



THE STATE UNIVERSITY *of* NEW YORK

Chancellor's Task Force on  
Critical Incident Management

May 11, 2007



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## **Chancellor's Task Force on Critical Incident Management**

Protecting the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff is paramount within the State University. The events of 9-11 permanently changed the way campuses view the issue of security. Many improvements have been made. Yet, no single campus today can guarantee they can prevent situations like the one that occurred at Virginia Tech from ever occurring. However, that fact should not stop us from doing everything possible to reduce the likelihood of such an event and ensure the effectiveness of our responses if such an attack does take place.

Chancellor John R. Ryan  
Testimony to the Senate Standing  
Committee on Higher Education  
May 1, 2007

The above statement by Chancellor Ryan summarizes concisely the importance placed on health and safety and the preparedness of the campuses in the State University of New York (SUNY) – all consider health and safety a top priority, all have emergency response plans, yet all realize that more can be done. Even before the tragic events at Virginia Tech, SUNY had a long-standing Committee on Personal Safety, campuses had personal safety committees and work was underway to review and improve the campus emergency response plans. In light of this incident, however, the Chancellor convened the Task Force on Critical Incident Management and charged it to:

- Review current campus practices in the area of critical incident management, including crisis-related decision making, emergency communications, lock down/shelter in place protocols, and training
- Identify best practices in the State and nation
- Review policies and procedures related to the identification of and services provided to individuals who potentially pose a risk to the campus community
- Make recommendations, including resource needs, to the Chancellor to further improve campus safety

The members (list attached) of the Task Force are pleased to present the following recommendations, which they believe will dramatically enhance the safety and security of our college communities. However, the cost of implementing these recommendations is significant, and SUNY must be provided the new funding identified in this document to put them in to operation as soon as possible.

Task Force on Critical Incident Management

## **Chancellor's Task Force on Critical Incident Management Recommendations**

### **Risk Assessment and Mental Health Issues**

- Given the growing number of students with mental health issues on college campuses, including SUNY campuses, the number of licensed mental health staff on each campus should be increased where necessary to meet the significant campus needs and to achieve the nationally recognized standards relating to the ratio of students to counselors. Community colleges should develop and implement plans to transition and support existing staff in becoming licensed mental health professionals.
- Campuses should review existing training opportunities and practices regarding risk assessment and ensure that a comprehensive, integrated prevention program is in place. Such a program should include education for students, faculty and staff and easily accessible guides that can be used to identify potential behavioral risks and procedures for reporting such individuals to the appropriate campus office. Ongoing support must be provided for these prevention programs.
- Consistent with State law on workplace violence, staff should be trained to report incidents of aggressive behavior on campus or other signs of danger to the appropriate campus authorities.
- Each campus should have a multi-disciplinary behavior assessment committee that meets regularly for the sharing of information and the coordination of responses to at-risk/distressed students. Each campus must identify and make known to the campus community the primary office to receive faculty/staff reports of individuals who are potential risks. Appropriate follow-up information should be provided to those who make such reports within the scope of legal and ethical guidelines regarding the disclosure of academic and mental health records.
- Campus personnel, including faculty and student affairs staff, may be unclear as to the circumstances under which records and/or information relating to a student can be shared with 1) other campus officials or 2) parents. SUNY System Administration should assist campuses by undertaking training programs and providing guidance documents to clarify these circumstances and the legal requirements relating to confidentiality of student records.
- SUNY should encourage its state and federal legislators to propose and support legislation that will clarify and expand the conditions under which student records can be shared with parents and in an emergency. For example, SUNY should support a proposed amendment to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which would allow disclosures to parents of all students, notwithstanding their dependent status and which would expand the definition of emergency circumstances under which nonconsensual disclosures can be made.

- Campuses should have involuntary administrative/psychiatric withdrawal policies for students who present an imminent health and safety risk to themselves or others. These policies must be consistent with current legal standards.
- The Office of University Police in conjunction with the Division of Criminal Justice Services should conduct statewide training for University Police and Community College Public Safety in Mental Health Crisis Intervention.

