State Assessment Handbook:
A Guide for States Participating in the Statewide 911 System Assessment Process

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About the National 911 Program

The mission of the National 911 Program is to provide Federal leadership in supporting and promoting optimal 911 services. It was created as a point of coordination for activities among 911 stakeholders and to provide information that can be used to improve the 911 system. We do that by developing a variety of tools and resources including tools that can be used to plan and implement Next Generation 911.

The National 911 Program is housed within the Office of Emergency Medical Services at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) – part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).

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0.5	11/14/2017	Updated Handbook to Include New Guidelines on NG911 Maturity Model

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1 INTRODUCTION

Many states are taking steps toward improving their statewide 911 systems and implementing technologies and operations that enable inter-jurisdictional communications and transmission of multimedia information. The operation and maintenance of 911 networks and systems has largely been a local issue, driven by the capabilities of local telephone companies to deliver various levels of service; and the desires and abilities of local jurisdictions to support emergency services. As new technologies are integrated into existing systems, states with strong state-level coordination are particularly well positioned to facilitate advancements in technology and operations. State-level 911 coordination and leadership has been demonstrated to be beneficial to the successful evolution of 911.

Statewide 911 system assessments can provide a method to gauge the status of state and local programs against an objective benchmark that was nationally developed; and to identify strengths and weaknesses within the current statewide 911 system. Once assessments are performed, state oversight entities can use the final assessment report as evidence for providing support to the public safety answering points (PSAPs) and 911 authorities within their statewide system, on many issues that are important to the advancement of 911 technologies.

This handbook provides background on how the 911 Assessment Guidelines were developed, what they represent for states, and the various considerations that will be helpful for states to understand before embarking on a state assessment. The handbook also provides direction on how to prepare for and conduct a state assessment, from the perspective of the state being assessed.

1.1 NATIONAL 911 ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

The National 911 Program's (Program) goal is to provide federal leadership to support and promote optimal 911 services. The Program fulfills its mission by developing and distributing a variety of tools and resources for the nation's 911 stakeholders. As part of its role, the Program undertook a project to bring together stakeholders to establish a comprehensive benchmark for State 911 authorities to measure the status of the operational aspects of their statewide 911 systems. The National 911 Assessment Work Group (NAGWG) was formed by the National 911 Program and charged with developing consensus guidelines that can be used as the basis for statewide 911 system assessments. NAGWG was comprised of 911 professionals from local governments, state governments, national associations, and industry experts.

The mission statement of NAGWG was to "develop consensus guidelines that can be used statewide to determine the status of the 911 system within a state."

To better define this mission, NAGWG developed the following definitions:

- **Consensus Guidelines:** A set of activities or functions developed by NAGWG that are considered benchmarks or standards of excellence. When a guideline indicates a specific requirement or function, it does <u>not</u> imply that the function has to be performed

    by state government, just that it should be performed within the statewide 911 system and apply to the entire state.

- **State:** The geographic area that is a state or territory of the United States, or a tribal nation. A state, for the purpose of this document, includes the political subdivisions and the people of a state. When a guideline says that the state should do something, it does not imply that it should be done by state government, but rather that it should be done in the state, and apply to the entire state.
- **Statewide:** A term used to define functions that apply to the entire state in order to provide uniform 911 service for all public and private entities within the state.
- **911 System:** A group of entities, functions, and activities that provide the public with the necessary communications system to request help in an emergency. There may or may not be a single entity with control of the entire system. In either case, system coordination is critical.

In developing these definitions, NAGWG had considerable discussion on the variety of ways 911 is implemented across the country. The guidelines represent high-level functions that should be accomplished within the state; however, the guidelines do not dictate *how* the function should be accomplished or who/what entity should accomplish it. The National 911 Assessment Guidelines (guidelines) were developed as a result of this project. The guidelines were released for public comment and were edited to reflect the needs and suggestions of the industry in 2011.

In 2017, the National 911 Program added a new guideline category titled Next Generation 911 (NG911) Maturity Model. The NG911 Maturity Model guidelines outline the items that a state should have implemented to enhance 911 system infrastructure. Examining these against a state's current infrastructure will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the 911 system. This category's guidelines are adapted from the NG911 Maturity Model, which was developed by the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Task Force on Optimal Public Safety Answering Point Architecture (TFOPA). Further information on TFOPA, including its charter, the final report, and the development of the NG911 Maturity Model can be found online at: www.fcc.gov/about-fcc/advisory-committees/general/task-force-optimal-public-safety-answering-point.

Listed below are the nine categories of guidelines as well as the number of associated guidelines in each of the respective categories. There are 83 guidelines in total.

1. Statutory and Regulatory Environment (27)
2. Governance (7)
3. Functional and Operational Planning (9)
4. Standards (6)
5. Security and Continuity of Operations (7)
6. Human Resources/Planning (8)
7. Evaluation (5)
8. Public Education (5)
9. NG911 Maturity Model (9).

1.2 STATEWIDE 911 SYSTEM ASSESSMENTS

The guidelines provide uniform assessment indicators for the 911 community across the United States and territories, and will be used as benchmarks to assess the operational components of a statewide 911 system. An assessment will evaluate the current status of a state's system, provide a path for enhancement, and provide an objective evaluation by peers and subject matter experts to help states leverage resources. Assessments will be conducted on a voluntary basis, at the request of the state, by an independent team of peers (The Peer Assessment Team). The guidelines will continue to be updated as technology and the public safety communications environment change.

It is important to note that the value of the assessment process lies largely in its use of peer evaluation. While a self-assessment may help states in some cases, it would not be as valuable as input from peers who are not intimately involved in the state and have no vested interest in the assessment results, or have any interest in "selling" any products or services to the state. Members of the Peer Assessment Team are drawn from the 911 community, and have experience and expertise that is shared during the assessment process, as examples and processes are shared by team members.

This handbook is intended to be a tool for use throughout the assessment process. It lays out the procedures and processes from the initial assessment request to the final assessment report. As guidelines change, the assessment handbook will be updated to best serve the purpose of the guidelines. The assessment tools found in Appendix B may be particularly useful in conducting the assessment process.

2 ASSESSMENT PROGRAM GUIDE

2.1 ASSESSMENT PREPARATION

There are several key teams and individuals to whom this handbook refers that need to be clearly defined. Below are the descriptions of the key players in the assessment process.

- **Coordinating Agency:** The National 911 Program is the agency through which the Peer Assessment Team and the State Assessment Team will coordinate efforts to accomplish all necessary tasks to perform an assessment and deliver the final assessment report.
- **Peer Assessment Team:** This team is made up of subject matter experts from state and/or local 911 systems that are not being assessed. The team members represent a wide variety of expertise and experience in the 911 community. The Peer Assessment Team evaluates the state's self-evaluation documents, and at the request of the state, conducts the onsite components of the assessment. All activities are directed toward the completion of the final assessment report.
- **Assessment Coordinator:** This is the main point of contact within the Coordinating Agency.
- **State Assessment Team:** This team is comprised of the various representatives within the state being assessed. The State Assessment Team will lead and direct the various members of the State Briefing Team and work with the Peer Assessment Team. These team members are selected by the state being assessed.
  - o **State Briefing Team:** This is a team of experts from across all areas needed to establish the current environment for the multiple guidelines included in the assessment. These team members could be the same as the State Assessment Team members or additional people may be selected to present the briefings.
- **State Contact Person:** This individual is the main point of contact for communication and coordination on the State Assessment Team.

2.1.1 Assessment Request

A state 911 assessment begins with a request from that state. This ensures state coordination and commitment, and is necessary to establish the credibility of an assessment and to facilitate information gathering. A request for an assessment should come from the state 911 authority. The request should clearly indicate the state's specific goals for the assessment as well as the intended audience for the final report (e.g., will it be shared with the general public or kept internal to state government). In the absence of a state 911 authority, the assessment request must come from an appropriate state authority (examples are provided below in section 2.1.1.1) or with the written consent of an appropriate state authority. Requests must demonstrate that the assessment will be done in cooperation with the state 911 authority, where applicable. This coordination is critical because the state 911 authority will need to coordinate all stakeholders throughout the state who provide information as input to the assessment. Information from all stakeholders is needed in order to complete an assessment. If the coordinating agency finds that the request is appropriate, the request will be approved and the state and coordinating

agency will enter into an agreement that lays out the commitments required for a successful assessment.

The official assessment request must be e-mailed to the assessment coordinating agency at NHTSA.National911@dot.gov or provided to the Assessment Coordinator in a manner agreed upon by the Assessment Coordinator and the State Contact Person.

2.1.1.1 Request Approval

The coordinating agency will approve a successful request within four weeks. A request is deemed "successful" if it is submitted by an appropriate authority and is legitimate in its requests. A request may be submitted by a state board; 911 council; or another governing/coordinating body. The request must indicate that the state has appropriate resources to complete the assessment and the requesting entity must have documentation from the state asserting that they will assist in providing all necessary data. The request must also show the coordinating agency that the current state environment sections of each guideline can be completed and the appropriate materials for the assessment are assembled. Additionally, the coordinating agency must have the time, resources, and availability to organize an assessment at the time of the request. Once a request is approved, the coordinating agency will assign an agency representative to act as the Assessment Coordinator for the respective assessment.

2.1.2 Initial State Meeting

The Assessment Coordinator will schedule the initial meeting/conference call with the state approximately as soon as possible, after the request is submitted. During this meeting/call, the Assessment Coordinator will give an overview of the assessment process and will walk the state representative through the steps of setting up and completing the assessment. The state representative will discuss what the state hopes to achieve through the assessment and the intended audience for the assessment report. This initial meeting will be conducted over the phone and will take approximately two hours.

