# Collecting Data Using Exercise Evaluation Guides

## Terminology

The Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs) are structured to capture information specifically related to the evaluation requirements developed by the Exercise Planning Team. The following evaluation requirements are documented in each EEG:

**Capabilities:** The distinct critical elements necessary to achieve a specific mission area (e.g., prevention). To assess both capacity and gaps, each capability includes capability targets.

**Capability target(s):** The performance thresholds for each capability; they state the level or amount of capability that players aim to achieve. Capability targets are typically written as quantitative or qualitative statements and are composed of three parts: a critical task, an impact, and a timeframe.

**Critical tasks:** The distinct elements required to perform a capability; they describe the specific actions needed to achieve the capability target. Critical tasks generally include the activities, resources, and responsibilities required to fulfill capability targets. Capability targets and critical tasks may derive from operational plans, standard operating procedures, or discipline-specific standards.

**Performance ratings:** The summary description of performance against target levels. Performance ratings include both Target Ratings, describing how exercise participants performed relative to each capability target, and Capability Ratings, describing overall performance relative to the entire capability.

## Documenting Observations

For each EEG, evaluators provide a target rating, observation notes including an explanation of the target rating, and a final capability rating. In order to efficiently complete these sections of the EEG, evaluators focus their observations on the capability targets and critical tasks listed in the EEG.

Observation notes include *if* and *how* quantitative or qualitative targets were met. For example, a capability target might state, “*Within 4 hours of the incident….”* Observation notes on that target should include the actual time required for exercise players to complete the critical task(s). Additionally, observations should include:

How the target was or was not met;

Pertinent decisions made or decision-making processes;

Requests made and how requests were handled;

Resources utilized;

Activation or implementation of plans, policies, processes, and procedures, requests for resources, use of mutual aid agreements, etc.;

Roles and responsibilities and authorities of the government agencies, jurisdictions, and private organizations;

Information sharing with other agencies and the public; and

Any other factors contributed to the results.

Evaluators may also note any obvious cause or underlying reason the target was not met, or critical task was not completed. However, observation notes should not include recommendations. As part of the after-action and improvement planning processes, the information will be reviewed and confirmed, the observations documented in the AAR, and areas for improvement requiring further action determined.

*Note:* Exercise observation and data collection can differ between discussion-based exercises and operations-based exercises. Observation notes for discussion-based exercises should reflect observations from participants’ discussions. Observation notes for operations-based exercises should record participant actions, which form the analytical basis for determining the successful demonstration of critical tasks and capability targets.

## Assigning Ratings

Based on their observations, evaluators assign a target rating for each capability target listed on the EEG*.* Evaluators then consider all target ratings for the capability and assign an overall capability rating. The rating scale includes four ratings:

**Performed without Challenge (P):** The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

**Performed with Some Challenges (S):** The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.

**Performed with Major Challenges (M):** The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

**Unable to be Performed (U):** The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).

## Wrap-Up

At the conclusion of the exercise, submit all completed EEGs and any supporting documentation to the Lead Evaluator.