

Improvement Planning Conference User's Handbook

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[Month Year]

PREFACE

Improvement Planning Conference User's Handbook

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 Grant Guidance requires that State or Urban Area (designated by the Urban Area Security Initiative [UASI]) receiving grant funds conduct an annual Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW). Each State or Urban Area has prepared a Homeland Security Strategy, identifying priorities with respect to its approach to prevention, protection, response, and recovery-improvement efforts. Participants should be familiar with each priority and its role in the State or Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy, prior to the T&EPW.

Preceding the T&EPW, State or Urban Area planners should conduct an annual Improvement Planning Conference. This Improvement Planning Conference provides a forum to review action items gleaned from the previous year's After-Action Reports (AARs) of State, Urban Area, local, and tribal exercises. The Improvement Planning Conference will drive the innovation of State or Urban Area planning priorities. State or Urban Area priorities, in turn, drive the selection of training and exercises at the annual T&EPW.

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PURPOSE

Improvement Planning Conference User's Handbook

Improvement Planning Conference User's Handbook

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has developed this Improvement Planning Conference User's Handbook, which provides the necessary information and documentation to assist any State or Urban Area in conducting an annual Improvement Planning Conference. It has been tailored to include documents appropriate to the needs of the State or Urban Area conducting the Improvement Planning Conference, including guidelines, sample documents, timelines, and definitions.

The annual Improvement Planning Conference provides an opportunity for a State or Urban Area to review Improvement Planning action items from the previous year's exercises and real-world events, and to determine new priorities for the State or Urban Area training and exercise program. These priorities will be the foundation for development of the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan and Schedule, which is revised annually at the Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW). The T&EPW is held subsequent to the Improvement Planning Conference.

Improvement Planning Conference Preparation

Sponsoring and conducting an Improvement Planning Conference requires a great deal of preparation and coordination. For the Improvement Planning Conference to run efficiently, participants must understand what is expected of them and be prepared to contribute. Distributed read-ahead packets will prepare attendees for full participation in the Improvement Planning Conference, and the development of Improvement Planning priorities.

The read-ahead material will provide participants with an overview of the recent national preparedness initiatives that have helped shape the concept of the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan and Schedule, which is the result of the T&EPW. The read-ahead material should be presented to anyone who has not yet had HSEEP training and to new members of the planning group before conducting the Improvement Planning Conference or T&EPW to ensure an understanding of the basis of the process.

Additionally, participants should be familiar with the State or Urban Area State or Urban Area homeland security strategy and their own jurisdiction's Improvement Planning action items from exercises and real-world events.

Improvement Planning Conference Conduct

Overview

The Improvement Planning Conference should be held annually, as close to the beginning of the calendar year as possible, and at least 30 days prior to the T&EPW. This allows jurisdictions to refine the materials developed at the Improvement Planning Conference and distribute them to T&EPW participants.

The purpose of the Improvement Planning Conference is to review Corrective Action Program accomplishments to date. Jurisdictions review their progress and accomplishments over the last year. They should then identify and prioritize the corrective actions to be addressed in the following year's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. The priorities should be crafted using capabilities-based language and distributed to T&EPW participants two weeks prior to the T&EPW.

The first half of the Improvement Planning Conference should be spent reviewing the previous year's Improvement Plans and identifying which corrective actions have been completed and which are outstanding. The second half of the conference should prioritize incomplete corrective actions and synchronize the revised

priorities with the Target Capabilities List (TCL). The final language can be polished after the Improvement Planning Conference, but should be available for participants to review sufficiently prior to the T&EPW.

State or Urban Area Point of Contact (POC) Responsibilities

To ensure the greatest effectiveness of the Improvement Planning Conference, a list of basic roles and responsibilities has been designated to the State or Urban Area Point of Contact (POC). The State or Urban Area will provide the structure for all workshop activities (based on the HSEEP framework). The jurisdiction's role is to provide IP Matrices using from After-Action Reports (AARs) on the previous year's exercises and real-world events. It is the responsibility of all Improvement Planning Conference participants to review the read-ahead material and State or Urban Area homeland security strategy prior to the Improvement Planning Conference.

