

3-Tiered Team Preparedness System for All-Hazards Incident Management Teams

Implementation and Management Plan

A peer-developed national best practice that quantifies Operational, Administrative, and Logistical preparedness of Type 3 All-Hazards Incident Management Teams

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Acknowledgement

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1.0 List of Abbreviations

3TTPS	3-Tiered Team Preparedness System
AHE	AHIMT Hosting Entity
AHIMT	All-Hazards Incident Management Team. Used to indicate a team composed of members qualified using the NIMS NQS or AHIMTA qualifications criteria or a State, Local, Tribal, or Territorial qualification criterion that meets or exceeds NIMS NQS or AHIMTA qualification criteria
AHIMTA	All-Hazards Incident Management Teams Association (also known as the Incident Management Teams Association)
ANPAE	All-Hazards Incident Management Team National PCL Assessment Exercise
RE	AHIMT Requesting Entity
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
ESF	Emergency Support Function
ESF #4	Emergency Support Function #4 (Firefighting and Incident Management Teams)
IMT	Incident Management Team (used to indicate a discipline-focused team)
MA	Mission Assignment
PCL	Preparedness Capability Level
PCM	Performance Capability Metrics
RSA	Resource Support Agreement (EMAC term)
SASF	Self-Assessment Survey Form
SRT	Supplemental Response Team (FEMA SRT Program)

3-Tiered Team Preparedness System Implementation and Management Plan

2.0 Overview

The *3-Tiered Team Preparedness System (3TTPS) for All-Hazards Incident Management Teams (AHIMTs)* is a peer-developed and -managed national best-practice methodology for quantifying and standardizing the level of preparedness an AHIMT should possess to be able to deploy successfully in the geographic area of operation the AHIMT's governance document identifies.

The 3TTPS ensures that an AHIMT's level of preparedness in the administrative, logistical, and operational areas aligns with peer-developed national preparedness and capability standards. The standardized national preparedness levels were developed based on After-Action Reports from AHIMTs and the entities that requested those AHIMT resources.

The functions, degree, and scope of the assignments that an Authority Having Jurisdiction's (AHJ's) AHIMT will deploy to or accept are determined solely by the AHIMT's Host Entity (AHE), which authorized its formation, management, and governance. The AHE should document the operational structure, limitations, and constraints, as well as defining the AHIMT's geographic area of operation, in their governance document(s).

Research shows AHEs classify their AHIMT(s) into one of three geographic areas of operation based on their level of preparedness and capability. Although originally referred to as Tiers, to avoid confusion with FEMA's Preparedness Toolkit's use of the same term, the 3TTPS now refers to these as Preparedness Capability Levels (PCLs), as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Descriptions of the Preparedness Capability Levels (PCLs) used in the 3TTPS.

PCL Levels	
LOCAL PCL	Designated to be prepared and capable to deploy for use within the AHE's boundaries (e.g., city, district, county).
REGIONAL PCL	Designated to be prepared and capable to deploy within the AHE's boundaries (e.g., city, district, county), as well as within a defined region (e.g., Urban Area Security Initiative, state homeland security district) or within the AHE's state.
NATIONAL PCL	Designated to be prepared and capable to deploy nationally (e.g., EMAC ¹ requests or Mission Assignment Taskings ²) as well as being prepared and capable for deployment within the Local and Regional areas defined above.

¹ The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is an all-hazards/all-disciplines mutual aid compact that serves as the cornerstone of the nation's mutual aid system.

² Mission Assignment Taskings must come from FEMA through a Federal agency, typically Emergency Support Function #4.

The three PCLs identified above are used to describe and differentiate the PCLs of the 3TTPS. Using the existing PCLs maximizes national standardization while enabling the AHE to determine its own level of participation and geographic PCL.

An AHE must be cognizant that there is a significant commitment of personnel, equipment, and financial resources to attain and maintain the Regional and National PCLs. AHEs are encouraged to work with neighboring AHEs to determine the most effective balance between preparedness, capability, and financial prudence.

3.0 Scope and Applicability

Implementation of the 3TTPS is focused on AHIMTs operating at the NIMS Type 3 performance capability level. AHIMTs and discipline-focused Incident Management Teams³ (IMTs) at other NIMS performance capability levels are encouraged to meet and adhere to the guidance to ensure they possess the necessary level of preparedness—not just performance capability—to fulfill their mission at their designated resource typing level while operating under the expected environmental conditions and levels of available infrastructure and logistical support.

Although the 3TTPS is currently a voluntary standard, to avoid the deployment issues experienced in the past, an AHIMT Requesting Entity (RE)—whether it is a state, city, town, commonwealth, Geographic Area Coordination Center, or other entity—has the prerogative to specify or require that an AHIMT responding to their Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), Mutual Aid, or any other type of request, meet the PCL they feel is required under the conditions they anticipate.

In addition, AHIMTs desiring to work with the Federal Government on the national or international level under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Supplemental Response Team (SRT) program, or deployed under the FEMA Emergency Support Function (ESF #4) MA process, may be required to demonstrate adherence to the National PCL as a condition of accepting a particular assignment or deployment request.

As the benefits and successes of the 3TTPS become more widely publicized, AHIMTs and IMTs should anticipate and be prepared for additional REs using the 3TTPS PCLs when requesting AHIMT resources.

Implementation of and adherence to the 3TTPS significantly increases the preparedness and standardization of AHIMT resources and ensures that Teams are prepared to sustain, and capable of sustaining, their assigned members while working under the conditions anticipated.

There are slight differences between the qualification processes and requirements that members of discipline-focused Incident Management Teams (IMTs) follow while attaining their Incident Command System (ICS) position qualifications from among those indicated in the All-Hazards-focused FEMA National Qualifications System (NQS) guidelines or the AHIMTA Model Qualifications System (MQS). For the purposes of the 3TTPS, the acronym AHIMT and the word “team” are used synonymously in this document. When a specific reference to an IMT operating under their discipline-focused program is needed to provide contextual differentiation, the abbreviation IMT will be used in its place.

