



# Frequently Asked Questions

## THREAT AND HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT (FY2012)

### ***What is a Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)?***

The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment is a tool that allows a jurisdiction to understand its threats and hazards and how the impacts may vary according to time of occurrence, season, location, and other community factors. This knowledge helps a jurisdiction establish informed and defensible capability targets.

### ***Who is required to complete a THIRA?***

The THIRA requirement, as it applies to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) preparedness grants, is that the following entities must complete a THIRA by December 31, 2012 as a condition of their FY 2012 grant funding:

- All 56 State Administrative Agencies (SAAs) receiving funding under the FY 2012 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) and the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program; and
- All 31 Urban Areas receiving funding under the FY 2012 Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) grant program.

All tribal nations that receive FY 2012 Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP) funding (announcement of recipients scheduled for June 29, 2012) are encouraged *but not required* to complete the THIRA by December 31, 2012.

Other jurisdictions such as local units of government and regional planning groups are highly encouraged, *but not required*, to complete a THIRA in conjunction with the SAA. The SAA is expected to engage their whole community, including tribal nations, to ensure that the entire scope of statewide risk is incorporated into the state's THIRA.

### ***What is the State Preparedness Report (SPR)?***

The State Preparedness Report is an annual capability assessment. The *Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA)* requires an SPR from any state/territory receiving federal preparedness assistance administered by the Department of Homeland Security. Each state submits an SPR to FEMA.

### ***How has the SPR changed since last year?***

There are three changes to the SPR methodology from the 2011 version:

- In 2011, states and territories set operational targets using a standardized list of threats and hazards and linked these targets to core capabilities. Now that *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 201* has been released, these steps are no longer necessary. The 2012 SPR replaces the operational targets with more specific core capability targets from a completed THIRA.
- In 2011, these operational targets reflected goals for the incidents states wished to be able to manage without external assistance. The 2012 capability targets from the THIRA are based on estimated or predicted impacts that may result from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk through the lens of the core capabilities.

- In 2011, the SPR included 11 optional core capabilities. Assessment of all 31 core capabilities from the National Preparedness Goal is required in 2012.

***What is the relationship between the THIRA and SPR?***

The ultimate outcome of the THIRA process is a set of capability targets. The SPR assesses current capability against these targets and documents any gaps that exist. The capability targets generated through the THIRA process are used as the basis for the SPR assessment.

***How is the SPR used to collect the THIRA?***

A complete THIRA, developed in alignment with *CPG 201*, contains five elements:

- A list of threats and hazards – natural, technological, and human-caused – which are of concern to a jurisdiction.
- Context statements which describe when and where a threat or hazard may occur.
- Desired outcome statements – what the jurisdiction wants to achieve – for all 31 core capabilities as described in the National Preparedness Goal.
- Estimations of how the threats and hazards described in context statements impact the core capabilities.
- Capability targets for all core capabilities.

Using the table templates provided in *CPG 201 Supplement 1: Toolkit*, a jurisdiction can upload their context statements, desired outcomes, and estimation of impacts as attachments to its SPR submission, using the SPR assessment tool. For SAAs, the state / territory capability target information is entered directly into the SPR assessment tool. For urban areas, the information is included as an attachment to the SAA’s SPR submittal.

***How do I submit my THIRA?***

SAAs should submit their state/territory and urban area THIRA(s) directly to their FEMA regional Federal Preparedness Coordinator (FPC) by December 31, 2012 through the on-line SPR Assessment Tool on the Preparedness Comprehensive Assessment System Tool (PrepCAST) portal. Urban areas should coordinate with their SAA to ensure that their THIRA is included in the submission to the FPC.

Through the SPR Assessment Tool, the SAAs will be asked pre-assessment questions about the state THIRA. Pre-assessment questions will not be asked of the UASIs. The information and tables developed through both the state and UASI THIRA process will be uploaded as an attachment to the official SPR assessment. For ease of use, Microsoft Word versions of the table templates included in Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 201 Supplement 1: Toolkit can be found at: [www.fema.gov/library](http://www.fema.gov/library) (key word: THIRA).

