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CABLE Gram Volume 2 Issue 76

13 December 2005 *CABLE Gram*™

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Take care,

Zhi Hamby-Nye, Editor

Henry Ziegler, Associate Editor

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We search the topics and Websites that you request, so it is important for you to provide feedback. We are in our infancy and the *CABLE Gram* will be as useful as you help make it. Please let us know the topics and keywords that will assist you in your professional endeavors. Send all comments and suggestions to zhi@cablegram.org – please type *CABLE Gram* in the subject line.

Please forward the *CABLE Gram* to all people you feel will find it useful!

FEDERAL

1. President Bush Urges Congress To Renew Patriot Act (Dept. of State, 10 Dec 2005)

President Bush welcomed agreement by key members of Congress to reauthorize the Patriot Act legislation that was passed to improve security in the United States following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Speaking December 10 in his weekly radio address to the nation, Bush said the agreement would

renew crucial legal provisions due to expire and make others permanent. He urged formal passage by the Senate and House of Representatives. The legislation “reauthorizes critical national security tools, while bolstering the Patriot Act's significant protections of civil liberties. It also includes provisions to fight crime and terrorism at America's seaports, and tougher criminal penalties and increased resources to combat the dangerous spread of methamphetamine abuse throughout our country,” Bush said. An [audio file](#) of the address is available on the White House Web site.

2. Key questions on terror and national preparedness - Conflicting priorities, implementation problems delaying reform (CNN, 5 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - The former 9/11 commission issued a report Monday that faulted the government's progress in implementing reforms the panel recommended last year. Some of the panel's suggested reforms have been put into place, notably the creation of the post of director of national intelligence. But others have not, the panel's report said. To help better understand the terror threat facing America, Richard Falkenrath, a fellow at the Brookings Institution and a CNN security analyst, answers five key questions about the risk and how the government has responded since September 11, 2001.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/POLITICS/12/05/falkenrath.qa/>

3. FEMA officials: Military delayed Superdome evacuation (By Greta Wodele, CongressDaily, 9 Dec 2005)

Military officials delayed an evacuation of Hurricane Katrina victims from the Superdome in New Orleans late last summer, prolonging their stay in squalid conditions for another 24 hours, a Federal Emergency Management Agency official told Congress Thursday. The FEMA official, Philip Parr, who was working out of the Superdome, said he had devised a plan to use helicopters to evacuate victims to dry land and later bus them to adequate shelters in less than 30 hours on Wednesday, Aug. 31 -- two days after the storm hit the city and massive flooding ensued. Parr said National Guard officials told him that Army Lt. Gen. Russell Honore had taken over evacuation operations and Parr's plan was on hold. On Thursday, Sept. 1, FEMA and state officials sent buses to begin evacuating victims, a process that took until Saturday, Sept. 3, to complete.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=32983&dcn=e_gvet

4. TSA workforce changes create rift with air marshals (GovExec.com, By Chris Strohm, 7 Dec 2005)

A workforce shift could be in store at the Transportation Security Administration, as airport screeners become federal air marshals and current marshals leave to become Border Patrol agents. TSA recently announced a series of initiatives affecting airport checkpoint procedures and the screening workforce. Some of the procedural changes ^ in particular one that will allow passengers to board airplanes carrying scissors with blades less than 4 inches long and tools less than 7 inches long ^ have generated a lot of attention. But the workforce changes also are significant. For example, screening personnel are now called transportation security officers and have been given the GS-

1802 law enforcement designation. The new designation is intended to open a career path into other law enforcement components at the Homeland Security Department.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=32937&dcn=e_gvet

5. Air marshals taught to be risk averse (CNN, 8 Dec 2005)

Federal air marshals train to shoot in extremely close quarters and tense situations, but until Wednesday no agent had used his weapon. What happened Wednesday at Miami's international airport could spark debate on the role of the law enforcement officials who sit incognito on flights, prepared to stop any threat to the crew or passengers. "People will be looking at this air marshal program," said Richard Falkenrath, a security analyst for CNN and a former deputy homeland security adviser. "The air marshals have had a somewhat checkered history over the last four years.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/US/12/07/air.marshal/>

6. Airport ID checks legally enforced? (c|net, by Declan McCullagh, contributed by Rick Forno)

SAN FRANCISCO - A federal appeals court wrestled Thursday with what seems to be a straightforward question: Can Americans be required to show ID on a commercial airline flight? [John Gilmore](#), an early employee of Sun Microsystems and co-founder of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, says the answer should be "no." The libertarian millionaire [sued the Bush administration](#), which claims that the ID requirement is necessary for security but has refused to identify any actual regulation requiring it. A three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals seemed skeptical of the Bush administration's defense of secret laws and regulations but stopped short of suggesting that such a rule would be necessarily unconstitutional. "How do we know there's an order?" Judge Thomas Nelson asked. "Because you said there was?" Replied Joshua Waldman, a staff attorney for the Department of Justice: "We couldn't confirm or deny the existence of an order." Even though government regulations required his silence, Waldman said, the situation did seem a "bit peculiar."

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://news.com.com/Airport+ID+checks+legally+enforced/2100-7348_3-5987820.html

7. Panel offers framework for airline passenger pre-screening plan (By Greta Wodele, CongressDaily, 7 Dec 2005)

As the Homeland Security Department finalizes a contentious program to pre-screen airline passengers, an advisory committee on Tuesday provided the department with a framework for the initiative. The Data Privacy and Integrity Advisory Committee said the department should narrowly focus the pre-screening program known as Secure Flight. The committee advised the department to require a passenger's name and date of birth, and airlines should verify a traveler's identity through two government databases. The group said the program should not be expanded to commercial databases. Collecting passengers' personal information and protecting the data is at the crux of the debate over the program between policymakers and privacy and civil rights advocates. The American

Civil Liberties Union repeatedly has called on the Homeland Security Department to eliminate the program.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=32939&dcn=e_gvet

8. Groups differ on countering shoulder-fired missile threat (By Greta Wodele, National Journal's Technology Daily, 12 Dec 2005)

An airline industry representative and Defense Department contractors squared off on Friday over whether the government should protect commercial airplanes against shoulder-fired missiles. Congress has been pressuring the Homeland Security Department since the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks to install devices on the underbelly of commercial airplanes to protect against Man-Portable Air Defense Systems, or MANPADS. The department plans to finish testing different technologies next year and make a decision about deploying countermeasures. "We're going to make a multi-billion mistake if we move" to put countermeasures on airplanes, said John Meenan, executive vice president and chief operating officer for the Air Transport Association, about the debate. "We seem to be on the path to conceivably spending billions of dollars to address one threat."

