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IMR GROUP

EDITOR'S NOTES

By James D. Hessman, Editor-in-Chief

Usually, when the members of the U.S. House and Senate go home for their annual summer "recess," as it is euphemistically called, they may take a well-deserved vacation break, but they also spend as much time as possible meeting with constituents, participating in various fundraising events, and – particularly in even-numbered years – campaigning for reelection.

This year will be no exception. But it *will* be an exceptional year. The American people are troubled. About the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. About the continuing threat posed by international terrorism. About the new and rapidly escalating conflict in Lebanon between Israel and the Hezbollah. About Iran's nuclear program, and about the weapons and financial support apparently being provided to the Hezbollah by both Iran and Syria.

There are many pressing domestic concerns as well. Higher gas prices represent only the tip of the iceberg. The national debt and the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit both continue to increase annually at an alarming rate, and a day of reckoning may be postponed, but it cannot be put off indefinitely. Meanwhile, looming just over the horizon are several other economic disasters waiting to happen – namely, the colossal unfunded deficits in Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

This year, fortunately or unfortunately – depending on one's point of view – there is another major issue of vital concern to the American people: illegal immigration. Numerous polls and surveys show that a very high percentage of Americans are seriously worried about border security. They may be personally sympathetic to the hopes and aspirations of individual immigrants, but they also recognize that the virtually unimpeded influx of illegal migrants, particularly through this nation's porous southern border with Mexico, has become a clear and present danger to U.S. national security. It also has caused significant economic problems in a number of states and large cities, and in some jurisdictions has led to an increase in crime as well.

Because they have not held their elected representatives responsible, the American people themselves are at least partly responsible for the immigration "problem," as it is generically described. The members of Congress deserve a greater share of the blame, though, because they have ignored the illegal-migration issue for so long, and have been so hesitant in facing admittedly unpleasant truths, that what was once a nagging and easily ignored minor backache is now a full-blown malignancy threatening to destroy the U.S. body politic. Those members of the House and Senate who are running for reelection this year have a lot of explaining to do during their summer recess. They should do a lot of hard listening as well.

The greatest share of the blame, though, belongs to the presidents, of both major parties, who not only also have ignored the illegal-immigration problem but have, in addition, failed to adequately protect the nation's borders – which is *their* responsibility, not Congress's – and to enforce laws previously enacted that, despite some loopholes, might at least have reduced the scope and complexity of the problem. The nation's commander in chief and the members of his cabinet also have some serious explaining to do.

About the Cover: Police, firefighters, EMTs, security guards, utility personnel, construction workers, and hospital staff: all play crucial roles during response, rescue, and recovery phases of homeland security operations. Photo courtesy of MSA.

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The IMR Group, Inc. publishing DomesticPreparedness.com (DomPrep) since 1998 to integrate the diverse first responder communities of state, local, national, and federal preparedness communities. Most recently, the reach was extended to include building-facility managers and critical-infrastructure, maritime, borders, ports, and public-health officials and operators.

The ABCs of NIMS and the ICS

By Joseph Cahill, EMS

NIMS, the National Incident Management System, is basically a plan that was developed to improve the ability of jurisdictions throughout the country to respond in a coordinated fashion to "incidents of national significance" – i.e., natural disasters such as hurricanes or earthquakes, and manmade disasters such as terrorist attacks. Under the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5), all of the nation's first responders are required to have received rudimentary training in and be familiar with the NIMS concept and operational procedures.

The principal component of NIMS with which most responders are familiar is the Incident Command System, or ICS. While NIMS provides the "big picture" organizational view – including the rules on how to organize support and to direct agency-level interactions – ICS deals with the practical actions affecting troops on the ground.

The first lesson that first responders must know about NIMS and ICS is to forget where they came from, but not what they know. ICS is about submerging personal and agency identities and working the problem with the resources available. In other words, it is about putting the best person for a specific job on that job.

Like many other elements of a large, interagency response team, EMS personnel and physical resources often play a dual role because they can be used both in direct operations and in supporting other teams or agencies. Under the ICS scheme of operations, EMS resources perform a direct role in the operations section by caring for the victims of the incident. However, when EMS resources are used primarily to treat other responders who are injured or otherwise incapacitated, those resources are being used in a support role and are therefore considered part of the medical unit of the logistics section.

As previously noted, there are certain minimum levels of training required under both NIMS and ICS. That training is provided, at no cost to the state and/or city agencies involved, by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Everyday Practicalities

As with all strategic plans and overarching concepts, the implementation of ICS will be efficient to a greater or lesser degree, compared to the ideal, depending on the specific circumstances related to and/or affecting a particular incident. There are, of course, many factors contributing to or detracting from that efficiency. In many if not all cases at least some of those factors are out of the control both of the agencies primarily involved and of the troops on the ground.

Under the ICS scheme of operations, EMS resources perform a direct role by caring for the victims of the incident.

Many agencies simply do not have the management depth required – the number of staff members needed, for example, or the ICS experience levels necessary – to be set up day to day along the organizational concepts envisioned in the ICS plans. In addition, certain EMS responses may have as few as two responders involved. In such circumstances, setting up an ICS structure might not necessarily be difficult but it would almost always be superfluous.

Over a decade ago, New York City's EMS educators (and their counterparts in other major cities) were teaching emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics that they should be thinking about the possible ICS implications of every incident

in which they might be involved. Although that may sound impractical, the message was not that the EMTs might personally have to decide who should serve as the incident commander (and, as a corollary task, fill out the rest of a complicated ICS table of organization), but that responders should always be thinking about what ICS rules and guidelines would come into play if the incident becomes bigger and more complex.

Using the ICS concept for every job model has two advantages. The first is that the EMS staff remains conversant with the system by thinking about it in their day-to-day work. The second is that when an incident does escalate to the point where it is necessary to start filling in a table of organization, the personnel already on the scene will not have to shift gears in their thinking.

Maintaining an ICS mindset is often more of a mental exercise than an actual functional component of the response operations. However, if practiced, this exercise will keep the responders' minds, and mindsets, both limber and flexible – and that is *always* an operational asset worth striving for.

Links for additional information
NIMS: http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/index.shtm

NIMS, ICS, and other FEMA Training:
http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/crslist.asp

HSPD-5
http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030228-9.html

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*Joseph Cahill has served as a line paramedic for over ten years in The South Bronx and North Philadelphia. He was awarded the distinguished service medal and seven pre-hospital "saves" ribbons from NYC*EMS and FDNY as well as a unit citation from the Philadelphia Fire Department, and has received both the 100-Year Association's award for "Outstanding Service to New York City" as well as the World Trade Center Survivor's Ribbon (two bronze stars).*

He has held many distinguished EMS positions, and is the author of over twenty newspaper and magazine articles on subjects ranging from patient care to equipment evaluations. He has taught or spoken at numerous training events and conventions in both the New York City area and nationally.