### **Emergency Response**

- Campuses should review their “Immediate Action Rapid Deployment (IARD)” plans to ensure that Campus University Police have the necessary personal protective equipment, armament and training for effective responses.
- A review should be conducted of the University Board of Trustee’s policy on Possession, Storage, Care and Use of Weapons and Firearms on State-operated campuses to determine if the policy should be revised.
- A SUNY-wide policy should be developed that mandates students who possess illegal firearms on campus shall be suspended/expelled from SUNY.
- Each campus must have an up-to-date Emergency Response Plan that identifies an individual with responsibility and authority for the Emergency Response Plan and systems.
  - Plans must include specific protocols for violent, critical incidents, such as those that involve the use of firearms.
  - Plans must be NIMS (National Incident Management System) compliant.
  - All campus senior executives and staff involved in emergency/crisis response should receive NIMS training.
  - Redundancy of roles must be defined in the plans.
  - In an emergency situation, leadership roles must be clearly defined. Decision-making must be timely and effective. The Incident Commander should be empowered to make life-saving tactical decisions, such as building evacuation, use of force, campus notification and resource allocation.
  - Each campus must appoint an emergency response team that will review and update campus plans annually, or more frequently as appropriate.
  - Each campus must exercise the plan regularly, including tabletop exercises, drills and a full scale exercise.
  - Campus plans must provide for timely and effective, 24/7 emergency communications.
  - Campus plans must have memoranda of understanding and mutual aid agreements with external first responders.
  - Plans must have procedures that address sheltering-in-place, evacuation strategies, medical aid locations and availability of trained staff. Strict “lock-down” procedures are typically not appropriate for a college campus setting.

- Campuses must communicate the existence and availability of plans to the college community and students' families. Specific education should be provided to students, faculty, staff and families on how to respond to emergencies.
- Campuses should plan for post-event activities, such as trauma counseling, family/victim support, emergency clean-up, and business continuity.
- The Chancellor should establish a critical incident reporting procedure that includes the appropriate notification of System Administration and the formation of an emergency response team within System Administration.

### **Communications Technology**

- Campuses should have at least one means of communicating the existence of an emergency condition to the campus community for each of the following categories of communication:
  - Active Broadcast (e.g., siren, public address system)
  - Passive Broadcast (e.g., close circuit television, e-mail, website)
  - Individual (e.g., cell phone, instant messaging, text messaging)
- Campuses should implement a mass notification system which can rapidly disseminate an alert via both audible (siren, horn) and visual (message display, strobe light) means.
- A notification service provider should be established for all campuses to send Alert-only notifications to pre-defined groups of students, faculty and staff by campus location.
- Campuses should utilize Incident Planning and Management software to assist in creating, maintaining and providing easy access to Emergency Response Plans. These software solutions also help to establish and document a clear set of procedures which can then also assist in deploying resources in an emergency.
- Campuses should pursue the capability of intercepting TV providers (cable) signals to allow for the ability to overlay an emergency broadcast message on all campus television stations (message ticker or crawl at the bottom of a broadcast program). And, if required, SUNY should seek assistance from the New York State Legislature to require TV providers to allow this functionality.
- Campuses may also consider the following actions to enhance communication:
  - Installation of Carillon Chimes and/or additional manually controlled sirens or horns.
  - Adoption of hand-held communication radios for communication within the campus community and directly with local police and fire departments. Most campus locations reported adoption already.
  - Integration of mass notification system recommendation into existing campus emergency alert systems (ie. Fire systems).

- Campuses should assess the capability of their technology infrastructures and available staff to support additional emergency services.
- Campuses should require students, faculty and staff to provide personal emergency notification information (Cell phone numbers, e-mail, etc.)
- Communication systems, especially add-ons, should integrate with existing campus information systems.
- Communication systems should be designed for high availability, such as in the event of a power outage or other emergencies.

### **General**

- Campuses should review the staffing levels for University Police and campus security personnel.
- Community Colleges should review the status of their security/law enforcement personnel.
- Community College Peace Officers should be able to conduct criminal history background checks in accordance with existing laws regarding lawful arrest.
- Campuses should review and implement, as appropriate, technology to enhance safety and security including the advisability of securing residence halls access using card/key pad or similar systems and the additional monitoring of building entrances. In addition, campuses should develop policies for the use of such technology, as appropriate.
- The University should be provided new funding as identified in this document to enable campuses to implement these recommendations.

