



# RIEMA NEWS



Volume I, Issue VII

Director- Major General Robert T. Bray

April 2, 2008

Executive Director- J. David Smith

## RIEMA Announces New Executive Director

Governor Donald L. Carcieri has selected J. David Smith as the new Executive Director of Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency. "I'm very pleased to announce the appointment of J. David Smith as the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency. He possesses the credentials, experience, management skills and leadership ability to serve the people of Rhode Island well. He is a dedicated public servant who has demonstrated his tireless commitment to safety and security of the people of Rhode Island." said the Governor.

"Dave Smith has the background necessary to take charge of this agency and coordinate all the diverse elements involved," said Major General Robert Bray. "I am confident

that his arrival will be well received and will signal a commitment to address the many challenges presented by the need for a coordinated multi-



**J. David Smith**

agency and multi-jurisdiction Homeland Security focus. Chief Smith has been a key participant for many

years in State Emergency Management initiatives and will therefore 'hit the ground running'. He is well known and respected. I look forward to working with him to ensure the preparedness of the State."

Chief Smith brings nearly thirty years of distinguished law enforcement service to the agency. He retired as the Police Chief from Westerly in 2002 to take the Chief of Police position in Narragansett. He left there in 2007 to be the Director of Public Safety and Transportation at Roger Williams University. He holds a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies-P.H.D. Candidate, ABD from Salve Regina University, is a past president of the Police Chiefs' Association, and a 1999 graduate of the FBI National Academy.

He will start on April 21, 2008.

## RIEMA Hosts Annual Statewide TEPW

This year the annual Training & Exercise Planning Workshop (TEPW) was held on March 25th. Invitations were extended to select members of various disciplines around the state to help direct the states plan. 46 people representing local, state and federal government in various functions such as law enforcement, fire, emergency management, special response teams, critical infrastructure, transportation, state working groups, and public/private sector partners were present.

RIEMA manages a grant that supports the Homeland Security Exercise & Evaluation Program (HSEEP) for the state of RI. HSEEP requires

each state to have a Training & Exercise Multiyear Plan and to review it annually. The state had just completed it's objectives in the prior multiyear plan. The outcome of the all day workshop was a new draft plan incorporating national, state and local priorities and goals. The new plan will help shape how the state HSEEP monies get spent for the next few years.

There are 11 major areas addressed in detail in the plan: transportation-related disasters; hurricanes; pandemic influenza; terrorism & weapons of mass destruction; school emergencies – lockdown and evacuation; communications & information tech-

nology; receiving and distributing mass medical supplies and life sustaining commodities; special response teams; dam failures; radiological incidents; and mass conflagrations.

Next year RIEMA will be asking locals and other state agencies to create their own progressively challenging multiyear plans for their own jurisdictions/agencies.

For more information about where to start on your plan or any other HSEEP or TEPW questions contact the RI HSEEP Coordinator Brittan Bates at [Brittan.bates@us.army.mil](mailto:Brittan.bates@us.army.mil) or (401) 462-7189.

# Rhode Island Communities Need Hazard Mitigation Plans for FEMA Funding

When disaster strikes, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has funding to reimburse communities for the overburdening expense of recovery. Only those communities with a hazard mitigation plan can tap into all of the available federal reimbursement programs.

As memory fades so does caution. Prior to the April 15, 2007 Nor'easter, the Ocean State hadn't had a large-scale disaster since Hurricane Bob in 1991. That storm, with a surge estimated at only six to ten feet caused about a billion dollars in damage in New England. Forecasters say the next hurricane could generate higher wind and storm surge and be much more destructive to the increasing population in Rhode Island. State emergency managers say the some of the state's communities are ill-

prepared.

"We want our cities and towns to know they will not be in the pipeline for all sources of funding unless they have a hazard mitigation plan in

place before a disaster occurs," said Lawrence Macedo, Program Manager for Mitigation and Public Assistance. "If another major storm struck today, some of our communities would leave money in the pipeline

because they don't have hazard miti-

gation plans."

After the 2007 Nor'easter resulted in a Presidential Disaster Declaration for Newport County several local government agencies in that county

lined up for reimbursement. Collectively they stood to receive up to \$1.5 million from FEMA. This money, in the form of Public Assistance grants, was for paying up to 75 percent of eligible disaster recovery expenses incurred by those local governments. It includes repairs to facilities and reimbursement



**Sand Bags Protect the West Embankment at Easton's Pond**

of storm-related overtime for police, fire and rescue workers.

