

# VIPR Update

Mississippi State Department of Health

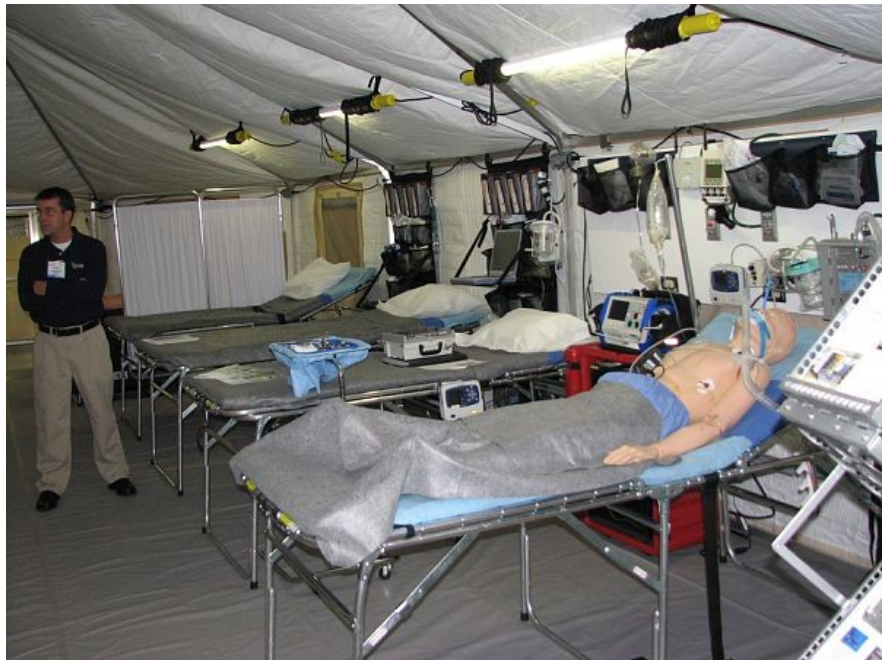
## What's New for Region IV

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In early 2009, FEMA Region IV will be receiving a **Federal Medical Contingency Station I (FMCS I)**. Some of you are probably asking yourself... "What is a Federal Medical Contingency Station I?" An FMCS is a *mobile field hospital* designed to provide medical surge capacity to communities overwhelmed by mass casualties. It can be pre-positioned and configured to respond rapidly and effectively to all types of public health emergencies, from significant incidents to large-scale disasters. The unit that Region IV will be receiving is a *Type I FMCS* and has the capability to care for severely ill and injured patients with facilities equivalent to a conventional operating room, an ICU, and basic laboratory.

While preparing to write this article, I spoke with Drexal Pratt with the North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services. Mr. Pratt explained that this equipment will be available to all states within FEMA Region IV. It is currently being stored in an 84,000 square foot warehouse and would take 14-18 eighteen wheeler trucks to transport and covers an area as large as three football fields to set up completely! It is capable of caring for up to 400 patients when fully deployed. The price tag to build this FMCS I was \$16,000,000.00.



One thing that is still being worked out between the Region IV states is development of a comprehensive training curriculum. A "Just in Time" training curriculum will likely be developed for those who volunteer for a specific disaster. The various job descriptions would be written for those that volunteer during a disaster. Mr. Pratt would also like to see each state develop their own team for disaster response within their own state. Region IV will be meeting at the end of January to discuss these issues as well as many others. We are hoping that the region will take possession of the equipment at this meeting.

With all of this in mind, I would like to encourage each of you to seek more information on this great asset. We all remember the weeks and months following Hurricane Katrina; during a disaster, this equipment will allow us to better care for our friends and neighbors. Hopefully at some point in the near future we will be able to provide you with more information on this great asset, as well as training and volunteer opportunities available to you all.

*Thanks to contributing writer Latt McInnis, MSDH/ OEPR State Planner for this article. Region IV consists of eight southeastern states, including Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North and South Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee.*

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*\*\*The Volunteers in Preparedness Registry (VIPR) is a preparedness program sponsored by the Mississippi state Department of Health, Office of Emergency Planning and Response (OEPR). It is a secure database of pre-credentialed volunteers who are trained to provide a coordinated response to emergencies in support of our established public health and emergency response systems. The VIPR Update is a product of the public health emergency volunteer program. Visit the VIPR website at <http://volunteer.msdh.state.ms.us> to register and create your own secured personal profile.*

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# Training Opportunities

The following is just a few of the training opportunities coming in the New Year.

## 2009

- Statewide Point of Dispensing (POD) site drills – February and March 2009
- Strategic National Stockpile/Cities Readiness Initiative Full Scale Exercise – May 2009
- Level I and Level II Volunteer Training (Statewide) --March until August
- Regional Psychological First Aid (PFA) Trainings – TBA
- Web-based Training – March 2009
- Pan Flu Seminar Series (Statewide) – On-going through June 2009

If your business, organization or faith-based institution would like to schedule a public health emergency preparedness volunteer training or need more information on how to become a public health emergency volunteer, please contact Laveta Thomas at 601-933-6872 or 601-576-7680.

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