NIMS: A Paradigm Shift For Law Enforcement

By Gary Simpson, Law Enforcement

By now, most of the public-safety first responders in the United States have heard about the National Incident Management System, or NIMS. Every public safety agency that receives DHS (Department of Homeland Security) grant funding must meet the goals of NIMS by October of this year. Following is a snapshot view of how this still relatively new way of handling major national incidents affects the law-enforcement community – starting with a brief explanation of the NIMS concept itself.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 provided strong impetus to develop a system for first responders, including the police, to mount a coordinated and multi-disciplinary response to major incidents. Before creation and implementation of the National Incident Management System, cooperation between state, local, and federal agencies was limited, particularly when it involved the handling of major incidents such as terrorist attacks and/or natural disasters caused by hurricanes, earthquakes, and/or tornadoes. Each jurisdiction made its own decisions on how, and whether, to coordinate its efforts with other jurisdictions and disciplines.

The lack of interoperable communications has been cited many times as a major problem during and in the aftermath not only of such major disasters as the 9/11 attacks and the floods in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina but also during lesser but well publicized incidents such as the Columbine massacre. During 9/11, local fire and police departments could not talk directly to one another. The same was true during the Columbine incident, when the numerous agencies responding also could not communicate with one another. In each case, the result was the same: Rescue and relief efforts were complicated and needlessly delayed.

The Key Ingredients: Uniformity and Interoperability

The NIMS concept was developed to solve the communications difficulties and other problems, and to enable state, federal, and local agencies and organizations to work together seamlessly toward a common goal. President Bush signed the National Incident Management System into existence when he issued Homeland Security Presidential Decision Directive 5 on 28 February 2003. The president and his senior advisors, particularly those in decision-making posts in the Department of Homeland Security, had determined that America's first-responder communities all would benefit by the establishment of a uniform response capability that would enable first responders across the nation to join forces and work together in an interoperable response environment.

Establishment of the NIMS methodology created a path that allows mutual-aid assistance to come from anywhere in the country and from any discipline – and from any level of government. NIMS also makes the integration process relatively seamless by requiring that all federal, state, and local first responders be trained in the NIMS philosophy, goals, and operating procedures.

One of the core components of NIMS is the Incident Command System, or ICS, which provides the foundation for first-responder inter-operational training and capabilities. The incident-command concept was developed in California during the 1970s as a response to the vast number of forest fires in that state – and the need for mutual-aid agreements involving numerous jurisdictions not only within California itself but also in many neighboring states.

It soon became obvious to decision makers at all levels of government that a common operational language was needed, and that common equipment standards also had to be established. Before the standardization requirements were implemented, fire-service agencies had been speaking different languages and using equipment that usually could not be shared or linked.

The Creation Of a National Capability

Standardization enabled equipment sharing, and communications sharing, during multi-jurisdictional events in California. Today, ICS and NIMS have permitted the creation of standardized operational procedures, equipment specifications, and language for first-responder agencies and organizations throughout the entire country.

The expected outcome of the creation and mandate for the use of the NIMS protocol is to provide first responders at the federal, state, and local levels with a set of uniform standards with which to create a coordinated, unified response to domestic all-hazard incidents within the United States. A look back at Hurricane Katrina brings the problem of interoperability to the forefront. In New Orleans, the best known example, a large number of police officers were not able to report for work for one reason or another. To take their places, a call went out for law-enforcement officers and other responders from other states throughout the country to help support the troubled Gulf Coast officers and citizens. Because the transition to NIMS had already started, those who responded to the Gulf Coast were able to integrate their operations quickly, more easily, and more effectively.

To summarize: NIMS helps to define what police and other first responders do during and after major national incidents. Significantly, it also removes the language barrier, because all radio transmissions are communicated in plain language, regardless of the agencies and disciplines involved.

Here it is worth noting that some police agencies expressed early concerns about eliminating the use of what are called "10-codes" during major incidents. A particular concern was that the public would be able to intercept the police communications. In reality, though, it became obvious that many private citizens already had scanners that intercepted police communications. Moreover, during life-saving operations there really should be no secrets – all agencies and individuals directly involved in a disaster-response situation should be on the same page.

Moreover, for decision-making purposes it is mandatory that all first responders assigned to an Incident Command Post must be able to immediately understand what is going on at any given time. The speed with which major events can escalate seldom gives decision makers enough time to translate communications from personnel who do not speak the same language. The use of plain language was and is the answer to all of these problems.

The NIMS concept was developed to enable state, federal, and local agencies and organizations to work together seamlessly toward a common goal.

The implementation of NIMS within and between fire-service agencies was relatively easy because so many fire departments already had broad ranging mutual-aid agreements in place, and their personnel were familiar with Firescope and similar programs. Moreover, because many fire-service organizations operate from fixed stations, they are more readily available for group training.

For police departments, however, implementation of the NIMS philosophy and working procedures is a different matter. Most police officers are routinely trained to act, and react, as individuals rather than as a team. Police training en masse usually is possible only during yearly in-service training sessions. To pull officers from their assignments during periods other than these in-service sessions becomes a very expensive decision for the jurisdiction that does so, and that in turn could result in making the more advanced NIMS/ICS training sessions available to fewer officers.

Practice for Success: The Voice of Experience

Gary S. Simpson is director of the Office of Domestic Preparedness for the City of Annapolis (Md.). In that post he is directly responsible for implementation of the NIMS/ICS policies and procedures within his own agency. "I did not immediately embrace the NIMS concept," he told DPJ, "but my understanding and appreciation of the benefits to be gained were changed when my department participated in a full-function drill that included nine agencies, including two federal agencies.

"Because I was assigned the task of preliminary coordination," he continued, "it became very clear that to meet the goals of the planned exercise we would have to operate in a highly coordinated manner. The DHS-required NIMS/ICS guidelines provided a ready answer that immediately spoke to how we would communicate, who would be responsible for what, and who was in charge at any given point in the process – and that resolved, in advance, the major issues that might have caused problems.

"Most police officers work their beats in single-unit vehicles," Simpson also noted. "NIMS requires thinking more in a team concept. Fire personnel always think in a team concept. This difference required a 'paradigm shift' of sorts for police officers – but there was and is much less change in thinking for fire-service personnel. Although the NIMS concept will take a number of years to be fully integrated across the entire first-responder continuum, it seems to me to be the 'best game in town' right now. In fact, responder agencies that have not met the NIMS standards may start losing their DHS grant funds within a couple of months. My final word is that NIMS/ICS has to be practiced to be successfully implemented."

