

Department of Homeland Security  
Exercise and Evaluation Program

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# THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY EXERCISE AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

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## I. Purpose

This directive establishes the Department of Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (DHS EEP) as the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) lead program for scheduling, coordination, and conduct of homeland security exercise and evaluation activities.<sup>1</sup> In doing so, this directive also establishes *HSEEP Policy and Guidance* as the official policy for all DHS exercise activities, requiring all DHS exercises that fall within the scope of this directive, as defined in Section II below, to adhere to the National Incident Management System (NIMS)-compliant methodologies, terminology, and documentation standards articulated in the *HSEEP Policy and Guidance* reference volumes.

The Secretary of DHS, or the Secretary's designated representative, is responsible for management and administration of DHS EEP and shall coordinate implementation of the DHS senior leadership decisions regarding all facets of exercise planning. On behalf of the Secretary, or the Secretary's designated representative, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Preparedness Directorate's (NPD) National Integration Center's (NIC) National Exercise Division (henceforth referred to as FEMA, National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division) will represent DHS senior leadership decisions to Federal Interagency, Regional, State, local, Tribal, private sector, and non-governmental exercise partners.

This directive also establishes sub-components of DHS EEP, including:

- A. The DHS EEP Steering Committee as the central DHS body for recommending courses of action to the DHS senior leadership—via the Secretary's designated representative—on issues related to exercise scheduling, organization, objectives, design, planning, conduct, evaluation, and corrective action implementation.
- B. The Corrective Action Program (CAP) as the DHS program with primary responsibility for identifying, analyzing, and coordinating corrective actions for

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<sup>1</sup> The HSEEP Management Directive does not supersede the authority of the Homeland Security Council (HSC) or the National Security Council (NSC).

gaps uncovered through homeland security preparedness exercises, policy discussions, and real-world incidents and supporting lessons learned information sharing.

- C. The National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) as the official DHS calendar of exercise activities, including events at all levels of government and across geographic locations.

## II. Scope

This directive applies to all DHS components and organizational elements that organize or participate in homeland security exercise and evaluation activities for all-hazard planning. This directive applies to exercise activities that require a DHS component or organizational element to commit to or engage with Federal Interagency, Regional, State, local, Tribal, private sector, and non-governmental partners. This directive also applies to exercise activities that require a DHS component or organizational element to make commitments beyond its budgetary or statutory authority.

This directive does not apply to exercise activities that are entirely internal to the component or organizational elements conducting them.

This directive applies to both classified and unclassified exercises.

The portions of this directive describing the CAP supersede the provisions of MD 0012 “Secretary’s Remedial Action Management Program (SEC RAMP).” MD 0012 is hereby rescinded.

## III. Authorities

The following laws, regulations, orders, policies, directives, plans and guidance govern DHS EEP Management Directive:

- A. *The National Strategy for Homeland Security*, July 2002.
- B. The Homeland Security Act of 2002, November 2002.
- C. Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5, February 2003.
- D. HSPD 8, December 2003.

## IV. Definitions

- A. **Components**: All DHS entities that directly report to the Office of the Secretary, as defined in DHS Management Directive 0010.2.
- B. **Corrective Action Issues**: Gaps in capability uncovered through exercises, policy discussions, and real-world incidents that are identified for corrective action via the CAP.
- C. **Corrective Action Program (CAP)**: The CAP is administered by the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division. The CAP identifies, analyzes, and coordinates corrective actions for gaps uncovered through homeland security preparedness exercises, policy discussions, and real-world incidents. The CAP identifies outstanding corrective action issues and coordinates corrective action assignment, concurrence, solution development, and implementation both within DHS and throughout the Federal Interagency. In support of this mission, the CAP administers the *CAP System*, a web-based tool that tracks corrective action implementation by allowing responsible parties to update progress toward corrective action implementation. The *CAP System* provides automated notifications of corrective action deadlines and generates corrective action status reports that monitor progress and provide accountability for responsible parties.
- D. **Discussion-Based Exercises**: Discussion-based exercises include seminars, workshops, tabletop exercises, and games. They typically highlight existing plans, policies, and procedures and are facilitated for a focus on strategic, operational, and policy-oriented issues.
- E. **Department of Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (DHS EEP) Steering Committee**: The DHS EEP Steering Committee is the central DHS body for recommending courses of action to DHS senior leaders—via the Secretary’s designated representative—on issues related to exercise scheduling, organization, objectives, design, planning, conduct, evaluation, and recommendations for corrective action recommendations. The FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division shall chair the DHS EEP Steering Committee on behalf of the Secretary or Secretary’s designated representative. The DHS EEP Steering Committee meets monthly or as needed to resolve outstanding issues related to DHS exercise participation. The following components and/or organizational elements that regularly participate in homeland security exercise and evaluation activities shall provide one representative each to the DHS EEP Steering Committee:
- a) FEMA National Preparedness Directorate (NPD), National Integration Center (NIC) [Chair]
  - b) FEMA, National Continuity Programs Directorate

