

North Central Texas Council of Governments



**Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory
Committee (REPAC)**

Handbook

September 2023

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Record of Changes

Change #	Date of Change	Entered By	Date Entered
1	9/20/2022	Irish Hancock	Updated by CF 5/2023

Introduction

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) established the Emergency Preparedness (EP) Department in 2002 after regional elected officials expressed interest in a coordinated, regional effort to address natural disaster and terrorism prevention programs. Their interest, brought on as a direct result of the September 11, 2001, terror attacks, helped establish the department with a mission to support regional governments and address issues focused on mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery of natural or manmade disasters. The vision of these elected officials, the NCTCOG Executive Board, and agency leadership helped ensure the EP Department established a collaborative and coordinated effort throughout the 16-county region while considering both rural and urban jurisdictions.

Established in November 2004, the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) is a Technical Committee of the Emergency Preparedness Planning Council (EPPC). The scope of the REPAC is to assist the Council in carrying out its duties and responsibilities and to formulate strategies and recommendations to affect an approach to accomplish coordinated and integrated emergency preparedness planning. The initial focus was on reviewing and approving regional homeland security projects. Subsequent activities will include strategic planning, project implementation, evaluation of ongoing regional projects, and other current and future issues facing our region.

REPAC membership consists of sixteen county representatives, three urban area representatives, and one representative from each Formal REPAC approved Working Group (Working Groups), and leadership.

Formal REPAC Approved Working Groups	
Citizen Corps Program (CCP)	Public Education (PubEd)
Public Cyber Security (Cyber)	Public Works (PWERT)
Emergency Management (EM)	Training and Exercise (T&E)
Emergency GIS Response Team (EGRT)	Special Weapons Attack Team (SWAT)
Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)	Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)
Fusion	Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)
Hazardous Materials (Hazmat)	Interoperable Communications (Interop)

Acronyms

AAR	After Action Review
EP	Emergency Preparedness Department
EPPC	Emergency Preparedness Planning Council
HSGD	Homeland Security Grants Division
NIMs	National Incident Management System
NCTCOG	North Central Texas Council of Government
OOG	Office of the Governor
PPOC	Principles Points of Contact
REPAC	Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee
RIP	Regional Implementation Plan
SOGs	Standard Operating Guidelines
SHSP	State Homeland Security Grant Program
SPR	State Preparedness Report
SME	Subject Matter Expert
THIRA	Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment
UASI	Urban Area Security Initiative

REPAC Operating Guidelines

A. General

1. The Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) is a technical subcommittee of the Emergency Preparedness Planning Council (EPPC).
2. REPAC's purpose is to:
 - a. Assist EPPC in carrying out its duties and responsibilities.
 - b. To lead collaborative regional planning, formulate strategies, and make recommendations to ensure the best possible approaches to emergency management are achieved in North Central Texas.
3. With guidance from EPPC, REPAC will also establish and carry out grant administration procedures for the State Homeland Security Program Grant Program (SHSP). These grant-related procedures can be found in the REPAC SHSP Standard Operating Guidelines.
4. The REPAC Handbook will be reviewed and revised as needed each year in the spring.

B. Membership Nomination

1. Those interested in becoming REPAC Members must complete the REPAC Nomination Form.
 - a. Please see Attachment C: REPAC Nomination Form and Attachment D: REPAC Alternate Form.
2. Nominees will be selected by working group chairs and approved by working group members. The working group may also select and approve up to two (2) alternates. Approval of the nominee and alternate(s) working group will be documented in meeting minutes.
3. Upon approval from the working group, all Nomination Forms must be sent to the REPAC COG staff lead who will then send the forms to REPAC for nomination and EPPC for approval.

New REPAC members and alternates must take a REPAC orientation within 90 days of appointment. If the orientation is not completed by the nominee, an alternate who has completed orientation will fill the seat until training is completed.

