



# The Guardian

A Publication of the APUS Student Chapter of the International Association of Emergency Managers

## Getting Educated on the HigherEd Conference

### Ellis Reports on Gathering, Mid-Year Meeting, and Process

By Bob Ellis

Student Chapter President

It's really hard for me to express to everyone just how much you can get out of attending these types of events. This was my first time attending the FEMA HigherEd Conference, and I can say without any trepidation that it was extremely rewarding. The aim of the FEMA Higher Education Project is to promote college-based emergency management education for future emergency managers and other interested personnel. If you would like more info please check here: <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/edu/>. Please note that they have a Student Corner that contains student testimonials, and I highly encourage you to write a testimonial of your own and submit it. It would be great to see some APUS student testimonials on the Higher Education Web site! Our former Chapter President Dan Hahn has already done so.

Please see **FEMA**, Page 3



APUS was well represented at the FEMA HigherEd Conference. Pictured, left to right, are Professors Bob Jaffin and Mike Kemp, Barbara Hinke, Eric Hodges, and Chapter President Bob Ellis. See Page 3 for Hodges' thoughts on the conference.

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#### Special points of interest:

- Conference reports
- Poster Competition Guidelines
- Facebook information
- GAO Report

## Cyber Social Scene Newest Home for EM Chapters; Facebook Explored for Networking Opportunities

Everyone seems to be busy and time is of the essence. In an effort to make maintaining contact with IAEM Region 12 APUS Student Chapter members easier, the Chapter is pursuing the establishment of a group on Facebook, a social network site. The IAEM Student Council has already established a presence on Facebook and MySpace, another social networking site, thanks to IAEM Student Council Secretary Andrew Jarvi. Ameri-

can Military University (AMU) also has a group on Facebook.

It is hoped that members will use these freely available resources to maintain lines of communication with the membership while they utilize the sites to communicate with family and friends.

To access the Facebook and MySpace groups, you must establish a profile with the individual sites. This is

Please see **NETWORK**, Page 2

## Hahn Graduates with Honors; Continuing Education Planned

Daniel Hahn, the Region 12 Student Council Vice President and former APUS Student Chapter President, graduated with honors from American Military University, part of the American Public University System (APUS), on Saturday, May 17, 2008, in Chantilly Virginia, outside of Washington, D.C. Hahn was also awarded the President's

Award for his Grade Point Average and extracurricular activities, which included assisting in starting the APUS student chapter and serving as its first president; his term ended on March 31, 2008.

"I firmly believe anything is possible if you set your goals high, never say never, and strive for perfection even if it is out of reach. I

was honored to represent the chapter at graduation and honored to serve as the first president," Hahn said.

Hahn has enrolled in North-central University where he plans to pursue a Doctorate in Business Administration with a specialization in Homeland Security starting in August 2008.

## Connect With EM Community on Facebook, MySpace

**NETWORK**, from Page 1

an easy process and takes little time. Once your profile is created, you can explore the cyber social network to see what it has to offer.

To access the IAEM Student Council page on Facebook, either search "groups" for IAEM or use this URL to directly access the page. <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=10960197219>. As this is a closed group, you will need to request access but it is a simple process. Just click "Request to Join" under the IAEM logo.

To access AMU's Facebook page, go to <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2234334925>.

Our chapter's prototype Facebook page is located at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=34908687320>. Members can invite people to visit and join the group and a discussion board is available for moderated or non-moderated discussions. This discussion board could be used similarly to the discussion board in the electronic classroom. Please take time to visit the site and provide feedback to the officers so the site can be tailored to offer the chapter the most benefit.

## Region 12 Convenes First Global Teleconference; Topics Recounted

**By Bob Ellis**

*Student Chapter President*

On July 7, 2008 Region 12 (IAEM Student Council) held its first global teleconference. Included were

student representatives from Canada, New Zealand, and several U.S. schools. Some of the topics included were:

- Each chapter officer introduced themselves and talked about their school and what programs they offered. It was mentioned that APUS has the largest student chapter in all of Region 12.
- Brian Silva, Region 12 Student Council President, discussed how IAEM is going to change the structure of the student councils to mirror what they have done with IAEM overall. Each student chapter will fall under a student region – i.e. USA, Canada, Oceania, Europa, etc. Each student regional president will also belong to the student region, which will be on a par with all of the regional councils. This may sound complicated, but actually it just realigns the student councils to fall in line with the other IAEM regions.