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=32992&dcn=e_gvet

9. Legislators want secretive agency to develop drugs (AP, 4 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON – By creating a federal agency shielded from public scrutiny, some lawmakers think they can speed up the development and testing of new drugs and vaccines needed to respond to a bioterrorist attack or flu pandemic. The proposed Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Agency, or BARDA, would be exempt from long-standing open records and meetings laws that apply to most government departments, according to legislation approved Oct. 18 by the Senate health committee. Those exemptions would streamline the development process, safeguard national security and protect the proprietary interests of drug companies, say Republican backers of the bill. The legislation also proposes giving manufacturers immunity from liability in exchange for their participation in the public-private effort.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/d2sax>

10. PACOM leads military in pandemic planning (FCW, 6 Dec 2005)

HONOLULU - The U.S. Pacific Command (Pacom) is ahead of other major combatant commands in planning for a potential pandemic flu, but its preparations lag behind other countries in Asia and the Pacific, Adm. William Fallon, Pacom commander, said here today at the opening of annual the AFCEA TechNet Asia-Pacific conference. Fallon said Pacom stands ahead of the power curve in its pandemic planning efforts compared with other commands, but based on a recent conference with the heads of Defense of Asia-Pacific countries, they are "way ahead of efforts here." Rear Adm. R.D. Hufstader, Pacom command surgeon, told a joint House committee hearing of the Hawaii State Legislature last month that the command intends to create a Pacific Region Coordination

Center to help manage a coordinated response to a pandemic by the United States and 43 Asia-Pacific nations.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://govhealthit.com/article91626-12-06-05-Web>

11. Invention speeds up bacteria identification (The State Press, 6 Dec 2005)

LSU fans cheer for their team during the game against ASU Saturday. Due to the effects of Hurricane Katrina, the game was moved from Louisiana to Tempe. ASU researchers have invented a sensor that could play an important role in early detection of disease-causing bacteria or bioterrorism agents in drinking water supplies. The researchers unveiled their invention Monday at the Arizona Water Quality Center's biannual meeting in Tempe. Developed by WQC Director Morteza Abbaszadegan and his ASU research team, the biosensor uses fiber optics, wireless communication and a patent-pending chemical process to identify bacteria in as little as 10 minutes. Identifying those same bacteria usually takes between 24 and 48 hours using current methods.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.asuwebdevil.com/issues/2005/12/06/news/695233>

12. Wall Street Journal Examines NIH Funding for Anti-Bioterrorism Medications, Vaccines (Kaiser Network, 6 Dec 2005)

The *Wall Street Journal* on Tuesday examined the role Anthony Fauci, director of the NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has played since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks to direct funding to drug companies to produce biodefense medicines. After the terrorist and anthrax attacks, Fauci argued that NIAID was "well-suited to receive new funds for biodefense," and the agency's biodefense-related funding rose from \$42 million annually in 2001 to about \$1.2 billion in 2003 and \$1.7 billion in 2005, the *Journal* reports. Fauci decided to "fund companies on a large scale" and currently directs \$500 million to \$600 million annually for new bioterrorism product development, according to the *Journal*. Last year HHS was authorized by Congress to spend \$5.6 billion over 10 years on biodefense drugs. According to the *Journal*, Fauci's goal is to prepare companies to bid on contracts under Project BioShield, which is managed by HHS.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/rep_index.cfm?DR_ID=34151

13. Top Bush aides test bird flu preparedness (Reuters, 11 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - Warning an outbreak may be inevitable, the White House on Saturday conducted a test of its readiness for a feared bird flu pandemic and said federal agencies fared "quite well" without offering any details. Cabinet secretaries, military leaders and other top officials took part in the four-hour tabletop drill, which officials said was designed to assess the level of federal preparedness for a possible outbreak of bird flu or another deadly virus. "This is about being ready for what inevitably will come," Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt said. But the White House refused to divulge details about the exercise and the test results, and officials said afterward that it was clear that state and local governments would have to assume a leading role.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?S52621C4C>

14. Security analyst: Terrorism threat 'will never go away' (CNN, Richard Falkenraath, 5 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - The former 9/11 commission issued a report Monday that faulted the government's progress in implementing the reforms the panel suggested last year. To better understand the commission's concerns, CNN anchor Daryn Kagan discussed the commission's final report Monday with Richard Falkenrath, a fellow at the Brookings Institution and a CNN security analyst.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/POLITICS/12/05/cnna.falkenrath/index.html>

15. More Border Patrol agents to be deployed to southern border (GovExec.com, By Chris Strohm, 9 Dec 2005)

An additional 1,700 Border Patrol agents will be deployed to the nation's southwest border within the next year, the Homeland Security Department announced Wednesday. Of the total, 643 agents will go to Arizona, 452 to Texas, 352 to California and 253 to New Mexico, according to the department. "A key element of our new Secure Border Initiative is more Border Patrol boots on the ground in the most heavily trafficked areas of the southwest border," said DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff. "By increasing the number of agents on the frontlines of our border and giving them better infrastructure and technology to do their jobs, we will be able to greatly increase interdictions and create a strong deterrent to illegal crossings."

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=32981&dcn=e_gvet

16. Justice Department Bars Human Rights Violators from United States (Dept. of State, 9 Dec 2005)

Preventing human rights violators from coming into the United States and identifying and removing them if they have been able to settle there are the goals of interagency efforts to ensure that abusers find no sanctuary in the United States, federal officials told a congressional hearing on December 8.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?W14512C4C>

17. FBI mishandled counterterrorism case (GovExec.com, 12 Dec 2005)

The Justice Department's inspector general has found that FBI agents mishandled a counterterrorism case in 2002, falsified records to cover up their mistakes and retaliated against a whistleblower for exposing the problems. The IG's draft report on the case -- obtained by *Government Executive* -- also sheds rare light on problems with how the FBI internally handled allegations from the whistleblower, then-special agent Michael German. But in another twist, German remains critical of the IG despite the report. He contends IG officials distorted some facts and failed to fully investigate whether the bureau missed an opportunity to infiltrate a terrorist conspiracy. He has asked the IG to do a more complete investigation before issuing a final report.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/1205/121205c1.htm>

STATE AND LOCAL NEWS

18. CA: L.A. slighted in terror funding (Daily Bulletin, 6 Dec 2005)

Despite being one of the top three terrorist targets in the nation, Los Angeles does not receive nearly enough federal funding to protect the city against an attack, according to a report released Monday and interviews with local law enforcement officials. Los Angeles received less per-capita funding than Vermont, Wyoming and other low-risk areas a funding system that leaves the area and the nation vulnerable, according to a follow-up report issued by the commission that investigated the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In 2005, Los Angeles County received \$92 million in two federal grants money split between the Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles Police Department and 16 other cities. "That is not nearly what we need," said LAPD Commander Mark Leap, head of the department's Counter-Terrorism and Criminal Intelligence Bureau. "We need at least double that." More money could be spent to secure transportation targets, including LAX and the Port of Los Angeles-Long Beach, Leap said.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.dailybulletin.com/news/ci_3282108

19. CA: National Park Island Eyed for Military Use (AP, 9 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - A 53,000-acre National Park island off the coast of Southern California would become a recreation enclave for the military under a proposal for a pending defense bill. The measure was being circulated by Republican aides for the House Armed Services Committee, chaired by California GOP Rep. Duncan Hunter, according to Democratic congressional aides who made it public Friday. Hunter proposed a similar measure in May only to drop it amid objections from Democrats and environmentalists. His committee spokesman, Josh Holly, declined comment Friday.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=78&sid=324005>

20. CT: New immigration strategy - Boughton forms group to launch national effort to reform laws (The News-Times, 9 Dec 2005)

DANBURY – Twenty minutes into a news conference Thursday dealing with illegal immigration, a reporter asked a question: "Mayor Boughton, are you anti-immigrant?" Boughton paused for a moment, smiled – and then said no. It's a question he has been answering often this year, after saying that thousands of illegal immigrants from Central and South America have put a strain on Danbury services and schools. The mayor has blamed a "failed federal immigration policy" for the problems. Now he'll have help pointing the finger. Boughton and Suffolk County (N.Y.) Executive Steve Levy announced the formation of Mayors and Executives for Immigration Reform, a group that will lobby federal lawmakers to overhaul immigration laws.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://news.newstimeslive.com/story.php?id=77484&category=Local>

