



Training & Exercise Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday, September 21, 9:00 a.m.
Virtual Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85437385453?pwd=REhzdG5jMXo3UEtZbGJWWU9VR3JhQT09>

Meeting ID: 854 3738 5453

Passcode: 670273

Phone: 1-929-205-6099

AGENDA

- 1. Open Meeting***
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
- 4. Budget Review**
- 5. Current T&E Projects**
 - a. TTX Card Game Printing
 - b. MERT Tactical Medical Practitioner Training
 - c. K9 Training Week
 - d. Aerial Apparatus Positioning Training
 - e. HCSO Hostage/Crisis Negotiators Conference
 - f. Emergency Response Diver I
- 6. Old Business**
- 7. New Business/Requests**
 - a. Franklin County Fairgrounds Functional Exercise
 - b. WMTRT Multi Agency Exercise Series
 - c. Lost Person Behavior Training
- 8. Business unforeseen by the Chair**

9. Next Steps/Future Meetings

Next T&E meeting – Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – Virtual Session

10. Adjourn Meeting

**Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Training and Exercise Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 21 2026, 9:00 am**

Subcommittee members present: Sandra Martin (BCBH), Carolyn Shores Ness (Deerfield), Paul Wentworth (Mercy Medical), Thomas Grady (BCSO), Jay Hastings (Westfield State), James Fitzgerald (Pelham PD), and Mark Williams (East Longmeadow PD).

Non-members present: Raine Brown (FRCOG), Eric Stratton (HCSO), William Millin (NFD), Jonathan Miller (NWMIMT).

Subcommittee members absent: Bruce Cullett (Peru PD) Christopher Norris (Easthampton Fire), Stephen Gaughan (Amherst Fire/EMS), Sam Lemanski (Westfield State), Alexander Sylvain (HMCC/FRCOG), and Nick Licata (HMCC/FRCOG),

This meeting was conducted on Zoom. The meeting was recorded.

Tom Grady called the meeting to order at 9:01am.

Minutes

The committee reviewed the minutes from the June 16, 2026 meeting.

Motion: Sandra Martin moved to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2026 meeting as submitted. Carolyn Shores Ness seconded the motion. Sandra Martin, Carolyn Shores Ness approved. Tom Grady, Jay Hastings, Mark Williams, Paul Wentworth and James Fitzgerald abstained. The motion was approved.

Introductions followed.

Budget Review

Raine Brown reported. There will be about \$7,500 left in T&E in FFY23, which ends the end of the month. Raine has identified an FFY24 invoice to spend down FFY23 and allow them to move the extra FFY23 funds to 24. With the move, there is just over \$124,000 available through the end of July next year. There is \$39,356.36 available for the Hazmat Team. When FFY25 comes online, there will be an additional \$190,000 to spend by the end of December 31, 2027.

Current Training and Exercise Projects

Raine reported on the following unless otherwise noted:

TTX Card Game Printing – The vendor is coordinating with print production. We should see a sample in a couple of weeks. Moving along as projected.

WMTRT Deployment Exercise Evaluation – This happened last month. A drill between Central and Western Mass Tech Rescue Teams. Reports are it went well.

MERT Tactical Medical Practitioner Training – Five members of MERT will be attending this training in September.

K9 Training Week – This is scheduled for next week. We are at capacity for handlers and dog teams. A couple spaces are still open for observers. The vendor who was going to provide the e-collar and other off-leash handling had a family emergency and is unable to attend.

**Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Training and Exercise Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
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Franklin Fairgrounds Exercise Series – Raine indicated they sent the AAR out last week for committee review. Overall, the After Action Report was well developed; however, a few opportunities for enhancement were identified. The report could more explicitly address the role of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), particularly within the active shooter scenario. While fire and law enforcement responses were well represented, additional discussion of mass casualty operations—including casualty collection points, patient triage, treatment, and transport coordination—would provide a more comprehensive assessment. Consideration should also be given to incorporating explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) resources, such as the Massachusetts State Police Bomb Squad or other regional capabilities, when addressing suspicious package incidents. Reviewing plans and practices from other venues that routinely manage large-scale events may provide useful examples. Finally, under the Public Information capability, the report emphasizes equipment and communication tools but could further clarify the decision-making process for developing, approving, and disseminating public messaging, including roles, responsibilities, and approval authorities.

Palmer Aerial Apparatus Training - This training will take place in Palmer and Hadley on September 12 and 13th respectively.

HCSO Hostage/Crisis Negotiators Conference – This request was approved by EOPSS. Three leadership members of the HCSO Crisis Negotiators team will attend in October.

Old Business

EMS Obstetric Emergencies – Raine reported that this wasn't approved by EOPSS. They had shared this via email, but mentioned again in case anyone had missed the email. EOPSS felt the training was too centric to one discipline and there wasn't a clear connection to Homeland Security Nexus. Raine had a conversation with Dr. Walsh and Eric Stratton exploring other ways to include this as an aspect of a drill or exercise. We will likely see a request sometime in the near future.

