National Association of State EMS Directors
Washington Update
September 30, 2005

Table of Contents
1. Trauma-EMS Program Like Not to Be Funded under Continuing Resolution
2. CDC Posts Guidance to State Health Department Grantees about Use of Grant Funds in Response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
3. HRSA Provides Information Regarding Grants in Hurricane Affected Areas
4. USFA Opens Call Center in Support of Firefighters Helping Firefighters
5. NVFC Establishes Fund for Volunteer Firefighters
6. NASEMSD Signs on to Effort to Maintain 2016 for Transition to Narrow-Banding for the 700 mHz Range
7. NIMS Compliance Does Not Require Abolition of 10-Code System of Verbal Communication
8. IOM Releases Study on the Smallpox Vaccination Program – NASEMSD Participated in Study
9. 9/11 Commission Releases Status Report
10. CDC Offers Toolkit for coaches of Teen Athletes
11. Iowa Now Accepting Applications for Chief of the Bureau of EMS
12. Kansas Seeks and Agency Administrator
13. GAO Provides Bibliography of Useful Disaster Preparedness, Response and Reconstruction Products
14. Upcoming Events

1. Trauma-EMS Program Likely Not to Be Funded under Continuing Resolution
The coalition for American Trauma Care on Sept. 29, 2005, provided a report regarding proposed spending cuts to offset Katrina spending. After spending more than $60 billion to provide relief to the victims of Hurricane Katrina, many Members of Congress now are calling for federal budget cuts to offset the spending. Reaction to proposed cuts, which include cuts in programs such as Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP as well as discretionary spending, has been lukewarm by the Republican leadership. However, action is expected to be completed on Sept. 29 on the Continuing Resolution, a measure to keep the federal government funded until Nov. 18, 2005, while Congress finishes work on the remaining FY 2006 Appropriations bills, will seriously impact funding for many health programs, including the Trauma-EMS program. The Continuing Resolution that will be adopted funds programs at either the FY 2006 House-passed level, FY 2006 Senate-passed level or the FY 2005 level, whichever is lowest. Since the FY 2006 House-passed Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill provides no funding for the Trauma-EMS program, this means the program will receive no funding during the period of Continuing Resolution.

2. CDC Posts Guidance to State Health Department Grantees about Use of Grant Funds in Response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have posted guidance on the use of CDC grant funds in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The guidance may be downloaded at http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/grantees.asp.

3. HRSA Provides Information Regarding Grants in Hurricane Affected Areas
The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is providing information for health care providers in areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. Included on their Web site at http://www.hrsa.gov/katrina/ is a list of hospitals and status reports, information on requesting supplies and generators, and frequently asked questions (FAQ). In the FAQs, there are answers to many questions posed by affected organizations, including information on the use of National Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness Program funds for Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.
4. USFA Opens Call Center in Support of Firefighters Helping Firefighters
The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has announced the opening of a national call center to assist fire organizations seeking to help fire departments, firefighters and their families affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The call center has been created to accept calls from departments with equipment to be donated to departments. The call center also will be taking calls from fire departments needing equipment in the disaster areas, as well as firefighters seeking assistance with their family needs. The USFA call center number is 1-800-250-9036, and the email address is fireaid@dhs.gov. The center will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., seven days a week, until further notice. All donations will be managed by a Steering Committee representing the numerous relief efforts currently underway throughout the nation. Requests for assistance also will be reviewed by this steering committee for matching the offer and the need.

5. NVFC Establishes Fund for Volunteer Firefighters
The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) has established a second fund, this one to aid individual volunteer firefighters and their families who have been impacted by Hurricane Katrina. The NVFC Volunteer Firefighter Support Fund, working through NVFC state member fire associations in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi, will identify volunteer firefighters who are seeking assistance. The goal of the fund is to provide volunteer firefighters with up to $250 in assistance to meet essential needs during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Contributions to the fund can be made online at http://www.nvfc.org. Volunteer firefighters in need should contact billbulman2002@yahoo.com in Alabama, jamboud@teche.net in Louisiana, or call Larry Barr at (888) 900-7414 in Mississippi.

