



# ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

*Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs*

**March / 2008**

## ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

### **VDOT Reviews Ice Storm Response**

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has completed its initial review of the Feb. 12 freezing rain storm that resulted in the closure of Northern Virginia's Springfield Interchange for several hours. Commissioner David S. Ekern delivered the report to the Commonwealth Transportation Board at its March 20 meeting noting a key finding that VDOT must refocus its emergency response mission to prevent similar significant delays from happening again. The event after-action report details key findings about:

- Mobilization of VDOT crews before and during the storm
- Communications improvements needed between emergency response agencies
- Traveler information needs
- Emergency management protocols
- The adoption of industry-leading snow- and ice-removal practices

Commissioner Ekern detailed 16 immediate action steps already implemented in response to the Feb. 12 event to prevent a similar situation from happening again this winter. These steps include:

- Designating a clear chain of command and focusing emergency response activities to the Northern Virginia Traffic Management Center
- Improving communications between VDOT, local, regional and state emergency operations centers, and between emergency response agencies
- Better use of technology and equipment to monitor traffic, report on actual pavement conditions and communicate with motorists about hazards they might encounter on Virginia's highways
- Consolidating snow- and ice-removal operations for the Springfield Interchange to one maintenance facility, and better deployment of VDOT equipment to manage winter weather events in the area
- Clearer chain of command and training procedures to ensure efficient delivery of emergency response services for snow, ice and other incidents in Northern Virginia

VDOT will host a meeting for elected officials and the public to offer feedback on the agency's Feb. 12 response and this after-action report at 6:30 p.m. on April 22. The meeting will be held at the Waterford at Springfield, 6715 Commerce Street, Springfield, Va. By April 15, VDOT will define a program to improve VDOT's emergency response protocols and practices. This will result in better service to Virginia's drivers and quicker clearance of natural and man-made traffic snarls. To review the interim after-action report for the Feb. 12 storm and to learn more about VDOT's emergency response activities, visit

[http://www.virginiadot.org/news/focus\\_on\\_emergency\\_response.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/news/focus_on_emergency_response.asp)

### **Blogger's Roundtable with Secretary Chertoff**

In remarks at a roundtable with bloggers, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff outlined his vision of accomplishments before the end of 2008. "I want to get REAL ID and enhanced driver's licenses – continue to build momentum on that; I want to get the cyber piece planned and the funding stream put out there. Those are some of the major things I want to get done before the end of the year." Chertoff also gave an outline of the five "bands" or areas of work for DHS. "There is keeping bad people out of the country, keeping bad stuff out of the country, protecting the infrastructure, building a capable response agency, and integrating the department."

[http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr\\_1204587093735.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr_1204587093735.shtm)

### **Fifth Anniversary of DHS**

Secretary Chertoff discussed the Department of Homeland Security's accomplishments during its five years at an anniversary celebration at Constitution Hall in Washington, DC on March 6.

[http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/speeches/sp\\_1204896171375.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/speeches/sp_1204896171375.shtm)

Chertoff also held a "pen-and-pad briefing" on the department's anniversary:

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[http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr\\_1204843734531.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr_1204843734531.shtm)

President Bush's speech given March 6 at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C.

[http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/speeches/sp\\_1204838566072.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/speeches/sp_1204838566072.shtm)

### **Airport Security Administrators are Blogging**

Here's a new blog—from security guards at America's airports. Launched Jan. 30, the blog is called "[Evolution of Security](#)" and it's brought to you by the Transportation Security Administration (that's right... the folks at the airport who make you take your shoes off). Actually, the security guards' bosses are blogging and their posts are engaging, informative and funny.

Read the article: <http://tinyurl.com/2a679l>

Check out the blog: <http://www.tsa.gov/blog/>

## PLANNING / PREPAREDNESS

### **FEMA Evaluating Non-Traditional Alternatives To Trailers/Mobile Homes for Future Disaster Housing**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has expanded its effort to identify and evaluate alternatives to FEMA trailers and mobile homes for housing people in the aftermath of a disaster. The project is being conducted by the Joint Housing Solutions Group (JHSG), which was established in June 2006 by the agency's Disaster Assistance Directorate. The members of the JHSG include housing specialists from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); building science experts from the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS); and specialists from FEMA housing, policy, Individual Assistance, Long-Term Recovery and Public Assistance divisions. The group is exploring the latest in factory-built contemporary housing, modular homes based on universal design, housing built from recyclable materials, and innovative work by schools of architecture and design at universities across the country.