Gary Simpson retired as a 32-year veteran with the Annapolis Police Department. When he retired he was hired back as the Emergency Management Director for the City of Annapolis. Two years later, he shifted back to the police side as Director of Domestic Preparedness. While with the Annapolis Police Department he rose to the rank of Captain.

Interpol's New Bioterrorism Guide: Incident Pre-Planning and Response

By Michael Allswede, Public Health

One of the major advantages possessed by international/transnational terrorist groups is that they do not have to respect jurisdictional boundaries and therefore are free to exploit the differences in law-enforcement philosophies and operations of the anti-terrorist agencies and organizations that are working against them. Interpol, the world's largest international police organization, with 184 member countries, was established in 1923 with the intent of, among other things, reducing this criminal advantage.

In the modern era of transnational terrorism carried out by Islamic terrorist groups and other paramilitary groups – as well as by home-grown terrorist groups that may operate outside the borders of the United States or another target nation – the Interpol role has become increasingly important because of the agency's usefulness as both a clearing house of information and a synthesis center for intelligence coordination.

> ***"There is simply not enough knowledge of what countries' police forces can and should do to prevent terrorists from acquiring or making biological weapons."***
>
> ***Interpol Secretary General Ronald K. Noble, 11 April 2006***

Because almost all bioterrorism diseases naturally occur outside the United States, and because of the proliferation in recent years of WMD (weapons of mass destruction) programs, it is more important than ever before that the U.S. preparedness community be aware of the assets that are available to pursue terrorist groups that threaten the U.S. homeland itself. In recognition of this concern – shared, of course, by many other nations – Interpol has developed and, earlier this week, released its own *Bioterrorism Incident Pre-Planning and Response Guide*.

An Adherence to Existing Laws

Interpol's own principal mission continues to be to facilitate cross-border police co-operation. To carry out that mission, the agency supports and assists *all* organizations, authorities, and agencies whose mission is to prevent and/or combat international

crime. More specifically, Interpol seeks to facilitate international police cooperation *even in situations where diplomatic relations do not exist* between particular countries. In any situation in which Interpol is involved, though, the rule is the same: Action is taken within the limits of the existing laws in the different countries participating in that action. Interpol has signed cooperative agreements to that effect with the United Nations, the European Central Bank, the Organization of African Unity, and the Arab Interior Ministers Council.

> ***In addition to the medical services required in a natural outbreak, a bioterrorism event will require public health services and law enforcement to cooperate closely in the area of crisis response and to conduct criminal investigations.***
>
> ***Interpol President Jackie Selebie, 21 November 2005***

Interpol has three primary functions that support worldwide law-enforcement operations in the priority areas of human trafficking, international fugitive location, financial crimes, and public safety and terrorism. To carry out those functions the agency:

- Runs a global police communications system, called I-24/7, that provides police around the world with a common operating tool through which they can share crucial information about criminals and criminal operations.
- Has created and uses its own databases and services to ensure that police agencies worldwide have access to the information and services they need to prevent and investigate crimes. Those databases include essential information both about criminals – e.g., names, fingerprints, and DNA profiles – and about stolen property such as passports, vehicles, and works of art.
- Supports law-enforcement officials in the field by providing emergency and operational support. The Interpol Command and Coordination Center operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

During the past year, Interpol has organized and conducted a series of international seminars and workshops focused on international law-enforcement activities in the field of bioterrorism. Perhaps the most important byproduct of the seminar/workshop series was the development of the *Bioterrorism Incident Pre-Planning and Response Guide*, released on 10 July in Santiago, Chile, during the final of three world-wide meetings focused on the prevention and deterrence of bioterrorism. The intent of the Response Guide is to serve as an international "play book" for law-enforcement operations between and among nations that may have to deal with disease outbreaks of an intentional – i.e., manmade – nature. The Response Guide is expected to be particularly helpful as a resource for smaller nations faced with the daunting task of standardizing and coordinating law-enforcement and public-health investigations across international borders.

The *Biological Incident Pre-Planning and Response Guide* was crafted by an international group of experts in law enforcement as well as medical, public health, diplomatic, and legal issues, and developed in close coordination with the World Health Organization. It was one of the major topics on the agendas of the three regional international meetings – in Cape Town, South Africa, in November 2005; in Singapore in April 2006; and in Santiago in June 2006 – that brought together senior law-enforcement leaders from most if not quite all Interpol member nations.

A Pocket-Sized Powerhouse of Information

The Response Guide was tested and favorably evaluated during the meetings, which were structured as part lectures and part tabletop exercises. A particularly useful section of the manual is a guidance document, designed for use by national police forces and other response organizations, that supports international cooperation and standardizes procedures and communications prior to and during the rare but potentially catastrophic bioterrorism events that now threaten the world community.

A 74-page pocket-sized manual specifically designed for field use by response personnel, the Response Guide includes a rapid reference section on various aspects of bioterrorism that is focused primarily upon coordinating law-enforcement investigations with public health, medical, and emergency-response operations.

Included in the second half of the manual are suggested protocols for investigations, public relations, and specimen handling, as well as force protection. U.S. professionals responsible for bioterrorism planning and response would be well advised to have a copy of the manual readily available to facilitate international communications and coordination during future times of crisis.

The response guide, which is produced and is being disseminated in the four official Interpol languages (Arabic, English, French, and Spanish), is available from the Interpol Bioterrorism Unit at the following numbers: (+33) 04 72 44 57 59; or (+33) 04 72 44 57 20. It also is available via the Internet: Email: webbioterroism@interpol.int; or http://www.interpol.int/Public/BioTerrorism/default.asp

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Dr. Michael Allswede is the Director of the Strategic Medical Intelligence Project on forensic epidemiology. He is the creator of the RaPiD-T Program and of the Pittsburgh Matrix Program for hospital training and preparedness. He has served on a number of expert national and international groups on preparedness.

NIMS: Is Better Coordination Needed?

By Brian Geraci, Fire/HazMat

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 it was recognized by authorities at all levels of government that a much improved plan of action was needed so that participating responders from federal, state, and local agencies – and non-governmental groups – could work together more effectively at the scene of a disaster. That plan would, among other things, give any and all participants in response operations a better understanding of how a disaster or emergency incident was to be handled.

The plan also would prescribe a common language and common operating procedures that all participating agencies would be expected to learn and use. The intent of the plan would be to ensure uniformity of operations whether the participants involved had backgrounds in law enforcement or the fire service, were EMS providers, or were representatives of government agencies at the federal, state, or local levels.

