National Training Needs Survey (NTNS)

To achieve its mission to develop and deliver all-hazards preparedness and response training to small, rural, and remote communities across America, the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC) conducts assessments to directly align the needs of the rural emergency response community with its training curriculum and training delivery practices. To accomplish this, the RDPC conducts the National Training Needs Survey (NTNS). Since 2006, the RDPC has conducted three NTNS in which 3,000 to 6,000 rural emergency responders were surveyed to obtain mission training needs information. To identify training needs, the RDPC utilizes the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Target Capabilities List (TCL) as basis for its assessment and curriculum planning efforts to ensure that the training needs of rural emergency responders can be easily translated to the overarching national targets and standards. The TCL provides the foundation and framework from which specific courses are developed. In addition to training needs identification, the NTNS also provides insight into the demographics of rural responders as well as training delivery experiences, preferences, barriers, and distance learning capabilities. More information, as well as copies of past NTNS reports, can be accessed on the RDPC website at [http://www.ruraltraining.org/](http://www.ruraltraining.org/).

Training Needs Survey of Emergency Responders in Tribal Nations

Although homeland security training is currently available for emergency responders in Tribal Nations, research to validate the training needs of Tribal responders as well (as to obtain a better understanding of their demographics) is extremely limited. To fill this gap, the RDPC is conducting a training needs survey of Tribal responders across all 562 federally recognized American Indian and Alaskan Native Tribes. Mirroring the NTNS methodology, this research seeks to gain knowledge about the demography of Tribal responders; assess training experiences, preferences, barriers, and distance learning capabilities; and identify training needs and gaps based on the TCL. The survey was administered in late 2009 in collaboration with representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). The information gathered from the survey will be used to help guide the development and delivery of future Tribal related training. The final report will be provided on the RDPC website.

Training Needs Survey of Rural Public Safety and Maritime Personnel

Although the RDPC currently offers training to address safety and security issues in rural port areas and inland waterways ([AWR 144 Port and Vessel Security for Public Safety and Maritime Personnel](http://www.ruraltraining.org/)), the training needs and gaps of rural public safety and maritime personnel are often only known anecdotally. In order to supplement and validate the anecdotal information, the University of Findlay, a RDPC academic partner, directed a research project that surveyed emergency responders from 30 rural ports and waterways across the United States, which included emergency managers, firefighters, law enforcement officers, and port authority/security personnel. The survey focused on several topics important to port and vessel security to include the Incident Command Systems (ICS), Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), regulation-related training, small vessel security threats, and leadership training. A copy of the final report can be accessed on the RDPC website at [http://www.ruraltraining.org/](http://www.ruraltraining.org/).
National Domestic Preparedness Consortium State Administrative Agency Training Points of Contact Survey

In recognition of the experience the RDPC has with conducting surveys at the local, state, and national levels, the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC) coordinated with the RDPC to administer a survey on their behalf to the 56 State and Territory State Administrative Agency (SAA) Training Points of Contact (TPOC). Similar to other RDPC assessments, an objective of this assessment was to determine specific training needs as perceived by SAA TPOCs. In addition to training needs, the survey also included research objectives that specifically aimed to determine the current methods in which emergency responder training needs are assessed within the States and Territories as well as the training barriers, decision factors, and facilitation technologies of emergency responders as perceived by the TPOCs. The final report will be provided on the RDPC website.

Level Three Course Evaluation Program

A level three course evaluation, as defined in Donald L. Kirkpatrick’s *Four Levels of Evaluation*, is frequently regarded as one of the truest assessments of a training program’s effectiveness. The objective of the RDPC’s Level Three Course Evaluation Program is to measure the transfer of training by assessing whether trainees are applying new knowledge, skills, or attitudes on the job that were obtained via training. The RDPC utilizes the results of the course evaluations to evaluate courses as well as to refine the course curriculum as appropriate. While the content of the evaluation survey will vary depending upon the course being evaluated, the overall nature of the questions, the methodology, and design of each course evaluation is similar. The execution of level three evaluations is a continuous effort within the RDPC, which also strives to take place in conjunction with the three year course reviews that are required by DHS. Course specific level three evaluation reports are available on the RDPC website at [http://www.ruraltraining.org/](http://www.ruraltraining.org/).

Annual National Rural Emergency Preparedness Summit

The Annual National Rural Emergency Preparedness Summit one of the two foundational elements (the other being the NTNS) from which specific training needs are identified for the RDPC courses. The Summit serves as a forum in which rural emergency responders can provide specific feedback to the RDPC in terms of training needs and other relevant topics (e.g., outreach and marketing, training delivery, etc.). The Summit also serves as a conduit to validate the NTNS results as well as an avenue to identify training needs and trends through the facilitation of specific discussions. In addition to rural emergency responders, the Summit is also attended by the RDPC Advisory Board members, and government officials (e.g., DHS and SAA representatives). Copies of the 2008 and 2010 Summit reports can be accessed on the RDPC website at [http://www.ruraltraining.org/](http://www.ruraltraining.org/).