Please see **TELECONFERENCE**, Page 7

### IAEM Region 12 APUS Student

#### Chapter Officers/Advisors

**Bob Ellis, President**

**Cory Mero, Vice President**

**Evelio Matos, Secretary**

**Dan Niederman, Treasurer**

**Dr. Christopher Reynolds, Faculty Advisor**

**Mike Kemp, Faculty Advisor**

To submit information for publication, contact Cheryl McCullough, Public Affairs/Liaison Committee Chair at [trp\\_lee@yahoo.com](mailto:trp_lee@yahoo.com). Please insert IEMSA in the subject line of all correspondence.

## ***EM Students Owe a Debt, Pay it Forward***

**FEMA**, from Page 1

Each year this conference is larger and covers a more diverse set of topics. This year's conference saw 316 enrolled attendees, 125 colleges and universities represented 9 foreign countries and 43 States and the District of Columbia, and 50 student volunteers. Attendees included college and university officials, professors, government officials, private sector business, authors, emergency management practitioners, and more. The conference itself is similar to others in that the morning is dedicated to one large plenary session while the afternoon is dedicated to breakout sessions. Topics were outstanding and covered a wide variety of subjects, all presented by experts in the field. If you had a question, there was probably someone there that could help you with an answer.

Besides the wealth of information available, the opportunity to net-

work was just as rewarding. Emergency management is all about relationships, and I had numerous opportunities to build new, worthwhile relationships. Whether it was a question for class, for my career, or looking for a new job, I now have numerous new contacts. I also had the opportunity to meet several of our professors and fellow students; something we do not get to do very often at APUS. I can also report that the FEMA National Fire Academy/ Emergency Management Institute is an absolutely beautiful campus. It is hard to imagine a more scenic setting and relaxed atmosphere.

Throughout the conference it became evident that practitioners and academics want to bridge the gap between them. We need to continue to advance the field of emergency management as an academic science as well as implement lessons learned from real-world, practical experience. Emergency

management is a complex array of science and art, and it is advancing by leaps and bounds. As I walked away from the conference, I kept thinking about two main things:

- the field of emergency management needs to fill the grey area between academia and practitioner; that true advancement within emergency management will come when we can fully realize it is both a science and an art, and how to professionally combine the two
- we (students) have a great debt to pay.

There are those working hard to advance this field, and we are the beneficiaries of that hard work. We must now take the baton and keep the momentum moving forward. I urge all of you to contribute whenever and however you can—even if it is just by attending conferences such as these.

## **FEMA's HigherEd Conference From a Student's Perspective**

**By Eric Hodges**

*APUS Region 12 Member*

I'm finishing up my last night at the gorgeous National Emergency Training Center (NETC) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Home to FEMA's Emergency Management Institute and the National Fire Academy, NETC hosted the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Emergency Management Higher Education Conference where I attended as a student representative. The purpose of the conference, as I saw it, is to support the professionalism and credibility of the emergency management discipline through quality, relevant higher education programs. I was encouraged to see how passionately faculty and program administrators approach this discipline. This point was

Please see **CONFERENCE**, Page 8



***The National Emergency Training Center hosted the 11th annual Emergency Management Higher Education Conference.***

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Conferences

### **The Future of Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Telework Conference, Aug. 6-7, 2008 ~ Washington, DC**

As a baseline of preparedness for the full range of potential emergencies, all government agencies, including federal, state, local, and counties need to have in place a viable COOP and telework plans which ensures the performance of their essential functions during any emergency or situation that may disrupt normal operations. The Future of Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Telework Conference will bring together government officials, business continuity planners, emergency responders, security personnel and the private sector to address developing a COOP and telework plan, how far agencies have come, benefits of teleworking, agency goals, the issues of teleworking and the future of COOP and telework planning. The keynote speakers for this conference are Congressman Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Major General Martha Rainville, USAF (Ret.), Assistant Administrator, National Continuity Programs, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Josh Sawislak, Senior Advisor to the Administrator, Acting Chief Emergency Response and Recovery Officer, US General Services Administration. (Offered by the Homeland Defense Journal; Supported by IAEM) **Conference site:** <http://www.coopteleworkconference.com/>

### **2008 Homeland Security Symposium and Exhibition, September 9-10, 2008 ~ Arlington, VA**

The conference will cover new directions in protecting infrastructure systems, FEMA policy and management, presidential candidates' vision for homeland security, immigration, procurement, and small business.