21. DC: Area will get disaster victim tracking system (Government Health IT, 11 Dec 2005)

By May, officials expect to have in place the beginnings of a regional system for tracking disaster victims in the Washington, D.C., area. V. Nona Ogunsula, the project manager for the Prince George's County Health Department, told a conference audience in Washington, D.C., that systems integrators had been invited to submit bids this month for a development contract. She said development of the system is being financed with an urban area security grant from the Department of Homeland Security. "We were initially focused on mass casualty incidents" in planning for the system, Ogunsula said, but now the 25-member planning team is expecting the system to support biosurveillance and family reunification after a disaster.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://govhealthit.com/article91678-12-09-05-Web>

22. DC: Police Find Assault Weapon Near High Court (AP, 9 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - Police are investigating a loaded assault weapon found in a parking lot a block from the Supreme Court, a law enforcement official said Friday. Supreme Court police discovered the gun on Dec. 2 in the lot in the residential Capitol Hill neighborhood east of the court and turned it over to the Washington police, said Supreme Court spokeswoman Kathy Arberg. The U.S. Capitol is west of the Supreme Court. Officials at the Supreme Court and Metropolitan Police Department would not identify the kind of gun found, but a senior federal law enforcement official said it was a loaded MAC-10 assault weapon. It is capable of firing many bullets over a wide area in a few seconds. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation is ongoing. The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has joined the investigation, said Officer Josue Alvida, a Washington police spokesman. No arrests have been made.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=78&sid=324042>

23. HI: State ready for storms, tsunamis (FCW, 12 Dec 2005)

National Weather Service officials announced last week that Hawaii is the first state in the country to be prepared for severe weather storms and tsunamis under voluntary federal guidelines. Under the NWS programs, all four of the state's counties achieved the distinctions of StormReady and TsunamiReady, which the agency designed to help communities meet certain communications and safety guidelines and skills. "Hawaii has experienced more tsunami threats than any other state in the union, and we know how devastating they can be," Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) said in a prepared statement. "In Hawaii we have taken steps to be better prepared for the next tsunami. We have an emergency operations center in every county, a statewide siren system, evacuation maps in the phone books, regular drills and public education programs."

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fcw.com/article91705-12-12-05-Web>

24. HI: Man subdued on flight here (Honolulu Advertiser, 10 Dec 2005)

Passengers and crew aboard a Northwest Airlines flight last night from Los Angeles to Honolulu overpowered an unruly passenger who threatened a sleeping baby girl, said passengers and officials yesterday. "I was scared in the plane," said the baby's 30-year-old mother, who would only give her first name of Sheila. "With everything that's happened since Sept. 11, I was hoping that everything was changed. I'm relieved. But I don't know how I'll feel tomorrow. It was a big stress." About 10 minutes before Flight 91 was preparing to touch down last night in Honolulu, the unidentified 37-year-old Mexican national burst toward the cockpit of the plane and was subdued by four people in the business-class section, according to passengers and the parents of the baby girl, who live in Montreal, Canada.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?H31621C4C>

25. MA: Immigration raids empty New Bedford fish plants (The Boston Globe, 7 Dec 2005)

A waterfront sweep by the US Coast Guard and immigration authorities that resulted in the arrest of 13 men has sent panic through New Bedford's large immigrant community, causing workers at seafood processing plants to stay away from their jobs. When workers at the AML International fish processing plant arrived for their shifts at 7 a.m. Monday, officers from Immigration and Customs Enforcement were waiting for them. Eight of the men, who could not provide identification, were handcuffed and loaded into a van. Officers arrested five more men at other plants. After the arrests, cellphones all over the waterfront started ringing, and fish cutters and packers from Central America, who make up the bulk of the workforce at the city's fish processing plants, fled the squat seafood warehouses.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?A33522C4C>

26. MA: Town leaders present emergency preparedness plans (Watertown TAB, 9 Dec 2005)

Watertown is making sure that we are ready for any emergency, whether it be a natural or manmade disaster. Coming off last week's mock emergency flu vaccination drill, both the police and fire chiefs, along with the town manager and school officials, gave an Emergency Preparedness presentation to Watertown residents at the Middle School this past Wednesday night. Police Chief Edward Deveau highlighted some of the training exercises and planning projects the police department takes part in to ensure it is ready to handle all emergency situations. Watertown is a part of the Northeast Homeland Security Planning Region consisting of 85 communities, said Deveau.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www2.townonline.com/watertown/localRegional/view.bg?articleid=387056>

27. MN: CN sues Orr over train speed limit (TimberJay, 12 Dec 2005)

The Canadian National Railway Co. is suing the city of Orr over a rule that requires trains to slow down to 30 miles per hour within city limits. Meanwhile, Minnesota Attorney General Mike Hatch has pledged to help the city defend the speed limit. "Orr's a small community. It doesn't have the money to fight a big railroad in court," Hatch said

during a fundraiser in Gilbert for his gubernatorial campaign. "If asked, you bet we'll be there." CN officials filed the lawsuit late last week in U.S. District Court. The suit claims the city speed limit isn't permitted under the Federal Railway Safety Act and asks the court to declare the law unconstitutional because it imposes an impermissible burden on interstate commerce. The motion also asks the court to order the city to pay court costs for bringing the suit and any other payments deemed appropriate.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.timberjay.com/current.php?article=2040>

28. NJ: Girls held for Web threats (Gannett News Service, 8 Dec 2005)

NEWARK - Two 15-year-old students were arrested Tuesday for allegedly posting death threats against their Newark High School classmates on xanga.com, a popular blog site for teens. Officials were tipped off through the district's Safe School Hotline early Tuesday morning. The xanga.com page in question states, "On December 19 one by one every NHS student will be taken ... slaughtered ... murdered ..." Officials suspect there was a hidden message in that statement indicating Tuesday was the intended day of the threat rather than Dec. 19, according to Assistant Superintendent Dan Montgomery.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?Q62522C4C>

29. NY: Lawmakers Want More Ground Zero Air Tests (AP, 10 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - New York lawmakers clamoring for greater testing of toxic ground zero dust said Friday they will seek a second inquiry to see if the government is sweeping the problem under the rug. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., and Rep. Jerrold Nadler, a Democrat whose district includes the World Trade Center site, will ask the Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, to probe their concerns. Clinton and Nadler maintain the Environmental Protection Agency should conduct much more extensive testing work. The EPA's inspector general found fault with the first round of such testing, prompting a technical review and a second round of testing announced last month. The lawmakers said Friday that a second investigation is needed to determine if the EPA is repeating mistakes made the first time.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=78&sid=323890>

30. NC: County installs public safety network (FCW, 6 Dec 2005)

Law enforcement officials in North Carolina's second most populous county have apparently deployed the first 4.9 GHz, multiband broadband public safety network in the country, a Motorola official said. The Motorola Motomesh network was implemented at three facilities in Wake County: the North Carolina State Fairgrounds, the Carter-Finley Stadium at North Carolina State University and the Royal Bank of Canada Center. The network, which is linked to several video cameras, will allow police officers to monitor those areas in real time through personal digital assistants or mobile terminals in their cruisers, said Rick Rotondo, director of marketing for Motorola's mesh networking products group.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fcw.com/article91622-12-06-05-Web>

31. PA: State police get special training to spot smuggling in big rigs (AP, 6 Dec 2005)

A program started 15 years ago to help California police stop cocaine smugglers has come to Pennsylvania, where 110 state troopers were being trained to find everything from drugs to dirty bombs in commercial trucks. The three-day training session is called "Desert Snow" – so named because it originally targeted those who trafficked drugs in California's Mojave Desert. "Especially since 9-11, you're looking for secret compartments in vehicles, especially in trucks," said Pennsylvania State Police spokesman Jack Lewis. "They can be hiding drugs, weapons, counterfeit items – whatever."