³ Examples of discipline-focused Incident Management Teams include the National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG), U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

4.0 Relationship to Other Guidance and Initiatives

As a result of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between USFA, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the National Fire Protection Association Metro Chiefs Section, signed on September 27, 2002, the USFA initiated, developed, and supported the AHIMT program until they eliminated their program in 2022. The USFA support started with a broad-based focus group that met during the summer of 2003. The focus group was tasked with determining the need for Incident Management Teams in non-Wildland-fire settings, the ICS positions and composition of these teams, and the training required to implement a program. The result was what is now called the Type 3 AHIMT program.

The 3TTPS Concept of Operations document and this 3TTPS Implementation and Management Plan are two of numerous guidance documents and initiatives developed by the USFA to support the AHIMT Technical Assistance Program and standardize the AHIMT program. In discussions with stakeholders, several closely related USFA AHIMT program documents have occasionally been confused or conflated with the 3TTPS. To elucidate their differences and autonomy, and to highlight their complementary nature, a brief description of those documents and initiatives and their relationship to the 3TTPS follows.

4.1 Defining Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams

The USFA document *Defining Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams Based on Resource Typing Levels* describes the proposed Performance Capability Metrics (PCMs) for AHIMTs and IMTs to determine and standardize the resource typing of a team at the Type 1, 2, 3, or 4 level. Resource typing is defining and categorizing, by capability, the resources requested, deployed, and used in incidents. Resource typing definitions establish a common language and define the minimum capabilities for a resource (for equipment, teams, and units). Measurable standards identifying resource capabilities and performance levels serve as the basis for this categorization.⁴ The *Defining Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams Based on Resource Typing Level* proposes to implement the same performance-based common language methodology used to type all other FEMA NIMS resources, including equipment, other kinds of teams, units, and personnel.

This proposal is important because the current resource typing for AHIMTs and IMTs does not adhere to or follow the standard FEMA NIMS resource typing methodologies.

Table 2 demonstrates that as the performance capability or capacity of a resource increases, that increase is indicated by the NIMS resource type increasing from Type 4, to Type 3, to Type 2, to the highest performance capability of Type 1.

⁴ Refer to www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components#resource-typing for more information regarding resource typing.

Table 2. How performance capability increases as NIMS resource type increases.

Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams	
NIMS Resource Type	As NIMS Resource Type Increases, the Performance Capability Increases
Type 1 Capability	Type 1 team members’ performance capability level is higher than Type 2
Type 2 Capability	Type 2 team members’ performance capability level is higher than Type 3
Type 3 Capability	Type 3 team members’ performance capability level is higher than Type 4
Type 4 Capability	Type 4 team members’ performance capability level

The 3TTPS is different from typing in that it provides metrics to determine how prepared a team is to manage the administrative, operational, and logistical support conditions at a particular deployment, but it does not indicate the resource typing performance capability – typing based on resource performance capability – of the members of the AHIMT or the team as a resource.

The two systems are separate but interactively complementary in that, once adopted and implemented, the systems will ensure that AHIMTs that respond to requests for assistance are both properly prepared and possess sufficient performance capability (resource type) to manage the RE’s request successfully.

The relationship between the 3TTPS and the *Defining Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams* becomes significant when an AHIMT participates in the *All-Hazards Incident Management Team National–PCL Assessment Exercise* (ANPAE) described in Section 4.2. **Figure 1** highlights the relationship between the exercise portion of the ANPAE and the PCMs.

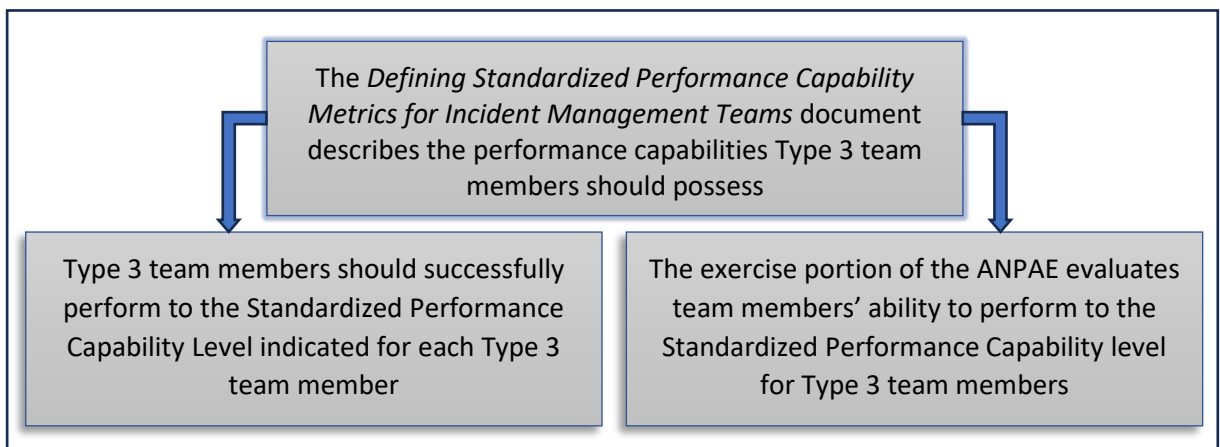


Figure 1. Relationship between the exercise portion of the ANPAE and the PCMs.

A Type 3 AHIMT member should be capable of demonstrating the performance capabilities described and expected in the document *Defining Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams*.

To remain consistent and valid, the exercise portion of the ANPAE and any subsequent updates to the exercise must maintain consistency with the PCMs at the Type 3 complexity level described in the document.

4.2 All-Hazards Incident Management Team National–PCL Assessment Exercise (ANPAE)

The 3TTPS is directly related to the *All-Hazards Incident Management Team National–PCL Assessment Exercise (ANPAE)*, a peer-developed capstone exercise for Type 3 AHIMTs that will permit the AHIMTA, FEMA, and stakeholders to standardize the capabilities of Type 3 AHIMT members. The ANPAE was managed by the USFA as part of its AHIMT program. After the USFA eliminated its program, management of the ANPAE was transferred to the National Fire Academy (NFA) and now uses an NFA-assigned course code of R-325. The exercise is conducted to assess whether AHIMT members are capable of being used for a National PCL deployment. If the AHE (AHIMT Hosting Entity) desires, it can also be used as a gateway to become eligible to participate in the FEMA Supplemental Response Team Program. The ANPAE will only be offered to AHIMTs that desire to be considered as available for the National PCL of the 3TTPS and have demonstrated adherence to the National PCL metrics. As the 3TTPS program matures, opportunities to attend the ANPAE may become available for AHIMTs at the Regional PCL, after their adherence to the Regional PCL metrics has been confirmed.

