Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
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A. The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is a capabilities and performance-based exercise program. The intent of HSEEP is to provide common exercise policy and program guidance capable of constituting a national standard for all exercises. HSEEP includes consistent terminology that can be used by all exercise planners, regardless of the nature and composition of their sponsoring agency or organization.

Q. **Is HSEEP a terrorism-only exercise program**?

A. No. The language and methodology of HSEEP are not scenario-specific. HSEEP is a program that can be used for all-hazards exercises, including those based on an intentional, technological, or natural disaster. While exercise objectives and scenarios may change according to the risks and vulnerabilities of the particular jurisdiction or agency, most exercises should be consistently designed, developed, conducted, and evaluated. HSEEP provides that consistency, regardless of the exercise scope, size, or scenario.

Q. **Is HSEEP a DHS-specific exercise program?**

A. No. HSEEP was developed and is maintained by the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate's National Exercise Division and is designed for use at the Federal, State, and local level. Additionally, HSEEP has been established as the exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation doctrine for all national-level exercises through the Homeland Security Council's National Exercise Program (NEP).

Q. **What training is available for HSEEP?**

A. Several HSEEP courses have been incorporated into the larger National Standard Exercise Curriculum (NSEC), which is a current effort to unify curricula in exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning across the country. The NSEC strategy involves providing guidance to State and local jurisdictions concerning the exercise and training curricula, workshops, and briefings. HSEEP-relevant courses that form the basis for the NSEC curricula include Independent Study (IS)-120: Introduction to Exercises and IS-130: Exercise Evaluation.

In addition, the HSEEP Mobile Training Course is an intermediate-level training course that incorporates

exercise guidance and best practices from the HSEEP Volumes. Throughout the course, participants learn the HSEEP methodology for exercise program management, design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

Q. **Who is required to comply with HSEEP guidelines?**

A. The HSEEP methodology can be applied to all National- (e.g., TOPOFF), Federal-, State-, and local-level exercises. However, only State and local jurisdictions that receive grant funds to conduct exercises through the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) are required to comply with HSEEP. In addition, Federal exercises conducted as part of the Homeland Security Council's National Exercise Program (NEP) are required to follow HSEEP guidelines.

Q. **What does it mean to be "HSEEP compliant"?**

A. HSEEP Compliance is defined as adherence to specific HSEEP-mandated practices for exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. In order for an entity to be considered HSEEP compliant it must satisfy four distinct performance requirements:

1. Conduct an annual Training and Exercise Plan Workshop and develop and maintain a Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan.
2. Plan and conduct exercises in accordance with the guidelines set forth in HSEEP Volumes I-III. It is important to note, however, that the specific guidance found in the HSEEP volumes is not required. Jurisdictions and organizations should use the planning, conduct, and evaluation guidance in the volumes as a starting point from which to build their own exercises.
3. Develop and submit an After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) following completion of the exercise. The recommended HSEEP format for the AAR/IP is available on the HSEEP Website.
4. Track and implement corrective actions identified in the AAR/IP.

For more information, see About HSEEP on the HSEEP Website.

Q. **What is the Direct Support Program and how do I apply?**

A. The National Exercise Division provides direct exercise support, in the form of vendor assistance, to help States, territories, and local jurisdictions with the design,   development, conduct, and evaluation of exercises in accordance with the HSEEP. Direct exercise support is also available to help States, territories, and jurisdictions conduct Training and Exercise Plan Workshops (T&EPWs) and to instruct the HSEEP Mobile Training Course.

Direct exercise support may be requested to assist with the conduct of a Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (T&EPW) or HSEEP Mobile Training Course, in addition to exercise related activities such as the following:

- Developing exercise documentation
- Designing exercise scenarios
- Facilitating planning meetings and exercise conduct
- Developing After-Action Reports (AARs)/Improvement Plans

The Direct Support Application and Users' Handbook is available on the HSEEP Website at http://hseep.dhs.gov. Applications must be submitted through the State Administrative Agency (SAA) to hseep@dhs.gov).

Q. **What is being done to ensure all agencies and organizations (e.g., Federal, State, tribal, local,) use HSEEP to manage, plan, and evaluate exercises?**

A. Through working groups, steering committees, and management directives, the National Preparedness Directorate continues to work with other agencies to promulgate HSEEP as the single policy and doctrine for planning and evaluating all exercises, regardless of the sponsoring Department or agency. For example, the National Preparedness Directorate is working with various Departments and agencies, through the HSEEP Working Group, to develop a common set of Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs) based on the Target Capabilities List (TCL) and Universal Task List (UTL).