FFY22026 Investment Planning - Raine noted that the official FFY26 NOFO was released. Actual award amount is approximately \$53,000 less than FFY25. Raine adjusted the budget accordingly, including T&E funds.

New Business/Requests

Western Mass Regional Dive Team Emergency Response Diver I training – Eric Stratton and William Millian presented a request to allow 10 new team members to take the Emergency Response Diver I training. This will bring the members up to similar training as other members. Hope to host the training in late September, early October at the latest. Eric reviewed some of the teams recent calls and noted they have been busy.

**Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Training and Exercise Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 21 2026, 9:00 am**

Motion: Sandra Martin moved to approved \$6,750 for Emergency Response Diver I Training. Carolyn Shores Ness seconded. Sandra Martin, Carolyn Shores Ness, Tom Grady, Jay Hastings, Mark Williams, Paul Wentworth and James Fitzgerald approved. The motion was approved.

Business Unforeseen by the Chair – Tom thanked everyone for the work they did while he was out. He thanked Larry for chairing. He felt reassured in seeing how everything kept moving along so well.

Next Steps/Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 15, 2026 at 9:00 am, on Zoom.

Motion: Sandra Martin moved to adjourn Carolyn Shores Ness seconded the motion. Sandra Martin, Carolyn Shores Ness, Tom Grady, Jay Hastings, Mark Williams, Paul Wentworth and James Fitzgerald approved. The motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 am.

List of Documents Reviewed at the Meeting

- T&E Subcommittee Meeting Agenda for July 21, 2026
- T&E Subcommittee Meeting Minutes from June 16, 2026 (draft)
- WRHSAC FFY23 T&E Budget Report through 7/17/26
- WRHSAC FFY24 T&E Budget Report through 7/17/26

Respectfully submitted by:

Raine Brown, Homeland Security Program Manager
Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council
Franklin Regional Council of Governments

WRHSAC

Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council

Thru: 9/11/2026
Total Grant: : \$1,031,973.85

FFY24

State Homeland Security Program

PLAN				ACTUAL					
Budget				Allocated		Encumbered			
	Original	Increases (Decreases)	Current		NOT Allocated		Invoiced	(OVER) Under	
TOTALS	\$1,031,973.85	\$0.00	\$1,031,973.85	765,229.51	266,744.34	699,117.54	488,837.07	261,139.61	
C Hazmat Teams Training	\$30,000.00		\$39,356.36	0.00	39,356.36	0.00	0.00	39,356.36	
		Moved from J	\$44.04	C.01 Hazmat Teams Training	0.00	x	0.00	0.00	0.00
		Moved from E	\$9,312.32	C.02 0		x	0.00	0.00	0.00
E WRHSAC IPP Training & Exercise	\$229,898.01	-\$22,015.23	\$207,882.78	72,670.27	135,212.51	78,450.00	19,570.27	129,432.78	
		Moved to B	-\$3,707.40	E.01 Belchertown Leadership Training	8,950.00	x	8,950.00	8,950.00	0.00
		Moved to A	-\$6,050.00	E.02 ASAP Training 2026	0.00	x	0.00	0.00	0.00
		Moved to C	-\$9,312.32	E.03 Franklin Fairground Security Plan Exercise	7,720.27		30,000.00	7,720.27	-22,279.73
		Moved to B	-\$2,945.51	E.04 PHEP Preparedness Summit 2026	2,900.00		2,900.00	2,900.00	0.00
				E.05 PHTLS 2026	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
				E.06 MERT Tactical Medical Practitioner Training	12,700.00		8,750.00	0.00	3,950.00
				E.07 Aerial Apparatus Positioning Training	10,500.00		10,500.00	0.00	0.00
				E.08 TTX Card Game Printing	17,350.00		17,350.00	0.00	0.00
				E.09 Hostage Crisis Negotiation Conf	5,800.00		0.00	0.00	5,800.00
				E.10 Emergency Response Diver Training	6,750.00		0.00	0.00	6,750.00

END

Key Terms

1. "Allocated" ... refers to funds that have been dedicated to a specific plan of action
2. "Not allocated" ... refers to budgeted funds not yet allocated to a specific plan of action
3. "Encumbered" ... refers to allocated funds that have been committed via purchase orders
4. "(OVER)Under Allocation" ... indicates the balance of funds remaining upon completion of a specific plan of action

September 9, 2026

Raine Brown
Homeland Security Program Manager
Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council
12 Olive Street, Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01301

RE: Project Proposal — Franklin County Fairgrounds Multi-Agency Active Assailant Functional Exercise

Dear Mx. Brown and Members of the Council,

On behalf of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), the Franklin County Agricultural Society, the City of Greenfield, and our regional public safety partners, I respectfully submit the enclosed two-part proposal for consideration under the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council's (WRHSAC) State Homeland Security Program investment planning process.

