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Office of the Attorney General

Office of the Inspector General



Office for
State and Local
Domestic Preparedness
Support



***Fiscal Year 1999
State Domestic
Preparedness
Equipment
Program***

*State Strategic Plan
Development Conference*

Monograph

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Foreword

I am pleased to present this special monograph summarizing key information from the five State Strategic Plan Development Conferences conducted by the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support (OSLDPS), during March and April, 2000.

These conferences were held in conjunction with OSLDPS' Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program. As part of this grant program, each state is required to conduct threat, risk and needs assessments, as well as develop a three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy. The threat, risk and needs assessments are intended to assist each state in prioritizing local and regional needs in terms of equipment, training, exercises, and technical assistance. This information will provide the foundation for each state to develop a three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy which addresses these needs.

The conferences were designed to introduce states to the level of effort and the types of information required for the threat, risk and needs assessments. The conferences also provided an opportunity to ask questions and allow each state to begin formulating their assessment methodologies. This monograph adds to these efforts by providing a convenient reference tool for conference attendees that summarizes the briefings provided and lists frequently asked questions raised during the conferences.

I would also like to update you on the threat, risk and needs assessment process, and the use of the on-line data collection tool discussed at the regional conferences. States that elect to use this tool may begin registering users on July 5, 2000, in the first phase of this process. OJP will implement the second phase of the data collection process on August 1, 2000. At that time, software will be made available on-line for local jurisdiction data input. State agencies will be able to input data beginning August 15, 2000, when the third phase of the on-line process is implemented. Instructions for electronic submission of the data and statewide strategies using the world wide web can be found on OJP's web page at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/osldps.

I hope that you find this monograph to be a useful resource, and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues during the implementation of this program.

Sincerely,

C.H. "Butch" Straub, II
Director
Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support

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I. Background

Pursuant to Public Law 105-277, the Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support (OSLDPS) is providing block grants to each state through the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program. These new grants are intended to enhance the ability of state and local jurisdictions to respond to terrorist incidents involving the use of weapons of mass destruction. As part of this grant program, each state is required to conduct a capabilities and needs assessment, as well as develop a three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy. The capabilities and needs assessments are intended to assist each state in prioritizing local and regional needs in terms of equipment, training, exercises, and technical assistance. This information will provide the foundation for each state to develop a three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy which addresses these needs.

During March and April, 2000, OSLDPS conducted a series of five regional conferences to assist representatives of the state administrative agencies (SAAs) designated by the governor of each state. The purpose of these conferences was to explain, in detail, what the states had to do to apply for and administer funds under the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program. The conferences were designed to introduce states to the level of effort and the types of information required for the needs assessment. The conferences also provided an opportunity to ask questions and allow each state to begin formulating their assessment methodologies. These conferences were conducted at locations across the country to maximize the opportunity for SAA representatives to attend. The conference locations and dates were:

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	March 28-29, 2000
Atlanta, Georgia	April 4-5, 2000
Chicago, Illinois	April 10-11, 2000
St. Louis, Missouri	April 13-14, 2000
San Diego, California	April 18-19, 2000

This monograph has been prepared by OSLDPS to serve as a reference source for attendees at these conferences. The monograph summarizes the briefings provided and groups frequently asked questions by subject area. For a list of attendees at the conferences, or additional information on the OSLDPS Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program, contact:

**Office of State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support
US Department of Justice
810 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531**

**Telephone: 202-305-9887
Fax: 202-616-2922**

Additional information may also be obtained from the OSLDPS web site at:

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/osldps/

II. Conference Overview

The five State Strategic Plan Development Conferences were each two days in length. The first day of each conference began with an overview of the history of OSLDPS, its mission and available programs and resources. This was followed by a briefing on the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program which focused on the development of the capabilities and needs assessments and three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategies required of program participants. Concurrent breakout sessions were also held to address each of the elements required in the assessments. These included sessions focusing on capabilities and needs, threat and public health.

The second day of each conference began with a report from each of the three breakout groups. This was followed by a detailed briefing addressing the on-line submittal process for the statewide strategy, assessment data and other required information, as well as a discussion of the technical assistance available from OSLDPS to support this process. Each conference concluded with an open discussion period.

