

[Emergency Preparedness & Homeland Security Experts Talk About Disasters & the 2008 Hurricane Season](#)

U.S. Coast Guard, Miami-Dade County and Miami emergency management and homeland security experts recently gathered to address PR professionals about disaster preparedness techniques and possible security threats to visitors to Southeast Florida.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PR Log (Press Release) – May 09, 2008 – U.S. Coast Guard, Miami-Dade Aviation, Miami-Dade Department of Emergency Management and City of Miami emergency management and homeland security experts recently came together in the Bayside Pavilion at Mercy Hospital to address PR professionals and the media about disaster preparedness techniques and possible security threats to Southeast Florida's airports, seaports, waterways, public facilities, businesses, residents and visitors to Southeast Florida.

[Lauren Stover](#), Assistant Director of Operations and Security, Miami-Dade Aviation Department, U.S. Coast Guard 7th District Chief Dana L. Warr, U.S. Coast Guard 7th District Public Affairs Specialist Jennifer Johnson, City of Miami Emergency Management & Homeland Security Officer Marcos T. Perez and Miami-Dade Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security Public Information Officer Jaime Hernandez gathered to impart their experience in dealing with disasters, emergencies and potential security threats to Southeast Florida.

"After I was deployed to New Orleans in August 2005 following Hurricane Katrina's destruction of the Gulf, I experienced first hand the coordinated efforts of federal, state, county and local emergency management officials," said Miami-Dade Assistant Aviation Director Lauren Stover. "Working together in a Joint Field Office and Joint Information Center helped with the development of key messages during the initial response and recovery phase of the operation."

Stover now oversees security, operations and communications for the Miami-Dade Aviation Department and Miami International Airport (MIA), among the busiest airports in the world and the gateway for all flights to the Caribbean, Mexico and Central and South America. Stover utilizes her experience as former SE Regional Director for Public Affairs for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on a daily basis to coordinate federal and county security measures at MIA.

For more information about Miami International Airport, visit www.miami-airport.com or contact Lauren Stover, (305) 876-7017.

After a distinguished ten years of service with the U.S. Coast Guard and most recently as Chief Public Affairs officer for the 7th District in Miami Beach, Chief Dana L. Warr has been on the front lines of undocumented migrant rescues, illegal drug interdictions, defense readiness, marine safety, search and rescue missions and hurricane preparedness in South Florida.

"With the start of the annual Atlantic-basin hurricane season just around the corner on June 1, now is the time for you to be prepared, develop a disaster and emergency communication plan to deal with tropical storms and hurricanes in South Florida," said U.S. Coast Guard 7th District Chief Dana L. Warr. "It's never too early to be ready."

U.S. Coast Guard 7th District Public Affairs Specialist Jennifer Johnson displayed the crown and jewel of Coast Guard operations in Miami Beach, one of three portable TAC-PAK communications tools in Florida used to transmit video, pictures and information in the early stages of a disaster.

"In the first days after Katrina wiped out communications and electricity in Louisiana and New Orleans, communications came to stand still with no way to document disaster video and photographs to the outside world," said Johnson. "This important tool gives us the technological advantage we need to communicate during the initial stages of a disaster or search and rescue mission."

For more information about the U.S. Coast Guard, 7th District Public Affairs, visit www.d7publicaffairs.com, or contact Dana L. Warr, (305) 415-6683.

Marcos T. Peres comes to life when he talks about the City of Miami Police Department's Miami Shield Initiative – "If You See Something, Say Something." Operation Miami Shield is an anti-terrorism program that utilizes existing public/police partnerships to deter, dissuade, and discourage terrorism.

Operation Miami Shield stands for:

- S**erve as the eyes and ears for your community.
- H**ave a plan in place in your home and work.
- I**dentify potential problems and notify police.
- E**valuate your surroundings and stay alert.
- L**earn evacuation and emergency contingency plans
- D**o not aggravate the incident, simply watch and call police.

"The first step is to become aware of your immediate surroundings and pay attention to what's going on around you," said Perez. "Increased public awareness combined with increased police visibility and the latest technology in reliable communication is crucial to our continued success with Operation Miami Shield."

For more information about Operation Miami Shield, visit www.miami-police.org or contact City of Miami Police Officer Marcos T. Perez, (305) 579-6263.

Miami-Dade Emergency Management & Homeland Security Public Information Officer Jaime Hernandez has many stories to tell on the front lines of emergency and disaster preparedness in South Florida.

Less than a month after transitioning from news reporter to the “dark side” of public affairs, Hernandez was thrust into the eye of the storm when he learned that he would be the county’s first multilingual public information officer under the newly created Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEM-HS), now that he was no longer under the protective wing of the Miami-Dade Fire Department.

“I faced this new challenge in the same way I did when I was a news reporter,” said Hernandez. “Full steam ahead!” Hernandez developed a passion for revamping the status quo and quickly molded a public affairs division to strategically carry out the mission of the department - lessen the impact of disasters and potential catastrophic incidents by meeting the needs of our community through planning, response, and coordination of information and resources.

For more information about emergency preparedness in Miami-Dade County, visit www.miamidade.gov/oem or contact Jaime Hernandez, (305) 468-5451.

<http://www.prlog.org/10070498-emergency-preparedness-homeland-security-experts-talk-about-disasters-the-2008-hurricane-season.html>

About PRSA Miami: With more than 250 local members, the PRSA Miami chapter provides professional development and networking opportunities to area South Florida communications professionals. The chapter boasts one of the largest scholarship funds in the nation. Established in 1985, the fund has awarded more than \$60,000 to deserving public relations students in local schools. To learn more about membership benefits and upcoming events, visit www.prsamiami.org.

About the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA): The Public Relations Society of America, based in New York City, is the world's largest organization for public relations professionals. The society has more than 31,000 professional and student members. PRSA is organized into 109 chapters nationwide, 19 professional interest Sections, as well as affinity groups, which represent business and industry, counseling firms, independent practitioners, military, government, associations, hospitals, schools, professional services firms and nonprofit organizations.

Media Contact:

Pete E. Garcia Cento
PRSA Miami Professional Development Co-chair, Ethics and Hispanic Market Chair
Tel. 305-588-2692
pedrog2@mac.com

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Email Contact : [Click to email](#)
Issued By : PRSA Miami Chapter
Phone : 305 588-2692
Address : 655 Northeast 135th Street
Zip : 33161-7518
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