- c) FEMA, Office of National Capital Region Coordination
- d) FEMA, Logistics Management
- e) FEMA, Disaster Assistance
- f) FEMA, Disaster Operations
- g) National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD), Office of Cyber Security and Communications, National Communications System
- h) NPPD, Office of Cyber Security and Communications, National Cyber Security Division
- i) NPPD, Office of Infrastructure Protection
- j) NPPD, Office of Intergovernmental Programs
- k) Domestic Nuclear Detection Office
- l) The Office of the General Counsel
- m) The Office of Health Affairs
- n) Directorate for Science and Technology
- o) The Office of Intelligence and Analysis
- p) The Office of Operations Coordination
- q) The Office of Policy, Office of Private Sector [Coordination]
- r) The Office of Public Affairs
- s) The Office of Security
- t) The Office of the Secretary/Deputy Secretary
- u) Transportation Security Administration
- v) U.S. Coast Guard
- w) U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- x) U.S. Secret Service
- y) U.S. Customs and Border Protection

F. **National Exercise Program Five Year Exercise Schedule:** The NEP Five Year Exercise Schedule is a five-year calendar of national-level homeland security exercise and evaluation activities developed jointly by DHS, the Department of Defense (DoD), and other Federal Departments and Agencies as necessary.

G. **Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Activities:** Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation activities include all Federal, State, and local activities pertaining to organization, planning, conduct, evaluation, and corrective action implementation for exercises that assess, train, practice, and improve performance in prevention, protection, response, and recovery capabilities. For the purposes of this Management Directive, these activities include simulations, tabletop exercises, drills, functional exercises (or command post exercises), full-scale exercises, experimental/hybrid exercises, and response/simulation cell activities.

- H. **Department of Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (DHS EEP)**: DHS EEP is DHS' primary program for scheduling, coordinating, and executing homeland security exercise and evaluation activities. In support of DHS EEP, the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division develops and maintains supporting tools and resources that facilitate exercise planning, conduct, evaluation, and corrective action implementation. These resources include HSEEP Policy and Guidance Reference Volumes, which provide a comprehensive methodology and terminology for homeland security exercise and evaluation activities.
- I. **HSEEP Policy and Guidance**: The HSEEP Policy and Guidance provides the official methodology for all exercises that fall within the scope of this directive, as defined in Section II above. The HSEEP Policy and Guidance provides a standardized terminology and methodology for exercise planning, conduct, evaluation, and corrective action implementation. Reflecting established best practices, HSEEP Policy and Guidance is specified in five reference volumes available on the HSEEP Web-site (<http://HSEEP.dhs.gov/>).
- J. **Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS.gov)**: A component of the CAP, *LLIS.gov* is the national Lessons Learned Information Sharing system that assists the emergency response and homeland security communities by sharing best practices, lessons learned, and good stories for real world and exercise events.
- K. **National Exercise Program (NEP)**: The NEP is administered jointly by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism. NEP activities are coordinated through the HSC PTEE PCC which designates one annual National-Level Exercises (NLE), four annual Principle Level Exercises (PLE), and annually validates a NEP Five Year Exercise Schedule.
- L. **National Exercise Schedule (NEXS)**: The NEXS is the official DHS calendar of exercise activities that includes events at all levels of government and across geographic locations. The NEXS is developed using the NEXS System, a web-based tool for exercise scheduling, synchronization, and de-confliction. The NEXS is also supported by an annual NEP Conference program in which DHS and Interagency exercise program managers convene to collaboratively schedule, synchronize, and de-conflict exercises. The NEXS provides visibility into National-Level, Federal, Regional, State, Tribal, and local exercise activities, which allows identification of schedule and resource synergies and conflicts, and provides opportunities to combine and coordinate preparedness events for greater effectiveness.
- M. **National-Level Exercises (NLE)**: NLEs are NEP-sanctioned exercises which incorporate threat assessment, planning, training, and exercises of Federal, State, and local governments to meet critical national goals, strategies, priorities, and objectives.

