

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



ANNUAL REPORT 2007



Welcome

On behalf of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), we are pleased to submit the annual report on the agency's performance for 2007. This report is the record and reference of agency performance in support of the state and local emergency management program and the state's homeland security program.

When collectively we look back on the year, within NEMA and a large portion of the state, we see a year marked by both fire and ice. In 2007 we saw reduced fire activity, with only one major fire declaration for the Soldier Creek Complex near Ft. Robinson. However, the reduced fire incidence was more than counterbalanced by ice storms and flooding. Coordination, planning, training and exercising once again allowed the emergency response community to effectively react and respond to this full spectrum of challenges.

As one reads this report, they will see the tremendous effort and work ethic exhibited by NEMA staff on a daily basis to carry out the emergency management and homeland security program for the state. High levels of energy have been, and continue to be expended to support our state's planning, training and exercising programs that are continually put into play during our state's response and recovery to disasters and emergencies. NEMA continues to work with her partner agencies at the state and local level to progressively enhance the professional level of emergency managers across the state and the overall level of state preparedness.

We are extremely proud of the quality of work performed every day by the women and men of NEMA, and impressed by their dedication and professionalism as emergency managers for the State of Nebraska.



**Brigadier General
Timothy J. Kadavy**



**Al Berndt
Assistant Director
NEMA**

Agency Overview / Administration

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency is charged by state statute with reducing the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of our state from damage, injury and loss of life and property resulting from natural, technological or man-made disasters and emergencies. NEMA focuses on maintaining an effective emergency response system through an emphasis on pre- and post-disaster programs that continues to build an effective emergency response system across the state.

This past year has been one of the most active periods ever experienced by the state from the ravages of natural disasters; starting with the New Year's Eve ice storm across the state and the resulting loss of power for an extended period of time, three flooding disasters in the spring and summer and then closing out the year with another ice storm disaster in the southeast part of our state. In addition to leading the state response to four Federal disasters, the agency continued to carry forward other state and federal programs within the emergency management arena, as well as the state homeland security program.

This past year also saw a change of leadership at the helm of NEMA with the retirement of Adjutant General Roger Lempke. General Lempke had led the agency since October of 2000 and retired in November of this past year after being the TAG and NEMA Director for seven years. It was

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**Brigadier General
Timothy J. Kadavy**



**Al
Berndt**



**Phyllis
Rathjen**



**Deb
Kai**



**Larry
Nedrow**

Agency Overview / Administration (continued)

during the tenure of General Lempke that the agency experienced growth in terms of both program and personnel to handle the ever-expanding duties assigned to the agency. In October of 2000, NEMA was staffed with 24 FTE's, and at the time of his retirement the agency had expanded to 36 FTE's as a result of increased responsibilities for both emergency management and homeland security. In November of 2007, Governor Heineman appointed General Timothy Kadavy as the Adjutant General and the Director of NEMA.

NEMA, as an agency, is housed under the Nebraska Military Department. The agency is structured into four performance areas: Administration; Preparedness - Exercise and Training; Response and Recovery; and Radiological Emergency Preparedness. NEMA also functions as the State Administrative Agency for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and administratively supports the Lt. Governor in his role as State Homeland Security Director.

The Administrative Division of NEMA is composed of: Brigadier General **Timothy Kadavy** - Agency Director; **Al Berndt** - Assistant Director; **Phyllis Rathjen** - Accountant I/Secretary; **Deb Kai** - Budget Manager; and **Larry Nedrow** - Administrative Assistant. These individuals are directly responsible for the oversight of the agency programs encompassing the following performance areas:

State Emergency Management Program and agency administration
State Administrative Agency for DHS programs and grants
Administrative support to the State Homeland Security Program
Agency Strategic Plan
State Emergency Operations Plan/Emergency Operations Center

No program can be sustained without the full cooperation and support of its peers at the state level and a core constituency at the local level. NEMA, in carrying out both the emergency management and homeland security programs, relies extensively on emergency management programs at the local level in all of Nebraska's 93 counties. Local programs and their directors have been used to facilitate and carry out EM and homeland security activities on a statewide basis. It is this partnership with local directors that is the backbone of the overall state program and one of the key reasons we as Nebraskans have been able to respond in times of need.

NEMA is currently staffed with 36 full-time employees and one GIS support position from the University of Nebraska. It is the dedicated staff of NEMA that supports and implements those programs that prepare us for, respond to, recover from and mitigate the future disasters, emergencies and hazards facing us as a state. This 2007 NEMA Annual Report is dedicated to the NEMA staff and local emergency managers who work diligently day after day on behalf of the citizens of this state.

Assistance to Local Governments

The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) is the core program within NEMA for supporting local county emergency management agencies in the administration of their programs. In 2007 NEMA provided \$1,551,095 to 38 county and regional emergency management agencies on a 50/50 cost-share basis. The EMPG program is a formula grant providing direct support for essential expenses, including salaries, benefits, equipment, supplies, maintenance of facilities, and other necessary costs of state and local emergency management departments and agencies. Local participants must maintain and expand the capabilities necessary to have an effective emergency management program.

Participating agencies are required by NEMA to have either a certified, full-time director or deputy director, or be part of an inter-jurisdictional organization. Each participant must submit a statement of work and a budget showing the local financial commitment. Throughout the performance year, local participating agencies work closely with and are monitored by NEMA for adherence to program guidelines.

During 2007, the subgrantee agencies focused on addressing work plans to ensure that emergency management capabilities are developed and maintained in local jurisdictions sufficient to provide the basis for dealing effectively with catastrophic disasters and homeland security emer-

gencies. The work plan requirements included:

- A. Maintenance of an emergency management office and EOC capabilities, including conducting day-to-day activities in support of emergency management and disaster preparedness.
- B. Maintenance of a Local Emergency Operations Plan according to State planning standards. This included a review of Local Emergency Operations Plans and revisions needed to ensure proper alignment with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and National Response Framework (NRF) coordinating structures, processes, and protocols.
- C. Coordination of State Homeland Security Grants at the local level and serving as the focal point for local-level disaster preparedness, training and exercising.
- D. Conducting all-hazards disaster preparedness, including required NIMS training.
- E. Conducting all-hazards disaster preparedness exercise(s).
- F. Reporting disaster response activities to NEMA at time of disaster or emergency.

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Assistance to Local Governments (continued)

Since 2003, the Lt. Governor, Rick Sheehy, the Governor's Homeland Security Policy Group and NEMA have utilized local emergency management organizations as the focal point at the local level for carrying out the state's homeland security program. Homeland security assessments, strategy development, grant applications and program guidance for all local-level homeland security programs are conducted by local or regional emergency management or-

ganizations. NEMA has recognized the strong ties between all-hazards emergency management planning and the new realities of homeland security/terrorism preparedness and has called upon local emergency managers to be the lead at the local level. Because of strong relationships developed over the years by the EMPG program, local agencies have stepped forward and taken a strong leadership role.

The 2007 EMPG-funded Emergency Management Directors/Coordinators and their jurisdictions are:

Loren Uden, Hastings/Adams County; **Faythe Petersen**, Region 11 (Antelope, Pierce and Madison Counties); **Jerry Bretthauer**, Banner and Scotts Bluff Counties; **Alma Beland**, Region 26 (Blaine, Garfield, Greeley, Loup, Sherman, Thomas, Wheeler and Valley Counties); **Nan Thornton**, Region 23 (Box Butte, Dawes, Sheridan and Sioux Counties); **Douglas L. Fox**, Region 24 (Boyd, Brown and Rock Counties); **Darrin Lewis**, Kearney/Buffalo County; **Bill Pook**, Region 5/6 (Burt, Dodge, and Washington Counties); **Rick Schneider**, Butler County; **William M. Cover**, Cass County; **Eilene Brannon**, Cherry and Keya Paha Counties; **Larry J. Collins**, Region 21 (Cheyenne, Deuel, Garden, Kimball and Morrill Counties); **Bob Rose**, Clay County; **Troy Smith**, Custer County; **Pat Foust**, Dakota County; **Brian Woldt**, Dawson County; **Paul W. Johnson**, Douglas County; **Terry Marshall**, Fillmore County; **Patrick Gerdes**, Region 15 (Frontier, Gosper and Phelps Counties); **Roger Powell**, Furnas County; **Mark Meints**, Gage County; **Pete Peterson**, Grant and Keith Counties; **Jon Rosenlund**, Grand Island/Hall County; **Deb Hilker**, Holt County; **John McKee**, Jefferson County; **Jeff England**, Kearney County; **Laura Hintz**, Knox County; **Doug Ahlberg**, Lincoln/Lancaster County; **James Nitz**, Lincoln County; **Bob Cole**, Nemaha County; **Dan Jantzen**, Region 13 (Nuckolls, Thayer and Webster Counties); **Greg Goebel**, Otoe County; **Tim Hofbauer**, Platte County; **Jim Gerweck**, Richardson County; **Bruce "B.J." Fictum**, Saline County; **Larry Lavelle**, Sarpy County; **Terry Miller**, Saunders County; **Gary Petersen**, Seward County.

Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise

Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise covers a wide range of activities within the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. This division is responsible, among its many duties, for oversight and administration of United States Department of Homeland Security grant funding programs.

GRANTS

For FY2007, The State of Nebraska applied for and received federal grants for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), Law Enforcement Terrorism Preparedness Program (LETPP), Citizen Corps Program (CCP), Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG), and the Metropolitan Medical Response System Program (MMRS). Although Omaha had originally received Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant funding in 2005 and 2006, they fell into the second funding tier this year and were not eligible to receive this grant in 2007.

