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This Issue:

NCRP 138: Reliable Guidance for Radiation Emergencies

By Rob Schnepp
Fire/HAZMAT

For the last several years, fire agencies across the country have been actively preparing to handle incidents involving weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The need for solid and reliable information traditionally accompanies those preparations – and, with the large number of credible and varied attack scenarios to consider, including radiation incidents, most of the nation's fire departments have found it difficult if not impossible to stay ahead of the equipment, information, and training curve.

The National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurement (NCRP), a non-profit corporation chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1964 to formulate and widely disseminate information, guidance, and recommendations on radiation protection and measurements, is always on the alert for areas in which the development and publication of the NCRP materials available can make an important contribution to the public interest.

Continued on the Next Page

September Is National Preparedness Month!

What Is Your *ORGANIZATION* Doing About It?

USAWC's New Emphasis on Homeland Security

By Brent Bankus
Military Support

The United States Army War College (USAWC) in Carlisle Barracks, Pa., already one of the most prestigious institutions in the U.S. military educational system, is becoming even more so by continuing to evolve not only to "keep up with the times" but also to anticipate the course of events in future conflicts in which its graduates will be both personally and professionally involved.

The most prominent recent example is the institution's increased emphasis on the field of homeland security, a once relatively minor topic in the USAWC curriculum that has substantially grown in importance in the past three years.

Continued on Page 4

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The goal of the non-profit corporation, according to the NCRP website (http://www.ncrponline.org/), is "to collect, analyze, develop, and disseminate, in the public interest, information and recommendations about: (a) protection against radiation; and (b) radiation measurements, quantities, and units, particularly those concerned with radiation protection."

To reach that goal, the NCRP developed a comprehensive guidance document several years ago to help firefighters, police officers, hazardous materials responders, and hospital personnel understand, plan for, and handle terrorist events involving radiation. Unfortunately, the guidance document (NCRP Report #138), although authoritative and comprehensive, has not yet received widespread recognition in the civilian emergency-response community.

Non-Technical Responder-Friendly Language

That situation may be about to change, though, thanks to last month's terrorist attacks in London and the growing recognition that similar attacks – including some involving WMDs – might be launched against potential terrorist targets in the United States. If such an incident were to involve a so-called "dirty bomb" or other radiation weapon, NCRP 138 would be an extremely valuable tool for any emergency responder called to the scene, according to Major Craig Moss, a U.S. Army health physicist now on duty in the Washington, D.C., area. "The NCRP's intent for Report #138," he told T.I.P.S. in a recent interview, "was to write a non-technical guidance document, based on good science, that laid out the nuts and bolts of response planning and management for an incident involving radiation." The document is written "in a language that any first responder can understand," he continued, and "basically boils down a bunch of complicated science into a logical, easy-to-understand format."

The NCRP report, first published on 24 October 2001 – only six weeks after the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center Towers and the Pentagon – is lengthy enough to cover virtually any radiation contingency now foreseeable, and sufficiently detailed to be of immediate help to first responders. More specifically, NCRP 138 is broken down into several main sections covering, among other essential topics, the following subjects: definition of the phases of a radiological event; medical management of radiation exposures; psychosocial impacts of terrorist events; command and control issues; and public communications. Also included is detailed information on radiation dose limitations. "The NCRP report," Moss said, "is a one-stop-shop kind of document … focused on the most important points of radiation-incident planning and response." First responders and decision making officials can use "as much or as little" of the information as they need. "In total," he summarized, the report is "very comprehensive and provides responders with useful information and real numbers [on which] to base emergency actions."

Continued on the Next Page

Dealing With the Psychosocial Impact

During the crisis phase of an incident, to consider one example of how NCRP 138 can be used, the report specifies an acceptable ambient radiation dose rate of 10 mrem/hr. Readings – from a properly functioning radiation detector – at or above this level probably indicate something significantly higher than background radiation or some other type of nuisance radiation. Conversely, according to the report, readings below 10 mrem/hr. probably do not indicate an emergency. The availability of such information would be particularly helpful when an agency is trying to develop emergency-response protocols based on measurable radiation levels.

