

Washington Update September 30, 2004

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1. Leslee Stein-Spencer Resigns as Illinois Division Chief of EMS and Highway Safety – NASEMSD to Elect President and President-Elect at Upcoming Meeting

After 18 years of service, Leslee Stein-Spencer has resigned, effective October 15, as the Illinois Division Chief of EMS and Highway Safety. Ms. Stein-Spencer was NASEMSD’s president-elect. At the NASEMSD Annual Meeting the membership will elect a new president and president-elect. Ms. Stein-Spencer indicated that she will not be leaving EMS, only moving to a different level.

2. NC Office of EMS Launches EMS Performance Improvement Resource Center

The North Carolina Office of EMS (NC OEMS) has announced a new program, The EMS Performance Improvement Resource Center. This three-year grant project, funded by the Duke Endowment Foundation, will focus on developing EMS Performance Improvement Toolkits. These Toolkits will be a new and innovative method of assisting local and state EMS systems with the evaluation and improvement of EMS service delivery, personnel performance and clinical care delivery. Using the new NHTSA Uniform PreHospital Dataset and the established NC PreHospital Medical Information System (PreMIS), six EMS Performance Toolkits will be created and implemented over a three year period. The NC OEMS will partner with the University of NC at Chapel Hill Department of Emergency Medicine to implement the EMS Performance Improvement Resource Center. NC OEMS staff as well as EMS providers across the state will be called upon to provide input to this project. For more information, contact cindy.raisor@ncmail.net. Visit the EMS Performance Improvement Resource Center at <http://www.emspi.org>.

3. Metropolitan Medical Response System Grant Awards for FY 2004 Announced

The Department of Homeland Security on September 30, 2004, awarded more than \$46 million in Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) grants for Fiscal Year 2004. The 110 grants reach 114 MMRS jurisdictions throughout the United States. The MMRS grants provide the awardees with major funding to further enhance and maintain integrated, systematic preparedness for local response to weapons of mass destruction high-casualty events until significant external assistance arrives. The awards committee noted that the grant applications, in addition to incorporating MMRS program goals and objectives, reflected progress in addressing National Incident Management System compliance, interoperable communications, enhanced mutual aid and regional expansion. Additional MMRS program information is available at <http://mmrs.fema.gov>.

4. NASEMSD Comments on “Balanced Investments” Document

NASEMSD provided comments in September to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on the Program Implementation Plan and Requirement Executive Summaries. NASEMSD suggested that DHS specify who is on the integrated concept team and define what a “portfolio manager” is. In addition, NASEMSD believes there are areas that need additional clarification. Information on NASEMSD’s comments is available from stephenhise@cox.net.

5. Emergency Response Guidebook Available Online

The 2004 edition of the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG2004) was developed jointly by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Transport Canada, and the Transportation Secretariat of Mexico, for use by all emergency services personnel who respond to transportation incidents involving hazardous materials. This guide will assist first responders in quickly identifying the specific or generic classification of involved materials. It also will help first responders protect themselves and the general public during the incident response phase. Copies are available free of charge to emergency departments through each state’s emergency coordinator. The guidebook can be downloaded at <http://hazmat.dot.gov/guidebook.htm>.

6. EMS Courses Available at the National Fire Academy

There are a number of excellent, emergency medical services-related education programs available at the National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, Maryland that are open to any person with substantial involvement in fire prevention and control, emergency services, fire-related emergency management activities, or allied professions. There are no tuition fees for NFA courses, and all instruction and course materials are provided at no cost. Classes of interest to EMS personnel include: EMS Management of Community Risks (R-149); Management of Emergency Medical Services (150); EMS Special Operations (R-152); Advance Leadership Issues in EMS; and Advanced Life Support Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents. John Brasko (john.brasko@dhs.gov) is the NFA’s EMS Management Training Specialist and will answer specific questions. Additional information about all NFA classes is available at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/nfa/nfa.shtm>.

7. DHS Launches Office of Interoperability and Compatibility

On October 1, 2004, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is launching the Office of Interoperability and Compatibility and releasing tools designed to help state and local public safety practitioners improve communications interoperability. The Office of Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC), part of the Science and Technology Directorate, will oversee the wide range of public safety interoperability programs and efforts currently spread across DHS. These programs address critical interoperability issues relating to public safety and emergency response, including communications, equipment, training, and other areas as needs are identified. For more information, visit http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/press_release/press_release_0530.xml.

