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Emergency Management & Response-Information Sharing & Analysis Center

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The U.S. Fire Administration maintains the **Emergency Management and Response – Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)**.

For information regarding the EMR-ISAC visit **www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac** or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: **(301) 447-1325 and/or emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov**.

The InfoGram

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OHA: Resources for Active Shooter Response

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Health Affairs (OHA) has released the "Active Shooter and Complex Attacks Resource" (PDF, 236 Kb), a 2-page list of resources available to first responders and related fields.

Complex attacks are a very real possibility here in the United States and it is vital first responders have a response plan in place before such an event. Multiple mass casualty events occurring simultaneously, as seen in Paris, can bring chaos to a community without an integrated response plan. The document lists information on:

- Integrated Response;
- Hemorrhage Control;
- Prevailing Response Models and Concepts;
- Bystander Preparedness and Response;
- Grant Opportunities.

This OHA document reminds us that not only are there now years of incident data to learn from, but also that many cities and municipalities already have such plans in place that others can use as models. Planning and training for an incident such as this will make any response go more smoothly and will ultimately save lives.

(Source: DHS OHA)

Securing Emergency Vehicles and Equipment

Stolen ambulances and other apparatus or official vehicles can cost departments a lot of time, money, and public scrutiny. Not only does it put a strain on the department financially to replace stolen or damaged equipment and vehicles, but it puts the community at risk because the department's capabilities are reduced. Departments can also be embroiled in lawsuits for negligence or worse.

Usually the crime is completed by someone under the influence of drugs or alcohol or someone with mental illness. Sometimes it can be in connection with another crime; recently a man stole an ambulance and drove it to a house he then broke into, possibly as cover and getaway for the burglary. Overseas, terrorists have used stolen or cloned emergency vehicles successfully to carry out attacks with vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices.

The InfoGram is distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures.

First responders must implement policies and procedures to secure the apparatus and equipment they rely on to do their jobs. A new document, "[Emergency Response Vehicle and Equipment Safety](#)" (PDF, 338 Kb) provides a list of best practices to follow and resources to go for more information or assistance.

One such program is the [Physical Security Assessment](#) through the Department of Homeland Security's [Protective Security Advisor (PSA) Program](#) (PDF, 112 Kb). Any critical infrastructure stakeholder, including those in the Emergency Services Sector, can request an Enhanced Critical Infrastructure Protection (ECIP) security survey to identify security gaps and get a synopsis of protective measures they can take to minimize threats. The program is beneficial to departments and offices that might otherwise not be able to obtain this kind of assessment.

(Source: [DHS](#))

Mental Illness Response Overloads Departments

People with untreated severe mental illness are more likely to encounter situations in their life that can put them in high-risk or vulnerable situations or cause them to react violently. There are a number of cases in the past several years where people with untreated severe mental illness carried out violent incidents or shootings (e.g., Sandy Hook school shooting, Aurora Theater shooting, shooting of Gabi Giffords).

There are decades of statistics and reports recounting the limitations and shortfalls of our country's mental healthcare system, yet little appears to be changing. This issue is a critical concern to the Emergency Services Sector as it is often EMS and fire personnel or law enforcement that respond when there is a problem.

The InterAgency Board (IAB) published a White Paper on this topic to support emergency services. "[Prevalence of Untreated Severe Mental Illness in U.S. Communities Places Unmanageable Burden on First Responders and Law Enforcement](#)" (PDF, 615 Kb) details the wide-ranging factors that make up this broad issue and make a variety of recommendations communities and first responder agencies can take.

One identified need is to better divert people from the court system and prosecution to into the mental health system. The IAB advises first responder agencies to become strong advocates of a comprehensive, functional, and proactive mental health and addictions treatment recovery system in their state and at a national level.

First responders use significant time and resources responding to incidents involving people with severe mental illness, and those incidents often do not result in the individual getting the care they need, which then perpetuates the problem. Ensuring people who need help get to the correct services as soon as possible and advocating for a stronger response to mental health issues are the first steps to fixing the problem.

(Source: [IAB](#))