Interoperable Communications Vehicles Converge in Columbus

The Buckeye State Sheriffs Association's (BSSA) parking lot at The Continent (north Columbus) was transposed Wednesday to a holding station for 15 interoperable communications vehicles. All 11 of the BSSA communications vehicles; the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Special Response communications vehicle; the Ohio State Highway Patrol command vehicle and the Ohio EMA mobile communications vehicle were on-site at one location for the first time.

All participants attended a meeting hosted by BSSA concerning Ohio schools' safety plans. Information was available on CDs for the BSSA vehicles.

Ohio EMA's telecommunication technicians conducted a radio check with each vehicle using their Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) stand-alone unit. The manufacturer of the state's communications vehicles, LDV Command and Communications, was also on site to participate in the exercise.

The BSSA vehicles stationed in Ashland, Athens, Columbiana, Franklin, Geauga, Guernsey, Hancock, Lucas, Mercer, Montgomery and Ross counties, can be deployed within an hour of an incident's occurrence within its 50-mile region. The interoperable communications vehicles enable law enforcement and other first responders to better communicate with each other and responde to large-scale emergencies such as civil riots, terrorist attacks or severe weather incidents.

The vehicles feature MARCS hand-held radios; onboard weather monitoring equipment; cell phone capabilities; fax machines; wireless and high speed networks; day/night camera and video distribution system; emergency scene lighting equipment.

Between May 2005 and January 2007, BSSA vehicles were purchased and distributed using federal homeland security funds.

Ohio EMA Telecommunication Tech Coordinator Joe Bennett sets up the satellite transmitter used to tie the communications vehicles'' MARCS radios into the same frequency.

Fourteen of the state's interoperable communications vehicles gathered in Columbus for a meeting conducted by the Buckeye State Sheriffs Association. The Ohio EMA Communications Branch conducted MARCS radio checks with the communications vehicles from BSSA (11), Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Ohio State Highway Patrol.

Homeland Security Threat Level: **ELEVATED**

Significant Risk of Terrorist Attack
HIGH or Orange for Aviation Sector

Ohio EMA Monthly Report - Update (From May 6 report covering April 1 - May 5, 2008)

March 18-19 Severe Storms/Flooding - The State Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) for public assistance has been authorized from reimbursement of emergency work for categories A (emergency debris removal) and B (emergency protective measures), only. SDRP will not provide funding for permanent repair work. Costs associated with emergency protective measures (Category B) will be reimbursed for activities that took place between March 18 and April 30, 2008.

Counties eligible for SDRP assistance include Belmont, Butler, Carroll, Erie, Guernsey, Hamilton, Huron, Sandusky, Tuscarawas and Warren. Based on information submitted, current public assistance costs total $5.3 million. Of this estimate, $939,566 would be in categories A and B, with the 75 percent state share for reimbursement totaling $704,675.

Pandemic Influenza Continuity of Operations (COOP) - Ohio EMA Plans Branch facilitated a meeting on April 29 for state agencies to review their Continuity of Operations plans for pandemic influenza, based on the federal government's *Guidance to Assist States in Improving State-Level Pandemic Influenza Operating Plans.* The meeting covered an overview of the guidance, which is part of the federal government's efforts to implement the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (2006).

All U.S. states and territories must provide a progress report to the federal government by May 30.

State agencies represented in the COOP meeting included Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation, Ohio National Guard, Ohio State Highway Patrol, and Ohio Departments of Administrative Services, Development, Education, Health, Job and Family Services, Mental Health, Public Safety - Ohio EMA, and Rehabilitation and Correction.

Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness

30th Anniversary

1978 - 2008

Teaching Ohioans
Severe Weather Safety and
Preparedness

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40 years of disasters
A look at some of the deadliest natural disasters around the world.

By: **AP** Associated Press

▶ **May 2008:** Earthquake (Magnitude 7.9) Hits Sichuan province in central China. As of May 15, death toll is 19,509. Death toll could rise to 50,000.
▶ **May 2008:** Cyclone Nargis strikes Maynmar, killing more than 43,000. Approximately 30,000 still missing.
▶ **October 2005:** Earthquake in northern Pakistan (magnitude 7.6) kills 768,000.
▶ **August 2005:** Hurricane Katrina on U.S. Gulf Coast kills at least 1,600 people in Louisiana and Mississippi.
▶ **December 2004:** Indian Ocean tsunami (triggered by magnitude 9.0 earthquake) kills 230,000 in a dozen countries.

▶ **December 2003:** Southeastern Iran earthquake (magnitude 6.5) kills 26,000.
▶ **August 1999:** Western Turkey earthquake (magnitude 7.4) kills 17,000.
▶ **October 1998:** Central America Hurricane Mitch kills
   9,000.
▶ **April 1991:** Bangladesh cyclone kills 140,000.
▶ June 1990: Northwestern Iran earthquake (magnitude 7.7) kills 50,000.
▶ **July 1996:** Northeastern China earthquake (magnitude 8.2) kills 240,000.
▶ **November 1970:** Bangladesh cyclone kills 300,000. World's deadliest cyclone on record.

Lucas County is now **StormReady**
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

On Tuesday, May 13 the Lucas County Emergency Management Agency made its county a StormReady community. According to the commissioners, Lucas County is the largest Ohio county to receive the National Weather Service certification. There are now 15 StormReady communities in the state.

By becoming StormReady, flood insurance rates may be lower for county residents. StormReady communities are better prepared to save lives from the onslaught of severe weather through better planning, education and awareness. To be certified as StormReady, a community or county must:

- Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center;
- Have multiple ways to receive severe weather forecasts and warnings to alert the public;
- Create a system that monitors local weather conditions;
- Promote the importance of public readiness through community seminars; and
- Develop a formal hazardous weather plan that includes training for severe weather spotters and holding emergency exercises.

For additional information, visit the NWS Web site: www.nws.noaa.gov/stormready.

EMA Updates

Michael White -Ohio EMA
Radiological Analyst in Ottawa County (Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station) Employed with Ohio EMA since March 2006. Last day with EMA: May 23rd

William Halsey, Director of the Lucas County Emergency Management Agency, is retiring May 30th after 35 years of dedicated service with the agency. Mr. Halsey served as director of Lucas County EMA for 20 years.

Congratulations. You will be missed by all.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18	**19**	**20** Evacuation & Re-Entry Planning Ohio EMA	**21** Incident Mgmt TAC Ohio EMA	**22**	**23**	**24**
25	**26** *Memorial Day*	**27**	**28** Animal Health Emerg ODOT - B / **Campus Security Tabletop Exercise** OSU - Columbus	**29** Bomb TAC Battelle - West Jeff / **Pandemic Influenza Tabletop Exercise** Cincinnati, OH / **Pandemic Influenza Functional Exer.** Upper Sandusky, OH	**30**	**31**
June **1**	**2** Canine TAC ODOT - B	**3** **BVPS Dry Run** Partial Participation	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
8	**9**	**10** Columbus/Franklin County Pandemic Influenza Functional Exercise Columbus, OH	**11** **Pandemic Influenza Functional Exer.** Washington CH, OH	**12**	**13**	**14** Flag Day

Register for Ohio EMA courses by visiting *http://ema.state.oh.us/training*
TAC - Technical Advisory Committee   *   BVPS - Beaver Valley Power Station