In April 2026, our region conducted a Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) discussion-based tabletop exercise, "The Festivities Must Go On," focusing on events occurring at the Franklin County Fairgrounds in Greenfield, MA. The exercise tested the Fairgrounds' Event Plan, Active Shooter/Active Assailant Response Plan, and Employee Handbook against a scenario culminating in an active assailant incident in the grandstands during a demolition derby. The resulting After-Action Report and Improvement Plan identified capability gaps in unified command integration, interoperable communications, mass-casualty coordination, and family reunification.

An earlier proposal requested regional Homeland Security funding to enhance the Fairgrounds' emergency plans to resolve the gaps identified in the tabletop's Improvement Plan. This proposal went before the All-Hazards committee and was approved. This proposal is to validate those enhancements through a full HSEEP-consistent functional exercise in late April or early May 2027, involving the Greenfield Police Department, Greenfield Fire Department/EMS, local EMS and mutual aid partners, dispatch, Franklin County Agricultural Society (Fair) administration, Fair volunteer, and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.

We believe this project meets WRHSAC's evaluation criteria for regional impact, alignment with identified capability gaps, feasibility, and cost effectiveness, and welcome the opportunity to discuss it further with the Council or its Subcommittees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Nietzsche
Program Manager
Franklin Regional Council of Governments
12 Olive Street, Suite 2, Greenfield, MA 01301
413-774-3167 x110

Franklin County Fairgrounds Emergency Preparedness Enhancement and Exercise Proposal

Lead Applicant	Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), on behalf of the Franklin County Fairgrounds Agricultural Society
Regional Partners	Greenfield Police Department; Greenfield Fire Department/EMS; local EMS and mutual aid providers; Greenfield/regional dispatch; Franklin County Agricultural Society (Fair administration and volunteers); FRCOG Emergency Preparedness Program; Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
Project Site	Franklin County Fairgrounds, 89 Wisdom Way, Greenfield, MA
Requested Funding	\$17,800
Project Timeline	Notice of Award to June 2027
Mission Areas	Prevention, Protection, Response, Recovery
Capability Gap Source	After-Action Report/Improvement Plan, “The Festivities Must Go On” tabletop exercise, April 28, 2026

Background and Identified Capability Gap

The Franklin County Fairgrounds in Greenfield, MA hosts the four-day Franklin County Fair each September, drawing large crowds to a 32-acre site with a racetrack, grandstands, midway, exhibition halls, and multiple gated entrances. The Fair's grandstand events, including the demolition derby, regularly fill the grandstands and concourse to capacity, creating a dense-crowd environment with the on-site public safety footprint (Fair security, Greenfield Police, and Greenfield Fire/EMS) but without permanent EMS/hospital infrastructure.

On April 28, 2026, FRCOG, the Franklin County Agricultural Society, the Greenfield Police Department, and the Greenfield Fire Department/EMS conducted a HSEEP discussion-based tabletop exercise, "The Festivities Must Go On," evaluating the Fairgrounds' Event Plan, Active Shooter/Active Assailant Response Plan, and Employee Handbook across three modules representing severe weather and traffic/crowd management, a suspicious-package/rumor-control incident, and an active assailant incident in the grandstands during the demolition derby followed by next-day recovery operations.

The resulting AAR/IP identified the following capability gaps that this project is designed to resolve:

- Unified command integration — current plans do not clearly define how Fair incident management team leadership, Greenfield Police, Greenfield Fire/EMS, and dispatch transition from routine event operations into a NIMS-compliant unified command structure during a fast-moving active assailant incident in a high-occupancy grandstand setting.
- Interoperable communications — the Event Plan and Employee Handbook lack documented radio interoperability procedures and backup communications paths between Fair security, law enforcement, fire/EMS, and dispatch across the Fairgrounds' multiple command posts and gates.
- Mass-casualty medical coordination — existing plans do not specify triage, treatment, and transport staging locations, ambulance ingress/egress routes, or mutual-aid activation thresholds specific to a mass-casualty incident originating in the grandstand/concourse area.
- Continuity and recovery decision-making — plans do not define the criteria or authority for reopening, restricting, or cancelling remaining Fair operations following a law-enforcement-active crime scene.

These gaps were identified through tabletop discussion rather than live, full-scale operational play. WRHSAC funding is requested to close these gaps through the enhanced plans, under a separate project submittal, and multi-agency coordination through a functional exercise consistent with the HSEEP exercise cycle of tabletop → functional → full-scale progression.

Multi-Agency Functional Exercise

We are requesting funding for a HSEEP-consistent functional exercise (FE) designed to validate the enhanced plans through simulated, real-time multi-agency response.

Proposed exercise name: “Grandstand Response 2027” (working title)

Proposed date: In late April or early May 2027 (e.g., April 24-May 1, 2026), to be confirmed with partner agencies

Location: Franklin County Fairgrounds, 89 Wisdom Way, Greenfield, MA (grandstands, concourse, and event command post)

Scenario: An active assailant incident occurring in the grandstands during a simulated demolition derby, escalating from a crowd altercation to gunfire, mass-casualty triage/transport, scene control, family reunification, and next-operational-period recovery decisions, mirroring and validating the enhanced Active Shooter/Active Assailant Response Plan and MCI annex.