**Conference site:** <http://www.ndia.org/Template.cfm?Section=8490&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=24621>

### **Emergency Preparedness & Response Seminar Sept. 23, 2008 ~ Canada Standards Association Learning Centre, Vancouver, BC, Canada**

**Oct. 6, 2008 ~ Canada Standards Association Learning Centre, Montreal, QC, Canada**

### **Nov. 3, 2008 ~ Canada Standards Association Learning Centre, Halifax, NS, Canada**

An effective emergency management plan will promote the safety of workers, responders and the public; reduce the potential for costly damage; reduce environmental and other impacts; assist emergency staff in initiating corrective actions; reduce recovery time and associated costs; and ensure employee and public confidence in your organization's ability to manage crisis. This seminar will guide participants through the requirements for an effective plan, with the use of CSA Z731 - Canada's National Standard and case studies and exercises designed to maximize understanding and facilitate application. **Conference site:** [https://learningcentre.csa.ca/lc\\_site/be.asp?gid=50009573&tid=50009639](https://learningcentre.csa.ca/lc_site/be.asp?gid=50009573&tid=50009639)

### **IAEM 56th Annual Conference & EMEX 2008, Nov. 15-20, 2008 ~ Sheraton Hotel & Overland Park Convention Center, Kansas City (Overland Park), KS**

"Putting a New Spin on Emergency Management" The IAEM Annual Conference provides a forum for current trends and topics, information about the latest tools and technology in emergency management and homeland security, and advances IAEM committee work. Sessions encourage stakeholders at all levels of government, the private sector, public health and related professions to exchange ideas on collaborating to protect lives and property from disaster.

*Student Volunteers: IAEM will help offset the conference fee for students who volunteer to help with the conference. Details will be posted in the online classroom as soon as they become available.*

For additional information about this conference and the poster contest, please see page 5.

### **Submitting Information**

If you have job announcements, conference opportunities, or other professional development information to share with the membership, please submit it to *The Guardian* at [trp\\_lee@yahoo.com](mailto:trp_lee@yahoo.com). Please insert APUS IEMSA in the subject line.

## Poster Competition Info Released; Abstracts Due Oct. 1

**By Brian Silva**

*IAEM President, Student Council*

Three main complaints were noted in the International Association of Emergency Managers Student Council survey of students and faculty about the 2007 Student Poster Competition. The chief complaints were:

- Not enough time to create a proper poster
- Not enough prizes
- No separate categories for graduate and undergraduate work.

The Student Council listened and took action. Vice President Dan Hahn and his team have been hard at work retooling the competition. The following changes will be implemented for the 2008 Student Poster Competition:

- The number of monetary prizes has increased from three to six
- The competition has been divided into two categories, one each for undergraduate and graduate students.

It is believed that these changes will increase participation at the conference.

For your convenience, the rules and poster preparation guidelines are provided here; however, they are also available on the IAEM Student Council page at <http://www.iaem.com/about/membership/regions/studentregion/studentregion.htm>.

**Who may submit a poster abstract** — Any Student Member of IAEM may enter. This year for the first time, entries will be divided into two separate competitions – one for undergraduate students and one for graduate students.

**Deadline** — Abstracts (not the poster) must arrive on or before October 1, 2008. Submissions will not be accepted after that date.

**Multiple papers** — You may present one poster at this meeting.

**Format of Abstract Submission** — Title, presenter(s), affiliation, address, phone & fax numbers, and e-mail address.

**Abstract and Title Length** — Abstracts must be less than 150 words. The program chair reserves the right to edit abstracts, if necessary, for clarity, grammar or good usage. Abstracts above the 150-word limit will

not be accepted. Titles of abstracts are limited to 10 words.

**Poster Format** — Your poster must not exceed 4 feet in height or 4 feet in width.

**Poster Presentation Theme** — The poster theme must relate to an aspect of emergency management.

The exhibit must include:

- Short title of the exhibit
- Identification of either a undergraduate or graduate level presentation
- Abstract
- Student's name, or names, and whether they are a graduate or undergraduate student (There may be no more than 2 students per poster and both must be at the graduate or undergraduate level)
- Collaborators, advisor(s), and department(s)
- Funding sources
- Internal Review Board Proof of regulatory committee approval if required
- Objectives of the research
- Significance to the field
- Significance to society in general
- Methods
- Results, interpretation of results and conclusions, and directions for future research if the project is completed.