In addition to defining what might be considered "acceptable" dose rates, the report also recommends a "turnaround" ambient dose level of 10 rem/hr. That dose rate, according to the NCRP, would allow emergency responders to perform critical missions of short duration before having to withdraw from a designated area. Again, these and other dose rates specified in the document are based on sound science and take into account the potential health effects likely to result from acute radiation exposure.

One of the more interesting sections of the report deals with the psychosocial aspects of a terror-based radiation event. According to Report #138, the psychosocial impact of a terrorist act may well have a greater impact on the people affected than the initial event itself. "Most perceptions of radiation" are somewhat imprecise and are not always based on the best scientific evidence, Moss explains. "So if a terrorist event involving radiation happens, the mental aspects of that attack may have the greatest impact on the affected population, and could be the most difficult health effect to treat.

"The bottom line," he continued, is that first responders and local communities will need "a lot of resources to deal with the fear and uncertainty after an event."

The NCRP report, Moss points out, also discusses the importance of the "allied specialties" likely to be needed after a radiation incident: "The chaplains, mental-health professionals, and members of the scientific community to monitor people for their mental well-being; you … [are not usually concerned about] those types of things with traditional chemical releases or exposures."

Continued on the Next Page

Interview with Vayl Oxford, Acting Director of the DHS Domestic Nuclear Detection Office

Acting Director Oxford discusses the newly established DNDO, commenting on its brief, deployment strategy, and interfaces with other federal agencies and the IC community, state and local governments, and the private sector. Itemizing some of the most promising radiological-and nuclear-detection technologies, he illustrates the DNDO contracting and program management model with the Advanced Spectroscopic Portal monitor. Looking to the future, he speaks of developing a global nuclear-detection architecture.

To get the complete audio download of the interview, please visit
www.DomesticPreparedness.com

Moss also suggested that any emergency-response agency would benefit by creating a relationship with local health physicists – who, he noted, "are radiation-safety specialists who can help … translate science into understandable language and concepts. You don't need to be a health physicist to make … [the right] decisions at a radiation incident, but it doesn't hurt to have one accessible."

Local Relationships, and a National Bonus

The U.S. health-physicist community is quite diverse, and encompasses many areas of specialized expertise – but not all health physicists understand emergency response, or the needs of the emergency-response community. "I think … [first responders] should develop a relationship with a local health physicist," Moss advised, rather than relying on a "come-help-me-now arrangement." A prior arrangement would be "in the interest of both communities: The emergency responder teaches the health physicist about response, and the health physicist teaches the emergency responder about the science."

To find a qualified health physicist, Moss recommends contacting a local university that offers a radiation-safety program. If that approach does not work, he says, "contact the Health Physics Society – you can find it on the web [at http://hps.org/]. It's the most comprehensive site for the health physics community – they can point you in the right direction. There is a homeland-security chapter in the health physics field, and it's growing by leaps and bounds."

Moss sums up the usefulness of NCRP Report #138 as follows: "Radiation emergencies … [are] not well understood across the country – it's just an area that people have a natural fear of. With all the media and political hype, people – including emergency responders – don't have a good understanding of radiation and how radiation response relates to other things they are already doing. This document [NCRP 138] helps put radiation response into context, to some degree, and offers some rationale behind the dose rates and other measurable values."

He pointed out an added bonus that would be of considerable value not only to first responders but also to decision makers at all levels of government and, in fact, to the nation's entire domestic-preparedness community – namely, that the report "can be used as a foundation to standardize response procedures across the boundaries of all jurisdictions and disciplines."

Author's Note: The opinions and statements made by Major Moss are his own and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Army or the Department of Defense.