## **Detail on Communication Technology Recommendations**

No single means of communication is effective for every campus and situation – multiple methods need to be available to a campus emergency management team. The attached charts depict the relationship between threat levels and communication strategies.

**Chart 1** depicts the threat level and notification methods that should be available. Basically, as the threat level increases (from General Notification to Warning to Emergency) the more notification methods should be available and employed.

**Chart 2** graphs the effectiveness of each communication type (Active, Passive, and Individual) against each threat level. The effectiveness of the Passive Broadcast and Individual Messaging techniques decreases as the threat level increases. Conversely, the Active Broadcast methods become more effective as the threat level increases.

**Chart 3** identifies the various communication options available to campuses locally and via a notification service provider. The “red lines” chart the course a message travels to the recipients during a high threat level. The potential “bottlenecks” in either the campus infrastructure or public infrastructure (e.g., cell towers) could result in the limited effectiveness of individual messaging during emergencies.

The communication technology recommendations are included in the above section, and additional detail is provided here on each of the recommendations.

**Recommendation: Campuses should implement a mass notification system which can rapidly disseminate an alert via both audible (siren, horn) and visual (message display, strobe light) means.**

**Details:** (Satisfies Active and Passive Communication)

The system and methodology being recommended is an Emergency Alert System, not to be confused with fire alarms. The systems enable campuses to alert thousands of people in dozens, even hundreds, of buildings and or exterior locations. Alert technology enables sirens, strobe lights and text displays via various wireless and wired communication alternatives. The solution must also have on-board power-backup which will function in the case of a power disruption. In addition, these solutions enable control of exterior sirens which broaden further the range of alert notification at a reasonable cost.

Text display panels should be strategically located within buildings at major event or meeting locations (gym, cafeteria, etc.) or within all campus building entry-ways. This recommendation satisfies both the Active and Passive communication categories and is ADA compliant.

Campus training is essential in order to define and describe the types of messages and the appropriate response of the campus community. Staff impact of this solution appears to be the up-front installation effort and the administration by an office, such as the University Police or Public Safety Departments.

**Recommendation: A notification service provider should be established for all campuses to send Alert-only notifications to pre-defined groups of students, faculty and staff by campus location.**

**Details:** (Satisfies Passive and Individual Communication)

The service agent should utilize the mandatory student-provided personal emergency contact information (Task Force recommendation, 5/11/07) to notify the campus community via all provided communication channels (email, TXT, Cell, pager, etc.). This recommendation satisfies both the Passive and Individual communication categories.

Campus training is essential in order to define and describe the types of messages and the appropriate response of the campus community. Staff impact of this solution appears to be the administration by an office, such as the University Police or Public Safety Departments, as well an impact on the IT staff.

**Recommendation: Campuses should utilize Incident Planning and Management software to assist in creating, maintaining and providing easy access to Emergency Response Plans. These software solutions also help to establish and document a clear set of procedures which can assist in deploying resources in an emergency.**

**Details:**

Incident Management tools can potentially reduce the overall staff necessary to create and maintain Emergency Response plans. Plans must remain current to be effective and the software tools in this category more effectively allow campuses to continually freshen their plan. Test scenarios and first-responder notifications are also typically included in tools of this nature. The standardization of a SUNY-wide tool would also enable the monitoring of campus Emergency Response plans at the System-wide level.

