



## ***NCR BRIEFING POINTS***

### **For more information, contact:**

Jo'Ellen Countee, Emergency Management Agency, District of Columbia, 202-727-2985

Jim Pettit, Maryland Governor's Office of Homeland Security, 410-974-2353

Bob Spieldenner, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, 804-897-6510

Merni Fitzgerald, Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs, 703-324-3189

### **The National Capital Region is prepared and ready**

- The region's homeland security capabilities cover the entire range of threats from terrorism to natural disasters.
- While these capabilities are not perfect, the region responded in a coordinated manner on 9/11, and is prepared to do so again, should terrorists ever strike our area.
- Public safety professionals and leaders across political and jurisdictional boundaries are organized into specialized work groups to measure and refine performance on an ongoing basis.
- The people who work on behalf of the National Capital Region have direct experience with 9/11, natural disasters, and countless emergencies. They are either on the front lines or are accountable for public safety.
- As a result of working together, the region revamped how public safety agencies share information, have made it a top priority to wisely spend homeland security grant dollars and use a proven organizational structure to respond to emergencies.

### **This region is interoperable and shares critical information**

- The District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia share voice and data information at the scene of an incident, command posts, emergency vehicles and emergency operation centers.
- Wireless computers in police vehicles enable identification of possible criminal or terrorist suspects. 1,500 users from 43 agencies can text message emergency response information and can access multiple law enforcement databases.

### **This region is interoperable and shares critical information**

- A common, Internet-based communications system ties together the region's emergency operation centers to efficiently share information and coordinate resources in an organized, systematic way.
- The region has a plan to build the nation's first broadband wireless data network to facilitate information exchange in the field and is working with the FCC to speed up the process to obtain this dedicated 700 MHz frequency for public safety responders.
- Maryland, Virginia and the District can distribute over 1,250 interoperable radios to first responders within two hours of an incident in the event additional communication capacity is needed.

### **Homeland security dollars are spent efficiently, on key priorities**

- The region has improved its stewardship of homeland security grant dollars. The expenditure rate more than doubled in 2005.
- 99% of \$188 million in grant funding allocated to the region is committed on agreed upon priorities to make the people who live and work here safe.
- Funds are used for interoperable radios, first responder protective equipment, disease detection systems, mass-casualty response and citizen awareness on what to do in an emergency.
- For 2006, the region decided spending priorities in line with national goals. Investments made now also fund capabilities over the next three to five years.

### **Who's in Charge: Incident Command 101**

- The incident command system is an organizational structure for responding to complex, multi-jurisdictional incidents. It is a standard practice in the region, and the United States, and has been in place since the 1970s.
- All incidents are first addressed at the local level, in the National Capital Region, and everywhere else in the U.S. When a local jurisdiction is overwhelmed, the state provides resources. When the state, in turn, is overwhelmed, the federal government assists.
- Tactical operational and response plans are coordinated across the region, through specialized work groups of public safety professionals, and elected and appointed officials, and others stakeholders.

# # #