USAWC's New Emphasis on Homeland Security

Continued from Page 1

Established by Secretary of War Elihu Root in 1901, the USAWC had several previous homes before permanently moving in 1951 to Carlisle Barracks, which has long been associated with the military educational system. Before hosting the USAWC, Carlisle was the home of the first permanent School of Artillery for the Continental Army, the Army's School of Cavalry in pre-Civil War America, and the site of the Indian Industrial School in the latter part of the 19th century and early years of the 20th century.

Because change is constant in the educational process, the USAWC curriculum has always grown and evolved in reaction to changes in the world-security situation as outlined in current U.S. strategic security documents – which also evolve and change on a continuing basis. The requirement for a shift in focus of the USAWC curriculum was probably never more evident, though, than in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center Towers and the Pentagon. In fact, not since the early days of World War II has the topic of homeland security been given so much attention not only at the USAWC and other U.S. naval and military educational institutions but also at the Pentagon and White House, and on Capitol Hill.

"To Preserve Peace … to Study and Confer"

The recent changes in the USAWC curriculum come as no surprise, though, to anyone familiar with the school's history. Secretary Root made it clear from the beginning that the principal purpose of the USAWC would not be to promote war, "but to preserve peace by intelligent and adequate preparation to repel aggression ...

Continued on the Next Page

[and] to study and confer on the great problems of national defense, of military science, and of responsible command." Obviously, because the "great problems of national defense" Root referred to change so frequently – and often without warning – the USAWC curriculum also should, and must, change if it is to carry out the mandate it has been assigned.

Maj. Gen. David Huntoon Jr., the current USAWC commandant, echoes Root's sentiments in his own mission statement, which simply and succinctly states that, "We have recently analyzed our mission, reassessed why we exist, and how we accomplish the mission through our principal functions of education, research, and publication, strategic communication, and well being. These functional areas will continue to be the focus of what we do. Our task is clear: We must anticipate and shape the future, and then effectively manage institutional change and increase the effectiveness and efficiency in all that we have been charged to do.

"We achieve this purpose," the mission statement continues, "by accomplishing the mission derived from Army Regulation 10-44 and TRADOC [Training and Doctrine Command] Regulation 10-10, 'USAWC': To prepare selected military, civilian, and international leaders for the responsibilities of strategic leadership; educate current and future leaders on the development and employment of land-power in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environment; research and publish on national security and military strategy; and engage in activities that support the Army's strategic communication efforts."

The Guiding Principle of Constant Change

In the field of homeland security, it is to the Army's, and Huntoon's, credit that the USAWC curriculum has changed not only to anticipate but also to eventually help shape the future. Which should not be too surprising – naval/military theorists and contingency planners throughout the world have long recognized that in times of war the guiding principle should be the old adage that "the only constant is change."

The truth of those words has been demonstrated many times throughout the post-WWII era, when – despite the ominous shadow cast by the Cold War – there have been numerous changes in traditional war-fighting scenarios – e.g., from the major theaters of war that were the strategic focus during World War II to an emphasis on brushfire and guerrilla wars and other localized conflicts.

In addition, and with only a few exceptions, warfare has also, in recent years, encompassed more, and more violent, intrastate and interstate rivalries. In fact, it has seemed at times, and in certain areas of the world, an encore performance of how world affairs were carried out in the two centuries preceding World Wars I and II. There were in that era, for example, various "Small War" contingencies in the Philippines and the Caribbean (where U.S. forces were heavily involved in the so-called "Banana Wars").

More recently – i.e., since the attacks of 11 September 2001 – the face of warfare has further evolved, and the nation's strategic planners now face the multifaceted challenge of combating transnational terrorism, a massive but asymmetrical threat to U.S. national security that involves not only defense of the American homeland but also the potential use of military forces to protect critical infrastructure sites.

The second- and third-level effects of what planners see as a constantly changing battlefield of the future have necessitated a reexamination of all previous doctrinal and training practices and subjects. In the U.S. Army, soldier and leader development comes in the form of training the individual, both in the unit and in the institution. Institutional training refers to the MOS (military occupational specialty) -producing "school house" or institution for each functional branch of the Army – e.g., Ft. Benning (Ga.) for the Infantry Branch and Ft. Knox (Ky.) for the Armor and Cavalry Branch. At these and other posts, the training for traditional military operations has been excellent for many years, and has prepared the Army well for the conduct of major theater warfare.

