

SPECIAL HOMELAND SECURITY ISSUE

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NEWS UPDATE

ICF Consulting Acquires Washington DC-based Synergy, Inc.

Continuity Planning Emphasizes Comprehensive, All-Hazards Approach

Government agencies and private industry have long been concerned with ensuring continuity of operations (COOP) and continuity of government (COG) during and after emergencies. However, a variety of natural and technological emergencies over the last few years have underscored the importance of ensuring the continuity of essential government functions across the U.S. Federal Executive Branch.

Continuity planning addresses any situation that might disrupt normal operations and possibly prevent access to the organization's primary place of business, ranging from a short-term inconvenience (e.g., a water main break or other maintenance issue) to a long-term interruption (e.g., a major terrorist incident or natural disaster). Disruptions in communications and/or information technology systems also can trigger activation of a continuity plan—physical damage to the primary facility is not required.

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A Single Response Framework for Managing Emergencies

In its role as a major provider of designing, conducting, and evaluating homeland security exercises for federal, state, and local government clients, ICF Consulting consistently sees the need for disparate organizations to work together to efficiently manage an emergency. There have been numerous cases of an actual emergency or a simulated exercise where emergency responders



have not worked effectively and efficiently together in a multi-jurisdictional response. The issues that arise in a multi-jurisdictional response range from “who’s in charge of what,” to “who reports to whom,” “who has the authority to do what,” and so on.

Some emergencies, such as a vehicle accident on an interstate highway,

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Presidential Directive Pushes Homeland Security Preparedness

During his first term, President George W. Bush issued a series of Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPDs) intended to re-direct and revitalize the United States' homeland security programs. One of these directives, HSPD-8 ("National Preparedness"), is focused on improving the nation's level of preparedness for responding to a terrorist attack.



The responsibility for HSPD-8 implementation was delegated to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office for State and Local Government Coordination and Planning (SLGCP)/Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP), which provides grants, training, exercises, and other support for state and local homeland security personnel.

HSPD-8 centers on the development of a "national preparedness goal" and the integration of current disparate federal preparedness programs into a more coordinated system. The purpose is to shift current planning from a threat-based to a capabilities-based planning approach, which focuses on the ability of a jurisdiction to perform essential tasks to meet desired mission outcomes. This shift will likely result in significant changes in how ODP distributes funding to support first-responder programs at the state and local levels.

ODP identified four priority initiatives under HSPD-8 that are needed to reorient the nation's preparedness programs. The core initiative is to develop a unified, national preparedness strategy, which employs a systems-based framework to build demonstrable and sustainable capabilities. This national preparedness system will form the foundation for the rest of the preparedness capacity building efforts and will drive the ODP grants planning process.

Development of the national preparedness system has been a challenging and complex process. Using the 15 Scenarios developed by the White House Homeland Security Council, ODP has developed a comprehensive Universal Task List (UTL) of all activities that need to be performed during a major incident to prevent occurrence, reduce loss of life or serious injuries, and mitigate significant property damage. These scenarios are intended only

to illustrate the range of threats and hazards of national significance and include the following:

- four chemical scenarios (blister agent, toxic industrial chemicals, nerve agent, and chlorine tank explosion)
- four biological scenarios (plague, aerosol anthrax, anthrax food

contamination, and foot and mouth disease)

- one disease outbreak scenario (pandemic flu)
- two natural disasters (earthquake and hurricane)
- one radiological scenario ("dirty bomb")
- one improvised nuclear device scenario
- one improvised explosive device scenario
- one cyber scenario

The Universal Task List identifies all the tasks that need to be performed to prevent, respond to, and recover from the large-scale events represented by these scenarios. ODP has also developed a Target Capabilities List (TCL), which

Under this program, funding will be more directly linked to preparedness needs, rather than being distributed based on formulas, as is currently being done.

describes the specific capabilities that federal, state, local, and tribal entities are expected to develop and maintain to meet the goal of "national preparedness."

