

**State of Nevada**

**Exercise  
Program  
Guidance**

July 12, 2012



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**Table of Contents**

Table of Contents.....iii  
Record of Changes.....iv  
Record of Distribution.....v  
I. Introduction.....1  
II. Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program.....2  
    Strategic Planning Process.....3  
    Exercise Types.....6  
    Exercise Documentation.....8  
    Planning and After Action Conferences.....10  
    NIMS, Grant Guidance Requirements, HSEEP.....11  
    Substitute Exercise Credit .....16  
    Additional Resources and Information.....21  
III. Training Available.....22  
IV. Special Programs and Assistance Available.....23  
App A Definitions.....A-1





## Introduction

The primary purpose of this document is to promote the importance of establishing and maintaining a progressive, comprehensive exercise program; a program which will ensure that local jurisdictions have realistic, tested, and proven plans with policies and procedures that reflect the specific needs of each community. Principles set forth in this document will encompass the notion that state, local, and tribal governments have direct responsibility to train and exercise their own homeland security professionals.

This document and the guidance it gives is required of the Nevada Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security by Nevada Revised Statutes chapter 414.040 (b) "Prepare state and local governmental agencies, private organizations and other persons to be capable of responding appropriately if an emergency or disaster occurs by fostering the adoption of plans for emergency operations, conducting exercises....", and again in chapter 414.060 (c) "In accordance with the plan and program for the emergency management in this State...institute planning, training and exercise programs...."

In order for this type of program to be effective, it will require a concentrated effort by state and local personnel to create a *partnership* dedicated to improving the delivery of emergency services through an objectives-driven capabilities-based approach. This will require joint planning, on-going training, and exercising the various functions and capabilities identified through the five mission areas of homeland security: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Constant focus remains on encouraging more and more governmental agencies, private industry, and the "Whole Community" to hold a pro-active stance that will improve their abilities to respond effectively to and recover efficiently from emergency and disaster situations.

This document has been designed to provide information pertaining to the requirements and documentation of emergency management exercises consistent with law as outlined in the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and the principles contained within Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Preparedness Goal (NPG), National Preparedness System (NPS), National Exercise Program Baseline Plan (NEP Base Plan), and all applicable existing emergency management standards.

## Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is an objectives-driven capabilities-based exercise program guidance developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which provides a standardized policy, methodology, and terminology (Foundation) for exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning for all entities involved in exercises, including federal, state, local, and tribal governments, departments, and agencies, private sector entities, nongovernmental organizations using the *Whole Community* approach. Figure 1 below depicts HSEEP exercise program management as a continuously improving, progressive model.

Adherence to the policy and guidance presented in HSEEP ensures that exercise programs conform to established best practices, and helps provide unity and consistency of effort for exercises at all levels of government.

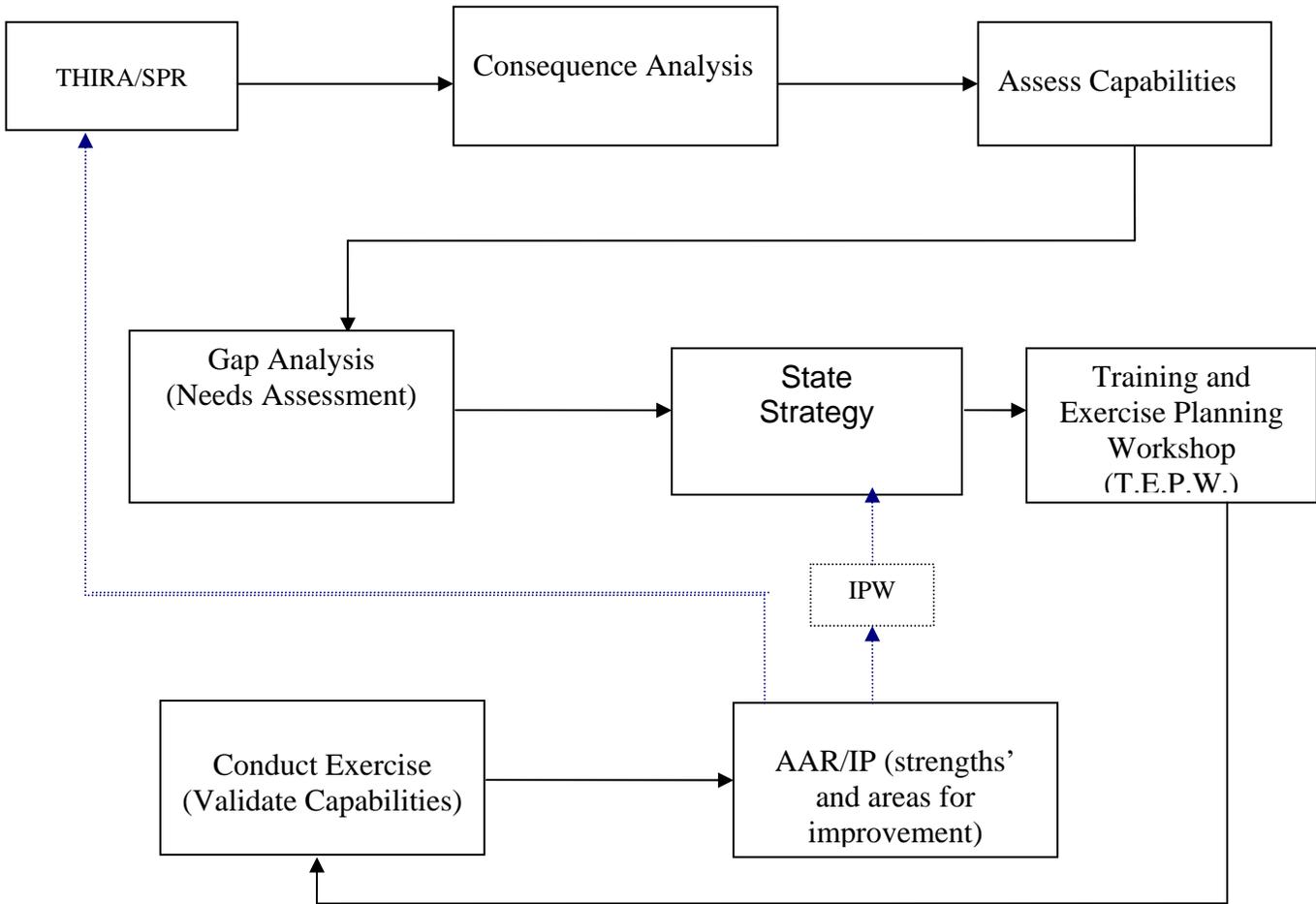
This document will help define the key requirements for an entity to meet DHS grant guidance.