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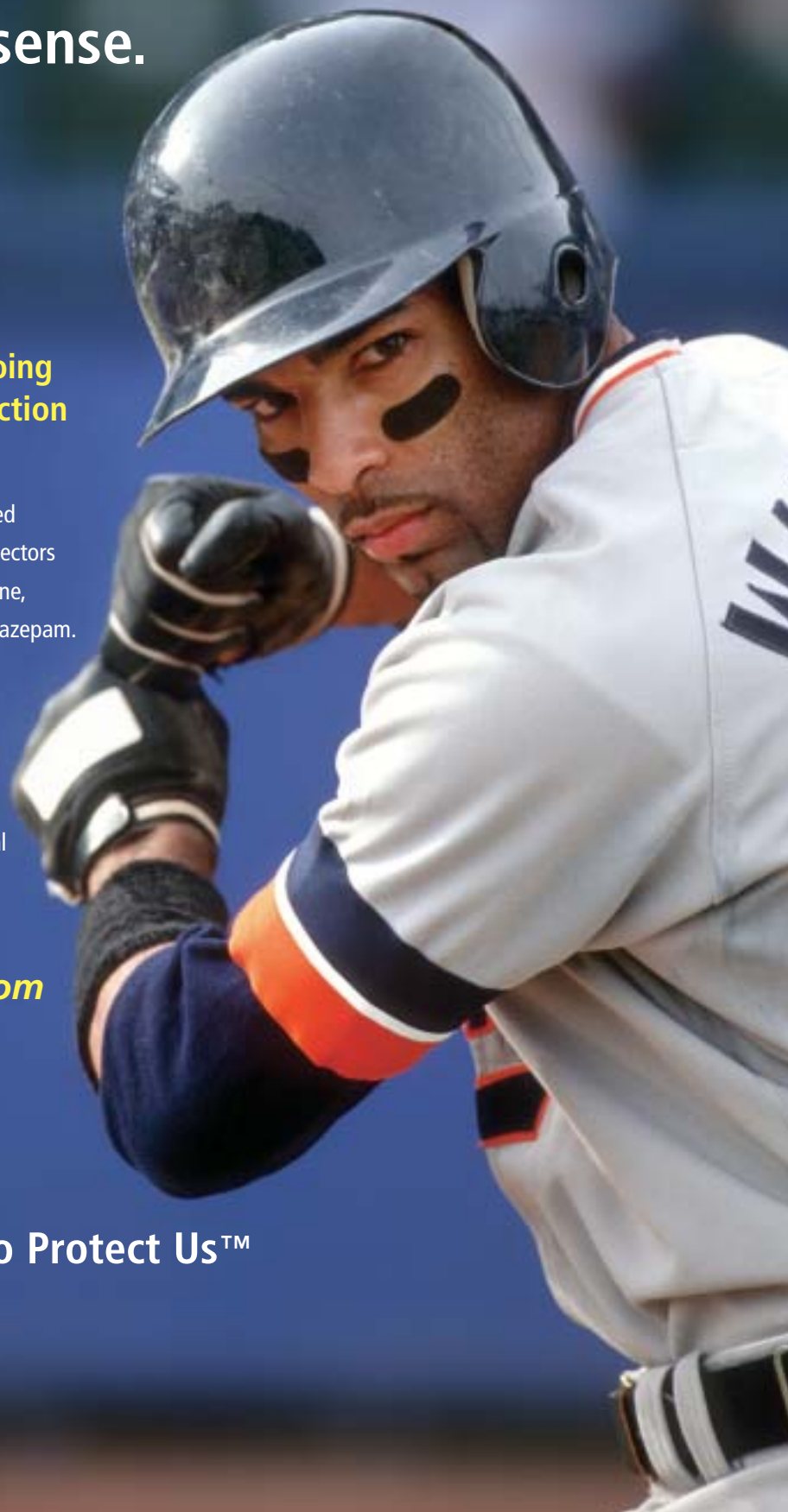

