



MEMO



N O R T H C A R O L I N A D I V I S I O N O F
E M E R G E N C Y M A N A G E M E N T

State Emergency Response Commission Holds Meeting

The State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) met July 17 to discuss how the state is preparing for more H1N1 flu cases and to review grant allocations from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The group also heard a summary report regarding emergency response efforts to the fatal explosion at the Garner ConAgra plant in June.

Dr. Julie Casani with the North Carolina Department of Public Health (NCDPH) talked about the H1N1 flu outbreak. By July 30, more than 550 cases of H1N1 had been confirmed in North Carolina.

Eight deaths have been linked with H1N1 in the state.

“We have stopped testing for H1N1 except for hospitalized patients and deaths or on a case by case basis. Over 90% of the isolates tested in our Sentinel Provider Network testing are H1N1, so if someone has the flu, there is a high likelihood it is H1N1,” said Casani.

Casani expects a second wave of H1N1 cases to hit the state in the fall, possibly to start an early flu season for North Carolina.

“There will be a two-dose injected vaccine. One dose and then another dose approximately one month later,” Casani says.

In previous flu seasons, health personnel didn't record who received the flu vaccine. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services now mandates all H1N1 vaccines recipients be documented. The Public Health division is preparing to register nearly nine million people in North Carolina to receive flu shots since both rounds of H1N1 flu shots must be recorded in a common database system under federal law.



NCEM Assistant Director Steve Sloan (front, left) and Deputy Director Mike Sprayberry discuss meeting.

Wake County Emergency Management Director Josh Creighton briefed SERC leaders about the county's activities during the response to the Con Agra plant explosion. Creighton described how Wake County handled public information, operations and logistics functions for the response.

Mike Daniska, from the NC Emergency Management Homeland Security Branch, presented information about this year's grant allocations. The department received \$16.5 million to fund 24 projects based on 11 investment justifications. The investment justifications outline the reasons for requesting the grant and describe how the money will be used.

“North Carolina scored in the top five percent nationally in the application process,” said Mike Daniska, planning unit manager. “Eight of our 11 investment justification letters scored in the top 15% nationally and were highly thought of by our Homeland Security peers.”

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“We had some of the strongest applications in the country,” Daniska explained. “That allowed us to earn additional Homeland Security funds.”

The following projects were funded through FY 2010 HSGP:

Comprehensive Community Preparedness	\$400,000
Hazardous Material Regional Response Team	\$950,000
Urban Search and Rescue	\$950,000
Training and Exercise	\$2,265,002
Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders	\$6,523,363
Domestic Preparedness Regions	\$2,760,530
Statewide Risk Assessment	\$175,000
State Fairgrounds Communications/Surveillance	\$116,651
Large Vehicle Borne IED Response Vehicle	<u>\$1,126,284</u>
	\$15,266,830



NCEM Area Coordinators Joe Wright (center) and Ricky Tuttle (right) talk with member of Raleigh's Fire Department (left).

The federal grant program requires that 80% of the State Homeland Security Program funds go to local government, while the remaining 25% is used for law enforcement terrorism prevention activities. A new requirement stipulates that 25% of the entire award is used to strengthen preparedness planning activities.

To meet the preparedness planning funding requirement, the SERC deferred \$1.2 million to FY 2010 and reallocated \$183,000 internally.

To meet the requirements, the following projects were changed:

Deferred one viper tower to FY 2010, worth \$750,000.

Deferred one North Carolina National Guard fuel tank to FY 2010, worth \$396,880.

Deferred the DPR-5 Operation Oversight equipment to FY 2010, worth \$113,825.

Deferred the DPR-2 radiation monitors to FY 2010, worth \$75,000.

The deferred projects left SERC with a surplus of \$100,313.

“The surplus will be allocated to the DPR 2 Marine Firefighting Training project to help to meet the 25% preparedness planning requirement. There is still a need to reallocate \$83,343,” says Daniska.

To help in this reallocation, the North Carolina Urban Search and Rescue program will shift \$83,343 from equipment funding to training funding.

The State has 45-days from receipt of the official award letter from DHS to obligate awards to sub-grantees. This official award letter has not yet been received, but should arrive no later than mid-August. NCEM was notified by DHS in mid-June, 2009 to expect the letter in 30 to 60 days.

New Legislation That Impacts Emergency Management

Several new bills passed during the 2009 legislative session that effect the emergency management community.

H377: Authorize Emergency Management Certification Program

This bill provides for the establishment of a voluntary emergency management certification program. The program is designed to strengthen and enhance the professional competencies of state and local emergency management personnel through education and training. The bill also provides for the establishment of an Emergency Management Training and Standards Advisory Board to provide oversight of the training and certification programs.

H378: Statutorily Establish the Division of Emergency Management

This bill clearly defines the Division of Emergency Management as a bona fide state agency located in the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety. (Amends 143B-475, 166A-4, 143B, Article 11)

H379: Allow Mutual Aid Agreements Between the State and Political Subdivisions of the State

This bill clearly states that the governor may establish mutual aid agreements with political subdivisions in the state with the concurrence of the subdivision's governing body. Mutual aid agreements are an important mechanism for securing inter-governmental assistance during a disaster. Current mutual aid legal authorizations do not include agreements between the state and local governments, although a number of these agreements currently exist and have been actively utilized to support disaster response.

H380: Strengthen Local Emergency Management

Many local governments face challenges with lack of resources and technical assistance in developing strong local emergency management plans. This bill requires a state review of local plans, and it allows for small counties to form partnerships. Counties and incorporated municipalities are authorized to form joint emergency management agencies composed of a county and one or more municipalities within the county's borders, between two or more counties, or between two or more counties and one or more municipalities within the borders of those counties. The bill also designates the Division of Emergency Management as the agency responsible for the management of appropriated federal and state emergency management grant funds to local governments.