The FY2007 grant year application procedure was the same format as the one used for FY2006. The Nebraska State Homeland Security Strategy was updated, and Investment Justifications were submitted requesting support for programs at the local and state level.

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) held two justification workshops, one with the State Homeland Security Planning Committee to complete the assessment and determine the justifications to be included in the State's application, and the second workshop with the Committee and local first responders to write the justifications.

After the state's application was submitted to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), state agencies and local jurisdictions submitted their justifications to the state to apply for grant funding. Their applications were reviewed by the Homeland Security Planning and Advisory Committee.

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Grant training programs are conducted throughout the state each year to provide guidance to local jurisdictions for the many grant programs administered by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

tees. These committees forwarded their recommendations, based on the total award from DHS, to the Governor's Policy Group. The Governor then made awards based on recommendations from the Policy Group. The FY2007 grants continued the 80% pass-through to local jurisdictions.

The State Homeland Security Planning Committee and NEMA staff worked to submit Investment Justifications that were reasonable, and that addressed Nebraska's need to prepare for possible Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) terrorism events. However, Nebraska received only the base allocations mandated by Congress. The funding received included: SHSG \$3,820,000; LETPP \$2,730,000; CCP \$160,184; and MMRS \$516,290.

The Regional Interoperability Advisory Board and NEMA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to allow the State to use \$1,100,000 of the local 80% LETPP grant funds to complete the purchase of a statewide license for InterOp Solution's Paraclete software. This software will make communications interoperability between NSP troop areas and local jurisdictions possible. The purchase of a statewide license resulted in significant savings to both the State and local agencies, and moved state interoperability forward on a large scale.

The following local funds were awarded, based on the Planning, Exercise and Training (PET) Regions:

Regions	SHSG			LETPP	
	Communications	P.E.T.	Hazmat/MOU	Communications	Fusion Centers
Southeast	522,803.00	50,000.00	25,000.00		692,000.00
South Central	403,310.00	50,000.00	75,000.00		
East Central	329,683.00	50,000.00	25,000.00		
Northeast	328,476.00	50,000.00	25,000.00		
Panhandle	294,680.000	50,000.00	25,000.00		
North Central	278,992.00	50,000.00			
Southwest	256,056.00	50,000.00	50,000.00		
UASI		42,000.00	50,000.00		692,000.00
State	764,000.00			1,100,000.00 MOU	246,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 3,178,000.00	\$ 392,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 1,100,000.00	\$ 1,630,000.00

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Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

Interoperable communications remains the top priority for Nebraska, and local jurisdictions are encouraged to use DHS grant funds for their interoperable communication needs. Working with the Department of Administrative Services/Office of the CIO, a total of eight PET/communication regions have been established, with the State as a peer region. Communication Regions were identified by areas of common interest. In conjunction with the office of the State Chief Information Officer, working through and with the Council of Regions, NEMA provides support to the regions through staff planning, training and exercising guidance.

The MMRS grant was split equally between Omaha and Lincoln at \$258,145 each, as directed by Congress. MMRS funding is used to help hospitals and public health departments plan for health issues arising from pandemic, mass casualty or terrorism incidents. Grant funds are also used for equipment, training and exercises. NEMA has assigned two planning staff members to attend the OMMRS and LMMRS planning committee meetings to assist with planning and program grant management.

CCP funds are sub-granted to the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

(NVSC), who administers the grant. The NVSC sub-grants CCP funds to local Citizen Corps Councils and Emergency Management Agencies for their local programs. NVSC hired a Program Coordinator to manage the CCP grant, work with Citizen Corps Councils, and help local jurisdictions with training. The funds awarded to counties are used primarily for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. Grant funds pay for student materials, emergency packs and instructors.

Another grant administered by NEMA is the SARA Title III,
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The 2007 Exercise Planning Workshop was held in North Platte, Nebraska

Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning (HMEP) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. In 2007, Nebraska received \$63,136 for Planning and LEPC activities and \$95,263 for hazardous materials training. These funds are made possible through fees paid by the transportation industry. The grant supports LEPC activities; e.g. meeting expenses, public education, county fair booths, Commodity Flow Studies, hazmat assessments, and state and regional LEPC conferences. Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) planning revisions and updates are also supported from this grant. NEMA makes the training funds available to the State Fire Marshal Training Division for hazmat awareness and operations training for first responders. The Nebraska Hazmat Incident Team's (N.H.I.T.) quarterly training is also supported by this grant, and is coordinated through the Nebraska State Patrol.

In 2007, Congress funded the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) grant through the U.S. Department of Commerce and DHS/FEMA. The application process included writing the State Communications Interoperability Plan and Investment Justifications. The NEMA grant and planning staff worked on this process for eight months, and met the December 3, 2007 application deadline. As of the end of 2007, Nebraska was waiting for the approval of the Investment Justifications. The grant total is \$8.5 million, and will be passed through to local jurisdic-

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**Mardell
Hergenrader**



**Dan
Hiller**



**Jim
Anderson**



**Patrick
Rooney**



**Bill
Meyer**

Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

tions. There is a 20% match requirement, and Nebraska has received approval to use state communication funds for this match, so there will be no local match funding required. The planning staff will be helping the communications regions update their Tactical Interoperable Communication Plans (T.I.C.P), and that information will then be incorporated in the Local Emergency Operation Plans.

The transfer of DHS Grants & Training to FEMA poses a challenge for NEMA and local jurisdictions. Environmental Assessments and other additional documentation is now required for the building of communication towers. NEMA is working closely with local jurisdictions to facilitate these additional grant requirements.

PLANNING

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency has an active planning section that supports state and local planning efforts. At the end of October, there were two counties out of compliance with the grant guidelines because their LEOP revisions were not completed on schedule. Letters went to County Boards informing them that grant funds were suspended until their LEOPs went to print. Overall, ten LEOPs were revised by the end of October 2007, and three will be completed by December, with the remaining six coming in early 2008.

NEMA also participated in the annual Terrex state exercise to test the Agency's Continuity of Operation /Continuity of Government (COOP/COG) Plan. The COOP/COG plan was completed in 2007, and was used as a part of the exercise.

The Department of Homeland Security continues to mandate that states address additional DHS goals and objectives, and has impacted our agency greatly. In FY2007, NEMA was required to oversee the development of Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs) for the eight PET regions and write the State Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP). Additions incorporated into the 2007 Generic LEOP were Resource Typing, updates to the Mass Prophylaxis Plan, The Agricultural Disease Response Plan, updates to the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation (HSEEP) standards. On the state level, NEMA holds itself to the same standards required of local jurisdictions, and adheres to a five-year planning schedule. The Planning Section, in conjunction with the Homeland Security Planning Team, completed a full review of the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) with no significant changes

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Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

identified.

The Preparedness Division consists of **Mardell Hergenrader**, Division Supervisor/Grants Manager; **Dan Hiller**, Lead Planner; **Jim Anderson**, **Patrick Rooney**, and **Bill Meyer**, Planning Specialists; **Jackie Maly**, Federal Aid Administrator; **Lynn Marshall** and **Bob Wilhelm**, Emergency Management Program Specialists; **Henry Tamasi**, Exercise Training Coordinator; **Dave Reisen**, **Nicole Weber**, and **Mark Robertson**, Exercise Training Officers; **Tonya Ngotel**, SERC Coordinator; and **Logan Lueking**, Staff Assistant.

**Jackie
Maly**



**Lynn
Marshall**



**Bob
Wilhelm**



**Logan
Lueking**



Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

**Henry
Tamasi**



**Dave
Reisen**



**Nicole
Weber**



**Mark
Robertson**



**Tonya
Ngotel**



Training and Exercising

NEMA's Training and Exercise Team found FY 2007 both busy and challenging. The agency presents a very active Training and Exercise program, integrated into Nebraska's eight PET/Communication regions. Activities are conducted at all levels, from assistance to local jurisdictions up through county-level deliveries, regional training and exercising, and offerings at the state level.

As in prior years, NEMA offered support to state agencies, local jurisdictions and the eight training regions (*see map on following page*) in the form of two Basic Certification Academies and two Advanced Opportunities Courses for emergency management personnel. These academies run concurrently, and were held in North Platte in March and in Lincoln during August. The Basic Academy supports certification as required under Nebraska



Ten counties in east-central Nebraska joined to conduct a terrorist/hazmat exercise in the fall of 2007.