If a tribal nation voluntarily chooses to complete a THIRA and if they would like to voluntarily share it with their respective FEMA Regional office, they are welcome (but not required) to send it to their Region’s Tribal Liaison(s).

***What is the SPR assessment tool?***

The SPR assessment tool is a web-based application that provides a standardized method to submit both the THIRA and the SPR. The SPR assessment tool resides on the secure FEMA PrepCAST portal.

***Is the THIRA intended to be a public document or a detailed working document to be For Official Use Only (FOUO) by the states?***

FEMA suggests that jurisdictions’ completed THIRAs be treated with the same discretion as State Preparedness Reports (i.e., use data in aggregate form, use for high-level strategic planning). The THIRA is intended to inform the whole community about its risks and capabilities needed to address those risks. As such, FEMA recommends that the document be kept at a classification and handling level which allows the greatest use by whole community partners. The state and UASI should determine what classification and handling level for their THIRA based upon the information contained therein. However, the document submitted to FEMA through the SPR assessment tool must be unclassified as the SPR assessment tool is unclassified. FEMA will not release publicly any jurisdictions’ THIRAs.

***Is the THIRA template in the toolkit guidance representative of the information required as part of the submitted THIRA?***

*CPG 201 Supplement 1: Toolkit* provides resources and information, data sources, and templates to support the conduct of a THIRA as described in *CPG 201*. The table templates in the *Toolkit* are representative of the information which should be contained in a completed THIRA.

***Is technical assistance available to assist my jurisdiction with completing the THIRA?***

Yes. Technical Assistance is provided through the Homeland Security Preparedness Technical Assistance (TA) Program. FEMA's National Integration Center (NIC) is now providing a TA Program in order to improve the ability of all jurisdictions to conduct a THIRA. All requests for TA should use the TA Request Form located at [http://www.fema.gov/about/divisions/pppa\\_ta](http://www.fema.gov/about/divisions/pppa_ta) (under Technical Assistance Catalog). SAA, urban area, and tribal nation requests for TA should be submitted to [FEMA-TARequest@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-TARequest@fema.dhs.gov). Urban areas should copy their SAA on the request to ensure the coordination of TA deliveries.

Should a tribal nation desire THIRA-related technical assistance they can use the TA Request Form located at [http://www.fema.gov/about/divisions/pppa\\_ta](http://www.fema.gov/about/divisions/pppa_ta) (under Technical Assistance Catalog) and submit the request to [FEMA-TARequest@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-TARequest@fema.dhs.gov).

***Why should I complete a THIRA if I'm not applying for a grant?***

The THIRA should be used to identify the capability targets that a community needs to support a host of activities such as: capability estimation and required resource planning; mutual aid planning; identifying opportunities to lessen the impact of potential emergencies or disasters; and informing resource allocation within a community. The information can be shared with neighboring jurisdictions and may present opportunities to share best practices or resources.

***Is the THIRA used as a basis for distributing grant funding?***

No. The THIRA is not intended to be used to determine baseline funding allocations. The THIRA is an all-hazards capability-based planning tool suitable for use by all jurisdictions. The THIRA allows a jurisdiction to understand its threats and hazards and how their impacts may vary according to time of occurrence, seasons, locations, and community factors. This knowledge allows a jurisdiction to establish informed and defensible capability targets and commit appropriate resources drawn from the whole community prior to making funding decisions with FEMA grants. THIRA-informed decision making helps identify ways to close the gap between a target and a current capability or for sustaining existing capabilities.

