

# STRATEGIC EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ASSESSMENTS (SEPA) OVERVIEW



**PREPAREDNESS**  
ADVISORS

SEPA is an emergency management planning tool and process that helps organizations identify their preparedness capability gaps to improve strategic and operational decision-making. The SEPA process enables government agencies, private/non-profit companies, and academic institutions to assess risk, capability, and response capacity for all types of threats and hazards. By implementing SEPA, your organization will gain new insight about your preparedness gaps and be better positioned to save lives, reduce human suffering, and mitigate financial impacts from the emergencies that you face. The Preparedness Advisors LLC team brings years of experience assessing preparedness and can help you implement SEPA to be more prepared for future disasters.

## How the SEPA Process Works



SEPA is delivered through structured, in-person meetings with representation from your key partners/stakeholders from all disciplines relevant to emergency preparedness (e.g., law enforcement, fire rescue, emergency medical services, health departments, IT/cybersecurity, transportation, etc.). The Preparedness Advisors team will facilitate the SEPA meetings and capture thorough notes of your organization's responses to the assessment questions. The process results in a comprehensive, yet concise report of your assessment and recommendations for how you can use it to improve your strategic decision-making.



## Benefits of SEPA

The SEPA process produces numerous benefits to your organization, to include:

- + *Identification of your capability gaps across all aspects of emergency management/homeland security and an action plan to resolve these challenges.*
- + *Opportunity to dialogue with your key partners and stakeholders in a structured, collaborative environment.*
- + *Thousands of quantitative and qualitative data points to help evaluate your agency operations and funding/budget decisions.*



The SEPA process is scalable and can be delivered to one specific jurisdiction or across multiple partner organizations (e.g., counties within a state) to produce comparative analysis.

## How We Can Help You Implement SEPA

1

Help you obtain buy-in on the SEPA process from your partners/stakeholders.

2

Prepare and tailor the SEPA tool to your organization's specific needs.

3

Provide SEPA materials and help you schedule SEPA sessions.

4

Facilitate the SEPA sessions ourselves or help coach your staff to run the SEPA.

5

Capture quantitative and qualitative data through the sessions and produce a comprehensive summary report.

6

Recommend potential solutions to address your preparedness capability gaps.



## Components



## of SEPA



### Organization/Jurisdiction Characteristics

Captures key information about your organization or jurisdiction that could affect how you prepare for and respond to emergencies (e.g., demographics, topography/geography, critical infrastructure, major events, historical disaster data).



### Risk Assessment

Identifies threats/hazards of concern to your organization and assesses their likelihood and consequence.



### Capability Assessment

Assesses a list of defined capabilities across all aspects of emergency preparedness (prevention, protection, response, mitigation, recovery). Each capability is evaluated through the POETE framework (planning, organization, equipment, training, exercises).



### Response Capacity Assessment

Evaluates how long your organization can deliver the response-related capabilities before needing outside assistance.



### Funding/Grant Reliance Assessment

Evaluates how reliant your organization is on grant funding/other sources to build and sustain your capabilities.



### Resource Inventory

Produces a high-level inventory of your key resources and personnel (e.g., response equipment, teams).



### Best Practices and Areas for Improvement

Allows participants to identify best practices and areas for improvement, based on earlier discussions, that will be built into a follow up action plan.

## Our Expertise



Patrick Campion, Founder and President of Preparedness Advisors LLC, brings years of experience managing preparedness assessments, strategic planning, and policy and data analysis efforts during his time with the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) and as a consultant to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Our company's mission is to strengthen the nation's understanding of preparedness through this intuitive, holistic, and standardized assessment process.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: Does SEPA use FEMA's National Core Capabilities?**

No, the SEPA process uses a different set of defined capabilities; however, these capabilities cover all emergency management/homeland security domains and do have some overlap with the national core capabilities. The SEPA process is flexible though, and organizations can tailor or create their own capability definitions to be evaluated.

### **Q: How is SEPA different from the Threat Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment/Stakeholder Preparedness Review (THIRA/SPR)**

SEPA is delivered through in-person, facilitated assessments and does not involve setting capability "impacts or targets" for specific scenarios. While the SEPA defined capabilities are not a "one-for-one" to the federal core capabilities, your SEPA can help inform your THIRA/SPR.

### **Q: How long does a SEPA session run?**

SEPA is designed to be a minimum burden on your staff's time. An individual SEPA session can take between 3-5 hours to complete and the summary report will be provided within days after the session.

### **Q: Is SEPA an audit?**

No, an important part of the SEPA process is ensuring your organization's leadership and partners/stakeholders that it is not an audit or a means of attributing blame for identified gaps. The goal of SEPA is to make your organization more aware of its risks and capabilities across all emergency preparedness issues so that they can make more informed strategic and programmatic decisions.

**For more information about the SEPA process, please contact us:**

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