<u>Conference Agenda</u>		
<u>Day One</u>		
10:00 AM - 12:45 PM	Registration	All Attendees
1:00 PM - 1:15 PM	Welcome and Introductions	C.H. "Butch" Straub, Director, OSLDPS
1:15 PM - 1:30 PM	Conference Overview	Kyle Olson, Program Manager, RPI
1:30 PM - 2:00 PM	OSLDPS Program Overview	Andy Mitchell, Deputy Director, OSLDPS
2:00 PM - 2:45 PM	Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan Requirements	Frank Lepage, Chief, Grants Management Branch, OSLDPS
2:45 PM - 3:15 PM	Break	
3:15 PM - 6:15 PM	Breakout Groups: -Capabilities and Needs Assessment -Threat Assessment -Public Health Assessment	Bill May, Director of Operations and Training, NERRTC Bob Geeslin, Supervisory Special Agent, FBI Rick Spiegel, Epidemiologist, CDC
<u>Day Two</u>		
8:00 AM - 8:15 AM	Wrap-up from Day One	Kyle Olson, Program Manager, RPI
8:15 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakout Group Reports	Kyle Olson, Program Manager, RPI
9:00 AM - 9:15 AM	Break	
9:15 AM - 10:15 AM	On-Line Submittal Procedures	Karen Evans, Director, IRMD, OJP
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	OSLDPS Technical Assistance	Frank Lepage, Chief, Grants Management Branch, OSLDPS
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Break	
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Open Discussion and Q&A	
12:00 PM	Adjourn	

III. Conference Briefing Summaries

1. OSLDPS Program Overview
2. Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan Requirements
3. Capabilities and Needs Assessment Breakout Session
4. Threat Assessment Breakout Session
5. Public Health Assessment Breakout Session
6. On-line Submittal Procedures
7. OSLDPS Technical Assistance

1. Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support Program Overview

Abstract: This overview summarized key facts about the creation, mission and programs provided by OSLDPS.

OSLDPS was established in 1998 with the goal of developing and implementing a national program for enhancing the ability of states and local jurisdictions to respond to terrorist incidents involving the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). To accomplish this goal, OSLDPS provides grants for equipment acquisition, and funds training, technical assistance and exercise planning. OSLDPS is also actively engaged with other key federal stakeholders, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Non-governmental partners include the National Emergency Management Association, the National Governors Association, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the National Sheriff's Association and the United States Conference of Mayors.

In Public Law 105-261, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999, Congress mandated that OSLDPS oversee a nationwide assessment of the risk, threat and needs posed by terrorist incidents involving WMD at the state and local level. To facilitate this assessment, OSLDPS is providing planning funding to the states through the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program. These funds are intended to assist states in conducting the necessary assessments and for the development of three-year statewide strategies for addressing the needs identified. To further assist in the collection of this data, OSLDPS has partnered with the FBI and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop an on-line assessment tool to help identify jurisdictional capabilities and needs, potential threat elements, and public health requirements. Assessments performed at the local level using this tool will provide the basis for each state's three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy. This strategy will help states formulate priorities for equipment purchases, training, exercise development and technical assistance.

The OSLDPS Mission:

To develop and implement a national program to enhance the capacity of State and local agencies to respond to WMD terrorist incidents through coordinated training, equipment acquisition, technical assistance, and support for state and local exercise planning.

2. Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan Requirements Briefing

Abstract: This briefing summarized key elements of the needs assessment and strategic plans required of states participating in the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program.

Under the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program, the governor of each state is required to designate one agency as the state administrative agency (SAA). The responsibilities of the SAA include overseeing the required capabilities and needs assessment, development of the three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy and allocating grant funds for equipment once the assessments are completed and the statewide strategy is received and accepted by OSLDPS. The statewide strategy is a practical and functional multi-year plan, for each state based upon valid assessments. The assessments consider vulnerability, risk, public health, capabilities and needs, and also the current resources available. These assessments will provide the validation of current capabilities and potential requirements.