Figure 1

### Strategic Planning Process

**NOTE:** The below diagram and following description of each step within the Strategic Planning Process demonstrates the interrelationships needed for a progressive exercise program to be successful.



#### THIRA/SPR:

The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) is an all-hazards capabilities-based assessment tool. The THIRA provides a framework to allow a jurisdiction to establish capability targets and monitor progress towards building, sustaining, and delivering capabilities and managing the risk it faces. Nevada is developing and will continuously update the statewide THIRA, which is the starting point of the Strategic Planning Process for all jurisdictions. The State Preparedness Report (SPR) and AAR/IP's from all exercises are used in THIRA's development.

### Consequence Assessment:

This is the process of identifying and evaluating the potential or actual effects of an event, incident, or occurrence. Local jurisdictions should use the information from the state's THIRA to evaluate the impact each threat or hazard would or could have on its communities. For example, each jurisdiction's threat of significant flooding may not be the same. By assessing a jurisdiction's potential to each threat and/or hazard contained in the state's THIRA, a prioritized list to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond to and recover from a particular threat and/or hazard can be developed by each jurisdiction.

### Assess Capabilities:

Jurisdictions should assess their own capabilities based on the POETE model (Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, and Exercise) taking into account how effective their current plans are, how they are organized to meet jurisdiction needs, the equipment available, training which has occurred, and finally exercises where capabilities are evaluated.

### Gap Analysis:

After assessing capabilities, the gaps that exist between what a jurisdiction needs to be capable of and what it is actually capable of (Assessing Capabilities) with regard to preventing, protecting, mitigating, responding to, and recovering from incidents provides the jurisdiction a list of what is needed to be bridged in order to effectively manage all-hazards. This list of gaps is the output of this needs assessment.

### State Strategy:

The Nevada Commission on Homeland Security prioritizes the specific capabilities the state as a whole should focus on improving. NDEM develops this strategy based on these priorities, which also prioritizes the distribution of all resources available to achieve improvement statewide with regard to these capabilities.

### Training and Exercise Planning Workshop:

It is at the annual T.E.P.W. where jurisdictions have the opportunity to share specific training and exercise needs in a collective manner in order to more efficiently coordinate training and exercise schedules saving on: (1) Grant funds; (2) workloads; and, creating a more effective "whole community" concept within the state. The output of the T.E.P.W. is the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. As the diagram's feedback loop demonstrates, after a Training and Exercise Plan (MYTEP) is developed, all entities sharing an exercise should work together in planning for and conducting each specific exercise to the benefit of all. This is the outcome of a coordinated MYTEP.

### Conduct Exercises:

By participating in exercises using specifically chosen capabilities and objectives to be tested, jurisdictions gain the advantage of learning their current level of effectiveness and capability toward any given threat and/or hazard. To assist jurisdictions in having an

objectives-driven capabilities-based exercise NDEM will provide annually at the T.E.P.W. the State's Overarching Exercise Program Objectives written for the prioritized core capabilities chosen by the Commission on Homeland Security for Nevada.

AAR/IP:

An After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) from each exercise participated in is key to learning of improvements gained or areas where further improvement is still needed. Thorough and accurate evaluation of specifically chosen capabilities and objectives is necessary to gain the best possible data for further strategic planning. By sending a copy of each AAR/IP to NDEM, Nevada is able to update the state's SPR and THIRA based on the most reliable and up-to-date information available as the diagram's feedback loop shows.