The creation of a universal task list and target capabilities list that are driven by

common scenarios is a new process for much of the homeland security community. ODP sponsored several workshops during 2004 to solicit input from federal, state, and local agencies on defining the key homeland security tasks and identifying the corresponding capabilities. ICF Consulting has observed that while participants generally understand the concept, many expressed concerns regarding the assumptions behind the overall approach. For example, questions were raised about whether the 15 scenarios adequately represent realistic, large-scale events. Participants also questioned the need for all jurisdictions across the country to be equally "pre-

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pared” for events that, for some, are highly improbable, due to location or discipline. The greatest concern expressed, however, is that the lists could be used as a yardstick against which all jurisdictions would be measured—and that future funding would be driven by the goal of ensuring that jurisdictions meet these standards.

In response to the issues raised by stakeholders, ODP has been revising the UTL and TCL to better align with current state and local programs. ICF Consulting has been working with ODP on this alignment process. At the same time, ODP is upholding its goal of defining national capability for preparedness with an expected release of the National Preparedness Goal in Spring 2005. Through performance-based exercises and other assessment activities, ODP will be able to determine a jurisdiction’s or agency’s current level of capability, and then compare that to the TCL to identify gaps, excesses, deficiencies, and actions for addressing these issues.

From ICF Consulting’s vantage point, it seems clear that the implementation of this process will have a direct impact upon public policy for homeland security officials at all levels of government in the United States. Under

this process, funding will be more directly linked to preparedness needs, rather than distributed based on formulas, as is currently being done. ODP’s FY2005 Homeland Security Grants Program Guidelines, which provide instructions and applications for the ODP grants program, specifically assert that state-wide preparedness strategies should be consistent with the National Preparedness Goal. States are further directed to use the National Planning Scenarios, the Universal Task List, and the Target Capability List in their preparedness efforts.

ICF Consulting is discussing these issues with its current state clients, and is prepared to position them and future clients to successfully integrate these new national programs into their homeland security efforts.

Several other initiatives being implemented under HSPD-8 will support achievement of the national strategy and National Preparedness goal. These include:

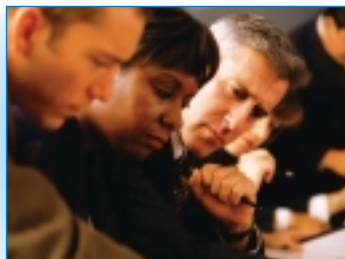
- A capabilities-based national preparedness assessment and reporting system. The purpose of this system will be to allow continuous subjective assessments of current national preparedness and to obtain a systematic view of

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Number	Homeland Security Presidential Directive Title	Issue Date
HSPD-1	Organization and Operation of the Homeland Security Council	29 October 2001
HSPD-2	Combating Terrorism Through Immigration Policies	29 October 2001
HSPD-3	Homeland Security Advisory System	11 March 2002
HSPD-4	National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (Unclassified version)	11 December 2002
HSPD-5	Management of Domestic Incidents (Initial National Response Plan, 30 September 2003)	28 February 2003
HSPD-6	Integration and Use of Screening Information	16 September 2003
HSPD-7	Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization, and Protection	17 December 2003
HSPD-8	National Preparedness	17 December 2003
HSPD-9	Defense of United States Agriculture and Food	30 January 2004
HSPD-10	Biodefense for the 21st Century (aka NSPD-33)	28 April 2004
HSPD-11	Comprehensive Terrorist-Related Screening Procedures	27 August 2004
HSPD-12	Policy for a Common Identification Standard for Federal Employees and Contractors	27 August 2004

Continuity Planning... (cont. from page 1)

In order to create these COOP plans, organizations should identify the essential functions that must be performed under all circumstances and determine the personnel, communications equipment, records and databases, and hardware needed to support these essential functions. The process of identifying essential functions not only includes a thorough examination of laws and regulations but must include intense stakeholder participation in the identification of operational functions. The proper identification and prioritization of these elements are critical for the creation of a viable continuity plan. Once the essential functions and supporting resources are identified, agencies determine alternate facilities to which they can relocate in case their primary facility is not available.