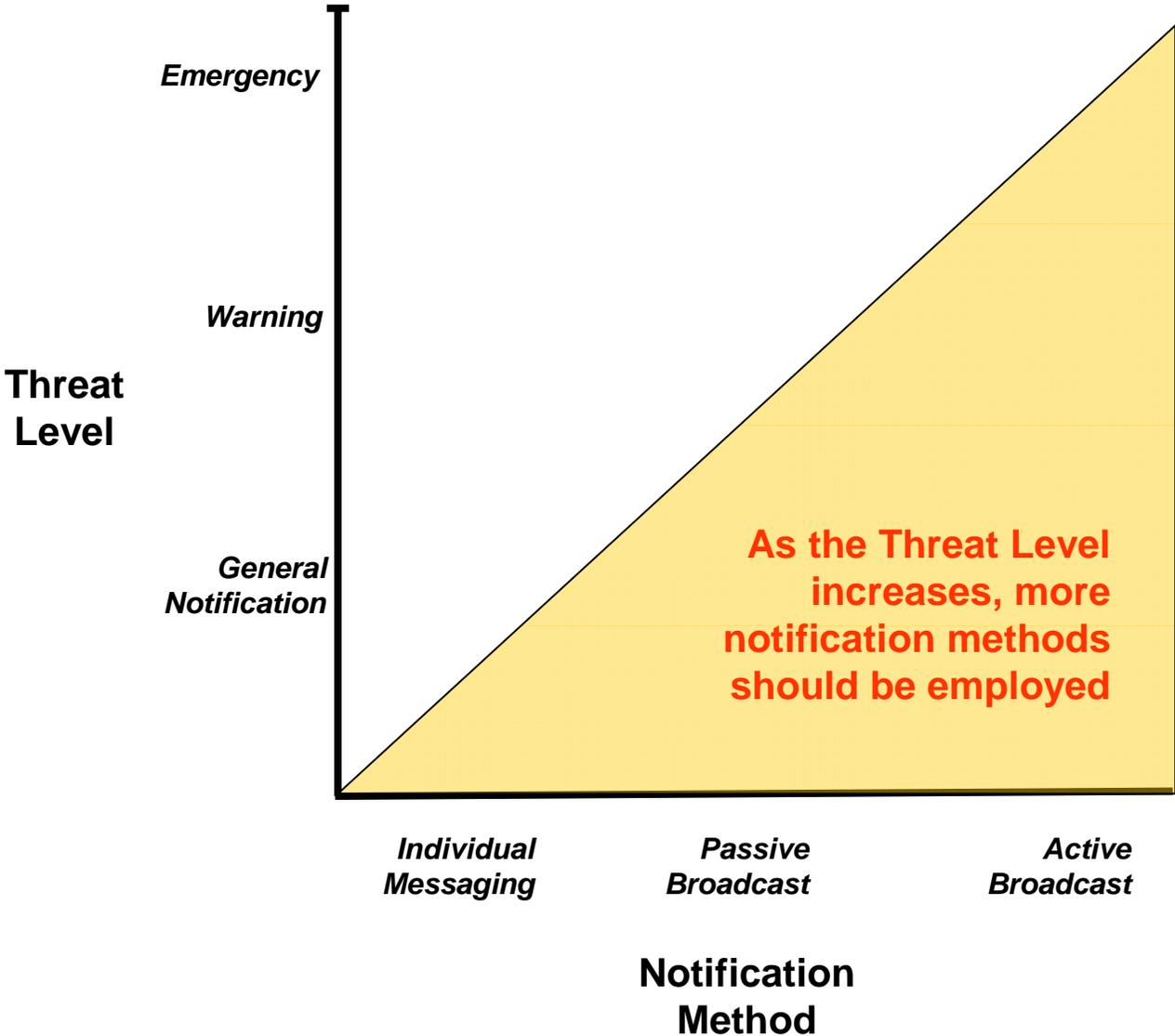
Staff impact of this recommendation appears to be the administration of the Emergency Response Plan by an office, as well as impact on the IT staff in supporting the software.

**Recommendation: Campuses should pursue the capability of intercepting TV providers (cable) signals to allow for the ability to overlay an emergency broadcast message on all campus television stations (message ticker or crawl at the bottom of a broadcast program). And, if required, SUNY should seek assistance from the New York State Legislature to require TV providers to allow this functionality.**