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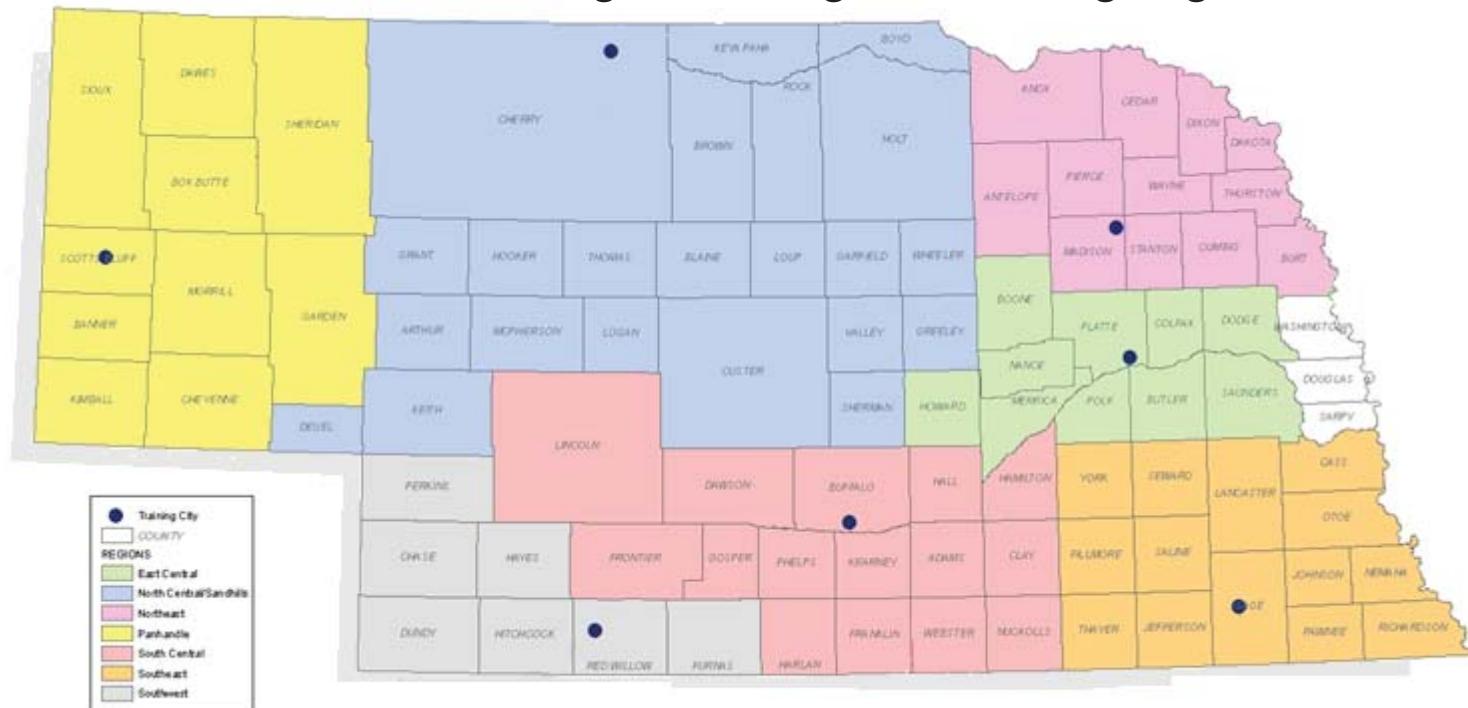
Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

Law (RRS 81-929.46). Attendees acquire the basic skills necessary to function as a certified emergency manager in the state of Nebraska. The Advanced Opportunities course provides previously certified emergency management personnel training and coursework in specialized areas at a level beyond the basic program.

An extended five-year training program for basic and advanced certification has been published for Nebraska, and NEMA tracks all students who participate in the programs. Thirty-five students took the training at the North Platte class, representing local emergency managers, law enforcement personnel, first responders from fire and EMS

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Nebraska Planning, Exercising and Training Regions



Planning, Preparedness, Training & Exercise (continued)

agencies, local government officials, and one international attendee from South Korea's emergency management community. Thirty attendees made up the Lincoln contingent. NEMA continues to establish a level of training which is in compliance with requirements identified by the Department of Homeland Security and Nebraska law.

In addition to the Basic and Advanced courses, NEMA is tasked to coordinate statewide training for the National Incident Management System, or NIMS. The agency delivered three training events focused on the NIMS 300 and 400 courses, designed for management, command and general staff personnel working in emergency management. This training was delivered to 40 students in Lincoln, 25 in North Platte and 20 in Columbus. In addition to these two courses, thousands of individuals in the State of Nebraska completed on-line independent studies in the NIMS 100, 200, 700 and 800 courses, along with specialized training in areas specific to agriculture, health and human services, hazardous materials and similar fields.

NEMA also conducts an annual state-level training exercise entitled "TERREX". Each year sees a different scenario that tests the readiness of local, county and state agencies and their ability to work together in a large-scale incident. TERREX '07 was built around Pandemic Influenza, and brought into play the testing of the state agencies' COOP/COG programs. The year long exercise development pro-



Jefferson County and Fairbury entities joined Nebraska and Kansas National Guard Civil Support Teams (CSTs) in a multi-part exercise. The scenario covered a wide geographic area and multiple scenes, while testing deployment capabilities.

cess included an Initial Planning Conference, a Mid-Year Planning Conference and a Final Planning Conference, in addition to many monthly exercise-wide meetings and numerous specialized planning sessions. Fifteen state agencies took part in TERREX '07, along with county and local entities that exercised at their own levels. The exercise also included the establishment of a state-level Joint Information Center.

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The exercise covered a three-day period, with tabletop exercises on days one and three, and a functional exercise on day two.

Objectives found in the State Strategy, along with individual state agencies' Continuity of Government plans, were put to the test. Strengths and weaknesses were identified by participating state agencies and a Corrective Action Program (CAP) took place to help eliminate or correct the weaknesses.

FY 2007 saw the completion of seven Regional Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans, (TICP), along with one Statewide TICP after the completion of the Regional Plans. TICP's are part of a Homeland Security Mandate for 2008, in which all states shall identify through the TICP process their current capabilities, and to identify their future communications needs.

Most of the year has been spent identifying regional vulnerabilities and preparing, through tabletop and functional exercises, to test local and regional capabilities to help improve response plans in the event of a disaster.

The Planning, Exercise and Training (PET) Team, along with an outside contractor hired last year to assist in carrying out the exercise, continue to assist the regions. This PET process helps locals and their regions identify capa-

bilities, as well as vulnerabilities, and then go out and test them through the exercise process.

As another dimension of the PET process, NEMA conducts a "Model Cities" program, where local first responders and elected officials are taken through natural disaster scenarios based on their jurisdictions, allowing them to identify threat areas, assess their capabilities, and test their response processes. In 2007 these sessions were conducted in Kimball, Cheyenne and Deuel counties.]

We continue to place emphasis on training with regards to the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System, and will continue to do so in 2008.



Field training and exercising involves all aspects of emergency response. Communication is a large part of that process.

Public Information

Jn 2007, the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) joined the National Weather Service (NWS) and the Nebraska Association of Emergency Managers (NAEM) to sponsor severe weather awareness activities. This year, Governor Dave Heineman signed a proclamation declaring April 2 through 6 “Severe Weather Awareness Week”. This annual observance ushers in the spring weather season, when thunderstorms and tornados lead the list of hazardous occurrences. For this event, educational and promotional materials were sent to media outlets across the state. Commercial weathercasters throughout Nebraska use materials supplied by NEMA and the NWS to educate their viewers about tornados and thunderstorms and their individual elements of strong winds, lightning, hail, heavy rain and flooding.

A big part of Severe Weather Awareness Week is the annual poster contest for Nebraska fourth-grade students. Sponsored jointly by NEMA and NAEM, this contest encourages teachers and their students to produce educational posters on the subject of severe weather. Four winners of the contest receive cash prizes, and a fifth receives a NOAA weather radio, and all may appear at the proclamation signing with the Governor.

Winners in the 2007 Severe Weather Poster Contest were: **First Place – Krista Johnson**, Clay Center, Clay Center Public School; **Second Place - Syndey Lynn Saathoff**, Wy-

more, Southern Elementary; **Third Place – Rachel Shackelford**, Clay Center, Clay Center Public School; **Fourth Place – Shelby Garton**, Beatrice, Cedar School; **Fifth Place – Morgan Messersmith**, Wallace Public School, Wallace.

Honorable Mentions went to Hannah Heil, Ord, St. Mary’s School; Mackenzie Maschka, Arcadia, Arcadia Public School; Erika Harms, Glenvil, Sand Creek Elementary; Jennifer Acevedo-Barrios, Lexington, Pershing Elementary; Savannah Schurman, Sutton, Sutton Public Schools; Jessica Domeier, Burwell, Burwell Elementary; Makenna Wallin, Imperial, Chase County Schools.

Toward the other end of the year, the Winter Weather Awareness Campaign provides information to the citizens of Nebraska about safety and survivability during blizzards, ice storms and other severe winter weather phenomena that affect Nebraska during the winter months.

Governor Dave Heineman proclaimed Thursday, November 1st as the 2007 “Winter Weather Awareness Day” in

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Jim Bunstock

Public Information
Officer

Public Information (continued)

Nebraska. NEMA and the National Weather Service, in conjunction with NAEM, issued news releases and public service announcements to help focus public attention on the rigors of winter weather and the ways in which the public can prepare for the effects of heavy snow, strong winds and cold temperatures.

During 2007 NEMA Public Information Officer Jim Bunstock took the Basic Public Information Officer (PIO) course into the field, teaching classes at the Agency's two Basic Academies / Advanced Training Opportunities. These courses bring basic skills and techniques for dealing with media to emergency management personnel and local officials who might find themselves thrown into the role of PIO as the result of an incident in their jurisdiction. The three-day course involves classroom work, mock on-camera interviews and a media panel discussion featuring representatives of local newspaper, radio and television outlets. One

course was delivered in North Platte, and the other in Lincoln.

In 2007, the PIO built upon previous year's foundations to expand and refine Nebraska's Joint Information Center (JIC). The JIC is a process whereby public information professionals from a wide range of agencies, disciplines and jurisdictions co-locate to provide a single integrated source of information in the event of a major incident. The JIC concept is a part of the National Incident Management System.

Through an agreement with Nebraska Educational Tele-

communications, the NEMA JIC forms at the NET facility for exercises or in the event of an emergency. This makes available an impressive array of capabilities for public information operations, including access to the NET broadcasting facilities and their satellite links.