Lines of succession and methods for delegating authority also should be established for key personnel to help ensure continuity. Similar to the orders of succession established for the President of the United States, each staff member with responsibility for carrying out mission-essential functions should have multiple clearly identified successors. These successors should be trained in their contingency responsibilities on a regular basis. Other agency personnel should be familiar with the identity of these successors as well as the nature and extent of their authority. Once an agency creates what it considers to be a viable continuity plan, it must develop and train employees on the new procedures, supplemented by regular drills and training exercises.

The most important, and most difficult, element of building a viable continuity plan is identifying the correct essential functions. Staff selection, equipment assignments, and choice of vital records and databases are all based on this initial list of functions. If the list is too narrowly focused, continuity of critical functions cannot be ensured. If the list is too broadly focused (e.g., "Provide speeches for the Secretary"), excessive resources may be earmarked to sustain nonessential functions, impeding work on tasks that are truly essential.

Another common pitfall agencies encounter when identifying mission-essential functions is neglecting to fully consider interdependencies with other agencies. For example, many federal agencies depend on the U.S. Department of the Treasury to make or collect payments. Similarly, an agency may be responsible for maintaining a database that is used by several other agencies. The database may not be critical to the owning agency's daily activities, but may be deemed essential by the other agencies that use it.

When creating a continuity plan, many people neglect to emphasize the importance of training successors in their emergency duties. Other pitfalls include neglecting to adequately document the legal authority that enables designated officials to make policy decisions during an emergency. Many plans omit information on the location of all vital records and databases and do not establish a program to regularly update this data. In addition, training and exercises often are not conducted with sufficient regularity.

At a minimum, what issues should be addressed in a COOP Plan?

- Identifying and prioritizing mission-essential functions
- Establishing how, when, and which authorities will be delegated
- Creating orders of succession
- Identifying and training appropriate staff to support essential functions
- Acquiring and equipping an alternate facility for relocation
- Defining availability and redundancy of interoperable communications and IT systems
- Identifying, protecting, and sustaining availability of vital records and databases
- Determining methods to transfer control to and from the primary site during and after an emergency
- Creating a viable schedule to update training, exercises, and plans

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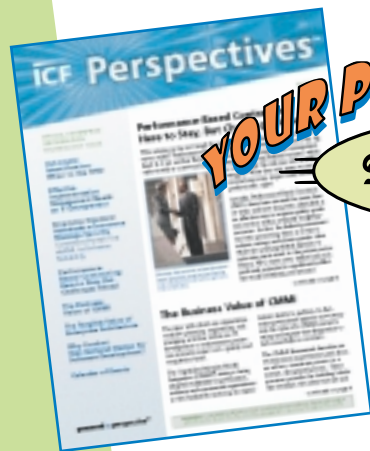
Continuity planning is being revisited by private industry as well as federal, state, and local governments. In the private sector, continuity activities are often referred to as “Business Continuity Planning” but involve the same process of identifying and prioritizing critical functions and planning how these functions will be supported under all conditions.

The most important, and most difficult, element of building a viable continuity plan is identifying the correct essential functions. Identifying these essential functions not only includes a through examination of laws and regulations but must include intense stakeholder participation.

examine their current policies, practices, and resources (e.g., data backup and storage procedures, vendor and mutual aid agreements, personnel policies and leadership structure, versatility of communications and computing equipment) that can lead to change, improvement, and increased preparedness no matter what the future holds.

Regardless of the term used, continuity planning is a useful exercise even if no business interruptions occur. Agencies and businesses are forced to re-

For more information on ICF Consulting’s continuity of operations capabilities, please visit www.icfconsulting.com/COOP.



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Calendar of Events

February

February 17

Washington, DC. Steve Rodgers, the Director of the Division of Tariffs & Market Development-South in the Office of Markets, Tariffs & Rates for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), will present "FERC's Market Power Tests: Issues in the Context of Market Development, at **ICF Consulting's Monthly Litigation Breakfast Series**, at the Washington, D.C. office at 1725 Eye St., N.W. *For more information, contact Stacey Hohenberg at 1.703.218.2504.*

February 23-24

Denver, CO. At **Electric Utility Consultant's, Inc (EUCI) Conference on Coal: Volatile Markets and New Fuel Supply Patterns**, ICF Consulting's John Blaney will present "New Coal Plant Development—The 800-Pound Gorilla: Outlook for Natural Gas Supply and Price." *For more information, contact Stacey Hohenberg at 1.703.218.2504.*