There were several goals considered in development of the plan. The first was to encourage the use of common terminology between and among the various responding agencies. The second was to establish a unified command structure under which all agencies could work together effectively. A third was to ensure that all agencies understood their respective roles within the command structure.

Goals, Imperatives, And Problem Areas

This new incident management system, it was hoped, would resolve any remaining issues of contention involving communications, rank structure, and/or the filling of needs at the disaster or emergency scene. In short, the overarching intent of the new system would be to provide a uniform method of handling all types of major disasters, no matter what their size or duration.

The response to these and other imperatives was the creation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which was established under Homeland Security Presidential Directive Five (HSPD-5). That directive sets forth, among other things, the rationale for an incident management system that all responders could use – and, in turn, that could be used by any agency at any level of government.

> ***The overarching intent would be to provide a uniform method of handling all types of major disasters, no matter what their size or duration.***

Issuance of HSPD-5 resolved a number of problems, but also created a few of its own. One of the main issues of concern to a number of state and local jurisdictions, for example, is that NIMS represents in some important respects yet another unfunded mandate that states and cities cannot ignore but might not always be able to comply with.

A brief look at some of the pros and cons of forcing the unfunded NIMS mandate on states and local jurisdictions demonstrates both the major benefits gained as well as some obvious problem areas. The first and perhaps most important benefit is that all jurisdictions involved in the consequence-management phase of a national incident, natural or manmade, would be familiar with the operational procedures prescribed and would be able to communicate effectively with one another.

California Earthquakes And Recurring Annual Examples

California, with its earthquakes, and the nation's southeastern states, with their annual hurricanes, represent just two examples of the states that would benefit from establishment of a uniform incident management system. Of particular importance is that there would be less chance of a breakdown in communications (today, a "code 10-02" might have a totally different meaning in one jurisdiction than it would have in another).

The use of professional jargon is another area of potential problems. The command to "charge the line" has different meanings in different professions. Police will use it to move forward with their line; fire fighters will use it when they want water surging through their fire hoses; and an electrician will use it when he or she wants the electric current turned on. The need for a common language, understood by all participating units, is very important, particularly in responding to large-scale incidents – during which, for example, a fire department from one jurisdiction may and probably would be working not only with fire departments from other jurisdictions but also from other first-responder agencies, representing different disciplines, from a broad spectrum of other jurisdictions.

Another benefit of learning, and using, a common language is that position titles would be the same – whether the incident occurs in Baltimore, Md., or in Nome, Alaska. Rank structures thus would be more closely aligned. There are no "sergeants" in the current rank structures of some jurisdictions – but there might be several sergeants in the rank structures of adjoining counties. The use of a standard rank structure would permit everyone involved in a national incident know to whom they should report and where they would obtain the equipment needed to accomplish the tasks they have been assigned.

Deficiencies in Funds – And in Ideas

Several but not all of the problems caused by the issuance of HSPD-5 are related to the unfunded mandate previously mentioned. State governors, city mayors, and other decision makers have no idea where to obtain the money needed to fully implement HSPD-5 if and when federal funds are not available – as might well be the case.

This is not just a political problem, but should be a concern to all citizens. For practical purposes, unfunded federal mandates almost always translate directly into unanswered questions. A few examples: What programs would state and local governments have to reduce in scope or eliminate completely in order to provide the funding needed to comply with a federal mandate approved by Congress and signed into law by the president? Do governors and mayors find the extra money needed by reducing road repair programs – thus making it not as safe to drive the roads?

Unfortunately, there are some politically easier but far from satisfactory answers to these and other questions. If full federal funding is not available the states would be tempted to do a less than adequate job implementing the mandate. Or they might do only what absolutely has to be done to satisfy federal requirements. A third alternative would be to do it long enough to complete the program, and then let it go by the wayside.

The federal government has been known to push its agenda on the states in the past. In the 1970s, for example, the federal government threatened to cut off funding for state roads if the states did not impose maximum highway speed limits of 55 mph. There are many other examples, painfully familiar to state governors and city mayors – but not to the general public – of how unfunded federal mandates were issued in the past to allay political concerns, but did not really solve a problem. Instead, they merely passed that problem on to a lower level of government.

There are other concerns with NIMS, and other questions that must be answered. Even if perfectly conceived and implemented, for example, the NIMS operational procedures might be used either infrequently or, in some fortunate areas of the country, not at all. No one seems to know, moreover, how the federal government plans to ensure that the NIMS mandates are being followed.

Another consideration is what might be called the "trickle down" problem. At least some states might adopt the same unfunded-mandate approach and try to force local jurisdictions to share the cost of NIMS implementation. But how would "Nowhere, Kansas" come up with the perhaps relatively large sum of money needed for NIMS implementation? At present, many small municipalities can barely afford to keep their local governments running, and their local needs met. The citizens of these towns and cities might well ask themselves if, with resources so limited, their fire companies should put off the purchase of the new firefighting equipment they need so they can implement a program that teaches them how to communicate better with fire companies from other jurisdictions.

Praise for DHS People (Plus Some Cautionary Notes)

Despite a somewhat slow start, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has many knowledgeable, hard-working, and dedicated employees on the job in all of its offices and agencies. Not all of them, though, fully understand the effect on end users of the well-intentioned DHS mandates passed down to cities and states.

What is happening with the unfunded NIMS mandate serves as an instructive example. Although states and cities are trying to comply with the mandate they have been given – which is tied to grant funding – not all responders are receiving the full benefit of the training they need. Because of varying work loads and the money required for overtime work – which is simply not available in all departments – many responders have had to resort to online training and testing, which is not as satisfactory or as effective as true "hands-on" training.

Some departments, in fact, are still trying to determine which staff personnel really need the training required, and at what levels. No one yet seems to know the full scope of this problem, but it can be safely assumed that it is a matter of concern to jurisdictions both large and small throughout the country. As of late July, Montgomery County (Md.) and other jurisdictions within the National Capital Region had obtained a one-year grant to fund a NIMS coordinator position. Filling that important post would help to some extent in getting the region's non-public safety departments on the right track to receive the NIMS training needed, it is generally conceded. There may well come a time, though, when at least some departments will no longer believe that it is worth all of the time and energy required to apply for grant funding.

For some departments that unhappy conclusion may already be the case. A few officials, in fact, have said, only half-jokingly, that the term NIMS really should stand for *Not In My Station*. More than a few officials have said, privately if not always publicly, that when NIMS training requirements were tied to grant funding it marked the downfall of the program. Clearly, there must be much better coordination between DHS decision makers, and end users at the state and local levels, when additional programs of similar scope and magnitude are mandated in the future.