The ANPAE mirrors the capstone evaluation nature of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) courses S-420, *Command and General Staff*; S-520, *Advanced Incident Management*; the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) *Complex Incident Management Course (CIMC)*; and the USFA O-305 *All-Hazards Incident Management Team Introduction* course, but focuses on the competencies and behaviors observed through the knowledge, skills, and abilities that team members should have attained at the Type 3 level in an All-Hazards environment. Through this exercise, the AHIMT community is measured against a standardized set of Performance Metrics that Type 3 AHIMTs should possess. Additional detailed information regarding the ANPAE and management of that portion of the 3TTPS is provided in Section 8, *AHIMT National PCL Assessment Exercise*.

4.3 AHIMT Model Document Development Initiative

The 3TTPS is directly related to the project by the AHIMT community to develop model “best practice” documents. A majority of the documents were identified in After-Action Reports, including the “Hurricane Harvey After-Action Report,” which resulted in a significant push to improve the current AHIMT response system. As a result of the concerns voiced by the AHIMT program leadership, the 3TTPS was developed. The model documents that make up the 3TTPS include standard operating guidelines, manual of operations, equipment and cache lists, and other guidance documents to facilitate their preparedness and readiness to deploy. The use of these peer-developed model documents is incorporated into the metrics of the PCLs.

4.4 NIMS Incident Complexity Guide

The USFA project team working on the ANPAE, a component of the 3TTPS National PCL, needed quantifiable metrics to objectively evaluate the Type 3 incident management personnel participating in the exercise.

Research determined that the only documents describing the differing levels of incident complexity were developed to be specific to a particular agency or organization and based on that organization or agency’s viewpoint. The quaesitum to the issue involved examining each of those versions and then developing one All-Hazards nationally accepted definition of Incident Complexity that provided standardized criteria at each complexity level. Using those definitions and criteria, appropriate quantifiable performance capability metrics could be developed. The final document the USFA project team used during the ANPAE development was made available to the National Integration Center (NIC), which used it as the draft that was edited and released as the *NIMS Incident Complexity Guide*. **Table 3** provides the structure and definition of each complexity level.

Table 3. The structure and definition of complexity levels.

NIMS Incident Complexity Guide	
NIMS Incident Complexity Levels	Incident/Event Complexity Level Description
Type 1	The term “complexity level” quantifies the level of difficulty or resistance an incident presents to those working to successfully manage or mitigate it. As incidents may vary in their difficulty or resistance to mitigation or management, FEMA measures complexity level on a scale of 5 to 1, where Type 5 is the least complex incident and the least resistant to management or mitigation.
Type 2	
Type 3	
Type 4	
Type 5	

The 3TTPS system is a separate concept, document, and system, but directly related to the *NIMS Incident Complexity Guide* in that the Type 3 performance capabilities and exercise injects are based on and complementary to the NIMS Incident Complexity Guide descriptors at the Type 3 Complexity Level.

4.5 Visual Representation of Guidance and Initiative Relationships

The relationship between the 3-Tiered Team Preparedness System PCLs, the *Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams*, and the *All-Hazards Incident Management Team National-PCL Assessment Exercise*, is visually represented in **Table 4** below.

Table 4. The relationship between the 3TTPS PCLs, Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for IMTs, and ANPAE.

Relationship of AHIMT Initiatives			
NIMS Resource Type	3-Tiered Team Preparedness System PCLs		
	Local PCL	Regional PCL	National PCL
Type 1 Capability ↑	←	→	→
Type 2 Capability	←	→	→
Type 3 Capability	←	→	→
Type 4 Capability ↓	←	→	→

The **BROWN** text in the table in the table on the upper right (3-Tiered Team Preparedness System PCLs) represents the 3TTPS and shows how the Local, Regional, and National PCLs are not affected by other guidance, incident complexity levels, and the NIMS resource typing of the AHIMT. The PCLs measure a team’s preparedness and readiness to manage the environmental and infrastructure conditions they will face, not the team’s performance capability typing, or the incident’s NIMS Incident Complexity Type level.

The **RED solid arrow** indicates how the 3TTPS is currently being implemented at the NIMS resource typing level for Type 3 AHIMTs.

The light **RED dashed arrows** indicate that AHIMTs and IMTs at other performance capability typing levels (Types 1, 2, and 4) are being encouraged to meet and adhere to the guidance to ensure they are prepared to fulfill and capable of fulfilling, their mission at their designated resource typing level, while operating under the expected environmental conditions and level of available infrastructure and logistical support.

The **Blue text and arrow** on the left-hand side (NIMS Resource Type) represent the *Standardized Performance Capability Metrics for Incident Management Teams* described in Section 4.1 and depict how that concept is related to the NIMS typing methodologies. In NIMS, the Performance Capability of an AHIMT increases as the NIMS resource type increases. As shown in **Table 4**, the NIMS resource typing performance capability does not increase as a team’s PCL changes from one PCL to another. As an example, the performance capability expected of a Type 3 AHIMT remains the same regardless of the PCL (Local, Regional, or National) the team holds.

The **GOLD-colored gridded rectangle** indicates Type 3 AHIMTs at the PCL National level. The AHIMT’s National PCL is a result of the team completing all of the components within all

categories of the National PCL and completing the ANPAE, *All-Hazards Incident Management Team National–PCL Assessment Exercise*.

Together, these guidance documents and initiatives provide a comprehensive and complementary system to ensure the level of preparedness and capability that incident management teams need to be successful, and to enable jurisdictions to request the most appropriate incident management resource.

5.0 Responsibilities and Guidance for System Users

It is vital to the health and safety of responders, and to the ability of incident management personnel to complete their assigned mission successfully, that personnel who are responsible to order, process, and assign incident management personnel have a solid understanding of the 3TTPS system, the specifics of each PCL, and the reasons behind its development.