February 23-26

Palm Desert, CA. ICF Consulting's Jeff Schwartz will speak on the "Benefits of ENERGY STAR Products and Partnership" at the **National Association of Electrical Distributors South Central Conference**. *For more information, contact Jeff Schwartz at 1.518.452.5986.*

February 27-March 2

San Antonio, TX. At the **RESNET Building Performance Conference**, ICF Consulting's David Meisegeier will present "What It

All Means—Quantifying the Changes to the Rating Score in 2006 and How They Will Affect ENERGY STAR Homes." ICF Consulting's Brian Smith also will present "Designing Effective Rating Quality Control Programs to Influence Positive Changes in the Rating Industry." *For more information, contact David Meisegeier at 1.703.934.3119.*

February 28-March 2

San Diego, CA. ICF Consulting's Michael Barth will speak on "Sustaining and Spreading Best Practices in Developmental Services: The Healthy Steps & Help Me Grow Models" at the **National Initiative for Children's Health Care Quality (NICHQ) 4th Annual Forum for Improving Children's Health Care**. *For more information, contact Juanita Hasan at 1.703.934.3221.*

March

March 1-3

Amsterdam, Netherlands. At **Point Carbon's Carbon Market Insights 2005**, ICF Consulting's Abyd Karmali will speak on "What is an Effective Corporate Strategy for Managing Greenhouse Gas Emissions?" *For more information, contact Sebastian Foot at 44.20.7391.4714.*

March 7-9

Galveston, TX. ICF Consulting will host an exhibit at the **Exploration and Production Environmental Conference** and will demonstrate its Greenhouse Gas Emissions Management System

(GEMS™). GEMS is a framework for managing economic emission reductions. *For more information, contact Robin Petrusak at 1.703.934.3868.*

March 8

London, England. ICF Consulting and CO3 are offering the first in a series of half-day, quarterly seminars on the **UK Operating and Financial Review Requirements**. The seminars will be held at Number One London Bridge. *For more information, contact Sebastian Foot at 44.20.7391.4714.*

March 15-19

Delray Beach, FL. At the **National Association of Independent Lighting Distributors National Meeting**, ICF Consulting's Jeff Schwartz will speak on the "Benefits of ENERGY STAR Products and Partnership". *For more information, contact Jeff Schwartz at 1.518.452.5986.*

March 29-31

Houston, TX. ICF Consulting's Tony Silva will lead a workshop on "Strategic Communications for Enabling Constructive Public and Stakeholder Engagement" at the **Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Supply Chain Strategies Conference**. Leonard Crook and Terry Mitchell, also from ICF Consulting, will lead a workshop on "Evaluating Risk Along the LNG Supply Chain." *For more information, contact Tony Silva at 1.202.862.1564.*

April

April 5-7

Chicago, IL. At the **Trade Fair Groups Electric Power Conference**, ICF Consulting's Elliot Roseman will present "Future Scenarios for Transmission" EP Session 1A on Regulatory/Legislative Initiatives That Will Shape the Industry. *For more information, contact Stacey Hohenberg at 1.703.218.2504.*

April 11-15

Las Vegas, NV. ICF Consulting's Kamala Jayaraman will present "Uncertainty Assessment as a Systemized Approach for Data Analysis and Quality Assurance of Emission Inventory" at the **14th Annual Emission Inventory Conference** sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. ICF Consulting's Anne Choate will speak on "Supporting Energy and GHG Analyses at the Local Level." *For more information, please contact Kamala Jayaraman at 1.703.934.3331 or Anne Choate at 1.202.862.1226.*

April 18

Absecon, NJ. Michael Barth will present "A Low Cost, Post Hoc Method to Rate Overall Site Quality in Multi-Site Demonstrations" at the **Eastern Evaluation Research Society's 28th Annual Conference**. *For more information, contact Juanita Hasan at 1.703.934.3221.*

May

May 14-18

Boston, MA. At the **National Association of Electrical Distributors Annual Meeting**, ICF Consulting's Jeff Schwartz will present "Increasing Sales and Profits with ENERGY STAR." *For more information, contact Jeff Schwartz at 1.518.452.5986.*

