



# Washington Update

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**January 15, 2006**

## **Table of Contents**

1. ACEP Releases First-Ever Report Card on the State of Emergency Care
2. NHSC Provides Recommendations on Implementation of the New Preparedness Directorate at DHS
3. Coalition to Sponsor Congressional Briefing on Feb. 24
4. Governor's Association Releases Report on EMAC
5. AEMS Releases 2005 Annual Report
6. FEMA Launches 'Determined Challenge' COOP Exercises
7. CDC Grant Applications Now Accepted through Grants Web Site
8. Public Demonstration to be Held on Changes to the Universal Licensing System
9. DHS Introduces Risk-Based Formula for Urban Areas Security Initiative Grants
10. Secretary Chertoff Announces New Members of the Homeland Security Advisory Council
11. CDC Releases Fact Sheet on Caring for Pregnant Women During Disaster
12. HHS Releases Guide to Help Individuals and Families Get Informed and Be Prepared for a Pandemic
13. Safety Engineers Offer Flu Infection Control Tips
14. NYCOSH Develops Mold Factsheet
15. ASTHO Executive Director to Retire July 1, 2006
16. ASTHO Alum Confirmed by Senate for HHS Position
17. E9-1-1 Institute Announces 9-1-1 Honor Awards Categories – Issues Call for Nominations
18. NC Posts Job Opening for Assistant Chief Emergency Medical Services
19. New Book Released on Ambulance History
20. Upcoming Events

### **1. ACEP Releases First-Ever Report Card on the State of Emergency Care**

The state of emergency care in America was assessed in a report released on Jan. 10 by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). A task force of experts assembled by ACEP used a range of available data to develop 50 measures for grading each state on a scale of A through F for its support in four areas: Access to Emergency Care, Quality and Patient Safety; Public Health and Injury Prevention; and Medical Liability Environment. The Report Card provides local, state and federal officials with information to identify their states' strengths and areas for improvement, while allowing them to make comparisons and learn from other states. The complete report is available at <http://www.acep.org>. Overall, the first-ever "National Report Card on the State of Emergency Medicine" finds an emergency care system characterized by overcrowding, declining access to care, soaring liability costs and a poor capacity to deal with public health or terrorist disasters. (Note: The NASEMSO Executive Committee has a number of questions regarding the methodology as well as the data utilized in preparing the report and will be providing feedback to ACEP. **State EMS Directors are asked to review the report and provided comments to [info@nasemsso.org](mailto:info@nasemsso.org), particularly as the report applies to their states.**)

## **2. NHSC Provides Recommendations on Implementation of the New Preparedness Directorate at DHS**

On Jan. 12, 2005, the National Homeland Security Consortium (NHSC) offered its assistance and support during the implementation of the new Preparedness Directorate within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In a letter to Secretary Chertoff, members expressed support for George Foresman as the first Undersecretary for Preparedness. NASEMSO is a member of NHSC and signed on to the letter.

NHSC submitted a series of principles on national preparedness and encouraged DHS to adopt them through the Preparedness Directorate. Additionally, NHSC submitted six recommendations. One, there should be more formalized standard operating procedures, through the Preparedness Directorate, for stakeholders to develop, review and comment on national plans, strategies and other key policy documents. Two, in order for DHS to formulate well thought out policy, there must be experienced and knowledgeable state, local and private sector representatives taking part in the process on the front end, and all appropriate disciplines must be included. Three, state, local and private sector officials need a reasonable and appropriate amount of time to review and comment on documents to allow for meaningful input by those charged with implementation. Four, summaries for state, local and private sector officials should be developed by DHS and shared as part of the document review process with direction on particular sections of the document most pertinent for state, local and private sector input. Five, the process for seeking input by select individuals or organizations should be more transparent to all stakeholders. Six, the NHSC is eager to serve as a vetting mechanism and sounding board for DHS and the federal government and will provide subject matter experts in the areas of homeland security, emergency management, law enforcement, fire, public health, EMS, National Guard, public works, emergency communications, and agriculture.