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/state/20051206-1531-commercialsmuggling.html>

KEY PEOPLE

32. Circuit: Who's in, who's out and who's changed jobs (FCW, 12 Dec 2005)

It was a rough year for the Homeland Security Department. Information technology executives spent only a couple of years at the government's newest agency before moving on. Here's a list of movers, shakers and newcomers at DHS and elsewhere in the government IT world in 2005.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fcw.com/article91684-12-12-05-Print>

GANG ACTIVITY

33. CA: Inland Anti-Gang Unit in the Works (Los Angeles Times, 6 Dec 2005)

Riverside County Dist. Atty. Grover Trask and Sheriff Bob Doyle unveiled plans Monday for a new anti-gang task force that they said would apply a "full-court press" to the region's escalating gang crime and violence. The special unit, expected to receive \$5.1 million in funding today from the Board of Supervisors, would include an additional 44 sheriff's deputies, prosecutors and probation officers to help monitor and crack down on the estimated 11,000 gang members in the county. "We will not concede anything to these outlaws," Doyle said. Trask said the estimated 321 gangs in Riverside County presented a "sea of problems" and accounted for a significant portion of murders and drug crimes in the county. More than 110 gangs have formed in the county since 1997, and he said 40 of his office's 125 active homicide cases are gang-related.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/7wq9b>

34. CA: Gang killings up, number of investigators down in LA county (AP, 12 Dec 2005)

LOS ANGELES - Gang killings have surged in areas patrolled by the sheriff's department but fewer gang officers are available to combat the problem, according to a published report. So far this year, gang-related homicides in the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department are up more than 30 percent over last year's level,

to 210 killings. At the same time, the number of deputies assigned to gang enforcement has shrunk from nearly 190 three years ago to 150 today, according to a report in Monday's Los Angeles Times.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?A15F52D4C>

35. CA: Gunfight blamed on bikers (The Press-Enterprise, 6 Dec 2005)

NORCO - Witnesses blame tensions between two rival motorcycle gangs for a shooting at a Christmas toy drive that left a firefighter and two others injured. Riverside County Sheriff's deputies interviewed about 150 people Sunday night and into Monday regarding the shootings at The Maverick Steakhouse. Now they have volumes of notes and tapes to digest. "We're basically at a standstill in the investigation," said spokesman Sgt. Earl Quinata.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/ata6u>

36. MD: More Weapons Found At Maryland Schools (WBALTV, 12 Dec 2005)

ROCKVILLE, Md. - Maryland school districts are reporting a 63 percent jump in the number of knives and other weapons found in schools over the last five years, making weapon offenses the fastest-growing category of misconduct by students. The number of Maryland students found with knives and other weapons in schools rose from 1,739 to 2,845 over the past five years. Total student suspensions in Maryland are up just 10 percent since the 1999-2000 academic year. The increase bucks a national trend in statistics reported by the U.S. Education Department showing a decline in weapons at schools early this decade.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.thewbalchannel.com/health/5516219/detail.html>

37. NC: Darlington County officials probe gang link in weekend assaults (Morning News, 6 Dec 2005)

Authorities in Darlington County are investigating whether two crimes that happened during the weekend are gang-related. One of the crimes is a stabbing that took place in Darlington during the city's Christmas parade Sunday. The other is the shooting of an 11-year-old boy in Hartsville on Saturday. The victims of both crimes have been treated and released from local hospitals.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/b3w52>

38. VA: Police arrest alleged MS13 gang member (Fauquier Times-Democrat, 6 Dec 2005)

A 15-year-old boy who is allegedly affiliated with the notorious street gang Mara Salvatrucha, or MS13, has been arrested in Warrenton. Warrenton Police Chief Connie Novak said the arrest stemmed from what began as a local investigation of gang graffiti. While working the case, Det. April Quick determined the boy's identity and learned that there were outstanding warrants for his arrest, Novak said. Looking through school and police records, Quick found that the suspect lived on Amber Circle in Warrenton. She

arrested him Nov. 29 on charges of malicious wounding and gang affiliation. Those charges reportedly stemmed from an incident that happened in Fairfax County earlier this fall.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?R21525C4C>

39. Canada: Organized crime decision from B.C. court carries huge implications (CKNW, 12 Dec 2005)

The publication ban has been lifted on a B.C. Supreme Court decision that has huge implications in the fight against criminal organizations. Justice Heather Holmes has ruled against a section of the criminal code that punishes anyone who commits an offence as part of a criminal organization. The judge finds the definition of criminal organization vague. The ruling came down this past Thursday but has until now been under a publication ban. The name of the accused is still under a ban.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?H1ED23D4C>

NARCO TRAFFICKING

40. Congress Poised to Pass Anti-Meth Law (AP, 9 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - Cold remedies that can be used by drug dealers to make methamphetamine would be forced behind store counters under legislation Congress is poised to pass by year's end. Lawmakers hope that federal restrictions _ included in the agreement reached Thursday to reauthorize the USA Patriot Act _ will stem a meth trade that has hit rural America particularly hard. A number of states have already moved to curb the sale of cold pills containing pseudoephedrine, the ingredient used to cook meth in makeshift labs. The federal law would prevent meth makers from moving to states with weaker laws. Stores would be required to keep medicines like Sudafed and Nyquil behind the counter and consumers would be limited to 3.6 grams, or about 120 pills, per day and 9 grams, or about 300 pills, a month. Purchasers would also need to show a photo ID and sign a logbook.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=78&sid=324012>

41. House Studies Sale of Controlled Substances (AP, 12 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - A recent survey of Web sites selling controlled substances to U.S. residents showed that many are powered by computers in the states and have been in operation for more than a year, according to a report prepared for House lawmakers. The report suggests to lawmakers that it is possible to crack down on illicit Web sites because they are not the fly-by-night operations that some envision. "A concerted, programmatic effort to take down these Web sites ... could have a significant impact on illicit product availability," states the report, which was compiled for a subcommittee that conducts investigations for the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=78&sid=324605>

42. FL: Couple Caught With \$5 Million Worth Of Cocaine (Local10.com, 12 Dec 2005)

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. - Agents arrested a couple they say were loading more than \$5 million worth of cocaine onto a fishing boat at a Fort Lauderdale boat dock. U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents said Jose Pagan, 31, was loading the drugs onto his 28-foot Maco. Juliette Galindez of Sunrise, who was with Pagan, was also arrested.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.local10.com/news/5516390/detail.html>

43. FL: Before marijuana and cocaine, there's huffing (Tampa Bay 10, 12 Dec 2005)

St. Petersburg, Florida - When it comes to kids using drugs, most parents watch for signs of marijuana or cocaine use. Yet there's a substance just as deadly and addicting and more than 2- million children in the US try each year. Huffing is nothing new but now it appears teens have found other common products to help them get high. Simple items like aerosol dust removers for your computer are popular with kids.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.tampabay10.com/aroundthebay/aroundthebay_article.aspx?storyid=22485

44. PA: \$2 million in cocaine seized (The Sentinel, 12 Dec 2005)

State police at Carlisle seized 43 kilos of cocaine — with a street value of \$2 million — Sunday following a routine traffic stop on Interstate 81 through South Middleton Township. The stop also netted three guns and a motorcycle. “It’s a very big arrest,” says Trooper Jackie Capriotti. “Somebody somewhere is going to feel it.”