May 16-21

Indianapolis, IN. At the **Affordable Comfort Conference 2005**, ICF Consulting's David Meisegeier will speak on "ENERGY STAR Builder Option Packages." ICF Consulting's Brian Smith will present "Demonstrating the Value of ENERGY STAR to Increasing Homebuilders' Financial Performance." *For more information, contact David Meisegeier at 1.703.934.3119.*

May 16

Oak Brook, IL. ICF Consulting's Michael Barth will speak on "Disseminating Healthy Steps—Experience in Sustainability and Evolution" at the **18th Annual Maternal and Child Health Leadership Conference**. *For more information, contact Juanita Hasan at 1.703.934.3221.*

June 6-8

Budapest, Hungary. ICF Consulting's Abyd Karmali will speak on "Assessing Competitiveness Impact of Constraints of Greenhouse Gas Emissions on the Steel

Sector" at the **International Conference on Clean Technologies in the Steel Sector**. *For more information, contact Sebastian Foot at 44.20.7391.4714.*

June

June 9-10

Toronto, Canada. ICF Consulting's Sergio Ostria will speak on "Understanding the Factors that Drive the Demand for Freight Transportation and the Role of Public Policy" as part of the session on The Future of Transportation: The Ingredients Needed to be a Leader in 2020 during **Canada's National Transportation Summit**. *For more information, contact Sergio Ostria at 1.703.934.3013.*

June 19-22

Las Vegas, NV. ICF Consulting will exhibit at the **Edison Electric Institute (EEI) Annual Meeting**. The meeting will center on trends and strategic policies affecting power generation, transmission, and distribution. *For more information, contact Pat Alexander at 1.703.934.3157.*



powered by perspective

A Single Response Framework... (cont. from page 1)

require that police, fire, and emergency medical services from different jurisdictions work together effectively and efficiently. Thus, the management of an emergency gets much more complicated when additional levels of government engage. Everyone has authority for something, but how do these disparate organizations work together to efficiently manage an emergency?

Everyone has authority for something, but how do these disparate organizations work together to efficiently manage an emergency?

Two years ago President George W. Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) number 5, “Management of Domestic Incidents,” which has spawned a new U.S. national effort designed to promote integrated homeland security efforts that will enhance the efforts of emergency responders and services to incident victims. The initiatives emanating from HSPD-5 have components that differ from past federal efforts.

ICF Consulting’s analysis of this new single framework for response concludes that these initiatives are best understood when viewed as a program that includes three instructional elements—a guidebook, an approach, and a tool for coordinating response.

The Guidebook

The *guidebook* is the National Response Plan (NRP), which updates the nation’s all-hazards approach to response. The NRP focuses on coordination of jurisdictions and disciplines; emphasizes the cycles of awareness, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery; promotes maximizing resources; and prioritizes the improvement of incident management communications and mutual aid agreements.

The Approach

The *approach* is based on the Incident Command System (ICS), long favored by the firefighting community and now adopted as the national standard for organizing response efforts. ICS is a functionally based structure that manages the people responding to an incident. The system uses functional titles such as Communications Officer and

Operations Section Chief so that anyone with the requisite training can step into that job, regardless of their day-to-day job and regardless of what agency or level of government they work for. Upon arrival at an incident, the affected local government typically sets up the ICS. The ranking fire official on scene or the ranking

police official are likely to take the role of Incident Commander and others will take that position as more senior officers arrive on scene. This example is the key to ICS. Everyone uses the same terminology, and everyone understands the same functional job. Thus, the ICS structure can be used as the response framework for multi-jurisdictional events, such as when five counties, the state, and federal government all respond to a single incident. All subsequent responding personnel from different locales fit into a functional organization. This minimizes confusion

The challenge ahead is to translate good existing efforts, and new federal insights, to integrate disciplines and unify response protocols in a way that enables an efficient and enhanced response effort at all levels of government.

about who is going to do what to what or whom. While many local and federal government agencies already use ICS, it is not uniformly used and was not a national requirement—until now.