Participating organizations:

- Greenfield Police Department
- Greenfield Fire Department/EMS
- Local and mutual-aid EMS providers
- Regional/Greenfield dispatch
- Franklin County Agricultural Society (Fair administration)
- Franklin County Fair volunteers (Fair operations and crowd-facing roles)
- FRCOG Emergency Management Department (exercise planning and control)
- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Exercise design will follow the HSEEP cycle: four multi-agency planning meetings (Concept and Objectives, Initial Planning, Mid-Term Planning, and Final Planning), development of an Exercise Plan (ExPlan), Controller/Evaluator Handbook, and Master Scenario Events List (MSEL); a controller/evaluator briefing; the functional exercise day itself; an immediate hotwash; and a follow-on After-Action Report and Improvement Plan meeting to capture remaining corrective actions.

Core capabilities to be validated: Planning; Operational Coordination; Operational Communications; On-Scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement; Public Health, Healthcare, and EMS; Public Information and Warning; Mass Care Services; and Situational Assessment.

4. Budget

Labor estimates use FRCOG Emergency Management Department staff rates consistent with FRCOG's standard project budgeting practice. Non-labor line items are good-faith planning estimates based on comparable regional Massachusetts exercises.

Task	Total
Stakeholder engagement planning	\$750
Four multi-agency planning meetings (3 hours × 4)	\$3,300
Exercise design: objectives, capabilities, and MSEL	\$1,450
Exercise documentation: ExPlan, Controller/Evaluator Handbook, and Situation Manual	\$2,700
Logistics and site coordination	\$1,300
Controller/evaluator and player briefings	\$1,000
Exercise conduct: functional-play day	\$2,050
Data collection and hotwash	\$1,650
After-Action Report drafting	\$1,900
Improvement Plan development and follow-up meeting	\$1,200
Labor subtotal	\$17,300
Printing and signage: ExPlan, badges, and maps	\$500
Part 2 total	\$17,800

Timeline

The proposed timeline sequences plan enhancement ahead of the functional exercise so that the exercise validates already-updated procedures, and completes well within WRHSAC's required project completion window.

Milestone	Target Date
FFY Notice of Award / funds available	January 2027
Part 1 kickoff and gap analysis	February 2027
Part 1 plan drafting (Event Plan, Active Shooter Plan, Handbook, annexes, GIS maps)	February – March 2027
Multi-agency stakeholder review meetings	March 2027
Part 1 plans finalized and adopted	Late March 2027

Milestone	Target Date
Part 2 exercise planning meetings	February – April 2027
Controller/evaluator and player briefings	April 2027
Functional exercise conducted	Late April / Early May 2027
Hotwash and after-action data collection	Same day / week of exercise
After-Action Report and Improvement Plan finalized	May – June 2027
Project closeout and reporting to WRHSAC	June 2027

Regional Partners

This project is regional in scope, serving the Franklin County Fairgrounds as a shared regional asset and directly engaging law enforcement, fire, EMS, dispatch, and event administration functions that are called upon for mutual aid at other fairs, festivals, and grandstand venues across Western Massachusetts.

Organization	Role
Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)	Project lead; plan drafting; exercise design, control, and evaluation coordination
Franklin County Agricultural Society	Fairgrounds owner/operator; Incident Management Team; venue access; volunteer coordination
Greenfield Police Department	Law enforcement response, Unified Command, and active assailant tactics
Greenfield Fire Department / EMS	Fire suppression, EMS response, mass-casualty triage/treatment/transport, Unified Command
Local and mutual-aid EMS providers	Mutual-aid medical surge capacity and transport
Regional / Greenfield dispatch	Multi-agency call-taking, dispatch, and interoperable communications
Fair volunteers	Gate, grandstand, and crowd-facing operational roles exercised under realistic conditions
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency	State-wide response coordination

Anticipated Outcomes and Impact

- Updated, gap-closing Event Plan, Active Shooter/Active Assailant Response Plan, Employee Handbook, and supporting annexes (communications, MCI, family reunification) for the Franklin County Fairgrounds.
- Demonstrated, exercised interoperability between Greenfield Police, Fire/EMS, dispatch, mutual-aid EMS, and Fair administration/volunteers under a realistic active assailant/mass-casualty scenario.
- A validated, replicable planning and exercise model—built on WRHSAC’s existing Fairground Security Plan Template and Family Reunification Plan Template—that other Western Massachusetts fairgrounds and grandstand venues (e.g., Cummington Fairgrounds) can adopt.
- A documented After-Action Report/Improvement Plan providing measurable evidence of capability improvement for future WRHSAC and EOPSS reporting.
- Increased confidence among Fair administration, volunteers, and the public in the region’s ability to protect large gatherings at grandstand events.