**Details:**

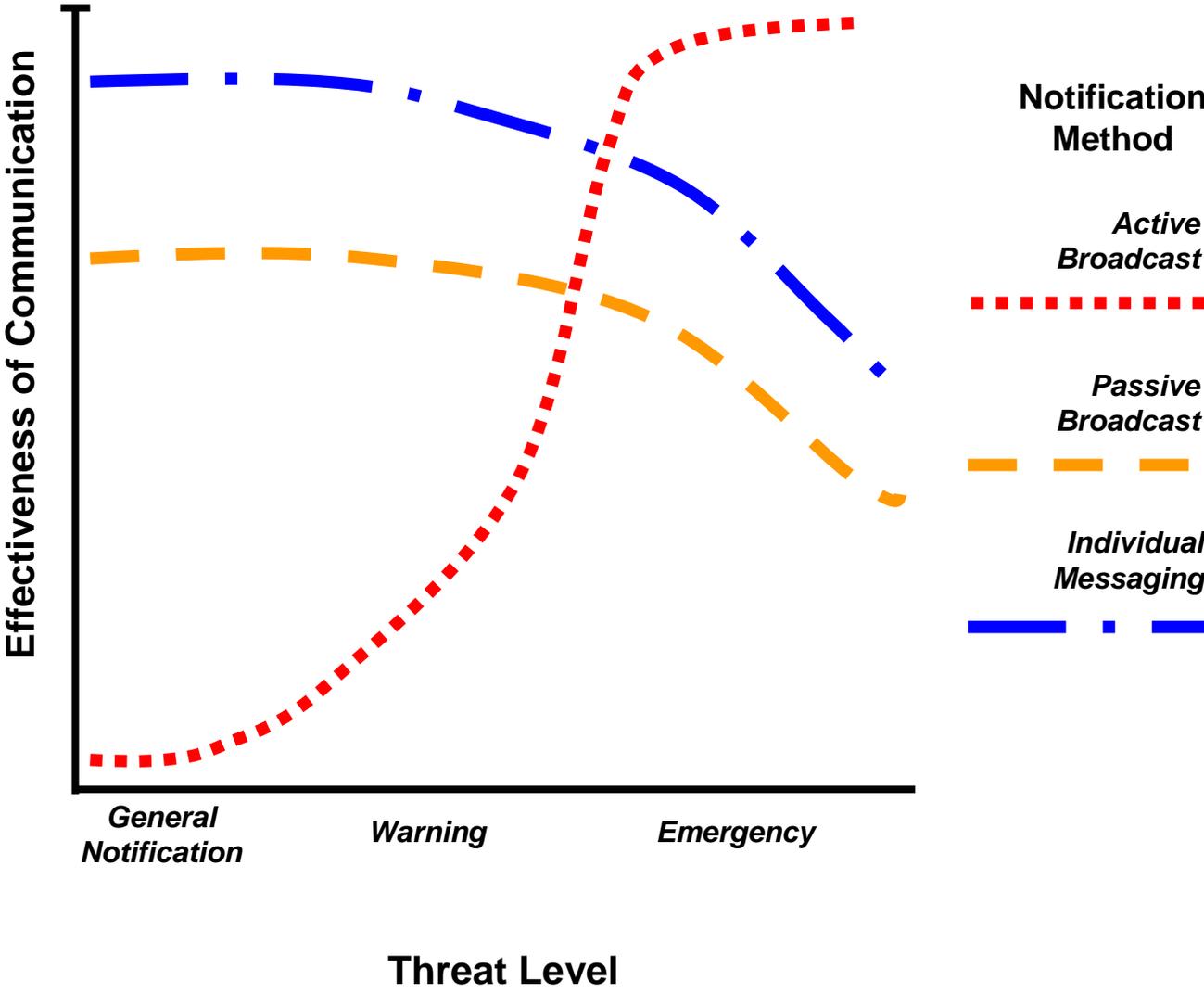
SUNY campuses may be able to filter the TV/cable signals coming on to the campus and attach an emergency broadcast message. Cable TV providers may be required to isolate the service being provided to the on-campus community to allow, in the case of an emergency only, the transmission of an emergency text message across the bottom of all cable stations. This may require legislation. All SUNY campuses have one station available for campus-based broadcasts via their cable TV provider. But, it is assumed that the campus community seldom is tuned-in to that station, therefore, limiting its effectiveness in an emergency.