Brian Geraci is a Battalion Chief with the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, Montgomery County Maryland. He is presently assigned to Montgomery County's Homeland Security Department. Chief Geraci has over 30 years of service in the County and was a charter member of the County's Hazardous Incident Response Team and served as one of the team leaders.

Special Report

The WMD-CST Program: A National Success Story

By Jonathan Dodson, National Guard

The U.S. media and decision makers at all levels of government – state, local, and federal – are in agreement on at least one thing: namely, that additional terrorist attacks against the American homeland are not only possible but probable. "When, not if," is the phrase that is frequently used – and is followed by a warning that future attacks might well involve the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

The fact that in the almost five years that have passed since 11 September 2001 there have been no WMD attacks against the American people on U.S. soil is due to a number of factors, including an important presidential decision made several years ago – before the 9/11 attacks, it should be emphasized – to create, develop, and deploy throughout the United States a number of highly skilled military units specially trained to detect, deter, and/or deal with the consequences of WMD attacks.

The creation, certification, and deployment, in five phases, of 55 WMD Civil Support Teams (CSTs) – so named because their primary mission is to support civil authorities in major incidents involving mass casualties and/or widespread destruction – are now almost complete. As their name implies, their primary missions are to: (a) deploy rapidly to assist a local incident commander in determining the nature and extent of an attack or incident; (b) provide expert technical advice on WMD response operations; and (c) help identify and support the arrival of follow-on state and federal military-response assets.

The CSTs are joint units and, as such, can include both Army National Guard and Air National Guard personnel; some of the units, in fact, are commanded by Air National Guard lieutenant colonels.

The mission of the WMD-CST units is to support local and state authorities at domestic WMD/NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical) incident sites by, among other things: (a) identifying any WMD agents and substances that have been detected; (b) assessing the immediate and projected consequences; (c) advising on the response measures that should be taken; and (d) assisting with requests for additional military support.

The WMD civil support teams provide significant capabilities not always available at the state or local level. They are able to deploy rapidly, for example, to assist local first responders in determining the nature of an attack, to provide the medical and technical advice needed to cope with a WMD incident, and to pave the way for the deployment and arrival of follow-on state and federal military response assets.

The WMD-CSTs also provide initial advice on what the WMD agent or agents might be, and they assist state and local first responders in their own detection-assessment tasks. In most situations they also would be the first military responders on the ground, so that, if additional federal resources are called into the situation, they can serve as an advance party that could work from the beginning with the Joint Task Force-Civil Support that usually would be established.

The CST units provide critical protection to the force, from the pre-deployment phase

WMD CST Units

1) 1st WMD CST (MA NG) - Natick	20) 32nd WMD CST (MD NG)	38) 63rd WMD CST (OK NG)
2) 2nd WMD CST (NY NG) - Scotia	21) 33rd WMD CST (DC NG)	39) 64th WMD CST (NM NG) - Santa Fe
3) 3rd WMD CST (PA NGO - Annville	22) 34th WMD CST (VA NG) - Blackstone	40) 71st WMD CST (IA NG)
4) 4th WMD CST (GA DOD DJO)	23) 35th WMD CST (WV NG) - St. Albans	41) 72nd WMD CST (NE NG)
5) 5th WMD CST (IL NG) - Bartonville	24) 41st WMD CST (KY NG) - Louisville	42) 73rd WMD CST (KS NG) - Topeka
6) 6th WMD CST (TX NG)	25) 42nd WMD CST (NC NG)	43) 81st WMD CST (ND NG)
7) 7th WMD CST (MO NG)	26) 43rd WMD CST (SC NG) - Eastover	44) 82nd WMD CST (SD NG) - Rapid City
8) 8th WMD CST (CO NG)	27) 44th WMD CST (FL NG) - Starke	45) 83rd WMD CST (MT NG)
9) 9th WMD CST (CA NG)	28) 45th WMD CST (TN NG) - Smyrna	46) 84th WMD CST (WY NG)
10) 10th WMD CST (WA NG) - Tacoma	29) 46th WMD CST (AL NG) - Montgomery	47) 85th WMD CST (UT NG)
11) 11th WMD CST (ME NG)	30) 47th WMD CST (MS NG) - Flowood	48) 91st WMD CST (AZ NG) - Phoenix
12) 12th WMD CST (NH NG) - Concord	31) 51st WMD CST (MI NG) - Augusta	49) 92nd WMD CST (NV NG)
13) 13th WMD CST (RI NG)	32) 52nd WMD CST (OH NG)	50) 93rd WMD CST (HI NG) - Honolulu
14) 14th WMD CST (CT NG)	33) 53rd WMD CST (IN NG) - Indianapolis	51) 94th WMD CST (Guam) - Juan Muna
15) 15th WMD CST (VT NG)	34) 54th WMD CST (WI NG)	52) 95th WMD CST (CA NG)
16) 21st WMD CST (NJ NG) - Fort Dix	35) 55th WMD CST (MN NG) - St. Paul	53) 101st WMD CST (ID NG) - Boise
17) 22nd WMD CST (PR NG) - San Juan	36) 61st WMD CST (AR NG) - Little Rock	54) 102nd WMD CST (OR NG) - Salem
18) 23rd WMD CST (VI NG) - St Croix	37) 62nd WMD CST (LA NG) - Carville	55) 103rd WMD CST (AK NG)
19) 31st WMD CST (DE NG)		

of an operation at Home Station through redeployment. They ensure that strategic national interests are protected against enemies, foreign or domestic, who might be attempting to employ chemical, biological, or radiological weapons against the American homeland and/or U.S. citizens. They are, in short, a key component of the overall Department of Defense (DOD) program to provide support to civil authorities in the event of an incident involving weapons of mass destruction used within the United States.

These National Guard teams make DOD's unique expertise and capabilities available to assist state governors in preparing for and responding to chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) incidents as part of a state's emergency-response infrastructure. Each team consists of 22 highly skilled, full-time National Guard members who are federally resourced, trained, and exercised, and who are familiar with, and follow, the federally approved CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear) response doctrine.