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Public Information (continued)

NEMA and its partner state agencies conduct a wide array of homeland security exercises on levels from tabletop to full-scale. Public information is a large part of those exercises, and NEMA coordinates and operates the state's JIC during these events. NEMA's Public Information Officer is the lead PIO in the JIC, which is staffed by public informa-



The Basic Public Information Officer course provides the opportunity for emergency management personnel and local officials to gain hands-on training in dealing with the media when they are tasked as spokespeople.

tion professionals from agencies involved in the exercises and other agencies who wish to contribute staff. The JIC concept is used during real-world emergencies when the State Emergency Operations Center is opened, and coordinates information from state agencies to ensure a consistent and coordinated message.

The major exercise this year was entitled TERREX 2007. This was a functional exercise testing the state's response to a nation- and world-wide pandemic influenza incident. For this exercise, the JIC brought together staff from the Governor's Office, NEMA, the Nebraska State Patrol, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Department of Agriculture, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Department of Roads and the University of Nebraska System. As this scenario involved a public health threat, public information officers from the Department of Health and Human Services assumed lead roles in the joint information center process, with support from the other agencies. Advance preparation by DHHS public information gave the JIC an edge in this exercise, as much of the preliminary fact-gathering and message-mapping work had already been done. Despite a heavily condensed timeline, the JIC was able to test a newly developed structure and produce a large volume of public information in a timely manner.

The JIC process proved itself in real-world situations as well during 2007. This year saw a diverse range of incidents, beginning early with a widespread ice storm that affected 59 of Nebraska's 93 counties. A Joint Information Center was established in Grand Island, co-located with the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC). From this facility, PIOs from numerous state agencies worked in con-

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Public Information (continued)

cert with representatives from the Public Power Districts involved, and issued damage updates, status reports on response and recovery efforts, and emergency public advisories and information bulletins.

Declared disasters involving storms and flooding followed in June and July, and public information duties were carried out for these incidents from NEMA's Lincoln offices.

In the wake of ice, storm and flooding disasters, Nebraska's fire season brought activity in August in the form of five small fires burning in the vicinity of Fort Robinson State Park. Volunteer PIOs from other Nebraska state agencies relocated with NEMA personnel and the Mobile Operations

Center to provide public information support at the Soldier Creek Wildlife Refuge, where lightning strikes had ignited blazes. Finally, a federal disaster declaration was awarded on August 29th for 16 counties in southwestern Nebraska for damage caused by torrential rainstorms and subsequent flooding. Information efforts for this

disaster were also handled from NEMA headquarters in Lincoln.

In an effort to provide information on all aspects of NEMA's operations in an easily accessible and full-time manner, NEMA maintains a website at <http://www.nema.gov>. A full range of data is available there to media and to the public, on every element of the agency and its activities, as well as content designed to inform and educate the public. On the site, NEMA's newsletter, *The BEACON*, showcases emergency management activities across the state and provides advance notice of upcoming events. Included



Participants in the Basic PIO course get a taste of real-world interview techniques, preparing them for on-camera action at incidents.

on the website are links to other local, state and national sites featuring emergency management and homeland security data. Here, Nebraska's local emergency managers can find guidance and information on the federal homeland security grant processes. Emergency Operation Plans for the state and all county jurisdictions can also be found here.

Citizen Corps / CERT

 Citizen Corps aims to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, emergencies and disasters of all kinds. This goal is accomplished through a national network of state, local, and tribal Citizen Corps Councils. These Councils build on community strengths to implement the Citizen Corps programs and will carry out a local strategy to have every Nebraskan participate.

Commission Partnership with NEMA

2007 was a year of formative developments for Citizen Corps in Nebraska. In 2006, NEMA cemented its growing partnership with the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission, contracting with the Commission for the administration of Citizen Corps in our state. This contract capitalized upon the Commission's expertise in mobilizing community involvement and providing management support to community-based initiatives. The diverse governor-appointed Commissioners of the NVSC now serve as the State Citizen Corps Council. Developments in 2007 expanded the relationship begun in prior years through which Commission personnel provided technical assistance to Citizen Corps development. The Commission contracted with seventeen Citizen Corps Councils throughout Nebraska in calendar year 2007 to implement local training, education and or-

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The Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission reached out to citizens groups across the state to deliver information on the Citizen Corps structure and programs.

2007 CITIZEN CORPS FUNDING [2007 Contracts Carried Over Through Contract Amendments to May 31, 2008]	Annual Grant Amount
Cherry-Keya Paha Counties	\$6,000.00
Frontier County	\$3,000.00
Hall County	\$10,400.00
Platte County	\$10,050.00
Gage County	\$8,400.00
Lancaster County	\$22,810.00
Madison County	\$15,253.00
Phelps County	\$6,700.00
Scottsbluff County	\$7,500.00
Red Willow County	\$2,777.00
Statewide*	\$61,445.00
NVSC Management & Administration	\$24,151.00
TOTALS	\$178,486.00

*Recommended for the use of promotion, enhancement and strategic initiatives of CCP efforts and local councils throughout the state at the direction of Commission staff.

Citizen Corps / CERT (continued)

ganizing activities with the 2006 funding. Those contracts allowed the local councils to implement Citizen Corps activities through December 31, 2007. Four CERT trainings were held in rural Nebraska and a TeenCERT class was held for Boy Scouts and their leaders in Lincoln in July, 07. Ten contracts have been amended to go through May 31, 2008 to complete the planned activities and training.

2007 Governor's Conference on Community Service

The Commission sponsored a statewide conference and included a strong track on disaster preparedness. Speakers addressing disaster preparedness included Mark Sloan, the Citizen Corps Council Point of Contact from the Harris County Texas Citizen Corps who shared the Citizen Corps experience with Hurricane Katrina refugees who arrived in Houston. Scott Wilson, the Regional Coordinator for the Humane Society of the United States spoke about the needs of pets in disasters and what Councils can do to prepare. Also speaking were Paula Sotnik from Boston presenting on Emergency Preparedness and Persons with Disabilities, Cee Cee Molineaux from Colorado talking about Disaster Preparedness Partnerships and Nebraska Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy giving a luncheon presentation on Nebraska's Homeland Security efforts. Twelve Citizen Corps Points of Contact and Emergency Managers attended the Conference.

Regional Citizen Corps Meetings

Recognizing that emergencies and disasters almost always require a coordinated response that reaches beyond normal political boundaries and to comply with the Homeland Security priority of regionalization, the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission initiated discussions with local councils about a more regional approach. During the summer, Commission personnel convened meetings in Crete, Omaha, Grand Island, Norfolk, Scottsbluff, and North Platte to introduce the Commission's new direction for the state Citizen Corps Program, clarified the 07-08 Request for Applications (RFA) process and timeline, provide technical assistance to current Citizen Corps Councils in completing their grant applications, and explained plans for the new regional approach that became effective with the new grant year.

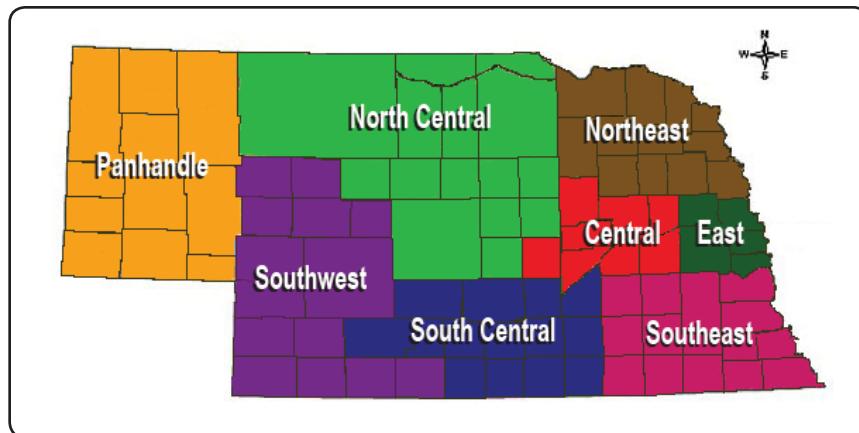
108 persons attended these six meetings, including County and regional Emergency Management directors, representatives of community first responder agencies, current Citizen Corps Council Points of Contact (POC), Council members, CERT team members and CERT trainers, representatives of community and faith-based organizations reps, non-profit and volunteer groups, individuals from public health and education agencies, and persons with an interest in being part of community disaster preparedness activities in their communities.

(continued)

Citizen Corps / CERT (continued)

CCP Regions

As a result of these meetings and follow-up discussions, eight Citizen Corps Program (CPP) regions were developed and counties were placed in the regions the local councils and representatives thought were most appropriate for their county.



07-08 CCP Request for Applications

The lead Citizen Corps Council in each region completed the 07-08 Request for Applications (RFA) grant applications for all initiatives in their region and submitted the application to the Commission by mid-September 2007. Each county that wants to participate within the Region had to develop an action plan for 2008 as part of the Region's application that addressed the RFA requirement to have local Community Preparedness Campaigns. A State

Citizen Corps Program requirement for a Community Preparedness Campaign in all Councils' counties includes four components: (1) A Plan for Spontaneous, Unaffiliated Volunteers, (2) A Plan for Persons with Disabilities and other Special Populations, (3) Partnering with Faith Groups, and (4) A Plan for Pet Disaster Preparedness. Grant applications were received from six of the eight Citizen Corps Regions. External grant reviewers evaluated and scored the grants; the Commission's Program Committee compiled the external reviewer scores and comments to make recommendations to the Commission Board about funding. The Commission's Board sitting as the State Citizen Corps Council met on October 25, 2007 determined the amount of funding that each applicant would receive for 2008 and identified the revisions that were needed to negotiate a contract for the 2008 calendar year.