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.cumberlandlink.com/articles/2005/12/12/news/news01.txt>

45. PA: Four charged in \$5 million heroin and cocaine ring (AP, 5 Dec 2005)

PHILADELPHIA - Four men were charged with running a large-scale drug ring that investigators allege sold \$5 million worth of heroin and cocaine between January and July. Attorney General Tom Corbett said Monday that the "Macho" drug ring distributed more than \$227,000 of heroin per week for the first seven months of the year, and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of cocaine during that time. In returning an indictment against the four men, the grand jury said that the organization packaged 3,250 postage stamp-sized packets of heroin nightly. A packet of heroin usually sells for \$10 on the street.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.centredaily.com/mld/centredaily/news/politics/13334413.htm>

46. TN: 'Cocaine brick' turns to crumbly cheese (IOL, 6 Dec 2005)

Memphis, Tennessee - A woman allegedly tried to hire a hitman to rob and kill some men who she believed had a brick of cocaine in their house, police said. However, the white block turned out to be cheese, and the hitman for hire was an undercover police officer. The woman was in the Memphis home of the four intended victims last week when she mistook a block of queso fresco cheese for cocaine - inspiring the alleged idea to hire someone to break into the home, take the drugs, and kill the men, police say. Jessica Sandy Booth, 18, was arrested over the weekend and remains in jail with bond set at \$1-

million on four charges of attempted murder and four counts of soliciting a murder, The Commercial Appeal reported on Tuesday.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/99q72>

47. Mexican authorities uncover Colombian-operated cocaine laboratory in upscale neighborhoods (AP, 12 Dec 2005)

MEXICO CITY – Mexican authorities Monday uncovered Colombian-run cocaine laboratories operating in upscale homes outside Mexico City and detained 22 people, including four children. During the raids, which took place in the state of Mexico following a months-long investigation, police seized 30 pounds (14 kilos) of cocaine; US\$308,180 (euro255,000) in euros and U.S. dollars; an unknown quantity of jewelry; weapons; cell phones; and computers, Defense Secretary Gen. Gerardo Clemente Vega and Attorney General Daniel Cabeza de Vaca told a news conference.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/mexico/20051212-1157-mexico-drugbust.html>

48. Colombia: The Real Thing; Coca-Cola Rival Will Include Cocaine Ingredient (WSBTV, 12 Dec 2005)

BOGOTA, Colombia - A group of Indians in southern Colombia have created a new soft drink made from coca leaf extract and plan to market their product as an alternative to Coca-Cola. Coca Sek, a golden, carbonated drink, will go on sale this week in parts of Colombia. But its makers expect they won't be able to export to the United States due to rules blocking the entry of coca, the main ingredient in cocaine. The soda looks like apple cider, has a tea-like fragrance and a flavor somewhere between Seven-Up and ginger ale. David Curtidor, a Nasa Indian who heads the small community company producing the drink, says that aside from being refreshing, the drink also is intended to make a political statement against transnational companies. Curtidor says Coca-Cola "symbolizes imperialist domination" and does not buy its raw ingredients in Colombia.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.wsbtv.com/news/5519970/detail.html>

49. Canada: Man given three years in jail for trafficking cocaine (Northern Life, 6 Dec 2005)

A Quebec man with no previous criminal record has been given a three-year penitentiary term after pleading guilty to being involved in a cocaine trafficking ring allegedly connected with the Hells Angels motorcycle club in Quebec. On Nov. 25, Christian Chenard, 35, pleaded guilty to conspiring to traffic cocaine charges. Justice John Keast of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice agreed to a joint submission that Chenard be given a three-year penitentiary term despite the fact he had no previous criminal record.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.northernlife.ca/localnewsarticle.asp?view=100632>

50. Norway: Man Had 100 Bags of Cocaine in Stomach (AP, 12 Dec 2005)

OSLO, Norway - A Liberian man was arrested with about one kilogram (2.2 pounds) of cocaine concealed in 100 condoms in his stomach on the Norwegian-Swedish border,

customs officials said Monday. The 41-year-old, whose name was withheld, was a passenger on bus from Sweden to southeastern Norway, and needed medical attention shortly after he was detained late Saturday, said Wenche Fredriksen, of the Norwegian Customs Region Eastern Norway.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=82&sid=324397>

51. UK Report: Cocaine use fuels rise in hard drug offences (Reuters, 6 Dec 2005)

LONDON - Cocaine use fuelled a rise in Class A drugs offences in England and Wales to record levels last year, government statistics showed on Tuesday. Class A offences -- those relating to the most harmful substances such as cocaine and heroin -- rose 2 percent to 36,350, the Home Office data showed, an increase of more than 25,000 offences from 1994. Cocaine offences dealt with by police were up almost 16 percent from the previous year. Ten years ago just 2 percent of all known drug offenders were involved with cocaine, but that figure had now risen to 10 percent with 8,070 offences.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/cezre>

52. NATO-Russia Council To Sponsor Counternarcotics Training (Dept. of State, 12 Dec 2005)

Washington - Foreign ministers from Russia and NATO-member countries have agreed to launch a pilot project on counternarcotics training for government officials in Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The pilot project will support international efforts to promote security and stability in and around Afghanistan, according to a NATO press statement released after the December 8 ministerial meeting in Brussels, Belgium. The training program will focus on threats posed by narcotics trafficking, including its links to the financing of terrorism.

Under the plan, training courses will be offered to personnel from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. "The aim is to build local capacity and to promote regional networking and cooperation," the NATO release said.

The project will be conducted in close cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which will play a key role in its implementation.

NATO officials did not say when the training would begin or where it would take place. The agreement was made during a meeting of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) at the foreign minister level, which was held in conjunction with the NATO ministerial. (See [related article](#).)

The NATO release said the training will make use of some course material already developed by various agencies in NATO-Russia Council member countries -- such as the Turkish International Academy Against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC) and the

Russian Domodedovo Counter-Narcotics Training Centre, as well as existing bilateral training courses offered in the region by NRC member states.

Courses will be two weeks to three weeks long and will be offered to midlevel officials from relevant national agencies in Afghanistan and Central Asia.

“We reaffirmed our support for international efforts to promote security and stability in and around Afghanistan,” the NATO-Russia Council said in its formal statement following the December 8 meeting.

“In this regard, we expressed concern over threats posed by the trafficking in narcotics, including its links to the financing of terrorism, and agreed today to launch an NRC Pilot Project on Counter-Narcotics Training for Afghan and Central Asian Personnel,” the statement said. “We expect this joint NATO-Russia effort to make a concrete and meaningful contribution to international efforts to countering threats posed by narcotics trafficking.” (See [statement](#) on NATO Web site.)

On December 2, Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns praised counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and Russia following a meeting of the U.S.-Russian Counterterrorism Working Group in Moscow. (See [related article](#).)

