



FEMA

**National Preparedness Directorate Information Bulletin
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TO: All State Administrative Agency Heads
All State Administrative Agency Points of Contact
All State Administrative Agency Exercise Points of Contact
All State Homeland Security Directors
All State Emergency Management Agency Directors
All Urban Area Core City/Core County Points of Contact
All FEMA Regional Administrators
All FEMA Regional Exercise Officers
All FEMA Regional Training Officers

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SUBJECT: Regional Exercise Support Program

The National Exercise Division (NED), in partnership with the FEMA Regional Offices, is pleased to announce the implementation of the Regional Exercise Support Program, formerly the NED Direct Support Exercise Program. This announcement marks a shift in strategy from a State-focused approach, organized by National Preparedness Directorate Headquarters, to a regional (multi-State) approach, organized by the FEMA Regions, to more effectively integrate national, regional, territorial, tribal, State, and local preparedness exercises. The primary goal of the Regional Exercise Support Program is to support and promote regionally coordinated exercise initiatives. The Regional Exercise Support Program will also serve as a mechanism through which several National Exercise Program (NEP) exercise initiatives will be conducted.

The NEP requires the United States Government to:

- Examine emerging policy issues through the conduct of exercises in a comprehensive manner on a routine basis;
- Incorporate current threat and vulnerability assessments into the exercise objectives and planning effort;
- Develop a corrective action process to ensure lessons from exercises are either sustained or improved as appropriate;
- Achieve national unity among appropriate Federal, territorial, tribal, State, local, private sector, and partner nation entities; and
- Design, develop, conduct and evaluate exercises in accordance with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

The NEP policy prescribes a standard quantity and type of exercise initiatives to be conducted annually in order to accomplish the aforementioned NEP tasks. Annual NEP exercise planning guidance is derived from strategic review of risks (threats, hazards, vulnerabilities, and operational risks), and from a five-year schedule of NEP exercises. FEMA Regions will have access to Regional Exercise Support Program funding and subject matter experts (SMEs) to participate in and conduct those exercises in their Region identified in the NEP annual schedule. Priority will be given to exercise initiatives that meet NEP requirements.

The Regional Exercise Support Program provides exercise support teams, through a contract vehicle, for all phases of design, development, conduct, and evaluation of preparedness exercises. At this time, the Regional Exercise Support Program will provide support for one discussion-based exercise (i.e., seminar, workshop or tabletop) and five operations-based (i.e. drills, functional exercises, full scale exercises) exercises within each of the 10 FEMA Regions. The Regional Exercise Support Program support is not limited to new exercise initiatives and can be applied to ongoing exercises to maintain continuity of existing planning schedules.

While consideration may be given to requests for support to an individual State, territorial, tribal, and or local exercises initiative, priority will be given to exercise initiatives that support collaboration within a Region. Exercise support requests must be associated with the appropriate State/territory multi-year training and exercise plans and, as they are developed, the regional multi-year training and exercise plan. These plans should incorporate broader preparedness planning such as operational plans, State Preparedness Reports and Annual Program Plan outputs.

State Administrative Agencies (SAAs), or their designees, are to determine their exercise support priorities and submit one application for each desired exercise. Local jurisdictions and Metropolitan regions designated under the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) are required to submit applications to their respective SAA. SAAs, territories, and tribes are required to coordinate with their FEMA Regional Exercise Officers prior to submitting the application to the FEMA Region; the Region, after reviewing the application, will then submit it to NED. Once a completed Regional Exercise Support Program application is received, it will be assigned a tracking number. A confirmation e-mail, including the tracking number, will be sent to the applicant within one week. Applications will be reviewed by the FEMA Regional Exercise Officer and the National Exercise Division utilizing the criteria outlined in the Regional Exercise Support Program Guide and Application. The applicant will be informed within two weeks, through an e-mail notification, as to the status of the application. Once an application is approved, an exercise support team member will reach out to the lead exercise planner via email and/or phone to initiate the planning process.

Applications for Regional Exercise Support in Fiscal Year 2008 must be submitted to the National Exercise Division no later than February 15, 2008. Please note, all exercises and corresponding support offered under the Regional Exercise Support Program must be completed by September 9, 2008 due to procurement restrictions.

How to Apply

To apply for support through the Regional Exercise Support Program, download the “Regional Exercise Support Program Application” from the HSEEP website at <http://hseep.dhs.gov>. All completed applications, after initial review by the FEMA Regional Office, must be submitted to hseep@dhs.gov. For a listing of FEMA Regional Offices and respective contact information, please visit <http://www.fema.gov/about/contact/regions>. For general information on HSEEP programs, including Training and Exercise Workshops and/or the HSEEP Mobile Training Course, please visit <https://hseep.dhs.gov>.

For additional questions or comments regarding the Regional Exercise Support Program, please email hseep@dhs.gov.