# Office of Spill Prevention and Response California Department of Fish & Game

# Task Book: Assessment Guide

Cadre: Attorney

Organization: FCO Staff, Chief of Staff

Position: Legal Advisor

Date: August 2006



Leading America to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from disasters.

### **Position Task Book: Purpose**

Position task books have been developed for positions within the FEMA Disaster Workforce. Each task book lists the essential tasks for the specific position.

Task books are designed to:

- Describe the tasks to be performed for a given position.
- Determine training needs of individual employees.
- Serve as a tool for promoting task-related performance feedback throughout a deployment.
- Record performance assessment data.

At the completion of a deployment, your supervisor will identify the tasks you were able to perform and the tasks needing improvement. Task books do **NOT** replace the standard performance appraisal process.

## Responsibilities

Listed below are the responsibilities associated with completion of this position task book.

#### The **Individual Employee** is responsible for:

- Reviewing and understanding instructions in this task book.
- Identifying desired objectives/goals related to the assigned tasks and subtasks.
- Providing background information to the supervisor.
- Demonstrating the ability to perform all tasks and subtasks for an assigned position.
- Working with the supervisor to improve performance as needed.

#### The **Supervisor** is responsible for:

- Being qualified and proficient in the position being evaluated or seeking technical assistance from someone who is qualified.
- Meeting with the individual employee and determining past experience, current qualifications, and desired objectives/goals.
- Reviewing task and subtask expectations with the individual employee.
- Explaining to the individual employee the evaluation procedures that will be used.
- Accurately evaluating and recording demonstrated performance of tasks and subtasks.
- Completing the evaluation record within this task book.
- Providing constructive feedback to the employee.
- Suggesting steps for improving performance as needed.

FEMA Task Books are produced by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI).

For more information or to suggest changes, corrections, or improvements, please contact:

Emergency Management Institute National Emergency Training Center Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727 \* ATTN: "Position Task Book"

#### **Assessment Instructions**

This task book is used to guide the performance assessment process. Onsite supervisory personnel will assess members of the Disaster Workforce cadres using this document and provide feedback. This assessment process is to document performance of required tasks and to identify development plans for improvement.

#### Who Must Receive an Assessment? All personnel,

including permanent full-time employees, disaster assistance employees (DAEs), and core positions, must receive an assessment. The information gathered from this assessment process can be used to support the performance appraisal process.

#### When Is Performance Assessed?

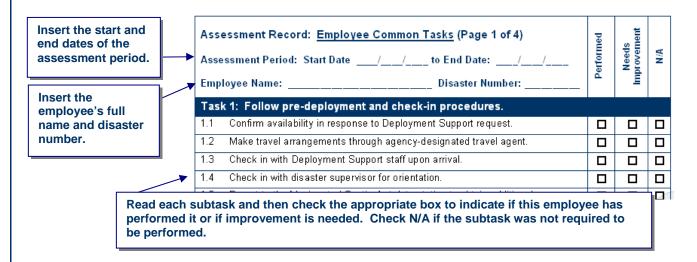
**Mandatory:** This assessment MUST be completed at the end of the deployment.

**Optional:** An interim assessment may be conducted when there is:

- A change in job title.
- A change in supervisor.
- Job performance indication that improvement is needed.
- An employee request for an assessment.

#### **How Is the Assessment Completed?**

Review the tasks listed. These task lists should be used to help you collect performance information. To collect performance information, you should observe the employee. Make sure you have specific examples of the employee's strengths and weaknesses. Then, complete the assessment record as follows:



After each set of tasks, add comments on the employee's strengths and areas for improvement. It is recommended that you conduct a feedback session in order to:

- Highlight accomplishments and positive performance.
- Provide constructive feedback in areas that need further development.

Find a private location to conduct the session. During the feedback session, you may want to:

- Begin by asking the individual to comment on his or her strengths and weaknesses.
- Next, present a summary of the overall performance strengths demonstrated during the performance period.
- Then, review the assessment record and comments. Discuss the areas requiring performance improvement.
- Encourage the individual to make comments regarding the assessment.
- Finally, sign and date each section.

