



Homeland
Security

Emergency Management and Response Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

INFOGRAM 10-09

March 12, 2009

***NOTE:** This INFOGRAM will be distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures. For further information, contact the Emergency Management and Response- Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) at (301) 447-1325 or by e-mail at emr-isac@dhs.gov.*

Hate Groups: A Growing Threat?

According to the “Year in Hate” report recently released by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), there are approximately 926 active hate groups in the United States as of December 2008. This number is an increase of more than 4 percent from the 888 groups identified in 2007, and far above the 602 groups documented in 2000. The SPLC, a professional watchdog of right wing groups, suggests “the continuing rise has been fueled by immigration fears, a faltering economy, and the successful campaign of President Barack Obama.”

When reviewing the report, the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) observed that the hate groups listed include neo-Nazis, white nationalists, white supremacists, neo-Confederates, racist skinheads, Klansmen, black separatists, etc. The document also discusses other groups that target gays or immigrants, and those specializing in producing racist music or propaganda denying the Holocaust.

Senior officials from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) have on several occasions expressed their growing concern over these groups. “The most worrisome trend to law enforcement and private industry alike has been the increase in willingness by these movements to resort to the use of incendiary and explosive devices,” said the ATF deputy assistant director.

The EMR-ISAC recognizes that the attention given to transnational terrorism often overshadows the possible threat from domestic hate groups. However, FBI officials recommend awareness of such groups by law enforcement, fire, and the emergency medical services. To obtain greater comprehension of this growing American problem, see the “Year in Hate” at <http://www.splcenter.org/news/item.jsp?aid=366>.

CI/KR Learning Series

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) learned the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Infrastructure Protection is sponsoring a “Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources (CI/KR) Learning Series.” The series consists of one-hour web-based seminars on current topics and issues of interest to owners and operators of the Emergency Services Sector (ESS) and the nation’s CI/KR sectors. The ESS has numerous interdependencies with all CI/KR sectors, and CI/KR facilities depend on emergency departments and agencies to assist with

planning, prevention, and mitigation activities, as well as respond to day-to-day incidents and catastrophic situations.

Offering the latest trends, issues, best practices, and practical ideas for implementing infrastructure protection protocols for those engaged in infrastructure protection and resilience activities, the series' next webinar, "Improvised Explosive Devices: Awareness and Management," will be presented in two parts scheduled for 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. EDT on March 18 and 25, 2009. It will present information on deterring, preventing, detecting, and responding to explosive attacks that use improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Part 1 focuses on how to recognize and react to IEDs; Part 2 teaches how to plan for and respond to bomb threats and IEDs.

To register for the improvised explosives webinar or for other upcoming topics, visit <https://connect.hsin.gov/iedregistration/>. The EMR-ISAC notes that future presentations include "Engaged Partnership for Disaster Response," on 22 April, and "Infrastructure Risk Analysis and Information Sharing Capabilities" on 20 May 2009.

New ESS Hazmat Risk

In the Emergency Services Sector (ESS), "expect the unexpected" can be a life-saving watchword when arriving at incident scenes. An emerging safety threat to first-arriving responders, according to information received by the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC), is a suicide method whereby victims mix readily available household chemicals to produce a flammable, noxious gas that causes the perpetrators to lose consciousness and suffer heart failure.

In two recent cases, responders arrived to find that the victims had locked themselves in their vehicles. One victim had taped his vehicle to prevent the gas from escaping. In each case, the victim left a visible note on the car that warned of the dangerous chemicals, which alerted responders to treat the incidents as hazardous materials scenes. Using guidance from various sources, including emergency management specialist August Vernon, the EMR-ISAC offers the following situational awareness considerations for the benefit of emergency departments and agencies:

- Conduct a thorough "windshield survey" of the scene. In these cases, the scene may be more dangerous than a routine "man down in a car."
- Remain alert for any activities, vehicles, or materials that arouse suspicion.
- Look for unusual indicators, e.g., notes, chemical containers, taped windows/vents, unusual smoke or fumes, etc.
- Scan the area using binoculars or spotting scopes before approaching a "suspicious incident" or "hazmat incident with injury."
- Establish zones of control (Hot, Warm, Cold) once the scene is determined to be a hazmat incident, and initiate hazmat procedures. Make appropriate notifications if presented with this scenario.
- Establish the Incident Command System (ICS) immediately and use Unified Command to develop a plan of action and coordinate response activities and resources.
- Consult the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG). As materials may be mixed or in unlabeled/mislabeled containers, check Guide 111, Mixed Load/Unidentified Cargo (ERG 2008, p. 169).
- Determine whether to make an immediate decision for "life rescue" or "wait and hold." If believed to be an "unconscious victim," responders should don appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) before breaching window or door. This decision may need to be made in conjunction with local or regional hazardous materials teams, depending on training, personnel, and resources available to initial responders.
- Treat the scene as a crime scene.

Additional information can be seen at the FirefighterCloseCalls web site (<http://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/averted.php>). The 2008 Emergency Response Guidebook can be downloaded at http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/staticfiles/PHMSA/DownloadableFiles/Files/erg2008_eng.pdf.

NFA Application Periods Change

The U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA) National Fire Academy (NFA) has changed the application period for on-campus course deliveries and the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP).

"We recognize that this nation's fire and emergency services personnel are extremely busy and that their time is valuable," said Acting NFA Superintendent Dr. Kirby Kiefer. "We want to be more responsive to the needs of the applicants and the departments for which they serve by completing the application and notification process earlier, thereby affording the extra time necessary for adequate planning."

Students should submit their applications between April 15 and June 15, 2009 in order to be considered for classes scheduled from October 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. To be considered for classes scheduled for delivery April 1 to September 30, 2010, potential students should submit their applications during the timeframe from October 15 to December 15, 2009.

The Executive Fire Officer Program application deadline has also changed. The application deadline is now June 15 of each year to be considered for the next fiscal year's (FY) program. To be considered for the FY 2010 program, interested applicants should submit their application by June 15, 2009.

To apply, and view course schedules and EFOP information, the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) directs prospective students to www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa.

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The FBI regional phone numbers can be found online at www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm.

For information affecting the private sector and critical infrastructure, contact the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC), a sub-element of the NOC. The NICC can be reached by telephone at 202-282-9201 or by e-mail at NICC@dhs.gov.

When available, each report submitted should include the date, time, location, type of activity, number of people and type of equipment used for the activity, the name of the submitting company or organization, and a designated point of contact.

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U.S. Fire Administration · U.S. Department of Homeland Security · Emmitsburg, MD 21727 · (301) 447-1325