



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

INFOGRAM 5-09

February 5, 2009

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.

Avoiding Cyber Attacks

With increasing frequency, criminals, terrorists, spies, and hackers are manipulating cyber technology including systems, applications, and devices to further their illicit objectives. Research by the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) substantiated that Internet technology has emerged as the preferred medium for iniquitous communication to connect cohorts, plan activities, acquire supplies, and manage logistics.

According to the FBI's Cyber Division, the progress of technology is unstoppable, and our adversaries will continue to use the Internet, portable storage devices, cellular phones, software, a variety of different mobile-to-web and web-to-mobile technologies, as well as other technological advances in the pursuit of their goals. Shawn Henry, Director of the FBI's Cyber Division, recently stated that cyber attacks are getting more sophisticated and can threaten both the economy and national security.

The EMR-ISAC confirmed that the unprecedented interdependencies among American critical infrastructures have created vulnerabilities with potential disruptions to the information that flows electronically 24x7. Exploitation of these vulnerabilities can degrade essential capabilities such as computer-aided dispatching. This is a harsh reality for the Emergency Services Sector because computers and networks have become an integral internal infrastructure that cannot be interrupted or destroyed without jeopardizing continuity of emergency response operations.

The former Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for Cyber Security called on every organization using networked technology to accept responsibility for securing their part of cyberspace by taking cyber risks seriously, ensuring that any cyber incidents, threats, or attacks are reported to the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) at 888-282-0870, and by using the safeguards available at the following web sites: www.us-cert.gov (US-CERT), www.onguardonline.gov (OnGuardOnline), and also www.staysafeonline.org (National Cyber Security Alliance).

2009 National Gang Threat Assessment

According to the 2009 National Gang Threat Assessment, "gangs pose a serious threat to public safety in many communities throughout the United States." This assessment, prepared by the Justice Department's National Gang Intelligence Center, states that gang members are progressively moving from urban to suburban areas and are responsible for a growing percentage of crime and violence in countless municipalities. "Much gang-related criminal activity involves drug trafficking; however, gang members are increasingly engaging in alien and weapons trafficking." The assessment also indicates that a rising number of American gangs are intent on developing working relationships with U.S.-and foreign-based drug trafficking organizations and other criminal organizations to gain direct access to foreign sources of illicit drugs.

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) reviewed the document and offers the following key findings:

- Local street gangs continue to account for the largest number of gangs nationwide.
- Gang members commit as much as 80 percent of crime in some localities.
- Gang membership was estimated at 1 million in September 2008, a rise of approximately 200,000 since 2005.
- Approximately 147,000 gang members are currently incarcerated, which has not reduced gang activity.
- Prison gangs are involved in drug distribution and sometimes control activities in communities through members who have been released back into society.
- At this time there are 11 national-level street gangs identified in the United States.

After reviewing the document, the EMR-ISAC understands that U.S.-based gangs, including outlaw motorcycle groups, “continue to evolve and adapt, and pose a growing threat” to American law enforcement authorities and other Emergency Services Sector departments and agencies. The assessment can be seen at <http://www.fbi.gov/publications/ngta2009.pdf> (9MB, 48 pages).

DHS Grant Opportunities

Applications are being accepted now through 6 March 2009 for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) competitive grants, awarded to mitigate high incidences of death and injury and to perform research for improving Emergency Services Sector (ESS) safety.

Past FP&S projects included smoke alarm installation, fire prevention and public safety education campaigns, juvenile fire setter interventions, media campaigns, and arson prevention and awareness programs. Available online this week is program guidance with detailed information on priorities and areas of emphasis for current grant applications.

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) notes that DHS encourages departments and agencies to submit applications electronically to take advantage of the help screens and drop-down menus within the automated process. Electronic applications can be saved and retrieved for updates until the application process ends. The system alerts applicants when required information has not been entered and automatically sends an electronic confirmation when applications have been submitted successfully. The online system allows one authorized representative from eligible organizations to log on and create a user name and password.

An applicant tutorial for FP&S grants is available at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/fps/tutorial.aspx>. All applications must be completed and submitted electronically, or postmarked on or before the close of business (5:00 p.m. EST) March 6, 2009. To request a paper application, or ask questions, call the Help Desk at 1-866-274-0960. The FP&S web site is <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/>.

On a related matter, nationwide workshops begin this week and continue through mid-March to help interested emergency organizations prepare for the annual opening of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program’s grant application period. Attendees will learn about program changes, program priorities, eligibility requirements, and the application process, and also gain insight on writing a competitive narrative for a grant application. Registration for the free two-hour workshops is not necessary. For more information, see <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/workshop/display/workshops.aspx>.

To receive no-cost electronic newsletters that update AFG, FP&S, and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant information, visit <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/prog/newsletter.aspx>.

CHEMTREC

Established by the chemical industry in 1971, the Chemical Transportation Emergency Center (CHEMTREC®) provides emergency response information to Emergency Services Sector (ESS) departments and agencies on a 24x7 basis for incidents involving chemicals and hazardous materials. Recently, CHEMTREC created two videos to explain its services and operations. The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) reviewed the videos—one targeted to the chemical industry, the other to emergency responders—for their value in protecting personnel and their critical assets.

The video for first responders outlines the process that begins with an initial 911 call, responders' arrival at the incident, the subsequent call to CHEMTREC, and continues by describing the following CHEMTREC services:

- A 24x7 communications center with trained and certified hazmat specialists who have immediate access to a database of more than 30,000 manufacturers, shippers, carriers, public organizations, private resources, and an electronic library exceeding four million Material Safety Data Sheets.
- Call specialists who contact the manufacturer(s) and shipper(s) of the hazardous material(s) involved in an incident and link instantly with chemists, toxicologists, and medical personnel who are on duty 24x7.
- Medical experts who offer advice and emergency medical treatment assistance to ESS personnel on scene, and are available to speak with local receiving medical facilities.
- Call-takers who send needed information immediately to responders via phone, fax, or electronic mail, or remain on the phone if responders lack access to alternative communications modes.
- A translation service that enables information to be provided in 170 languages.
- Reports that capture and document scene information throughout the incident.

Subject experts on the responder video expand on CHEMTREC's services, noting that some chemical manufacturers send their own personnel to help with response operations. Additionally, CHEMTREC can activate its nationwide emergency responder contractor network. One expert clarifies that CHEMTREC successfully assists callers whose experience ranges from little to no training to those of highly trained hazmat teams. In terms of gauging CHEMTREC's success, its managing director explains that CHEMTREC will be successful when every responder knows the center's telephone number (1-800-424-9300) and takes advantage of its services. The video for emergency responders can be seen at <http://www.chemtrec.com/Chemtrec/>.

FAIR USE NOTICE

This INFOGRAM may contain copyrighted material that was not specifically authorized by the copyright owner. EMR-ISAC personnel believe this constitutes "fair use" of copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Law. If you wish to use copyrighted material contained within this document for your own purposes that go beyond "fair use," you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

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