"28 communities in Rhode Island have FEMA approved plans and we hope that all 39 of our municipalities will come on board soon," said Mr. Macedo. "The smooth recovery process in Newport County points out how valuable a hazard mitigation plan can be for participating communities—and there is no downside."

Should you have any questions on hazard mitigation planning, please contact Lawrence Macedo at [lawrence.macedo@us.army.mil](mailto:lawrence.macedo@us.army.mil) or (401) 462-7126. Don't be left out of the hazard mitigation pipeline.

## Kass on Loan to RIEMA

Steve Kass has been placed on loan to the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency from the Governor's office to assist with public information, media relations, and agency improvement. The Governor felt that



**Steve Kass**

Steve's experience, as a former member of the media and his own senior staff, would be a great asset to the agency. Since joining the team in early March, Steve has worked to prepare media campaigns in preparation for the 2008 Hurricane Season, to change the perception of RIEMA

around the state, and address long standing agency issues.

"The Governor asked me to come here temporarily to help in any way I can. In just a few weeks I have seen first hand the workload RIEMA staff members are dealing with and it is significant. "I will be working along side them and Director Smith to ensure that the agency moves forwards and tackles those tough issues." Kass can be reached at 401-462-7127 or [steve.kass@us.army.mil](mailto:steve.kass@us.army.mil).

## NIMS Training Available Bi-Monthly

In an ongoing effort to provide updated NIMS required training and ICS training, RIEMA will be conducting Technical Assistance training for the On-line courses (IS-100 and IS-700). Also an overview brief will be provided for ICS 100. The training will be scheduled the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>

Thursday of the month from 9 a.m. through 12 p.m. and will be located in the State EOC at 645 New London Ave. Cranston, R.I. 02920. Seats will be limited due to computer resources.

Please contact Ken Baker to reserve your seat at: [Kenneth.l.baker1@us.army.mil](mailto:Kenneth.l.baker1@us.army.mil).

# Top Ten Reason to Buy Flood Insurance- NOW!

Floods are the most common and costly natural disasters. Fortunately property owners who live in communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) can purchase affordable protection to insure against flood losses. Since 1978, the NFIP has paid more than \$34 million in flood insurance claims in Rhode Island. This program offered by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency deserves recognition. With our best David Letterman impression, we present to you ...

The Top Ten Reasons to Buy Flood Insurance—Now:

1. Flood insurance compensates you for flood-related losses to your home or business after your deductible is met.
2. Coverage is relatively inexpensive. An average annual premium in the New England states is only \$475.
3. You can depend on being reimbursed for flood damages because NFIP flood insurance is backed by the federal government, even if the President does not declare a federal disaster.
4. When flood insurance pays you keep it. It's not a loan.
5. You become eligible for additional dollars to elevate, strengthen or move your building.
6. Renters can purchase flood insurance contents coverage for personal belongings or even business inventory.
7. Although you know better than to store valuable stuff where water can get to it, your coverage may include cleanup and items such as furnaces, water heaters, washers, dryers, air conditioners, freezers, utility connections and pumps.
8. You can request a partial payment immediately after the flood, which can help you recover quicker.
9. Buying flood insurance is one of the soundest financial decisions you will ever make to protect your home or business. And the number one reason is...
10. You'll be FloodSmart!

Buy it now because hurricane season is approaching and there's a 30-day waiting period before coverage begins. To contact a flood insurance agent serving your area, check out: [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

## Partnership Works Towards Preparedness

On Friday, February 29, 2008, the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region 1 of Boston and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency formed partnership to unveil a Preparedness Program specifically designed for 4th grade students.

North Providence Superintendent Dr. Donna Ottaviano volunteered to have the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers attend the pilot program unveiling on their professional development day.

The Preparedness Program allowed the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to examine both the "Masters of Disasters" and the "Adventures of the Disaster Dudes"; model for their respective classes. The purpose of the program is to create a culture of preparedness in the State of Rhode Island by enlisting the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students as agents who will lead their families to first prepare an emergency kit and secondly create a family communications plan.

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency will collaborate with

FEMA Region 1, before the start of the pilot program in the North Providence School District in the fall of 2008 which will also coincide with National Preparedness Month (September). This program will be introduced during a statewide effort in 2009.

Following a presentation of the programs, the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers of North Providence overwhelmingly selected the "Adventures of the Disaster Dudes" program. Comments from the teachers centered on empowering the students to take an interest in the program; easy steps for the students to follow; address all nationalities; peers addressing the students; encourages the students listening skills; and teacher friendliness of the presentation. The diversity of the video bridges the gap to all cultures through a DVD and allowed interactive skills to garner participation of the students.