The Western Massachusetts Technical Rescue Team (WMTRT) respectfully submits this proposal for consideration and funding of the exercise plan outlined below.

The WMTRT is requesting \$20,000 to initiate the first phases of a Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)-compliant exercise. This exercise would benefit not only the WMTRT but also numerous regional, local, and state agencies throughout Western Massachusetts.

We anticipate that additional funding may be needed after the initial phases are completed. These phases will help identify the specific needs of each participating team and support the development of a final full-scale exercise plan.

Over the past two months, I have spoken with the agencies listed in the accompanying documents. Each agency agrees that this would be a valuable program to implement over the next 18 to 24 months. This timeline will allow participating teams to receive meaningful feedback regarding their response to large-scale incidents while enhancing their individual capabilities.

Participating teams will work collaboratively toward documented objectives, identify and address capability gaps, and build stronger working relationships across the region.

I submit this request on behalf of the Western Massachusetts Technical Rescue Team and intend for other regional, local, and state agencies to serve as full partners in this effort.

Sincerely,

Daryl Springman

Director

Western Massachusetts Technical Rescue Team



Operation Iron Bridge Multi-Incident Regional Response Exercise

On a typical weekday, local Public Safety Answering Points begin receiving multiple reports of gunfire at a community venue. Local police units respond, and first-arriving officers report an active-shooter incident involving multiple injured individuals.

As additional calls are received, local and state dispatch centers become increasingly overwhelmed. The volume of emergency calls continues to grow as witnesses and members of the public report injuries, request assistance, and provide conflicting information. Due to the size and complexity of the incident, mutual aid resources are requested from surrounding communities. Law enforcement, fire, EMS, emergency management, and specialized response teams begin arriving, creating a rapidly expanding multi-agency operation.

While the initial incident is still active, dispatch centers receive a second major emergency report from a neighboring municipality. Callers report an explosion at a municipal building, with a portion of the roof missing and sections of the walls collapsed. This incident presents additional concerns, including possible victims, structural instability, hazardous conditions, and the need for specialized rescue resources.

At approximately the same time, Barnes Municipal Airport reports that a corporate aircraft scheduled to depart earlier in the day has gone down somewhere in Western Massachusetts. The aircraft has nine people on board, and flight-tracking information places its last known location near the Connecticut River dam X area. This creates a third emergency requiring coordination among aviation authorities, search-and-rescue teams, fire and EMS personnel, law enforcement, and emergency management agencies. The name Operation Iron Bridge was chosen because the objective of this plan is to fortify the bridge between agencies thus making the relationships iron clad.

Operation Iron Bridge is designed to strengthen the relationships and operational coordination among special response teams and first-responder agencies throughout Western

Massachusetts. Although regional teams communicate and train together, the entire system has not been tested recently under the pressure of multiple, simultaneous, high-consequence incidents.



1. Executive Summary

This proposal outlines a comprehensive training plan to be conducted over approximately 18 to 24 months, culminating in a large-scale HSEEP-compliant exercise. The training will focus on Technical Rescue (structural collapse), Search operations, Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat), Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) response, specialized medical response, Bomb Squad operations, and Law Enforcement. Specialized medical training will include pediatric and obstetric emergencies and patient care in austere or technically challenging environments. The initiative will bring together regional and state response organizations to progressively strengthen individual capabilities and multi-agency interoperability in preparation for the culminating exercise.

2. Objectives

- Enhance skills and interoperability across the involved teams.
 - Ensure compliance with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).
 - Build readiness in key emergency response disciplines.
 - Improve responder preparedness for pediatric, obstetric, and other medically complex casualties encountered during large-scale or technically challenging incidents.
 - Foster coordination and communication among specialized response teams.
 - Identify capability gaps and areas for improvement throughout the training series.
 - Use lessons learned from earlier training and exercises to inform subsequent activities and the culminating full-scale exercise.
-

3. Training Plan Overview

Timeline: Spanning 18 to 24 months culminating in the final exercise.

Phases:

- Initial phase: Classroom and hands-on training sessions in each specialty.
 - Tech-Rescue; Evidence training, patient extrication with medical complications
 - Search; Urban search during manmade disaster,
 - Haz-Mat; Operation in rescue mode vs mitigation mode, large area monitoring
 - MCI; regional training on new MCI plan
 - Bomb Squad; rendering safe for rescue, Evidence during rescue operations
 - Law enforcement; ASHER event on scene, large area security with multiple agencies.
 - Medical Response/Special Populations: Pediatric and obstetric emergency preparedness, management of medically complex casualties, and patient care in austere or technically challenging environments.
 - Intermediate phase: Integrated training and exercise activities combining two or more disciplines and applying capabilities developed during the initial phase in increasingly complex operational environments.
 - Final phase: Full-scale HSEEP-compliant exercise simulating a complex emergency scenario.
-

4. Training Areas and Content

4.1 Technical Rescue (Structural Collapse)

- Structural collapse assessment and rescue strategies involving multiple patients.
- Use of technical rescue tools and safety protocols.
- Evidence awareness and documentation *
- Scenario-based practical exercises.