The lead Citizen Corps Council – a local governmental entity – will facilitate inter-Council collaboration, assist counties in developing new or strengthening current Councils, and ensure equitable distribution of funds to implement Citizen Corps Council initiatives in the region. Of the \$160,184 in 2007 federal funds available, \$95,184 will be contracted with the Regions for local community organizing, promotion, education and training activities for the 2008 grant year and \$65,000 will be used in the Commission to support the management of the Citizen Corps program

(continued)

Citizen Corps / CERT (continued)

to provide State Citizen Corps leadership and technical assistance to the regions and local councils. Collaboration within regions and support from the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission will expand the scope of the Citizen Corps Program to ensure that community-based disaster preparedness reaches Nebraskans.

2008 CITIZEN CORPS FUNDING [2007 DHS Funding]	Annual Grant Amount
Central Region	\$11,600.00
East Region	\$16,590.00
North Central Region	\$12,687.00
Northeast Region	No application received
Panhandle Region	\$13,703.00
South Central Region	\$17,820.00
Southeast Region	\$10,000.00
Southwest Region	No application received
Statewide*	\$12,784.00
NVSC Management & Administration	\$65,000.00
TOTALS	\$160,184.00

*Recommended for the use of promotion, enhancement and strategic initiatives of CCP efforts and local councils throughout the state at the direction of Commission staff.

Disability Preparedness

In November, 2006 NEMA administrators directed the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission to serve as the lead agency in Nebraska for Disaster Preparedness to ensure that the disaster preparedness needs of those with disabilities are met. The Commission already had a developed Disability Inclusion Program so it was a natural

extension to add Preparedness to that initiative. Because the Citizen Corps Program also had a disability preparedness component as part of its Community Preparedness Campaign, the partnership was off to a good start. The Commission's internal programs and staff worked together with the Commission's Disability Preparedness Advisory Team to organize and host the first state Disability Preparedness Summit in November at the Paralyzed Veterans of America Center in Omaha. Citizen Corps leaders were asked to partner with a local leader with disabilities to participate in the Summit and take home the knowledge, tools and resources to help them begin to put a local disability preparedness planning initiative into action.

Summit participants were joined by local health department representatives, emergency managers and representatives from Nebraska's AmeriCorps programs. The Summit provided a venue for all participants to network, learn from one another, and from a variety of experts including respected national speaker, Chad Colley, of the National Council on Disability from Florida, about the importance of implementing personal and community preparedness efforts with persons with disabilities. The Summit culminated with the distribution of the 1st version of "Working with the Disability Community: A Citizen Corps Toolkit for Collaboration". This document was the product of approximately three months of wide research, collaboration and

(continued)

Citizen Corps / CERT (continued)

information gathering. The Toolkit synthesizes a variety of disability and disaster preparedness practices, guides, lists and comments from local, regional and national experts and organizations catered to Nebraska's preparedness experiences and likely future needs. Moving ahead, each Citizen Corps Council will utilize and apply the Toolkit to maximize the preparedness of those with disabilities in their locales. The toolkit will continue to be revised and upgraded as more resources become known and new practices are employed.

National Preparedness Month Activities

The Nebraska State Citizen Corps Program joined the national initiative to promote National Preparedness Month in September along with National Citizen Corps, Ready.gov and the Department of Homeland Security. This was an exciting opportunity to raise the awareness of individuals in Nebraska of the need to be prepared for any kind of disaster. The Commission worked with Nebraska Emergency Management Agency staff and local Citizen Corps Council Points of Contact on the Nebraska activities to celebrate the month.

A unique approach was utilized in 2007 as the Commission's Citizen Corps Program partnered with the University of Nebraska Athletic Department and the Commission's national service programs – AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and

VISTA to reach several thousand Nebraskans who attend Nebraska home football and volleyball games. The Commission developed a flyer with one side highlighting National Preparedness Month, Nebraska Citizen Corps and the Commission, and the other side summarizing practical advice to program cell phones with the "In Case of Emergency (ICE)". The ICE notation can help first responders contact a person who could give important information to help treat that individual if they are not capable of providing a medical history themselves. About 5,000 flyers were distributed at the September 22 NU football and volleyball games. An ad highlighting the same information was placed in the football program.

The NU Athletic Department created a video that was shown on the gigantic video screens inside the football stadium during the football game (attendance makes the stadium the third largest city in Nebraska) to encourage fans to program their phones with ICE. The flyers were given to fans as they left the game to remind them to follow-up on programming their phones. Nebraska national service volunteers from Citizen Corps Councils, AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, VISTA and alums assisted Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission Board members and Nebraska's First Lady distribute flyers after the football game. Flyers were also distributed the same day prior to the evening volley-

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Citizen Corps / CERT (continued)

ball game that highlighted the defending National Champion Nebraska Huskers Volleyball team.

Prior to the football game, the Commission's Citizen Corps Program had a vendor booth at HUSKER NATION PAVILION which featured live bands, cheerleaders, the NU Marching Band, several stations for youth including an obstacle course supervised by NU varsity athletes, face painting, multiple large inflatable games, all attracting up to 25,000 people. The Husker Sports Network Pre-game Show broadcasted from the Pavilion included an interview with Nebraska's Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy, Director of Homeland Security for Nebraska talking about National Preparedness Month. The Citizen Corps Program booth gave away information including the ICE flyer, ReadyKids coloring books, stickers and other disaster preparedness activities for children.

Ready.gov spots from the Ad Council were tagged for Nebraska and sent to all television and radio stations in Nebraska to play during the month. Citizen Corps Councils across Nebraska distributed the ICE flyers in their home communities, the Lt. Governor taped a spot to be on Sports Nightly News during the week prior to the September 22 football game and the Governor signed a National Preparedness Month Proclamation. The Commission's Citizen Corps Program partnered with the following groups

to highlight the National Preparedness Theme Weeks and get disaster preparedness information and the ICE flyer to their constituents:

- **Sept 1-8, "Back to School and Ready Kids"** – partnered with the State Association of School Administrators and Nebraska Teachers Association,
- **Sept 9-15, "Business Preparedness and Ready Business"** – partnered with the Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, Omaha Chamber of Commerce and several businesses,
- **Sept 16-22, "Multicultural Preparedness"** – partnered with the Nebraska Mexican American Commission, and
- **Sept 23-30, "Home and Family Preparedness"** – partnered with the Nebraska National Guard's Family Assistance Program to promote preparedness.

An article about Nebraska's National Preparedness Month activities was published in official communications of two national organizations: (1) on the Ready.gov website and (2) in the September National Citizen Corps newsletter. 16,000-18,000 copies of the ICE flyer were distributed during National Preparedness Month activities.

Response and Recovery

The Response and Recovery Section staff is assigned to a variety of response and recovery programs. The Section includes **Seth Hyberger** and **Lori Moore** with the Hazard Mitigation program; **Brian Podwinski** and **Earl Imler** with the Public Assistance Program; and **Sue Krogman, Brent Curtis, Bob Eastwood** and **Chad Boshart** with Information Technology and Communications. The Section Manager and NEMA Operations Officer is **Cindy Newsham**.

The core mission of the Response and Recovery Section is to be ready to respond rapidly to any incident that goes beyond the ability of local government to respond. This includes continual monitoring of the state for potential weather-related incidents. To this end, NEMA has instituted and maintains a Duty Officer system that includes the Duty Officer, Back-up Duty Officer and an on-call supervisor, who maintain a ready condition for the agency during off-hours. Staff members of the agency are assigned to a weekly rotation of Duty Officer and Back-up Duty Officer that includes carrying a pager and phone. Supervisors also are assigned to a weekly rotation to be the on-call Supervisor for the Duty Officer and Back-up Duty Officer. The Duty Officer is equipped with a variety of other communications and reference materials to enable them to gather necessary information and begin the response process from their location when the page or call comes in.

To meet the core mission of the Agency, R&R section staff members continually attend training given by NEMA's training staff and training and workshops offered by FEMA for specific programs. This training keeps program specialists on top of the most recent developments of their areas and the response process of the State of Nebraska. All of the R&R staff participated in the TEREX '07 exercise in November. This exercise tested the agency's Continuity of Operations using a pandemic flu scenario.



Communications and Information Technology are also vital to maintain the Agency's readiness. The Communications Officer, Bob Eastwood, is a member of the State's Emergency Alert Committee and of the Amber Alert program, and continues to work with the Office of the Chief Information Officer on the State's Interoperable Communications project. He works with a cadre of dedicated vol-

(continued)

Response and Recovery (continued)

unteers who are ready to provide Ham radio assistance to the agency when the need arises. He also oversees a wide variety of communications equipment to provide NEMA with a varied and redundant communications system. Bob maintains a testing program of weekly and monthly tests of various radio and notification systems. In keeping with the Nebraska state-wide communications upgrade plan, NEMA has decided to upgrade its complete radio system to an 800-Mhz analog/digital/apco 25-capable system. This will give NEMA interoperability with the new statewide system, most state agencies, and local city/county systems that have been or will be upgraded in the future in accordance with the statewide plan. Likewise, the Information Technology (IT) Manager, Sue Krogman, keeps the agency aware of the rapidly changing IT environment. IT maintains a close relationship with the University of Nebraska's Center for Advanced Land Management Information Technologies (CALMIT) to develop a multi-layered GIS mapping capability that has proved invaluable during exercises and actual responses. Chad Boshart has been tasked to work with NEMA in this capacity.