Personnel within the AHIMT Hosting Entity (AHE) who are responsible for working with the AHIMT leadership to establish and maintain the PCL for the AHIMT(s) must not only have a thorough understanding of all aspects of the 3TTPS, but must also be cognizant of the financial and personnel commitment necessary to attain and maintain each PCL, and must be able to articulate to the leadership of the AHJ(s) involved the reasoning behind decisions regarding the program.

Finally, it is incumbent upon all members of an AHIMT that they possess an in-depth understanding of the 3TTPS, the requirements of each component, and the specific actions they and other team members have completed or will need to complete to prepare themselves and their AHIMT to function within the PCL agreed on by the AHE and AHIMT leadership.

5.1 AHIMT Requesting Entity (RE) Specific Guidance and Responsibilities

When an incident or event occurs that may necessitate AHIMT resources, personnel representing the RE must obtain accurate situational awareness of the “on the ground” environmental conditions the AHIMT will be operating in. Damage to critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, airports, and communication networks can hinder the movement of people, goods, and services the AHIMT may need. Power outages due to damaged electrical infrastructure may affect government offices, emergency services, and essential facilities on which the AHIMT may rely to function. The disruption of supply chains may also make it difficult to procure essential resources, equipment, and supplies necessary for the AHIMT to remain self-sufficient.

It is critical for the AHIMT to be cognizant of the degree and scope of the damage, because an AHIMT deployed must be prepared to operate successfully, and must be capable of operating successfully, despite the condition of the infrastructure and the entity’s remaining support capability. The higher the level of damage and the larger the scope of damage to the entity’s infrastructure and support mechanisms, the more self-sufficient and logistically autonomous a requested AHIMT may need to be. A short-term loss of the power grid is not nearly as consequential as the expectation that the operational area may be without power for several weeks to a month. When requesting AHIMT resources, it is critical that an accurate assessment of the possible environmental, infrastructure, and support conditions under which the AHIMT will be operating be determined and the appropriate PCL be selected and communicated in the request for the AHIMT – along with anticipated weather conditions. Correctly determining and communicating the PCL along with an accurate description of the anticipated conditions is necessary to prevent the AHIMT from being deployed beyond their preparedness and ability to self-sustain and support themselves, and/or beyond their administrative or logistical ability to manage an incident.

If the RE is unable to ascertain or provide the AHIMT resources with the necessary environmental conditions, personnel from the AHIMT will likely continually inquire, be forced to make assumptions, and prepare for the worst possible conditions. In those cases, an RE should strongly consider accepting only PCL National AHIMTs in their request.

The RE must also have available someone knowledgeable of the current situation to discuss and answer questions regarding the remaining infrastructure and support capabilities the entity can provide to the AHIMT. The logistical components of the PCL metrics listed in **Table 5** are critical to the preparedness and sustainability of the AHIMT. The components, the details associated with each component, and any explanatory comments should be reviewed and any shortfalls identified within their request.

Table 5. The logistical components of the PCL metrics listed here are critical to the preparedness and sustainability of the AHIMT.

Reference Number	Name of the Component Critical to an AHIMT’s Preparedness	Page Number
L-1	Self-Sufficiency Capability: Food, Water, and Shelter	25
L-2	Self-Sufficiency Capability: Workspace	25
L-9	Section/Team Go-Kit and Supplies	26
L-10	Austere-Environment Capabilities	26

Use of the 3TTPS to select a correspondingly prepared AHIMT and provide an accurate and detailed briefing does not relieve the RE of their responsibility to discuss all aspects of the proposed mission with any resources selected to deploy.

5.2 AHIMT Hosting Entity (AHE) Guidance and Responsibilities

The function, degree, and scope of the assignments that an AHIMT will deploy to or accept is determined by the AHE that authorizes the AHIMT(s) formation, management, and governance. In the governance documents, the AHE should document the operational structure, limitations, and constraints, as well as defining the geographic area of operation they will permit or enable their AHIMT to deploy to in response to a request. Based on research that determined how existing AHEs defined or described the operational area their AHIMT would deploy within, the 3TTPS uses the following descriptions and refers to them as Preparedness Capability Level (PCL), as shown in **Table 6** on the following page.

Table 6. Descriptions of the Preparedness Capability Levels (PCLs) used in the 3TTPS.

PCL Levels	
LOCAL PCL	Designated to be prepared and capable to deploy for use within the AHE’s boundaries (e.g., city, district, county).
REGIONAL PCL	Designated to be prepared and capable to deploy within the AHE’s boundaries (e.g., city, district, county) as well as within a defined region (e.g., Urban Area Security Initiative, state homeland security district) or within the AHE’s state.
NATIONAL PCL	Designated to be prepared and capable to deploy nationally (e.g., EMAC requests or Mission Assignment Taskings) as well as being prepared and capable for deployment within the Local and Regional areas defined above.

An AHE’s AHIMT program is usually managed by a person assigned to a position known as the AHIMT Program Manager or a similar title. The Program Manager has day-to-day responsibility for managing the AHIMT program for the AHE. After deciding which PCL is most appropriate for their program, the AHIMT Program Manager and any appropriate team leadership and members must work collectively and collaboratively to meet the metrics described within each component of the selected PCL. The individual metrics provide benchmarks to measure adherence to the components under the selected PCL, and all metrics must be completed and documented in order to be considered within that PCL.

Selecting a particular PCL is not a permanent choice. An AHIMT may select a particular PCL and then develop a plan for eventually achieving a “higher” PCL within a certain time frame – if that is deemed necessary or desirable. This method would provide the time needed to develop proposals, justifications, and budgets for any additional equipment, supplies, or personnel necessary to achieve the higher PCL. An AHIMT in the development stage could use this methodology to rapidly provide the Local PCL capability while still working towards the PCL the AHE leadership has determined to be necessary.

The categories and metrics of the system provide AHE leadership with a set of measurable capability targets to strive for, drawn from best practices. Using the PCLs as targets will provide valuable assistance in defining, developing, and maintaining the AHE’s AHIMT(s), irrespective of which PCL they use as the desired level of preparedness for their individual team. Established teams will be able to incorporate a best-practice national-model system into their continued sustainment and self-improvement program, and elected and appointed officials can use the presence and support of “their” 3-Tiered listed AHIMT as an indicator of their commitment to public safety and preparedness.