[Additional information](#) on the pilot project on counternarcotics training is available on the NATO Web site.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

53. Afghan drugs rings face clampdown (BBC, 06 Dec 2005)

Government and Western officials in Afghanistan have told the BBC there will be a much tougher approach towards drugs traffickers in the New Year. Despite a multi-million dollar British and US-led effort to stamp out the trade, the country still accounts for most of the world's illegal supplies. But there has been criticism too little has been done to break up trafficking networks who make the biggest profits. The focus instead has been placed on farmers who grow opium poppies. According to those involved, the new approach will mean more arrests of traffickers and the replacement of some officials allegedly involved in the trade.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4504366.stm

CYBERTHREAT & THEFT

54. SANS: Lack of I.T. Security Training Makes U.S. Vulnerable (Top Tech News, 12 Dec 2005)

[SANS Institute](#) warned that U.S. government, military contractor, and bank computer systems are facing a barrage of attacks from overseas hackers, and that network-security management lacks the training to mount an adequate defense. "American government and

corporate computer systems are being riddled with online attacks," said Allan Paller, director of research at Bethesda, Maryland-based SANS. "But there is a culture of secrecy, and government departments, defense contractors, and banks are not talking about the attacks." Paller said that for the last few years, the U.S. government's strategy has been to keep reports of Internet attacks on military and other government computer systems out of the press. The hackers steal information for industrial espionage, for identity theft, or for extortion, according to SANS.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?E62013E4C>

55. Consumers Warned To Be Wary of Online e-Greeting Cards This Holiday Season (PRWeb, 6 Dec 2005)

Nova Scotia - SpyCop today announced that as the holiday season draws closer, computer users should be very wary of opening Internet e-Greeting Cards without checking to be sure that they were sent from someone they know and trust. If there's even the slightest doubt that the Christmas or New Year e-Greeting card sitting in your email box has been sent by someone you know, don't open it without calling the sender to check.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2005/12/prweb318074.htm>

56. Experts Debate Whether Cybercrime Profits Surpass Drug Trafficking (By K.C. Jones Security Pipeline, 8 Dec 2005, Contributed by Rick Forno)

A statement that cybercrime proceeds amounted to more than \$105 billion in 2004, made Nov. 28 during a banking security conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia by U.S. Treasury advisor Valerie McNevin, is sparking push-back from experts who aren't sure it's on the mark. McNevin's claim was reported by Reuters and widely circulated. While no one disputes that the cost of cybercrime can be devastating, several experts are questioning the profit claims. "This is just total bunk," Richard Stiennon, VP of Threat Research, wrote on on threatchaos.com. Stiennon, a former vice president of research for Gartner Inc., has covered security topics extensively, is not alone. Peter Andrews questioned the statement in published reports on complianceandprivacy.com.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?O2C315C4C>

57. Live Tracking of Mobile Phones Prompts Court Fights on Privacy (New York Times, 10 Dec 2005)

Most Americans carry cellphones, but many may not know that government agencies can track their movements through the signals emanating from the handset. In recent years, law enforcement officials have turned to cellular technology as a tool for easily and secretly monitoring the movements of suspects as they occur. But this kind of surveillance - which investigators have been able to conduct with easily obtained court orders - has now come under tougher legal scrutiny. In the last four months, three federal judges have denied prosecutors the right to get cellphone tracking information from wireless companies without first showing "probable cause" to believe that a crime has been or is being committed. That is the same standard applied to requests for search

warrants. The rulings, issued by magistrate judges in New York, Texas and Maryland, underscore the growing debate over privacy rights and government surveillance in the digital age.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?B40631C4C>

COUNTERFEIT

58. Gov't Seizes \$11 Million in Knockoff Goods (AP, 12 Dec 2005)

WASHINGTON - Fake Burberry handbags and Nike shoes were among \$11.4 million worth of knockoff items seized by federal authorities last month as counterfeiters geared up for the holiday shopping season, officials said Monday. In all, Customs and Border Protection officials intercepted \$9.2 million worth of imported knockoff bags and \$2.2 million in fake designer shirts, pants and Nike shoes at entry ports across the country, including New York, Los Angeles, Seattle and Miami. "Counterfeit products not only defraud companies that work hard to develop the genuine products, but also unsuspecting consumers who think they are purchasing legitimate items," said Vera Adams, executive director of the agency's trade enforcement unit. Authorities said they seized more than \$93 million in counterfeit items in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 20. Customs and Border Protection donated clothes, towels, pillows and other goods worth \$20 million to Hurricane Katrina victims.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=78&sid=324601>

TECHNOLOGY

59. US Global Nanospace Launches MAPSANDS(TM) - New System Delivers Autonomous Wide-Area Perimeter Security & Defense (Market Wire, 5 Dec 2005)

CARSON CITY, NV - US Global Nanospace, Inc. announced today that it has launched MAPSANDS™ -- Modular Autonomous Perimeter Security and Non-Lethal Defense System. The USGN team, consisting of its employees and certain independent contractors, designed MAPSANDS™ to address the need for autonomous wide-area perimeter security and access denial for sovereign borders, pipelines, power plants, seaports, ships, airports, oil and gas refineries, offshore oil rigs and other high value infrastructure. In June 2004, USGN filed a provisional patent application, and in June 2005 a utility patent application, with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for the entire MAPSANDS™ system. MAPSANDS™ combines USGN-developed proprietary, secure and robust control software plus advanced wireless communications and remote power systems with detection and tracking sensors, directed energy acoustics and a suite of accurately delivered non-lethal munitions. Unlike traditional perimeter security solutions, the MAPSANDS™ system architecture was designed to secure perimeters ranging in length from less than one mile to several hundred continuous miles and to deliver a programmed response based on predetermined rules of engagement.

ZGram Suggested URL:

http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release_html_b1?release_id=103197

60. Transportation Security Administration Selects Lockheed Martin Team to Enhance US Airport Explosives Detection Systems (PRNewswire, 12 Dec 2005)

OWEGO, N.Y. - The U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has awarded a Lockheed Martin-led team a contract to begin field testing advanced certified explosives detection systems (EDS) in two major U.S. airports. Funded by a \$1.1 million cooperative agreement grant from the TSA under its Phoenix Project, Lockheed Martin's team, which includes Analogic Corporation of Peabody, MA, will install the systems at Sky Harbor International Airport, Phoenix, AZ, and at John Wayne Airport, Orange County, CA. The systems incorporate technology enhancements, demonstrated by the Lockheed Martin team during earlier phases of the Phoenix Project, that enhance the performance of EDS equipment already deployed around the nation.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?T1A052E4C>

61. N.C. county installs public safety network (FCW, 6 Dec 2005)

Law enforcement officials in North Carolina's second most populous county have apparently deployed the first 4.9 GHz, multiband broadband public safety network in the country, a Motorola official said. The Motorola Motomesh network was implemented at three facilities in Wake County: the North Carolina State Fairgrounds, the Carter-Finley Stadium at North Carolina State University and the Royal Bank of Canada Center. The network, which is linked to several video cameras, will allow police officers to monitor those areas in real time through personal digital assistants or mobile terminals in their cruisers, said Rick Rotondo, director of marketing for Motorola's mesh networking products group.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fcw.com/article91622-12-06-05-Web>

62. China: Guangzhou Unveils New Satellite First-Aid Facilities (XNA, 12 Dec 2005)

Beijing - The South China city of Guangzhou is installing ambulances with satellite navigation technology and setting up a new state-of-the-art first-aid centre in a bid to improve medical facilities and response times. Lu Yande, deputy director of Guangzhou Health Bureau, said that the city's existing main first-aid complex already had its computer system and Intranet facilities upgraded, along with smaller stations across the city. The main centre has also begun to install the city's ambulances with the global position system (GPS), to give warning to ambulances in case of traffic jams or other unexpected incidents on the road. Extra ambulances have been purchased to increase the city's fleet.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.spacedaily.com/news/china-05zzzzzzzzzzzv.html>

RESOURCES

63. The Truth About FEMA: Analysis and Proposals (by James Jay Carafano, Ph.D., and Richard Weitz, Ph.D. Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #1901, 7 Dec 2005)