# CHART 1

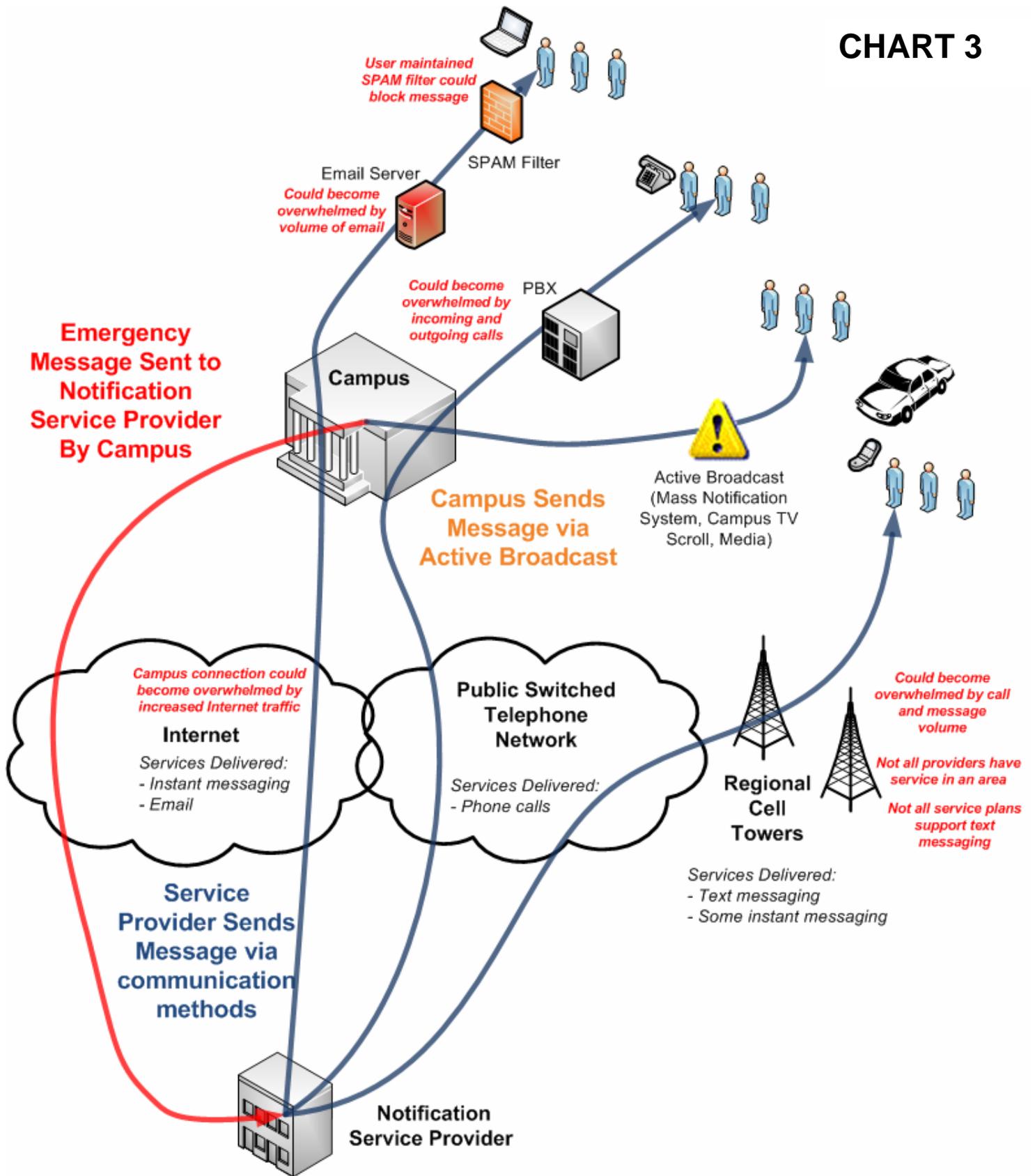


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CHART 2



# CHART 3



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## **Funding Requirements for Chancellor's Critical Incident Task Force Recommendations**

While many of the Task Force's recommendations will have incremental financial and staff workload impact on the colleges that will be absorbed by campuses, the following initiatives will require new resources to implement due to the magnitude and/or ongoing nature of the expenses.

