
INFORMATION SHARING ENVIRONMENT GUIDANCE (ISE-G)

FEDERAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION CRITERIA (RAC)

Purpose

This document defines objective criteria to be used by federal agencies that provide direct support to state and major urban area fusion centers (“fusion centers”) (herein referred to as federal fusion center support entities or FFCSE) when making federal resource allocation decisions to fusion centers.

Background

The Federal Government does not dictate where fusion centers should be built and maintained, nor does it designate fusion centers. However, the Federal Government has a shared responsibility with state and local governments to promote the establishment of a national network of fusion centers to facilitate effective information sharing. Since 2001, the Federal Government has provided significant grant funding, training, technical assistance, exercise support, federal personnel, and access to federal information and networks to support fusion centers. The Federal Government recognizes the importance and ability of state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments to own, operate, and/or participate in fusion centers and respects that a fusion center’s mission should be defined according to its jurisdictional needs. To ensure that information sharing efforts are optimized and barriers minimized, SLTT governments should define and document how their jurisdictions intend to carry out intrastate coordination to gather, process, analyze, and disseminate terrorism, homeland security, and law enforcement information (the “fusion process”).

The *National Strategy for Information Sharing (2007)* (“*NSIS*”) provides a Federal Government-wide approach to interfacing and collaborating with fusion centers. In furtherance of the *NSIS* goals, the Federal Government must clearly define the parameters for the allocation of federal resources to fusion centers in order to provide support in a manner that:

- Collectively supports the development of a national network of fusion centers; and
- Effectively balances the need for supporting SLTT, as well as federal, imperatives.

The Federal Government can accomplish this task through the implementation of specific, objective criteria for resource allocation by FFCSEs to fusion centers. Not only will established criteria help bring transparency into the process of allocating federal resources to fusion centers; it will also enable FFCSEs to prioritize support in order to enhance the national network of fusion centers.

Criteria for Resource Allocation to Fusion Centers

FFCSEs will prioritize federal resource allocation across three categories. These categories (in order of primacy) and the corresponding prioritization criteria for resource allocation are detailed below.

Category 1: Criteria for Prioritization of Primary Fusion Centers

In each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five U.S. territories¹, there may be one primary fusion center. To be eligible for this category, a fusion center must be designated by the Governor² as the primary fusion center, pursuant to the joint Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Justice (DOJ) November 2007 fusion center designation letter, and this designation must be communicated to the Secretary of Homeland Security and the United States Attorney General.

A primary fusion center shall maintain the following criteria in order for FFCSEs to continue to prioritize it within this category for federal resource allocation:

- Designation as the primary fusion center by the Governor;
- Oversight and management by a state or local government agency;
- Receipt of DHS certification that privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties (P/CRCL) protections are in place that are determined to be at least as comprehensive as the Information Sharing Environment (ISE) Privacy Guidelines;
- Implementation of a plan and procedures to fulfill its responsibility as the focal point within the state and local environment for the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information³, and for the coordination and execution of the statewide fusion process, including all fusion centers and other SLTT partners in its state or territory; and
- Achievement and maintenance of the *Baseline Capabilities for State and Major Urban Area Fusion Center (Baseline Capabilities)*, as measured by the annual Baseline Capabilities Assessment (BCA).

Category 2: Criteria for Prioritization of Recognized Fusion Centers

The Federal Government respects the authority of state governments to designate fusion centers. Any designated fusion center, including major urban area fusion centers, not designated as a primary fusion center will be referred to as a recognized fusion center and included within this category for resource allocation, as appropriate.

A recognized fusion center shall maintain the following criteria in order for the fusion center to continue to be eligible for federal resource allocation within this category:

- Designation as a fusion center by the Governor;
- Oversight and management by a state or local government agency;

¹ The five territories are American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

² For the District of Columbia, the Mayor may designate the primary fusion center.