C. Membership and Voting

1. REPAC membership shall be comprised of 38 seats in the following manner.
 - a. Sixteen (16) county seats will provide geographical representation throughout the region. County seat positions are nominated by corresponding County Judge or EMC.
 - b. One (1) representative (chair or someone appointed by working group chair) from each formal working group (see page 4).
 - c. Three (3) Urban Area seats will provide representation from each of the region's core cities: Dallas, Fort Worth, and Arlington. Nominations for the three Urban Area seats will only be accepted from the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Executive Committee.

- d. Two (2) non-voting seats will be provided for committee officers. These include one Chair and one Vice-Chair representing Urban and Rural jurisdictions. Chairs can be the determining vote in the event of a tie.
 - e. One (1) seat will be provided to a liaison between EPPC and REPAC. The seat will be filled by the Chair or Vice-Chair of EPPC and is a non-voting seat.
 - f. One (1) seat will be provided to a liaison to the State of Texas. The seat will be filled by REPAC Chairs' recommendations and EPPC approval. The State liaison is a non-voting seat.
 - g. One (1) seat will be provided to a liaison to the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council (NCTTRAC). The seat will be filled by REPAC Chairs' recommendations and EPPC approval. The NCTTRAC liaison is a non-voting seat.
 - h. REPAC maintains the right to approve any deviations from guidance.
2. To maintain a seat on REPAC, members must be employed by an Emergency Preparedness member jurisdiction within the North Central Texas Region.
 - a. If an individual representing a Working Group on REPAC changes their employment agency and remains within the discipline, they may maintain their position on REPAC representing the Working Group (unless that organization is not an Emergency Preparedness member).
 - b. REPAC Chairs may make modifications to the REPAC membership at their discretion.
 - c. If a seat becomes vacant, the designated alternate may complete the remainder of the term if approved by REPAC Chairs.
 - d. Nominees, upon approval from REPAC and EPPC will continue to be active in the working group and serve as a liaison to the working group regarding REPAC business. Additionally, they will serve as a liaison to REPAC regarding working group SHSP projects.
 3. Members may only vote on the committee if their jurisdiction is a member of the Regional Emergency Preparedness Program at NCTCOG.
 4. New Member recommendations for all seats will be presented to and voted on by EPPC twice a year.
 5. REPAC Chairs can appoint liaison seats on an as-needed basis for as long as determined by the REPAC Chairs. Any liaison seat appointed to REPAC will be a non-voting seat. The Chairs will review the necessary liaisons during the Chair rotation to determine the need.
 6. REPAC members are allowed to attend meetings in person or virtually (if offered) to meet the attendance requirement to maintain their seat.
 7. REPAC Members must designate their authorized alternate(s) via an alternate nomination form. Only the designated alternate(s) will count towards the attendance of a REPAC member. The alternate is allowed voting privileges.
 - a. REPAC members are allowed up to two alternates: a primary and a secondary.
 8. To serve as an alternate, a potential representative must be employed in the same discipline as the primary delegate from the designated working group or represent a jurisdiction within the same county (in the case of county representative seats). Alternates for the Urban Area seats are assigned by the Urban Area representatives.

9. REPAC Nomination Forms are collected every Summer for voting in August of each year. Forms must be sent to the Emergency Preparedness COG representative.

D. Term of Membership

1. Working Group representative membership is a two (2)-year term unless the elected member formally resigns their position. Elections will be held each year at the November/December meeting.
2. Working groups must renominate their REPAC representative/liaison every two (2) years.
3. Members elected during mid-term elections to fill interim vacancies will serve the remainder of the term available under the previous occupant's term of office.
4. REPAC members may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the REPAC Chair. Primary membership changes must go before EPPC.
5. REPAC Chairs are able to excuse absences and will do so on a case-by-case basis.

E. Compensation

1. REPAC members and alternates shall not be compensated in any way for the performance of their duties as members of REPAC.