The needs assessment process is initiated by the SAA establishing a multi-disciplinary strategic planning team comprised of emergency management, law enforcement, fire, hazardous materials, emergency medical services, public health and public works personnel. Elements of the assessment and strategy development include jurisdiction identification and coordination, baseline capability assessments, jurisdiction prioritization, three-year projections and annual strategy updates. The statewide strategy should include a statement of the nature and extent of the problem, identification of current capabilities and gaps, a projection of needs, establishment of goals and objectives and periodic reevaluation of the plan. The end product is a statewide domestic preparedness strategy that covers a three-year time frame, incorporates state and local jurisdiction assessment data and provides a comprehensive plan for increasing the state's domestic preparedness response capabilities.

3. Capabilities and Needs Assessment Breakout Session

Abstract: This breakout session addressed issues relating to the overall capabilities and needs assessment.

The capabilities and needs assessment will establish a baseline for each state's current jurisdictional response capabilities, as well as identify any additional equipment, training, exercise and technical assistance needs.

The capabilities and needs assessment involves three tasks: 1) a vulnerability assessment; 2) a threat assessment; and, 3) a public health assessment. The vulnerability assessment addresses the accessibility of critical infrastructure to potential terrorist attacks and legal WMD hazards in the jurisdiction. The threat assessment identifies potential threat elements within the jurisdiction capable of terrorist activity. The public health assessment identifies capabilities to respond to incidents that create large public health hazards. These assessments, conducted simultaneously, form the basis of a fourth task, the development of a risk assessment profile (RAP). The RAP provides a summary of risk levels in each jurisdiction across a state, enabling that state to prioritize jurisdictional needs. The capabilities and needs assessment answers the following questions:

- (1) What do we need to do based on the RAP?
- (2) What can we currently do?
- (3) What do we need to obtain in order to minimize any shortfall between current and required capabilities?

As not all jurisdictions have the same response capability requirements, it is the state's responsibility to evaluate the needs submissions from the jurisdictions and verify the data from the other submitted assessments. States can then use this data to develop a statewide strategy covering such topics as equipment purchases, training requirements, exercises, technical assistance and other resource allocation.

4. Threat Assessment Breakout Session

Abstract: This breakout session addressed issues relating specifically to the threat assessment component of the overall needs assessment.

The FBI was mandated to perform a nationwide threat assessment. This effort has since been combined with the OSLDPS assessment effort. The FBI will play a supporting role in this process by assisting at the jurisdictional and state levels. The FBI's ability to assist every jurisdiction will depend upon available FBI resources in each jurisdiction. In addition to this local role, FBI headquarters will also assist in the evaluation and confirmation of any abnormally high threat levels identified in the needs assessment. This will provide states with a non-biased opinion concerning the threat level interpretation, as well as maintain a check on all threat levels likely to receive increased attention.

During the breakout session, participants also received advice on how to conduct the threat assessment. The threat assessment is based on recognizing potential threat elements within each jurisdiction and recording this information in a numerically coded format. A threat assessment profile is then sent to the state level for review, and then to the federal level. As the assessments are submitted, any threat levels coded higher than four will result in a follow-up with the jurisdiction submitting the data by an FBI representative.

5. Public Health Assessment Breakout Session

Abstract: This breakout session addressed issues relating specifically to the public health assessment component of the overall needs assessment.

The public health community must be an integral part of the needs assessment process and development of the three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategies. However, integrating the public health community into the assessment process will involve establishing a correlation between differing jurisdictional definitions, coordinating communication between local elected officials and aligning planning resources. A cooperative effort by both state and local jurisdictions is crucial in order to accurately evaluate the public health data collected.

This data will be focused on capacities and capabilities and will assess:

- (1) Workforce capacity;
- (2) Information systems capabilities;
- (3) Public health surveillance capacities;
- (4) Epidemiological investigation expertise;
- (5) Laboratory services and other diagnostic resources;
- (6) Local hospital capacities for responding to an emergency;
- (7) Availability of privately owned assets (ambulances, home health care providers, emergency care facilities, and university equipment and personnel);
- (8) Veterinary and environmental resources (personnel and/or equipment);
- (9) Regional and state assets available to local jurisdictions; and,
- (10) Overall strength of public health infrastructure.

Information obtained through the public health component of the assessments will be a factor in determining the allocation of future resources for training, equipment, exercises and technical assistance.

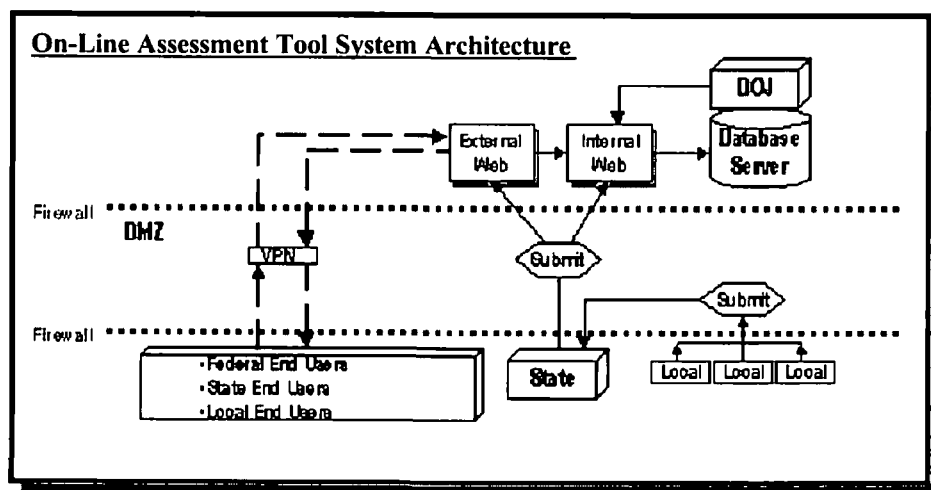
6. On-Line Submittal Procedures Briefing

Abstract: *This briefing addressed issues relating to procedures for submitting needs assessment data using the Office of Justice Programs' (OJP) on-line assessment tool.*

Each state, through its SAA and state public health agency, will designate the authorized users of the on-line assessment tool. Designated personnel from each local jurisdiction will then submit a password request to use the tool, and after this request is approved, enter the data compiled from their specific area of expertise (e.g., capabilities/needs, threat, public health). Capabilities/needs, threat and public health data entered at the local level will then be reviewed by the SAA and state public health agency before submission to OJP. Each state will use the data developed to formulate a statewide strategy which will be the basis for future OSLDPS grant funding allocations.

The security of the data submitted is of paramount concern to OJP. Efforts to ensure the security of the data include password authorization procedures, periodic web site penetration tests, multiple fire walls and 128-bit encryption. Access to the information is closely monitored, and each state will only be able to review its own data. After the data is submitted at the local level, the SAA, in cooperation with the state public health agency, may review the data and then request that the local jurisdiction amend or clarify their submission. The SAA will then make the final submission to OJP. The SAA will still be able to review the data after it is submitted, but further changes will need to undergo an OJP-controlled revision process.

For those jurisdictions that are unable to submit data on-line, other submission avenues are available. OJP is prepared to advise the states should they consider allowing jurisdictions to use another means to submit data. However, it is up to each state to determine what the other options will be.



7. OSLDPS Technical Assistance Briefing

Abstract: This briefing addressed technical assistance available to OSLDPS grantees, as well as the ability of OSLDPS grantees to purchase specialized equipment through the Defense Logistics Agency.

OSLDPS has established a State and Local Domestic Preparedness Technical Assistance Program. The State and Local Domestic Preparedness Technical Assistance Program provides technical assistance in three areas: 1) general technical assistance; 2) state strategy technical assistance; and, 3) equipment technical assistance. The purpose of the State and Local Domestic Preparedness Technical Assistance Program is to provide direct assistance to state and local jurisdictions in enhancing their capacity and preparedness to respond to WMD terrorist incidents.

General Technical Assistance: Provides general overall assistance to state and local jurisdictions for preparedness to respond to WMD terrorist incidents.

State Strategy Technical Assistance: Provides assistance to states in meeting the assessment and comprehensive planning requirements under OSLDPS' Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program.

Equipment Technical Assistance: Training on the use and maintenance of specialized WMD response equipment is offered under OSLDPS' Domestic Preparedness Equipment Support Program. Provided by mobile training teams, this assistance will be delivered on site in eligible jurisdictions.

OSLDPS technical assistance is provided without charge to a requesting state or local jurisdiction. All requests for technical assistance should be submitted to the jurisdiction's OSLDPS grants program manager. Each request should provide:

- (1) A brief description of the nature and extent of the requestor's domestic preparedness issue;
- (2) A brief description of the type of technical assistance needed;
- (3) A brief description of the efforts taken to address this need and the identification of other jurisdictions or agencies that have similar needs; and,
- (4) A brief description of the requestor's desired schedule for technical assistance, specifically when the technical assistance is needed and any other special information.

OSLDPS also offers assistance to states and local jurisdictions with equipment acquisition through an agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency. Through this agreement, OSLDPS grantees may now receive some equipment faster and at better prices than previously available.

IV. Conference Frequently Asked Questions

1. General Program Issues
2. On-Line Submittal Procedures
3. Capabilities and Needs Assessment
4. Threat Assessment
5. Public Health Assessment

1. General Program Issues

Question: How does the OSLDPS Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program relate to the OSLDPS Fiscal Year 1999 County and Municipal Agency Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program?

Answer: OSLDPS is shifting from direct grants to states and local jurisdictions to a program of state block grants. After Fiscal Year 1999, there will be no more direct grants to states or local jurisdictions.

Question: How will funds be distributed under the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program?

Answer: Each state will receive a \$250,000 base for equipment acquisition and a \$75,000 base for conducting the required capabilities and needs assessment and developing their three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy. The balance of funds will be distributed on a population-share basis.

Question: Can recipients of OSLDPS Fiscal Year 1999 County and Municipal Agency Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program grants also receive funds through the OSLDPS Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program?

Answer: If an agency is one of the 157 jurisdictions that received funding under the OSLDPS FY1999 County and Municipal Agency Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program, they will not be eligible to receive additional funds for equipment acquisition under the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program. However, these agencies may receive planning funds under this program as part of each state's effort to conduct their capabilities and needs assessment and develop a three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategy. In addition, these agencies will also be eligible to receive Fiscal Year 2000 and Fiscal Year 2001 funding for equipment acquisition.

Question: Can Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program funds be used for training and exercises?

Answer: No. Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program funds are solely for conducting the capabilities and needs assessments and for equipment acquisition. However, OSLDPS will work with the governor designated SAA's to provide training and technical assistance. OSLDPS will share the burden of this assistance with our other federal partners. OSLDPS also has \$1.5 million in funding set aside to work with the states for exercise support.

Question: Will health care institutions be able to obtain equipment through the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program?

Answer: If you include health care institutions in your local public health system, and the equipment they require complies with the list of approved equipment for this program, then there should not be a problem with supplying that equipment to them as long as the equipment will be designated for first responder use.

Question: Can Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program funds go to private sector response providers for equipment acquisition?

Answer: If the state assessment plan notes such private sector teams, and the private sector teams provide specific first response functions, the state should provide these teams with funding. However, if these response providers are part of a large corporation, it would be advisable to see if the corporation will buy the equipment before OSLDPS grant funding is offered.

Question: Much of the data to be collected for the assessments is sensitive. Is this data going to be publicly available?

Answer: OSLDPS and the other federal agencies involved in the program are aware of the concerns about data security. The most sensitive data to be collected is related to the threat and vulnerability assessments. However, this process is not designed to collect intelligence. All sensitive information will be retained at the local level. For reporting to the state, the information will be converted into numeric data only. Operational security of data pertaining to open cases will be maintained.

Electronic data security is also being implemented on the OJP servers. In addition, a letter from the OJP Office of General Counsel is available that states this assessment is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) at the federal level. However, each state should review their individual state laws.

Question: What will be done with the information collected?

Answer: The information collected will be available online to assist states as they develop their three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategies. As data is submitted by localities, states will be able to view the information and generate reports that will assist in this process.

Question: It is going to take a great deal of time to organize staffing and funding to accomplish this assessment. What is the required time line for completing the assessment?

Answer: There is no deadline for completing this assessment. However, a state will not be able to apply for Fiscal Year 2000 or Fiscal Year 2001 equipment acquisition funding until its assessment and statewide strategy has been submitted and accepted by OSLDPS.

Question: Is it acceptable to use assessments conducted in the past and incorporate them into

the final product? Is there a requirement on how recent the data must be?

Answer: There is no requirement on how recent the data must be. It is suggested that the question of data validity be directed to the local jurisdictions.

Question: Can OSLDPS mandate the hiring of staff to facilitate the state assessment process?

Answer: OSLDPS cannot mandate the hiring of a staff for this process. It is up to each state to deal with their own staffing needs.

Question: Does the equipment grant program recognize that states might decide to develop joint strategies and joint projects for regions or territories that stretch across state borders or build on existing Mutual Aid Agreements (MAAs)?

Answer: OSLDPS strongly encourages cooperation between jurisdictions within states and across state borders. In the online reporting system, states will only be able to view their own data. However, states can make their information available to other states off-line at their discretion. In addition, there is no direction from OSLDPS regarding existing MAAs. However, it is suggested that if states elect to include MAAs in their strategic plan, grants to jurisdictions should be tied to honoring these MAAs.

Question: There has been no mention of groups such as the National Domestic Preparedness Office, FEMA, NEMA, or the EPA. Working partnerships have already been established with these organizations. If this is a cooperative venture, will the states be receiving crucial information from these agencies? For example, the FBI has information regarding terrorist cases. Without access to this information, how can states accurately assess threat level issues?

Answer: All relevant federal agencies have been encouraged to participate in this process. However, it is the state's responsibility to foster the necessary working dialogue with personnel in the regional federal offices (e.g. FBI field offices, FBI WMD coordinators, etc.).

Question: Is there a glossary defining terms that apply on the regulatory level?

Answer: Yes. The definitions used by OSLDPS are based on definitions utilizing a tier system to assess response capabilities. These definitions were developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and other first responder organizations. All terms used in this process were derived from existing definitions as described in responder regulatory documents (NFPA, OSHA, etc.).

Question: Are there nationally approved standards as to what constitutes being prepared for a disaster?

Answer: This assessment is being used to assist in setting those minimum standards that will apply to all WMD response models.

2. On-Line Submittal Procedures

Question: Who authorizes access to threat assessment and public health data?

Answer: The SAAs, in coordination with the state public health agencies, authorize all users.

Question: Does all the required information have to be entered at once?

Answer: No. The system stores information and thus allows partial work. It also allows the user to navigate the steps in no particular order, so information can be entered as it becomes available.

Question: Can updates be done after the report is submitted, and will the system store different versions of that data?

Answer: The system will only store the latest version, but it establishes an audit trail of updates and edits. After submittal, jurisdictions will not be able to change information. The SAA needs to officially release that information back to the jurisdiction for them to update it.

Question: Is there an easy way for sharing the information in the system among states?

Answer: Currently there is no mechanism for sharing state information or assessments between or among states. The system is designed to have state data only visible to the submitting state.

Question: Some jurisdictions do not have the web access required to fill out the on-line assessment tool. How will they be able to complete the assessment?

Answer: While the assessment is a web-based tool, we are aware that not every jurisdiction has on-line access. Users may also submit data by filling out a hard copy form, or by using another electronic form that can be completed off-line and submitted through other means. OJP plans to provide the assessment tool in a variety of formats, including MS Word®, WordPerfect®, and Adobe Acrobat®. Additionally, the tool can be obtained on a disk, allowing easy data upload to the remote servers. Local libraries and personal computers can also be used.

Question: Who determines the list of eligible users at the state level and how will user identifiers (IDs) be assigned?

Answer: The SAA and state public health agency will determine the eligible users for each state. The SAA and state public health agency will then provide OSLDPS with a list of designated personnel who should receive user IDs at the state level. OSLDPS will refer to these lists to determine if a request for a user ID should be approved or denied.

Question: Whose machine receives the data when the local community submits the data?

Answer: It is sent to an OJP server, but the state owns the data. The OJP machine simply holds the data for the state.

Question: Will the states need significant information technology support to work with this online submittal software.

Answer: The state should not need such support, as the intent is for this tool to only require a simple understanding of the Internet.

Question: Is there a mechanism that gathers the jurisdictional information for the statewide strategy?

Answer: Yes. The on-line tool will compile this data for the state. Reports and roll up summaries may also be generated by the state using this data.

Question: When a locality submits their data prior to state approval, does it remain in the system?

Answer: Yes, the data remains in the OJP system, but only the submitting jurisdiction and the state may have access to it.

Question: Will a hard copy of the on-line submittal pages be available?

Answer: Yes, these will be downloadable from the OSLDPS web site. OJP will also open a working part of the OJP site so the states can use these screens for training. This will be done prior to the process being operational on-line, and will be password protected.

Question: Is the on-line submittal program browser based on 128-bit encryption?

Answer: Yes. Your browser will have to support 128-bit encryption, as well.

Question: Who approves the registrations of the jurisdictions?

Answer: The Governor-appointed designee from each state approves them.

Question: Certain counties and states have experienced access problems in the past. Are access problems anticipated, and has OJP researched the volume of jurisdictions reporting?

Answer: There is no one hundred percent guarantee that problems will not occur. This is the reason for posting the help desk telephone numbers and email addresses. OJP is prepared for a great number of jurisdictions accessing the system.

Question: Can someone at the state level change data submitted by the local jurisdiction?

Answer: No. If the state believes there is an error in the local jurisdiction's data, the state must contact the local jurisdiction and release the record back to the local jurisdiction so that it can be changed. Only the local jurisdiction will have the ability to change the data they submitted.

3. Capabilities and Needs Assessment

Question: What is the Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) designed for? Does it allow prioritization?

Answer: The intent of the RAP is to give states information to assist in jurisdiction prioritization. However, prioritization represents only one step in the overall process.

Question: Is it possible to use other information sources such as the Department of Defense, the Coast Guard, or the National Infrastructure Protection Center?

Answer: This information can be made available to states, but is not a substitute for the information collected by local jurisdictions. States need to document the methods they used to create risk assessments and strategic plans (regardless of the method used) to get approval. OSLDPS' preference is to have a consistent means of data collection across all states.

Question: Should privately owned facilities be included in the vulnerability assessment?

Answer: All assessments should be completed for one hundred percent of the land area and population of a state and include all of the selected critical facilities, whether public or private.

Question: Will the completion of this tool provide a "terrorist road map" that details vulnerabilities within the states?

Answer: Information identifying specific facilities will be retained at the jurisdiction level. The data submitted to the state will be in numerical form and will not contain detailed information on any specific sites, events, groups or individuals. These numbers will not provide a "terrorist road map".

Question: What is a jurisdiction?

Answer: It is up to each state to define their jurisdictions. A jurisdiction could be a city, county, metroplex, a city within a county and the surrounding county as separate entities, or a group of counties (a region). The guidelines for jurisdiction selection are included in both the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program Application Kit and the Fiscal Year 1999 State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Program Assessment and Strategy Development Tool Kit.

Question: Why is it necessary to complete a narrative assessment in addition to the classification in the TIER level system?

Answer: The information in the TIER matrix is used as backup for the written statewide domestic preparedness strategy. The written strategy is the focus of this process. The strategy gives the SAA the vehicle to clearly articulate the path the state will follow to ensure it is capable of responding to a WMD terrorism incident and justify state and jurisdiction validated needs to accomplish this process.

4. Threat Assessment

Question: If a State agency responds to an incident within a jurisdiction, who submits the corresponding data?

Answer: The assessment process only occurs at the jurisdictional level and therefore necessitates involvement from all relevant federal, state and local agencies. The state level analysis pertains to the interpretation of the assessments performed at the local level.

Question: How should mass casualty be defined?

Answer: It is defined as an incident that would overwhelm a jurisdiction's resources. However, the focus of the assessment should be on large-scale events.

Question: Will potential threat elements be specifically identified in the on-line submittal forms?

Answer: No. Identification of potential threat elements (e.g., critical infrastructure, facilities, transportation hubs, terrorist/extremist groups, etc.) is not intended to go beyond discussions conducted by the local jurisdiction's threat assessment working group. Only a numeric summary of this data will be sent to the state.

Question: How should a jurisdiction account for a threat in a neighboring jurisdiction?

Answer: If a jurisdiction has intelligence about a threat in a neighboring jurisdiction, they should have a responsibility through information sharing to inform that jurisdiction of the threat. Potential threat elements (PTEs) should only be recorded in those jurisdictions in which the PTEs carry on day-to-day operations. However, a threat incident that occurs within your jurisdiction that was conducted by a non-resident PTE would be included in your threat incident history.

Question: Why are the jurisdictions being limited to listing only fifteen potential threat elements?

Answer: A numerical limit needed to be established. If a jurisdiction has more than fifteen PTE's they should consider their highest level threat groups.

Question: Have FBI WMD coordinators received the information regarding this threat assessment effort?

Answer: Yes. Although all FBI WMD coordinators were not able to attend one of the regional planning conferences, all FBI Field Offices have been apprised of the process and encouraged to participate. Contact your local FBI WMD coordinator if you require their participation or have a specific question for them.

Question : How should hoaxes such as the anthrax or bomb threats be considered when conducting the assessment?

Answer : All prior hoaxes that elicited an emergency response should be included in the prior threat incident history if occurring on or after January 1, 1998.

A perpetrator who is alleged to be responsible for such a hoax may or may not satisfy the definition of a PTE. However, if a PTE has been found to exist, the fact that the threat was a hoax would nullify any legitimate justification for the finding of intent, capability and targeting. These factors are reserved for those entities that are genuinely believed to be predisposed to utilize a WMD with mass casualty results. Assessment groups should use common sense when assigning a threat value to identified PTEs. The juvenile who simply calls in a threat of WMD nature in order to avoid a test, for example, is not someone whose intentions and capabilities can be justified as credible.

It should be noted that any past threat incidents where resolution resulted in the cessation of a PTE to act, should only be included in prior threat incident history.

Question: Can we get copies of the PowerPoint presentation for the threat assessment breakout session for use at the state or jurisdictional level?

Answer: Yes. To obtain copies of the PowerPoint presentation for the threat assessment breakout session, contact:

**Office of State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support
US Department of Justice
810 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531**

**Telephone: 202-305-9887
Fax: 202-616-2922**

Additional information may also be obtained from the OSLDPS web site at:

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/osldps/

5. Public Health Assessment

Question: If a state has a centralized health department, but information is to be gathered from the county level, you will get a totally different picture than if that information had come from the state. Where should the information come from?

Answer: The intent is to assess preparedness for all **local** jurisdictions within a state. For that reason, it is ideal to obtain the information at the county level. You may want to combine a few small counties, but gathering information from large areas becomes problematic. Information collected at the county level can always be aggregated to provide an assessment for a larger area, but it is difficult to split information gathered on a macro level into smaller units for evaluation. There may be some information available at the state level which may provide a different picture of local response capabilities. If that is the case, the information should be reflected in the overall state-wide domestic preparedness strategy, or state representatives may want to discuss specific issues with localities and request that local information reflect the outcome of those discussions.

Question: How far do the public health capabilities for the state extend? For example, if a county does not have a certain public health capability, but an adjacent county does, is that considered a capability?

Answer: The issue is whether local jurisdictions have certain capacities and capabilities accessible to them in the event of an emergency. Therefore, if a county is aware of resources that are available, whether they are from a neighboring county or at the state level, they should consider those capabilities in evaluating their ability to respond within a specified time frame.

Question: It will be difficult to get local public health entities, particularly those in remote areas, to participate in this assessment. Is there anything to entice these entities to participate? Otherwise, this might be viewed as an unfunded mandate.

Answer: This assessment is not a mandate. The tool is designed to assess a locality's readiness to respond and to help the state develop its statewide domestic preparedness strategy. However, completion of the assessment instrument will provide strong justification for providing resources to address identified needs, and this could influence future decisions. Many state and federal agencies will look to this type of information as the basis for future funding. Therefore, although the assessment may not provide public health agencies with tangible monetary benefits in the short term, it will have rewards in the long term.

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National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)
Box 800
Fayetteville, NC 28404-0800

Question: How will collecting this data assist states as they develop their three-year statewide domestic preparedness strategies?

Answer: This data will enhance the planning process by providing a more complete picture of response community capabilities and needs. The data will assess: 1) workforce capacity; 2) information systems capabilities; 3) public health surveillance capacities; 4) epidemiological investigation expertise; 5) laboratory services and other diagnostic resources; 6) local hospital capacities for responding to an emergency; 7) availability of privately owned assets; 8) veterinary and environmental resources; 9) regional and state assets available to local jurisdictions; and, 10) overall strength of public health infrastructure.