Coordinating Agency → Schedule initial meeting with state

Coordinating Agency and State → Conduct initial meeting over the phone

Coordinating Agency and State → Enter into agreement

Coordinating Agency→ Draft assessment schedule

State → Establish State Assessment Team

State Assessment Team → Coordinate facilities and support requirements

State Assessment Team → Publicly announce assessment

Following the initial meeting/call, the state will begin to plan the on-site assessment logistics and provide direction to the State Assessment Team to conduct the initial self-evaluation of the state environment to be used as the basis of the assessment. The State Assessment Team will need to determine what relevant documentation needs to be gathered and submitted. Specifics of what will be covered in the initial meeting are detailed in Appendix B – Initial State Meeting Notes.

2.1.2.1 Agreement

At the onset of the initial state meeting, an agreement can be signed by the Assessment Coordinator and the state that establishes a mutual understanding and commitment to the data collection, which must be performed prior to an assessment. Appendix B includes a sample

agreement. This agreement also establishes the parameters for compensation of the peer assessment team, which is provided by the state. The agreement and all specifics therein will be determined on a state-by-state basis as each state has unique rules and processes.

2.1.2.2 Assessment Schedule

During the initial state meeting, the Assessment Coordinator will draft a schedule for the pre-assessment activities and the on-site assessment. A timely schedule is essential for an efficient and effective assessment experience.

The Assessment Coordinator will explain what the state will need to prepare for the assessment, including on-site assessment logistics and a team to prepare and present a state environment briefing to the assessors. A plan for ongoing communication will be established between the state contact person and the Assessment Coordinator. This plan will include details of ongoing communication between the state contact and the briefers within the state for the duration of the assessment process. Figure 1 below includes a general timeline that can be used to guide the activities needed for a successful assessment.

Figure 1: General Timeline for State Assessment
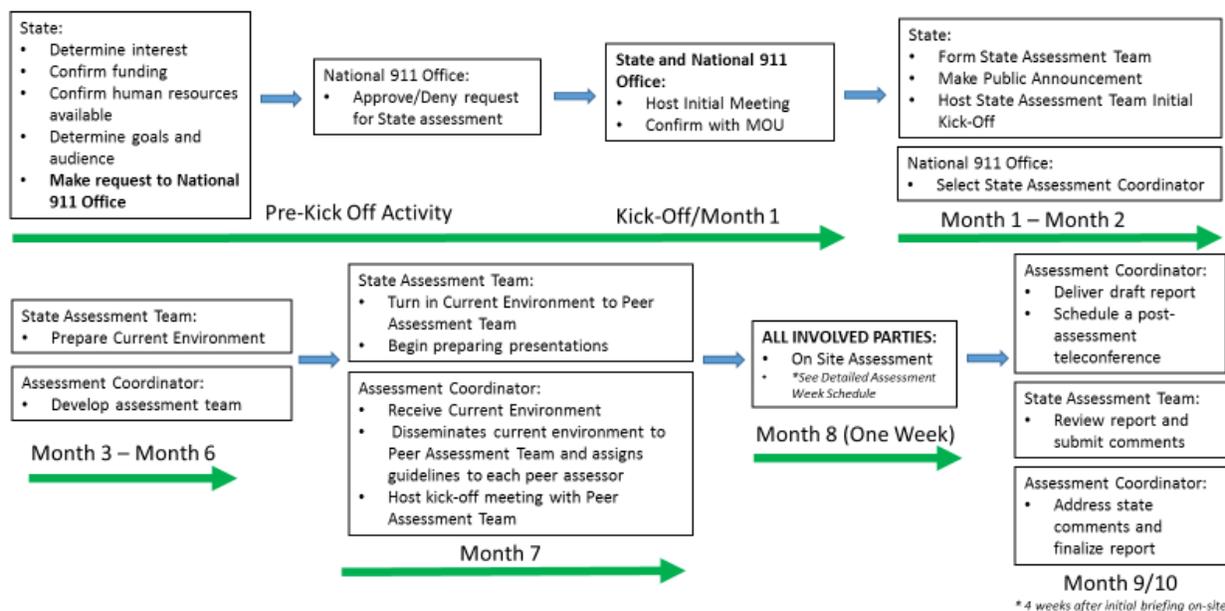
2.1.2.3 State Assessment Team

During this first meeting, the assessment schedule will be agreed upon and the state should have an understanding of expectations. After the first meeting, the state assigns a State Assessment Team so they can prepare the current environment description for each guideline within the assessment report tool. Completing the current state environment descriptions is a comprehensive and time-consuming process. States are expected to give complete and thorough information in this document. Some states, depending on available resources, may

want to consider third-party assistance to gather data to include as evidence for the state self-evaluation contained within the current environment. Each state will individually need to determine the appropriate measures and timeframe to complete their assessment responsibilities. Members of the State Assessment Team that participate in compiling the information for the current environment should also be involved in gathering additional information for the briefing. These team members should plan to attend the assessment briefing and related activities.

States will determine what organizations or offices (e.g., state 911 offices, stakeholder groups) should be involved in the assessment and will coordinate their involvement. It is critical that the state choose appropriate persons to prepare and present information during the assessment. A broad range of expertise from state briefers is important to ensure that a complete picture of the state is presented to the assessors. There is often active dialogue, and many clarifying questions are asked by the Peer Assessment Team members as part of the briefing process. States are encouraged to gather input from local 911 jurisdictions and other entities involved in the delivery of 911 to be included in their self-assessment. An accurate depiction of the current environment will result in an accurate and effective assessment.

The state briefing team can and should represent entities outside of state agencies that are involved in providing 911 services throughout the statewide system. Presenters could include a state legislator to describe new or unique statutes or a PSAP manager to discuss coordination between the state and PSAPs. The following list contains potential participants from the user community; it is not meant to suggest that all of these entities should be included.

- State 911 Director
- NENA and APCO chapters
- Association of Counties
- Municipal League (cities/county lead)
- Tribal representation
- Public Utilities Commission (PUC) (funding mechanisms)
- State agency authorities such as the Attorney General or Chief Information Officer (CIO) with public safety components
- Chief Security Officer (CSO)
- Elected officials (staff members)
- PSAP community
- 911 authorities, boards, commissions
- 911 system service providers
- Originating service providers within the state, wireless providers, local exchange carriers (LECs)
- State/regional attorneys that work for public entities
- State comptroller
- Civil Service or collective bargaining organizations
- State emergency medical services (EMS) entities
- State law enforcement entities
- State fire (including volunteer) entities
- State emergency management entities

- Advocacy groups (special needs communities)
- Non-public safety responders (public works, transportation, etc.)
- Military/defense representatives
- National Parks representatives
- State Geographic Information System (GIS) office
- Accrediting agencies for training and certification
- Non-profit organizations that perform public education
- Schools (911 education)
- Alert organizations.

2.1.2.4 Facilities and Support Requirements

The on-site assessment will take place over one working week. Logistics for the meeting, requirements for conducting the on-site assessment, and pre-assessment preparations will be covered during the initial state meeting. The Assessment Coordinator will provide a description of the activities that must be performed prior to the assessment, such as finalizing the terms and conditions of the assessment, scheduling facilities for the assessment, coordinating lodging and meals for the assessors, and other assessment preparation activities.

Following the initial state meeting, the State Assessment Team will begin to coordinate the on-site assessment logistics. Several support requirements are needed to perform an assessment and are vital to an efficient and successful process. The most important support requirement is a facility for the Peer Assessment Team. The state must provide a meeting room large enough for the Peer Assessment Team and the briefing participants. It is recommended that someone be designated as facility administrator, who can help the Peer Assessment Team to take care of anything needed during the assessment.

The Peer Assessment Team also needs tools to complete an assessment including, but not limited to, the following:

- Internet access
- Tables and chairs
- Projector and screen
- Printer and paper
- Teleconferencing equipment
- Extra cables and extension cords.

See Appendix B for a suggested assessment room layout tool.

2.1.2.5 Public Announcement

It is recommended that the state make an announcement to notify stakeholders of the assessment. The state will use its internal procedures to dictate how and when the announcement is made (e.g., press release, e-mail announcement to constituents). The state should announce the assessment and request comment from stakeholders prior to the assessment. Any comments received should be included in the state environment, if applicable.

2.1.3 State Prep Meeting

Assessment Coordinator → Schedule State prep meeting with State

Assessment Coordinator and State Assessment Team → Conduct state prep meeting

State Assessment Team → Prepare state environment descriptions

State Assessment Team → Prepare on-site briefing

Assessment Coordinator → Assign Peer Assessment Team

Assessment Coordinator and Peer Assessment Team → Conduct initial assessment call

Assessment Coordinator → Make assessment assignments

Assessment Coordinator → Distribute state environment to Peer Assessment Team

Peer Assessment Team → Review state environment

Coordinator and Peer Assessment Team → Conduct final preparatory conference call

The Assessment Coordinator will schedule the prep meeting with the state to take place approximately three weeks after the initial state meeting. If the state has made assignments for briefing the Peer Assessment Team, it is recommended that these individuals participate in this prep meeting. The guidelines will be reviewed with the State Assessment Team and any questions will be clarified regarding the assessment process. The Assessment Coordinator will further explain the documentation the state needs to prepare for the assessment.

