



**Homeland
Security**

5 February 2009

RE: National Conference on Emergency Communications

Dear Colleague:

It is my pleasure to invite you to the **National Conference on Emergency Communications**, sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency Communications (OEC). This important gathering of nationwide public safety stakeholders will take place April 22-24, 2009 in the heart of the "Windy City" at the Hilton Chicago. Widely anticipated in the emergency communications community, this conference will attract over 300 multi-discipline practitioners, government officials, and industry representatives from around the country.

This year's focus, "*Effective Communications for a Secure Nation*," will promote coordination between Federal, State, local and tribal first responders and private-sector personnel for communications during natural and man-made incidents and disasters. The agenda will drive participants to discuss tangible ideas to address the critical challenges facing the emergency communications community and to identify real-time recommendations and solutions to increase practitioner involvement, coordination, and partnerships.

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OEC MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of [OEC](#) is to support and promote the ability of emergency responders and government officials to continue to communicate in the event of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters; and work to ensure, accelerate, and attain operable and interoperable emergency communications nationwide. OEC's mission and vision is centered on its practitioner-driven philosophy. At every phase OEC works with Federal, State, local, and tribal practitioners to identify problems, solutions, and best practices.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

The conference will include plenary sessions and speaker panels addressing these topics:

- National Emergency Communications Plan Implementation;
- State and Local Governance Planning and Coordination; and
- Information Sharing on Grants and Tools Development.

In addition, a series of Leadership Discussions will encourage attendees to identify solutions, break down barriers, and increase knowledge of best practices.

OEC has extended speaking invitations to key officials in both the new U.S. administration and in local government. The tentative [agenda](#) is available on the conference website and will be updated periodically.

REGISTRATION

Attendees can [register](#) online by accessing the conference website.

The advance registration deadline is April 10, 2009.

ACCOMODATIONS

OEC has arranged a special conference rate with the [Hilton Chicago](#) downtown. Rooms are available on a first-come first-served basis. Please [click here](#) for more information on rates and procedures for reserving a room. Space is limited, and lodging prices will increase to market rates after the registration deadline passes.

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I am eager for your participation and active engagement during and after the conference. The steps we take today to discuss specific actions and milestones in our community will greatly enhance vital partnerships and lay the groundwork for future success. I look forward to meeting with you in April!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Essid". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Director,
Office of Emergency Communications
U.S. Department of Homeland Security