The days after Hurricane Katrina made landfall saw a flood engulf the city of New Orleans and a deluge of instant incriminations and knee-jerk solutions for improving the national response to catastrophes. Many complaints centered on the performance of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the division of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) responsible for coordinating federal disaster support to state and local governments. More sober analysis of FEMA's performance before and after it joined the DHS suggests that many of these criticisms were unfounded. However, some of the complaints are valid. As Katrina demonstrated, the nation is not adequately prepared to respond to catastrophic disasters. In a July 2005 review of the structure and organization of the Department of Homeland Security, Secretary Michael Chertoff correctly identified many of the systemic shortfalls that have retarded the development of a more effective national response system. Congress should evaluate his proposals in light of Katrina and consider reforming the grant allocation process, regional preparedness, and FEMA's response mission—initiatives that could strengthen the department's capacity to deal with deadly disasters.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/HomelandDefense/bg1901.cfm>

64. The Demise Of Sensitive Homeland Security Info (SHSI) (Contributed by Steven Aftergood, Federation of American Scientists, www.fas.org)

Three years after Congress directed the President to develop government-wide procedures for protecting sensitive homeland security information (SHSI), no such procedures are in place and the effort to produce them has been all but formally abandoned, Secrecy News has learned.

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 required the President to prescribe and implement procedures by which agencies would "identify and safeguard homeland security information that is sensitive but unclassified" (Section 892).

In his July 2003 executive order 13311, President Bush assigned the Secretary of Homeland Security responsibility for complying with this requirement.

But "as is true with so many other subjects, they have done nothing with it," said one U.S. Government official with subject matter expertise. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

A government-wide policy on protecting SHSI "has been periodically discussed, pushed close to some action, and then sent back for further study. There are a dozen hard and fast deadlines that have been missed on this whole subject."

"I think it's fair to say it's dead. The concept is not dead but it's highly unlikely anything will come of it."

Because Congress failed to define the statutory meaning of "sensitive," critics including the Federation of American Scientists were concerned that the establishment of the

"Sensitive Homeland Security Information" (SHSI) category was an invitation to formalize the indiscriminate withholding of information.

"I think this is a case where no news is good news from your point of view," said the official, referring to the lack of progress on SHSI.

Meanwhile, however, he said that a separate interagency initiative was underway to define and regulate the even broader category of "sensitive but unclassified" information.

But "that is far too big a task to come to fruition," the official predicted.

Given that agencies were unable to reach consensus on the definition of terrorism-related SHSI, it will be "exponentially more difficult" to come to agreement on the vastly larger and more amorphous domain of "sensitive but unclassified" information, he said.

OPPORTUNITIES

65. Wanted: Systems to track disaster victims (Government Health IT, 7 Dec 2005)

A Washington, D.C., nonprofit organization is developing a set of requirements for patient tracking systems for use in disasters. The organization, Comcare Emergency Response Alliance, has drafted a requirements document and is refining it after hearing emergency response experts' comments at a meeting in Washington, D.C., yesterday. Comcare Director David Aylward said he hoped to issue the final version of the requirements by the end of the year. They would then be available to any community or organization aiming to develop or acquire a tracking system. If funding is available, Comcare officials also want to develop a model request for proposals and work with jurisdictions to test the RFP.

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://govhealthit.com/article91640-12-07-05-Web>

FULL REPORTS

66. U.S. State, Local Officials Begin Influenza Pandemic Planning - Integration of plans from every level of government urged (Dept. of State, 5 Dec 2005)

Two top-level U.S. officials convened a meeting December 5 of state and local leaders to emphasize the potential threat of pandemic influenza and the need for integrated plans.

"With this meeting, we begin the critical coordination with state and local leaders to assure their readiness and the integration of our collective efforts if a pandemic outbreak strikes," said Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Michael Leavitt, according to an HHS news release.

"Every step we take together now will save lives later," he added.

This Washington session launches a series of meetings to be held in every state in the months ahead in which local officials will be urged to bring all quarters of community

leadership together to plan for what Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff described as “the potential for societal disruption of unprecedented proportion.”

International health officials warn that a form of bird flu now endemic in large regions of Asia has the potential to develop into a viral strain easily transmissible among humans, setting a human disease pandemic in motion.

More than 130 humans have become ill with the disease in five nations; almost 70 have died.

[More information](#) on the meeting and domestic planning for influenza pandemics is available on a special HHS Web site.

For additional information on the avian influenza and efforts to combat it, see [Bird Flu](#).

The text of the HHS news release follows:

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/akfpf>

The Planning Checklist is located at:

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/Checklist.pdf>

67. U.S. Officials Conduct Exercise in Pandemic Preparedness - Role of state, local governments termed key to national strategy (Dept. of State, 10 Dec 2005)

Following a planning exercise at the White House on December 10, three senior U.S. officials said that the nation has a valuable opportunity right now to prepare for a possible flu pandemic in the future.

The three officials, who spoke briefly to reporters following the exercise, were Secretary of Health and Human Services Michael Leavitt, Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, and White House Homeland Security Advisor Fran Townsend.

Researchers and health officials increasingly are concerned that avian influenza, or bird flu, could generate just the sort of pandemic that was the subject of the exercise.

No evidence has emerged that H5N1, the bird flu pathogen, is transmitted efficiently among humans, but international health experts have warned that H5N1 could mutate into a viral strain that is contagious, creating the conditions for an international influenza pandemic.

International concern about this possibility has mounted considerably in recent months with new attention focused on the need for stronger actions to stop the disease in animal populations to avert further mutation of the virus and transmission into human populations. (See [related article](#).)

Townsend said that the White House exercise revealed the critical need for the vaccines and anti-viral drugs that are key elements of the Bush administration's national strategy for safeguarding the nation against an outbreak of avian flu. (See [related article](#).)

"We are fairly warned, and the time to prepare for that pandemic is now," Townsend said. "That involves all levels of government: federal, state and local, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, the media. We all must be prepared and we all have a role to play in the nation's preparation."

The prospect of a flu outbreak should "inspire preparation but not panic," said Secretary Leavitt. Pandemics might be inevitable, he said, but this generation is the first in history with the opportunity to prepare before such a pandemic occurs.

The exercise revealed the need for a comprehensive plan that allows authorities to identify when an incident has occurred in the world and react quickly, according to Leavitt.

Leavitt stressed that not only must governments at all levels have plans in place, but that communities, businesses, religious groups and individuals must do the same.

Secretary Chertoff said that if everyone takes the opportunity to plan now, "We will put ourselves in a position to be ready if and when we have some kind of an outbreak."

For more information on U.S. and international efforts to combat avian influenza, see [Bird Flu \(Avian Influenza\)](#).

68. Fact Sheet: Progress on the 9/11 Commission Recommendations (White House, 5 Dec 2005)

The President Has Worked To Address The Recommendations Of The Commission

President Bush's Top Priority Is The Safety And Security Of The American People.

Since September 11th, President Bush has restructured and reformed the Federal government to focus resources on counterterrorism and to ensure the security of our homeland.

The Administration Has Worked With Congress To Implement The 9/11

Commission's Recommendations. Since the Commission issued its final report, the Administration has taken action on 37 of the Commission's 39 recommendations that apply to the Executive Branch and is working with Congress to continue to improve intelligence and homeland security.

Administration Officials Repeatedly Have Testified On The Implementation Of The Recommendations. Officials from the Intelligence Community, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and other

agencies have testified before Congress on the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission in over 50 hearings since the Commission issued its final report.