## **3. Coalition to Sponsor Congressional Briefing on Feb. 24**

The Coalition for American Trauma Care (CATC), together with other trauma-interested organizations (American College of Surgeons, American College of Emergency Physicians, American Hospital Association, American Trauma Society and National Association of State EMS Officials) is sponsoring a Congressional Briefing on Feb. 24, 2006, entitled "Saving Lives When Minutes Count: Briefing on a Public Health Model for Trauma Systems." The briefing is timed to coincide with the next HRSA Trauma Leadership meeting to present the new Model Trauma Systems Plan. Many state trauma program managers will attend and invite health staff from their respective Congressional offices to join them. It is an opportunity to educate a broad array of Congressional staff. Other organizations are invited to join in the sponsorship. For more information, contact CATC Executive Director Marcia Mabee at [mmabee@ix.netcom.com](mailto:mmabee@ix.netcom.com).

## **4. Governor's Association Releases Report on EMAC**

The National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices released "Beyond Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC): Legal Issues in Mutual Aid for Public Health Practice." The report examines some of the legal issues resulting from sharing certain out-of-state resources and offers some potential solutions. To read the report, visit <http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.9123e83a1f6786440ddcbeeb501010a0/?vgnnextoid=2a3a4b0bea0448010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCRD>.

## **5. AEMS Releases 2005 Annual Report**

Advocates for EMS (AEMS) released its 2005 Annual Report. Included in the report are the AEMS Advocacy Agenda; results of advocacy efforts; and the 2006 agenda. The report is available at <http://www.advocatesforems.org>.

## **6. FEMA Launches ‘Determined Challenge’ COOP Exercises**

FEMA’s Office of National Security has begun a series of tabletop exercises for all federal departments and agencies as part of the Interagency Continuity of Operations (COOP) program. Called Exercise Determined Challenge, it focuses on an agency’s ability to perform its essential functions under the scenario of a natural disaster. It also is designed to prepare agencies for participation in the upcoming interagency COOP full-scale exercise, Forward Challenge 06, scheduled for June 2006. This tabletop gives all exercise participants a chance to discuss and vet key planning issues that are relevant and pertinent across the interagency spectrum. Some of the major issues discussed in the exercise have resulted from changes in program policy, procedural changes, and lessons learned from previous exercises. Exercise Determined Challenge pays particular attention to improving interagency communications and identifying potential solutions for specific issues raised.

## **7. CDC Grant Applications Now Accepted through Grants Web Site**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now is required by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to receive grant applications through <http://www.grants.gov>. Non-competing, non-research continuing grant/cooperative agreement applications, now known as Interim Progress Reports, can be submitted by using the same Web site. Prior to submitting an application for grant or cooperative agreement continuation funding, grantees will need to register on the Web site in the “Getting Started” section. The registration process takes three to five business days to complete.

## **8. Public Demonstration to be Held on Changes to the Universal Licensing System**

As part of a continuing effort to improve the Federal Communication Commission’s (FCC) license management process, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) announces the public demonstration of changes to the Universal Licensing System (ULS) to implement an automated termination process for licenses and electronic filings of pleadings. WTB will hold a public demonstration of these modifications on Jan. 24, 2006, in the FCC Washington, D.C. headquarters. Pre-registration is required. To register for the seminar, contact Karen Shupe by e-mail at [Karen.Shupe@fcc.gov](mailto:Karen.Shupe@fcc.gov). This demonstration also is available for remote attendance via the Internet. Beginning Jan. 20, 2006, you will be able to find information about performing the needed installation and pre-test at <http://esupport.fcc.gov/streamingmedia.htm>. Following the presentation, a video of the event will be available at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/papers2006.html>.

## **9. DHS Introduces Risk-Based Formula for Urban Areas Security Initiative Grants**

On Jan. 3, 2006, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced \$765 million in direct funding for high threat urban areas as part of the fiscal year 2006 Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI). UASI provides resources for the unique equipment, training, planning, and exercise needs of select high threat urban areas. In fiscal year 2006, DHS identified 35 areas eligible to apply for and receive funding. The 35 areas encompass 95 cities with populations of 100,000 or more. This year’s formula promotes a “super” UASI concept that is designed to build greater regional capabilities across a geographic area. In addition, 11 urban areas from the fiscal year 2005 UASI have been identified as eligible to apply for sustainment funding in fiscal year 2006. All eligible applicants must submit an investment justification, which identifies needs and outlines the intended security enhancement plan to be addressed with funding, to meet the target capabilities outlined in the National Preparedness Goal. Investment justifications will be reviewed, scored, and prioritized, along with risk factors to determine which investments should be funded to best address need and minimize risk. For a list of the eligible applicants, visit [http://www.dhs.gov/interweb/assetlibrary/FY06\\_UASI\\_Eligibility\\_List.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/interweb/assetlibrary/FY06_UASI_Eligibility_List.pdf).