Improvement Planning Conference Preparation

- Prepare all documentation and meeting facilitation materials (e.g., agendas, PowerPoint presentations, and minutes) in support of the workshop.
- Invite and register all participants for the workshop (see Appendix B for sample registration form).
- Set workshop agenda (see Appendix B for sample agenda).
- Ensure that participants review the State or Urban Area homeland security strategy and the prerequisite Improvement Planning Conference reading.

Improvement Planning Conference Conduct

- Conduct and facilitate the Improvement Planning Conference. If breakout groups are required, provide a facilitator for group discussions. Coordinate recording of major points of discussion.

Post-Improvement Planning Conference

- Draft Improvement Planning Conference minutes and submit to DHS.
- Finalize the State or Urban Area priorities and distribute them to all T&EPW participants.
- Schedule and prepare for the T&EPW.

Improvement Planning Conference Checklist

Please use the following checklist to ensure all the proper activities occur when conducting an Improvement Planning Conference.

- Invite all applicable representatives and provide an RSVP deadline.
- Ensure all Improvement Planning Conference invitees are provided with all prerequisite materials.
- Ensure all Improvement Planning Conference invitees understand the requirement to bring their previous year's IPs to the Improvement Planning Conference.
- Register all Improvement Planning Conference attendees.
- Prepare all documentation and meeting facilitation materials (e.g., agendas, presentations, copies of State or Urban Area homeland security strategy, and TCL) in support of the conference.
- Conduct and facilitate the Improvement Planning Conference. Provide adequate facilitation, so that attendees stay focused on Improvement Planning Conference goals. Coordinate recording of major points for discussion.
- Finalize State or Urban Area priorities, draft Improvement Planning Conference minutes and submit to all Improvement Planning Conference attendees, T&EPW invitees, and DHS.
- Prepare for the T&EPW.

Improvement Planning Conference Timeline

Table 1: Improvement Planning Conference Timeline	
Improvement Planning Conference - 30 days	All invitees should begin gathering Improvement Planning matrices and submitting to State or Urban Area POC
Improvement Planning Conference - 15 days	All invitees should review the State or Urban Area homeland security strategy and prerequisite Improvement Planning Conference reading
Improvement Planning Conference	Conduct Improvement Planning Conference
Improvement Planning Conference + 5 days	State or Urban Area POC submits T&EPW minutes to DHS within 5 days
Minutes Submission + 3 Days	DHS reviews and approves/disapproves Improvement Planning Conference minutes
Improvement Planning Conference + 7 days	State or Urban Area POC finalizes priorities and distributes to T&EPW invitees
Improvement Planning Conference + 30 Days	Conduct T&EPW

Participants

It is important to invite individuals who are able to make preparedness planning decisions for their respective jurisdictions. Participants at the Improvement Planning Conference should be aware of their jurisdictional capabilities and should be able to prioritize outstanding improvement planning corrective actions. They should also be prepared to assess State or Urban Area Capabilities and craft State or Urban Area-level priorities that will drive the State or Urban Areas training and exercise planning for the next year. These participants should be informed that the Improvement Planning Conference will likely be an all-day meeting, largely depending on how prepared the participants are for the workshop (See Appendix B for a sample participant list).

In addition to prerequisite reading, attendees are expected to complete individual agency IP Matrices and have them on-hand at the Improvement Planning Conference. Prior to the Improvement Planning Conference, the State or Urban Area POC should advise all those invited of the following materials, for which they are responsible:

- DHS Improvement Planning Conference and T&EPW read-ahead material
- State or Urban Area homeland security strategy
- Volumes I-IV of the HSEEP (can be found at www.hseep.dhs.gov)
- Target Capabilities List
- State or Urban Area Homeland Security Grant Guidance
- Current training and exercise initiatives throughout the State or Urban Area