F. Code of Conduct

1. Each REPAC member and their designated alternate must sign a code of conduct at the beginning of each term of office to ensure ethical and behavioral standards are understood by all members and interested parties.
2. Committee members shall not:
 - a. Appear before REPAC while acting as an advocate for any other person or business entity.
 - b. Knowingly use their position on the committee for their own private gain or for the financial gain of their or any other business or agency.
 - c. Accept or solicit any gift or favor that could influence that individual in the discharge of official duties.
 - d. Lobby for seat nomination or during project scoring.
3. Failure to adhere to the code of conduct may result in removal from committee by the Chair and Vice-chair.

G. REPAC Chairs

1. REPAC will nominate and recommend a committee member to serve as Vice-Chair every two (2) years. The recommendation must be approved by EPPC. Leadership is committed to a four (4)-year term with succession from Vice-Chair to Chair. No person will fill the same leadership position for more than two (2) years within a four (4)-year consecutive term.
 - a. The two (2) leadership positions (Chair and Vice-Chair) will be modified every other August by the Chair stepping down and Vice-Chair rotating up.

- b. In the event the Vice-Chair resigns their duties, a new Vice-Chair will be nominated at the next meeting and will serve the remainder of the term. In the event the Chair resigns their seat, the Vice-Chair will rotate to the Chair seat at the next meeting; a new Vice-Chair will also be nominated during that meeting.
2. The Chair will preside over REPAC meetings, and in their absence, the Vice-Chair will preside.

H. Meeting Notes/Agendas

1. Notes of all REPAC meetings shall be retained by EP staff and posted to the REPAC webpage after it is approved at the next meeting. Meeting minutes shall be approved by a simple majority of the entire current REPAC membership. Agendas shall be prepared by the Chair and Vice-Chair, with assistance from the EP staff and posted to the REPAC webpage in advance of any regularly scheduled meeting.

I. Quorum and Voting Procedures

1. A quorum is defined as a simple majority of the current committee members.
2. For voting purposes, a simple majority of the present committee membership is required to approve any proposed action item during meetings at which a quorum is present.
3. REPAC members and alternate(s) may not share voting privileges simultaneously.

J. Subcommittees

1. Subcommittees may be formed as needed for the purpose of exploring detailed issues before REPAC.

K. Conflict of Interest

1. Any member or organization that has a conflict of interest concerning any matter before the committee shall inform the committee before participating in a discussion.
2. A conflict of interest shall be defined as any issue in which there is a conflict between members or an organization's public obligation and private interests such as financial or other interests.

L. Authority

1. The Chair and Vice-Chair, in agreement, have the authority to remove a REPAC member.
2. EPPC may vote to adjust the REPAC Operating Guidelines at their discretion.

SHSP Operating Guidelines

The Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) will oversee the administration of the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) as outlined below.

A. The Office of the Governor (OOG) Homeland Security Grants Division (HSGD)

1. HSGD collaborates closely with each of the 24 Regional Councils of Governments (COGs) across the state and provides funding for the COGs to engage in regional and local planning efforts, including threat and preparedness assessments and planning to implement the state's homeland security strategy. These assessments are used by the COGs when making funding recommendations to HSGD and are also reviewed by the Texas Office of Homeland Security in preparing the state's annual Threat and Hazards Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and State Preparedness Report (SPR).
2. Grant funding is used to address gaps identified through the annual State Preparedness Report (SPR) in achieving capability targets set through the annual Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA). These assessments identify capability targets and Texas' current ability to meet those targets. Precedence is given to high-priority core capabilities where significant gaps exist.
3. eGrants
 - a. HSGD's online grant management system used to create and manage grant applications and projects.

B. Regional Priorities and Projects

1. REPAC, in conjunction with EP, will develop a Regional Implementation Plan (RIP).
 - a. The RIP will outline the future strategy of REPAC to enhance the preparedness level of the North Central Texas region through available grant funding.
 - b. The RIP is updated annually, as implemented by the State of Texas Office of the Governor (OOG).
2. Annually, REPAC will recommend regional priorities and projects to EPPC.
 - a. Projects and priorities will be based on the most pressing needs to enhance the preparedness level of the region.
 - b. Projects and priorities will take into consideration National and State guidance.