## **10. Secretary Chertoff Announces New Members of the Homeland Security Advisory Council**

On Jan. 10, 2006, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Michael Chertoff announced the appointment of Elliott Broidy, Tom Foley and John Magaw to serve on his Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC). The HSAC is the Secretary's primary council and is comprised of experts from state and local governments, first responder communities, academia and the private sector. Members of the Council provide advice and recommendations to Secretary Chertoff on homeland security issues. Elliott Broidy is a commissioner for the Los Angeles City Fire and Policy Pension Fund and serves on the governing boards of several large charitable and education organizations, including the Los Angeles Police Foundation. Tom Foley is a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served 15 terms from January 1965 to January 1995. John Magaw served as Undersecretary for Security at the Department of Transportation and was responsible for implementing the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001, which augmented transportation security nationwide in air, land, water and rail modes.

## **11. CDC Releases Fact Sheet on Caring for Pregnant Women During Disaster**

Three questions are answered in a recently released Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) fact sheet regarding critical needs in caring for pregnant women during times of disaster. The fact sheet is written for non-obstetric health care providers. It covers the critical reproductive health care messages for women and their health care providers, the critical issues for prenatal care, and the signs and symptoms that require emergency obstetric services. For a copy of the fact sheet, visit <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/pregnantdisasterhcp.asp>.

## **12. HHS Releases Guide to Help Individuals and Families Get Informed and Be Prepared for a Pandemic**

On Jan. 6, 2006, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Mike Leavitt announced the release of "Pandemic Influenza Planning: A Guide for Individuals and Families." This is a new tool to help Americans understand the threat of pandemic influenza and specific actions they can take to protect themselves and their families. A copy of the guide and other checklists and pandemic planning information is available at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>.

## **13. Safety Engineers Offer Flu Infection Control Tips**

What should your workplace do to prepare for a possible flu pandemic? Keep informed, develop a plan and implement public health programs are some of the tips offered to businesses and members by the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) Healthcare Practice Specialty group in a newsletter article titled "Avian Flu: Infection Control Guidelines." The article is a response to questions on avian flu from several of ASSE's 30,000 occupational safety, health and environmental practitioners, who are on the front lines protecting workers. For more details on the article, visit <http://www.asse.org/newsroom> and review the news release.

## **14. NYCOSH Develops Mold Factsheet**

The New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH), in partnership with the United Church of Christ Disaster Response, has produced the first in a series of health and safety factsheets for Gulf Coast cleanup workers and residents. "Katrina & Rita Cleanup Workers Mold Factsheet" may be downloaded at [http://www.nycosh.org/environment\\_wtc/natural\\_catastrophes\\_index.htm](http://www.nycosh.org/environment_wtc/natural_catastrophes_index.htm).

## **15. ASTHO Executive Director to Retire July 1, 2006**

Dr. George Hardy, executive director for the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, announced that he will retire from his association position effective July 1, 2006, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his first public health appointment. ASTHO President Lea M. Devlin, DDS, MPH, sent a letter Jan. 3 to

all state health officials announcing the change. "George has had a long and illustrative career in public health serving in a wide variety of capacities in both the public and private sector," wrote Devlin. "His leadership and vision, his wit and wisdom are invaluable to us all in our everyday work as he has led our national association for over six years. We wish him the very best in his retirement as we celebrate his many, many contributions to public health and acknowledge our deepest esteem and care for him." For more information, contact ASTHO's Fred Rivera at [frivera@astho.org](mailto:frivera@astho.org).

#### **16. ASTHO Alumni Confirmed by Senate for HHS Position**

On Dec. 17, 2005, the U.S. Senate confirmed the nomination of ASTHO Alumni John Agwunobi (former SHO in Florida) to be assistant secretary for health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). For more information, contact Dr. George Hardy at [ghardy@astho.org](mailto:ghardy@astho.org).

