



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

INFOGRAM 19-09

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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.*

Influenza Pandemic: GAO Report

Influenza is usually seasonal, and typically, there is very limited circulation in the northern hemisphere during our summer months, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Regarding next fall, the CDC Interim Deputy Director for Science and Public Health Programs said this week: "We don't know whether the novel H1N1 virus will circulate in the United States next fall, and if it circulates, whether it will be more severe, of similar severity or less severe than now."

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) suggests that the potential for the H1N1 virus to reappear in the 2009-2010 Flu Season (1 November to 31 March) adds credence to the recently released U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) study entitled: "Sustaining Focus on the Nation's Planning and Preparedness Efforts." The GAO study contains a body of work conducted over the past several years to help the nation better prepare for, respond to, and recover from a possible influenza pandemic, which could result from a novel strain of a highly transmissible influenza virus among humans.

In this study, the GAO synthesized the results of 11 reports and 2 testimonies into several conclusions. The EMR-ISAC summarized these major GAO findings as follows:

- Leadership roles and responsibilities need to be clarified and tested, and coordination mechanisms could be better utilized.
- Efforts are underway to improve the surveillance and detection of pandemic-related threats.
- Pandemic planning and exercising has occurred, but planning gaps remain.
- Further actions are needed to address the capacity to respond to and recover from an influenza pandemic.
- Federal agencies have provided considerable guidance and pandemic-related information, but could augment their efforts.
- Performance monitoring and accountability for pandemic preparedness need strengthening.

The complete GAO report can be accessed at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09334.pdf>.

ESS Crime Fighting Potential

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) acknowledges that the use of non-law enforcement Emergency Services Sector (ESS) personnel in crime fighting is controversial and potentially problematic, despite being advocated in best-practices documents, professional journals, and academic papers. Nevertheless, the EMR-ISAC continues to find instances where firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics—in the performance of normal duties—have appropriately assisted their police counterparts.

For example, a local firefighter in Texas recently observed a man burning a police uniform and some other questionable items in a fire pit. Believing the individual's actions were suspicious, the firefighter immediately contacted the local police department. Upon questioning the suspect, the police officers discovered that he was the one who broke into a parked, unmarked police vehicle and removed guns, body armor, other equipment, and official identification. After further investigation, the law enforcers apprehended two of the man's relatives who were accomplices in the crime. The three perpetrators were subsequently charged with multiple felonies.

This example demonstrates that there are legally acceptable ways for first responders who are not sworn officers of the law to support community anti-crime, anti-terrorism, and infrastructure protection efforts by suspicious activity reporting. It further substantiates that ESS personnel can not only help identify suspects, but also assist in acquiring missing pieces of puzzles needed to prevent future crimes. EMR-ISAC research verifies that such vigilance and cooperation will likely make a positive difference in the safety and security of local municipalities.

Suspicious activity should be reported to the local law enforcement agency, but also to the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center: voice: 202-282-9201; Fax: 703-487-3570; E-mail: nicc@dhs.gov.

More information about the described incident can be seen at:
<http://www.firegeezzer.com/2009/03/30/alert-firefighter-cracks-major-crime>.

Resilience Resources

When the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) first reported on critical infrastructure resiliency (CIR) in 2006, the concept of resiliency as it related to the role of the Emergency Services Sector (ESS) in disasters was considered a new trend.

This year, the Community and Regional Resilience Initiative (CARRI), part of Oak Ridge National Laboratory, created the Community and Regional Resilience Institute (CRRI) to further work it began in 2007, when it received Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding to examine what the term "resilience" meant in the context of homeland security. At that time, former DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff said, "We have to focus on resiliency as well as preparedness—that means the community's ability to rebound and restore critical government and business functions after a disaster occurs."

CARRI considers a community resilient if it anticipates problems and opportunities, reduces vulnerabilities, responds effectively, fairly, and legitimately, and recovers rapidly and safely. Further, a resilient community recognizes that in addition to the key disaster management services provided by the ESS and local governments, private sector and non-governmental organizations are critical components of the fabric of a community and play significant roles in community and regional disaster resilience.

The EMR-ISAC confirmed that CARRI developed a community resilience framework outlining processes and tools communities can use to become more resilient, by using input from its partner communities, lessons learned from around the nation, and guidance from ORNL-convened researchers schooled in the diverse disciplines that comprise resilience,. The CARRI process can be seen at http://www.resilientus.org/library/the-carri-community-process_1241113352.pdf.

Additionally, CARRI is finalizing a community implementation package that provides the basic materials to enable a community to understand and take ownership of the CARRI process with ongoing Institute guidance and mentoring. Available at its web site are fact sheets, presentations, white papers, reports, a searchable resilience bibliography, and archived issues of its free electronic monthly newsletter. To access the resources, visit <http://www.resilientus.org>.

DHS TechSolutions

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) learned that a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate's (DHS S&T) program, TechSolutions, launched a new web site to improve and streamline the process for Emergency Services Sector (ESS) members to advise DHS of capability gaps, and also to suggest technology solutions that currently do not exist.

TechSolutions program director, Greg Price, seeks ideas from ESS personnel at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels for solutions that will help them do their jobs faster, more efficiently, and more effectively. Among proposals already submitted are 3-D location devices that provide X, Y, and Z coordinates for responders within a building, and an Ohio firefighter's plan for a fireground compass that provides orientation in a smoky building. Price said he typically looks for concept solutions for which a prototype can be developed within 12 to 15 months at a cost of a million dollars or less, or is commensurate with the price of the effort.

At the new web site, responders can check DHS projects already underway before they submit their own capability gap ideas/solutions. When an idea is submitted, the responder receives an automated e-mail response indicating that it was received. Throughout the process, the submitter receives updated information on whether or not it has been accepted. At the "My Submission" section, individuals can monitor the progress of their idea. If they have made multiple submissions, they can click and check the status of any of the projects at any given time. Responders decide how involved they want to be in the process once they submit an idea, and are not financially or in any other way obligated. The EMR-ISAC notes that a number of currently funded TechSolutions projects can help to preserve and protect ESS critical assets. To explore the new web site, go to www.TechSolutions.DHS.gov.

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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: J-247, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727