C. SHSP Project Applications: Creation and Submission Process

1. Annually, REPAC, in conjunction with the Emergency Preparedness Department, will accept project applications from the Regional Working Groups.
 - a. The EP department will create a grant timeline to be approved by REPAC:
 - 1) Dates will take into consideration National and State timelines.
 - 2) Dates will allow adequate time for the Working Groups to submit a project(s).

- 3) EP staff will host a Technical Grants Workshop encouraging two working group members to attend. This is a one-day workshop where EP staff are available to answer any questions.
2. Regional Working Groups determine their top priorities based on the greatest needs and gaps in each subject matter area along with the regional priorities.
 - a. When applicable, Working Groups will be expected to participate in the regional Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA), State Preparedness Report (SPR), and the Regional Implementation Plan (RIP) process to help determine priorities.
 - b. Projects will go through REPAC and EPPC for review and approval; REPAC and EPPC are able to make changes or modifications to the submitted projects.
 - c. Working Group members are not allowed to lobby for their projects to REPAC and/or EPPC members.
 - d. Working Groups may submit up to two projects that are different in scope per grant year.
 - e. EP will work with the Working Groups to ensure eligibility of the jurisdictions involved.
 - 1) To be eligible, jurisdictions must certify they meet "Intermediate" planning requirements upon submission of the grant application. The OOG will use local planning records maintained by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to determine if these criteria have been satisfied.
 - 2) The jurisdiction or response organization's governing body must have formally adopted National Incident Management System (NIMS) standards by ordinance or court order and be implementing current NIMS compliance requirements.
 - 3) Jurisdictions are responsible for ensuring they have knowledge of and are in compliance with the laws, rules, and regulations of the grant(s), including compliance with all state and federal grant eligibility requirements.
 - 4) Working Groups are responsible for assigning a grant writer to assist them in writing their project application(s).
 - f. Executive Summary
 - 1) Working Groups, in conjunction with EP staff, will create an Executive Summary of their project(s). The Executive Summary will serve as a cover sheet to the projects and will provide a summary of the project.
 - 2) The one-page Executive Summary will include details such as the project description, regional impact, identified gap/need for the project, project timeline of completion, breakdown of project cost, and the jurisdiction who will receive funding/equipment.
 - g. REPAC will utilize a scoring method to help rank and prioritize projects
 - 1) Projects will be scored by REPAC members based on six (6) criteria and ranked from highest priority to least priority
 - (1) Nexus to Terrorism - Correlates to terrorism preparedness and/or prevention
 - (2) Regional in Scope - Benefits the region as a whole vs. few or one jurisdiction
 - (3) Ongoing Sustainment - One-time or sustained by subgrantee vs. continued SHSP funding
 - (4) Capability Gap - Need identified in exercise, gap analysis, or real-world event
 - (5) Reasonable Budget - Amount requested aligns with project
 - (6) Overall Quality – Overall assessment of project

- 1 – Not at all Effective
 - 2 – Slightly Effective
 - 3 – Moderately Effective
 - 4 – Very Effective
 - 5 – Extremely Effective
- 2) REPAC may change these factors depending on grant guidance and priorities.
 - 3) REPAC will receive scoring criteria definitions during the scoring meeting.
 - 4) A member from each Working Group will be allowed up to five (5) minutes per project, not to exceed ten (10) minutes. Questions and answers are not included in the time limit.
 - 5) Working Group members should utilize the standardized PowerPoint template provided by EP staff for their presentation.
- h. Changes or extensions to the application period will only be considered under extenuating circumstances
 - 1) Any request for changes or extension must be approved by the EPPC and REPAC Chairs.
 - 2) Any changes or extensions must be announced three (3) business days before they take effect.
 - i. EP will collect all project submissions
 - 1) EP will maintain files of all projects submitted.
 - 2) EP will prepare projects for REPAC review.
 - j. An EPPC Funding Subcommittee will meet to review all of the SHSP projects and make funding recommendations to EPPC.
 - 1) EPPC retains the authority to fund any regional project(s) and to make all funding decisions for projects.
 - 2) Prior to official EPPC approval, no information regarding scores, ranks, funding amounts, etc., may be released to any Working Group Members, REPAC Members, or other regional partners.
 - k. REPAC will conduct an annual After Action Review (AAR) meeting to discuss the current processes and procedures to ensure REPAC is as efficient and effective as possible. During the REPAC AAR, members will discuss and review all of the Working Groups and evaluate continued status.
 - l.
 - 1) All AAR items will be discussed and documented during the meeting.
 - (1) Any significant items will be taken to REPAC as a whole for a vote if needed.
 - 2) The REPAC Vice-Chair will facilitate the meeting.