ICS incorporates a Unified Command (UC), and an optional Area Command—important

elements in multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency domestic incident management. In applying the ICS standards to exercises it has designed, ICF Consulting has seen that the UC promotes a team effort and overcomes many of the inefficiencies that can occur when different agencies operate without a common system or organizational framework. We find that when the UC is applied our clients maximize their exercise experience to assure participation of all agencies with jurisdictional authority, or functional responsibility for any or all aspects of an incident, as well as those able to provide specific resource support.

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We have seen the best applications of the UC structure when the following conditions exist:

- organizing robust contribution to the process of determining overall incident strategies and selecting objectives
- ensuring that joint planning for tactical activities is accomplished in accordance with approved incident objectives
- ensuring the integration of tactical operations
- approving, committing, and making optimum use of all assigned resources

An Area Command is established either to oversee the management of multiple incidents that are each being handled by a separate ICS organization, or to oversee the management of a very large incident that involves multiple ICS organizations, either of which is likely for incidents that are not site specific, geographically dispersed, or evolve over longer periods of time (such as a bioterrorism event). In this sense, acts of biological, chemical, radiological, and/or nuclear terrorism represent particular challenges for the traditional ICS structure and will require extraordinary coordination between federal, state, local, tribal, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations.

ICF Consulting advocates the use of the Area Command option to avoid unnecessary competition for the same resources, such as when there are a number of incidents in the same area and of the same type (e.g., two or more hazardous material or oil spills, and fires). In designing an exercise, this command system approach can be enhanced, if necessary, by response operations steps, in addition to those used for a single incident. These steps might include the activation of Emergency Operations Centers and/or a Unified Command. When incidents do not have similar resource demands, they are usually handled separately and are coordinated through an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). If the incidents under the authority of the Area Command are multi-jurisdictional, then a Unified Area



Command should be established. This allows each jurisdiction to have representation in the command structure. Area Command should not be confused with the functions performed by an EOC. An Area Command oversees management of the incident(s), while an EOC coordinates support functions and provides resources support.

The Tool

The *tool* in the single response framework is the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The result of two years of federal planning in response to HSPD-5, the NIMS is designed to take the guidance of the NRP (the guidebook) and the ICS (the approach) into the actual management of response activities. NIMS is a tool that helps communities be better prepared to respond to disasters by providing a list of action items. In the event of a response, NIMS relies on the flexible framework of ICS.

ICF Consulting can imagine a future response era when all agencies across the government and across the country are responding with the same terminology and framework. The efficiencies that the NIMS response framework brings will benefit the victims of every incident. According to HSPD-5, by 2005, federal departments and

agencies will adopt NIMS as a requirement for federal emergency preparedness grants to state, tribal, and local governments. States will have two years to become compliant with NIMS, with the funding of grants in 2007 conditioned upon that compliance.

The NIMS provides a nationwide template enabling federal, state, local, and tribal governments, and private sector and nongovernmental organizations to work together effectively and efficiently to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To enhance our services to our clients, all of ICF Consulting's Emergency Management and Homeland Security staff are certified by FEMA that they have successfully completed its Independent Study Course #700 on NIMS. Moreover,

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Presidential Directive... (cont. from page 3)

future critical capabilities. The results of these assessments will be used to identify critical preparedness deficiencies, develop strategies for rectifying those deficiencies, and ensure these issues are addressed in programming and budgeting and other management systems.

- A comprehensive national training and exercise program that supports achievement of the national preparedness goal. The national exercise program is intended to be the primary vehicle for training national leaders and DHS staff, and for promoting collaboration among partners at all levels of government for assigned homeland security missions. These national-level exercises will involve full-scale, full-system tests of collective preparedness, and will improve interoperability, build strong teams across all levels of government and the private sector, and strengthen international partnerships. The cornerstone of the national exercise program is the TOPOFF (Top Official) Exercise Series, which was conducted in 2000 and again in 2003.
- A balanced investments program, through which ODP will develop tools and criteria to ensure that grant programs and awards are being allocated consistent with the national preparedness goal.