2.1.3.1 State Environment

In addition to the logistical planning for the Peer Assessment Team and assessment facility, the state must prepare a briefing of the statewide 911 system's current environment for the assessors' review. This current environment is analogous to a self-assessment. After the state prep meeting, the state will begin to address the state environment section of the guidelines matrix document. The time period to complete the state environment portion of the document begins the day of the state prep meeting. The amount of time for completion should be agreed upon by the Assessment Coordinator and the State Contact Person. The state must submit the completed matrix document to the Assessment Coordinator at the end of this period, in advance of the on-site assessment.

The state's current environment will serve as the basis for the assessment. It is the state's responsibility to determine how the state environment descriptions will be completed and who will complete them. Visits to each PSAP and public safety agencies within a state during an assessment would be time consuming and impractical. As a result, the state is responsible for compiling all information relevant to the assessment from these agencies and providing a comprehensive briefing on guideline topics. This compiling of information and state environment preparation involves a large time commitment from the state briefing team. The assessment covers a large array of topics and the state must provide information on all aspects of the guidelines prior to the assessment. In order to have a successful assessment, it is critical that the state commit a sufficient amount of advanced preparation time. It is highly recommended that those persons giving presentations during the on-site assessment be involved in preparing the state environment, so any questions posed by the Peer Assessment Team can be answered. There should be communication between the Assessment Coordinator, the state representative, and the briefers throughout the assessment preparation period. The amount of

time necessary to fully prepare for an assessment will vary by state due to the various circumstances within an individual state.

An assessment matrix, shown below, will be provided to states for completion. The 83 National 911 Assessment Guidelines are the basis of the matrix. Each guideline includes a "Current Environment" field for the state to input their specific information. States should provide their self-assessment of how the statewide 911 system performs when compared with the criteria contained in the guideline benchmark. The state should attach any supporting information and documentation, such as legislation or standards, which could be useful for the assessors in validating the self-assessment done by the state.

The figure below provides an example of the assessment matrix for the state briefing.

Guideline: *The benchmark on which the statewide system is being assessed.*		
Guidance: *Information that gives further direction to states to understand and achieve the benchmark (including references to other standards and documents). This is the how one would go about assessing the system against the benchmark. It is a qualitative explanation.*		
Guideline Cross-reference(s): *Other guidelines that have similarities to this particular guideline, if any.*		
Minimum Criteria	**Advanced Criteria**	**Superior Criteria**
This is the minimum level expected of the statewide system to meet the recommended guideline (the benchmark).	*This is an advanced level criterion that denotes the statewide system exceeds the minimum criterion.*	*This is the highest level criterion that denotes the statewide system exceeds the advanced criterion. This is the model to which states should strive.*
Rationale: *This is the explanation of why the benchmark exists and is considered important.*		
Current Environment: *What is the status currently in state?*		
Reference Material: *List of reference material from the state that is applicable to this guideline.*		

2.1.3.2 On-Site Briefing

After the state submits the guidelines matrix to the Assessment Coordinator, briefers must individually prepare their presentations for the on-site portion of the assessment. The length and depth of this preparation will vary by state and briefing topic. The time allotted for the completion of this task begins when the state completes the state environment section of the matrix, or may be developed as the state completes the current environment. The briefing materials must be completed prior to the on-site assessment.

The on-site briefing is the state's opportunity to provide the Peer Assessment Team with an overview of the statewide 911 system and highlight points and issues that the state deems necessary and appropriate for the purposes of the assessment. The briefings are designed to provide assessors with additional information needed to conduct a successful assessment and to provide an opportunity for interactive dialogue, to clarify the information provided, and include any pertinent information.

Presentations should not just re-state what is included in the state environment portion of the guidelines matrix. The on-site briefings are an overview of the state environment and should cover any background information, other supporting documentation, as well as any information that may not have been included in the current environment matrix.

In general, the process should follow the order of the guidelines matrix. The state should focus on making an impression on the assessors of what the strengths and challenges within their statewide 911 system. Some questions to consider while developing the on-site briefing material include the following:

- Is the state doing something new, unique, or different?
- Is there a guideline the state meets at a certain level, but does not feel needs to change?
- What specific circumstances have provided particular challenges?
- What is the state proud of?
- Did assessors ask for more information on a topic prior to the briefing?

The state should consider the briefing topics and select the most appropriate presenters for each. States are encouraged to include representatives of local 911 authorities and other entities that are key to the delivery of 911 in the state so assessors have a well-rounded and accurate representation of the statewide 911 system.

2.1.3.3 Peer Assessment Team Assignments

Statewide assessments are a collaborative effort between the State Assessment Team and the Assessment Coordinator/Peer Assessment Team. Following the state prep meeting, the Assessment Coordinator will finalize the schedule and select a team of subject matter experts from across the 911 industry who are trained in the evaluation process and the guidelines to conduct the assessments. See Appendix A for the training process.

Peer Assessment Team assignments will be made based on availability, expertise, and proximity to the state in which the assessment is being conducted. The Assessment Coordinator will determine the number and type of assessors needed for each assessment. Potential Peer Assessment Team members include the following:

- PSAP Directors
- 911 Authority Executives
- State Directors
- Policy analysts from a state environment
- 911 technology specialists
- General interest person(s).

These positions are suggested to promote diverse areas of expertise in order to conduct a well-rounded assessment.

2.1.3.4 Initial Assessment Conference Call

Once the Assessment Coordinator has established the Peer Assessment Team, and while the state is preparing the state environment, the Assessment Coordinator will conduct the first conference call with the assigned Peer Assessment Team. During this initial call, the Assessment Coordinator will overview the assessment schedule and logistics. This call will result in a finalized schedule that will provide the Peer Assessment Team with the appropriate information to make their travel arrangements and commit to performing the assessment on the scheduled dates.

2.1.3.5 Assessment Assignments

Each Peer Assessment Team member will be assigned specific guideline categories in which they are to lead the assessment. While only one person takes the lead in each category, it is likely that their expertise will be needed in other guidelines areas as well. The Peer Assessment Team will need to work together to ensure that everyone's expertise is utilized and applied where necessary.

Based on expertise, assignments for guidelines are suggested below. These scenarios will differ based on the make-up of each Peer Assessment Team.

The policy analyst will work with the State 911 Director to assess the Statutory and Regulatory Environment category. The State 911 Director will lead the Governance category. The PSAP Director will lead the Public Education and Human Resources and Training categories; the 911 Authority Executive will lead the Evaluation and Functional and Operational Planning categories. The 911 Technology Specialist will lead the Standards and Security and Continuity of Operations categories. The policy analyst will work with the State 911 Director to assess the NG911 Maturity Model category.

Category	Assessor(s)
Statutory and Regulatory Environment	Policy Analyst, State 911 Director
Governance	State 911 Director
Evaluation	911 Authority Executive
Public Education	PSAP Director
Human Resources and Training	PSAP Director
Functional and Operational Planning	911 Authority Executive
Standards	911 Technology Specialist
Security and Continuity of Operations	911 Technology Specialist
NG911 Maturity Model	Policy Analyst, State 911 Director

2.1.3.6 Distribution and Review of State Environment Document

While the Peer Assessment Team is preparing their schedules for the assessment, the state continues preparing the state environment information for the guidelines. Once the state

completes this task, the document is sent to the Assessment Coordinator who then distributes it to the Peer Assessment Team members. The Peer Assessment Team members are required to review the guidelines and, most importantly, the state environment section that the state prepared. The assessors must understand not only the guidelines but the state's self-assessment against those guidelines prior to the start of the assessment. It is important to recognize the time commitment required for assessments.

2.1.3.7 Final Assessor Preparatory Conference Call

The Peer Assessment Team is responsible for preparing for the assessment by reviewing the guidelines and their associated state environments. There will be a second Peer Assessment Team conference call after the state submits the state environment document to the Assessment Coordinator. Assessors should utilize the time between conference calls as a preparation period. During the second conference call, the Peer Assessment Team reviews the guidelines together and clarifies any questions assessors may have in advance regarding the assessment. This call can vary in length depending on the assessors and complexity of the state environment.

2.2 ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

Given the short amount of time allotted for on-site assessments (three days plus two travel days for a total of one week), it is imperative that Peer Assessment Team members and the supporting State Assessment Team understand and strictly adhere to their respective roles and responsibilities. The Assessment Coordinator will attend all days and be charged with ensuring that the assessment runs smoothly and efficiently. The Assessment Coordinator will act as the "master of ceremonies" and will keep time, give introductions for each agenda item, and keep the assessment in scope. Additionally, the Assessment Coordinator will arrange for an administrative consultant to attend the assessment. The administrative consultant will be responsible for providing administrative assistance to the Peer Assessment Team, compiling the report, and preparing it for final delivery.

The Peer Assessment Team will use the National 911 Assessment Guidelines, found in Appendix C, to conduct each assessment. The Peer Assessment Team will receive a printed set of documentation (including, but not limited to, this handbook, state self-assessment of current environment, overview presentations, etc.) prior to the assessment. The length of time for the assessment briefings during the assessment week will be based on the schedule agreed to between the state and the Assessment Coordinator during the preliminary conference. Details of an assessment week follow. A sample agenda may be found in Appendix B.

Peer Assessment Team members will need to bring their own laptop. If an assessor does not have a laptop, the Assessment Coordinator should be notified as soon as possible so arrangements may be made for one. Other necessary supplies should be provided by the state.

2.2.1 Assessment Day One: Travel and Introductions

The assessment week will begin on a Monday, which is the predetermined travel day. The Peer Assessment Team should plan to arrive in the afternoon.

