

NCRP Releases Commentary No. 19, *Key Elements of Preparing Emergency Responders for Nuclear and Radiological Terrorism*

NCRP Commentary No. 19, *Key Elements of Preparing Emergency Responders for Nuclear and Radiological Terrorism*, was prepared by a 22 member scientific committee chaired by Dr. John Poston of Texas A&M University. The recommendations in the Commentary are intended for officials of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and state and local authorities who prepare emergency responders for terrorist incidents that involve radiation or radioactive materials. These incidents could result from use by terrorists of a radiation exposure device, a radiological dispersal device, or an improvised (or otherwise obtained) nuclear device.

In 1980, NCRP published Report No. 65, *Management of Persons Accidentally Contaminated with Radionuclides*, and in 2001 published Report No. 138, *Management of Terrorist Events Involving Radioactive Material*. These NCRP reports remain basic references on the overall preparation for and management of a potential or actual terrorist nuclear or radiological incident.

Commentary No. 19 focuses on radiation detection and personal protection equipment for emergency responders, advice regarding decontamination of equipment and individuals, and training and exercises for emergency responders. It also provides the following guidance for emergency responders who may be required to work in a radiation environment resulting from a nuclear or radiological incident:

- use of delineated radiation control zones;
- a decision dose (cumulative absorbed dose to the responder) for life-saving and other critical activities;
- use of standard protective gear (*i.e.*, bunker gear and supplied air) with regard to radiation protection;
- use of alarming personal radiation dosimeters;
- the influence of time, distance and shielding on radiation levels, and the value of appropriate radiation instruments;
- the health effects and risks associated with various radiation dose levels; and
- the importance of individual radiation dose records and management of radiation exposures for emergency responders involved in life-saving and other critical actions.

Commentary No. 19 can be purchased in hard- and softcopy formats online at <http://NCRPpublications.org>. For additional information contact David A. Schauer, ScD, CHP, Executive Director, at schauer@NCRPonline.org, 301.657.2652 (x20) or 301.907.8768 (fax).