

Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) User Guide

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FEMA

Table of Contents

A. Introduction..... 3

B. Purpose..... 3

C. LCAT Question Summary 4

D. Workshop Forum 7

E. Sample Workshop Agenda 8

F. Recommended LCAT Workshop Rules of Engagement (ROE) 9

G. LCAT Instructions.....10



Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) User Guide

A. Introduction

The Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) is a collaborative logistics planning and preparedness tool that improves the common operating picture for local, state, and federal responders. As such, state emergency managers will garner the greatest benefit from its implementation by bringing all public and private planning and response partners together for a two-day workshop. Participants should include state emergency management officials, as well as FEMA logistics personnel, FEMA Regional representatives, local emergency managers, National Guard Bureau, and private sector partners. Bringing together all partners involved in disaster logistics planning and response ensures more complete and accurate answers to the LCAT and promotes discussion, awareness, and cross-flow of information between the various agencies.

B. Purpose

The LCAT is tailored for use by states to evaluate their current disaster logistics readiness, identify areas for targeted improvement, and develop a roadmap to both mitigate weaknesses and further enhance strengths. The tool has been developed from the perspective of state logisticians for their benefit. The LCAT and state responses to questions within the LCAT are, and will remain, confidential and will not be shared with any other states or agencies.

FEMA Regions will facilitate state workshops with FEMA HQ LMD support. The LCAT can also be used by states for regular self-assessments. As such, states can track improvements in particular functional areas from the time a state's baseline score was taken.

C. LCAT Question Summary

- **Logistics Planning (49 Questions)**
 - The development of a set of disaster logistics plans which consider demand recognition, sourcing, acquisition, transportation, warehousing requirements and distribution/management of goods, people, and equipment during a disaster
 - Plans Development
 - Contingency Planning
 - Distribution Planning
 - Training and Compliance
 - Provider Qualification
 - Procurement Procedures and Protocols
 - Solicitation
 - Existing Contracts

- **Logistics Operations (32 Questions)**
 - The procedural side of state logistics. Log Operations ensures SOPs and processes are followed according to a previously created plan of action
 - Identify Requirements
 - Activate Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution
 - Acquire Resources
 - Common Operating Picture
 - Procurement
 - Transportation

- **Distribution Management (14 Questions)**
 - Everything that has to do with the end-to-end movement of people, commodities and equipment. This includes communications with other stakeholders, ordering, order processing, transportation asset identification and dispatch, delivery receipt and delivery confirmation.
 - Order tracking
 - Transportation Coordination
 - Inbound Shipment Management

- **Organizational Functions (19 Questions)**
 - How disaster logistics fits into your State’s overall Emergency Management; considers training, credentialing, and acquisition of logistics resources, general administration, and quality management
 - Reporting Structure and Alignments
 - Credentialing and Cross-Functional Team Structure
 - Logistics Quality Management
 - Logistics Knowledge, Skills, and Training
 - Administrative Burden (State legal constraints)

- **Property Management (16 Questions)**
 - Includes the inventory management processes, in-transit visibility activities and maintenance of both capital assets and commodities
 - Property Management Personnel
 - Warehouse and Facility Management
 - Logistics Equipment Management and Maintenance
 - Commodity Inventory Management Process and Enablers

The Logistics Capability Assessment Tool features 130 survey-style questions, which are grouped into subcategories within each of the five functional areas listed above. Participants respond to each question by identifying where the state fits along a range of five capability levels, from Static to Synchronized. Capability levels are defined below:

- **Static** – State has not yet developed and/or implemented a viable strategy within the functional area.
- **Functional** – State has implemented informal plans or processes, but Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have not been defined or adopted.
- **Horizontal Integration** – State has developed and implemented formalized, integrated SOPs across the state emergency management organization.
- **External Collaboration** – State has coordinated plans and SOPs with other state, local/tribal, and external partner agencies, organizations, and private vendors.
- **Synchronized** – All local, state, federal, and private partners have fully integrated and synchronized plans, procedures, and operations. All plans and SOPs have been documented and exercised regularly with all participants. State has demonstrated mastery of this capability.

An example LCAT question can be found below in Figure 1 below:

The screenshot displays the 'Logistics Capability Assessment' application window. The title bar reads 'Logistics Capability Assessment'. The interface includes a FEMA logo and a navigation menu on the left with categories like 'Assessment', 'Results', and 'Graphs'. The main content area is titled 'Logistics Planning' and contains a question: 'Q1. Has your state considered risks in logistics plans?'. Below the question is a vertical scale of five capability levels: Synchronized (top, marked with a red star and selected), External Collaboration, Horizontal Integration, Functional, and Static. A 'Next' button is located at the bottom right of the question area. A reference note at the bottom reads: 'REF: CPG 101 (interim) dated 1 Aug 08, pg 2-1, 2-17; NPG pg 6'.

