



New Jersey Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness **NEWS**

Jon S. Corzine, *Governor*

Richard L. Cañas, *Director*

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OHSP Appoints Deputy Director of Preparedness

— Former Federal Official Brings 30 Years of Emergency Management Experience to New Job —

HAMILTON — Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) Director Richard L. Cañas today announced that Joseph Picciano will serve as Deputy Director of the Division of Preparedness.

Picciano, a former federal official with almost 30 years' experience in preparing for and responding to catastrophic events, will head the branch of OHSP responsible for overseeing state policy on readiness for natural and man-made disasters. The division also coordinates statewide protection of critical infrastructure, the distribution of federal and state homeland security grants, and counterterrorism and preparedness training and exercising. The division also works closely with the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) in the Division of State Police and with county and local OEMs throughout the state, which are responsible for emergency response and recovery operations.

“We are fortunate to have Joe Picciano’s considerable experience and expertise back home to benefit New Jersey citizens directly,” said Governor Jon S. Corzine. “He will be a valuable addition to the state’s preparedness team.”

“The Governor’s Executive Order that created our office charged it with coordinating emergency response efforts across all levels of government and the private sector to protect the people of the state,” said Cañas. “Joe Picciano’s experience in the field and temperament as a consensus builder make him an ideal person to help fulfill these responsibilities.”

“New Jersey’s Office of Emergency Management has had a long and productive working relationship with Joe Picciano in his years at FEMA,” said Col. Joseph Fuentes, Superintendent of State Police and State Director of NJOEM. “We will continue to build on that relationship in his new role at OHSP.”

“I look forward to working on New Jersey’s preparedness efforts in keeping with Governor Corzine and Director Cañas’ emphasis on inclusiveness, regionalization and transparency,”



Picciano said. “I plan to work closely with the state, county and local government agencies that make up New Jersey’s preparedness and emergency management communities, and use my background and experience to help maintain and improve their high level of readiness for any event.”

Picciano, a lifelong New Jersey resident, comes to his new position after serving with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) since 1979, and its precursor agency since 1977. Over the years with FEMA, he participated in responses to major disasters across the country ranging from hurricanes, large-scale flooding, earthquakes and environmental disasters. Most recently, he served as Deputy Regional Director of FEMA Region 2, the office which oversees New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. From 1999 to 2005, he served as acting director of the FEMA Region 2 office, which is headquartered in New York City. During that period, his office oversaw the World Trade Center recovery.

Cañas noted that Picciano’s responsibilities at FEMA have led to close working ties with New Jersey government at all levels. In 2004, former Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Tom Ridge appointed him Deputy Principal Federal Official in response to the Orange Level Threat imposed for the financial sector in Northern New Jersey and New York. In 2005, Ridge appointed him as the Principal Federal Official for the national TOPOFF 3 exercise, the major national and international weapons of mass destruction exercise in which New Jersey was one of two state participants. In 2002, he was recognized with the FEMA Director’s Award for his service during 9/11. Picciano was also recognized by the New York Federal Executive Board with its Direct Service Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Service of the United States Government.

Picciano received his Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the Newark College of Engineering and a Master of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the New Jersey Institute of Technology. He is a licensed professional engineer in New Jersey. Prior to his service with FEMA/DHS, he worked as an engineer in the field of floodplain management. Picciano and his wife live in Scotch Plains, Union County, and are the parents of three adult children.

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