Improvement Planning Conference Components

- **State or Urban Area homeland security strategy:** A current overview of preparedness activities, planning, training, equipment, and exercises from all agencies and programs should be discussed. Priorities gleaned from the State or Urban Area homeland security strategy should be identified prior to the start of the Improvement Planning Conference, and invitees to the Improvement Planning Conference should be aware of the priorities prior to arriving.
- **Capabilities-Based Planning:** An overview regarding the focus on capabilities-based planning should be conducted. The State or Urban Area priorities should be clearly defined and discussed as they relate to the National Priorities. The State or Urban Area priorities should be linked to improvement planning efforts. Target capabilities that should be accomplished to attain the State or

Urban Area priorities should then be listed that will help the State or Urban Area obtain those capabilities and achieve those priorities.

- **IP Matrices:** Participants will engage in a review of the previous year’s improvement planning corrective actions that were identified in the evaluation of exercises and real-world events. The corrective actions that still need to be accomplished will then be prioritized and linked to the TCL. These priorities will drive the selection of training and exercises at the T&EPW.
- **HSEEP:** A brief overview of HSEEP should be conducted, highlighting the program’s guidelines, goals, and objectives.

The following National preparedness initiatives set the context for capabilities-based improvement planning, and should be taken into consideration as each State or Urban Area prepares for its respective annual Improvement Planning Conference.

Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-8

On December 17, 2003, the President issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-8: National Preparedness. Among other actions, HSPD-8 required the establishment of a National Preparedness Goal, which establishes measurable priorities, targets, and a common approach to developing capabilities needed to better prepare the Nation as a whole. The National Preparedness Goal uses a capabilities-based planning approach to help answer the questions, “How prepared are we,” “How prepared do we need to be,” and “How do we prioritize efforts to close the gap?” As a result of HSPD-8 and the National Preparedness Goal, a set of National Planning Scenarios was developed to illustrate the effects and conditions of incidents of national significance for which the Nation should prepare.

National Preparedness Goal

The National Preparedness Goal is designed to guide departments, agencies, officials, and organizations among Federal, State, Urban Area, local, tribal, private sector, non-government, and public levels in determining how most efficiently to strengthen preparedness for terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

The goal includes seven priorities for national preparedness. The priorities fall into two categories: overarching priorities and priorities to build specific capabilities.

The overarching priorities are to:

- Implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and National Response Plan (NRP)
- Expand regional collaboration
- Implement the Interim National Infrastructure Protection Plan

The priorities for specific capabilities are to:

- Strengthen information sharing and collaboration capabilities
- Strengthen interoperable communications capabilities
- Strengthen chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosive (CBRNE) weapons’ detection, response, and decontamination capabilities
- Strengthen medical surge and mass prophylaxis capabilities

The goal addresses a requirement of HSPD-8, National Preparedness, to define “standards for preparedness assessments and strategies, and a system for assessing the Nation’s overall preparedness to respond to major events, especially those involving acts of terrorism.”

The National Preparedness System

The National Preparedness System is designed to answer three main questions:

- How prepared are we?

- How prepared do we need to be?
- How do we prioritize efforts to close the gap?

By asking and answering these questions, all levels of government should be able to identify critical deficiencies, develop strategies, track and report on progress, and aggregate this information to better understand the Nation's preparedness level.

Target Capabilities List

The Target Capabilities List (TCL) includes 37 goals that will balance the potential threat and magnitude of terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies with the resources required to prevent, respond to, and recover from them. This list is designed to help jurisdictions understand what their preparedness roles and responsibilities are during a major incident, and includes everything from all-hazards planning to worker health and safety.

Universal Task List

The Universal Task List (UTL) is a list of every unique task identified in the National Planning Scenarios, developed under the leadership of the Homeland Security Council. The UTL is a reference to help plan, organize, equip, train, exercise, and evaluate personnel for the tasks they may need to perform during a major incident.