The Peer Assessment Team and State Assessment Team will have the opportunity to meet and mingle prior to the formal assessment. An informal social event is intended to allow the State Assessment Team and Peer Assessment Team to introduce themselves, ask questions, and establish a comfort

Day One
Coordinator and Peer Assessment Team → Travel to state
Coordinator, Peer Assessment Team, and State Team → Informal Social Event

level with one another prior to the on-site briefing session. The assessment process can be intimidating, and providing an opportunity for informal socializing can be key in reducing anxiety, and facilitating open communication among all participants. Open communication is key to completing an assessment report that is relevant, and includes all pertinent information.

2.2.2 Assessment Day Two: On-Site Briefing

To begin the assessment process, the state will coordinate an on-site briefing for the assessors from predetermined agency representatives to supplement the information provided in the state environment portion of the guidelines matrix. The on-site briefing is the state's opportunity to provide an overview of the statewide 911 system and highlight points and issues that the state deems necessary and appropriate for the purposes of the assessment.

Day Two
State Assessment Team → Present briefing to Peer Assessment Team
Peer Assessment Team → Ask questions

The state briefing presentations are essential to the assessment process. It is important that the assessors gain all of the information necessary from this section in order to perform the assessment properly. The final product of the assessment is the assessment report and the briefing portion is the only time the assessors will be able to ask questions and gain an understanding of specific circumstances in the state. Please see section 2.1.3.2 of this document for instruction on the contents of the presentations.

The briefing portion of the assessment will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. local time on Tuesday. After each briefing, the Peer Assessment Team will have the opportunity to ask the presenters any questions for clarification. Briefing activities require a large time commitment from the presenters, who must commit to being at the assessment for their scheduled presentation and are expected to stay for the entire briefing period.

2.2.3 Assessment Day Three: Complete Briefing (if necessary), Report Writing, and Consensus

The morning of day three can be used to provide additional briefings by the state. If the State Assessment Team does not need additional time after Tuesday's presentations to complete their presentations to the Peer Assessment Team, then the Peer Assessment Team can begin their assessment preparation on Wednesday morning.

On Wednesday, the Peer Assessment Team will be sequestered with an administrative consultant and the Assessment Coordinator to begin writing. Assessors will use the state environment portion of the guidelines matrix, their notes from the on-site briefing presentations, and any documentation provided by the state to assess the statewide 911 system against the National 911 Assessment Guidelines and complete their portion of the written assessment report. The report will then be compiled.

Day Three
Peer Assessment Team → Write assessment
Administrative Consultant → Compile assessment report
Coordinator → Keep assessment on time and on track
Coordinator → Facilitate consensus among Peer Assessment Team

The longest, most intense writing session will occur between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. local time. A working lunch will be provided to the Peer Assessment Team.

2.2.3.1 Assessment Matrix

Assessors will use the assessment matrix to record their assessment and related recommendations for each guideline. The assessment matrix will have the individual guidelines, the current environment provided by the state, and additional fields for the assessor's recommendations and notes/comments. Assessors will determine what criteria the statewide 911 system achieves for each guideline based on the state's current environment and the on-site briefings.

Assessors will include recommendations, where necessary and applicable, on ways that the state could improve its performance for the respective guideline. Assessors can also include notes and comments, as necessary to explain their reasoning and thought process for the assessment.

The state will be evaluated against the national guidelines only, not any other state. Each state is unique and the Peer Assessment Team will make recommendations that are appropriate for each state and their particular structure. States may have similar issues, but each state will be assessed and given unique recommendations for improvement.

The table below provides an example of the assessment matrix, as shown above in the discussion of the current environment of each guideline.

Guideline: *The benchmark on which the statewide system is being assessed.*		
Guidance: *Information that gives further direction to states to understand and achieve the benchmark (including references to other standards and documents). This is the how one would go about assessing the system against the benchmark. It is a qualitative explanation.*		
Guideline Cross-reference(s): *Other guidelines that have similarities to this particular guideline, if any.*		
Minimum Criteria	**Advanced Criteria**	**Superior Criteria**
This is the minimum level expected of the statewide system to meet the recommended guideline (the benchmark).	*This is an advanced level criterion that denotes the statewide system exceeds the minimum criterion.*	*This is the highest level criterion that denotes the statewide system exceeds the advanced criterion. This is the model to which states should strive.*
Rationale: *This is the explanation of why the benchmark exists and is considered important.*		
Current Environment: *What is the status currently in state?*		
Reference Material: *List of reference material from the state that is applicable to this guideline.*		
Ranking: *Criteria level that the state meets.*		
Assessor Recommendations: *What can be done for improvement?*		
Assessor Notes/Comments: *Additional remarks from the assessors.*		

All assessment tasks described in this section need to be completed within the set time limit. Keep in mind that these time limits can be extremely challenging for the Peer Assessment Team.

2.2.3.2 Assessment Consensus

The assessment and related recommendations will be a consensus product of the entire Peer Assessment Team. Therefore, the entire team will review each the assessments and recommendations made for each group of guidelines. The Assessment Coordinator will facilitate consensus to ensure that all assessors have input on every group of guidelines and come to general agreement on the final recommendations for each. The consensus process will begin immediately following the writing portion. Generally, the consensus session will be held Wednesday afternoon/evening of the assessment. For planning purposes, the consensus process will likely take the most time. It is important that the Peer Assessment Team members keep this in mind and plan their schedules accordingly. A working dinner will be provided to the Peer Assessment Team on day three.

2.2.4 Assessment Day Four: Consensus Completion, Report Compilation, Final Review and Presentation

Day Four
Peer Assessment Team → Prepare introduction and executive summary
Administrative Consultant → Prepare assessment report components for delivery
Peer Assessment Team → Prepare assessment presentation
Peer Assessment Team → Present assessment to state and deliver assessment report
Peer Assessment Team and Assessment Coordinator → Conduct after action session

Thursday, day four of the assessment, will continue the consensus process, as this is generally the longest part of the assessment. Following the consensus process, the Peer Assessment Team will need to compose an executive summary and introduction for the assessment report.

2.2.4.1 Executive Summary and Introduction

In addition to individual recommendations, assessors are responsible for writing an executive summary and introduction to be included in the assessment report. The executive summary is the most important part of the assessment and is intended to be a one- to two-page summation of the most important aspects of the assessment. The executive summary should function as a stand-alone document that summarizes the process and provides highlights of the individual state assessment. The executive summary should contain the most important points and top recommendations. This will help the state to efficiently share the highlights of the report with state officials. The introduction provides background to the reader about the state and frames the assessment recommendations.

For each assessment, the Assessment Coordinator will provide a template for the executive summary and introduction in advance of the last day of the assessment.

To construct the executive summary, the Peer Assessment Team will agree on a few priority recommendations that should be highlighted for the state. Specific guidelines that fall under the identified subject matter should be grouped for discussion and included in the executive summary. Priority subjects may include but are not limited to the following:

- Funding
- Coordination
- Authority
- Training.

2.2.4.2 Assessment Presentation Preparation

After the preparation of the executive summary, the Peer Assessment Team will prepare a PowerPoint presentation that highlights the state's strengths and presents the high priority recommendations. The read-out will be the final presentation of the assessment to the state. The high priority guidelines and recommendations will not only be in the executive summary, but also will be presented to the state and interested parties at the conclusion of the assessment. The PowerPoint will be presented during the formal assessment presentation.

2.2.4.3 Assessment Presentation

The one-hour assessment presentation to the state will be delivered on Thursday afternoon. The state has the authority to determine who may attend this session, unless otherwise bound by laws of the state. This presentation is the final step in the assessment process. The Peer Assessment Team will present a short PowerPoint that highlights the assessment and keeps excess commentary to a minimum. After the Peer Assessment Team presents the priorities, each assessor will be given an opportunity to provide personal commentary. The state and its constituents can leave after the presentation.

2.2.4.4 After Action Review

The presentation is followed by an after-action review. The Peer Assessment Team and Assessment Coordinator will have a meeting to share feedback about the assessment and the assessment process in general.

2.2.5 Assessment Day Five: Travel

Day Five **Coordinator and Peer Assessment Team** → Travel back

2.2.5.1 Travel

On the fifth day (Friday), the coordinator and the assessors will travel home.

2.3 POST ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

2.3.1 Report Finalization Process and Post-Assessment Coordination

Following the assessment, the state will have three to four weeks to review the assessment for inaccuracies that could impact the assessment results.

After the state has reviewed the report and come up with a list of comments (if any), the Assessment Coordinator will schedule a one-hour teleconference to include the Peer Assessment Team, the Assessment Coordinator, and the state representatives. During this meeting, the state and Peer Assessment Team will go over any comments or questions that may have come up during the state's review of the report. During this meeting, the two groups will decide on a path forward that is acceptable to all parties. More meetings may be deemed necessary in order to finalize the report.

State → Review assessment report and submit comments to Assessment Coordinator   **Assessment Coordinator** → Schedule a post-assessment teleconference with state and Peer Assessment Team **Peer Assessment Team** → Address state comments **Assessment Coordinator** → Finalize assessment report

After the post-assessment teleconference, the Peer Assessment Team has one to two weeks to review the state comments; edit recommendations and assessments, if necessary, based on inaccuracies; and prepare the final assessment report. After the state reviews the assessment and any inaccuracies have been resolved by the Peer Assessment Team, the report is finalized. The Assessment Coordinator will have one to two weeks to coordinate the inclusion of any final edits based on the Peer Assessment Team final review.

