

Terms of Clearance Acknowledgment

The purpose of the *Terms of Clearance Acknowledgment* is to address Terms of Clearance from the previous approval of the collection.

Collection Title: 1640-NEW, FrCop, New Collection

OMB Control No.: 1640-0016

Current Expiration Date: 07/31/2011

Previous Conclusion Date: 07/15/2010

Collection Instrument(s): DHS Form 10059

The previous approval of this collection was given the following Terms of Clearance:

This collection is approved for one year. If DHS submits a renewal of this collection, it should include a report with the following information:

- *How the First Responders Community of Practice is being used. Has the intended audience been reached?*

- *An analysis by DHS of the practical utility of the collection.*

- *An analysis by DHS of other similar platforms currently in use by first responders.*

OMB Authorizing

How is First Responder Communities of Practice being used?

First Responder Communities of Practice (FRCoP) was developed by DHS Science & Technology (S&T) to be used as a professional networking and collaboration platform to facilitate discussion among federal and local government, first responders and others working in homeland security. DHS S&T is also using the platform to gather feedback from first responders on its various initiatives and to share relevant resources and information with stakeholders.

Has the intended audience been reached?

Yes, the site has more than 2,600 members from all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Members post documents and blog entries, edit wiki pages and message each other across 84 Communities. On average, the site gains over 40 new members per week.

Analysis by DHS of the practical utility of the collection.

FRCoP is a prime collaboration tool for all the various stakeholders with whom DHS engages, including first responders (all disciplines including volunteers), government (state, local, federal and contractors), and academia (DHS Centers of Excellence and others). The site currently hosts 84 communities ranging from communities of interest to specific project groups such as Virtual USA (vUSA). vUSA participants are using FRCoP for day-to-day project management and for sharing information about the project with the rest of the FRCoP community. The site also hosts the activities of DHS S&T's Virtual Social Media Working Group (VSMWG), a body of first responders who work to publish best practices, tips and plans for the use of social media in emergency management. The site also offers a virtual home base for the National Urban Security Technology Lab's (NUSTL) New York Area Science & Technology (NYAST) where members can ask questions and view presentations from past group meetings and sessions.

Analysis by DHS of other similar platforms currently in use by first responders.

A number of other similar platforms were reviewed prior to the development of First Responder Communities of Practice. The analysis is as follows:

Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN): Designed for collaboration but within specific silos. In addition, HSIN only permits government employees and government contractors as members. The siloed nature of HSIN does not encourage collaboration with non-government employees, such as volunteer First Responders who make up the bulk of the First Responder Community. Unlike Communities of Practice, HSIN members can't connect across communities nor do they have ready access and insight into the activities of other communities. First Responder Communities of Practice really focuses on the open sharing and collaboration of information to allow members to network and make connections where otherwise they would likely be unaware of one another.

Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS): National online network of lessons learned, best practices, and innovative ideas for the emergency management and homeland security communities. LLIS.gov offers a document library for posting items including after action documents from tabletop and other exercises.

Responder Knowledgebase (RKB): RKB's primary mission is focused around providing emergency responders with information on the approved equipment list (AEL).