WMD CST Communications Equipment

Unified Command Suite (UCS) - Communications Van

- 15 kW power supply and environmental control unit
- KU-Band SATCOM - wide-bandwidth for data and voice reach back; secure capable
- INMARSAT-B - portable data and voice SATCOM
- Motorola VHF/UHF AM/FM Transceiver - intra-team communications and Responder Communications
- Military VHF/UHF/UHF SATCOM Radios
- Multilane Scanner
- Team Radios - Motorola XTS-3000
- Cellular Telephone and Local Area Network for Laptop Computers

Stand-Up And Certification Timeline

Federally-Mandated WMD CSTs - Phase I

Team	State	Founded	Certified
1st	Massachusetts	Original	15 Aug 2001
2nd	New York	Original	26 Jul 2001
3rd	Pennsylvania	Original	29 Aug 2001
4th	Georgia	Original	17 Oct 2001
5th	Illinois	Original	29 Aug 2001
6th	Texas	Original	15 Aug 2001
7th	Missouri	Original	14 Aug 2001
8th	Colorado	Original	26 Jul 2001
9th	California-South	Original	29 Aug 2001
10th	Washington	Original	26 Jul 2001

Federally-Mandated WMD CSTs - Phase II

Team	State	Founded	Certified
103rd	Alaska	New (FY2000)	12 Mar 2002
61st	Arkansas	New (FY2000)	28 Jan 2002
91st	Arizona	New (FY2000)	11 Jan 2002
95th	California-North	New (FY2000)	28 Jan 2002
44th	Florida	New (FY2000)	28 Jan 2002
93rd	Hawaii	New (FY2000)	30 Apr 2002
71st	Iowa	New (FY2000)	28 Jan 2002
101st	Idaho	New (FY2000)	11 Jan 2002
41st	Kentucky	New (FY2000)	11 Jan 2002
62nd	Louisiana	New (FY2000)	17 Dec 2001
11th	Maine	New (FY2000)	15 Jan 2002
55th	Minnesota	New (FY2000)	17 Dec 2001
64th	New Mexico	New (FY2000)	28 Jan 2002
52nd	Ohio	New (FY2000)	26 Feb 2002
63rd	Oklahoma	New (FY2000)	28 Jan 2002
43rd	South Carolina	New (FY2000)	11 Jan 2002
34th	Virginia	New (FY2000)	28 Jan 2002

Federally-Mandated WMD CSTs - Phase III

Team	State	Founded	Certified
46th	Alabama	New (FY2001)	06 Mar 2003
73rd	Kansas	New (FY2001)	14 Mar 2003
51st	Michigan	New (FY2001)	05 Feb 2003
45th	Tennessee	New (FY2001)	05 Feb 2003
35th	West Virginia	New (FY2001)	05 Feb 2003

Federally-Mandated WMD CSTs - Phase IV

Team	State	Founded	Certified
14th	Connecticut	New (FY2004)	
21st	New Jersy	New (FY2004)	28 Nov 2005
42nd	North Carolina	New (FY2004)	
53rd	Indiana	New (FY2004)	28 Nov 2005
54th	Wisconsin	New (FY2004)	08 Feb 2006
32nd	Maryland	New (FY2004)	
102nd	Oregon	New (FY2004)	
47th	Mississippi	New (FY2004)	
85th	Utah	New (FY2004)	
92nd	Nevada	New (FY2004)	
72nd	Nebraska	New (FY2004)	08 Feb 2006
13th	Rhode Island	New (FY2004)	

Federally-Mandated WMD CSTs - Phase V

Team	State	Founded	Certified
33rd	District of Columbia	New (FY2005)	
31st	Delaware	New (FY2005)	
94th	Guam	New (FY2005)	
83rd	Montana	New (FY2005)	
81st	North Dakota	New (FY2005)	
12th	New Hampshire	New (FY2005)	
22nd	Puerto Rico	New (FY2005)	
82nd	South Dakota	New (FY2005)	
23rd	U.S. Virgin Island	New (FY2005)	
15th	Vermont	New (FY2005)	
84th	Wyoming	New (FY2005)	

Jonathan Dodson is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. He has received a Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Ohio State University and a Master of Military Art and Science Degree from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. During his active-duty career, he served with the 1st Cavalry Division in the Republic of Vietnam.

Some NRP Changes Made - More Are Needed

By Christopher Doane and Joseph DiRenzo III

Although some changes were made to the National Response Plan (NRP) following Hurricane Katrina, significant weaknesses remain in the duties and authority of the Principal Federal Official, the role of the Joint Field Office, and the application of the Incident Command System in the aftermath of a disaster response.

According to the National Response Plan, the Principal Federal Official does not have "directive authority" over other federal and state officials involved in the response to what is termed an "incident of national significance." Instead, he or she "coordinates the activities" of federal officials. But that construct does not align with the public and political perceptions and expectations, particularly as demonstrated during the response to Hurricane Katrina, where the Principal Federal Official was generally assumed to be in charge and therefore accountable for the success or failure of the response.

In the field of domestic preparedness as in the military and other fields of human endeavor common sense and operating doctrine, according to management officials both inside and out of government, is or should be the same: Authority must accompany accountability. In other words, whoever is designated the Principal Federal Official must have directive authority over all of the operational units of all federal agencies engaged in the response.

The National Response Plan establishes the Joint Field Office (JFO) as a "multi-agency coordination center" that "enables the effective and efficient coordination of federal incident-related" response. The JFO is organized in accordance with the precepts laid down in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) and is led by the Principal Federal Official during incidents of national significance.

An Unfortunate And Unworkable Assumption

For operational purposes, the JFO focuses on 15 Emergency Support Functions – e.g., communications, mass care, and urban search and rescue – common to most if not all incident-response situations. The JFO receives a request for federal assistance from the state or states affected by a natural or manmade disaster and assigns the request to the official in charge of the appropriate support function, who then coordinates the assistance needed. The problems in JFO operations arise in determining with whom or what agencies the Emergency Support Function coordinate at the field level.

> ***There is little specific guidance as to what the incident command structure should look like, and the possibilities are endless.***

The National Response Plan assumes that an incident command will be established that the Joint Field Office would support. Unfortunately, there is little in the way of specific guidance provided as to what the incident command structure for a disaster should look like, and the possibilities are endless. There might be a single incident command, for example, overseeing all functions of the response and recovery operations. But there might just as easily be several incident commands – one or more overseeing multiple functions while others focus on single functions. Another possibility is a combination of incident commands and other less formally organized response entities. The almost inevitable result of the latter, according to the same management experts, would be an almost certain blurring of responsibilities among the various agencies involved.

This looseness in the response structure below the JFO level could significantly degrade the efficiency of units and agencies providing, or receiving, federal assistance.

In addition, having an Incident Command attempting to manage several response functions simultaneously during an incident of national significance might not only overwhelm those in charge, but also would diffuse the expertise available. The latter point is easy to overlook, but it should not be. The expertise required to manage a mass rescue is different from the expertise needed to manage mass-casualty care.