5.3 AHIMT Members’ Specific Guidance and Responsibilities

Members of the AHIMT must possess an in-depth understanding of the 3TTPS, the requirements of each component, and the specific actions they and other team members must complete to prepare themselves and their AHIMT to function within the PCL assigned.

There are certain components (e.g. L-8, Individual Go-Kit and Supplies) that will require each individual to assume personal responsibility for assembling, maintaining, and keeping these components readily accessible while they are members of the AHIMT. Other components (e.g., L-9, Section/Team Go-Kit and Supplies, and L-10, Austere-Environment Capabilities) will require they work closely with the other members within their ICS functional section – as well as the team itself – to complete, understand how they affect their own welfare, and then assist in maintaining.

5.4 AHIMTA 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee Guidance and Responsibilities

The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee, a multi-agency, multi-discipline subcommittee of the AHIMTA’s Incident Qualifications System (IQS) Committee, is tasked with the responsibility to maintain the program doctrine, provide up-to-date and accurate data on resource preparedness, and provide a program that reflects the needs of all users. To execute those duties, the Committee is tasked with numerous responsibilities throughout each cycle (**Table 7**). These responsibilities include the following:

- The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee is responsible to review the 3TTPS Self-Assessment Survey Form (SASF) submittals and compile a list of AHIMTs based on their identified PCL. The list will be published on the AHIMTA website by June 1 of each year and distributed for REs’ and stakeholders’ use.
- The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee is responsible for providing National-level leadership in the management of the ANPAE curriculum and the exercises conducted during the ANPAE, including course updates, instructor selection, and presentation guidelines. Additional details of the ANPAE are provided in Section 8, *AHIMT National PCL Assessment Exercise (ANPAE)*.

The Advisory Subcommittee and IQS Committee will develop and maintain the necessary business rules, forms, and doctrine to enable the accurate and effective functioning of the 3TTPS program. The milestones and time frames listed in the tables may be adjusted at the discretion of the Advisory Subcommittee upon concurrence from the IQS Committee.

Table 7. Responsibilities the Advisory Subcommittee is tasked with throughout each cycle.

3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee Guidance and Responsibilities Timeline	
March 25, 2024 – May 31, 2024	Prepare for upcoming implementation
June 1, 2024	Phase One of program initiates
Sept. 1, 2024 – March 1, 2025	Prepare for upcoming (2025) 3TTPS SASF submittals and develop review process as necessary
May 1, 2025 – May 31, 2025	Review (2025) submissions and develop list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs
June 1, 2025	Phase Two of program initiates

3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee Guidance and Responsibilities Timeline (Cont.)	
June 1, 2025	Deadline for 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee to publish (2025) list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs from Phase One submissions
August 2, 2025 – Feb. 1, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee reviews requests for updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or metrics for the upcoming cycle
Feb. 2, 2026 – April 1, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee develops, socializes, and finalizes updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or metrics for the upcoming cycle
May 1, 2026 – May 31, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee reviews submissions and develops (2026) list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs
May 31, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee provides AHE and AHIMTs updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or its metrics for the cycle starting on June 1 (for the 2027 list)
June 1, 2026	Deadline for 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee to publish (2026) list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs, from submissions

6.0 Implementation Phases and Timelines

Implementation of the 3TTPS uses a phased approach to maximize participation and incorporate anticipated programmatic updates needed in outyears.

6.1 Phase One

Implementation of the first phase will commence on June 1, 2024 to correspond with the start of the official hurricane season for the Atlantic Basin. The implementation date of the first phase establishes the initiation of the overall program and, by providing a list of AHIMTs by PCL for the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane season, starts a one-year time-frame for Phase One that starts on June 1, 2024 and ends on May 31, 2025. The timeline for Phase One is shown in **Table 8** below.

During the first portion of Phase One, participating AHEs work with their AHIMTs to determine which PCL is appropriate for their AHIMT. The remaining time should be spent completing the required metrics in each of the categories of the PCL selected, and then submitting a 3TTPS SASF after March 2, 2025 but prior to April 30, 2025.

The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee will review the 3TTPS SASF submittals and compile a list of AHIMTs based on their identified PCL. The list will be published June 1 of each year and distributed for the use by REs and stakeholders.

AHEs with AHIMTs who complete all the requirements of the National PCL except for the requirements of metric O-10, *C&GS Competency Validation*, which requires successful completion of the ANPAE,⁵ will be listed as “Conditional” on the PCL list for that year or until they complete the ANPAE.

A more detailed explanation of the term “Conditional,” the pre-work requirements for the ANPAE, and course management are included in Section 8, *AHIMT National PCL Assessment Exercise* (ANPAE).

Table 8. Phase One of the implementation of the 3TTPS.

Phase 1 Timeline	
June 1, 2024	Program initiates
June 1, 2024 – March 1, 2025	AHEs determine appropriate PCL and work with their AHIMTs to complete appropriate metrics and documentation
March 2, 2025 – April 30, 2025	AHEs submit their 3TTPS SASF following the instructions provided on the form
May 1, 2025 – May 31, 2025	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee reviews submissions and develops list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs

⁵ Reference Appendix A, 3TTPS Metrics Chart, Component O-10 for specific requirements.

Continuous outreach efforts will be used to publicize program status and provide updates as necessary:

- Program updates and reminders will be provided on the AHIMTA.org website.
- Program updates and reminders will be included in the AHIMTA membership email newsletter distributed throughout the year.
- The 3TTPS SASF will be available on the AHIMTA.org website along with its instructions.
- Instructions for submitting the 3TTPS SASF will also be included on the form itself.
- 3TTPS program documents and updates will be posted on the www.AHIMTdevelopment.org website.

6.2 Phase Two

At the conclusion of Phase One, Phase Two automatically initiates and continues the framework for the ongoing annual cycle while introducing a schedule for 3TTPS programmatic updates and changes. **Table 9** shows the integration of the ongoing cycle with the update and change schedule. The milestone dates for selecting/confirming the PCL and completing any required work follow the same pattern as Phase One. The milestone dates to manage program updates and corrections are interwoven into the Phase Two milestones to balance the workload of the participants and the committees.