Figure 1

After all questions are answered within a category, the LCAT generates a results chart which provides a snapshot of where the state’s relative strengths and weaknesses lie within each functional area. After all tabs are complete, the tool generates an executive dashboard summary view of overall capability levels. A snapshot of the executive dashboard summary is below in Figure 2.

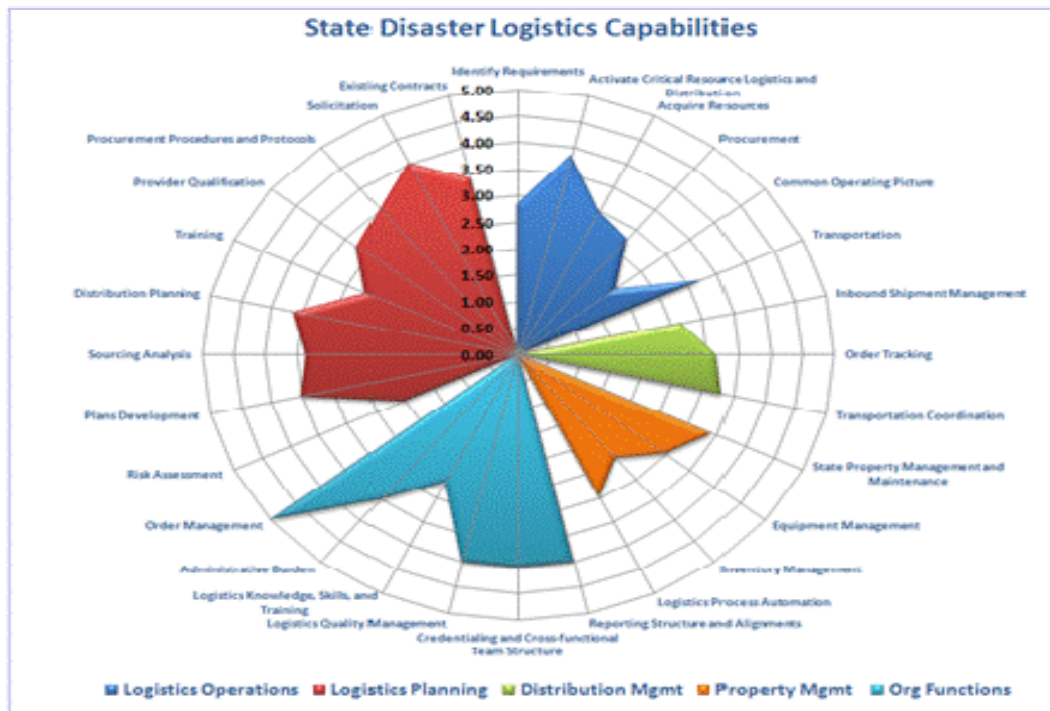


Figure 2

D. Recommended Workshop Forum

In order to achieve optimal collaboration, FEMA recommends that the states conduct a two-day workshop to perform the initial assessment. Recommended meeting participants are as follows:

- FEMA State Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO)
- FEMA Regional Logistics Chief
- State Emergency Management Director
- State logistics chief & support staff
- State operations chief & support staff
- State planning chief & support staff
- Other key emergency management agency staff
- State procurement officer(s)
- State finance/accounting officer(s)
- National Guard personnel
- Major private sector contractors
- Key state non-governmental organizations
- County emergency management officials
- City emergency management officials

The more decision-makers who are in attendance at the forum the better, as one of the most beneficial aspects of the LCAT is the inherent educational nature of the tool. The meeting doubles as both an assessment and a training session.

E. Sample Workshop Agenda

The questions in the LCAT may be spread across the two day session should the coordinating team desire. However, the implementation team recommends a forum agenda similar to the following example. The questions will likely generate significant discussion and will require ample time. It is important for the moderator to be diligent about managing time. Furthermore, ample break time should be built in to the agenda.

Time	Description	Key Attendees
DAY ONE		
0830 – 0930	Introductions & Background	All
0940 – 1200	Logistics Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Staff • County, City & Private Partners
1200-1300	Lunch	
1300-1400	Logistics Planning Contd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Staff • County, City & Private Partners • Procurement
1415-1530	Logistics Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics Ops staff • Operations staff • Procurement • County & City Partners • Private partners
1545-1630	Day 1 Parking Lot Discussion	All
END Day One		
DAY TWO		
0830-0900	Day 1 Recap	All
0900-1000	Distribution Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics Planners • Logistics Operations
1015-1130	Property Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory & Equipment Mgmt personnel (State and Partner agency)
1130-1230	Lunch	
1230-1400	Organizational Functions	All
1415-1500	Review LCAT Results, Discussion	All
1500-1600	Hot Wash, Lessons Learned	All
End Day Two		