D. SHSP Maintenance

1. Project Changes
 - a. All project changes must be submitted to the EP Department for processing.
 - b. Project changes are considered to be any modifications to the grant project that change the overall intent of the grant. For example, a training grant becoming an equipment grant.
 - c. REPAC Chairs are able to approve project changes that are less than \$3,000; any project changes over \$3,000 must be presented to and approved by REPAC.

E. Close Out Policy

1. Extensions
 - a. Jurisdictions will not be approved for an extension for SHSP funds past their original Sub Recipient Agreement performance period without prior OOG and REPAC Chair approval.
 - b. Extension requests must be submitted by project to the EP REPAC staff lead in writing and must include detailed rationale.
2. Grant Close-Out
 - a. Grant closeout will begin two (2) months prior to the end of the performance period of the grant.
3. Exceptions
 - a. The EPPC Chair, REPAC Chair, and EP Director, collectively and if in full agreement, have the authority to make exceptions to the process.
 - 1) Any changes to the process must be reported at the next EPPC and REPAC meetings.

Working Group Operating Guidelines

A. History of Working Groups

1. Working Groups were originally created as a requirement under the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant program to allow for an inclusive regional approach to the development and implementation of the UASI program.
2. Designated UASI counties are made up of the four core counties: Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant. Designated UASI cities are made up of the cities within the four core counties whose population is 100,000 or more.
3. The representatives from Dallas, Arlington, and Fort Worth meet to discuss UASI funding and projects as well as Working Groups.
 - a. The UASI Primary Points of Contact (PPOCs) retain control over the Chairs of the original UASI Working Groups which are:
 - 1) EOD
 - 2) Fusion
 - 3) HazMat
 - 4) SWAT
 - 5) USAR

B. Overview of Formal REPAC approved Working Groups

1. The Emergency Preparedness Planning Council (EPPC) and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) have created and implemented additional Regional Working Groups.
2. There are fourteen (14) REPAC approved working groups that are comprised of regional Subject Matter Experts (SME's) who together lead and execute regional planning goals and objectives as well as training and exercises.
3. Working Group Roles and Responsibilities
 - a. Each Working Group will nominate a primary and alternate representative from their membership to represent their Working Group as members on REPAC and attend REPAC meetings.
 - b. Working Groups are responsible for coordinating and collaborating with their group members on the creation, implementation, and execution of Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP) projects, if and when applicable.
 - c. Any jurisdiction from the North Central Texas Region is able to attend and be involved in Working Group meetings; however, to be eligible for SHSP grant funds, a representative from a jurisdiction must attend 50% of the Working Group meetings during the year.
 - d. Each Working Group is comprised of a Chair and a Vice-Chair who are responsible for leading the Working Group, in collaboration with EP staff, toward the group's goals and objectives. If able, the Chair and Vice-Chair will represent Urban and Rural jurisdictions. Working Groups must meet a minimum of four (4) times a year.