Table 9. Phase Two includes the automatic initiation and continuation of the framework for the ongoing annual cycle with the update and change schedule.

Phase 2 and Continuous Timeline	
June 1, 2025	Phase Two starts and becomes a continuous cycle
June 1, 2025	3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee publishes list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs from previous cycle submissions
June 1, 2025 – March 1, 2026	AHEs work with their AHIMTs to determine appropriate PCL. Same process is used regardless of whether the AHIMT is new to the 3TTPS program or is changing PCLs from a prior year
June 1, 2025 – August 1, 2026	AHEs may request updates or changes to the 3TTPS program or its metrics to be implemented during the upcoming cycle
August 2, 2025 – Feb. 1, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee reviews requests for updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or metrics for the upcoming cycle
March 2, 2026 – April 30, 2026	AHEs submit their 3TTPS SASF following the instructions provided on the form
Feb. 2, 2026 – April 1, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee develops, socializes, and finalizes requests for updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or metrics for the upcoming cycle

Phase 2 and Continuous Timeline (Cont.)	
May 1, 2026 – May 31, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee reviews submissions and develops list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs
May 31, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee provides AHE and AHIMTs updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or its metrics for the cycle starting on June 1
June 1, 2026	3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee publishes list of AHIMTs by FEMA/AHIMTA Region, by their PCLs from previous cycle submissions
June 1, 2026	Next continuous cycle starts using any changed 3TTPS guidance or metrics

7.0 Updates and Amendments

After Phase One, it is anticipated that the REs, AHEs, AHIMTs, the response community, and program stakeholders may identify the need for changes, updates, and corrections to the 3TTPS guidance and its components.

Starting in Phase Two, specific time-frames are provided for those updates (**Table 9**) and corrections to be submitted, vetted, distributed to stakeholders and members for comments, and any agreed-on changes finalized and distributed to all affected groups.

Deadlines for program participants to submit requests for changes or deadlines by which they must be notified of upcoming changes are highlighted in **Table 10** with a light orange background.

As described in Section 5.2, *AHIMTA 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee Guidance and Responsibilities*, the business rules and operation of the 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee and the IQS Committee will govern operation of the update and corrections process.

Table 10. Table highlights deadlines for program participants to submit requests for changes or deadlines by which they must be notified of upcoming changes.

Update and Corrections Timeline	
June 1, 2025	Phase Two of program initiates
June 1, 2025 – August 1, 2025	AHEs, REs, and stakeholders may request updates or changes to the 3TTPS program or its metrics to be implemented during the upcoming cycle
August 2, 2025 – Feb. 1, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee reviews requests for updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or metrics for the upcoming cycle
Feb. 2, 2026 – April 1, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee develops, socializes, and finalizes updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or metrics for the upcoming cycle
May 31, 2026	The 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee provides AHEs, REs, and stakeholders the updates or changes in the 3TTPS program or its metrics for the cycle starting on June 1 (effective for the 2027 and subsequent lists)

8.0 AHIMT National PCL Assessment Exercise (ANPAE)

8.1 Exercise Description, Emphasis, Purpose, and Goal

Exercise Description

The *All-Hazards Incident Management Team National PCL Assessment Exercise (ANPAE)* is a four-day capstone exercise developed to reinforce, refine, and emphasize the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully manage Type 3-complexity-level incidents that fall into the National PCL of the 3TTPS.

The exercise is designed for highly functioning, fully credentialed Type 3 AHIMTs that have Local and Regional deployment experience and, in the future, have been audited through in-person site visits, as well as through a review of their program and team ensuring they meet the National PCL requirements.

The National PCL is not a credentialing requirement of the NIMS NQS for Type 3 incident management positions. It is, however, being adopted by jurisdictions as a requirement for an AHIMT when they place requests for assistance. It is also under consideration by FEMA as a requirement for participation in the Supplemental Response Team program. The relationship between NIMS typing and the 3TTPS is explained in detail in Section 4, *Relationship to Other Guidance and Initiatives*.

The significant interest in the 3TTPS and the ANPAE is a direct result of the research and subsequent preparedness matrix that provides AHIMTs and requesting jurisdictions a solid path to resolve issues identified during past AHIMT deployments. The 3TTPS has gained broad support and approval and is widely accepted as the solution needed to assist in preparing AHIMTs in meeting future deployment challenges. The ANPAE includes the topics of managing volunteers, evacuations, donations, and incidents within an incident. Also discussed and exercised are variations of the planning process, applying ICS to non-standard organizations, managing local officials' expectations, working within delegations, EMAC Resource Support Agreements (RSAs), Mission Assignments, and working with other ICS structures and entities.

Exercise Purpose and Goal

The purpose and goal of the *AHIMT National PCL Assessment Exercise (ANPAE)* is to provide an opportunity to prepare Type 3 qualified All-Hazards Incident Management Teams to successfully function when assigned to an incident deemed a National PCL deployment as described in the 3-Tiered Team Preparedness system, and to assess their preparedness.

The ANPAE provides multiple opportunities for AHIMT members to practice critical thinking skills on many of the unique topics identified as essential to managing an all-hazards incident, and then enables them to develop or refine their plans, processes, and procedures to manage those incidents effectively.

After successfully completing the ANPAE, team members will be more capable of managing, and better prepared to successfully manage, National PCL deployments.

The design of the ANPAE enables the complexity of the exercise, currently set at the Type 3 complexity level, to be modified to meet the complexity needs of Type 2 or Type 1 AHIMTs. There

must be sufficient interest from teams at Type 1 and Type 2 complexity levels to modify the exercise to accommodate their performance capability.

8.2 Target Audience

Selection Criteria

An AHIMT must send the 14 credentialed personnel identified in **Table 11** below. Deviations from the listed positions are not acceptable because of the potential negative effects on the exercises and simulations.

The 10 Command and General Staff (C&GS) participants should be fully qualified and credentialed for the position they are filling under the qualifications program implemented by the AHE. An AHE's qualifications system must meet the requirements of O-1, *Qualifications System Process*, and O-2, *Qualification System Documentation*, described in the 3TTPS Metrics Chart in **Appendix A**.