4.2 Search Operations

- Search techniques in urban* and open environments.
- Coordination with rescue and medical teams.

4.3 Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat)

- Hazard identification and response techniques.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) training for collapse areas.*
- Handling Hazmat in real time rescues.

4.4 Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Response

- Triage protocols and casualty management.

- Incident Command System (ICS) operational training during MCIs.
- Communication and coordination strategies.*

4.5 Medical Response / Special Populations

- Pediatric emergency assessment and treatment during complex incidents.
- Obstetric emergencies, including emergency delivery and management of associated complications.
- Management of medically complex casualties in austere, confined, or technically challenging environments.
- Coordination between medical personnel, rescue personnel, and other responding disciplines during patient access, treatment, and movement.
- Scenario-based practical application of medical skills in nontraditional operational environments.

4.6 Bomb Squad Operations

- Threat assessment and neutralization procedures.
- Coordination with law enforcement and emergency responders.
- Real time problem solving during rescues.*

4.7 Law Enforcement

- Handle an ASHER type situation on an active scene.
- Holding scene security for a large area.

* possible new skill

5. Schedule and Milestones

- Start date of early 2027
- Month 1-5: Concept planning and Initial training sessions for all teams.
- Month 4-9: Intermediate combined drills, Table top exercises.
- Month 10-12+: Final exercise planning and execution.

Planning and program development: 2026—early 2027.

- Months 1–5: Initial discipline-specific training and capability-development activities.
- Months 4–9: Intermediate multidisciplinary training, discussion-based exercises, and integrated practical activities.

- Months 10–18+: Final exercise planning, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.
-

6. Resources Required

- Expert instructors and subject matter experts from participating technical rescue, bomb squad, Haz-Mat, EMS, medical, search, law enforcement, and other partner organizations, including specialized pediatric and obstetric medical educators as appropriate.
 - Training venues equipped for technical rescue, Haz-Mat, and MCI exercises.
 - Necessary rescue, Haz-Mat, and bomb squad equipment.
 - Medical simulation equipment, training aids, consumable supplies, and other resources required for specialized medical training and practical exercises.
 - Communication and safety gear.
 - Administrative support and logistics coordination.
 - Role play victims.
-

7. Budget Estimate

- Instructor fees: \$0
- Training materials and supplies: \$250
- Equipment rental or purchase: \$0
- Facility rental: \$0
- Exercise planning and execution costs: \$19,000(through tabletop's)
- Miscellaneous (travel): \$750
- Total estimated budget: \$20,000

(Actual costs to be finalized upon vendor quotes and team availability.)

(This would not be the final budget. A second round would be needed once objectives are obtained through table top phase)

8. Final Exercise Details

- A full-scale exercise compliant with HSEEP guidelines.
- Multi-agency participation in a complex emergency scenario potentially incorporating structural collapse, hazardous materials, mass-casualty operations, explosive-device considerations, law enforcement operations, specialized medical response, and other capabilities developed throughout the training series.

- Roles assigned to all participating teams.
 - Evaluation and After-Action report (AAR) to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
-

9. Benefits and Expected Outcomes

- Increased operational readiness and multi-disciplinary coordination.
 - Compliance with HSEEP exercise program standards.
 - Clear documentation of lessons learned and improvement plans.
 - Progressive development and validation of regional capabilities through a series of increasingly integrated training and exercise activities.
 - Improved preparedness for managing pediatric, obstetric, and other special-population casualties during complex incidents.
 - Identification of capability gaps early enough to address them through additional training before the culminating full-scale exercise.
-

10. Conclusion

This training and exercise initiative presents a strategic, progressive approach to developing and maintaining critical emergency response capabilities across multiple disciplines. Discipline-specific training will establish and strengthen core capabilities, while subsequent integrated activities will provide opportunities for participating organizations to apply those capabilities together in increasingly complex environments. The initiative will culminate in a large-scale, HSEEP-compliant exercise designed to validate regional preparedness and interagency coordination and identify priorities for continued improvement.

We respectfully request the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council's approval and support to proceed with this initiative.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Conservation and Recreation

State Transportation Building | 10 Park Plaza | Suite 6620 | Boston, MA 02116
www.Mass.gov/DCR | **Tel:** (617) 626-1250

Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kimberley Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Rebecca L. Tepper
Secretary

Nicole LaChapelle
Commissioner

Hi Raine -

Thank you very much for taking the time to consider this proposal for a **Lost Person Behavior (LPB)** course for first responders in Western Massachusetts.