To correct these and other problems, the JFO should be restructured to function more as a NIMS ICS Unified Area Command. Under NIMS, the Area Command would not be a coordinating body, but a strategic command. Its responsibilities would include but not necessarily be limited to the setting of overall incident-related priorities, the allocation of critical resources according to priorities, and ensuring not only that incidents are properly managed but also that the incident-management objectives established are met and do not conflict with one another.

A More Logical Chain of Command

Under the Area Command construct, the Joint Field Office would be led by a unified command consisting of the Principal Federal Official designated, the governors or empowered representatives of the various states involved, and the mayors or empowered representatives of the larger municipalities within the impacted area. Collectively, those officials would be the logical jurisdictional authorities involved in the strategic management of response operations.

Under this same construct, the JFO would provide incident commanders with

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overarching priorities, receive resource-requirement requests from the incident commanders, obtain the resources needed through local or state emergency operations centers (or from federal agencies), and provide those resources to the incident commanders.

Below the Joint Field Office/Area Command there should be a Unified Incident Command for each Emergency Support Function relevant to the situation, each of which would be led by local, state, and/or federal officials possessing the expertise needed for the given function. Each functional incident command would be authorized to communicate directly with its supporting element within the Joint Field Office/Area Command. The Area Command itself would retain the authority and responsibility for ensuring coordination between the various Unified Incident Commands.

In short, to more effectively unify and streamline the local, state, and federal response to an incident of national significance, the senior leaders from each level of government must join forces to form a Unified Area Command responsible for providing strategic direction and management of the response and recovery operations. That would ensure not only that the Principal Federal Official has the authority needed to match his or her accountability but also that he or she is formally linked, from the start, with his/her state and local counterparts. The Joint Field Office would be the most logical entity to convert into a Unified Area Command.

Below the JFO level, Unified Incident Commands should be established for each relevant response function: (a) to ensure that the proper expertise is both available and appropriately focused; and (b) to align with the Joint Field Office Emergency Support Function organization to facilitate the flow of external resources to the incident site.

Christopher Doane (pictured on previous page) and Joseph DiRenzo III are retired Coast Guard officers now serving as Coast Guard civilian employees; both also are Visiting Fellows at the Joint Forces Staff College. Although management experts in and out of government were consulted in the preparation of this article, the opinions expressed in the article are their own.

Florida, Arkansas, California, Rhode Island, and Virginia

By Adam McLaughlin, State Homeland News

Florida Hosts SERT Disaster-Response Seminar

The Florida Division of Emergency Management has reported the successful completion of a two-day seminar that included attendees from more than a dozen other states and that focused on an innovative management system that Florida has used to cope with numerous disasters and other emergencies.

The system, which is based on what are called State Emergency Response Teams (SERTs), dates back to Hurricane Andrew in 1992, when state officials realized they had to revise and improve their then-fragmented response system. Since then, the SERT management concept has served Florida's emergency managers well through 60 "events" of various types and earned the state a national emergency-response accreditation that only nine other states have received.

The "secret" behind the SERT success is described by David Bujak of the Florida Division of Emergency Management in one word: "Teamwork." The overall SERT management system is perhaps best described as a tree, with the Emergency Management Division serving as the trunk and various state agencies – which previously duplicated one another's efforts and competed for scarce resources during disasters – serving as the branches.

Florida's responses to the hurricanes that have wreaked so much havoc throughout the state in recent years are perhaps the best example of how the SERT concept works. Instead of competing for fuel, as in the past, emergency responders from the state's health and law-enforcement agencies, and fire departments, are now able to access a single statewide fuel-center route during hurricanes and other disasters.

There are other examples as well. One commander now directs a unified search-and-rescue team during floods. In the past, multiple teams were separately dispatched from various state agencies and local sheriffs' offices and fire departments. The new system not only conserves resources, it is also more operationally effective. "SERT is state government at its best," said SERT Chief David Halstead. "… Egos are left at the door, and everyone works toward one mission."

Arkansas ADEM Officials Review Emergency-Response Plan

Officials in the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) are not confident that the state's current emergency-response plan is adequate to manage a major catastrophe, and are particularly concerned about existing gaps in the areas of evacuations and sheltering. "Part of the plan simply has not been put in writing, such as a timeline of when people would do what in a disaster," said David Maxwell, the department's deputy director.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina – which killed more than 1,000 people and destroyed much of the Gulf Coast – Arkansas Governor Michael Huckabee decided that his state needed to focus more intensely on "worst-case" scenarios. In recent years, Arkansas's own biggest disasters were the back-to-back ice storms (in 2000) that stranded motorists on frozen highways and left thousands of homes and businesses without electricity for weeks.

One of the most frightening scenarios now being reviewed is the possibility of a major earthquake along the New Madrid seismic zone – which runs from Marked Tree in northeast Arkansas, through Memphis and St. Louis, and into southern Illinois. In addition, Arkansas, like all other states, may have to deal with a pandemic flu outbreak. State officials already have warned that a severe pandemic flu could cause up to 35 percent of the state's 2.8 million citizens to become sick, and an alarmingly high number to die from the disease.

According to Huckabee, Arkansas is now steadily improving its level of readiness to cope with major disasters. The state has more than doubled the size of its emergency planning staff, for example, and various task forces now meet on a regular basis to address potential problems with mass care, transportation resources, and other critical-infrastructure assets.

Arkansas also has spent millions of dollars on a new communications system that all of the state's 75 counties will be able to access. Almost 80 percent of the state's emergency-management budget is provided through federal funds – but this year, like many other states and major cities, Arkansas is receiving considerably less ($11 million) in DHS (Department of Homeland Security) grants than in previous years. Maxwell said he hopes that state legislators will decide during their next session to review what his agency does, and how much funding it receives, and then offer a substantial increase in state funds to offset the reduction in federal grants.

California
Develops Emergency Water Transit Plan for Bay Area

A special Task Force on Disaster Recovery created by the Bay Area Council has developed an Emergency Water Transit Plan to help cope with the loss of most of the area's current transportation resources in the wake of a massive and deadly earthquake that might cause widespread damage and destruction in San Francisco, Oakland, and other cities and towns throughout that highly populated area of California.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the Bay Area has a 29 percent chance of a magnitude 6.7 quake, or greater, occurring within the next ten years, with the probability increasing to 62 percent in 30 years. The Association of Bay Area Governments estimates that a major earthquake on the Hayward Fault would close over 1,700 roads. In addition, the damage and destruction caused by a quake of any significant magnitude could cause the closure of all trans-bay bridges and the BART tube for an undetermined period of time.

