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## News Release

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### IAEM Responds to DHS Nationwide Plan Review – Urges Increase in EMPG Funding

**June 23, 2006 (Falls Church, Va.)** – On June 16, 2006, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued findings from a national assessment of the country's catastrophic planning capabilities. Responding to directives from President Bush and Congress, the *Nationwide Plan Review* (NPR) looked at whether existing emergency operations plans for states and urban areas are sufficient for managing a catastrophic event. The Review also presents conclusions on actions needed by the federal government to improve and coordinate planning.

Most report cards reflect the combined effort of the instructor and the learner. While the roles don't match exactly in the case of the Department of Homeland Security scorecards on preparedness, the truism still holds.

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) observes the vast majority of the information making up both phases of the NPR is actually the result of great effort and honest self-assessment by state and local emergency managers. Further, IAEM notes the personnel producing the data are funded primarily by the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) – a grant not a part of the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) or the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP).

The main value of the NPR appears to have been in the contractor gathering the information centrally, on behalf of DHS.

IAEM urges that future assessments include an examination of the assumptions underlying the questions – mainly a look at, the need for massive evacuations of urban areas and entire states when compared to the much more frequent and realistic threats and risks faced by local governments outside the coastal area.

"It's a question of probability versus vulnerability," said IAEM First Vice President Mike Selves, Johnson County, Kan. "While we do have concern about catastrophic events, we have an obligation to spend our limited time, effort and resources planning for those events our ongoing hazard analyses indicate should be our highest priorities."

IAEM and other emergency management organizations have consistently emphasized people are one of the most critical elements of increased preparedness. In this case, it is the state and local emergency managers who accomplish the planning and coordination needed to effectively prepare for disasters and emergencies. Robert Bohlmann of York County, Maine and Chair of IAEM's Government Affairs Committee stated, "This national assessment provides the most compelling argument so far for a significant increase in EMPG and the planning and preparedness capability only it can provide."

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