National Planning Scenarios

The 15 National Planning Scenarios address all-hazard incidents, which include terrorism, natural disasters, and health emergencies. They represent a minimum number of scenarios necessary to illustrate the range of potential incidents, rather than every possible threat or hazard. The 15 National Planning Scenarios are as follows:

1. Improvised Nuclear Device
2. Aerosolized Anthrax
3. Pandemic Influenza
4. Plague
5. Blister Agent
6. Toxic Industrial Chemical
7. Nerve Agent
8. Chlorine Tank Explosion
9. Major Earthquake
10. Major Hurricane
11. Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD)
12. Improvised Explosive Device (IED)
13. Food Contamination
14. Foreign Animal Disease (FAD)
15. Cyber

The National Planning Scenarios serve as the basis for identifying tasks that must be performed to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from these incidents, as well as the capabilities required to perform the tasks. From the 15 National Planning Scenarios, the UTL was developed as a comprehensive, integrated menu of essential tasks for major events illustrated by the National Planning Scenarios. The 15 scenarios provide for common planning factors in terms of the potential scope, magnitude, and complexity of major events that will help to determine the target levels of capability required and apportion responsibility among all potential partners. Developing appropriate capabilities to address this range of scenarios will best prepare the Nation for terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

National Priorities

The following eight National Priorities were established by the DHS' Interim National Preparedness Goal:

1. Implement NIMS and the NRP
2. Expand Regional Collaboration
3. Implement the National Infrastructure Preparedness Plan
4. Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities
5. Strengthen CBRNE Weapons Detection, Response, and Decontamination Capabilities
6. Strengthen Interoperable Communications Capabilities
7. Strengthen Medical Surge and Mass Prophylaxis Capabilities
8. Strengthen Emergency Operations Planning and Citizen Protection Capabilities

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

HSEEP was published to provide an overview of the exercise planning, design, development, conduct, and evaluation process as well as provide sample materials. HSEEP provides the tools and resources such as policy, guidance, training, technology, and direct support to promote regional, State, and local exercise expertise, while advancing a standardized means of assessing and improving preparedness across the Nation.

Capabilities-Based Planning

The National Planning Scenarios and the establishment of the National Priorities steered the focus of homeland security toward a capabilities-based planning approach. Capabilities-based planning focuses on uncertainty. Because it can never be determined with 100-percent accuracy what threat or hazard will occur, it is important to build capabilities that can be applied to a wide variety of incidents. The TCL defines capabilities-based planning as “planning, under uncertainty, to build capabilities suitable for a wide range of threats and hazards while working within an economic framework that necessitates prioritization and choice.” As such, capabilities-based planning is all-hazards planning that identifies a baseline assessment of State or Urban Area’s homeland security efforts. An assessment of this kind is necessary to begin any long-term exercise strategy. This determines where current capabilities stand against the UTL and TCL, and identifies gaps in capabilities. The approach focuses efforts on identifying and developing the capabilities from the TCL to perform the critical tasks from the UTL. The TCL currently contains 37 target capabilities on which jurisdictions should focus their efforts.

Model 1: Evolution of Capabilities-Based Planning



APPENDIX A: TARGET CAPABILITIES LIST

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Common Target Capabilities:

- Planning
- Communications
- Citizen Preparedness and Participation
- Risk Management

Prevent Mission Area Target Capabilities:

- Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings
- Intelligence Analysis and Production
- Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination
- Law Enforcement Investigation and Operations
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosives (CBRNE) Detection

Protect Mission Area Target Capabilities:

- Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP)
- Epidemiological Surveillance and Investigation
- Food and Agriculture Safety and Defense
- Public Health Laboratory Testing

Respond Mission Area Target Capabilities:

- Animal Health Emergency Support
- Citizen Protection: Evacuation and/or Shelter-In-Place Protection
- Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution
- Emergency Public Information and Warning
- Environmental Health
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Management
- Explosive Device Response Operations
- Fatality Management
- Firefighting Operations/Support
- Isolation and Quarantine
- Mass Care (Sheltering, Feeding, and Related Services)
- Mass Prophylaxis
- Medical Supplies Management and Distribution
- Medical Surge
- Onsite Incident Management
- Public Safety and Security Response
- Responder Safety and Health
- Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment
- Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)
- Volunteer Management and Donations
- Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)/Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Response and Decontamination

