



Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Preparedness Division

August 29, 2003

NATIONAL NEWS

TSA, Pilots Wage War of Words over Gun Program

GovExec, August 26, 2003

Transportation Security Administration officials say they are moving "full speed ahead" with a program to train and arm commercial airline pilots while pilot organizations accuse the agency of actually deterring pilots of volunteering to carry weapons.

Bush's Handling of Security Defended

San Antonio Express-News, August 28, 2003

FEMA Director Michael D. Brown on Wednesday defended President Bush's handling of homeland security issues, saying the administration has invested heavily in boosting first-responders, those likely to initially handle a terror attack.

More Gov't Sharing of Terror Info Urged

NY Times, August 27, 2003

The General Accounting Office said that while steps have been taken to improve the way governments share information to prevent terrorism, many of the initiatives were put in place by states and cities and not necessarily coordinated with federal agencies.

➤ [Government Seeks More Terror Information](#), *Associated Press*, August 27

Passports and Visas to Add High-Tech Identity Features

NY Times, August 23, 2003

In a little more than a year, as part of a mandate by border security legislation passed by Congress last May, the State Department and immigration bureau must begin issuing visas and other documents with biometrics technologies to foreign visitors.

➤ [U.S. Now Demanding Biometric Technology](#), *Associated Press*, August 25

Critics say U.S. Airline Screening Plan Intrusive

CNN, August 25, 2003

Groups from the American Civil Liberties Union to the American Conservative Union criticized the Computer Assisted Passenger Prescreening System, known as CAPPS II, which was announced in July as part of an effort to improve passenger security.

➤ [DHS Stands behind CAPPS II](#), *Federal Computer Week*, August 26

CONGRESS

Congress Weighs DC Request for Security Funds

GovExec, August 26, 2003

The District of Columbia is requesting funding from Congress for emergency preparedness in the event of a terrorist attack, including cyberterrorism, but lawmakers have yet to finalize the numbers in a spending bill that they will consider when both chambers return in September.

Clinton and Nadler Seek Inquiry Into E.P.A. Response to Sept. 11

NY Times, August 27, 2003

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Representative Jerrold L. Nadler called yesterday for a Congressional inquiry into the Environmental Protection Agency's response to the World Trade Center attack, saying that the agency and the White House had not told the truth about potential health hazards.

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

City, County Test First-Response System

Jersey City Reporter, August 24, 2003

Jersey City was the latest area to test their emergency responses last Thursday, Aug. 14, when a pretend dirty bomb containing the nerve gas Lewcote exploded during a simulated athletic event at the Caven Point Recreational Field, setting into motion the various interagency procedures that are required in such an event.

Grant for Fire Assn.

Moberly Monitor Index, August 28, 2003

U. S. Senator Jim Talent announced that the U. S. Department of Homeland Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R) will send the Southeastern Randolph Fire Association \$54,000 in federal assistance to support the purchase of a new firefighting vehicle.

Federal Mandate Sought for Preschool Evacuation Plans

NEPA News, August 27, 2003

Last fall, a resident of New Cumberland and the leader of a nuclear watchdog group petitioned the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to require state and local governments to include nursery schools and daycare centers within 10 miles of nuclear power plants in their emergency preparedness plans.

County Commission Agrees to Homeland Security Assessment

Helena Independent Record, August 27, 2003

A split Lewis and Clark County Commission agreed to a homeland security assessment kick-starting the area's latest anti-terrorism effort where local jurisdictions are asked to assess threats, vulnerabilities, response capabilities and needs related to preparedness for weapons of mass destruction terrorism incidents.

United Way's Volunteers to Assist Emergency Services

Rocky Mount Telegram, August 28, 2003

The Rocky Mount Area United Way is moving forward with a volunteer program to assist emergency service agencies in the Twin Counties as United Way's nine member Volunteer Management Team joined county emergency services representatives during a "meet and greet" session Wednesday in the final phase of the selection of eight volunteer managers.

Community Officials from Throughout State Discuss Disaster Plans

Arizona Republic, August 28, 2003

Paradise Valley Communities large and small need to have emergency plans in place in the event of a terrorist attack or other disaster, a federal expert told a gathering of city and town officials Wednesday.

City Secures Anti-Terror Funds

Rocky Mountain News, August 28, 2003

The city and county of Denver, bypassed last month when an initial round of \$9.5 million of homeland security grants was announced, received \$2.6 million Wednesday as part of federal funds to pay for emergency equipment and training to respond to terrorist threats.

➤ [Region gets Homeland Security Grant](#), *Durango Herald Online*, August 28

Bureaucracy Slows Terror Preparation

St. Petersburg Times, August 26, 2003

Federal grant funds come with too much red tape, too many restrictions, and the reporting rules are so painful that many hospitals simply don't apply according to Florida emergency management officials.

FEMA Delivers Recovery Plans to Tornado-Torn Towns

KOLR10, August 28, 2003

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has offered long-term recovery assistance to Pierce City and Stockton as a result of the catastrophic damage left by the May 4 tornadoes.

CDC Seeks Smallpox Shot Rates

Atlanta Journal Constitution, August 26, 2003

With the nation's smallpox vaccination campaign in near hibernation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is trying to get states to identify how many more people need to be immunized -- which experts say could reawaken the controversial effort.

Portable Hospital Prototype goes up in Monroeville

Post Gazette, August 26, 2003

Covering more than 5,000 square feet of parking lot behind the Westinghouse Energy Center, the floor, walls and some of the roof for the first disposable Emergency Isolation and Treatment Shelter have been assembled in Monroeville during the past week.

President Bush Authorizes \$5 Million in FEMA Blackout Aid

NY Newsday, August 24, 2003

President Bush has authorized the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide New York State up to \$5 million in reimbursement to cover costs from the blackout that left millions without power nearly two weeks ago.

Surveillance Planned for Miami River

Associated Press, August 24, 2003

The Miami River Marine Group, an organization of private terminals, awaits approval from the Department of Homeland Security for a \$1 million grant that would fund installation of cameras that could transmit real-time video to a command center.

Local Safety Officials Feel Unprepared

Boston Globe, August 28, 2003

Local public safety officials say their communities are unprepared for a biological or chemical attack and have not received adequate funding from the federal government, according to a Massachusetts survey to be released in September

Fire Agencies Encouraging Locals to Get Involved With Emergency Rescue

Register-Pajaronian, August 29, 2003

Local fire agencies are attempting to team up with community members to act as a larger, coordinated force when dealing with large-scale emergencies such as earthquakes, flooding, major fires and the like as the Community Emergency Response Team program is about to get underway.

RELATED INFORMATION

RECENT REPORTS

- [INS Contracting Weaknesses Need Attention from the Department of Homeland Security](#), GAO-03-799, July 2003
- [State and Local Officials Still Kept in the Dark about Homeland Security](#), Report by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, August 2003
- [Homeland Security: Efforts to Improve Information Sharing Need to be Strengthened](#), GAO-03-760, August 2003
- [Land Border Ports of Entry: Vulnerabilities and Inefficiencies in the Inspections Process](#), GAO-03-1084R, 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.