### **Enhance Mental Health Capacity**

The number of students entering the State University with mental health issues is increasing. The International Association of Counseling Services recommends a counselor to student ratio range from 1:1000 to 1500 for colleges. The ratio on SUNY's State-operated and community college campuses, on average, exceeds these averages. In order to better serve the increasing number of students with mental health issues, the State University must increase the number of mental health counselors to correspond to the recommended ratios. This request would add 88 mental health counselors at the State-operated campuses and 84 mental health counselors at the community colleges.

	State-Operated Campuses	Community Colleges
Initial Year and Ongoing Annual	\$6,200,000	\$7,056,000

### **University Police Tactical Equipment**

Certain tactical equipment will be required to ensure that campus University Police have the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE), armament and training for an effective response to a critical incident. At a minimum, each campus should have three (3) sets of tactical response equipment, which consists of tactical knee pads, elbow pads, helmet with face shield, riot batons, jumpsuits, gloves, AR15's and shotgun (\$155,100). Also recommended are two (2) ballistic shields per campus (\$106,400).

In addition, five (5) training sessions developed in conjunction with the Division of Criminal Justice Services should be offered statewide for University Police and Public Safety officers on campus intervention with the mentally ill (\$20,000). Tactical equipment is not appropriate for un-armed Security or Peace officers (Community Colleges).

This equipment and training is necessary if University Police are to intervene in an active shooter or similar critical incident.

	State-Operated Campuses	Community Colleges
Initial Year Total	\$281,500	-0-

## **Mass Alert Notification System**

Campuses require a mass notification system which can rapidly disseminate an alert via both audible (siren, horn) and visual (message display, strobe light) means. The system and methodology recommended is an Emergency Alert System, not to be confused with fire alarms. The systems enable campuses to alert thousands of people in dozens, even hundreds, of buildings and or exterior locations. Alert technology enables sirens, strobe lights and text displays via various wireless and wired communication alternatives.

Campus training is essential in order to define and describe the types of messages and the appropriate response of the campus community. Staff impact of this solution is the installation effort and the administration by an office, such as the University Police or Public Safety Departments.

The estimated cost reflects a University-wide contract versus individual campus contracts, placement of devices at the entryways to buildings and up to ten sirens per campus.

	State-Operated Campuses	Community Colleges
Initial Year Total	\$7,486,000	\$1,540,000
Hardware	4,860,000	962,500
Installation	2,626,000	577,500
Ongoing Annual	\$486,000	\$100,000

## **Individual Notification System**

A notification service provider should be established for all campuses to send Alert-only notifications to pre-defined groups of students, faculty and staff by campus location. The service agent should utilize the mandatory student-provided personal emergency contact information to notify the campus community via all provided communication channels (email, TXT, Cell, pager, etc.).

Campus training is essential in order to define and describe the types of messages and the appropriate response of the campus community. Staff impact of this solution is the administration by an office, such as the University Police or Public Safety Departments, as well an impact on the IT staff.

The estimated cost reflects a University-wide contract versus individual campus contracts, assumes an e-mail system is in place for all recipients and the population covered includes students, faculty, staff and one parent contact.

	State-Operated Campuses	Community Colleges
Initial Year and Ongoing Annual	\$225,000	\$225,000

### **Incident Management Software (IMS)**

Campuses should utilize Incident Planning and Management software to assist in creating, maintaining and providing easy access to Emergency Response Plans. These software solutions also help to establish and document a clear set of procedures that can assist in deploying resources in an emergency.

Staff impact of this recommendation is the administration of the Emergency Response Plan by an office, as well as impact on the IT staff in supporting the software

The estimated cost reflects a University-wide contract versus individual campus contracts and only incident responders would be notified by this solution.

	State-Operated Campuses	Community Colleges
Initial Year Total	\$912,000	\$912,000
Software Acquisition	400,000	400,000
Training/Consulting	512,000	512,000
Ongoing Annual	\$90,000	\$90,000

### **TV Intercept and Emergency Broadcast Crawl solution**

Campuses should pursue the capability of intercepting TV providers (cable) signals to allow for the ability to overlay an emergency broadcast message on all campus television stations (message ticker or crawl at the bottom of a broadcast program). SUNY campuses should be able to filter the TV/cable signals coming on to the campus and attach an emergency broadcast message.

