

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose

The National Flood Mitigation Data Collection Tool (referred to as the National Tool or NT) was developed for nationwide use to gather information about floodprone structures in order to determine potentially appropriate long-term mitigation measures. The ultimate goal of the NT is to provide a standardized, systematic approach to collecting and interpreting property data and mitigation project development.

While the focus of the NT is on data collection for repetitive loss properties, it can be used to gather information related to flood risk, building construction, and building value for any structure.

The NT is designed to encourage a comprehensive sweep for information pertinent to each structure. Data fields within the NT require information from a variety of sources, including NFIP policy information; community building, tax, and historical flood records; and field reconnaissance. Having detailed data helps to create a clearer picture of the property and its flooding issues, which is important in determining the most appropriate and cost-effective mitigation method. However, the NT can also be used for more cursory or limited data collection efforts as appropriate.

The NT also allows the user to make changes to the information that is currently recorded with the NFIP. FEMA recognizes that addresses linked to past and present claim records and NFIP policies may be vague or outdated. Similarly, past addressing practices may cause the data associated with RL properties to be linked with the wrong structure. Several RL properties have been mitigated from the 100-year flood or have been provided with a lesser degree of protection. If noted, and documented appropriately within the NT, any updated or corrected data captured may be revised by the NFIP.

2.2 Description

The NT was developed using Microsoft (MS) Access 2002 (i.e., XP); however, it was also designed to work with Access 2000 and 2003, provided that the installation is done properly for each of these systems and the system requirements are met. Appendix A – System Requirements and Installation Instructions includes system requirements and installation instructions. Although the NT can currently run in Access 2000, future versions (after version 2.0) will not be supported to run in Access 2000. For any issues with installation, a Troubleshooting section is provided as Appendix B – Troubleshooting.

In order to use the NT in the field, it should be loaded onto a laptop to incorporate information from the field visit(s) immediately. However, data collection forms are also provided within the NT and in Appendix C – Field Data Collection Suggested

Equipment and Forms to allow for paper/hardcopy data recording in the field that can be transferred to the NT after field work is complete. A two-person team is suggested to optimize efficiency in the field. Suggested equipment for field data collection is also included in Appendix C – Field Data Collection Suggested Equipment and Forms. Once the field data collection efforts are complete and the NT has been populated, it should be provided to the appropriate FEMA Regional Repetitive Loss Coordinator for inclusion into both the Regional and National Database Repositories. A list of these coordinators is provided in Appendix D – Regional Repetitive Loss Coordinators.

The National Database Repository will be housed at FEMA Region IV. Each individual FEMA Region will serve as a Regional Repository where the populated databases will be housed and then forwarded to Region IV for inclusion in the National Database Repository. An upload site for each Region may eventually be created for field data collectors to send data to the Region's Repository via the Internet.