- N. **Operations-Based Exercises**: Operations-based exercises are used to validate homeland security-related plans, policies, agreements, and procedures. They include drills, functional exercises, and full-scale exercises. Operations-based exercises are characterized by actual reaction to simulated intelligence, response to emergency conditions, or mobilization of resources.
- O. **Organizational Elements**: DHS offices and agencies that report to component heads.
- P. **Planning, Training, Exercises, and Evaluation Policy Coordination Committee (PTEE PCC)**: The Homeland Security Council (HSC) PTEE PCC is a coordinating entity that oversees the development and implementation of homeland security planning, training, exercise, and evaluation activities coordinated across Federal Departments and Agencies. The HSC PTEE PCC is the primary forum for administration of the NEP.
- Q. **Simulation Cell**: The DHS Exercise Simulation Cell is a resource intended to simulate the decisions, communications, and actions of the Federal Interagency during Federal, State, and local exercises which do not receive full-scale Federal Interagency participation.
- R. **Principle Level Exercises (PLE)**: PLEs are NEP-sanctioned, discussion-based exercises executed by the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division, which involve participation by senior U.S. Government officials. PLEs provide national leaders with the opportunity to validate authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, and capabilities required to prevent, respond to, or recover from terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other emergencies. PLE scenarios reflect priority issues identified by Federal policymakers. At least four PLEs take place annually at the Cabinet or sub-Cabinet level.

## V. Responsibilities

- A. The **Department of Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (DHS EEP) Steering Committee** is responsible for:
1. Making recommendations to DHS senior leadership—via the Secretary’s designated representative—regarding:
    - a) Exercise focus, goals, lessons learned, and expected outcomes to ensure that major DHS exercises are consistent with policy, planning, training and investment priorities
    - b) Exercise scenarios

- c) DHS participation in NLEs, Regional, State, and local exercises, based on objectives, prioritized threats, and vulnerabilities
  - d) DHS participation in Regional, State, local, and Interagency exercises using simulation/response cell support
  - e) Specific exercise schedules and dates
2. Overseeing implementation of the decisions of the DHS senior leadership to ensure that major exercises are executed in accordance with Departmental priorities.
3. Designating membership and convening meetings of exercise-specific coordination groups with action officer-level representation, as appropriate to ensure proper intra-DHS planning and coordination for major homeland security exercise and evaluation activities, including NLEs and Regional exercises.
4. Modifying list of components and organizational elements in Section IV.E above as necessary to reflect changes to the Department's organizational structure.
5. Approving Federal Interagency, Regional, State, and local outreach initiatives for DHS exercises to ensure timely engagement of Regional, State, and local partners through appropriate channels and that partners at those levels receive consistent guidance from DHS.
6. Providing intra-DHS coordination relevant to DHS components or organizational elements that require resources administered by other DHS components or organizational elements for exercise purposes.
7. Overseeing and addressing the recommendations of an DHS EEP Policy and Implementation Subcommittee that discusses and resolves issues of exercise policy.
8. Prioritizing corrective action issues and recommending lead and supporting components and organizational elements for issue implementation for those corrective action issues resulting from exercises, policy discussions, and real-world events that require coordination between DHS components and organizational elements. The DHS EEP Steering Committee shall deliver the complete list of prioritized corrective actions to the Office of the Secretary/Deputy Secretary for review and formal designation of an appropriate DHS component or organizational element.
9. Reviewing After Action Reports/Improvement Plans (AAR/IPs) and associated corrective actions, monitoring corrective actions and disseminating lessons learned to ensure coordination, solution development, and implementation within DHS.

