

performance of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Dated: November 27, 2017.

**Tammi Hines,**

*Acting Records Management Program Chief,  
Mission Support, Federal Emergency  
Management Agency, Department of  
Homeland Security.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Federal Emergency Management Agency

[Docket ID: FEMA-2017-0035]

#### Notice of Utilization of Streamlined Procedures for Environmental Assessments Associated With Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, and Nate

**AGENCY:** Federal Emergency Management Agency; Department of Homeland Security.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** As a result of recent unprecedented hurricanes, disasters have been declared for areas affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, and Nate. Due to the catastrophic damages caused by these hurricanes, FEMA must have a more efficient and streamlined procedure for achieving compliance under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) during multiple, simultaneous, recovery missions for the provision of disaster assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, including Individual Assistance, Public Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Assistance. After assessing the scale of current recovery operations, and identifying the critical need for timely rebuilding of the affected communities, FEMA, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security, determined that exigent circumstances

exist. As a result of these exigent circumstances, FEMA may utilize the streamlined procedures outlined in this notice for those activities that require an Environmental Assessment.

**ADDRESSES:** For access to the docket to read background documents, go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for the docket ID. Documents may also be inspected at FEMA, Office of Chief Counsel, Room 8NE, 500 C Street SW., Washington, DC 20472.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Katherine Zeringue, [Katherine.zeringue@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Katherine.zeringue@fema.dhs.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** As a result of unprecedented damages from 2017 Hurricane Season, federal disasters were declared for multiple areas affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate. Due to the catastrophic damages caused by these hurricanes, it is critical that FEMA create a more efficient and streamlined procedure for NEPA compliance for multiple, simultaneous, recovery missions and the provision of disaster assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 4121 *et seq.*, including Individual Assistance, Public Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Assistance. After assessing the scale of the recovery operations, and the need for the timely rebuilding of all of the affected communities, FEMA, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), determined that exigent circumstances exist. As a result of these exigent circumstances, FEMA may utilize streamlined procedures for those activities that require an Environmental Assessment (EA) under NEPA. The streamlined NEPA procedures may include any or all of the following:

(1) The public involvement process for EAs associated with Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, and Nate may be condensed to more efficiently complete NEPA review [DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, Rev 1 Section V.C (7)]. Public review and comment periods may vary depending upon the urgency of the action. FEMA may provide for a 3-day comment period for the following actions:

- Group Housing Sites
- Interim and/or temporary facilities for:
  - Hospitals and health care facilities;
  - schools and day care centers;
  - utilities and wastewater treatment plants;
  - police and fire stations;
  - government and court facilities;
  - detention centers and jailhouses;

- transportation facilities.

FEMA may provide for a 14-day comment period for all other actions associated with Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate. Public comments to the EAs can be submitted via phone or email. Specific contact information will be provided in each individual EA.

(2) FEMA may favor electronic media rather than other forms of media for notifications to the public because traditional media may no longer be available to affected communities, take longer to prepare, or add additional cost. Electronic notifications may reach a broader audience, since affected communities may be displaced or away from their traditional access points for local information (such as the U.S. Postal Service or local libraries that may be affected by the disaster). FEMA will continue use of the Unified Federal Review for notification to Other Federal Agencies that may have an interest in a relevant project.

(3) Unless other action alternatives are readily available, FEMA may focus EA level analysis and documentation on the "No Action" and "Proposed Action" alternatives (40 CFR 1508.9, Sec. 102; 42 U.S.C. 4332). FEMA's action is often to approve or deny requests for federal disaster assistance, from affected communities. This means that FEMA's "Proposal" or proposed action occurs when FEMA is considering a grant application or application for assistance.

(4) FEMA may discuss resource areas in detail only if it determines that there is a potential impact to the resources, rather than following the procedure outlined in FEMA Instruction 108-1 Section 3.4(C)(4) that requires FEMA to address in detail the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and Executive Order 12898 in its EAs regardless of the potential for impact to these resources. These streamlined procedures will supersede the requirement in FEMA's Instruction and allow FEMA to identify, and eliminate from detailed study, the issues that are not significant (40 CFR 1501.7).

The above changes, along with other internal efficiencies that FEMA may employ to comply with NEPA, such as document templates and analysis and reference tools, will allow FEMA to balance concise environmental reviews with open communication and the opportunity for meaningful public input in the decision making process. It also allows the public the opportunity to participate in FEMA's NEPA process and receive timely assistance and grants. FEMA acknowledges that the

2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season is still underway, and it may be necessary to re-issue this notification in the future.