8. “Biological Terrorism, Emerging Diseases, and National Security” Report Available from Rockefeller Brothers Fund

This new report argues that public health surveillance for emerging diseases and preparedness for biological terrorism are strongly related. It first surveys possible scales of bioterrorist attacks and the extent to which these have proven or may prove difficult to distinguish from outbreaks of emerging diseases. Building on these examples, the report makes recommendations for how the United States could better prepare to meet the threat of bioterrorism. Written by Christopher F. Chyba for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the full report is available at http://www.rbf.org/pdf/Chyba_Bioterrorism.pdf.

9. CDC Revising Guidelines for Death Scene Investigation of SIDS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is leading the national effort to revise the "1996 Guidelines for the Death Scene Investigation of Sudden, Unexplained Infant Death and Form (SUIDIRF)." In revising the form The CDC wants to ensure that it is useable and practical. The CDC welcomes users to review, comment, and/or make suggestions to the revised SIUDIRF at <http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/SIDS/SUIDIRF/suidirf.htm>.

10. Comprehensive Anti-Terror Package Addresses 9/11 Commission Report Recommendations

House Republican leaders unveiled a comprehensive anti-terror package aimed at dramatically strengthening America's homeland security defenses. Responding swiftly to the 9/11 Commission's recommendations, the House GOP leadership has been working closely with committees of jurisdiction, holding more than 20 hearings and hearing from more than 100 witnesses and experts on the report's findings. The bill, H.R. 10, was introduced on September 24. Complete information on the bill and the full text is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov>. Once on the site, query by bill number.

11. AMD Publishes Statement on Ambulance Safety and Occupant Protection

The Ambulance Manufacturers Division (AMD) of the National Truck Equipment Association (NTEA) has published a paper on ambulance safety and occupant protection. AMD members account for more than 90 percent of North American ambulance production, and the group represents numerous suppliers in the industry. The paper notes that ambulances are built on chassis manufactured by major automobile and truck manufacturers. These manufacturers develop comprehensive engineering-based guidelines and ambulance manufacturers are required to comply. Strict adherence to these guidelines is mandatory for ambulance manufacturers. In recent years, a small number of sensationalized news stories have sent a distorted message to the public regarding ambulance safety. Although accidents are "newsworthy," oversimplified conclusions in the reports are contrary to available data, and wholly unsubstantiated. More information on this statement is available by calling (800) 441-6832, or visit <http://www.ntea.com>.

12. Upcoming Events (denotes event is newly added)**

EMS Expo, NAEMT Annual Meeting, and American Ambulance Association Annual Conference & Trade Show, Oct. 19-23, 2004, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga. Information is available at <http://www.emsmagazine.com> or by calling (977) EMS-EXPO.

CAAS Fall 2004 Accreditation Seminar, Oct. 20, 2004, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga. Information is available at <http://www.caas.org>.

Air Medical Transport Conference, Oct. 25-27, 2004, Cincinnati Convention Center, Cincinnati, Ohio. Information is available at <http://www.aams.org/amtc2004.html>.

Panamerican Trauma Society XVII Congress, Nov. 17-20, 2004, Miami Beach, Fla. Information is available at <http://www.panamtrauma.org/meeting>.

4th Global Homeland Security Conference & Expo – Protecting the Nation's Critical Infrastructure and Key Assets, Nov. 22-23, 2004, Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, VA. Information is available at <http://www.protectinfrastructure.com>.

"Delivering Results: Improving Pregnancy & Birth," 2005 Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs Annual Conference, Feb. 19-23, 2005, Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel, Washington, D.C. Information is available at <http://www.amchp.org/conference>.

Homeland Defense Training Conference®: Medical Planning and Operations in Support of Consequence Management: “Managing the Un-thinkable in the Era of Asymmetrical Threats” – Preparing Healthcare Professionals for New Challenges in the Medical Arena, Feb. 24-25, 2005, Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C. Information is available at http://www.marketaccess.org/event_consmgmt.asp.

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