



New Jersey Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness **NEWS**

Jon S. Corzine, Governor

Richard L. Cañas, Director

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For More Information Contact

Scott Kisch (609) 588-7250

Lt. Gerald Lewis, NJSP (609) 882-2000 x6516

Two Counties Awarded Homeland Security Grants for Local Emergency Operations Centers -Funds can be used for Construction, Renovation and Installation of Key Equipment-

HAMILTON — New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) Director Richard L. Cañas announced today Atlantic County and Hudson County have been awarded funding under the federal fiscal year 2009 Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Grant Program. The counties will share nearly \$1.8 million to improve emergency management preparedness capabilities at their county emergency operations centers. Atlantic County has been allocated \$750,000 and Hudson County has been allocated \$1 million.

Nationwide, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has made available \$34 million for this program. \$21.6 million has been awarded on a non-competitive basis while the remaining \$12.3 million will be awarded competitively. Cañas said that Atlantic and Hudson counties have been allocated funding under the non-competitive portion of the grant while other New Jersey counties and municipalities are eligible to compete for funding. Last year DHS awarded more than \$14.5 million for 22 EOC construction and renovation projects throughout the country.

“We’re pleased that DHS has designated Atlantic and Hudson counties for EOC funding,” Cañas said. “Ensuring that these two critical counties, Hudson in the North and Atlantic in the South, have the resources they need to properly prepare for, respond to and recover from any type of emergency. Maintaining fully-functional emergency operations centers at the county level supports our overall state homeland security and emergency management strategy.”

"All emergencies begin on a local level, so it's critical to support the improvement of county emergency operations centers. This money allows Atlantic and Hudson counties to better protect life and property in their communities and the entire region," said Colonel Rick Fuentes, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police, which also serves as the State's Office of Emergency Management (OEM). "Through the coordination of the State OEM, New Jersey's counties collectively respond to the area in which an emergency occurs, so better equipped counties translate to a more prepared state."

"Atlantic County is pleased to accept this funding which will be used to advance our radio communications system and promote interoperability among local, state and federal emergency response agencies," stated Dennis Levinson, Atlantic County Executive. "Communication is essential to a coordinated and effective emergency response."

“Hudson County is home to the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels, the Bayonne Bridge and the PATH system, as well as a number of bridges and chemical facilities, so our security challenges are



significant,” said Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise. “That is why we are so grateful to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for assisting us with this grant. It will allow us to take a major step toward enhancing our ability to keep our residents, and residents of the surrounding New York-New Jersey metropolitan area, safe.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2007 Population Estimates, Hudson County is the state’s fifth most populous county with nearly 600,000 residents and is part of the state’s Urban Area Security Initiative Area (UASI). The federal UASI program is designed to provide funding to high-threat, high-density urban areas to help them build capacity to prevent, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism. Atlantic County is home to more than 270,000 residents, the fifteenth most populous county in New Jersey. The county’s population swells during the summer vacation season. The county is home to Atlantic City, which remains an international destination experiencing more than 30 million visitors each year.

Cañas said the grant funds must be used for construction or renovation costs such as structure hardening to resist natural and man-made hazards and the installation of certain equipment, including, but not limited to, cyber-security enhancement, interoperable communications and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) logistical support equipment. The grants require the counties to provide a 25 percent cash match-or-in-kind match.

Applications for the competitive funding portion of the grant program are due to OHSP by the close of business on Friday, February 6, 2009. More information about the grant, grant guidelines and an application can be found at <http://www.njhomelandsecurity.gov/grants/2009/2009.html>.

Governor Corzine created the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) after taking office in 2006. OHSP is responsible for leading the state’s counter-terrorism and preparedness efforts. OHSP oversees and distributes discretionary state and federal homeland security and preparedness funds on behalf of the State of New Jersey. More information about OHSP can be found at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov.

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