### Additional Presentation Rules

You must be present to at the IAEM 2008 Annual Conference to participate.

- All posters must be set up in the time allotted, and presenters must be present during the entire judging period
- The media or design of the poster is at the creator's discretion
- You are responsible for all needed materials. (Audiovisual equipment and other materials to individual posters will not be provided.)
- If needed, you may have access to one standard electrical outlet should you need it. (When you register your poster, please be sure to note this need.)
- While the author may receive minor assistance

Please see **CONTEST**, Page 6

## Poster Contest Judging Guidelines Announced

### CONTEST, from Page 5

(as determined by the judges), the poster must be the student(s) original work and not that of others including their professor(s)

#### Judging Guidelines for Poster Presentations

The purpose of a poster exhibit is to convey to a wide audience a research project's significance to scholars in the field and its potential significance to the general public. While all posters will be publicly displayed for the length of the Annual Conference, judging will take place in private.

Exhibits will be judged on their quality in three areas:

- **Content** (50% of total score) — See Sections G and H for what the exhibit must include.
- **Display** (30% of total score) — The core of each exhibit is a poster with text and graphics intended for a general audience. The poster should attract attention and convey important information about the project. Language should be simple and descriptions brief. Jargon should be avoided, and necessary technical terms should be defined.

Spelling and grammar must be correct. Photographs, drawings, graphs, charts, figures, etc., should be simple and well-organized. All text should be large enough to be readable from a distance of 4 to 6 feet.

- **Oral Description and Defense** (20% of total score) — During the poster session, each student should be positioned with their poster, prepared to answer questions and elaborate upon their research and presented materials. The quality and accuracy of this discussion will be evaluated by the judges.

#### Awards

The award structure is as follows:

Undergraduate Level	Graduate Level
1st Place: \$225	1st Place: \$225
2nd Place: \$175	2nd Place: \$175
3rd Place: \$100	3rd Place: \$100

#### Questions

All questions should be directed to Dan Hahn, IAEM Student Council Vice President at [danielh@santarosa.fl.gov](mailto:danielh@santarosa.fl.gov).

## IAEM Award Nominations Sought; Deadline Looming

On May 13, 2008, the IAEM Awards & Recognition Committee chaired by Phyllis Mann issued the Call for Entries for the 2008 IAEM Awards Program. Each year IAEM recognizes excellence in the emergency management field through the IAEM Awards Program.

In 2007, APUS was well represented among the winners as Prof. James Smith won the inaugural Academic Recognition award for his efforts to establish the APUS Student Association and former President Dan Hahn won the Student Region Executive Citations Award, which recognized an IAEM member within each region whose professional image and achievements en-

hance the field of emergency management. Hahn was acknowledged with the award for his leadership, dedication, and service toward membership recruitment and retention for IAEM Region XII.

Categories for the 2008 Awards include:

- Career Excellence
- Academic Recognition
- Public Awareness
- Technology & Innovation
- Partners in Preparedness, Interagency Disaster Preparedness (co-sponsor: [Home-land1.com](http://Home-land1.com))
- Business & Industry Preparedness.

The program and judging process are overseen by the IAEM Awards & Recognition Committee. Winners will be announced during the IAEM 56th Annual Conference & EMEX 2008, Kansas City (Overland Park), Kansas.

The complete IAEM 2008 Awards Brochure, with guidelines and tips, can be downloaded at [www.iaem.com/awards](http://www.iaem.com/awards), along with the official entry form.

Please read the IAEM 2008 Awards Brochure prior to completing the official entry form. All entries must be electronically submitted to IAEM Headquarters via e-mail to [info@iaem.com](mailto:info@iaem.com) no later than **Aug. 15, 2008**.