Additionally, through the National Standard Exercise Curriculum (NSEC) Working Group, the National Preparedness Directorate is working with FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) to incorporate HSEEP methodology into its existing curriculum, including the independent study (IS) courses and Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP).

Q. **What are the benefits of using HSEEP?**

A. HSEEP features consistent terminology that can be used by all exercise planners, regardless of the nature and composition of their sponsoring agency or organization. This language incorporates lessons learned and best practices of all existing exercise programs, and can be adapted to a variety of scenarios and incidents. HSEEP is also consistent with all of the current national initiatives and policies including the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Preparedness Goal, the Target Capabilities List (TCL,) and the Universal Task List (UTL).

Q. **Does HSEEP replace existing exercise programs (e.g., Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program [CSEPP], Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program [REPP]) or training courses (e.g., IS-120.A, etc.)?**

A. No, HSEEP does not replace existing exercise programs or training courses. Its methodology is being incorporated into policy and guidance for current programs and courses.

Q. **What policies or directives support or relate to HSEEP?**

A. The following policies and directives govern HSEEP:
  - National Strategy for Homeland Security
  - Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5: Management of Domestic Incidents
  - HSPD 8: National Preparedness
  - National Exercise Program (NEP)
  - National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Q. **What exercise programs helped to shape HSEEP?**

A. Several exercise programs, including the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP), the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program (REPP), and the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici (NLD) Domestic Preparedness Program (DPP) contributed to the development of HSEEP. CSEPP encouraged the recognition of increased hazards associated with critical infrastructure and hazardous materials (HazMat) and contribution of evaluation methodology, while REP was the first major exercise program to involve local first responders in biannual exercise activities and introduce the evaluation methodology. The NLD DPP played a key role as a springboard to the National Exercise Program and was the first program to recognize increased vulnerability of the Nation's urban centers. DPP contributed many of the lessons learned and best practices that are the cornerstone of HSEEP's design and

development methodology.

Q. **Is HSEEP in line with the requirements of Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-8?**

A. Yes. HSPD-8 directed that DHS, in coordination with other appropriate Federal Departments and agencies, establish a "national program and a multi-year planning system to conduct homeland security preparedness-related exercises that reinforces identified training standards, provides for evaluation of readiness, and supports the National Preparedness Goal." HSEEP provides the program structure, multi-year planning system, tools, and guidance necessary to build and sustain exercise programs that enhance homeland security capabilities and preparedness.

Q. **Does HSEEP mandate any exercises?**

A. No. HSEEP provides policy and guidance for the exercise cycle and types, as well as for how exercises should be conducted, but the program does not mandate specific exercises. Grant guidance (e.g., Urban Area Security Initiatives [UASI], Homeland Security Grant Program [HSGP], Metropolitan Medical Response System [MMRS], etc.) may mandate that entities conduct specific HSEEP-compliant exercises.

Q. **Is the content in HSEEP sensitive or classified?**

A. While most of the content found in HSEEP is not classified or sensitive, some HSEEP materials (e.g., scenario examples), particularly those in the Volume IV Library, may necessitate restrictions on distribution. Exercise materials that are produced in accordance with HSEEP guidance and are deemed sensitive should be designated as For Official Use Only (FOUO).

HSEEP RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Q. **What resources are available to implement HSEEP?**

A. Several resources are available to help entities utilize and implement HSEEP, including the HSEEP Volumes, HSEEP Website, and the HSEEP Toolkit, which includes several on-line tools to help users schedule, design, develop, and create improvement plans for their exercises.

Q. **What are the HSEEP Volumes?**

A. The HSEEP Volumes are a series of program and reference manuals that integrate language and concepts from the National Response Plan (NRP), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Preparedness Goal, the Universal Task List (UTL), the Target Capabilities List (TCL), existing exercise programs, and representative prevention and response protocols from all levels of government. The HSEEP policy and doctrine is organized into the following volumes:

- HSEEP Volume I: HSEEP Overview and Exercise Program Management provides guidance for building and maintaining an effective exercise program and summarizes the planning and evaluation process described in further detail in Volumes II through V.
- HSEEP Volume II: Exercise Planning and Conduct helps planners outline a standardized foundation, design, development, and conduct process adaptable to any type of exercise.
- HSEEP Volume III: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning offers proven methodology for evaluating and documenting exercises and implementing an improvement plan.
- HSEEP Volume IV: Sample Exercise Documents and Formats provides sample exercise

materials referenced in HSEEP Volumes I, II, III, and V.