The course would be taught by internationally recognized search expert **Dr. Robert J. Koester**. The price of the course would be \$8,744.00 for a class of up to 30 participants (see attached spreadsheet)

Missing and endangered person incidents are among the most time-critical emergencies faced by public safety agencies. This training provides responders with proven, evidence-based methods to better understand lost person behavior, prioritize search areas, and deploy resources effectively. These principles apply not only to traditional search and rescue incidents, but also to everyday calls involving missing children, individuals with dementia or autism, mental health crises, suicidal subjects, and other vulnerable populations.

The course would also strengthen our response to **large-scale incidents and disasters** by providing a common framework for search planning and improving coordination among law enforcement, fire, EMS, emergency management, SAR teams, K9 teams, aviation, drones, and other specialized resources.

Western Massachusetts presents a unique combination of urban, rural, and wilderness environments. Bringing this nationally recognized training to the region would allow responders from multiple agencies and disciplines to train together, build relationships, and develop a shared approach before they are called upon to work together during an actual emergency.

The attached endorsements from the **Western Massachusetts Police Chiefs Association, Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association, and Berkshire County Special Response Team** demonstrate the broad regional support for this training and its value across the public safety community.

I believe this course would be a worthwhile investment in Western Massachusetts preparedness. Most importantly, it would give our first responders better tools to make informed decisions when time matters most and help us bring missing and endangered people home safely.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Capt. Pete Michaels
Massachusetts Department of Conservation



Western Massachusetts Fire Chief's Association

15 Depot Street Southwick, MA 01077

President: Chief C.J. Bartone, West Springfield
1st Vice President: Chief William Bernat, Palmer
2nd Vice President: Chief John Ingram, Belchertown
Secretary: Chief Michael Andrews, Wilbraham
Treasurer: Chief Richard Stefanowicz, Southwick

Western Region Homeland Security Council
Attention: Raine Brown
12 Olive Street, Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01301

September 8, 2026

Dear Members of the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council,

On behalf of the Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association (WMFCA), I am writing to express our endorsement and support for the Lost Person Behavior (LPB) course proposal submitted by Captain Pete Michaels, DCR Ranger. Taught by recognized search expert Dr. Robert J. Koester, this training represents a vital investment in the safety, operational capabilities, and interagency coordination of public safety personnel across our region.

Western Massachusetts features a unique combination of urban, suburban, rural, and wilderness environments where public safety agencies regularly respond to urgent missing person incidents. Missing and endangered individual incidents are among the most time-critical emergencies faced by first responders. Dr. Koester's research provides actionable, evidence-based methods to predict subject behavior, prioritize search sectors, and deploy resources rapidly.

The Western Massachusetts Technical Rescue Team (WMTRT) serves as a vital asset during high-stakes search and rescue operations across our communities. Captain Michaels and his group are responsible for searches on state property and have been assisting the Western Massachusetts Technical Rescue Team with searches over the last few years. Attending and hosting this course will directly elevate WMTRT's operational proficiency by embedding scientific search planning tools—such as the Lost Person Behavior framework and search management application—into their primary response protocols.

The Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association strongly urges the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council to support this grant application. Investing in this research-backed training will equip our first responders and technical rescue personnel with the essential tools needed to conduct faster, safer, and more effective search operations, ultimately saving lives across our region.

Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to regional preparedness.

Sincerely,

C.J. Bartone
Fire Chief, West Springfield Fire Department
Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association President



WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

23 PLUMTREE WAY, FEEDING HILLS, MA 01030
TELEPHONE (413) 348-3511 - EMAIL: chiefricardi161@gmail.com

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Chief Mark A. Williams
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1st Vice President
Chief Scott D. Minckler
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2nd Vice President
Chief Thomas J. Ford III
WNEC PD

Secretary
Chief Gary Thomann
Pelham PD

Executive Director
Chief David A. Ricardi (Ret)

August 30, 2026

Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council, Western Massachusetts

12 Olive Street, Suite 2

Greenfield, MA 01301

Re: Letter of Endorsement – Lost Person Behavior Training Course

Dear Members of the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council:

On behalf of the Western Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, I am pleased to offer our strong endorsement and support for the proposal to host a Lost Person Behavior (LPB) training course, taught by internationally recognized search expert Dr. Robert J. Koester, for first responders throughout Western Massachusetts.

Missing and endangered person incidents are among the most time-sensitive and resource-intensive emergencies faced by public safety agencies. The initial hours of a search can be critical to achieving a safe and successful outcome. Dr. Koester's extensive research into Lost Person Behavior provides first responders with an evidence-based framework for understanding and predicting the behavior of missing individuals, identifying areas of highest probability, prioritizing search efforts, and deploying available resources more effectively.

Although these principles are fundamental to search and rescue operations, the benefits of this training extend well beyond traditional SAR missions. Law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS personnel, emergency managers, dispatchers, and other public safety professionals routinely encounter incidents involving missing children, individuals with dementia or autism, persons experiencing mental health crises, suicidal subjects, and other vulnerable individuals. Training in Lost Person Behavior would provide these professionals with practical tools that can be immediately applied during these critical incidents.