The President Supported The Work Of The Commission. The White House provided the 9/11 Commission with unprecedented access, including providing close to 1,000 interviews with Administration officials and making available 2.3 million pages of documents for the Commission's review.

Key Institutional Developments And Accomplishments

Appointing The Director Of National Intelligence. President Bush signed into law the landmark Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, which overhauls the intelligence community, mandating a range of reforms and centralizing in one office key authorities. The Director of National Intelligence (DNI) serves as President Bush's principal intelligence advisor and the leader of the Intelligence Community. The first DNI, Ambassador John Negroponte, was confirmed by the Senate and sworn in this past April.

Establishing The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). The NCTC assists in analyzing and integrating foreign and domestic intelligence acquired from all U.S. government departments and agencies pertaining to the war on terrorism. The Center identifies, coordinates, and prioritizes the counterterrorism intelligence requirements of America's intelligence agencies and develops strategic operational plans for implementation. In July 2005, the Senate confirmed the President's nominee, Vice Admiral Scott Redd, to become the first Director of the NCTC.

Establishing The Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO). The DNDO, in the Department of Homeland Security, provides a single federal organization to develop and deploy a nuclear-detection system to thwart the importation of illegal nuclear or radiological materials.

Appointing A Privacy And Civil Liberties Oversight Board. The President has nominated the Chairman and Vice Chairman and appointed the other three members to serve on the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, to further help ensure that privacy and civil rights are not eroded as we fight the War on Terror.

Establishing The Terrorist Screening Center. In order to consolidate terrorist watch lists and provide around-the-clock operational support for Federal and other government law-enforcement personnel across the country and around the world, the Administration created the Terrorist Screening Center. The Center ensures that government investigators, screeners, and agents are working with the same unified, comprehensive set of information about terrorists.

Transforming The FBI To Focus On Preventing Terrorism. The President has led the effort to transform the FBI into an agency focused on preventing terrorist attacks through

intelligence collection and other key efforts, while improving its ability to perform its traditional role as a world-class law-enforcement agency.

Strengthening Transportation Security Through Screening And Prevention. Since 9/11 the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has made significant advancements in aviation security, including the installation of hardened cockpit doors, a substantial increase in the number of Federal Air Marshals, the training and authorization of thousands of pilots to carry firearms in the cockpit, the 100 percent screening of all passengers and baggage, and the stationing of explosives-detection canine teams at each of the Nation's largest. These initiatives have raised the bar in aviation security and shifted the threat.

Improving Border Screening And Security Through The US-VISIT Entry-Exit System. US-VISIT uses cutting-edge biometric technology to help ensure that our borders remain open to legitimate travelers but closed to terrorists. US-VISIT is in place at 115 airports, 14 seaports, and 50 land border crossings across the country. Since January 2004, more than 39 million visitors have been checked through US-VISIT.

Establishing The National Targeting Center (NTC) To Screen All Imported Cargo. DHS established the NTC to examine cargo and passengers destined for the United States to identify those presenting the greatest threat. The NTC screens data on 100 percent of inbound shipping containers (9 million per year) to identify those posing a "high risk." CBP personnel examine 100 percent of high-risk containers.

Expanding Shipping Security Through The Container Security Initiative (CSI). The CSI is currently established in over 35 major international seaports to pre-screen shipping containers for illicit or dangerous materials before they are loaded on vessels bound for the United States.

Developing Project Bioshield To Increase Preparedness For A Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Or Nuclear Attack. Project BioShield is a comprehensive effort that will ensure that resources (\$5.6 billion) are available to pay for "next-generation" medical countermeasures, expedite the conduct of NIH research and development on medical countermeasures based on the most promising recent scientific discoveries, and give FDA the ability to make promising treatments quickly available in emergency situations. Project BioShield will help protect Americans against a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear attack.

Cracking Down On Terrorist Financing With Our International Partners. Over 400 individuals and entities have been designated pursuant to Executive Order 13224, resulting in nearly \$150 million in frozen assets and millions more blocked in transit or seized at borders. We have built an international coalition that is applying more rigorous financial standards and controls to help prevent terrorists' use of the international financial system. Specifically, we have established with the Government of Saudi Arabia a Joint Task Force on Terrorism Finance that serves as a coordinating mechanism to cooperate on important terrorism-financing investigations.

Increasing Cooperation And Reform Among International Partners At The Front Lines Of The War On Terror. In Pakistan over the next five years, we will provide more than \$3 billion in security, economic, and development assistance to enhance counterterrorism capacity and promote continued reform, including of the education system. In the last three years, the United States provided more than \$4.5 billion in reconstruction, economic, and security assistance programs to Afghanistan.

69. U.S. Dismantles International Drug/Money-Laundering Organization - Group operated in Colombia, Brazil, other nations in Americas (By Eric Green, Washington File Staff Writer, 12 Dec 2005)

Washington - U.S. law enforcement authorities have dismantled a large drug-trafficking and money-laundering organization that operated in the United States and five countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

The DEA said in a December 8 statement that its "Operation Cali Exchange" resulted in 24 indictments, 18 arrests and the seizure of more than \$7 million, 2,107 kilograms of cocaine and 235 kilograms of marijuana. Charges in the indictments include conspiracy to distribute cocaine, importation of a controlled substance, money laundering and criminal forfeiture.

The Cali exchange operation, said the DEA, marks the third round of success in the agency's "Money Trail Initiative," a financial crime strategy that attacks the financing of the illegal drug trade to dismantle major drug-trafficking organizations. To date, the initiative has resulted in the seizure of \$43.6 million. (See [related article](#).)

In its latest success, the DEA targeted a drug-distribution and money-laundering organization that ran networks in the United States, Colombia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Panama and the Bahamas. The drug organization used various methods, such as bulk cash deliveries, wire transfers and use of the Colombian Black Market Peso Exchange, to launder drug proceeds in Miami, New York and Chicago and return drug profits to the drug suppliers based in Colombia.

The DEA described the black market exchange as a system where drug traffickers sell U.S. drug proceeds to brokers for pesos. Brokers then sell the drug proceeds to Colombian importers who purchase goods in the United States and elsewhere. (See [related article](#).)

The DEA said its investigation has revealed that 28 different bank accounts in the United States and abroad were used to launder drug proceeds and that more than \$10.2 million was laundered through the U.S. banking system.

DEA Administrator Karen Tandy said: "Drug traffickers are using their profits to burrow into our neighborhoods and corrupt legitimate banking systems. In major drug-trafficking

operations, money is the thread that unravels the drugs and devastation otherwise hidden by dealers. DEA knows where money leads, and we will be relentless in going after it."

During the course of the investigation, DEA agents and their international partners discovered that the organization coordinated and provided maritime transport of drugs and money through the Caribbean corridor. One defendant in the case, Eric Gardiner, led the Panama-based operation, and was arrested in the Dominican Republic. Gardiner was charged with funneling a large quantity of currency through the U.S. banking system into bank accounts in Panama. Other members of the organization arrested in the Dominican Republic include Rogelio Griffith, a Panamanian national, and Tyrone Russell of the Bahamas. All three defendants were sent to Miami to face U.S. prosecution.

U.S. Attorney Alexander Acosta of the Southern District of Florida, whose office is prosecuting the case, said the U.S. indictments disrupt "every aspect of this drug-trafficking network, bringing to justice those responsible for producing the cocaine in South America, those who imported it and sold it in the United States, those who funded and profited from the drug trade, and those who delivered the money back to the drug dealers."

The Bahamas police force and the National Directorate for Drug Control in the Dominican Republic participated with the DEA in handling the case.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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