## Feedback Requested on Fundraiser Options

### TELECONFERENCE, from Page 2

- Mr. Silva also gave an update on the IAEM Annual Conference which is being held in Kansas City. It sounds like he and his fellow officers are working hard to make it a great experience for all student members. They are developing a one-page flyer and as soon as it is released we will post it in our classroom as well as in future editions of *The Guardian*. We urge all of you to work on and submit a poster for the poster competition (details on pp 5-6).
- IAEM has added some paperwork for all chapters; they will be notifying us of any needed forms.
- Mr. Silva asked if there were any objections to removing all references to IEMSA, commonly used to refer to student chapters. All members present agreed to stop using this terminology.
- IAEM is hoping that Region 12 can help with fundraising efforts for the Scholarship Fund. Since we are completely online, we are somewhat limited in what we can do. We can either take donations towards a basket that can be auctioned off at the annual conference, or we can take donations and forward the collected funds to the scholarship committee. If we do a basket, we could go with a "Gifts from the World" theme that highlights the fact that we have students all over the world. Chapter members could send in something that represents where they are from. If you have input, please send a note to [B1Ellis@hotmail.com](mailto:B1Ellis@hotmail.com).
- Mr. Silva is asking for submissions to the Region 12 newsletter. If you have an article, photos, suggestions, etc. please send your submission to Andy Jarvi at [andrew.jarvi@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.jarvi@gmail.com). We have given Region 12 permission to reprint any articles from *The Guardian* in *The Responder*.
- Region 12 is also working on a Recruitment Brochure (we are currently updating ours). When it is released we will publish it in our classroom and in future editions of *The Guardian*.
- Reminder – Region 12 has both Facebook and MySpace user groups.

The meeting concluded with each chapter voicing any thoughts or concerns. As chapter president I

voiced the thought that our biggest mission was to help increase the networking possibilities within Region 12. With students and chapters all over the world, we have an opportunity to establish collaboration/networking opportunities far beyond what we currently have. But these efforts have to begin with each individual student and chapter. I ask each of you to spend 5 – 10 extra minutes each week either posting in our discussion boards or our new Facebook user group (please add yourself to our Facebook user group if you have not already done so). We can be the seeds that help our networks grow.

Summer is here and I know all of you are going to the four winds, but please do not forget that we have an obligation. I need your help, this is our chapter. Current ongoing projects (w/action officer) are:

- Review/Update of Bylaws – Rules Committee
- Update of Recruitment Brochure – Bob Ellis
- Moving ahead with Web Page – Faculty advisors
- Facebook User Group – all chapter members
- Annual Conference Flyer – from Region 12
- Future editions of *The Guardian* – Cheryl McCullough

Bob Ellis

### WANTED: FIELD REPORTERS

*The Guardian* needs you. Have you attended a conference, seminar, or lecture, or perhaps participated in an exercise? Please submit a short article or photographs for this newsletter. Short research papers written for your classes are also welcome. Sharing with your fellow Chapter members benefits the entire group.

If you have something you would like to contribute, please contact Cheryl McCullough at [trp\\_lee@yahoo.com](mailto:trp_lee@yahoo.com) or Bob Ellis at [B1Ellis@hotmail.com](mailto:B1Ellis@hotmail.com). Please insert IEMSA in the subject line.

## Conference Planning Headlines Mid-Year Meeting

By Bob Ellis

*Student Chapter President*

The IAEM Mid-Year Conference was not really a conference at all, but rather a working meeting. IAEM organized the meetings by topic area, and panels went to work on a myriad of issues important to the emergency management field. I attended the working group for the annual conference. The main order of business was to go through over 300 submissions for conference presenters. I was amazed at the breadth of subjects and subject matter experts. In the end approximately 50 different presentations were selected, and all of them sounded extremely interesting. We also discussed other

topics pertinent to the annual conference and I learned a lot about what goes in to putting something like this together. I have no doubt that this year's annual conference will be outstanding.

In the past year, I have attended the IAEM Community Preparedness Conference, the Virginia Emergency Management Conference, the FEMA HigherEd Conference, and the IAEM mid-year meeting. I have used some vacation time, some of my own funds, and been given some great discounts. I can honestly say that it has been worth every minute, and I highly encourage all of you to attend any conferences, seminars, etc. that you can.

## Expand Considerations Beyond Obvious in the Future

**CONFERENCE**, from Page 3 clearly demonstrated when a single participant questioned the value of an associate's degree in our field. The audience collectively rallied around a respondent who praised the integrity and quality of everyone's EM program, regardless of their levels of conferred degrees. Pride, rightfully so, flowed through the room.

As one of four APUS students and 50 total students to attend the 300-attendee conference, my primary responsibility included recording the essence of one breakout session and preparing a 4- to 5-page paper to be included in post-conference proceedings. During the balance of the 4 days, I was able to attend all plenary and breakout sessions of interest to me. I soaked up everything I could, including interacting with fellow APUS students, meeting my faculty sponsor, Dr. Tom Phelan, and talking with educators from other institutions who offer a range of perspectives on educating students in emergency management. However, as the sessions and days progressed, a few themes began to clearly emerge, including:

Field experience is critical to devel-

oping a well-rounded and employable student. How do students receive this experience, especially in an online setting?