IPW:

An Improvement Planning Workshop (IPW) provides a forum to identify training and exercise priorities based on a review of corrective action items from exercises and real-world events. IPW activities typically include identifying and reviewing strengths and areas for improvement from previous real-world events and exercises through a review and analysis of AAR/IP data. IPW activities can inform the State Strategy and can be integrated into the T.E.P.W.

## Exercise Types

A consistent terminology and methodology for exercises is critical to avoid confusion, and to ensure that entities can exercise together seamlessly. To lay an effective foundation for a successful exercise program, the below discussion gives the proper terminology and definitions of the exercise types.

There are seven (7) types of exercises defined within HSEEP, each of which is either *discussions-based* or *operations-based*.

- *Discussions-based Exercises* familiarize participants with current plans, policies, agreements and procedures, or may be used to develop new plans, policies, agreements, and procedures. In *Discussion-based Exercises* participants do not perform activities and tasks related to accomplishing a mission. Instead a Facilitator guides participants to communicate and share what activities and tasks would be performed given the specific scenario and questions posed. Types of Discussion-based Exercises include:

Utility/Purpose		Type of Player Action	Duration	Real-Time Play?	Scope
Discussion-Based Exercises	Familiarize players with current plans, policies, agreements, and procedures; develop new plans, policies, agreements, and procedures	Notional; player actions are imaginary or hypothetical	Rarely exceeding 8 hours	No	Varies
Seminar	Provide overview of new or current plans, resources, strategies, concepts or ideas	N/A	2-5 hours	No	Multi- or Single-agency
Workshop	Achieve specific goal or build product (e.g., exercise objectives, SOPs, policies, plans)	N/A	3-8 hours	No	Multi-agency/ Single function
Tabletop Exercise (TTX)	Validate plans and procedures by utilizing a hypothetical scenario to drive participant discussions	Notional	4-8 hours	No	Multi-agency/ Multiple functions
Game	Explore decision-making process and examine consequences of those decisions	Notional	2-5 hours	No (though some simulations provide real- or near-real-time play)	Multi-agency/ Multiple functions

- Operations-based Exercises validates plans, policies, agreements and procedures, clarify roles and responsibilities, and identify resource gaps in an operational environment. In Operations-based Exercises participants do perform activities and tasks (“Boots on ground”) and are evaluated by subject matter experts for improvement purposes. Types of Operations-based Exercises include:

	Utility / Purpose	Type of Player Action	Duration	Real-Time Play?	Scope
<b>Operations-Based Exercises</b>	Validate plans, policies, agreements, and procedures; clarify roles and responsibilities; identify resource gaps	Actual; player action mimics reaction, response, mobilization, and commitment of personnel and resources	May be hours, days, or weeks, depending on purpose, type, and scope of the exercise	Yes	Varies
<b>Drill</b>	Validate a single operation or function of an agency Evaluate capabilities, functions, plans, and staffs of Incident Command, Unified Command, intelligence centers, or other multi-agency coordination centers	Actual	2-4 hours	Yes	Single agency/ single function
<b>Functional Exercise (FE)</b>	Validate plans, policies, procedures, and cooperative agreements developed in previous exercises through their actual implementation and	Command staff actions are actual; movement of other personnel, equipment, or adversaries is simulated	4-8 hours or several days or weeks	Yes	Multiple functional areas/ Multiple functions
<b>Full-Scale Exercise (FSE)</b>	Validate plans, policies, procedures, and cooperative agreements developed in previous exercises through their actual implementation and	Actual	One full day or several days or weeks	Yes	Multi-agency/ Multiple functions

## Exercise Documentation

A consistent terminology and methodology for exercises is critical to avoid confusion, and to ensure that entities can exercise together seamlessly. To lay an effective foundation for a successful exercise program, the below discussion gives short descriptions of typical exercise documentation. The types of documentation described here are discussed in more detail at: [www.hseep.dhs.gov](http://www.hseep.dhs.gov).

- A *Situation Manual (SitMan)* is a participant handbook for discussion-based exercises, particularly Tabletop Exercises (TTX). It provides background information on exercise scope, schedule, and objectives. It also presents the scenario narrative that will drive participant discussions during the exercise.
- The *Exercise Plan (ExPlan)*, typically used for operations-based exercises, provides a synopsis of the exercise and is published and [may be] distributed to players and observers prior to the start of the exercise. The ExPlan includes the exercise specific objectives and scope, safety procedures, and logistical considerations necessary for conducting the exercise. The ExPlan does not contain detailed scenario information.
- The *Controller and Evaluator (C/E) Handbook* supplements the ExPlan for operations-based exercises, containing more detailed information about the exercise scenario and describing exercise controllers' and evaluators' roles and responsibilities. Because the C/E Handbook contains information on the scenario and exercise administration, it is distributed only to those individuals specifically designated as controllers and evaluators.
- The *Master Scenario Events List (MSEL)* is a chronological timeline of expected actions and scripted events (i.e., injects) to be inserted into operations-based exercise play by controllers in order to generate or prompt player activity. It ensures necessary events happen so that all exercise specific objectives are met.
- A *Player Handout* is a 1-2 page document, usually handed out the day of an exercise, which provides a quick reference for exercise players on safety procedures, logistical considerations, exercise schedule, and other key factors and information that will allow players to understand the overall exercise simulation facts.
- *Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs)* help evaluators collect and interpret relevant exercise observations. EEGs provide evaluators with information on what tasks they should expect to see accomplished during an exercise, space to record observations, and questions to address after the exercise as a first step in the analysis process. In order to assist entities in exercise evaluation, standardized EEGs have been created that reflect capabilities-based planning tools, such as the Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities) and the Universal Task List (UTL). The EEGs are not meant as report cards. Rather, they are intended to guide an evaluator's observations so that the evaluator focuses on capabilities and tasks relevant to exercise specific objectives to support development of the After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP).