The written comments that are received from the state and follow-up responses from the Peer Assessment Team can be added into the report if it is the state's preference. If there are any additional actions or addendums to the report that the state feels would be helpful in making the document useful for their needs, they should contact the Assessment Coordinator with these requests or to dialogue about their concerns. The assessment team is committed to making this process helpful and useful to the state.

Once the report is finalized by the Assessment Coordinator, the report is turned over to and owned by the state, not the coordinating agency, or the Peer Assessment Team. The finished assessment is a product of the Peer Assessment Team members and is not endorsed or approved by the coordinating agency. The coordinating agency will retain copies of the assessments for research and data purposes. The coordinating agency will not release the assessment without the express consent of the state. Any results used for research will only be released on an aggregate basis across states and regions. Individual state assessment results will not be published or released during research activities.

After the final report has been completed, the Coordinating Agency will continue to work with the State Assessment Team to develop and execute a plan for the utilization of the contents of the written assessment report. The State Assessment Team's initial goals, including what the state hopes to achieve through the assessment and the intended audience for the assessment report, will be reviewed. The Coordinating Agency will also provide support to the State Assessment Team in order to help them use the written assessment report as evidence for providing support to the PSAPs and 911 authorities within the statewide system on issues that are important to the advancement of 911.

APPENDIX A: ASSESSOR TRAINING

During the early stages of the assessment program, assessors will be extensively trained on the assessment process. Assessor training will be an on-going process; ever-evolving to meet the needs of current and future assessors.

Assessors will be trained to communicate positive, constructive feedback to the state. Training should be standardized so that each assessment is run in the same manner, regardless of the make-up of the Peer Assessment Team. Training should also allow for improvements from lessons learned in previous assessments.

Once there is a pool of experienced assessors, a limit of two new trainee assessors can be with the team for on-the job training from seasoned assessors.

The Assessment Coordinator is charged with recruiting potential assessors, assembling each Peer Assessment Team, and coordinating information related to their travel and accommodations. Peer Assessment Teams will be made up of a combination of subject matter experts in the 911 industry and could include, a PSAP Director, a 911 Authority Executive, a State Director, a Policy Analyst, a 911 Technology Specialist, and a General Interest person from the industry.

Assessors should have knowledge in one or several of the category subject areas; optimally, they should have participated in on at least one other assessment as a trainee and they should have an understanding of the consensus process. The assessors that are recruited should have good communication, interpersonal, and writing skills. Assessors should have a demonstrated history of working constructively in a group setting.

The Assessment Coordinator will consider the size and environment of a state in order to select assessors who can most effectively assess that state based on their own backgrounds.

Assessors will be given web-based training on the following:

- The role of an assessor and what is expected of an assessor
- Content of the guidelines
- The Assessment Handbook
- Things to look for during data gathering
- How to prepare the report using the assessment matrix.

Moving forward, the Peer Assessment Team should have at least three members who have already performed an assessment. It would be difficult and time-consuming to perform an assessment with more than two new assessors per team.

APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The assessment tools may be found on the following pages.

STATE CHECKLIST FOR ASSESSOR BRIEFING

STATE ACTIVITY CHECKLIST STATE _____ TYPE of ASSESSMENT _____ DATE SUBMITTED DATE ASSESSMENT DATE PRESITE DATE REPORT RECEIVED REGL ASSESSMENT REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR		FILE #	DATE
	OFFICIAL REQUEST SUBMITTED TO COORDINATING AGENCY		
	INITIAL STATE MEETING - COORDINATE with ASSESSMENT REPRESENTATIVE PRE-SITE DATE & PLACE		
	COORDINATE FACILITIES AND MEALS FOR ASSESSMENT		
	PARTICIPATE IN STATE PREP MEETING		
	TRAVEL & PAYMENT for ALL PEER ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS ARRANGED		
	PRESENTERS SCHEDULED - Instructions re: purpose of presentation, length, content, need for written materials		
	SUBMIT STATE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT TO COORDINATING AGENCY		
	Site, logistics, travel, information		
	Agenda/schedule		
	Information on and status re: all guideline categories		
	PREPARE STATE BRIEFING		
	EQUIPMENT and MATERIALS/SUPPLIES (see support requirements handout)		
	REFRESHMENTS for team during presentations & deliberations		

	STAFF ON-SITE during presentations and available at other times		
	Assist coordinating agency with meeting facilitation		
	STAFF ON-SITE for social event		
	Provide logistical/administrative support		
	REVIEW REPORT for APPROPRIATE ACTION		
	DISTRIBUTE REPORT		
	PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD		

INITIAL STATE MEETING NOTES

This initial state meeting will be conducted over the phone and will take approximately two hours.

- Thank state for their participation.

  o The goal of this program is to offer a tool for your state to use in improving its statewide 911 system. This is the state's report to use.

  o Ask the state what it hopes to get out of this assessment and who it intends to distribute the report to.

  o This is a joint effort between the state 911 authority, the coordinating agency, and the private sector. This is an excellent example of Federal, State, and private sector cooperation.

- Give history of the National 911 Assessment Program.

- Give overview of assessment process.

  o The statewide 911 system is measured against the National 911 Assessment Guidelines. The guidelines were developed using a consensus process by the National 911 Assessment Workgroup made up of 911 stakeholders.

  o The guidelines are not government standards.

  o The Peer Assessment Team will be comprised of subject matter experts that are hand-selected for the purposes of your state's assessment.

  o The Peer Assessment Team evaluates the following nine areas:

    ▪ Statutory and Regulatory Environment
    ▪ Governance
    ▪ Functional and Operational Planning
    ▪ Standards
    ▪ Security and Continuity of Operations
    ▪ Human Resources and Training
    ▪ Evaluation
    ▪ Public Education
    ▪ NG911 Maturity Model.

  o The Peer Assessment Team does not create a report card, nor do they compare one state to another; they only compare your state to the guidelines.

  o This is a consensus report of the Peer Assessment Team. **The coordinating agency is not involved in the recommendations.** The coordinating agency is a

facilitator for the process only. The coordinating agency's job is to see that the report is completed by the established deadline.

o   The report will analyze the state's 911 system using the National 911 Assessment Guidelines and give recommendations for each group of guidelines, where appropriate. The Peer Assessment Team determines the criteria achieved by the state for each guideline based on what is learned at the briefing, and makes recommendations on how the state could reach the next criteria level.

The entire process will take five days, including travel for the assessors. A representative of the Peer Assessment Team will present highlights of the draft report to the State 911 authority representatives, briefing participants and guests. **THIS PRESENTATION IS NOT A DISCUSSION.**

o   Following the assessment, the state will have three to four weeks to review the assessment for inaccuracies that could impact the assessment results. In turn, the Peer Assessment Team has one to two weeks to edit recommendations and assessments that were based on inaccuracies.

o   You must go into this process recognizing that this report is a constructive assessment and it must be used appropriately.

- Review agreement and agree to terms

   o   Discuss the logistics that the state will be responsible for planning and providing.

   o   Preliminary Logistics to be agreed to during this meeting.

      ▪   Schedule
      ▪   Who will administer the logistics?
      ▪   Administrative Support
      ▪   Time commitment for pre-assessment briefing
      ▪   Discuss working Social Event (cash bar, ambiance, purpose, etc.)

   o   The cost for providing the team for an assessment will be determined and agreed to prior to the assessment. This money is used to provide for the cost of travel, per diem (lodging and meals), administrative support and honoraria for the Peer Assessment Team members. This value represents the cost associated with the team and the administrative support for the assessment. Additional cost may include travel and lodging of state briefing participants, as required. This money is not to be used to fund the travel of coordinating agency representatives or other Federal Government partners. They must travel under their own travel funds.

   o   Travel (airfare, rental cars, POV miles, etc.) and hotel costs (base room rate and taxes only) will be paid for up-front by the state, wherever possible. Meals should be covered for Peer Assessment Team members, including travel days and

meals while producing the final report. An honorarium will be calculated prior to the assessment, to include travel days. Administrative support is needed.

- Walk the state through the steps of preparing for the assessment.

    o Stress the large time commitment required leading up to and during the assessment week.

    o The state will need to convene a team that will tell the story of the statewide 911 system to the assessors, both with a written presentation and an oral presentation at the on-site assessment.

    o The State Assessment Team should include representation from any entity that is key to the provision of 911 service in the state.

    o The requesting state is responsible for preparing a current environment for the Peer Assessment Team. The current environment will outline the accomplishments that have been achieved for each guideline, as well as barriers to implementation of superior criteria, if the state does not already meet superior standard. A guidelines matrix will be provided for the state to complete.

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE & LOGISTICS

Detailed Schedule and Logistics of On-Site Assessment

Monday – Friday

Monday: Evening Networking Event @ 6:00 – 7:00 PM

- Logistics:
    - Select a location, either in hotel or nearby, for an informal gathering
        - If you select a nearby restaurant, the Peer assessment team can purchase their own beverages and will be on their own for dinner (which they could purchase in the chosen restaurant).
        - If you decide to host the gathering in a reserved room in the hotel, please have a cash bar available. In this instance, you can provide dinner for those who attend, but please keep in mind that you will still have to reimburse those who are not able to attend for dinner.

Tuesday: State Assessment Team Presentations to Peer Assessment Team

- Logistics:
    - In the hotel, please reserve 1 conference room, large enough to hold both teams and any additional guests the state would like to invite.
    - You may set up the room in any format that will be most fitting for the State Assessment Team to present.
    - 12:00 – Schedule lunch with State Assessment Team and Peer Assessment Team.
    - Afternoon: Continue with presentations on state's self-evaluation.