<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=42811>

### **Commonwealth to Update Hurricane Evacuation Plan Based on Preliminary Study Results**

Virginia state agencies have begun updating the Commonwealth's hurricane evacuation plan based on preliminary results from a study conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The study, which began in 2000, found that more people will likely need to evacuate Hampton Roads for a hurricane, especially for a Category 3 or 4 storm. This is an update to a 1992 study that was the basis for the current hurricane evacuation plan. Virginia has updated the hurricane evacuation plan many times over the years, but has been awaiting the results of this study for a more thorough overhaul. Gov. Tim Kaine committed \$250,000 of state funds in 2007 to speed completion of the study. The new study estimates that approximately 100,000 people could evacuate the Hampton Roads area for a Category 1 hurricane and up to 890,000 for a Category 4 storm. Those figures are worst-case scenarios and are approximately twice what the 1992 study estimated. Research and experience in other states tells us that approximately 10 percent of evacuees will seek public shelter. The study projects an increased number of evacuees based on two factors: a population that has grown substantially over the past 15 years and a different way of measuring potential storm surge that provides a worst-case scenario. The new study uses high tide instead of mean tide as a measure. That added an additional 2 to 3 feet of potential storm surge per hurricane category, which is the rise in water associated with tropical storms. The larger number of evacuees means more traffic on the roads and longer evacuation times. When the Commonwealth updates the hurricane evacuation plan using the new study data, the timetable for starting an evacuation could change to compensate for the increased traffic. The current plan calls for an evacuation order 14 to 24 hours before the onset of tropical storm force winds. People who live in storm surge areas and who will actually be adversely affected by the amount of storm surge should understand that they don't have to drive great distances to be safe. If they have family or friends in the region that live on higher ground, then they should go there instead of trying to drive out of the area. The full study is not yet complete, but Hampton Roads residents can contact their local emergency management office to learn how storm surge can affect their property. In addition, general and local storm surge maps are available at <http://www.vaemergency.com/threats/hurricane/stormsurge.cfm>.

### **\$260,553 in Grants to Prevent Terrorism Throughout Virginia**

Governor Timothy M. Kaine has announced that grants worth more than \$260,000 have been awarded to support programs to prevent terrorism throughout the Commonwealth. The grants are drawn from federal funds allocated to Virginia from the Department of Homeland Security's Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program. Localities applied for the grants and selection was based on the project description and need. Funds were capped at \$5,000 per locality and no match was required. The grants will be used by localities to buy personal protective equipment. The Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) administers the grant programs. DCJS's Criminal Justice Services Board (CJSB), the policy board appointed by the Governor to act on matters affecting the criminal justice system, reviewed and approved them. In total, the CJSB approved 53 grants to towns, cities and counties.

A complete breakdown can be found online at:

<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=628>

### **NOAA: Coolest Winter Since 2001 for U.S., Globe**

The average temperature across both the contiguous U.S. and the globe during climatological winter (Dec. 2007-Feb. 2008) was the coolest since 2001, according to scientists at [NOAA's National Climatic Data Center](#) in Asheville, N.C. Among the highlights:

- In the contiguous United States, the average winter temperature was 33.2°F (0.6°C), which was 0.2°F (0.1°C) above the 20th century average – yet still ranks as the coolest since 2001. It was the 54th coolest winter since national records began in 1895.
- Record February precipitation in the Northeast helped make the winter the fifth wettest on record for the region. New York had its wettest winter, while Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Vermont, and Colorado to the West, had their second wettest. While some areas of the Southeast were wetter than average during the winter, overall precipitation for the region was near average. At the end of February, two-thirds of the Southeast remained in some stage of drought, with more than 25 percent in extreme-to- exceptional drought.
- February was 61st warmest in the contiguous U.S. and 15th warmest globally on record. For the U.S., the temperature was near average, 0.2°F (0.1°C) above the 20th century average of 34.7°F (1.5°C), which was 2.0°F (1.1°C) warmer than February 2007. Globally, the February average temperature was 0.68°F/0.38°C above the 20th century mean of 53.8°F/12.1°C.