Table 11 shows ICS positions required for ANPAE.

All-Hazards Incident Management Team ICS Positions		
Incident Commander	Safety Officer	Public Information Officer
Liaison Officer	Operations Section Chief	Deputy Operations Section Chief
Planning Section Chief	Resources Unit Leader	Situation Unit Leader
Logistics Section Chief	Supply Unit Leader	Communications Unit Leader
Finance/Admin Section Chief	Deputy Planning Section Chief or Deputy Logistics Section Chief	

Personnel attending in one of the four Unit Leader positions on the AHIMT should be fully qualified and credentialed for the position they are filling, using the same criteria as described for the C&GS. Personnel may either be trainees or credentialed in higher-level positions, e.g., the C&GS, but they must be credentialed in the Unit Leader position being filled. Under NQS, jurisdictions should recognize that C&GS positions do not require credentialing in a subordinate position prior to credentialing in the C&GS position of the individual who supervises them. However, personnel must have all necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the position they are filling. Although performance is measured on an individual basis, to be successful, the AHIMT must work as a cohesive team of trained, experienced, and capable personnel, and their success depends on all members being capable of executing their positions' duties and responsibilities.

Recognition of Prior Attendance

The ANPAE is not listed as required training for ICS position credentialing under FEMA NQS or the AHIMTA MQS. It has been adopted as required training for National PCL Deployments under the 3TTPS. Section 4, *Relationship to Other Guidance and Initiatives*, explains the differences between NIMS ICS position typing and the 3TTPS.

After a C&GS participant successfully completes the ANPAE, if they attain credentialing in a different C&GS position, the individual does not have to attend the ANPAE in their new position. In addition, Unit Leaders who successfully complete the ANPAE do not need to retake the ANPAE if they subsequently attain credentialing in a C&GS position.

8.3 Requesting and Scheduling the ANPAE

An AHIMT that has completed all the metrics required for National PCL and been informed that their 3TTPS SASF has been accepted by the 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee, should notify the 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee when they want to be considered for participation in the ANPAE. The Program Manager or their designee should submit the request form, *AHIMT National PCL Assessment Exercise Request Form*, following the instructions on the form.

In return, the AHIMT will be provided a list of the precourse requirements each team member must complete and the *All-Hazards Incident Management Team National--PCL Assessment Exercise (ANPAE) Student Information Guide (SIG)*. The precourse requirements include eight online independent study courses provided by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) covering the following subjects:

- Guide to Points of Distribution
- Military Resources in Emergency Management
- Leadership & Influence
- Decision-Making & Problem-Solving
- Effective Communications
- Introduction to Debris Operations
- National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) Overview
- Introduction to Community Lifelines

There are also recommendations to review the latest versions of several of the ICS core curriculum courses, if prior versions of the courses were taken, and several documents that need to be read and understood.

8.4 An AHIMT's Status While Waiting for the ANPAE

After the AHIMT has been informed that they have been accepted into the ANPAE scheduling process and received the SIG, they should develop a plan for the team members to complete the precourse requirements as soon as feasible. The scheduling process, number of eligible teams, and funding available will determine the timing of any ANPAE course. Because the course could be scheduled at any time, it is strongly encouraged that all precourse requirements be completed as soon as possible to prevent an AHIMT from having to bypass a time slot due to failure to complete the precourse requirements.

An AHIMT that has been accepted into the scheduling process and developed and initiated a precourse completion plan will be listed as "Conditional" under the National PCL tier for that and subsequent years until they complete the ANPAE or the team changes their PCL level during the annual 3TTPS SASF reporting process.

8.5 Transportation, Travel, and Reimbursement

The specifics of transportation, travel, and reimbursement for ANPAE attendees will vary depending on the venue, the sponsor, and budget considerations. Information regarding transportation, travel arrangements, and any cost reimbursement for attendance will be provided upon acceptance into the ANPAE course scheduling process.

9.0 Definitions

3-Tiered Team Preparedness System (3TTPS). A peer-developed national best-practice methodology for quantifying the level of preparedness a Type 3 AHIMT should possess to be able to deploy successfully in the geographic area of operation their team has selected.

AHIMT. All-Hazards Incident Management Team. Used to indicate a team composed of members qualified using the NIMS NQS or AHIMTA qualifications criteria or a State, Local, Tribal, or Territorial qualification criterion that meets or exceeds NIMS NQS or AHIMTA qualification criteria.

AHIMT Hosting Entity (AHE). An entity that authorizes an AHIMT’s formation, management, sponsorship, and/or governance structure.

AHIMT Member. A person who has been rostered to respond with an AHIMT on a deployment.

AHIMT National PCL Assessment Exercise. The four-day capstone exercise developed to reinforce, refine, and emphasize the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully manage Type 3-complexity-level incidents that fall into the National PCL of the 3TTPS. See details in Section 8.

AHIMT Requesting Entity (RE). An entity that places a request for an AHIMT or a resource that may be considered to be, or may become, part of an AHIMT. The RE includes a state, city, town, commonwealth, Geographic Area Coordination Center, Federal Agency or department, or other entity.

AHIMTA. All-Hazards Incident Management Teams Association (also known as the Incident Management Teams Association).

AHIMTA 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee. A multi-agency, multi-discipline subcommittee of the AHIMTA’s Incident Qualifications Systems (IQS) Committee that is responsible to review the 3TTPS SASF submittals, compile a list of AHIMTs based on their identified PCL, and manage updates and additions to the 3TTPS program.

AHE Program Manager. The person within the AHE who is assigned day-to-day responsibilities for managing the AHE’s AHIMT Program.

Conditional National PCL. Term used to describe a team that has completed all metrics for the National PCL, with the exception of attendance at the ANPAE, and has been accepted into the ANPAE course scheduling process. See Section 8.4.

Emergency Support Function (ESF). ESFs are groups of organizations that work together to deliver core capabilities to stabilize community lifelines in support of an effective response. At the Federal level there are 15 ESF groupings. State and local governments may have additional groupings to address locally identified issues.