	State-Operated Campuses	Community Colleges
Initial Year Total	\$640,000	\$640,000

**Police/Public Safety Staff and Information Technology Staff**

Although the implementation of the Task Force’s recommendations will have an effect on the entire campus, the impact on the Police/Public Safety and Information Technology staff is the most immediate. The support of new technology, implementation of hardware and software, expanded training programs, and enhanced support of campus offices will have a noticeable impact on staff workload.

	State-Operated Campuses	Community Colleges
Initial Year and Ongoing Annual	\$2,610,000	\$3,360,000
Police/Public Safety	\$1,260,000	\$1,470,000
IT Staff	\$1,350,000	\$1,890,000

**Summary**

	State-Operated Campuses		Community Colleges	
	Initial Year	Ongoing Annual	Initial Year	Ongoing Annual
Total	\$18,354,500	\$9,611,000	\$13,733,000	\$10,831,000
Enhance Mental Health Capacity	\$6,200,000	\$6,200,000	\$7,056,000	\$7,056,000
University Police Tactical Equipment	\$281,500	-0-	-0-	-0-
Mass Alert Notification System	\$7,486,000	\$486,000	\$1,540,000	\$100,000
Individual Notification System	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000
Incident Management Software	\$912,000	\$90,000	\$912,000	\$90,000
TV Intercept and Emergency Broadcast	\$640,000	-0-	\$640,000	-0-
Police/Public Safety Staff and IT Staff	\$2,610,000	\$2,610,000	\$3,360,000	\$3,360,000

## Chancellor's Task Force on Critical Incident Management

### Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Campus</u>
<b>Campus Representatives</b>		
Mr. Tracy Bennett	Vice President for Administrative Services & Technology	Fredonia
Mr. Dennis Black	Vice President for Student Affairs	University at Buffalo
Mr. Don Boyce	Treasurer and In-Coming President Of Student Assembly	University at Albany
Ms. Joanne Braxton	Associate Vice President for Campus Affairs	Suffolk CC
Mr. Timothy Faughnan*	Deputy Chief of University Police	Binghamton
Dr. Edward Feldman	Associate Professor, Director Behavioral Medicine	Stony Brook
Ms. Laurie Garafola	Director of Residential Life	University at Albany
Mr. Marty Gilmore	Safety Supervisor	Monroe CC
Ms. Christine Haile*	Chief Information Officer	University at Albany
Mr. David Hubeny	Special Services Coordinator	Binghamton
Dr. Barton Ingersoll*	Chief of University Police	Oneonta
Dr. Edward Miller	Professor of Chemistry	Plattsburgh
Dr. Runi Mukherji-Ratnam	Professor of Psychology	Old Westbury
Mr. Tom Rathbone*	Associate Vice President for Facilities	Oneonta
Mr. Kevin Readdean	Director of Counseling and Health Services	Cobleskill
Ms. Carol Urbaitis	Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management	Finger Lakes CC
<b>System Administration</b>		
Mr. Jim Campbell	Director of Legislative Relations	
Mr. David DeMarco	Assistant Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services and Technology	
Ms. Marti Anne Ellermann	Senior Counsel	
Mr. Edward Engelbride	Assistant Vice Chancellor for University Life	
Mr. David Henahan	Director of Media Relations	
Mr. Roger Johnson	Assistant Vice Chancellor for University Police	
Mr. Dave Powalyk*	Chief Technology Officer	

\*Task Force members that participated in the communication subcommittee

**Communication Sub Committee  
For Critical Incident Task Force**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Campus</u>
Mr. Brian Gaon	Information Security Officer	Downstate
Mr. Tom Neiss	Director, Telecommunications	University at Albany
Mr. John Riena	Director Computer Services	Genesee CC
Mr. Dan Sidebottom	Director, Administrative Computing	Cortland
Mr. Kevin Stillman	Manager Network Operations	System Administration
Mr. Marc Ternullo	Director Information Technology	Fulton Montgomery CC