[http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2008/20080313\\_coolest.html](http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2008/20080313_coolest.html)

### **Four Virginia Localities Deemed StormReady**

The National Weather Service recognized the Arlington, Chesterfield and Page counties and the city of Portsmouth in its "StormReady" program, adding them to its list of more than 1,325 qualified localities in the United States, Puerto Rico and Guam. In the Commonwealth, these localities join the StormReady counties of Campbell, Fairfax, Gloucester, Greene, Loudoun and Prince William and the cities of Chesapeake, Colonial Heights, Danville, Hampton, Newport News, Richmond and Virginia Beach. The city of Norfolk is StormReady as well as TsunamiReady. The voluntary program encourages emergency planners to develop severe weather and flood response plans using a grassroots approach in order to meet standards set forth by the NWS with state and local emergency managers. The standards include establishing a 24-hour warning point or emergency operations center, conducting community outreach seminars, developing response plans that include exercises and training weather spotters.

Visit the StormReady site at <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov/>

### **George Mason University Installs Emergency Communications Portal**

George Mason University is the first university in the nation to install Alert FM for emergency alerting on its campuses, according to a release from Global Security Systems. The FM radio-based alert and messaging system will provide redundancy to the University's existing emergency communications systems. Alert FM allows authorized personnel to create and send alerts and messages to specific groups of first responders, students or campus buildings before, during and after a crisis. Targeted alerts and messages are delivered by satellite to FM transmission towers and can be received on special receivers, wall units and other mobile devices, including PDAs, cell phones and other specialized receivers equipped with FM chips. The new system uses a pre-existing network of FM towers, which in turn provides overlapping coverage of an area. George Mason University will be initially covered by local FM station

WETA (90.9 FM) in Washington, D.C. This ensures distribution over a large geographical “footprint,” having the potential to reach more than 30,000 students and faculty at George Mason University.

<http://www.govtech.com/gt/278469?topic=117693>

## MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

### **Texas Tops Nation in Dangerous Weather, Study Says**

Texas is the number one spot in the nation for many kinds of severe weather, including tornadoes, flash floods and more, according to a new report. In an article in the Austin-American Statesman, Matt Presser says the report was released last week from the Governor’s Division of Emergency Management. According to the report, Texas generally leads the nation in the number of tornadoes each year. Since 1950, the state has averaged 139 tornadoes per year — a total of 7,319 since 1953. Texas also sees the most fatalities, injuries and damage associated with tornadoes — including 504 deaths since 1953 — the report says. The report also found that the state usually leads the nation in flash flood deaths per year, including 45 flood-related deaths in 2007. Texas is also second in the nation in lightning fatalities, behind Florida, according to the report. Texas is most often struck by thunderstorms, hail storms, straight line winds and tornadoes during the spring and early summer, the report says.

[http://www.austin360.com/blogs/content/shared-gen/blogs/austin/weather/entries/2008/02/29/texas\\_is\\_a\\_lead.html](http://www.austin360.com/blogs/content/shared-gen/blogs/austin/weather/entries/2008/02/29/texas_is_a_lead.html)

### **Emergency Preparedness**

Virginia Department of Emergency Management creates YouTube channel for emergency preparedness.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/VAEmergency>

The March 6 Washington Post article about the effort may be found at:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/05/AR2008030500201.html>

### **Google Says Spam is Huge Corporate Headache**

Google released a white paper this month about trends in electronic communications systems at corporations and found, to no surprise, that spam is a huge problem and getting worse. While overall e-mail message volume per user grew 47 percent, the spam volume was up 57 percent in 2007 to record levels, according to data from Google’s Postini cited in the 2008 Annual Google Communications Intelligence Report. The average “unprotected user” would have received 36,000 spam messages in the year, up from 23,000 in 2006, the report said. Stopping spam and other malware is the top priority for the government, legal, manufacturing and, for the most part the tech industry, while healthcare, financial and retail companies are more concerned with complying with government regulations, according to online surveys of 575 CEOs, CIOs and CTOs.