**Cadre: Attorney** 

Organization: FCO Staff, Chief of Staff

**Position: Legal Advisor** 

#### **Employee Common Tasks**

- Follow pre-deployment and check-in procedures.
- Follow check-out procedures.
- Complete ongoing administrative procedures.
- Establish and maintain positive and ethical behaviors during interpersonal, intra-agency, and interagency interactions.
- Help resolve problems/issues and make effective decisions.
- Prepare written reports and other documents.
- Communicate orally with others to exchange and clarify information.
- Exhibit an understanding of relevant safety and security procedures.

#### **Legal Advisor Position-Specific Tasks**

- Identify potential legal issues.
- Gather information and conduct legal research.
- Analyze the facts, context, and the law to develop opinions, recommendations, and solutions.
- Provide legal advice, instruction, and communication.
- Organize, plan, coordinate, and schedule work.
- Prepare disaster declaration documents and resolve declaration-related issues.
- Process external requests for information.
- Provide training and guidance.
- Train new Legal Advisors.

Asse	essment Record: Employee Common Tasks (Page 1 of 4)	med	Needs Improvement	
Asse	ssment Period: Start Date/ to End Date:/	Performed	Needs	N/A
Empl	oyee Name: Disaster Number:	Pe	dw <sub>I</sub>	
Task	1: Follow pre-deployment and check-in procedures.			
1.1	Confirm availability in response to Deployment Support request.			
1.2	Make travel arrangements through agency-designated travel agent.			
1.3	Check in with Deployment Support staff upon arrival.			
1.4	Check in with disaster supervisor for orientation.			
1.5	Complete check-in procedures at duty station to obtain additional information.			
1.6	Complete appropriate forms .			
1.7	Report to the Logistics Helpdesk to obtain requisition for accountable property and network access.			
1.8	Obtain authorization for accountable property from supervisor.			
1.9	Locate assigned workspace.			
1.10	Pick up equipment (e.g., computer, phone) as required. (.			
1.11	Obtain pertinent information about the operation (about the disaster, Field Office (FO), facility safety and security).			
1.12	Review the task book for assigned position and clarify supervisor expectations as needed.			
1.13	Display OSPR identification in the proper manner (i.e., wear badge above the waist).			
1.14	Demonstrate full and consistent compliance with all pre-deployment policies and check-in procedures.			
Task	2: Follow check-out procedures.			
2.1	Schedule debriefing session with supervisor to complete the task book assessment record and performance appraisal.			
2.2	Submit final time and attendance (T&A) statement signed by supervisor.			
2.3	Make return travel arrangements through agency-designated travel agent.			
2.4	Prepare final travel voucher in coordination with the Cost Unit.			
2.5	Return equipment for release.			
2.6	Clear workstation and return supplies to Supply Unit.			
2.7	Submit check-out form(s) with supporting documentation (e.g., task book assessment record, performance appraisal form) as instructed.			
2.8	Check out through Deployment Support staff with required information (e.g., job completed, rotation).			
2.9	Demonstrate full and consistent compliance with all policies and check-out procedures.			