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In confronting the anomalies of asymmetric warfare, however – particularly as waged by the forces of international terrorism – the service's track record has been somewhat less stellar. Again, though, this is not surprising. Even today, few if any of the military forces of any nation in the world could be considered fully prepared to combat terrorism. The same is true, of course, of most if not quite all national governments and political leaders as well.

With the introduction, a full century ago, of codified doctrine in the form of printed Field Manuals (FMs), the U.S. Army started a long era of tremendous progress in training and doctrine policies and procedures. As the latest version of *The Army* (U.S. Army Field Manual *FM-1*) states, "Since the 1980s, the Army developed a comprehensive doctrinal construct for assessing current capabilities and managing change. The Army maintains a trained and ready force and develops future capabilities by carefully balancing six imperatives: doctrine, organizations, materiel, leader development, training, and Soldiers." These six imperatives are to be synchronized with one another to ensure an effective fighting force.

The resulting effects on institutional training of the changing battlefield have been recognized at the highest levels of the Army and incorporated into the current curriculum of the USAWC. For example, resident students must now, among other requirements, successfully complete six core courses in addition to four electives and a strategic research project; the latter is a written paper on a topic decided upon in collaboration with a faculty advisor.

The USAWC core courses consist of: Fundamentals of Strategic Thinking, Theory of War and Strategy, Strategic Leadership, National Security Policy and Strategy, Implementing National Military Strategy, and Joint Processes and Landpower Development.

Electives: The Most Notable Change

Although each core course reflects the change in focus from traditional operations to the asymmetric threat, the most notable change is in the elective courses offered by each teaching department of the USAWC.

For example, the school's Department of Command, Leadership, and Management now offers the following electives: Military Assistance to Civil Authorities; and Reserve Components: Organization, Roles, and Issues. The Department of National Security and Strategy offers Regional Studies electives, including the Americas, Civil-Military Relations in Comparative Perspective, Homeland Security Policy and Strategy, and Militant Islam.

In addition to the institution's teaching departments, the USAWC Center for Strategic Leadership offers an elective on Weapons of Mass Destruction. The electives named, combined with other curriculum changes, represent a marked increase in focus not only on the overall field of homeland security but also on a number of ancillary topics that are related to and/or affect U.S. homeland security in various ways.

In addition, the topics selected by students as their strategic-research projects reflect the same recent increased emphasis on homeland-security issues. USAWC students have always had a wide variety of subjects to consider when choosing their strategic-research topics. Since the beginning of the 2002 school year, however, no fewer than 75 students, close to ten percent of the eligible student population, selected a topic related to homeland security. Not surprisingly, in view of their mission, many National Guard and Reserve students are included in that number, but quite a few active-component students also selected homeland-security issues for their projects.

Thanks to the focus on the future displayed by the USAWC leadership, and the commitment of students and faculty alike to stay on the "leading edge" of current changes in U.S. national-security policies, the institution's ability to adapt an always demanding curriculum to meet the changing paradigms of warfare has been nothing less than exceptional. It seems obvious, therefore, that the USAWC has continued to follow the mandate of scholarly excellence postulated by Secretary Root more than a century ago and fully deserves the place of honor it holds in both the military and private-sector educational communities.

Agitated Delirium: A Primer for EMS/Law-Enforcement Personnel

By Jay Kehoe
Law Enforcement

The sudden death of anyone is a personal tragedy for that person's friends and relatives. It also is a complex and difficult issue for the nation's law-enforcement, EMS (emergency medical services), and correctional-agencies personnel to deal with. Sudden death is defined by the World Health Organization as cardiorespiratory collapse occurring within 24 hours of symptoms. Many U.S. medical authorities, however, have adopted the definition of sudden death as cardiorespiratory collapse occurring within one hour of the onset of symptoms.