Wednesday: ½ Day State Assessment Team Presentation (If necessary)/ ½ Day Peer Assessment Team Assessment Prep

- Logistics:
    - In order to make the day-to-day meetings transition easily, please reserve the same conference room in the hotel for all days of the assessment (Tuesday – Thursday).
    - If the State Assessment Team does not need additional time after Tuesday's presentations to finalize their presentation to the Peer Assessment Team, then the Peer Assessment Team will begin their assessment preparation on Wednesday morning.
    - Lunch: If the 911 coordinator would like to have lunch with the Peer Assessment Team, please make plans to either have a catered lunch at the hotel, or to go to a nearby restaurant.
        - The purpose of having lunch with the Peer Assessment Team is to provide all parties the opportunity for any last-minute clarification or answer any last-minute questions before the Peer Assessment Team writes their report.
        - The Peer Assessment Team can also be responsible for their own lunch and they will include their food purchase in their expense report for reimbursement at the end of the trip.

- o The Peer Assessment Team will need access to the conference room late into Wednesday night, to finish writing the report.

Thursday: ½ Day Peer Assessment Team Briefing Preparation/ Mid-Afternoon Peer Assessment Team presentations to State Assessment Team
- Logistics:
  - o Please ensure the same conference room is available early Thursday morning through 6:00 PM on Thursday.
  - o If desired, the State can invite others (e.g. PSAP managers) to attend the presentations so the Peer Assessment Team briefs the PSAP managers, along with the State Assessment Team, on their assessment.
  - o We will let you know if the Peer Assessment Team or NHTSA would like to include anyone in the list of invitees for the report read-out.

Friday: Travel Day for Peer Assessment Team
- Logistics:
  - o The Peer Assessment Team will be using Friday to travel back to their home towns.

Suggestions for Hotel Contract:

In the written contract with the hotel, it is suggested to include the following requirements:
- 1 Conference Room from Tuesday– Thursday
  - o Needs to be large enough to fit the Peer Assessment Team, the State Assessment Team, and any additional invitees to the presentations
  - o Contract to include room logistics such as seating arrangement, table setup, A/V, water, etc.
- A room block that is sufficient for everyone
  - o A favorable or no attrition clause (70% of room block or less)
  - o Latest date for favorable rates under the room block to be as close as possible to the meeting date

TALKING POINTS: PEER ASSESSMENT TEAM BRIEFING BY ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

Welcome all members. Recognize taking time out of their busy schedules to join this worthwhile project.

- Reinforce that this is not an assessment done by the coordinating agency, but rather will be done solely by the Peer Assessment Team. The coordinating agency will not take part in making recommendations or assessing the state.

- The assessment report will be a consensus report of the Peer Assessment Team.

Review the Process

- Listen to State Assessment Team for 1-1.5 days – State Assessment Team is selected by the State 911 Authority, or whoever is facilitating the assessment from the state.

- The process is based on comparison of the 911 activities within the state (current environment) with the National 911 Assessment Guidelines criteria and recommendations on how the state can achieve the superior criteria, if the state has not already met superior.

- During the briefing process, gather information. Do not discuss strengths or weaknesses of various components. That will be left for the assessment report.

- After the briefing process, the Peer Assessment Team will be sequestered in order to write the assessment report.

- Be constructive. Highlight strengths.

- The process will become clear as we proceed.

- The coordinating agency representative will let you know when you are behind schedule.

TEAM INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING REPORT

- Use the assessment matrix to assess the statewide 911 system against the criteria for each guideline.

- Make recommendations for improvement to the statewide 911 system that would move the state toward achieving the superior criteria.

- Include notes and comments, as necessary, to explain your reasoning and thought process for your assessment or recommendation. Be sure to consider what the state's goal of achieving through this assessment is.

- Each Peer Assessment Team member will assess and make recommendations for their assigned guidelines.

- Each Peer Assessment Team member will present the highlights of the statewide 911 system status, their assessment and recommendations for each guideline to the entire Peer Assessment Team, to gain consensus and additional recommendations from other team members.

- The assessment report is a consensus document, so the prose must represent the entire Peer Assessment Team.

- Turn in completed guidelines when you complete the matrix for each guidelines category.

- The administrative team member will let you know when you are behind schedule.

- Review and edit your initial assessments and recommendations as you write them, then the Peer Assessment Team will edit them all together.

- Select one Peer Assessment Team member to compile the introduction. This will usually be whoever finishes their assigned guidelines first.

- The team will decide on priority recommendations that will be highlighted in an executive summary.

- Follow the provided template to draft the executive summary and introduction.

- Each assessor will provide a short biography to the administrative team member to include in the assessment report.

- Decide who will present the draft report highlights to the state.

- Compose an assessment presentation.

- The draft report will be completed and ready for the assessment presentation no later than 3:00 PM on Thursday.

SAMPLE AGREEMENT BETWEEN COORDINATING AGENCY AND STATE

In anticipation of the upcoming Statewide 911 Program Assessment in North Carolina during calendar year 2015, this agreement sets forth a schedule and responsibilities for the participants of the assessment. It is critical that all parties have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, as well as those of their partner organizations, so that a comprehensive and complete assessment can take place. The parties to which this agreement refers are the National 911 Program, the State of North Carolina and its 911 Agency, and the firm of Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc., as a contractor to the National 911 Program. For the purposes of this agreement, definitions of various cooperating parties are included here:

- Coordinating Agency: This refers to the National 911 Program, and is the agency through which the Peer Assessment Team and the State Assessment Team will work to perform and deliver the final assessment.
- Peer Assessment Team: This team is made up of subject matter experts from state and/or local 911 systems that are not being assessed. The team members represent a wide variety of expertise and experience in the 911 community.
- Assessment Coordinator: This is the main point of contact within the Coordinating Agency.
- State Assessment Team: This team is comprised of the various representatives within the state being assessed, leading and directing the various members of the state briefing team and working with the Peer Assessment Team.
    - State Briefing Team: This is a team of experts from across all areas needed to establish the current environment for the multiple guidelines included in the assessment. These team members could be the same as the State Assessment Team members or they may be selected to present the briefings.
- State Contact Person: This is the Point of Contact on the State Assessment Team who will be the main hub of communication and coordination for the State Assessment Team.

Included in the figure below is a general schedule of the activities that must happen during the assessment process, including responsible parties.
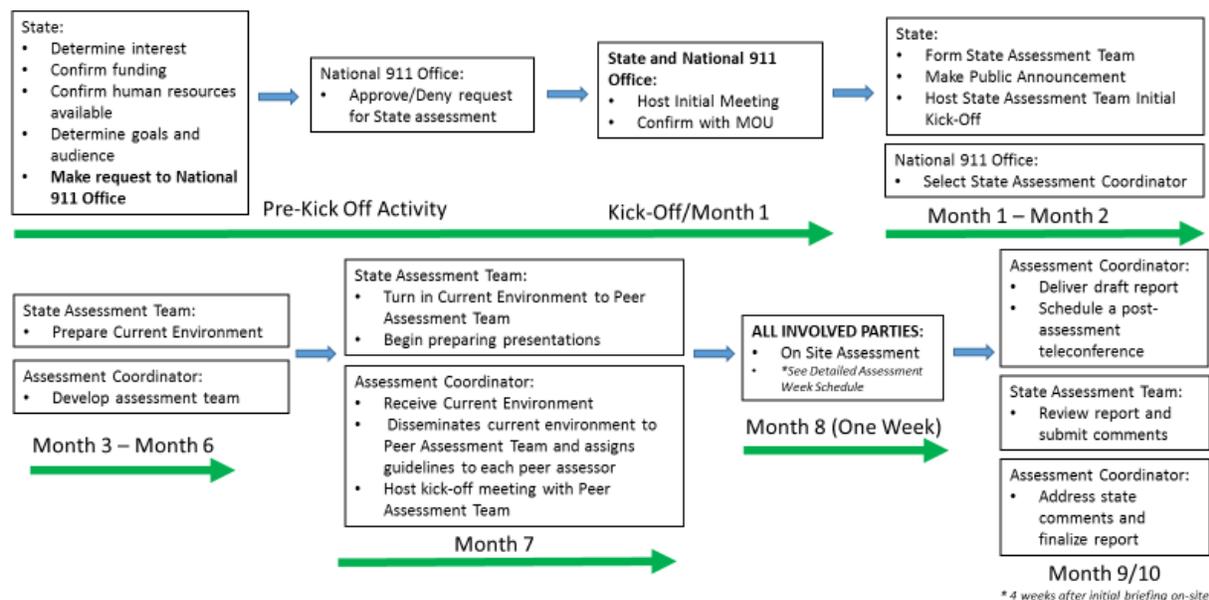
In addition to the activities outlined in the figure, the state, the National 911 Program, and Booz Allen Hamilton (as a contractor to the National 911 Program), are assigned actions they must complete. The list below incudes those actions for each party.

National 911 Program (and Booz Allen Hamilton, as a contractor to the National 911 Program)
   o   Provide support materials and guidance to the state
   o   Outline all steps and actions needed to be performed before, during, and after the state assessment
   o   Be present during the on-site assessment
   o   Secure commitments with all peer assessment team members (noted on figure)
   o   Serve as liaison between state and peer assessment team (noted on figure)
   o   The final deliverable to the state will be a comprehensive, written report on the status of the operation of the statewide 911 system, which will be the property of the state 911 program to use at it sees fit.

