
Section 9. Program Evaluation and Assessment

9.1. Overview

The most basic measurement of success can be defined by answering two simple questions:

- Has the program been implemented as planned?
- Does it work?

Plans for NET Guard Program evaluation should include multiple audiences, approaches and measures for addressing these basic questions.

Emergency exercises or actual deployments are both good methods for evaluating the success of response functions. Hands-on experience and lessons learned are excellent indicators of the program's success, and the after-action review process helps to identify areas for improvement.

Discussions, interviews and surveys provide evaluation from:

- **Organizations receiving services** - regarding their satisfaction with services and areas for improvement
- **Volunteers** - to identify and incorporate their program evaluations and suggestions for improvement as well as to evaluate their satisfaction as volunteers and areas for improvement in volunteer management
- **Partners** - to evaluate the program and the partnerships to identify both program improvements and areas for strengthening or expanding collaboration and partnership relationships



9.2. Reevaluate and Reprioritize Needs

Several different factors could make it necessary to reevaluate the original assessment and gap analysis as well as reprioritize or consider previously discounted or overlooked additional needs. For example:

- Additional needs and gaps revealed by disasters or exercises

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- Changes in local state or federal emergency operation plans
 - Expanded Mutual Aid agreements
 - Availability of resources and funding
 - Changes in technology
 - Loss or addition of partners or sponsors

Just as the original development of the NET Guard Program was an iterative process, so is the process of sustaining the existing NET Guard Program. As changes in the community occur, the program should go back through the developmental processes of assessing, validating, refining or revising goals and objectives, building the structure to support each new need, and establishing priorities of new needs within the existing program plan.

9.3. Define and Implement Changes

Once you have identified an unmet need and provided for the structure to satisfy that need, add the functions and supporting program changes to the NET Guard Program plan, policies, and procedures. Defining and implementing these changes helps to ensure that:

- Changes have been communicated to other program personnel
- Resources are available
- Volunteer training and operations are updated
- Appropriate stakeholders have been advised

9.4. Define and Document Lessons Learned

The written NET Guard Program plan should be reviewed regularly and updated. Considerations for updating the plan include:

- Lessons learned from training exercises
- Actual emergencies in the local area
- Information learned from other deployed NET Guard Programs in other areas
- Feedback from new volunteers with different areas of expertise
- Feedback from program partners

Once the NET Guard Program is implemented, revise the plan annually to ensure the program adapts to changes in state, federal, or local policy, and incorporates the lessons learned and areas for improvement.

9.5. Tools to Help with Program Evaluation and Assessment

Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
City of Austin - After Action Report for NET Guard Training Exercise in 2009	City of Austin - After Action Report for Training Exercise - 2009.doc	Either
City of Austin - After Action Report for NET Guard Training Exercise in 2010	City of Austin - After Action Report for Training Exercise - 2010.doc	Either

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