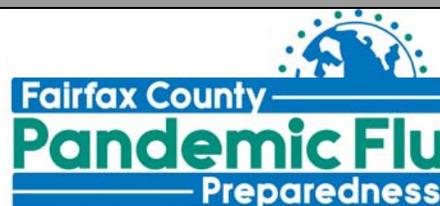
[http://www.news.com/8301-10784\\_3-9888233-7.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1\\_3-0-5](http://www.news.com/8301-10784_3-9888233-7.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1_3-0-5)

### **New Security Software Flies with FAA**

George Mason University researchers have developed software that they say helps nip cyber attacks in the bud by recognizing weak links across networks, not just in individual systems. Creation of this Center for Secure Information Systems software, dubbed CAULDRON (Combinatorial Analysis Utilizing Logical Dependencies Residing on Networks), was funded by the Federal Aviation Administration, plus the defense and intelligence communities. The FAA is also using the software to prioritize security problems and sniff out attack paths, according to GMU. CAULDRON’s unique approach, according to GMU, is its ability to add up what multiple vulnerabilities across a network might lead to in terms of an attack. According to the researchers, they plan to license the software and are currently in discussion with multiple companies. The technology has been extensively tested and was even the subject of a Master’s thesis by a student from the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif.

<http://www.networkworld.com/community/node/26174>

## PANDEMIC FLU



### Fairfax County Pandemic Flu Preparedness

Be sure to visit the county's pandemic flu Web page for information on upcoming events and other preparedness news.

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/pandemicflu/>

### India Expands Culling Zone to Contain Bird Flu

Veterinary staff in safety gear began killing thousands of chickens earlier this month after expanding a culling operation to stop bird flu from spreading in an eastern Indian state. A fresh outbreak of bird flu was detected in West Bengal state's Malda district where about 1,000 chickens had died. Poultry sales in the eastern state fell by about 70 percent since the avian flu hit in January, officials said, but it has had limited impact elsewhere in the country. Veterinary staff were now killing not only the poultry at the affected farm in Malda, but also about 44,000 chickens and ducks in nearby areas to ensure the virus did not spread. India has not reported any human bird flu cases so far.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/health/idINPAR05595620080320>

## TRAININGS / EXERCISES / CONFERENCES

### Creating Vigilant, Prepared and Resilient Communities for Homeland Security

This free two-day course provides an opportunity for community members to use their collective skills, knowledge and resources to address existing or potential homeland security threats at the local community level. Topics include: Critical Thinking, Leadership, Community Policing, Homeland Security, Impact of Fear, Community Responsibility, Ethics, Action Planning, Group Presentation, Problem-Based Learning, and Group Dynamics. Those interested in building partnerships and working collaboratively to make their community vigilant, prepared and resilient for homeland security threats should attend. Local governments should send a team of six to eight public safety staff, volunteers, school representatives and elected officials. Class is April 10-11, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Virginia Baptist Resource Center in Richmond. Register online by April 1.

<http://www.vcpionline.org>.

### GovSec, U.S. Law, and Ready 2008

April 23-24; Washington, D.C.

This forum fosters communication and cooperation between industry and government security, law enforcement and emergency responders at the federal, state, local and tribal levels to protect America's citizens and critical assets. It features speakers from Estonia, the FBI, the U.S. Fire Administration and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, plus exhibits of "cutting edge technology and hot new products, tools and vehicles."

<http://www.govsecinfo.com/>

### Infrastructure Security Partnership Breakfast With Chris T. Geldart

April 24; Washington, D.C.

Chris Geldart, Director of National Capital Region Coordination for the Federal Emergency Management Agency will discuss FEMA activities related to critical infrastructure resilience. Registration deadline is 1 p.m. April 22.

