



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

INFOGRAM 31-09

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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.*

The Growing Laser Threat

In its April 2003 Law Enforcement Bulletin, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported that laser pointers, handheld lasers, and other bright light sources were being pointed at helicopters and aircraft from the ground at an alarming rate. Considering more current news accounts of laser attacks, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center \(EMR-ISAC\)](#) examined this matter and substantiated that the FBI and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently notified law enforcement agencies regarding the growing threat from persons armed with lasers.

FBI and DHS memos stated there is no specific or credible intelligence that would indicate laser incidents are connected to terrorists. "As far as we know, lasers are not the terrorists' weapon of choice." However, both the FBI and DHS recommend emergency departments "at least consider the possibility of a more sinister motivation when investigating laser incidents and always make notifications to other agencies when necessary."

According to a 29 July article at PoliceOne.com, laser threats range from general distraction to permanent eye damage. Although many varieties of pointers exist, "green-dot lasers are becoming more popular because they are brighter and more powerful than the standard red-dot lasers." The EMR-ISAC learned that some of these devices can project a beam exceeding 1,500 feet. Pulse lasers are particularly dangerous because they emit short bursts of light that give the victim no chance to look away.

Federal government law enforcement and homeland security officials encourage first responder organizations to prepare now for this growing threat. They suggest meeting with local, state, and federal security personnel to promote awareness and develop protective measures. They also recommend local elected leaders draft appropriate laws to deal with attacks within their jurisdiction.

NIMS ICS Position Specific Courses

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center \(EMR-ISAC\)](#) confirmed that the Incident Management System Integration Division (IMSID) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will be offering [National Incident Management System \(NIMS\)](#) (PDF, 3.8 MB) Incident Command System (ICS) compliant [All-Hazards ICS position specific courses](#) through the Emergency Management Institute (EMI).

EMI will be offering these 15 courses on-campus at the National Emergency Training Center (Emmitsburg, MD) during the 2010 Fiscal Year beginning in October 2009. Emergency Services Sector personnel interested in examining more information regarding eligibility requirements, reimbursement, transportation, and lodging expenses can be seen at [EMI's web site](#). The EMR-ISAC verified that courses will be eligible for delivery utilizing grant monies and will be included on the Training and Exercise Index list from DHS/IMSID.

Emergency Services personnel will be trained and become eligible to apply to serve on a Type 3 All-Hazard Incident Management Team (IMT). The following describes an IMT, according to the NIMS document:

- Includes command and general staff members and support personnel.
- Possesses statutory authority and/or formal response requirements and responsibilities.
- Incorporates pre-designated roles and responsibilities for members.
- Maintains 24/7/365 availability.

The following explains a Type 3 All-Hazards Incident Management Team:

- Managed at the state, regional or metropolitan level for extended incidents as a multi-agency/multi-jurisdiction team. May be activated by a State EOC, or regional or municipal authority.
- Deployed as a team of 10-20 trained personnel to manage major and/or complex incidents requiring a significant number of local, regional, and state resources, and incidents that extend into multiple operational periods and require a written Incident Action Plan.
- Utilized at natural disaster incidents, law enforcement centric incidents, major exercises, or at planned events.
- Deployed to initially manage larger, more complex incidents prior to arrival of and transition to a Type 2 or Type 1 IMT if required or available.

TRANSCAER Whistle-Stop Tour

While researching no-cost hazardous materials training opportunities, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned of the 2009 Norfolk Southern Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response ([TRANSCAER](#)) Whistle-Stop Tour.

Their [TRANSCAER Whistle-Stop Tour](#) brochure states that the training is designed to increase community understanding of the importance of emergency planning, to provide local emergency response groups an opportunity to receive some hands-on training, and to talk about additional training needs. Demonstrations and presentations will be focused on rail, truck, and chemical specific information.

According to their web site, TRANSCAER is sponsored by manufacturers, shippers, carriers, and other industries involved in the transportation of hazardous materials. Industries include railroads, trucking companies, chemical producers and distributors, emergency response contractors, as well as trade associations.

The EMR-ISAC particularly noted that the TRANSCAER staff can help local officials identify hazardous materials moving through their communities. Assistance is offered in developing and evaluating a community emergency response plan. In addition to this training, other opportunities are offered throughout the country.

Fire Response to the NIU Shooting

This week, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) released a new technical report titled "[Northern Illinois University Shooting](#)." (PDF, 1.8 MB) The document discusses the events of 14 February 2008, when a former graduate student walked onto the stage of a large lecture hall and began firing on startled students and faculty. The shooter shot and killed 5 students, wounded 18, and ended the brief attack by committing suicide.

Upon reviewing this report, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) understands the City of DeKalb Fire Department, Northern Illinois University (NIU) Department of Public Safety, Kishwaukee Community Hospital, and other mutual aid responders were prepared. “They had practiced emergency drills together and coordinated their planning.” They were also familiar with the Incident Command System and had formally incorporated its use in their planning.

From after-action accounts of this tragic incident, the situation was handled with the highest levels of skill and expertise. “The multiagency response cooperation in Dekalb was virtually a textbook application of Unified Command and the National Incident Management System.” The EMR-ISAC noted the key element contributing to the success of operations was NIU had a very well-defined plan that was exercised routinely.

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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: <http://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/subjects/emr-isac, Mail: E-108, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727