H381: Expand Division of Emergency Management Authority

This bill designates the Division of Emergency Management as the lead agency for the systematic application of policies, practices, and resources to the identification, assessment and control of risk associated with hazards affecting human health and safety and property. Hazard, risk and cost/benefit analysis are used to support development of risk reduction options, program objectives and prioritization of issues and resources.

S256: Clarify Local Government Evacuation Authority

An act to clarify that counties and cities have the authority to order evacuations in certain situations and that the emergency management immunity statute applies to them

To view the bills, see <http://www.ncleg.net/gascripts/BillLookUp/BillLookUp.pl>. Make sure to have the 2009-2010 session selected and type in the bill number.

McGuire Nuclear Power Plant Exercise

On Aug. 18, the state of North Carolina will participate in a graded exercise for the McGuire Nuclear Power Station. The exercise will test current plans and procedures in place to respond to a potential release of radiation from the power station. From Aug. 3-6, off-scenario activities will take place. These off-scenario activities allow evaluators to observe activities such as traffic control measures, sheltering and decontamination processes that they wouldn't normally be able to view during exercise.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission requires that all nuclear power plants in the United States be evaluated every two years to ensure they can adequately notify and protect the public in case of a nuclear incident. North Carolina has four power plants that are tested; Brunswick (Brunswick Co.), Harris (Wake Co), McGuire (Mecklenburg Co.) and Catawba (York Co., SC).

For more information, contact Steve Payne at 919-715-0170 or spayne@ncem.org.

Emergency Management Forum

The North Carolina Emergency Management forum is scheduled for Aug. 12 from 1-5 p.m. This year the forum will be held via video conferencing using Smile Tiger software and by conference call at 919-715-1909. Smile Tiger allows conference attendees to participate from their personal computer by watching a live video stream of the meeting and asking questions via message boards. Attendees submit questions where a person monitoring the message board will ask the topic presenters.

The bi-annual forum brings together local and state emergency management officials to discuss topics such as upcoming potential threats, legislative changes that impact the emergency management community, and advancements in the preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation stages of emergency management.

Topics for this forum include: a North Carolina H1N1 flu report and projection for the fall season presented by Dr Jeff Engel; an update on hurricane operations presented by NCEM section chiefs; and the emergency management performance grant formula presented by NCEM's Homeland Security section.

For more information, contact Brenda Jones at 919-715-9216 or bjones@ncem.org.

CAMET Program Has Two More Units

The state Companion Animal Mobile Equipment Trailer (CAMET) program will soon add two new trailers. That makes a total of 26 trailers that have been purchased since 2006 and positioned across the state to provide assistance to animal owners during disasters.

The CAMETs contain supplies to quickly establish an animal shelter when people need to evacuate their homes during emergencies. The trailers contain 40 large and 10 medium cages to house animals. The medium cages can also be divided in half for smaller animals. Other supplies include a generator, animal registration system and other durable goods such as bowls and plastic to be used as floor coverings.

The CAMET program was created to meet the Federal Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 which directs state and local governments to account for household pets and service animals during emergencies. During evacuations, some designated shelters now allow people to bring their pets with them; the people are housed in one building, while their pets are sheltered in a nearby facility.

Funded through a Homeland Security grant, the newest CAMET trailers will be positioned in Orange and shared among Camden and Pasquotank counties.

Training is available for those agencies responsible for setting up the pet shelters. Last May, nearly 60 people participated in training to learn how to set up, operate, manage and demobilize a unit. The training also covered how to read animal body language. For more information on the animal sheltering, see www.ncagrgis.com/sheltering/ or <http://nc.sartusa.org/>. For more information on the CAMET program, contact Tim Johnson at 919-715-4077 or tjohnson@ncem.org.

NCEM Staff Changes

Gary Faltinowski left the division in June to accept a position with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Gary served 11 years with the division, most recently as information and planning chief.

Elaine Wathen was promoted in July as the new information and planning chief /assistant director for N.C. Emergency Management. Elaine has been with the division for 24 years and most recently served as the central branch manager.

Tom Collins retired July 31 after more than 30 years of public service, most recently as NCEM eastern branch manager. Tom previously worked in Watauga County Emergency Management, the N.C. State Highway Patrol and as a volunteer fire fighter.

Todd Brown was named the new emergency services program manager in July. He replaces Mary Beth Young who accepted a position with North Carolina Division of Public Health in January. Todd has been with the division since 2001, serving in positions of search and rescue program manager and hazard mitigation grant manager.

International Affair Council Visits the EOC

Representatives from 11 countries visited the State Emergency Operations Center July 27 to meet board members of North Carolina's Interfaith Disaster Response (NCIDR). The visitors came from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the West Bank.

At the meeting, the representatives learned about the emergency response process in North Carolina and how faith groups work together in disasters. Mike Patterson, the NCIDR president addressed the group. This was the first time the country representatives' visited the State EOC. The visitors were invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. The program is called "*Promoting Interfaith Dialogue*". NCEM's role was to serve as the facility host.



NCIDR President Mike Patterson answers questions from the group's interrupter.



**NORTH CAROLINA
DIVISION OF
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT**

116 West Jones Street
4713 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4713

Questions and Comments can be directed to:

Cory Grier, Public Affairs Section
Phone: 919-733-3824
Email: cgrier@ncem.org

"In the Business of Saving Lives and Protecting Property"

The North Carolina Division of Emergency Management was formed in 1977 to coordinate the preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation activities of all agencies for emergency management within North Carolina. It performs this mission by planning, organizing, staffing, equipping, training, testing and activating emergency management programs during times of need.