<http://www.tisp.org/events/eventdetails.cfm?&eventID=1905>

### 2nd National Conference on Security Analysis and Risk Management

May 13-15; Fairfax, Va.

The Critical Infrastructure Protection Program at George Mason University's School of Law is co-hosting the Security Analysis and Risk Management Association (SARMA)'s second event, May 13-15. The conference on security analysis and risk management bills itself at the only national event that brings together leaders, experts and practitioners in security analysis and risk management to share current developments and evolving best practices in the protection of the nation, its people, critical infrastructures, information and operations from terrorism and other

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man-made and natural hazards.

<http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=4e12ff60-53fd-4029-adeb-d9cd6cf5785d>

### **Fostering Public-Private Partnerships**

May 22; Washington, D.C.

The 2008 Homeland Security Symposium illuminates successful public-private partnerships at the local, regional, and national levels as models and considers steps to develop and improve future public-private partnerships.

<http://www.jmu.edu/iiia/2008symposium/>

### **Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education Conference**

May 31-June 2; Emmitsburg, Md.

Representatives from fire-related degree programs, state and local fire service training agencies, and national fire service organizations attend this three-day conference with presentations by national leaders and experts.

Participation in the conference is by invitation only to those in the target audiences.

[http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/higher\\_ed/feshe\\_conf/index.shtm](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/higher_ed/feshe_conf/index.shtm)

## LINKS

### **Fairfax County Blogs and Web Resources**

- Fairfax County CERT - <http://fairfaxcountycert.blogspot.com/>
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Web Page - <http://www.fairfaxcountycitizencorps.org/>
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Blog - <http://citizencorps.blogspot.com/>
- Virginia Citizen Corps - <http://www.vaemergency.com/citcorps/index.cfm>

### **DHS Science & Technology Directorate Newsletter**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science & Technology Directorate has a free newsletter, "S&T Snapshots," featuring stories about current research projects and opportunities with laboratories, universities, government agencies, and the private sector. The newsletter is produced monthly by the DHS Science and Technology Directorate in partnership with the Homeland Security Institute, a Studies and Analysis Federally Funded Research and Development Center.

<http://www.homelandsecurity.org/snapshots/>

### **DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report (OSIR)**

The Department of Homeland Security provides a Web-based "Daily OSIR," which is posted on the DHS public Web site. Accessing the report via the Web enables readers to retrieve the current Daily Report as well as 10 days of archived DHS Daily Reports. Once you arrive at the Web page you will find the most recent Daily OSIR at the top of the page, under the title "Current Report." This report is posted each morning, except for weekends and holidays. Simply click on the title "DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report." This will launch the current days report in PDF format. You can continue to submit content comments or make suggestions by contacting the DHS Daily Report Team by telephone at 202-312-5389 or by e-mail at [NICCCReports@dhs.gov](mailto:NICCCReports@dhs.gov). You can access the Daily OSIR at:

[http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/programs/editorial\\_0542.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/programs/editorial_0542.shtm).

### **Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Web Page**

The county's emergency information page features easy navigation and a clean look so that residents can easily find emergency information.

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/)

### **Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Line**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/infoline.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/infoline.htm)

**FAIRFAX COUNTY 703-817-7771**  
**EMERGENCY**  
**INFORMATION LINE**

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In accordance with NIMS – the National Incident Management System – the Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan states that Emergency Support Function 15 (External Affairs) is led by the Office of Public Affairs. This ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update is part of the county's outreach efforts for our business and nonprofit partners as a way to provide information about the county's ESF 15, Homeland Security and emergency management.

Please feel free to forward this ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update to other contacts you have inside or outside your organization. Should someone you know like to be added to our distribution list, have them send an e-mail to [jim.person@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:jim.person@fairfaxcounty.gov) and ask to be subscribed to the ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update.

If you have any suggestions on how to improve this update or other communications between Fairfax County and the business/nonprofit community, please contact Merni Fitzgerald, director of the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs, at 703-324-3187, TTY 711, or by e-mail at [merni.fitzgerald@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:merni.fitzgerald@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Thanks for your partnership with Fairfax County. We appreciate the opportunity to work with you.