- 1) Working Group Chairs and Vice-Chairs are nominated by the group and approved by a simple majority vote.
 - 2) Working Group Chairs serve a two-year term and are eligible for re-appointment.
 - 3) Working Group Chairs must sign the Acknowledgement of Responsibilities form.
- e. Working Group Chair and Vice-Chair responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:
- 1) Lead Working Group meetings in collaboration with EP staff.
 - 2) Communicate Working Group meeting dates and availability with EP staff.
 - 3) Attend all scheduled Working Group meetings
 - a) Representing the Working Group at other regional meetings such as the REPAC Scoring Meeting or other meetings, as required.
 - 4) Designate a scribe who will take notes during each meeting and send to the working group via the listserv within one (1) week of the meeting
 - 5) Communicate with the EP Department on behalf of the group.
 - 6) Designate a Grant Writer who will lead the SHSP project for the Working Group.
- f. If REPAC believes a Chair(s) is not following items as listed in the REPAC Handbook, then REPAC can decide to change leadership prior to the two-year appointment period.
- g. If traveling on Homeland Security Grant funds, Working Group Chairs and members are to read Attachment E: External (Non-COG) Travel Policy for Regional Partners.
- 1) All working group and member travel require REPAC Chair/ Vice Chair approval with the exception of the Regional Planning Project.
 - 2) All recipients of funding for travel utilizing SHSP funds must provide an AAR to their working groups regarding lessons learned. Failure to provide a presentation could result in denial of future travel.
 - 3) When an individual is requesting SHSP funds to travel, the travel policy from the individual's jurisdiction will be used to determine if they are eligible to utilize SHSP funds.
4. Emergency Preparedness Department Roles and Responsibilities
- a. EP staff will assist and support the Working Groups in a joint effort towards meeting the group's goals and objectives.
 - b. EP staff will assist with managing Working Group project funds, if and when NCTCOG administers the grant project.
 - c. EP staff responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) Coordinate with the Working Group Chair(s) to schedule meeting room space and to draft Working Group meeting agendas.
 - 2) Maintain situational awareness regarding other regional events and communicate possible impacts to the Working Group.
 - 3) Process contracts, purchase requisitions, and invoices, if and when NCTCOG administers the Working Group's grant.
 - 4) Assist with other needs and planning initiatives.

C. Regional Working Group Creation and Implementation

1. A group that wishes to be considered as a formal Working Group must demonstrate that creating the Working Group will assist in filling a regional need and gap. The group must demonstrate their abilities to fill this need and gap to REPAC.

2. Those that are interested in becoming a formalized Working Group must be functioning as a regional planning group and assisting the region in regional activities for a minimum of one (1) year before presenting their group's abilities and the need to REPAC.
3. In order to be considered an official working group, the following requirements must be met:
 - a. Establish a Chair & Vice Chair
 - b. Be established for at least 1 year
 - c. Conduct a minimum of 6 meetings per calendar year
 - d. Must have a mission statement and executive summary.
 - e. The working group must provide documentation of items a. – e. and present to REPAC for consideration.
4. REPAC may recommend approval or denial of the Working Group to EPPC after a discussion about the group's request occurs at REPAC.

D. Description of Recognized Regional Working Groups

1. Citizen Corps Program(CCP)
 - a. The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make our communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.
2. Emergency GIS Response Team (EGRT)
 - a. The Emergency GIS Response Team is a deployable resource comprised of volunteer members from local agencies. Each member is trained on emergency response mapping and becomes available to deploy to a disaster to assist in GIS functions within the EOC. The team brings necessary computer equipment, along with regional datasets to support general location mapping, printed map books for search and rescue, web-based mapping for display and analysis, and web applications for damage assessment, among other things. The team can also support pre-disaster planning maps and applications.
3. Emergency Management (EMWG)
 - a. The Emergency Management Working Group is composed of local emergency management stakeholders in North Central Texas who work toward establishing best practices, coordinating planning efforts, and identifying needs in regional emergency management. The Working Group plans and coordinates regional initiatives and assists in identifying gaps in emergency operations throughout the region using coordination and collaboration. Based on the gaps identified through trainings, exercises, and real world events, EMWG works to address regional needs and provide technical assistance and expertise to enhance emergency operations in North Central Texas.
4. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)
 - a. The goal of the EOD Working Groups is to increase the region's ability to respond to and adequately address the threat of an explosively-driven weapon being employed against a regional target. The goal is achieved through increased training, procurement of equipment, and information sharing between regional bomb squads. The EOD Working Groups is comprised of one representative from each of the area's accredited bomb squads. These squads all operate on the same set of guidelines, and each certified member meets the FBI Hazardous Devices School's standard for certification, ensuring interoperability among squads.