With bridges, tunnels, roads, and trains all out of service at the same time, water transportation would be the most readily option available to emergency responders. Tens of thousands of people could be stranded, officials said, and massive quantities of supplies and equipment would be needed to move people in and out of the many communities likely to be affected.

Current infrastructure and equipment capabilities, however, are grossly inadequate to the physical task being contemplated. There are ferry terminals in only a few communities throughout the Bay, and the collective ferry vessel fleet does not have enough carrying capacity to compensate for even one bridge being out of service. Moreover, the few vessels now operational are owned and managed by a broad spectrum of public agencies and private-sector operators, and until now there has been no detailed plan to activate them and coordinate their use in times of emergency.

The new emergency water-transit plan will help fill the current void, officials said. The proposed system is robust and flexible, with clear lines of authority designated. When fully implemented, the officials said, it will be able to meet the most important trans-bay emergency response-and-recovery transportation requirements of the greater Bay Area and its millions of residents.

L.A. County Beefs Up Transportation Security

Spurred in part by the London Underground and bus bombings in 2005, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has invested $9 million in new security upgrades, including the purchase and installation of a new closed-circuit television system that was unveiled in mid-July.

"We are a lot safer today than we were a year ago, without question," said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. "We are absolutely committed to doing everything that we can to protect the riding public," he said.

Hundreds of new cameras that tilt, pan, and zoom have been installed in and around all stations along the Red, Blue, Green, and Gold lines, with as many as 14 in a single station. The cameras also have been installed in subway cars on the Red Line, and there are plans to put them on all trains by the end of the year.

In addition, about 94 percent of the MTA's buses also have been fitted with new cameras, which are similar to those used to identify and help capture the bombing suspects in London last year. All of the images caught by the cameras are recorded onto compact discs that are kept for 14 days; those that show accidents or crimes are kept somewhat longer.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department already has solved 20 robberies using the digital recordings as evidence, according to Commander Daniel Finkelstein, head of transit security for the MTA. He said he hopes to further update the MTA security system with additional high-tech equipment, including systems fitted with face-recognition software.

Rhode Island
Addresses Communications Problems

Rhode Island officials say that the state's responders are now better equipped to communicate with one another in the aftermath of a disaster than they were three years ago during the station fire – in February 2003 in West Warwick – that exposed serious communications problems. Police and firefighters responding from around the state could not talk to one another at that time because their radios were incompatible and their Nextel coverage was totally inadequate.

Much has changed for Rhode Island communications since then. The state now has a variety of communications options at its disposal, including use of the interoperable 800 MHz radio system built by Motorola.

Although the upgrade program is still in the early stages, emergency officials in South County have been won over by the 800 MHz radios, which enable them to communicate directly with any department in the state. The Motorola system, which allows users from different agencies to communicate across the same

frequencies, puts all of its users onto the same frequencies, but has enough bandwidth to allow for "talk groups" so that those using the system are not interfering with one another.

The system has several backups, moreover. Every antenna site has its own battery power and generator, which are monitored electronically by the main Motorola center in Illinois. In addition, nearly half of the system's antennas are installed on fixed structures instead of towers, which are more likely to collapse in high winds. Moreover, the antennas are usually erected in fairly close proximity, so that if one goes out the others should be able to provide the coverage needed.

About half to two-thirds of the state, from Westerly to most of Aquidneck Island and up to southern Pawtucket, now is locked into the system. By late summer, the coverage is expected to extend up through Scituate and into the Attleboros. By the start of the next hurricane season, almost the entire state will be covered by the system.

Virginia
Storm Evacuation Will Provide Challenges

Virginia emergency managers estimate that a major hurricane could force 600,000 to 700,000 people within the Hampton Roads region, driving 300,000 vehicles, to seek shelter inland. According to the state's hurricane emergency plan, more than 27 hours would be needed to completely evacuate the unprecedented number of cars expected to be on the road in such a situation.

The Hampton Roads area is uncomfortably positioned at the end of a peninsula with the Chesapeake Bay to the east, Hampton Roads Bay to the south, and the James River to the west. Interstate 64, which would be the main evacuation route north from the peninsula, is already regularly gridlocked by only a fraction of the estimated number of cars expected during a pre-hurricane evacuation.

"There is not enough capacity to evacuate Hampton Roads," said Virginia Transportation Secretary Pierce R. Homer. To save lives and effectively manage a safe evacuation, Virginia officials said, the state will depend on hundreds of personnel from the Virginia Department of Transportation, the state police, the National Guard, and a host of other local and private agencies and organizations. State and local officials cannot give the evacuation plan a test run, however, and/or actually conduct reverse-lane operations on I-64, but they have rehearsed parts of the evacuation plan in tabletop exercises and field drills.

Although direct hurricane hits in the Hampton Roads area have been rare, there is historical evidence that "a Category 2 or 3 storm" would be possible, according to Michael Cline, the state's emergency management coordinator. "The weakest point we have" in the current plan, he said, "is to get people to be aware of their level of risk, to make preparations, and especially to heed the call to evacuate when given."

Adam McLaughlin is Preparedness Manager of Training and Exercises, Operations, and Emergency Management for the Port Authority of N.Y. & N.J. He develops and implements agency-wide emergency response and recovery plans, business continuity plans, and training and exercise programs. He is a former U.S. Army Military Intelligence & Security Officer.

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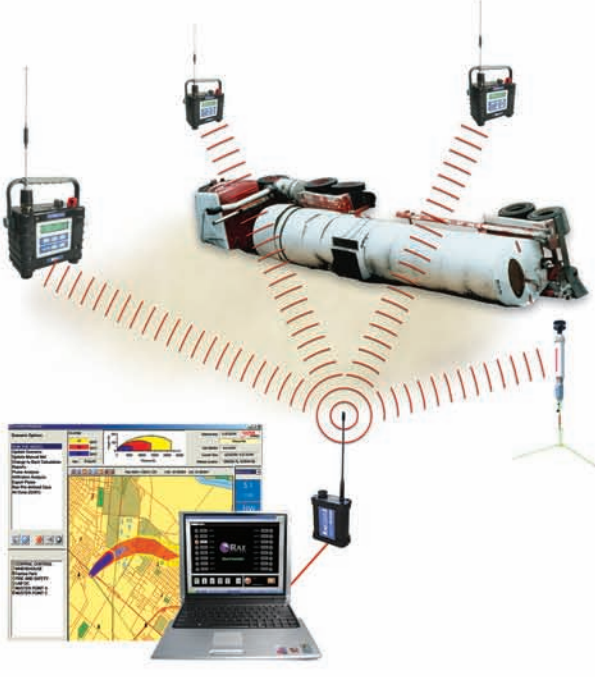

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