Other ideas that developed from the meeting included:

- Solicit the assistance of the Local

Emergency Management Director to address the Parent Teachers Associations or Organizations at the beginning of the school years to discuss both winter storms and hurricanes on the subject of Preparedness.

- Solicit corporate sponsors on providing items for "starter kits" for each student for the purpose of building their own Preparedness Kit.
- Local schools may elect to include Art and Drama Clubs to incorporate a theme that would coincide with National Preparedness Month (September) or Hurricane Preparedness Week (Last week of May).
- Conduct an assembly or event at the end of the school year for recognition for the student's completion of the program with parents in attendance.

If you have any questions concerning this project you may reach David H. Leonard at 462.7188 or

[David.H.Leonard@us.army.mil](mailto:David.H.Leonard@us.army.mil)

# Update on 2008 Rhode Island MEDS-POD Activities

RI Municipalities in conjunction with the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) are once again working to ensure that RI residents will be protected in the event of a public health emergency. The first eighteen municipalities in the state to have an approved MEDS-POD plan are eligible to conduct an exercise simulating a response to a public health emergency by activating a POD, which would be used to distribute medications or provide vaccine to the population in a time of a public health emergency.

The purpose of the exercises is to allow responsible parties from mu-

nicipalities to test their ability to bring together resources, activate a POD site, and distribute medications to the population as quickly and efficiently as possible. The exercise process begins with a planning meeting, which is assisted by both RIEMA and HEALTH and lays the foundation for both a tabletop and functional exercise.

Local response agencies and volunteer organizations, integral to the preparation and execution of a POD, will be involved in the planning and implementation of the exercises. During the exercises, they will have the opportunity to perform their roles

as they would during an actual emergency.

Funding for municipalities to develop and revise their POD plans and conduct these exercises is provided by HEALTH utilizing federal funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under the Strategic National Stockpile's (SNS) Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) program.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about these plans or exercises please contact the state SNS Coordinator, Christopher Daniel at the Department of Health at 401-222-4905.

## When You Respond... RI Responds

By Christopher Daniel  
RI Department of Health

When a public health emergency occurs there will likely be a need for professionals trained in healthcare, public health, and related occupations willing to volunteer their services. Recent experience with large-scale disasters has consistently shown that an effective response requires that volunteers' credentials are verified ahead of time and that they are deployed through a coordinated effort. To ensure that Rhode Island is up to this important challenge, a new initiative called **RI Responds** was launched by the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH).

**RI Responds** is a partnership between the state's two premier health professional volunteer programs, the RI Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) and the RI Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), and the newly functional Statewide Emergency Registry of Volunteers (SERV - RI) that operates as part of a nation-wide effort sponsored by the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The HHS program requires each state in the nation to establish a

functional program that allows healthcare practitioners to provide, on a voluntary basis, verifiable information about their professional status. SERV - RI is the state's official health volunteer program run by HEALTH as part of the **RI Responds** partnership, which will help ensure a robust and coordinated response to a



public health emergency.

HEALTH is currently using online medical license renewal as a means to inform healthcare professionals about volunteer opportunities and solicit their participation. The online renewal process permits those renewing their medical licenses to indicate if they are willing to respond to a public health emergency and directs them to the [www.riresponds.org](http://www.riresponds.org) webpage where they may learn about volunteer opportunities with DMAT, MRC and SERV - RI. While indicating interest will in no way impact the

license renewal process, it is hoped that offering volunteer opportunities for healthcare professionals will generate interest and serve to increase participation.

During the **RI Responds** registration process, potential volunteers will be asked to enter information regarding their professional license, certifications, contact information, as well as other relevant background information that facilitates appropriate deployment and utilization. **RI Responds** utilizes a secure database of verified information provided by healthcare professionals who have expressed an interest in assisting in the event of a public health emergency or other disaster requiring trained medical professionals. By registering for any of the three volunteer opportunities, those healthcare professionals who become part of the system can be queried regarding their availability, receive instructions for response, and be deployed as part of an emergency response.

Please check out [www.riresponds.org](http://www.riresponds.org) to learn more about health professional volunteer opportunities.