The changes FEMA may employ for the recovery efforts for Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate do not affect the requirements of any other environmental or historic preservation laws, regulations, or executive orders. This notice addresses FEMA's requirements under DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01 Rev 1 Sections V. C (7) and VII M (1-3) and provides the public with sufficient notice of FEMA's intent to expedite federal assistance by reducing typical, but not required, public input timeframes. The Streamlined Procedures for Environmental Assessments under NEPA is available for reviewing at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) under FEMA-2017-0035. FEMA and DHS will post this notice and will provide any updates to the public on its Web sites at: <https://www.fema.gov/fema-national-environmental-policy-act-streamlined-procedures> and <https://www.dhs.gov/national-environmental-policy-act>.

**Authority:** The authority for the streamlined procedures for Environmental Assessments under the NEPA is derived from DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01 Rev 1 Section V. C (7).

Dated: November 22, 2017.

**Brock Long,**

*Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency.*

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**BILLING CODE 9111-46-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

[Docket No. DHS-2017-0059]

### Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan Template and Progress Report

**AGENCY:** National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD), Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

**ACTION:** 60-Day notice and request for comments; revised collection, 1670-0017.

**SUMMARY:** The DHS NPPD Office of Cybersecurity and Communications (CS&C) will submit the following Information Collection Request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**DATES:** Comments are encouraged and will be accepted until January 30, 2018.

This process is conducted in accordance with 5 CFR part 1320.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments, identified by docket number DHS-2017-0059, by one of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** <http://www.regulations.gov>. Please follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- **Email:** [SCIP@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:SCIP@hq.dhs.gov). Please include docket number DHS-2017-0059 in the subject line of the message.
- **Mail:** Written comments and questions about this Information Collection Request should be forwarded to DHS/NPPD/CS&C/OEC, ATTN: 1670-0017, 245 Murray Lane SW., Arlington, VA 20598-0640.

**Instructions:** All submissions received must include the words "Department of Homeland Security" and docket number DHS-2017-0059. Comments received will be posted without alteration at <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided.

Comments submitted in response to this notice may be made available to the public through relevant Web sites. For this reason, please do not include in your comments information of a confidential nature, such as sensitive personal information or proprietary information. If you send an email comment, your email address will be automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the public docket and made available on the Internet. Please note that responses to this public comment request containing any routine notice about the confidentiality of the communication will be treated as public comments that may be made available to the public notwithstanding the inclusion of the routine notice.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For specific questions related to collection activities, please contact Richard Tenney at 703-705-6281 or at [SCIP@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:SCIP@hq.dhs.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The DHS NPPD CS&C Office of Emergency Communications (OEC), formed under Title XVIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, 6 U.S.C. 571 *et seq.*, is required, pursuant to 6 U.S.C. 572, to develop the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP), which includes identification of goals, timeframes, and appropriate measures to achieve interoperable communications capabilities. The Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Template and Annual SCIP Snapshot Report are designed to meet and support these statutory requirements.

OEC will use the information from the SCIP Template and Annual SCIP Snapshot to track the progress States are making in implementing milestones and demonstrating goals of the NECP, as required through the Homeland Security Act of 2002, 6 U.S.C. 572. The SCIP Template and Annual SCIP Snapshot will provide OEC with broader capability data across the lanes of the Interoperability Continuum, which are key indicators of consistent success in response-level communications.

In addition, the SCIP Template and the SCIP Snapshot will assist States in their strategic planning for interoperable and emergency communications while demonstrating each State's achievements and challenges in accomplishing optimal interoperability for emergency responders. Moreover, certain government grants may require States to update their SCIP Templates and SCIP Snapshot to include broadband efforts in order to receive funding for interoperable and emergency communications.

Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWICs) will be responsible for collecting this information from their respective stakeholders and governance bodies, and will complete and submit the SCIP Snapshots directly to OEC through unclassified electronic submission.

The SCIP Template and Annual SCIP Snapshot may be submitted through unclassified electronic submission to OEC by each State's SWIC in addition to being able to submit their respective SCIP Template and Annual SCIP Snapshot via email to [SCIP@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:SCIP@hq.dhs.gov).

OEC streamlined its annual SCIP reporting process to obtain standard data to understand progress and challenges in emergency communications planning. OEC replaced the lengthier Annual Progress Report with the SCIP Snapshot as a reporting mechanism for States and territories for submitting SCIP progress, achievements and challenges. The data collected is based on calendar year reporting. The SCIP Snapshot also includes sections for States and territories to report on the status of governance structures, progress towards SCIP goals and initiatives, and overall successes and challenges in advancing interoperable emergency communications.

This is a revised information collection. OMB is particularly interested in comments which:

1. Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including