***How does the THIRA relate to my Hazard Mitigation Plan?***

The THIRA incorporates, expands, and evolves existing local, state, territorial, and tribal risk assessments such as the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments (HIRAs). The THIRA serves as a consistent foundation for many other follow-on planning initiatives such as estimating capability requirements and hazard mitigation planning. A THIRA conducted in accordance with CPG 201 will provide the jurisdiction with a comprehensive hazard catalogue for the threats and hazards of greatest concern, community defined desired outcomes, a risk overview with hazard profiles and estimated impacts, and capability targets.

This initial cataloguing, hazard profiling, and impact estimating are further enhanced to support hazard mitigation planning. The hazard catalog, along with the risk overview created through the THIRA process should be used to inform follow-on vulnerability analysis and loss estimation, which is required by 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 201.4, 201.6, 201.7 (c)(2) (i-iii), to develop and/or revise a jurisdiction's Hazard Mitigation Plan. This additional analysis should be directly incorporated into the jurisdiction's Hazard Mitigation Plan as described in 44 CFR Part 201 – Hazard Mitigation Planning. Hazard mitigation planning risk assessment requirements detailed in 44 CFR Part 201 are further discussed, including examples, in the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance documents for locals, states, territories, and tribes.

***Does the annual maintenance of the THIRA mean that I need to annually update my Hazard Mitigation Plan?***

No. While the THIRA should be maintained annually (and revised as needed), the Hazard Mitigation Plans should continue on their existing revision cycles: every five years for local jurisdictions and every three years for states.

***When are the THIRA and SPR due?***

State/territory and urban area THIRAs and state/territory SPRs must be submitted by December 31, 2012.

***How will my THIRA be validated?***

To ensure a shared understanding of capabilities and requirements across the nation, the FEMA Regions will review all THIRAs through a collaborative effort with the states, territories, and urban areas.

The Regional FPC and/or his or her staff will review all state, territorial, and other eligible grantee THIRA submissions in their area of responsibility. This review will ensure that the submitted THIRAs were developed in alignment with CPG 201:

1. Did the jurisdiction provide description statements of the threats and hazards of concern?
  - Do the description statements include major known threats and hazards?
2. Did the jurisdiction provide outcome statements for all 31 core capabilities from the National Preparedness Goal?
3. Did the jurisdiction provide estimated impacts for all threats and hazards of concern in relation to the 31 core capabilities?
4. Did the jurisdiction provide capability targets for all 31 core capabilities?
5. Did the jurisdiction provide an affirmation that their submittal is in alignment with CPG 201?

***How often should the THIRA be updated?***

The THIRA should be maintained annually. This annual maintenance cycle allows a jurisdiction to have a dialog with its whole community partners to discuss desired outcomes, how they may meet capability targets and requirements, or how capability targets and requirements may be reduced through prevention, protection, and mitigation activities. When the jurisdiction is discussing and reviewing its THIRA with its partners, it should assess whether or not a change in the risk landscape has occurred over the previous year. This review should take into account the following:

- Have mitigation projects been completed which would lessen the impact of a threat or hazard on a community?
- Have protective measures been implemented which would lessen the community's vulnerability to a threat or hazard?
- Has a real-world event taken place which alters the estimated impacts of a threat or hazard on the community?
- Has an emerging threat to the community been identified that was not previously included in the THIRA?

Based on the answers to these questions, a jurisdiction may choose to update their THIRA or to maintain its current THIRA.

***How will the FEMA Regional THIRAs impact State/local THIRAs?***

The intent of the Regional THIRA is the same as the state THIRAs – an understanding of the risk landscape in order to make informed decisions about how to manage risk and develop needed capabilities. The Regional THIRA looks at threats and hazards beyond the state THIRAs to take a holistic view of the Region and the capabilities that the Federal government will need to plan for catastrophic events. It is not expected to impact state and local THIRAs, but rather state and local THIRAs will inform the Regional THIRA.

The ten FEMA Regions will engage with states and partners across the whole community, including other Federal agencies, to develop Regional THIRAs. In order to ensure a consistent approach, the Regional THIRAs will also use *CPG 201* as the guiding process.