



## ***New York State Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Medical Services***

### ***IMPORTANT ADVISORY AND UPDATE***

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#### **Subject: National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) Bulletin March 24, 2003**

Below is a bulletin issued by the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) on March 20, 2003. Because of the state's Orange alert status, the Bureau of EMS feels that it is important to provide this information to the EMS community. Please note that this information is **NOT BASED ON A SPECIFIC THREAT**. However it is necessary for EMS agencies and personnel to be aware of current information and the need for heightened scrutiny at the local level.

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The National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) has issued the following bulletin regarding possible indicators of Al-Qaeda Surveillance. The USFA has collaborated with the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Critical Infrastructure support component (formerly the National Infrastructure Protection Center) for the interim use of NLETS to provide more timely and complete threat and Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) information to a larger segment of Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

According to this temporary arrangement, NLETS will forward to police agencies DHS information that has been determined by USFA to be particularly applicable to firefighters and EMS personnel. A special header will request that the information be disseminated as soon as possible to the local fire and EMS chief officers because of the nature of the information and necessity for preparedness. **The information will always be limited to official use only and never for general public consumption.**

**General information on possible terrorist planning activities proceeding an attack can be found at [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov).**

DHS encourages individuals to report information concerning such suspicious activity to their local FBI, joint terrorism task force (JTTF) office, DHS, or to other appropriate authorities. Individuals can reach the DHS (NIPC) watch and warning unit at 202-323-3205 or toll free at 1-888-585-9078.

The NIPC and the USFA recommends that the chief officers of the local law enforcement, fire and EMS community receiving this message take the time to discuss this mutual support scheme. Agreements should be concluded regarding how the transfer of this information will quickly and easily occur within their locality.

The USFA Critical Infrastructure Protection Information Center (CIPIC) will continue to develop CIP news and information technology for the fire and EMS sector during 2003. There are high expectations that this sector will have its own dedicated electronic messaging system in the near future. Once implemented and tested, the new USFA CIPIC list server should eliminate the dependence on NLETS for sector-wide distribution of essential CIP threat information. Watch for more information about the USFA CIPIC LISTSERVE at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/dhtml/fire-service/cipc.cfm>.

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding this interim notification scheme to the USFA CIPIC at 301-447-1325 or [USFACIPC@fema.gov](mailto:USFACIPC@fema.gov).

**The Message is as follows:**

Al-Qaeda operations have been characterized by meticulous planning, a focus on inflicting mass casualties and multiple, simultaneous suicide attacks. Operatives are highly trained in basic and sophisticated surveillance techniques, posing challenges for counter terrorism and security forces in identifying terrorist surveillance. ENT information and analysis point to surveillance practices that traditionally have been utilized by Al-Qaeda-affiliated operatives. While not exhaustive, the following list suggests possible indicators of terrorist surveillance.

- Unusual or prolonged interest in security measures or personnel, entry points and access controls, or perimeter barriers such as fences or walls.
- Unusual behavior such as starting or quickly looking away from personnel or vehicles entering or leaving designated facilities or parking areas.
- Observation of security reaction drills or procedures.
- Increase in anonymous telephone or e-mail threats to facilities in conjunction with suspected surveillance incidents - indicating possible surveillance of threat reaction procedures.
- Foot surveillance involving two or three individuals working together.
- Mobile surveillance using bicycles, scooters, motorcycles, cars, trucks, sport utility vehicles, boats or small aircraft.
- Prolonged static surveillance using operatives disguised as panhandlers, demonstrators, shoe shiners, food or flower vendors, news agents, or street sweepers not previously seen in the area.
- Discrete use of still cameras, video recorders or note taking at non-tourist type locations.
- Use of multiple sets of clothing, identifications, or the use of sketching materials (paper, pencils, etc.).
- Questioning of security or facility personnel.

**END OF MESSAGE**