Asse	essment Record: Employee Common Tasks (Page 2 of 4)	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A
Task	3: Complete ongoing administrative procedures.			
3.1	Update Deployment Support and onsite supervisor with any changes in duty station, lodging, and/or emergency contact as needed.			
3.2	Complete T&A reports and input into automated system or submit for processing (bi-weekly).			
3.3	Prepare travel voucher in coordination with the Cost Unit on a bi-weekly basis.			
3.4	Get limited approvals (e.g., rental cars) renewed, as appropriate, on extended deployments.			
3.5	Reconcile Government credit card account statements with approved travel vouchers in accordance with split-pay policy.			
3.6	Demonstrate full and consistent compliance with all administrative procedures.			
	4: Establish and maintain positive and ethical behaviors during inte -agency, and interagency interactions.	rpers	onal,	
4.1	Maintain a high standard of ethics required of employees that is consistent with core values.			
4.2	Demonstrate sensitivity to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences in accordance with the nondiscrimination policy.			
4.3	Take measures to safeguard confidential information and records.			
4.4	Foster consensus building among coworkers, supervisors, and others.			
4.5	Cultivate professional relationships with coworkers and others to exchange information and work effectively.			
4.6	Handle differences/disputes with others in a positive, constructive manner.			
4.7	Represent OSPR in a professional manner when working with internal and external parties.			
4.8	Establish an effective rapport with individuals who are initially difficult, emotional, or distressed.			
4.9	Relate effectively to people from varied backgrounds and different situations.			
4.10	Comply with chain-of-command principles by operating within the established lines of authority.			
4.11	Exhibit appropriate public stewardship of taxpayer dollars.			
4.12	Complete tasks using time and resources effectively and efficiently (e.g., keep travel time to a minimum, obtain lodging that is appropriate to duty station).			

Asse	essment Record: Employee Common Tasks (Page 3 of 4)	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A
Task	5: Help resolve problems/issues and make effective decisions.			
5.1	Adapt behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.			
5.2	Identify and analyze issues and problems.			
5.3	Confer with coworkers, supervisor, and/or others as appropriate when making decisions.			
5.4	Generate alternative solutions or strategies to address problems or needs.			
5.5	Assess the impact of alternatives on the overall operation and work unit.			
5.6	Recommend alternative solutions or strategies for addressing the problems/issues.			
5.7	Contribute to group problem-solving efforts.			
5.8	Implement group-derived solutions or strategies to address problems/issues.			
5.9 .				
5.10	Deal effectively with pressure; maintain focus and intensity and remain optimistic and persistent, even under adverse conditions.			
5.11	Exercise good judgment by making sound, well-informed, and timely decisions.			
Task	6: Prepare written reports and other documents.			
6.1	Write documents using "plain English" that are well organized and appropriate for the intended audience.			
6.2	Write clear and concise emails and other written documents.			
6.3	Use email and other official modes of written communication for business purposes only.			
6.4	Use computer software and programs required to support task performance.			
6.5	Submit written documents through the proper channels.			
6.6	Proofread written documents before submission to ensure correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.			
6.7	Produce reports using established formats and on required forms.			
6.8	Develop written materials that are complete and accurate.			
Task	7: Communicate orally with others to exchange and clarify informati	ion.		
7.1	Share relevant information and/or developments with coworkers, as necessary.			
7.2	Explain decisions, conclusions, findings, or recommendations to the appropriate person or group.			
7.3	Attend meetings to obtain information for use in programs, or to inform management of program status.			
7.4	Represent the cadre's role in a manner that promotes awareness of capabilities, services, and accomplishments.			

Asso	essment Record: Employee Common Tasks (Page 4 of 4)	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A	
Tasl	k 8: Exhibit an understanding of relevant safety and security procedu	res.			
8.1	Provide for the safety, welfare, and accountability of coworkers during the entire period of deployment.				
8.2	Safeguard property and equipment.				
8.3	Communicate potentially hazardous situations to immediate supervisor or Safety Officer.				
8.4	Take necessary precautions when hazards exist.				
8.5	Protect personal information to prevent identity theft.				
8.6	Comply with mandatory Information Technology security procedures.				
8.7	Comply with the violence in the workplace policy.				
Employee Common Tasks and Subtasks Comments					
Asses	ssment Date:/				
Super	visor: Employee:				