State
   o   Secure facility for on site assessment, providing for all needed logistics support
   o   Reserve hotel block for peer assessment team and National 911 Program office for on site assessment
   o   Form state assessment team (noted on figure)
   o   Conduct assessment of current environment (noted on figure)
   o   Provide support to peer assessment team and national 911 Program for on site assessment.

Signatures:
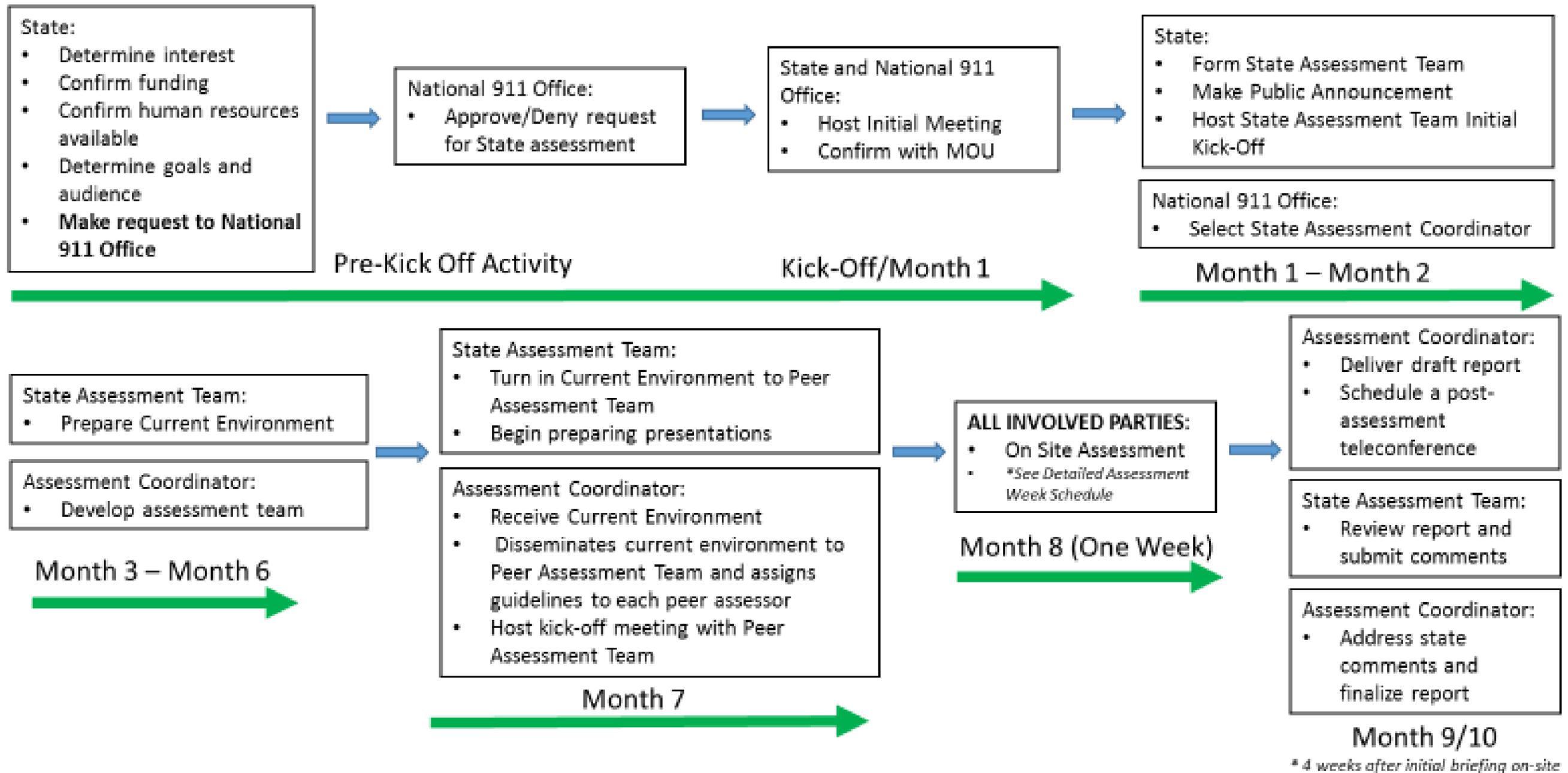We agree to complete the tasks as delineated.

National 911 Program

_____
Contractor to the National 911 Program

_____
State 911 Office

_____

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE ASSESSMENT PROCESS SCHEDULE

A Sample Assessment Process Schedule may be found on the following page.

State:
- Determine interest
- Confirm funding
- Confirm human resources available
- Determine goals and audience
- **Make request to National 911 Office**

National 911 Office:
- Approve/Deny request for State assessment

State and National 911 Office:
- Host Initial Meeting
- Confirm with MOU

State:
- Form State Assessment Team
- Make Public Announcement
- Host State Assessment Team Initial Kick-Off

National 911 Office:
- Select State Assessment Coordinator

Pre-Kick Off Activity   **Kick-Off/Month 1**   **Month 1 – Month 2**

State Assessment Team:
- Prepare Current Environment

Assessment Coordinator:
- Develop assessment team

State Assessment Team:
- Turn in Current Environment to Peer Assessment Team
- Begin preparing presentations

Assessment Coordinator:
- Receive Current Environment
- Disseminates current environment to Peer Assessment Team and assigns guidelines to each peer assessor
- Host kick-off meeting with Peer Assessment Team

ALL INVOLVED PARTIES:
- On Site Assessment
- *See Detailed Assessment Week Schedule*

Assessment Coordinator:
- Deliver draft report
- Schedule a post-assessment teleconference

State Assessment Team:
- Review report and submit comments

Assessment Coordinator:
- Address state comments and finalize report

Month 3 – Month 6   **Month 7**   **Month 8 (One Week)**   **Month 9/10**

ª 4 weeks after initial briefing on-site

APPENDIX D: State 911 Assessment Guidelines: Document Collection Tool

The State 911 Assessment Guidelines: Document Collection Tool may be found on the following page.

State 911 Assessment Guidelines:

Document Collection Tool

December 2014

Contents

Introduction

This document is intended as a guide to help states gather the materials and information needed to conduct a state 911 assessment. The materials and information gathered demonstrate how a state meets each of the national 911 assessment guidelines. Thus, this guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the National 911 Assessment Report Tool, a publication of the National 911 Program. The national 911 assessment guidelines were developed in consensus by 911 professionals from local and state government, national associations, and industry experts.

The national 911 assessment guidelines provide a uniform assessment process for states to use to evaluate the status of the operation of their statewide 911 system. The assessment itself allows states to measure where they currently stand and obtain objective feedback on potential ways to enhance the operation of their system.

The National 911 Program's role in a statewide 911 assessment is only to facilitate the establishment of an independent assessment team of your peers, who will conduct the assessment, and to facilitate the assessment process. The report issued by the evaluation team is "owned" by the state, to be used however the state sees fit.

The materials and information identified herein are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit you to these items only. They are simply examples of the types of materials and information that you could use to demonstrate how your state meets a particular guideline. You may have access to other types of materials and information that also could be used.

Statutory and Regulatory

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
SR1	The statutory environment provides for comprehensive statewide 911 coordination.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 plan
SR2	The state has a designated state 911 coordinator.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 plan • State 911 coordinator job description • State 911 program staff job descriptions • State 911 program organization chart
SR3	The statutory environment defines jurisdictional roles and responsibilities.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 plan • Governance agreements
SR4	The statutory environment provides for dedicated and sustainable 911 funding.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Audit requirements • Requirement for provider certification of subscriber counts
SR5	The statutory environment prohibits the use of 911 funds for purposes other than those defined in the state's State 911 statute.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Audit requirements • Enforcement standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures
SR6	The statutory environment authorizes the operation of a 911 system.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures
SR7	The statutory environment provides for interlocal cooperation.	• State 911 statute or other statute

		• State 911 rules • Governance agreements, MOUs, etc.
SR8	The statutory environment enables and allows public and private cooperation in providing 911 services required by statute.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State procurement and contracting statutes, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Joint service agreements • Public/private partnership agreements
SR9	The statutory environment provides contractual authority to procure and/or operate statewide 911 components.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State procurement and contracting statutes, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures
SR10	The state fosters an open and competitive procurement of 911 services.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State procurement and contracting statutes, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • E911 or NG911 RFP
SR11	The statutory environment provides liability protection.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Telephone company/911 system service provider tariffs
SR12	The statutory environment fosters the adoption of technical and operational consensus standards for the statewide system.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 technical and operational standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Training, technical and/or operations committee charters • Compliance and/or quality assurance standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures

			State 911 plan
SR13	A mechanism is in place for periodic reviews of statutes and regulations.	•	Legislative committee charter or other documented process
SR14	The statutory environment provides for stakeholder involvement.	• •	State 911 statute or other statute State 911 rules, guidelines policies and procedures
SR15	Service providers that deliver and/or enable telecommunications services to the public are involved in the 911 system.	• • • • • • • •	State 911 statute or other statute State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures Registration requirements Network provider agreement Wireline, wireless and VoIP service provider agreement VoIP positioning center agreement NG911 user agreements Emergency Services Gateway access agreement E911/NG911 test procedures
SR16	The statutory environment provides for a comprehensive quality assurance (QA) program for the 911 system.	• • • • •	State 911 statute or other statute Service level agreements Trouble reporting and resolution procedures QA standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures QA program oversight description
SR17	The statutory environment provides comprehensive quality assurance (QA) for call handling.	• • • •	State 911 statute or other statute 911 call handling compliance standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures Records management rules, guidelines, policies and procedures QA program oversight description