**Cindy
Newsham**



**Seth
Hyberger**



**Lori
Moore**



**Bob
Eastwood**



**Sue
Krogman**



**Brent
Curtis**



**Sheila
Hascall**



**Chad
Boshart**



**Brian
Podwinski**



**Earl
Imler**



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Response and Recovery (continued)

Each year, in early January, the R&R Section, in partnership with the Papio-Missouri NRD, holds an Ice Meeting to bring together the federal, state and local agencies most



affected by the consequences of ice jams on state waterways. The 2007 agenda included presentations from the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, who maintains the on-line database for ice reports; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who explained their flood-fighting capabilities; and the National Weather Service, who gave short- and long-term forecasts that would affect the possibility of flooding.

NEMA is a signatory to the Interagency Cooperative Fire Management Agreement and facilitates meetings of the Nebraska Wildfire Coordination Council each year. This year's meeting included the updating of the Nebraska Wildfire Annual Operations plan and a review of the final changes for the revision of the Inter-Agency Cooperative Fire Management Agreement.

The Response and Recovery Section also works closely with the Nebraska State Patrol and the Department Of Homeland Security's (DHS) Protective Security Advisor to implement the National Infrastructure Protection Plan and to

be the Point of Contact for DHS on security-related issues like the National Assets Database. The Section Manager, along with the Lt. Governor, Assistant Director and staff from the State Patrol, attended the first National Fusion Conference in Florida.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

There has been a concentration on planning this year in the Hazard Mitigation section. The section added a new staffer in Seth Hyberger, who has been focused on the revision of the State Haz-

ard Mitigation Plan, due in April of 2008. Seth and Lori Moore, the Hazard Mitigation Officer, have met across the State with Natural Resource Districts, Counties and Regions to encourage the development of plans. Two training courses were held this year with FEMA instructors. One concerned the Development of Local Hazard Mitigation



(continued)

Response and Recovery (continued)

Planning and how to complete a Benefit/Cost Analysis, a process necessary to the eligibility of a Hazard Mitigation Project application.

There are seven FEMA-approved local plans. These plans cover a variety of jurisdictions, from village to multi-county Natural Resource Districts that together cover 43% of the state's population.



The five-pole structure in the lower right corner of this photo is a mitigation element designed to stop the cascading failure of ice-laden power lines. The two-pole structure at top left was one in a long line of failed structures that was stopped at the 5-pole installation.

The Ice Storm of December 2006/January 2007 was of such magnitude that there is more than one-and-one-half million dollars available for Hazard Mitigation Planning Grants. Added to this is approximately one million dollars in Pre-disaster Mitigation Grants and an estimated \$800,000 in planning dollars from the three Federal Disasters that were declared in the spring and summer of 2007. As a result of these opportunities, a large number of planning grants have been approved, and plans are in the works that, added to what is currently approved, cover about 75% of the population of the State.

There are also eighteen Public Power Districts that are working on annexes to the State Plan to allow these districts to be eligible for Mitigation Project dollars.

Along with the planning grants, the 2007 Ice Storm Declaration has made \$19,653,065 available for Hazard Mitigation Projects and another \$1,116,653 available for the 5% set-aside program that allows for projects with no Benefit/Cost Analysis. Any jurisdiction can apply for a planning grant, but projects are available only to jurisdictions with approved hazard mitigation plans. Applications for these grants can be found on the NEMA website at http://www.nema.ne.gov/index_html?page=content/operations/hazmit_grant.html. From the home page, follow NEMA Divisions/State Administrative Plan for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. These project applications are due in the summer of 2008.

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Response and Recovery (continued)

Fire Operations:

NEMA's fire operation for the year of 2007 was rather tame, especially when compared to the 2006 fire season, which resulted in the state being awarded three Fire Management Assistance Grants through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the Big Rock/Valentine, Sioux Complex, and Dawes Complex fires. These grants were closed this year, with the price tag for all three fires



at \$6.24 million, with 79,500 total acres charred. The total federal portion allocated by FEMA and the United States Department of Agriculture / Forest Service was \$5.04 million. The state share was \$1.2 million.

On August 12 there were five small fires burning due to dry lightning strikes on the Soldier Creek Wildlife Refuge, located just three miles west of Fort Robinson State Park

near Crawford. A Type-III Incident Management Team was called in by the USDA Forest Service to help coordinate operations/response activities with Volunteer Fire Departments from Nebraska and South Dakota, the Nebraska Army National Guard, the State Fire Marshal's Office, and NEMA. NEMA dispatched six personnel and its Mobile Operations Center to help assist with the coordination effort. The fires were contained by August 19 in what became known as the Soldier Creek Complex, resulting in nearly 3,900 acres charred. There were no fatalities, injuries, or structures lost.

The quick response and containment of the Soldier Creek Complex fire is a true testament to the expertise and leadership of the area's Volunteer Fire Departments and the staff of the Nebraska National Forest. The NEMA Hazard Mitigation staff is working closely with Emergency Management Region 23 (Sioux, Dawes, Box Butte, and Sheridan Counties) to identify hazard mitigation actions like the Nebraska Forest Service's Fuel Reduction Program, USDA's Forest Service's Firewise Program, and Public Awareness Campaigns including Smokey the Bear.

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Response and Recovery (continued)

January 2007 Ice Storm

Two major winter storms blasted the center of Nebraska, beginning New Year's Eve 2006, with crippling ice forming on roadways and, most importantly, electrical transmission and distribution systems statewide. On January 7th, Nebraska was awarded a Major Disaster Declaration, **Federal Disaster # 1674**, that would eventually become the most costly in Nebraska's history. A total of 59 counties were



declared, with only counties in the extreme north-west and eastern parts of the State not declared.

Early in the response NEMA opened a Multi-Agency Co-ordination Center (MACC) in Grand Island that included representation from NEMA operations and the most impacted Public Power Districts, along with the State Joint Information Center. This MACC became the focus for the integration of state and public power actions, ensuring that

information was quickly and clearly shared among the major players and that information given to the citizens was immediate, coordinated and accurate. One of the operations that was most vital to the response was restoration of temporary power to entire cities and villages by trucking in large portable generation systems until permanent power could be restored. The largest of these municipalities was the city of Holdrege, located in south-central Nebraska, with a population of nearly 6,000. This complex operation was efficiently coordinated through the MACC.

The MACC remained in operation until the Joint Field Office (JFO) was established, also in Grand Island, and the personnel working from the MACC moved to that facility. The JFO opened on January 14th and was closed on February 9th with a Public Assistance Processing Center remaining in operation until February 23rd.

The Nebraska Public Power District placed back into service the last of the 37 transmission segments damaged or destroyed on May 10th, six weeks ahead of the original reconstruction schedule.

Because Nebraska is served 100% by Public Power Districts, large amounts of the damages were eligible for federal reimbursement. The total eligible damage amount obligated by project worksheets is \$198,551,689, with a federal share

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Response and Recovery (continued)

of \$148,913,771 and a state share of \$863,003. The remaining amount is the responsibility of local jurisdictions and the affected public power districts.

Spring Flooding

Following almost seven years of drought, the spring brought torrential rains to many parts of the State. Nebraska was awarded three federal disasters and awarded four state disasters during the May through August time period.

Federal Disaster # 1706 was awarded by the President on June 6th to eighteen counties in north central and eastern Nebraska following storms that brought tornados and torrential rains to the area. Counties affected included Blaine, Brown, Cass, Custer, Gage, Garfield, Jefferson, Johnson, Keya Paha, Knox, Loup, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Saunders and Wheeler. Total eligible damages were \$7,796,155, with 75% reimbursed by FEMA.

Federal Disaster #1714 was awarded by the President on July 24th for 16 counties in central Nebraska following very heavy rain storms that caused damages to roads, bridges and culverts. Those counties named in the declaration were Buffalo, Custer, Dawson, Frontier, Greeley, Hayes, Hitchcock, Howard, Kearney, Lincoln, Logan, Loup, Madison, Valley and Wheeler. Total eligible damages were \$3,094,020.



Federal Disaster #1721 was awarded on August 29th for six counties in southwestern Nebraska - Arthur, Chase, Dundy, Keith, McPherson and Perkins - also for flooding due to heavy rains. Eligible damages to date are \$2.1 million, with more projects worksheets yet to be completed.

This has been a record year, with total damages from federally declared disasters of \$211,531,864, that we would like to remain in the record books for many years to come.

Radiological Emergency Preparedness

With two nuclear power stations and two transportation corridors heavily used to transport radioactive material and radioactive waste, the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency's (NEMA) goal is to be prepared for any radiological emergency that could occur in the State.

It is the responsibility of the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Division (REP) to meet this goal. The REP Division has six vital positions:

As the REP Division Manager, Mr. Jon Schwarz annually develops and works to have the REP budget that supports almost all REP division activities approved by the nuclear power stations. He supervises the REP planning specialists to ensure the Radiological Emergency Response Plans (RERPs) are reviewed and updated in as timely a manner as possible and that all required annual REP training is offered throughout the affected REP counties. Mr. Schwarz ensures that emergency response agencies throughout the state are aware of the radiological response training available to them, and notifies local emergency response managers of known radiological shipments through their jurisdictions. He maintains a database of the personnel trained in each county, and as new or additional training is provided in a jurisdiction, provides the local emergency management directors with an updated roster of personnel who have received the radiological training. As the Ra-

diological Systems Manager makes radiological equipment exchanges and conducts inventories, Mr. Schwarz tracks the inventories and exchanges, and once again provides affected local emergency management directors with an updated list of radiological equipment within their jurisdiction, and when it will again be due for calibration.

Ms. Amy Stroh is the REP Division Staff Assistant. She has been with NEMA for more than 30 years, the majority of those with the REP Division. She provides administrative support to the REP Division - reviewing plans and arranging for lodging, meals, and travel. Ms. Stroh's most important responsibility, though, is assisting the REP Division Manager in the accurate accountability of the REP budget, and in tracking expenditures on the state computer information system.