#### **17. E9-1-1 Institute Announces 9-1-1 Honor Awards Categories – Issues Call for Nominations**

The E9-1-1 Institute announced the categories for the 2006 "9-1-1 Honor Awards" and issued a call for nominations. The awards will be presented on March 8, 2006, in Washington, D.C. Award winners will be honored at a Gala recognizing individuals and institutions that positively represent 9-1-1. The deadline to submit nominations is Jan. 31, 2006. The event will be hosted jointly by the E9-1-1 Institute and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). The award categories are: 9-1-1 Call Taker/Dispatcher Award; Citizen in Action Award; First Responder Award; Government Leader Award (Federal); Government Leader Award (State or Local); Industry Professional Award; Media/Entertainment Award; and Outstanding 9-1-1 Program. Nominations may be submitted at <http://www.e911institute.org>.

#### **18. NC Posts Job Opening for Assistant Chief Emergency Medical Services**

The North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services Division of Facility Services has announced an opening for Assistant Chief of Emergency Medical Services. The job involves the assisting and directing of activities to develop and monitor emergency medical services programs throughout North Carolina. The job posting and the state application for employment (PD-107) is available at <http://www.osp.state.nc.us/jobs/gnrinfo.htm>.

#### **19. New Book Released on Ambulance History**

The archives of the Carriage Museum of America has provided the foundation for yet another unique book for horse-drawn vehicles, focusing on ambulances. This book compiles information that was scattered in other publications to make a unique treatise of its own standing. The first section of the book covers the military ambulance focusing on the specifications and drawings. The second section of the book begins with a history of civilian ambulances. The book covers a variety of topics related to horse-drawn ambulances, with something of interest to anyone studying history, horses, ambulances, or military history. The softcover book, *Horse-Drawn, Military, Civilian, Veterinary Ambulances*, costs \$35.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. More information is available at <http://www.cariagemuseumlibrary.org>.

#### **20. Upcoming Events (\*\* denotes event is newly added)**

National Health Policy Conference 2006, Feb. 6-7, 2006, Renaissance Washington, Washington, D.C. Information is available at <http://www.academyhealth.org/nhpc/index.htm>.

\*\*Transportation Disaster Response – Family Assistance: NTSB Training Course, Feb. 7-9, 2006, NTSB Academy, Ashburn, VA. Information is available at <http://www.nts.gov/academy>.

27<sup>th</sup> Annual International Disaster Management Conference, Feb. 9-12, 2006, Rosen Centre Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Information is available at <http://www.emlrc.org/disaster2006.htm>.

Public Safety Communications Summit, Feb. 15-17, 2006, Imperial Palace, Las Vegas, Nev. Information is available at <http://www.iirusa.com/publicsafetycomms>.

2006 Public Health Preparedness Summit, Feb. 22-24, 2006, Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C. Information is available at <http://www.naccho.org/conferences/phprep06/index.cfm>.

Trauma-EMS Systems Program Annual State Trauma Leadership Meeting, Feb. 22-24, 2006, Doubletree Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, VA. Information is available at <http://www.hrsa.gov/trauma>.

Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs Annual Conference, March 4-8, 2006, Arlington, Va. Information is available at <http://www.amchp.org>.

\*\*4<sup>th</sup> Annual 9-1-1 Goes to Washington: Critical Issues Forum, March 7-8, 2006, Hilton Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, VA. Information is available at [http://www.nena.org/Events/CIF/washington\\_cif.htm](http://www.nena.org/Events/CIF/washington_cif.htm).

Association of Air Medical Services Spring Conference, March 8-11, 2006, Hilton Washington Embassy Row, Washington, D.C. Information is available at <http://www.aams.org/midyear.html>.

\*\*Mass Fatality Incidents for Medicolegal Professionals: NTSB Training Course, May 15-19, 2006, NTSB Academy, Ashburn, VA. Information is available at <http://www.nts.gov/academy>.

2006 Annual EMSC Grantee Meeting, June 20-22, 2006, Hilton Hotel, Silver Spring, Md. More information will be available in early 2006.

\*\*Transportation Disaster Response – Family Assistance: NTSB Training Course, July 11-13, 2006, NTSB Academy, Ashburn, VA. Information is available at <http://www.nts.gov/academy>.

\*\*Transportation Disaster Response – Family Assistance: NTSB Training Course, Nov. 14-16, 2006, NTSB Academy, Ashburn, VA. Information is available at <http://www.nts.gov/academy>.

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