		• Caller feedback surveys
SR18	The statutory environment provides for training.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 training standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • State 911 certification and accreditation standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Training program description • Curriculum • Training staff job description • Performance and compliance monitoring standards, rules, guidelines and procedures
SR19	The statutory environment provides for professional certification and accreditation.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 certification and accreditation standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Performance and compliance monitoring standards, rules, policies and procedures
SR20	Statute exists for the provision of emergency medical dispatch (EMD).	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Performance and compliance monitoring standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures
SR21	Statutory environment provides for medical oversight of the policies and procedures governing the use of emergency medical protocols.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • MOU or other contractual

		vehicle for medical oversight services
SR22	The statutory environment provides for public education.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Public education materials (Public Service Announcements, brochures, Website, etc.)
SR23	The statutory environment provides for the collection of 911 system data.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Contractual reporting provisions • PSAP survey questionnaires, forms, tools, etc.
SR24	The statutory environment has rules for retention of 911 call records and 911 related data.	• State 911 statute or other statute • 911 records retention standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures
SR25	The statutory environment defines confidentiality and disclosure of 911 records.	• State 911 statute or other statute • 911 records confidentiality and disclosure standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures (FOIA)
SR26	The statutory/regulatory environment requires compliance with federal 9-1-1 related laws and regulations.	• State 911 statute or other statute
SR27	A statute/regulation exists that addresses multi-line telephone systems (MLTS) statewide for 911.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Tariffs
SR28	The statutory environment identifies 911 as an essential government service for States that are able to make that distinction.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures

Governance

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
G1	The state has a comprehensive statewide 911 plan.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 plan • SCIP plan (showing integration with 911) • FirstNet plan (showing integration with 911 and NG911)
G2	An entity has authority and responsibility for statewide 911 coordination.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Executive Order
G3	Stakeholder groups participate in 911 planning, implementation, and changes.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Planning, training, legislative, technical, operational and user committee charters, etc. • State 911 plan • Written change control procedures
G4	A statewide board or advisory council provides input and oversight for statewide 911 system coordination.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Advisory board by-laws • Advisory board meeting schedule
G5	The state facilitates working relationships between 911 and groups within the state that interact with 911.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 plan
G6	The ability exists within the state to facilitate essential partnerships statewide, across state lines, and for specific strategic purposes.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 plan • Interlocal agreements, governance agreements, MOUs, etc. • Inter-state agreements

G7	The state provides a statewide governance model for resource sharing and agreements between jurisdictions.	• Written statewide governance model • Interlocal agreements, governance agreements, MOUs, etc.

Functional and Operational Planning

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
OP1	All traditional wireline and wireless calls within the state route to a PSAP enabled to receive Enhanced 911 (E911) data, and route to an appropriate dispatcher.	• Network diagram • Call flow diagram
OP2	The state is pursuing full implementation of emergency medical dispatch (EMD).	• State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • EMD protocols in use in the state
OP3	Provisions exist for interpretation capabilities statewide.	• State 911 standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Service contracts (for non-English language and/or American Sign Language interpreters)
OP4	The state provides guidelines for the retention of 911 call records and 911 related data.	• Records retention standards, rules, guidelines, policies and procedures
OP5	The state requires a data backup plan.	• Data backup plan and procedures • Data backup logs • Data backup audit procedures
OP6	State-level guidance exists for public safety's use of social media.	• Social media rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Public information plan
OP7	Statewide support and coordination exist for managing/operating emergency notification systems (ENS).	• State 911 plan • ENS use rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Interagency ENS agreements
OP8	The state has a formalized process and communication plan for change management.	• Communications plan • Change management plan • Change management rules, guidelines, policies and procedures
OP9	The State monitors and enforces compliance of 9-1-1	• State 911 statute or other

	related provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.	statute • State 911 rules, standards, policies and procedures • Compliance monitoring and enforcement provisions

Standards

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
ST1	Standards and best practices have been identified and implemented at the state level.	• State 911 plan • Technical, operational, training and other standards
ST2	The state requires specific operational standards for PSAPs to ensure a minimum level of service delivery.	• State 911 plan • Technical, operational, training and other standards • Compliance and performance rules, policies and procedures • Enforcement policies and procedures
ST3	The state has defined PSAP performance standards.	• State 911 plan • Technical, operational, training and other standards • Technical, operational, training and other committee charters • Compliance and performance rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Enforcement policies and procedures
ST4	The state requires specific interface standards for the exchange of 911 related data between functional entities.	• Data exchange interface standards
ST5	The state has minimum standards for emergency call processing protocols.	• Call processing rules, standards, guidelines, policies and procedures • Call processing protocols • Call processing protocol review and updating policies and procedures • Call processing compliance monitoring policies and procedures
ST6	The state program fosters the adoption of technical	• State 911 plan

	and/or operational consensus standards and requirements.	• Technical, operational, training and other standards • Technical, operational, training and other committee charters • Request for Proposal

Security/Continuity of Operations

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
SC1	The state has business continuity of operations plans (COOP) for 911 to ensure continuous operations.	• 911 COOP plan • Critical infrastructure plan • Cybersecurity plan • PSAP back-up provisions • Interagency back-up agreements • 911 system redundancy, diversity and reliability provisions
SC2	Plans are in place statewide that define and meet needs and priorities to respond to and recover from a disaster.	• Disaster recovery plan • Disaster recovery policies and procedures
SC3	The state has a plan and procedures in place to safeguard information from unauthorized use, disclosure or modification, damage or loss.	• 911 network and data security provisions • PSAP security requirements • Cybersecurity provisions • Reverse ALI lookup provisions
SC4	The state has a procedure that ensures confidentiality of information to the extent permitted and/or required by law.	• 911 records confidentiality and disclosure policies and procedures (FOIA) • Non-disclosure agreement • Oversight and enforcement provisions
SC5	The state has a plan and procedures that address the logical security of the system and network.	• 911 system security plan • Network and data monitoring provisions • Cybersecurity monitoring provisions • Service interruption (outage) alert provisions • Intrusion alarm provisions
SC6	The state has a plan for physical security and access control.	• PSAP security requirements • Critical infrastructure plan
SC7	PSAP facilities and system facilities are planned, designed and constructed according to accepted site selection standards and best practices.	• PSAP site selection standards and guidelines • PSAP construction and

		renovation standards and guidelines
		• System facility site selection standards and guidelines
		• System facility construction and renovation standards and guidelines

Human Resources/Training

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
HR1	The state has minimum / essential telecommunicator training requirements.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Training committee charter • Training staff job description • Training rules, standards, guidelines, policies and procedures (initial training, continuing education, remedial training, and certification requirements) • Training program description • Monitoring and enforcement provisions
HR2	The state recommends PSAPs have a professional code of ethics for telecommunicators.	• Telecommunicator code of ethics • Standard Operating Procedures
HR3	All emergency communications staffing positions have an associated job description.	• PSAP staff job descriptions • PSAP staff performance evaluation requirements and provisions • PSAP staff professional development provisions
HR4	Comprehensive pre-employment screening for telecommunicators exists within the statewide system.	• Pre-employment screening and/or testing provisions
HR5	The state recommends regular staff performance evaluations be conducted locally.	• PSAP staff performance evaluation requirements and provisions
HR6	The state has a telecommunicator certification program.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Telecommunicator certification program description • Telecommunicator certification rules, guidelines, policies and procedures

		• Monitoring and enforcement provisions
HR7	The state has continuing education guidelines for operational staff.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Continuing education rules, standards, guidelines, policies and procedures • Continuing education monitoring, auditing and enforcement provisions
HR8	The state has a comprehensive stress management program accessible statewide.	• Stress management program rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Stress management program description

Evaluation

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
EV1	The state fosters the ongoing evaluation of statewide system(s) quality performance.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Rules, standards, guidelines, policies and procedures for performance quality review
EV2	The state has a comprehensive and standardized quality assurance (QA) process for call processing.	• State 911 statute or other statute • QA rules, standards, guidelines, policies and procedures for call processing
EV3	The state collects information and data for evaluation and planning purposes.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Rules, standards, guidelines policies and procedures for data collection • Data collection survey tool • State 911 program annual report • State 911 plan
EV4	The state utilizes statewide collected data for evaluation purposes.	• Data evaluation and analysis procedures • Benchmarks/standards against which the collected data are evaluated • Description of how collected data are used for QA and QI • State 911 plan
EV5	The state has guidelines, based on specific metrics, for measuring and managing telecommunicator staffing levels.	• State 911 statute or other statute • Rules, standards, guidelines and policies for staffing levels

Public Education

Guideline	Synopsis	Examples of Reference Materials
PE1	The state has an effective public education program that includes information about the capabilities and appropriate use of 911.	• State 911 statute or other statute • State 911 rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Public education program description and/or plan • Public education materials • Public education program review and update provisions
PE2	The state has a 911 education program for appointed/elected officials and policy makers.	• State 911 rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Public education program description and/or plan • Public education materials • Public education program review and update provisions
PE3	The state has identified special needs populations and developed specific educational programs for each.	• State 911 rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Public education program description and/or plan • Public education materials • Public education program review and update provisions
PE4	The state has specific 911 educational programs for children at all grade levels.	• State 911 rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Public education program description and/or plan • Public education materials • Public education program review and update provisions
PE5	The state has an educational program for emergency responders.	• State 911 rules, guidelines, policies and procedures • Public education program description and/or plan

| | | • Public education materials |
| | | • Public education program review and update provisions |