5. Fusion Center

- a. The Fusion Working Group regularly meets to evaluate regional capabilities and resources, and discuss opportunities to collaborate, coordinate, prepare, plan and respond to regional threats and active incidents with the ultimate goal of ensuring citizen safety. The intent of the working group is to focus on individual community efforts to provide timely, accurate, and actionable information. Information is often derived from the planning, direction, collection, exploitation, processing, analysis, production, dissemination, evaluation, and feedback of available information concerning different threats to the United States, its people, property, or interests. Information sharing is the ability to exchange intelligence, information, data, or knowledge in a coordinated, efficient, and secure method.

6. Hazardous Materials (HazMat)

- a. The objective of the Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Working Group is to enhance overall response effectiveness for all hazardous material incidents within the North Central Texas Region. The group holds regular meetings during which subject matter experts, primarily HazMat coordinators, evaluate discipline-specific information, unit capability, regional coverage, and projects. By providing recommendations to the Urban Area Working Group and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee, the Working Group is able to maximize homeland security funding opportunities to address capability gaps.
- b. This group participates in ongoing evaluation and categorization of unit capabilities, program request evaluations, and the creation of regional training opportunities to better train and equip our first responders with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to enhance HazMat response capabilities in this region and beyond. The Working Group coordinates with regional, state, and federal agencies to address HazMat aspects of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) events.

7. Interoperable Communications (Interop)

- a. The Interoperable Communications Working Group goal is to continue enhancing communication throughout the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) 16-county region. The lack of Interoperable Communications has long been a barrier to effective inter-agency communications given the need for a multi-agency response, whether for a natural or manmade disaster or for day-to-day operational incidents calling for response from another department or agency or from another jurisdiction.
- b. These subject matter experts continue to enhance the regions interoperability communications through various trainings, exercises, and shared experiences. Throughout this region, public safety agencies operate over a number of different frequencies from the VHF, UHF, 800 MHz, and low bands. This often makes it very difficult for neighboring jurisdictions to request assistance on major incidents. It is not uncommon for emergency responders from the same jurisdiction to have difficulty communicating at the scene of fire, hazardous materials spill, or other incidents.

The Interoperability Working Group will provide local public safety agencies and local policy makers a direction by which agencies throughout the region may have effective interoperability.

8. Public Education (PubEd)

- a. KnoWhat2Do, our regional public education campaign, exists to educate and empower people in the 16-county North Central Texas Council of Governments region about the tools and resources available to help them prepare for any number of threats specific to this region. The KnoWhat2Do campaign is a year-round effort for the more than 200 participating

municipalities focused on engaging public relations to support its fundraising initiatives and projects, increase visibility and credibility to key constituencies and key publics and maintain ongoing branding initiatives.

9. Public Safety Cyber (Cyber)

- a. The Public Safety Cyber Threat Work Group will serve as the regional, multi-agency unit for securing technologies, identifying training, and allocating personnel to support regional mitigation and recovery efforts for significant cyber and communications incidents. The group will also support the integration and coordination of Law Enforcement, Information Technology, and Emergency Management activities by advocating for the adoption of technologies, techniques and procedures for sharing pertinent and actionable information related to cybercrime, terrorism, and threats to critical infrastructure.”

10. Public Works Emergency Response Team (PWERT)

- a. The North Central Texas Public Works Emergency Response Team was created to provide public works assistance when an emergency or disaster overwhelms local resources. The response team was created by and for local governments and operates on a voluntary quid pro quo basis. PWERT first deployed to calls for assistance during the April 3, 2012 tornado outbreak and continues to grow to meet regional needs.

11. Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)

- a. The objective of the Special Weapons and Tactics Working Group is to fortify counter-terror investigations and law enforcement, and enhance law enforcement's ability to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) incidents. Through regular meetings, the group's subject matter experts evaluate discipline-specific information, unit capability, regional coverage, and projects. By providing recommendations to both the Urban Area Working Group and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee, the group is able to maximize homeland security funding opportunities to address capability gaps.
- b. The group's subject matter experts continue to evaluate and categorize unit capabilities, program request evaluations, and create regional training opportunities to better train and equip our first responders with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to enhance SWAT response capabilities in this region and beyond.

12. Training and Exercise (T & E)

- a. The North Central Texas Training and Exercise Working Group strives to be the benchmark in all-hazards emergency management and homeland security that encompasses all organizations in the public and private sectors. Our Working Group focuses on the inclusion of citizens, government at the city, county, regional, state, and federal levels, school districts, higher education, hospitals, private sector businesses, and faith-based and volunteer groups. This group assists cities and counties in coordinating comprehensive training and exercises needs to ensure maximum efficiency and benefit from hazard prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery in order to protect lives, property, and the environment.

13. Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)

- a. The UAS Working Group has been established to improve Unmanned Aerial System response operations in North Texas. The primary goal of the group is to provide a forum for regional partners to discuss concerns and develop solutions regarding the complexity of UAS operations in urban and rural jurisdictions. The working group will also focus on assisting

jurisdictional UAS program development, collaboration on regional policies, airspace coordination, technology implementation, and regional training standards.

14. Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)

- a. The objective of the Urban Search and Rescue Working Group is to enhance overall response effectiveness for search and rescue teams within the North Central Texas Region. This Working Group provides recommendations to both the Urban Area Working Group and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee to maximize homeland security funding opportunities to address capability gaps for missions on both water and land.
- b. This Working Group increases USAR capabilities by ensuring teams are equipped in accordance with National Incident Management System (NIMS) resource typing and training, so they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to protect life and respond to all-hazard events. Whether services are requested due to flash flooding, flooding, a building collapse, or other accidents/incidents, the North Central Texas Region has demonstrated an increased need in Urban Search and Rescue response. The USAR Working Group provides technical guidance and standardization to support the rapid deployment of Regional USAR Task Forces for terrorism events, natural disasters, or large-scale emergencies. This Working Group continues to advocate for, generate, and procure response resources, regional assessments, and increased training opportunities, which enhance the capability to conduct lifesaving USAR response efforts.

Code of Conduct
Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC)

I, _____, do hereby affirm that I will follow the guidelines set forth by the North Central Texas Council of Governments' Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) as outlined in the REPAC Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG). As stated in the SOG, each REPAC Member and Alternate must sign a new Code of Conduct form at the beginning of each two (2)-year term of membership to assure ethical and behavioral standards are maintained consistently throughout the committee.

Committee Members and Alternates shall not:

1. Appear before the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee while acting as an advocate for any other person or business entity.
2. Knowingly use their position on the committee for their private gain or for that of their business or agency.
3. Accept or solicit any gift or favor that would tend to influence that individual in the discharge of official duties.

As stated in the REPAC Standard Operating Guidelines, a member organization will be considered to have resigned its position on REPAC when its representative or designated alternate misses 50% of all the meetings held or two (2) meetings in a twelve (12)-month period.

Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

**Working Group Leadership
Acknowledgment of Responsibilities Form**

I, _____, have received and read the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) Handbook. I understand it contains important information regarding REPAC's Standard Operating Guidelines and my role as a Working Group Chair, that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the material in the handbook. I acknowledge and accept the responsibilities required to be a Working Group Chair. I understand that I will be required to attend Working Group meetings and other regional meetings, as necessary, to represent the Working Group.

I further understand the time commitment required to be a Working Group Chair and am able to perform the duties outlined in the REPAC Handbook.

Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date