Emergency Support Function #4 (ESF #4). In the FEMA response structure, Firefighting and Incident Management Teams are deployed through Emergency Support Function #4 (ESF #4). The primary agency for managing “ESF #4 – Firefighting” is USDA’s U.S. Forest Service. There are several additional requirements an AHIMT must complete in order to be capable of being deployed under the ESF #4 system.

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is an all-hazards/all-disciplines mutual aid compact. EMAC offers assistance during

governor-declared states of emergency or disaster through a system that allows states to send personnel, equipment, and commodities to assist with response and recovery efforts in other states.

Incident Management Team (IMT). Used to indicate a team composed of members who were qualified using the qualification processes and requirements of the entity that established the discipline-focused Incident Management Teams qualifications system.

Mission Assignment (MA). A Mission Assignment is a work order issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to another Federal agency. It directs the completion of a specified task and provides information on payment, funding, other managerial controls, and guidance. It is used when States, Tribes, or Territories are overwhelmed by disaster impacts. FEMA issues Mission Assignments in anticipation of, or in response to, a Presidential declaration of an emergency or major disaster.

Performance Capability Metrics (PCM). Performance Capability Metrics are used to implement the same performance-based common language methodology used to type all other FEMA NIMS resources, including equipment, other kinds of teams, units, and personnel to either All-Hazard Incident Management Teams or discipline-focused Incident Management Teams. See Section 4.1.

Preparedness Capability Level (PCL). Geographic areas of operation used to determine the level of preparedness and capability an AHIMT has to operate in. See Section 2.

Self-Assessment Survey Form (SASF). The form that AHIMTs submit to the 3TTPS Advisory Subcommittee to certify their PCL status for the current year.

Supplemental Response Team (SRT). The FEMA Supplemental Response Team (SRT) Program is a part of FEMA's efforts to prepare for disaster response, particularly during the Atlantic hurricane season. FEMA's SRT program office helps develop, maintain, and then deploy SLTT (State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial) AHIMTs with all-hazards capabilities to support FEMA's incident workforce during response operations. The SRT program adds to FEMA's existing augmentation efforts by focusing on already-established Incident Management Teams instead of individuals.

Team. Used as a synonym for an All-Hazards Incident Management Team or AHIMT.

10.0 Organization and Layout of the Metric Chart

Figure 2 below provides the layout and relationship of the individual components, categories, and PCLs used in the system. For brevity, **Figure 2** includes only the category of Administrative/Management Readiness.

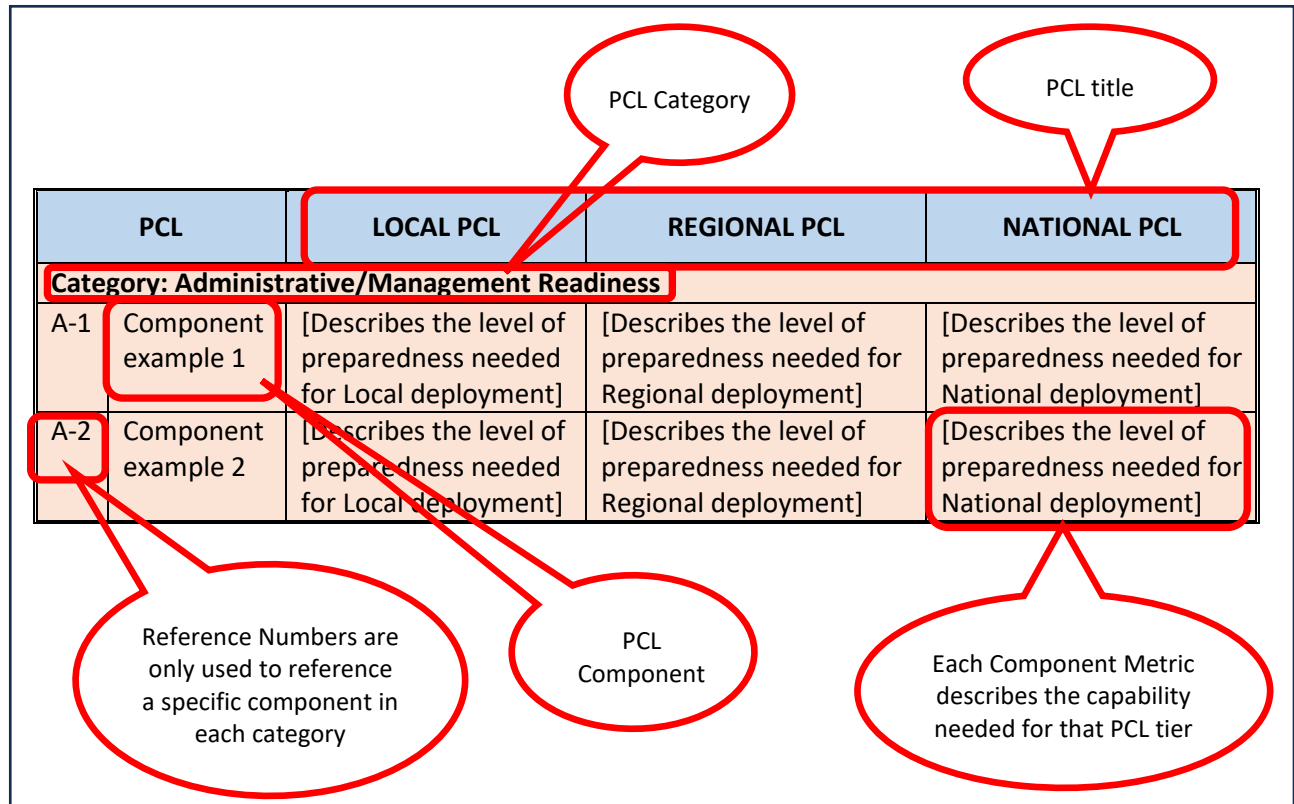


Figure 2. PCL Metric System Layout. This figure provides the layout and relationship of the individual components, categories, and PCLs used in the system.

Appendix A, 3TTPS Metrics Chart

Refer to stand-alone of Appendix A available at
<https://ahimtdevelopment.org/ahimt-3-tiered-implementation-plan/>

Appendix B, Metric Descriptions and Details

Refer to stand-alone of Appendix B available at
<https://ahimtdevelopment.org/ahimt-3-tiered-implementation-plan/>