



Emergency Management and Response Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

INFOGRAM 27-10

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***NOTE:** This INFOGRAM will be distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures. For further information, contact the Emergency Management and Response- Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) at (301) 447-1325 or by e-mail at emr-isac@dhs.gov.*

Plain Language Communications

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [Office of Emergency Communications](#) (OEC) contacted the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) and requested dissemination of the following information regarding plain language communications.

The OEC sponsored a Plain Language Working Group that developed the “Plain Language Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs) to highlight key challenges presented when moving from coded substitutions to plain language, along with examples of how agencies have handled these challenges in the past. The [Plain Language FAQs](#) are now available on the [SAFECOM website](#).

The information developed by the working group supported multiple educational and outreach efforts. Additionally, OEC conducted media interviews, including [one with NBC](#), produced an awareness video, and briefed multiple stakeholder groups, including members of Congress and officials within the Administration. In addition, a number of published articles addressed the topic of plain language, including those of March 2010 in [OnScene](#) and [PoliceOne](#).

Emergency Response Resources

According to the web site of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned that pre-event preparation, training, and access to readily available information, field assessment, and safety equipment are critical to minimizing deaths, injuries, and illnesses, and to promote overall workforce resilience.

“Once the event occurs the responders are placed under a time-urgent, dual-cognitive demand: 1) they must attend to the hazards (including attention to self and crew members’ safety and health), and 2) they must perform the work necessary to complete a rescue.” In the post-event stage (72 hours after the incident) responders may assess potential exposures, conduct rescues, and attempt recovery activities in constantly changing and complex hazardous environments.

The EMR-ISAC observed that the [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health](#) (NIOSH) produced four reports in collaboration with the [RAND Corporation](#). The first three reports provide recommendations and the need for research, training, and other strategic approaches to help protect emergency responders in terrorist attacks. The fourth report is a technical source for incident commander guidelines for emergency response immediately following large structural collapse events.

Free downloads of these reports can be accessed using the following hyperlinks:

- [Protecting Emergency Responders Lessons Learned from Terrorist Attacks.](#)
- [Community Views of Safety and Health Risks and Personal Protection Needs.](#)
- [Safety Management in Disaster and Terrorism Response.](#)
- [Personal Protective Equipment Guidelines for Structural Collapse Events.](#)

Public Health Emergency Web Site

Public Health Emergency (PHE.gov) is a web portal created by the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) (HHS) as a site for residents in the U.S. and worldwide to obtain information from all U.S. federal agencies involved in a public health emergency, a medical disaster, or the public health aspects of a [natural or man-made disaster](#).

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned that this site is maintained by the HHS [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response](#) to meet public information requirements of the [Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act of 2006](#) (PAHPA). Congress passed PAHPA “to improve the Nation’s public health and medical preparedness and response capabilities for emergencies, whether deliberate, accidental, or natural.” The Act established within HHS an Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response; guides HHS preparedness and response activities; provides specific authorities, including the advanced development and acquisitions of [medical countermeasures](#), and called for a quadrennial [National Health Security Strategy](#).

The EMR-ISAC noted that the portal provides specific information for [federal, state, and local emergency planners](#) to aid in preparing for and responding to public health emergencies. The site links to the necessary legal authorities and guidance, preparedness and planning tools, and specific preparedness programs for emergency planners. The site also supplies [responders](#) with information on physical safety and mental health, and guidance for dealing with specific public health emergencies.

Users of this portal can find the current status and actions taken by the federal government in preparing for and responding to public health emergencies and medical disasters, links to report potential public health threats, as well as information about [medical response](#), [emergency support functions](#) and [medical assistance](#) available through the federal government for domestic and international emergencies, as well as learn about U.S. efforts to provide basic and advanced research and development of medical countermeasures and how these countermeasures will be used in response to public health emergencies.

HHS agencies and divisions participating in the Public Health Emergency.gov site include the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Aging, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Food and Drug Administration, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, and many others. Additional Federal Agencies participating in this site include but are not limited to the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Environmental Protection Agency, and Veterans Administration.

EMR-ISAC Staff Change

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) regrets to announce the departure of Ms. Kelly Stern effective 30 June. Throughout the past year, Ms. Stern excellently assisted thousands of Emergency Services Sector personnel, particularly with initiating or renewing subscriptions to receive the information products disseminated by this Center.

Additionally, the EMR-ISAC welcomes the arrival of a new staff member. Ms. Jody Morris comes to this position from the National Emergency Training Center’s Learning Resource Center and will begin full-time performance of duties on 19 July. Ms. Morris will be responsible for all subscription matters as well as the database management performed by her predecessor.

Those individuals who have communicated with the EMR-ISAC between 23 June and the present for subscription or renewal purposes are requested to patiently await action by the EMR-ISAC as duties are effectively transferred to Ms. Morris with associated orientation and training. However, if you have any questions or concerns about the status of your matter, contact this Center at emr-isac@dhs.gov or at 301-447-1325.

DISCLAIMER OF ENDORSEMENT

The U.S. Fire Administration/EMR-ISAC does not endorse the organizations sponsoring linked web sites, and does not endorse the views they express or the products/services they offer.

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REPORTING NOTICE

The National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Infrastructure Protection is the central point for notifications regarding infrastructure threats, disruptions, intrusions, and suspicious activities. Emergency Services Sector personnel are requested to report any incidents or attacks involving their infrastructures using at least the first and second points of contact seen below:

- 1) NICC - Voice: 202-282-9201, Fax: 703-487-3570, E-Mail: nicc@dhs.gov
- 2) Your local FBI office - Web: www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm
- 3) EMR-ISAC - Voice: 301-447-1325, E-Mail: emr-isac@dhs.gov, fax: 301-447- 1034,
Web: www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac, Mail: E-108, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727