

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Portal Training Sessions
March 16, 2004 – March 26, 2004

Exercises

- 1) In the Exercise Scheduler and Reporting System, explanations and examples should be provided to understand what information should be submitted for each field. For example, the choices listed under Scope may be confusing (e.g., what constitutes local, regional, etc.).

We have developed ‘Help Screens’ to explain each of the categories in the Exercise Scheduler and Exercise Overview. These help screens are accessible by clicking on the red question marks next to each category heading.

- 2) Can other exercise programs (e.g., CSEPP, REP, etc.) that may not involve a terrorism scenario be scheduled on the Portal?

Yes, please use the “other/specify” category under the Scenario category when employing a non-terrorism scenario. You can also select other Federal Sponsoring Agencies beside ODP and other sponsoring programs beside HSEEP.

- 3) Only the location of the exercise is listed as a category in the Add/Edit Exercise screen. Where are other participating jurisdictions listed?

Participating Federal, State, and local agencies should be submitted in the Exercise Overview, accessible through the Reporting function.

- 4) Is the calendar secure against edits from unauthorized users?

The designated portal administrator for the state can assign rights to individuals within the state. The only people that can view or change a state’s schedule are the people within that respective state that have been invited to the portal or an ODP Exercise Manager.

- 5) Whose responsibility is it to post After-Action Reports/Improvement Plans and other documents?

As described in the HSEEP doctrine, it is ultimately the responsibility of the State Administrative Agency (SAA) to submit AAR/IPs to ODP. A local jurisdiction or urban area conducting an exercise may use the portal to post documents for the State to review prior to submission.

- 6) Can the Exercise Scheduler be used for historical data?

Yes. Exercises that have already occurred can be entered into the Exercise Scheduler by selecting the corresponding calendar year.

- 7) Will States be able to transfer the Portal calendar to their own websites for a wider audience?

We are currently researching ways to convert the calendar to a downloadable Adobe PDF format. The Comprehensive Homeland Security Exercise Schedule (CHSXS) which contains Federal, State and local exercises, is currently available in a spreadsheet format in the Portal's Library.

- 8) Can Fiscal Year be added to the 'Funds Allocated' category in the Exercise Scheduler.

Fiscal Year has been added to the Exercise Scheduler. The 'Funds Allocated' category is an optional field and is available for states to track how much money they have allocated for each exercise.

- 9) Can you create an instruction guide for the portal?

A user's guide has been developed and is available on the Portal's Library under the folder entitled 'Exercise Portal Users Guide.' It provides instructions on scheduling and reporting exercises, as well as uploading and managing access to the Portal Library.

- 10) Why must a State designate two to three portal administrators?

Designated portal administrators can manage access to certain materials and information on the portal and invite others within the State to join the portal. The ODP State Administrative Agency or its designated Exercise or Training POC must approve any requests for portal administration. Instructions on portal administration are found in the Exercise Portal Users Guide.