- An *After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP)* is the final product of an exercise. The AAR/IP has two components: an AAR, which captures observations and recommendations, based on the exercise specific objectives as associated with the capabilities and tasks; and an IP, which identifies specific corrective actions, assigns them to responsible parties, and establishes targets for their completion. The lead evaluator and the exercise planning team draft the AAR and submit it to conference participants prior to an After Action Conference. The draft AAR is distributed to conference participants for review no more than 30 days after exercise conduct. The final AAR/IP is an outcome of the After Action Conference and *should* be completed no more than 60 days after the exercise, but **must** be no more than 90 days after the exercise.

NOTE: Seminars and Workshop may use a summary form of AAR/IP rather than the more developed template form available from HSEEP. The summary form still needs to list what capabilities were addressed, purpose for seminar or Workshop, participating organizations, and address the issues discussed and recommendations agreed upon.

## Planning and After Action Conferences

The HSEEP methodology defines a variety of planning and after action conferences. The need for each of these conferences varies depending on the type and scope of the exercise. They include:

	Primary Focus	Length	Outcomes
Concepts and Objectives Meeting (C&O)	Formal beginning of the planning process. Is held to identify the type, scope, objectives, and purpose of the exercise. For less complex exercises, it can be conducted in conjunction with the IPC. Representatives could include sponsoring agency/ organization, potentially participating organizations, exercise planning team leader, and senior officials	Range from 2 to 4 hours	Agreement regarding exercise type, scenario, capabilities, tasks, and objectives, and Consensus regarding the target timeframe and the date and time of the next planning conference. Identification of participating entities. The C&O Meeting helps planners identify the capabilities and tasks that are going to be validated, design objectives based on those capabilities and tasks, and exercise planning team members.
Initial Planning Conference (IPC)	Unless a separate C&O meeting is conducted, the IPC is typically the first official step in the planning process. Its purpose is to determine exercise scope by gathering: input from exercise planning team; design requirements and conditions (e.g., assumptions and artificialities); objectives; extent of play; and scenario variables (e.g., time, location, hazard selection)	Range from 3 to 6 hours	A planning schedule Clearly defined, obtainable, and measurable capabilities, tasks, and objectives Identified exercise scenario variables (e.g., threat scenario, scope of hazard, venue, conditions)  Exercise planning team members are assigned responsibility for activities associated with designing and developing exercise documents
Mid-Term Planning Conference (MPC)	Typically used in more complex, operations-based exercises such as Functional and Full-Scales. A working session to discuss exercise organization and staffing concepts, scenario and timeline development, scheduling, logistics, and administrative requirements. Is also a session to review draft documentation.	Depending on the agenda, it generally is a full day conference (especially if no MSEL planning conference is scheduled) Could allow for a walkthrough of exercise site and gather supporting pictures, maps, and other visual aids	Agreement on final ExPlan details. A fully reviewed exercise scenario timeline, usually the MSEL fully reviewed exercise documentation (e.g., ExPlan, C/E Handbook) Well developed scenario injects (imperative if no additional conferences are scheduled) Agreement on the exercise site Finalization of date, time, and location of the Final Planning Conference
Master Scenario Events List Conference (MSEL)	Development of the MSEL (a chronological list that supplements the exercise scenario with event synopses; expected player responses, capabilities, tasks, and objectives to be addressed; and, responsible personnel. It also records the methods used to provide the injects)	Varies on the scope of exercise, allow for 4 to 8 hours. Assign a person to incorporate suggestions & changes. May require more than one meeting or can be incorporated into a mid-term or final planning meeting.	At a minimum, key events and the time of their delivery are identified
Final Planning Conference	Final forum for reviewing exercise processes and procedures.	½ day for discussion-based Full-day for operations-based	Resolve any open issues Review logistical activities (e.g., schedule, registration, attire, special Final review of all exercise and presentation materials needs)

## **NIMS and Grant Guidance Requirements/HSEEP**

### NIMS Compliance

- Jurisdictions receiving Grant Funds must work toward insuring that all county plans, policies, procedures and emergency response personnel are compliant with National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Exercises conducted using EMPG funding **must** be NIMS compliant. This includes the following:
  - Developing/enhancing systems to monitor exercise program
  - Conducting all-hazards exercises, based on the likely hazards/risks as identified in a vulnerability assessment and/or THIRA
  - Conducting exercises which include the testing of the Incident Command System structure
  - Any future NIMS mandated exercise requirements

### Grant Guidance Requirements

Entities that receive and utilize DHS/FEMA Grant funds (e.g., EMPG) are required to test periodically HSEEP Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities) in exercises in accordance with HSEEP Policy. The specific year Grant Guidance will inform them of these requirements, and NDEM Grant Managers can assist jurisdictions in understanding them. These specific requirements can be seen wherever the bolded-word **must** appears in the discussion below.