³ "State and major urban area fusion centers will be the focus, but not exclusive points, within the State and local environment for the receipt and sharing of terrorism information, homeland security information, and law enforcement information related to terrorism." *National Strategy for Information Sharing. A1-1*

- Implementation of a plan and procedures to work in conjunction with the primary fusion center, as part of the statewide fusion process;
- Achievement and maintenance of the Baseline Capabilities; and
- Receipt of DHS certification that P/CRCL protections are in place that are determined to be at least as comprehensive as the ISE Privacy Guidelines.

Category 3: Criteria for Prioritization of Nodes

A state may leverage its criminal intelligence units, real-time crime analysis centers, and other law enforcement or homeland security analytic centers that have not been designated as fusion centers by state governments. These nodes can provide valuable support to the statewide fusion process by coordinating with the primary fusion center and recognized fusion centers in the geographic area, thereby participating in intrastate coordination. Nodes are encouraged to achieve the *Baseline Capabilities*, as they pertain to their operations. Additionally, nodes are encouraged to maintain all applicable P/CRCL protections.

Implementation of Resource Allocation Criteria

FFCSEs provide support and resources to fusion centers in order to achieve and sustain the *Baseline Capabilities*. These resources include, but are not limited to, deployed personnel, connectivity with federal data systems, training, technical assistance, exercise support, grant programs, and national and regional workshops and conferences. The goal of these criteria is to enable FFCSEs to prioritize resource allocation to fusion centers. Within the context of this policy, federal mission needs may also inform the allocation of resources provided by FFCSEs.

While prioritization for federal support and resources is dependent upon achieving and maintaining fusion center resource allocation criteria, meeting these criteria does not guarantee the provision of funding. Federal agency support will be contingent upon available resources.

Primary Fusion Centers

Because primary fusion centers are designated by state Governors as the focal points within the state and local environment for the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information and have additional responsibilities related to the coordination of critical operational capabilities across the statewide fusion process with recognized fusion centers and nodes, the highest priority for the allocation of federal resources to fusion centers shall be directed to primary fusion centers. FFCSEs are committed to deploying personnel and establishing connectivity with federal data systems to primary fusion centers with the understanding that once resources are obligated by federal partners, they may not be immediately replaceable if the fusion center moves or relocates. In addition, primary fusion centers will be eligible to receive joint DHS/DOJ Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program services, as well as other training and exercise services directly related to the fusion process. Primary fusion centers will also receive invitations to National Fusion Center Conferences and Regional Workshops. Primary fusion centers will remain eligible for state and Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) grant programs, as applicable. When available resources are limited, FFCSEs may prioritize the allocation of resources to those fusion centers within this category based on the fusion centers'

demonstrated ability to achieve and maintain the *Baseline Capabilities* and collocation with existing federal resources at fusion centers.

Recognized Fusion Centers

Recognized fusion centers will be eligible to receive deployed personnel and connectivity to federal data systems, as available. They will be eligible to receive joint DHS/DOJ Fusion Process Technical Assistance Program services only when a request is submitted and approved through the primary fusion center or the Homeland Security Advisor. Recognized fusion centers will also be eligible to receive invitations to National Fusion Center Conferences and Regional Workshops only when a request is submitted and approved through the primary fusion center or the Homeland Security Advisor. Recognized fusion centers will remain eligible for state and UASI grant programs, as applicable. When available resources are limited, FFCSEs may prioritize the allocation of resources to those fusion centers within this category based on the fusion centers' demonstrated ability to achieve and maintain the *Baseline Capabilities* and collocation with existing federal resources at fusion centers.

Nodes

Nodes will receive access to deployed personnel and federal data systems through the primary and/or recognized fusion centers. They may be eligible to receive specialized fusion center training and technical assistance services, as applicable, and invitations to other conferences and workshops only when a request is submitted and approved through the primary fusion center or the Homeland Security Advisor. Nodes will remain eligible for state and UASI grant programs, as applicable.

Effective Date and Expiration. This ISE-G is effective immediately and will remain in effect as the Federal Resource Allocation Criteria (RAC) until updated, superseded, or cancelled.



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