Unfortunately, EMS personnel and/or other first responders usually arrive on the scene, responding to the acute medical problem, with little or no knowledge of when the first symptoms occurred or if there has been a report of bizarre behaviors.

Sudden *In-Custody* death, a situation fraught with legal and other complications, is broadly defined as "any unintentional death that occurs while a subject is in police custody." Such deaths usually take place after a subject has demonstrated bizarre and/or violent behavior, and has been restrained. These deaths, which frequently appear similar in various respects to the sudden deaths of infants, are not a new phenomenon in the United States – some Agitated-Delirium-related sudden deaths, as they are also described, have been documented as early as 1849. Restraint-related deaths have been a concern for some time of both American and British doctors working with the insane, and were explored in detail, in the journal *Insanity*, in an article written by a Massachusetts doctor, Dr. Luther V. Bell.

There were fewer than 200 sudden in-custody deaths reported in the United States in 2004, many of them deemed the result of Agitated Delirium or Excited Delirium. To put those numbers in context, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement reported 1,128 cocaine-related deaths in the year 1998 (the latest year for which complete data is available).

A Sad But Familiar Pattern

The scenarios for most in-custody deaths follow a familiar pattern: A 911 call is received reporting an individual exhibiting bizarre behavior. Police, EMS, and/or correctional personnel respond to find an incoherent individual, sweating profusely and suffering from such other symptoms as a high body temperature, dilated pupils, and skin discoloration.

When confronted, the subject struggles, forcing the first responders to employ force, which may include the use of pepper spray, batons, electronic-control devices, neck holds, and various restraint techniques. Typically, the subject is taken to the ground and restrained, then put into a prone position for transport to a medical facility or jail. During transport, however, the subject becomes suddenly calm (which is a major indication of an impending problem). The calm state is followed by unconsciousness, labored shallow breathing, and then death – even if medical intervention has been attempted.

In the circumstances described, it frequently happens that the print and broadcast media will magnify the tragedy by the use of such terms as "Another Pepper Spray Death," "Another Hogtie Death," or "Another Taser Death" (depending, of course, on which device or restraint had been used). Such headlines are read, collected, and (far too frequently) believed by the decedent's family and friends, along with members of special-interest groups.

Regrettably, many of these people either cannot or will not believe that the person who died did so at least partly as a result of his (or, very rarely, her) negative lifestyle choices (e.g., addiction to alcohol, cocaine, and/or other drugs; a failure to take the neuroleptic medications prescribed; a struggle with police and/or EMS personnel). The end result is that the police, paramedics, and/or hospital personnel are unfairly blamed for causing the death of the person.

Continued on the Next Page

A Broad Range of Contemporary Theories

According to the recently created Institute for the Prevention of In-Custody Deaths (IPICD), an estimated 99 percent of all in-custody deaths involve males, generally between the ages of 35-44. The person is usually involved in a struggle, and the deaths generally follow episodes of bizarre behavior and/or the use of illegal drugs. Geographic residence does not seem to be a factor in these in-custody sudden deaths.

Contemporary theories of in-custody sudden death are too numerous to list here, but the most currently accepted theories include the following:

1. Positional, postural, restraint, or compression asphyxia (i.e., caused, for example, by prone positioning, hogtie restraints, lateral vascular neck restraint, and/or the overwhelming weight of several officers required to gain control)
2. Pepper spray-induced
3. Psychological-induced (psychogenic death, emotional stress)
4. Pharmacological-induced (drug interaction and/or combinations and/or rapid drug withdrawal).
5. Physiological: Cardiomyopathy (due to genetics and/or negative lifestyle choices)
6. Physiological: Metabolic Acidosis (the buildup, during a struggle, of lactate beyond the body's ability to cope with it, causing the person to exert himself to death)
7. Physiological: Catecholamine Damage (a heart attack due to epinephrine and dopamine levels)
8. Environmental (e.g., a drop in barometric pressure)
9. Electronic control device-induced ventricular fibrillation.
10. Electronic control device-induced cardiac damage.
11. Firearms.
12. Impact weapons (batons, bean bags, etc.)
13. Restraint exacerbation of drug abuse.