Mainly due to the early Federal REP requirement that nuclear power station incidents require the activation of a Joint Information Center (JIC) - where the Public Information Officer is a major player - the PIO is included under the REP Division. Mr. Jim Bunstock is the Agency PIO, and serves the whole Agency in that capacity for all emergencies. With the National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirement for the activation of JICs as needed, the PIO position is even more important, and Mr. Bunstock has benefited from the training received in JIC operations

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Radiological Emergency Preparedness (continued)

**Jon
Schwarz**



**Amy
Stroh**



**DeWayne
Morrow**



**Bryan
Cook**



**Mike
Loftis**



**Jim
Bunstock**

through nuclear power station exercises. Mr. Bunstock was involved in the nuclear power station exercises this year; responsible for the activation of a JIC for this year's state terrorism exercise; and coordinated the activation of a JIC for two federally declared emergencies within the state. In addition, Mr. Bunstock has coordinated meetings with other state agencies PIOs to ensure continuity of public information operations in the event of any state-involved emergency.

Emergency first-responder agencies throughout the state during the era of Civil Defense received and maintained the familiar yellow Civil Defense radiation detection equipment. This equipment was calibrated and exchanged by a staff supervised by the Radiological Systems Manager. With the end of the cold war, Civil Defense went by the wayside, as did the Radiological Systems staff. Today, the Agency still has a Radiological Systems Manager, who continues to calibrate and exchange civil defense equipment on a four-year cycle throughout the 93 counties of Nebraska. As Mr. Mike Loftis performs his normal exchanges and quarterly checks of REP-county radiological survey meters and instruments, he records the latitude and longitude of radiological meters' and instruments' locations. This information is forwarded to state GIS personnel to enter into a database for use as needed in an emergency.

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Radiological Emergency Preparedness (continued)

The Agency, per legislation, now charges a fee for the calibration of instruments other than those owned by the Agency. This has provided the Agency the capability to provide affordable calibration and repair services for the newer radiation survey meters and instruments held by emergency first responder agencies throughout Nebraska. However, it also required an investment in additional equipment, sources, and training for Mr. Loftis.

Cooper Nuclear Station and Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station, both located in eastern Nebraska, require that the state is always ready to protect the health and safety of its citizens and, to the extent possible, prevent damage to property. To meet this challenge, the REP section employs two off-site planning specialists. Mr. Bryan Cook is responsible for updating the local RERPs for the counties of Otoe, Nemaha and Richardson. Mr. De-Wayne Morrow is responsible for updating the local RERPs for the counties of Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington. Mr. Cook is also responsible for the annual exchange of thermoluminescent dosimeters (TLDs); Mr. Morrow is also responsible for the State RERP, which describes the state response to a nuclear power station incident. All plans

were updated during the year.

As is well known, planning is not enough. Once plans have been updated, they must be exercised. However, training is essential before exercising can begin. To this end, Mr. Cook and Mr. Morrow annually offer and conduct numerous REP classes in the counties affected by the nuclear power stations. The classes are offered to executive boards, emergency management and emergency response agencies, and various volunteer agencies and personnel. These classes include topics such as *Communications*, which deals with Emergency Alert System and Public Emergency Information messages, as well as who needs to be notified in case of

an emergency; *Emergency Operations Center (EOC)*, which deals with what needs to be done in the EOC to protect the health and safety of the citizenry; *Emergency Worker*, which trains personnel to understand radioactivity, the hazards of radiation, how to protect one's self in a radiation environment, and how to use various radiation survey meters and instruments; *Medical Response*, which trains hospital workers, ambulance, and fire and rescue crews in

(continued)

Radiological Emergency Preparedness (continued)

proper response techniques during an incident involving radiological contamination; *Radiological Monitoring and Decontamination*, which trains personnel how to properly frisk (monitor) a person for radioactive contamination and, if contamination is found, how to properly decontaminate



Representatives from the U.S. Department of Energy's Radiological Assistance Team (RAP) met with local and state personnel at NEMA, to present the capabilities and services the team can offer.

the person; and *Traffic Access and Control*, which provides law enforcement and other agencies training in evacuation routes, what to do in the event a main evacuation route is obstructed, and what will need to be done to allow access back into an evacuated area during a radiation incident.

The nuclear power stations routinely conduct drills and exercises, and NEMA annually participates with the nuclear power stations and affected counties in them. This year, NEMA was involved in six nuclear power station drills and

three full-scale exercises, one of which was a two-day plume and ingestion exercise evaluated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and their contractors.

Cooper Nuclear Station is in the process of moving their Joint Information Center (JIC) into their Emergency Operations Facility (EOF), located outside the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone in Auburn, Nebraska. This has required a number of drills and exercises to orient all JIC personnel and EOF personnel in how to interact within the confines of the EOF over telephones and radios. Nebraska has participated in three of these drills and exercises.

Interstate 80 is a major transportation artery in the U.S. and is heavily traveled in Nebraska, and the Union Pacific Railroad with its large amount of track through the state is also a chief thoroughfare. It should be no surprise, then, that Nebraska experiences a fair number of both truck and rail shipments of radioactive material and radioactive waste. In 2007, Nebraska again experienced many shipments, both truck and rail. The number of shipments can only be approximated because, depending on the amount of radioactive material or radioactive waste shipped, shippers do not always have to notify state officials of these shipments.

The Governor's Radioactive Materials Transportation

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Radiological Emergency Preparedness (continued)

Working Group, which consists of representatives from the Governor's Policy Research Office, Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure, NEMA and the Nebraska State Patrol, with other agencies brought in as needed, oversees the transportation of radioactive materials and radioactive waste through the state.

For incidents or accidents involving radioactive material or waste on Nebraska highways, the Interstate and on rail lines, the state maintains the Radioactive Materials Transportation Accident Plan (RAMTAP) as Appendix 3 to Emergency Support Function (ESF) Eight, "Public Health and Medical Services" in the State Emergency Operations Plan. The plan is reviewed annually by the Governor's Radioactive Materials Transportation Working Group. In addition to his duties as the REP division manager, Mr. Schwarz is the NEMA representative to the working group and is responsible for ensuring the annual review of the RAMTAP and any plan changes agreed to by the working group.

The Agency maintains contact with radiation transportation committee members within the Western Governors' Association, Council of State Governors-Midwest, representatives from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, U. S. Department of Energy, and U. S. Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency. This allows the Agency to keep on top of the newest develop-

ments concerning radiological shipments through the state and the latest technologies used in the shipments of radiological materials and radiological waste.

In order to ensure that the state is prepared for any radiological emergency that could occur in the state, Mr. Schwarz, Mr. Morrow, Mr. Cook and Mr. Loftis are all certified Radiological Instructors and offer free training to all emergency first-responder agencies throughout Nebraska. The training is provided at the convenience of those desiring the training. It is provided day or night, weekday or weekend. The training is provided in one session or spread out over as many sessions as needed to complete the training. The Agency uses the U. S. Department of Energy's "Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training" (MERRTT) course which consists of 18 modules, with the first 12 modules making up the primary eight-hour course and the remaining six modules covering specialized areas. To enhance this radiological training, the REP division has two instructor kits, two field training kits and enough modern instruments to train one class of 20 and one class of 10 simultaneously.

Each REP division staff member annually attends various training courses and conferences to ensure each that each is technically proficient and knowledgeable in their field of endeavor.

State Emergency Response Commission (SERC)

The Nebraska State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) was established in 1989, with origins in the Federal Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). The SERC was established to provide information to citizens regarding hazardous materials awareness and to localize planning of all entities involved in a response – government, private and industry. The purpose of the SERC is to supervise and coordinate the activities of the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs). The LEPCs review the hazardous materials portion of the local emergency plan and act as a repository of information on hazardous materials stored, processed or manufactured in their respective counties.

The SERC meets quarterly to approve members of the LEPCs and review the submission of the plans. The SERC comprises 19 members appointed by the Governor and approved by the Legislature. The 2008 SERC dates include January 8th, April 8th, July 8th, and October 7th.

In 2007 the SERC continued to distribute “Emergency Action Wheels”, and distributed more than a thousand CD-Rom games “Stop, Leave it Alone, Get a Grown Up” at the Nebraska State Fair. The SERC, with assistance from the LEPCs, continues to distribute awareness brochures and public service announcements.

This year’s regional LEPC conference was held in Kansas

City in August, and had representatives from the Nebraska SERC as committee members. Nebraska was well represented, with more than fifty (50) members of LEPCs across Nebraska attending. Several LEPCs were nominated by the SERC and received awards by the region. Douglas County LEPC, South Central LEPC, Cass County LEPC, Koch Nitrogen – Industry all received awards for their outstanding contributions to the Nebraska Community Right to Know Act.



Tonya Ngotel

Nebraska SERC
Coordinator

The SERC partnered with the Nebraska Hazmat Association and played a key role in the development of the 2007 Hazmat Symposium. The Hazmat Symposium continues to be a growing conference, with record attendance in 2007. The SERC will continue to support the Hazmat Association and the Hazmat Symposium by offering HMEP funding and staff assistance.

The SERC co-sponsored the Nebraska TRANSCAER tour in September. The TRANSCAER (Transportation Community Awareness Emergency Response) Training was

(continued)

State Emergency Response Commission (continued)

held at seven different cities across Nebraska with nine training sessions, reaching more than 500 first responders. The training was co-sponsored by the BNSF and UP railroads, along with other state and federal supporters. The SERC provided information wheels, Emergency Response

Guidebooks, and other educational outreach material to the TRANSCAER participants. LEPCs from the host cities assisted with the site development, provided training materials and logistical support.