There is a feeling that this discipline is in its infancy, especially as higher education is concerned; to that end, several discussions questioned basic concepts such as "what is emergency management" and "what should be included within the scope of teaching and learning?"

Students approaching graduation need to broaden their interests beyond well-known government agency positions; in fact, most EM positions fall within the private sector.

This is truly a great, albeit challenging, time for us to be students in the fields of emergency management and homeland security. Beyond our collective interest in finding rewarding careers, we each have a responsibility and great fortune to contribute to the foundation of a discipline that will have a profound impact on our way of life for the next generation. I am soon to graduate and will not be attending this conference next year; however I suggest others deeply interested in this discipline consider seeking faculty sponsorship for this unique opportunity.

*Eric Hodges is a master's student pursuing a degree in Emergency and Disaster Management.*

### CHAPTER HELP WANTED

**Rules Committee** - this committee ensures the Chapter adheres to all rules, guidelines, and policies as set forth by IAEM, APUS, and our own By-laws. Interested in helping out? Contact the Rules Committee Chair, Shawn Durbin at [vcems16@netscape.net](mailto:vcems16@netscape.net).

**Service Committee** - this committee works on means to improving our collaboration tools. If you have computer skills and would like to help, contact the Service Committee Chair, Roger Anderson at [rogera@touchva.net](mailto:rogera@touchva.net).

If other committees would like to advertise for members, contact McCullough at [trp\\_lee@yahoo.com](mailto:trp_lee@yahoo.com). As these are personal email addresses, please insert IEMSA in the subject line.

## Monthly Teleconference Schedule; Plan Now to Attend

It is understood that members' schedules are very busy, and no matter what times/dates are picked for the chapter's monthly teleconferences there will be inevitable conflicts for some. In an attempt to offer ample time to plan for upcoming conferences, the last Saturday of

each month (unless it is a holiday weekend) has been designated as the regular chapter teleconference. It will convene at noon. The schedule for the next six months is:

- July 26th - Noon ET
- August 23rd - Noon ET
- September 27th - Noon ET

Toll Free Access Number: 1-877-643-6951

Canadian Access Number: 1-877-722-6536

International Access Number: 1-302-607-2017

Participant Passcode: 21082304#

## GAO Issues Report on Strengthening Risk Management Principles

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently issued a report entitled, *Strengthening the Use of Risk Management Principles in Homeland Security*.

GAO recognizes the broad scope of homeland security risks and the difficulty associated with identifying, mitigating, and responding to risks and events/incidents, especially considering today's environment of globalization, increasing security interdependence, and growing fiscal challenges for the federal government. GAO convened a forum of 25 national and international experts on October 25, 2007, to advance a national dialogue on applying risk management to homeland security. Participants included federal, state, and local officials and risk management experts from the private sector and academia.

Forum participants identified the following:

- what they considered to be effective risk management practices used by organizations from the private and public sectors
- key challenges to applying risk management to homeland security and actions that could be taken to address them.
- what they considered to be effective public and private sector risk management practices, including the defining reporting relationships within the organization in a way that provides sufficient authority and autonomy for a chief risk officer to report to the highest levels of the organization.

Participants stated that the U.S. government needs a single risk manager. One participant suggested that this lack of central leadership has resulted in distributed responsibility for risk management within the administra-

tion and Congress and has contributed to a lack of coordination on spending decisions. Participants also discussed examples of public sector organizations that have effectively integrated risk management practices into their operations, such as the U.S. Coast Guard, and compared and contrasted public and private sector risk management practices.

According to forum participants, three key challenges exist to applying risk management to homeland security:

- improving risk communication
- political obstacles to risk-based resource allocation
- a lack of strategic thinking about managing homeland security risks.

To address these challenges, forum participants offered several recommendations, some of which involved education initiatives and developing new communication tools and strategic planning processes for homeland security and government-wide risk management guidance.

To read the complete report, go to <http://www.gao.gov/> and type the report number, GAO-08-904T, in the keyword or report # blank in the upper right corner of the page.

GAO maintains several report collections.

For disaster preparedness, response, and reconstruction products, go to <http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/featured/dpr2.html>.

For homeland security products, go to <http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/featured/homelandsecurity.html>.