- HSEEP Volume V: Prevention Exercises contains guidance consistent with the HSEEP model to assist jurisdictions in designing and evaluating exercises that test pre-incident capabilities such as intelligence analysis and information sharing.

Q. **Where can I find the HSEEP Volumes?**

A. HSEEP Volumes can be found on the HSEEP Website at http://hseep.dhs.gov.

Q. **What is the HSEEP Volume IV Library?**

A. The HSEEP Volume IV Library is an online, searchable library of sample documents, media files, and templates to be used and/or modified when designing and developing exercises and managing exercise programs. Users may also upload documents and media files for inclusion into the library. Included materials are organized according to the outline and contents of the other volumes in the HSEEP manual series.

Q. **How do I access the HSEEP Volume IV Library?**

A. The HSEEP Volume IV Library can be accessed from the HSEEP Website. General access is open to the public for all non-sensitive documents. For sensitive document access, please see contact the HSEEP Toolkit Help Desk at support@hseep.net or (877) 612-HELP (4357).

Q. **What information and resources does the HSEEP Website provide?**

A. The HSEEP Website provides necessary information for conducting exercises using the HSEEP program and also provides a central location for accessing the HSEEP Toolkit systems and other available HSEEP-related documents, resources, and technologies.

Q. **What is the HSEEP Toolkit?**

A. The HSEEP Toolkit is an interactive, online system for exercise scheduling, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. This web-based application provides exercise planners with the tools to schedule exercises, develop exercise documentation and resources, and track corrective actions to implementation.

The HSEEP Toolkit contains several interactive systems that are designed to provide users with the information to design, develop, conduct, and evaluate exercises. These systems include the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) System, the Design and Development System (DDS), and the Corrective Action Program (CAP) System.

Q. **How do I access the HSEEP Toolkit?**

A. To request access to any of the HSEEP Toolkit systems, please contact the HSEEP Toolkit Help Desk at support@hseep.net or (877) 612-HELP (4357).

Q. **What is the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) System?**

A. The National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) System is the Nation's online comprehensive tool that facilitates scheduling, de-confliction, and synchronization of all exercises in a centralized location. The NEXS System allows users to schedule exercises online, in addition to de-conflicting and synchronizing with exercises that are similar in date and location, scope, scenario, or participants. Exercise synchronization, the coordination and possible linking or combining of exercises, facilitates better allocation of resources and limits potential exercise fatigue.

Q. **What is the Design and Development System (DDS)?**

A. The Design and Development System (DDS) is an online comprehensive planning tool designed to assist in the development, conduct, and evaluation of exercises. This interactive application provides suggested project timelines, templates, task and planning team lists, and associated guidance throughout an exercise design and development cycle.

Q. **What is the Exercise Evaluation Guide (EEG) Builder?**

A. The EEG Builder, a component of DDS, is a task-oriented tool designed to enhance the usability of the Exercise Evaluation Guide content within an exercise. The EEG Builder provides users the ability to generate custom evaluation tools, combining existing DHS content with additional jurisdiction- or organization-specific tasks, metrics, and measures.

Q. **What is the Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) Builder?**

A. The MSEL Builder, a component of DDS, was developed to assist Lead Planners in designing, developing, and managing of MSELs. The MSEL Builder will allow exercise planners to create and customize the MSEL based on the requirements of a specific exercise. It also provides a web-based forum for data collaboration on drafting and creating injects.

Q. **What is the Corrective Action Program (CAP) System?**

A. The Corrective Action Program (CAP) System is a web-based tool that enables Federal, State, and local emergency response and homeland security officials to develop, prioritize, track, and analyze corrective actions following exercises or real-world incidents. The primary goal of the system is to help officials resolve preparedness gaps or deficiencies in a systematic manner, ultimately strengthening national preparedness.

Q. **What is the HSEEP Data Exchange Standard?**

A. The HSEEP Data Exchange Standard is an agreed upon terminology and set of definitions, based on HSEEP methodology, for exchanging data between stakeholders and between stakeholders and the HSEEP Toolkit. For more information on the HSEEP Data Exchange Standard, please visit the HSEEP Data Exchange Standard Website.