In general, the below represents what Grant Guidance requires:

- All entities receiving Grant Funds **must** take part in or conduct a T.E.P.W. each calendar year in which is developed a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan, which includes:
  - The entities' training and exercise priorities, a jurisdiction's gap analysis, and the state strategy
  - The Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities) that the entity will train for and exercise against.

- A multi-year training and exercise plan which:
  - Reflects the training activities which will take place prior to an exercise, allowing exercises to serve as a true validation of previous training.
  - Reflects all exercises in which the entity participates
  - Employs a progressive and whole community approach for training and exercise activities.
- All entities receiving Grant Funds **must** publish the new Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan within 90 days of the T.E.P.W.
- EMPG Grantees (e.g., NDEM) **must** take part in four exercises within a 12-month period, one of which must be a full-scale exercise.
- Individuals whose salaries are funded in whole or in part by EMPG funds **must** participate in a minimum of three exercises per year. Participating as either a Controller, Evaluator, or within a Simulation Cell (SimCell) counts toward this requirement and needs to be documented in the AAR/IP.

NOTE: Entities are encouraged to take part of either the State or USAI T.E.P.W. in meeting some of the above requirements.

- In accordance with the National Exercise Program (NEP), all scheduled exercises **must** be entered into the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) System.

### HSEEP

The HSEEP program guidance document provides a proven and comprehensive set of exercise planning procedures for which it is *recommended* that entities using DHS/FEMA Grant funds follow. These recommendations can be seen wherever the italicized word *should* appears in the discussion below.

- The type of exercise selected by the entity *should* be consistent with the entity's Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan.
- Exercise specific objectives *should* be based on Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities) and their associated critical tasks, which are contained within the EEGs. However, an entity may wish to create its own Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Task-oriented (S.M.A.R.T.) exercise specific objectives based on its plans, policies, and procedures associated with these capabilities and tasks.

- In addition, the exercise specific objectives chosen for the exercise as much as possible *should* be linked to the General Overarching Exercise Program Objectives developed by the State of Nevada.
- The scenarios used in exercises *should* be tailored toward validating the Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities) and exercise specific objectives, and *should* be based on the entity's hazard/risk vulnerability assessment and/or the Threat/Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA).
- Exercise planners *should* develop the following documents to support exercise planning, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning:
  - For Discussion-based Exercises:
    - Situation Manual (SITMAN)
    - Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEG)
  - For Operations-based Exercises:
    - Exercise Plan (EXPLAN)
    - Player Handout
    - Master Scenario Events List (MSEL)
    - Controller/Evaluator Handbook (C/E Handbook)
    - Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEG)
- Exercise planners **must** develop an After-Action Report/Improvement Plan.

*Sample templates and formats for all documents are available at the HSEEP Resource Center Website [www.hseep.dhs.gov](http://www.hseep.dhs.gov) or the NDEM website.*

- AAP/IPs created for exercises *should* conform to the templates provided within HSEEP.
- Following each exercise, a draft AAR/IP *should* be developed based on information gathered through use of Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs), participant feedback (written and gathered through an after action Hot Wash), and evaluator notes.

- Following every exercise, an After Action conference (AAC) *should* be conducted, in which:
  - Key personnel and the exercise planning team are presented with findings and recommendations from the draft AAR/IP.
  - Corrective actions addressing a draft AAR/IP's recommendations are developed and assigned to responsible parties with due dates for completion.
- A final AAR/IP with recommendations and corrective actions derived from discussion at the AAC **must** be completed within 90 days after the completion of each exercise.
- Dissemination of the Final AAR/IP *should* be made to all participating agencies. Submission of a copy of the Final AAR/IP **must** be made to the State Exercise Officer in electronic format (Microsoft Word or PDF file) for review and inclusion into the HSEEP database [hseep@dhs.gov](mailto:hseep@dhs.gov) and to the state's DHS Grants program manager within 90 days of the end of the exercise.
- Corrective actions derived from an AAC are associated with the recommendations and should be linked to a capability element (POETE model) as defined in the Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities).
- Corrective actions included in the improvement plan *should* be measurable for continual tracking of corrective actions.
- Corrective actions included in the plan *should* designate a projected start date and completion date.
- Corrective actions included in the improvement plan *should* be assigned to an organization and a point of contact (POC) within that organization for tracking of improvement.
- Corrective actions *should* be continually monitored and reviewed as part of an organizational Corrective Action Program. An individual (usually identified in the improvement plan) needs to be designated as each organization's POC who is responsible for managing and reporting the corrective actions resulting from exercises, policy discussions, and real-world events are resolved. Monitoring should take place often, but especially during the Strategic Planning Process.
- Entities **must** have a process for tracking of corrective actions from exercises and real-world events in place and report progress on quarterly reports.