In 2008 the SERC will provide assistance to a LEPC in coordinating the 2008 State LEPC Conference. Similar to 2006, the SERC asked for bids from LEPCs to host the conference. Adams county LEPC, with assistance from Hall, Clay, Kearney and the South Central LEPC, will host the 2008 conference. Other projects, such as county fair booths, EPCRA EXPLORER's and trainings, will be supported through the SERC using the HMEP mini-grant process.

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State Emergency Response Commission (continued)

Current SERC members include:

Jim Schmailzl, Nebraska Department of Roads; **Maj. Gen. Roger Lempke**, Adjutant General; **Tim Hofbauer**, Local Emergency Management; **Sue Semerena**, Department of Health and Human Services; **Richard J. Christensen**, Vice Chair, Chemical Industry; **Dana Miller**, Chair, Firefighters; **Mark Reimers**, Transportation; **Donald Eisenhauer**, Agribusiness; **Steven Danon**, Small Business; **Joe Francis**, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality; **Allen Grell**, County Government; **Keith Hansen**, Community Health; **Major Rhonda Lahm**, Ne-

braska State Patrol; **John Falgione**, State Fire Marshal; **Steven Wood**, Labor; **Larry Johnson**, Trucking; **Keith Deiml**, Schools; City Government & Environmental Protection is currently vacant.

New members for the 2008 year will include; **Steven Virgil**, Environmental Protection; **Gary Gandara** replacing Steven Wood, Labor; and **Mark Graf** filling the City Government position.



Homeland Security Activities / State Administrative Agency

Since 1999, NEMA has been the designated State Administrative Agency (SAA) for all homeland security grants coming into the state from the Department of Homeland Security. In this role NEMA is responsible for filing the state application, distributing program guidelines to the state and local level agencies, receiving applications, maintaining oversight and compliance monitoring, and facilitating the distribution of funds.

The Governor's Homeland Security Policy Group has been established to oversee the program in the state, with the Lt. Governor as the chairman of the group. Operating under the Policy Group are the State Planning, Exercising and Training Teams, ensuring there is an integrated and coordinated effort on the state and local level. NEMA has been the operational arm of the Lt. Governor and the Homeland Security Policy Group since its inception.

The 2007 Nebraska Homeland Security Policy Group consists of: **Brenda Decker**, State of Nebraska Division of Communications; **John Erickson**, Nebraska Governor's Policy Research Office; **John Falgione**, Nebraska State Fire Marshall's Office; **Sen. Mike Friend**, Nebraska State



Nebraska Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy (standing) is the state's Director of Homeland Security, and chairs the Nebraska Homeland Security Policy Group.

Legislature; **Sen. Tony Fulton**, Nebraska State Legislature; **Dr. Steve Hinrichs**, University of Nebraska Medical Center; **Greg Ibach**, Nebraska Department of Agriculture; **General Roger Lempke**, Adjutant General, Nebraska Military Department; **Chancellor Harold Maurer**, University of Nebraska Medical Center; **Christine Peterson**, Nebraska Health and Human Services System; **Dr. Joann**

(continued)

State Administrative Agency (continued)

Schaefer, Nebraska Health and Human Services System; **Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy**; **Don Thorson**, Omaha UASI; **Col. Bryan Tuma**, Nebraska State Patrol; **Al Berndt**, NEMA.

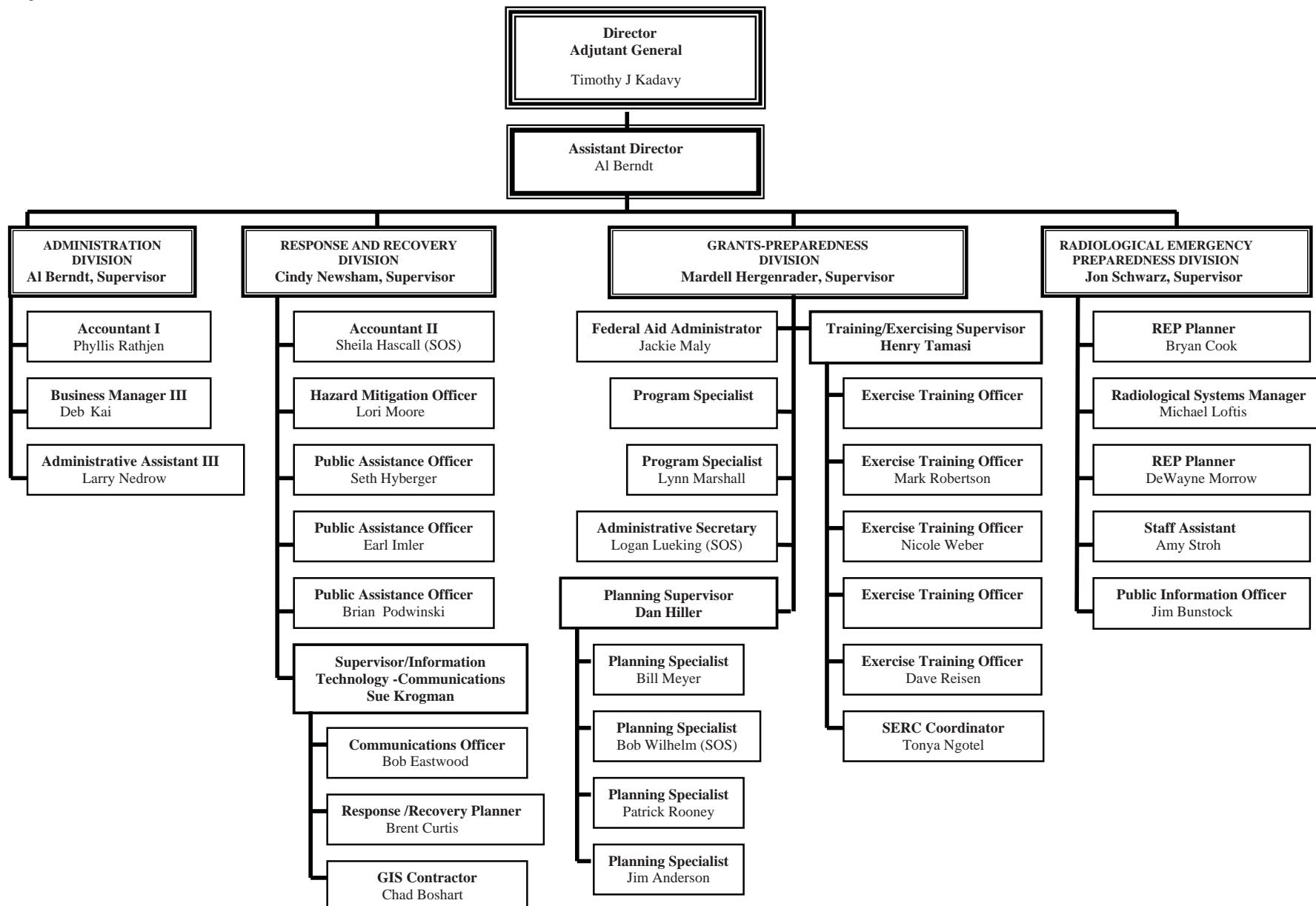
NEMA's role in homeland security in Nebraska is greatly facilitated by the close working relationship with other state agencies and with outside programs. All agencies involved in homeland security and natural emergency response in Nebraska meet, train and exercise together on a regular basis, and the open lines of communication greatly

ease the role of the state administrative agency. In addition to the state agencies involved, NEMA works closely with the University of Nebraska System and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Since 1999, NEMA has overseen the completion of two statewide assessments of response capabilities at the state and local level, and the writing of two statewide strategies for homeland security. These assessments have been the basis of the distribution of homeland security funds in support of the state strategy.

Agency Staff

NEBRASKA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



Acronyms used in this publication:

CALMIT.....	Center for Advanced Land Management Information Technologies	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CAP.....	Corrective Action Program	NAEM	Nebraska Association of Emergency Managers
CBRNE.....	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive	NEMA	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
CCP.....	Citizen Corps Program	NET.....	Nebraska Educational Telecommunications
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team	NHIT.....	Nebraska Hazmat Incident Team
COOP/COG.....	Continuity of Operations/Continuity of Government	NIMS	National Incident Management System
DHS	Department of Homeland Security	NOAA.....	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency
DHSS	Department of Health and Human Services	NRF.....	National Response Framework
EMPG	Emergency Management Program Grant	NSP	Nebraska State Patrol
EOC.....	Emergency Operations Center	NVSC	Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
EPCRA.....	Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act	NWS.....	National Weather Service
ESF	Emergency Support Function	PET	Planning, Exercising and Training
FEMA.....	Federal Emergency Management Agency	PIO	Public Information Officer
HMEP	Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning	POC	Point of Contact
HSEEP.....	Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program	PSIC	Public Safety Interoperable Communications
ICE	In Case of Emergency	RAMTAP.....	Radioactive Materials Transportation Accident Plan
JFO	Joint Field Office	REP	Radiological Emergency Program
JIC	Joint Information Center	RERP	Radiological Emergency Response Plan
LEOP	Local Emergency Operations Plan	SEOP	State Emergency Operations Plan
LEPC.....	Local Emergency Planning Committee	SERC	State Emergency Response Commission
LETPP	Law Enforcement Terrorism Preparedness Program	SHSGP	State Homeland Security Grant Program
MACC	Multi-Agency Coordination Center	TICP.....	Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan
MERRTT.....	Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training	TRANSCAER	Transportation Community Awareness Emergency Response
MMRS.....	Metropolitan Medical Response System	UASI	Urban Area Security Initiative
		VISTA	Volunteers In Service to America



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