

The following pages are excerpted from the *DHS Capabilities Assessment Coordinators Guide* (February 2007).

Respond to Self Assessment Measures

The Table Coordinator will facilitate a collaborative discussion with Assessment Participants to determine one appropriate response for each Self Assessment measure, using the regional approach described below. Participants must reach consensus about the scale value that best represents the region's progress. The Table Coordinator will record the scale value in the Self Assessment Tool and provide an explanation of the response as necessary.

Regional Approach to Measure Responses

In determining one regional response for each measure, the group should collaboratively discuss the capability for the entire region, taking into consideration the context of the event (Incident of National Significance), current resources, plans, MOUs, and other factors. Given that collaboration is key to successful preparedness and to achieving many of the capabilities, **it is important that the region is evaluated as one entity instead of several individual units.** An example of responding to a Self Assessment measure using this regional approach is provided on the following page.

Response Approaches:

- ✓ As one entity, not individual jurisdictions
- ✗ As individual jurisdictions, taking the lowest score to represent the region
- ✗ As individual jurisdictions, taking the average score to represent the region

Discussion of progress against specific measures should consider the following two factors, mutual aid and subjective terms:

Mutual Aid and Federal Resources: Resources and personnel obtained through a mutual aid agreement should rarely be given the same weight as resources or personnel that the region possesses itself. The factors listed at right should be considered for each mutual aid agreement and be used to weigh the value of the resources and/or personnel obtained through the agreement (i.e. an agreement that is old or that does not address de-confliction of personnel or resources should not be given as much weight as one that is relatively new and for which there are no competing mutual aid agreements).

**Mutual Aid & Federal Resources:
Factors to Consider**

- Formality of the agreement
- Date created/Date last updated
- The existence of competing mutual aid agreements
- The region's capability without the agreement
- The risk that the resources may be activated under the NRP for use in another emergency (for Federal resources)

Definition of Subjective Terms: Since standards and specific parameters have not been set for many of the activities and capabilities, subjective terms such as "effective" or "comprehensive" may be used for some of the measures. For example, a measure may read, "Our region effectively manages..." The term "effective" in this case may vary based on a locality's definition. Participants should come to a common understanding of what the subjective term means before determining progress against the measure.

Example: Regional Approach to Developing Assessment Responses

The figure below contains a sample measure and a mock description of how each jurisdiction in the region would respond to the measure. The challenge is to combine these individual responses appropriately and select a scale value that represents the capability of the entire region. For this example, a regional score of 4 was selected. Begin by reviewing the measure and jurisdiction explanations and then read below the figure for the rationale behind this score.

Measure: Our region currently has (or has access to) the personnel it needs to support Urban Search and Rescue (e.g. heavy equipment contractors, structural engineers, robotics, police, firefighters).

Scale:

No Progress			Limited Progress			Moderate Progress			Substantial Progress			Outcome Achieved	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A		

Illustrative Description of Jurisdictional Capabilities (Mock-up):

Jurisdiction:	A	B	C
Jurisdictional Capability:	No Urban Search and Rescue team, but has an agreement with Jurisdiction B to use the Jurisdiction B team, if necessary	Has an established Urban Search and Rescue team, and the capacity to assist one other jurisdiction if necessary	No Urban Search and Rescue team, and no specified access to one within the region

Regional Score: 4

In determining the regional score for this example, many factors were considered. Two-thirds of the region currently has, or has access to, the personnel needed to support Urban Search and Rescue. While one-third of the region does not currently have access to these personnel, they have discovered through the collaborative Self Assessment process that Jurisdiction B has the appropriate personnel and has the capacity to help them as long as all three Jurisdictions do not need the personnel at the same time. So, Jurisdiction C has recognized the need to develop an MOU with Jurisdiction B, which would lead to an improvement in the regional capability. However, Jurisdiction A and Jurisdiction C would then be competing for one set of resources from Jurisdiction B. In order to achieve the specified outcome, Jurisdiction C needs to develop the MOU with Jurisdiction B, and the region needs to obtain more Urban Search and Rescue personnel so that they would be able to handle the entire region at once, if necessary.

Based on this review, the following factors led to the determination that the region is currently making moderate progress, and is close to nearly achieving the outcome.

- 2/3 of region possesses the capability
- There is a gap in capability for 1/3 of the region
- MOU needs to be put in place
- Strategy for addressing de-confliction of personnel needs to be developed

This currently places them at the low end of the Moderate Progress end of the scale (based on the explanation for that section). Significant efforts are underway, but the objective has not yet been reached. Important gaps still remain, and strategies have not yet been developed to overcome them. The regional score, therefore, is currently a 4. After Jurisdiction C puts the appropriate MOU in place, the region's capability will become greater, and the outcome will be achieved once de-confliction has been adequately addressed.