- Entities *should* consider the revision of current plans, policies, and procedures based on information contained in the AAR/IP to reflect necessary changes and improve performance. Following the development of an AAR/IP, jurisdictions can utilize a Workshop exercise designed to create, modify, and/or update plans by including as participants stakeholders and NDEM State Planners for assistance. Assistance for scheduling and developing such a Workshop could be requested from NDEM anytime, but should be scheduled at each annual T.E.P.W.

## Substitute Exercise Credit for an Actual Occurrence

**NOTE:** NDEM will be creating on its website a fill-in form to use when requesting substitute exercise credit for an actual real-world incident.

It is understood that the occurrence of an actual emergency or disaster can create difficulties that will affect a jurisdiction's exercise program, capability, and schedule. Therefore, jurisdictions experiencing an actual, substantial response to an emergency or disaster may be eligible to receive substitute credit to satisfy exercise requirements.

To be considered for substitute exercise credit, the documentation of the event does not have to utilize the exact AAR/IP template, but should mirror the intent of the after action review and improvement planning process of HSEEP Policy, to include:

- a summary or general description of the event(s) that took place
- the participating organizations in the event
- What it was about this incident that proved a heightened or exceptional test of the local plan and related resources (*please include any successes, accomplishments, lessons learned, and Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities) tested by the incident*).
- Recommendations for improvement of performance (suggested use of an improvement planning matrix similar to the AAR/IP template)

All submissions should include documentation to the best extent possible – pictures, newspaper articles, etc. The decision to accept or reject the actual incident for substitute exercise credit rests with the Chief, Nevada Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

Using the following criteria, select those that apply to the local incident and explain how those particular functions were tested. (*Bullets are only listed as clarifying/guiding questions to support the justification and need not all be addressed in the submission*)

### 1. Formal declaration of a disaster issued by either the jurisdiction's Chief Executive, the Governor, or the President

- Was the county emergency operations plan activated for this incident?
- Did this incident require multi-agency and/or other jurisdiction response?
- Did this incident exhaust local resources?
- Did the event require multiple days/weeks of any or all of the five mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery)?

2. Incident Management System / Incident Command System activated and operational

- How was the Incident Command System organized, and was it effective in accomplishing incident objectives?
- Did the event cover multiple operational periods; were Incident Action Plans and related ICS forms utilized?
- How were mutual aid agreements activated and supported?
- Were there communication system challenges (Interoperable communications)?
- Did outside resources integrate into the ICS?
- What Target Capabilities (becoming Core Capabilities) were tested in this real-world incident?

3. Emergency Operations Center [or an alternate] was activated and resources/ information coordinated (ESF#5)

- Which functions were staffed within the EOC?
- Were there alert/notification and staff assembly challenges?
- How were public warnings issued/managed?
- How effective was the interface between the EOC and field operations?
- Were backup resources and capabilities necessary to respond?
- How were state and/or federal resources requested?

4. Actual evacuations of populations / sheltering-in-place provisions activated / coordination of public transportation resources

- Was an evacuation organized and carried out?
- Were evacuation warnings and related public information released?
- Were public transportation resources used?
- Were new resources and/or partners (private or public) identified?
- Were there special needs populations and issues involved (e.g. nursing homes, schools, hospitals, day care facilities, etc.)?
- Did security issues arise for evacuated areas?
- Were GIS resources utilized and effective?

5. A local damage assessment team deployed and documentation collected for a preliminary damage assessment with state and/or federal partners

- What local team structures were used to collect initial damage estimates?
- Was Public Assistance and/or Individual Assistance requested thru the state for this incident; how did local resources interface with state/federal resources?

6. Actual debris management activities/plans were activated (ESF#3)

- Were temporary debris storage and reduction sites established?
- Were temporary personnel, equipment, and/or services (private and/or public) activated to support this event?
- Were local personnel trained to respond to potentially hazardous materials?

7. Actual sheltering/warming center operations activated / mass care and feeding (ESF #6)

- Were mass care operations coordinated and conducted?
- Was registration and tracking of evacuees conducted?
- Were special need groups and individuals given consideration?
- Were provisions made for handling pets or other domestic animals?
- Were there behavioral (mental) health services provided?
- Were disaster welfare inquiries organized and managed?
- Was there a communications plan activated for informing the public of mass care services/facilities?
- Were volunteer resources coordinated and managed?

8. [Specialized] Resource support and acquisitions (ESF #7)

- Were designated staging areas for the storage and movement of resources established?
- Were donated goods and/or services provided and how were they managed?
- Were there any specialized resources needed during the event?
- Were critical resources moved outside the threatened or impacted area?
- Did the event create opportunities to coordinate with private sector resources?

9. Special public health and medical services provided (ESF #8 & 8-1)

- Were there any health-related protective action decisions made?
- Were any vaccines, drugs and/or antidotes distributed to the general public and/or emergency workers?
- Did the event create a mass casualty incident beyond the resources of the jurisdiction?
- Were procedures activated to request state/federal medical assistance?
- Were extra-ordinary mortuary services coordinated during the event?
- Were there public health threats or contamination issues related to the event and how were they managed?
- Were volunteer medical resources activated and coordinated?

