NC4 Supports Infrastructure Protection

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The National Center for Crisis and Continuity Coordination (NC4) provides a useful service to private industry, law enforcement and government organizations who need to coordinate information sharing for infrastructure protection. The firm, a division of Candle Corporation, provides Web-based tools for defining groups of cooperating organizations and establishing modalities for secure communications among the members. Communications can include such elements as
* daily bulletin
* secure communications channels
* exercises, education & training
* color-coded visual status tracking system
* online customizable knowledge base.

The firm’s home page at http://www.nc4.us currently defaults to a list of pointers to recent news articles about homeland security. A drop-down menu box at the top allows one to select from headlines from the most recent month of activity. Other news topics indexed on other pages include
* Business Continuity
* IT Disaster Recovery
* Cyber Crimes &Viruses
* Natural Disasters
* Bioterrorism
* International Terrorism
* Nuclear,Biological,Chemical Contaminates
* Hazardous Materials
* FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency).

Another section points to local and national alerts including
* Regional Traffic Conditions
* Severe Weather Alerts
* Earthquake Activity
* FAA Operational Delays.

NC4 also provides a systematic approach to incident management that can be adapted to the needs of participants. Consultants are available on demand to support development and implementation of the plans.

I met Jeff Covert, VP of Consulting for NC4, at the National InfraGard Congress in June 2003. I asked him what he felt was the single most important contribution NC4 could make to infrastructure protection. He answered, “We help people realize that their community is part of a wider community. We help build bridges among those communities to be aware of threats, respond and recover effectively. If you have a broader view, you can be more resilient in responding to threats.”
It’s far better to think about contingencies with factual information at hand than to base our plans on complete speculation, and it’s always better to plan responses to emergencies than to react in a scatterbrained panic. I hope that some readers will find the resources above helpful in your own work as you manage networks and plan for appropriate responses to various emergencies.

Finally, the usual disclaimer: I have no association whatever, professional or financial, with the NC4. However, I wish them well in what seems to be a useful contribution to emergency planning.

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