

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Technology Clearinghouse National Online Electronic Assessment

(OMB No. 1640-NEW)

A. Justification

1. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) to establish a Technology Clearinghouse to encourage and support innovative technical solutions to enhance homeland security and the mission of the Department (P.L. 107-296, Section 313). This requirement responds to long-standing requests by the first responder community to create a resource for information and technology that would assist them in support of their mission. In order to assess the current version of the DHS Tech Clearinghouse, a National Online Electronic Assessment will be administered.
2. The information will be collected via a secure Website and will be used by DHS S&T to:
 1. Assess the overall usability of the Tech Clearinghouse.
 2. Assess the specific functions of the Tech Clearinghouse.
 3. Assess the relevancy and usefulness of the content of the Tech Clearinghouse to first responders.
 4. Assess the ease with which users navigate the Tech Clearinghouse.
 5. Provide general feedback on the Tech Clearinghouse.
3. Information technology will be used in the collection of this information to reduce the data gathering and records management burden. The National Online Electronic Assessment will be conducted with approximately 100 currently employed or recently retired individuals from the first responder disciplines. An invitation to participate in the National Online Electronic Assessment will be distributed through sources such as the First Responder Technologies (R-Tech) User Working Group (UWG), the R-Tech Newsletter, and national and state-level associations representing all first responder disciplines. The sources will announce the opportunity for participation in the NOEA.

The assessment will be completely Web-based. DHS S&T will provide a secure Website, www.jsc.eku.edu/NOEA, through which individuals can participate in the assessment. DHS has opted to conduct this collection electronically in order to minimize the burden on participants. Individuals that choose to participate will take part in the assessment over a 4-week period, at locations of their choice where an Internet connection is available. The assessment will require a total of two and a half (2.5) hours of the respondent's time, thus presenting a minimal burden to each respondent.

Participants will be asked to read and sign an electronic consent form granting their consent to participate in the assessment. Participants will then complete an online Entrance Form, which addresses their familiarity with computers, computer use in employment and leisure, common websites they visit and/or use, and expectations of the Tech Clearinghouse. They will then utilize and assess the Tech Clearinghouse by conducting specified and general searches and providing feedback through online assessment instruments (Structured Assessment Cases). After completing the Structured Assessment Cases, participants will complete an online Exit Form, which addresses the participant's satisfaction with and the overall usability of the Tech Clearinghouse and specific functions included in the Tech Clearinghouse. The electronic data collection forms will standardize the collection of information that is both necessary and sufficient for assessing the Tech Clearinghouse. All online assessment instruments were created using *mrInterview*[™] 4.0 software, which works in conjunction with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS[™]). Data collected from online assessment instruments will be analyzed using SPSS[™] 15.0. Data will be stored in password-protected computers accessible only to authorized personnel, and no data will be associated in any way with personally identifiable information (PII).

4. The current version of the Tech Clearinghouse has not been assessed by the public. No similar information collection efforts have been conducted that would provide this necessary assessment of the Tech Clearinghouse.
5. The proposed collection of information has no impact on small businesses and other small entities.
6. DHS S&T collects information that is both necessary and sufficient to comply with P.L. 107-296, Section 313. Failure to assess the Tech Clearinghouse will diminish the ability of DHS S&T to meet its obligations as required by P.L. 107-296, Section 313. If this collection were not conducted, DHS would be unable to assess the Tech Clearinghouse.
7. This collection will be conducted consistent with the information collection guidelines.
8. By notice in the Federal Register on May 19, 2008 at 73 FR 28831, DHS S&T notified the public that it was requesting comments on this information collection. The notice allowed for a 60-day public comment period. No comments were received. Additionally, by notice in the Federal Register on August 1, 2008] at 73 FR 45026, DHS S&T notified the public that it was requesting comments on this information collection. The notice allowed for a 30-day public comment period. No comments were received. No consultations with people outside the agency have been conducted.
9. DHS S&T does not provide payments or gifts to respondents in exchange for participating in the assessment.
10. In order to protect the participant's privacy and ensure anonymity of the assessment

results, participants will be asked to create their own unique identification code at the start of the assessment. This identification code will be used on each of the data collection tools throughout the assessment. Participants will be asked to create an identification code consisting of letters, numbers, and one special character. Participants will be asked specifically not to include any PII in this number (e.g., date of birth or last four digits of their Social Security Number). PII of assessment participants will not be collected and will not be known at any time by the assessment administrators. This is ensured by the voluntary nature of the assessment and by the self-assignment of unique participant identification codes. Only the participant will know his or her identification code, therefore indirect identification of the assessment participant will not be possible. Using a unique, participant-developed identification code will allow assessment administrators to capture data longitudinally across the assessment process and will allow for useful, reliable analysis of assessment results. Results of the assessment will be stored in password-protected computers accessible only to authorized personnel. A Privacy Threshold Analysis has been conducted for this collection.

11. There are no questions of a sensitive nature in this information collection.

12. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

Form Name / Number	Consent Form	Entrance Form	Structured Assessment Case #1
No. of Respondents	100	100	100
No. of Responses per Respondent	1	1	1
Avg. Burden per Response (in hours)	.1	.20	.5
Total Annual Burden (in hours)	10	20	50
Average Hourly Wage Rate	\$50	\$50	\$50
Total Annual Respondent Cost	\$500	\$1000	\$2500

Form Name / Number	Structured Assessment Case #2	Structured Assessment Case Free Form Query	Exit Form
No. of Respondents	100	100	100
No. of Responses per Respondent	1	2	1
Avg. Burden per Response (in hours)	.5	.5	.20
Total Annual Burden	50	100	20

(in hours)			
Average Hourly Wage Rate	\$50	\$50	\$50
Total Annual Respondent Cost	\$2500	\$5000	\$1000

Annual Reporting Burden and Respondent Cost: The total estimated ICR Public Burden is 250 hours. This figure was derived by summing the total annual burden hours from all forms.

Public Cost

The total estimated annual public reporting cost is \$12,500. This figure was derived by summing the estimated annual respondent costs for all forms.

13. There are no capital or start-up costs associated with this information collection.

14. **Government Cost**

Estimate annual cost to the federal government in relation to this information collection is \$10,000. This cost includes the following:

- \$ 5,200 for program office contractor support
- \$ 1,200 for supplies, printing, and travel
- \$ 3,600 for website operation and maintenance

15. This is a new information collection.

16. DHS S&T does not intend to publish the results of this information collection.

17. DHS S&T will display the expiration date of OMB approval for this information collection.

18. DHS S&T does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.