(Pag	essment Record: Legal Advisor Position-Specific Tasks e 1 of 5) ssment Period: Start Date// to End Date:// oyee Name: Disaster Number:	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A
Task	1: Identify potential legal issues.			
1.1	Build rapport with all stakeholders to develop effective working relationships and trust in order to foster inclusion in the decisionmaking process.			
1.2	Identify unique issues that may be related to the disaster type or location.			
1.3	Assess the legal situation by meeting with the (support groups (e.g., Equal Rights Specialist, Individual Assistance, Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation, Environmental and Historic Preservation, Tribal Liaison, External Affairs) upon arrival.			
1.4	Identify potential legal issues through ongoing coordination with the External Affairs, Section Chiefs, and Program Branch Directors.			
1.5	Identify potential legal issues through ongoing coordination with Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies in accordance with procedures.			
1.6	Identify potential legal issues through ongoing coordination with external stakeholder groups (e.g., legal services groups and voluntary agencies) in accordance with procedures.			
1.7	Attend Public Assistance Kickoff Meeting(s) and Applicant Briefing(s), as needed.			
1.8	Attend local/community meeting(s) to identify potential issues and general concerns.			
1.9	Monitor local media to identify potential issues and general concerns.			
1.10	Visit Disaster Recovery Centers, as needed, to identify potential issues and general concerns.			
1.11	Review the Incident Action Plan/ Coordination Plan and planned activities for compliance with laws and regulations.			
1.12	Attend staff meetings/planning meetings to remain abreast of potential legal issues.			
1.13	Review regulations and office procedures for relevance, compliance, and potential modification.			
Task	2: Gather information and conduct legal research.			
2.1	Ask questions to clarify facts, issues, and policies.			
2.2	Interview key people involved in an action.			
2.3	Research applicable laws, policies, regulations, judicial decisions, Executive orders, statutes, and legislative history.			
2.4	Oversee investigations relating to potential Agency liability.			
2.5	Review historical records, letters, contracts, and other documents to gather factual information.			
2.6	Communicate issues to the General Counsel (in order to obtain input and guidance and to determine if issues have Agency-wide impact.			
2.7	Consult coworkers and supervisors for advice regarding work-related issues.			

	essment Record: <u>Legal Advisor Position-Specific Tasks</u> e 2 of 5)	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A
Task	2: Gather information and conduct legal research. (Continued)			
2.8	Accumulate and organize potentially relevant documents and information.			
2.9	Gather information and documentation to fulfill HQ requests.			
2.10	Monitor relevant information on congressional actions and legislation.			
	3: Analyze the facts, context, and the law to develop opinions, recorsolutions.	nmen	dation	s,
3.1	Evaluate gathered information for relevancy, accuracy, and completeness.			
3.2	Analyze applicable laws, policies, regulations, judicial decisions, Executive orders, and statutes and apply them to the facts of each situation.			
3.3	Review contracts and other agreements for intended purpose (e.g., for legal sufficiency, to determine legal responsibility, to determine contractual obligations).			
3.4	Identify alternative legal paths to desired outcomes.			
3.5	Develop solutions within legal guidelines and regulations that meet stakeholder needs.			
Task	4: Provide legal advice, instruction, and communication.			
4.1	Provide legal opinions to program officials and Operations Section Branch Directors on issues affecting program implementation.			
4.2	Determine the appropriate mode of communication (e.g., e-mail, briefing, formal written document) to provide legal advice, instruction, and/or recommendations.			
4.3	Create legal documents.			
4.4	Draft written legal opinions and/or correspondence.			
4.5	Represent the legal views of legal at meetings, when appropriate.			
4.6	Provide guidance to personnel regarding their obligations to report fraud, waste, and abuse			
4.7	Refer employees and clients to appropriate resources.			
4.8	Advise the staff of the requirement to coordinate Privacy Act requests for information on applicants with legal.			