10. Special search and rescue operation(s) conducted and coordinated (ESF #9)

- Were critical resource SAR equipment and services brought in to support the operation?

11. Extraordinary hazardous materials response and recovery

- Were protective actions for emergency workers and the public required and communicated?
- Were notifications made to local, state, and federal authorities effectively?
- Were there any monitoring assets implemented (e.g. air, water, radiological, etc.)?
- Did special mitigation procedures need to be determined and resourced by local authorities?

12. Other special functions activated and tested (E.g., large animal care issues, stop movement procedures, national media outlets present, etc.)

13. An evaluation process conducted following the incident

- An after action review process was conducted, including participation from a majority of those departments/agencies involved in the event.

- Corrective actions were identified and documented in an improvement plan matrix.
- Designated individual(s) are identified to track improvement actions.
- A review plans was integrated into this process.

In order to receive exercise credit:

- at a minimum, six (6) criteria **must** be met to receive functional exercise credit (**must include criteria numbers 1, 2, and 13**).
- at a minimum, nine (9) criteria **must** be met to receive full-scale exercise credit (**must include criteria numbers 1, 2, 3, and 13**).

Other notes:

All documentation **must** be submitted to the State of Nevada Exercise Officer for review and recommendation to the Chief, Nevada Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. FEMA's National Exercise Division (NED) makes the final decision on acceptance of a real-world event counting toward an exercise requirement.

Assistance on completing an after action review and improvement planning process following a real-world incident can be requested from the State Exercise Officer.

## **Additional Resources and Information**

### The HSEEP Resource Center Website

- The HSEEP Resource Center Website at <http://hseep.dhs.gov> provides additional information regarding HSEEP Policy and Guidance. Available on this website are various tools and sample materials to aid in the exercise development process, as well as a listing of best practices from across the nation. The HSEEP toolkit, which includes the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) System, Design and Development System (DDS), and Corrective Action Program (CAP) System, allows users to schedule, plan, evaluate, and track corrective actions from exercises.

### After Action Report / Improvement Plan Template

- The goal of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) exercise evaluation and improvement process is to validate strengths and identify improvement opportunities for the participating organization(s). This is accomplished by observing the exercise based on pre-determined evaluation data to be collected, analyzing the data to compare performance against expected outcomes, and determining what changes need to be made to any procedures, plans, staffing, equipment, communications, organizations, and interagency coordination efforts.
- Exercises conducted should be reported using the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) template format. Templates and examples of completed AAR/IPs are available online at [www.hseep.dhs.gov](http://www.hseep.dhs.gov) and from the State Exercise Officer.

## **Training and Assistance available from NDEM**

The below training is available for individuals and jurisdictions and should be requested through the State Exercise Officer:

- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) 3-day course
- HSEEP Toolkit (NEXS, DDS, and CAP databases) one day course
- Specialized and Just-in-Time training for exercise planning teams and emergency management personnel to include:
  - Controller/Evaluator/Simulation Cell training
  - AAR/IP writing
  - Exercise Program Management
  - Technical training and/or periodic reviews
- Evaluations of jurisdiction and/or agency plans, policies, and capabilities (e.g., Emergency Operations Plan – EOP; current policies vs. changing Grant requirements/HSEEP policy; and, the current transition from 37 Target capabilities to 31 Core Capabilities)

## **Special Programs Available**

The below programs, run by DHS and/or FEMA, are available upon approval by the federal entity offering assistance.

- Regional Exercise Support Program (RESP) is a FEMA program where local, tribal, and state jurisdictions may request contracted assistance funded by FEMA to help with the planning, conduct, and AAR/IP development for large and/or complex exercises (usually full-scale exercises). The State Exercise Officer should be contacted to help with submitting specific requests to FEMA.
- Terrorism Prevention Exercise Program (TPEP) is a FEMA program for fusion centers and law enforcement agencies to receive specialized exercise support in planning, conducting, and AAR/IP development of exercises based on terrorism scenarios. Exercise types include specialized Workshops, Games, and Functional Exercises. For more information on this program contact the State Exercise Officer.
- DHS-sponsored exercise programs are programs offered from time to time by divisions and/or agencies within DHS other than FEMA. Examples of exercise assistance available would be the National Cyber Security Division's assistance to jurisdictions for planning, conducting, and AAR/IP development of Cyber exercises. This includes Tabletop Exercises and Functional Exercises. From time to time DHS divisions will sponsor such exercise assistance for other capabilities. For more information on these programs contact the State Exercise Officer.

## DEFINITIONS

Core Capabilities – 31 capabilities spread over five mission areas that capture the distinct critical elements necessary to achieve the National Preparedness Goal. These will be replacing the 37 Target Capabilities for exercise programs in the near future.

Corrective Action Program (CAP) – The processes designed to keep track of the completion of an improvement plan developed from exercises or real-world incidents

Corrective Action Program (CAP) database – The DHS database within the HSEEP Toolkit that can be used as a CAP

Design and Development System (DDS) database – The DHS database within the HSEEP Toolkit that assists planning teams in designing and developing all documents for an exercise

Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) - is a voluntary accreditation process based on collaboratively developed national standards for local, tribal, and state programs responsible for preventing, preparing for, mitigating against, and coordinating response and recovery to disaster.