The creation of this new federal approach which requires scenario-driven task and capabilities lists, ongoing capabilities assessments, and full-scale exercises, (including “TOPOFF,”) is likely to spur efforts to integrate the diverse disciplines that make up the homeland security community.

ICF Consulting has had the opportunity to help drive this integration through its work in developing exercises, training, and plans for state and local clients. We have learned where the logical interdependencies exist between disciplines, and supported projects that require a strong commitment to interdisciplinary coordination. Our work at all levels of government indicates that organizations with missions ranging from food safety to water treatment to emergency medical systems, along with the more traditional fields of law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency management, will be increasingly brought together by their jurisdictions to jointly think through multi-disciplinary solutions to this multi-faceted challenge.

For more information on ICF Consulting’s homeland security services, please visit www.icfconsulting.com/emhs.

A Single Response Framework... (cont. from page 9)

selected senior staff have taken an additional in-depth, privately taught course to ensure we are prepared to help our clients achieve compliance with NIMS and improve the management of emergencies.

Our training in the NIMS, and feedback from state and local clients, indicate that the federal initiatives can build upon efforts already underway or previously achieved at the state and local levels. A number of jurisdictions have been applying the practices advocated by the ICS, NIMS, and the NRP for a number of years. The challenge ahead is to translate good existing efforts, and new federal insights, to integrate disciplines and unify response protocols in a way that enables an efficient and enhanced response effort at all levels of government.

For example, ICF Consulting recently received its first assignment to help a local government in Florida to update its Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

(CEMP) to be compliant with the NRP and NIMS. This client already has a strong emergency management program, but wants to be sure all its responders understand the language and structure that these two new federal initiatives have created. Our emergency management experts will study the local CEMP and work with a local planning team to augment the existing plan with the new requirements. We will conduct training and facilitate an exercise to allow the response personnel to practice under the new management framework. It won’t be a major change for the local government, but it will be the foundation for more organized and efficient response when the state and federal government are asked to support the local government in a major incident.

For more information on NIMS and ICF Consulting’s capabilities in exercises, please visit us at www.icfconsulting.com/exercises.

Homeland Security Strategic Planning for Urban Areas

Urban areas pose a myriad of challenges and vulnerabilities regarding threats posed by acts of terrorism. Population and building density, dependence on critical infrastructure, integrating multiple disciplines, coordinating varying levels of government, and facilitating the appropriate expenditure of dollars are all issues on the front burner of today's urban homeland security planners. In the United States, extra funds are being directed specifically to urban areas to supplement other funding in the area of homeland security preparedness.

Many highly urbanized areas are not governed by a single entity, but contain a mixture of city, county, special district, regional, state, federal, and other governing entities. Into this layering of governments comes well-intentioned funding designed to enhance the capabilities of all entities to prepare for and mitigate against acts of terrorism. The key questions are: where should the money go and what expenditures should have priority?

Through its work in the metropolitan areas of Seattle, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., ICF Consulting has learned some valuable lessons regarding strategic planning for homeland security. These lessons suggest that a consensus-driven process, which includes and validates stakeholder participation, best positions urban areas to successfully implement strategic plans that will guide future decisions regarding funding, partnering, and prioritizing action items.

Thinking Like an Urban Area

A threshold challenge is to position key stakeholders to act and think like one urban area, in one large discipline called "homeland security." This is a huge hurdle, given that any one entity may have various internal disciplines competing for dollars (eg., police, fire, public health, transportation, public works), and that entity in turn feels it is competing against other jurisdictions for its "piece of the pie." Several steps can start a process that acknowledges common goals, mission, and vision. Engagement of stakeholders regarding their expectations, needs, and concerns about a strategic process is critical. Development of a commonly held position that reflects stakeholder input can validate the engagement process and create momentum. Equally important is an acceptance that all jurisdictions and disciplines do not need to be equally awarded. Stated another way by one stakeholder, "the process must be transparent, but not necessarily equitable."

Leveraging Assets and Best Practices

Areas that have been impacted by terrorist attacks and other disasters quickly learn that "we are all in this together." Mutual aid agreements, inventories of assets, public-private partnerships, and the benefits of joint exercises and training activities all accelerate the ability of a large urban area to effectively respond and recover. A comprehensive strategic planning process regarding homeland security will acknowledge the totality of assets and skills that benefit the entire urban area. This allows a subsequent determination of gaps, "weak links" in the intra-urban partnership, and identification of leadership entities that can mentor the remainder of the urban area.