B. The **FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division** administers DHS EEP and oversees DHS exercise activities. The Division ensures intra-DHS unity of effort, consistent goals, standardized planning and evaluation methodology, synchronized scheduling, and implementation of corrective actions. In fulfillment of its leadership and coordination role, the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division is responsible for:

1. Chairing the DHS EEP Steering Committee on behalf of the Secretary, or the Secretary's designated representative and representing DHS EEP Steering Committee recommendations on issues related to exercise scheduling, organization, planning, conduct, evaluation, and corrective action implementation to the Secretary's designated representative.
2. Chairing meetings of exercise-specific coordination groups with action officer-level representation, as appropriate to ensure proper intra-DHS planning and coordination for major homeland security exercise and evaluation activities, including NLEs and Regional exercises.
3. Administering the NEXS as DHS' primary forum for exercise scheduling, synchronization, and de-confliction. The FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division will host an annual NEP Conference in which DHS and the Interagency exercise program managers will convene to collaboratively schedule, synchronize, and de-conflict exercises at all levels of government.

The FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division will also maintain the NEXS system as a collaborative Departmental scheduling tool, the Nation's online comprehensive tool that facilitates scheduling, de-confliction, and synchronization of all exercises.

4. Providing notification of required exercise commitments to DHS leadership, components, and organizational elements so that appropriate scheduling and budgeting can be undertaken in support of exercise activities.
5. Coordinating and directing DHS efforts to respond to short-notice exercise requirements.
6. Representing DHS exercises and related interests to the HSC PTEE PCC and NEP, especially as pertains to scheduling of DHS exercises, coordination of Interagency participation in DHS exercises, and development of NEP Five Year Exercise Schedule.

7. Administering the CAP as DHS' primary program for systematic identification, analysis, and corrective actions for gaps uncovered through homeland security preparedness exercises, policy discussions, and real-world events. National Exercise Division analysts shall facilitate the identification of priority corrective action issues, recommendation of lead organizational elements or components for each issue, by providing a list of identified corrective action issues to the DHS EEP Steering Committee for prioritization. For corrective action issues that require Interagency coordination, the National Exercise Division shall provide said issues to the HSC PTEE PCC for prioritization and assignment. The National Exercise Division shall ensure that DHS components and organizational elements comply with CAP timelines. Using the *CAP System*, the National Exercise Division shall track the implementation of corrective actions and hold responsible parties accountable for the completion of those actions. The National Exercise Division shall produce quarterly reports for the DHS EEP Steering Committee and the HSC PTEE PCC providing status updates and trend analysis for outstanding corrective actions.
8. Maintaining and revising HSEEP Policy and Guidance Reference Volumes, which shall articulate the official policy for the planning, conduct, evaluation, and corrective action implementation for all DHS exercises falling within the scope of this directive, as defined in Section II above.
9. Executing PLEs on a quarterly basis.

C. The **Secretary's designated representative** is responsible for:

1. Modifying the recommendations of the DHS EEP Steering Committee as appropriate, and representing those recommendations to DHS senior leaders to elicit determinations as to official courses of action for homeland security exercise and evaluation activities.
2. On the basis of the decisions made by DHS senior leaders, communicating official courses of action to the DHS EEP Steering Committee for implementation.

D. **DHS components and organizational elements** that organize or participate in homeland security exercise and evaluation activities (as listed in Section IV.E above) are responsible for:

1. Providing one senior management-level (GS-14/GS-15 or equivalent) representative to the DHS EEP Steering Committee.

The designated representative should be selected by the component or organization element's senior leadership and have authority to make decisions and commitments on behalf of the represented directorate / component.