6. NASEMSD Signs on to Effort to Maintain 2016 for Transition to Narrow-Banding for the 700 mHz Range
The FCC set an interim transition date of December 31, 2006 for transition to 6.25 kHz voice channels in the 700 mHz band and then replaced that with a 2016 date after public safety interests responded that they were not ready for the transition. Motorola, Inc. has petitioned to reinstate the original date for transition. NASEMSD and other have signed on against Motorola’s petition indicating that public safety will not be able to test narrow-banding in the 700 range until broadcasters clear out of those frequencies, which will probably not happen next year. NASEMSD and others urged that the FCC keep the 2016 date. For more information, contact NASEMSD Program Advisor Kevin McGinnis at mcginnis@nasemsd.org.

7. NIMS Compliance Does Not Require Abolition of 10-Code System of Verbal Communication
In a speech on Sept. 27, 2005, at the Annual Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) in Miami Beach, Fla., Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff announced that it is no longer necessary for first responders to discontinue using the 10-Code system of verbal communication in order to come into compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). According to Chertoff, there was a strong response from the law enforcement community against this proposal. “We had a discussion about it,” stated Chertoff. “As a result, I have decided that NIMS compliance will not include the requirement of the abolition of 10-Codes in everyday law enforcement communications.” Further, Chertoff indicated that when there are multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency events that there must exist a common language that addresses the variations that exist in 10-Code communication. Chertoff’s remarks are available at http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=4861.

8. IOM Releases Study on the Smallpox Vaccination Program – NASEMSD Participated in Study
The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has released a report, “The Smallpox Vaccination Program: Public Health in an Age of Terrorism.” Margaret Trimble represented NASEMSD on the Liaison Panel that responded to committee queries and provided helpful information at public meetings. The book was developed from many reports drafted by the IOM Committee on Smallpox Vaccination Program Implementation. The committee was convened in October 2002 and charged with providing “advice to the CDC and the program investigators on selected aspects of the smallpox program implementation and evaluation.” The report is available from the National Academies Press. For more information, visit http://www.nap.edu.

9. 9/11 Commission Releases Status Report
On September 14, 2005, the 9/11 Commission released a report on the status of the Commission’s recommendations. On July 22, 2004, the 9/11 Commission released the recommendations to make the country safer and more secure. The recommendations were unanimous and bipartisan and flowed directly from the findings on the investigation of the September 11 attacks. In September the Commission reconvened to assess the status of the recommendations. Their first report is on homeland security, emergency preparedness and response. Future reports, to be released during the next three months, will assess the status of recommendations on institutional reform, foreign policy and securing nuclear materials. The status report is available at http://www.9-11pdp.org/press/2005-09-14_report.pdf.

10. CDC Offers Toolkit for Coaches of Teen Athletes
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is announcing a new multimedia educational toolkit to protect teen athletes from a serious but often underestimated health threat – concussion. Concussions are a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a blow or jolt to the head that can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. This initiative, “Heads Up: concussion in High School Sports,” includes information to prevent concussions and identify symptoms and immediate steps to take when an athlete is showing signs of a concussion. To order and download the toolkit free-of-charge, visit http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm.

11. Iowa Now Accepting Applications for Chief of the Bureau of EMS
Ray Jones will be retiring in January 2006 from the position of Iowa State EMS Director. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Division of Acute Disease Prevention and Emergency Response, is seeking a public service executive to serve as full-time chief for the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The successful candidate must have excellent leadership, management and communications skills to lead a full-time EMS staff in shaping and sustaining a model EMS system in Iowa. The successful candidate will be responsible for all bureau operations, budget, grant management, and developing and amending administrative rules. A letter of intent and resume must be submitted by October 25, 2005. For additional information, visit http://www.das.hre.iowa.gov or email Mary Sams at msams@idph.state.ia.us.

12. Kansas Seeks an Agency Administrator
The Kansas Board of Emergency Medical Services is seeking applications from interested people for this lead position with the agency. For information, visit http://www.ksbems.org or contact Mary E. Mulryan at emsmem@ink.org.

13. GAO Provides Bibliography of Useful Disaster Preparedness, Response and Reconstruction Products
The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has created a bibliography of their products related to disaster preparedness, response, and reconstruction. The bibliography of 128 items is posted on GAO’s Web site at http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/featured/dprr.html.
14. Upcoming Events (** denotes event is newly added)


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