Getting "Buy-In" from Decision Makers

A strategic planning process must have the endorsement of key decision makers from the moment it commences. It must acknowledge limits based on legal issues, past history, current relationships, and likelihood of success. The process itself must strive to preserve this endorsement, as any sense of "winners and losers" will cause that endorsement to evaporate. The strategic planning process at its best produces an advisory document that will be used as a basis for decision making, or as a basis for opposition to proposed actions. The strategic plan itself is rarely legally binding; however, it should contain explicit tasks, assigned lead coordinators, expected outcomes, and timelines. Finally, the plan should contain a "re-visitation clause" to check the validity and relevance of the plan on a regular basis.

An effective urban area homeland security strategic plan can serve as a unifying agent for key stakeholders, as a resource for decision makers, and as a roadmap for integrating and leveraging best practices throughout the area's disciplines and jurisdictions.

For more information about ICF Consulting's capabilities in strategic planning for emergency management and homeland security, please visit www.icfconsulting.com/EMplanning.

ICF Consulting Acquires Washington DC-based Synergy, Inc.

Acquisition Enhances ICF Consulting's Defense and Information Technology Service Offerings

ICF Consulting has acquired Synergy, Inc., a Washington, D.C.-based consulting firm specializing in high-end strategic planning, analysis, and information technology services in defense operations, command and control, and logistics. This acquisition enhances ICF Consulting's ability to serve U.S. Department of Defense (U.S. DOD) and other clients with expanded mission-critical analytical and technology-based solutions.

"Synergy and ICF Consulting have similar traditions of quality analytics, superior customer focus, and innovative solutions," says Sudhakar Kesavan, ICF Consulting Chairman and CEO. "This acquisition allows us to combine our strengths in information technology, homeland security, and human capital management with Synergy's topflight capabilities in defense and information technology. ICF Consulting's decision to purchase Synergy reflects our continued commitment to growth and service enhancements across all federal agencies by combining the best professionals, analytics, and institutional knowledge."

The acquisition of Synergy will add more than 200 new employees and contribute more than \$25 million to ICF Consulting's government revenue. Synergy provides high-end services to the U.S. DOD and other federal and state agencies in four areas: logistics and weapons system analysis; command and control and operations; technology services and solutions; and information systems integration. Synergy will continue to offer its existing services as an ICF Consulting company. In addition, Synergy's and ICF Consulting's collective expertise will enhance defense, civilian, and commercial applications across the combined 1,200-person firm.

"While our client bases are highly complementary, both firms share a deep commitment to partnering with our clients to fulfill their missions, using leading analytical techniques and technology solutions," says Donald Zimmerman, former Synergy CEO, who will lead Synergy's efforts within ICF Consulting. "I am confident that joining with ICF Consulting will allow us to expand our delivery of effective and innovative solutions to our



clients, while providing enhanced opportunities to our employees."

Synergy Chairman and Founder Dr. Terrence Colvin says, "Synergy has served clients for more than 35 years, and our employees pride themselves in offering the best, forward-thinking solutions. I am delighted that Synergy clients found a home at a firm known for its analytical rigor."

For more information, please visit www.icfconsulting.com/synergy.

About ICF Consulting

ICF Consulting is a leading management, technology, and policy consulting firm. Drawing upon extensive industry knowledge, distinguished professionals, and innovative analytics, the firm develops solutions to complex defense, homeland security, energy, environment, social program, and transportation issues. ICF Consulting's approach to these issues is strengthened by its expertise in information technology, organizational improvement, program management, and communications. Since 1969, ICF Consulting has been serving major corporations, government at all levels, and multinational institutions. More than 1,200 employees serve these clients from key business

centers in the Americas, Asia, and Europe.

For more information on ICF Consulting's services, please visit our Web site at www.icfconsulting.com.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please contact us at 1.703.934.3081 or by e-mail at perspectives@icfconsulting.com.

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