Recover Mission Area Target Capabilities:

- Economic and Community Recovery
- Restoration of Lifeline
- Structural Damage and Mitigation Assessment

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE FORMS

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Invitation Letter

To: State Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Stakeholders

From: [State Representative (i.e., State Administrative Agency or Exercise Point of Contact[POC])]

Date: [Date]

Subject: Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW)

You (or your designated representative) have been invited to attend the [Year] Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW) on [Date]. The purpose of the workshop is to develop a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan and schedule for the [State/Commonwealth/Territory of _____] with input from appropriate stakeholders. The workshop is not a course on how to plan or conduct an exercise, but it is an opportunity for stakeholders to identify current training opportunities throughout the State and plan for future exercises.

Date: [Day, Month, Year]

Location: [Place]

Time: Registration will begin at [Time]. The workshop will begin at [Time] and conclude by [Time].

Prior to the workshop it is important to be familiar with the following:

- State or Urban Area homeland security strategy
- Volumes I-IV of the HSEEP (They can be found at www.hseep.dhs.gov).
- Target Capabilities List (TCL)
- State or Urban Area homeland security guidance
- Current training and exercise initiatives throughout the State and Urban Area

Please bring previous year's Improvement Plan(s) and your individual agency training and exercise schedule with you to the T&EPW.

If you have any questions prior to the workshop, please feel free to contact [POC name and number]. We look forward to seeing you.

Attachments: Registration Form

- Registration Form
- Agenda
- Participant List

Registration Form

The table below contains the Registration Form. Please enter your responses in the form field or check box after the appropriate selection.

1. Print Name:	2. Please select one: Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Rank (e.g., Lt., Sgt., Chief):	3. Work telephone number: (Include area code)
4. Home address:	5. Cellular/Mobile Phone number: (Include area code)	6. Contact fax number: (Include area code)
7. Name and complete address of organization being represented:	8. Current position:	9. Contact fax number : (Include area code)
10. Please note any special needs or requests (e.g., Vegetarian, Medical Conditions):		
<p>11a. I am attending the workshop, but I will not need a room. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>11b. IF APPLICABLE: I live over 50 miles from the workshop site. Please provide me with a room. Smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Nonsmoking <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I live within 50 miles of the course/conference site. Please reserve a room at my expense. <input type="checkbox"/> for the evenings of:</p>		

Email, Mail or Fax Form to: [POC name and contact info]

Please submit application by: [Deadline]

Signature of Applicant:

Date:

Supervisor Approval:

Date:

Agenda

Exercise Plan Workshop

- I. Registration**
- II. Welcome and Introductions**
- III. Overview of the State or Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy**
- IV. Introduction to the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan**
- V. Development of Training and Exercise Schedule**
- VI. Closing Remarks**

Participant List

State and Local Representatives

- Airport Operations Representative
- Board of Animal Health (BAH)
- Citizen Corps
- Emergency Management
- Local or Regional Training and Exercise Coordinator(s)
- Medical/Hospitals
- National Guard
- Ports Authority
- Private Sector (e.g., utilities, plants, and industry)
- Public Health
- Public Safety (e.g., law enforcement, fire, Emergency Medical Services [EMS], Medical Examiner's Office)
- Public Works
- School District Representative
- State Administrative Agency (SAA)
- State Homeland Security
- State-Appointed Exercise Point of Contact (POC)
- State-Appointed Training POC
- Transit Authority
- Tribal Liaison
- Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) representative

Federal Partners

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Defense (DOD)
- Department of Energy
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Regional Representative
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regional Representative
- Health and Human Services (HHS) Regional Emergency Coordinator
- Protective Security Advisor – Infrastructure Protection
- Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Transportation Readiness Division
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)