A Multidisciplinary Approach to EMS Education

Obviously, law-enforcement, emergency-medical, and correctional personnel all need to develop a higher awareness of the ramifications of sudden in-custody deaths. Until recently, however, little information has been available on this highly publicized phenomenon. The previously mentioned IPICD fills that gap by offering much-needed training in this area. The institute, headquartered in Henderson, Nev., serves as a combined clearinghouse, resource center, and training provider dedicated to providing interested parties with objective, timely, accurate, qualitative, and quantitative information, training, and operational guidance on matters related to the prevention and management of sudden- and in-custody deaths

IPICD President John G. Peters Jr., Ph.D., A. David Berman of Defensive Tactical Institute, Robert R. Pletcher (a retired police chief), and attorneys Teri Himebaugh and Michael A. Brave have combined their several decades of legal, medical, and research experience to develop and present an instructor program on *The Identification, Prevention, Management, and Investigation of Sudden In-Custody Deaths*. Their courses, which provide a multidisciplinary approach to educating police, medical, and correctional personnel, are currently offered free of charge to interested agencies. (Schedule and registration information can be located on the institute's website, www.ipicd.com)

Continued on the Next Page

September Is National Preparedness Month!

What Are *YOU* Doing About It?

Homeland Defense Begins At Home!

One of the IPICD's goals is to help implement a paradigm shift in emergency services by training personnel to recognize that events such as those described above are *medical emergencies* and not always, or necessarily, criminal acts. In fact, a study on this very thesis is currently being conducted by Dr. Jeffrey Ho of Minneapolis, who is reviewing 162 cases of such deaths and seeking to determine the effect of rapid medical intervention on the survivability of persons in the conditions mentioned. Results of his study are scheduled to be presented at two emergency-medical conferences in the fall of 2005.

The IPICD course, which focuses on basic education about sudden in-custody deaths, teaches emergency personnel how to identify the behavioral indicators – in both a law-enforcement and correctional setting – of high-risk candidates. Extensive course time is devoted to a discussion, for both law enforcement and medical purposes, of liability theories and to demonstrating how force-continuum issues relate to the seizure of individuals. Action plans for the prevention and/or investigation of a sudden in-custody death also are discussed in detail.

It is important to note that the Agitated Delirium/ Excited Delirium phenomenon has few if any boundaries. It will be experienced equally by both small and large agencies. The education of front-line personnel in rapid identification of this condition – combined with the education of investigators, medical examiners, and judicial officials as well – may well lead to an improvement in the procedures used for coping with this deadly condition.

States of Preparedness

By Adam McLaughlin
State Homeland News

Arizona

Strengthens Security of Drinking-Water Supply

The city of Tucson will serve as a laboratory to test the security-notification protocols that will be needed in the event that the city's drinking-water supply system becomes contaminated with dangerous chemicals. According to an announcement made in late July by Rep. James Kolbe (R-Ariz.), the Department of the Interior will allocate $450,000 to help provide the funding for a continuous monitoring system that the city has been trying to emplace for three years.

"The main goal is to develop an online monitoring program with sensors that alert the water company should anything be detected," said Tucson Water Director David Modeer. "Water samples will be taken to federal government laboratories for analysis, then the data will be used to program computers that would check for changes. The sooner we know something has gone wrong, the sooner we can protect the public," Modeer said.

"Protecting our water is not cheap," commented Bruce Johnson, Tucson Water's assistant director. Since the September 2001 terrorist attacks, Tucson has spent about $3 million on security measures to "harden" its drinking-water supply system against a terrorist attack, and Tucson Water now has 24 quality monitors in place that cost about $50,000 each.