## The Team Approach

Due to the demanding requirements and responsibilities of Emergency Management, Local Emergency Managers who are part-time, volunteers, or their primary responsibility is another function such a Chief of a Police or Fire Department can be over-tasked with the duties of Emergency Management. The duties of Emergency Management are more than just coordinating and responding to wide-spread disasters in a time of need. The duties of emergency management range from developing training and exercises that take months of planning and preparation to developing complex planning that requires at times Federal and State and other local participation. Emergency planning on the local level varies from updating to rewriting local Emergency Operations Plans, to developing Medical Points of Distribution Plans, to Pandemic Flu, to Continuity Government, and now developing Emergency Action Plans for Dam failure. These are just the few plans that local emergency management directors have to write in order to insure emergency preparedness on the local level. These duties and responsibilities at times are overwhelming for a team of people to complete let alone a single individual who may be a volunteer or run a full-time fire department.

New approaches have to be developed to tackle these requirements in order to have comprehensive emergency management on the local level. Currently, there are only two local full-time emergency management agencies throughout the state, Providence and Pawtucket. Other cities and towns have either a part-time, volunteer or another city or town official whose primary responsibility is not emergency management.

Recently, the City of Newport has developed team approach to local Emergency Management. Instead of having one person with the entire responsibility of emergency management, a team has been developed and appointed to handle the complexities

of the job. The Team is comprised of the Director who is the Police Chief, Deputy Director who is the Fire Chief, a member from Public Services, the Harbor Master and the City Grant Writer. Each member of the team is appointed to a 2 year term. The team meets frequently on the range of emergency management issues and is currently rewriting their Local Emergency Operations Plan, Increasing local Shelter capability, enhancing catastrophic radio communications by the development of ham radio and regional pet sheltering. These are just a few of the issues that the team faces among their regular day to day activities.

If you have any questions this Emergency Management structure please contact Robert Pesapane of RIEMA at (401) 462-7187 or Chief Michael G. McKenna of the Newport Police Department at (401) 845-5776.

### NATIONAL THREAT ADVISORY

#### ELEVATED



Significant Risk of Terrorist Attacks

### NATIONAL AIR TRAVEL ADVISORY

#### HIGH



High Threat of Terrorist Attacks



## Upcoming RIEMA Courses & Training

April 7-8

Basic Search & Rescue

April 10-11

ICS 400\*\*

May 6-7

ICS 300

May 8-9

Basic Search & Rescue\*\*

May 13-15

WMD Incident Management and Unified Command

\*\*Signifies that the class is full

## Questions?

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that have appeared in it please contact:

Brittan Bates  
Newsletter Co-Editor  
Brittan.Bates@us.army.mil

Or

Jeff Stevens  
Newsletter Co-Editor  
Jeffrey.Stevens6@us.army.mil

**Rhode Island Emergency  
Management Agency**  
645 New London Avenue  
Cranston, RI 02920  
Phone: (401) 946-9996  
Fax: (401) 944-1891

[www.riema.ri.gov](http://www.riema.ri.gov)

**Director**  
**Major General Robert T.  
Bray**

**Executive Director**  
**J. David Smith**

# Get Ready RI!

Become a  
Disaster Relief & Emergency  
Response Volunteer



Preparation is the best response  
& the time to learn is NOW!

Attend a  
**Volunteer Recruitment & Training Fair**  
April 19, 2008  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Find out about the opportunities in your  
Community and statewide by visiting the Fair  
nearest you or calling the number below.

All locations will have representatives from  
RI Emergency Management Agency  
American Red Cross Rhode Island Chapter  
Volunteer Center of RI  
The Salvation Army  
Urban Search & Rescue  
Disaster Medical Assistance Team  
Medical Reserve Corps

These fairs are brought to you by



Funding Provided by:



For More Information  
(401) 421-6547

[www.vcri.org](http://www.vcri.org) or [www.riredcross.org](http://www.riredcross.org)

## Recruitment & Training Fair Locations

### Greater Providence Area

The CCRI Liston  
Campus, Providence

- Providence,
- Pawtucket
- Johnston
- East Providence
- Barrington
- Warren
- Bristol

### Warwick & Vicinity

CCRI Knight Campus in  
Warwick

- Warwick
- West Warwick
- Cranston
- East Greenwich
- West Greenwich
- Coventry
- North Kingstown

### Northern RI Area

The CCRI Flanagan  
Campus, Lincoln

- Burrillville
- Central Falls
- Cumberland
- Foster
- Glocester
- Lincoln
- North Providence
- North Smithfield
- Scituate
- Smithfield
- Woonsocket

### New Shoreham

Block Island Fire &  
Rescue Headquarters

### Southern RI

Charlho High School

- Narragansett
- Westerly
- Charlestown
- South Kingstown
- Exeter
- Hopkinton
- Richmond

### East Bay Area

CCRI Newport County  
Campus, in Newport

- Newport,
- Middletown
- Portsmouth
- Tiverton
- Little Compton
- Jamestown