Emergency Personnel – Salaried and voluntary personnel in a jurisdiction who respond to incidents and disasters to save lives and mitigate damage. These personnel are often called First Responders and are associated with law enforcement, firefighting, and emergency medical services.

Equipment – Tangible property (other than land or buildings) that are used in emergency operations by responders and emergency management personnel during incidents and disasters

Exercises – Planned testing of an entity's policies, plans, or procedures, either discussion or operational based, that is evaluated against defined tasks drawn from objectives and capabilities, and which result in an after action report and an improvement plan

Exercise specific objectives – Objectives agreed to by the exercise planning team to use for evaluation of activities and tasks performed by players and linked to state or federal overarching exercise objectives

Exercise linkage to THIRA: Exercise specific objectives are linked to overarching exercise objectives which were created partly based on linkage to THIRA

Facilities – Tangible property (land and buildings, other than equipment) that are used in emergency operations by responders and emergency management personnel during incidents and disasters

General overarching exercise objectives – Developed by the federal government with state, local, tribal, and territorial input and linked to Principal Objectives and used to help set priorities in training and exercising

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) - is an objectives-driven capabilities-based program that provides a standardized methodology and terminology for exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

HSEEP course – Three-day course of instruction covering HSEEP Policy and exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning

HSEEP Toolkit – FEMA databases containing the National Exercise System, the Design and Development System, and the Corrective Action Program can assist exercise planners in exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. The state Exercise Administrative Authority (EAA), who is also the State Exercise Officer, can help individuals gain access to these databases.

HSEEP Toolkit course – A one-day course of instruction on the use of the HSEEP Toolkit databases

Improvement Planning Workshop – FEMA recommended exercise to prepare participants in gap analysis/needs assessment using the previous year's AAR/IP's.

Incident Command System (ICS) - a set of personnel, policies, procedures, facilities, and equipment, integrated into a common organizational structure designed to improve emergency response operations of all types and complexities. ICS is a subcomponent of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Lessons learned - Information from exercises and real-world events that can be used for collaboration purposes for emergency response providers and homeland security officials to help prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other emergencies. Often it is added to the After-Action Report (AAR).

Multi-year training and exercise plan – In Nevada, is a three-year plan developed and/or modified annually by jurisdictional emergency managers listing the training and exercises planned for based on needs assessment.

National Preparedness System (NPS) - is a system developed by the President in order to enable the nation to meet the national preparedness goal.

National Preparedness Goal (NPG) - is the cornerstone of implementation of Presidential Policy Directive – 8, and consists of the 31 core capabilities spread through the five mission areas “prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery”

National Incident Management System (NIMS) - is a system prescribed by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 to coordinate emergency preparedness and incident management among various federal, state, local, and tribal agencies

National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) database – FEMA database used by federal, state, local, tribal jurisdictions to publish planned for training and exercises

NEP Base Plan – provides a strategically-focused foundational document of the principles and tenets of FEMA’s National Exercise Program

Performance evaluations – Part of the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), these evaluations are performed to insure that exercise programs are in accordance with EMPG Grant Guidance

Periodic reviews – Reviews of exercise programs to evaluate that a jurisdiction’s plans, policies, and capabilities meet EMAP standards

Plans, policies, and procedures – Developed by jurisdictions as a detailed written description of how a jurisdiction responds to emergencies. These include coordination, communication, command and control, notifications and alerts, and activities of responding personnel and agencies.

Post-incident reports – Usually the After-Action Report (AAR), this report contains a description of the jurisdiction’s performance against its plans, policies, and procedures linked to chosen target and/or core capabilities. This report contains a summary of both activities that went well and areas needing improvement.

Principal Objectives – Developed by the federal government for a two-year cycle to be used by federal departments and agencies in prioritizing training and exercising requirements.

Real-world events – Incidents requiring emergency personnel response to either natural or man-made disasters

State overarching exercise objectives – developed by the Nevada Division of Emergency Management and based on the state’s THIRA, state priorities of the Commission on Homeland Security, the State Preparedness Report, and the after action reports from both exercises and real-world events, and used to guide development of exercise-specific objectives throughout Nevada

Target Capabilities – The 37 capabilities developed by FEMA after the events of 9/11 are separated into four mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Response, and Recovery) and used as a framework to capture all necessary capabilities to confront natural and man-made disasters. These will be replaced by the 31 Core Capabilities separated into five mission areas.

Testing – Designed evaluation of capabilities, activities, and tasks necessary for plans, policies, and procedures in emergency management

Threat/Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) - a systematic and comprehensive approach for identifying a jurisdiction's most likely and highest-impacting threats and hazards, and assessing their risks. THIRA reports assist jurisdictions in identifying priorities for all emergency management programs.

Tracking of corrective actions – The Corrective Action Program (CAP) process used by a jurisdiction to insure improvements deemed necessary by evaluations during an exercise or real-world event are occurring

Whole Community – Collaborative approach using all government and non-government entities, including citizenry, to meet emergency management goals