

## Washington Update December 30, 2004

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### **1. DHS Provides New Information on Allowable Training Expenditures**

The Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) encourages states, territories, and urban areas to use funds to enhance the capabilities of state and local emergency preparedness and response personnel through development of a state homeland security training program. ODP Information Bulletin No. 144 was released on Dec. 17, 2004, and provides guidance on approved courses. Visit <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/info144.pdf> for the guidance. In addition, a list of approved courses is available at [http://198.104.156.52/ODP\\_Webforms/Eligible\\_Federal\\_Courses12.pdf](http://198.104.156.52/ODP_Webforms/Eligible_Federal_Courses12.pdf).

### **2. New, Tighter Standards for States' Bioterrorism Preparedness Coming**

In mid-December, Charles Schable, director of the CDC's Office of Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response, told a panel on state preparedness on Capitol Hill that the CDC's initial guidance was not as specific as the agency would like it to be. The agency will issue new guidelines by spring for how states use their bioterrorism funds. Schable stated that the CDC is working with stakeholders on the problem, including individual public health departments to create a more measurable set of guidelines. During the past three years, the federal government has given \$3 billion to state and local officials to improve their ability to respond to bioterrorism threats.

### **3. New Report Finds Progress, But Basic Federal and State Bioterrorism Preparedness Capabilities Lacking Three Years after 9/11**

A report released Dec. 14, 2004, by Trust for America's Health (TFAH) found that, despite incremental progress, three years after September 11, 2001, there still is a long way to go to protect the American people from bioterrorist attacks. "Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health in the Age of Bioterrorism, 2004" examined 10 key indicators to gauge state preparedness and determine America's overall readiness to respond to bioterrorist attacks and other health emergencies. More than two-thirds of states and the District of Columbia achieved a score of six or less. Florida and North Carolina scored the highest, achieving nine out of the possible 10 indicators. Alaska and Massachusetts scored the lowest, at three out of 10. For the complete report, visit <http://healthyamericans.org/reports/bioterror04/>.

### **4. Homeland Security Invites Americans to Make a New Year's Resolution**

Nearly half of all American adults make one or more New Year's resolutions every year. Unfortunately, many Americans have difficulty keeping their resolution due to lack of time or motivation. This year, as part of its successful "Ready" campaign, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is encouraging citizens to make a New Year's resolution that is easy to keep – creating their own family emergency plan. NASEMSD is a partner in the "Ready" campaign. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are running to encourage the development of the family emergency plan.

### **5. Loy Resigns as Deputy Secretary of DHS**

On Dec. 20, 2004, Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge confirmed that his deputy, Adm. James Loy, intends to step down effective March 1, 2005, or as soon as a successor is confirmed by the Senate. Ridge stated, "For more than 40 years, Adm. James Loy has dedicated himself to the protection of our country and citizens. Following his retirement as Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard in May 2002, Jim answered the call to service once again by standing up the Transportation Security Administration." Loy later joined the Department of Homeland Security to oversee the integration of 22 previously disparate agencies into one unified organization. Loy set his date of departure to occur a month after that of Ridge's date of Feb. 1, ostensibly to ease the transition from new leadership during the introduction of a new secretary.

## **6. DHS Director Mencer Announces Resignation**

C. Suzanne Mencer, the executive director of the Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), announced on Dec. 16, 2004, that she will resign effective Jan. 31, 2005. "Sue's leadership has enabled us to streamline the grant application process and to refine the matrix which allocates funding to the urban areas at greatest risk," stated Secretary Tom Ridge. "She also has built bridges across the first responder groups to ensure better protection of our communities."

## **7. Low Population States Receive Highest Per Capital Homeland Security Grants**

Sparsely populated states such as Wyoming and Alaska are ranked highest in per capital federal Homeland Security funding in 2005, according to a new report from the Congressional Research Service (CRS). The report, dated Dec. 13, is titled "Fiscal Year 2005 Homeland Security Grant Program: State Allocations and Issues for Congressional Oversight." Other states receiving the most per capita funding include North Dakota, Vermont, and the District of Columbia. The states ranked lowest in per capita grant receipts from the department were Virginia, North Carolina, Texas, and Florida. The complete report is available at <http://www.nado.org/legaffair/dhs2005grants.pdf>.

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

NAEMSP Annual Meeting, Jan. 13-15, 2005, Registry Resort, Naples, Fla. Information is available at <http://www.naemsp.org>.

2005 National Health Policy Conference: Post-Election 2004, What's in Store for Health Policy, Feb. 2-3, 2005, Renaissance Washington, D.C. Hotel. Information is available at <http://www.academyhealth.org/nhpc/>.

2005 Trauma-EMS Systems Program Leadership Meeting, Feb. 2-4, 2005, Key Bridge Marriott, Arlington, Va. Information will be provided closer to the meeting date.

"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<sup>®</sup>: 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](http://www.marketaccess.org/event_consmgmt.asp).

Emergency Medical Services Response to Hazardous Material Incidents or Acts of Terrorism, March 18, 2005, Harvard School of Public Health, Boston, Mass. Information is available at <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/ccpe/programs/EMSR.shtml>.

EMS Today Conference and Exposition, March 18-22, 2005, Philadelphia, Pa. Information is available at <http://www.emstodayconference.com>.

Injury and Violence in America: Meeting Challenges, Sharing Solutions, May 9-11, 2005, Denver, Colo. Information is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/2005conference>.

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## **NASEMSD Staff Contacts**

Elizabeth B. Armstrong, CAE, MAM / Executive Director  
(703) 538-1799 ext. 5 - [armstrong@nasemsd.org](mailto:armstrong@nasemsd.org)

Peter Casals / Program Manager  
(703) 538-1799 ext. 3 - [casals@nasemsd.org](mailto:casals@nasemsd.org)

Sharon Kelly / Executive Assistant  
(703) 538-1799 ext. 2 - [kelly@nasemsd.org](mailto:kelly@nasemsd.org)

Dawn M. Shiley-Danzeisen / Washington Update Editor  
(703) 533-0251 ext. 3 - [dshiley@asmii.net](mailto:dshiley@asmii.net)

201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church VA 22046  
Phone: (703) 538-1799  
Fax: (703) 241-5603  
Website: [www.nasemsd.org](http://www.nasemsd.org)

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The Washington Update is supported by a cooperative agreement between NASEMSD and HRSA's Maternal and Child Health Bureau's Partnership in Communication. Feel free to share this publication with your colleagues.

NASEMSD Washington Update is published two times a month by e-mail for association members and partners. Comments should be directed to the editor, Dawn M. Shiley at [dshiley@asmii.net](mailto:dshiley@asmii.net).

Cordially,

Dawn M. Shiley-Danzeisen  
Marketing & Communications Director  
NASEMSD  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
Phone: 703-538-1799  
Fax: 703-241-5603  
Email: [dshiley@asmii.net](mailto:dshiley@asmii.net)  
Website: [www.nasemsd.org](http://www.nasemsd.org)