F. Recommended LCAT Workshop Rules of Engagement (ROE)

- The only “right” answer is the honest answer.
- Encourage all meeting attendees to participate. Invitees all have valid opinions and insights, and the group benefits from dialogue and discourse, as it tends to flesh out some of the nuances of disaster logistics processes.
- With only a limited time for each question, it is important that the moderator move issues to the “parking lot” in the event that consensus is not reached in an acceptable time. Parking lot issues can be addressed after all of the other questions have been answered.
- It is advisable to identify a “section captain” for each LCAT section. This person should be responsible for arbitrating disputed answers and if necessary, sending the issue to the parking lot.
- Remaining time in each section (if any) should be used to continue discussions from the parking lot.
- The FEMA LMD team is very interested in your input to the LCAT question content and meeting conduct. Please keep track and note potential improvements to the LCAT; we will conduct a hot wash at the end of the workshop.
- Please refrain from cross talk.

G. LCAT Instructions

Overview

This user guide details the capabilities and instructions for FEMA's Logistics Capability Assessment Tool. The tool consists of a series of multiple-choice questions designed to survey each area of state logistics readiness. After all the questions have been answered, the tool will provide an output of graphs (to provide a visualization of the evaluation), as well as a results pane with numeric scores per area, and an overall capability score.

How to Begin

How to install the LCAT to Your Computer

1. Locate the file named "New Questionnaire <mmddy>.xml" from the CD provided
2. Save the "New Questionnaire <mmddy>.xml" to your main My Documents folder
3. Double click the 'LCAT.msi' file. This will begin the install Wizard. Follow the wizard instructions and click on "finish" when complete.
4. Go to your computer's Desktop. There will be a new icon called "LCAT." Double click the icon to start the program.

How to Begin a new LCAT Assessment

1. Once inside the application, go to File > Open in the top left corner. This will prompt with a dialog box
2. Double click on the "New Questionnaire (mmddy)" file inside your My Documents folder
3. Questionnaire is ready to begin.
4. *If, after loading the CD-ROM, you receive the error message "LCAT Tool cannot be installed on systems with JRE Version smaller than 1.5," go to the java.com website and click the "Free Java Download" button, which will update your existing Java software.*

How to Save an LCAT Assessment

1. When the application opens, navigate back up to the File menu. Click "Save As"
2. Name the file using the following standard nomenclature: "<Your State Name> - Assessment (#) - <mmddy>.xml." (Example – "Oklahoma – Assessment 1 – 033009.xml")
3. Next, save the LCAT file to your "My Documents" folder.
4. As you work through the LCAT, it is advisable to periodically save your work.

How to Open an Existing LCAT file

1. Double click the 'LCAT' file on your desktop
2. When the application opens, navigate to File>Open
3. Select the .xml file that you want to open.

4. If any changes are made to the file, re-save

Navigation

The LCAT features four tabs at the top of the screen: Assessment, Results, Graphs, and Participants. The following text summarizes usage of each.

Assessment Tab

Once the questionnaire file has been opened, the display presents sets of questions divided according to categories and sub-categories. The respondents choose the answer on a scale of 1 through 5 (1 being lowest and 5 being highest) that most closely captures the state's process maturity. Respondents may select their answer in half-increment (.5) if their reply falls between two choices. Once each question is answered the respondent must click "next" on the screen until completed and then move on to the next subcategory. It is best to finish all questions in each category before moving on to the next however you can always return to modify your answer. Within each category a count is shown to indicate the number of questions answered (from the total number of questions). In order to correctly view results and the results graphs, all questions will need to be answered first.

"Results" and "Graphs" are stored under separate tabs. These tabs will not be viewable until the application has confirmed that all questions have been answered. Each question consists of a set of multiple-choice answers, as well as a comment box that must be filled in if a state selects the not applicable box. Please note that the assessment cannot proceed unless a choice has been made or an explanation is given (if the answer is N/A). Each answer choice, when selected, displays a detailed description of the choice (Static to Synchronized). Read each answer carefully before selecting which answer most closely describes your organization.

Results Tab

After all the questions have been answered, the Results tab becomes available for view. Each of the categories and sub-categories are processed and a score is derived for each section, with an overall capability score displayed in the top-right of the panel. For each section selected, the bottom pane displays the questions and answers provided for the section for easy viewing.

Graphs Tab

LCA generates multiple graphs based on the answers provided; first, a graph illustrating overall readiness, and then graphs based on each category from the assessment. Each axis of a graph is plotted according to the score for each category; scores are shown from 0 to 5. Visually, each graph denotes readiness based on how filled-in each category is around the circumference of the chart.

Participants Tab

Lastly, the Participants tab allows for a record of those involved in the assessment. This can be used to track contacts for obtaining additional information pertaining to an assessment. While many of the contact attributes are optional, a name is required in order to add a person as a participant. For easier tracking, the state/territory and assessment date should also be filled-in.