



Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Preparedness Division

August 22, 2003

NATIONAL NEWS

Homeland Security Still Seeking to Consolidate Watch Lists

GovExec, August 20, 2003

Homeland Security Department Deputy Secretary Gordon England said Wednesday that the department has not completed the task of combining a dozen separate "watch lists" of potential terrorists because it is a "technical challenge" to consolidate databases and computers that were not designed to share information.

Ashcroft Blasts Efforts to Weaken Terrorism Law

NY Times, August 22, 2003

Attorney General John Ashcroft, in his most forceful defense of the Bush administration's antiterrorism efforts, said today that any attempt to strip law enforcement agents of their expanded legal powers could open the way to further terrorist attacks

First Responders Feel Inadequately Equipped, Survey Finds

GovExec, August 20, 2003

U.S. emergency responders believe they lack adequate protection to respond to terrorist incidents involving weapons of mass destruction, according to a [report](#) released by RAND Wednesday.

Intelligence to Be Shared, Ridge Tells Governors

NY Times, August 18, 2003

Tom Ridge, secretary of homeland security, told the nation's governors today that his department was taking added steps to make sure they are given all necessary intelligence to respond quickly to a terrorist attack or the threat of one.

➤ [Ridge Tells Governors they Passed First Test but Must do More](#), *Washington Post*, August 19

Coast Guard Tests Digital Photo Transmission

Federal Computer Week, August 19, 2003

Coast Guard first responders may soon be able to transmit photos directly from incident scenes to command centers allowing quicker responses to emergencies and more efficient information sharing with state and local law enforcement agencies.

DHS to Host Alert System Fair

Federal Computer Week, August 19, 2003

Homeland Security Department officials in the Science and Technology Directorate and Information Assurance office plan to host an industry day in October for companies to show off their solutions for public warnings and alert systems.

Post-Sept. 11 Reserve Mobilization Called Inefficient

GovExec, August 21, 2003

After the Sept. 11 attacks, the Pentagon's mobilization of military reserve forces was inefficient because the Defense Department had to cobble together a new strategy to deal with domestic terrorism, according to the [General Accounting Office](#).

CONGRESS

Congress Lowers Funding for Intelligence, Cybersecurity

GovExec, August 15, 2003

The House and Senate showed a reluctance to fully fund the White House's budget request for Homeland Security Department's work on intelligence and infrastructure protection in legislation that would fund the department for fiscal 2004.

Proposals for Homeland Security include Similar Science, Tech Figures

GovExec, August 18, 2003

Both the House and the Senate proposed spending more than the \$803.3 million that the White House requested on funding of science and technology initiatives for the Homeland Security Department in fiscal 2004.

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Neighborhood Panel Discusses Preparations for Emergencies

Desert Sun, August 21, 2003

A new Coachella Valley subcommittee -- the Palm Desert Gated Community Subcommittee, which comprises representatives from various neighborhoods and homeowners' associations, some with detailed plans for coping with a major disaster or emergency -- held its first meeting Wednesday to discuss emergency plans and cooperation among the communities.

Local Fire Department Receives FEMA Grant

Tulahoma News, August 20, 2003

The Coalmont Volunteer Fire Department has received a grant of \$54,972 from the 2003 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Clark County Practices Preparedness for Bio-terror Attack

Associated Press, August 20, 2003

Working under a scenario that terrorists unleashed pneumonic plague on the Las Vegas Strip, Clark County authorities staged a daylong exercise at the fairgrounds using hundreds of volunteers and members of the Clark County Health District, Clark County Fire Department, Nevada Highway Patrol and Nevada National Guard.

- [Nevada County Practices Preparedness for Bio-terror Attack](#), *Star Tribune*, August 20

After Blackout, Hotels Rethink Disaster Plans

Wall Street Journal, August 20, 2003

The fallout from last week highlights the wide variations in the contingency plans that hotels have in place for emergencies despite previous crises such as fears of a Y2K tech meltdown and the terror attacks in 2001, while forcing some hotels to rethink their preparedness.

Greenville Board Approves City-County Aid Agreement

Greenville Sun, August 20, 2003

The Greenville Board of Mayor and Aldermen voted Tuesday to authorize Mayor Darrell Bryan to enter the city into a law enforcement mutual-aid agreement with Greene County, a change that has been influenced by FEMA's announcement that cities and counties must have mutual aid agreements in place before a disaster occurs in order to receive federal assistance for the disaster.

Call for More Terror Prep

The Examiner, August 19, 2003

City emergency-service responders are asking the federal government for more direction in the war on terror, following the release of a damning report that found that the nation is grossly unprepared for another attack.

Teaching Others to be Ready for the Worst

Washington Post, August 21, 2003

Jasmin Drain and other young people received funds from the District of Columbia Emergency Management Administration to train city residents in responding to disasters as part of President Bush's war on terrorism.

Senator takes Time to Greet Area's First Responders

The Sentinel, August 21, 2003

Arlen Specter, a member of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, told *The Sentinel* that he has been traveling through Pennsylvania to "make a determination as to where that money (Homeland Security funding) has gone and what the needs of firefighters are this year and next year."

Kansas City Develops Internet-Based Security System

Stateline.org, August 21, 2003

A coalition of city governments is preparing to launch an Internet-based homeland security initiative in Kansas City that is meant to help emergency workers better respond to terrorism or natural disasters.

Offers Aid to Fire Services

St. Petersburg Times, August 21, 2003

St. Petersburg's fire services became \$357,140 richer Wednesday when officials found out they had been awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to improve firefighter operations and safety.

Region's Terrorism Response at Crossroads

New Britain Herald, August 21, 2003

While the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency has hired a planner to help coordinate an emergency response plan, at least one local leader is skeptical about the future of local terrorism aftermath programs.

Township Official Participates in Call with Ridge

Fulton County News, August 21, 2003

Robert Wright of Licking Creek Township was among the more than 70 township officials to participate in an August 5 statewide conference call with U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, Pennsylvania's former governor.

Schools Receive An F In Terror Threat Response

USA Today, August 19, 2003

When the federal government raises the level of its color-coded terror alert, the call goes largely unheeded by half the nation's public schools, a [poll](#) released today in Washington suggests.

Experts Suggest Preparing Disaster Kit

Local4, August 19, 2003

With some disasters, like storms and floods there is a warning but for other disasters that happen quickly, experts suggest preparedness measures, including disaster kits can make a major difference in minimizing the damage after an incident.

Town Evaluates Blackout Response

Greenwich Time, August 19, 2003

Greenwich Public safety officials, playing the role of Monday morning quarterback yesterday, hailed their response to last week's power outage as swift and unified.

RELATED INFORMATION

RECENT REPORTS

- [Spent Nuclear Fuel: Options Exist to Further Enhance Security](#), GAO-03-426, July 2003
- [2003 National School Safety Survey](#), NASRO, August 2003
- [Protecting Emergency Responders, Volume 2: Community Views of Safety and Health Risks and Personal Protection Needs](#), RAND, August 2003

The information contained in this newsletter was collected from Internet sources. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the Department of Homeland Security or FEMA's Preparedness Division.