	essment Record: <u>Legal Advisor Position-Specific Tasks</u> e 3 of 5)	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A
Task	5: Organize, plan, coordinate, and schedule work.			
5.1	Establish and maintain a personal log of activities to be completed.			
5.2	Prioritize concurrent tasks to be accomplished in order to meet deadlines.			
5.3	Coordinate with field attorneys/Legal Advisors in other locations to maintain consistency and avoid duplication of effort.			
5.4	Forward issues (i.e., subpoenas, court summonses, and orders) that may be sources of litigation.			
5.5	Coordinate with Legal on ethical questions and issues raised at the incident site.			
5.6	Draft weekly reports.			
5.7	Maintain Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214) or an equivalent.			
5.8	Review files in preparation for archived storage.			
Task	6: Prepare disaster declaration documents and resolve declaration-	relate	d issu	es.
6.1	Coordinate to determine who will prepare the declaration documents.			
6.2	Review and finalize the State Agreement.			
6.3	Prepare and/or review amendments to the State Agreement.			
6.4	Prepare Tribal Agreements.			
6.5	Oversee the processing of Tribal Agreements, including the preparation and/or review of related documents (e.g., Public Assistance Administrative Plan, Federal grants management documents).			
6.6	Prepare hold-harmless and right-of-entry agreements.			
6.7				
6.8	Advise on legal issues relating to investigations, finance, claims, etc.			
6.9	Coordinate to gather input on State-requested cost-share reduction.			
6.10	Evaluate the State-requested cost-share reduction for compliance with regulations.			
6.11	Prepare a recommendation for the requested cost-share reduction.			
6.12	Answer questions from Legal about cost-share recommendations.			
6.13	Coordinate to gather input on the request to reopen the incident period.			
6.14	Evaluate the request to reopen the incident period for compliance with regulations.			
6.15	Prepare recommendations concerning requests to reopen the incident period.			
6.16	Answer questions from Legal about requests to reopen the incident period.			

	essment Record: <u>Legal Advisor Position-Specific Tasks</u> e 4 of 5)	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A
Task	7: Process external requests for information.			
7.1	Expedite release for requests for publicly available information.			
7.2	Coordinate to log requests for nonpublic information.			
7.3	Evaluate the sufficiency of requests for nonpublic information.			
7.4	Evaluate the appropriateness of nonpublic information for release under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and/or the Privacy Act.			
7.5	Identify documents that are responsive to the request for information.			
7.6	Oversee the collection of requested documents.			
7.7	Determine what components of the requested document can be released.			
7.8	Coordinate on release/redaction of collected documents.			
7.9	Redact information from the requested document that cannot be released.			
7.10	Draft a letter to accompany the FOIA and/or Privacy Act response.			
7.11	Release appropriate information in response to FOIA and/or Privacy Act requests.			
Task	8: Provide training and guidance.			
8.1	Coordinate with the Training Unit to determine the need for mandatory Government Ethics training and other specialized training (e.g., Citizenship/Qualified Alien, rental cars, Privacy Act).			
8.2	Instruct/oversee the Government Ethics class and other specialized training.			
8.3	Respond to questions about ethics-related issues.			
8.4	Circulate vehicle policy memorandum and respond to related questions.			
8.5	Coordinate with External Affairs on media releases, talking points, and FAQ sheets.			
8.6	Contact Legal Aid attorneys to establish relationships and explain disaster programs.			
8.7	Help the Individual Assistance program to coordinate the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division (ABA/YLD) Disaster Legal Services Program.			

Assessment Record: <u>Legal Advisor Position-Specific Tasks</u> (Page 5 of 5)	Performed	Needs Improvement	N/A	
Task 9: Train new Legal Advisors.				
9.1 Provide new Legal Advisors with an overview of operations (e.g., office layout, key staff, key meetings, administrative information).				
9.2 Establish training plans for new Legal Advisors.				
9.3 Ensure that new Legal Advisors communicate with stakeholders and customers in an appropriate fashion (e.g., avoiding the use of unnecessary legal jargon, acknowledging the expertise of program specialists, and treating clients respectfully).				
9.4 Develop new Legal Advisors' skills by allowing them to take lead on issues and in meetings, as appropriate.				
9.5 Provide guidance, feedback, and mentoring to new Legal Advisors, as necessary, to support performance.				
9.6 Provide feedback to the Manager.				
Task 10: Perform other duties, as assigned.				
Legal Advisor Position-Specific Tasks and Subtasks Comments				
Assessment Date:/				
Supervisor: Employee:				