2. Providing an action officer-level representative to exercise-specific coordination groups, as requested by DHS EEP Steering Committee.
3. Adhering to the guidelines articulated in the HSEEP Policy and Guidance Reference Volumes during planning, conduct, evaluation, and corrective action implementation for all exercises falling within the scope of this directive, as defined in Section II above.
4. Ensuring that all exercise-related training courses promulgate methodologies consistent with HSEEP Policy and Guidance.
5. Scheduling all exercise activities using the NEXS Web-based tool and providing a representative for the annual NEP Conference.
6. Forecasting and budgeting as necessary to support DHS EEP-mandated exercises.
7. Providing the participation of senior leaders as necessary to support PLE events and NLEs.
8. Securing approval for exercise-related Federal Interagency coordination efforts through the DHS EEP Steering Committee.
9. Securing approval for exercise-related Regional, State, and local coordination efforts through the DHS EEP Steering Committee.
10. Within 10 days of being assigned a corrective action issue by the Office of the Executive Secretary, notifying the Office of the Executive Secretary of its concurrence or non-concurrence to assigned corrective action issues. If the component or organizational element does not concur with a corrective action issue, it shall provide a written justification of its non-concurrence to the Office of the Executive Secretary. If a component or organizational element concurs with a corrective action issue, it shall identify a responsible Point-of-Contact (POC) and submit an Implementation Plan including timelines and milestones to the Office of Executive Secretary within 30 days of receiving official notification of corrective action issue assignment. Upon intra-DHS concurrence with the proposed Implementation Plan, the component or organizational element shall be responsible for

implementing the corrective action, and shall provide regular status updates through the *CAP System*.

E. **The Office of the Secretary/Deputy Secretary** is responsible for:

1. Providing quarterly exercise priorities to the **Secretary's designated representative**, DHS EEP Steering Committee, and the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division.
2. Ensuring senior department leadership support for the CAP. The office is responsible for formally designating lead and supporting components and organizational elements for the priority corrective action issues provided to it by the DHS EEP Steering Committee following exercises, policy-discussions, and real-world events, and providing priority corrective action issues to the Office of the Executive Secretary to be assigned to designated DHS components and organizational elements for concurrence, solution development, and implementation.

F. The **Office of the Executive Secretary** is responsible for:

1. Assignment of corrective action issues identified as priorities by the Office of the Secretary/Deputy Secretary to the DHS components and organizational elements identified as the appropriate leads for each issue. The Office of the Executive Secretary shall provide a period of 10 working days for the selected component or organizational element to provide concurrence or non-concurrence for a corrective action issue. If a component or organizational element does not concur with a corrective action issue, the Office of the Executive Secretary shall forward the justification for non-concurrence to the Office of the Secretary/Deputy Secretary for review and possible modification or reassignment. If a component or organizational element concurs with an assigned corrective action issue, the Office of the Executive Secretary shall provide a period of 30 days from the date of assignment for that component or organizational element to designate a point-of-contact responsible for the corrective action issue and to develop and submit an Implementation Plan with clearly defined milestones and timelines. The Office of the Executive Secretary shall obtain intra-DHS concurrence to the proposed Implementation Plan by standard channels, and forward the final Implementation Plan to the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division for entry into the *CAP System* for tracking and reporting.

G. The **HSC PTEE PCC** is responsible for:

1. Managing and maintaining the NEP, to include:
  - a) Convening regular meetings of the HSC PTEE PCC.
  - b) Identifying one annual NLEs and providing guidance pertaining to their execution.
  - c) Providing guidance pertaining to the execution of four annual PLEs.
  - d) Coordinating validation of a NEP Five Year Exercise Schedule addressing major Interagency exercise activities.
  - e) Working with the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division to coordinate prioritization, mission analysis, solution development, metric development, concurrence, and implementation for Interagency-level corrective actions arising from exercises and real-world events.

## VI. Policy and Procedures

### A. **Policy:**

1. DHS officials involved in exercise execution shall coordinate with the DHS EEP Steering Committee on all matters related to the responsibilities and functions cited in this directive.
2. DHS exercises which fall within the scope of this directive, as specified in Section II above, shall be executed in accordance with the principles articulated in the HSEEP Policy and Guidance Reference Volumes.
3. DHS components and organizational elements shall fulfill their responsibilities under the CAP within specified deadlines as detailed in Sections V.B.8, V.D.10, V.E.2, and V.F.1 above.
4. Scheduling all exercise activities in the NEXS in accordance with the responsibilities described in Sections V.B.4 and V.C.5 above.

- B. **Procedures:** The FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, National Exercise Division shall coordinate the preparation of exercise-related schedules, scenarios, capabilities, objectives, and corrective actions for the Secretary's approval in coordination with component and organizational element heads, as required to accomplish all responsibilities and functions.

## VII. Questions

Further questions regarding DHS EEP Management Directive should be directed to:

FEMA National Preparedness Directorate  
National Integration Center  
National Exercise Division  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC