Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

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Email **HSEEP@dhs.gov** with comments or questions.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

November 2005, Issue 4

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is a capabilities-based exercise program that provides a standardized methodology and language for designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating all homeland security exercises.

The purpose of HSEEP is to facilitate the creation of self-sustaining, capabilities-based exercise programs by providing tools and resources such as policy, guidance, training, technology, and direct support. This blended approach to HSEEP implementation increases regional, State, and local exercise expertise, while advancing a standardized means of assessing and improving preparedness across the Nation.

This quarterly newsletter was created to communicate new HSEEP initiatives, volume revisions, and recent and upcoming events.

Note: This newsletter outlines new HSEEP-related initiatives and revisions of the volumes; however, the fundamentals of the exercise planning and evaluation process and methodology are not being altered. Tools and resources are being implemented to streamline the exercise process from planning through evaluation. These tools and resources will incorporate new policies such as *Homeland Security Presidential Directives* (*HSPD*) *5* and *8*, and ensure a common framework that all exercises, regardless of scenario or scope, can adopt.

HSEEP Initiatives

HSEEP Training Courses

The Preparedness Directorate's Office of Grants and Training (G&T---formerly the Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness/Office for Domestic Preparedness) is coordinating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute (EMI) on all exercise training courses currently being developed or revised.

Coordination will ensure consistency among all exercise curriculums including Independent Study courses, the Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP), State delivered ("G") courses, and the HSEEP Mobile Training Course, among others.

Independent Study-120 Course Revision - G&T is continuing to work with FEMA's EMI to incorporate the HSEEP guidance and methodology into EMI's "An Orientation to Community Disaster Exercises," Independent Study-120 (may be renamed to Independent Study-121).

Independent Study-120 introduces individuals to the basics of exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. The course will also lay the foundation for future courses that will address further details of a comprehensive exercise program.

Update: Beta testing for the Independent Study-120 course has begun. A link to the course was recently sent out to over 75 individuals to gather feedback. The interactive course includes module quizzes and games and a certificate upon completion. It has been used as the prerequisite for the HSEEP Mobile Training Course pilots and will continue to be the prerequisite to the Mobile Course after it is finalized and released.

To beta test Independent Study-120, visit the new HSEEP website. Please complete the accompanying survey available online to provide anonymous feedback. G&T will continue to incorporate feedback received from users until the course is finalized early next year. When finalized, Independent Study-120 will be hosted on a learning management system and will be accessed through EMI's website and the *First Responder Training* portal.

HSEEP Mobile Training Course - The HSEEP Mobile Training Course will be modular in structure and will take students through the full spectrum of exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. It is intended for exercise program managers, planners, controllers, evaluators, and elected officials at the Federal, State, and local level.

The course will be three to four days in length with a class size of approximately 50 students. Throughout the course, students will be grouped into teams and will complete 18 activities that will apply the knowledge learned in the modules. It will also cover new initiatives and updated policy including the HSEEP Toolkit, *Target Capabilities List (TCL)*, and the *Universal Task List (UTL)*.

Update: The HSEEP Mobile Training Course is currently in the final stages of development. Three pilot courses have been conducted for a diverse audience over the past three months. The pilots were conducting for the following groups:

- HSEEP Mobile Training Course Working Group (20 State and local representatives)
- G&T Direct Support Teams

- State of Ohio representatives, as well as exercise managers from Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois

Each pilot has resulted in valuable improvements including revised document formats and additional small-group activities.

Future pilot courses will be held for State and local representatives in Maryland and California, and for Federal partners in Washington, D.C. The course will be presented to the G&T Training Course Review Board in January after the pilots are completed. G&T anticipates that the course will be finalized for delivery in February. Look for a direct support application for the Mobile Course on the HSEEP website in January 2006.

HSEEP Toolkit

The HSEEP Toolkit is a suite of web-based applications that walks users through design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning of exercises. It also provides guidance, timelines, and associated sample documentation from the HSEEP volumes.

Update: G&T is continuing to beta test and develop the HSEEP Toolkit. It will link to several other tools including a Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) builder and an After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) system.

Individuals who would like to beta test the Toolkit must be current members of the G&T Secure Portal. Members of the Secure Portal can gain access to the "Toolkit plug-in" by sending a request to hseep@dhs. gov. If you are not currently a member of the Secure Portal, send an email to askcsid@dhs.gov requesting access to the "HSEEP Organization" and "Toolkit plug-in."

HSEEP Website

The HSEEP website serves as the central interface and destination for individuals inquiring about new HSEEP initiatives, communications, related links, tools, and applications. The site links to the following:

- HSEEP Volumes
- HSEEP Toolkit
- HSEEP Newsletter
- *HSEEP Volume IV* Searchable Database

Update: The HSEEP website is live and can be accessed by visiting http://hseep.dhs.gov. The site offers several reference materials and links to external resources. A portion of the website is still under construction and will be available by the end of the year. By January, visitors to the site will be able to learn more about the history of HSEEP and related programs, and access a "Frequently Asked Questions" page.

The HSEEP website is the first Department of Homeland Security (DHS) website to meet the DHS Branding Guidelines and be approved by the DHS Public Affairs Office. To provide feedback on the HSEEP website, please send an email to hseep@dhs.gov. This site will not replace existing sites or portals.

After Action Report/Improvement Plan System *NEW*

G&T is developing an AAR/IP system, a web-based application that will include an AAR/IP generation tool and tracking and analysis system. The generation tool will guide an exercise evaluator through the process of creating an AAR. It will be supported by electronic exercise data that can be viewed while drafting the AAR and incorporated into the AAR text.

The system will produce AARs that are consistent in structure and will be readily available for further aggregation and trend analysis. This feature will facilitate the assessment of progress towards implementing the *National Preparedness Goal* as outlined in *HSPD-8*.

The tracking and analysis system will enable Federal, State, and local emergency response and homeland security officials to identify, prioritize, track, and analyze the recommendations and IPs developed from exercises and real-world events.

The AAR/IP system is expected to be released to the emergency response and homeland security community for testing in the spring of 2006.

Exercise Program Management and Planning Lessons Learned

The National Exercise Program (NEP) and *Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS)* continue to work together to distribute exercise program management and planning lessons learned to the homeland security community. This research initiative will continue to produce a wide array of new content on issues including the following:

- Managing and maintaining an effective exercise program (e.g., multi-year exercise planning, scheduling, and monitoring)
- Designing and developing exercises (e.g., recruiting actor volunteers, coordinating exercise logistics, handling media-related issues, forming a planning team)
- Coordinating training courses with exercises
- Evaluating exercises and tracking improvements

Update: An exercise-specific area of the *LLIS* website has been developed to highlight this new area of research. This portion of the site will go live by the end of the year. NEP and the *LLIS* team have recently finalized the project's research agenda and are currently in the process of researching and drafting new lessons learned and good story documents. This content will be posted on the *LLIS* exercise pages as it is completed.

The *LLIS* team is interested in developing contacts with individuals who have exercise subject matter expertise. The team is also seeking additional exercises and exercise planning meetings to attend. To be included in the research process, please send an email to exercise@llis.dhs.gov.

An online survey is available for individuals who would like to share lessons learned or good stories from previous exercises. The survey is intended to solicit information from planners, exercise managers, and participants about innovative processes and techniques for developing exercise programs. The survey is located on the HSEEP website.

National Exercise Schedule Working Group

The National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) is a compilation of all national-level, Federal, State, and local exercises. A NEXS Working Group was formed to discuss the fundamentals of the exercise scheduling process and the key characteristics of a collaborative scheduling system.

The NEXS Working Group consists of subject matter experts from DHS agencies and directorates and has been expanded to include State and local representation. Future meetings will include interagency partners. The goal of the Working Group is to develop a streamlined and more user friendly web-based scheduling system.

Update: The second NEXS Working Group meeting was held on September 26th to discuss key scheduling processes, agree on common terminology and definitions, and develop scheduling de-confliction and synchronization rules. Issues discussed include the following:

- Examination of levels of access to a scheduling system, including delegation of scheduling functions within an organization
- Clarification and refinement of data fields appropriate to a scheduling system
- Exploration of de-confliction and synchronization methodology
- Incorporation of the *TCL* and *UTL* in exercise scheduling
- Integration of an exercise scheduling system with the exercise lifecycle

The next meeting will be held in early December. Members will explore policy foundations and architecture and review revised data fields. The group will also discuss components of a scheduling process including reporting functions, exercise visibility, and de-confliction and synchronization algorithms.

For further information on the NEXS Working Group, please contact Bill Schwinn, G&T Exercise Manager, at NEXS@dhs.gov.

Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan and Schedule *NEW*

G&T is developing a Multi-year *Training* and *Exercise* Plan and Schedule template that will eventually replace the current Multi-year *Exercise* Plan and Schedule template. This revised template will tie exercise and training schedules together in order apply knowledge gained from training courses to existing and future exercises.

The Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan will allow program managers to identify their training and exercise priorities based on Homeland Security Strategies, the previous year's IPs, and the national priorities from the *National Preparedness Goal*. The plan will also identify the capabilities associated with the entity's priorities.

Training will be based on the identified capabilities and the exercises will validate those capabilities. The training courses and exercises will be placed on a multi-year schedule. The schedule will identify high-level scheduling information such as training area focus, type of exercise, scenario category, and estimated conduct dates by quarter.

G&T will begin piloting this concept for select States beginning in January 2006.

HSEEP Volume Revisions

Exercise Evaluation Guides

The Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs) are being revised to incorporate the *TCL* and the *UTL*. The revised EEGs are also being reformatted to better assist evaluators in collecting data to assist with post-exercise analysis and the development of AARs/IPs.

Update: An initial meeting of the Interagency Exercise Evaluation Working Group convened on August 19th to create a more efficient EEG. The four overarching revision goals for the EEGs include the following:

- Support the *UTL* and *TCL*
- Encourage consistency and quality of data collection and information
- Support qualitative and quantitative exercise analysis and AARs
- Ensure a more user friendly and intuitive format

Comments from Federal, State, and local representatives are being reviewed, and a revised EEG format will be distributed for wider review and comment. A follow-on Exercise Evaluation Working Group meeting will be held in December. Comments on the existing EEGs or suggestions for revisions are welcome. To provide feedback, please send an e-mail to hseep@dhs.gov.

HSEEP Volume IV Searchable Database

The *HSEEP Volume IV* Searchable Database will allow users to search and sort sample documents, templates, and multimedia files in a more efficient manner. Individuals will be able to view, download, and upload exercise planning and management documents.

Update: The *HSEEP Volume IV* Searchable Database will be available on the HSEEP website by the end of the year.

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Recent and Upcoming Events

Live Response

Live Response is a 60-minute live discussion with a panel of experts and covers topics relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) recovery. Audience members and panelists also participate in question and answer sessions. Discussions are made available by Saint Petersburg College's National Terrorism Preparedness Institute (NTPI).

Mike Forgy, Branch Chief of G&T State and Local Exercises, was a guest on *Live Response* on September 28, 2005 to discuss HSEEP. He discussed the requirements of exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

Update: Mike Kaminski, G&T Exercise Manager, was a guest on November 16th and the broadcast focused on post-incident reporting and lessons learned. *Live Response* continued to cover information from HSEEP,

such as hot washes, AARs, IPs, and IP implementation.

To access the November 16th or September 28th broadcasts, visit http://terrorism.spcollege.edu.
Participation in *Live Response* discussions is limited to registered members of the NTPI site.

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Announcements

National Planning Scenarios and Exercises *NEW*
The *National Planning Scenarios*, developed by a Federal interagency working group and approved by the Homeland Security Council, illustrate the range of threats and hazards that could potentially face the Nation. They outline the potential scope, magnitude, and complexity of these events.

Exercise planners may use the *National Planning Scenarios* as a reference or model for scenario design, or as a planning tool to help conceptualize the magnitude of threats facing an entity. **It is not necessary to replicate the *National Planning Scenarios* in exercises; however, planners should use the tasks and capabilities derived from the *National Planning Scenarios* to design objectives and a scenario tailored to the jurisdiction.**

Preparedness Directorate's Office of Grants and Training *NEW*
Following his confirmation, Secretary Michael Chertoff initiated a comprehensive review of DHS's organization, operations, and policies to ensure that every element of DHS is mission-focused and best organized to meet potential threats to the Nation. Changes are being made to DHS's structure and operations to better ensure that DHS resources and programs are being effectively applied to meet the DHS mission and security goals.

As a result of this review, DHS's organizational structure has been altered. The Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness (SLGCP) and the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP) have been renamed. The new name that represents the divisions within both offices is the Preparedness Directorate's Office of Grants and Training (G&T). For more information, please visit the DHS Organization page on the DHS public website.

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HSEEP Exercise and Program Management Highlights

Ohio's Improvement Plan Tracking System *NEW*

The State of Ohio recognizes that tracking IPs is an integral component of the exercise process and overall preparedness. Ohio has developed an AAR/IP database and tracking system to assist with this process.

The database and tracking system has been developed using Microsoft Access and provides a mechanism to track the total number of exercises by scenario or hazard, exercise type, and participating agency or organization. It also tracks the number of exercise objectives accomplished in a given time frame.

Additionally, equipment needs from various exercises can be tracked and sorted to identify local, regional, and State level resource requirements. The AAR/IP tracking system has been structured to provide a notification when an improvement action is due, as well as the ability to sort IPs by exercise and/or objective or task.

This system will be used as a model for the national AAR/IP system, which will be web-based and accessible to all States and territories.

For further information on Ohio's AAR/IP database and tracking system, please contact Darren Price, Ohio Exercise Program Manager, at deprice@dps.state.oh.us.

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Links

Links to the G&T Secure Portal will require a login.

To learn more about HSEEP policy and guidance, please see **HSEEP Volumes I-III**.

Read the **Models, Simulations, and Games Reports**.

HSPD-8 Documents include the full versions of the UTL and TCL, among others.

To apply for G&T direct support, use the **Direct Support Application and Users Handbook**.

The **Exercise Plan Workshop Packet** includes templates and guidance for conducting an EPW.

All archived **HSEEP Newsletters** are stored on the G&T Secure Portal and are available for viewing.

The comprehensive **National Exercise Schedule** is offered in three formats.

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To provide feedback on the HSEEP newsletter or share an exercise or program management story to be used in a future issue, please send an email to hseep@dhs.gov.