"The tests will probably not start until at least early next year," Modeer said. "Federal agencies have to be more 'nimble' in the wake of the 9/11 attacks," he added.

California

Provides Port of Los Angeles $750,000 in Security Grants

The California Office of Homeland Security has announced that the Port of Los Angeles will be provided $750,000 in new security grants, or not quite one-sixth of the nearly $5 million that the state has been allocated from the federal government's fiscal year 2005 Port Security Grant Program. The latest grant, announced on 27 July, brings to just over $16 million the total in state and federal homeland-security funds received by the Port of Los Angeles to date. The nation's leading container port and a critical hub in the international supply chain, the Port of Los Angeles generates thousands of stable jobs and billions of dollars in annual wages and tax revenues.

Continued on the Next Page

A portion of the $750,000 grant will be used to purchase, train, and house two additional K-9 police dogs used for the detection of explosives. Unlike the Port Police drug-sniffing dogs, which are certified by the California Narcotics Canine Association and trained to sniff and locate narcotics throughout the cargo and passenger ships that move through the Port, the Port Police bomb dogs are specifically trained to sniff out explosive materials. Their primary assignment, officials said, will be to patrol cruise ships and the port's World Cruise Center Terminal.

Another share of the grant funding will be used to purchase additional key equipment for the port's underwater-surveillance operations, hazardous-materials-response team, and visual-surveillance operations. "We were very happy to hear the news [about the grant funds]," said Port Director of Operations and Emergency Management Noel Cunningham. "Our goal is to be one of the safest ports in America, and these funds will help us implement additional security measures."

Nebraska
Conducts CERT Training in North Platte

Instructors from the Omaha (Metro) Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) provided 21 hours of training over a three-day period for their colleagues on the North Platte CERT unit. During the training program, carried out in late July, the volunteers of the North Platte CERT received instruction on, among other topics, disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, disaster medical operations, light search-and-rescue operations, team operations, personal readiness, and terrorism recognition.

One of the scenarios the CERT members were called upon to respond to postulated a simulated mass-casualty incident caused by a tornado. EMS (emergency medical services) personnel were not close enough to respond, according to the scenario, so it was up to the CERT volunteers to assess the situation and take charge until the EMS professionals arrived on the scene. "The CERT volunteers would first do a damage assessment of the area, and make sure it is safe for entry," said Omaha (Metro) CERT Instructor Roseann Dobesh-DeGraff. "Then the triage and medical teams would go in to take care of the victims."

According to information provided by the Omaha (Metro) CERT instructors, teams are trained to provide aid during the first 72 hours of a disaster. "Depending on the guidelines of their training, the CERT members can self-activate after a natural disaster but would usually wait to be notified," Dobesh-DeGraff said.

The CERT concept has been promoted throughout the nation by the Federal Emergency Management Agency using a model created by the Los Angeles Fire Department. Additional information on the CERT program is available at http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/CERT/

Publisher's Note:

Bonni Tischler Succumbs to Cancer;
Customs and Border Channel Master

The DomPrep/T.I.P.S. team is saddened to report that our beloved colleague Bonni Tischler died of cancer on August 9, 2005. Bonni was a Channel Master for DomPrep T.I.P.S. and submitted articles in the Customs & Border WebChannel, including the January 12, 2005 launch issue. With a law-enforcement background, she was a special agent within Customs Service and became the agency's first woman to serve as assistant commissioner for the office of investigations. After retiring from government, she became Vice President for Pinkerton Consulting & Investigations' Homeland Security practice in Washington, D.C. A recognized expert in transportation and supply chain security, she had over 30 years experience in border security, anti-money laundering efforts, trade compliance, anti-smuggling, and fraud detection. Bonni began her career with the U.S. Customs Service in 1971 as one of the original Sky Marshals. She was the first woman to serve as the Assistant Commissioner of Customs, Office of Field Operations. Before becoming Assistant Commissioner of the OFO, Tischler was the Assistant Commissioner of the Office of Investigations.

Bonni will be missed by all who knew her.