. This free service is available a 24 hours/seven days a week due to funding from the United Way.

More than 90 percent of ICIU's interpreters and translators are native speakers with work and life experience in their native country and in the U.S. This allows ICIU to provide not only the language expertise but also the cultural aspects of communication which are essential for successful interactions with people from different countries and cultures.

To use the service, call 515-282-8269, ext. 16. During business hours, calls should be directed to Colin Peterson. After hours, the overnight emergency phone number is on the voicemail system. Service is dependent upon the availability of an interpreter.

Ethanol Spill Emergency Training Coming

Hands-on training for transportation emergencies will return to Iowa next year.

The Iowa Transcaer® Ethanol Training Tour is tentatively scheduled for April 2008. The training tour will provide hands-on training using actual rail and truck equipment, focusing on ethanol. The tour is expected to stop at multiple cities around the state during a three week period. Although specific stops on the tour are not yet determined, you can expect a training session near you.

"We are excited about bringing this training program to emergency responders across the state," said Rodney Tucker, Iowa Transcaer® state coordinator. "With ethanol being a major commodity in Iowa, we feel it is important to be able to respond to environmental incidents including ethanol."

This will be the second recent training tour to come to Iowa to train emergency responders on transportation related incidents. Iowa hosted a training tour in October 2005 that stopped at seven major Iowa cities. That tour was based on general rail and highway hazmat incidents, where the 2008 tour will focus on the ethanol transportation industry.

"This program will provide the information and guidance responders and community leaders need to manage and contain hazardous materials incidents and safely restore transportation and other essential services," Tucker said.

For more information, visit www.transcaer.org or contact Rodney Tucker at 515-725-0387 or rodney.tucker@dnr.state.ia.us.