The course would also significantly enhance our region's ability to manage large-scale emergencies and disasters. Establishing a common, research-based approach to search planning and resource allocation strengthens coordination under Unified Command and promotes interoperability among law enforcement, fire, EMS, emergency management, search and rescue teams, aviation

resources, K9 teams, drone operators, and volunteer organizations. Developing this shared operational understanding before a major incident occurs is an important component of regional preparedness.

Western Massachusetts presents a particularly diverse operational environment, encompassing urban and suburban communities, agricultural areas, heavily wooded terrain, waterways, parks, and expansive wilderness areas. Our agencies regularly face missing person incidents across these varied environments. Bringing this nationally recognized training to our region would provide an exceptional professional development opportunity while reducing the financial and logistical barriers associated with sending personnel out of the area. Hosting the course locally would also make it possible for a greater number of agencies and disciplines to participate, further strengthening regional capabilities.

The anticipated benefits of this training include:

- Faster, evidence-based search planning and decision-making
- More efficient deployment of personnel and specialized resources
- Improved interagency coordination and interoperability
- Enhanced responder safety through informed, probability-based resource deployment
- Improved preparedness for both routine and large-scale incidents
- Increased likelihood of locating missing and endangered persons quickly and safely

The intended audience, including law enforcement, fire service, EMS, emergency management, search and rescue personnel, incident management teams, dispatchers, park rangers, conservation officers, and other public safety professionals, is directly aligned with the regional preparedness mission of the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council.

The Western Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association believes that bringing Dr. Koester's Lost Person Behavior course to Western Massachusetts would be a meaningful investment in the safety and preparedness of our communities. Equipping first responders with practical, research-based tools will improve operational effectiveness, promote the responsible use of limited public safety resources, strengthen regional collaboration, and, most importantly, increase our collective ability to protect and save lives.

We strongly encourage the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council to support this training opportunity and make it available to public safety professionals throughout Western Massachusetts. The Association is pleased to endorse the proposal and would welcome the opportunity to assist in promoting participation and regional collaboration surrounding this important training initiative.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to strengthening homeland security and emergency preparedness throughout Western Massachusetts.

With sincere appreciation,

Chief David A. Ricardi (Ret)

Chief David A. Ricardi (Ret)
Executive Director
Western Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association



BERKSHIRE COUNTY SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM

September 8, 2026

Dear Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council:

On behalf of the Berkshire County Special Response Team, I am writing to offer our support for the proposal to host a Lost Person Behavior (LPB) training course, taught by internationally recognized search expert Dr. Robert J. Koester, for first responders throughout Western Massachusetts.

Missing and endangered person incidents are among the most time-sensitive and resource-intensive emergencies faced by public safety agencies. The initial hours of a search can be critical to achieving a safe and successful outcome. Dr. Koester's extensive research into *Lost Person Behavior* provides first responders with an evidence-based framework for understanding and predicting the behavior of missing individuals, identifying areas of highest probability, prioritizing search efforts, and deploying available resources more effectively.

Although these principles are fundamental to search and rescue operations, the benefits of this training extend well beyond traditional search and rescue missions. Law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS personnel, emergency managers, dispatchers, and other public safety professionals routinely encounter incidents involving missing children, individuals with dementia or autism, persons experiencing mental health crises, suicidal subjects, and other vulnerable individuals. Training in Lost Person Behavior would provide these professionals with practical tools that can be immediately applied during these critical incidents.

The course would also significantly enhance the county's ability to manage large-scale emergencies and disasters; establishing a common, research-based approach to search planning and resource allocation strengthens coordination under Unified Command and promotes interoperability among law enforcement, fire, EMS, emergency management, search and rescue teams, aviation resources, K9 teams, drone operators, and volunteer organizations. Developing this shared operational understanding before a major incident occurs is an important component of regional preparedness.

Berkshire County presents a diverse operational environment, encompassing small urban and suburban communities, agricultural areas, heavily wooded terrain, waterways, parks, and expansive wilderness areas from Mount Washington to Mount Greylock. Our team has assisted other agencies with missing person incidents across these varied environments. Bringing this nationally recognized training to our region would provide an exceptional professional development opportunity while reducing the financial and logistical barriers associated with sending personnel out of the area. Hosting the course locally would also make it possible for a greater number of agencies and disciplines to participate, further strengthening regional capabilities.

The anticipated benefits of this training include:

- Faster, evidence-based search planning and decision-making
- More efficient deployment of personnel and specialized resources
- Improved interagency coordination and interoperability
- Enhanced responder safety through informed, probability-based resource deployment
- Improved preparedness for both routine and large-scale incidents
- Increased likelihood of locating missing and endangered persons quickly and safely

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to strengthening homeland security and emergency preparedness throughout Western Massachusetts.

Sincerely,



Adam J Carlotto

Berkshire County SRT Executive Officer / Deputy Commander
Interim Police Chief – Great Barrington