



NATIONWIDE COMMUNICATIONS BASELINE ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) is developing the Nationwide Communications Baseline Assessment (NCBA) to evaluate the Nation’s ability to communicate during a response to routine incidents, natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters. The purpose of this assessment is to improve understanding across all levels of government on the capabilities needed and in use by today’s emergency response providers in order to establish and sustain communications operability, interoperability, and continuity.

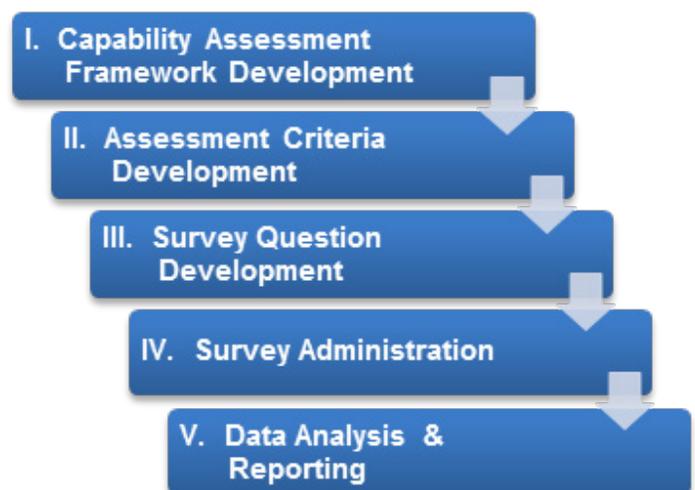
LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as amended (6 U.S.C. § 573(a)), Congress directs OEC to conduct this assessment of federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments that:

- Defines capabilities needed by emergency response providers and relevant government officials to continue communications in the event of natural and man-made disasters, and acts of terrorism;
- Defines interoperable emergency communications capabilities needed for specific events;
- Assesses the capabilities that are currently available to meet communications needs; and
- Identifies gaps between current capabilities and defined requirements.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The NCBA development process is stakeholder-driven. OEC recruited various stakeholders that represent the emergency communications community—including traditional emergency responder disciplines such as fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical services; entities that need to communicate and share information during emergencies (e.g., public health, public works, transportation agencies); and appointed and elected officials—to form the NCBA Champions Working Group. This group’s role is to assist OEC to develop and deploy a comprehensive survey for assessing emergency communications capabilities and gaps nationwide. The survey will be developed and completed by emergency responders and government officials at all levels of government in a wide range of positions to gain a complete and accurate understanding. OEC anticipates going live with the NCBA survey in March 2017.



BENEFITS TO THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Information gathered in the NCBA survey will assist government officials in making informed decisions on improvements to emergency communications capabilities, establishing priorities, and allocating resources more effectively. In addition, NCBA findings may influence congressional appropriations for grant funding, as well as Federal Government programs and service offerings to state, local, tribal, and territorial government agencies. OEC will continue coordinating with stakeholders to advance emergency communications capabilities and address gaps identified in the NCBA findings.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact oececp@dhs.gov or visit www.dhs.gov/oece. For additional information on the NCBA, or other OEC programs and services.