



## Around the Region in Homeland Security February 2009

The Northwest Regional Technology Center (NWRTC) is a virtual resource center, operated by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), to support regional preparedness, response, and recovery. The center enables homeland security solutions for emergency responder communities and federal, state, and local stakeholders in the Northwest. This monthly status report summarizes activities related to Homeland Security in the Pacific Northwest, and this issue highlights

- The first laboratory approved to test radiation detection equipment
- Indication of the new DHS Secretary's focus on State and local involvement
- How scarcity of resources may drive homeland security issues.

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### **First Testing Laboratory Approved for Radiation Detection Equipment**

In early January, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) accepted PNNL as the first U.S. laboratory to test and evaluate commercially available radiation detectors through its new Graduated Radiation and Nuclear Detector Evaluation and Reporting (GRaDER) program. The program will help ensure that emergency response tools meet operational requirements.

When emergency personnel respond to a potential terrorist event, they need to know that the tools they purchased to detect radiation will work, and work well. PNNL had previously tested several models of hand-held commercial detectors, only to find that not one met all the performance requirements.

“We’ll be the first line of defense, if you will, for emergency responders,” said Michelle Johnson, project manager for PNNL’s Ionizing Radiation Lab. “It really comes down to emergency responders having the best tools available. We’ll be objective technical experts. It means a lot to me to know that we’ll be helping protect them so they can stay focused on protecting us.”

The DHS Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) created the new program based on the standards set by the American National Standards Institute and Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers as well as those currently being developed by DHS. Anyone buying radiation detectors using federal government grant money must choose



PNNL researchers test performance of commercially available radiation detectors with equipment such as this pressure chamber.

systems that satisfy performance requirements based on GRaDER program test results. Companies selling these systems to grant recipients must have the tools evaluated to get the equipment on GRaDER's list.

Through the GRaDER program, laboratories accredited under the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) or already participating in the NVLAP accreditation process and accepted by DNDO would test radiation detection products from various vendors or manufacturers.

Vendors pay the costs of having their radiation detection equipment evaluated. PNNL is already accredited by NVLAP (lab code 105020-0) as an ionizing radiation calibration laboratory.

The Savannah River National Laboratory in South Carolina and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee are also applying for acceptance into the GRaDER program.

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## **New DHS Secretary Shows Early Emphasis on Involving State and Regional Stakeholders**

Janet Napolitano was sworn in on January 21, 2009, as the third Secretary of DHS. On her first official day in the office, she started issuing action directives, many of which were focused on involvement by state and local agencies. The action directives instruct specific DHS offices and components to gather information, review existing strategies and programs, and provide oral and written reports to her by a certain time.



“One of my top priorities is to unify this department and create a common culture,” said Napolitano in the press release that accompanied the first batch of directives. “These action directives are designed to begin a review, evaluation, and dialogue between the various functions of this department and me. I look forward to receiving the information and to working with the offices and agencies to make DHS a more effective and efficient department.”

One of the areas in which the new Secretary requested reports was state and local intelligence sharing. “Core to the department’s ability to successfully carry out its mission is sharing information between DHS and other federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector entities,” said Napolitano. She asked DHS staff to provide a complete inventory of activities to improve information sharing and evaluate which hold the most promise for achieving the smooth flow of information in real time. She stressed that the inventory and evaluation should take into account input from all stakeholders, especially state, local, and tribal entities and the private sector’s perspective and relationships to these stakeholders. An oral report was due January 28.

Napolitano also tasked the DHS Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to more fully integrate state, local, and tribal governments in the development of policies and programs to protect the nation and help it recover from natural and human-made disasters. She asked the Office to immediately contact every relevant governmental association, such as the National Governors Association, National Association of Counties, League of Cities and Towns, U.S. Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, National Emergency Management Association, and the National Congress of American Indians, to let them know that DHS intends to revitalize its relationship with state, local, and tribal governments effective immediately with the intent of creating a working partnership. She also asked the Office to immediately plan for an accelerated process of soliciting and collecting input from state, local, and tribal partners on how to improve the programs and processes of DHS. A preliminary written report was due to her by February 10.

The Secretary also tasked the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to work with state and local emergency management to review plans and activities to strengthen and coordinate preparedness activities and assess any overlaps or inconsistencies. FEMA is also to submit possible restructuring of these plans and identify areas where state and local emergency management can provide input. An oral report was due to the Secretary February 9, with a final report by February 23.

In addition, Napolitano recognized DHS’s critical role in enhancing emergency medical response capabilities at all levels of government. “Given the ongoing threat of a pandemic, biological, or nuclear attack,” she said, “improving the capacity to deal with large-scale medical emergencies is paramount from an all-hazards perspective.” She tasked the Office of Health Affairs to work with FEMA and federal, state, and local agencies to assess any shortcomings of the National Response Framework Emergency Support Function #8 – Public Health and Medical Services; review the capacity for communities to handle large-scale health emergencies, including first responder capacity and the ability to surge beyond existing bed space at local hospitals; review any overlaps and inconsistencies in medical readiness plans and activities; assess the effectiveness of ongoing grant making efforts; and identify possible restructuring. An oral report was due February 10, with a final report by February 24.

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## Stone Lecture Highlights Scarcity of Resources as Root Cause of Security Issues



On January 8, for the Homeland Security Lecture Series, retired Rear-Admiral David Stone spoke on how scarcity of resources affects homeland security. From January 2004 to June 2005, Stone served as Assistant Secretary for the Transportation Security Administration, where he was responsible for the security of the U.S. transportation system including mass transit, rail, highway, pipeline, maritime, and aviation. Stone has also been active in the Clinton and Obama campaigns as an advisor for homeland security.

He described how homeland security thinking has evolved to identify three causal factors for instability around the world: scarcity of energy, food, and water. For example, Russia used energy resources as a political weapon six times in the recent past. Stone felt the key to combating these issues is to shift to asymmetric warfare. "It's not the example of power but power of example that counts," he told attendees.

He also stressed that the homeland security enterprise will only succeed if it partners with state and local government. "We have to encourage citizens, not just the D.C. veterans, to participate in securing the homeland. We're all in a common struggle."

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### Upcoming Events

March 1, 2009

Exercise Unit EXEVAL by ARNorth  
Camp Murray and surrounding areas, Washington

March 24, 2009

WMD-CST Standardization Evaluation and Assistance Team Program Evaluation  
Camp Murray, Washington

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*Around the Region in Homeland Security* is a monthly report from the Northwest Regional Technology Center, operated by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The goal of the NWRTC is to bring together major stakeholders from across the region that have a vested interest in homeland security issues and provide a collaborative environment that addresses Northwest regional homeland security requirements, needs, and challenges. For more information, contact Director Steve Stein at

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